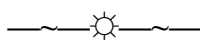




Volume 8, No. 3: June 2021

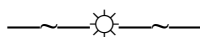
Contents list:



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

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

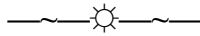
Special thanks to Charles Coulston for his work in sub-editing this issue



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NEW SNU PIONEER PAGE

Looking for a specific subject?



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

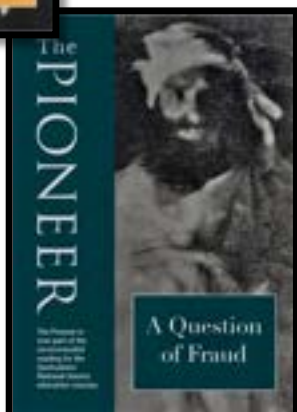
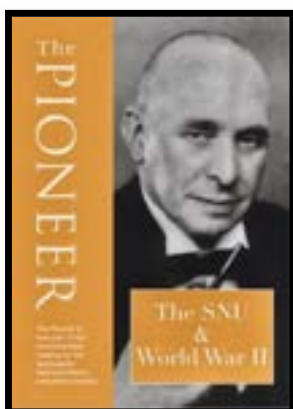


A selection of important subjects from the history of the Spiritualists' National Union.

Designed to cover key topics for anyone studying one of our courses or for anyone looking to further their knowledge on the history of our movement.

<https://www.snu.org.uk/the-pioneer-journal>

The Pioneer journal is a unique insight into the history of the Spiritualists' National Union and its pioneers.



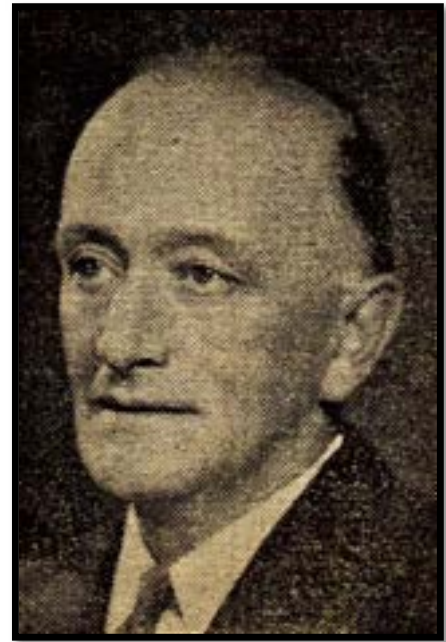
B. ABDY COLLINS

Psychical Researcher, Spiritualist and Author

Abdy Collins was a staunch supporter of the physical medium Helen Duncan. He was one of the defence witnesses at her trial held before the Recorder of London, Sir Gerald Dodson,¹ at the Central Criminal Court, Old Bailey, E.C.4., commencing on Thursday 23rd March 1944.²

The SNU appointed legal team Mr Charles E. Loseby and Mr J. Simpson Pedlar as Duncan's counsel. Abdy Collins was called to give evidence on the fifth day of the trial on Wednesday March 28th; we can note some information on Collins in the trial records:³

B. A. Collins.—B Abdy Collins, a retired member of the Indian Civil Service, and District and Sessions Judge. For the last ten years: Psychical Researcher, on the Council of the Society for Psychical Research (SPR), and a member of the International Institute for Psychic Investigation (IIPi), living in Bedford.



We can note in *Pioneer*, Vol. 6, No. 5: “International Institute for Psychical Research” & “The Case for Real Psychical Research – by Arthur Findlay”; Findlay was then Chairman of the IIPR.

In 1939 Abdy Collins gives a significant account of the medium Jack Webber's psychic removal of the medium's coat shortly before Webber's untimely death on March 9th, 1940, aged thirty-three years.

The following extracts are taken from an article published in *Light* (page 427-428, 1939), written by Mr. B. Abdy Collins, C.I.E., well known for his books and writings on psychical research.

“I wish to draw attention to one phenomenon which is quite in a class by itself and cannot be explained; they are explained by those who accept the facts, as caused by psychic rods or voice boxes emanating from the medium and directed by his sub-conscious mind.”

“The phenomenon to which I refer is the removal and replacement of Mr. Webber's coat. In order that its importance may be clearly appreciated, I will briefly describe what happens. Mr. Webber wears an ordinary closely fitting black lounge coat, which is sewn up all down the front with a needle and coarse thread by one of the sitters. He then sits in an armchair into which he



¹ Sir Gerald Dodson was Recorder of London for 1937-1959; “... the most senior permanent judge of the Central Criminal Court has the title of Recorder of London.”

² See *Pioneer*, six-part series, starting in *Pioneer*, Vol. 2, No. 1: “The Effect of The Vagrancy Act – The Work of the Spiritualists' National Union”.

³ “The Trial of Mrs. Duncan”, which is available to read or download online: Editor, C.E. Bechhofer Roberts (Gray's Inn and the South-Eastern Circuit, Barrister-at-Law).

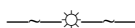
is securely bound. The middle of a long piece of rope is fastened to the back of the chair and Mr. Webber's arms are tightly tied to the arms and his legs to the legs of the chair. This is effected by two sitters each taking one end of the rope and winding it round and round his limbs and the chair arm and leg, securing it with knots here and there and finally bringing the ends of the rope together, when they are sewn up and sealed in several places.
...

"The two persons sitting either side of him are then asked each to grasp one of his hands. 'Black Cloud,' the soi-disant Guide, speaking through the medium, then announces that the coat will be removed, and the light is switched off. In a very short while, he again asks for the light to be turned on, and there is Mr. Webber sitting bound in his chair as before, but his coat has been removed with the stitches in front intact. It may be lying on the medium's knees or on the lap of one of the sitters. After any examination the sitters wish, 'Black Cloud' announces that he will replace the coat, the two sitters grasp the medium's hands and the light is switched off. Very soon, 'Black Cloud' calls for light and Mr. Webber is found sitting in the chair, his hands still held, and the coat on him again as it was at first.



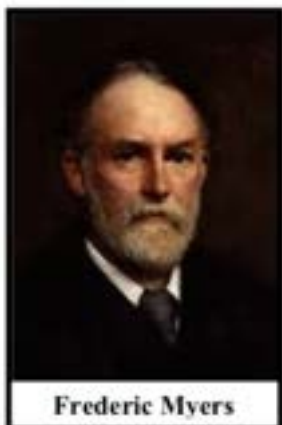
"The facts are undoubted. They have been 'witnessed,' if that is the proper word, by many hundreds of persons. I myself have twice 'seen' the coat removed in this way and once 'seen' it replaced. The coat is removed while Mr. Webber's hands are held, his arms are tightly bound to the arms of the chair and the front of the coat is closely stitched together. It is not a conjuring trick. How is it done? The only explanation seems to be that the coat is 'dematerialized' in some way, or else that matter as represented by the coat is passed through matter as represented by Mr. Webber. Anyway, this is a phenomenon which cannot be explained by invisible psychic rods, or 'pseudo-pods.' Apports brought into a closed room have been explained in much the same way as I have suggested, but our sceptics get over this simply by denying that any case of an apport is properly substantiated. Here they cannot deny the facts. If they refuse to accept the testimony of others, they can easily verify the facts themselves. What 'explanation' can they offer?

"If nothing will induce them to accept the spiritist hypothesis, then at least they must admit that some unknown force does somehow remove the coat. The scientific world will at last have to agree that there are phenomena which are not governed by physical laws, and that there is something beyond the material world, as hitherto unknown. For myself, it seems less absurd to ascribe these activities to 'spirits' than to try to explain them by the activities of the medium's subconscious mind. The latter hypothesis seems to get us nowhere. It does not explain how the coat is removed and replaced. We require an intelligence with a knowledge and ability that is more than human. . . ."⁴



⁴ For further information on Jack Webber please see Pioneer, Vol. 5, No. 5: "Jack Webber – John Boaden Webber 1907 – 1940", "Ectoplasm Examined – Seen and Handled by Experimenters", "The Mediumship of Jack Webber – Full Face Materialisations", and "Editor's Note". The above article was published in Harry Edwards' book, "The Mediumship of Jack Webber", originally published in 1940; for a recent reprint please see Pioneer, Vol. 5, No. 6: "Ann Harrison – Responds to the Jack Webber article ..."

Telepathy, Psychic and Spirit Communication



These are general classifications for some of the various modes of mental phenomena but to what extent do they each blend into each other? On this point there can be no set rules. The Society for Psychical Research was founded in 1881-1882. The now defunct *Psypioneer* put forward material which strongly suggested that the Society had very close links with the Spiritualists in forming the SPR which had not been recognised in their history. The British National Association of Spiritualists (BNAS) provided a substantial platform and was of influence in the founding and launch of the SPR. The BNAS had an influential membership and in itself did not hold any religious or philosophical dogma, its members being from all walks of life. The BNAS maintained an "Experimental Research Committee" and a "Séance Committee".

One *Psypioneer* article showed that the original twenty-nine-member Council and Officers of the SPR were 55% BNAS members.⁶ The SPR was formally founded in February 1882 and the first investigations were in thought-reading, changing to thought transference; later, this was simply renamed by Frederic Myers with his new word, "telepathy".

The SPR website notes:



The group charged with collecting historical and current evidence produced the first landmark in psychical research, a two-volume study of visions and apparitions titled *Phantasms of the Living* (1886). This substantial work, written mainly by Gurney, together with Myers and, provided careful analyses of more than seven hundred personal experiences; many were dubbed 'crisis apparitions', those of people seen at a time when, as was later learned, they were in fact dying or in life-threatening situations in another location, a phenomenon viewed by Gurney as a telepathically-generated hallucination.



This covered "Telepathy, Psychic and Spirit Communication", "Spontaneous Telepathy", and "Thought Transference".

