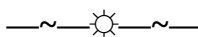




Volume 12, No. 1: 2025



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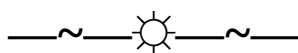
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**“Subscribe” free to Pioneer or contact the editor –
pioneer@snu.org.uk**

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



THE BRITTEN MEMORIAL TRUST

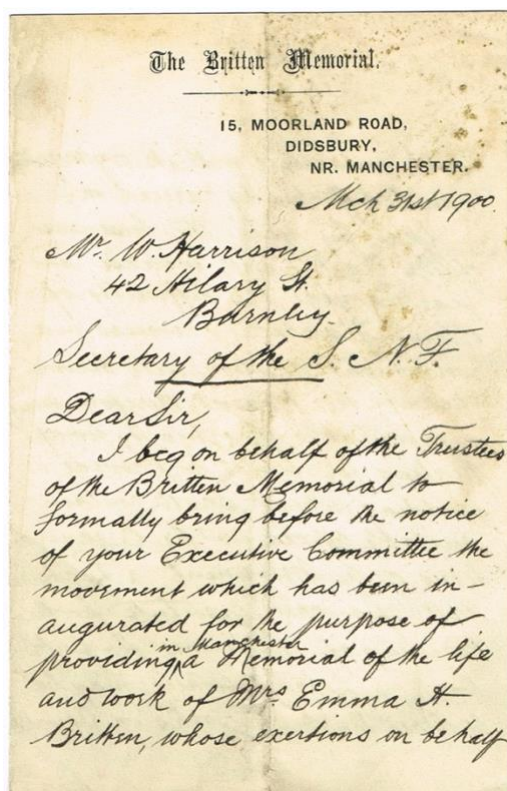
Britten Museum & Library

How it all came about

On October 2nd, 1899 one of Spiritualism's finest pioneers, Emma Hardinge Britten, died. On Friday, December 15th, 1899, a provisional committee was convened by Will Phillips (then editor of the *Two Worlds*), together with James J. Morse, Mr A. W. Orr (Secretary *pro tem*), James Burchall and John Venables (not present as Treasurer *pro tem*). The intended proposal was to inaugurate a suitable memorial in memory of Emma Hardinge Britten; I quote in part the handwritten report as dated above:

"That such a memorial being desirable it should be of a national character, & that therefore the subject should be presented for consideration at the next annual Conference of the S.N.F. as officially representing the Spiritualists of Great Britain.

"As the S.N.F. is not at present legally capable of holding property it is recommended that until legal incorporation has been effected by that body the subscribers to this memorial should elect a Board of Trustees who should be empowered to receive subscriptions and hold them or acquire and hold property for the purposes of the Memorial which subscriptions or property shall be transferred to the S.N.F. whenever that body shall be in a position to legally hold the same, provided that the Conference adopts the proposal and contributes to the cost thereof.



"The Memorial, it is proposed, shall be a building which shall be known as "The Britten Memorial", to be used as the Head-quarters of the National Sprlst. [sic] Organisations of Great Britain, with the necessary offices and appartmances [sic], a Hall for public meetings, a (*in pencil public* (?) library and reading room, and a room to be specially devoted to the memory of Mrs. Britten, where shall be kept copies of her works, a portrait of her, and such other mementoes as she may have bequeathed or may be collected for the purpose."

This was put forward to the Spiritualists' National Federation (SNF) on March 31st, 1900 in a letter addressed to the SNF Secretary, William Harrison,¹ from "The Britten Memorial", signed by its Honorary Secretary, A. Orr²; the first page is shown here. It should be noted at this period in our history that the British Spiritualists' Lyceum Union (BSLU) was very closely companioned with the movement, which was significantly growing every year; the letter further notes:

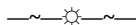
¹ James Morse, at the fifth Conference of the Spiritualists' National Federation held at Darwen in 1894, proposed that Mr William Harrison take the post of Federation Secretary, replacing Mr T. Taylor (Manchester). Harrison at this time was the Secretary of the Robinson Street Society, Burnley. Apart from 1896, when Wilfred Rooke (Levenshulme, Manchester) held this position and the following year James Swindlehurst (Preston) became Secretary, with Harrison as his Assistant Secretary, Harrison held the position as Federation Secretary until 1902, when he then became the first SNU General Secretary of the newly constituted National Union.

² Arthur Wellesley Orr was born in Manchester in 1853 and died on August 31st, 1937.

“... a permanent office where the steadily increasing business of the S.N.F. can be transacted, and which shall be the recognized official home of that body.

“The Lyceums Branch of the movement is in a similar position and also feels the necessity of having headquarters where the work connected with its organization can be effectually carried on.”

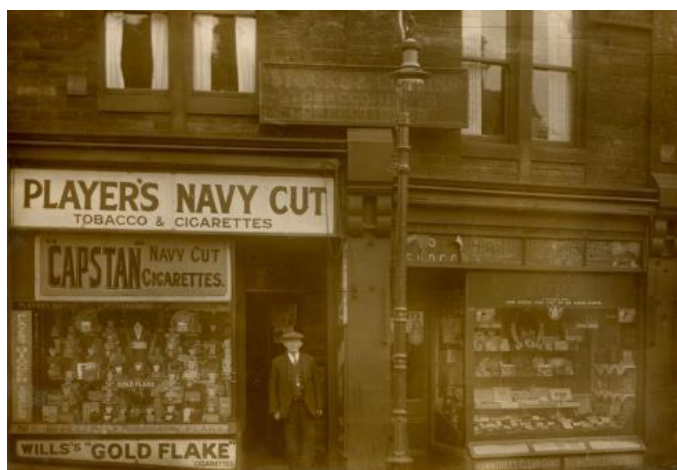
“... funds to provide a building which shall contain suitable offices for the organizations of the movement, a Lecture Hall, Psychic Institute for the training of mediums for public work, a Library where may be gathered the best works on Psychic and cognate subjects, and such other accommodation may be found necessary.”



It was proposed by the Britten Memorial Trust that it would be handed over to the S.N.F., provided it was legally qualified to hold property, etc.; the Spiritualists' National Federation was asked to read the letter at its next meeting of the Committee for their comments, and a circular was also issued to the Presidents of British Societies inviting their co-operation. The newly proposed scheme was naturally accepted; however, the Spiritualist' National Federation was receiving opposition in the proposed reconstitution to being able legally to hold property, elect a President, etc. ³ This was mostly delayed because some of the members did not want to be governed by any form of creeds or principles, which had been rejected ever since the SNF was constituted and formed at Bradford in 1891; this was also the case with any form of badges or labelling. The new constitution would require a set of religious principles to become legally registered; the transition was in fact already in progress at the time of the proposed Britten Memorial Trust. It took over five years from the time when Thomas Todd first broached the matter at the 1896 Federation Conference until the Federation was finally wound up and its affairs handed over to the Union at the close of its 1902 National Federation Conference.

The Britten Memorial Fund's objective was, as stated:

“The Memorial, it is proposed, shall be a building which shall be known as “The Britten Memorial”, to be used as the Head-quarters of the National Sprlst. [*sic*] Organisations of Great Britain, with the necessary offices and appartmances [*sic*], a Hall for public meetings, a (*in pencil public (?)*) library and reading room, and a room to be specially devoted to the memory of Mrs. Britten, where shall be kept copies of her works, a portrait of her, and such other mementoes as she may have bequeathed or may be collected for the purpose.”



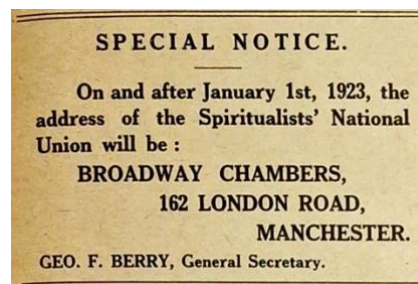
It was indeed a slow arduous task fulfilling the proposed building for a National Spiritualist Headquarters: the Spiritualists' National Union would have various registered offices, firstly a tobacconist's shop the residence of the Hon. Secretary, Hanson G. Hey at Crown Street, Halifax. ⁴ Around fourteen years later Mr R. H. Yates was appointed to help Hanson Hey when he fell ill around 1918. Hey retired owing to his health problems in 1920 and died the following February; Yates was appointed his successor. His home at Thornton Lodge Road, Huddersfield became the second

³ Please see Pioneer, Vol. 7, No. 2: “President or Chairmen?”

⁴ It should be noted that the man standing outside is not Hanson Hey.

registered office of the Union. On the eve of the 1922 AGM word came that Mr Yates had suffered a stroke; his written resignation was read at the AGM held on July 1st, 1922 at Caxton Hall, Westminster, London. Yates consented for the registered office of the SNU to remain at his home in Huddersfield.

At the SNU quarterly meeting on October 28th of this year in Manchester a new registered office was discussed; after considering several towns it was agreed that Manchester offered the most central position and first-class railway facilities. The registered office of the Union moved to Broadway Chambers, 162 London Road, Manchester from January 1st, 1923. During this period the Britten Memorial Trust was moving forward; its Secretary, Arthur Orr, had given up his position in 1922, £600.00 had been collected and valuable contributions had been made in the building up of the library. Orr handed over the reins of office to Mr John Jackson, whose association with Spiritualism in the North had extended for over half a century; by 1933 the funds accumulated exceeded £5,000, while the Library itself had developed enormously.



In 1925 the BMT found it necessary to occupy a small room in which the library could be housed as its collection extended. Additionally, other donations which today make the Museum an essential part of our history, with original artefacts showing the various phases of mediumship, are just one aspect of its value in formulating our history for future generations. It was later considered imperative that larger premises were needed to be secured; at the same time the Trustees deemed it advisable to establish the Britten Memorial on an active basis. An admirable suite of rooms was obtained in the centre of the city: "The Britten Memorial" at Hollins Chambers, 64a Bridge Street, Deansgate, Manchester. In July 1931, the Britten Memorial Trust supplied the Spiritualists' National Union with its registered office at Hollins Chambers; at long last the BMT was starting to be fulfilled.

SPIRITUALISTS' NATIONAL UNION

LIMITED BY GUARANTEE.

J. B. MCINDOE. PRESIDENT.

GEO. F. BERRY, DIPL. S.N.U.,
GENERAL SECRETARY.

Telephone: BLackfriars 6840.

Registered Office:

Hollins Chambers,
64a, Bridge Street,
Deansgate, Manchester.

APRIL 21, 1933
THE TWO WORLDS
313

CHURCH AND SOCIETY ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Britten Memorial.

HOLLINS CHAMBERS, 64A, BRIDGE STREET, DEANSGATE, MANCHESTER, 3. Tel.: BLackfriars 6840

FREE HEALING SERVICES: MONDAYS, at 7-45, } Mr. JAMES KITE, WEDNESDAYS, at 3, } Dipl. S.N.U. Silver Collection. GROUP SEANCES. Limited to 10 Sitters. Early application desired. TUESDAY, APRIL 25TH, at 3 and 7-30, Mrs. N. BATES (Liverpool). Private Sitzings can be arranged through the Secretary.	LECTURES. FRIDAY, APRIL 21ST, at 7-45, Usual Lecture. FRIDAY, APRIL 28TH, at 7-45, Mr. CHAS. E. TIMMS, "Mediums and Mediumship." Members and Associates Free. Silver Collection. Friends of Members and Associates. 1/-. Library Open, Week-days, 10 to 6, Saturdays 10 to 1. Call, write or phone for full particulars as to Membership, etc. JOHN JACKSON, Hon. Sec.
--	--

Quoted below from the Two Worlds, July 21st, 1933:

“Mr. Jackson explained that the first seance held in the new building took place in August last, and immediately it became known that the Memorial had taken premises which were available to the public, interest steadily grew. From the first it was seen that there was a definite need for an institution of this kind in the city.

“To-day, as a result of only a few months activities, some 250 members and associates have been enrolled and are actively participating in the many advantages which the Britten Memorial offers the serious student of Spiritualism. The inclusive membership fee is £1 1s. per year, and this entitles the member to the use of the Reading room—where all the leading home and foreign Spiritualist journals can be consulted—and the extensive library of over 3,000 volumes, many of which are otherwise inaccessible. The Library incorporates reference and lending sections, and the members find that the services offered are greatly in excess of those available through municipal channels.

“ “We have been able to present the educational side of the Movement in our weekly lectures on all phases of psychic subjects,” added Mr. Jackson. “In this respect we have benefitted greatly from the offices of (among others) Mr. Ernest W. Oaten, Mr. J. B. McIndoe, Mr. G. F. Berry, Mr. J. Norbury, Mr. E. A. Keeling, and Mr. J. M. Greenwood. In addition, the School for Prophets finds its embryo in the three Development Classes already established, wherein some 30 to 40 students sit weekly.

