The PIONEER

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



Mental Mediumship

the PIONEER

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All references to Psypioneer in these issues are archived at http://psypioneer.iapsop.com/

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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Knowing our pioneers: Mrs M. H. Wallis

Minnie Harriet Wallis (1854-1939) was much more than the lady who founded the Union's Fund of Benevolence (FOB) in 1893.[12] Below, the former S.N.U., President and editor of *The Two Worlds,* Ernest Oaten, gives a warm tribute to her great contribution to Spiritualism and the Union. This was first published in *The Two Worlds* March 31th 1939, page 197:

TRANSITION OF MRS. M. H. WALLIS



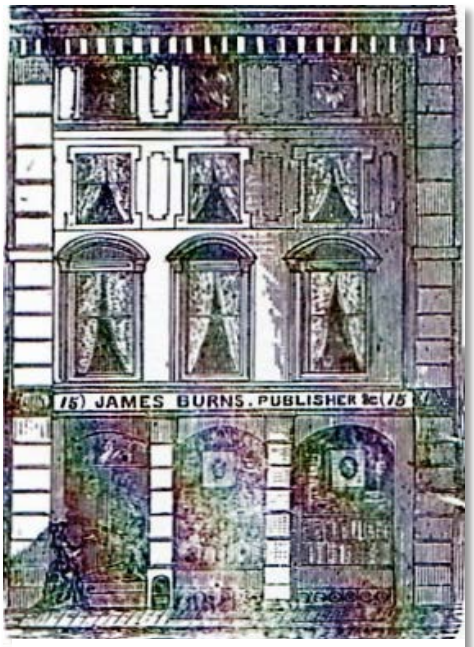
IT is in a spirit of jubilation rather than of regret that we announce the passing of Mrs. M. H. Wallis, the veteran medium, who passed to the higher life on March 20th from her home at Stanhope Avenue, London, N. 3. For over twelve months she had been confined to her bed, and had been attended by day and night nurses for many weeks. At last her tired spirit found release from the pains of earth, and joy in reunion with her beloved husband, who passed behind the veil in January, 1914. The mortal remains were cremated at Golder's Green.

She will always be remembered for her quiet, retiring disposition, her sympathetic nature, and her kindly assistance to young mediums, for whom she always had a word of encouragement.

Minnie Harriet Eager was born in London. Her mother came of a West-country farming stock, whilst her father was a London solicitor, as was her grandfather. Owing to indifferent health and eye trouble, which frequently threatened blindness, her schooling was very intermittent. During her early teens she had several psychic experiences, but it was when she was about sixteen that she began to question the religious teaching which was offered her, and expressed impatience with many of the creeds. At about nineteen years of age she became interested in Spiritualism in consequence of conversations with a neighbour, and she accepted an invitation to join their home circle. On her second visit to the circle she lost consciousness and began to speak in a foreign tongue. Then for a time she attended the services conducted by Robert Cogman at the East End Spiritual Institute, and was soon controlled by the spirit of a young Cuban girl, "Veina," who used to give excellent clairvoyant descriptions.

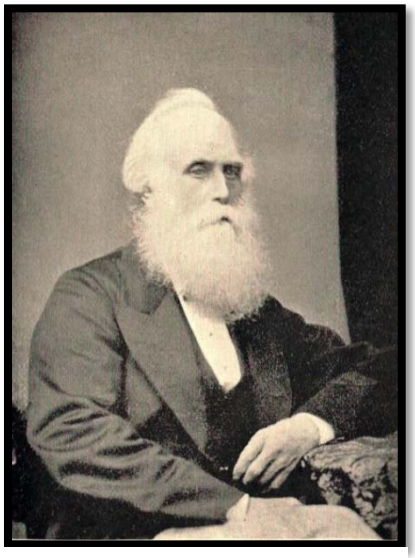
[12].–See "Pioneer" Volume 1. No 3. April 2015:—*Badges, Symbols, and Emblems of the Spiritualists' National Union*:—http://www.snu.org.uk/documents/pdf/SNU%20PIONEER%2001_03.pdf

A circle was started for her at the Spiritual Institute, Southampton Row, W.C.,[13] under Mr. James Burns (the man who also fostered the fine trance mediumship of J. J. Morse), and at these seances another control manifested whose name was to be heard wherever Spiritualists foregathered. "Morambo" had been an African slave. He knew very little English, and had little love for white people, but he quickly mastered our language, and through the years has been Mrs. Wallis' chief control. For seven years Miss Eager continued her development before taking the platform. "Morambo" was quite a personality. His deep resonant voice bore a striking contrast to that of his medium, while his deep logical addresses, couched in simple, direct, and well-chosen phrases, breathed an air of sincerity which carried conviction. Quite a number of other spirits used Mrs. Wallis from time to time. Generally, she was quite conscious of all that was said, but unable to interfere with the flow of language.



Burns' "Spiritual Institute"

Soon she accepted a call to Nottingham, where she became resident speaker for the Shakespeare Street Society.


Robert Cogman

The real beginning of her actual platform work occurred about 1875 or '76 when, on the recommendation of Mrs. E. H. Britten, she was invited to fill the platform at Liverpool, and there met Mr. E. W. Wallis, just returned from an American tour. In 1876 they were married and went to reside in St. Peter Street, Mile End, London, to carry on the work which had been conducted by Robert Cogman up to his death.[14] The marriage was of the happiest description, for their love deepened with the passing years; their difficulties and trials only served to knit them more closely together, and their home was a centre of spiritual activity.

[13].–See Psypioneer: Volume 6. No 1. January 2010:—*Spiritual Origin of the Spiritual Institution*.

[14].–Robert Cogman (1810-1876) a trance speaker, the first in London to establish a successful training school for mediumship. His East End Spiritual Institution was helped many mediums develop, e.g., James J. Morse, Frank Herne, Miss Eager (later Mrs. Wallis) and E. W. Wallis. Edward Walter Wallis would later credit Cogman and his "School of the Prophets," as he called it.

On the list of 'forgotten pioneers,' Mr Cogman ranks high. He was affectionately known by many of the early mediums as their "Spiritual Father"

Subsequently, Mr. and Mrs. Wallis moved to Nottingham, to Walsall and to Glasgow, in each of which cities they helped to establish the Cause. Then, in 1875, they removed to Manchester, where Mr. and Mrs. Wallis and Mrs. E. H. Britten were instrumental in founding *The Two Worlds* in 1887. In 1890 it was at their home in Petworth Street that the first steps were taken for the formation of the Spiritualist National Federation, which subsequently became the Spiritualists' National Union. In 1898, Mr. and Mrs. Wallis toured America, where their excellent work was much appreciated.

Most Spiritualists are familiar with the National Fund of Benevolence, but not everyone knows that it was Mr. and Mrs. Wallis who founded that Fund. Mrs. Wallis acted as Secretary and Almoner for a number of years, and her work helped to lighten the burdens of many a sick and impoverished worker. Subsequently, the Fund came under the supervision of the National Union, and as long as that Fund exists, Spiritualists will owe a debt to Mrs. Wallis. In May, 1889, Mr. Wallis severed his connection with *The Two Worlds* to become assistant to Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, Editor of *Light*, and they removed to London. For many years Mrs. Wallis conducted regular meetings at the London Spiritualist Alliance,[15] where "Morambo's" replies to questions were a notable feature of the syllabus.

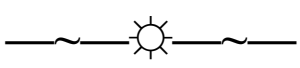
Mr. and Mrs. Wallis cooperated in the authorship of the *Guide to Mediumship*, which is still the standard work on the development and use of psychic gifts. Based upon a wide personal experience over many years and in several countries, which placed them in a unique position to expound and explain so complex a problem as mediumship.

She was in her 85th year.

In the course of fifty years of active labour for the Cause, Mrs. Wallis addressed meetings in every important town in the country. I first heard her at Cardiff Town Hall in 1892, and sent up several questions. The replies of "Morambo" opened a new world to me, and the assistance and encouragement she gave to Mrs. Oaten in the early stages of her mediumship were invaluable.

If I were asked to draw a picture of a woman of sterling worth, faithful and constant, and grounded in all womanly qualities. I would draw a picture of Mrs. M. H. Wallis. It was an honour to know her, and a pleasure to know that we shall presently meet again, and meanwhile I have a radiant vision of a reunion between two devoted souls whose love and devotion to one another has ensured for them a companionship which will last for aye.

E. W. O.
[Ernest W. Oaten]



[15].–Today this is known as the College of Psychic Studies:—https://www.collegeofpsychicstudies.co.uk/

Estelle Roberts and the House of Red Cloud



Parish not only linked on a personal level with Silver Birch, as noted above, but also with Red Cloud, one of the guides of Estelle Roberts. Noted in the above article, the secretary of the 'House of Red Cloud', who incidentally was, I believe, Estelle's daughter Iris, called Parish to treat her mother under Red Cloud's instruction.

Estelle was born May Estelle Wills on May 10th 1889 at May Cottage, Kensington, the daughter of Isobel and Edwin Blackstone Wills, one of eight children, having four sisters and three brothers. At fifteen she worked as a nursemaid to a family in Turnham Green. Later she met and married Hugh Warren Miles, according to her daughter Ivy ("Why I Believe in Red Cloud"); she married at age 17. Estelle and Hugh had three children, Ivy, Eveline and Iris. Eight years after they were married Hugh fell ill and was diagnosed with Bright's disease and died in May 1919.

In 1920 Estelle married Arthur Roberts. It was from this period in the early 1920s that she started to become involved with Spiritualism, initially at Hampton Hill Spiritualist Church. At the third meeting she attended, the medium, Mrs Elizabeth Cannock, singled Estelle out, saying in unequivocal terms:

> "*You are a medium and have much work to do. Chosen by the Spirit World, you must not ignore the call. Please come and see me after the meeting.*"

After the passing of Mrs Cannock on November 11th 1945 her obituary published in *Psychic News* stated:

> "*The following Sunday Estelle Roberts gave her first public demonstration in the same Spiritualist church*."

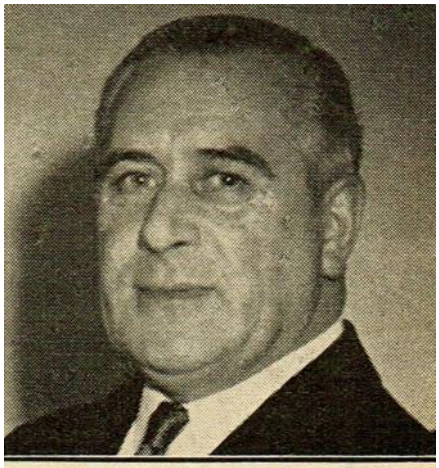
In 1922 Estelle's son, Terry, was born. She had become aware of Red Cloud and it would be at Richmond Spiritualist Church in 1925 that Red Cloud would first control her. A headquarters for Estelle's work as a medium and healer was established in October 1934, called the 'House of Red Cloud', in Wimbledon.

In 1938 her marriage to Arthur Roberts ended in the divorce court. She was granted a decree on the grounds of cruelty after successfully defending an action alleging misconduct. In 1941 she was bombed out of her home at Esher, moving away to the West Country to live; the doors of the 'House of Red Cloud' also closed. One of the 'House of Red Cloud' healers was Charles Tilson Chowne, who would play an important part in Estelle's life.

The article below gives an outline of some of the physical mediumship exhibited through Estelle Roberts at the 'House of Red Cloud' and also the introduction of Charles Tilson Chowne:[5]

HE HAS SEEN A LIVE BIRD ARRIVE AS AN APPORT AT A SEANCE

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE, though founded by a medium, Mary Baker Eddy, is opposed to Spiritualism, yet C. Tilson Chowne, a Christian Science practitioner, turned to Spiritualism when his wife "died."



C. Tilson Chowne

Because of a clairvoyant message from Estelle Roberts he became a Spiritualist and now devotes most of his time to the House of Red Cloud.

His inquiry began six years ago and since then Chowne has seen some of the finest psychic phenomena that the movement has produced.

He has seen amazing proofs of Survival given to people who were strangers to the medium, attended direct-voice seances at which evidence poured from another world, seen the materialisations of spirit guides, from one of whom a lock of hair was cut, and seen a live bird apported into the seance room from a garden and then taken back.

Once, when Chowne was sitting in a circle at which all the sitters received apports as gifts from Red Cloud, the guide announced he would take a stone from Chowne's pocket. It was an apport Red Cloud had given him on a previous occasion and was kept with a number of other stones in a wash-leather bag, within an envelope, which Chowne had put for safe keeping in an inside pocket of his waistcoat.

[5] *Psychic News,* August 3rd 1940, page 5.

TAKEN FROM POCKET

Though the sitter felt nothing, that stone was extracted from his pocket in a flash. Other people in the seance room saw a light and then came a rattling sound in the trumpet, signalling the arrival of another apport. And Chowne was presented with the stone he thought was still in his pocket.

The bird was apported at another sitting when Red Cloud, to illustrate a point, offered to bring into the room, at the top of the house, any article from the garden. When Shaw Desmond asked for a budgerigar out of the aviary, the guide accepted the challenge.

FEATHERS AS PROOF

A few minutes later there appeared on a table a luminous clock on which was perched a budgerigar. Red Cloud made all the sitters touch the bird and examine it closely to make sure it was real. Then, so that they could not say afterwards that they were hypnotised, the guide took a few feathers from the bird and gave them to a sitter so that he could later inspect them.

Then the little bird disappeared as suddenly as it came.

Once, when Red Cloud materialised, another of Estelle Roberts's guides, Archael, also appeared and remained in solid form for an hour. He was closely examined by the 60 sitters, four of whom felt the spirit's hair. Except for occasional pauses, Archael's face was illuminated all the time with a red torch which he held.

Then Red Cloud asked for a pair of scissors, which were handed to him inside the cabinet. The guide was heard cutting off a lock of hair from the materialised form. This hair, which was preserved [Now displayed at Stansted Hall],[6] was different both in colour and in texture from that of the medium.

When Chowne's wife passed on, he began by reading our literature and then went to Spiritualist meetings and received messages from his wife.

Once he tried automatic writing, and the pencil wrote what seemed to be a meaningless scrawl which Chowne did not attempt to decipher. But he was impressed to go to the Grotrian Hall instead of the Spiritualist service he had intended visiting.

Estelle Roberts was demonstrating clairvoyance at the Grotrian Hall and Chowne sat at the back. He was a stranger to her. Estelle picked

[6] The séance took place in March 1937; the lock was exhibited in the 'House of Red Cloud' séance room and is now exhibited in the Britten Memorial Museum, housed at the Arthur Findlay College, Stansted Hall.

him out and gave him a very evidential message from his wife, whom she described accurately.

Then the medium told Chowne his wife was placing some flowers on his lap and said he would understand the significance of the action later.

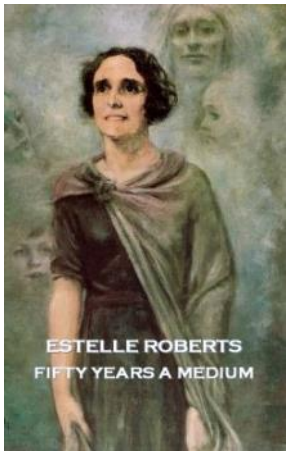
When Chowne got home, he looked again at the scrawl the pencil had written through his hand that afternoon. After careful scrutiny he could read a message. It was: "Coming tonight, bringing flowers."

Chowne, after receiving more evidence of Survival through Estelle Roberts, joined in her work and, in addition to administrative activities at the House of Red Cloud, has been a member for years of Red Cloud's band of healers.

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In 1941, when Estelle was bombed out of her home and the 'House of Red Cloud' was closed, she married Charles Tilson Chowne. Within the Red Cloud circle the guide, who claimed to be an Egyptian working through the astral body of an Indian 'Red Cloud', held special names for the circle members, for example Tilson Chowne was addressed as 'Zebedee' and Red Cloud called Maurice Barbanell 'John'. Charles died in 1959 and Estelle on May 30th 1970, aged 81.

SNUi has republished "Red Cloud Speaks"[7] and also "Estelle Roberts – Fifty Years a Medium". The cover on this book shows the painting by Marcel Poncin; the original hangs in the Mediums' Room at the Arthur Findlay College.[8] Those visiting the Arthur Findlay College can read the file on Estelle and see the various photographs and Archael's hair in the museum.



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[7] "Red Cloud Speaks" published by Psychic Book Club in 1938; the book compiler is anonymous; the Foreword is by Red Cloud through his medium Estelle Roberts. This was later re-published in a 1992 paperback but still remains scarce. Now re-published and available at:— http://www.snui.org/index.php?act=viewCat&catId=1

[8] In 1969 Estelle Roberts "Fifty Years a Medium," was published in paperback by Corgi Books, London, numerous later editions came and went. Some information given on this book suggests it has an added chapter, "16. Final Chapter", added to the original 1959 "Forty Years a Medium". However, it should be noted that some of the text has also been updated and additional text added, as well as the new chapter. Now re-published (in a number of languages) and available at:—http://www.snui.org/index.php?act=viewCat&catId=1

"Remembering our old workers"

Spiritualism in Blackburn

Blackburn holds a significant place in Spiritualist history and within the Spiritualists' National Union

Below is quoted from the 'Two Worlds', May 17th 1895, under the editorship of Edward Wallis, who co-founded the journal with Emma Hardinge Britten in 1887:

"Blackburn has been a centre of Spiritual activity for a number of years, and was for a long time the scene of the operations of one of the strongest, most harmonious, and most successful societies in the kingdom. Audiences of upwards of a thousand persons assembled for some time, and month after month, on Sunday evenings, 7, 8 or 9 hundred people listened to our speakers and mediums.



Richard Wolstenholme

"Among the earnest and devoted workers of those days the subject of our sketch for this week, Mr. R. Wolstenholme, did yeoman's service, and we are pleased to have him in our portrait gallery. He it was who, some ten years ago, seeing that there was a likelihood of the termination of the Glasgow engagement with Mr. and Mrs. Wallis, set on foot the scheme to bring them to Lancashire to live and labour for Spiritualism. Quiet, observant, thoughtful and persevering, outspoken and high-principled he has won respect and esteem from all sorts and conditions of men, and after a spell of rest has again consented to be president of the Blackburn Society, which society, by the way, has just successfully entertained the Lyceum Union for their Annual Conference."[13]

Richard Wolstenholme was born in the village of Rhodes, near Manchester, in 1842. He was one of the founders of the 'Blackburn Psychological Society' and its first President, which continued for some years. In 1895 he was elected a member of the Board of Directors of the Two Worlds Publishing Company Limited; below, Wolstenholme briefly outlines in his own words the early years at Blackburn and the forming of the Society:

[13] This was the tenth Annual Lyceum Conference, held on May 12th 1895 at the Blackburn Spiritualist Society. Thomas Olman Todd was elected President for the ensuing year, Alfred Kitson Hon. Secretary and J. Sutcliffe Treasurer.

"In 1873 I came to live in Blackburn, and in 1876, for the first time in my life, I heard Spiritualism publicly advocated from the platform. Mr. Samuel Quarmby, of Oldham,[14] was the speaker, and from what I heard that night I determined to investigate for myself, and see what truth there was in the subject. For this purpose I held a circle at my own house every Sunday and Thursday evening, where I became thoroughly convinced of the genuineness of spirit return. With the enthusiasm of a new convert I went wherever I could get more evidence.

"During the time of the Slade trial my wife and I went to London and had a seance with Dr. Slade; also with Mr. Williams, Mrs. Olive and other noted London mediums. Several times I visited Newcastle and had seances with Miss Wood and Mrs. Esperance. I also very often got Mr. John Taylor, the physical medium, to come to our house, when the wonderful phenomena taking place in his presence was watched and critically examined by us. From 1876 to about 1881 Spiritualism was presented to the public of Blackburn only very occasionally, Mr. J. B. Stones, of Pleasington, at intervals getting J. J. Morse to give a lecture. The Lancashire Committee also occasionally sent Miss Longbottom and others to speak, but about 1881 a number of us met together to form a society and to inaugurate the same. Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten came and spoke most effectively in the Exchange Hall. Then followed Mr. Colville, Mr. Howell, Rev. C. Ware, Mr. James Burns (late Editor of the *Medium and Daybreak*), Mr. Farmer (then Editor of *Light*), Mr. Morse, Mr. and Mrs. Wallis, and many other able exponents of the movement; in fact, all the best speakers in the country were engaged, and Spiritualism spread fast and furious. A strong society was the result, and for years I was annually elected its president.

"During my presidency the famous debate between the Rev. T. Ashcroft and Mr. E. W. Wallis took place, a debate that never would have taken place but for the determined attitude of the committee of the Blackburn Society. When Mr. Ashcroft broke off the negotiations, a few of the committee went with me one Sunday to Chorley, where Mr. Ashcroft was stationed, and we placed ourselves at every church and chapel door in the town, and gave out printed papers to every one entering the various places of worship, in which we challenged Mr. Ashcroft to debate with Mr. Wallis. The debate came off with, so far as the Spiritualists were concerned, very gratifying results, both friends and foes proclaiming Mr. Wallis a gentleman.

"I conducted the first Spiritualist funeral in Blackburn, over the body of Mr. R. Walsh, one of the pioneers of Spiritualism in the town.[15] I also joined in matrimony the first couple of Spiritualists ever married in England in a Spiritualist

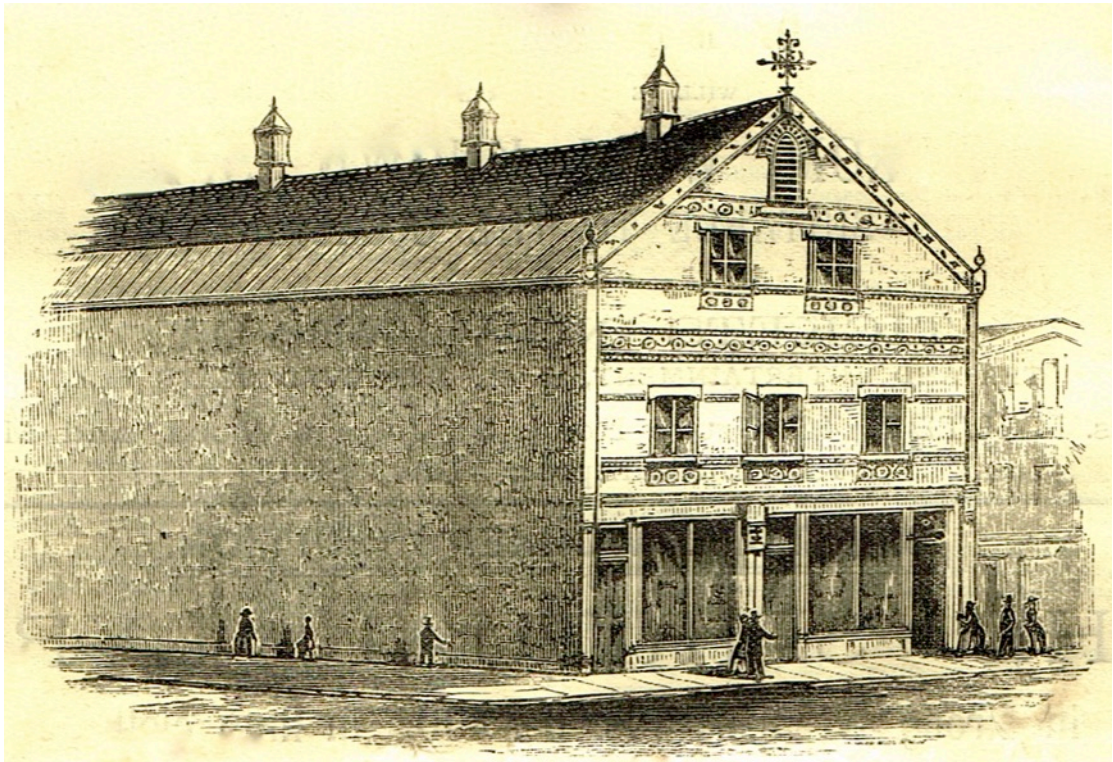
[14] Samuel Quarmby was Secretary of the Oldham Society of Spiritualists; for further information see the SNU Pioneer, Volume I, No. 1, August 2013: 'Oldham Society of Spiritualists': http://www.snu.org.uk/spiritualism/pioneer

[15] Richard Walsh died on March 28th 1886; he had built the public hall in Blackburn where the Spiritualists held their meetings. The funeral procession route on April 1st was lined with people; hundreds assembled to watch the proceedings. James Pemberton was one of the coffin-bearers; Pemberton founded a Lyceum at Blackburn and was known for his work in the days of the Spiritualists' National Federation. In 1892 he became a director of the 'Two Worlds', in 1893 he was Secretary of the South-West Lancashire Committee and in 1903 he was elected to the first S.N.U. Council.

meeting room and with a Spiritualistic ceremony. Spiritualism in Blackburn for a long term of years sailed with the flowing tide until jealousy, that curse of societies, crept into what once was an earnest and enthusiastic body of workers. A new society was formed, and to-day we have the spectacle of two struggling societies, each burdened with heavy liabilities, neither of them presenting Spiritualism to the public as it ought to be, neither of them able to afford (only on very rare occasions) to engage the best speakers in the movement. Blackburn is not the only town where this suicidal folly has been developed, but all over the country this canker-worm has crept in, destroying instead of raising the status of Spiritualism. When will men learn that to be true saviours we must sacrifice self, and that he who is least shall become greatest? When shall we learn the lesson that union is strength and disbanding is weakness? Let me appeal to Spiritualists all over the country to amalgamate and form strong, robust societies where the truths of Spiritualism can be intelligently and effectively put before the public by intelligent and forcible speakers, whose lives shall command respect and admiration, and whose words shall carry conviction to all who hear them. This can only be done by unity and unselfishness, and if we cannot see eye to eye with our neighbours, let us try to so mould our lives and actions that we may work for the general good."

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On Saturday March 7th and Sunday March 8th 1885 a new hall opened in Blackburn. The opening was front-page news on March 13th in the 'Medium and Daybreak'. Below are quoted the opening remarks (the four-page report is freely available from the editor):



HALL FOR SPIRITUALISTS.
NEW WATER STREET, STATION ROAD, BLACKBURN.

OPENING OF THE NEW HALL AT BLACKBURN

On Thursday evening a private party of local friends, some 200 in number, had a preliminary seance in the Hall, though it was then in an unfinished state. In fact on Saturday, Mr. Delaine and his men were busy with the work necessary to the completion of the building. Some of the plaster had been recently put on, and rather a cool influence predominated, but which was amply compensated for by the heartiness of the audience which crowded it in every part.

The platform is at the end opposite to the front entrance, the deep gallery coming well forward into the middle of the area. At the platform end the house is nearly double the width of the other end. There is, therefore, a kind of side hall to the left of the speaker, which can be boarded off by moveable shutters into two small halls or seance rooms: one on the level of the platform and the other on the lower level of the floor of the Hall.

THE OPENING ENTERTAINMENT.

On Saturday evening the twenty-five feet screen on which the pictures were thrown, stood so far forward on the platform that the side space was not available. The other parts of the house were filled. It was supposed that about 1,000 persons were present, and the entrance money was about of £18; so we were informed. There were a few seats at 1s., the other prices being 6d. and 3d. Mr. Wolstenholme had his lantern well back under the gallery, requiring a very long focus to magnify our spirit friends to the vast proportions of the twenty-five feet screen, but in such a large hall it was needful to have size, that all might see perfectly what was placed before them. The whole of the proceedings, which were of rather a complex character, went off without a hitch, as if all had rehearsed their parts together to perfection.

Mr. Wolstenholme took entire charge of the exhibition department, and did his work in a very able manner. Mr. Burns had the duties of the platform entrusted to him, and in words few and to the point, he seemed ready to offer appropriate comments on all that appeared on the screen. Mr. Holt presided over the musical arrangements, surrounded by his devoted choir, who did all they could to add the charms of their delightful art to the merits of the entertainment. Several ladies and gentlemen did effective service as soloists, &c., which items will be duly noted as we proceed.

Long before the time for opening, the doors were besieged by a clamorous multitude. It was like Drury Lane Theatre on the first night of a great piece, only the crush was proportionately less severe. Half-past seven was the hour for commencing, and by that time a full house was in a state of eager expectancy. Mr. Wolstenholme, as President of the Society, briefly introduced, from the platform, the business of the evening, after which he took his position at the lantern. The gas was turned down to a “blue peep” by Mr. Delaine, and Mr. Wolstenholme threw on the screen,

Welcome angels, pure and bright,
Children of the living light,

which was sung in a glorious manner and in the sweetest harmony, by the whole audience. That hymn was indeed the consecration of the building, for it altered the atmosphere entirely; all tumult and confusion passed away, and a serene and spiritual influence pervaded the house. The angels had responded to the invitation, and taken

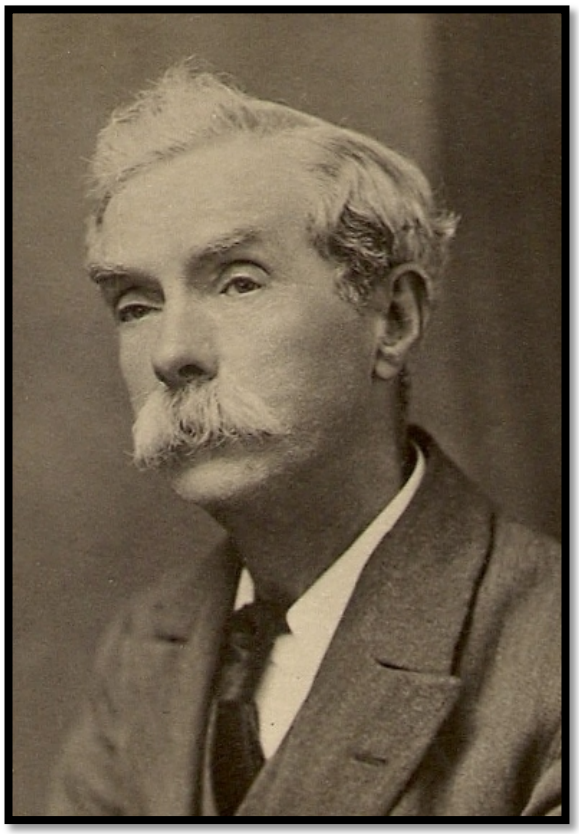
possession of a Home on earth for Spiritual Work. It was at Mr. Walsh's particular request that this was sung, and there could not have been a better introduction. Then followed some mottoes, such as Success to Spiritualism, and some views of the MEDIUM: the page commencing the Bishop's Sermon, last week's front page with the portrait of Hon. R. Stout, also the programme page with the engraving of the Hall, and a motto recommending all present to secure a copy of the MEDIUM. This advice was followed by hundreds' of the audience.

A full programme of events followed a lecture on the 'Facts and Phenomena of Spiritualism' by James Burns, a choir, duets and solo singers. More lectures on drawings, direct drawing and spirit photography continued till late in the evening. Wolstenholme gave recognition of Walsh's enterprise in building the hall and leading Spiritualists filled the platform; on the following day the Hall was formally inaugurated for spiritual purposes on Sunday afternoon. The Blackburn Spiritualists enjoyed another full day.

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One of the greatest clairvoyants that the movement has ever produced and who was closely associated with Blackburn was Tom Tyrrell. The article below is taken from the 'Two Worlds', March 2nd 1928, pages 133-134:

Mr. Tom Tyrrell



As briefly announced in last week's issue, Mr. Tom Tyrrell, the famous clairvoyant, was translated to spirit life on Friday, February 17th, at 8-15 a.m., at his home, 54, Whalley Banks, King Street, Blackburn. For several years Mr. Tyrrell has known that there was a danger from an impending stroke, and for at least eight years has been gradually easing up his public work with a view to avoiding it, but he had a seizure on February 13th (not the 15th as we stated last week) which affected his right side. Consciousness was intermittent for several days, during which, without alarm or regrets, he carefully made all arrangements concerning his estate and his interment. He passed peacefully away on the Friday morning.

Mr. Tom Tyrrell was born at Darwen on July 2nd, 1857, and was thus 70 years of age at the time of his passing. He was of Irish extraction, his parents migrating to Lancashire from West Meath sometime before his birth. Mr. Tyrrell had a twin sister who passed to spirit life in 1918. The family were adherents of the Church of England, and Mr. Tyrrell was brought up in the heart of that communion in Darwen. He was always weakly in health, and in early manhood was several times prostrated by the breaking of blood vessels. His father died when Tom was a child, and at a

very early age he went into the cotton mills to earn a few shillings to assist his widowed mother to keep the wolf from the door.

Brought up in the heart of Lancashire he became a weaver, and at one time worked a hand loom. Later he had charge of four power looms, and continued in the mill until he had turned 60 years of age. He was twice married, his first wife being Miss M. A. Horrocks, of Bolton, a daughter of one of the old circus clowns, and as a result of this union there were three sons and one daughter, all of whom survive him. His early life was a struggle—long hours, small wages and the responsibility of a young family, and was one continual struggle against poverty.

His first wife passed away in 1912, and in the following year he was united to Miss Annie Holt, a former sweetheart and early friend of his first wife. It was some 45 years ago that Mr. Tyrrell's interest in Spiritualism commenced, and he was introduced to his first seance at the house of Mrs. Holt, subsequently destined to be his mother-in-law. He soon found himself possessed of very exceptional powers of a decidedly physical nature, and for some years his house was full of physical manifestations which are almost unbelievable. In his presence heavy articles of furniture would be moved from place to place or carried from room to room. These phenomena were decidedly distasteful to Mr. Tyrrell and caused him a good deal of distress. To the end of his career he was always full of fear when physical phenomena occurred in his presence, probably due to a nervous reaction caused by the withdrawal of the psychic forces from his body. Had he pursued physical mediumship it is quite likely that he would have been even greater than D. D. Home, but in the early days of his connection with Spiritualism he was brought into close contact with Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten and she advised him very strongly that owing to his physical weakness it was inadvisable for him to cultivate that class of phenomena, and suggested that he should endeavour to develop the clairvoyant and clairaudient faculty.

It was some 43 years ago that this clairvoyant faculty began to emerge, and the results which accrued were really remarkable. Names, dates, places of abode and minute particulars concerning deceased persons seemed to flow naturally through him, and he became one of the greatest clairvoyants that the movement has ever produced. He threw in his lot with the Blackburn Spiritualist Society (then meeting in Freckleton Street), and began to take an interest in the training of the young. He visited Keighley, where a Spiritualist Lyceum had been established, in order to learn something of Lyceum methods, and speedily established a Lyceum in connection with the Blackburn Society.

The possession of a wonderful clairvoyant faculty brought him visitors from all over the country, and Mr. Tyrrell consistently put his gift at the disposal of any and every inquirer who came. Despite the fact that he was in continual poverty he viewed his gift especially as a spiritual privilege and steadfastly refused to take one single penny from anyone, though later in life when he was called upon to take the platform throughout the whole country he, in justice to his family who were then growing up, demanded a fee for the taking of public services, but to the end of his life he would not sit for fees, though he seldom refused help to honest investigators.

No one who has not heard Mr. Tyrrell can understand the value of the services he rendered to the movement. For over 40 years he was upon the platform of Spiritualist Societies and travelled throughout the whole of the country. It was a very rare thing for him to miss a Sunday. Generally he gave clairvoyance at two services—afternoon and evening or morning and evening—and in the course of his public career he must have described something like a HUNDRED THOUSAND SPIRIT PEOPLE. In 90 per cent. of such cases it is safe to say that he gave the full Christian and surname of the spirit described, whilst in a large proportion of cases gave the date and place of birth, the address at which they lived, read the exact wording of their mourning cards, stated the number of children and other intimate details, which left no option between recognition and non-recognition. When it is remembered that quite 80 per cent. of the descriptions given were readily recognised (whilst he would often pick out two or three members of a family sat in different parts of the hall) his clairvoyance could only be described as marvellous. In addition to this he has given thousands of small seances either at his home or in the homes of others.

From the standpoint of the demonstration of clairvoyance at PUBLIC meetings we think it would be true to say that Tom Tyrrell is the greatest clairvoyant this country has ever produced. Others may excel him in private consultation, which was a phase of the subject he never cultivated, but for public demonstrations he has stood unequalled, and thousands of people have been brought to conviction of the truths of Spiritualism through his advocacy. What the future may bring forth we do not know, but his place will be hard to fill.

Inquiry into his family life shows that there is no record of any psychic gift whatever amongst his ancestry, but several of his children are psychically endowed, one in particular having the same gift as his father, although he has never used it or given public demonstrations.

Mr. Tyrrell was very varied in his tastes. He was a clever amateur photographer, and had several times exhibited in photographic exhibitions. He was a keen botanist, and knew practically every herb of the fields and their medicinal and other values. Since his retirement from the platform some few years ago he had used his clairvoyant faculty for the diagnosis of disease and applied magnetic and herbal remedies, and at the time of his passing on had a long list of patients whom he was treating. As a healer he was extraordinary. Quite a number of cases of epilepsy had been cured by him, and we believe it is true to say that he never treated a case of epilepsy without effecting a complete cure. On several occasions he showed the possession of the remarkable gift of handling fire, live coals, etc., without harm to himself. Throughout it all he was the most humble of men who never spoke about himself and became impatient when you talked of his gifts, and studiously endeavoured to efface himself. He detested public life, and was never happier than when taking a long ramble through the country amongst the nature which he loved. There is not a tree which grows in this country which he could not name on sight. He has journeyed forty and fifty miles to see a rare tree. Even foreign trees which had been imported to this country he quickly recognised, and to take a country walk in his company was a generous education.

He was never a successful speaker and never tried to become one, but as a teacher in a class he was one of the best we have ever known. He could interest everyone, from the child

to the adult. His knowledge of botany, mesmerism, phrenology and psychic investigation was unequalled.

We venture to express the opinion that there is no man living who knows as much about the philosophy, laws and practice of mediumship or the possibilities of psychic development as Tom Tyrrell, and this world is poorer by his transition. For forty years Spiritualism was his only religion. Tolerant towards others he often proclaimed that no system of religious thought could add anything of value to Spiritualism as taught by the spirit people.

The final obsequies took place on Tuesday, February 21st, when the fine Spiritualist Temple at Blackburn was packed with friends and sympathisers who joined heartily in singing "Where have the world's great heroes gone," and after prayer had been offered by Mr. E. W. Oaten, Mr. Entwistle (President of the Blackburn Church), in a brief and pointed speech, referred to the great work which Mr. Tyrrell had done and the loss which Spiritualism would suffer by the transference of his activities to another plane. He spoke feelingly of the pleasure it had always been to work with Mr. Tyrrell, and urged upon them the necessity of making such sacrifices for a great and noble cause as their comrade had done.

Mrs. Battersby (Vice-President) also paid an eloquent tribute to the work of Mr. Tyrrell, and expressed the sympathy of the members to his wife and family.

Mr. Oaten followed, and was deeply moved as he told of the great debt they owed to the pioneers of Spiritualism, amongst whom the name of Mr. Tom Tyrrell might deservedly be placed. He was one of the humblest and most sincere of men, and those who knew him best had the highest admiration of his character. His word was his bond. Any form of deceit was repulsive to him. He was simple and direct, and though without education he had all the fine feelings of nature's gentlemen. He expressed his thanks to Mr. Tyrrell for the work he had done and considered it a privilege to be associated with such a fine soul.

After the singing of "Blest be the tie that binds" the tremendous company wended their way to the Wesleyan Church Yard at New Row, some few miles out from Blackburn, beautifully situate on the top of a hill surrounded by pastoral scenes. It was a glorious Spring morning. The fresh nip of the winds from the moors was tempered by brilliant sunshine, and the song of the birds and the tramp of footsteps alone marred the peace of the scene. On the hillside, in the very scenes in which Mr. Tyrrell had delighted, we laid his body to rest with that of his first wife, while a company of many hundreds of people representative of all the Spiritualistic interests of a wide area stood reverently around the grave. The committal was pronounced by Mr. Oaten, and Mr. Battersby pronounced the benediction. While the company joined in singing "Father of all" the great throng wended their way back into the town and took tea at the Blackburn Temple.

The mourners were Mrs. E. Tyrrell (widow), Mr. A. Holt (brother-in-law), Miss Maggie Tyrrell (daughter), Mr. and Mrs. J. Tyrrell, Mr. and Mrs. T. Tyrrell, and Mr. and Mrs. H. Tyrrell (sons and daughters-in-law), Mrs. L. Riding (niece), Mr. and Mrs. Warburton (brother-in-law and sister), Mrs. Smith (sister-in-law) and Miss Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Drane, Miss Ward, Mrs. Southworth, Mrs. Crook and Mr. T. Bolton, J.P.

Mrs. Robinson, Messrs. J. Entwistle, G. B. Battersby, E. Holding and S. Crook represented the Spiritualist Temple and Lyceum.

Mr. G. F. Berry and Jessy Greenwood, J.P. (S.N.U.), Mr. W. Edwards and Mrs. L. Nurse (B.S.L.U.), Mrs. Keeling (Lanes. D.C.), Mrs. A. Riding (N.E. Lanes. D.C.), Mr. Hibbins, B.A. (Sheffield D.C.), and representatives were present from Blackburn Churches and others in the district.

There were a large number of floral tributes, including wreaths from a number of Spiritualist organisations.

The memorial service was held in the Temple on Sunday, February 26th, and was conducted by Mr. E. W. Oaten and Mrs. M. E. Pickles.

Mrs. Tyrrell desires us to express her thanks to the many friends whose letters and floral tributes have helped her, and regrets that it is impracticable to reply to all.

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Today we have the 'Blackburn Spiritualist Centre', a fine tribute to its early workers.

On Saturday November 2nd 2013 a Dedication Service was conducted by Minister David Bruton, President of the Spiritualists' National Union



Blackburn Spiritualist Centre
Princes Street, Blackburn, Lancashire BB2 1LS

http://www.blackburnspiritualistcentre.co.uk/home/4584599533

HELEN HUGHES



Helen Hughes was one of the movement's finest clairaudients for almost four decades. Hughes, like Lillian Bailey and Estelle Roberts, demonstrated to large audiences. The movement celebrated the centenary of Modern Spiritualism at the Royal Albert Hall on March 31st 1948. The various Spiritualist organisations united in a grand celebration, including the Spiritualists' National Union, the Marylebone Spiritualist Association, today called the *Spiritualist Association of Great Britain*, and the Greater World Christian Spiritualist League, today known as the *Greater World Christian Spiritualist Association*.[18]

Estelle Roberts and Hughes demonstrated at the Royal Albert Hall on March 31st 1948; Estelle Roberts has already been profiled in the October 2014 issue: "Estelle Roberts and the House of Red Cloud". Below is a profile of the medium by *Two Worlds*[19] correspondent Philip Paul, published in the June 4th 1955 issue:

> "A PLACID and uninquiring acceptance of the queer but incomprehensible" is how a biographer records young Jane Helen Shepherd's attitude to her inborn psychic abilities.[20]
>
> The fact may not mean much to some readers, but its significance will be obvious in the light of a matrimonial sequel. For Shepherd was the maiden name of Helen Hughes, whose towering achievements, modesty, sympathy and simple charm have made her one of Spiritualism's most cherished mediums.
>
> First child of a Methodist bottle finisher at Seaham Harbour glassworks, Helen spent most of her pre-marriage years with her paternal grandmother, herself a natural clairvoyant, who recognised the gift as "second sight." The fact that Helen inherited it and spoke of her "visions" earned her many parental reprimands for "indulging in absurd fancies."

[18] See footnote 7.

[19] The photograph was taken by Leon Isaacs, a pioneer photographer, with infra-red. Psypioneer has covered much of his work with famous mediums.

[20] Jane Helen Shepherd was born on April 11th 1893 at Adolphus Street, Seaham Harbour, County Durham, the first born of Henry and Margaret. Some reports state she died in September 1967, aged 74.

EARLY PREMONITION

Nonetheless, her sensitivity had its uses, even then. One morning she implored her brother not to go to work because she had a pre-monition he would be killed. He stayed at home. A machine fell on the boy who took his place, breaking both his legs.

Married at 18 to a miner Thomas Hughes, at 22 Helen had borne three children. Then she developed a spinal complaint, which made her an invalid, with little hope of recovery. During the dark days that followed, her psychic experiences multiplied until she feared for her sanity.

Near death and with friends awaiting her passing, she saw a vision of a beautiful garden. In it was an elderly friend whom she knew to be dead.

"YOU HAVE WORK TO DO"

"After a conversation, I sighted a flower of ineffable beauty and reached forward to caress it. But I was restrained with the words, 'Not yet, you have work to do.' I awoke and told my friends I knew I was not going to die. They agreed but, I knew, with doubt in their hearts. In later years I learned if I had touched the flower I would never have returned to physical consciousness."

Her latent psychic powers developed still further, including one manifestation which was instrumental in curing her two-year-old son of pneumonia overnight. Then she began to hear persistent voices telling her to get up and walk.

She told her doctor about them. He advised her to go away for a rest. But Helen had come to trust her voices and persisted in efforts to resuscitate her "dead" legs. After walking for some time with sticks she was eventually able to discard them.

Coinciding with her physical betterment, the voices grew stronger. They were accompanied by other manifestations—knockings, the shaking of her bed and even the starching of her bedclothes!

But it was an aged roadmender who opened her eyes to the import of her experiences. Working outside her home, he asked her to warm his can of tea and noticed she was walking with stick. His sympathy brought out her story.

It was the beginning of the Helen Hughes we know, for the old man was a Spiritualist. He visited her every day for six months, encouraging and advising. At last she understood.

There came the passing of her father—it fulfilled a prophecy by her psychic grandmother—and ten months after, her mother also died. Helen joined a small private circle which later developed into the Seaham Harbour Spiritualist Church. Her public work began with demonstrations at small meetings in the town. Her remarkable standard of mediumship ensured the rapid growth of her reputation.

In 1929 she was invited to demonstrate in Glasgow. It was the beginning of the journey that continues to this day, involving thousands of miles of travelling to propagate the message that death is not the end.

She soon thought nothing of speaking in Ireland in the afternoon and Scotland in the evening. As it was put at the time—"while others stagnate, reiterate and prevaricate, Helen demonstrates."

And what demonstrations they were—and are! To quote some Press phrases—"brilliant mediumship." "Helen triumphs again," and "huge audience gaped." And again to quote—"even the ranks of Tuscany could scarce forebear to cheer."

WARTIME LEGACY

Since those days, she has struggled through more attacks of ill-health which were almost certainly the inheritance of war-time travelling and privations incurred, by her determination that the emergency should not interrupts her work. There have been brief sojourns in Switzerland and periods of rest in her Scottish home. But Helen is always smiling.

The audience at the recent "Tribute to our mediums" dinner organised by this newspaper had a taste of her humour in a witty yet moving speech. She told of her arrival, wearily carrying her luggage, at the home of a woman who was to be her hostess in a northern town where she had been engaged to demonstrate.

IF THIS LIFE WERE ALL

The woman looked her over, then exclaimed: "If I'd known it was you I wouldn't have gone to all this trouble. It's taken me all day to put up another bed. I'm awful particular about who I sleep with, but I could have slept with you!"

The same speech contained a striking thought which typifies Helen's philosophy. "What," she inquired, "would life be if this was the only life? It would be better by far that we had never been born."

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In 1946 Bernard Upton published *The Mediumship of Helen Hughes*, originally issued in hardback by the Spiritualist Press, London, later followed by a Psychic Book Club special edition in paperback (more recently republished by SDU Publications in 2006 and available from SNUi[21]).



There are many accounts in the old Spiritualistic journals of Helen's outstanding public demonstrations of clairaudience, as the above report states.

Evidential demonstrations of mediumship gave great emphasis to the role played by the Spiritualist movement during the two world wars, reuniting so many broken families with their loved ones.

[21] SNU International: http://www.snui.org/index.php?act=viewProd&productId=5

Below is quoted from a demonstration given by Helen Hughes at the City Memorial Hall, Sheffield, published as front-page news in the "Two Worlds", October 24th 1941. It is interesting to note the headline caption: "Boys who went down in the Hood and Greyhound return". The battleship HMS Hood was sunk at 0600 in the Denmark Strait on Saturday May 24th 1941. "Fourteen hundred fifteen officers and men of *H.M.S. Hood* were killed in the explosion, or died in the water shortly thereafter."[22]

Later that day Roy Firebrace attended a séance with Helen Duncan in Edinburgh and he later recalled: "There appeared during the séance the form of a control, Albert, and he suddenly said a great British battleship has been sunk." This event may have been the first to attract the attention of British intelligence services to Duncan's physical mediumship and her potential danger to British security. Firebrace was a Spiritualist but also a Military Intelligence Officer; this will be covered more in a future issue.

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HELEN HUGHES AT SHEFFIELD!

Boys who went down in the Hood and Greyhound return.

A PACKED audience at the City Memorial Hall, Sheffield, on Saturday afternoon last was thrilled by a remarkable demonstration of clairaudience by Mrs. Helen Hughes. The meeting was organised by the Sheffield Spiritualist Centre, and the Chair was taken by Mr. Bradbury.

The Chairman said that a few months ago he would have scouted the idea of taking the chair at a Spiritualists' meeting. He did not even know whether he was a Spiritualist, but of one thing he was certain, Mrs. Hughes had proved to him that his son still lived, and had put him in communication with him. He went unknown and unnamed to see Mrs. Hughes, even the secretary who introduced him to her had no idea of his identity. But she had proved to him that survival after death was a fact.

Mr. Oaten, in a short address, outlined the claims of modern Spiritualism and emphasised the value of its message in the difficulties of the present times.

Then followed a torrent of evidences by Mrs. Helen Hughes. Pointing to the gallery, she said, "There is someone up there who knew Tom Parker. He says: I have tried very hard to get back. There is Tom Parker, Mrs. Parker and Aunt Annie. Tom says: I have met Mary Wilson; she was your Godmother. Let them all know at home."

Pointing to another lady, Mrs. Hughes said: "Do you know Mrs. Holland? I think she knew something of Spiritualism, for she says it has helped me considerably to know about this. She says that you are her Sister. There is John and William Holland, and they send love to Margery,—tell Margery to stick to Aunty."

Mrs. Hughes continued: I hear someone say "if this is what angina does, it is good." It is a Spirit named Nelson; there is Mr. Nelson and Mary Nelson, who died of angina. She tells me that she has met Tommy; she has got him with her. He went down in the 'Hood.' and it was his first boat."

[22] The loss of HMS Hood: http://www.warship.org/no21987.htm

Pointing to the back of the Hall, Mrs. Mrs. Hughes said: There is someone over there who knew Mrs. Partridge, a very emotional woman. She brings Bill with her, she says: ask her if she will see my identity card put right, and there is something wrong with her pension book. She brings Elizabeth Walker, who kept an Off-Licence."

"There is a lady here who has been killed in an air-raid; she keeps pulling at my dress. She's Mrs. Calvert and she is with her husband; they were both killed in a public shelter. She says she was watching them while they were looking for her body. They bring Norman Brown, who was killed in the same shelter. Mrs. Calvert says she is very happy, there is nothing to worry about."



Helen Hughes in later years

Pointing to another lady, Mrs. Hughes said: "Are you Mrs. Barnes? (Yes.) There is a young airman with you who says Grandma Barnes brought him. Do you know Pilot Sergeant Hodges, who was killed over the Ruhr? He doesn't want his people to worry. He says tell them I've been. I know they won't accept it, but tell them."

To a gentleman Mrs. Hughes said: "Do you know who the Major is? (I don't know a Major.) There is a man standing by you; he is laughing and says he is Major Harry. (I know a Sergeant-Major.) That is right; he is Sergeant-Major Ellis. He says: 'Hasn't John done well he has just been promoted,' and he adds. 'Tell him I am still in the Engineers.'"

Singling out another gentleman, she said: "Was your Father's name Harry? (Yes.) There is Harry Nelson and Harry Cameron. They tell me you have travelled some distance to this meeting, and they've travelled with you. Harry Nelson was a very practical man; he says 'Don't worry for me, cease weeping, give my love to Maggie and tell her I'll help her all I can with the children.' There is also Basil Bray, a young man in uniform who tells me he went down on the 'Greyhound.' "

Pointing to another man and woman, Mrs. Hughes asked, "Have you lived in Stockport? (I do live in Stockport.) Well, there is a young man there from Stockport, who says he is Willie Bailey. There is also Elizabeth, who says, 'I'm moving about the house, don't be alarmed when you hear noises, it's me.' He brings Betty and says you are her Mammy. Betty sends love and she has grown in Spirit."

To another man she said, "Are you Jack; there is a lady here who is calling you Jack? She says there is not such a thing as dying, she is helping you and she will speak to you in direct voice. Your Father's name was Tom; he says 'I'm Tom and I have

brought Harry—your brother.' They say 'Don't worry about us, don't leave go of the reins, but carry on.' Your name is John, but he says 'Cut it and call him brother Jack.'"

There were also messages from Edward Bowen, Mr. Stevenson and Lily Stevenson, who brought old George Smith, the old engine driver. There was a Mrs. Matthews, who said she was sorry for the trouble about her estate that had all gone into Chancery; she was sorry, but nothing could be done.

Pointing to another lady, Mrs. Hughes said, "Have you lived in Spain? There is a gentleman with you who did. He can't speak English, and I have a job to get messages from him. But Harry and your husband are with you. I must try and get that name." After a little hesitation, Mrs. Hughes said, "The foreign gentleman is saying Caridad, Pepito Caridad. The word Caridad means much to you." (Yes, that is what he always called me.)

There is a young man here who says 'I was killed.' His name was Thompson, and he brings his mother. A number of the family are here; there is John and William Thompson; he says 'I was there when you went into the little box'; you know what that means. Mrs. Thompson says, Thank you for your help.' When she died there was a small legacy under, the mattress of her bed for you." (Quite correct.)

In this remarkable display of clairaudience there was not a single name or statement that was not accepted by the audience, while many of the messages were significant of definite events and characteristics which gave them evidential meaning.

It is upon such evidence as this that hundreds of people are gaining the conviction that those whom the world calls dead still live. That their affection for friends and memory of past events enables them to prove their identity".

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Please note:

The Effect of the Vagrancy Act (Part III) – The Work of the Spiritualists' National Union will continue in the next issue.

Morse & Vango



James J. Morse was one of the finest trance mediums the movement has ever produced. The photograph shows his daughter Florence standing, with Mrs Morse sitting on her left. The gentleman standing is J. J. Vango, a well-known and respected medium, with his wife seated in front of him. But who was the dog? This photograph was found in the Museum archives at the Arthur Findlay College; I was overjoyed, as I had never seen a good image of Florence Morse.

The photograph is quite unique, as what are generally called spirit extras are normally produced under conditions conducive to this type of physical mediumship. Here we have what appears to be a human face of a man on a dog's body! We do not know who took the photograph but notably absent is James Morse.

It would appear the photograph is at least a hundred years old; Mrs Morse passed over, after a long illness consequent on shock from air-raids, in November 1917 and her husband James died two years later on February 19th 1919. Florence became a well-known trance medium and speaker in her own right, giving her first lecture in 1907. She had toured abroad with her father and addressed large meetings in New Zealand and Australia. Her father founded the Lyceum Banner in 1890 and Florence had acted as editor; she also supported her father in the war effort. (See Pioneer, April 2014, "The Story of the Motor Ambulances – A Landmark in the History of Our Cause".)

Florence was the only child, born on July 3rd 1871. She was brought up surrounded by her parents' Spiritualist colleagues. Florence died of a heart attack on February 26th 1934; from her obituary published in the 'Two Worlds', March 2nd 1934, a few quotes are below:

> It is interesting to recall that she knew the Fox Sisters, Maggie and Leah. Katie she did not meet, but she was a great admirer of their courage and the work they performed in the face of tremendous opposition. She was for some years in close association with Andrew Jackson Davis.
>
> … she received the first money she ever had from Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten! Mrs. Britten sent her a birthday present when she was only a few days old. She grew up to know Mrs. Britten as "a great lady, extremely dignified, possessing a very impressive

personality, and seeming to exalt a meeting by her presence on the platform. People who met her in public sometimes thought she was slighly 'stiff and stand offish ' but in private life her manner was quite gracious and homely. She was in fact a kindly and sympathetic soul and accomplished a magnificent work for Spiritualism."



Florence Alice Emma Morse did not marry, so when she died in 1934 it was the end of the Morse family. Her money was willed to the Spiritualists' National Union and her wish was for this to become part of the 'Fund of Benevolence' under the title 'J. J. & Florence Morse Fund'. Her old friend, Mrs Minnie Harriet Wallis, had founded the Fund of Benevolence in 1893. (See Pioneer, April 2014: "Badges, Symbols, and Emblems of the Spiritualists' National Union".) Ernest Oaten was one of the trustees of the will. Her father's possessions were willed to the Trustees of the Britten Memorial, Manchester; this included one of James Morse's prized possessions, a large drawing in pencil by Wella Anderson, done in September 1875, of his chief control, 'Tien Sien Tie', a Chinese mandarin. This is today displayed in the Britten Memorial Museum housed at the Arthur Findlay College, Stansted Hall.

J. J. Vango had been associated with James Morse for almost four decades, when Morse suddenly died in 1919. Vango was born in London on February 12th 1861. He developed his mediumship and started his work in 1879, and was well known for his platform work as a clairvoyant. It can be noted that he was still working in 1936. Vango was one of the mediums for William Stead's 'Julia's Bureau', which was officially opened on April 24th 1909; information on the Bureau can be found in Psypioneer, April 2012.

Gladys Osborne Leonard, in her 'My Life in Two Worlds', originally published in 1931, refers to Vango:

> About a week later I got the impression that Dada would like me to go to a medium so that he could speak to me, so I attended a circle held by the well-known trance medium, Mr. J. J. Vango. Mr. Vango did not know me, but soon after going into trance he described my father exactly as he was in his earth life, giving his name, the way he passed over, and many other details, which made me quite sure it was my father whom he described. Mr. Vango then told me about my father's visit to me, and how pleased he was that I had seen him, and that he would keep in touch with me from "Over There." Other messages followed. It was a remarkably evidential and comforting sitting.

In 'Light', August 30th 1930, page 446, Vango wrote about some of his early experiences relating the difficulties the mediums encountered. He mentions one incident with his friend James Morse:

> Platform workers had a difficult time in earlier days. I remember when the late Mr. J. J. Morse lectured to a crowded meeting in the Midlands. Among the audience was a small hostile group that had gathered for the purpose of upsetting the meeting. The ringleader was a Mr. Hillier, who, when Morse began his trance address, started a noisy demonstration. Indignant members in the hall tried to put a stop to this disturbance but

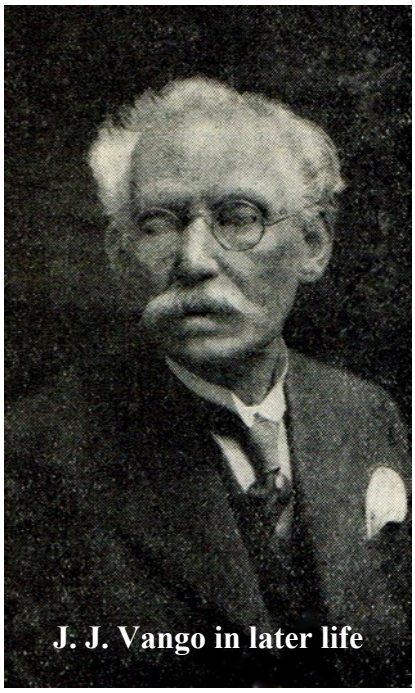
Morse's control said, "Let him alone, for the next time we meet our friend he will be one of us." The hostile element, however, was so strong that they endeavoured to rush the platform, and Morse had to be smuggled out by a back door. Many years later Morse lectured again in the same hall. This time the meeting was presided over by his former opponent, Mr. Hillier, so that the prediction was fulfilled. For a long time afterwards Morse and Hillier used to meet at my house on the best of good terms.


