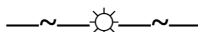




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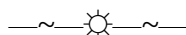
Contents list:



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

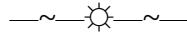


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THE “OLD BAILEY” COMES TO STANSTED HALL



A spectacular re-enactment of the events of the 1944 trial which would bring about the imprisonment of Helen Duncan



On Tuesday December 12th 2017 the Arthur Findlay College lecture room was transformed into the Central Criminal Court, Old Bailey, E.C.4. Paul Gaunt explains the set up to SNU President David Bruton who was to play the SNU Defence of Helen Duncan and her fellow defendants.

After the primary introductions by the college manager Tanya Smith, the total re-enactment lasted 2 hours and twenty-five minutes. Throughout the proceedings a continued silence prevailed from the audience with only a short adjournment.

The four defendants and council had entered the court room shortly followed by the court rising as the Recorder of London, Sir Gerald Dodson entered.¹ The clerk of the court² read the plea:

Helen Duncan, Ernest Edward Hartland Homer, Elizabeth Anne Jones, and Frances Brown, you four are charged upon an indictment which contains seven counts.

In the *first count* that between the 1st December, 1943, and the 19th January, 1944, you conspired together and with other persons unknown to pretend to exercise or use a kind of conjuration, to wit, that through the agency of the said Helen Duncan spirits of deceased persons should appear to be present in fact in such place as the said Helen Duncan was then in, and that the said spirits were communicating with living persons then and there present, contrary to section 4 of The Witchcraft Act, 1735.



Ernest Homer



Helen Duncan

In the *second count* you are all four charged that on the 19th January of this year you pretended to exercise or use a kind of conjuration, namely, that spirits of deceased persons should be present in fact in the place where Helen Duncan then was, contrary to section 4 of The Witchcraft Act, 1735.

In the *third count* you are charged that upon the same day, 19th January of this year, you with intent to defraud caused Stanley Raymond Worth to pay 25s. to Ernest Homer (that is, the said

¹ Dr David Saunders, PhD, MSc, BSc (Hons), FHEA, PGCAP. University of Northampton

² Rachel Evenden Lecturer in Positive Psychology (MBPsS, BSc Psychology). University of Northampton



Elizabeth Anne Jones

Ernest Edward Hartland Homer) for the use or benefit of yourselves by false pretences, the pretence being that you were then in a position to bring about the appearance of the spirits of deceased persons and that you then bona fide intended so to do without trickery.

In the *fourth count* you are charged with a similar offence upon the 19th January of this year in respect of causing Bessie Lock to pay 7s. to Ernest Homer for the use or benefit of yourselves upon the same false pretences with intent to defraud.

In the last *three counts* you are charged with effecting a public mischief, in each count upon the following dates respectively, namely, the 14th day of January, the 17th day of January, and the 19th day of January of this year, the particulars being that you effected that public mischief by holding a meeting to which His Majesty's liege subjects were admitted on payment, and at which meeting the said Helen Duncan professed that the spirit of a deceased person was in fact present and visible through her agency. Those particulars are the same in each of those last three counts.

Helen Duncan, are you guilty or not guilty?

PRISONER DUNCAN: Not guilty.³

THE CLERK OF THE COURT: Ernest Edward Hartland Homer?

PRISONER HOMER: Not guilty.⁴

THE CLERK OF THE COURT: Elizabeth Anne Jones?

PRISONER JONES: Not guilty.⁵

THE CLERK OF THE COURT: Frances Brown?

PRISONER BROWN: Not guilty.⁶



PRISONERS DOCK



Frances Brown

³ Tanya Smith General Manager of the Arthur Findlay College (AFC)

⁴ Torsten Nyquist

⁵ Sandie Baker AFC Tutor

⁶ Lynn Cottrell AFC Tutor

The Prosecution was played by Paul Gaunt; in the opening address is was stated:



May it please your Lordship, members of the jury: I appear with my learned friend Mr. Elam to prosecute these four persons. We appear for the Crown, and my learned friends Mr. Loseby and Mr. Simpson Pedler appear together for all four prisoners.

I daresay you noticed that when the indictment was read out the Witchcraft Act was mentioned; you may have heard that. I want to make it abundantly clear at the very commencement of this prosecution that this is in no way connected with witchcraft; it is in no way aimed at the honest beliefs, whatever they may be, of any man or woman. What it is aimed at is something quite different.

It is aimed at just ordinary common fraud.

In the first two counts of this indictment you will find that the Witchcraft Act has been used; it is an old Act, it is two hundred years old, and in this particular case the Act has remained in the Statute Book untouched since the reign of George II, and you may think for a very good reason indeed.

In olden days, that is to say, in the times of our forefathers, yours and mine, it was almost a popular matter to chase poor deluded creatures who were thought to be witches, and the mass of the public believed in that sort of thing being possible.

Witchcraft was not the only means known in those times of playing upon the imagination of the public. There was sorcery, enchantment, spells, and one particular thing which was called conjuration, that is to say, conjuring up spirits: but times changed and our forefathers began to think it was all nonsense, and that it was ridiculous to prosecute people for practising something which was utterly impossible, and, when the reign of George II was reached, the law was altered to say that people were not to be prosecuted for witchcraft.

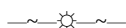
Therefore the Act of 1736 says this: "From and after the 24th day of June no prosecution, suit or proceedings shall be commenced or carried on against any person or persons for witchcraft, sorcery, enchantment or conjuration in any court whatsoever in Great Britain"; so that stopped that, and everybody thought that that had been packed up. The Act also says: "And for the more effectual preventing and punishing any pretences to such, arts as are before mentioned . . . being lawfully convicted on indictment, shall, for every such offence suffer imprisonment"—that, of course, means 'may'. It would be a matter in the discretion of the judge; it does not mean that they have to go to prison.

So we reach a position in 1735 which would no doubt be welcomed by any person who may call himself to-day a Spiritualist.

The other matters in this indictment that do not concern the Witchcraft Act, are allegations that these persons caused money to be paid by false pretences, that is to say, the false pretence that I have already indicated to you and which you have heard in the indictment: that Helen Duncan was in a position to bring about the appearance of the spirits of the dead, and the false pretence that they intended to do that bona fide without any trickery.

And that, in the allegation of the Crown, led to the payment of monies by persons for admission to such entertainment. Perhaps 'entertainment' is the wrong word—exhibition.

Finally it is alleged by the Crown here that such behaviour—not necessarily particularly at this time when the dead are no doubt anxiously sought after by persons who have lost their boys—that such conduct as pretending to call them up when it is a false and hollow lie, is nothing more than a public mischief.



After the primary opening, the court called the crown prosecution witness Stanley Raymond Worth.⁷ Stanley Worth was a Lieutenant in the R.N.V.R. It would be his account that would form the basis of the prosecution although he initially claimed to be an honest researcher into Spiritualism, on meeting Helen Duncan he soon decided she was a fraud and reported her to the police. On police instructions, he would attend meetings reporting back to the Portsmouth police, establishing that monies were paid for materialisation séances.

On January 19th 1944 Worth also purchased a séance ticket for 12s. 6d. for War Reserve police officer Thomas Cross⁸ as the third materialisation was taking place Cross rushed forward from the second row knocking Mr Homer to the ground from his chair he claimed to seize the form with the aid of Stanley Worth shining a torch both claiming in the evidence box the spirit form was in fact Helen Duncan holding a white sheet?



Clerk of the court



Dorothy Constance Gill

However, defence witness Dorothy Constance Gill⁹ claimed this account to be false insomuch as the form Cross claimed was indeed Helen Duncan was in fact ectoplasm, and Duncan was sitting where she was supposed to be in her chair. That in fact Cross fell through the curtains sprawled across Duncan and the ectoplasm had gone, not snatched away by somebody in the audience as claimed by the prosecution.



Defence

⁷ Professor Chris A. Roe Perrott-Warrick Senior Researcher Director, Centre for the Study of Anomalous Psychological Processes. University of Northampton

⁸ Darren Hart an AFC college student and professional actor.

⁹ Janette (Jan) Marshall AFC tutor.

It was this debate between councils the re-enactment was centred around by the Defence and Prosecution.



