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The Pioneer is now part of the recommended reading for the Spiritualists' National Union's education courses.

the PIONEER

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The J. Arthur Findlay College, for the Advancement of Psychic Science

Stansted Hall 1948

The above title was the Hall's original name as a place dedicated to the growth of Spiritualist education and spiritual development.

The following article will take us back to the early days of the college, from its conception and to almost five decades later, when it is a thriving success, earning itself international respect. For many Spiritualists and visitors alike, Stansted Hall holds fond memories of their visits; of the courses they have taken; of the mediums and their mediumship and of new friends they have made.

Information for this article has been taken mostly from original records held at the Britten Memorial Museum; unfortunately, there are gaps so this is by no means a full account but hopefully gives a good basic overview. I have not referenced all the quotes due to space, but any reader wanting further information on any of the subjects mentioned herein should contact the editor.

James Arthur Findlay was born on 16th May 1883, and on 15th July 1913 married Annie Gertrude Walker (known as Gertrude). In 1921, the Findlay's adopted Joan (spelt Joane on her birth certificate) Margaret, born on 12th August 1916, on 9th September 1939, Joan married a London Chartered Accountant, Francis Wayne. Unfortunately, the planned ceremony was held a week after the outbreak of WWII and many of the numerous invited guests were unable to attend the ceremony.

In the 1940s', Findlay made the decision to bequeath his home, Stansted Hall, to the Spiritualists' National Union for the purpose of a college following his death and for the college to be named after him. On 19th July 1963, Findlay's wife Gertrude passed away and so it was decided that the college be opened early and that Findlay should remain in residence. Therefore, on 6th and 7th June 1964, a meeting of members of a Management Committee was held – "It was understood that this meeting was preliminary to the complete formation of Committee owing to replies to invitations to join not having been yet received from all the members of the original Management Committee (A. Findlay 1954) who have or are willing to have constitutional links with S.N.U." Findlay accepted the position of Honorary Member of the Committee.[1]

[1].–**January 1966 SNU General Secretary Richard Ellidge**:–"It was early in 1945 that Mr J. Arthur Findlay first approached the Union regarding Stansted Hall when it was occupied by the Red Cross as a Convalescent Home and when he resided at Rockingham Castle, Market Harborough. This was followed in 1950 by personal contact with W. Lorraine Haig, then President of the Union, who appointed a President's Committee to

This meeting resulted in a quotation for heating fuel from Hicks and Co being accepted. Electrical installation firms were to be invited for completing necessary electrical work throughout the Hall, conditional on "free" inspection and fixed price tenders to be sent to the SNU President Charles Quastel who was acting as Secretary for the Committee, SNU General Secretary Richard (Dick) Ellidge, was requested to invite "Sun" Co. to submit the cost of insuring the fabric of the mansion. It was agreed to write to Mr. McAllister (medium and hotelier) of London, to inspect Stansted Hall and submit his opinions on future possibilities to use the Hall as residence for guests, etc. It was agreed that Mr. Payne, Findlay's personal chauffeur and servant, be engaged by the College for suitable duties (driving committee members to and from the railway station for example), and that the SNU pay a quarter towards his salary, with Mr. Findlay paying the remainder.

An agreement was reached for two further inclusions to Findlay's Will:

a. gift of motor car to S.N.U. after Mr. Findlay's death.

b. statement in Will to following effect,

"I wish the Spiritualists' National Union to have, for the future use of the College in Stansted Hall, the furniture, furnishings and pictures, which are necessary for the functioning of the College, apart from the particular items which are desired by Mrs. Wayne for use in her home".

Quastel agreed to this and Findlay invited his lawyer to join them at Stansted Hall on June 20th to deal with the additional codicil to the Will. A further agreement was made that Findlay's personal secretary, Mrs. Eden, be given permission to continue to live at the Hall and she, Mrs. Eden, assured the Committee that she would be willing to allow her furniture to be used in the rooms (five roomed flat) at any time when visitors would occupy them. In the short term (around a month), Mrs. Eden doubled up with the Union, giving her services as typist and receptionist whilst continuing to live at Stansted Hall. She was also available to

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investigate and report on a College for Spiritualism. But it was not until January, 1954, that Mr Findlay wrote to Mr H. Dawson, who had been elected President six months previously, followed by meeting at Stansted, that a direct and close liaison between the Hall and the Union was established.

"Mr Findlay submitted the Charter of the proposed Arthur Findlay College and at his request only sufficient copies were duplicated for the then Members of the National Council each marked "Private and Confidential." The Council accepted the proposed bequest of Stansted Hall in April, 1954. At that time the bequest was to comprise the Hall, thirty five acres of land and a more substantial endowment than that which the Union eventually received.

"In 1955 Mr Findlay transferred £2,000 to the union in the form of Stock towards the cost of furnishing and decorating the proposed College, and in 1956 the Council accepted a gift of shares in Psychic Press Ltd.

"The position changed however, and following the passing of his wife in 1963 he transferred Stansted Hall in April, 1964, by Deed to the Union along with £28,000 cash. It was intended that Mr Findlay should occupy five rooms in the Hall and the first plans of the architect provided for this.

"Unfortunately Mr Findlay passed to Higher Life in July, 1965 [should read 1964], rendering the arrangement void.

"There were no legal "strings" attached to the gifts, but the College of his dreams is now nearing fruition, perhaps in a modified form – but who knows!"

show visitors around the Hall, where teas (3/6d), cold lunches (6/-) and postcards were on sale.

Then, on 24th July 1964, amidst the implementation of agreements and requests, James Arthur Findlay died. The funeral service was conducted by Dr. John Winning, Vice-President of the SNU supported by Percy Wilson, M.A., and Grace Boyers. The service was held in the Gallery of Stansted Hall and attended by members of the Findlay family and friends from Chelmsford and nearby villages. Representing the National Council were Mr W. S. Fowler, Mr Joe Capstack, Mr Sills and Mr S. T. Gunning.

Just over a year later, the first residential group of forty-six people from Longton Church and other areas saw the first Summer School at Stansted Hall held in the first week of August 1965, organised and under the leadership of Gordon Higginson and Frank Tams. The newly elected S.N.U. President, Dr. John Winning conducted the first Spiritualist service at the college this week, as well as a naming ceremony for Semantha (sic) Jane ….. who was given the Spirit name "Joy". Also on the evening on Sunday August 1st the President conducted the Ordination service for Wilfred Watts in the Gallery whilst the Longton Choir sang from the grand staircase, Watts gave a short address and was followed by Gladys Mallaburn who demonstrated survival. All told, the week was so successful that Longton Church re-booked for the following year.

With the success of the first residential week, there was much activity behind the scenes. There were concerns for the College's maintenance, upgrading and finance etc. For example, the Hall's drinking and domestic water was sourced from a deep well in the court-yard. In anticipation of a hundred visitors being in residence, it was necessary for the Hall to be connected to the main water supply and the existing well's water be possibly used for the gardens. The soil and rainwater drainage was of concern, as it did not comply with sanitary requirements. Therefore, new drains had to be laid and connected to the main sewer. A new electrical supply, central heating system and hot water were required; the old house was wired for 110 volts, so all the existing wiring had to be replaced with a new up-to-date circuit. Alterations were planned to make provision for one hundred beds, including baths, new hand basins, more toilets etc. In addition, there were much-needed repairs to gutters and roofs; second floor carpeting etc., was needed as well as new kitchen equipment.

In 1966 it was decided to install a four line manual exchange telephone system at a cost of £32.00 to install and £16.00 per quarter rental, thus allowing for two entries in the telephone directory – *The Spiritualists' National Union, Stansted Hall, Essex.* & *Findlay College, The J. Arthur, Stansted Hall, Essex. (see also S.N.U.).*

Dr. John Winning who had been appointed the College Principal in January 1966,[2] decided on room décor. He considered the College should not have too many colour schemes, and so instructed the walls be pale sunshine and the woodwork a pale green or blue. It was decided that the "Stable Block" building, should in future be known as the "Annex". Winning produced the first draft brochure of the College and agreed it could be sold for one shilling per copy, the last page listing the charges being left loose to allow revised charges. It was initially agreed the full board tariff include afternoon tea and biscuits but not early morning or night-time teas etc. The tariffs for lunch and dinner were added at 7/6 and 9/6 respectively. Adverts for staff were placed in *Psychic News,* including one for a Manager or Manageress, whose appointment came with on-site residence. There were twenty-seven applications for this position, but none of them were appointed due to a lack of information given by the applicants. The position was then re-advertised requesting certain information from potential applicants and also stating that a furnished flat was part of the appointment.

There was a hive of activity at the Hall in preparation for the College's official opening; tentatively the agreed date was July 16th. Charles Quastel had produced a proposed comprehensive syllabus for educational purposes and suggested the text books be available at the College. Dr. Winning and Dick Ellidge were tasked with pricing shopping lists which included 50 new beds, linen and blankets etc, 30 wardrobes and 28 chest of drawers, dining chairs and tables, 100 tumblers, 120 ice cream/fruit dishes, knives, forks, toilet rolls and

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[2].–In March 1968 Dr. John Winning then Union President and Honorary Principal of the Arthur Findlay College since January 1966 advised the members of the Board of Governors and Management Committee his views on his role as College Principal:—"In an Educational College there is a Principal and a Bursar and some form of Board of Governors. The Board of Governors determine the general policy of the College and instruct the Principal and the Bursar to see it is carried out. The Principal is entirely responsible for the Educational Curriculum, The Bursar for the general management of the College. He is usually the treasurer and is often a qualified accountant or solicitor. These are the two main persons in touch directly with the Governors.

Each of these two persons may delegate some of their work to subordinates but the final responsibility is with the Principal and the Bursar.

The Principal is responsible for planning the details of the Educational Courses approved by the Board of Governors and seeing them carried out. He need not do the actual work of arranging the details but all must have his final approval.

The Bursar is responsible for all finances of the College and also the general fabric of the building. Again he may delegate these duties to others who must get his authority for spending any money.

According to the Charter of the Arthur Findlay College "The Principal must be a man or woman of sterling character, and the teaching staff must always be men and women of unblemished reputation. Neither the Principal nor the staff will profess or teach any of the worlds creedal supernatural religions, nor perform within or without the College any of the ritual or ceremonies connected therewith, their duty being to inform the students on all matters relating to Spiritualism, Religion and History, such subjects for instance as I have covered in my various books,."

Consequently the Principal must always be a convinced Spiritualist of many years standing and of great knowledge so far as psychic matters are concerned.

Regarding his or her appointment we should determine who should appoint. It may be that the appointment is made by the Board of Governors subject to the approval of the National Council. With this set up there need not be a Management Committee and a Board of Governors. There could be one governing body with its chairman and secretary which should not meet more often than three time a year, but with the Principal and Bursar in regular touch with the chairman and secretary of the Board of Governors.

The President of the Spiritualists' National Union should not be the Chairman of the Board of Governors but he or she may be an ex officio member of the Board of Governors. Yours sincerely, John Winning.

towels etc., from suppliers in Stansted and Bishop's Stortford. Mr Paine, Findlay's personal chauffeur and servant, was tasked with the job of fixing the curtain rods, whilst Mrs Sawbridge and Mrs Hesling made curtains. Mrs Sawbridge was appointed housekeeper, Miss Edith Morris senior housemaid, and Mr Paine was further appointed boiler man in addition to his regular duties and would be paid an additional £1 per week; he was also available to wait on breakfast tables as well as wash up after. A cook, one kitchen assistant, two housemaids and two waitresses would be required. Seven hives of bees were installed by a member of the Chelmsford Spiritualists' National Church which the owner would maintain, and any honey produced would be given to the Hall. The head gardener received an order book to record all the garden produce supplied to the College as well as any outside sales to local shops etc. Upon its official opening, there would be forty beds available on the first floor of the College, forty-four beds on the second floor, a possible three spare beds, five staff rooms, and fifteen beds in the annex (available around the end of August).

Stansted Hall's official opening, a little later than previously scheduled, was on Saturday, September 17th at 3 p.m. and was officiated by Mrs Francis Wayne, daughter of Arthur and Gertrude, carried out the official opening, to which the public were invited at the price of 3/6. *Psychic News* reported there were over two hundred and fifty people; this included four coach parties.

Findlay's daughter stated in her dedication:

Mrs. Wayne recalled that her father "tried to find answers to questions mankind has always asked. This search eventually led him to Spiritualism."

"As a result of his writings and speeches there were people who did not agree with him," she said. "I remember one woman wrote to him and accused him of being in league with the Devil. We laughed. Daddy didn't mind. I didn't mind. And I don't think the Devil did either!"

She said Stansted Hall been a very happy home for years, adding, "My husband and family are very pleased to think that you now have care of this house." Mrs. Wayne spoke of her father's dream that his house should be used for research into psychic matters. And she expressed her pleasant surprise at the change that had taken place in spite of the many difficulties which had faced the Spiritualists' National Union.

Declaring the college open, Mrs. Wayne quoted "the words you have as your motto: 'May this house flourish'."

The first College manager was Thomas W. Harrison;[3] he took up his new position at the College accompanied by his wife, son and two daughters on November 1st 1966, with his elder daughter and son taking up some duties in the College. Tom himself was given instruction on bee keeping and later on in November, he appointed a cook to take on general day duties with Mrs. Sawbridge as the breakfast cook.

[3].–Harrison was a life-long Lyceumist, like his parents before him. He was for many years active in Middlesbrough Spiritualist Church, for which he was Treasurer. After moving to Slough, he became active in Windsor Church. Tom had also held office as the Secretary of the Tees-side Lyceum District Council. Tom was the son of Minnie Harrison, a well-known physical medium. Incidentally, Tom and his wife gave up a restaurant they ran on the seashore in Perranporth, Cornwall, to move to the College.

Nearing the end of 1966, it was agreed to put slot meters in the guest rooms of which 41 would be required. This move would mean guests could heat their own rooms; many of the bedrooms had no keys so locks and master sets of Yale type locks were required. A laundrette was agreed to for the laundering of the College's bed linen, to be sited in the old kitchen and consisted of a Bendix type washer, a heated tumble dryer and a rotary iron. For a fee, there was also a guest laundry service available. The manager's daughter was busy dyeing parts of the main stair carpet where it was stained or badly worn; producing such good results, she was given £5 as a Christmas gift as her work was voluntary. In the main reception area, general reading books, confectionery etc were available for purchase.

Prior to the College's official opening, short courses had been available on healing; there was a Conference for Ministers, Diploma holders etc. At this time full board (seven nights) to include accommodation, breakfast, lunch, afternoon Teas and Dinner, would set you back a tidy sum of £10. 10s with a reducing scale to children under 5 years at £3.10s.

Christmas week at the College began on Christmas Eve with a children's party from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. with each child receiving a gift to a suggested value of 2/6. This was followed by another party for the adults, with a four-piece band. Christmas Day we can note began with a 10 a.m. service, with Christmas Dinner at 1 p.m. High Tea at 5.30 p.m. then another service at 7 p.m. followed by a 10 p.m. supper. This year, The Hall and Annex was full over Christmas, catering for over 70 guests!

In July 1966, Miss G Owen, SNU Treasurer, accepted a temporary offer whereby she would move from her home in Bootle to take up residence at the Hall to act in a dual capacity as SNU Treasurer, as well as College receptionist and Hostess.[4] This was on the understanding that no member of the National Council received payment for work done at the College. In January 1967, she was asked to stay for a year and continue her work at the College and to also act as Hostess; for the latter she would receive no monetary payment, instead she would receive free board and accommodation. With her agreement she conducted her work from her second floor room. As Miss Owen was now under the direction of the manager, she could no longer be a member of the Board of Governors.[5]

President John Winning also acted as the Medical Superintendent for the college and carried out guest consultations in room 101. A consultation fee of three guineas was charged to the guest and the payment given to the College as Dr. Winning would not accept this payment for

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[4].–Gladys Owen was the Spiritualists Lyceum Union's (SLU) President for 1961-1965, and for many years she was the President of Daulby Street Spiritualist Church in Liverpool.

[5].–The original "Management Committee" included SNU President Charles Quastel, Dr John Winning (Secretary), Mrs Grace Boyers, Mr W. Fowler (Treasurer), Mr S. T. Gunning (Consultant Surveyor) Joe Capstack, Harry Dawson, and Ray W. Jones who would soon take up the role of Secretary. In around 1965 Mr W. W. Sills would take up the position as Financial Secretary. Miss G. Owen and Wilfred Watts were active members of the Committee.

In late 1965 the Committee was reformed to the "Board of Governors" with a "Management Committee" with Ray Jones (MSNU) as the Secretary of both committees (Jones was personally recommended as a Governor by Arthur Findlay), Richard Ellidge (MSNU) (General Secretary of the SNU), the Committee still included Charles Quastel (MSNU), Dr John Winning (MSNU), Joe Capstack and Grace Boyers (MSNU) who resigned in July 1967. She was replaced by Mrs Mabel Hibbs (MSNU), Mr S. T. Gunning, Miss G. Owen, Mr Walter W. Sills (MSNU) continued as Financial Secretary and Wilfred Watts (MSNU) and Council Member Gordon Higginson (MSNU) soon joined the Board. In October 1968 Ray Taylor became a member of the Board. In August 1969 Mr George Scott was co-opted on to the Board to give advice on catering, printing, publishing etc.

himself. College Manager Tom Harrison advertised in the Psychic Press for a Manager or Manageress. There were two applicants, Mrs Edna Hopkins of South Wales and Mrs Robson of London.[6] At their interview, they were advised of other suitable appointments, and so Mrs Robson was appointed Dining Room/Still Room Supervisor. Her twenty three year old daughter also required accommodation, so Mrs. Robson had two staff rooms allocated to her for which £1. 10s was deducted from her wage in payment for the extra room with an option for her daughter to work at the college if she wished and so receive a wage of her own.

Mrs Hopkins was appointed Housekeeper, replacing Mrs Sawbridge, and had accommodation with her retired husband in the Clock House, consisting of a kitchen, lounge, bathroom and two bedrooms. Her wage was reduced by just over half, in payment for her husband's board and accommodation, however Mr. Hopkins was soon engaged in book-keeping and attended to the accounts etc for the College's general office. He also sent out the adverts and Mr. W Sills (Treasurer of the AFC management committee) reported that the adverts to *Psychic News* were costing £36 a month. Dr. Winning stated concerning the adverts, "… the picture of the College has now been left out, the name "The Arthur Findlay College" is in heavy black type, the speakers' names are in larger black type than previously used and the general information regarding the College is also left out." By July 1967, a receptionist had been engaged with the appropriate name Miss Service,[7] her hours being 9.00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m. Her duties included typing for John Winning and the college manager. Gordon Higginson said that voluntary staff should be used as much as possible and the reception desk be attended from early morning until late at night.

During this year, Charles Quastel stated that most of the mediums and speakers gave their services free, but almost certainly, payment would have to be made at some point; and it was also made clear to the public that Spiritual Healing be given to all without charge.

At the start of 1968, it was agreed at a meeting of the College's senior staff that seventy-two guests would be the general maximum. Seventy-two was an ideal number for the dining room, and an ideal number to be catered for with a minimum staff of cook, assistant cook, one house-maid, one general maid, one still room maid and one waitress; however, more guests would be catered for if required. In the spring, Mrs. Iris Burford had been employed as a Kitchen Assistant at £7.00 per week, and Ken Fullard engaged as cook at £14.00 per week with full board and accommodation. Mrs Robson, Dining Room/Still Room Supervisor left the College.

A speakers' platform was delivered to the College in May; it consisted of three sections and had a tubular rail along the front and two sides with a removable step at the back. It was

[6]–David Hopkins informs me: Winning approached my mother to take a position at the Hall. Clearly at the age she was (59) and with a retired husband, a move from South Wales to Stansted was a very big step. It meant leaving family, friends and all that both my parents had been involved with in churches (particularly Cardiff at that time), DC, Lyceum work etc. The main reason was agreeing to move was the fact that we all had such high hopes of what the Hall and College might become for the Union and Spiritualism. The suggestion that she just decided to apply for a job at the Hall is not accurate. She was actively encouraged to become part of the team.

[7].–Linda Service later married David Nellist, son of Edward and Edith Nellist. Edward Nellist was Lyceum Banner Editor and his wife Edith was Lyceum Union Secretary for many years. (David Hopkins)

proposed to affix a plaque stating its donation as an Educational gift by the late George A. Mack who had died in 1961. This was initially to be put into storage.[8]

THE
ARTHUR FINDLAY COLLEGE
STANSTED HALL, STANSTED
ESSEX

GALA DAY
SATURDAY, 14th SEPTEMBER, 1968
THE LADY DOWDING

Gordon Higginson offered the college his services for one weekend a month, district councils were approached in respect of a College based garden fete and asked what help they could give. A "Gala Day," was arranged and at a meeting of the Gala committee on July 20th 1968, it was said twenty coaches had been booked in to date; in all five hundred and ninety persons were booked. In addition to the general guests, the President suggested there would be one hundred V.I.P.s. Upon their arrival they would be escorted by members of the National Council and their invitation cards were marked with the initials of their escort. Traffic control was arranged with the Chief Constable of Essex and the fire brigade advised. It was decided no insurance cover would be taken out for loss due to rain, as it was too expensive – all other insurances were covered by the existing College insurance policy. The formal opening would be by Lady Dowding at 2 p.m. and later in the day she would be available to sign autographs. A PA system had been purchased and linked up with a record player; carrier bags with Stansted Hall on them would be for sale and St Johns Ambulance Brigade would attend. The London D.C. was responsible for the information room and for the SNU publicity material.

College manager Tom Harrison reported the conservatory's condition as unsafe, and it was subsequently roped off from the terrace walkway. Many items within the conservatory were in a very poor condition due to woodworm but thanks to numerous monetary donations and a draw amounting to £332, plans were under way to convert the conservatory to a Healing Centre etc. Provisional arrangements were made by the Principal for an official opening and dedication ceremony of the Sanctuary, to take place on July 12th 1969, with Harry Edwards agreeing to perform the official opening.

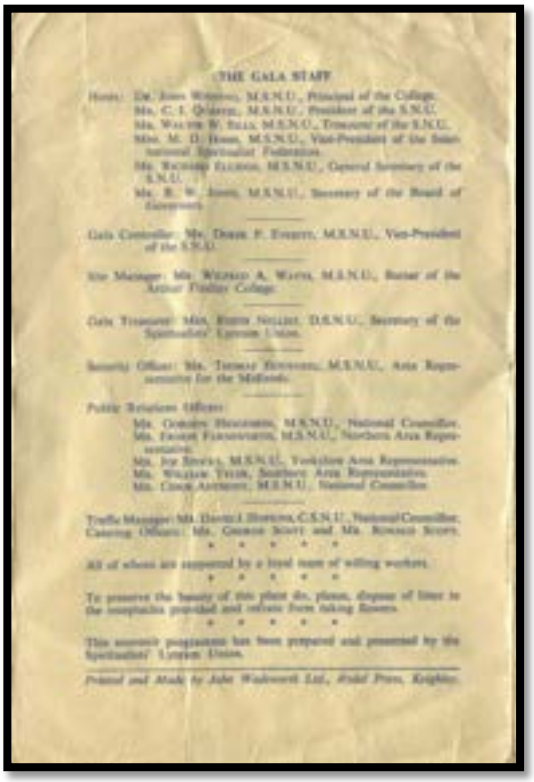
In July 1968, manager Tom Harrison resigned. Mr. W. Sills accompanied by his wife was appointed Acting Manager on July 27th, and it was considered a Bursar should be appointed within a month.[9] At this time there were major staffing problems elsewhere in the College; four staff were leaving, Mrs Hopkins reported applicants were declining due to the long hours; she herself was working thirteen or so hours a day. Staff shortage problems were in part alleviated by offering free room and board. Mrs. Hopkins' sister and nephew staffed the dining room and, with the help and co-operation of existing staff, the College remained functional. Then on August 12th, Mr. W. A. Watts was appointed Bursar. The Gardener's Cottage had been modernised, with the help of an improvement grant from the local

[8].–George Mack was a well-known Lyceum figure. As Lyceum President, on the afternoon of Saturday, February 2nd, 1924 he laid one of the foundation stones of Fleetwood Church. Ernest Oaten and Mrs. J. Butterworth represented the SNU and presentations were made to them. George A Mack's inscribed pendant showing Andrew Jackson Davis and his inscribed trowel are on show in the Britten Memorial Museum at Stansted Hall.

[9].–By this time Walter Sills MSNU had taken the position of SNU Treasurer, previously held by Miss Owen, who was now involved with the "Building Fund Pool," Sills was also assistant Principal and deputised for Winning in his absence.

Authority. A donation of furniture and effects of the famous medium Robert James Lees was accepted and these are now displayed in the museum. The programme for 1969 was agreed; where twenty-two weekly courses had been arranged between April and October.

Wilfred Watts the new Bursar/manager divided the staff into three sections. Housekeeping, with the addition of two staff who were engaged for general cleaning. Kitchen, dining room and still room; the cook Ken Fullard, who was working sixty hours per week plus paid overtime and his staff, were responsible for ordering and buying of all foods, and volunteer worker Mrs. M. Sills was in charge of the dining/still room. Linda Service and Miss. G. Owen continued to carry out office work and operated the reception desk. Under the new management morning tea was served to the bedrooms for those who requested it at an additional cost of 8d per cup, evening meal time was revised and this was now served at 6 p.m. where a newly introduced gong was sounded to announce meal times. After dinner meetings commenced at 7.30 p.m. continuing until 9 p.m. after which tea and biscuits followed for residents and guests free of charge. David Hopkins no longer acted as a voluntary worker, owing to him being a member of the National Council but he continued to split his time with his parents at Clock Cottage and Southend where he was teaching, he did however, continue to help out on occasion at the college whilst in Stansted. The billiards table was put up for sale and it was suggested the room be made into a games room and cafeteria with John Winning offering to donate a chess set.


THE GALA STAFF

Hosts: Dr. John Worthington, M.S.N.U., President of the College.
Mrs. C. I. Quinney, M.S.N.U., President of the S.N.U.
Mrs. Walter W. Sills, M.S.N.U., Treasurer of the S.N.U.
Miss. M. D. Jones, M.S.N.U., Vice-President of the International Spiritualist Federation.
Mr. Richard Ellerton, M.S.N.U., General Secretary of the S.N.U.
Mr. R. W. Jones, M.S.N.U., Secretary of the Board of Governors.

Gala Controller: Mr. Derek F. Fowers, M.S.N.U., Vice-President of the S.N.U.

Site Manager: Mr. Wilfred A. Watts, M.S.N.U., Bursar of the Arthur Findlay College.

Gala Treasurer: Miss. Ruth Nellist, D.S.N.U., Secretary of the Spiritualists' Lyceum Union.

Security Officer: Mr. Thomas Hopkins, M.S.N.U., Area Representative for the Midlands.

Public Relations Officers:
Mr. Gordon Higginson, M.S.N.U., National Councillor.
Mr. Frank Farnsworth, M.S.N.U., Northern Area Representative.
Mr. Joe Davies, M.S.N.U., Yorkshire Area Representative.
Mr. William Tyler, Southern Area Representative.
Mr. Cyril Anthony, M.S.N.U., National Councillor.

Traffic Manager: Mr. David Hopkins, C.S.N.U. National Councillor.
Catering Officers: Mr. George Scott and Mr. Ronald Scott.

* * * * *

All of whom are supported by a loyal team of willing workers.

* * * * *

To preserve the beauty of this plant do, please, dispose of litter in the receptacles provided and refrain from taking flowers.

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This souvenir programme has been prepared and presented by the Spiritualists' Lyceum Union.

Printed and Made by John Wadsworth Ltd., Model Press, Keighley.

Originally an idea of Gordon Higginson, college ties and headscarves were introduced. The ties were 17/6 and it was agreed all officials should wear one on the "Gala Day." Unfortunately, the day of the Gala, which took place on Saturday September 14th, was one of the wettest for about 20 year. Financially however, the day was a success with an income of £1,363 and an expenditure of £638, showing a net profit of £725.

Block bookings had been introduced for fifty persons or more with a five percent discount; where three or four bedded rooms are shared, a reduction of a further 10% was made. However, any cancellations would have to be met by the organisers, so the College would not loose any revenue. It was decided in the latter part of 1968 that no alcohol was to be consumed on College premises. Due to ill health, receptionist Miss. Service left the College and Miss. Owen was appointed receptionist and librarian. Mrs Hopkins resigned her position as house-keeper in November 1968, and the now vacant Clock Cottage would be used to house guests for Christmas, as the College was fully booked and had a cancellation waiting list. The Yorkshire D.C. endowed a bedroom for a welcome £150, in November £78. 17.6 was paid and payment was completed by the autumn of 1969. It was decided to ask all District Councils to consider doing this.

The Financial Secretary, Mr W. Sills gave details of staffing costs for 1969; inclusive of insurances etc it would be £9190, with an expected total expenditure of around £20,000. An income of £385 per week was therefore required, or roughly thirty guests per week at £13 per head. However, most of the improvements and renovations had been completed, thus reducing the capital expenditure in this respect for the forthcoming year. The only remaining work consisted of the modification of the old kitchen, which was being used as a storeroom; the disposal of the billiard table, and making the room into a cafeteria/games room; the modification of the old engine room at Clock Cottage; and Dr. Winning's College surgery was made into three single bedrooms of which all were used at Christmas 1968.

At the start of 1969 the fund for pending works on the sanctuary had reached £1625 and so work began on the roof. Estimates for heating the building were given by architect Mr. Cliff Gunning Jr who further reported that the whole roof needed renewing at an additional cost of £150. In spite of this extra work however, the project was still expected to be completed for the scheduled opening. Two Victorian style street gas lights were put up; the paint was removed leaving the copper exposed. One was used at the junction of the path at the gardener's cottage and Annex, the other as a guide light on the grass where the main drive diverts to the front entrance. In addition, a path lighting system had been installed between the college and the Annex as a measure of convenience and safety. A valuation of the Hall, Annex, Gardeners Cottage, Front Lodge and Land by Sworder and Co was prepared on January 7th 1969 and reported by the Principal (Winning) to be at a gross figure of £100,000; this did not include the furniture and fittings etc. Findlay had purchased Stansted Hall in September 1924 for the sum of £9.998.

A twenty-seat coach donated to the College was collected from Margate by Findlay's former chauffer and it was insured and taxed for the year. Head Gardener Mr. Bottomley decided in April to leave the area upon retirement in May but in order to help find a replacement for his position he agreed to sit in on the interviews, after which Mr Bell took the position. When Bursar Wilfred Watts was returning from a trip to London, he passed the College car on the road and promptly called the police. Although the car thieves were apprehended, the car itself was damaged.

In the Summer of 1969, work on the Sanctuary was completed and its official opening was overseen by four Ministers of the Union. Dr. John Winning chaired the event; Mr. Harry Edwards conducted the official opening; Mr. Charles Quastel performed the Dedication and Mr. T. Henwood (chairman of the Healing Committee) responded to Mr. Edwards. The day was well attended with about forty guests from other Organisations amongst the attendees who lunched in the Library. Around forty chairs were sold at a price of £3. 5s each, small plates would be fitted to the chairs showing details of the chair's purchaser. On the formation of Friends of the Arthur Findlay College as organised by Gordon Higginson, General Secretary Dick Ellidge provided a list of Class B members for Gordon to prepare a further list of possible 'Friends.[10] It was in July of this year Wilfred Watts left the College and Walter W. Sills took on the position of acting manager.

As always, the College was looking for ways of supplementing its income and in August 1969, the Board agreed for a Psychic Youth Group Walk to end at the College and for them to supply light refreshments, with showers and baths being at the disposal of the walkers. Among those completing the walk were Roy Stemman and Leslie Price. Mrs. Doris Davey

[10].–Prior to the formation of Friends of Stansted, there were 'Founder Members of the College.'

presented the College with a Wendy House and Swings. This play area was known as Uncle Bert's Corner in honour of Mrs. Davey's father Bert Fruin.[11]

The full time College staff at the end of August were as follows: Miss E Morris, housemaid, Ken Fullard, cook, Iris Burford, cook, three gardeners, Mr Payne, Mrs Leigh, waitress, Miss Leigh, reception and booking, Mrs Hampton, general and Mr. & Mrs Sills. With the College's annual closure getting closer a difficult decision was being considered to dismiss the entire staff but with more staff needing to be recruited once the College re-opened, the decision was therefore made to retain the staff they already had as there was the need to clean the College thoroughly whilst shut.

Ray Jones and Ray Taylor prepared a programme for the College to accept guests over Christmas and New Year. Jointly the festivities were charged at £25.00, individually, Christmas was charged at £15. 15s, and New Year at £6. 6s. The College accepted Gordon Higginson's offer of his services for December 30th. Although sixty guests celebrated the festive season and successful reports were later received, it was noted that the events could have been more successful had they been publicised earlier.

Mr. Jones and Mr. Taylor again teamed to organise the Gala Day for next year. Dr. Winning contacted the local college to arrange an accommodation overflow of their dormitories should the need arise. The day was planned to commence at 11.00 a.m. and continue until 9.30 p.m. that evening.

In the autumn, Ray Taylor made a suggestion for Mr. Leslie Price to start sorting non-psychic books from psychic ones in the library. Leslie recalls: "While I sorted the books in the Library standing on a ladder I was joined by an American guest and we chatted about psychic books. Later I received a postcard written on his plane back over the North Pole inviting me to assist him as a London rep, in his research into healing. He was George Meek,[12] later to publish important works on healing, the work of Bertha Harris, life after death and Spiricom." Dick Ellidge wrote to all the members of the National Council to ask for their opinions on the sale of alcoholic drinks at the College. A Dinner & Dance was arranged for February 21st 1970. It was stipulated a bar should be made available for this occasion, the legal position was therefore explored and a licence applied for, with the old billiards room in mind as a suitable bar area.

With the Sanctuary now open, Dr. Winning was in touch with the necessary authorities with a view to registering the Sanctuary as a place of worship and for the solemnisation of marriages etc. especially as arrangements were already in place for a wedding in the following spring, which would of course require the necessary licence. Also by the registration it would exempt the Sanctuary from paying rates; it was reported in March 1970 the rateable value of the

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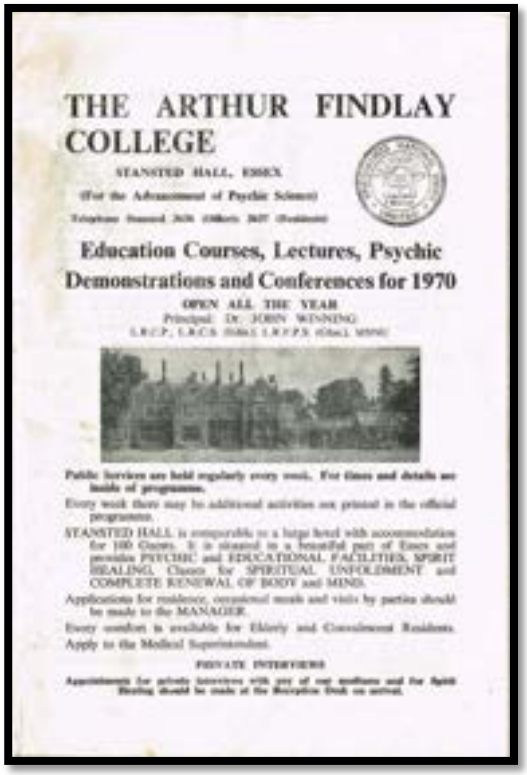
[11].–Doris Davey was well known in the movement, her husband Leslie was vice-President to Gordon Higginson in the early 1970's. Uncle Bert's Corner no longer exists; as you looked down the lawn from the house the area was at the bottom right hand corner. I myself and guests would often shelter in the Wendy House if caught out in the rain – or just for fun. Doris' father Bert Fruin was a well-respected Lyceumist and its President, 1940-1949.

In these early days the lawn was in good use with a height of leisurely activities, playing bowls, putting; or being very English with 'a game of croquet.' Chairs were often placed around the Tulip tree where group sessions, meditations etc took place.

[12].–The research of George W. Meek, Founder, Metascience Foundation:—
http://www.worlditc.org/h_07_meek_by_macy.htm

College was reduced from £1138 to £1126. Towards the end of 1969, Ray Taylor was appointed Museum Curator[13] and an electric organ presented to the College by Colchester Church was installed in the Sanctuary.

Looking ahead to 1970, Gordon Higginson proposed a Garden Party to mark the College's spring re-opening, followed by a Bazaar in the autumn, both of which were agreed to be placed in the programme. It was decided that coach parties would be accepted for an inclusive cost to aim more at the overseas visitors staying at the College for more than a week, coach trips from the College would be arranged to local areas, London with theatre trips etc. The National Gardens Associations were invited to view the college gardens and it was decided that on set dates throughout 1970 the general public would be invited to tour the gardens at a price of 2/- for adults and 1/- for children. The proceeds would go to the Nurses Association and be collected by the Head Gardener. Although the college would not benefit directly from the admission proceeds, benefits came from hosting advertisements in the Year Book, direction signs, adverts in the local papers and the sale of garden produce, refreshments, tours of the College's public rooms and the sale of booklets. Another means of advertising the College were 15 x 12 inch printed posters, which were circulated to outside bodies.


THE ARTHUR FINDLAY COLLEGE

STANSTED HALL, ESSEX

(For the Advancement of Psychic Science)

Education Courses, Lectures, Psychic Demonstrations and Conferences for 1970

OPEN ALL THE YEAR

Principal: Dr. JOHN WINNING

Public Services are held regularly every week. For times and details see inside of programme.

Every week there may be additional activities not printed in the official programme.

STANSTED HALL is comparable to a large hotel with accommodation for 100 Guests. It is situated in a beautiful part of Essex and provides PSYCHIC and EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES, SPIRIT HEALING, Classes for SPIRITUAL UNFOLDMENT and COMPLETE RENEWAL OF BODY and MIND.

Applications for residence, occasional meals and visits by parties should be made to the MANAGER.

Every comfort is available for Elderly and Convalescent Residents. Apply to the Medical Superintendent.

PRIVATE INTERVIEWS

Appointments for private interviews with any of our mediums and for Spirit Healing should be made at the Reception Desk on arrival.

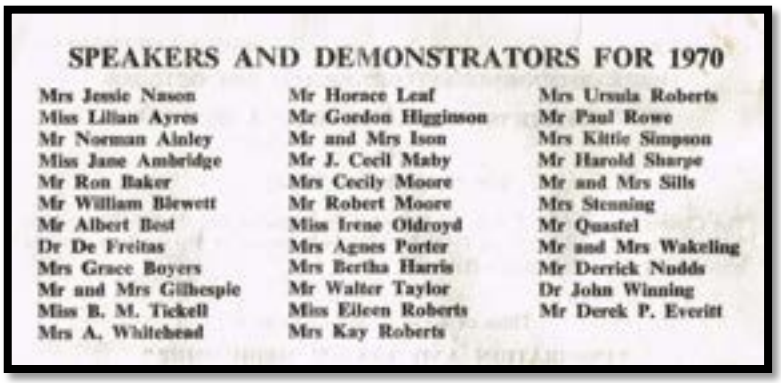
Moving into 1970, the Board gave confirmation of their agreement for the College to apply for a license as a Private Residential and Restaurant establishment in order to sell alcohol. As an experiment however, a one year 'see how it goes' limit was placed on the bar and Gordon Hibbs negotiated with local brewers to obtain bar facilities free of charge.

