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A BOOK OF REAL GHOSTS

Unbidden Guests

by

William Oliver Stevens

Are we not Spirits, that are shaped into a body, into an Appearance; and that fade away again into air and Invisibility? Oh, Heaven, it is mysterious, it is awful to consider that we not only carry a future Ghost within us; but are, in very deed, Ghosts!

THOMAS CARLYLE

Sartor Resartus: Natural Supernaturalism

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Acknowledgments

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Among individuals my warmest thanks are due to Mrs. Eileen J. Garett for her kindness in letting me have access to notes of two ghostly adventures of hers which have never before been published, as well as other incidents drawn from her autobiographical book, *My Life as a Search for the Meaning of Mediumship.* In connection with the story of "Lynn Manor" I am indebted also to Dr. Nandor Fodor and Dr. Elmer A. Lindsay, who were participants in the experience. Thanks are due to Mrs. Lydia A. Allison and Mrs. Laura Abbott Dale of the American Society for Psychical Research for their kindness in reading the manuscript, and to the latter, especially, for reading the proofs.

For the great bulk of the personal sources, the individuals in my own circle of friends and acquaintances, who have had their own ghostly experiences and confided them to me, I can only say "thank you" in general terms. For, as is quite understandable, each of these contributors would prefer to remain anonymous and they have asked me to take particular pains to conceal their identity. To admit that one has seen a ghost is, to most people, enough evidence that a person is ready for the madhouse. It is true that these friends have not been cross-examined by investigators like the people concerned

in the cases presented by the societies for psychical research, but to me there can be no doubt of their sincerity or their conviction that their story is the literal truth. Each has had the opportunity of checking his or her story as it is presented in the pages that follow.

Again, my warmest thanks to every one who has added to this anthology of strange adventures in a world of the unknown.

William Oliver Stevens

Introduction

THE phrase "real ghosts" sounds absurd on the face of it. Who, nowadays, believes in ghosts? Certainly, in this age of science, the ghost has not a shred of respectability; it has long since been banished to the realm of legend and superstition. So, if one ventures to present a collection of tales which are called "real" ghost stories, he must face an instant challenge on the use of that word. Be it said, therefore, at the outset, that the term is used, in the first place, to distinguish these anecdotes from fictional ghost stories. The narratives that follow have been recorded, at least, as genuine experiences. Whether the reader chooses to accept them as true in an objective sense is another matter. It is only reasonable to question such stories sharply because they defy natural law, and one cannot lightly accept as a fact something that is inexplicable in terms of science.

For example, if a traveler returning from the South Seas tells of a tribe that eats the bodies of its enemies, the fact is not hard to accept because it fits in with what we already know of savage peoples. But when he says also that these natives have a way of passing news from island to island over hundreds of miles of ocean by a form of telepathy, then we have a right to demand that he furnish the exact data on which he bases that surprising statement. Healthy skepticism is fair enough. It is the ostrich attitude of refusing to look at *any* evidence which is neither good science nor good sense.

Another justification for calling the narratives that follow "real" ghost stories is that, in my own mind at least, there can be no reasonable doubt that the experiences they describe were certainly real to those who describe them. It is hard to see how there can be any suspicion of lying and fraud compromising these witnesses. After all, they had nothing to gain by telling their strange stories except the probability that they would be laughed at.

At the same time, it can still be argued that though these visions

seemed real to the percipients, and they are perfectly honest in telling their stories, yet the ghost in each instance may have been something that existed only in their minds, a hallucination which they mistook for reality. As the phrase goes, they were only "seeing things." Accordingly, the whole crux of this question of the reality of these experiences is whether the ghost, in any instance, had an *objective* reality, wholly outside the percipient's imagination.

What tests can there be? An apparition is not something that can be produced in a retort on a laboratory table. It is one of those human experiences that are, in the main, unpredictable. It is a matter of examining the evidence. Who is telling the story? Is he an honest, emotionally balanced, intelligent person, capable of reporting accurately? Is he, indeed, besides all this, a man who is normally a skeptic regarding the sort of experience he relates; in other words, is his testimony, so to speak, reluctant or unwilling testimony? If a witness testifieth to the hurt of his own way of thinking and changeth not, that is about as good evidence as one can ask.

Further, we may ask, was there anyone else, another competent witness, who observed the identical phenomenon at that time or at any other time? Credibility increases with the number of reliable witnesses.

Finally, is there any objective evidence, such as the revelation of information unknown to the percipient, or the displacement and conveyance of some article which could not have been moved by human means? Was any evidence registered by some mechanical device which could not be affected by human emotion, by hypnotism, or by telepathy? Such a device would be the photographic camera employed under circumstances that preclude the possibility of fraud. Accordingly, if we come to accept any or all of the real ghost stories in the sense that what the narrators said that they saw or heard or felt had an objective and not merely a subjective reality, it will be only after the foregoing questions and others on the same lines have been met to our satisfaction. It is primarily, however, a matter of accepting or rejecting testimony.

The point is the same as that made by Henri Bergson, the French

philosopher, in regard to telepathy. In the course of his address accepting the presidency of the Society for Psychical Research, in 1913, he said: "I am forced to believe in telepathy in the same way that I believe, for example, in the Invincible Armada. It is not the mathematical certitude which I feel in the law of falling bodies. It is more or less the certitude I obtain from historical or judicial matter." He goes on to say that the facts of the mind cannot be measured by way of experiment and mathematics.

At all events, whether these ghost stories appear to be "real" in the final and most important meaning of that word is a question that rests on the judgment of the reader. Whatever certitude he reaches will be based in large degree on the probability of human testimony. This is bound to be difficult to reach because each of these experiences transcends normal occurrences; indeed, they defy the laws of nature that we are accustomed to accept as absolute. They are "super" stories: supernatural to the devout, superstition to the man of science, and supernormal to those who believe that they may yet be true.

It is worth noting, by the way, that our disbelief in specters of the dead is a comparatively recent attitude of mind. As late as the seventeenth century they still had a respectable standing. Shakespeare wrote for a public that accepted ghosts as stock characters on the stage He could count on their being taken seriously. Caesar in the tent of Brutus before the battle of Philippi, Banquo sitting in Macbeth's chair at the feast, and the elder Hamlet on the battlements of Elsinore play important parts. But in these days these specters are almost impossible to put across the footlights effectively; the audience will not take them seriously. Now ghosts are usually kept in the wings and their presence indicated by a shaft of light on the stage.

In the eighteenth century, Dr. Samuel Johnson declared that he believed in ghosts because of the fact that all races of men everywhere and in all ages had reported apparitions of the dead. His contemporary, Immanuel Kant, was not so sure. "I do not care wholly to deny all truth to the various ghost stories," he wrote in his *Traüme Eines Geistersehers,* "but with the curious reservation

that I doubt each one of them singly yet have some belief in them all taken together." It is the argument that a single branch may be weak but a whole faggot is strong, or where there is so much smoke there must be some fire.

Another frame of mind on this subject, quite characteristic of the eighteenth century intellectuals, was expressed by Madame du Deffand, who, when asked if she believed in ghosts replied, "No, but I'm afraid of them."

As the eighteenth century Age of Reason gave way to its child, the nineteenth century Age of Science, ghosts vanished from literature and the stage because people no longer believed in them. One notable exception occurs in the novel *John Inglesant*, where, in a finely written scene, the ghost of Lord Strafford strides through the anterooms of Whitehall and enters the chamber of King Charles. In the theater, two familiar plays might be named, also, as exceptions: "The Return of Peter Grimm" and "Outward Bound."

The new science, unable to make a place for ghosts in its scheme of things, banished them into the outer darkness of primitive superstitions. All the more so because the philosophy that grew out of the new science had no place for the human soul.

Nevertheless, in defiance of Messrs. Haeckel, Tyndall and Spencer, stories of the "supernatural" continued to be reported. Many of these came from people who could not be lightly tossed off as fools or frauds. And so it happened that in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, at the very time when ghosts and souls had been disposed of by the pundits, a group of distinguished scholars, authors and scientists in England began investigating these mysterious happenings to see if there could be any truth in them. They called them "psychic phenomena," and the group took the name Society for Psychical Research. They agreed on strict rules of evidence, investigated the cases reported to them and published their findings in a series of *Proceedings*. For the first time a ghost story was subjected to the same kind of examination that the testimony of a witness receives in a court of law.

Some of these investigators were top rank scientists, like Alfred Russel Wallace, Sir William Crookes, Sir William Barrett, Pro-

fessor Rayleigh, Sir Oliver Lodge, and our own William James. The reputation of these men was unassailable; all they demanded was that psychic phenomena should be investigated like any other phenomena. But they brought on their heads a storm of ridicule that tended to compromise their standing as men of science. Once a dinner was given in honor of Sir William Crookes, the eminent physicist, and it was proposed to display in compliment to him the motto *Ubi crux ibi lux*. A wag altered it to "Ubi Crookes ibi Spooks." The whole assembly came down with a roar of laughter, in which the guest of honor joined heartily. By that time he was used to it.

Orthodox science has not changed its attitude in our own time. Those who look upon ghostly phenomena with respect are, for the most part, physicists and astronomers, the men of science who come upon facts in their own fields that baffle explanation and common sense. For example, Professor Gustav Strömberg of the Mount Wilson Observatory makes this comment in his *Soul of the Universe:*

"All races on earth seem to have recorded them [apparitions of the dead] and many are so well authenticated that we have no right to doubt them. The reason why they are usually ignored by investigators who have not themselves had any such experiences is that it seems entirely impossible to explain them scientifically."

If a distinguished scientist says that we have no right to doubt well authenticated ghost stories, a layman may have the right to present as "real" a number of stories that seem to fill the requirement of being well authenticated, regardless of the general contempt for the subject. Once scientists flinched from new truth because it contradicted the Bible or some doctrine of their religious sect. Even Isaac Newton, it is said, suffered from the dread that he might discover some law that would not harmonize with revealed religion, particularly the Book of Genesis. Today it is not orthodoxy of religion that scares people but orthodoxy of science. And the ghost is the very essence of heresy because it does not fit in with the scientific scheme of things; it defies explanation in terms of natural law as it is now understood. Yet if phantoms continue to

be seen and heard by reputable people, it would seem as if something should be done to look into the matter.

Of the collection of stories presented in this volume it may be said that the term ghost is used only in connection with spontaneous experiences. Phenomena produced by mediums will not find a place here for the reason that the presence of a medium complicates the problem of deciding whether or not a manifestation is genuine. Too many who have produced "materializations" in the past have done so out of a combination of darkness, cheese-cloth, and sleight of hand. It is simpler, therefore, to omit all mediumistic phenomena, however genuine many of them may be.

Further, the term ghost story will be used in these pages to include not only the apparitions registered on the eyes of the witnesses, but also other phenomena such as sounds, voices, movements of objects, and the like. The voices that Joan of Arc listened to were no less "ghostly" than the vision seen by Bernadette, for all these phenomena seem to be bound up together in one great mystery.

In the selection of material for this collection of real ghost stories I have first of all taken experiences narrated by people of unimpeachable integrity. Also, in as many instances as possible, I have used testimony coming from out-and-out skeptics so far as any spirit theory is concerned. It is this unwilling testimony, referred to earlier, that is the most convincing. Again, due weight is given to the number of witnesses of the same occurrence and the examination made of these witnesses by competent researchers. Some of the shorter anecdotes are the experiences of my own friends, and I am frank to say that in these instances their word means more to me than a whole stack of affidavits signed by strangers. Finally, for the principal tales I have gone to printed sources, which the reader may consult if he wishes to study the material in detail.

Since the best work in psychic research has been done in England, it is not surprising that the best attested cases have an English setting. No collection of real ghost stories could omit some of these English instances, but since the American instances are

not so well known, I have tried to find as many good American experiences as possible.

As actual human experiences, all of these stories must stand or fall with the weight of evidence they appear to bring. It is hard for any intelligent person to accept as true some phenomenon that on the face of it sounds like nonsense. For most people it is still impossible, no matter what the facts are. As a man said to a friend of mine after he had related an experience of his own, "I wouldn't believe that if I saw it with my own eyes!" Hamlet illustrates this attitude of mind. In his famous soliloquy he wonders whether there is any afterlife; he speaks of "the undiscover'd country from whose bourn no traveller returns." And yet he had just seen the ghost of his father, and received from him a long and evidential account of the murder by Claudius. But no sooner is the ghost departed than Hamlet begins to doubt the reality of what he had seen and heard.

At all events, the following pages contain "real" ghost stories of many sorts. The reader, of course, is free to accept them as true or reject them as false. But he should be warned that if even a single one of these narratives seems to be, beyond reasonable doubt, the record of a true experience, then he must face an issue. For such a thing as an apparition is supernormal; since it does not fit in with our scheme of natural law, it demands an explanation. It also raises a great cloud of troublesome questions. To those whose minds are channeled into grooves such a challenge is intolerable. It is simpler to dismiss all the evidence as "bunk."

Others may be led by the evidence to admit that, without accepting these phantoms as spirits of the dead, they are free to confess that as yet we know very little about the human mind, that there must be vast and shadowy realms of which we have no conception. And these rare and mysterious experiences are phenomena that point toward that conclusion.

One of these days such phenomena will have to be recognized by science and some key sought to unlock their secret. At present these things are still only a matter for ridicule, but that attitude cannot be maintained forever. Goethe, in one of his conversations with Eckermann, made the following observation that applies to

this subject with special force: "In the sciences . . . if anyone advances anything new . . . people resist with all their might; they speak of the new view with contempt, as if it were not worth the trouble of even so much as an investigation or a regard; and this new truth may wait a long time before it can win its way."

*

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Chapter I

Quiet Haunts

IN THE popular mind the word ghost is associated chiefly with certain localities, where the specters are said to "walk" and reveal themselves by sight or sound or both. If these manifestations happen repeatedly, these places are said to be haunted.

On the face of it this sort of thing would appear sufficiently absurd to be dismissed with a laugh. And yet there is an astonishing amount of evidence to suggest that certain places, especially houses, have been afflicted by what seem to be "haunts" under conditions that look as if they were impossible to explain by hallucination or the practical joker. Camille Flammarion, the French astronomer, wrote a book on haunted houses, in which he declared that he knew of 180 houses which, he was satisfied, were actually haunted.* He quotes Lombroso, the Italian criminologist, as authority for the statement that there were 150 houses in England alone which were tenantless because of mysterious sights and sounds.

On the other hand, some of the phantom visitants appear to be so quiet and well-mannered that the living tenants get along very well with them and sometimes are really proud of them. The Irishman Elliott O'Donnell, who has written a number of books on ghosts, says that at the MacNeill residence, in Cantire, Scotland, the owners are said to reserve one of its rooms for the exclusive use of a friendly shade. Many ancient dwellings in Scotland, Ireland, and England are famous for their legends of ghostly tenants. Chief among these is Glamis Castle, which probably enjoyed its spooky fame at the time when Shakespeare wrote *Macbeth*. For, in the sixteenth century, the widow of the lord of the castle was condemned as a witch and burned alive. Since then Glamis has added

* *Haunted Houses*, p. 103.

to its legends with a secret chamber of unknown horrors, and the ghosts of wicked earls who killed each other in duels over their gambling losses, all in the romantic tradition.

Violet Tweedale, the Scottish novelist, says that in Scotland ghosts are a family possession "like the portraits and the silver." And it is probably fair to say that among cultivated people in the British Isles there is much more disposition to accept the existence of haunts than in the United States. There, at any rate, ghost stories are not merely a part of the folk-lore of peasants and fishermen.

Mrs. Tweedale, in a book with the creepy title of *Ghosts I Have Met*, quotes the following advertisement that appeared in the London *Morning Post* of February 27, 1919:

Haunted or disturbed properties. A lady who has deeply studied this subject and possesses unusual powers, will find out the history of the trouble and undertake to remedy it. Houses with persistent bad luck can often be freed from the influence. Strictest confidence. Social references asked and offered.*

If a person can take up the profession of "laying" ghosts, it suggests that more people in England are troubled over their haunted homes than one would imagine. And the allusion to social references makes it clear that these are people of standing. Certainly, it is the haunted dwellings of the educated and upper class people in Britain that we read about, possibly because there it is difficult for plain people to get a hearing for their own haunts.

For an example of these family ghosts in England we might go back the better part of a century and visit Raynham Hall, the country seat of the Townshend family in Norfolkshire. This was the scene of a famous clash between a ghost and the redoubtable Captain Marryatt, author of the sea stories that delighted the generation of our grandfathers. It will serve as well as any to illustrate the haunted house story of which there are so many instances in the British Isles.