“ “Healing work is another important activity, as is evidenced in the testimony received by Mr. James Kite, a healing diplomist of the S.N.U. Many of our members and visitors have found the healing meetings of inestimable value.

“ “Every week we have, of course, our usual programme of private and group seances. To date quite a number of gifted mediums have served us in this capacity—among them Miss Petersen, Mrs. Bertha Harris, Miss N. Cordall, Mr. Arthur Whyman, Mrs. Bates, and Mrs. S. Hughes; while from further afield have come Mrs. B. Hirst, Mrs. Annie Johnson and Miss Jacqueline.

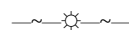
FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

“ “In short, every day of the week proves conclusively that an institute on these lines has been greatly needed, and there is every reason for further expansion in the not too far distant future. Our present accommodation is already severely taxed to meet our needs and as soon as funds admit we hope to set about the originally planned building which was to provide a worthy home and head quarters for the Spiritualist Cause in this country.

“ “Apart from Mr. Jackson’s very able work, great credit is due to the enterprise of the surviving Trustees of whom Mr. W. A. Herring is the senior, the other two being Mr. E. W. Oaten and Mr. E. A. Keeling.

“ “All insist that the Britten Memorial in its present state must soon be eclipsed. The funds of the Institute still remain intact, and the Memorial in its present form is simply established to hasten the day when the original plans may be suitably carried out. What has been done in this case can be done in others—and Spiritualist Societies in other towns must look to their laurels.

“ “Already the British College of Psychic Science has been working in association with its Societies (somewhat similar in the scope of the Britten Memorial) at Bradford, Reading, Sheffield, Ipswich, and Edinburgh.”



In around 1948 it would again move but this time into its first property purchased by the Britten Memorial Trust, named “Britten House”; it was located at 12 Tib Lane, off Cross Street, Manchester, a large three-storey building, with a basement and sub-basement. Britten House was, in the words as quoted above, very active, with functions, reading-room, lending library, etc. The Britten Memorial Museum and Library items were moved to Tib Lane on February 20th, 1948, as shown in the bill by “Osbornes Removers Ltd”, all paid by the BMT.



Telephone : RUSHOLME 1464-5 Telephone : Springfield 1611

Head Office Branch Office:

536 CLAREMONT ROAD 1191 STRATFORD ROAD
RUSHOLME HALL GREEN
MANCHESTER, 14 BIRMINGHAM, 28

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Mr. Ellidge, The Spiritualists National Union, Ltd., Hollins Chambers,
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Feb 20th To Removal from the above address to:-
12, Tib Lane, MANCHESTER. £24 0 0
" Loan of 55 Cases at 3/- each. 3 5 0
£27 5 0

Britten Memorial Trust

SPIRITUALISTS' NATIONAL UNION
RECEIVED
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However, by 1971 Britten House was in need of urgent repair and deemed unsafe, as pointed out in the Presidential address at the 1971 AGM. For the first time the President's address was not read at Conference; the President, Gordon Higginson, stated: "I hope I am giving you plenty of time to prepare your questions and constructive criticisms for the Annual Conference at Brighton."

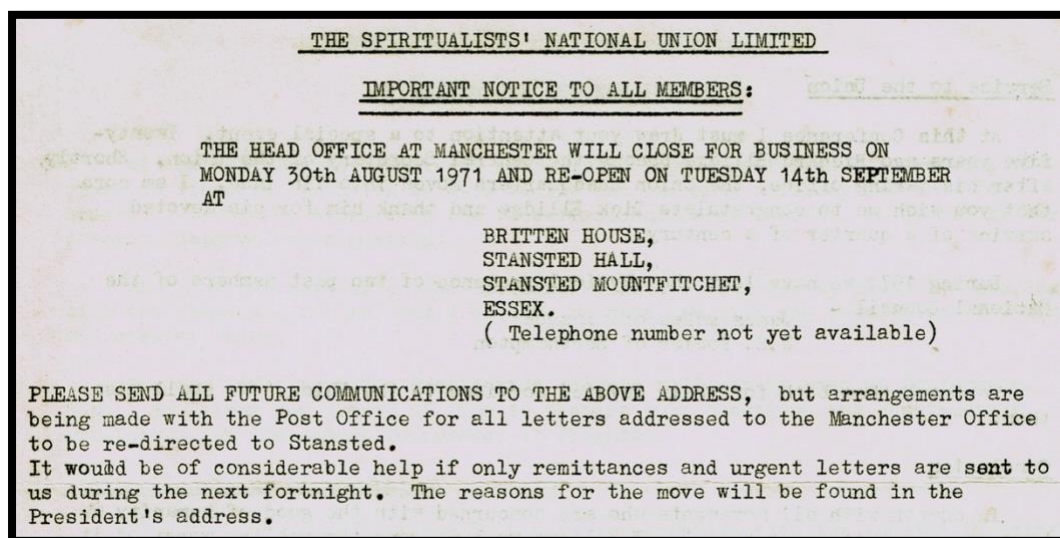
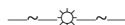
At the AGM Higginson stated:

General Office and Britten Trust

Many problems regarding the Union's offices at Tib lane, Manchester and the Britten Trust have faced the Union for years. I decided, along with the Vice-President, to visit Tib Lane and inspect the property and offices and found the building was in a worse state of repair than we had envisaged. We were also faced with demands from the local Fire Authority in respect of Fire Precautions, which, including essential modernisations, would involve us in an expense of at least £2,500 that could not be justified or reconciled with the potential life of the property under the Corporation's re-development plans. Under these conditions we were compelled to investigate the possibility of alternative accommodation. After several deferments we were given a final date of August 1st by the Fire Authorities either to vacate Britten House or carry out the expensive improvements. We have therefore decided to make use of the property at Stansted Hall known as "The Annexe". This move will take place during August and be completed by September 18th, and the Annexe will in future be known as "Britten House" and be the home of the Britten Memorial Trust.

The National Council has decided to invest the money from the sale of Tib Lane property and to pay rent for the use of "The Annexe" from the interest derived. The capital therefore will always be available to buy or rent property elsewhere, if needed.

The Britten Fellowship will continue to operate at Tib lane until the property is sold. I have promised the Manchester District Council that I will give them all the help I can to keep the Fellowship going. I would like to offer my grateful thanks to the officers of the District Council for their help and understanding during a very difficult period.



In 1984 the Union moved its registered office just up the path from the Annex in the Arthur Findlay College grounds to the newly renovated and extended gardener's cottage, becoming the new registered office and renamed 'Redwoods'. Recently this year, January 29th, 2025, it has moved to the Coach House, Clock Courtyard, just behind the Annex, which in the time of Mr Findlay was the stables; since the office removal to Redwoods the Annex is used as accommodation and retains the name of "Britten House".

The Britten Memorial Museum & Library was re-established at Stansted in 1978 in the old engine room at Clock Cottage as you look at Clock Cottage today, it's the bottom left-hand room/s, which was the Museum and the Library in another room in the building. Muriel Turner and her sister, Jeanette Dunn⁵, who were well-known for their work within the Union, were the first curators of the Britten Memorial Museum at Stansted.

MUSEUM AT BRITTEN HOUSE

A MUSEUM will shortly open at Stansted where students and visitors will be able to see many objects of interest which it has not been possible to view previously.

The building which will house the S.N.U. collection is in close proximity to Britten House and there will be a number of items on display which belonged to Emma Hardinge Britten and which show the outstanding contribution that she made to Spiritualism. Other pioneers and researchers will be represented in a variety of media. Psychic art, spirit photography, and apports will be exhibited. A special feature will be tape recordings of direct voice séances. There are also numerous photographs and items of historical interest connected with individuals and churches together with letters and documents which evoke a vivid picture of the struggle to gain public recognition for Spiritualism.

The working party has already brought about a minor miracle on the former engine house to make it into a museum. Originally the place where the trees from the estate were sawn up, the engine house has been in recent years, filled with lumber and an indefinite number of cats. An 'antique' fish fryer used for the cooking of Mr and Mrs Findlay's fish and chips has

finally been ousted along with other lumber.

Obstacles Removed

Determination and energy were needed to demolish the engine block.

Storage units were improvised.

Many yards of cobwebs were removed and the resident monster spiders persuaded to move on. The cats have established a new routine and no longer bring in rabbits and birds.

Holes Filled

Large gulleys in the floor, which housed parts of the machinery, have been filled. Walls and ceilings have been cleaned and painted, cracks plastered and a thousand and one other jobs have been done in a very short space of time by a few keen workers.

A gentleman at Reading supplied a quantity of wood and nails at a most generous price and loaned tools to help to break up the engine block.

The floor has been levelled and the display cases can be built in. Good lighting and pleasant decor will complete a museum of really pleasing proportions.

The careful cleaning, restoring and mounting of many items has occupied countless hours. A catalogue is in preparation. Files are being

Gifts of: Photographs Books Banners Regalia Letters Posters Articles

Pertaining to the History of Spiritualism —

The Evolution of God and Man —

Science and Psychic Science —

Natures Revelations — etc., are needed urgently.

compiled listing comprehensive information about people, places, events, truths and proofs which have formulated the history of Spiritualism. Past and Present will stand side by side.

Many of our treasures have necessarily been hidden from view and it will be a great pleasure to have the opportunity of seeing them.

In the past articles and papers of archive interest have been gratefully received and it is hoped that the innovation of a permanent museum will encourage people who still retain items to donate them, both to give instruction and inspiration to those studying Spiritualism.

Anyone wishing to donate an article or document should write in the first instance to the Curator, S.N.U. Museum, Britten House, Stansted Hall, Stansted, Essex.

Articles should then be forwarded under separate cover to the same address. When possible arrangements will be made to collect bulky, heavy or very fragile items.



In the early 1980s the Museum was made into a flat and the archives, along with the Library, were put into storage at Stansted Hall. After the new dining-room and kitchens were built at the College, the College Shop moved from the staircase landing into the old Still Room. In 1989 Duncan Gascoyne (SNU President 2000-2010) became the College Chairman, took on the role as Britten Memorial Museum Curator and re-established the Museum to where it is today at the top of the grand staircase; this would be in the early 1990s. The Britten Memorial Library was established in the then conference room at Redwoods; on Duncan Gascoyne's retirement I was offered the role of curator.

⁵ Jeanette Dunn, CSNU, was the National Publicity Officer of the Union and the Editor of the official paper, "S.N.U. Communicator".

When I took over in early 2011 the Museum was, most probably as a Museum should be, packed with artefacts, posters, large photographs, etc. There was a large showcase down the centre of the room, so, as you walked around in a circle, it was visually stunning—walking in the footsteps of our pioneers. However, with time comes change, and with change come new and different ideas. I felt that the valuable archives needed to be directed towards education and study. Over the years this aim has been accomplished, as can be seen in the following images.



In 2016 Museum Study & Research weeks were introduced and the Britten Memorial Library was once again united with the Museum. The directors of the “Two Worlds” had decided to offer the Union all their bound volumes from 1887 to present on permanent loan. The name was changed this year from the Britten Memorial Museum and Library to the Britten Museum and Library. In around 2008, the Britten Memorial Fund was wound up with the permission of the Charity Commissioners:

Its purpose of 1899 being wonderfully fulfilled!

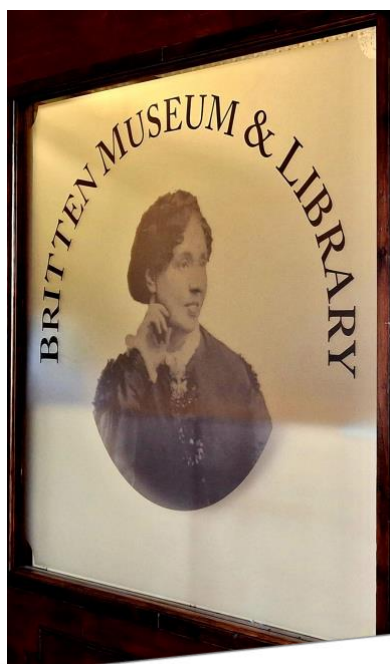
At present our bound weekly journals containing so much of our valuable history are all being rebound; the full run of the ‘Medium and Daybreak’ (1870-1895) has already been done.

Our resources for study and research are today an important part of the Arthur Findlay College: our history is preserved for generations to come.