This includes a story from 1880 of a ghostly nature; please see the above-quoted issue for the full story:

... At that moment, however, she heard the door open, and, looking round, saw a very stout old woman walk in. She was dressed in a nightgown and red flannel petticoat, and carried an old-fashioned brass candlestick in her hand. The petticoat had a hole rubbed in it. She walked into the room, and appeared to be going towards the dressing-table to put her candle down. She was a perfect stranger to Reddell, who, however, merely thought, 'This is her mother come to see after her,' and she felt quite glad it was so, accepting the idea without reasoning upon it, as one would in a dream. She thought the mother looked annoyed, possibly at not having been sent for before. She then gave Helen the medicine, and turning round, found that the apparition had disappeared, and that the door was shut. ...

Below Abdy Collins approaches the subject of ghosts, which he notes are sometimes *taken for a living person*. This article was part of a series of articles (no. 13) by B. Abdy Collins, “The Whole Case for Survival”, published in *Psychic News*, April 3rd, 1948:

THE EXPLANATION OF GHOSTS

WHAT IS A GHOST? BY A GHOST I MEAN A FIGURE OR PHANTOM WHICH HAUNTS A PLACE AS OPPOSED TO AN APPARITION WHICH APPEARS TO SOMEONE WITH WHOM IT HAS SOME AFFINITY OR RELATION, ONCE AND FOR ALL AT A CRISIS OF SOME KIND.

Are there really such things as ghosts? Yes, certainly; there can be no doubt about it. They are seen by persons who have the capacity for seeing them only in a particular place.

The most certain and irrefutable case of all is that known as the Morton case recorded in full in the *S.P.R. Progs.* (Vol. VIII), and analysed at length by Myers, on page 227, and following of “*Human Personality*” (abridged edition).⁵

It occurred in a modern house built in the 1860’s and the ghost was clearly identified as that of the second wife of the first occupant of the house who died in 1878 while living elsewhere.

After standing empty for a few years the house was occupied in 1882 by a family consisting of Capt. Morton and his wife, five daughters and two sons.

None of them knew anything about the house being haunted. Rose, the eldest unmarried girl, aged nineteen, first saw the ghost two months after they went in. For next five years it was seen frequently by various members of the family, by friends and by the servants, not only in the house but in the garden by daylight as well as at night.

Rose kept a diary in which she noted everything as it happened and sent it to a friend living in the north of England. So there was a contemporary record of all that occurred.

SOLID FORM.

The ghost was dressed in the conventional nineteenth century widow’s garb and always held a handkerchief to her face. She was so solid and natural that she was often mistaken for a living person (e.g., when she passed close to the charwoman in the garden at teatime in the summer).

She never spoke, though once or twice she gasped as if about to speak and if cornered she suddenly disappeared or somehow eluded her pursuers. She was unsubstantial and passed through strings put up across her path without disturbing them.

Everyone could not see her—Capt. Morton for instance, failed to do so, even when she was pointed out to him—but four of the five girls and one of the sons could do so and apparently all the various servants and the gardener.

She continued to be seen frequently and clearly till 1886, then by degrees she became less substantial and even transparent. and after 1889 was not seen again.

⁵ Originally: Myers, F.W.H. (1903), *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death* (2 vols.), London: Longmans, Green.

SIGNED STATEMENTS

The case was carefully investigated by F. W. H. Myers, who often stayed with his mother in Cheltenham, where the house was from 1884 onwards. He examined all those who had seen the ghost and took signed statements from them, so there can be no doubt as to the facts. What is the explanation?

The most thorough book on haunting is an Italian monograph by Bozzano, of which a French translation is available. I have translated it into English and hope some day it will be published. He collected and analysed 532 cases of hauntings which he considered sufficiently documented.⁶

Of these he classed 158 as poltergeists and the rest as hauntings proper. In 304 of the latter cases there was a death (in 207 a tragic death) which preceded the appearances. In 114 the phantom seemed to observe the persons present, while 41 spoke.

None of his cases appear to be so full and satisfactory as the Morton case. As a general rule the ghost is not identified, it is only seen very occasionally and by one or two persons, while no contemporary record is available.

SEEN IN DAYTIME

A very interesting case is that reported by the Misses Scott from St. Boswell's in Roxburghshire (S.P.R. Journal, Vols. VI and IX). Over a period of eight years (1892-1900) from time to time the sisters saw the figure of a man dressed as a clergyman in the style of a century or more previously walking along or close to a road near their homes in broad daylight.

It was seen by two sisters at one time and also once or twice by other persons. I reproduce Miss M. Scott's account of her second or third encounter on June 12, 1893:

"On Sunday last . . . at a few minutes before ten in the morning, having occasion to pass that way I perceived far in front a dark figure. . . . I had not gone far . . . when I discovered it to be none other than the apparition we had looked for and failed to see for so many months.

I did not then feel at all afraid and hoping to get a nearer inspection boldly followed, running in close pursuit, but here the strangest part of it all is that, though he was apparently walking slowly, I never could get any closer than within a few yards for in but a moment he seemed to float or skim away.

"Presently he came to a standstill and I began to feel very much afraid and stopped also. There he was !—the tall spectre dressed as I have described before. He turned round and gazed at me with a vacant expression and the same ghastly pallid features . . .

"While I stood he still looked intently at me for a few seconds and then regained his former position. Moving on a few steps he again stood and looked back a second time, finally fading from view at his usual spot by the hedge on the right."

UNIDENTIFIED

In this case the figure could not be identified, but in more than one respect it resembles the Morton ghost. It was seen by daylight in the open; it showed some reaction to its environment; it eluded attempts to corner or arrest it; it was never seen when it was

⁶ Professor Ernesto (Signor) Bozzano, 1862-1943, was an Italian psychical researcher, e.g. series of experiments with Eusapia Palladino. He was also a Spiritualist; there is an autobiographical sketch by Bozzano in *Psypioneer*, Vol. 5, No. 2, February 2009.

expected or anyone looked for it or wished to see it, and it was seen from time to time by a number of people over a long period.

Another interesting case in which the ghost is taken for a living person is that narrated at great length by Miss Vatas-Simpson in S.P.R. Progs. (Vol. III, p.126) and investigated very fully on behalf of the Society.

Her mother kept a diary from which long extracts are given. She and the children constantly saw a strange old lady in the house but though she complained to her husband he would not believe her. Finally, he had an experience which convinced him there was something in their stories.

He was sitting alone at his desk one evening absorbed in his work. Happening to look up he saw within his office doorway a little old lady standing. Even though he was angry at her intrusion he rose and addressed her politely. Finding she neither spoke or moved he advanced a little nearer.

Still she said nothing but kept looking at him with a soft sweet expression, her face very pallid. Giving her a little time to reply in case she was out of breath from coming upstairs he again approached her, when she moved gradually a little farther into the room.

“DON’T DENY IT”

Then in spite of his coming nearer she remained motionless. He made a quick step towards her and lo ! she was gone and no trace could be found of her. He flung open his door and called the servants, angrily demanding why they had let in a stranger at that hour. No one had done so.

“Don’t deny it,” he cried. “Who is the woman? What does she want? I see no one at this hour of the night,” and so on. It took a long time to make him believe that no one had entered the locked house.

These are just a few of the many cases which have been collected and carefully investigated. That ghosts are seen and sometimes talk cannot be doubted. A number of other strange cases will be found in my book “The Cheltenham Ghost.” which will be published shortly. What do they mean and are they evidence of survival?

A theory has been put forward by a number of distinguished persons who cannot deny the facts that they are caused in some way by impressions of events on the houses or places they haunt or on the ether which permeates them and that they are seen by persons endowed with a certain faculty under favourable conditions.

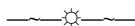
But this theory simply does not fit the facts. Why for instance are ghosts not much more common ? Why is not almost every house haunted ? How is it some ghosts speak and give information known to no one ?

Bozzano gives twelve reasons why this theory will not fit, and he and Mr. G. N. M. Tyrrell agree that the only satisfactory explanation is the same as for apparitions of all kinds which we have already discussed.⁷

They are part of a series and are due to the activity of the mind of a deceased person still surviving obsessed by some idea or bound by a tragic event or earthly longing to a particular place.

⁷ George Nugent Merle Tyrrell, 1879-1952, was a British psychical researcher, member of the Society for Psychical Research and its President, 1945-1946. Tyrrell authored a number of books; in 1943 he published “Apparitions”. I believe he coined the term “out-of-body experience” from this book.

They dream constantly of it and in some way influence those who can do so to see them at that spot and no other. Certainly it is difficult to see how the Morton case at any rate can be explained otherwise.



In 1951 J. Arthur Findlay wrote Bernard Abdy Collins' obituary notice, published in Psychic News, November 3rd:

A TRIBUTE TO ABDY COLLINS:

JUDGE CONVERTED HIM TO SPIRITUALISM

DISCUSSIONS ON GOLF COURSE

THE READERS OF PSYCHIC NEWS, BESIDES HIS MANY OTHER FRIENDS, WILL LEARN WITH DEEP REGRET OF THE PASSING OF BERNARD ABDY COLLINS AT HIS HOME IN BEDFORD ON MONDAY, OCTOBER 22.

We all know that he has passed on to a happier and fuller life, free from suffering and pain, and no one deserves the change more than he does.

For the past two years he has suffered bravely from an infection of the bone in his upper right leg. Gradually this got worse and it was decided that the leg should be amputated.

This was a serious matter for a man of 71 years of age, but the operation was successful and for a time it seemed as if he would recover. Unfortunately he had a relapse, from which he did not recover and gradually he passed peacefully away.

Bernard Abdy Collins was born on February 17, 1880. He was educated at Malvern and Brasenose College, Oxford, and entered the Indian Civil Service in 1903.

After some district experience he became under-secretary to the Bengal Government in 1909 and then filled a similar post in Bihar and Orissa.

He was Registrar of Co-operative Societies from 1913 to 1918 and from 1920 to 1926 Director of Industries in Bihar and Orissa.

After serving as Education Secretary in the same province from 1922 to 1926 he was appointed in 1927 Director-General of Commerce and Industry in Hyderabad State and retired from the India Civil Service in 1933, having been made a C.I.E. in 1926.

