

# PSYPIONEER JOURNAL

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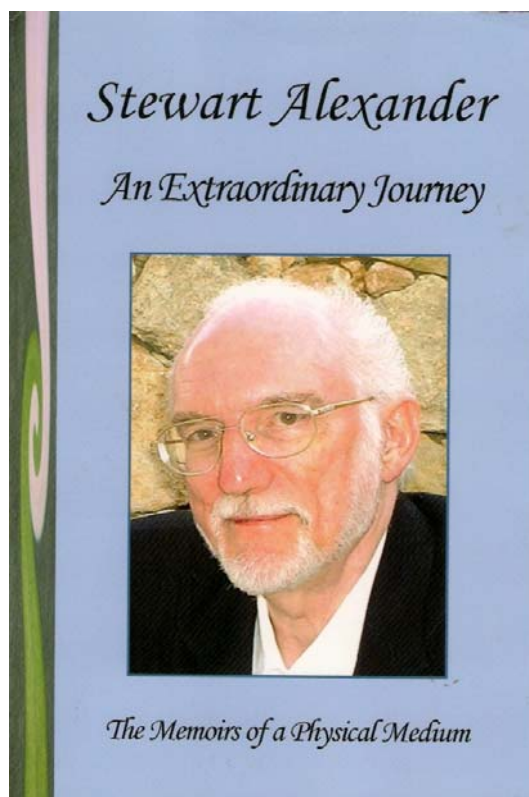
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# STEWART ALEXANDER'S JOURNEY

In recent years there has been a revival of physical mediumship in the UK. In the Scoble case,<sup>1</sup> this even impinged on the SPR. Moreover, a little of the traditional hostility between psychical researchers and Spiritualists was, perhaps surprisingly, dissolved in the séance rooms of the Noah's Ark Society (NAS) and related circles. To follow this revival, the historian can turn to many contemporary reports in psychic newspapers; to the Review of the now defunct NAS; to several monographs on Scoble; and to investigations like Robin Foy's *In Pursuit of Physical Mediumship*.<sup>2</sup> To this can now be added a memoir by the physical medium known as Stewart Alexander (SA) which will be a great help to students of the pioneers.<sup>3</sup>

SA's book joins the few autobiographies by physical mediums. His development was lengthy, and although he was a founder member of NAS, serving at different times as archivist and president, he did not immediately begin the public séances and seminars, there and elsewhere, which changed the lives of many people, including Susan Farrow, the later editor of *Psychic News*. In the NAS, he sought out old workers to record their memories of physical mediums, and also deepened his knowledge of the literature. He therefore brings to his narrative, experience of his own and others' mediumship, and a wide knowledge of the history, including the fraught question of tests and fraud. Indeed a disagreement about infra-red recording of his mediumship led to the fracture of his friendship with Alan Crossley<sup>4</sup> who had hoped to see history made with such a film.



<sup>1</sup> See *Psypioneer* Volume 4, No.6:—*A sitting at Scoble - Dr Alan Gauld*, pages 156-164:—<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP4.7July08..pdf>

<sup>2</sup> London, Janus, 1996.

<sup>3</sup> *An Extraordinary Journey:—The Memoirs of a Physical Medium* by Stewart Alexander, published by Saturday Night Press Publications, England, 2010. Paperback: ISBN:—978-0-9557050-6-9. Now available:— <http://www.amazon.co.uk/Extraordinary-Journey-Memoirs-Physical-Medium/dp/0955705061>

<sup>4</sup> Authored:—*The Story of Helen Duncan*, Alan E. Crossley Arthur H. Stockwell Ltd, Devon 1975.

SA returns several times to his reasons for not accepting formal test conditions (though he has at times endured quite rigorous controls). He feared the media circus that a successful test might trigger, which could disrupt his family and professional life; he believed that such tests would fail to end the dispute about the reality of the phenomena; and he was traumatised by another NAS member, a retired scientist who warned about infra-red—“You, my friend, could literally be fried” (p.73).

Actually there are no documented cases of mediums being injured by infra-red photography or viewing, [though see note at end]. Mediums can be injured by older controls like ropes. Non-invasive technology (p.297) such as thermal imaging is progressing all the time, and we may hope that it will eventually prove acceptable. Historically then, the physical mediumship of SA may be remembered like that of, say, Estelle Roberts, about which a sitter (such as Paul Beard) might look back and say “That was the most remarkable experience” rather than, say, Stella C, who fully cooperated with research, resulting in a full report. The situation is illustrated by David Fontana, who contributed a warm foreword to the book, and sadly passed away around the time of publication. Fontana published no research papers about SA’s mediumship, which he witnessed as a guest rather than as a researcher.

There are a great many valuable observations in the book (SA resembles D.D. Home in being prepared to speak very plainly about the foibles of Spiritualism) and also reassessments of such classic mediums as Eusapia, George Valiantine and Margery. SA has clearly thought much about the problem of mixed mediumship—those who at times, especially in their later work, are found in compromising circumstances.

A reassessment of the neglected Valiantine is long overdue. SA is not afraid to criticise Mrs Salter whose paper in Proceedings Society for Psychical Research (PSPR) more or less wrote off the medium; and also Dennis Bradley, surely one of the ten most disagreeable investigators ever, who pushed Valiantine up, and then tore him down. Especially timely are the two chapters devoted to Margery Crandon, who died on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1941. Much archival material about Margery has lately emerged. Sadly, Thomas Tietze, who wrote the only recent biography of Margery, truncated by the publisher, passed away on 20 October 2009 while working on an expanded update.

SA uses Tietze’s book, and also the eye-witness testimony of Marian Nester, director of education at the American SPR, daughter of Mark Richardson; as a child she witnessed the mediumship. (I visited Mrs Nester in New York in 1975 and 1976, and wish now I had asked more about Margery! She later corresponded with SA.). Margery cooperated with many tests, to no avail for her reputation; not an encouraging precedent for mediums such as SA. “Walter”, Margery’s control, also known in the Glen Hamilton circle, re-appears as an SA control.

Stewart Alexander’s book will greatly interest not only Psypioneer readers, but all who are concerned about the direction taken by the Spiritualist Movement. We must hope in particular that, though he has retired from public mediumship, he will continue his historical writing.

**Note:**—Some Psypioneer readers saw burn marks on Gordon Higginson, attributable to infra-red equipment. It would be useful to have a full account of these incidents, and whether they involved, for example, an infra-red spotlight. PN later published an account of a Swaffer circle séance in which GH photos were produced without injury. Some new unobtrusive technology is available for monitoring mediums in the dark (not its original purpose of course), from Thermoview Pty Ltd. Apparently it uses a combination of infra-red and thermo-graphic processes. It is entirely non-intrusive, passive, and can be employed in any industry in the most sensitive situations where issues of safety are paramount. An attempt abroad to interest one well-known physical medium in it failed.

LP.

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## DR SIDGWICK I PRESUME?

When is a doctor not a doctor? Tom Ruffles, SPR book review editor and Fortean Times reviewer<sup>5</sup> disagreed with Michael Tynn, author of “The Articulate Dead”<sup>6</sup> when he referred to “Dr Sidgwick” rather than “Mrs Sidgwick”, the SPR pioneer.

But Dr Ruffles was led to make further enquiries which he has reported on his blog.<sup>7</sup>

The official biography “Mrs Henry Sidgwick: a Memoir” (1938 by her niece Ethel Sidgwick listed 4 honorary doctorates—Victoria University, England [i.e. Manchester/Leeds/Liverpool], Birmingham, St. Andrews (Scotland) and Edinburgh. Dr Ruffles ascertained from the universities in question that the degrees, all honorary, were Litt.D. (1899 Victoria), LL.D (1909 Birmingham) LL.D (1911 St. Andrews) and LL.D Edinburgh (923 Edinburgh). (LL.D is doctor of laws.) Burke’s Peerage also mentions these doctorates but omits to state they were honorary.

