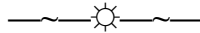




Volume 5, No. 6: December 2018

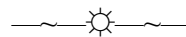
Contents list:



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.

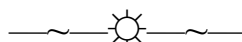
Special thanks to Leslie Price and Charles Coulston for their work in sub-editing this issue



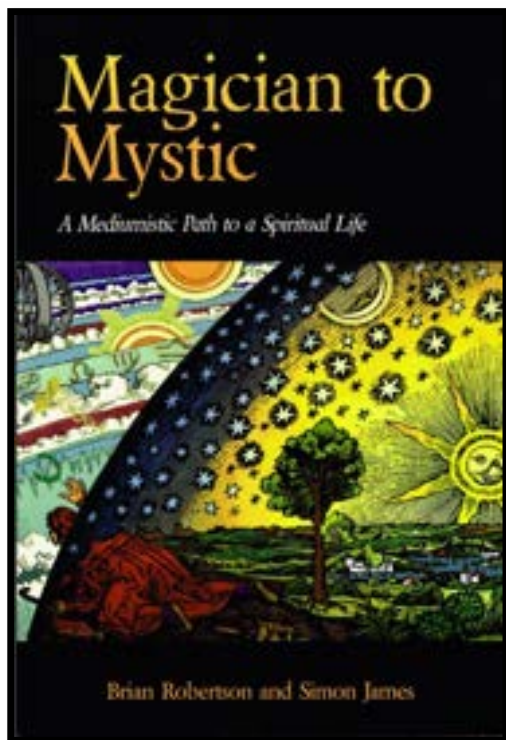
- 177 – Book Review: Magician to Mystic – *A Mediumistic Path to a Spiritual Life*
by Brian Robertson and Simon James**
- 178 – Part Two: Spiritualistic Phenomena of the Past
Luminous Phenomena
Florence (Florrie) Cook - Corner & Katie King Photographs
A further observation has now been made**
- 186 – Britten Museum & Library Research – Study Weeks at the Arthur Findlay College**
- 187 – Ann Harrison – Responds to the Jack Webber article in the last issue**
- 188 – Spook Hall – Can It Be Done?**
- 189 – Spiritualist Healers of the Past – Margaret Lyon – Psychic Trance Healer**
- 195 – Direct - Independent Voice Phenomena – *Could this be simulated by ventriloquism?*
Ventriloquism, Considered as A Possible Explanation of 'Independent Voice'
Phenomena
“Dead” Air Hero Gives Perfect Proof of His Survival**
- 201 – Society to Church – Cardiff SNU Church, ‘Park Grove’**
- 206 – Pioneer ends its fifth volume**

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pioneer@snu.org.uk**

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



Book Review:



Magician to Mystic

A Mediumistic Path to a Spiritual Life

by Brian Robertson and Simon James

The pages will take the reader through the various avenues of psychic and spiritual development – underlying the stages and phases of development of conscious awareness, leading to a well-disciplined development of mediumship on a solid foundation.

This is well demonstrated by the writers' extensive knowledge and teaching abilities to clearly define and emphasise these various stages, the pitfalls, understanding and philosophy of the development of mediumship throughout the book.

The book gives an esoteric heritage of the mediumistic foundation:

“Our work is an outflowing of esoteric knowledge deeply rooted in ancient spiritual thought and expressed throughout history’s cultural and religious traditions.”¹

The chapters nicely bring together the phases of understanding and development; Chapter six, for example, is the “Three Aspects of Being”; these are the primary aspects of our being – spirit, soul and physical body are discussed, leading to psychism and mediumship.

The ensuing chapter focuses on energy, vibration, aura and colour, etc., leading to becoming a balanced medium in Chapter eight. These constitute just a small portion of the book; other subjects include altered states, e.g. trance mediumship and healing, etc.

Magician to Mystic, eighteen chapters, 187 pages, complete with a glossary of terms. References, list of illustrations, information about the authors and their Inner Quest Foundation.²

This new book comes highly recommended.³

Paul J. Gaunt.



Brian & Simon book signing at the Arthur Findlay College.

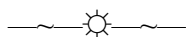
¹ Page 32.

² Inner Quest Foundation: <https://www.innerquestfoundation.com>

³ Available at the Arthur Findlay College bookshop directly by calling the College on 01279 813636 or from the SNU website: <https://www.snu.org.uk/shop>

PART TWO:

Spiritualistic phenomena of the past



LUMINOUS PHENOMENA



Luminous effects of a surprisingly beautiful character were one of the principal features of Moses' séances. He himself did not usually see them, for he was generally entranced during this phenomenon. As is usual with spirit lights, they did not illuminate surrounding objects. They took various forms; sometimes numerous star-like points of light appeared and floated about the room. Sometimes one would remain poised over the table, and flash in response to the alphabet; or took the form of a large diamond, brightly illuminated. A floating mass of luminous vapour would gradually condense and form a globe of golden light in which a spirit hand would be seen. Sometimes globes of light would bounce on the table audibly. The medium was sometimes surrounded by silvery or phosphorescent light, and a halo formed over his head which moved as he moved.⁴ The globes of light were usually surrounded by spirit drapery, which the sitters were permitted to feel. Other lights were also handled and found to be hard and cold, like a luminous crystal.

The above quote is referring to the Victorian medium, Stainton Moses, who would be better known at this period under the pseudonym 'M.A. Oxon'.⁵

Pioneer has previously given attention to the Polish medium (producer of "Wax Gloves")⁶, who worked with scientific researchers such as Dr. Geley and Prof. Charles Richet under the pseudonym of Franek Klusky. Dr. Geley gives an account in "Revue Métapsychique" of a séance held in Warsaw on May 15th 1921:

A moment later, magnificent luminous phenomena; a hand moved slowly about before the sitters. It held in the palm, by a partial bending of the fingers, a body resembling a piece of luminous ice. The whole hand appeared luminous and transparent. One could see the flesh colour. It was admirable. The phenomenon was repeated three times. Then the luminous hand approached a face which it illuminated. It was a handsome male face, but I could not see its details with precision. During all this scene the medium, who was entranced and held by both hands, did not make a movement."

⁴ It is recorded that D.D. Home and many other mediums were sometimes illuminated in this way. See D.D. Home, *His Life and Mission*, p. 247.

⁵ For further information on Moses please see Pioneer Vol. 3, No. 3, June 2016: "The College of Psychic Studies – Some background information – Visit to the College of Psychic Studies".

⁶ Pioneer, Vol. 5, No. 2, April 2018: "Britten Museum & Library "Wax Spirit Hands" booklet — Reviewed by the SPR Houdini & Wax Gloves — Joseph F Rinn".

Archibald Campbell Holms' (1861-1954) work, "The Facts of Psychic Science and Philosophy", first published in 1925, reprinted in 1969, from which all the above quotes are taken. Dr. Geley frequently noticed a strong smell of ozone during luminous manifestations, also noticed by other experimenters. The author states:

"It should be noted that ectoplasm has been observed by many to have a smell resembling ozone. The ordinary spirit lights commonly observed with various mediums are not usually accompanied by any smell; but in exceptional cases, when flame-like displays have occurred, a distinct smell of phosphorus has been noticed. This occurred with Stainton Moses,⁷ and with Slade."⁸

Many accounts can be found in our early history; I will quote another from William Crookes F.R.S., an account published in his 1874 book, "Phenomena of Spiritualism":

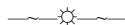
Luminous Appearances.

These, being rather faint, generally require the room to be darkened. I need scarcely remind my readers again that, under these circumstances, I have taken proper precautions to avoid being imposed upon by phosphorised oil or other means. Moreover, many of these lights are such as I have tried to imitate artificially, but cannot.

Under the strictest test conditions, I have seen a solid self-luminous body, the size and nearly the shape of a turkey's egg, float noiselessly about the room, at one time higher than any one present could reach standing on tiptoe, and then gently descend to the floor. It was visible for more than ten minutes, and before it faded away it struck the table three times with a sound like that of a hard, solid body. During this time the medium was lying back, apparently insensible, in an easy chair.

I have seen luminous points of light darting about and settling on the heads of different persons; I have had questions answered by the flashing of a bright light a desired number of times in front of my face. I have seen sparks of light rising from the table to the ceiling, and again falling upon the table, striking it with an audible sound. I have had an alphabetic communication given by luminous flashes occurring before me in the air, whilst my hand was moving about amongst them. I have seen a luminous cloud floating upwards to a picture. Under the strictest test conditions, I have more than once had a solid, self-luminous, crystalline body placed in my hand by a hand which did not belong to any person in the room.

In the light, I have seen a luminous cloud hover over a heliotrope on a side table, break a sprig off, and carry the sprig to a lady; and on some occasions I have seen a similar luminous cloud visibly condense to the form of a hand and carry small objects about. These, however, more properly belong to the next class of phenomena.⁹



One of the most famous spirit controls in our history would be John King, who, unlike most controls, would work through multiple mediums over many decades. The alleged control had a wife and a daughter, confusingly both called Katie King. The daughter is said to have worked through Florence (Florrie) Cook, producing the first full-form materialisations in this country circa 1873.

Incidentally, it is interesting that in physical phenomena the medium's spirit controls would generally specialise in a certain phenomenon, e.g. slate-writing, but would fail if asked to produce another type —this was noted by Stainton Moses:

⁷ Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research, Vol. XI, p. 45.

