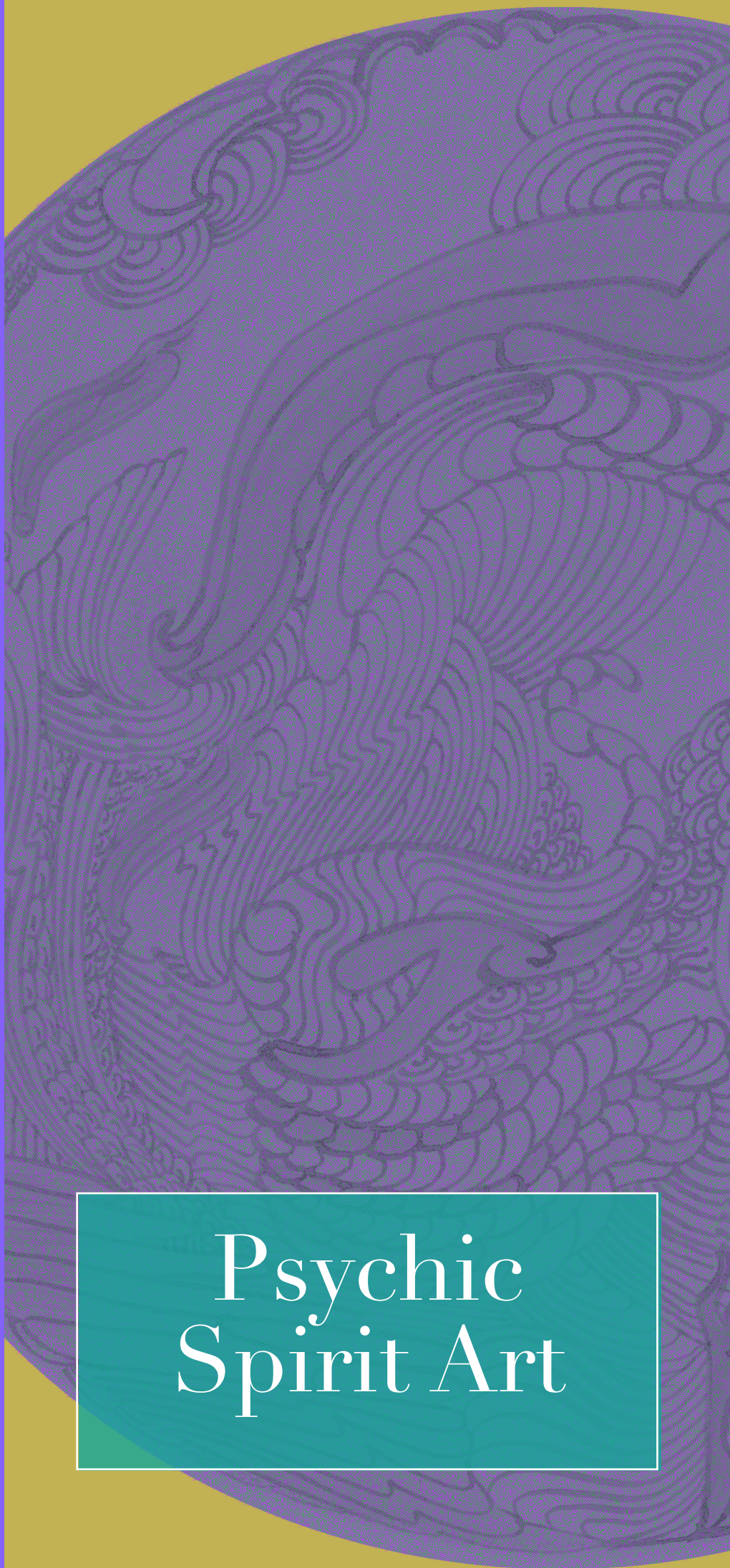
The PIONEER

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



Psychic Spirit Art

the PIONEER

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

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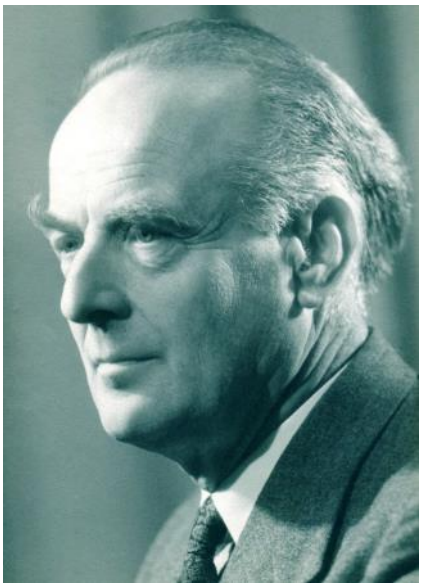
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Special thanks to Charles Coulston for his work in sub-editing these issues – also acknowledged to Minister David Hopkins and Leslie Price for their past work in sub-editing the issues

HAROLD SHARP

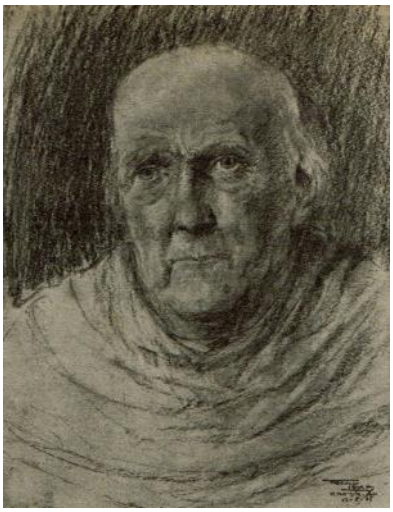
Symbolic Drawings – Auragraphs



Harold Sharp started to investigate Spiritualism around 1930 and began to develop his mediumship. In Sharp's early childhood he used to see a monk and in later life he found the monk to be his guide, Brother Peter, who had lived in Vienna and, it is said, had been a healer who used rare herbs in his treatments. As a tribute to his guide Sharp cultivated his own herb garden.

The image of Brother Peter was captured by psychic artist Frank Leah and later by Coral Polge, showing a striking resemblance. Both of the original drawings are displayed in the Britten Memorial Museum at the Arthur Findlay College; below is the image by Frank Leah.

Harold came from a farming background, living with his father on their farm in Leicestershire. He was raised a Roman Catholic and when his father died Harold moved to London.



On his first day in London Harold visited Westminster Abbey and on coming out he saw Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's psychic museum and called in.[17] The secretary recommended the names of some mediums; he was careful not to give his name to the museum secretary or any of the mediums he would later visit. He went immediately to one of the mediums' addresses given by the secretary, Charles Gover Botham, whose guide was called Lily.[18]

[17] For details on the museum see Psypioneer Archives, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle: – http://www.woodlandway.org/

Below is a quote from an article in *Psychic News* around 1980:

> "Then Lily said, "You have your father's watch but not your father's chain." That was true. Sharp had given his father's watch-chain to his brother.
>
> The guide next said, "Was your father a schoolmaster?" Up to that time, Sharp had been getting more and more amazed, but now he thought he had found a flaw. His father was a farmer – and looked like one.
>
> Lily added: "He is not telling me he was a schoolmaster. But he is showing me a picture of a very big school, with all the little boys dressed in grey, and saying, 'Those little devils always left the gates open'."
>
> This was very evidential. The farm owned by Sharp's father adjoined a preparatory school. The boys used to walk across the ground, leaving all the gates open, causing endless confusion.
>
> The sitting with Botham made Sharp think seriously about the case for Spiritualism.
>
> Harold visited all the mediums whose names he had been given.
>
> At his sitting with automatist Hester Dowden,[19] Sharp gave the fictitious name of Cyril Roper."

In the early 1940s Sharp began to develop symbolic drawings, popularly known today as auragraphs, for which he later became well-known. An auragraph is basically a symbolic representation of one's life, past, present and potential. Sharp was an early pioneer of this technique and generally produced his auragraphs within circles.

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[18] Many years later Botham was charged with fraud, which came at a bad time. During the General Elections of 1945 and 1950 the Spiritualists' National Union and other organisations submitted a questionnaire to candidates in the respective constituencies and 200 elected Members of the House of Commons gave unqualified support to a Fraudulent Mediums Bill.

"It was a case in which Charles Botham was convicted on 20th June, 1950, on three counts of false pretences. There were also two counts of conjuration under the Witchcraft Act, 1735. The jury was discharged from returning a verdict on them, so that, in fact, they never came before the court. What happened in that case was this. Botham persuaded a widow to place sums of money of the order of £1,000 and £500 on a chair, with the story that the spirit of her late husband would dematerialise them and apply the money to medical charities. The notes were not dematerialised, but, in a very material form, reached Mr. Botham's own wallet. The charges under the Witchcraft Act were added in case the widow insisted that she believed her husband's spirit was going to come into the room. The jury, as one would expect, were not concerned with that part of the case; they said they were quite sure that the whole show was a fraud." See:–http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1950/dec/01/fraudulent-mediums-bill

[19] For Hester (Dowden) Travers Smith see Psypioneer: Volume 9, No. 03, March 2013: – A review of Voices in the Void by Hester (Dowden) Travers Smith by Maxine Meilleur.

Below is taken from *Psychic News,* January 30th 1943:

> HAROLD SHARP has developed a new phase of his mediumship. It is automatic drawing and colouring, the latest stage being the production of "graphs " of the human aura executed in delicate colouring and intricate but rhythmic designs. These are produced at high speed by a medium who has never had an art lesson and cannot draw normally.
>
> By means of his clairvoyance, Sharp has seen the spirit artist who is responsible for this new development. He is Chan Shih, a young modern Chinaman of about 30. This Chinaman had often been described to him by other mediums, but until these drawings began Sharp did not know of the reason for the spirit association.
>
> In years gone by Harold Sharp discovered that when telephoning his friends he used to "doodle " on the pad or scrap of paper. Then he noticed that, instead of being meaningless scribbling, he had drawn symbolic designs, some so beautiful that he was loath to destroy them.
>
> In February last year he received as a gift a large book with "clear pages," expertly bound and with gold lettering. The medium thought this was just the thing for his favourite quotations. Soon after that he was about to record a much-loved "pearl of wisdom" on the first page, when his pen began to weave discernible fascinating vignettes of caves, waterfalls and woodland vistas. These were repeated again and again, the designs taking definite shape and obviously containing hidden meanings.
>
> Sometimes in the quietness of his seance room Sharp would receive clairaudiently the interpretation of the sketches.
>
> One drawing was interpreted as:
>
> "The harp-string shall break down the strong wall;
> And the tree of wisdom
> Shall dwarf the temple and pagoda,
> And all mankind shall sing—
> 'How lovely is our dwelling-place.' "
>
> Then one day Harold Sharp heard clairaudiently these words, "Place colours at my service and I will place myself at yours." Now, Sharp merely sits quietly, thinks of his guide and receives these coloured representations of the aura.
>
> He is not in trance during this form of mediumship, but he never knows what the result will be. Sometimes he begins at the middle of the sheet, other times in one corner. The colours are done first and then the ink drawing is superimposed.

Even the most intricate "graphs" are executed usually in about an hour. The speediest has been 20 minutes and the largest, a "graph" of thousands of closely packed lines, took an hour and 20 minutes. The largest measures 26in. by 14in. The most recent results are in circular form with a diameter of about 10in.

He possesses about a hundred ink sketches and 30 coloured "graphs." To interpret these "graphs" the Chinese guide takes control and gives their meaning.

Often in the past Sharp had been told by other mediums, "You will draw," or "You will paint," but knowing his inability to do anything of the kind normally he always replied, "That would be proof of spirit-world activity."

He is quite convinced that these drawings do not originate in his subconscious mind. Sharp, a fervid supporter of Russia even in the days when his partisanship was difficult, points out that in all the hundreds of designs there has never been one hammer and sickle!

In around 1966 Sharp, then in his late 70s, visited Peking, where Chan Shih had lived and worked as a metal engraver; he saw the house where Chan Shih had lived. Sharp said a commune was named after Chan Shih, who had died in the Boxer Rising.

For over a quarter of a century Sharp worked at the Marylebone Spiritualist Association, founded in 1872, today known as the Spiritualist Association of Great Britain (SAGB). He was also programmed in the early days of the Arthur Findlay College.

In the 1970s Harold moved into a health home for elderly people in Golcar, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire. He died soon after his 90th birthday on February 22nd 1980.



One of Sharp's Auragraphs.

FRANK LEAH – PSYCHIC ARTIST

(1886-1972)

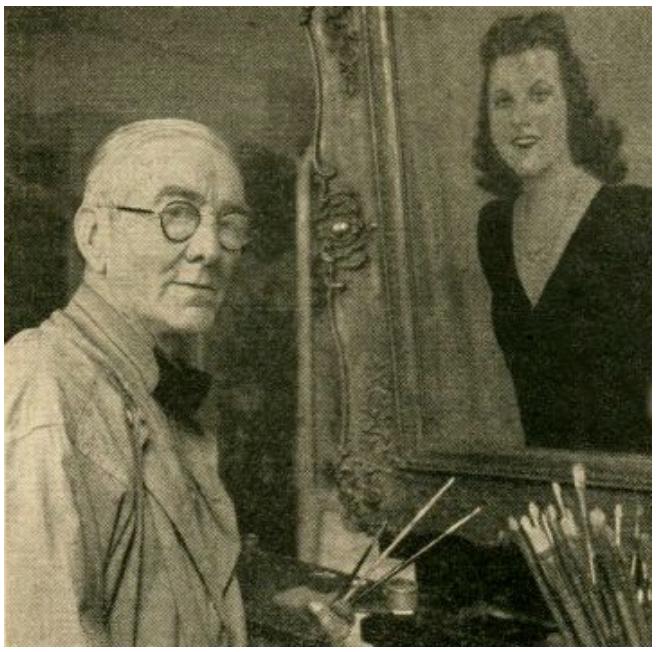
An account of the development of *Symbolic Drawings,* later more popularly known as *Auragraphs*, through the mediumship of Harold Sharp was published in the October 2014 issue of the Pioneer. Below is a description of the early development of Frank Leah, who pioneered spirit portraits of family, friends and guides. We can note in the October issue a portrait of Sharp's guide, "Brother Peter", captured by Leah.

Frank Leah paved much of the ground for later psychic artist Coral Polge, who was told through automatic writing, according to her autobiography, "The Living Image", on page 30, that "one day I would take Frank Leah's place in Spiritualism."

ARTIST WHO DRAWS "SPIRIT" PICTURES

A RARE FORM OF MEDIUMSHIP

By Horace Leaf, F.R.G.S.[13]



ART has long been a method by which the inhabitants of the beyond have communicated with us, but mediums for this special form of demonstration have been rare. Frequently it has been through inspired or "direct" music. Often it has been through what have become known as "spirit drawings." The latter have usually been beautiful but fantastic, owing, it is believed, to the spirit world having more than three dimensions. In endeavouring to convey to us something of the marvels and beauty of their world, the spirits have been compelled to resort to symbolism.

All through, however, there have been unseen intelligences who have endeavoured to inspire mediums to produce pictures which would be more easily appreciated by those too logically minded to be influenced by mysticism, and some truly wonderful supernormal results have been obtained. The remarkable paintings done through the late David Duguid rank among the best of these.[14] They were usually landscape. The Society for Psychical Research have on record a number of impressive pictures that bear all the marks of supernormal origin, but true portraits of departed friends have been rather scarce. There, is nevertheless, ample evidence that our unseen helpers have again been trying to exploit this field, in their effort to prove in every way their survival of bodily death.

[13] Taken from the *Two Worlds*, September 9th 1932.

[14] See Psypioneer: Volume 10, No. 01: January 2014: "Trance Paintings; Direct Paintings a sitting with Mr. D. Duguid, Glasgow."

During the last few months, at least one qualified artist has been exhibiting this form of mediumship in a very convincing manner. Mr. Frank Leah, journalist, cartoonist, assistant-editor and art editor in his time, of various well-known journals at home and abroad, has already won considerable recognition as being extraordinarily endowed with what may be termed supernormal portrait drawing and painting, and many bereaved souls have been gladdened by his work.

Mr. Leah has all the experience of art necessary for the work, and in selecting him as their instrument the spirit people have shown determination to recruit to their service one able to serve their purpose in the highest degree. Perhaps no one has been more astonished than this gentleman that he should have been practically coerced into this unusual branch of art. His method is different from that of the Bangs Sisters, who received their productions without having to use the pencil or palate, their striking portraits having been received through a form of mediumship allied to materialisation.

HOW IT IS DONE.

Mr. Leah works in the presence of his sitters, with a dim red light on his drawing board, and then awaits either the actual objective appearance of his spirit "sitter," or else a subjective vision of him or her. In some instances the spirit has shown a lively interest in trying to produce exactly the expression or attitude that the artist thinks most suitable, and occasionally he has had verbally to suggest that the spirit whose portrait is to be drawn shall do this or that, or explain why certain effects have been made.

I had an interview with Mr. Frank Leah to find out more about his mediumship, and found him deeply interested in the unexpected development of his art.

The first serious indication that he possessed an unusual sense of portrait painting occurred soon after returning from India, where he was occupied in journalistic and artistic pursuits. On arriving in England he became Art Editor of five journals, one of which was devoted to sport. One day the Editor asked him to produce the picture of a well-known personality who had never been photographed. Unable to get any assistance from portraits, Mr. Leah had finally to rely upon a verbal description of the man from the Editor and a friend. He then drew a full-length portrait of the subject, which was so accurate that it was published next day. The picture was said to have re-produced the man in his most characteristic mood, expression and dress, and aroused a great deal of interest.

There was an amusing aftermath. Mr. Leah met this man soon afterwards on a racecourse, and immediately recognised him from the portrait he had drawn. Somewhat taken aback at his own success, he ventured to congratulate the gentleman on the picture, and was amused to find his subject indignant that it should have been published without his consent. He told Mr. Leah what he would do to the artist if he met him, for taking such a liberty!

Inviting the indignant man to partake of some refreshments, Mr. Leah informed him who the artist was, and explained how the picture had been done. The gentleman was amazed, readily forgiving so remarkable an artist, and a close friendship was there and then formed between them.

Mr. Leah has been interested in scientific evidence of survival ever since, when a youth, he saw the spirit of his great uncle, who had been a vicar in Yorkshire. He had never seen the dead man, and was able to recognise him from an old portrait. The apparition was perfectly life-like, holding a Bible in its hand, and surrounded by a beautiful flame coloured aura.

Perhaps his first real spirit portrait was drawn in 1924. Whilst in London he heard a voice clairaudiently telling him to go home to Ireland. On arriving at his house he was delighted to meet an old friend, an army captain, who also had a keen psychic sense.

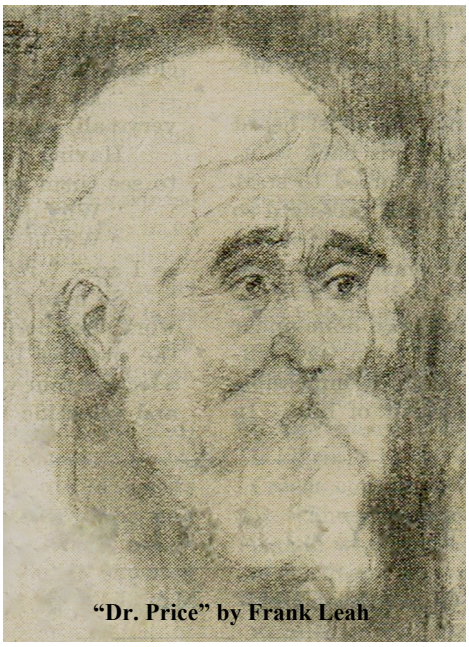
“Did you receive my mental call? ” asked the Captain.

“Yes,” replied Mr. Leah. “It was accompanied by so powerful an impulse that I had to hurry home.”

The Captain had come to ask him to draw the portrait of an important Irish personality who had recently passed away. Mr. Leah had drawn a picture of this person on the charred walls of a billiard room in a hotel which had been almost destroyed by fire, and suggested that the Captain, and a friend who was with him, accompany him. The portrait on the wall had been done in a spirit of fun, and although good, hardly expressed what was desired by Mr. Leah’s client.

Whilst looking at the mural drawing, the artist heard clairaudiently a voice instruct him to turn his back to it, and as soon as he had done so, he seemed forced to start the portrait. In less than half-an-hour he had produced so vivid a likeness of the deceased man that the Captain and his friend, both of whom were devoted friends of the dead man, were reduced to tears!

The artist knew that the drawing had been done under spirit impulsion. In life the dead man had been very self-conscious at portrait sittings, and had made it impossible for Mr. Leah to draw a satisfactory portrait of him. In death he was evidently trying to undo this by assisting the artist in this novel and unexpected way.



“Dr. Price” by Frank Leah

After this experience the artist dabbled in portraying the deceased, and became deeply interested in spiritual healing through the well-known medium, Mrs. May Bird, and her celebrated control “Dr. Price.” However, it was not until the end of 1931 that the spirit world called insistently upon his mediumship, and he resolved to devote his time to their service. The spirit friends pointed out the value to both worlds that must inevitably come from an actual portrayal of the departed through such a high form of art. The preliminary stages of his psychic development, they pointed out, had passed, and he was quite able to enter with confidence upon the suggested undertaking.

The results have been gratifying, numerous portraits having been satisfactorily produced in the presence of witnesses, who have been astonished that a man who had never seen the deceased persons, nor even a picture of them, could produce such striking likenesses.

An example of the keen interest the spirits take in this form of mediumship is shown, not only in their willingness to “sit” for their portraits, but in the astonishment they sometimes show when they realise that it can be done.

On one occasion the spirit of a venerable North American Indian appeared for reproduction, and as his eyes were closed, Mr. Leah asked him why he did not open them.

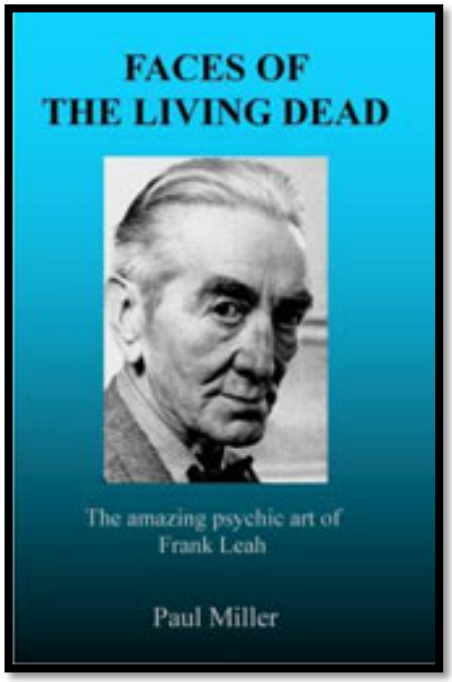
“ My eyes are not closed,” came the reply. “I am very tall, and am merely looking down; can’t you see?

Having drawn the eyebrows, the artist was astonished to see them appear to rise as if with surprise.

"Why do you raise your eyebrows?" asked Mr. Leah.

"Would not you raise yours if you were as surprised as I am?" returned the spirit in the "direct voice."

So many people have become interested in Mr. Leah's work that he is preparing a set of lantern slides of some of the pictures he has produced, and will shortly undertake a lecture tour with a view to presenting the full philosophical and scientific value of this new evidence of survival.



Biography of Frank Leah, "Faces of the Living Dead", by Paul Miller, first published in 1943, which has been reprinted by Saturday Night Press Publications.[15]

[15] 'Faces of the Living Dead: The amazing psychic art of Frank Leah', by Paul Miller: http://www.snppbooks.com/faces-of-the-living-dead.html

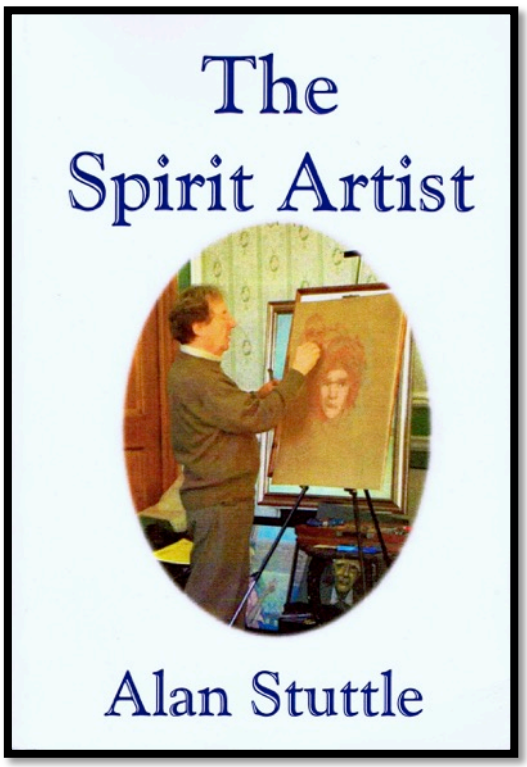
Book review:

The Spirit Artist

Alan Stuttle

The "Pioneer' has covered Harold Sharp, who may be considered the father of 'symbolic drawings'; later these would become better known as 'auragraphs' – see the October 2014 issue. In the January issue, "Pioneer" published an article on the early development of Frank Leah, who pioneered spirit portraits of family, friends and guides. Leah paved much of the ground for psychic artist Coral Polge and was followed by others like Ivor James, who worked at the Arthur Findlay College; some of his work is displayed in the museum.