Dr Ruffles was advised by the University of Cambridge Ceremonial Officer, that there was no definite rule as to whether recipients of honorary doctorates should be addressed as “Dr”. She herself does not seem to have used the title.

Her husband Henry Sidgwick also had honorary doctorates, but he too did not have a doctorate from a thesis.

LP.

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<sup>5</sup> For a selection of recent FT reviews, see:—<http://www.forteanimes.com/reviews/books/archive/>

<sup>6</sup> Volume 5, No.3:—*New Book Articulates Pioneer Cases* by Leslie Price page 70:—<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP5.3March09..pdf>

<sup>7</sup> [www.tomruffles.blogspot.com/](http://www.tomruffles.blogspot.com/)

# MRS BRITTEN NOMINALLY CHALLENGED

In *Psypioneer* November 2004,<sup>8</sup> we called attention to the need for care in referring to Emma Hardinge Britten. Not only did she change her name at intervals, but she was not always consistent, styling herself Miss or Mrs Hardinge in America for example, with a logic that was not always clear.



Even in that *Psypioneer* note, we may have given too much weight in supporting the theory of Robert Mathiesen<sup>9</sup> that there had been an actual person connected with her called Hardinge, though the debate continues.

## Unwarranted hyphenation

Emma married William Britten in 1870 in New Jersey, USA. She then took the names Emma Hardinge Britten. She did not hyphenate this as Hardinge-Britten. This is a rather troublesome misunderstanding, as it can result in her name appearing in the wrong place in an index. This is the case in the *Cumulative Index to Collected Writings of H.P. Blavatsky*;<sup>10</sup> the Index is a volume in its own right. In the *Theosophical Encyclopedia*, noticed elsewhere in this issue, the entire article on Emma appears under “H” and she is called “Hardinge-Britten”.

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<sup>8</sup> Volume 1, No.7:—*The Names of Emma Hardinge Britten*, page 57:—  
[http://woodlandway.org/PDF/Leslie\\_Price\\_PP7.pdf](http://woodlandway.org/PDF/Leslie_Price_PP7.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> *The Unseen Worlds of Emma Hardinge Britten: ...* by Robert Mathiesen:—*Theosophical History Occasional Papers*, Vol. IX 2001. Still available see:—<http://www.theohistory.org/occas.html>

See also: Duncan Gascoyne former SNU, president (2000-2010). Vol.3, No.4:—*Emma Hardinge Britten:—Further Information collated by Duncan Gascoyne (as at February 2007)*. Pages 24 – 26:—  
<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP3.2February07..pdf>

<sup>10</sup> <http://blavatskyarchives.com/collectedwritings.htm>

## Loss of birth

Emma was born Emma Floyd. Her name is on her baptismal record issued at Bethnal Green, London. Her father, mother and siblings also had the surname name Floyd. Her later adoption of the name Harding (increasingly Hardinge after she went to the States) appears to have been connected originally with her stage career. We mentioned in the 2004 article that a Spiritualist web site had retrojected the Hardinge name and renamed her father “Floyd Hardinge”. Since then other Spiritualist web sites have copied the confusion. Sadly part of the SNU has also fallen victim.

Marc Demarest on his blog<sup>11</sup> asked on 25 October:

### “What Matters History?”

“As shocking as it may sound, a recent Spiritualist National Union newsletter<sup>12</sup>—one in which they discuss the wonderful work done to restore EHB’s gravesite<sup>13</sup> (p. 2)—recapitulates, in a page, several of the mythic errors and dark lacunae concerning Emma’s life (p. 3).

“What’s more troubling to me is where they cribbed from: other Spiritualist sites on the Internet?”

“Even though some of these errors had been corrected, years before<sup>14</sup> within the Spiritualist community.

“If the SNU and the American spiritualist community does not care to get things right where Emma is concerned, who does?”

Marc has written to the SNU, offering his help in clarifying references to Emma in SNU publications. We hope this offer, immediately acknowledged, leads to transatlantic co-operation – and that “Floyd Hardinge” can be laid to rest.

LP.

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<sup>11</sup> [www.ehbritten.org](http://www.ehbritten.org)

<sup>12</sup> See SNU:—Spirit Post 2<sup>nd</sup> edition:— <http://www.charnwood.snu-emdc.org.uk/Spirit%20Post%202nd%20Edition.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> Psypioneer see:—Volume 1, No.18:—*Emma Hardinge Britten: Grave News*, pages 217-220:—<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/18.PSYPIONEERFoundedbyLesliePrice.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> As previously referenced:—Volume 1, No.7:—*The Names of Emma Hardinge Britten*, page 57:—[http://woodlandway.org/PDF/Leslie\\_Price\\_PP7.pdf](http://woodlandway.org/PDF/Leslie_Price_PP7.pdf)



[The engraved portrait of EHB which accompanies the above article was originally published by James Burns on the front page of his journal, *The Medium and Daybreak* on July 16<sup>th</sup> 1886. In this issue he published “*Some Passages in the Spiritual Experiences of Mrs. Emma Hardinge-Britten.*”<sup>15</sup> by the author of “Art Magic” Louis De B—. Burns published the portrait and article, “*To welcome the return to the platform of Emma Hardinge-Britten*”. Note, Burns and the anonymous author of the article use a hyphen between Hardinge-Britten.]

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## A Pioneer for Aquarius

Wellesley Tudor Pole was born in Weston-super-Mare on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1884.

Wellesley’s father was Thomas Pole who married Kate Wansborough and they had five children; Mary Tudor, Dorothy (who died as a child), Katharine Tudor (Kitty), Wellesley Tudor (WTP) and Alexander Cecil. Wellesley married Florence Mary Snelling in 1912 and they had three children.

Katherine wrote of Wellesley’s developing spiritual powers for Oliver Villiers in his pamphlet ‘Appreciation and Valuation of WTP’.<sup>16</sup>

“...he was a difficult little chap because of being psychic and, of course, he was not understood and so had a frustrating childhood.”

As a youngster he became aware of his psychic faculties when he was able to see the colour of prayers rising up above the congregation in church. After a bout of typhoid he could remember being outside his body.

Rather than attending university he joined the family grain business in Bristol, and aged eighteen in 1902 he had a revelatory dream about Glastonbury, which he began visiting on pilgrimage. This was how he discovered the Chalice Well, nestling between the Tor and Chalice Hill, and he was so affected by the atmosphere around the Well that he knew that one day he would be given the opportunity to restore the site. (This in fact came to pass fifty-five years later).

Between 1906 -1913 Tudor Pole was much concerned with a Sapphire Blue Bowl that he was involved in finding at Glastonbury in 1906 with the help of Christine and Janet Allen

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<sup>15</sup> A pdf ocr copy available on request.

<sup>16</sup> Available from Chalice Well Bookshop. There is now also an official history of the Well:—  
[http://www.challicewell.org.uk/index.cfm/glastonbury/Products.Details/product\\_id/390](http://www.challicewell.org.uk/index.cfm/glastonbury/Products.Details/product_id/390)

and of his sister Kitty. The bowl was kept in an oratory at his house in Clifton, Bristol, where it was seen by many luminaries of the day. Throughout his life Tudor Pole and his sister Kitty looked after the bowl, before it was passed into the care of The Chalice Well Trust in 1968.<sup>17</sup>

During the First World War WTP obtained his commission to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cheshire Regiment in September 1917, and was posted to Egypt, serving on the Palestine Front. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of December he was wounded and taken to hospital in Cairo. He recovered and served until May 1919, being awarded the OBE in that year's honours list.