Defence and Prosecution arguing the claims of Stanley Raymond Worth



The full re-enactment was as far as possible taken from the trial transcripts which were put together giving a unique insight to the actual proceedings of the trial, many not realising the facts of the trial and that Helen Duncan did not sit at the dock alone but there were three other co-defendants charged on the same seven counts in the high court. Naturally there was some editing but nothing was change, added, or removed to change the balanced overview of this extraordinary trial.

Mr. John Maude, K.C., and Mr. Henry Elam appeared on behalf of the Prosecution, Mr. C. E. Loseby And Mr. J. Simpson Pedler appeared on behalf of the Defence. For the purpose of the re-enactment there was just the Defence and Prosecution.

**Prosecution witness
Thomas Cross**





Thomas Cross' testimony is challenged by the Defence



Defence witness Dorothy Constance Gill leaving the witness box

The trial started on Thursday March 23rd 1944 and closed with the verdict on the seventh day, Friday March 31st 1944. The jury retired to consider their verdict at 4.32 pm and returned into court at 4.56 p.m:

THE CLERK OF THE COURT: Members of the jury, are you agreed upon your verdict?

THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY:¹⁰

Yes, sir.

THE CLERK OF THE COURT: Do you find the prisoner Helen Duncan guilty or not guilty on the first count of this Indictment for conspiracy to contravene the Witchcraft Act?

THE FOREMAN: Guilty, sir.

THE CLERK OF THE COURT: Do you find the prisoner Ernest Edward Hartland Homer guilty or not guilty on that count?

THE FOREMAN: Guilty.

THE CLERK OF THE COURT: Do you find the prisoner Elizabeth Anne Jones guilty or not guilty on that count?

THE FOREMAN: Guilty.

THE CLERK OF THE COURT: Do you find the prisoner Frances Brown guilty or not guilty on that count?

THE FOREMAN: Guilty.

THE CLERK OF THE COURT: You find all four guilty on the first count,- and that is the verdict of you all?

THE FOREMAN: Yes.

THE CLERK OF THE COURT: You are discharged from giving a verdict on the other counts.



¹⁰ Benny Illemaann

On day eight Monday April 3rd 1944 sentencing was passed:

SENTENCES

THE RECORDER: Helen Duncan, Ernest Homer, Elizabeth Jones and Frances Brown, you have been found guilty of conspiring together to commit an unlawful act, namely, of pretending to recall spirits of deceased persons in a visible and tangible form; the emphasis, of course, is upon the word “pretending”. Whether genuine manifestations of the kind are possible, the verdict of the jury here does not decide, and this court has nothing whatever to do with any such abstract questions. The jury found that the methods adopted by you in the exhibitions covered by the charge amounted to a fraud upon those who witnessed them.

It has been argued that the Statute of 1735, which makes false pretending an offence, is old and out of date, but fraud existed long before that Statute was passed and has prevailed in one form or another ever since. It was also suggested that Mrs. Duncan should be allowed to give a demonstration of her powers. Well, as I have said already, if this had taken place and nothing had appeared, Mrs. Duncan would have been condemned even before she had been tried. It would have been in effect a reversion to the dark ages, and to something very akin to trial by ordeal. It was not a question of Mrs. Duncan taking the risk; it was a question of her being tried according to the laws of the land, and there was nothing in this Prosecution directed against Spiritualism as such; and all those who may believe in genuine manifestations of a spiritual kind will, I imagine, welcome the expulsion of fraud from any of its observances. In law there is no uncertainty at all about the position of Spiritualists, among whom there are many sincere and devout persons. They are free to go their own way, and they are only responsible to the law when fraudulent practices are proved. In this respect they are no different from any other section of the community.

In this case the jury appeared to have little hesitation in finding that all of you had participated in a common fraud, and I must deal with the case upon that footing. There are many people, especially in War-time, sorrowing for loved ones. There is a great danger of their susceptibilities being exploited, and out of this yearning for comfort and assurance there are those unfortunately who are ready to profit. Many of those persons who seek that solace are trusting by nature and poor in circumstances, and the law endeavours to protect such persons against themselves. Now in this case Mrs. Duncan made £112 in six days, which is some indication of how willing people are to dabble in the occult. That being so,



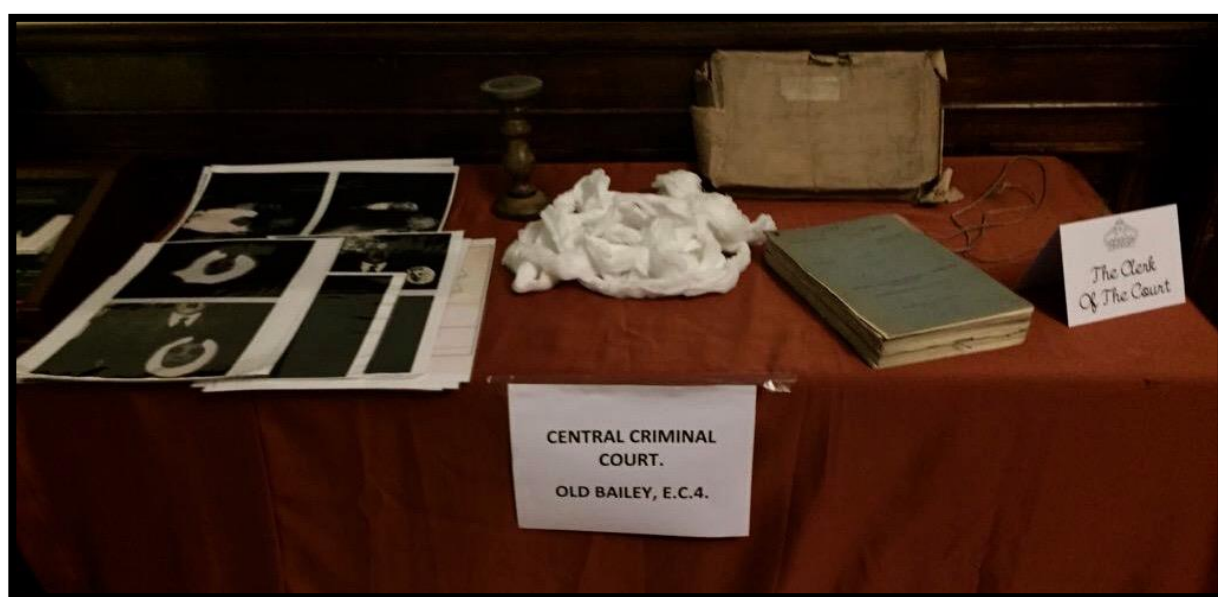
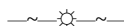
it is highly important in the interests of the community as a whole that these demonstrations should be conducted without fraud.

I have considered very anxiously the course that I should take, and I have come to the conclusion that, as the jury have found this to be a case of plain dishonesty, I can make no distinction between the accused and others who are similarly convicted. In the case of Mrs. Duncan, she has made the most out of this, and the sentence of the Court upon her is that she be imprisoned for nine months.

So far as you, Frances Brown, are concerned, it is a long time ago since you were convicted of shoplifting, and I dismiss that from my mind altogether. It is quite plain that you took an active part in this, particularly by the exhibition of these photographs. But you were active in trying to impress upon them the genuineness of these exhibitions by the handling of these photographs. The matter cannot be therefore passed over in your case without there being some penalty, but I make it as lenient as I can, and the sentence of the court upon you will be one of four months' imprisonment.

So far as you, Ernest Homer, and you, Elizabeth Jones, are concerned, I think you are in a somewhat different position, both of you. I think it may well be that, like other people, you engaged Helen Duncan, and it may well be that your enthusiasm for what you may believe led you to close your eyes to what was going on. You both of you have good characters, and under those circumstances I do not think it is necessary to pass any sentence of imprisonment upon either of you, but I trust in future you will be on your guard against those who are only too ready to make money at the expense of credulous people. I am willing to believe that you belong to that class, although it is not a matter which can be regarded as altogether a matter without doubt. However, I am going to give you the benefit of that doubt, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, and particularly with regard to your good character hitherto, and I trust you will guard against such a situation in future to the utmost of your power.

In those circumstances you will both be bound over to be of good behaviour for a period of two years in your own recognizances in the sum of £5, which means you will hear no more about this if you behave yourselves and keep out of trouble; otherwise consequences are apt to follow, you understand.



Items shown above are copies of evidence used by the prosecution in the trial which consisted of Frances Brown's psychic photographs, séance seating plan for January 19th 1944 when Helen Duncan was seized, and some cheese cloth/butter muslin.

