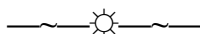




Volume 7, No. 3: June 2020

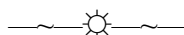
Contents list:



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 Charles Coulston for his work in sub-editing this issue



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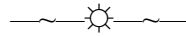
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All references to Psypioneer in this issue are archived at <http://psypioneer.iapsop.com/>

HARRY EDWARDS ADDRESSED BY SILVER BIRCH



In November 1952 Harry Edwards was addressed by Silver Birch, the spirit guide of Hannen Swaffer's home circle. At the sitting Edward's helpers, Olive and George Burton, were also present. Edwards, along with the formation of the 'National Federation of Spiritual Healers', 'Burrows Lea', etc., has featured numerous times in the pages of Pioneer.¹

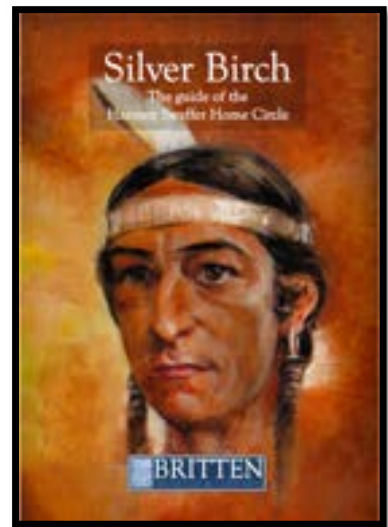
Below, Harry Edwards, together with his healing team, poses questions to Silver Birch; the article published here is the second part from the Two Worlds, November 8th, 1952. I hope to locate the first part and publish it in a later issue of Pioneer, where Silver Birch remarks to Harry Edwards:

"Great as is the work that has been achieved, the crown is still to be attained."

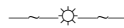
An extraordinary secret was kept in the Spiritualist moment for over three decades: who was the medium for Silver Birch, known as the guide of the Hannen Swaffer home circle? At the time of the article it was not publicly known that it was Maurice Barbanell until another five years, until 1957! ²

It has also been further revealed in the SNU publication that Silver Birch, the guide, was not originally called Silver Birch but was initially known as "Big Jump".³

The name continued within the circle until Maurice Barbanell's death in 1981.⁴



Harry Edwards Questions Silver Birch on Healing Problems



"WHAT we find supporting the evidence of the continuance of spirit power is that, at times, people who ask for help write a year later to say they have got better," Edwards told the guide.

"That always must be," declared Silver Birch, "because what you cannot control is the measure of the spiritual unfoldment of the individual. I have touched on this before but all is controlled by the evolution of the soul. That is the decisive factor. No soul can obtain for

¹ For example, in Vol. 5, No. 2, April 1918: "Spiritualist Healers of the Past: John Britnell — Father of "The National Federation of Spiritual Healers" & "Burrows Lea", The Shrine of Healing — A Visit to Harry Edwards — Herbert Hampson 1947.

² See Pioneer, Vol. 4, No. 6: "An extraordinary secret was held in the Spiritualist movement for over three decades: who is Silver Birch's medium?"

³ This psychic painting of Silver Birch was done by Marcel Poncin, a famous French artist and actor (see Pioneer, Vol. 2, No. 6). 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. In addition, without realising it he included in the picture a feature that is highly evidential. No mention has ever been made in print of this feature. The accuracy of the painting has been confirmed by several clairvoyants.

⁴ The booklet is available at the SNU online shop and the Arthur Findlay College (AFC).

itself that to which it is not entitled. The body is but the servant of the spirit; it is not the master.”

Here the healer asked. “Do you mean that an unevolved soul cannot be helped by spirit healing?”

“Yes, that is precisely what I mean,” said Silver Birch, “but ‘unevolved’ is a difficult word. You must appreciate that when I speak of the law. I do not refer to one law. I refer to the law which comprises all the natural laws of the universe. These conform to a perfect pattern. They are laws within laws all the time. The universe is boundless; no one can see its limit. The universe, like the Great Spirit, is infinite; the laws of the Great Spirit are infinite too and progress is an infinite process.

THE BODY A STAGE

“Every person in the world of matter is a soul in a body. Now that soul is at a certain stage of evolution. You cannot dismiss the past life; it must come into the picture. The body is the expression of the mind, which in its turn is the expression of the spirit. The body represents the stage that the spirit has attained. If that soul is not to be healed because the pain is an essential concomitant of the process of purification that the soul must pass through in order to be ready for its next stage, then the power that flows through you cannot touch it, and there is no healer who can touch it.

“Pain is part of nature’s process; pain is part of the law; pain, sorrow, suffering, these are all part of the natural law. You are back to what I have always tried to tell you, that sunshine and shadow, peace and storm, light and darkness, love and hatred, all these are parts of the law; you cannot have one without the other.”

“Pain is the result of breaking the law,” commented a member of the circle.

“RELY ON FAITH”

“Do not use the words ‘breaking the law’—say transgressing it,” averred the guide. “But then you can only learn about the law through transgression sometimes. You are not perfect beings, you have the seed of perfection which is growing, but it can only grow through the variety of conditions that life imposes. If there were no pain, no storm, no difficulty, no suffering, no disease, the soul could not grow.

“The law cannot fall. If the law could fall then the Great Spirit would cease to be the Great Spirit and the universe would cease to have any harmony, rhythm or purpose. You must pin your whole faith on the exactness and perfection of the natural law, because there are stages where you cannot have knowledge and you must rely on faith. I never decry faith born of knowledge. I decry blind faith which becomes mere credulity. But you cannot have all the knowledge and so you must perforce rely on some faith to help you. I do not want, as a result, that you should avoid compassion or mercy or tenderness and say, “This is the result of the law, I can do no more.’ That would be wrong. You must strive to do your utmost, because in your striving you are fulfilling your own spiritual obligations.”

After answering some questions Silver Birch stated: “The soul makes its own path. In addition to that, the body of matter imposes some restriction and limitation on the soul. The machine owes its existence to the spirit. There is a double influence at work the whole time, but overriding all is the influence of the soul. The soul is pre-eminent. This must be so because the soul is the Great Spirit within you and everything the Great Spirit possesses you possess in miniature.”

PHYSICAL MIND

“It seems very fundamental,” Edwards declared. “You said that upon the state of the evolution of the soul depends whether healing can take place. If that is so, then we should devote more time to the healing of the mind rather than physical healing.”

The guide asked: “Where do you think your healing power is exerted now if not on the spirit of those who come to you?”

“Through healing, the spirit self is healed and from that the physical healing takes place,” replied Edwards.

“Yes, that is what I say,” the guide pointed out.

“Is it not necessary for us to influence the physical mind?” Edwards inquired.

“SOUL MUST ADVANCE”

The guide answered: “The physical mind is but the servant of the spirit, If you get the spirit mind to work all the rest will follow, but if the spirit has not attained the stage of evolution where it can respond then you cannot make it work. The soul must advance still further. It will have to endure those processes which will shape it, and these are the painful ones. The soul cannot awaken in conditions of ease.”

A member of the circle asked: “Do you mean that if the soul has not reached the necessary stage of evolution, even the influence of the healers from the spirit side cannot help?”

“It is the same law which applies to you and to us,” answered Silver Birch.

“Isn’t this what the Christian Scientists believe?” another person asked.

“All truth is truth,” the guide answered. “Labels do not matter, it is the principle with which we are concerned. If the one who is called a Christian Scientist can the power of the spirit to work and, as a result of the life-giving, dynamic, vital forces, make the body obey and the cure is achieved, it matters not whether you call it spirit healing or Christian Science, does it?”

“I know that we play a part” said Edwards. “But it is very difficult for us to reach the soul of the patients.”

“You do play a part, a very important part. If you were not there it could not happen. You are the instruments; you are the mediums; you are the condensers; you are the means by which the power is transmitted.”

“Transmitted to what, the body or the soul?” asked the healer.

“I am not concerned with bodies,” said the guide. “What makes an arm locked?”

“The physical state of the arm,” Edwards replied.

“NOT BY FORCE”

“What has happened to that normal, healthy force which gives movement to the arm?”

“It has gone; it has surrendered to the disease; it has created the ill-condition,”

“If that vitality could circulate, once again, what would happen?”

“The arm would get better.”

“How do you get the life force to circulate through the arm?”

“That is their problem, not mine.”

“You cannot do it by pushing the arm.”

“Not by force,”

“Not by force. But if the soul, which made the body in the first instance to be its instrument, can now pursue its old function and allow the force to function, where there is now a lock, health will result.”

“That is what we see.

Another visitor to the circle asked. “Is the function of the healer to give stimulus to the natural resources of the patient?”

Silver Birch answered: “It is a little more than that, because the power of the spirit has to be stepped down owing to the fact that the patient is a spirit in a body in an earthly world, vibrating at a rate much lower than the power which has to reach him. The healers, who are the transformers, enable the power to be stepped down, and when the soul is ready healing is almost instantaneous; because of the degree of harmony between you and those that work with you the power can flow with lightning rapidity. If the soul of the patient cannot receive that force, there is nothing you can do. You cannot transfer the dynamic into the bent leg; it is only the soul of the patient that can do that.”

ACTION, NOT BELIEF

Still the comments came, one visitor declaring, “Some people who say they do not believe in God are healed.”

“Yes, because whether they believe in the Great Spirit or not, the law can operate.”

“But you would not think their souls would be evolved enough.”

“You can have a great soul, who is an agnostic, and you can have poor soul, who is religious. The greatness of the soul is not measured by belief, but by action. Listen, you can only help those who are ready to be helped. Rejoice at the fact that so many can be helped to find the light. It should be a measure of great satisfaction that through your instrumentally there are so many souls who are freed and who can rejoice because their feet have been placed on the pathways that lead to knowledge to understanding and to abiding peace. That is the measure of the success. You will not be able to help them all: it is part of the law. I do not say that you should be satisfied—just as I say that the Great Spirit is in love and hatred, In sunshine and in storm. Success and failure again play their part, for if there were no failures there could be no successes.”

Next came these questions: “Why is it that some people who believe and have faith and knowledge do not respond as well as they ought to spiritual healing? Is it a question of their soul?”

“Yes, it always comes back to the same thing. It is not a question of belief, faith, love. It is a question of the soul and what that soul is entitled to receive as a result of the stage it has reached in its evolution.”

“We can see physical laws, but we cannot see the change to spirit laws,” said Edwards.