During that first war, the ideas and impulse for the later Silent Minute were incubated. WTP was able to convince Winston Churchill and the BBC to observe a silent minute at 9.00 p.m. each evening. WTP wrote:

“There is no power on earth that can withstand the united cooperation on spiritual levels of men and women of goodwill everywhere and it is for this reason that the continued observance of the Silent Minute is considered to be of such vital importance in the interests of human welfare.”

At first it was anticipated that the Big Ben Silent Minute would finish in August 1945, at the end of the war, but in fact it ran for 7700 successive nights until the 18<sup>th</sup> of September 1961. In a small way its observance carries on to this day through the Silent Minute Organisation, and also by being marked by the ringing of a bell in the gardens at Chalice Well at midday and 3.00 pm each day to call people to silence.

From his earliest day WTP was truly a global person, having a remarkable number of overseas friends and contacts, including many Russian friends and associates. By December 1919 he had established his own firm W. Tudor Pole and Company at 61, St, James Street, London, negotiating direct trade links with Russia and Eastern Europe. The company had representation in New York, Paris, Amsterdam, Constantinople, Alexandria and Haifa and it was said that WTP would never finance or be connected with any business, unless he himself was fully satisfied that it would be of direct benefit to suffering humanity.

Many of Tudor Pole's papers and records were destroyed during a bombing raid on London in the Second World War. Throughout this second conflict WTP was busy working for the protection of Britain and for the ultimate success of the Allied Forces. He wrote in 1940:

“Through silence in the Islands comes strength to the people (and thereby a renewal of inspiration). As a result they are ‘let’ or allowed to approach and come near to the source of all good. ‘Then let them speak’ the prayers of supplication, affirmation, meditation, peace. Herein lies the key to what we are trying to do with the silent observance.”

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<sup>17</sup> See:—Patrick Benham “The Avalonians” Glastonbury, Gothic Image, 2006



In fact after the war was over, WTP was very concerned that there should be no harsh triumphalism, lobbying both Churchill and Roosevelt to this end. He despaired at the rush to bring down 'the iron curtain' and at the use of nuclear weapons on Japan. As late as 1963 in his 'Message for the Coming Time' he warned of the dangers and impact of nuclear technology on the natural world, including humanity.<sup>18</sup>

In his lifetime WTP wrote an astonishing amount of material in the form of letters and pamphlets, and in the last years of his life completed a series of books. The direct and contemporary nature of his writing can be judged from these brief extracts:

"Whilst on pilgrimage the pilgrim should hold in thought and prayer the activities and experiences of each day. The key note then should be - show me how to do my part under St Michael's guidance."

"In practical matters, when ever a centre is found to be neglected or in disrepair, do not leave that spot without doing something, however small, to improve the situation, in the spirit of loving service. Whether conscious of his presence or no, always salute the Guardian on arriving and on leaving each centre visited."

"Pray daily for the peace of the world, for true fellowship among people and for the realisation of the fact that all Life lives and moves and has its being within the infinite and universal Mind of the Creator."

"Darkness cannot overwhelm the world so long as Light continues to radiate by reflection from the hearts and minds of all who dedicate themselves to this high purpose. Learn also to reflect the light from each holy place to which your pilgrim steps are led."

(These four extracts are taken from 'Michael, Prince of Heaven' pamphlet).

By 1959 Tudor Pole had established The Chalice Well Trust to safeguard the future of the Chalice Well and its surrounding land and properties. Giving us this insight he wrote to Rosamond Lehmann:

"There are certain geographical spots or centres where the veil is 'thinner' than elsewhere. There may be historical, occult or even astrological reasons that have supervened over the centuries to bring about this thinning of the veils, through which light can pass down into our human atmosphere more easily than is the case elsewhere. Such spots are nearly always associated with a healing spring or well, and with holy persons from past history. At such spots, if they are preserved, peacefully and prayerfully, pilgrims cannot only find rest, but their inner perceptions can be stimulated and brought out into the open. Chalice Well is one such centre, and part of its heritage is to be able to act like a

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<sup>18</sup> Message for the Coming Time booklet and CD of WTP reading available from Chalice Well Bookshop

sounding board. With the world in turmoil, the careful preservation of such dedicated centres becomes imperative for the welfare of the whole community.”

WTP thought of Chalice Well as the first Gateway in Britain through which Christ’s message entered, and he felt the task of the Well was to render the property (i.e. the dwellings and the gardens laid out in a particular way) and its atmosphere peaceful, beautiful and worthy to be used again as “A gateway for a message for the coming times.” Of considerable importance was the creation of an ‘Upper Room’ in Little St. Michael’s Retreat House, dedicated to silence, meditation and prayer.

His glimpses, an unusual form of seership, are chronicled in his books ‘*A Man Seen Afar*’, ‘*Writing on the Ground*’ and ‘*The Silent Road*’. Before his illness and passing in 1968 these books laid out his vision for the future. His life work had included the Silent Minute and the subsequent Lamplighter Movement and seeing the Chalice Well restored and renewed. These were the gifts WTP gave to the world and which make him such an important figure in the spiritual history of the world.

Paul Fletcher, Chalice Well Trust, 2010.

**For further information please visit:**—[chalicewell.org.uk](http://chalicewell.org.uk)

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**[Pspioneer would like to extend its thanks to Paul Fletcher for sending us this excellent article. Ed.]**

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# COULD PSYCHICAL RESEARCH HAVE STARTED IN RUSSIA?

What is the connection between television, postage stamps and psychical research? Well, they are all supposed to have been invented in Britain.

The Society for Psychical Research was founded in 1882 in London, at the British National Association of Spiritualists rooms near the British Museum. Similar societies were later started all over the world.

But was there another country which began scientific psychical research first? In her great work "Nineteenth Century Miracles", Emma Hardinge Britten called attention to events in Russia, where a group of scientists were at work in 1875. They were convened by Dmitri Mendeleev.

Mendeleev was no ordinary scientist. In a major breakthrough in 1869 he conceived the periodic table of chemical elements which in essence we still use. Yet something disrupted those Russian scientists. What went wrong has lessons for us today.

The story began in 1871 when D.D. Home, the most famous Victorian medium, was in St. Petersburg, Russia. Among his sitters was A.M. Butlerov, a leading organic chemist, who was convinced by the phenomena. Julie, the sister of Butlerov's wife was impressed too - she married the medium! Butlerov had been introduced to Spiritualism by Aksakov, the intellectual leader of Russian Spiritualism.

Butlerov got other scientists interested, but Home was unwell, and left Russia, though he was soon fit enough to experiment most successfully with Crookes in London. Although Home returned to work in Russia, it was the visiting French medium Camille Bredif who impressed another Russian scientist, the zoologist N.P. Vagner [sic- Not Wagner].

The resulting publicity for Spiritualism alarmed Mendeleev who like many younger scientists hoped with messianic fervour that Science would replace Superstition in Russian life, and who feared that the image of Science would be marred by any association with Spiritualism.

In May 1875 at his suggestion, the Russian Physical Society set up a twelve person commission to investigate Spiritualism. Butlerov, Aksakov and Vagner agreed to advise it.

The commission sat with the teenage Petty brothers, brought from Newcastle to Russia by Aksakov. The boys made a dubious impression - Hudson Tuttle, quoted by Mrs Britten, explained that the strongest psychic power was actually in their mother who had not come to Russia.

A second British medium, known as Mrs Clayer, did produce phenomena, but not at special anti-fraud tables. Accusations of deception were again made; the pro-Spiritualist scientists withdrew; the commission suspended work, and produced a negative report

“Spiritualistic phenomena occur from unintentional movements or from intentional fraud, and spiritualistic teaching is a superstition” they concluded..

