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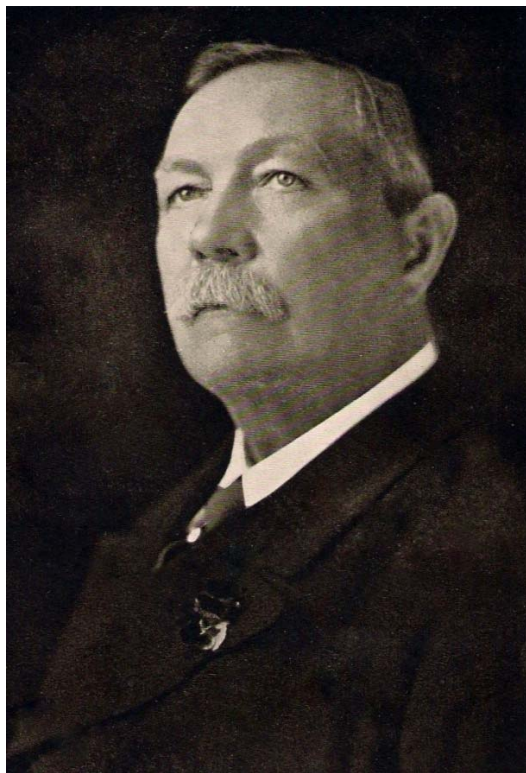
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FAIR PLAY FOR CONAN DOYLE

Arthur Conan Doyle (1859-1930) remains a high profile Spiritualist. He had his faults, but not all criticisms are fair.

A new book by Christopher Sandford deals again with ACD's friendship with Houdini.¹ It was reviewed in *The Times* of London on 10 December, and the reviewer wrote. "In his final years Arthur Conan Doyle became consumed by the need to prove that there was life after death. The creator of the ultra-rationalist Sherlock Holmes had had a passing interest in the occult since his youth. But the loss of his son Kingsley to pneumonia and younger brother Innes to Spanish flu seems to have deranged him, making him more than usually suggestible."

As editor Tony Ortzen noted in *Two Worlds* (Feb.2012) a reader [and Psypioneer contributor] Dr Roger Straughan, defended ACD. *The Times* provided a heading.



"Doyle announced his acceptance of the evidence for survival in 1916 after more than 30 years of open-minded investigation

"Sir, John O'Connell perpetuates the myth that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was "deranged" by the deaths of his son and brother and so became "consumed by the need to prove that there was life after death" (books Dec 10). Doyle announced his acceptance of the evidence for survival in 1916 after more than 30 years of open-minded investigation, whereas the family deaths did not occur until 1918-19.

" "The subject of psychical research," he wrote, "is one upon which I have thought more, and about which I have been slower to form my opinion, than upon any other subject whatever" (*The New Revelation*). O'Connell should heed Sherlock Holmes's warning of the dangers of theorising on inadequate data."

¹ *Houdini and Conan Doyle* by Christopher Sandford 20th, October 2011. Available at Amazon:—
http://www.amazon.co.uk/s/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=Christopher+Sandford+&x=14&y=22

The Times returned to ACD in their archive feature on 29 December, 2011 when they reprinted a 1919 letter from an angry husband.

“Psychic” painting

The Times, December 29, 1919

Sir, Various sensational and misleading statements have been appearing in the Press (though not in *The Times*) concerning a picture of the head of Christ painted by my wife. Based upon a letter from Sir A. Conan Doyle, it is stated that the picture was painted under “spirit” guidance, and allusion is made to “psychic power”, mediumship, and so forth. On behalf of my wife and in the public interest, I wish to utter a most emphatic contradiction. The picture, as all the rest of her work, was painted in a perfectly normal manner. Mrs. Spencer makes no claims either to “psychic power” or mediumship, nor is she in sympathy with the spiritualist movement. She has never met Sir A. Conan Doyle, and his statements, which were published wholly without her knowledge and during her absence on the Continent, rest entirely on hearsay.

That her name should be used as an advertisement for spiritualism, with which she has no sympathy, is not only extremely unfair and repugnantly distasteful to her, but grossly misleading to the public. Her paintings have attracted a certain amount of attention owing to the fact that she has never had a lesson in her life. But this, as she herself points out, is no more than an argument for spiritualism than is the performance of a pianist who plays by ear without having being taught.

Victor Spencer

93, Promenade des Anglais, Nice”

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Readers may well think that ACD was foolish, but a reader has found in “Letters to the Press” ACD’s original letter to the Daily Mail and his reply to “The Times”. Note that in his letter to the Mail, ACD does not name the woman; it was the newspaper which added the name in a headline.

THE DAILY MAIL

Woman “Spirit” Painter, Sir A. Conan Doyle and Mrs. Spencer

16 December 1919

SIR,—In the early days of this movement it was foretold by Mrs. de Morgan and others that the line of advance would be from the crude material phenomena, common in these days to the finer and more intellectual proofs which the human race would become more fitted to receive. This prophecy has, in the course of the last fifty years, been amply justified. The spirit rap, levitations, and even materialisations have become far less common. The evidence in these directions has been given, and this stage appears to be closing down. On the other hand, we have never before had such an outburst of the finer phases of spirit intervention, of spirit photography, of inspirational addresses,

writings, and paintings, and very especially of that clairvoyance or “discerning of spirits” which Saint Paul counted among the most valuable of spiritual gifts.

In writing this letter my object was, however, to point out some of the more intellectual proofs of spirit intervention which may appeal to those minds which recoil from grosser manifestations, only justified by the necessities of the material age in which we live. Of written inspiration much might be said, for no philosophy that has appeared has such a literature as has grown round spiritualism. To those who imagine that the inspirational messages are of small intellectual value I would name only two recent books: Claude’s Second Book (Methuen) and Letters from the Other Side (Watkins), which contain the very essence of spiritual knowledge, and, incidentally, a good deal of prophesy, in the case of the latter book, which has been literally fulfilled since the time the messages were taken. If those two books are not indeed inspired, then what are we to think of the transcendent intellectual qualities of those two ladies whose hands were used to produce the script?

It is, however, to inspirational painting which I would especially refer, because when a masterpiece is produced by one who has no technical skill, and when it is exposed for all to behold, the most sceptical must admit that there is something there beyond their ken. Some publicity has been given recently to the symbolic drawings of Mr. Charles Horsfall, and after inspecting them I am certainly of opinion that they are indeed truly inspirational in their origin and profound in their meaning.

I could, however, appreciate the position of those who have no turn for mysticism and who do not understand that there are some subjects so complex that they cannot be treated in a pictorial but only in a diagrammatic fashion.

To these people I would recommend an inspection of the head of Christ now exhibited at the Walker Gallery in New Bond Street. This picture is, in my opinion, the very finest head of the Founder of Christianity that has ever been conceived, and I can well understand the action of a great painter in Paris who, when he saw the companion full-face drawing, fell instantly upon his knees.

It is, indeed, a most marvellous production, with all that inner soul which is so lacking in the old masters, whose Christs and Virgins appear to me to be very often the quintessence of materialism and vulgarity.

Yet this wonderful work was done in a few hours by a lady who, as I am assured by her family, has no power of artistic expression when in her normal condition. It is a supreme example of the working of spiritual intelligence through a material mortal frame.

ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

Windlesham, Crowborough, Sussex, Dec. 13.

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THE TIMES

30 December 1919

“A Disclaimer”

SIR,—In answer to the Hon. Major Victor Spencer’s letter in your columns, may I disclaim having ever mentioned Mrs. Spencer’s name at any time in connexion with psychic phenomena. A reference to the original published correspondence will show that it was her own family who mentioned her name, and that it was a close relation who said, “Mrs. Spencer has strong psychic power,” and also asserted in one picture that it was done upside down.

“When she had finished she wondered what on earth she had done. It was only on turning it upside down that a perfect head of Christ appeared.” I enclose the cutting with marked passages to prove my assertion.

Major Spencer is, of course, entitled to have his own views upon psychic matters and their value, but the tide of events is, I think, against him.

Yours faithfully,

ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

Windlesham, Crowborough, Sussex, Dec. 29

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Taken together, the letters show that ACD was more cautious than might be initially thought.

Turning again to the recent book by Sandford, whereas the review in “The Times” aroused a defender of ACD, the reviewer Olivia Laing in the Guardian (a left-wing newspaper) thought the author was biased on class grounds against Houdini!²

Laing writes:

“More troubling, and stranger, is Sandford’s partisanship on the part of Conan Doyle, whose sweet and sportsmanlike nature apparently trumps his insistence on consoling fantasy over the uncomfortable realities of scientific proof. There are frequent references to Houdini’s diminutive stature, crumpled clothes and inability to spell (describing himself as Conan Doyle’s intellectual “pier” is a cracker, no doubt), all of which would be fine if they were accompanied by the same note of respect that Conan Doyle automatically commands.”

² See:— <http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2011/oct/30/houdini-conan-doyle-sandford-review>

Psypioneer's attitude to books is shaped mainly by their degree of accuracy. All publications, including this one, fall into error. We are impressed by efforts to avoid this, such as having drafts read by relevant persons. We are very impressed when authors read Psypioneer and use the online index of contents and Google to search it. Here is an incorrect reference by Sandford which could easily have been avoided:³

“On July 1st Conan Doyle went up to London for the last time, for a meeting with the new Labour Home Secretary, John Clynes. Although Doyle was meant to be head of ten strong-delegation lobbying for changes to the Witchcraft Act, he found himself alone there, but for the journalist Hannen Swaffer; once again, the Spiritualists had fallen out among themselves on a point of principle.”

But by a Google search under 'Clynes' in Psypioneer, he would have found in our June 2009 edition:

“When, just before Conan Doyle's passing, a deputation of Spiritualists went to the Home Office to ask J. R. Clynes, then Home Secretary, to remove the disabilities on mediumship, Oaten was the spokesman.”

Again in Psypioneer September 2011, there is a footnote:

“John M. Stewart was the S.N.U.'s Freedom Committee Secretary who worked with Tom Brooks. Stewart looked after the S.N.U., interests in the legal field. He was involved in the long fight of freedom for over 20 years and was present at the Deputation who met with the then Home Secretary J.R. Clynes on Tuesday July 1st, 1930.”

So Conan Doyle was not alone, and Sandford appears to have been misled. Indeed, there were eighteen people in the Spiritualist delegation on July 1 1930. Paul Gaunt will soon republish the minutes of that meeting, in a study he has recently completed of attempts to change the law on mediumship.

We will return to the Sandford book, but to conclude for the present. It is by no means easy to write accurately and fairly about psychic pioneers.

LP.

