PSYPIONEER

Founded by Leslie Price Editor Paul J. Gaunt

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SILVER BELLE DOUBTS

There are doubts about the 1953 Silver Belle series of materialisation photographs, which show the medium Ethel Post-Parrish, and a materialised Red Indian girl at Camp Silver Belle, which Ethel founded at Ephrata, Pennsylvania.

An older camp, Chesterfield in Anderson, Indiana, which was for long managed by Ethel's cousin, Mabel Riffle, is one reason for this. In 1960, with the prior approval of all concerned, Tom O'Neill and Dr Andrija Puharich made an infra red film of the medium Edith Stillwell (with Mabel as cabinet attendant). The resulting articles in "Psychic Observer", which are reproduced later in this issue, showed that the materialised figures all entered through a side door, and had the faces and build of other mediums at the camp.

In 1976, a once prominent medium at Chesterfield and in Florida, Lamar Keene published a detailed confession of the methods he used to produce both mental and physical phenomena. (Both Keene and his former partner have since died.) In his book "The Psychic Mafia", the chapter "Secrets of the Séance" explains how the trumpet and ectoplasmic phenomena were produced by them. Unfortunately this book is out of print and has become rare.

Among the photos in the book are the Silver Belle sequence from the other camp. The caption reads "Of course, this is trick photography. One familiar method is to

photograph smoke and then, by double exposure, to superimpose on it either a drawing, or an actual accomplice dressed as a spirit, or a cardboard figure. Needless to say, the woman to the left in the photograph, the "cabinet keeper," was an accomplice in the deception. "

In one recent article about these photos, Zerdin Phenomenal (issue 18, February 2008 lead story) they are called "some of the clearest and most convincing photographs ever, of a materialisation taking form.". The source given for the material is said to be "various web sites".

Is it possible that these photos are like the Cottingley fairy photos which for long exercised a baleful influence over the study of fairy lore in our own country? The time is long overdue for a thorough study of the Silver Belle case. Meanwhile, perhaps caution would be advisable?

LP.

THEOSOPHISTS GO TO THE POLLS

A presidential election in the Adyar-based Theosophical Society may have implications for the study of psychic pioneers.

The first president of the Theosophical Society, Henry Olcott (who served from 1875 to 1907) was an outstanding pioneer in cross cultural psychical research. Since then, the archives of the Society have accumulated many papers concerning such leading figures as Stainton Moses. Much archival material was published in "The Theosophist" and in the multi-volume Collected Writings of Madame Blavatsky. Some is currently appearing in her Collected Letters, of which the second volume from 1879 onwards is in preparation.

Mrs Radha Burnier of India has been president since 1980. She is being challenged by Professor John Algeo of the United States, who is the vice-president and editor of the Blavatsky Letters. Because of his substantial track record in historical research, he may be more sympathetic to promoting the study of historical matters in "The Theosophist" and elsewhere.

More background on the election can be found in a newsletter edited by Katinka Hesselink[1].

LP.

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[1] http://lucifer7.katinkahesselink.net/i/2008/5.html

Notes by the Way

NOW WE ARE FOUR

It's now four years since Psypioneer appeared as a monthly free electronic newsletter. Just the other day, an American author wrote to express appreciation for the fascinating material in a wonderful resource. We know from their comments that others of the 250 subscribers also feel we are meeting the need for historical material on psychic pioneers, with no particular perspective on the phenomena. We welcome suggestions for areas we need to cover, but have not yet got around to featuring; there are certainly a number of these, such as Kardecism.

Lots of people help keep us on the road - the original grant givers (STF, CPS and certain private donors) the editors of old journals (some still in copyright); librarians, contributors of papers, our proof reader, the web master at Woodland Way, our long suffering spouses….to mention just a few.

There are many rich seams of material that are difficult of access. (This phrase was used by Myers as long ago as SPR Proc. 1893 p.245 when he was writing a paper on Stainton Moses. The journal "Human Nature" was, he noted, difficult of access!)

The trustees of the College of Psychic Studies are still not allowing any CPS member, even book reviewers for LIGHT, access to their set of LIGHT, the oldest psychic journal in continuous publication. (See Psypioneer December 2007[2] "A future for psychic studies"). Sets of Two Worlds, founded in 1887, and Psychic News, are also scarce. Several other journals appear to be only in the British Library.

Our republication this month of two 1960 articles from Psychic Observer was somewhat complicated. There may well be sets of the Psychic Observer in some American libraries, but the only copies known to us were those of our contributor Canon William Rauscher, whose valuable articles on Eileen Garrett[3] and Muriel Hankey[4] will be recalled...

Bill kindly airmailed his irreplaceable copies to Paul Gaunt. The articles were accompanied in the text by images from the original microfilm. Coloured photocopies of the articles were made by a specialist printer here, and these were used to scan the text while the originals were promptly returned to the States. The colour presented some difficulty, and made necessary hours of extra work in scanning. (We hope it may be possible for some or all of the actual images to be reproduced in another UK publication before long; for electronic space reasons we generally avoid images in Psypioneer.).

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[2] Page 265: - http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/PP3.12December07..pdf

[3] Remembering Eileen J. Garrett: - http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/Leslie_Price_PP10.pdf

[4] Thoughts of Muriel Hankey: - http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/Leslie_Price_PP11.pdf

It may be worth commenting on the general question of fraud, real or alleged. Some readers may feel that this is not a proper subject, and best omitted from studies of the pioneers. But the pioneers themselves lived with the fraud problem every day. D.D. Home was so concerned he devoted much of his book "Lights and Shadows" to exposing it. William Crookes privately got one lady offender to retire from the field, at least temporarily. Maurice Barbanell used publicity to try to rid the Movement of such mediums - we reprinted in August 2007[5] one such early case from even before PN was founded, and others will follow. Our object is to give such allegations no more and no less than they had in the historical record.

The articles in the Psychic Observer were historically important, as an early use by a researcher of infra-red. Simeon Edmunds claimed in his book "Spiritualism a critical survey" (1966)[6]

There followed a storm of protest from many of his readers, and sales of Psychic Observer slumped so heavily in consequence that it had to cease publication. Cancellations of subscriptions came not only from individual readers but from many churches and societies as well.[7]

More information about the impact of the articles can be found at:
http://www.answers.com/topic/psychic-observer-and-chimes

It's vital however to treat allegations of fraud or exposure with the same caution we apply to claims generally in the psychic field. To give an example, not a few psychical researchers would be wary of Harry Price's claim to have exposed Rudi. Even mediums may sometimes have their reasons for wanting to discredit another medium. Were it not for a surviving letter, we might find it hard to believe there was an alleged plot to throw vitriol in the face of Katie King, inspired by a jealous medium, Mrs Guppy.

The retired voice medium Leslie Hodges used to enjoy telling the story of his encounter with Maurice Barbanell. Hodges was a barber in Brighton; some observers thought that in fact it was his wife who was the power in their home circle (some of whose seance records were later given to CPS.). Barbie wanted him to turn professional, but he declined. "I make mediums, and I break them" warned the editor. "You did not make me, and you will not break me" responded the medium, and indeed he has continued to be featured in PN retrospectives long after the editor had gone to meet his guide.

On a happier note, we regularly mention the White Eagle Lodge[8] in these pages. For some months we have been cooperating with the Lodge historian, Colum Hayward, who has been working on the revised official history of the Lodge. Essentially, we draw to his attention early mentions we come across of the Lodge founders and

[5] Fraudulent Mediumship: An Exposure: - http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/PP3.8August07..pdf

[6] Spiritualism: A Critical Survey, by Simeon Edmonds. With a Forward by Sir George Joy then Honorary Secretary S.P.R. Published by Aquarian Press November 1966.

[7] Pages 136 – 137.