Also on the table are part of the original typed trial notes which belonged to the SNU defence Charles Loseby.

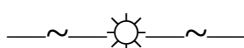


An overview of the re-enactment showing the defence seated, the recorder at the bench, witness Lieutenant Stanley Worth, prosecution in cross-examination, and the Clerk of the court seated with the items of evidence behind her.

Helen Duncan, after a failed appeal on Monday 19th June 1944, was released from HM Prison Holloway on Friday September 22nd 1944, after serving 172 days of her nine-month sentence

Pioneer has previously published the problems with mediumship and the Vagrancy Act - Helen Duncan being the first and only Spiritualist medium to be sent to prison under the clause from the Witchcraft Act please see Pioneer from Vol. II No. I in six parts: "The Effect of the Vagrancy Act – The Work of the Spiritualists' National Union."

Thanks, are due to all those who played the characters, my wife Cindy for her many hours of help with the script, and the staff at the Arthur Findlay College for making this historic event such a success. Thanks, are also due to Janette (Jan) Marshall for taking all these wonderful photographs of the trial re-enactment of Helen Duncan and her co-defendants.



An extraordinary secret was held in the Spiritualist moment for over three decades:

Who was the medium for Silver Birch, known as the “Guide of the Hannen Swaffer Home Circle”?

It is well known today the medium was Maurice Barbanell the founding editor of “Psychic News”, which had begun on May 28th, 1932. Barbanell continued in this role until 1946 when (following a disagreement with Arthur Findlay) he left, later becoming the editor of the “Two Worlds”. On August 24th 1957 the editor revealed he himself was the trance medium through whom Silver Birch communicated. Sixteen years later June 20th, 1962 Barbanell returned to his previous role and continued as editor of “Psychic News”, and, the “Two Worlds” jointly until his death in 1981.



Below is Barbanell’s announcement in 1957:

WHO IS SILVER BIRCH’S MEDIUM?

BY THE EDITOR

THE time has come to make public what has for long been a “secret.” Who is Silver Birch’s medium? The answer is—I am.

This fact has been known to a growing number of people who have visited Hannen Swaffer’s home circle, where Silver Birch has spoken for over 20 years. Visitors, however, were asked not to disclose the medium’s identity.

Swaff, always a critical journalist, recognised from the start that here we had spirit teachings, profound yet simple, expressing our philosophy in words of beauty and dignity, that ought to be printed. They were not given to the home circle for private use, he insisted, but so that they could be broadcast all over the world.

I agreed, with one proviso. “I am the Editor of a Spiritualist newspaper,” I said. “If I print that I am the medium there could be the criticism that publication is done to flatter my vanity. I will leave my name out and let the spirit teachings stand or fall on their own merit.”

What was the result of publication? Swaff has written: “As a consequence, Silver Birch has more followers than any earthly preacher. They belong to every clime and almost every race, and are people of all shades of colour.”

Apart from regular publication of the teachings after every sitting, they have been recorded in seven books, translated into several languages. Who can measure their influence?

The teachings have won through on their own merits. There is therefore, no longer any need for anonymity. Besides, being very frank by nature, I dislike secrecy.

Silver Birch was responsible for bringing me into Spiritualism 37 years ago. I was secretary of a literary society at which, to ensure there were good discussions, it was my job to oppose the speaker, no matter what he said. One night we had a talk on Spiritualism from a man who recounted experiences that had convinced him.

Instead of opposing the speaker, I said that this was a subject on which opinions could not be expressed without prior investigation. Later, the speaker asked if I was serious in my views. If so, would I like to investigate?

I had no intention of conducting a personal inquiry, but it seemed churlish to refuse after what I had said in discussion. I still have the diary in which I noted, "Six months to investigate Spiritualism." I thought it would be fair to express no opinion until after six months' inquiry. Here I am, 37 years later, still inquiring . . .

I was taken by the speaker to my first seance. It was held in a tenement in one of London's poorest parts. But I was not impressed. I was an agnostic, with practically an atheistic outlook.

When at this seance sitters announced that they had suddenly become Red Indians, Africans and Chinese, I laughed outright. One of these reproved me, saying, "You will be doing this before long." Sceptical and incredulous I left, but returned the next week, as promised.

Half-way through the proceedings I woke up and apologised for having fallen asleep. "You have been a Red Indian, and in trance! I was told. "**Your guide gave his name** and said that he has been training you for this for years, having chosen you before your birth, and that before long you will be speaking on Spiritualist platforms."

Again I laughed at the prophecy, though bewildered by my experience. At subsequent seances this same guide continued to speak, though his English was faulty and the accent rather crude.

With the passing of the years the guide's language so improved that, to quote Swaff who has heard all the Keir Hardies and Philip Snowdens, all the Lloyd Georges and Lord Samuels, all the Churchills and Joseph Chamberlains, all the Dr. Gores and Dr. Temples:

"His simple eloquence now often transcends that of any speaker to whom I have ever listened."

Through the years, the degree of trance gradually grew. At first I could hear every word spoken. Then I seemed to be listening at a distance. Finally came the stage where, though unconscious, every word that had been uttered appeared as if on an unfolding screen before I went to sleep at night.

Having an independent mind, I always wanted to know what was going on so far as I was involved. This repetition at night of what had been said involved, I was told, the utilisation of psychic power. When the decision to print the teachings was made, it was suggested to me that, as I would see the transcript, I should forego its being repeated to me at night. I agreed.

A curious happening followed. If the stenographer has made an error — it is no mean feat to record verbatim seance proceedings sometimes for as long as two hours — I always “know,” when reading the transcript, what the right word should be.

There was an extraordinary incident after the decision to publish was made. The circle had always called the guide by an affectionate nickname, which they did not want printed. They asked him to choose the name to be used. He selected Silver Birch. The next morning, when I arrived at the office there was a postcard, addressed to me anonymously from a reader in Scotland, of a picture of silver birches.

Who is Silver Birch? That is another story. The Red Indian who manifests is only a small expression of a much larger and evolved being. Hints of identity have, however, been given.

“Silver Birch has an aura of majesty,” says Lilian Bailey, whose clairvoyance has enabled her to see him frequently “He is a very great soul who comes in the guise of an Indian.”

Silver Birch has given ample evidence that he is not a secondary personality, as researchers so often assert, but an independent being. Once he told my wife that at the next Estelle Roberts voice seance he would speak through the trumpet and repeat certain words that she should remember. The promise was fulfilled — and it was a thrill for me to hear Silver Birch speak in the direct voice.

Then, in the early days, the guide to prove his separate existence, would insist on a pin being stuck deeply into my hand. Nothing was felt and no marks were visible.

Largely, Silver Birch has confined himself to teaching, though occasionally he has given healing and evidence of Survival. He has, however, provided remarkable guidance and help. I have often found myself envying Silver Birch his eloquence.

My speeches, which, alas, never touch oratorical heights, have to be prepared from notes. His wise utterances flow without pause, even when giving spontaneous answers to questions or replying to comments.

He has the remarkable facility for saying the same thing in a different way. His teaching could be compressed in an address no longer than the Sermon on the Mount. Yet he goes on and on with infinite but consistent variations.

“Does a guide choose his medium because “like attracts like”? With one exception, I have always agreed with the outlook Silver Birch reveals. That exception is reincarnation. In debates, when I have opposed it, I have always been told that I won.

Yet gradually my viewpoint has changed. Now I am prepared to believe that, in exceptional circumstances, individuals voluntarily reincarnate for a special task.

Silver Birch has a breadth of humanity and a transcendental wisdom which reveal an access to a pool of wisdom, alas not available to me. He never criticises individuals, never finds fault or blames them. I, on the other hand, am frankly critical.

He has always risen to the occasion, no matter who the visitor may be. He has met the arguments of the scientist and preacher, comforted the mourner, helped the tough and the simple, thrown light on the problems of the despairing, encouraged mediums and

workers, and always maintained a level that is the hallmark of an evolved being. No caller has left feeling that his visit has been in vain.

Directly the war ended, Silver Birch, in prophetic mood,¹¹ began his weekly utterance with these words:

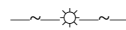
“One war ends. Another war begins—the war against human greed, selfishness and materialism, the war to liberate man and to build systems in an ever-better world in which freedom, equity, justice and decency are the lot of all peoples.”