Today there are a number of excellent psychic/spirit artists and some of these are tutors at the Arthur Findlay College, with Alan Stuttle being the longest-serving artist. He has been tutoring and organising courses for around a quarter of a century.[16]



Alan states in his book, "More than anything, *Spirit Artist* is a manual that gives guidance into how art and mediumship work together and what they can do for the individual."

The book contains 72 pages, including illustrations, and provides an insight into what Alan has learned through 25 years of practising as a medium.

Alan was a professional artist and it was not until he was fifty years of age that he became a spirit artist. The book is, of course, written from his own experience and his methods of development; as with all forms of mediumship, these vary in different mediums, as Alan points out in the book.

This is a valuable work insomuch as it guides potential spirit artists through the various stages of development in easy, understandable language. The author gives step-by-step explanations for the various techniques and skills required, leading to giving private readings and public demonstrations.

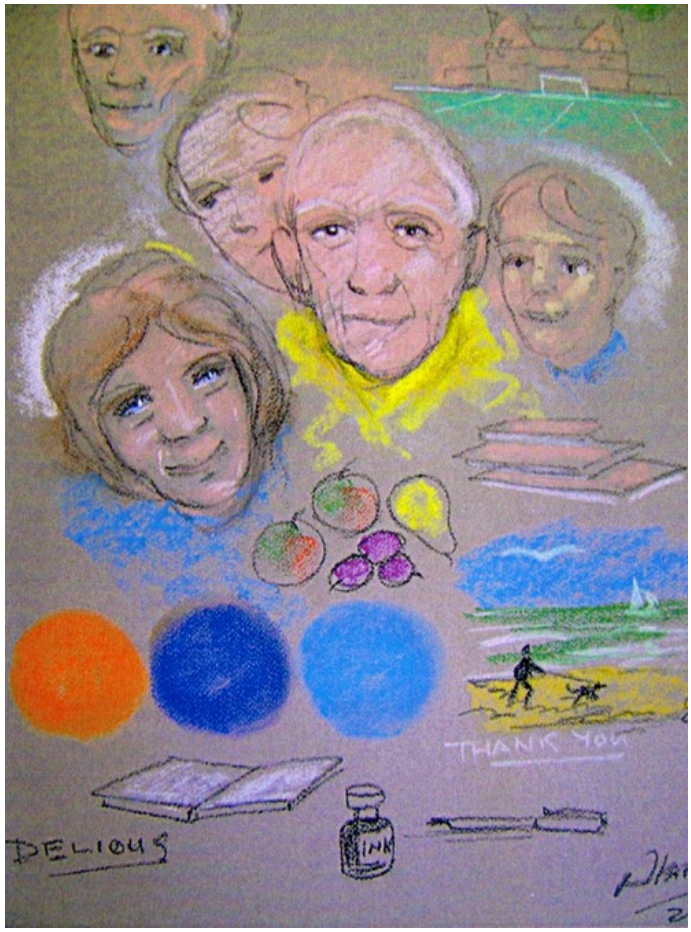
Alan notes on pages 56/57:

> "The late Coral Polge did so much throughout the world to encourage psychic artists in their endeavours to translate their artistic talents in terms of spiritual engagement. She was a truly gifted lady and it was during one of her weeks at the Arthur Findlay College that I was given the opportunity to do my very first public demonstration. (Who would have thought it?!) "

[16] See AFC Approved Tutors' profiles. Other psychic/spirit artists include Lynn Cottrell, Jan Marshall, Stella Upton and Su Wood: http://www.arthurfindlaycollege.org/tutors.html

The book (apart from the cover image) contains six images of the artist's work in oil and pastel, including working without brushes, just fingers. Shown is one titled "Spirit Sketch", from a private sitting with the recipient only, which took around twenty minutes; Stuttle notes:

The experience as the artistic medium is not unlike telling a story through film. The more I drew, the more the energy developed along with lots more information to help the artistic progress.



The book, published by Farthing Publishing, March 2015, is available from the Arthur Findlay College shop or from the author: alanstuttle@aol.com at £7.50, plus post and packing.

The profits will be donated to the Richard & Caroline Art Bursary to help young people develop their skills in the arts.

There will also be a video to complement the book at some future date

Trance & Direct Spirit Art

The 'Pioneer' has covered Harold Sharp, who may be considered the father of 'symbolic drawings'; later these would become better known as 'auragraphs' – see the October 2014 issue. In the January issue 'Pioneer' published an article on the early development of Frank Leah, who pioneered spirit portraits of family, friends and guides. Leah paved much of the ground for psychic artist Coral Polge and was followed by others like Ivor James, who worked at the Arthur Findlay College; some of his work is displayed in the Museum. In the May issue Alan Stuttle's new book, 'The Spirit Artist', was reviewed.

The above forms of psychic/spirit art are all practised and demonstrated today; we need to move further back into history for 'Trance & Direct Spirit Art', which made its entrance into Modern Spiritualism in the 1860s but has always remained relatively rare throughout our history. Scotland was to produce an early remarkable artist.[2]

David Duguid



David Duguid (1832-1907), known as "the Glasgow Painting Medium," was by trade a working cabinet maker. His education was only elementary; he had difficulty in expressing his thoughts and had no knowledge of painting or drawing. His two brothers, Alexander and Robert, were also mediums. Although David was a capable medium for nearly all types of spiritualistic phenomena, he confined himself chiefly to trance speaking, automatic painting and drawing, and psychic photography.

At a painting séance, though his eyes were always tightly shut, he worked pretty much like an ordinary artist, but much faster. Having become entranced, he first filled his palette with the colours he intended to use, chose his brushes, adjusted the easel, sketched in his picture and then began to paint. Though his eyes were shut, he seemed to examine his work just as if he saw with them, standing back occasionally to get a

[2] The Duguid article is taken from 'The Facts of Psychic Science', by A. Campbell Holms (1861-1954), originally published in 1925 and later republished in 1969 by University Books Inc, N.Y., pages 201-206. In the early days of the Union 'Britten Memorial' played a significant role and Campbell Holms' excellent reference book was in part researched from the Britten Memorial library. In the words of the former S.N.U. President Ernest Oaten: – "Turning from general considerations to the specialised psychic library, the Britten Memorial proper, Mr. Oaten stressed the fact that as a collection of psychic works it was without its equal in this country. "Years ago," he said, "when Mr. Campbell Holms commenced his researches for material for the encyclopeædic work, *The Facts of Psychic Science and Philosophy,* I was able to put him in touch with a mine of valuable information in the volumes of the Britten Library." (Quoted from *Britten Memorial Centre for Psychic Study and Research in North*, by James Norbury, published in *Light*, June 3, 1932, page 272.)

better view. It was usual, after he had started his picture, to put out the light, the only effect being that the painting proceeded faster, spirit action being at all times aided by darkness. In this way fair-sized pictures were finished in from half an hour to one hour, and smaller ones in about ten minutes; later, however, the latter were done directly, in a few seconds.

It should be observed that Duguid did not exhibit his mediumship for gain, he had his daily occupation and practised his mediumship in his leisure time. He had a devoted circle of Glasgow friends; and once a week, at least, for about forty years, they met together, usually at Duguid's house. All the best manifestations occurred here, the environment being well saturated with the medium's "magnetism." Later, in order that strangers might profit, two evenings were set aside in each week for their admission, and many hundreds from all classes of the community attended.

The spirit artist who first entranced Duguid, could not, or would not give his name, but promised to disclose his identity by painting a copy of one of his masterpieces. He then painted, by the hand of the medium, a picture initialled J.R., and which was recognised as a copy of "The Waterfall," by Jacob Ruisdal (1636-81), as reproduced in Cassell's *Art Treasures Exhibition* (p. 301). He then admitted he was Ruisdal. Some figures were omitted in the medium's painting which were shown in the original, and, on being questioned, Ruisdal explained that the painting, as he finished it, had no figures, and that these had been added by his friend, Bergheim. On referring to Ruisdal's biography, this was found to be correct. Duguid had another spirit-artist control, Jan Steen, also a well-known Dutch painter, who was a humorous spirit when controlling Duguid.

It was soon ascertained by Duguid's circle that equally good and more marvellous results could be obtained when the spirit artists worked directly on the paper, instead of by the hand of the medium. The one condition necessary for such direct work was complete darkness, the medium remaining entranced but sitting back in his chair. To ensure that his hands had no part in the production of the picture, they were sometimes held, otherwise they were tied together, and his arms to the back of the chair. The spirit controls were always anxious that such test conditions should prevail, and insisted on them when anything important was in hand. The tying was usually done very tightly with silk handkerchiefs; and sometimes when the wrists were tied in front and his elbows to the chair back, it would be found, on lighting up, that the binding had been changed, his wrists being behind his back. And the knots, on one occasion at least, were so tightly tied that the sitters could not undo them, but on the light being extinguished for only a few seconds the spirits undid them during the momentary darkness. Sometimes his jacket was taken off while his wrists and arms were tied; this has occurred with many mediums.

Although some fair-sized pictures were painted by direct spirit action, most of them were on small cards, 3½ by 2½ inches (photographer's blank *cartes-de-visite*). The medium used to carry some of these in his pocket so that they might become magnetised. At a séance, when entranced he would take one of them, hold it between his hands, breathe on it, tear a corner off and present it to one of the sitters for identification purposes, and then throw the card so prepared on the table; otherwise the sitters initialled the blank cards. Having put suitable colours on his palette and chosen some small clean brushes, the light would be extinguished for ten to thirty seconds and on relighting, a tiny oil painting would be found in the middle of the card. Sometimes the pictures were miniature landscapes about the size of a sixpence, and so finely executed as to stand magnification under a strong lens. On one occasion a small card was filled up with six little oil paintings, the time occupied being five or six minutes. Several

small paintings of varying artistic merit were done at each séance, and were usually given to the sitters. The total number distributed in this way must have been very large.



In all such direct work the spirits seemed to operate in mid-air, for the noise of sketching came from well above the table, and on its completion the cards, papers, pencil or brushes, were heard to fall on the table, the painted side of the card uppermost and sticky with fresh paint. Precisely the same thing was observed by Mr. Everitt, when direct writing came through his wife; but Mrs. Everitt, unlike Duguid, was not entranced at these times.[3]

Besides direct spirit painting, Duguid obtained many direct pencil drawings, and writings in different languages. The forty odd illustrations in *Hafid,*[4] *Prince of Persia* were facsimiles of spirit drawings all made on sheets of paper about nine inches by five. He sometimes obtained direct spirit drawings on a folded sheet of paper placed within a sealed envelope, in a similar manner to the direct writings of the Misses Bangs, of Chicago, but with Duguid, the whole room was darkened, whereas with the Misses Bangs, the dark space between two slates served the same purpose. The following quotation is from an account of a sitting with Duguid recorded in *The Spiritualist*, for June, 1875, by Mr. J. Freeman, one of the sitters:—

> " . . . Another piece of ordinary printing paper, supplied by Mr. Nisbet, who was with us at the séance, was folded and placed in an envelope, fastened down and initialled by each of those present, except the medium, who was still too tightly bound to his chair, hands, feet, and arms, to permit it. The sealed envelope was then placed upon the table, and all were requested to put their fingers upon the envelope; the gas was then put out, and after a lapse of, say, three minutes, a light was struck and we were instructed to open the envelope, which, after satisfactory examination, we did, and found upon the paper enclosed a very interesting pencil drawing of a half-length female figure in profile, surrounded by winged heads, with an eye at the top in the centre, and a German sentence at the bottom. The paper was identified as being the same which was seen in the first instance without the drawing upon it.

[3] *Light*, for June and July 1894.

[4] This should read 'Hafed', not 'Hafid', as given by Holms.

"Now I do not pretend to know how this was done, but no ordinary difficulties had to be overcome. (I) A securely bound medium, who could not so much as touch the paper. (2) A *folded* paper in a secured envelope. (3) The pressure of five pairs of hands upon the envelope containing the paper while resting upon the table.

"Next, an additional test was given us. A plain card was provided off which we tore a corner and retained as a means of future identification. Paints and pencils were then placed before the medium, who remained bound as before described, the room darkened, and when we were requested almost immediately to re-light up, we found upon the table where it had previously been placed, the same card, with a neatly executed landscape in oil upon it, with the colours still wet and the pencil (one only), full of the last colour which had been used in the production of the picture."

David Duguid is famous as the medium through whom, when entranced, the spirit Hafid purported to give his experiences in earth life in the first century of the Christian era. The full title of the book, in its first edition, was *Hafid, Prince of Persia; his Experiences in Earth life and Spirit life; being Spirit Communications received through Mr. David Duguid, the Glasgow Trance-Painting Medium, with an Appendix, containing Communications from the Spirit Artists Ruisdal and Stem, illustrated by facsimiles of forty-five Drawings and Writings, the Direct Work of the Spirits*. The book is still obtainable in a cheap edition, in which most of the illustrations are omitted.

Duguid's utterances were taken down by Mr. Hay Nisbet; they extended over forty-six sittings held during 1870 and 1871. Difficulties were encountered because the writing, being in long hand, was slow, and the spirit often spoke quickly and excitedly. Proper names and dates were uttered with such difficulty that they had to be written by the medium automatically, or directly by the spirits. To ensure correctness in the finished MS. it was read aloud at intervals, and listened to and amended by Hafid in control of the medium. A large number of séances were occupied by this revisal work alone.

The book was published in 1876. It comprises 580 pages and has high literary merit. The first edition had forty-five illustrations, many of them full-page, and all facsimiles of drawings produced directly in the dark in the manner just described. The first edition was no sooner published than it was withdrawn at the instance of the publishers of *Cassell's Family Bible*, because they found that four of the illustrations were very evident copies, altered more or less, of pictures in their book. The offending pictures were expunged, and a second edition was published in the same year.

No public explanation was given of how these apparent plagiarisms came to be in the book, but to psychic students who have studied the phenomenon of direct spirit portraiture and psychic photography, there is nothing surprising in the incident. Duguid admitted he had looked through *Cassell's Family Bible* on one occasion, and an impression of the illustrations had no doubt been recorded in his subconscious memory, which, being at all times accessible to his controlling spirits, was doubtless utilised in their work, while perhaps unconscious or careless of its source.

It often happened that Duguid's direct paintings represented scenes on the Clyde well known to the medium. But it also occurred that some direct paintings represented scenes in America familiar to American sitters, which were probably produced from impressions

recorded in their subconscious memories. Mr. Hay Nisbet records[5] that Duguid's spirit artists stated on several occasions that the scenes painted by them were sometimes taken from impressions recorded in the memories of the sitters or medium.

Nevertheless, it seems a marvellous thing that the Hafid pictures so closely resembled those of which they were admittedly copies.[6] One of the pictures represents the interior of a temple, with decorated ceiling and several large pillars highly ornamented. But while in the Family Bible picture the temple is shown as a disused ruin, in the Hafid picture it is shown in perfect preservation. Nevertheless, the spirit drawing, while finer and more detailed than that in the Family Bible, is in general aspect and many minor details identical with it.

It is difficult to conceive that the medium, when glancing through the Bible, had recorded in his memory all the fine ornamental details in such a way as to be able to reproduce them accurately. Still, it must be remembered that the subconscious mind is marvellously more impressionable than the conscious mind. (This is demonstrated by experiments in hypnotism; a hypnotised subject, on merely glancing at the page of a book, has told how many times a particular letter occurred). Duguid's conscious vision noticed few of these details, but they were in the picture momentarily formed in the retina of the eye, and this, no doubt, was impressed indelibly on the subconscious mind and memory.

It is interesting to note that reproductions of existing pictures have occurred with other drawing mediums, working under similar conditions, notably with the American medium, Mrs. French, and with Mrs. Marshall, a medium well known in London between 1860 and 1870. On one occasion Captain G. obtained through Mrs. Marshall a pencil portrait of the poet Goethe—an oval medallion with the name inscribed in capital letters below—and he found that it was a close copy of an engraving in a book, the *Life of Goethe*, the oval shape and the inscription being faithfully reproduced. It was well known that copies of existing pictures were occasionally reproduced through Mrs. Marshall, and Captain G.'s faith in the spiritual origin of his portrait of Goethe was unshaken.[7]

Like nearly all physical mediums, Duguid was accused of fraud. He was then 73 years of age, had an unblemished reputation, and during forty years of mediumship had, without fee, given thousands of séances. Unfortunately it would *appear* from an impartial study of the evidence that he was guilty of deliberate fraud at a séance on April 1, 1905, in Manchester, at the house of Mr. Stead. He was accused of secreting on his person two freshly-painted cards, and of substituting them for two blank ones lying on the table, on which the spirit paintings were supposed to come. It was alleged that from each of the painted cards he had torn a corner, and had stuck these two corners, by means of adhesive substance, to corners previously torn off the two blank cards. When, at the beginning of the séance, he produced these two doctored blank cards, he did not exhibit them, but, while holding them in view, quickly whipped off the stuck-on corners, and handed them to the sitters. In the darkness he then substituted the painted cards (which the corners held by the sitters fitted) for the blank cards, and slipped the latter down the leg of his pants, where they were felt and found when

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[5] *The Spiritualist* for March 1876.

[6] Reproductions of the pictures in question are given, originals and copies, in Bennett's *The Direct Phenomena of Spiritualism*.

[7] *The Spiritual Magazine*, 1867, p. 306.

he was *forcibly* searched after the séance. The oil paintings were fresh and sticky, but as they were concave on the painted side he was able to carry them face to face without smudging them. When asked to account for the hidden mutilated cards, he prevaricated, and was unable to give a satisfactory explanation, except that he was entranced and that the cards were old ones.

Though fatal to Duguid's continued reputation as a man of honour, his fraudulent conduct at this séance does not discredit the phenomena produced through him in the past. It may be observed that on many occasions at his painting séances the sitters themselves tore the corners off the cards, or else initialled them. One has only to read the exceedingly voluminous records of his phenomena, produced continuously during 40 years, before astute, sceptical sitters, to feel satisfied that systematic fraud was out of the question. In his old age his psychic power, or his original spirit controls seem to have deserted him; also his sense of moral rectitude, which mediumship in so many cases would seem to inhibit.[8] A good account of Duguid's mediumship will be found in Nisbet's introduction and appendix to the book, *Hafid, Prince of Persia*; and in hundreds of articles in contemporaneous literature, from 1866 onwards.[9]

Should read 'Hafed', not 'Hafid', as given by Holms.

—~—☼—~—



The Britten Memorial Museum holds a number of miniatures and larger works by David Duguid – note the one shown in the article with the torn-off corner.

[8] For details of the alleged exposure see *Light* for April 15 and 29, 1905.

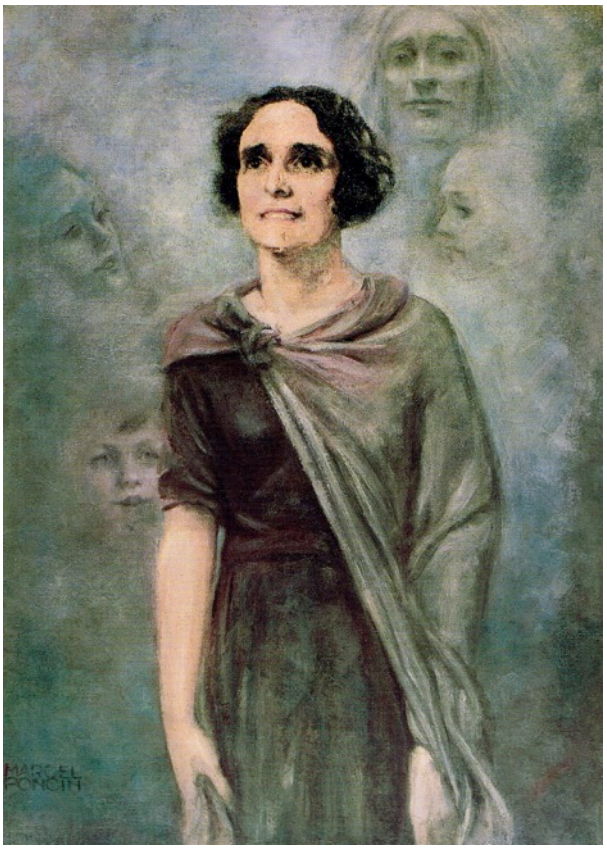
[9] "Hafed, Prince of Persia…" It can be read/downloaded online: https://archive.org/details/hafedprinceofper00dugurich

MARCEL PONCIN

It appears the image of Estelle Roberts giving clairvoyance as seen by the artist Marcel Poncin was his first *inspirational painting* reported in 'Psychic News', December 4th 1937. The original painting hangs today in the 'Mediums Room' 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; see "Pioneer", October 2014.

SOME DISCERN SPIRITS . . .

Artist Paints Medium Giving Clairvoyance



"SOME discern spirits," said St. Paul in his First Epistle to the Corinthians. The Churches are still puzzled by his words. He meant, of course, clairvoyance—seeing spirits.

In this inspirational painting, a French artist, Marcel Poncin, shows Estelle Roberts, Spiritualism's best-known public clairvoyant, surrounded by faces of the "dead."

When he had the urge to paint this picture, the artist had no idea of featuring Estelle Roberts. He wanted it to be a symbolical picture which he intended to call "The Medium."

The face of Mrs. Roberts persistently intruded itself. So he decided to paint it.

Then came the head of the Indian spirit, not supposed to represent her guide; Red Cloud, but meant to depict the guide who is always in the background of a medium.

Those who have watched Estelle Roberts giving public demonstrations know how she declares that she often hears the spirit voices and, even when she is describing one of the "dead," others try to attract her attention.

THE WHISPERED MESSAGE

In this painting you see one spirit whispering a message in her ear, while others bring themselves within the range of her vision in the hope of being described.

Marcel Poncin has been an artist for over twenty-five years. He has exhibited in the Salon des Artistes Francais, which is the "Royal Academy" of France.

Painting psychic pictures is a new departure for him and the urge began about four months ago. These inspirational paintings are all executed in the same tones, in a style that is different from his usual oil colours. He feels that he is the instrument of some higher power. When the artist is finished, he is exhausted.

Two years ago, Thomas Wyatt predicted that Poncin would execute psychic paintings, but as he had felt no urge to do so he dismissed the idea.

More recently Rosie, Bertha Hirst's spirit control, mentioned the psychic paintings again and prophesied that one would be published in a Spiritualist newspaper.

Poncin died in 1953. It can be noted in his obituary, published in the *Two Worlds*, June 13th, 1953, that he was urged by the spirit of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle *to acquaint Lady Doyle of his spirit return*:

Marcel Poncin, psychic artist, passes on

MARCEL PONCIN, who was rightly esteemed for his outstanding psychic paintings of spirit guides, including Silver Birch, passed on early last Monday morning after an operation.

For a quarter of a century he worked as an artist, achieving distinction in France. Blasco Ibanez, the celebrated Spanish author, commissioned him to paint his portrait and asked him to do all the illustrations for his famous book "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse."

Like most Frenchmen, Marcel was brought up a Roman Catholic, but even in his youth he was attracted to Spiritualism. Both his mother and grandmother were psychic. He was present at a seance at his home when he was four.

His interest in the subject was aroused after his marriage to Sumurun, the best-known mannequin in Paris. She was a great friend of Raoul Montandon, the most distinguished Spiritualist in Switzerland.

At seances held at Geneva, using a home-made ouija board, there was spelt out "ACD." In reply to a question, it was stated that the communicator was Arthur Conan Doyle. A message stated that Poncin would do some work connected with Spiritualism, but the nature of the work was not indicated.

Conan Doyle urged the artist to acquaint Lady Doyle of his spirit return. This he did and received an invitation to meet her and her son when he visited England.

In this country several mediums told him that he would be doing psychic work. Not long afterwards there came a succession of psychic paintings, each in a style different from his own normal work. These were all painted in delicate blue and silver tones and were executed speedily.

One unique feature of all these psychic paintings is the vivid, liquid and limpid eyes, which seem to hold you with their gaze.

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.

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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.