Mendeleev reinforced this negative message in public lectures, and in a full length book of the séances records. Aksakov published two replies, but a large extent, scientific investigation of Spiritualism in Russia was over. It has never resumed.

Attempts were made in 1875 in the United States by Henry Olcott, Madame Blavatsky and others to find mediums to send to Russian scientists, and this was recorded in the Theosophical history books, such as Olcott’s *Old Diary Leaves*.

Henry Slade who was sent to Russia with their encouragement, had various adventures en route, including being arrested in England, and amazing Professor Zollner in Germany.

Why had the Russian attempt at psychical research ended so badly? How did it differ from the UK project, the SPR, founded a mere seven years later in 1882, which is still with us today?

First, Russia was not a free society. Aksakov, despite his high connections, was not even permitted in 1874 by the censor to establish a psychic journal in Russia - he had to publish it in Germany. Although mediumship was of doubtful legality in Britain, there was a free press here.

The acute polarisation of opinion in Russia was not conducive to progress. As well as the rising generation of materialist Russian scientists, there were pious intellectuals such as Dostoevsky, who did not hesitate to identify the Devil as the inspirer of the phenomena. The novelist mocked the scientific pretensions of the Mendeleev commission. Indeed, Spiritualism, or rather anti-Spiritualism, was a theme in his work.

Mendeleev, in contrast, was not entirely closed to the paranormal as aspect of the physical world; initially he even suspected that the weather might play a part in the success or failure of séances. But meteorology was much more a passion for him than mediumship.

And Mendeleev felt fear. Members of certain scientific disciplines whose status is precarious, are often hostile to psychical research, and seek to put distance between their own speciality and the psychic field. So it was at times with psychology in the twentieth century, and still was with science generally, in the nineteenth.

Mendeleev’s dogmatism was not helpful. In contrast, the SPR had as its first president, the philosopher Henry Sidgwick. His neutrality might be irritating to believers or disbelievers alike, but it did permit different viewpoints to be expressed within the same organisation.

In retrospect, a time limited commission was not ideal, even if it had completed its full year-long programme. The complexity of the phenomena really needs more than a lifetime to unravel. We may be sorry that the SPR cannot by its constitution pronounce a collective verdict, but at least it prevents a premature reckoning, and allows research to continue.

Reliance on visiting mediums (to Russia) was far from ideal. It is difficult even for many non-mediums to work in strange surroundings amid unfamiliar languages. Sometimes a medium abroad can do good work with scientists- Mrs Piper for example in England. But general reliance on indigenous talent is to be recommended.

We might also suggest that it is best not to limit enquiries to Spiritualism, but to include the whole field of the paranormal, such as ghosts, ESP and precognition. F.W. H. Myers, the great mind of the SPR, put these in a framework in his classic work *Human Personality and its Survival of bodily death*.

Ironically, Mendeleev, who had provided a classic framework, for chemistry in the periodic table, did not perceive a similar challenge in the paranormal.

Leslie Price.

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## FEWER PSYCHICS PUT TO DEATH

The number of psychics put to death by the Christian church, has fallen sharply since Psypioneer first highlighted the problem in August 2004.<sup>19</sup> According to the SNU web site at that time “Hundreds of thousands of psychics were put to death by organised ‘witch-hunters’ during the Christian centuries,”

Now the number has been reduced to thousands.<sup>20</sup>

“During these times” the SNU reports “thousands of mediums were put to death by the church-sanctioned ‘witch-hunters’.

But the assertion is imaginary. As reported as long ago as the first issue of Psypioneer, total witchcraft trial deaths were around 60,000. Undoubtedly a few mediums or healers were among the victims, but they were not especially targeted. The Christian authorities were, on occasion, restraining influences, and at other times deeply implicated.

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<sup>19</sup> Volume 1, No.4:—*Psychics put to death on web site*, page 30:—  
[http://woodlandway.org/PDF/Leslie\\_Price\\_PP4.pdf](http://woodlandway.org/PDF/Leslie_Price_PP4.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.snu.org.uk/Spiritualism/ancient.htm>

Pagan scholars, who have an obvious interest today in the term “witch”, now accept that pagans were not the target of the witch hunts. A watershed here was the publication of Professor Ronald Hutton’s history of Wicca, “The Triumph of the Moon” in 1999. But even before, Jenny Gibbons had alerted the pagan community to the new discoveries in a 1998 paper “Recent developments in the study of the Great European witch hunt.”<sup>21</sup>

Why have Spiritualists not got the same message? A major factor is the influence of Arthur Findlay’s books, many still in print, which perpetuate incorrect stereotypes on this and other historical questions.

LP.

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## AN EPOCH-MAKING THEOSOPHICAL WORK OF REFERENCE

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One of the streams of work in which psychic pioneers played a significant role has always been Modern Theosophy. We regularly carry articles by or about such workers as Stainton Moses, an early member of the New York T.S. The relation between his phenomena and those of the early Theosophists continues to perplex historians. Charles Carleton Massey, a T.S. founder, was also a founder of the Society for Psychological Research and of the London Spiritualist Alliance.

The publication in 2006 of the long-awaited Theosophical Encyclopedia<sup>22</sup> was therefore a welcome event.<sup>23</sup>

It is one of many well-produced works to emerge from the Philippine T.S. But there is a problem with any reference work published by a movement—will it forsake objectivity in deference to the sensitivities of that movement? This is in addition to the problems which beset all who work on reference material, especially biographical—the individuals, for example, who lack any date of birth, or death, or even both.

In my view, the TE is much better than it might have been. It is an invaluable work of reference for all Theosophists, but no one can peruse even a few pages without learning

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<sup>21</sup> [www.draeconin.com/database/witchhunt.htm](http://www.draeconin.com/database/witchhunt.htm)

<sup>22</sup> Note the American spelling which, our subscriber Dr Algeo reminds me, was also the 1531 first spelling in English, according to the Oxford English Dictionary!

<sup>23</sup> Theosophical Encyclopedia:—<http://www.theosophy.ph/encyclo.html>

something worthwhile. Obviously its central focus is not the paranormal—the powers latent in man are mentioned only in one of the three objects shortly adopted in the T.S.

A sober note is sounded in the preface. Totalitarian regimes have regularly destroyed Theosophical groups and their records. Though not mentioned, the impressive French T.S. headquarters building was seized by the Gestapo. Theosophy is not just pots of tea and bananas.<sup>24</sup>

Its teaching of equality and brotherhood is a threat to tyrants.

Turning now to the articles in TE, there seems to have been an agreement not to be critical of other Theosophical and related societies; indeed some of the contributors are members of groups that are separate from the biggest (Adyar-based) T.S. This means that the less attractive traits of the minority of such leaders who are imperfect, and possibly not honest about themselves, and their contacts with the Mahatmas (or Masters,) are not featured. There are limits to such liberality however. Annie Besant gets nine pages, Leadbeater five, Judge less than two, and Crosbie one. To be fair, some subjects had fuller lives that merit longer articles.

At times, the treatment borders on the misleading. The article on Leadbeater minimises the sexual charges against him; the one on his colleague Wedgwood claims he suffered persecution and ill-health, but does not explain why this should be so. Both articles are by priests of the Liberal Catholic Church in which L and W were leaders.

Only a few articles have any bibliography, and it is to be hoped that this is rectified in the next edition. An important example is in the article about the Books of Kiu-te, which are significant in establishing the Tibetan links of HPB.<sup>25</sup>

“Recent scholars” it is noted, “particularly H.J. Spierenburg and David Reigle, have identified the Book of Kiu-te to be the Tibetan Buddhist Tantras, known in Tibetan as rGyud-de” (p.356). But the reader who wants to follow this up is not told where.