Leslie Price reported on his work in the library; he was asked if he was in a position to card index the library under author, title and category. Discussions took place regarding the various libraries, and it was agreed there would be no restrictions in housing the ISF library if required.

As the Sanctuary was now registered as a place of Worship etc, the first wedding was booked for March 22nd 1970. The groom was Mr Brian Lindsay and the bride Penelope Davey, whose father Leslie was the Officiating Minister. The planned Garden Party decided upon to mark the opening of the College in spring of this year was changed by Gordon Higginson to the Easter Weekend instead. In the early part of the year, The Friends of Stansted provided £40 for a much needed truck for use in the garden. Mr. Sills, who was responsible for the running of the College as a whole was asked to continue in that role, Dr. Winning agreed to continue as

[13].–The Britten Memorial Museum was not moved to Stansted Hall until August 1971, records show a museum room was used at the College prior to this at various locations e.g Findlay's old kitchen (today the old kitchen is part of the new kitchen, the kitchen before the alterations is today the office) the museum was also sited in Findlay's old office, today it is the mediums room, next to the Blue Room. Presumably the museum held items from Findlay, the bequest by Eva Lees of her father's personal affects etc. These included his 1888 diaries and Lee's participation in the "Jack the Ripper" case, some years later Ray reported these as stolen.

Principal and Charles Quastel agreed to work as the full time Education Organiser with lodgings at the College. In March, Miss. Owen left the College and moved to Liverpool.



SPEAKERS AND DEMONSTRATORS FOR 1970

Mrs Jessie Nason	Mr Horace Leaf	Mrs Ursula Roberts
Miss Lilian Ayres	Mr Gordon Higginson	Mr Paul Rowe
Mr Norman Ainley	Mr and Mrs Ison	Mrs Kittie Simpson
Miss Jane Ambridge	Mr J. Cecil Maby	Mr Harold Sharpe
Mr Ron Baker	Mrs Cecily Moore	Mr and Mrs Sills
Mr William Blewett	Mr Robert Moore	Mrs Stenning
Mr Albert Best	Miss Irene Oldroyd	Mr Quastel
Dr De Freitas	Mrs Agnes Porter	Mr and Mrs Wakeling
Mrs Grace Boyers	Mrs Bertha Harris	Mr Derrick Nudds
Mr and Mrs Gillespie	Mr Walter Taylor	Dr John Winning
Miss B. M. Tickell	Miss Eileen Roberts	Mr Derek P. Everitt
Mrs A. Whitehead	Mrs Kay Roberts	

In the July, menus were being considered for guests to have a choice of food. For example, a choice of breakfasts was being considered whereby a guest could have half a grapefruit or cereal, scrambled egg, boiled egg, fried egg, bacon, sausages, and kippers instead of an already set bacon and egg breakfast. By this time, Gordon Higginson was SNU President and the Board was informed that the SNU might sell their property at Tib Lane in Manchester, then buy and use the College Annex as its headquarters. The Board therefore considered the value of the Annex and put forward an asking price to the SNU. The money from the sale would then be used to pay off part of the College's debt.

Preparations were in progress for a Gala Day. It was decided the catering should be done inside the College and the College's toilets used by the Gala's attending public to save money. Lists of stalls were to be drawn up and a 20 x 20 foot marquee be used, with another by the LDC for its Bingo. A piano and a platform from the College would be used in the Social Marquee, chairs, tables and ropes would be required for the sideshows etc. The Gala took place on July 18th.

In late summer, Higginson agreed to organise the first College dinner/dance for October 31st, principal guests were Grace Boyers, Maurice Barbanell, John Winning and Thomas Johanson SAGB (Coral Polge's husband) with Frank Tamms as the Master of Ceremonies. The planning of the Christmas and New Year festivities at the College was underway, the proceedings to be on similar lines as the previous year, with a combined stay, December 24th to January 1st for £25. 10s. A petition was given the Board signed by 53 Yorkshire DC members expressing their dissatisfaction with the College's main staircase carpet. It was their intention to raise funds themselves to have the carpet replaced, an action met with full agreement by the Board. Mr. and Mrs. Sills were still carrying out their duties on a voluntary basis and had done so for a long period. It was now decided that an advert be placed in the Spiritualist press for a permanent manager at the College.

At the Board of Governors meeting on August 30th 1970 Higginson moved, seconded by Ray Taylor that a bar would operate under a residential and restaurant licence to be applied for in the name of Mr W. Sills. It appears it would not be until the summer or later of 1971 that the licensed bar actually came into fruition in the old Billiards room.[14] It was also at around this

[14].–Today the bar remains in Findlay's old billiard room but in recent years it has been extended, in the old days it held a Grand piano. I was employed as its first bar manager. Ivor James, Gordon Higginson and Frank Tamms would sometimes entertain us: Frank's version of 'Oh Danny Boy' in his deep voice was a favourite. Many of our old friends spent many an enjoyable evening either singing or chatting in this room. I remember well Maurice and Sylvia Barbanell, Doris Stokes, Coral Polge, Bertha Harris, Albert Best, Robin Stevens, Don Galloway, Jean Bassett, Connie Ransom, Jack and Betty Wakeling, healers Maurice Tester and Gilbert Anderson to name just a few. The College's General Manager, Tanya Smith, has mounted portraits on the walls of some of our pioneers; the Sanctuary also has an area dedicated with individual plaques of our old friends.

time that an estimated date for the SNU office to transfer to the Annex was pencilled in as August 14th; it was agreed that Dick Ellidge and Miss Foster, a member of the SNU staff, be offered accommodation at Stansted Hall.

Acknowledgement and thanks should be given to all the early dedicated workers of the college, many of whom worked on a purely voluntary basis. Others while waged, often worked above and beyond their contracted hours during these years. The Union in striving to keep Findlay's magnificent gift, drew close to bankruptcy. Around this period a new member of staff called Jane Heatley started to work part time waiting tables etc, Jane was a member of the staff at SAGB, London, and would come to the College with Jimmy Young who would be appointed the new manager of Stansted Hall.

Editor's closing comments:

On October 31st 1972 Jane Heatley had taken up residence at Stansted Hall, and was employed by the SNU at their new registered office in the Annex named "Britten House." Today Jane still works full-time as Senior Administrator, and office Secretary to Mr Charles Coulston. Ken Fullard continued as resident cook until the early 1980's, his assistant Iris Burford continued for some years after. Today Ken is retired and lives in Stansted village; Iris died in 2005, and there is a dedication plaque in the garden of remembrance. In early 1973 I took up residence at Stansted Hall and still keep in contact with Ken and Jane. These early days hold many special and fond memories of all the friends and acquaintances made; sadly almost all of them now reside in the Spirit World.

Epic scenes for the signing of the Magna Carta

Stansted Hall Medieval Fayre, June 27th 2015

The Arthur Findlay College, Stansted Hall, Stansted Mountfitchet celebrated the 800th anniversary of the signing of the Magna Carta "proclaiming the fundamental principle that everyone is subject to the rule of law…even kings". Richard De Mountfitchet was one of the twenty-five barons who played a significant part; for further information see the Magna Carta Barons Association.[1]

It was fitting that the re-enactments took place alongside Arthur Findlay's memorial, as he gives an account of the Magna Carta in his two-volume work, 'The Curse of Ignorance', first published in 1947. Findlay notes:

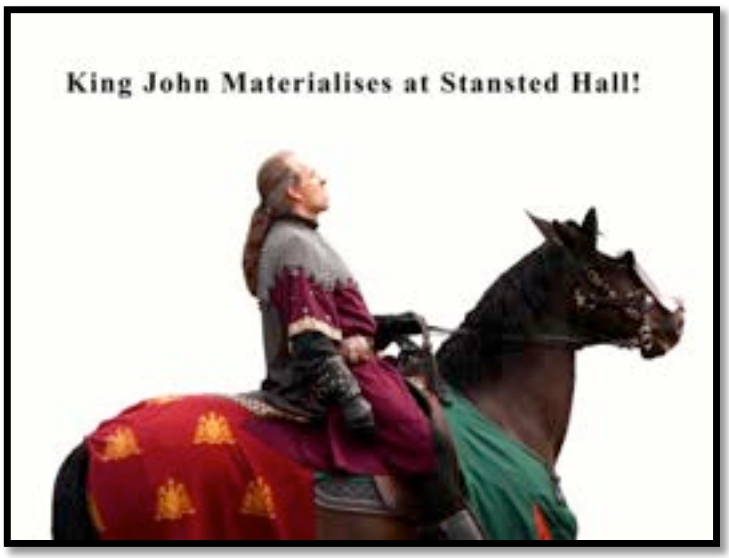
John (1199-1216) was probably one of the most despised of all the Kings of England, being possessed of all the vices of his ancestors and none of their virtues.

Findlay provides an overview of the formation of the Magna Carta in Vol. I, pages 931-935:

> As John had previously lost Normandy to Philip in 1204, and Anjou, Maine and Touraine in 1206, many of his nobles, disgusted at the loss of their possessions in these parts, decided that they preferred a strong and ruthless ruler like Henry II, who, at least, could keep his domains intact, even though they had to bow to his authority. Besides these losses and humiliations, the old quarrel broke out again between the King and Innocent III on the question of the appointment of the Archbishop. Again the Church asserted its claim to be above all kings, and never before was it nearer its goal.
>
> Let us pause for a moment and think of the meaning of all this, as it is a subject which has never so far received rational thought. If, however, we do get down to facts, we find that there is a connecting chain, made up of links of cause and effect, right back from this world-domineering pope to a ghost being seen in Palestine some twelve hundred years earlier. From seeing a ghost to the claim of world-wide authority, there is an unbroken connection, step by step, without a break, a cause having produced an effect, and that effect in turn a cause, until finally a man reached the position of Pontifex Maximus and, as the Pope, became the greatest power on earth. Other religions have come into being from the same cause, but certainly none obtained the power and majesty secured by Christianity, which happened to develop and spread amongst a strong and virile people.

[1] Magna Carta Barons Association: www.magnacartabarons.info

So we have now reached the time in history when His Holiness, claiming to represent a priestly victim who was seen on earth after his death, wielded an authority over Europe such as was never previously exercised. He decided that Stephen Langton was to be the new Archbishop of Canterbury, and John not only refused to agree but seized all the Church land of Canterbury. Innocent then excommunicated the King and everyone in England from communion with the Church, and this, in the opinion of every Englishman, not only meant everlasting torment but being boycotted by all Christendom. This holy curse did not complete the revenge of the Holy Father, because Innocent followed it up by encouraging rebellion in England, and instructing the King of France to invade the island.



John, with everyone in England his enemy, surrendered completely. He did homage to the Pope, they became friends, and he agreed to have Langton as Archbishop of Canterbury. His humiliation, however, did not end there, and he further agreed that in future England would be a vassal state to the Holy See, besides which he promised large indemnities to the Church in England, including an annual subsidy to the Pope. Defeated in battle, hated by everyone for his cruel misdeeds, and his country now a vassal state; never before had England fallen so low, and never previously was a king so despised. With the Church his overlord, and the barons ceasing to fear him, conferences commenced between Langton, who was a man of great ability, and the nobles, to end in the King being brought to Runnymede in 1215, and made to grant the Great Charter safeguarding the rights of the nobles, the priests and the free men.

The principal points in this historic document can be summed up briefly as follows:—

(1) Before the King could levy more taxes beyond the ordinary feudal dues he must call together the Great Council.

(2) The existing privileges of the Church in England were guaranteed.

(3) No free man shall be arrested or imprisoned except by the lawful judgment of his peers, or by the law of the land. To none will justice be denied.

(4) The liberties of London, and the other towns or harbours of England, were confirmed.

(5) A Commission of twenty-five barons was appointed to enforce the sixty-three clauses of the Charter.

Too much has been claimed for the Magna Charta. It made few lasting innovations, and asserted no new liberties. It contained, however, guarantees for the greater security of all free men, but nothing was said of the vast majority who were bondmen, whose bondage was further tightened. The Church secured her ancient liberties, and the barons

obtained greater privileges, both of which were reactionary developments. The limitation of the power of the King to tax without the consent of the Great Council was in the interests of the barons, though ultimately it was for the good of all.

Magna Charta, however, never became the law of the land, but, instead, a somewhat similar Charter took its place in 1225. This, however, omitted the obligation of the King to call together the Great Council before new taxes were imposed, and the new Charter remained the basis of the law throughout the Middle Ages. Magna Charta did not guarantee trial by jury, not give the people any political power; in fact it was a feudal document designed for the benefit of the Church and the barons, and is not the liberty-giving document it is so often represented to be.

In spite of the guarantee that the privileges of the Church in England would be preserved, Pope Innocent III was not satisfied, and he vehemently denounced the new Charter as "a diabolical document" and an impudent infringement of the King's right over the people. He evidently expected even more privileges for his Church, and, by absolving John from keeping his oath, he encouraged him to break his promises, which is just what the King did. The barons consequently declared war against him, and offered the crown to Louis of France. This he accepted, but fortunately John died in 1216, and this happy event prevented England from becoming an appendage of France, as Louis had by then arrived in London with ships of war, and French troops were already in England supporting the barons.

Magna Charta, to its framers, must have been looked back upon as simply a scrap of paper which had only fanned the flames of civil war, and introduced a foreign king as claimant to the throne of England. Its failure, however, brought about the necessary reaction, which laid the foundation of something better and more enduring. We can compare this setback to the one suffered by the League of Nations in our own time, a failure which may lead to something better. It, however, required a Hitler and a war to expose where its weakness lay, just as it required a John and a civil war to make the more intelligent of his time realise that law and order were to be preferred to lawlessness and injustice. Evolution sometimes follows a great catastrophe, and one of our problems is to find the way to progress without being first whipped into the way of knowledge and wisdom.

Henry III (1216-1272), who followed John, his father, at nine years of age, turned out to be a better man. …

—~—☼—~—

Photographs taken at Stansted Hall Medieval Fayre, June 27th 2015

What we did before Stansted

In the early days of the Union, generally the only time members from the various regions met was at the yearly AGM, at various Conferences, or maybe on a coach trip to various demonstrations or day events, probably organised by one of the District Councils. At the Bristol AGM, July 1925, an ambitious scheme was accepted, to have joint Educational Committees of the British Spiritualists' Lyceum Union and the S.N.U. under the style and title of the National Spiritualist College. It comprised a three-year course of study with yearly examinations and terminal certificates (see the last issue of Pioneer, "Early S.N.U Education History…"). Despite the title, the 'National Spiritualist College', it was in reality a correspondence course.

At around this period the Union discussed another venture, an 'S.N.U. Summer School'. This would comprise a wide programme over a three-week period of studies, lectures, circles, private sittings and social, etc. The school would be open to all members of SNU Churches, subscribing members and Lyceums; non-members would pay 20% extra. A double-bedded room for two would cost £3 3s. per person per week, dormitories with single beds at £2 17s 6d per week. The first Summer School was held at Colet House School, The Promenade, Rhyl, North Wales from August 6th to August 27th 1927 inclusive. The lecturers and demonstrators engaged were Harry Boddington, whose chosen subject was healing, Ernest Oaten on mediumship, Ernest Keeling and George Cole on the philosophy of Spiritualism, George Berry on the history of Spiritualism and Arthur Whyman on séances and readings. The general opinion was that the venture had been a huge success, although there were only twenty-six students and lecturers present in each of the first two weeks.

Below is a report from the fifth Summer School taken from the Union's 'National Spiritualist', official journal, August 1932:

The fifth Spiritualists' Summer School

The fifth Spiritualists Summer School held at Gourock on the famous Clyde Coast has come and gone, and the Fellowship of the Summer School lives on in anticipation of future experiments. In passing a vote of thanks to the Lecturers and Chairmen, the suggestion was made that Churches should seriously consider the wisdom of selecting a budding medium and send him to any future Summer Schools for helpful tuition and experience. So pleased was another enthusiast by the scope of the Lectures and the values of the Psychic Demonstrations, that he saw in the summer School the possibilities of a revived School of the Prophets.

This year's School differed from its predecessors in several particulars and a consideration of these may help to point the way to the organisation of succeeding Summer Schools. The School ran for two weeks instead of three, and the period was changed from the end of July and the first half of August to the last week in June and the first week in July. It is to be noted that this change did not adversely affect the number attending. At the Weston-super-Mare School in 1930 there were 50 bookings for the first two weeks. This year, including the speakers and mediums there were 56 bookings. The

third week in previous Summer Schools has been the cause of our financial losses. This year's effort will show small loss, if any.

Summer School Students.

The hostel charges were on a different scale and paid direct to the Manageress; and the expenses of this year's School have been met by a booking fee of 5/0 per head plus a small surplus on the bookings for the Seances. These changes perhaps make the financial comparison difficult.

Another difference was the experiment of holding the School as an adjunct to the Annual General Meeting of the Union. Not all the students attended the Annual Conference. For a first experiment the numbers attending the A.G.M. may be regarded as satisfactory, and might well improve if tried over a number of years. Some students were leaving the School, some were arriving, and with the attention of the Council concentrated on the A.G.M. those who remained at the School over the Conference week-end found themselves at a loose end with the activities of the School suspended.

A more important difference was the definite engagement of noted mediums and the organisation of seances. In each week four evenings were devoted to seances and in the afternoons a number of small group seances were held or private sittings were given. As in former years morning lectures were given, four in the first week and three in the second. This meant the abandonment of a feature that was part of the charm of previous Summer Schools. It was not found practicable to arrange afternoon excursions which included nearly the whole of the students in residence. The excursions were taken in small groups with fairly large groups for each Friday.

There were no evening Socials, no community singing and music. The closing hours of each day were devoted to the all familiar 'circle.' The nonprofessional mediums—eagerly supported by the whole school—demonstrated their powers in their own way. The 1932 Spiritualists Summer School was above all else a school for the display of varied mediumistic activities.

The Phenomena.

For the student of psychic phenomena, the school offered unique opportunities. Mrs. Duncan, Edinburgh gave materialising seances as well as demonstrations of direct writing without physical contact. Mrs. Bullock, Manchester, gave seances for 'transfiguration,' while as already indicated the non-professional mediums demonstrated several distinct types of manifestation.

Materialisations.

A convenient dressing room behind the Cabinet was used for the precautionary examination and disrobing of Mrs. Duncan and to don the special seance costume. When ready to sit, the dressing room door was locked and the key retained by one of the sitters. 'Albert' the guide took control and at each seance showed himself apart from his medium, and then the medium and some manifesting entity side by side. I missed the great display of lights which marked the Manchester seances but there were many affectionate reunions, and some very intimate conversations. In quite a large number of cases the visitor was gripped by the hand of some spirit friend; some were kissed. In one instance a sitter was asked to take careful note of the fine hair on the back of a man's hand and compare it with that of a young girl spirit, as well as the hand of Mrs. Duncan when she came out of trance. One spirit friend had passed out with heart trouble, and his widow was asked to note the beating of the heart and compare it with the heart rhythm of the medium. On the last evening relatives of mine manifested. A girl just entering her twenties and who had passed away 40 years ago, and her mother who passed but a few years ago. Their hands were placed in mine and I felt the delicate hand of a young woman and noted its difference from that of the older woman who had lived with us prior to her passing.

Lively Peggy, the child control, came each evening and eased the tension of an atmosphere heavy with unexpressed emotion. One night a chair was left too near the curtains. A spirit friend moved it from one side of the corner to the other. The curtain became entangled with the chair legs and nearly brought the whole down. In the darkness a lady stood on the chair to replace the curtains and pin them in position again. She reported that as she put her hands over the cross-bar her fingers were touched by something having a phosphorescent glow.

One entity came twice in the last week. At her first appearance she was unable to say anything, and 'Albert' gave his impression that she had died by drowning. On the second occasion she was able to confirm this. 'Albert' declared that she was standing in a pool of water which dripped from her clothing. We examined the floor of the cabinet after the seance had closed. The floor was bone dry but very significantly, I and several others felt drops of water sprinkled on us at least twice. Having previously prepared the cabinet I can vouch for the fact that no water or other liquid was present in the room or cabinet. To another sitter a picture which hung on the wall a considerable distance from the cabinet was taken from the wall and placed in her lap.

The last night was remarkable for a fulfilled prophecy made 20 years ago in New Zealand. A visitor from that country had the great privilege of a long sustained conversation with her husband in spirit. She told us afterwards that she was present at a seance in New Zealand where her husband passed away and was then told that she would find herself in Great Britain 20 years hence and would be in a materialising seance at which only nine persons were present, and she would see and talk with her husband. Including the medium there were but nine sitters that evening; and the lady had come from New Zealand early this year in anticipation of the fulfilment of the prophecy. 'Albert' discovered that the lady was familiar with the district in which his old home was situated and gave her the address with the promise that if she called and mentioned him, she would be made welcome.

Direct Writing Tests.

The Direct Writing tests were excellent. Mrs. Duncan sat in full daylight at a small table round which was grouped some 13 or 14 persons, sitting together as closely as the table would permit. She took a small pad on which was placed sheets of paper torn from a writing pad brought into the room by one of the sitters after the group was formed. On the top of the sheets of writing paper a pencil was placed with its point towards the medium. Mrs. Duncan took the paper and pencil in one hand and held the whole pressed against the underside of the table. A table cloth hanging down over the sides afforded the necessary darkness. Her other hand was on the top of the table supporting her stooping attitude. Meanwhile she chatted with the sitters on general topics. Ten of the group had spirit friends named, and from whom they asked written questions. The answers were intelligent, fully appropo of the question asked, and in some instances contained welcome news or pleasing prophecies. When the messages were completed, the pencil could be heard falling to the ground, and in every instance was picked up by a sitter. After the pencil was on the ground three distinct raps were heard on the table. This was the signal to bring up the pad and examine the writing.

Transfigurations.

Mrs. Bullock has deservedly won popularity with her demonstrations of transfigurations. From my point of view the term does not exactly describe the type of mediumship revealed. A more correct description would be impersonation. For real transfiguration there should be a covering of extoplasmic material over the face of the medium. Upon this extoplasmic base the manifesting entity would mould the likeness of his own features. It is a well recognised type of phenomena. Mrs. Bullock sits in a darkened room with a strong red light thrown on her face. She puts over her shoulders a dark hood so that the face is thrown into sharp relief from the surrounding darkness. The first to manifest are her special guides who help her in this work; a Japanese, a Red Indian for power and others. The ease with which these guides manipulate the mobile features of the medium is truly extraordinary. In rapid succession we see startlingly life-like portraits of the different guides. When we reflect that these guides have had innumerable opportunities to use their medium in this way their success is understandable. It explains why, when other entities come who have not had the same access to the medium, and are now trying for the first or a second or third time only that their success is not so great. Those who sit regularly with Mrs. Bullock declare that their spirit friends gradually gather the power to mould a perfect likeness of themselves. For those who have sat but once or rarely such perfection is not vouchsafed, and one must look for the fleeting likeness or some characteristic pose or attitude reinforced by the evidential nature of the messages given. The sympathetic or ardent sitter will get more than the severely and coldly critical, the regular sitter most of all. Even in the difficult conditions of the single seance and strange sitters, the reports of crowded meetings testifies to the popularity and satisfying nature of the demonstrations. Some highly satisfactory delineations and messages were received by the Summer School sitters.[9]

[9] For information and images of Mrs Elizabeth Frances Bullock please see Psypioneer, Volume 8, No. 6, June 2012.

Clairvoyance and Personations.

Mrs. Wilby, Manchester, gave good service during the closing hours circle. Her clairvoyance and messages were excellent examples of the type which makes for successful platform demonstrations. Markedly different was the work of Mr. Bogue, Gateshead on Tyne. By a species of dumb show Mr. Bogue indicates the sex and physical characteristics of the manifesting spirit. By the same method there follows a portrayal of the conditions prevailing at the time of the passing. For instance, to see the medium sway as if suffering from vertigo, and then fall to the ground in simulation of sudden death, leaves little room for doubt as to the identity of a relative or friend whose end was known. A young Nottingham Lyceumist whose funeral service I had taken manifested to myself. She came again the next evening through Mrs. Duncan and delighted everyone present by her childish recital of Lyceum Pearls.

Still another type was presented by Mrs. Harper, Aberdeen. The manifesting entities seem unable or unwilling to give their name, relationship, or any description that would identify them. Instead the sitter is invited to tell over the names of any friends whom he knows has passed. When by a process of elimination the right name is pronounced the spirit controlling demonstrates unmistakably his pleasure. In like manner all other necessary information for complete identification is sought and found. It is a process as lengthy as taking down a long message through the alphabetic code of table tilting, which was in fact our last experiment.

We repeat the 1932 Summer School was above all else, a school for the demonstration of mediumistic activity. It revealed a great variety of power and phenomena. We saw each medium developing on his or her own line and producing phenomena various as the moods and characters of humanity itself. In like manner, and following the same law of variation, each investigator finds some type of demonstration which pleases him best, and which singly or in combination with other types assures him of the tremendous fact of Survival.

GEO. F. BERRY.
Dipl. S.N.U.

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The SNU Summer School became an ongoing popular event for around fifty years, drawing many of the top mediums and speakers. Tom and Mabel Hibbs were two well-known Welsh Spiritualists; Tom in some reports is referred to as the 'Summer School Pioneer'. He was for many years the secretary of the South Wales District Council; in 1950 the SNU National Council honoured him by appointing him Honorary Vice-President of the Union. Tom died in November 1955, aged 66; the photograph shows Tom and Mabel (bottom left) at the Porthcawl Summer School in 1950. The photograph is a large panoramic group showing over a hundred students; some notable names can be recognised: Gladys Mallaburn, Joe Capstack, Bertha Harris, Minnie Bridges, Eric Hatton and Union Presidents Harry Dawson and John Stewart. But who is the young boy shown on the image? See footnote 10.

Incidentally, Mabel Hibbs conducted the wedding service for former SNU President Eric Hatton on December 27th 1955; Tom had died shortly before. The 'Two Worlds' series, "Meet the S.N.U. National Council", April 8th 1949, gives this short profile:

> Mrs. M. D. Hibbs has the honour of being the only woman on the National Council of the Spiritualists' National Union. With eleven years to her credit, she has one of the longest records of service, only Messrs. McIndoe, Stewart and Dawson having served longer.
>
> In the South Wales District, which she represents, she is regarded as a great leader and Mr. Hopkins, District Secretary,[10] has stated that this District owes its many successes, chiefly to the careful supervision and encouragement given by Mrs. Hibbs in the many aspects of the work.

[10] John C. Hopkins was Secretary in 1949; he was David Hopkins' father. Both were/are Ministers of the Union; the young boy is David, about age 9. Difficult to recognise him without the beard! Behind David is his father and the lady between him and Mabel Hibbs is his mother, Edna. Both his parents were very active within the Summer Schools. David commented: "I know that the South Wales folks were very proud of the School and always felt that it was the model for many later activities across the country, including the early days at Stansted." If any readers have any of the old programs these would be most welcome for the Britten Memorial Museum.

Great Organiser

Her great organising ability has long since been recognised, and out of thirty years membership, eighteen years have been spent as church secretary, sixteen years as a member of the South Wales District Council, (four as Vice-President), and the last five years as President. She is also a Spiritualist minister. The Treherbert S.N. Church, which is a great credit to the Movement, was founded and built largely as a result of Mrs. Hibbs's efforts.

Social Work

She is well known as a leader in other walks of life, thus demonstrating to others that Spiritualists carry their principles into practice. During the war she worked unceasingly to provide funds for the benefit of those serving in the forces, served as local representative on the Citizens Advice Bureau, and will long be remembered for her great efforts as secretary of the Local Food Control Dept. during the days of the great depression in the Rhondda Valley.

—~—☼—~—

David Hopkins told me:

I think the South Wales folk of the time saw 'their' school as something new and unique, not a 'development of anything national that had gone before but rather something innovative, in that it provided a week-long event that covered a range of interests in Spiritualist activities and also a strong social/'fun' element – perhaps of considerable importance in those early post-war years. I suppose there was a strong element of 'learning and laughing together.'

People were 'billeted' locally, in homes or small 'B&Bs' (or larger establishments if they wanted). This kept costs down. The schools attracted people from all over the country, offering a 'fellowship' based on mutual interest and friendship. As you have seen, the 'line-up' over the years was pretty impressive.

The 'initiation ceremony' (everyone went through it on their first visit) meant that everybody was treated the same – there was no hierarchy. The 'ceremony' included the new students being instructed in a special 'chant' (I suppose it would be a mantra today!). They had to say

'OH' then 'AH' then 'TA' followed by 'NA' and finally (quickly) 'SIAM.'

They then 'joined' these to say 'OH AH TA NA SIAM', gradually getting quicker then singing the words over and over to the tune of the National Anthem. By then it had become:

OH WHAT AN ASS I AM.

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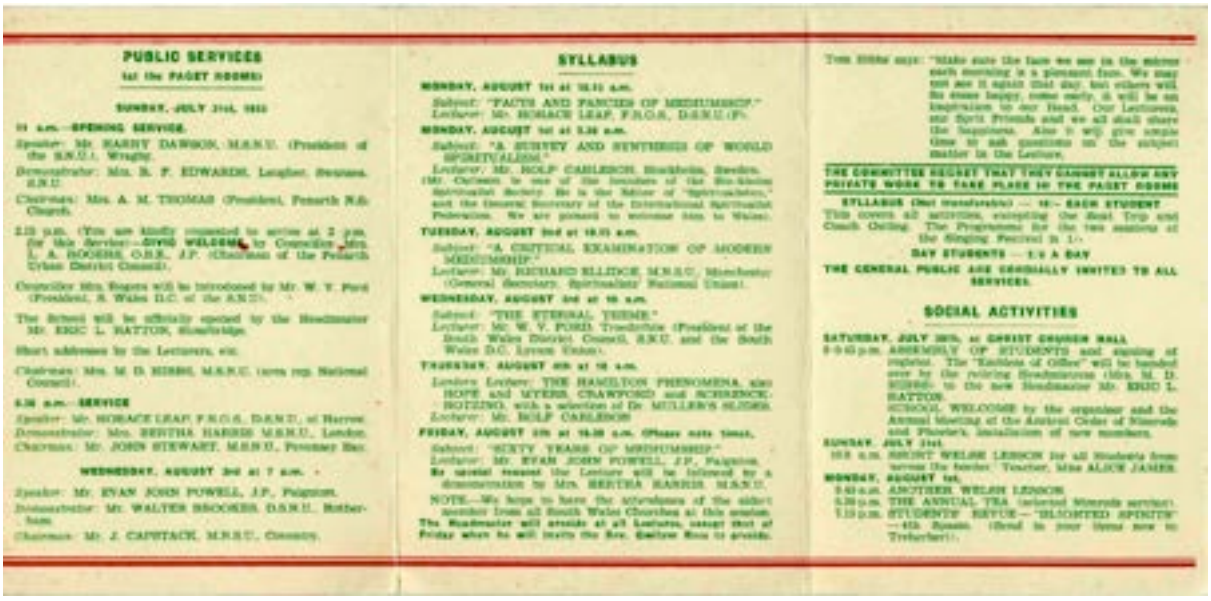
Below is shown part of the 1955 programme July 30th-August 5th at Penarth. Kindly supplied by David Hopkins.



PUBLIC SERVICES

(at the PAGET ROOMS)

SUNDAY, JULY 31st, 1955

11 a.m.—OPENING SERVICE.

Speaker: Mr. HARRY DAWSON, M.S.N.U. (President of the S.N.U.), Wrexham.

Demonstrator: Mrs. B. F. EDWARDS, Laugher, Swansea, S.N.U.

Chairman: Mrs. A. M. THOMAS (President, Penarth N.S. Church).

2.15 p.m. (You are kindly requested to arrive at 2 p.m. for this Service)—DIVIS WELCOME by Councillor Mrs. L. A. ROGERS, O.B.E., J.P. (Chairman of the Penarth Urban District Council).

Councillor Mrs. Rogers will be introduced by Mr. W. T. Ford (President, S. Wales D.C. of the S.N.U.).

The School will be officially opened by the Headmaster Mr. ERIC L. HATTON, Homefridge.

Short addresses by the Lecturers, etc.

Chairman: Mrs. M. D. SIBBS, M.S.N.U. (area rep. National Council).

6.30 p.m.—SERVICE

Speaker: Mr. HORACE LEAF, F.R.C.S., D.S.N.U., of Harrow.

Demonstrator: Mrs. BERTHA HARRIS M.S.N.U., London.

Chairman: Mr. JOHN STEWART, M.S.N.U., Pontypridd Dist.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 3rd at 7 p.m.

Speaker: Mr. EVAN JOHN POWELL, J.P., Pulgwyn.

Demonstrator: Mr. WALTER BROOKES, D.S.N.U., Rotherham.

Chairman: Mr. J. CAPSTACK, M.S.N.U., Coventry.

SYLLABUS

MONDAY, AUGUST 1st at 10.15 a.m.

Subject: "FACTS AND FANCIES OF MEDIUMSHIP."
Lecturer: Mr. HORACE LEAF, F.R.C.S., D.S.N.U.(P).

MONDAY, AUGUST 1st at 3.30 p.m.

Subject: "A SURVEY AND SYNTHESIS OF WORLD SPIRITUALISM."
Lecturer: Mr. BOLIP CARLSSON, Stockholm, Sweden.
(Mr. Carlsson is one of the founders of the Stockholm Spiritualist Society. He is the Editor of "Spiritualisten," and the General Secretary of the International Spiritualist Federation. We are pleased to welcome him to Wales).

TUESDAY, AUGUST 2nd at 10.15 a.m.

Subject: "A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF MODERN MEDIUMSHIP."
Lecturer: Mr. RICHARD ELLIDGE, M.S.N.U., Manchester (General Secretary, Spiritualists' National Union).

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 3rd at 10 a.m.

Subject: "THE ETERNAL THEME."
Lecturer: Mr. W. T. FORD, Treorchy (President of the South Wales District Council, S.N.U. and the South Wales D.C. Lyceum Union).

THURSDAY, AUGUST 4th at 10 a.m.

Lecture Lecture: THE HAMILTON PHENOMENA, also HOPE and MYERS, CRAWFORD and SCHRENCK-NOTZING, with a selection of Dr. MULLER'S SLIDES.
Lecturer: Mr. BOLIP CARLSSON

FRIDAY, AUGUST 5th at 10.30 a.m. (Please note time).

Subject: "SIXTY YEARS OF MEDIUMSHIP."
Lecturer: Mr. EVAN JOHN POWELL, J.P., Pulgwyn.
We special request the Lecture will be followed by a demonstration by Mrs. BERTHA HARRIS, M.S.N.U.

NOTE.—We hope to have the attendance of the oldest member from all South Wales Churches at this session.
The Headmaster will preside at all Lectures, except that of Friday when he will invite the Rev. Gwilym Rees to preside.

Tom Sibbs says: "Make sure the face we see in the mirror each morning is a pleasant face. We may not see it again that day, but others will. Be some happy, some early, it will be an inspiration to our Head. Our Lecturers, our Spirit Friends and we all shall share the happiness. Also it will give ample time to ask questions on the subject matter in the Lecture.

THE COMMITTEE REGRET THAT THEY CANNOT ALLOW ANY PRIVATE WORK TO TAKE PLACE IN THE PAGET ROOMS

SYLLABUS (Not transferable) — 10/- EACH STUDENT

This covers all activities, excepting the Boat Trip and Coach Outing. The Programme for the two sessions of the Singing Festival is 1/-.

DAY STUDENTS — 1/6 A DAY

THE GENERAL PUBLIC ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO ALL SERVICES.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

SATURDAY, JULY 30th, at CHRIST CHURCH HALL

8-0-45 p.m. ASSEMBLY OF STUDENTS and signing of register. The "Endless of Office" will be handed over by the retiring Headmistress (Mrs. M. D. SIBBS) to the new Headmaster Mr. ERIC L. HATTON.
SCHOOL WELCOME by the organiser and the Annual Meeting of the Austral Order of Minerals and Phoebe's, installation of new members.

SUNDAY, JULY 31st.

10.0 a.m. SHORT WELSH LESSON for all Students from across the border. Teacher, Miss ALICE JAMES.

MONDAY, AUGUST 1st.

9.45 a.m. ANOTHER WELSH LESSON.
6.30 p.m. THE ANNUAL TEA (selected Minerals service).
7.15 p.m. STUDENTS' REVUE—"BLIGHTED SPIRITS" —4th Sketch. (Send in your items now to Treherbert).

Photograph of SNU President Harry Dawson and General Secretary Richard (Dick) Ellidge

1958 South Wales Summer School

Although there was an ongoing success with the Summer Schools, the Union did not have a permanent location to run courses, training and development, etc. The first, I believe, to see the need and importance of the facilities within the movement was Emma Hardinge Britten. William Stead in his 'Borderland' journal for October 1995 (pages 354-355) publishes an appeal from Emma:

WANTED: A COLLEGE FOR MEDIUMS

MRS. HARDINGE BRITTEN has been appealing to the Spiritualists, through the columns of their weekly organ, for support to found a College for Mediums. She Says:—

The first pre-requisite for this proposed Training College is a commodious house, with, if possible, some ground attached and, here let me say, it can scarcely be doubted that there are some rich property owners, spiritually inclined enough to devote a house and lands to the *experiment, at least*, of the noble purpose under consideration. The house required should be large enough to accommodate from twelve to twenty young persons (we will say in the first instance of the female sex), together with a good motherly matron or housekeeper, a well-informed governess competent to teach the scholars various branches of literature and art (especially music), and in highly mediumistic person who, by aid of experience and study, should be able to organize the circles and devote herself, in a manner somewhat analogous to the ordinary spiritual Lyceum exercises, especially to the moral as well as spiritual culture of the scholars. Besides these permanent officials there should be a council of interested managers, who should meet at stated periods and aid in drawing up rules and superintending their practical application. At least three circles should be held each week for the purpose of unfolding and practising the mediumistic powers of the inmates, and regular services should be given every Sunday, attended by such members of the council and their friends as could be present. The scholars qualified for admission should be persons endowed with some mediumistic gift, and recommended by, or known to, members of the council, who could vouch alike for their capacity and worth. Whilst it is essential and right that the matron, governess, and mediumistic controller should be paid employes, the scholars admitted for set terms of time and periods should be received and entertained free of all cost.

When good speakers or mediums were found to be fitted for public work they should be allowed to go to societies or families applying to the college officials, and though that service should in all justice and honour be paid for, as long as the parties employed remained attached to the college, their fees should be devoted solely to the maintenance of the institution. This provision would not only aid the support of the gratuitous home supplied to the mediums, but it would also avoid the terrible temptations to which some paid mediums have unhappily yielded, viz., to resort to fraud, when the spirit power, which they could not always command, failed them.

In this initial sketch I do not attempt to enter into those varied and important details of internal management which can only be devised in careful council and regulated by expediency; but I should urge that the most sublime and exalted exercises of music should be practised, and the scholars taught how to cultivate the ground—if there be any attached to the house—with a view of raising fruit, herbs, and vegetables, for medicinal as well as edible purposes, no less than as contributing to the maintenance of the house.