Lord Beaverbrook, after reading the first book of Silver Birch’s teachings,¹² wrote: “It contains passages of great beauty. I was struck by the simplicity of the work.”

The guide’s oratory has been compared with the language of Churchill. “Almost Churchillian prose in their flights,” said a journalist. “Rarely has the English language been so gently, so simply and so beautifully used,” wrote another, who said of one passage, “That beats the drama of a Churchill.”

It is not surprising that, having been a medium for 37 years, I have always sympathised with other instruments of the spirit world and fought for them, because I understand many of their problems at first hand. And the finest way to learn about Spiritualism, and the after-life, is from the wise teachers who are living in what will be our future existence.

It is in such an atmosphere that the Silver Birch teachings have been produced through a human instrument too often aware of his failings and weaknesses. Through the years, however, I have learned to love and respect this saintly guide whom I have never seen.



Barbanell further adds:

SPIRIT ALCHEMY

MY own tribute to Silver Birch is contained in these words:

“His teaching is an example of spirit alchemy, the ability to take the 26 letters of the alphabet and transmute them into words of shimmering beauty.

“As one who spends the whole of his working life in writing, I can appreciate that the faculty of being able to deliver, week after week, words of Wisdom, full of eloquent simplicity, in this spontaneous fashion, is in itself evidence of supernormality.

“Like other journalists who live by their pen, I know that simple English is the most difficult to write. I know how you have to polish and repolish, alter words, delete others, change sentences, consult the dictionary and the thesaurus, before you are satisfied.

“Yet here is a ‘dead’ man who, without hesitation, can produce perfect prose. Everything he says is full of common sense, inspiring, uplifting and ennobling.

“Silver Birch’s words glisten like diamonds. I salute a master of English, a great literary craftsman whom I have grown to love and admire.”

M.B.

¹¹ See Pioneer Vol. 3 No.2 April 201 “No World War” predictions

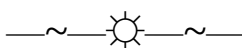
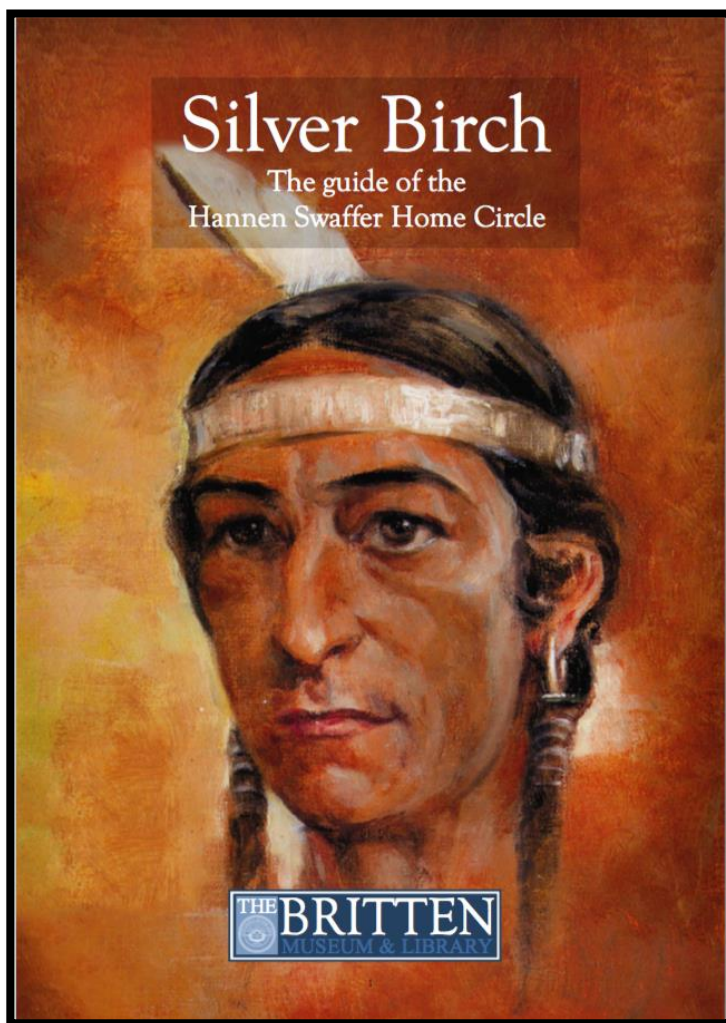
¹² Lord Beaverbrook features in “My Greatest Story” by Hannen Swaffer, this has been re-published by the SNU (the name Hannen is incorrectly spelt: Hannan on the front cover)

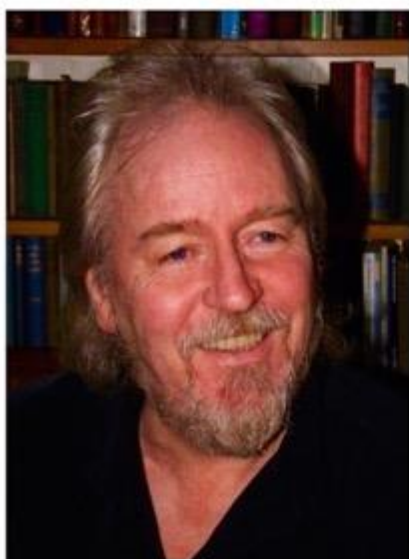
It is further revealed in the SNU publication “Silver Birch” the guide was not originally called Silver Birch: but was known as

“Big Jump.”

The name continued within the circle until Maurice Barbanell’s death.

This psychic painting of Silver Birch was done by Marcel Poncin, a famous French artist and actor. It is completely unlike his normal art. Though he never saw the guide, he was inspired to produce this portrait, working feverishly in the half light. And, without realising it, he included in the picture a feature that is highly evidential. No mention has even been made in print of this feature. The accuracy of the painting has been confirmed by several clairvoyants.





Britten Museum & Library

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2018 Dates

February 17th - 23rd

July 14th - 21st

November 17th - 22nd

Your **Research** study visit will be supported under the guidance of the Museum Curator and Librarian, Paul Gaunt.

A Unique Opportunity Exploring Spiritualist History

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



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/photocopies will be available on some material.

£25.00 per day
09. 00 - 18. 00

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 available if required

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

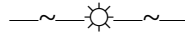
5 nights £300.00

6 nights £335.00

7 nights £360.00

Arthur Findlay College

“Christmas Week”

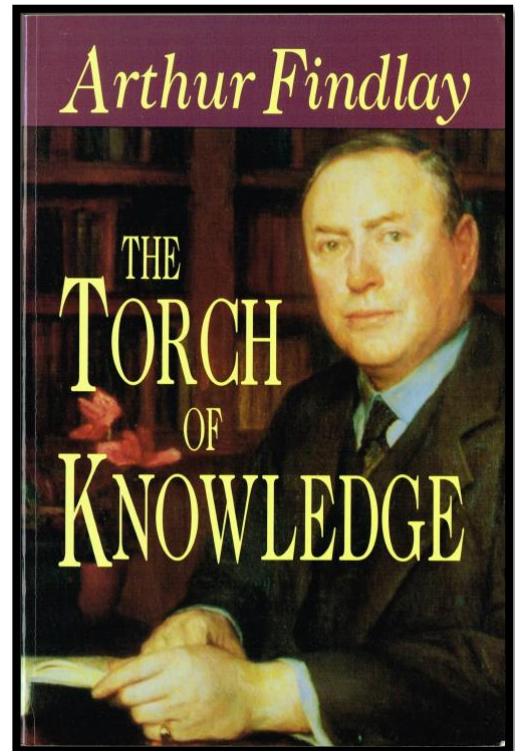


The colleges traditional Murder Mystery evening was again, as last year, based on the characters of Arthur Findlay’s 1936, only fictional work. Findlay’s characters in the story are fictitious, but he emphasises the fact that all the psychic phenomena, which ran through the story had actually happened.

The Murder Mystery is based on the George Trueman circle; Trueman’s character in the book is a Chartered Accountant and a psychical researcher and lecturer and his wife is a highly-developed medium who live in a Surrey country mansion, Sureway Court.

The murder mystery this year as last year is based on the George Trueman circle who came to “Huntingham House” (Stansted Hall) which results in a murder.

