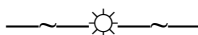




Volume 3, No. 6: December 2016

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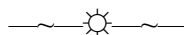


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The Pioneer (bi-monthly) is now part of the recommended reading for the Spiritualists' National Union's education courses.

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

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



“Subscribe” free to Pioneer or contact the editor – pioneer@snu.org.uk

All references to Psypioneer in this issue are archived in Australia by Garth Willey at the Woodlands Sanctuary Foundation. For further information about Psypioneer or to subscribe please visit:—<http://www.woodlandway.org>

JAMES JOHNSON MORSE & EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN

Return to spend an evening at Stansted Hall!

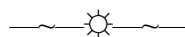
As part of Tanya Smith's 'Traditional Victorian Christmas at the Arthur Findlay College' held from December 10th to 17th 2016, AFC General Manager Tanya Smith and Museum Curator Paul Gaunt took the part of these two founder members of the Spiritualists' National Union.

Tanya and Paul re-enacted the factual account of the lives of Emma Hardinge Britten and James J. Morse in full character with a timed PowerPoint as their backdrop. Both characters gave graphic accounts of their lives, which included the formation of the Union. Their accounts were well received by the students; the re-enactment was very atmospheric within the ambience of Stansted Hall, built in 1871. Not only was the visual aspect appreciated; the whole evening was built on historical information about these two pioneers, giving a clear, detailed foundation of their lives.

The evening was opened by AFC tutor Janette (Jan) Marshall in period costume stating there were many pioneers of Spiritualism; Emma and Morse were just two of them, to which we owed so much.

Jan finished with one of her quotes:

Philosophy is the flower of Spiritualism that casts its seeds upon the minds of men that they may breathe in the mist of inspiration and exhale fruits of wisdom for mankind.



James Morse was principally involved with the foundation of the 'Britten Memorial'. A Provisional Committee met in Manchester on Friday December 15th 1899 to provide a suitable memorial to the 'life and work of Mrs Emma Hardinge Britten', who had died on October 2nd 1899. It can be noted in "Pioneer", Vol. 3, No. 4, that the Britten Memorial Museum and Library were reunited in August 2016. The Spiritualists' National Union has now officially renamed this as the 'Britten Museum and Library'; study/research weeks are available and details can be found elsewhere in this issue.

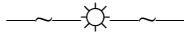
The evening was further highlighted with a Victorian slide show. The old magic lantern projector is believed to have belonged to James Morse; it appears that candles or oil lamps originally illuminated it, but later by a very large electric bulb, so it was a short show showing around twenty glass slides. The actual slides

were discovered at the back of the cupboards in Arthur Findlay's library. Records show that some of the slides belonged to James Morse, who was known to use a projector for some of his talks about his travels, psychic photography, etc.

The image below is the actual projector, which is still in perfect working order; the photograph was kindly taken by James Frid, Print Technician at Redwoods, Stansted. Below is an image of the slide show, a truly unique experience. The glass slides cover psychic photography, portraits of some of our many pioneers, old churches and Lyceum marches, etc. James has now preserved these electronically, so these images can be used on PowerPoint, etc. Some images are identified on the slide, others have been identified independently, and others need further research. Below are some examples of this wonderful find.



The evening Victorian slide show



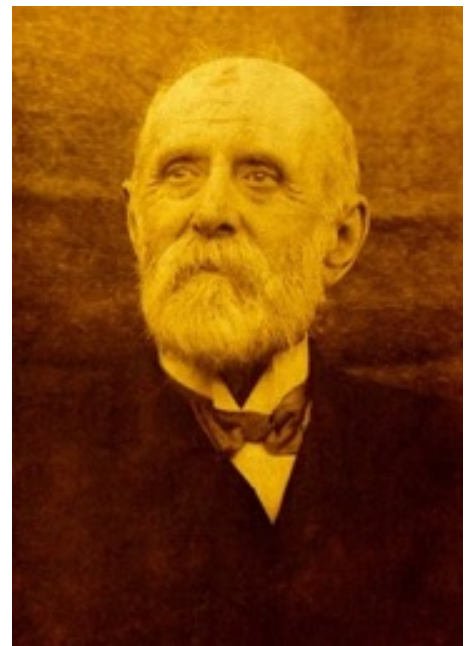
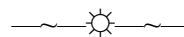
Thanks are due to AFC tutor Janette (Jan) Marshall, who kindly took all the photographs of this special evening



Last known images

Emma Hardinge Britten
1823 - 1899

James Johnson Morse
1848 – 1919





The Morse collection of glass magic lantern slides includes some rare images of the Lyceum marches; James Morse was himself very involved within the Lyceum movement. The image above is not dated, but note James Morse with the top hat directly behind the bandsman with his head turned near the centre of the banner; the banner shows it is the Ashton-under-Lyne Lyceum.

The first issue of "Pioneer" published an excellent overview of Spiritualism in Great Britain written by James J. Morse on September 22nd 1896, which also included a detailed look at the Lyceum movement. It can be noted in the article that Morse founded its official journal:

"... the Lyceums possess their official organ, *The Lyceum Banner*, which periodical was founded under Spirit impulsion by the present writer six years ago, and who, in conjunction with his daughter, Miss Florence Morse, as assistant editor, has been editor and publisher down to the present time. During my absence the paper is in the able care of Mr. Thomas Olman Todd, of Sunderland. It was made the official organ of the Lyceum Union in 1891. Since its establishment over 150,000 copies have been sold. It is the only journal devoted to Lyceum work in the world, and as is usual with most Spiritualist papers, it has been issued at the personal loss of its proprietor, though there is evidence that the proverbial corner has now been almost turned! All the labour involved has been entirely gratuitous."

The Lyceum movement played a substantial part in the early growth of the Spiritualist movement, which has been so often overlooked. It was very closely associated in the formation and growth of the Spiritualists' National Union, with some of our former Presidents being also Presidents of the Lyceum; for example, our former Presidents Samuel S. Chiswell (1891, 1892 and 1895) and James Morse (1899 and 1900) were Lyceum Presidents in 1895 and 1900

respectively.¹ In the early days of the yearly movable Conferences the Lyceums would march through the towns. The report below (taken from the “Two Worlds”²) is an example – the 1892 Burnley Conference of the Spiritualists’ National Federation – and gives us some insight into the early events and excitement of our early Conferences which formed the Union.

THE Third Annual Conference of the National Federation of Spiritualists may be regarded as an unqualified success. The whole proceedings passed off most happily without a hitch, and we feel assured that much good will result both to Spiritualists individually and to the movement itself.

The proceedings commenced at 3-30 on Saturday, July 2nd, with a procession through the principal streets of the town. Hammerton Street was thronged with Spiritualists and spectators, and promptly at the time appointed, Mr. Sudall (marshal) put the procession in motion. In the front a youth carried the flag presented by our American friends to Mr. J. J. Morse, and Mr. Mason accompanied him. Then followed most of the members of the Executive Committee. The Burnley Temperance Brass Band came next, and their excellent music was greatly appreciated. Then came the children of the Hammerton Street Lyceums, most of them being dressed in white and carrying flowers, some of the smaller ones being crowned with wreaths of flowers and wearing veils.

They presented a bright and attractive picture, and many favourable comments were heard. Members of the elder groups and officers and contingents from neighbouring Lyceums and societies, such as Nelson, Colne, Darwen, Accrington, Blackburn, Bacup, Rawtenstall, Bolton, and Rochdale, augmented the numbers, until they totalled upwards of 800 persons. The streets were lined with spectators, and in the main thoroughfare the services of the police were required to obtain room for the procession, so great was the throng. Other schools were marching, and the Ambulance Corps also paraded the streets, which, no doubt, swelled the number of onlookers. The weather proved fine, and the procession, which was enlivened by a number of flags and large banners, was a splendid start for the demonstration and struck the keynote of success.

After tea of which upwards of 400 friends partook (the children of the Lyceums being supplied with buns and coffee in the skating rink on the other side of the street, kindly lent by the proprietors, whose generous helpfulness in various ways we cordially acknowledge), a public conversazione was held in the Mechanics’ Institute, when a high class programme was gone through. The audience, which numbered about 800, evidently thoroughly appreciated the efforts put forward to please them, and a number of encores would have been demanded had they not been rigorously forbidden, owing to the length of the programme.

The Chairman, Mr. S. S. Chiswell, of Liverpool, in a happy speech, rejoiced in the success of the procession, and thought Burnley Spiritualists had educated their townsmen to the recognition that Spiritualists were decent people after all. He had heard it whispered that Spiritualism was dead in Burnley, but it did not look like it, and he hoped the movement would be all the stronger after the Conference, and the friends would feel encouraged to push on with renewed zeal in the movement for man’s spiritual redemption.