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³ (p253) to the end of ACD's life

STANTON MOSES

Introduction by Leslie Price:—Stanton Moses, whom we have often featured, was an outstanding figure in Victorian Spiritualism. But only a handful of persons have ever studied his life and work in detail. One was F.W.H. Myers, who wrote his obituary for the SPR (already re-published in *Psypioneer*⁴) and contributed a long two-part paper about him to SPR Proceedings. Another was A.W. Trethewy, whose lecture revealing the identity of the controls we have also reprinted.⁵ It is unlikely, however, that most readers will have access to Trethewy's full-length book and we plan therefore to reprint some of the chapters.



THE “CONTROLS” OF STANTON MOSES

INTRODUCTION⁶

STANTON MOSES is a name well known to all who are interested in the history of Psychological Research and Spiritualism. Besides exercising extraordinary mediumistic powers he held a prominent position as an exponent of Spiritualism, was President of the London Spiritualist Alliance and Editor of *Light*, the author of several books and a frequent contributor to the Press. His principal work, *Spirit Teachings*, is often quoted as representative of the best type of Spirit communications, both in the nature of the subject matter and the quality of the literary style, on the ground that it consists of

messages given by exalted entities through an intellectual and well-educated medium. In the Memorial Edition of that work is a biographical notice of the author, written by the late Mr. Charlton T. Speer, from which and from the article by F. W. H. Myers in Proceedings S.P.R., Vol. IX., Part XXV., the following information has been taken.

⁴ Volume 6, No.10:—*William Stanton Moses - Frederic W H. Myers*, pages 285-288:—
<http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/PP6.10October2010.pdf>

⁵ Volume 3, No.4:—*A Study of Stanton Moses - An address by A.W. Trethewy*, pages 85-88:—
<http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/PP3.4April07.pdf>

⁶ *The “Controls” of Stanton Moses (“M.A. Oxon.”)* by A.W. Trethewy, B.A. Hurst & Blackett Ltd, no date, circa 1923, pages 1-8.



William Stainton Moses was born in 1839. His father was the Headmaster of the Grammar School of Donnington in Lincolnshire, and the family had been settled in that county for some time; in spite of the name there is no reason to suppose that the stock was Semitic; he thought that "Moses" had been originally Mostyn." He was educated at Bedford Grammar School and Oxford University (Exeter College). At Oxford his course was interrupted by illness; he was obliged to travel on the Continent for the sake of his health, and spent some time in a monastery on Mount Athos. On his return to England he took the degree of M.A. at Oxford and entered the Church, being ordained by Bishop Wilberforce.

He began his ministry in the Isle of Man and did very good work as a clergyman. There he made the acquaintance of Dr. and Mrs. Speer. In 1870 ill-health obliged him to give up parish work, and he accepted the post of tutor to Dr. Speer's son, the late Mr. Charlton T. Speer. From 1871 till 1889 he was a master at University College School, London. He suffered much from ill-health during the closing years of his life and died in 1892 at Bedford, where his mother was then residing. He seems to have got through a great deal of work in addition to his ordinary duties; he wrote for *Punch*, the *Saturday Review* and other journals when he was in the Isle of Man: he contributed many articles to *Human Nature* and other psychical publications when he was at University College School, generally writing as "M.A. Oxon."

Spiritualism had at first no attractions for him; he regarded the phenomena as produced by fraud. He was persuaded, however, by Mrs. Speer, who had been much impressed by a book she had read, to consider the question seriously. At séances with various mediums he had some mystifying experiences; soon he showed signs of having mediumistic powers himself and, after sitting with Dr. and Mrs. Speer, developed quickly for physical phenomena and trance speaking.

In 1873 he acquired the power of automatic writing without the necessity of trance then began the series of messages from which extracts have been selected for publication as *Spirit Teachings*. This faculty he exercised regularly till 1877, after which year the communications were rarer till they closed in 1883; at least there is no later record, though

occasional communications were received afterwards.⁷ The table on page 336 of *Proceedings S.P.R.*, Vol. IX., shows the various kinds of phenomena obtained by Stainton Moses at séances. Adding to these the automatic writing, clairvoyance, clairaudience and trance speaking, we get an extraordinary degree of versatility for a single medium. Others may have surpassed him, specializing in particular lines, but none had a wider range of powers so notably exercised. There was never any scandal of suspected trickery and (see Chapter XIII.) there is no reason now to doubt his good faith; the testimony of his friends and the internal evidence of his records are conclusive against any theory of fraud.

The book *Spirit Teachings* contains but a small portion of the automatic script. There are, however, typed copies of the original record, nearly complete, in the library of the London Spiritualist Alliance at 5 Queen Square; they do not include Book No. III., which has been lost, but they do cover the whole of the remaining twenty-three books except for a very few passages which it was thought undesirable to divulge as disclosing the identity of some of the communicating spirits; those passages find places in the present book. The copies are available to be read by members of the Alliance. To the student they are more convincing and interesting than *Spirit Teachings*; they show the communications in the form of a dialogue, consisting mainly of instruction, but interspersed with evidential information and other matter, sometimes as sudden interruptions. The appearance of a conversation between Stainton Moses and one or more other persons is much clearer in the copies than in the edited extracts, artificially connected, which make up the printed book. Moreover, the reader's natural curiosity as to the identity of the teachers is to a great extent satisfied, and of course there is much additional matter of various kinds.

Stainton Moses had been opposed to the early publication of full personal details and had excluded many from the extracts printed in *Light* during his lifetime. Mrs. Speer had been guided by the same principle in selecting extracts for the same journal after his death. He did, however, contemplate the possibility of subsequent publication, in a later generation, of the portions withheld in the first instance; so much is clear from what he has left on record. After reading the copies I suggested to the officials of the Alliance that the time had now come when the whole story might be told without reserve. I offered to prepare the copies for publication by completing and correcting them to the best of my ability and by adding explanatory notes to elucidate references to séances and topical allusions to contemporary events, and to show the results of my inquiries into the value of the evidential information furnished by some of the communicating Intelligences in support of their claims to identity with historical characters.

This plan was approved by the Council of the Alliance, and the original records were placed at my disposal for the preparation of the work. The copies have been corrected, completed and annotated; everything is nearly ready for publication, but unfortunately the state of business in the trade makes the time unsuitable for so large a work. It would be about six times the size of *Spirit Teachings* and under present conditions would be almost unsaleable at cost price. The original plan, therefore, has been postponed and replaced

⁷ Trethewy reference:—See, for instance, reference in page 53 of *Light* for 1884 to a message of that year from B. Coleman.

temporarily by the present undertaking, which may prepare the way for its future execution. The most important part of what has hitherto been withheld consists of evidential information relating to the identity claimed by the communicating spirits; this constitutes the bulk of the present book. There is a list of the principal Intelligences with a notice showing the part played by each, the evidence, if any, furnished by him, and an appreciation of his claim.

In Chapter XIII an attempt is made to consider all the cases as a whole and to suggest some general conclusions, but as I do not profess to have sufficient knowledge of psychical research to speak with confidence on such a subject, any opinions that I may venture to express are merely tentative. My main task is to make literary inquiries on the material side in order to set forth the facts for the benefit of those who have sufficient experience to adjudicate on them. The confirmed Spiritualist may welcome the collection of evidence bearing on the identity of the "controls" to satisfy himself whether the characters are genuine or false personations. The Psychical Researcher who is not yet ready to admit a spiritistic basis for such communications may, nevertheless, recognize that any light which can be thrown on the work of so remarkable a medium as Stainton Moses is an aid to scientific inquiry into the causes of such phenomena.

It is sometimes said that the subject matter of a message is more important than the source from which it comes, and that we should consider it in the light of our reason without being too curious as to the personality of the author. Such a contention may be pushed too far. In matters of which we can have no experience we have no gauge of probabilities to guide us in the exercise of our reason. The amount of credit that we feel inclined to attach to a statement which cannot be satisfactorily weighed in the balance of analogy, far less verified, must be influenced by our opinion of the truthfulness and knowledge of the person responsible for it. It is, therefore, desirable to examine the source if we are asked to accept an assertion without proof.

It is also said that the contents of *Spirit Teachings* have no claim to originality, but may be read in Unitarian and Spiritualistic literature. If this criticism is well founded, it is not fatal to the claims of the alleged revelation; the subject matter may be true if it is not new, and the point is that the Intelligences who profess to be the authors of the teaching were in their earth lives authorities on some of the subjects discussed. If, then, we believe that they were the persons they profess to be, we shall be the more inclined to concede their competence to instruct us. They asserted that a missionary effort to uplift the human race was being made in the spirit realms, which they termed the spheres, and that in pursuance of this endeavour some who on earth had borne high and honoured names had combined together to convey the teaching through a suitable medium, one who had the rarest gifts and whose personality furnished an extraordinary opportunity.

Stainton Moses published the message, but he withheld the names of its authors and he had their authority for his reticence. He feared, no doubt, that the use of great names would be received with scorn and would be prejudicial to the acceptance of the teaching. He also must have shrunk from exposing them to ridicule. Public opinion has advanced a little since his day, and people are more inclined to accord a tolerant attention to statements contrary

to their experience and views. The time has come when the full story may be told and the scheme completed. Whatever interpretation may be placed on the drama, so great is our ignorance of spiritual things that it would be rash to deny the possibility of the teachings having come from the alleged source, though the degree of credence accorded or withheld will vary with each reader.

This book is written principally for students who are willing to devote time and trouble to research. It contains all the important evidential matter which has not yet been published, but does not repeat what has already appeared in print and is still readily accessible. It is a continuation of Stainton Moses' works, *Spirit Teachings* and *Spirit Identity*, and of F. W. H. Myers' articles in Vols. IX. and XI. (Parts XXV. and XXVII) of the S.P.R. *Proceedings*. References are given to the appropriate pages of those publications, but their contents are not copied, though where the context seems to require it a very short summary of the passage is given.

When the printing of the whole body of automatic writing was contemplated, a summary showing the subject and date of every communication was prepared for the book as a table of contents. This summary is incorporated in the present work, with marginal references to the places where those portions may be found that have already been printed. The reader who has access to old numbers of *Light* will find many extracts there.

Frequent references have been made to the following works in the editions specified.

Spirit Teachings, "M.A. Oxon.," Memorial Edition, London, 1904, Reprint.

Spirit Identity, "M.A. Oxon.," London, 1908, Reprint.

Proceedings S.P.R., Vols. IX. and XI. (Parts XXV. and XXVII.), viz., the articles II. and III., written by F. W. H. Myers, on "The Experiences of W. Stainton Moses."

Encyclopædia Britannica, Edition XI.