A house, land, and some endowment, and gifts or subscriptions enough to pay officials and maintain the grand experiment, for at least one year, should surely be forthcoming from those whose wealth could meet the demand, and whose knowledge must assure them that their stewardship of that very wealth will determine their happiness or misery when they themselves become spirits.

James Arthur Findlay was only twelve when Emma published her appeal; Findlay did, however, have a full set of Stead's 'Borderland' in his library at Stansted Hall and one could *tentatively* wonder if he had read Emma's appeal. In 1948 Mr W. Lorraine Haig became President of the Union and the following year's AGM was held in Edinburgh on July 2nd 1949. Education was the main theme, the focus being on larger but fewer churches. Haig emphasised that the churches were splitting up into small groups, creating a greater demand on speakers and demonstrators, hence lowering the standards. The S.N.U. could not cope with these extra demands, thus the need for emphasising the bonuses of an all-round education scheme.

The President emphasised:

A Spiritualist's College

If we wish to achieve fully our plans in the future, we must have a training centre 'a place of our own' so to speak, where every phase of our work will be taught by qualified teachers. A place where men and women – for the outlay of an amount of money within their reach or of the Society who may sponsor them – can attend for special courses.

In this – for lack of a special name – "College for the Advancement of Psychic Science," there will be courses for speakers, development classes for mediums, classes for Spiritualists who want to specialise in any suitable subject. Short Summer courses for those who require further tuition, *i.e.*, Presidents and Executives alike.

Indeed, all the subjects coming under the heading of "Psychic Science" will be part of the curriculum. *Great is the need for such a college*.

Haig continued:

I am certain that within the next twenty-five years a "College for Psychic Science" will be established in this country, and with that faith I am trying today to prepare the mind of the membership to be ready, when the time comes, to grasp the great opportunity

> with both hands. Yes! grasp it with both hands, so that we may make this "Place of our Own' a model for all the countries in the world to imitate, and at the same time, make it a living memorial to the souls whose work and goodwill will be responsible for bringing it about.[11]

Haig's certainty of a Spiritualist College *within the next twenty-five years* was based on ongoing talks, presumably not generally known outside the Union. General Secretary Dick Ellidge stated in 1966:

> "It was early in 1945 that Mr J. Arthur Findlay first approached the Union regarding Stansted Hall when it was occupied by the Red Cross as a Convalescent Home and when he resided at Rockingham Castle, Market Harborough. This was followed in 1950 by personal contact with W. Lorraine Haig, then President of the Union, who appointed a President's Committee to investigate and report on a College for Spiritualism. But it was not until January, 1954, that Mr Findlay wrote to Mr H. Dawson, who had been elected President six months previously, followed by meeting at Stansted, that a direct and close liaison between the Hall and the Union was established. …"

For further details and references please see "The J. Arthur Findlay College for the Advancement of Psychic Science – The early years", Pioneer, Volume 1, No. 2, January 2014.

The College opened in 1964, mainly for meetings and weekends; in the first week of August 1965 the SNU Summer School occupied the College. The official opening took place on Saturday September 17 1966 by Mrs Wayne, daughter of Mr and Mrs J. A. Findlay.

She recalled that her father:

"tried to find answers to questions mankind has always asked. This search eventually led his to Spiritualism."

"As a result of his writings and speeches there were people who did not agree with him," she said. "I remember one woman wrote to him and accused him of being in league with the Devil. We laughed. Daddy didn't mind. I didn't mind. And I don't think the Devil did either!"

Over 250 Spiritualists crowded into the Hall for the dedication service, Mrs Wayne on declaring the college open, quoted, "the words you have as your motto:

'May this house flourish'."

—~—☼—~—

[11] The above quotes were taken from the verbatim account of Lorraine Haig's AGM address on July 2nd, published in the 'Two Worlds', issues July 15th & 22nd 1949.

Early images of the Arthur Findlay College

⇑ Original Reception location & Shop

⇐ Original Dining Room

⇓Bar Area

September 17th 2016 marks the Golden Anniversary of the Official Opening of Stansted Hall

"May this house flourish"

The original name was "The J. Arthur Findlay College for the Advancement of Psychic Science". Its early history as a functioning College up until the early 1970s is published in "Pioneer", Vol. 1, No. 2, January 2014. The official opening was under the SNU President Dr John Winning (1965-1968), who also served as its first Principal. Below is a short quote from the article:

> Stansted Hall's official opening, a little later than previously scheduled, was on Saturday, September 17th at 3 p.m. and was officiated by Mrs Francis Wayne, daughter of Arthur and Gertrude, carried out the official opening, to which the public were invited at the price of 3/6. *Psychic News* reported there were over two hundred and fifty people; this included four coach parties.
>
> Findlay's daughter stated in her dedication:
>
> Mrs. Wayne recalled that her father "tried to find answers to questions mankind has always asked. This search eventually led him to Spiritualism."
>
> "As a result of his writings and speeches there were people who did not agree with him," she said. "I remember one woman wrote to him and accused him of being in league with the Devil. We laughed. Daddy didn't mind. I didn't mind. And I don't think the Devil did either!"
>
> She said Stansted Hall been a very happy home for years, adding, "My husband and family are very pleased to think that you now have care of this house." Mrs. Wayne spoke of her father's dream that his house should be used for research into psychic matters. And she expressed her pleasant surprise at the change that had taken place in spite of the many difficulties which had faced the Spiritualists' National Union.
>
> Declaring the college open, Mrs. Wayne quoted "the words you have as your motto: 'May this house flourish'."

In 1968 Charles Quastel became the SNU President for the second time; Quastel was featured in "Pioneer", Vol. 3, Nos. 1 and 2, February-April 2016. The amount of work and finance required to keep the College, as indicated in the article referred to, far outweighed the income it received, plunging the College into possible financial ruin, with a roll-on effect on the Union. In 1969 the "Friends of Stansted" was formed, with Gordon Higginson as Chairman, Bertha Frank as Secretary and W. Potter as Treasurer, aided by Mrs E. Anderson and Frank Tams.

It can be noted in the minutes of the inaugural meeting of the "Friends of Stansted" held at Stansted Hall on February 21st and 22nd 1970, with a hundred and fifty present. Opening the meeting, Higginson "clearly stated the reason why the Friends of Stansted was formed last year, when a few decided to support the College and to fight for its continuation. With this in mind his appeal letter was sent out in December 1969

to which, he stated, the response had been very encouraging and membership was gradually increasing." General Secretary Dick Ellidge provided a list of Class B members for Gordon to prepare a further list of possible 'Friends'; prior to the formation of the Friends of Stansted there were 'Founder Members of the College'.

Numerous activities were planed to raise funds, including two "Friends Weeks" at the College. It was agreed at this meeting that the word "Hall" be added to the "Friends of Stansted".

At the 1970 AGM Gordon Higginson became President of the Union. Seven years later, during the "Arthur Findlay Weekend" of November 19th and 20th, a Dinner Dance and, on Sunday, the Arthur Findlay Memorial Lecture took place. It was customary in the early years of the College for the year to generally end with the Arthur Findlay Memorial dinner. In 1977 the guest of honour was Maurice Barbanell, who had supported numerous dinners at the College to raise the much-needed funds for it to survive.

Gordon announced at the Dinner Dance:

"*President of the Spiritualists' National Union expressed his gratitude to all who had supported him and the Union, through the 'President's Appeal' and through 'The Friends of Stansted Hall' in order that the Debt to the Building Fund Pool might be cleared*."

In the President's letter to the SNU publication, "Communicator" (Vol. 2, No. 5, 1977) Mr Higginson reiterates his thanks.

Stansted Hall Cleared of Debt

During the period of my Presidency of the Union, I have been greatly moved by the invaluable support that I have been given at all times, with this support I have been able to make many alterations which tend to the advancement of our Movement. One of my aims on taking over this onerous job was to find the means to clear the debt owing to the Building Fund Pool for the adaptation of Stansted Hall for the purpose of a College. The generosity of the late Arthur Findlay has been recognised and acknowledged on many occasions. It is now my pleasure to give my acknowledgement to the many ordinary people who by their generosity have made it possible to repay the debt owed to the Building Fund Pool.

Realising the enormity of the task of raising the money to repay the debt and the accumulating interest, I launched an Appeal a few years ago, and today I can give my thanks to all those who responded with outright gifts of money and to those who made interest free loans. My fellow custodians and l, ably advised by Mr Wilf Potter, the Custodian Trustee have been able to invest the monies received at very advantageous rates and we can now make our contribution to the clearing of the debt.

We are greatly helped towards the end of clearing the debt, by the Friends of Stansted Hall who have contributed their investments which have been received or raised for this ultimate purpose.

It is not my purpose to make reference to the specific amounts which have been contributed, but to inform you that aided by the Union as the Trustee of the Britten Memorial Trust in purchasing Britten House for the Union's Offices [annex building] it is possible to clear, as from the beginning of October 1977 the debt to the Building Fund Pool has been set at £100,000. This is a magnificent effort and I cannot let the occasion pass without giving to all concerned my most grateful and heartfelt thanks.

In acknowledging the efforts of the past, we must look to the future and the work that has to be done and above all to the part which can be played by the Hall in the scheme of things. Undoubtedly it has been proved that there is a demand both from this country and from overseas for a College where all can be helped in their search for the Truth and for their spiritual advancement. We have started a Foundation Fund for the College under the auspices of the Union and though at the moment the investments that we have been able to make are very small nevertheless it is a beginning towards assuring that there will be an income each year which will allow us to maintain the Hall in good condition and perhaps make any improvements.

I would close by once again paying my acknowledgement to everyone who has aided my efforts, either by giving money, making loans or by taking the necessary care that the money received has been wisely used in order to achieve this most satisfactory.

Thank you,
G. M. Higginson,
President.
Spiritualists' Nat. Union

Without the strenuous, dedicated, ongoing efforts of Gordon Higginson in the early years of his Presidency it is very doubtful today that we would enjoy J. Arthur Findlay's great gift to the Union – Thank You.[5]

[5] There would be many more challenges to Stansted Hall over the ensuing years but this was the first landmark achievement by Gordon Higginson and all those dedicated Spiritualists who worked so hard to give the Arthur Findlay College success today worldwide. Donald Brooks took the B&W images.

College of Psychic Studies President: Stephen Chapman

Spiritualists' National Union President: David Bruton

meet for the first time at Stansted Hall

The two Presidents from the two leading teaching colleges in the UK met for the first time at the Arthur Findlay College on June 27th 2016. Stephen was accompanied by the College Principal, Gill Matini, and curator Vivienne Roberts. In May 2016 Arthur Findlay College tutor Janette Marshall and Paul Gaunt were invited to spend a day at the College of Psychic Studies,[8] which resulted in a return invitation to spend a day at the Arthur Findlay College.

Stephen and his colleagues were welcomed by President Bruton, Tanya Smith, General Manager of the College, Jan Marshall and Paul Gaunt (shown in the centre of the photograph). William Stainton Moses founded the College of Psychic Studies, originally called the London Spiritualist Alliance, on October 25th 1883, seven years prior to the SNU, which was then called the Spiritualists' National Federation; Moses himself was a strong advocate of National Spiritualism.[9]

In 1926 Arthur Conan Doyle, until shortly before his death in 1930, became the President of the London Spiritualist Alliance. Towards the end of Doyle's life he was also the Hon. President of the Union and today remains so *in spirit*. Later Arthur Findlay became President of the Alliance.

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[8] The full report can be found in the last issue of Pioneer.

[9] The College of Psychic Studies: https://www.collegeofpsychicstudies.co.uk/

⇒Paul Gaunt – Jan Marshall – Vivienne Roberts – Stephen Chapman – Tanya Smith – David Bruton – Gill Matini.

The morning was taken up with general discussions on the two organisations. Although both are teaching colleges, the courses are generally quite diverse and varied in their approach to psychic, spiritual and healing development. After lunch Tanya Smith gave our guests an excellent detailed tour of the College and the history of Stansted Hall and President Bruton introduced the party to the SNU headquarters at Redwoods. The final part of the visit was spent in the Britten Memorial Museum with Paul Gaunt and Jan Marshall.

One of the great features of the College of Psychic Studies is its fine collection of spirit art, photography and its library. Its President, who became a member of the College in 1985, served as a volunteer librarian for many years before becoming president in 2011. Its archives hold many reminders of our past; Leslie Price, the College archivist, was unfortunately ill and unable to join us. So it was no surprise that the final part of their visit to the Museum created some intense mutual interest.

Top of the agenda were our displayed independent/trance and inspired works of art. The more technical points of production and application were discussed by Jan and art historian Vivienne. I relate below some of the interesting points of the discussions.

The first was a drawing by Robert Cooper, who died on November 5th 1909. He was introduced into Spiritualism in 1862, although, interestingly, history has no record

of him as a medium, but he was a well-known lecturer on the Spiritualist platform. He worked with Emma Hardinge Britten, authored books on Spiritualism and travelled extensively with the likes of James J. Morse, etc.

So I found it strange when I found an ink spirit drawing called "Chaos", executed through the hand of Robert Cooper; Vivienne Roberts (shown on the left of the image) likened the work to that of Madge Gill, whose work is displayed at the College of Psychic Studies.[10]

The mystery about the spirit drawing is explained in a "Two Worlds" Xmas supplement dated December 12th 1924, neatly found in a pocket at the back of the drawing, which I am pointing out to Stephen. Cooper's son, C. J. Cooper, tells the story of how the drawing was done by his father:

> "In connection with the spirit drawing, representing 'Chaos,' I think it as well to state the circumstances under which it was produced. My father, the late Robert Cooper, had some time previously become acquainted with J. H. Powell, the poet, who, when calling at our house one day, mentioned some very extra-ordinary things which he had witnessed at a seance when he was present at a Mrs. Marshall's, in London, and my father, who was at the time quite a materialist, was very much interested in what he was told, and subsequently paid Mrs. Marshall a visit, and was more than ever impressed by what he there witnessed. Seances were then conducted in our own home, and my eldest sister, then only a schoolgirl, developed the faculty of automatic writing. Through her mediumship some interesting and extraordinary messages were obtained, some in languages she knew nothing whatever about.

> "Later on my father became very abnormal, and informed us he was being controlled by his uncle, John Thomas Cooper, who, was a celebrated chemist. He was the discoverer of the oxyhydrogen light, also of the process of enamelling as applied to articles of daily use: jugs, basins, etc. The subject of Spiritualism was, of course, little understood by any members of my father's family,

[10] Unfortunately, the image shown above does not do the exquisite drawing justice; it is taken from the "Two Worlds" journal. For Madge Gill, see Psypioneer, Vol. 10, No. 4, April 2014: "The Psychic Art of Madge Gill – Psychic News".

and as his condition became apparently worse (he abstained from food for days together), it was arranged that I should be continually with him, as his condition was such that we deemed it necessary that he should not be left alone. During this time I slept in the same room with him, and it was then that the spirit drawings were produced.

"There was a table in the room on which, before retiring, would be placed a sheet of drawing paper, together with ink, pencils, etc., and he would say, 'We'll see what the spirits will give us to-night,' or words to that effect. Every night I would hear, him get out of bed, go to the table, and then the sound of writing or drawing could be heard; then after a short time—ten minutes, may be—he would get back into bed, and in the morning the drawings would be there. I should say perhaps ten or a dozen pictures were produced in this way. A light was never at any time used, so I may consistently say they were produced in total darkness.

"This phase of things went on for nearly a fortnight, when by degrees his abnormal condition disappeared, and food was again taken. He still continued engrossed in the subject of Spiritualism, but no recurrence of this sort ever again appeared. The other drawings were all of a most exquisite character and design, but totally different to the one now exhibited.

(Signed) C. COOPER."

—~—☼—~—

Vivienne Roberts drew attention to a painting drawn under spirit influence by Mrs Cranstoun (sometimes spelt Cranston) Laurie in one and a half hours, dated July 1st 1867 and presented to Emma Harding by the medium. Vivienne noted that the medium lived in Washington DC, and the family were mediums connected with President Abraham Lincoln. It is noteworthy to mention that Emma Hardinge (Emma Hardinge Britten from October 11th 1870) campaigned for Lincoln in the Presidential election of 1864. Emma wrote in her autobiography published by her sister posthumously in 1900, page 203:

I, in especial, may look back with glad memory to that night when, in my first public plea uttered in his honour, I declared that the day was not far distant when every true American would say, that 'If George Washington was the father of this country, Abraham Lincoln was its preserver.'

The artist is Margaret Ann McCutcheon, who married Cranstoun H. Laurie;[11] Emma wrote an article, "Spirit Art", in the 1871 "Year Book of Spiritualism"; below is a short quote:

> The whole of Mr. Laurie's highly-gifted family display mediumistic powers in the direction of spirit-art; and the immense maps or charts, so to speak, of floral luxuriance, executed under control by Mrs. Laurie, have, for years, excited the admiration and astonishment of all beholders. Still they represent flowers, fruits, and other objects, which, despite their singular groupings, and the wonderfully-abnormal character of their execution, might be the work of some highly-gifted artist endowed with an erratic and exuberant fancy.

From Vivienne Roberts' observation and comments a history has been built about this valuable exhibit in the Britten Memorial Museum, which had previously gone unnoticed!

Many discussions, items and documents were viewed throughout the afternoon; psychic artist Janette Marshall called attention to the bust of Joseph Benjamin and the Museum's collection of Benjamin memorabilia. He was a remarkable evidential mental medium who served the Spiritualist movement for over five decades.

Part of the collection is a silver cup presented to Joseph Benjamin when he was voted as "The Spiritualist of 1979" by Psychic News, together with a framed letter of recognition signed by Maurice Barbanell, Editor.[12]

Jan was particularly interested in the Maurice and Sylvia Barbanell portrait inscribed "To Joe Benjamin whose superb gifts confound sceptics, from Sylvia & Maurice Barbanell". Recently Jan and myself had the pleasure to meet up with Roy Stemman and Tony Ortzen. Both had previously worked with Barbanell at "Psychic News" and took the opportunity to give us some amusing and interesting stories of their former boss. President Bruton announced at this year's AGM that the NEC had agreed to accord the honour of Honorary President-in-Spirit to Maurice Barbanell, together with the news that the Union is to rename the Arthur Findlay Centre in Stafford as the "Barbanell Conference Centre", giving an interesting significance to Jan's choice!

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[11] "Mrs. Belle Miller, Mr. Laurie's daughter, was one of the most powerful physical mediums I ever met. While she played the piano it would rise with apparent ease, and keep perfect time, rising and falling with the music. By placing her hand on the top of the piano it would rise clear from the floor, though I have seen as many as *five men seated on it at the time*. Mr. and Mrs. Laurie were both fine mediums; and I had met many prominent people during my visits there, who, though not professing to be spiritualists, made no secret of their desire to investigate the subject." Taken from Nettie Colburn Maynard's book, "Was Abraham Lincoln a Spiritualist?", published 1891. Available at the Arthur Findlay Shop: http://arthurfindlayshop.org/

[12] Note in the photograph one of our Presidents-in-spirit, Hannen Swaffer, inscribed "To Maurice Barbanell from Hannen Swaffer, Xmas Eve 1929".

Numerous other works of direct/ independent and trance art by the early 1860s Glasgow medium, David Duguid, came into discussion, including a statement attesting to the conditions under which Duguid painted "The Pool" in a trance state in 1872. I had previously noted that the painting in the Museum was not in fact "The Pool" as previously thought – all a bit of a mystery!

Finally, another image which created interest was a spirit oil painting on slate by the Campbell brothers, "Spirit Artists of Lily Dale, New York", an oil painting of flowers (bottom right of the photograph).

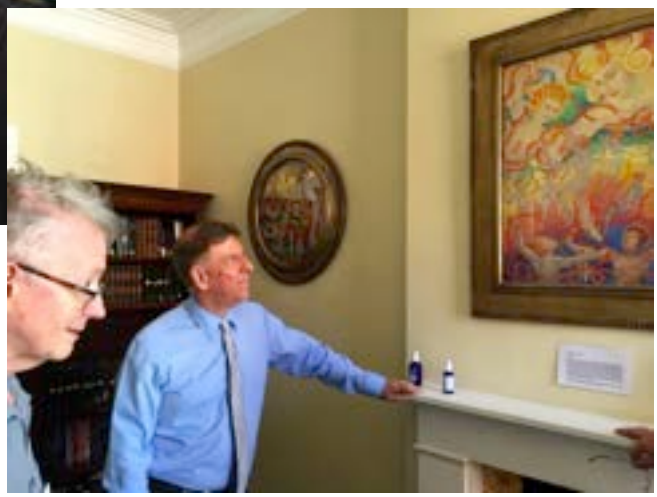
The séance took place in Salford, Manchester, about 1901. The picture was painted by spirit precipitation "before a full audience in good gaslight on a penny slate bought at Abel Heywood's shop." The time taken was two minutes.

The day was a great success all round and links between the two major organisations were forged for closer relations in the future.

The College of Psychic Studies held an "Exhibition: Encounters with the Spirit World" from 14th to 20th August 2016. David Bruton, Janette Marshall and myself attended this excellent exhibition of our Spiritualist heritage. We were privileged to have a conducted tour by the College archivist, Leslie Price. Above, I noted the mystery of the missing 1872 David Duguid painting, "The Pool"; the exhibition held a copy of the Britten Memorial missing painting. A story for a future issue!

Special thanks are due to Jan Marshall for taking all the photographs in this article and also in the "Britten Memorial Museum & Library" article elsewhere in this issue.

Below are some images of the exhibition with Leslie Price:



JAMES JOHNSON MORSE & EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN

Return to spend an evening at Stansted Hall!

As part of Tanya Smith's 'Traditional Victorian Christmas at the Arthur Findlay College' held from December 10th to 17th 2016, AFC General Manager Tanya Smith and Museum Curator Paul Gaunt took the part of these two founder members of the Spiritualists' National Union.

Tanya and Paul re-enacted the factual account of the lives of Emma Hardinge Britten and James J. Morse in full character with a timed PowerPoint as their backdrop. Both characters gave graphic accounts of their lives, which included the formation of the Union. Their accounts were well received by the students; the re-enactment was very atmospheric within the ambience of Stansted Hall, built in 1871. Not only was the visual aspect appreciated; the whole evening was built on historical information about these two pioneers, giving a clear, detailed foundation of their lives.

The evening was opened by AFC tutor Janette (Jan) Marshall in period costume stating there were many pioneers of Spiritualism; Emma and Morse were just two of them, to which we owed so much.

Jan finished with one of her quotes:

Philosophy is the flower of Spiritualism that casts its seeds upon the minds of men that they may breathe in the mist of inspiration and exhale fruits of wisdom for mankind.

James Morse was principally involved with the foundation of the 'Britten Memorial'. A Provisional Committee met in Manchester on Friday December 15th 1899 to provide a suitable memorial to the 'life and work of Mrs Emma Hardinge Britten', who had died on October 2nd 1899. It can be noted in "Pioneer", Vol. 3, No. 4, that the Britten Memorial Museum and Library were reunited in August 2016. The Spiritualists' National Union has now officially renamed this as the 'Britten Museum and Library'; study/research weeks are available and details can be found elsewhere in this issue.

The evening was further highlighted with a Victorian slide show. The old magic lantern projector is believed to have belonged to James Morse; it appears that candles or oil lamps originally illuminated it, but later by a very large electric bulb, so it was a short show showing around twenty glass slides. The actual slides were discovered at the back of the cupboards in Arthur Findlay's library. Records show that some of the slides belonged to James Morse, who was known to use a projector for some of his talks about his travels, psychic photography, etc.

The image below is the actual projector, which is still in perfect working order; the photograph was kindly taken by James Frid, Print Technician at Redwoods, Stansted. Below is an image of the slide show, a truly unique experience. The glass slides cover psychic photography, portraits of some of our many pioneers, old churches and Lyceum marches, etc. James has now preserved these electronically, so these images can be used on PowerPoint, etc. Some images are identified on the slide, others have been identified independently, and others need further research. Below are some examples of this wonderful find.

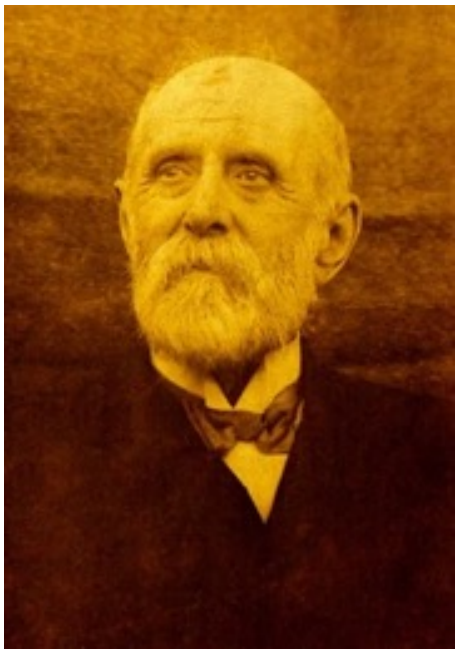
The evening Victorian slide show

Thanks are due to AFC tutor Janette (Jan) Marshall, who kindly took all the photographs of this special evening

Last known images

Emma Hardinge Britten
1823 - 1899

James Johnson Morse
1848 – 1919



The Morse collection of glass magic lantern slides includes some rare images of the Lyceum marches; James Morse was himself very involved within the Lyceum movement. The image above is not dated, but note James Morse with the top hat directly behind the bandsman with his head turned near the centre of the banner; the banner shows it is the Ashton-under-Lyne Lyceum.

The first issue of "Pioneer" published an excellent overview of Spiritualism in Great Britain written by James J. Morse on September 22nd 1896, which also included a detailed look at the Lyceum movement. It can be noted in the article that Morse founded its official journal:

> "… the Lyceums possess their official organ, *The Lyceum Banner,* which periodical was founded under Spirit impulsion by the present writer six years ago, and who, in conjunction with his daughter, Miss Florence Morse, as assistant editor, has been editor and publisher down to the present time. During my absence the paper is in the able care of Mr. Thomas Olman Todd, of Sunderland. It was made the official organ of the Lyceum Union in 1891. Since its establishment over 150,000 copies have been sold. It is the only journal devoted to Lyceum work in the world, and as is usual with most Spiritualist papers, it has been issued at the personal loss of its proprietor, though there is evidence that the proverbial corner has now been almost turned! All the labour involved has been entirely gratuitous."

The Lyceum movement played a substantial part in the early growth of the Spiritualist movement, which has been so often overlooked. It was very closely associated in the formation and growth of the Spiritualists' National Union, with some of our former Presidents being also Presidents of the Lyceum; for example, our former Presidents Samuel S. Chiswell (1891, 1892 and 1895) and James Morse (1899 and 1900) were Lyceum Presidents in 1895 and 1900

respectively.[1] In the early days of the yearly movable Conferences the Lyceums would march through the towns. The report below (taken from the "Two Worlds"[2]) is an example – the 1892 Burnley Conference of the Spiritualists' National Federation – and gives us some insight into the early events and excitement of our early Conferences which formed the Union.

> THE Third Annual Conference of the National Federation of Spiritualists may be regarded as an unqualified success. The whole proceedings passed off most happily without a hitch, and we feel assured that much good will result both to Spiritualists individually and to the movement itself.
>
> The proceedings commenced at 3-30 on Saturday, July 2nd, with a procession through the principal streets of the town. Hammerton Street was thronged with Spiritualists and spectators, and promptly at the time appointed, Mr. Sudall (marshal) put the procession in motion. In the front a youth carried the flag presented by our American friends to Mr. J. J. Morse, and Mr. Mason accompanied him. Then followed most of the members of the Executive Committee. The Burnley Temperance Brass Band came next, and their excellent music was greatly appreciated. Then came the children of the Hammerton Street Lyceums, most of them being dressed in white and carrying flowers, some of the smaller ones being crowned with wreaths of flowers and wearing veils.
>
> They presented a bright and attractive picture, and many favourable comments were heard. Members of the elder groups and officers and contingents from neighbouring Lyceums and societies, such as Nelson, Colne, Darwen, Accrington, Blackburn, Bacup, Rawtenstall, Bolton, and Rochdale, augmented the numbers, until they totalled upwards of 800 persons. The streets were lined with spectators, and in the main thoroughfare the services of the police were required to obtain room for the procession, so great was the throng. Other schools were marching, and the Ambulance Corps also paraded the streets, which, no doubt, swelled the number of onlookers. The weather proved fine, and the procession, which was enlivened by a number of flags and large banners, was a splendid start for the demonstration and struck the keynote of success.
>
> After tea of which upwards of 400 friends partook (the children of the Lyceums being supplied with buns and coffee in the skating rink on the other side of the street, kindly lent by the proprietors, whose generous helpfulness in various ways we cordially acknowledge), a public conversazione was held in the Mechanics' Institute, when a high class programme was gone through. The audience, which numbered about 800, evidently thoroughly appreciated the efforts put forward to please them, and a number of encores would have been demanded had they not been rigorously forbidden, owing to the length of the programme.
>
> The Chairman, Mr. S. S. Chiswell, of Liverpool, in a happy speech, rejoiced in the success of the procession, and thought Burnley Spiritualists had educated their townsmen to the recognition that Spiritualists were decent people after all. He had heard it whispered that Spiritualism was dead in Burnley, but it did not look like it, and he hoped the movement would be all the stronger after the Conference, and the friends would feel encouraged to push on with renewed zeal in the movement for man's spiritual redemption.
>
> A number of bright lads from the Darwen Lyceum sang a song and chorus, and also gave a whistling chorus in good style, winning hearty applause. The band kindly proffered and rendered the Hallelujah Chorus, for which they were heartily thanked. Glees were rendered by the choir, the first especially being capitally given. Miss Coles, of Colne,

[1] It should be noted that the "Past Presidents of the Lyceum" SNU page incorrectly states "Mr. C. Chiswell"; it should read "Samuel Southern Chiswell" (29th March 1852-12th April 1910).

[2] Taken from the Conference Supplement: Containing a full report of the Proceedings at the Burnley Conference of the Spiritualists' National Federation: Gratis Supplement To "Two Worlds", July 8, 1892.

recited a very lengthy piece in a manner which gave great promise of good things in the future. She has abilities of a high order, which, with care and culture, should land her in the front rank of public reciters. Mrs. J. M. Smith gave a reading which met with much appreciation, as also did a piano duet by Mrs. Kaye and Miss Smith, the latter being a girl of about 10 or 12 years of age, whose playing gives great promise. The solos and songs were numerous, and where all were so good it is difficult to make especial mention of any, but we *must* give credit to Miss A. French, of Preston, a lady baritone, who has a voice of rare capacity, feeling, and sweetness, which she uses with great taste and judgment. One song, self-accompanied on the guitar, was a gem, and her mandoline solo was a fine treat. Miss Boys, of Pendleton, charmed the hearts of her hearers with her fine singing, and was quite captivating in her gipsy costume. Miss Wilkinson sang sweetly, and Mrs. Kaye, of Leeds, also gave great pleasure in her two songs. Mr. Hartley has a fine tenor voice and sang exceedingly well. Mr. Sudall's powers were well displayed in his songs. Mr. Simkin self-accompanied on the banjo, won hearty laughter and applause. Mr. E. W. Wallis also rendered a sea song; and Mr. Hepworth's inimitable humorous songs, in character, were amazingly relished. Everyone, singers and audience alike, were deeply indebted to Mrs. Chiswell, who so kindly and very efficiently presided at the piano. Her skilful accompaniments added greatly to the effect of the songs.

These two remarkable images are again undated; it is the same parade in front and behind the banner, which shows us it is the Stockport Progressive Lyceum (Manchester).

The two men on the right of the photograph appear to be collecting or handing out propaganda information

This image from the collection of the magic lantern slides again holds no dates, etc. but is most likely to be the SNU executive or possibly an AGM photograph.

If today we were to photograph our past and present President it would consist of Judith Seaman (our second lady President, 1996-2000), Duncan Gascoyne (second-longest serving President, 2000-2010) and our present President, David Bruton. It can be noted in the photograph that there are five Presidents.[3]

Back, left to right: ?, ?, Hanson Hey (General Secretary), H. Holgate, ?, John Parr (first elected SNU President, 1903-1905)

Front, left to right: William Johnson (first Federation President – first SNU President), ?, ?, Frank Hepworth (SNU President, 1909-1910), George P. Young (SNU President, 1907-1909), John Adams (SNU President, 1905-1907), ?, J. C. MacDonald

The "Pioneer" has already posted information on John Adams (1841-1923) on the SNU Presidents page.[4] We can note in the above photograph the name Frank Hepworth; in addition, in the previous report he is again mentioned in the Lyceum quote at the Burnley Conference. His photograph also is included in the lantern slides.

[3] The ladies and gentlemen with a question mark are familiar figures within the early SNU, so they will be fully identified in due course.

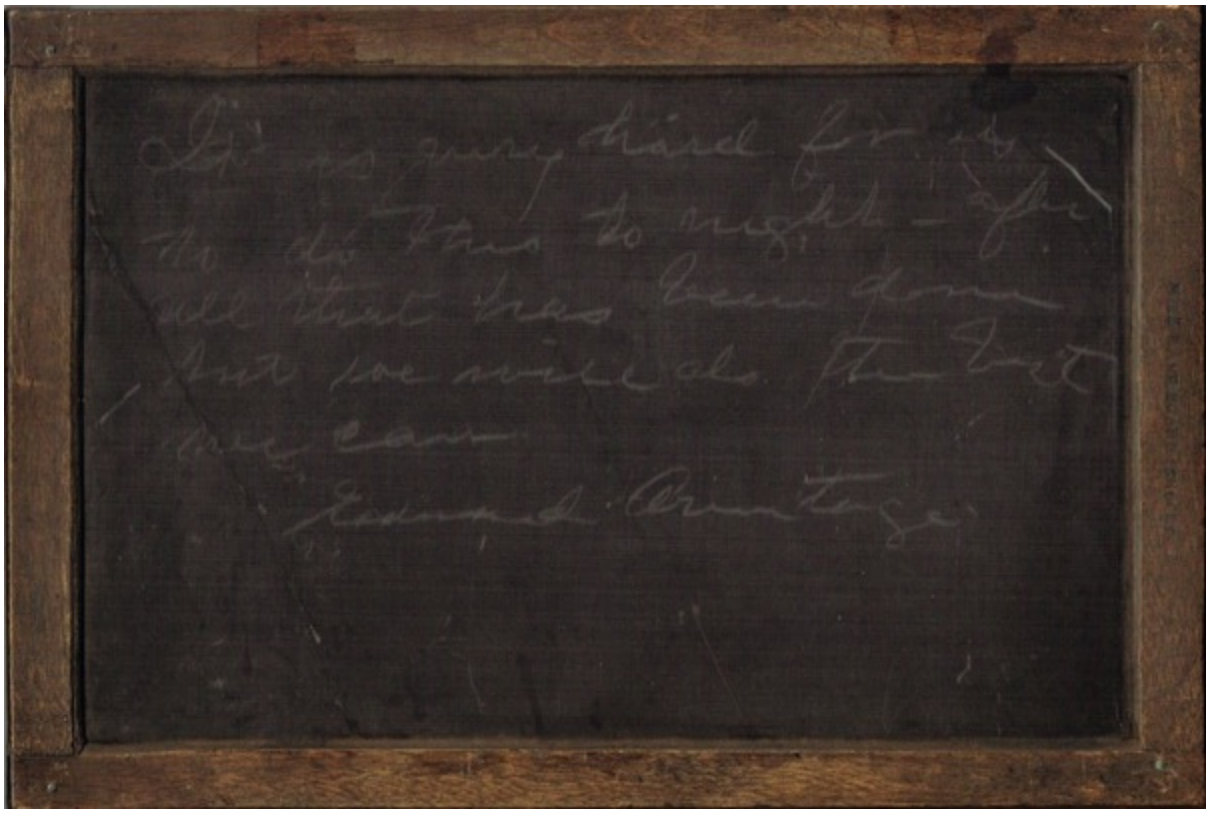
[4] The Presidents page: http://www.snu.org.uk/spiritualism/presidents

Around 1880 Hepworth experimented with ‘table turning’ and became a healer under spirit influence, developing into a trance speaker and clairvoyant. He was an active worker within the early days of the Union, including its Secretary in 1894, and was well known at the Conferences with his considerable ability as a singer, comedian/humourist.

The Spiritualists’ National Federation President in 1897 was Joseph Armitage (1843-1924), born at Dewsbury Moor, Yorkshire; Frank Hepworth married Joseph and Emma Armitage’s eldest daughter, Annie.

In Joseph Armitage’s obituary published in the *“*Two Worlds”, June 20th 1924, pages 311/13, it is noted:

> “Mr. Armitage retained in his possession eight slates which had been on different occasions subjected to the mediumship of Dr. Shade (then travelling in England under the name of Wilson). These slates contain exclusive personal messages and are variously signed by the grandfather, father, mother, uncle and children of Mr. Armitage. All names are signed in full, and the conditions under which they were produced perfectly satisfied Mr. Armitage.
>
> “His son-in-law, Mr. Frank Hepworth, has secured these slates with the object of handing them in the name of Mr. Armitage to the trustees of the Britten Memorial Institute.”
>
> “He leaves seven daughters all married. His eldest daughter, Annie, is the wife of that well-known public speaker, Mr. Frank Hepworth, who, in conjunction with Rev. W. E. Cluer, interred the body of our beloved pioneer in the graveyard of Hanging Heaton Church, near Dewsbury on Saturday, May 31st.”



Today some of these slates are still in the Britten Museum and Library at Stansted.

JAMES ARTHUR FINDLAY

Stansted Hall & Elms Farm – The early years

Arthur Findlay, as he was more generally known, came to the forefront as a psychical researcher. This led to the publication in November 1931 of "On the Edge of the Etheric", based on a series of sittings with a Glasgow trance and direct voice medium, John C. Sloan. The first publication of the book was in November 1931. Previously, in September 1924, Findlay published a small booklet titled "An Investigation of Psychic Phenomena"; this was basically a summary of his notes of his experiences with Sloan.

In the early part of the twentieth century Findlay's family moved from Hillhead near Kilbirnie, North Ayrshire, on the west coast of Scotland to Woodside, situated a mile from Beith and just three miles from Hillhead. It would be at Woodside where the young James Arthur Findlay would meet his future wife, Gertrude Walker; Findlay records in his autobiography, "Looking Back", first published in 1955, pages 146-147:

To FALL in love, as the saying is, then to become engaged, and then to marry, is one of the most important events in one's life, and everyone who has gone through this experience has some story to tell as to how it came about. My story is simple. My brother, when an undergraduate at Cambridge, became friendly with a fellow student, and through this friendship I came to know his parents who asked me to stay with them at their lovely place in Argyllshire, where they spent several months in the year. The rest of the time they lived in Leicestershire, and it was when visiting them there at a later date that I met their niece, Gertrude Walker. She lived near, her home being called Glenn Hall, close to the village of Great Glenn.