A number of bright lads from the Darwen Lyceum sang a song and chorus, and also gave a whistling chorus in good style, winning hearty applause. The band kindly proffered and rendered the Hallelujah Chorus, for which they were heartily thanked. Glees were rendered by the choir, the first especially being capitally given. Miss Coles, of Colne,

¹ It should be noted that the “Past Presidents of the Lyceum” SNU page incorrectly states “Mr. C. Chiswell”; it should read “Samuel Southern Chiswell” (29th March 1852-12th April 1910).

² Taken from the Conference Supplement: Containing a full report of the Proceedings at the Burnley Conference of the Spiritualists’ National Federation: Gratis Supplement To “Two Worlds”, July 8, 1892.

recited a very lengthy piece in a manner which gave great promise of good things in the future. She has abilities of a high order, which, with care and culture, should land her in the front rank of public reciters. Mrs. J. M. Smith gave a reading which met with much appreciation, as also did a piano duet by Mrs. Kaye and Miss Smith, the latter being a girl of about 10 or 12 years of age, whose playing gives great promise. The solos and songs were numerous, and where all were so good it is difficult to make especial mention of any, but we *must* give credit to Miss A. French, of Preston, a lady baritone, who has a voice of rare capacity, feeling, and sweetness, which she uses with great taste and judgment. One song, self-accompanied on the guitar, was a gem, and her mandoline solo was a fine treat. Miss Boys, of Pendleton, charmed the hearts of her hearers with her fine singing, and was quite captivating in her gipsy costume. Miss Wilkinson sang sweetly, and Mrs. Kaye, of Leeds, also gave great pleasure in her two songs. Mr. Hartley has a fine tenor voice and sang exceedingly well. Mr. Sudall's powers were well displayed in his songs. Mr. Simkin self-accompanied on the banjo, won hearty laughter and applause. Mr. E. W. Wallis also rendered a sea song; and Mr. Hepworth's inimitable humorous songs, in character, were amazingly relished. Everyone, singers and audience alike, were deeply indebted to Mrs. Chiswell, who so kindly and very efficiently presided at the piano. Her skilful accompaniments added greatly to the effect of the songs.

These two remarkable images are again undated; it is the same parade in front and behind the banner, which shows us it is the Stockport Progressive Lyceum (Manchester).



The two men on the right of the photograph appear to be collecting or handing out propaganda information



This image from the collection of the magic lantern slides again holds no dates, etc. but is most likely to be the SNU executive or possibly an AGM photograph.

If today we were to photograph our past and present President it would consist of Judith Seaman (our second lady President, 1996-2000), Duncan Gascoyne (second-longest serving President, 2000-2010) and our present President, David Bruton. It can be noted in the photograph that there are five Presidents.³

Back, left to right: ?, ?, Hanson Hey (General Secretary), H. Holgate, ?, John Parr (first elected SNU President, 1903-1905)



Front, left to right: William Johnson (first Federation President – first SNU President), ?, ?, Frank Hepworth (SNU President, 1909-1910), George P. Young (SNU President, 1907-1909), John Adams (SNU President, 1905-1907), ?, J. C. MacDonald

The “Pioneer” has already posted information on John Adams (1841-1923) on the SNU Presidents page.⁴ We can note in the above photograph the name Frank Hepworth; in addition, in the previous report he is again mentioned in the Lyceum quote at the Burnley Conference. His photograph also is included in the lantern slides.

³ The ladies and gentlemen with a question mark are familiar figures within the early SNU, so they will be fully identified in due course.

⁴ The Presidents page: <http://www.snu.org.uk/spiritualism/presidents>

Around 1880 Hepworth experimented with 'table turning' and became a healer under spirit influence, developing into a trance speaker and clairvoyant. He was an active worker within the early days of the Union, including its Secretary in 1894, and was well known at the Conferences with his considerable ability as a singer, comedian/humourist.

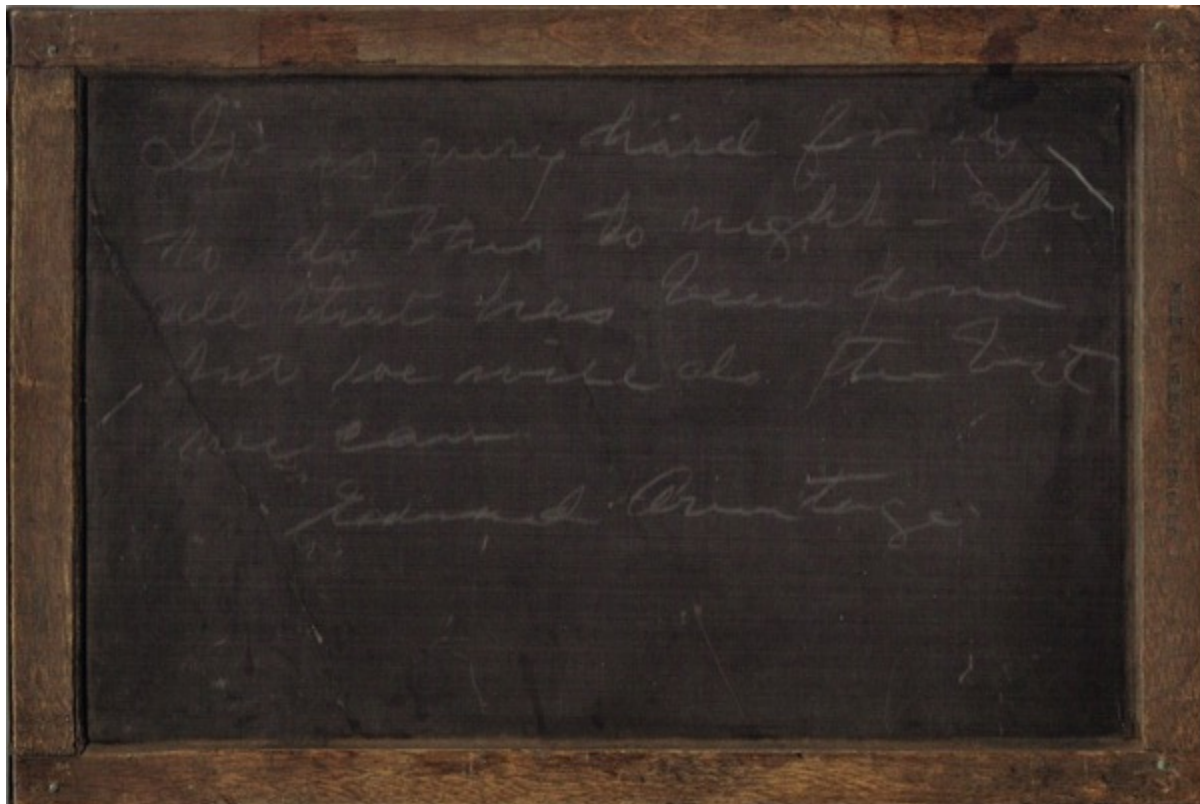
The Spiritualists' National Federation President in 1897 was Joseph Armitage (1843-1924), born at Dewsbury Moor, Yorkshire; Frank Hepworth married Joseph and Emma Armitage's eldest daughter, Annie.

In Joseph Armitage's obituary published in the "Two Worlds", June 20th 1924, pages 311/13, it is noted:

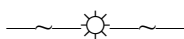
"Mr. Armitage retained in his possession eight slates which had been on different occasions subjected to the mediumship of Dr. Shade (then travelling in England under the name of Wilson). These slates contain exclusive personal messages and are variously signed by the grandfather, father, mother, uncle and children of Mr. Armitage. All names are signed in full, and the conditions under which they were produced perfectly satisfied Mr. Armitage.

"His son-in-law, Mr. Frank Hepworth, has secured these slates with the object of handing them in the name of Mr. Armitage to the trustees of the Britten Memorial Institute."

"He leaves seven daughters all married. His eldest daughter, Annie, is the wife of that well-known public speaker, Mr. Frank Hepworth, who, in conjunction with Rev. W. E. Cluer, interred the body of our beloved pioneer in the graveyard of Hanging Heaton Church, near Dewsbury on Saturday, May 31st."



Today some of these slates are still in the Britten Museum and Library at Stansted.



Below is a short profile of our former Spiritualists' National Union President (1909-1910), Frank Hepworth; this was originally published in the "Two Worlds", Friday, June 28, 1895, front page:

MR. FRANK HEPWORTH, OF LEEDS.