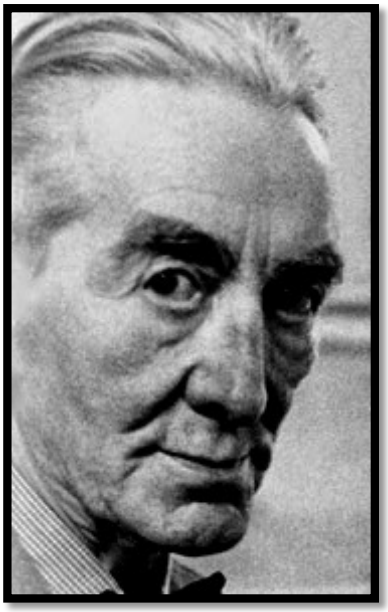
Referring to her inspired writing, Arthur has placed on record a tribute to his wife's mediumship. "In her intense honesty and deep modesty," he said, "she somewhat retarded it at first by holding back her impulses in the fear lest they should come from her own subconscious self.

"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.



FRANK LEAH

Psychic artist

Frank Leah was featured in "Pioneer", Vol. 2, No. 1, January 2014, "Artist who draws 'Spirit' pictures". Frank Leah paved the ground for later psychic artists like Coral Polge. In 1943 Paul Miller published "Faces of the Living Dead"; at the time of publication Leah had been drawing faces of the living dead for over fifteen years. The book was republished in paperback in 2010 by Saturday Night Press Publications.[7]

Below is a quote from the first edition:

" "IF only I could see his face." That is the heart-cry of the mourner from the moment the body is laid away until time wears down the sharp edge of grief—or until Spiritualism answers the cry and there appears in reality the voice, the touch, the message, or the face of the living dead. It has happened so often that the time has come to record, in lasting form, some of the many cases of evidence which prove, beyond question, that not only do the "dead" live beyond the grave, but that they have the power, under suitable conditions and with the right kind of medium, of posing for their portraits.

"Unfortunately for the armies of mourners throughout the world, there is only one medium trained to draw or paint the "dead". This is his story—Frank Leah, a journalist, artist, and medium. He was born with the psychic gift he now employs for the comfort of mourners. Long before he understood its meaning and purpose he was afraid of it. He sees with the eye of the spirit in a special way, for we all have some degree of perception. In most it is buried beneath the cares of the day and of this world; in others its beholding is ignored or dismissed as day-dreams. To others again, as in Leah's case, it flowers as an artistic gift which is employed for a great and beneficent work—the stilling of fear, the soothing of the brooding mind, the comforting of the aching heart, and the kindling of the joy of recollection of the face of the well-known and well-beloved.

"Now a psychic or spiritual gift has to be trained. It is not something handed to the medium and left untended. The greater the technical skill in the medium, the greater the service that is done, for those who from the Other Side have charge of this work can then impress their points of evidence with greater skill and ease. Behind every evidential drawing, behind every detail impressed on paper, there is a story. Those who, from the spirit world, guide this medium-artist are so well versed in their work that they neglect nothing that will bring conviction—but when they have reached that point they go no further. That is a fact. Leah has given hundreds of instances of it. Did they so desire, I have no doubt—because of my long acquaintance with the power of those who guide mediums—the spirit operators could paint pictures that would rival the best in our art galleries. Often they are the great painters and singers, poets and musicians, teachers and reformers, doing again their familiar work from another place. That is all, and they temper their power to their purpose. They show in another form, a form all can understand, that there is no death, that the body perishes and the soul lives on, retaining memories, affections and the power to show facial peculiarities, aye, and even blemishes, for evidential purposes. The warm human personalities are alive always; and as of old they

[7] *Faces of the Living Dead: The amazing art of Frank Leah* by Paul Miller: http://www.snppbooks.com/faces-of-the-living-dead.html

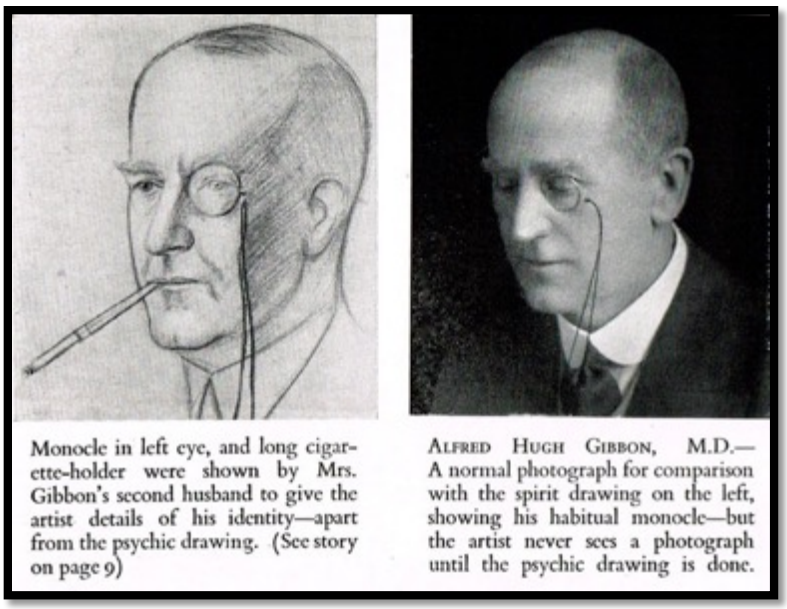
like to comfort those they love and have left behind. They like to know they have succeeded in catching the artist's eye, and that he has put their likenesses on record.

"In the early days of Leah's work he received sitters, all anonymously, through Spiritualist societies, and for their satisfaction he used a red torch to light his drawing board and paper while he worked, always with the sitter as close to him as possible.

"Leah has had many kinds of sitters. Many know nothing of Survival until they come to him. It would make no difference to him if he used a red torch or an electric light, for many of the drawings are made in his mind—if not, in fact, on paper—before the sitters arrive. Sometimes he describes the "dead" on the telephone before the prospective sitter has had time to give a name and ask for an appointment. How could Leah know who was going to telephone him—unless the "dead" relative told him? Some spirits are drawn in daylight; others have been done on top of a London bus."

"In the first instance all the sketches are outlined rapidly, though not all are completed rapidly. Some are finished within a few minutes; some have been done in a few seconds. Yet other spirits are obstinate or retiring, and the work is retarded or complicated. Often a life-size head will appear so rapidly that it appears not to be drawn but to be projecting itself on the paper."

There are many illustrations of Leah's work; an example is shown here on page 9:



Monocle in left eye, and long cigarette-holder were shown by Mrs. Gibbon's second husband to give the artist details of his identity—apart from the psychic drawing. (See story on page 9)

ALFRED HUGH GIBBON, M.D.—A normal photograph for comparison with the spirit drawing on the left, showing his habitual monocle—but the artist never sees a photograph until the psychic drawing is done.

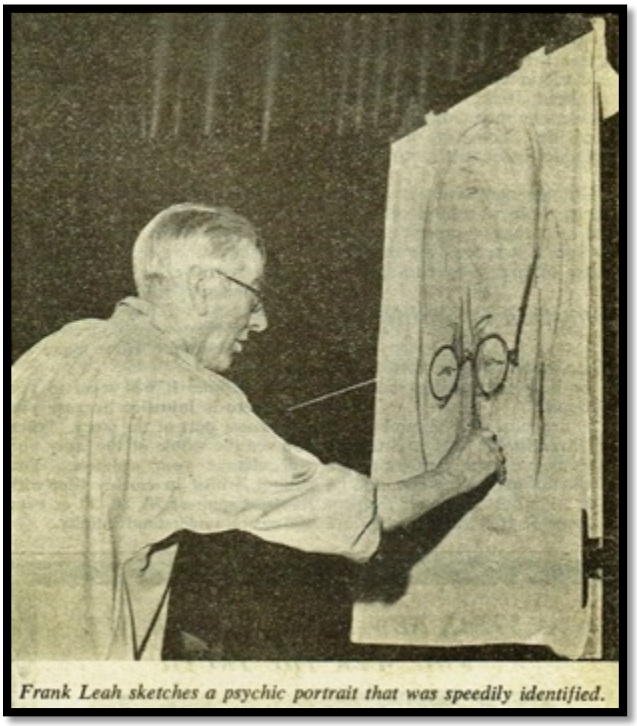
Mrs. Ethel Gibbon, of Sussex Gardens, West London, made her first appointment with Leah anonymously, and when she saw him it was for the first time in her life. If you know Leah's quick, direct way of speaking you can imagine him saying this as he did to Mrs. Gibbon almost as soon as she entered the room: "There are two husbands here, but the second husband comes more strongly." Then the spirit gave the medium his name as Hugh, adding that he was a doctor. His full name was Alfred Hugh Gibbon. He explained that he had come to "collect" his wife's mother who was being prepared for her passing. He told Leah that his mother-in-law had lived on the Other Side for many months, though still on earth, and that she was 102. Now the artist, accustomed to making portraits, could not believe that, and he said so because the daughter who was in the room with him did not look as though her mother was anything like 100.

Then the doctor posed for his portrait, showing himself wearing a monocle in his left eye. This was confirmed on comparison with a normal photograph. He also showed himself with his cigarette holder as a further proof of his identity. The whole drawing took two minutes, but it was not the end of the evidence for Mrs. Gibbon, for the artist prophesied that her mother would pass within a month. True, a prophecy is not evidence until it comes to pass, but this one did.[8]

[8] The story continues giving further evidence of survival but owing to space it is not possible to continue.

It can be noted that Leah's drawings were given personally to the sitters; it would not be until sixty years ago, in March 1957, that Frank Leah made "the first-ever attempt at public post-mortem portraiture". Leah paved the ground for psychic/spirit artists but also for the first public partnered demonstrations, with mediums tuning into the same spirit contact. Later came the public partnerships of Coral Polge and Gordon Higginson, Stephen O'Brien, etc.

Below is the first report of an attempt at public post-mortem portraiture by Frank Leah, partnered by the clairvoyant Helen Hughes, who was featured in "Pioneer", Vol. 2, No. 3, May 2015:



Frank Leah sketches a psychic portrait that was speedily identified.

"Dead" man's remarkable public proofs:

drawn by psychic artist – named by clairvoyant – identified

MORE than 1,000 people witnessed the first-ever attempt at public post-mortem portraiture by famous psychic artist Frank Leah at the Kingsway Hall meeting organised by Two Worlds last week.[9]

Dwarfed by twin easels against the majestic backcloth of the giant organ, the artist executed four rapid charcoal drawings, three of men and one of a woman.

Perhaps the most dramatic moment of the evening occurred after Leah had unveiled two previously drawn portraits and asked whether anyone could identify them. With an outstretched finger indicating one of the pictures, taffeta-gowned and radiant clairvoyant Helen Hughes added a staccato postscript to the brilliant demonstration with which she had set the tone of the meeting.

"My father"

"That man's name is Vallance Elam!" she said. Immediately, a woman sitting in the balcony called out, "Vallance Elam was my father!"

Called down to the platform, she produced a passport photograph of a man, signed "Vallance Elam," which showed a clear likeness to the portrait.

Announcing that he would-sketch a man who had died in his 85th year and whose features he had begun to "see" during a telephone conversation, the blue-smocked artist with the charcoal drew the face of an elderly man. As he worked, he made comments into a hand-microphone.

He had a long nose . . . no teeth and the head is well down. But above all, he had exceptionally large ears. . . ." Sure enough, exceptionally large ears took shape.

[9] Reported by Philip Paul, published in the "Two Worlds", March 30th 1957.

"That is absolutely right, it is my father," called Miss Vera Cripps, of Five Ways, Norfolk Road, Maidenhead, from the audience.

Obvious likeness

But Leah was not satisfied. "Stay a moment," he advised, "there is a correction here." A few deft strokes preceded another comparison of portrait and photograph. Again, an obvious similarity had been secured.

Grey-haired, 73-year-old little Mrs. Elizabeth White, of 120 Columbia Square, Bethnal Green, told the meeting that she could not produce a photograph of her father, who had refused to have one taken. But she was positive in her recognition of a keen-eyed middle-aged man whose face took shape under Leah's expert hand as her parent, who had, she said, died when she was only 18. As he worked, the artist provided a feature-by-feature description.

The female portrait depicted an elderly woman who wore a patch over what Leah said had been a blind eye. "She was quite small," he said, "only so big"—indicating a height level with his shoulder.

"She was over 60 . . . over 70 . . . over 80 . . . over 90 . . . no, wait a minute, about halfway. She was over 85 . . . the cheeks had gone in . . . there was very little eyesight . . . a little button nose . . . very lined forehead . . . wispy hair . . ."

After each comment, there was a "Yes" from Mrs. Lilian Flower, of 375 Rochester Way, Eltham, who spoke into a microphone placed near her balcony seat. But when Leah remarked, "She was very excitable," Mrs. Flower responded, "Sure, she was Irish!"

"There was a little touch of vanity about her," said the artist. "No," said Mrs. Flower, "we Irish are not vain, we just like our-selves!"

When Leah asked if she had a photograph of her mother, she replied, "No, she tore it up because she couldn't abide it."

The most outstanding of Helen Hughes' 14 messages was delivered to a couple who responded to her "Does anyone in the audience know a Captain Wotton?"

Receiving the acceptance, she went on, "Had he anything to do with a garage?"— "Indirectly."

"Do you work in a garage?"—"Yes." "He says you appear to be shocked by him coming to-night."

"Peter is here, with Jack."—"I understand."

"He is with Captain Wotton and a John who died with thrombosis."—"Yes."

"You are not a Spiritualist . . . you are not sure." — "Right."

"Jack was killed."—"Yes."

"Have you been painting the garage? Yes."



Helen Hughes sparkles in a brilliant demonstration.

"He likes it but it is not quite what he would have done." (Laughter).

"You dismantled a car today."—"No, not quite."

Airplane victim

"He says, 'Just tell him I am among everything and they don' know just what takes place.' You don't know how much you are helped by Jack. He will never leave you. Don't be embarrassed if I ask you this, but didn't you take Jack's place? Yes."

"He was killed in a plane, but he was not in uniform. It was a private plane."—"Yes."

Pointing into the audience at the start of another message, Helen asked: "Has someone just here got two photographs in their pocket? No, it is for you; someone wants his mother."

A moment's pause and a whispered aside to an unseen communicator. Then: Oh, yes, she has got her best coat on! Did you get your best coat to come here?"—"Yes." (Laughter).

Told that her time had ended, Helen was expressing her thanks to her listeners when . . . another message!

"Is there anyone over there who knows a boy named Harry Mannings?" "Yes," from the back of the hall. He says he has Freddie with him and the whole bunch that went down with him. And there is someone named Edith Mannings. She suffered with her chest, but they thought she took her brandy because she liked it!" (Laughter).

Just two days after the new year, you were going through the old photographs."—"Yes, quite true."

"There is a lady here who says she is Beatrice and you are not to have tears in your eyes any more."—"I know, thank you."

In his introductory remarks, Maurice Barbanell said that life after death was a fact in accordance with natural laws "just like those which control the arrival and departure of the four seasons.

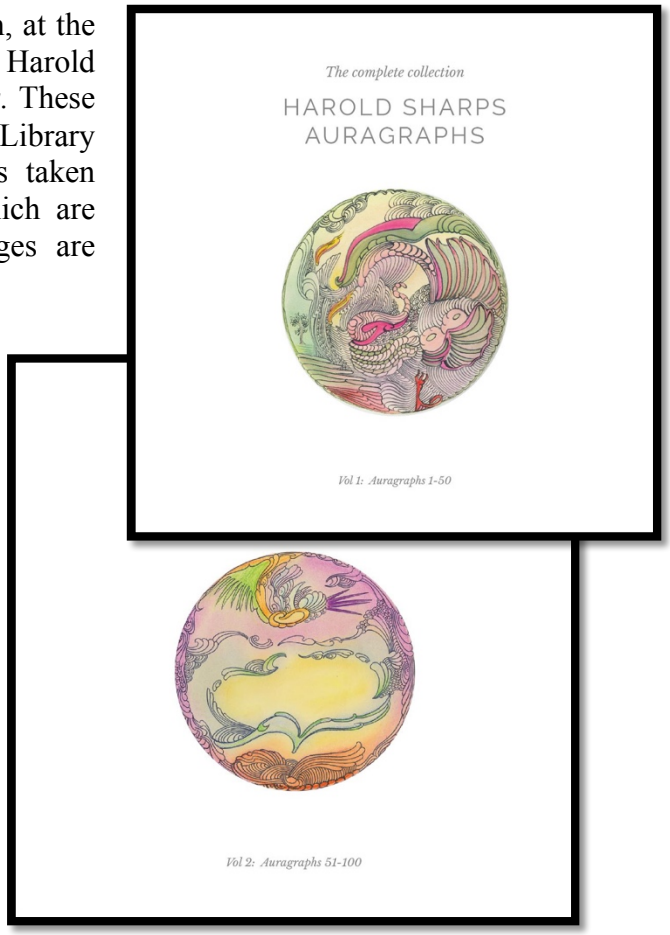
"We say that Survival is a biological fact in which you have no alternative. Many religions teach life after death, but none offers evidence as Spiritualism does. Science is not much help, for, alas, today all that science seems to be able to offer is either complete annihilation by the detonation of H-bombs or contamination of countless unborn generations.

Today, March 21, is the first day of Spring, an annual reminder that the universe is ruled by natural laws. Spring heralds the resurrection after the long winter of death."

HAROLD SHARP

Symbolic Drawings – Auragraphs

This year's "Open Week", May 5th to 8th, at the Arthur Findlay College saw the launch of Harold Sharp's *Symbolic Drawings – Auragraphs.* These are published in two Britten Museum & Library booklets containing one hundred images taken from two of Sharp's bound albums, which are held in the Museum. Three of the pages are shown randomly in the article below.



Information on Sharp's remarkable drawings can be found in Pioneer, Vol. 1, No. 5, October 2014. For over a quarter of a century Sharp worked at the Marylebone Spiritualist Association, founded in 1872, today known as the Spiritualist Association of Great Britain (SAGB). He was also programmed in the early days of the Arthur Findlay College.

In the 1970s Harold moved into a health home for elderly people in Golcar, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire. He died soon after his 90th birthday, on February 22nd 1980.

Below is taken from the "Two Worlds", February 20th 1948:

He Portrays the Soul in Colour

THE MEDIUMSHIP OF HAROLD SHARP

By CHARLES Y. STROMBERG F.Ph.S.(Eng.)

Harold Sharp is a kindly, simple man, with more than twenty years' experience of the outworklngs of the spirit world. He is not just another auragraph medium—for his graphs are unique, and the profundity of their interpretation is rarely met with elsewhere.

The human aura, distinct from the etheric and spiritual bodies, is a field of magnetism surrounding the physical body, registering vibrations of character, mentality, health and environment. Sharp's first indication of his gift was during the air raids early in the war. Whilst on the telephone, or playing the gramophone, he "doodled" an unusual combination of rhythmical lines. He then experimented with pieces of blank paper of varying sizes, and found that whatever the size sheet, the design was completed with the sounding of the "all clear."



Aura: 4

Reproduction of Auragraph by Chan Shih through the Mediumship of Harold Sharp
© 2018 The Britten Museum & Library

The early graphs were mostly in pen and ink, whilst later colour pictographs were designed. The medium is unable to draw or paint, and the striking resemblance of his work to the mystical designs of William Blake reminds one of the latter's saying that "he could only draw a line when an angel was standing by."

Sharp's Chinese Medium

The medium's Chinese Guide, Chan Shih, was a metal engraver on earth, which accounts for his particular aptitude. He sees the sitter as a radiant human being, raying a magnetic flow from all the body cells. We are informed that there are seven different wavelengths to which man responds, and that every word, thought and deed uses some of the magnetism.

To allow the guide to work, the medium concentrates his conscious mind on the sitter, who is often anonymous, losing control over his hand which designs quite independently of his will. First the hand picks up colour, which accords with the magnetic vibration of the sitter. The aura is not seen in colour but Chan transposes magnetism into the different medium. The same underlying principle may apply to colour and music, these being the expression in different keys of an inward pulsating rhythm. The colouring completed, Chan draws in ink the lines and whorls representative of the emotional aspect of the aura, then he takes the medium in trance and reads his interpretation of the graph from the base upwards, line by line.

How the Graph is Built

Lines may be rhythmic, fluid or hard, depending on emotional or intellectual conditions. Colour represents the rate of vibration. The graph is usually built up from a base in three divisions; material conditions, development of the personality, and the state of the mental and spiritual planes. A balanced person would have low red vibrations at the base gradually increasing in rate through the centre to the upper zone, where spiritual yellow should be apparent. The picture is often symbolical as in one example, when from a heart grew a tree which was linked to a church, this indicating the love from which proceeds true growth in life and finds expression in worship and service. Character trends may similarly be depicted.



Aura: 53

Reproduction of Auragraph by Chan Shih through the Mediumship of Harold Sharp
© 2018 The Britten Museum & Library

X-ray of the Soul

Chan's psychological understanding enables him to advise and treat many in need. The diagnosis of health would in itself form a valuable aid to healing and medicine. Natural ability corresponds to magnetic radiation, and its pictorial discernment helps the sitter to find out whether he is in his right vocation. One pertinent example shows an actor, whose graph inclination a marked inclination to architecture and inherent inability to act. This sitter, though a failure as an actor, would have been brilliant as a playwright, they could follow their natural life patterns, thus alleviating much pain and

avoiding the wasteful trial and error methods through which they now pass. The auragraph provides an X-ray of the human being on the three planes of body, mind and spirit.

Authenticity is confirmed by the remarkable speed with which the work is executed. The speed with which colour is selected and the design drawn is beyond the capacity of any artist. This type of auragraph can enrich mankind, and opens a wide field of research. Similarly as character is now portrayed, so the hidden fastness of the soul may in time be revealed.

Book Tests

Harold Sharp is also a noted demonstrator and speaker. Possessing a flair for clear expression and infectious enthusiasm, he now wishes to devote his public life to propaganda. Privately, he is especially interested in book tests, which perhaps beyond all else can prove conclusively the existence of the discarnate worlds. Evidence precluding all telepathic theories has been given based on facts quite unknown both to medium and sitter, which were most unlikely in the experience of either, and yet proved incontestably true.

Spiritualism Clarifies

Spiritualism, Mr. Sharp believes, stimulates and clarifies the individual philosophic bent. Its true value will only manifest when the "doorstep" people pass into a wider philosophical understanding. Phenomena are indeed necessary, but only to point the road whence philosophy, both abstract and applied, may commence.

As medium and man, Harold Sharp is endowed with a rare combination of spiritual gifts. His influence may lead to considerable advances in human health and well-being.

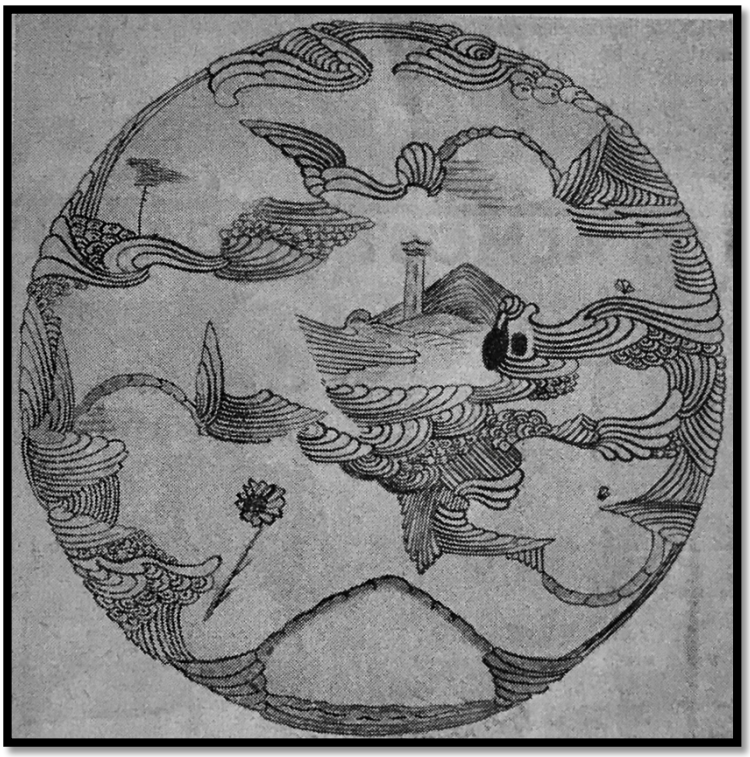


Aura: 2

Reproduction of Auragraph by Chan Shih through the Mediumship of Harold Sharp

© 2018 The Britten Museum & Library

Within the above "Two Worlds" article this Harold Sharp image was included but the readers then did not benefit from the stunning colours of Sharp's work; a sitter explained the auragraph on page 62:



In the black and white reproduction of one of Harold Sharp's auragraphs it is impossible to give any idea of the exquisite colouring and dainty blendings of shades as shown in the original. The work is done by the controlling hand of a young China-man who, when upon earth was a skilled metal engraver. And as everyone knows, the oriental engraver fills his work with a very significant symbolism.

