

PSYPIONEER JOURNAL

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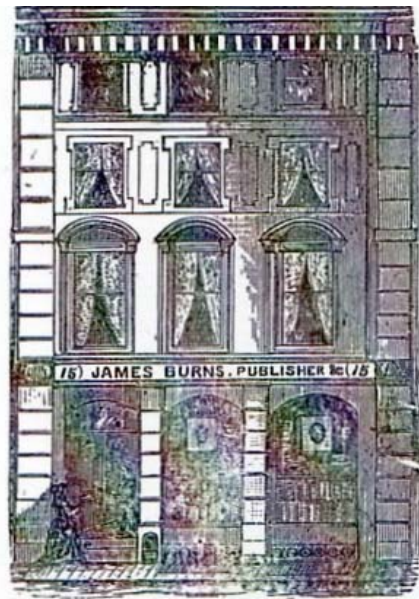
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PSYPIONEER JOURNAL and THE SPIRITUALISTS' NATIONAL UNION

The new SNU President, David R. Bruton, and the Chairman of The Arthur Findlay College Committee, Duncan Gascoyne,¹ for the second year running arranged for Psypioneer's editor to spend six days at the Arthur Findlay College (AFC)² during its annual closure for essential repairs and redecoration.

This was a wonderful research opportunity for Psypioneer in its continuing search for original materials. I was again given full use of its magnificent library which holds many leading spiritualistic journals and books of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These include *The Medium and Daybreak* (1870—1895). Last year on my return from the AFC we published James Burns's article:—*Spiritual Origin of the Spiritual Institution*.

James Burns (1835-1894), contributed greatly to the early Spiritualist movement from the 1860's up to the day of his death on December 30th 1894. His journal *The Medium and Daybreak* was continued by his family for a few months after his death until May 10th 1895 when the last issue was published.



15, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, LONDON, W.C.

Our reprint of the Burns article:—*Spiritual Origin of the Spiritual Institution*, in last January's issue aroused much interest in readers at home and internationally. So little is known, or has been published, about one of Spiritualism's greatest workers who put his work for Spiritualism tirelessly before himself. During my recent visit to AFC I concluded my research into Burns, and Psypioneer will shortly issue a James Burns Special Issue.³

¹ Duncan P. Gascoyne MSNU:—Spiritualists' National Union (SNU) President 2000—2010.

² <http://www.arthurfindlaycollege.org/>

³ This will be published in the Spring; more information later.

Psypioneer would like to extend its sincere thanks to President Bruton, Duncan Gascoyne, and the Spiritualists' National Union for the opportunity afforded it during another valuable visit.

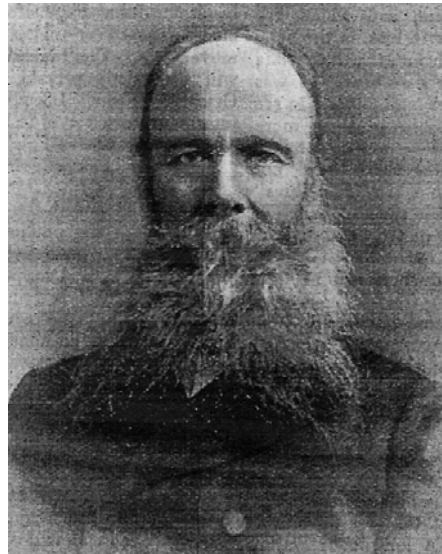
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Below we publish James Burns's obituary:

## OBITUARY

### THE PASSING AWAY OF THE EDITOR

*The Medium and Daybreak*:—<sup>4</sup>



It falls to my painful and sorrowful lot to announce the sudden and premature passing away of my poor father on Sunday morning last, after having kept his bed only five days. The news of his untimely decease will come as a shock to one and all, in spite of the knowledge that he has been ailing so long. I have made use of the expression "poor" in reference to my father, not merely to correctly describe the poverty with which he was surrounded at his death, and since his occupation of 73, Great Ormond Street, but also in a sentimental sense, for how many are there of his readers, who have followed him faithfully during the past two years or more, who have failed to detect the vein of abject sadness and disappointment underlying so much that he wrote? What could be more pathetic than his article entitled, "Personal Experiences: The Mountain Peaks of Life," which appeared, together with his portrait, in the first issue of 1893? He says:—"In short I have reached the summit, and I am now 'toddlin' door life's brae.'" This is touching evidence of the decline of that vigour and hope which had, up to that time, sustained him almost single-handed in a stupendous undertaking extending over a period of many years. It was at this time that the dreaded disorder, which completely undermined and shattered his constitution began to manifest itself, but in spite of its ravages, he continued to carry out the work he felt himself called upon, and constituted, to perform, and to the very end he maintained this position.

The causes of death, as specified on the doctor's certificate, were "Diabetes Mellitis, Chill and Exhaustion." but the real cause of his untimely end (he was only 60), is to be traced to the years of constant mental and physical strain and anxiety to which he subjected himself for the welfare of the Cause he so unselfishly advocated. I have been intimately associated with my father, and the affairs of the Spiritual institution for the past fifteen years, and I declare him to have been one of the most unselfish and self-sacrificing men it is possible to conceive in the interests of his work in connection with Spiritualism.

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<sup>4</sup> *The Medium and Daybreak*, No. 1292.—Vol. XXVI London, January 4, 1895 page 2

Striking evidence of this characteristic is found in the destitution into which he was plunged, and which my brother, myself and our mother shared with him, in the hope that relief would come ultimately, and before it was too late for him to know that he and his family were free. It was always the fervent wish of my brother and myself to see our parents free from debt and hardship in their more advanced years. But such unfortunately was not to be during his life-time, and I now regret that I did not publicly identify myself with the question of the "Liabilities" long ago, for I know for a certain fact that the knowledge of my responsibility, and the long years of disaster and distress through which we have passed during our association with him, preyed heavily on his mind and shortened his life. Then, again, the disappointment resulting from his ineffectual efforts to free, first himself, and afterwards his family, from liability, and the depression which accompanied his distressing complaint, broke his heart, and caused him to neglect himself. Yet his determination and ardour were not checked, in the least degree, although physically he was only the shattered wreck of his former self.

Only three nights before his death he lay in bed planning the programme of future efforts, and the development of ideas, and making resolutions to struggle with his complaint, and follow our advice. He was so confident that his illness was only a passing indisposition, that in a long conversation which we had together during the early stages, he attributed his feeling so unwell to a further change or crisis in his malady, and assured me that he would renounce his old system of living, and especially diet, and take the necessary nourishment which we had constantly urged upon him long before he was stricken. To look upon this frail, worn man—the mere shadow of his former self—and to hear him talk so assuredly of his restoration, and his hopes and plans for the future, was a heartrending sight indeed, and his enemies (even supposing that he had any really such, and I am sure they mostly existed in his imagination) would have felt the deepest compassion and sympathy for him. He bore the hours of intense suffering with the greatest fortitude—never complaining in words of what he endured—and on Thursday, December 27, he would insist upon getting out of bed to write the "Personal Paragraphs" which were printed on page 822 in last week's issue. These were the last words he wrote, and this action displayed the determination and spirit of the man, and shew how self-sacrificing he was even on the point of death. On Saturday afternoon indications of failure set in and he was conscious only at intervals, but during the periods of consciousness his brain was as active and clear as that of a strong vigorous man, and four hours before his death, when in a state of partial delirium, he told my mother that he had arranged the first issue of the MEDIUM for the New Year on the wall opposite his bed, but he added: "I shall not see 1895." During his short but fatal illness he spoke very often of Luther Colby in the warmest terms of admiration, and arranged that the obituary and portrait of Mr. Colby should constitute the first article in this issue. Alas, he did not seem to realize until the last that his own would occupy the self-same place, and that it would be the painful task of his sons to help close his eyes, and announce his transition. For four days and four nights my mother had not removed her clothing, nor had an hour's rest, so we relieved her on Saturday about eleven p.m., and she lay down on a couch in the sick room. The four succeeding hours I shall never forget, and the situation was rendered the more distressing as I felt that our constant endeavours to relieve the patient were of no avail. Just after 3 o'clock I woke my mother, and my brother and myself lay in our clothes on the bed in the adjoining room. We did not

sleep, nor attempt to sleep, as we could hear all that transpired in the sick chamber—my mother singing, and my father’s delirium gradually subsiding into silence—which we afterwards proved to be the silence of death. Then all was still until my mother touched me, and said “Jimmy, come and look at father!” I called my brother, and rushed into the next room, where he lay with his face to the light, but too late!—by the grey dawn of that cold winter morning I saw that my father’s spirit had fled and left its poor, shattered abode for us to mourn over. Who can picture our sentiments and feelings at that terrible moment, which is so difficult to realize, in spite of all our exalted philosophy?