[While Yorkshire has been a prolific field for the development of mediums, and has given a number of workers to the Cause, it is curious to note that the majority have been ladies, and comparatively few men have exercised the gift of trance mediumship. Among the few who have developed of recent years, Mr. Frank Hepworth has won honourable mention. The addresses of his spirit inspirers are thoughtful, suggestive, high in tone, and delivered with earnestness. There has been marked improvement of late years, both in matter and manner of delivery, and friend Hepworth is now a most acceptable speaker. He has also developed good powers as a clairvoyant.



We have heard him give good, clear, and convincing descriptions, and this feature of his mediumship would repay constant exercise. Mr. Hepworth has considerable ability as a singer, and would undoubtedly have been most successful as a comedian had he given his natural abilities in that direction full scope, but he has preferred to subordinate them to the more serious and spiritually beneficial, though less financially remunerative, labours of the advocate of Spiritualism. —ED. T.W.⁵]

HAVING BEEN PERSONALLY ACQUAINTED with the original of the photo which appears on the cover this week, and hearing that you would be glad of a few particulars concerning his life generally, and his conclusions regarding Spiritualism in particular, it was with little difficulty that I was able to glean from him information calculated to be of interest to your readers.

In answer to questions regarding his early life, Mr. Hepworth said: —I was born on March 6, 1859, in a little village called Clayton West, some eight or ten miles from Huddersfield, but I have no recollection of my birthplace, inasmuch as I left that locality with my parents, I understand, within two years of my birth. I was reared in a pretty little village named Meanwood, in which place I underwent the boyish experiences common to country life, viz., modest schooling and romping in the fields, and subsequently started my working career as groom and errand boy to the vicar of the parish. When I reached sixteen years of age I had my first bitter sorrow—my father passed away very suddenly. This was the first acute manifestation to me of the sad and uncertain side of existence here. Within three years from this time the remaining members of the family drifted in different directions, through various causes, and I found myself, the youngest member of the family, standing practically alone in the world.

“Had you by this time formed any conclusions on religious questions?”

⁵ The Editor was Edward Walter Wallis (1893-1899), co-founder of the "Two Worlds" with Emma Hardinge Britten in 1887. Wallis was one of our former Presidents in 1898.

Yes, I was carefully nurtured by the Church of England, attending all services, first in the capacity of choir-boy for seven years, and subsequently discharging the duties of “assistant organist,” *in the shape of “blower,”* for nearly four years. During those years my plastic mind had been so aptly moulded and fashioned by the desires of my church that I had no hesitation, in my inexperienced condition, in saying “Amen” to all her incongruous beliefs and inconsistent declarations.

“How, then, did you become acquainted with Spiritualism?”

Very simply, yet unexpectedly. At twenty-two years of age, I had then been “on the world” some years, I was actively connected with an Amateur Dramatic Club in Leeds, and it was customary to hold periodical “socials” at the homes of the various members. On one of these occasions, in the autumn of 1881, the conversation turned upon “table-tilting,” and our host, a writing master at the Grammar School, had witnessed, he said, remarkable phenomena. As is usual upon such recitals, everyone smiled incredulously, and indicated, by pointing to the head surreptitiously, that the poor old man was demented. His strange story, however, haunted me for some time, and my curiosity continued to increase until eventually I suggested to two intimate friends—man and wife—who were present at the social” mentioned, that we should try if we could “do” the same thing as our host had done. To show you how ignorant we were concerning the whole subject, we at once agreed to a limit to the time to be spent in investigation. We arranged to sit at the table one night a week for one month, and if we did not succeed in what our host had prophesied, we should arrive at the conclusion that we had been the victims of a huge joke. We commenced our sittings. Nothing occurred until the last night of the four, when the table, to our bewilderment, moved. Assuring ourselves that none of us were personally responsible for the movements, we began to put questions, and by the slow, but at that time deeply interesting, process of “tilts” in response to the use of the alphabet, we each received personal messages from the supposed dead. Some of these were recognised as correct when given; others were afterwards verified.

“Were you then the medium?”

Not to my knowledge. We groped along in the dark (metaphorically speaking only) to the best of our ability, guided in our researches solely by the intelligence governing the table until, one evening, some three months after our first sitting, I felt a strange, yet not unpleasant sensation, possess me. I was entranced by some strange influence, and remained in that condition nearly half an hour. At each subsequent seance the strange power controlled me, until eventually the sitters were able to determine the nature of the influence. Relative and friend, one after another, long passed away, were absolutely identified, either by the delivery through me of messages of personal interest, or by demonstrations of the circumstances under which they passed away.

“Being the medium of these manifestations I presume you were quickly convinced of spiritual phenomena?”

Not so quickly as you may think. I believe it is a matter of common admission that the medium is the greatest sceptic.

“How do you account for that?”

In this way: In the early experiences of mediums the majority are entranced. Manifestations of spirit-power, whilst the medium is in this condition, carry strong conviction to the investigator, but when recounted to the medium they serve rather to astonish and bewilder than to convince.

“What then, did convince you of the claims of the spirits?”

A host of sterling facts which occurred during two years’ experience as a medium for “healing.” During that time I would enter the sitting-room, to meet from twelve to sixteen people in one evening, who had come to be “healed” of some more or less serious complaint. Personally, I had no knowledge of either allopathic, homœopathic or botanic treatment of disease, and yet under the influence of spirit-power, (for I could give it no other name) scores of people received successful treatment at MY(?) hands. In addition to this I have had descriptions of relatives on the other side, given to me by other mediums, and personal messages from these relatives, which have been of the greatest importance to me, but which by reason of their exclusiveness could not interest you.

“How did you reconcile the teachings of Spiritualism in regard to a future life with the teachings you had been accustomed to receive in Church upon the subject?”

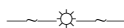
I never did reconcile them; I even made no attempt. I simply wished to know the truth concerning that life if there was any method of its disclosure. A considerable time had passed ere I fully comprehended what was involved in the study of Spiritualism, although a strange, yet beautiful philosophy had been revealed to us in our little circle at intervals. I was most deeply impressed from this standpoint on hearing Mrs. E. H. Britten speak in Leeds in the early part of 1882, and since that time, through personal conviction and as an instrument in the hands of higher intelligences, I have constantly endeavoured to the extent of my limitations to expound a philosophy of life, which I sincerely believe to be (on its adoption by mankind) capable of emancipating man from social wretchedness and evil and spiritual darkness—a philosophy which breathes a spirit of true brotherhood into the souls of men.

“How long have you been a public speaker?”

I commenced platform work in 1882, my first experience away from home being at Halifax, where I was most generously entertained and greatly encouraged to future work by our staunch and good brother (now passed on), Mr. J. Culpan. Since that time I have travelled thousands of miles; have, under influence, delivered over 1,500 addresses; have given hundreds of clairvoyant descriptions, most of which have been readily recognised, and have otherwise tried to make myself useful in the dissemination of knowledge of a fact and a philosophy, the preface even of which, I believe, is but vaguely comprehended by millions of men and women all over our little world.

Much more interesting information regarding the subject of Spiritualism generally I gleaned from Mr. Hepworth, but I must withhold it, and even already apologise for encroaching so much upon your valuable space.

A FELLOW-WORKER.



Our former President continued his Spiritualist work for many years. In the "Two Worlds", March 10th 1939, we can note the headlines, "80 Not Out A Healthy Veteran", although in the report above it states Hepworth commenced his platform work in 1882 but below suggests two years earlier. Whichever is correct, it can be seen that he dedicated around six decades to Spiritualism and to the formation of the Union from its earliest days!

On Monday last we had a call from Mr. Frank Hepworth, of Bury; it was his birthday. He has completed his eightieth year. He was just returning from taking the services at Belper.

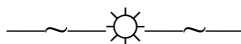
Frank Hepworth is the veteran of the Movement. On March 5th he celebrated the 59th anniversary of his first public meeting. He was then living in Leeds, and had started development in his own home. He and a couple of friends had gone for a walk, and acting on a sudden impulse they were led to a Spiritualist meeting just in time to hear an announcement from the platform that the speaker of the day had disappointed them. While sitting in the audience, Frank passed under control, went to the platform, and gave the address and clairvoyance. From that day he has been a regular platform worker. In the last ten years he has not had half a dozen Sundays free of the platform, and judging by his bright, breezy personality, he appears to have many years of active service before him.



Forty years ago, Mr. Frank Hepworth was a missioner for the National Federation; for many years he served on the Council of the S.N.U., and for twelve months occupied the presidential chair.