At the time the incident is supposed to have happened, Raynham Hall, together with the title, had just changed hands. The new

* *Ibid*, p. 275.

owners, Sir Charles and Lady Townshend, refurbished the old place with new wall paper and paint. But shortly after they moved in they discovered that they had a ghost in the house. One after another, each of their guests would make sudden excuses to go home.

Captain Marryatt, being at that time a neighbor and friend, was taken into the confidence of the Townshends. At that period Norfolk was infested with smugglers and poachers, and Marryatt declared his belief that one of these outlaws was putting on a show to scare away the Townshends from their country house. He offered to stay three nights in the afflicted guest room, and promised that he would damned well dispose of the marauder with his pistol. The offer was promptly accepted and the Captain moved in.

The first night he slept with a loaded pistol under his pillow, but to his disgust no specter appeared. He had been told that the nightly visitor was a figure that looked exactly like the portrait of an ancestor, a lady wearing a ruff and a brown dress. Indeed, she was the spectral replica of a portrait that hung in the haunted room, and had come to be known in Raynham Hall as "The Brown Lady." This ingenious disguise, Marryatt declared, would not save the wretch from the pistol. When the second night passed with no sign of a ghost, it began to look as if the intruder had got wind of the Captain's murderous intentions.

On the third night, two young nephews of the baronet came to Marryatt's room while he was undressing for bed, knocked on the door and asked him if he would be so good as to step over to their room to inspect a new gun that had just arrived from London. The Captain picked up his pistol, as they were leaving his room, explaining with a laugh, "This, in case we meet the Brown Lady."

After looking over the new weapon with Captain Marryatt, the two young men said that they would accompany him back to his room, repeating in fun, "In case you meet the Brown Lady." By that time the lights were out on the floor and the three walked down the long corridor in darkness. As they reached the middle of the passage, they saw the gleam of a lamp coming toward them. The Captain, arrayed only in shirt and trousers, sought to protect his dignity by slipping into the space provided by the two doors

that led into each chamber.

"It's one of the ladies going to the nursery," whispered one of the young men.

Marryatt kept his eye on the approaching light by peering through the chink of the partly closed door opening on the hall. Suddenly the figure carrying the light came within his vision. And there she was, the Brown Lady, in her Elizabethan ruff and dress! He was on the point of calling "Halt!" when the Lady stopped of her own accord in front of him. She held up the lamp so that the light would fall on her face. Then, to quote the words of Marryatt's daughter who published the story, she "grinned in a malicious and diabolical manner." * In a rage, he fired the pistol full in her face. Instantly the light went out, the Brown Lady vanished, but the bullet was discovered to have pierced the outer door of the room behind where she had stood and embedded itself in the second door. There was no corpse of a villain in disguise.

After that Captain Marryatt had no further interest in exposing the ghost of Raynham Hall. He knew that his eyes had not deceived him, for the Brown Lady was seen simultaneously by him and the two nephews.

The foregoing is only one of many stories of haunted houses in Britain. It stands out from most of its company because it comes to a fine, banging climax with the discharge of the Captain's pistol. But, like the vast majority of them it cannot be offered as an authenticated, or "real" haunted-house story which the general public can accept, since it comes to us only on the word of the chief participant through his daughter Florence. There were no psychic researchers in those days to examine witnesses and take down depositions and make out affidavits. Apparently, the two nephews made no written statements, but evidently there never was any denial from the Townshend family after Florence Marryatt published her story. We shall meet the ghost of Raynham Hall again in the concluding chapter of this volume.†

* *There Is No Death*, p. 10.

† For the story of another encounter with the Brown Lady *v. The Mystery and Lore of Apparitions*, C. J. S. Thompson, p. 155.

In those days, no matter how outlandish a tale might sound, if it was offered on the word of a gentleman it was accepted as true. So the late Lord Halifax, father of the ambassador to the United States, went about among his friends and collected a number of striking ghost experiences. These he published in *Lord Halifax's Ghost Book*. The reviewers gently took his lordship to task for too readily accepting a story as true without more formal verification. To him faith in the trustworthiness of a friend was sufficient.

Indeed, for some, if not many, of the ghost stories reported it is impossible to get any verification at all beyond the word of the narrator. His account may be subjected to a cross-examination but there are often no other witnesses.

Two other brief anecdotes are offered here as examples of quiet haunts and of the type of ghost story that must depend almost entirely on the credibility of the narrator. The overwhelming proportion of such stories are of this character. Both of these that follow have come to me direct from friends of long standing.

The first has to do with a splendid eighteenth-century mansion in Annapolis, Maryland, known as the Brice House. A friend and former colleague of mine, a professor at the Naval Academy, at one time had his quarters in the Brice House. One spring morning about seven-thirty, he told me, "I was leaving my room after a sound sleep, with a bundle of papers under my arm, starting off for my eight-o'clock class. It was bright daylight. As I stepped outside my door, I saw to my astonishment, diagonally across the hall, an old gentleman standing at the door of what was once the library. His white hair was worn rather long and his black clothes were of an old-fashioned cut. As he was someone I had never seen before, I stood still and looked at him in surprise. As I stared, the old man gradually faded into the door behind him and disappeared." This, my friend swears, was the literal truth of his experience.

On inquiry, it appeared that there had been a long-forgotten legend of haunting at the Brice House. Once, long ago, so the story ran, the owner of the Brice House promised his black body servant that he would leave him a tidy sum of money in his will.

Tired of waiting for his old master to die, the slave killed him in his library. After that, from time to time, people who lived in the house saw the ghost of the old gentleman.

The second story comes from a lady with a distinguished record in authorship. She has a summer home on an island off the New England coast. The original building was tall and angular, but an architect transformed it into an attractive cottage.

One night after she had gone to bed, and this was shortly after she had taken possession, she heard the stairs creak under the heavy tread of someone coming up. Thinking that it must be her husband, looking for some tablets she had put in the medicine closet of the bathroom, she got up to meet him. As she came near the head of the stairs she was amazed to see, not her husband, but a broad, heavily built woman in the habit of a nun. The stranger turned her back and started to walk down the hall toward the "master's bedroom."

This was so surprising that my friend exclaimed, "Oh!"

At this the nun turned round and for a few moments the two looked at each other. The visitor was a stout woman; nothing, declared my friend, could have looked more substantial than this figure with the big hips and deep bosom. Her face was broad, of the type one associates with the peasant women of Europe, and it was kindly. Then she smiled "a friendly little smile," and vanished. "There was no gradual fading," said the narrator. "One instant she was there, looking as solid and real as anyone I ever saw. The next instant there was nothing there at all."

She and her husband agreed that for some time, at least, nothing should be said about the spectral nun in order not to frighten their child or the servants. It was not until several months afterwards that she confided the experience to a group of friends. One of these was a Catholic, and she asked for a detailed description of the nun's attire. This was readily given.

"That was not a nun," the friend replied. "The dress you describe is what is worn by a Mother Superior."

It was a considerable time later that a neighbor who had spent most of his summers on the island asked the lady of the cottage

if she knew about the history of the place. He had never heard of the ghost.

"Yes," she answered, "it belonged to a Mrs. C——, a widow. But that is all I know."

"She wasn't the first to occupy it," said he. "I can remember when it was a retreat for a Catholic sisterhood. A bishop in Boston built it and gave it to his sister, who was a Mother Superior."

The old gentleman of the Brice House and the Mother Superior of the summer cottage are typical of a great many of the hauntings reported; like well-mannered children, they are seen but not heard. Others make sounds without showing themselves, yet these noises are not loud or unfriendly, but rather soft and homey. The people who live with them get accustomed to them. Mr. Archibald Rutledge, in his book of reminiscences about "Hampton," his family home in South Carolina, tells of such a ghost there. This was heard so often that it came to be taken as a matter of course. He says:

This creature made its presence known from time to time by a remarkably regular series of sounds. First, there would be a soft, monotonous noise, as if some grandmother were quietly rocking in a chair. And these sounds always were heard coming from my great grandmother's bedroom immediately over the dining room. Then there would be three distinct raps, after which there would come a creepy sound as if someone were gently and surreptitiously dragging a heavy body across the room overhead, always from the northwest to the southeast corner. Three more raps would conclude the weird performance. I can remember that, not infrequently as we were at tea, or while we were reading in the dining room afterwards, this weird rite would be gone through, and one of us would say casually, so familiar did it become, "There's the ghost." *

Mr. Rutledge admits that guests, when they heard the old lady upstairs, never displayed the same sang-froid as the family.

For full-length telling, four stories of quiet haunts have been selected. They have been chosen because they may claim good at-

* *My Colonel and His Lady*, p. 145.

testation and they are recorded in great detail. Three of them fall within the lifetime of this present generation, in the very heart of the Age of Science.

I. THE GHOST OF DOCTOR HARRIS

It is not often that the word "charming" seems appropriate to a ghost story. The very phrase suggests cold shivers. But once in a while a tale is told of the appearance of some quiet, friendly shade who does nothing to cause one to shudder, whose manners are indeed impeccable. Such an apparition was seen and reported by no less a person than Nathaniel Hawthorne, and the charm of this story may be in large measure due to his characteristic style.

Like so many ghost stories, it comes to us on the testimony of a single witness, the "percipient." For that reason it is easy in such instances to dismiss the experience as hallucination. Yet it is only fair to point out that the testimony of one person to an event may be as true as that of several, especially if the witness who tells the story possesses both intelligence and character. It is not necessary to add that in Nathaniel Hawthorne those two qualities were present to an eminent degree.

It will be remembered that in the year 1856 the author of *The Scarlet Letter* held the office of United States Consul at Liverpool. Among his friends in that city were Mr. and Mrs. John Pemberton Heywood. One evening, while dining in their home, Hawthorne related his own experience with a ghost. Mrs. Heywood was so much impressed that she asked him to put it down in writing for her. This he did, and the following story is as he wrote it in full.

The manuscript came eventually into the possession of Mrs. Heywood's sister, the Honorable Mrs. Richard Denman. Many years later Mrs. Denman sent it to the *Nineteenth Century* magazine, which published it in the issue of January, 1900. The narrative is addressed to Mrs. Heywood:

"I am afraid this ghost story will bear a very faded aspect when transferred to paper. Whatever effect it had on you, or whatever

charm it retains in your memory, is perhaps to be attributed to the favorable circumstances under which it was originally told.

"We were sitting, I remember, late in the evening, in your drawing-room, where the lights of the chandelier were so muffled as to produce a delicious obscurity through which the fire diffused a dim red glow. In this rich twilight the feelings of the party had been properly attuned by some tales of English superstition, and the lady of Smithills Hall had just been describing that Bloody Footstep which marks the threshold of her old mansion, when your Yankee guest (zealous for the honor of his country, and desirous of proving that his dead compatriots have the same ghostly privileges as other dead people, if they think it worth while to use them) began a story of something wonderful that long ago happened to himself. Possibly in the verbal narrative he may have assumed a little more license than would be allowable in a written record. For the sake of the artistic effect, he may then have thrown in, here and there, a few slight circumstances which he will not think it proper to retain in what he now puts forth as the sober statement of a veritable fact.

"A good many years ago (it may be as many as fifteen, perhaps more, and while I was still a bachelor) I resided at Boston, in the United States. In that city there is a large and long-established library, styled the Atheneum, connected with which is a reading-room, well supplied with foreign and American periodicals and newspapers. A splendid edifice has since been erected by the proprietors of the institution; but, at the period I speak of, it was contained within a large, old mansion, formerly the town residence of an eminent citizen of Boston. The reading-room (a spacious hall, with the group of the Laocoon at one end, and the Belvidere Apollo at the other) was frequented by not a few elderly merchants, retired from business, by clergymen and lawyers, and by such literary men as we had amongst us. These good people were mostly old, leisurely, and somnolent, and used to nod and doze for hours together, with the newspapers before them—ever and anon recovering themselves so far as to read a word or two of the politics of the day—sitting, as it were, on the boundary of the land

of dreams, and having little to do with this world, except through the newspapers which they so tenaciously grasped.

"One of these worthies, whom I occasionally saw there, was the Reverend Doctor Harris, a Unitarian clergyman of considerable repute and eminence. He was very far advanced in life, not less than eighty years old, and probably more; and he resided, I think, at Dorchester, a suburban village in the immediate vicinity of Boston. I had never been personally acquainted with this good old clergyman, but had heard of him all my life as a noteworthy man; so that when he was first pointed out to me I looked at him with a certain speciality of attention, and always subsequently eyed him with a degree of interest whenever I happened to see him at the Athenæum or elsewhere. He was a small, withered, infirm, but brisk old gentleman, with snow-white hair, a somewhat stooping figure, but yet with a remarkable alacrity of movement. I remember it was in the street that I first noticed him. The Doctor was plodding along with his staff, but turned smartly about on being addressed by the gentleman who was with me, and responded with a good deal of vivacity.

"'Who is he?' I inquired, as soon as he had passed. 'The Reverend Doctor Harris, of Dorchester,' replied my companion; and from that time I often saw him, and never forgot his aspect. His especial haunt was the Athenæum. There I used to see him daily, and almost always with a newspaper—the *Boston Post*, which was the leading journal of the Democratic party in the Northern states. As old Doctor Harris had been a noted Democrat during his more active life, it was a very natural thing that he should still like to read the *Boston Post*. There his reverend figure was accustomed to sit day after day, in the self-same chair by the fireside; and, by degrees, seeing him there so constantly, I began to look towards him as I entered the reading-room, and felt that a kind of acquaintance, at least on my part, was established. Not that I had any reason (as long as this venerable person remained in the body) to suppose that he ever noticed me; but by some subtle connection, this small, white-haired, infirm, yet vivacious figure of an old clergyman became associated with my idea and recollection of the place. One

day, especially (about noon, as was generally his hour) I am perfectly certain that I had seen this figure of old Doctor Harris, and taken my customary note of him, although I remember nothing in his appearance at all different from what I had seen on many previous occasions.

"But, that very evening, a friend said to me, 'Did you hear that old Doctor Harris is dead?' 'No,' said I very quietly, 'and it cannot be true, for I saw him at the Atheneum today.' 'You must be mistaken,' rejoined my friend. 'He is certainly dead!' and confirmed the fact with such special circumstances that I could no longer doubt it. My friend has often since assured me that I seemed much startled at the intelligence; but, as well as I can recollect, I believe that I was very little disturbed, if at all, but set down the apparition as a mistake of my own, or, perhaps, the interposition of a familiar idea into the place and amid the circumstances with which I had been accustomed to associate it.

"The next day, as I ascended the steps of the Atheneum, I remember thinking within myself, 'Well, I never shall see old Doctor Harris again!' With this thought in my mind, as I opened the door of the reading-room, I glanced toward the spot and chair where Doctor Harris usually sat, and there, to my astonishment, sat the grey, infirm figure of the deceased Doctor, reading the newspaper as was his wont! His own death must have been recorded, that very morning, in that very newspaper! I have no recollection of being greatly discomposed at the moment, nor indeed that I felt any extraordinary emotion whatever. Probably, if ghosts were in the habit of coming among us, they would coincide with the ordinary train of affairs, and melt into them so familiarly that we should not be shocked at their presence. At all events, so it was in this instance. I looked through the newspapers as usual, and turned over the periodicals, taking about as much interest in their contents as at other times. Once or twice, no doubt, I may have lifted my eyes from the page to look again at the venerable Doctor, who ought then to have been lying in his coffin dressed out for the grave, but who felt such interest in the *Boston Post* as to come back from the other world to read it the morning after his death.

One might have supposed that he would have cared more about the novelties of the sphere to which he had just been introduced than about the politics he had left behind him!

"The apparition took no notice of me, nor behaved otherwise in any respect than on any previous day. Nobody but myself seemed to notice him; and yet the old gentlemen round about the fire, beside his chair, were his life-long acquaintances, who were perhaps thinking of his death, and who in a day or two would deem it a proper courtesy to attend his funeral.

"I have forgotten how the ghost of Doctor Harris took his departure from the Atheneum on this occasion, or, in fact, whether the ghost or I went first. This equanimity, and almost indifference, on my part—the careless way in which I glanced at so singular a mystery and left it aside—is what now surprises me as much as anything else in the affair.

"From that time, for a long while thereafter—for weeks at least, and I know not but for months—I used to see the figure of Doctor Harris quite as frequently as before his death. It grew to be so common that at length I regarded the venerable defunct no more than the other old fogies who basked before the fire and dozed over the newspapers.