“Even if you had many clairvoyants around you, they would not all see the same process at work, it is a most complex process. Do not think for a minute that it is simple. The whole of the interaction between matter and spirit is profound and complex. The body itself is a complicated piece of machinery and the spirit, too, is full of many facets. All of these are subject to laws that work within laws. Whilst harmony rules throughout, within the framework of all these laws there is plenty of interplay and the one reacts upon the other.”

EFFECT OF SUFFERING

Olive Burton asked. “Did you say that the physical suffering of a person does not affect the spirit?”

“No. I did not say that. Any suffering to the body affects the spirit and suffering to the spirit affects the body. You cannot divorce one from the other. You are one person. Your body is part of you because it is a means by which you express yourself. You are the spirit. What happens to your body affects the spirit.”

Next she asked. “If we make intercession for spirit help for people dying in agony, and the help cannot be given to keep them in this life, do you sometimes dissociate the spirit from the body to prevent any detrimental effect on the spirit?”

“That depends on the individual. The soul will be released from the body when the natural law determines it, unless you jump ahead of the natural and force a severance, as does happen many times.”

“We have had instances where we have thought that happened.”

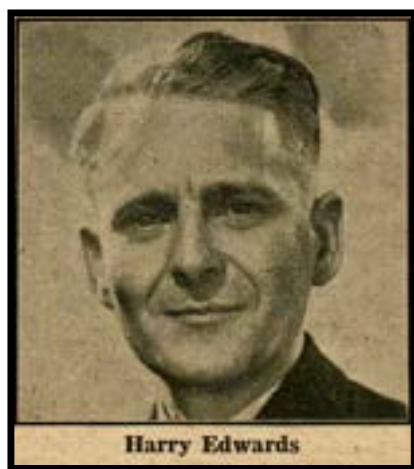
LAW OF BALANCE

“Remember that in all such cases there is a law of balance at work; there is a shock to the spirit, though not a great one.”

“Is it a shock caused by the early releasing?”

“That is so. In all things there are compensation and retribution. If the soul frees itself from the body before its proper time, it has an adjustment to make. It must depend on the individual circumstance. Where you can help is that, if the soul has earned the right, you can ease the pain, the adjustment is made and it is cushioned off, as it were, until it finds its proper status.”

To be continued ...⁵



⁵ In Pioneer, Vol. 7, No. 5.

New One-stop Website:



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The home page gives a direct link to all the back copies of "Pioneer"; subscribe free, etc.

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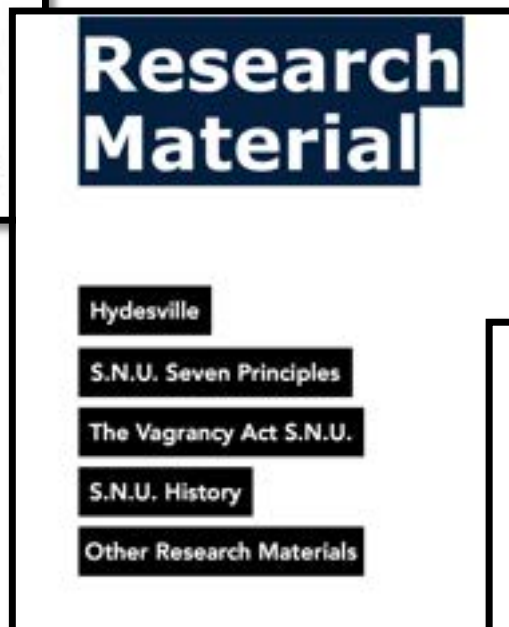
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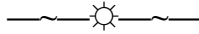
All the articles published in Pioneer over the last seven years have been grouped together within their category as much as possible.

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HYMNS AND TUNES FOR SPIRITUAL CIRCLES AND MEETINGS



In Pioneer, Vol. 4, No. 3, June 2017, was featured “Spiritualists’ National Federation – Our First National Hymn Book”. Hymns, of course, have been an important part of our early history in London. James Burns established Sunday Services; it can be noted in Pioneer, Vol. 1, No. 4, “How many Principles made up Emma’s “Creed of the Spirits”?”:

As a point of history it is interesting to note that during the autumn of 1869 James Burns was strongly impressed for the necessity of a free platform for the advocacy of Spiritualism in London on Sunday evenings. In early January 1870, the American speaker Mr. Peebles was visiting London and according to Burns he was also impressed with the same necessity in the organisation of Sunday meetings in London. Burns and Peebles strolled out together and found the Cavendish Rooms which was considered to be a suitable place for making a commencement. The first meeting was held on January 23rd 1870 with James Martin Peebles, who stayed in London for four months and who included congregational singing in his services. Various other speakers/mediums took to the Sunday evening rostrum; it was at these meetings there commenced the career of James J. Morse as a trance-speaker.

Emma began her addresses at the larger Cleveland Hall, Cleveland Street, London on January 1st 1871 and concluded her run of Sunday Services on April 30th. Apart from March 19th when Emma was ill she conducted twenty one consecutive Sunday Services at the two venues. Her concluding lecture on Sunday April 30th 1871 was titled “The Creed of the Spirits, and the Influence of the Religion of Spiritualism” It was in this lecture that Emma gave four of her principles ...

Pioneer continued the theme in Vol. 4, Nos. 5 & 6: “Early Spiritualist Sunday Services – Sunday services in Spiritualism – 1877 & Early Spiritualist Sunday Services – continued...” “An Ideal Religious Service for Spiritualists and Inquirers – E. W. Wallis, 1895”.

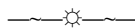


James Burns in his weekly journal, “The Medium and Daybreak”, published some of the hymns and music. Below is taken from issue April 22nd, 1881:

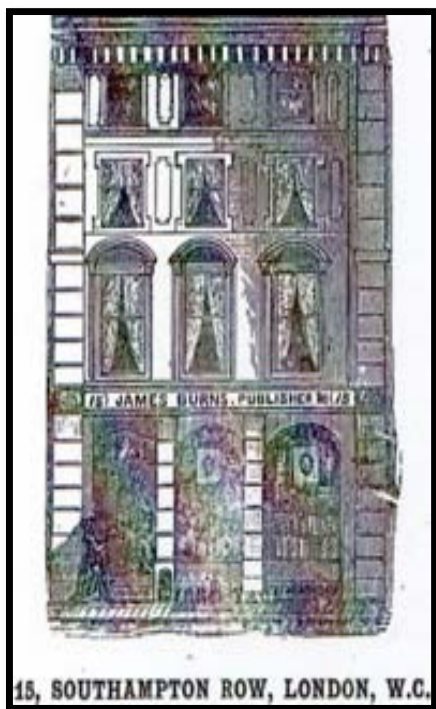
The hymn, No. 80 “Spiritual Lyre,” introduced this week is one of the most beautiful compositions of T. L. Harris. It has been used in the Order of Spiritual Teachers at the entrance of a new teacher into the School. For such a purpose it is well suited, also as an invitation to any visitor to unite the exercises of a circle or spiritual meeting. Some of the glorious facts of spirit-communion are recognised in these verses.

“Vienna,” or “Austria,” as it is frequently named, is a tune well adapted to the theme. It is a musical composition of a superior order, and to give it true expression requires ability. It should be sung with boldness and spirit and a recognition of its well marked peculiarities.

This tune is almost universally known, but seldom is it correctly rendered by those whose musical instruction has been defective. The time is two beats to the bar—an easy measure—but the chief difficulty is experienced with the dotted notes, which are frequently misplaced, or over-looked altogether. One of these is at the commencement, causing the first word, “Peace,” to be sung to along note, and the word, “be,” very short. In the second part of the tune these dotted notes occur repeatedly, and a due observance of them gives expression to the musical idea.



Editor’s Note:



James Burns’ contribution to the early Spiritualist movement is much unrecognised as one of our finest pioneers in the promotion of Modern Spiritualism. I will not attempt here to cover his vast contribution in this short note; this needs to be done in a full-feature article to do justice to it.

I will just note briefly. It can be noted above:

“... is one of the most beautiful compositions of T. L. Harris. It has been used in the Order of Spiritual Teachers at the entrance of a new teacher into the School.”

T.L. Harris refers to the Rev. Thomas Lake Harris, who can be noted in *Pioneer*, Vol. 6, No. 5: “Spiritualism in Auburn, New York – Progress of Spiritualism from 1849 to 1855”. James (Jas) Burns OST (“Order of Spiritual Teachers”), was probably the first Spiritualist educational centre at Burns’ “Spiritual Institution”, 15 Southampton Row, London W.C.

For more information please see *Psypioneer*: “Spiritual origin of The Spiritual Institution & The Medium and Daybreak”.⁶

The first ‘National Convention’ was held at the Mechanics’ Institution, Darlington, on Wednesday and Thursday, July 26 and 27, 1865: Burns was a promoter of this convention. Numerous well-known Spiritualists were in attendance, including David Richmond.⁷ It was the first general assemblage of British Spiritualists and the origin of a free platform in connection with the Movement. “The Association of Progressive Spiritualists of Great Britain” was formed.⁸

It can be noted in some Spiritualists’ National Union older educational literature that this *first* ‘National Spiritualist’ meeting was looked upon as an *unsuccessful attempt*, as only a few people attended.

In fact, this was not the case. Below is quoted from the Report of Proceedings:

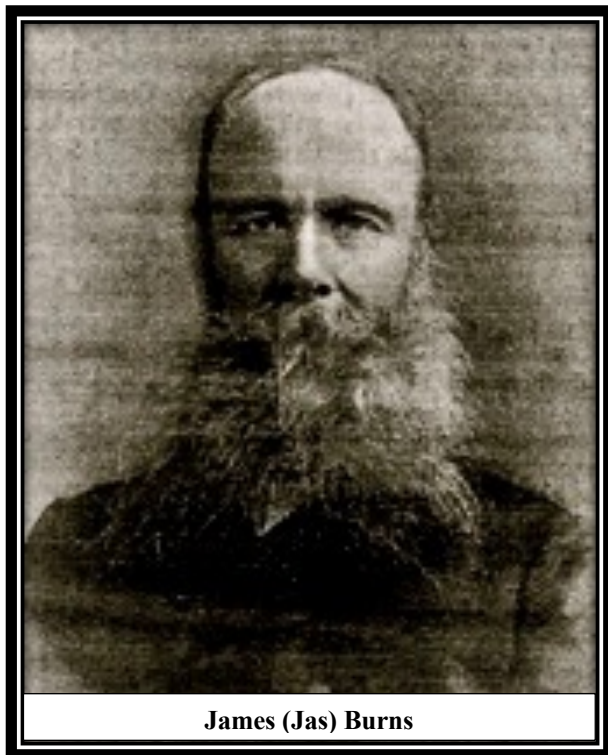
⁶ Vol. 6, No. 1, January 2010.