And so my father passed away in harness, and devoting his last sparks of life to the interests of his life’s work.

The interment will take place at Norbiton Cemetery at 1.30 on Friday, 4th ist, and the service will be conducted by Rev. John Page Hopps, who is one of my father’s oldest literary associates in progressive and reformatory movements. The funeral from 73, Great Ormond Street, will be strictly private, and will be timed to reach the Cemetery about 1.30. Friends desiring to attend the interment can travel to Kingston by the 12.40 train from Waterloo.

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During 2011:—

We will be continuing the series of *Forgotten Pioneers of the S.N.U.*, each month, which started in the October issue with Hanson Gledhill Hey, General Secretary of the National Federation / S.N.U. 1901-1921. In the November issue covered William Greenwood, Treasurer of the National Federation / S.N.U., 1901c-1905, and we ended the year with Mrs. Jessy Greenwood, J.P., the first lady S.N.U. president 1923-1925.

Also in the October issue I briefly stated:—“I am at present compiling a large two volume reference book:—*THE CAUSE. The Formation of the Spiritualists’ National Union 1865-1902.*” My research was much aided during my recent stay at Stansted; almost all my research is now in hand and hopefully this work will be available towards the latter part of the year.

James Burns was present at the first meeting of “The Association of Progressive Spiritualists” held in the Mechanics’ Institution, Darlington, on Wednesday and Thursday, July 26 and 27, 1865. He continued his association with this group of “Progressive Spiritualists” first attempts at ‘National Organisation’ until 1872. During this period, in April 1867, Burns started a new monthly journal *Human Nature*, the mouthpiece of non-Christian, Progressive Spiritualism.

TAKING UP THE CHALLENGE

Very few Spiritualist presidents have written autobiographies.⁵ To that select group we can now add Eric Hatton's moving account of his 84 years.

Eric began to investigate Spiritualism in 1945, but it was evidence of the survival of his brother, received via a young Gordon Higginson, which shortly convinced Eric. In 1993, he succeeded Gordon as SNU president. He has known personally most Spiritualist leaders of his time, and also witnessed some remarkable mediumship.

Yet history may decide that Eric's most important work was with the JV Trust, some of whose charitable work is made public in this book (p.152). It is possible that without the help of that Trust in capital works, the college at Stansted might not have endured.



In 1947, Eric was successfully treated for a back problem by Harry Edwards at Burrows Lea (p.35). Later, among many cures, he witnessed the dramatic shrinking of a goiter by the healer at Wolverhampton, and the healing of a crippled child.⁶ It is good to be reminded of such miracles.

Eric was helped in his wider quest by another SNU president Harold Vigurs, who was interested in Sufism. [I can recall Mr Vigurs climbing the stairs at the South Wales summer school in 1969 with a copy of a book by Idries Shah.] It was fitting that when in 2001 Eric suffered a near-fatal heart attack (p. 174) he saw in a vision Harry Edwards, Gordon, Harold Vigurs, and his father, who advised Eric "Not yet." The memory of the colours in this near-death experience especially remained with him.

Actually Eric (like Gordon) might well have died in harness in 1996, had he not resigned as SNU president (p.162). "With hindsight, I realise I had perhaps taken on rather too much" he notes. That Eric's work continues today underlines the wisdom of that resignation.

⁵ Examples include Ella Sheridan (GWCSL "Across the Valley" 1971). Arthur Conan Doyle (LSA & BCPS) "Memories and Adventures" 1924). Gordon Higginson (SNU "On the Side of the Angels" 1993) and Dawson Rogers (LSA, "Life and Experiences", 1911).

⁶ Coincidentally, Jim Pym has also written recently of remarkable healings he witnessed with Harry Edwards. See "In Touch" NFSH No.8, 2010:—"Harry Edwards and the Golden Age of Spiritual Healing". Such eye witnesses to H.E are now few.

Many of Eric's psychic experiences were shared with his wife Heather, notably a sitting with the materialisation medium Alec Harris.⁷ Heather had been privileged to sit in a Helen Duncan seance at the age of nine. Eric also recalls a séance in Penarth where Gordon produced streams of ectoplasm, witnessed also by Geoff Griffiths (p. 202). Such cases of ectoplasm (similar testimony was given in PN by Tom Johanson, and by the Swaffer circle) are important positive data in any assessment of Gordon's mediumship.

Would Eric be recruited by the Movement today? Like Ernest Oaten⁸ he had an Orthodox background. The creation of the Churches' Fellowship for Psychical and Spiritual Studies⁹ (p.96) offers an alternative path. But Eric exemplifies the religion of Spiritualism, whose highlights have included his ordination, and a year as mayor's chaplain.

Among the pioneer mediums recalled, I was especially pleased to read of Walter Brooks, who successfully predicted the birth day and month of the second Hatton child who was not yet conceived, and of Vincent Turvey, (apparently a friend of Harold Vigurs) whose precognition was such as that he wrote out his messages for a demonstration hours before. Turvey was once well known for his classic book "The Beginning of Seership", but Brooks, perhaps because of his location up north, never achieved adequate recognition.

***Taking up the Challenge*, by Eric Hatton is published by
Saturday Night Press Publications
Take a look inside the book and purchase a copy, if you will, at Amazon.¹⁰**

⁷ Psypioneer Vol.6, No4:—*Book Review-Alec Harris* — Paul J. Gaunt, pages 89-93:—<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP6.4.April2010.pdf>

⁸ We hold a lot of information on Ernest Oaten please use Psypioneer Journal search engine at:—www.woodlandway.org then Psypioneer Journals, use keyword:—*Oaten*

⁹ Psypioneer Vol.1, No.11:— *Origin of the Churches' Fellowship for Psychical Study*, pages 124-127:—http://woodlandway.org/PDF/Leslie_Price_PP11.pdf [there are numerous other entries, please use Psypioneer Journal search engine at:—www.woodlandway.org then Psypioneer Journals, use keyword: *Churches' Fellowship for Psychical Study*]. The name was later changed.

¹⁰ <http://www.amazon.co.uk/Taking-Up-Challenge-Eric-Hatton/dp/095570507X>

EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN ON REINCARNATION

[Note by LP:—The online newspaper “Spirit of PN”¹¹ has launched a debate about reincarnation. As part of the preparation for this, at my request, Marc Demarest of www.ehbritten.org kindly assembled some references by Mrs Britten to the subject. What follows is from Marc’s investigation, and grateful thanks are tendered.]

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The word reincarnation does not appear in the first edition of *Art Magic*, but Louis de B\_\_\_\_, in *Ghost Land*, pp 320-1 does comment. Very few of the texts of EHB’s lectures survived, as they were (a) not written beforehand and (b) rarely transcribed or summarized while being delivered. Astounding indeed that Louis de B\_\_\_\_ is in a position to quote from one that Marc has not found any record of:

“Quoting from a lecture by Emma Hardinge Britten on this subject, I re-echo her unanswerable argument for immortality,—ay, ETERNAL being,—when she says, ‘Could you alter, change, or impinge upon that individualism which enables each human being to say I AM, you find annihilation; for self-consciousness is individuality, and individuality is the distinguishing characteristic of human life; so when man has attained individuality he has attained immortality, for you can no more annihilate a function than you can an atom.’

“After the death of the mortal body the soul commences a fresh series of pilgrimages, starting from the exact grade of progress it has attained through its incarnations in matter; but its progress now is as a spirit, with the memory, individuality and identity it has gained in its incarnations through the rudimentary states of matter Born at last as a soul, its new states or series of progressions commence in the spirit spheres, where every grade of spiritual unfoldment and future progress is amply provided for.

“To my dim apprehension, and in view of my long years of wandering through spirit spheres, where teaching spirits and blessed angels guided my soul’s ardent explorations, this brief summary of our pre-existent states explains all that the reincarnationists have labored so sedulously to theorize upon.”

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<sup>11</sup> [www.spiritofpn.wordpress.com](http://www.spiritofpn.wordpress.com)



EHB, writing in the 1 November 1889 (v.2 N103) issue of *The Two Worlds*:

“We cannot open our columns to the discussion of reincarnation, about which no one really knows anything.”