The Dictionary of National Biography, Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee, London, 1885, *et seq.*

Dictionary of Music and Musicians, Sir George Grove, London, 1890.

Dictionary of the Bible, W. Smith, LL.D., London, 1863.

Human Personality, F. W. H. Myers, London, 1915.

Studies in Psychical Research, F. Podmore, London, 1897.

Modern Spiritualism, F. Podmore, London, 1902.

Old Diary Leaves, First Series, Colonel H. S. Olcott, Madras, 1895.

The unpublished Séance Records are the manuscript records of seances compiled by Stainton Moses. The Retrospects for 1872 and 1873 are two private manuscript books written by him at the instance of “Imperator” to trace the growth of his development and knowledge. The Séance Records and Retrospects are in the keeping of the London Spiritualist Alliance.

The phrase “Biblical Spirits” signifies the spirits of men who figure in the Bible.

In the quotation of dialogues the letters S.M. are used to denote the part taken by Stainton Moses in his supraliminal self.

The illustrations have been made by photography from tracings of certain figures and words in the manuscript books of Stainton Moses’ automatic writing kept in the library of the London Spiritualist Alliance. The number of the Book and the page number have been quoted in every case to show where the original is to be found. The same Books are frequently mentioned in the text, but there the date of the communication is quoted, instead of the number of the page, to facilitate search for the passage in the typed copy which also is in the same library, and which has pages numbered differently from the manuscript.

Following the example of Stainton Moses, as stated in page 9 of his Retrospect for 1873, I have, for the sake of brevity, frequently referred to a spirit or phenomenon as being all that it professed to be, instead of using the word “alleged” or a phrase denoting the same idea. It must not be supposed that by mentioning it in this form I necessarily accept it at face value.

Finally, I may quote from page 5 of the same Retrospect Stainton Moses’ words, which are applicable to my own work “Nothing that seems material to the subject will be designedly left out either because it does not square with a theory or because it savours too strongly of the marvellous.”

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Notes by the Way:

PSYCHIC NEWS SURVIVES DEATH

The weekly newspaper *Psychic News*, founded in 1932, was closed by its owners, the Spiritualists National Union in July 2010. In December 2011, it was revived as a fortnightly magazine with the same editorial team, but now owned by the JV Trust, who had purchased it from the liquidator. For the study of pioneers, this revival was greatly welcome, as PN publishes much material about pioneers, and its archives are a major resource. The new magazine carried an illuminating account of the work of the JV Trust in its first issue in the new format.⁸ The trust now fully emerges as a leading financial supporter of Spiritualism, having been previously associated mainly with the development of the Arthur Findlay College at Stansted Hall.

From 1965 to 1995, PN was owned by the Spiritual Truth Foundation, a trust originally intended to have a controlling interest in Psychic Press Ltd., the Two Worlds Publishing Co. Ltd., and the Psychic Book Club Ltd, as well as a wider role in promoting Spiritualism. In 1995, when STF could not longer sustain PN, the SNU took the paper over, moving it immediately from London to Stansted.

By 2010 the paper was in debt. The SNU decided to close it down and to put the subsidiary, which operated it into liquidation. They claimed ownership of such PN assets as the masthead and archives, but the liquidator concluded they were part of the liquidation. The way was open for JV Trust to successfully bid for the paper and revive it.

Many readers will have followed this painful saga from the first rumours of financial difficulty in 2010. In retrospect, there is no doubt that a good deal of money – and anguish – could have been saved for all concerned if the SNU had cooperated with JV Trust and STF from the beginning in negotiating a smooth sale of assets without interruption of the paper. It appears however that some in the SNU may have hoped to revive the paper as a more internal publication, and resisted the eventual outcome.

When papers close, they usually stay closed. That PN did not owes much to the united efforts of JV, STF and PN staff. Web sites such as Paranormal Review, Spiritualism Link and Spirit of PN kept readers in touch with developments. Fellow editors of sister publications turned out in force on 15 December at the London Spiritual Mission to welcome the new magazine.

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⁸ *Psychic News* see:—<http://www.psychicnews.org.uk/>

Modern Historians on Modern Spiritualism

[Introduction by LP: Many persons seriously interested in the history of Spiritualism and related subjects will already have seen the important criticisms made on 12 January 2012 by Marc Demarest in his blog www.ehbritten.org about the present state of academic writing on the subject. Marc has kindly consented for his remarks to be reprinted in Psypioneer. Problems with the writing of Spiritualist history have always been a central concern of Psypioneer. The version below is edited by us, and by Marc himself. My own comments follow.]



I'm putting off real work, and have been reading a lot of modern—that is, contemporary—historians' work on Modern Spiritualism and related topics, of late. Perhaps it's a sign of the curmudgeonly spirit that usually accompanies specialization, but I find modern history-writers' treatment of Modern Spiritualism infuriating: particularly the writings of American academics. Excepting Oppenheim, Albanese, Buescher and Gutierrez from the mix, I'll go out on a limb and say that the problems I am about to list can be found in pretty much every book written about Modern Spiritualism for the last decade (at least).

1). - Grossly-incorrect details, indicating a superficial familiarity with the material, due to an acquaintance with the material that is largely second-hand: that is, through the work of other academics. This indicates, I think, a lack of care, or more precisely the sense that American academics, particularly younger academics, have that Modern Spiritualism is relatively speaking a clean stage for the ritualistic dramas associated with getting ahead, grinding theoretical axes, and getting tenure. In other words, the details don't matter, because (a) no one knows them anyway and (b) Modern Spiritualism is always a pretext for something else: acts of professional affiliation and devotion, theory-construction, vaguely post-modern linguistic cleverness, political revisionism, etc.

2). - The homogeneity fallacy. Readers are usually invited to accept a model of Modern Spiritualism that is homogeneous. MS is a progressive, anti-institutional (some academics even claim antinomian), decentralized discipline allied with progressive movements in other areas: sexual politics (free love), health, diet and medicine (vegetarianism, homeopathy) and the anti-vivisection movement, progressive politics (abolitionism, etc.).

It is certainly true that (a) many Spiritualists (of what type, though?) resembled that profile, that (b) fully as many did not, and (c) the more academics talk about only the ‘progressive’ Spiritualist (as opposed to the Christian Spiritualist or indeed the reactionary Spiritualist, who was also represented in the mix), the more it will appear to future academics using only secondary sources that the movement was homogenous. The movement is not homogenous today, and was not homogenous in the 1840s, and has not been homogeneous at any point in between.

I will offer into evidence, as an example of the lengths modern historians will go to avoid confronting their own presumption of homogeneity, the case of Victoria Woodhull. Those modern historians who are willing to acknowledge the central role that Spiritualism played in Woodhull’s life and work (and in the lives and work of other founders of modern feminism) are unwilling to acknowledge, with equal detail, that Woodhull spent the last decades of her life as an ardent polemicist for eugenics. They don’t explain that transition, or examine Woodhull’s work as a eugenics propagandist at the same level of detail that they examine her life as a leading proponent of free love or women’s political equality. Woodhull’s affinity for eugenics is a knotty problem worth untangling, by any estimate, particularly when we note that the drift into eugenics was not uncommon for first-circle Spiritualists (or first-circle occultists for that matter), and when we note that (however we see it today) eugenics was a ‘progressive’ discipline in the sense that word had at the turn of the 20th century, even though we view it, post-Nazi, as the worst sort of crypto-fascism.

There’s a second aspect to this homogeneity fallacy—the notion that a Spiritualist is a Spiritualist is a Spiritualist—but I’ll deal with that one separately, in a bit. My sense of the movement is that it is highly segmented, and multi-dimensionally so. For example, the spirit controls of Stainton Moses come from a different universe than the controls of Mrs. Piper, despite the similarity of some monikers, and those of Moses - though perhaps not those of Mrs. Piper - would have cut dead in the streets of Summerland the controls of Miss Young. Similarly, the spiritualism of Boston and the spiritualism of New York were distinctive and in important ways (the collective attitude toward free love-ism, for example), and both were viewed as not rigorous by the spiritualism of Chicago and somewhat uninformed and blinkered by the spiritualism of San Francisco. There are two dimensions: class and place. There are several others. There is, no matter how you look at it, no homogeneity. Below the level of label, of top-level theoretical object and a small creedal contract (which Emma encapsulated nicely at several junctures), there is no such integrated, homogeneous thing as “Modern Spiritualism” per se.

3). - The nationalist fallacy. Modern academic treatments of Modern Spiritualism discuss a theoretical object called “American Spiritualism” as though it has any real, historical foundation, which it does not. Among the dimensions that segment “Modern Spiritualism,” national boundaries are at best tertiary in importance. The movement was primarily Anglo-American (that is, the Commonwealth + the United States), with (as Emma and others sought to demonstrate) significant traction in Western Europe (France and Germany in particular), and was internationalist from its outset. Innovation—in séance techniques and apparatus, in propaganda techniques, in dissemination methods, in any of the mechanisms of a discipline or belief system that matter—was not confined to the

United States, or any other country, and these were spread, replicated and versioned quickly (in matters of weeks) across national boundaries. On the whole, the trajectory of the movement and its interpenetration and symbiosis with a nominally-oppositional “mainstream culture” took shape in substantially the same way whether we’re looking at British Spiritualism in the 1850s, 1860s and 1870s, or Australian Spiritualism in the 1870s, 1880s and 1890s. The national dimension of the movement—the ways in which Australian Spiritualism, say, differed from American Spiritualism—are nuances; the movement was, from the late 1850s, international.

4). - The recapitulation fallacy. An unfortunate feature of academic history. What I say is so because it was said before me, by academics to whom I wish to claim affiliation. If we say it often enough, to one another, in our academic cabinet, it must be true. Modern academic treatments of Modern Spiritualism distort the objects of study by recapitulating signal themes, in particular the notions that MS was either (a) a manifestation of the Victorian cult of death or (b) a reaction to the horror of mass death in the US Civil War, the Crimea and elsewhere. It would be tough to trace these free-floating themes (because they do not stand up to scrutiny, at the detailed level, very well) back to their origins, but my hypothesis is that they all take root in Weber and Weberian analyses that need—because of Weber’s model—disruption, dislocation, and loss in order for the model to make sense. As I’ll suggest in a bit, many third and fourth circle Spiritualists may have been drawn to the movement because of a personal loss, but second-circle and first-circle Spiritualists came to MS, in the main, for reasons that had nothing to do with the themes recapitulated by academics, and everything to do with a profound dissatisfaction with the available idols of the marketplace.