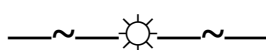


Quoted from the letter to establish a 'Britten Memorial' dated Friday, December 15th, 1899:

"... library and reading room, and a room to be specially devoted to the memory of Mrs. Britten, where shall be kept copies of her works, a portrait of her, and such other mementoes as she may have bequeathed or may be collected for the purpose."



***Today this is reflected in
the Britten Museum and
Library***



More on Sir Arthur

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle requires little introduction; he has been featured many times in the pages of Pioneer over the years:

Vol 3, No. 2:

“Houdini & Conan Doyle – Story of Strange Friendship and an Historic Quarrel”

Vol 3, No. 3:

“Sir Arthur Conan Doyle – *“100 Years Anniversary of his Acceptance of Spiritualism”*”

Vol 4, No. 5:

“The Case for Spirit Photography – Arthur Conan Doyle The Crewe Circle”

Vol 5, No. 1:

“When Spiritualists Refused the B.B.C.–How Conan Doyle Declined to Broadcast – Ernest W. Oaten”

Vol 8, No. 4:

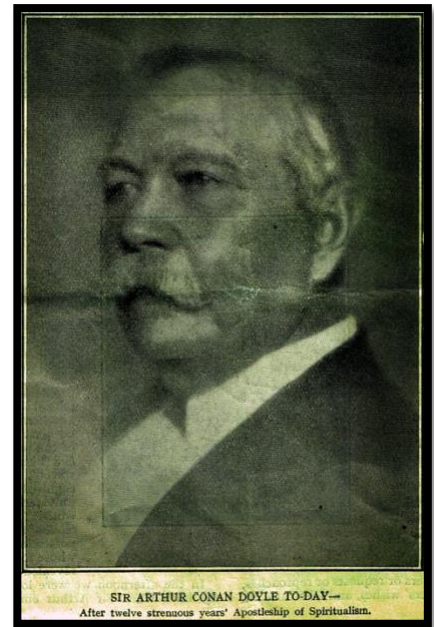
“Rev. Susanna Harris – American voice-medium – The Wanderings of a Spiritualist – Arthur Conan Doyle”

Vol 9, No. 2:

“92nd Anniversary of the passing of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle”

Vol 10, No. 1:

“Charles Fulton Oursler – Samri Frikell – “Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Predicts Spirit Moving Pictures” – Samri Frikell Sitzings of the 25th June and 13th July 1913 with Stanislava P – kinematograph to produce an early movie film – Cinematography – Phenomena of Materialisation”



Below is taken from: “The International Psychic Gazette”, a monthly publication published in London between 1913 and 1935. The article below was written by its editor, John Lewis, and published in the August 1930 issue, which was a special “Conan Doyle Memorial Number”. Doyle’s passing was on the morning of July 7th, 1930; the article was reprinted from the paper’s November 1928 issue on the eve of Sir Arthur’s South African Tour.



This delightful article recounts the editor’s experience when he visited the Doyles’ summer retreat at “Bignell House”, situated just north of the boundary of the edge of Bignell Wood in the New Forest. John Lewis takes the reader into Sir Arthur’s close family life at Bignell House. ⁶

⁶ Owned by Lady Doyle between 1924 until Doyle’s death in 1930.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle at Home

A WEEKEND AT BIGNELL WOOD

IT is at “Bignell Wood,” his summer residence, near Lyndhurst, Hampshire, where Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is best seen at home in the midst of his family, free for a little from the strain and embarrassment of being for ever in the glare of publicity, for as Montaigne truly says, “Fame pays off her votaries handsomely by keeping them always on view, like a statue in the market-place—‘*magna servita est magna fortuna*’ ”—(a great position is great bondage).

It was here on September 1 that Sir Arthur greeted us at his door in his bluff hearty way with “Hallo, Lewis, we have read ‘The Lady and the Bell’ at the breakfast table, and think it the best ghost story that has appeared for years. Malcolm (now known as Adrian) has found the true solution, I think.” “What is it ?” he ask, “She was a leper !” he replies. Turning to Malcolm, who had just motored us from Southampton, we ask, “Why a leper ? ” and he quietly responds, “Because in olden times lepers were compelled by law to wear a grey tunic and ring a bell at the approach of other persons, crying ‘Unclean, unclean ! leper ! ’ ”

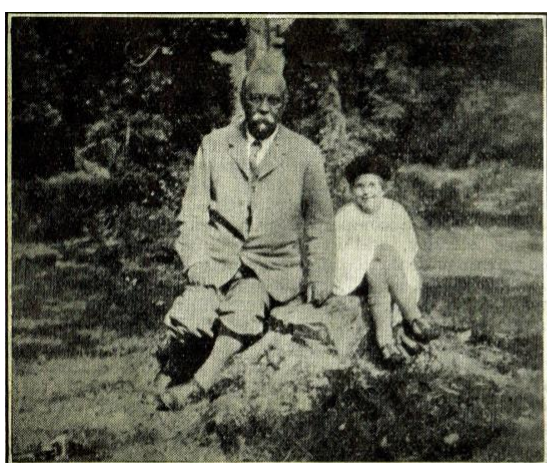
This solution fits so well the ghost of a lady in grey ringing a bell lately seen at midnight by a party of motorists near Stratford-on-Avon, that we perceive “ Sherlock Holmes, junior ” has in truth arrived ! No one else has thought of an explanation so feasible. The best attempt a certain seasoned Shakespearean scholar made was to suggest that the highly respectable motorists must have been drunk !

Bignell Wood has an interesting story. Two years ago it was a solitary thatched cottage said to be two hundred years old. It stood on the edge of the New Forest, whose primeval trees came up to its walls. Now it stands a picturesque country residence, spread out with thatched additions in keeping with its primitive style. How this transformation came about is told us by Lady Doyle. All her life, she says, she has dreamt of the kind of home she would like above all others. It must have three things—river, forest, and thatch, a difficult combination to find, but at last, guided by psychic inspiration, she came upon this quaint thatched house embosomed among the trees, and lo ! around it flowed a stream filled with rainbow trout. It so exactly fitted her dream of an earthly paradise that Sir Arthur at once bought it and gave it her as a present. Now it is surrounded by smooth lawns and beautifully laid out gardens, full of every variety of fragrant English flowers, designed and planted by Lady Doyle’s own hands. Also it has a kitchen garden, a poultry yard, a clock golf course, a hard tennis court, and a commodious motor garage, all linked to the main thoroughfare by a broad sweeping carriage drive.

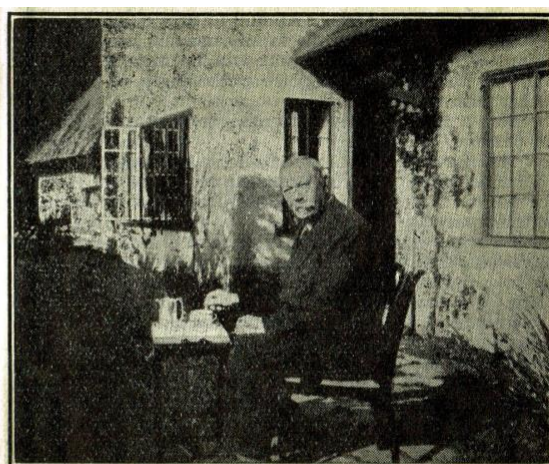
After lunch Sir Arthur retires for his usual siesta. Her Ladyship explains that he could never hold up without this little break in the middle of the day. But he must have enjoyed only about forty winks, for before very long he emerges with a handful of letters for the post ! He proposed that we should visit Tom Charman, a great friend of the fairies, who has seen them and talked to them for many years, and has often drawn pictures of the little folk as they gambol around him. He and his wife are idealists, and have founded a Utopian village at Godshill, Fordingbridge, where a little contented community are engaged in small-farming, weaving, and making pottery. When we call they have a houseful of visitors, but they come out to the car to chat and give us hearty greeting. Sir Arthur invites Tom to come to Bignell Wood for an experiment in fairy photography, and he says he is willing.

Sir Arthur recently published a delightful book on “ The Coming of the Fairies, ” and as one of his lighter recreations he has set himself to court them as friends and neighbours ! Dotted about the gardens of Bignell Wood are full-sized life-like images of members of the fairy tribe in Dutch pottery. Here at the side of a garden path is a comical brownie, with a basket on his back, a staff in his hand, and smoking a pipe. Not far off, a white - whiskered one grins through the hedge. On the river bank a queer old fellow fishes for trout while watching the white geese float on the surface of the water. All over the grounds things weird and wonderful keep peeping out to create an atmosphere of wonder and romance in this woodland retreat.

By cultivating the fairies Sir Arthur hopes some day to photograph them himself. The housekeeper at Bignell Wood has a little eight-years old daughter whom Sir Arthur sets occasionally on the stump of an old tree on the forest side of the garden gate, with a musical box going full song, while he waits with a Kodak ready to snap one of these elusive sprites ! He has already secured faint hazy images in human form which give him promise of success.



THE FAIRY LURE—
The Child who attracted the Fairies.



AFTERNOON TEA.
Sir Arthur takes tea in the Forest garden.

The fact that Sir Arthur has been ahead of his time—ahead even of the Spiritualists—in his recognition of the existence of elemental life, has given the impression that he is credulous and easily deceived. To those who think so we would say, “ Try him and see.” One of the Editors of the *Scientific American* did try him recently with disastrous results to himself. He tried to pass a photograph, on which he had faked a spirit form, upon Sir Arthur. Not only was the deception recognised, but Sir Arthur was able at once to trace the perpetrator, although he had done his dishonest work through an intermediary. “After all,” said Sir Arthur, “ I suppose Sherlock is concealed somewhere about my person ! ”

Never, perhaps, was any great literary genius so blessed as Sir Arthur is in his family life. Lady Doyle is his constant companion in the home, on the platform, at public functions, and in his world travels. She shares all his interests and ideals, upholds him in his many battles, and watches over him like a guardian angel. His sons are great broad-shouldered stalwarts still in their teens. No one would guess their ages at eighteen and nineteen and a half. Denis, the elder, has selected medicine for his career, but Malcolm has not yet made a decision. I rather fancy him as an admiral on a British battleship ! Denis is perhaps more serious and philosophical, and Malcolm more daring and adventurous, though they are both sportsmen to their fingertips. They have a racing cars of their own, and are familiar with all established pace records, which they mean to beat. Malcolm tells us gaily that he has already had nineteen smashes ! He adds, “ Pop

sometimes comes out for a spin, and we let her rip ! When going round corners at sixty miles an hour he leans over the outer edge just like a skilled mechanic !”

The only daughter is named “Billy” at home, perhaps because she is really one of the boys ! She romps with them and partners them at tennis and golf; she is keen in her school life, an enthusiastic girl guide, a fine swimmer, and a lover of animals.

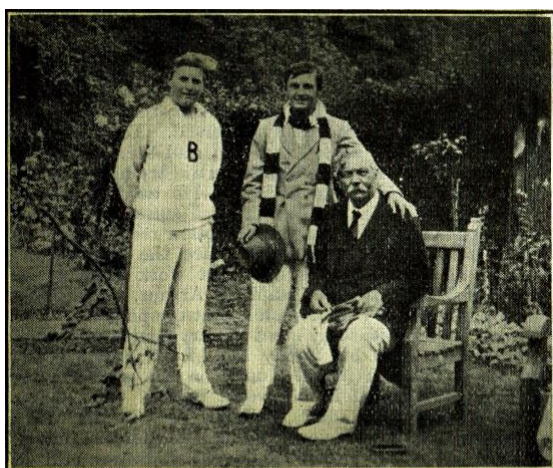
A wonderful affection unites the whole family. The boys call their father “ Pop, ” and they appear all boys together on a basis of “ liberty, equality, and fraternity. ” No one is over-awed by the super-powerful personality of the head of the house. The children treat him lovingly as an elder brother, and he takes an active part in all their games, and shares in all their interests and ambitions. Every morning a French tutor comes for an hour’s conversation with Sir Arthur and the boys. They also learn Spanish together, and the father coaches Malcolm in Latin for a coming examination. And all as an ordinary part of life’s great game. One hears no orders or requests or reproaches, all seem to anticipate the others’ wishes, and love rules all.



“ BILLY ”—
The Joy of the Home.

“ Billy ” has a very bright, happy disposition, and a fine sense of humour. It does one good to hear her laughter when the unexpected denouement of a humorous story has unfolded itself. Her happiness is infectious. She mentions that she has had some trouble with her eyes, and we tell her of a wonderful spiritual healer who was once a principal baritone in the Carl Rosa Opera Company and who has made a blind man see. She says she will try him, and she is now receiving his treatments.