"It was but a ghost—nothing but thin air—not tangible nor appreciable, nor demanding any attention from a man of flesh and blood! I cannot recollect any cold shudderings, any awe, any repugnance, any emotion whatever, such as would be suitable and decorous on beholding a visitant from the spiritual world. It is very strange, but such is the truth. It appears excessively odd to me now that I did not adopt such means as I readily might to ascertain whether the appearance had solid substance, or was merely gaseous and vapoury. I might have brushed against him, have jostled his chair, or have trodden accidentally on his poor old toes. I might have snatched the *Boston Post*—unless that were an apparition, too—out of his shadowy hands. I might have tested him in a hundred ways; but I did nothing of the kind.

"Perhaps I was loth to destroy the illusion, and to rob myself of so good a ghost story, which might probably have been explained

in some very commonplace way. Perhaps, after all, I had a secret dread of the old phenomenon, and, therefore, kept within my limits, with an instinctive caution which I mistook for indifference. Be this as it may, here is the fact. I saw the figure, day after day, for a considerable space of time, and took no pains to ascertain whether it was a ghost or no. I never, to my knowledge, saw him come into the reading-room or depart from it. There sat Doctor Harris in his customary chair, and I can say little else about him.

"After a certain period—I really know not how long—I began to notice, or to fancy, a peculiar regard in the old gentleman's aspect towards myself. I sometimes found him gazing at me, and, unless I deceived myself, there was a sort of expectancy in his face. His spectacles, I think, were shoved up, so that his bleared eyes might meet my own. Had he been a living man I should have flattered myself that good Doctor Harris was, for some reason or other, interested in me and desirous of a personal acquaintance. Being a ghost, and amenable to ghostly laws, it was natural to conclude that he was waiting to be spoken to before delivering whatever message he wished to impart. But, if so, the ghost had shown the bad judgment common among the spiritual brotherhood, both as regarded the place of interview and the person whom he had selected as the recipient of his communications. In the reading-room of the Atheneum, conversation is strictly forbidden, and I could not have addressed the apparition without drawing the instant notice and indignant frowns of the slumberous old gentlemen around me. I myself, too, at that time, was as shy as any ghost, and followed the ghosts' rule never to speak first. And what an absurd figure should I have made, solemnly and awfully addressing what must have appeared, in the eyes of all the rest of the company, an empty chair! Besides, I had never been introduced to Doctor Harris, dead or alive, and I am not aware that social regulations are to be abrogated by the accidental fact of one of the parties having crossed the imperceptible line which separates the other party from the spiritual world. If ghosts throw off all conventionalism among themselves, it does not therefore follow that it can safely be dispensed with by those who are still hampered

with flesh and blood.

"For such reasons as these—and reflecting, moreover, that the deceased Doctor might burden me with some disagreeable task, with which I had no business nor wish to be concerned—I stubbornly resolved to have nothing to say to him. To this determination I adhered; and not a syllable ever passed between the ghost of Doctor Harris and myself.

"To the best of my recollection, I never observed the old gentleman either enter the reading-room or depart from it, or move from his chair, or lay down the newspaper, or exchange a look with any person in the company, unless it were myself. He was not by any means invariably in his place. In the evening, for instance, though often at the reading-room myself, I never saw him. It was at the brightest noontide that I used to behold him, sitting within the most comfortable focus of the glowing fire, as real and lifelike an object (except that he was so very old, and of an ashen complexion) as any other in the room. After a long while of this strange intercourse, if such it can be called, I remember—once, at least, and I know not but oftener—a sad, wistful, disappointed gaze, which the ghost fixed upon me from beneath his spectacles; a melancholy look of helplessness, which if my heart had not been as hard as a paving stone, I could hardly have withstood. But I did withstand it; and I think I saw him no more after this last appealing look, which still dwells in my memory as perfectly as while my own eyes were encountering the dim and bleared eyes of the ghost. And whenever I recall this strange passage of my life, I see the small, old, withered figure of Doctor Harris, sitting in his accustomed chair, the *Boston Post* in his hand, his spectacles shoved upwards—and gazing at me as I closed the door of the reading-room, with that wistful, appealing, hopeless, helpless look. It is too late now; his grave has been grass-grown this many and many a year; and I hope he has found rest in it without any aid from me.

"I have only to add that it was not until long after I had ceased to encounter the ghost that I became aware how very odd and strange the whole affair had been; and even now I am made sensible

of its strangeness chiefly by the wonder and incredulity of those to whom I tell the story.

Nathaniel Hawthorne."

Liverpool, August 17, 1856.

The foregoing narrative needs no postscript except, perhaps, to repeat the words that Hawthorne used when he began; namely, that it is "the sober statement of a veritable fact."

II. THE DARK LADY OF BOGNOR

The town of Bognor is a small watering resort on the southern coast of England. It lies in Sussex, between six and seven miles from Chichester. The house which became famous as the scene of ghostly visitations was not, as one might suppose, a mouldy old castle, with cavernous rooms hung with cobwebs, and with a dank and moss-grown dungeon. On the contrary, this Bognor house was a commonplace, nineteenth-century dwelling, dating only from 1860.

Before the building was finished it was bought by a Mr. S——. This gentleman was twice married, and his second venture was most unhappy. He and his second wife quarreled bitterly, especially when they were both in liquor. The disputes arose from the question of how the children should be handled by their step-mother and her determination to get her hands on her predecessor's jewels, which the husband was anxious to save for the children. He went so far as to call in a carpenter to construct a hiding place for them under the floor of the sitting-room. The unhappy owner died in 1876 and his disagreeable consort followed him to the graveyard a little over two years afterwards.

An elderly gentleman then bought the house and moved in, but he died suddenly after only six months' occupancy.

In April, 1882, the "Morton" family moved in, and it was with them that the haunting began. To avoid the publicity involved in any psychic story, the name Morton was assumed for the published accounts, but the real name was known to the investigators of the

Society for Psychical Research who followed the case. The family consisted of the father, Captain Morton, his invalid and somewhat deaf wife; one young married daughter, who was an occasional visitor, four unmarried daughters and a six-year-old son. Another sixteen-year-old son was away practically all the time. One of the unmarried girls became the chief reporter of the mysterious visitations that began shortly after the Mortons took possession. She was a medical student, only nineteen years old, but she made her observations with the same cool detachment that a veteran research man might have felt over the development of cultures under a microscope. Indeed, for calm self-possession in the presence of what appeared to be supernatural, it would be hard to find the equal of this girl. She never shows the least indication of fear. Of her own feelings she notes merely "the sensation of awe at something unknown at the first occasion."

As to who the Dark Lady was, the consensus of opinion in the Morton family was that she was the ghost of the second Mrs. S——, because the apparition was tall and slender, as the woman was described to be, she wore widow's weeds, and she haunted particularly the couch in the bow window of the drawing-room, where, according to the step-children, Mrs. S—— habitually sat when she lived in the house. But no one ever saw the full face of the Dark Lady because she was never seen except with a handkerchief held over the mouth.

All that, of course, is mere speculation. The important thing is the fact of the ghost herself. Since Rose Morton is the principal reporter of this haunting, giving the record of what she herself witnessed, the following narrative will follow her own words as far as practicable in a condensed paraphrase. There is a matter-of-factness about her style that heightens the effect of the mystery.*

The family moved into the house in April (1882), the narrator says, "but it was not till the following June that I saw the apparition. I had gone to my room but was not yet in bed when I heard

* For the full record, including the testimony of six other independent witnesses, see *Proceedings*, Society for Psychical Research, vol. VIII, pp. 311–329.

someone at the door and went to it, thinking it was my mother. On opening it I saw no one, but going a few steps along the passage I saw the figure of a tall lady, dressed in black, standing at the head of the stairs. After a few moments she descended the stairs and I followed for a short distance, curious to see who it was. But I had only a small piece of candle and it suddenly went out. Seeing nothing more, I went back to my room.

"The figure was of a tall lady wearing a dress of black, soft woolen material, to judge by the slight sound she made in moving. Her face was hidden in a handkerchief held in her right hand. This was all I observed then. Later, as I saw her repeatedly, I noticed more. Her left hand was nearly hidden by the sleeve and a fold in her dress. A portion of a widow's cuff was visible on both wrists, and gave the impression of a lady in widow's weeds.

"During the next two years, 1882–1884, I saw the figure about half a dozen times; first, at long intervals, afterwards at shorter ones, but I mentioned them only to one friend [Miss Campbell] by means of letters in the form of a journal, and she kept silent. I did not want to frighten my mother. During this period, as far as I know, the figure appeared only three times to anyone else but myself:

"1. In the summer of 1882, to my sister, Mrs. K——, when the figure was thought to be that of a Sister of Mercy who had called at the house, and no further curiosity was aroused.

"2. In the autumn of 1883, it was seen by the housemaid, about ten p.m., she declaring that someone had got into the house, her description agreeing fairly with what I had seen; but, as on searching no one was found, her story received no credit.

"3. On or about December 18th, 1883, it was seen in the drawing-room by my brother and another little boy. They were playing outside on the terrace when they saw the figure in the drawing-room close to the window, and ran in to see who it could be that was crying so bitterly. They found no one in the drawing-room and the parlor maid told them that no one had come into the house.

"After the first sight, I followed the apparition downstairs sev-

eral times and into the drawing-room, where she remained a variable time, generally standing at the right side of the bow window. From the drawing-room she moved to the garden door, where she disappeared. The first time I spoke to her was on January 29, 1884. I opened the drawing-room door softly and went in, standing just by it. She entered, passed me and walked to the sofa, where she stood still. So I went up to her and asked if I could help her. She moved and I thought was going to speak but only gave a slight gasp and moved to the door. Just by the door I spoke to her again, but she seemed unable to speak. She walked into the hall and then disappeared by the side door, as before.

"The following May and June I tried experiments, fastening strings with marine glue across the stairs at different heights. I saw her pass through them at least twice. Also, I tried to touch her, but she always eluded me. Not that there was nothing to touch but she always seemed beyond me, and if I followed her into a corner she simply disappeared. During the two years, 1882–1884, the only noises I heard were of slight pushes against my bedroom door accompanied by footsteps, and if I looked out I invariably saw the figure. The footsteps were light. I could hardly hear them except on linoleum, and then only like someone walking with thin boots on.

"The appearances in July and August (1884) became much more frequent; then they attained their maximum. After that they gradually decreased and then stopped altogether. Of these two months I have a short record in a set of Journal letters written at the time to a friend.

"On July 21st I went into the drawing-room where my father and sisters were sitting, about nine o'clock in the evening, and sat down on a couch near the bow window. I saw the figure come in at the open door, cross the room and take a position close behind the couch where I was. I was astonished that no one else in the room saw her, she was so distinct to me. My youngest brother, who had before seen her, was not in the room at the time. She stood behind the couch for a half hour; then, as usual, walked to the door. I went after her on the excuse of getting a book, saw her

pass along the hall until she came to the garden door where she vanished. I spoke to her as she passed the foot of the stairs, but there was no answer, although she stopped and seemed as if she were about to speak.

"On the night of August 1st, I again saw the figure. I heard the footsteps outside on the landing about two a.m. I got up at once and went outside. She was then at the end of the landing at the top of the stairs, with her side view towards me. She stood there some minutes, then went downstairs, stopping again when she reached the hall below. I opened the drawing-room door and she went in, walked across the room to the couch in the bow window, stayed there a little, then came out of the room, went along the passage and disappeared by the garden door. I spoke to her again but she did not answer.

"On the night of August 2nd, footsteps were heard by my three sisters and the cook, all of whom slept on the top floor; also by my married sister, Mrs. K——, who was sleeping on the floor below. Next morning they all said that they plainly heard these footsteps pass and repass their doors. The cook, a very practical-minded, middle-aged person, said she had heard these steps before, and when I asked her she said she had seen the figure on the stairs one night when she went to the kitchen to fetch hot water after the servants had gone to bed. She described it as a lady in widow's weeds, tall and slight, with her face hidden in a handkerchief held in her right hand. Also, while in the kitchen, she saw the figure outside the kitchen window on the terrace walk about eleven in the morning.

"The footsteps we all heard were very characteristic, not like any others in the family, soft and slow, though decided and even. My sisters would not go out on the landing after hearing them pass, nor would the servants, but each time I went out I saw the figure there. On August 3rd, I told my father, and he was astonished because he had heard and seen nothing. Nor had my mother, but she was slightly deaf and an invalid.

"On August 11th, my eldest sister, Mrs. K——, saw the figure outside the house, looking in at the window. Soon after it came

into the drawing-room, where I saw her but my sister did not. That same evening my sister E—— saw her on the stairs. On the following afternoon I saw her cross the orchard, go along the carriage drive in front of the house and in at the open side door, cross the hall and enter the drawing-room, I following. She crossed the room and took her usual position by the couch. Soon my father came in but he could not see her, though he walked up to where I told him she was. She went swiftly round behind him, crossed the room and went out and along the hall, disappearing as usual near the garden door. All the while my father and I followed. That same evening, about eight, while it was still light, my sister E—— was singing in the back room. Suddenly she stopped and called me. She said she had seen the figure close behind her as she sat at the piano. I went back to the room with her and there I saw the woman in the bow window at her usual place. I spoke to her several times but got no answer. There she stood for ten minutes or a quarter of an hour, then crossed the room into the hall and out by the garden door. My sister M—— (Mrs. K——) then came in from the garden saying that she had seen her coming up the kitchen steps outside. We all three went out into the garden, and Mrs. K—— called out from a window on the first story that she had just seen her pass along the carriage drive into the orchard. On this evening, therefore, four people saw her. Three days later the parlor maid saw her, while opening the shutters of the dining room at eight-thirty in the morning. All of us were on the watch for her that evening but saw nothing.

"All the while we kept the facts from outsiders on account of our landlord, who feared the story would ruin his house for renting. New servants were not told and to those who had seen and heard we explained that it was just a harmless apparition. But some left on account of the noises, and once any one of the maids got up to see what was in the hallway outside they never could be persuaded to do it again."

Mr. Frederic Myers, the leading investigator in the Society for Psychical Research, kept in touch with Miss Morton and suggested

she keep a camera handy to see if she could photograph the rition, but on the few occasions when she made the attempt :onditions of light were too bad for any results.

constantly spoke to the figure," Miss Morton continues, "ask- t to make signs if it was unable to speak, but got no response. :ornering it, as I did once or twice, the figure vanished. I tried enly to pounce on it, but never could touch it. Up to the year she was always taken for a real person when first seen. She ys intercepted the light but I could not ascertain if she ever a shadow."

ne night when Rose and her father were away, her mother and naid heard a loud noise in the unoccupied room overhead. 'hey went up, but seeing nothing and the noise ceasing, they : back to my mother's room on the first story. They then heard noises from the morning-room on the ground floor. When went half way down the stairs, they saw a bright light in the beneath. Being alarmed, they went up to my sister E——, then came down, and they all three examined the doors, win- ;, etc., and found them all fastened as usual. My mother and naid then went to bed. My sister E—— went up to her room he second story, but as she passed the room where my two rs L—— and M—— were sleeping, they opened their door y that they had heard noises, and had also seen what they de- ed as the *flame* of a candle, without candle or hand visible, ; the room diagonally from corner to door. Two of the maids ıed the doors of their two bedrooms and said they also had d noises; they all five stood at their doors with their lighted les for some little time. They all heard steps walking up and n the landing between them; as they passed, they felt a ıtion which they described as 'a cold wind,' though their lles were not blown about. They *saw* nothing. The steps then ended the stairs, reascended, again descended, and did not n.

During the next two years, 1887–1889, the figure was very sel- seen, though footsteps were heard; the louder noises gradually ed. From 1889 to the present, 1892, so far as I know, the figure

has not been seen at all; the lighter footsteps lasted a little longer, but even they have now ceased. The figure became much less substantial on its later appearances. Up to about 1886 it was so solid and life-like that it was often mistaken for a real person. It gradually became less distinct."

Among her notes on the report Rose Morton added the observation that the apparition must have been seen by the two dogs. The retriever, which slept in the kitchen, was often discovered by the cook, when she came down in the morning, to be in a state of terror. More than once he was seen slinking in from the orchard, cowed and terrified. The retriever was a large dog which always stayed downstairs. The other was a Skye terrier that usually slept on Rose's bed. "Undoubtedly," she writes, "it heard the footsteps outside my door. On October 27, 1887, though ill, on hearing them it sprang up and sniffed at the door. Twice I remember seeing the dog suddenly run up to the mat at the foot of the stairs in the hall, wagging its tail as dogs do, expecting a caress. It jumped, fawning, as if on a person standing there, then suddenly slunk away, tail between legs, and retreated trembling under the sofa."

There is no climax to this ghost story because there was none to the visitation. The Dark Lady appeared from time to time in this house of the Mortons' over a period of seven years. She gradually increased the number of her visits and then as gradually decreased them. Finally, without ever a spoken word or the vestige of a sign, she vanished, never to return.