He served in the Ministry of Home Security from 1941 to 1945.

He was much interested in psychic phenomena. During his retirement he worked as managing director of "Psychic News" and published two monographs, "Death is not the End" and "The Cheltenham Ghost," in 1939 and 1948 respectively.

He was twice married, first in 1912 to Beryl, daughter of Colonel J. B. Lynch. The marriage was dissolved in 1922, and he married secondly in 1929 Miss Bertha Watson.

There were two children of his first marriage, a son and a daughter, and three children of his second marriage, a son and two daughters.

His interest in Spiritualism began after he returned from India, and it commenced in a rather unusual way.

I was visiting Sir Cyril Atkinson last month at his home in Aldeburgh. He was a Justice of the King's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice and has for many years accepted what Spiritualism stands for.

This had come about through the death of his daughter, some twenty years ago, with whom, since then, he has been in regular communication.

We were talking about Abdy Collins, and what follows is the gist of what Sir Cyril Atkinson told me:

“You know, it was I who introduced him to the subject, and it all took place on the golf course. We went round together from time to time and I told Collins what Spiritualism had meant to me. At first he was a complete disbeliever but I interested him in the subject and he started his own investigations.”

So that was how Abdy Collins became interested in Spiritualism. Before he took up his duties with “Psychic News” he had been editor of “Psychic Science” and an active member of the Society for Psychical Research.

IN WHITEHALL

When I was looking out for a new managing director for Psychic Press, just after the war, I was told by Mr. Percy Wilson to try and make contact with Abdy Collins.⁸

He was then-engaged at Whitehall in the Ministry of Home Security, supervising Air Raid Precautions, which duties, with the close of war, were coming to an end.

I asked him if he would become managing director of Psychic Press, which controls “Psychic News,” and he gladly consented.

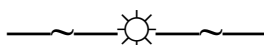
For the last six years we have worked happily together, and he was always energetic and enthusiastic in furthering anything which would help forward the work of propagating Spiritualism and all it stood for.

LUCID WRITER

No one could have had a more loyal or helpful colleague, and personally I shall greatly miss his presence.

He was a lucid, interesting and well informed writer on psychic matters, and, besides the two books already mentioned which he published, he wrote many valuable articles for “PSYCHIC NEWS” which greatly interested our readers.

He would have many friends on the other side to meet him, and we are sure that the change, for him, is for the better, but nevertheless we all sympathise deeply with his wife and family in their great bereavement.



⁸ J.A. Findlay was the Chairman of Psychic Press Ltd, the then proprietors of Psychic News.

Emma—Floyd—Hardinge—Britten

May 2nd, 1823 – October 2nd, 1899

Recently Pioneer was asked where the name “Hardinge” came from.

*Given that Emma was born Floyd and married Britten, where does
Miss / Mrs Emma Hardinge fit in?*

Marriage of Emma Hardinge:



Married, at Grace Church Rectory, Jersey City, Tuesday October 11th, by Rev. L. Rice. EMMA HARDINGE to Wm. G. P. Britten, both of London, England.

Mrs. Hardinge is no more! – but “she still lives,” – proving Spiritualism to be true.⁹ She is now the happy Mrs. Emma Britten; has married one of her own countrymen, Mr. Wm. G. P. Britten, a gentleman of culture and a devoted Spiritualist. We wish them joy such as angels love to record. Having been born in England, she may now be regarded as really and truly a “Briton.” – Cleveland *Spiritualist*.¹⁰



William Britten

Emma Hardinge Britten needs little introduction; however, there are many mysteries which still surround her life. Her autobiography was edited and published by her younger sister, Margaret Wilkinson, around June 1st, 1900, eight months after Emma’s death on October 2nd, 1899; however, the autobiography draws a veil over much of her life.

As to the origin of the name “Hardinge”, it is open to speculation, with two possible *general explanations*. By 1836, before her thirteenth birthday, Emma was working as a clairvoyant and magnetic subject in a London secret occult society called the Orphic Circle. In the 2001 Robert Mathiesen publication, “The Unseen Worlds of Emma Hardinge Britten: Some Chapters in the History of Western Occultism” (Theosophical History, Occasional Paper IX) Mathiesen identified her earliest work as a medium with Dr E. Hardinge, to whom she may have been married.

Support for a connection with Dr Hardinge is published in Psypioneer, Vol. 1, No. 5, September 2004, “Emma Mystery deepens”. Duncan Gascoyne, who had revived the Britten Museum at Stansted before becoming SNU President, made a dramatic discovery; by referring to the first regularly published UK Spiritualist periodical he found new information on Emma’s presumed movements if she separated from Dr Hardinge.

Duncan reported:

Dr Hardinge writes to the editor of the Yorkshire Spiritual Telegraph on the 15th October 1855 from his address at 5 Tabernacle Walk, Finsbury Square, London stating that

⁹ Emma continued to be called Mrs Hardinge for some time after her marriage; for example, when she first gave her “four principles” on April 30th, 1871 at Cleveland Hall in London, it is stated: “A lecture delivered by Mrs Emma Hardinge”, later known as Emma Hardinge Britten.

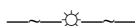
¹⁰ Notice taken from: The Ohio Democrat, Friday, October 28th, 1870.

“he would have communicated with them earlier, had not our circle been broken in consequence of the long and protracted illness of my dear and valuable partner. etc etc.”

“Mrs Hardinge has been used as a writing medium for the last three years, and much, very much of important information have we received through her hand. She is now being developed as a speaking medium. Lectures or discourses, occupying from fifteen to sixty minutes, have been delivered through her.

On Sunday evening, when she passed into the state of trance, it was requested by the Spirits that, for the future, one of the company should propose a subject, and then a lecture would be delivered upon it through her, providing the subject was one calculated to benefit the whole human family.

We have in progress, by the Spirit of Cowper, ‘Lines upon the Mormons’.¹¹ This reference to Mormons ties in with the fact that the medium herself was to take the sixth lecture in which she would give an account of a conversation which the medium had with a company of Mormonites.



If this is correct then Emma cannot have arrived in America on 22nd August 1855 as it would appear that she was still in London.¹² A communication dated 28th December 1855 to the Yorkshire Spiritual Telegraph appears to indicate by the statement that they are gathering new enquirers around us, that Emma has departed and that there has been a change in circumstances.

This discovery in the Yorkshire Spiritual Telegraph suggests that Emma was already engaged in one of her most characteristic mediumship feats – the entranced address – by 1855.

Duncan Gascoyne offered further research on Emma in *Psypioneer*, Vol. 3, No. 2, February 2007: “Search for Emma intensifies”. Duncan noted:

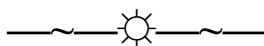
1844:

Actresses listed at the Adelphi Theatre from 1806 to 1900 show that an Emma Hardinge worked there annually from 1844 to 1853. Emma was not using her maiden name of Floyd.

This brings us the other, simpler possibility, given that Emma worked as an actress in various theatres in London, including the Adelphi noted above. Emma changed her name from Floyd to Hardinge and went to live and work in Paris, later to America, using Hardinge as her professional name and continuing to use it throughout her life.

Emma’s first pseudonym, at age 15, for her musical work was E(rnest) Reinhold; see the excellent downloadable paper: “Back From Jerusalem: Emma Hardinge Britten, Spiritualist Propagandist”, by Marc Demarest.¹³

Emma would also have used occult name/s originating from her early days in the Orphic Circle – “Emma gives the impression that the Orphic Circle enjoyed the services of many young clairvoyants, and that it was part of a network of occult organisations”; see *Psypioneer*, Vol. 6, No. 12: “What We Don’t Know About One Who Knows”. See also *Pioneer*, Vol. 7, No.2: “Astral Projection – Liberating *the Double*”.



¹¹ See the “Unseen Worlds of Emma Hardinge Britten”, top of page 8.

¹² See page 12 of Emma Hardinge Britten’s autobiography.

¹³ http://www.ehbritten.org/video/ehb_life_bw_version.pdf

See also the Emma Hardinge Britten Archive: www.ehbritten.org



New One-stop Website:

www.pauljgaunt.com

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

The home page links to:

Lectures on the History of the Spiritualist Movement with some specialist subjects.

Study Weeks at the Arthur Findlay College as advertised elsewhere in this journal, with a link to book and further information



This page also has some free downloads of the factual information on

“Hydesville”

“SNU Seven Principles”

Primarily advisable for the SNU educational courses

Also, a link to all “Psypioneer” issues often referenced in Pioneer

Feedback facility is available on all pages

Memories are made of this!

Reminiscing, by Paul J. Gaunt:

Back in the day, as a popular expression goes, sparked off some unexpected memories while putting this issue of Pioneer together. While taking a break, drinking my coffee and having a bite to eat, I received an email with a question about the once popular yearly Psychic News Dinner Dances and who would be the “Spiritualist of the Year”.

This led me to reminisce back to almost fifty years ago to my early years in Spiritualism, attending numerous events; one of my favourites was the yearly Royal Albert Hall meeting, either attending by minibus from my church in Bedford or going in a small group from the Arthur Findlay College in the early 1970s. Some of the more senior readers will remember the medium Brenda Dunrich, who I first met at my church. Brenda was born in Australia; she was also well-known as an actress, appearing in the popular BBC radio series “The Archers” and “Mrs Dale’s Diary”. Earlier she was known for BBC Sunday-Night Theatre and ITV Play of the Week.



One of my fondest memories of Brenda, who demonstrated at SAGB twice weekly, was not her mediumship but her beautiful, eloquent, controlled voice. As the famous Spiritualist meeting at the Albert Hall started the lights were dimmed and silence totally engulfed the large, tiered hall—then it was echoed with the tranquil voice of Brenda Dunrich with a reading.

When I moved to work at Stansted Hall in 1973 Brenda was a frequent guest; she would say to me, “Paul, if you’re going to the village, be a darling and get me twenty Dunhill.” Funny how these long-forgotten thoughts seem to come from nowhere! Sadly, in June 1977 Brenda suddenly died; she was 59 years old.