Nearly half a century ago he married the daughter of Joseph Armitage, of Dewsbury, a man who, in the early days of the Movement, regularly appeared on the platforms in Yorkshire, always accompanied by his little table. Instead of giving clairvoyance, Joseph would get the names and addresses of relatives of people in the audience by tilts through his table, and many hundreds of veridical messages and descriptions were given by him in this fashion.

Quite recently, Mrs. Hepworth was knocked down by a car and had to enter Bury Hospital. We are glad to hear that she is now at home and making a good recovery, though it will be some weeks before she is fit again. Many friends in the North will be glad to hear that despite a few recent colds, Frank is fit and well.





Britten Memorial Museum & Library

RESEARCH – STUDY WEEKS at the Arthur Findlay College

A Unique Opportunity Exploring Spiritualist History

Studying for an SNU Course, a degree, writing
a paper or
furthering your general knowledge of Spiritualism and our history,
etc.?

2017 RESEARCH – STUDY DATES

February 11th – 17th

July 22nd – 29th

November 11th – 17th

£25.00 per day 09.30 – 20.30

Your research/study visit will be supported under the guidance of the Museum Curator and Librarian, Paul Gaunt. Students will have access to the important major Spiritualistic journals of the day, books and the Museum, where you can study and research the many aspects of our history.

Scans will be available on some material.

**All those intending to book should contact Paul first
to make sure any specialised subject material is available**
curator@snu.org.uk

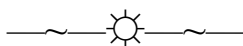
MEALS & ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE IF REQUIRED

Lunch £10, Dinner £12.50.

Bed & full English breakfast is £90.00 per room per night for an ensuite room.

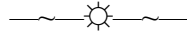
Bed & full English breakfast is £70.00 per room per night.

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



MAURICE BARBANELL

My greatest journalistic “Scoop”



In 1937 a Committee was appointed by Dr. Lang, Archbishop of Canterbury, to investigate Spiritualism. It carefully studied the subject for two years – but the report was suppressed.

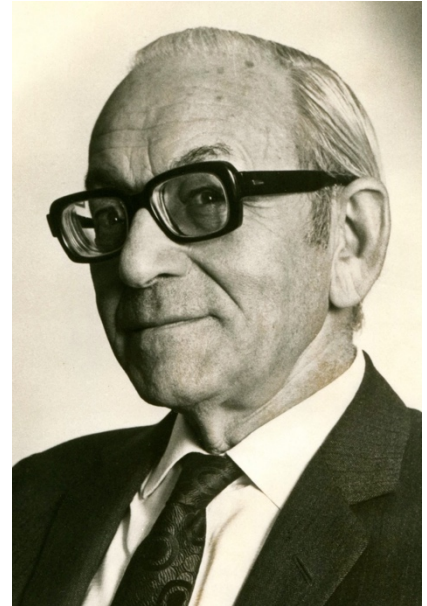
Published below is taken from the “Two Worlds”, June 7th 1952, front page and page 267:

MY GREATEST SCOOP

by Maurice Barbanell

THE passing of Dr. William Brown, the celebrated psychologist, enables me to disclose part of the story which gave me my greatest; journalistic “Scoop.” This was the disclosure of the actual findings in the suppressed report of the committee appointed by Dr. Lang, Archbishop of Canterbury, to inquire into Spiritualism.

The story began when Hannan Swaffer met a distinguished public figure who was angry because he knew that the report was being withheld from the public. He had helped in the Investigation and was present at some of the sittings held by members of the committee.



Some time previously, he had made his own inquiry into Spiritualism and, with the aid of a mediumistic friend, had succeeded in receiving communications which satisfied him that Survival was a fact. When Swaff mentioned this meeting, I went to see his informant, who told me that he had seen a copy of the report and gave me some of the names of its signatories. Dr. William Brown was one of them.

I telephoned the psychologist and saw him in his Harley Street consulting rooms. I soon discovered that he objected to the report being suppressed. He stated that if he had known the efforts of his labours were not to be made public, he never would have joined the inquiry. The Primate had invited him to co-operate because of his scientific prestige.

This gave me my cue. I pointed out to Dr. Brown that, as a scientist, he could not be a party to the suppression of truth, a statement with which he promptly agreed. He himself was very sympathetic to Spiritualism, largely because of his own researches, coupled with the fact that he had discovered he possessed the psychic faculty of automatic writing.

Dr. Brown, however, would not allow me to take away a copy of the report because it was a confidential document which had been sent to him as a member of the committee. He opened a drawer in his desk, pulled out the report and handed it to me.

“You can read it,” he said, “provided you do not take any notes. What you do afterwards is entirely your own affair.”

I held the historic document in my hands and began to read the pages. Fortunately, nature has blessed me with a retentive memory. When I had finished reading, I expressed my thanks and jumped in to a taxi. No sooner had I reached the office than I dictated from memory all I could remember of the majority report. While I could not quote the actual words, I was able to give a fair summary.

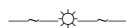
The publication of my story created a sensation. National newspapers avidly seized on it, and soon the Primate was in a dilemma, Doubtless the fact that he was unsympathetic to Spiritualism—he had made no secret of his hostility—had influenced him in a decision to suppress the report. *The Daily Telegraph* was among the many national newspapers which followed up my story. It got into touch with Lambeth Palace and printed a reply by the Archbishop of Canterbury that my statements were “both unauthorised and inaccurate.”

I was not concerned with the charge of being unauthorised and willingly pleaded guilty to it. The only inaccuracy I would admit was the fact that the committee numbered 10 instead of 12 as I had stated.

Having obtained from my perusal of the report, the actual names of the signatories, I then arranged for each of them to be interviewed. Some were co-operative and some were not. When some of them made unhelpful comments, I went back to Dr. Brown to tell him what they had said.

“Oh,” he would answer, “is that so? Let us see what it says in the report.” Back again he went to the drawer and fished out the historic document. Then he would quote, word for word, statements that completely answered any criticism of the accounts I had printed. Finally, so much of the report was published by me, that other members of the committee came out into the open and disclosed the part they had played, which made nonsense of the Primate’s suppression.

I have placed these facts on record so that Spiritualists should know the debt of gratitude they owe to Dr. William Brown for the vital part he played in defeating a clerical attempt to suppress psychic truth.



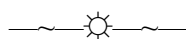
Maurice Barbanell was the founding editor of “Psychic News”, which began on May 28th 1932. He continued in this role until 1946, when, following a disagreement with Arthur Findlay, he left. Stuart Martin took over from Barbanell but died on January 10th 1947. A.W. (Billy) Austin took over from Stuart Martin and continued until 1953; the next editor was Fred Archer. Sixteen years later, on June 20th 1962, Barbanell returned as editor. He was also the editor of the “Two Worlds” and continued with both publications until his death in 1981.

The full report was published in “Psychic News” by Billy Austin during his editorship; Austin stated: “For nine years the reports were kept secret; then one morning there mysteriously appeared on my office desk what purported to be a typed copy of the Majority Report.” One may wonder if this was from Maurice Barbanell! For details and the full report please see the Church of England and Spiritualism.⁶

⁶ Church of England and Spiritualism: <http://www.aspects.org.au/intro.htm>

See also *Psypioneer*, Vol. 1, No. 9, January 2005: “The Secret Report on Spiritualism”. Leslie Price adds: *Psychic News* in 1947 published the conclusions of the majority report. For the full text of the majority and minority reports, contact the Churches’ Fellowship for Psychical and Spiritual Studies. *Psychic News* adds: The issue of *Psychic News* the Church of England Report was first reported in was 8th November 1947.

MADAME VICTORIA DUNCAN



Helen Duncan needs little introduction as a materialisation medium. Without doubt the best resource of researched original material on Helen Duncan is the free online journal, “Psypioneer”, edited by Leslie Price; details are on the index page. We have noted in the “Pioneer” that Helen Duncan occasionally took Spiritualist meetings, with a trance address given through Helen by her main control, Albert Stewart; please see Vol. 1, No. 5, October 2014, “Builders of Bridges”.

However, it is little known that Duncan wrote about her experiences in her own weekly column, “My Second-Sight Secrets”, published in “The People’s Journal” of Dundee in 1933. In part what we would commonly refer to today as an “agony aunt”, Duncan referred to herself as a “counsellor and friend” in psychic matters; she would also work in a role as “Psychic Detective”, revealing some of the “Disappearance Cases I Have Solved”.



Below is published one of her cases in psychic detection published in “The People’s Journal”, Saturday November 11th 1933, page 24:

MANY people have consulted me, often as a last resort, in their anxiety to trace relatives who have disappeared. I have been remarkable successful in solving mysteries of this kind.