[8] www.whiteagle.org

origins, and he in turn elucidates these for us, explaining why for example, Ivan Cooke on occasion writes of Australia (he lived there for some years). We commend this kind of cooperation to other readers and their organisations. The source material on the psychic pioneers is so scattered globally that we do need to work together to get the full picture.

LP.

FROM THE COLLECTION – LIBRARY of WILLIAM V. RAUSCHER

Below is taken from *PSYCHIC OBSERVER* July 10th 1960

WE ARE IN MOURNING

Truth for Authority not Authority for Truth
The tragic Deception in Materialization, or
Why Spare the Angels?
Turn to Page 2 for this fantastic story

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FRAUD UNCOVERED AT CHESTERFIELD SPIRITUALIST CAMP

INFRA-RED MOTION PICTURES REVEAL THIS GREAT DECEPTION

Shocking-Amazing-But True!

By The Editor
Copyright Psychic Observer 1960

This is the story of an adventure-on adventure with a purpose. The purpose of this adventure was to record for all time, the truth of a very special type of science in the field of Spiritualism: MATERIALIZATION!
~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

While it is a well known fact that materialization is a matter of record in the files of many Psychic Researchers, and we too, have files of photographs to prove it, this "adventure with a purpose" started out NOT TO RESEARCH- NOT TO INVESTIGATE- but to RECORD ONLY with the most modern technique of the day; the motion picture camera, infra-red lighting and infra-red film. Used in conjunction with this most modern approach was the OBSERVER SCOPE commonly called "SNOOPER-SCOPE" by the armed forces. This instrument was used to clearly observe the enemy regardless of darkness at a distance of a thousand feet. When this instrument was placed on the rifle barrel, a good marksman could hit the enemy squarely between the eyes in the dead of night! This then was our approach, with permission granted from all parties concerned, to the putting on record, the great truth of MATERIALIZATION.

Psychic Observer secured the services of a man whose stamp of approval on the project would demand a closer look from those who heretofore have openly sneered at the possibilities of this great science. This man, Dr. Andrija Puharich, whom I was lucky enough to catch in between trips in his search for the "*sacred Mushroom*" gladly consented to accompany me on what he considered "one of the greatest adventures of his life."

Dr. Puharich secured all the necessary equipment: cameras, film, lights and two "Snooper-scopes," and arrived, after a rough weekend (which is a story in itself) at the Indianapolis Airport, Indianapolis, Indiana, Sunday, May 29, 1960.

We were accorded a royal welcome at Camp Chesterfield, and the word soon got around that we were there to record, for the first time in the history of American Spiritualism, motion pictures of materialization.

The medium was Edith Stillwell the cabinet attendant, Mable Riffle. (The duties of a cabinet attendant are to see that the seance runs smoothly and to help, with her presence, some of the more shaky sitters.)

Our first three seances were conducted with Edith Stillwell sitting outside the cabinet in the chair normally occupied by the cabinet attendant, and Mable Riffle, who was to act as cabinet attendant, sat back with us in the chairs for the sitters. This in itself, Edith Stillwell sitting *outside* of the cabinet for the materialization, indicated a source of tremendous power, and because of this, Dr. Puharich and myself had visions of a tremendous scoop for the Psychic World at large.

Our first sitting (Monday) was a sort of "*get acquainted time*" because we had not as yet set up all of our equipment. (Tuesday was the day we had planned to start rolling.) We went through the standard procedure; said the Lord's Prayer, and sang (creaked and cracked are better words,) our way through one of the usual hymns. Halfway through (thank goodness) the second chorus, the "phenomena" started. A gentleman appeared and announced himself as Brother Ben; he was replete with brilliant headgear that seemed to flow down as far as his waist. He philosophied a bit, then turned to the cabinet to *personally* bring out another "spirit" with the statement that it was her first try at this sort of thing and he wanted to be of help in the situation. *This creature was gorgeously arrayed in pink "ectoplasm" and called herself "Sister Mary."* Both "spirits" were on the floor at the same time, which gave us a look at

everyone in the room; Brother Ben, Sister Mary, Edith Stillwell and Mable Riffle. This was great! What camera shots we could take! What proof we could give to the world! Finally, it was announced that the power had run out and that the seance would have to come to an end. In due time the white lights were turned on and we sat back congratulating each other on the wonder of it all!

Frankly, there wasn't much sleep for either of us that night. Puharich and I sat on the front porch of the Western Hotel until 2 a.m. planning our camera layout, and when we finally did hit the sack, sleep for me was mighty hard to come by.

Little did I know of the great shock that was in store for me!

Morning finally arrived, and after a good breakfast, with more planning of camera angles, we went over to Edith Stillwell's seance room and assembled our equipment which we had unloaded there the day before.

I could go into a long and detailed description of the time we had getting our lighting up to par in order to record perfectly, all that transpired in the seance room, and actually, we did not start shooting perfect film until Wednesday, June 1st. We discovered that we needed more infrared lighting for crystal clear pictures, and after a BIG search in Indianapolis, we were lucky enough to come up with two 250 watt infra-red lights. *This gave its altogether, 1000 watts of pure infra-red lighting, which incidentally, does not throw out as much light as the standard 15, watt red lights normally used in a materialization seance room.* But let us for the moment return to Monday night's seance. While it is true that we did not record anything on film that night, t h e "Snooper - scope" worked like a "Snooper-scope" should, and Andrija, (Dr. Puharich) saw perfectly everything that transpired in the room. Later, he told me what he saw, and frankly I didn't believe: "*that the spirits were entering the seance room from a door just adjacent to the cabinet!*"

I was profoundly shocked! Edith Stillwell, whom I had always praised to the skies as one of the top mediums in the Spiritualist movement, just couldn't- wouldn't - fake a seance! I said: "Andrija, *these people know what we are doing*; they have even looked through the "snooper-scope" themselves; they know its powers of observation, and besides, why should they take such terrible chances with the Editor of Psychic Observer, and a scientist of your reknown, [sic-PP] recording for posterity, *every movement that transpires in the room!*" The discussion grew hotter and heavier; not from Anrija's side, but from my side. I could not, no matter how much I badgered him, get him to admit that he had made even the slightest error of observation through the "snooper-scope!"

Tuesday night's seance, however, was the clincher! This clincher did not come to light though, until the following day, Wednesday, June 1, 1960.

We had been quite fortunate in discovering that Indianapolis was the only city in a radius of a 1000 miles that could boast, as one of its enterprises, a firm called FILMCRAFT LABORATORIES. These people process every and all types of film, and processing infra-red film, which had been one of our greatest concerns, was second nature to them. Hence, all we had to do was take the film we had shot the night before down to Filmcraft; it was processed on the spot, and we viewed our

efforts in their projection room the same day. *That is why I say "Wednesday was the clincher."* this was the day when we were viewing Tuesday night's film. I could hardly believe my eyes! Andrija was right! *The "spirits" were coming front a door adjacent to the cabinet*; 'entering the cabinet through its loose side-curtain, and walking through the front opening of the cabinet to be photographed by us. *Little did they know that we were photographing the whole bit!*

After viewing this ridiculous fakery, my apologies to Andrija for doubting his "snooper-scope" observations, were not very good, due to my feelings of guilt for my erstwhile good friends, Edith Stillwell and Mable Riffle. *Even now, writing this story just about tears my heart right out of its socket*, but this is a story that must be written, and the film must be publicized! Being Editor of the *Psychic Observer*, one of the foremost psychic publications in the world, carries its burden in presenting psychic truths to the world at large. The masthead clearly states: "TRUTH FOR AUTHORITY, NOT AUTHORITY FOR TRUTH" hence, there is no place else to turn.