On Sunday morning Sir Arthur took us for a long promenade through the forest. It was a day of beautiful sunshine, and that walk over the velvety sward through the leafy glades and over rough heather and shaggy bracken will remain ever memorable. Sir Arthur discussed with us the philosophy of Spiritualism, and were this the place to set down a Platonic dialogue of two modern peripatetic philosophers the talk might interest many. It traversed every aspect of the human soul and envisaged solutions of age-long problems yet undreamt of in the official schools of philosophy, though a generation hence they may well be part of the common thought of the people. For the soul has at last been discovered; its history traced; its place in nature recognised; it is now seen not as a mysterious supernatural something which “ cometh from afar trailing clouds of glory, ” but an inherited possession of undying substance, whose form and faculties have been revealed by Spiritualistic Science.



“ THE BOYS ”—
Adrian, Denis, and their Father.



“ THE MOTORISTS.”
Sir Arthur setting out on a spin.

In the afternoon we were lounging in the sunshine on the lawn when Sir Arthur emerged from his study and called, “ Lewis, there’s been an accident. Come ! ” We paced after him over the river bridge down the drive towards a group gathered around a young lady, who had been riding pillion on her fiancé’s motor-cycle. A passing motor-car had touched their wheel and the young lady was thrown on to her shoulder. Sir Arthur, whose professional skill has been seldom called upon since the South African war, found that her collar-bone was broken, and tenderly bound it up. While this was being done we asked the anxious group if they knew who the doctor was. One answered, “ He is the doctor who lives in that house. ” We said, “ He is Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, ” and they seemed then to feel honoured rather than distressed at having been the occasion of calling for Sir Arthur’s medical attentions ! Lady Doyle and her daughter were first on the scene with everything necessary for first aid, and the two boys took the invalid to Southampton hospital in a saloon car. Sir Arthur rang up the hospital next day, and was told by the surgeon that their patient had already been able to leave the hospital, owing to the prompt and skilful treatment she had received on the spot.

In our chats Sir Arthur reveals to us that he is starting for South Africa on his last long missionary journey for Spiritualism, though he may thereafter visit the principal European capitals to round off his self-imposed mission. He is obviously feeling the strain of overwork, but by the side of his long chair on the lawn lies a large print Bible, from which he is unearthing the most striking Old Testament stories to represent them in modern dress. And up in his quiet study which looks out on the forest he is boiling down the six volumes of his “ British Campaigns in Europe : 1914-1918, ” into a single volume of 1,000 pages, which will be published next month. This work is destined to become the authoritative popular account of the Great War, for it was the very first to give full and accurate details of the battle line during its progress.



SIR ARTHUR AND LADY CONAN DOYLE.
This photograph was taken during their Australian Tour in 1920.

And there is an adjacent room we ought to mention called “ Pheneas’ Room. ” It is the *sanctum sanctorum* in Bignell Wood where Sir Arthur and his family converse with his wise spiritual guide “ Pheneas ” and other spirit friends with the aid of Lady Doyle as medium. “ Pheneas ” favourite colour is purple, and wall papers, lamp shades, and curtains are all in tones of that colour. Visitors who enter this room say they feel a tremendous psychic atmosphere, a something that strikes deep into their souls, for it is consecrated to the world now invisible but eternal. The end of our visit arrives. The car is brought out. We get in with the boys. Lady Doyle and “ Billy ” wave us a kind adieu, and Sir Arthur, comically shouldering a sporting gun, gives us a playful salute !

We shall never forget the homely hospitality of this great man, whose books are to be found in the bookshops of every country under the sun, and whose future fame as the creator of “ Sherlock Holme ” is as secure as that of Scott, Dickens, or Alexandre Dumas ⁷. As a criminologist he is the only living private individual who has ever successfully established the innocence of men

⁷ Editor’s note: As a point of interest Alexandre Dumas was Daniel Home’s best man (or marriage witness, depending on which report is correct) at St Petersburg in August 1858, when Home married Sacha (Alexandrina de Kroll). Home’s first marriage to Sacha ended on July 3rd, 1862, when she died of tuberculosis, which would later also be the cause of Daniel’s death. Dumas was also a friend of the musical medium, Jesse Shepard (see Pioneer, Vol. 11, No. 2: “Musical Mediums, Rosemary Brown, and Jesse Francis Shepard”).

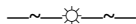
long immured in penal servitude, as in the cases of Edalji and Oscar Slater. But I venture to think that his greatest claim to rank amongst the immortals will be based on his last twelve years' strenuous, courageous, uncompromising and self-sacrificing Apostleship of Spiritualism, with which he has truly blessed humanity. He has been for that modern movement what the Apostle Paul was for early Christianity, carrying its light and comfort to the uttermost ends of the earth.

Twelve years ago it was little more than a bitterly despised faith; now it is an article of cherished belief respected throughout the world—fast dispelling the gross religious darkness that had grown up through the ages, and unveiling the spiritual world as an ever-present reality just across the way.

The article ends:

THE PSYCHIC BOOKSHOP.

One of the landmarks in Sir Arthur's great crusade for the cause was the opening some five or six years ago of the Psychic Bookshop, opposite Westminster Abbey. It was even something more than a library and bookshop, for it contained a most interesting Museum of psychic pictures, manuscripts, and apports. In the management of the Bookshop Sir Arthur was fortunate in having the devoted assistance of his elder daughter, Miss Mary Conan Doyle.

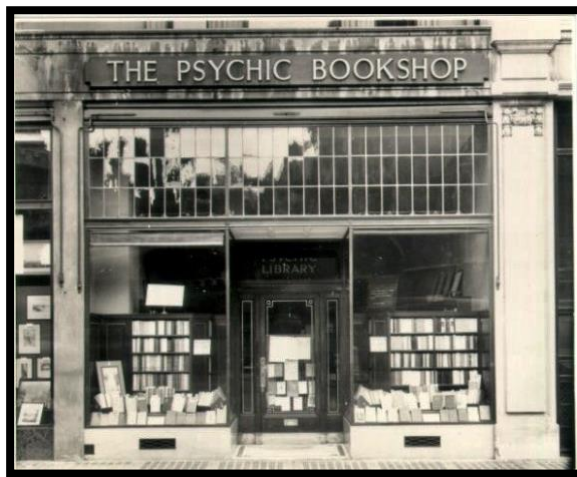


Psypioneer, Vol. 5, No. 5, May 2009, dedicated the entire issue to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, which marked the 150 years since the birth of Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle in Edinburgh. Garth Willey, who was one of the sub-editors, archived the journals at his Woodlands Sanctuary Foundation Inc. in Melbourne, Australia. Today they are archived in America by Marc Demarest at "The International Association for the Preservation of Spiritualist and Occult Periodicals (IAPSOP)", giving a wonderful aid in researching. The link is given at the bottom of the contents page of each issue of Pioneer.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Psychic Bookshop, Library & Museum

By Garth Willey

ON 9th FEBRUARY, 1925 Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (ACD) established a Psychic Bookshop and Library "within a stone's throw of Westminster Abbey"; and towards the end of that year he supplemented it with a Museum of psychic artefacts and memorabilia in the basement.



It was very much a labour of love on ACD's part, to bring the truths of psychical research and Spiritualism within easy reach of the general public's attention and opportunity to browse and see for themselves the truths of the matter (so to speak, for much of the Museum's artefacts were related to physical phenomena) and of the spirit.

But the enterprise never turned a profit and early in 1930 he endeavoured to give it a chance of surviving himself by converting the enterprise into a company and issuing a prospectus inviting subscribers to participate. The prospectus was issued but its objective was not fulfilled. He passed on July 7th, 1930 and his estate and family were left to carry the burden.

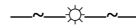


A Conan Doyle Memorial Fund had been set up and the Library was donated to that Fund, thereafter referred to as the Conan Doyle Memorial Library. Without willing financial support, the Bookshop, Library and Museum was closed early in 1932. All remaining material (stock for sale, the Library and the Museum) was transferred to *The Friendship Centre* at Lancaster Gate in Bayswater (opposite the north side of Hyde Park).

The Friendship Centre had been set up by Spiritualist Stephen Foster in 1929. It was a place where people could go for psychic development, a clairvoyant sitting or for healing, a chat, a cuppa and a browse, comfort in bereavement, etc. In the course of the 1930s, the libraries of The Friendship Centre, the Conan Doyle Memorial Library and the W T Stead Estate (being donated in 1937) became merged. The

eventual fate of the Library, the Museum and other material became somewhat of a mystery following its removal in 1939 with the advent of World War II.⁸

In 1927, ACD was interviewed by The Strand Magazine about his Psychic Museum and the following article appeared in its May, 1927 edition.



See the *Psypioneer* issue as noted: “The World’s Happiest Museum - Through a Room of Miracles with Sir A. Conan Doyle by Leonard Crocombe”. To conclude this article, one of the exhibits in Doyle’s museum is shown here in an article in “The International Psychic Gazette” for October 1928:



⁸See “*Psypioneer Archives*” at the end of the *Strand Magazine*.

MR WILLIAM LONGSTAFF is an Australian artist of great promise. He has already made his mark with a remarkable picture of “Midnight at the Menin Gate”, bought by Lord Woolavington for two thousand guineas and presented to the Australian Government to decorate its Parliament House at Canberra.⁹

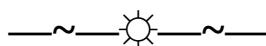
He has now painted an equally remarkable picture under very extraordinary circumstances, which point to spiritual inspiration. Knowing that Mr Longstaff was interested in psychic matters but had only a small experience of them, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle invited him to join a private circle in his London flat to meet Mr Arthur Ford, the highly gifted Spiritualist pastor from New York. At this meeting the artist received complete proof of spirit return in a long communication from a friend who had passed over. He was deeply moved by this experience and his mental excitement would seem to have stimulated his artistic faculty, for in a state of what may be described as psychic exaltation he started on a large allegorical picture representing “The Eternal March” of humanity to the other world. He selected a canvas, nine feet by five, and for nine consecutive hours he worked without intermission until the painting was completed. When Sir Arthur saw it, he was astounded by the power of the work and acclaimed it a masterpiece.

Mr. Longstaff, grateful to Sir Arthur for having introduced him into a new world of thought and experience, desired to present the picture to him, but Sir Arthur waived aside this generous offer and became its owner on a business basis.

The picture was afterwards seen by Mr Gustav Tuck, managing director of Messrs Raphael Tuck & Co., the famous art publishers, who shared Sir Arthur’s admiration and declared that coloured reproductions must be made. This has now been done and the picture has been hung by Sir Arthur in his Museum at the Psychic Book Shop.

There was some misapprehension in the minds of the art critics of the *Daily Express* and other papers when they quoted the artist on the subject of his psychic inspiration, as if he were in some fashion contradicting Sir Arthur’s view. Actually, they were confusing possession or obsession with inspiration. It was never asserted that Mr Longstaff was not using his normal artistic faculties in the painting of the picture. It was the exciting impulse which was psychic. Mr Longstaff himself wrote to the *Express* to point this out but with less than their usual fairness his letter was omitted. They did, however, insert the following from Sir Arthur:—

“There is no discrepancy at all between Mr Longstaff’s view of the origin of his picture, ‘The Eternal March’, and my own. I have never thought that he was under obsession when he painted this picture—which to my mind, is one of the greatest in the world. But he was certainly under strong psychic mental influence. He had been to a seance; he had got into touch with a vanished friend who was an artist, he was full of that spiritual elation which comes with conviction, and then within a few days he painted, working at great speed, a picture which depicts the whole fate of man as Spiritualists conceive it. Surely you cannot disconnect these events.”



⁹ “Menin Gate at Midnight” (also known as “Ghosts of Menin Gate”), painted in 1927, which depicts a host of ghostly soldiers marching across a field in front of the Menin Gate war memorial. The painting is part of the collection at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

A Unique Opportunity Exploring Spiritualist History

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SINCE 2011, when I was appointed Curator of the Britten Museum & Library, I have endeavoured to use our archives for research and study within and outside the Spiritualist movement. This has been strongly achieved in one avenue since 2013 with the publication of the SNU Pioneer online journal. Over the last decade or so much research has been done by authors, education students, churches researching their history, psychical researchers and universities, their professors and students' dissertations on Spiritualist subjects.