Nevertheless, the virtues of the work greatly outweigh the flaws. It was a herculean task to assemble so many workers in such a vast cooperative endeavour. From the short articles, which often furnish details of hard-to-clarify minor characters and concepts, to the longer essays on major themes and personalities, there is endless edification here.

LP.

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<sup>24</sup> The poem:—“*My Love Is a Theosophist*” see:—<http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/my-love-is-theosophist/>

<sup>25</sup> Psypioneer Volume 1, No.14:—*Madame Blavatsky, Buddhism and Tibet*, pages 172-179:—[http://woodlandway.org/PDF/Leslie\\_Price\\_PP14\\_2005.pdf](http://woodlandway.org/PDF/Leslie_Price_PP14_2005.pdf)



# The Beginnings of Full Form Materialisations

Mrs. Mary J. Hollis-Billing was featured in the last issue,<sup>26</sup> under the article reference number 15; I stated:

*Another medium of the period was Mrs. Andrews of Moravia, New York. Like Hollis she remained conscious during the phenomena. Andrews is credited (by Harrison in *The Spiritualist*) as being the first medium with whom spirit faces began to appear regularly. Soon afterwards the spotlight was pointed to London. January 1872, Mrs. Guppy became the first British medium to materialise spirit hands and faces,<sup>27</sup> followed by Herne and Williams, and the introduction of Florence Cook. *Psypioneer* will be publishing reports on the Andrews mediumship in the next issue.*

However, Mrs. Mary Andrews has proved difficult to track down. In the May 1873 issue, of *The Spiritualist* newspaper we find this account of Andrews' physical mediumship:—

## MRS. ANDREW'S MEDIUMSHIP

*The Spiritualist*:—<sup>28</sup>

MRS. ANDREWS, of Moravia, New York State, was the medium through whom spirit faces first began to appear regularly to many witnesses at once. The following account of one of her seances is from the *Banner of Light* (Boston, U.S.), February 8th, 1873:—

There are seven persons present to form a circle. Only three of these are strangers to me; the rest my relatives who accompanied me hither. We form a semicircle and join hands. The medium, Mrs. Andrews, sits facing us. I can easily touch her with my cane, my right arms rests on a pianoforte. A lamp is burning brightly. It is nine o'clock in the morning, but we need the lamp, because the only window of the apartment is darkened, and the only door bolted.

The medium now remarks:—"We first sit in the dark, and continue until the spirits call for a light." The light is now extinguished. The piano begins to play. It is not the

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<sup>26</sup> Volume 6, No.10:—Mrs. Mary J. Hollis, pages 272-283:—  
<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP6.10October2010..pdf>

<sup>27</sup> Oxford DNB: —<http://www.oup.com/oxforddnb/info/>

<sup>28</sup> *The Spiritualist* May 1, 1873 page 190.

medium, for I am conversing with her. Passing my cane along the keys I feel no one; still the playing goes on, and is directly assisted by voices, seemingly in the air above us, that join in with great power and sweetness. Mysterious lights are beginning to dance before us, describing curved lines and circles, and playing around each other in a way that makes it clear they are guided by intelligence. While this beautiful display is going on, soft voices whisper startling things in our ears, and delicate hands thrill us by gentle touches and affectionate caresses. A familiar voice, long silent in death, as I had thought, said to me, "Dear brother, I come to greet you. Believe me, this is your own sister Nancy. A fortnight ago you visited my grave. I stood by your side, though you saw me not, my spirit-body being invisible as the viewless air. How I wanted to speak to you! Thank heaven for the present opportunity!" Tender lips now kissed mine. I sat speechless, my heart swelling and throbbing, but directly found relief in gushing tears.

During the dark *seance* white and purple clouds gathered above our heads, and seemed in commotion. Their crimson edges now and then shed such light as enabled us to see one another, and every object in the room. Out of the clouds came, at one time, a little dash of rain, accompanied by wind and the rich perfume of flowers. Immediately after this, a white figure that seemed a column of cloud, snowy, yet tinged with something bright and luminous, came down and sat before me. While I gazed, wondering what it might be, the figure bent toward me, and out came a luminous hand, which was gently laid upon my forehead. It remained but for a moment, touching my temple and cheek affectionately. It disappeared in the fleecy folds enveloping the mysterious figure, which now ascended and was lost to my view amid the moving clouds overhead.

After about thirty-five minutes of darkness, a voice in the air said, "Please strike a light." Being nearest the light, I complied with the request. The medium, now rising from her chair, went into the cabinet, which is a thing looking not unlike a common wardrobe. It is made of plain, thin boards, and has folding-doors about three feet and a half high. Above the door hangs a black velvet curtain reaching down to the top of the shutters when closed.

Upon entering the cabinet, the medium requested me to close and latch the door after her. As I did so, I was surprised to see an armless hand, white as snow, come out from under the curtain and tap me on the hand and arm, which it did quickly and several times, then darted back into the cabinet. Resuming my seat in the circle, we waited a few minutes, and the curtain of the aperture slowly moved aside while the face of a man appeared. There was nothing ghostly in the look or action of the apparition. Countenance, feature, complexion, and every movement of muscle, and motion of head, hand and lip were perfectly natural. He bent his gaze steadfastly upon a middle-aged man in the circle, who was a stranger to me, and evidently made an effort to speak, but failing, waved his hand and drew back from the light, letting the curtain drop. The gentleman at whom the apparition had looked so earnestly now exclaimed: "That was my father! Oh, will he not speak to me?" Immediately the curtain went aside again, and the same face presented itself, and another effort—I thought a painful one—was made to speak. The mouth opened, the lips moved, but no sound of voice was heard. With a

slight shade of disappointment on his countenance, the old man bowed his head twice, and putting forth his hand, waved an adieu in a most feeling manner. In a few seconds afterwards, the curtain was put back by a hand resembling very much the armless one which had caressed me at the aperture. And now a face, *facsimile* of one I had seen coffined years gone by. Without speaking, I turned a glance upon my sister in the flesh, sitting by my side. She was trembling and weeping, so I felt sure she was not behind me in the recognition of the face at the aperture. It was our dear departed sister, the same who had spoken to us in the dark a few minutes before. She now uttered her own name in her own clear, familiar tone. How the blood tingled in my veins as her well-remembered grey eyes met mine! Nor seemed she less moved than I. I could not keep my seat, but glided up to the aperture, when she, with manifest emotion, threw her arms around my neck. It was but for a moment. Releasing me, she quickly disappeared behind the curtain.

But I must crowd the facts and incidents I propose to give more closely. Of course I cannot set down all, nor even half, in an article like this, intended to brief, which was elicited during an investigation kept up, day after day, for three weeks.

I saw many strange faces at the aperture,—some days from ten to fifteen or twenty—the most of whom were recognised by some one or more present in the circle. It was near a week after the appearance of the sister just alluded to, before I recognised another face, yet a number of apparitions professed to recognise me. At length two other sisters succeeded in materialising themselves, and appeared side by side at the aperture. The recognition was undoubted; my sister at my side recognising them at the same moment I did; and strangers present remarked upon the family resemblance. But the certainty was made doubly certain when the apparitions mentioned incidents in their earth-life and ours, which we readily and vividly remembered.

A few days subsequent, our mother appeared, threw open the door of the cabinet, and showed herself to us from head to foot.

Six times during the three weeks, an old acquaintance, who died a materialist, appeared to me, looked and talked naturally; referred repeatedly to his materialistic notions, and how unhappy they made him; said much about his present condition, and its advantages over the former; tried to give me an idea of spirit-life, the pursuits, pleasures, and amusements of spirits, as well as their institutions for doing good, educating the ignorant, and lifting higher the low and debased.