J. J. Morse

Vango continued:

I recall a gentleman who came to one of my seances in the early years. He said, "I am a criminal lawyer. I would like to have you before me for a couple of hours and I would do my best to get you ten years." However, he turned up at a seance some two years later and asked me if I remembered the incident. I replied that it was not a thing I would readily forget. He said, "I was that man. On my wife's advice I have been investigating and I find now there is more in it than I thought. I offer you my full apologies, which I hope you will accept." Needless to say I accepted them readily.

After many years' work I have many happy memories. I cannot claim to have done a great work. I have always stood for the truth and have been privileged to bring comfort to many in their deepest grief. I know that my brother and sister Mediums all over the country must rejoice as I do when they look back on the fruits of their labours.


J. J. Vango in later life

In more recent years the films and the stage claimed his attention. He played character parts on London's West End stage and in scores of films.

—~—☼—~—

Lady Jean Doyle was herself a medium; details are given in her obituary. Jean Elizabeth Leckie was born on March 14th 1874 and was the second wife of Arthur Conan Doyle, who married her on September 18th 1907. Lady Doyle died on June 27th 1940, almost ten years to the day her husband had died, on July 6th 1930. Below is the 'Two Worlds' obituary published on the front page, July 6th 1940:

Lady Doyle Was The Family Medium

—~—☼—~—



Lady Doyle who passed on last week was for many years the medium of the family's home Circle. Through her psychic powers there came spirit messages which cheered Sir Arthur in his great propagandist campaign for Spiritualism.

There was counsel from the spirit world. There were teachings which inspired Doyle to champion what he called both "The New Revelation" and "The Vital Message," and there were intimate proofs for members of family.

Referring to her inspired writing, Arthur has placed on record a tribute to his wife's mediumship. "In her intense honesty and deep modesty," he said, "she somewhat retarded it at first by holding back her impulses in the fear lest they should come from her own subconscious self.

"Gradually, however, the unexpected nature of the messages and the allusions to be found in them showed both her and me that there were forces at work which were outside herself. Sentiments were expressed quite foreign to our own."

The first written communications, which started nine years before Sir Arthur's passing, came from "dead" relations and friends. Then there were visits from strangers.

A year later, Pheneas, Doyle's spirit guide, came through for the first time, and took chief control. The next development was that the writing mediumship changed to what Doyle described as "semi-trance inspiration talking."

Though Lady Doyle never completely lost consciousness, her hold upon her own organism was slight. The messages increased in power as fuller control was gained.

Sir Arthur stressed that much of the teaching was absolutely foreign to his own and to his wife‘s conscious convictions. Pheneas gave glimpses of life in the spirit world which Sir Arthur found particularly interesting. They closely corroborated other descriptions which he was sure his wife had never read and could not therefore have lingered in her subconscious memory.

Their three children, Denis, Adrian and “Billie” treated Pheneas like a wise and tender elder brother. “To all of them he has been a guiding star in their young lives,” wrote Sir Arthur.

Because the name of Conan Doyle was inseparably associated with Spiritualism Lady Doyle, for years after her husband’s passing, was besieged by correspondents from all over the world. They all sought information about our case.

Doyle’s “death,” ten years ago, was the testing-time for a family which was so intimately associated with Spiritualism. The world wondered how they would stand the strain of so great a bereavement. There was no doubt about the answer.

It was supplied by Lady Doyle herself, who wrote on the fourth anniversary of her husband’s passing, in *Psychic News*, “Knowledge was surely never put to a more severe test than when the one who was life itself to me was taken from me.

“At such a time, only spiritual and concrete *truth* in its highest and greatest form can help the human soul—no shadowy faith, no make-believe, can uphold and carry on the stricken heart—only a great vitalising knowledge of living and God-inspired comfort can bring balm to the heart and peace to the stricken soul.”

Then she gave her own testimony: “I can never be grateful enough for the blessed knowledge of Personal Survival and for the beacon of light that knowledge has been to me during the four years I have had to carry on since my beloved husband was taken to another higher sphere in which great work awaited him.

“In those four years, my children and I have had the most marvellous evidence of my husband’s continued love and care of us. My boys’ lives have actually been saved through his warnings of the dangerous condition of certain parts of their racing cars, which they had intended to drive—warnings which were later proved to be absolutely correct.”

She ended her article with these words, “I thank God with all that is in me for the guidance and help and inspiration I have received through my knowledge of Personal Survival—the source of which is God’s love. It has brought balm to my stricken soul and joy and comfort to my heart and mind. It has enabled me to carry on through four most strenuous years, and to be able to say on this fourth anniversary of the passing of my beloved husband. ‘Praise be to God—all is well.’ ”

Doyle, the great propagandist for Spiritualism, continued his self-imposed mission from the spirit world. To the day of his wife’s passing he showered on her and their family an abundance of evidence. He left them in no doubt that he continued to guide and inspire them. This is how Lady Doyle summed up these proofs:

"I have seen handwriting produced by the spirit of my husband which tallies exactly with his writing while alive, stroke for stroke, flourish for flourish.

"I have held conversations with him that prove that the life beyond death is the ordinary human life raised to a higher level in a higher sphere. I am in constant communication with my husband."

She knew from long association how to deal with orthodox opposition. "How little regard you have for the truth, when you speak or write against this subject," she declared in a series she wrote for the "Daily Sketch." "How you will twist and turn words uttered by a Spiritualist if you think you can by doing so influence people against Spiritualism.

"How carefully you will hide all the beautiful new knowledge and inspiring information which the Spiritualist has derived from his contact with the higher world. Why do the Churches not realise that they have utterly failed humanity? It is time that they ceased to follow the letter and that they should begin humbly to follow the spirit."

When Dr. Winnington-Ingram was Bishop of London he attacked Spiritualism in a diocesan leaflet and banned the holding of seances in all London church buildings.

In a trenchant reply Lady Doyle wrote in a daily newspaper, "I would say to him that Spiritualism is the greatest support of what the clergy are teaching in the churches at the present time. If the Church kept in touch with the spirit world, it would be a living thing, and the world would not be in such a materialistic state.

"There are people who have been driven to the depths of despair, but who have found comfort and inspiration in the teachings of Spiritualism. It would be as well if the Bishop of London turned his attention to the wrongs in his own Church instead of attacking Spiritualism, which is a religion that has given comfort to suffering humanity."

For the past four years she suffered from a succession of illnesses which necessitated operation after operation. Throughout this trying period she was conscious of her spirit husband's care and watchfulness

Sir Arthur, who was formerly a medical man, once gave proof of his nearness by diagnosing his wife before an X-ray examination was made. The medical examination tallied with his spirit diagnosis.

During one of these operations she had a remarkable psychic experience. "My etheric body" she said, "separated from my corporeal body, which I saw as if lying dead upon a table. Then my etheric body moved away from this plane to a region of light and calm, the portals of a marvellous other world. I saw my beloved husband, his features radiant with love and understanding."

Lady Doyle once described the story of her 23 years of marriage with Sir Arthur as a "continuous and perfect honeymoon." It was interrupted by his passing, and she had to wait 10 years before it could be resumed in another world.

The funeral service was conducted on Monday by the Rev. G. Maurice Elliott.

Her body was buried by the side of her husband's in the garden of their Sussex home.

Adrian Conan Doyle told a reporter: "We know quite definitely that we shall be in communication with her. The night before she 'died' she was holding long conversations with my father."[3]

In the same issue the intended 'Doyle Memorial' is updated:

Doyle Memorial Fate?

LADY DOYLE unfortunately missed a splendid opportunity after her husband's passing. Representatives of the Spiritualist movement all agreed to have a memorial to him—a half-crown volume describing his life and work, a book that could have gone into every Spiritualist home all over the world.

It was suggested that the proceeds should found a home for mediums, where psychic gifts be developed.

Instead, Lady Doyle insisted on fostering a scheme for public contributions to build a Doyle Memorial in London. Her plan, she was told, would only duplicate the work done by London Spiritualist societies, who offered all the facilities to inquirers that she proposed.

In any case, declared leading Spiritualists, the money would not be forthcoming for her ambitious project. Nevertheless, she insisted, and a public appeal for funds was launched.

As predicted, the response was disappointing. The Doyle Memorial did not materialise and for 10 years the money raised has never been used for Spiritualist purposes.

Now that Lady Doyle has passed on, the trustees of this fund should meet to consider how it can be used to help our movement. Unless some move is made, the fund will eventually pass to the State.

[3] The paper's editor Maurice Barbanell commented: B.B.C. Omission: WHY did the B.B.C., in announcing the passing of Lady Doyle, make no mention of her spiritualism?

Is this part of the strangle-hold exercised by its Religious Advisory committee, which has declared that Spiritualism is not "in the mainstream of Christian tradition"?

Lady Doyle's passing was "news" because she was the wife of the man whom the public identified with Spiritualism.

Doesn't the B.B.C. know this? Or does the Religious Advisory committee censor the broadcast news?

At present, I do not know what happened to the fund. It is speculated by one source that the small sum raised ended up going with Doyle's Psychic Bookshop, Library & Museum to the Friendship Centre, 85 Lancaster Gate, London W.2.; for further information on the Friendship Centre please see Psypioneer Archives. In an earlier article published in "Psychic News", June 11th 1932, Barbanell states (some repetition in the above article):

> As for Sir Arthur's memory, it was Lady Doyle who prevented the movement from having the memorial that was at first generally agreed upon – a half-crown volume describing his life and work, one that could have gone into every Spiritualist home all over the world.
>
> It was suggested that the proceeds should found a home for mediums, where psychic gifts could be developed.
>
> Nearly everybody, knowing the poverty of the movement, agreed that it was wrong to attempt to build a Doyle Memorial in London. They knew there were too many societies already – and too few mediums.
>
> Both Swaffer and I opposed the building idea. He started objecting at the very first meeting, when he demanded that all the most prominent Spiritualists should be consulted. At the second meeting Ernest Oaten opposed it. So did the heads of the different societies.
>
> The result was that we were not called to the next meeting of the Doyle Memorial Committee.
>
> More than that, when Oaten, who was the chairman, came back to London to preside, he asked, in astonishment, "Where are the members of the committee?" He then insisted on the original members being called next time.
>
> Ultimately, in order that Lady Doyle should not be offended, the scheme was agreed upon, but only for that reason.
>
> Even then, several of us, Swaffer and I particularly, told the meeting quite frankly that the money would not be forthcoming. We were right.



EILEEN GARRETT

1893-1970



William Frederick Neech was well-known in the 1950s for his Spiritualist writings. In the "Two Worlds", he ran a series titled "World's Greatest Psychic Stories". Number twelve in the series, published on October 25th 1958, was "The Queen of Spiritualism"; this is referring to Emma Hardinge Britten and an 1851 painting of her which hangs at the Britten Memorial Museum, Stansted. Reference to this can be seen in "Psypioneer", December 2010.

Neech also published two well-known Spiritualist books, "No Living Person Could Have Known", Spiritualist Press, London 1955, and "Death is Her Life", Spiritualist Press, London 1957.

Below, in his series, "World's Greatest Psychic Stories – 15", he tells the remarkable story of spirit communication with the medium, Eileen Garrett. This was published in the "Two Worlds", November 29th 1958, page 7.

"*If this seance does not prove survival, then nothing ever will*"

Medium solves air disaster mystery

EXPERTS AMAZED BY SEANCE EVIDENCE

EARLY IN THE MORNING OF SUNDAY, 5, 1930, A CUMBERSOME AND BEAUTIFUL GIANT OF THE SKIES, THE R101 AIRSHIP, CRASHED ON A HILL NEAR BEAUVAIS, FRANCE. FORTY-SIX OF THOSE ON BOARD WERE INCINERATED IN THE WORST TRAGEDY OF ITS KIND IN BRITISH AIR HISTORY. TWO DAYS LATER, THE "DEAD" CAPTAIN OF THAT AIRSHIP COMMUNICATED ONE OF THE MOST DETAILED AND IMPRESSIVE MESSAGES EVER TO BE RECEIVED FROM THE BEYOND.

He gave a mass of technical details regarding the cause of the crash which at least two experts admitted could only have come from him. It is one of the most remarkable and dramatic examples we have of a person supposedly dead conveying information that could not have been in the mind of any living person.

Like so many other important events in psychic history this classic case of Spiritualism was wholly unexpected and unheralded. In fact the "dead" airman's intrusion at a seance was at first resented! If the journalist who admits to this resentment had had his way and dismissed the intruder, he would have robbed the world of one of its most sensationally strange stories and deprived Spiritualism of a classic example of spirit communication.

But thanks to the spirit communicator's insistence, Ian Coster was able to add to his scoops the story of the airman who came back from the dead.

They hoped for Doyle

It all began when Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who had recently died, was "invited" to a seance. This famous Spiritualist, who had attended so many seances during his earthly life, was still expected to make the headlines by attending them in spirit form.

Coster, who had been commissioned to get articles for "Nash's Magazine," conceived the idea of getting in touch with Doyle.

On October 2, 1930, he called on Harry Price and outlined his idea. Price agreed to help in the attempt to contact the famous author. While Coster was with him he telephoned that great medium, Eileen Garrett, simply asking her to give the journalist a sitting. Doyle's name was not mentioned. An appointment was made for October 7 at 3 p.m., three months after Doyle's death.

Thus at the appointed time, four people, Price, Coster, the medium and Eileen Beenham, Price's secretary, met. Eileen Garrett was soon entranced.

Uvani, her guide, gave a message to Price from a German doctor and one to Coster from an elderly woman whose described appearance reminded him a little of his maternal grandmother. There was nothing at this stage to indicate the drama that was to come.

"Dead" captain speaks

But it was not long before the voice became more excited: "I see for the moment I-R-V-I-N-G or I-R-W-I-N. He says he must do something about it. He is not coming to you—does not belong to anyone—apologises for coming, for interfering . . .

"He says: 'Never mind about me, but do, for heaven's sake, give this to them . . . The Whole bulk of the dirigible was entirely and absolutely too much for her engine Capacity . . .'"

At this stage, Flight-Lieut. H. C. Irwin, captain of the ill-fated R101, controlled the medium. Speaking rapidly in staccato sentences, Irwin said:

"*Engines too heavy. It was this that made me on fire occasions have to scuttle back to safety. Useful lift too small. Gross lift computed badly—inform control panel. And this idea of new elevators totally mad. Elevator jammed. Oil pipe plugged . . .*"

The flow of technical details continued. Miss Beenham had difficulty in getting it all down.

A copy of "Nash's Magazine," in which Coster's account of the seance appeared, was shown to Walter Charlton, who was an officer at the Royal Airship works in Bedford during the R10l's construction. He asked Price for a copy of the Irwin statement.

Charlton and his colleagues decided this was "an astounding document," containing more than 40 references to highly technical and confidential details, and furnishing

impressive information—confirmed at an Air Ministry inquiry—about what occurred on the airship's ill-fated flight.

"It appeared very evident," Charlton declared, "to us in Cardington that for anyone present at the seance to have obtained information beforehand was grotesquely absurd." The only explanation that he, a technical expert, could give was that "Irwin did actually communicate with those present at the seance after his physical death."

Mrs. Garrett had no technical knowledge of airship construction and engines, but she rattled off terms such as "disposable lift," "starboard strakes," "cruising altitude," "tension on the fabric," "fuel injection," "bore capacity," as if she had been working on the airship. And this was before the start of the official inquiry into the loss.

Comments Coster: " 'Starboard strakes started,' was one of the alleged messages from Irwin. Apart from the fact that this is, on Charlton's expert opinion, very probably what happened, how did Mrs. Garrett know that 'strakes,' a nautical term, was used to mean the longitudinal plates forming the sides of an airship?

"The rest of us knew nothing about the subject, so any suggestion of telepathy is ruled out," adds, the journalist.

"Same with S.L.8—tell Eckener," was one message from Irwin. After Charlton had been through complete records of German airships he found that S.L. stood for Schutte Lanz, involved in another air disaster. Eckener was the constructor of the German Graf Zeppelin.

"*This exorbitant mixture of carbon and hydrogen is entirely wrong," was another comment. Charlton revealed that at the time of the R101 flight highly important technical experiments were contemplated at Cardington, with the idea of burning a mixture of hydrogen and oil fuel*.

Describing the tragic flight, Irwin said: "Fabric all waterlogged and ships nose is down. Impossible to rise. Cannot trim . . . two hours tried to rise, but elevator jammed. Almost scraped the roofs at Achy."



Cast-iron proofs

Achy, a small village between Amiens and Beauvais, is not marked on ordinary maps, but it was marked on the large scale flying map which Irwin had before him on the trip. At the inquiry a French air official stated that at Poix aerodrome, 16 miles north of Achy, the R101, only 300 feet from the ground, was struggling hard against the wind.

Flight-Lieut. William H. Wood, another expert, was so impressed with the evidence that he wrote: "If this seance does not prove survival, then nothing ever will. I consider the R101 case to be cast-iron."

"My particular interest in the seance," Wood told Coster, "was due to the fact that I was an airship pilot in the first world war and I knew Irwin personally. We had been brother officers at various airship stations and were both flying airships in the Eastern Mediterranean.

"I was able to appreciate the significance of all the technical terms used in his communication through Mrs. Garrett. I was also impressed by Price's statement that Irwin spoke very quickly and disjointedly and was extremely difficult to follow.

They were convinced

"In life Irwin was always rather difficult to understand owing to his peculiar manner of speech; his quick jerky delivery was very marked. I considered this evidence very important in establishing his identity."

Charlton and Wood compared notes several times. Both were convinced that no one but an airship pilot could possibly have given the information regarding the causes leading to the disaster—and then only if he had been in the airship at the time.

Referring to the seance, Miss Beenham wrote: " Mrs. Garrett appeared much agitated and distressed when the Irwin entity came through, and her speech was so rapid I had the greatest difficulty in getting it down, including the unfamiliar technical terms.

"I transcribed the notes directly after the conclusion of the seance, remarking, I remember, as I handed the typescript to Mr. Price, that I should not have been able to make head or tail of it had I not done it immediately. Even so, I felt I had only taken down a part of the whole and, maybe, much that was garbled and inaccurate."

Yet even so, it was sufficient to convince two experts — Charlton and Wood. Charlton in fact, was so impressed that he began a thorough investigation into psychic matters and is now a Spiritualist.

Could Mrs. Garrett have pretended to be in touch with the otherworld? Even the sceptical Coster did not think this was feasible. "Price chose her." he said, "because she was not a Spiritualist and did not become emotional, and because her name and integrity as a medium were unchallenged.

Challenge to sceptics

Could she, under a spell of self-hypnosis, have allowed her sub-conscious to well up? Possibly, but where did she get those technical terms? I agree with Price that thought – transference can be ruled out because nobody present had any knowledge of airships."

Try as they may, the sceptics cannot explain the facts away. None of their far-fetched theories will suffice. Flight.-Lieut. Wood's words hold good to this day: "If this seance does not prove survival, then nothing ever will."

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Editor's note:

Eileen Garrett was not a Spiritualist in the normal sense; an interesting point, given the remarkable content of the article. She maintained during her lifetime her firm belief that her spirit guides/controls (Uvani, Abdul Latif, Tahotah and Ramah) were different aspects of her deeper self. She was not convinced that her mediumship stemmed from separate, discarnate entities. For example, it can be noted in her 1943 book, "Awareness" (quoted from the 2007 reprint), page 133:

> I cannot explain or definitely understand them. I have never been able wholly to accept them as the spiritual dwellers on the threshold, which they seem to believe they are. I rather leaned away from accepting them as such, a fact which is known to them and troubles them not at all… My own lack of a true belief in the identity of these controls troubles me, but I have maintained an impartial, but respectful, attitude toward them.

For more information on Eileen Garrett, please see Psypioneer, Vol. 9, No. 9/10, October 2013: "Archetypes, fragments of our collective unconscious, or other: Re-examining Eileen Garrett's struggle with spirit guides – Maxine Meilleur" & Vol. 1, No. 10, February 2005: "Remembering Eileen J. Garrett – William V. Rauscher".

Harry Price was critical of Spiritualism. I have checked his version of the story, as published in his 1939 book, "Fifty Years of Psychical Research". His account does not vary from Neech's telling, stating: "It is inconceivable that Mrs. Garrett could have acquired the R101 information through normal channels and the case strongly supports the hypothesis of survival." The reference to Harry Price's secretary, Eileen Beenham, appears to be a slip of the pen and should read Ethel Beenham.

For more information on the case, see the book, "The Airmen Who Would Not Die", by John G. Fuller (1978). For new archival evidence, see the journal "Light" (2014-15).

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“No World War” predictions

It was briefly mentioned in the last issue of “Pioneer”:

> “Some of the decline would be a result of the “No World War” predictions. Leading spirit guides such as Silver Birch, Red Cloud and others assured Spiritualists there would be no war. Assurances were given, more or less emphatic, that there would be “no European War,” or that there would be “no Great War,” or that there would be “no war for England.” SNU President Frank Blake repeatedly said in public and in the press that “war would not come.”
>
> “These incorrect prophecies from the spirit world dealt Spiritualism a severe blow within the movement and no doubt caused amusement and ridicule from its critics.”

Here is a notable example of such a prophecy. From “Psychic News”, May 20th 1939:

WAR DANGER IS OVER!
Prophecies Of Peace Now Being Fulfilled

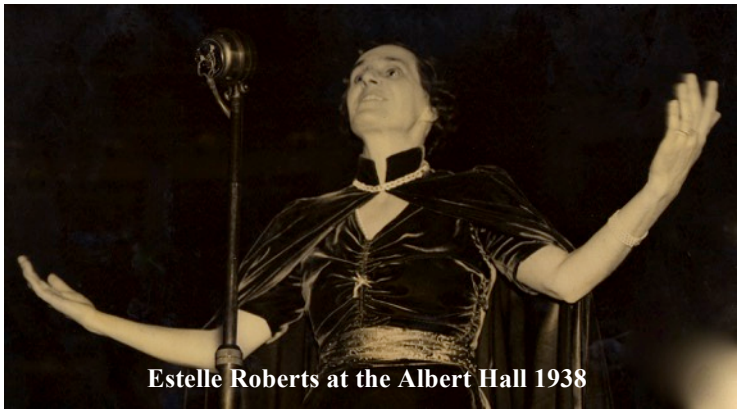
> “Now you are beginning to see the first steps in the fulfilment of those prophecies made in our world many, many months ago,” said Silver Birch, spirit guide of Hannen Swaffer’s home circle, last week.
>
> “You are beginning to see the faint streaks of light as the dawn which heralds peace makes its gradual appearance in your midst,” he went on.
>
> “When with calm assurance we told you in the hours of your blackness and darkness, when hope and reason had fled, that war would not come, it seemed that our prophecy was impossible of fulfilment.
>
> “How could it come about? many asked. Yet they clung to this reed, for they had naught else to support them in their dire extremity. Today you begin to see the promise of better times.

Prophecy for some Spiritualists should remain with the crystal ball and the fortune-tellers’ tents along the promenade, as Spiritualism is to ‘prove the survival of the human spirit’ rather than future events. But nevertheless, leading up to WWII, prophecy was on the agenda, with well-known spirit guides echoing the “No World War” predictions. Even after the Prime Minister’s declaration that a ‘state of war’ existed, some spirit messages continued to affirm that peace would prevail at that late hour.

Two of the biggest named spirit guides were Silver Birch and Red Cloud, though at this time Silver Birch was known only as the guide of the Hannen Swaffer circle. The identity of the medium was a closely kept secret. For further information please see “Psypioneer”, Vol. 2, No. 9, September 2006, A Surprising Jesuit: “Spiritualists and their “No War” Predictions”, & “Spiritualism and the War”, by Herbert Thurston (1856-1939); these were the last articles from the Jesuit priest and were written from his deathbed.

In response, "Prediction", December 1939, published:

Estelle Roberts says



Estelle Roberts at the Albert Hall 1938

"LET THE PEOPLE JUDGE"

What "Red Cloud" said before the War

THERE has been great controversy in the press and elsewhere concerning the apparently incorrect statement of the spirit guides and controls to the effect that England would not be involved in war.

Much has been said both heatedly and calmly; the guides have been denied, condemned and even pitied—those same guides who only twelve months ago were being praised and thanked for the peace of mind that they had given to their hearers.

The question has been asked: "Are the guides, mediums or the Press to blame?" It seems to me that neither the guides, mediums, nor the Press can be blamed. The fault lies entirely with the people, because no one in this world or the next can alter their free-will and personal responsibility.

I am now about to take up the cudgels on behalf of Red Cloud (who in reality needs no defender) in order that people might be helped to judge the question for themselves. I am now printing extracts from the verbatim printed notes of lectures that Red Cloud has given to a certain class that is known as the "White Brotherhood Class" numbering over fifty members. These notes in the usual way are not given for general publication, but it is now apparent that the guides have been concerned and indeed have had their serious doubts that war might come sooner or later owing to the cause of man's free-will operating in this world.

There is no question that I and Red Cloud are being "wise after the event" because these reports are dated and can be confirmed by all who were present at the Brotherhood Classes.

It must be remembered that the guides seldom allow any opportunity to pass to impress upon their audience that every man has free-will and personal responsibility, and that responsibility lies with mankind alone for the chaos that abounds in the world to-day.

In October, 1938, just after the crisis when Red Cloud prophesied that there would be no war involving England he firmly believed this to be the case because he had received instructions from the Masters above him to tell the people so. He foresaw the crises that would arise and even said that the ''worst crisis" would be in August, 1939. But as the months passed, there is proof positive that early in 1939 he began to have forebodings that all was not well and he endeavoured to definitely warn the people that the responsibility of war or peace lay upon their shoulders.

—~—☼—~—

SNU President Frank Blake responded in the "Two Worlds", October 20th 1939:



PROPHECIES

MANY people have written asking if I can tell them why, in spite of many messages from the spirit world and prophecies to the contrary, war has come upon us. The question is not easy to answer. As is well known, I have repeatedly said in public, and published in our Press, that war would not come. My confidence in this assertion was based upon my own vision of portending events and messages received even up to the day before war was declared. I was further sustained in my belief that war would not come, because during the past five years, while war has seemed imminent, and particularly during September of last year, when war seemed inevitable, my prophecies came true.

From messages since received, it would seem that at the last moment the forces working for Peace, both in the Beyond and here upon Earth, were overwhelmed by the intensified momentum given to the evil forces operating from the Beyond as here, and which had their genesis in the embittered hatred and cruel despotism of one man.

Some will say: But why could not the spirit world prevent war; or if not able to prevent it, why did they prophesy Peace?

The spirit world is peopled by those who have lived here upon earth—those who communicate with us are those who, in the main, have passed beyond the veil within living memory. There, as here, their knowledge of life and coming events is limited to their experience and powers of perception and interpretation, and they, like ourselves, with the most honest intent, are liable to make mistakes. Indeed, it is seldom a communicator claims to be immune from error of judgment, though he may maintain a positive opinion upon the trend of certain events. Moreover, we must not forget that while prominence was given to those who prophesied that there would be no war, a very large number of messages came through to the effect that war would be declared; some of these came within my personal knowledge, but they received little or no publicity. If it had been possible to canvass the opinion of our discarnate friends as to whether war would come, it is highly probable that we would have found their opinion as divided as our own. This was borne in upon me when during September, 1938, I persisted that there

would be no war, though a large number of messages were received by others to the effect that war was then inevitable.

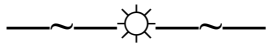
Mediums as a rule are influenced, if not actually controlled, by selected discarnate individuals or groups of individuals. They come under the direction of the individual or group concerned. Just as a student is to a greater or lesser extent influenced by the training he receives, so, too, is the medium. It is probably true to say that complete mental independence is unknown. The mind, mental outlook, and vision are coloured by its training. To accept this is not, as some would have us believe, to deny the genuineness of mediumship, but to recognise and acknowledge the laws controlling it and the methods by which it is rendered active.

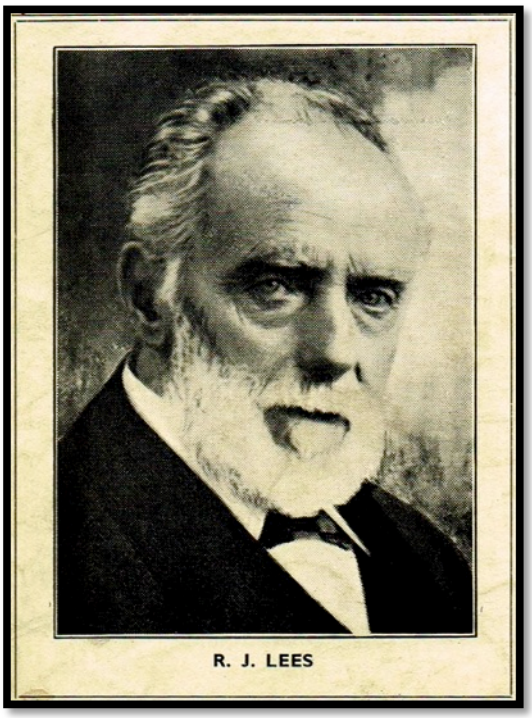
Some assert that the cause of Spiritualism has suffered a severe defeat because certain well-known mediums—myself among them—have proved unreliable in this particular prophecy. These critics have ignored entirely the essential facts concerning mediumship and spirit intercourse, also the many true prophecies by other mediums concerning the same event. I would remind these hasty critics that failure is not necessarily a just cause for destructive criticism: it is sometimes a valuable lead for inquiry and adjustment.

The foregoing is not an apology for the failure of myself and others or the spirit friends concerned to forecast with certainty the coming of the present war. I have no such intention, though I deeply regret to have been the means of distressing a large number of people. I gave to the world, as did others who were similarly instructed, the messages received. That our spirit friends worked for Peace and honestly believed their combined labours would not be in vain can, I believe, be accepted. Their disappointment in the failure of their effort is as keen as our own.

I note that some have expressed the opinion that we mediums should cease to prophesy and refrain from giving messages. They assert we should confine ourselves to proving survival, and claim that that is the main and essential mission of Spiritualism. In these claims there is an entire disregard of the instructive and educational value of spirit communion. To contend that a knowledge of survival is all that is necessary is not only to ignore the priceless value of human intercourse between those discarnate and incarnate, but also to assume that nothing of immediate practical value can be received from our discarnate friends.

Those of us who are acquainted with the history and literature of Spiritualism know that numberless prophecies and messages have proved a hundred per cent true. They have been quoted and published times innumerable. Some of them have been quoted and published even by those who now are ready to condemn the practice. One is given to wonder if, after all, they have not been attracted by the “loaves and fishes” rather than by the deeper implications that lie behind mediumship.





Robert James Lees

1849-1931

Robert James Lees was born on August 12th 1848 in Hinckley, a market town in southwest Leicestershire; his wife, Sarah Ann, neé Bishop, was born on December 22nd 1850. They married in December 1871 and it appears they had fifteen children. Sarah died on February 19th 1912 in Ilfracombe, North Devon; Lees died, aged 81 years, on January 11th 1931 in Leicester, where he was cremated. His ashes were interred in Ilfracombe Score cemetery in his wife's grave on Saturday January 16th 1931. Photographs of Lees on his death and the numerous floral tributes and further information can be seen on Stephen Butt's excellent Robert James Lees website, which contains a considerable amount of researched information.[1]

On the death of his wife in 1912 Lees became very close to his eldest daughter, Evelyn (Eva) Florence, born in 1879 in Camberwell, Surrey; Eva Lees died in Leicester on March 28th 1968. In the Britten Memorial Museum & Library at Stansted Hall there is a large, framed photograph of Eva and her father. Prior to her death she bequeathed many of her father's personal items to the Arthur Findlay College Library, including his desk, which can be noted on the above footnote. More senior visitors to the Arthur Findlay College may recall that Lees' desk resided in the Gallery for some years. Other items include his letter-opener, diaries, address book, letter-rack, postage scales, lead crystal inkwell, his books and a striking 'Crown of Thorns', covered in a glass dome; also some manuscripts with his notations to some of his published works, and numerous personal letters, some relating to his healing work in Ilfracombe, etc.[2]



Today this is displayed in the Britten Memorial Museum & Library at Stansted Hall:

'The R. J. Lees Corner'

[1] Robert James Lees: http://rjlees.co.uk/death.htm Home page: "An objective investigation and assessment of the life and work of author, journalist, social reformer and spiritualist, Robert James Lees": http://rjlees.co.uk/

[2] Photograph of the R. J. Lees corner taken by Janette Marshall.

As Curator of the Britten Memorial Museum I am often asked two questions:

Did he really sit for Queen Victoria as a young boy?

Lees' involvement with the 1888 Jack the Ripper case?

As neither of these two stories is fully built on solid factual ground and, given that the Museum deals in facts and researched material rather than speculation, it is difficult to give a definitive answer. I came across the article published below while sorting out the "Two Worlds" donation cited in the last issue from Tony Ortzen and the directors of the "Two Worlds". It is taken from May 14th 1937 and is very interesting, but the reader will note that it does not have a single reference and makes a rather sweeping statement:

> *It is well known, of course, that it was the mediumship of R. J. Lees which enabled the discovery and bringing to heel of the famous "Jack the Ripper," but it is not generally known that it was the sincere concern of the Prince Consort over the long list of crimes which were creating unrest in London which led him to influence Mr. Lees in the discovery of the culprit.*

We are not given the article author's name – just from "a Special Correspondent". Problems arise within the Spiritualist movement when these stories over the years are looked upon and spoken on as *'factual events',* although often there are seeds of truth and possibilities within the claims:

HE SAT FOR QUEEN VICTORIA

The exclusive story of the famous medium who sat for a Queen and who was later invited to visit the Empress of Germany.



QUEEN VICTORIA'S interest in Spiritualism is fairly well known, and it is common property that she had a number of sittings with Robert James Lees, author of *Through the Mists*, etc.

It is not generally known that R. J. Lees was but a boy when Queen Victoria first sent for him. He lived in Birmingham at the time, and attended a Sunday-school, of which Mr. Aaron Franklin was the superintendent. In the late fifties Franklin heard of the table rappings which had set America aflame. He tried a number of experiments at home. It was just at this time that R. J. Lees had one or two psychical experiences, which were related to Franklin, with the result that Aaron invited young Lees and his father to one of the seances. At the first séance R. J. Lees dropped off to sleep, and in the trance state alluded to facts which he could not possibly have known. His own

brother spoke to him. This was in the year 1862, when Lees was but thirteen years of age.

Aaron Franklin sent for James Burns, then the editor of The *Medium and Daybreak*,[3] and at the seance which ensued a spirit controlled R. J. Lees, and claimed to be the Prince Consort, who died in 1861.[4] He instructed them to send a message to Queen Victoria. It was conveyed to the Court, with the result that two gentlemen came down to Birmingham to investigate. They gave no names, but were invited to a sitting. As soon as the seance opened they were both addressed by name by someone purporting to be the Prince Consort. He greeted them masonically, and requested them to take a message to the Queen. This they consented to do, provided he (the control) would sign it. The Prince Consort signed the message, and his signature was so satisfactory that a fortnight later R. J. Lees received a command to visit Windsor. Mr. Lees (Senr.) was rather appalled at the prospect. On consulting the Prince Consort, however, he was told that if Queen Victoria would get John Brown (the Prince's former gillie) to Windsor they would develop him, but if at any time she could not get a message through she was to send for the boy.


John Brown

Four or five seances were given to the Queen by R. J. Lees between 1862 and 1864, at each of which the Prince Consort communicated. Thereafter, John Brown was Queen Victoria's medium, and appears to have carried on successfully. In the early months of 1900, however, visitors from Queen Victoria came to St. Ives, where R. J. Lees was on holiday, to take him up for another sitting. The Queen passed away twelve months later.

On another occasion he had an urgent call from Germany to visit the Empress of Germany (the Princess Royal), who wished to consult him in a matter of serious illness in the family. Sir Morell Mackenzie and Sir James Pager dissuaded him from going.

It may be wondered why the Royal seances ended abruptly about 1868. The fact is, R. J. Lees attended a seance where fraud was evident and he severed all connection with the Movement, and even took the platform as an anti-Spiritualist, appearing on the platform with the Rev. Thomas Ashcroft to denounce the Movement. Two years later, however, his mediumship strengthened, and as a result of pressure by the guides he came back into the Movement, and offered to debate with Ashcroft, an offer which was refused.

Mr. Lees was always excellently received, and treated as an equal in his various visits to Court. Several members of the Royal family showed signs of possessing mediumship, and especially the Princess Alice.

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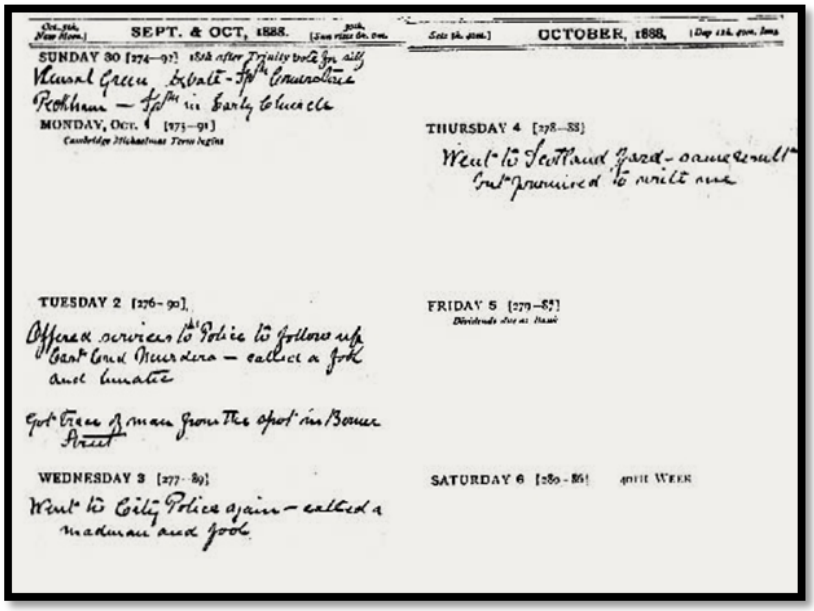
[3] The "Medium and Daybreak" did not start until April 8th 1870. In 1862 Burns started "The Progressive Library" from his cottage in Camberwell.

[4] When Prince Albert breathed his last at 10.50pm on the night of Saturday 14 December 1861 at Windsor, a telegraph message was sent within the hour to the Lord Mayor that the great bell of St Paul's Cathedral should toll out the news across London. Everyone knew that this sound signified one of two things: the death of a monarch or a moment of extreme national crisis such as war. BBC History Magazine: Google "History extra – Prince Albert: The death that rocked the monarchy."

It is well known, of course, that it was the mediumship of R. J. Lees which enabled the discovery and bringing to heel of the famous "Jack the Ripper," but it is not generally known that it was the sincere concern of the Prince Consort over the long list of crimes which were creating unrest in London which led him to influence Mr. Lees in the discovery of the culprit.

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A referenced account of the Rev. Thomas Ashcroft affair is published in Psypioneer, Volume 5, No. 12, December 2009: "Robert James Lees and the Revd Thomas Ashcroft – Stephen Butt".


SEPT. & OCT, 1888. OCTOBER, 1888.

SUNDAY 30 [274–92] 18th after Trinity Holy Eu. all
Mutual Green & Walt – 3p.m Conversation
Rotherham – 4p.m in Early Church

MONDAY, OCT. 1 [275–91]
Cambridge Michaelmas Term begins

THURSDAY 4 [278–88]
Went to Scotland Yard – same result
but promised to write me

TUESDAY 2 [276–90]
Offered services to Police to follow up
East End Murders – called a fool
and lunatic

Got trace of man from the spot in Berner
Street

FRIDAY 5 [279–87]
Dividends due at Bank

WEDNESDAY 3 [277–89]
Went to City Police again – called a
madman and fool

SATURDAY 6 [280–86] 40TH WEEK

The claim that Robert James Lees worked with the police and identified Jack the Ripper holds no known factual evidence; it should be noted that Robert James Lees, the police and Spiritualist publications, etc. made no public statement about Lees giving assistance in the Whitechapel Murders in 1888. The only *actual factual* evidence of Lees' interest in the murders is when he offered his assistance to the local police and Scotland Yard and was turned down, being called a "madman and fool", "fool and lunatic", etc. This was recorded in his personal diary and written in his own hand. The diaries were part of the Lees Bequest to the Arthur Findlay College. Unfortunately, the 1888 diary was taken from the Museum some years ago, though, fortunately, a copy was made, as shown above.

Tuesday October 2nd 1888

Offered services to police to follow up East End Murders – called a "fool and lunatic"

Got trace of man from spot near Berner Street

Wednesday October 3rd 1888

Went to City Police again – called a "madman and fool"

Thursday October 4th 1888

Went to Scotland Yard – same result but they promised to write me

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Below is quoted from Psypioneer, Volume 5, No. 12, December 2009:

Journalists reporting on the series of murders in the Whitechapel area of London gave the perpetrator a name, Jack the Ripper. Seven years after that 'autumn of terror', Lees' name was to be forever associated with those events because of the publication of an article in a Chicago newspaper

"The article was published by the Chicago Sunday Times-Herald on 28th April, 1895. At the heart of this story is the claim that over a number of years,[5] Lees was seized by visions of the Ripper and his murders. They each came true.

Lees, it was said, went abroad and briefly was not troubled by such visions. He returned to London and when on an omnibus with his wife, saw a man get on the bus at Notting Hill. Lees told his wife that he believed the man to be the Ripper. Lees' wife laughed at him. When the man alighted at Marble Arch, Lees followed him, informing a constable *en route* about his fears. The constable laughed at Lees. The next day, and after another vision, Lees went to Scotland Yard. Lees remembered a postcard from his vision, and the police received one that morning which read as Lees stated. They then took him seriously.

Eventually, after more murders, Lees was able to lead the police to the house of the Ripper. The Ripper was a doctor who lived in a fashionable house in London. The Ripper was placed in an asylum under the name Thomas Mason No.124 in place of a pauper, and a mock funeral held. It claims that a Dr Howard recounted the tale whilst drunk to a man who then informed the newspaper.

The newspaper report describes a séance in detail involving Lees and two American visitors to London. It is obvious that the Chicago journalist is drawing upon Lees' own words as published in LIGHT in 1886, not the least the re-appearance of Mr S and Mr B:[6]

> "Mr Lees returned to England where he made the acquaintance of Roland B. Shaw, a mining stockbroker, of New York and Fred C. Beckwith, of Broadhead, Wisconsin who was then the financial promoter of an American syndicate in London.
>
> These three gentlemen were dining one day in the Criterion when Mr Lees turned to his two companions suddenly and exclaimed: 'Great God! Jack the Ripper has committed another murder.' Mr Shaw looked at his watch and found it was eleven minutes to eight. At ten minutes past eight a policeman discovered the body of a woman in Crown court, in the Whitechapel district, with her throat cut from ear to ear and her body bearing all the marks of the Ripper's handiwork. Mr Lees and his companions at once went to Scotland Yard. The news of the murder had not yet reached the inspector, but while Mr Lees was relating his story, a telegram arrived giving full details of the outrage."

Many other details in the Chicago article indicate that the writer or writers had access to a source of personal information about Lees. American journalists would have seen the daily wires from London about the Ripper Murders and were as informed about them as

[5] This is a strange remark, as the (known) Jack the Ripper murders were committed in the space of a few months in 1888: "*At the heart of this story is the claim that over a number of years, Lees was seized by visions of the Ripper and his murders. They each came true.*"

[6] See Psypioneer, Vol. 5, No. 12, December 2009: "Spiritualism and its opponents". Light, May 22nd 1886.

their counterparts in London, but specific family details about Lees and of his work, and his address in the London suburbs also found their way into the spurious article.

In 1895, Lees was busy with his latest enterprise, the People's League which supported many hundreds of needy families in the Peckham area of London. A 'glorious mission' was how Lees described it in his diary, and with its many self-help Socialist-based policies and projects, it was having a real effect on the people of that area. Within a few months of the publication of the Chicago article in several English newspapers, he had suffered a breakdown. Lees left London for the peace and relative anonymity of the fishing port of St Ives in Cornwall, taking his large family with him. The People's League closed its doors, never to re-open. Lees ever eschewed the limelight and a role of leadership."

Sometimes our Pioneers are reluctantly pivoted into the spotlight, which sometimes overshadows their true work.

Robert James Lees should be remembered as a Spiritualist medium, lecturer, social reformer, healer and writer.

Did Robert James Lees really sit for Queen Victoria as a young boy? Again, a visit to Stephen Butt's website, as cited elsewhere in this article, is recommended. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle wrote to Lees asking him if the story:

"could be put on record […]. We are all growing older & it would be good to leave a clear record behind."

Whether or not Doyle received a reply we can only speculate; however, Lees never publicly confirmed the story.

This whole article on Robert James Lees came about when I was looking for an unrelated reference in Arthur Findlay's autobiography, "Looking Back", published in 1955. I came across the alleged story of Lees sitting with Queen Victoria on pages 407-411, when Mr and Mrs Findlay were invited to meet two of Robert James Lees' children, Eva Lees, his eldest daughter, and his son, Claude Lees (1884-1965), who both resided in Leicester. Eva and Claude launched the Leicester Centre for Psychic Research in the early 1950s. Given that Arthur Findlay took notes of their meeting, later asking Claude and Eva to check what he recorded, this is probably the closest report we have to the events surrounding the early mediumship of their father and his possible royal connection, but it still remains unsupported by any documented evidence.

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Arthur Findlay stated:



When we were at Rockingham Castle, which is about thirty miles from Leicester, my wife and I motored there by invitation to pay a short visit to this lady and gentleman, Miss Eva Lees and her brother, Mr. Lees. The latter is a well-known photographer in that city. They welcomed us and kindly gave us tea, while Miss Lees told us their story. Her father was Robert James Lees, a man well known and respected in Leicester. I took notes of all Miss Lees told me, wrote out a report, and sent it to her for her and her brother to check and return to me. What follows is my record of what she told me, and I think that most people will agree with me that such an interesting story is well worth preserving.

A fact worthy of mention, and one which is quite unknown to historians, is the interest Queen Victoria took in Spiritualism, even before the death of her husband.[7] The following facts are recorded because she was a prominent woman, and not for any other reason, her experience being typical of what hundreds of thousands of people have also discovered. Her deep interest began shortly after the death of her husband the Prince Consort, and this is how it happened.

Robert James Lees (1849-193I), then a boy of about thirteen years of age, was so mediumistic from early childhood that his family and friends were converted to the belief that discarnate men and women spoke through him when in a state of trance. Soon after the death of the Prince in 1861, while the Lees family was having a private sitting in their own home, Robert Lees was controlled by a man from the other world who gave the name of Albert, the Prince Consort He then made the request that Queen Victoria be told that he could communicate with her through this boy medium.

The editor of a newspaper, a friend of the Lees family was present at this séance, and published this request purporting to come from the late Prince Albert through Lees while in trance. This came to the notice of Queen Victoria who, prior to her husband's death, had been convinced by her experiences with other mediums that such communication was possible. So she sent anonymously two members of her court to the home of Lees, who requested that they might have a sitting with him. They did not mention who they were, or from whom they came, and gave assumed names, but the boy was not long in trance before the Prince Consort purported to speak, and he greeted these two courtiers as his friends, calling them by their correct names.

Then the boy in trance shook hands with them, and gave them correctly the highest Masonic handshake, which normally he did not know. The Prince, through the boy who was in trance, then told the visitors that he knew they had come from Queen Victoria, and, though at first they denied it, he forced them by the evidence he gave of his identity to admit that this was so. Before the séance ended he had given them such accurate

[7] See Psypioneer, Vol. 1, Nos. 15/16, July/August 2005: "Georgiana Eagle – Queen Victoria's Clairvoyant Revealed", by Stephen Butt.

information, which only the Prince Consort could have known (some of it being of a very private nature, known only to the Queen), that when her envoys returned to Windsor she was quite satisfied that these communications could have come only from her husband. She was especially impressed by a letter the boy wrote when controlled by the Prince. This was of a particularly personal nature, and he then signed it by a unique name used only by the Prince in letters to the Queen when he was on earth.

She then sent for Lees, and asked him if he would give her a sitting, which he did, and the Prince again spoke through the medium. The Queen then said to her husband that she wanted Lees to remain permanently at Court so that he would be available at all times, but the Prince objected, saying that he did not wish this boy to be his medium. He, however, told the Queen that he could speak to her equally well, and just as easily, by using the vocal organs of the son of a gillie on the Balmoral estate whose name was John Brown. The Queen immediately sent for Brown, and thus began the long and strange friendship of Queen Victoria with John Brown who, up to his death, was used as the medium of the Prince Consort to communicate with his wife, whom he advised on many questions until her death.

Robert James Lees, when he grew up, became a highly respected journalist and author. He wrote several books, of which the best known is *Through the Mists*, it being a record of the communications he believed he had received from the etheric world. Queen Victoria ordered six specially bound copies, which she presented to members of her family. The acquaintance of the Queen with Lees did not end with their first meeting, in fact it continued throughout her lifetime, and on five different occasions the Prince Consort spoke through him in the presence of the Queen. Shortly before she died she sent for Lees and thanked him for all he had done for her. From time to time she offered him honours, a comfortable annuity for his lifetime and gifts, all of which he refused. He would take nothing, he said, in return for his services.

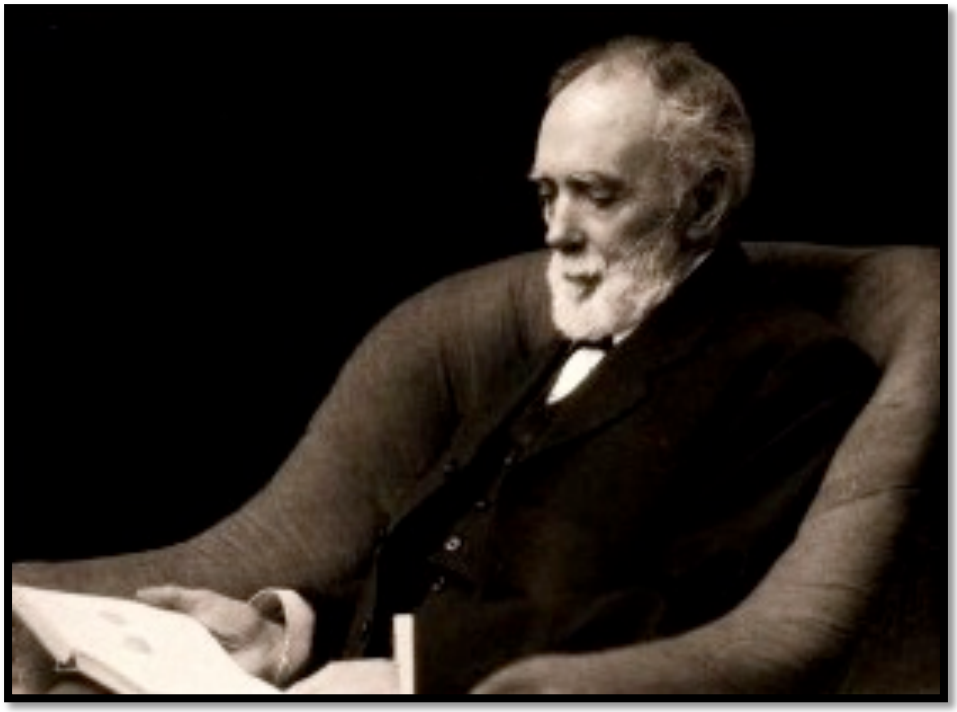
The Queen, knowing the prejudice there was at Court, and by the Church, towards everything relating to Spiritualism, never wrote to Lees and always sent her messages by a special courier, but she kept a record of all that transpired at her sittings with both John Brown and Lees. Dr. Davidson, the Dean of Windsor, who afterwards became Archbishop of Canterbury, was always hostile towards the lady who carried the title of "Defender of the Faith" being so unorthodox, but she entirely ignored his advice to discontinue her communications with her husband, and brought up the members of her family to believe in the principles of Spiritualism. That is why the Royal Family have had sittings from time to time with the world's leading mediums.

After John Brown's death the Queen wrote a monograph about him and wished to publish it. Dr. Davidson and Sir Henry Ponsonby, her Private Secretary, firmly objected to this proposal, the former threatening to resign his position as Court Chaplain. Moreover, Ponsonby destroyed Brown's private diaries, so that what was written therein would never become known. Thus it was that the influence of two Court officials prevented the Queen from publicly testifying to the comfort she had received from the communications she believed she had had with her husband, through the mediumship of her highland gillie.

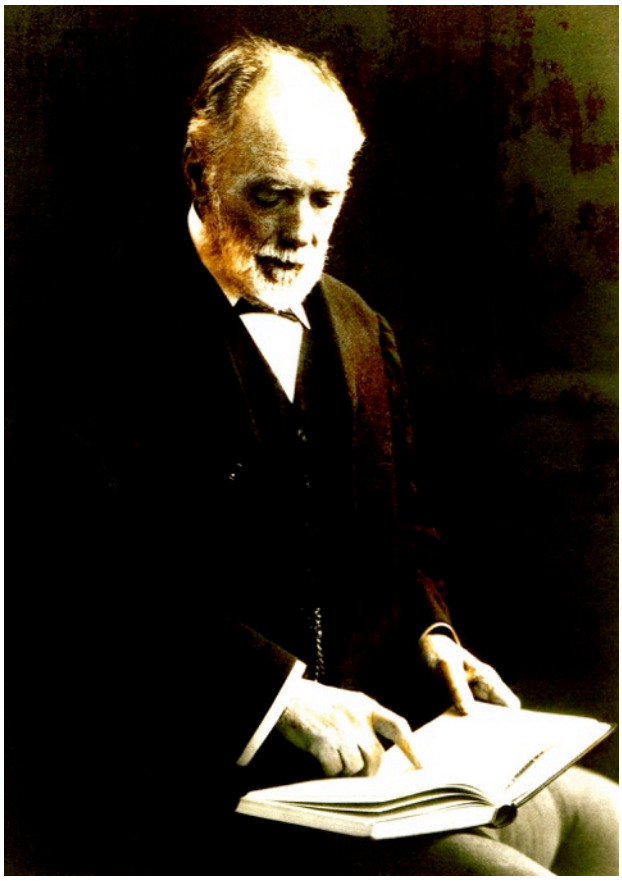
Lees never spoke to anyone outside of his own family about his close contact with Queen Victoria, or of her communications with her husband, and consequently only the members of his family knew what was happening, and this they only spoke about to a few of their friends. I am grateful to Miss Lees for the trouble she took to give me the information I desired, and also for her and her brother's kindness in allowing me to make public what they had up till then considered a private matter.



Robert James Lees, Eva and Claude



So what can be concluded?



The story of Robert James Lees' sittings with Queen Victoria remains hearsay to the present day; there appear to be no official or documented records. As late as just two years before Lees' death, Arthur Conan Doyle wrote to Lees asking him to put his story on record – but Lees remained publicly silent. It is probable, however, that owing to the nature of trance mediumship in the royal household he would have been sworn to secrecy, as claimed by his daughter, and with the passage of time he may have revealed his story to his family and left them to be the storyteller!

It can be noted in the first article cited above that Aaron Franklin sent for James Burns. The article states that Burns was "then the editor of the *Medium and Daybreak*"; this in fact is incorrect, as it would be around another eight years before Burns started the weekly Spiritualist publication, *Medium and Daybreak,* in 1870. It is certainly interesting that James Burns, who a few years later would become a household name in Spiritualism, was at the séance when the communicating spirit:

> "… claimed to be the Prince Consort, who died in 1861. He instructed them to send a message to Queen Victoria. It was conveyed to the Court, with the result that two gentlemen came down to Birmingham to investigate.

Stephen Butt reliably informs me: "It was claimed by Eva that James Burns published an account in the 'Medium and Daybreak'…" If this were in fact the case, it would be the most valuable, independent report. Hopefully, I will be able to find this and publish it in the next issue.

It is also claimed by Eva Lees that Queen Victoria talked to Lees regarding the Jack the Ripper murders and her father received a pension from the Privy Purse for his services to the Queen. This claim seems to have been given by Eva Lees after her father's death in 1931.

The Whitechapel Jack the Ripper case involving Robert James Lees is shrouded in mystery, contradiction, and false reporting in the national and Spiritualist press, stated as *factual*:

> "It is well known, of course, that it was the mediumship of R. J. Lees which enabled the discovery and bringing to heel of the famous "Jack the Ripper," "

Up until 1895 there is no public mention of Lees or any other medium for that matter being named as helping the police with the Whitechapel murders. The author of the Chicago Sunday Times-Herald article, who named Lees as being involved, is unknown. The full article is available on Stephen Butt's website, as previously given. A short quote reads:



"One day, while riding in an omnibus from shepherd's Bush in company with his wife, he experienced a renewal of the strange sensations which had preceded his former clairvoyant condition. The omnibus ascending Notting Hill. It stopped at the top, and a man entered the interior of the vehicle. Mr Lees at once experienced a singular sensation. Looking up he perceived that the new passenger was a man of medium size. He noticed that he was dressed in a dark suit of Scotch tweed, over which he wore a light overcoat. He had a soft felt hat on his head.

Over a year had elapsed since Mr Lees' clairvoyant vision, but the picture of the murderer had been indelibly impressed upon his mind. Leaning over to his wife he remarked earnestly, 'That is Jack the Ripper,' his wife laughed at this, and told him not to be foolish. 'I am not mistaken,' replied Mr Lees, 'I feel it.' The omnibus traversed the entire length of the Edgware road, turning into Oxford street at the marble arch. At this point the man in the light overcoat got out.

Mr Lees determined to follow him. Bidding his wife continue on her journey in the direction of home, he followed the man down Park lane. About half way down the thoroughfare he met a constable, to whom he pointed out the man in the light overcoat informing him that he was the dreaded 'ripper' and asking that he be arrested. The constable laughed at him, and threatened to 'run him in.' It seems that the 'ripper' must have entertained some apprehension that he was in danger, for on reaching Apsley House he jumped into a cab and was driven rapidly down Piccadilly …".

Only a few points are highlighted here from the 1895 paper report:

There is no evidence to substantiate any of the claims involving Robert James Lees but there are some double-barrelled parallels worthy of mention.