Findlay’s characters used in this year’s murder mystery are:



Mr George Trueman: David Bruton

Mrs Trueman: Jan Marshal

Their daughter Hope: Lynn Cottrell

A medium Angela Bridge: Sandie Baker

A village doctor Dr. Cureall: Chris Roe

Secretary to Mrs Trueman Miss Noteall: Tanya Smith

The story line was:¹³

Mr and Mrs George Trueman are leading Spiritualists and live in their Surrey country mansion, Sureway Court and hold their regular private closed séances each week with the regular sitters.

Through the direct voice mediumship of world famous medium Mrs Trueman the circle is instructed to go to Huntingham House, situated just a few miles from Bishops Stortford a sprawling mansion set in its own grounds with two drives as shown in the photograph.

The circle is warned by Mrs Trueman’s guide “Pocahontas” that a disclosure is to be made against a member of the Trueman circle by the well-known direct voice medium “Harry F. Tindaul”, and his Chinese control “Shojan Lon”, at Huntingham Hall.

Each knows “Shojan Lon” is going to reveal a well-kept secret against a member of the George Trueman circle – each is scared the Spirit will reveal something against them!

A MOTIVE FOR MURDER!

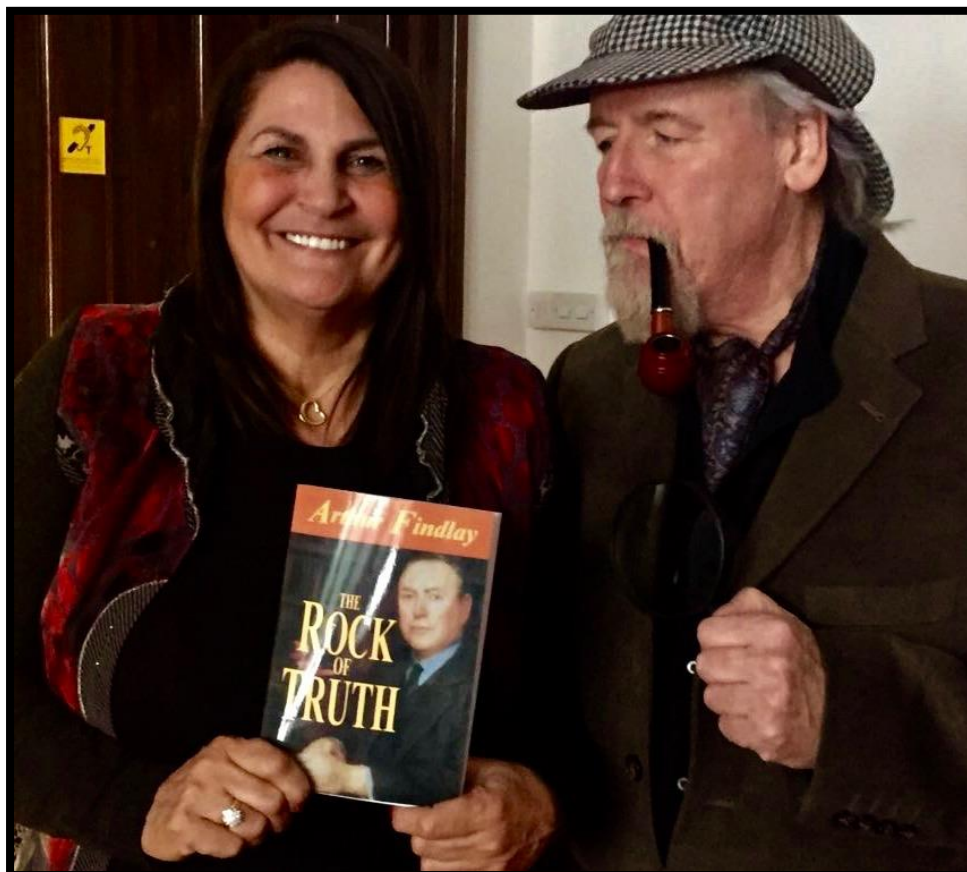
¹³ Co-written by Janette (Jan) Marshall AFC Tutor.



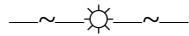


Left to right: Lynn Cottrell, Jan Marshal, David Bruton, Tanya Smith, Sandie Baker, & Chris Roe

Arthur Findlays book also featured in some psychic detection in two of the week's sessions "A Christmas Mystery with Sherlock Homes"



SPIRITUALIST HEALERS OF THE PAST



Another healer who was well known during her healing work for around three decades is featured Leah Doctors, below she is interviewed by the “Two Worlds”, correspondent Philip Paul published September 8th 1956:

LEAH DOCTORS WHEN DOCTORS FAIL

“I HAVE had kyphosis for eight years. After three treatments my spine was perfectly straight and felt much stronger.”

“I wish to thank you for the healing you gave me last week. The large bump on my head was gone when I got home and the pain had disappeared. I had had this bump for a whole week after a door fell on me.”

“It was a lucky day for me when you met my daughter with Rex the dog. Rex had been knocked down by a car and his left front paw had been crushed. When he went out he was hopping. My daughter said you stroked the paw for a minute or two and he came running home quite better.”

So say three testimonials from the files of a modern mercy-worker. They are typical of many that pay tribute to the wonders wrought by aptly-named, 42-year-old Leah Doctors, of 15 Bethune Road, Stoke Newington, London.

She saw a light

It began when “One evening, on going to bed, I saw a huge light reaching from the ceiling to the floor. I was enraptured by a holy feeling and was impressed to give healing.

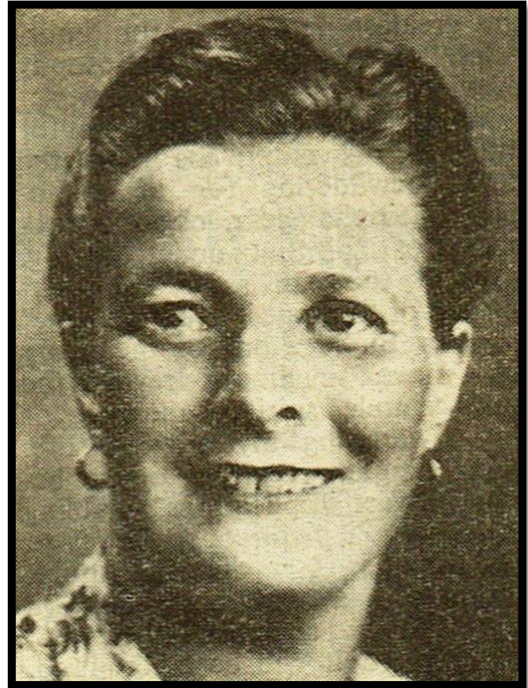
“I did this with very good benefit to patients. I can see the patient’s aura, in shades of various colours corresponding to their complaint. I can feel the complaint in my own body.”

One of five children, now the mother of a 12-year-old son, Leah was born in Dovercourt. Her draper father and mother had no interest in Spiritualism, but their daughter was clairvoyant from an early age.

“I used to see spirit faces. I would not tell anyone what I saw in fear that they would laugh at me. As I grew up I began to read books on Spiritualism. It was then that I realised what the faces were.

“The unseen world of the materialist becomes a living reality to the clairvoyant. We cannot understand why people cannot see the beauty of the spirit world.”

Leah believes that her healing powers are aided by a “departed” personality whom she knows as “Mr. Chang.”



Writing of the sensations she felt while receiving Leah's treatment for a spinal curvature, a patient says: "When she placed her hands on my back I felt a warm glow penetrate throughout my body. It felt like an electric current. The healing took about ten minutes or so.

"I saw her twice more for healing. My back was now perfectly straight. I felt much stronger, my breathing easier, as it still is. I wouldn't have thought it possible to be cured. Now I feel years younger."

Visiting her grocer one day, Leah saw his dog hopping about on three legs. What happened is best described in the grocer's own words:

"About three months ago my bull terrier broke her back leg and fractured her femur. I took her to the vet, who stated nothing could be done and the dog might get better in a few years time.

"Then a strange thing happened. Mrs. Doctors, a close neighbour of mine, saw the dog hopping. Then she knelt down in our garden and stroked it. I was amazed when the dog stopped hopping next day and was running about quite normal. I do not as a rule believe in miracles but I believe in this one."