In the auragraph from which the illustration on the front page is taken the prevailing colours are pale blue, gold, green and mauve, indicating a strong spiritual personality with a progressive outlook and courage to deal ruthlessly with wrongs and injustices. In contrast to the pale shades of the background the rocks and bridge in the foreground are a bright scarlet in colour, indicating a practical approach to all material problems.

Details of Sitter's Character

Bridges of one kind or another appear repeatedly in various parts of the graph showing that the "sitter is a bridge-builder." Ever seeking to bridge folks' difficulties for them. It is true that sometimes the bridges are upside down and come to naught—all the same the intention is good.

Her guide is a Chinaman (note the Chinese pagoda) but the padlock she has fastened to the gate indicates that her self consciousness prevents the guide helping her to the degree he otherwise might.

The tall lone pine, upper left zone, indicates that much of her life is spent alone. Yet she does not chafe or grumble. Indeed she prefers to be alone, and because of her active mind she never feels lonely.

Mental Outlook

The mind is active and the imagination strong. Sometimes she feeds upon happy memories; sometimes she builds great castles in the air. Her truly fitting symbol is the sunflower, for, ignoring doubt she ever looks upon the bright side of existence; facing life with faith, hope and confidence.

Small butterflies flit through the picture showing that she is rather inclined to flit from subject to subject as a butterfly flits from flower to flower, without pausing to drain the rich honey nectar.

This sitter is fond of listening to music but has little creative ability, and a large inferiority complex, so it is to be expected that her enjoyment is rather in listening than in performing.

Religious Trends

She is a lover of the countryside and of the sea and has travelled abroad. Three seas are clearly indicated. She is impatient and would rather do a job herself that watch anyone fumbling. There is a little yellow zone; but it is chiefly in the very centre of the picture. This shows that the sitter needs no *shrine* in which to worship. Brick and mortar religion is unnecessary to her though she might very readily feel the Divine presence in the wild places of nature or even in a garden.

Creeds would mean little in her life. Ethics much! At the age of 22 there was a formidable barrier across the pathway, partly caused by her own folly. The way seemed hopelessly blocked until a way out "over the ocean wave" was discovered. There has been but little sickness except headaches which have from time to time proved troublesome.

These are some of the things indicated and explained by Mr. Sharp's guide to the sitter, who acknowledged the correctness of the reading.

Harold Sharp Auragraphs - The Complete Collection:

Vols 1 & 2 are available at the Arthur Findlay College or on-line at £8.99 per volume. [1]



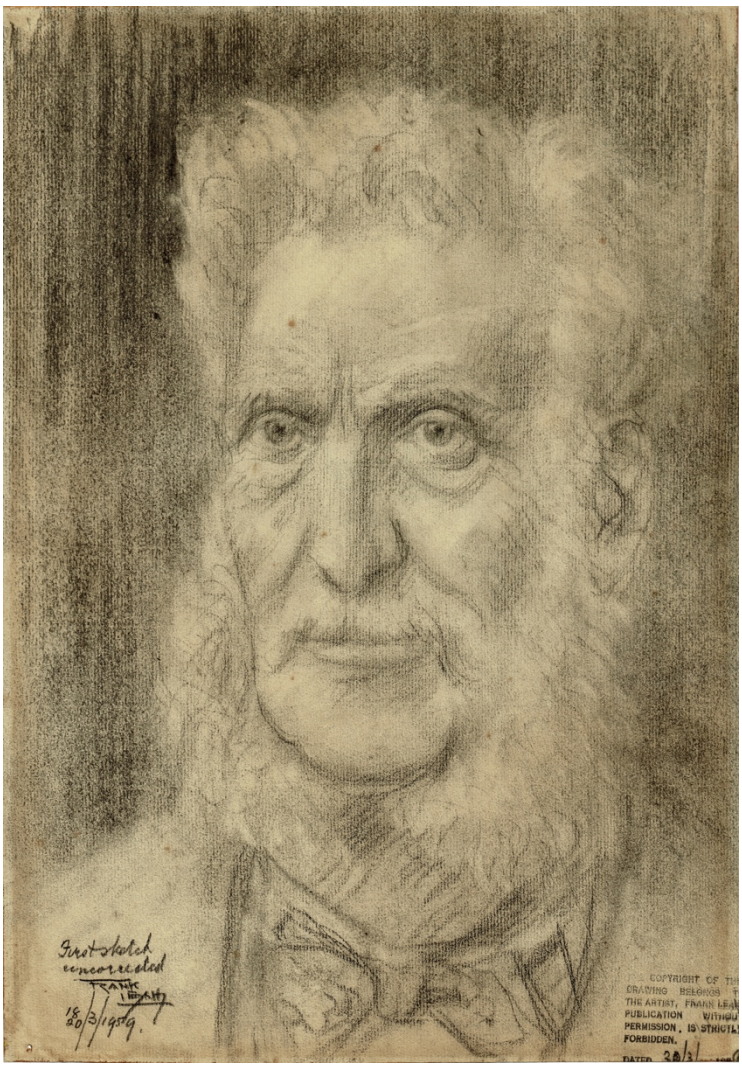
Mr Sharp being presented with a gift as oldest man present.
Harold Sharp - Derek Everitt & Miss Gracie Haigh
(as written on reverse of photograph - details unknown)

[1] https://www.snu.org.uk/shop/harold-sharp-auragraphs-the-complete-collection-vol-1
https://www.snu.org.uk/shop/harold-sharp-auragraphs-the-complete-collection-vol-2

Below is taken from the front page and page 8 of the "Two Worlds", June 27th 1959:

PERFECT PROOF OF AFTER-LIFE

This Psychic Drawing Challenges Sceptics



Perfect proof of Survival has been furnished by a 'dead' man whose psychic portrait is unlike any picture of him in existence.

Every known photograph possessed by his daughter shows him younger than the drawing made by that remarkable clairvoyant artist, Frank Leah.

This is a case which sceptics cannot explain away. As there is no photograph like the psychic drawing in existence they cannot argue that the seance portrait is a copy.

This psychic feat is not only incontestable evidence of the afterlife but a wonderful example of planning by a spirit intelligence.

The delighted recipient of this permanent memento of Survival is Miss C. Ward, of Burwash Common, Sussex. She is an old Spiritualist, who wrote Leah for an appointment without disclosing the individual she hoped would communicate.

He made his customary reply, 'Please telephone me.' Leah does this because a long experience has taught him that his successes in psychic art are achieved if, in the course of telephone conversation, spirit communicators reveal their presence.

Thus he is able to describe them, give some evidential messages from them and make preliminary sketches of their appearance.

Miss Ward telephoned she was told by Leah that her father and mother wished to manifest that several others were present but her father was the most dominant. An appointment was made for Miss Ward to visit Leah at his London studio.

No sooner had she arrived than the artist gave a detailed description of her father, who was obviously present. she confirmed the mediums description of the communicator.

Yes. she said, he was 6ft. tall or more, broad in proportion, had a long face and high forehead, a long pointed nose with its tip lower than the nostrils.

She confirmed that his keen grey-blue eyes had a far-away look, and his wavy hair was plentiful and curled over the ears. She recalled, of course, his firm mouth with moustache turned down at sides, his side-whiskers coming down under his bare chin, and prominent ears.

When, however, Leah said, 'He was very young,' she answered, 'No, he was 85 when he passed.'

Impatiently the medium retorted: 'I did not mean his years. He was a man young in spirit, full of life and energy.

This was eagerly accepted, just as she confirmed Leah's next statement that her father was 'a seaman, a first-class navigator and a typical nautical adventurer.'

Then the medium assumed some of the communicator's earthly conditions by saying: 'I feel so cold. I cannot breath properly. I have bronchitis.'

Miss Ward's father suffered from that complaint. He also felt the cold excessively, having lived for years in India and other countries with a hot climate.

While the medium had been talking, he had been busy at work with his drawing. 'Come and look at this,' he told the sitter, and beckoned her to his easel. There she saw that the outline of her father's face was already drawn.

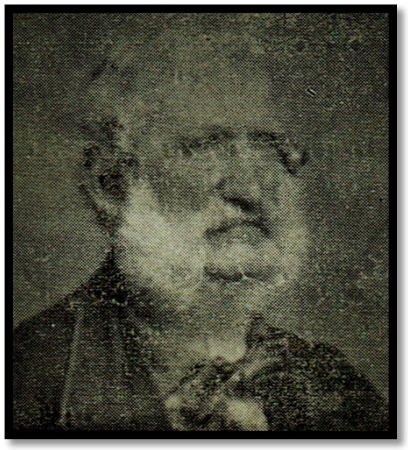
With a few rapid strokes the features took shape until, she says, the living image looked at me.' It was accurate even to the turned-down collar and carelessly knotted bow.

'Preposterous'

Leah then said: 'This is preposterous. Your father passed on 74 years ago, in 1885, when you were a child. This is the first time he has shown himself for an intimate and physical description of the kind I am now giving you. Yet you tell me he communicates orally and fairly constantly.'

Miss Ward said that with nearly every medium she had visited her father communicated.

Two days later she was asked to call and see the completed portrait. 'It show a man somewhat older than in any photograph I possess,' she says.



It was only then when the psychic drawing was finished in every detail that she produced a photograph for comparison, the one printed on page 1. Seeing this photograph for the first time, Leah commented, 'It speaks for itself.' It certainly does.

'Sure Proof'

Miss Ward recalls one other strikingly evidential reference made by Leah when she telephoned him. He then stated that something important happened 24 years ago. She knew immediately what he meant.

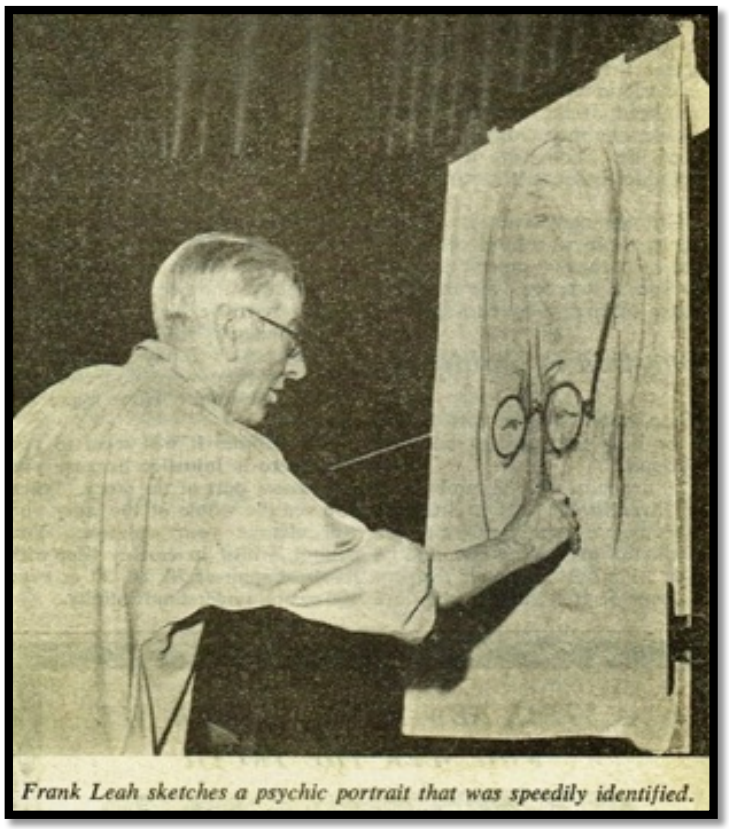
In 1935 her mother died very suddenly. Within a few weeks the close friend with whom she lived passed on equally suddenly, a happening which caused her to adopt a completely new style of life.

Miss Ward summarises her dramatic seance experience by saying: 'This is a factual account of the return of my still living father and a sure proof of the thinness of the veil which separates us, the living, and the so-called dead. One cannot be other than astounded at Leah's wonderful clairvoyance and the marvellous artistry, a combination that is unique.'

Frank Leah – Psychic artist

First-ever attempt at public post-mortem portraiture was by Frank Leah, partnered by the clairvoyant, Helen Hughes

See Pioneer [18]



Frank Leah sketches a psychic portrait that was speedily identified.



Helen Hughes sparkles in a brilliant demonstration.

[18] See Pioneer, 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.

When is a psychic not a psychic?

A Curious Spirit Drawing



Not long after I was appointed Curator of the Britten Museum, I went down the cellar to the Museum storage room with an Arthur Findlay College tutor, psychic artist Lynn Cottrell. We found a curious framed drawing; on turning it over in a paper pocket Lynn said to me, "There is some information on the drawing. Oh, it's by Robert Cooper." I remarked that maybe the information was written by Cooper, as Cooper was not known as a medium!

But in fact this drawing was produced by the hand of Robert Cooper, so it is reported!

Cooper died on November 5th 1909, aged 90. He began his Spiritualist interests at Eastbourne, becoming a lecturer on Spiritualism, an author and starting the "Spiritual Times". He was an ardent worker for Spiritualism and he arranged the venues for Mrs Emma Hardinge Britten's arrival in England.

In 1874 James Morse visited America on a lecturing tour and a month later Cooper accompanied Morse on his travels as his companion. Cooper remained in America after Morse's departure a year later for five years, visiting many noted Spiritualists, arranging more lectures for Emma Hardinge Britten, visiting New York City and meeting Andrew Jackson Davis. It was when he was with James Morse in New York in 1875 that he met psychic artist Wella Anderson. Morse referred to him as a "spirit-photographer in pencil". Morse relates their visit to Anderson in his autobiography, "Leaves from my Life", published in 1877:



"Mr. Anderson was a wood-turner prior to becoming a drawing medium, and he was often disturbed by drawing figures against his will upon his work.

Occasionally he would, while asleep, spend the entire night, in drawing faces, figures, &c., until, finally, he commenced his career as a drawing-medium. Such, in substance, is his account of his development. We had quite a pleasant chat together, and Mr. Anderson afforded us a slight specimen of his power. He requested us to bandage his eyes. We did so, in a manner that completely blindfolded him; further, he then became entranced. While in the above condition he took a piece of cartridge paper, about 3in. by 2½in., and drew a face on each side, the drawings being executed upside down; no hitch of faltering, but done as naturally as though he was in full possession of his normal sight."

It was at this time that Wella, under the alleged influence of the Italian painter, Raphael Sanzio, produced the original picture of Morse's chief control, "Tien Sien Tie", as shown. Cooper's work in the promotion of Spiritualism was indeed substantial but I have never seen a reference to his mediumistic faculties until the finding of the curious framed drawing.

So to the drawing:



CHAOS

Taken from the "Two Worlds" Xmas Supplement, December 12th, 1924:

> WE have pleasure in presenting a spirit drawing which was executed through the hand of the late Mr. Robert Cooper, of London, who was so well known for his work in connection with the Marylebone Association. The drawing was done in ink in an incredibly short space of time, and in total darkness. Mr. C. J. Cooper sends us the following particulars in connection with it.
>
> In years gone by it was no unusual thing for drawings, paintings, etc., to be produced in the dark, but such phenomena seems to be declining, probably owing to the modern suspicion of dark seances. Anyhow, we will allow Mr. Cooper to tell his own story:—
>
> "In connection with the spirit drawing representing 'Chaos,' I think it as well to state the circumstances under which it was produced. My father, the late Robert Cooper, had some time previously become acquainted with J. H. Powell, the poet, who, when calling at our house one day, mentioned some very extraordinary things which he had witnessed

at a seance when he was present at a Mrs. Marshall's, in London, and my father, who was at the time quite a materialist, was very much interested in what he was told, and subsequently paid Mrs. Marshall a visit, and was more than ever impressed by what he there witnessed. Seances were then conducted in our own home, and my eldest sister, then only a schoolgirl, developed the faculty of automatic writing. Through her mediumship some interesting and extraordinary messages were obtained, some in languages she knew nothing whatever about.

"Later on my father became very abnormal and informed us he was being controlled by his uncle, John Thomas Cooper, who was a celebrated chemist. He was the discoverer of the oxyhydrogen light, also of the process of enamelling as applied to articles of daily use: jugs, basins, etc. The subject of Spiritualism was, of course, little understood by any members of my father's family, and as his condition became apparently worse (he abstained from food for days together), it was arranged that I should be continually with him, as his condition was such that we deemed it necessary that he should not be left alone. During this time I slept in the same room with him, and it was then that the spirit drawings were produced.

"There was a table in the room on which, before retiring, would be placed a sheet of drawing paper, together with ink, pencils, etc., and he would say, 'We'll see what the spirits will give us to-night,' or words to that effect. Every night I would hear him get out of bed, go to the table, and then the sound of writing or drawing could be heard; then after a short time —ten minutes, may be—he would get back into bed, and in the morning the drawings would be there. I should say perhaps ten or a dozen pictures were produced in this way. A light was never at any time used, so I may consistently say they were produced in total darkness.

"This phase of things went on for nearly a fortnight, when by degrees his abnormal condition disappeared, and food was again taken. He still continued engrossed in the subject of Spiritualism, but no recurrence of this sort ever again appeared. The other drawings were all of a most exquisite character and design, but totally different to the one now exhibited.

(Signed) C. Ion COOPER."[7]



[7] For more information on Robert Cooper please see Psypioneer, Vol. 4, No. 12, December 2008: "Mr. Robert Cooper – Paul J. Gaunt".

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]

—~—☼—~—

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]

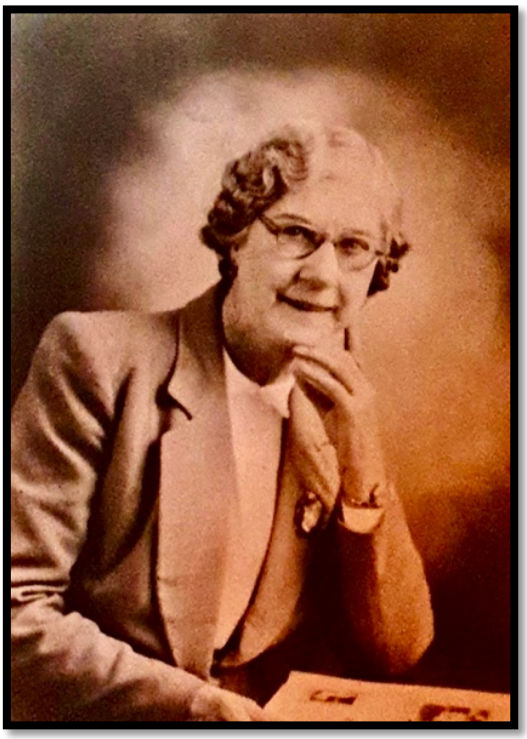


The extra was claimed by Mrs Potts to be a member of her family.

[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.

—~—☼—~—

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*.

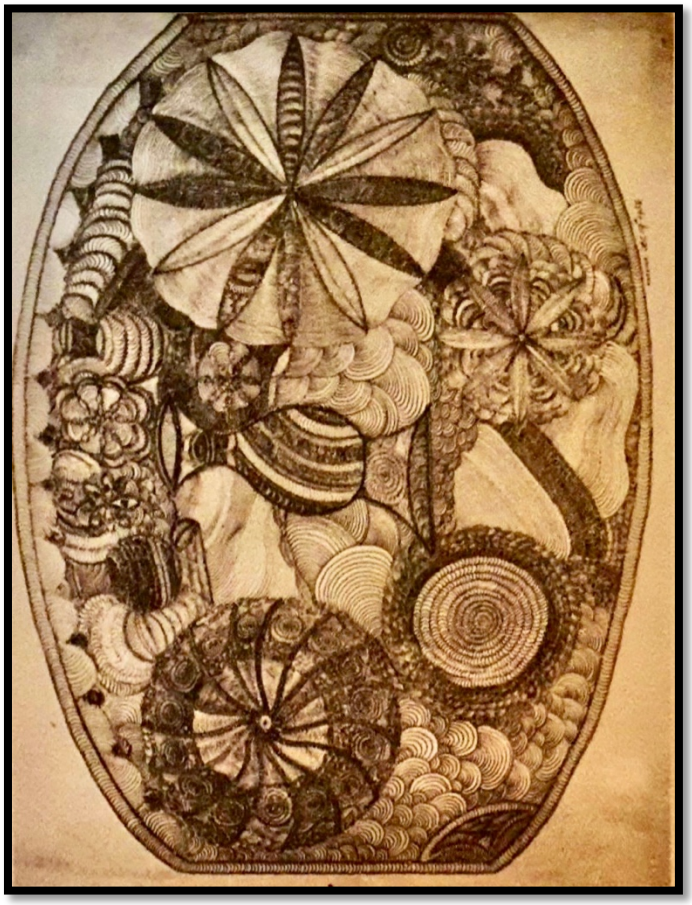
The letter writer notes: *It was one big smear on Spiritualism* and continues: *We think he must have influenced the others from buying. However he was the only adverse critic…* It was noted that another gentleman, connected to a London arts centre, was very keen to hold a Psychic Drawing Exhibition 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.

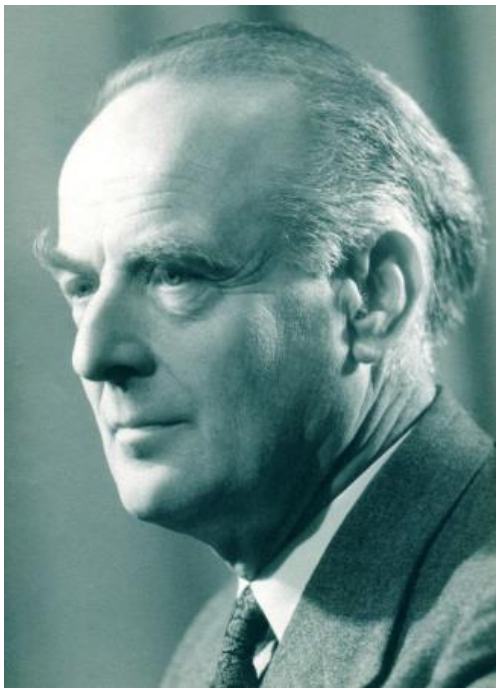
We do hold two prints of Edith Potts: the portrait as shown and one of her drawings.



MORE ON HAROLD SHARP

"Put colour at my disposal, and I will put myself at yours."

—~—☼—~—



Harold Sharp has previously been featured in Pioneer on two occasions, firstly in Vol. 1, No. 5,[14] and then in Vol. 5, No. 2.[15] Biographical information on Sharp has been limited. Pioneer has come across two later articles published below from the Two Worlds, July 26th, 1952.

These will add to what we know about Sharp's background, and a further sense of the unfoldment of his *symbolic* mediumship, which became more widely known as Auragraphs.

HAROLD SHARP'S AURAGRAPHS

Exhibition in London

—~—☼—~—

An Exhibition of Auragraphs, held at Marylebone House by Mr. Harold Sharp provided a feast of colour and unusual design for the onlooker. Automatic drawings, one measuring as much as four and a half feet in length, were also on show.

For those ignorant of their meaning, and I must confess I was one, it must be explained what an auragraph is Circular in shape, and executed in pastels, the auragraph is a symbolic drawing of intricate design and tiny pictures, of the life and character of an individual. Certain colours represent certain aspects—for instance—red, the practical nature: blue, personality; black, grief, etc.

Mr. Harold Sharp, the medium for these beautiful drawings, has himself no normal knowledge of art. Indeed, drawing was apparently his worst subject at school, and he has had no training subsequently.

The artist is his Chinese guide, Chan Shih, who during his earth life was a metal engraver.

"While talking to the sitter." explained Mr. Sharp, "my hand is seized by a warm tangible hand; the grip increases and guides my fingers executing the auragraph. When the drawing is completed, I then pass into a state of deep trance and Chan Shih speaks to the sitter, explaining the symbols."

The medium has only been working in this way for eight years, yet his great gift was prophesied by a medium twenty-eight years ago! It was also promised that the auragraphs would travel to every country in the world and this also has come to pass.

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[14] "Harold Sharp Symbolic Drawings – Auragraphs".

[15] "He Portrays the Soul in Colour – The Mediumship of Harold Sharp", "A sitter explained the auragraph".

Among the many exhibits were many intricate and colourful automatic drawings executed by Chan Shih, while Mr. Sharp was listening to classical music. These portrayed in visual form the pattern and colour of the musical vibrations.

One auragraph, interpreted by the medium during his lecture was a curious drawing of a complete pattern superimposed upon another complete pattern. This, in fact, belonged to a schizophrenic and was very symbolic of this peculiar state of mind.

The auragraph illustrated in this report was chosen by the medium for its clarity of line and symbol.

The interpretation is as follows: The sitter was a woman who had a phobia, amounting to obsession, that her relatives were going to compel her to have an operation. Under the operation, she was sure she was going to die, to be received after death by a fiendish devil. This devil is clearly shown by the red and black symbol rushing downwards, the five tails being the five fingers of the surgeon, encased in a rubber glove. Above is pictured a tree in blossom, even as the woman's life would blossom when she has rid her mind of the groundless fear.