In Lees' interview published in Light, 1886, he talks about his American aquaintances, Mr S and Mr B; it was while giving these two gentlemen a series of sittings in London that he re-established himself as a medium – in the 1895 Chicago article they are again mentioned and with Lees in London when Lees is alleged to have said, "Great God! Jack the Ripper has committed another murder." See Psypioneer, Vol. 5, No. 12, December 2009.

Lees and Sarah married in 1871. She would have been fully aware of her husband's visions, etc, so why on the omnibus, when her husband allegedly said, "That is Jack the Ripper," did his wife laugh at this and tell him not to be foolish?



Did she consider her husband's work as a medium foolish and doubt his abilities? Or did Sarah Lees laugh at her husband, calling him foolish, because she possibly recognised the gentleman – whom it is alleged he later found?

The Scotch tweed suit and a soft felt hat would indicate a gentleman of mid- to upper class, as shown in the Victorian image.

Lees made three entries in his personal 1888 diary, as shown elsewhere in this article. Eva Lees gave these as part of the Lees Bequest to the Arthur Findlay College in the late 1960s; Eva died in 1968. It is my understanding that the information was not made public until the 1970s. Lees' three entries give the only documented link of his personal interest and the offer of his services to assist the police in the apprehension of the Whitechapel murderer.

The entries are dated October 2nd, 3rd & 4th 1888, after the murder of Catherine Eddowes, the fourth victim, on September 30th 1888. Lees' entry for Thursday October 4th 1888 reads: "Went to Scotland Yard – same result but they promised to write me." The next victim was Mary Jane Kelly, murdered on November 9th 1888.

By Lees' own hand, it is clear that up to Thursday October 4th 1888 he had had 'no input into the Whitechapel Ripper murders'. So the only murder and possible apprehension of the killer which Robert James Lees could have been involved in *officially* with the police must have been on November 9th 1888 and the murder of Mary Jane Kelly. Generally, Lees' diary is looked upon as disappointing, as it holds no information about the case. However, in my opinion it is in fact the best and only documented evidence of his involvement, as it gives a time frame which would involve only one murder, that of Mary Jane Kelly.

The 1895 Chicago story states:

> Lees' exclaimed "'Great God! Jack the Ripper has committed another murder.' Mr Shaw looked at his watch and found it was eleven minutes to eight.[8] At ten minutes past eight a policeman discovered the body of a woman in Crown court, in the Whitechapel district, with her throat cut from ear to ear and her body bearing all the marks of the Ripper's handiwork."

Out of all the five victims "Crown Court" was not a murder site; the last victim was the most brutal of them all. The five (canonical) victims between August 31st and November 9th 1888 are the generally accepted Ripper murders but some historians suggest there were other alleged Ripper victims. Given that the 1895 article gives no dates, there is no way of confirming any of the rather mixed report. The report suggests that Lees was involved in all the murders. This may well have been the case with regard to his clairvoyant perception but in Lees' only known documented input he tells us his offers of any official help with the police were rejected up until Thursday October 4th 1888.

There are other considerations still to be viewed but, owing to space, this will be continued in the next issue.

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[8] One of his American acquaintances.

JOE BENJAMIN



Joe Benjamin died in 1983, aged 68. A medium for over fifty years, Joe's evidential clairvoyance was probably first brought before the public in a "Psychic News" article on May 14th 1938: "An evidential communication was received through Joseph Benjamin, a young Jewish trance medium who was present." Joe demonstrated at two London venues for decades, Sunday meetings at Alliance Hall, Westminster and on Tuesdays at a hall in Kentish Town, London.

Benjamin was well known for his stunning mediumship, colourful platform delivery and a wonderful sense of humour in his demonstrations, earning himself numerous descriptions such as 'exhilarating as champagne' or 'as rare as a fine liqueur'. In 1979 Maurice Barbanell presented a Silver Cup to Joseph Benjamin as Psychic News 'Spiritualist of the Year'. The cup is displayed in the Britten Memorial Museum & Library at the Arthur Findlay College, Stansted Hall, along with a large bust of Benjamin and photographs, etc. donated by his family in June 2001. The photograph shown in the article below was taken at the Alliance Hall, Westminster in 1977.

Below is an interview by the "Two Worlds" correspondent Philip Paul, published on February 1st 1958, page 7:

Joseph Benjamin tells:

HOW I SEE THE DEAD

"THEY ARE REAL AND SOLID"

AS exhilarating as champagne; as Cockney as mild-and-bitter; as rare as a fine liqueur. Slight, black-haired, bright-eyed Joseph Benjamin is all of these things. He is as familiar a part of the London psychic scene as mediumship itself.

Twice each seven days he meets his public *en masse*, at meetings in Westminster and Kentish Town. Year in, year out, his admirers brave rain, snow, fog and storm to jam his halls to the doors and smother him with an affection that often nears adoration.

Joe revels in it all. It is his life, embracing for him the elation of achievement and the ambition of endeavour. Yet he knows he must never relax, never depend upon the laurels of the past.

Human dynamo

For those who love him are also critical. Quickly, they notice any shortcoming, any sign of a decline in the standard of his performance. This, and a deep-rooted conviction that his work is worth while, keeps Joe on the ball.

But how does this gesticulating and bespectacled human dynamo go on drawing gasps from his listeners from one decade to the next? Who tells him what to say? What are his sensations while he demonstrates? Who, for him, are the most dead, the "dead" or the living?

A quest for the answers to these problems kept me in Joe's East-End home until two a.m. the other day. By that time two friends who were visiting him were nodding with weariness, his wife Kitty was rubbing sleepy eyes and I was wondering whether I could keep awake to drive myself home.

"What about that?"

But Joe was still talking, still waving his arms, still jumping from his chair to pace agitatedly back and forth, still cracking jokes, still spinning anecdotes—and, in between it all, still giving me flashes of clairvoyance . . .

More astonishing still, they were flashes that insinuated themselves beyond my critical faculties, finding, now and then, that tender inner fastness that, when touched, cries, "This could be something."

Each time I paused for thought Joe would utter delighted exclamations, for I had been arguing with him about the hypothetical sources of his information. "*That's* not telepathy, is it?" he would cry. Or: "What about that, then? I couldn't have known that, could I? I didn't get that out of your diary, did I? How could I have got it except from the other world?"

Psychology as aid

His questions symbolise his personality; simple directness allied with shrewd conviction. He is not artless, and allowed himself the boast: "I am a psychologist as well as a medium, you know. Otherwise, I'd never hold my audiences."

"How do you see these spirit people?"

His answer was unfaltering: "Usually, I sense them with my mind, but sometimes it is objective and sometimes subjective. Mental impressions are the most important part of it. To me, the spirit people are just as real and just as solid as the real people I am looking at."

About his clairaudience, he commented: "I hear with my ear and with my mind also. I am not conscious of guides, but I often get information by means of a sort of symbolism. For instance, if there is something to do with property, I see a lawyer. If there is something about a Jew, I see a rabbi. If you get a bad man, something inside you tells you he is the wrong one. When you are going to give a sitting, you know at the start if it is going to be a good one or a bad one.

Two-way flow

"A medium's conscious and subconscious faculties are influenced by a two-way flow. Under the spell of mediumship, some power gives him the ability to differentiate between telepathic thoughts from the audience, his own subconscious and messages from the other world."

I asked why it was sometimes difficult to give full names and addresses. Again, his answer was immediate. "It all depends upon the communicator," he said. "It depends upon his personality and his degree of advancement. I cannot give what I do not get. But so much comes in this symbol form. For example, if I see a Chinese lighting candles I know there will be a death."

When I inquired how he knew where to place messages, he said, “The person concerned in the hall is surrounded by a radiance.” Music and singing were helpful to him, he added, but he could work without them. “Vibrations are atmosphere. If a sad song is played, I pick up emotional souls. My ideal conditions are sympathy and silence.”

“Yes,” was his answer to the query, “Do you register physically in your person the symptoms suffered by communicators before passing? ” To the inquiry, “What, to you, is the difference between people in the audience and communicators?” he replied, “The communicators are brighter! ”

When he must stop



Describing the means by which he knows when he must end a demonstration, he said: “I know I must stop when I can no longer see the spirit people. But invariably my time has gone before that happens. When it does happen, I can feel the power shut off. Then, I am no longer a medium but just an ordinary man.”

“What.” I inquired, “do you feel as a result of recipients’ responses to what you tell them? Does a non co-operative recipient put you off?”

“No,” he said, decisively. “A recipient’s answers do not make any difference to me, except that when someone will not admit something straight away you have to work harder to hammer it home.”

I sheltered behind a chair when he said he could see the auras of living people. These, he said, were always in colour, the predominating shade determining the type of character of the person concerned. Blue, he told me, meant healing; green, faith; gold, a firm foundation; red, protection.

Care from beyond

In the matter of going into trance, he affirmed: “When I do, the intelligences look after me. They wouldn’t for example, put me into that state on a bus or anywhere else like that.

“My sensations when in trance are semi-conscious. I have sensations like floating and falling. I believe that, with trance, the less knowledge there is in the medium’s mind the better it is for the guide.”

Sometimes, he said, he remembers the words uttered through him while he is in trance. In the early days of his mediumship, however, it had been a state of complete oblivion. The return to consciousness was invariably accompanied by a feeling of weariness.

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Philip Paul continues this theme in the "Two Worlds", February 15th 1958, page 6, with the veteran mental medium Bertha Harris, born in August 1889 in Cheshire; Bertha Amelia Hughes married Robert Harris in 1918. A profile by Philip Paul is published, along with other information on Harris and her work, in Psypioneer, Volume 12, No. 1, January-February 2016.



Bertha Harris tells:

HOW I SEE THE DEAD

"LIKE standing beside yourself like being under an anaesthetic." This is how tall, determined Bertha Harris describes her sensations during trance.

A veteran worker on Spiritualist platforms, she has demonstrated her gifts in many countries. A staunch defender of the principles in which she believes, she is vociferous when provoked.

She is no simpering goody-goody. When, during our interview, I asked her what conditions she found most suitable for her mediumship and how she would define the Spiritualist term "vibrations," she gave a warning growl.

"Vibrations," she announced with emphasis, "are an excuse for undeveloped mediumship. The singing of songs doesn't help me at all. I often get impatient because of all this hymn-singing.

TEMPERAMENT

" 'Vibrations' are nothing more nor less than temperament on the medium's part. All I want when I am demonstrating is for the person I speak to to answer me."

That's Bertha Harris now, in focus. Down-to-earth, matter-of-fact, and don't-give-me-any-of-that-nonsense,-young-man. It was with the same kind of directness that she waded into the primary questions.

"In clairvoyance, I see objectively. The forms I see appear solid and are complete in every detail. But I can easily distinguish between the dead and the living, because I see the dead more distinctly than the living. The blacks are blacker. More vivid. There seems to be more 3-D about them.

"With clairaudience. I hear it actually as a conversation, with my ear. The guides have a system of co-operation with the communicators. I think there must be some arrangement whereby the guides select the most suitable communicators, otherwise you would get a confusion that no medium could sort out.

The guides certainly help the communicators to get information over concisely. A guide will often transmit messages on behalf of communicators, especially when you are not quite sure what a spirit is saying."

Like the villain twirling his moustaches before pouncing on the helpless maiden, I lashed out with: "But how do you know these are communications from the dead? How can you distinguish between telepathy, your own subconscious mind and spirit communications?"

She didn‘t flinch, but for a moment her eyes closed as if she were offering up a prayer for patience. “It’s very simple. First of all, you are fully aware of your own subconscious, because of your development as a medium. It is an entirely different *modus operandi*. The spirit message is very forceful, but your subconscious is subservient. It is also easy to select telepathic impressions, because these come over in waves. You immediately sort them out.”

And why, I queried, did mediums often find it difficult to give the full names and addresses of communicators? Again she needed no prompting.

“I think there are several reasons. In the course of years, I have found I have the ability to get full names, whereas I didn’t in my younger days. Therefore, it seems as though it is of development.

But I will say this. If you get names and addresses, you don’t get much else. The spirit people don’t always concentrate on their names and addresses, but when they do it seems to take a great deal of their power.

SYMBOLISM

“Sometimes the information I get comes in symbol form. Once, I saw a bottle of brandy. It turned out that the communicator’s name was Mrs. Brandy.”

She went on to tell me that “a pin-pointing light, like, a baby rocket,” indicates to her the people in her audiences to whom she is to give messages. “Sometimes it is so quick that you miss it. You don‘t get it twice.”

For Bertha, there is no such thing as the power running out.” She chuckled when I asked her how she knows when the time has come to end her demonstrations. “When the chairman tells me!” she said.

“Unquestionably,” she told me, “some communicators are better at giving evidence than others. But it is essential that the medium should be quick. Sometimes communicators with strong personalities will try to gate-crash into a message you are already giving.”

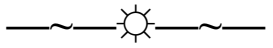
Like many other mediums, Bertha says she is greatly helped by the fact that she is able to see the coloured emanations, or aura, which surround living bodies. But her code for the meanings of the colours depends very much upon the whereabouts of the colours.

CATALEPSY

“For example, green round the hands means that the person is a good gardener, but if the green is round the eyes it means they are full of jealousy.” “Pink”, she said, signifies “a very bright, light-hearted and gay sort of person,” while shades of grey “represent things that are not so pleasant.”

Trance, she told me, was a little more complex than fully conscious mediumship. First, to enter trance, she found it necessary to “submit to relaxation.” During catalepsy, her own voice sounds to her to be “faraway, like a semi-sleeping condition.” And, on recovering full consciousness after trance, she feels “cold and hungry and small and achy.”

“You think, ‘How dull and dingy everything looks.’ So it seems that when you are in trance you are in happier surroundings.”



Robert James Lees

1849-1931



Continued:

In the last issue of "Pioneer" we considered whether Lees psychically worked with the police, tracking and identifying Jack the Ripper in 1888, leading to his arrest and incarceration. The original press claim came from America; "Pioneer" quoted the anonymous claim as published in "Chicago Sunday Times-Herald" on 28th April, 1895.

Robert James Lees made no official written statement to confirm these events,[7] and on the surface there is no direct evidence to confirm these press claims or those of his family, namely two of his children, Eva and Claude Lees.

The article has received a lot of feedback from within the Spiritualist movement and from some historians. The American historian, Marc Demarest, who runs "The International Association for the Preservation of Spiritualist and Occult Periodicals" (IAPSOP) with other leading historians digitalising the valuable Spiritualist and occult periodicals, etc.,[8] has kindly sent me the Boston Sunday Post of May 5th 1895, noting:

> "The earliest one I have found, so far, is from April 29, 1895 issue of the New Orleans Times-Democrat. Unlike the Boston Post version, it is headed "Chicago" – and is shorter than this Boston Post version.

Some inaccuracies from the American article published in the April 28th "Chicago Sunday Times-Herald" were pointed out in the previous issue of "Pioneer".

The Boston Sunday Post version of the 1895 story, for example, emphasises some of the many errors of known facts:[9]

> "As will be recalled, the first crime of "Jack the Ripper" was coincident with the publication of "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," …"

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[7] According to a journalist in an interview with Robert James Lees reported in the *Illustrated Leicester Chronicle* on November 23rd 1929, Lees confirmed the claim that he had traced the Ripper but said he could not reveal the murderer's identity as he was sworn to secrecy.

[8] Visit IAPSOP: http://www.iapsop.com
See also Psypioneer: Vol. 12, No. 3, May-June 2016: "Major Advance in Digitising American Spiritualism – statement by IAPSOP and NSAC".

[9] The image of Robert James Lees shown is taken from the Boston Sunday Post article.

The book was first published on January 5, 1886! The five (canonical) Ripper victims were between August 31st and November 9th 1888; these are the generally accepted Ripper murders but some historians suggest there were other Ripper victims. It is also noted in the Boston Sunday Post article that after the first three Ripper murders Lee went abroad for a year and when he returned he saw the man of his visions, "Jack the Ripper", on an omnibus in London, as detailed in the previous issue of "Pioneer".

It is noted in the Boston Post that after the omnibus incident Lees later that night had another vision about another murder by the Ripper where the victim's "ear was completely severed from the face and the other remained hanging by a mere shred of flesh." Lees, after recovering from his trance, hastened to Scotland Yard. After he revealed the severed ears vision, the officer produced a postcard with two bloody fingermarks. According to the paper, the postcard read as follows:

> Tomorrow night I shall again take my revenge, claiming, from a class of woman who have made themselves most obnoxious to me, my ninth victim.
>
> JACK THE RIPPER
>
> P.S.- To prove that I am really "Jack the Ripper," I will cut off the ears of this ninth victim.

Lees is now referred to as *Dr.* Lees in the Boston Sunday Post and refers to his second vision – the murder took place and "the victim had been discovered with one ear severed from her body and the other hanging from her head by a mere shred of flesh…" Lees was so affected that he went to the continent and while he was away the Ripper committed his sixteenth murder!

There appears to be no record of this claim in its fullness. The third victim, Elizabeth Stride, was murdered in the early hours of September 30th 1888 and the lobe of her left ear was torn; this was the early morning of the double ripper murder with Catherine Eddowes; the lobe and auricle of her right ear were cut obliquely through. The last victim, murdered on November 9th, was Mary Jane Kelly, whose ears were partly removed.

With so much contradiction to the known facts, the timeline of the five (canonical) Ripper victims, the injuries sustained by the victims, etc., it is difficult to accept any of the story as factual. As acknowledged, some historians alleged other Ripper victims. This may be an avenue to be followed up to try to make sense of the American papers' claim that Robert James Lees eventually, after more murders, led the police to the house of the Ripper. The Ripper was a doctor who lived in a fashionable house in London. The Ripper was placed in an asylum under the name Thomas Mason, No. 124, in place of a pauper and a mock funeral held. It claims that a Dr Howard recounted the tale whilst drunk to a man, who then informed the newspapers cited above.

The story was considered in 1949 by Prof. Donald J. West, Research Officer of the Society for Psychical Research, and his conclusions were published in their Journal for July-August of this year. Incidentally, it was announced in this issue that the journal's restricted circulation was lifted – up until this time the journal (JSPR) was only strictly for its members, who were obligated to maintain the rule of privacy.

It is interesting to note that West states there were six victims (rather than the generally accepted canonical five) of the Whitechapel murders, giving the first murdered victim as Martha Turner on Tuesday August 7th 1888 and the last murder, that of Mary Jane Kelly, on November 9th of that year. West gives the name as Mary Jeannette Davies; Mary was married for three years to a collier named Davies in 1879, who had been killed in a coalmine explosion.

West in an interview with Eva Lees states that Eva "maintained that it is perfectly true that her father detected 'Jack the Ripper' by psychic means." West contacted Scotland Yard regarding the various claims to Lees working with the police; below is its reply:

New Scotland Yard, S.W. I
17th March, 1949

Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 8th March, regarding the 'Jack the Ripper' murders, I am directed by the Commissioner to inform you that, according to the records in this office, there is no foundation for the newspaper stories that the murderer was known to the Police, and traced through the aid of a medium.

I am to add that there is no record of the person named James Lees to whom you refer in your letter.

Signed,
Secretary.

A further quote reveals:

"In 1931 Mrs Brackenbury, who was then working for the Society, visited Scotland Yard and discussed the case with C.I.D. officials, one of whom had been keeper of the criminal records since 1901. No-one there had ever heard of R. J. Lees or of any medium connected with the Ripper murders. Mrs Brackenbury also questioned ex-Inspector Wensley who had been a police constable in Whitechapel at the time of the murders. He had never heard, either at Scotland Yard or at any police station, any mention of the alleged visits and revelations of Mr Lees, although he felt certain he would have heard of it if such an extraordinary thing had actually happened.

In the course of ex-Inspector Woodhall's account,[10] he mentions a private file in the Home Office which is said to bear witness to the truth of the Lees story. On inquiry, the following reply was received:

Home Office
Whitehall
December 29th, 1948.

Sir,

I am directed by the Secretary of State to refer to your letter of the 30th November about the nineteenth-century murderer known as Jack the Ripper and to say that there is no reference in the records of the Department to the statement said to have been left by a medium named Lees and that no such file as you mention appears to exist.

Signed,
C. S. Brown."

West concludes:

According to the story the murderer was a prominent West End physician. In Woodhall's version, it was announced that he died of heart failure, that a fake funeral was staged, and an empty coffin buried. […] The obituaries in *The Times* and in the medical journals of the time have been thoroughly examined, and no death of a prominent London medical man is reported in the six months following the last Ripper murder.

[10] *Crime and the Supernatural*, by E.T. Woodhall (London, 1935). The author, a former Scotland Yard detective, wrote of the Lees story.

The Editor of Psypioneer notes:

> "Leslie Price recalls from the Society for Psychical Research file that privately Dr West was not 100% convinced of the truthfulness of the police..."

On the Lees childhood sitting with Queen Victoria in 1862, it was stated in the last issue: "claimed by Eva that James Burns published an account in the 'Medium and Daybreak'…" The journals were consulted at the Britten Museum and Library. Although the editor, James Burns, refers to Queen Victoria believing in Spiritualism and with numerous references to her medium John Brown, there is no reference to Burns being involved in the 1862 séance with James Lees or to him publishing Lees' sitting with Queen Victoria.

In a future issue of "Pioneer" we will publish some of the reports by James Burns regarding Queen Victoria and Spiritualism.

Unfortunately, the stories will still, at least at the present time, be left to speculation, given that there is no documented evidence to support these claims.



One of the most outstanding platform mediums of the twentieth century



WILLIAM "BILL" REDMOND MSNU

WILLIAM REDMOND was born in Gateshead, but only just. His parents were in show business. It happened that, at the time of their son's arrival, they were playing in Newcastle. So it was that William left his birthplace while still rather less than two weeks old.

His earliest memory of the theatre concerns an occasion when he occupied a front-row seat to watch his patents perform in "Uncle Tom's Cabin." His pleasure was marred by the fact that he was suffering from a raging toothache.

Tragedy struck his Irish father when, during a performance, he was accidentally shot in the eye. Within a comparatively short period, the sight of the other eye failed. Slowly but surely, his health deteriorated until, finally, he died.

Nurse shows the way

William was only 15 at the time of this sad blow, but he paid close attention to the advice of an old German nurse who had tended his father in his illness. The thing to do, she counselled, was to take up Spiritualism.

This, in due course, William and his mother did, by visiting a small meeting at Upper Norwood. They were impressed by a remarkable message they received and maintained their attendance at the meetings.

Then William received a further message, from a medium named Ronald Brailey, to the effect that he would be a medium and would demonstrate at large meetings all over the country.

"The man must be mad!" said William's mother after the service. "Fancy telling a boy of your age things like that!"

"Inner conviction"

But William had achieved his own philosophy, by the simple expedient of "trying to imagine a state of complete unconsciousness after death. There came into my mind a realisation that one goes on after death."

Alas, this highly satisfactory conclusion did not absolve him from the necessity to earn his living. He worked in the catering department of several hotels and a large store.

Then he began sitting in a study circle, despite the fact that "to me, survival was an inner conviction. I never needed any proof."

Possibly for this reason, most of his development as a medium took place during solitary periods of meditation. He was, and is, passionately fond of music. His collection of classical records aided him in his quiet musings.

The time came when he was asked to give his first public demonstration – in Brighton. "I lay awake all night wondering what I was going to say," he recalls. "I was not so much worried about the clairvoyance, but I was terribly anxious about the address."

He need not have worried. His success there brought more success and has led to his prominence on today's Spiritualist platform. He joined the Marylebone Spiritualist Association's panel of mediums 20 years ago and was serving the London Spiritual Mission before that. He has worked in Brussels, Liege, Antwerp, Ghent and Paris as well as in most of Britain's large towns.

"Underneath it all," he remembers. "I was aware that I was uncovering within myself something that I had already learned. I am sure that reincarnation is true."

All his experience does not exempt him from "butterflies in the stomach" before taking a meeting. He has two ambitions – to travel round the world, principally to hot countries, for he is a sun-lover (has anyone ever seen him without his tan?) and to reach "that degree of spiritual unfoldment" which W. T. Parish had. "Billy Parish was the saintliest man I ever met.[7] I was always uplifted for three or four days after being in his presence. He was a man far removed from this world. He had the true spirit of humility."

The know-alls

His dislikes, in a nutshell, are cold weather, jazz music and "people who think they know it all." This latter goes particularly for people in Spiritualism – people who say they are fully developed. "There is a no medium on earth who is fully developed."

Redmond joined the Royal Signals in 1942 – and caused consternation when he wrote his profession as "Spiritualist medium." "You'd better fall out and have a séance!" said a sergeant on parade. But slowly the fun-making subsided and soon a trickle of requests for private sittings from fellow soldiers grew into a steam … "You have done great good here," an officer told him when he was invalided out in 1944.

He was married three years ago to a member of Birkenhead Spiritualist Church.

Among prominent personalities who have sat with him are Sonia Dresdel and Enid Stamp Taylor. At one period of his career he gave clairvoyance at the famous meetings organised by Mrs. St. Clair Stobart and the Rev. G. Maurice Elliot.

He is well known for his candour. On several occasions he has told audiences and private sitters: "I am sorry. I hear nothing and see nothing. You must get your money back."

Redmond is a man who has found his vocation.

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[7] Billy Parish. One of the movement's finest spiritual healers of the twentieth century; please see Pioneer, Vol. 1, No. 5, October 2014.

The profile above is taken from the "Two Worlds', circa 1956, by Philip Paul. Bill Redmond was born in Gateshead in 1908 and at the age of nineteen he began his work in Spiritualist churches, He then became involved with the Spiritualist Mission in London. Redmond met Mrs St. Clair Stobart, who worked closely with the Rev. Maurice Elliott, who was so impressed with his high standard of mediumship that she more or less launched his career. He demonstrated at Wigmore Hall and the Grotian Hall to packed audiences. The name of Mrs St. Clair Stobart may not be familiar to some readers but most who attend Spiritualist churches will know the healing hymn she wrote:

Gracious Spirit, of Thy goodness,
Hear our anxious prayer!
Take our loved ones who are suffering
'Neath Thy tender care.
Loving Father, hear us, hear us!'



For more information on Mabel Annie St. Clair Stobart (1862-1954) please see Psypioneer, Vol. 9, No. 8, August 2013. Much of Redmond's work from around 1936 centred around the Marylebone Spiritualist Association or MSA (today it's the Spiritualist Association of Great Britain), as a staff medium spanning over three decades. Under the auspices of the MSA, Redmond, then a full-time medium, demonstrated at the most famous and largest halls, e.g. the Queens Hall and the Royal Albert Hall. The photograph shows Bill Redmond at the Albert Hall in 1963.

Earlier, in 1959, Redmond was appointed a Minister of the Spiritualists' National Union. At this time there was no examination but a distinction of excellence, a decision and an appointment by the National Executive Committee of the Spiritualists' National Union.

In 1980 the SNU gave Redmond his fifty years Long Service Award. The photograph shows Redmond receiving the award from Joan Adams of the North Lancashire & Cumbria District Council. Bill Redmond also held the SNU award of DSNU, awarded to him at the AGM held at Leicester on July 2nd 1944, under the presidency of Harold Vigurs.





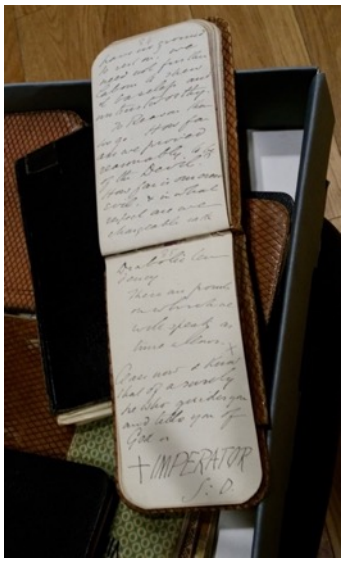
Bill's DSNU award, Minister's regalia and Long Service badge are now in the Britten Museum & Library.

AUTOMATIC WRITING

Automatic writing is a vast subject spanning many decades and can take the reader in so many directions from the early days of Modern Spiritualism, for example in the 1870s independent/direct writing (slate writing, etc.).



"Pioneer" has previously noted that the editor and AFC tutor Janette Marshall visited the College of Psychic Studies, where we were given access to the papers of Stainton Moses (who used the pseudonym 'M.A. Oxon'), including numerous notebooks, which contained the material later edited and published in 'Spirit Teachings', 1883. This book is regarded by some as the Spiritualists' Bible; the communications were received by the process known as automatic or passive writing. Please see, for further details, Pioneer, Vol. 3, No. 3, June 2016.



Other cases involve 'living communicators', i.e. from the mind of a *living person,* as was often the case with William T. Stead, who wrote messages from friends, with distance being no object; afterwards he verified the accuracy by referring to the transmitters. He noted in his "Borderland" (Vol. I, page 50) that he knew at least ten other automatic writers who received messages from living friends through "automatic telepathy".

Campbell Holms' "The Facts of Psychic Science" was originally published in 1925; below is taken from page 168:

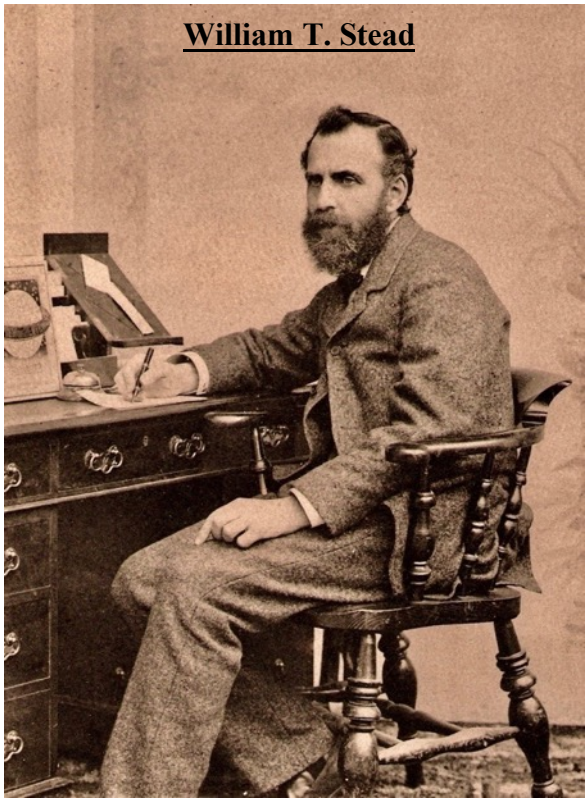
> In his address to the London Spiritual Alliance, in March, 1893,[1] Stead described some of the peculiarities of his automatic correspondence with living friends. He said that it was only possible with some, and that, while with some, 99 per cent. of their statements were accurate, with others there was a curious mixture of truth and error, falsities of the most unmeaning kind being given as facts (probably due to inopportune intervention of other controlling influences); in other cases the statements were entirely false. On one occasion, a friend wrote a statement through his hand which, although not true at the time, became true a few days later, and was thus in the nature of a premonition.

Holms quotes on the previous page a remarkable case from Stead's book, "After Death", published in 1909; Holms gives page 15 but not the edition:

> "A lady friend of mine, who can write with my hand at any distance with even more freedom than she can write with her own, had been spending the week-end at Haslemere, a village about thirty miles from London. She had promised to lunch with me on Wednesday if she returned to town. Late on Monday I wished to know if she had left the country, and placing my pen on the paper I mentally asked if she had returned to London.

[1] Published in Light, 1893, pp. 133, 143.

My hand wrote as follows: –


William T. Stead

'I am very sorry to tell you I have had a very painful experience, of which I am almost ashamed to speak. I left Haslemere at 2.27 p.m. in a second-class carriage, in which there were two ladies and one gentleman. When the train stopped at Godalming, the ladies got out, and I was left alone with the man. After the train started he left his seat and came close to me. I was alarmed, and repelled him. He refused to go away, and tried to kiss me. I was furious. We had a struggle. I seized his umbrella and struck him, but it broke, and I was beginning to fear that he would master me, when the train began to slow up before arriving at Guildford Station. He got frightened, let go of me, and before the train reached the platform he jumped out and ran away. I was very much upset. But I have the umbrella.'

"I sent my secretary up with a note, saying merely I was very sorry to hear what had happened, and added, 'Be sure and bring the man's umbrella on Wednesday.' She wrote in reply, 'I am very sorry you know anything about it. I had made up my mind to tell nobody. I will bring the broken umbrella, but it was my umbrella, not his.'

"When she came to lunch on Wednesday, she confirmed the story in every particular, and produced the broken umbrella, which was hers, and not his. How that mistake occurred in the transmission of the message I do not know. . . . I may say that I had no idea as to the train she was travelling by, and had not the slightest suspicion that she had experienced so awkward an adventure.

"I may say that since then, for a period of fifteen years, I have been, and am still, in the habit of receiving similar automatic messages from many of my friends. In some the percentage of error is larger, but as a rule, the messages are astonishingly correct. This system of automatic telepathy from friends who are still in their bodies and who are in sympathy with me is for me as well established as the existence of electric telegraphy, or any other fact capable of verification every day."

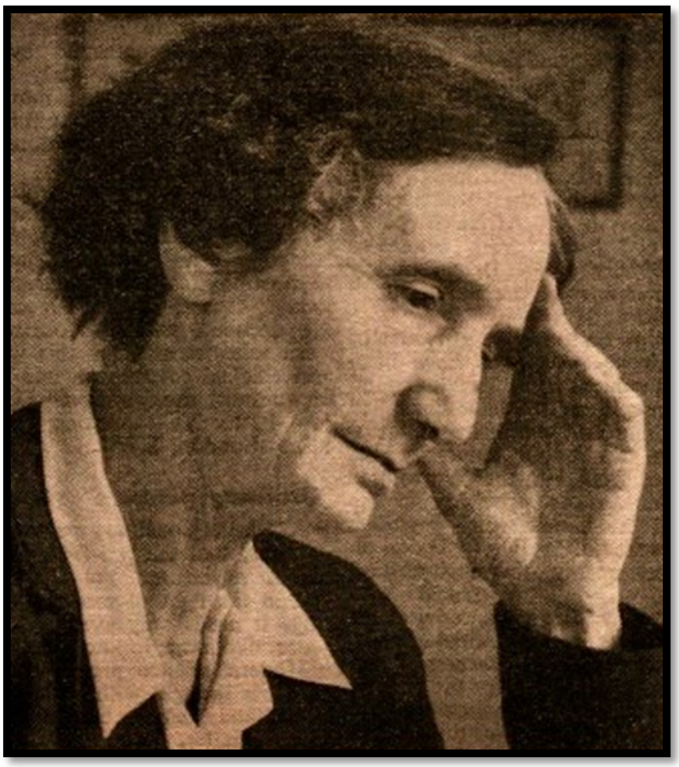
Hester Dowden (1868-1949) became Mrs Hester Travers Smith but after her divorce she reverted to her original name. Although today she is little known this was not the case during her time as a medium. She commonly used a ouija board.[2]

One name that is still well-known today in automatic writing is Geraldine Dorothy Cummins. It can be noted in the short profile below by Philip Paul, published in the "Two Worlds", November 19th 1955, page 7, that her technique does not conform to the more general understanding of automatic writing (produced by involuntary movement of the writing hand),

[2] Please see Psypioneer, Vol. 9, No. 3, March 2013: A review of *Voices in the Void* by Hester (Dowden) Travers Smith by Maxine Meilleur.
Vol. 9, No. 4, April 2013: From Home Shores to Far Horizons: Hester Dowden as a Child – Wendy Cousins.

as the interview states, “Geraldine hears each word clairaudiently and puts it on to paper through the normal processes of penmanship.”

Incidentally, the photograph of Geraldine Cummins (1890-1969) was taken by the infra-red séance photographer Leon Isaacs, who was featured in Pioneer, Vol. 4, No. 1, February 2017.



The moving finger writes; and, having writ.
Moves on: nor all your piety nor wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line.
Nor all your tears wash out a word of it.

So, nearly a thousand years ago, wrote Omar Khayyam. His words have echoed through the ages, finding a poignant place in the hearts of succeeding generations of men.

The immortal lines come again to mind in relation to the life and work of a small pale, brown-eyed Irishwoman whose inscribing fingers have moved through 40 years of human history, writing she believes, at the dictation of men who have gone on beyond the realms of the flesh ….

Grim seance warning

Geraldine Cummins was one of 11 children borne by the wife of a professor of medicine at Cork University. In due time, bent on a literary career, she left home for Dublin where, writing plays for the Abbey Theatre, she lived in the home of a Spiritualist, Hester Dowden.

Despite this close contact with the movement, her first participation in a seance did not take place until June, 1914. At that time, she and her hostess were holidaying in Paris. Sitting at her Ouija board, Mrs. Dowden received a grim forewarning of great bloodshed and horror to come.

Talking it over, they decided there must have been some mistake. How could bloodshed and horror overtake the gaiety of the carefree Europe of that time? The answer came within weeks.

From that time on, Geraldine made a close study of the art of automatism in the production of scripts. Her well-known “Scripts of Cleophas” was the first major work she produced by those means. Her recently-published “Fate of Colonel Fawcett” is her 17th book, of which 14 have a psychic content. Her latest work, “Mind in Life and Death,” aimed at providing evidence of Franklin D. Roosevelt’s survival is to be published shortly.

Famous sitters

She has always tried to maintain an attitude of objectivity and analysis towards her work, and thinks of herself as a psychic researcher rather than a Spiritualist. She gave sittings for Sir Oliver Lodge, had discussions with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and sat for Lord Gerald Balfour in 1939.

In 1923, she met Edith Beatrice Gibbes, an enthusiastic researcher who guided and watched over her work until her death in 1951. The two spent many hours together during Geraldine's writings. Miss Gibbes placing fresh foolscap sheets beneath the moving hand as the close-packed, linked words covered the pages. Normally a slow writer, Geraldine has, in her automatism, produced as many as 1,750 words in an hour – and not a word needed correction.

Conscious, but –

Her technique does not conform to the normal rules of automatic writing. The scripts are not, as is usual, produced by involuntary movement of the writing hand. Geraldine hears each word clairaudiently and puts it on to paper through the normal processes of penmanship. She is fully conscious during her seances, but nonetheless "never quite knows" what is going on.

Slow in speech and deep of voice, she found no difficulty in answering a question inquiring whether she had ever received personal evidence or advice through her mediumship. "I always make it a rule never to seek advice for myself. I think that would be wrong and I mustn't use it in that way. I think the reason people get into trouble when getting communications is that they try to get advice for themselves."

She did, however, recall a remarkable dream-experience. In 1932, she said, she had an actress friend in London. Following an operation, Geraldine went to Ireland for convalescence, leaving her actress friend in good health and spirits.

Scar as test

During a dream, the actress appeared to her, saying, "I am very well and happy." Geraldine had time to notice an unfamiliar scar on her friend's forehead.

Remembering the experience next day, Geraldine wrote to Miss Gibbes in London, giving the details. Upon inquiring, Miss Gibbes discovered that the actress had died during an operation. The scar on her forehead had been revealed during her hospital treatment. Normally, she wore her hair style which covered it.

Geraldine confessed to "an open mind about guides. They may be secondary personalities acting as guides. I leave it to others to form a verdict."[3]

But she is satisfied about the importance of her self-chosen path. "It is wonderful to be able to help people who have been shattered by bereavement. In three cases my work has prevented people from committing suicide."

[3] Numerous well-known mediums such as Eileen Garrett (well-known for her mediumship after the R101 airship disaster in 1930) held similar open-minded views on guides: she maintained during her lifetime her firm belief that her spirit guides/controls (Uvani, Abdul Latif, Tahotah and Ramah) were different aspects of her deeper self. She was not convinced that her mediumship stemmed from separate, discarnate entities. See Pioneer, Vol. 3, No. 1, February 2016.

There was an occasion when she received a communication signed "F. W. H. Myers." In it, there was a remark to the effect that he was unable to make contact as strongly as he might because he was trying to speak elsewhere at the same time. Later, Geraldine learned that, at the very moment of receipt of this communication, a communicator announcing himself as "F. W. H. Myers" was talking to Miss Gibbes through Gladys Osborne Leonard!

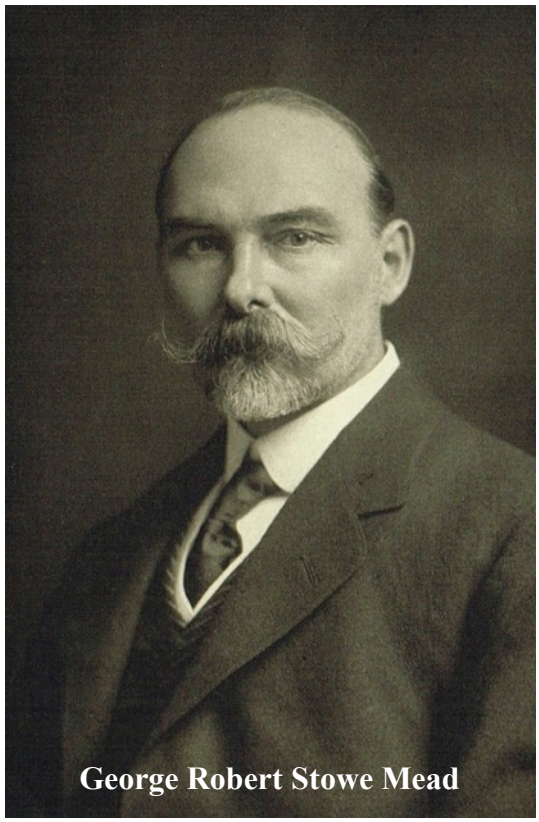
Oliver Lodge's joke

She remembers Lodge as "a critical mind. He arrived at his conclusions after long deliberation. I was much impressed by what I would call the massive intellect. One day, when he was having tea with me, he said, 'There are two antiquities at Salisbury – Stonehenge and myself.' "

Quite properly, the conversation passed to posthumous tests. Again Geraldine was in no doubt about her opinion. "I think sealed letters are valueless as evidence of Survival, because 'authorities' say that any medium who succeeds in getting the contents proves his success in clairvoyance but does not establish Survival."

Nevertheless, "I have had evidence which leads me to believe that the whole mind goes on after death."

Nowadays, Geraldine's time is divided between her family home in Cork and the Chelsea house bequeathed to her by Miss Gibbes. Thus, living amid London's literati is a woman who has penned millions of words to the simple but tremendously significant testimony, "There is no death."



George Robert Stowe Mead

Below was published in "Light", November 24th 1933, page 474, and gives us some insight as to how the Cummins scripts were formulated – showing the close working relationship between Cummins and Miss Gibbes.

The alleged communicator is G.R.S. Mead (1863-1933), a respected senior member of the London Spiritualist Alliance. In 1884 he joined the Theosophical Society and worked closely, amongst others, with Mme Blavatsky.

Later he was editor of a high-quality journal, "The Quest", and its associated Quest Society; the Quest ceased publication in 1930.[4]

[4] For further details see Psypioneer, Vol. 11, No. 3, March 2015.

AN UNEXPECTED MESSAGE

IN THE WHIMSICAL STYLE OF G. R. S. MEAD

SEVERAL communications appear to have been received lately in various quarters from or in connection with our departed friend "G.R.S.M."

From Miss E. B. Gibbes we have received one which is so highly characteristic that we give an extract from it. Miss Gibbes, in a prefatory note, says: "After a lapse of four and a half months, during which Miss Cummins was in Ireland, we had a sitting (Sunday, October 15, 1933) just to see what would transpire. We had not anticipated a communication from the one who purported to write, neither had we thought of him or spoken of him that day. We had never even suggested that he might come to us."

Miss Gibbes's notes are as follows:

A message from Astor, the guide, indicated the presence of "two rather aggressive souls" and then the writing changed to a small hand, each word being separated:—

De mortuis nihil nisi bonum. G. R. S. Mead. Do you know me? Yes, of course. I have forced my way in, because, though you often discussed an invitation with me, the invitation never came. I want to get in my little say before you kick me out for good.

I am ready now to accept David Gow's suggestion of two years ago, that I occupy the Editor's chair in the offices of LIGHT. I feel fully qualified for such a task and they can none of them get at me and plague the life out of me. Ask Lethem if I may act as supernatural editor, and tell him to reserve at least a page for my gossip notes about the famous departed. For instance, the "Old Lady," (God bless her soul!), and Annie Besant are making rings round each other. They are making a Theosophical Inferno which would defy the pen of Dante to describe. The Old Lady feels that Annie has wrecked the nice bit of work she left behind her on earth. The girls can't be separated. They meet and give each other a wigging twice nightly while all Paradise looks on. [Laughter from E.B.G.]

It is no joke for me I can tell you. I am their reference book. They appeal to me for dates and descriptions of old rows and I'd damn them both, only for my affection for the "Old Lady."

Look here, you two, I have found Heaven and Hell out and metempsychosis too. All the Hereafter is in the rubbish-heap. I mean the kind manufactured by the Christians, the Buddhists and the whole bang lot of the high-toned souls who have special communications from the Almighty.

E.B.G.: Have you met M—?[5]

Yes, I went up to him and said, "Hullo, old chap, we are both on the same lines, trying to find the truth. So we're out against all the peddling clergymen, priests and Masters." He was rather chilly about it, but I have no doubt he will warm to me when he gets to know me. Anyhow, you two girls had better take down a book from me now. I can tell you a great deal that M—omitted.[6]

[5] Leslie Price notes: I take this to be Myers – Mrs Myers was very touchy about his name being mentioned in communications.

[6] Leslie Price notes: Geraldine wrote two books automatically from Myers, "The Road to Immortality" and "Beyond Human Personality".

He is too far off from the earth to understand that he must be practical and write in film lingo if he is to interest people. My book will be full of slang—if you will take me on.

E.B.G.: We shall have to see. But, as usual, Geraldine has much work to do and is very much engaged. Also she has not much power to do a lot of psychic work at present.

Title: "Fragments of a Heaven and Hell Forgotten."

E.B.G. Excellent.

Most of you people have looked in here and then pulled down the window and have let the train carry you back to earth. . . . .

The message is in the whimsical manner of Mr. Mead, who sometimes ruffled his serious friends with his apparent irreverence. The "Old Lady" is, of course, Madame Blavatsky for whom he had always a warm regard. Those who knew him well will recall his impatience with doctrinal or scholastic ideas of the Hereafter—to him the next world was as human and as natural as this one.

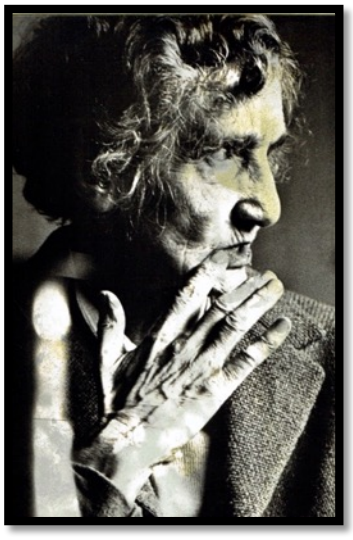
Astor's reference to the "two rather aggressive souls" is explained by the fact that G.R.S.M., in the course of the message, alluded to a connection of Miss Gibbes's who had rather resented him pushing his way in.

As to the reference to "David Gow's suggestion," Mr. Gow remembers that about a year or two ago, he made, in a conversation with Mr. Mead, some humorous proposal of the kind mentioned.

It should be recalled that the title of the book which Mr. Mead proposed to communicate, is a play upon the title of a learned work which he wrote some years ago called *Fragments of a Faith Forgotten*.

Readers who are familiar with the *Cleophas Scripts* and *The Road to Immortality* should note the contrast in the style of these communications. The whole message is in the racy manner of G.R.S.M. as we knew him.

—~—☼—~—



Geraldine Dorothy Cummins

As noted, Miss E. Gibbes passed suddenly in 1951 and the tribute below was published in "Psychic News", January 5th 1952, page 5.

Sudden Passing of Miss E. Gibbes



MISS E. B. GIBBES, WHO FOR SO LONG HAS BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH THE WORK OF MISS GERALDINE CUMMINS, THE AUTOMATIC-WRITING MEDIUM, HAS PASSED TO THE NEXT LIFE.

Death occurred at her Chelsea home a few days before Christmas. She was 71.

Miss Gibbes, who is chiefly known to Spiritualists for the great assistance she has given Miss Cummins in the compilation of her scripts into book form, was a woman of considerable ability and wide interests.

She could, if she had chosen, have made a fine career for herself as a singer, for she had a rich voice and had studied and trained in both New York and Paris.

TWICE ROUND WORLD

A widely travelled person, she had twice encircled the globe, and was a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society.

Her interest in psychic things had its roots in a fatal traffic accident which occurred in 1919. She lost a young friend, a married woman who left two children.

She worried about what would become of the kiddies and eventually went to visit her sister-in-law, Mrs. M. G. Gibbes, whom she knew to be interested in survival and communication, with the hope that she might contact the dead mother for advice.

Mrs. Gibbes, whose father, Mr. George Matthey was, incidentally, a scientific colleague of Sir William Crookes, advised her to contact Mrs. de Crespigny. She in turn introduced her to Mrs. Gladys Osborne Leonard.

Amongst such illustrious company Miss Gibbes had a flying start in psychic research. Her interest aroused she visited the London Spiritualist Alliance where she had sittings with Eileen Garrett.

Later she became a member, and ultimately graduated to the Council. She also became a member of the Society for Psychical Research.

LONG FRIENDSHIP

Some four years after her first contact with Spiritualism she met Miss Geraldine Cummins, who at that time was making a few moderate but unpretentious experiments with automatic writing.

Miss Gibbes quickly saw the great ability of Miss Cummins and there commenced the close friendship which lasted until her death nearly 30 years later.

At nearly all of the seances which Miss Cummins conducted and which have produced such remarkable works as the Cleophas scripts Miss Gibbes was at her side replacing writing paper as the entranced medium covered the sheets with rapid strokes of the pen.[7]

She did an astonishing amount of work in this field for after the sitting she would annotate the manuscripts, file them and even write articles about them, many of which were published in the "Journal" of the S.P.R., "Light" and *Psychic News.*

These articles drew voluminous correspondence all of which was dealt with by the faithful Miss Gibbes. A great deal of this was foreign correspondence and there is record that letters were received from no less than 29 different countries.

FINE INVESTIGATOR

Of her great friend, Miss Cummins has told *Psychic News*:

"She was a very fine investigator because she was so thorough. Every manuscript was kept with the notes appertaining to it.

"Mrs. Piper was supervised for several years but Miss Gibbes supervised my mediumship for 26 years. Except for the war years she kept me under observation the whole time and also kept the records.

"I could not have accomplished anything without her. She was the type of investigator who was really scientific. She gave her whole time to it; it was her great interest and her work in life."

LAST WORK

On December 18 Miss Gibbes completed the material from which "Reynolds News" printed their story this week, then she finished correcting the last few page proofs of "Beyond Human Personality" – one of Miss Cummins' books which is being re-printed.

Rather symbolically, almost as though it marked the end of her life's work, she was seized with a sudden heart attack and collapsed. She died almost immediately.

Owing to the Christmas holidays the funeral, which was at Mortlake crematorium, did not take place until December 27. At her own desire it was quite private, only a few friends and relatives being present.

—~—☼—~—

[7] It can be noted that in the Cummins profile it is stated: "She is fully conscious during her seances, but nonetheless "never quite knows" what is going on." This possibly suggests a light trance or Cummins' development changed after her colleague's death.

LEONORA E. PIPER



Medium Leonora E. Piper's (1857-1950) importance to psychical research may be assessed by the fact that she is still cited today by those writing about evidential phenomena supporting the concept of survival of bodily death. Please see Psypioneer, Vol.5, No. 3, March 2009: "Leonora E. Piper online – Carlos S. Alvarado".

Below is taken from the front page of the "Two Worlds", March 23rd 1934:

MEDIUM WHO CONVINCED SIR OLIVER LODGE

Mrs. Piper's Martyrdom for Psychic Science

By Dr. NANDOR FODOR

"I myself was convinced by the evidence derived from Mrs. Pipers trance utterances in the year l889."

Behind this statement, made by Sir Oliver Lodge during his recent broadcast talk, is a remarkable story. Through Mrs. Piper, Sir Oliver had communication from deceased members of his own family, but he did not find conviction until after much investigation.

Writing in the "Bristol Evening World," Dr Nandor Fodor unfolds some of the story. We print excerpts below.

SOME day a monument will be erected to Leonore E. Piper.[7] She is still with us. A woman of sterling character and courage on whom Professor William James[8] one of the greatest of modern philosophers was willing to leave his reputation for wisdom or folly to stand or fall."

She converted Dr. Richard Hodgson, the greatest fraud-hunter in the history of psychical research to a belief in human survival.

She convinced Professor J. H. Hyslop, of Columbia University that "there is a future life and persistence of personal identity"—a declaration which cost him his professorial chair.

She bewildered the world's most eminent psychologists, and for a period of more than forty years, she endured all the vivisection which scientific ingenuity could devise, in its attempt to disprove the reality of an invisible world.

And this remarkable woman, Mrs. Leonore E. Piper, brought Sir Oliver Lodge to the conviction of survival.

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[7] Also spelt Leonore.

[8] SPR President, 1894-5.

It cannot be too strongly emphasised that this great scientist testified to the stupendous reality of survival long before he suffered an acute personal bereavement. His views on demonstrated survival were announced as early as 1909.

But those who attempt to explain away the great scientist's conviction of the truth of Spiritualism conveniently forget that.

Mrs. Piper was a trance medium. So-called spirit controls succeeded in spite of inconceivable difficulties, in efficiently handling an alien organism for earthly manifestations.

This is how "Pelham," one of Mrs. Piper's otherworld supervisors explained the position.

"In order to reveal themselves to you the spirits put themselves in an environment that discommodes them a good deal.

"They are like persons who have received a blow on the head and are in a state of semi-delirium. They must be calmed, encouraged, assured that their idea will immediately be of great importance. . . .

"In order to speak with you it is necessary for me to re-enter the body and there dream. Hence you must pardon my errors and the lacunae in my speech and memory."

The marvel of Mrs. Piper's case was that her body responded to the invaders exceedingly well. She could obtain three simultaneous communications: writing with both hands and speaking at the same time.

The dramatic activity of the hand was a remarkable phenomenon. It was full of intelligence and could be described more as a person than a hand.

Dr. Hodgson reported that a sitting where a woman was engaged in a profoundly personal conversation with the control concerning her relations "the hand was seized very quietly and as it were surreptitiously, and wrote a very personal communication to myself purporting to come from a deceased friend of mine and having no relation whatsoever to the sitters; precisely as if a caller should enter a room where two strangers to him were conversing but a friend of his is also present, and whispers a special message into the ear of the friend without disturbing the conversation."

The first point on which the average inquirer wishes to be satisfied is the integrity of the medium. We have the testimony of Mrs. Piper's discoverer, Professor William James.

For the first eighteen months he kept her under personal supervision. He hypnotised her and found the condition of her trance and hypnotic sleep radically different.

He found no signs of thought-transference either in the hypnotic condition or immediately after it.

It was the result of Professor James's representations to the Society for Psychical Research in London that Dr. Richard Hodgson was sent over to America, and initiated there the most famous period of mediumistic investigations.

He started by engaging detectives to watch Mrs. Piper, and see if she made any attempt to obtain information normally.

On days of sittings he forbade her to read the morning papers. He introduced all sitters under the pseudonym "Smith."

He improvised sitting for the benefit of chance callers of whose very existence Mrs. Piper could not have been aware.

For fifteen years he was ready to pounce upon the least suspicious circumstance. But in his second report to the Society of Psychical Research. Dr. Hodgson stated:

"At the present time I cannot profess to have any doubt that the chief communicators to whom I have referred in the foregoing pages are veritably the personages that they claim to be, that they have survived the change we call death, and that they have directly communicated with us whom we call living, through Mrs. Piper's entranced organism."

The terror of fraudulent mediums. the hardest sceptic who ever entered the arena of psychical research, the man who exposed Mme. Blavatsky in India, became a Spiritualist.

His outlook upon life underwent a complete change. He refused remunerative offers from Universities and colleges, and lived happily on an inadequate salary in one room in Boston for the rest of his life.

Mrs. Piper paid her first visit to England in 1889. She was isolated more completely from the world than if she had been taken to a fever hospital.

Sir Oliver Lodge was her host at his house in Liverpool. His wife engaged an entirely new staff of servants. All her correspondence passed through the hands of her host, and she could not even go to a shopping expedition alone.

Yet this woman revealed the most extraordinary familiarity with the lives of all the strange people who were brought to her. Her control, the rascally "Phinuit,' showed an astonishing familiarity with the boyhood days of two of Sir Oliver Lodge's uncles.

Sir Oliver Lodge thereupon sent a professional inquiry agent to Barking, where they lived, to see how much he could find out on the scene. The agent wrote:

"Mrs. Piper has certainly beaten me. My inquiries in modern Barking yield less information than she gave. Yet the most skilful agent could have done no more than secure the assistance of the local record keepers and the oldest inhabitants living."

Sir Oliver Lodge's first report, issued in 1890, was cautiously restricted to the conclusions:—

1. That Mrs. Piper's attitude is not one of deception.

2. No conceivable deception on the part of Mrs. Piper can explain the facts.

But nineteen years later in his *Survival of Man*, Sir Oliver admitted:

"The hypothesis of surviving intelligence and personality—not only surviving but anxious and able with difficulty to communicate——is the simplest and most straightforward and the only one that fits all the facts."

—~—☼—~—

So runs in brief the story of Mrs. Piper's mediumship, and we congratulate the *Bristol Evening World* on publishing the long article, from which the above extracts are taken. Who can tell how much the testimony of such men as Lodge and Hodgson has contributed to the changed attitude of the press?

A full record of Mrs. Piper's work is given in *The Life and Work of Mrs. Piper* by Alta L. Piper (Kegan Paul. 7s. 6d.). Few mediums have withstood more meticulous and untiring investigation, and few have provided such crucial evidence in the face of the most stringent tests. Mrs. Piper is still alive, but the last important investigations took place in America in 1926-7.



Supplement to "Light," September 2nd 1899

From a photo by Cunningham, Boston, U.S.A.

ERNEST WALTER OATEN

1875-1952

Telepathic Experiments



Our SNU President Ernest W. Oaten has previously featured in "Pioneer"[15] on two occasions; for many years he was editor of the "Two Worlds", he was one of our most experienced pioneers giving almost sixty years' service much of this within the SNU.

Psychic ability was indeed a very prominent part in the earlier part of our history, today its importance is sometimes neglected although the early part of our foundations was built on "Psychic Force" a term used in the early 1870's by William Crookes or the word "Psychic" as used by Stainton Moses.

Oaten wrote a number of weekly articles of his early memories of his investigations etc in the "Two Worlds" which at that time he was editor, they were so successful in 1938 they were put into a book "That Reminds Me", he notes in his Foreword:

> Experienced investigators know that the best results are not produced by occasional and isolated sittings. The soundest convictions are established by regular circles, or seances in which the same sitters with the same medium meet over a period of years. That is the strength of the "home circle." To watch mediumship grow from its early beginnings to the fullness of its power, is to know its weakness and its strength, and is an education in itself. …

He concludes with the words of William Crookes:

> "I did not say they were possible, I only said they happened."