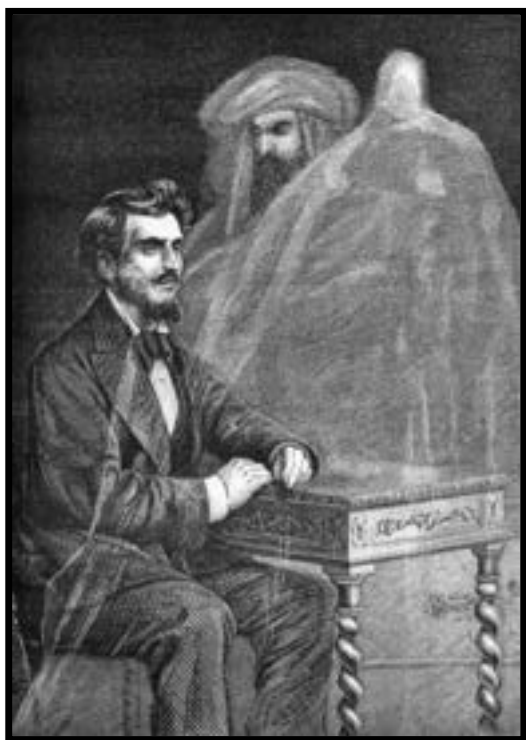
⁸ Henry Slade, slate-writing medium: The Spiritual Magazine, 1874, p. 174.

⁹ The Appearance of Hands, either Self-Luminous or Visible by Ordinary Light.

Moses observed that during the period that any particular spirit was in the habit of manifesting a certain type of phenomenon, this was produced in abundance; and that a change of spirit operator was accompanied by a new type of phenomenon, each operator evidently excelling in its own speciality.

This is evident in well-known mediums like Etta Wriedt and Ada Besinnet; their mediumship remained in the same style.¹⁰ Wriedt's speciality was direct voice; she tried hard to produce slate-writing but her controls would give her no assistance and she continually failed.

John King appears to be more multifunctional in the production of phenomena. Moses noted at the beginning of this article: "As is usual with spirit lights, they did not illuminate surrounding objects."



The spirit control John King, when materialised, brought with him a peculiar spirit lamp which illuminated him in the darkened séance room, and it is reported that on occasion the lamp would illuminate the séance-room. It was often handled by the sitters and was usually found to be hard and slightly warm, or soft, like flesh. Often it was covered with soft, lace-like drapery. Its light increased or diminished according to the available psychic force. There are many records describing the doings of this spirit and his curious lamp.¹¹

The engraving shows the physical medium Charles Williams with the spirit control John King holding his lamp:

"Katie King" the elder, as the leader of a band of scientific disembodied minds, we say, most heartily, God bless her! It was she who discovered the mode of concentrating the spirit-light which is now so well known as "John King's" spirit-lamp."

The above quote is taken from a series of articles in *Psypioneer*, "The Beginnings of Full-Form Materialisations".¹² Stainton Moses recorded some thirty sittings with Charles Williams during the period 1872-1876; some of the earlier recorded sittings with Williams were joint séances with Frank Herne. For the spirit-lamp as observed and described by Stainton Moses, see the above-cited series for more information and references:

"A great development in this special manifestation has taken place during the past 18 months. When first I saw spirit-lights they were of a smoky, phosphoric nature. In the presence of Herne and Williams Katie would endeavour to illumine her face with light which streamed from her fingers. The result was very much what I could obtain by daubing a plate over with phosphorized oil and rubbing my fingers over it. The features were purely imaginary, and the odour of phosphorus which pervaded the room most real. By degrees this mode of illumination viz by sheaves of phosphoric light emanating from fingers of a hand gave way to something more refined. I remember well being present on the evening (Sep. 22 1872) when the new lamp was first produced. It gave a dull reddish-

¹⁰ Vice-Admiral W. Osborne Moore noted: "Miss Besinnet's phenomena are almost stereotyped... They have changed very little during the last thirteen years ..." (*Glimpses of the Next State*).

¹¹ "Some Reminiscences" by Alfred Smedley (and others), published London 1900, page 45.

¹² Started in Vol. 6, No. 11, November 2010: all volumes are archived at: <http://psypioneer.iapsop.com/>

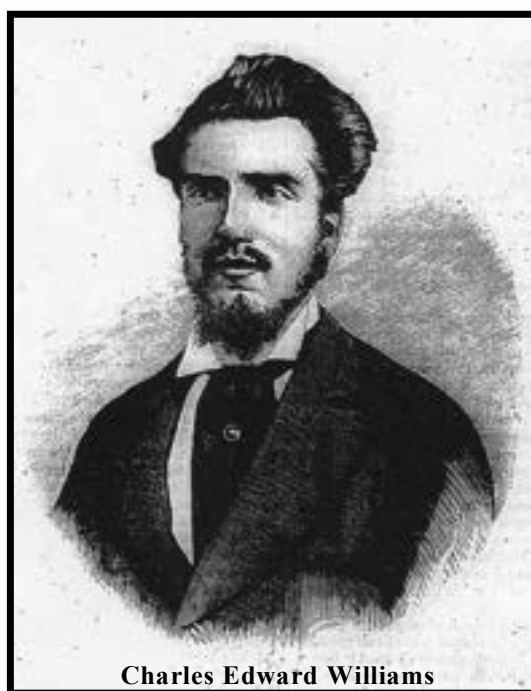
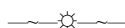
yellow light, very evanescent and very poor, as we think now, but it was then a great triumph. The crystal was apparently an oblong of about 6 in x 3 in and varying in thickness. This form of light has been gradually improved by John King who now uses it until it presents now the appearance of a globe of soft yellow light surrounded by drapery, and varying in size from that of a large turnip down to that of a hen's egg. I have seen it as John King passed it over his face as large as a turnip, and giving out light which filled the Cabinet and was reflected from the mirror at the back of the Cabinet. I have seen it too when apparently no hand held it, hovering about 8 feet from the floor whilst Mrs. Wm. Crookes held Williams in his chair. This séance was in Mr. Crookes' own house. The light on that occasion ascended 6 feet from where the Medium sat, and rapped quite plainly on the table 3 feet from the hand which was held by Mrs. Crookes. This was crucial evidence of the independent action and existence of the light.

"This light varies, as I have said, from a vapoury large phosphorescent light to a clear luminous crystal. The appearance can in some degree be counterfeited by a phial of phosphorized oil enclosed in a handkerchief, but the light so made is of a greyer tint, more ashen in hue, and is not nearly so permanent. Moreover the experience just detailed is crucial as to the independent existence of the light.

"In presence of Mr. Williams are seen also little round flashing lights purporting to be made by the spirit Katie. They are of a totally different character. Instead of the bottled moonlight appearance, they are brilliant, radiant, like the flashing of a gem in bright light. They are not larger than a walnut and dart about rapidly in mid-air giving one the idea of a large diamond scintillating in a ray of light. I have once observed a similar light on the mantel shelf in the study at Dglas House, but it was quite stationary and remained for half an hour or more like a large gem lit up by a ray of light.

"Katie's little gem-lights are not unlike the little points of light which dart about with Mrs Everitt, and answer questions by their flashes.

"Spirit-lights of great brilliancy are seen with Mrs Jencken [Katie Fox]. They are not unlike the light shewn by John King. Mr. Crookes has tested the independent existence of these lights very satisfactorily."



Charles Edward Williams

Florence (Florrie) Cook - Corner & Katie King Photographs



The image shown of the alleged daughter of the spirit controls John and Katie King is taken from an 1875 book by Epes Sargent, "The Proof Palpable of Immortality; Being an Account of the Materialization of Modern Spiritualism".

I found important references in this book while writing an article for the now defunct *Psypioneer* on William Crookes' photographs of his séances with the medium Florence (Florrie) Cook - Corner & Katie King, which he investigated. The article was published in *Psypioneer*, "Four "Katie King" Photographs" in 2012.¹³

The opening paragraph started:

The photographic images of the alleged spirit Katie King, through the physical mediumship of Florence Cook, taken at 20, Mornington Road London the residence of William Crookes are well known, through numerous books, spiritualistic journals and websites. Published below is the original article that brought four of these photographs to public attention in 1934.

One of the images is published here for convenience. Within the article Crookes' feelings on the materialisations of "Katie King" were noted:

Mr. Crookes was not convinced of Katie's identity. In a letter to professor Brofferio in 1894, he said:

"All that I am concerned in is that invisible and intelligent beings exist, who say that they are the spirits of dead persons. But proof that they really are the individuals they assume to be, which I require in order to believe it, I have never received, though I am disposed to admit that many of my friends assert they have actually obtained the desired proofs, and I myself have already frequently been many times on the verge of this conviction."

It is noted in the article that "all the forty-four negatives taken by Sir William Crookes, O.M., F.R.S., were destroyed after his death...", which is discussed in the cited article.



However, there are a few photographs of Crookes arm-in-arm with Katie King.¹⁴

¹³ Vol. 8, No. 7, July 2012: "The Katie King Photographs – Four "Katie King" Photographs – *Psychic Science* – Paul Gaunt comments".

¹⁴ Nandor Fodor, in his *Encyclopaedia of Psychic Science* (Citadel Press, 1966, p. 71), states: "He never allowed the circulation of the photograph in which he stood arm-in-arm with Katie King." Some reports state that none of Crookes' photographs were published in his lifetime. When the above article, along with the publication of the

During the research for the article it is noted:

It is usually assumed that all photographs of “Katie King” are part of Crookes’ private collection. We can note quite clearly the cabinet behind the alleged materialisation, and we can see on the four photographs the sitters appear to be facing away from the cabinet, this is suggestive that the photographs were not taken at Mornington Road as the article states.



Note Crookes’ comments on the photographic séances setup:

“My library was used as a dark cabinet. It has folding doors opening into the laboratory; one of these doors was taken off its hinges, and a curtain suspended in its place to enable Katie to pass in and out easily. Those of our friends who were present were seated in the laboratory facing the curtain, and the cameras were placed a little behind them, ready to photograph Katie when she came outside, and to photograph anything also inside the cabinet whenever the curtain was withdrawn for the purpose.”