A young Glasgow woman visited me, expecting that I would provide her with confirmation of her husband’s death by drowning. On the contrary, I was able to tell her that he was alive and well, but I had to add that he had become involved in trouble which was to lead to police action.

This young woman was accompanied by a lady friend. She told me she had called regarding her husband, who was missing, and who, she had good reason to believe, had committed suicide by drowning.

“He was acting queerly for some time prior to his disappearance,” the young woman told me, and I feel sure he won’t come back.”

“You have already taken clairvoyant advice in regard to this matter,” I said to her, and she agreed.

“And you were told your husband was dead; that he had been drowned in a quarry hole.”

“Yes, out at G—.” She mentioned the name of the disused quarry on the outskirts of Glasgow.

“Then, why come to me?” I asked.

Motive for Leaving Home.

The young woman hung her head, but suddenly she raised it and said, “Oh, two heads are better than one, aren’t they?”

“The head has nothing whatever to do with clairvoyance,” I replied. “The messages I received do not come from my brain in the ordinary sense of the word. I do not think back or think forward. I see.”

Observing that my client was becoming flustered, I hastened to add, “But don’t let us worry about these things. I shall help you to the best of my ability. Have you brought any article belonging to your husband with you?”

“Yes,” she said, with relief in her voice, “I’ve brought a linen collar; the collar he took off just before he went away. Will that do?”

“Splendidly,” I replied.

As soon as I received the collar into my hands I sensed that the man who had worn it was still alive, and I told my client so, adding, “I do not like to say that I am right and that someone else is wrong, but I certainly must tell you that your husband is alive. He had a motive for leaving home,” I proceeded, but the young woman interrupted me saying, “Oh, no, we were perfectly happy, Mrs Duncan.”

“This has nothing to do with his home life or his domestic happiness,” I explained. “He had a motive for going away. Wait a minute. I’m getting it. Didn’t he act as a treasurer for an employees’ holiday fund?”

My client nodded.

“There was a sum of about £50 in the fund?”

“I cannot tell you the exact amount,” she said.

“He had spent some of the money and taken the remainder with him.”

“I know he was treasurer of the fund, and that the money was yet to be paid out, but I don’t think he has been spending any of it.”

“Well,” I said, “I wish to assure you that your husband is not dead. He is living at—” (I mentioned the name of a village on the outskirts of the city.) “He is afraid to communicate with you just now in case he should provide the police with a clue to his whereabouts. You have had a visit from the police, haven’t you?” My client nodded.

“And they asked you if you had been in touch with your husband, and you truthfully replied that you had neither seen him nor heard of or from him since he went away.”

“That is so,” she replied.

“Your husband has a sister who lives not very far from where you stay, but you have not called on her.”

“No, we are not on speaking terms.”

“In a few days your sister-in-law will call on you to say she has had a communication from your husband.”

“Well, I think if he is going to write to anyone it will be to me.”

Arrested By Detectives.

“Your house is being watched by the police, and he will not write to you. Your husband will return home, but—and I do not like to tell you this—he will almost immediately be taken into custody on a charge of appropriating the holiday fund to his own use.”

“If only he comes back,” she replied with emotion, “everything will be all right. We will make up the money somehow.”

“That is an honourable thought,” I said, “but I regret to say you will find it impossible to make good the loss of £50. You will try hard nevertheless. He will go before the Court and be found guilty and sentenced to a short term of imprisonment. But do not grieve too much over it. This will be a lesson your husband will never forget, and, so far as I can see at the moment, your troubles will be over.”

A fortnight or so later my client’s companion appeared at my consulting room.

“Did you see it in the paper?” she asked me.

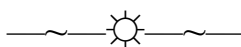
“See what?”

“About the sentence on—,” she explained.

I then recollected the visit of her friend and what I had predicted in regard to her husband, but had to confess that the court case had escaped my notice.

“It all came out as you said,” my visitor stated. “The exact amount of the money missing was £50 18s. He wrote to his sister and she went over to his wife with another letter he had enclosed for her. In this letter he said he was returning home that night. Detectives were watching for him, and when he returned about midnight they followed him upstairs and arrested him just after he had entered the house.”

Some more examples of Helen Duncan’s psychometry (a psychic way of seeing through touching the object) and clairvoyant consultations in the next issue.



Robert James Lees

1849-1931



Continued:

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

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

The article has received a lot of feedback from within the Spiritualist movement and from some historians. The American historian, Marc

Demarest, who runs “The International Association for the Preservation of Spiritualist and Occult Periodicals” (IAPSOP) with other leading historians digitalising the valuable Spiritualist and occult periodicals, etc.,⁸ has kindly sent me the Boston Sunday Post of May 5th 1895, noting:

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

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

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

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

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

⁸ Visit IAPSOP: <http://www.iapsop.com>

See also Psypioneer: Vol. 12, No. 3, May-June 2016: “Major Advance in Digitising American Spiritualism – statement by IAPSOP and NSAC”.

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

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

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

Tomorrow night I shall again take my revenge, claiming, from a class of woman who have made themselves most obnoxious to me, my ninth victim.

JACK THE RIPPER

P.S.- To prove that I am really “Jack the Ripper,” I will cut off the ears of this ninth victim.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sir,

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

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

Signed,
Secretary.

A further quote reveals:

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

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

Home Office
Whitehall
December 29th, 1948.

Sir,

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

Signed,
C. S. Brown.”

West concludes:

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

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

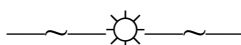
The Editor of Psypioneer notes:

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

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

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

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



THE ETHERIC BODY

A question which is often asked in the Britten Museum and Library and on the Study/Research weeks concerns the intermediate body of man – between matter and spirit. This is complicated by the various names given, for example the “astral body”; below is a compilation of views on what is often called the “etheric body”.

In the last issue of “Pioneer” I quoted from Arthur Findlay’s only novel, “The Torch of Knowledge” (1936);¹¹ the characters themselves are fictional. Findlay emphasises

the fact that all the psychic phenomena, which run through this story, have actually happened. What I have done has been to change their setting and the details



I noted: A good, detailed knowledge of Spiritualism and mediumship can be gained by reading this book, with an interesting, instructive and, in some places, thrilling story of spirit communication. The book was used as the focus of the ‘Murder Mystery’ at the Arthur Findlay College’s Christmas week. The central fictional 1930s character is Psychical Researcher George Trueman, who was brilliantly played (praise also goes to the other performers) by our President David Bruton (photograph taken by Janette (Jan) Marshall).

Below I have quoted from Chapter III, ‘At Sureway Court’, pages 92-94 (SNU Publications edition), from a question put to George Trueman by Ralph Leader (played by Rachel Casson) on “Vibrations”; Trueman stated:¹²

“We Spiritualists know that others exist, and this is the pivotal point on which the whole subject turns.

Other vibrations, which we term etheric, constitute another vehicle for each individual mind in which it

¹¹ Available from the online Arthur Findlay Shop: <http://arthurfindlayshop.org/>

¹² Mr. J. Arthur Findlay lectured at the Caxton Hall on “Survival After Death scientifically Explained,” on February 1st, Dr. Nandor Fodor presiding. He said that every one of us has an etheric body which is the exact duplicate, cell for cell, of the material body. Death represented the withdrawal of this etheric body from the material, and when this took place the material body disintegrated. He said he had spoken to many who were considered dead. They had told him many things that he did not know at the time, but afterwards found to be correct. He had spoken with these face to face, not through a medium in trance, but by the direct voice. In the past we had had to rely on faith and hope, but now knowledge had come to take the place of faith, and would give us a better comprehension of the Universe and of our place in it.

(Other communications have told us that the etheric body is the mould on which our material body is fashioned. This is not in contradiction to anything that Mr. Findlay said, but merely shows us that when looked at from the Other Side of life, the material body is rather the counterpart of the etheric, than the other way round.) Taken from “Psychic Science” April 1934 page 69.

functions after death, and the physical body is only the earth covering of this etheric body. This etheric body vibrates at a higher frequency than does our earth body, but to the Mind in the Etheric World it is just as solid as our physical body is to us on earth. Keep that in mind and all else is easy to follow, and when you hear Etherians at a séance talking about being on another vibration, to what we are on, you will understand that this is the common-place way of expressing what I have put in more scientific language.

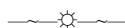
Death is only the shedding of the ‘physical’ covering and nothing more. As the physical body is not the mind’s real home but just its temporary abode on earth, the etheric body must be its true abode.

Now, this etheric body is just a duplicate of the earth body. Each etheric body is composed of cells which have attracted to them earth matter for its time on earth, but this being only temporary, separation takes place at death. When the etheric structure leaves the physical body then the physical particles fall away. This we call decomposition.