5). - The eruption-and-decline fallacy. This one’s a bit of a shocker. In part because academics appear to accept the distorted canonical versions of Modern Spiritualism as promoted by Spiritualism itself (then and now), MS is presented as erupting full-blown with the Fox Sisters, and collapsing in a sticky heap in the late nineteenth century. This fallacy does produce a nice bell-shaped curve (for the movement’s trajectory, the number of “Spiritualists,” etc.)—it is a pretty theoretical object to be sure. But it is a fallacy that does not serve Spiritualism the modern movement, and is otherwise just an ahistorical academic play toy. The movements that were MS developed, quite slowly (over perhaps 20 years) from mesmerism, phrenology, folk occult practices, alternative medical disciplines and *incorrect and incomplete orthodox science*—not to mention a pre-existing whirlwind of religious innovation that dates back to the 1770s, and a mythographic tradition coincident with the colonization of India and the British hegemony over parts of the Far East. It’s appropriate to date the “beginning” of Modern Spiritualism to (most conservatively) the work of Andrew Jackson Davis in the US, and more realistically to the Anglo-American cultural hubbub we tend to refer to as the Age of Cant (say, 1770-1830). And Modern Spiritualism has in no sense ended. In fact, it has persisted, and, if we take a notional 4% of the general population as a number that probably pegs the peak of self-identified third circle US Spiritualists in 1870, Modern Spiritualism has persisted at more or less the same level of demographic penetration, up to the present day. And none of this gets at the fundamental fact that the “Modern Spiritualism” EH Britten documented in *Nineteenth Century Miracles* and the one Conan Doyle documented, several decades later,

are fundamentally different—or the fact that Doyle’s was, in most important ways, more culturally significant. There is no tangible, evidence-based bottoms-up view of Modern Spiritualism that supports the eruption-and-decline model academics favor. That is the wishful thinking of reason, and that’s all it is.

6). - Problems of cause-and-effect, and a penchant for the ahistorical. A common example of this is the tendency of modern historians to see alternative medical practices (medical clairvoyance, or intuitive medicine as we now call it), changes in dietary and dress regimes, and other “allied causes” as the effects of Modern Spiritualism, rather than some of the discourses and communities from which and into which Spiritualists (particularly the first-and second-circle Spiritualists) migrated. The wily mesmerist preceded, trained, nurtured and in many cases pimped the spirit medium. EHB and Blavatsky—to pick two obvious examples—were steeped in one or more of these disciplines before they self-identified as Spiritualists; Elizabeth French made her living as a medical clairvoyant before AND after she was a successful medium; Gilbert Vale “tested” Spiritualism from his secure vantage point in the freethought movement; Benjamin Coleman embraced Spiritualism after two decades as a political advocate of the rights of ordinary folks against the deprivations of capital and the State. Cromwell Varley believed in the truths of Spiritualism because he believed in the truths of free and open communication, of all sorts. Chartists became Spiritualists; Spiritualism did not, in itself, promote socialism and freethought except insofar as infinite perfectibility, an ethics of personal responsibility here and hereafter, and a religious experience centered on intimacy and a medium—rather than a crowd and a priest—promoted socialism, freethought, anti-vivisectionism, and vegetarianism.

7). - The chop-shop effect. In my view, modern academic historians do violence to the lives of the dead. It’s difficult, after reading academic treatments of Modern Spiritualism, to look into the giant bag of real historical figures and find a single person whose personal life trajectory fits the academic model one’s just ingested. The academic’s clothes cover no emperor, no pauper, no one at all. If one steps back, and looks only at how academic historians conjure with historical figures in their work, it becomes apparent very quickly that we’re dealing with chop-shop history: the real lives of real people are parted out, into thematic bins, like car parts in a stolen car parts operation. Purloined lives, disassembled and sold off. Judge Edmonds—a name frequently conjured with—has no life, or his life has no integrity. He is an exemplar for certain assertions (people came to Spiritualism after personal tragedy), and those parts of his life (as a person, as a Spiritualist) that don’t have a bin (for example, the mediumship of his wife and daughter, his role in the founding of the Society for the Diffusion of Spiritualist Knowledge, his defense of Cora Hatch against her husband Benjamin, his resolutely Christian orientation toward Spiritualism and its truths, and his lack of rigor in accepting witnessed and reported phenomenon, not to mention the history of his legal opinions) get silently dumped on the floor of the academic chop shop. Seen bottoms-up, through the details of the lives of real Spiritualists of the nineteenth century, there are virtually no academic treatments of Spiritualism that align well with the facts of people’s detailed, intensely-lived existences.

8). - The cartoon séance problem. For academics, all séances—all Spiritualist practice and apparatus—are bound up with immediate interpersonal communications with the dead. This is a view of the séance that is sustainable only (a) if one has not actually read any significant number of séance records and/or (b) if one has no interest in what Spiritualist practice actually was and always (c) when one makes no distinction between first-, second- and third-circle Spiritualists. Let's take four first-circle and first-generation mediums as test cases—J. V. Mansfield, Henry Slade, Daniel Dunglas Home and the Davenport—as examples. What percentage of the performances (public and private) of these four actors would any reasonably well-read person say were “interpersonal communications with the dead”? I would hazard the guess: less than 30%. Even if we restrict the analysis to the purely private circles each of the four was involved with, less than half of the performances would involve interpersonal communication with named deceased persons beyond the controls involved. The séance, for Spiritualists, was laboratory, therapeutic couch, theatre and lecture hall, and was always a zone of **demonstration** first, and communication second. Based on a (naive and fragile) model of “scientific proof” that emphasized personal experience as proof, and made sensory perception (not to mention cause and effect) unproblematic, the séance was not, primarily, about permitting the bereaved to communicate with their lost loved ones. The séance was the source of the self-evident truths of Spiritualism: true because I witnessed it, at first hand.

Katie King was proof, but not of the afterlife existence of one's Aunt Emily. J. V. Mansfield wanted a sealed envelope, or a lock of your hair, but usually the transaction did not involve the afterlife existence of one's Aunt Emily. And although Mina Crandon (“Margery”) was controlled by the spirit of her dead brother Walter, the material of the Margery séances was definitely not interpersonal: it was an exploration of the limits of the medium (Mina, and the séance) first and foremost, and it was proof of the survival of personality: something academic historians do not recognize, because they apparently have not read much at all in the primary literature. When I tested for Aunt Emily, I did so not because I was mourning her or because I had some necrophilial preoccupation with death, but because I expected to be able to recognize the nuances of her personality. (The obsession with proof of the survival of personality, which can be documented, contradicts directly academic yarn-spinning about “cults of death” and private obsessions with specific dead people. It was my personality, and its survival, that were frequently at issue, in the “test.”)

9). - The separate-and-unequal fallacy. I have harped on this before. There seems to be little or no acknowledgement of the plain fact that Modern Spiritualism existed, from inception, and does to this day, within the boundaries of that theoretical object called “mainstream culture”, rather than as a separate community in more or less uneasy relations with “mainstream culture.”

10). - The disingenuous narrator problem. If you read closely in modern academic treatments of Modern Spiritualism, you will nearly always find the moment where the writer un.masks himself or herself as the agent-of-reason, and ridicules some aspect of Spiritualism as a belief system. The tone may be “how nutty!” or “how quaint!” or “of course we know better now....” but the moment we discover a fundamental lack of

sympathy almost always occurs. This has been the hallmark of “mainstream” and “academic” histories of Spiritualism (and the occult) for the past 150 years. The author cannot be trusted to show us the memes at play, because eventually the author will conclude (a) that the memes are fraudulent, dangerous, trivial, or unhealthy, (b) that the play of those memes is uninstrutive, marginal, or distracting or (c) both. I am reminded of a comment quoted in one of Christopher MacIntosh’s books, in which someone suggested that it is never a waste of time to study how one’s predecessors wasted theirs. Many academic historians do not even exhibit this level of sympathy with Modern Spiritualism.

The list is not exhaustive.

Finally, boiling over on an airplane while being dragged through overgeneralization, fallacy and cliché by one scholar’s book—wherein I learned that Theosophy originated in Britain, among other things—I’m provoked to make what ought to be an obvious point to anyone who has read EHB’s *Modern American Spiritualism*: a Spiritualist is not a Spiritualist. At a gross level, during the first generation of Modern Spiritualist (1840-1900, say, with 1870 as the lovely convenient and entirely faux midpoint for the erupt-and-dissipate peak to center itself on), there were four circles of Spiritualists in the international community:

- first-circle Spiritualists who occupied positions as public intellectuals advocating one flavor or other of Modern Spiritualism. Examples would include: William Stainton Moses, E H Britten, Benjamin Coleman, Crookes, Cora Hatch, Alfred Russel Wallace, Marie Countess of Caithness (but NOT Victoria Woodhull, to differentiate). You know you’re looking at a first-circle Spiritualist when they served as synecdochal material for attacks on Spiritualist in the “mainstream” media, or as the organizing point for a splinter faction that forms around them, or when they explicitly differentiated their ‘brand’ of spiritualism from others brands.

- second-circle Spiritualists who derived some or all of their personal income from either the promotion or the practice of Spiritualism. Examples would include: J. J. Morse, Colby, Rich, Samuel Brittan, Thomas Shorter, Elizabeth French, and Victoria Woodhull (and Tennessee Claflin). There were 10 or 20 second circle Spiritualists in 1870, in my estimation, for every first circle Spiritualist, and the first and second circles were connected to one another in vibrant and complex international social networks that become immediately apparent to anyone spending time with the primary material.

- third-circle Spiritualists, ordinary believers who testified publicly to their belief in Spiritualism, but who did not promote Spiritualism beyond the scope of a private circle or a local society, and who made their living by conventional means not immediately associated with the movement. There were 20 to 40 third-circle Spiritualists for every second-circle Spiritualist, in 1870. The hallmark of a third-circle Spiritualist: they paid the social cost for their beliefs. They evangelized; they bore witness publicly and often under adverse conditions. These people were and are the backbone of the international movement. You can find them running or participating in literally thousands of local societies and public circles in 1870.

· fourth-circle Spiritualists: ordinary believers who incorporated elements of the Modern Spiritualist belief system—or the entire belief system—into their personal worldview, but who did not organize locally, join locally, or bear witness in any public sense to those beliefs. Syncretists, fair-weather believers - or ordinary folks. There were 10 to 100 fourth-circle Spiritualists for every third circle Spiritualist in 1870, just as there are, today (if we credit surveys and polls) millions of Americans who believe in the possibility of direct communication with angels (Christian and otherwise, superintending and personal).

There's so much more to say about this topic....