I first met her when she came to dine in the evening. I sat next to her at dinner and we talked of her travels abroad, which had been extensive, she always having accompanied her father and mother who generally went abroad for the Winter. I found that, except for Australia, New Zealand and southern South America, Gertrude had been to most of the other countries in the world, including a voyage round the world when she was nineteen years of age.[1] We got on well together, and she asked me to come the next day for afternoon tea. This I did, to find other subjects in which we were both interested, and so it went on. I again visited her aunt and uncle, and Gertrude and I met again, to end in our becoming engaged within a month of our first meeting.

[1] Annie Gertrude Walker (known as Gertrude) died July 19th 1963.

Her father, Theodore Walker, was a director of Wolsey Ltd., a charming cultured man with the mind of a university professor. He welcomed me as his future son-in-law in such a kind and cordial way that I knew I would like him. We always remained the best of friends, and I found him as good a father-in-law as a man could have. His wife, who could claim direct descent from the Welsh King Ludd, had died at sea a few years earlier coming back from South Africa, and he and Gertrude came home alone. Gertrude took her mother's place in looking after her father and their home, but my coming on the scene changed this arrangement and, following our marriage six months after our engagement, her place was taken by her sister.

My mother and brother decided to leave Woodside and live elsewhere, so that when we returned from our honeymoon we began our married life at Woodside.[2] The Hon. Edward Carr Glyn, Bishop of Peterborough, and two other clergymen officiated at our marriage, to which came many of our friends, and this took place at Great Glenn church on 15th July 1913. My father-in-law kindly put his car and chauffeur at our disposal and the honeymoon was spent in Devonshire and Cornwall. When we returned home we received a great welcome from the people of Beith. The train entered the station to the sound of fog signals going off and we were pulled to Woodside by ropes attached to our car. We certainly never expected this great reception.

Thus it was we married and lived happily ever after, …

WOODSIDE FROM THE GLEN.

[2] Findlay records on pages 137-138: "The year 1907 meant much to me, to my mother and my brother, as in that year my father died on 24th July. He became ill when sitting out on the lawn one afternoon at Woodside and went to bed. He developed acute appendicitis, and a surgeon from Glasgow was called in. He said that an operation was the only hope, but that at the best there was slight prospect of his recovery. He never recovered from it, blood-poisoning set in, and he passed peacefully away at the age of fifty-one to the sorrow of everyone.

I remember making this remark to the surgeon before he returned to Glasgow. "I wonder," I said, "what death means. Does it mark the end of life or the beginning of another?" He replied: "The end, to be sure, there is no life after death. Your father only lives on in you and your brother." How wrong he was, …"

The Findlays remained, by all accounts, happily at Woodside. After the Great War (1914-18) Findlay received a letter from the Home Secretary on behalf of the Prime Minister, Mr Lloyd George, informing him that he proposed to submit Findlay's name to King George V for the appointment as a Member of the newly established Order of the British Empire (MBE). This was duly awarded by the King at Buckingham Palace. A few years later the Lord Lieutenant of Ayrshire appointed Findlay to the position of Justice of the Peace, after which he devoted as much time as possible to work as a magistrate on the Bench.[3]

Findlay was also asked to become a member of an ancient Guild, a member of the Incorporation of Hammermen,[4] and later was given the Freedom of Glasgow.

Findlay records in his autobiography, page 192:

> I was now at a fork in my road of life. I had two ways I could go. I might then have stood for Parliament, or gone in for Glasgow municipal work, with the expectation of one day becoming Lord Provost with the title and honours attached to this office, but neither appealed to me.
>
> My grandfather once said, when asked why he had not stood for the City Council, that he had no desire to work his way up through the intrigues, malice and backbiting with which it is surrounded, and I felt much the same.

Findlay further stated on pages 193-194:

> So neither a parliamentary nor a municipal life attracted me, and yet I was now a free man to do as I liked, because I had all that I needed, quite apart from my business. With heavy taxation, as it then was after the First World War, and has remained since, I was just as well off out of business as in it. By taxing the taxpayers' income on a graded scale the Inland Revenue deprived me of nearly everything I made from my business. All incentive to work for gain had gone.
>
> By such methods the war was in part paid for, and those who had the largest income had to pay the most in taxes. This method kills the rich man's desire for remunerative work, as my energy was now devoted to making money which was just handed over to the State. Why, therefore, should I not be free to live as I wished, and not be tied to the daily attendance at the office?

Findlay preferred country life to work in the city. Gertrude was happy to remain at Woodside for the rest of her life but Findlay "longed for the south of England. Western Scotland is very beautiful, but the climate is bad, as sometimes it rains for days, and Woodside, situated as it is in a valley amongst high hills, got all the rain coming in from the Atlantic."

Findlay records in his autobiography on pages 194-195:

> So we decided to find a house in a drier part of the world. We must have gone through the catalogues of nearly a hundred houses when at last one came from my agents relating to Stansted Hall in Essex. This seemed to us just the place we wanted, convenient to, but not too near, London, in one of the driest and sunniest parts of England. There we would

[3] Later in the late 1920s Findlay became a Justice of the Peace for Essex.

[4] Throughout Europe, from the 11th century onwards, a system of guilds of craftsmen and merchants developed to regulate the trade and commerce of their communities. In towns and cities, including Glasgow, a highly developed system of guilds – or incorporations, as they came to be known – controlled the government of the Burgh, headed by an officer known as the Deacon Convenor.

not have the hills, but the countryside was rural and dotted everywhere with magnificent trees. A beautiful landscape, with large and stately trees, was to me ideal.

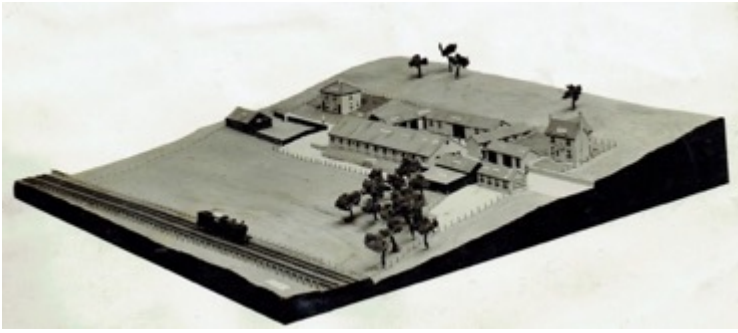
So off I went in January 1923 to see the house, which was situated on the Essex and Hertfordshire borders. I was so taken with it that my wife came with me on a return visit, to end in my buying the estate comprising the mansion and all the other houses and farm on about four hundred acres of land. My partnership had still two years to run, and, as the house required redecorating, we did not leave Scotland for England until February 1925.

Findlay purchased the estate from Sir Albert Ball in 1923. Today the grounds are in glorious splendour, as shown in the photograph taken on June 11th, the start of Japanese Week this year. Full credit must be given to the College's head gardener, Will Crowley, and his assistant, Robert Watson. Under the long arch on the left-hand side lies the original gravestone of Emma Hardinge Britten, her mother, Anne Sophia Floyd, husband William, and her sister and her husband, Margaret and Gilbert Wilkinson.

Findlay turned his hand to farming and with no formal training turned Elms Farm into a Grade A farm, the first in the district! The images shown below are from Findlay's scrapbooks, held in the Britten Museum & Library at Stansted, and are under copyright.

Findlay records in his autobiography on pages 269-271:

"It is said that if a man retires from his profession he should do so when he is young enough to take up something new, and, if he is too old for that, he should not retire at all. Fortunately, I was young enough to be able to interest myself in all the opportunities which had opened up before me. I was forty-one years of age, strong, healthy, and energetic. So I bent my energies to farming, and for six years gave much of my thought to building up a dairy farm, for which the land was specially suitable.

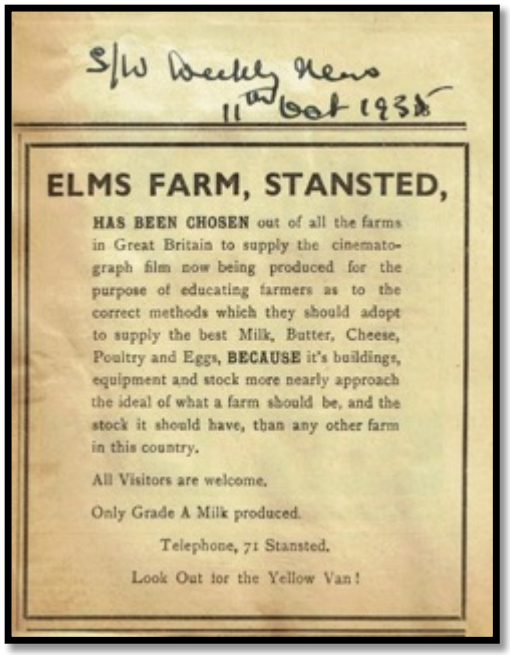


"The existing farm buildings, half a mile from Stansted Hall, were old-fashioned and out of date. So everything was removed and new buildings erected,→ after I had made a close study of modern farming methods. Consequently, it became a Grade A farm, the first in the district. I never had any training as a farmer, but I am glad to say, after many years of experience, that if I rebuilt the farm to-day I would do so exactly as I did then. When completed, I engaged an experienced bailiff to look after a herd of eighty Shorthorn cattle and the cultivation of the land.

"When all this was done a business of some size had been created, and this gave me much pleasure as the work of creation should always do. Over three hundred acres of land were thus used for agriculture, the rest of the estate being made up of woodlands,

garden and the pleasure grounds surrounding the Hall. Some ten miles of fencing had to be maintained, and, besides this, private roads and many houses, large and small, on the estate required to be kept in repair. So gardeners, farm-workers and other craftsmen were employed and had to be supervised, all of which meant work, but it was all enjoyable and of great interest. Nevertheless, the fact remained that I had not really retired, when I gave up my business in Glasgow, as I had only exchanged one interest for another, but my new one was in the country and not in a town. Moreover, I could spend the day as I liked, which made all the difference."

Findlay continues:



S/W Weekly News
11th Oct 1935

ELMS FARM, STANSTED,

HAS BEEN CHOSEN out of all the farms in Great Britain to supply the cinematograph film now being produced for the purpose of educating farmers as to the correct methods which they should adopt to supply the best Milk, Butter, Cheese, Poultry and Eggs, BECAUSE it's buildings, equipment and stock more nearly approach the ideal of what a farm should be, and the stock it should have, than any other farm in this country.

All Visitors are welcome.

Only Grade A Milk produced.

Telephone, 71 Stansted.

Look Out for the Yellow Van!

"I now discovered that there was much dissatisfaction amongst dairy farmers about the way magistrates were dealing with those who occasionally sold milk which had less than three per cent of butter fat. Adulteration of the milk was presumed, and the retailer too often convicted. The truth was that the cows themselves were in many cases giving poor milk, and the retailer was not to blame. The law allowed for this, but the honest farmer found it difficult to prove his case, as cows vary in the percentage of butter fat they produce. The sample complained of one day quite possibly would have complied with the standard of three per cent. if taken the next day. Several convictions in our neighbourhood made me look into the matter, and see what could be done to secure justice for the honest farmer.

"Everyone who sold milk was in danger of being in this unenviable position sooner or later, and to right a wrong I had a long correspondence with the Chief Inspector of Weights and Measures for Essex. He said he had to administer the law and could not help me. I then went to the Ministry of Agriculture and saw several leading officials, who sympathised, but could not do more than that. One stated that as the law was administered he would never be a milk-producer. Finally I decided to make out my case in pamphlet form, and send a copy to each Member of Parliament and the Chairman of every Justice of the Peace Court in the country. The pamphlet, entitled *The Law Relating to Butter Fat in Milk*, stating the case

> and giving copies of the correspondence which had taken place, ran into twenty-seven pages and received much publicity. I am glad to feel that, when the position was understood by the magistrates, honest farmers who were summoned obtained greater justice than they had received in the past. The pamphlet still circulates and goes on doing its good work to this day."

The Elms Farm land is now (2017) under development, with proposals of around sixty new houses to be built, and community allotments, etc.

Here we have an interesting story:

We can note in the above quotes that Arthur Findlay was a well-placed employer in Stansted, with household staff, gardeners and farm workers. When the editor was first employed at the Arthur Findlay College in 1973, there remained one of Findlay's housemaids, Edith. She was elderly but each day she would be out with the feather duster keeping the house in good order, as she had done for many years. She told me Mr. Findlay was strict but very kind and generous; after all, he had secured her well-being in so much that she would be looked after for accommodation, food, etc. at Stansted Hall for as long as she wished.

In 1975 age had caught up with Edith and she decided to go into a home to be cared for. She was given a big send off, my car was covered in balloons, etc. and the College chef, Ken Fullard, drove her to her new home.

At Open Week this year, which was featured in the previous issue of "Pioneer", my breaks for lunch, etc. were covered by one of the 'Stansted Healers', Beryl Jay. She told me her father worked delivering milk for Arthur Findlay from 1930.

Beryl told me her father,

> "Alan Garnet Patmore, known as Garnet, was born in Stansted in 1916, left school at 14 and went to work at Arthur Findlay's farm (Elms Farm) in Stansted.
>
> His job was delivering milk as far as Saffron Walden on a bicycle with several crates fixed to it.

When Dad married in January 1940 Arthur Findlay gave him a wedding present of a carving set.

My dad served in WW2 from 1940 to 1945. He was in Cairo, the desert, Belgium and Sicily. He brought a German doll home for me. It had human hair; I wonder where the hair came from!

When he returned from the war, he went back to work at Arthur Findlay's farm. He no longer had to ride a bike but was issued with a white van."

The photograph shows Garnet Patmore on his milk round

Beryl continued an association with Stansted Hall, as she told me:

Beryl Jay

"I used to accompany my mother to services in the Sanctuary in the 1960s and 1970s and often saw Gordon Higginson work.

In the early 90s I went on a Coral Polge course at the College and decided I would love to work there. I started in the still-room washing up in 1995 and progressed to housekeeping, reception, and finally worked in the bookshop for eight years with the lovely Sheila Keener, then with the equally lovely Magda Korsak.

My husband Jack worked in the College bar for some years.

I joined the Friends of Stansted Hall Fellowship soon after it started. When June and Geoff Hughes took over the FOSH they trained some of us as healers. I became an Approved Healer in 2006 and joined the Stansted Healers soon after.[5] I have also had some success as a psychic artist.

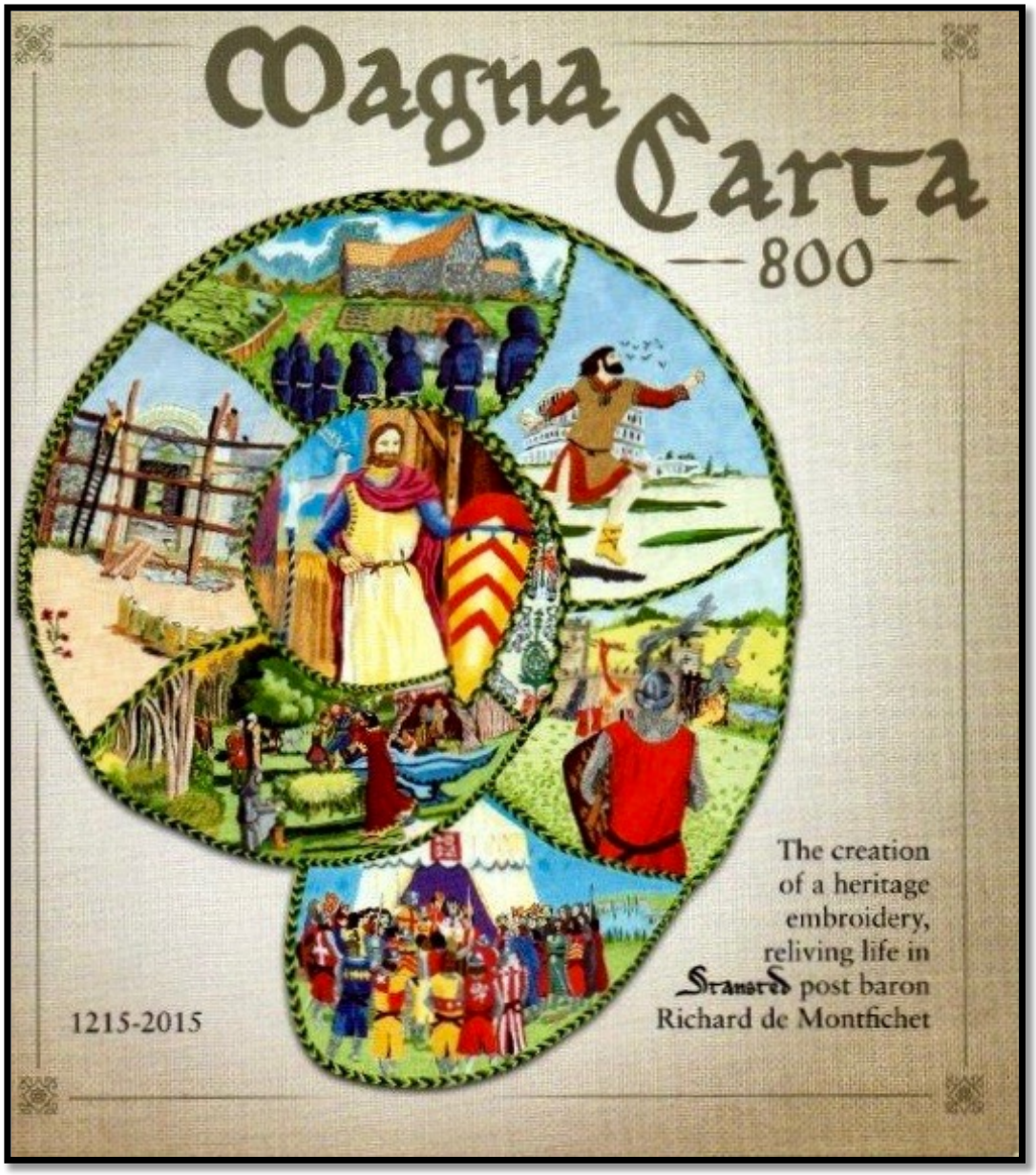
Arthur Findlay's wedding present to her parents was used consistently until Mrs Patmore's death in 2004. Beryl has passed on the carving set to the Museum.

Seventy-seven years later it returns to Stansted Hall!

[5] The 'Stansted Healers' are a working healing group, meeting on Tuesdays and the Open Week at the Arthur Findlay College. The Saturday 'SNU Stansted Hall Healing Centre' is an official SNU entity specialising in training SNU Healers. Both use the Pioneer Centre situated near the Sanctuary.

Beryl continued:

> I have a sister, Carole, who is also artistic. Carole drew all the figures, which were stitched into a tapestry to celebrate the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta. The tapestry is at present on show in the Sanctuary at the Arthur Findlay College.[6]



[6] A special day was held at Stansted Hall - please see Pioneer, Vol. 2, No. 4, July 2015: "Epic scenes for the signing of the Magna Carta – Stansted Hall".

THE "OLD BAILEY" COMES TO STANSTED HALL

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

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

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

The four defendants and counsel had entered the court room, shortly followed by the court rising as the Recorder of London, Sir Gerald Dodson, entered.[1] The Clerk of the Court[2] read the plea:

> Helen Duncan, Ernest Edward Hartland Homer, Elizabeth Anne Jones, and Frances Brown, you four are charged upon an indictment which contains seven counts.
>
> In the *first count* that between the 1st December, 1943, and the 19th January, 1944, you conspired together and with other persons unknown to pretend to exercise or use a kind of conjuration, to wit, that through the agency of the said Helen Duncan spirits of deceased persons should appear to be present in fact in such place as the said Helen Duncan was then in, and that the said spirits were communicating with living persons then and there present, contrary to section 4 of The Witchcraft Act, 1735.
>
> In the *second count* you are all four charged that on the 19th January of this year you pretended to exercise or use a kind of conjuration, namely, that spirits of deceased persons should be present in fact in the place where Helen Duncan then was, contrary to section 4 of The Witchcraft Act, 1735.

Helen Duncan

Ernest Homer

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

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

Elizabeth Anne Jones

In the *third count* you are charged that upon the same day, 19th January of this year, you with intent to defraud caused Stanley Raymond Worth to pay 25s. to Ernest Homer (that is, the said Ernest Edward Hartland Homer) for the use or benefit of yourselves by false pretences, the pretence being that you were then in a position to bring about the appearance of the spirits of deceased persons and that you then bona fide intended so to do without trickery.

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

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

Helen Duncan, are you guilty or not guilty?

PRISONER DUNCAN: Not guilty.[3]

THE CLERK OF THE COURT: Ernest Edward Hartland Homer?

PRISONER HOMER: Not guilty.[4]

THE CLERK OF THE COURT: Elizabeth Anne Jones?

PRISONER JONES: Not guilty.[5]

THE CLERK OF THE COURT: Frances Brown? PRISONER BROWN: Not guilty.[6]

PRISONER'S DOCK

Frances Brown

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

[4] Torsten Nyquist

[5] Sandie Baker, AFC Tutor

[6] Lynn Cottrell, AFC Tutor

The prosecution was played by Paul Gaunt; in the opening address it was stated:

Prosecution

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

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

It is aimed at just ordinary common fraud.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Clerk of the Court

On January 19th 1944 Worth also purchased a séance ticket for 12s. 6d. for War Reserve police officer Thomas Cross[8]. As the third materialisation was taking place Cross rushed forward from the second row, knocking Mr Homer to the ground. From his chair he claimed to seize the form with the aid of Stanley Worth shining a torch, both claiming in the evidence box that the spirit form was in fact Helen Duncan holding a white sheet!

Dorothy Constance Gill

However, defence witness Dorothy Constance Gill[9] claimed this account to be false insomuch as the form Cross claimed was indeed Helen Duncan was in fact ectoplasm, and Duncan was sitting where she was supposed to be in her chair. She stated that in fact Cross fell through the curtains, sprawled across Duncan and the ectoplasm had gone, not snatched away by somebody in the audience as claimed by the prosecution.

Defence

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

[8] Darren Hart, an AFC student and professional actor.

[9] Janette (Jan) Marshall, AFC tutor.

It was this debate between counsel that the re-enactment was centred around by the defence and prosecution.

Defence and prosecution arguing the claims of Stanley Raymond Worth

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

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

Prosecution witness Thomas Cross

Thomas Cross's testimony is challenged by the defence

Defence witness Dorothy Constance Gill leaving the witness box

The trial started on Thursday March 23rd 1944 and closed with the verdict on the seventh day, Friday March 31st 1944.

The jury retired to consider their verdict at 4.32 pm and returned into court at 4.56 p.m:

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

THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY:[10]

Yes, sir.

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

THE FOREMAN: Guilty, sir.

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

THE FOREMAN: Guilty.

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

THE FOREMAN: Guilty.

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

THE FOREMAN: Guilty.

THE CLERK 0F THE COURT: You find all four guilty on the first count,- and that is the verdict of you all?

THE FOREMAN: Yes.

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

[10] Benny Illemann

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

SENTENCES

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

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

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

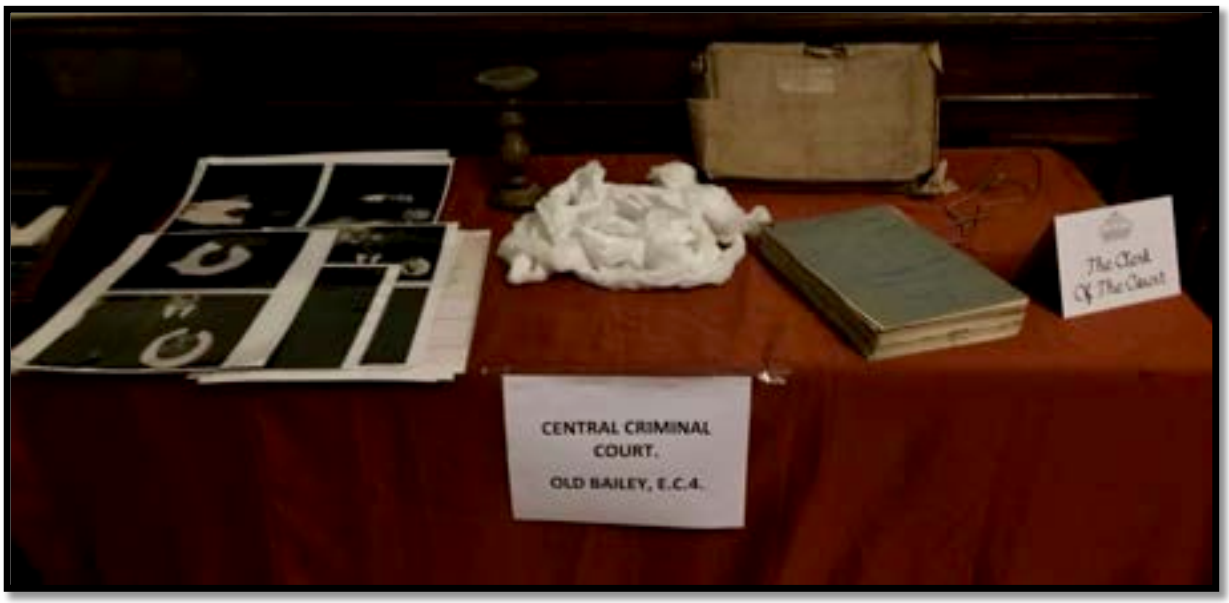
it is highly important in the interests of the community as a whole that these demonstrations should be conducted without fraud.

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

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

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

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



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

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

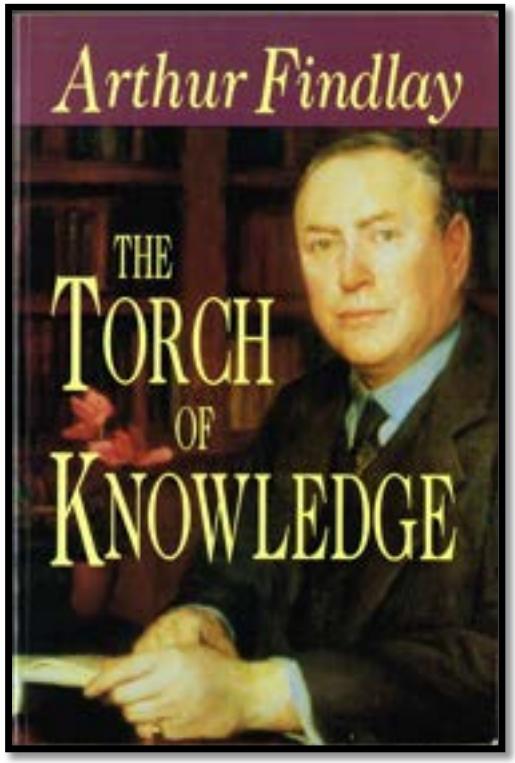
An overview of the re-enactment showing the defence seated, the Recorder at the bench, witness Lieutenant Stanley Worth, the prosecution in cross-examination and the Clerk of the Court seated with the items of evidence behind her.

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

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

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

Arthur Findlay College
"Christmas Week"



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

The murder mystery is based on the George Trueman circle; Trueman's character in the book is a chartered accountant and a psychical researcher and lecturer and his wife is a highly-developed medium, who live in a Surrey country mansion, Sureway Court.

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

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

Mr George Trueman: David Bruton
Mrs Trueman: Jan Marshall
Their daughter Hope: Lynn Cottrell
A medium, Angela Bridge: Sandie Baker
A village doctor, Dr. Cureall: Chris Roe
Secretary to Mrs Trueman, Miss Noteall: Tanya Smith

The story line was:[14]

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

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

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

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

A MOTIVE FOR MURDER!

[14] Co-written by Janette (Jan) Marshall, AFC Tutor.

Left to right: Lynn Cottrell, Jan Marshal, David Bruton, Tanya Smith, Sandie Baker & Chris Roe[15]

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

[15] Thanks are once again due to Janette (Jan) Marshall for taking the photographs of the Murder Mystery.

GRACE BOYERS

(Winifred Whiting Boyers)

Readers may be wondering who the author was of the second reported Hunter Selkirk article who witnessed and reported on the séance; Grace Boyers DSNU was a prominent figure in the movement and within the Spiritualists' National Union.

The profile below is taken from the "Two Worlds", April 14th 1956, and is by their correspondent, Philip Paul, and the photograph shown by Leon Isaacs:

> "I CAN'T help believing in reincarnation. I think it is capable of scientific proof. At the moment we are so little aware of the laws that we cannot offer logical proof, but after a long series of empirical investigations it seems only reasonable to assume that cause and effect works both ways."
>
> The speaker is 55-year-old Winifred Whiting Boyers. She first saw the light of day in Nottinghamshire but went with her parents to Lincoln when she was only five. Having been baptised into the Christian faith, she lived "a nun-like existence" in her early years.
>
> Her first psychic experience happened soon after the move to Lincoln. She saw a woman standing beside her bed and thought at first that it was her mother. When she extended her hand to touch her visitor, her fingers passed through the figure.
>
> **Youth was spent in semi-trance**
>
> As well as seeing "fairies and that sort of thing," she remembers spending many of her youthful years in a kind of semi-trance. "Mother was not prepared to listen to my experiences. She thought it was all imagination."
>
> After marriage and bearing a son, she was ill for a number of years. The child was also ailing. One day, after visiting her doctor with him, she found herself walking unconsciously away from home. "Then I was outside a particular house and was told clairaudiently to go and knock on the door. My son asked me where we were going and I said I didn't know.
>
> The door was opened by a woman who said, 'I know what you have come for.' Inside, she diagnosed my son's trouble and gave him healing. He recovered, but, soon after, I was ill again. In hospital I had an operation. The doctors and nurses were astounded by the fact that I spoke in six different languages whilst I was under the anaesthetic." [9]
>
> **Terrified of facing peopled**
>
> Grace attended no developing circle—"I was under the objective tuition of my guide, Eli, for two years."
>
> Her first contact with organised Spiritualism came through the woman who had healed her son. It began when she accepted an invitation to demonstrate psychometry in her benefactress's home circle. "I was terrified of facing people but so certain of the people on the Other Side that I knew I could do it."

[9] For similar cases of speaking under anaesthetic, see Pioneer, Vol. 12, No. 5, September - October 2016: "Voices at surgical operations".

A demonstration at a church on the east coast followed. Grace was on the ladder which she has steadily mounted since those days to her present prominent place among British mental mediums.

"I am essentially a researcher." she avers. "I don't want things to happen just anyhow. I dislike to feel that I am controlled or possessed."

Her advent in London came just after the war, when she joined Marylebone Spiritualist Association.[10] Now, her commitments in the capital are such that she spends the majority of her time in London, living in her comfortable Bayswater flat and returning to her husband and real home in Lincoln as often as she can. Normally, this is every other week-end. She runs her own car for these purposes. Last year it covered 35,000 miles in her service.

More men than women are sitters

She has a theory that hauntings are in some way connected with reincarnation. "I have often been asked to lay ghosts. Sometimes I have been successful and sometimes not."

In her 23 years' public mediumship she has noticed many changes. "In the old days the majority of sitters were women. Now they are mainly men."

When it comes to a discussion of her unfulfilled ambitions, she says: "I have done what I set out to do with about two exceptions. I want to write in order to put on record some of the things I have discovered in order to help others. I would like to interest people in the how and why of psychic science. I would like to do more lecturing and, perhaps, to broadcast."

"I can make myself a vacuum"

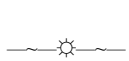
Small in build and brown-eyed, Grace has two primary allergies—smoke ("tobacco and chimney") and noise. How does she tolerate life in a great city? "Whenever I go into crowds I can make myself a vacuum."

Grace's hopes for the Movement are simply and sincerely expressed. "I should like to see Spiritualism take its place in the world as a power which people sought for its value, not as a temporary relief."

During the war, she served in military hospitals and gave seances in first-aid posts "while we were waiting for things to happen."

On a journey from Wisbech to Lincoln the express train in which she was travelling collided with a goods train and was badly damaged. A girl in her compartment had been recovering from a nervous breakdown. Though neither was injured in the accident, Grace had considerable difficulty in soothing her fears when they at last obtained another train.

"I was able to help her by hypnosis and psychic healing. She lay down with her head on my knee. We completed the journey without further trouble, but I shall never forget the look of consternation which came onto the face of a young man when he entered the compartment and saw the scene!"



[10] Today this is called the Spiritualists' Association of Great Britain (SAGB).

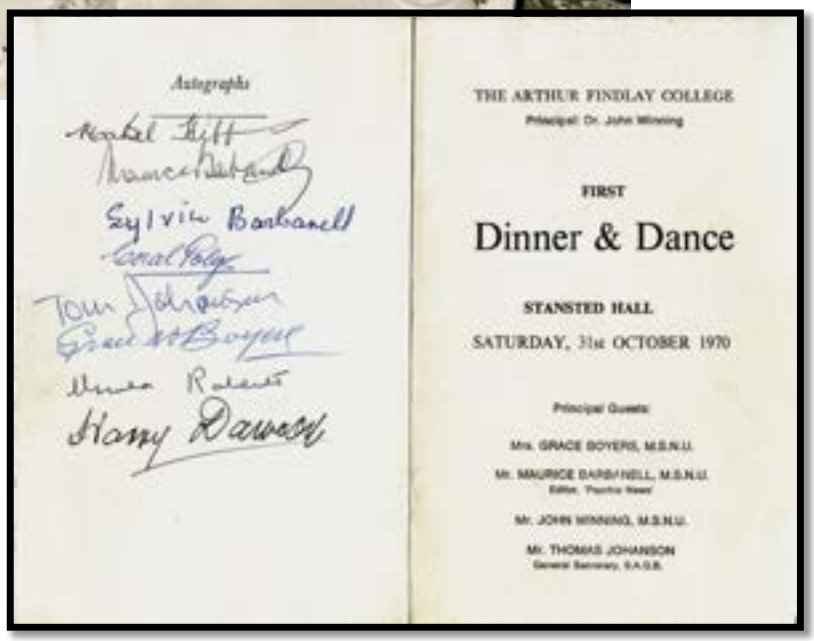
Editor's note:

Grace Boyers DSNU was a Minister of the Spiritualists' National Union; it can be noted in Pioneer, Vol. 1, No. 2, January 2014: "The J. Arthur Findlay College for the Advancement of Psychic Science –The early years":

> "… on 24th July 1964, amidst the implementation of agreements and requests, James Arthur Findlay died. The funeral service was conducted by Dr. John Winning, Vice-President of the SNU supported by Percy Wilson, M.A., and Grace Boyers. The service was held in the Gallery of Stansted Hall and attended by members of the Findlay family and friends from Chelmsford and nearby villages. Representing the National Council were Mr W. S. Fowler, Mr Joe Capstack, Mr Sills and Mr S. T. Gunning."

Grace Boyers was on the original Management Committee set up to deal with the transfer of the Arthur Findlay College from Arthur Findlay to the Union; please see the issue cited above.

On a lighter note, in late summer Gordon Higginson agreed to organise the first College dinner/dance for October 31st; the principal guests were Grace Boyers, Maurice Barbanell, John Winning and Thomas Johanson SAGB (Coral Polge's husband), with Frank Tamms as the Master of Ceremonies:



Autographs

Sylvia Barbanell

THE ARTHUR FINDLAY COLLEGE

Principal: Dr. John Winning

FIRST

Dinner & Dance

STANSTED HALL

SATURDAY, 31st OCTOBER 1970

Principal Guests:

Mrs. GRACE BOYERS, M.S.N.U.

Mr. MAURICE BARBANELL, M.S.N.U.

Editor, 'Psychic News'

Mr. JOHN WINNING, M.S.N.U.

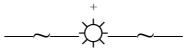
Mr. THOMAS JOHANSON

General Secretary, S.A.G.B.

Grace Boyers is, I believe, seated bottom left; second man up is former SNU President Charles Quastel, then another former President, John Winning.

World Congress of Spiritualists

Hosted at the Arthur Findlay College on July 5th & 6th 2018



The World Congress of Spiritualists is not an organisation as such but an umbrella under which, from the 1880s, Spiritualist organisations come together from various parts of the world, forming a Congress of International Spiritualists. Four years ago it was held at Lily Dale, New York, which would have its roots in "Cassadaga Lake Free Association". In 1891 the spirit guide of C. E. Langdon, Rochester, N.Y., suggested the wearing of a token by which Spiritualists might recognize each other, naming as appropriate for the purpose a badge having as its emblem "a sunflower with the sun in the centre". Around 1893 the Association adopted the sunflower as its official emblem, becoming recognised as the American National Spiritualist symbol.

It can be noted in Psypioneer, Vol. 9, No. 11, November 2013:

> "LILY DALE" is the name of the post-office, and of the particular locality of the grounds of the Cassadaga Lake Free Association, but the name of the Association itself and the connection in the mind of the visitor of the summer meetings with the lake, have caused the place to be broadly and generally known as "Cassadaga."
>
> The Cassadaga area is steeped in spiritualistic history. It was first used in the winter of 1844-5 for a course of lectures and study into animal magnetism and mesmerism, a close association in the early Spiritualist movement. Many camp meetings followed, the Cassadaga vicinity becoming a strong hold of Spiritualism, and by the mid 1850's William Denton delivered a course of lectures on geology and the philosophy of Spiritualism. Later other well-known Spiritualists such as Paschal Randolph, Andrew Jackson Davis, Samuel B. Brittan, and John M. Spear would occupy the platform. These also would include Elizabeth Lowe and Cora L. V. Scott (later Richmond), who were at this time scarcely more than children.
>
> In 1879, the grounds were purchased and incorporated under the name "Cassadaga Lake Free Association" and the site named as the "Cassadaga Lake Camp Meeting Grounds." The formal opening and dedication of the grounds was on Tuesday June 15th 1880 with the address being delivered by Mrs Elizabeth Lowe Watson (noted above) with the first meetings starting in August under its first President Albert Cobb (resigned in 1882); a year later a children's Lyceum was started by Thomas Lees.
>
> In 1891 the "History of Cassadaga" was told by Adrian W. McCoy and the earlier history of the "Spiritualist Camp Meetings" by Harrison D. Barrett published in the *Cassadaga; Its History and Teaching*, edited and compiled by McCoy and Barrett, published by Meadville, PA. There appears however, to be no mention of the Sunflower emblem up to this period in time. In 1903 "Cassadaga Lake Free Association's" name was changed to the "City of Light Assembly" and again in 1906 to "Lily Dale Assembly" as it remains today.

The referenced history and how the Sunflower emblem evolved can be found in the issue cited above.

The first International Congress I can find was the Barcelona Congress; this is reported in "Light", issue November 10th, 1888, page 552. (It appears there was an earlier Congress in Madrid in the early l880s.) Numerous other Congresses would follow, for example the "Spiritist and Spiritualist International Congress in Paris", which took place on September 9th 1889, again reported in "Light". The well-known Spiritualist, Thomas Everitt, was the delegate for the London Spiritualist Alliance (LSA), under the presidency of William Stainton Moses. Everitt was one of the Congress Vice-Presidents. In his address he spoke on the various phases of phenomena with which he was acquainted through the famed physical mediumship of his wife. Numerous World Congresses continued, with some positive attempt to form an International Union or Federation, but this was interrupted by WWI.