On Wednesday, June 1st, 1960, we were recording movies that were of excellent quality. The seance did not last long, but we got about 30 feet of fabulous pictures.

It might be wise to inject here, that at no time did we discuss our findings with Edith Stillwell, Mable Riffle, or for that matter, anyone else in or around Camp Chesterfield. We kept the whole thing to ourselves, and while Filmcraft Laboratories knew we were attempting to take motion pictures of the spirit, I do not believe that they were aware of just what action WAS taking place.

Thursday, June 2, on our regular 8:30 schedule, we sat again. This time Edith Stillwell sat inside the cabinet; (as I have already mentioned, Edith sat for the first three nights outside of the cabinet where she could also, out of trance, witness some of her own "phenomena.") *However, absolutely nothing occurred. Neither "actors" nor "spirits" showed up*. This may be due to the fact that before the "seance" I had asked Edith if she minded my putting two chairs in front of the curtain that covers the door: (where the "spirits" had been entering from). I had mentioned that it would look better in our recorded seance if this curtain, which swung back and forth on a single arm, wasn't standing straight out, making it look on film, like a curtained hallway from the door of her living quarters to the cabinet. She agreed to the arrangement, but all we drew was a blank!

Edith said that she would try again on the following night which was June 3rd.

Andrija and I discussed the point, that perhaps they, Edith and Mable, were onto the fact that we were recording more than they thought we should, but apparently not, for the following night, they even had another medium, Gladys Strohm, to help in the sitting. Mable Riffle said that it would help give more power to Edith.

Andrija and I were filled with misgivings. We still had high hopes that we could photograph the real thing; we had also discussed the fact that if this night was a dry run, we would just pack up our equipment, and head for home. *While we had photographed enough, evidence of fraud to upset the whole field of spiritualism for many*

years to come, we had the thought that, in front of another medium, trickery would not be resorted to.

The seance started as usual; prayer, a few hymns, and while we again bogged down on how the tunes should go, our feelings were good and our thoughts ran high.

The "phenomena" started before we stopped singing, and the motion pictured results of some of the proceedings that took place in the next hour, *will go down in history as the greatest recordings of fraud in the history of the movement of Spiritualism!*

The whole sordid mess is one of the bitterest pills that I have ever had to swallow, and my heart will bleed for a long long time for those poor misguided people, *Edith Stillwell and Mable Riffle.*

It is true, of course, that all mediums are not frauds; there are some very fine ones, and no doubt there are some very fine ones at the Chesterfield Spiritualist Camp, but I for one, will never go there again to seek them out; that is, unless - Mable Riffle is no longer in charge of the Camp, and a great sweeping has taken place!

[EDITOR'S NOTE: The "spirit" pictures that follow this story are reproduced from our l6mm infra-red motion picture film, blown up approximately 25 times the original size. This should indicate how crystal clear the motion pictures themselves are.]

[Series One and Four discussed later with second article- Ed. PP.]

SERIES TWO

This shows the "Draper Spirit" going through his paces. His movement depicted a ballet dancer and he tossed his shining "ectoplasmic" clothes to and fro.

NOTE: Shown also from the files of the Psychic Observer is this picture of Homer Watkins, the well-dressed man with flower in his button hole, who bears a remarkable resemblance to the "spirit" of "John William Draper".

SERIES THREE

This shows the "spirit" of "Sister Agnes" who claims that she is the one who meets accident victims as they make the change called death.

NOTE: shown also from our files is this picture (with glasses) of Penny Umbach, who looks enough like "Sister Agnes" to be her twin.

Continued on page four-*PSYCHIC OBSERVER* July 10th 1960: -

From The Editor's Desk

BY TOM O'NEIL

Are We What The Scoffers Say We Are?

Let's suppose together for a few paragraphs-

Suppose you were an individual in the foreranks of the movement called Spiritualism. Occupying such a spot, you accepted your position with a grave sense of responsibility, and believing in the truths Spiritualism has to offer, you are anxious to share these with the world.

Suppose a little further - you ponder about how these truths can be most effectively and convincingly presented to the public who is either ignorant of or scornful of them. You need proof, hard, cold, tangible facts - something to sink your teeth into!

Suppose after you think, pray and meditate, you decide to take a long chance- a real long chance. BUT, if successful, you will have that hard, cold, tangible proof.

What did you decide? A motion picture, via infra-red photography, of a materialization and trumpet seance! Incredible, you think - maybe even impossible. BUT (the little word) if successful, what a tremendous impact! Those who come to scoff at such a film will stay to marvel, learn and maybe, even believe.

Suppose you go ahead with this revolutionary idea. You purchase the expensive film ... you engage reputable, scientific researchers, as anxious as you to prove personal survival, to participate in the seance . . . you obtain the services of mediums who are "giants" in the field of physical phenomena . . . you go to work!

The mediums fully comprehend that the seance is a scientific experiment with an ultimate aim of securing indisputable proof of personal survival after the change called death for a skeptical world.

The seance is about ready to begin . . . cameras are loaded . . . one scientist stands by with a snooperscope . . . the medium is in the cabinet . . . the cabinet tender sits nearby . . . the air around you is vibrant with a sense of expectancy and hope ... the seance begins.

The medium is entranced. Spirits materialize, walk around the room, approach you, speak to and with you. All the time the cameras are grinding and the snooperscope is scanning every inch of the room.

And then it is all over. Specially trained technicians develop your precious infra-red film ... you are enthusiastic to the point of bursting with pride. You are going to do what Lodge, Schrenck-Notzing, Flammarion, Crookes attempted to do. But these

men didn't have the tools that you now have - who ever heard of infra-red film back in those days.

No, you and you alone are going to have that proof so desperately needed for so long.

The processed film is returned. You load the filmholder . . . the projector starts to grind.

As it grinds on, you sink lower and lower into your chair . . . you cannot believe your eyes! It can't be, you say to yourself. It can't be!

But it is! Cameras don't lie! There aren't any materialized spirits! ... only actors ... people popping in and out of partially concealed doors ... all quick-change artists waving cotton gauze 'ectoplasm.'

Suppose all this happened to you. What would you do? Destroy the film . . . sell it to the powerful anti-Spiritualist press who would have a field-day with it ... print it in the Spiritualist press ... lose all faith in the philosophy that has previously brought you knowledge and proof of survival and peace within . . . button your lip up forever because you cannot bring yourself to destroy the faith of thousands who have been helped both physically and spiritual by Spiritualism and demonstrations of physical phenomena even by fake mediums...

Just suppose all this happened to you. What would you do?

You tell us... are we what the scoffers say we are?

A Thumbnail Sketch of
Dr. Andrija Puharich

Many of Psychic Observer readers may not know of Dr. Puharich or his many activities. Here is a short biographical sketch.

Dr. Andrija Puharich is an American of Yugoslav descent. He took his medical degree at Northwestern University, specializing in physiology and internal medicine. In 1947 Dr. Puharich began to investigate extrasensory perception (ESP). The following year he founded a research laboratory in Glen Cove. Maine, and designed and built a special Faraday Cage-a copper-sheathed, double box which enabled him to isolate a "sensitive" within an electrical field and determine that electricity was a significant aid in the study of ESP. He was able to carry on his own experiments with the sacred mushroom after he discovered the AMANITA MUSCARIA growing in the woods a half mile from his laboratory. Dr. Puharich now lives in New York and is continuing his research on the psychical effects and metaphysical history of THE SACRED MUSHROOM.

The story continues: -

PSYCHIC OBSERVER

No 522 SOUTHERN PINES, N.C., AUGUST 10, 1960 25 Cents a Copy

Dr. Andrija Puharich Reports On The Frauds, Fakes And Fantasies Of The Chesterfield Spiritualist Camp!

A Psychic Circus Without Equal This Camp In Indiana Presents The Greatest Show - On Earth?