What is not generally known is the fact that Crookes was not the only person to photograph the alleged “Katie King”: photographs were taken by the founder editor of “The Spiritualist”, William Henry Harrison (1841-1897).

Harrison was one of the most experienced sitters with Florence Cook, covering at least two years during her stages of development to full materialisation, and he was the first to obtain photographs of the alleged materialised figure, “Katie King”. In May 1873 Harrison by magnesium light successfully obtained a series of photographic images as the form emerged from the cabinet, walked about the room and conversed with the sitters who sat in a semi-circle in front of the cabinet.

This image on the websites and books generally states (I believe incorrectly): “Photograph was taken by William Crookes with Dr. James M. Gully taking her pulse.”!

One of the more frequent sitters with William H. Harrison was indeed Dr. Gully. Information on this image can be noted in the book mentioned at the head of this article by Epes Sargent, which states on July 20 1874:¹⁵

“When that photograph was taken, I held her hand for at least two minutes, three several times, for we sat three times for it on one and the same evening; but I was constrained to close my eyes by reason of the intense magnesium light which shone upon me; she desired that none of us gaze at her whilst the lens was directed upon her.”



four Crookes photographs, appeared for the *first* time in April 1934, *Psychic News* also reproduced these by courtesy of *Psychic Science*.

¹⁵ “The well-known published photograph, in which Katie is represented standing with Dr. Gully sitting at her side and holding her hand.” (Sargent, p. 54-55)

A further observation has now been made:

The conclusion of one photograph (6) in the Psypioneer article cited was left open:



6, again no research has been carried out on this but does not fit in with Crookes description:

“On entering the cabinet Miss Cook lies down upon the floor, with her head on a pillow, and is soon entranced. During the photographic *séance*, Katie muffled her medium’s head up in a shawl to prevent the light falling upon her face. I frequently drew the curtain on one side when Katie was standing near, and it was a common thing for the seven or eight of us in the laboratory to see Miss Cook and Katie at the same time, under the full blaze of the electric light.

We did not on these occasions actually see the face of the medium because of the shawl, but we saw her hands and feet; we saw her move uneasily under the influence of the intense light, and we heard her moan occasionally. I have one photograph of the two together, but Katie is seated in front of Miss Cook’s head.”

As with the Dr. Gully photograph, it is frequently stated to have been taken by William Crookes but it does not fit in with his above description!

It is clear the image is indeed Florence Cook but she has her head exposed and not on the floor, as stated by Crookes; it may appear the ghostly image could suggest it is pulling away the shawl—but the entranced medium is clearly resting her head on the chair and not with her head on a pillow on the floor. It could possibly suggest the photograph of a *séance* taken by William Harrison, as Crookes clearly notes: “I have one photograph of the two together, but Katie is seated in front of Miss Cook’s head.” So it was left as an open question.

It has previously been noted in Pioneer that the Spiritualists’ Lyceum Union donated its archives to the Britten Museum & Library, housed at Stansted Hall. Included in this archive is a collection of lantern slides on psychic photography, which are now all scanned. Psychic photography dates to the early 1860s but is referenced around a decade earlier, though no images are known to have survived. I have been researching some of the history on this subject and have put together a Powerpoint to be used at the Arthur Findlay College. During this research I discovered the origin of the image here shown.

This observation shows without doubt that the image was not taken or associated with either Crookes or Harrison: in fact, it brings into consideration another phase of psychic phenomena. The image shown would have been invisible to any observers and to the photographer, as this was produced by psychic photography in March 1872 by the first commercial psychic photographer in the UK, Frederick Hudson.

At this period there were no known reported full-form materialisation mediums in the UK, as it was still in development; in London, in January 1872, Mrs. Elizabeth Guppy (who later became Mrs Volckman)¹⁶ was the first British medium to materialise spirit hands and faces—followed by Frank Herne and Charles Williams taking the young teenager, Florence Cook, under their wing. The following year Florence materialised the full form of Katie King.

It is interesting to note that Katie King the younger was in fact materialising, giving the appearance of solid form not only in this photograph but in at least one other at this time by Hudson. The forms appear solid rather than the appearance of double exposure, as some of Hudson's other images appeared. However, the images were not at this time visible to the human eye but through the process of what became known as psychic photography early in Hudson's work the faces of the ghost images were mostly unseen.

Shortly after Hudson in June 1872, John Beattie's experimental circle began to produce psychic photography but not in the form of human spirits like Hudson and previously Mumler.

Beattie said that the luminescent substances were

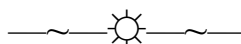
*“taken up by invisible intelligent beings and molded into shapes,
like clay in the hand of the artist”*



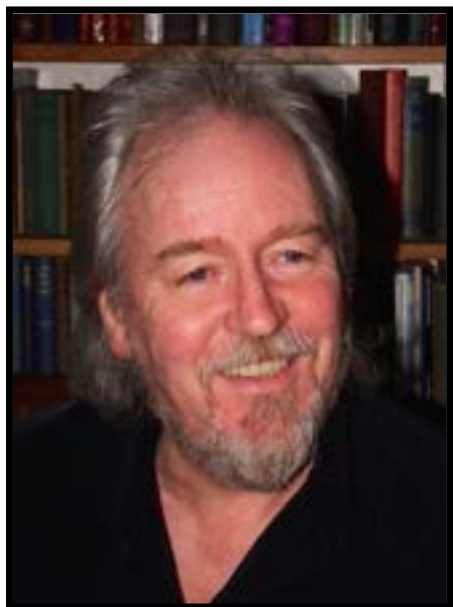
Left: John Beattie



John Beattie continued in the next issue ...



¹⁶ Volckman was the first, a seasoned experienced researcher, to grab a spirit form. This took place at the Cooks residence at Hackney during a séance on December 9th 1873—Volckman grabbed Katie King. See Psypioneer Vol. 6, No. 7, July 2010: “William Volckman”.



Britten Museum & Library

Research - Study Weeks at the Arthur Findlay College

2019 Dates

February 16th — 22nd

July 13th — 19th

September 7th — 14th

A Unique Opportunity Exploring Spiritualist History

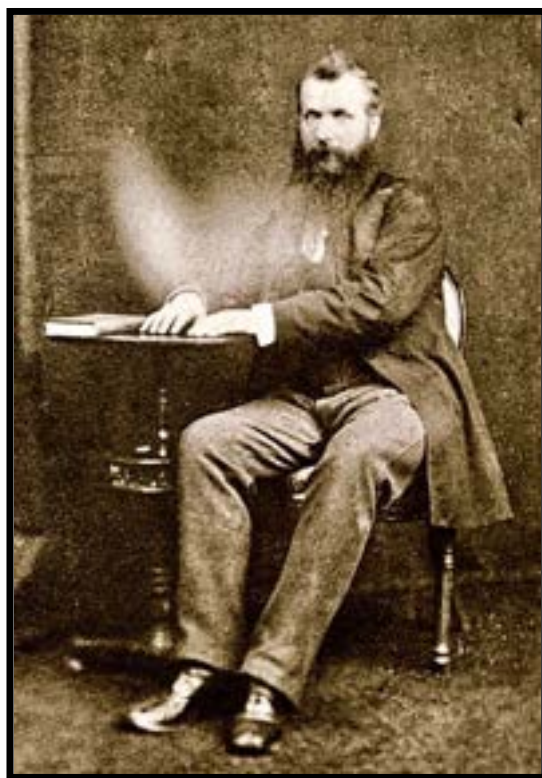
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Students will have access to the important major Spiritualistic journals of the day, books and the Museum, where you can study and research the many aspects of our history.

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



Meals and accommodation depending on availability

Lunch £10, Dinner £12.50

The following prices include all meals and accommodation.

1 or 2 nights £90.00 bed and breakfast

3 nights £235.00

4 nights £285.00

5 nights £300.00

6 nights £335.00

7 nights £360.00

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

The Mediumship of Jack Webber:

Featured in the last issue of Pioneer were a few articles on John Boaden Webber (1907-1940), better known as Jack Webber. I received some feedback on the Webber article from Ann Harrison.

Ann wrote:

“Dear Paul

Aren’t Spirit wonderful?

Just as I am about to issue a new edition of “The Mediumship of Jack Webber” by Harry Edwards, with the permission of the Harry Edwards Healing Sanctuary, who hold the copyright for this book until 2046, you publish a long article about his mediumship in the SNU Pioneer.

We (being Denzil Fairbairn and myself) were rather dismayed to see the inclusion of the information that the book was available for free as a pdf on the web, as this will deny revenue to the HEHS, who do such good work in sending healing throughout the world. All royalties from sales of the new book, which will be available as a paperback and an Ebook, are going to the Centre to help in their work.