Prayer plus—

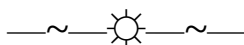
Nowadays, Leah treats 20 or 30 patients a week in her little first floor consulting room. Formerly an assistant in a baker's shop, she now devotes all her time and energy to the healing work, as does her Osteopath husband, Jack.

It is a good combination. As he puts it: "My wife deals with the spiritual, mental and emotional part of the business and I look after the physical."

As well as the patients they see for contact healing, the Doctors maintain a considerable absent healing list. Good results have been achieved by this means, but contact treatment has been found the most effective.

Wherever possible, patients are required to help themselves. "I tell my patients to pray to God each evening on retiring to bed," says Leah. "Then they are asked to call for Mr. Chang to help them. He visits them while they sleep. Some wonderful results are sometimes obtained. They must write each week to report any progress."

Last year, a spate of new patients sought her aid after her work had been featured in the new women's magazine "She" by Evadne Price. Evadne was able to write from personal experience because Leah cured a foot injury she had suffered in an accident.



Early Spiritualist Sunday Services – continued...



In the last issue of “Pioneer”, it covered “The Best Mode of Conducting Sunday Services” and published a paper:

Prepared to be read before the Spiritualists’ National Federation Conference, Walsall, 7th July, 1895, by A. J. SMYTH. Hon. Sec., Birmingham Spiritualists’ Union, and published by request of the Conference.¹⁴

Pioneer received a lot of positive feedback from this article, the article noted:

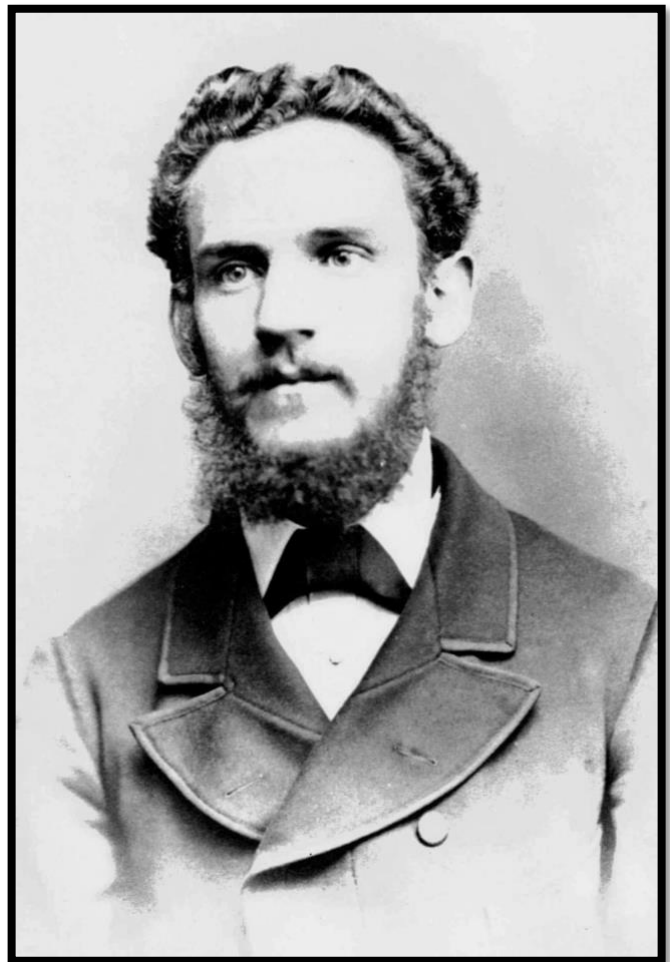
The “Ideal Religious Service,” recently sketched by Mr. Wallis, has deservedly met with general approval. It was admittedly “less concerned with the *method* than the *spirit* of the service.”

The article “Ideal Religious Service,” was published in the “Two Worlds”, May 17th 1895 pages 302-305. It is of historical interest as to how our National Spiritualism was built in its public presentation of its philosophy. This is six years before the Spiritualists’ National Federation was re-constituted becoming the Spiritualists’ National Union; so, prior to the introduction of our religious basis today:

The primary object of the Spiritualists’ National Union is to promote the advancement and diffusion of a knowledge of the religion and religious philosophy of Spiritualism on the basis of the Seven Principles.¹⁵

It is interesting to note; although at this time Emma Hardinge Britten’s principles were not under consideration by the Federation there is a distinct flavour which runs through the ideas of an Ideal Religious Service within the Spiritualists’ National Federation.

Edward Walter Wallis (1855-1914) born Teddington will be featured in “Pioneer”, in the New Year he was one of the founder members which established the SNU he was a former President in 1898, co-founder of the “Two Worlds”, with Emma Harding Britten in 1887.

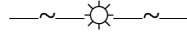


¹⁴ Mr A. J. Smyth was President of the National Federation in 1896 and died in October 1913, aged 60.

¹⁵ SNU Yearbook 2017.

AN IDEAL RELIGIOUS SERVICE FOR SPIRITUALISTS AND INQUIRERS.

By E. W. WALLIS.



AS I AM TO SPEAK of religious services, I may be permitted to use as my text the following words from our good friend, Thos. Shorter:—

That religion which most truly reveals to us the character of God; which gives us the clearest insight into our own spiritual nature; which finds us at our greatest depths; which meets most fully our souls needs; is the religion which proves itself to be the truest, and therefore the best.

Speaking for myself Spiritualism best fulfils the requirements set forth by Mr. Shorter, and is therefore the religion of my life.

There is an idea abroad that Spiritualists concern themselves mainly (if not exclusively) with seance-holding and hobnobbing with the “familiar” of mediums, vulgarly called “spooks,” that they have no philosophy, no religion higher than “dancing tables,” and are loose in their moral relations. Now this idea, like most popular notions, is very wide of the mark; but it exists. I have heard hundreds of people exclaim after hearing or reading a lucid exposition of our philosophy and teachings, “I had no idea Spiritualists believed that”; or, “If that is Spiritualism—I am a Spiritualist.” Let me quote a few words from A. E. Newton, written upwards of a quarter of a century ago:—

Spiritualism, in its broad sense, as a philosophical system, embraces whatever relates to spirit, spiritual existences, and spiritual forces; especially all truths relative to the human, spirit, its nature, capacities, laws of manifestation, its disembodied existence, the conditions of that existence, and the modes of communication between that and earth-life.

Take also this definition from Dr. J. M. Peebles, the spiritual pilgrim:—

Spiritualism, in the general acceptation of the term, implies a recognition of God as the infinite spirit-presence of the universe, and of a *present* as well as past intercourse and communion between the inhabitants of earth and those peopling the world of spirits. It is a fact, and a life; in method it is phenomenal and philosophical.

M. A. Oxon truly said:—

In days when a fading faith has relaxed its hold on human life, when religion as a binding power, is losing much of its vitalising influence and becoming less and less a factor in the formation of the national character, we are being by the mercy of that God whose response is never wanting to the aspirations of his creatures, brought face to face with the reality of our true spiritual existence.

An editor of a non-Spiritualist paper recently stated:—

By every reasonable consideration, the belief which we call Spiritualism must be included among religions. It has become the rule of life to many thousands of intelligent people, earnest men and women, good citizens.

These extracts point to the fact that Spiritualism has a much wider application and a deeper significance than the simple act of intercourse with the departed. Let us not, however, despise the “dancing tables” nor the “rappers”; those same movements and messages have opened for us doors into the unseen, have enabled us to identify the communicants, and given the basis of FACT to the philosophy—substantiating the intuitions and hopes of man by demonstrating that he is a spirit and enjoys continued conscious and progressive life. They carry us forward a stage, and enable us to comprehend the outworking of consequences on the spirit plane of existence. Thus the despised and rejected phenomena become the cornerstone of the Temple of our Faith and worship. The fact that man alone has ideals: that he alone is capable of interpreting the phenomena and entering into the purposes manifested in Nature and Humanity, is not only prophetic of his ultimate triumph, but is *evidence* of his spiritual nature. Religion, I contend, is the natural expression of man’s consciousness of relationship to and dependence upon the Divine Spirit in feelings, thoughts and actions; his love for the beautiful, the true and the good manifested in his desires and endeavours to become all that his ideals of perfection present to him as the object of his life. Principal Caird truly says:—

The religious impulse, the aspiration after God and after union with Him as the soul’s true life, is grounded in the very nature of man as a rational and spiritual being. . . My life as a rational and spiritual being would be impossible, and my relations to Nature and Society would be baseless—save on the pre-supposition of an Infinite and Absolute Intelligence on which all finite thought and being rest.