Special To The Psychic Observer

By ANDRIJA PUHARICH

Copyright Psychic Observer 1960

Chesterfield, Indiana is a town of some one thousand souls firmly rooted in the agricultural prosperity of the mid western prairies. But it is not corn, hay or hogs that distinguishes Chesterfield from a hundred other towns like it; it is the Chesterfield Spiritualist Camp, "The Hub of World Spiritualism," that elevates it to Olympian heights.

The Chesterfield Spiritualist Camp was a Mecca last year for 52,000 pilgrims who came to see "the phenomena" that proves man's survival is still in operation, and Chesterfield's mission is to present the true understanding of man's survival of death. In 1959 the pilgrims showed their appreciation of this re-affirmation of their beliefs by spending almost a half million dollars - or so I was told - at Chesterfield Camp.

What is it that attracts them, to the Chesterfield Spiritualist Camp? The camp maintains a staff of two dozen or more mediums who perform healing, produce spirit photographs on silk, spirit pictures and spirit card writing, materialize the spirits, and bring the living into communication with the dead. Remarkably enough one can make an appointment with a medium for 8 p.m. and at 8:30 pm. find oneself talking to the spirit of the departed beloved.

It is such efficient and punctual communication with the dead that has established the reputation and the prosperity of this camp.

This communications empire is presided over by a fast moving, sharp-witted grandmother of 83 who whizzes around the camp on her motor scooter which has been dubbed “The Sputnik.”. For Mable Riffle there is no detail too small to look into personally and no problem too large for her to handle. She handles the cash, keeps the

books, and hires and fires the "mediums." She supervises the construction of new buildings, and keeps architect, builder, and foreman on their toes. She can be seen whizzing around the corners on "two wheels" from sun-up to sundown spotting trouble wherever it arises, and barking out orders with the gusto of a drill sergeant. Yet she has time to drop in on her son, and her grandchildren, and keep track of their smallest needs and their largest problems. Mable's memory is encyclopedic for names, faces, and details. Mable not only manages the Camp efficiently, but she has the surplus time in which to give performances as a trumpet medium to many persons a day. One cannot help but be awed by such prodigious industry, efficiency and energy.

One of Mable Riffle's leading stars is a materializing medium, Edith Stillwell, age "65," who for thirty years has brought comfort to untold thousands by bringing them into face to face contact with the spirits of their deceased loved ones and friends. It was to record the work of Edith Stillwell that Tom O'Neil and I journeyed to Chesterfield on the 29th of May 1960. *O'Neil is the publisher of the "Psychic Observer."*

Tom had known Edith for a number of years, and had sat at many of her seances. He had witnessed the appearance of many spirits, and had even been allowed to take infra-red flash photographs of such materialized spirits. Because Tom had so much confidence in the mediumship of Edith Stillwell, and because Edith responded to this genuine admiration, it was not difficult for Tom to get permission to make motion pictures of a series of seances. Since mediums always prefer to work in the darkness (relieved only by a dim dark-room red light) Tom had some special problems to overcome in order to take motion pictures under these conditions. That is why he called me in as a professional parapsychologist, as one who knew how to deal with mediums, and who could set up an infra-red monitoring system and take motion pictures in the dark.

Tom and I had our first seance together with Mable Riffle and Edith Stillwell at 8:00 p.m. on the 30th of May. Since I had only arrived the day before by airplane from California, I had not got my infra-red motion picture equipment in perfect working order, and was not ready to take pictures. However, I was able to use my infra-red visual monitoring system to see what was going on in the dark.

The seance room was 14 feet wide and 21 feet long. At one end was a section eight feet wide, and, four feet deep surrounded by a black velvet curtain; the so-called medium's cabinet. There were two doors into the room but no windows. One door entered from the street, near which I sat, and it was at the far end from the medium's cabinet. The other door entered from the house of the medium and was about five feet from the cabinet. Across this door was placed a flowered curtain hung on a rod that swung out from the wall. The rest of the room was bare except for some chairs.

The lights were turned off, and the room was faintly illumined by two eight watt red lights. One's eyes became accustomed to this faint light after about ten minutes so that one could barely see the other people sitting in the room. As the main lights went out Edith led the four of us in the Lord's Prayer, and then some church hymns were sung. *It was explained that this was for the purpose of bringing on the spirits.*

Edith did not sit in the cabinet, but sat in front of the curtained door that entered her house, and just off to the right of the cabinet as we faced her. I sat at the far end of the room from the cabinet, Mable was to my left, and Tom was to my right. Keeping my telescope focussed on the front of the cabinet I did not see anything unusual until the singing had ended. Then I noticed that above the top of the curtain of the cabinet there was a luminescent glow. Soon the glow appeared behind the curtain, the curtain parted and out stepped a shimmering and luminescent figure who spoke in a masculine voice announcing himself as Brother Benois. Tom immediately recognized his name as a spirit that had often appeared before. Some pleasantries were exchanged and Brother Benois retreated behind the curtain. The time was now 8:15 p.m.

Shortly thereafter a female wraith appeared through the curtain introducing herself as Sister Mary, and she had come to tell me that she was my guardian angel. The conversation that ensued was trivial and dealt in generalities, and she too disappeared behind the curtain. A few minutes later these two ghostly figures re-appeared draped in fine luminescent netting announcing themselves different personalities. Then Mable announced that this was enough for the evening. In the meantime, I had been observing the medium, Edith Stillwell. She rocked back and forth in her rocking chair wide awake and watching the ghostly pageantry. When Mable called a halt to the production of spirits I noticed that Edith reached around and gathered in the curtains of the cabinet side nearest her, and with the other hand reached out and gathered in the swinging curtain of the door behind her. By gathering the two together she made a curtained passageway between the cabinet and the door entering her home. The top of this passageway was about five or so feet high. At this point Mable called out for more singing and a prayer, and as the noise started, I caught a fleeting glimpse of a head scuttling from the cabinet to the door which entered Edith's living room. I must say I was startled by this fleeting glimpse, and wasn't entirely sure what it was that I had seen, But I did know that this was the place to watch when the next seance began.

When the seance was all over, and the lights were on again, I offered to show Mable Riffle and Edith Stillwell what it was that we intended to do with the infra-red motion picture cameras, and the infra-red visual system. I explained to them that with these two pieces of equipment one could see in a dark room as though it were flooded with daylight, and that the camera would also take pictures as though it were daylight. I then let them view the room through the infra-red telescope. I carefully adjusted the focus on the optical system (which was very critical for sharpness) with my eyes which are 20/20. Then each stepped up to look at the room. Both said that they could not see anything but a greenish blur. Since they could not manage the focussing ring properly I did the best I could to help them get a sharp focus, but try as they could everything they saw was blurred, and finally they gave up.

The next evening, May 31st, the seance began at 8:30 p.m., because I was late in getting my infra-red lighting (invisible to the naked eye) established. I never did succeed during this evening in getting my lights arranged for perfect photography, but the lighting was more than sufficient for viewing with my infra-red optical system. Before the lights went out I had my telescope trained on Edith Stillwell who sat in the same position outside the cabinet as the night before, and on the door behind her. As the lights went out and the singing started, I noticed that Edith's first move was to gather up the curtains as she had the night before, and as we were making noise and

trying to get eyes adjusted to the dim red light, I clearly saw the figure of an "Indian" (American) enter the room by the door behind Edith, and pass into the cabinet. While the sound of the prayer was going on, I clearly saw a female figure enter by the same door and pass into the cabinet.