Below Ernest Oaten talks of some of his psychic experiences taken from his book pages 105-109:

SHE MET THE TRAIN

> TELEPATHIC experiments are always fascinating, and though they sometimes produce results very different from those intended, yet they can afford evidence of the action of mind upon mind.
>
> Over a period of nearly twenty years I systematically experimented with a large number of people until I found three with whom the experiments seemed to show a high standard of successes. It is not surprising that the most responsive of these is my wife,

[15] Vol. 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."

and on hundreds of occasions I have been able to send messages at unexpected times and with a large measure of success.

In the course of my speaking engagements I had spent four weeks on the South Coast, journeying from town to town, and my tour was to finish on a Friday evening at Paignton, allowing me to journey home to Yorkshire on the Saturday. On the Thursday evening, however, someone remembered that there was a local fête, or special gathering on the Friday, which it was thought would militate against a good attendance at the Masonic Hall, and accordingly, at the close of Thursday's meeting, an announcement was made that there would be no meeting on Friday.

Mr. Rabbitch, who was then the president, suggested that if I liked I could get away home on Friday morning. It was then 9-30 p.m. The telegraph offices were closed. I lived in a remote hamlet on the Yorkshire moors. There was no chance of getting an ordinary message home. Living in such a remote place it was seldom my wife came to town, and the thought struck me that if I could induce her to meet me on the Friday afternoon we might have tea in town, do a theatre, and have a pleasant evening. How to get in touch with her? that was the question.

I waited until 11 o'clock, when I expected she would be in a quiet and restful mood. I retired to my room, and having looked up the time-table, sent through a telepathic message asking her to meet a certain train at the Sheffield station I was speedily satisfied that I was getting a response, and that the message had been received, Accordingly, I caught an early morning train, arriving in Sheffield in the middle of the afternoon to find my wife waiting for me at the station barrier. She had travelled seven miles to meet the train I had specified, and met me with a sarcastic smile. "You're a beauty," she said, "to tell me the time of the train, and not tell me which station you were arriving at." It had not struck me that there were two stations in Sheffield. However, she had gone to each and inquired whether a connection from Torquay would arrive at the time specified and thus had met me. It enabled us to have a pleasant evening together, and gave me a little rest and relaxation after the strain of a month's tour.

Often in emergencies I have used telepathic powers to get such messages across. Occasionally it is a "two-way line," and I am able to receive messages, but, generally speaking, it is far easier for me to send a message than to receive one.

PROJECTING THE ASTRAL BODY

I HAVE related several incidents of the use of telepathic powers, but the following has always puzzled me:—

I had been to Blackburn on National Council business, and on the Monday had been privileged to have a sitting with Tom Tyrrell.[16] Tom was a remarkable medium, and quite as good a physical medium as he was a clairvoyant. I have often thought that my close association with him that day had something to do with the success of the following experiment.

The Wrong Tram.

I was living at the time on the Yorkshire moors, and on Monday evening started my return journey. It had been raining heavily all day. I had no coat or umbrella. I had to cross the city at Manchester from station to station, and was very wet. I caught the Sheffield train at London Road, and while on the journey suddenly bethought myself that if I could get a slow train from Penistone, which would stop at the local station, it

[16] See Pioneer Vol.2 No.2 March 2015 "Mr Tom Tyrrell."

would save me a seven miles' walk at the other end, for my train was not due till late. It was during the war years, and on alighting at Penistone I asked the old porter—a superannuated railway servant who had been brought back in consequence of the shortage of men—from which platform the Sheffield slow train started. Presently the train drew in and I took my seat. Off we went. The first stop was Silkstone, an isolated station standing on high ground. The wind was blowing a hurricane, and the rain coming down in torrents. I knew I was in the wrong train. I consulted the station "staff" as to whether I should travel to Barnsley or go back to Penistone. He advised the latter. This would give me the midnight train to Sheffield, with a seven miles' walk.

I had half an hour to wait. I was already wet through, and very cold; there was no waiting-room, no fire, no chance of getting a hot drink, and I began to fear for my health. I was sure to catch a cold.

The Experiment.

As I sat on a box of luggage in the shelter of the booking-office, the thought came to me that if I could be sure of a hot supper and a hot bath the moment I got home, I might escape a serious illness I put my whole energy into my experiment. Mentally, I journeyed down the line to the local station, climbed the hill, crossed the quarry, went up the drive, put my finger on the latch and entered the hall. Advancing to the door of the room, I stretched out my hand and went through the motion of turning the handle of the door. Entering the room, I stood poised, and opened up my psychic perceptions. My wife was sitting in a long low deck-chair—a chair not usually kept in that room. It was usually on the lawn. She was reading a book. I passed behind her, looked over her shoulder, and saw the title on the top of each page. It was *Before Adam*. That book was not in the house when I left on the Friday. It had been borrowed on the Sunday. I noticed my wife's mother sitting in her usual chair. I advanced and faced my wife.

Putting all my energy into my effort, I said: "I have lost my train. Shall arrive at 3 a.m. Go to bed, leave me a hot supper, hot bath, and towels." I felt that I had succeeded, and in came my train.

My luck was in that night. I got back to Penistone to find a goods train going through, and by means of a little persuasion and a very impressive handshake with the guard, he allowed me to ride in the guard's van, and even stopped the train at my local station! I arrived home at half-past one to find a note awaiting me from my wife, who had gone to bed. "Towels on the rail. Plenty of hot water. Supper in the oven." I am satisfied that that experiment saved me a severe illness.

A Puzzle.

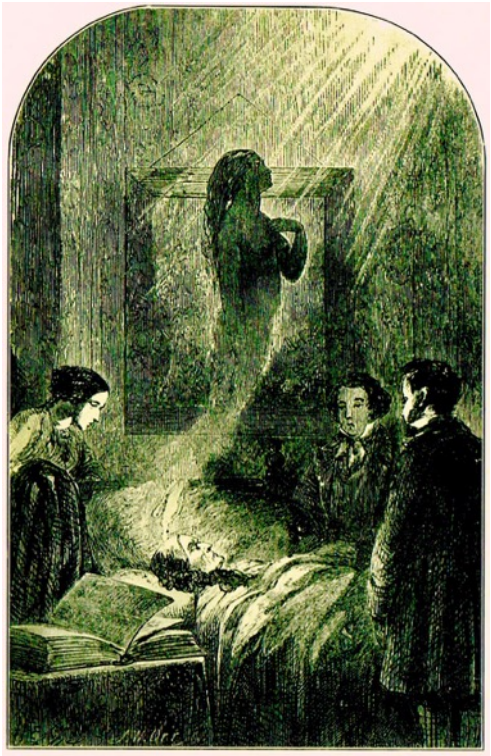
And now for the other side. The following morning my wife was able to tell me that she was sitting reading when both she and her mother heard the handle of the door turn and *the door swing open*. At that time we had a Persian cat which was a match for any dog in the district. He occupied my chair in my absence, and when I returned home he always advanced to me and showed fight, since I was turning him out of his pet corner. When the door swung open, both witnesses testify that Tim rose from the chair, went to the door, and stood on his hind legs in his usual fighting attitude. Opening up her clairvoyant power, my wife saw me, got my message and all went well.

The question that has always puzzled me is:

"Can a man's astral body open a material door at a distance of fourteen miles?"

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The term “astral body” has different meanings for different authors and researchers; an interesting book on what is generally called astral projection, which highlights the terminology and addresses similar problems of Oaten’s open question, “Can a man’s astral body open a material door at a distance of fourteen miles?” is “The Supreme Adventure: Analyses of Psychic Communications”, by Robert Crookall, first published in 1961.



THE DEPARTURE OF THE ASTRAL BODY AT DEATH
According to clairvoyant vision of Andrew Jackson Davis.

Another fine contribution is by Sylvan J. Muldoon & Hereward Carrington, “The Projection of the Astral Body”, first published in February 1929; the image shown is from the third edition, March 1939.

I will make one more quote from the book, pages 71-72. I was interested to see the name Caroline Groom, a forgotten pioneer, who in her day was highly regarded and ranked among the top exponents in the growing movement.

One rewarding aspect of the Research – Study Weeks is the interest from university students and on occasion their professors, who are taking the opportunity of using our resources in their studies. Many students have covered Spiritualism in their dissertations; the subjects are varied, for example Spiritualism in WWI, and Early Psychic Art, highlighting the pioneer medium David Duguid. Recently there was Sophie Allen, a first-year history PhD student at Newman University, who for her thesis is looking at the developments of Spiritualism and its connection to science and scientific theory in 19th-century Britain – particularly the West Midlands and, more specifically, Birmingham. Her thesis has a specific focus on women, in terms of what was popular about Spiritualism that engaged with so many women during the 19th century. Sophie found the ideal medium with Birmingham connections in Mrs Caroline Groom; it is good to know that our history via our Britten Museum and Library is being used by the various universities.

Oaten recounts his experience with Mrs Groom:

> TRANSFIGURATION is a remarkable phenomenon when seen at its best. Sometimes only the face of the medium is changed: at others the whole body seems to alter. Transfiguration is sometimes merely the manipulation of the medium’s features, at other times an ectoplasmic mask seems to overlay the face.
>
> One of the most remarkable mediums of the old times was Mrs. Caroline Groom, known as the “Birmingham Witch”—a title which always brought an amused smile to her face. She was fulfilling an engagement at the local church, and I was one of the select company who adjourned to Mrs. Johnson’s house after the Sunday night meeting. After supper we sat round the fire chatting. We were sitting in full lamp-light. Mrs. Groom was a woman well past middle-age, and her features were well lined. She was a small woman of about five feet, and fairly broad. She had been telling us some of her experiences when suddenly she became quiet, and dropped off apparently into a swoon. I watched her face. Slowly the lines faded. The face became that of a young woman. The features altered. The nose became very prominent almost Wellingtonian in outline. Mrs. Groom vanished and I was gazing on a handsome, rather masculine woman in the first flush of womanhood.

Slowly she rose from her seat and stood behind the armchair in which she had been sitting. Her breathing was deep and heavy. To my amazement she slowly began to grow taller, until the waistline was almost visible above the back of the chair. I was curious. I always am. I want to know what has happened. So I said, “may I come round and see if her heels are on the floor?’’

Permission was granted provided I did not touch her. I stood behind her. I not only saw, but felt, that her heels were on the floor. Her height was greater than mine. I went to the corner and took my walking-stick and measured from the floor to the waist the full length of the stick, and then from the waist upwards. Taking out my penknife I made a notch in my stick, so that I might subsequently check the measurements. My stick is still notched to-day. Mrs. Groom was five feet ten inches high.

For nearly half an hour she addressed us on the laws of intercommunion between men and spirits. It was a strong masculine voice, entirely at variance with Mrs. Groom’s natural voice. It had a slightly foreign accent. The English was good and well chosen. She claimed to be Joan of Arc. I had no means of testing the identity, and I have to let it go at that; but the features were certainly those of someone in her early twenties, while Mrs. Groom was the wrong side of fifty.

It was one of the most outstanding cases of transfiguration I have ever seen, the more so because it was unexpected both by the medium and ourselves, and it left an impression on me which will never be removed.

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Last year, with the discovery of James J. Morse’s projector and the glass lantern slides, I was delighted to find an image of Caroline Groom; I was aware that James Burns had published an image in 1888 in his “Medium and Daybreak” but to find a glass positive of a different image was rewarding, as shown.



She was one of the first to give clairvoyant descriptions in an open public assembly, where she has often encountered rough and hostile treatment, but, with the unconquerable resolution that has always characterised her pioneer labours, coupled with her own powerful and keenly developed psychical powers, she has mastered the most adverse and stubborn conditions, and extracted from her would-be opponents admissions of the truth of her clairvoyant descriptions.

Below is an article which appeared in the "Two Worlds", October 4th 1895, under the editorship of Edward Walter Wallis, 1893-1899:

MRS. GROOM

FOR A QUARTER of a century Mrs. Groom has been intimately associated with much private benevolent work, as well as identified with the public movement of Spiritualism in Birmingham and Midlands, and in latter years extending her visits to almost every town in which a Spiritualist Society exists.

It is not merely in the public advocacy of Spiritualism as a trance and clairvoyant medium that her sterling merit is displayed, but also in the private life of a true; generous, and self-sacrificing woman, ever exercising her "diversity of Spiritual gifts" for the good of all with whom she comes in contact, whether high or low in the moral and social scale, who from all parts of the country have sought her counsel and advice, and not infrequently her personal and material help. Under all circumstances maintaining a pure and creditable position and standard for herself and the cause she represented, endowed with an indomitable energy, that spurns the habits of indolent and luxurious ease, intense sympathy for those in trouble, and distress, always ready to respond to the call of the spirit-world to nurse the sick and soothe their passing over to "the other side" of life, to give words of comfort and knowledge of spiritual facts to the bereaved, she has in her private life, ever been a willing instrument of messages of love and consolation, by impression, trance, and clairaudience, for hundreds of spirit people to their grief-stricken, sorrow-laden friends, who mourned them as being dead!

To Mrs. Groom has fallen the lot to lift the ominous, and awful pall of death's terrors, and give in its place certain knowledge; joyous, and rational hope of immortal life. The blighting pangs of bitter anguish and despair, that fastened with relentless grip upon, the heart of one whose life's idol had been cruelly snatched into an unknown world, may-be of torture, have, in thousands of cases, been assuaged by this faithful servant of the spirits; lives have been made happier, unrequited wrongs have been righted, families united in harmony have thus learnt the gospel of Spiritualism, and have in their turn become its standard bearers. Like most other pioneer mediums, nothing, daunts her efforts; she has travelled in storm and tempest, frost and snow, in fulfilment of her duties, without puff or praise, or "the sounding of the loud timbrel," and often to receive ridicule and false accusation for her pains. The true life-history of mediums can never be recorded outside their own consciousness.

Voltaire said "history was a grand lie," being a distorted reflection of life, a dry bundle of facts built up into a decrepid form. Who can depict the torturous experience of a fine-grained, delicately-strung sensitive, amenable to the most subtle waves of thought and emotion, rudely subjected to the most callous and brutal calumny and slander, to fierce and vicious attacks from the hydra-headed foe—the vindictive bigots,—who, more than once, have endeavoured to entrap Mrs. Groom within the clutches of the law by the bait of a fee? Y.M.C.A. men have dogged her footsteps at seances and public meetings, caused uproarious proceedings, frantically yelling "witch! Witch!" while they jostled and threatened. But moral courage and tenacious fidelity triumphed. For the spirits of those heroes of liberty, whom their forefathers in Christianity murdered, stand now to protect and control these mediums, who are further outworking their glorious mission.

Let us trace the narrow path through which the subject of our sketch passed ere she entered the broader field of public work. Born at Wishaw, Warwickshire, in 1842, she was the youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs, Walker, for many years extensive farmers, and whose ancestry hid a long and honourable pedigree. Reared in this secluded and beautiful spot, where the perpetual din, the maddening rush, and the polluted atmosphere of man-made cities did not obtrude, and being somewhat delicate in health she was kept from school, and allowed the fullest possible freedom to roam through lanes and meadows, to climb hill and dale, at her own sweet pleasure.

At the age of eight her psychical powers became manifest, and at first to her amazement she saw strange sights, which proved to be spirit people. So clear and palpable did a number of spirit children become that she made friends with them, and they joined in her childish play, but to mention these things incurred the severe displeasure of her parents. […]

From that period onward she occasionally saw apparitions, and on one occasion identified the form of a very near and intimate friend who just at that moment had passed away. After her marriage to Mr. Richard Groom they resided for many years in Birmingham, where her husband carried on his business as locksmith, at premises he built in St.Vincent-street. Both were members of Mr. George Dawson's Church, and ardent admirers of his advanced teachings.

In 1870 a friend of Mr. Groom's induced him to attend a seance, at which a Miss Baker was the medium. Mrs. Groom was ultimately persuaded to attend also, but not without protestation, as such proceedings did not accord with her sense of propriety.

On entering the seance room, however, she saw and described a spirit form that was identified as a guide of one of the sitters, and it was soon discovered that Mrs. Groom was a powerful physical medium.

Dr. Aquila Baldwin thus testified in the *Medium* in 1888: "Like all good mediums, her mediumship has been a progressive and unfolding experience. From table-tipping, through the ascending degrees of physical mediumship, she has gradually, through successive stages of development, reached the teaching and clairvoyant plane which she occupies now, a form of mediumship which she has unselfishly devoted to the Cause, with so much credit to herself and benefit to the thousands of earnest investigators who have sought her ministrations, up and down the country. There are also living witnesses, who may testify to slate-writing and other kinds of phenomena (not covered by this report), which frequently occurred in her presence at that time. I have witnessed very many remarkable tests of identity from the platform, through her wonderful clairvoyant powers, in recent times. I hope she may live long in health and strength to serve the spirits and the Cause with her spiritual gifts, and to enjoy the respect and gratitude of all honest Spiritualists."

We now enter upon a more recent stage in Mrs. Groom's career, viz., the public advocacy of Spiritualism as a trance speaker and seer, which is too well-known to require lengthy notice. She was one of the first to give clairvoyant descriptions in an open public assembly, where she has often encountered rough and hostile treatment, but, with the unconquerable resolution that has always characterised her pioneer labours, coupled with her own powerful and keenly developed psychical powers, she has mastered the most adverse and stubborn conditions, and extracted from her would-be opponents admissions of the truth of her clairvoyant descriptions. Like all other mediums she has her own odd ways; and, as there is but one "John Slater," so

there is but one “Mrs. Groom,” and to expect them to fall into commonplace conventional ways is consummate folly.

Now, let us form a rough estimate of the value of the evidence given at large to the public for, say, only a period of 15 years. A constant stream of people have visited her privately, and she has given two or three public meetings weekly, and to fix the number of descriptions at 30 per week is vastly below the mark, and 75 per cent. of those to be fully identified is also an under-estimate. This, however, brings out the total of 19,243.

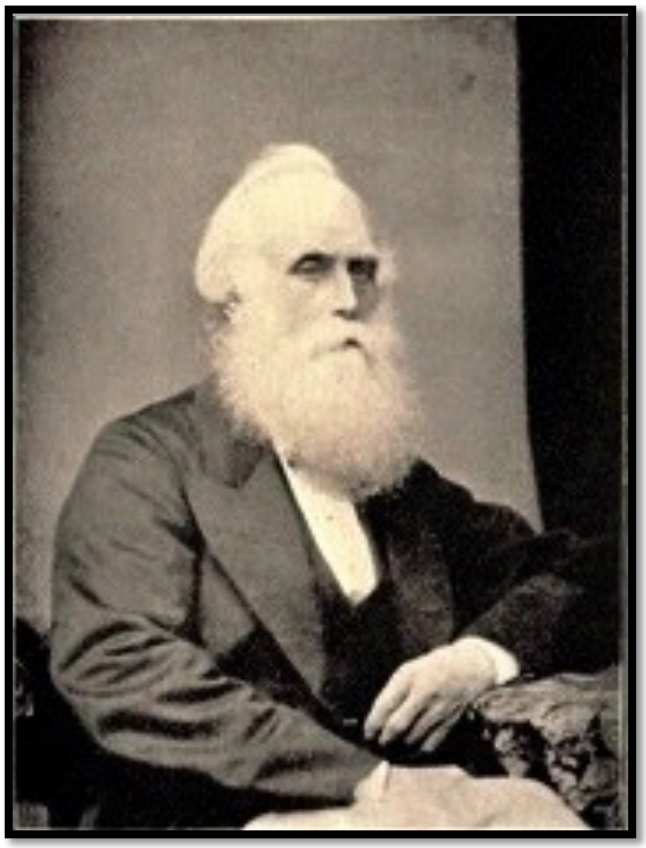
Let our idle critic, who sits on the fence, “go and do likewise.” The quality and literary merit of Mrs. Groom’s trance addresses varies, but they are always acceptable and sometimes brilliant. If everyone was gauged by their opportunities, then Mrs. Groom would stand pre-eminent.

Her work in Birmingham is simply invaluable. She has worked with societies, as well as single-handed, amid good and ill repute, she still goes on with her mission. She has passed through jealousies, bickering, and strife that for a time seemed to overshadow her work; but as one who knew her in those early days of partial development, of trial, and trouble, in the days of small beginnings and back rooms; from that time all through the many years of constant, assiduous labour, under circumstances of adversity as well as prosperity, I can bear testimony, as others can to-day, that Mrs. Groom has never lowered the flag—the white, unsullied fag of Spiritual Truth, but ever maintained its lofty standard with a courage and fidelity that is incomparable.

There is no society that has valued and rightly applied her work in a practical way more than the Birmingham Spiritualist Union, who have relieved her from all the business worry and financial responsibility of meetings, and supplied proper rooms and suitable regulations for the various public and semi-public meetings.



Remarkable Pioneers:



The First Public Developing Circles

ROBERT COGMAN

1810-1876

Robert Cogman, a trance speaker, was the first, I believe, in London to establish a successful training school for mediumship. Edward Wallis would later credit Cogman and his "School of the Prophets", as he called it. He was affectionately known by many of the early mediums as their "Spiritual Father".

Below is taken from the "Two Worlds", April 12th 1895:

MR. R. COGMAN

THIRTY YEARS AGO there lived in a comfortable home in the New Road, Whitechapel, London, a man who, in many ways, was quite remarkable. Slightly above the medium height, spare in form, marked in features, with locks "scant and grey," keen, pale blue eyes, and a head in appearance such as one invariably associates with ascetics, seers and prophets. His voice had the pleasant Norfolk burr in it, his manner was frank and open, he was sturdy in opinion, and not afraid to say his word when called upon to do so. Such, briefly, was the man whose name heads this article when the writer first met him, in the autumn of 1868. Such, too, he continued until when in his 67th year of mortal life he passed through the gates of gold in the year 1876, beloved and respected by all who knew him.

Born at Caistor, near Norwich, in 1810, none ever dreamed that Robert Cogman was destined to perform no unimportant part in the evolution of modern Spiritualism. Yet so it was to be. The inevitable "ups and downs" of life duly brought him to London. His naturally progressive mind was attracted to the study of mesmerism and phrenology, so small wonder that ultimately he came into contact with Spiritualism. At first, indeed for seven long years, he bitterly opposed the subject, and offered all sorts of explanations. He was well acquainted with Mr. William Wallace, the pioneer medium, and obtained much aid and information from that now patriarchal worker. Finally, his daughter Deborah developed as a medium, exhibiting clairvoyance, trance speaking and obtaining table movements as well. Another member of the family, Mrs. Gender, also became a medium, and with her, medical clairvoyance, impressions, trance speaking and several other phases were unfolded, and as nearly all the time Mr. Cogman was sitting and investigating, the "power" was operating upon himself, he finally admitted spirit control as the true explanation of all he had observed and experienced, henceforth giving way to the operations of the spirit friends. His great forte, if one may use such an expression in

this connection, was his marvellous usefulness as a developer of mediums. He literally seemed to be a very centre of developing power.

For nearly eight years in all Mr. Cogman held a circle at his house every Sunday evening and every Wednesday evening. It was at one of the Sunday evening circles that Mr. J. J. Morse obtained his first experience of Spiritualism and spirit control. Mr. Frank Herne,[18] Miss Keeves (now Mrs. Keeves-Record), the late Mr. Towns, Mr. Woolnough, and other mediums of that time, including Miss Eagar (now Mrs. Wallis), and Mr. Wallis himself, were among those who frequently attended the circles at the house referred to, and at Mr. Cogman's last residence, in St. Peter's-road, at Mile End.

These circles were always conducted in a most orderly fashion. Mr. Cogman usually read some appropriate chapter from the Bible, offered a prayer, and gave an admirable inspirational discourse, frequently in a remarkable foreign tongue. He gave his talents free to the work, as he did the use of his room, rendering in those early days in his district services to our cause that have never received their full record nor just recompense.

His work, as above stated, was carried on up to the time of his decease in the form of an East End Spiritual Institution, which was of great service to our cause. Finally, this effort was taken over by Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Wallis, who continued it for some time, until, in fact, the unseen directors of the chosen workers in our ranks called them forth into a larger sphere of action.

Mr. Cogman lived among us at the time when the private circle was more valued and more numerous than it is today. Pleasant times, too, when mediumship was cherished as a good and holy thing, and mediums were cared for and comforted, and considered as servants of the angels. Would that our home circles were as numerous now as then, for it is in the privacy of domestic life that one finds the sweetest blessings of our faith and facts! Mr. Cogman's house in Whitechapel, Mrs. Main's in Bethnal Green, Mr. Marsh's at Stepney, and Mr. Steele's in Clerkenwell, were veritable homes of the spirit in the days in question. The good done there was incalculable, and its results contributed not a little to the making of Spiritualism in London what it is today.

The interviewer deputed by the Editor of the TWO WORLDS to gather the information for this brief sketch was directed to call upon Mrs. Cogman and learn from her such particulars as might be needful. This he did, but in so doing he was pained to find the widow of the man who certainly did a good work for us in our days of small things in a state very slightly beyond the very edge of poverty. Living in one little meanly-furnished back-room, in an indifferent road in Holloway, and eking out an existence on something less than a shilling per day, part of which is actually received from the parish, but the far larger part given by one lady, whose name was at one time well known as that of one of our most active, charitable and true-souled workers in the Metropolis.

Surely an income of 10 ½d. a day for this poor old lady, in her eighty-first year, and utterly past work, is a too small livelihood for one who is the widow of one of our pioneer workers? Can nothing be done? Is our O.P.S. Benevolent Fund able to send a trifle now and then? Should aught prevent the generous lady referred to above continuing her aid, there is nothing but "the House" and a pauper's grave for this now failing lady. A trifle would lighten her load and help to mark our appreciation of her husband's services to us while he was here in the flesh. FRATER.

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[18] See the series in Psypioneer: "The Beginnings of Full-Form Materialisations", starting in Vol.6, No.11, November 2010 - Frank Herne, Charles Williams, Florence Cook, etc.

Edward Wallis adds:

MY TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF ROBERT COGMAN.

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I have long felt that but scant justice has been done to Mr. Cogman, whose work for Spiritualism was most important. He sat in circles for seven years without suspecting he was a medium. When his daughter married and could not "sit" any more, he felt solitary and alone, as if the door of intercourse had been closed in his face, when to his great joy he found that those seven years of patient sitting had not been in vain, his strong personality had been slowly but surely saturated with spirit influence, the work of development and fitness had been proceeding unsuspected by him, and he became an inspired man. He was sent for by Mr. Burns whenever he had a case of obsession or disorderly mediumship,[19] and the spirits through Mr. Cogman were always successful in establishing harmony and relieving the fear of friends and restoring the sufferer. He was controlled to deliver thoughtful and eloquent addresses of quite an original character, the treatment was really unique, but his greatest work was that of developing young mediums. "Frater" has referred to the fact that quite a number of workers graduated in his "school of the prophets."

Miss E. Young, a private medium, a remarkable clairvoyant, another lady, a clairvoyant who became Mrs. Gray, and several others, whose names escape us, could be added to the roll. When death called him he had become so etherialised that he was little more than a spirit, but his departure left the friends in the East End of London without a home for spiritual services.

One of the most palpable clairvoyant experiences that I have had, occurred shortly after the decease of friend Cogman. He came before me and urged me to carry on his work. I saw and heard him distinctly, but did not feel capable of performing the task. A number of his old friends, notably Mr. W. Jennison, this side, requested me to try to fill the gap, and promised their aid. Eventually, having gained the lady's consent, a marriage occurred in I876 between E. W. Wallis and Miss Eagar, and the "East End Spiritual Institution" at St. Peter's Road, Mile End, London, was continued under our direction. But for friend Cogman's demise who knows what may have happened. We should not have been married that year, and may never have become public workers in the cause. Brother Cogman was a strongly marked personality, wise and level-headed. He never encouraged promiscuous sitting, and always advised young mediums to exercise their own judgment, and neither be carried away by excitement nor become the unquestioning tool for any or all spirits who might wish to use them. "Try the spirits" was his motto as you try men and women, prove them 'true and trustworthy, and do not blindly follow any spirit, either in or out of the body.

I sincerely hope something will be done to help Mrs. Cogman in her old age and poverty. Both she and her husband sacrificed and suffered much for Spiritualism twenty years ago, and now she is crippled with rheumatism, and old and poor, surely the cause can provide her with five or six shillings a week for the rest of her days? The O.P.S. Sick and Pension Funds have not been started a day too soon, and I join in the appeal alike to generous and wealthy Spiritualists, and to the kind hearted who are not wealthy save in sympathy and love, to contribute to assist the veterans in their declining years, and brighten their path to the summer-land.

E. W. WALLIS.

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[19] James Burns, founder editor of the "Medium and Daybreak", 1870-1895; see Psypioneer, Vol.7, No.1, January 2011: "The Passing Away of the Editor".

We can note references to different well-known pioneers, for example “Mr. J. J. Morse obtained his first experience of Spiritualism and spirit control”; this took place in the autumn of 1868 and is detailed in his autobiography, “Leaves from My Life”, published by James Burns in 1877. A short quote below from pages 8-10:



The following Sunday being my “Sunday out,” I found my way to Mr. Cogman’s, presented myself to that gentleman’s notice, and in due course behold me for the first time at a spiritual seance! Mr. Cogman was an elderly gentleman, sufficiently venerable to be my grandfather at least. His flowing gray hair, piercing eyes, and general mien, all contributed to strike the beholder with respect.

The chamber in which the seance was held was an ordinary room, on a level with the street; it communicated with a back-parlour by means of folding doors, which were open.

A settee, side-board, chairs, and a long table comprised the furniture, and all seemed neat and tidy. The seance commenced. I expected that tables and chairs would be moved, and that the raps would occur, and was totally unprepared for the subsequent proceedings. The mediums present were all of the psychical order, consequently we had no physical phenomena. The first medium to “go off” was a gentleman now in the United States, Mr. Woolnough, who was entranced, as he said, by the spirit of Dr. Young. However, I could not *see* it, in a double sense! Afterwards a lady was influenced; she lectured for some time, and culminated in a tremendous outburst of either noise or eloquence. The effect was to disgust my mind with the whole proceedings. I had almost imagined that I had got into a ranters’ meeting.

While these somewhat ungenerous thoughts were passing through my mind, I was conscious of a very peculiar experience, before relating which I must mention, that at the time I am writing of I was a disbeliever in mesmerism, so I was wondering whether these trance mediums, as I heard them called, were rogues or fools.

However, to return, my sensations were of a peculiar and indescribable character. I felt as if a large hand had suddenly struck me a heavy blow with extended palm upon the top of the head. I instantly turned round to see who had taken this liberty with my crown, the room being lighted with an ordinary paraffin lamp in full light. Observing everyone in their seats, and no one behind me, I was considerably astonished. My strange sensations continued until my brain felt as if split in two halves, and into the cavity thus created a shovelful of burning sand seemed to be poured, which trickled through me from my split head right down to the tips of my fingers and to the tips of my toes. These sensations were succeeded by an intense desire to give a tremendous shout.

The muscles of my throat, lungs, and mouth all seemed intent upon giving out this uncontrollable ejaculation. While this internal struggle was going on, I tried to rise up and shake the feeling off, but, to my horror, I was a fixture. My eyes had closed and were proof against my most powerful efforts to open them. The internal desire to shout at last prevailed, and a goodly “whoop” was the result. I then seemed endowed with another personality, which for a period of three-quarters of an hour raised the most un-Sunday-like din that ever afflicted mortal ears. I shouted, I rolled round the room, I swore, and, as if to render my position more uncomfortable, I was perfectly conscious of

all my gentlemanly actions! The more I tried not to do these things, the more perfectly were they accomplished! At the end of three-quarters of an hour the fit, or whatever it might be called, passed off, and I sank exhausted upon a settee.

Upon regaining possession of myself, I, with the most profuse apologies, tendered my excuses to the proprietor of the house, vowing that I could not help doing what I had done, for I had in the course of the proceedings spoken to the old gentleman in a most unceremonious manner, and used the most opprobrious epithets. Mr. Cogman very good-naturedly replied that it did not matter; he was not offended, and implied that he was rather used to that kind of thing, and concluded by suggesting my coming again on the following Sunday evening.

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A sketch on James Morse is published in Psypioneer, "James Johnson Morse, October 1st 1848 – February 19th 1919"[20] and many references are to be found in Pioneer; below is taken from the article:

MRS. MARY MAIN



Mary Main was a well-known London medium, born at Bethnal Green on April 28th 1803. She became involved in Spiritualism around 1853 obtaining physical manifestations through her daughter Eliza (Mrs Fielder). In 1861 Mary Main commenced her public work; Morse would continue his development in her circle, as would Frank Herne starting his development just aged 17, together with other well-known mediums. It was in this circle Morse's lecturing control Tien Sien Tie first announced his presence. Another control/guide the "Actor" or the "Strolling Player," first controlled Morse here, and they would become Morse's principal controls/guides working in unison.

Mrs Main never accepted a penny in remuneration. On December 15th, 1873, her daughter Eliza Fielder died; Mary Main died January 11th 1876. In the *Medium and Daybreak* July 13th 1888 a tribute was written by her family. James Burns published this on the front page, continued on pages 434-435 accompanied with a portrait, from where some of the above information and photograph has been taken:

"Mrs Mary Main: A Pioneer London Spiritualist"

Morse concluded the article with this tribute:—**MRS. MAIN'S MEDIUMSHIP**. My dear Mr. Main,—Your letter of 21st arrived, as above, this morning, and as I am a regular reader of Mr. Burns's paper, I was aware of the proposed publication of a portrait of my dear and beloved mother in Spiritualism, Mrs. Main. I have never ceased to remember her goodness of heart, her nobleness of mind, her earnestness of soul. Of all the workers in our early days, whom I met, I know of none that I owe more to, or who deserves a higher place in the regard of English Spiritualists. My development, for active work, was completed under her hospitable roof. My hands were steadied by her goodness, and many were the pleasant hours passed in her company.

Twice a week, for many months on Sundays and Tuesdays, with many others, some now scattered far and wide, among whom were Mr. Woolnough, Mr. Davis, Mr. Overton, Mr. Emms, Mr. Goss, Miss. Keeves, Mrs. Fielder, Miss. Lewis—now my

[20] Vol.8, No.10, October 2012.

wife,—I have drunk in the waters of life dispensed to us from the "other side"; truly soul-inspiring hours were those. I have never seen their equal since. Free from all cant and servility, looking only for Truth, independent in spirit, and suffering in pocket as a consequence—but respected by even these who disliked her cause,—she was a woman among women. For the poor she had ever money, clothes, food or help of some sort. For the Cause she had open house, free of all cost, for many years. I am too far away to write much in detail, as time will not permit, but were I in London I would turn to my memoranda, and do something better fit than this poor letter to do justice to one whose name, work and life I ever cherish with the deepest love and most profound respect.

You are at liberty to make what use you please of this, and believe me as ever most sincerely yours in the bonds of truth and human progress, J. J. Morse.

P.S.—I send you a Canadian bank note for one dollar (4s.) as a mite towards the cost of the picture. 331 Turk Street, San Francisco, June 11, 1888.

Noted in the article is "The O.P.S. Sick and Pension Funds". This fund was founded by Mrs Minnie Wallis and worked alongside the Spiritualists' National Federation; at the tenth Conference in 1899 the fund came under the control of the Federation and was administered under the title of 'The Spiritualists' National Federation Fund of Benevolence'. [21] The Federation was reconstituted as the Union and today this fund continues as the "Fund of Benevolence" (FOB). Generally the fund is wrongly attributed to Minnie's husband, Edward Wallis.



Edward Walter Wallis (1855-1914), born in Teddington, will be featured in the next issue of Pioneer. He was one of the founder members who established the SNU. He was President in 1898 and co-founder of the "Two Worlds" with Emma Hardinge Britten in 1887.

[21] O.P.S. "The Order of Progressive Spiritualists" — Mrs Minnie Harriet Wallis, 1854-1939, who was very active in the National Federation and one of the original sixteen (1890) *pro tem* committee members who were co-opted as the first Executive. She married Edward Wallis in 1876. She continued her work until 1924, when she completed fifty years of public work and fifty-two years of mediumship. Her control for public speaking was called Morambo, a black slave who had been transported to South America, where he died.

See Pioneer, Vol.1, No.3, April 2014 for the history of the Fund of Benevolence: "Badges, Symbols, and Emblems of the Spiritualists' National Union".

MRS HELEN HUGHES



Helen Hughes was well-known for her demonstrations of clairaudience at some of the largest venues in the U.K., often with Maurice Barbanell, Hannan Swaffer and Ernest Oaten, etc. as the speakers. The photograph shows Barbanell with Helen Hughes sitting behind him in Edinburgh in 1942. See Pioneer, Vol. 2, No. 6, November 2015: "Maurice Barbanell, the S.N.U. and his Propaganda Work".

Pioneer, Vol. 2, No. 3, May 2015, gives a profile of Hughes; also reprinted in this issue is a full report of her remarkable mediumship at Sheffield in 1941 (brief quote):

> Mr. Oaten, in a short address, outlined the claims of modern Spiritualism and emphasised the value of its message in the difficulties of the present times.
>
> Then followed a torrent of evidences by Mrs. Helen Hughes. Pointing to the gallery, she said, "There is someone up there who knew Tom Parker. He says: I have tried very hard to get back. There is Tom Parker, Mrs. Parker and Aunt Annie. Tom says: I have met Mary Wilson; she was your Godmother. Let them all know at home."
>
> Pointing to another lady, Mrs. Hughes said: "Do you know Mrs. Holland? I think she knew something of Spiritualism, for she says it has helped me considerably to know about this. She says that you are her Sister. There is John and William Holland, and they send love to Margery, —tell Margery to stick to Aunty."
>
> Mrs. Hughes continued: I hear someone say "if this is what angina does, it is good." It is a Spirit named Nelson; there is Mr. Nelson and Mary Nelson, who died of angina. She tells me that she has met Tommy; she has got him with her. He went down in the 'Hood.' And it was his first boat."

Further, in Vol. 4, No. 3, June 2017, Frank Leah – Psychic Artist: "First-ever attempt at public post-mortem portraiture by Frank Leah partnered by the clairvoyant Helen Hughes".

Helen Hughes, together with Estelle Roberts, *secretly* demonstrated survival to Members of Parliament in the precincts of the House of Commons with positive effect in persuading willing MPs to learn about the legal disabilities under which the movement had suffered for decades. See Pioneer, Vol. 2, No. 1, January 2014: "The Effect of the Vagrancy & Witchcraft Act – The Work of the Spiritualists' National Union".[13]

Below is published a rather interesting article written by Helen Hughes on her own mediumship, "How I Demonstrate Survival"; this was brought to my attention by David Rogers, who had asked me about material on the development of clairaudience. David came across this article in his research: "Light", March 12th 1936, published on the front page, continued on page 162:

[13] This is in six parts.

HOW I DEMONSTRATE SURVIVAL

FAMOUS CLAIRAUDIENT MEDIUM DESCRIBES HER EXPERIENCES

By MRS. HELEN HUGHES



IN the work of demonstrating the survival of human personality after physical death, numerous facts and data have been accumulated, proving our case to the satisfaction of many of the world's greatest minds.

As regards knowledge of the exact processes employed by those on the Other Side to convey their messages, we know very little. The Psychic just knows that certain things happen. We can attempt to diagnose our feelings in the various phases of demonstration, and yet know very little of the forces in operation, and how they are being employed.

It seems that, in psychic demonstration, we are being introduced to a wider range of human faculty, and what is now peculiar to the few will be common to the races of the future; it belongs to a further phase of progress. Not all will specialise in the use of psychic faculty, even in the distant future, but it will be recognised as a natural endowment of human personality. By then, a corresponding development will have taken place in the general sciences; the map of the human body and its functions will have been revised and enlarged, helping us to an understanding of the exact *modus operandi* employed in psychic demonstration.

There are different types of mediumship; but, for simplicity, we divide them into two broad classes—*viz*., physical mediumship and mental mediumship. Physical mediumship is that which produces results which have direct appeal to the physical senses; such as the movement of objects without physical contact, raps, and levitation; the passing of solid matter through solid matter; writing and painting without physical contact; materialisation or the temporary building up of a human form; the direct voice, where the voice speaks from space independent of any human agency. These phenomena only occur in the presence of a person possessing the qualities of physical mediumship.

In automatic writing, the Medium's hand produces the writing, but independent of his own volition. This seems to be a gift that contains elements of both physical and mental mediumship.

Then we come to the class known as mental mediumship. In this class we have clairvoyance, clairaudience, psychometry, inspirational writing, painting and speaking, and trance mediumship.

My own mediumship includes Clairvoyance, Clairaudience and Trance.

In Clairvoyance, I see a spirit form as naturally as if I were using the physical eye. I am not aware of any abnormal sensation until I begin to respond to the feelings or characteristics of the spirit that appears to me. These sensations may be of happiness or sorrow, anxiety or peace, according to the feelings and characteristics of the spirit appearing to me. Sometimes I find myself responding to the last sensations the spirit experienced before leaving the physical body. It appears that by coming into contact with the earth atmosphere, there is an association of the old ideas and impressions, causing the last earth experiences of the spirit temporarily to recur.

All these feelings seem to be under the control of my will—that is, I can "close up" or "open out" at will. If a sensation is too unpleasant, I can "switch it off." I can often get a clear understanding of the mission and message of the spirit by interpreting these feelings that impinge themselves on my psychic sensitiveness.

GIFT OF CLAIRAUDIENCE

But it is on my gift of Clairaudience that I mostly depend in my demonstration of survival. In Clairaudience, or clear-hearing, I hear quite naturally, as though I were using the normal ear. The voices sound quite normal. I can tell if it is the voice of a man, woman or child, or if it is a loud voice or a quiet one. Even the characteristics of intonation and modulation are quite noticeable.

It is listening to the "Voice," that enables me to understand all other feelings that come to me, and to gather the facts by which I demonstrate survival. It is listening to the "Voice" that enables me to give the names, facts and details, that provide the evidence.

You may ask: "If there is such a clear means of communication as this listening to the 'Voice,' why are mistakes made? Why is each message not perfect and conclusive?" The answer to this is: the imperfection of the receiving instrument. The spirit-people may be "broadcasting" the most conclusive evidence and yet the Medium hears nothing, or only part of what has been spoken. It is due to the imperfection of the human "receiving instrument." We are dependent on laws of attunement of which we know little. Even our telephone system has its temporary disconnections. Can we wonder at the difficulties encountered in trying to communicate with a world of a different dimension?

QUICKENING OF PERSONALITY

I have said I am not aware of any abnormality when demonstrating Clairvoyance or Clairaudience. But I must mention that when these faculties are working strongly, especially in a large and enthusiastic public meeting, I experience a quickening of my whole personality which at times amounts to a feeling of exaltation. It is as though I am flooded with abnormal energies. This energy has been called "power" by Spiritualists. When this "power" is strong, my faculties of Clairvoyance and Clairaudience are accelerated. I can best describe it as a lifting of my vibrations to meet the vibrations of the Spirit-World. This "power" seems to form the means of contact. It is the bridge between the two worlds. In a sympathetic audience the "power" is strongest; music and enthusiasm stimulate it.

A cold and unsympathetic person defeats his own purpose by closing the avenues he seeks to explore. Yet I can recall occasions when my demonstrations have been at their best in what appeared to be most uncongenial conditions. Scepticism and opposition sometimes call forth an additional effort from the spirit-friends, But demonstrating in uncongenial conditions leaves me feeling more tired than usual, as though an extra strain had been made on my energies.

Demonstrating in private circles has certain advantages over public meetings. In public, there is the obvious difficulty of "locating" whom the message is for, and of the fact that there are so many eager spirits seeking to communicate.

When giving Clairaudience in large gatherings, I am generally able to "locate" whom the message is for by seeing a Clairvoyant light resting on the person. This light varies in colour and intensity according to the characteristics and development of the person communicating. The purpose of the Spirit-World, when giving a clairaudient message, is to give certain small details which form links in a chain of evidence which precludes all suggestions of fraud or telepathy.

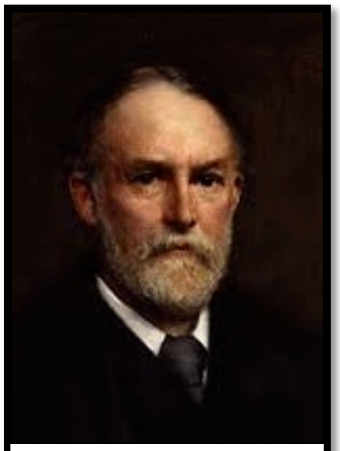
Now I come to the third and last branch of my mediumship, by which I demonstrate the survival of personality—my trance mediumship. I do not usually go into trance in public. I prefer the normal state. While in trance, I am unaware of my surroundings as if in a sound sleep. Just preceding trance, I experience a feeling of sleepiness. For knowledge of what happens while in the trance, I am dependent on my friends. I am told there is a complete transformation of my personality. Facts and proofs of survival are given of which I could have no previous knowledge. My friends listen to talks on life and man's spiritual destiny that far transcend my knowledge and intellect. Subjects are dealt with of which I have not thought while in my normal state.

It appears that, while in trance, my active consciousness is held in temporary abeyance and the spirit-friends can use my powers of Clairvoyance and Clairaudience with great facility. Sometimes my spirit-guides will allow a spirit seeking to prove his survival to enter my, body and speak direct to his loved ones, but this is left to the discretion of my two main spirit- guides and protectors. One I know by the name of "Mazeeta," an Indian girl who specialises mainly in giving messages that prove survival; the other is ''White Feather," who, though at times he gives proofs of the continuity of life, is more concerned with the greater truths of man's spiritual destiny. "Whita" is the leader of the unseen powers behind my work. He is the philosopher, the teacher and the comforter. Many hearts have been healed by his kindly words. He builds the glorious superstructure of spiritual thought on the proven facts of survival. Tolerance and love are his greatest ideals. He is the great moulding influence in my life.

All these gifts seem quite natural to me. They came unsought by me. At first I did not understand them. I was afraid for my sanity. Thinking I must be losing my reason, I prayed that the phenomena would cease; but now I realise they have been the greatest blessing in my life. Since giving full expression to these gifts, I have experienced much better health. Spiritually, mentally and physically I feel a better woman.

My parting advice is: Seek the advice of the spirit-people in purity of motive. No matter who you are or what you have been, they will not turn you away. Their love and their tolerance are fathomless. They will lead you gently by the hand to pastures of peace and open for you the springs of Eternal Life. They are the harbingers of the better world that is to be when men inspired by the truths of immortality shall live harmoniously in the fold of universal peace.

Telepathy, Psychic and Spirit Communication



Frederic Myers

These are general classifications for some of the various modes of mental phenomena but to what extent do they each blend into each other? On this point there can be no set rules. The Society for Psychical Research was founded in 1881-1882. The now defunct Psypioneer put forward material which strongly suggested that the Society had very close links with the Spiritualists in forming the SPR which had not been recognised in their history. The British National Association of Spiritualists (BNAS) provided a substantial platform and was of influence in the founding and launch of the SPR. The BNAS had an influential membership and in itself did not hold any religious or philosophical dogma, its members being from all walks of life. The BNAS maintained an "Experimental Research Committee" and a "Séance Committee".

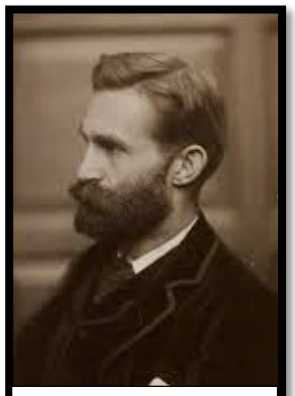
One Psypioneer article showed that the original twenty-nine-member Council and Officers of the SPR were 55% BNAS members.[6] The SPR was formally founded in February 1882 and the first investigations were in thought-reading, changing to thought transference; later, this was simply renamed by Frederic Myers with his new word, "telepathy".

The SPR website notes:



Edmund Gurney

The group charged with collecting historical and current evidence produced the first landmark in psychical research, a two-volume study of visions and apparitions titled *Phantasms of the Living* (1886). This substantial work, written mainly by Gurney, together with Myers and, provided careful analyses of more than seven hundred personal experiences; many were dubbed 'crisis apparitions', those of people seen at a time when, as was later learned, they were in fact dying or in life-threatening situations in another location, a phenomenon viewed by Gurney as a telepathically-generated hallucination.



Frank Podmore

Below I have taken at random a quote from one of the many cases presented in "Phantasms of the Living"; the different examples are under different sections, e.g. Thought Transference, Telepathic Hallucinations, etc. I have quoted from Chapter V, Spontaneous Telepathy:

> This at first sight might be taken for a mere delusion of an excitable or over-tired servant, modified and exaggerated by the subsequent sight of the real mother. If such a case is to have evidential force, we must ascertain beyond doubt that the description of the experience was given in detail before any knowledge of the reality can have affected the percipient's memory or imagination. This necessary corroboration has been kindly supplied by Mrs. Pole-Carew, of Antony, Torpoint, Devonport.
>
> "December 31st, 1883.

[6] Psypioneer, Vol. 5, No. 19, October 2008.

"In October, 1880, Lord and Lady Waldegrave came with their Scotch maid, Helen Alexander, to stay with us. [The account then describes how Helen was discovered to have caught typhoid fever.] She did not seem to be very ill in spite of it, and as there seemed no fear of danger, and Lord and Lady Waldegrave had to go a long journey the following day (Thursday), they decided to leave her, as they were advised to do, under their friends' care.

"The illness ran its usual course, and she seemed to be going on perfectly well till the Sunday week following, when the doctor told me that the fever had left her, but the state of weakness which had supervened was such as to make him extremely anxious. I immediately engaged a regular nurse, greatly against the wish of Reddell, my maid, who had been her chief nurse all through the illness; and who was quite devoted to her. However, as the nurse could not conveniently come till the following day, I allowed Reddell to sit up with Helen again that night, to give her the medicine and food, which were to be taken constantly.

"At about 4.30 that night, or rather Monday morning, Reddell looked at her watch, poured out the medicine, and was bending over the bed to give it to Helen, when the call-bell in the passage rang. She said to herself, 'There's that tiresome bell with the wire caught again.' (It seems it did occasionally ring of itself in this manner.) At that moment, however, she heard the door open, and, looking round, saw a very stout old woman walk in. She was dressed in a nightgown and red flannel petticoat, and carried an old-fashioned brass candlestick in her hand. The petticoat had a hole rubbed in it. She walked into the room, and appeared to be going towards the dressing-table to put her candle down. She was a perfect stranger to Reddell, who, however, merely thought, 'This is her mother come to see after her,' and she felt quite glad it was so, accepting the idea without reasoning upon it, as one would in a dream. She thought the mother looked annoyed, possibly at not having been sent for before. She then gave Helen the medicine, and turning round, found that the apparition had disappeared, and that the door was shut. A great change, meanwhile, had taken place in Helen, and Reddell fetched me, who sent off for the doctor, and meanwhile applied hot poultices, &c., but Helen died a little before the doctor came. She was quite conscious up to about half an hour before she died, when she seemed to be going to sleep.

"During the early days of her illness Helen had written to a sister, mentioning her being unwell, but making nothing of it, and as she never mentioned anyone but this sister, it was supposed by the household, to whom she was a perfect stranger, that she had no other relation alive, Reddell was always offering to write for her, but she always declined, saying there was no need, she would write herself in a day or two. No one at home, therefore, knew anything of her being so ill, and it is, therefore, remarkable that her mother, a far from nervous person, should have said that evening going up to bed, 'I am sure Helen is very ill.'

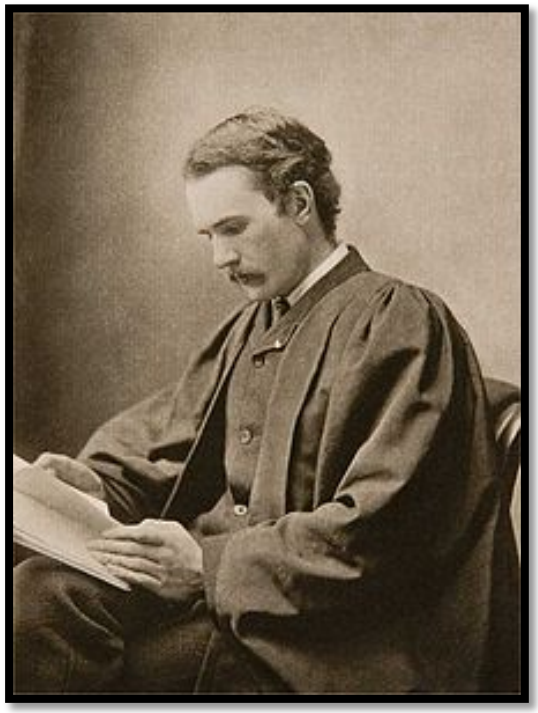
"Reddell told me and my daughter of the apparition, about an hour after Helen's death, prefacing with, 'I am not superstitious, or nervous, and I wasn't the least frightened, but her mother came last night,' and she then told the story, giving a careful description of the figure she had seen. The relations were asked to come to the funeral, and the father, mother, and sister came, and in the mother Reddell recognised the apparition, as I did also, for Reddell's description had been most accurate, even to the expression, which she had ascribed to annoyance, but which was due to deafness. It was judged best not to speak about it to the mother, but Reddell told the sister, who said the description of the figure corresponded exactly with the probable appearance of her mother if roused in the night; that they had exactly such a candlestick at home, and that there was a hole in her mother's petticoat produced by the way she always wore it. It seems curious that neither Helen nor her mother appeared to be aware of the visit. Neither of them, at any rate, ever spoke of having seen the other, nor even of having dreamt of having done so.

"F. A. POLE-CAREW."

The report continues rounding up the previous reports, so slightly edited:

> Mrs. Pole-Carew's evidence goes far to stamp this occurrence as having been something more than a mere subjective hallucination." But it will be observed that there is some doubt as to who was the agent. Was it the mother? If so, we find nothing more definite on the agent's part, as a basis for the distant effect, than a certain amount of anxiety as to her daughter's condition; while the fact that Reddell and she were totally unknown to one another, would show, even more conclusively than the two preceding narratives, that a special personal *rapport* between the parties is not a necessary condition for spontaneous telepathic transference.
>
> "… the condition of the telepathic impression being presumably the common occupation of the mind of both agent and percipient with one subject, the dying girl. But it is also conceivable that Helen herself was the agent; and that in her dying condition a flash of memory of her mother's aspect conveyed a direct impulse to the mind of her devoted nurse.

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Below is taken from "The National Spiritualist", Vol. 1, No. 8, February 1st 1925; this was the first official journal of the SNU, edited by George F. Berry, former President, and General Secretary of the SNU. "The National Spiritualist" was featured in the first issue of Pioneer. The article starts off about Professor Gilbert Murray FBA, OM (1866-1957), the former SPR President 1915-16. By 1952 Professor Murray had conducted many experiments from circa 1915 with great success. It was considered at one point that the communications could be attributed to hyperaesthesia, an extraordinarily acute sense of hearing, but this was later ruled out. Professor Murray affirmed that he accepted telepathy (ESP) and reaffirmed this in his 1952 SPR Presidential address.

Further reference is made to Sir William F. Barrett FRS (1844-1925), who had earlier done experimental work in Ireland with mesmerism and thought transference; Barrett was instrumental in the formation of the Society for Psychical Research and was its President in 1904. An interesting article is published in Psypioneer, Vol. 7, No. 7, July 2011: "The Early Years of Psychical Research – Sir William Barrett."

Below finishes the subject of telepathy with some interesting thoughts by George Berry:

… why should the average Clairvoyant require the aid of 'Guide' when describing the quite ordinary and homely conditions of their friends?

To know how certainly thought is transmitted between souls encased in mortal bodies makes more credible the possibility of such transference between those in the body and those in spirit bodies.

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Thought Transference.

The recent experiments in Thought Reading by Professor Murray have revived interest in the discussion of Telepathy as a sufficient explanation of certain forms of psychic phenomena so as to exclude the hypothesis of Spiritualism. Several foremost Scientists have contributed articles to the Press, among them Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir William Barrett. The latter in an article to the *Times* reminds us that the S.P.R. was founded in 1882, largely because of the apathy and indifference shown towards this subject by the scientific societies and journals of that period. Students of Psychic Research will recall that this great scientist read a Paper before the British Association at Glasgow in 1876, relating to some experiments he had made with a hypnotised subject. We are now reminded that in this same year, Sir William published a letter in the *Times* asking for instances of thought transference, and received replies from all parts of the world giving many experiences.

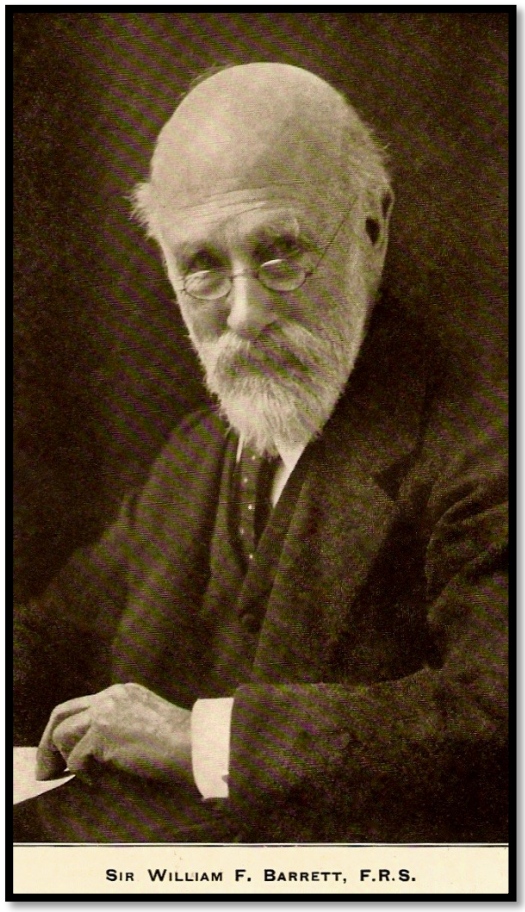
The present controversy will most probably strengthen rather than hinder our Cause by stressing the essentially Spiritual nature of Man. Nor should Spiritualists be disturbed in the attempt to explain a large percentage of psychic phenomena as due to thought transmission. For example, why should the average Clairvoyant require the aid of 'Guide' when describing the quite ordinary and homely conditions of their friends? Why not frankly recognise that the gift of clairvoyance or clairaudience is a power inherent in themselves, lying dormant maybe, like the capacity for art or music, until developed under proper training?

Sir William Barrett suggests "that the evidence all points to the phenomena of telepathy as being due not to any physical process transmitted across space, but to a purely psychical process." He adds, "It affords strong presumption of the existence in our personality of an immaterial entity, a soul or transcendental self, which is not limited to the confines of our body, or conditioned by matter, time or space." Here and now," he contends, "this self lies below the threshold of consciousness, and apparently comes into touch, and can interfuse with, other souls.