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Leslie Price responds below:

Spiritualism and Scholarship

All students are indebted to Marc Demarest for this analysis of academic scholarship about Spiritualism. The exercise might be extended to similar writings on psychical research, some of which, in avoiding the question of the reality or otherwise of the phenomena studied by various scientists, surely limit the value of their theories. We may hope that he will expand this blog post with a full-length critique in due course.

Other readers will have shared Marc's reactions in studying such academic work. To take a British example, Jenny Hazelgrove "Spiritualism and British Society Between the Wars" (2000) gave little attention to such influential figures as Ernest Oaten or Winifred Moyes. There are at least some easily available sources for these pioneers, but one of the reasons for the Psypioneer project has always been the need to increase the easily available source material on a wide range of early workers.

Let us acknowledge that the scholar approaching Spiritualism encounters a severe shortage of general histories of the movement. Biographical accounts of mediums may leave one with only a vague awareness of the institutional framework within which they worked. Janet Oppenheim "The Other World; Spiritualism and Psychical Research in Great Britain 1850-1914 (1985) remains an outstanding exception of an integrated perspective.

Some fault rests with the Spiritualist Movement. Having failed for 150 years even to get a clear and accurate perspective on the Fox sisters, they have been content with an extremely limited understanding of their own later history. To take just one issue, Spiritualism is legal in the UK, but as we have demonstrated in Psypioneer, a mythological broth persists in which Winston Churchill and Helen Duncan sometimes overshadow the actual fighters for freedom.

Let us respond to Marc's critique by encouraging more and better historical study of these movements by academics and lay persons alike.

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The Beginnings of Full Form Materialisations in England

Catherine (Kate) Elizabeth Wood 1854-1884

Continued from PP7.11:—⁹

Previous issues in this series should be consulted for more on Kate Wood's physical mediumship, for example; securing methods used to restrain her, and source references. At the end of this concluding article on Miss Wood the issues are listed. In the previous issue we noted:

After spending a week at Derby, Kate agreed to return to Belper and accept some new challenges: (1)—for the spirit to materialise inside the cabinet and come out whilst the medium sat in circle; (2)—for the spirit to materialise outside the cabinet while the medium sat inside; (3)—to obtain moulds of spirit hands or feet while the medium was detained inside the screwed up cage.

Kate Wood completed her third and final challenge; *to obtain moulds of spirit hands or feet while the medium was detained inside the screwed up cage*. The early production of Spirit Moulds has not been well documented, but when this phenomenon resurfaced in the 1920's it was better documented and mainly published in psychical research journals, though many are not easily accessible.¹⁰ Another problem is that the many physical mediums producing this kind of phenomenon *mostly* in the mid 1870's, did so very briefly. Early detailed accounts are few and far between, Annie Mellon produced paraffin-wax moulds at Weir's Court, Newcastle-on-Tyne in April 1877 (she was then Miss Fairlamb), but a written account (taken from the minutes) was not published until May 27th, 1893 by James Burns in his *Medium and Daybreak*. That account will be republished in our forthcoming series about Annie Mellon.

Below is the full account of Kate Wood's third test, initially published in the *Medium and Daybreak*, and later in *Some Reminiscences*, (1900):¹¹

⁹ Pages 366-373:—<http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/PP7.11November2011.pdf>

¹⁰ The most comprehensive research on paraffin moulds was carried out by Dr. Gustave Geley, and recorded in his book *Clairvoyance and Materialisation*. English translation published by T. Fisher Unwin Limited, London, 1927. The experiments were carried out with the Polish medium Franek Kluski, commencing at the International Metapsychic Institute, Paris on November 8th, 1920.

¹¹ *Some Reminiscences*, pages 118-124

On Sunday morning, February 18th, 1877:

In America, through the mediumship of Mrs. Hardy,¹² spirit-moulds have been obtained under test conditions, sceptics themselves being the judges. The moulds were produced inside a wire cage securely fastened, while the medium sat at a distance from it. In making our experiment we proposed to reverse the American method by placing the medium in the cage, and having the moulds produced outside. It was carefully noted that when Miss Wood entered the seance room she had nothing in her hands. Divesting herself of her jacket, she at once entered the cage, and was secured to the chair as before, which could not have been done without completely crushing articles so fragile as spirit-moulds, had she any such about her person. The cage door was then screwed up.

Two pails having been provided, a pound of paraffin wax was cut into small pieces, and placed in one of the pails; into this pail was poured boiling water until it was three-parts full, and into the other pail an equal quantity of cold water. The pails were then placed in the cabinet about twelve inches from the side of the cage.

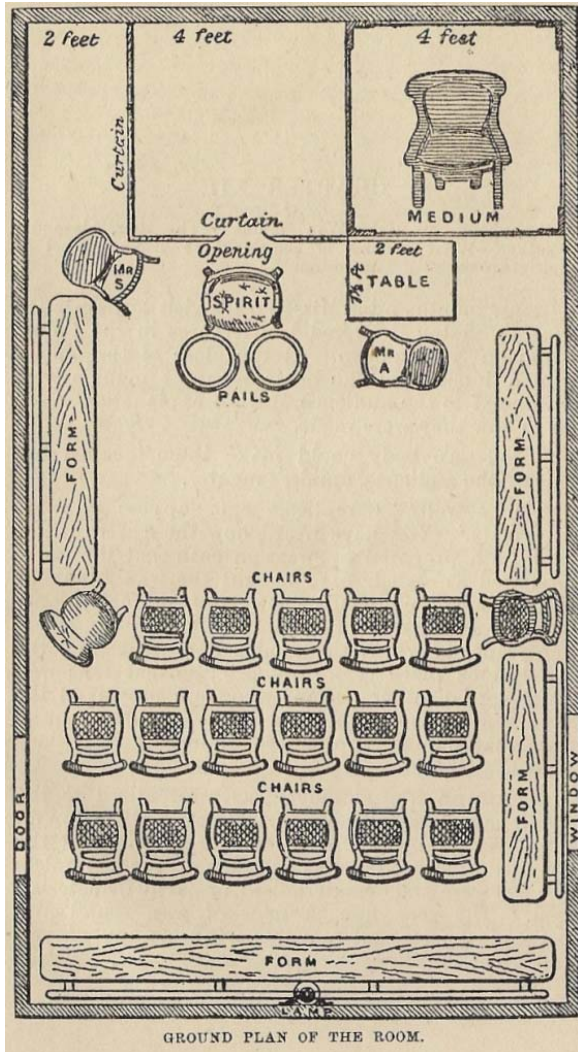
We were then informed that in order to accomplish their purpose it would be necessary to open the cage door a few inches.

The screws were taken out, and an opening made, through which a very small baby could not have been passed, the table being placed against the door as before. We were not kept long in doubt as to the character of the manifestations; and in the manifestations that were given to us we had, I think, at least, a very strong intimation that, when the best mental and physical conditions are offered to the spirits, they, on their part, to the extent of their knowledge and power, will work, to make the demonstration as complete as can be secured by our best devised tests. The old proverb, “seeing is believing” was on this occasion fitly and beautifully illustrated. We had not asked to *see* spirit-moulds made; we professed to be content if we found them in the cabinet while the medium was secured in the cage, an experience, which has not hitherto, I believe, been improved upon.

But the workers on the other side,—doubtless arguing, just as logically as we should on this, that if one person sitting close to another saw that other put a boot on his foot and pull it off again, it would be exceedingly difficult for that person not to believe he had seen the thing done—addressed themselves to the task of MAKING SPIRIT-MOULDS BEFORE OUR EYES.

[Being seated, we commenced to sing a hymn, when “Pocka” called out—

¹² The first well-publicised spirit paraffin-wax hand moulds, were pioneered in America by Prof. W. Denton with the Boston medium Mrs. M. M. Hardy in the mid 1870's. Later she and her husband were caught in deliberate fraud. She was exposed in the *Spiritual Scientist* March 30, 1876



“Mr. Smedley, come inside the cabinet”

I immediately passed behind the curtains, and, looking into the cage, I could not see either medium or chair, but instead “a pillar of cloud.”

“What do you wish me to do?” I asked.

A voice from the midst of the cloud answered, “You must take the pails out; ‘Benny’ say he’s going to try and make the moulds outside the cabinet, so that you can all see them made. Won’t you like that better?”

“Yes; very much,” I replied.

When moving the pails I dipped my finger into the hot water, and found the wax was melted and floating on the top; a coating of it remained on my finger till it was washed off at home with hot water, soap, and brush.

As soon as the pails were put in the centre of the circle we commenced to sing, and when singing the second hymn the curtains were opened by “Benny,” who stepped out, laid his right hand heavily on

my left shoulder, and said, “Good morning to ye all.”

“Good morning, ‘Benny.’ How do you find the conditions?” was asked.

“Oh, very good; please let me have the loan of your chair,” he answered.

I handed him my chair, which he placed close to the pails, his back being about a foot clear of the curtains. When he was seated, he gathered up his white robe and commenced in a vigorous and business-like way to dip his left foot first in the hot and then in the cold pail alternately, for about ten times; then placing his left leg over his right knee, he gently, tapped the waged foot all round, and, taking off a beautiful was mould, held it up so that all could see it, and then handed it to Mr. Adshead, who said—

“Oh, thank you, ‘Benny’.”

I said, “ ‘Benny,’ I suppose you are a good Scotchman; are you not breaking the Sabbath by making moulds to-day?” To which he at once replied—

“Eh, mon! ye’re havin’ sick a sarmon on the ‘Immortality of the Soul’ as they’ll nae get in any of the kirks to-day!”

“Hear! hear !! Well done, ‘Benny,’ called out several of the friends.—AS.¹³]

“Benny,” remembering he had asked that the cage door might be partially opened, and anxious that this concession should not in any respect diminish the completeness of the test under which the moulds had been obtained, undertook in his own way to convince us that the medium was not in any sense an active participant in the work which had been done.

Therefore, approaching the cage door he closed it, and pushed the table up closely against it; he then took my right arm in both his hands, and pressed it firmly on the table, as much as to say, “You take care it does not move an inch,” which duty I faithfully discharged.

Stooping down, he drew the musical box from beneath the table, and, carrying it towards the cage door, placed it on one end on the floor, the other end leaning against the door, the position of the box then being such that had the door been opened, the box must have been thrown backwards.

He then replaced the chair in its former position, and, after shaking hands and conversing with those around him, he bid us adieu and retired within the curtains.