EHB, prefacing a transcription of an anti-reincarnationist letter written by Elise van Calcar to the International Congress of Spiritists and Spiritualists in Paris, in the July 12, 1889 (V2 N87) issue of *The Two Worlds*:

“We publish the following excellent letter, address to the promoters of the Spiritual Congress, to meet in Paris next September, not because we deem that eminent body are in the wrong to exclude any subject that may promote unkind divisions amongst the visitors; in fact, we highly approve of their purpose to discuss such general points of the spiritualistic movement and its philosophy, as all present can concur in, and grow stronger in fraternal feeling and mutual regard by so doing. Nevertheless, we publish Madame van Calcar’s paper for the sake of the arguments she advances against the doctrine of reincarnation, one (doctrine) that seems to the Editor, as to thousands of others, to lack reason, evidence or harmony with any of the known laws of the universe. We congratulate rather than condemn the promoters of the conference for excluding the discussion of this baseless, and, to many, most obnoxious subject, but we also gladly avail ourselves of Madame van Calcar’s powerful and unanswerable logic in denunciation of an idea that cuts at the very root of spiritualism and the hope of immortality, and trust its perusal will sweep away some of the fantasies that have clustered around this shadowy reflection of antique metaphysical speculations.”

(See also:—EHB’s editorial “No Controversy on Reincarnation” in the August 2, 1889 (V2 N90) issue of *The Two Worlds*.)

EHB in “Spiritualism, Theosophy and Reincarnation”, in the 16 August 1889 issue of *The Two Worlds*:

“In regard to reincarnation, we have already written in former numbers, endorsing Madame Elise van Calcar’s arguments to the full; and to all opponents we simply answer, Prove your doctrine on grounds as world-wide, conclusive, and corroborative, as are the well-proven teachings of the spirits against the belief, and you may succeed in converting us; until you can do this, we rest upon the famous Scottish verdict—NOT PROVEN.”

EHB in an editorial note following a republished editorial from the Newcastle *Daily Leader* discussing H.S. Olcott, in the TW January 3, 1890 (v.3 N112):

“[If Colonel Olcott—although the avowed founder and high priest of theosophy—were its only interpreter, and his lectures, as reported above, were the all of the cult, we should either be disposed to say, with Sir Charles

Coldstream in “Used Up,” “there’s nothing in it,” or we should think the prudent orator had studied and put in practice Dean Swift’s advice to young critics, to wit, “Please everybody—praise everybody—agree with everybody.” Unfortunately, however, Colonel Olcott’s colleagues have not been quite so complaisant as their leader, and the doctrines of “Spookism,” “Reincarnation”—utter annihilation of individuality and consciousness at death—utter annihilation of all loves, kindreds, affectations, or memory at death—a thousand years half awake and half asleep in Devachan, &c., &c., &c. ... are all published abroad as authoritative theosophical doctrines—Colonel Olcott and his *all things to all sects*, notwithstanding.]”

Perhaps the earliest discussion was “The Doctrine of Reincarnation” by Emma Hardinge Britten, in *The Spiritual Scientist* for May 20, 1875 (Volume 2, Number 11), pp. 128-9, and May 27, 1875 (Volume 2, Number 12). MD.

**Footnote by LP:**

This eloquent article has now been placed on-line at Marc’s site, together with a valuable commentary by Marc.

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# THE HISTORIAN AND THE ADEPTS

One might supposed that the people who started the current revival of interest in psychic pioneers were Spiritualists, but this is doubtful. Theosophical historians entered the field in the 1990s, if not before. Among them was the Virginia librarian Paul Johnson, whose investigation “The Masters Revealed” (1994) explored the network of occultists and political figures around the Theosophical Society founder Madame Blavatsky, including chapters on such international Spiritualists as James Peebles and the Countess of Caithness. His research presented original archive material, new and old published sources, and a different theoretical framework from that used by most Theosophists and critics of Theosophy. One of Paul Johnson’s later books is the first study of Edgar Cayce to appear from a university press “Edgar Cayce in Context.”<sup>12</sup>

Among Paul Johnson’s ongoing research is further analysis of those influential esoteric figures whose work formed the foundation of various modern movements. This is reported on a web site<sup>13</sup> sponsored by the Church of Light, which is descended from the Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor.

One of the persons whose work inspires the COL is Emma Hardinge Britten. Johnson notes “Emma lent tacit support and the HBofL regarded her *Art Magic* and *Ghost Land* as foundational documents — the “stones rejected by the builders” of the Later TS.”<sup>14</sup>

In a more recent post, Johnson returns to Emma’s friend, James Peebles who appeared at some crucial moments in pioneer history.

LP.

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<sup>12</sup> For details and a look inside the book:—<http://www.amazon.com/Edgar-Cayce-Context-Readings-Traditions/dp/0791439062>

<sup>13</sup> [www.historyoftheadeps.com](http://www.historyoftheadeps.com)

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.historyoftheadeps.com/historyoftheadeps/?p=9>

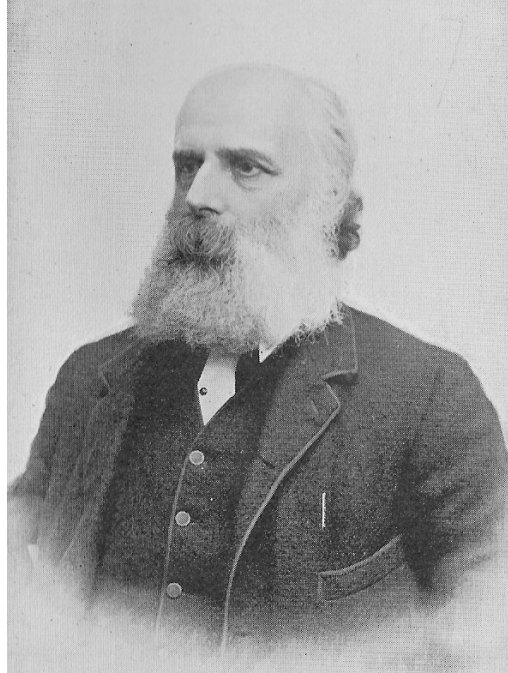
## FORGOTTEN PIONEERS OF THE S.N.U:

### Was the veteran Spiritualist William Johnson the first S.N.U., president for 1901-1903?

Most of our references on the order of Spiritualists' National Union (S.N.U.) presidents, e.g. the S.N.U., diary / yearbook—will give the first S.N.U. president as William Johnson time served—1901-1903.

But William Johnson (1838-1914) was not an S.N.U. **elected** president!

At the 1901 Spiritualists' National Federation conference held in Sheffield Mr. John Venables was elected president.<sup>15</sup> Mr. William Johnson was elected president<sup>16</sup> for the 1902 conference which was the thirteenth and last conference of Spiritualists' National Federation which met at Bootle on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of July.



At the 1903 first general business meeting and consultative Conference held on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of July at Keighley under auspices of the now legally constituted National body, "The Spiritualists' National Union, Ltd.," it was decided at the *last* National Federation meeting that—"The officers of the Federation would be the first officers of the Union, and a formal resolution was carried to give effect to this"<sup>17</sup>

At this 1903 conference, Mr J. J. Parr was to become the *first* S.N.U., elected president. In the first article of this series, the "Forgotten Pioneers of the S.N.U", which started in the October 2010 issue, a photograph of "The First Elected Council of the Spiritualists National Union, Ltd",<sup>18</sup> was published.

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<sup>15</sup> It was at this meeting:—Mr. J. J. Morse, on behalf of the Executive, then proposed, 'That this Conference adopt the advice of Mr. Bateman that the Federation be incorporated under the Joint Stock Companies' Act, with liability limited under guarantee, under the style of 'The Spiritualists' National Union Limited.' Mr. Johnson seconded, thinking it was the best scheme possible.

<sup>16</sup> It was Mr. J. J. Morse who proposed Mr. Wm. Johnson as president, Mrs. Wallis who seconded the motion.

<sup>17</sup> *The Two Worlds* July 11, 1902 page 357:—Thirteenth Annual Conference at Bootle.

<sup>18</sup> *Psypioneer* Vol. 6, No.10 page 267:—*Hanson Gledhill Hey 1866-1921: Pioneer of the Spiritualists' National Union*:—<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP6.10October2010.pdf>

It is suggested in some publications that Parr became S.N.U., president sometime after the last Federation Conference at Bootle e.g., post July 1902. Although Wm Johnson is named as president over the 1903 Keighley S.N.U. Annual General Meeting (as it was now called), I have found three suggestions that it was Parr and not Johnson who sat in the presidential chair for the 1903 A.G.M:

Jean Bassett in her: *100 years of National Spiritualism* (1990 S.N.U.) states that:—

*“Mr. W. Johnson had been elected as President to oversee the transition from Federation to Union and to lead the members through any and every teething problem that might arise from the change of status (p.28).”*

On p.29 Bassett states:—

*“At Keighley, thanks to the firm tactics and expertise in chairing of ‘Sledgehammer’ Johnson, the business was indeed completed ...”*

This could suggest that Johnson sat back and acted only as chairman rather than president. Jean told me she had access to the original SNU minutes to compile her book; strangely Mr. Parr is not mentioned.