Thinking of the more recent pioneers in living memory, I was drawn to the 1974 Psychic Dinner Dance, which I attended on Saturday June 1st, 1974 at the Europa Hotel, Grosvenor Square, London; five hundred people attended the occasion.

Unexpectedly, on entering the hotel I met up with the first medium I came into contact with, who was conducting the meeting in late 1969. I first attended, seeking help after an experience on the ouija board; this is the well-known psychic detective Robert (Bob) Cracknell.¹⁴ His cases over the years, like the hunt for the Yorkshire Ripper, etc., are showcased on his website, revealing some of his work and psychic investigations which Bob has been involved in over the last 40 years or so.¹⁵ I had a delightful evening with Bob and his partner Jenny, spending the night at their residence.

As the proceedings of the evening got underway nobody was more surprised than the Scottish cleric, the Rev. David Kennedy, when he was declared ‘The Spiritualist of 1973’. He was the first Minister to achieve this honour; the award was given for his book, “A Venture in Immortality”, which caused a furore in his native land. It describes his first wife’s survival evidence through mediums. Kennedy mentioned to Maurice Barbanell that he wished the award

¹⁴ See Pioneer, Vol. 6, No. 6: ‘Fifty Years’ Involvement within the Spiritualist movement – Paul J. Gaunt – Ouija Experience

¹⁵ Google: Robert Cracknell Psychic Detective.

had gone to Albert Best, who was *the medium mainly responsible for the irrefutable evidence which convinced him of Spiritualism's truths.*



In David Kennedy's forthright acceptance speech, partly quoted below, he said:

"I am proud to call myself a Spiritualist. I *am one* — there's no beating about the bush."

He was a Spiritualist because he no longer cared about some things he used to care about as a clergyman. He mentioned as examples church unity, who was or was not baptised or took communion.

'Church has failed'

"But I do care that the Church has failed to speak of life after death, and millions of hearts break in silence because they don't know or believe they are immortal souls."

He quoted some sayings of the:

"founder of our religion," Jesus.

"Be not afraid of those who kill the body." "Today you will be with me in paradise." God is a god of the *living*, not the dead."



[David and his wife Shirley shown]

Maurice Barbanell's speech was a grand mixture of humour and quips; after toasting former SNU president Percy Wilson, then chairman of Psychic Press, Barbanell toasted the 82-year-old veteran, who was celebrating with his wife Winifred their twelfth wedding anniversary.

Barbanell, commenting on guests at the top table, said,

there were six ministers, "three Spiritualists and three of the others.

"I don't know who is taking over who; whether the Churches are taking over Spiritualists, or Spiritualists the Churches."



He was talking about Canon William Rauscher [right], former president of Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship, and Canon Robert Lewis, who were sitting with David Kennedy.

Barbanell joked:

"Cannons to the left of them, cannons to the right of them ..."

Until writing these unplanned reminiscences I had no idea that one of the American ecclesiastics was in fact Canon William Rauscher, who in later years I would come into contact with. Rauscher is not just an Episcopal priest; he is today known for his work as a psychical researcher, an accomplished magician, magic historian and a fine lecturer and author. His work has brought him into personal contact with such mediums as Arthur Ford and Eileen Garrett. It was through *Psypioneer* in the early 2000s that Bill started to make many valuable contributions to the journal with his personal original insights into well-known mediums, for example Vol. 1, No. 8, “Knowing Arthur Ford” by W.V. Rauscher, Vol. 1, No. 10, “Remembering Eileen J. Garrett” by William V. Rauscher. Leslie Price’s Book Review, published in Vol. 3, No. 2, “On the Spiritual Frontier in America”, gives a valuable insight into his work.

In Vol. 4, No. 5, Bill sent me the material for the article, “Fraud Uncovered at Chesterfield Spiritualist Camp”, where infra-red photography uncovered a great deception. On a more positive note, *Psypioneer*, October 2008, published “The Grave of William Stainton Moses”; this article was due entirely to Bill Rauscher’s information and photographs that led me, eventually, to finding the grave of the Rev. William Stainton Moses, M.A., in Bedford’s old cemetery. *Psypioneer*, March 2009, published “Rev. William Stainton Moses, M.A” – Canon William V. Rauscher.

(Right) The photograph of the Moses family plot at Bedford cemetery, taken July 10th, 1974. To Bill’s right is the grave of Moses’ parents, and on the left lies Stainton Moses. My hunt for the plot in 2008 was not quite straightforward; albeit Bill had given me reference marks, etc., the state of the graveyard was sadly dilapidated. After days of searching while visiting my parents I came to my last day. My wife Cindy then accompanied me in my search; after some hours with some garden shears Cindy cut through some growth, then to reveal the hidden treasure, the grave of Rev. William Stainton Moses.¹⁶



Behind this:



**is the grave of
William Stainton
Moses**

**See Pioneer
Vol. 3, No. 3**



¹⁶ Moses is interred at the old Bedford cemetery, which was established in 1850 and opened in 1855. Through gross neglect the grave itself is very difficult to locate and is not readily visible unless the actual location is known. The original site is a large plot containing a family gravestone and a large Celtic Cross structure standing in excess of six foot, marking the earthly resting-place of William Stainton Moses. The whole Moses plot is edged with stone but is now totally entwined with ivy and other creeper-like growth, so the grave cannot be seen from the various paths and access points.

PN's Annual Dinner Dance as it was generally known; more correctly, it was the 'Annual Psychic News / Two Worlds Dinner Dance'.

Barbanell noted:

The oldest practising medium present was Peggy Parrish, 83.¹⁷ There was also world-famous healer Harry Edwards, who had celebrated his 81st birthday that week.

The youngest mediums present so far as he knew were David Young, 31 and Robin Stevens, 33, who was also the SNU London District Council president.



The Dinner Dance was indeed the Who's Who of Spiritualism in the 70s; many I knew from the Arthur Findlay College, such as Bertha Harris, Don Galloway, healer Maurice Tester, psychic artist Coral Polge, course organisers Cecily and Bob Moore with Albert Best. Others in attendance were mediums Ena Twigg, Gay Muir, Jessie Nason, direct-voice medium Leslie Flint, author Paul Miller and psychic surgeon George Chapman, to name a few.



Many photographs were taken at these events, with some shown in this article. I was in a group photograph with Albert Best, published in the Psychic News issue referred to in this article. Just over three months later, in Psychic News, September 21st, 1974, I was shot to fame, albeit by mistaken identity! While reading this issue I was shocked to find a photograph of myself taken from the group photograph with Albert, with the heading,

"Teenage psychic is 'Britain's remarkable boy'"

The photograph was mistaken for the up-and-coming psychic, Matthew Manning, who was around the time of Uri Geller; Manning was then 19 years old, I was 23. Matthew was not at the Dinner Dance but I was mistaken for him by a few guests. Shortly after I did the slide show for a talk by Matthew at a propaganda meeting in Bedford; one of Matthew's slides was

indeed the image of myself, about which nobody was any the wiser, taken from the PN article reporting on the spectacular phenomena of this young man. At the Britten Museum and Library housed at the Arthur Findlay College a stainless-steel teaspoon bent by Matthew Manning in 1976 for Charles Sherratt, former General Manager of the College, is displayed. To my knowledge Matthew continues his work today as a healer.



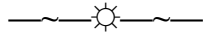
— ❄ —

Today the digital archive of Psychic News is available online, giving the reader access to our history from May 28th, 1932, then a weekly newspaper. ¹⁸

¹⁷ See Pioneer, Vol. 1, No. 5: "William (Billy) Parish".

¹⁸ <https://digitalcollections.lib.umanitoba.ca/islandora/object/uofm%3A2939726>

PSYCHIC NEWS WAS FOUNDED BY MAURICE BARBANELL AND JACK RUBENS



Over the years there has been some ongoing confusion as to this fact—a few years ago the correct information was input and corrected within the SNU, i.e. its Yearbook, education courses and general publications. However, the confusion continues as to who founded *Psychic News*; this is due to the many erroneous notices available from different sources, for example:



Psychic News – Wikipedia:

The name of the paper was devised by one of its founding editors, Maurice Barbanell, who said that he was told to use it by his spirit guide. The other founding members were Hannen Swaffer, a Fleet Street journalist, and Arthur Findlay, a notable figure in the history of Spiritualism in Britain.



This sweeping statement holds three errors: Barbanell ... *was told to use it by his spirit guide*, Hannen Swaffer, and Arthur Findlay *were other founding members*. This misinformation is addressed by Leslie Price (founder editor) in *Psypioneer*, Vol. 1, No. 9, January 2005, as published below:

PSYCHIC NEWS IN PERSPECTIVE

The origin and history of the weekly Spiritualist newspaper “*Psychic News*” is sometimes confusing. The SNU web site states: 1932– *Psychic News* founded by Arthur Findlay under the editorship of Maurice Barbanell. The web site of PN itself more modestly claims that Findlay was closely involved, along with Hannen Swaffer. The first issue appeared on 28 May 1932.

Findlay’s own account in “Looking Back” recalls that soon after the publication of his book “*On the Edge of the Etheric*” in 1931, he received a letter from Maurice Barbanell asking him to write an article for PN.

The newspaper had just been born, and it was only a week old, but his letter had effects much greater than the article I wrote. I met him a few days later and found that he, and the other founder of *Psychic News*, J.M. Rubens, required financial help to continue publication. This I contributed and we formed a company *Psychic Press Ltd*, to finance and manage this new Spiritualist journal.

It will be seen that by his own account, Findlay did not found PN, but he certainly saved it from extinction, and as principal shareholder became controller of it for many years. Another perspective on these events was given by Maurice Barbanell himself in an article for *Psychic News*, reprinted in a special issue of the SNU’s own newsletter “*New Communicator*” of 14 July 1995 to mark their acquisition of PN. Around 1930 Barbanell was lecturing on Spiritualism throughout Britain with Hannen Swaffer. Jack Rubens was accountant to HS and later to MB. Merrifield a Spiritualist financier had offered financial help to enliven psychic journalism. Ernest Oaten had been invited to bring “*Two Worlds*” to London where HS and MB would enliven it free of charge. Oaten declined, perhaps suspecting that he would be sidelined.