Post-war, the Spiritualists' National Union significantly helped in the formation of the International Spiritualist Federation in 1922-23. From this time the Federation would continue strongly, only to be halted by WWII. During this period the Federation's headquarters were at "Maison des Spirites", la rue Copernic, Paris, through the generosity of Jean Meyer (who died in 1931). The war would halt all activity. It appears their headquarters was completely destroyed in the siege of Paris in 1940, including all the Federation records up until this period; the ISF never secured another headquarters of its own. It would not be until 1947 that a new start and a complete reorganisation began in the re-establishing of the Federation. At the SNU AGM in Bournemouth delegates "were to be invited by the S.N.U. in the hope of forming a new International Federation." Former SNU President Ernest Keeling was the Acting President of the ISF.

It is interesting to note that, a year later, the re-launch with the new constitution adopted by the International Spiritualist Federation, under the now elected President Ernest Keeling, involved Mr and Mrs J. Arthur Findlay.

This report was published in the "Two Worlds," September 17th 1948:

Visit to Stansted Hall

"The coach trip to Stansted Hall by invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Findley provided a most enjoyable change for the delegates attending the Congress. Four large buses carried no less than one hundred and sixty visitors to Mr. Findlay's charming residence which is situated in the heart of some of the most beautiful country in England."

Who would have known 70 years later that Stansted Hall would host a World Congress?

As noted, the last World Congress of Spiritualists was held at Lily Dale in 2014 and this year at the Arthur Findlay College, and in 2020 it will be held in Canada.[1]

The previous two and the forthcoming Canada Congress are organised by the Reverend Janet Nohavec at The Journey Within Spiritualists' National Union Church, 25 Carr Street, Pompton Lakes, NJ, and Ministers Simon James and Brian Robertson at Inner Quest Centre, 1600 Cook Street, Victoria BC, V8T 3P1, Canada.

World Congresses were big affairs and their early history can be easily traced in the Spiritualist journals of the day, namely "Light" and "Two Worlds"; below I have selected a report from "Light", September 19th 1925, by Leslie Curnow:

[1] Top photograph: Is the opening of the World Congress by the Arthur Findlay College General Manager Tanya Smith, to her right is AFC Principle and SNU President, Minister David Bruton. Below left to right Ministers Simon James, Brian Robertson, and the Reverend Janet Nohavec.

PARIS INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

AN EVENTFUL WEEK

SIR A. CONAN DOYLE'S AMAZING MEETING

THE SPIRITUALISTS' INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS in Paris closed in a blaze of glory. One is in some danger of hyperbole after a week of fervid oratory of our Continental brethren at the Congress, but it is relating sober fact to say that the Congress gained in utility and impressiveness as it advanced in its course, and further that what may be called the culmination—Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's truly wonderful meeting in the Salle Wagram, on Friday, September 11th—is probably destined to have the most far-reaching consequences.

PARIS, SEPTEMBER 6—13, 1925.

FIRST DAY.—Sunday, September 6th.
MAISON DES SPIRITES, 8, Rue Copernic.
9 a.m. Reception of Congressists. Distribution of Cards.
Constitution of Committees and registration of names of Delegates wishing to participate in the work of the Committees.
11 a.m. Inauguration of the Spiritualist Exhibition.
HOTEL DES SOCIETES SAVANTES, 8, Rue Danton.
2 p.m. General Meeting. Welcome by M. Leon Denis, Chairman and Senior. (Doyen d'age).
6 p.m. Speech and Introduction of Delegates by Mr. Berry, President of the Federation Spirite Internationale.
General Meeting of Delegates of National Federation (F.S.I.).
8.30 p.m. Deliberations on the Order of the Day. Nomination of Chairman of the Congress.
Public Conference with projection of Lantern Slides of supernormal pictures by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Honorary President of the Executive Committee of the F.S.I.

SECOND DAY.—Monday, September 7th.
MAISON DES SPIRITES, 8, Rue Copernic.
9 a.m. Division of the Communications classified by the Organisation Committee.
3 p.m. Committees.

THIRD DAY.—Tuesday, September 8th.
MAISON DES SPIRITES, 8, Rue Copernic.
9 a.m. Committees.
3 p.m. Committees.
9 p.m. Musical Evening Party (Reserved for Congressists), with Psychometrical Experiments by M.P.F.

FOURTH DAY.—Wednesday, September 9th.
MAISON DES SPIRITES, 8, Rue Copernic.
9 a.m. Committees.
3 p.m. Deliberation of Committees for the Presentation of Reports to the Congress.
9 p.m. PUBLIC MEETING. — Exhibition of Lantern Slides from the Collection of the METAPSYCHICAL INSTITUTE.

FIFTH DAY.—Thursday, September 10th.
MAISON DES SPIRITES, 8, Rue Copernic.
9 a.m. Committees.
3 p.m. SOCIETE DES SAVANTES, 8, Rue Danton.
Presentation of the President of the Congress by Mr. Berry, Chairman of the F.S.I.
Speech of the President of the Congress.
Reading of Reports and Discussion.

SIXTH DAY.—Friday, September 11th.
MAISON DES SPIRITES, 8, Rue Copernic.
9 a.m. Reading of Reports and Discussion.
SOCIETE DES SAVANTES, 8, Rue Danton.
3 p.m. Reading of Reports and Discussion.
MAISON DES SPIRITES, 8 Rue Copernic.
8.30 p.m. Paper by Mr. Alfred Kitson (of the British Spiritualists' Lyceum Union), "Spiritualism in Relation to the Child."

SEVENTH DAY.—Saturday, September 12th.
SOCIETE DES SAVANTES, 8, Rue Danton.
3 p.m. General Meeting. Discussion. Report of M. Ripert, General Secretary.
Conclusion and Closing of the Congress.

EIGHTH DAY.—Sunday, September 13th.
Afternoon. EXCURSION TO VERSAILLES.

For practical business the Congress divided itself up into Commissions, and their Reports provoked interesting discussions and mutual enlightenment. Miss Lind-af-Hageby and Miss Felicia R. Scatcherd proved an invaluable aid on the Commissions, owing to their expert knowledge and their high capacity for organisation. Dr. Abraham Wallace and Mr. Ernest Oaten were also elements of strength in this direction. Mrs. Cadwallader too, on occasion, made a most excellent chairman, and there were others.

The Duchess of Hamilton and Brandon and Lady Conan Doyle were radiant figures, whose presence and influence counted for much.[2]

Papers of deep scientific and philosophical import by Leon Denis, Gabriel Delanne, and Dr. Joseph Maxwell were outstanding events of the week.

There were two tender and beautiful episodes that will be long remembered. They were the placing of wreaths from English and from American Spiritualists on the tomb of the Unknown Warrior at the Arc de Triomphe, and a wreath on the grave of the great French pioneer Spiritualist, Allan Kardec, in the historic cemetery of Père Lachaise. One

[2] In case the word "Brandon" causes a query, the Duke of Hamilton and Brandon is Hereditary Keeper of the Palace of Holyrood House, the official royal residence in Scotland, where he maintains a large private quarter. - Leslie Price.

could not fail to envisage at these thrilling moments the indubitable band of fellow celebrants in the Great Beyond, as we thus joined hearts across the bridge of death.

It was gratifying to all to hear the wise words of the message to the Congress from Sir Oliver Lodge, whom Sir Arthur Conan Doyle described as our great intellectual and scientific leader in England.

A notable event on the social side was the brilliant Reception to members and friends organised by the Duchess of Hamilton, Miss Lind-af-Hageby, and Miss Felicia R. Scatcherd.

DELEGATES TO THE CONGRESS.

The following is the list of delegates to the Congress:—

South Africa.—Mrs. Gladys Davies and Sir A. Conan Doyle.
Germany.—Herren Bruns and Schlotterberg.
England. —S.N.U., G. F. Berry, Mr. and Mrs. Oaten, Mr. and Mrs. F. T. Blake, F. Bessant, J Slimmin, A. G. Newton, E. Vickers, Dr. Margaret Vivian; B.S.L.U., Mr. and Mrs. G. A. Mack, G. F. Knott; London, Miss Felicia R. Scatcherd; Marylebone Association, Miss Lind-af-Hageby; LIGHT, Leslie Curnow; L.S.A., Dr. Abraham Wallace.
Belgium.—MM. L'Homme and Coninckx (press), M. Maillet, Mme. Jane Oudot.
Cuba.—M. Jules Vega.
Brazil.—M. Leon Denis, Cdt. Blaye (press), M. Jules Thiebault.
Costa Rica.—M. Lopez Gomez.
Denmark.—M. Beversluis.
Spain.—M. Gertsch.
United States.—M. Van der Nailen, V. A. Jackson; National Spiritualists' Association, Rev. Thomas Grimshaw; (press), Mrs. E. M. Cadwallader.
France.—MM. Melusson, Forthuny, Chreveuil. Mme. Ducel, MM. Malosse and Marty.
Greece.—M. Yotopoulos.
Holland.—MM. Beversluis, Goedhart, Bergman.
Hungary.—Mme. Reichenhaller.
India.—V. D. Rishi.
Indo-China.—M. Mellini.
Mexico.—M. Leon Denis.
Norway.—Mme. Ellen Letort.
Poland.——(Press) M. Marendowski.
Portugal.—M. Graca Zugarte.
Rumania.—M. Stanulescu.
Switzerland.—MM. Montandon and Booss.

SIR OLIVER LODGE.

Sir Oliver Lodge wrote:—

I trust that the International Congress in Paris will be successful. We have hold of a truth much needed by the world, but one which is of so remarkable a character that acceptance is difficult.

Communication with another order of existence, is so great a novelty in science, and the phenomena accompanying or associated with it are, many of them, so inexplicable, that scientific scepticism is very natural and not at all surprising.

It behoves us to make very sure of our facts, to present them with candour, courtesy and care, and then to have faith that the weight of evidence will in due time overpower

hostility, will carry sincere conviction, and will enlarge the boundaries of scientific knowledge.

DR. JOSEPH MAXWELL.

DR. JOSEPH MAXWELL, of Bordeaux, author of that splendid book (to give it its English title) "Metapsychical Phenomena," and one of the ripe thinkers in the psychic field, whose conclusions, moreover, are based on extensive practical experience, contributed a valuable paper. While not, sharing all the Spiritualist ideas, he was convinced that the movement possessed great importance in its bearing on the destiny of humanity. Materialism had had disastrous results on human evolution, and unless checked in its mad course, must lead to fatal ruin. Psychic phenomena, when studied from the biological point of view, afforded a glimpse of the very mechanism of life. Spiritualism in its philosophical aspect must play a great part in restoring to the world the ideals it had lost.

From the full text of Dr. Maxwell's thoughtful contribution, which it is hoped to publish in a later issue, his views will be more readily grasped.

THE CARE OF MEDIUMS.

MISS LIND-AF HAGEBY at Friday's session at the Rue Danton proposed and carried an important resolution regarding the care of mediums and the study of mediumship. It affirmed that, as Spiritualism was based on mediumship, a sympathetic study of mediums and mediumship should be one of the primary duties of Spiritualists; that genuine mediums should be protected from charges of insanity and fraud, from reckless exploitation, and from the dangers incidental to poverty and economic distress.

Miss Lind, with power and lucidity, indicated that as mediumship was in constant process of evolution—it was impossible to say what developments there might be—and that, as we could not adequately protect what we did not properly understand, it was eminently desirable there should be a more exact study of the psychological aspects of mediumship. Dr. Abraham Wallace and others supported Miss Lind.

THE "CREDO" OR THE CONGRESS.

On the last day (Saturday, September 12th) the final decision of the Congress was expressed in the following words: —

The Executive Committee, after reading all reports and documents and hearing speeches on questions concerning the varied phases of Spiritualism its propaganda and organisation, votes in favour of the following conclusions:—

Spiritualism is a philosophy based on scientific and precise facts. Its fundamental principles are as follows:—

1. The existence of God, the supreme intelligence and cause of all things.

2. The existence of the soul or spirit connected through earthly life to the physical and perishable bod by the intermediary element called the perisprit or fluidic and indestructible body.

3. The immortality of the soul and its continual evolution towards perfection through progressive stages of life.

4. Individual and collective responsibility, and universal fraternity and communion between all beings.

With the close of the formal business, M. Leon Denis, in felicitous terms, proposed a vote of thanks to the workers at the Congress. Mr. Ernest W. Oaten seconded this,

making special mention of MM. Pascal Forthuny and André Ripert. Dr. Abraham Wallace added an expression of his appreciation of the assistance rendered by the delegates from national bodies in England and America.

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE'S GREAT MEETING.

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE scored a great triumph at his lecture, with illustrations, on Friday evening, September 11th. No one who was present at the Salle Wagram on that occasion is likely to forget the scene. On the first night of the Congress Sir Arthur gave his lecture at 8, Rue Danton, where the hall holds about a thousand people. The accommodation was hopelessly inadequate, and there was some disappointment owing to the lantern being manipulated by an incompetent operator. It was a trying time, but Sir Arthur showed wonderful patience. A small section of the Press in England described the lecture as a fiasco. It was nothing of the sort.

To enable those to attend who had been refused admission, the Salle Wagram, which holds between three thousand and four thousand people, was engaged for Friday night, with the services of the best lantern operator in Paris. The lecture was announced for 8.30 p.m., but at 7.30 the Avenue Wagram was blocked by a long queue, formed in the street, instead of on the pavement as with us in England. The hall speedily filled. After the lecture had been in progress for a few minutes, there was an uproar, and a huge crowd suddenly pressed in, after having brushed the police aside and broken down the barriers. They stood in every available space and remained in rapt attention, save when they burst into applause at many stages.

Sir Arthur was in splendid form, and his address and the remarkable pictures he afterwards showed, evidently made the deepest appeal.

Nearly all the Paris newspapers reported the lecture at length.

The "Chicago Tribune" (Paris edition) said that he "brought tears of hope into the eyes of hundreds of unconsoled men and women who wanted assurance that their loved ones were not gone for ever. For over an hour, in a voice ringing with conviction, the great creator of Sherlock Holmes affirmed his belief in a life beyond the grave, reasoned with sceptics, expounded the doctrine of mediums and of ectoplasm, and then brought applause and gasps of amazement and terror with photo after photo on the screen of spirits emerging from ectoplasm."

Such a crowd on such an occasion was, of course, no novelty to Englishmen, but a competent French authority said that never before in Paris had there been a meeting at all approaching it, connected with Spiritualism. He declared that the Trocadero, the largest hall in Paris, would not have held all those who desired to be present on that evening. Sir Arthur's great popularity in Paris—his books, in French and in English, were encountered on all sides—had something to do with the demonstration, but it was obvious that in the main it was his message of hope and consolation which people had come to hear.

The previous International Congress was held in conjunction with the Spiritualists' National Union's twentieth AGM at Caxton Hall, Westminster, London, which opened on July 1st 1922. Incidentally, up until more recent years the SNU AGM was held on the first weekend of July.

On the third day an interesting paper was read by Stanley De Brath on "Materialisations by Franek Kluski and Some Inferences from them". Included in his paper was reference to "Jack the Ripper", rather shrouded in mystery even as to the medium's or killer's identity, etc. Further comments were at the conclusion of the article, which is taken from "Light," July 15th 1922, page 436:

JACK THE RIPPER.

Before speaking of one or two examples in which I have personally investigated, I should like to refer to one of the most notorious cases where Psychic Science was successfully employed. Few people, even Spiritualists, know that that series of atrocious crimes which took place many years ago in the Whitechapel district of London, perpetrated on women of the "unfortunate" class, and associated with the name of Jack the Ripper, was brought to light and terminated by the action of a friend of mine, a trustworthy sensitive, a distinguished Spiritualist, and one of the most highly spiritually evolved men who exist to-day.

The case proved to be one of the most difficult ever experienced by the Metropolitan legal authorities. Owing to the many outrages committed, the police had numerous detectives in plain clothes nightly perambulating the locality. Yet victim after victim was discovered in the early mornings without a trace being found of the skilled perpetrator.

In all the cases the methods followed indicated that it must be the same individual—someone possessing highly trained surgical ability, as the precision displayed in the use of the knife pointed to an expert with perfect anatomical knowledge. The culprit was found to be one of those rare cases of double personality, and, I regret to say, belonging to the medical profession—a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, with all the characteristics of Stevenson's wonderful creation. Owing to the interposition of a high authority the homicidal maniac in the Whitechapel case was quietly removed to an asylum for the insane, where he died many years after. Some time ago I learned some details of the psychic aspects of the case, and it is very interesting to investigators to consider these, for they were more or less of the same nature as I have found in investigating other cases.

My sensitive friend has always displayed excellent powers of retrocognition and prevision, which usually evolved in his sleep life, and afterwards sometimes manifested in his ordinary consciousness. It is highly probable, however, perhaps absolutely certain that in the discovery of the culprit in the above instance he was prompted by intelligences from higher planes, who doubtless knew what murders had already, been done by the wretched man, and could recognise what he further intended to do which they determined to prevent.

I understand that the sensitive first came into contact with the murderer while riding in an omnibus. A "voice" told him to follow the man sitting opposite to him, as he was Jack the Ripper. He did so, because the voice informed him that the murderer intended very soon to do another outrage in a certain way. He then communicated with the police who were disposed to suspect him as the culprit. He requested them however to keep him under observation till the next murder took place, which they did. Thereafter they listened to his statements without question, and acted according to his directions. The criminal was taken, the series of murders terminated, the great public excitement ceased, and nothing more was heard of the case.

This rather interesting story about "Jack the Ripper" told by De Brath has been previously addressed on Pioneer

Stanley De Brath, M.Inst. C.E., early in his career was more widely known under his pen name, V.C. Desertis. During his life he was secretary (psychical matters) to Arthur Conan Doyle, a psychical researcher, author, translator, editor[3] and Spiritualist. Stanley De Brath's first book, "Psychic Philosophy as the Foundation of a Religion of Natural Law", was initially published by George Redway, London, 1896.[4]

The medium referred to in the above article is Robert James Lees

A two-part article on Lees can be found in Pioneer; the quote below is taken from this article:[5]

One day, while riding in an omnibus from shepherd's Bush in company with his wife, he experienced a renewal of the strange sensations which had preceded his former clairvoyant condition. The omnibus ascending Notting Hill. It stopped at the top, and a man entered the interior of the vehicle. Mr Lees at once experienced a singular sensation. Looking up he perceived that the new passenger was a man of medium size. He noticed that he was dressed in a dark suit of Scotch tweed, over which he wore a light overcoat. He had a soft felt hat on his head.

Over a year had elapsed since Mr Lees' clairvoyant vision, but the picture of the murderer had been indelibly impressed upon his mind. Leaning over to his wife he remarked earnestly, 'That is Jack the Ripper,' his wife laughed at this, and told him not to be foolish. 'I am not mistaken,' replied Mr Lees, 'I feel it.' The omnibus traversed the entire length of the Edgware road, turning into Oxford street at the marble arch. At this point the man in the light overcoat got out.

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[3] In 1926 Stanley De Brath became editor of "Psychic Science" – the quarterly journal of the British College of Psychic Science (BCPS).

[4] For further information on De Brath please see Psypioneer, Vol. 8, No. 3, March 2012.

[5] Vol. 3, No. 5, October 2016: Did he really sit for Queen Victoria as a young boy? — Lees' involvement with the 1888 Jack the Ripper case? Also Vol. 3, No. 6, December 2016: Robert James Lees – continued and concluded.

JAMES J. MORSE & EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN VISIT THE WORLD CONGRESS AT STANSTED HALL

On the Friday night running up to the start of the World Congress College General Manager Tanya Smith and Paul Gaunt took on the roles of Emma Hardinge Britten and James J. Morse, who told the Congress their life-stories, backed with a timed Powerpoint showing their various images.

This was incorporated with the events of their lives, for example the images of Robert Cogman, Mary Main and James Burns, who were so instrumental in the early development of Morse's trance mediumship in London in the late 1860s and 70s.[6]

Morse told in graphic detail his initiation and daunting experience in the development of his trance mediumship.[7]

Emma spoke of her early years as a musician and actress, her propagation of Spiritualism in America and how in 1871 while in London she gave her first four Principles.

Thanks are due to the stunning outfits which were supplied by "The Dressing-Up Box", close to Stansted Hall at Dunmow, and very kindly loaned to the Congress free of charge.[8]

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[6] See Pioneer, Vol. 5, No. 1, February 2018: "First Public Developing Circles – Robert Cogman – Mrs. Mary Main".

[7] See above article.

[8] The Dressing-Up Box: http://www.dressing-upbox.co.uk/contact-dressing-upbox/

Lionel Owen

Lionel Owen is internationally known as a Spiritualist teacher, speaker and medium, who presently lives in South Africa and is a former President of the "International Spiritualist Federation" (ISF). Lionel was a delegate at the World Congress this year at Stansted Hall. I had not previously met Lionel but I was aware of his family's many years in the Spiritualist movement.

I asked Lionel if he was any relation of our former SNU President, Robert Owen — "Yes," he replied, "he was my uncle."

Our former 1925-1928 President has been featured in Pioneer several times regarding our first official Presidential badge. Lionel was unaware of the story about the badge and his uncle.[9]

I later met up with Lionel in the lovely gardens at Stansted Hall in the brilliant weather which continued throughout the whole Conference, I took the opportunity to have a short interview with him:

I just want to ask you about your uncle Robert.

Lionel: Okay.

If you could tell us something about him — that he was your uncle on your father's side, obviously.

Yes, that's right, he was my father's eldest brother and he was really responsible for our family becoming Spiritualists, because, when he was seven, he sat with his father, my grandfather, having read a pamphlet by Emma Hardinge Britten, and they sat at the kitchen table and of course expected the table to move, but what happened was Robert fell asleep, or so my grandfather thought.

He went to wake him up and then he recalled the pamphlet said, "Don't do that, put a piece of paper and pencil in front," and he did, and Robert wrote, and he was seven years old, mind you; he wrote quite a bit in Welsh. Now Welsh was my grandfather's native tongue but Robert was seven and born in Liverpool, didn't know much Welsh at all, and the information was known to only two people, my grandfather and a relative of his who died a few years before.

But he didn't stop there; he thought, "Well, if this is my relative, my son can't speak Welsh and if I ask some questions in Welsh and I get the right answers, then I'll be convinced." And that's what he did.

Oh, really?

He got the right answers and then from being ardent Methodists they joined the local psychological society and the rest is history.

Wow, that's impressive!

[9] See Pioneer, Vol. 5, No. 2, April 2018: The President's Badge and Farthings Again!

It was really something, and of course Robert went on; apart from becoming President of the SNU, he had the gift of medical clairvoyance.

Like Andrew Jackson Davis.

Yeah, well, that's right; now it would be illegal today but then it was okay. When he treated a patient, he would see a medicine bottle and he could read the label and he wrote down what was on the label and gave it to the patient and said, "You go to the chemist and get this made up and you'll be all right."

And probably in Latin as well.

Well, I'm not sure about that, but a lot of the herbs were tropical and the chemist didn't have them. Now in Liverpool there's a very good School of Tropical Medicine at the university, so they used to go down to the university and they got to know, and it came to the stage where people would go with us and they would say, "Oh, Mr. Owen sent you, did he?"

Ah! Wow!

And the tropical medicine people used to ask folks what was wrong with them, and they'd tell them and say, "Well, this is exactly the right thing to treat that condition."

Extra confirmation.

Yeah, that's right. He and Ernest Keeling were known as the terrible twins in the SNU because they always used to stir things up at Conferences.

So they were good friends?

Yeah, oh, they were very good friends, yeah. So he was a remarkable man.

Was he married?

Yes.

And were they Spiritualists?

No, his children, he had two children, who are still living in Ireland, but they're not Spiritualists.

Ah! So that was the end of the line from his family.

Yeah. Well, I'm the only one in my family that stayed with Spiritualism.

Ah, right!

My brothers and sister, we all went to the Lyceum, but I'm the only one who remained involved.

So when did you come into Spiritualism?

Well, I was born into it.

Yeah, but when did you take an active interest?

Well, initially I started developing trance mediumship when I was 16; my father put me in a circle in Watford, where we lived then. But then I was called up and I used to help in the Lyceum, initially in Norwich, because that's where I was stationed; and then in Cardiff, when I was moved to Cardiff. And it was, of course, while helping at the Lyceum in Cardiff that I had this séance with Alec Harris, because he used to give a special séance for the Lyceum every Christmas and I was lucky enough to be invited.

Well, you were privileged, to have one with Alec Harris.

Yeah, and not only that, my grandmother materialised and came and held my hands.

Really! So you could actually, like, identify her from the form?

Yeah, absolutely. You know, the thing that impressed me about the whole thing was the atmosphere of reverence; it was, it was astonishing, it really was. And it's a feeling that's never left me; and I thought, you know, I took it all for granted at the time, but it's the only time I've ever had a member of the family materialise, it's not happened to me since, but it was a wonderful experience.

And presumably Alec was in a cabinet, was he? Or behind a curtain or something or…?

Well, they had a cabinet with a curtain over it.

Like a corner of the room, I suspect.

He sat in a chair, which they've still got at Cardiff Church.

Oh, have they?

They've still got his chair; they keep it there. There's somebody here from Cardiff this week that was talking to me about it. Well, he was quite a small guy and he had this great big Native American guide; he was the first one to materialise and he was almost twice the size of Alec Harris.

And you saw this clearly?

Yeah.

And in reasonable light?

Yeah, yeah, that's right.

In red light, presumably?

It wasn't white light, it was subdued light, but it was bright enough to identify people, especially with 19-year-old eyes.

Yeah, yeah. And just about Gladys Owen; she was your auntie?

Yes, she was my father's sister, he had two sisters and she was the youngest sister; and she was involved and remained involved in the Lyceum all her life, and she became the Centenary President of the Lyceum Union and was also President of Liverpool Church for many years before she died. In fact, when she died, there had been an Owen associated with Liverpool Church since the 1880s.

Oh, right. So they would have known John Lamont, our first President really and the founder of the Liverpool Society.

Yes, that's right; and I was privileged to be asked to speak at the 125th anniversary of the church. You know, when Gladys was President, she used to invite me to go there and take services now and again, and by the 125th she'd been long gone by then, but it was a thrill, really, to be there, to sort of continue the line, as it were.

Yeah, that's great. And then of course she was involved here somewhere along the line, wasn't she? With the College.

Oh, she was indeed. She was one of the original hostesses, when they first took over.

Would she have known Findlay? Would he still have been a resident then?

Oh, yes she did, because in 1963, when I lived in Hounslow, she and a group that had been at the SNU Conference came to visit us, and they were on their way the next day to see Arthur Findlay, to finalise the arrangement for the SNU to take over.[10]

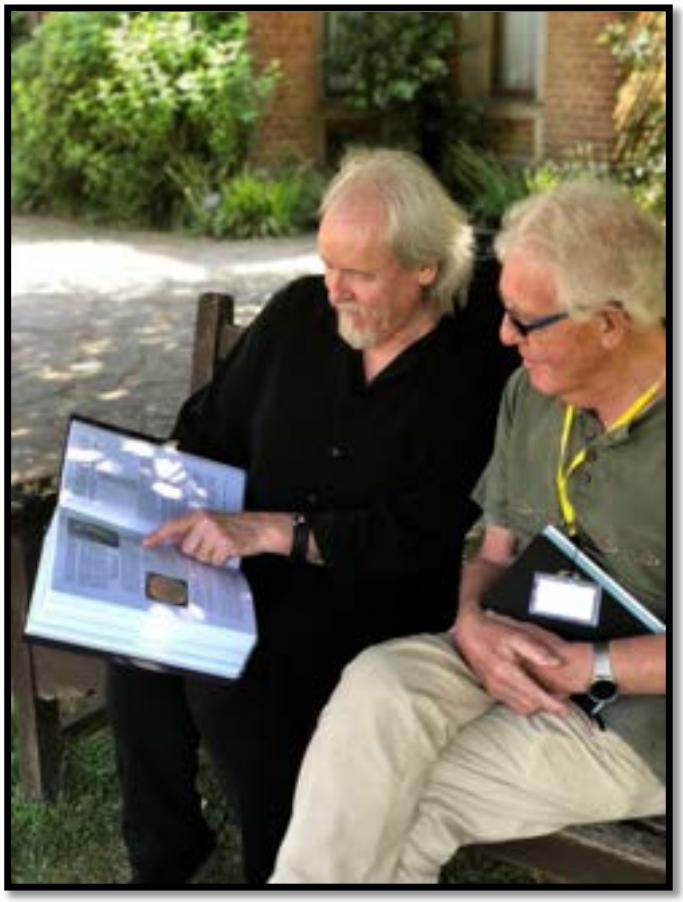
[10] In July 1966 Miss G. Owen, SNU Treasurer, accepted a temporary offer whereby she would move from her home in Bootle to take up residence at Stansted Hall to act in a dual capacity as SNU Treasurer, as well as College receptionist and Hostess. This was on the understanding that no member of the National Council received payment for work done at the College. In January 1967 she was asked to stay for a year and continue her work at the College and to also act as Hostess; for the latter she would receive no monetary payment but, instead, she would receive free board and accommodation. With her agreement she conducted her work from

Ah! So that would probably have been just after Findlay's wife's death in 1963.

Yes, that's right.

Thank you.

Lionel also told me that his uncle, Robert Owen, sat in the William Hope Crewe Circle for some years and was closely associated with the work, telling me some remarkable stories of Hope and the Crew Circle's work in psychic photography.



Showing Lionel the articles in "Pioneer" regarding his uncle, Robert Owen, as SNU President and receiving the first Presidential badge of the Union in 1927.

SNU President and AFC Principal Minister David Bruton wore the badge throughout the official business of the World Congress.

Thanks are due to Janette (Jan) Marshall for all the excellent Congress photographs supplied.

her second-floor room. As Miss Owen was now under the direction of the Manager, she could no longer be a member of the Board of Governors. For further details please see Pioneer, Vol.1, No. 2, January 2014.

Congress streamed live

The early World Congress of Spiritualists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were very well recorded within the Spiritualist press of the day but without doubt this year's World Congress of Spiritualists, hosted at the Arthur Findlay College, received the highest ever coverage.

Francesco Rovelli Gervasoni, Segretario from the Associazione Spiritus Italia, which is an SNU Associated Body.[11]

Streamed live were all the major sessions of the Congress held in the Sanctuary at the Arthur Findlay College.

For the first time it was streamed live on Facebook, page "WCOS 2018", globally — the page had reached more than 50,000 people within the streaming days.

This historic event can still be viewed on the Facebook page.

Francesco kindly supplied Pioneer with this breakdown report:

WORLD CONGRESS OF SPIRITUALISTS 2018 JULY 5th & 6th

Online Streaming and Viewers Report

Stream 1: July 4th, Pre-Congress Event: "James J. Morse and Emma Hardinge Britten" (7.30 pm) Full visualization: 4.515 Coverage: 8.443[12]

Stream 2: July 5th, "Welcome and Keynote Speakers" (9.00 am) Full visualization: 1.441 Coverage: 3.684

Stream 3: July 5th, "Keynote Speakers" (11.30am) Full visualization: 4.263 Coverage: 8.072

Stream 4: July 6th, "Divine Service" (9.00am) Full visualization: 6.254 Coverage: 21.563

Stream 5: July 6th, "The Ministry of Spiritualism" (11.30am) Full visualization: 2.379 Coverage: 5.465

Stream 6: July 6th, "Spiritualist Outreach" (2.30pm) Full visualization: 2.910 Coverage: 13.642

Stream 7: July 6th, "Hope and the Global Spiritualist" (4.30pm) Full visualization: 1.075 Coverage: 2.141

WCOS 2018 Streaming Global General Coverage: 46.043 Global active interactions (page share, comments, reactions): 4.532.[13]

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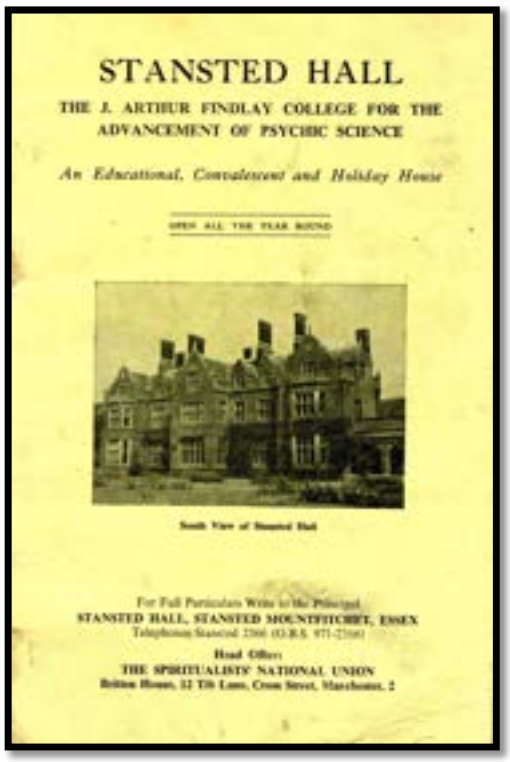
[11] Spiritus Italia: http://www.spiritusitalia.com

[12] Full visualisation: people who watch the entire video from the beginning to the end —Coverage: full viewers, or someone who just views parts of it.

Stansted Hall, an Educational, Convalescent and Holiday House



STANSTED HALL

THE J. ARTHUR FINDLAY COLLEGE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF PSYCHIC SCIENCE

An Educational, Convalescent and Holiday House

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South View of Stansted Hall

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Head Office:
THE SPIRITUALISTS' NATIONAL UNION
Britten House, 32 Tib Lane, Cross Street, Manchester, 2

Maybe the first booklet produced by the SNU on Stansted Hall, then situated at their Manchester office, was on the opening of

The J. Arthur Findlay College for the Advancement of Psychic Science.

The start of the AFC functioning as a residential college and the opening of the College can be found in Pioneer, Vol. 1, No. 2, January 2014: "The J. Arthur Findlay College for the Advancement of Psychic Science – The early years".[1]

The main purpose of bringing this booklet to attention is the photographs, but note the last page titled "Facilities at Stansted Hall", republished below; most have come and gone, and others have been achieved:

Stansted, with its broad acres and velvety lawns bedecked with flowers, is ideal for a refreshing and health-giving holiday where everyone is welcomed and given freedom to rest and be lazy or to take part in more active physical pursuits. The well-stocked library will be a joy and haven to all book lovers; the comfortable public rooms will satisfy those who want to do nothing but sit and chat and rest; the games and billiard rooms will please the more restless beings, as also will the outside amenities, e.g., Tennis, Bowling, Miniature Golf, Boating and Fishing. The whole district has a historic setting and will incite the Rambler and the Hiker.

But Mr Findlay had other things in mind when he gifted us this magnificent house. He envisaged some kind of College and also a Home for Healing. Therefore in deference to his wishes there will also be provided facilities for:—

(a) National Conferences, where Spiritualists of different points of view may meet and discuss their problems. It will also be available for non-Spiritualist organisations not actively hostile to Spiritualism.

(b) Summer and Week-end Schools where a variety of studies will be possible, such as—

The Study of Spiritualism and its Allied Phenomena.
Mediumship and its Development.

[1] Also available in a Museum booklet at the Arthur Findlay College or in the online shop: https://www.snu.org.uk/shop/the-arthur-findlay-college

Spiritual and Psychical Unfoldment.
Comparative Religion.
The Physiology and Anatomy of the Etheric Body.
The Technique of Spiritual Healing.
Psychology.
Public Speaking and Chairmanship.
Conducting a Lyceum.
Musical Appreciation.
Foreign Languages.

THE LIBRARY
Sitting: Miss G. Owen, Dr J. Winning, Mr C. I. Quastel.
Standing: Mr R. Ellidge.

(c) There is also planned the erection of a Healing Sanctuary or Church for Spirit Healing and Meditation, and where Religious Services may be held. Any visitor requiring Spiritual Healing will be given free treatment during their stay at Stansted. To supplement Spirit Healing other forms of treatment can be had, such as Hydrotherapy, Physiotherapy and Special Nursing under the guidance of fully qualified medical and nursing staffs. The cost of this will be extra and the amount will be determined by the doctor in charge and will depend on the type of treatment and the ability to pay.

Direction to get to the Hall.—As you come out of Stansted Station turn right into Church Road and go over the bridge. Continue along that road for about 200 yards until you come to the Lodge Gates on left. Turn into drive. Walk on till you come to Stansted Hall, ¾ mile on. Arrangements may be made to meet visitors at Stansted Station if time of arrival is given either by letter or phone.

Phone Stansted 2366 or O.B.S. 971-2366.

Charge for car 2/6 for each person.

The Grand Staircase, Stansted Hall

STANSTED HALL

The J. Arthur Findlay College

SPOOK HALL

Can it be done?

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

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

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

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

"SPOOK HALL"

RESIDENTIAL HOME FOR RETIRED SPIRITUALIST TUTORS

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

Open Week May 2019 at the Arthur Findlay College

***Photographs and Article for SNU Pioneer by* Janette Marshall**

The UK Bank Holiday weekend, Saturday 4th May to Tuesday 7th May, saw the Arthur Findlay College once again open its doors to the public. People travelled from near and far, including overseas, to attend the annual four days' event. 'Open Week May 2019' offered attendees a healing atmosphere and an inspiring insight into the opportunities offered throughout the year. The Course Organiser, AFC Principal and President of the Spiritualists' National Union, Minister David Bruton, took time to create a well-thought-out four days' programme offering a traditional and innovative view of Spiritualism, spirituality and mediumship with an introduction to Pioneers who made it possible.

David Bruton

A £20 entrance fee for Saturday, and thereafter £15, offered a valuable day to all who attended and an opportunity for the public to experience debates, lectures, tutorials, workshops and demonstrations of mediumship, plus psychic and spirit art with mediumship. Payment or prepayment of £8 secured a place for those who chose to experience a Masterclass. £25 offered visitors a further opportunity to have a private session with one of the College Tutors or approved mediums. Healing in the Pioneer Centre was also available without charge, yet people willingly made donations with appreciation. *Alan Rawnsley, June English, Julia Almond and SNU President Minister David Bruton* were ready in reception to meet the first of many visitors.

The Sanctuary

The Sanctuary was filled with the air of anticipation as visitors began to arrive.

The College was represented by AFC Tutors, approved mediums, guest speakers and experienced presenters Alan Stuttle NDDRCA, Alv Hirst, Chris Drew, Minister Colin Bates, Minister David Bruton, David Schlesser, Minister Irene McGilvray, Minister Jackie Wright, Janette Marshall, John Blackwood, Minister Judith Seaman, Lillian Steiner-Iten, Lynn Parker, Minister Matthew Smith, Maureen Murnan, Otto Haddad, Paul Jacobs, Penny Hayward, Rachel Casson, Sally Barnes, Stella Upton, Minister Steven Upton, Su Wood, Tim Smith, who also celebrated his birthday at the College, and Minister Val Williams, plus the Gordon Higginson Scholars Adam Berry, Daniel Robinson and Robert Cairnie.

The Presenters were supported by Chairpersons Minister Alan Rawnsley, Alv Hirst, David Schlesser, Minister David Bruton, Minister Jackie Wright, John Blackwood, Joy Clark, Julia Almond, Minister June English, Minister Lyn Bradley, Mark Bradley, Rachel Casson, Minister Steven Upton and the AFC General Manager Tanya Smith.