*The Two Worlds* journal started in 1887 by Emma Hardinge Britten, was instrumental in the formation and early growth of the National Federation / Union, acting as their flagship. Almost all of the directors and editors in the early decades were deeply involved in the National Federation / Union, the TW being their mouthpiece.

In the TW July 8<sup>th</sup>, 1950 page 807:—

*“1902. The Bootle Conference approved the By-Laws of the Union Resolutions were approved enabling the Spiritualists’ National Union to take over the assets of the Federation, which was then formally dissolved. The Statuary Meeting of the S.N.U. was then held. Mr. J.J. Parr was elected President. (three years)”*

S.N.U., General Secretary, Frank Harris gives us a nice early overview of the presidents up to 1930, also suggesting J. J. Parr was in office much earlier:

[The photograph of William Johnson that heads this article is taken from:—*“The Two Worlds Portrait Album”* page 8. This was published around mid October 1896. This album is now available at:—[http://www.ehbritten.org/texts/primary/ehb\\_two\\_worlds\\_album\\_189x.pdf](http://www.ehbritten.org/texts/primary/ehb_two_worlds_album_189x.pdf) ]

# S.N.U. PRESIDENTS

By FRANK T. HARRIS, General Secretary of the S.N.U.

*LIGHT*:—<sup>19</sup>

IT is interesting to review the personalities who have occupied the chief office of the Spiritualists' National Union.

There have been twelve Presidents since 1902, when J. J. Parr was elected first President at Bootle. He held the reins for three years, and was succeeded in 1905 by John Adams. Two years later, in 1907, George P. Young was installed as President, to be followed in 1909 by Frank Hepworth, and A. W. Wilkinson in 1910. The next year George Young was again elected, but did not complete his term of office, having gone to build a new home in British Columbia.

The annual conference of 1912, at Liverpool, is memorable for the organising of an International Conference in conjunction with the annual general meeting. George T. Gwinn was elected President on this occasion and held office for three years. By this time the Great War was in progress, and only *pro forma* conferences were possible. In 1915, E. W. Oaten took office, and had the honour of creating a record of five years continuous service. In 1920 G. F. Berry succeeded Mr. Oaten. He was re-elected in 1921 and 1922, but relinquished his office on his appointment as General Secretary at the October Council meeting, when Mr. Oaten stepped into the breach.

The 1922 conference was held in London. Like the Liverpool conference of 1912, it is notable because again a further International Spiritualist Conference was organised in conjunction with the A.G.M. It has a greater claim on our memory, since the convening of the first International Conference was among the first, if not actually the very first step taken by an Association in Great Britain to attempt to overcome the animosities and hatreds of the war years, and bring together in fraternal association delegates from the countries who had so lately been at deadly grips in war. It may be remembered, too, for the establishment of a provisional committee, charged with the duty of framing a constitution for and convening the conference in 1923, which saw the foundation of the present International Spiritualists' Federation.

In 1923 the conference elected its first lady President in the person of Mrs. Jessy Greenwood, of Hebden Bridge. In these days of woman's emancipation, it is quite surprising that there should have been no other feminine aspirants for the highest office in the Union. In 1925 she was succeeded by Mr. R. A. Owen, who held the office for three years. In 1928, E. A. Keeling took the chair, holding it with great ability till 1930, when J. B. M'Indoe,<sup>20</sup> the present occupant, was elected.

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<sup>19</sup> *Light* February 21, 1935 page 122

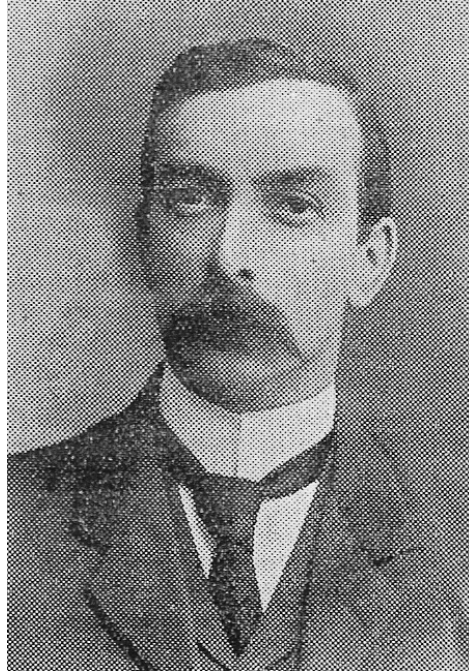
<sup>20</sup> John McIndoe, SNU president 1930-1938

# MR. J. J. PARR

*The Two Worlds:*—<sup>21</sup>

THE movement of modern Spiritualism has been recruited from every branch of the Christian Church, and it is from Roman Catholicism that the subject of our sketch was drawn. Probably no man in the County Palatine works harder for his Cause, and this may perhaps be due to the fact that he is Lancashire born and bred.

Born and reared in St. Helens of Romanist parents, his early religious training was gained from the priests of that Church. Nothing occurred to create doubt of any kind until 1881, when, preparing for a competitive examination in religious knowledge for the Duke of Norfolk's Medal, he asked for the Bible to study from. His parents sternly rebuked him, and for the first time the mind realised a sense of imprisonment. However, he proceeded with his studies, and eventually secured the coveted medal.



But the prize did not destroy the doubts. Obtaining a Bible, he freely used it, and though every step was painful, he went farther from the 'only Church.' The year 1890 found him on the verge of Atheism, and proving all the time that 'the way of the doubter is hard.'

In 1894 he entered into membership with the Bootle Unitarian Church, finding the views of that body most harmonious with his own theological evolution. In 1895 he listened to a lecture by the late Florence Marryat, the subject being 'There is no death,' and was so much influenced that on the following Sunday he attended Daulby Hall, and for the first time listened to a trance address through Mr. J. J. Morse. Recognising that there seemed to be something in it, and being determined to know how much there was of that something, he joined the Liverpool Society in the days of John Lamont, E. Allen, S. S. Chiswell, and others.

A course of monthly lectures by Emma H. Britten helped him into private circle sitting, and here the greatest proof followed in the outgrowth of his own mediumship, one special test being a well-recognised impersonation of a paralysed man unknown to him.

For about 18 months he acted as conductor of the public circle, and, then, with fullest co-operation of the Liverpool Society, he, in conjunction with the late Mr. J. R. Dibble and

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<sup>21</sup> *The Two Worlds*, March 21, 1902, page 151. [Photograph taken by, E. Hinchcliffe. 8a, Norton Street, Liverpool]

Mr. J. G. Owen, founded at the County Hall the present Bootle Society of Spiritualists. This society he has continued to serve as secretary without break, except during 12 months when he occupied the presidential chair. After six months' tenancy of the County Hall, the society moved into the Masonic Hall, this representing a difference between a rental of 7s. 6d. weekly, and £55 per annum.

Mr. Parr's first contact with the National Federation was at the Walsall Conference, where, as a delegate from Liverpool, he received an excellent test from John Slater, of California. He has never missed a Conference since, and in 1899 was elected to the Executive of the Federation at Blackpool, and has remained there without a break.

His work as the secretary to the Propaganda Committee is well known, and the whole of the active mission work done by the late Mr. J. Swindlehurst and assistant missionaries has been under his direction. As treasurer of the Swindlehurst Memorial Fund, and secretary and treasurer of the Ten Thousand Shillings Fund, his work has been colossal.

No first impression suffices to explain or reveal the man. Brusque and candid almost to a fault, he *is* the soul of honour, *and* has the soul of a man. To the writer, who has been almost in daily contact with him for the past three years, he is the incarnation of brotherly kindness. Whatever office he accepts, his whole heart goes into the performance of its duties. Other men have done and are doing a noble work in connection with Bootle, but the fact remains that J. J. Parr is the mainspring.

The movement needs men of this type—the foe of, the unworthy, the faithful ally of the deserving. His home hospitality, to the excellence of which most of the present-day mediums can testify, has been ungrudgingly dispensed with the faithful co-operation of his excellent wife. He may not be eloquent in the sense of being capable of pouring forth torrents of words, but his platform utterances are characterised by intensity rather than volubility, by the practical rather than the ideal. Our movement need never fear so long as its pioneers are being followed by such men as J. J. Parr. Wealth we can do with, wealth we can welcome, but let us never forget that—

Ill fares the land to hastening ills a prey  
Where wealth accumulates and men decay.

—G. H. B

Incidentally, the article is signed G. H. B., this is George Horatio Bibbings, a member of the National Federation—he will be featured later in the series. His name appears in the birthday honours list in 1937 as being a recipient of the MBE.