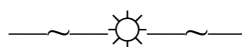
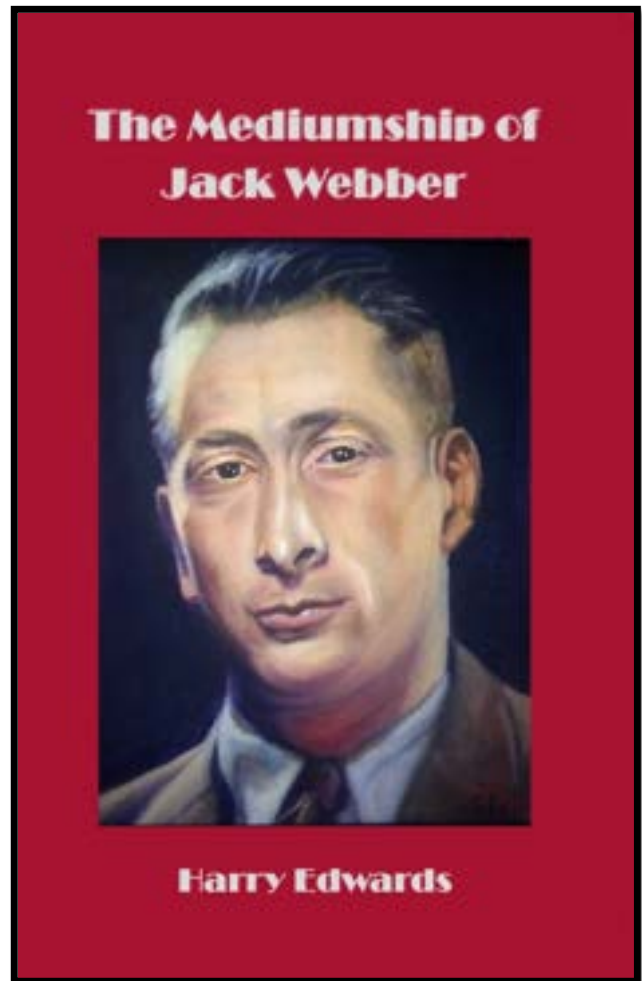
I do hope that you can include this information in your next edition.

The book will be available from early January through Amazon worldwide and through my website.¹⁷ It will be available through mainstream bookshops to special order too (ISBN 978-1-908421-33-3) and at the Arthur Findlay Bookshop.

I am happy to say that the photographs have been rescanned from the originals, thanks to Denzil, and are now placed at the relevant places in the book instead of all at the end as previously. He hopes to shortly have his own book about the mediumship of his uncle Jack Webber in print too.

Thank you for your help
Ann Harrison

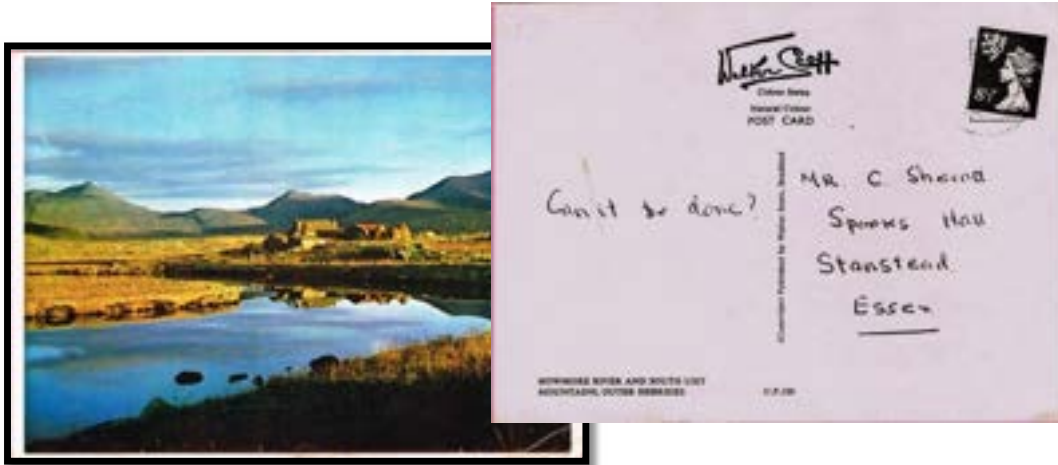
Saturday Night Press Publications.”



¹⁷ SNPP: Saturday Night Press Publications: <http://www.snppbooks.com>

SPOOK HALL

Can it be done?



Museum exhibit BMT 0204 is a postcard sent to Charles Sherratt, who was the third manager (circa 1975) of the Arthur Findlay College, Stansted Hall: who sent the post card is unknown.

It was always a sense of amusement at the College, as the card is simply addressed:

Mr C Sheratt (incorrect spelling)
Spooks Hall
Stanstead (incorrect spelling)
Essex

Yes, it could be done with such little and incorrect information! It was this card which inspired me to write the traditional “Murder Mystery” at the Christmas Week at the Arthur Findlay College:¹⁸

“SPOOK HALL”

RESIDENTIAL HOME FOR RETIRED SPIRITUALIST TUTORS



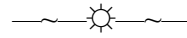
¹⁸ Left to right: Lynn Cottrell, Stella Upton, Tanya Smith, David Bruton, Janette (Jan) Marshall, Angela Amy.



SPIRITUALIST HEALERS OF THE PAST

MARGARET LYON

Psychic Trance Healer



Margaret Lyon was a well-known Glasgow medium who worked as a psychic trance healer for around four decades in the early part of the last century. Margaret regularly gave healing at the “Edinburgh Psychic College”, founded by Mrs Ethel Miller in 1932; today it is known as the Edinburgh College of Parapsychology.

Margaret was sometimes known as “the woman who can X-ray with her eyes shut”; a journalist once described her as “an ordinary, rather plumpish Scottish housewife”. Her remarkable psychic healing was for many years done in Scotland, particularly in Glasgow. It appears only in the late 1940s that she became known across the border.

Maurice Barbanell notes in his book, “The Power of the Spirit”:¹⁹

Her mediumship is organised like a medical practice. You telephone for an appointment. When you arrive, you are shown into a waiting room, complete with the usual magazines. Later, you are ushered into the consulting room, which has the typical couch used by medical men, to be greeted by Mrs. Lyon dressed in a white overall and entranced by the spirit Japanese doctor [Kahesdee] who works through her. You are not asked for a recital of your troubles. You are told what is wrong with you.”

Barbanell notes in the above-cited book that Margaret Lyon treated animals and gave absent healing and that personal treatment was given to four thousand people a year. An hour was devoted to all new patients because a diagnosis was necessary; afterwards, the treatment generally lasted around thirty minutes. A charge was made except when the patient was unable to pay: no case was ever refused.

Periodically the medium hired a Glasgow cinema, seating eight hundred and fifty people; at these meetings cured patients gave their testimony

At one gathering the audience was addressed by a medical man who referred to the splendid results which followed treatment by Kahesdee. Speaking as a psychiatrist, he described successes achieved with obsessed individuals. Reporting on one case which came under his observation, he stated that he had never known any recorded instance of delusional insanity in which there was so rapid a cure.

During the meeting forty-seven people in the audience stood up to testify to the benefit they had received from the spirit doctor’s treatment. ...

¹⁹ First published in 1949.

Margaret Lyon is primarily responsible for the spiritual healing done under the auspices of the Church of Scotland's ministers.

... there are now nearly a hundred ministers practising healing in Scotland

Margaret Lyon's story opens in 1928, when her two-year-old son suffered from a mysterious disease which the medical profession could not diagnose. The story is told on the following page by Maurice Barbanell.²⁰

DEAD DOCTOR DIAGNOSES



FOR over thirty years Scottish specialists and doctors have regularly consulted a Glasgow housewife because of her skilful diagnoses. She is Margaret Lyon, who has been called, "The woman who can X-ray with her eyes closed". The diagnostic talent does not belong to Mrs Lyon but to the dead Japanese woman doctor who works through her in trance.

Margaret Lyon's mediumship is also responsible for the fact that there are nearly a hundred Church of Scotland ministers practising spiritual healing. She helped to develop the healing gift that was latent in their ministerial pioneer. He in turn helped to unfold a similar talent in other ministers. Even today most of them do not know that it all began with a healing medium.

In thirty years Margaret Lyon cannot recall one case in which her trance diagnoses have proved inaccurate, even though occasionally they have flatly contradicted medical opinion. You can imagine the kind of situation that has arisen when some of her patients have been medical men who knew that the diagnoses they had received were the most expert available to them. To these arguments there is always one reply. The medium asserts that a test on guinea-pigs, or with the patient's blood, or X-ray plates, will prove her right.

Thus it is not surprising to learn that sufferers who become her patients—there is a very long waiting list—are never asked for a recital of their troubles. They are told in detail what is wrong with them. The cause of the malady is often traced to an incident in the past which has sometimes been forgotten.

It was personal suffering that originally brought Margaret Lyon into the healing domain. Her son, barely two years of age, suffered from a mysterious disease which no doctor or specialist could diagnose. When the mother had reached the depths of despair, a friend suggested she should try spirit healing. Mrs Lyon was recommended to visit Govan, where a Clyde shipwright, a medium named Jerry Nicholson, practised this form of mediumship.

As a last resort, the mother called with her boy. The entranced healer, without asking any questions, immediately examined the child's head. Soon he diagnosed the cause of the trouble as a milk worm which had attacked the brain, and expressed his regret that it was too late for any recovery to be made.

²⁰ Barbanell reports on the story of Margaret Lyon in various books and in the "Two Worlds"; the report here published is from his 1959 book, "This is Spiritualism".

On the following day, the boy lapsed into a coma. He was taken to hospital, where he stayed for three weeks and then died. A post-mortem examination produced the verdict, "Death from bovine meningitis." The medium had been proved right.

This experience made her realise what spirit healing could achieve if it could be applied to sufferers in time. She prayed that she could be used in some way to help other mothers who might be placed in a plight similar to her own. When a medium later told her that she possessed the healing gift in embryonic form, Margaret Lyon determined to unfold it.

For two years she was an assiduous member of a developing circle which met once a week. Because nothing happened, she decided reluctantly that perhaps, after all, she was not intended to be a healer. Then came what she decided must be her last séance. All that she remembers is that she fell asleep. Apologising, when she awoke, for what she thought was a breach of good manners, she was surprised to be told that she had not been asleep. Instead, someone who claimed to be a spirit Japanese woman doctor had spoken through her.

The visitor from another world had given the name of Kahesdee, which, translated, meant, "I serve". Kahesdee had announced that, with the cooperation of her medium, a great service could be rendered to the suffering, and that she would specialise in the treatment of tuberculosis, a significant statement in view of the fact that this disease had been responsible for the death of Mrs Lyon's child.