Tanya Smith

Healing was available each day in the Pioneer Centre. 'The Stansted Healers' included Angela Gotobed, Annette Garrod, Beryl Jay, Bill Fletcher, Chris Bennett, Dagmar Hoffman from Germany, Ed Bluett, Graham Clarke, Gwen Williams, Hazel Shaw, Helen Cooper, Jackie Wallace, Jackie and Keith Parsons, Joy Clark, Judi Hancock, Maxine Fenwick, June Shore, Mick Bond, Pat Canfield, Sonia Beck, Steve Morris, Sue Tabrett and Wendy Boulton.

Healers Pat Canfield & Steve Morris.

Gordon Higginson
SNU President
1970-1993

Minister David Bruton
SNU President
2010 to present day

Minister Duncan Gascoyne
SNU President
2000-2010

The initial Welcome in the Sanctuary on Saturday was followed by a Dedication of the 'Duncan Gascoyne Pioneer Centre' by current SNU President David Bruton. David succeeded Duncan in 2010. Duncan, who was President of the SNU for ten years, dedicated much time to securing the viability and advancement of the College. Duncan is well respected and appreciated for his contribution to AFC and Spiritualism.

Another dedication was made on Monday to renowned President of the Spiritualists' National Union and previous Principal of the Arthur Findlay College Gordon Higginson. Gordon to date has been the longest-standing SNU President, with 23 years from 1970 to 1993. SNU President David Bruton presented the Dedication of the 'Gordon Higginson Library' within the Arthur Findlay College.

Paul Gaunt Museum Curator

Visitors to the Britten Museum at AFC were greeted by the Museum Curator and lecturer Paul Gaunt, Editor of Pioneer Journal. Paul is always happy to assist and inform visitors and researchers. He verifies the facts for Tutors and students working on SNU education courses. Always willing to generously share his extensive knowledge of the history of Spiritualism, he has now been invited to lecture at Lily Dale, USA. He is pictured here with a model of the 'Hydesville House'.

Minister Val Williams

Lillian Steiner-Iten

Masterclass Titles included the following carefully considered choices:
Animal Communication, Creating Communication, Deepening Attunement Techniques, Deepening the Evidence, Diversity of Perception, Experiencing True Clairvoyance, How a Spirit Artist Works, Importance and Awareness of Communication, In Search of the Diamond, Mastering Emotions within Mediumship, Paranormal Investigation, Photographic Mediumship, Portraits in Perspective, Prayer, Prayer for Today, Private Sittings, Sitting in the Power Techniques, Soul Growth - The Source of Personal Power, Sound Healing Bath, Spiritual Healing in the 21st Century, Spiritualism's Forgotten Assets, Strengthening Psychic Senses, Strengthening Meditation, Symbolism in Mediumship, The Art and Science of Colour in Healing, The Aura as a Tool for Mediumship, The Healing Touch, The Heart of Spirit, The Hidden Magic of the Aura, The Importance of Colour, The Message of Spiritualism, The Power of Communication, The Voice of Spirit, Philosophy for the Modern Age, and Trance Healing, plus Working with Mediumship to find Missing People.

Minister Colin Bates

Paul Jacobs

Tutorial Titles also included Animal Communication, Clairvoyance Evidence and Message, Defining and Challenging your Avenues of Mediumship, Demonstration of Mediumship, How to Blend with Energy and Stay in the Power, Moving the Power, Physical Energy within Mediumship - Past, Present and Future, Spirit Guides - Actual or Virtual?, The Art & Science of Colour in Healing, The Control in Trance Mediumship, The Evolving Medium, The Philosophy of the Spirit, Why Mediums Need to Learn to Pray, and in the Garden 'Branching Out' Philosophy to take us Further with Alv Hirst, plus an introduction to Pioneers for the Day Hannen Swaffer, with Tim Smith, and Gordon Higginson, with Lynn Parker.

Workshop Titles included Developing the Power of Philosophy, Drumming - The Healing Journey, Private Readings and How to Enjoy Doing them, and The Soul, plus The Spirit Intelligence.

Demonstrations: Mediumship, Mediumship and Psychic Spirit Art, Sound Healing, and Trance, plus Trance Healing.

Minister Jackie Wright

Saturday Evening Special Event
'Sound Healing', with Otto Haddad.

Debate Titles included
'Search for the True Message of Spiritualism', with SNU President Minister David Bruton, Minister Jackie Wright and John Blackwood OSNU, and 'Can the NHS Survive without Spiritual Healing?', with SNU President Minister David Bruton, Minister Steven Upton and Tim Smith.

Sally Barnes with John Blackwood OSNU

Minister Matthew Smith

Lecture Titles: 'Investigating the Haunted', with Stella Upton,
'Photographic Mediumship (Spirit Photography)', with Minister Martin Colclough, and
'Shamanic Soul and the Shamanic Cosmology', with Maureen Murnan.
Lecture/Tutorial: 'The Relativity of Time within Mediumship', with Janette Marshall.

Janette Marshall

Minister Steven Upton

Minister Irene MacGilvray

Booking Desk for Private Sessions run by
Sue Crook, Caroline Spink and Simon Parr
'Runner' Co-Ordinator Russell Fitzpatrick & Christa Korzenietz & Jeannie Pickles

The Private Sittings Booking Desk and Reception staff were kept constantly busy as visitors booked personal one-to-one sessions and excitedly booked places on future courses at the College. The 'Loyalty Scheme' discounts also saw previous students eagerly rebooking,

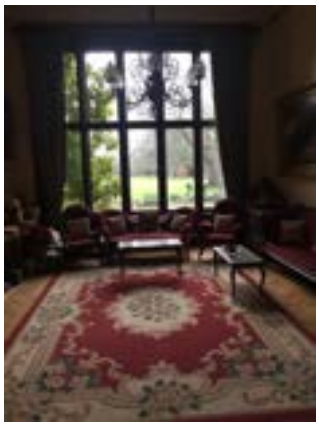
Alan Stuttle NDDRCA

Alv Hirst, Julia Almond & Alan Rawnsley

Chris Drew

The air of generosity of spirit was apparent as people browsed the College corridors and bustled enthusiastically into rooms. 'Team Spirit' prevailed amongst everyone working together to ensure the smooth running of yet another successful Open Week. During work or well-served breaks, it was possible to capture photographs of some of the many people involved.

We have respectfully regarded the privacy of visitors and not included photographs of them in this article. Their interest, joy and, for some, comfort was expressed, viewed and felt as they explored the College.



AFC with a view to the Garden

As one of the many visitors stated, "Stansted Hall is a truly unique and beautiful building with exceptionally talented Tutors and a worldwide reputation for quality education."

A visit to the College would not be complete without a moment spent in the well-kept gardens. The wealth of trees and plants include the spectacular Tulip Tree.

Reflections of Moments at AFC Open Week

Penny Hayward
& Rachel Casson

Gordon Higginson
Scholars
Daniel, Robert & Adam

Margaret Falconer
& Carmel Cranston

Christa Korzenietz

Joy Clark

Lyn Bradley &
Josie Anderson

Maureen Murnan
& Lynn Parker

Minister June English
& Jean Smart

Helen

Behind the Scenes at Open Week. Before the event takes place, extensive planning and preparation are necessary to coordinate a successful event. AFC Principal Minister David Bruton and Tanya Smith, the Manager of the Arthur Findlay College, lead a great team working to support the College, Tutors and students, not only on Open Week but all year round. Bar staff, Dining-room Staff, Nurturing the Garden – Will & Tom, Housekeeping – Chefs Danny and Stuart, Kitchen and Office staff, the Reception, AFC College Shop, the Maintenance Team – Vinnie, Mick, Ian and Paul, Night Managers – Alan and Mike, and so many more staff and volunteers who dedicate their time free of charge, are much appreciated.

Cassie

Volunteers Car Parking Maurice Smedhurst & Carl McLelland

Reception Natalie, Niki and Alison

Volunteers AFC Entrance & Car Parking Mark Bradley & George Falconer

AFC Shop Nicki

Main Office Kelly, Christine, Sandra & Colette

George Falconer on the steps of AFC

Garden Manager Will

Bar Food Eddie Hill & Tina Elven

Housekeeping Jacqui & Dave

AFC Shop Karen

Assistant Manager Viv Simpson stepping in to offer Dominika a well-earned break.

The AFC College Shop is open most days during the year. Each day of Open Week the shop was filled with people purchasing art, books, including publications by Arthur Findlay himself, candles, cards, crystals, educational and music CDs, jewelry, magazines, singing bowls and many other welcomed articles of interest, for themselves and as gifts for others. A wide variety of secondhand books was also available to purchase in the Gallery.

James Arthur Findlay

Arthur Findlay's book titles include 'The Unfolding Universe', 'The Way of Life', 'Where Two Worlds Meet', 'On the Edge of the Etheric', 'The Rock of Truth', 'The Torch of Knowledge', and more.

David and Tanya stood at the door and on the steps of AFC to greet old and new arrivals. Newcomers to Stansted Hall were interested to learn that the public are welcomed to attend Sunday and Wednesday Services in the Sanctuary, to book a day or week in the Museum, to attend Healing in the Pioneer Centre on Tuesdays or to begin a spiritual journey with FOSH, 'The Friends of Stansted Hall', at their Open Circle on Thursday evenings or at their Saturday workshop events. The Open Week Sunday evening Divine Service saw visitors happily soon return.

David Bruton & Tanya Smith

'2019 Open Week' at AFC was quite a family affair, with husband and wife Barry and Judith Seaman, Margaret and George Falconer, plus their daughter Caroline Spinks, Stella and Steven Upton, Mark and Lyn Bradley, Vinnie and Alison Gillam, Kathy and Smudge Smedhurst, plus others, including sisters Jodie and Toni from the dining-room and their mother Debbie. It has been quite usual over the years for AFC to attract family members, parents, children, siblings and spouses to become staff and Tutors. It all contributes to a close-knit team of people who are there to support one other and the many thousands of visitors who annually frequent AFC.

Another valuable team member, AFC Organist Ron Holding, is still remembered and missed.

Maureen with Adam *Christa with Simon* *Robert Cairnie* *Bill Fletcher* *Margaret Falconer* *Caroline Spinks*

Stansted Hall for many is that 'home away from home' with a sense of spiritual family. It was wonderful to see so many people enjoying the freedom to visit the Findlay family rooms, also used as classrooms during working sessions. They retain a homely, yet majestic feel.

Whilst walking in the corridors it almost appears that voices of Tutors and personalities past still resonate in the fabric of the building. Albert Best, Coral Polge, Heather and Eric Hatton, Glynn Edwards, Jean Bassett, Jill Harland, Maurice Barbanell, Muriel Tennant and Vi Kipling are but some of the many who dedicated their time to furthering the knowledge base of AFC. Perhaps we still benefit from their words woven within the voices of the Tutors of today.

The Arthur Findlay College of Stansted Hall

Sundown in the Arthur Findlay College Gardens

AFC has over 50 of its own Approved Tutors, plus experienced guest Tutors and speakers focused to sharing their wide range of skills and expertise. Open Week allows Tutors to come together to work diligently and set goals for the future, yet also enjoy each other's company, creating a wonderful atmosphere going forward. Not all Tutors are able to attend Open Week, yet all have contributed. Services take place most Wednesdays and Sundays, Healing Tuesdays, FOSH Open Circle Thursdays. If you are unable to visit AFC at Stansted Hall, education is also available through www.snu.org.uk and through SNU International www.snui.org.uk.

Judith Seaman

Stella Upton

Su Wood

Martin Colclough

Tim Smith

Alan Stuttle NDDRCA

Photographs taken from the AFC Website

To learn more about the events and people who have influenced the face of Spiritualism you may wish to spend a study day, days or a residential week in the Museum with Paul Gaunt. Please see page 86 for further details. It is a valuable and enlightening experience.

Museum R J Lees Corner

It is only possible by prior appointment when Paul is present at the College.

You will have access to articles, journals and artefacts from over 100 years ago, starting from the 1860s.

There are many interesting exhibits, including Pioneer James Morse's 'Magic Lantern' Slide Projector and Slides.

Gallery Stairs to Museum

Paul Gaunt shown at a Lecture with James Morse's 'Magic Lantern'

'**Open Week 2020**' is currently scheduled for **2nd to 5th May next year**. Minister David Bruton, AFC General Manager Tanya Smith, her staff and the Committees work hard to ensure that the College continues to offer the highest standard of tuition.

James Morse's 'Magic Lantern'

You are Welcome to Attend Open Week 2nd to 5th May 2020.

Visitors also had an opportunity to book the Pre-Christmas **1920s-style Christmas Week 2019**, another special Annual Event with Course Organiser AFC General Manager Tanya Smith. As a residential week the College invites you to come alone, joining others, or to bring your partner, to just relax or to experience a week of focused learning plus festive cheer in a relaxed atmosphere. Tanya, with her love of the Arthur Findlay College and its history, enjoys bringing her team of Tutors together to combine some of her favourite topics from courses throughout the year.

Enjoy the warmth of the crackling open fires if you wish. Tanya's aim is to create a pre-Christmas indulgent relaxing retreat filled with the seasonal magic that would have been felt by the Findlay family at Stansted Hall at Christmas.

The Arthur Findlay Legacy of Knowledge and Inspiration for Mankind

James Arthur and Mrs. Annie Gertrude Findlay left their home to the SNU in 1964 to further education for Spiritualists and people from all walks of life to study and research Spiritualism and psychic sciences. It is not difficult to imagine them standing on the lawn welcoming travellers to their home.

AFC includes the Arts, Sciences, Philosophy and Education.

Open Week stands as a tribute to this family, who appeared earnest and passionate, caring deeply for their fellow men and the future of humanity. The resonance of many Tutors and visitors of the past, present and perhaps future contribute to the atmosphere and intellectual interface of the College. They are remembered in our minds with gratitude and appreciation, particularly on Open Week, as everyone gathers together.

Mr & Mrs Findlay

The current President and AFC Principal Minister David Bruton and the AFC General Manager Tanya Smith, with their team and fellow colleagues, focus to uphold and perpetuate the continuance and excellence of the AFC Experience.

EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN & JAMES JOHNSON MORSE

During the 'Traditional Victorian Christmas Week' held at the Arthur Findlay College from December 10th to 17th 2016, Emma and Morse *return to spend an evening at Stansted Hall!* General Manager Tanya Smith and Museum Curator Paul Gaunt took the part of these two founder members of the Spiritualists' National Union. This was followed by a Victorian slide show – see Pioneer, Vol. 3, No. 6, December 2016.

Emma and Morse revisited Stansted Hall at the July 4th Pre-Congress Event for the lead up to the World Congress on July 5th and 6th 2018. For the final time Emma and Morse told their story live on SNUi on Monday May 20th 2019 and on this occasion the role of Emma was narrated by Daniela Gervasoni CSNU. During the three occasions I played Morse I have been repeatedly asked for the script. This is now published below, together with some of the Powerpoint images used during the narration:

I Am Emma Hardinge Britten:

I was born on May 2nd 1823; my parents were Ebenezer and Ann Sophia Floyd.

When I was 11 my father died and I had to support my family; I did this by teaching music in a school.

In my late teens I went to Paris for a period of musical training and a year later I began my life as a concert musician and vocalist; my talent was looked upon as remarkable!

Unfortunately, while in Paris I lost my voice and had to begin another career as a pianist and composer.

Then I found work as an actress with the Haymarket and the Adelphi companies for seven years; I also worked as an organist, choir leader and composer, and writer for a musical publication.

For my musical compositions I called myself Ernest Reinhold; music lasted prominently throughout my life.

But I had another life when I was around 12 years old…

I served as an entranced clairvoyant and a mesmeric subject for an English occult society called "The Orphic Circle".

I cannot tell you anything about this secret occult society, except that I kept certain connections throughout my life.

I later returned to the stage in Paris, acting at the Imperial Theatre; there I was offered to go to the Broadway Theatre in New York. I was then 32 years old; I took my dear mother with me.

During my acting career and until I got married I was known as Mrs Hardinge. A year later I gave up my career as an actress.

I visited a Spiritualist medium – and fled in horror; it was so unchristian and blasphemous!

I was persuaded to visit another medium because I was told by the medium Ada Foye I would be a great medium – I received a communication from my brother Tom, who died 10 years earlier, aged 16.

When I got home my mother confirmed the details of the message from our Tom.

So my life would soon change to a Spiritualist medium. I was helped by Mrs Kellogg to awaken my spiritual powers of magnetism.

I was soon giving séances free for all who sought my services.

I held public seances as a test medium, gave music lessons in the rooms of the Society for the 'Diffusion of Spiritual Knowledge' and edited their periodical, 'The Christian Spiritualist'.

I crossed the Atlantic Ocean from Liverpool to New York on board the steamship "Pacific" and it took 13 long days…

In July 1857 I had developed into a public trance-speaker; my public début was at Troy, New York – the spirits had promised me I would hear every word I spoke, and so I intended to convert many of them to the true Christian faith.

But instead of converting any of my audience to orthodoxy I converted myself entirely away from the mists of superstition invented by priestcraft; my assurance was my own personal responsibility both here and hereafter for all the good or evil I have ever done on earth.

I would become one of the most successful trance-lecturers in Spiritualism, and in the next eight years I travelled throughout the entire United States of America.

During this period numerous lectures were published and I contributed to the Spiritualist periodicals. I supported Abraham Lincoln, raising funds for nursing and medical care for the soldiers during the Civil War.

After the war I returned home to England and was in great demand and shuttled back and forth to America. I wrote my first historical work while in England, 'Modern American Spiritualism'.

On October 11th 1870, while in America, I married Dr William Britten.

We returned to London, where I lectured extensively. I conducted consecutive Sunday Services in London; these were arranged and published by my good friend James Burns, editor of the "Medium & Daybreak".

My concluding Sunday lecture on April 30th 1871 was my most famous. I gave four principles, which were evolved from Spiritualism:

I believe in God
I believe in the immortality of the human soul
I believe in right and wrong
I believe in the communion of spirits as ministering angels

I toured the North of England and continued the lectures in London. I sailed back to America in August 1871. I was presented by the English Spiritualists with a purse with 145 pounds to continue my work abroad.

At this time my good friend James J. Morse had started his work.

MORSE:

I was born on October 1st 1848; my parents, Thomas and Mary, were publicans at the Strand, London. I was the youngest and I had a brother Charles and a sister Louise.

I was not a strong child and not expected to live – my mother died of cholera when I was about five and father followed five years later.

My family was broken up; my elder brother was sent to Canada, my sister to Norfolk, and I was placed in a care home. It was a dreadful time in my life.

I ran away to family friends and was put under the care of a lovely lady and received only six months' schooling. I was now 10 years of age and sent out to work.

I was then sent off to sea as a sailor. In the spring of 1863 I had an accident; I was at work in the hold when suddenly a huge piece of timber hit the back of my skull – I was knocked senseless!

I was too ill for duty, so my captain discharged me and paid just over ten shillings; after my passage to London I had sixpence left.

My friends and uncle all accused me of deserting my ship and would have nothing to do with me – I was so ill I was confined to the infirmary for six months.

I recovered and found employment as a barman in a public house called the "Fox and Grapes" and later in the "Two Brewers".

I was duped after eight months' work; I lost my money and my clothes and was starving. I was almost an atheist during this dreadful period of complete loneliness.

At this time I became aware of a peculiar guiding influence about me; something appeared to intervene at the right time – I called it Providence.

I would later write in my autobiography:

The gentle dew descended, my soul was watered with a purer truth, and I arose to a consciousness of the existence of the soul, immortality, and God

I now know it was my mother's influence and direction.

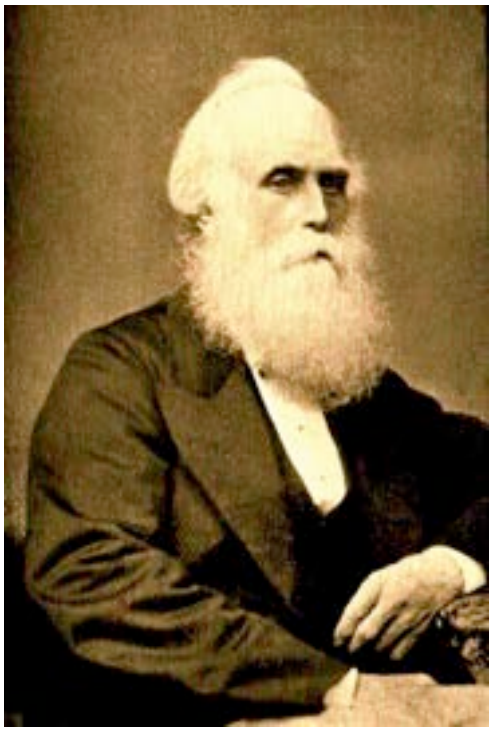
My attention was drawn towards Spiritualism in the autumn of 1868; I was now 20 years old.

A button came off, so I called at a haberdasher's shop kept by Mrs Hopps, who was holding a conversation on Spiritualism. I remarked, "You are not such a fool as to believe in that stuff, are you?" – "Yes, I do," she replied.

As the result of further conversation she lent me two books, "Experiences of the Davenport Brothers" by Robert Cooper and "Six Months' Experience at Home of Spirit-Communion" by the Rev. John Page Hopps, the son of the shopkeeper.

Impressed with what I read – I wanted to see it – when I returned the books, Mrs Hopps gave me the address of a medium, Mr Cogman, in Whitechapel.

The following Sunday being my "Sunday out", I found my way to Mr Cogman's; I presented myself to him and in due course I found myself for the first time at a spiritual séance!



Mr Cogman was an elderly gentleman, of an age perhaps to be my grandfather at least. His flowing gray hair, piercing eyes and general appearance all contributed to strike the beholder with respect.

The chamber in which the séance was held was an ordinary room, on a level with the street; it joined with a back-parlour by means of folding doors, which were open.

A settee, sideboard, chairs and a long table comprised the furniture, and all seemed neat and tidy. The séance commenced. I expected that tables and chairs would be moved and that the raps would occur, and was totally unprepared for the following proceedings.

The mediums present were all of the psychical order, consequently we had no physical phenomena.

The first medium to "go off" was a gentleman now in the United States, Mr. Woolnough (Woolnuf), who was

entranced, as he said, by the spirit of Dr Young. However, I could not *see* it, in a double sense!

Afterwards a lady was influenced; she lectured for some time and peaked in a tremendous outburst of either noise or eloquence. The effect was to disgust my mind with the whole proceedings.

I had almost imagined that I had got into a ranters' meeting.

While these somewhat ungenerous thoughts were passing through my mind, I was conscious of a very peculiar experience. I must mention that at the time I was a disbeliever in mesmerism, so I was wondering whether these trance mediums, as I heard them called, were rogues or fools.

However, to return, my sensations were of a peculiar and unusual character. I felt as if a large hand had suddenly struck me a heavy blow with extended palm upon the top of the head.

I instantly turned round to see who had taken this liberty with my crown, the room being lighted with an ordinary paraffin lamp in full light.

Observing everyone in their seats and no one behind me, I was astonished.

My strange sensations continued until my brain felt as if split in two halves, and into the cavity a shovelful of burning sand seemed to be poured, which trickled through me from my split head right down to the tips of my fingers and to the tips of my toes.

These sensations were followed by an intense desire to give a tremendous shout.

The muscles of my throat, lungs and mouth all seemed intent upon giving out this uncontrollable shout. While this internal struggle was going on, I tried to rise up and shake the feeling off but, to my horror, I was a fixture.

My eyes had closed and were proof against my most powerful efforts to open them.

The internal desire to shout at last prevailed and a goodly "whoop" was the result.

I then seemed endowed with another personality, which for a period of three-quarters of an hour raised the most un-Sunday-like din that ever afflicted mortal ears.

I shouted, I rolled round the room, I swore and, as if to render my position more uncomfortable, I was perfectly conscious of all my actions!

The more I tried not to do these things, the more perfectly were they accomplished!

At the end of three-quarters of an hour the fit, or whatever it might be called, passed off and I sank exhausted upon a settee.

Upon regaining possession of myself, with the most profuse apologies, I tendered my excuses to the proprietor of the house, vowing that I could not help doing what I had done.

For I had in the course of the proceedings spoken to the old gentleman in a most abrupt manner and used the most offensive names.

Mr. Cogman, very good-natured, replied that it did not matter; he was not offended and implied that he was rather used to that kind of thing, and concluded by suggesting my coming again on the following Sunday evening – I was utterly at a loss to account for what took place.

The following morning, I went to work, considerably shaken by the events. While busy I suddenly felt a peculiar warm sensation on the left side of the back of my head, passing down my neck into my right arm downwards to my index finger; my body felt fixed.

I felt I should write something. As this suggestion entered my mind my index finger scrolled a tremendous "Yes" in the sand contained in the tub I was using; I felt I had red-hot wires passing down my arm.

I asked more questions and found the communicator to be my mother; I then took the possibility of spirit communication seriously. It was six or seven minutes before my arm recovered. I purchased an exercise book and pencil and got the same result at home, receiving a long, loving message from my parents telling me I would become a great medium.

Once all this cooled down by reason I attributed the whole thing to excited imagination. It kept cropping up in mental battles; as the time approached for the next séance it proved irresistible.

The same experience repeated itself at the séance; I seemed to be two persons instead of one. A parson delivered a lecture through me for 40 minutes; I was then taken over again by a complete blackguard. I continued for some weeks, always becoming influenced; was I being mesmerised?

I met a medium called Frank Herne at one of the séances. He gave me details of my family, including the names of my parents. I later put further tests to this medium; I now accepted spirit communication.

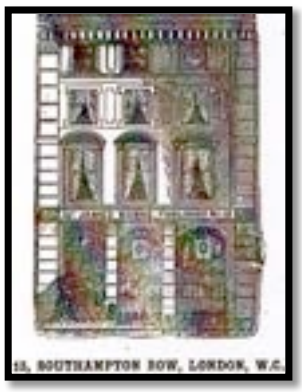
As I progressed in the Spiritualist movement I developed other forms of being in a controlled state, such as putting my hands in the fire and holding burning coal on the palm of my hand. This reached the Spiritualist press; I made many Spiritualist connections.

I had attended the medium Mrs Main's for some time, where I met my wife, who had been told she would meet her future husband at the circle; it was a case of "love at first sight".

It was in this circle that my lecturing control first announced his presence – "Tien-Sien-Tie", a Chinese mandarin.

I met James Burns, who ran the Spiritual Institute, and he invited me to conduct séances every Friday. This was in October 1869 and they were reported in the "Medium & Daybreak" and in the Spiritualist and the general press; they were the first regular séances in London for trance mediumship and they continued until 1872.

It was during the Friday séances, as my mediumship developed, that my second control became known; he is called the "Actor" or the "Strolling Player" and he joined "Tien".



I was also working at the Spiritual Institute, assisting in his publishing business, extending over three years.

I started giving regular trance addresses in London in April 1870 and my first in the provinces was in Northampton in September.

The spirit prophecy of my parents was fulfilled.

My position as a Spiritualist may be defined as beautifully described by EHB in her 1871 lecture, the "Creed of the Spirits":

I believe in God
I believe in the immortality of the human soul
I believe in right and wrong
I believe in the communion of spirits as ministering angels

EMMA:

I continued my work in America. During one year I was privileged to do 300 lectures; on each occasion there were between 2,000 and 3,000 people in attendance.

During the 1870s I wrote, edited and published various works and in 1877 I began my Pacific Lecture tour, travelling overland to California.

In January 1878 I continued my tour to Australia, which continued for 15 months, then on to New Zealand, returning to America in January 1880, where I resumed my work.

MORSE:

I toured much of the United Kingdom in August 1872; I became listed as a professional speaker.

My friend James Burns had done so much to promote and organise Spiritualism in this country. I began my work calling for a National Organisation, which I strongly outlined at the annual Conference of Spiritualists held in Liverpool in August 1873.

In October 1874 I crossed the Atlantic to tour America – New York, Philadelphia, Massachusetts – returning home in October 1875; while in Boston I visited my dear friend Emma.

It was while I was in New York that I met Wella Anderson, a "spirit photographer in pencil", who drew the wonderful image of my chief control, "Tien-Sien-Tie", under the influence of the Italian sixteenth-century artist known as Raphael.

The National Organisation started with the "Lancashire District Committee". It was the first

district association to be formed, at a Conference in Bury, August 1875, headed by my friend William Johnson.

Its aim was to promote Spiritualism in new districts, places of weak or non-existent Spiritualist activity, supply experienced speakers and distribute literature.

In 1881 we were aided by Emma upon returning home: the years of work resulted in the formation of the Spiritualists' National Federation in 1890, of which I was President on two occasions.

EMMA:

In 1881 my husband William and I returned home to England with the full intention of retiring. I was completely exhausted from so many years of extensive travel, lecturing and writing.

Spiritualism in England was not in a good position; my dear friend Morse, with other pioneers, had been working to establish a National Organisation.

Retirement was not an option.

In September 1881 I started another intensive tour, this time in the North of England, starting in Liverpool.

In 1884 my second historical work was published, “Nineteenth-Century Miracles”.

In 1886 my dear mother, Ann Sophia, died; she had for so many years been my touring companion.

In 1887 I helped to compile the English Lyceum Manual.

I also gave my summary of statements at the Oldham Spiritual Temple that had been given to me over the years by the spirits that had evolved from Spiritualism – proven on the basis of previously established truths of spirit communication through Spiritualism:

I believe in the Fatherhood of God,

The Brotherhood of Man,

The Immortality of the Soul,

Personal Responsibility,

Compensation and Retribution hereafter for all the good or evil deeds done here,

And a path of eternal progress open to every human soul that wills to tread it by the path of eternal good.

These were placed in the laying of the corner-stones of the Oldham Spiritual Temple.

I was co-founder of the "Two Worlds", of which I was editor until 1892. It was through my editorship that I helped to arrange the "National Conference of British Spiritualists" on July 6th 1890, becoming the "Spiritualists' National Federation" the following year.

My husband, my sister Margaret, James Morse and myself, as well as other colleagues, were part of the first executive of the Federation. I was never President as some think; myself and my family all resigned at the following Conference to continue other work.

In 1894 my dear husband William died.

My work was now mainly over except for the odd lecture, as I was in poor health.

I died aged 76 years on October 2nd 1899 at home in Manchester.

Two of my dearest friends, John Lamont and James Morse, took part in my funeral service.

At two o'clock the cortege left the house, passing through the heart of Manchester and attracting widespread attention. "The line of carriages was so extended that when the wreath-car was well out of Albert-square into Cross-street the last conveyance was just entering the square at the other end."

Upon arriving at Harpurhey Cemetery, Manchester, the entrance pathway was lined with Lyceumists clothed in white.

Around the grave gathered a great concourse of people, with the Lyceum children in the centre.

My great work on this side of life was done

MORSE:

I was instrumental in forming the "Britten Memorial" just weeks after Emma's death – a lasting monument to our departed sister. As the Federation had no home it was decided to form a trust to purchase a building as its head office; I would not live to see this fulfilled.

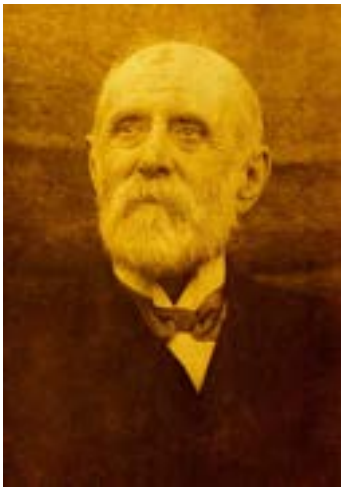
In 1901 the Spiritualists' National Federation was reconstituted, becoming the Spiritualists' National Union.

In 1902 I was engaged by the Victorian Association of Spiritualists of Melbourne to lecture upon Spiritualism in Australia and then to continue to New Zealand; on my return in June 1903 I would continue my work within the SNU, where I held many executive posts.

In 1906 I followed Emma as editor of the SNU flagship journal, "The Two Worlds", a post I would hold until my death.

During the war years, through "The Two Worlds" and aided by my only child Florence, we were able to raise funds to purchase six ambulances to be sent abroad.

I suffered the great loss of my companion, Marion Morse, who passed over, after a long illness consequent on shock from air-raids, on November 25th 1917.



For some years I had been Vice-President of the Union and preparations were in place to celebrate my 50 years' anniversary.

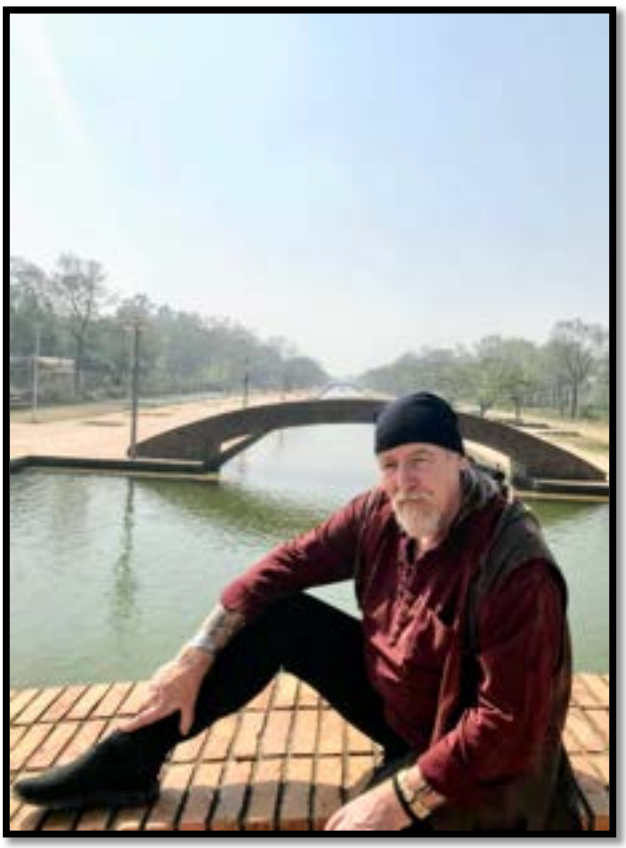
On February 18th 1919 I had an attack of influenza; its effect on my heart was fatal. The following day I became unconscious and sank rapidly; at about 6:30pm I passed quietly away from this life.

My great work was also done

Emma and Morse revisited Stansted Hall at the July 4th Pre-Congress Event for the lead up to the World Congress on July 5th and 6th 2018

FIFTY YEARS OF SPIRITUALISM

Paul J. Gaunt



On October 30th 2019, while in Lumbini, Nepal, the birthplace of the Buddha,[9] I celebrated my fifty years' involvement within the Spiritualist movement under the auspices of National Spiritualism, soon becoming a Class B member of the Union. My church was affiliated to the SNU, hence my membership of the Union; however, the church was run on strictly Christian lines, which did not fully fulfil my expectations or sit well with me. Nevertheless, I became a very active church member fifty years ago; the church was very well attended and the committee were of a much older generation—very unlike today!

It was within this environment at Bedford Church that much of my early life was spent. I introduced several of my friends to the church. Along with a few people in the church already, namely Hugh Aldous and David Spring, we formed, with the church's blessing, the POL group "Purpose of Life"; this primarily was to raise money and awareness of Spiritualism. We did the usual things like jumble sales, psychic evenings, coffee mornings, etc. Robert (Bob) Cracknell would do Psychic Evenings, where, for example, we would put numbers on the underside of the chairs completely out of sight and Bob would give a reading, say seat number four, the person on the seat and the psychic having no idea who the person was; he gave some remarkable demonstrations.

During this time I met two friends, a medium called Robin Stevens, and Connie Ransom; they were a big inspiration to me. We decided to do a six-week one-evening-a-week workshop (for want of a better name) on 'Public Speaking'; Robin, a fine speaker. agreed to do this with a friend, David Hopkins. Wow! This was a great education for me; David and Robin together were fabulous putting over the importance of a good talk, leading me to the rostrum.

I started chairing the church meetings and taking the platform for the address, then the church circuits with various mediums; one medium whom I worked with was Gena Brealey,

[9] Photograph taken at Lumbini: it has a number of older temples, including the Mayadevi Temple, and various new temples, funded by Buddhist organisations from various countries, have been completed or are still under construction. Many monuments, monasteries and a museum, and the Lumbini International Research Institute are also within the holy site. In addition, there is the Puskarini, or Holy Pond, where the Buddha's mother took the ritual dip prior to his birth and where he had his first bath. At other sites near Lumbini, earlier Buddhas were, according to tradition, born, then achieved ultimate enlightenment and finally relinquished their earthly forms.

a daughter of Helen Duncan. However, I found I was so often talking to the converted, so to speak, and reliant on a medium. So I changed direction and started to give talks to non-Spiritualist groups, e.g. the Women's Guild and suchlike; I did this until 1982, then stopped public speaking completely.

With regard to the church, the POL group was most successful in raising awareness of Spiritualism in Bedford and in 1973 I moved from Bedford to the Arthur Findlay College to live and work—but that's another story. After around eighteen months at the AFC I went to London to see a show, 'Jesus Christ Superstar'; I noted an advert for a one-way coach trip to India, so I booked. It was a three-month journey to New Delhi, where I remained for a while. Gordon Higginson kindly kept my job open; on returning to the AFC the management had changed from Jimmy Young (second AFC manager) to general manager Charles Sherratt.

At Bedford we started to hire school halls, town halls, local theatres, etc. and put on all-day events. We worked the prices that anyone could attend with or without an entry payment. Maurice Barbanell would send back issues of "Psychic News" to put on each seat free. We had on several occasions Harry Edwards and his group of healers, and Rose Gladden. Mediums included Gordon Higginson, Robin Stevens, Carmen Rogers and Matthew Manning. The demonstrations were packed; my contacts at the AFC were most useful and we also brought along Albert Best, Ron Baker, the then SNU General Secretary, and for good measure Charles Sherratt to address the meetings; he was a fine speaker.

These are some of my very fond memories of over forty years ago. My introduction was not sought inasmuch as I did not intend to become in any way involved; in fact I knew nothing about Spiritualism or in fact had any interests within that avenue.

My introduction was powerful and at the time very disturbing, but so evidential; I have never needed to look for further proof from when it all began for me on October 31st 1969. My story was first told in "The Ark Review", the journal of the Noah's Ark Society for Physical Mediumship, issue 128, January/February 2003, pages 17-19.

However, published below is the fuller original version, as it was heavily edited for space in the Ark:

OUIJA EXPERIENCE

Early Modern Spiritualism was a time of demonstrable power from the spirit world largely beyond the senses of man; and yet through the recorded history of mankind there are numerous examples of spirit communication, sometimes being swallowed in religious pampering or categorised as superstitious evil.

It was, however, the events that surrounded the Fox Family in 1848, with its powerful demonstration of spirit communication, that made America and indeed much of the world stand up and take note of much that history had chosen to ignore.

Much ground had been prepared prior to 1848 by the likes of Emanuel Swedenborg, Anton Mesmer and Andrew Jackson Davis, their philosophical foundation stones paving the way to the demonstrable truths of 1848.