One weakness of the enthusiastic Spiritualist is a tendency to set before himself the pursuit of psychic phenomena as an end in itself; as if the sole purpose of Spiritualism was the demonstration of life after so-called death; or as if the one thing that mattered in the recognition of spirit return was the consolation and comfort to be derived from a knowledge that there is re-union of loving souls temporarily parted through death. But if the word 'Spiritual' as distinct from the word ''Psychic" is really to apply to the philosophic outlook of the Spiritualist, and is to be reflected in his activities as a citizen as well as a member of a Spiritualist Association, there must be a far greater realization than at present obtains, of the existence in each of us of this transcendental self referred to by Sir William Barrett.

Most experiments of thought transference and telepathy, such as those which have engaged the attention of Professor Murray, are of the kind which involve a deliberate effort of the will to convey definite images or thoughts from one mind to another, or to receive thoughts given out by someone else. On the other hand, the experiences related by the normal person are mainly those spontaneously received, and which have not consciously been a direct effort of the will.

These deliberate and conscious experiments are useful in that they provide immediate tests that transference of thought does in fact take place, and further, that the images or thoughts perceived are identical with the things transmitted. In a way this identification of the mental projection has an importance similar to the tests of identity applied to the returning spirit. When the proofs of identity are sufficiently complete, the implications of the phenomena can be studied, and it is in this region that we may look for the fuller significance of its relation to our social life.


SIR WILLIAM F. BARRETT, F.R.S.

It is important to realise that one may quite deliberately transmit a given thought to another. A powerful instrument is thereby put into our hands to help or hinder the unfoldment of some other soul. It is perhaps, on the whole, good to reflect that it will only be the few who would thus be likely to deliberately attempt the task of interfering in the life of another. Such efforts would prove too exhausting for the average individual.

It is rather more important to understand that this transcendental self can and does act apart from the volition of the person whose thought is being transmitted to another. It is also worthwhile for the recipient to understand that an influence which is affecting him sufficiently to exalt or depress his whole life may probably be the result of the transmitted thought of someone who wishes well or ill of him.

Here, then, is the supreme importance of that word "Spiritual," as descriptive of our general attitude towards life. If that attitude is indeed spiritual, then these subconscious influences to which we are subjected, and which in turn we send out to others, will be for the upliftment of humanity. If, on the other hand, our outlook is coloured by enmity, jealousy, or small-minded materialism, then the influences by which humanity is surrounded will correspondingly degrade and lower human life. For the great mass of human beings what counts most in their general effect upon one another is not the few deliberate efforts put forth now and again under the stress of some emotion, but the quiet, spontaneous influences that flow from our general level of intelligence, culture, and philosophic or religious outlook.

The following instances illustrate the unconscious flow of thought between ordinary friends. I had lost sight of a chum of my early manhood for some years. One day, for no apparent reason, I found myself absorbed in thought about the days when this friend and I cycled together, and recalled some of our more exciting adventures. Arriving home later in the day I was astonished to find a letter waiting me from this very friend, telling me he would shortly be coming to reside in my town. Anticipating a renewal of our cycling trips he recounted the identical incidents which had occupied my mind earlier in the day. On the hypothesis of Sir William Barrett I find no difficulty in believing that my friend's keen expectation of renewing old times was so intense that all unawares to himself his thought images were transferred to myself.

Experimenting further I have discovered that I may start thinking about some person, and if nothing occurs to interfere with my absorption in thought, a clairvoyant vision of myself will sometimes be transferred to the person I am thinking of. In these instances I have not deliberately willed to be present, but I am generally aware in a dimly conscious fashion of a real communion, of thought. Conversely, I have occasionally caught clairvoyant glimpses of others thinking about myself with a similar intensity of thought. But, going still further, I have deliberately set myself to be present in thought with someone. I begin, say, by thinking of the journey I should have to take until I can see quiet clearly the railway stations I have passed through on an actual visit, see myself leave the train and walk down the road to the house I am visiting in this fashion. I enter the house and roam about at will. That it is not just imagination I have proved by finding someone there whom I did not know to be there, and verifying the fact by enquiries. It would be interesting to know at what point, if any, did the thought and the transcendent self become merged into the clairvoyant vision.

Is there, in fact, any separation, or is the whole—the thought and the self—a unity? Nay, is there not a possibility that there is a momentary merging of the thought, the percipient, and the recipient into such a unity?

Finally, it does not appear that thought reading or telepathy should prove a disconcerting fact to Spiritualists. Communication between minds, whether embodied or disembodied, must have some mode of operation. To know how certainly thought is transmitted between souls encased in mortal bodies makes more credible the possibility of such transference between those in the body and those in spirit bodies. If, through these experiments, we are made to realise more fully the psychical element in communing between ourselves, the spirit world is brought nearer by the recognition that the same psychical element is the link between the two worlds. Looked at rightly we have one more demonstration of the existence in ourselves of that “house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”

GEO. F. Berry, Dipl. S.N.U.

well as the main healing current—whatever that may be—that is directed from the Other Side upon the patient through the hands of the healer.

That the strength of this current is tremendous I know from personal experience. The advice always given, to rest for ten minutes after treatment, should be strictly followed. I was foolish enough once, being in a hurry, to leave after a strong treatment without my rest, and I became so giddy in the street that I had to go into a shop to recover. It was a teashop, and I had to pay for my rest by buying myself a tea that I didn't want. So having learnt my lesson, now I obey orders literally and without question.

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When I was the editor of the Psypioneer I had intended bringing attention to the medium Ronald Strong and his guide, Red Eagle; this article is the ideal opportunity. Strong, a former actor, was a well-known medium from the late 1930s, producing direct-voice mediumship and clairvoyance. He held Sunday services at Wigmore Hall, W. London from 1940 until his early death at age 38 in October 1958. It appears that Strong gained attention from the Spiritualist press in 1939; it can be noted in the "Two Worlds", September 8th of this year, under the editorship of former SNU President Ernest Oaten:

A Promising Young Medium


Mr. RONALD STRONG

TALL and slight in build, with a pleasing personality, and a polished and easy delivery, Mr. Ronald Strong, though young in years and experience, is a welcome addition to our platforms. I have not heard him "speak" (writes "The Londoner"), though I am told on excellent authority that he gives a really interesting and enlightening address in trance, but I have heard him give clairvoyance, and on that showing I class him among the best I have heard.

He hails from Southend way, and an evening meeting was specially arranged by Ilford's Secretary mainly for the purpose of a clairvoyant demonstration. The meeting opened with a pleasing interlude, with vocal items by Miss May Phillips, of Wanstead, and organ solos by Mrs. Bessie Lee, the church organist.

Short quote of his demonstration:

"No, I cannot place Mollie," answered one lady, when Strong went to her.

"Oh yes, you do," insisted the medium. "Do you remember about 25 years ago you lived about halfway up a road, on the corner of which was a shop that you used to go to for small purchase?"

"Yes; now I remember her, came the quick reply.

"She tells me you were reading a thick red book four days ago?" — "Yes."

"What was the blue thing you put in the book to mark the page; wasn't it a blue envelope?" — "Yes."

"Well, look in the book when you go home and see if you don't find it at page 150."

"What's wrong with your clock?" — "Nothing that I know of."

"Wasn't it ten minutes fast this evening, and didn't you remark about it to yourself when you were preparing to come to this meeting?" — "Oh yes, that's quite right."
"Mollie has given these apparently trivial things just to show you she is often in your conditions.

The profile below is by Philip Paul, published in the "Two Worlds", August 13th, 1955; the portrait was taken by Leon Isaacs:



THE youthful actor froze, his plotted actions forgotten and lines fast slipping from his mind. For fleeting moments he wondered whether the audience had gone berserk. The stage was filled with shadowy, flitting figures, most of them regarding him with strange intensity...

Whether the Mancunian assembly noticed the player falter is not recorded; what they certainly could not have known was that they were present at the start of a mediumship that was to lead the young performer from the histrionic boards to the heights of psychic attainment.

For the actor was Ronald Strong, now a name that needs no introduction in Spiritualist circles and one whose fame has spread far outside the courts of the converted.

Fair, wavy-haired, well-built, but pale, Strong recalls his first meeting with his guide, Red Eagle. They met in a mirror.

Visit from Red Indian

Making up in his dressing room while preparing for a performance, Ronald suddenly saw, reflected over his shoulder, the countenance of a Red Indian, resplendent in headdress and warpaint. Not naturally he was unnerved. The vision slowly vanished.

From that time on, his dressing room became an earthly rendezvous for people of the non-material world. Slowly—it took time—he came to accept the ghostly visitors as part of his life. Then, he was introduced to a Spiritualist circle in South London. He went into trance at his first sitting and Red Eagle announced the beginning of his partnership with the white man.

Thereafter, Strong sat regularly and his gifts of clairvoyance, clairaudience and direct voice developed apace. Still he stuck to his appointed profession—born in Bryanston Square, he was trained for ballet and was appearing in "No, No Nanette" when his shadowy communicators took their cue to come on stage—but then fell ill.

The flood begins

After recovering, he opened a school for ballet and tap-dancing—an activity he continues to this day. "I go there each Monday, without fail. I am not a medium on Mondays.")

His first public demonstration of clairvoyance was at Prittlewell, Essex. He understates the case when he says of its sequel: "People began to take an interest in me."

When Maurice Barbanell accepted an invitation to attend one of his direct voice circles, publicity followed as a natural consequence. Then, as Ronald puts it, "The flood began."

His Sunday evening meetings at Wigmore Hall, W., began in 1940. They have been interrupted only by holidays and emergencies. There, each week, he reaches out to take

the hand of the newcomer to Spiritualism and works near-miracles in bringing conviction of life after death to the psychically uninitiated.

Recalling the foundation of Red Eagle Lodge, in Southend in 1938, he remembers with gratitude the help in developing his mediumship which he received from the mother of ex-B.B.C. orchestra conductor Charles Shadwell.

As one might expect, much of his psychic career has been occupied in providing evidence of survival to his colleagues of show business. A friend of Ivor Novello, he remembers the brilliant composer as "extremely psychic. When he sat next to me the vibrations were much better."

Threatened with gun

He has sat for the Greek Royal Family, actress Beatrice Lillie, novelist Margery Lawrence, ex-Gaiety girl Ruby Miller, as well as for other celebrities who cannot be named. He and Ruby have carried out numerous sorties, including an exorcism at the Duke of York's Theatre, where actress Thora Hird was beset by a "haunted jacket" which several times attempted to strangle her.

His most dramatic memory? "A woman arrived for a sitting. She had lost her husband. Suddenly, she took a revolver out of her handbag and said, 'If you don't bring my husband back I am going to shoot you and myself!"

Happily, the situation was saved by the entrance of Ronald's secretary. Equally happily, he *was* able to contact the departed husband, despite the shock!

Tour of 35 towns

Among those who have faithfully aided his efforts for many years are Bill Hill, who chairs his Wigmore Hall meetings, and his secretary, Doris Garland Anderson. They have a big plan on hand—a tour involving 35 dates between now and Christmas.

Admitting that he still suffers from "internal butterflies" before demonstrations, he nevertheless owns but a single ambition: "To go on with my work." And work it is, as an incessant telephone bell established during our interview.

First a request for healing (Ronald does both absent and contact treatments), then a plea for advice with a problem. Next a stream of requests for private sittings . . . To say nothing of a torrent of mail — almost as much from overseas as British.

When I asked him what he thought was Spiritualism's greatest need he was unhesitant. "Good public clairvoyance," he said.

There, I submit, speaks the voice of a realist. Yet he is a realist who has never received an iota of personal evidence through any fellow-medium. The solution is simple: with mediumship like his he is well qualified as his own counsellor.

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Sadly, his interview comment, "To go on with my work", abruptly came to an end at age 38 years in October 1958 when he passed on. An obituary was written by Maurice Barbanell and appeared on the front page of the "Two Worlds", which he edited on October 11th, 1958.

Incidentally, if you Google "Ronald Strong" there is a rather splendid photograph (gettyimages) of Strong healing at a meeting in Wigmore Hall in 1946. Generally there is no available information on this once famous medium; I have published his obituary below, in which Barbanell tells a dramatic story of Strong's direct-voice mediumship:

Ronald Strong passes suddenly

BRILLIANT MEDIUMSHIP PROVED SURVIVAL TO THOUSANDS

RONALD Strong, whose highly evidential public clairvoyance proved Survival to thousands, suddenly passed on last week after intermittent bouts of illness. He was 38 years old.

Only the day before, Doris Garland Anderson, who for many years chaired his public meetings and was secretary to Red Eagle Lodge, founded around his mediumship, had asked me, "What can we do to get Ronnie back into harness?"

Strangely enough, just a few days previously, a reader telephoned to ask if the rumour were true that Strong had died.

Teenage success

Though to the public he was best known for his clairvoyance, his mediumship was versatile. It included materialisation, direct voice, levitation, the passing of matter through matter, healing, psychometry and trance.

I was responsible for drawing attention to his striking powers in 1939 when he was not yet 20. Friends had told me of a young man giving brilliant clairvoyance at Westcliff-on-Sea. I went to investigate and found that Strong was also a voice medium.

Friends who had been present at a voice seance a few weeks earlier told me of a dramatic incident that had occurred. "I am Captain Kennedy," said a communicator. "I have been drowned. I want to send a message to my wife."

His name was unknown to the sitters. A few hours later they heard in a BBC news bulletin the announcement of a stirring naval engagement.

Doomed ship

Captain Kennedy, commanding the Rawalpindi, had encountered the German pocket battleship Deutschland, and refused to surrender. Outgunned, outranged and outpaced, he sailed into battle knowing that he and his ship were doomed. He continued to fight until every gun on the Rawalpindi was silenced. When his ship sank in flames he was still on the bridge.

The sitters discussed whether they should approach Mrs. Kennedy, but fearing a rebuff decided not to do so. Wishing to test for myself the powers of a new voice medium, I invited Strong to give a seance in my flat. It was the first he ever held in London.

Intimate seance

I telephoned Mrs. Kennedy—her son, Ludovic, is the TV personality who married Moira Shearer—and asked if she would like to be present. She accepted my invitation and came with a friend. Neither was introduced to the medium, nor was he told who they were.

Halfway through the seance we heard one word coming from the trumpet, "Rossie,"

Then Mrs. Kennedy knew, as she told me later, it was her husband. This was his nickname for her.

A long and intimate conversation between husband and wife followed. In it he displayed an obvious knowledge of her surroundings and all that was happening to her. "I saw you waiting anxiously for news," he said. "When it arrived you were brave . . ."

Then, right at the end, we heard again, "Rossie," followed by, "I knew that if I could say "Rossie" you would know it was me." Mrs. Kennedy's friend also received some evidence from her son.

Deeply moved

Another proof was added to Kennedy's spirit message when Red Eagle, the medium's guide, obviously referring to the captain, said to me, "The man with the peaked cap and the buttons wants to thank you for bringing his wife."

When she left I saw that she had been deeply moved by this dramatic experience which led to her becoming a Spiritualist. She was profuse in her thanks, saying, "Tonight has made me a happy woman."

Like so many other mediums, Ronald had been psychic all his life. He would recall how, when quite young, he saw children who were invisible to everyone else. But he did not realise these children were "dead."

Ronald earned his living on the stage. Whenever he "dried up" a voice would repeat the forgotten lines. During one performance he realised he was a clairvoyant. Out of a whitish mass at the back of the audience, he clearly saw a spirit form build.

Then, making up in his dressing room, while preparing for a show, he was unnerved to see, reflected over his shoulder in the mirror, the figure of a Red Indian resplendent in headdress. The vision slowly vanished. It was his first meeting with Red Eagle and the beginning of their partnership.

Soon he was introduced to a Spiritualist circle, where he went into trance at his first sitting. Gradually his other psychic gifts developed.

Estelle's admirer

He modelled his public clairvoyance on the pattern followed by Estelle Roberts—Ronnie was one of her greatest admirers. It was a red-letter day when she gave clairvoyance at one of the Wigmore Hall meetings he carried on for 17 years.

Features of his clairvoyance were the remarkable details which usually accompanied messages, and his refusal to make anything fit. He would go on giving more and more detail until final recognition came.

A strange mixture of vanity and the desire to serve, coupled with an actor's flamboyance, made him a controversial figure who was either very much liked or disliked. Underlying it all was a passionate sincerity spurred on by his knowledge that he possessed outstanding psychic gifts.

Ended in uproar

Throughout the dark days of the war, he continued to hold his Wigmore Hall meetings, Sunday after Sunday, blitz or no blitz, and succeeded in bringing our truths to thousands of strangers attracted by his posters on London streets and in the Underground.

Then there were his many propaganda tours throughout the country—he loved the challenge of proving spirit truths to strangers—with meetings sometimes packed, sometimes half-full. It is sad that his last public demonstration, at Brighton, just over a

year ago, should have ended in uproar and money had to be refunded because his psychic powers refused to function.

For the last two years he was a sick man, afflicted by rheumatoid arthritis. When he had to go into a nursing home for an operation on his teeth, it was discovered that he was also suffering from heart trouble.

Our last meeting, a few months ago, was a luncheon date. I was shocked to see how ill he looked as he limped, leaning on a heavy stick, into the restaurant. Even then he was talking about making a come-back.

Proofs for stars

Because of his stage connections he was instrumental in proving Spiritualism to many outstanding figures in the profession. It was Ronald who gave Beatrice Lillie evidence from her only son, a war victim, whose passing was one of the greatest tragedies of her life.

It was. Ronald who helped to convince Ivor Novello—there were many seances in Ivor's flat. His mediumship provided outstanding proofs to Ruby Miller, the ex-Gaiety girl, and to Evadne Price, actress, playwright, author and journalist.

It was only a few close friends who witnessed examples of extraordinary facets of his physical mediumship. Only last week, Doris Anderson told me of the time when Ronald duplicated D. D. Home's famous levitation phenomenon, by floating in through the window of the house in which they lived.

Margery Lawrence, the novelist, who was associated with him for many years, has described the occasion on which, after he had been lashed and bound, he was released by psychic power. The ropes were left intact and sealed.

Always late

I could quote several cases of outstanding healing accomplished through his mediumship.

Ronald, temperamental and often erratic, made friendship difficult He was invariably late for appointments and even for public meetings. Sitters arrived for seances that had been arranged weeks beforehand and Ronald failed to appear.

Yet despite it all, at his best he was a brilliant medium. It is impossible to estimate the number of mourners whose tears of sorrow he was successful in drying.

Harry Price was involved with one of the finest demonstrations of spirit communication on record with the medium Eileen Garrett, who was not a Spiritualist in the normal sense; she maintained during her lifetime her firm belief that her spirit guides/controls (Uvani, Abdul Latif, Tahotah and Ramah) were different aspects of her deeper self. She was not convinced that her mediumship stemmed from separate, discarnate entities. [8]

Below briefly outlines the story:

> EARLY IN THE MORNING OF SUNDAY, 5, 1930, A CUMBERSOME AND BEAUTIFUL GIANT OF THE SKIES, THE R101 AIRSHIP, CRASHED ON A HILL NEAR BEAUVAIS, FRANCE. FORTY-SIX OF THOSE ON BOARD WERE INCINERATED IN THE WORST TRAGEDY OF ITS KIND IN BRITISH AIR HISTORY. TWO DAYS LATER, THE "DEAD" CAPTAIN OF THAT AIRSHIP COMMUNICATED ONE OF THE MOST DETAILED AND IMPRESSIVE MESSAGES EVER TO BE RECEIVED FROM THE BEYOND.
>
> He gave a mass of technical details regarding the cause of the crash which at least two experts admitted could only have come from him. It is one of the most remarkable and dramatic examples we have of a person supposedly dead conveying information that could not have been in the mind of any living person.



Captain Flight-Lieut. H. C. Irwin

The original arranged séance with Price was for something entirely different:

They hoped for Doyle

It all began when Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who had recently died, was "invited" to a seance. This famous Spiritualist, who had attended so many seances during his earthly life, was still expected to make the headlines by attending them in spirit form.

Ian Coster, who had been commissioned to get articles for "Nash's Magazine," conceived the idea of getting in touch with Doyle.

On October 2, 1930, he called on Harry Price and outlined his idea. Price agreed to help in the attempt to contact the famous author. While Coster was with him he telephoned that great medium, Eileen Garrett, simply asking her to give the journalist a sitting. Doyle's name was not mentioned. An appointment was made for October 7 at 3 p.m., three months after Doyle's death.

Thus at the appointed time, four people, Price, Coster, the medium and Eileen Beenham,[9] Price's secretary, met. Eileen Garrett was soon entranced.

Uvani, her guide, gave a message to Price from a German doctor and one to Coster from an elderly woman whose described appearance reminded him a little of his maternal grandmother. There was nothing at this stage to indicate the drama that was to come.

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[8] It can be noted in her 1943 book, "Awareness" (quoted from the 2007 reprint), page 133: "I cannot explain or definitely understand them. I have never been able wholly to accept them as the spiritual dwellers on the threshold, which they seem to believe they are. I rather leaned away from accepting them as such, a fact which is known to them and troubles them not at all… My own lack of a true belief in the identity of these controls troubles me, but I have maintained an impartial, but respectful, attitude toward them."

[9] The reference to Harry Price's secretary, Eileen Beenham, appears to be a slip of the pen and should read Ethel Beenham.

The quotes are taken from the account published in Pioneer, Vol. 3, No. 1, February 2016:

"Eileen Garrett – Medium solves air disaster mystery".

Further to the above article published in Pioneer I found more information in Price's 1942 book, "Search For Truth - My Life for Psychical Research", pages 158-160:



During this brilliant séance, two observations by 'Irwin'[10] were truly remarkable. He said: 'We almost scraped the roofs at Achy.' Now, no one knew where Achy was and the place was never heard of in connection with the disaster until the name emerged at the séance. It is a tiny village near Beauvais, and I searched high and low in several guide-books and tourist maps, without finding the place. However, it *was* found by the Cardington people on the largescale French ordnance map, and the probability that the airship 'scraped the roofs at Achy' was emphasized at the public inquiry when two French air officials testified that at Poix (14 miles north of Achy) the airship was seen to be only 300 feet from the ground.

The other remarkable statement made by 'Irwin' was that 'this exorbitant scheme of carbon and hydrogen is entirely and absolutely wrong.' Now it happened that, known to only a very few officials at Cardington, experiments were in progress for testing a new fuel composed of coal gas (hydrogen), and carbon (oil fuel from the ship). These experiments had never been made public; in fact, they had hardly begun when the R101 crashed. How were these highly-technical and secret tests known to the entity that 'communicated' at this séance?


Eileen Garrett

There were many other statements, later proved to be facts, connected with the ill-starred airship. Where did this information come from? As Mrs. Garrett did not know one end of an airship from the other, and the sitters, too, possessed no technical knowledge of such things, it is quite certain that the facts about the R 101 emanated from an external source. There is no evidence that it was the discarnate Irwin speaking, But it *is* possible that the information came from the dead Irwin, telepathically, and was 'picked up' by the entranced medium. This hypothesis may be the *vera causa* of all genuine trance communications. There is a well-known theory that some portion of the mind of a deceased person may linger on for an indefinite period. If that person was in dire distress at the time of passing, it is conceivable that the 'persisting remnant' of his mind or ego might register itself on, or combine with, the mind of some living person sensitive enough to receive it.[11]

[10] Flight-Lieut. H. C. Irwin, captain of the ill-fated R101, who controlled Eileen Garrett during the séance.

[11] My official report of this séance, from which the above few details have been extracted, can be read in full in the Am. S.P.R. Journal, July 1931.

At this same séance the alleged spirit of Conan Doyle 'conversed' with me for an hour. The 'Doyle' entity and I discussed our old quarrels, and I must admit that the verbal mannerisms of the entity, the choice of expressions, and the style and diction, were reminiscent of the living Doyle. I reminded the entity that a few years previously I had been asked to lecture in Scandinavia in his stead because the 'spirits' had warned him not to go. But just before Doyle died, he did go to Denmark on a lecture tour, and I asked the entity whether this was the indirect cause of his death. 'Doyle' said: 'I felt my better self warning me not to go to Denmark . . . all my audiences were not sympathetic . . . I think I overdid it in my last tour.' 'Doyle' said a great deal more: all interesting, but not conclusive that the spirit of the great writer was speaking.

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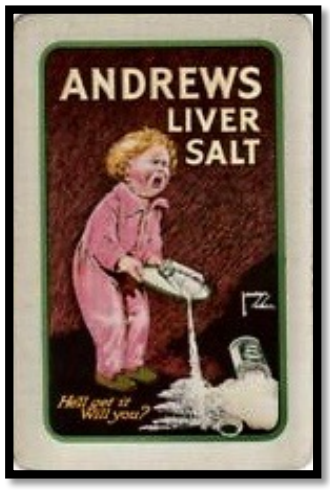
Price relates a rather fascinating story with Miss Stella C—Stella Cranshaw:


Stella Cranshaw

In the previous chapter I related some of the convincing physical phenomena witnessed through Miss Stella C. Stella was a brilliant physical medium, but on one occasion she startled us by describing, when in trance, the details of an advertisement that was to appear on the front page of the *Daily Mail* thirty-seven days later. The séance was held on April 12, 1923, and she 'saw,' as in a vision, an advertisement for Andrews Liver Salt on the front page of the *Daily Mail* for May 19, 1923. She described it in detail, and full particulars were recorded, as usual, in the séance record, which was signed by everyone present.

I had forgotten all about the advertisement, but upon looking at the *Daily Mail* for May 19, 1923, I saw Stella's visualised advertisement of Andrews Salt, exactly as described at the séance.

The reader will at once imagine—as we did—that Stella had, in some way, subconsciously received information concerning this advertisement, and had revealed the information in trance. But during our exhaustive inquiries into the matter it was revealed that an advertisement for Andrews had been received by the *Daily Mail* for publication on May 19. The prominent feature of this advertisement was the picture of a large statue of Abraham Lincoln on a plinth. Three weeks before this was due for publication (i.e. a fortnight after the séance) the Newcastle-upon-Tyne firm which owned the Andrews Liver Salt suddenly informed the *Daily Mail* that another picture (the one Stella described) of a crying boy spilling a tin of Andrews Salts was to be substituted for the 'Abraham Lincoln' copy. This latter picture was not decided upon, said the *Daily Mail*, until several days after our séance. How did a young girl, permanently living in the South of England, anticipate the changed policy and the changed picture of a firm in the North of England? There was no suggestion that the 'crying boy' picture should be used until a fortnight after Stella's vision. How did Stella know that a Newcastle-on-Tyne firm would advertise in the *Daily Mail* on May 19? The Advertising Manager of this paper wrote me that his department was deeply impressed by Stella's spontaneous 'prediction.'



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Below, Estelle becomes involved in a real-life murder inquiry published in "Psychic News", January 1st, 1938:

Mona Tinsley Tells How She Was Murdered

The Mediumship Of Estelle Roberts Helped In Solution Of The Crime

THE psychic powers of Estelle Roberts played an important part in the solution of the Mona Tinsley murder. For this crime against the ten-year-old Newark schoolgirl, Frederick Nodder was executed this week.


Mona Tinsley

Mona Tinsley, a happy, healthy intelligent child, went to school, as usual, on January 5, almost a year ago. She left the school at 4 p.m. that day and her parents never saw her alive again.

In March, Nodder, who had lodged with the Tinsleys, was sentenced to seven years' penal servitude for her abduction.

On June 6th, the body of the girl was found in the River Idle, which flows not very far away from Nodder's home at Hayton Smeeth, Retford.

MEDICAL TESTIMONY

Medical evidence, given at his trial for murder a few weeks ago, proved that she died by strangulation by ligature and that the girl was killed before her body was put into the water.

Unofficially, Estelle Roberts was consulted by the authorities and the information received through her mediumship proved of tremendous value. Her interest in the case started soon after the child was reported missing.

A well-known author asked the medium if it were not possible for something to be done to allay the despairing uncertainty in the minds of the parents. Reports were current that the child was still alive. The medium knew that Mona Tinsley had passed on, for the child had clairvoyantly appeared to her three days after she was reported missing.

Being opposed to capital punishment, Estelle Roberts did not want to use her mediumship for the purpose of causing a man to be hanged. But there were other considerations impressed upon her.

She was told it was only right that the false hope of the girl still being alive should be shattered, not only for the sake of her parents, but, more important still, because it was retarding the progress and peace of the little child who had been so tragically hurled into the spirit world.

Mona Tinsley, herself, would not let the medium rest. Again and again, the child's face came to her vision, appealing to Estelle Roberts in her terrible distress, begging that

the medium should do everything within her power to alleviate the spirit's anguish and suffering. At that time, the child's body had not yet been found.

Mona first appeared to the medium three or four days after she was reported missing, when the B.B.C. broadcast a police message concerning her disappearance. Estelle Roberts then told members of her family and friends that Mona had been outraged and strangled. *She was sure of these facts because the spirit girl told them to her*.

Then the medium asked the authorities to send her a personal article belonging to the child. A little, silk party frock was sent and this provided an even stronger means of contact with the spirit child.

Mona appeared again, still referred to the strangling, and Mrs. Roberts could see that the effect of the terrible ordeal was still in her mind. The spirit child was hysterical and sometimes incoherent. Her story became a little muddled and had to be sifted. It was obvious that the child was unable to differentiate between all that she had experienced during her last hours on earth and her spirit awakening.

SPIRIT INFORMATION

Mona told the medium that she had been taken to another house some distance from her own—at that time there was no report to this effect in circulation—and she had travelled quite a long way in something on wheels. This was subsequently proved to refer to the omnibus journey she made with Nodder to his home. She also gave details of the clothing she wore and referred to some water pipes—a reference that could not be understood.

She said her body had been put into a sack, or something of a similar nature. Then, with the help of the medium's spirit guide, Mona tried in her childish way to tell where her body could be found.

She gave Estelle Roberts a mental picture of her body being taken away from the second house, past a row of trees to a little bridge over some water.

It was taken over the bridge, along a little muddy lane, through fields, and then her body was thrown over into the water. She continued by talking about cartwheels and carts, saying that this route passed by a church, that the lane had a high hedge on one side and opened on to fields on the other side. She also referred to a public house or a brewery in the immediate vicinity.

SCENE OF THE MURDER

In February, Estelle Roberts decided to go to Newark to try to confirm the spirit evidence as given to her. With some friends she arrived at Newark at mid-day, journeyed to Hayton Smeeth and visited the house where Nodder lived, mentioned by Mona.

This was an ordinary small dwelling-house, with a living room and kitchen and small gardens at the front and back. All the furniture and effects had been removed some weeks previously and the rooms had been thoroughly cleaned. From the medium's point of view, these alterations made conditions more difficult, for they affected the vibrations.

The official who accompanied the medium asked in which room the child had slept. Although there were three bedrooms, the main one being in the front, Estelle Roberts immediately went to one at the back of the house. Mona had told her that she had slept

in this back room, in the only bed in the house. The official confirmed that these facts were correct.

On looking over this room, Mrs. Roberts was able to understand Mona Tinsley's reference to water pipes. There was only one cupboard in this bedroom and this contained a cylindrical water tank and pipes, which she was sure had been explored by the child. This fact must have registered itself in Mona's mind and was one of the things she clearly remembered after her passing.

In order once again to test the accuracy of her spirit information, the official asked Estelle Roberts by which door Nodder and Mona Tinsley had entered and left the house. The medium immediately went to the back door. This, the official said, was the only one ever used, the front one being kept permanently locked.

AT NODDER'S HOUSE

When the psychic added that the child had partaken of various meals in the house and had spent much of her time in the front living room, these facts were also accepted as being correct.

The medium was sure that Mona was strangled in that front room because she experienced an over-powering condition of horror in one particular corner.

With Mona leading her, Estelle Roberts went to the back door, up the back garden, scrambled through a thick hedge, walked across two muddy fields and came to a church. That was the church that Mona had told her about.

As advised by the spirit child, she kept to the left of it, along a muddy lane, where immediately in front of her she found the little bridge over a canal. This muddy lane, which was bordered by trees, had been churned up by farm cartwheels after a season of heavy rains.

THE ROUTE TAKEN

"Over this bridge the lane continued," says Estelle Roberts. "On one side of it there was a high hedge, and on the other some fields. It then branched off into some fields, but I regret that here it was impossible to walk. Our party tried very hard to cross these fields, but they were absolutely impassable.

"I have subsequently proved that the route across these fields led to the River Idle, in which the body was found. By this time I realised and stated that Mona's body was in the water, as I went over the little bridge, which was rather steep, I saw a small public house at the back of the road which, for a short way, ran parallel with this lane."

This was, of course, the public house mentioned by Mona.

Neither the medium nor any member of her party had ever been to Hayton Smeeth before. Yet they easily recognised the surroundings from the description given to Estelle Roberts by the spirit girl.

"Thirty years Among the Dead", by Dr Carl Wickland, originally published in 1924, was once readily found in many of church libraries and was a source of topic in the discussion groups; I am personally talking about the late sixties and seventies.[12]

In my Church, during this period, a Rescue Developing circle, said to release some spirits from their earthbound state, was set up along the lines of the Wicklands'. These sessions were often recorded, causing good healthy debates within the Church discussion nights, as to some this suggestion was somewhat controversial and distasteful. Today, however, the names of Dr Carl and Anna Wickland have gone, like many others, into obscurity. The book has recently been republished and is available as a free download; below is taken from "These Mysterious People", by Nandor Fodor, published in 1934, chapter IX, pages 83-90:

WAKING UP AND SAVING THE LOST SOULS OF THE DEAD

Story of Dr. and Mrs. Carl A. Wickland



A DOCTOR may get many shocks in the pursuance of his professional duties, but no worse one could be imagined than to be suddenly addressed and reprimanded by a corpse which he was about to dissect.

That the doctor in the case need not have been necessarily drunk or insane is the solemn plea of Dr. Carl A. Wickland, member of the Chicago Medical Society, of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and Director of the National Psychological Institute of Los Angeles, California.

He was cutting on the arm and neck of the body of a woman which was for seven months on ice. Faintly as from a distance he heard a voice say distinctly:

"Don't murder me!"

He concluded that the words came from a child in the street, though no children were heard playing about.

The following afternoon he heard a rustling sound from a crumpled newspaper lying on the floor. But he paid no attention.

A few days later he held some trance experiments at his home with his wife. Towards the end, in a semi-comatose condition, his wife rose and struck at him angrily, saying:

"I have some bones to pick with you."

[12] Later followed by "The Gateway of Understanding", 1934.

A period of struggle followed. Dr. Wickland had sufficient knowledge of the phenomena of the so-called spirit control to get alarmed. He asked the voice which spoke from the mouth of his wife what the trouble was.

"Why do you want to kill me?" the entity demanded to know.

Dr. Wickland answered that he was not killing anyone.

"Yes, you are. You are cutting on my arm and neck. I shouted at you not to murder me, and I struck that paper on the floor to frighten you, but you would not pay any attention."

Dr. Wickland understood. The entity in control believed herself to be the dead body he was dissecting. She apparently did not realize her apartness and still clung to the "mortal coil''.

He took a deep breath and set out to tell the momentous story, to bring the awful truth home to his interlocutor that she was dead.

It was not his first case and far from being the worst one of the same nature. He grappled with it because no experiments on earth seemed to have so tremendous an issue hanging on them as this one.

Some time ago his wife was discovered to be what is called a trance medium. She did not like it. She was afraid of "disturbing the dead". Whereupon the voices that spoke through her organism during her state of unconsciousness explained to Dr. Wickland that a grievously wrong conception existed among mortals regarding the conditions prevailing after death.

They told him that in reality there was no death but a simple and natural transition to another world: that advanced human souls, on the other side of life, are ever striving to communicate with mortals to enlighten them as to the higher possibilities which await the progressive spirit, but that owing to the prevailing terrible ignorance a great majority of the dead do not realize the change that took place in their condition and continue to remain in their earthly haunts; that they are the cause of untold mischief and misery; that they often produce invalidism, immorality, crime and seeming insanity, for they hang around those whose armour they can pierce and, ignorantly or maliciously, attempt to share their earthly existence.

It was also revealed that the greatest mission work on earth is waiting for those who would help these misguided souls, that they are nearer to earth than heaven, that they can be reached more easily by mortals than by advanced spirits. In their case a psychic intermediary would have to be found. The advanced souls would see that the dead who found no footing in their new life, and the obsessing entities, who exercised a vicious control over mortals in the body, should be attracted to the intermediary, and enlightened as to their true position. Mrs. Wickland was to be the psychic intermediary, and if Dr. Wickland would allow them to use her they would prove their case and would safeguard her from any harm.

Dr. Wickland gave his consent. He realized that criminology, psychopathology, and human thought in general, would have to undergo a revolutionary revision if the claims of the trance entities were proved.

It was following his consent that the dead owners of the corpses he was dissecting away from his home and unknown to his wife, were brought back to tell their story.

Most of these "unearthly" interviews started rather stormily. The temporary possessors of Mrs. Wickland's body would not admit that they were dead. If they were men, a mirror was held in front of them to prove that they were in a female body. They declared that they were hypnotized. Occasionally they grew violent and had to be expelled. This expulsion took place by charges from a static electric machine. Why electric shocks should have the desired effect was not plain. But the visitants could not endure it.

Their violence was also dealt with on the "other side". On being brought back for another lesson these refractory spirits complained of having been kept in a dungeon. It appeared that, in accordance with a certain psychic law, intelligent spirits could impose a condition of restriction around an ignorant spirit similar to imprisonment, an impenetrable, cell-like enclosure from which there was no escape. As soon as they showed repentance and willingness to adapt themselves to their new conditions they were freed and helped along the road of progress.

This is the short history of how Dr. Wickland and his wife became missionaries of the dead. They founded first the Psycho-Pathological Institute of Chicago, and later, the National Psychological Institute of California, where, in the portals of two worlds, they still carry on their heroic work.

Nor are they alone in their undertaking. For theirs was no new and unique discovery. Rescue circles of spiritualists carry on similar missions all over the world. With very difficult cases they may not be capable to cope, but they teach and preach, they parley with the dead, and frequently bring the light of understanding into their life. Occasionally they clear haunted houses, and now and then succeed in curing cases of obsession.

The problem of obsession has been the subject of special scientific study for the past twenty years at the James Hyslop Institute of New York. The Institute was founded by Prof. James J. Hyslop, of Columbia University, an American pioneer of psychical research. In a chapter on obsession in his *Life After Death*, he writes:

"I fought against it for ten years after I was convinced that survival after bodily death was proved. But several cases forced upon me the consideration of the question."

Before his death Professor William James, the greatest psychologist of America, surrendered to the same belief.

"The refusal of modern enlightenment," he wrote, "to treat obsession as a hypothesis to be spoken of as even possible, in spite of the massive human tradition based on concrete experience in its favour, has always seemed to me a curious example of the power of fashion in things scientific. That the demon theory (not necessarily a devil theory) will have its innings again is to my mind absolutely certain."

Last year Dr. Titus Bull, the Director of the James Hyslop Institute, published a small book: *Analysis of Unusual Experiences in Healing Relative to Diseased Minds and Results of Materialism Foreshadowed*. Under this unassuming title, in a cold and dispassionate manner, astounding and stupefying discoveries are submitted to an unheeding world.

Dr. Wickland's experiences were published, as early as 1924 under the title *Thirty Years Among the Dead*. It is a book crammed with thrills, dramatic incidents and poignant emotions. One of its revelations concerns Harry Thaw, the eccentric American millionaire who, for no earthly reason, killed Stanford White, the famous architect of Madison Square Gardens, New York. According to Dr. Wickland, he was a psychic sensitive "unquestionably obsessed by avenging spirits who desired retribution for real or fancied injustice done to themselves or kindred". This is how the conclusion was reached:

"On July 15th, 1906, several weeks after the tragedy occurred, a strange spirit controlled Mrs Wickland during a psychic circle, and she fell prostrate to the floor. Placing the form of my wife in a chair, I began questioning the controlling intelligence.

"The stranger strenuously objected to being touched, brusquely demanded to be left alone, and called out:

" 'Hey, there, waiter ! Bring me a drink.'

" 'What kind of a drink do you want ?"

" 'Bring me a whisky-and-soda, and be quick about it.'

"Who are you ?"

" 'None of your business who I am.'

" 'Where do you think you are ?"

" 'In Madison Square Roof Garden, of course.'

" 'What is your name ?'

" 'Stanford White, if you have to know.'

"Holding one hand on the back of his head, on the right side, and clutching at his chest and abdomen as if in great pain, he cried:

" 'Have a waiter bring me that whisky-and-soda !'

"I was about to ask further questions when the spirit's attention was attracted to some invisibles, and he began to tremble with fear.

" 'Are you seeing dead people ?' I asked.

"He nodded his head violently, then shouted: "They're after me !' and, jumping from the chair, ran to a corner of the room in an effort to escape.

"His agitation was so great that he lost control of the psychic and was gone.

"Immediately another sprit took possession of the psychic and in great excitement began to walk back and forth, exclaiming exultantly:

" 'I killed the dog! I killed the dog! There he lies !'—pointing at the floor toward the spot where White had lost control. 'The dog ! I have been looking for a chance to kill him for several years, and got him at last ! The dog !

"I forced the spirit to sit down and learned that his name was Johnson.

" 'I killed Stanford White,' he boasted. 'He deserved death. He had trifled too long with our daughters . . .'

"He was followed by a third entity, but this intelligence was aware of being a spirit, temporarily controlling a borrowed body.

" 'I am Harry Thaw's father. Save my boy! Save my boy ! He is not guilty. Harry will not be electrocuted.' (Later events proved this to be true). . . . 'He was obsessed by revengeful spirits when he killed Stanford White. I have tried to reach the external world by every possible avenue to tell the people that Harry is not insane, but that he is a psychic sensitive.' "

No one can be reasonably expected to accept without personal experience, statements of such crushing implications as the above, but Dr. Wickland is no maniac. He spent thirty years in this investigation, and through the same channels of approach many brilliant minds reached conclusions similar to his own.

Can it be that an immense volume of human experience should spell nothing but the word "humbug" ?

Professor William James answered the question as follows:

"The spirits, if spirits there be, must indeed work under incredible complications and falsifications, but at least, if they are present, some honesty is left in the whole department of the universe which otherwise is run by pure deception. The more I realize the quantitative massiveness of the phenomenon and its complexity, the more incredible it seems to me that in a world all of whose vaster features we are in the habit of considering to be sincere at least, however brutal, this feature should be wholly constituted of insincerity."

The Wicklands were well respected by many leading Spiritualists, as can be noted with the article below by Hannen Swaffer, who visited them at their home in a suburb of Los Angeles in 1936. Below was published in "Psychic News", August 15th, 1936:

Spiritualism In The Land Of Films

A Sitting With Dr. Carl Wickland Who Cures "Obsession"



By HANNEN SWAFFER

IT was a great pleasure, during my visit to Los Angeles, to spend an evening with Dr. Carl Wickland and his wife in the pleasant suburb where they live.

Actually I had gone to California to visit Filmland, to renew friendships with old friends in the world of the screen. I met dozens of film stars whose names are now known right across the world, some of them as kindly and as charming as they are clever.

But, when I think of Los Angeles, I think not only of screen favourites, whose fame has travelled right across the globe. I always think of Carl Wickland and his wife, two simple people who may be recognised by Posterity long after the names of all the film stars are forgotten.

For they, together, the one a doctor and the other a psychic medium, have blazed a new trail in psychopathic knowledge. Their method of treating lunacy—driving out "evil" and blundering spirits—has been copied in New York by Dr. Titus Bull and has been, in England, the subject of experiment by Dr. Oscar Parkes, who has examined the mediumship of C. S. Collen-Smith. When Dr. Wickland came to London, I sent him to see Dr. Porter Phillips, the head of "Bedlam." He was most interested . .

Yes, many names that are famous to-day, will soon be forgotten, while some of the pioneers of Spiritualism, almost unknown now, may, for all we know, go down through the centuries.

I mentioned Carl Wickland's name to Charles Chaplin when I spent two days with him on John Barrymore's yacht. He had been telling me of a remarkable boy medium whose strange powers were being closely investigated by Charles's own doctor. When I mentioned Carl Wickland, Chaplin said, "Oh, isn't he a fraud?"

You see, Wickland has had, in the world of Los Angeles medicine, much bitter opposition. Doctors have even "reported" him, and asked for his name to be erased from the medical register.

"You go and see him, Charles," I said. "You will obtain quite a different impression."

It was when Chaplin took me to Catalina Island that I met, there, the owner of the biggest store, a man who was called "Judge," and was the confidant and adviser of all the island. When Charles told him of my great interest in psychic matters, he waited about for a whole day to meet me again, and then explained that he was experimenting along the lines of telepathy.

"I had to give it all up, though," he said, "because I decided I could not live in Catalina if I knew the thoughts of all the people who lived here. Besides, I was afraid they might read mine."

This man had blundered into psychical research of a kind by studying the big fish which abound round Catalina Island. In the Tuna Club, they have on the walls enormous fish, some of which weighed, when alive, over 500 pounds.

"The Judge," taking me round the club, showed me, midway across the bodies of all of them, except one species, a serious of tiny holes from which the fish exuded oil.

"I always wondered how, without holes, that fish got rid of its oil," he said, "until one day, when up in a balloon, I saw one of them apparently squirting it from the back of its head and then rolling over to get oil all round its body. 'The fish has a mind,' I decided. From that, I blundered on to telepathy,"

He had worked out some mixed-up sort of philosophy on this and was amazed when I was able to tell him how knowledge of Spiritualism filled in all the gaps that his enquiries had left open.

Chaplin's own attitude towards Spiritualism is best expressed by his objection to the idea that Man should think he was so important.

"He speaks as though he is the lord of creation," he said. "How is he better than a dog or a butterfly?"

He and I and Paulette Goddard had a long talk about Spiritualism, one indeed which lasted for some hours.

I noticed about American people generally that they are most adventurous in all their attitudes towards modern thought, but they mix it all up.

I badly wanted to have a long talk with Mary Pickford, because I knew of the trouble she had been through and I always respected her cool and yet active brain. Unfortunately I returned from the trip with Chaplin hours too late to be present at the big dinner party she had arranged for me. The next day she had gone to comfort a friend whose mother had suddenly passed on. So we did not meet, this time, for that afternoon, I had to fly back to New York.

INSANITY CURED

But I had several talks in Filmland about Spiritualism. Much more interesting, though, was my call on the Wicklands. Conan Doyle had been there during his American tour and been waited on by women, who not long before were considered lunatics. Abraham Russell Wallace, too, had been there. "Thirty Years Among The Dead," Carl Wickland's book, had made him so well known.

Besides, he and his wife and two friends called Fred Rafferty and Miss Dresser had been to my flat in London and there seen physical phenomena which was new to them.

It was with the greatest interest that I went into the Wickland's seance room and saw the big electrical machine which is used for passing an electric current through a chair on which the "lunatic" is seated. When I touched the chair, and the machine was turned on my hair stood up on end. But electricity is one of the many things I know nothing about.

A PUZZLED SPIRIT

I did understand, however, the little séance we had after dinner. It was remarkable in the sense that, when Mrs. Wickland was controlled, the spirit of a little girl came through in a bewildered sort of way. She did not understand where she was, or what she was doing.

"There was a man fastened on to me," she said. "I had to pull him. Oh, he was so heavy."

Afterwards the spirit guide explained it all. It seemed that a man whom the Wickland's had employed as a gardener had passed on a few hours before. He had been a heavy drinker and such a trouble that they had had to get rid of him. Because of the plea of the woman who records the sittings, he was taken on again, on condition that she looked after his money. Then he "died" suddenly.

All that day, she had felt a kind of depression, and this, the spirit guide explained, was due to the presence of the man who had passed on. He was worrying her. So, in order to get him into a condition in which spirit friends could deal with him, they had had to use the little girl to bring him to the seance.

"He will be all right now," we were told.

Well, then Fred Rafferty, who had passed on a few years ago, turned up. I was not surprised. I had been thinking of him. He spoke of the dinner he had had in my flat and the manifestations he had seen. He talked of the work I was doing. I had flown to Los Angeles from New York.

"You don't need to take a train or an aeroplane, Fred," I said. "You travel by thought."

"That was the machine Will Rogers travelled by, shortly after he passed out. He alluded to it when he controlled Mrs. Wickland," said Fred.

Will Rogers, it seemed, was entirely unaware of being a spirit when he spoke through Mrs. Wickland shortly after his death in an aeroplane crash in Alaska. Since his mind was centred on aeroplane travel, he, unwittingly as a spirit, travelled by thought. With great enthusiasm he said he had made a wonderful discovery in flying.

"No gasoline or engine is necessary," he said, "and it makes no noise. It is a wonderful thing, and when I get home, I will take out a patent on it."

Although he was laughing at this, it was obvious that he did not know the new condition he was in.

MEDIUMS EVERYWHERE

"The way you travelled, Mr. Swaffer," said Fred, "brings England so much nearer to us. The time will come when there will be no interference between this world and the spirit world. There will be open doors so that we can get through anywhere, and also, what is far more important, we shall not be scoffed at.

"We shall demonstrate to the world that we are living and that, when you talk of us, you call us and we try to come to you. We are just as anxious to be with you as you are to have us come. We have a great advantage over you. We can come to you whenever we want to, but you cannot come to us.

A COMMUNICATION MACHINE

"It will not be so many years before an instrument will be invented which will be used as a radio in every home and through which a connection will be made between your world and ours. It is being worked upon, but is not yet ready.

"There will not be any scoffing, because talking through such a radio will be just as easy as it is for me to talk to you.

"This medium is a radio, and we will talk through this new radio I speak of with the same ease with which I talk through Mrs. Wickland.

"If anybody had said twenty-five years ago that radios would be in almost every home, people would have laughed. Now that has come about, and it will be the same with the new invention. There is some little connection that is not yet perfected, but it will be, and the machines will be sensitive enough for us to communicate directly with you.

"We travel by thought and we live in a thought world.

"There is some one who comes to you, Mr. Swaffer, and he does all he can to help you. He worked for humanity as you are working."

"It is Abraham Lincoln," I said.

"Yes," said Rafferty, "and he says he was just as happy to come to you as you were to receive him. He is trying to make humanity open the door to the truth of spirit existence.

"Mr. Swaffer, I have not been in the spirit world very long, but I have had some wonderful adventures in travelling. I am never still. I want to learn all I can, so go from one place to another.

"You will not get the radio I spoke of until things become more settled. At present there is too much fighting, quibbling, killing, war, and many other disturbances.

"It is hard to penetrate these conditions, but when things become more settled, it will be different.

THE EFFECT OF HATRED

"You are all going through a very trying period, not you alone, but everybody. All this turmoil is caused by the thoughts of hatred that are sent out. Even little children are affected by them. After these disturbances have passed, you will have a vastly different atmosphere. I use the word 'atmosphere' because there is a war of thoughts going through it all the time.

"When coming to you we get into a current which is hard to penetrate, and when it pushes us to one side, we have to start out again, until finally we are able to reach you. The atmosphere itself seems to be in the clutches of the fighting spirit which pervades it.

"If there were more 'receiving stations,' such as this one, for us to come through, as there should be, we could do much more for you.

"When we come to you, we feel bright and happy, but when we get into a stratum of hatred thoughts we can hardly breathe. This is the earth condition, so vastly difference from the conditions in the spirit world.

SPIRIT WORLD BEAUTIES

"Everything is so wonderful on our side of life. When we want to listen to music, we reach the minds of the masters of music and listen to them. If we want to go to a lecture, we centre our minds on it, and there we are.

"When I was on earth I wanted to see many things which I was unable to see. Now, conditions are different, and my desires are being gratified.

"I shall never forget the wonderful trip to London we had with the Wicklands.

"Conan Doyle, who is now here, says that he does all he can to help the Spiritualist movement, but most of his time has been taken up with his wife. He is trying to give her strength, as she is not so strong as he wishes her to be."

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On March 3rd, 1937, the Wicklands' physical partnership ended when Anna died. The obituary below was published in "Psychic News", April 10th., 1937:

MRS. CARL WICKLAND PASSES ON

She Cured Hundreds of Victims of Obsession

I REGRET to advise you that my wife and companion, Mrs. Wickland departed this physical world on March 3rd, after a nine-months illness.

"Mrs. Wickland's going has indeed left a great vacuum in my life and our household. At the same time, we also rejoice because we know she has earned a good rest after over forty-five years of psychic labour and is now among friends, many of whom she knew in physica1 life and hosts whom she has been a benefactress, through communication with their kindred and those she has helped from darkness to light"



This letter which reached Hannen Swaffer in London last Monday—it was signed by Dr. Carl Wickland—tells of the passing of one of the world's greatest mediums, a charming, simple woman who gave most of her life to the great task of helping her husband to cure lunacy by driving out obsessing spirits.

Like her husband, a Los Angeles medical man, she was of Swedish origin. They blazed a new trail in psychopathic knowledge, risking professional ostracism but developing a method of dealing with "evil" and blundering spirits which has been copied by Dr. Titus Bull in New York and by Dr. Oscar Parkes in England, and which is destined, ultimately, to transform the means of curing lunacy.

Their system of treatment was to give the patient a charge of static electricity, not sufficient to hurt the victim, but enough to dislodge the obsessing spirit, who then controlled Mrs. Wickland, a remarkable trance medium.

Often these spirits were ignorant of the fact that they were "dead," and did not realise they had attached themselves to people on earth.

The task of Dr. Wickland and his helpers was to convince them, once they controlled the medium, that they could release themselves from their earthbound state. The investigators interrogated these spirits, obtained proofs of their identities and then showed them how to progress. It often took more than one seance to convince the obsessor that he had passed from earth.

They used many novel methods. For example, if a spirit was of the male sex, they would say, "What are you doing wearing women's clothes? Look at your hands. They are those of a woman." That would bring him to realise that he was no longer on the earth

Dr. Wickland's book, "Thirty Years Among the Dead," is a record of scores of these cases.

Two thousand years ago, the Nazarene drove out evil spirits. Mrs. Wickland was used to perform similar tasks in our own generation.

Opponents talk vaguely of the dangers attending Spiritualists from associating with "evil spirits." Dr. Wickland and his wife, realising that the next world is composed of the people who leave this, tried to help the less fortunate ones.

When Dr. Wickland came to London some years ago, Hannen Swaffer sent him to see Dr. Porter Phillips, the head of Bedlam. He did not laugh, but was most interested.

Dr. Wickland become interested in Spiritualism through experimenting with a Ouija board. Then he discovered that his wife was a medium with remarkable powers. At first, he was troubled as to whether he had any right to "disturb" the "dead."

The Spirit Promise

But he was told of the great work he had to do in helping unenlightened spirits. His guides informed him that his wife was a suitable instrument for instructing ignorant entities and that, if she would allow herself to be used for that purpose, they would see that no harm befell her.

Dr. Wickland's curiosity was naturally aroused, as he realised the great bearing this new knowledge would have on criminology and psychopathology. So they began, forty-five years ago, what seemed a hazardous undertaking.

Their first case was a striking one. Dr. Wickland had left home to carry out some dissecting work. The subject was a man of about sixty years of age and that afternoon he began dissecting one of the lower limbs.

The "Dead" Victim

When he returned home, he had scarcely entered the door when his wife, apparently afflicted with a sudden illness, complained of feeling strange and staggered as though about to fall. As Dr. Wickland placed his hand on her shoulder she drew herself up, and became entranced by a foreign intelligence who, with a threatening gesture, said: "What do you mean by cutting me?"

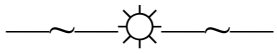
When Wickland replied that he was not aware of cutting anyone, the spirit angrily answered: "Of course you are. You are cutting on my leg."

Then the doctor realised that it was the spirit of the man whose body he had been dissecting that day.

That was the prelude to the work that occupied the major part of Mrs. Wickland's earthly life.

They lived in a cottage in a Los Angeles suburb, called their centre the National Psychological Institute, and had recently built several bungalows near, so that patients could stay with them.

Dr. Wickland and his wife had planned to visit Glasgow next September for the International Spiritualist Congress. Although, no doubt, that visit will be abandoned, his work will go on, with a new medium.



"Ask the Spirits"



Mr David Gow occupied the position of Editor of LIGHT from January 1914 until Mr George Henderson Lethem was appointed Editor on April 20th, 1931; Gow agreed to remain as Advisory Editor. He continued for 18 months before retiring due to poor health. He died on Thursday November 2nd, 1939, aged 73.[1]

"Ask the Spirits": A symposium edited by David Gow, published in 1934. The book publishes replies to questions asked of the Spirit—through the various channels from the early days of the Spiritualist movement up until the publication date. These quotes include "Letters from Julia" (William Stead), "Thirty Years among the Dead" (Carl Wickland),[2] "Raymond" (Sir Oliver Lodge), "Hafed, Prince of Persia" (David Duguid), "The Life Elysian" (Robert James Lees)[3] and "Northcliffe's Return" (Hannen Swaffer), etc.

Below are some of the spirit answers to the questions:

Q. Have you ever met a spirit who had a remembrance of passing through more than one existence on Earth?

A. No, no. If such were the case, I could not say I was myself. I believe I never was on the Earth til I was sent direct from the Great and Mighty Source of all Spirit. Some men in the Spirit World go back to Earth, and teach the old doctrines they held in mortal life, and which they still tenaciously hold. Let such men but come to stand on the same platform that I and others occupy, become frequenters of the Great Temple, and they will soon learn to think otherwise.

Many of us, indeed, return to Earth on errands of love and truth, but not in the body. I, for my part, have no such desire, unless it were permitted me to do so, and then it would be to revolutionize the world—to bring on the glorious "golden age", so long desired by all the good and true in past ages. But here, and as I am, I have work to do—and a glorious work it is: the rescue of the benighted ones who, in multitudes, wander amid the shadows of the Spirit World.

(*Hafed Prince of Persia*.)

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[1] For further information please see: Psypioneer, Vol. 19, No. 9: "Light" During the War – And After – David Gow, David Gow – Poet and Journalist, Editorial Notes – Stanley De Brath, and David Gow – John B. McIndoe.

[2] See Pioneer, Vol. 6, No. 5: Waking Up and Saving the Lost Souls of the Dead – Story of Dr and Mrs Carl A. Wickland; Spiritualism in the Land of Films – A Sitting with Dr Carl Wickland, Who Cures 'Obsession' – by Hannen Swaffer; Mrs Carl Wickland Passes On - She Cured Hundreds of Victims of Obsession

[3] See Pioneer, Vol. 3, No. 5: Robert James Lees – Did he really sit for Queen Victoria as a young boy?; Lees' involvement with the 1888 Jack the Ripper case?

Q. What is the weakness all spirits complain of shortly after they pass over? Those I have asked do not seem to understand it themselves, but say that during the time it exists they have not the same capabilities of communicating. Is it a change of magnetic currents?

A. The mere facts of departure from one state of existence to another, the relinquishment of the relations of an organization that you have lived in for a considerable period, and the taking on of new conditions and fresh circumstances, are in themselves quite sufficient to account not only for weakness but for a certain amount of awkwardness in regard to one's new conditions and relationships. The mental reaction produces a certain effect, with the consequence that the normal vigour of the psychical forces and the will is diminished, and the individual feels all the lassitude that would be experienced after a physical illness in this world. This condition of weakness remains until such time as the vital currents flow through their proper channels again and the adjustment is completed between the consciousness and its independent spiritual organization, and the spirit has become related normally to its new state. Then strength and vigour reassert themselves, the difficulties disappear, and a perfect state of balance is thereby established. This, in effect, will explain the circumstances referred to in the question.