⁷ See *Pioneer*, Vol. 1, No. 4: “Richmond & Weatherhead – An account of the introduction of Spiritualism at Keighley”.

⁸ The series of articles starts in *Psypioneer*, Vol. 8, No. 8: “The Building of The Spiritualists’ National Union”.

“Seeing that those present were called together by special invitation, the public not being admitted, the attendance was highly gratifying and satisfactory to its promoters. The following names of those who were present and took part at the various sessions have been recorded: ...”

James Burns, along with Mr M. Heslop, a phonographic reporter, were appointed as Secretaries. Burns would give his first paper to this event, entitled: “Man’s Natural Position in Respect to Theology, Religion, And Immortality,” but it is too long to print here. During the various sessions over the two days there were many interesting discussions on the various forms of mediumship at this early period of our history. An interesting session was: “Discussion—Mesmerism *V.* Spiritualism”; during the discussions Burns noted:



James (Jas) Burns

Mr Burns contended that mesmeric phenomena and spiritual phenomena were identical, only that mesmerism was performed by spirits in the flesh, while the spiritual manifestations were performed by disembodied spirits. In both cases they were psychological, and in accordance with the same psychological laws, therefore, though similar manifestations were produced by what are called mesmerism and spiritualism, yet it was no proof that mesmerism was a fact and spiritualism a myth, but rather that spiritualism was the great fact of which mesmerism was a branch.

Man was now a spiritual being or he never could be one, and from his spiritual nature all forces and phenomena proceeded. Mere facts and instances could never settle the question: the investigation required to be based on a knowledge of principles. It was a well-known fact that disembodied spirits could

control subjects and produce all the phenomena of the mesmerist.

Though we were spirits now, yet our condition of consciousness was a physical one—hence we were not cognisant of our spiritual existence; but under mesmeric or spiritual manipulations, the state of spiritual consciousness or clairvoyance could be induced, so that Mr Morgan’s objection fell to the ground.⁹ Those who were subjects for the manipulation of spirits were called mediums. Mr Burns then described the operations of writing and drawing mediums as they had been presented to his experience; how pictures of six or seven colours had been executed with crayons or paints by mediums who knew nothing of art; how valuable information in philosophy and morals had been given; also advice in regard to health and medical prescriptions.

He narrated the case of a lady who was rendered sleepless for several days and nights with a violent attack of pleuralgia. She was nearly worn out with pain when she thought of her spirit friends. In less than an hour her sister, who is a writing medium, and had not been acquainted with the action of her mind towards the spirits, went up stairs with the following prescription, written automatically, by the spirits controlling the action of her

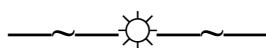
⁹ “Mr Morgan interposed an objection to the conclusions of Spiritualists respecting the source of their manifestations. He thought that Mesmerism and Spiritualism were two distinct things, and that the phenomena ought to be classified, not confounded.”

arm:—"Lie on your back, and inflate your lungs forty times, even though it cause you much pain, then move into a darkened room and sit fifteen minutes." The lady did so, and while in the darkened room felt the influence, as it were, of mesmeric passes over the affected part, which removed nearly all trace of pain, and next day she was quite restored.

Mr Burns gave other instances of medical care and guardianship which clearly demonstrated the certainty, beneficence, and utility of spirit intercourse. He also gave a case of the spirits throwing a young woman, a medium, into the trance state, similar to what a mesmeric operator would, and against which she for a certain time resisted. In this state she not only went through the ordinary phenomena of clairvoyance, describing persons and places she had never seen, but talked with spirits, beheld spiritual states and societies, and got promise of many instances of spirit intercourse which have since come to pass. On another occasion she traced a robbery by the same means. These mediums are often conscious of the influence of the spirits. It falls on the head at the top, over the phrenological organ of Spirituality, and proceeds down the muscles of the arm, giving a volition not of their own, and causing them to write, draw, and do other unpremeditated acts.¹⁰

Mere mesmeric experience could never settle the question. Mediumship, and the intercourse of living beings with spirits, was a privilege and function of the human soul, and to understand it required a deep knowledge of anthropology and investigation of the spiritual nature of man. It would yet be seen that spiritualism would explain mesmerism, instead of mesmerism explaining spiritualism. Mr Morgan had quoted Dr Ashburner, but the doctor was now a spiritualist as well as Dr Elliotson; and both now declare that their acquaintance with spiritualism has thrown a flood of light on their former investigations, and entirely reversed their convictions in many respects. It ought to be remembered, also, that the late accomplished and lamented Professor Gregory of Edinburgh was an intelligent spiritualist.¹¹

Mr Burns also referred to the writings of Professor Brittan of New York, one of the most experienced psychologists, and to Dr Dods, an experimental and healing mesmerist, who, after many years of resistance to the truth, at last acknowledged that he was in great part a medium for the operations of beneficent spirits.

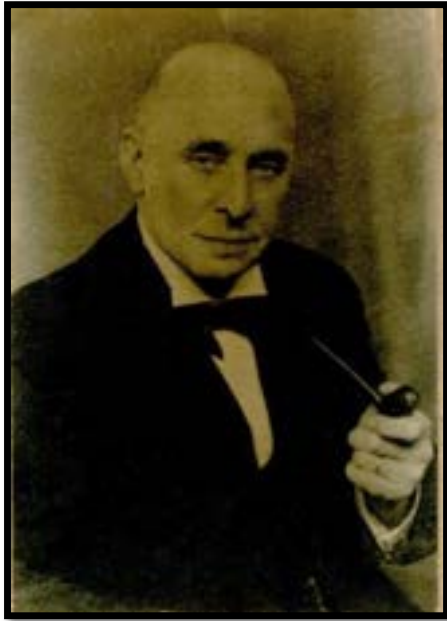


¹⁰ Burns at this period was travelling with one of the Fowler brothers, L.N. (Lorenzo Niles) Fowler, the famous phrenologist, who attended the Convention; his phrenology busts are still available today. Burns was also a phrenologist (the measurement of bumps on the skull to predict mental traits).

¹¹ Dr Ashburner and Dr John Elliotson can be noted in *Psypioneer*, Vol. 2, No. 10, October 2006: "Mrs. Hayden's visit to England in 1852-3".

“HOW IS SPIRIT CONTROL EFFECTED?”

This was the subject dealt with by one of the controls of Mr Frank T. Blake at the Psychic Congress at Llanberis on April 28th, 1939



Frank Thomas Blake was a trance medium for a healing control known as “The Doctor”. Blake gave many years of dedicated service to the Spiritualists’ National Union; he was President of the Southern District Council (SDC) for many years. He was one of the founder members of Bournemouth National Spiritualist Church; he was a Vice-President of the Union and President 1938-1941 and sadly died while in office.

Blake has been previously featured in *Pioneer*, primarily for his work as a healer.¹² At the 30th SNU Annual General Meeting, held in Glasgow in July 1932, the Exponents Committee recommended Blake for the Healing Diploma.

We can further note his involvement with the “No World War” predictions: “Prophecies – SNU President Frank Blake”.¹³

Below, the *Two Worlds*, June 2nd, 1939, presents a summary of the address; this was reported by former SNU President John McIndoe.

HOW I EFFECT CONTROL

By a control, Through Frank T. Blake

SOMETIMES it is a puzzle to me myself to know just how I control my medium. It is easy enough to make contact with my medium, but there is nothing in the nature of constant interference with him. He and I respect each other’s individuality, but in collective work we have learned to respond to each other.

Just now you are looking at Blake’s physical body; that covers the presence of another body similar in its shape and function, but more subtle, invisible, yet far more permanent. It is slightly less in height and girth but the difference is small. We call this other body the etheric body. Both these bodies are clothed by an aura

The Human Aura

This aura is observed by clairvoyants around the physical body, near which it resembles a cloud. It has texture. It can be felt, if you approach it as I (the control) do, for my etheric body is aware of its contact with it.

To take control I enter that aura, and blend my own with his. They mingle together and thus are brought into strict coincidence. With their conditions thus harmonised and their properties fused, my mind can exert its influence on his mind, brain and nervous system.

¹² See Vol. 1, No. 3, “Healing”, continued in the following issue.

¹³ See *Pioneer*, Vol. 3, No. 2.

It is wise to contact the mind first. Some do not; they contact first the nervous system, and thus produce contortions in the physical body and unnecessary nervous reactions. By contacting first the mind, there is evoked an awareness of the approach and a willingness which makes complete control easy. That is the method adopted when definite, intimate use of the medium's physical body is required for comparatively short periods.

For sustained control over long periods of time there must be complete control over mind and brain. The brain determines the flow and the language which the control can use in giving his message. As I hold my medium now I have quietened down the activities of his physical extremities, You could not just now excite into intense action the lower parts of his body. The heart's action is slowed down; it must be watched. Its best is steady but considerably lower than normal.

“I Am Not Inside Blake”

I have not disturbed his etheric body. It is still in strict coincidence with his physical body. Sometimes it has to be out of coincidence, partially or completely withdrawn. I seldom do this through “The Doctor” frequently does when he is in control. But I am not going to walk about or use Blake's arms violently. It is sufficient for my purpose that my mind is in control.

Where is Blake's mind? That is difficult to answer. At no time during physical life is the whole content of a mind in action. That is also true of discarnate mind. The mind cannot be envisaged by sight, physical, etheric or psychic. But you can see around a man who is mentally active, a field, as though the atmosphere around him had been set in motion by mind. It is in that field of movement that the control finds his closest contact. If you had the power to see it you would perceive the air around Blake now in a state of agitation. That is the mechanism by which my mind exerts its influence on his mind.

The Effects of Control

It has been suggested that control undermines the independence of the medium's mind and destroys his individuality; but there is no such thing as complete independence of mind in anyone. Association with another affects both mentally, As with you, so with us. My mind was influenced by countless contacts with other minds while I was incarnate. It is now influenced not only by discarnate minds, but also by incarnate minds which I contact when in control. That part of my mind's content which has influenced Blake naturally leaves something of itself with him. Hence the foolishness of promiscuous companionship—incarnate or discarnate. But it should not be forgotten that while your mind is reacting to another, it in turn is being influenced by you.

Deep Control

To control Blake so that he could walk about or engage in muscular activity, my manner of approach and of control would be similar, but carried to such a point as to give me control over his muscular movements. At present my etheric body is close to his. Its head is here (indicating a little above and behind the medium's head), but there is no disturbance of his physical or etheric body by this control. But for control to do walking, writing, and so on, I should have to displace his etheric body with my own. Then the physical organs, the eyes, the hands, etc., can be used in a more or less natural manner and by training; such control can be maintained for fairly long periods.