Throughout the years, Kahesdee has shown that she possesses a wide range of medical knowledge, is familiar with the technical phraseology employed by doctors, and conversant with the latest researches in therapeutics. She speaks softly and works with a competence that is highly impressive to watch. Her sense of humour is of the quiet variety, and she chats merrily all the time she gives treatment. Typical of her humour is the aside she once made to me: "I expect I'm the chattiest ghost you have ever met."

Many observers have commented on the fact that when Mrs Lyon is entranced her face, eyes and bodily posture all suggest the Oriental. Kahesdee has given me some details about her earthly life.

"I was taught by a Japanese priest who had been to Stoneyhurst College," she said. She was a doctor attached to the royal household at Korea in 1895, at the time when it was attacked by the Japanese. The invaders burned and buried alive the Queen and all members of the royal household. Kahesdee says that she died as a result of exposure at the early age of twenty-three.

The Queen had been anxious to introduce new ideas on hygiene to her country. The spread of medicine was to be her antidote to native superstitions. Kahesdee was anxious to continue her medical career that had ended all too briefly. She attached herself to Mrs Lyon for the best part of the medium's life. The spirit doctor knew it would require some soul-stirring experience, like the sorrow caused by her two-year old son's death, to pave the way for this co-operative mission to begin.

You might ask what evidence there is for the existence of this spirit doctor. Margaret Lyon would reply that, using her faculty of clairvoyance, she has seen Kahesdee on many occasions, and gives a precise description of her. The unbeliever could still maintain that this is nothing but imagination. Nevertheless, there is confirmation of the medium's clairvoyance.



Once, when in London, Margaret Lyon telephoned Frank Leah,²¹ the psychic artist to whom I have already referred. They had never met, or even corresponded. Mrs Lyon did not give her name. Yet immediately Leah told her of the spirit presence of a Japanese doctor, stated specifically that it was a *woman*, and described her exactly as Margaret Lyon always saw her. A visit to the artist's studio showed that Leah had faithfully captured the likeness of the woman he had described on the telephone. This psychic drawing has pride of place in the room where all Mrs Lyon's healing is done.

Once again I am in difficulty because medical etiquette forbids me to mention the name of a doctor concerned in this cure. Margaret Lyon has lost count of the number of medical men who have consulted her for themselves, their closest relatives and for their most difficult patients. This particular doctor, after seeing a specialist, was told that he was suffering from tuberculosis. Because he was getting worse, he finally yielded to his mother's entreaties to consult Margaret Lyon. The worried mother, a Spiritualist, had badgered him owing to his deteriorating condition. The medium was even persuaded to visit the doctor at his home.

Through the entranced medium, Kahesdee disagreed with the specialist's diagnosis and stated that all she saw was a septic abscess on the left lung. She announced that she would not permit the lung to be drained, as had been suggested, maintaining that spirit healing could perform a cure. The doctor refuted all that Kahesdee said because of the specialist's diagnosis.

"We will argue about that after a pathological examination of the sputum has been made," was the spirit answer. A sputum test was made twenty-four hours later. The verdict was, "Non-tubercular". The first round had gone to Kahesdee. Even then the medical patient had his fears. He believed that he might have latent tuberculosis. Kahesdee was equal to the situation. She advised a guinea-pig test, which is considered to be final in these matters. After six weeks, the animals were alive and well. Kahesdee had won the second and final round.

In connection with this healing, there is a subsidiary psychic story that shows how confirmation can sometimes come in dramatic fashion. When Kahesdee gave her diagnosis, she described the spirit presence of the doctor's father, saying that, for the purpose of identification, she could see him holding a hypodermic syringe which he filled with a yellow liquid. "Did he specialise in vaccines?" she asked. "Yes," was the doctor's answer, as he admitted the accuracy of his father's description.

The communicator expressed pleasure because his son was in good hands, and added that he would acquaint his wife with that fact. "Note the time," were his last words to his son, "because this message will be confirmed." The doctor looked at his watch and saw that it was 6.45 p.m. All this, of course, happened in Glasgow.

The doctor's mother, in London, did not know that he was receiving spirit healing, although she had urged him to approach Mrs Lyon. It was a Sunday, and, concerned about her son's health, she wondered if she could obtain comfort at a Spiritualist meeting. She went to her nearest church, where Lilian Bailey happened to be the clairvoyant engaged for that service. The mother received the first spirit message. Mrs Bailey referred to the presence of the husband, who, once again, showed himself with his hypodermic syringe.

²¹ Frank Leah's psychic drawing is featured in Pioneer, Vol. 5, No. 4, August 2018: "Perfect Proof of Afterlife – This Psychic Drawing Challenges Sceptics".

He repeated almost word for word the message he had given to his son. The medium's spirit message was received at about 6.45 p.m. Two letters crossed in the post—one from the son to his mother describing the Glasgow happening, and the other from the mother to the son telling of the London sequel.

Another doctor, whose name I cannot mention, in confirming several cures by Kahesdee, stated: "I have seen X-ray photographs of men and women with gallstones. And I have seen the X-ray photographs taken after the patients were treated by Mrs Lyon. The stones had gone."

It is ironical to mention that a Church of Scotland commission of inquiry into spiritual healing reported that its ministers should attempt treatments only in co-operation with doctors. My use of the word "ironical" is deliberate because Margaret Lyon is primarily responsible for the spiritual healing done under the auspices of the Church of Scotland's ministers.

The minister who has pioneered spiritual healing among his colleagues in Scotland is the Rev. J. Cameron Peddie. His church is in the Gorbals district of Glasgow, the heart of its slum quarter. When he heard of Margaret Lyon's healing successes, this minister brought his wife, who was troubled by fibrositis. Relief was instantaneous, and a cure speedily followed. The Peddies next brought their son, who was suffering from asthma and skin trouble. The complete cure was proved by his being passed A.I. for national service in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve.

"Do you think I could heal?" the minister once asked Kahesdee. She told him to go into the silence and meditate, and try to attune himself to the power that comes for healing.

The minister followed the spirit advice, and his healing faculty began to develop. The Peddies came many times to watch Margaret, Lyon give healing. The medium often accompanied the minister on his visits to sick parishioners. Sometimes he brought sufferers to Margaret Lyon. Both in her home and in theirs the medium helped the Peddies to develop their powers. For eight years Mrs Peddie sat regularly in Mrs Lyon's weekly circle to help this unfoldment. Progress was so sustained that the medium frequently encouraged Mrs Peddie to treat some of the patients who came to the Lyon household. Mr Peddie has also appeared in public on Margaret Lyon's platform on the annual occasion when cured patients give their testimony.

There is apparently an apostolic quality in any gift of the spirit, in the sense that one who possesses it can stimulate it in another where it is latent. Just as Margaret Lyon was able to kindle the spark of Mr Peddie's healing, so he in turn was able to perform a similar function for other ministers. In this manner the healing has spread until there are now nearly a hundred ministers practising healing in Scotland.

One of them, a leading figure in the Glasgow presbytery, is the Rev. S. Smith, who first brought his mother-in-law for treatment to Margaret Lyon. This having proved successful, he came many times, bringing other patients. At one of these sessions Kahesdee told him: "You can heal, but take your time to develop." He followed her advice.

Margaret Lyon—or should I say Kahesdee?—had a great triumph when she was invited by the Rev. S. Smith to address Church of Scotland ministers on healing and to give them a demonstration. This took place in 1951 at Iona Community House, which is associated with the Church of Scotland.

More than one hundred ministers were present, including many who are now prominent in healing. The medium was warned beforehand that there would be a barrage of questions, but not one was asked. The Rev. S. Smith was in the chair, with the Rev. Cameron Peddie seated on the medium's left.

After a preliminary talk by Mrs Lyon, she was entranced and Kahesdee communicated. First, with great reverence, she asked for a blessing on the work that was to be done. "I have sought God's help," she said, "to guide me to a spectacular case, one of your own congregation that I do not know, for we still have some doubting Thomases among us." Kahesdee added that she wanted someone present who had become deaf through a blast or an explosion.

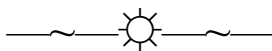
Finally a young woman in her thirties—she was accompanied by a friend who had made her understand the spirit request—put up her hand and said she might be the person to whom reference was made. "But you can't heal me," she added, "I have been deaf since 1943 when a land-mine exploded near the hospital in London where I was a nurse. I am stone-deaf. I cannot even hear the telephone bell ring."

Kahesdee replied: "I am not here to ridicule medical science, or to say what it can or cannot do. I am here to prove the gift of healing. Bring her to the chair." The ex-nurse came forward and was seated facing the audience. The entranced medium, who stood behind her, gave treatment while Mr Peddie, watch in hand, timed the performance.

Presently Kahesdee said to the ex-nurse: "Speak to your friend." The patient answered: "Are you shouting?"

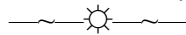
"No," said Kahesdee, "you are hearing!" The audience knew that lip-reading was not the explanation of this instantaneous healing because the medium was behind the patient. "That took only five minutes," said Mr Peddie. "It could happen in the twinkling of an eye," replied Kahesdee.

Silence reigned, due to the profound impression created by this spectacular healing. "Are there any questions?" asked Kahesdee. The patient's friend broke in with: "No questions are necessary in the presence of a power like that." Then the ex-nurse spoke. "Why are you all silent?" she asked. "The days of miracles are not past." As a result of the healing she returned to nursing.



DIRECT - INDEPENDENT VOICE PHENOMENA

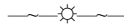
Could this be simulated by ventriloquism?