(*Mediumship of J. J. Morse*.)

Q. What shape or form do spirits take in the spirit world?

A. Some people have imagined that they are balls of light. Some have added wings to these balls of light, and spoken of the winged souls that people the spaces; some have given them a fanciful human form, and added wings thereto, the inference being apparently that man is so gross a creature that he could never become angelic or spiritual. When one thinks of the inconvenience of being a ball of light, even with wings attached to it, one might not unreasonably ask if there is not some more familiar shape that one could assume after death, so that one could resume one's acquaintance with oneself, because the majority of you would hardly know yourselves under such circumstances.

Personality and consciousness are so closely associated that it is difficult to dissociate them from each other. Individuality is also bound up with personality and consciousness to such an extent that to deprive you of these three elements of your being would be virtually to deprive you of your existence altogether. Hence, then, it would follow that if you are to know yourselves after death, you must retain the consciousness of your existence; memory must exist with you. If you retain consciousness and memory, it is not hard to suppose that individuality will be associated therewith; and if so, one must necessarily reckon with personality as well. If you are to know that you continue to exist you must be able to recognize yourselves by possessing those elements of being that were previously yours while you were here; that is to say, consciousness, memory, intelligence, individuality and personality.

Therefore, man after death has the human form, is possessed of the personality pertaining to his human nature—purified, exalted, spiritualized, if you will, and possessing certain faculties, powers and adaptations that have been unfolded in his new body, and were not expressed while he was here on earth. By the consciousness, intelligence, personality and will expressed through his human form, man, as a spirit, recognizes his past experience in his then present consciousness. Therefore the individual and personal consciousness of man after death is the answer to the question.

(*Mediumship of J. J. Morse*.)

Q. How can one cultivate psychic power?

A. Some gifts are very difficult to develop, but what is needed is great patience, regularity, and harmony. For instance, clairvoyance is the easiest, but trance, voice, physical phenomena, materialization, etc., take five to six years. Spirit-photography, like other psychic gifts, needs cultivating. Unfortunately a great deal of controversy surrounds this gift; and in fact every psychic gift, or means of showing there is a life in the Great Beyond, is hindered by contention.

Now a question recently discussed on earth: Why not all sittings with a faint light? Well, dear friends, it is impossible to develop or perform *every* phenomena in no matter how subdued a light. Automatic and inspired writing, clairvoyance, trance, may be so performed; but voice and materialization can never be developed or satisfactorily performed in anything but darkness, the reason being that our eyes and our faculties are so highly developed and sensitive and magnetized.

I mean that for voice and materialization we come in person to earth; and gross, earthly light is disturbing and destructive to us; whereas for those other phenomena we merely project ourselves, or part of ourselves into the medium's body, which, as you all know, occurs in trance, and on these occasions perhaps a faint light may be allowed. But since the sitters have a grave responsibility towards any medium under trance, the *sudden* flashing on of lights should never be allowed.

(*Difficulties experienced by Spirit Controls*.)

Q. Does God seem any nearer to you?

A. People think that when they die they will see God, but how few realize what God means. God is the Life of all things. How little people think of this earth-plane and what it really is. It is only an infinitesimal part of the Universe. Once I thought of reincarnation. I was at one time a Theosophist. Theosophy is all right so far as it goes; the thoughts and teachings are beautiful, but why should we reincarnate on this little planet? I would not care to come back to the earth-plane except to tell you of the higher and real life which lies before you. I would not like to come back to this earth-plane again to be a little baby and I do not see why I should, for what would I learn?

Could souls like us come back into children again and feel satisfied? After you have learned the higher things of life, you do not care to come back to matter another time. You want to learn while here and gain sufficient knowledge so that when you pass on you will not want to come back and learn it over again. You can learn much about the other side of life while here, and when you pass over there you will learn more and more of things which you could not learn while here because you could not understand them.

(*Thirty Years among the Dead*.)

Q. How do controls influence matter as in automatic writing?

A. With regard to this writing, it is merely a guiding of the surroundings that causes the hand to move. And the thoughts and teachings that are written down are guided by intelligences beyond you. A certain form does not stand beside you and move the pencil with physical force, but the "machinery" which moves the pencil is flesh and blood. Take a typewriter as an illustration. You do not put your finger on the part that is impressed on the paper; you touch another part that communicates with a spring which forces the type down on to the paper. So it is with the "Guides." The writer is merely the instrument, not the source of energy.

Some methods of communicating are more material than others, but they are necessary to convince where others fail. For instance, the materialist is not convinced by writing, either direct or automatic. But when he comes to tangible objects moving, a voice as real as his own, and all such phenomena, then what can he say, but that sight and hearing cannot both deceive him? And he will acknowledge an hereafter from the moment his bodily senses are convinced.

(*More Guidance from Beyond*.)

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Automatic Writing

Automatic writing, over time, has demonstrated various methods from the early days of physical phenomena and direct/independent writing, for example slate writing. It is referred to by some as "psychography" or "abnormal writing", a word used by M.A. (Oxon), an early pseudonym for William Stainton Moses. Attention to Stainton Moses' writings is drawn in Pioneer, Vol. 3, No. 3: "Visit to the College of Psychic Studies." It was Stainton Moses who founded the London Spiritualist Alliance in 1883, later changed to the College of Psychic Studies (CPS) in 1970.



Stainton Moses' numerous notebooks, which contain the material later edited and published in 'Spirit Teachings', 1883, are today held at the CPS. These were received,

> "… by the process known as Automatic or Passive Writing. This is to be distinguished from Psychography. In the former case, the Psychic holds the pen or pencil, or places his hand upon the Planchette, and the message is written without the conscious intervention of his mind. In the latter case, the writing is direct, or is obtained without the use of the hand of the psychic, and sometimes without the aid of pen or pencil."

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Other accounts of automatic writing can come from:

> "'living communicators', i.e. from the mind of a *living person,* as was often the case with William T. Stead, who wrote messages from friends, with distance being no object; afterwards he verified the accuracy by referring to the transmitters. He noted in his "Borderland" (Vol. I, page 50) that he knew at least ten other automatic writers who received messages from living friends through "automatic telepathy".

One name that is still well-known today in automatic writing is Geraldine Dorothy Cummins, who made a close study of the art of automatism in the production of her scripts. Her well-known "Scripts of Cleophas" was the first major work she produced by these means.[4]

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GRACE ROSHER

Once a well-known automatic writer, I guess she is better known today in the art world for her miniature portraits of royal families, theatre personalities, etc., which were exhibited in the Royal Academy in London. These paintings can be found on-line and are mostly under copyright.

Rosher wrote two books on her automatic scripts: "Beyond the Horizon" in 1961 and "The Travellers' Return" in 1968. Below is quoted from the preface of "Beyond the Horizon", which gives a nice insight into Grace Rosher:

PREFACE


GRACE ROSHER

In introducing the following communications from what is referred to by my Communicator as "The other side of life,' I wish to make it clear that neither of us had any knowledge of, or interest in, Spiritualism. In fact I was quite definitely prejudiced against anything of that kind, and had no wish to investigate the subject. But this does not mean that I had no belief in a future life.

While still a young girl I had had a very vivid dream experience of a dearly loved relative who had passed on, in which I had been able to hold a brief conversation with her which concluded with these words. "If only people knew, if only people understood, no one would ever be afraid of death." This experience which I recounted to my friend Gordon Burdick, not only assuaged my sense of grief at that time, but left such a deep impression on my mind that I was completely satisfied that life continued after death, and that it was perhaps possible when partly released from the physical body during sleep to meet with those we loved who had left the earth world.

[4] These accounts and more can be found in Pioneer, Vol. 4, No. 2: Automatic Writing: William T. Stead – Living Communicators; Geraldine Dorothy Cummins; An Unexpected Message – In the Whimsical Style of G.R.S. Mead; Passing of Miss E. Gibbes.

When I received the news of my friend's sudden passing shortly before he was due to sail for England, my only hope was that I might perhaps have a similar dream experience with him, in which he would speak to me.

We had first met in our youth and the happy and affectionate friendship which sprang up between us continued unbroken through the years. His sudden passing, for he was coming to me, was a severe blow. My first reaction, after I had recovered from the immediate shock was, "At least we can still 'think' to each other". He had believed that telepathic communication was possible between people who cared for each other, and had told me so in a letter and that in this way our thought communication could bridge the distance between us; and from time to time it was abundantly proved to me that our thoughts did reach each other across the four thousand miles that more often than not separated us.

I was also glad to recall at this time an occasion when we were together, when, without any reference to the subject of our conversation, he suddenly tapped himself on the arm, saying very seriously, "You know, Grace, *this isn't* really me." Very surprised at this apparently irrelevant remark, but realising what he meant, viz. that his physical body was not his real self; I hastened to agree adding, "I suppose if we come to think of it we have never really seen each other."

I tried to be thankful for the long years of perfect friendship that had so sweetened life and for the fact that his passing had been so gentle (I had been told that he had passed in his sleep). That I had only lovely memories to recall, and I felt sure that wherever he was, he was not beyond the reach of my love, or of my thoughts and prayers. And with this I tried to content myself, I remembered also how he had faced up to his own griefs, and I knew so well what he would expect of me.

I felt no desire whatever to try to get in touch with him through a medium of any kind, and assuming that memory and consciousness persist, he would know quite well that I would be unlikely to attempt to do so: anything of that nature would have been repugnant to me and I would have been very hard to convince. Of automatic writing I had no knowledge, beyond the fact that I had heard there was such a thing, but just what it was I had no idea, nor had I any wish to find out. These things had no appeal for me.

It was because of this attitude of mine therefore, that the initiative had to come from the other side, and that what subsequently happened was the greatest surprise to me. My feelings were a mixture of bewilderment, joy, and incredulity, for I was almost afraid to believe that anything so wonderful could really happen. Could it be true that it was really he, himself? Was such a thing possible? I had never heard of such a thing ever happening to anyone else. Might it be something to do with that mysterious thing called the subconscious mind? I argued with myself that he was not even in my thoughts on the day it happened, that I had never expected anything of the kind; therefore, it could not be attributed to wishful thinking.

I tried to reassure myself that I was, or thought I was, an unemotional and matter-of-fact person, not easily impressed or gullible where psychic matters were concerned. Yet in spite of this, and a great deal that was seemingly very evidential in what I was being told, I passed at times through quite agonising periods of doubt, fearing lest I might be the victim of some strange hallucination, or of unconscious self-deception. I wanted desperately to believe, but dare I, that this wonderful thing was true?



Now, nearly four years since those first stumblingly written messages with their sense of urgency, excitement, and deep affection appeared, I have had so many proofs of the authenticity of the communications and of the close companionship of the Communicator himself, that doubt is no longer possible. In the actual communications themselves I have refrained from editing; for example the word "through" is invariably written "thru" a thing I as an English woman would never do. Gordon Burdick [5] was a Canadian by birth and this might account for this little bit of Americanism, or possibly the shortened word was less trouble to write.

Among the earlier communications was much that was very personal and these have naturally been omitted.

It is my sincere hope and prayer that the message contained in the following pages will bring to those who read them some measure of the comfort and reassurance that has been given to me, to the members of my family and to many of my friends, and with it a new realisation of the wonderful love and kindly justice of the One we call "Our Father'.

G.R.

Grace Rosher was born circa 1889 and died in 1980. It can be noted from the photograph which heads this article that Rosher's method is different from that of Stainton Moses, Geraldine Cummings and William Stead, as referenced above. The pen was clearly only balanced on the medium's hands rather than held, which suggests that the actual writing did not come through the medium's hand as such, i.e. automatic or passive writing, more possibly on the side of psychography and independent/direct control.



Her psychic potential, as noted in her own words, came to the forefront with the death of her fiancé, Gordon E. Burdick, who in 1956 was serving in the Canadian Navy at Vancouver; a week before he was due to sail to London he died.

Rosher notes on page 1 of "Beyond the Horizon":

> It was half past three on a September afternoon in 1957. I was sitting at my table engaged in writing letters. I had just finished one and had addressed the envelope and was debating in my mind whether there would be time to begin another before a visitor I was expecting to tea was due to arrive.
>
> My hand still holding my pen was resting on the writing pad whilst I was trying to decide this question, when I heard the words "Leave your hand there and see what happens," as distinctly as though spoken. I conclude now that I must have heard them clairaudiently. My instant mental reaction was 'Why nothing is likely to happen,' but to

[5] Photograph of Gordon Burdick as a younger man.

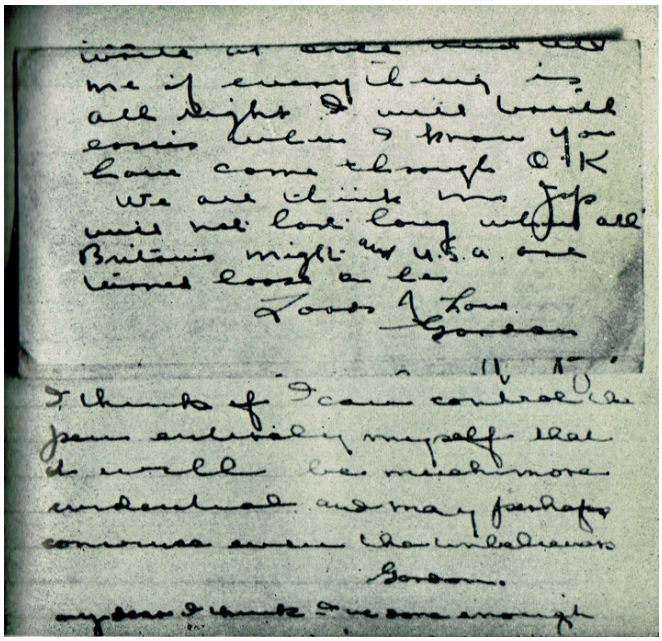
my utter astonishment the pen started to move without any effort on my part. As I watched fascinated I concluded that some sort of electric force in myself must be causing the pen to move; but out of the erratic line creeping across the page words began to form, and the message "With love from Gordon," slowly appeared.

The sentence was repeated, then my name and a term of endearment, followed by the words "write often." The words were all joined together, and the writing which was very small, was shaky and uncertain. Very puzzled, I mentally said "Who is doing this, is it you or me?" Immediately the pen moved and wrote "I am, it is me, Gordon, Gordon." The name repeated as though anxious to convince me. Then followed a very personal and precious message.

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The top part is Gordon Burdick's handwriting during his lifetime—below received after his death by the mediumship of Grace Rosher

Grace Rosher sought guidance from the Reverend G. Maurice Elliot, the first honorary secretary of "The Churches' Fellowship for Psychical Study" (CFPS).[6] Rev. Elliot enlisted the aid of handwriting expert F.T. Hilliger, who studied the automatic scripts and compared them to the handwriting of Burdick when alive.



Although initially skeptical, F.T. Hilliger published his detailed report in "Beyond the Horizon", concluding "… the writing reproduced by Grace Rosher was, if it were humanly possible, genuinely inspired by the personality of Gordon E. Burdick" (signed by Hilliger on 28th January 1957).



[6] For further information on the Reverend G. Maurice Elliot and the CFPS please see Psypioneer; a contents sheet is available on request. The CFPS is still going today:
The Churches' Fellowship for Psychical and Spiritual Studies exists to promote the study and the integration of psychical and spiritual experience within a Christian context. Founded in 1953, it continues to serve churches and individuals with many and varied backgrounds, experiences and needs.

Eileen Garrett

1893-1970

The name Eileen Garrett is well-known in the annals of psychical research; an interesting article was published in Psypioneer:

Archetypes, fragments of our collective unconscious, or other: Re-examining Eileen Garrett's struggle with spirit guides

By Maxine Meilleur

Below is a short quote:



> Eileen Garrett was one of the finest mediums of the 20th century who had an impeccable body of work and was whole heartedly committed to scientifically researching psychic phenomena. But she famously struggled with the notion that spiritual guides were entities separate from her. After much public pondering over this and submitting herself to test after test in pursuit of evidence one way or another on this matter, she continued to believe they were a part of her subconscious.
>
> Although other great mediums had similar struggles (1) and researchers investigated and continue to investigate the nature of spiritual guides, (2) Eileen Garrett was the only major medium who remained firm in her belief that spirit guides were merely another aspect of her. Despite this, her dilemma has wider implications for Spiritualism and demands a close re-examination.

As stated, Eileen believed her four spirit guides/controls (3) to be different aspects of her deeper self, a view also held by Dr. Ira Progoff, the Jungian analyst who worked with her. She wrote in her 1968 autobiography, *Many Voices: The Autobiography of a Medium*:

> I definitely believe the entities are formed from spiritual and emotional needs of the person involved...The older conception of these personalities as evidence of schizophrenia would not seem to be true in my case, though there are many who still feel that this may be an answer. On the other hand, those who have known me intimately through the years know that I have continued to meet life on its many levels and that the psychic structure which may have begun very early has learned to deal with symbol and fantasy, thus giving me an appreciation of the meaning of life within and without; yet I have never lost sight of the spiritual goal toward which my whole nature strives.

The reference to schizophrenia reflected Eileen's one time doubt of her own sanity and ongoing belief that both mild and severe mental illness existed within some so-called mediums. Further, she knew that some so-called mediums were merely deluded individuals with abnormal psychological needs. This abnormal need may have played out in the identification of guides which went beyond a quiet, collective group of entities that meet the needs of a medium or any individual. To Eileen, focus on any particular guide or focus on their description was limiting.[1]

Despite the wealth of convincing, detailed evidence of survival which came through Eileen Garrett and the fact that her secondary guide, Abdul Latif, was proved to have lived and she had had no previous knowledge of him,[2] she was never quite convinced that her mediumship stemmed from separate, discarnate entities. … [3]

See also Pioneer:

Medium solves air disaster mystery
Experts Amazed by Séance Evidence

Eileen Garrett—R101 crashed.[4]

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Below was published in "Two Worlds", June 22nd 1957 – highlights from a speech she gave to a Spiritual Healing Seminar, New York:

THIS WAS EILEEN GARRETT'S MOMENT OF TRUTH

A famous medium is faced with the problem of finding milk for 2,000 babies and food for 9,000 other war refugees. How she did so—and how it revolutionised her thinking—is revealed in an amazing speech she gave at the Fifth Spiritual Healing Seminar held in Rye, New York, U.S.A.

The medium is Eileen Garrett, one of the most extraordinarily gifted psychics of this age. Here are extracts from her speech.

I didn't enter this field (psychics) because I wanted to. I entered it because I was driven by not knowing what was the matter with me. As a child it was all right, but as I grew up I went out to seek, in all he areas of understanding, for the meaning of the different stages of what was alleged in me to be amnesia, the thing that became clairvoyance. I sought to find where the voices came from.

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[1] The teachings of many of the great mediums reveal that their spirit guides were not self-aggrandizing and generally choose an image of themselves that will be acceptable to us (i.e., their projected image more a reflection of our need than their spiritual image). They generally fell into the following categories: a life guide who accompanies everyone from birth (or birth) on their journey in this incarnation and those specialized helpers who assist with mediumship or other specific life tasks. …

[2] Garrett's secondary control, Abdul Latif, a seventeenth-century Persian physician, dealt primarily with healing.

[3] See full article in Psypioneer, Vol. 9, No. 9/10, direct link via: www.pauljgaunt.com

[4] Pioneer, Vol. 3, No. 1: Eileen Garrett & Vol. 6, No. 3.

The church gave me no answers; told me to have faith. But faith was difficult to explain to a woman who was in a hurry to find out about life.

I went to see Dr. Annie Besant and she was not for me. Then one day I met Edward Carpenter, a very great mystic. I told him of my difficulties, of the alleged paranoia, of the telepathic dreams, and of all the other things that were happening, and he said to me, "My goodness, you're going to have a difficult life—you have an overdose of cosmic consciousness!"

Finally Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Sir Oliver Lodge got hold of me. I had the great privilege of working with Sir Oliver Lodge. He asked me to enter the British College of Psychic Science and to take training,[5] because he believed I was a medium. He said, "I think that with a good deal of discipline perhaps you will begin to understand these things." I wasn't too certain that I like that very much, but many others insisted that I had mediumship and that when I went under this stage of what was declared to be amnesia, these alleged personalities came and spoke words that made sense.



ANALYSIS . . .

I entered the College and worked with Dr. Hewat McKenzie. I went into trance four times a day, and I produced results which were alleged to be results proving survival. I resented every day that I worked. I took care to tell to people. "Don't believe a word of it, it may be all from the sub-conscious."

I went through the process of ten years' detachment, not believing a word of it, not caring, frankly. It didn't matter to me and I didn't like it. At the end of 10 years, I went to America. I wrote to Professor MacDougal and said, "You are an honest and honourable man, now tell me the truth."

He said:

"Eileen, what you need more than anything else, is more discipline. If I were you I would enter the Johns Hopkins Hospital and have analysis."

HYPNOSIS . . .

So I went to the Johns Hopkins Hospital and I entered the Phipps' Clinic, and I worked with Adolf Meyer and had analysis. He told me: "You have plenty of good common sense, but you are in too much of a hurry to live. But there is no doubt about your telepathic experiences."

I returned to London, and I did analysis with Dr. William Brown, at Harley Street, under hypnosis. That was to rid me of the alleged trance personalities. I stayed in Kings College Hospital and did this work thoroughly but without losing the trance personalities.

[5] Psypioneer, Vol. 3, No. 8: Knight Errant of Psychic Science – James Hewat Mckenzie.

I don't like to tell this very much but I think you should know how I came to believe. I was in France, working with the soup kitchens and at the "Foyer de Soldat."

"MAGIC" . . .

The Italians were coming over the border and the villages had to be cleared. Eleven thousand people—children and the old people—were cleared out of the hills. There were about 2,000 babies that we had to feed, and we were sweeping the market place at this time for leavings to colour the hot water, to feed the children.

We opened one of the hotels and the mayor asked us to do something and find food: but there was no food.

I was in charge of getting food for the children. I stood by the stove and children were all unhappy and crying. I said to myself:—

"You know, Garrett, you used to thing you were such a miraculous girl, and knew this and that, and you had a pre-vision, and you were clairvoyant. Well, why don't you get clairvoyant now and see where there is some milk? Of course you can't do it. It's negative magic."

All of a sudden I blacked out. The room was dark. Everything I looked at was dark. I heard nothing. And I came to the conclusion: "I am dead. I have been struck. There was no lightening and I didn't hear the thunder."

And then I shook myself awake. All this could have taken only a second or two, perhaps. I had one of the babies on my hip. I listened and there was no sound. I could not hear the children crying.

PRAYER . . .

I felt that something very terrific had happened to me. I walked outside, jumped on to a motor cycle, went to Cannes, and asked the Mayor in Cannes if we might open up some of the houses of the British and Americans and find milk and food.

I didn't think he would let us do it; but finally he did. On the way back I said: "Dear God, I have been inpatient and unbelieving very often, but I'll be good. I'll go back and do whatever is asked of me."

And from that day I have not queried, I have not told anybody, "Don't believe it."

I am not completely convinced, perhaps I never will be. But I try to accept the fact that these personalities are really there.

I must confess to you, there are many days when I don't believe it. Then I say, "Please, God, forgive me." And I ask this when I have to ask them to do the same work.

I am a deep believer in prayer, am always praying about something. Therefore it seems to me that, since I do not understand anything about this "locked room" within my other self, it is far better for me to leave it alone and let other people speak of it.

I have opened two publishing businesses, in order to prove to the world that a medium can also be a solid citizen and make her way.

People say. “Why have you dropped your gift?” I haven’t I use it to the best of my ability. Because I do not understand what it is, this thing I possess, I therefore am very careful to give, and to do, and to be. This is all I can tell you.

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Notes from the head of this article:

(1). Automatist Geraldine Cummins at first subscribed to the theory that all her mediumship was all coming from her subconscious by a means of what was then referred to as *cryptesthesia* and would now be called *superpsi*. “Proud of my agnosticism, I firmly believed that the subconsciousness, with its capacity for fantasy-weaving, accounted for all the communications. My slow, conscious mind could not have invented these impersonations. So [I] became all the more interested and conceitedly pleased with [my] subconscious powers.” Cummins wrote in her autobiography, *Unseen Adventures* (1951: 27). At some point during the 1920s, Cummins came to abandon her subconscious theory. “…these investigations presented to me a vision of the latent powers of the individual self and also a belief in the immortality of the soul,” she (1951: 39) wrote. “Better still, they gave me a philosophy with which to withstand the buffets of the world – best of all, an understanding of many of the mysterious sayings of Christ, and they cast for me a certain illumination on His recorded life….” In the conclusion of *Unseen Adventures* (1964), Cummins wrote: “I am inclined to accept with reservations the unrefined spiritualistic view – humdrum bodies as the outward expression of the soul, existence in a non-physical world, but in a world of substance. Why not? It seems that we human beings see each other because we are all travelling on the same wavelength; at the same rate of speed…Death may perhaps be defined as simply a change of speed. Our souls cast off our material bodies and occupy bodies of another more rapidly vibrating substance.”

(2). But these investigations of guides were considered less important than those verifying the phenomena itself. Hereward Carrington wrote that “Phinuit”, the well-known control of medium Leonore Piper, claimed to be a Frenchman and a medical man, but when driven into a corner, he had to admit that he knew very little French and very little medicine (Carrington, 1957: 103 as reported in Smith 1964: 37). However, Carrington goes on to state that of the three hypotheses on the nature of a medium’s control, “Phinuit” was least likely to be a separate being, but this was of secondary importance because it was through his instrumentality and presence that a vast mass of supernormal information and veridical messages was brought (Carrington, 1957: 103 as reported in Smith, 1964: 37). See Smith, S. 1964. *The Mediumship of Mrs. Leonard*. New York: University Books and Carrington, H. 1957. *The Case for Psychic Survival*. New York: Citadel Press. A contemporary researcher, Stephen Braude, in his book *Immortal Remains*: *The Evidence of Life after Death*, thoroughly examines the case of Patience Worth and concludes that medium Pearl Curran was probably a highly gifted child whose talent for writing was smothered by her mother, who wanted to force Pearl into a singing career. In the alter ego of Patience Worth, Pearl’s subconscious could revive that talent. Patience also had a sharp tongue and was highly suspicious and critical of organized religion and formal education. Braude argues that these were in fact personality traits of Pearl that she couldn’t let out at that time. However, this theory is rebutted by the speed, lack of hesitation and little need for editing Patience’s communication flowed through Pearl.

(3). They were: Uvani, Abdul Latif, and to a lesser degree, Tahotah and Ramah, the latter two claimed no earthly incarnations and spoke very seldom. And when they did, they spoke on more philosophic and spiritual matters than Uvani or Abdul Latif.

This image was painted by the well-known psychic artist and published in “Two Worlds”, November 14th 1936:



ABDUL LATIF

A picture painted under spirit guidance of the famous Persian physician—he has been ‘‘dead’’ for 750 years—by Ida M. Dixon, the 74-year-old medium, who suffered from cataract in both eyes and was practically blind.

“It is a good likeness,”

Red Cloud declared the other day

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PATIENCE WORTH

1883-1937

Walter Franklin Prince, who was the Research Officer of the Boston Society for Psychic Research, wrote an extensive critical study in his book, "The Case of Patience Worth", published by the BSPR in 1927; this is available as a free download.

Below features a visit to the medium by Mrs McKenzie, whose husband James founded the British College of Psychic Science, referenced elsewhere in this issue. The article below is taken from the BCPS's Quarterly Transactions of the British College of Psychic Science, Vol. XVII, April 1938, which was then edited by Mrs Hewat McKenzie:

"PATIENCE WORTH" AND HER MEDIUM.

By Mrs. HEWAT MCKENZIE.



MRS. JOHN H. CURRAN, "PATIENCE WORTH'S" MEDIUM

One of the most interesting visits I paid in the States was to St. Louis, to visit Mrs. John H. Curran (now Mrs. H. Rogers), through "whom" Patience Worth" has poured her wit, wisdom, philosophy and poetry since 1913, in an unceasing stream.[18]

Mrs. Curran—see the excellent likeness accompanying this article—is in early middle life, interested in her family and home, and in life in general, but certainly not originally interested in philosophy, in mediæval English nor in poetry, the three outstanding features of her mediumship. Her early and later history is known, friends are alive who knew her as a girl, and as a young married woman, and there is nothing in what would be described as a very normal and uneventful life which could give a clue to what followed. When in 1912, urged by a friend to sit with her at the Ouija Board, some power was manifested, and in about a year's time this seemed to be controlled completely by a unique personality who called herself "Patience Worth.

[18] Readers who have not acquainted themselves with this remarkable mental mediumship may do so by consulting the following books in the College Library: "Patience Worth—A Psychic Mystery," by Casper S. Yost. "The Case of Patience Worth," by Dr. W. F. Prince, of Boston (an exhaustive and valuable study of the whole case). "Hope Trueblood," a novel through the ouija board. "The Sorry Tale—a Story of the Time of Christ."
"The Potter and the Wheel," an Eastern Wisdom Story. See also PSYCHIC SCIENCE, October, 1927, for an article by B. McKenzie, and *Light*, for May 5th, 1928, by same.

I was received most kindly by Mrs. Curran, who, engrossed with the care of a sick husband and two children not at all well, at the moment, said that she had not been sitting recently for "Patience," as her amanuensis also had been ill, but added that if I could stay in St. Louis for a few days, the latter might be better, and that she would be most happy to give me a sitting.

During this time of waiting I saw a good deal of Mrs. Curran and her family in many pleasant ways, and was therefore able to make some comparison between her and her unseen friend "Patience Worth."

Mrs. Curran is not subtle in her thought processes as "Patience" is, nor has she poetic flights, nor is she interested in archaic English nor skilled in Eastern knowledge such as shines through, according to very able experts, in "The Sorry Tale," published 1917, and in "The Potter and the Wheel," published 1927. Such work as she has produced under "Patience Worth's" influence cannot be learned or imitated, it is the real thing, and the psychologists with their pat phrasing about the medium's sub-consciousness—things heard or read or seen by the medium in earlier days—are quite at fault in placing "Patience Worth" in any category at present known to them.

Professor F. S. C. Schiller, reviewing Dr. Prince's "Case of Patience Worth," in the S.P.R. Proceedings for November, 1927, says wisely: "What then, shall we do? I suppose that at present it is still *safer* to credit 'Patience Worth' to the unconscious and to class her, officially, as Mrs. Curran's 'secondary self.' But it is impossible to be comfortable about this theory, and it should certainly not be held fanatically. And, personally, I am quite willing to subscribe to Dr. Prince's conclusion that 'either our concept of what we call the subconscious must be radically altered, so as to include potencies of which we hitherto have had no knowledge, or else some cause operating through but not originating in the sub-consciousness of Mrs. Curran must be acknowledged.' The general impression of the case on my mind is to deepen the conviction that orthodox psychology and orthodox philosophy are both very far from having plumbed the depths of the soul, and, that it is unreasonable to require an open-minded man to endorse their prejudices."



Mrs. Curren has several volumes waiting to be published not less fine in quality than those produced, and is busy upon others, for "Patience" can take up the thread of a story at any moment or with any set of persons with whom her medium may happen to be sitting, and without reference to what has gone before, continue in an absolutely correct way, even though weeks may have passed by. She is apparently quite independent of her sitters, though occasionally they may colour the work or give it an impetus. "The Potter and the Wheel" was given chiefly in the presence of a lady who is deeply interested in ceramics.

"Patience" in a word which closed my own sitting of February 25th, 1928, says that she will use "her harp," Mrs. Curran, "till she be breaked and mute." Let us hope that Mrs. Curran may be long spared for such valuable use.

"The Sorry Tale," a story of the time of Christ, published in 1917 (English publishers, Kegan Paul) is considered by some theological professors and clergymen as one of the most remarkable books written regarding the life and death of Jesus since the New Testament record. Of it Mr. Reedy, editor of Reedy's Journal, a man of culture and an earnest student of all the writings by "Patience" says: "I have seen the complete manuscript. This is the most remarkable piece of literature I have ever read. I have no hesitation in saying that this production—I ignore any religious claims for it, and I discount the adventitious interest of the manner of its presentation—is a world's literary marvel."

It is written by a Greek slave—a woman of great beauty and noble blood—and is written about her son, whose father is Tiberius Cæsar, and who is born the same night as Jesus. She calls him "Hate," and this rules and shapes his life. He meets Jesus from time to time and then at Calvary. The life of Jesus between his twelfth and thirtieth years is also dealt with in the story.

"Patience" was much stirred before she began this story, says Mr. Casper S. Yost who writes an introduction: "Loth, loth I be," she said, "Yea, thy handmaid's hands do tremble." For three or four minutes there was no sound in the room, and then as if in reality from out the silence of twenty centuries, as if actually from out of the darkness, came the plaintive cry, "Panda, Panda, tellest thou a truth," the opening words of the story.

In the course of giving the story, "Patience" often described her own feelings regarding the sad recital, and once gave a fine poem,

"Jesus by the Sea." A stanza will show its quality:—
"The sands soft clung about the feet a-bared,
That still should trod 'pon stones a-sharped.
Yea, Earth e'en then did hold the greéned tree
That burst the sod for upping of the cross."

There is much in the story to rouse discussion, but "Patience" gave it with the utmost confidence and has no fear. "Hark ye", she says, "there shall be ones who shall tear at this cloth till it shreddeth, yet the shreds shall weave them back into the whole 'pon love strands. For Love be the magic harp, and Love may ne'er die, but be born athin all hearts that sup the words."

A philosopher one day questioned "Patience" thus: "Patience," modern science holds that death destroys man, body and soul, and the psychologists claim that you are only Mrs. Curran's sub-conscious mind. What have you to say on man's final Destiny, and what as to your relation to Mrs. Curran?"

"Patience" answered: to the first part, "Man's words may not destroy—they be but strutting little egots which disport them in obeisance before their lord and creator man, measuring his length and breadth. Man may tear into tatters even the commonest way rose, he may pluck it petal by petal, thorn by thorn, leaf by leaf, and crush its stem. What then will he do with the perfume 'pon his fingertips? In its crushed atoms the way rose is still complete in its being. Man's argument, the cunning of his hand, hath done what? He is confronted with matter haunted with spirit, and hath found himself like unto an ass at the end of his tether. Who be these princlings that play not faith with their King? Who be these lordlings who would espouse wisdom and bring forth the brat o' doubt, egad, no one may learn while his doubt-brat wails!"

Regarding her relation to Mrs. Curran, she answered, “Who be he that said I be but a distorted whit o’ the Follied’s (Mrs. C.’s) imagination? Where be he who can present a greater man as the child of his imagination than he himself is? His be a sma’ sma’ voice who sayeth No nimbly. Let him lay hands on me and tether me and her and days to come shall write his name FOOL, for he is not for the ages. His quill be short, and I sirrah be a long quill dipped in old wisdom. I sing not that I SING, but that the SONG BE——. As well give babes, tomes, skulls, wines, swords, Sacraments, with which to play, as present me as a part of mine harp (Mrs. C.), for behold am I separate . . . strumming, and she, the babe, and wonder eyed, playing with old wisdom.”

This is a good sample of the sharp wit for which “Patience” is famed and of the wisdom with which her needle is threaded, and it is this blend which has made her hosts of devoted admirers throughout the States.

Recently one of the great lecture agencies has made approaches to Mrs. Curran for a series of lectures on the mediumship, which would be accompanied by demonstrations of “Patience’s” handling of subjects given by the audience. She is seldom if ever embarrassed, and her work is as fine in the presence of hundreds as with one sitter. Mrs. Curran, who has always been apparently normal during the sittings, is now the greatest admirer of her “Control,” and has had all aspects of the mediumship so often discussed with her or before her, that she is quite able to take up a lecture tour.

The sitting I was able to have with Mrs. Curran before I left St. Louis, took place on February 25th, and remains in my mind as a very perfect thing. Miss Parrish, a Scotch lady, very kindly acted as amanuensis, for ‘Patience” speaks her messages through her medium at a very rapid rate. Mrs. Curran hears a beautiful voice speaking to her, her face softens, her own voice sweetens, and the stream of words begins, often accompanied by mind pictures which enhance the message.

Five subjects were proposed by me spontaneously, and each was dealt with immediately with great beauty of language. In addition there was a prologue and an epilogue and also three poems given without suggestion to the amanuensis and her sister.

I will close my brief article on Mrs, Curran and her work by quoting a poem on “California,” one of the subjects I gave.

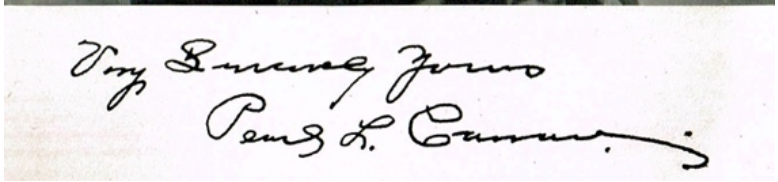
Mrs. Curran said as I spoke the word, she got the picture of a very delicate, slender wine-glass full of a clear golden liquid, and began:—

“A golden wine in a slender stemm-ed chalice,
Distilled by the loving hand of Him
Who hath caused rich fruition ’pon the spot
He loveth. . . .
A golden wine, distilled thro’ many suns
And many silver moonlights,
Fragrant of the honey of a myriad blooms.
Heady stuff ! Rare vintage !
I lift the chalice in a troth to Him
Who with His perfect love
Hath poured the stuff !

Anyone who has seen and loved California will recognise the appreciation of its natural beauty, the awareness "Patience" shows of the "heady" nature of its exotic character, and the wonder which remains with one at the perfection of the natural "chalice" of mountain, sea and sky, in and under which it has been placed.

The two women who are the "heroines," if one may say so, of this number of PSYCHIC SCIENCE, Mrs. Dr. Crandon of Boston, and Mrs. Curran of St. Louis, should be remembered by all psychic students with continual appreciation and affection, because of their manifold labours on our behalf and the interest and vitality they have poured into our lives by being willing to become the channels of this new, yet old knowledge.





Forgotten Pioneers:

MISS EDITH POTTS

In 1927 she was invited to the platform of the Glasgow Association and soon afterward became one of the most popular mediums touring Scotland under the auspices of the Scottish Council of the SNU.

Presently there is very little information available on this medium; the odd snippets I have found show that she was a fine evidential medium, working on occasions with two of our finest exponents bringing public awareness of Spiritualism, Hannan Swaffer and Maurice Barbanell. See Pioneer, Vol. 2, No. 6: "Maurice Barbanell, the S.N.U. and his Propaganda Work". This issue includes "On Tour with Hannen Swaffer – We Continue Our Crusade", by Maurice Barbanell.

Taken from Light, March 9th, 1934: [6]

SCOTTISH PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

CROWDED meetings on Sunday (March 4th) in St. Andrew's Hall, Glasgow, and in the Music Hall, Edinburgh, were addressed by Mr. Hannen Swaffer and Mr. M. Barbanell.

Mr. Swaffer dealt with experiments at his own circle and stressed the great importance of home circles and the value of Spiritualism as a factor in daily life. Mr. Barbanell dealt pointedly with the recent dictum of the Archbishop of York, that it is positively undesirable to have experimental proof of Survival. He asked his hearers not to take other people's opinion on Spiritualism for or against, but to investigate for themselves.

Miss Edith Potts, of Gateshead, gave about twenty clairvoyant descriptions at the Glasgow meeting. Names and surnames were given, usually with accompanying message, and the responses by the recipients indicated in almost every case that the clairvoyance was of a very evidential nature. Mrs. Chanley, of Leeds, gave clairvoyance at the Edinburgh meeting, and it also was very evidential and met with general acceptance. Mr. J. B. M'Indoe presided at both meetings.[7]

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In 1927 psychic photographers William Hope and Mrs Buxton gave some group sittings at Rectory Hall, Gateshead National Spiritualist Church. In the glass slide printed here can be noted Mrs Potts and Miss Potts (right) in the front row. The extra enclosed an arched veil; this is sometimes referred to as the "psychic arch".[8]

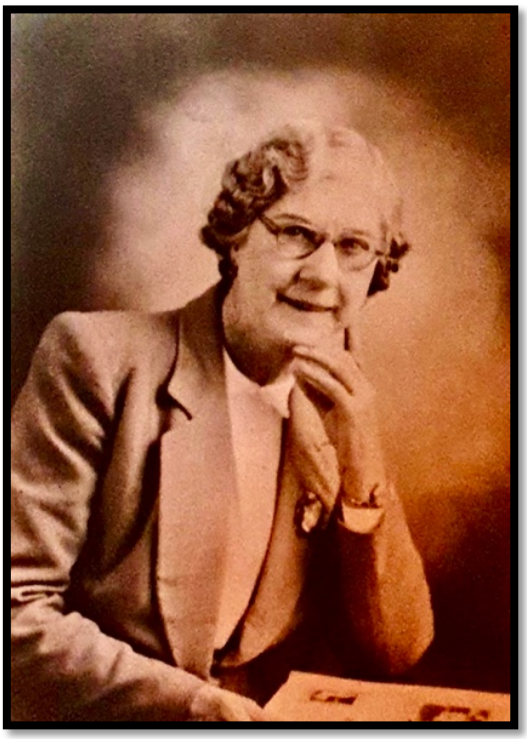


The extra was claimed by Mrs Potts to be a member of her family.

[6] This was found on "The International Association for the Preservation of Spiritualist and Occult Periodicals" (IAPSOP), noted elsewhere in this issue, which highlights the importance of the availability of original materials.

[7] John (Mac) McIndoe, SNU President 1930-1938.

[8] Psypioneer, Vol. 4, No. 5: "The Case for Spirit Photography – Arthur Conan Doyle – The Crewe Circle". Direct link via: www.pauljgaunt.com



Below is a short overview of the work of Edith Potts, as published in the Two Worlds, February 23rd, 1952:

ONE notable quality about the mediumship of Miss Potts of Gateshead, is that apart altogether from the content of her platform messages, her demonstrations usually have an exhilarating effect on the audience. This is largely due to the manner in which the messages are put over.

Miss Potts usually goes into trance, and the audience hear the naive and engaging commentaries of her youthful control. The control does not suffer from any kind of platform shyness, and her sometimes pointed and engagingly childish comments are always enjoyed. The commentaries frequently extend to the speaker who has preceded the medium, and who finds that his audience has been more extended than he had realised.

Miss Potts' mediumship began when she was a schoolgirl. Her earliest recollection relating to her psychic gifts brings up an episode when she was sitting in church with her parents. Her attention was centered on the lovely colours and forms which surrounded the minister in the pulpit. She also saw a form standing beside him as he preached his sermon. She naturally thought that the others in the church saw what she was seeing. One day, however, she spoke to her mother about the lovely things she had seen and then discovered that she was seeing differently from her mother and other people.

Her mother was naturally a little puzzled about her daughter. One day she happened to meet a Spiritualist and told her about the things her daughter described as seeing. The mother was asked to go to a Spiritualist meeting. Knowing nothing of the subject she went very reluctantly.

She was impressed and went a second time, taking her little daughter with her. To the latter the platform proceedings were no mystery. She also saw the people described, as well as colours surrounding different people in the church.

HER FIRST MESSAGE

This came to the knowledge of the President about what she saw. She told a lady who was present that she had a boy on crutches standing beside her, and the boy said it was his mother and that his name was Jimmy. The lady confirmed that this was a correct description of her son. This was Miss Potts first message from the other side. It was the beginning of a long career of clairvoyance.

Her first big demonstration was in St. Andrew's Hall, Glasgow, when Mr. Hannen Swaffer was the speaker. This was in March 1928. She has appeared since then at numerous meetings with Mr. Swaffer and other leading exponents of Spiritualism, and has travelled all over the British Isles, giving clairvoyance in the churches and to psychic study organisations. She frequently appears at the Edinburgh Psychic College and is always sure of a large and sympathetic audience. "I have loved every moment of it," she says.

Miss Potts was very fortunate in her early adventures into psychic communication. Her mother gave her encouragement and was sympathetic and understanding. As soon as she assured herself that her daughter had this special faculty, she helped her all she could in its development. Miss Potts never required to sit in a development class. All her development took place at home. “Psychics” she says, “are born, not made”—although the latent faculty exists in many individuals without their knowing it.

There have been various developments of her mediumship and she has been inspired to attempt drawing. Some wonderful psychic drawings and compositions have been the result. Some of her later work in this direction has been done in ink, the control, being a Greek artist. She has no natural aptitude for drawing and had no training of any kind.

A PRIMA DONNA

One of her occasional controls was a famous vocalist. Sometimes Miss Potts’ clairvoyance has been interrupted whilst she has given a rendering of a song associated with the vocalist in question. Her singing is in a voice not at all like her own; it is a deep contra’ to—and the singing is marked by the effectiveness and artistic qualities of the expert.

In the early period of her mediumship, Miss Potts was accustomed to take the whole service for churches in the Northumberland and Durham districts. In 1927 she was invited to the platform of the Glasgow Association and soon afterward became one of the most popular mediums touring Scotland under the auspices of the Scottish Council of the S.N.U. At the time of her appearance at the large public meetings in Glasgow such demonstrations were looked upon with some misgiving by the older Spiritualists of the period. She performed her difficult task, however, with remarkable success and set their doubts at rest.

A message was given at an early public meeting to Mr. Hannen Swaffer from Sir H. Seagrave. Mr. Swaffer thought it was very evidential, and the autographed photograph of himself which he gave her as a mark of the occasion is one of her most prized possessions. Another of her early demonstrations was in 1929 when she gave clairvoyance at a meeting addressed by Messrs. Swaffer and Barbanell in Northampton. This was the first of many similar meetings which took place in almost every large town in the country, at which she appeared with prominent speakers.

J.W.H.

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Editor’s note:

It may appear that she was more of an accredited artist than the article suggests:

> There have been various developments of her mediumship and she has been inspired to attempt drawing. Some wonderful psychic drawings and compositions have been the result. Some of her later work in this direction has been done in ink, the control, being a Greek artist.

Possibly her psychic art became more pronounced after the date the article was written, as it notes: *Some of her later work in this direction has been done in ink...* The reason I note this is because some of her drawing was used in an art exhibition. Several letters are archived in the Britten Museum & Library, written to the then General Secretary Richard (Dick) Ellidge and featured recently in Pioneer, Vol. 6, No. 6: “This Man is the Mainspring of Organised Spiritualism”.

The correspondence shows that Edith Potts' drawings were exhibited at Bede Gallery, Jarrow in 1973. The Arts Council were offered the drawings to purchase but they decided against it. An art critic for the Manchester Guardian wrote;

> *… a very bad criticism of the drawings, saying they were just "doodles" comprising of jugs of flowers and leaves and purporting to be done by spirits as Rosemary Browns music was*.

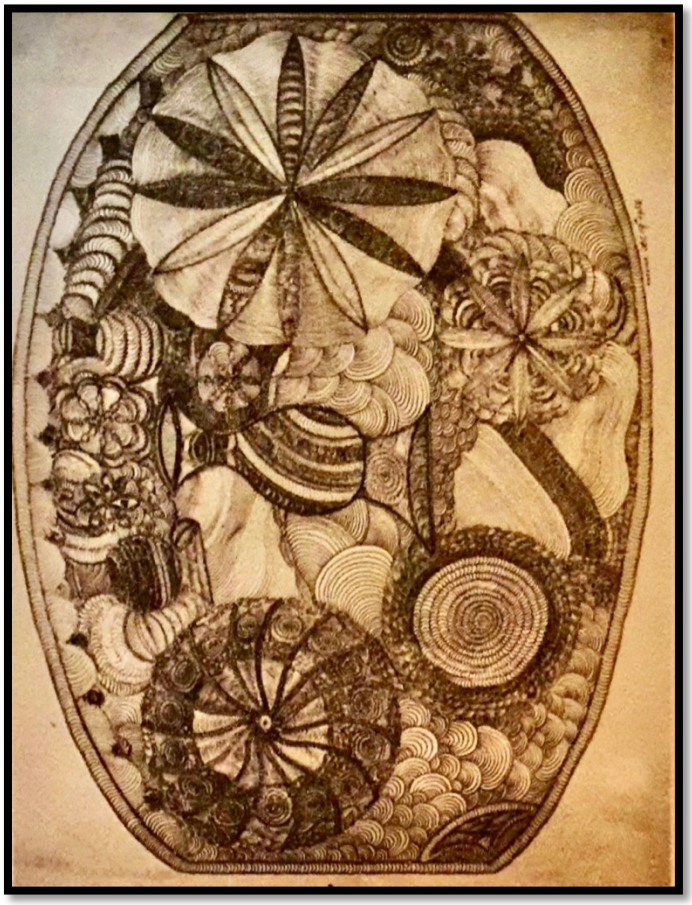
The letter writer notes: *It was one big smear on Spiritualism* and continues: *We think he must have influenced the others from buying. However he was the only adverse critic…* It was noted that another gentleman, connected to a London arts centre, was very keen to hold a Psychic Drawing Exhibition next year, so potentially the drawings were still on the market. The letter notes that, of course, the sale would be subject to Mr Higginson and the Committee; it was estimated that each drawing was worth £20 and it noted:

> *Naturally we think them priceless things which cannot be repeated but then she was an unknown artist.*

It was arranged for the drawings to be returned to Stansted Hall at the end of October 1973. The drawings are sadly no longer at the Museum; it is not known what happened to them. This situation would certainly not arise today. They may possibly have been sold, as in 1973 the Arthur Findlay College was on the verge of being lost, being deeply in debt. The correspondence gives no indication as to how many drawings there were; the estimated £20 per drawing would today be equivalent to around £243.

It would not be until 1977 that "Stansted Hall Cleared of Debt": see Pioneer, Vol. 3, No. 4.

We do hold two prints of Edith Potts: the portrait as shown and one of her drawings.





ESTELLE ROBERTS AND THE GREEK ROYAL FAMILY

Estelle was born May Estelle Wills on May 10th, 1889 at May Cottage, Kensington, the daughter of Isobel and Edwin Blackstone Wills, one of eight children, having four sisters and three brothers.

At fifteen she worked as a nursemaid to a family in Turnham Green. Later she met and married Hugh Warren Miles, according to her daughter Ivy;[4] she married at age 17. Estelle and Hugh had three children, Ivy, Eveline and Iris. Eight years after they were married Hugh fell ill and was diagnosed with Bright's disease and died in May 1919.

In 1920 Estelle married Arthur Roberts. It was from this period in the early 1920s that she started to become involved with Spiritualism, initially at Hampton Hill Spiritualist Church. At the third meeting she attended, the medium, Mrs Elizabeth Cannock, singled Estelle out, saying in unequivocal terms:

"*You are a medium and have much work to do. Chosen by the Spirit World, you must not ignore the call. Please come and see me after the meeting.*"

In 1922 Estelle's son, Terry, was born. She had become aware of Red Cloud and it would be at Richmond Spiritualist Church in 1925 that Red Cloud would first control her. A headquarters for Estelle's work as a medium and healer was established in October 1934, called the 'House of Red Cloud', in Wimbledon.

In 1938 her marriage to Arthur Roberts ended in the divorce court. She was granted a decree on the grounds of cruelty after successfully defending an action alleging misconduct. In 1941 she was bombed out of her home at Esher, moving away to the West Country to live. The doors of the House of Red Cloud also closed. In the same year she married Charles Tilson-Chowne, previously a healer at the House of Red Cloud.



Charles died in 1959 and Estelle followed on May 30th, 1970, aged 81. Charles and Estelle as shown in the photographs

[4] Ivy Estelle Boutcher: "Why I Believe in Red Cloud: The Control of Mrs. Estelle Roberts", published by Elite Bureau, 1934.

Britten Museum & Library

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In the Estelle Roberts archives (ER. 18-19), kindly donated by Minister Steven Upton, there are two Christmas cards from "Roy" (Athens); these are undated.

The identification of the name "Roy" is to be found in "Fifty Years a Medium" in Chapter 2, "The Coming of Red Cloud", but not included in the earlier 1959 first edition, "Forty Years a Medium":

> Perhaps the most remarkable example of the truth of Red Cloud's words is to be found in a most unexpected occurrence in India.
>
> The late King George of Greece often came to talk to Red Cloud, to receive his teachings and guidance. This fact has since become generally known, but at the time his visits were never mentioned outside the small circle in which we sat and were unknown to the world at large. He had gone to India, and stayed with the then Viceroy, Lord Willingdon. Being deeply interested in psychic matters, he inquired of Lord Willingdon if he knew of a mystic with whom he could discuss them. The Viceroy told him of a holy man who lived like a hermit. King George set off to find him, taking care to preserve the secret of his identity. *En route* he had to cross a wide plateau. After he had gone some distance, he was met by a holy man, dressed in a loin-cloth and wearing a turban. The hermit held up his hand, bidding the king to stop.



Lord Willingdon

> "Come no further, my son," he said. "You have no need of me, for you are under the protection of the great Red Cloud." He turned back, refusing further conversation, and made his way out to his hut.



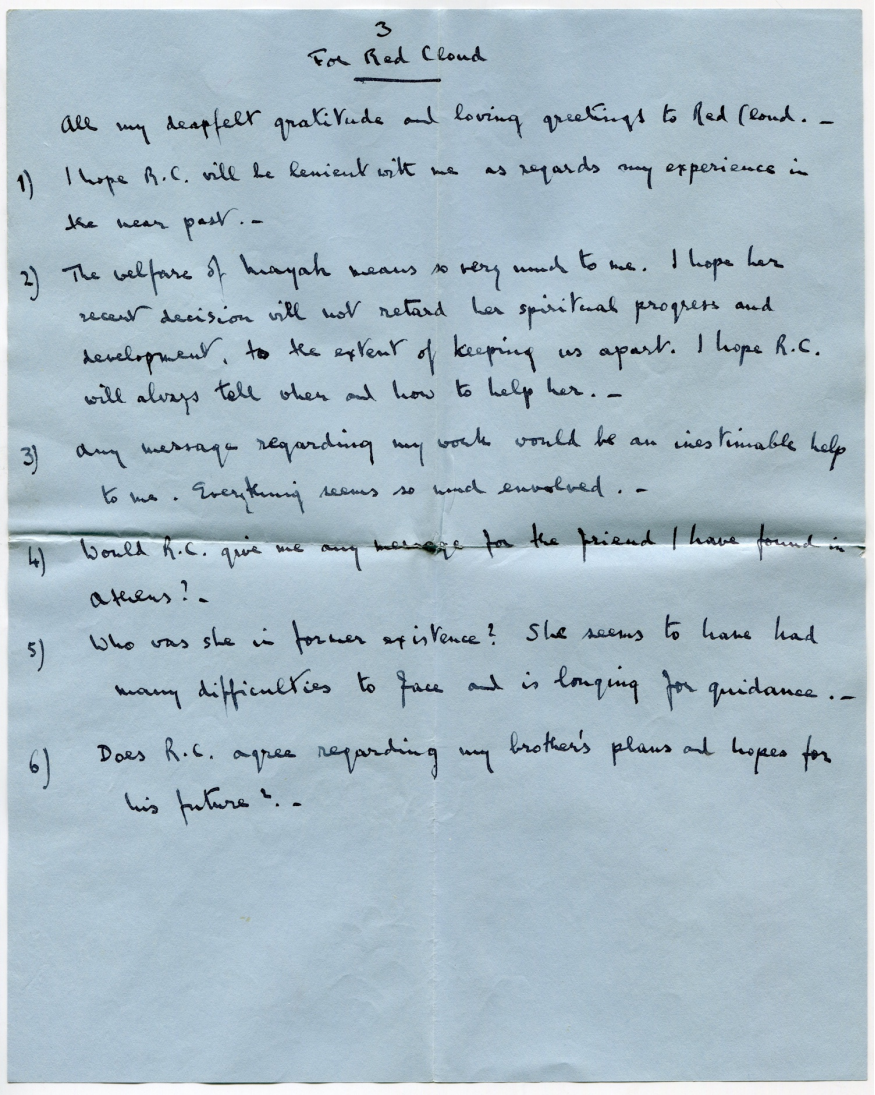
When King George (photograph) returned to England, he came immediately to tell me the story. He was greatly impressed by what had happened, particularly because the holy man could have had no knowledge from earthly sources of the visitor's association with Red Cloud. Nor could the holy man could have known who the monarch was.

Other members of the Greek Royal Family have visited my house; the late Paul, who was Crown Prince at the time, often came to seek guidance. Neither King George nor Prince Paul made any secret of their great interest in Spiritualism and Red Cloud, but I and my family always referred to them as "Mr. Roy" and "Mr. Constantine," the names they chose when traveling incognito. My daughter Iris has acted as my personal secretary throughout her adult life, and she considers herself shock-proof. However, even her natural aplomb was shaken when answering the telephone one day was met with, "Buckingham Palace calling." Mr. Roy was an official guest at the Palace. Another member to come to Red Cloud was their sister, the late ex-Queen Helen of Rumania. King George was the most frequent visitor. He loved Red Cloud, and liked to discuss all manner of subjects

with him. Greece was in a troubled ferment at this time. The King, exiled in England, came many times to discuss his country's affairs with Red Cloud. When eventually he was invited to return to the throne of Greece, as the guide had foretold, he wrote often, sending questions for Red Cloud to answer. I still have his letters covering the years from 1933 to 1940. They are, of course, entirely private, and will never be allowed to pass out of my hands.

—~—☼—~—

The Museum archive holds two telegrams and a letter from "Roy" addressed to Estelle's husband, Charles Tilson-Chowne, at Wimbledon. Noted from the above quote "... he wrote often, sending questions for Red Cloud to answer." Shown is an additional page from "Roy's" letter to Charles dated (Athens) July 31st, 1936 with some questions for Red Cloud!"



3

For Red Cloud

All my deepfelt gratitude and loving greetings to Red Cloud. –

1) I hope R.C. will be lenient with me as regards my experience in the near past. –

2) The welfare of Maryah means so very much to me. I hope her recent decision will not retard her spiritual progress and development, to the extent of keeping us apart. I hope R.C. will always tell Olga and how to help her. –

3) any message regarding my work would be an inestimable help to me. Everything seems so much involved. –

4) Would R.C. give me any message for the friend I have found in Athens? –

5) Who was she in former existence? She seems to have had many difficulties to face and is longing for guidance. –

6) Does R.C. agree regarding my brother's plans and hopes for his future?. –

King George attended a demonstration of mediumship by Estelle at the Aeolian Hall; he was present at the opening of the House of Red Cloud in October 1934. According to Britannica, King George II was born July 20th, 1890 at Tatoi, near Athens, and died on April 1st, 1947 at Athens. He was King of Greece from September 1922 to March 1924 and later from October 1935 until his death.[5]

[5] Britannica: "The king was forced into exile after the German invasion of Greece in April 1941, going first to Crete (Modern Greek: Kríti), then to Alexandria, and finally to London. After the war republican sentiments again threatened his throne, but he was restored by a plebiscite supervised by the Allies and returned to Greece in September 1946. Upon his death, he was succeeded by his brother Paul.

