

PSYCHIC
PHENOMENA

By
Helen Dames.

1/6 Net.

S
5
W

Gesellschaft für metaphysische Forschung e. V.

With very kind regards
from
F. B. Beddow.



June 1930.

dy p 9

Psychic Phenomena

BY

HELEN DAMES.



LONDON :

ARTHUR H. STOCKWELL, LTD.
29, LUDGATE HILL, E.C.4.

PPS 15



1988. 2443

(b 2923)

30

Made and Printed in Great Britain for Arthur H. Stockwell, Ltd.,
by J. F. Cook, Church Street, Rushden, Northants.

Gesellschaft für metaphysische Forschung e. V.

FOREWORD.

I WOULD like to state that every one of the incidents recorded in the following pages is true in every detail. They should not only prove interesting, but should go a long way towards making even the most sceptical realize that death is *not* the end.

PSYCHIC PHENOMENA.

As the following incident was experienced by my mother many years ago, I will endeavour to tell it in the same way as she did, as we sat around the big log fire away in dear old Ireland.

"On the evening of the 4th August, 1874, I retired to rest more than a little troubled.

That morning my youngest brother, Micheal, had wired me that he would be home after an absence of ten years. The wire was worded as follows :

'Will arrive in G.N.R. Station Belfast at twelve o'clock, noon to-day.—Micheal.'

"I was greatly disappointed when the mid-day day express steamed into the crowded station, for the face I so eagerly looked for was not there. My anxiety increased as the day wore on, and no further wire came to me ; and it was, as I have already said, with a greatly troubled mind that I fell asleep that night.

I had no sooner fallen asleep (or so it seemed to me) than a tall gentleman stood beside me, looking down

at me with dark, penetrating eyes. He was dressed as the doctor's used to dress in those days, with black silk hat and tail-coat, and carried a black bag in his hand. He wore a beard, too, which made his appearance as French as the accent in which he addressed me.

"Come with me to the window at the top of the stairs," he said.

"I obeyed, and presently we were both looking through a small diamond-shaped window-pane in the centre of many coloured panes of the same shape.

"Now this window usually overlooked a long street of red-brick houses, but just now it seemed to me that there were only five grey-coloured houses, and that outside the centre one a tall lamp-post stood.

"It was to this middle house that the stranger pointed.

"Your brother was killed to-day," he said, "by the mid-day express as it left Carrick Junction for Belfast. His body lies in that house where the lamp-post is, but the only way by which he can be recognised, is by some papers and letters in his pockets."

"I screamed and awoke, and it took my husband a long time to make me realize that it was only a dream.

"At ten o'clock the next morning, I heard a rap at the front door, and when I opened the door, it was to find a stout railway official standing there. He was holding a blue paper in his hand.

"Have you a brother called Micheal M—?" he asked.

"Yes!" I answered. And somehow my dream came before me in all its vividness.

"I am sorry to say," the official went on, "he met with a serious accident yesterday at Carrick Junction. We went to an address which was found in his pockets, but we found you had left there, and that's the reason for the delay."

"I tried hard to muster courage.—'Tell me the truth,' I said.

"He is dead!" replied the official, bowing his head. And for the first time in my life, I fainted.

"That day at twelve o'clock my husband went on the train to Carrick Junction, and there was met by a man the exact double of the stranger I had seen in my dream. He was a doctor, of French origin, and he took my husband to a row of houses, five in number, and grey in colour. A lamp-post stood in front of the centre house, and into this house they went.

"On the way, the good doctor strove to prepare my husband.

"He is badly mutilated," he said, "as the train pulled him along the lines, and it had covered almost a mile before it was stopped."

"How did it happen?" my husband asked.

"Well, it seems that he was talking to someone

on the platform, and did not attempt to board the train until it had started to go, and that then his foot slipped, and was caught in one of the wheels underneath.—It would have been very hard to locate him, as he was a complete stranger, but he had some letters and papers in his pockets, which helped us to trace his identity.'