The etheric body, still guided by mind, operates and functions, guided by the same mind, just as it did on earth, but in an environment suited to its faster vibrations. The mind is still in control. So, following death, we are still ourselves, with the same memories, affections and characteristics which we had on earth.

All that is changed is the environment in which the finer body functions. Nature has provided this environment to which I have given the name Etheria. It is all about us though we sense it not.

When death takes place, we just enter this new environment and live in it as we used to do on earth. The ‘dead’ can still sense the earth when they wish to, but they can do something more—they can read our minds and realise all we are thinking, because the mind makes images which constitute its thoughts. These images are pictures, so our minds can be read like a book. When I think of a chair I image a chair, and those we call dead can stand behind me and see the picture of the chair in my mind.

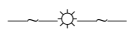


Trueman continues with the direct voice and ectoplasm; much of the information is from Findlay’s “On the Edge of the Etheric”, November 1931, and his preceding books. Helen Alexandria Dallas (1856-1944) wrote an interesting discussion on the “Etheric Body” in the “Quarterly Transactions of Psychic Science”, October 1933. *Light* published a short profile of Miss Dallas on March 30th 1929, page 153:

Miss H. A. Dallas bears a name amongst the most familiar and honoured in the long annals of *LIGHT*, for we can trace it for many years through our files as that of a frequent contributor. She began her work in the days of Mr. Edmund Dawson Rogers and Mr. F. W. H. Myers, to both of whom she feels indebted for much counsel and encouragement in her psychic investigation and writings. Her recent published work, *Leaves from a Psychic Note Book* (with a Preface by Sir Oliver Lodge) gives some interesting reminiscences as well as much sound and helpful guidance for inquirers, the more valuable that they are the fruit of long study and first hand experience.

It was not until Miss Dallas had for some years been a member of the Society for Psychical Research that she joined the London Spiritualist Alliance, having by that time assured herself of the reality of human survival. Amongst the best known of her books we should class *Objections to Spiritualism Answered*, and *Across the Barrier*, the latter book written in collaboration with the late Mr. H. B. Marriott-Watson, the well-known novelist. But *Leaves from a Psychic Note Book* represents a general summary of her

conclusions and a culminating point in her work. Miss Dallas belongs to the ancient Scottish family of that name, a family associated with Lord Byron by marriage and friendship. Her father, a staff officer in India, died there on active service during the mutiny. Careful, thorough and discriminating, Miss Dallas has won the right to be regarded as an authority on psychic matters, and but for her singular modesty—a rare quality in these days—her name might be even more widely known, although it could hardly be more esteemed.



Miss Dallas brings the subject of the etheric body into discussion:



ETHERIC BODY

By MISS H. A. DALLAS

The statement that every material cell has its etheric counterpart is not difficult to accept if it is limited to the *present*; but if it is claimed that the spirit-organism after death is a replica of the material organism cell for cell, then we are confronted with great problems, and some of us feel considerable doubt.

Most of us hope that many functions of our material organism will cease at our liberation in death: but if the above statement is true, can we discriminate between the functions we would like to retain and those we desire to be rid of?

What can determine this discrimination? We are not justified in claiming the etheric continuance of those we like and rejecting those we do not like—i.e., if the etheric body corresponds cell for cell after death with the material body.

Moreover, the analogies which we have been in the habit of regarding as illustrations of the change at death no longer correspond. The butterfly's body is entirely different from that of the caterpillar; the dragon-fly is quite different from the grub. The lily differs from the root, the hyacinth from the bulb, the frog from the tadpole.

There is danger in over-definition in attempting to make statements about conditions which will be as different from the present as the butterfly is from the caterpillar.

In the July issue of *PSYCHIC SCIENCE QUARTERLY*, I note that it is recorded that the editor's friend gave a warning that the medium was a weak channel through which to seek and obtain knowledge on such a subject, and that she would not herself attempt to give it. It may well be that the knowledge which it was attempted to impart became so highly coloured by the ideas in the mind of the medium as to be misleading.

I prefer myself to wait to know what the future body will be like. It may be like, *in some measure* to our present forms—so is the dragon-fly grub or even the caterpillar to its glorified condition, for the same forces are at work in both—it is the same yet not the same—for the forces work in a different way with different results. The perfected creature still has some of the same needs and instincts. So with our new bodies, they will, I think, be created by similar forces which will relate to the new environment, but because the environment will be new the faculties and instincts will be transformed.

It will be a natural evolution and that which we shall retain will be *determined* by our environment and by the stage of development of the ego: those faculties and functions which relate us to that environment will persist—no others. We go each to “our own place,” to the environment fit for us, and that will be determined by our characters and the stage in development which we shall have attained.

In order to manifest again in relation to a material environment, the freed spirit has to limit itself and materialise a form in which it can experience bodily sensations again. This is not a natural evolution, but is non-natural, undertaken for those still in the flesh—undesirable except for the sake of benefitting mankind. When Sister Amy¹³ materialised, she remarked that the boards of the floor made her feet cold! And when surprise was expressed, she said that when she materialised she took on earthly conditions. It was apparently as if a butterfly were to try to crawl on a cabbage leaf again!

Sir Oliver Lodge has stated his conviction that we possess etheric bodies *now*, and that it is through these bodies that we contact and control matter.

Our individual experience of the ether is through its manifestation as light. It appears to be the great store-house of all energy, even of life itself, but immediate habitual *cognizance* of the Ether of Space is by the light which our sense of vision receives. If we have ether bodies we should, therefore, expect that any evidence we might obtain of them would be through the same manifestation, i.e., light phenomena.

Now there is a great deal of testimony to the appearance of lights, not only at seances, but in connexion with appearance after death, and occasionally light has been seen on the faces of the dying, as if shining through the frail material form; the account of the transfiguration of Jesus is a supreme instance of this, but other instances of a similar though less intense quality are on record.

The question arises why is not this manifestation habitual? If we have ether bodies, and if occasionally they manifest luminously, why is this not a constant occurrence?

The clue to the answer seem to have been supplied by the experiments of Dr. Ochorowicz (of Warsaw) with his medium. He observed that two kinds of rays emanated from her, visible rays and invisible rays; the latter, though invisible, affected a photographic plate; but he also observed that when a materialisation took place there was no luminous manifestation.

The atomic bodies which we have acquired to fit us for our earth life are materialisations; unlike the materialisations which occur in a seance room they are of a durable nature and can sometimes last even for a hundred years: they absorb much force, and we may conclude that the force which would otherwise manifest as light is required to build up and consolidate our material organisms. If this is so, when these organisms are dissipated we may expect our etheric bodies to be luminous; unless the mind, which is the determining and controlling factor, has become grossly materialistic; in that case it may wrap itself in a covering akin to ectoplasm.

The seeress of Prevorst and other psychics have testified that some such substance forms a *nexus* between atomic matter and the real etheric body. She said: “It pervades the body in all parts” and “when the soul parts from the body this fine substance accompanies it”: it is destined at last “as to what is more gross and corporeal to be entirely removed,

¹³ This manifestation has repeatedly appeared with the medium Craddock. I have seen her several times and I am personally convinced of her independent existence.

and the soul to assume the nature of the eternal light of the spirit.” She added that “souls quite earthly wrap themselves gladly in it.”

Andrew Jackson Davis spoke of the same substance as “the vital electrical element.” Other seers have referred to it under other terms.

Is it possible that it is this substance which affords a, cell for cell, replica of the atomic body after death?

These suggestions are tentative and speculative, but there is a considerable amount of evidence which supports my main contention, namely, that our etheric bodies would be luminous if the force required to build up our material forms was liberated. I have quoted some cases which bear on this in my book, *Leaves from a Psychic Note Book*, pp. 61-93,¹⁴ in which I have discussed the subject more fully.

That the true body is not the atomic form in which we operate on earth has been maintained by deep thinkers in past times whose insight forestalled the conclusions of Sir Oliver Lodge. The Rev. F. D. Maurice, in his work on *Metaphysical Philosophy*, quotes Johannes Scotus, a Celtic metaphysician of the ninth century A.D., who taught that “the form of the body, its primary spiritual constitution is . . . to remain amidst all the changes that it has undergone from its connexion with matter. Its outward material vesture will fall off and be mixed with the elements out of which it is formed. But the true native form, the proper body, will be preserved and recover its relation to the soul that inhabits it.”