III. THE NUN AT THE RECTORY

A line drawn about sixty miles northeast from London would touch the hamlet of Borley, lying just inside the border of Essex and two and a half miles from the town of Long Melford in Suffolk. Borley had fewer than one hundred and twenty-five inhabitants, but under the laws of the Church of England, which have no counterpart in America, the village had a "living"; that is, it car-

ried a salaried post as rector for the charming little, square-towered church which is said to date from the twelfth century. And this living, by another curious quirk of ecclesiastical law and custom, was in the possession of the Bull family. The Reverend Henry D. E. Bull served the spiritual needs of his tiny flock for thirty years, from 1862 to 1892. Then he was succeeded by his son.

The rectory, which was the scene of the haunting, was built by Henry Bull, in 1863. There he lived with his fourteen children and large domestic staff, finding it necessary from time to time, as his family expanded, to add a wing to the house. Like the home frequented by the Dark Lady of Bognor, the rectory was no venerable pile, steeped in history and romance, but a commonplace dwelling dating from the eighteen-sixties. However, it had ample grounds and was shaded by tall trees.

A newcomer, calling at the rectory, would have been surprised to observe that the window at the left of the front door was bricked up, giving the effect of a blinded eye. If the visitor were curious enough to inquire why this was done, he would have learned that this disfigurement was the work of the first rector to occupy the house and the man who built it, the Reverend Henry Bull. And the astonishing reason that he gave was that he was constantly annoyed by the specter of a nun who habitually stood at the window and peered in at him while he sat at table. Further inquiry would have revealed that the same nun had been seen by so many other people and so often that she had long been accepted as the familiar *revenant* of the rectory. A path in the garden along which she was frequently seen to move had long since been known as the "Nun's Walk." The village people had many stories to tell of the haunts in and about the place, especially of this nun; and stout yeomen who, of course, did not believe in ghosts, preferred, nevertheless, not to walk past the rectory after dark.

To explain these hauntings there grew up various legends in Borley. It was said that once there was a monastic establishment near the church and on the site of the rectory. This much was true. From this there grew a tale about a novice at a neighboring convent who fell in love with a groom employed by the monks at

the monastery. Another groom, a friend of his, got a coach so that the lovers might elope. But something went wrong. According to one version, the lovers quarreled in the midst of their attempted escape and the man strangled his sweetheart in the forest. Then the murderer and his friend were caught and beheaded. Another version has it that the runaways were caught by the monks in their effort to drive away, that the two men were beheaded, and the novice bricked up alive in a wall of the monastery, to die a lingering death with only a pitcher of water and a loaf of bread. The one alleged fact on which the legends agreed was that ages ago a novice from a convent had met a tragic death on the premises of the rectory, and ever since then she "walked."

Legends, however, are no basis for a true ghost story. The question is, did anyone among the family and servants at the rectory actually see this specter? There is the mute testimony of the bricked-up window, and the reason given by the Reverend Henry Bull. His successor is generally referred to as the Reverend "Harry" Bull to distinguish him from his father. After he took over the living, Harry Bull and four of his sisters continued to live in the rectory, until his death, in 1927.

On the afternoon of July 28, 1900, to be precise, three of the young ladies—Ethel, Freda and Mabel—were returning home from a garden party. It was bright daylight because the sun was still above the horizon. The girls entered by the back gate. As they emerged from the shade of the trees and came out on the open lawn, all three at the same instant saw a woman with bowed head, dressed in the black habit of a nun. Her hands were clasped in front of her as if she were telling her beads. Of course, they were familiar with the story of the phantom nun and they watched her with a touch of fright. As they looked, she seemed to be slowly gliding rather than walking along the path that bore her name in the direction of a little brook hidden in the shrubbery. The nun's movement added to the impression of something supernatural. The sisters stopped where they stood and eyed her keenly. They said she seemed to be intensely sad and ill. Then one of the girls ran to the house to fetch their other sister, Elsie. When she came

out and saw the figure, she cried, "A ghost? Oh, what nonsense! I'll go and speak to it." With that she started to run across the lawn, but she had scarcely gone more than two or three steps when the nun turned and faced her with an expression of intense grief. Elsie stopped short, terrified. Then the nun vanished before the eyes of all four sisters at the same instant.

Usually the credibility of ghost stories is weakened by the fact that the experience has come to only one person and often in the dead of night, when one may always say that the person was dreaming. There is no one else to corroborate the testimony of that one person. The experience of the Bull sisters is noteworthy because all four of the young women saw the phantom at the same time and in daylight, and at the same moment they saw her disappear. The theory that all four suffered from the identical hallucination at the identical time is rather harder to accept than the fact of the ghost itself.

In the following November, Ethel saw the nun again, but this time the black-robed figure was leaning on the gate instead of moving along the walk. Later, a cousin of hers saw the nun. Edward Cooper, who was for some years gardener at the rectory, testified that he frequently saw the apparition; at least, he said the figure that he saw was a black-hooded shape of a woman crossing the courtyard of the house. Once he said he had a view of it side-face. On a particular evening when it was still light, he saw the nun cross the courtyard and walk to the road. What interested him specially was the fact that directly in her path there was a sort of manhole with a loose metal cover, flush with the ground. No one could tread on that cover without making it clank. But as she stepped on it there was no sound. Cooper said that she was "dressed like a Sister of Mercy," and looked so lifelike that he made inquiries as to who she could be.

Another man who recorded his experience with the somber phantom was a stranger in the neighborhood, a carpenter named Fred Cartwright. He lived in Sudbury, a near-by town, and, having got a job to do repair work on some farm buildings near Borley, he used to walk to his work every morning. His shortest route lay

past the rectory. It was in the early fall of 1927, and at the time, he said, he believed that the house was unoccupied, which was true.

As he trudged to his daily task one morning about seven, he saw a Sister of Mercy standing by the rectory gate at the side of the road. He said that she looked perfectly normal, but it seemed strange to him that she should be standing there at that hour of the morning as if she were waiting for someone. No buses went by on that road, but he decided that she must be waiting for someone to call for her in a car.

Cartwright passed the gate every morning at about the same time. It was on Monday that he first saw the nun. The Friday following he saw the same nun at the same spot, but standing close to the hedge at the gate. Again she looked lifelike, but for the fact that her eyes were closed.

"She must be tired," he said to himself, "she's probably been at the bedside of some sick person all night."

On the subsequent Wednesday he passed her again standing at the gate. There she stood, silent, pale, with closed eyes. Though there was nothing about her that did not seem substantial and human, Cartwright confessed to a sensation of something like fright as he looked at the silent nun. It did not seem natural for anyone to be standing there, day after day, silent, motionless, deathly pale and with eyes closed. He decided that he might at least offer help anyway. So, after going a short distance he turned back, but to his surprise she wasn't there. He decided that she must have run quickly back into the rectory.

Once again, at precisely the same spot and the same hour, he saw her. This time he made up his mind that he would say good morning. But before he came up to the gate she was gone. It was simply that one moment he saw her and the next there was no one there. It was most bewildering because he could not figure out any possible way for her to get from the gate and out of sight in such a momentary flash.

He told his experience at the inn, and there, being a stranger, he was informed by the villagers present of the legend of the nun that haunted the rectory. At any rate, Cartwright testified that he saw a

nun distinctly four different days at the rectory gate, each time about seven in the morning. On each occasion he took the figure to be a living woman.

There were other apparitions reported in and about this dwelling, but it is the sad-faced nun who was seen by so many and on so many occasions as to become the chief haunt. Inquiry disclosed that she had been seen not only by the first rector, who had bricked up a window in consequence, but by his son Harry, who succeeded him as rector, and by four of the daughters on a single occasion as narrated above. She was seen by the cook, by the gardener, by a cousin of the Bulls' and by the carpenter Cartwright, as just described, not to mention others. In all, the nun was known to have been seen at the rectory by no less than fourteen persons.

Naturally, the first question of the skeptic would be, "Where does all this story come from?" The answer is that it comes from about as good a source as one could ask; namely, a hard-boiled psychic investigator, who has spent a lifetime looking into ghostly phenomena. He is Mr. Harry Price, Honorary Secretary and Editor of the University of London Council for Psychical Investigation. He is a frank skeptic, and nothing pleases him better than the opportunity to expose a fraud. He might be called a "ghost-buster." He says repeatedly in his books that he is not convinced of survival after death and the spirit hypothesis for explaining psychic phenomena. Indeed, he has no theory at all to support; he is merely concerned with investigating and reporting the facts.

In 1929, Price's attention was called to the mysteries at the Borley rectory by the editor of a London daily paper. Thereafter, over a period of ten years, he kept the house under surveillance. At the end of that time he published a book with the title, *The Most Haunted House in England.*

It was in June, of 1929, that he first heard of the strange doings at the rectory. He immediately packed up his kit of instruments for testing out alleged hauntings, and with his secretary went to Borley. There he found a reporter of the London newspaper, a man named Wall. The two decided to lie in wait for the nun that very night. They took station at dusk by a summer house on the

edge of the lawn, with Price keeping his eyes fixed on the window of an upper room where a strange light had frequently appeared, and Wall watching the Nun's Walk. They had been told that twilight was the time of day when the specter was most frequently seen. The summer twilight was shading into nightfall when suddenly Wall seized his companion's arm, crying, "There she is!" Instantly he dashed after the something he had seen. Price turned his eyes from the window and looked only in time to see a dark shape move into the shrubbery. When the men reached the spot they saw nothing. Price says that he cannot swear to having glimpsed the figure of a nun; it was just a brief impression of a moving, dark shape that vanished in the shrubbery. Wall says that, owing to the deep shadows of the background, he could not make out any definite dress or form. But there was not a breath of wind that evening, and both men saw a dark shape move into the shrubbery along the Nun's Walk and vanish.

That was Price's introduction to the Borley ghost. For his prolonged study of the haunted rectory, inaugurated some years later, he selected a group of assistants. One of these was a Mr. S. H. Glanville. He was no Spiritualist or "believer," but having heard of table-tipping, he had a small, light table constructed and tried it during the few days that he and his friends stayed at the rectory, looking for phenomena. It was a tedious process of saying the alphabet and noting at which letter the table would tip, and getting one rap for "no" and three for "yes" in answer to questions.

The table began rocking promptly, and in response to the question, "Are you Harry Bull?" the answer was three taps for "yes." Then a message was worked out laboriously to the effect that the nun was sad because she wanted a Christian burial, that she had been interred near the site of the house and on the southwest side under a fir tree. The skeleton was still lying under a stone with the letter B on it.

Shortly afterwards, Mr. Glanville's grown daughter Helen tried the planchette in her home for the first time. In two sittings she received a long story scrawled out under her fingers by the instrument. She had not been told of the results of the table-tipping

experiment by her father in the rectory. Whatever may be said about the value of these planchette writings, a coherent story was given. The alleged communicator was the nun herself. She said that her name was Mary Lairre and she came from Havre. She was nineteen when she died, and the date of her death was May 17, 1667. She had been murdered by strangling, and through no fault of her own, by a man named Waldegrave, who took her from her convent at Bures. She was unhappy because she had never had a proper burial. She wanted a Catholic Requiem Mass with holy water and incense. She added that a monk was buried in the garden, too.

It happens that there is, or was, a stone with a large B on it in the rectory garden, and some day an investigator may think it worth while to dig under it for the bones of Mary Lairre. Besides the story of the nun herself there were other disclosures made in answer to questions put to the planchette. These had to do with tragic incidents that were said to have occurred there and concern the Bull family only. For that reason Mr. Price did not publish them with the rest, but he has them on record for any other psychic investigator who is interested enough to delve into the phenomena for himself.

The phantom nun would have been sufficient in herself to make any house famous as a haunted place, but she was only one of the incredible mysteries that filled this Borley rectory. Besides a few other quiet specters that were seen occasionally, there was a host of noisy manifestations, many of them decidedly unpleasant. It was these, more than the nun, that were responsible for Mr. Price's long and detailed investigation. But these must needs be dealt with later in their proper place. For the present consideration of quiet haunts we are concerned only with the silent, sad-faced nun who flitted along the garden path or leaned with closed eyes on the gate beside the highway, the specter that was seen by so many and so often, over a period of sixty years.

IV. THE HAUNTED CHURCH

One unusual and striking ghost story has its setting in a church, not, however, one of the venerable Gothic cathedrals of the Old

World but a plain modern temple of worship in America. And the scene is as unromantic and unpicturesque as can be imagined. It is the last place where one might expect to find a ghost, a town called Millvale, an industrial suburb of Pittsburgh. Factory towns are notoriously grimy and ugly, but Millvale is more so than most because it lies under the smoke-laden sky of America's greatest steel center.

The experience with a ghost took place in the Roman Catholic church of Saint Nicholas, whose congregation consisted of immigrants from Croatia. This sanctuary stands on an eminence overlooking a vast and dreary area of car barns, factories, steel mills, and rows upon rows of workmen's houses. The man who had the experience of seeing a specter in that church was an immigrant artist, Maximilien Vanka, and the story comes from his friend, the well-known author, Mr. Louis Adamic.

To go back to the beginning, Mr. Vanka came to America from Yugo-Slavia to make his fortune, but at first had little success in selling his work. Then to his great joy he received the commission to paint a series of murals on the walls of the church of Saint Nicholas in Millvale. This was in the spring of 1937. The job required prodigious labor because, for some reason, it had to be completed in two months. The artist began early in April, and by working literally day and night he completed the undertaking on June 10th. His daily program during that time was painting from nine in the morning to two or three the next morning.

As soon as the task was completed, Vanka sent word to his friend Adamic, who then drove to Pittsburgh to bring him back east. It was not till late in the following August that the painter blurted out the story of what happened in the church during the time he was at work on the murals. This story so impressed Mr. Adamic that he wrote it out in full, and it was published in *Harper's Magazine* for April, 1938, under the title "The Millvale Apparition." The following is a summary which may serve to give the gist of it.

When the artist reported for work in Millvale, he requested the priest in charge of the parish, Father Zagar, to keep all the church doors locked from nine o'clock in the morning every week day, and

to permit no one to enter while he was painting. This exclusion applied also to the priest himself, for Vanka was determined to suffer no interruption or distraction on a task that required such concentrated and sustained effort as the murals. The priest readily agreed. Every day Vanka let himself in by a private key to a small side door and worked in solitude. He plunged into his task happily. Father Zagar proved most friendly and congenial. Vanka stayed with the priest in the parish house, and every day when he returned in the early hours of the morning he would find his host waiting up for him with coffee, cake and fruit.

On the fourth night, while the artist was mixing paint high on the scaffolding, he glanced at the altar beneath, which was lighted by the downward beam of the lamp by which he worked. To his surprise he saw a man in black moving to and fro before the altar, raising his arms and making gestures. He assumed that the intruder was Father Zagar, and felt annoyed because the latter had promised to keep out of the church while the work was going on. And it seemed odd that the priest had said nothing when he came in. However, Vanka dismissed the incident from his mind and went back to his brushes and paint.

At two-thirty he stopped for the night. He had noticed a howling of dogs outside the church for several hours, and when he stepped outside the church they rushed up to him as if in great excitement, pawing at him and licking his hands. On getting home he found the priest waiting for him as usual and the two chatted till three, but all the while Father Zagar never alluded to the fact that he had been in the church.

The next three nights passed as usual, but during the fourth Vanka saw the same figure again, and as before making fantastic gestures. Afterwards, he heard the intruder walking up and down the main aisle mumbling rhythmically. This went on for between half an hour and an hour. "Glancing down," he told Adamic at the time he revealed his experience, "I saw him momentarily as he cut the light here and there that poured from the scaffolding." Then all was quiet, but Vanka said that he felt strangely cold and uneasy. Though it was only twelve-thirty he decided to stop paint-

ing. He climbed down, put out the lights and returned to the parish house.

On entering, he saw the priest asleep on the couch in the living room. On waking up, he declared that he was vexed because he had slept so long. He had left word for his housekeeper to wake him at eleven.

"Strange!" exclaimed the artist. "Do you mean to say that you've lain here asleep since nine o'clock?"

"Why do you ask?"

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, sure."

"You must be a sleepwalker then." Briefly Vanka told him what he had seen in the church.

"You saw something?"

"I saw you in front of the altar, making gestures like this."

The priest looked very serious. "You are sure you saw me?"

"Well, I assumed it was you."

"I am not a sleepwalker. I was on that couch from about nine till you wakened me." He hesitated. "Tell me, have you, since coming here, heard that this church is occasionally visited by a ghost?"

"No." Vanka was perfectly sure on that point. Then Father Zagar went on to say that there was a fifteen-year-old tradition about a ghost in the church, one that had actually led to quarrels in the parish. But, he hastened to add, he himself had never seen it. Then he said that the reason he sat up so late every night to greet Vanka was because he was afraid the artist might see something that would startle him and might cause him to fall from the scaffolding. Indeed, he had gone so far as to stand watch outside the door of the church every night between eleven and one except this one night in which he had slept through.