"My husband entered the house and indentified the body as that of my brother.'

This is the incident my mother told to her growing family, and I have tried to reproduce it as faithfully as possible.

.

MANY years afterwards my mother had an experience even more interesting. In recording it, I will again use her own words.

"On the 12th of March, 1915, I was engaged in the uncongenial, but nevertheless necessary, task of washing clothes, when the door of the wash-house (which I had firmly closed) flew open. Three times I closed it firmly, but each time it defied me, and at last I had to lock it.

"That same afternoon I went to my room and rested for a while on the couch, as I had had a strenuous morning.

"I was lying, not quite asleep, but just half-doing, when I heard a fluttering of heavy wings against my window; and on looking through the window, which, by the way, was half open, I observed two huge white birds with broad yellow beaks and large, ungainly, yellow feet. I cannot find a name for them, for I have never seen, nor heard of birds of their kind.

"Their eyes held mine, for they looked most intelligent—almost human, I thought—and my heart gave a great throb of pity, for they looked dusty, and, oh, so very tired, as if they had travelled a long distance and would fain rest; and I felt no fear as they now flew in, one after the other, and settled on the couch, at my feet.

"It seemed to me then that I went properly off to sleep, and that as soon as I did so, the heavy body of a man threw himself down on the couch, beside me.

"For the second time in my life I awoke screaming; and going down stairs, told my family my strange experience.

"About two weeks later, we were informed through the War Office, that my son was killed on the 12th of March, at Neuve Chapelle, where his regiment, the Royal Irish Rifles, had been engaged in heavy fighting.

"Later still, we learned that owing to the confusion my boy, with many other loved sons and husbands, had been hurriedly buried in one huge grave.

"They did not get the chance to sleep their last sleep there, however, for one evening heavy shells from the enemy tore up the ground, and the men who lay there were scattered to the four winds—at least, their bodies were, but their souls soared far away from such maddening strife, and at least two of them came home—my son and his faithful companion.

"And one of them rested for a second beside his mother, ere he took his flight to where, we trust, he found everlasting peace.

.

Before proceeding further with strange incidents which occurred to me and mine during the Great War, I would like to relate a dream which my married sister had the evening before the war started. I had best let her tell the dream herself.

"On the evening before the start of the Great War, in 1914, I dreamt that I stood admiring a cloudless sky. It was a perfect moonlight night, and a harvest moon shone brilliantly, making the night more wonderful still; and even as I looked, bright stars came out and shaped themselves into huge figures—1914—1918.

"Then I saw the clouds beside these starry figures, and these clouds were transformed, by some unseen magic hand, into green fields, and countless people rushed through these fields.

"And then came the most wonderful sight of all, for I could see Christ, Himself, with a scythe, reaping. He scattered human souls as He walked, and it seemed to me that some were destroyed, and others lifted up out of the terrible confusion.

"I shall never forget the look on Christ's face. He looked beautiful, as if He had stepped out of a masterpiece; and yet, He somehow, looked terrible, as He walked with his scythe scattering humanity.

"Then all this gradually faded away, except the starry figures, 1914—1918.

"It took my people four years to realize that this prophecy from the heavens was only too true."

.

"Seven months later my husband wired me from the S.S. "Bellerophen," to say that all going well, he would be home in three days. On the evening that I got the wire I had another dream.

"I thought I went into a strange room, where a man sat at a small table shuffling cards.

" Bidding me be seated, this man placed the cards, face upwards, opposite me, and then I saw that, instead of bearing the usual familiar figures and designs the cards were photographs.

" The man now shuffled the cards, and having picked out three, put these three in front of me once more.

" The first one showed me my husband's ship, and the nose of a submarine a little distance away in the water ; the second depicted the ship being hit by a torpedo and being wrecked ; while the third and last pictured my husband lying, face upwards, at the bottom of the sea with the waters lapping over him as he lay.

" My dream was only too true, for, instead of my husband's coming home, I got a wire from the Admiralty to say that his ship had been sunk by an enemy submarine, and all hands lost."