The crudity of the employment of communication, alphabetical raps and later table tilting, reached Victorian England in 1852 by American medium, Mrs Maria Hayden

and soared openly to epidemic proportions soon after amongst England's elite. This laborious, yet efficient method of spirit communication remained popular even with the progression of mediumistic development. The method of delivery in spirit communication was of basic irrelevance. The relevance was the fact that the veil between life and death had been broken, and survival of death with individuality was for all and not dependent upon religious belief. This so-called, 'crudity' was an open doorway to Modern Spiritualism for those ready to cross; a doorway that I crossed in 1969.

Halloween night, 1969, was the night in which all my preconceived ideas were to change direction.

There is no significance in it being All Hallowed Eve, except had it not have been, perhaps the events of that night may not have taken place.

After partying this night with two friends, we decided to try out the ouija board, mainly for youthful thrills and excitement, a 'scary' finale to Halloween Night. Later, while we were all sitting a fair distance from the table, the upturned glass and cut out letters etc were still where we left them. Suddenly the glass shot off the table flew through the air, and smashed against the wall some distance away!

Impressed with the results, albeit rather nervous, I decided to have another go the following evening in my bedroom with my friend John from the previous evening this time however, in a more serious and responsible manner. We soon made *contact* with a woman who called herself Laura. We were so impressed with the clarity and quality of the information she gave us. We continued with our 'corresponding' for a week or so, each time getting more and more information about Laura. Suddenly her tone became decidedly chilly.

She began to describe how badly her husband had treated her shortly before her death. Laura had given us such clear information, her full name, place of burial, husband's name, and address etc., that we decided to check out all that we had received.

We located the place of her burial and all the information she had given was correct full name, dates of birth, death location etc.

Weeks followed and we persisted our corresponding and checking to the point of visiting her husband whom, by this time had remarried. He became extremely agitated and angry when I confronted him with information we couldn't possibly have otherwise known.

By this time things had well and truly gotten out of hand. The whole situation was affecting our lives at home and at work, and so we stopped using the ouija board. This did not however, see the end of Laura contacting us! My bedroom had a decidedly heavy feeling to it my cat who would normally sleep at the bottom of my bed, would not even come close to the room.

So, scared by these astonishing revelations we called to see the local vicar, a Catholic priest, and a convent. Albeit they were all most helpful, but by far did solved or helped our desperate plea. It was just after this something quite extraordinary happened to me while walking along a passage, I had what I can only explain as a daydream—but so totally vivid.

I was that night to sit alone and contact Laura, have a bible and ask her to move the glass totally on her *own volition*. I was to hold the bible at the edge of the table, and the spirit Laura to move the glass on it. I had one hand on the table and the other holding

the book, this was in no way a religious act —but simply a symbolic act to move on as I felt in my daydream.

I can feel the goose pimples on my arms typing this after so many years, she actually did this and it was almost as if someone had switched on a light, the whole atmosphere changed. And unbelievably shortly after, my cat took its place at the bottom of my bed.

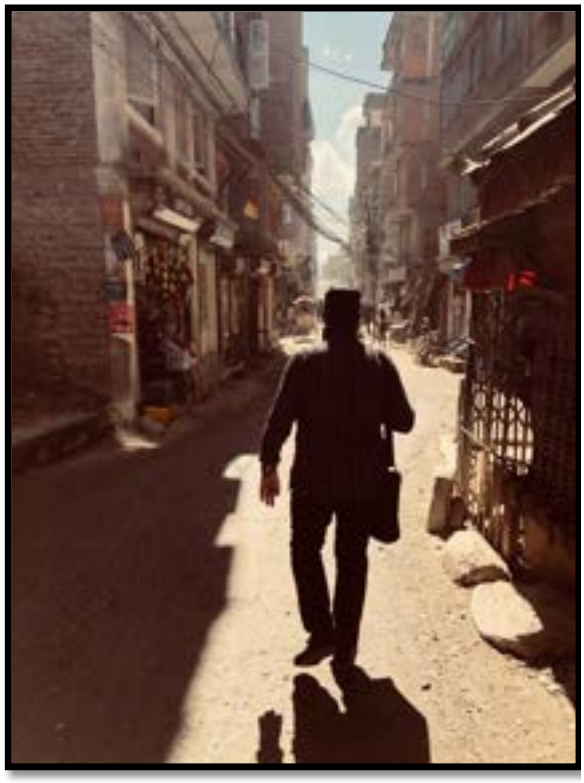
After John and I sought the help of the local Spiritualist church, and I shall never forget at the first service we attended. We were approached by the medium, Robert (Bob) Cracknell, whom we had never met prior to this day, and he so astonishingly pointed to us waving his finger between us—and asked if we had been using a ouija board, he told us to meet him after the service.

Thankfully, all was resolved, and now over fifty years on, the experience remains clear with me still. This was for me the most evidential experience of spirit communication I have ever encountered. As shaken as I was by the events that unfolded, this was my introduction to Spiritualism.

—~—☼—~—

Today, in my later years, I spend time in Kathmandu, Chitwan national park and the Himalayas, Nepal. Here I dedicate time putting together much of the issues of Pioneer, my Powerpoint presentations and the Arthur Findlay College yearly Christmas murder mystery, etc.

The photograph below depicts my favourite routines: a stroll through the older parts of the city, just outside the Thamel area, where I always stay. Just behind me is the devastated part of Kathmandu's Durbar Square; many of the capital's landmark buildings and temples were badly damaged or destroyed from the April 2015 earthquake. Further up this road is another one of my favourite haunts, the Swayambhunath Stupa, known as the Monkey Temple.



The streets are dusty but an air of magic always surrounds me; for me life is in itself a spiritual mission, no leaders, self-occupied, with no self-perceived thoughts as I stroll down the many streets, with the Hindu and Buddhist monuments, etc. always present.

For me as I walk, a spiritual experience is not necessarily a deep-rooted experience of enlightenment; it's, in part, a process of conversations with people of so many diverse ways of life, belief systems, etc., which holds a lasting, life-changing experience for me

CHRISTMAS WEEK AT THE ARTHUR FINDLAY COLLEGE

The theme for this year for its last week in 2019 was the 1920s. The AFC tutors were Stella Upton, Lynn Cottrell, Val Williams and Janette (Jan) Marshall, with General Manager Tanya Smith.

This included workshops on art, auragraphs, mediumship, meditation, table-tilting, remote viewing, etc.

The traditional "Murder Mystery" started with an enactment:

Guests had been invited by an unknown host under the pretence of a "surprise party!" But why? And by whom?

Resulting in the murder of Miss Flossie Periwinkle by poison < played by Monica Salvi.

Top left to right: Mrs Bessie Constance — Stella Upton, Lady Beatrice-Somerset — Val Williams, Madam Dorothea Frances — Tanya Smith

Bottom left to right: Sir Percy Lancelot — David Bruton, Lady Winifred Leonora — Janette (Jan) Marshall, and Lady Susanna Mountfitchet — Lynn Cottrell

The hunt for clues—who did kill the beautiful Miss Flossie Periwinkle?

Earlier in the week a reconstruction was demonstrated on how the incredible phenomena of producing paraffin 'wax moulds' of feet and hands was demonstrated by our pioneering physical mediums, such as Franek Kluski.

The first reconstruction under séance conditions was to show the experiments held at the "Institut Métapsychique International" in Paris, which operated during 1918-c1938. An organization for the studies of paranormal phenomena, in 1919 Professor Charles Richet became Honorary Chairman and later in 1930 its President. In 1919 Gustav Geley was its director; they both experimented in November 1920 with Kluski in the production of wax moulds claimed to be produced by materialised spirits.

Professor Charles Richet, who gave us the name "ectoplasm" in 1894, noted:[13]

"Geley and I took the precaution of introducing, unknown to any other person, a small quantity of cholesterin in the bath of melted paraffin wax placed before the medium during the séance.

"This substance is soluble in paraffin without discolouring it, but on adding sulphuric acid it takes a deep violet-red tint; so that we could be absolutely certain that any moulds obtained should be from the paraffin provided by ourselves.

"We therefore had certain proof that the moulds obtained could not have been prepared in advance but must have been produced during the séance itself.

"Absolute certainty was thus secured"

"We therefore affirm that there was a materialization and dematerialization of an ectoplasmic or fluidic hand, and we think that this is the first time that such rigorous conditions of experiment have been imposed."

[13] Taken from "Thirty Years of Psychical Research", by Charles Richet, 1923, page 543.

This was demonstrated with a commentary from myself, partly as given above and from the notes by Geley and Richet; we had, of course, to use a *human spirit* to demonstrate the process with plastic hands to complete the reconstruction. To my knowledge Franek Kluski never used a cabinet to produce materialised forms, but in order to surprise the sitters and conceal the materialisation, or as the Kluski circle would term it, the "phantom".

As the actual conditions were simulated as far as possible, it was too dark to take any photographs of the reconstruction.

The "phantom" was played by Darren Heart, who later in the week materialised as Sherlock Homes, assisting Jan Marshall in her psychic detection/remote viewing session.

Franek Kluski has been well represented in the pages of Pioneer, Vol. 6, No. 3 and Vol. 5, No. 2:

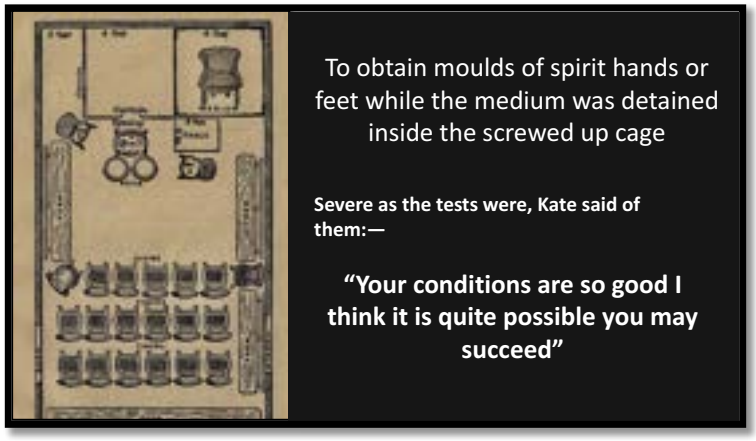
Experiments of the Polish S.P.R. with Franek Kluski & Beasts from The Beyond — Story of Franek Kluski

"Wax Spirit Hands" booklet — Reviewed by the SPR

We then delved further back into the Victorian era of physical mediumship with two mediums who produced wax moulds, firstly Catherine (Kate) Woods, who was one of the first. It was noted that generally prior to the year 1872 most physical manifestations took place in private circles; in July 1872 the "Newcastle Society" was formed and in the year 1873 it was discovered that two ladies had, it was claimed, very great mediumistic power — Miss Wood, aged 21, and Miss Fairlamb, aged 17.

Experiments for materialisations were tried in 1874; human faces and hands presented themselves at the openings of the cabinet where the mediums were enclosed, and eventually fully-developed human forms of men, women and children walked from the cabinet.

Restraints were discussed, leading to Kate's Belper experiments:



(1)—for the spirit to materialise inside the cabinet and come out whilst the medium sat in circle;
(2)—for the spirit to materialise outside the cabinet while the medium sat inside;
(3)—to obtain moulds of spirit hands or feet while the medium was detained inside the screwed-up cage

These experiments are well covered in Psypioneer, Vol. 8, No. 2, February 2012.[14]

Annie Mellon and "Geordie"

The focus for the reconstruction of a séance report was Kate's friend, Miss Annie Fairlamb, who by 1878 was acknowledged as one of the most "active workers in Spiritualism"; in this year she married James Barr Mellon, a name which would serve the movement of upwards of five decades.

The part of Annie was played by the AFC General Manager, Tanya Smith. I myself played the part of the researcher Thomas Ashton, who recorded the séance circa 1875, with Jan Marshall as Armstrong, who in fact was William Armstrong, co-founder and first President of the "Newcastle Society".[15]

A short quote:

> All was now ready, and Miss Fairlamb was requested to take her place in the cabinet, but this she positively refused to do. She said she was willing to sit outside the cabinet, but inside she would not go. Her reason was this: she told me she was certain that if she entered the cabinet, and anything in the shape of phenomena occurred, one of the gentlemen present would declare it a trick, and not genuine spiritual phenomena, so we had to give way, and at once took our seats round the cabinet, Miss Fairlamb sitting immediately opposite the centre of the cabinet, with a clear space of about 3ft. between it and the chair on which she was seated. She was immediately controlled, and the controlling spirit requested me to bring my chair close to the medium, to take hold of both her hands, and also place my feet upon those of the medium. This latter I strongly objected to do. I said 1 was willing for the medium to place her feet upon mine, but

[14] See the Psypioneer link on the new website which heads this issue: The Beginnings of Full Form Materialisations in England – Catherine (Kate) Elizabeth Wood 1854-1884 – concluded 61 Paraffin-Wax Moulds – Alfred Smedley & W.P. Adshead, 62 – What Became of the Moulds? – Alfred Smedley.

[15] The "Newcastle Society", founded in July 1872, named the "Newcastle Psychological Society", operated under that title for seven years, after which it was renamed the "Newcastle Spiritual Evidence Society".

could not think of placing mine upon those of the medium, However, the control would not give way, and I was compelled to comply under protest against those conditions. I was further commanded on no account to lose my hold upon the medium. Another gentleman, a complete stranger to Miss Fairlamb, was then requested to bring his chair and sit next to me, and hold me as he pleased, and so place himself that he could see that I faithfully carried out the conditions imposed upon me.

When these arrangements were completed, the control requested us to sing. After we had been singing for a short time, we all heard what appeared to be a splashing of water inside cabinet, at the same time the medium was very much convulsed and shaken, so much so, that I found it difficult to hold her, but I succeeded in keeping the conditions imposed. When the splashing ceased, the control asked me if I knew the reason why her medium was so much shaken, I replied, I did not; the control said it was caused by "Minnie" (one of the medium's guides) when dipping her hand into the hot molten wax. We were again requested to sing, when the same remarkable convulsions of the medium, and splashing of water in the, cabinet, were repeated. We were now told they could do no more, as the power was exhausted.

Whilst I still held the medium as described above, Mr. Armstrong went direct to the cabinet, threw back the curtains, and we beheld with astonishment that the foot baths had been removed from the position in which they had been placed, to the centre of the cabinet; a magazine, which bad previously lain on the table before the commencement of the seance, was spread out on the floor in front of the baths, and on it were laid two perfect wax moulds of the right and left hands, evidently of a lady by their size and shape.[16]

It turned out to be an educational evening exploring these fascinating physical phenomena of the past. Thanks are due to all who participated and to Janette (Jan) Marshall for taking most of these images and acting as séance assistant in the two reconstructions.

[16] The full account is published in Pioneer, Vol. 6, No. 4: Mrs Annie Mellon – Materialisation medium.

List of Arthur Findlay's books about Spiritualism and Religion

First Edition Dates

On the Edge of the Etheric: September 1931.

The Rock of Truth: August 1933.

The Unfolding Universe: March 1935.

The Torch of Knowledge: August 1936. *

The Psychic Stream: June 1939.

The Curse of Ignorance: Two volumes, 1947. **

Where Two Worlds Meet: 1951.

The Way of Life: 1953.

Looking Back: 1955. ***

* The story is based on Findlay's psychic experiences; he noted: "One thing I would like to emphasise, which is that all the characters in this story are fictitious and are not portrayed to resemble anyone. Having said this I wish also to emphasise the fact that all the psychic phenomena, which run through this story, have actually happened. What I have done has been to change their setting and the details." (JAF, August 1936).

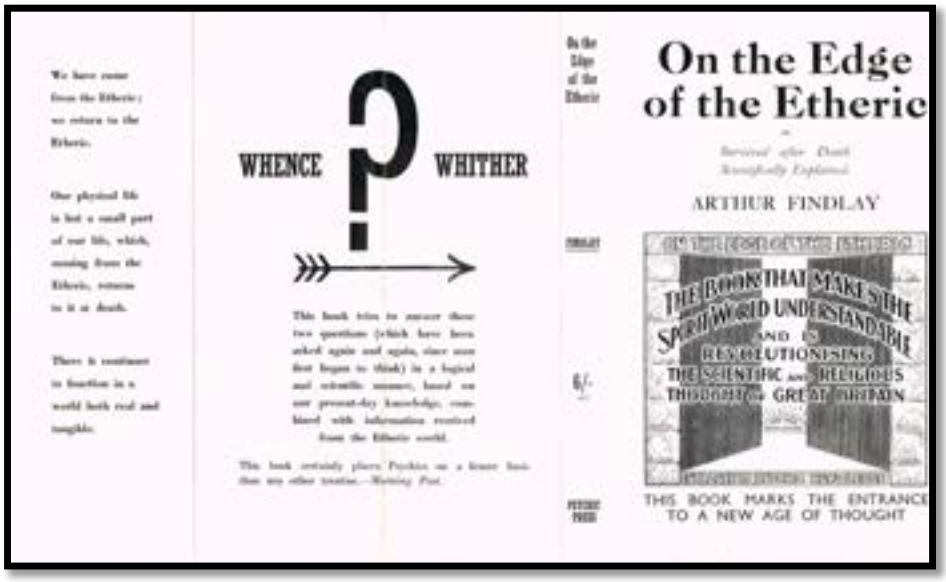
** These two volumes in some references are titled "A History of Mankind".

*** Arthur Findlay's autobiography.

Other related information

The Effect of Religion on History: A lecture to the Cambridge Historical Society at Cambridge. Booklet privately published 1930s.

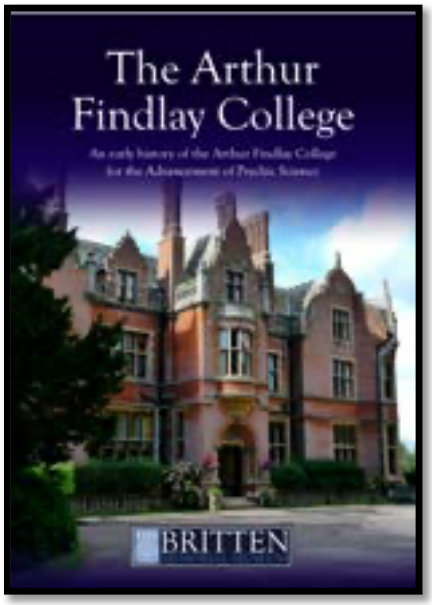
Combined Index to Arthur Findlay's trilogy on Spiritualism (contains 15,630 references), compiled by Dr Albert Neale, published by Psychic Press, Ltd, c1936: On the Edge of the Etheric, The Rock of Truth, The Unfolding Universe.



Friends of Stansted Hall

Founded 1969

The article in Pioneer, Vol. 1, No. 2, "The J. Arthur Findlay College, for the Advancement of Psychic Science – The early years",[4] traces Arthur Findlay's wonderful gift of Stansted Hall to the Spiritualists' National Union and the early formation of Findlay's wish, a College *for the Advancement of Psychic Science*.



January 1966, SNU General Secretary Richard Ellidge: [5]

"It was early in 1945 that Mr J. Arthur Findlay first approached the Union regarding Stansted Hall when it was occupied by the Red Cross as a Convalescent Home and when he resided at Rockingham Castle, Market Harborough. This was followed in 1950 by personal contact with W. Lorraine Haig, then President of the Union, who appointed a President's Committee to investigate and report on a College for Spiritualism. But it was not until January, 1954, that Mr Findlay wrote to Mr H. Dawson, who had been elected President six months previously, followed by meeting at Stansted, that a direct and close liaison between the Hall and the Union was established.

"Mr Findlay submitted the Charter of the proposed Arthur Findlay College and at his request only sufficient copies were duplicated for the then Members of the National Council each marked "Private and Confidential." The Council accepted the proposed bequest of Stansted Hall in April, 1954. At that time the bequest was to comprise the Hall, thirty five acres of land and a more substantial endowment than that which the Union eventually received.

"In 1955 Mr Findlay transferred £2,000 to the union in the form of Stock towards the cost of furnishing and decorating the proposed College, and in 1956 the Council accepted a gift of shares in Psychic Press Ltd.

"The position changed however, and following the passing of his wife in 1963 he transferred Stansted Hall in April, 1964, by Deed to the Union along with £28,000 cash. It was intended that Mr Findlay should occupy five rooms in the Hall and the first plans of the architect provided for this.

"Unfortunately Mr Findlay passed to Higher Life in July, 1965 [should read 1964], rendering the arrangement void.

"There were no legal "strings" attached to the gifts, but the College of his dreams is now nearing fruition, perhaps in a modified form – but who knows!"

[4] Also available in booklet form from the SNU online shop and the Arthur Findlay College (AFC).

[5] Pioneer, Vol. 6, No. 6: This Man is the Mainspring of Organised Spiritualism – Richard Ellidge, SNU Registered Offices.

The early years of the College saw the mounting financial pressures with the amount of work and the finances required to keep up the College, which far outweighed the income it received, plunging the College into possible financial ruin, with a roll-on effect on the Union.[6]

Much support was given by Union members under the presidency of Charles Quastel, who in 1968 became SNU President for the second time,[7] when every effort was made to save Stansted Hall. In 1969 General Secretary Dick Ellidge provided a list of Class B members for Gordon Higginson to prepare a further list of possible 'Friends'. In 1969, with a small, dedicated group of people, the "Friends of Stansted" was founded, with Gordon Higginson being elected as Chairman, Bertha Frank as Secretary and Wilf Potter as Treasurer, aided by Mrs E. Anderson and Frank Tams.[8]

It can be noted in the minutes, as published below, of the Inaugural Meeting of the "Friends of Stansted":

> **MINUTES OF THE INAUGURAL MEETING OF THE "FRIENDS OF STANSTED" held at STANSTED HALL STANSTED, Essex on the 21st. & 22nd. February 1970**.
>
> **Present 150.**
>
> **Chair was taken by Mr. Gordon Higginson. MSNU.**
>
> **Opening the meeting Mr. Higginson** clearly stated the reason why the Friends of Stansted was formed last year, when a few decided to support the College and to fight for its continuation. With this in mind his appeal letter was sent out in December 1969 to which, he stated, the response had been very encouraging and membership was gradually increasing.
>
> **FINANCE.** Mr. Higginson put to the meeting the arrangements made in dealing with subscriptions and donations received. These he stated would be placed in a separate account which had been opened in the name of the "Friends of Stansted".
>
> **FUTURE EVENTS.** Mr. Higginson referred to the Flower Festival to be held at Easter, which would be in the hands of Eileen Roberts and he hoped Members would endeavour to book for that weekend. There would be two "Friends Weeks" during the year and a Senior Citizens Week, when a coach outing would be arranged by the Friends. The Gala to be held in July would have the help of the Friends, who would arrange to have various stalls at this event, in order to raise funds and to endeavour to make this a great success.
>
> **Mr. Tams** stated that Members had been advised of the Committees decision to arrange for the collection of GREEN SHIELD STAMPS with the views to purchasing a car to be raffled to raise a large sum of money.
>
> **CONSTITUTION.** DRAFTS of the Constitution were put to the meeting and after considerable discussion, the Constitution was adopted - the Chairman being given authority to alter the Constitution for the purpose of facilitating registration under the Charities Act 1960.
>
> It was agreed that the word "Hall" be added to the "Friends of Stansted".

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[6] A valuation of the Hall, Annex, Gardener's Cottage, Front Lodge and Land by Sworder and Co. was prepared on January 7th, 1969 and reported by the Principal (John Winning) to be at a gross figure of £100,000; this did not include the furniture and fittings, etc. Findlay had purchased Stansted Hall in September 1924 for the sum of £9,998.

[7] For Charles Quastel see Pioneer, Vol. 3, Nos.1 and 2.

[8] Prior to the formation of the "Friends of Stansted" there were 'Founder Members of the College'.

Mr. Percy Wilson proposed and Mr. R. H. Wandless seconded this proposal,[9] that the Steering Committee as standing be nominated on block until the Annual General Meeting. Agreed.

Committee Principal Dr. J. Winning.

Chairman Mr. Gordon Higginson.
Secretary Miss B. Frank.
Treasurer. Mr. W. Potter.

Mrs E. Anderson.
Mr. F. Tams.

The meeting ended at 5/30 p.m.

Dated. 1st November 1970

(signed) G M Higginson

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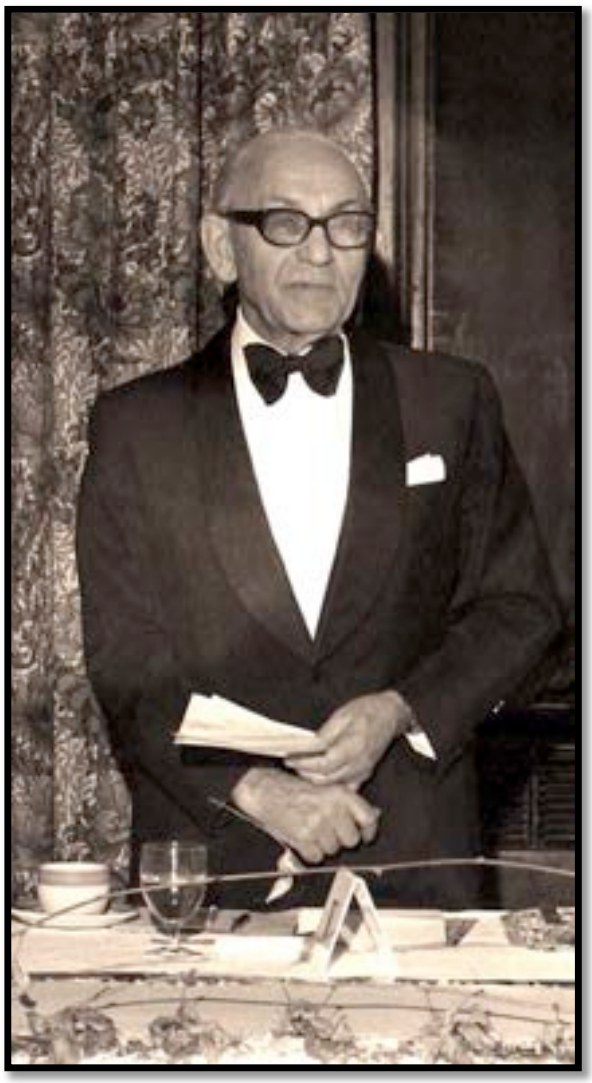


From this day on the "Friends of Stansted Hall" have been raising funds through garden parties, sometimes in conjunction with churches, District Councils, dinner dances, and weeks at the Arthur Findlay College.

At the 1970 AGM Gordon Higginson became President of the Union. Seven years later, during the "Arthur Findlay Weekend" of November 19th and 20th, a Dinner Dance and, on Sunday, the Arthur Findlay Memorial Lecture took place. It was customary in the early years of the College for the year to generally end with the Arthur Findlay Memorial dinner.

In 1977 the guest of honour was Maurice Barbanell, who had supported numerous dinners at the College to raise the much-needed funds for it to survive.

Gordon announced at the Dinner Dance

"*President of the Spiritualists' National Union expressed his gratitude to all who had supported him and the Union, through the 'President's Appeal' and through 'The Friends of Stansted Hall' in order that the Debt to the Building Fund Pool might be cleared.*"

—~—☼—~—

[9] This refers to Roy Wandless. Roy and his wife Christine would later become the founders of the J.V. Trust, which over the years has substantially contributed to Stansted Hall and the Arthur Findlay College. J & V refer to Roy and Christine's children, John and Valerie, who were both lost from cystic fibrosis; they wanted to set up a charity in their memory, so the name derives from their children's initials (**J**ohn and **V**alerie), hence **J.V. Trust.**

Both Roy and Christine knew Arthur Findlay before he handed Stansted Hall over to the SNU.

In the President's letter to the SNU publication, "Communicator" (Vol. 2, No. 5, 1977), Mr Higginson reiterates his thanks, as published below:

"Stansted Hall Cleared of Debt"

During the period of my Presidency of the Union, I have been greatly moved by the invaluable support that I have been given at all times, with this support I have been able to make many alterations which tend to the advancement of our Movement. One of my aims on taking over this onerous job was to find the means to clear the debt owing to the Building Fund Pool for the adaptation of Stansted Hall for the purpose of a College. The generosity of the late Arthur Findlay has been recognised and acknowledged on many occasions. It is now my pleasure to give my acknowledgement to the many ordinary people who by their generosity have made it possible to repay the debt owed to the Building Fund Pool.

Realising the enormity of the task of raising the money to repay the debt and the accumulating interest, I launched an Appeal a few years ago, and today I can give my thanks to all those who responded with outright gifts of money and to those who made interest free loans. My fellow custodians and I, ably advised by Mr Wilf Potter, the Custodian Trustee have been able to invest the monies received at very advantageous rates and we can now make our contribution to the clearing of the debt.

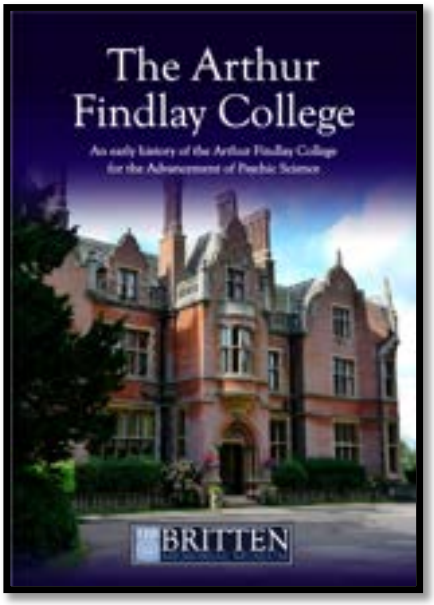
We are greatly helped towards the end of clearing the debt, by the Friends of Stansted Hall who have contributed their investments which have been received or raised for this ultimate purpose.

It is not my purpose to make reference to the specific amounts which have been contributed, but to inform you that aided by the Union as the Trustee of the Britten Memorial Trust in purchasing Britten House for the Union's Offices [annex building] it is possible to clear, as from the beginning of October 1977 the debt to the Building Fund Pool has been set at £100,000. This is a magnificent effort and I cannot let the occasion pass without giving to all concerned my most grateful and heartfelt thanks.

In acknowledging the efforts of the past, we must look to the future and the work that has to be done and above all to the part which can be played by the Hall in the scheme of things. Undoubtedly it has been proved that there is a demand both from this country and from overseas for a College where all can be helped in their search for the Truth and for their spiritual advancement. We have started a Foundation Fund for the College under the auspices of the Union and though at the moment the investments that we have been able to make are very small nevertheless it is a beginning towards assuring that there will be an income each year which will allow us to maintain the Hall in good condition and perhaps make any improvements.

I would close by once again paying my acknowledgement to everyone who has aided my efforts, either by giving money, making loans or by taking the necessary care that the money received has been wisely used in order to achieve this most satisfactory.

Thank you,
G. M. Higginson,
President.
Spiritualists' Nat. Union



THERE MAY BE A NEW BUZZ AT STANSTED HALL!

On September 17th, fifty-five years ago, "The Arthur Findlay College for the Advancement of Psychic Science" was officially opened by the SNU,[1] albeit this magnificent gift from J. Arthur Findlay would for almost a decade pose a very heavy financial burden for the Union. It would not be until the end of 1977, after much fund-raising, members' financial support and the selling of the SNU registered office, "Britten House", at Tib Lane, Manchester, that the survival of Stansted Hall was on a firmer foundation.[2] The early years of the opening of the Hall, as it was then affectionally known (today the AFC), is outlined in a Pioneer article in its second issue, "The J. Arthur Findlay College, for the Advancement of Psychic Science – The early years".[3]

It can be noted in the early years that the Hall was pretty much self-sufficient, with its market garden in a walled area next to the annex. Within the grounds was the gardener's cottage; today it is the SNU registered office, Redwoods, which was later extended. I remember well the village grocer bringing the fresh vegetables to the kitchen, where there would be vegetables waiting from the Hall's Garden to sell or exchange with the greengrocer.

Another fine outlet around 1966 were the beehives:

> *Seven hives of bees were installed by a member of the Chelmsford Spiritualists' National Church, which the owner would maintain, and any honey produced would be given to the Hall.*

The Hall's honey was indeed a big hit with the students and the kitchen alike; I was delighted to note, while listening to President David Bruton's Address at the 119th AGM, July 2021:

> *"We are also in talks with a local beekeeper concerning the potential to site some hives on the estate. Stansted Hall is surrounded by meadows and has a vibrant and diverse selection of wildlife flora and fauna, so the introduction of a colony of bees to the estate will do much to improve the local environment and of course there is the added bonus of Stansted Hall honey, which we are sure will be a big hit with the students."*

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[1] Pioneer, Vol. 3, No. 4: "September 17th, 2016, marks the Golden Anniversary of the Official Opening of Stansted Hall – *"May this house flourish"* "

[2] Pioneer, Vol. 7, No. 4: "Friends of Stansted Hall – Founded 1969"– "Stansted Hall Cleared of Debt".

[3] Pioneer, Vol. 1, No. 2: January 2014; it is also available in a hard copy on the SNU website: https://www.snu.org.uk/shop/the-arthur-findlay-college

Arthur Findlay College

Christmas Week 2022

It's been Pioneer's tradition to publish a few images of the Arthur Findlay College's Christmas Week, the final course of the year. This was the first year since 2019 owing to the pandemic. The ever-popular Murder Mystery created seasonal joy and laughter, as the week was themed "The Swinging Sixties". The fictional Agatha Christie-style murder took place in 1962 at Mountfitchet Manor. Published below is some of the information given to the detective: students to catch the murderer or murderers; the suspects; all who had strong motives where the tutors and staff *all* needed to talk themselves out of any allegations whether or not they were in fact the guilty party to the crime!

The setting:

"INTERNATIONAL PSYCHIC FAIR"

Mountfitchet Manor
December 17th - 20th 1962

At 11.00am Mountfitchet Manor held its traditional Christmas clay pigeon shoot, with many enjoying a hot toddy or a glass of warm mulled wine on the chilly but bright pleasant day. Most of the six psychics joined in the shoot, with the flamboyant journalist, Philippe De La Papier, taking the opportunity to take candid shots of the *famous six,* as he had dubbed them.

In the bar overlooking the beautiful grounds of Mountfitchet Manor, where the clay pigeon shoot was taking place, a beautiful game luncheon was laid out with all the festive trimmings. At around 1.45pm, just prior to the shoot finishing, the psychics started to go to their allotted demonstration rooms to get ready for the opening of the "International Psychic Fair".

At around 2.00pm, just prior to the scheduled start of the various demonstrations, readings, etc., two gunshots were heard echoing throughout Mountfitchet Manor. Panic ensued some five minutes later when the body of the flamboyant journalist was found murdered at his desk in the office.

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Press Release:

Six of the world's renowned psychics met at the beautiful Essex manor-house to demonstrate their varied skills during the proposed four-day event. Famous writer and journalist, Philippe De La Papier, interviewed the famous six on camera. With the interviews finished, chaos ensued as the body of the flamboyant journalist was found murdered at his desk. The police were called and upon investigation it was found that all six of the interviews were missing!

All six psychics are to be interviewed by detectives, as they are *all considered* suspects. It is speculated that during the journalist's filmed interviews one or more of the group were confronted on camera with hints of damaging information which he might publish later—giving a strong motive to murder the journalist—*a murder most foul indeed!*

The Six Suspects [11]

[11] **The suspects group photo left to right:** Tutor Sharon Harvey (Australian psychometrist: "Mrs. O.B. Ject"), General Manager Tanya Smith (Spanish clairvoyant: "Ethelinda Gitana Romero"), Head Gardener Will Crowley (American remote viewer: "Dr Marcus C'All"), Tutor Jan Marshall (French psychic photographer: "Mademoiselle A. D'ark Rume"). Night Manager Alan Brooks (British psychic healer: "Dr. E. Theric"), and Tutor Lynn Cottrell (German psychic detective: "Madam Dita von Tective").

REMOTE VIEWING

My dear friend Dr Watson was away for the festive period, so I was wondering if I could help anyone while my learned partner was away! So, quite impromptu, I decided to wander into a remote viewing session, *totally unannounced*, being given by Jan Marshall in the lecture-room; they seemed to be at a bit of a loose end trying to trace a stolen item which had a connection to J. Arthur Findlay.

Immediately upon entry into the room, I engaged my detection skills and put them to the test, informing the students I would be walking around the large mansion looking to trace the stolen item. Naturally, as a skilled observer, I was able to locate the item and gave *clues* to the remote viewers group using my investigative skills and experience of detection to locate the item—indeed two of the remote viewers were able to find the item under some tactful indications of my clues as to the hiding-place of the valuable stolen treasure of Findlay's only fictional work, "The Torch of Knowledge", published in 1936. [12]

Findlay noted in the book that the story was based on his psychic experiences; he stated:

> "One thing I would like to emphasise, which is that all the characters in this story are fictitious and are not portrayed to resemble anyone. Having said this I wish also to emphasise the fact that all the psychic phenomena, which run through this story, have actually happened. What I have done has been to change their setting and the details." (JAF, August 1936).

In a more serious context, there were varied subjects throughout the week, psychic/spirit art, both practical and demonstrative, trance, etc.; my subject was a lecture on the Communigraph. Readers of Pioneer may recall in issue Vol. 7, No. 6: "A Means of Spirit Communication – Designed from the Spirit World!" [13], which outlined the story of George Jobson's death-bed promise to Basil K. Kirkby:

> "I must repay you for this most marvellous happening of my life," he said. "I feel I can do this best by making a promise to you that when I return after so-called death I will endeavour to instruct you how to build an instrument to enable spirits to communicate with mortals. But I shall take over a call-sign for you to be certain it is I communicating."

The call-sign was Kirkby's three initials, "BKK". The first of two machines made in collaboration between Jobson/Kirkby was up and running in early 1930. The first was called the "Reflectograph", then known as:

The Jobson-B.K.K. Reflectograph

> It required ectoplasmic rods to be produced, gradually forming into a hand and arm needed to push the desired keys to produce the messages on the Reflectograph, which

[12] For a list of Arthur Findlay's books about Spiritualism and Religion; First Edition Dates please see Pioneer, Vol. 9, No. 5.

[13] A further supplement was issued in the following issue of Pioneer: "Some Notes on the Reflectograph and Communigraph – December 2020 – Marc Demarest"

were flashed up on to a screen; the medium was Mrs L.E. Singleton and the alleged materialised arm/hand was that of one of Singleton's guides/controls, "Ethel".

The image shown here on the Powerpoint presentation shows the entranced medium, Louise Singleton, during a demonstration; on the back of the photograph it is noted: "The top row of the keys have been removed to give a clear view of the hand." This shows the alleged materialised hand of "Ethel".[14]

The problem with the Reflectograph was that a materialisation medium was *necessary* to produce results; apart from the Singleton/Kirkby partnership I have not come across any other reports with other mediums of this era undertaking experiments. Around 1931 came the second machine, the "Communigraph", much improved inasmuch as no physical medium was required for its operation; the building of the second machine was a more combined effort of the "Ashkir-Jobson Trianion" group,[15] whereas the Reflectograph was by Kirkby and Jobson.