Danger

The danger comes at the moment of retiral from control. Unless due care is taken, the medium's etheric body may have gone away to a considerable distance. The two cords

which link the physical and the etheric body will be drawn out correspondingly, and if there is a sudden departure of the control, a short interval may elapse before repossession occurs, and this break, though short, may induce a feeling of nausea and weakness, and a sense of fear. The control should know how to leave the medium so that the medium is not disturbed.

The lecture, of which the above is a résumé, took 35 minutes to deliver.

Questions

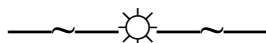
Answers to many questions followed. Some interesting points were: If the needs of medium and control have proper consideration, there is no harm to either the control or the medium.

Contortions are not always due to wrong approach by the control. If in the early stages of development a medium acquires the habit of contortions, it may continue after development. Though he has gone under control himself very many times, and knows that he is quite safe, Blake has not yet managed to overcome the momentary dread and fear of crossing the point where blackness supervenes—the moment of emptiness in which the mind loses consciousness of its surroundings.

Insanity does not imply a defect in the mind, but merely in the functioning of its instrument, the brain. A wise control saves his medium from any unnecessary effort while under control.

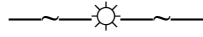
In genuine voice and materialisation phenomena, the physical and the etheric body of the medium are in strict close coincidence, because in such phenomena the power and the qualities of both are required.

J. B.



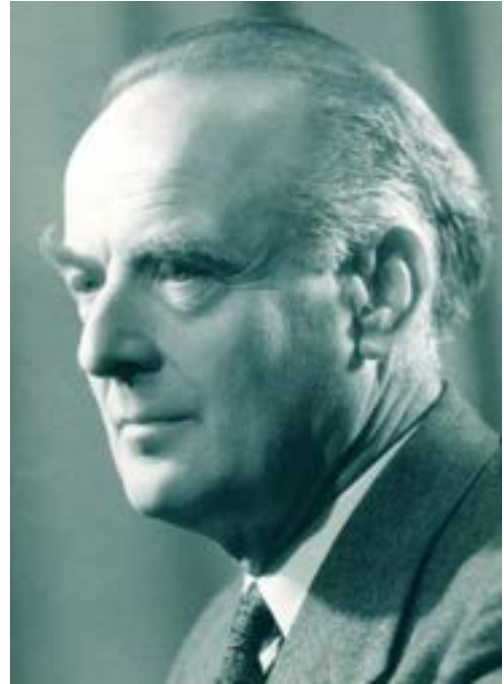
MORE ON HAROLD SHARP

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



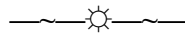
Harold Sharp has previously been featured in Pioneer on two occasions, firstly in Vol. 1, No. 5,¹⁴ and then in Vol. 5, No. 2.¹⁵ Biographical information on Sharp has been limited. Pioneer has come across two later articles published below from the Two Worlds, July 26th, 1952.

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



HAROLD SHARP'S AURAGRAPHS

Exhibition in London



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

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

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

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

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

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

¹⁴ “Harold Sharp Symbolic Drawings – Auragraphs”.

¹⁵ “He Portrays the Soul in Colour – The Mediumship of Harold Sharp”, “A sitter explained the auragraph”.

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

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

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

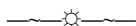
The interpretation is as follows: The sitter was a woman who had a phobia, amounting to obsession, that her relatives were going to compel her to have an operation. Under the operation, she was sure she was going to die, to be received after death by a fiendish devil. This devil is clearly shown by the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

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

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

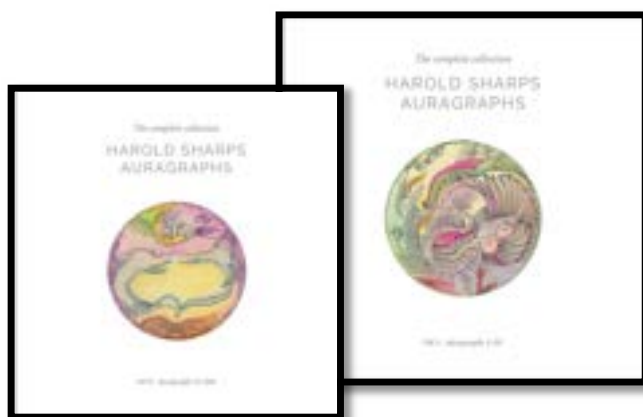
Beautiful as the drawings are, perhaps their greatest value lies in the great help given to sitters by Chan Shih as he explains the auragraphs. Defects in character are pointed out, fears revealed and dissipated and helpful advice gently given. In the words of his medium, Chan Shih is a "spiritual psychologist"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

MARIANNE FRANCIS



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

Available at the SNU online shop



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

Profile - Harold Sharp

Story by PHILIP PAUL

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

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

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



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

Thought it was measles

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

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

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

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

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

Medium was right

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

¹⁶ See Pioneer, Vol. 7, No. 1: “Eileen Garrett: This Was Eileen Garrett’s Moment of Truth”.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

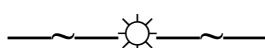
During his execution of auragraphs, he feels a control “almost like a glove in my hand.” He finds it necessary to keep in constant conversation with sitters so that his mind is never on the drawing.

Reason for arrows

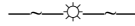
Once, he was asked by an anonymous applicant to provide her with an auragraph sitting at her hotel. To his consternation, the drawing showed broad arrows, prison bars and scales of justice. But later, the sitter told him she had suffered incarceration as a militant suffragette.

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

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



A QUESTION OF FRAUD!



Throughout our history physical phenomena have been a debatable issue within the movement from its earliest days, even though the Spiritualist movement was largely founded on physical phenomena.

By the end of the 1880s much discredit had been placed on the dark séances. With many exposures, some of course were well-deserved and rightly exposed; some were self-exposed by the medium themselves! Others were merely alleged, etc. Its process and its history are indeed complex but in some instances of alleged fraud we may hold some of the answers. Many of the exposures were almost always by Spiritualists themselves; this can also be said of the Spiritualist press over the ensuing decades. But sometimes an alleged exposure cannot be as clear-cut as it may appear on the surface, as there may be other underlining issues, misrepresentation, jealousy and a real possibility of unconscious fraud.¹⁸

It is often claimed that physical mediums are sometimes badly injured, with some claims of actual death as a result of a spirit form, ectoplasm, etc. being grabbed. There are numerous accounts, but there appears to be no firm documented material, medical evidence, etc. of such injuries.

As noted: *Its process and its history are indeed complex but in some instances of alleged fraud we may hold some of the answers*: over the next few issues Pioneer will look through the history of some of these alleged cases of fraud, looking at both sides if possible. Some will be without doubt fraud, others perhaps *wrongly* alleged — others due possibly to the complex psychological process of physical phenomena.

Harry Boddington, along with his brother Richard, was involved within the SNU, more so Richard, a former Vice-President of the Union, elected to the Council in 1907. In 1928 Maurice Barbanell became a member of the SNU Council, taking over from the veteran Richard Boddington as London Area Representative.

The article below is by Harry Boddington and is picked up in the Two Worlds issue of September 9th, 1939 under the editorship of Ernest Oaten; it appears that the debating issues mentioned in the article were ongoing for clarification:

In the 1930s a group was formed by Harold Chibbett called “The Probe”, which had a newsletter by the same name—hence Boddington’s names: ‘Probitis’ and ‘Probites’. “The Probe” investigated various occult fields, Spiritualism, psychical research, etc.

Another name which appears in the below article is that of Mrs Wakely, who was the President of Walthamstow National Spiritualist Church and a member of “The Probe”.

¹⁸ Conscious or unconscious fraud? Do mediums consciously premeditate fraud or is the fraud carried out unconsciously by *low* mischievous spirits? Some will argue that the medium premeditated the fraud and is therefore conscious and responsible for their actions, whilst others would say that due to the influence of *low* mischievous spirits or of the sitters in the séance the medium is totally unaware of their actions, as they are in a somnambulistic state and therefore cannot be accountable for their *unconscious* actions. For example, in August 1877 Catherine (Kate) Elizabeth Wood (1854-1884) was headlined “Miss Wood Caught Personating a Spirit”. The report states: “During the unconscious state the medium is made the victim of the circumstances by which she is surrounded, and either through the perverted action of some of her own controls, or the intrusion of other spirits, she is reduced to the disgraceful position in which she was found.” See *Psypioneer*, Vol. 8, No. 2, February 2012.

Harry Boddington replies to his critics, and discusses “an extraordinary disease called ‘Probitis’”

Fraud

THE extraordinary disease called “Probitis” attacks all psychical researchers at some time or another. It is due to the fact that dwellers in a three-dimensional world find it quite impossible to accept the idea that a four-dimensional world interpenetrates it and that people conditioned to a four-dimensional world can, by very delicate mental and physical adjustments, produce results inexplicable to those living on the three-dimensional plane.

Add to this the fact that in this world everybody is on the look-out for “easy money” and is suspicious of everybody who attains that end by producing apparently incredible happenings, and that we are entirely ignorant of the dynamic effect of thought upon the elements around us, and you at once perceive the basis of the disease that continually drives genuine physical mediumship out of existence.



An Answer

Even when Spiritualists understand some phases of psychic phenomena they seem utterly incapable of grasping the fact that all psychic phenomena are mental at base and can therefore be unset by *other* mentalities.

First I must deal with my opponent, Mrs. Wakely seems to have adopted the role of representative for the Probites. As soon as she heard I had an answer to her theories she prevented her members hearing the other side of the question by cancelling my date. I note that she has this week added another victim at Kensington to her credit. Again the “flash-and-grab” process was utilised, but instead of grasping draperies they discovered a medium holding a trumpet to her mouth. Associated with Mrs. Wakely is a lady of theosophic tendencies who assured me that “all physical mediums were frauds.”

Get two sitters obsessed with this mental outlook and their effect upon the delicate conditions of a seance room needs no further comment. They discover fraud wherever they go. No matter whether it is physical or mental phenomena that is being examined, the medium quite definitely passes under their control.

Mental Interference

Mrs. Duncan's spirit guide, “Albert,” once gave the sitters a striking demonstration of their power over the entranced medium. One of their number was selected to *mentally* ask the medium to come and place her hands upon his shoulders, The medium could not possibly know who was selected, but as soon as the mental request was made the medium promptly left the cabinet and came and put her hands upon him

Mr. Oaten assures me that he has known of people who deliberately practise mental interference with seance room phenomena.

The only difference between these premeditated mental interferences and that of the Probite mind is that the former act consciously and the Probites ignorantly. The effect is the same.