In a few moments an Indian "spirit" came out of the cabinet wearing a luminous feather head-dress, and danced and grunted on the floor, calling himself Big Bear in broken English. Then he retired into the cabinet. A few minutes later a female figure swatched in luminous netting appeared out of the cabinet, and introduced herself as Tom's spirit guide, Nita. Tom had "seen her" before at other seances, though he did not recognize her as the same figure of yore. She then volunteered to grow smaller and larger before our eyes. In watching her with the naked eye, I saw that her figure seemed to go from a height of about five feet to one of about three feet. *But in viewing her with the infra-red visual system, I noticed that she simply bent her knees 'in a jerky fashion, and stooped lower and lower, and then rose in the same way. While she was doing this I had a good opportunity to observe her features.*

Nita then faded back into the cabinet. A few moments later a female figure appeared out of the cabinet with a slightly different wardrobe than that worn by Nita, and now announced herself as Tom's Grandma Vess. However, I could clearly see that Grandma Vess and Nita were one and the same person. When this figure disappeared into the cabinet, Mable Riffle announced that the spirits were through for the evening and we should join in a prayer of thanks for having been privileged to witness this rare manifestation from the world of spirits. As the prayer started, Edith again prepared a passageway with the curtains, and I saw the two figures that had earlier entered by this route, leave the cabinet and the seance room by the same route and door. When they had passed out of the room, Edith arranged the curtains (in what she thought was the dark) as they had been before the lights went out.

Edith then announced that her spirit guide, "Wild Rose" wanted to say a few words. Wild Rose sang out in a shrill falsetto voice with a marked Indiana twang; similar to Edith's normal speaking voice and inflection. Each time that I heard Wild Rose's voice, I observed that Edith turned her head away from the audience, and "threw" her voice toward the back wall. There was no doubt in my mind that Edith was exercising her own vocal cords in an attempt at rather poor ventriloquoy. The session ended shortly thereafter.

By the next evening, June 1st, I had the lighting for infra-red motion pictures in good working order, and was able to supplement my infra-red visual observation with a perfect camera record. Much the same scene was repeated this evening as in the two preceding seances. I saw and photographed the entrance of the spirit actors, their performance in front of the mediums cabinet, and their exit from the room with the assistance of Edith Stillwell. Again there were two actors taking multiple roles, but different actors, and different roles from the preceding sessions.

Tom and I were fortunate in being able to find a film processing firm in Indianapolis (about forty miles away) who were willing to develop infra-red movie film on a rush basis.

However on Wednesday, the morning of June 1st, we drove into Indianapolis and delivered our May 29th film to the processors. We had a five hour wait for the film to be developed before we could view it. During this waiting period, I described for the first time to Tom what it was that I had seen via the infra-red visual system, and what I had recorded on film. I had waited for three days to break the news to him for a number of reasons. In the first place, *I knew that he was a dedicated spiritualist, and had complete faith in the honesty and integrity of his two old friends, Mable and Edith.* Because of this I felt that any statements I might make would be looked upon as heresy until they could be proven by the evidence from the motion pictures. Secondly, I felt that any statements made by me along these lines to Tom would arouse strong, emotions which would telegraph our preliminary findings to the mediums before the photographic evidence was complete. And there is nothing more distasteful to me than an inconclusive study. I was willing to bide my time until the evidence was clearly negative, or positive, and would not settle for any indecisive observations. Considering what a shock, this rigged show could be to Tom, and the sense of betrayal with which he was faced, I could not help but admire the coolness with which he viewed my verbal evidence, and the evidence from the films.

In discussing the future approach to Mable and Edith, and the way in which the observations should be continued we agreed that we would request one additional change in the control conditions. This was that two chairs be placed in front of the door by which the actors entered, and exited. When we made this request to Mable and Edith on the evening of June 2nd, they cheerfully assented. But when the lights went out, and the singing started, no actors appeared in the room, and after about twenty minutes, Mable *announced that the spirits were not coming tonight because our faith in them had sagged*, and one of our infra-red lights was a wee bit too bright for the ectoplasm to materialize. Thus no performance was given, and I felt that we had tipped our hand unnecessarily and alarmed the ladies.

On the evening of June 3rd we again met to attempt to coax the spirits back into operation. There were present on this evening Mable Riffle, Edith Stillwell, Gladys Strohm, Tom O'Neil and I. Gladys was one of the mediums at the camp, and she had been invited to increase the power of the medium, Edith Stillwell, by helping to produce more ectoplasm. During this séance, Edith Stillwell sat in the cabinet for the first time with the curtain securely closed around her.

As soon as the lights went out at 8:30 p.m. the praying and singing began. I noticed with the infra-red visual system that someone was moving around inside the cabinet and rustling the curtains. This figure moved behind the curtains towards the side "entrance" door and pushed the curtain of the cabinet out toward the curtain in front of the door to Edith's living room. At the same time a bulge appeared behind the door curtain, and this curtain moved out. to join the one from the cabinet. At the same time something moved the two chairs out of the way thus making a clear passageway between the door and the cabinet. However, the passageway formation was rather incomplete so that anyone walking through this area was sure to be seen. In a few moments, I clearly saw an old gentleman fumbling his way in the dark, and photographed his cabinetward passage in detail. He was followed by a shorter lady suitably garbed for her role.

Figures 1-2 [these figures are not reproduced in Psypioneer] show the entrance of one of these actors. As soon as they had entered the cabinet, the curtain was dropped by the occupant of the cabinet, and the makeshift passageway was eliminated.

Figure No. 1 [photograph]
"Spirit" who later called himself John William Draper, emerging from behind curtain that covers the door that leads to Edith Stillwell's living quarters.

Figure No. 2 [photograph]
"John William Draper" halfway through his trip from flowered curtains to the cabinet.

The first figure to step out of the cabinet announced herself as Sister Agnes, Fig. 3. Sister Agnes was the same face as had appeared in the entrance scene a few moments earlier. After a few palliative words of sweetness and light she re-entered the cabinet.

Figure No. 3 [photograph]
This shows the "spirit" of "Sister Agnes."

The second figure was that of a man who called himself John William Draper, Fig. 4. He was the same old gentleman who had been fumbling in the curtained passage-way earlier. In his right hand he held a yard square cloth of transparent weave well coated with a luminescent material. This he wound around as he discoursed in pseudo-scientific terms about light and ectoplasm, presumably to give the impression of ectoplasm swirling around him. He slowly re-entered the cabinet and his hand remained in the part of the curtain waving the luminescent cloth in farewell.

Figure no. 4 [photograph]
William Draper

Sister Agnes then reappeared, and Tom requested that he be photographed standing alongside of her. This she granted readily, and I took a few feet of film of them standing together. As this was being done, Wild Rose announced from within the cabinet that she wanted to have her medium Edith Stillwell, photographed to show the ectoplasm streaming from her. Mable then suggested that the cabinet curtain be parted so that I could get a better movie of this wondrous effect. I requested Mable Riffle and Gladys Strohm to stand on each side of the curtain so that I could photograph them while they parted the curtain widely. They promptly got up and pulled the curtains far apart on each side. In Fig. 6 Gladys holds the curtain on the right, and in Fig. 8 Mable is on the left. In the cabinet, Fig. 7, the medium is covered with a luminescent transparent drapery. On each side of her stand Sister Agnes and John William Draper, waving transparent luminous handkerchiefs and occasionally placing them to the ears or the nose of the medium the better to help the appearance of oozing ectoplasm. When the photography of this remarkable scene was done, Mable and Gladys returned to their chairs; and again Mable told us that the spirits would not perform any more tonight. Fig. 5 shows John William Draper making his exit from the cabinet through the door out of the seance room. Fig. 9 shows Edith Stillwell coming out of the cabinet at the end of the seance.

Figure No. 5 [photograph]

"Draper" has finished his "hokus-pocus" bit, and is seen here leaving the "materialization" cabinet, and is returning from whence he came, behind the flowered curtain.