[We were all excitement directly, and were leaving our seats to examine the mould, when “Benny” opened the curtains again and said—

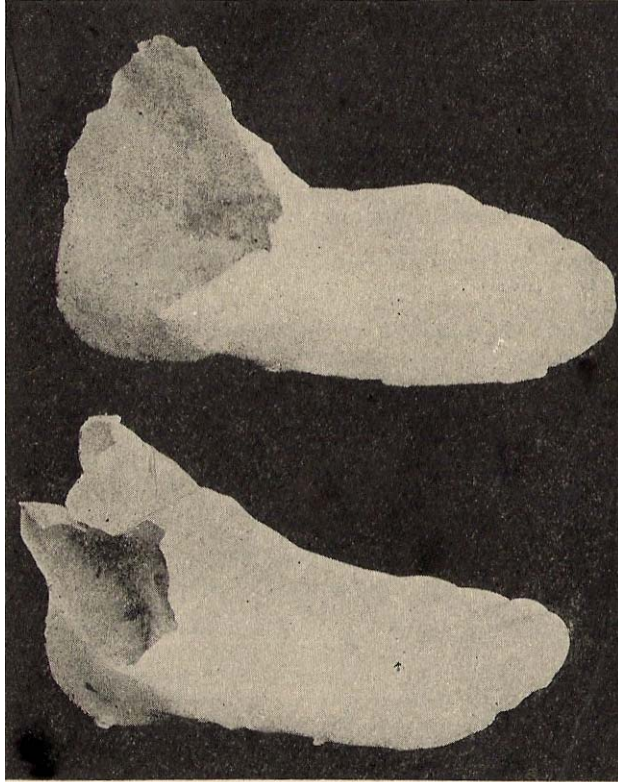
“What’s to do now; why are ye all so excited?”

“We thought the seance was over,” I replied.

No, no; all sit down; be very quiet and sing again, an’ we’ll try an’ send a wee lassie out to make a mould of her foot—ye’ll then see the difference between the two,” said ‘Benny.’”

After taking our seats again and singing for a short time, the curtains opened and “Maggie,” a beautiful female form in snow-white robes, stepped gently out, and, after bowing gracefully, pointed to my chair, which I placed close to the pails. “Maggie” seated herself, and, gathering up her long robes, pursued the same course that “Benny” had done, dipping her left foot alternately in the hot and cold water, until the work was finished, when she handed a beautiful mould of her foot to Mr. Adshead. “Maggie” essayed to repeat the experiment with her right foot, but after dipping it two or three times, in consequence, I presume, of her power failing, she rose from her seat, bowed very politely, went into the cabinet, and did not return.—A.S.]

¹³ Alfred Smedley



PARAFFIN WAX MOULDS OF MATERIALISED SPIRITS' FEET.

The whole process, from the first dip to the finished mould, was distinctly seen, and the fact that they were made as stated rests on as good evidence as can be offered for the shining of the sun, or the falling of snow.

Had there been a lingering suspicion in the mind of anyone present that the medium by some "subtle device or otherwise"—for in this case we could not speak of "palmistry" —had managed to present us with an impression of her own little foot, it was destined to be forever destroyed the moment "Benny," at my request, placed in my hand the mould we saw him take from his foot.

It will thus be seen, when I state that the table never moved, and that at the close of the seance the musical box was found resting against the cage door, and the medium inside the cage entranced

and secured to the chair, that the moulds were given to us under a test as absolute as though the cage door had been screwed up. But supposing the cage test had been less complete than it was, we are confronted by other difficulties which require explanation. In the first place, as a rule individuals have not two left feet, but the moulds we got were both taken from left feet; and again the anatomical structure and proportions of both right and left foot in most individuals is so much alike the shoemaker finds it enough for his purpose to measure one; but I find the outside measurement of the mould taken from "Benny's" foot is nine inches in length and four in breadth, while that taken from "Maggie's" foot is eight inches in length and two and a quarter in breadth. Again, the cabinet was so surrounded and watched on every side, by no conceivable possibility could a human being introduce himself or herself without instant detection; whilst at the close of the seance, when an article of some kind was asked for in which to place the moulds for conveyance to my house, nothing could be found, not even a sheet of paper could be had, until one large enough for the purpose was brought from a friend's house. I ask, then, if the moulds of which I have been speaking were not taken from the feet of the medium—and in view of the facts I have narrated who will dare say they were?—from whose feet were they taken?

Here is a wall against which sceptical scientists, bigoted theologians, conjurers, and incompetent judges are invited to knock their heads, with the caution, that, in the event of a collision, the heads will be smashed, for assuredly this wall, like every other fact in nature, will stand firm as the everlasting hills.

My own theory—and I shall hold it until I get a better—is, these moulds are indeed the “footprints of angels,” and as such they are to me very precious.

In some of the cathedrals of Europe there are servitors who, for a consideration, will open for inspection cabinets filled with holy relics, some of which, on account of their preciousness, are deposited in golden caskets, and to which there clings the mysterious sanctity of ages, but amongst these there is to be found nothing so calculated to stir to its deepest depths the human soul as these moulds; for, granting these relics are what they are represented to be, they at best but illustrate the history of a dead past, whereas our simple piece of wax, so moulded, like the falling apple which to the prophetic eye of Newton brought a revelation big with glorious results, tells of a future, compared with which the highest developments of life and culture hitherto attained are like the faintest streaks of morning light when compared with the full unclouded splendour of noonday.

My task is now finished. I have endeavoured to give a faithful record of the facts connected with Miss Wood’s visit to Derbyshire, in the order of their occurrence. Doubtless, my statement in some of its details to a large number of persons will appear incredible. But I am of opinion that if in any place conditions as good as those we were able to offer Miss Wood in Belper and Derby are given, the same results may be obtained through her mediumship.

I feel it in my heart to say that the beat thanks of the of the great body of investigators into Spiritualism in this country are due to our friends in Newcastle, who have succeeded in developing to such a state of perfection so excellent a servant of the spirit-world.

Of Miss Wood as a medium I cannot speak too highly. By her conduct during the ordeal through which she passed, she gained for herself the full confidence and esteem of all who were privileged to attend her seances. I can only hope that her career in the future will be as pleasant as was her short sojourn in Derbyshire.—W.P.A. [Adshead]

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WHAT BECAME OF THE MOULDS?

Alfred Smedley.¹⁴

Mr. Adshead kept them in a case made for the purpose for a number of years, and showed them to any person wishing to see them. I was under the impression that they were afterwards sent to the Hon. A. Aksakoff, Privy Councillor, of St. Petersburg, and that he returned plaster casts of the feet instead of the moulds. I wrote through a friend in London to obtain information on the point, and received a letter in reply as follows, viz:—

ST. PETERSBURG, December 16th, 1899.

In 1886 I was printing my answer to Hartmann and was in quest of good moulds; so wrote to Mr. Adshead, whose account had read in the *Medium and Daybreak*, asking him to send me his, but he was unwilling to part with them.

Finally, I persuaded him to take casts of the moulds, this being the best means for preserving the *fact*, as the moulds were already becoming deteriorated.

To this he ultimately agreed. He first took photos of the moulds, then run the moulds full of plaster, and then dissolved the wax moulds from the plaster casts, by putting them in boiling water.

I have two photos of the wax moulds and three of the plaster casts, taken by Mr. Schmidt, of Belper.

As I afterwards received some other casts (obtained in presence of the same medium) from Mrs. Reimers; also from Mr. Oxley, of Manchester, I decided to publish the latter, which were the most perfect, although Mr. Adshead's have an intrinsic value.

(Signed) ALEXANDER AKSAKOFF.

The plaster casts, made at the solicitation of the Hon. A. Aksakoff, have been handed to me, and are now in my possession, so that any person desiring to see them can do so at my house.

I may here state that while Miss Wood was in Belper she was the guest of my brother Frederick and wife one week, and of my brother Samuel and wife the second week. During the week she was in Derby she was the guest of Mrs. Ford, who has now been my wife nearly 20 years. They have all borne testimony to her remarkable and genuine mediumship.

One thing that struck me was that she readily submitted to any test we suggested, and never appeared to be the least concerned as to whether any manifestations appeared or not.

¹⁴ *Some Reminiscences* pages 127-128

In conclusion, I commenced to investigate as a thorough sceptic as to spirit return. For a considerable time I was suspicious of fraud, but did not allow my suspicion to prevent me from honestly investigating the subject. Looking back over the quarter of a century that has passed, I have no reason to doubt the genuineness of any of the manifestations recorded in these pages, and am quite certain as to those witnessed in the presence of Miss Wood in Belper.

I can bear testimony, on oath, that they were genuine with as much confidence as I can to any incidents that have come under my own notice in other departments during the whole period of my life.

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Adshead's words just a few months earlier (*I can only hope that her career in the future will be as pleasant as was her short sojourn in Derbyshire*) were soon followed by the announcement:

MISS WOOD CAUGHT PERSONATING A SPIRIT.

*The Medium and Daybreak:—*¹⁵

The *Blackburn Times* of Saturday last contains three columns of a report of a series of seances held with Miss Wood at Blackburn. There were present on the first occasion twenty-eight or twenty-nine sitters, including, three ladies, and a newspaper reporter: and a doctor were the tyers of the medium. From the flippant, slangy, self-sufficient style in which the report is written, it is easy to be guessed what kind of influence predominated in the circle. The reporter proceeds upon the modest assumption that his knowledge of Spiritualism, which he confesses is *nil*, comprises all that can be known on the subject. The findings of previous investigators, with which he seems to be familiar, are utterly ignored by him, and the only ostensible object which he could possibly have had in attending the seances, was not to discover truth, but to expose the assumed trickery of the medium. In this he was seconded by certain non-Spiritualist friends, and these having obtained, it would appear, a most, active position in the circle, their sphere of thought had the opportunity of dominating on the occasion. It is reported that Miss Wood bent down her head, that her neck might not be properly tied, and bent her wrists, that the fastenings might be loose when her hands were straightened out, all of which remarkable phenomena are quite new to those who have had a very lengthy experience with the medium. After repeated failures, with the exception of a figure appearing in a very dim light, the reporter and his friends were requested to stop away, after which other seances were held. These are reported in the *Blackburn Times*, as follows:—

¹⁵ *The Medium and Daybreak*, August 17th, 1877, pages 523-524.

Since the above was placed in type, our worst suspicions have been realised; the medium has been caught imposing upon the circle—caught in the very act of playing the spirit. It appears that the committee, finding it was impossible to have satisfactory manifestations whilst so many “sceptical minds” were in their midst, went through a weeding-out process, and recommenced sitting on Monday last with a smaller circle, understood to be composed of thorough-going Spiritualists. The seances were held at the house of a friend; and it was believed that they would thus obtain such phenomena as were witnessed during Miss Wood’s first visit to Blackburn. There was nothing at all on Monday; but on Tuesday night “Pocks” did something more than take possession of the medium; she took possession of the sitters by appearing in their midst, and distributed biscuits and kisses to those whom she thought worthy of such spiritual favours. The biscuits, we should, explain, were handed to her; but the dessert, in the way of kisses, was all her own.