In combating fraud we must not fail to note the main difficulties under which all trance mediums labour: 1, the unconscious medium is liable to suggestion from spirits both in and out of the body; 2, to seize an unconscious man and charge him with fraud means ignoring the very factors which constitute the basis of his mediumship; 3, subconscious action also produces fraudulent effects if the intense desire of the medium for success, or the urgent need for money worries him while sinking into trance, Many other motives conduce to the same end.

The offence of the Probites is that they destroy the “pearl of great price” in their vain effort to check the medium’s money making.

I do not condone fraud, no matter whether produced consciously or subconsciously. It indicates a weakness somewhere, but that weakness is just as often in the mental atmosphere created by sitters as in the medium. Get the economic conditions altered and the main reason for fraud in every apartment of life will cease. That is why I want to see Spiritualists making it a definite plank in their propaganda platform.

My book on “Materialisations” cited one death and many injuries inflicted by the Probite method of testing mediums. Mrs Wakely suggests that my arguments are theoretical only. The book easily disproves that suggestion. In the first chapter on “The Mechanism of Mind,” I prove the definite action of the mind upon inanimate objects. How much more powerfully operative must it be upon the quiescent brain of a medium?

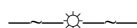
My case against the Probites is that they ignorantly misuse the powers of hypnotism and telepathy. Harmonious seances succeed because of the trust and harmony present. In this condition the medium’s brain responds to spirit action only.

The Walthamstow Probites are in a difficult position. I am sorry for them, but it should not blind them to the consequences of vindictive attacks.

Mrs. Wakely wrote to Harry Brown that he was the “one and only medium her society had ever seen or was ever likely to see.” Their pet medium now denies that his phenomena are “psychic” in any way. Since throwing over trance states—which presumably include hypnotic control by Mrs. Bell—he successfully produces psychic phenomena on the music hall stage In imitation of Kuda Bux, with his eyes so completely bandaged that it is impossible for him to see anything, he rides bicycles, plays cards and billiards, reads sealed letters and does other incredible things previously attributed to spirit aid. It seems to have annoyed them. I want to whisper a word of consolation to them. What Harry Brown is now doing could, I believe, be achieved by any well-developed physical medium who travels along Yoga lines of development after being sensitised by spirit operators over a long period of time.

If Probites want to stamp out fraud it is useless attacking *unconscious instruments*. They must first kill *unconscious trance mediumship*. This in its turn would be incredible folly, for from this class the most definite tests and spirit teaching are obtained. The way out of the difficulty is to teach trance mediums how to co-operate—in good light—with their spirit guides. Harry Brown is merely indicating a way.

HARRY BODDINGTON,
London Psychic Educational Centre.



The following issue of *Two Worlds* naturally brought a response from Mrs Wakely and “The Probe”.

Mrs E Wakely’s response:

Sir,—Logic teaches us that we must have our premises correct. If the premises on which Mr. Boddington builds his case for materialisation are as incorrect as those in his article on “Fraud” in last week’s issue of *The Two Worlds*, then one doubts the wisdom of his attempt to write a book on the subject.

I did not cancel Mr. Boddington’s date. The Secretary of the church, acting at the *unanimous* vote of the Church Committee, did this. It was felt that in view of the fact that Mr. Boddington was publicly supporting Clive Holmes, it was unwise to permit his presence on the platform of a church which is out to do its best to raise the standard of Spiritualism. As several members of the Church Council (not all members of “The Probe”) had witnessed the so-called phenomena of Clive Holmes, and had positive proof of his fraudulent practices, it was felt that no opportunity of talking on such a subject should be given to one whose observations were apparently not sufficiently careful to detect the presence of the fraud we had witnessed.¹⁹

Mr. Boddington was given a chance to appear on our platform on a weekday, when the very members he seems so convinced *want* to hear him would have a chance of voicing their own opinions, but, so far, he has not availed himself of the opportunity.

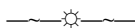
On no account, however, will he—at least while the present Council is in power—be allowed to speak on a Sunday evening, when only his side of the question can be voiced and heard. I have no one of theosophic tendencies associated with me, nor yet anyone who is likely to have assured Mr. Boddington that “all physical mediums are frauds.” May we ask Mr. Boddington to give the *name* of the medium who was killed through being tested by any method. *We want facts*. As he claims to know how exposures should *not* be done, will he please tell me how they should be carried out.

In no exposure with which I have been connected has the so-called medium suffered any injury, and in every case ample proof of fraud has been visible to all sitters.

As Mr. Oaten pointed out in his recent article, exposures are not published until sufficient evidence has been previously gathered. The same applies to the actual exposures with which I have been concerned. As long as people of Mr. Boddington’s calibre are alive to provide excuses for these ghouls in human form, just so long will Spiritualism cease to make the progress it deserves.

Not having read Mr. Boddington’s book, I have yet to learn what he considers proof. Unfortunately for Spiritualism, commercialisation and vested interests are not solely confined to fraudulent mediums.

Mrs. E. WAKELY,
President,
Walthamstow S. Church.



¹⁹ **NOT RESPONSIBLE:** Sir,—As Vice-President of Walthamstow Spiritualist Church, I would like to point out that Mr. Harry. Boddington’s bookings were cancelled by the Church Council. We were notified of the matter he was to speak on, and we did not think this desirable for a Sunday service. Mrs. Wakely was not, responsible. LEONARD C. BOOTH, Vice-President, Walthamstow Church.

Response from “The Probe”:

NO CONNECTION

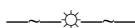
Sir,—The article, entitled “Fraud,” by Harry Boddington, contained in last week’s issue of *The Two Worlds*, may have conveyed the impression to your readers that “The Probe” is actively concerned in the controversy between Mr. Boddington and the members of the Walthamstow Church.

This is not so, and Mr. Boddington should seek information regarding “The Probe’s” organisation from authoritative quarters before assuming that every exposure is necessarily the work of “The Probe.”

“The Probe” is concerned chiefly with *bona fide* research, and resents the loose use of the terms “probitis” and “probites” in connection with the exposure of fraudulent mediums, which contain the implication that “The Probe” exists solely for that purpose.

It is time that responsible Spiritualists such as Harry Boddington realised that psychic researchers are not ignorant fools, and that co-operation in the investigation of psychic phenomena is much more likely to be of use to the Spiritualist. Movement than abuse and unprovoked attack.

Per pro “The Probe,”
H. S. W. CHIBBETT, Hon. Sec.



A Church Council member adds: ²⁰

Sir,—My name has been brought into Mr. Harry Boddington’s vituperative explosions, all because our local Church Council cancelled his dates. My wife and I must, according to him, face a charge of condoning fraud or else we must read his book !

Straight speaking is now required. Constant misstatements of fact and misrepresentations are made by Mr. Boddington.

Being a member of the Walthamstow Church Council, a member of the Probe, and a friend of many years’ standing of Mr. Harry Brown, whose remarkable mediumistic development my wife and I were privileged to watch, I am in a position to reply to Mr. Boddington.

I challenge Mr. Boddington to produce one tittle of evidence of Mr. Brown’s confession of fraud, or prove that he ever stated that his mediumship was not genuine.

I challenge Mr. Boddington to produce one letter from Mrs Wakeley asking him not to use Holmes’ name.²¹

[...]

Now as to the Probe, with whose name he tries to make such capital. What does he know of this organisation? Because they once successfully exposed a fraudulent medium, he feels he has the right to use his questionable wit at the Probe’s expense. Well, he has a tough nut to crack. The Probe is strong enough and independent enough to follow its own. line of investigation and research. It does not depend on popularity or advertisement, and Mr. Boddington’s cheap sneers will neither help nor harm the Probe.

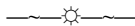
²⁰ Two Worlds, October 21st, 1938 (*slightly edited – repeated information*).

²¹ Mr Bell misspells “Wakely” as “Wakeley”.

With regard to the matter of my wife and I condoning fraud. Let Mr. Boddington first prove fraud by Mr. Harry Brown—I wish to emphasise the word *prove*, not make statements—then I will take up the matter of condoning fraud.

We can all have differences of opinion. We may not all see alike, but let us state facts plainly and truthfully, and not rely on subterfuge to make our case good. Only thus can we hope to arrive at some germ of truth.

FRANK H. C. BELL.



The editor, Ernest Oaten, on October 28th brings a halt to the argument, letting Harry Boddington have the final say (*slightly edited*):

This brings us to the crux of the matter so far as Brown is concerned. Both of them deny that he uses extra-sensory perception, psychic sight, or the faculty of clairvoyance (which Mrs. Bell admits he developed), during his stage shows. The “dangerously misleading statement” is theirs, not mine. Readers must judge.

I have before me two printed accounts of the way in which he claimed to train for his stage show. The clearest explanation is taken from *Pearson's Weekly* of July 10th, 1937, and reads as follows:—

“ ‘But how did you suddenly discover that you had this power’ I asked.

“ ‘It wasn't sudden,’ he corrected. ‘*It's a matter of concentration and development.*’ As a child he could see hazy forms while blindfolded. He mentioned this to a friend, who suggested he might be able to do the Kuda Bux [1905-1981: known as “The Man with the X-Ray Eyes.”] act.

“ ‘I tried, but at first it did not work. Yet I somehow felt that with patience I should be able to recapture my childhood's powers. I lighted a candle in a darkened room, bandaged my eyes very tightly, *so that I could not see the candle*, and sat gazing at the place where it was. I concentrated on seeing it.

“ ‘After a time I began to see the dim form of the light, A mere glimmer. Then it took shape. I could see the actual outline of the flame. Then, *after weeks of further practice*, I got expert that I could not only see the candle, but some of the things in the room which were lighted up by it.

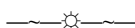
“ ‘Then I increased the bandage thickness and tried again, gradually developing the power *of seeing without my eyes*’ ”

What becomes of the suggested stage “trick” after that very lucid explanation? I called it positive development on Yoga lines. I still adhere to that explanation.

I think Brown's denial that anything “psychic” enters into his show is due to the fact that his later development differed from his earlier clairvoyance in that his concentration has caused him to restrict his extra-sensory perception to the physical plane that same act shuts out normal clairvoyance and its relationship to the spirit world. To me, it is simply a difference in degree and not in actual fact.

Please note that I have not suggested that Brown ever committed conscious fraud. But I have emphasised the fact in “Materialisations” that all entranced mediums are liable to subconscious actions and also to influence from their audience. These are the actual points in debate, but which have in no way been dealt with by any contributor.