Religion has also been defined “as the verification of the spiritual in human life.” “For spiritual development religion claims a spiritual environment.” I boldly claim that Spiritualism *has* verified the spiritual in human life; it has revealed the spiritual environment of man as a perpetually present fact, in a manner never attempted before. “It offers ‘the substance of things hoped for (eternal life and spiritual communion) and the evidence of things unseen’ (the world behind the veil),” and therefore Spiritualism is both fact and philosophy: science and religion. It is a knowledge and an inspiration: a revelation and a baptism. As Spiritualists we have a duty to perform, a truth to proclaim, a message to deliver, a path to open up, guests to receive, a life to live, a service of Love to render. Hence the necessity for an Ideal and for efforts to *realise* the ideal life—for *collective* as well as individual endeavours to lighten the path for those who sit in darkness, or mourn in the shadow of death: to recall the wanderer to the paths of wisdom and right, and help the weak ones who fall beaten in the strife.

It has been well said that “ideas rule the world”; that thoughts are-as real as things; nay, that things but imperfectly represent thoughts. Spiritualism stands for the Divine Ideal: for the man-spiritual; man the learner, worker, and lover; for progress here and hereafter. It teaches that to be good and to do good; to become better and more useful is the business of our life. It is not good for us to be too much alone. We are apt to grow morbid, selfish, isolated, proud, and opinionated. We need to mix with our fellows, it does us good to assemble for social intercourse, and we are equally benefited by association for spiritual fellowship and communion. Too much introspection and meditation are as dangerous as too little. Cloistered virtues are not usually robust; they seldom stand the strain when put to the test. Spiritualism proclaims the harmonial development of man on all planes of expression. It is as religious to be healthy, hopeful, happy and helpful as it is to pray, sing or preach. If I have read the message of the spirits at all clearly, their call is to life—full, free, buoyant, rounded and faithful—their behest is, “Be thyself, true to thy highest thought, and ready to march forward day-by-day to self-possession and obedience to the Right and True.”

The world has witnessed many religions: many strivings of man to serve the gods, but the new gospel is “Render service to man, and thus do the will of God.” Every altar, temple, ritual and theology has been man made; every act of homage or reverence was prompted from within. Idols represented man’s ideals. Sacrifice, praise and prayer, uncouth or cultured, gave

expression to the souls cry for mercy, help, light and love. The birth place was ever the same—the human heart. All religious aspirations and intuitions are the out-breathings of the God-consciousness within us. As our needs become more clearly comprehended the great throbbing heart of humanity will beat and burn with higher aims, more intelligent conceptions, and loftier purposes.

The same spirit that moved good men and women in all ages prompts us to search for and reverence the True, the Good, the Pure, and the Beautiful. We struggle to the light and cry for aid; we bend our energies to the task of combating error and overthrowing sin; we grapple with doubt and darkness, and seek to rescue the fallen and set free the captive, *because we must*, it is the command laid upon us, the Divine decree written in our spiritual constitution. It is the method of our education for the attainment of the purpose of our existence. The old gospel of fear (the doctrine of human depravity and divine fury) has no message for us. Our spiritual philosophy finds no flaw, no failure, no caprice, no vengeance—law and beneficence reign supreme. Order and harmony prevail, beauty is displayed in all form, and an anthem of praise reverberates throughout the universe. We need the trained eye, the listening ear, the interpreting mind and the responsive spirit, and then we feel there is—

One God who ever lives and loves—
One God—one law—one element:
One great supreme far-off event,
To which the whole creation moves.

The “Larger Hope,” now budding on the Christian Tree of Faith, has blossomed in beauty and borne for us the fruit of Knowledge of continued conscious and progressive existence. Death has no terrors—we hear the joyous songs of the emancipated ones, and we too strive to sing a new psalm of life and love and gladness.

If religion is man’s higher-self grown active and dominant; the going forth of the Divine *within*, seeking the Divine without; the cry of the child for its parent; the question man puts to the Universe, “What am I?” and answers in the very breathing it, then has Man-the-Spirit grown conscious of his birthright (sold for the mess of theological pottage) and regained his inheritance by second birth into spiritual liberty.

We take possession of “the promised land” by proving our fitness to enter upon its eternally progressive career of attainment of the ideal pure and perfect.

We know that Inspiration is a perennial stream flowing as full and free to-day as ever; that modern prophets speak as the spirit gives them utterance; that clairvoyant seers discern and describe some of the mighty host of witnessing spirits around about us. We know we cannot seek in vain, that every question can be answered, and the hungry heart can be filled, and we need a service to which we can invite the sad, the suffering and the weary that they, too, may delight in the liberty of the spirit, grow strong in the light of love, that they may look within and trust the God-powers of their own nature, aspire to gain the heights of strength, conquest and wisdom, and receive the answering baptismal outpouring of Love and Intelligence.

“We need a religious service for Spiritualists” because it is unwise to put new cloth into old garments; because the world has need of prophets and seers as in the past; because traditions limit, formality fetters, and the spirit that moves humanity to-day is freer, fuller and more distinctly *human* than in any preceding age; because ours is a gospel of life, not death, of reliance upon and love of truth, of progress here and hereafter, of self-cultivation, and the exercise of spiritual “gifts and graces.”

It is almost ten years since M. A. Oxon said:—

Some of us desire very much that there should be some available form of religious service expressive of our faith, which we could attend for worship, for instruction, perhaps for direct and elevated communion with those who have gone before.

For upwards of twenty years Spiritualists all over the country have been holding public religious Sunday services until we now have about two hundred meeting places, in which the Spiritual religion is proclaimed to congregations which will probably total, almost any Sunday evening, about 10,000 persons. Practical efforts have thus been made to provide for the religious wants of Spiritualists and Inquirers. The success of those endeavours varies I admit, and there are not a few complaints made because of lack of culture, ability and spirituality among workers and speakers; but we are all striving to learn, and experience is teaching us the better way to supply the conditions required for spiritual development. It is proverbially easy to find fault, but will those who see what is lacking, who feel the need for more efficient service, do their utmost to supply the deficiency? Helpers are wanted who will work for the ideal?

First and foremost it seems to me, our Ideal service must be *to others—not for ourselves* while the people die for lack of knowledge: not for ourselves while hot tears fall and hearts are torn with anguish: not for ourselves while sin-sick and suffering ones go blindly groping in darkness: not for ourselves while poor, oppressed and outcast brothers and sisters lack food and sell themselves to greed and sensualism: not for ourselves while false theology blinds the eyes and palsies the heart of so many thousands, darkens the present with dread, filling the future with horrors and enthroning as the God of their worship, a despotic, jealous and vengeful Deity.

By angel hands to us has been entrusted the spotless banner of the new dispensation of Spiritual Truth. Surely we should set it proudly floating in the breeze in its purity, a challenge to all the world!

From the unseen we have received that pearl of great price knowledge—certainty regarding the hereafter—surely it is the least we can do to give it the most perfect setting? Surely the consecration and presentation of the best we have and are is not too much to render in this Divine service! Our advocates, teachers, mediums, exponents call them what you will—should surely be capable, spiritually minded, earnest, cultured and devoted, that the best possible conditions may be offered to advanced and enlightened inspirers, and that they may do themselves and the great theme of their inspirations justice in the minds of their hearers.

Our religion does not *bind us back*; the “dead hand of the past” does not fetter our freedom. No *written* word weighs upon us with false authority. We follow Truth, and *re-read* the everlasting problems-of-being in the light of the newest facts, and the knowledge of Life and Immortality brought to light by angel ministry. We are free to stand erect, conscious sons of God, knowing that the body is His temple for our use; we dare to think, decide, and act for ourselves. We own no man or spirit *master*, but lovingly accept the kindly aid of sympathetic and wise preceptors in or out of the body. I think that the Ideal religious service is the one that best enables us to discover truth, to wisely apply knowledge in our daily life, to proclaim the truth by example, influence, and precept.