One of the sitters, Mr. T. E. Atkinson, of 76, Whalley Road, has been looked upon all along as a confirmed believer, but the fact is that he was a confirmed sceptic after all he had seen; and when he observed “Pocks” supplying him with a bit of biscuit, he was more than ever assured that it was the medium on her knees. Shortly afterwards he disengaged one hand, and lightly touched “Pocka’s” garment—a circumstance which caused her to get out of his reach, and to complain when she returned to the chair that someone had been attempting to poke holes in her dress.

On Wednesday night, sitting was resumed under customary conditions, that is, the medium was tied more or less securely to a chair, which was placed in a recess with a curtain before it. Mr. Atkinson was present with two friends in, court in the shape of his wife and a grown up daughter. “Pocks” affirmed that everything was favourable, and that good manifestations might be expected. Indeed, it was intimated that three spirits might appear at once; but nothing was seen until about eleven o’clock, when several present saw a form emerge from the recess, and immediately afterwards various sitters on the shadier side of the room were touched with a tube, or fan, provided for the purpose.

It was really so dark that our wide-awake friend could not see “the spirit,” though he could hear the taps being administered on the other side of the room. But he was not to be imposed upon any longer; and was determined, if he could, to make a seizure, as he had not signed any regulations, and was fettered by no promise. It was the last seance of the series, and his only chance of exposing the humbug; so, with a courage which does him great credit, and guided by his ears, he dashed across the room, and made a grasp at the form, which, however, slipped through his hands. It became a race then for the recess, but the vigilant sceptic was more alert this time, and seized the figure whilst it was still amongst the sitters. What a struggle then ensued! It was as if life and death on both sides depended upon it, though there was no screaming and not a word was said.

The company seemed paralysed; there was much to hear, but nothing to see, and they knew not what it meant. The strong man proved in the end too powerful for the desperate woman; and when matches were lighted by Mrs. and Miss Atkinson, the medium was

found on the floor, near the curtain of the recess, in attire which was confined to chemise, stockings, and a pair of —!

Miss Wood braved it out to the last, hardened sinner as she is, and speaking as “Pocks,” after being assisted to her chair, declared that she had been controlled by an evil spirit, who had all but stripped her naked, and sent her out in the circle. This was too much for Mr. Atkinson, who gave his opinion of what he called her “devilment,” and went so far as to say that, unless every penny that had been paid for the seances this week and last was returned to the sitters, he would put the case in the hands of the police.

Fortunately no money had been paid to the medium, and the committee finally assenting to these terms, Miss Wood has since had to sign a document foregoing all claim upon them for her services.

The affair has naturally caused a good deal of stir in the town; and the prevalent opinion is that, after a failure so complete, and an exposure so discreditable, we shall hear no more for some time of paid mediums in Blackburn.

A letter from a local Spiritualist informs us that the above report of the capture of Miss Wood is sufficiently accurate to establish the main fact, which we readily accept, and are not sorry that it has happened, for which feeling we will give our reasons. We thought Miss Wood had had enough of the “committee” business at Macclesfield, but if she required further experience in that line, we hope she has now had a sufficiency. Every seance should be under the control of one individual, and that a spiritually-minded one. This case affords valuable instruction, to be added to that which has already been gathered from the public management of mediums. When a remarkable medium permits himself or herself to be pitted against the detective abilities of the sceptical public, he or she is sure to be run down at last. The reason is this: these test-seance holders do not meet for a spiritual purpose at all, but one which is of an entirely opposite character, the object being to show that what previous investigators have regarded as spiritual, is due only to mercenary tricks.

Charged to the brim with these infamous purposes, a few positive individuals soon dominate over the whole circle, and their influence becomes the ruling element at the disposal of the spiritual operators. Once thoroughly charged with such surrounding's, a medium is incapable of being properly used, until purified by a successive run of sittings under spiritual circumstances. In the case before us we have the medium subjected to these derogatory surroundings for a succession of nights, to which demoralising process the residue of the sitters, who formed the last two seances, had also been subjected. In these further attempts the sitters were joined by parties actuated by the detective doctrine, and ready prepared to put it in force to the utmost. The result is described above. During the unconscious state the medium is made the victim of the circumstances by which she is surrounded, and either through the perverted action of some of her own controls, or the intrusion of other spirits, she is reduced to the disgraceful position in which she was found.

This is our view of the affair. We do not for a moment regard Miss Wood as a trickster, or that the phenomena hitherto occurring through her mediumship have been other than genuine. The conditions which have been observed on numberless other occasions, have been such as to utterly preclude the supposition that the phenomena were due to imposture of medium or spirit. We are not at all sorry that this seemingly painful event has happened, and Miss Wood does not deserve one grain of pity, neither do her committee merit the slightest commiseration at the chagrin with which they have been rewarded. If mediums and so-called Spiritualists will continue to investigate without spirituality, and in open defiance of what is already known of the laws of spirit-communion, they must just put up with the consequences until they are wise enough to profit by their experiences.

If Miss Wood will sell herself to the degrading manipulations of newspaper reporters, that they may, through her disgrace, earn a pittance by writing special reports of their ignoble triumphs, she must be content with the wages of such conduct. And if sitters at a spirit-circle will regale themselves by bantering with a poor little Indian spirit rather than engaging in prayer to God for light and guidance, and the presence of His ministering angels, then it is well that they should be held up to the ridicule of the public. We do not blame poor "Pocka," she is an undeveloped child, and knows no better. We do not blame Miss Wood, she has possibly suffered enough by her folly, and has the stigma of dishonesty attached to her which really she does not deserve. We do not blame the circle, or committee, for they were too ignorant to do aught else than blunder most foolishly.

We do not blame the newspaper man and his clique, for they are the victims of an overweening egotism, and occupy the zero place of knowledge in the scale of public ignorance of the subject, and by their act they have further confirmed themselves in an impregnable fortress of ignorance. We need not blame any of these parties, who all deserve our pity, and at the same time we are heartily glad that they met with their deserts, for as far as we can see, it serves them right, and we hope the experiences of Blackburn will be a warning to not only the parties concerned, but to all who hear of the event, and are engaged in the process of spiritual investigation.

—§—

Problems again arose five years later when Kate was again seized *impersonating Pocka* during a séance at Peterborough. This alleged exposure was well covered by *Light* and by the other major Spiritualist publications.¹⁶ Discussions naturally ensued for and against Kate Wood and the continuance of privately held *dark seances* by leading Spiritualists and well-known societies. Due to space, we will just publish the breaking news:

¹⁶ Namely the *Medium and Daybreak* and the *Spiritualist*

MISS C. E. WOOD EXPOSED.

Light:—¹⁷

[It is with deep regret that we publish the following communications, but fidelity to the truth leaves us no alternative.—ED. “LIGHT.” (E. Dawson Rogers)]

To the Editor of “LIGHT.”

SIR,—Last night, Miss C. E. Wood, of Newcastle, gave a sitting at my house. There were seventeen friends present, the majority Spiritualists. Miss Wood was tied to an armchair by two gentlemen. After sitting for two hours, a form draped in white came from the cabinet, then immediately retired. Then the supposed “Pocka” came out in white to a small table in front of me, played two small musical boxes, gave some sweets to a gentleman, kissed a lady, and chatted for some minutes. Then Mr. Cade, who is a medium, and a sitter at Mr. Chapman’s circle, at Stamford, who sat on my left, suddenly seized the supposed “Pocka,” and instead of a little Indian girl it was Miss Wood with her dress off, and covered with muslin, part of which was secured. I have retained some, and Mr. Cade part. In the interest of Spiritualism, I hope you will publish this, as Miss Wood is so well known as a so-called professional medium. It is only loyalty to the cause that compels me to discharge the painful duty of porting this unsatisfactory sitting.—Faithfully yours,

ROBERT CATLING.

Granville-street, Park-road, Peterborough,
September 12th, 1882.

To the Editor of “LIGHT.”

SIR,—With your permission I would like to place on record an account of a seance at which I was present in the house of Mr. Robert Catling, of this city.

For the information of your readers I may say that I have been very intimately acquainted with Mr. Catling for about eight years; he has been a very devoted friend to the cause of Spiritualism before I knew him and ever since. Miss Wood arrived at his residence on Thursday, 7th inst. She was received and treated as a friend by Mrs. and Mr. Catling till the night of Monday, 11th inst., when the séance was held about which I wish to speak.

I may say that Mr. and Mrs. Catling went with Miss Wood to Stamford on Sunday, the 10th inst., when a séance was held at Mr. Chapman’s Lyceum. This séance gave great satisfaction to all but one or two. Mr. Cade, who is to some extent identified with the Spiritual movement in Stamford, was present, but was not satisfied with what he saw, and he came to Peterborough on Monday evening, to be present at our séance.

During the séance, while what was supposed to be “Pocha” was outside the cabinet, Mr. Cade sprang forward, and there was a scuffle. The light was very dim. I stepped to the

¹⁷ *Light*, September 16, 1882 page 410.

cabinet, and could see Mr. Cade sitting in the chair in which the medium had been tied at the beginning of the séance. He called for more light, and held a figure draped with white in his arms, which seemed to struggle to get free. A gentleman who tried to turn up the light turned it out in mistake. I kept my place for about a minute, and when the light was turned on I could see that the figure with which Mr. Cade struggled was Miss Wood, the medium. She had a quantity of muslin wrapped round her head and shoulders, but through openings I could see parts of her body. I said to Mr. Cade, "We had better leave her to the ladies." I turned to call some of the ladies, and when I turned back again, in what seemed to me about one minute's time, Miss Wood was dressed in the black dress in which she commenced the seance, and the muslin was hidden away. Mr. Cade said, "We must have the muslin;" and after a gather severe struggle the muslin was found in some part of her, and taken from her. These are a few of the disagreeable facts connected with this séance.

On Friday, when we were making arrangements for the Monday's séance, I suggested as a test that a piece of tape should be sewn round each of the medium's wrists, and the ends given to the sitters to hold, but Miss Wood objected to this, I think, very reasonable test.¹⁸

As the result of what I have seen, I have come to the painful conclusion that Miss Wood deliberately planned the deception, and that practice has made her too perfect in the art of deceiving.

I did not feel the least excited through the whole séance, and I do not feel the least discouraged now. Fraudulent mediums will always exist in proportion to foolish people.

Let us study Spiritualism by spiritual methods. Let us get our heads clear and keep them so, and let us—

"Keep a brave heart still."