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February 28th - March 6th 2026

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All those intending to book should contact me first to make sure any specialised subject material is available:

curator@snu.org.uk

Places are limited to around four students a day so that I can give as much attention as possible to each student. This is generally not a residential course but accommodation may be available if required –

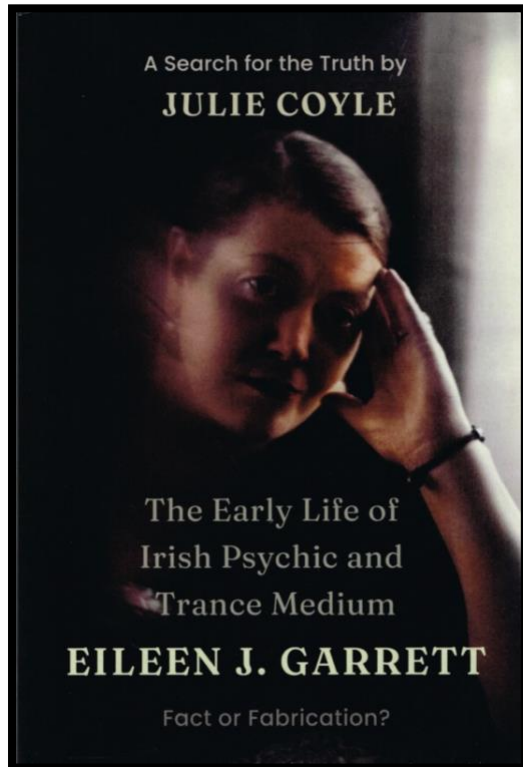
Bookings@arthurfindlaycollege.org

The Early Life of Irish Psychic and Trance Medium Eileen J. Garrett

Fact or Fabrication?

**A Search for the Truth by
JULIE COYLE**

Book review by Paul J. Gaunt:



The name of Eileen Garrett requires little introduction in the history of Spiritualism and psychical research. Some of her trance mediumship, etc., has been published in *Pioneer*, for example when the R101 airship crashed on a hill near Beauvais, France (Vol. 3, No. 1: “Eileen Garrett – Medium solves air disaster mystery”). Showing her psychic abilities, *Pioneer* published highlights from a speech she gave to a Spiritual Healing Seminar in New York in 1957 (Vol. 7, No. 1: “This Was Eileen Garrett’s Moment of Truth”). Prior to this *Pioneer* published in *Psypioneer*,¹⁰ Vol. 1, No. 10, February 2005: “Remembering Eileen J. Garrett – William V. Rauscher”. This is an interesting account when Rauscher met Garrett in 1962; below is a short quote:

“It is not generally known, however, that Mrs. Garrett did not begin developing her talents as a medium until she was past thirty, a rather late period in life for a psychic to begin using her

gifts. A run-away to England, Mrs. Garrett married for the first time when she was sixteen. She bore four children. The first three, all boys, died in infancy, one of them in her arms. The fourth child, Eileen Coly, survives and with her daughter, Lisette, carries on her mother’s work at the Parapsychology Foundation.

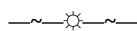
“Preoccupied as she was with her three marriages and the deaths of her husbands and children, her equally ill-fated business ventures and her illnesses, Mrs. Garrett did not begin to develop her disconcerting gifts until 1925. In that year Mrs. Kelway Bamber, an acquaintance, persuaded her to join the British College of Psychic Science.¹¹ Although she had in 1921 acted as a sitter for the Stella C. (Cranshaw) experiments at the National Laboratory of Psychical Research, in later years Mrs. Garrett rarely spoke of these experiments because she had no belief in materializations.

“And so it was not until she came under the tutelage of J. Hewat McKenzie, the BCPS Founder (which was a school for mediums, among other roles), that Mrs. Garrett began to make serious use of her extrasensory ability. McKenzie was a serious man and a martinet, but perhaps only such a man could have stabilized and trained the gifts of a medium like Eileen Garrett who was even more tempestuous and impulsive than mediums usually are. It was during these years that Mrs. Garrett did the bulk of her private sittings (accepting

¹⁰ A link to *Psypioneer* is to be found at the bottom of the contents page of each issue.

¹¹ *Psypioneer*, Vol. 3, No. 8: “A Knight Errant of Psychic Science – James Hewat McKenzie (founder of British College of Psychic Science (BCPS))”.

fees), but also began to take part in investigations of alleged haunted houses and poltergeist cases, submitting to the rules of evidence which McKenzie required”.



Julie Coyle was born in Dublin, Ireland; she herself, a developing medium in 2009, was then living in Co. Meath. Coyle, at this time, had never heard of Garrett, but once aware and with the proximity of the Irish-born medium from Beauparc, Navan, Co. Meath, Coyle decided in 2018 to research the family tree of Eileen Garrett, given that the grave records, etc. were just thirty minutes’ drive away, with the objective of highlighting the life of Eileen Garrett.

It is to the early part of Eileen Garrett’s personal family life that Julie Coyle first gives her attention, as she started her research on Garrett’s tragic life, which the medium herself gives in her published works.

It is here that the sub-title of Julie Coyle book is born:

Fact or Fabrication?

As the author started her painstaking and dedicated genealogical research into the life of Eileen Garrett within the pages of the Irish Register of Birth Records, Death Records, 1901 Census Records, etc., Coyle would soon find that little of Garrett’s claims would match historically from the published works of Eileen Garrett, starting from her first autobiography published in 1939, “My Life - As a Search for the Meaning of Mediumship”.

Coyle does an excellent job of recording the results of her research in fine detail throughout her book, with the addition of the many images, documents and photographs verifying her findings—unveiling the many fabricated, fictitious inaccuracies Garrett claimed throughout her life.

Eileen Jeanette Garrett was born Emily Jane Savage on March 14th, 1892. William V. Rauscher would tell of her tragic life, as noted in my opening quote, “Remembering Eileen J. Garrett – William V. Rauscher”, where Bill Rauscher notes:

“A run-away to England, Mrs. Garrett married for the first time when she was sixteen. She bore four children. The first three, all boys, died in infancy, one of them in her arms.”

“Preoccupied as she was with her three marriages and the deaths of her husbands and children, ...”

Julie Coyle claims, as a result of her research:

“Garrett never gave birth to three infant boys who then died, and she had in fact never been married. Her stories were fabricated to conceal her poor upbringing and the birth of her daughter outside wedlock”

This indeed, whichever way it is viewed, is a sad story of the life of Eileen Garrett (Jane Savage); the book ends as it started, with dedicated and well-detailed research in every respect, with the death of Eileen J. Garrett at the Saint-Roch Hospital at Rue Pierre Devoluy in Nice, France on Tuesday September 15th, 1970, aged 77; the recorded cause of her death shows: Intoxication by over-dose of sleeping pills.

The book’s primary focus is on the life and the public claims made by Eileen Garrett; it does not touch upon the genuineness of Garrett’s mediumship and her vast impressive work in this quarter. The book publishes the ‘R101 Airship Séance’ in 1930 and other references to her trance mediumship, etc.; however, given her published works, where she appears to have

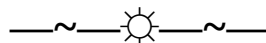
given misleading facts about her own life, it is a matter for the reader to decide whether this diminishes the quality or genuineness of her mediumship and other psychic activities.

This short review touches only the fringe of the amount of research which is published in this most interesting work, which contains in its twenty-three chapters Epilogue, Bibliographic and Website references, photographs of Eileen Garrett and 'About the author' in the book's 280 pages.

The book is available at the Arthur Findlay Shop and website, Amazon, etc.



British College of Psychic Science official photograph



HOW OUR FIRST SNU MINISTERS WERE APPOINTED

“Who were the first Ministers of the Union?” This was published in Pioneer, Vol. 1, No. 2, January 2014. This article came about as a result of several questions asked by SNU Education but the answer is not straightforward, as there is some conflicting information on this question. Ernest Oaten is described in various publications as being a Spiritualist Minister as early as the First World War. It can also be noted that Frank Blake was the Resident Minister of the Spiritualists’ National Church, Bournemouth prior to 1939. Although these two gentlemen both served on the SNU National Council they *were not* Ministers of the SNU.

The first SNU Ministers appear to have been officially appointed in 1939 and were listed in the Diary for this year. However, the Diary for 1939 was sent to the printers around July/August and was available to members from mid-September 1938, so the newly-appointed Ministers were known at this time. The short list of these *first* ministers included Ernest Oaten and Frank Blake; please see the referenced Pioneer issue for the full article.

The article below is taken from the SNU News Letter, January 1970, issue No. 23:

APPOINTMENT OF MINISTERS

The APPOINTMENT OF MINISTERS by the National Council of the S.N.U. is often a matter of discussion amongst the members of our Churches. They want to know, first WHY we have Ministers, and then HOW they are selected. Officers of Churches or Lyceums, used to conduct the ceremonies connected with the naming of babies, marriages, and funerals, long before we had any Ministers, so why do we appoint them now?

In England, marriages may only be solemnised in a building which is registered for that purpose, a Church, or Chapel or the Registry Office, and within Churches and Chapels any responsible person may conduct the service.

Except in the Church of England, most Methodist Chapels and some Roman Catholic Churches, the presence of the local Registrar is essential, and this official listens to the service and arranges for the signing of the marriage register.

It is possible for Churches to have a special registration which makes the presence of a Registrar unnecessary, but this is more expensive than the other form, and the Church must have a fixed safe for the keeping of the register.

The first form of registration costs about 25/- and is made through the Local Registrar of Births, Marriages and Deaths—the other form with the fire-proof safe means an application to Somerset House by an individual to become an AUTHORISED PERSON to act as the Church Registrar—he (she) would make a quarterly return to Somerset House.

From this it is evident that in England it was possible to be married in a Spiritualist Church before Ministers were made but in Scotland a different position occurs. There the marriage service can only be conducted by a REGISTERED PERSON—a Minister. Therefore until the S.N.U. inaugurated its own Ministry, there could be no Spiritualist weddings that were legally recognised in Scotland.

Our first Ministers were selected by the National Council of that time from the people known to be active and capable members of S.N.U. Churches. As the need developed, District Councils were asked to recommend people within their area who

were considered capable and would MINISTER with dignity and understanding, not only at ceremonies, and services, but would give help and comfort where required. Requests from individuals for appointment are never considered. People must be recommended. **No Church has its own Minister.** Ministers are appointed to serve the needs of a district. Nor are appointments made in appreciation of services rendered—for that we have the Long Service Award. Even where people have been recommended, and are capable of fulfilling the required conditions, the final appointment rests with the National Council to whom all Ministers are responsible, for in the name of the S.N.U., Ministers are registered at Somerset House, in England, and with the corresponding authority in Scotland.¹²

The appointment of Ministers is only one section of our organisation for establishing Spiritualism as a religion. All our efforts to help in the educational work of the Union are also directed to that end. If you are interested in the many aspects of this work, write for details to:—

The Education Secretary,
Mrs M., E. Grieve,
134 Ainslie Street,
Barrow-in-Furness.

The need for SNU Ministers became strongly apparent during wartime with our workers unable to travel to the churches with the many travelling restrictions. The new Ministers (and approved platform workers), were issued with a “Spiritualist Minister’s Identity Certificate” from July 7th, 1940 in the form of a folded card with a photograph. In the Two Worlds, August 2nd, 1940 is noted a statement by the SNU General Secretary (1938-1944), Ernest A. Keeling:

Churches in Restricted Areas

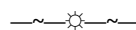
IMPORTANT NOTICE

THE Government have found it necessary to restrict the entry of persons into a considerable section of Great Britain, extending from Berwick-on-Tweed to Weymouth. As this made it almost impossible for churches in this area to maintain their platform supply, the matter was taken up by the Union with the Ministry of Home Security, who have agreed to our suggestion that Platform Workers shall be provided with an identity certificate bearing their photograph and the seal of the Union.

Speakers and Demonstrators, Please Note.

The Spiritualists’ National Union is prepared to grant a “Spiritualists’ Minister’s Identity Certificate” to Platform Workers who have to fulfil engagements with churches in areas where entry is restricted.

Applications, accompanied by a “Passport” photograph and a postal order for 1s., should be sent to the Local District Council Secretary of the area in which applicant resides.



¹² Spiritualists Marriages in Scotland: “It was reported that as the result of efforts by Messrs. J. B. McIndoe and J. G. Findlay arrangements had been made by which marriages in Scotland performed by Spiritualist Ministers, will be registered as regular marriages.” J.B. McIndoe is John Brown McIndoe, former SNU President (1930-1938). J.G. Findlay is John Galloway Findlay, who was Area Representative for Scotland and the brother of James Arthur Findlay. John Findlay was also an appointed Minister of the Union.

Further noted in the Two Worlds, August 16th:

Identity Certificates

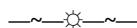
From information which has reached us it would appear that the purpose of the Identity Certificates, as well as the conditions governing their issue, are not fully understood.