Paul J. Gaunt

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# IT'S SIXTY YEARS SINCE SPIRITUALISM WAS LEGALISED

And it is now possible for everyone to read the proceedings in Parliament.

The full text of the House of Commons debates on the Fraudulent Mediums Bill 1950 is available on line. We can see what was said in those debates, about the 1944 Duncan case for example, and about Conan Doyle's earlier efforts.

<http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1950/nov/17/fraudulent-mediums-bill>

<http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1950/dec/01/fraudulent-mediums-bill>

[http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1951/apr/20/fraudulent-mediums-bill#S5CV0486P0\\_19510420\\_HOC\\_50](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1951/apr/20/fraudulent-mediums-bill#S5CV0486P0_19510420_HOC_50)

There is an on line index to Hansard matters, which includes other references to Spiritualism, such as this 1944 incident.

[http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1944/oct/26/spiritualist-meeting-altrincham-use-of#S5CV0404P0\\_19441026\\_HOC\\_81](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1944/oct/26/spiritualist-meeting-altrincham-use-of#S5CV0404P0_19441026_HOC_81)

or again

[http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/written\\_answers/1944/oct/31/spiritualism-and-psychic-research#S5CV0404P0\\_19441031\\_CWA\\_46](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/written_answers/1944/oct/31/spiritualism-and-psychic-research#S5CV0404P0_19441031_CWA_46)

We should also note the Fraudulent Mediums Bill in the Lords, where Lord Dowding introduced it and alluded to the Duncan case.

[http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1951/may/03/fraudulent-mediums-bill#S5LV0171P0\\_19510503\\_HOL\\_117](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1951/may/03/fraudulent-mediums-bill#S5LV0171P0_19510503_HOL_117)

There is clearly scope in the future for learning more from Hansard about psychic pioneers. Take for example an exchange in 1911 with Winston Churchill.

[HC Deb 06 March 1911 Vol 22 cc814-5 814](#)

*§Mr. JAMES PARKER* asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has received a petition from the Spiritualists' National Union praying for an amendment of the burial laws, so as to enable that association to bury their deceased members according to their own funeral rites; and, if so, whether the prayer of the petitioners can be acceded to?

*§ Mr. CHURCHILL* I have received the petition referred to, but as at present advised, I do not think that any legislation is called for. Section 1 of the [Burial Laws Amendment Act, 1880](#), authorises in certain circumstances the burial of persons in consecrated ground without the performance of the Church of England service. Under Section 6 of the same Act, the burial

may be either without any religious service or with such Christian and orderly religious service as the person in charge of the burial thinks fit, and “Christian service” is defined as including “every religious service used by any church, denomination or person professing to be Christian.” If, therefore, as I understand, the members of the Spiritualists’ National Union profess to be Christian, they are entitled to the full benefit of the Act

Finally, here is a light hearted extract from the very long 1950 second reading debate.

*§ Mr. Paget*

On a point of order. Is it in order, Sir, to read a newspaper in the Chamber?

*§ Mr. Deputy-Speaker (Sir Charles MacAndrew)*

Preparatory to an introduction to a speech it might be excusable.

*§ Mr. Turton (Thirsk and Malton)*

Is it in order on this occasion to read the “Psychic World”?

*§ Mr. Deputy-Speaker*

I do not think it is.

*§ Mr. Hale*

If the hon. Member’s preoccupation with his paper has prevented him from hearing my remarks I willingly forgive him.

*§ Mr. Turton*

I have heard all the hon. Gentleman's remarks.

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Matthew Hutton writes in PW Feb. 2011 (p.20.)

“Psychic World was first founded by Maurice Barbanell in 1946. It was constant pressure from the Catholic Church which forced Psychic World to cease publishing in 1951. Simon Forsyth attempted to resurrect Psychic World in 1993, but only managed to release twelve issues over the next two years. Psychic World did not truly become the publication it is today until Ray F. Taylor (BA) re-launched it with his first issue in January 1995.”

LP.

The Beginnings of Full Form Materialisations in England

Herne and Williams:—Professional Partnership:

Frank Herne and Charles Williams were major mediums at the beginning of form materialisations, especially in public demonstrations. It was in 1871 that Frank Herne was joined by Charles Edward Williams; their partnership was successful and for the next couple of years they held séances at 61, Lambs Conduit Street, Holborn, W. C. London. Their rooms are partly described in the *Medium and Daybreak* for August 1871:—²²

“I found myself at Messrs, Herne and Williams’s rooms in Lamb’s Conduit Street, The apartment into which I was ushered was an ordinary drawing-room over a clothier’s shop. At one end of it—that furthest from the street—were folding doors which, when closed, formed the dark room.”

Another description from 1871:—²³

The séance room at Lamb’s Conduit Street, was on the first floor. It was 12ft. by 10ft. 4ins., and contained no furniture but an oval table 5ft. by 4ft., and the chairs on which ten people sat, closely packed around it. There were folding doors between it and a back room, which was entered and examined by the sitters before the séance, and the doors giving entry to both rooms were locked. The window in the séance room was covered to exclude the daylight.

Francis G. Herne had begun his séances in January 1869; his public mediumship appears to have started with general clairvoyance and trance, then in 1870 elongation appeared. [Another medium at this time who was demonstrating elongation was James J. Morse!]

Mr. C. W. Pearce, in describing a séance held in 1870, with Herne, in London, says:—²⁴

“. . . His body was inflated and his chest expanded so much that his coat fell off his shoulders, and his trunk was so elongated that there was a space of between six and eight inches between the top of his trousers and the bottom of his waistcoat; he then sat down in his chair, and gradually returned to his normal size. When the control was released he was unconscious of what had passed, except from the disordered state of his dress. We spent a few minutes talking over this extraordinary phenomenon, much regretting we had not measured his

²² *The Medium and Daybreak*, August 4, 1871 page 253:—*Three Days Among the Spiritualists*.

²³ *The Facts of Psychic Science* by A. Campbell Holms, 1969 University Books Inc., N.Y., (originally published 1925) page 360.

²⁴ Originally published in *The Spiritual magazine*, 1870, page 400. Also published in *The Facts of Psychic Science* by A. Campbell Holms, 1969 University Books Inc N.Y., (originally published 1925).

height, breadth, and girth, when we were surprised to see the same phenomenon repeated, whereupon, not having a measure wherewith to measure him, one of our number, who stands about five feet ten inches, and is proportionately broad, compared himself with him, and we made the following observations, viz., that Mr. Herne stood about four inches higher and was proportionately broader—giving, as near as we could estimate, an elongation of eight inches, and an enlargement of bulk of about six inches.”

Herne started to hold regular public circles at James Burns’ Progressive Library and Spiritual Institute; in July 1870 admission to these séances was 2s. per person. The circles took place on a Monday evening at 8.00pm. Towards the end of this year the Monday circles were aiming for the manifestation of spirit-voices, but admission remained at 2s. For those who wished to investigate this phenomenon more intimately, a series of private séances was suggested, commencing on Tuesday 3rd January 1871.²⁵ A ticket for six consecutive Tuesday evenings cost £1. 1s, with only eight sitters being admitted.

By April 1871 Hearn, now partnered with Williams, held séances at Jas Burns establishment at 15, Southampton Row, London, W.C., covering Monday and Thursday evenings. After December 30th of this year they announced they would be not sitting in London until further notice, as they were taking engagements in the provinces. In the latter part of June 1872, Williams resumed his regular public séances at Lambs Conduit, while Hearn remained in the provinces until early July.

Within a few months of their partnership, remarkable occurrences began; the transportation²⁶ of mediums and other objects. The most famous alleged incident involved the medium Mrs. Elizabeth (Lizzie) Guppy (1838-1917) who was transported by the spirit of Katie King, from her home at Highbury Hill Park to 61 Lamb’s Conduit Street.²⁷ James

²⁵ Incidentally, at around this time in early December 1870 “The College of Mediums” was founded at the Burns Spiritual Institution, with Mr. Cogman as its first president. During Jan 1871 a term/course of six Wednesday evenings at the Spiritual Institution would cost 5s. Although this College was fairly short lived, it is an interesting part of history; it was post- 1876 following the publication of *Art Magic* that the concept of any college/school was popularised. Robert Cogman (1810-1876) was the first in London to establish a successful training school for mediumship. His *East End Spiritual Institution* was responsible in helping many mediums develop, like James J. Morse, Frank Herne, Miss Eagar (later Mrs. Wallis) and E. W. Wallis.. Edward Walter Wallis would later credit Cogman and his “School of the Prophets” as he called it. Many of Cogman’s students became key figures in the foundations of the National Federation / S.N.U.