I must give one more instance of recognition, and close my story, already, perhaps, too long.

A few days before I left the place, a gentleman came there, bringing with him two little girls—his own daughters—the elder, perhaps, eight years old, the younger about six. Before going into the *seance* room, he said to me, “When about leaving home my wife observed, ‘I would go too, if I thought mother would show herself there; but as she was always opposed to Spiritualism, I’m sure she’ll have no desire to make any

manifestation.’ The last one I should look for,” he rejoined, “she was so bitter against everything of the kind.” But, lo! after the light *seance* began, who should appear first at the aperture but this same old grandmother. She bent her eyes affectionately upon the children. The little girls gazed a moment in mute astonishment, then both at once clapping their hands in ecstasy, exclaimed, “Grandma! Grandma!” “Keep still!” said the father, in a low tone of voice, and evidently much moved. Then to the apparition said, “You didn’t believe in this a few weeks ago.”

“No,” replied the spirit, “but, thank God, it is true!” These words were uttered very distinctly, and with a peculiar stress of voice, indicating earnestness and deep feeling. The old lady had been dead but three weeks.

I could give many more remarkable tests through recognition, but must close here.

*Alton, Ill.*

ISAAC KELSO

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There are few references to Mrs. Andrews’ mediumship in spiritualistic books, Frank Podmore briefly gives two short accounts of her mediumship:—<sup>29</sup>

*In the latter part of 1871 the American papers contained accounts of sittings held with a new medium, Mrs. Andrews, at the house of a farmer named Keeler,<sup>30</sup> in Moravia, New York, not far from Auburn. At these sittings spirit hands and faces were shown from the cabinet; and spirit forms, frequently recognised as those of deceased relations, walked about the room and conversed with the sitters.*

*At the early seances in America, as already mentioned, the sitters were reported to have constantly “recognised” the spirit forms. Mr. J. W. Truesdell<sup>31</sup> was present at some of the sittings given by Mrs. Anderson in Moravia, and has described some of the “recognitions” of which he was a witness. Thus Mr. T. R. Hazard (a well-known Spiritualist) was greeted by a figure purporting to be his mother. Mr. Hazard could not see the features of the figure, and could*

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<sup>29</sup> Quotes, pages 96, 114 respectively:—*Mediums of the 19th Century* (two volumes), by Frank Podmore University Books, Inc New York, 1963. Originally published under the title:—*Modern Spiritualism A History and a Criticism* (two Volumes), Methuen & Co, London 1902.

<sup>30</sup> Ed. Mary Andrews, was of Irish parentage, and lived for some time as a domestic in Mr. Keeler’s family. She was described (Dec., 1871) as “a well-formed, comely married woman between twenty-five and thirty years old, and the mother of three little girls.” From p. 32, *The Proof Palpable of Immortality* by Epes Sargent.

<sup>31</sup> Author:—*The Bottom Facts concerning the Science of Spiritualism* by John W. Truesdell G.W. Dillingham, 1892, 315 pages.

*not recognise the voice; but he had no doubt that it really was his mother, founding his conviction on his recognition of the Quaker cap and bonnet which the figure wore. This Quaker cap and bonnet, Mr. Truesdell tells us, had already done duty in a similar capacity for several other witnesses with equal success.*

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A fuller account of Hazard's (Rhode Island) account can be found in Epes Sargent's book *The Proof Palpable of Immortality*.<sup>32</sup> Hazard gave his accounts of Andrews' mediumship in his, *Eleven Days in Moravia* by Thomas Robinson Hazard, William White & Co., 1872, 45 pages.<sup>33</sup>

Reports of Mrs. Andrews' manifestations tend to end around 1873, the quote below may give us some clues as to her demise. Her career may have continued for some years and are contained and awaiting re-discovery in the various journals like the Boston, *Banner of Light*.

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## LECTURE AT THE CAVENDISH ROOMS.

*The Spiritualist*:—<sup>34</sup>

LAST Sunday week, at the Cavendish Rooms, Mr. James Burns presided.

Miss Hay, who had just returned from America, delivered an address, in the course of which she told how she had attended the wonderful *seances* for spirit forms, obtained through the mediumship of Mrs. Andrews Moravia, N.Y. Miss Hay said that she went to Moravia for the first time on her way back from the Falls of Niagara to Boston; she remained at Moravia for six days. After several failures her mother succeeded in materialising herself so as to be beautifully seen, but her (Miss Hay's) spirit guide, the late Frederick Robertson of Brighton, failed in his attempts to show himself; she wondered at this, since her mother had only recently entered spirit life, whereas Frederick Robertson had passed from earth in 1853, so might be supposed to have had much more experience. However, she did not understand the science of the matter. Strangers in the room noticed the resemblance of her mother to herself, and her mother said to her, "Mary, will you forgive and forget?"—a question the meaning of which she well understood. She wished every living soul to understand that the first thing spirits think about on entering the next life is how to repair wrongs done on earth; they have to come back here to make a starting point, from which to rise to higher and brighter

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<sup>32</sup> Chapter III, Mr. Hazard's Experiences pages 32-36: *The Proof Palpable of Immortality* by Epes Sargent Colby and Rich, 1875. (Numerous "read on line" or download options available)

<sup>33</sup> Now reprinted by *Kessinger Publishing*, 2010 ISBN:—1162186119, 9781162186115.

<sup>34</sup> *The Spiritualist* August 15, 1873 pages 300-301.

spheres. Before the first letters reached her (Miss Hay) in America, announcing her mother's death, her mother told her of the circumstance through a medium, and asked her forgiveness.

Next a hand came out of Mrs. Andrews's cabinet, waving a white handkerchief with blood-stains on it; then a female face appeared, holding the handkerchief to her nose; it was her aunt, but she did not see her features very clearly. Next came her departed cousin Janet; there was no mistaking her; there she stood in her beautiful ringlets. Recently she had obtained a photographic likeness of the same spirit at Mr. Hudson's. These three spirit relatives were all Mrs. Hays. The manifestations take place in a rough pleasant farmhouse. Keeler, the farmer, is a blunt honest man. Altogether it is a peculiar affair, and great numbers of people go there, the excitement about the appearance of the spirits is so intense. Even at that time the power of Mrs. Andrews as a medium was on the wane, and it has been waning ever since. She (Miss Hay) knew why. She had said to Mrs. Andrews, "I wish you to be a good woman as well as a good medium." Mrs. Andrews had got into the way of thinking of nothing but the amount of money she could make by her mediumship; she makes no secret of this, but tells both the mortals and the spirits that she would sit for neither of them were it not for the money. On her second visit to Moravia, Mrs. Andrews let two of her rooms to her, a thing she had never done before to anybody, and told her she might stop for ten years if she liked. She remained there for four or five months, so saw much of Mrs. Andrews and her mediumship. Mrs. Andrews was very peculiar and difficult to manage, so that very often people did not know how to get on with her; still, she had her good points, and could do generous things. She (Miss Hay) would not object to go to Mrs. Andrews's house again, although they parted under somewhat unhappy circumstances.

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Starting in the next issue, we will be publishing original reports on the early physical mediums:—E.g., Agnes Nichol/Guppy/Volckman, Charles Williams, Mr. A. Rita, Frank Hearn, Florence Cook/Corner, Catherine Wood, Annie Fairlamb/Mellon/Gleave, Henry Slade, Rev/Dr. Francis Monck, Elizabeth Hope/D'Esperance etc, the séances, the charges made against them, their supporters, and statements by leading Spiritualists like Stainton Moses,<sup>35</sup> J.S. Farmer, Emma Hardinge Britten etc, who voiced concerns with the dark circles/cabinets.