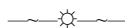
The Rev. F. D. Maurice, D.D., expressed a similar belief in his volume of *Theological Essays*, published about the year A.D. 1850; in this he indicated his belief that resurrection occurs at death through the liberation of the essential body.

Origen, again, wrote: “Another body, a spiritual and ethereal one, is promised us; a body which is not subject to physical touch, not seen by physical eyes, not burdened with weight and which shall be metamorphosed according to the variety of regions in which it shall be.” He called those who believed in a material resuscitation “flesh-lovers.”

How greatly these men would have rejoiced to read Sir Oliver’s assurance that his scientific studies have led him to the conclusion: “Not only is there a matter body, there is also an ether body and the two are co-existent . . . we may be sure the ether body does not wear out.” Thus does a great scientist corroborate the intuitive perception of earnest thinkers in past ages.

It is interesting to remember that as Mr. Mead has told us, the early Gnostic schools used the term “light emanation” to denote the germ of the spiritual man.

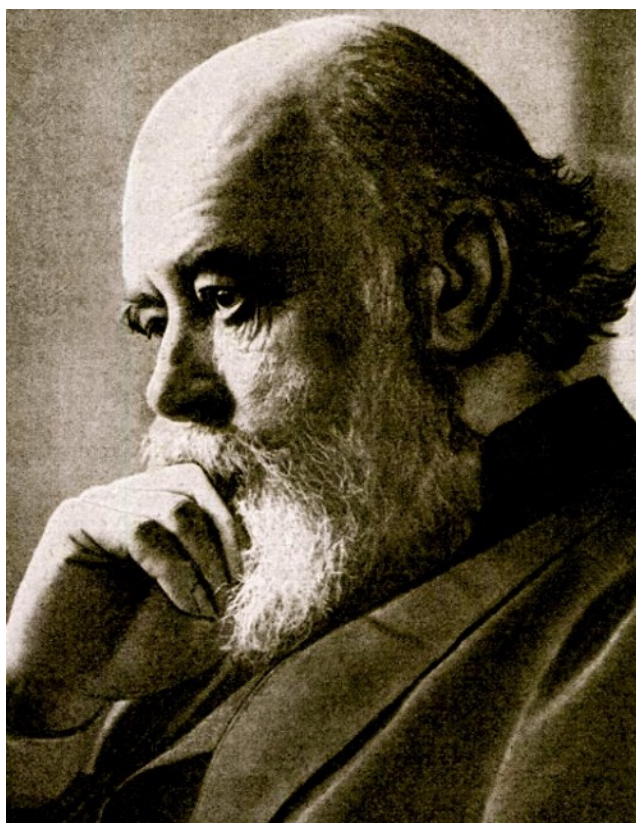
H.A.D.



¹⁴ Rider & Co. This book has had very limited circulation.

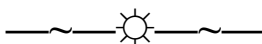
To conclude is a quote¹⁵ from Sir Oliver Lodge published in his “My Philosophy”; Lodge is probably one of the best qualified to speak on the etheric body:

“By ‘spiritual body’ St. Paul did not mean one made of spirit, but one that serves the needs of the spirit; just as by ‘psychical body’ he did not mean one made of ‘psyche,’ but meant the material body which serves the psychical or mental need. The psychical body is made of matter and used by soul. So also the pneumatical body is one used by spirit and made of X. My hypothesis is, that partially and approximately, X is Ether.



“This view is not materialistic in the ordinary sense. It does not even claim any direct association of mind with matter; it claims association with an intermediate substance. The Etheric body is intermediate between matter and spirit, for it seems probable that spirit requires some kind of physical medium for its manifestation. My hypothesis is that spirit primarily inhabits the ether, uses it, and acts upon it; and that occasionally this operated-on-ether is able to act upon matter. Thus through the intervention of ether, spirit can be brought into relation with matter, indirectly; and the intervening mechanism (if it can be called mechanism) is the etheric or spiritual body. . . . The view is, that the intermediary is a substantial reality. . . . Physics is already learning much, and may hope to learn more, of the interaction between ether and matter: and it would be left to psychologists to learn more (if they can) about the connection between mind and ether. They must begin by grasping the fact that ether can be animated; the connection between mind and ether must have laws which can gradually be explore” though at present we have hardly a clue.

“The probability is that every sensible object has both material and an etherial counterpart . . . and I foresee a time when the term ‘soul’ will be intelligible, and I think it will be found that soul is related to the ether, as body is related to matter. I suggest that it will turn out to be a sort of etherial body, as opposed or supplemental to our obvious material body. That is what I foresee as lying in the path of the progress of discovery. We shall find, I think, that we possess all the time, a body co-existent with this one that we know—a body essentially substantial and related to space and time, not really transcendental, but yet in no way appealing to our present senses. Recently an etheric version of such a body has been approved—at any rate regarded as a step in the right direction—by some of the more thoughtful and philosophically minded communicators on ‘the other side.’” (*My Philosophy*, ch. xx and xxi.)



¹⁵ The quote is published in the “Quarterly Transactions of Psychic Science”, October 1934: The “Etheric” Body, pages 195-203, by the editor, Stanley De Brath.

SPIRITUALIST HEALERS OF THE PAST

George William Tomkins

In the previous issues we looked at the 'Psychic Surgeon', Jesse J. Thomas, whose healing guide, 'Dr. Robert', operated on the etheric bodies of sick patients. Similarly, Frederick Joseph Jones was claimed in the Spiritualist press in 1933 as "the most remarkable psychic healer known to Spiritualism in recent years". In this issue we are featuring George Tomkins, who was well-known in the 1950s as an animal healer achieving remarkable success.



Below is taken from the "Two Worlds", May 5th 1956, front page:

Millions read about animal healer's successes

"One touch and my dog was cured"

MILLIONS READ FOR THE FIRST TIME LAST WEEK ABOUT THE SUCCESSES ACHIEVED BY GEORGE TOMKINS, FAMOUS ANIMAL HEALER. THE STORY OF HIS CURING A DOG, AFTER EVERY OTHER TREATMENT FAILED, WAS PRINTED IN THE "DAILY MIRROR," WHICH HAS A CIRCULATION OF OVER 5,000,000, THE LARGEST IN THE WORLD FOR ANY DAILY NEWSPAPER.

Margaret McCartney told the dramatic story of how she took Nicholas, her sick dachshund, to Tomkins, though she did not believe that anyone could heal sick animals by laying on of hands. Tomkins, she thought, was either a cheat or a humbug.

The dog's illness had turned her into a nervous wreck. His pale honey-coloured hair fell out in handfuls until there were bald patches on his stomach. Medicine having failed, she was ready to try anything—even Tomkins.

Feeling foolish and only faintly hopeful, she took the dog to Tomkins' Surrey home. Nervous Nicholas trembled and flattened his ears suspiciously—until the healer opened the door. Then Nicholas stopped trembling.

GUIDING HANDS

Nothing was said. The healer stretched out his hands. Nicholas who usually shrinks from strangers went to him willingly.

Standing the dog on a couch, Tomkins gently stroked him all over, exploratively. It seemed, said the reporter, that his hands guided him rather than that he guided his hands.

The fingers, drawn to the bald patches, stroked the stomach. Ten minutes later he handed Nicholas back to her, saying the dog would be put on his absent healing list. "Bring him again next week," he said.

NO FEES CHARGED

Asked how much she owed, Tomkins smilingly replied, "There is no fee." This, said the journalist, proved that he was no cheat. But was he a humbug?

She examined his records, the letters from grateful pet owners, 80% of them describing cures. She found that he had treated 15,000 pets in the past four years. Many he had never seen, for they were on his absent healing list, which today had 5,000 names.

Distant owners had written to tell Tomkins of curing their cats, dogs, canaries, budgerigars, cows and horses. The journalist was impressed but still not convinced.

A couple of days later, a friend made a comment that caused the reporter to turn pale. Nicholas' waistcoat is sprouting again," she said.

Margaret McCartney telephoned Tomkins, who was neither surprised nor elated. He asked her to bring the dog the following week, as arranged, adding in his matter-of-fact voice, "We must be quite sure."

The next visit was a short one. There was no need for the healing hands to work on the dog. Nicholas was cured. And there has been no return of the trouble.

The journalist records how she saw hundreds of air-mail letters thanking Tomkins for successful treatments—even letters from vets asking for help!

She lists these cures: A spaniel, blind for six months, now jumping for joy because he could see; a poodle, completely bald for four years, now as woolly as a lamb; a budgerigar, formerly songless because of a throat growth, chattering gaily again.

Selecting two names at random from the healer's files, the reporter called on the writers. At the first address, a dachshund rushed to the door.