²⁶ Some reports refer to this as human apports or levitation. Another case of transportation can be found in *Psypioneer* Vol, 5 No.10, pages 328-333:—*The strange case of the Marquis’ transportation - Massimo Biondi*:—<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP5.10.October09.pdf>

²⁷ A few weeks prior to this:—“On Friday morning last (May 19th) Mr. Herne had called on a friend living at Caledonian Road. When near Thornhill Square, about twenty minutes past ten, he felt a peculiar sick sensation creeping over him, and he became unconscious and knew nothing till he came to himself at Mr. Guppy’s house, situated at 1, Morland Villas, Highbury Hill Park.” This was published in *The Medium and Daybreak*, May 26, 1871. Quote taken from *Mind Over Space* by Nandor Fodor, originally published by Citadel Press, N.Y., 1962.

Burns was the first to report this in his *Medium and Daybreak* under the heading: “Human Beings and other Objects Carried by Spirits”²⁸ shortly after a signed statement of this séance was published in *The Spiritualist*, on June 15, 1871 of which I do not have an original copy.

However, the statement was later published in Nandor Fodor’s *Mind Over Space*,²⁹ from which I quote:—³⁰

“On Saturday evening, June 3rd, at 61, Lamb’s Conduit Street, High Holborn, London, W. C., a seance was held in the rooms of Messrs. Herne and Williams, mediums. Before the seance began, the doors communicating with the passage outside were locked. The proceedings began, at the request of the mediums, with prayer. Then spirit lights, like small stars, were seen moving about, after which a conversation between the spirits of John King and Katie King was heard. John said, ‘Katie, you can’t do it’. Katie replied, ‘I will, I tell you, I will.’ John said, ‘I tell you you can’t’. She answered, ‘I will.’ Mr. Harrison then said, ‘Can you bring Mrs. Guppy?’ There was no reply but a member of the circle urged that the attempt should not be made.

“Within three minutes after Katie had said ‘I will’, a single heavy sound was heard for an instant on the centre of the table. Mr. Edwards put out his hand and said, ‘There is a dress here.’ A light was instantly struck, and Mrs. Guppy was found standing motionless on the centre of the table, trembling all over; she had a pen and an account book in her hands. Her right hand, with the pen in it, was over her eyes. She was spoken to by those present but did not seem to hear; the light was then placed in another room, and the door was closed for an instant; John King then said, ‘She will be all right presently.’

“After the lapse of about four minutes after her arrival, she moved for the first time and began to cry. The time of her arrival was ten minutes past eight. Mrs. Edmiston, Mr. Edwards, and Mr. Harrison went at once to one of the doors, and found it still locked; the other door could not be opened during the seance, because the back of the chair of one of the sitters was against it. There was no cupboard, article of furniture, or anything else in the rooms, in which it was possible for anybody to conceal themselves, and, if there had been, we, the undersigned witnesses, are all certain that by no natural means could Mrs. Guppy have placed herself instantaneously on the centre of the table around which we were all sitting shoulder to shoulder.

²⁸ *The Medium and Daybreak*, June 9, 1871, page 185.

²⁹ Although Fodor starts off with the wrong date for the séance, June 23rd, this little error is rectified on the statement date which is correct. We can only assume that Fodor has published the full statement account, as originally published in the *Spiritualist*.

³⁰ Quoted from Chapter XI:—*The Flight of Mrs. Guppy*. This book was re-published in 2006 by Kessinger Publishing, originally published by Citadel Press, N.Y., 1962.

“Mrs. Guppy said that the last thing she remembered before she found herself on the table, was that she was sitting at home at Highbury, talking to Miss Neyland,³¹ and entering some household accounts in her book. The ink in the pen was wet when she arrived in our midst; the last word of the writing in the book was incomplete, and was wet and smeared.³² She complained that she was not dressed in visiting costume, and had no shoes on, as she had been sitting at the fire without them. As she stated this to Mr. Morris, and Mr. and Mrs. Edwards, a pair of slippers dropped on the floor from above, one of them grazing Mr. Morris’ head; this was after the seance, and in the light. We all went into the dark room for a few minutes afterwards, and four flower-pots with flowers in them, which Mrs. Guppy declared to be from her home, were placed on the table at once.

“After tea a second seance was held. Within a single minute or two after the light was put out, there was a cry for a light, and Mr. Herne was seen by four persons falling from above, onto his chair. There were bundles of clothes belonging to Mr. Guppy, Mrs. Guppy, and Miss Neyland on the table, and Mr. Herne declared he had just seen Miss Neyland in Mrs. Guppy’s house; that she had pushed the clothes into his arms, and told him to ‘go to the devil.’ The light was again put out, and when it was struck once more, Mr. Williams was missing. He was found in the next room, lying in an insensible state on some clothes,³³ belonging to Mr. Guppy. He said on waking that he had been to Mr. Guppy’s house, and saw Miss Neyland, who was sitting at a table, and seemed to be praying.

“N. Hagger, 46, Moorgate Street, Caroline Edmiston, Beckenham, C. E. Edwards, Kilburn Square, Kilburn, Henry Morris, Mount Trafford, Eccles, near Manchester, Elizabeth Guppy, 1 Morland Villas, Highbury Hill Park, N., Ernest Edwards, Kilburn Square, Kilburn, Henry Clifford Smith, 38, Ennis Road, Stroudgreen, H. B. Husk, 26 Sandwich Street W. C., Charles E. Williams, 61, Lamb’s Conduit Street, W. C., W. H. Harrison, Wilmin Villa, Chaucer Road, S. E., F. Herne, 61, Lamb’s Conduit Street, W. C.”

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<sup>31</sup> Miss Neyland was Mrs. Guppy’s secretary.

<sup>32</sup> Even at this early stage of the story, within the first two publications we find a difference in the Burns version:—“*The last word inscribed in the book was “onions,” the ink of which , was wet, and there was ink in the pen*” Burns gives no clue as to whom he interviewed for his report, as he was not in attendance, it would most likely be Herne and Williams themselves, as they were at this time working at his Institution.

<sup>33</sup> Burns also states:—“*Both Mr. Herne and Mr. Williams were carried the same evening. Mr. Williams found himself at the top of the stairs, the doors being shut all the while.*”

Nandor Fodor's *Mind Over Space* discusses this in some detail with other incidents of transportation, including Frank Herne's unconscious trip from Thornhill Square to the Guppy residence, which I have briefly noted. One point that Fodor does not directly address is:—Which Katie/Katey King<sup>34</sup> assisted in the above statement i.e., “*Within three minutes after Katie had said ‘I will’, a single heavy sound was heard for an instant on the centre of the table*”<sup>35</sup> Fodor tends to assume it's the Katie King who was just starting with Florence Cook. This is not the same Katie King who is allegedly associated with Herne and Williams, although there are the inevitable contradictions, however, on balance it is fairly clear that John King's wife:—Katie/Katey King, was acting within the Herne and William's séances. It was also in 1871 that the young Florence Cook is said to have succeeded in getting direct voice, direct writing and spirit touches while under the mentorship of the Herne and Williams's circles. At this point it was clear the spirit was Katie/Katey King the daughter, who was associated with the young Florence.

The burning question is of course, could Mrs. Guppy have entered the séance room and climbed on the table herself? Fodor publishes this informative information, which we quote:—<sup>36</sup>

The answer is: yes. Technically, it was yes even at the time, of the event. *The Spiritualist* (July 15, 1871) publishes a letter to this effect. It is from an engineer who signs his name as T.V. and who was requested to make a professional survey. He said:

The question I was particularly requested to answer was the following: “Was it possible for a person to have been introduced into the room, other than by the so-called spiritual agency, without being noticed by anyone of those present?”

I am of opinion that it was quite possible.

My reasons for arriving at this conclusion are as follows:

Firstly. The adjoining room could be darkened so that on opening the door no light would be seen.

Secondly. If a curtain had been placed before the door, light and draught would have been both excluded, whilst an entrance was being made.

Thirdly. If the table had been placed in the centre of the room, there would have been sufficient space to admit of the door being opened wide enough for one person to enter.

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<sup>34</sup> The spelling Katie-Katey is used by different accounts. The John King interview published in the *Medium and Daybreak* which will be published later in the series uses the spelling ‘Katey’ for both his wife and daughter.

<sup>35</sup> Burns makes no mention of any of the John King family in his article.

<sup>36</sup> Chapter XIII, *The Mediumship of Mrs. Guppy*.

Fourthly. Though the doors made the usual considerable noise on opening, yet this would not be sufficient to attract attention during the noises which sometimes attend dark seances.