"Of course," he declared stoutly, "I don't believe in ghosts. But —there might be something—something we don't understand." And he went on to say that this mysterious something was reported to happen in the church about eleven at night.

After this, it was agreed that Father Zagar should come into the church at eleven every night and stay until the painter stopped

work. The following night the priest entered and called out in fun, "Come on, ghost, show yourself and see if the Professor [Vanka] and I are afraid of you!" His friend laughed and went on with his painting. Once the priest climbed the ladder with a pot of coffee, lent a hand with the mixing of the paint and went down again.

Suddenly there was a loud click or knock at the back of the church beneath the choir. Vanka felt that deadly chill again.

"Hear that, Father?"

"Just a creak in the scaffolding."

"I don't think so."

Another click sounded from another part of the church. Father Zagar turned to face the back of the church, saying in a loud voice, "Come on, show yourself if you are a ghost, or speak if you can! If you are a dead man, go with God and peace to you. I'll pray for you. Only," he added, dropping from the priestly to the practical, "please don't bother us."

Vanka suddenly broke in with a yell, for just then, as if in answer to the priest, the same figure in black was there sitting in the fourth pew. Vanka said that he saw him clearly, a man in black, old, with "a strange, angular face, wrinkled and dark with a bluish tinge." The figure was leaning on the front part of the pew, looking up with an expression that was sad and miserable. For a moment Vanka felt icy cold and the sweat broke out all over him; then the old man in black, so clear a moment before, disappeared before his eyes.

At this, the artist hastily got off the scaffolding, nearly falling in his terror. The priest ran to him but Vanka brushed him aside and burst out of the door. Again the dogs outside were howling. Since the priest had not seen the specter he told his friend that it was only his imagination.

"But I really saw him," gasped Vanka, "with these eyes as I see you now." He went to his room and made a sketch from memory in his note-book of the man he had seen. He changed his sweat-soaked underwear, and then when he felt calm again, he forced himself to return to the church. There he finished his stint at the usual hour and with no further disturbance.

Next day the priest said that a few minutes after he had gone to bed and turned out the lights he heard three distinct clicks or knocks close to the bed, just like those in the church and unlike any sound produced by wood or metal, and he felt chilled. "I knew there was a dead man in the room," he said, "but I blessed myself, said an Ave Maria and when I switched on the light there was nothing to be seen." Yet the chill persisted. "Why don't you show yourself to me as to Mr. Vanka?" I cried. "Talk to me if you can . . . I'll pray for you."

There was no response. The priest put out the light and said a Pater-Noster and an Ave Maria for the peace of the troubled soul. The chill left him and he fell asleep.

For the next two or three nights there was no sign of a ghost and Father Zagar prided himself on having sent it packing. One night shortly afterwards he entered the church just before eleven, joking, as he unlocked the door, about the ghost that he had so successfully dismissed. Suddenly that strange knocking sounded under the choir and once again in a corner. Vanka cried out at the sound. Hastily he used up the paint already mixed and put his brushes aside for a quick run for the door. Again he dripped sweat. As he ran, the priest seized him by the arm, begging him to face the thing, but the artist dashed for the exit. As he did so, another knock sounded through the still church, a sound, Vanka said afterwards, that cut into him "like a knife." At that moment he saw the same old man in black moving down the aisle toward the altar.

"Look, Father!" Vanka shrieked, "there he goes to the altar! *He's blown out the light!*" Then the phantom vanished. At once Vanka calmed down. But the light had been blown out. It was the sanctuary flame hanging from the ceiling over the altar, an eternal light, the wick and tallow of which needed changing only about once a year. The nuns from a neighboring convent, who had this lamp in their care, said on inquiry afterwards that as long as they had been there, a matter of eight years, the light had never gone out. There was a glass bulb kept to shield the flame so that it was practically impossible to blow it out, and no draft could affect it.

Because of the scaffolding, the light had been pulled up over the altar. Father Zagar rushed forward to see for himself. There was no doubt about it; the light had suddenly gone out, the wick was still smoking and the lamp was hot. Vanka had not stayed with him to investigate.

"Now I believe," said the priest solemnly, as they talked it all over in the parish house. "There is something here. That light was blown out just when you said it was."

At one o'clock Vanka returned to his work. Again all was normal, and two or three peaceful nights followed. Then "he" came back, two or three nights in succession, somewhere between eleven and twelve, Standard Time. The shift to daylight-saving time did not affect the visitant in his schedule. Once the priest tried to fool his friend by telling him that it was "nearly one-thirty, and aren't you quitting yet?" But no sooner had Father Zagar said these words when that terrible chill struck Vanka again. By this time he knew it so well that he called it his "signal."

"You're a fibber," retorted the painter. "It's somewhere between eleven and twelve, standard time; I must go." He knew too well from experience what was coming. He had tried to ignore the thing several times. He went so far as to make blinders out of newspapers, like the blinders on the head harness of a horse, so that he might not see the apparition. He had plugged cotton in his ears also so that he might not hear that dread click. But it was no use. The sensation of chill he had no way of avoiding and it was unbearable. Every time he forced himself to stay after he felt that signal, he saw the ghost. Vanka admitted that this old man looked only mild and pensive, and yet the sight of him brought indescribable horror.

Father Zagar received the "signal," too, but not so strongly as his friend. He begged Vanka repeatedly to stay with him and face it out with the apparition. Once he even tried to hold his friend back by force, but the latter was so crazed by terror that he cried out, "Let me by or I'll kill you!"

All this was going on for two months. Once the old man in black appeared at nine or nine-thirty, this time giving no "signal."

Vanka said that the feeling he had on that occasion was "unpleasant but not intolerable," so he put on his blinders and kept at work. Meanwhile, the visitant busied himself burning candles on the chandeliers in front of the altar on the right, doing so from the time he appeared until Father Zagar entered at eleven.

"What's this smell?" the priest asked.

"He's been burning candles all the evening," said Vanka.

At this point the housekeeper came in, and she and the priest found that the chandelier was indeeed full of melted tallow. One wick, which had burned almost to the bottom, still flamed, and the housekeeper put it out. This, however, was the final manifestation because the work on the murals was at last finished.

Vanka concluded his tale to Mr. Adamic by saying, "Nothing so intense, so terrific has ever happened to me." The latter was so deeply impressed that he drove back to Pittsburgh and spent two days with Father Zagar at Millvale, during which the two men had long talks on the mystery. The priest verified every word of the narrative as Adamic had taken it down from the painter. He said that in the parish the ghost was generally accepted as a fact. In consequence, no one ever entered the church at night. Others in the parish had heard the strange clicks, and one priest had left on account of the haunting. The popular explanation of the ghost was that it was the penitent spirit of a former priest who in life took money for masses he had never said, and who neglected his own personal religious duties, but this, Father Zagar said, was, of course, only gossip. Mr. Adamic went into the church to see for himself one night about twelve o'clock but he saw and heard nothing. The priest told him that the specter stayed away for periods of days, weeks, and even months.

There, in brief, is the story of "The Millvale Apparition" as it came from the pen of Louis Adamic. It is significant that he should be the one to offer this tale because he takes pains to explain that he had long since settled his belief that "once we died we were dead; that our personalities disintegrated into atoms, molecules and other such basic life units, which then become available as

material in the construction of other forms." In these words he reveals himself as a typical child of the materialistic twentieth century. To him there can be no survival of personality after death. Nothing but atoms and molecules. But after he left Millvale he does not seem to be quite so sure. He says that he is no longer a "skeptic" but an "agnostic"—one who doesn't know what to believe—but is keeping an open mind. "There seems to be," he concludes with an honest frankness rare among agnostics, "*something* in the church." And he took that something so seriously that he wrote out the full story for others to ponder over.

Being fortunate enough to make contact with Mr. Vanka, who is still resident in this country, I learned that this was not the only apparition in his life. Indeed he had seen ghosts on several other occasions, but none resembled in the least the black-robed figure in the Millvale church. Also, he had on many occasions known what are called "psychic" experiences, such as premonitions, telepathic communications and clairvoyance. It is clear, therefore, that he is a true "sensitive," as suggested by the fact that he could see the apparition in the church while his friend, the priest, could not. Since Mr. Vanka corroborated the tale as told by Mr. Adamic, that narrative may fairly be called direct testimony. It is an interesting circumstance that nothing more has ever been reported concerning the Millvale ghost, "and no one even speaks about it."

This anthology of ghost stories has opened with "quiet" haunts, the apparitions that associate themselves with a particular locale, but do not speak or create any disturbances. Although only four incidents of this type have been given at length, they are enough to raise a world of puzzling problems. All these quiet phantoms have been reported by reputable witnesses, most, if not all of them, avowed skeptics as to the very existence of ghosts before their own experience came. These quiet haunts were seen repeatedly, in the same places, frequently by a number of different people, and occasionally, as in the Borley nun story, by several individuals at the same instant.

All of these specters had human semblance and wore character-

istic and easily recognized dress. The ghost of Doctor Harris even wore his customary spectacles, which he pushed up on his forehead when he looked away from his paper into the startled eyes of Nathaniel Hawthorne. And yet each one of these shades was capable of vanishing on the instant and of passing through material objects, such as doors and walls. Rose Morton, it will be remembered, hung strings from banister to wall on the staircase. A light touch would have knocked them down, but she testified that she saw the Dark Lady on at least two occasions pass through them. And yet this shadowy figure had enough substance so that her footsteps could be heard in the hall and on the stair, not only by Rose but by other members of the household. The swish of her gown also was noted as it passed over the floor. Still more striking is the fact remarked by Rose that the phantom "intercepted the light" whenever she passed between it and the observer. Rose regretted that she never could ascertain whether the Dark Lady cast a shadow because of the subdued light or darkness in which she usually appeared. So also Mr. Vanka saw the old man in the Millvale church "cut the light" when he passed through the beams of the lamp on the scaffolding. It would seem then that there must be some kind of objective substance to these ghosts, but what can that be?

The problem is further complicated by the fact that these apparitions were visible to some but not to everyone. Apparently no one else in the reading-room at the Atheneum saw Doctor Harris except Hawthorne, and yet, to him, the old clergyman appeared as solid and real as ever he did in life. Although so many of the Morton household saw the Dark Lady, Captain Morton could not see her even when Rose pointed her out to him in the drawing-room. Father Zagar was unable to perceive the old man in black at the Millvale church, even when the latter was in the act of blowing out the flame of the lamp over the altar. At the same time, however, the priest heard the clicks, felt the premonitory chill and sensed the "presence" in his bedroom. What can the ghostly substance be that is solid enough to be silhouetted against the light and yet be wholly invisible to some eyes at the moment that it

looks lifelike to others?

There are other curious circumstances that crop out in these narratives. Contrary to popular belief, these ghosts manifest themselves in daylight as well as in darkness. Doctor Harris, for example, never appeared during the evening hours at the Atheneum, but always in "the brightest noontide." It was in broad daylight that the four Bull sisters saw the nun in the garden, and seven in the morning on the four occasions that she stood at the gate when Cartwright walked past to his work.

Another point of interest is the sensation of deadly chill, felt sometimes as a breeze and sometimes only inwardly. This phenomenon is by no means the invariable concomitant of the apparition but it is noted often.

So, also, is the effect a presence, whether seen or unseen, has on animals, notably dogs. Rose Morton testified, as will be remembered, to the effect of the haunting on both her retriever and her Skye terrier. Outside the Millvale church Vanka noted that the dogs used to howl at the hour when the grim old man in black appeared within. This reaction on the part of animals is often recorded in stories of the "supernatural."

Finally, there is the similar effect on human beings. The sangfroid of Nathaniel Hawthorne and of Rose Morton is exceptional indeed. The wild terror that overwhelmed Vanka is the almost universal experience of those who see ghosts. That would appear strange, because there is no reason to suppose that spirits return from the other world—if that is what these creatures are—in order to do harm to living men. Perhaps it is only the dread of confronting something unknown, a phenomenon that inspires terror because it is past understanding, just as a thunder-storm is to a little child. Perhaps it is the same horror as that shown by the dogs, a physical, animal reaction that is unreasoning and beyond control.

The most important question of all is bound to be the fundamental one, What *are* these figures that people see? Are they really the discarnate forms of dead personalities? Are they "spirits" of the deceased, to use the popular term? If so, these ghosts prove that human souls do persist beyond bodily death, despite what

the scientists tell us. That, if established, would be a fact of overwhelming importance to a world that has largely lost its faith in a hereafter, believing only, to quote again the words of Louis Adamic, that "our personalities disintegrate into atoms, molecules, and other such basic life units, which then become available as material in the construction of other forms."

As a class, the men of science shake their heads smilingly at the idea of ghosts, particularly as spirits of the dead. But if these apparitions are something else, what are they?

This question is bound to run like a red thread through this whole collection of real ghost stories, and it will have to be picked up again at the end. It is not simple either way. If these phantoms are the shades of the departed, why should they be wandering about in the scenes of their earthly life? Had old Doctor Harris nothing better to do the moment he died than to come back to his chair in the Atheneum and to the *Boston Post*? Why should the nun of Borley rectory be moping about the grounds for some three hundred years after her death because she had never received proper Christian burial? One would think that after that lapse of time she might have learned that Latin masses and the smoke of incense could contribute little to her happiness, and as long as she was unable to speak, what could she achieve by wandering along the garden path or leaning on the roadside gate?

At all events, once we climb over the boundary wall and enter the realm of apparitions, we become tangled in a jungle of baffling questions, and the farther we beat a path into this twilight land the more the thorny problems multiply. But that should make the exploration all the more interesting. It is a step ahead if at this point we can admit, as Mr. Adamic does in concluding his own story, "There seems to be *something*." It is not all moonshine.

Chapter II

Noisy Haunts

OLD Doctor Harris in the Atheneum, the woman in widow's weeds at the house in Bognor, and the unhappy nun in the garden of the rectory came and went in silence, moving like sleepwalkers among the people of flesh and blood. And the man in black who haunted the Millvale church, except for being heard "mumbling rhythmically," came, stayed and departed in silence. These are typical of the wraiths that are reported as manifesting their presence by sight rather than sound. Although they create no less terror by their quietness, they make no physical disturbance beyond the sound of footsteps or the swish of their garments.

Another group of ghostly phenomena haunting the habitations of men behave in a manner quite the reverse. They are never seen but they are most emphatically heard. They seem to make their presence known by loud bangings and knocks on walls, ceilings, and furniture. They hurl things about and smash glass and crockery. In short, they make infernal nuisances of themselves

These noisy haunts have been called "poltergeists," from the German word meaning noisy spirit or hobgoblin. Fantastic as all this sounds, there are so many well-authenticated stories of this type of haunting as to make a selection difficult. The five instances that have been chosen here for full-length narration show the time-spread of these experiences in modern days. One represents the seventeenth century, one the eighteenth, one the nineteenth and two belong to this scientific twentieth century, in which such absurd phenomena are not supposed to happen.

During the Age of Faith, poltergeist performances were readily explained. They were the work of devils, usually at the instigation of a witch or wizard who was practicing the Black Art in order to

get revenge on some personal enemy. In those days no one denied that such things happened.

After the Age of Science banished devils and witches from the Cosmos it was no longer possible to admit that poltergeist phenomena ever happened because there was no scientific explanation that could account for them. And yet, even in these enlightened days, it seems that the poltergeists go merrily on, thumbing their noses at the pundits, who look the other way in shocked horror. That is, of course, if we are to believe stories that come from sources that are not easy to throw out of court, ridiculous as it all sounds.

The novelist Mary Roberts Rinehart, for example, tells of the poltergeist tricks that she witnessed both in a Long Island house * and in the Washington apartment formerly occupied by Senator Boise Penrose.† Stephen Phillips, the English poet, once took a house near Windsor as a retreat where he hoped to write in quiet seclusion. He had scarcely moved in, however, when the place began to breed a medley of noises. Footsteps could be heard, both heavy and light. There were raps and scratchings. Doors opened of themselves. Cries resounded through the house, despairing shrieks as of one mad with terror, and choking outcries as of one being strangled to death. All this hubbub went on in broad daylight. Finding it impossible to do any work under such conditions, the poet left the house.