"She was partly paralysed," said the owner, "and had to drag her front paws along the ground. Now you can see for yourself."

At the second address she was told about Gypp, a 10-year-old mongrel, whose internal abscesses vets had failed to cure. Tomkins had succeeded in a few weeks. Gypp proved the cure by performing a happy double roll on the sofa.

So now the reporter was convinced. Tomkins was no humbug.



Below is a profile of the healer, George Tomkins, by Philip Paul, published in the “Two Worlds”; unfortunately, the issue date was not recorded but it would be in the 1950s also. The article is not complete but, given that there are no available records of Tomkins, it is a valuable record of this forgotten healer. The photograph of Tomkins which heads this article was taken by Leon Isaacs (more on Isaacs in the next issue – a pioneer of séance infra-red photography).

“Mr. Tomkins, the animal healer.”

“BEWARE,” said the notice on the gate, “beware of the dog.” It seemed an incongruous label to be worn on the home of a famous animal healer.

The opened door revealed a tawny, crouching bull-mastiff bitch with a foot-wide face and an expression of pregnant concentration. Without further ado, she launched herself at the caller—and began licking such exposed parts of the person as she could find. There followed something of a battle, but it was only a struggle to thwart Dinah’s determined efforts to deposit her seven-stone bulk on the visitor’s lap.

The eldest of ten children, George William Tomkins was born 59 years ago in Aston, Birmingham. The gift of healing which has made him famous goes back to schoolboy days when he kept pet mice. He discovered that he had only to fondle them to rid them of their ills. Only when he learned that his friends could not do the same did he realise the unusual nature of his talent.

Monkey healed

Then, when his master-printer father brought the family south, to Kingston, he was given a pet monkey. One day, while Tomkins senior was shaving, the monkey seized the open blade of his cut-throat razor. The animal’s palm was badly cut and bled profusely.

Young George was heartbroken and took infinite care over bandaging the wound and soothing his shocked pet. To everyone’s astonishment, the next morning the cut was healed.

At the outbreak of the first world war, George joined the navy and was sent submarine-hunting in the South Seas. Came the day when, with a naval party led by a lieutenant, he made a trek through Borneo jungle.

Witch-doctor at work

The party was under the guidance of a native who, on catching sight of a bundle of pink feathers hanging from a vine, exclaimed “Voo-doo,” and would go no further. Yelling with fright, he was picked up and carried onwards. When they arrived at a native village, the guide was moaning with pain and the local witch-doctor was summoned.

Having examined his “patient,” that worthy produced a white goat and tethered it to a post. He explained that when the setting sun fell below a certain tree either goat or the man would die.

Intrigued, the sailors gathered round to watch. When the sun sank to the position the witch-doctor had mentioned, the goat suddenly gave a scream, leaped to the limit of its leash—and fell dead. Instantly, the guide sprang to his feet, fully recovered.

“Seeing this,” George recalls, “started me thinking about black magic and spirits. I began reading about those subjects, I was terribly afraid I was possessed of black magic.”

Some years after his marriage, he learned that his mother and two of his brothers were sitting in a Spiritualist circle. They persuaded George to take an interest. He had several sittings with prominent mediums. On each occasion, he was told he possessed the natural gift of healing.

Then, during a Joseph Benjamin circle he was told to begin his healing work.¹⁶ “I feel confident enough,” he said, “but where are the patients?” “They will come,” he was told.

The next evening, a woman visited the house holding a whimpering Pekingese in her arms. She asked for “Mr. Tomkins, the animal healer.” Her dog, she said, was suffering seven or eight heart attacks each week and was being kept alive by drugs.

George fondled the little animal and told her to stop the drug doses. Within a week, the woman returned to announce that her pet was completely cured.

Slowly but surely, the requests for his aid increased. All told, he calculated he has provided absent healing to some 14,000 patients in all parts of the world—patients that include goats, pigs, horses, cows, calves, sheep, lambs, tortoises, monkeys, a wild cat, a fox and all kinds of birds. Almost every letter he receives from India asks aid for a cow, the sacred beast of that land.

Whole-time job

Now, George looks forward to his retirement—he is a Post Office engineer—in a year’s time, so that he may concentrate completely upon his appointed task at his spacious home in the pleasant suburb of Mitcham.

He focuses upon absent healing each evening from 10 p.m. and has contact healing clinics on Thursdays. But the furry and feathered patients arrive at all hours and from all parts of Britain. There’s a healing couch for those of the human species too.

Just back from their first holiday for three years—“We had a week in North Wales and there was thunder, lightning, hail, rain and snow!”—Mr. and Mrs. Tomkins proudly showed a photograph of their 21-years-old soldier son, taken a month before he was killed in the assault upon Salerno. In a corner of the print is a clearly—discernible “extra” of a feathered Red Indian.

Dinah, the bull-mastiff, was rescued from death when the Tomkins welcomed her to their home after her master had lost his job and was unable to keep her. Likewise the Tomkins’ beautiful tortoiseshell—coloured cat, who formerly belonged to their neighbour but was given to a friend.

Visiting her new owners, the Tomkins’ neighbour was horrified to discover that they had sold the cat, with her kittens, to a Catford pet stores. Inquiries there revealed that the animal had again been sold—to a research laboratory.

The Tomkins were called in to help. At last, they discovered that a laboratory in Newcastle had a cat answering the description. “To save further trouble,” they were told, “we will send it back by train.”

¹⁶ See Pioneer, Vol. 3, No. 5, October 2016: Joseph Benjamin Tells: How I See the Dead – The Two Worlds.

In due course, the cat arrived, confined in an aluminium container so small she could not turn around, alive with mange and bearing the scars of operations on her abdomen. But she was saved, and is now a healthy and happy member of the Tomkins household.

An astral traveller

To the accompaniment of songs from a pair of brilliant yellow canaries – a gift from a grateful breeder whom he aided—George displayed examples of another of his talents, some excellent water colour and pen-and-ink pictures.

Less material but even more fascinating is his ability to “astral travel”—another gift he has had from childhood. One story in this connection concerns his absent healing of a horse in Vernon, British Columbia. He admits that horses are his favourite animals and, in this case, made particular efforts to concentrate upon the patient, Prince.

Later, he received a letter from Prince’s owner saying that, to her amazement, she had seen him standing beside the horse at a certain time on a given date. When George checked, he discovered that his “appearance” on the other side of the Atlantic coincided with his healing efforts—which were, of course, successful—for the animal!

George William Tomkins deserves ...



Psypioneer – Change of editorship

It was announced in the December issue of Psypioneer that I was stepping down as editor of “Psypioneer”; **I will be continuing as editor of this journal.**

Below is the announcement published in Psypioneer:



After eleven years as editor of the online journal, *Psypioneer*, I have decided to pass it back to the journal’s founder editor, Leslie Price. The change will take effect from January 1st 2017.

Psypioneer has been a great joy for me over the last decade, presenting our readers with original reliable information on psychic pioneers and spiritualistic history. Our readership has grown internationally over the years, however, none of this would have been possible without the help and the continuous support of the editorial team.

Leslie has been sub-editor since I took over from him in July 2005; Garth Willey has also acted as proof reader during this period. Garth has hosted Psypioneer since May 2004 when Leslie started the publication, and he will continue to archive the journal on his Woodlands Sanctuary Foundation website in Melbourne, Australia, where Peter Hui provides technical help. Over the last five years Lis Warwood has given Psypioneer substantial support as proof reader, and her invaluable research has gone far beyond the important births and death dates.

My wife Cindy has often had to type out material which was too poor to scan, and she has checked every issue before the draft is passed to the editorial team. Over the years Psypioneer has been financially supported by donations, namely from the JV Trust, Spiritual Truth Foundation, and the Survival Joint Research Committee Trust.

Our material has often been sourced from the College for Psychic Studies library and archives, with their full support. Support has also been given by the Society for Psychical Research, and from the Spiritualists’ National Union Presidents Duncan Gascoyne and David Bruton who arranged free accommodation and full use of the Arthur Findlay library during periods when the college was closed for a number of years. Support has been given from Sue Farrow and Roy Stemman, editors of *Psychic News*.

Finally thanks are due to all who have contributed articles, book reviews etc. and all the feedback and continuing support from our readers.

I will continue my support to Leslie for the future growth of Psypioneer.

Please note: I will continue to edit the Spiritualists’ National Union *Pioneer*, which is available on their website.¹⁷

Thank you all.

Paul J. Gaunt.

¹⁷ *The Pioneer Journal*: <http://www.snu.org.uk/spiritualism/pioneer> To subscribe free, please contact me at: pioneer@snu.org.uk