During his lecture, which was in the nature of an explanation and history of his drawings Mr Harold Sharp gave a brief history of the guide Chan Shih. This guide was trained as a metal engraver, but longed to work with colour. When at the age of 33 he passed to spirit, he was able to study the subject of colour fully. He saw that his friends on earth trailed clouds of colour, in other words, auras. He then wished to teach others to use and understand the colour which surrounded them as a key to self-knowledge. After experimenting with an artist and finding himself frustrated in self-expression, Chan Shih decided to work through a sensitive who had no knowledge of art and therefore could not interfere with his plans.

The first attempt was made when the medium was talking to a friend on the phone. The same evening nine drawings followed, also while Sharp was talking. After eighteen months the medium heard a voice say, "Put colour at my disposal, and I will put myself at yours." After a time, the coloured drawings came, but always and only when the medium's mind was occupied.

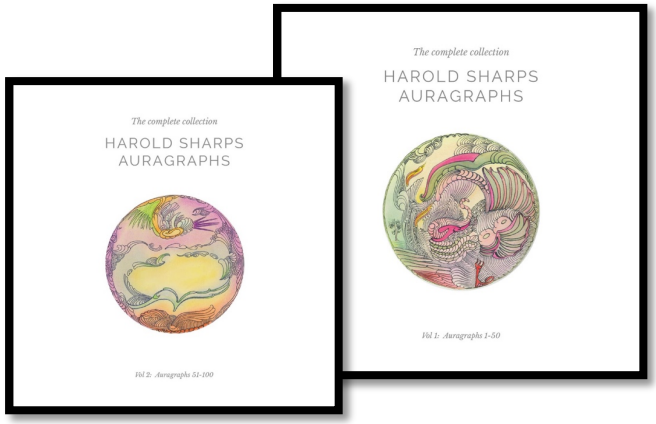
Beautiful as the drawings are, perhaps their greatest value lies in the great help given to sitters by Chan Shih as he explains the auragraphs. Defects in character are pointed out, fears revealed and dissipated and helpful advice gently given. In the words of his medium, Chan Shih is a "spiritual psychologist" and we have great need of such in our world to-day.

MARIANNE FRANCIS

—~—☼—~—

Harold Sharp's *Symbolic Drawings – Auragraphs.* These are published in two Britten Museum & Library booklets containing one hundred images taken from two of Sharp's bound albums, which are held in the Britten Museum & Library.

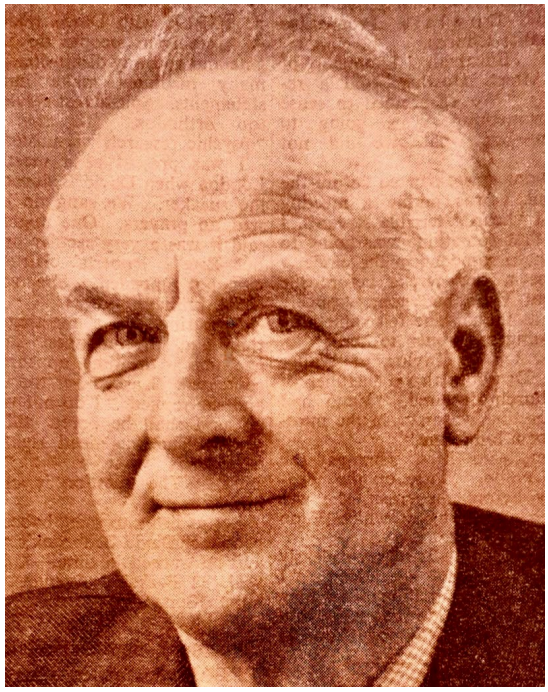
Available at the SNU online shop



Below from the Two Worlds, December 17th, 1955:

Profile - Harold Sharp

Story by PHILIP PAUL



MODERN Psychiatry embraces a technique which is aimed at achieving revelations from patients in response to key words uttered by the practitioner. For example, if all is well, the word "bread" will produce "butter," "up" will be answered with "down" and so on.

So here is a tip for any psychiatrist who finds himself with a Spiritualist for a patient. Let him, at the appropriate moment, say the word "auragraph." If all is as it should be, the patient will respond "Harold Sharp."

Born on his father's Leicestershire farm, Harold was the first of three children. A second son arrived when he was 12 and a daughter was born ten years later.

The loneliness of his childhood—he had few playmates in his early years—made Harold a thoughtful infant. The animals of farm and field were his friends and the flowers of the hedgerows his delight.

Thought it was measles

The first sign if his psychic faculties—he attributes them to his Scottish forefathers—was mistaken by his mother for an attack of measles !

But, years later, one of the world's most famous mediums, Eileen Garrett, confirmed the reality of that early encounter when she described how, in his childhood, and old monk had watched at his bedside.[16]

Playing in a stack-yard one morning, he was called in to breakfast and exclaimed, "Mother, Granny's dead." This information earned him a hasty scolding but, of course, he was right. His grandmother had died that day in Rugby, of a heart attack.

Harold's contact with Spiritualism began in London—at the premises of the College of Psychic Science.

Then came 18 months in a monastery. "But instead of hair shirts and scourges there were all sorts of annoying, petty restrictions I soon found I had no vocation there."

Medium was right

In a Southend Spiritualist church, a medium, Margaret Vivian, told him he would be going abroad.[17] He shook his head dubiously—"There must be some mistake." A few weeks later, he was in Russia.

[16] See Pioneer, Vol. 7, No. 1: "Eileen Garrett: This Was Eileen Garrett's Moment of Truth".

[17] Dr Margaret Vivian, a well-known investigator and strong supporter of Helen Duncan.

Visits to Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Kharkov and Yalta convinced him that he was witnessing "an attempt to put the kingdom of God on earth in deeds, not words." Ever since those days, in 1933, he has been undeviating in his advocacy of a "fair deal for Russia."

Once, his membership of the Society of Socialist Clergy and Ministers brought him into contact with a parson who inquired, "Are you one of us?" "No," said Harold, "not really, because I am Spiritualist" !

Amused by his companion's outraged exclamation, he asked the clergyman what he knew about Spiritualism. "Nothing," confessed his companion, "except that I always advise my parishioners to have nothing to do with it!"

But Harold had his own back. A few days later, at the minister's invitation, his parishioners were listening to a Harold Sharp talk under the title, "Why I am a Spiritualist!"

The coming of his auragraphs was foretold by a medium. Again he was unable to believe the information given him, for he disliked drawing and had no ability. Twenty years later, however, his hand was "seized by some power, and nine intricate and detailed drawings came through in one evening."

The guide for this work, says Sharp, is a Chinese. He has some basis for this belief—as a result of a chance encounter on a train. Journeying to Belfast, he was unable to follow his usual habit of reserving a seat in a non-smoking compartment. Settled for the journey, he found he had a single companion in his compartment—a man who, presently, leaned across and asked him whether he was a Christian.

His questioner proved to be the Chinese Anglican Bishop of Fukien. Harold told him he was a Spiritualist and mentioned the auragraphs. His fellow-traveller asked if he might see some of the work. Harold took some examples from his case. Showing obvious delight, the bishop proceeded to explain the Chinese symbolism they portrayed!

As well as his Russian travels, Harold has worked in Denmark, Sweden and France. He announces his ambition as "a desire to improve the literature of the movement. So much of it makes a serious subject seem silly."

During his execution of auragraphs, he feels a control "almost like a glove in my hand." He finds it necessary to keep in constant conversation with sitters so that his mind is never on the drawing.

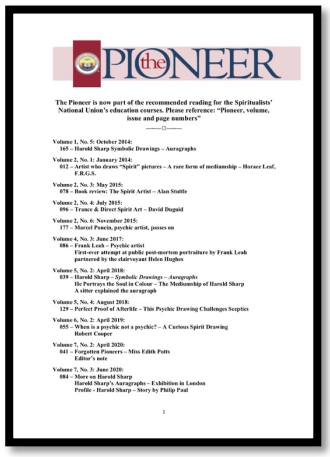
Reason for arrows

Once, he was asked by an anonymous applicant to provide her with an auragraph sitting at her hotel. To his consternation, the drawing showed broad arrows, prison bars and scales of justice. But later, the sitter told him she had suffered incarceration as a militant suffragette.

Harold looks back upon 30 years of "ordinary mediumship" (his own phrase). The auragraphs began in 1939. He is proud of the names that have passed through his developing circle — among others, Marcel Poncin, Mrs. Drayton Thomas, Mary Flanders and Rebecca Williams.

Next to auragraphs, Harold Sharp means herbs. Here, he attributes all his knowledge to his guide, Brother Peter. When he was seven, Harold fell over a cliff and suffered severe bruises. Clairaudiently, Brother Peter told him to pulverise daisy leaves and rub them on his wounds. Harold did so. Next day, all his bruises were gone.

Spiritualism has been rich in psychic and spirit art from its earliest days. Its presentation has undergone many phases, from Wella and Pet Anderson in America, to David Duguid in Scotland in direct and trance art, to the first demonstration of recognisable spirit portraits of family members and friends by Frank Leah, to symbolic art, known better today as Auragraphs and pioneered by Harold Sharp. Pioneer has featured numerous psychic/spirit artists and all articles pertaining to this subject can now be downloaded on one pdf; see "New One-stop Website" elsewhere in this issue.


PIONEER

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

Volume 1, No. 5: October 2014:
165 – Harold Sharp Symbolic Drawings – Auragraphs

Volume 2, No. 1: January 2014:
012 – Artist who draws "Spirit" pictures – A rare form of mediumship – Horace Leaf, F.R.G.S.

Volume 2, No. 3: May 2015:
078 – Book review: The Spirit Artist – Alan Stuttle

Volume 2, No. 4: July 2015:
096 – Trance & Direct Spirit Art – David Duguid

Volume 2, No. 6: November 2015:
177 – Marcel Pomin, psychic artist, passes on

Volume 4, No. 3: June 2017:
086 – Frank Leah – Psychic artist
First-ever attempt at public post-mortem portraiture by Frank Leah partnered by the clairvoyant Helen Hughes

Volume 5, No. 2: April 2018:
039 – Harold Sharp – *Symbolic Drawings – Auragraphs*
He Portrays the Soul in Colour – The Mediumship of Harold Sharp
A sitter explained the auragraph

Volume 5, No. 4: August 2018:
129 – Perfect Proof of Afterlife – This Psychic Drawing Challenges Sceptics

Volume 6, No. 2: April 2019:
055 – When is a psychic not a psychic? – A Curious Spirit Drawing
Robert Cooper

Volume 7, No. 2: April 2020:
041 – Forgotten Pioneers – Miss Edith Potts
Editor's note

Volume 7, No. 3: June 2020:
084 – More on Harold Sharp
Harold Sharp's Auragraphs – Exhibition in London
Profile - Harold Sharp – Story by Philip Paul

One very rare form of psychic art is missing from this list – Precipitated paintings

THE BANGS SISTERS



Elizabeth, known as Lizzie, and Mary, known as May, collectively known as the Bangs Sisters, are best known today for their stunning precipitated paintings; I have refrained from adding their birthdates, as the various sources are most contradictory.

From their early childhood they exhibited many forms of mediumship, including materialisation, clairvoyance, automatic writing, slate-writing, etc. It would appear that they did not start their precipitated paintings, or at least publicly demonstrate them, until the latter part of 1894, as most reports suggest, which would bring the sisters to fame and envy.

However, their earlier mediumship was brought into serious question in 1888 with a claim of fraud levied against the Bangs family.

The Religio-Philosophical, a weekly journal, was founded in 1865 by Stevens Sanborn Jones. In 1877 Jones was shot twice in his office, situated in room 16 of the Religio-Philosophical Publishing House Building, No. 394, Dearborn Street, Chicago. Control of the Religio-Philosophical Journal was assumed on Mr Jones's death by his son-in-law and former business manager, Colonel John Bundy (1841-1892). Bundy published on April 7th, 1888 "The Bangs' Fall from Grace".[8]

Bundy noted:

The great body of Spiritualists are more unrelenting toward fraud practiced under the cloak of Spiritualism and better able to detect it than outsiders possibly can be

[8] As noted in the recent series in Pioneer, "A Question of Fraud!", the British Spiritualist press was committed to stamping out fraud; this also extended to the American Spiritualist press.

A short quote below:

> On Sunday evening last, while several societies in this city were celebrating the fortieth anniversary of Modern American Spiritualism, and all the churches were filled to overflowing with people who thronged them to hear the beautiful music and witness the floral display, a very different scene was in progress at the home of the Bangs Sisters on Walnut street. While church bells were ringing, organs pealing forth joyful anthems and trained voices filling the air with triumphant strains in commemoration of the resurrection of Jesus, the Bangs women, mother and daughters, were busily engaged in the cold-blooded, damnable, unutterably vile business of running a bogus materialization show. With a music box making noise enough to drown all other sounds and Mrs. Bangs ever on the alert with her cracked voice to fill up any hiatus of the machine music, the daughters went through the sickening swindle with all the coolness of well-trained performers. Heedless of friendly admonition, intent only upon securing the forty to sixty dollars per week which the swindle was bringing in, this female trio, mother and daughters, persisted in their diabolical business; blinded by their avarice and feeling the confidence bred of long success in eluding exposure and deluding seekers after evidences of the continued existence of their beloved dead, these women went on with their nefarious work until the experience which must come sooner or later to all evildoers overtook them. Nemesis was on their trail disguised as D. F. Trefry, and though they were suspicious of hum, their overweening confidence in their ability to circumvent an exposure led them to court danger and defy detection. Here is Mr. Trefry's statement of the exposure, condensed as much as possible by omitting vivid descriptions of the dramatic, almost tragic, details of the scene:
>
> Having secured the assistance of two policemen and several friends, I proceeded with them to the Bangs Sisters, 22½ Walnut St., on Sunday evening last, to attend a séance. There were about thirty persons present. I sat in the front row where I had an opportunity to carefully inspect the proceedings. The two policemen were seated in the third row, and the friends accompanying me were compelled to stand back of them, there being no seats for them.
>
> May Bangs occupied one apartment of the cabinet, being locked therein, there being a thin cloth partition between the medium and the apartment where the spirits were supposed to materialize. Five or six figures appeared purporting to be materializations, some of which were recognized as spirit friends by the gullible people present. Then Belle, one of the principal cabinet spirits came, dressed in white, with white pearl buttons, and stood in the cabinet with the door partially open.
>
> Then forms appeared, after which the celebrated Russian Princess came and stood in the partially opened door of the cabinet, dressed in white, trimmed with what was stated by Mrs. Bangs, the mother of the mediums, to be precious diamonds. She wore a white head-dress bespangled like the dress. There was a signal agreed upon by me and my friends, which I gave when the auspicious moment arrived for making the exposure, and at the same time I made a sudden spring and caught the Princess just before she got the door closed, and I did not release my hold until she was taken before those present, some sixty ladies and gentlemen, with her toggery still upon her, and held by me and my assistants; and when this was torn off of her, the medium, May Bangs, was revealed, dressed the same as she was when she first entered the cabinet. She had in her possession a bundle of paraphernalia, consisting of robes, scarfs, false beards, etc. The mother, fighting to release her, grabbed the bundle, and tried to carry it off, but was intercepted by one of the policemen, who took it from her.[9]

[9] Further noted: It may be well however to say a word about the trick cabinet. This cabinet is large and divided into two compartments. As it stands with the sitters facing it, the compartment for the medium is to the right and is only about one half the dimensions of the other one, used by the "spirits." The partition is of thin but strong

The friends of the mediums were so pugnacious that the policemen were compelled to flourish their revolvers in order to maintain order. After, however, the mediums were arrested, their paraphernalia exposed, and the condition of the cabinet shown to be such that fraud could be easily practiced, those who were loudest in denunciations of their arrest, were glad that it had occurred.

The patrol wagon was summoned and when the mediums were taken out to it, there were about 150 people on the sidewalk, who expressed themselves as highly pleased, at the result, for the show had got to be a dreadful nuisance.

However, Bundy does give us some valuable information on their early life and as mediums: "May and Lizzie Bangs", reprinted from the Chicago Herald in the Religio-Philosophical Journal, April 7, 1888:

"Colonel John C. Bundy, editor of the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, yesterday consented to give *The Herald* some interesting revelations touching the Bangs sisters and their methods. He says the girls first came to his notice as mediums about eighteen years ago. Lizzie is twenty-nine. She was married some years ago to one Paul, a letter-carrier, Colonel Bundy adds: "Lizzie obtained a divorce for good cause, as I am informed, and with her two little children, girls, returned to her father's home. May is twenty-six years old, and also divorced; has a little boy about three years old, and lives with the parents. In the early years of their alleged mediumship marvelous stories were told of the phenomena occurring in their presence and about the house. The respectability of the family and the apparent sincerity of the father carried much weight, and the stories were quite generally credited. Soon public 'circles' were given under the auspices of the parents, and a fee was charged.

"Gradually the demonstrations increased in variety and complexity. Nearly eleven years ago, at the earnest solicitation of Mr. Paul, who was then, as I suppose, engaged to Lizzie, I witnessed several of their 'dark séances' for physical manifestations. The conditions were unsatisfactory in that the observer could never be sure that the girls were not assisting. As such exhibitions have no scientific value and are useless where certainty is essential, I declined to pursue the matter."

"Prior to two years ago I did not allow the names of the Bangs sisters to appear on the mediums' directory which I furnish investigators, nor did I mention them in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, to the best of my recollection. Some time after the formation of the Psychical Research Society in this city the girls called on me and offered to submit their claims as mediums for independent slate-writing to the investigation of the society's committee on physical phenomena. They appeared ingenuous, and anxious to obtain a standing in the *Journal* and with the society."

The full report is available to any interested parties in pdf; please contact the editor. It is interesting to note a leading comment by Bundy:

From my own observations and the reports of credible informants I had by this time reached the conclusion, much against my inclination, that Mrs. Bangs was master spirit of the business. I then ceased to have any further interest in the mediumistic claims of the family and knew little of its history for some years.[10]

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muslin nailed to two pieces of hard wood, one on either side, about an inch thick and two inches wide. These extend from bottom to top of the cabinet, and are secured by iron sockets and bolts. The whole thing looks honest and only an experienced investigator familiar with the construction of trick boxes would be able to detect the swindle. By the use of a small wrench, its head covered with chamois skin to deaden sound, and the removal of three screws which had no hold on the wood and could be instantly removed, the materializer could in a minute remove the wooden strip at the rear of the cabinet and have free access to the other compartment. After the show it could all be replaced in another minute.

[10] Mrs Meroe Bangs, their mother, died on November 2nd, 1917.

There are numerous unsavoury reports of this era, no doubt giving the media much fuel surrounding the then called "Notorious Bangs Sisters", with five failed marriages between the two sisters in their early life. As noted in the Pioneer's three-part series ending in the last issue, "A Question of Fraud!", apparent fraud is not always as it appears on the surface; in addition, the local and national non-Spiritualist newspaper articles of the day often had *sensationalised headlines* and generally knew nothing of the mediumistic processes, albeit the comments of the editor of the Religio-Philosophical, John Bundy, require respect as an experienced Spiritualist investigator and editor of the respected journal.

PRECIPITATED PAINTINGS

As previously noted, precipitated paintings, which the Bangs Sisters started in the latter part of 1894, were unlike David Duguid's direct art, which were done in total darkness with oils or watercolour, with the paints present on the table; precipitated paintings were different. They were produced in direct view of the sitter or sitters, with the portrait of the deceased slowly and gradually appearing on the canvas, sometimes the details of the portrait being altered, as in life our image changes—long hair, short hair, moustache and/or a beard, clean-shaven, etc. It is reported that the precipitated image would change when sitters would remark (sometimes mentally) that at that age they did not have a beard, so the image was said to change, reshaping the image.

The finished paintings were without doubt stunning. During my time at Lily Daly in July 2019 it was the first time I had viewed original precipitated paintings displayed in Lily Dale museum and the Maplewood Hotel, Marion Skidmore Library, NSAC office.[11] The paintings were produced by Lizzy and May Bangs and by Allen Campbell and Charles Shourds, known famously as the "Campbell Brothers". To my knowledge these are the only known mediums to demonstrate precipitated work. The paintings of the Bangs and Campbells are indeed very similar. The photograph of myself and Museum Curator Ron Nagy shows some of the beautiful displayed works in Lily Dale museum. Ron himself cannot be certain with some of them whether or not they were produced by the Bangs or the Campbells!



The Bangs and Campbell paintings are indeed similar, as noted, but totally unlike other paintings produced through other forms of art mediumship, as in the case of precipitated paintings, for example, there are no eyelashes, the eyes are vibrant and there is a feeling of being alive and deep. There are no brush strokes similar to an image produced by modern-day airbrushing. Reports show that when the paintings were produced they were damp to the touch and vibrant in colours, which would rub off with one's finger, feeling like soot or powder or oily.

[11] See Pioneer, Vol. 6, No. 4: "Ron Nagy, Museum Curator at the Lily Dale Assembly".

The Bang Sisters rented various properties at Lily Dale during the summer months for a number of years, whereas the Campbell Brothers owned a property and lived at Lily Dale. Allen Campbell and Charles Shourds, the "Campbell Brothers", will be covered in a later issue of Pioneer.

Sometimes, as in the case of Frank Leah, and with psychic photography at the end of the sitting the sitter would produce a photograph of their loved one or friend—being the same or similar to the image produced by the medium. With the sisters the image was close to the produced photograph but, for example, the hands were repositioned; perhaps the hat was missing or a badge on the lapel or on a dress would be added or missing—but yet identified by the sitter as belonging to the person in the painting at some point in their life.

This brings in similar problems as in psychic photography, whereby it was considered that in some cases the psychic image was projected on to the film emulsion by some form of *ectoplasmic overlay*, as it was generally agreed that the alleged spirit form did not pose for the photograph. Psychic photography was one of the most controversial phenomena in the Spiritualist movement. The Bangs Sisters had problems with hostile press, the authorities, and critics whose comments and accounts—for *non-psychic* theories—were sometimes more unbelievable than the actual phenomena themselves.

Given that the sisters would generally sit on either side of the table holding the canvases (not in all accounts), one must be aware of manipulation, as there were curtains, etc. in place, so substitution of pre-prepared canvas is of course possible. But, as with psychic photography, the known possible methods of trickery do little to rule out what is unquestionably actually produced on the precipitated canvas—a perfect recognisable image of the deceased person—but *not* always a direct copy of any known image. That is to say, the mediums could have had no foreknowledge of the image produced on the canvas; it should also be considered that in those days there was no colour photography, yet some reports state the accuracy of the correct colour of eyes, hair, etc. which were produced on the paintings! Perhaps a very different perspective of a well-known person of the day.



THE BANGS SISTERS

Lily Dale – Southwestern New York State

Below gives a general description of the way the sisters worked, taken from the Arthur Findlay College Newsletter of October 15th, 2010:

THE MEDIUMSHIP OF THE BANG'S SISTERS

The following is a description extracted from Admiral W Unsworth Moore's book 'Glimpses of the Next State' published by Watts & Co, London in 1911, as to how the paintings were obtained in his presence through the mediumship of the Banks Sisters of Chicago.

Two thin canvasses stretched on wooden frames and covered with thin paper were placed face to face and held up in the window. The blind was drawn to the top of the canvasses and curtains hung up in my presence on either side. The window has a southern aspect, and the light coming in through the two semi-transparent canvasses is sufficient for the purposes of taking notes and seeing everything that goes on. The small oak table was lengthways in the window; the bottom of the canvasses rests upon it.

May Bangs sat on my right side facing me and pinching together with her right hand one side of the canvasses. Lizzie Bangs sat on my left side facing me and pinching together the other side of the canvasses with her left hand. I faced the middle of the canvasses, my nose being between two feet and two feet six inches from them. After a few minutes the canvas assumed various hues, rosy, blue and brown; it would become dark and light independently of the sun being clouded or not.



On the morning of the 20th January 1909 went to the Bang Sisters for a profile portrait of Iola as arranged on the 18th. Everything was ready at 10.50 and we sat until 11.30. I had in my pocket a *carte-de-visite* of Iola taken in the year 1874. The mediums had never seen this or any other photograph in my possession. Fifteen minutes after we sat in the window the face and bust appeared; the profile was looking to the right, precisely the same aspect as it has now, framed, hanging in my room. Remember, I was looking through the back of the picture, and it was forming on the further side of that one of the two canvasses nearer to me; consequently, had it gone on as it was and been finished, it would now (when framed) be profile left.