I wish, however, to state that the possibility of a person entering is no proof that a lady was not brought through the ceiling; the probability resting in great measure upon the evidence of the assembled witnesses.

“In August, 1934, I paid a visit to 61, Lamb's Conduit Street to make a diagram of the rooms if the house still existed. I found it still standing: a dingy house with poverty written in large letters over its apartments. The second and third floor had been made into two separate apartments. Mrs. Carter, who lived on the second floor, gave me permission of entry and examination.

“I found that altogether there were three doors that had to be considered as places of entry. The two doors mentioned in the original signed account of the seance opened from the passage, one directly into the seance room (which was in the back and faced a yard, its single window being opposite the entrance), the other into the front room from the end of the passage, the front room being connected with the seance room by folding doors.

“According to the signed statement of the sitters, “the doors communicating with the passage outside were locked”; that means both doors were locked before the seance began. After Mrs. Guppy’s appearance “Mr. Harrison went at once to one of the doors, and found it still locked; the other door could not be opened during the seance because the back of the chair of one of the sitters was against it.” While it is quite clear that “one of the doors” refers to the entrance into the seance room from the passage, the other door now refers to the folding door, and not to the door from the living room from which the folding door opened into the seance room.

“This causes no confusion when the floor plan of the apartment is before us. More cause for criticism may be found in the fact that the sitter whose chair was against the folding door is not mentioned by name. It happens that it was Herne, Williams occupying the opposite long end of the oval table. The only man who was in a position, and had an interest to let Mrs. Guppy in clandestinely, was Herne. By sufficient wriggling, he could have reached and turned the key of the passage door a duplicate key could have been used just as well if the original had been drawn off, or he could have opened the folding door for Mrs. Guppy. After the entrance, his own chair would have given her sufficient purchase to get on top of the table.”

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1872 saw the introduction of Spirit Forms. We have already reported on Mrs. Andrews³⁷ in Moravia, N.Y who, in the later part of 1871 is reported to have produced *recognisable* Spirit forms. Again as previously stated, Mrs. Guppy was the first in England to produce spirit faces.³⁸ Around April 1872, Herne and Williams' started their form materialisations. Florence Cook, who had attended some of Herne and Williams' early séances, had been a pupil of Herne as arranged by her father, Henry Cook, and it would be she who would be the first to produce full form solid materialisation.

Below is published a sober report of one of Herne and Williams early séances by Emily Kislingbury who would later become secretary to the British National Association of Spiritualists (BNAS) as formed in 1873; Miss Kislingbury later turned to Theosophy.

FACE MANIFESTATIONS

The Spiritualist:—³⁹

Sir,—I was present at a *séance* with the professional mediums, Messrs. Herne and Williams, last night, at their rooms, and, as the progress of the manifestations during the last few weeks has been truly astonishing, perhaps a short account of what took place may interest some of your readers.

The mediums sat in a moveable cabinet, something after the pattern of that used by the Davenport brothers. A seat is fixed inside at each end, consisting of a plain board, perforated on each side by three elliptical holes, through which the ropes are passed when the mediums are bound, thus making it impossible for them either to leave their seat or to move it with them. The front of the cabinet is composed of three panels, the two outer ones having doors which are fastened with bolts within and without. Above each door, and over the centre panel, is an aperture about a foot square and five feet from the ground, covered with a small black curtain. Through these three openings, after the mediums were entranced, the spirits first projected hands, and afterwards showed their faces for a few seconds at a time, raising and dropping the curtain as they required it. The cabinet was placed at the end of the back or smaller room, and the company sat in rows in front of it; last night the visitors were so numerous that the seats extended back beyond the folding doors into the front room. The gas here was lowered, but the light was sufficiently strong to allow those who were furthest removed from the cabinet to see the faces quite distinctly.

Last night the first face which presented itself was that of John King, with strong, black beard and moustache, dark, piercing eyes, and white turban. He did not speak to us when

³⁷ *Psypioneer* Vol.6, No.11:—*Mrs. Andrew's Mediumship*, pages 308-313:—
<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP6.11November2010.pdf>

³⁸ *Psypioneer* Vol.6, No.12:—*Spirit Faces*, Pages 341-344:—
<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP6.12December2010.pdf>

³⁹ *The Spiritualist* Dec 15, 1872, page 46.

showing his face, but he allowed the visitors, perhaps twelve or fifteen in succession, to go up to the cabinet and put a hand through the curtain; after grasping the hand, John raised the curtain, and gave each person an opportunity of inspecting his visage more closely. Later on, the spirit Katie called me up by name from the back row of seats. On my approach, she raised the curtain and showed me herself and John both together, two living, glowing human faces, radiant with beauty and beaming with intelligence. Katie's head was adorned with a veil of flowing white muslin.

I can never forget or mistake these faces, and if these manifestations are only the forerunners of what is to come—if we may, each and all, hope to recognise our own beloved friends from the spirit-world, in living, breathing forms, like those with which I stood face to face last night—I can only say that, at present, the thought seems to me almost more than human weakness can bear; and it is as well that we should first become familiarised with such sights through the introductory efforts of our kind, hard-working friends, John and Katie King. I will not relate what further took place, as the rest has often been described. I will only add that the power did not appear to flag during the whole two hours the mediums remained in the cabinet, although there were twenty-seven persons present, not reckoning Messrs. Herne and Williams. I believe that the majority were Spiritualists, unknown to myself, but apparently on familiar terms with John King and his manifestations.

93, Clarendon-road, W.
Dec. 10.

EMILY KISLINGBURY.

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Although we have not yet made a feature of the visiting American mediums Mr. and Mrs. Nelson Holmes, it was reported in our December issue:—"Mr. Holmes, who has been the most successful medium as yet in getting recognisable faces, ..." <sup>40</sup> Nelson and Jennie Holmes are an important part of the William Volckman article published in July 2010. <sup>41</sup>

As the new phenomenon of form materialisations started to take hold in England, we also had the introduction of Spirit Photography. In March 1872, Frederick A. Hudson, had his studio at 177 Holloway Road, London. <sup>42</sup> What is interesting is that it was again the Guppys who introduced the phenomena of spirit photography to England. It was Mr. Guppy who found Hudson, and in the company of Mrs. Guppy, Hudson was able to produce images of both spirit and sitter on a photographic plate.

What is not so well known is that Herne and Williams also sat with Hudson for the production of spirit photography. This led them to be implicated in spurious spirit-

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<sup>40</sup> Psypioneer Vol.6, No.12:—*Spirit Faces*, Pages 341-344:—  
<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP6.12December2010.pdf>

<sup>41</sup> Pages 185-195, *William Volckman*:— <http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP6.7.July2010.pdf>

<sup>42</sup> [http://psychictruth.info/Medium\\_Frederick\\_A\\_Hudson.htm](http://psychictruth.info/Medium_Frederick_A_Hudson.htm)

photographs with Herne and Hudson, being directly accused of fraud by William Harrison the founder editor of *The Spiritualist*.

An experienced photographer, as previously covered,<sup>43</sup> Harrison claimed to have detected fraud after examining a few of Hudson's photographs belonging to Dawson Rogers. According to Harrison, the images bore clear signs of double exposure, with the background being visible through the dress of the sitter. It was also claimed that the medium in some cases dressed up and played the part of the spirit; a predicament Frank Herne found himself in.



This photograph was taken on June 4<sup>th</sup> 1872 by Hudson, with Herne being present as the medium. I have no way of knowing if this particular photograph was one of those in question, but Harrison's charge was that Herne dressed as a spirit; Herne's counter-claim was that he was supplying the conditions to enable Hudson to photograph the spirit. Could this be Herne under the sheet, or perhaps he was off camera creating the correct conditions for the spirit extra to be photographed?

These accusations against Herne and Williams were made while they were fulfilling their engagements in the provinces. Charles Williams was the first to act:

## A LETTER FROM A MEDIUM

*To the Editor of the Medium and Daybreak:—*<sup>44</sup>

SIR,—Owing to the numerous slanderous reports which have been circulated in the Spiritualist publications lately concerning Mr. Herne and myself, I consider it my duty—on my own behalf, at any rate—to break the silence we have hitherto preserved, and which by many has been looked upon as a fulfilment of the axiom that silence gives consent.