The sole purpose of the certificate is to enable workers to travel, without hindrance, to conduct church services, particularly in restricted areas. They are intended to meet the present emergency, and do not confer upon the holder either membership of the Union or any implied acknowledgment of the holder's qualification as a platform worker.

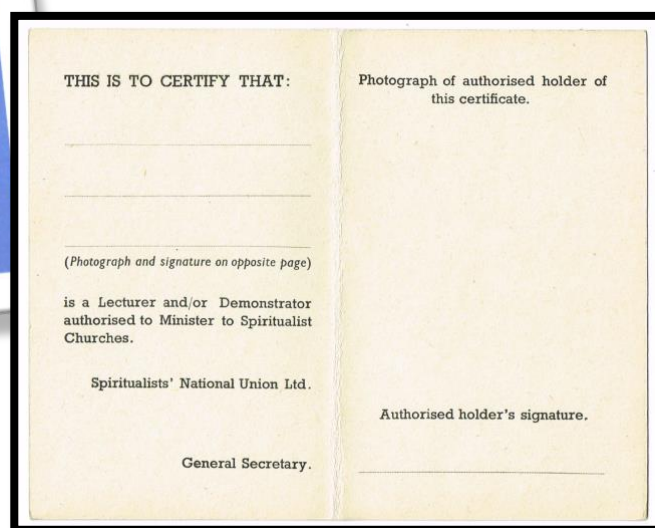
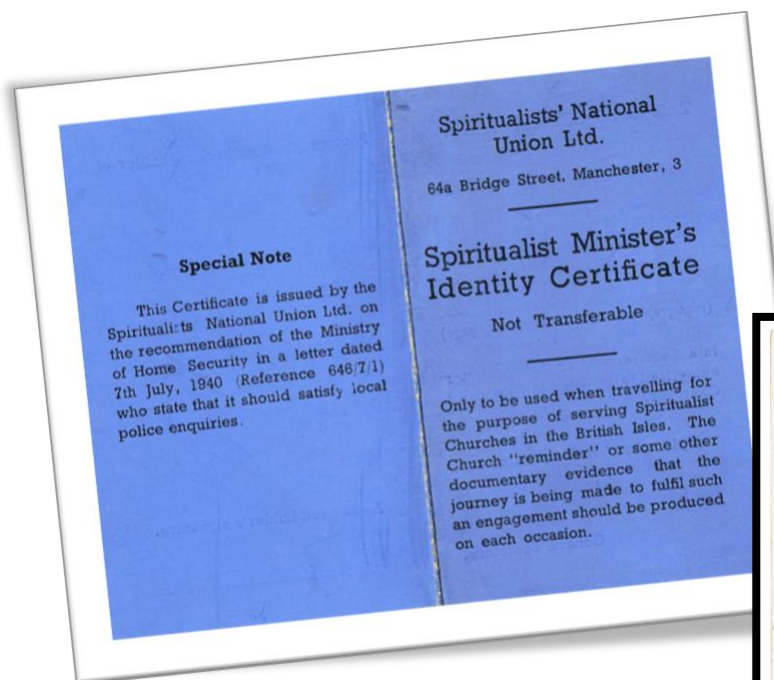
We would therefore restate the position as follows:—

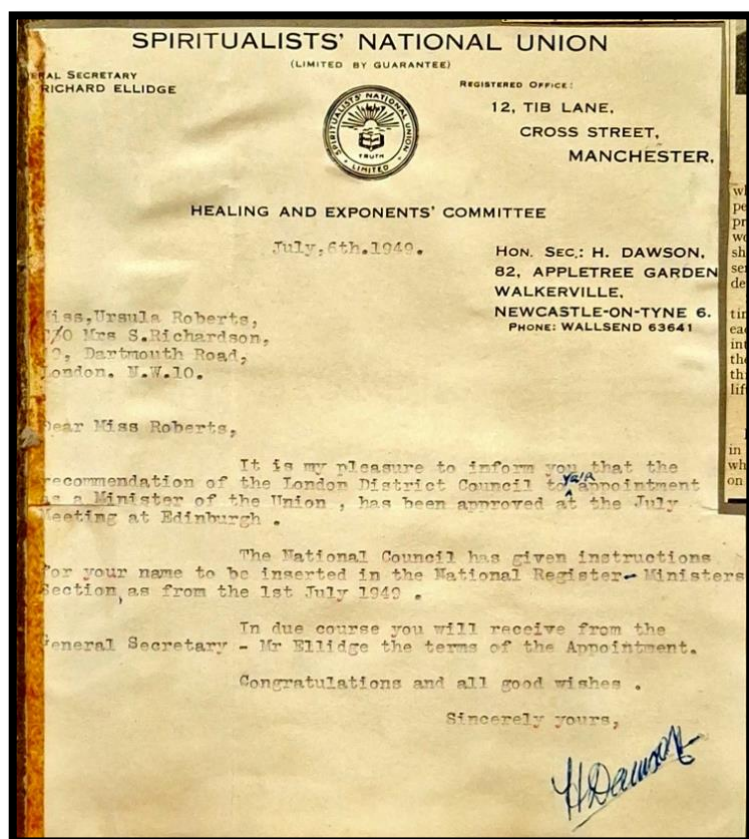
“The Spiritualist National Union is prepared to grant a Union's Identity Certificate to known platform workers serving churches distant from their home town and its immediate vicinity to facilitate their travelling in areas where entry is restricted under the Home Defence regulations.”

Applications must be accompanied by a letter of recommendation from a member of the National Council or from the secretary of their local District Council, together with a “passport” photograph vouched for by the writer of the letter of recommendation and a postal order for one shilling to defray cost.



Here shown is the “Spiritualist Minister's Identity Certificate,” part of the Britten Museum & Library archives:





Shown is a letter dated July 6th, 1949 from Harry Dawson to inform Miss S. Richardson, better known as Ursula Roberts, that as from July 1st, 1949 she will be added to the National Register - Ministers Section.¹³

In more recent years, becoming a Minister of the SNU is now in part an award based on undergoing the required education courses to gain the appointment of Officiant, which is granted to those who are considered capable of conducting services such as marriages, funerals and Spiritualist namings and which is by invitation only from the National Executive Committee to a candidate who has satisfactorily completed the prescribed training and assessment. The final appointment from Officiant to Minister still requires an invitation from the National Executive Committee to a candidate who has satisfactorily completed and passed the prescribed training and Assessment Board.

The term 'National Council' of the SNU was a term used after the National Federation was re-constituted into a National Union. The thirteenth and last Conference of the Spiritualists' National Federation was held in Bootle on 5th and 6th of July 1902. At the close of the Conference the new legally constituted "Spiritualists' National Union Ltd" took over the property, rights and obligations of the Spiritualists' National Federation. The Union's *first* Conference and AGM and its *first* elected 'National Council' took place on July 4th and 5th, 1903.

In 1976, under the Presidency of Gordon Higginson, the structure of the National Council was changed; a report was published in the SNU July issue of the Communicator, detailed elsewhere in this issue:

An Historic Event

THE UNION RE-STRUCTURED

THE 'three tier system', coming into effect immediately after the close of the 1976 Annual General Meeting, marks a new phase in the history of Spiritualism.

For many years, those of us concerned with administration in churches, at district council and national level, have recognised the need for a more effective structure. In this connection I brought into consultation officers from all sections of the Union and I have listened to their recommendations. At the outset it was unanimously agreed that

¹³ Taken from Ursula Roberts' scrapbook at the Britten Museum & Library, Stansted.

changes must be made. All proposals were thoroughly discussed and a structure formulated.

Many of the problems of the past resulted from too few people carrying too heavy a burden of work. The new system obviates a multiplicity of duties for anyone. District Councils have asked for more responsibility and now they must be ready to carry out more in their role as representatives of The Union in each area of the country.

The Branches of the Union, concerning Lyceum and Healers, have specific tasks and their work should go forward confidently within the new structure.

The National Council will bring together ideas from all parts of the country and it is here that new policies will be made. The National Executive Committee will put these policies into effect.

This is the structure which you have accepted on paper. Its success in reality is the responsibility of each one of us.

Today the 'three-tier system' is still in operation. The term 'National Council' is in the past and was replaced by the National Executive Committee (NEC).

First Tier:

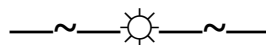
National Executive Committee

Second Tier

Council

Third Tier

SNUi (Branches & District Councils) Lyceum Union



Hannan Swaffer, Lord Northcliffe & Big Jump



Hannan Swaffer (1879-1962) was a well-known English journalist and drama critic; although his views were left-wing, he worked mostly for right-wing publications, some of which were owned by Alfred Charles William Harmsworth, 1st Viscount Northcliffe (1865-1922), a British newspaper and publishing magnate and owner of the Daily Mail and Daily Mirror. Swaffer was editor of Northcliffe's Weekly Dispatch, helped to develop the Daily Mirror and would develop a close relationship with Lord Northcliffe.

The 'National Spiritualist' was the official Journal of the Spiritualists' National Union Ltd. The following is quoted from the front page and page 134, No. 78, Vol. VII, December 1930. ¹⁴

Who's Who in the S.N.U.

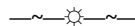
HANNEN SWAFFER, ESQ., Honorary President, S. N. U.

Hannan Swaffer, the new Hon. President of the Spiritualist National Union, ¹⁵ is the best known working journalist in England. He is "Swaff" to half journalism, and a man who is so well known that few music-hall programmes are complete unless at least one comedian mentions his name. He has been a journalist ever since he was sixteen, starting in Folkestone, and then going to Preston and Birmingham before reaching Fleet Street, the Mecca of journalism when he was twenty-four.

He was, more than anybody, the creator of daily illustrated journalism, being for nearly nine years Picture Editor of the "Daily Mirror" and then Acting Editor of the "Daily Sketch," into which he introduced the first "Gossip" feature now copied all over the world.

When, in 1914, he took charge of the "Weekly Dispatch," a century-old newspaper which Lord Northcliffe had owned for fifteen years, in which time he had tried over a score of editors, he so transformed it that Sunday journalism was revolutionised.

He worked for seventeen years for Lord Northcliffe in three different periods. Northcliffe called him "The Poet," and allowed him an independence and freedom of opinion never given by him to any other member of his staff. ¹⁶



¹⁴ See Pioneer, Vol. 1, No. 1: "The First SNU Journal July 1924 - December 1932".

¹⁵ Swaffer became Hon. President of the Spiritualists' National Union after the death of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in July 1930.

¹⁶ For the full article see Psypioneer, Vol. 7, No. 8: "Hannan Swaffer, esq., Honorary President S.N.U.", "How I Became a Spiritualist (Hannan Swaffer) – *The National Spiritualist*".

After Lord Northcliffe's death in 1922 Swaffer, in or around 1924 as the editor of *The People*, enquired into the alleged survival of Lord Northcliffe. Convinced by the direct voice mediumship of Dennis Bradley, Swaffer printed his new-found convictions, acknowledged his conversion from modernist-agnosticism at a crowded gathering at the Queen's Hall, London and made his first speech on Spiritualism, calling his lecture "Is Lord Northcliffe Dead?"

Maurice Barbanell notes: "Our friendship began shortly after his inquiry into Spiritualism when he set out to prove Northcliffe's survival." Barbanell was first entranced in or around 1920. About four years later Barbanell came into contact with Swaffer, a friendship and working relationship which would last for almost forty years, and the "Hannen Swaffer Home Circle" was formed with the spirit guide "Big Jump". It would not be until the early 1930s, after *Psychic News* was founded in 1932, that the name "Silver Birch" would come into existence.

The "Hannen Swaffer Home Circle" held an extraordinary secret in the Spiritualist movement for over three decades: who is Silver Birch's medium? This was not revealed until Barbanell's announcement in 1957 (please see the Pioneer Maurice Barbanell pdf booklet as shown on the last page of this issue).

It is further revealed in *Pioneer* that the circle's guide was in fact called "Big Jump", a fact which would remain within the circle until well after the medium's death in 1981. The name "Silver Birch" was used solely as a public name to bring about the guide's teachings. When the Teachings were printed, it was considered a more suitable name should be used. Barbanell had said that the name 'Silver Birch' was decided one evening at a sitting and the next morning in his *Psychic News* office he received a postcard with a picture of a silver birch tree on the front; it had come from a member of the public he did not know.