Paul J. Gaunt

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<sup>35</sup> Who had:—"long and earnestly advocated the total abolition of the practice of placing a medium in a dark cabinet out of view of the sitters, except under very special circumstances ..." After Catherine (Kate) Woods, second seizure in 1882 a carefully worded statement was sent out to societies and individual Spiritualists throughout England, by the editors of *Light* and the *Psychological Review* (J.S. Farmer). So grave was the effect for the general welfare of Spiritualism, as the run of exposures had been so damaging and discrediting to the movement, united action was sought in methods of investigation for dark circles/cabinets. This article which also contains the Moses quote will be published later in the series "*The Evils of Dark Cabinets*", *Light* September 23<sup>rd</sup> 1882, page 422.

## FORGOTTEN PIONEERS OF THE S.N.U:

# William Greenwood

April 13th, 1861—April 22d, 1905

Each month *Psypioneer* will be looking at the *forgotten pioneers of the Spiritualists' National Union* (SNU). In the last issue we featured Hanson Hey,<sup>36</sup> who became SNU General Secretary; his tobacconist's shop at Halifax, was the first registered office of the SNU. William Greenwood was to become SNU treasurer, and he also sat on the first SNU council with Hey; both can be seen in the group photograph published in the last issue on page 267.

It appears Wm Greenwood became active within the National Federation at the Ninth Annual Conference under the presidency of Mr. E. W. Wallis, which was held on Friday, July 8, 1898 at the Heber Street Spiritual Temple, the home of the Keighley Spiritualists' Society, who also celebrated their 45th Anniversary, in conjunction with the National Conference—the birthplace, it was claimed, of English Modern Spiritualism.

Greenwood at this conference put his name forward for the Executive Council, but his name with others was withdrawn<sup>37</sup> in favour of Messrs. Macdonald, P. Lee, Mrs. Greenwood, Mrs. Venables, Messrs. Swindlehurst, Collins, and Adams. His wife Jessie<sup>38</sup> can be traced back to the 1893 conference as a soloist and Lyceum leader:—“*Part I was provided by the Lyceum scholars, under the able direction of the indefatigable Mrs. Greenwood, assisted by a capable staff of loyal co-workers.*”<sup>39</sup>

In 1899 William Greenwood with Mr. T. Taylor were elected auditors,<sup>40</sup> later, in 1901 he became treasurer, a post which I believe he held until his death in 1905.

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<sup>36</sup> Volume 6, No.10:—*Hanson Gledhill Hey*, pages 263-271:—  
<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP6.10October2010..pdf>

<sup>37</sup> The ballot paper originally held 25 names, but those of Messrs. Bibbings, Butterworth, Greenwood, and Hewes were withdrawn:—*The Two Worlds* Friday, July 8, 1898

<sup>38</sup> Sometimes spelt:—Jessie

<sup>39</sup> 1893, Fourth Conference of the National Federation, under the presidency of James Robertson (Glasgow), Jessie Greenwood was in the opening procession:—“*At Sowerby Bridge, on Saturday last, in perfect weather, a large number of Spiritualists assembled at the Town Hall and, to the inspiring strains of a first-class brass band, paraded the principal streets of the town.*” *The Two Worlds*, July 7, 1893. The conferences in those days were big joyful affairs, Frank Hepworth was said to have considerable ability as a singer, and comedian/humorist, and would perform at the Federation conferences, later becoming SNU president in 1909.

<sup>40</sup> *The Two Worlds* July 7, 1899



The Greenwoods, like Hanson Hey, were active members in the Sowerby Bridge Lyceum,<sup>41</sup> which was founded in 1869.<sup>42</sup> William and Jessy were the founders of Hebden Bridge Spiritualist Society in 1903.

### **Duncan Gascoyne informs me:—**



“Hebden Bridge Society was formed in November 1903 and accepted into affiliation with the SNU in March 1904. They initially met in the Co-op Hall in Hebden Bridge.

I have a write-up of the opening of the Lyceum on 6th November 1904 and attach a copy of this for you (as published below).

In 1979 the Society was in a poor state and as Secretary of the then SNU Yorkshire District Council I organised a two day 75th Anniversary events for them. This attracted quite a large number of interested parties and the Society gained a new life. It is still going quite well today.<sup>43</sup>

In the Britten Memorial Museum<sup>44</sup> I have a copy of the Programme for the Golden Jubilee celebrations.”

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<sup>41</sup> It was at Sowerby Bridge that Abbey Wilson introduced Alfred Kitson to Lyceum work. (Alfred Kitson himself told this story in an Address he gave at Sowerby Bridge in 1886, which was later published in the *Medium and Daybreak*.) Taken from:—“*Historical aspects and personalities attached to the early years of Sowerby Bridge Church*” 2010, Britten Memorial Museum by Duncan Gascoyne:—former SNU president (2000-2010)

Sowerby Bridge Society was to host the Fourth Conference of the Spiritualists National Federation (SNF), on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1893 which was held in the Town Hall.

<sup>42</sup> The Lyceum at Sowerby Bridge was commenced in 1869 in the house of Edward Woods, and afterwards at the house of Mr William Robinson:— Gascoyne *Historical aspects ...*

<sup>43</sup> Spiritualist Churches in Yorkshire, UK:—<http://www.spiritualist.tv/churches/uk/yorkshire/>

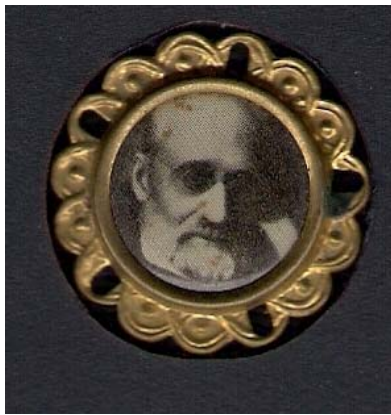
<sup>44</sup> Duncan Gascoyne, curator of the Britten Museum see:—<http://www.answers.com/topic/britten-memorial-museum> The accompanying photograph shows Duncan Gascoyne sitting at J. Arthur Findlay’s desk which is part of the Britten Memorial Museum, and is housed at The Arthur Findlay College: —<http://www.arthurfindlaycollege.org/>

This report on the opening of Hebden Bridge Lyceum was printed in the December 1904 edition of the British Spiritualists' Lyceum Banner Vol XIV No 167 (references and photo Pspioneer Ed).

## HEBDEN BRIDGE LYCEUM OPENING.

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This society attained its first birthday on November 6<sup>th</sup>, and celebrated its anniversary by opening a Lyceum. The two eminent Lyceumists entrusted with the ceremony were Mr. and Mrs. Chiswell, who are known everywhere as ardent workers in the children's cause. Sowerby Bridge Lyceum closed for the day, and a big company walked over in the morning to give all the assistance they could to their new baby—Hebden Bridge Lyceum—and right royally did they work. About 100 assembled, and at 10.30 the bell rang for order for the first time in Victoria Hall. Mrs. Greenwood introduced the visitors and then asked Mr. Chiswell<sup>45</sup> to take charge of the session. All rose to their feet, and a beautiful invocation made a deep impression on all present. The session then commenced in the



usual way. Perhaps the most interesting and impressive part of it was the installing of the various officers. This was done in a truly Chiswellian style, and each officer realised the dignity of his or her office. Special badges had been provided, and after the officers had resumed their places all the Lyceumists pinned the Davis Badge<sup>46</sup> to the opposite side from that on which the officers wore theirs. These were a gift to the Lyceum by Mr. Greenwood. Words of welcome to Mr. Chiswell, who represented the B.S.L.U.,<sup>47</sup> were spoken by Miss C. Holroyde, as conductor for Sowerby Bridge Lyceum; Mr. Ernest Howarth, as sec. for the Halifax and Huddersfield Lyceum District Council;

also the D.V., Mr. Baker; Mr. Hudson and Mr. Shackleton from Keighley, and others. A pretty compliment was conveyed to Mrs. Chiswell by Miss Beryl Jackson in a bouquet of flowers, accompanied by a greeting from the new Lyceum. After suitable acknowledgments, Mr. Chiswell proceeded with the programmed for the morning. A nice duet from the *Songster* was sung by Misses Dora and Ivy Rushworth. Mr. George Howarth rendered yeoman service in conducting the marching and callisthenics, and he was helped considerably by the splendid music. Mr. James Law provided. Who could help marching to such excellent playing? Everyone was delighted, and no one would have guessed it was a