When the portrait was nearly finished the two canvasses were lowered towards me on to the table (the mediums being impressed, apparently to do this). A telegraphic came by taps to May Bangs, who said: "She wants this picture for your wife specially, as well as for you. She thinks that your wife would prefer to see her in the pose to which she is accustomed." Up went the canvasses again to the window, and I found that the whole picture was changed round, so that the profile looked to the left instead of the right. In a few minutes the portrait was completed, May Bangs remarking: "She says she cannot put in the hand."

From the time the face and bust first appeared to the time the canvasses were separated and the finished picture put on the sofa in the next room, twenty-five minutes had elapsed. Neither of the psychics had ever seen the *carte-de-visite* in my pocket. How did they know normally that there ought to be any hand in the picture? As a matter of

fact, in this photo there is a hand (the left) supporting the cheek on its left side? This was omitted in the coloured picture.

When the portrait was finished, it bore a very close resemblance to the photograph. It was looking in the same direction – to the right. As to likeness, it is impossible for anyone who compares the photograph with the picture to deny that they are one and the same individual. At the same time the picture is by no means a slavish copy of the photograph.

Its pose is more upright, the face spirituelle, and the dress not exactly the same. There is a firmness, a decision, and an appearance of calm and contented happiness in the face which is absent from the *carte-de-visite.*

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Admiral W. Unsworth Moore further adds, on January 22nd, 1909: Sat with the Bangs Sisters for a portrait of Cleopatra:

As before two canvasses were produced, covered with blank drawing paper, laid face to face, and held up against the window, the bottom of the canvasses, in this case, resting on the sill of the window, as they were much larger in size than those used for the two portraits of Iola.[12]



I sat between the psychics, as on previous occasions, my eyes looking straight into the centre of the canvasses from a distance of two feet to two feet six inches. We took our places at 10.55. About 11.05 the form began to appear, and it was roughly finished in ten minutes. We were then directed, by taps on a slate, to put the canvases on the table and sit around it. We moved the table to the centre of the room, placed the canvases flat upon it, covered them over with the felt tablecloth, and sat around as directed. At 11.30 we were informed that the picture could be raised; the canvases were now separated and the picture put on a sofa in a neighbouring drawing-room.

In all precipitations through the mediumship of the Bangs Sisters the picture is found to be on the further side of the canvas which is next to the sitter. The stuff of which the picture is composed is damp, and rubs off at the slightest touch, like soot. Notwithstanding this, the paper on the canvas furthest from the sitter is unsoiled. The picture, while in process, can be seen clearly through the back of the canvas; but of course it presents the reverse aspect to that when it is framed – left arm for the right, and so forth.

The portrait of Cleopatra is practically the same now as it was when it was lifted from the table. Afterwards, but not while I was looking at it, the colours deepened a little, flowers were added to the embroidery of the dress, a ring was put on the finger of the left hand, and the picture acquired a general appearance of greater richness and finish. It was

[12] "The two portraits of Iola"? It is unclear whether or not this is an error or whether indeed Admiral W. Unsworth Moore received two portraits of Iola!

hanging in the lecture-room of the London Spiritualistic Alliance for four months, and it is therefore unnecessary to describe it.

It cannot be called a work of high art; the dress is stiff, and the anatomical features are deficient; but it is undoubtedly a representation of an Egyptian queen, and, considering the way in which it was done, a fine example of spirit power.

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It is clear that Vice-Admiral W. Usborne Moore was a strong supporter of sisters Lizzie and May Bangs, but he would come into contact with researchers and magicians who would not be as sympathetic to the genuineness of the sisters. One such opponent was the psychical researcher, Hereward Carrington, in connection with the Bangs Sisters' slate-writing. Carrington went to Chicago in 1909 and reported in the Annals of Psychic Science (July-September 1910) that he had found fraud. He had addressed a letter in a sealed envelope to "Dearest mother, Jane Thompson" (who never existed) and received a reply addressed to "Dearly loved son Harold", signed by his "devoted mother, Jane Thompson".

As the controversy increased, Carrington sent a letter to "Light", published on May 13th, 1911. Carrington pointed out in his letter that fellow-magician David Phelps Abbott, who had invented some famous illusions, had succeeded in duplicating the Bangs Sisters' precipitated paintings—by trickery. Part of Hereward Carrington's letter to "Light" is quoted below; it was in response to an ongoing argument with Vice-Admiral W. Usborne Moore:

The Bangs Sisters and Fraud.

"I could go through Admiral Moore's reports if I chose to do so, and point out exactly where, in my opinion, the fraud crept in, in his slate-writing sittings, but it is hardly necessary. I do not consider them genuine, and Admiral Moore does; others besides myself have detected fraud; Admiral Moore did not—let the matter rest there. If the Bangs Sisters would ever consent to give sittings under really test conditions, I should be most happy, and stand willing to investigate them with the utmost care and patience and to publish a favourable report, should I fail to detect fraud—as I did not hesitate to do in the case of Eusapia.[13] I have no grudge against the Bangs Sisters; indeed their work interests me immensely."

"Finally, I wish to say this: If this portrait phenomenon can, under virtually the same conditions, be duplicated by fraud, then, surely, its evidential value vanishes. If it could be shown that phenomena, precisely similar to Eusapia's, could be produced by trickery, hitherto unsuspected, then I should give up my belief in her at once. I still believe in her powers because no such proof has been forthcoming. But in the case of the Bangs Sisters, it is a little different.

"For years these 'spirit portraits' were the wonder and the envy of all the conjurers and mediums in America. Attempts were made to duplicate their work, without success. I myself was 'on the fence' regarding their portraits, and so stated in my report. After I had my sittings, Mr. David P. Abbott and myself worked together over this problem, but I was forced to stop, at the time, owing to press of other matters, and Mr. Abbott continued his experiments alone. I think I am safe in saying that he has now succeeded in duplicating the Bangs Sisters' portraits exactly—and by trickery. No chemicals are used, no solar-photography, no spraying—nothing of the kind.

"Two canvases are selected, marked and placed upon a light easel, which is examined. A bright are-lamp is placed behind the canvases. Investigators may walk round the

[13] Pioneer, Vol. 6, No. 6: "Eusapia Palladino – Hereward Carrington".

canvas during the entire process. They may look above, below, behind, on all sides. A picture slowly forms on the inside—between the two canvases—which picture has the same finish and texture as the Bangs' portraits. It can be made to appear slowly, the eyes to open at will, &c., exactly as their pictures do. The process is, in fact, from all external indications, identical in appearance. In view of this fact, I think the authenticity of the Bangs' 'spirit-portraits' may seriously be called into question! As to their slate-writing, I am certain I could duplicate it myself, under the same conditions.—Yours, &c.,

Hereward Carrington."



At the time Carrington wrote this letter, David Abbott had not yet released his report of duplicating the Bangs' style of precipitated paintings; Abbott, as far as I know, never sat or attended a public demonstration with the sisters. C.F. Eldredge, a supporter of the sisters, wrote a book stating that it was written by his dead wife through the Bangs Sisters' mediumship. Unfortunately, at present I have been unable to find this book, no doubt valuable, as it is *full of these pictures*! The book title is "Through the Valley of the Shadow and Beyond".

Abbott (image shown) gives via Eldredge's report a description on how Lizzie and May Bangs conducted their séance:

> Mr. Eldredge is a very intelligent man, and is teaching the mysteries of the human mind, how to effect certain marvelous cures, and how to perform other mental miracles—if I may be allowed the word. It was through a description furnished by him that I was able finally to work out the solution of this mystery, and to settle definitely the extravagant claims of the mediums, besides making the stage illusion possible. Mr. Eldredge had the privilege of witnessing one of the Kansas City seances, and I here give his report:
>
> Having met by appointment at the residence of the mediums, my doctor friend and myself were ushered into the studio where the sitting took place. The object was to secure a portrait in colors of the doctor's sister who was killed some six years ago in a run-away accident.
>
> The doctor was requested by the mediums to select two canvases from a dozen or more that were leaning against the wall. This he did from near the middle of the pile, holding them up to the light and rubbing his hand over them in order to determine if there was any coating or film over them. I also examined them very carefully, and was satisfied there was not. One of the mediums now took the two framed canvases and placing them face to face, stood them upon a small table in front of a window which looked out upon the Paseo, one of the great boulevards of our city. The canvases were leaned against the window which faced the south.
>
> One of the mediums stood upon a chair and pulled down the blind to the top of the canvases, and then each of them drew a soft, dark curtain from the side of the window to the frames, thus darkening all of the window except where light came through the canvases.

The light from the window passed directly through the canvases and they appeared clear and white. My friend held a picture of his dead sister in his hand, being requested to fix the expression of her face in his mind. We were seated immediately in front of the window, not more than three feet from the canvases while the mediums stood at the two sides of the table holding them and talking to us.

After waiting possibly five minutes, one of the mediums said, 'You will observe how the canvases are drawing. They are being sized.' The front canvas did seem to be stretching on the frame making a slight noise, as if the thumb were being drawn upon the side of the frame. Presently the noise stopped, and there appeared on the outer edge of the canvases, or rather between the two, a slight shadow. I did not notice it until our attention was called to it by the mediums. It continued to darken while the center remained white and clear. In a few minutes I noticed a pale pink, almost directly in the center. It seemed like the glow of sunrise, but there was no form. Next we noticed an outline. The face was forming. We noticed two dark blurs that grew more distinct, and we saw that they were eyebrows and eyelashes of closed eyes. The lines of the mouth appeared, and the outlines of the head became visible, while the shoulders were distinct; and then the eyes opened out, giving a life-like effect to the portrait.

Was I dreaming? I felt like pinching myself to see. A woman's face was looking at us from between the canvases, beautiful in form and feature.

My friend had been told to suggest any changes he wanted during the formation of the picture. He now said that he would like the face turned a little more to the right giving more of a front view. Almost immediately the picture began to fade from the canvas, and it grew fainter until it lost every detail. The outlines of the head became indistinct. The eyes went out into mere dark rings. Presently we saw the face coming as before. The face seemed turned a little this time, though I am not positive that it was. I imagined that it was, and the doctor seemed better satisfied; however, the change was very slight if any. We were so carried away with the marvel of the performance, that reason gave place to sentiment. The very marvel was inspiring. This time the development was more rapid. The eyes opened again as before.

The doctor now asked that the eyes be made a little darker blue, more of a gray; and while he was speaking I noticed that the eyes were changing to a blue gray, or else my imagination was playing me false. He now suggested a slight change of the nose, which was made, and the lines of the mouth were altered at his suggestion. He now suggested that the face was a little too full, and it seemed to narrow slightly. The picture seemed to follow the doctor's thought. He was asked if he would have, as a hair ornament a crescent, a star or crown. The doctor suggested a crescent, and immediately a crescent of gold with gems of white appeared. Up to this time the shoulders seemed bare. He was asked to choose whether there should be a high or low collar. He suggested one of medium height and it at once appeared. On looking at the photograph, the doctor now saw a string of beads around the neck. Without speaking, the beads came into view about the neck, one bead at a time.

They changed in color from white to amber then to gold. He seemed to conjure the picture. As a dream follows the will, so this picture followed the doctor's thought. Meanwhile the background had changed in color several times, from white to light yellow, then to dark yellow or brown, and then to green with a tinge of red, after which it mottled beautifully until the effect was superb. The changes took place like waves of light passing upwards over the whole picture. The two canvases were now laid flat on the table, and a third canvas was then lifted from the floor and placed over them for a cover. We were then asked to place our hands on this, so as to 'set the colors.' Soon the portrait was uncovered, and I found the paint was a kind of greasy substance, as I rubbed some of it on my fingers.

My friend had enclosed a photograph of his sister, together with a letter to her spirit, between slates for a time, in the presence of these mediums, some three days before this sitting. It was then his appointment was made.

I have heard of the Hindu magician who plants a seed and grows a tree before your eyes, and of the turning of water into wine, but here was a phenomenon even greater; one that seemed to contradict every known law of nature; and now as I record this the day after, I am more bewildered than when I saw the work done. I do not believe the picture was painted before our eyes, for that is beyond rational belief, and by no process of reasoning can such an idea satisfy my mind. Where did the colors come from? How did they get between the close fitting canvases, and by what miraculous power were they intelligently spread over one of them?

We compared the portrait with the photograph; the psychics asked to see it, claiming never to have seen it before. The likeness was perfect. Any one could recognize it. There seemed to have been no opportunity for trickery or fraud, and everything was open and above-board. We could see all over the room at all times, under the table in front of us, and everywhere. Yet the work was contrary to natural law and all human experience.

One of these mediums said to me when speaking of their marvel, 'We are the only people in the world to-day, who positively and absolutely prove immortality.'

I expect to work out this problem somehow, somewhere, sometime. But there is no hurry. It will be the result of patient effort.

Another lady here had quite a large portrait made. It came in about five minutes. She said it seemed like a rain-storm on the canvas, the colors seemingly being pelted on in waves.

I also have a report from Thomas Grinshaw, the spiritualist lecturer, and President of the Missouri State Association of Spiritualists. He saw a portrait produced on a stage in the auditorium at Camp Chesterfield. An attempt was made to produce a portrait in the afternoon, but it resulted in an accident and nearly caused a fire. The attempt was repeated in the evening with more success. Clean canvases were selected by a committee and faced together, and placed in front of an ordinary wooden soap-box.

The box was first placed on a little table near the front of the stage. It had neither front nor back, and an ordinary kerosene lamp was placed in the box to shine through the canvases. A black cloth was then hung over the rear of the box so as to darken the room, and cut off all light except what passed through the canvases. A medium stood at each side of the box holding them. The portrait gradually materialized, then dematerialized, after which it again reappeared. He was particularly impressed by the making of the lace work around the neck. A large audience witnessed this production, and a large committee was on the stage and helped to select the clean canvases.

This is a very brief summary of his report. It will be seen that all of the main features are about the same as described by Mr. Eldredge.

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The above full quote is used, as it gives the reader a good understanding of the full procedure the sisters used on this occasion. Abbott struggled with the report furnished by Eldredge; "The more I thought, the greater the mystery became," he noted; after various experiments he succeeded in replicating an illusion which mimicked the process of Lizzie and May Bangs from Eldredge's narrative. It required a prepared painting, distraction and substitution, given that the blank canvases were examined by the sitter/s and marked; however, due to space the full report is too large to publish here in full. However, Abbott published his methods and one

can freely download “The Spirit Portrait Mystery – Its Final Solution”, by David P. Abbott, originally published by “The Open Court”, April 1913.

The interesting part is, of course, the appearance of the materialising image, dematerialising, changes in front of the sitter or audiences. This is what the magician says after the finished portrait was at the back of the first canvas due to professional substitution, etc.:

> “So the psychics, acting simultaneously, pin the soft black curtains at the side of the window to the front frame, and at the same time allow the back canvas to tilt back out of focus. The top curtain, still being very high, lets so much light into the room, that it helps to obscure what comes through the canvases, when the two are separated but an inch. But before the top curtain is drawn, completely darkening the room, the portrait must be moved or tilted further back. It must be remembered that the bottoms of the canvases stand on a table end directly in front of a window, with a psychic at each side holding the canvases and discoursing and gesticulating, so as to take and direct the attention where desired.”
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> “The sitter naturally thinks that his two chosen blanks are now in the window, and he seems to be seeing right through them and they appear clear and white. He does not dream that his portrait, all finished, is already in the window behind the front canvas, but merely moved back out of focus.”
>
> “Next, everything being in readiness, the psychics have but to manipulate the rear canvas very slowly to get the effects. Meanwhile they skilfully employ suggestion announcing in advance each effect as it is to appear. The eyes seem to be dark blurs until the tops of the canvases are crowded together very closely, whereupon they appear to open. That is, the dark blurs dissolve into open eyes, giving them the appearance of opening out. This is particularly apparent when the eyes are colored a beautiful sky-blue. The use of suggestion before this effect, by the psychics announcing that “the eyes will now open,” impresses this effect upon the sitter’s mind.



> “By crowding together the top of the canvases first, the eyes open when the shoulders are still indistinct enough to appear indefinite or bare—that is, mere dark outlines. As the majority of the effects appear the last quarter of an inch, and nearly all of them in the last half-inch, if it be remembered that four or five minutes are used in this amount of motion, one can realize how very slowly the rear canvas must approach the front one. Also the use of so much time greatly adds to the effect when a miracle is supposed to be in the act of performance. The psychics seem to be trying so hard to hurry it up, and the stress of desire is so great, that the slowness of production produces the effect on the sitter’s mind of great effort on the part of the spirits.[14]

[14] The drawing is taken from a 1905 newspaper ad: “The Bangs Sisters”.

"After the eyes open, if one psychic crowds up the bottom of the canvas on her side, the lace work will begin to form on her side and the beads, etc., to appear. Then if the other psychic slowly crowds up the bottom on her side, this causes the lace work to finish and the beads to come one at a time. There is also an apparent change of color as each object takes on clear-cut detail. Naturally during this movement the background is working in most beautifully like waves of light, etc. The changes of color are, however, to a certain extent imagination; and this occurs easily among so many confusing details all coming at the same time. The hair ornament can be made to appear by skilfully pulling off a patch on the back of the portrait which has been stuck on with wax and with a thread attached, but I hardly think this necessary.[15]

"The choice is undoubtedly "forced" by suggestion; and if this occurs early in the performance, before the ornament appears, the psychics can announce its appearance when the right time arrives and thus produce that effect. For instance, one psychic would say to the other, "She ought to have a hair ornament. I think a crescent would be beautiful, don't you? Or would a star, or crown, be better?" The other would say, "Oh, it should be a crescent by all means; for I think a crown or star would be out of place and not at all artistic. Which do you think would be best, Mr. ....?" Naturally he would choose a crescent, and would afterwards think he had free choice. Should he choose a crown or a star, it would only be necessary to explain to him that a crescent is much more artistic, and he would be sure to yield to "superior persons who wield supernatural powers."[16]

"The effects of narrowing the visage, or of slightly turning it, or of altering the lines of the nose or mouth slightly, can be apparently effected by a slight jostling of the rear canvas and the use of suggestion at the time. Thus, if the sitter request the visage to narrow, the psychic can say "all right," and at that instant cause the portrait behind to move sidewise the slightest amount. The sitter will see the portrait move, and construe it to be a slight narrowing, for the vision being at the time concentrated on the point in question, will see only its movement. The same will apply to the lines of the nose or mouth, Also, at any time, a slightly tighter crowding of the canvases so as to make any feature come out brighter and clearer, coupled with suggestion, will carry the effect of an alteration of the portrait in response to the sitter's request.

"All of this is the real art of the performance, and what makes it "strong." It is not what you do, but how you do it. The strong way this has been dressed up and presented to believers, is the secret of the marvel and has made it what it is. The principle alone was not so much, but embellished with this incomparable art of presentation, it has been one of the wonders of the world."

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Abbott's illusion was widely performed by various magicians in England and France, as well as by a great American magician, Howard Thurston, under direct authority from David Abbott.

[15] Mr Eldredge in this statement may have helped Abbott: "The front canvas did seem to be stretching on the frame making a slight noise, as if the thumb were being drawn upon the side of the frame. Presently the noise stopped, and there appeared on the outer edge of the canvases, or rather between the two, a slight shadow. I did not notice it until our attention was called to it by the mediums."

[16] As far as information for an illusion goes, i.e., suggestion - it is demonstrated in various articles, for example by Admiral W. Unsworth Moore: "She [the spirit] wants this picture for your wife specially, as well as for you. She thinks that your wife would prefer to see her in the pose to which she is accustomed."

Editor's Note:

Elizabeth (Lizzie) and Mary (May) Bangs came from a family of mediums. They had two brothers, and their parents were Edward and Meroe. Their mother was a practising medium and when Lizzie and May were young girls the family entertained paying guests at their home demonstrating their mediumship. The editor of the Religio-Philosophical Journal, Steven Jones, published on August 3rd, 1872 "An Evening with the Bangs Children". It is difficult to state the exact ages of the girls but each was a young child/teenager at the time. The report suggests that the sisters were well-accomplished physical mediums at such a young age, moving pianos, etc.: a few quoted examples:

> "When we took our seat at the table, with two young girls, and one little boy, we were much amused at the readiness with which the spirits used the pencil. It is true the messages would only contain a single sentence or a single word, but they were expressive, and that's enough. The little girl placed the slate under the table—the pencil is heard to move—then tick, tick, tick, announced the close of the message. The slate is removed, and on it in a plain, bold hand, we find the name Martha. …"
>
> **"Cabinet Séance**
>
> was especially interesting. One little boy and one bright-eyed girl were securely tied with ropes, rendering it impossible for them to extricate themselves without assistance. Large hands were exhibited at the aperture of the cabinet, and one was extended far enough to thrum the guitar strings. This was startling—especially so. And then a partially-developed face appeared at the aperture, and we heard the name, "Bennie," distinctly lisped. It must be remembered that these mediums are young children. There is not a particle of deception in their nature. Their hearts are free from guile, and in all their actions they exhibit the innocence of their nature. No one would accuse them of deception. …"

Numerous exceptional claims were made in the article. It was under similar circumstances, years later in 1888, that they were raided and charged with fraud during a materialisation séance, as shown in this article. Pioneer, whenever possible, shows both sides of the articles researched, so that readers have an informed foundation on which to base their conclusions. Often writers produce only the positive results, leaving out the charges of fraud; these charges should not be disregarded, as they are part of the medium's history. It was the actual facts which surrounded these allegations where a richer analysis is formed. As found in the recent Pioneer three-part series, "A Question of Fraud!", although mediums are seized and without question in an act of apparent fraud, sometimes the accusations show a lack of total understanding of the process of mediumistic development, misrepresentation and a lack of awareness of the psychological psychic facts surrounding the phenomena and those involved; physical mediumship is a delicate balance of many factors involved. "A Question of Fraud!"[17]

It would appear that once Lizzie and May starting their precipitated paintings in the autumn of 1894 they met with great success. Their opposition did not stop their popularity over a long, successful career in precipitated paintings, etc.; magician David Abbotts duplicating the sisters' work successfully with on-stage acts did not demonstrate fraud. Duplicating a physical phenomenon is not to say that it is fraudulent: to move, for example, a pen in a séance room is an act of having the means to move the pen—we in the body have hands—whereas the spirit uses psychic force or ectoplasm.

Without doubt David Abbott could physically reproduce the Bangs Sisters' mediumship by illusion but only under rehearsed procedure. But the sisters' procedure varied in different reports, sometimes in public demonstrations with only one canvas, not on every occasion; a

[17] This starts in Pioneer, Vol. 7, No. 3.

photograph was placed between magnetised slates, as was the case with Mr. Eldredge. It was *his* report which was used as a template for Abbott to form the trick. Nor does Abbott explain how in numerous reports mental suggestions alone influenced the materialising images. His simple principle was only moving the rear canvas which contains a finished prepared portrait to give the illusion of seeing the opening and closing of eyes, etc.; in no way does he explain that sometimes the sisters did not touch the canvas.

Abbott and his fellow magicians were one hundred percent reliant on a photograph of the deceased person well before their shows in order to get it painted in a similar fashion. One important issue is—how good were the magicians' prepared paintings?

Eldredge noted:

> I found the paint was a kind of greasy substance, as I rubbed some of it on my fingers.

Admiral W. Unsworth Moore noted:

> The stuff of which the picture is composed is damp, and rubs off at the slightest touch, like soot.

Ron Nagy in his book, "Precipitated Spirit Painting", second edition, 2012, variously notes in his book the medium used to produce the paintings, for example on page 82:

> The portraits have been examined by art experts who cannot explain the medium used, as the paintings are not pastels, charcoal, oils, watercolors, or any other known substance. The medium has been compared to the dust on a butterfly's wings.
>
> I do not know who coined the phrase "dust on a butter-fly's wings," but I do know the art experts who originally examined the precipitated spirit painting of Lincoln were from the Eastman Kodak company of Rochester, New York. [18]

Eldredge also noted:

> My friend had enclosed a photograph of his sister, together with a letter to her spirit, between slates for a time, in the presence of these mediums, some three days before this sitting. It was then his appointment was made.

But did the sisters on *every* occasion ask for a photograph days in advance? Not all accounts suggest this; in Admiral W. Unsworth Moore's account he states:

> I had in my pocket a *carte-de-visite* of Iola taken in the year 1874. The mediums had never seen this or any other photograph in my possession.

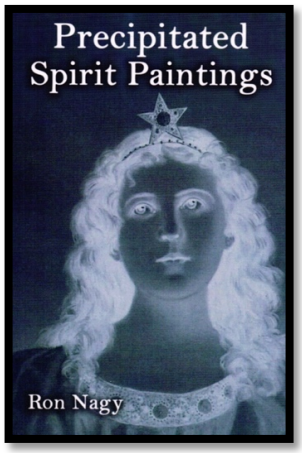
Abbott assumes that the Bangs Sisters *had* access to an image for their portrait in every instance or no spirit-precipitated painting; this is what he said:

> Of course it is unnecessary to explain how the photograph can be extracted from slates, or from pockets of coats which were left out in the hall, etc., so as to enable the mediums to get a "snap shot" of it. Any one reading the many slate tricks in my book will not need further enlightenment on this point. Where a portrait conforms to a photograph, an interval of a day or so is taken after the first sitting, before the psychics will give the portrait sitting. If forced to try for a portrait at once no results will be obtained, and it will have to be tried again later. This gives them time to make the portrait.