.

To describe my own personal experiences, I must go back to a time many years before the war started.

The first incident was so vivid that the years can never dim one detail of it, although it was but a dream, just as the other's were.

At seventeen I was just an ordinary healthy girl,

with perhaps more than the usual crowd of boy and girl friends. These companions had all gone to school with me, and now, school days ended, we were still good friends.

It was with deep regret that I learned that one of our number, a boy named Alexander McKinnen, had fallen a victim to consumption and would no longer be amongst us.

Occasionally if the weather were fine we would catch a glimpse of him walking, with his devoted Mother, through the public Park, or listening to the band ; but then, as winter approached, even these glimpses were denied us, and the big house beside the park, where he lived, told its own tale, with its front bedroom windows wide open night and day, to give air to the suffering patient.

One rather stormy evening in October, I retired early, and scarcely had I fallen asleep when I dreamt that I walked up the drive to Alec's home and rapped on the door. I noticed that the knocker on the door was covered by a huge black silk bow—a sign of death !

The door was opened by Alec's youngest sister, Eva, a slight, pretty girl of fifteen, with her brother's hair and eyes. She smiled at me, but oh, the sadness of that smile !—it seemed to me that all the tears in the world lingered close to those smiling lips. Still smiling, she bade me enter.

The house was large, with broad stairs and many

rooms. Silently we walked up the thickly carpeted stairs, and then both stopped to look at an old, but handsome grandfather's clock, which stood silent, with its great hands pointing to the hour of two.

"He died at two o'clock this morning," whispered Eva, and then she looked around as if her eyes saw many things which it was not my privilege to see.

"Hush!—walk softly and whisper low," she added still whispering herself, "for this house is filled with ghosts."

Then, treading lightly, she entered the front bedroom, and I followed her, to where the body of my former school-mate lay.

He was even more beautiful in death than I have ever seen him in life. The lovely soft, brown eyes (I have never seen eyes like them in all my travels) were closed in death, but the creamy pallor of his face seemed to make the clear-cut nose and lips more perfect in shape, while the whole face seemed transfigured with a smile of sheer content. He had grown tall during his long illness, and stretched to the foot of the long, white bed.

He wore evening clothes (as was the custom of his people before him), and even in my dream I mourned the passing of one so strikingly perfect.

Two brown curls lay damp on the white brow, and it was with reluctance that I turned my gaze from the face and looked towards the foot of the bed.

But I did so, and then I found that Eva and I were not alone with the dead boy—someone else was present sitting at the foot of the bed.

This someone was a man, and looked to me to be a judge, for he was dressed similar to one, even to the wig. But he was not in the flesh—he was a spirit; and in his right hand he held a small hammer; letting it rest gently on the bed. And it seemed to me that he had only just dropped his hand into that position.

I awoke, and, on coming downstairs, told my people of my strange dream, which had been so vivid in every detail.

It was Sunday morning, and, it being gloriously fine after the previous evening's storm, my sister and I took a walk past our old companion's home. I was not at all surprised at seeing a black bow on the knocker—indeed, I felt that it looked familiar, and as if my eyes had seen it before.

Sadly we retraced our steps, and pulling some late-lowers from our garden, then returned to lay our simple offering on the dead boy's bed.

I wrapped on the door, and presently it was opened by Alec's youngest sister, Eva. When she saw who her callers were, she smiled—and her smile was full of tears, just as in my dream.

In answer to her request, we followed her up the stairs, and although it was the first time that we

had been inside the house, I had the same feeling of its being familiar to me, that I had had when we observed the black bow on the knocker. I could have sworn that I had seen this place before.

On the first landing stood the grandfather clock, and its hands pointed silently to the hour of two. Eva noticed me looking at the clock, and answered my unspoken question.—“He died at two o'clock this morning,” she said.

When I entered the bedroom I knew that some invisible part of me had entered that house early that morning. For the figure on the bed lay calmly smiling, and beautiful—every detail was as I had seen it in my dream.