Rubens then suggested MB should start a modern Spiritualist newspaper. MB hesitated, but that same evening in an Estelle Roberts sitting, was told by Red Cloud to get on with it – full time. (Red Cloud’s name for MB was always John the Scribe, supposedly a past life reference to MB promising to do this writing work in this life).

Seeking confirmation, MB sat with Kathleen Barkel whom he had never met. Her guide White Hawk told him that Northcliffe was interested in the projected newspaper. At the next sitting with Mrs Roberts, Red Cloud asked him if he was satisfied. He was, and Northcliffe and Stead then gave advice on the policy of the newspaper – to be independent. (Stead allegedly communicated earlier at a Vyvyan Deacon séance that a new paper, called *Psychic News*, would be coming within six months.)

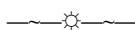
There was insufficient money for the new paper, but Red Cloud said “You supply the faith, we will find the money”. HS declined to invest, which left Rubens and Barbanell with a joint capital of £666 13s 4d. (Swaffer did write many articles later.)

Barbanell states that he wrote to Findlay while planning the first issue. It was on the evening of his first meeting with Findlay that Red Cloud said in circle “I have today sent you the man who is to supply the money”. MB told this to Findlay who agreed to invest £1000, which soon ran out. Findlay then increased his shareholding to £3000, but insisted on voting power and control. Findlay promised not to interfere editorially and he did not. PN soon became profitable.

It will be seen that in Barbanell’s account the newspaper is founded with much encouragement from spirit guides. MB and Findlay take decisions on that basis. The paper has a paranormal origin. Findlay is also seen by the other side as an essential part of the recipe for success. He is the man sent with the money.

Did Findlay know Barbanell and Swaffer already? They were after all three of the most famous Spiritualists in the country. Findlay had already published a best seller. MB and HS had lectured all over. Edwin Butler, then working at the Friendship Centre, Bayswater, London, recalls MB and HS coming in with a mock-up of the proposed new paper, and Findlay arriving separately to join them.

There is no published biography of Maurice Barbanell, and no autobiography, and until one is written, much remains unclear about this outstanding figure. (Additional research by Paul Gaunt.)



Further, in Pioneer, October 2007, then under my editorship, the matter was again addressed. In the August Newsletter, 'The SNU and History', Leslie Price looked at the redesigned SNU website under the "Important Dates" web page:

"1932 Psychic News founded by Arthur Findlay under the editorship of Maurice Barbanell."

Psypioneer published an article written by its editor, Maurice Barbanell, on the front and second page of Psychic News, May 20th, 1939, albeit it repeats some of Leslie's research two years earlier as published above. Barbanell clearly shows how Psychic News came into being and survived its first seven years as published below:

Three "Dead" Men Began Psychic News

By The Editor

POLICY OF *PSYCHIC NEWS* WAS LAID DOWN IN THE SPIRIT WORLD

BECAUSE of three "dead" men you are reading these words. Two of them belong to that much misunderstood race, the North American Indians. The other is Lord Northcliffe, the creator of the "Daily Mail" and the founder of modern, popular journalism.

These three men were responsible for the advent of *Psychic News* seven years ago. Behind the founding of this paper there is a remarkable story of spirit planning and guidance. It came into existence as part of a campaign which originated in the spirit world.

Even the name *Psychic News* was chosen by the Other Side. After I decided to use it I was told of a seance at which W. T. Stead spoke in the direct voice, informing the sitters that a new paper called *Psychic News* was shortly to be launched. That was months before the first issue.



Alfred Harmsworth, better known
under his later title Lord Northcliffe

I had been chosen to be the Editor, though when *Psychic News* began I had no practical knowledge of journalism. Theoretically I knew from Hannen Swaffer something about how newspapers are produced. Our friendship began shortly after his inquiry into Spiritualism when he set out to prove Northcliffe's survival.

For three years Swaffer and I conducted a propaganda tour and addressed a quarter of a million people – a record that has never been equalled. We spoke in nearly every large town in this country.

Once we addressed three meetings on one Sunday. We spoke at Maesteg in the morning, Merthyr Tydfil in the afternoon and Cardiff in the evening. Then we motored back to London, arriving home after four in the morning. And I had motored down to South Wales on the Saturday afternoon and spoke at a meeting at Caerau that night.

In those three years, sitting up half the night talking, in conversations on trains, in cars and hotels, I learned a great deal about journalism from Swaffer.

My days, however, were spent in the world of commerce. I held some directorships, had my own business and owned some properties. I was fairly prosperous for many years. Then came a series of misfortunes, culminating in the slump of 1931, when things were very black. I was compelled to sell nearly everything I possessed.

I had to wind up my own business and my income came from one directorship, but as that meant attendance at a board meeting for a few hours once a month I was virtually unemployed.

Just about that time Swaffer and I were approached to give editorial assistance to a proposed psychic weekly. Nothing, however, came of it. The scheme petered out.

One day, to my surprise, Swaffer's business manager, J. M. Rubens, a non-Spiritualist who was winding up one of my companies, suggested I should start a psychic paper.

He is well-known in Fleet Street and he thought there was a need for a Spiritualist paper on modern journalistic lines. He even offered to put up some capital though he was not convinced of our truths.

When he made this startling suggestion I recalled a seance with Alfred Vout Peters at which his guide said – and I am quoting from my notes made at the time—“*W. T. Stead is interested in you. You have a journalistic urge in your fingers. Cultivate your writing powers. Later on you are going to do writing work. I see association with Hannen Swaffer. You will contribute to the newspapers. Try to make your writing short and crisp.*”

TWO SEANCES PROPHECIES



That was more than eight years ago, at a time when I could see no possibility of the prediction being fulfilled.

I remembered, too, that Red Cloud, speaking through Estelle Roberts a month before Rubens threw out the suggestion, had said to me when discussing my troubles, “*We have plenty for you to do. Our plans are already made. They only have to materialise in your world. You are going forward to do a bigger work.*”

On the day that I saw Rubens I had later on a private sitting with Red Cloud. He surprised me by referring to Rubens's proposal. This was the work I had been chosen to do, he said, and if I would start the new paper, he and others in the spirit world would give it their whole-hearted support. I argued with Red Cloud, but it was all in vain.

I pointed out that I was a business man, not a journalist. Surely I was not the person for the job. In any case it was a vital decision to make—to abandon my idea of a commercial career for psychic journalism at the age of 30. I wanted time to consider it.

My commercial and financial troubles, this guide insisted, were all part of the plan. I was to sever my business ties and learn to be dependent on spirit guidance.

I knew I was being asked to make the biggest decision of my life. Though I had confidence in Red Cloud, a guide who had proved his ability and had earned my respect, I decided that on so important a matter I required confirmation.

THE RIGHT MEDIUM

I searched for a medium to whom I was unknown. I had been a public speaker for Spiritualism for twelve years and knew most of them. At last I found the medium I wanted—Kathleen Barkel. We had never met and at that time she had done hardly any public work, confining her mediumship to giving private seances.

Usually you had to wait months to get a sitting with her, but when I inquired, someone had just cancelled an appointment, and she was able to see me within a few days. I went anonymously and it was obvious she did not know me.

I waited eagerly for her guide, White Hawk, to control, wondering if I would obtain the confirmation I desired. The ground was already prepared for my work, he said, which was connected with Spiritualism. I would start these activities in two months. His prophecy was accurate, for *Psychic News* made its appearance two months later.

CO-OPERATION IN THE BEYOND

Then came a remark which proved how closely associated are these spirit guides. *"You know Red Cloud," he said. Then he added that the proposal in which I was interested had already been outlined to me by Red Cloud. "Everything is prepared," he said. "All is arranged as far as we are concerned. It has only to work out in the material world. You must accept that proposal."*

Now this was almost word for word what Red Cloud had said. To obtain closer contact the guide then asked me to hand him any article that belonged to me. I gave him my fountain-pen. As I placed it in the medium's hands it began to leak, something it had never done before.

"That is Northcliffe's fault," declared the spirit. "He is here and says he always upsets pens"—an ingenious reference to the famous newspaper proprietor's vigorous journalistic activities. "He comes in connection with the newspaper," added the guide, "and he says, 'Go ahead with it.'"

Then he told me that Northcliffe was dissatisfied with psychic journalism as then presented. Northcliffe's words, as relayed by Mrs. Barkel's guide, were, "It's about time something was done with common sense—too much sickly sentiment—there is opportunity for great growth and much spread of knowledge—he is amazed at the lack of guts. Get it on a strong basis and it will be of world-wide consequence."

Well, I had obtained the confirmation I wanted. The medium could not have known what I was after. I made the fateful decision to become the editor of a Spiritualist newspaper. The sequel was extraordinary.

A few days later I went down to Estelle Roberts's home to talk to Red Cloud. I said nothing about my visit to Kathleen Barkel. The first words spoken by Red Cloud, when he entranced his medium, were, *"Are you satisfied now that you have been to my brother White Hawk?"* Red Cloud knew.

I asked him whether he objected to my going, but he said he understood how I felt. There and then Red Cloud, speaking on behalf of others whom he said were present—and he referred to Northcliffe and Stead among others—outlined the policy of *Psychic News*.

It had to be bright. I was told. It had to be fearless. It had to “Stand for the truth and fear no man.” The one thing impressed upon me was to print the evidence for Survival. And Red Cloud promised to provide these proofs.

I would like to place on record that for seven years he has kept his promise and has been responsible for enabling us to print accounts of the spirit return of famous men and women that have aroused world-wide interest.