In these days, when such stress is laid upon “environment,” we must surely recognise that if we cannot succeed in transforming the homes of the people, to make them perfect and artistic, we may at least try to make their “home” for Sunday services beautiful! Our temples should be noble in architecture, well ventilated, lighted, clean and warm, with good acoustic properties, adorned with statuary, paintings, and where possible, flowers and shrubs. If harmony is heaven’s first law (and Spiritualists should surely realise how necessary it is for securing good conditions and spiritual results), then our Ideal service should include the finest instrumental

and vocal music attainable. The choral services of the Churches have met a want for their worshippers and we too must supply the needs of men. Congregational singing of hymns of praise and thanksgiving, well selected and appropriate solos, duets, anthems, glees and psalms could and should form part of our service.

We should assemble for mutual encouragement to hearten one another in good works, to foster the aspirational mode of spirit-expression and lay ourselves open for, and become receptive to, inspirations and baptisms of power and love from the ministering ones. We should send forth “the soul’s sincere desire,” and rise on the wings of true prayer into accordant and responsive relations with the ever-present Divine Spirit. Individually, this should be our mood when we enter the Spiritual Temple, and the speaker when invoking Divine aid and Spirit ministrations should feel the needs of all and strive to breathe their cries to the unseen. Readings, culled from the world’s best teachers, thinkers, spiritual leaders and poets, of an instructive, helpful and harmonising character should be given at each service. No reading should exceed ten minutes, and if two are given in one service fifteen minutes for both would ordinarily be sufficient. These would need to be judiciously selected, and should be read with proper care and emphasis and elocutionary effect either by the officiating speaker or the chairman. The address, as a rule, should not exceed forty or forty-five minutes, and in my opinion, should be expository, practical, human, suggestive, sympathetic, consolatory, thoughtful, aspirational illustrative, spiritual, constructive, comforting, educational, exalting and loving.

Our present method of frequent change of mediums or speakers, while it affords variety, does not I think tend to stability. Our societies are too much like bodies without a head; they lack a centre or rallying point, and little or no opportunity is offered to speakers, normal or inspired, for consecutive constructive work. Worse still, there is hardly any possibility of the formation of those associations, relations and attachments which bind preacher and church together; which win for the teacher the lasting esteem and love of his hearers, and afford scope for mutual helpfulness. We are too diffusive, we squander our means and our people; above all, we dissipate those very sentiments and emotions which we seek to foster. A *good* man (or woman) will recommend the principles he or she may advocate—character, earnestness, fidelity, honour and goodness in any public worker will cause people who admire those qualities to respect and rally round him, and it is not necessarily the most educated, fluent, or eloquent orator who wins the heart and elevates the moral and spiritual tone of the listener. After all it is this *human* relationship—this touch that makes us kin—that links us heart to heart and makes us true friends and comrades, united in sympathy, service, desire and endeavour, life and love.

In connection with every meeting place there ought to be ladies and gentlemen, either appointed or volunteers, who would act as stewards, give a welcome word and smile to visitors, conduct them to a seat, lend them a hymn book, minister to their comfort, and make them feel that they have gone into a friendly human family, not among a lot of intellectual icebergs or frozen respectabilities. Four walls do not a prison make, neither is a palace of necessity a *home*. Home is where the sweet love emotions prevail, where courtesy, mutual affection, consideration and patience preside, where each one holds the other in dear esteem and delights in serving—aye—“in honour preferring one another,” and in such an atmosphere the truest religious service and the sweetest spirit intercourse and *spiritual communion* can take place. My ideal of a religious service is where spirit responds to spirit, thought answers thought, and love-links hold hearts together in sweetest harmony.

The service which meets the needs of the Spiritualist will in the main meet the needs of the Inquirer, for he too wants to know and needs to be spiritually harmonised and enlightened. But he asks more at our hands. He says: you tell me there are no dead, that the departed return, that

mediums are spirit-guided, that *my* dear ones can come back. Your talk is good and sounds well, but is it true? give me evidence; not faith, but fact.

This leads to the vexed question, should clairvoyance be exhibited at our Ideal service. I say emphatically “Yes”—if it is clairvoyance. Let the messages be given, the descriptions of the spirits be made, and if possible the facts and names stated which prove identity. Then our claims are substantiated and the inquirer does not go empty away. I have a great deal of sympathy even with Spiritualists who *long* for the touch of the vanished hand, the sound of the voice that is still, the sign or message from the loved one behind the veil. What a glad thrill it gives us even now to receive a greeting from, or have a clear description of, an old friend. No time is too sacred for real spiritual intercourse and no hour is secular enough for impudent fraud or vulgar pretence. In the Ideal Service I have in mind mediums whose gifts have been well and wisely cultivated will have their place as speakers and seers. The evidence real evidence, will accompany the spoken word, and the tears will be wiped away and the broken hearted will be healed and comforted. Suppose ten minutes or a quarter of an hour were devoted, after the address and following some beautiful singing, to “descriptions” of a clear and definite character. The service need not last more than an hour-and-a-half, but if only one or two visitors go away convinced that the “seer” has really discerned and faithfully delineated their dear departed; if but a few words of love in the well-remembered and characteristic manner; if but a few facts have been given of a convincing character they *are* facts. In no other service will the inquirer get such a response to his cry, and we should be careful lest we grow too proper and punctilious and respectably conventional, and shut the opening door in the face of the spirits who would return and the mourners who would gladly receive them. Let us at least keep the gates ajar and if possible fling them wide and wider open by the intelligent study, development and exercise of mediumship in its highest and most spiritual forms. MORE and BETTER mediums are needed for our Ideal service.

I would not depreciate the value of clear and forcible arguments, of intellectual acumen and sound logic, of brilliant oratory and well rounded periods, of grammatical excellence and defensive, critical, sarcastic, expository ability and skill, all these are useful and necessary in their place, but after all that is truly spiritual which helps us, and that helps us which touches the source of our emotions, desires, and purposes. We are all very human. Life is full of burdens, crosses, losses, griefs, heartaches, and sorrows, and one wants a refuge—a haven of calm, a home of charity and love, a well-spring of strength and comfort. Our *ideal* service, it seems to me, must be *spiritual*—should supply us with healing for the mind, balm for our oppressed spirits, light on the path of life, and practically offer the invitation, “Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest,” not the rest of inaction, but the rest of change of occupation and restoration. Our Spiritual Church should correspond to the pool where the angels visit us, and by stirring the magnetic and spiritual waters afford us renewed health, so that we go forth invigorated and capable. I am more concerned about the *spirit* of our service than about the methods—they will come. It seems to me we need to clearly work up to the ideal that our services are to help us to be better men and women, kindlier, sweeter and wiser: more tolerant, patient, sympathetic and helpful, less harsh and condemnatory, more forgiving and fraternal: for we shall all have to learn the lessons here or hereafter, and why not *now*?

I think if we once get “into the spirit” and respond to the spirit of a spiritual Spiritualism our services will *of necessity* become more orderly, more devout and worshipful, more cultured and dignified, more religious and inspiring. It seems to me that the *ideal* of our service *must* be SERVICE: to sow seeds, and ourselves be exemplars of the better way. Everything depends upon the MOTIVE. Purity and earnestness dignify even inefficient service: Love is the solvent of bitterness and strife. If we are single-minded and have at heart the good of others, our Temple will be one of Harmony, our altar will bear the offerings of Love and Good will, our sacrifice will be the acceptable service rendered to others, and our psalms will be the spontaneous songs

of gladness of the spirit recognising its Divine origin and destiny of endless progress. Spiritual things will be spiritually discerned, wrongs will be righted, errors outgrown, follies repented, and hearts re-united; the purpose and beauty of life will be revealed and the Wisdom and Love of the supreme made manifest in view of the final Perfection and happiness of all.

Science herself would lose her fearless love of truth, were it not that religion fed its secret springs; social reform would lose its motive and inspiration, literature and art their beauty, and all human life its sweetest and tenderest grace, did not religion evermore create the insatiable hunger after perfection in the soul of man. Bright, cheerful, ennobling, stimulating, emancipating, religion is the greatest friend of humanity, ever guiding it upward and onward to the right and the true—aye, and to all we yearn for, if, as we believe, the right and the true are indeed the pathway to God.

Worship God by doing good:
Works, not words; kind acts, not creeds:
He who loves God as he should,
Makes his heart's love understood,
By kind deeds.
Be it thine life's cares to smother,
And to brighten eyes now dim;
Kind deeds done to one another
Unto God are done, my brother,
Unto Him!

—*Selected.*