Figure No. 9 [photograph]
Edith Stillwell leaving cabinet after the seance.

Wild Rose then spoke up for herself, and curtly announced to Tom and I that the medium had exhausted herself this week in producing wondrous phenomena. This was to be the last materialization given for our benefit was Wild Rose's command. Frankly Tom and I were relieved that we would not have to sit through another spirit charade. Tom and I thanked the ladies for their co-operation, packed our equipment, boarded the waiting private airplane, and quickly climbed to an 8,000 foot altitude where the air felt cool and clean.

The rest of our movie film was developed in a few days and we reviewed all of our sequences.

It was apparent that if we had observed human actors, and since we had their pictures, it should be easy enough to find them somewhere on the premises, or in the environs, of the Chesterfield Spiritualist Camp. It was I who arranged to have Ralph Pressing, the former publisher of the Psychic Observer, inspect the movies and the photographs of the actors since he had lived on the grounds of the Camp for years. He immediately identified each of the "spirits" as look-alikes to mediums residing on the premises of the Chesterfield Spiritualist Camp. This answered the question as to how security and secrecy was maintained at the Camp on the part of the actors.

It was apparent that some the professional mediums residing there were in collusion, and the little old grandmother who whizzed around wind on her Sputnik was the Queen of them all.

Figure No. 6 [photograph]
Gladys Strohm

Figure No. 7 [photograph]

Figure No. 8 [photograph]

The top three pictures this series shows, right to left Mable Riffle, "spirit of Draper," and Gladys Strohm. Mable Riffle had suggested that we take pictures of the inside of the cabinet to show the medium, Edith Stilwell and the "spirits," all at the same time. The moving pictures show this sequel clearly, but this one frame (center) will give you an idea of how the "spirits" toss the "ectoplasm" around. NOTE: Mable Riffle and Gladys Strohm are shown holding the cabinet curtains open while Dr. Puharich is shooting the film.

[**Note by Psypioneer: -** The final paper in this four part series presented by Dr. Carlos S. Alvarado: - Mental Phenomena.]

Further Notes on Historical Ideas of Human Radiations:

IV. Mental Phenomena (1)

Carlos S. Alvarado

While I have emphasized physical phenomena in the previous sections of this paper, ideas of forces emanating from the human body were also associated to mental phenomena. This included mental mediumship, and telepathy and clairvoyance.

Mental Mediumship

Adin Ballou (1853) believed that mediums were characterized by having a good amount of "spiriticity," an ethereal principle employed by discarnate spirits when communicating through mediums. Spirit communicators quoted by Robert Hare in his book *Experimental Investigation of the Spirit Manifestations* (1855), affirmed they used "vitalized spiritual electricity" to influence the writing of mediums (p. 94). Hare also mentioned an aura that spirits used to communicate, an aura that "only a few are so endowed with" (p. 160).

Allan Kardec (1863, p. 279) cited spirit communications stating that the discarnate spirit's perispirit acted on the perispirit of the medium to produce such phenomena as writing. The communicators stated the importance of the "affinity that exists between our perispirit and the one of the medium that serves us as interpreter" (p. 280).

In later years others recorded observations about forces involved with mediumistic communications. Richard Hodgson (1898) summarized some relevant communications received through Leonora Piper:

> We all have bodies composed of "luminiferous ether" enclosed in our flesh and blood bodies. The relation of Mrs. Piper's etherial body to the etherial world, in which the "communicators" claim to dwell, is such that a special store of peculiar energy is accumulated in connection with her organism, and this appears to them as "a light." Mrs. Piper's etherial body is removed by them, and her ordinary body appears as a shell filled with this "light." Several "communicators" may be in contact with this light at the same time. There are two chief "masses" of it in her case, one in connection with the head, the other in connection with the right arm and hand. Latterly, that in connection with the hand

> has been "brighter" than that in connection with the head. If the "communicator" gets into contact with the "light" and thinks his thoughts, they tend to be reproduced by movements in Mrs. Piper's organism. Very few can produce vocal effects, even, when in contact with the "light" of the head, but practically all can-produce writing movements when in contact with the "light" of the hand. Upon the amount and brightness of this "light," *coeteris paribus*, the communications depend. When Mrs. Piper is in ill-health, the "light" is feebler, and the communications tend to be less coherent. It also gets used up during a sitting, and when it gets dim there is a tendency to incoherence even in otherwise clear communicators. In all cases, coming into contact with this "light" tends to produce bewilderment, and if the contact is continued too long, or the "light" becomes very dim, the consciousness of the communicator tends to lapse completely (p. 400).

Others also recorded communications about an emanation around the medium that was sensitive to the thoughts of spirits. An example was Charles Drayton's Thomas' (1928) discussion of medium Gladys Osborne Leonard. As he wrote summarizing the idea and referring to the medium's control:

> Medium and sitter are surrounded by a cloud of this power. Anything within this area is visible to Feda; but should a communicator remain outside it he would be invisible to her, and she could only with some difficulty obtain information from him by "sensing." Upon his entering the zone or sphere of influence, Feda would be able to see and hear him.
>
> This quasi-physical cloud emanates from the medium, and the sitter may contribute some small amount. Although usually visible to both control and communicator, the latter can, by passing out of it and then re-entering, feel its influence as a slight tingling (p. 73).

Telepathy and Clairvoyance

Many writers, such as the mesmerists, discussed ideas of force to account for what we call today ESP. Physician Herbert Mayo discussed Od: "It cannot be doubted that . . . an Od-current . . . enables the mind of the clairvoyante to penetrate the interior being of the visiter,—just as, in the humblest effects of common mesmerism, a relation is sensibly established between the party entranced and her mesmeriser, through the Od-current which he had previously directed upon her, in order to produce the trance" (1852, p. 185).

Chemist and physicist Williams Crookes (1897) discussed a variety of physical vibrations and X rays in the hope of relating telepathy to physical processes. As he wrote:

> Let it be assumed that these rays, or rays even of higher frequency, can pass into the brain and act on some nervous centre there. Let it be conceived that the brain contains a centre which uses these rays as the vocal cords use sound vibrations (both being under the command of intelligence), and sends them out, with the velocity of light, to impinge on the receiving ganglion of another brain. In this way some, at least, of the phenomena of telepathy, and the transmission of intelligence from one sensitive to another through long distances, seem to come into the domain of law, and can be grasped (p. 352).

Others saw telepathy as "sort of a natural telegraph and telephone . . . a magnetic communication without a conducting wire" (A. Denis, 1895, pp. 17-18). Mark Twain (1891) wrote about "mental telegraphy" based on electricity. In his view such cases as letters crossing in the mail, simultaneous development of ideas and discoveries, and other coincidences, were the result of a mind telegraphing another at a distance.

Héricourt's (1891) suggested that all bodies are connected to each other through unknown energies. Some evolve and develop receptive organs for "errant vibrations." Others acquire the sensibility by some form of unbalance. This sensitivity, another writer speculated, came from emotional bonds between people such as those that exist in familial relationships (Baudoin, 1900).

Houston (1892) stated in an article entitled "Cerebral Radiations" that: "An active brain may . . . be regarded as moulding the ether around it into thought waves that are spreading outward from it in all directions" (p. 152). A second brain may resonate with sympathetic vibrations coming from the thoughts of the first brain. These vibrations must travel at the speed of light. Similarly, Léon Denis (1900) argued that: "Thought vibrations may propagate through space like light and sounds and may affect other organisms that are in affinity with the one manifesting. The psychic waves, like hertzian waves in wireless telegraphy, propagate at a distance . . . ."(p. 291). The response to the waves varies according to the person, manifesting as visions, voices, or movements.