The only thing not visible to me was the phantom figure at the foot of the bed. But perhaps he was there, too—it is not for me to say.

I have already stated that my brother, John, was killed at Neuve Chapelle on the 12th of March, 1915. We did not get the official word until some days later, but before then he had come to me as I slept. He was in uniform and looked exactly as he had looked in life, except that I knew that he was in the spirit.

He came to me as I sat at the open fire, and took

my two hands in one of his big brown ones. I felt his hand was hot, and it looked blistered too; and I remarked on it.

“It's brown and hot with holding the rifle so long,” he said.

And then his eyes grew sad (and it was the first time I had ever seen them anything but smiling) as he looked across at my mother, who sat with the rest of the family around the fire.—Curiously enough, no one, not even my mother took the slightest notice of him—it was as if they didn't see him at all.

“I stopped a bullet to-day, Cis.” he now said, using his usual name for me, “but I wouldn't mind so much if it wasn't for Mother. She is going to take it very badly, and I want you to take great care of her.—She is going to be very ill,” he went on, “and afterwards she will suffer from very severe nervous complaints and get very depressed. At such times, you must on no account ever let her be by herself—you must always be with her, as none of the others will be able to soothe her as you will be able to do.”

He then drew me from my seat, I thought, and brought me over to Mother, who still sat with a dreamy look on her face, gazing into the fire; and placing one hand on her shoulder and one on mine, he said, “Promise me that you will look after her!” And his eyes were wet.

"Shall I always know when she is going to have one of these fits of depression?" I asked, thinking of my work, and how necessary it was for me to attend to it.

"I will always come and tell you the night before she is taken ill," he replied, "and then you must stop away from business the next day."

He left us then, and I awoke.

I did not tell my mother of this dream, but I told my brothers and sisters, and it made them very uneasy indeed.

When word came through that John had been killed on that day, the 12th of March, my mother was taken very ill. Indeed, it seemed to us that her heart commenced to break from that date; but it being a very strong and brave heart, it took some years to break. She recovered from the illness, but she was never afterwards really well, and at intervals was worse than usual. However, my brother never failed me once: he kept his word, and always came to me as I slept, and bid me not to go to my business the following day.

But one night he came in such a vague way, that I could scarcely recall seeing him at all, and so I decided to go to work as usual; but when I arrived at my place of business, I could not settle my mind on anything except my brother, and it seemed to me that he was inside of me forcing me to go back

home. I tried to fight this down, and to put it aside as so much vivid imagination, but in vain; and at last, the urging impulse became so strong, that I left orders for another woman to take care of the shop, and hurried home.

Never in my life have I been so glad about anything as I was on that occasion, at having obeyed that mysterious impulse, for never since my brother's death, did my mother need me as she did that day!

I thank God that it was my privilege to comfort and soothe that stricken soul. And somehow—I cannot state the reason for it, for her affection for every one of us was the same—she seemed to respond more to me than to the other members of the family.

The night after this last incident my brother came to me, instead of greeting me with his usual cherry smile, he looked at me in a reproachful way.

"I wish that you and the others in the house would realize that I am as much alive as I've ever been," he said wistfully. "—You disobeyed me to-day, Cis," he added.

"I shall never do so again," I promised him. Yet he still looked wistful.

"Do you know, Cis," he went on, "we, my companions and I, sit with you all round the fire in the evenings, and smile with you all? And when someone of you talks about me as if I were really dead, and not with you, it makes me feel very lonely

indeed.—If only you would understand a little more!”

I would have answered him, but he did not give me time—he left me.

That was the last conversation I ever had with him; but he frequently came, and showed himself to me in a dream, as he said he would, and I never disobeyed him again.

My mother died some years later, and since then my dreams have been undisturbed—my brother has never appeared since. Perhaps he was content, once Mother was with him? God grant it may be so!

ON the 31st of May, 1916, I retired as usual, but instead of falling to sleep, as was my custom, I lay awake for hours. My mind felt greatly troubled, somehow, and I could not rest.