GUIDE KEEPS HIS PROMISE



Well, *Psychic News* was launched. Actually, its first number was issued a week earlier than originally planned because of the Meurig Morris—“Daily Mail” lawsuit, which was the subject of comment in newspapers all over the land. It gave us an opportunity for an outstanding front page.

“I CHALLENGE THE “DAILY MAIL,” it was headed, and it was written by Hannen Swaffer. Yes, the very first issue of *Psychic News* began with a challenging note on its front page!

I must tell you how *Psychic News* was financed. Actually the paper was started on the ridiculously small capital of just over £600—half subscribed by Rubens and the other half by myself, which I borrowed from a friend. And Rubens, the non-Spiritualist, guaranteed the bank and other accounts and gave personal references where necessary!

OTHER-SIDE GUIDANCE

When I pointed out to Red Cloud, “It is all very well to talk about a new paper, but where is the money coming from?” he replied, “Do not worry; we will attend to that.” And they did !

When planning the first issue I had an idea for an article. It was to get Arthur Findlay, author of “On The Edge Of The Etheric,” Spiritualism's best-seller, to say in *Psychic News* why he wrote the book. Findlay called in to see me and we discussed the article, which he agreed to write.

That night I had another seance with Red Cloud. To my surprise the spirit guide volunteered, “The man who is to finance ‘Psychic News’ has called to see you today. His name is Findlay. Approach him on the subject.”

I discussed this question with Arthur Findlay and he readily agreed. Again I should like to put on record that in seven years of close co-operation there has never been an angry word between us; neither has there been any disagreement on policy.

We agreed from the start that *Psychic News* had to be run on commercial lines, and its success, or failure, judged by commercial standards.



J. Arthur Findlay

For three years the paper lost money; but Findlay never complained. Indeed, he found whatever sum was necessary. The corner was turned with the fourth year,¹⁹ and ever since *Psychic News* has paid its way.

The two libel actions we had to defend this year may break our record, but they are only chapters in the history of a newspaper.

I shall not tell of my troubles in producing the first number. I did not leave the printers on press night until three in the morning. It was a nightmare.

The first issue was received with fixed feelings. A few weeks before the paper appeared it was the subject of violent comment, some declaring, "Another Spiritualist weekly is not necessary," others being eager to see what we would produce.

ONE EDITOR'S COMMENT

One Spiritualist editor, whom I shall not name, wrote me a most discouraging letter. He had heard of my proposed journalistic ventures, he said, and added, "Frankly I am sorry that you find it necessary to change from business to journalism."

The reception given to *Psychic News*, on the whole, was very enthusiastic. There were, of course, those who exclaimed "It is too sensational," "It cannot last a week." But they were in the minority.

From the first number we had the largest circulation of any Spiritualist newspaper in the world, a position we have since proudly maintained. Today, our net paid circulation, which is approaching 25,000, exceeds the combined circulation of all English Spiritualist journals.

Psychic News broke new ground. Though it was not subsidised it was, and still is, the only English Spiritualist weekly to pay its way – and to make a profit.

NEW PUBLIC FOUND

It reached the man-in-the-street. Here was a modern newspaper, with news on the front page, boldly proclaiming the facts of Spiritualism. It was independent, for it belonged to no section, group or Spiritualist society.

Soon, our familiar green and white posters were to be seen in many of London's main thoroughfares.

Our Spiritualist contemporaries paid us the compliment of imitation. They changed their make-up and modelled themselves, more or less, on the format of *Psychic News*.

From the first number *Psychic News* adopted a bold policy. Because it was independent, it could criticise Spiritualists and the weaknesses of the movement.

¹⁹ In the December 5th issue of P.N., 1936, Barbanell dropped a libel suit against the Rev. J.W. Potter. It does not directly concern this article but an interesting remark by Barbanell was made:—

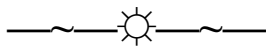
Psychic News was started against Swaffer's advice. He refused to have any financial interest in it, arguing that, if he put money into it, he would have to accept a dividend, and then he would be accused of making money out of Spiritualism. He has never received one penny from *Psychic News*. His only financial connection with the paper is that, once, he lent it £500, refusing to take interest. This amount, of course, was repaid.

It helped to change the Press attitude towards our truths and forced newspapers to realise that the evidences for Survival were as newsworthy as any other events recorded in their pages.

We are proud of the part we have played in giving comfort, hope and knowledge to thousands.

Looking back on our seven years of history, there is nothing that we regret.

Still, trusting to that spirit guidance which conceived this newspaper, we face the future unafraid, knowing that *Psychic News* can help to give the vital blow to the materialism which is the cancer of our modern civilisation.



SPIRITUALIST HEALERS OF THE PAST

Gordon Alan John Turner

Gordon Turner was indeed a fine pioneer of Spiritual Healing and is no stranger to the pages in Pioneer previously in Vol. 4, No. 1: "Gordon Alan John Turner", "Medium in TV debate with surgeon over healers in hospitals", "Why Does Healing Work—And Fail?"; this was followed in Vol. 5, No. 3: "Harmony and Healing by Gordon Turner".

In this issue we look at some of his earlier pioneering work, bringing spiritual healing to public awareness.



Below was published in Psychic News, October 5th, 1957:

10,000 NON-SPIRITUALISTS HAVE SEEN HEALING

—And All In One Year!

THE campaign organised by Gordon Turner and the Fellowship of Spiritual Healing to take spiritual healing to the London public, borough by borough, reached the end of its first year's work at Acton Town Hall last Thursday.

By the end of the evening, Acton was responding warmly to its first ever healing demonstration — in sharp contrast to its early scepticism.

What has this year achieved? In figures, the Fellowship has demonstrated to about 10,000 non-Spiritualists in the year. To do this has meant its 50 members walking nearly 1,000 miles of London's streets and distributing leaflets in just under half a million homes.

More than figures though, is the overall, accumulative effect. In the boroughs where demonstrations have been held people still talk about spiritual healing, although many of them have not seen or experienced it. Indeed, in many parts of London today, spiritual healing is an accepted, established fact.

Speaking about this general acceptance, Gordon Turner said, "We feel now that there is no longer any need to prove spiritual healing to anyone. To many it is already a fact. We have, instead, to familiarise this fact to the whole world."



Some of the many people who queued to witness Gordon Turner's Greater-London demonstrations.

“There are three vitally important aspects to spiritual healing. Firstly, the sick are made whole. Secondly, humanity is beginning to accept the power as a natural force. Thirdly, people are realising that spiritual healing is the manifestation of God’s love.

1,000 a week

“This last point is even more important than the other two, although they are, in themselves, each vitally important,” he said.

“Spiritual healing can, in this way, be the answer to all loneliness and fear. It can show us that we are all an integral part of God.”

Of the Archbishop’s commission, Gordon Turner said that its findings must be honest. “The Fellowship of Spiritual Healing is only a small society but we often see as many as 1,000 patients a week. This means that, over the country, hundreds of thousands of people are seeking God’s love through healing.

“The commission must realise this fact and realise, too, that it is not dealing with a theological question. It is dealing with people’s lives, their happiness and their well-being,” he said.

All the patients treated during the demonstration showed visible improvement in their condition. Probably the most amazing case of the evening was the last one.

Mrs. Anne Darvill, Lefroy Road, W.12., had been stone deaf for several years. Her disability resulted from a hospital accident. After a few moments’ treatment Turner clicked his fingers by Mrs. Darvill’s ears, more from sheer habit than the expectancy of a result.

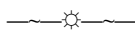
The condition of her ears had indicated that, at most, only small response could be hoped for. But, when those fingers clicked, Mrs. Darvill nearly jumped out of her skin, shot round in her chair and shouted, “I heard a bang. What’s the noise?”

Mrs. W. Longland, Willcote Road, W.3., also suffered from deafness. But in the ear which had previously been stone deaf, she was able to hear clearly, even distinguishing words.

When 45-year-old George Hill, Erconwald Street, W. 12., fell off a swing forty years ago he damaged his back so badly that a curvature of the spine left him seriously handicapped. The hospitals could do nothing but gave him a spinal support.

He was wearing the brace when Mr. Turner treated him and, despite the restriction of movement it put on his back, the curvature was much less acute afterwards. He was also free of pain.

Mrs. K. Tew, Pierrepont Road, W.3., had a slipped disc for two years. She had suffered constant pain and agonising exercises at the hospital had brought no relief. After two minutes, however, of Gordon Turner’s touch she said that the pain had vanished.



The next issue of Psychic News continues the success of Turner's campaign:

AND NOW THE ALL-ENGLAND HEALING CAMPAIGN Turner's Team To Follow-Up London Success



With the end of Gordon Turner's Greater London Healing Campaign, comes the beginning of his much more ambitious All-England Campaign.

This propaganda project is aimed at filling the Spiritualist churches with newcomers.

Already 32 public meetings have been organised out of a total of 66, which will be held at points covering the entire country. Arrangements for 15 more meetings are in hand.

IN ALL CASES CHURCHES IN THE AREAS
ARE COOPERATING, AND OVER NINETY
PER CENT OF THESE ARE S.N.U.
CHURCHES.

The most difficult areas are those where there are few churches and few Spiritualists, such as Cornwall and some parts of Cumberland.

Turner will be taking some of his Spiritual Fellowship team on tour with him. But where possible, church healers and local Spiritualists will help in the after healing and act as stewards.

The actual demonstration will be given by Gordon Turner and Mr. and Mrs. Prince. But, as usual, all those people who wish to remain behind can attend the after-healing which is a prominent feature of the Turner meetings.

The Fellowship are launching a national fund with a mammoth Christmas Bazaar having some twenty-two different stalls.

The Fund money will be used to subsidise the All England Campaign. Where possible those churches that make a profit will be asked to contribute, in order to reimburse other churches that may make a loss.

The campaign organisers want the project to pay for itself, but are prepared to underwrite the costs as far as their funds will allow and churches will co-operate. They do not expect any monetary advantage, but they firmly believe the campaign will have a powerful propaganda effect.