[18] Ron is talking generally about the Lily Dale precipitated painting by the Bangs and the Campbell Brothers – the spirit painting of Lincoln was by the Campbell Brothers.

If, indeed, the Bangs extracted an image a day or two before the appointment, given that the painting were on large canvases, one may wonder how such works of art were produced in such a short period; were Abbott's of similar quality and similarly presented, perhaps damp, greasy and soot-like?

Ron Nagy in his book notes:



Identifying a Precipitated Spirit Painting

WHEN TRYING to identify precipitated spirit painting, first look at the eyes. In a genuine spirit painting, there are no eyelashes and the eyes are penetrating and look alive. You will definitely receive a different feeling from the precipitated painting, as if the entity was actually compressed into the canvas. Check for brush strokes or sketch lines that are the human artist's telltale pre-painting routine.

Some marks may appear to be brush strokes, but this is not always the case. When the hair materializes on canvas, how else would Spirit form the hair but as a grouping of fine lines? The hair would only appear as a blurred blending of colors.

If the Bangs Sisters produced their own images, what a talent and to produce so quickly! The sisters did many summer seasons at Lily Dale with around three sittings a day. To conclude, there is an interesting observation in Ron Nagy's book: he notes:

> In all cases portraits appeared without eyelashes.

As previously noted in this article, it is interesting to note what Mr Eldredge stated:

> The face was forming. We noticed two dark blurs that grew more distinct, and we saw that they were eyebrows and eyelashes of closed eyes.

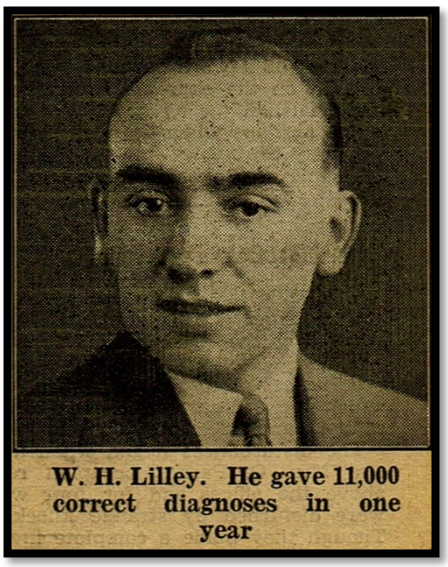
Whether or not the eyelashes appeared on the finished painting, we do not know; perhaps some of the lesser-known private paintings of the time—these most probably have not survived or are in an old dusty attic somewhere—or possibly some unknown painting may have had eyelashes, as it is not known whether or not their style of painting may have possibly changed over the years.

This article has but touched the surface of the mediumship of Elizabeth and Mary Bangs. Other than Ron Nagy's book mentioned, another book has been published on the Bangs Sisters: "Portraits from Beyond: The Mediumship of the Bangs Sisters", by N. Riley Heagerty. I must be honest, I have not as yet read this book but it is reviewed by the Society for Psychical Research by Tom Ruffles, available online.

The photographs shown in this article are a poor representative for the stunning originals

A War-Time Remarkable Healer

W. H. Lilley


W. H. Lilley. He gave 11,000 correct diagnoses in one year

Psychic News, September 21st, 1940, quoted below:

Medium's New Psychic Healing Centre

"WHILE the bombs—and the raiders—fall Spiritualism extends its healing, never more needed than now.

"A new centre is being opened at 7, Chariot Street, Hull, as a result of the work of W. H. Lilley, the 26-year-old Leeds healer who has given 11,000 correct diagnoses in one year.

"This new centre, sponsored by the same band of workers who have made the Sanctuary at Black Bull Street, Leeds, world-famous, is opening on October 1. Lilley will be there to heal and advise every Thursday and Friday from October 3.

"All healing and advice is free, but appointments for personal treatment at either centre must be made by writing to The Sanctuary, 20, Black Bull Street, Leeds, 10.

Lilley and his associates, working under spirit guidance, are specially interested in cases which doctors say are incurable."

"Since January, 1939, when the Leeds centre opened, this band of Spiritualist healers has successfully treated cancer, migraine, epilepsy, St. Vitus's Dance, jaundice, catarrh, gallstones, cirrhosis, dropsy, asthma, pleurisy, bronchitis and so on through almost the whole catalogue of human diseases.

"Thousands have been helped, and still the work grows in a world that talks about the next air raid or what happened in the last one."

—~—☼—~—

Psychic News, April 26th, 1941, gives a rather good overview on how Lilly achieved his early healing ministry at such an early age:

Army Tribunal Gives Spirit Healer Complete Exemption

UNCONDITIONAL exemption from Army service has been given to a man because he is a psychic healer !

This decision, which made psychic history, was given by a Manchester tribunal to William Henry Lilley, the healer who is in charge of The Sanctuary at Black Bull Street, Leeds.

A year ago the decision was forecast by the medium's guide, who was persistent even when a local tribunal registered Lilley for non-combatant work. Because of their confidence in the spirit statement. Lilley's colleagues opened a branch at Hull a few months ago.

The guide, a spirit doctor, had also promised that, when the appeal was heard, he would control his medium and address its members. This promise was also fulfilled.

At the Leeds Sanctuary, Lilley has what must be the ideal psychic healing centre. It is equipped, not only for spirit healing, but for at least a score of other known forms of alleviation. The healers can give treatment by homoeopathy, biochemistry, osteopathy and colour-therapy. There is an infra-red ray apparatus. There is a well-stocked dispensary with scores of preparations in the form of herbs, pills and tinctures.

EVERY CASE DIAGNOSED

At both Sanctuaries nearly 250 patients are now given personal treatment each week. There is a long waiting list. In addition, absent healing is given to about 15,000 patients. A complete case record is kept of every sufferer and a detailed diagnosis, from a handkerchief or some object sent by the patient, is made.

All the diagnoses are done by Lilley, either in trance or using his clairaudient gift. The accuracy of these diagnoses has amazed thousands of people, including medical men. A few days ago, in trance for two-and-a-half hours, Lilley's spirit doctor gave 98 diagnoses, using two stenographers for this purpose !

To aid his ministry, Lilley has three trained healers, four women assistants and a qualified dispenser.

ANONYMOUS SUPPORT

When, nearly three years ago, the Sanctuary began its activities, no charge was made for treatments, or for herbal and other remedies given to patients. Now, however, because of rising costs due to the war, a nominal charge of 2s. 6d. is made. Nobody, however, is turned away if this fee cannot be afforded. This nominal charge, however, does not cover the expenses of the two Sanctuaries, which are maintained anonymously.

The spirit responsible for these diagnoses is a Hindu, Dr. Lejan Tari, a medical man who "died" in Peshawar in 1914. Another feature of his activities is to give trance lectures to the healers, by the aid of diagrams drawn through his medium, on anatomy, physiology, *materia medica*, pathology, chemistry and what he calls "the science of the soul."

The effects of diseases on the colours of the aura are also lucidly explained.

The spirit doctor believes that the healers should be proficient not only in the art of psychic healing, but should also be equipped with a medical knowledge of the human body. No healer is allowed to give treatment to patients until he is familiar with all these aspects of medical knowledge. In addition he receives from the spirit doctor courses in osteopathy homoeopathy and biochemistry.

Dr. Lejan Tari is helped by a spirit band of a dozen men, some with knowledge of medicine, others specialising in psychology and manipulation.

Lilley and his colleagues estimate that 90 per cent. of their patients have been given up as incurable by the medical profession. The psychic healer is their last hope. New patients come through recommendation, for there is no advertising. In addition there are hundreds of pleas for healing help from sufferers all over the country, from America and from some of our dominions.

In hundreds of cases operations have been averted. The list of diseases successfully treated makes impressive reading.

PSYCHIC FAMILY

Twenty-seven-year-old Lilley comes of psychic stock. His maternal grandfather was a medium. His mother has been a practising medium for 30 years and a healer for ten years.

His parents were disappointed when he was born because they wanted a girl. Already they had two sons. But the grandfather consoled them by telling them that young Lilley had come to do a great healing work.

Lilley was reared in a psychic atmosphere where Spiritualism was regarded naturally. At the age of ten he was taken to his first circle. He remembers hearing the hymn "Lead Kindly Light" sung, and that was all. He went three times and, on each occasion, the same thing happened.

Then, at that young age, he was controlled by an Egyptian guide who said that the boy was not to go to any more circles, but to spend the next five years at home in psychic development as a preparation for his healing career.

Night after night, for five whole years, Lilley's gifts developed and his trance condition evolved. The whole course of psychic study was prescribed by this guide.

Then, at the age of 15, he began healing. A friend was suffering from Bright's disease. Three doctors who were called in said there was no hope. The friend's parents, knowing of Lilley's promised healing career, asked him to treat their son. In three weeks the boy was cured. That was 12 years ago. There has been no recurrence since.

The news of the cure spread. The young healer was asked to visit patients and sufferers called at his home. Frequently, in trance, the Hindu spirit doctor prophesied that one day there would be a sanctuary at which the medium would devote all his time to healing. The prophecy was fulfilled two-and-a-half years ago.

Arthur Richards, the head of an engineering firm which makes piston rings, was talking to a metal merchant in his office. The merchant told him about Lilley's remarkable psychic healing gifts, and particularly specified his extraordinarily accurate diagnoses. Richards arranged to meet Lilley.

The engineer asked the healer whether he would undergo a drastic test. He agreed. Two eminent doctors were chosen by Richards. These doctors selected three patients whom they were treating, two of whom had been X-rayed. The complete medical diagnosis of each patient was placed in a sealed envelope. The doctors brought small articles belonging to each patient.

DRASTIC TEST SUCCEEDS

The result was amazing. The medium's diagnoses not only tallied with the medical ones, later taken from the envelopes and checked, but the guide supplied additional information of which the medical men were then unaware! This was checked when one sufferer passed on four months later and a post-mortem examination was held.

After this rigid test, Richards persuaded Lilley to throw up his job and devote his whole life to healing. To provide the Sanctuary, Richards used part of his commercial offices. Indeed, there is a common entrance to the engineering firm and the Sanctuary.

Within a week Richards was told by the spirit doctor that he himself was a healer. He was trained by the Other Side and now takes an active part in the spirit healing. Engineering friends, when they heard of this departure, began to make pointed observations.

They prophesied that his business would suffer. Their prediction has not matured. The business, on the contrary, is steadily increasing. And Richards is respected by engineering colleagues who have appointed him to high office in their profession.

FORMER ATHEIST

Another of Lilley's trained healers is a young man who was formerly an atheist. He, an utter sceptic, sat with Lilley every week-end, devoting the rest of the week to devising difficult questions and finding them satisfactorily answered.

Remarkable as is the progress that has been made, Lilley is confident that the future will see an extension of his work throughout the country. This amazing young medium is, apart from his healing, thoroughly normal in his habits and outlook. He has no special diet and he smokes.

And he has a sense of humour. He smilingly admits that psychic healing cannot cure everything, as he slowly touches his partially bald head.

—~—☼—~—

Some readers who are aware of this famous pioneer healer of the past and his well-known Hindu helper, a medical man who is said to have died in Peshawar in 1914, may have been a little confused, as indeed I was, with the guide's name, "Dr. Lejan Tari"; I was aware of only the name Dr. Letari. With a little research my question was answered in Psychic News, May 30th, 1942:

Guide Praises Psychic Sketch:

"As Faithful As My Own Reflection"

By A Special Correspondent

This portrait of Dr. Letari, the spirit guide of W. H. Lilley, the famous healing medium, was drawn by Frank Leah, the equally famous psychic artist. Leah executed the drawing after he had provided Lilley, by telephone, with the most accurate description of his guide which the healer had ever been given. When he was shown his own portrait, the spirit doctor sought permission to sign it, likening it to his own reflection in a mirror. Though the picture, and the story behind it, are in themselves abundantly evidential, by way of still further proof, the "dead" doctor wrote upon it Indian symbols indicating both his profession and status.

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THIS is the story of a psychic portrait produced under what I consider I am entitled to describe as "remarkable" circumstances.

I was sitting the other night in the London flat of W. H. Lilley, the famous healing medium. In the course of a Spiritualist conversation I said, "I'd like you to meet Frank Leah, the psychic artist."

There and then I telephoned Leah, and introduced the two mediums, each so renowned in his own field.

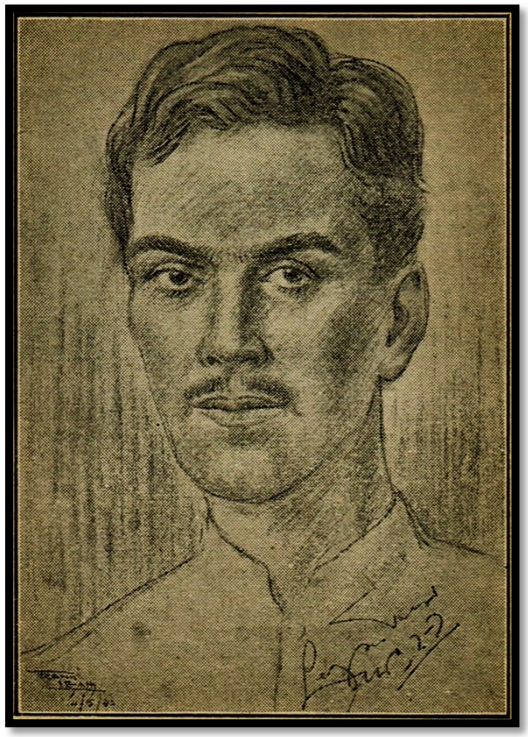
Lilley chuckled. "Do you ever," he asked of Leah, "see a Hindu gentleman walking round your studio?" He meant his own spirit guide, Dr. Lejan Tari—"Letari" for short.

"Oh, yes," replied Leah. "I feel sure he is here now. The vibration is so strong !" The artist's mediumship is frequently demonstrated in this manner in the course of telephone conversations. To this many can testify.

PROOF PILED ON PROOF

Leah then told Lilley the doctor's age when he "died," the place and cause of his passing, where he had lived and worked, and described his features, figure, and

mannerisms. In particular, he stressed the intensity of his eyes—one of his most salient features—and his short stature.



This last point was highly evidential—as, indeed, were all—because Dr. Letari was only 5ft. 1in.

Nor was this all. Leah went on to describe not only the college where the "dead" Hindu doctor had been educated and trained, but gave its exact position in Calcutta.

This telephonic picture of a man whom Leah had never met occupied less time than it has taken me to recount.

And what did Lilley say ? That "no one has ever given me such an accurate description of my guide."

Almost every fact tallied with what Lilley already knew of the "dead" doctor—with one exception. Leah said the doctor wore a moustache. At the time Lilley could not agree.

But when, in response to the artist's pressing invitation, I took Lilley down in his studio the same evening, Dr. Letari himself, through his entranced medium, told us that from 1910-12—two years before his passing—he wore a moustache during his visit to this country to study surgery!

And he confirmed as correct every statement the artist had earlier made to his "mediator," as Dr. Letari calls Lilley—a corroboration which included the place, Peshawar, at the mouth of the Khyber Pass, where he had met his "death."

While I myself continued to talk to the doctor—for he and I are old friends—Leah went to his drawing board and executed a lightning but detailed portrait of the Hindu who is beloved by thousands.

Lilley came out of trance. I showed him the picture. **"That's the doctor !" he exclaimed.**

But Leah wasn't satisfied. He wanted to keep it and render it an even more faithful likeness of the "dead" man he saw clairvoyantly.

The following day Lilley returned to the studio. The finished sketch was waiting. The healer became entranced.

Whereupon, in his own characteristically courtly manner, addressing the artist, the guide said: "If you will give me permission, I would consider it a great privilege to sign it."

SIGNATURE FROM BEYOND

A pencil was placed in his hand. Gripping it as though he were handling a dagger—Dr. Letari employs the same mannerism when illustrating many of his healing lectures—he signed it with the result you now see.

Beneath the signature he added, two symbols which I can best describe as question marks without the downward stroke, or "leg." Between these he inserted a hyphen, and below them a long pencil line.

"Any Indian seeing these symbols will understand them," he said. "That which you call the hyphen between them shows my calling; the line indicates my status."

Mark what he then added. If he had seen that portrait, he said, as his own reflection in a mirror he would have been well pleased at the spectacle.

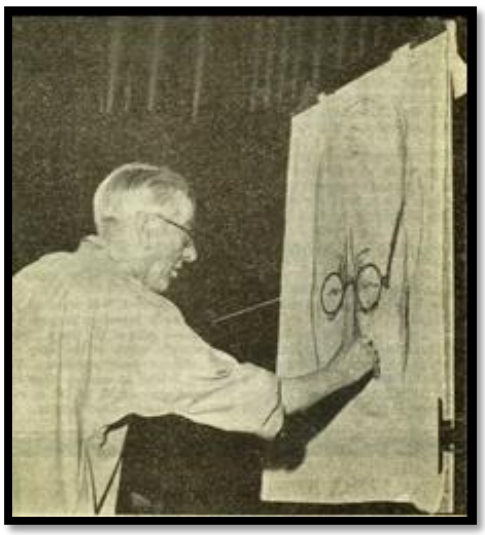
Every time Dr. Letari gives treatment to a patient of The House of Divinity—the name by which Lilley's healing organisation is known—Survival, his own and that of all mankind, is proved. Now, in a different place and in different circumstances, he has proved for the thousandth—shall I say the ten thousandth time ?—that he lives beyond the grave.

—~—☼—~—

A similar story with Frank Leah is published in Pioneer, Vol. 7, No. 6:
"Harry Edwards – *For 15 years Edwards did not know which spirit guides were using him*."

In the next issue Pioneer will continue with the work of the *psychic* healer, W. H. Lilley

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Some more examples of the work of Psychic Artist Frank Leah

Frank Leah has featured in numerous issues of the Pioneer over the years. The two articles below are taken from the Two Worlds, October 16th and November 6th, 1936 respectively, and illustrate Leah's remarkable psychic art, capturing the remarkable likeness of his *deceased* subjects.

PORTRAIT PAINTINGS OF THE DEAD

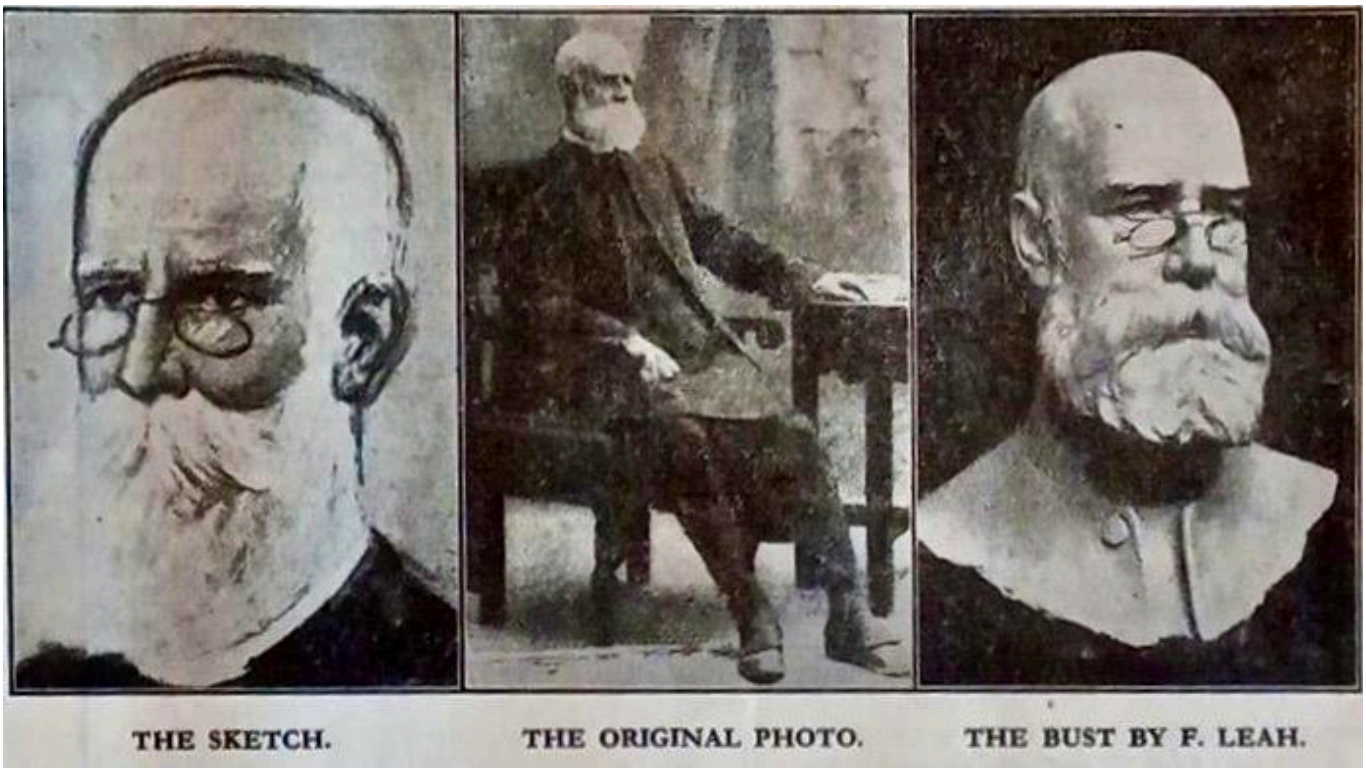
By JAMES NORBURY

SOME months ago an unknown woman called on a famous medium and requested that he would give her a sitting. The woman was Mrs. Richardson, the medium was Frank Leah, and the sitting one of the most remarkable in the annals of psychic phenomena.

They sat together talking, chatting idly about London, the weather and those sundry topics that contribute to the success of a gossipy half hour. Suddenly Mr. Leah moved across the room, picked up a pad and paper, and commenced rapidly sketching a figure he could see standing by the lady.

The sketch took two and a half minutes. Without a word Mr. Leah handed it to his sitter. To say she was amazed is too mild a word. She was completely bewildered, for in her hand was an exact likeness of her father-in-law, Archdeacon Richardson. Not a living soul could have told Mr. Leah of the identity of his sitter, but a dead man had been able to prove his own and her identity in the few minutes that had passed.

Not content with obtaining the sketch, Mr Leah proceeded in collaboration with a fellow artist to model a bust of his spirit-visitor. The bust was completed, and a few weeks later a photograph of the Archdeacon himself arrived from Ontario.



THE SKETCH. THE ORIGINAL PHOTO. THE BUST BY F. LEAH.

I have given you full details of this startling case of Mr. Leah's work because I believe it is one of those fraud proof incidents that spells damnation to the carping critics who are always yelling "Fraud !" but who never stop to examine evidence even when it is as fool-proof as this.

The dead have walked with us, they have told us of their lives, they have appeared upon photographic plates . . . and I am afraid if the authorities at Burlington House are not careful, one of them will be stealing into the Royal Academy, and they will be confounded by the fact that they are entertaining angels unawares !

The plain truth seems to be somewhat vulgarly expressed in the words of the old music hall song, "He's dead, but he won't lie down." Of course he won't. Neither will you or I when our time comes to take up an active life in that world of the living dead of which seers have been conscious down the ages.

The intelligence of many average men is of such a peculiar nature that it really astounds me. The other day I was talking to someone about Leah's mediumship. After he assured me that it was all fraud I said, "But I have talked to a dead man many a time." The fellow looked at me. His voice became piteously gentle. "You know," he said, "our parson once said that all Spiritualists end up in the asylum."

I looked at him and quietly asked him if he thought I was ready for a mental home ? . . . then I told him a story.

A few months ago I happened to be visiting an asylum. I had a chat with one of the doctors and quite casually asked him if there were any Spiritualists in his asylum. He looked at me, and I explained that we often hear clergymen telling their congregation that the asylums are full of people who have dabbled in Spiritualism.

"Well," he said, "I can't find you any Spiritualists in this asylum but I can let you have one or two parsons if *those* are any use to you."

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Second article:

AN ARTIST PORTRAYS THE DEAD

ANOTHER "LEAH" TEST JAMES NORBURY

THIS is a story of rumour and reality. It is the tale of the biter bit . . . an Æsop fable of setting a trap and falling into it oneself. Like all good fables, it has a moral, and that moral is: "Every man is a fool at least once in his lifetime"—the fool in this case being myself.