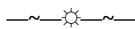
Publicly we are generally aware of the philosophical teachings of Silver Birch only from the various publications over the years but not behind the closed doors of the "Hannen Swaffer Home Circle". Big Jump would act as an intermediary for spirit communications and Barbanell on occasion would become entranced by another communicator, which is not generally known. Below are the communications between Northcliffe and Swaffer in the "Hannen Swaffer Home Circle"; the reader will note that Northcliffe called Swaff the "Poet" and Swaff would refer to Northcliffe as "Chief".



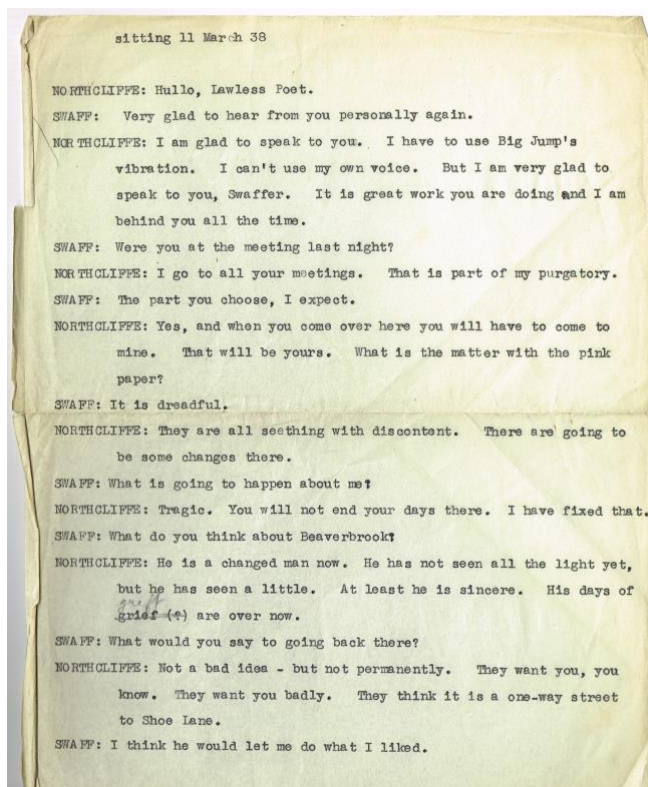
Lord Northcliffe & Hannan Swaffer

The following original typed scripts are dated May 26th, 1937 and March 11th, 1938 and are held in the Britten Museum & Library at Stansted.

I start with the later transcript as this is the order in which these fragile reports are placed; the reader will not necessarily know or understand the full content of the conversation between Swaffer and Northcliffe but it gives an insight into behind the doors of the "Hannen Swaffer Home Circle".



sitting 11 March 38



NORTHCLIFFE: Hullo, Lawless Poet.

SWAFF: Very glad to hear from you personally again.

NORTHCLIFFE: I am glad to speak to you. I have to use Big Jump's vibration. I can't use my own voice. But I am very glad to speak to you, Swaffer. It is great work you are doing and I am behind you all the time.

SWAFF: Were you at the meeting last night?

NORTHCLIFFE: I go to all your meetings. That is part of my purgatory.

SWAFF: The part you choose, I expect.

NORTHCLIFFE: Yes, and when you come over here you will have to come to mine. That will be yours. What is the matter with the pink paper?

SWAFF: It is dreadful.

NORTHCLIFFE: They are all seething with discontent. There are going to be some changes there.

SWAFF: What is going to happen about me?

NORTHCLIFFE: Tragic. You will not end your days there. I have fixed that.

SWAFF: What do you think about Beaverbrook?¹⁷

NORTHCLIFFE: He is a changed man now. He has not seen all the light yet, but he has seen a little. At least he is sincere. His days of graft are over now.

SWAFF: What would you say to going back there?

NORTHCLIFFE: Not a bad idea - but not permanently. They want you, you know. They want you badly. They think it is a one-way street to Shoe Lane.

SWAFF: I think he would let me do what I liked.

¹⁷ Throughout the 1930s Lord Max Beaverbrook was owner of the London *Daily Express*, *Sunday Express* and *Evening Standard*; he said that Northcliffe was "the greatest figure who ever strode down Fleet Street" Lord Beaverbrook features in "My Greatest Story" by Hannen Swaffer; this has been republished by the SNU (the name 'Hannen' is incorrectly spelled and should read 'Hannan' on the front cover).

NORTHCLIFFE: Oh, yes, the Beaver is all right. He is the only one left who knows anything about journalism. The others do not know a story when they see it. I have endured tortures, Swaffer, when I see what has happened to all the years of effort, initiative, ingenuity and skill with which we planned. And the honesty - we were always honest - no mangles and wangles.¹⁸

SWAFF: I thought that was mine, but you have pinched it.

NORTHCLIFFE: Oh, no, it is mine. I let you call some of my ideas yours. I have got them all in my fold.

SWAFF: How is Wareham?

NORTHCLIFFE: All right.

SWAFF: Lumb?

NORTHCLIFFE: Yes. Very dull. So is Wareham. Never understood me at all. No one did, not even you.

SWAFF: I did a bit.

NORTHCLIFFE: Only when I wanted you to. I think I will start sending them communiques from heaven. See what they think.

SWAFF: Why aren't we selling more copies of Psychic News?

NORTHCLIFFE: Not spending enough money. You have a mean old skinflint. I am fixing that and arranging for a lot more money to come in, so that you can really put it over. I don't think the time is ready for a daily, but I don't see why you should not do a quarter of a million. There is very little wrong with the paper, except that it is too small. It has not enough variety, of course. It requires more features to brighten it up. The news side is quite well managed but it requires more features. You understand. Things are very sketchy sometimes, but I send them good stories.

This guide Big Jump is magnificent. I wish they would allow me to tell you who he is, but not yet. He is a great soul. I love him and he radiates love here. There are thousands who come to hear him when he speaks in our world.

SWAFF: He has a wonderful gift of language.

NORTHCLIFFE: Magnificent. I envy him his oratory and only get annoyed when he is not being reported.

SWAFF: It was a good story last week.

NORTHCLIFFE: Very good. Young man, you should have come back from France to report it - cohorting on the Continent!

SWAFF: Or being revered on the Riviera.

NORTHCLIFFE: That's not so Nice.

SWAFF: How is Wallace?

NORTHCLIFFE: He is doing magnificent work. Strangely enough, he and Doyle have got great friends. Queer things happen in this world, queerer than Fleet Street sometimes,

¹⁸ Further, if you google "Lord Beaverbrook hosts dinner to honour journalist Hannen Swaffer (1942)" it will show an old film clip of them both speaking (the sound does cut out but returns).

strangest combinations. How is Lulu? I think she is getting scatterbrain but I daren't tell her so. I can get through to her through Fedra.¹⁹ I am coming through all over the place now, sometimes saying who I am and sometimes not. They get scared. I have seen Napoleon.

SWAFF: Were you very much like him?

NORTHCLIFFE: Not as much as I thought. I must confess I am not the hero-worshipper I was.

SWAFF: Have you seen William Morris?

NORTHCLIFFE: Fine chap.

SWAFF: Keir Hardie?

NORTHCLIFFE: Yes, I have converted him to Socialism!

SWAFF: I suppose they are the great ones?

NORTHCLIFFE: Over here they are the greatest ones. Over here the Birkenheads are nothing. There is no glitter in this world. This is not a world of illusion, but reality. I managed to squeeze in because I kidded them I had done some work. I am active.

SWAFF: You would soon see where you were wrong before.

NORTHCLIFFE: I knew where I was wrong. I never said so. I had to be right. It would not do if I were wrong. How is my poor old "Daily Mail"?

SWAFF: Still going down. You never hear them say, "The 'Daily Mail' says..."

NORTHCLIFFE: No, you hear them say what the "Daily Mail" doesn't say. It is no use. My brother never could lead the paper from behind. The Beaver knows how to get the best out of them.

SWAFF: Very nice to work for.

NORTHCLIFFE: Almost as erratic as I was. How are your couple of odd hams getting on?

SWAFF: I never see them. They are getting tired of me.

NORTHCLIFFE: I know. Southwood is so tired and dazed he doesn't know where he is. He thinks he is another Napoleon now. They are missing great opportunities. They have a potential power that could change world influence. They could not only lead the whole of England but the world with concerted initiative and knowledge. I am proud of you, Swaffer. I never thought that you would become a political speaker.

SWAFF: You told me long before I was.

NORTHCLIFFE: Yes, I know.

SWAFF: What sort of effect does it have?

NORTHCLIFFE: A tremendous effect. All those little people get heartened and in their own way they begin to realise that they too can stand up to iniquity and tyranny. It is a great change from cardboard drama and pasteboard scenery to go out and find the real

¹⁹ Spirit control of Mrs Osborne Leonard.

dramas. You are a marked man, Swaffer, more than you realise. I have held on for a long time, now I must go.

SWAFF: There is no need to worry about anything?

NORTHCLIFFE: Not the slightest. I am behind you, and there are many more. You will be sorry to hear that Gladstone helps you politically.

SWAFF: I have had him described.

NORTHCLIFFE: Yes, I know.

SWAFF: He was a great guy.

NORTHCLIFFE: He cannot hear me now - he is not so dreary as he used to be. I am very glad to have had this chance to talk to you.

SWAFF: I will give your love to Lulu.

NORTHCLIFFE: Yes, and my very best wishes to your wife. Don't forget, I have got a very pleasant surprise for you. It is not long now. Forgive me if I have monopolised the time in talking to my old ?chief, but I want you to realise how privileged you are to be able to have a part in this work. You cannot imagine what you are doing, but allow me, who is one used to calculating public influence, to tell you that you are doing a magnificent work and you are to thank God for the opportunity that has come to you whilst you are in your comparative youth. God bless you, Thank the medium for allowing me to use him.

SWAFF: Love to Wareham, Randall Charlton, - Parsons.

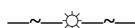
NORTHCLIFFE: Not to ???

SWAFF: Oh, yes.

NORTHCLIFFE: He is a changed man too. We change them here. By the way, Swaffer, when are you going to write a story for my paper?

SWAFF: What do you mean?

NORTHCLIFFE: The St. Peter's Gazette. God bless you.



26.5. 37

Big Jump: The Chief is here with you to-night. I would let him talk with you through medium, but the brain is so tired it is hard to find all the words so easily. But I will try to catch what he says. He always says things I do not understand, which makes it more difficult. He says, "How is the barren baron?" He says they give the carrot to the donkey at last. He says it will make him weaker. Something about weaken his position. I cannot quite get that.

Swaffer: He means with the Labour Party?

Big Jump: Yes. Chief says lot of troubles with the pink paper. He says it has gone white at the gills. He says they are very angry with you because they can't get you. He says that the Eli man wants to cut himself off from the other man does not want to. He laughs and says, "Because the odd ham wants to save his bacon". He says they are a couple of worms that can't turn. He is very cross because - he says you will know this phrase - they could bring down the government every day. The Chief tells me to tell you

that there is a door that opens for you, not yet, but you do not end your days with the pink paper run by pale people.

Swaffer: Does he give any advice at all?

Big Jump: He is laughing and says they can't see rhyme or reason so they can't see how to deal with my Poet. He says, "Go on, be awkward. Do some of the old monkey tricks."

Swaffer: I saw Tom Clarke to-day.

Big Jump: He says Tom always was a clerk. Only two people understood him, he said, you and his Lulu girl. He says you were his poet. That man was his peasant. He says he likes the Tommy man, but he never knew whether it was the Thunderer or the Cut Comic. He calls it a cock that doesn't crow any more.

Swaffer: I know what he means. He took one himself.

Big Jump: But he says he only took it to raise status and to make them angry.

Swaffer: Ask him if he has met Bob Crombie.

Big Jump: Yes. Chief says that this man had great respect for him and great admiration for you. Chief says your paper doesn't want Sweet Williams but Scarlet Runners. He is very close to you. Now he puts his arm round you and he looks straight at you. I wish you could see the love that comes from him. He says, "They think I am out of their way, but I am not, and through you and with you we shall make the Press what it should be." He urges you to go on because now, in spite of all the troubles, you give inspiration to many and courage to the weak. He means in your own work. He asks you to give his love to your squaw. And he also wants me to tell you that the Daily Mail is going down and down and down.

Swaffer: His nephew Geoffrey seems the best of the lot.

Big Jump: Yes, but he says there was only one Chief, thank God. He says what do you think would happen if he reincarnated? Chief says he is not finished with you yet. You can't get rid of him. But the door opens later. You do not end your days with the pink paper. And he is glad to help you in the political work.

I come and help you also, Chief. When the other man gets tired of throwing bombs, I throw them too. The Chief is great friends with all of them, you know - I mean, now. He laughs because he says it is a good story, but you can't print it, how the arm and the eye walk arm in arm (Hardy).