In his book *Psychic Phenomena, Science and Immortality*, Henry Frank (1911) stated his belief in a physical transmission in telepathy, and the reasons it was not a common phenomenon: "The reason that thought transference is at present so uncommon, at least to my mind, is because the forms of thought, or modes of vibration, which pass from individual brains, have been dissipated in the ether on account of not having found synchronous brains on which to impinge, and being without such paths their habits of action have not become fixed" (p. 341).

Some influential twentieth century research that has been forgotten by many was that conducted by Italian Ferdinando Cazzamalli. Cazzamalli (e.g., Cazzamalli,

1925/1926, 1928, 1947, 1960) used a variety of instruments to detect radiations from the brain. In his view the brain was a generator of electromagnetic energy responsible for telepathy, particularly during altered states of consciousness. In an early paper entitled "Telepsychic Phenomena and Cerebral Radiations," Cazzamalli (1925/1926) presented results of studies with instruments that supposedly detected electromagnetic radiations and indicated their presence audibly through a frequency amplifyer. Using psychics and individuals suffering from psychiatric conditions, Cazzamalli argued that electromagnetic activity was detected at the time the participants – inside a shielded chamber – were experiencing hallucinations, trances and telepathic phenomena. These findings led him to state that: "The human subject, under particular psychic conditions . . . gives off electromagnetic oscillations of the type of radio waves" (Cazzamalli, 1925/1926, p. 16).

In later tests, conveniently summarized in his book *Il Cervello Radiante*, Cazzamalli (1960) presented tracings directly made on film of the oscillations of the radiations. These tracings, or "radiocerebropsychographs," recorded the intensity of these cerebral radiations, which varied according to a variety of factors such as the type of person and their state of consciousness.

In the case of dowsing, Cazzamalli (1947) argued, the dowser's brain emitted electromagnetic waves. These waves could hit water, metal and other materials and, as radar, would provide information to the brain by the variations in the waves' feedback. This allowed them to detect the desired target. Another possibility was for the brain to perceive radiations from the surrounding, that is, radiations emanations from water and other materials.

For Cazzamalli parapsychological phenomena were basically neuropsychological. As he wrote, "it is the brain which, having psycho-sensory centers in orgasm, [and having] electrical and electromagnetic currents with radiant effects, acquires the possibility of contacting directly the surrounding physical reality . . . ." (Cazzamalli, 1947, p. 87).

Cazzamalli was not the only one to argue for cerebral radiations during the twentieth century. Others such as Wilson (1925), Azam (1926), and Sinel (1927) speculated along similar, although less specific and less sophisticated lines. Sinel postulated that the pineal gland was the locus of the "sixth sense."

Charles Andry-Bourgeois (1935) compared ESP to television. He argued that on one hand scientists worked hard to transmit a "simple animated image at a distance," while the brain of a clairvoyant in trance, "this marvelous emitting and receptive post of 'psychic waves,' . . . does this automatically, unconsciously, instinctively, so to speak" (p. 487).

Although not specifically connected to the brain, one of the best known physical ideas of ESP in psychical research literature was Charles Richet's concept of unknown vibrations to account for the "sixth sense." As Richet wrote: "The sixth sense is that one which gives us knowledge of a vibration of reality, a vibration which our normal senses are unable to perceive" (Richet, n.d., p. 224).

Another writer that wrote about physical transmission analogies of telepathy was engineer René Warcollier (1938). In his book of collected essays, *Experimental Telepathy*, Warcollier discussed the nature of the telepathic transmission. He cautioned the reader that he was using physical processes as analogies and that he was only speculating. Nonetheless, some of his writings suggest a more solid belief than Warcollier admitted. In an essay first written in 1921 Warcollier said that the process was one in which "the vibration of one of A's cerebral neurones producing by resonance, the corresponding vibration in one of P's cerebral neurons . . . ." (Warcollier, 1938, p. 199).

As Warcollier wrote about the actual process:

> It seems to me that we can find in the disintegration of the atom the origin of radiations to account for distant and swift transmission. Psychic radioactivity, the breaking down of atoms of cerebral cells, is certainly pure hypothesis, but I feel it is necessary to explain the telepathic phenomenon . . . . Modern physics has demonstrated that our organs, like other material bodies, are made up of whirlwinds of forces, reacting on one another. The spirit is more at ease with the conceptions of these minute solar systems of ions and electrons than with the blood-filled particles that constitute the brain . . . . When we face the question from this angle . . . we can conceive perfectly how the vibrations of the nervous system can be produced, how they can lead the vibrations of external bodies, through the nerve centers, to the centers of consciousness. We can conceive how motor nerves can transmit orders to muscles, how ideas can be associated with or without fibers of association, can pass beyond the cranium and influence, by induction, other nerve centers in other brains (pp. 199, 202-203).

Not everyone interested in the phenomena took a physical approach involving vibrations or forces. Frederic W. H. Myers (1886) affirmed: "We may say that telepathy is a psychical agency, and that there is an impassable gulf between all agencies which can be classed as physical on the one hand, and on the other hand, all agencies, whether apparently operating in proximity or at a distance, which we can as yet cognise on the psychical side alone" (p. 178). Other individuals — such as Rudolf Tischner (1925), Hans Driesch (1932/1933), and J.B. Rhine (1934) — opposed radiation explanations of ESP and argued for non-physical models. For example, Driesch referred to the necessity of postulating a "mental field," described as "something superpersonal in addition to something non-spatial in general" (Driesch, 1932/1933, p. 133). This ambiguous statement referred to some sort of mental plane not bound by space that could connect different minds.

Concluding Remarks

This concludes this series of short notes on historical concepts of force related to psychic phenomena. The notes, readers should keep in mind, were not intended as complete reviews, but as offering supplementary material material to a previous paper on the topic (Alvarado, 2006). Furthermore, I have not covered speculations on all possible phenomena, leaving aside, for example, psychic photography, hauntings, healing, and auras.

As argued before, the ideas discussed in these notes were related to a great extent to the scientific interests of the times. This included ideas about nerve fluids and animal electricity in past neurophysiology (Brazier, 1984; Morus, 1988). Furthermore, there were also multiple nineteenth-century developments about force and energy, including electricity and magnetism (Harman, 1982). The latter, as well as the rise of technology, was referred to by French popularizer of science Louis Figuier (1884) as the "new conquests of science." All of this—focusing on the transmission of electricity, nerve conduction, and on technologies such as telegraphy—encouraged the idea of transmission via a physical medium by assuming the extension of science into the unknown.

Such knowledge also brought us perspectives such as Flammarion's (1900), who argued that while X rays, the telephone, and several physical processes showed what scientists had learned, they also served to remind us about how much was still to learn about the universe. Consequently, he said, we should open our minds to the domain of the unknown, which included telepathy and other phenomena.

The concepts discussed here were speculations developed from observations. In using the word speculation I want to emphasize the supposed or hypothetical character of these concepts. The ideas I have mentioned were suppositions that were rarely generated through or supported by attempts to test the concept in scientific ways. Rather they were assumptions in which imagined extensions of physical concepts were used to make sense of the phenomena observed. These concepts of force are perhaps part of what Holton (1988) has referred to as thematic concepts in science, or general ideas that guide the course of science in different ways, while being resistant to proof or disproof, according to one's perspective.

Holton discussed concepts that ranged from the more general such as reductionism, atomism and evolution, to the more specific such as particular physical processes (e.g., inertia). Among these were ideas still considered valid, as well as those concepts that have been discarded over time, including such principles as humors, animal spirits, phlogiston, and the ether. While in some cases these ideas are now thought to have affected science negatively, they may also be seen as concepts that performed useful functions of creation and organization to those individuals who proposed them as true depictions of nature. This was the case of animal magnetism and the perispirit, which were central in mesmerism and spiritism. These concepts, interestingly enough, could be and were used to support different models, differentiating between ideas of human and discarnate agency.