Judging by the success of their Greater London campaign this seems likely. Out of a hundred general Press reports (not counting those appearing in the psychic Press) only two have been unfavourable.

ALSO, THE TECHNIQUE USED BY TURNER'S FELLOWSHIP ACTUALLY DOES REACH THE NON-SPIRITUALISTS IN EACH AREA. IN A RECENT SURVEY OF THOSE ATTENDING TURNER'S CLINICS FOR HEALING ONLY TEN PEOPLE OUT OF 700 WERE ACTUAL SPIRITUALISTS.

Turner calculates that about 50% of his patients begin to take an interest in Spiritualism.

Donald Good adds to the front-page report:

“WE are fighting against bias—we are fighting against medical and religious bias,” Gordon Turner told an audience of non-Spiritualists at the Greenwich Town Hall, London, on Thursday.

It was the last of his Greater London Healing Campaign meetings.

“The position is that whereas medical and religious leaders will admit it in private, they won’t admit the value of spiritual healing in public.

“A high-ranking churchman said to me recently: ‘Yes, I know, but is it good to put it before the public at this moment?’ Believe me, the people who are sick do not speak like that.

“We firmly believe that it’s the duty of every church in this country to do this healing work.

“We have given spiritual healing to medical practitioners at our sanctuaries. We have treated clergymen. Recently a bishop was given spiritual healing by a Harley Street doctor. There are at least two and probably three Harley Street doctors who give spiritual healing.

“Yet, still we are not officially recognised.”

OPINION

Turner looked forward to the day when spiritual healing was part of the facilities offered at every hospital in this country. He did not think the forthcoming Bishops’ report would be very favourable. But he did believe that the opinion of the ordinary man in the street would count in the end.

“The public will ultimately decide whether this is a good thing or a bad thing, especially those who receive the healing.”

Furthermore, Turner believed that the truth of healing was self-evident. Spiritualists had only to go out and meet the public on their own ground, and they would be welcomed and find themselves satisfying a crying need.

His Greater London Campaign has proved his point.

At 17 mass meetings organised at Town Halls in almost every borough in London, he has attracted a total of 10,400 people, and has directed even more people to healing groups in the neighbourhood.

Audiences of about seven or eight hundred a time were admitted free of charge and attracted by circularising the neighbourhood.

The fifty-odd Spiritual Fellowship members are all volunteers who have to work for their living during the day-time. They include nurses, chemists, and engineers, all acting as stewards and healers. Working as a team, they have trudged 4,982 miles of London streets pushing 520,000 leaflets into letterboxes.

The overwhelming public response to these Gordon Turner meetings is now well-known to Spiritualists everywhere.

At Greenwich we saw Mrs. Lilian Painter of 4, Collarston Road, East Greenwich, step on to the platform suffering for the past three months with osteo-arthritis, and due to receive radio-therapy at her hospital.

While he was treating her, Turner said: "We healers claim that we have no power whatever by ourselves, but that we are channels through which flows the power of love—the most natural therapy in the world."

When 51-year-old Mrs. Painter stepped down from that platform she told Psychic News: "It was grand. Like little electrical rays going through you. You could feel them. It was wonderful, every moment of it." It was the first time she had had healing.

She had pains and stiffness in her arms and neck, chronic headaches and had to sleep on her left side, because the right side was also affected. But all pain had vanished.

PAINLESS

Two years suffering with a slipped disc brought Mrs. M. Jeffreys from 84, West Combe, Park Road, S.E.3. She had left off her spinal jacket, so sure was she of some relief. Her trouble affected her gait, and she could not bend. Pain was chronic; while she kept moving it lessened.

Turner made her bend and move freely. "It doesn't hurt now," she said.

A young man developed a slipped disc when he moved the electric-cooker about a year ago. He was wearing a steel jacket. At the hospital he had been laid out on a table, weights placed upon him, and his spine stretched in an effort to put his back right. Apart from "terrific pain" this method did not appear to have been very successful.

Turner simply placed his hands on his spine, and after a moment moved him forward and sideways. Then he made him bend down several times. There was no pain. He went away very thoughtfully.

L. Riches of 102, Turner Avenue, S.E.10, had that dread disease disseminated-sclerosis. It made him giddy, and he had pain at the back and front.

"How do you feel now?" asked Turner.

"Smashing," was his reply, but he said the pain was worst when he tried to lift any load.

After a moment, Turner asked him to stand up and pick up the chair. As Riches bent to lift it, Turner put his weight upon it. Riches lifted all right, protesting that Turner had made it an unfair test.

"Have you any pain?"

"No," replied Riches, suddenly realising what he had done.

"Then, as an afterthought, he added that he was still worried about getting giddy when he walked. More treatment, lasting only a few moments.

"Now walk across there," said Turner, and Riches walked round several times: "What's it like?"

"Lovely," he replied.

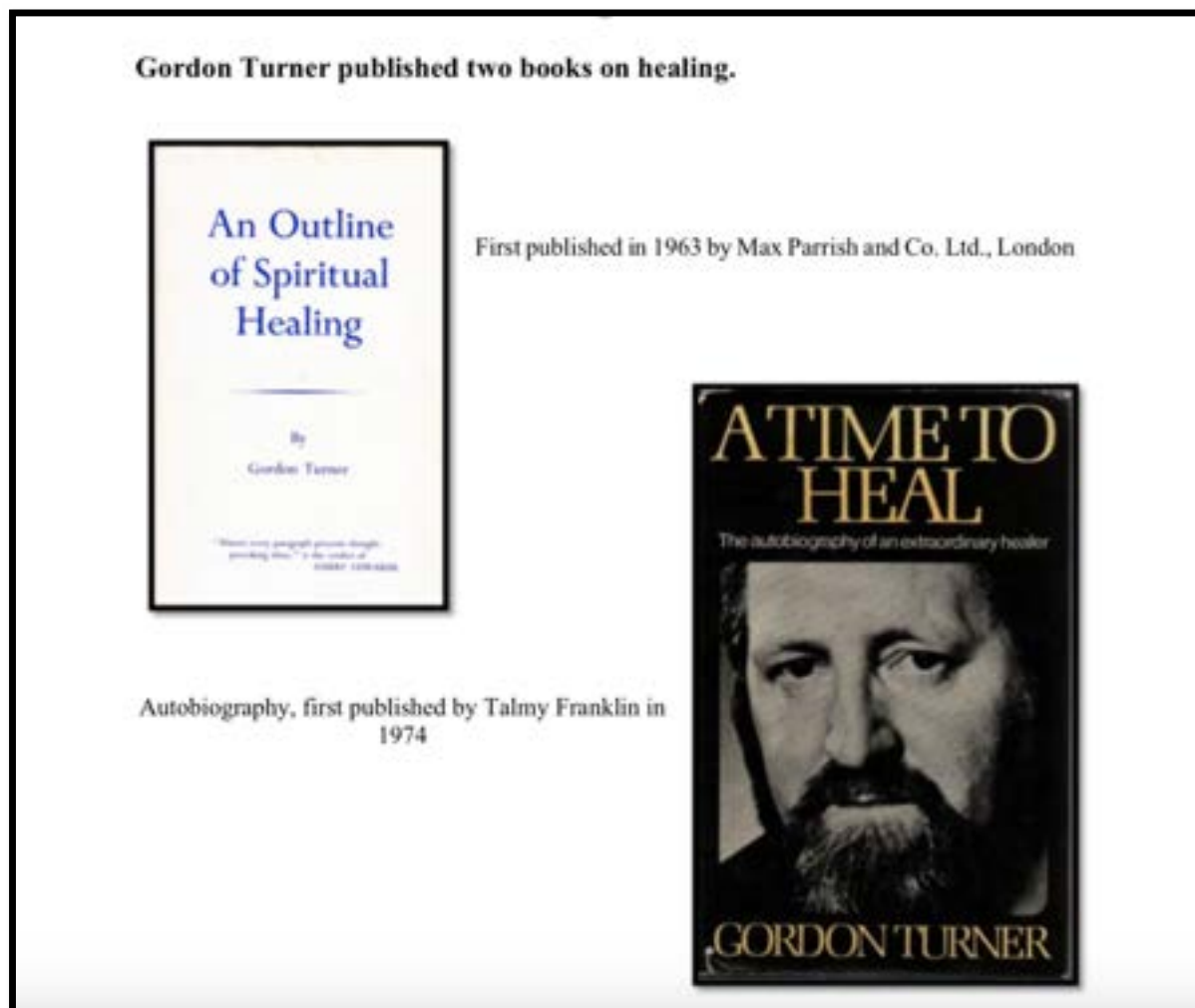
Outside Riches told our reporter: "I felt better the moment he first touched me."

Another remarkable result came with a man who had been born with a curvature of the spine, and had also been blown up by a landmine.

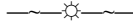
When Turner had finished he showed the audience this man's coat hanging in folds on his back. It no longer fitted properly.

"You can see that the position of his back has changed," said Turner.

This man, Mr. W. Armstrong (58), of 67, Canberra Road, Charlton, also received healing for his knees which had been smashed during the explosion.



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Continued from the last issue:

A War-Time Remarkable Healer

W. H. Lilley

Over the last few issues of Pioneer, we have been publishing a series of articles from Psychic News, ending in the last issue with the *third instalment*, “Doctors And Clergy Consult Medium”.

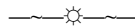
This concluded with:

My promise made a week ago to tell you in the present instalment how the opening of Tudor Lodge, Cheltenham, as a spiritual healing nursing home was made possible, and of the labours of Dr. Letari in its organisation and equipment, must await my fourth article next week.

We can note below that a change was made the following week, January 31st, 1942, by Psychic News:

By A Special Correspondent

We interrupt our special correspondent's series of articles on the spiritual healing nursing home opened in Cheltenham by W. H. Lilley, the famous Leeds healer, to give you the same writer's description of Lilley's initial visit, made last week, to some of his London patients. That visit is historic, in that it foreshadows the founding of a permanent healing Sanctuary in the capital in the near future.