Now in those young days I was not a spiritualist, but though that was so, and though I had never attended any meeting dealing with Psychic Phenomena of any kind, yet on that night I could distinctly feel the presence of my brother in my room. And many other strange people were there too, and the whole room seemed filled with tense excitement, as if there were some great exciting thing taking place in the world.

I can honestly say that it was the first time in my

life that I had lain awake, I being of a healthy disposition; but now, though I tried to sleep, it was in vain, and the hours dragged on. My thoughts kept constantly recurring to the young man to whom I was engaged to be married—an artificer on board H.M.S. Defence—and eventually, knowing that my mother slept but little at night, I called her into the room and told her how I felt. Accordingly she lay down beside me, and I soon fell asleep.

Then, when I felt as if my eyes were not properly closed, the spirit-form of my intended husband came into the room; and although he was in the blue and gold of the navy, and looked exactly as he had done when I last saw him, I knew he was no longer in the body. In his right hand he held a lighted candle.

“Would you bring to me the photograph of your brother, John?” he asked.—He had never seen my brother, but I had, of course, often mentioned the latter in my letters.

He went downstairs, the light from his candle showing the way, and I followed; and then, I having pointed out the life-sized photograph of my brother on the wall, we both stood looking at it.

Then my fiance turned to me and handed me a letter which he had taken from his breast pocket. The letter, every word of which was distinct, and in his own handwriting, ran as follows.

" Dear Cis,

" We have been cruising around Jutland, and have been engaged in heavy battle with the Germans. My ship caught on fire, and every man was drowned."

The letter ended abruptly, and as soon as I had finished reading it, my fiance disappeared, and I awoke; and it took me some minutes to realize that there was no letter about my bed, and that my experience was only a dream.

I went down to breakfast, and had scarcely finished telling my people about it, when the newspaper boy handed in the morning paper; and then the first thing my eyes saw on the front page was :

" *GREAT NAVAL BATTLE.
SEVERAL SHIPS SUNK.*"

Then followed details, and we found that the *Defence* and *Black Prince* had both been destroyed in the fight. The former had caught on fire, and in a few minutes had blown up, and not one man out of more than nine hundred had been saved

Through some mysterious force, I received the news before it reached me through the ordinary medium of the newspapers—another striking example of *Psychic Phenomena* !

Four years after the battle of Jutland, I married and went to live in New Zealand.

When we had been in the country about four months, we got an invitation to go with some friends for a picnic to Pine Island.

It was a glorious day, with perfect sunshine and scenery, and I had everything to make me happy in the way of nice friends and pleasant surroundings; and yet I spent the most unhappy hours of my life that day.

My husband could not understand my being so sad, as it is not my nature to be so, and he tried to restore my usual good spirits. I tried, too, to shake off the horrible feeling of misery which had, all at once, taken possession of me; but it was all in vain, and as the day wore on, I felt some invisible thing were tugging at me, and drawing me back home, to Ireland, and I would have given all I had in the world to be able to fly back home, to my people.