PASSING OF MEDIUM WHO STARTED ESTELLE ROBERTS ON HER PSYCHIC CAREER



Mrs. E. A. Cannock, the veteran medium

THE medium who started Estelle Roberts on her psychic career, Mrs Elizabeth Cannock, passed on last Sunday.[6]

It was many years ago, when Mrs. Cannock was demonstrating clairvoyance at a Spiritualist church at Hampton Hill, that she met Estelle Roberts, who had been taken by a neighbour to her first Spiritualist meeting.

"You are a born medium," she told Estelle. "You have a great work to do in the world."

Estelle had seen spirit forms and heard their voices for a long time. When working as a waitress in a London cafe she used to see "dead" people standing behind the customers. But it was not until Mrs. Cannock told her that she realised she was a medium.

The following Sunday Estelle Roberts gave her first public demonstration in the same Spiritualist church.

Opponents used to say that Spiritualism drove people to an early grave ! Mrs. Cannock was over 80 when she passed on. Until five years ago she was still demonstrating her gift of clairvoyance from public platforms. Only this year she performed the naming ceremony for the child of an absent serviceman.

HELPED TO WIN WAR

Mrs. Cannock claimed that, through her mediumistic powers, she helped to win the first world war. At her sittings during those years were a number of War Office officials, with whom her guide discussed the war. This spirit told them much that affected their deliberations. He forecast where the Germans would be halted in their march on Paris,

Even before the war this control mentioned the "big gun" the Germans were preparing and said the range was not sufficient for the shells to reach England, as was originally planned. Before Kitchener passed on this guide foretold that his work was done, and his forecast of the end of the war was correct to within a fortnight.

Five months before war was declared this medium had a vision just before she addressed a meeting of the North London Spiritualist Society. She told her congregation that before September they would be in the midst of a European war and advised them to stock their larders in preparation.

When friends and former patients—for she did much healing work and at the age of 70 was largely instrumental in opening a new psychic healing centre at Croydon—wanted to commemorate her 50 years' work as a medium, she urged that they should apply their generosity to opening a home for old workers in the movement.

It was Elizabeth Cannock who was responsible for the Rev. George Ward, a former Baptist minister, becoming a Spiritualist. At the first meeting he attended, "more for a lark than anything else," Mrs. Cannock described his "dead" mother in greater detail even than he could have done himself !

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[6] Psychic News, November 17th, 1945.

With his niece, Ward joined Mrs. Cannock's home' circle. Within six months the niece developed clairvoyance and he himself had powers of transfiguration.

SAW "DEAD" WHEN YOUNG

Like Estelle Roberts, Mrs. Cannock used to see and hear the "dead" long before she realised that it had anything to do with mediumship or Spiritualism.

When she was a child her "dead" grandfather told her that her sister would pass on at midnight on a certain day and that he would be waiting to greet her on the Other Side.

Elizabeth Cannock told her mother about this, and as a result she was beaten for not telling the truth !

But her sister did pass on at midnight on the day the "dead" man had said, and just before she "died" she said she could see her grandfather, who had come to meet her.

Her first contact with Spiritualism was the result of a shower of rain. On her way to her usual place of worship she was caught in the rain when just outside the Leicester Liberal Club, where she could see a meeting was in progress. It was not until she was inside the hall that she realised it was a Spiritualist service she was attending.

Then, meeting some Spiritualists in Birmingham, she sat with them round the dining-room table. Raps came on a chair and Mrs. Cannock went into a trance.

Even then she did not accept Spiritualism. When a medium told her of her powers she replied, "You have never made a bigger mistake in your life; I shall never be a Spiritualist and shall never be a medium."

"A medium you are and a Spiritualist you will be," retorted the other.

Mrs. Cannock gradually become more interested in the subject and began to attend services regularly. One evening the advertised speaker did not arrive, and, to help the society out of a difficulty, Mrs. Cannock agreed to speak from the platform for a short while.

HOW SHE BEGAN

When she rose to speak, however, she went into a trance and a "dead" speaker gave the address. When that was finished she felt impelled to give clairvoyance, and all her 12 descriptions were recognised. So she started her public work for Spiritualism.

During her long service to the movement this medium has travelled all over the British Isles; she was in Sweden for two months and while there founded the Swedish Spiritualist Society; and for 15 months she toured Canada for the Canadian Spiritualists' National Union.

While in Sweden she was told by a professor that she ought to be deported as the whole thing was a fraud. But before she left this man was a Spiritualist and even helped her in her services

Mrs. Cannock slipped quietly away into the spirit world. One of her great joys, during her recent illness, was to listen to the radio organ recitals by Reginald Foort, who is a convinced Spiritualist.

The funeral service will be taken by C. Glover Botham, an old friend and medium, at the Golders Green Crematorium, on Saturday, November 17, at noon.

AM I DEAD OR ALIVE ?

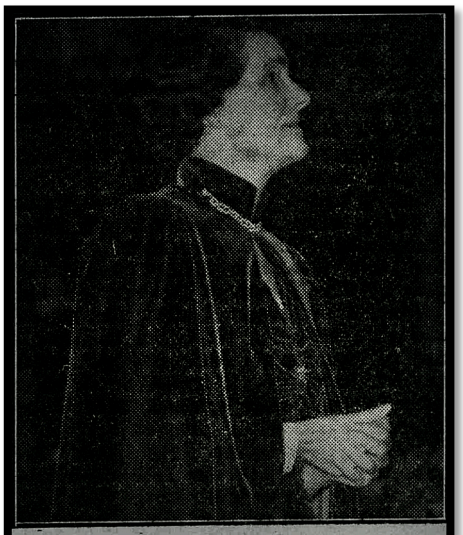
There are various accounts of passing generally under extreme conditions like wartime, tragic accidents, etc., where the spirit is said to be totally unaware of its transition. This is evident in some of the Leslie Flint direct voice recordings, where the *dead* person seems totally unaware of what has happened. Another example is Carl Wickland; see Pioneer, Vol. 6, No. 5: "Story of Dr and Mrs Carl A. Wickland".[8]

> "Often these spirits were ignorant of the fact that they were "dead," and did not realise they had attached themselves to people on earth.
>
> "The task of Dr. Wickland and his helpers was to convince them, once they controlled the medium, that they could release themselves from their earthbound state. The investigators interrogated these spirits, obtained proofs of their identities and then showed them how to progress. It often took more than one seance to convince the obsessor that he had passed from earth."

As a public demonstrator Estelle Roberts aired this question during WWII. [9]

Estelle Roberts Proves—

War "Dead" Are Not Always Aware Of Their Passing On



Estelle Roberts photographed while giving clairvoyance

WAR brings its own difficulties to spirit communication, as Estelle Roberts has discovered. The famous medium refers to these problems by asking three questions:

"Do our boys always realise that they have passed on?

"Why is it that loved ones on the Other Side and also the guides occasionally say that they have not come into contact with a certain person who has recently left the earth, and state further that they know nothing of his whereabouts ?

"Is there an intermediate state of life between the earth and the spirit world, where such souls sometimes temporarily dwell, eventually to be reached by the guides who make them realise that they have gone through the experience called death ?"

The Missing Airman

These questions arise because of this medium's own experiences. She cites some examples. The authorities reported a young airman as missing. His parents have been Spiritualists for many years. They approached Estelle Roberts with a view to getting definite evidence of his whereabouts.

Their spirit daughter, a good communicator, and others members of the family who had passed on, all declared that they had not seen the missing boy. They knew that his

[8] Dr. Wickland's book, "Thirty Years Among the Dead", originally published in 1924.

[9] Psychic News, February 7th, 1942.

aeroplane had crashed into the water, but they could supply no further evidence. One spirit relative volunteered the information that the boy was badly knocked about.

Between Two Worlds

These communications were regarded by Estelle Roberts as inconclusive. Later in the day, she herself got into touch with Red Cloud and asked him why further information had not been forthcoming. Red Cloud explained that in all probability this young airman was somewhere in a state between the two worlds of life and that the guide would "lower his vibrations" in order to try to reach him.

The medium then arranged for another seance to take place with the parents. When they arrived, Red Cloud told her that he wished to place her in trance—most of her sittings are given normally these days—as he had found the boy, who was now settling down in the spirit world. The guide had promised the airman that he would speak to his parents.

Then, through his entranced medium, Red Cloud explained what happened after the crash. The young airman, not realising that he was "dead," had returned to his aerodrome to carry on with his duties. When Red Cloud got into touch with him, the airman would not at first listen, but after much persuasion he consented to accompany the guide, on the distinct understanding that he could personally speak to his parents.

Red Cloud got the airman to take control of the medium. The evidence that the boy gave his parents startled them in its conclusiveness, especially when he referred to certain documents which he had on earth, and his knowledge of how his parents had dealt with them since his passing. Definite proof was given that this young man had been killed. The body has since been recovered.

When the medium came out of trance and learned from the parents all that had happened, she said it seemed strange that a member of a family so interested in Spiritualism should find himself earthbound. The parents replied that he was the only member of the family who refused to interest himself in Spiritualism !

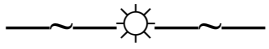
Estelle Roberts quotes another example. The mother and wife of an airman reported missing, both complete strangers to the medium, came for a sitting. The sitters received proofs of spirit identity from members of their family. Then one who was not a relative communicated and gave his name. From his many statements they were able to confirm that he was the only other person in the aeroplane.

"I Have Not Seen Him''

This is what he said, 'We were on night patrol and were shot down over the water. I remember seeing K— (the name of the missing man), just as we went down. I have not seen him over here."

Arising from this spirit communication, Estelle Roberts asks, "Where is this missing man? Red Cloud has not yet found him on the Other Side. Is he between the two worlds, or still alive somewhere on earth? Why did the other occupant of the aeroplane communicate ?" In the light of these experiences, Estelle Roberts comments:

"These examples go to prove how necessary it is for mediums to be absolutely certain before they state definitely whether a soul is still upon the earth or has passed on to the Other Side. They should be very careful not to jump to the conclusion that, because they cannot get into contact with a soul, this means he must still be on the earth."





AUTOMATIC OR SPIRIT WRITING

Automatic writing has featured over past issues of Pioneer, for example Grace Rosher, whose method of writing is shown in the photograph; others include Geraldine Cummins and her faithful assistant Miss E.B. Gibbes, as well as Stainton Moses, who used the pseudonym 'M.A. Oxon'.[11]

Below is featured another pioneer of this form of writing mediumship, Sara Underwood, who was married to one-time editor of the weekly American Spiritualistic journal, "Religio-Philosophical Journal", Benjamin Franklin Underhill (1839-1914), sometimes referred to in the article as B.F.U.; for more information on this valuable journal, which was founded by Stevens Sanborn Jones in 1865, please see Psypioneer, Vol. 3, No. 2: "Religio-Philosophical Journal". On March 15th, 1877 Jones was murdered just after mid-day and died instantly from two pistol wounds; he was at his office at the Religio-Philosophical Publishing House Building, No. 394, Dearborn Street, Chicago. Some background information on Benjamin and Sara Underwood can be noted from this article, as quoted here:

> At this period the journal was under the editorship of Benjamin Franklin Underwood. In the 'Light of Truth', Album issued by The Light of Truth Publishing Company Columbus, Ohio 1897 we read this about the Underwoods:—
>
> ### B. F. Underwood
>
> One of the most prominent lecturers, debaters, and writers of the Free Thought cause, was Mr. Underwood, at this time. Besides this he is a journalist of high rank. He was born in New York City, July 6, 1839, and in 1857 already contributed articles to first - class journals. He served as lieutenant in the Union army. At the close of the war he re-entered the lecture field, and was late editor of the Boston Index and Chicago Open Court. Few men have ever received such editorial deference by the press as Mr. Underwood. For several years he was editorial writer for the Religio Philosophical Journal, on scientific, religious, and moral subjects, and for about two years he himself conducted the paper along the lines and in the interest of the Psychical Research Society. Mrs. Underwood associated with him, writing directly in support of Spiritualism, citing in proof her own personal experiences. As a young man Mr. Underwood was inclined to materialism, but latterly he has lectured on Spiritualism – having made its phenomena a subject of careful investigation. He has also contributed articles to the Arena and Journal of Psychic Research anent his observations in relation to this subject. He was also secretary of the Psychical Science Congress held in connection with the World's Fair, co-operating with many other prominent men in contributing to the success of those important meetings.
>
> ### Mrs. Sarah A. Underwood.
>
> Until her eighteenth year, Mrs. Underwood was a Methodist, but shortly after reasoned herself out of orthodoxy into liberalism. About this time the writings of Mr. B. F. Underwood also came to her notice, which resulted in correspondence and eventually marriage in 1862. She then became identified with the reform movement, though

[11] This is found in the Pioneer pdf booklet, "Mental Mediumship", as advertised at the end of this issue, which can be searched online or downloaded.

longing all the while for a higher light and some definite evidence of immortality. But upon reading the results of investigations made by Professors Sidgwick, Lodge, and James, she remembered some youthful experiences with the planchette, and determined privately to experiment in automatic writing. The results proved that "spirits" were the agency, as described in her book entitled "Automatic Spirit Writing." Her present address is 2653 Evanston avenue, Chicago, Ill.

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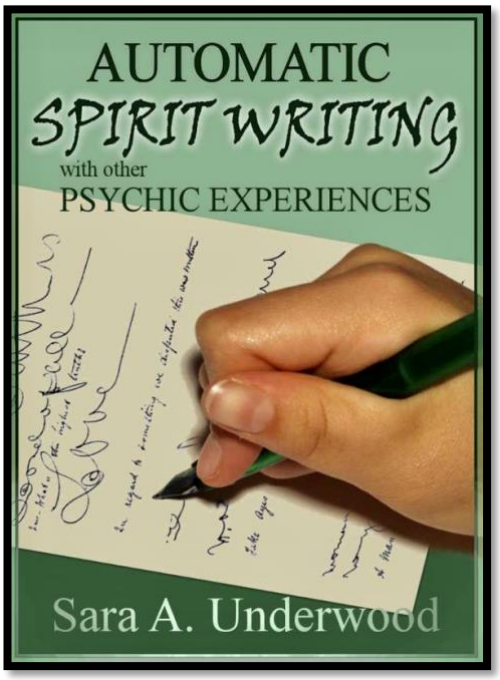
The book review by "W", published below, is taken from the Two Worlds, July 24th, 1896, and mentions the development of Sara as a writing medium, shrouded in her own doubts as to the actual phenomena claimed by spirits, and the challenging questions she put to the spirits who it was claimed wrote through her rather than her subconscious mind. In the early phases of the various mediumships in Victorian times it can be noted, for example in psychic photography and some trance art, etc., that the medium *sometimes* needed a partner—for a better word—to *boost* their required psychic force to produce the phenomena required by the spirits. Mrs Underwood soon discovered that she was not successful as a medium unless Mr Underwood (B.F.U.) was also present—a blending of powers:

AUTOMATIC OR SPIRIT WRITING.

SARA A. UNDERWOOD. [12]

By W.

What you don't grasp is wholly lost to you,
What you don't reckon, think you, can't be true.



THE ABOVE LINES, from Goethe's "Faust," should be remembered by all opponents to the phenomena of Spiritualism. Some oppose it from one motive, some from another, but all may be reckoned up in the thought that they don't grasp the full significance of the deductions to be drawn from its teachings. Our attitudes to all such should be as that of "seers to those yet in the dark—as full of lovingness and tenderness as one who sees to those bereft of sight, eager to remove the disability, but patient with their natural mistakes and halting steps. Remember, as they are so once were ye, and they too shall be ultimately led to the light." That is the feeling one often has while reading Mrs. Underwood's thought-inspiring book on automatic writing. For Spiritualists, it is not merely the book of the month, but a standard work, to be studied, not only for the curious phenomenon of automatic writing, but for the 'beautiful moral teachings' given by that means.

There are often references to the "conditions" necessary for getting the writing, and Mrs. Underwood soon discovered that she was not successful unless Mr. Underwood was also present. If he left the room the writing instantly ceased, even if she was in the middle of a sentence, and no more writing could be got till he returned. That "power" was drawn from him is proved by the fact that it produced a feeling of fatigue with him, which, however, would soon pass away when the writing ceased. This suggested to the

[12] Originally published by Thomas G. Newman, Chicago, Ill. in 1896. It has been more recently republished in 2012 and is available in various formats from Amazon. It is also available as a free download.

medium to ask her spirit friends if it would be injurious in its effects, the reply was that it might cause a little nervousness for an hour or so, but, ultimately, it would be beneficial rather than injurious.

One evening, when Mr. Underwood was busy, and not paying any attention to the medium, the invisible intelligence asked for "a warmer greeting from B.F.U." as he is usually denominated. They tried to write, but coming to a sudden stop, the medium asked, "why not go on?"

A. "We are not strong enough to do with your aid alone."

Q. "Why?"

A. "Blended powers are of greatest use to us."

On another occasion, after a rather warm discussion between themselves, they asked the control a question on an entirely different subject, but instead of answering, there was written:—

> Want you two to be in sweet accord, otherwise we cannot give you the best and highest which waits for such as you when in more harmony.

Only mediums fully understand the absolute necessity for perfect harmony at circles, even if there are manifestations, they are liable to be faulty, if not mischievous. And not only at the seance is it necessary to have good conditions, but it should be prepared for.

"Save your power of spiritual friendliness for the occasion, and we will give powerful tests."

Q. "How can we save power ?"

A. "By some previous care of temper. Let not emotion of any sort control your spirit. Be guided by our higher desires and aspirations, let us for once fully control."

"Come willingly to us, or we cannot give you communications."

Here is one of the many little proofs that it was not the medium's own brain, as some have suggested, which dictated the writing. She says:

> Often when I note the first letters of a word my thought runs on ahead, and I guess the word is going to be this or that, but the intelligence which rules seems to be cognisant of my guessing, and to take a perverse pleasure in twisting the words into something wholly unexpected, yet bringing the sentence into harmonious thought when finished.

It was the development of Mrs. Underwood's mediumship which eventually convinced both herself and her husband of the truth of Spiritualism, and drew them away from Agnosticism, their former belief, or rather want of belief.

In the introduction, Mr. Underwood tells us that the medium's private opinions were often vigorously combated by the various intelligences using her hand, and matter-of-fact information, unknown to either of them, was often given—another proof that it could not have been her own brain or sub-conscious self that dictated the writing, or even a case of thought transference. He also says:

> Sometimes philosophical questions are discussed; at other times verse is composed with greater rapidity than Mrs. Underwood can write even prose in the ordinary way. I have seen written by her hand thirty or forty lines, quickly and without pause, and a curious fact worth mentioning is, that in several cases the

poem was constructed in a way which showed that the whole must have been in the mind of the real author when the first verse was composed.

On one occasion, after a communication from an entirely different source, and one in no way suggestive of Browning, the words, "one word more," were rapidly written, then followed the verse:

Round goes the world, as song-birds go,
Then comes an age of overthrow;
Strange dreams come true, yet still we dream
Of deeper depths in Life's swift stream.

Objections were raised by the medium to so many of the communications being signed by noted names, when was written:—

> Elaine and Guinevere were not real beings, but types—so somewhere in our sphere, are spirits who embody cleverness in creations of their fancy, and adopt names suited to their ideas.

The medium also objected to the false and often mischievous statements which were sometimes made, and she asked why such things were allowed. They replied:

> Rather tough problem. There are certain phases of our existence here which are not explainable to you on your plane, and the test we were obliged to make of your credulity was one of these.

Naturally, there was a strong protest made against what appeared to be very deceitful proceedings. But they said:

> Why do you protest when you already know you are but a tyro in this phase of being? You don't now willingly do the work assigned you, and B.F.U. is still harder to manage.

Perhaps the explanation may be that:

> These invisibles declare that they are as seriously and anxiously experimenting on their side to discover modes of untrammelled communication with us, as we, on our side, ought to be, if what they write be true, and if such a thing be possible.

To account for some of the phenomena of Spiritualism, it has been suggested "that a portion of the self becomes alienated and appears to the mind as a separate, foreign personality." A most curious suggestion, and decidedly a "far-fetched hypothesis to account for all mental phenomenon, one of the peculiarities of which is that it sometimes surpasses the conscious mind of the psychic in the power of thought shown, knowledge of facts, and in force and facility of expression." It seems equally out of the question to attribute this wonderful gift of automatic writing to the sub-conscious self, for, as Mr. Underwood says, "The sub-conscious self would then be deceiving the upper self, which is an absurdity when 'the psychic's conscious self is, as to veracity and trustworthiness, beyond suspicion.' "

Mr. T. W. H. Myers, who has made automatic writing a subject of prolonged and careful investigation, says that in some of the automatic messages received he cannot avoid the conviction that it is the "departed personality" which originates them.[13]

[13] It should read: F[rederic] W. H. Myers, who was on the first Council of the Society for Psychical Research, founded in 1882 (as was Frank Podmore, mentioned elsewhere in this issue); Myers' work in psychical research was indeed extensive and much of this is to be found in Psypioneer.

Rev. Minot J. Savage is equally emphatic:

> I have been told things which neither the medium nor myself knew, or could by any possibility have known. If there is any other theory than a Spiritualistic one to explain facts of this sort, I don't know what it is.

Professor Alfred Alexander, of Brazil, thinks there is a special value in automatic writing, because—

> It may not be merely fanciful to say that the supraliminal self, being awake, stands sentinel over the operation, and prevents the ingress of disturbing forces.

Mr. Underwood says:

> It is not improbable to my mind that much of the so-called sacred literature of the world was written by scribes, who were moved to write by intelligences which they could not identify with their own, and which they believed were divine. The Koran, the sacred authority, and guide for many millions of people, was, I believe, produced in this supernormal manner, and may it not be true of some of the books of the Bible ? [14]

Mrs. Underwood must have inherited some of her mediumistic gift, for she refers to her mother's experiences "of visions and voices;" but for all such things she had only "lofty feelings of pity for her superstitions and imaginings." Little did she think that in a few years she would herself be an authority on the subject. She had the same feeling of "lofty pity" for all who confessed themselves Spiritualists; and as for the phenomena, she says, "I was sure it was imagination, or partly due to some undiscovered law, but mostly due to deliberate fraud."

Her own first experience was with the planchette, when such a remarkable test was given, that her companion, a blind man, exclaimed excitedly, "Throw that thing away. It is of Satan ! don't touch it again. Please don't !"

While still an Agnostic, a strange experience came to her at the bedside of a dear friend on the point of death.

> It was near midnight; death was momentarily expected. All the other watchers, exhausted by days of grief and care, were snatching an hour of rest; and I stood alone, looking at the unconscious face before me, which was distinctly visible, though the light was heavily shaded to keep the glare from the dying eyes. All her life my friend had been a Christian believer, with an unwavering faith in a life beyond this, and for her sake a bitter grief came upon me, because, so far as I could see, there were no grounds for that belief. I thought I could more easily let her go out into the unknown if I could but feel that her hope would be realised, and I put into words this feeling. I pleaded that if there were any of her own departed ones present at this supreme moment, could they not, and would they not give me some least sign that such was the fact, and I would be content.
>
> Slowly over the dying one's face spread a mellow radiant mist—I know no other way to describe it. In a few moments it covered the dying face as with a veil, and spread in a circle about a foot beyond, over the pillow, the strange yellowish-white light, all the more distinct from the partial darkness of the room. Then from the centre of this, immediately over the hidden face, appeared an apparently living face, with smiling eyes, which looked directly into mine, gazing at me with a look so full of comforting assurance that I could scarcely feel frightened. But it was so

[14] See Pioneer, Vol. 9, No. 1: "The Relation of Modern Spiritualism to Christianity - Ernest W. Oaten", which was continued in the next issue.

real and so strange that I wondered if I were temporarily crazed, and as it disappeared, I called some one from another room, and went out into the open air for a few moments, to recover myself under the midnight stars. When I was sure of myself, I returned and took my place again alone. Then I asked that, if that appearance were real and not an hallucination, would it be made once more manifest to me; and again the phenomenon was repeated, and the kind, smiling face looked up at me—a face new to me, yet wondrously familiar.

Afterwards, I recalled my friend's frequent description of her dead father, whom she dearly loved, but whom I had never seen, and I could not help the impression that it was his face I saw, the hour that his daughter died.

To be concluded.

The Two Worlds, July 31st, 1896:

AUTOMATIC OR SPIRIT WRITING.

SARA A. UNDERWOOD
By W.

Concluded:



WHEN Mr. and Mrs. Underwood were one time discussing the advisability of asking a medium of their acquaintance to sit with them, they were told to "Wait. It is always best to test even mediumistic persons, since their control and yours may be on different planes, and belong to altogether different spheres. You do not on your plane wish to take into your confidence every one who professes to think and believe as they think you do." Good advice, truly, and another variation on the word "conditions."

The indefinite nature of description, usually given by "controls," of their environments in spirit life has many times been remarked upon, and it has even been brought as an accusation against mediumship that it was proof the control was not really from the spirit side of life, but probably merely an exalted state of the medium's own brain or thoughts, gathered from the other sitters. Mrs. Underwood complained about these indefinite descriptions being given in reply to her questions for information of spirit spheres, when was written:—"Words, as you know, are inadequate to present clearly pictures of the things most familiar to sense-perceptions. How, then, can we paragraph to your limited knowledge wonders beyond our power to describe or comprehend ?"

Q. "Can you give a hint as to what the most marked differences between what your ideas were while here as to spirit existence, and the reality as you now know it ?"

A. "Void are words, bounded by earthly meanings, to answer your query. Sense perceptions are on so much lower a plane of spirituality, that no words within your knowledge could convey definite ideas of spirit existence. . . . Those studying the A B C of life, cannot expect to understand the *x* of algebra."

Let us all remember this when inclined to complain of the imperfection of mediumship, that need not, of course, hinder us from ever striving after perfection, but it will help us to cultivate the virtue of charity in thought.

The following reply to a query as to whether it was worth while striving after more perfect knowledge of spiritual things, should stimulate those who think there is no progress in mediumship, and be an encouragement to the faint-hearted to persevere. "Those who have advanced as far as you have advanced, will grow in esoteric knowledge in spite of hard conditions."

An instructive and interesting answer is given to the question: "Are the different religious beliefs held by men on our plane carried on to your sphere, and believed in after their death ?" "Clear thinking is not at once attained by even the fairest-minded, who experience the change you call death; and with new meanings attached to old ideas, the sects will persist for one or more changes of planes."

'Are you happy ?" is often asked by inquirers, when a spirit friend controls the medium. Here is a reply from one, which is almost enough to make one long for the future life:—"Told as a wonderful dream of poet or seer, I should have thought this phase of existence a phantasm too beautiful for realisation, but living this new, sweet, helpful life, I am constantly wondering if I am a real part of this sphere."

Here is another question which has, in various ways, often been asked by investigators. The reply is instructive. "Why do you not answer our appeal to you on behalf of M.L., that she may hear from her friends ?" "A. Shall not we who are *en rapport* with all spiritual entities such as the soul whose earth name you speak, know more fully than your short sight can guess at, the spiritual need of silence from our side, though desire and earthly longing would break and cancel all spiritual law ? Should not a spiritualistic mortal like the sweet soul you mention be disciplined to wait the proper hour for spirit communion ? "

And that "proper hour" often is when the soul is in such deep sorrow that it inclines one to say with the psalmist, "All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me."

Spirit friends often remind us of the ephemeral nature of all life's trials, and that suggested the question, when Boehme purported to be in control, how he viewed his own earthly sorrows now ?"

A. "Bitter was the cup which spiritual powers compelled me to drink when on your plane. In the light of my higher knowledge on this plane, I am only sorry that even more bitter draughts were not offered me, while with such as you, to give blessed cause for the joys which I now experience. Be of good cheer, children of truth, ye shall reap tenfold what ye sow in tears and fearfulness."

One control spoke of feeling crestfallen when he got to the spirit-side of life, and how much better it would have been had he known something of the truth while in earth life. Another said, "The trials and temptations of both upper and lower strata of society are essential to true development."

The conditions on the other side of the veil seem to be as varied as on this—perhaps more so—and one spirit found everything so different to anything he expected that it made him feel quite "homesick," and he was glad to get into communication with his old friends again.

A wealthy materialist wrote through the medium, "Those may thank their fates to whom has been given the cult of poverty." He was charitable, and did much good with his money when in earth life, but in spirit life his constant regret was, "Oh, the good I could have done had my eyes been opened; that makes me unhappy."

There are many discussions between the medium and her spirit friends, on deeply interesting subjects, such as Cremation; Religion and Morality; Christ, Buddha, and Mahomet; Theosophy and Spiritualism; Evil; Spirit and Matter; God; Eternity—all

stimulating thought, whether we agree with what is written or not. Those who believe in individual immortality will be inclined to doubt the truth of the following, but which, nevertheless, sounds very like "a natural law in spiritual life."

"Spirit as a whole is eternal—exists, did exist—will exist by force of powers you do not understand. But you, as individuals, self-conscious atomistic particles of spirit wholeness, are not eternal, and must return to the Primal Source. There is happiness, however, almost undreamable—possible, before your atoms are submerged—returned to that Primal Source, which makes your existence all-good."

In the medium's desire to obtain fuller and more perfect knowledge of spiritual truth, she asked what was the best way. The answer was: "Love for all humanity is the 'short cut.' Salvation comes through love always, never through mere philosophical attainments."

Mrs. Underwood has a word of reproof for those who seek for phenomena only, instead of considering them simply as a means to an end.

"To those for whom phenomena and spirit recognition are the be-all and end-all of Spiritualism, only phenomena, and that not of the highest type, will come. In Spiritualism more than any other religious faith is it true, that only to those who earnestly ask for it shall the truth be given, and only those who knock at the door of spirit for admittance in their search for the key to the higher life shall find the way open?"

Mrs. Underwood was, at first, very reticent about her gift for automatic writing, and for some time did not mention it even to her most intimate friends; but this reticence was not pleasing to her spirit friends, who desired her to publish the writings. As a preliminary, they said: "Share your gladness with a select few before publication."

After a while they began to urge her to publish, but for long these importunities were resisted. Then they called her a coward; and sometimes in the middle of a sentence there would be a sudden pause, and then came the word "coward." While in a state of doubt on the subject, she asked: "Don't you know that many will disbelieve what we say ?" to which they replied: "Some will doubt what you may state, but the many are an hungered and athirst for the truth as it has been given through you two." These invisible powers complained of feeling impatient because of there being "so little sensible appreciation of their work. . . . Your vanity is in the way. Mortals are as queer as ever !" Which compliment may, sometimes, be returned to our spirit friends !

After the first publication of her experiences, Mrs. Underwood had letters from many, to whom they had been helpful and comforting. And all who read the book will rejoice that she was at last obedient to the wishes of her spirit friends, for from cover to cover it is of unceasing interest. One lady, who lived in a lonely place, and who had gone through a like experience, but feared to tell anyone for fear they should think her mad, and treat her accordingly, was very grateful in her acknowledgment of the help it had been to her to know that hers was not a solitary case.

So interesting, suggestive, and instructive are the writings as a whole, that we can quite believe with Mr. Underwood that "These experiments have convinced her, as nothing in the orthodox faith held by her ancestors, in which she was educated, had or could, of the truth and reasonableness of the soul's survival of death, and of its progressive existence in spheres beyond this mortal life."

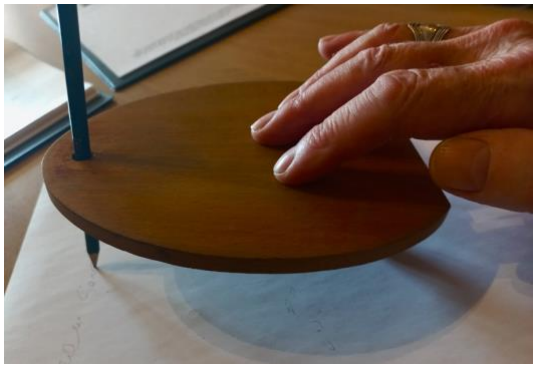
May every reader be equally convinced of its truth, and may there be many readers of Mrs. Underwood's interesting book on "Automatic Writing."

Automatic Writing

Pioneer's numerous articles on automatic writing over the years have generally generated great interest in its readers and in the last issue we featured the Victorian writing medium, Sara Underwood.[8] The subject has sometimes raised questions as to how this form of mediumship is achieved and whether or not it falls under the category of mental or physical mediumship. In the next issue Pioneer will look at direct writing, or psychography as it was more commonly known, which falls under the general heading of physical mediumship. Automatic writing falls under mental—*passive*—mediumship; below are some quotes describing various cases of this form of mediumship. Is it one's subconscious mind? The methods and descriptions given give a good overview of this method of communication, including examples of some well-known mediums who used this form of communication.

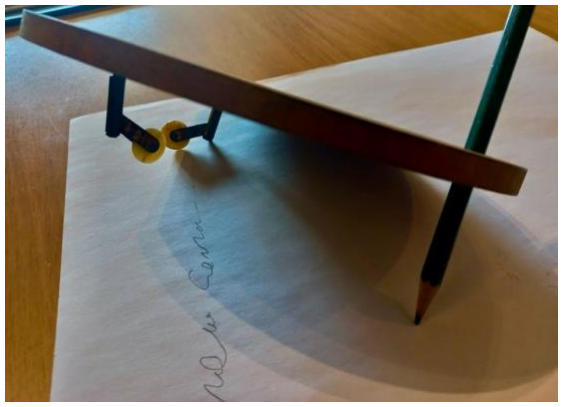
Below is taken from "The Facts of Psychic Science" by A. Campbell Holms, first published in 1925: [9]

> Automatic writing is one of the principal means of spirit communication. Many people can write more or less automatically, for it requires comparatively little psychic power. The gift is often discovered accidentally. While writing, the medium usually remains in the normal state, the spirit controlling through the subconscious mind only that part of the brain which moves the hand. Often the communications seem merely to emanate from the medium's own spirit or subconscious personality; usually, however, this is impressed or influenced more or less by foreign spirits, discarnate or incarnate. The only guide to their real authorship is the style, calligraphy and evidential value of the written words, which vary with different controls.



The automatic writer may use a pencil or pen in the ordinary way, or a planchette.[10] In the first case the pencil is held over a sheet of paper, as in the act of writing, the mind is made passive, and after a time, or immediately, it will begin to write sentences or replies to questions audibly put by anyone present. The practised medium is often impressed to get a pencil and paper, and then intelligent writing begins at once. Some writing mediums are also controlled to draw and paint.

> A planchette is a simple little apparatus, which affords a good test of mediumship. It is an ancient contrivance, which most people have amused themselves with some time or another. If it writes without conscious effort, the operator is a medium. In effect, it is merely a pencil holder in the form of a thin triangular or heart-shaped piece of wood; it has a leg at each corner, one is a pencil, and the others have smooth ends or castors, so that they may run easily over the paper. It is



[8] Pioneer, Vol. 9, No. 3: "Automatic or Spirit Writing – Sara A. Underwood".

[9] A. Campbell Holms, "The Facts of Psychic Science", published in 1925; it was later reprinted in 1969 with a new foreword from Leslie Shepard.

[10] Britten Museum BMT 54: Planchette on wheels, said to have been used by Emma Hardinge Britten.

easy to use, for the fingers need only be placed upon it, when it will begin to run about, write sentences or draw things, that is, if the operator is sufficiently psychic, and there are spirits present who desire to communicate—the latter, however, when a medium is present, are rarely lacking.

A planchette is advantageous in that two people can touch it simultaneously, and thus combine their psychic forces. The same concentration of force, however, can be affected when using an ordinary pencil, by a second person touching the wrist of the writer, such additional influence with some mediums being essential to secure results. The Spirit messages recorded in the book entitled *The Result of an Experiment* (Lond., 1909), were all received in this way by a married couple, one of whom placed a hand on the wrist of the other. Their attempts to write individually were always failures. For many years they devoted a short time every evening to the writing. At first they got nothing but scribble and disconnected phrases. After many months the writing became stronger and clearer, and the names of deceased relatives appeared, with interesting personal communications and advice.

When a medium first attempts to write automatically, the writing is usually illegible, and drawings or curious designs may be attempted. When the medium or spirit is without experience, the arm may be moved in the most erratic way, making wild circular movements with great force and rapidity, so as to pain it and create dismay. Sometimes the unpractised writer feels a tingling sensation as of an electric current running down the arm.

The mental condition of the automatic writer varies. Some must exert themselves to write, though they feel an impulse given to the hand, which is not their own; and though they do not know the sense of what they are going to write, they know each word as they are about to write it. Such writing is more or less *impressional*; it is not truly automatic, for the writer's conscious mind controls his hand to some extent. With others the writing is almost automatic, but requires to be looked at or it will stop or become illegible, or the lines will run across each other. In truly automatic writing it is the pencil that seems to move the hand; and it writes regardless of the thoughts of the writer, which may be on different matters; he may chat with a friend, read a book, or work out problems requiring concentration of thought.

Some mediums cannot write if they look at the words as they are written. Stainton Moses studied and wrote with his right hand while his left continued to write automatically, but this perfection only came after considerable practice. He was controlled by a group of spirits (the "Imperator" group), who were both wise and good, and who through him indited the well-known book, *Spirit Teaching*[11] Some mediums can write automatically with both hands simultaneously, on different subjects, each hand being controlled apparently by a different spirit; some only write when entranced. Mrs. Piper was one of these.



Automatic writing by a practised medium varies in character with the control quite as much as with different individuals. It may be illiterate and scrawly; or perfect in calligraphy, composition, grammar, spelling and punctuation, and pages may be written without a single error or correction. That of Stainton Moses was of this

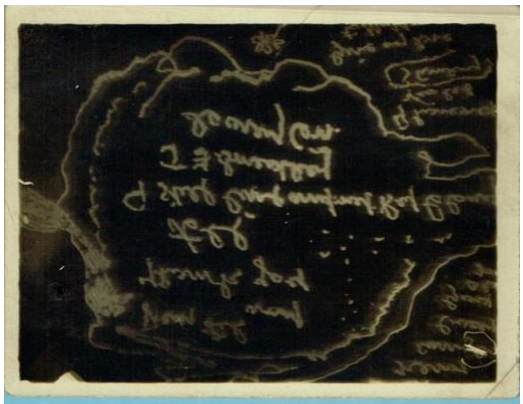
[11] The first edition was published in 1883, and the eighth in 1918, by the London Spiritual Alliance, Ltd. Please see Pioneer, Vol.3, No. 3: "Visit to the College of Psychic Studies – Paul J. Gaunt".

perfect type. Illiterate mediums do not often write automatically, unless they are entranced. The writing may be in a language quite unknown to the medium, Greek and Eastern languages being written, each with its peculiar characters. Dr. Richet records a case of this kind.[12] It was that of a medium Mme. X., who, though knowing nothing of Greek, wrote pages of it in perfect characters and with scarcely a wrong letter or accent. Most of the writings were transcriptions from classical authors; appropriate quotations were also given in reply to questions or apropos of things said. When controlled to write, she was usually in semi-trance and wrote while standing up, in a small note book, awkwardly held in her hand.

Mr. Hugh Junor Browne, of Melbourne, in his book, *The Holy Truth* (pp. 69, 70), relates how his elder daughter, age eleven years, wrote automatically some pages of Chinese; the characters were imperfectibly formed because, it was stated, it was the Chinese spirit's first attempt to write, but they were recognised by a Chinaman. She also wrote in the Kaffir language, of which she was ignorant. Her father once brought a Kaffir into the séance room, and a message came for him written in his language. It was read out by Mr. Browne, and every word was understood but one; this was pronounced in various ways, but without success. Just then his daughter's hand wrote the words "Click with the mouth." This reminded Mr. Browne of a peculiar click which accompanies the sounding of the letter "T" in the Kaffir language, and on the word being pronounced in this way the Kaffir understood. The names of several of the Kaffir's spirit friends were written, and he was astonished and scared when they were read out to him. Kaffirs cannot usually write, but in answer to enquiries, Mr. Browne was informed that the spirit who controlled his daughter to write on behalf of the Kaffir's spirit friends, was an educated man named "Monquambeen."

Communications by automatic writing are not always so reliable as those made by raps or table tilts, for the mentality of the medium is more apt to intrude and affect the sense of the writing. Spirits find it easier to give their own shade of meaning to communications when the writing is purely automatic. When the medium pays attention to it, words or thoughts in his mind are apt to be included in the writing. The need for detachment on the part of the medium was frequently urged by W. T. Stead's spirit scribe, "Julia," who told him not to criticise or intrude his thoughts during the writing; and so it was with Stainton Moses and his spirit scribes. When the writing medium is fully entranced there is no chance of sophistication of the messages through suggestion from his conscious personality."

[…]



Photograph of Mirror Writing (approx. c1910)

Donated to Museum by Belper SNU Church, June 1999

Item 940 - Britten Memorial Museum

Automatic writing often presents curious characteristics. Sometimes it is so minute as only to be readable under a magnifying glass. Sometimes each line is written backwards, as we see ordinary writing in a mirror; being readable in a mirror it is called *mirror writing*. Sometimes each, or every alternate, word is written backwards. Or the whole page may be written backwards, beginning at the bottom right-hand corner. The spirit's object in writing backwards is to preclude the medium from guessing the context, and by mental activity, sophisticating the message. Sometimes the writing is done with tremendous speed. When quite automatic, the writer may be blindfolded. Sometimes it is written upside down, so that a questioner sitting opposite the writer, may conveniently read the spirit's replies.

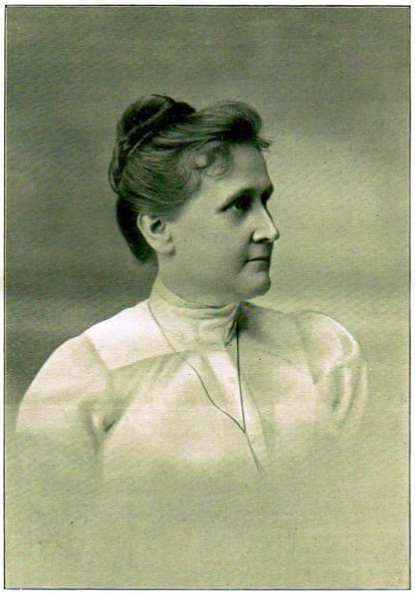
[12] *The Annals of Psychical Science*, June, 1905 and Jan., 1908.

Not all spirits can control a medium's hand to write, and when one wishes to write and cannot, another writes for him. When receiving messages from deceased friends, the friend himself does not usually write, and so the handwriting is not always recognisable; the signature, however, often is. As with nearly all psychic phenomena, automatic writing taxes the strength of the medium, and more particularly when the spirit who writes is inexperienced. The hand itself, however, never gets tired of writing.

The experienced automatic writer has usually several spirit guides or friends who constantly make use of his hand; and each one can always be identified by the handwriting and peculiarities of method, which never vary, however long an interval may elapse between the writings. There sometimes appears to be a curious sort of rivalry between these familiar spirits, for the writing of one will occasionally cease abruptly and give place to that of another, and this without apparent reason. Sometimes the writing purports to be a transcript from an old classical work, and it may continue during numerous séances, always beginning where it left off. When the writer is not entranced an effort of will is sufficient to stop the writing. Sometimes unknown spirits give, as their names, those of the great in history, but these may be mere pseudonyms.

When we write in the ordinary way the hand is controlled to move by the conscious mind, but how precisely the control is effected is a mystery. The hand of the automatic writer is controlled by his subconscious mind, and so he is not conscious of any mental impulse. His subconscious mind may act independently, but usually it does so under the suggestion, dictation or guidance of an external spirit. In hypnotism the subconscious mind is entirely governed by suggestion from the hypnotiser, and in its absence will remain inactive. A medium's subconscious mind is readily accessible to suggestion from any external spirit, incarnate or discarnate.

If the medium is imperfectly developed the control established by an external spirit is imperfect, and the sense of the message may be sophisticated by the obtrusion of the medium's own thoughts, conscious or subconscious, or the thoughts of the sitters or of the other spirits who always crowd round a medium. With a good medium there is more complete surrender of his subconscious mind, and consequently, more complete control and less sophistication. In the case of an entranced medium it is probable that his spirit or subconscious personality may temporarily quit his corporeal organism, and in such cases the controlling spirit acts directly on the brain, which is composed of substance specially adapted for the purpose of being acted upon by mind or spirit—it may be the medium's own spirit or, in its absence, another spirit.



Leonora E. Piper

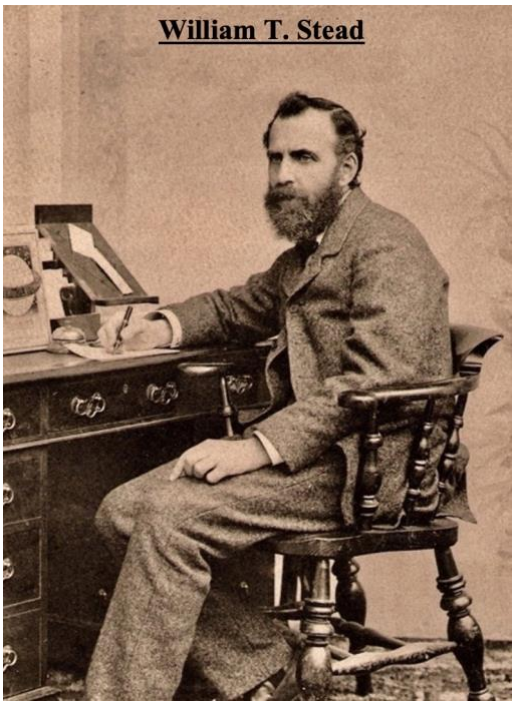
Spirits controlling a medium to write cannot explain satisfactorily how it is done. Those communicating through Mrs. Piper did not seem to know rightly whether their messages were written or spoken by the entranced medium; they themselves were not conscious of the act of writing, and were apparently under the impression that their messages were delivered by speech. It seems that in their case, therefore, they simply projected their thoughts into the medium's brain, and were not concerned as to whether she translated them by writing or speech. Although this probably represented the facts in this particular case, in others (as when the medium speaks or writes in an unknown language) different conditions must evidently prevail.

Hypnotic subjects can write automatically and unconsciously in obedience to a post-hypnotic suggestion. This phenomenon is often erroneously urged by sceptics as an explanation applicable to automatic writing. They say that it is not an extraneous spirit who controls the hand to write, but the subconscious self of the writer, who, by telepathy, has searched the memories and thoughts of the sitter, and made use of the knowledge so acquired to play the part of a deceased spirit friend. This is equivalent to saying that the subconscious self is ever ready to play the part of a communicating spirit, and thus cleverly deceive whoever it can, including its own primary, conscious self. Deliberate lying and deception on the part of the subconscious personality seems unlikely, for we know from experiments in hypnotism that one of its most noticeable characteristics is a meticulous truthfulness; if questioned on any subject the hypnotised subject will never say "yes" for "no," and if knowledge is lacking will at once admit ignorance.

In further disproof of the sceptic's subconscious-self hypothesis, mention need only be made of the numerous spirit messages which state facts unknown to anyone present, the wide variation in the styles and calligraphy of the writings, and the well-observed phenomenon of a medium writing in a language quite unknown to him, which alone proves clearly that a spirit other than his own controls his hand.

Communicating spirits have often been asked their opinion of the sceptic's allegation that they are not discarnate spirits but the medium's subconscious self, and they invariably ridicule the notion, pronouncing it to be a "foolish vagary." When Mrs. Piper's control "Phinuit" was speaking, it was put to him that scientific men did not regard the controls of a trance medium as separate entities. To this he replied, "I know that, but what do they think I am?" He was told "They think you are just one of the medium's dreams; she goes to sleep and dreams she is a French doctor." His answer to this, spoken with infinite disgust was, "Oh my ! people had better say it again. I'm individually, distinctly, absolutely my own self, I have nothing to do with that woman." [13]

Automatically written messages usually emanate from a discarnate spirit, but in many cases they may come from the spirit of someone still in the body. W. T. Stead's hand frequently wrote messages or statements from friends hundreds and even thousands of miles away the accuracy of which he afterwards verified by referring them to the transmitters. He records a remarkable case of the kind in his book *After Death*, p. 15. Quoting from this, he says :—


William T. Stead

"A lady friend of mine, who can write with my hand at any distance, with even more freedom than she can write with her own, had been spending the week-end at Haslemere, a village about thirty miles from London. She had promised to lunch with me on Wednesday if she returned to town. Late on Monday I wished to know if she had left the country, and placing my pen on the paper I mentally asked if she had returned to London. My hand wrote as follows :—

'I am very sorry to tell you I have had a very painful experience, of which I am almost ashamed to speak. I left Haslemere at 2.27 p.m. in a second-class carriage, in which there were two ladies and one gentleman. When the train stopped at Godalming, the ladies got

[13] Mrs. Sidgwick, *Proc*. S.P.R., Vol. XXIII, p. 177.

out, and I was left alone with the man. After the train started he left his seat and came close to me. I was alarmed, and repelled him. He refused to go away, and tried to kiss me. I was furious. We had a struggle. I seized his umbrella and struck him, but it broke, and I was beginning to fear that he would master me, when the train began to slow up before arriving at Guildford Station. He got frightened, let go of me, and before the train reached the platform he jumped out and ran away. I was very much upset. But I have the umbrella.'

"I sent my secretary up with a note, saying merely I was very sorry to hear what had happened, and added, 'Be sure and bring the man's umbrella on Wednesday.' She wrote in reply, 'I am very sorry you know anything about it. I had made up my mind to tell nobody. I will bring the broken umbrella, but it was my umbrella, not his.'

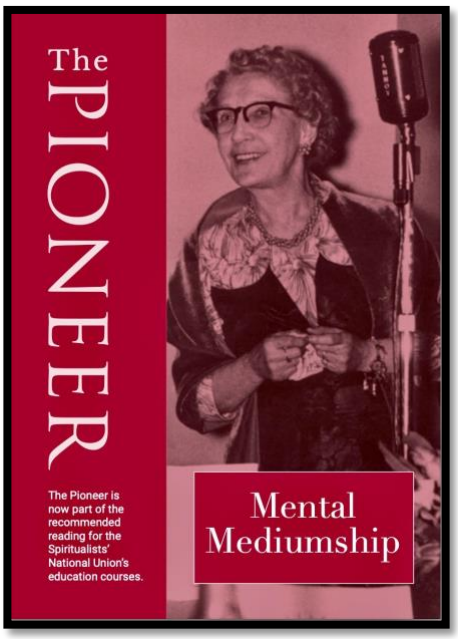
"When she came to lunch on Wednesday, she confirmed the story in every particular, and produced the broken umbrella, which was hers, and not his. How that mistake occurred in the transmission of the message I do not know. . . . I may say that I had no idea as to the train she was travelling by, and had not the slightest suspicion that she had experienced so awkward an adventure.

"I may say that since then, for a period of fifteen years, I have been, and am still, in the habit of receiving similar automatic messages from many of my friends. In some the percentage of error is larger, but as a rule, the messages are astonishingly correct. This system of automatic telepathy from friends who are still in their bodies and who are in sympathy with me is for me as well established as the existence of electric telegraphy, or any other fact capable of verification every day."

Stead says in *Borderland* (Vol. I, p. 50), that he knew at least ten other automatic writers who received, as he did, messages from living friends, and describes (pp. 101 and 507) some more of his experiences.

—~—☼—~—

Editor's Note:



As noted, the above quotes are taken from Archibald Campbell Holms's (1861-1954) "The Facts of Psychic Science." In my opinion it is a most valuable and comprehensive encyclopaedia of Spiritualist phenomena and much of the contents of its 512 pages are well referenced for research purposes. Much of the above-quoted material has numerous references, quotes, etc., but far too much to publish here. However, some of the views expressed in the above are more fully explored in some of Pioneer's previous articles.

All Pioneer's articles and references to automatic writing can be found in the pdf booklet, "Mental Mediumship", which can be searched on-line or freely downloaded.

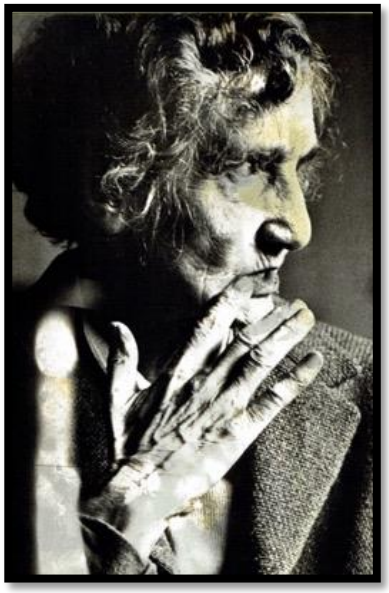
For example, it was strongly noted in the last issue of Pioneer's article, "Automatic or Spirit Writing", by Sara A. Underwood:

… that the medium *sometimes* needed a partner—for a better word—to *boost* their required psychic force to produce the phenomena required by the spirits. Mrs Underwood soon discovered that she was not successful as a medium unless Mr Underwood (B.F.U.) was also present—a blending of powers.

It can be noted that a similar account to the above quotes:

> … The Spirit messages recorded in the book entitled *The Result of an Experiment* (Lond., 1909), were all received in this way by a married couple, one of whom placed a hand on the wrist of the other. Their attempts to write individually were always failures.

Other examples are also outlined in the above article, e.g. about the speed of the writing, whether or not the automatist hears the words or whether it is simply the action of the hand. We can note in Pioneer, Vol. 4, No. 2: "Automatic Writing", regarding the medium Geraldine Cummins (1890-1969):



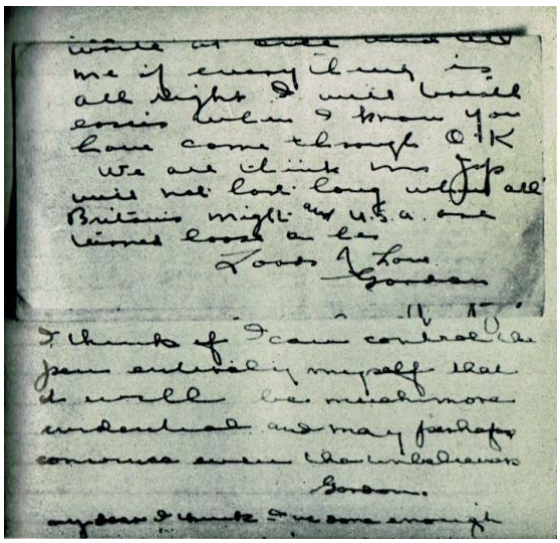
In 1923, she met Edith Beatrice Gibbes, an enthusiastic researcher who guided and watched over her work until her death in 1951. The two spent many hours together during Geraldine's writings. Miss Gibbes placing fresh foolscap sheets beneath the moving hand as the close-packed, linked words covered the pages. Normally a slow writer, Geraldine has, in her automatism, produced as many as 1,750 words in an hour – and not a word needed correction.

Conscious, but –

Her technique does not conform to the normal rules of automatic writing. The scripts are not, as is usual, produced by involuntary movement of the writing hand. Geraldine hears each word clairaudiently and puts it on to paper through the normal processes of penmanship.[14] She is fully conscious during her seances, but nonetheless "never quite knows" what is going on.

Another point noted: Were the automatic scripts of the dead persons in their own handwriting? One example can be found in Pioneer, Vol. 6, No. 6: "Automatic Writing – Grace Rosher"; the end of the article concludes:

The top part is Gordon Burdick's handwriting during his lifetime—below received after his death by the mediumship of Grace Rosher



Grace Rosher sought guidance from the Reverend G. Maurice Elliot, the first honorary secretary of "The Churches' Fellowship for Psychical Study" (CFPS).[15] Rev. Elliot enlisted the aid of handwriting expert F.T. Hilliger, who studied the automatic scripts and compared them to the handwriting of Burdick when alive.

Although initially skeptical, F.T. Hilliger published his detailed report in "Beyond the Horizon", concluding "... the writing reproduced by Grace Rosher was, if it were humanly possible, genuinely inspired by the personality of Gordon E. Burdick" (signed by Hilliger on 28th January 1957).

[14] This does not always appear to be the case in other articles.

[15] For further information on the Reverend G. Maurice Elliot and the CFPS please see Psypioneer; a contents sheet is available on request. The CFPS is still going today:
The Churches' Fellowship for Psychical and Spiritual Studies exists to promote the study and the integration of psychical and spiritual experience within a Christian context. Founded in 1953, it continues to serve churches and individuals with many and varied backgrounds, experiences and needs.



The name Estelle Roberts needs little introduction in the annals of Spiritualism. Estelle has on numerous times been reflected in the pages of Pioneer; here Estelle talks about how she works as a medium on the platform—the two worlds are one—the spirit world interpenetrating with our world:

"I see them objectively as clearly as I see you now,"
"but they do not come to me. I go to them ..."

The article below is taken from *Light*, October 20th, 1933:

SEEING AND HEARING "OTHER-WORLD" PEOPLE

How do Mediums see and hear the "Other-World" people they describe ? Those who have listened to Mrs. Estelle Roberts giving her wonderful clairvoyant descriptions from the platform of the Queen's Hall or at the Grotrian Hall, must often have wished to get an answer to this question. Here it is, given in an interview by Mrs. Roberts, specially for the information of the readers of LIGHT.

MRS. ESTELLE ROBERTS ON HER PLATFORM WORK.

"HOW do you see the spirits you describe ? " was the first question answered by Mrs. Roberts.

"I see them objectively as clearly as I see you now," she said, "but they do not come to me. I go to them. I find myself on their plane, in their element in which I feel more at home than with the people on earth. I am somewhere in terms of space, in a definite place which is interpenetrating with our world. I can as well describe the habitation of spirits as their personal appearance. In fact, for thirteen years I have been longing to tell the world what I can see. But they only want to know of Tom, Dick and Harry—how they look, what have they got to tell them. So I refrain from speaking of the spheres and of the different stages of soul evolution, and I give them what they want.

"As the age of a person is disclosed here by his height so I translate into our terms what their spiritual state, reflecting on their bodily appearance, discloses to me. I see their mouths moving, I hear their messages. It is to me, in that state, like ordinary hearing.

"But there is a remarkable thing about it. The speed with which they speak. It is beating like drumfire against my ears. I have to listen as intently as if I listened to a high-speed message through the telephone. Once I miss the line of vibration on which the words are coming, it is gone, I cannot get it again. Sufferings and emotions are conveyed by a reflector-method. I feel their joys and sorrows. They become temporarily mine, and I suffer from the memory-pangs of their former physical ailments. But I always warn the audience that the pain is just a memory. I wear it off without great inconvenience."

Do you see miniatures, distorted shapes, or normal sizes ?

"They are like ordinary human beings. They are never out of shape, except those in the lower astral plane. A distorted mental condition, a retarded spiritual nature will result in an undeveloped shape. It is a curious thing that spirits in the lower astral plane sap my vitality. They affect me physically far more than the higher ones. The reason is that they cannot manage their vibrations. They cannot make it easier for me. They have to be taught how to communicate."

Who is teaching them ?