In any case, the ideas presented here show the richness of the literatures in question. I offer my comments in the hopes that by presenting selected bibliography, I will awaken historical interest in these topics.

Note

1. Readers should keep in mind that these notes are meant as supplementary material for a previous paper (Alvarado, 2006). I am grateful to Nancy L. Zingrone for useful editorial suggestions for the improvement of the four parts of this paper.

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HORACE LEAF

1886c – 1971

Horace Leaf F.R.G.S. (1886c – 1971) was a well known British propagandist, who lectured widely at home and abroad on psychic subjects. His interest in the psychic field was aroused in 1904; he was mediumistic and practiced clairvoyance, psychometry and healing. Leaf authored a number of books including '*What is this Spiritualism*'1918 (1919 U.S.A.), '*Under the Southern Cross*'[9] 1923, '*The Psychology and Development of Mediumship*' (the publication date of this book is uncertain but it is c1926,). It is interesting to note that Horace Leaf met James Hewat McKenzie[10] at the beginning of the twentieth century at a debating society in Clapton, North London, where religious, scientific, political, philosophical views were discussed. Leaf was unaware that McKenzie was a Spiritualist, and when the young Horace Leaf became a Spiritualist medium, McKenzie's interest naturally increased in him.

Soon after, James Hewat McKenzie established in April 1920, the 'British College of Psychic Science' (BCPS) at 59 Holland Park, London which was a spacious double-fronted, twenty five roomed house. Leaf was invited to become staff lecturer on psychology and the development of mediumship. Out of this developed his book *The Psychology and Development of Mediumship* with Mr. McKenzie writing the foreword.

Leaf often contributed articles to *Light*. Reprinted below is one such article[11] whilst in Australia. After leaving Sydney he arrived at Auckland in June, according to 'The Spiritualist Church of New Zealand' in their Early History of Spiritualism in New Zealand[12]

The Australasia – New Zealand lecture tour lasted for twelve months. Mr. and Mrs. Leaf traveled over 35, 000 miles. A welcome-home social event was held at Mortimer Hall, Regent Street, London on Monday 5th March 1923 by a representative body of Spiritualists who gathered to greet Mr. and Mrs. Leaf. The 'Marylebone Spiritualist Association' (MSA) was represented by their president George Craze who delivered one of the welcoming speeches.

PJG

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[9] This has an introduction by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Illustrated, and chronicles his travels in the southern hemisphere. Psypioneer is purchasing a copy of this for more information on his Australian and New Zealand tour.

[10] See: - A Knight Errant of Psychic Science James Hewat McKenzie page 169.
http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/PP3.8August07..pdf

[11] *Light*, August 12, 1922 page 507

[12] See: - The Spiritualist Church of New Zealand
http://www.spiritualists.org.nz/cms/pages/history.php

EXPERIENCES OF AN OLD AUSTRALIAN SPIRITUALIST

BY HORACE LEAF

The magnificent city of Sydney has the largest population in Australia and is rapidly growing. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle regards it as the home of Spiritualism, and my experience confirms that conclusion. One of the most pleasant features about the movement here is the good feeling prevailing among the various Spiritualist organisations. They unite together with the greatest good feeling when any special effort on behalf of the Cause is being made. In this way my brief stay in Sydney was made a great success, and a most pleasant experience.

There have been many remarkable mediums at different times in Sydney, and I took the opportunity to gather from the oldest and most experienced supporters of Spiritualism accounts of their best and most convincing experiences.

One of the sources from whence I drew my information was Mr. Nettleton, a hearty Yorkshireman, whose experience of psychic phenomena extends well over thirty years, and who is President of a Spiritualistic Society known as the Spiritual Scientists of Sydney, an active and progressive body founded in 1912 by Mrs. L. Elmore, of U.S.A. His reliability is shown in the great respect in which he is held by his fellow workers, and the genuine love shown to him by the congregation over which he presides. My personal testimony is not without value, as Mrs. Leaf and I had the good fortune to enjoy the hospitality and friendship of Mr. and Mrs. Nettleton, during part of our stay in New South Wales.

Mr. Nettleton's most remarkable experience of the power of clairvoyance is the following: About 1886, knowing nothing of clairvoyance or second sight, and having heard little for or against Spiritualism, he went to see a certain medium who was almost totally blind. He had no belief in what he regarded as fortune telling, being a strict Methodist, and was careful not in any way to give the medium any clues which would help her. He had never seen the medium before, and it is very unlikely that she knew anything of his existence, as Mr. Nettleton was a total stranger to the district in which the medium lived, and had not long arrived in Australia from England.

The medium asked Mr. Nettleton to place his hand on top of hers, and placing her free hand over his, immediately told him his name and business, and stated that she could see his shop and a lady in it selling a certain article, mentioning even the price received for it. Mr. Nettleton on arriving home found that the medium had exactly described what had occurred in his own shop, and the correct time.

After requesting Mr. Nettleton not to speak too much, but to leave the talking to her, as that was her part of the sitting, she asked him if he had any questions to ask. He then requested her to inform him, if possible, how his brother was. His

brother was living in England, and there had been very little correspondence between them for some time, but news had reached Mr. Nettleton that his brother was ill. Without any assistance the medium said: "I am at Leeds, and now I am going along a country road. I am in a long street"; and thereupon she described Mr. Nettleton's brother's place of business, and said, "He is a saddler and harness maker," even reading aloud the sign which she declared she saw over the door of the brother's shop. She then said, "I see a man standing at the door smoking." And on describing this person, Mr. Nettleton realised that it was a splendid description of his brother. Continuing, she said: "This gentleman has been very ill, but is now much better." Later, on making enquiries, Mr. Nettleton found all this to be true.

It will be observed that there is nothing spiritual about this form of clear seeing, so far as evidence of survival is concerned. This in itself will be sufficient for certain thoughtless and narrow-minded critics to condemn it as unworthy. To do so, however, is to pass an adverse judgment upon one of the most remarkable and curious of human faculties. Second sight is apparently as old as the human race and common to all peoples. It raises important scientific or philosophical questions, for if man can see without the use of the physical brain, it is evidence that the consciousness is really independent of that organ, and perhaps the physical body altogether. This is at least good *prima facie* evidence that man is destined to survive death.

Mr. Nettleton certainly has every reason to be thankful for the existence of this wonderful gift, as it resulted in finding for him three lost horses, even as Samuel discovered the whereabouts of Saul's father's lost asses. Having sent three horses away for grazing purposes, after six months he wrote for them to be returned. In reply he received a letter delaying their arrival for a few days; a process which continued for several months. Later he discovered that the man in whose charge he had left the animals had disappeared; so likewise had the horses. Much perturbed in his mind the unfortunate owner applied to various mediums, hoping to obtain some trace of his beasts, but without success.

Finally he applied to the blind woman and placing in her hand a letter connected with the affair anxiously awaited the result. Immediately she said, "This letter is concerning horses, and there is a mystery about them." She then told him to go and make enquiries along a certain road some distance from Sydney. He would then trace the horses and make arrangements for two to be brought home, while he would himself bring the other. This is exactly what occurred. One of the horses being of a docile nature he brought it back with him; but the other two being rather restive he had to arrange to be sent back later.

One of Mr. Nettleton's brothers had a curious experience in the way of a coincidence accurately prognosticating the circumstances under which he died. On his way through England he had his "future read" in the street by an Italian with canaries. On paying a penny the woman caused the bird to select a folded slip of paper from amongst many others tightly packed together. The slip read, "You will go to a foreign country and be drowned." This came to pass. Several years later the man went to Australia and was unexpectedly drowned there in a boating accident.

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Paul J. Gaunt
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