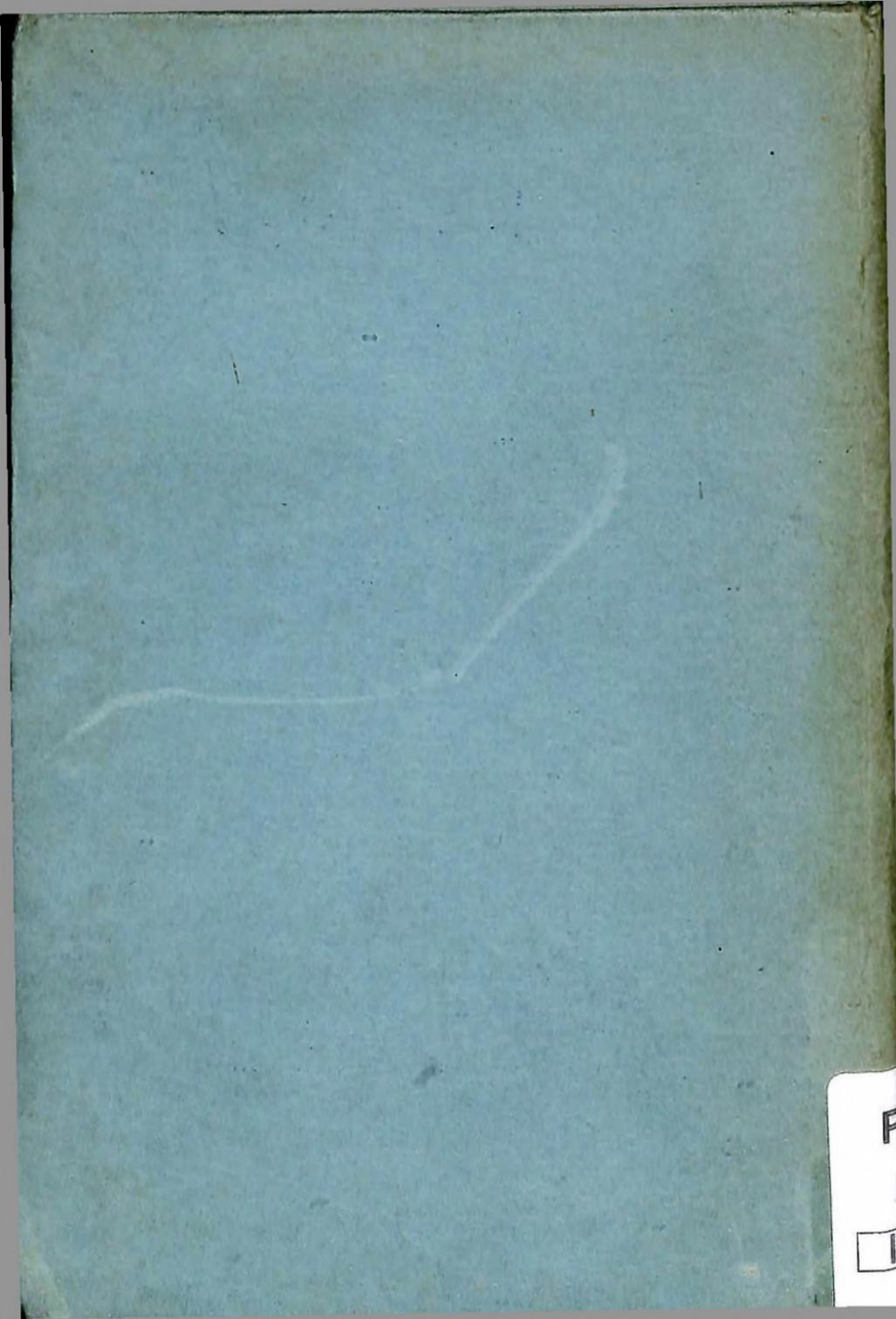
At last we got back to Auckland, and then I at once wrote home (carefully dating my letter), saying that I felt sure something dreadful had happened that day, and begging them not to keep me in suspense, but to tell me the truth.

It took that letter six weeks to go, but on the day after the picnic, I received a cable informing me that my mother had died that day. Now, it took the cable a day to come, and so my mother must

have been dying when we were at Pine Island ; and when one realizes that there were 14,000 miles distance between my home and myself, one can't but wonder at such an experience.

This was the last experience I had concerning me and mine, many others have I had since then, but they have concerned others outside my own home. It was, however, one of the latter that provided me with my motive in writing an account of the experiences here recorded, for the experience in question caused a man, a drunkard, to see the errors of his ways, and—in his own words—“ to live the life his loved ones wanted him to live when he had thought them dead.” And so, if *one* of my readers looks at the matter in this way, and comes to realize that the loved ones who have gone before see one's every action and read one's every thought, then my work will not have been in vain, and I shall feel well rewarded for having recorded these experiences.

Gesellschaft für metaphysische Forschung e. V.



P

□