Swaffer: How is Pemberton?

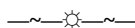
Big Jump: He is all right now.

Swaffer: I do not think Beaverbrook has done anything for his widow yet.

Big Jump: He says, "The not-so-green incorruptible will have to disgorge."

Swaffer: I am going to see Lloyd George next week.

Big Jump: Chief says, "Take a wand for the wizard" I think he could keep it up all night, but he is very glad to talk with you. I cannot get it all because the medium's brain is tired and the words are hard to find

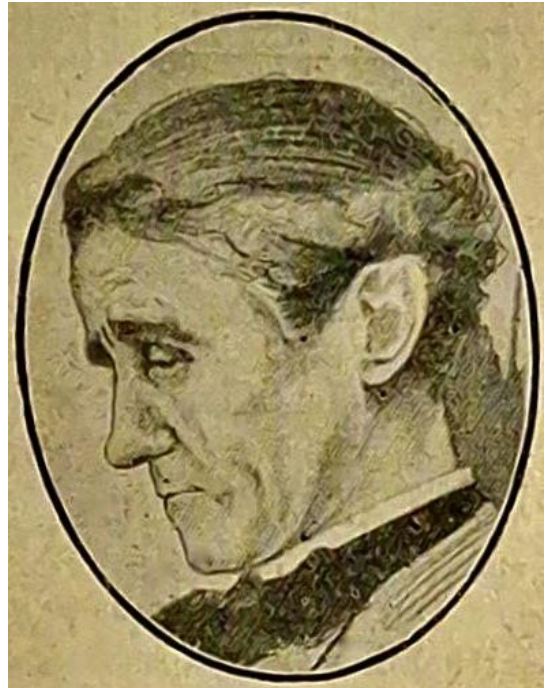


To conclude:

Below from the Two Worlds, October 16th, 1925:

Manchester Propaganda Meetings.

THE fifth winter series of monthly meetings organised by the Manchester Spiritualists' Central Propaganda Committee started on Sunday, October 4th, in the Ardwick Picture Theatre. Mr. Hannen Swaffer, the well-known journalist, was the speaker, with Mr. Ernest W. Oaten in the chair. On behalf of the committee, Mr. Oaten extended a hearty welcome to those interested in the series of meetings. At these gatherings, Spiritualism was put before the public, said the chairman, from a free platform. No special "brand" of Spiritualism was preached. Spiritualists differed widely; all hope would be lost in a movement where everyone thought alike. In welcoming Mr. Swaffer to that meeting Mr. Oaten said that no man's mind was asked to range over a wider field than a journalist's. Mr. Swaffer had been enquiring into Spiritualism for some time, and he had come to Manchester to tell what he had found.



Mr. Swaffer's subject was "Lord Northcliffe's Return," and he led up to this by first reminding his hearers that, for all they knew, the civilisation that had been built up for many centuries was crumbling away.

"We are losing grip of the things about which we thought we were safe," he said. "The disappointments of war have rather jarred on us: we are over-tired, and critical. There are coming across this country, as they have come across other countries, changes that we are not quite certain about. At this moment we are not even so sure as we were about the Church, one of the props of the old order; it is now very critical of itself, and has changed its point of view.

"Lord Beaverbrook, the other week, asked some distinguished authors to write about 'My Religion' for one of his newspapers. There was remarkable evidence, in the ten articles contributed, that authors were very critical about established faith. The novelist's point of view is usually a little bit in front of that of the ordinary man. Only one of those men felt absolutely certain that he knew where he was. That was a man who, after leaving the Roman Catholic Church, had become an agnostic and had been brought back to Christianity by a belief in those principles, for the examination of which we are here assembled to-night. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was brought back from agnosticism because he had evidence that was scientific, that could be examined, that was proof.

"Henry Arthur Jones, in his article on 'My Religion,' said: 'Much of this evidence—that is, our evidence—is unreasonable; some of it is incredible; but much of it has great weight, is difficult to discredit, and is impossible to disprove.'

"Sir Hall Caine wrote to me, a few weeks ago, accepting our case absolutely, qualifying it only by saying that he does not seek personal contact with the dead, and

that he is quite satisfied to know that his dead are not dead, but that they are immortal and are around us.

“Here are two fresh evidences of belief in most of the things for which we stand. They are both the intelligent views of men who, while over seventy, looking back, surveying their years of achievement, noting the changes around them, seem to have arrived at a definite and settled conclusion about the things which we believe.

A WORD FOR MEDIUMS.

“Robert Blatchford, who, a few years ago, nearly made an agnostic of me, sat only a few times with Mrs. Leonard; yet he was soon convinced by the overwhelming proof which Mrs. Leonard’s mediumship so often finds for her sitters. Robert Blatchford preceded me into your ranks by only a few weeks.

“The world can no longer think that the people who accept the truth of Spiritualism are a lot of lunatics. I have had many opportunities of discussing this matter with all sorts of very distinguished people, and I have discovered that, when they know you believe in it, they start to *tell* you things. The most hardened materialists come out with the most extraordinary stories which they cannot explain.

“Lord Dewar is a man of the world; yet I meet him at seances. I sat with him last year when Valiantine was here, and I sat with him the other week with Mrs. Pruden. Among other men who have confessed to me their remarkable experiences recently, is the Russian pianist, Czernikoff, who said that on one occasion, when he could not remember a note of a piece of Liszt’s music he was called upon to play, he felt it was all suggested to him, almost note by note. ‘I am conscious,’ he said to me, ‘that I was given that music, for, the next day, when I tried to play it at home, I had forgotten it again.’

“On the first night of ‘Marie Rose,’ Miss Fay Compton, having determined to play the heroine’s part a certain way, felt herself impelled to play it another way. She can only explain it by believing that some influence outside her was showing her the way to do it. These stories, I find, are common. No one can explain them, except by adopting our hypothesis.

LORD NORTHCLIFFE.

“When I published, last July, a book called ‘Lord Northcliffe’s Return,’ it was a rather daring thing to do. You see, from the point of view of somebody who was objecting, I had brought from the grave the ghost of Lord Northcliffe, to criticise certain newspapers, now controlled by his brother. And I had induced Lord Beaverbrook to write an introduction to say I was an honest man ! Yet, of all the criticisms of the book, almost the only one that attacked me was *Truth*, which said that ‘the messages which come from the other world do not seem of much value.’

“We are left, at the end, with the conviction that revolting though a great many of the trappings are,’ said the *Ladies’ Field*, ‘yet it can give definite proof—as nothing else is able—of life beyond the grave.’

“The best way of telling you how I arrived at my conclusions is to explain to you the mediumship of some of the people with whom I have sat. The first, George Valiantine, was visiting Pittsburg, some years ago, when a friend told him there was a spirit in the room, who wanted to speak with him. ‘We will sit after lunch,’ said the friend, ‘and see if we get anything.’ When they sat there were some raps, the usual beginning of mediumship. He was told to sit alone with his wife. In six months he got voices. Most of the mediums that I know have started themselves, singly, like that.

“During thirty sittings that I had with George Valiantine this Spring, we got accumulative evidence that was overwhelming. On one occasion, one of the sitters was the wife of a Chinese diplomat, who wanted to talk to her father. We were not told this until afterwards. At the end of the sitting, when Chinese words had been spoken to her, she said, ‘There are twenty Chinese dialects. My father spoke to me to-night in two dialects, the one he used to me when I was a child and that he spoke in when I grew up. No medium could know that,’ Clara Butt received a message from Lily Hanbury; Constance Collier had a message from her mother; Mrs. Hilton Philipson and Ivor Novello also had messages, all four at the same sitting. And all four people were satisfied.

“For many years I merely glanced at the subject now and then, when, like most of the outside world I read chiefly the exposures of mediums, and about the fortune-tellers who had been prosecuted. Then, on a particular night, I sat in Dennis Bradley’s house, along with his wife, his son, Lord Northcliffe’s former secretary, and a friend. We were all seekers after truth. Within a quarter-of-an hour Mr. Bradley’s voice-mediumship, which he had developed suddenly, brought Lord Northcliffe’s voice into the room. Then I knew that Spiritualism *was true*.

OTHER EVIDENCES.

“Another medium I should like to mention is Mrs. Gibbons Grinling. For three years, she and her son sat three times a week, alone. After three years they got the direct voice. It wants some patience, but if, at the end of it, you can prove to a bereaved person that his friend is not dead, it is a sacrifice worth making. It was through Mrs. Gibbons Grinling’s mediumship that I heard, for the first time, the Northcliffe voice exactly as I had heard it in life. I have heard it since, as characteristically Northcliffe’s as my own is characteristically mine. It was his voice undoubtedly. Yet Mrs. Grinling did not know Lord Northcliffe.

“Our enquiries into the Northcliffe survival began because Miss Owen, his former secretary, involved in worrying correspondence over a lawsuit, felt that, if it were true, as she had read, that Conan Doyle had spoken to Lord Northcliffe, she should consult her former Chief about it all. So she told Sir Arthur Conan Doyle all the story. Now, Conan Doyle objects to Spiritualism being used for material purposes; but he gave way in this case, hearing the large sums of money involved which might go to charity.

“Doyle sent Miss Owen to Mrs. Annie Brittain. Now, as Miss Owen was full of anxiety, full of enthusiasm and full of hope about speaking to Lord Northcliffe, why was it, if the subconscious theory was true, that the moment she got to Mrs. Brittain’s it was *not* Northcliffe, but her mother, who came through? Her mother died when Miss Owen was a few months old, and she could not remember anything of her; yet her mother came through, and for nearly two hours described the whole circumstances of her life and death.

“When, still determined to speak to Northcliffe, Miss Owen visited Mrs. Osborne Leonard, Northcliffe immediately came through and said that he had let her mother speak last time, but that now he was not going to be kept on one side.”

SPIRITUALISM’S MAGNETISM.

After giving more examples of mediumship, Mr. Swaffer said that many people outside the Spiritualist movement were being drawn into it because they themselves were developing mediumship, without outside, or professional, help.

“I am not a sentimentalist,” said Mr. Swaffer, “I am a man of the world. I have never lost anybody in my life who was very close to me. I am not the sort of person who, for

long, would be affected by bereavement: I am too selfishly interested in the things of to-day. I have had such proof, however, that I have felt it my duty, not for my own comfort, not for any reason of my own advancement, to come out and tell as many people as I can that there is no death.

“One evening a servant at Ciro’s Club came to me and asked where he could get Mr. Bradley’s book, ‘Towards the Stars.’ I asked him why he wanted to read it, and he told me he had lost his little girl. I told him I would send him some books to read. When, on Christmas eve, I met Mrs. Leonard I told her how, even in a night club, the subject of Spiritualism had cropped up. Later, the same night-club servant ran up to me while jazz was being played. ‘We sat with Mrs. Leonard to-day,’ he said, ‘and we spoke to our little girl. We had evidence that she was always beside us in the house, as you told us, and that, when my wife is thinking of her, she is there.’ That man has now joined a Spiritualist Society. What has Spiritualism done for his wife ? ‘*It has saved her reason,*’ he told me. If I had only done that, what I have done would have been worth while.

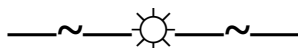
“Another man I know who lost his little girl last February told me that he and his wife now hear the voice of their own little child in the sanctity of their home. One by one, people are beginning to realise that certain things the Bible has always told us are true, and can be found if sought after. We know that the dead we love are not dead, but that they are trying to help us, are beside us when we mourn them, helping us, urging us on. I have had proof of that, and I want to bear witness to it.

IN YOUR OWN HOME.

“Out of every ten persons in the world there are probably eight who might become mediums. You need not risk being defrauded. You can study the rules for mediumship and you can follow them. Then, when the phenomena happen in your own home, with only your own friends, you know they are true. Supposing that Spiritualism cannot save the world, and I do not believe it can, for I know that man has to *save himself*, with faith or without it; supposing it cannot double your income, supposing it cannot cure your illness, there is at least one thing it can do.

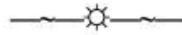
“It can prove that Christ’s last recorded words: ‘Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world,’ are true. When the spirit voices first come through, when the spirit writings begin, when, at a seance, you hear your spirit friends described, you always get something like this: ‘He says he is not dead; he is with you.’ It was the word of Christ, it is the word of your dead friend, it is the language of Love itself. If it is all that Love ever had to say, it would make Love worth while.”

During the evening Miss A. Rimmer (contralto) contributed in beautiful style “Abide With Me” and “My Prayer,” accompanied by Miss Brand Lane.



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