H. BODDINGTON.



Editor's note:

Boddington's article, "Fraud", and its response brought out some complex problems of what truly constitutes fraud, pointing to the possibility of blatant deliberate fraud, unconscious fraud and perhaps other considerations as to the mechanics of physical mediumship, as in the case of Clive Holmes, the materialisation medium, whom Boddington does not directly mention in the above article *but in fact, strongly supported*—while others *cited above* were equally satisfied from their first-hand observations and experience of Holmes' mediumship: "... *had positive proof of his fraudulent practices...*". However, the magistrate had no problem in their judgement that Clive Holmes was indeed guilty of his charges.

Regarding the points raised in the article, "Fraud", by Boddington and his apparent attack on Mrs E. Wakely, Frank Bell and his wife (Margery), these people were all Spiritualists, President and Councillor of an SNU church, Boddington a Diploma-holder of the Union, etc. On the surface, it appears that Boddington was not impressed with "The Probe", in which Wakely and the Bells were active members. The published response from "The Probe" was from its founder and then current Honorary Secretary, Mr Harold Chibbett.



Harold Stanley Walter Chibbett (1900-1978) was in fact a supporter of physical phenomena, as is demonstrated by his involvement with Noah Zerdin (1889-1972), who was well known for pioneering a general awareness, and the safe practice, of physical mediumship.

The development of physical mediumship, generally speaking, is restricted to private home circles. Around 1930 Noah Zerdin began to exchange reports of his home circle with those of Harold Chibbett. This would lead to the formation of the "Link Association of Home Circles" in 1931, which developed into an international association of home circles, privately publishing its own monthly journal, "The Link".



In 1931 Harold Chibbett and Noah Zerdin held their first conferences of "The Link". Chibbett became its Honorary Secretary. It represented 21 home circles and the following year it increased slightly to 26. By the third Conference, held on October 15th, 1933 in London, it had reached 156 affiliated home circles (1934 – 187 home circles).

"The Link" held large mass meetings for psychical phenomena. Mrs A.E. Perriman was the first voice medium for "The Link" in 1934 at the Æolian Hall.



A year later Leslie Flint,²² a friend of co-founder Noah Zerdin, gave a large direct-voice séance at

²² The photograph is a later Leslie Flint direct-voice public séance by the "Link Association of Home Circles" in 1946, where over one thousand people witnessed direct voice. The photograph shows the cabinet Flint was sitting in; the microphone can be seen surrounded by Leslie Flint's home circle members. The "Link" event was started by various speakers: Noah Zerdin (whose photo is shown), Lord Dowding and former SNU Presidents Percy Wilson and Harold Vigurs (then SNU President).

Bloomsbury's Victoria Hall. Colin Evans' home circle was a member of the "Link Association of Home Circles" and reports were circulating of remarkable physical phenomena in Evans' home circle, in which he was already a well-known clairvoyant. "The Link" decided to centre some large mass séances around Evans' home circle. This was in late 1937; arrangements were made for Nandor Fodor, research officer for the "International Institute for Psychical Research", to record any phenomena which might occur.²³

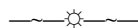
In more recent years, after the deaths of Chibbett and Zerdin, in their footsteps came the formation of the "Noah's Ark Society", whose journal carried important articles on pioneers of physical mediumship. The name came from Noah Zerdin, followed in later years by the "Zerdin Fellowship", which also had its own magazine, the "Zerdin Buzz Sheet". All of these are now sadly defunct.



See *Psypioneer*, Vol. 10, No. 8: "The Link"—The Association of Home Circles & "The Noah's Ark Society"—for Physical Mediumship.

To conclude the arguments between Boddington and the "Probites," it is correct to say that Mrs Wakely, Frank Bell and his wife Margery were sometimes involved in the exposure of alleged fraud. For example, Frank Bell and Mrs Wakely were involved in the exposure of the flower apport medium, Miss X – Miss Hilda Lewis, 'Flower Medium'. Bell played a fairly substantial part, with Mrs Wakely as a signed witness. An overview of the story is published in *Psypioneer*, Vol. 6, No. 6: "The Flower Medium — Mrs. Hewat McKenzie, Oct 1935", albeit this article does not include the involvement of Wakely and Bell.²⁴

During the discussions of Boddington and the "Probites" former SNU President and editor of the *Two Worlds* Ernest Oaten publicly exposed two physical mediums, Mrs Grover and Mrs Woolf. Following the exposures Oaten publishes in the *Two Worlds*, August 26th, 1938:



²³ See *Pioneer*, Vol. 6, No. 5: International Institute for Psychical Research – The Case for Real Psychical Research – by Arthur Findlay.

See also *Psypioneer*, Vol. 10, No. 8: "Spiritualism through the Lens – Colin Evans" – "Paul J. Gaunt comments on Colin Evans" – "Sitters See His Body Floating in the Air – A. W. Austen" and " "The Link" Triumphs Again – *Two Worlds*".

²⁴ Further information is available from the editor.

The Question of Fraud

THE exposure we have published in the last two weeks, which concern Mrs. Grover and Mrs. Woolf, draw attention once again to the element of fraud in psychic phenomena. In the minds of many people mediumistic phenomena, by reason of their strangeness and exceptional nature, are invariably associated with fraud, credulity and deception. Unfortunately such accusations are not always without foundation.

Accusations of fraud have *always* been levelled against mediums, and while some of them have been undoubtedly based upon facts a large number of such accusations have been due to the fact that men of ordinary experience found it impossible to believe that such phenomena *could* actually occur; there appeared to be no laws known to science which would allow such happenings, and it was therefore far easier to assert that they were produced fraudulently than to accept results which lay beyond the pale of ordinary experience. We are convinced that a very large number of the accusations of fraud in the early days of the Movement were by no means well founded. Men were dealing with phenomena which were new to them, the laws of which were *not* understood, and the only comparison which most men had was to the delusions produced by conjurors, and they imagined that there was some relationship between the deceptions of the conjuror and the seances of mediums.

Rogues and cheats are to be found in every walk of life. "The Church, the Law and Medicine are all disgraced occasionally by the conviction of disreputable practitioners," but however numerous such people may be, it is only when we come to Spiritualism that the existence of fraud and deception is used as an argument against the whole movement.

Psychical researchers have *ever* been suspicious of professional mediums, and, of course, it is quite conceivable that where the element of gain enters into the matter the prevalence of deception is far more likely than in cases where no material gain is at stake. There are, of course, other factors, such as the desire for fame, notoriety or personal vanity, all of which may enter into the matter, but in the main it can be said that ability to extort heavy profits in any department of life or trade offers a temptation to the cheat to pretend to powers which he does not possess.

The difficulty of dealing of with fraud in mediumship, however, would be very much simplified if it was attempted by people who possessed no genuine powers whatever, but there have been remarkably few cases of this type in the history of the Movement. The problem is complicated by the fact that we have to deal with sensitive people who under *some* conditions are capable of producing genuine phenomena, but who, when those conditions are not present, resort to deceit and trickery. Now in our opinion, when we are dealing with the most sacred convictions of the human soul, when we are attempting too, to analyse the very serious matter of the love-links which bind us to our best-beloved friends, the individual who would practise wilful fraud under such conditions deserves the worst that can be said about him. To exploit the deepest emotions of the human soul and the most sacred of human associations by using fraudulent means to exploit them for personal gain is a detestable and disgraceful thing, showing a lack of all fine feeling and of decency.

As the importance of Spiritualism grows in public estimation, as its claims become popular, it is obvious that there is a greater demand for phenomena, and while, half a century ago the best mediums in this country lived on the borders of starvation, to-day the medium who can produce definite and positive evidences can undoubtedly command large fees. There seems little doubt, from facts in our possession, that Mrs. Grover must have been receiving somewhere in the region of £20 per week, and for an individual whose

position in life has always been moderate and humble one, the ability to acquire such fees is a very great temptation. The fact, too, that such fees are payable to-day throws upon the Spiritualistic Movement a very great deal more responsibility than in the days when fees were few and mediums were despised.

Let us be perfectly frank: we should maintain that the individual who can produce actual evidence of the continued survival of loved ones, the apparent loss of whom has brought sorrow, misery and despondency into the hearts of their relatives; the individual who can stem the tide of sorrow, which is the result of bereavement, and substitute therefor the joy and confidence which comes from the conviction of reunion, is doing a great deal more good in the world than a Hollywood film star. The medium who can bridge the gulf of death is conferring quite as great a benefit on humanity as any bishop or archbishop, and is entitled—and rightly entitled—to comfort, security, and those amenities which bring peace of mind, so essential to the practice of mediumship.

It must not be forgotten that in the practice of mediumship there are psychological factors at work which are too often overlooked by the uninformed. The fact that a medium in the seance room is more or less in a hypnotic condition and may react to mental and psychical factors which are difficult to trace, very often causes them to do things unconsciously which they would not consciously do. Sitting some time ago with one materialising medium, the guide distinctly told us, “Will you bear in mind that my medium is in a hypnotic state, and if you give orders she will obey your suggestions; when in state she acts automatically.” Such a statement throws a great deal of light on the process.

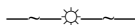
Again, Dr. Crawford²⁵ showed that much physical phenomena is produced by the extrusion of psychic rods (visible or invisible) from the body of the medium, and it would seem that there is a current of nervous energy flowing through those rods which corresponds very closely to the nerve energy flowing through the arms when we attempt to lift a chair, for instance. It is not surprising that in such cases part of the energy thus projected is directed through the limbs, and one gets involuntary twitchings and movements of arms and legs which may easily excite suspicion and lead to the supposition that the medium is wilfully and very crudely attempting to move objects with his hands. These characteristics were especially notable with Eusapia Palladino, who made little or no attempt to disguise the facts.²⁶

It is always well to remember, then, that a medium in the seance-room may be liable to act unconsciously to psychological factors of which the sitters may be largely ignorant. In the days of long ago when such matters were imperfectly understood, many accusations of fraud were made against mediums which had no foundation other than the ignorance of the sitters. Such considerations, however, are not an excuse for fraud—in fact, when they are understood they make fraud easily apparent. When, however, as in the case of Mrs. Grover, it can be definitely shown that preparations were made beforehand to practice fraud by carrying into the seance-room the materials used for fraudulent purposes, such as butter-muslin and band of linen with a large safety pin in it, there is only one conclusion to be reached, namely, that a deliberate attempt had been made beforehand to deceive the sitters. And we hope Spiritualists, despite their sympathy for the bottom dog and the desire to practise kindness and the spirit of brotherhood will let no false sentiment stand in the way of keeping the Movement clean. There is far less fraud in the Movement than the outsider is prepared to admit, but with the growing popularity of Spiritualism one can understand the danger of an increase. It's up to Spiritualists of every grade to denounce and make

²⁵ See Pioneer, Vol. 4, No. 5: “Letter from Harry Houdini to Dr W. J. Crawford”, “Dr. W. J. Crawford & the Goligher Circle”, “Ectoplasm Photographed – John McIndoe”, and “Editor's endnote”.