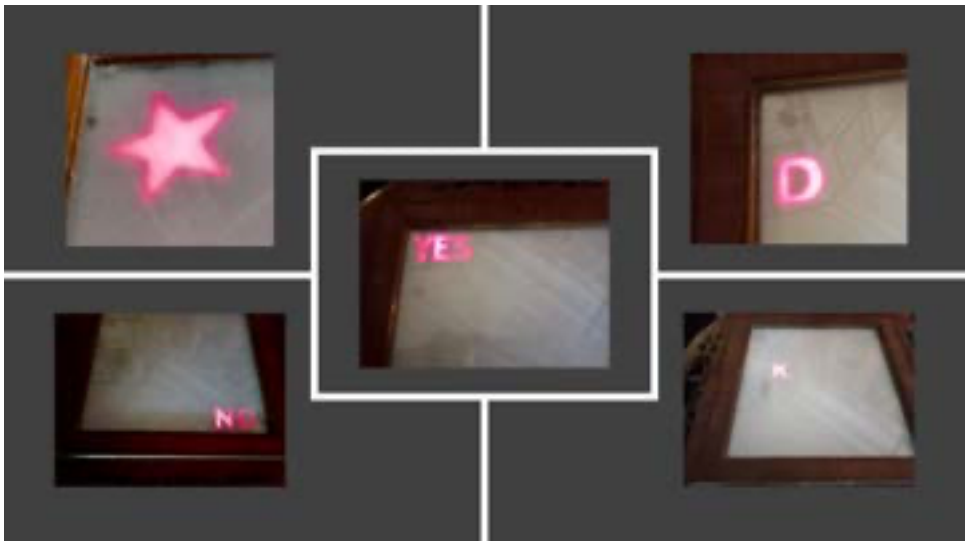
The presentation explained the intended function of the "Communigraph" as per its original operation manual, with the intention of conducting a séance in the evening as it would have been done in the 1930s as closely as possible. The last record of the machine functioning at a séance was in 1936, so the séance held in the library was a fitting historic experiment. As stated, it was conducted as closely as possible with the AFC tutors, healer, and Tanya Smith as circle leader, but given the SNU rules

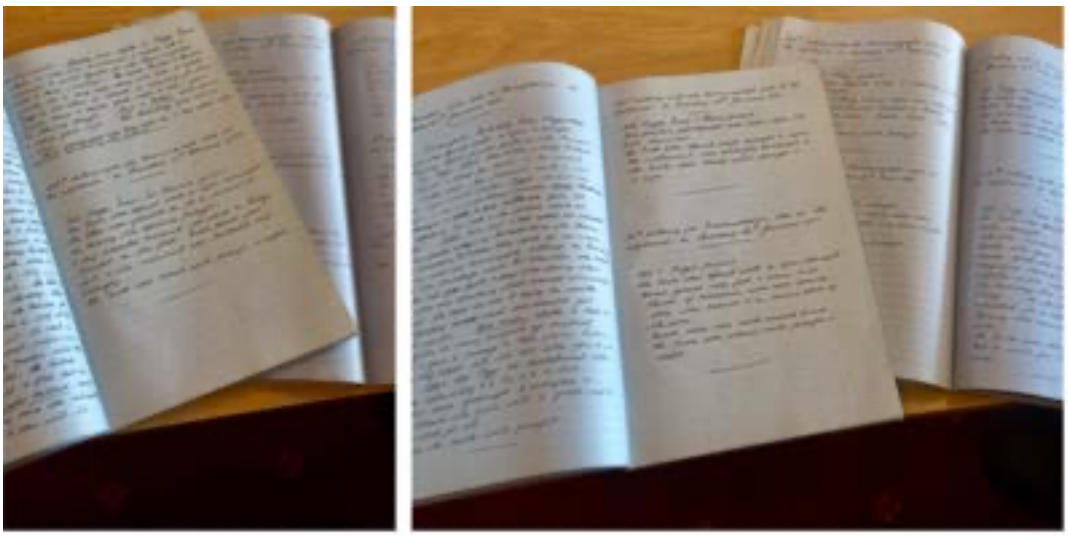
[14] It is unfortunate that a front photograph of the cabinet was not taken to show the medium with both arms secured and the *additional* phantom arm and hand.

[15] In the spring of 1930 a group was organised on both sides of the veil consisting of George Jobson, Basil Kirkby and his steward and partner, Mr A.J. Ashdown, a psychical researcher who had carried out scientific work in the testing of instruments in many outlets of government research departments and the War Office. This body became known as THE ASHKIR-JOBSON TRIANION: Ashdown was the technical adviser to the Trianion; the name ASHKIR is made up from **ASH**down / **KIR**kby = ASHKIR, with George Jobson as the leader of the Trianion group.

of conduct full darkness was not possible, so it was conducted in red light. Please see the Pioneer articles as referred to for further information.

A few of the Powerpoint slides:





August 1933 – March 1936

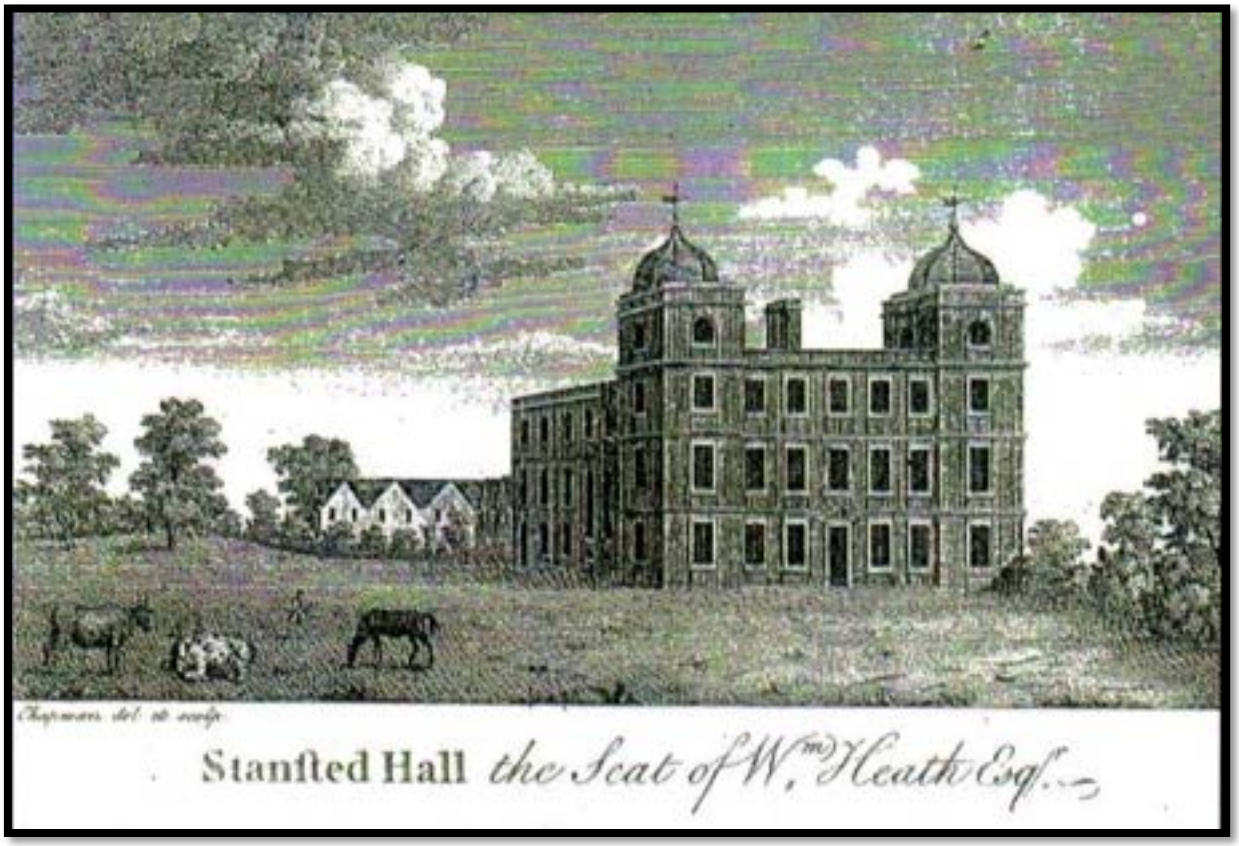
"STANSTED HALL"

How many Stansted Halls have there been?

It is considered that there were three Stansted Halls, although it is not a precise, referenced history by far. The *first* Stansted Hall is said, in several reports, to have been built on the location below the lake near to the church and close to where the J. Arthur Findlay monument is situated today. Richard de Montfichet, who owned the Stansted estate, died in 1258, when the Stansted estate reverted to his sister/s. Stansted Castle was his residence until it was laid siege to in 1216; it is suggested that this is when he built the first Stansted Hall. However, I find no confirmation, dates or referenced details available on the building or existence of Stansted Hall I being built. A large building or buildings may, of course, have pre-existed on or around the said location, etc. of the first alleged Hall before the castle itself was destroyed or damaged. The fate of the *first* Hall is again uncertain; some claim it was burnt down in the 1600s.

If we jump the line of succession of the Stansted estate to Sir Francis Hubbard, who in 1615 sold the estate to Sir Thomas Myddleton (sometimes spelt Middleton), we are on a safer foundation, as it appears that it was this gentleman who built, or at least started, the *second* Stansted Hall. Sir Thomas Myddleton died in 1631; the Myddleton family, however, remained for several generations until circa 1715, when, after around a century, the Myddleton male line died out. The estate was then purchased by Thomas Heath, then passed on to his son Bailey Heath, and, finally, to Bailey's own two sons, firstly to William, then Bailey.

William took over the estate and Stansted Hall in 1760 until his death in 1797; it is during this period that we fall on more solid ground as to the location of the building, engravings, paintings and references of Stansted Hall II. However, the various images of the building are mostly undated and not referenced, and they are not necessarily the *correct* images of the same building!



This image can be found in the present Stansted Hall, which is said to have been a Jacobean-style building; interestingly, the name 'William Heath' is clearly noted and can be dated to 1770. Stansted Hall II was close to the church: the said Stansted Hall I would have been on the other side of the Parish Church. Looking at this image, 'St Mary's the Virgin' would be on the right-hand side of the Hall.

As to the confusing remark, "not necessarily the *correct* images of the same building", the above image does not represent correctly the massive building of Stansted Hall II. Other images were often used as shown below:

The watercolour shown here is a similar image at a distance to the engraving above, but, again, it is not fully representative of Stansted Hall II—the tower on the far right through the trees as seen is the Parish Church

William Heath commissioned Humphry Repton, a well-known English landscape designer for commissions for the gentry, aristocracy and wealthy landowners. Repton claimed that he designed around 400 estates, but it was, however, up to the client to implement his designs, plans, recommendations, etc., which were given to the client in his famous Repton 'Red Books'.

The Red Book would be presented to the client in a red morocco leather binding; it would start with a ground plan summarising his ideas and a description of the client's property, commenting on its attractions and/or defects and suggesting improvements. This would include the approach to the house, features of the landscape, etc., all of which would be discussed in separate sections. The book would be beautifully illustrated with watercolour illustrations, sketches, maps and so forth. Some of the watercolours would be with overlay, with the use of a flap attached; this was to show the client his recommendations, before and after. Repton regarded the Red Book as the working plans for his designs.

William Heath's Red Book has the inscription to 'William Heath, esq.': The 'Introduction' is signed by Repton and dated 2-4 December 1790 at Stansted Hall and February 1791 at Hare Street by Romford. (As appears in the original Red Book.) The Red Book is held at the Essex Record Office, reference: D/DQ 29/1. The images shown further down in this article are 'Reproduced by courtesy of the Essex Record Office', to which I am most grateful for their help in this article.

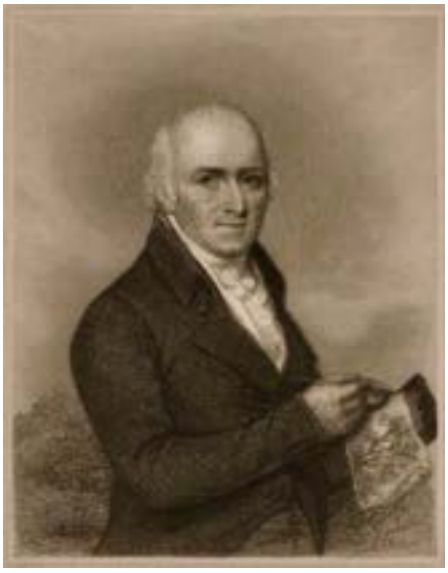
Further:

The Garden Trust website is focused on gardens and landscapes at every scale: from heritage landscapes to private gardens and public roadside verges. This site also holds some interesting information regarding: "C18 timbered landscape on which Repton had given advice and produced a Red Book". I quote:

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

"In 1615 Sir Thomas Middleton, Lord Mayor of London, bought Stansted park and built Stansted Hall, where the Middleton family lived for seven generations before the male line died out in 1715 and the estate was sold to Thomas Heath, a captain of the East India Company. It was William Heath, grandson to Thomas, who consulted Humphry Repton in December 1790 on improvements to the park and house. Repton spent three days at Stansted, and his bill for this, together with his travelling expenses, amounted to £14 3s 6d.

"Repton suggested changes to the access road to enhance the views of approach to the house, and the building of a lodge at the entrance to the park. The park boundary would be pushed south-west in a graceful curve, while the new approach would skirt the vicarage (hidden by plantation) before revealing the house. He felt that emphasis should be given to the foreground, rather than to distant views, as the setting of the house stood on an eminence 'so broad, that in looking from the house very little irregularity of grounds is seen; and consequently the views should be treated in some degree the same as if we were considering a flat; in which distant views are seldom worth obtaining'.



"The pond was objectionable because it was on high ground, and 'Water on the top of a hill will always appear unnatural' but should remain, as it was useful, and could not easily be replaced by a lake in the meadow. The house was described as 'very large without any room', and in its current state looked like the ruins of a palace. To remedy this, and to enable an architect to make the house comfortable, the low tower, which had originally been designed as the centre of the façade, should be raised to correspond with the others, and 'finish the house at this place'. Repton concluded that the house would be much improved by a stucco wash: 'From a full conviction how much more important as picturesque a stone coloured building appears than one of red bricks...'.

"Although Repton's advice regarding the house was not acted upon, it appears that the landscape was developed along the principles set out in his Red Book as field evidence, pointing to considerable improvements to the planting *c.*1795, is mentioned in a report by Nick Owen of Debois Landscape Survey Group (1999). A surprising aspect of the commission is that the road diversion suggested by Repton was carried out, but not until 1867, eight years before the Hall was rebuilt. This results in a confusing series of maps, where Repton's plan is consistent with the first edition Ordnance Surveys of the 1870s, while the tithe map of 1843 shows the road as it remained until 1867." [1]

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It has been noted previously that the drawing/engraving and the painting shown are not the *correct* images and did not represent the full size of Stansted Hall II; this is because both images are how Humphry Repton envisaged Stansted Hall II would look like *if his suggestions* were carried forward. However, Repton's advice regarding the house was not acted upon; the paintings shown below were painted by Repton in watercolours, as shown in his Red Book previously referred to. [2]

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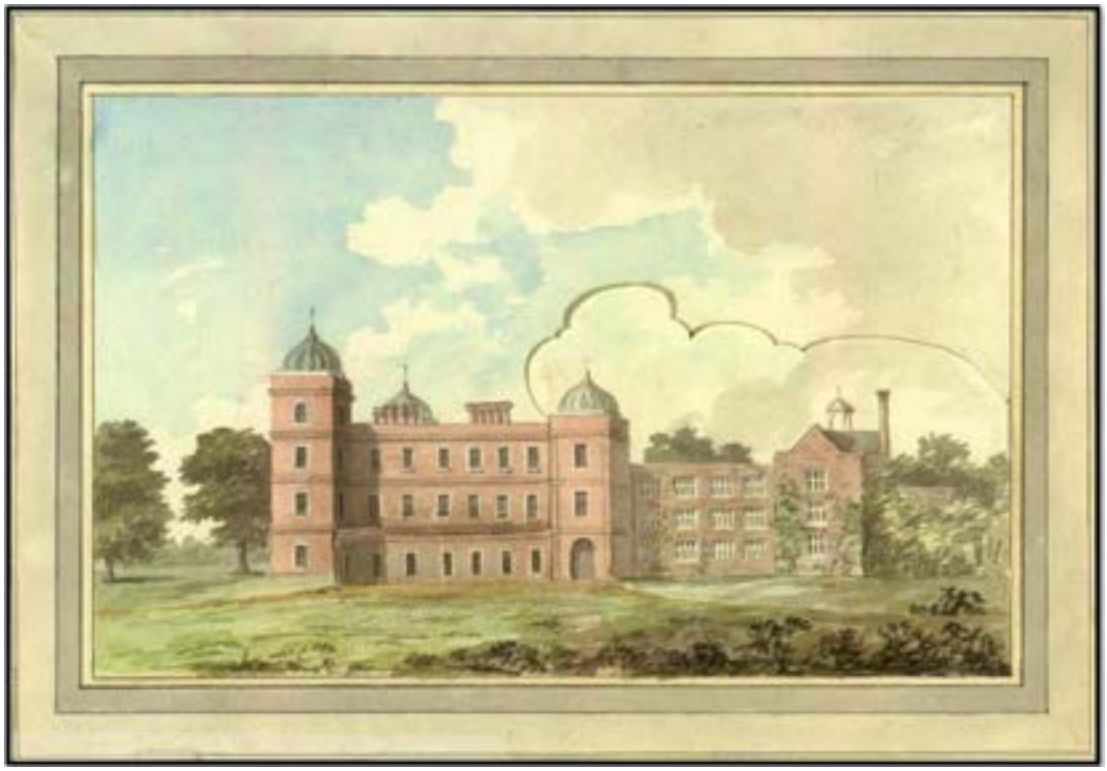
[1] The Garden Trust (TGT) website obtained its information from the Uttlesford District Council records (TL 525 245).

[2] Humphry Repton's Red Book of Stansted Hall can be viewed on-line at the 'Essex Record Office', as previously referenced. In their blog for March 2018 Repton's Red Book for Stansted Hall was featured in their 'Document of



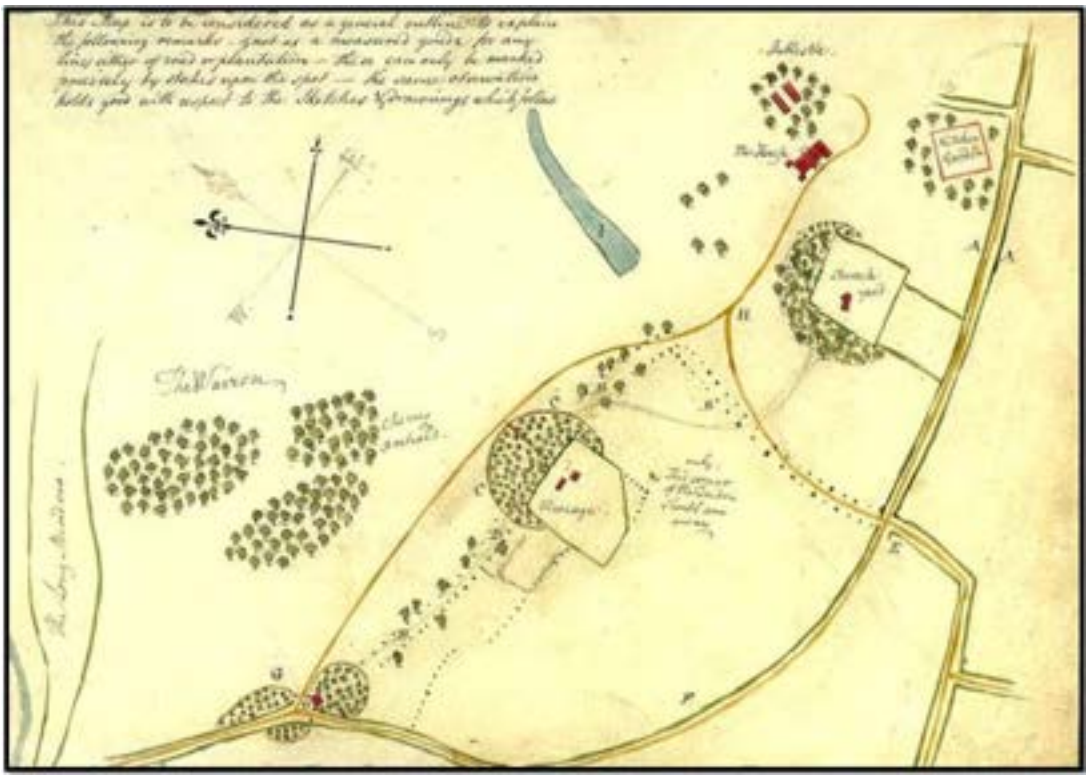
The Stansted Red Book includes one of Repton's 'lift the flap' pages. With the flap down, we see a watercolour of the house as it stood.

A flap showing part of the existing view can be lifted …

the Month'. I have used the image, as it shows the overlay with the use of a flap clearly with the finger and their captions under the images.

… to reveal to the client the changes Repton was proposing. In this case, the building up of the shorter tower to match the others, and concealing part of the building with planting.

Repton's impression of what Stansted Hall would look like if rendered in white stucco, which he considered a vast improvement on its red brick exterior



Repton suggested concealing the vicarage which was near the hall with a plantation, and rerouting the approach road to carefully craft the views seen by visitors as they arrived.

After William Heath died in 1797 the property passed to his brother Bailey. On Bailey's death in 1818 the estate was acquired by Ebenezer Fuller Maitland, purchased by his new wife's trustees at the time of their marriage. Fuller Maitland's wife did not like the house, so it became vacant and was demolished except for one tower. Here is a quote from 'The People's History of Essex', by D.W. Coller, published in 1861, pages 527-28:

> "… Stansted Mountfitchet, one of the largest parishes in the county, being nearly forty miles in circumference—containing within its boundaries a good village, the remains of an ancient town, and slight traces of the once mighty castle of the Mountfitchets, whose frowning towers awed the country round. This was the head of the barony of that great Norman family which, in the plunder of the Saxons, secured 48 lordships in the county. It continued so, however, but for a short period. The last of the house died without issue in 1258; the estates were divided, the castle of Stansted coming afterwards into the possession of the De Veres, and it became a sort of dependency of their chief seat of Hedingham.
>
> "Gradually it appears to have been demolished, or to have fallen to decay, as castles went out of fashion. A century ago some ruins of it remained, but these have disappeared or been overgrown; and near a small rivulet which falls into the Stort, at the south-west part of the parish, we can with difficulty trace the spot where stood its towers, its dungeons, and its keep. In place of the castle, Stansted Hall rose up as the home of the modern lords of the parish—Sir Thomas Middleton, a city magnate, who purchased the estate in 1615; afterwards of the Heaths, and lastly of the Maitlands,—William Fuller Maitland, Esq., being the present owner of the manors. It was a fine old mansion, on a lofty hill near the church, commanding a wide extent of view; but some years ago it was in turn deserted and demolished, save one of the towers, which still picturesquely crowns the height; and Stansted House was erected not far distant. It is a large elegant seat, surrounded by a fine park and pasture lands, and Mr. Maitland is much improving it.

"Bentfield hamlet, though over the border, in Clavering Hundred, is within this parish; the manor belongs to R. Gosling, Esq. Of the priory of Thremhall, which stood about two miles south-east of the church, on the border of Hatfield Forest, the only remains are parts of a stone wall by a garden-side. This house was founded by Richard De Mountfitchet, for black Benedictine canons, and was well endowed by his family and by the Earl of Oxford. It possessed the great tithes of the parish, with rights and lands in many parts of the surrounding district and several of its noble patrons, the Mountfitchets, the De Veres, and the Barringtons, were buried within its walls. Its value at the suppression was £70. 19s. 3d. The church was a small interesting old relic. Up to about thirty years ago, the carved stalls in which the priests repeated their matins and chanted their vespers remained entire along the north side of the chancel; and on the south was a huge pew with sliding lattice-work, in which the penitent could pray, as in a cage.

"The sacred edifice, however, was considerably enlarged by a public subscription in 1829; and though a few of the carved seats, and a rudely sculptured font, evidently of it antiquity, have been left, much of its olden character vanished at the touch of the modem trowel. On the south side of the chancel is a richly-decorated monument, rising 20 feet high, to Sir Thomas Middleton, who was buried here in 1631: and if we may judge from the diffuse Latin inscription, he was the perfection of a man and a merchant, and the model of a Lord Mayor. …"

As noted, the Fuller Maitlands were living in a new residence, Stansted House, which had been built on the northern boundary of the park/estate, while Stansted Hall II lay vacant and demolished except for one tower. But other reports state that it was destroyed by fire, with just one tower standing, and left to fall into further ruin!

The image, "Remains of Stansted Hall", was drawn and engraved by J. Greg for 'Excursions Through Essex', dated April 1st 1819 and published by Longman & Co., Paternoster Row. The year after, the last male member of the Heath family died and the estate at some point was acquired by Ebenezer Fuller Maitland; this shows that Stansted Hall II was in ruins, partially demolished or destroyed by fire shortly after the Maitlands purchased the estate.

Ebenezer Fuller Maitland died in 1858 and was succeeded by his son, William Fuller Maitland, who commissioned a new Stansted Hall III, which work started in 1871 and was completed between 1875-78, depending on which report is read; the new Hall was built in Tudor style on a site slightly to the north-east of the old hall. William never lived in the new Hall, as he died in 1876. His son, also called William, sold the estate in 1922 to Sir Albert Ball, who in turn sold it to James Arthur Findlay in 1923.

The Findlay family moved into their new residence in February 1925. The information given throughout this article may, naturally, differ slightly from other reports. I have primarily taken the dates from Findlay's research, which he published in his autobiography, "Looking Back", first published in 1955, where Findlay notes with regard to the current Stansted Hall:

Its architect, Robert Armstrong, was a man of great talent, as his modern Elizabethan architecture fitted perfectly into the old surroundings. He erected a noble dwelling in keeping with the past history of its situation, but modern in every respect, fireproof, steel girders instead of wooden beams, everything where it should be, and its large windows give ample light to its spacious and well-designed rooms. Armstrong would have become an outstanding member of his profession, but he only lived long enough to carry out one other residence of the same size.

Some items were salvaged from the old Stansted Hall, which include two beautiful Adams fireplaces of Italian marble. I understand that other items include other fireplaces, a wooden fireplace surround, some sixteenth-century wood panelling, two cupolas from the towers, one on the main roof, "…adapted and made into a Bell Tower and incorporated on the roof of the Kitchen wing", and one placed "…on the Stable Block" (now the Britten House Annex). [3]

What can be concluded:

We know that Stansted Hall II, as I have referred to it, was build post-1615 by Sir Thomas Myddleton and/or completed by the Myddleton family (see further reference in the end notes) but it is lacking in dates and general information. I have referenced back to 'The People's History of Essex', 1861, by D.W. Coller, as quoted, when under the ownership of Ebenezer Fuller Maitland, that Stansted Hall "…was in turn deserted and demolished, save one of the towers"; however, it does not mention that it was destroyed or partially destroyed by fire, though the author does mention other such building being destroyed by fire in his book. The image, 'Remains of Stansted Hall', by J. Greg was published on April 1st, 1819 and shows just one of the towers standing at this date; the image itself shows no indication of its being destroyed or damaged by fire.

J. Arthur Findlay, in his autobiography, states that it was "burnt down" and that all that remains is "its underground drainage system". Other statements suggest that it burnt down in 1880, leaving just the tower, but we know the date to be incorrect from John Greg's 'Remains of Stansted Hall'; by 1880 Greg was certainly no longer working and most probably was dead. Possibly it was the final tower which was destroyed by fire, which seems more fitting, but who knows the final fate of Stansted Hall II!

[3] Taken from: "The History of Stansted Hall", 2010, by former SNU President Minister Duncan Gascoyne.

But how safe is the foundation that there was a Stansted Hall I?

This is said to have been built circa 1216 by Richard de Montfichet and has been accepted in the history of Stansted Hall, as noted at the start of this article. The claim of a Stansted Hall I appears only as a modern claim. Arthur Findlay, in his autobiography previously referenced, tells a different story. He states:

> I made a careful research into the history and previous owners of this property and, as I wish this preserved for future generations, I here give a copy of the document I prepared.

To cut the story short, William I took the lands of Stansted from their previous Saxon owners and gave them to Robert Gernon, one of his generals. William made him a baron, taking the name Baron Mountfitchet, the name of a village in Normandy, and that is why Stansted is called Stansted Mountfitchet; it was Robert Gernon who built the Castle on his land. History records that the Castle was attacked but the estate remained and continued, which is listed by Findlay through generations of benefactors; at one point the estate was confiscated and returned by Henry VII to the Earl of Oxford, with the estate continuing in the family to 1582.

Findlay states:

> "… as fortified dwellings became unnecessary, the first Stansted Hall was built, and the old castle fell into ruins. This happened, I should think, about the end of the 16th century from the appearance of the picture I have of the first Stansted Hall, …"

Which brings the reader to within a few years of when Sir Francis Hubbard sold the estate to Sir Thomas Myddleton in 1615. Further, it can be noted to endorse Findlay in the quotation published in this article taken from 'The People's History of Essex', 1861, by D.W. Coller:

> "… The last of the house died (Richard de Montfichet) without issue in 1258; the estates were divided, the castle of Stansted coming afterwards into the possession of the De Veres, and it became a sort of dependency of their chief seat of Hedingham.
>
> "Gradually it appears to have been demolished, or to have fallen to decay, as castles went out of fashion. A century ago some ruins of it remained, but these have disappeared or been overgrown; and near a small rivulet which falls into the Stort, at the south-west part of the parish, we can with difficulty trace the spot where stood its towers, its dungeons, and its keep. In place of the castle, Stansted Hall rose up as the home of the modern lords of the parish—Sir Thomas Middleton, a city magnate, who purchased the estate in 1615; afterwards of the Heaths, and lastly of the Maitlands,—William Fuller Maitland, Esq., being the present owner of the manors."

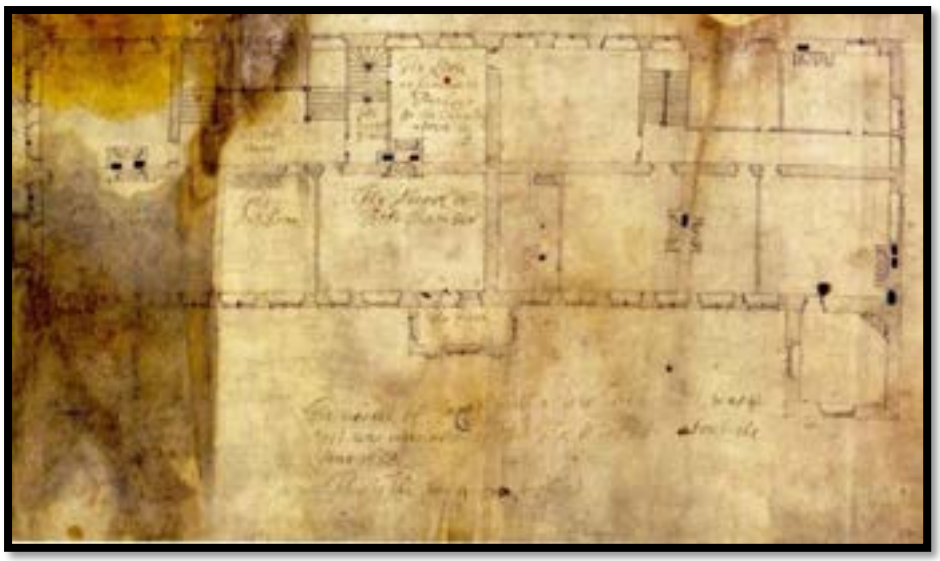
How many Stansted Halls have there been?

End notes:

A further reference. We know that Sir Thomas Myddleton purchased the estate in 1615 and said that he built Stansted Hall; he died in 1631. We can note below that the Hall was not completed by him and it fell upon another Thomas in the family to finish the work. This Thomas, spelt "Middleton" in the British Library archives, was the last in the family to own Stansted Hall, etc.; he died in 1710.

The British Library holds a drawing of a plan of Stansted Hall: [4]

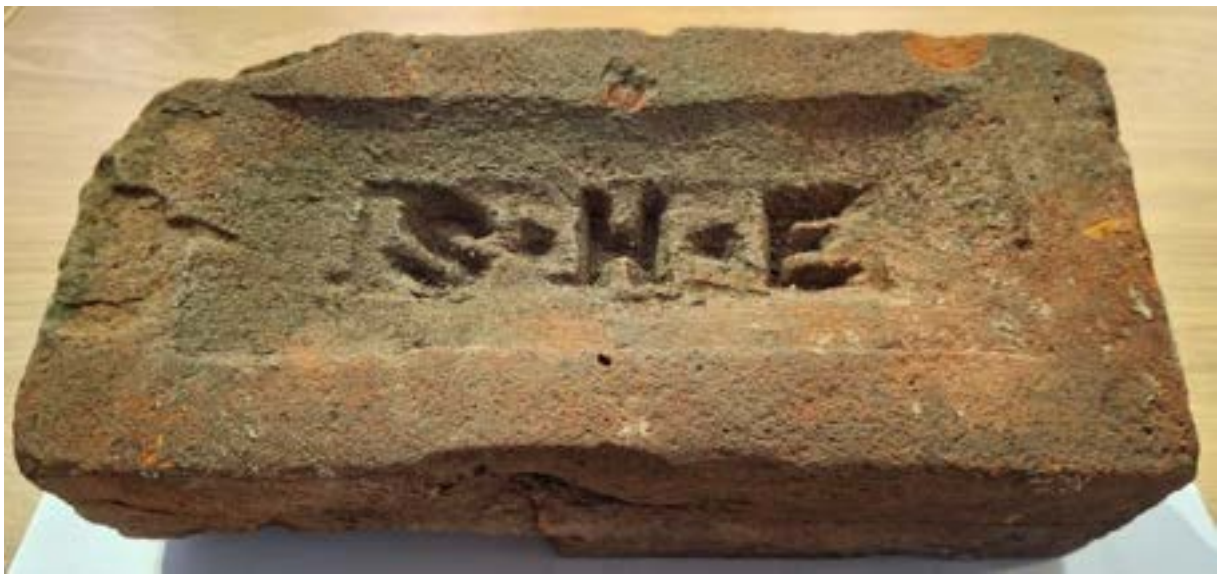
> "The modell of Stansted Hall it is partly built, and as the rest was intended by Mr. Thomas Middleton [*sic*] about the year 1658: this is the south front of it."
>
> "Inscribed with title in brown ink below image about 1658
>
> "The drawing:
>
> "Pen and black and brown ink on vellum; sheet 19 x 34 cm"



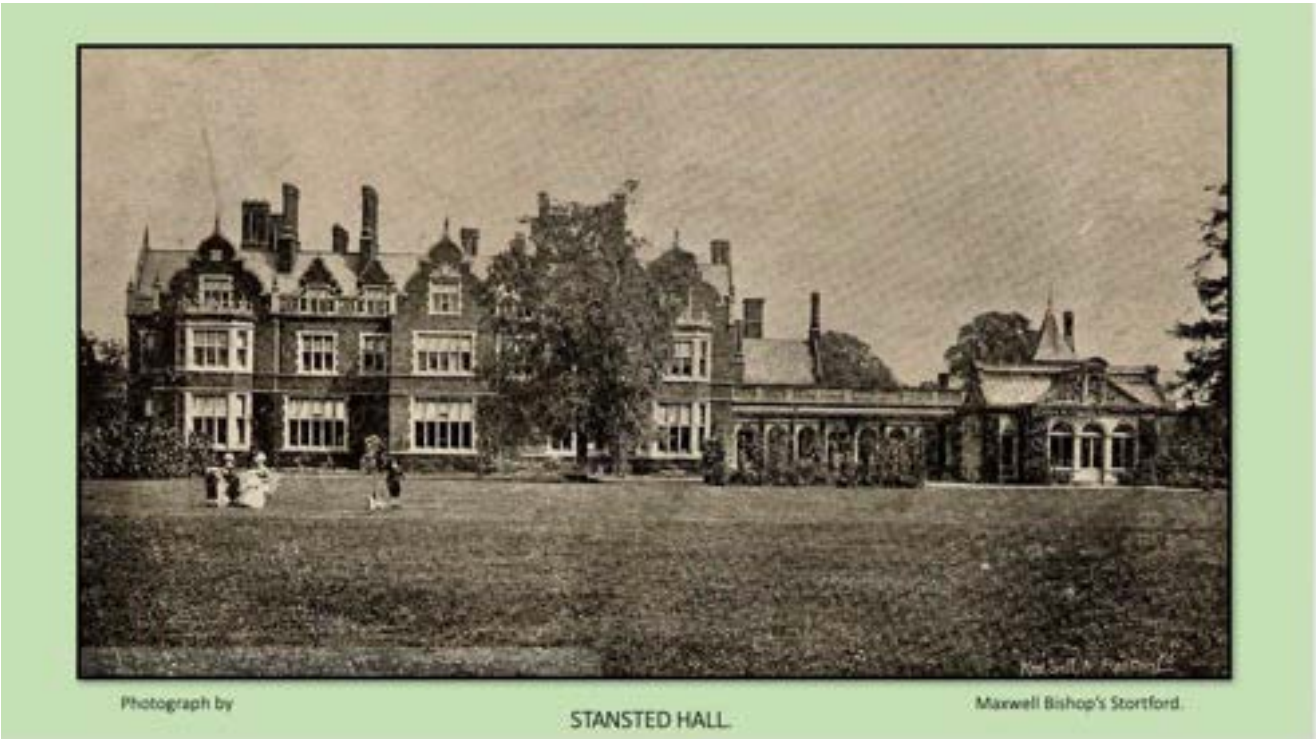
Humphry Repton's Red Book of Stansted Hall was at one point in the possession of the Maitland family, with a note stuck over the original inscription to William Heath, Esq.

[4] [Reference - Maps] King George III Topographical Collection.

The remarks of the pond by Repton and the location shown on his map are recorded in part in this article. In the building of the present Stansted Hall this would have been extended by its builders by removing the clay to make the bricks. These bricks were called 'SHE' bricks and were marked as such, meaning 'Stansted Hall Estate'.



A postcard of Stansted Hall taken by Arthur Maxwell, 27 Potter Street, Bishops Stortford, Essex. This is dated between 1902 and 1912, the Hall being then occupied by William Fuller Maitland; as can be noted, the name 'William' was carried down. This image would show the Maitland family in residence; note the building at the right of the postcard which today is the Sanctuary. J. Arthur Findlay used this as an orangery or conservatory.



Stansted Hall

Calendar House

Stansted Hall is *reputed* to be a Calendar House, which represents architectural features reflecting the seasons, the number of days, weeks, months in a year, etc. This style of architecture developed in the Elizabethan era, becoming prevalent in the Victorian era when the Hall was built. [5]

Originally with regards to the design of Stansted Hall:

365 panes of glass for each day in a year

52 chimneys for the weeks in a year

29 fireplaces for the Leap Year

12 hallways for the months in a year

7 external doorways for the days in a week

4 staircases for the seasons in a year

Stansted Hall circa 1910

[5] How correct this statement is we cannot be sure, as to my knowledge we hold no record to confirm this. However, the number of chimneys and fireplaces is correct, as the extra chimneys are solely cosmetic to balance the architecture.