In the first place, although my name has not been mentioned personally as having been concerned knowingly in connection with so-called spurious spirit-photographs, yet, owing to my intimate connection with those concerned in it, I

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<sup>43</sup> *Psypioneer* Vol.6, No.9:—*Portrait of the Spirit "Katie King"*, page 252:—  
<http://woodlandway.org/PDF/PP6.9.September2010.pdf>

<sup>44</sup> *The Medium and Daybreak*, July 5, 1872 page 260. The last part of the letter is not produced as Williams deals with another subject.

think it wise here to say that, having been advised by many that it was to my interest to dissolve partnership with Mr. Herne on account of his supposedly proved complicity in a cheat, I, have plainly, and as man to man, asked him whether such has been the case, and having received his denial, am willing to place credence in him. Knowing, as all should know who are acquainted with spirit manifestations, that they are often inexplicable, and bear semblances of imposture, I can on my own account, with clear conscience, look back at my connection with Mr. Hudson, knowing that I have not in any way lent myself to any trick or imposture.

I believe Mr. Hudson to be a genuine spirit-photographer. His manifestations have been put to most crucial test under my mediumship, and satisfactory results have been obtained. Why Mr. Hudson has so long kept silence and allowed all these accusations to appear against him unanswered, I am at a loss to understand, and I think it a duty not only that he owes to the mediums who have incurred reproach at his establishment but also to the cause of Spiritualism, that he should come forward and boldly deny the accusations made against him, if (as I firmly believe) he can do so with truth.

When first we went to sit as mediums for spirit-photographs, we did so for weeks without remuneration, and it was not until after we received a letter from Mr. Harrison \* (which I herewith enclose), urging us to do so, that we made any charge. He, believing that he has discovered incontrovertible marks of fraud implicating Mr. Herne, withdraws the shadow of his Ægis from us, and, more than that, throws most unnecessarily other insinuations at us in the columns of his paper, almost stating that, in consequence of these things, our genuine power to obtain manifestations had left us, and that we had lost the "voice." This shows how easily a trifle may be exaggerated to suit a purpose. It is true that for one or two séances, which we held about that time, the manifestations were weak, and the séance's proved almost perfect failures; but this has not been an unprecedented occurrence, and considering the worry and annoyance we had been subjected to, it was not to be wondered at. Even on former occasions we had temporarily lost the power, and had been obliged to go to Mrs. Berry to recover it. However, I think you have had sufficient evidence in your recent correspondence on this point, so that it is unnecessary for me further to, defend this [...] *In the latter half of this letter, Williams writes on another subject hence its omission.*

Hoping that I have not occupied too much space, I remain yours, &c.,

CHARLES E. WILLIAMS,

Medium.

61. Lamb's Conduit Street, Holborn, W.C., July 3, 1872.

\* THURSDAY NIGHT.

MY DEAR FRIENDS.—I don't know whether you think I have any right to give you any advice, but seeing that for some incomprehensible reason you have been sitting for spirit-photographs for nothing, which you can't afford to do, and that after the first rush for them is over the demand may slacken, don't you think it would be well to write Mr. Hudson a letter like the following, and to stick to it:—

“Dear Sir,—We write to inform you that in future our terms for every negative with anything spiritual on it taken through our mediumship will be five shillings cash, and we recommend you to do as many leading photographers do, namely, to obtain a deposit of ten shillings from every sitter before they are permitted to enter the garden or the studio.—Truly yours,

“HERNE AND WILLIAMS”

You see you must charge Hudson, and not the sitters, as the latter cannot be bothered for two payments; moreover, you don't want to keep account-books, and send in bills to people who don't pay on the spot. With kind wishes to you and John and Katey, whose photographs I wish I had,—Yours sincerely,

WILLIAM H. HARRISON.

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Francis G. Herne returned home from the provinces and defended himself in *The Medium and Daybreak*:—⁴⁵

Mr. Herne, the well-known medium, having been charged with complicity in the production of alleged spurious spirit-photographs taken by Mr. Hudson, 177, Holloway Road, has desired us to give publicity to the following letter. Mr. Herne may be innocent or not, but investigators will be guided in their opinions more by the palpable results than by the attestations of the parties interested. If the anomalous photographs referred to can be successfully explained, every Spiritualist will rejoice at the result:—

To the Editor of the Medium and Daybreak.

SIR,—I write to you these few lines, knowing that you, in the cause of justice, will give them publicity. Until I returned to London on Saturday last I had not seen last month's Spiritualist, nor heard of the accusations that were published against me. Through the medium of your paper, which I know has a great circulation, and much weight amongst the mass of Spiritualists, owing to your fair dealing in all such cases, I now deny most emphatically the accusation of having lent myself to the imposition of having allowed myself to be dressed up as a ghost “in at least two” of the so-called spirit-photographs. I deny it. I have not on any occasion done so. Certain proofs are specified. I cannot explain them. Spiritual manifestations are often inexplicable. I again most emphatically deny that I have ever been dressed up so as to appear as a ghost, either in that one photo spoken of as my double, or in that of any other sitter. I have never done so of my own accord or under any evil spirit-influence, and I now call

⁴⁵ *The Medium and Daybreak*, July 12, 1872 page 267.

upon Mr. Hudson to give his corroboration to my statement, and which, if an oath would intensify, I should be willing to swear to. I shall take this letter to him for his signature.—I remain, yours &c.,

(Signed) FRANCIS G. HERNE, Medium.

(Signed) FREDERICK A. HUDSON.

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All three survived the allegations primarily made by William Harrison, due mainly to the support they received from the *Medium and Daybreak* and the many testimonies to Herne's integrity, (which also included support from Miss Emily Kislbury), and support that Hudson did produce genuine Spirit Photographs. The Herne-Williams partnership carried on despite Williams' words "dissolve *the partnership*" in his letter to the *Medium and Daybreak*.

All unreferenced material is sourced from original adverts and programmes etc., as printed in the likes of *The Medium and Daybreak*, *The Spiritualist*, etc.

Paul J. Gaunt.

*To be continued ...*

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# Christmas Quiz

Here are the answers to our annual Christmas Quiz. Thanks to our Australian colleague Garth Willey, you can consult all back issues at [www.woodlandway.org](http://www.woodlandway.org)

**Where is Arthur Findlay's desk? (Clue- look at the photograph!)**

The Britten Memorial Museum, Stansted hall.

**Who was Emma Hardinge Britten's sister?**

Mrs Margaret Wilkinson. It is thought that she inherited the archives of Emma.

**Who was the young lady in a picture with the Fox sister who wasn't their sister?**

The eldest sister Anne Leah's daughter, who was called Elizabeth or Lizzie.

**Who seized a spirit form at a séance and shouted "I've got you"?**

A journalist at a South African séance by Alec Harris,

**Which famous medium had hopes of an operatic career, until she caught diphtheria and lost her voice?**

Mrs Leonard. However her nurse was a Spiritualist, and awakened her interest in the subject.

**What did the secretary at the British College of Psychic Science find in the cistern of the ladies?**

Flowers, after a visit by the flower medium Miss Lewis.

**Whose grave bore the epitaph "Steel true, blade straight"?**

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle at Windlesham in 1930. He was moved later.

**Who took hold of Sir Oliver Lodge's secretary in a fond paternal manner?**

The medium Thirza Smith, during attempts to communicate the Lodge test message.

**Whose funeral was according to the Greek ritual, with children singing around the coffin, and priests in festive garments?**

D. D. Home, both of whose wives were Russian Orthodox.

**Which clergyman was scandalised by a Spiritualist hymn book?**

Graeme Maurice Elliott, later first hon. Secretary of the Churches' Fellowship for Psychical Study.

**Which medium appears to have been first to produce materialised spirit faces regularly?**

Mrs Andrews of Moravia, New York, though *Psypioneer* continues to publish source material on this question.

**Which trance medium served as a magistrate?**

Jessy Greenwood, who was also the first woman president of the SNU.

LP.

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<http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/PP3.11November07..pdf>

*'The Cathars and Arthur Guirdham'* **Published by Psypioneer** @ £4.50 Inc U.K., postage, elsewhere (airmail) £4.95 Inc postage. ISBN: 978 0 9536719 3 9.  
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*'Six Lectures on Theology and Nature'* By Emma Hardinge first published in 1860. **Re-Published by Psypioneer** @ £9.95 + pp. ISBN: 978-0-9556539-0-2  
See *Psypioneer* 3.6 issue:—<http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/PP3.6June07..pdf>



*'Magical Spiritualism - a warning address given in 1878 to mark thirty years of Modern Spiritualism'*, Andrew Jackson Davis. Published May 2000 by Psychic Pioneer Publications, this is a small booklet 7pp £2.00 incl. U.K., postage. \*

*'The Mystery of Stainton Moses an address given in 1992 on the centenary of his death'* Leslie Price Published December 1999 by Psychic Pioneer Publications, this is a small booklet 8pp £2.50 Inc U.K., postage.\*

\*For both Psychic Pioneer Publications £4.50 Inc U.K., postage.

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Paul J. Gaunt