²⁶ See Pioneer, Vol. 6, No. 6: “Eusapia Palladino – Hereward Carrington”.

public every case in which fraud has been definitely proved. It is our duty to the spirit world to keep *their* reputation and our own as clean as the conditions of this world will allow. Any false sentiment is a reflection upon that band of ministering spirits who in the last ninety years have laboured under very trying conditions to establish their case.



Mrs Elizabeth Grover's exposure was published in the Two Worlds, August 12th, 1938; below is the full report by Ernest Oaten:

MRS. GROVER EXPOSED

IT is with very great regret that we have to announce that Mrs. Elizabeth Grover, who has posed as a materialising medium, was definitely discovered in fraud last week while giving an alleged materialising séance near Birkenhead. The seance had been arranged for the 21st of August, but to fit in with Mrs. Grover's engagements, at her request the date was altered to the 7th. There were nine sitters, in addition to Mrs. Grover and Mr. J. L. Hampson. Mrs. Grover was met at Liverpool and motored across to the Wirral peninsular. Two ladies were appointed to take her into an ante-room for a complete search. After her outer clothes had been removed there was some delay before she removed her underclothing. She was *never* completely stripped. While the search was in process, Mr. Hampson called the two ladies, who were examining her to examine the clothes that she was to wear, thereafter they returned to the ante-room. A complete search was not made and to that extent the sitters were lax.

After the seance had started a form came from the cabinet who claimed to be Albert Stewart. Close scrutiny showed no likeness to the Albert Stewart whom many of the sitters were familiar with not even the voice being satisfactory. Two other forms came from the cabinet, one claiming to be "White Rose," a guide, and another one, who said he was Hill, but no one knew him, and he couldn't tell the sitters who he was. Mrs. Grover had heard a sitter addressed as "May," and the next form announced itself as being for May, although there was no one of this name in the room. The sitters were by now definitely of the opinion that in every case the form which appeared *was* Mrs. Grover, clothed in white substance. When another form appeared who gave the name of Ethel, one of the sitters slipped into the cabinet and found the cabinet empty. The light was put on and Mrs. Grover was then discovered in her underclothes draped with wet butter muslin, with a calico bandage round her head. The exposure was complete, and no attempt was made, either by Mrs. Grover *or* Mr. Hampson to disguise the fact. Mrs. Grover signed the following statement:—

I, Elizabeth Grover, hereby acknowledge that on August 7, 1938, at 3 p.m., at a seance held in Wye View, Meadowbrook Road, Moreton, Wirral, I fraudulently produced the materialised form of "Albert Stewart" and others. These forms were produced by muslin and other material hidden on my person, in the presence of Edward Edwards, Caroline Davies, Lilian Roberts, Ethel Wearing, Dorothy H. Pugh, W. J. Lee, K. Nichols, W. O. S. Lee, Ada Lee.

Signed,

E. Grover,
J. L. Hampson.

Mr. Hampson expressed his surprise, as he claimed that he had believed absolutely in Mrs. Grover, but as it was he who called the two ladies aside from the task of searching her, Mr. Hampson has signed the following statement:—

August 7, 1938.

I hereby agree that it was possible for Mrs. Grover to have secreted the muslin on her person, when I called, the two ladies who were examining Mrs. Grover into the seance room, to examine the gown she would wear,

J. L. Hampson.

The sitters acquit Mr, Hampson of wilful complicity and assert that he was as much surprised as they were.

Mrs. Grover has been sitting for a number of years in Edinburgh, and from time to time reports have reached our editor. He had hopes that a reliable medium was in process of development, but some months ago Mr. Hampson offered *The Two Worlds* a series of advertisements announcing that Mr. Hampson and Mrs. Grover would be prepared to undertake materialising seances throughout the country. Our editor wrote Mr. Hampson *definitely* stating that while Mrs. Grover might possess mediumship, he was of the opinion that that mediumship was by no means sufficiently advanced to guarantee the giving of public seances, and advised that she remain for another year or two in her developing circle. It was a loss of advertisement income to us, but *The Two Worlds* has always put the interests of the Movement first. Steps were then taken to give Mrs. Grover publicity in other ways. Since then we have received quite a dozen adverse reports of seances held in different parts of the country, and at least five persons who have sat with her have called upon us personally to express their dissatisfaction, On the other hand we have had two reports only which express satisfaction, and in neither case did the evidence offered seem to us conclusive, otherwise we should have published it.

There are many materialising mediums who can produce good results when they sit in the same circle with the same sitters regularly, but who are quite incapable of producing satisfactory results when they have to sit with different sitters at each seance, It *may* be that Mrs. Grover possesses mediumship, though we have little evidence of it, but in any case, the best course open to her is to put herself in the hands of a carefully selected committee for a series of seances under rigid test conditions. It is a matter of deep regret to us to have to call attention to wilful fraud, but in the interests of honesty and for the protection of honest searchers, it has been the policy of *The Two Worlds* for fifty years to make such facts known wherever they occur.

E. W. O.

The exposure of Mrs Elizabeth Grover brings out another problem that some mediums *claim* to have other mediums' guides/controls. This was indeed sometimes the case with Estelle Roberts' "Red Cloud." At one point the alleged guide made a statement to the effect... *that he only works through his medium and after her death he will not chose another medium*—this is in contrast to "John King", who, it is claimed, worked with numerous mediums for decades—even today!

The Grover séances claimed Helen Duncan's alleged control, "Albert Stewart." The story was written very much from the point of view that Helen Duncan was *herself aware* of the fact that Grover was to be exposed. The letter below is from one of the people present at the exposure and a signatory to the confession, Edward Edwards; the following is a quote from the *Two Worlds*, August 26th, 1938:



Will you permit me, Mr. Editor, to explain how and why the exposure came about? For some considerable time at Mrs. Grover's "seances," a form purporting to be "Albert Stewart" has been appearing and giving so-called advice to sitters, which, when acted upon, has caused quite a lot of sorrow and disappointment. So much so that Albert himself was greatly grieved at the havoc that was being done.

When Mrs. Duncan was in Birkenhead during May last, Albert spoke to me very feelingly about this, saying: "Mr. Edwards, can you not, for God's sake, do something to stop this use of my name," I asked what could I do. He then suggested that I write a disclaimer to the Spiritualist paper, which I did. The Editor can bear me out in that. The letters were not published. Laws of libel, etc., had to be considered. At a trance sitting, Albert again pleaded for something to be done. He was asked if we should arrange a sitting to try and find the lady out. This, through Mr. W. J. Lee, was eventually arranged. We were directed by Albert all through. He told us what Mrs. Grover would be wearing, how we were to sit, and what we would find when the light went on.

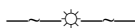
Mr. Hampson is quite right in saying that Mrs. Duncan knew of the proposed exposure. She was staying for the week-end at the home of Mrs. Roberts, some five miles away, as we wished to keep in touch with Albert, and to ask him if the arrangements we had made were satisfactory. Mrs. Duncan gave up part of her holiday so that we could do this. Apart from that she had nothing whatever to do with the exposure. It was carried through by personal friends of "Albert Stewart," solely in an endeavour to vindicate his name.

It is unfortunate that Mr. Hampson considers he was subjected to some little abuse, but, as I have stated previously his action in calling the ladies away from Mrs. Grover placed him under suspicion. Regarding, his statement that he has received letters from persons who still have faith in Mrs. Grover, and are prepared still to engage her, I believe it was the "Great Barnum" who said, "There is one born every minute." So consequently, I am not surprised at this. And now, Mr. Hampson, a message to yourself from the real "Albert Stewart," which asked me to pass on to you. Albert said you were not knowingly a party to the frauds perpetuated by Mrs. Grover. And, in conclusion, I can only say I regret to find you still sign yourself as "Acting Secretary for Mrs. Grover."



EDWARD EDWARDS.

5, White Street,
Birkenhead.



Many points of view have been expressed and discussed and reasons given for and against conscious and unconscious fraud, etc. In the next issue Pioneer will look at the early Victorian mediums and the claims of fraud against them. As Ernest Oaten remarked:

"... that it may be quite possible for suspicious sitters, who sit with the express purpose of exposing the medium to so permeate the mental atmosphere with their intentions that a medium acts under their suggestion. Mediums, being sensitives, must necessarily, in some measure, be influenced by the mental powers brought to bear upon them. The theory is perfectly valid, and is well recognised by all qualified experimenters. It is because of this that many people have been accused of fraud, when they have been perfectly innocent, ..."

Given this article, "Fraud", by Harry Boddington, it appears to suggest that perhaps the underlining factors of his article were the conviction and imprisonment of the physical materialisation medium Clive Holmes. It has been noted that it was Mrs. Wakely who said:

"... several members of the Church Council (not all members of "The Probe") had witnessed the so-called phenomena of Clive Holmes, and had positive proof of his fraudulent practices, ..."

In Boddington's article, "Fraud", he called "The Probe" members 'Probitis' and 'Probites', which he used throughout the article, but "The Probe" had nothing to do with the conviction of Holmes directly, albeit some were members of "The Probe." Clearly its founder and Honorary Secretary, Mr Harold Chibbett, was in support of physical mediumship with "The Link"!

Below, Pioneer publishes the front-page story of the Two Worlds, July 30th, 1937:

A MEDIUM CONVICTED

CLIVE HOLMES SENTENCED

FROM OUR SPECIAL REPREHENSIVE



WHATEVER one's ideas of justice may be, the sentence on Clive Holmes will rankle in all minds. Robbery with violence gets no heavier sentence. A clean life's record, honourable army service, with King George's Jubilee medal, twenty years' service in Government employ, employment which will automatically cease, with loss of pension, and not even the grace of the First Offender's Act. All this will be the normal sequence of four months' imprisonment, because a lad claimed to seize a piece of muslin in a seance room. The magistrate said he had "no doubt a clever conjuror could produce all the phenomena."