As he did so, the reason leaked out and found its way into the papers. The owner of the property felt outraged and sued the *Daily Mail* for printing the story. He took the same action against the Spiritualist journal *Light*, which also had given it publicity. The court awarded the owner ninety pounds from the *Daily Mail* and ten pounds from the far less affluent *Light*. The former appealed, and the higher court upheld the appeal. So, in a roundabout way, the poltergeist has won a legal status in Britain.‡

Incidentally, ghosts of the noisy sort have been officially recog-

* *My Story*, 253 f.
† *Ibid.*, 351 f.
‡ *Haunted Houses*, C. Flammarion, 101.

nized in America as well. According to the *Journal des Debats*, of Apnl 18, 1912, as quoted by Camille Flammarion in his *Haunted Houses*, one J. Denlertander, of Chicago (3375 South Oakley Avenue), protested the assessment on his house. He claimed that the house was of no profit to him whatever because it was haunted. A girl had died there, he said, and murder was suspected. Every new tenant complained of moans and cries and got out as fast as possible. In consideration of the situation, the court reduced the valuation by four thousand dollars.

Although these unpleasant manifestations are generally reported as happening in or about a dwelling, they may take place outdoors and anywhere by day or night in apparent persecution of certain individuals. Dr. Nandor Fodor, author of the *Encyclopedia of Psychic Science* and a life-long investigator, has told in public of an experience he had in studying a case in England where a woman was pursued everywhere she went by the sudden crash of breaking glass. A bottle or a tumbler picked out of somewhere would smash to pieces near her, but apparently she herself was never hit. On the whole, however, the poltergeist stories tell of much the same kind of disturbances, such as those experienced by Mr. Phillips in his house near Windsor: cries, footsteps, opening doors, moving of objects, and so on.

In the first of the extended anecdotes given here, the phenomena were somewhat different from the usual pattern. This was an experience that came to a number of people in the year 1682, on a farm in colonial New Hampshire, and it was given to the public in a pamphlet under the quaint title:

I. "LITHOBOLIA, OR THE STONE-THROWING DEVIL"

A certain Richard Chamberlayne, one-time Secretary for the Province of New Hampshire, narrates in circumstantial detail and with meticulous notation of time and place, a mysterious occurrence that he witnessed with his own eyes. Since he was unable to get any serious attention from the Governor of the Province, Chamberlayne wrote out his narrative and on his return to England pub-

lished it. The pamphlet was printed in London in the year 1698. Mindful of the refusal of the Governor to listen to the story, Chamberlayne fortified his published version by attestations from nine substantial witnesses, headed by Samuel Jennings, Governor of New Jersey ("West Jarsey" in the pamphlet) and Walter Clark, the Deputy Governor of Rhode Island. It might be added that Cotton Mather also gives an account of the affair in his *Magnalia*.

Chamberlayne's example of witchcraft occurred ten years before the famous witch trials in Salem, which resulted in the execution of nineteen persons indicted for being in league with the devil. Although this grisly episode in colonial history is notorious, it is only fair to say that the courts of contemporary England and Scotland were sending witches to their death by rope or stake in far greater numbers than those even of Salem. Very few in the Britain or America of the seventeenth century dared to question the fact of witchcraft. Certainly, Richard Chamberlayne had no doubts on that score. Indeed, the things he saw happen on that farm in New Hampshire were to him overwhelming proof, and he was exasperated to fury by the cool indifference of the Governor and the Council, before whom the whole matter had been laid.

According to the custom of the seventeenth century, the title page of a book or pamphlet contained a digest of the whole. Apparently the idea was that a reader, pausing to turn the pages at a bookstall, could quickly discover whether he wanted to buy the publication or not. It was the contemporary form of the modern "blurb." Chamberlayne's own title page is comprehensive after this fashion and is worth reproducing here. The spelling is preserved but the author's wayward fancy in the use of italics has been disregarded.

LITHOBOLIA OR THE STONE-THROWING DEVIL,

Being an exact and true account of the various actions of Infernal Spirits or (Devils Incarnate) Witches, or both; and the great Disturbance and Amazement they gave to George Walton's family, at a place call'd Great Island in the Province of New Hantshire in

New England, chiefly in Throwing about (by an invisible hand) Stones, Bricks, and Brick-bats of all sizes, with several other things, as Hammers, Mauls, Iron Crows, Spits, and other Domestick Utensils, as came into their Hellish Minds, and this for a space of a Quarter of a Year.

By R. C., Esq.; who was a Sojourner in the same family the whole time, and was an Ocular Witness of these Diabolick Inventions.

The contents, hereof being manifestly known to the inhabitants of that Province, and Persons of other Provinces, and is upon Record in his Majestie's Council-Court held in that Province. London, 1698.

The whole strange story told in this pamphlet is difficult to boil down to a few pages because of the variety of the antics of this Stone-throwing Devil. In general, however, it was a matter of stones, dropped, tossed, rolled or hurled. As the title page indicates, it happened that Chamberlayne was lodged in the house of one George Walton, the person marked out for the attentions of this unpleasant entity. Chamberlayne, therefore, was an "ocular witness" of the "Diabolick Inventions." To him the explanation was clear enough. He says that Walton took unto himself a parcel of land that his neighbor, an elderly woman, claimed was hers. She made a loud complaint about the matter, and was heard to declare that Walton should "never quietly injoy that ground."

He certainly did not. Retribution began on a Sunday night shortly after. Stones, coming from nowhere, began to smite upon the Walton house. Strangely enough, many of these stones seemed to come from the inside. Windows were battered out, not in; and the stones fell back into the room. That was true during most of the bombardment.

Nor were these Diabolick Inventions confined to the house. Wherever George Walton went to work in the fields with his hired men, the falling stones pursued him. Chamberlayne and a minister named Woodbridge saw, as they stood watching in the field, stones "lighting and tumbling in the grass." But, search as one might, there was never a sign of a hand throwing these missiles. Among the workers there were a few boys, and a man suggested that

one or more of these might be responsible for the mischief. As this was spoken, a Mrs. Clark, who was present with her little boy, saw him struck on the back with a stone so hard that he began to cry and she carried him away.

Indoors, however, it was worse. When Chamberlayne started to play a little musical instrument in his room, a large stone came bouncing in through the open door. Hearing the noise, the Deputy Governor, his wife and some neighbors came upstairs. Then they all saw many other stones fall, and finally a pewter spoon come tumbling along the floor.

All the while, says the narrator, there were strange noises of snorting and whistling. The stones kept falling on the floor of Chamberlayne's room and banging against the walls or the doors. Once he saw a great hammer brushing along the ceiling, at a time when he was walking across the chamber, and then it slammed down on the floor beside him. It was not long before every window in the house had been smashed.

One morning the iron spit in the chimney vanished. Then suddenly it fell down the same chimney with such force that it stuck itself into a log in the fireplace. After that, it flung itself out of the window. Pewter and brass utensils were pelted and knocked to the floor. Two candlesticks were suddenly struck off the table, along with a pewter pot.

After these and similar performances, some members of the household picked up the stones, counted them and laid them aside, but it was repeatedly discovered afterwards that some of them had disappeared. Even as Chamberlayne lay in bed trying to sleep, he could hear stones and bricks come banging against his door.

There was no doubt about it among the witnesses. Only a devil could perform such spiteful mischief. When someone in the distracted household recalled a charm for banishing evil spirits it was promptly tried. An earthen pot was filled with urine, into which some crooked pins were dropped. Then it was put on the fire to boil. As the liquid became hot, a stone fell upon it and broke off the spout of the pot, knocking it over and spilling the contents. Nothing daunted, they refilled it and put it back on the fire. An-

other stone fell upon it, knocking off the handle this time and again spilling the contents. The pot was refilled and put on the fire for a third time. Still another stone fell upon it, and this was the last because it smashed the utensil to pieces. It was agreed that the charm must have lost its power.

It was not only in the house and fields of his own farm that George Walton had to suffer the barrage of stones. One day he made a journey across water to his son's place. On the way his boat began to fill with water and he discovered that the bottom plug had been removed. While his men were chopping trees for the lumber he was after, the stones began to fall again. The workers picked up a lot of them and filled a hat, which they set between two trees. After they had carried the wood to the boat, they discovered that both the hat and the stones had disappeared. Then the bombardment began again. Later, the empty hat was found under a square piece of timber.

The chief target of personal attack seemed to be the unhappy Walton. Chamberlayne declares that the man was struck more than forty times in a single day while he was at work in his fields. Some of them were "shrewd, hurtful blows." He found his corn uprooted as if by a sharp tool. Once his haycocks were scattered far and wide, some of the hay being tossed up into the tops of trees and a quantity of it brought somehow into the house and strewn about the floor. Three of the sickles used by Walton's hired men were broken by the blows of heavy stones, being knocked out of their hands. Some of the workers quit on the spot. Chamberlayne himself received a slight blow on the leg.

Thereafter, for a while, there was peace. But when Walton started off by boat from the island to attend a meeting of the Provincial Council, before whom this strange matter had already been laid, he was severely pelted again. This time the stones were as big as a man's fist. His scalp was cut and he received one blow on the back, of which he complained, says the narrator, until the day of his death.

Unhappily for the sequel, that was the last of the stone-throwing. When the Governor of New Hampshire arrived to pre-

side over the meeting of the Council, he laughed at the story. Just about that time the disturbances suddenly stopped. Since there was no more stone-throwing, no one could prove to His Excellency that such a thing really did happen. He told the complainants that they were the credulous victims of mischievous boys. The credibility of the witnesses, the day by day record kept by his colonial Secretary Chamberlayne, the eager testimony of the neighbors —all this was of no consequence. The story was too preposterous. The old woman was never indicted for witchcraft. So Chamberlayne bided his time until he could print his story in London, and that was sixteen years afterwards. Certainly, the Governor's position is easy to understand, especially as the complaining parties had to admit that the stone-throwing devil had ceased his antics.

Although witches and devils were still a part of orthodox belief, it is likely that there were a number of people in London who felt as the Governor did on the subject when they read Chamberlayne's pamphlet. More than thirty years earlier, in the *Annus Mirabilis* of 1665, a man named Reginald Scott published his opinion on such matters. His pamphlet was entitled *Discovery of Witchcraft, Proving that the Compacts and Contracts of Witches with Devils and All Infernal Spirits and Familiars Are but Erroneous Novelties and Imaginary Conceptions.* Scott's intelligent and merciful purpose was to stem the tide of executions for witchcraft, "for the undeceiving of justices and jurors before they pass sentence on poor, ignorant and miserable people, who are frequently arraigned, condemned and executed for witches and wizards." This was a bold stand to take, for the extermination of witches had been a passion with King James the First not so many years before, and the trials and executions were going on in full swing both in England and Scotland, backed by the authority of the clergy. If Chamberlayne nad ever seen Scott's treatise he would have laughed the heretic to scorn. If devils and witches were not responsible for the stone-throwing that he witnessed with his own eyes, then what could be?

Curiously enough, nearly two hundred years later, in the age of

science, when devils had long since been sent packing together with witches and wizards, an instance of stone-throwing was reported in the *Gazette des Tribunaux* of February 2, 1849. The news item narrates the inexplicable fate of an empty cottage standing in a coal and lumber yard. The house had only one story and an attic. Workmen engaged in demolition of condemned buildings came upon it where it stood by itself in the lumber yard. It stood at some distance from the street and was separated from the other buildings by deep excavations. According to this paper, that house had been assailed "every evening for the last three weeks" by a hail of stones. Under this assault the house was smashed and splintered "as if it had sustained a siege and a bombardment by catapult." There was no explanation then and never a clue afterwards.

The incident is quoted by Flammarion in his *Haunted Houses.** He follows it with a similar stone-throwing episode † as nearly parallel to the sufferings of George Walton as can be imagined. This happened in our own twentieth century. Early in September, 1921, says Flammarion, stones began to fall upon the house and person of a French farmer. They fell at all hours of the day and pursued him into his fields at a distance of two hundred and twenty yards from his house. His windows were smashed and the front door heavily pounded by stones. None could tell where they came from because the house stood in a wide, empty field where no one could possibly hide in order to throw stones without being seen. A curious circumstance was that they were never seen until just as they struck. Some came on a curve; others fell slowly as if dropped from only a six-foot height.

The details of this story were furnished to Flammarion by the local Evangelical pastor, who added the circumstance that the previous owner of the farm had committed suicide. There never was any adequate explanation. Like Chamberlayne's story, it faded into the limbo of never explained mysteries.

* *Ibid.*, p. 77 f.
† *Ibid.*, p. 84 f.

II. THE EPWORTH RECTORY

The tale of the Epworth haunting is perhaps the most famous of all ghost stories of bygone days. What we know about it comes from the pens of members of the Wesley household who lived in the afflicted rectory. This testimony is contained in letters written to Samuel, the eldest son of the family, by his father, mother, and two of his sisters, all written at the time of the visitation. In addition, there are letters from Mrs. Wesley and four of her daughters to John Wesley in the summer and fall of 1726. This was, of course, nine or ten years after the event. The Reverend Samuel Wesley himself left an account. The neighboring vicar, Mr. Hoole, who was called in for help, wrote his experience during the day he spent in the rectory; and the man servant, Robert Brown, added his testimony. Finally, when a very old man, John Wesley wrote an article about the whole affair, which he published in a religious periodical, the *Arminian Magazine*, in the year 1784.

There can be no question as to the good faith of these stories, for the Wesleys were as godly a family as could have been found in all England. In addition, it may be said that the various letters written at different times support each other. Although there are added features in the later stories, the variations are surprisingly small and they are never inconsistent. Nowhere is there any evidence of imagination embroidering the tale.

The one attempted explanation was put forth by the confirmed skeptic Mr. Podmore, who was interested in psychic phenomena but felt certain that there was always a natural rather than "supernatural" explanation. He accused the sprightly Hetty Wesley of doing the whole job. The reasoning is that she was full of fun and wit, and was the only one of the grown sisters who did not leave a written narrative of the haunting. Others have followed Mr. Podmore in this explanation. How probable that is may be left to the reader as he follows the story.

Chamberlayne's narrative of the Stone-throwing Devil episode in colonial New Hampshire has long been forgotten. Indeed, the

pamphlet itself is so rare a collector's item that some twenty years ago one copy sold in New York for eight hundred dollars. But the very year that this pamphlet was first put on sale in London the Reverend Samuel Wesley was struggling to adjust himself to a new parish at Epworth, Lincolnshire. That name Epworth is hallowed to all good Methodists because it was the birthplace of John Wesley, the founder of their form of worship. In other circles the Epworth rectory, where John was born, has been famous for more than two hundred years as the scene of a remarkably well-attested poltergeist haunting. Joseph Priestley, the eminent theologian and discoverer of oxygen, called it "perhaps the best authenticated and the best told story of the kind that is anywhere extant." And that story has never been forgotten, because many attempts have been made to dispose of it by explanations based on the ordinary laws of nature.

The Reverend Mr. Wesley acquired his living at Epworth by royal bounty. In his leisure hours he was a poet, and had ground out a prodigious heroic epic of ten books on the Life of Christ. Rubbish as the stuff is by later standards of literature, Nahum Tate, the poet laureate, admired it extravagantly. This Gargantuan effort Wesley dedicated to Queen Mary, and though there is no evidence that she ever read a word of it, she rewarded him with the "Crown living" of Epworth. This seemed at the time a godsend, for the living he then occupied at South Ormsby brought him a salary of only fifty pounds a year and he was already a hundred and fifty pounds in debt. However, he did not take possession, for some reason, until 1696, two years after the queen had died.

Samuel's wife, Susannah, was a strong-minded woman, who in her opinions bowed to no ideas held by her husband, for he was a staunch Whig and she an equally staunch Tory or Jacobite. She could not abide the German lout who sat on the throne as George the First. But for the most part she was kept busy bearing and nursing babies. By the time she was forty she had given birth to nineteen "pledges of affection." Of these, number fifteen was John Wesley, and number eighteen was Charles; two names venerated in the religious annals of the English-speaking peoples as the found-

ers of Methodism and the authors of some of our best-loved hymns.

No sooner had Samuel Wesley taken over the duties of the Epworth parish than he found himself in difficulties. His parishioners were hostile, and most reluctant to pay their tithes. They were suspected of being the authors of certain afflictions that befell him. His barn fell down, and then his rectory went up in flames. With his growing family he could not extricate himself from his debts and his creditors threw the reverend gentleman into prison, where he languished for several months. After his release he built another rectory but that, too, burned down, and in this disaster the infant John barely escaped with his life. Finally, Samuel erected a substantial brick rectory, which managed to last.

After all that the poor man had suffered, complicated by the cares attendant upon an ever-growing family of children, it would seem that he might have been spared any unpleasant ghostly manifestations. But suddenly, in the year 1716, poltergeist disturbances began in the rectory. On the first of December of that year the children and the servants complained of strange knockings on every floor of the house and in most of the rooms. Besides, they said they could hear footsteps, as of a man walking up and down the stairs at all hours of the night. On top of these came what were described as "vast rumblings" below stairs and up in the garret.