Direct - Independent voice phenomena are recorded in the beginning of Modern Spiritualism. The voices are allegedly produced at a distance away from the medium by a temporary building of an ectoplasmic larynx, where the spirit voice reproduction was generally heard through a trumpet, but this is not always the case, e.g. as in the case of Leslie Flint.

Pioneer, Vol. 3, No. 3, June 1916:

Flint was able to demonstrate the direct voice while he was fully conscious, seldom going into a trance state. Flint did not speak in trance; he worked in total darkness and, unlike most mediums, he did not use a trumpet or any other physical devices to help produce the spirit voices. His ectoplasmic larynx was formed on his left side and located some two feet away from the medium, where the spirit voices would speak into the manufactured replica voice box. The communicating spirit would concentrate its thoughts into the ectoplasmic voice box by lowering its frequency/vibration to produce objective speech.



The voices are quite distinct from that of the mediums, although often the reports state that the style and mannerisms of the communicating spirit are more evidential, as the voices in the early stages are not always easily recognised.

There are numerous striking reports on this rare form of physical mediumship, for example John Campbell Sloan (1869-1951), whose name became synonymous with James Arthur Findlay, whom he met on September 20th 1918. A rare report on this voice medium, "A Scotch Materializing and Voice Medium", can be found in *Psypioneer*.²² Further valuable information can be found in this publication: "Direct Voice Mediumship", "Arthur Conan Doyle and the Independent Direct Voice", and "Independent Voice Development with Mrs. Osborne Leonard".²³

The above *Pioneer* reference also includes "Behind the scenes at Estelle Roberts' Voice Seances" by Maurice Barbanell.

However, there are some skeptical avenues of thought which considered ventriloquism as a possible way of creating the voices which emanated from the trumpet, etc.

Psychical researcher and author Hereward Carrington (1880-1958) ably tackled this suggestion, "Ventriloquism, Considered as A Possible Explanation of 'Independent Voice' Phenomena", in his 1930 book, "The Story of Psychic Science", which is published below:

²² Vol. 8, No. 12, December 1912: John Campbell Sloan (1869-1951) – Paul J. Gaunt – A Scotch Materializing and Voice Medium – Mrs Hewat McKenzie.

²³ Vol. 10, No. 1, January 1914; Vol. 10, No. 7, July 1914; Vol. 12, No. 2, March/April 1916.



VENTRILOQUISM, CONSIDERED AS A POSSIBLE EXPLANATION OF 'INDEPENDENT VOICE' PHENOMENA

The impression seems to be fairly prevalent that 'ventriloquism' may account for the so-called 'independent voices' often heard at trumpet séances; in fact such an explanation has frequently been advanced by skeptical investigators, in an attempt to dispose of the possible authenticity of such manifestations. In view of the striking evidence which has recently been obtained, in connection with the 'Margery' mediumship,²⁴ it may be of interest to examine this supposition at some length, in order to see whether or not any such explanation may be advanced by way of accounting for the facts.

Roughly speaking, there are two types of ventriloquism: *near* ventriloquism, and natural or *distant* ventriloquism. In the former, the voice apparently proceeds from the mouth of a dummy or lay-figure, which the performer holds upon his knee, and, while producing the ventriloquial effects, he causes the mouth of the figure to move in imitation of the sounds produced—usually by means of the thumb of the hand holding the figure erect. The audience instinctively watches the mouth of the figure, and the voice seems to proceed from it—the illusion being maintained by the studied immobility of the lips of the ventriloquist himself. In the latter case (distant ventriloquism) no figure is visible, but a conversation is carried on with some child or grown person who is in a box, upstairs, on the roof, etc. Imitations may also be given of various animals, or of a saw, planing, tearing linen, drawing soda, and so forth. In all such instances, the ventriloquist acts out the part, in order to add to the illusion.

Ventriloquism is an art which can be learned, and depends very largely upon certain physiological controls, which insure the desired sound-effects. A number of these I have described at length in my little book *Side Show and Animal Tricks* (1913),—since reprinted in *The Boys' Book of Magic*. Two essential factors must be noted: First, the lips of the performer must be as far as possible without movement; secondly, the sound produced must be precisely the sound which would emanate from the location whence it is supposed to issue. To insure this the ventriloquist listens to the voice of some real person in the position desired, and then reproduces this as accurately as possible. The illusion is enhanced by the acting of the performer, and by distracting the attention of the audience to the spot indicated, and away from himself.

In other words, the ventriloquist reproduces the voice precisely as it *would* sound to his audience, were it really to issue from the spot whence it is supposed to come; and adds to the illusion in every way possible—such as pointing, looking, etc., in that direction himself; or, in the case of 'near' ventriloquism, by moving the jaw of the lay-figure which is supposed to do the talking.

All this works very well so long as the audience is at some distance from the performer; but the nearer the audience the less perfect the illusion! At very near range, it is impossible for a ventriloquist to produce the illusion of distant sounds or voices; he must then depend upon 'near' ventriloquism, and the nearer the listener's ear to the mouth of the performer the less perfect the illusion, until, at quite close range, the illusion

²⁴ 'Margery' mediumship: Carrington is referring to Mina Crandon, a Canadian physical medium.

vanishes altogether, and the sounds are correctly located, as issuing from the ventriloquist's mouth, and not from that of the lay-figure.

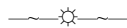
This is merely due to the fact that, contrary to popular belief, there is no such thing as 'throwing the voice' across the room, or to any distant location in space. The prevalent conception seems to be that the voice can be 'thrown'—like a stone—and that the 'stone' will speak, or appear to speak, from its present position. This is a complete fallacy, as every practical ventriloquist will testify. The voice merely *seems* to issue from that spot because the performer distracts the attention of his audience to it, and imitates the exact sound which would be heard if it actually did so. The imagination does the rest. But there is no such thing as 'throwing the voice' across space, in the sense popularly supposed. Mr. Charles H. Olin, a practical ventriloquist, in his book upon the subject, explicitly states that:

'A large part of the otherwise intelligent public still labours under the delusion that the ventriloquist is endowed by nature with the power of "throwing his voice" wherever he pleases, and causing it mysteriously to return to him; and that it is as easy to ventriloquize in the midst of a crowd or in the street as it is from a theatre stage or in a large hall, where the audience is some distance from the performer. . . . If the commonly accepted theory of the vocal bomb were correct, it would undoubtedly be as easy to ventriloquize in one place as in another; but as a matter-of-fact, there is nothing peculiar about the formation of the throats of the professors of this art—even of the most adept—to distinguish them from the rest of humanity; and as for actual voice-throwing—there is no such thing' (pp. 11-12).

All this has a distinct bearing upon the alleged 'independent voices' produced by mediums, through a trumpet or otherwise. For, in such cases, all acting, distraction of attention, etc., is necessarily eliminated, while the investigators are usually quite close to the medium. In complete darkness, the customary illusions and methods could not possibly be employed. In their absence, a large percentage of the delusory effect would at once vanish. The medium might produce an exact imitation of a voice, as it would sound some feet away, but at such close range the illusion would be completely lost, and the voice would be located by the listeners at its real point of origin. In other words, inasmuch as 'throwing the voice' to a distant part of the room, in the commonly accepted sense of the term, is quite impossible, the illusion of its being there would at once disappear, and hence ventriloquism, in this sense, is quite incapable of explaining the 'independent voices' heard, e.g. at Margery's séances.

It is true that our senses are all subject to error, and that sounds are often difficult to locate exactly, but it is not nearly as difficult as many persons imagine. Years ago, Dr. Hyslop and I tried a number of experiments of this kind, and discovered that it is usually fairly easy to locate a sound, provided that it is not in the median plane—that is, exactly midway between the ears. Mr. Bird and Dr. Crandon have obtained the same results in informal experiments. This is true both in the dark and in the light. And it is certainly true that no person of even average keenness of perception would locate a sound behind him while it really emanated from in front of him. So that, if the investigator were standing close beside the medium, there is no known ventriloquial effect by means of which the medium could make a sound which would appear to issue from a point in space behind the investigator—as happened, e.g. at the Margery séance of May 19, 1924, at which Mr. Bird and myself were present, the medium's mouth being completely closed by Mr. Bird's hand.

All of which, of course, does not prove that the independent voices produced at Margery's séances are genuine. I am not at present discussing that point. All that I have endeavoured to do is to examine the theoretical possibility that such voices might have been produced by means of ventriloquism, and I think we may confidently conclude that such an explanation in no wise serves to elucidate or explain them.



In conclusion, the article published below is an example of Leslie Flint's voice mediumship during WWII. The image of Flint shown at the beginning of the article is taken from that published by "Psychic News", August 3rd 1940:

"Dead" Air Hero Gives Perfect Proof of His Survival

FULL NAME AND ADDRESS TOLD AT SEANCE

FLIGHT-LIEUTENANT PETER KITE, who was killed when his machine crashed in the Norwegian offensive in April, has succeeded in transmitting perfect proof of his survival.

At a direct-voice seance at which he was unknown to all but one of the sitters—he met him years ago but knew nothing of his recent activities—he told his full name, gave the correct address of his parents and transmitted information which his mother confirms is "in every way accurate."

Kite communicated at a seance with Leslie Flint, the direct-voice medium, on Monday of last week. He was introduced by Micky, Flint's Cockney guide, who announced, "There's a chap here out of the Air Force who wants to get into touch with his parents. He's very excited. I don't know if he will manage; I'll see what I can do."

Then the dozen sitters heard the excited voice of the "dead" airman speaking to them. No trumpet is used at Flint's seances; the spirit voices speak out of the air. "Hello, hello, hello!" he repeated. "My name's Peter. I want to get into touch with my mother. Do please help me, somebody. I was just 20. I am their only son.

"NOW I'M ALL RIGHT"

"I've been to see them, and they don't know I'm there. It's awful! Tell them I'm all right and tell them I'm not dead. Tell. Mother I came down in a crash, but now I'm all right. I want them to know.