The witnesses who testified to searching, stripping, handcuffing, and recognising spirit forms, and accepted the manifestations as genuine, were dismissed as "dupes." The magistrate's attitude towards psychic phenomena is illustrated by the following extract from his summing up: "A certain French cynic said, 'Faith consists of believing what you know to be untrue.' I cannot help thinking that the faith of these witnesses is faith of that variety." He also decided that 'the "religious atmosphere in which these manifestations occur all form part of the 'false pretence.' "

Mr. Ronald Evans, who sat next to the prosecutrix and her son at the seance on May 20th, said he had known Clive Holmes about three years. He was not an official, but went as a seeker after truth. He had definitely recognised his grandmother because of a particular scar on her nose. He had also recognised his aunt Mary, seen two forms out at a time, and sometimes young children had manifested. (Holmes is 6ft. 2in.) Sometimes he had seen forms and heard Clive's voice speaking from the cabinet at the same time.

Several people had inspected the cabinet on May 20th. On that night four forms materialised. Three were recognised by sitters. Mr. Smith had handcuffed Mr. Holmes. He was a stranger to him, and was there for the first time. Smith held the key. The fourth form did not "lash out" at Evans, but tried to strike the light down with the luminous slates. Mrs. Evans could not have fallen on to the floor, as he was sitting next to her and she would naturally have fallen on him. The spirit form seemed to rise from the floor about 3 ft. away from him. As it passed him he was tapped gently on the face. He then saw the beam of light which for a moment he mistook for a psychic phenomenon. The torch was directed towards the stomach of the spirit, which used the slates as a shield to ward it off. The form then

disappeared towards the cabinet. He saw nothing whatever of the alleged striking of either Mrs. Evans or her son. Mrs. Evans held his hand nearly all the time and sat still. He went to the cabinet within a few seconds and found Clive Holmes, still handcuffed, with his head lolling on one side. He saw no theatrical properties nor anything suspicious in the cabinet.

He helped Mr. Clive Holmes out of the cabinet still handcuffed. The key was obtained and he was released and helped downstairs and laid on the couch. The unscrewing of the handcuffs occupied two or three minutes. One of the sitters had taken off his coat and made a pillow of it. They did this because the medium was apparently lifeless. When they got him downstairs he seemed in a very bad state, and complained that he could not see. Cross-examination rebutted the suggestion that he had concocted this story in collaboration with the defendant's solicitor. He had summarised his evidence in a letter to a psychic journal before he saw the solicitor for the defence.

Mr. Forsyth said he took the photographs exhibited in court. They were the same as Mr. Boddington took at the same meeting. He examined the cabinet while he was busy fixing up the infra-red photographic apparatus. It was impossible for anything to be smuggled into the room after the examination, and he was quite sure there were no theatrical properties in the cabinet. He saw Mr. Boddington cut the lock of hair from the head of "White Moose." He was quite sure it was not Clive Holmes, and that Holmes was a genuine medium.

Miss Silver, a maidservant to the Holmes', said she had access to all cupboards, drawers, and every part of the house. She was a Baptist and did not go to the meetings, but had never seen anything suspicious. Part of her Work was to clean the seance room. The lino over the cabinet floor was one solid piece. She was certain there were no trap doors or hiding places for theatrical properties. There was no restriction at any time to prevent her going to cupboards and drawers.

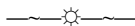
Mr. Chitty submitted that on the evidence of the prosecution he had no case to answer. There had been no false pretence. No specific promise to produce anything. In any event, if it was held that the phenomena were not genuine it was for the prosecution to prove it.

The magistrate intervened, and said it had been a false representation to suggest that Holmes could produce genuine psychic phenomena. It was not genuine, it was a fraud.

Then as to Mrs. Evans. She had posed as a poor ignorant widow duped by Mr. Holmes. Her own evidence proved her to be a woman who ought to have known all about psychic phenomena as she had been a practising medium for twenty years, and her son claimed to have been clairvoyant all his life. She first instructed a solicitor to claim compensation on her behalf and then denied instructing him. He was quite sure that if Mr. Seaton had known the type of woman he was acting for he would not have taken up her case. Exactly the same phenomena occurred on the 20th as had occurred when Mr. Holmes was sitting under strict test conditions. The material with which the forms are clothed cannot be distinguished from the manufactured article. If, therefore, any of it is seized it is no proof of fraud. If Mr. Evans could come armed with a torch, why not also a piece of muslin as well. This quite apart from the white scarf which Mrs. Evans admitted losing on that night.

In summing up, the magistrate said: "The case merely concerns what happened on the 20th May. Matters followed their usual course until Mr. Evans produced a torch. Mr. Evans' sworn evidence is that he saw the defendant. He apparently did not attempt to do Mr. Evans any bodily harm, but in the struggle his mother may have been struck. The fact of the handcuffs being used also constitutes a pretence that the phenomena were genuine. It is said, amongst other things, that white light would destroy the spirit.

But this never happened. It is said that the Evans' were inspired by spite against the Holmes' and brought the muslin in themselves. It is extremely unlikely. If any competent conjuror were asked to simulate the phenomena I have no doubt he could do so. I think that the whole thing can be reproduced. It was therefore a fraudulent series of seances. The procedure followed on that night was no different from those on any other night. Therefore representations were given to Mrs. Evans to produce genuine phenomena. She paid money by reason of these false pretences. I must therefore find him guilty. Police testified to the witnesses' good record. Mr. Chitty reminded the magistrate that the defendant had already lost a source of income by resigning his post as chorister. Also that his client had held a steady appointment for twenty years, and that he made no personal gain from the work of the centre. To this the magistrate dissented. Bail was demanded in £250. On further protest this was reduced to the prisoner's own recognisances in £50 and two sureties of £25 each. Bail was immediately arranged. Notice of appeal was given.



The Two Worlds, October 1st, 1937:

CLIVE HOLMES APPEAL FAILS

The Clive Holmes appeal has failed. A grave miscarriage of justice has occurred. In the present state of the law and the prevailing ignorance of psychic science, nothing else was to be expected, no matter how honourable or innocent a medium may be.

Had I no other evidence of the genuineness of his mediumship than the letter I enclose from Mr. Case, the Vice-President of the Cambridge Psychic Research Society, I should hold myself justified in proclaiming his imprisonment a martyrdom.

At the moment, my energies are being directed into providing a means of livelihood for the martyred man. To this end, I am collecting all available reports on his mediumship and will publish them with an analysis on physical phenomena generally. Every aspect of the case will be reviewed in my forthcoming book on *Clive Holmes' Martyrdom*. I aim at producing a cheap volume at 2s. 6d. each. Subscribers helping me to cover the initial outlay by ordering their copies in advance will receive them at 2s. each. The entire proceeds, after paying costs of advertising and production, will go either to Clive Holmes as salary for organising a centre, or to the expenses of its creation. Full details will be stated in the book itself.

In the letter which follows, note the facts. Flesh is nipped into the lock of the handcuffs. It remains fixed until after the seance. Blood flows, which proves the location has never shifted.

Dear Mr. Boddington,—I have been following with great interest the case of Clive Holmes, also your articles in *The Two Worlds*. It may interest you to know that in June of last year, in company with the President and other members of the above Society (Cambridge Society for Psychical Research), I attended one of the seances at Blackheath.

I was invited to secure Mr. Holmes to his chair, and in doing so caught a small piece of the flesh of his wrist in the handcuffs. He told me not to bother about undoing them again. When I released him after the sitting, I found the flesh still nipped in the handcuffs and a small quantity of blood on the wrist. This seems to rule out any idea that he could have been released during the sitting.

I may say we were invited to search the room before the seance commenced, which I can assure you we did thoroughly, and were satisfied that there were no props or make-up concealed anywhere.—Yours faithfully,

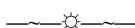
A. J. CASE (Vice-President, C.S.P.R.

P.S.—Quite a number of materialisations took place, and in our opinion there was no loop hole for fraud.

The Committee and Mrs. Holmes tender their thanks for assistance rendered in their hour of need. The long period between arrest and hearing of the appeal, with all sources of income dried up, has proved a great strain. If no donors object, the Committee contemplate clearing all liabilities to date and pacing the balance towards clearing the rent as it comes due.

HARRY BODDINGTON,

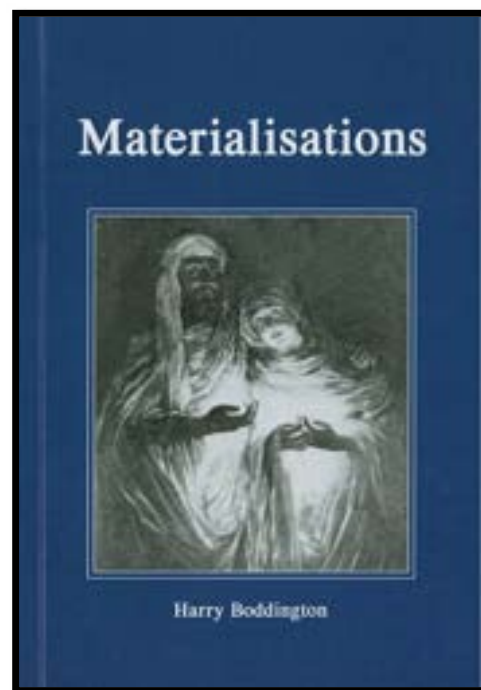
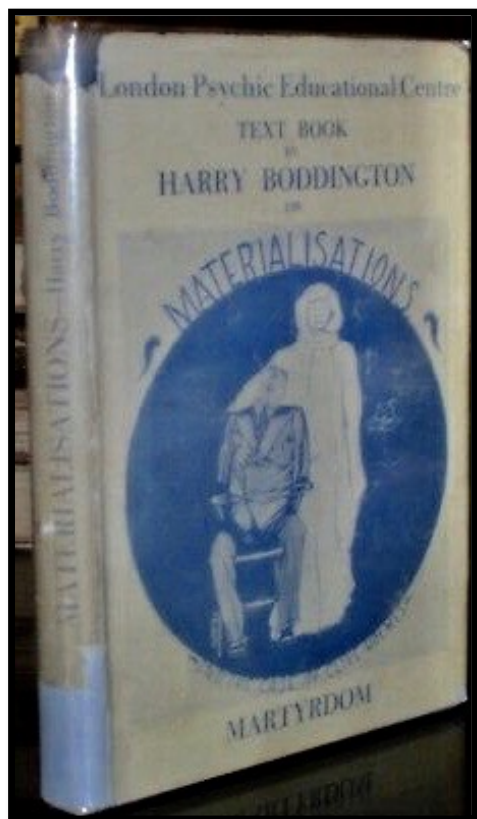
Director, London Educational Psychic Centre.



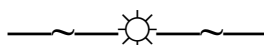
For further information please see:

“Materialisations: a critical analysis of physical phenomena, an instructive text-book showing the martyrdom of Clive Holmes”

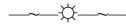
by Harry Boddington, published by Psychic Press for the London Psychic Educational Centre [1938]



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