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<sup>45</sup> Samuel Southern Chiswell died 12<sup>th</sup> April 1910 at the age of 58; Chiswell was:—an ardent Spiritualist, a strenuous worker for the Liverpool Spiritualist Society, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the *Two Worlds* and played a major part in the foundation of the SNU. He was President of the Spiritualists' National Federation on several occasions.

<sup>46</sup> The A.J. Davies badge image is taken from an actual badge which I have.

<sup>47</sup> B.S.L.U.:—*British Spiritualists Lyceum Union*. SNU Spiritualists' Lyceum Union History see:—<http://www.snu.org.uk/Lyceum/history.htm>

new Lyceum learning its first lesson. It was a long session, but all were unaware that the parting time had come. Friends from surrounding Lyceums were present, and enjoyed the memorable affair. The afternoon and evening services were exceedingly enjoyable. Sowerby Bridge choir led the singing, and sang unaccompanied, two anthems, the first as an introit, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace," and "The radiant morn." This shows what can be done when societies work harmoniously for the general weal. The Lyceum and Society are one body, governed by one committee, and have one purse. May it prosper and be a mighty influence for good on the young people of the neighbourhood.

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William Greenwood aged only 44, died on Saturday, April 22 1905. His obituary was also published in the American Spiritualist press:—*Banner of Light*, which we republish below:

## **The Passing of William Greenwood, Treasurer of the British Spiritualists' National Union.**

*Banner of Light*:—<sup>48</sup>

A notable personality among English Spiritualists passed to the higher life from his late home at Hebden Bridge, Yorkshire, Eng., on Saturday, April 22, when William Greenwood, for many years Honorary Treasurer of the British Spiritualists' National Union, exchanged the mortal for the immortal.

Well known for many years to the writer of these lines, our ascended brother leaves the fragrance of a sweet spirit behind, for as a sterling man, a true friend, a devoted husband, a loving parent he was socially an ideal personality. In the commercial world, and among his fellow citizens, he stood high in the regard of all. As a fearless and outspoken Spiritualist he was a true champion of our work, while in his office as National Treasurer, he was a faithful official and an untiring worker for the body he served so zealously. To show the esteem in which he was held we make the following extract from the account given in a local newspaper of the interment of the body:

"The body was interred at the Sowerby Bridge Cemetery last Tuesday afternoon and the funeral procession was very imposing. The hearse and three mourning coaches preceded by quite a hundred people, most of them connected with the Spiritualist Associations at Hebden Bridge and Sowerby Bridge. There were also present leading representatives of Spiritualists' unions, viz.: Messrs. Parr, Hey, Macdonald, Wilkinson, Briggs, Wright and Phillips (editor of 'The Two Worlds'), National Union; Messrs. Alfred Kitson (editor of the 'Lyceum Banner') and Mr. A. E. Sutcliffe, of the British Spiritualists' Lyceum Union; and Messrs. Baume, Burchell, Yates, Gavin (editor of 'The Spiritualist'), and Sutcliffe, Yorkshire Union. The Sowerby Bridge Musical Society was represented by Mr. W. T. Walton, and the Liberal club by Councillors Em.

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<sup>48</sup> *Banner of Light* May 13<sup>th</sup> 1905 page 5.

Mitchell, Ely Whitely, and Mr. J. A. Whiteley; the Flour Society by the chairman (Mr. J. Broadbent), the vice-chairman (Mr. Allatt), the secretary (Mr. J. W. Hodgson), several members of the Board, Mr. Charles Beswick, cashier, and the office staffs at Sowerby Bridge and Hebden Bridge. Messrs. Jos. Craven and Leonard Stocks attended on behalf of the Nutclough Fustian Society, Mr. Abm. Webster (manager), the Hebden Bridge Co-operative Society, and Mr. James Midgley and Fred Sutcliffe represented the Hebden Bridge Choral and Harmonic Society. Mr. Holroyd, station master at Hebden Bridge, and Mr. Parkinson, station master at Sowerby Bridge, were also present. The service in the cemetery chapel was choral, and both this and the ceremony at the graveside were exceptionally forcible. They were both conducted according to Spiritualist formula, Mr. Alfred Kitson, Batley Carr, and Mr. Armitage, Dewsbury performing the obsequies. In the chapel the choir of the Sowerby Bridge Spiritualists sang the anthem 'The radiant morn' and 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace,' besides the hymn, 'Father, lover of my soul.' The body was borne to the grave by millers employee at Breck Mill. It was enclosed in a pitch-pine coffin, with heavy brass mountings, and inscribed: 'William Greenwood born April 13th, 1861, died April 22d, 1905.' The reading at the graveside was undertaken by Mr. Kitson, and Mr. Armitage contributed invocation. The choir sang here the hymn, 'Blest be the tie that binds.'

"Beautiful floral tributes with sympathetic messages were sent by the Sowerby Bridge Liberal Club; the directors of the Flour Society; the Sowerby Bridge Spiritualist Lyceum; the Hebden Bridge Spiritualist Association; the Sowerby Bridge Spiritualist choir; the office staffs at Sowerby Bridge and Preck Mills; Mrs. Whitehead; Mr. and Mrs. J. Mitchell, Breck Mill yard; Mr. J. Chatburn and family; Mr. Mrs. Briggs and family (Lockwood); Mr. and Mrs, W. T. Walton, Sowerby Bridge; and others."

American Spiritualists will unite with the "Banner" in sending to Mrs. Greenwood and her family a message of fraternal sympathy, rejoicing with her that she has the full knowledge of the truth of our gospel to sustain her in the hours of present sadness."

[Jessy Greenwood continued her work and become the first woman SNU president; her work will be outlined in the next issue.]

# NATIONAL FEDERATION—SPIRITUALISTS’ NATIONAL UNION

*A note of explanation for the various names*

On July 6<sup>th</sup> 1890, the first conference (Manchester) was called:—“The National Conference of British Spiritualists”, also sometimes referred to as the “National Conference of Spiritualists”. On July 4<sup>th</sup> 1891, the second conference (Bradford) was called the “Spiritualists’ National Federation” (SNF). In the next issue of *The Two Worlds* in a further report it was named as “National Federation of Spiritualists” (NFS).

Throughout the 1890s the SNF and NFS titles became interchangeable at the yearly conferences. In the above article, I noted Greenwood became active in 1898 at the “National Federation” conference which was also used as the conference heading.

The various names for the same organisation can become very confusing, in researching this period of the early SNU. In future Psypioneer articles I will refer to this period as the “National Federation” (NF).

At the Thirteenth Annual Conference on Saturday and Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> July 1902, at Stanley Hall, Stanley Road, Bootle under the presidency of Mr. W. Johnson:—began the first conference of the “Spiritualists’ National Union”.

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Paul J. Gaunt

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