"I was Flight-Lieutenant. Promise me you'll tell Mum and Dad. Tell them I like the enlargement from the snapshot. Mother's very worried; it's making her ill."

From the information given, no one in the circle could identify the boy. W. J. West, one of the sitters, promised the spirit that he would try to contact his parents if he could give sufficient information to enable them to be traced. "Try to give us your full name and address," he said, "and I promise that, if it is at all possible, I will get into touch with them."

THREE CHRISTIAN NAMES

"Oh, thank you so much," exclaimed the "dead" boy. "I had three Christian names—Peter William Handford Kite." To make sure he had transmitted his name correctly, he spelt his surname letter by letter, K-I-T-E. "I lived at 85, Upland Way, Grange Park," he added.

Then Kite materialised—there have been attempts at materialisation for several weeks at this series of Monday sittings, which are of an experimental nature—and advanced

towards one of the sitters, a man named Turner. The spirit touched Turner's knees and took hold of his arm, as if trying to shake him.

"I know you," he said. "You're Mr. Turner. I was a patient of yours. You took my teeth out!"

Although Turner had been attending these seances for several weeks, none of the sitters knew he was a dentist. He said he remembered Peter coming to him for treatment some years before, but he did not know he had joined the R.A.F. and had not heard of his "death."

"It's Peter," went on the spirit, still talking to the dentist. "Tell Mother, please, I'm not dead. She is worrying; tell her not to. Tell her I'm all right."

He repeated that he liked the enlargement, as though that message had some significance, and added: "Tell her to give my regards to Edward—she will understand. I'll be very upset indeed if you don't tell them. Tell them to come and talk with me. I want them to be happy. Don't forget, please. Thank you."

West promised that he would try to contact the boy's parents the next day and, with a final "Thank you," the spirit went.

On Tuesday, West went to Grange Park, North London, and at last succeeded in locating the address the "dead" airman had given.

EVERYTHING CONFIRMED

The woman who answered the door admitted that she was Mrs. Kite and that her son, Peter, had recently been killed in an air crash. But when she was told a message from her son had been received at a seance the night before, she, knowing nothing of Spiritualism, did not understand.

But West read to her from his notes what the "dead" boy had said and she acknowledged point after point as being correct. The only slight discrepancy was that her son's third christian name had been given at the seance as "Handford" whereas it was really Handsford. She knew Edward, she said, and showed West the enlargement of which Peter had spoken.

MOTHER'S LETTER

Mrs. Kite asked whether she might have a copy of what her son had said. When it was sent to her, she replied: "I wish to thank you for sending me the transcription of your notes and also for your visit to me last Tuesday.

"I must apologise to you for the way in which I received you at first, which was due to my ignorance and fear of the supernatural, but want you now to realise how much I appreciate your desire to help me. My husband is also much impressed with all that you told me.

"At first, as you know, I was very sceptical, and still am much bewildered, but must admit a feeling of serenity and comfort after your visit, which I have not experienced during many recent weeks.

"My husband and I acknowledge that the facts of the communications, some of which you could not possibly have been cognisant of are in every way accurate.

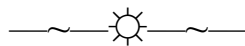
“We are indebted to you and Mr. Turner for the fulfilment of your obligation to our son, and the fresh hope you have given to us.”

* * *

At this same seance, there was a conversation between a spirit and a sitter in Dutch, a language of which Flint is ignorant. Micky, giving additional evidence, said to the man:

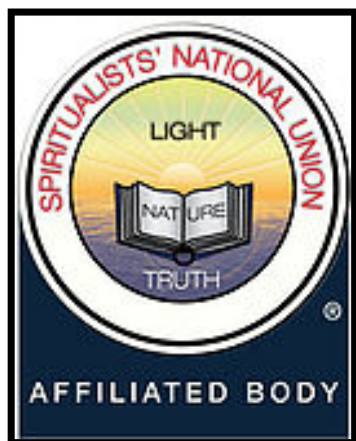
“Your wife is here and she has Peter with her. Peter was her dog: it was a Pekinese and it had something the matter with its eyes. You have a lock of hair in a locket. It is not her hair, but the dog’s! She says it was buried at the bottom of the garden and she had a flower bed put round it, in memory.”

All this was accepted by the sitter as correct. It was evidence, he said, which was unknown to anyone in this country except himself.



Leslie Flint (1911-1994)

SOCIETY TO CHURCH



The SNU Pioneer has featured various Spiritualists' National Union affiliated churches, for example Croydon in issue Vol. 3, No. 3, June 2016, and, more recently, Huddersfield in issue Vol. 5, No. 3, June 2018. These have shown some of the work that many of our forgotten pioneers carried out who worked so valiantly to bring about the Spiritualist movement we have today.

It is sometimes overlooked that many of our churches were not actually established when the church was opened. Often the now established church started years before in front rooms of private houses, in a hall, etc. by a small group of people, later sometimes becoming a society leading to the established church we have today.

In addition, the Spiritualist movement was seriously hampered by the Vagrancy Act; it should be noted that Spiritualism itself was not illegal — but the practice of mediumship. See the Pioneer series in six parts: “The Effect of the Vagrancy Act – The Work of the Spiritualists’ National Union”, starting in issue Vol. 2, No. 1, January 2014.

Cardiff First National Spiritualist Church was established in 1926. Today it is called Cardiff SNU Church, known as ‘Park Grove’. Its President, Carol Ellis, has sent me its history; at present the author of the report is unknown. What a wonderful tribute to our pioneers!

The original investigators into the cause of Spiritualism in Cardiff were a group who met around 1871 - 1872, who became interested through reading our American papers making reference to some spirit rappings. The group continued to meet for about 12 months, endeavouring to get communication through various means — sitting around a table, etc., but without result — until one evening when they were about to give it up a light passed over the table, causing much excitement.

After this they continued to meet and in due course invited two mediums, a Mr. Hearne and a Mr. Williams, to hold séances. These so impressed the sitters that they decided to form themselves into a sort of “Brotherhood” to investigate the matter further and eventually two circles were formed for development, the leaders being Mr. R. Williams and Mr. Peck.

Circles were held for about four years, three or four times a week. In 1876 the first public meeting was held over a shop at the end of Cowbridge Road, seating capacity about 80, the outcome of this meeting being that a Society was formed, named the Cardiff Progressive Society, with Rules etc., the President being Mr. Peck.

Subscriptions 3d per week. This lasted about three years.

During 1879 meetings were held at the home of Mr. R.C. Daly in Cowbridge Road for about three months and it was during this time that Captain Mark and Mr. E. Adams became connected with the movement. (The Memorial table in the present church is in memory of Mr. Adams.) A hall was then opened in Frederick Street. No collections were taken but a box was placed near the door into which anyone so disposed could place money.

The circle then continued and about 1880 invitations were sent to Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten, who came to address meetings at the Old Town Hall.

Mr. J.J. Morse was also invited to give six lectures, the first to be given in the Old Stuart Hall. This was broken up by a rowdy crowd led by a local preacher, the speaker and others having to remain in the Hall until being escorted from there by the police. The other five meetings were held above the Philharmonic Hall in St. Mary Street and were attended by 200 to 300 people each night.

In 1881 the Assembly Room in the Cardiff Arms Hotel was hired for twelve months at from 30/- to 40/- per week and 15 to 20 persons guaranteed 5/- per week towards expenses. Visiting speakers were engaged one about every two weeks but the fees and expenses of the speakers were not uniform and some proved to be very expensive, so this effort ceased after the twelve-month period expired and it was four to five years before any further public attempt was made.

In May 1890 a Psychological Society was formed, with rules adopted and a constitutional place of meeting. Unfortunately the first records (minute books, etc.) of the Society were destroyed — it is believed in a fire which took place at Captain Robert Mark's office at the Docks. Itinerant speakers were engaged for periodical visits, the first being Mr J.J. Morse, Mr. & Mrs. W. Wallis and Mrs. Green.²⁵ Spiritualist papers were published in Cardiff, these being "Ghost Revue" and the other named "Body & Soul". "Ghost Revue" was published by Mr. Jacob Matthews, who bore the whole of the expenses himself, and "Body & Soul" was published monthly by Dr. Williams for about three years; Dr. Williams also bore the whole of the expense of his publication himself.

This then was the foundation on which the Spiritualist movement in Cardiff was built.

The Society became affiliated to the Spiritualists' National Union in 1900.

In 1915 it was proposed to celebrate 25 years of the Society's existence and correspondence shows that the quarter-yearly meeting of the NEC of the SNU was invited to meet at Cardiff

In 1926 the present Church building was erected and it cannot be too strongly emphasised that courage and foresight were the hallmarks of those who took responsibility in this matter. The decision was to purchase the house at 18 Park Grove and the ground adjoining the house; the Church is built on this ground. Signing as trustees were Mr. J. Woodland, Mr. Owen Evans, Mr. W.D. Lemmer, Mr. W.J. Hare, Mr. B.W. Bilby, Mr. George Harris, Mr. K.B. Andrews, Mr. Thomas Davies, Mr. Arthur Merchant, Mr. Herbert Worth and Mr. J.E. Richards, and they deserve to be remembered always for their courage.

At that time the SNU was fighting for recognition as a religion in this country; mediums were liable to prosecution and imprisonment and some suffered these penalties, so there was a real danger that the Church would not prosper. In this event they stood to lose their homes and in some cases their livelihoods.

However, foundation stones were laid by certain Church officers on 18th October 1926 and the building was opened by Mr. Ernest Oaten on 4th December 1926. Mr. Oaten first became interested in the movement as a member of a circle meeting in a private house in

²⁵ For Mr. & Mrs. W. Wallis, see the previous issue of Pioneer. Both were founder workers in the foundation of the SNU.