At first, the paterfamilias did not hear any of this, and he roared his contempt of such nonsense. He declared that whatever the noise was, of course it came from mischief-makers, probably some of the suitors of the girls. At that time there were four grown daughters among the seven girls in the family, and the older boys were off at school. This slander upon the swains made the young ladies extremely angry, so angry indeed that they forgot their own fright in the hope that their papa would hear the racket, too.

This hope was soon realized, for the very next night after his lofty pronouncement he heard nine distinct bangs on the walls of his chamber, which knocks seemed to come from the next room. Oddly enough, they came in a series, with a pause after each group of three. Feeling sure that there was an intruder in the house he went to look but could find nothing. The very next day he got him-

self a mastiff big enough to chew any burglar in two.

The next night, however, brought the sound of six more knocks, though this time they were not so loud. At first the dog barked fiercely at the sound. Then he suddenly went silent and showed more signs of terror than the children did, not only then but during all the rest of the afflicted period.

Two nights afterward Samuel and Susannah were awakened by noises so violent that sleep was out of the question. They got up and went through every chamber, and as they went the noises seemed to be playing around them. As they went from room to room, the sounds followed behind them. Once there was the noise of crashing bottles. Then a curious metallic clank as if a bag of coins had been thrown on the floor at Wesley's feet. As they passed through the hall their mastiff came whimpering to them as if asking for protection. Search as they might, they could find nothing that could possibly account for the noises and, Wesley declared, "We still heard it rattle and thunder in every room, locked as well as open, above and behind us."

About ten o'clock on the night of December 26th one of the girls reported hearing again what she called the signal. This she had come to associate with the beginning of each disturbance, and she described it as sounding like the "strong winding up of a jack." On this occasion the racket began with a knocking in the kitchen downstairs. Next it rapped on the foot of a bed, shifting after a while to the head. Mr. Wesley went after the thing again, this time armed with a stout cudgel. Down to the kitchen he strode and smote the timbers of the room. To his astonishment, the Invisible repeated each blow of the stick with a knock of his own. Upstairs the poor man climbed again, only to find the knocking going on loudly in the upstairs rooms.

"Why do you disturb innocent children?" he roared indignantly as he addressed empty space. "If you have anything to say, come to me in my study!" Apparently, up to that time, this had been the one room that had been spared the barrage of poundings. But the only response to Wesley's challenge was a mighty bang on the outside of the house. Out he went to see, as he had often done before.

sometimes alone and sometimes with others, but it was the same; there was nobody to be seen.

One night, when the hubbub was louder than ever in the kitchen, the door-latch was seen to lift of itself. Emilia, one of the daughters, undaunted by this performance, went to the door and tried to hold the latch fast on the inside. But in spite of all the strength she could bring to bear, up went the latch again and the door itself was pushed violently against her. Yet, as always, there was nothing visible. This phenomenon of latch-lifting was observed repeatedly thereafter.

Mrs. Wesley was much upset because she feared that these appalling manifestations of the supernatural were a sign that death had come to her eldest son, who was away occupying the post of Head Usher at the Westminster School. She communicated this fear to her husband, who by this time had no idea what to believe. Accordingly, one night when the noisy assault began again, he sent the rest of the family out of his study to face it out with the Thing by himself. "Maybe if I am alone," he said, "it will have the courage to speak."

He called out sternly, "If thou art the spirit of my son Samuel, I pray thee knock three knocks and no more." Then he waited apprehensively in silence. But there was not a sound. If at this point he had asked some other questions calling for a certain number of raps for "yes" and "no," the rector might have obtained some interesting responses, but evidently the idea did not occur to him.

Still the noises went on. Once Wesley was so enraged that he was on the point of discharging a pistol in the direction of the sounds when one of his daughters caught his arm. Then he walked up to the spot and shouted angrily, "Thou deaf and dumb devil, why dost thou frighten these children that cannot answer for themselves? Come to me in my study like a man!" Instantly there came a crashing knock, imitating the one he always used to announce himself at the gate, but so tremendous that it seemed as if the board would be splintered. However, this ended the performance for that day.

The "deaf and dumb devil" was quick to accept the rector's in-

vitation to come to the study. Once he was shoved heavily against his desk "by an invisible power," and a second time he was pushed violently against the door of his chamber. A third time he was flung against the jamb of his study door just as he was entering.

The Thing, whatever it was, seemed to have an irreverent sense of humor. While the family were kneeling at daily prayers, there would be the usual solemn and becoming silence until the rector asked a blessing on King George and the Prince of Wales. As soon as these names were mentioned, bang would go a great knock on the ceiling. The family decided that the devil must agree with Susannah in a preference for Stuart kings. But since "Amen" also was always accompanied by a peal of knocks, it was not clear what was meant.

In his distress, Wesley sent for a neighboring clergyman, the Vicar of Hoxley, Mr. Hoole. But when the visiting cleric led the family in their daily devotions, the poundings went on just as ever, both at the names of the royal family and the amen. After one night of terror the vicar fled, nor did he stand upon the order of his going.

Meanwhile, the servants and the children were witnesses of the devilment that went on. Susannah wrote to her son Samuel about the plague of noises and received from him a letter written in a respectful but obviously amused tone. Put down on paper the story sounded ridiculous indeed. But John happened to come home from Charterhouse School during the time the rumpus was in full swing. His father walked him upstairs to a room where the pounding was going on and cried, "There, sir, see for yourself!" The boy was then thirteen years old. He never forgot what he heard and wrote of it long afterwards in his old age.

It was the girls who were the most constant witnesses. Four of them were grown up, lively young women, and they got so used to the Invisible that they called him "Old Jeffery." Once over their initial fright, they probably regarded him as a rather diverting personage in the boredom of their village life. He became almost a pal. They talked to him impudently. When the mother stamped her foot and bade Old Jeffery repeat the sound, getting the usual echo,

Keziah did the same. "Let it answer me if it can!" she cried defiantly, and "It" promptly obliged.

It was noticed that if anyone said that the sounds were due to natural causes, such as rats in the rafters, the blows were redoubled. One day Mrs. Wesley conceived the idea that if the horn were blown it might scare away the intruder. According to ancient folklore, loud sounds were unpleasing to malignant spirits. But the result of the experiment was that while up to this time Old Jeffery used to arrive at about nine forty-five in the evening, now—though mighty blasts were blown in every room of the house—he took to putting on his noisy show by day as well.

One curious circumstance was reported by the girls. They were playing cards one evening when Nancy, who was sitting on the edge of the bed, suddenly felt it lifted from the floor.

"Surely, Old Jeffery wouldn't run away with me!" she cried. The others persuaded her to sit down again and go on with the game. But several times afterwards she was raised with the bed and to a considerable height. This was more than Nancy could stand from Old Jeffery and she flatly refused to sit there any more.

Some of the girls reported hearing a swishing sound on the floor, like a trailing robe, and they admitted that they did not like it. The soft noise was even more creepy than the loud ones. But the only one of the family who claimed to have seen Old Jeffery was Mehitabel or "Hetty." She declared that she once saw the figure of a man in a long, white night robe that dragged on the floor.

As for the little ones, evidently they were pacified by the courage of their older sisters, and took the pounding that made the house shake as a part of the inscrutable ways of Nature. But when John Wesley was taken upstairs by his father to hear the knocks in the bedchambers, the boy noted that the infants were "sweating and trembling in their sleep." The wonder is that they could sleep at all!

For two months the Epworth rectory quivered under the blows of "Old Jeffery." Then, as suddenly as the clamor began, it stopped. Peace descended on the Wesley household, and there was never any recurrence of the haunting. But those two months have been an unsolved riddle for two centuries and more.

III. THE IRISH MAID

Parson Wesley, like Chamberlayne, thought that the troubles which assailed his house must be the work of an evil spirit. But when the nineteenth century came on, with its amazing advances in scientific knowledge, it created an atmosphere in which witches and devils could hardly survive. And yet the poltergeist hauntings seem to be more numerous than ever and more carefully recorded. In almost every instance the person chiefly affected—the narrator—was one who had no belief in the supernatural and scoffed at imps and evil spirits. The narratives sound as if they had been wrung out of the people who tell them, as if in spite of themselves and in sheer desperation with the facts. They each realize that their story is fantastically unbelievable; they are at a complete loss to account for what they saw and heard; they just know it all happened—and no fooling!

One New England minister of the mid-nineteenth century, Dr. Eliakim Phelps, of Stratford, Connecticut, did fall back on the evil-spirits theory to explain his own case of poltergeist haunting, but that is natural because of his theological training. His story is worth notice in passing because in some respects it is more astonishing than that of the Epworth rectory. Parson Wesley's house was battered for two months, but Parson Phelps's home was bewitched from March tenth, 1850, to the following October 1st. In the latter instance there were not only the inexplicable poundings and rappings but other phenomena no less disquieting. Screams sounded from nowhere. Chairs and tables moved of their own accord, crockery was thrown by an unseen hand and smashed, words scribbled themselves on the walls. Out of his meager salary, Dr. Phelps had to spend in the neighborhood of two hundred dollars to repair the damage when the haunting ceased.

The affair became so notorious that he wrote out the full story early the following year in a communication to the New York *Observer.**

* Quoted in *Mysteries or Glimpses of the Supernatural*, Chas. W. Elliott, 171 ff.

"For days and weeks together," he writes, "I watched these strange movements with all the care and close attention I could bestow." So did his friends, scores of them, who flocked in to see the wonder.

To test the raps on the wall, Dr. Phelps tried a system of "yes" and "no" by assigning a certain number of raps for each answer, combined with numbers for each letter of the alphabet. "To our utter astonishment," he reports, "a series of responses were returned, from which it was evident there was a being possessing intelligence." But the messages thus obtained were "often contradictory, often false, often scurrilous and profane, and frequently trifling and nonsensical, more in the character of a crowd of loafers on a spree."

It all added up in Dr. Phelps's mind to the conclusion that the visitation was Satan's work, aiming at the destruction of souls through stimulating a faith in the nonsense of Spiritualism. The very fact that the trouble began on the Lord's Day suggested a hellish source.

But other people who had not seen the restless furniture and the flying knives and forks and plates, or heard the rappings and the screams, declared that it was all humbug. This despite Dr. Phelps's high reputation in the Christian ministry. And by and by the six-months' wonder was forgotten.

The "Stratford Mystery" came from the pen of a clergyman. The following narrative was told, nearly a score of years later, not only by a layman but by one who was a typical child of the nineteenth century, a man who expected to find a scientific explanation for everything. What happened in his house he observed in the spirit of a scientist watching an interesting phenomenon. The author, H. A. Willis, had no belief in Satan and his imps, certainly not where physical phenomena were concerned, and he had only contempt for Spiritualism. In this point he and Dr. Phelps were agreed. Yet it was to this hard-headed person that there came an experience so amazing that he had to tell it. Since he had only been laughed at for his pains in trying to interest men of science, he turned in desperation to the general public in the hope that someone would take up the matter in the spirit of scientific inquiry. He sent his article to

the *Atlantic Monthly*, the most conservative magazine imaginable in those days, and the editors were evidently not only convinced of the man's integrity, but also impressed by his story. They printed it in the issue for August, 1868.

The article by Willis is entitled "A Remarkable Case of Physical Phenomena." That phraseology puts the experience into the field of scientific data, as the author believed it should be. Unfortunately, the original story is much too long to be quoted here in its entirety, but as far as is practicable in a condensation, Willis's own words will be used, since they reveal his matter-of-fact attitude of mind toward an incredible experience.

At the outset he explains that "the chief interest which may attach to this article will lie in the fact that the occurrences it describes are of very recent date—having happened during the past few months—and are susceptible of easy verification. Further than this it may be added that the author is a confirmed skeptic as to the so-called *doctrine of Spiritualism*." This indeed seems to be his pet abomination. "To attribute these mysterious performances to the spirits of the departed is ridiculous folly, delusion and imposture." He wants that understood clearly. Having cleared the deck of all supernatural nonsense, he squares away to his tale.

It all began with the coming of Mary Carrick, an Irish girl of eighteen, who arrived as an immigrant in the United States in May, 1867. She was illiterate but quick to learn, and had always been in good health except for one illness vaguely described as "a fever." She was a good girl and a hard worker. She seldom left the house, for she knew hardly half a dozen people outside the Willis family. Everything went normally for the first six weeks after she was hired by the Willises. Then, suddenly, on the third of July, the bells hanging in the kitchen and communicating with the outside doors and the chambers began ringing. This would occur at intervals of half an hour or longer during the day and evening, but not at night. These bells hung near the ceiling, which was eleven feet high.

"It must be the rats on the wires," said Mr. Willis, and he disconnected all the wires. Yet still the bells rang, though never, he observed, unless Mary was in the kitchen or the room next to it.

This ringing was not the usual polite bell-pull, but violent and furious. Again the head of the house went over every wire carefully, but he could discover nothing that could possibly make a bell ring. It was exasperating.

A few days later, loud raps were heard on the walls, doors, and windows of the room where the girl worked. They sounded like hard knocks made by knuckles on wood. There were ten members of the Willis family and these sounds were heard by every one of them. As the story went abroad, friends and neighbors flocked in to see and hear for themselves, and they too witnessed the same performance.

From day to day the noises grew louder, and Mary became very nervous and hysterical. She protested that she had no hand in these disturbances. "Please don't send me away!" she wailed in tears. "I haven't a friend in America." Unhappily this was true, for after the story of strange goings on in the Willis house became known, Mary's fellow Irish folk shunned her as one possessed of an evil spirit, and probably in league with Satan. Some Spiritualists, hearing the story, offered to take her in, but Willis scornfully refused to turn the innocent girl over to such "*questionable* supervision." The family decided finally to put up with the racket for the sake of the unhappy Mary.

All that had already happened was bad enough to endure but worse was to come. Raps on the wall pursued the girl as she went from room to room, and could be heard in her chamber even when she was evidently asleep. This went on for three weeks. Then the thing got to be tumultuous. Chairs were tipped over and crockery thrown down, tables lifted and moved and kitchen utensils were "hurled about the room."

Up to the first of August, Willis had kept no formal record of these mysterious disturbances, but on that date he began a careful daily memorandum of everything that he observed. And here it is in excerpts:

"On August 5th Mary was washing clothes when a bench, having upon it two large tubs filled with water, was suddenly moved several inches. The lid of a copper wash boiler was repeatedly thrown

up when the girl was not near enough to touch it. These occurrences were observed by different members of the family."

The next day when Mary was ironing, the table at which she worked continually lifted itself, and annoyed her so much that she shifted her work to another table which proceeded to act up in the same way. "Her flatiron, which she had left for a moment, was thrown to the floor." These movements always went on when she was ironing, and more or less at other times. "The writer saw the table thus lifted when neither the girl nor any other person was near enough to touch it. It has happened when a child of nine years of age was sitting upon it, and also when persons have tried to hold it down. This lifting propensity seemed to communicate itself to everything movable. The covers to the woodbox and wash boiler were constantly slamming. A heavy soapstone slab, one and one-half inches thick, weighing forty-eight pounds, which formed the top of a case of drawers, was often affected in a similar manner.

"On that very day, while Mary was putting away the tea things, the stone slab rose and struck the bottom of the tea tray so hard that it upset the dishes. This was observed by one of the family on that day and it happened often thereafter." On the last occasion Willis was seated near it, watching for the action which had repeated itself several times in a single hour. Suddenly, as he was looking, the slab reared itself and fell again with great force, breaking in two across the middle. Soon after, one of the halves was dashed to the floor and the fragments tossed out of the house. While this was going on, Mary was wringing a wet dishcloth.

A few days before that very stone, which proved so restless, had been taken from its place and laid on the floor of another room, with a heavy bucket set on it to keep it still. But as it continued to move, Willis replaced it where it belonged for the sake of noting its behavior. Once he fastened it in place with heavy wooden clamps, but these were wrenched off.

Another soapstone slab, which had become loosened from its brick foundation—it held the copper boiler—was split and thrown to the floor, and a piece weighing several pounds was thrown into the kitchen from the washroom, though at the time there was no-

body in the washroom. A table standing against the wall in the kitchen frequently started out into the room and once "was hurled over on its top." A basket of clothes was thrown down, doors began to slam, and kept opening and slamming unless fastened.

On the twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh of August, says Willis, there was "hardly a half hour of peace." Raps banged on the walls. Chairs and other pieces of furniture shoved themselves about. A washtub full of clothes in soak was thrown from its bench to the floor and its contents dumped out. A stool with a pail of water on it glided over the floor. A kettle on the sink lifted itself over the side and banged on the floor. In the girl's room the furniture was so active that Willis had everything moved out but the bed for the sake of quiet.