I had heard much of Frank Leah's strange psychic powers in portraying those the world calls dead. I had written a report for *The Two Worlds* on one of the most spectacular feats in the history of modern psychic phenomena. Last week I had the opportunity of meeting Leah in person, of putting him through his paces, and of finding myself completely routed.

Frank Leah is one of those jovial, hail-fellow-well-met persons, who appears to spend the whole of his life laughing. His wit is never caustic; when he tells a story the laugh is often against himself. The only serious thing in his life is his psychic gift . . . and that he treats as a sacred trust. All he desires to do is to help others to realise the good news of survival until they too can share in his laughter, in which there is no room for tears.

Leah arrived at Leicester laughing at life in general, and left it laughing at me in particular. And here is where that saucy jade, Rumour, enters into the story. I examined many of Leah's drawings. They seemed too incredible to be true . . . and with the cunning of every good Psychic Researcher, I proceeded to make one of two discreet inquiries about this mystery man, who apparently could draw the dead with the same ease that a conjurer can produce rabbits from a hat.

I talked with one or two people who had sat with him. I had a telephone conversation with someone who had had splendid results some months prior to our meeting. In each case I heard that Leah had asked for a photograph of the dead man he was supposed to have drawn. My doubts increased, my speculations became a thing of torment . . . and then the miracle happened.

After Leah had delivered a lecture at the Leicester headquarters, a lady came to me and asked me if she could book a sitting. Her name was Wilson. The sitting was booked in the name of Pickering. I saw her off the premises myself; Leah left later in my company, and from then until his sitter arrived next morning he was never out of my sight. He made no telephone calls. He received no letters. As he was staying with me in Leicester I know that he had no communication of any kind either at home or at headquarters.

The sitter arrived after Leah had retired into the seance room. I chatted with her for a few moments and asked her whatever happened not to let Leah have any access to any photographs. The promise was freely given that my wishes should be obeyed, and the only photograph the woman brought along of her husband, who had been dead some years, was *left in my charge*.

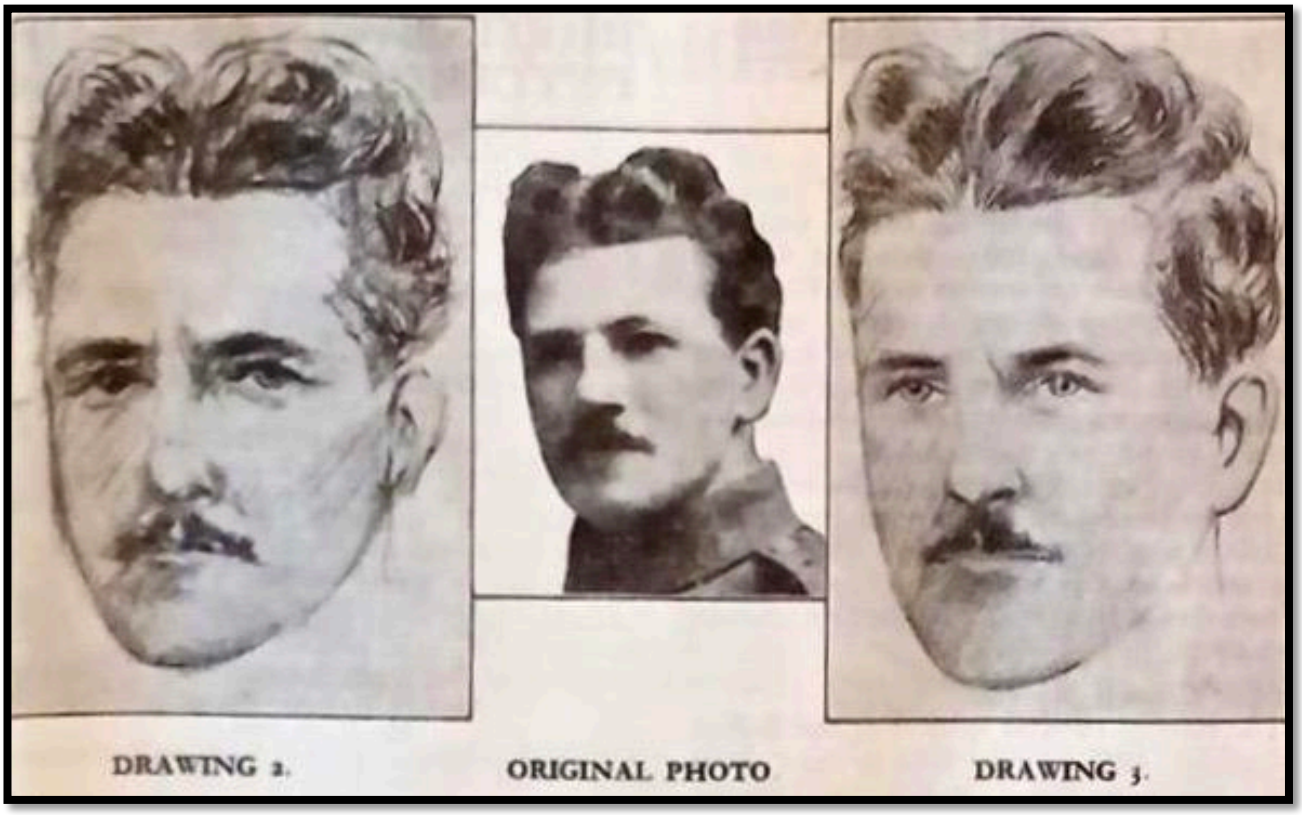
For the first twenty minutes of the siting nothing happened. Then Leah said, "Your husband is here. Why does he keep talking about football ? He tells me he had something to do with the Tigers." Leah then rapidly sketched a half side-face portrait of a man about middle age, quite clean shaven, and looking rather tired and ill.

A short time elapsed, during which Leah said little, then he started to talk about the man in detail. "This man had black, wavy hair. His eyes were blue. He says I have drawn his nose too long. Now he is worrying about the parting in his hair. He says it was in two places. Oh ! wait a minute. I have to make another drawing now of a younger man, but this time he has a moustache." Leah then made a second sketch of a younger man, bearing a striking resemblance to the first drawing, but with a neat moustache. Leah then said his powers were going, and that the sitter would have to return next day to finish the sitting.

I can account for Leah's movements all that day. I can definitely state that he had no letters or parcels of any kind the next morning. The sitter arrived and the seance continued. Leah worked much more rapidly, concentrating on the sketch of the younger man with the moustache. When it was completed, Mrs. Wilson brought the drawing to me, and when we compared it with the photograph she had left in my keeping of her husband in middle life, it was identical. I think at this point I will let Mrs. Wilson tell her own story.

"My husband was very keen on football. On the Saturday before he died he listened to the results on the radio. He played for the Tigers, the local Rugby team, and later played for the Northern Union. When first I married him he was clean shaven and parted his hair at the side, but later on he grew a small, neat moustache and parted his hair in the middle. Before he died he shaved his moustache off again."

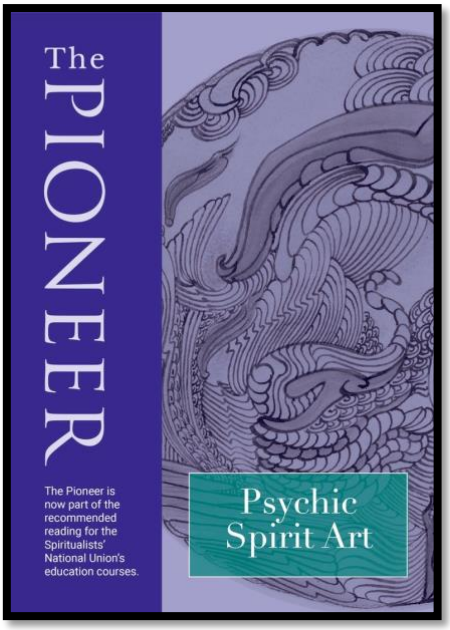
Two drawings and original photograph are reproduced here, and I leave the reader to form his own conclusions as to whether they are the same man or not. Mrs. Wilson is quite convinced, and it is a poor woman who does not recognise her own husband.



After the sitting, I sat talking to Leah, and I said, "Look here, Frank, have you ever asked a sitter for a photograph of the dead person you were drawing ?"

"Many a time," answered Leah. "I wanted them to make my lantern slide showing my drawing and an actual photograph of the spirit while alive in the flesh."

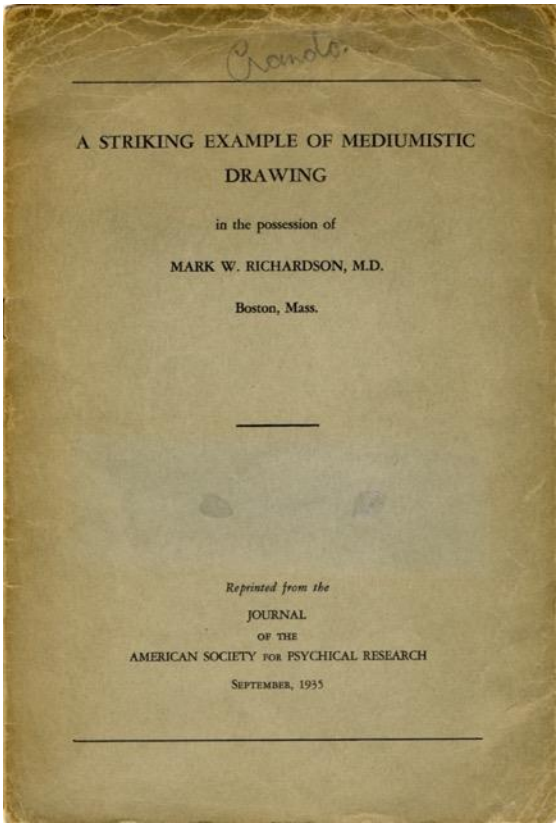
Of course Leah asks for photographs. He asked for one of Mr. Wilson. But he asked *after* the drawing was completed.



Search the Pioneer "Psychic Spirit Art" booklet for more on Frank Leah; details on the last page of this issue

Psychic Art

Psychic/Spirit Art has been one of the most consistent phases of mediumship throughout our history, covering both physical and mental forms of mediumship; it has constantly reinvented itself through its various phases of development and today it is presented mostly in mental mediumship. The image below, as presented by Mark W. Richardson MD, unfortunately lacks greatly in information but it is an interesting example of an early phase of psychic drawing with the medium under control and being produced in a dark séance in a relevantly short period of time.


Grando.

A STRIKING EXAMPLE OF MEDIUMISTIC DRAWING

in the possession of

MARK W. RICHARDSON, M.D.

Boston, Mass.

Reprinted from the
JOURNAL
OF THE
AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH
SEPTEMBER, 1935

A STRIKING EXAMPLE OF MEDIUMISTIC DRAWING

By MARK W. RICHARDSON, M.D.

The drawing which accompanies this communication was presented to the writer several years ago by Dr. Gustave P. Wiksell, then a resident of Massachusetts. The history of the drawing is given in Dr. Wiksell's letters which are submitted herewith. Furthermore, the reference in these letters to the Cram family led me to confer with Mr. Ralph Adams Cram, whose letter gives interested and interesting comment on this most remarkable artistic production. The original picture is somewhat larger than the photograph, being 8 x 10. The paper is slightly yellowish in tint and the pencil used must have been rather soft though sharply pointed. To get a proper photograph was extremely difficult, and Mr. B. K. Thorogood is to be congratulated on his final success in getting a good reproduction.

December 19, 1930

Dr. Gustav P. Wiksell
459 So. Orange Drive
Los Angeles, Calif.

Dear Dr. Wiksell:

. . . Some months ago I tried to write to you to inquire more definitely the circumstances surrounding that spirit drawing which you kindly gave me. All that I could remember is that it was done by a medium and in a very short period of time. The picture has been very much admired and I should like, if possible, to have more details as to the method and other circumstances of its construction.

With very kind regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

(signed) MARK W. RICHARDSON, M.D.

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Los Angeles, Calif., December 26, 1930

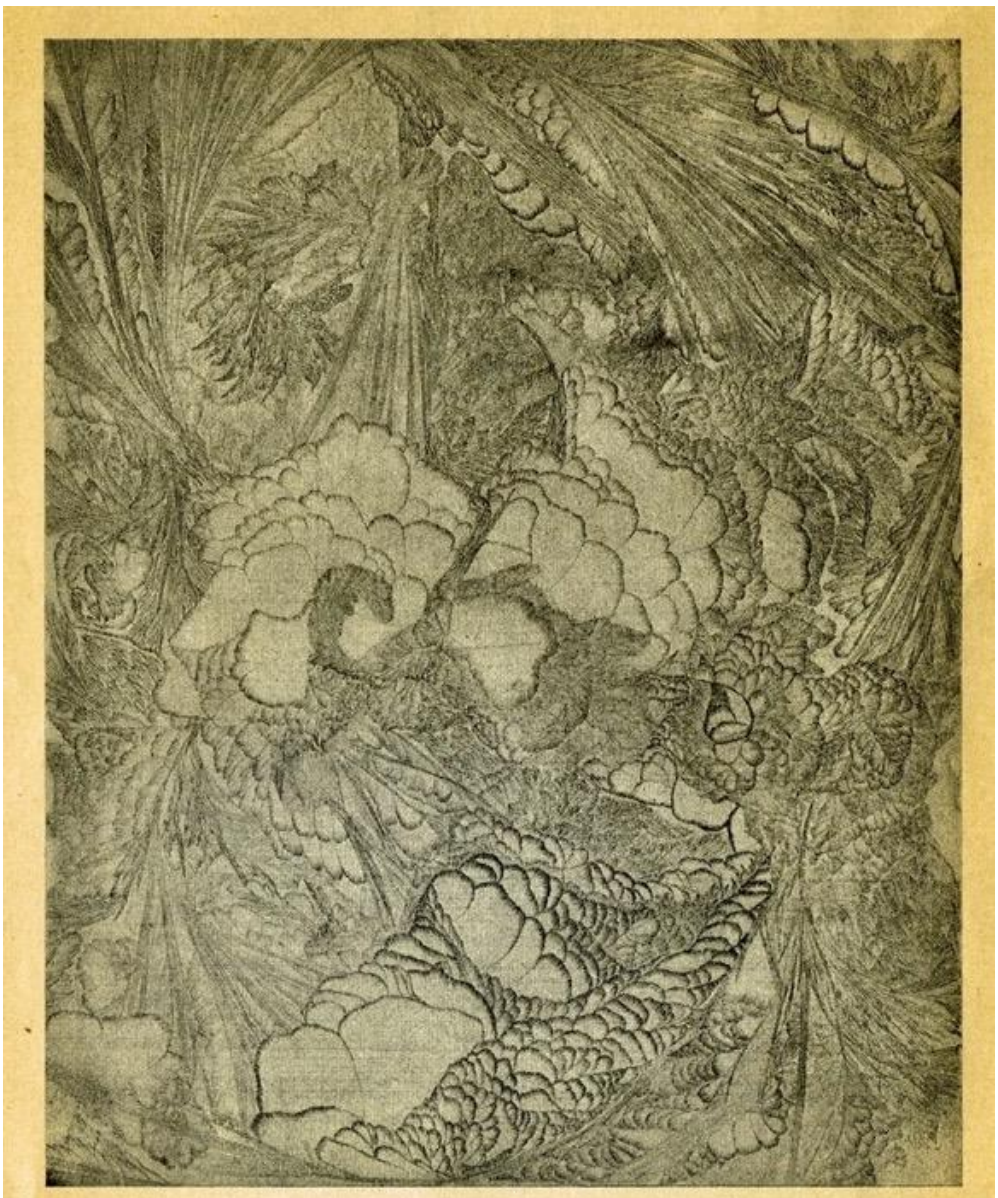
Mark W. Richardson, M.D.
Boston, Mass.

Dear Doctor:

Yours of 19th inst. at hand. The spirit picture was done in the dark by controlled hand of the medium in the house of a Mr. Cram of Hampton Falls, father of Cram the great architect. My father-in-law, Dr. W. L. Johnson (of *The Educator*), was the one who sat in the seance and received the picture which was symbolic of his life. That is all I remember of it. Lots of that sort of thing was done by spirits in the old days. Perhaps they are too busy now!

Yours truly,

(signed) G. P. WIKSELL, M.D.



Mediumistic drawing made at a single sitting, probably about 1860. In the possession of Mark W. Richardson, M.D.

Boston, Mass., May 31, 1935
Dear Dr. Wiksell:

I am trying to prepare for publication the spirit drawing which you gave me several years ago. One important point remains in doubt. The picture seems to have been done at a single seance. Have you any idea as to how long it took to make it?

Yours very sincerely,

(signed) MARK W. RICHARDSON, M.D.

—~—☼—~—

Los Angeles, Calif., June 3, 1935

Mark W. Richardson, M.D.

Dear Doctor:

All I can tell you is what Dr. Wm. L. Johnson (of *The Educator*) told me; that the pencil work was done in the dark and in a very short time. The séance was at the house of Mr. Cram. Dr. Johnson at that time was a dentist in Exeter.

I remember the doctor said that no mortal could do such a piece of work in less than a day.

(signed) G. P. WIKSELL, M.D.

—~—☼—~—

21st January, 35

My dear Dr. Richardson:

Yes, I remember very well the investigations into the phenomena of Spiritism that my father carried on, chiefly in the house of my Aunt, Mrs. John Cram, just across the road from my father's place. I took part in several of them. The medium was, as I remember, a very respectable woman from Exeter, not a professional but a friend of my Aunt. I do not remember her name. This must have been about 1890 I should say.

I also remember that there were certain "spirit" drawings, but I do not think they came from this particular medium.

There was one curious drawing in pencil, somewhat resembling frost-figures on a window in winter. This very much antedated my experience. It hung in my father's library when I was a small boy and was the object of great wonder and admiration on my part. This drawing disappeared years ago: I wonder if this is what you have? I know nothing of its origin, but it must have been made at least seventy-five years ago.

My father was not a "believer" in the spiritist sense, but he was a great—though unknown—philosopher and therefore very much interested in this particular mystery. He admitted the authenticity of most of the phenomena but refused to accept the spiritualists' interpretation of them.

Very truly yours,

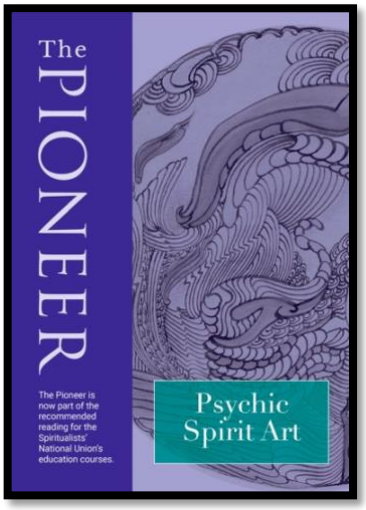
(signed) R. A. CRAM

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Please see the Pioneer pdf booklet, 'Psychic Spirit Art', which can be freely downloaded from the SNU website as detailed on the last page of this issue.

GIRL SPIRIT POSES FOR ARTIST

THE WONDERFUL EVIDENCE OF FRANK LEAH'S SKETCH



Frank Leah has graced the pages of Pioneer over the years, as found in our free Pioneer pdf booklet, available as a free download; please see the last page of this issue for details. In March 1957, at Kingsway Hall, London, over a thousand people witnessed Leah make the first ever attempt at public post-mortem portraiture, partnered by the clairaudient medium Helen Hughes. "GIRL SPIRIT POSES FOR ARTIST", as published below from "The Two Worlds", October 11th, 1946:

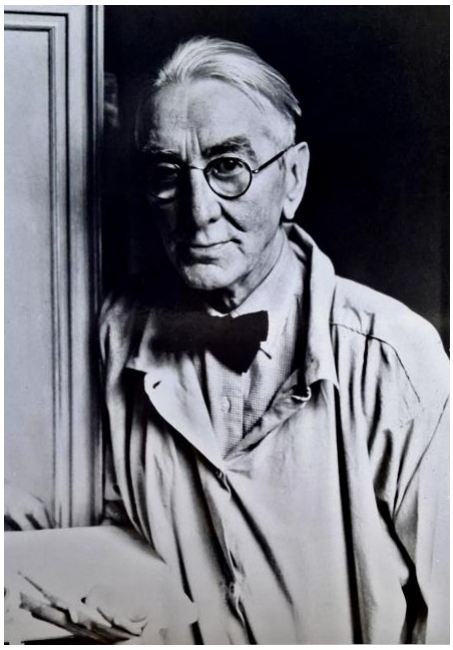
—~—☼—~—

Here is an account which is typical of the work of Frank Leah, the psychic artist. Mrs. A. M. Edwards of Manchester, a stranger to the artist, visits him for the first time and receives a sketch of her daughter who passed to the higher life during the war. Here is a permanent record and testimony to spirit return, confirmed in its accuracy by the accompanying photograph. The sketch was made direct from the artist's clairvoyant. vision.

SITTING WITH FRANK LEAH

By Mrs. A. M. EDWARDS, B.A.

Secretary, Britten Memorial Fellowship Manchester



When I called upon Mr. Frank Leah, the London Psychic Artist, I was told that it was customary to telephone him. I did so next morning and he described to me a young woman.

The Girl is Your Child

"She is very young—under twenty. She is in her nineteenth year. It is not many years since she passed over. It was during the war. She was not ill very long. The end was sudden.

"Her hair is dark brown. Her eyebrows are dark; they look thick, but she may be accentuating them to call my attention to them. Her eyes are not brown—hazel I should say. Her eyebrows have not been plucked. Her hair, at present is piled up high in the front, in the modern style. Now she has let it fall down, loosely. It is parted at the left-hand side, but the parting is not very clear, and the scalp does not show, as her hair is thick. She had a good complexion. Her skin was clear and after she had been out in the fresh air she would have a good colour in her cheeks. She has a fairly short nose, slightly turned-up. She has a full mouth—her lips are not thin. She was very particular about her appearance; I should say that she was a very smart young lady."

The First Sitting

After giving me this very evidential description of my daughter Margaret, over the phone, Mr. Leah arranged for me to have my first sitting at his house on the evening of the next day. This sitting lasted 2½ hours.

Before the artist commenced the sketch, we had a little chat, thereby ensuring the necessary harmony. He then sketched the frame-work of the portrait. After that he began to sketch in the details, talking to me as he sketched, He drew in these details very lightly at first so that he could alter them, if necessary, according to Margaret's changing moods. Margaret did not appear to Mr. Leah as quickly as she did on the previous day. "She is a very shy young lady," said Mr. Leah. However, it was not very long before he saw her again, distinctly and bit by bit, as Margaret gradually 'built up.'

Evidential Details

Mr. Leah gave me the following evidential details—"Her forehead is deep. Her hair, as I see it now, is rather flat on top, puffed out at the right-hand side and then caught up in something (taken over in a hair-slide) and taken over to the top. Her hair is rather wavy and forms a small peak in the centre of her forehead. Her eyebrows, which are fairly thick at first, go to a point in the centre and then become thinner. Her eyelashes are long. Her eyes, which are rather long, are very mischievous. Did she wear spectacles?" (Yes.). "She tells me that she wishes me to 'put them on her.' Am I to do so?" 'Certainly. It is her picture," I replied. "She tells me that there are bits of light colour in the rims." (Correct: The rims were made of tortoiseshell.) "One of her eyes is slightly larger than the other. Her cheeks are rounded at the tops, then taper to a rounded chin. Her ears are partly hidden by her hair." Here the first sitting ended.

The Second Sitting

At ten o'clock the next morning the second sitting began. At this sitting we received even greater evidence than at the previous one. Continuing his description of Margaret and, as before, sketching in the details lightly, as each one appeared to him, the artist said—

Terrible pain round my heart

"I've a terrible pain round my heart," said Mr, Leah. (My daughter's condition.) "Now I have a swollen stomach." (When very young Margaret had a severe attack of Catarrh of the stomach, and this complaint returned at intervals). Mr. Leah continued sketching, and then suddenly exclaimed, "Oh ! my legs are giving way," and he collapsed on to a settee. (It was Pericarditis that took my daughter into spirit).

Sitting Interrupted

Recovering sufficiently to walk out of the room, Mr. Leah remained away for a few minutes and when he returned he said to me, "I cannot work any more at present. We will continue the sitting at 2-30 pm."

After sittings lasting four hours on the second day, the artist had put the final touches to the sketch, and he handed me the finished portrait with the words, "We have had very much more than the picture." I received a perfect likeness of my daughter as she was at the age of 15 ½ to which the photograph taken at that time testifies.

My daughter has come back to earth again and I now have a permanent record of this great truth, which is of inestimable comfort to me. No religion but Spiritualism can give such evidence and proof of the continued existence of our loved ones or give such spiritual inspiration and purpose to life.





No religion but Spiritualism can give such evidence and proof of the continued existence of our loved ones or give such spiritual inspiration and purpose to life.