Miskin in Cardiff. He became a President [1915-1920 & 1922-1923] of the SNU and [in 1919] Editor of “Two Worlds”.

Both events were reported in the local press and the press references are placed in the Membership Roll Book in the Church, together with the press photograph of the event.

The records of those years following the opening of the Church building show a period of much energetic activity. Social events were arranged, whist drives and dancing classes were successfully mounted and services were being held, with many of the nationally known workers serving the platform. The house number, 18 Park Grove, was used as a residence for Church caretakers and for holding séances.

There was a very well-attended Lyceum meeting in the Church. It is interesting to note the request to members’ friends to contribute books to provide a library in the Church. The library has existed for many years now and has many interesting publications available, notably many provided from those early years.

Application was made in January 1929 for certification as a healer of Mrs Lilian Hare, with details of cures that had been effected through her work as a Spiritualist Healer, and this certification to be awarded in this country. Mrs. Hare was an outstanding healer and through her work as a healer she contributed quite substantially to the Church funds and to its reputation. Through all those early years Mrs. Hare served as Financial Secretary and the Church records show just how active she was, serving as delegate to the SNU conferences — at her own expense and always present at committee and general meetings. (Mr. Walter Hare also was very active in the Church, which he served as President from January 1928. The President at the time when the building was opened was Mr. James Woodland.)

Over the years the platform was served by many of the nationally known workers — Mr Harold Sharp, Mr. Horace Leaf, Mr. Harry Boddington, Mr. Charles Quastel, Mr. Bell, Mr. Calendar, Mr Jack Mackay, Mrs. D.C. Williams, Mrs Ivy Northcott [Northage?], Miss Reddings, Mrs Helen Hughes, and the much loved “Aunty Ada” (Mrs. Hoskins) of Bristol, come to mind. Publicity meetings were arranged, one of these being held at the Park Hall in with Air Chief Marshal Lord Dowding as speaker and Mrs. Helen Hughes to demonstrate clairvoyance.

In 1957 it was decided to sell the house, number 18 Park Grove, and to build the annexe around the rear and side of the Church. This added the small hallway, two cloakrooms, two side rooms and the kitchen area and improved the facilities greatly. There have been many improvements made and the present committee have endeavoured to keep the building up to a high standard.

Certain members of past years deserve special mention — Mrs. George Harris, MSNU, who served for many years as Minister and President, Mr. Lewis Trenchard OBE, who also served for some years as President, and Mr. Don Harris, MSNU, who was Minister and President for quite a length of time. Miss Gladys Sally was Secretary of the Church for a period of 27 years and she was largely responsible for maintaining the quality of the platform. Miss Sally was one of those quietly efficient souls whose concern was only for the Church she served, and to the end of her physical life she was holding office — finally that of Librarian, which she carried out with customary efficiency. Her somewhat sudden transition to the higher life left a real gap.

The organist of some 40 years, Mrs. Myfanwy Davies, also deserves special mention, for she was a faithful servant to the Church. Her musical skill, combined with her beautiful

voice, contributed a great deal to the beauty of services and to the creation of an atmosphere of peace and serenity. Mrs. Davies also wrote quite a number of spiritually inspired verses, and the healing hymn, which is sung in the Church, was written by her.

There have been many local workers who have done a great deal to maintain this Church over the years of its existence. The names of Mrs. Barnstable and Mrs. Marsh are noticeable in the earlier years, then followed by Mrs. Hailes, Mrs. Dorothy Palmer, Mrs. Squires and Mrs Hannah Wormald, who as Mrs. Walters took a part in the earlier platform work, as did Mrs. Rosie Beale, Mr. Cyril Dell and Mr. Jordan Gill. Mrs. Rosa Griffiths was a very active worker, teacher and healer and she has left a legacy of some fine workers and healers who are workers in the Church today.

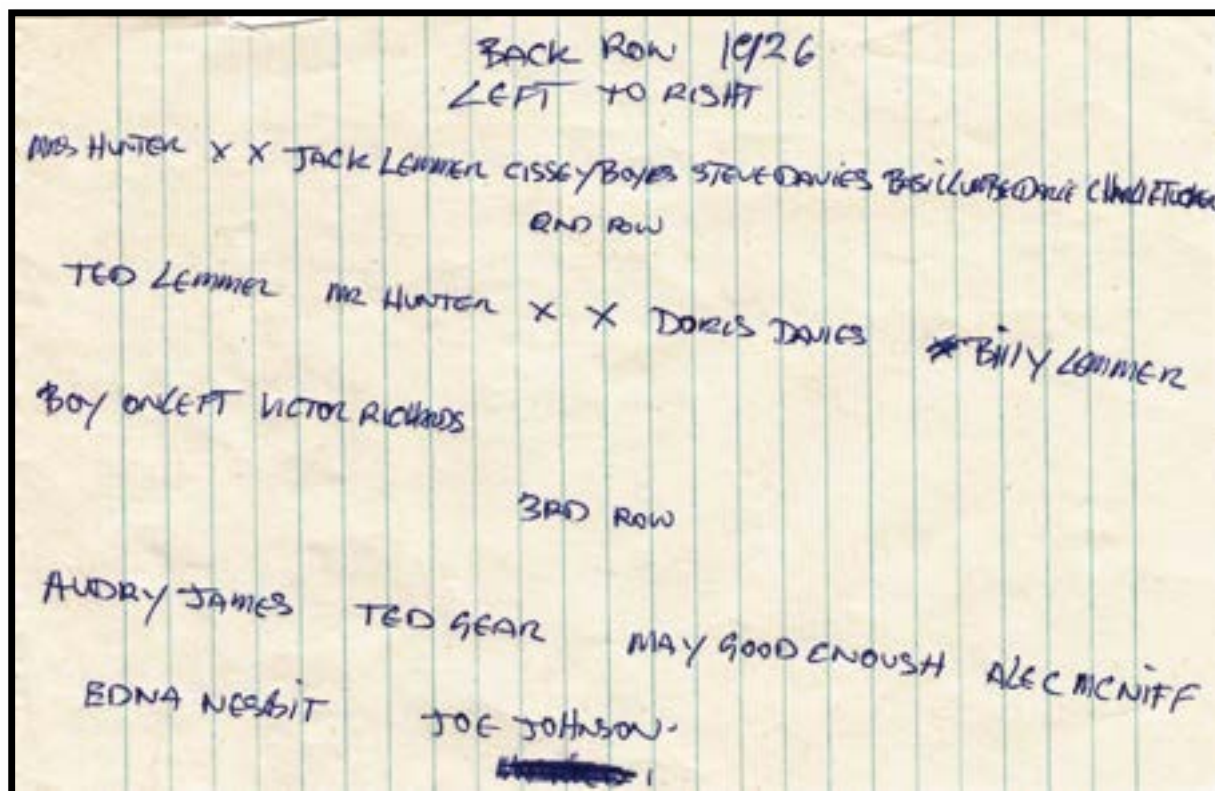
Outstanding and internationally acclaimed physical mediums have emerged from Park Grove Church, Mr. George Spriggs being a more recently known physical medium who was a member of this Church. Mr. Alec Harris originally sat in a circle conducted by Mr. George Harris MSNU and he proved to be a very excellent physical medium.

Those many workers who have not been named but who have over all the years contributed in many, many ways to the continued existence and fortunes of this Church are really the pillars on which it is built. Without their support and interest it would never have survived — so we remember and revere everyone who has helped to keep our Spiritualist Church alive and well. In 1986, as a celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of the opening of the building, the SNU Conference was invited to Cardiff and so Cardiff Church was host to this meeting.

We look forward to the next century with courage and a determination to keep it a beacon of light in this world which often appears dark and troubled.

Taken in 1926





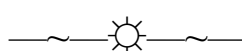
It can be noted in the report:

“Outstanding and Internationally acclaimed physical mediums have emerged from Park Grove Church, Mr. George Spriggs ...” Carol Ellis also sent me an article titled “Materialisation Phenomena through the Mediumship of Mr George Spriggs, (of Cardiff)”, a paper which was read by Dr Abraham Wallace, M.D. (London), to a Congress in London in 1913. This will be published in a later issue.



Today the Cardiff SNU Church, ‘Park Grove’, enjoys a full programme of activities on most days of the week, including two Divine Sunday services morning and evening; for times and dates, mediums list, Spiritual Healing, developing circle, discussions and demonstrations, etc. see their website:

<https://www.spiritualistchurchcardiff.com>





Pioneer ends its fifth volume

Pioneer was launched at the Torquay A.G.M. 2013, replacing the SNU hardback magazine of the same title; a special edited edition of the first issue was published for the delegates. Starting as a quarterly electronic journal, from January 2015 it went bi-monthly and continues as such today.

The front page noted:

The foundations of the Spiritualists' National Union were laid over a long period of time, and its growth ensured by dedicated pioneers, many of whom have been forgotten. Most readers will be unacquainted with their names and the roles they so valiantly played in the building of the SNU, an organisation that today stands firm due to their bold efforts.

This journal is dedicated to those Pioneers.

To date it has published over 1,000 pages of researched materials; it is read in various societies, such as the Society for Psychical Research. It is recommended reading for the SNU education courses; it is also used by universities and has attracted numerous students and on occasion their professors to attend the Britten Museum and Library Research – Study, as noted elsewhere in this issue.

In the last year individual subscribers have substantially increased, rising to 1,200; in addition, it is sent out to SNUi members and is available on the SNU website.

Extended thanks are due to David Hopkins, who sub-edited the early issues of the journal.



The present
sub-editors are
Leslie Price and
former SNU
General Secretary
Charles Coulston.