LILLEY'S personal healing mission in London has begun. “Personal,” because he already had many absent healing patients in the metropolis and Greater London.

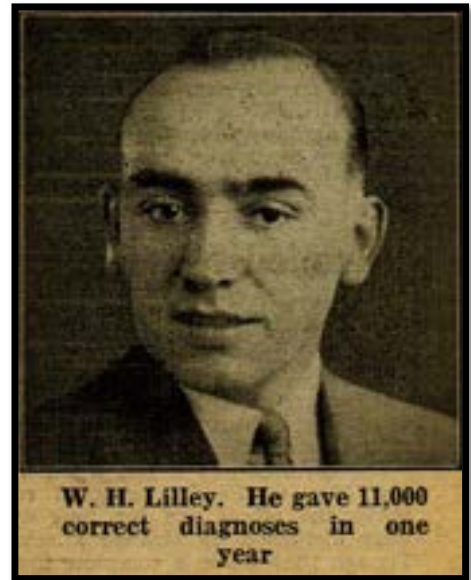
Last week, in a small flat in Central London, Lilley of Leeds sat and talked for the first time with men and women whom he had earlier diagnosed and prescribed for from a distance.

And so were sown the first seeds of a virile London branch of The House of Divinity. Another arm of the tree of healing. Another of the good Sanctuaries to dedicate itself to the most selfless of all causes, service to others.

Let us follow Lilley-in-London and see what more we can learn of the methods of the medium and his spirit guide. What is his object in travelling 180 miles from his headquarters to talk to these grateful people ? To check over the symptoms, and, in the light of his discoveries, to make any necessary changes in the medicines they are receiving—that is the main object.

Symptomatology, he calls it, and there are no half measures about it, I can assure you. His thoroughness would be an object lesson to many doctors if only they would watch him.

The patient is questioned and cross-questioned until every possible symptom is extracted from him. By the time Lilley has finished, he has filled the greater part of the specially printed case report sheets that are part of every patient's file.



Superbly gifted himself, he has written nevertheless to the spirit doctor's "dictation." What he puts down, in other words, he first hears clairaudiently. Dr. Letari works fast, and in this symptomatology his medium maintains a rate of writing which is only a word behind his own speech.

The better part of half an hour is spent thus with each patient; each without exception goes away immensely cheered and confident from their initial contact with the healer. He has brought fresh hope into their lives, been able to promise many of them a cure.

"I'll see you again next time I am in town," he says to others. To those who know Lilley, that is something genuinely to look forward to.

Everything that this healer does is backed by years of study, years of training. You didn't know, did you, that Dr. Letari spent five years training his "mediator," as he calls Lilley, to go into trance? To go into trance quietly, surely, without fuss or theatricality.

So thoroughly was he trained that any one of his spirit guides—chief of whom is Dr. Letari—can control him at will, and under any conditions.

Next time you read the words, "the medium went into trance," think of all the hard work and application lying, for one medium at least, behind that simple-sounding act.

Longest continuous period during which Lilley has been in trance is 24 hours ! On another occasion he was entranced all night, and without any rest went straight off to a day's work in the Hunslet factory where he was employed before devoting the whole of his time to healing.

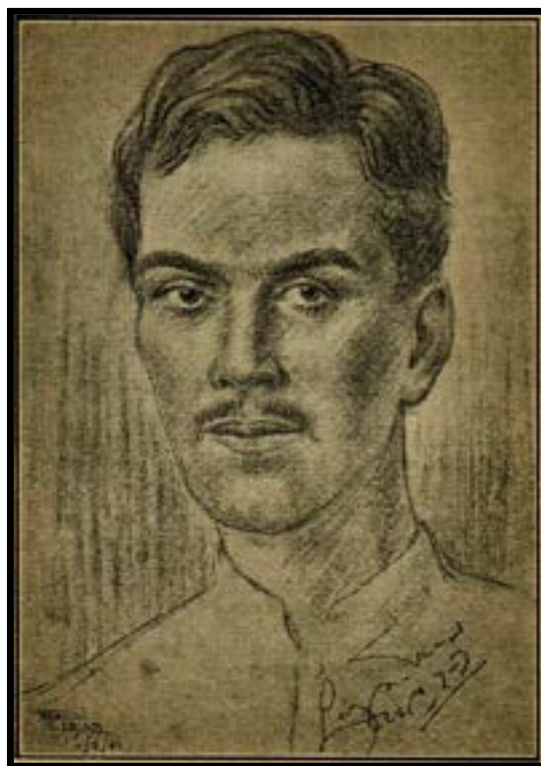
Probably the most unusual surroundings in which he has been entranced are those of a dance hall.

When Lilley is entranced for treatment, always three, often four, spirit helpers accompany the "dead" doctor Letari.²⁰

I asked Lilley where these "stood" in relation to the patient. At the head and foot, he replied, and on either or both sides.

When, as I had seen him do at Tudor Lodge, Cheltenham, and in the Central London flat, Dr. Letari turns his head from side to side in the course of treating a patient, he is actually turning to make some communication with these helpers from the Other Side whom neither you nor I can see.

But whether it is this simple action, or the replacement of a vertebra, or the breaking down of a lesion, or applying the incredibly fast percussion treatment to the patient's back, or picking his way about the room, **not once while he is entranced do the medium's eyes open. Dr. Letari can see better that way than you or I possessing normal earth vision!**



²⁰ Image of Dr. Letari see Pioneer, Vol. 8, No. 1: "Guide Praises Psychic Sketch – "As Faithful As My Own Reflection" ".

Like the spirit helpers at these treatments, another invisible yet indispensable accessory is the psychic rod. This is a kind of ectoplasmic link formed between spirit guide and patient.

Recently Dr. Letari was treating a man at Tudor Lodge for paralysis of the leg. By manipulating a certain muscle of the body, movement would temporarily be restored to the limb. Not only did this come about, but the leg, so long inactive, was now kicked up with such an involuntary force as to strike the medium a sharp blow on the arm. The impact temporarily severed the psychic rod, and the following day a burn developed where the arm had been hit. From this unusual experience, however, the medium soon recovered.

He will tell you of all these things with the same verve that characterises his whole approach to this life-long healing mission. He carries you away with his own enthusiasm.

As he snatches a hasty lunch—for every quarter of an hour is planned out for him—he turns from the incident of the broken rod and his guide's spirit assistants to tell me eagerly of the latest recruit to his band of healers. She is a girl of 14. Already, at 12, it was decided that she should be a healer.

Now she has her adolescent foot on the first rung of the ladder where every step is a step to helping others. She will go through the same course of study and training as all the rest of the healers of The House of Divinity. A long course; a technical and often arduous course, but ever an absorbing course.

I call it Dr. Letari's 5-year plan—five years to equip a man or woman to take their place by the side of his “mediator” and the other healers. Only in 1947, then, will this girl have graduated. You see now how thorough it all is ? They can't afford to take chances when another's health, another's body, another's life, is at stake.

“Start 'em young !” That, I think is one of the mottoes of The House of Divinity: it is assuredly one of their secrets. William Lilley began at 10, and after 18 years, a large part of that time spent out of his own body, he is still on the right side of 30.

But his son will begin even earlier. By the time that, three years hence, David John Lilley is five he will be learning yoga. From then on he will be trained in mediumship in progressive stages.

His father already stands out clear in the van of spiritual healers, and the fame of his mediumship will expand with the years. Yet for David John a greater career still is confidently predicted. He will start, for one thing, with the benefit of all his father's accumulated knowledge.

So early as this, the little chap has his own guide, who has twice controlled the father.

He is a real spiritual baby born into a spiritual family. His mother has been identified with Spiritualism for eight years: his famous father comes of psychic stock. There is no limit then to what he may not achieve.

Meanwhile, the responsibilities of Lilley Senior multiply daily. In addition to meeting those many London patients last week, in the course of a brief stay he was busied with his colleague, Arthur Richards, and some people from the Sussex seaboard, planning the next of their Sanctuary nursing homes, to be opened in Worthing.

THEY ALL WANT DIAGNOSES

Then, in Cheltenham and Leeds, he has been coping heroically with the response you made to my first two articles on the Tudor Lodge nursing home. And what a response ! A fortnight ago, when the second article had only just appeared, requests for diagnoses were

so high as 200 ! Before I have concluded the series they expect that figure to be at least trebled.

Over 100 diagnoses out of the first 200 were dictated by Lilley and dispatched by the House of Divinity staff in a day and a half!

And so from triumph to triumph, blessing to blessing, the healer goes marching on in his chosen path.

BEGINNING OF A CURE

Scattered all over Lilley's consulting room desk are the little envelopes containing articles sent by the latest batch of these anxious inquirers.

Lilley picks up an article—probably it's a handkerchief. Rapidly he dictates, never, as I said just now, more than one word behind his spirit guide who is overshadowing him. One of The House of Divinity's picked stenographers gets it all down.

"Spinal weakness, with displacement to cervical and lumbar vertebrae causing general nervous incoordination, with loss of muscle tone, and muscle weakness.

"Stomach weakness ... kidney weakness . . . liver debility." And so on, all remarkably accurate. And that is the beginning of another cure. Another name on the absent healing list. Another patient, maybe, for Lilley's quiz which goes by the name of symptomatology, and which ends up in a homoeopathic remedy as infallible, generally, as that remedy is infinite in its own variety.

THE NEXT VISIT

Lilley's next visit to London will be in February, for the practice again of symptomatology and for the treatment of patients. Thereafter he will travel to town once monthly.

The consulting rooms he will use on these occasions are your own contribution to his mission, for your response to the request made at the foot of my second article two weeks ago was swift and generous.

After the consulting room, the Sanctuary. The House of Divinity's own home in the capital. A lighthouse to guide the sick. A shining beacon to repair the shipwrecked in body and soul.

I shall be back with you next week to take up the Tudor Lodge, Cheltenham, story where we left it off seven days ago.

In the next issue Pioneer will continue with the work of the *psychic* healer, W. H. Lilley