When we have cleared the path of folly and fraud true spiritual manifestations will—

"Come as a waking joy
After bad dreams,"

THOS. MCKINNEY,

New Fletton, Peterborough,
September 12th, 1882.

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¹⁸ In response Miss Wood stated in her letter; dated September 16th, 1882 and published in *Light*, on September 23rd, 1882:—" Mr, McKinney says I objected to what he calls the "reasonable test" of a piece of tape sewn around each of my wrists, the ends to be held by sitters. This is put by him in such a way as to constitute a perversion of the truth. The fact is that *two or three days before, in the, course of conversation*, such a test was mentioned, but I recommended its non-application, as I thought that the sitters holding the tapes might, through their inexperience of such phenomena, jerk my wrists and injure me during any possible manifestation; but I offered to have my wrists sewn in the manner suggested, the ends of the tape to be sealed on both wall and floor in view of the circle."

There are numerous reports of Kate Wood being very susceptible, perhaps more than most physical mediums, to *evil* spirits—a better and more correct term would be *low* spirits.¹⁹ The very nature of materialisation is *physical mediumship* that would in principle attract lower spirits; we can note in the John King seances with Charles Williams that they were sometimes of rough character.²⁰ Kate was developed in what most Spiritualists would call the correct way that is; under the protection and harmonious auspices of development groups run by experienced Spiritualists, Kate fell into such responsible hands at the Newcastle Spiritual Evidence Society, Newcastle-on Tyne. Venturing away in 1876, she initially maintained early protection and procedure, at the Derbyshire experiments, where she received careful and judicious supervision. Adshead at Belper recorded an incident of *low* spirits on February 13th, 1877:²¹

“As usual, Miss Wood, on entering the seance-room, went at once into the cage, was bound and sealed to her chair, and the door of the cage screwed up. As I was about to let the curtain drop in front of the cage I observed Miss Wood lying back in the chair as in a death-swoon. Thinking she was perhaps more deeply entranced than usual, I said nothing. She must have remained in that condition for nearly a quarter of an hour, as not the slightest movement was heard.

“Then “Pocka” took control, and informed us the conditions were bad; that in coming to the seance some drunken men had jostled against the medium; that spirits who had been drunkards in earth-life were present, and their influence would prevent any manifestations taking place that evening; that, on being bound, the medium had been controlled by a spirit who had committed suicide by poison, and that she had been injuriously affected by the control; that the cage must be opened and the medium released at once, taken home under control and put to bed. This was done, and she remained under control until a late hour.”

There was no doubt that Kate Wood was seized and found to be impersonating “Pocka” in these two exposures. The question was: did Kate consciously premeditate the fraud or was the fraud carried out unconsciously by *low* mischievous spirits. Today the debate prevails; some will argue that the medium premeditated the fraud and was therefore conscious of their actions; whilst others would say that due to the influence of *low* mischievous spirits, or sitters in the séance, the medium was totally unaware of their actions and was in a

¹⁹ See *Psypioneer* Volume 7, No.8:—*Facts from the History of Miss Wood’s Development as a Medium – Mrs. Mould*, pages 257-264:—<http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/PP7.8August2011.pdf>

²⁰ See *Psypioneer* Volume 7, No.1 (continued over several issues):—*Herne and Williams:—Professional Partnership*, pages 19-30:— <http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/PP7.1January2011.pdf>

²¹ *Some Reminiscences*, pages 89-99 Adshead noted:—“*We were afterwards informed by those who accompanied Miss Wood to the seance that in passing along the street two drunken men rushed from the road on to the pavement, nearly knocking the medium down. This fact, to those who know anything of sensitives and the laws which govern mediumship, will be premiss enough on which to build a theory which will account for the peculiar occurrences of the evening.*”

somnambulistic state, and termed *unconscious* fraud. Some time after the Peterborough affair, Kate went to Australia and in a little over two years she was dead:

Saturday 13 December 1884:²²

“Catherine Woods, a medium well-known in spiritualistic circles in the colonies and England, died of typhoid fever yesterday, aged 26, and was buried to day. She had held several private séances here.”

It is without doubt that Catherine (Kate) Elizabeth Wood submitted to some of the most difficult and stringent tests ever made on a physical medium; most of these she accomplished under the given conditions—for that we must applaud her achievements.

Paul J. Gaunt.

Catherine (Kate) Elizabeth Wood 1854-1884

1). – Started in *Psypioneer* 7.7:—*Miss Wood’s Mediumship*, by T. P. Barkas, F.G.S., Newcastle-on-Tyne, pages 229-232:—<http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/PP7.7July2011.pdf>

2). – Continued *Psypioneer* 7.8:—*Facts from the History of Miss Wood’s Development as a Medium*, by Mrs. Mould, Newcastle-on-Tyne, pages 257-264:—<http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/PP7.8August2011.pdf>

3). – Continued *Psypioneer* 7.9:—Seances – experiments at Newcastle-upon-Tyne – later at Belper, Derbyshire, pages 291-298:—<http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/PP7.9September2011.pdf>

4). – Continued *Psypioneer* 7.11:—After spending a week at Derby, Kate – return to Belper and accepted more tests. In addition, a séance report with the “Sidgwick Group,” (F. W. H. Myers, Edmund Gurney), pages 366-373:—<http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/PP7.11November2011.pdf>

5). – Concludes in this issue 8.2:—Third Test (Wax) Moulds at Belper, *Miss Wood Caught Personating a Spirit – The Medium and Daybreak*, Miss C. E. Wood exposed – Light.

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²² Thanks are due to Lis Warwood for sending me this clipping:—*The Argus* (Melbourne, Vic.: 1848-1954), Saturday 13 December 1884, page 10. We can note in our heading we give the dates (October) 1854-1884 making Kate 30 years old, whereas this obituary states she was 26 years old. Our date is taken from *Miss Wood’s Mediumship* by T.P. Barkas, Kate was introduced to the Newcastle Society in 1872 by her father – and then in November 1873 she was engaged as a medium age 19. If we consider the obituary age she would have been 15.

Photograph References:

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (page 43)

Quarterly Transactions of the British College of Psychic Science, *Psychic Science*, Volume II April 1923, to January 1924.

Imperator (page 48)

Frontispiece: *The "Controls" of Stainton Moses ("M.A. Oxon.")* A.W. Trethewy.

Pages 33-34:

The portrait of Imperator which forms the frontispiece of the present book has been reproduced from a photograph in the possession of the late Mr. Charlton T. Speer by his kind permission. The original must have been a sketch made by Stainton Moses as an automatic drawing; it is probably that mentioned on March 3rd, in Book XV. The spirit who controlled his hand for the purpose left the Band and his name was not disclosed.

Stainton Moses Portrait (page 49)

Photograph is from the collection of Canon William V. Rauscher a leading Christian parapsychologist in America, Rauscher an Episcopal Priest, Psychic Researcher, Magician, Magic Historian, Lecturer and Author. Bill has supplied various articles to *Psypioneer* over the years: *Remembering Eileen J. Garrett*, *Thoughts of Muriel Hankey*, *Rev. William Stainton Moses, M.A.*, also supplied material for articles *Fraud Uncovered at Chesterfield Spiritualist Camp*. He has authored numerous books for example *The Houdini Code Mystery- a Spirit Secret Solved*, 2000. Leslie Price reviewed Rauscher's *Religion, Magic, and the Supernatural* Published 2006. (*Psypioneer on the Spiritual Frontier in America* (3.2) February 2007) Use our *Psypioneer* search engine at www.woodlandway.org key word – Rauscher.

See his website:—http://www.mysticlightpress.com/index.php?page_id=14

Marc Demarest (page 55)

See Marc's site: www.ehbritten.org

Ground Plan of the Room (page 64)

Page 125: *Some Reminiscences ...*

Paraffin Wax Moulds of Materialised Spirits' Feet (page 66)

Page 119: *Some Reminiscences ...*

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BOOKS WE HAVE REVIEWED

If you have any problems locating a copy we can contact the author

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., available at Amazon. Psypioneer review, by Leslie Price pages 294-296:—<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP6.11November2010.pdf>

Helen Duncan The Mystery Show Trial, by Robert Hartley published by H Pr (Publishing), London 2007. Paperback ISBN:—978-0-9553420-8-0. Psypioneer review, by Paul J. Gaunt pages 244-247:—<http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/PP3.11November07..pdf>

Aquarian Evangelist: The Age of Aquarius as It Dawned in the Mind of Levi Dowling, by John Benedict Buescher Theosophical History Volume XI available at:—<http://www.theohistory.org> then—Occasional Papers. Psypioneer references by Leslie Price page 7:—<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP4.1January08.pdf>

Dead Men’s Embers, by Gerald O’Hara, published by Saturday Night Press Publications, England 2006. Large Paperback ISBN:—978-0-9514534-6-9., available at Amazon. Psypioneer review, by Leslie Price pages 1-2:—<http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/PP3.1January07..pdf>

Mrs Miller’s Gift’ - a Celebration of 75 Years of the Edinburgh College of Parapsychology formerly Edinburgh Psychic College & Library, by Gerald O’Hara & Ann Harrison, published by Saturday Night Press Publications, England 2007. Paperback ISBN: 978-0-951-4534-9-0., available at Amazon. Psypioneer review, by Paul J. Gaunt pages 1-4:—<http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/PP4.1January08..pdf>

Mrs Miller’s Gift CD:—Helen Duncan Séance, Ernest Oaten and Harry Edwards, Written and produced by Gerald O’Hara B.Sc. Psypioneer review, by Paul J. Gaunt pages 106-107:—<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP5.4April09.pdf>

The Indescribable Phenomena – The Life and Mysteries of Anna Eva Fay, by Barry H. Wiley published by Hermetic Press, Inc., Seattle Washington 2005. ISBN: 0-945296-50-9., available at:—http://www.hermeticpress.com/product_info.php?products_id=45 Psypioneer references by Leslie Price pages 39-42:— <http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/PP5.2February09.pdf>

Immortal Longings – FWH Myers and the Victorian Search for Life After Death, by Trevor Hamilton published by Imprint Academic in Exeter, U.K (also VA, U.S.A) 2009. ISBN: 9-781845- 401238 H.B, 9-781845-402488 PB, available at Amazon. Psypioneer review, by Leslie Price pages 157-148:—<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP5.6June09.pdf>

Talking to the Dead – Kate and Maggie Fox and the Rise of Spiritualism, by Barbara Weisberg published by HarperSanFrancisco New York 2004. Hardback ISBN: 0-06-056667-1., available at Amazon. Psypioneer review, by Paul J. Gaunt pages 9-10:—http://woodlandway.org/PDF/Leslie_Price_PP2.pdf

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Paul J. Gaunt