"Red Cloud and the other guides. They are automatically picking up the vibrations of souls in distress. All souls can summon help by prayer. They will be instantly found and might be brought to me. But I am under no necessity to listen, or accept their messages. I can pick out somebody else. I have free will, I am master of the situation and can refuse any communication which I do not care to accept. Not even Red Cloud can overcome me. In fact, he taught me how to be independent. But I have my personal responsibility for the gift which has been given to me and I work in concert with Red Cloud on the principle that we must help those in distress. In fact, it happens but very seldom that the idly curious will get a message at all. As Red Cloud says: it is the sick man who needs the physician. His work is on the line of the Nazarene."

How is your earth-consciousness affected by rising into the spirit plane ?

"This is difficult to explain. I am on the spirit plane, yet I am alert to every movement around me. I feel the vibrations of the audience intensified. It is a sort of bilocation, double consciousness, of being in two places at once."

What is the effect of the audience on you ?

"Their vibration affects me first of all physically. It hits me on the solar plexus. The presence of the stewards who are put in the front row right below the platform sometimes lessens the impact. But it is not so much the physical effect which matters as the psychic. It is like getting conscious of the spiritual state of the whole audience. I could pick out any individual and tell the state of advancement of his soul. Sometimes I wish I could not do it. It is too disillusioning. It comes to me in waves of light and darkness, in feelings of peace and turmoil. I could delve into the past history of any member of the audience but I do feel it is the best to refrain.

Do you see spirits from higher spheres ?

"Occasionally. Once a very high spirit revealed itself to me. His vibration was so terrific that it set every nerve of my body quivering and I shook for a quarter of an hour afterwards. There was also the effect of light, so dazzling that it paled all other light and I had the feeling that I stood dangerously near to being disintegrated into atoms."

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Three issues later, November 10th, more clarity to the questions is given by Estelle Roberts' control, Red Cloud:

"RED CLOUD" ANSWERS QUESTIONS


RED CLOUD.
Control and Chief Guide of
Mrs. Estelle Roberts.
Portrait received Skotographically by
Mrs. MADGE DONOHOE.

HOW HIS MEDIUM SEES AND HEARS SPIRIT-PEOPLE AND HOW SHE IS AFFECTED BY HER EXPERIENCES

IN an interview with a representative of LIGHT published on October 20th, Estelle Roberts gave a description of how she sees and hears spirit people during her demonstrations of platform-clairvoyance.

She said that she sees and hears them objectively and that she finds herself on their plane which is interpenetrating with our world. But she could not tell how she gets there.

This is the crux of the problem and we decided to seek enlightenment from "Red Cloud" himself.

"Red Cloud" is Mrs. Estelle Roberts' spirit control and Mrs. Roberts kindly consented to give a trance sitting for the purpose of the interview.

Question and answer followed each other as follows:

HOW SPIRITS ARE SEEN AND HEARD

Q.—How does the medium see and hear the spirits ?

RED CLOUD.— "The answer to that question lies in the soul-evolution to which the Medium has attained. But to be particular, I will state that she enters space which is time, and there contacts those we desire her to talk to. Space and time are one. I do not admit time apart. It does not exist. Space does, but not quite in the sense of which you are aware. In our space, which the Medium enters, she finds herself in at-oneness with eternal laws. She is in the Eternal Present, in the Eternal Now, where there is no past and no future."

Is not this conception in conflict with the evolution of the soul ?

"No. The soul is perpetually progressing through the Eternal Present. It is through and it evolves as it reaches height after height. This Medium has been trained to express in your language that which she experiences in the soul. Matter drops away and she is in at-oneness in the world of spirits. She is in no abnormal state, for she *is* a spirit. It is *you* who are in an abnormal state—you who are *still* encased in matter. The spirit of the Medium, when it is here, is at home. What she experiences is *the reality*. What she conveys is but an interpretation."

What is it that you actually do ?

"How can I tell in a few words that which has taken me a thousand years to learn ? Yes, a thousand years. And before that I had spent another thousand years in these realms. I have taken service for humanity through eternity. This body of life is a temporary channel. This Medium gave her life for service; she has the qualities of the soul and we find it easier to project it into our space."

Your work, then, is the projection of the Medium ?

"Yes. It is a knowledge acquired in a thousand years. You may use your own words. You may call me a communication-expert if you like. But do not praise me. I am but a servant."

There are myriads of spirits and where there is space there must be places. Do you project the Medium to a definite place or to definite people ?

"Yes and no. Our space is not expressible in your terms. We give the Medium power and we direct her to where the necessity arises for comfort and help,"

Is it, then, the case that the Medium goes to the spirits and not the spirits to the Medium ?

"It is both. There is the law of attraction in operation. Spirits desire to contact the Medium; and, if the desire needs and deserves fulfilment, we help the Medium to establish touch. We ate in at-oneness with the Medium when she is projected and we can talk to her in that far clearer than I am talking to you now. We can suggest to her to help this case and that. She works in conjunction with and in obedience to us. She elects to do so by her own free will."

"RED CLOUD'S" SPIRIT-HELPERS

You speak in plural. Do you have helpers ?

"Yes. I have doctors and other friends with whom I have worked for many a generation. When the Medium is in that highly-trained sensitive state, the doctors are watching the physical and spiritual cord, they are protecting it from excessive and harmful vibrations by softening them, by toning them down. The vibrations of the physical and spiritual world are like two strong cross-currents, tearing through the grey matter of the brain. They have to be attuned or they would tear the grey matter—which is the signal box, the valve—to pieces. Four doctors are watching that part of the work from this side. Other friends, ladies whom I have helped in this work, watch over the physical body of the Medium."

"I want you to realise another thing. When I use the word 'projection,' I do not use it in a physical sense. It does not mean that the Medium goes a long way. The two worlds are interpenetrating. The Medium is "projected," yet she remains where she is. She is in perpetual state of oscillation between three-dimensional and four-dimensional realities."

In being "projected," does the Medium experience an enlarging consciousness ?

"Yes. She becomes much more alert. She is on a higher vibration. The burden of matter, which slows vibrations down, is lifted from her. The degree of this higher consciousness is a question of soul-evolution, not of psychic faculties. The two can combine, but soul- consciousness is the greater understanding of the Eternal Law, to be in at-oneness with truth. The psychic faculties mean no more than St. Paul said of the gifts of the spirit:—'Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.'

"What you call psychic faculties help to bring about a greater awareness but they can only expand along certain vibrations *according* to the soul-evolution. Never mix up psychic faculties with soul-evolution. They are different things."

PSYCHIC FACULTIES AND SOUL-EVOLUTION

Does the attainment of this greater consciousness benefit the Medium in this life ?

"Yes, my son. If you enter a room permeated with scent, do you think you can come out without impregnation ? Of course she is benefited by her experiences on this side of life. She takes back power of the spirit and strength of character. Service must bring about its own reward. It is the law of this world: those that serve are served. It is the motive which is the decisive factor. When a Medium sits with the desire of uplifting humanity, bringing help and comfort to it, she naturally receives the fruits of the spirit.

"On the other hand, you do not have to be a Medium to get these attributes of the spirit. Every man in whom there is a desire of uplifting humanity may correspondingly benefit. You need not be a great Medium to be near the Kingdom of Heaven.

What is the reward after a life of such service ?

"You will hear on entering this life: 'Well done, good and faithful servant.' Cause and effect is the law. As a man sows and so shall he reap. You will reap the beauties of the Kingdom of Heaven, you will inherit a state of sublime peace."

I assume that your work is not solely limited to this Medium ? According to our tine conceptions, you must suffer frequent interruptions.

"Does not the sun shine upon all the people at once ? Did not the Nazarene say: 'I am in the Father, and the Father in Me' ? You cannot dissect the spirit which is in all beings. If you are in at-oneness with the spirit, you can operate on two places at once. The effect is largely what you would call divided consciousness,"

"RED CLOUD'S" CHOICE

You said that you have been evolving for 2,000 years. Does not the state of evolution which you have reached make it exceedingly difficult to come back?

"I have gone on evolving for ages and when I reached the Council Chamber in the last belt of these spheres—roughly in that period which in your time corresponds to 1907—the Masters of this planet showed me a panorama of the Eternal Now, pointed out the coming wars, [6] the tribulations and degradation of humanity, and I was asked if I would like to go forward or come back into matter. I chose to come back. It took seven years for our scientists to cloak my body sufficiently to enable me to re-enter your slow vibrations. When you want a balloon to go up, you throw the ballast out. They ballasted me up to send me down."

[6] Leading spirit guides such as Silver Birch, Red Cloud and others assured Spiritualists there would be no war. Assurances were given, more or less emphatic, that there would be "no European War," or that there would be "no Great War," or that there would be "no war for England." SNU President Frank Blake repeatedly said in public and in the press that "war would not come." These incorrect prophecies from the spirit world dealt Spiritualism a severe blow within the movement and no doubt caused amusement and ridicule from its critics. Which had caused bitter disappointment within the movement, as many were no doubt convinced of the infallibility of the spirit guides.

See Pioneer, Vol. 3, No. 2: " "No World War" predictions – Estelle Roberts says – "Let the People Judge" "

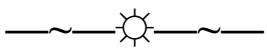
What is this Council Chamber ?

"That is where the Masters watch the earth. They are known as The White Brotherhood. They see the suffering and ignorance which is rampant in the lower planes of consciousness and they remember the promise: 'I will not leave you comfortless.' "

"RED CLOUD'S" HUMILITY

Mrs. Roberts' trance is a study in itself. There is a sudden violence in the spasms of her body which may alarm the inexperienced sitter, and there is a note of wailing in her deep, stertorous breathing. The coming of "Red Cloud" is heralded by strange mutterings. The Medium doubles forward and gives the impression of an ancient, humble creature. One is left uncertain whether this is an expression of "Red Cloud's" earthly age or of his humility. For he says that he is a servant and that there is a law we must remember: the last shall be first, the first shall be the last, and the greatest the servant of all. His voice is harsh and grating, thoroughly masculine, making the sitter entirely oblivious to the strangeness of the fact that it issues from the vocal organism of a woman which the speaker has temporarily borrowed.

An interesting pamphlet under the title, *The Teachings of "Red Cloud",* contains lectures by "Red Cloud" on: Communication with the Dead, What Happens After Death, The Spheres and the Souls Within Them and on Progress. It is obtainable (price 9d.) from Mrs. I. E. Boutcher, 42 Esher Road, E. Molesey Surrey.[7]



[7] This was Estelle Robert's daughter, Ivy Estelle Boutcher.



The name Estelle Roberts needs little introduction in the annals of Spiritualism. Estelle has on numerous times been reflected in the pages of Pioneer; here Estelle talks about how she works as a medium on the platform—the two worlds are one—the spirit world interpenetrating with our world:

"I see them objectively as clearly as I see you now,"
"but they do not come to me. I go to them …" [6]

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The article below is published from the Two Worlds, March 20th, 1936 and gives a good example of her impressive platform work:

ESTELLE ROBERTS AT CROYDON

SPIRITUALISM has been denounced by the Pope and frowned upon by some of our bishops; it has been distorted in out popular Press and cold-shouldered by the B.B.C., yet in spite of these modern Canutes the rising tide of public interest refuses to recede.

On Wednesday, March 11th, under the auspices of the House of Red Cloud, [7] the first of a series of propaganda meetings was held at Croydon, at which the speaker was Mr. Maurice Barbanell, and the clairvoyante, Mrs. Estelle Roberts. The largest hall in Croydon (seating 1,200) had been procured, and before the meeting was due to commence the "house-full" boards were displayed, and numbers of disappointed people were turned away.

As chairman, Mr. J. M. Stewart [8] paid an earnest tribute to Red Cloud, the guide of Mrs. Roberts, at whose request these propaganda meetings were being arranged. He valued his contacts with that spirit, and had always found his advice both wise and practical. "Mr. Barbanell, the editor of *Psychic News*," he said, "was a fearless advocate for Spiritualism as he conceived it."

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[6] This was published in Pioneer, Vol. 9, No. 6: "Seeing and Hearing "Other-World" People", "Mrs Estelle Roberts On Her Platform Work', & " "Red Cloud" Answers Questions".

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

[8] John M. Stewart, former SNU President (1941-1943) and founder member and President of Croydon National Spiritualist Church. See Pioneer, Vol. 3, No. 3: "First Croydon National Spiritualist Church", "The benefits of Union affiliation!", & "Pioneer retires from active service – Farewell to John Stewart".

Mr. Barbanell, in his address, was invitingly persuasive. The case for Spiritualism, he said, rested on the evidence which, under proper conditions, could be obtained to-day. It proved that it was natural for man to survive death, and being a natural law he survived irrespective of his religious beliefs. In a popular way he explained the function of mediumship, and then dwelt upon our difficulties in view of the provision of the Witchcraft Act.

Mrs, Roberts' gifts as a clairvoyante are universally recognised among Spiritualists, and she followed with a very convincing demonstration.

"You have a brother on the other side who has passed over some time," she said, indicating a lady in the audience. This was a direct statement of fact, acknowledged to be true, and she followed: "He gives me the names of Aunt Mary, John, Elizabeth, Uncle George, Tom, Aunt Sarah, Arthur (your cousin), Aunt Polly (dad's sister-in-law), and Ginny." All these names were immediately recognised. "They also give me Harry and Jim (two brothers), and Alice and Emily." All acknowledged. "They are all here, and are referring to a friend you knew about fifteen to twenty years ago, Mrs. Farmer." Correct.

"They now ask me to give you the name of George Carpenter. He was a porter at a hospital, and you knew him when you were a young girl. They are talking of ear and eye trouble in connection with the visit." The lady in the audience had some difficulty in placing these facts, but when Mrs. Roberts said, "They are now asking me to remind you of an elderly lady—surname Clark—you use to meet there," this established recognition and enabled the above facts to be remembered.

"They are asking me to give their love to you and also to your sister, who is with you." Correct: the sister was sitting next to the lady.



Addressing the sister, Mrs. Roberts continued: "They are now talking of Jim. You must go back over twenty years. I am to remind you of an old couple. The lady died and Jim passed over nine days later. They were country people interested in farming. They lived in a cottage and were friends of your father. They lost a son in the war. The man suffered with his kidneys, and the lady died of old age. It was pneumonia that carried her off in the end. They want me to remind you of Mr. and Mrs. Wells." The sister could not place this, so Mrs, Roberts continued: "They want me to remind you of when you were a little girl and used to stay with your aunt in the country. You used to visit them and take a basket of eggs or fruit with you. There was a water-mill there." "Oh, yes" interrupted the sister, "I recognise it all now. I fell into that water."

Both these ladies admitted that Mrs. Roberts did not know them, and had never spoken to them before.

Similar descriptions and messages followed. They told their own tale and carried their own conviction to a very interested audience, who enthusiastically assented when later they were invited to indicate whether they would like a further meeting at which Red Cloud could address them.

Both the lecture and the demonstration served the best interests of Spiritualism, and the "House of Red Cloud" are to be congratulated on their public-spiritedness and on the services they are rendering to our Cause.

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Another snippet of the mental mediumship of Estelle Roberts

Estelle Roberts needs little introduction in the pages of Pioneer. Much of her mediumship can be found in the Pioneer booklets detailed on the last page of this issue. This article, published in Psychic News, May 20th, 1950, gives an excellent example of *not* making the message *fit* to a willing recipient: "I cannot make a canoe out of a raft," was Estelle's reply. "No, it is not for you."

Raft Or Canoe ?

MEDIUM REFUSED TO CHANGE DESCRIPTION AND WAS RIGHT

FOR A NUMBER OF DAYS A SAILOR CLUNG HELPLESSLY TO A RAFT WHICH DRIFTED IN THE COLD NORTHERN BRITISH WATERS. HIS SHIP HAD BEEN TORPEDOED. GRADUALLY HE SUCCUMBED TO THE EXTREME PRIVATION AND DIED.

Yet he lived on in another world and during Estelle Roberts's recent clairvoyant demonstration at the Victoria Hall returned to prove his existence.

His contact was Mrs. Nell Badsey, of 109 Cazenove Road, Stoke Newington, London, N.16, who had been a friend of his family.

Mrs. Badsey's husband had seen his spirit form about their home only that week, so his manifestation at Victoria Hall was not entirely unexpected.

WRONG CONTACT

Despite this, however, the sailor did not succeed in establishing the right contact at the outset. Through Estelle he gave a brief and terse description of his passing and mentioned the names of Ethel, Edie and Ken.

A man in the audience claimed recognition, but said the sailor had been in a canoe, not a raft. This did not satisfy either the sailor or Estelle.

"I cannot make a canoe out of a raft," was Estelle's reply. "No, it is not for you."

By giving his own name, George, and the name of Nellie, the sailor finally elicited recognition from Mrs. Badsey.



Estelle Roberts

Every detail connected with his passing was verified, Mrs. Badsey explaining in a letter to *Psychic News* that Ethel and Edie were his sisters and Ken his brother.

During the actual communication Estelle was prompted to ask: "Who is Dorothy ?" Immediately Mrs. Badsey replied: "His wife," thus clinching the sailor's efforts to identify himself.

KNOCKINGS IN HOME

Before making way for other communicators, he spoke of how he had endeavoured to attract Mrs. Badsey's attention by knocking in the home.

"Also he says there is a photograph of himself in a trunk," Estelle stated, immediately adding: "In that trunk there is a photograph of a young man wearing the uniform of the Royal Horse Artillery."

This was true, Mrs. Badsey said, and then gave recognition to a Margaret Henderson, an old friend, who referred to a private matter which was understood perfectly.

Another extremely evidential message concerned a woman who had gassed herself after suffering a protracted illness, namely cancer.

Again there was difficulty in finding the right recipient but Estelle, loathe to leave the contact, persisted until a woman was able to fully understand the details.



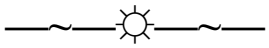
Drayton Thomas, who gave the address, delighted his audience with his dry humour and his fund of amusing anecdotes. [4]

He sought by means of various illustrations to provoke his audience into a new appreciation of the great wonder of spirit life and communication.

Such an appreciation of the fact that discarnate spirits were ever round and about us required, at times, an effort of the imagination.

Many Spiritualists of long standing became so familiar with the fact of survival that it sometimes became difficult for them to realise that the spirit people were truly present.

Familiarity dulled perception, but Thomas urged that all should realise anew the reality of the Beyond and its inhabitants.



[4] The Rev. Drayton Thomas was a well-known supporter of Spiritualism; he was a member of the Council of the Society for Psychical Research. We can note the capacity of his involvement in the testing of the direct/independent voice medium Leslie Flint. Please see Pioneer, Vol. 8, No. 6: "Leslie Flint Public Séances".

Rosemary Brown

(1916-2001)



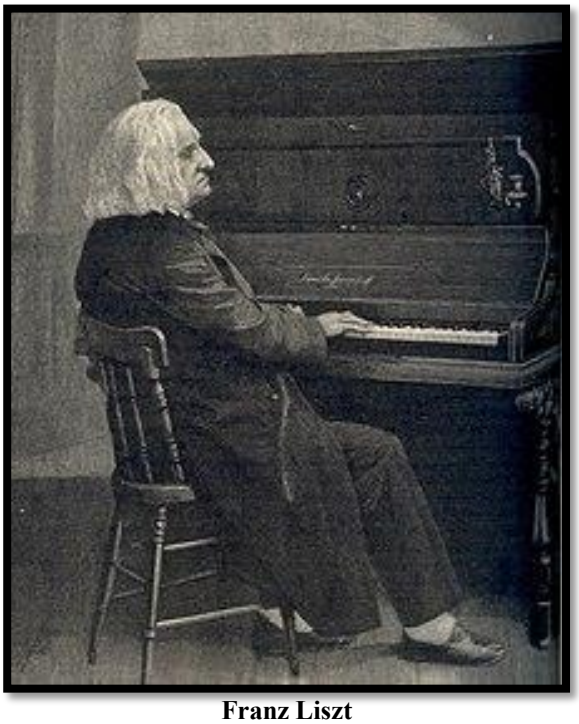
Rosemary Isabel (*née* Dickeson) Brown from the mid-1960s was, to use a familiar phrase, 'a household name': quite unbelievably today, her name and her form of mediumship are little known! Her mediumship is best described as being a 'musical medium,' in the form of famous dead composers who dictated through her and communicated new musical works, with her primary composer being Franz Liszt. Brown would transcribe from many other famed composers of the past, for example Chopin, Schubert, Schumann and Rachmaninov.

In the mid-1960s Brown became interested in Spiritualism. She recalled that when she was seven years an old man in a cassock, with long white hair, appeared to her uninvited at her home in south London. He told her he was a long-dead musician and that he would return one day to make her famous when she was grown up. Ten years later she saw a photograph of Franz Liszt and recognised him as the old, long-dead musician, who died aged 74, that she had seen some years earlier in her home. In 1964 Liszt fulfilled his promise. By that time Brown was widowed and supporting two children as a dinner lady. She claimed to have had minimal musical training and to have struggled to keep up as the composers attempted 'automatic writing' by moving her hands on the keyboard or as they dictated phrases at considerable speed.

She found that sitting at the piano she would became aware of her hands being taken over for a few bars and then, at Liszt's instruction, she wrote down the notes. Others worked in different ways: Chopin pushed her hands on to the right keys, Schubert tried to sing his compositions, and Beethoven and Bach dictated the notes, as did Mozart, Rachmaninov, Brahms and Grieg. Naturally, she had her critics but she was taken seriously by some in the field of music. Among Brown's foremost musicological advocates were Ian Parrott, a professor at Aberystwyth University.

I need not say more, given that in 1969 an excellent BBC documentary was aired: "Music from the Beyond – the Mediumship of Rosemary Brown"; this is available on YouTube, together with numerous other videos of her work, etc. A few years ago I contacted her son and asked him if there was anything he could contribute from his mother to the Britten Museum & Library: unfortunately not, he explained, because all her material had been passed on to the British Library. This can be noted in the British Library Collection blogs dated October 31st, 2018, showing some examples which I have not shown owing to possible copyright restrictions. I quote in part a portion of its text:

> "The British Library's collection comprises extensive drafts and copies of works 'inspired by' canonic composers from Bach to Stravinsky, dating from the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s; the majority are for solo piano and by a handful of frequent visitors – most prominently Liszt (Brown's favourite), Chopin, Schubert, Schumann, and Rachmaninov. Brown is listed consistently as the principal author, allowing publishers to avoid some esoteric copyright conundrums. Liszt appeared to Brown first, and gradually introduced a small troupe of other composers keen to transcribe their posthumous thoughts onto worldly manuscript paper. In later years, perhaps prompted by Brown's expanding audience, John Lennon, Fats Waller, and Gracie Fields also made appearances and offered some new songs."



Franz Liszt

"The process was painstaking, and the scribbled early versions of compositions in the manuscript collection contain basic memory aids for the workings of musical notation, as well as extensive crossings-out and revisions. Brown caused quite a media stir in the late 1960s and 1970s, and widespread interest from journalists, broadcasters, and musicians led her to appear on radio and television shows – including a delightfully earnest BBC documentary – and meet figures such as Leonard Bernstein, who was impressed by all but one bar of Rachmaninov's posthumous offerings. She underwent extensive psychiatric tests by international experts, all of whom declared her of sound mind, and even agreed to attempt a supernatural transcription while the BBC recorded: she was unsure whether any composer would agree to work under such pressure, but fortunately Liszt stepped up and produced the rather lovely 'Grübelei'. [1]



[1]Rosemary Brown wrote two books: "Unfinished Symphonies: Voices from the Beyond", 1971, and "Immortals at My Elbow", 1974, or "Immortals by My Side", later published in 1975.

Considered to be the first musical medium was Jesse Francis Shepard



Musical phenomena have been somewhat rare in our history. In some respects, it can be likened to psychic/spirit art, as in many cases artists like David Duguid and Wella Anderson claimed they were influenced by the great masters of the past such as Jacob Ruisdal and Raphael Sanzio, whereas musical mediums are similarly influenced by the great composers, as with Rosemary Brown.

Jesse Francis Shepard born in Birkenhead, England on September 18th 1948 as Benjamin Henry Jesse Francis Shepard.[2] In 1899 Jesse would start to use the pseudonym Francis Grierson, which was his mother's maiden name. It may appear that the editor of the Medium and Daybreak, James Burns, in issue No. 5, May 6th, 1870 was where the young Jesse introduced himself on the journal's front page:

HOW I BECAME A MUSICAL MEDIUM

By JESSE B. H. SHEPARD

The question is often asked, Have you been taught music ? and when I answer, Not in the usual way, great interest is manifested as to how I became a "musical medium" and to gratify this universal desire I have been induced to make a few statements of fact, respecting my development as a medium. While on a visit to my friends in St. Louis during the winter of 1867, I was told that I was a very powerful medium, and after a short time the mediumistic faculty began to manifest itself in the form of spirit-seeing, and the power of healing. I also began to receive impressions and give tests to sceptics with considerable success. After these developments I returned to Chicago, where my parents resided, previous to their removal to St. Louis. I at once commenced to magnetise for disease, and exercise the faculty of clairvoyance in the important matter of diagnosis, which powers I have retained to this time, and have often used them with great good to numerous patients.

I also became developed in psychometry, rapping, and a great variety of tests which were of much service to the cause of spiritualism and afforded satisfaction and enlightenment to many inquiring minds. In the spring of 1868, I passed through a frightful ordeal, the features of which I will not on this occasion pourtray; but I found it to be a very necessary step in my development, and afterwards I was enabled to exercise my gifts much more powerfully and freely. The powers of the medium are often envied by those devoted to spiritualism. They are indeed grand gifts, priceless above money value, but alas, often purchased by weeks and months of suffering of such a peculiar kind, that the solace of sympathy can scarcely ever approach to sooth the tortured soul. Oh, the horrors of development ! And even after that crisis has been passed over, the sensitive organism of the medium is alive to many discomforts and annoyances which ordinary mortals know not of. It is not all flowers and sweets; the rose of mediumship has its own peculiar thorn of suffering and hardships, and those who can face its duties and sustain themselves in the vortex of development, have passed through an achievement which ought to entitle them to the consideration and fraternal sustainance of all true Spiritualists.

[2] Different authors, obituaries, etc., carry different information relating to the actual makeup of his name and birth date. This can be noted in the article here published in "The Medium and Daybreak".

I remained in Chicago through the summer of 1868, and returned to St. Louis in the fall, where double success attended the exercise of my mediumship. The power increased with the facility in using it. In the following January, while I was in a theatre, the spirit of Rachel came to me and asked if I would like to be developed in singing. She advised me to go next day and have the quality of my voice examined by a competent professor. I did so; called on a celebrated musician, and told him my business. He was astonished at the power of my voice and facility of execution, facts of which I was ignorant myself, and of which I was no judge. The professor gave it as his opinion that the voice would not last long; it was too wonderful to be permanent.


JESSE B. H. SHEPARD,
The Greatest Male Soprano Living,
AT MASONIC HALL,
WEDNESDAY EVENING, MAY 6, 1868.
PROGRAMME—PART I.
1. Grand scene and air from Robert il Diavalo.
2. Child of the Regiment—as sung by Jenny Lind.
3. Grand fantasia on airs from Trovatore—composed by Jesse Shepard.
4. Annie Laurie.
PART II.
5. The celebrated Shadow Dance, from Grand Opera of Dinorah.
6. The Conquered Banner (new)—composed by Jesse Shepard, and sung with immense success at his concerts.
7. Jesse Shepard's celebrated Echo Song.
8. Brindisi—Drinking Song—Lucrezia Borgia.
PART III.
9. Grand Symphony in three movements, composed by Mr. Shepard.
10. Ave Maria.
11. Within a Mile of Edinboro'.
12. Loving Eyes—by J. C. Meninger.
13. Casta Diva—Grand scene from Norma.
TICKETS, $1 00.
Reserved seats can be secured without extra charge at the office of Mr. Davidson, Superintendent of the Hall.
All can see at a glance that this is the finest selection of music ever sung by one person in one night. His rendering of "Casta Diva," "Annie Laurie," and "The Conquered Banner," should fill the house.
The elegant piano used on this occasion is from the well-known manufactory of Peters & Webb, Jefferson street.
my5 dl

However, I was only two weeks in being developed, but when that important result had been accomplished, I was too sceptical to believe that I really could sing, and was in great doubt as to the propriety of making the attempt in public, all of which I expressed to the musical professor, asking his opinion on the matter. He replied that he would be very proud to have me sing an *Ave Maria* in St. Xavier's Church, where he was organist. This is one of the most fashionable churches in the city, and the choir is composed of superior singers. On taking my place in the service, I was influenced to sing in the piece allotted to me to the astonishment of all who heard me. On the following Sunday, I sang an ode in German to St. Felicia, by Haydn, which was even more successful than my first attempt. My sister, who was present on the second occasion, could not believe it possible that I was the singer; and others who were acquainted with me were not less surprised at my new vocation. I remained for a few weeks in St. Louis, during which I gained more confidence in my new and extraordinary manifestation, when a sphere of wider usefulness presented itself to me, which I shall endeavour to detail when my numerous engagements will permit.

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Campbell Holms notes: [3]

Jesse F. Shepard was probably the most widely celebrated musical medium, for he performed in America, Australia, London, Paris, St. Petersburg, Berlin and other capitals before many well-known musicians and royal personages, who were all deeply impressed. His performances, which he only gave in private drawing-rooms, were given in perfect darkness, the sitters being arranged in a circle round the pianoforte at which he sat. He also played in the light, but with much less wonderful effects. He also played the organ and sang in cathedrals, which his voice filled. In the normal state he could neither play nor sing, and he never tried to, but when entranced or controlled he was a consummate musician. Yet it is certain that the music which occurred in his presence was not always played through his fingers or larynx, for the piano sometimes played with the keyboard shut; duets for four hands were rendered; and two voices, bass and soprano, were sometimes heard simultaneously. His pianoforte pieces, which varied in excellence, were all improvisations, and they purported to be rendered by well-known composers, who successively controlled the medium. The style of each was readily recognised, and their names were announced through the alphabet with a note of music as signal.

[3] A. Campbell Holms, "The Facts of Psychic Science", published in 1925; it was later reprinted in 1969 with a new foreword from Leslie Shepard.

The following quotation is from an account of a séance held in Paris, on September 3rd, 1893, by Prince Adam Wisniewski:— [4]

"After having secured the most complete obscurity we placed ourselves in a circle around the medium, seated before the piano. Hardly were the first chords struck when we saw lights appearing at every corner of the room. . . . . The first piece played through Shepard was a fantasia of Thalberg's on the air from 'Semiramide.' This is unpublished, as is all the music which is played by the spirits through Shepard. The second was a Rhapsody for four hands, played by Liszt and Thalberg with astounding fire, a sonority truly grand, and a masterly interpretation. Notwithstanding this extraordinarily complex *technique*, the harmony was admirable, and such as no one present had ever known paralleled, even by Liszt himself, whom I personally knew, and in whom passion and delicacy were united. In the circle were musicians who, like me, had heard the greatest pianists in Europe; but we can say that we never heard such truly super-natural execution."

M. Bernardin Rahn wrote the following (ibid.):—

"In my capacity of Professor of Harmony I was one of the chosen. It would be an impossible task to attempt to give a just account of Mr. Shepard's strange concert. How could I describe the refinement of execution, the beauty of tone which the master drew from a piano, of such lovely character, and of such power ? . . . As for the singing, it is unique. There is no imitation of it possible. The compass of the voice can have nothing likened to it. A bass of profound depth, full of expression, is first heard. Thereupon it is answered by a soprano, which attains the utmost heights with clear and thrilling notes. Brilliant shakes follow the most amazing staccato. We hear a clear tone begin *piano*, and swell gradually far beyond the breath limit, finally bursting out like a flame, gradually falling down again by *saccades*, and ultimately dying away."

Prof. J. Niclassen, the well-known organist and musical critic of the *Fremdenblatt*, of Hamburg, having heard Shepard in Berlin, in 1894, wrote:— [5]

"Soft, mysterious, sphere like tones, coming and going, fall on our ear . . . tone-pictures full of poetic charm. Most remarkable is the unfailing surety of touch, in spite of the darkness, especially in octave and wide jumps. Between short pauses, four or five selections followed one another, all completely different in character, giving the widest play to the imagination of the listeners. Suddenly, one hears a basso of colossal register, the singer at the same time playing an accompaniment that makes the grand piano quiver; as, of old, the trumpet sounded before the gates of Jericho, so thundered certain passages of the piano music, while the mighty basso penetrated to bone and marrow . . . the accompaniment becomes more subdued, and to a melodious theme rises a soprano voice of sympathetic quality, which to about the second G has a youthful boyish character, but in the highest notes it becomes a decided soprano. A duet is now carried on alternately between a powerful basso and a beautiful soprano, which decidedly belongs to the most extraordinary manifestations in the realm of music."

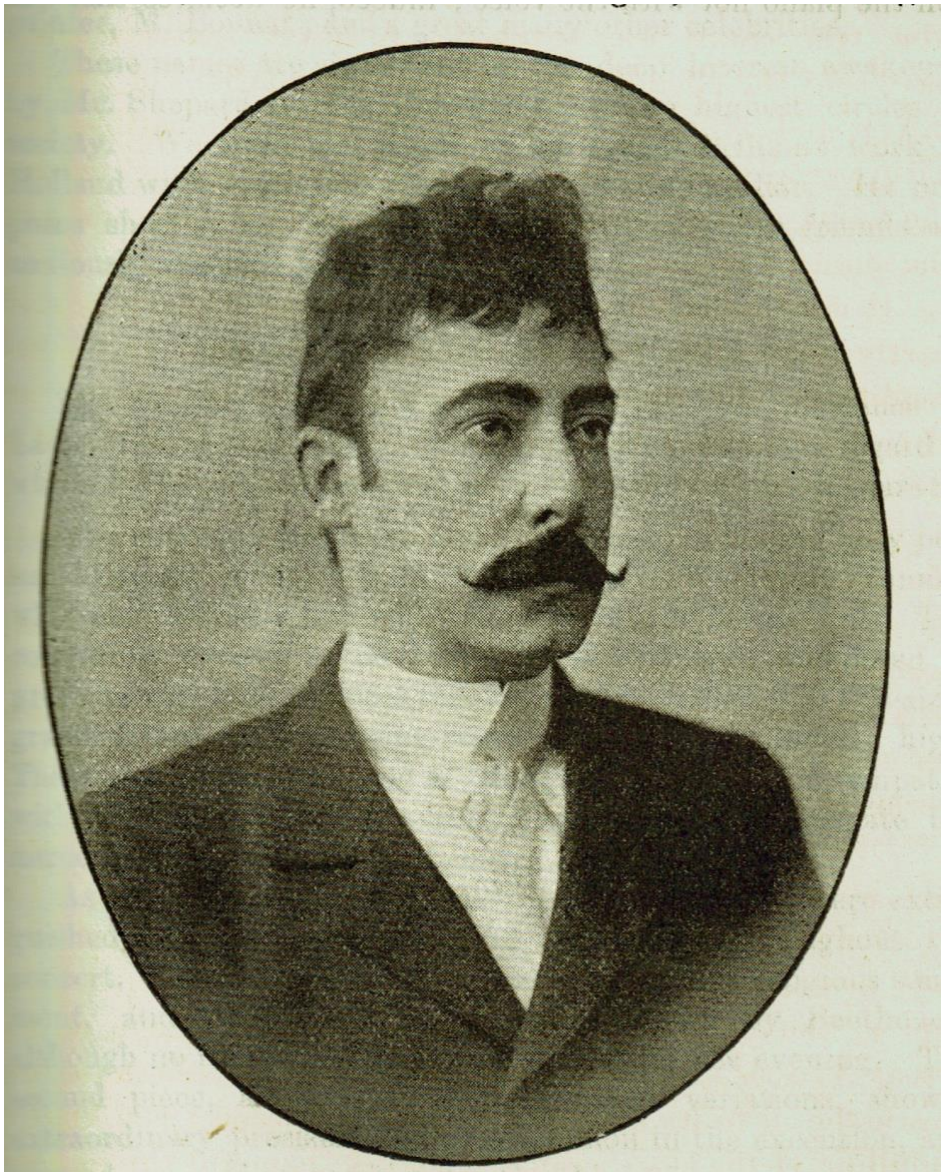
Some interesting details of the life and methods of Shepard are given in *Light*, for February 24th, and April 28th, 1894 (with portrait). [6] Prof. Kiddle, of New York, had séances in his own house, extending over a year, and found that Shepard was not only a gifted trance musician, but gave trance addresses in English, French, German, Latin, Greek, Chaldean and Arabic, dealing with scientific, philosophical and social subjects. He also wrote under inspiration, and, in 1889, published two small volumes of discourses in

[4] *Borderland*, Vol. I, p. 343; also, *Light*, 1894, p. 86.

[5] *Light*, 1895, p. 20.

[6] Shown below.

English and French. These were noticed by Maurice Mæterlinck, who wrote that "he knew of nothing in literature more admirable more profound" (*Light*, 1894, p. 200). Shepard continued to give musical séances for many years, and many accounts of these will be found in the volumes of *Light*, particularly that for 1907. Finally, he retired into private life, and now, under another name, is well-known as a writer of distinction.[7]



MR. JESSE F. SHEPARD.

(*From a photograph by Hemmerlink, The Hague.*)

[7] Francis Grierson, author of *Abraham Lincoln, the Practical Mystic*, etc.

Medium Solves A Haunting Mystery

Below is a simple ghost story eighty-five years ago which involved the mental medium, Helen Hughes, who needs little introduction in the pages of Pioneer. In our last issue we published her retirement in 1965: “Biggest psychic galaxy at Helen Hughes farewell” .The article was published in Psychic News, January 28th, 1939:



DURING her recent visit to Edinburgh, Helen Hughes had an interesting experience in an Edinburgh house in which, over a long period of years, but at considerable intervals, there have been abnormal manifestations.

The house is one of the older type in a residential quarter of the city, and a few years ago it was the house of a well-known citizen now living in retirement in the north. His successor was told by this man about the “grey lady” who had been seen by him and others, from time to time, generally on the staircase.

As the previous tenant was of Highland extraction and of the type known as imaginative, his successors were inclined to pay little attention to what he told them, but after a considerable interval the new tenant was startled to see the figure as described by his predecessor.

He has since seen this figure several times, usually at a particular part of the staircase, as if leaning against the railing for support. His wife has also seen the figure.

The facts came to my knowledge and I suggested that Mrs. Hughes should visit the house, which she readily agreed to do. The results were very interesting.

GHOST OF OLD MAN

The medium, immediately she entered the house, was aware of the etheric figure of an old man with a beard who had occupied the house, he stated, some considerable time ago. After some talk with the present tenants, Mrs. Hughes ascended the two flights of stairs and entered a small room at the top, where from time to time sounds had been heard.

After sitting there for a few minutes, she announced that the little “grey lady” was there. She suggested a trance sitting in the room, which was at once arranged.

A number of “dead” friends of the tenants were announced by name and were recognised; then Mrs. Hughes’s control gave an account of the little grey lady.

Her name, she said, was Mary Stuart. She had been a nurse in the house a long time ago—in the time of the old man whom Mrs Hughes had seen on entering.

The nurse had had a seizure on the stairs, as a result of which she had fallen and was hurt, at the point at which she was usually seen clutching the railing. The room in which the sitting was held was the grey lady’s room. She had “died” there, not from the seizure but as the result of the fall.

She was now interested in the children in the house and liked to be there and was bringing her influence in order to be helpful.

One of the interesting items in the sitting, apart from the “grey lady,” was that Mrs. Hughes described an elderly woman whose name she gave, mentioning that she was holding out a red rose to the occupier of the house.

He stated that Rose was the name of his grandmother. When he was young and she came to visit him, she always made a point of bringing a red rose.

Mrs. Hughes also mentioned an inspector, who came to greet the same man. The name was a little unusual and was recognised as that of someone he had known and with whom he had discussed the future life in another district, before coming to Edinburgh.



EVIDENTIAL MEDIUMSHIP

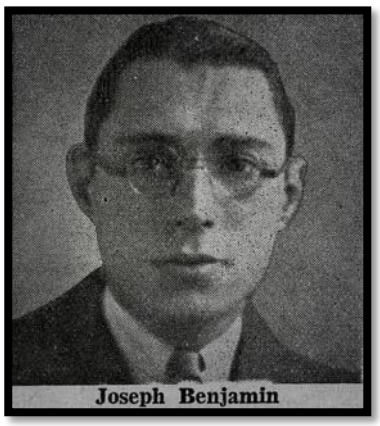
Joseph Benjamin

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One of the finest evidential mediums was Joseph Benjamin, who started to be publicly recognised in 1938. Joe was a young Jewish medium; the report below gives the reader some idea of Benjamin's early beginnings as a medium, written by another Jewish medium,[13] Maurice Barbanell, founder Editor of Psychic News, in which he published this article in the November 26th, 1938 issue:

EAST-END JEWRY HAS A REMARKABLE MEDIUM

In the heart of London's East End there is a remarkable young Jewish medium, Joseph Benjamin.


Joseph Benjamin

Though he is only 23, he has been associated with Spiritualism for twelve years. He is a fine trance medium and an excellent clairvoyant, an earnest Spiritualist who radiates sincerity.

Usually his seances never begin much before 10 p.m., for his work as a presser keeps him employed thirteen hours a day, and he seldom finishes before 9 o'clock. Yet such is his enthusiasm that he devotes three and four nights a week to holding seances and spreading our knowledge among the members of his own race.

Once a week, at his own expense, he hires a hall, where he gives trance addresses and clairvoyance, usually in Yiddish. So many of his audience are unable to speak English that he is contemplating the printing of a pamphlet in Yiddish telling what it's all about.

BREAKING DOWN ORTHODOXY

His labours are succeeding in breaking down that curious mixture of materialism and Orthodoxy which is so typical of the Jewish outlook on life. My work for Spiritualism provides me with striking contrasts. I have been to seances in a Belgrave Square mansion and in a miner's tiny cottage in desolate South Wales. I have been present at sittings where famous men and women have proved Survival.

Benjamin's sitters were all "obscure" people, but they were filled with the same thirst for knowledge that comes to nearly all human beings when "death" removes the ones they love.

Benjamin lives above a grocer's shop. To reach his small but scrupulously clean flat you make your way up the stairs, past cases of provisions and a bicycle. There was a warm welcome from his young wife and himself, and the inevitable cup of tea, our national symbol of hospitality, both before and after the sitting.

[13] At this time Barbanell was not known as a medium; he was known primarily as the founder Editor of Psychic News. Please see Pioneer, Vol. 4, No. 6: "An extraordinary secret was held in the Spiritualist movement for over three decades: who is Silver Birch's medium?"

A LATE START

For the seance we went to another small room on the next floor used only for his mediumship.

It was some time after 10.30 p.m. when the seance began. And Benjamin conducted it with great reverence.

It was a night packed with evidence that life continues beyond the grave. There were scores of details to prove spirit identity, but most of it is too intimate to be printed. Apart from Benjamin's clairvoyance, there were a few trance controls, followed by "dead" relatives and friends of the sitters. Drama and humour were all mixed up in these astonishing séance talks.

A more than welcome visitor was my old friend, A. G. Newton, who referred to our last meeting in his Southampton home. [14]

Through the lips of the entranced medium I was greeted by an old Jewish acquaintance, a man named Tannenbaum, a Spiritualist I knew more than ten years ago. He was a great student of the Kabbala and a picturesque figure.

I well remember his excitement when he called on Hannen Swaffer at his Trafalgar Square flat. Tannenbaum apologised for not coming on the previous Saturday which, being the Jewish Sabbath, would have meant walking all the way from the East End.

As Swaffer had not asked him to call, he was puzzled by the apology.

Tannenbaum was a most learned man. He was indifferent to his appearance and wore, I remember, a black bowler hat and brown button boots.

Well, Tannenbaum spoke to me last week and in a few minutes gave me at least a dozen proofs of his identity—names and facts that the medium could not have known. He made references, to my first seance—incidentally this took place only a few streets away—mentioning some of the people who went there.

If I began to describe all the spirit evidence at this remarkable seance it would fill columns. Old friends of mine who had passed on were named, and they indicated their presence with messages.

FINISHED AT 1 A.M.

There were spirit greetings from those who had communicated with me at sittings with other mediums. And there were messages of comfort, cheer and guidance for some of the other sitters from their own loved ones. It was almost 1 a.m. when the seance ended.

Benjamin's wife told me that she was not a Spiritualist when she married her husband, but that his mediumship soon convinced her. There was one amusing story he told of how, when at Southend, he went for fun to a fortune-teller.

"You are a Spiritualist," she said to him. "What's more, you are a medium. *What can you tell me*?"

He gave her messages from her "dead" husband, which she accepted. In the end she said "Customers like you aren't of much use to me."

[14] Alexander George Newton was well known in the Spiritualist movement for some thirty years, mostly for his work at Southampton Church, where he was Secretary, and within the Spiritualists' National Union. In 1915 he was elected to the Council of the Union and was Vice-President. Newton died on September 22nd, 1938.

Already Benjamin has won local recognition, for the knowledge of his powers has spread by word of mouth to hundreds. He has fostered Spiritualism by forming home circles, of which more than a score are already in existence. Occasionally he has visitors from far-away towns who have heard of his mediumship. One memorable evening neighbours gasped when a Rolls-Royce arrived.

Rich or poor, however, Benjamin treats them all alike. He thinks only of his mediumship which can help the bereaved and spread what he knows is one of the greatest truths in the world.

M.B.

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A further two months later Hannen Swaffer published an article in Psychic News on January 28th, 1939, which gives, at least in my opinion, a feeling of the atmosphere which faced Spiritualism and those who represented it on the front line during these troubled times in our history; mediumship was indeed in high demand in the many avenues where it was demonstrated:

East End Takes Its Troubles To A Medium

SPIRITUALISM GROWS DESPITE POVERTY AND POLITICS

IN many parts of Britain, Spiritualism is making progress, not only because of the evidence it pours out at public meetings, but because of its philosophical and religious implications.

In the East End of London, stricken by poverty, a place of almost overwhelming despair, Joseph Benjamin, the young Jewish medium, finds himself the centre of political arguments, "Fascism v. Communism," and things like that, and attacks, from all sides, of clashing thought.

He is continually worried for help of a material kind. Many of the very poor are not concerned about their "dead." They are not thinking of an after-life.

They want money. They want a better job. It is no use talking about a better world to people who, living in a slum, are in the depths of gloom.

QUESTIONS THEY ASK

"When shall I win the Irish Sweepstake?" someone may ask Benjamin—in the middle of a religious address !

"Shall I break my partnership?" asks another.

"What about my coupon in Littlewoods' Pool?" is a question often heard.

"Will it be a boy or a girl?" is another.

Even one of Benjamin's most faithful supporters has, on occasion, interrupted the medium's guide while he has been teaching, putting into Benjamin's hand a letter and saying, "What shall I do about this?"

WHICH IS RIGHT?

A man followed Benjamin home, one night, in great bewilderment. A half-developed medium in the circle had told him he would not get a job at a synagogue. Benjamin, in trance, had told him he would.

"Which of you is right?" he kept on asking. Even when Benjamin got rid of him, he saw him standing in the middle of the road, still so puzzled that he nearly got run over.

There seems to have been much more faith in psychic happenings in orthodox Jewry than I thought. Benjamin not only tells me that people go for advice to rabbis exercising psychic gifts without calling them that, but he relates a story of a dream that is remarkable.

SPIRIT REVEALS BLUNDER

Hundreds in the East End still talk of the case of a man and a woman who died in the London Hospital on the same day, were laid on slabs near each other in a mortuary, and then got mixed, the woman's body going to Edmonton for burial, and the man's body to Plaistow, whereas it should have been the other way round.

The night of the woman's funeral, while the family were downstairs, "sitting shiva," the daughter dreamed that her mother came to her and said, "I was not here when they brought the coffin."

On three nights running she dreamed the same dream. All sorts of people were consulted, and, at last, the case was taken to a rabbi, who had the grave opened and the coffin examined. They found that the girl's dream was based on fact.

A Jewish friend who confirms this tells me that, in the southeast of Europe, Jewish people flock to an adviser called "The Good Jew," no doubt a man with half-developed psychic gifts. "It is not called Spiritualism," he said, "but no doubt it is the same thing."

So it was in the old Russia, I am told.

Before many of Benjamin's sittings, whether they are in a hall or in the room where his open circle is held, there are political arguments that sometimes continue even during the meeting. And they go on, long after it is over.

"Will you write us an article on Fascism versus Spiritualism?" demanded a man on the "New World Outpost"—as though the two could be compared. "Get it into 200 words."

ZEST FOR INQUIRY

The lesson to be drawn from all this is that eventually many thousands of Jews will be drawn into the Spiritualist movement. Jews have such a zest for inquiry. Jews argue so much.

The Jews are very emotional. If, at one of Benjamin's meetings, a woman gets a message which makes her cry, half the audience will cry. If, when Benjamin's guide controls him, someone laughs, they all laugh.

Then they start to argue, even during the trance address. Sometimes, too, as many as ten mediums will go into trance at the same time, mediums in various stages of development. Yet, all the time, Benjamin has to go on with his work.

"A LOT OF NONSENSE"

Sometimes, people's fears cause trouble. Once, the day after a sitting, a woman called up Benjamin's brother-in-law and said, "My evidence last night was a lot of nonsense." When, the same night, Benjamin and his wife were on their way to a meeting, they saw the woman walking up and down the pavement.

"I don't want to see her," said Benjamin. "It will disturb me. Besides, she may come along to the meeting and upset it."

"WONDERFUL EVIDENCE"

However, when he spoke to her, the woman said "I got wonderful evidence last night. The reason I called up your brother-in-law and denied it was that I didn't want him to know it was true. It embarrassed me."

Now, this woman is a regular sitter.

Once, when Benjamin and his wife were due at a Jewish wedding, three women insisted on a reading. Benjamin, upset at being delayed, and finding them in his seance room, said, "What do you want?"

"Should I go to America?" asked one.

"Should my daughter get married?" said the second.

"What do you want?" Benjamin asked the third, who was quiet.

"I have come with the other two," she explained. "I am waiting for them."

"Then you should wait downstairs," said Benjamin, still annoyed.

"Go to America," he told the first woman. "You will be successful . . . . Yes, your daughter can get married"—this to the second woman—"and you can still wait downstairs," this to the third.

Now, this advice he gave them, without consulting his guide, just to get rid of them.

ALL WERE PLEASED

"I have never had such a good sitting in my life," wrote the first woman from America, some time after. "I have been very successful here."

The second woman's daughter married happily, and has a baby.

"The third woman is still waiting downstairs for all I know," commented Benjamin.

Then, at a developing circle, when four would-be mediums were sitting with a score of inquirers, Benjamin was surprised to find that two mediums under control both claimed to be the famous Rabbi Shaposnick, who, in spite of his Orthodoxy, practised mediumship on earth.

"How can you both be Rabbi Shaposnick?" asked Benjamin. Yet, strangely enough, both mediums in trance were reciting, simultaneously, the same Hebrew prayer. Afterwards, both uttered the same words in conversation at the same time.

"Is simultaneous control of two mediums by the same spirit possible?" he asks.

Once, a Gentile who came from Westcliff, after his boy had been successfully treated for consumption by absent healing, asked in spite of this, "How can I escape my income tax?"

"Don't pay it !" replied Benjamin, in fun.

A woman who was laughing, at one of Benjamin's public demonstrations, was suddenly told by him that her husband had been killed in a smash between a motorcar and a tramcar at Shepherds Bush.

"I am not satisfied," said the woman, whereupon Benjamin gave the man's name.

"But I don't want him," shouted the woman. "He gets on my blinking nerves."

Benjamin persisted, and told her she had a bald patch on her head. Upon this, the woman took off her bonnet and pointed to the bald patch, at which the large audience laughed.

I have myself sat four times with Benjamin, whose sincerity of purpose is vouched for by Silver Birch. A great future is prophesied for him in the East End, among his own people, by this guide.

For he is hard-boiled. He gets on with his job, in spite of all the drawbacks.

GUIDE LOVES SINGING


JOHNNY MILLER

His guide, Johnny Miller, who was killed in the war, belonged to Plaistow. He, too, understands these East-enders. He loves them to hold hands while he joins them in singing war-time marching songs.

He apologises for the uncouthness of his language. "There is no need for him to worry about that," said Silver Birch, when asked about it. "There are no bad words. It is what you mean by them. That guide is trying to help people. Therefore, what do his words matter?" [15]

A private sitting with Benjamin is an amazing experience. Evidence pours through, often for three hours at a time.

A STRANGE MIXTURE

Now and then, you get something very concrete. It is a strange mixture of trance and clairvoyance, after which Benjamin will sometimes do psychometry.

Although he is not now an orthodox Jew, he always starts his sittings with a prayer in Hebrew. His mother-in-law, who was a Spiritualist long before him, remains orthodox in spite of her added knowledge.

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The psychic drawing of Benjamin's Cockney soldier guide was done by the inspirational psychic artist Marcel Poncin in the above article by Swaffer; it further notes:

> "Jonny said the drawing was a good likeness, though Poncin has never seen him or a photograph of him. Confirmation was given by the guide in trance, before the picture was shown to the medium."

Marcel Poncin's first well-known image appears to have been the beautiful painting of Estelle Roberts giving clairvoyance, showing the communicators and her guide, Red Cloud; this was firstly reported in 'Psychic News', December 4th, 1937. The original painting hangs today in the corridor at the Arthur Findlay College. Shortly after, Poncin would paint the well-known image of Silver Birch, followed by others such as healer William (Billy) Parish; for further information please see Pioneer, Vol. 2, No. 6: "Marcel Poncin, psychic artist, passes on".

The above article stated: "A great future is prophesied for him in the East End, among his own people, by this guide", and indeed it came to fruition; Benjamin worked for well over four decades as a public medium. He became known for his stunning evidential mediumship,

[15] It can be noted in the Britten Museum & Library in the final shorthand scripts by the circle's scribe, Frances Moore, unpublished sittings with "Big Jump", publicly known as Silver Birch. Joe Benjamin and his wife, Kitty, were present on February 20th, 1981 (possibly again later). The guide's medium, Maurice Barbanell, died on July 17th, 1981 at the age of 79.

colourful platform delivery and a wonderful sense of humour in his demonstrations, earning himself numerous descriptions such as ‘exhilarating as champagne’ or ‘as rare as a fine liqueur’. Joe demonstrated at two London venues for decades, Sunday meetings at the Alliance Hall, Westminster and on Tuesdays at a hall in Kentish Town, London. The photograph shown in the the concluding article below was taken at the Alliance Hall, Westminster in 1977.

Pioneer has previously published in Vol. 3, No. 5: “Joseph Benjamin Tells: How I See The Dead”; to conclude this article on Joseph “Joe” Benjamin, below is a profile of the medium by the Two Worlds correspondent, Philip Paul, published July 16th, 1955:



JOSEPH BENJAMIN

IT has been said that all men are singular but some rate more singularly than others. Joseph Benjamin indisputably qualifies for inclusion in the latter category.

Short, slight of build, black-haired and with thick horn-rimmed spectacles that are so much part of the personality one feels they must have been on his nose when he was born on December 23rd some two score years ago, this effervescent east-ender mans a meteoric mediumship which swept him into the milky way of the psychic firmament only two years before the outbreak of the second world war.

The only son of a Whitechapel dress designer, he took an obvious course in entering the tailoring trade at the end of his schooldays.

WENT TO SCOFF

Then he heard about Spiritualist meetings that were held in neighbouring Hanbury Street. He is frank about the motive which took him and a friend to that humble hall: “We had the idea of creating a disturbance.”

It was a disturbance that was never created, for Joe surrendered to Spiritualism in the wonder of a message from a dead cousin—a communication from beyond the barrier of death whose positive details sent him home in a daze

The following week he returned. While he sat in the audience he went into trance. “I don’t know how long I was under, but when I came round the whole crowd was standing round me. One man told me I had given him a wonderful message from his dead father.”

From that point it was only a matter of time before he took his rightful place on the platform.

One evening, a woman among his audience asked him back to her home for a cup of tea. There, for the first time, he met her daughter and learned there was a son named Joseph.

Those who know him will recognise the unhesitant Benjamin in his next action, which, in his own words, was to inquire of the young lady: Would you like two Joes in the family?

WHIRLWIND WOOING

One might have expected such whirlwind wooing to reap results, but the lady was adamant. She replied to the effect that she would not marry a medium for all the money

in the world. Perhaps it was because Joe didn't possess all the money in the world that they were married soon after. Now they have a son of 16, Michael, who anxiously awaits the results of his matriculation examination.

Though he has demonstrated in all parts of the British Isles, Joe has never been abroad. He has no need to travel, for the world comes to him in the little house he occupies in the street of his birth just behind London Hospital.

Among the famous who have attended sittings with him—the walls of his tiny seance room are crowded with photographs and memories—of Frances Day, Charlie Chester, Adelaide Hall, Ruby Miller, Sir John and Lady Anderson, Edgar K. Bruce, Canon Marcus Knight, Dean of St. Paul's, Sir Robert Gower and Lucille Clayton, the "mannequin queen."

SHORT SHRIFT FOR SCEPTIC

But those who would see the real Benjamin in action cannot do better than visit the two London meetings where he demonstrates each week—Westminster's Alliance Hall on Sunday evenings and the Foresters' Hall, Kentish Town, on Tuesdays.



In this connection a word of warning: both halls are always packed half-an-hour before the meetings open. It is not uncommon for strong men to weep under the spell of this diminutive disciple of psychic debouchment, whose platform technique presents, simultaneously, the mannerisms of an auctioneer and the tender concern of a comforter.

Nothing disconcerts him. Once, during a demonstration, a man yelled, "You are a liar!"

"Oh, am I?" responded Joe to the interrupter, a complete stranger to him. "Well, I'll tell you this. You have just come out of prison after serving a five-year sentence!" The man was nonplussed. Jaw hanging open he admitted that Joe spoke the truth.

The pen of Hannen Swaffer has spread the news of his psychic brilliance. He has cooperated with psychic researchers.

Patting Major, his black Alsatian, he told me his ambition is to own a hall of his own and so avoid the wrath of caretakers when, as they invariably do, his meetings overrun their scheduled time. A lover of beauty, he says he has never picked a blossom in his life. He is as delighted as a schoolboy over new decorations being made in his home. A tiny garden, carefully tended, flowers behind the house.

AGAINST SEGREGATION

Believing that there should be no segregation in Spiritualism —"our halls are sanctuaries of truth for Christian and Jew alike"—he affirms his greatest desire is to spread psychic truths among all people.

Suddenly, over cigarettes and drinks, he begins giving clairaudience. He tells me I am shortly on holiday. Mrs. Benjamin intervenes to inquire, "What will the weather be like?"

Joe's brown eyes take on the sparkle that heralds the approach of some of his characteristic Cockney humour.

"How do I know?" he demands, "I'm a medium, not a barometer !"



We can note in the above article that the writer states: "Among the famous who have attended sittings with him—the walls of his tiny seance room are crowded with photographs and memories." Some two decades later Benjamin continued his memorabilia of signed photographs from some of the famed clients who attended his sittings, as the photograph shows.



His bust sits proudly in the Britten Museum & Library





Joe Benjamin died in 1983, aged 68