In despair, the Willises sent Mary away for a holiday to see what effect the absence might have on the house. This was the 28th of August, the day following the forty-eight hours of bedlam. The result was twenty-four hours of blessed peace. And when Mary returned she reported that nothing queer happened around her while she was gone. But, alas, she had not been back in the Willis house for two hours before the movements and noises started up again. They kept up until September 12th, when poor Mary suffered a nervous collapse in consequence.

On the eighteenth Willis sent her off to the insane asylum. In three weeks she was back again, calm and happy. She had not been bothered during her absence. The family waited in trepidation to see what would happen after she got back, but, strange to say, not a single disturbance occurred after that time. But she herself complained of pains in her head and took to sleepwalking—during which she was seen going about her usual tasks in the kitchen. Then she had another hysterical attack and was once more bundled off to the asylum. Again she recovered quickly, but this time Mary elected to remain happily employed as a maid servant in the institution. This decision was welcomed by the afflicted Willis family.

As an intelligent and educated man, Willis felt that he must find a workable hypothesis for the mysterious noises and movements that he had been watching so closely for so many weeks. He had a

theory that electricity had something to do with the business. At one time, he put the feet of Mary's bed on glass insulators. That device seemed to be effective, for afterwards the bed stayed quiet except once when one of the feet slipped off the glass. He tried the same precaution on the lively kitchen table and chair that Mary used when she ate in the kitchen. At first the table bounced right off the insulators, but when replaced it remained quiet. After that the girl was able to eat her meals in peace.

Willis noted also that the movements of the furniture were less in carpeted rooms than in those with a bare floor or oilcloth. Each day he jotted down in his journal the state of the weather, but he says that when he came to look it over he could not deduce any conclusion from rain or shine. Nor could he square what he witnessed with what he called "the known laws of electricity."

One interesting observation was to the effect that Mary Carrick became clairvoyant during this experience and proved the fact several times. Willis is willing to admit this because he says he believes that clairvoyance has come to general acceptance in scientific circles, a statement that probably surprised laymen as well as scientists, in 1868. At any rate, Willis tells of an occasion when Mary declared with feeling that a young woman member of the family, who was in a distant city at the time, was sick. It did no good to tell her that the absent one had recently been heard from and was perfectly well. Mary insisted repeatedly that the girl was ill, suffering great pain from a sore place on her hand. Later it turned out to be exactly as Mary had described.

One may well ask, the narrator continued, why was there no scientific investigation made of these phenomena? He explains that he tried his best to interest "two learned professors" in one of the educational institutions near-by (probably Harvard) with the idea of getting them to send some proper person to conduct observation and experiment on scientific lines. But, Willis says grimly, the request was "treated with contempt." The professors told him that he was being imposed on; he was just a credulous fool. They recommended that he look out sharply for "trickery." This to a man who had been scrutinizing the phenomena daily for two months and

more! Willis was infuriated. Naturally he felt that a golden opportunity was lost for attaining some adequate explanation in terms of science, one that would cover the facts and yet save intelligent people from "the pernicious doctrines of Spiritualism." This would, he believed, keep thousands off the perilous path that leads to the insane asylum. But the irony of it was that the only persons who took his narrative seriously were the Spiritualists!

IV. A SUMMER COTTAGE ON CAPE COD

It would be so much easier to dispose of poltergeists if they did not stray beyond the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when witches and devils were taken for granted. But they seem to have a mocking contempt for the skepticism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when no one believes any more in Satan and his imps, and they put on a show every now and then just the same. It was easy for Chamberlayne to explain the Stone-throwing Devil as the infernal agent of a witch. But Willis, two hundred years later, could not find any explanation at all. He insisted that there must be a reason based on science. All summer long he made careful investigations in the spirit of an investigator, but for all the pains he took was called a fool by the professors.

The twentieth century is still less friendly to poltergeists than the nineteenth, but they seem to carry on as merrily as ever when they feel like it. A college professor and his wife discovered this fact for themselves during a summer they spent in a cottage on Cape Cod.

Although this experience occurred in the nineteen-thirties, it appears to defy explanation as successfully as the shows put on, centuries ago, by the Stone-throwing Devil and Old Jeffery. The man who witnessed the performances that went on in his summer cottage on Cape Cod is an intellectual, who, of course, cannot believe in such rubbish as devils, ghosts, and hauntings. But he and his wife saw and heard a series of manifestations so astonishing that he simply had to tell the story. The narrative appeared in *Harper's Magazine* for November, 1934, under the title, "Four Months in a Haunted House."

The author signs himself "Harlan Jacobs," which is not his real name. The reason he prefers to use a pseudonym, he explains, is because he does not wish to be "labeled as the Great American Liar," though he admits that he would not blame anyone, after hearing the story, for calling him that. But the editors of the magazine, in a prefatory note, affirm that he "occupies an important position in one of our leading universities," and that the article is "a veracious account of actual experiences, with only a few minor changes to prevent his identification."

To this attestation the writer adds these words: "I will now declare that every word I utter will be chosen for its literal truth; and to the editors' assurance of my sanity and probity I will add that I stand ready to reveal my real name and all I know to any person who is qualified to put my story to the test of science." That forthright statement may serve well to launch the story.

One summer Mr. Jacobs, as he calls himself, rented a cottage that stood on the outskirts of a vacation colony on Cape Cod, the same village where he and his wife had spent "a dozen happy summers." The cottage was nine years old, but for some reason he and his wife were its first tenants. He chose it for its seclusion because he and his wife had a job of writing to do together that summer vacation and they wanted no distractions. The quiet they had hoped for, however, was broken the first night they slept in the house, and the disturbances continued nearly every other day and night during the four months of their occupancy.

That first night his wife went to bed early, while he started work on his manuscript. On the upper floor were two good-sized bedrooms, front and rear, with a foyer between. Mrs. Jacobs was asleep in the front room while her husband wrote in the rear one. As the doors were open he could see into his wife's room. Soon he realized that she was awake. She called out to ask if he was making that tapping noise. "Maybe," he answered. "Is this the noise you mean?" He gave his table a few jogs, as it was not quite level.

"Not, not that sound at all. What I heard was a tapping that seemed to come from the brick walk in front of the door downstairs. Like someone tapping on the bricks with a cane. Didn't you hear

it?" She insisted that the sound had awakened her and that the tapping went on after she was wide awake. Her husband told her that she had been dreaming, and the matter was dropped for the night.

The next night, while sitting up later downstairs, both of them heard about ten taps on the brick walk, striking about a second apart.

"That's what I heard last night!" cried Mrs. Jacobs. The husband picked up his flashlight and went outside. As he opened the door the tapping ceased. No human being, no animal was to be seen anywhere, and yet it was impossible for either man or beast to have made off so fast. In such a momentary flash there was no place where anyone could hide.

Precisely the same thing happened at least fifty times more during the summer, always at night, usually about ten o'clock, though sometimes they both heard the sound at other hours. They did everything to ascertain the cause. The walk was scrutinized, brick by brick. A dozen nights Jacobs stood at the door as ten o'clock drew near, but the moment he sprang out the taps stopped. A dozen other nights he lay in wait in some bushes outside. On these nights the tapping did not happen. Finally he gave up.

Meanwhile, other mysteries developed. On three successive nights of the second week in the house, Jacobs heard inexplicable noises in his bedroom. Each time the sound came a minute after he had got into bed but was still wide awake. The first night his head had scarcely touched the pillow when he heard a sound as of a box of matches falling off the chiffonier and striking flat on the floor. He sprang out of bed and switched on the light, but he could find nothing on the floor or under any of the furniture. The next night he heard a sheet of newspaper swish across the floor the full length of the room, a very distinctive sound. But turning on the light revealed no paper in the room and there was no breeze. On the third night the sound was louder. He was scarcely in bed when a broom handle or rolling pin seemed to smack hard on the floor and then "to roll across the room, ker-lump, ker-lump, ker-lump, until it clattered against the wall and came to rest." He leaped to the floor and turned

on the light as before, but again there was nothing whatever.

The next peculiar sound was one that both the Jacobses heard at any hour of the day or night and in every wall of the cottage. It was so frequent—they heard it at least a hundred times—that they called it the "Universal Click." Sooner or later that sound issued from every square foot of board in every wall or partition in the house. It was, says Jacobs, just like the click made by a lecturer as to signal to change lantern slides. To make sure that there was no insect doing it, the couple went over every board "with all but microscopic scrutiny."

Along with these other sounds, the third week brought the sound of footfalls tramping all over the house. These continued to be heard at intervals during the rest of the summer, but irregularly. Sometimes they would be heard three or four times in a single day, and sometimes a whole week would go by without them. This was no soft, muffled sound. It was a resounding tramp, tramp, tramp, as of a man wearing "good leather heels." If the couple were sitting downstairs they heard the walking going on overhead; if they were upstairs the sound seemed to be on the ground floor.

Once, while Mrs. Jacobs was writing upstairs, she heard the front door open and someone enter and walk about. Thinking it might be an intimate friend who sometimes entered and called out, she cried, "Is that you, Mary?" There was no answer. As she started down the stairs the walking stopped. She looked about the room but there was no sign of anyone. Yet from the stair she would have seen anyone who went out the door. Back she went upstairs and again she heard the footsteps on the floor below. This time she stole noiselessly down to sneak up on the intruder, but again the room was silent and vacant. This performance was repeated for a third time. When for a fourth time she heard someone's footsteps below, she refused to look; it was no use. But this time the voice of her friend called up, "Very busy up there?" Mrs. Jacobs declared that there was no difference between the sound of the real Mary entering and walking about downstairs and the invisible Thing that she had heard three times before. Nor was Mary playing any trick of hide and seek, for it happened that Jacobs had been following her up the

road for a matter of a quarter of a mile and saw just when she entered the house.

All the foregoing manifestations were in the form of sounds. The next one was different. It happened when the couple had been in the cottage for something over a month. About nine o'clock one evening Mr. Jacobs got up from his desk to look for a date in one of his reference books. These were stored in a shed, used as a garage and joined to the pantry by a door. The moment he opened that door and switched on the light there flew out of the garage and all over him "a fearsome swarm of big brown moths." They were of the common variety, but the swarm was enormous, two hundred of them at least. They attacked him like mad hornets, dashing into his face and eyes. He could not imagine how they could have entered the garage because it had never been opened all summer. The floor was concrete and the roof sheet iron. Except for the door into the pantry the place had been sealed up.

As quickly as he could he found his date and escaped back into the house. He told his wife of the experience with the moths and then realized that in his excitement he had forgotten the date. He would have to go back into the den of moths.

"Come and see for yourself!" he cried and flung open the pantry door leading into the garage, at the same moment turning on the light. Not a moth was to be seen! Five minutes before the air was thick with them beating on his face. And there was no outlet for them to escape. He took a broom and beat the walls and ceilings hard, but not a single insect appeared.* "It's the ghost!" they agreed, with one voice.

That night Mrs. Jacobs awoke and turned on her light. "Just one of your brown moths," she explained to her husband. "It was flapping in my face and waking me up. I had to put on the light and kill him."

Five minutes later Jacobs saw her light go on again. Then it went off. "Another moth?" he called.

"What?"

* For another curious experience with moths, see *Ghosts I Have Met*, Violet Tweedale, p. 239.

"Did you have another moth?"

"No, I was asleep."

"But you turned on your light again."

"No, no! I haven't had the light on; I was fast asleep."

Jacobs got up and went into her room. He had most certainly seen her light go on and off a second time. He shook the electric fixture to see if he could make it go on of its own accord, but with no success. Who or what turned that light on and off? There was no more sleep for either of them during the rest of that night.

The climax came with a sound that, the writer declares, "could have been heard a mile." They called it their "Grand Piano Smash." This did not happen until midsummer. One night, while the couple were working in the living-room, they were astounded by a terrific crash in the garage, a deafening noise that shook the house. It sounded as if a grand piano had suddenly lost its legs and crashed down on the cement floor. They jumped from their chairs and ran to the garage in a matter of three seconds. They threw open the door, expecting to see the roof down, but not one sign of a fallen object could they discover. Not even a book had fallen from its shelf. They made a thorough search of the grounds and the house, but there was no clue.

Within the next ten days they both heard, on two more occasions, the same "deafening din" in the garage. Again, on each occurrence, they could not discover any conceivable way to account for it. Curiously enough, it happened a third time, when three guests in the house heard it but not the Jacobses themselves. By that time it was the end of September. Mr. Jacobs's lawyer, together with his wife and daughter, had come to the cottage for a brief visit while a bit of legal business was being attended to. Nothing was said to the wife and daughter about the inexplicable phenomena that had gone on in the house all summer. When the lawyer was told of it in confidence, he laughed. It was too ridiculous.

In the evening, while Jacobs and his lawyer were deep in a complicated legal document, the familiar click sounded.

"Is that your 'universal click'?" asked the man of law.

"That's it."

"Just a snap in the drying wood," he replied, and the conference went on. Twenty minutes later footsteps were heard in the room overhead. Jacobs paid no attention, but kept on calling out the list of items for the document. But his friend leaped from his chair.

"What on earth is that?"

"Only the ghost."

"Ghost your grandmother! There's a man upstairs or I'm a ghost myself! Come on!"

The two men were up the stairs in a moment. But there was nothing to be seen to account for any noise whatever. The lawyer went through everything, even turning up the mattresses, to make sure that no one was hiding beneath. And yet there could be no mistaking the heavy, measured tread of a man walking across the room.

When Jacobs went to bed late that night he heard his guests up and moving about, speaking in low tones, as if something had happened. Next morning all three came downstairs visibly excited. They said they had slept less than half the night.

"What was that awful crash we heard?" they asked. "It sounded like the ceiling falling in the garage." It was a perfect description of the Grand Piano Smash, but on that occasion neither Jacobs nor his wife heard it.

By that time the summer vacation had come to an end and the tenants left their cottage to return to the university. The problem remained to find some reasonable explanation for what they had experienced during the four months of their occupancy. The writer of the article says that he knows all the noises in a wooden house and all the sounds that can be made by rats, bats or mice. But he confesses that he is utterly at a loss to account for what both he and his wife witnessed. He says neither of them is "psychic"—just ordinary, practical people. His training as a scholar with respect to exact data led him to make a careful, factual record of what happened, and that is the evidential value of his story. It is all the more telling because he stubbornly clings to his skepticism. "I don't believe in ghosts," he concludes after this recital of a typical poltergeist experience, "though I am, of course, aware that we have no final evidence against them." That leaves the door open just a

crack. "But something strange was loose in that house and I wish I could discover what it was. All I can do is to tell how it acted.",

V. THE BORLEY RECTORY AGAIN

The rectory for the parish of the village of Borley, England, was introduced in the first chapter, among the "quiet haunts," because of the spectral nun who glided along the garden path that bore her name, crossed the courtyard of the house, or leaned with closed eyes upon the gate that opened on the highway. It will be recalled that she never spoke, and her movements were without sound.

The nun would have been sufficient in herself to make the rectory famous as a haunted house, but, as hinted in the earlier story, she was only one of the evidences of haunting that beset that dwelling, so many and so varied as to make it, to quote the words of Mr. Harry Price again, "the most haunted house in England." In the appendix to his book by that title he has six pages listing the different types of manifestations in and about that rectory, together with the names of the individuals who testified to witnessing each one. It is worth repeating that the place was made the subject of a methodical investigation that covered a period of ten years, 1929–1939, and that the one who conducted that investigation and narrates the story is, according to his own testimony, a disbeliever in the spirit theory, an out-and-out skeptic. It is important to bear this fact in mind as one reads his story of poltergeist pranks that sound as if they came out of a fairy tale. Fantastically unbelievable as it all seems, Mr. Price declares boldly that it is "the best authenticated case of haunting in the annals of psychic research."

When Mr. Price went up to Borley from London to begin his investigations, he discovered the rectory to be a huge, overgrown house, much too large for a rector on a small salary to keep up. It was also inconvenient and uncomfortable, even by the standards of English country houses. It had no electric light, no gas, no furnace and no connection with a water main. These drawbacks were practical, everyday matters. But, he was told, the house was preternaturally cold; it never could be heated comfortably enough even for

hardy English people who expect to be cold most of the year. To make sure that this was not imagination, Price tested the fact by means of a thermograph. Although it was midsummer, the temperature in the house registered 48 degrees Fahrenheit, and did not vary more than a degree and a half during twenty-four hours. Let anyone try living in a house with a temperature of 48° even in July! As if this were not frigid enough, there was a spot in the hallway at the head of the stairs known as "the cold spot." Observers who stood there reported a cutting chill. People seated in other rooms at times felt an icy breeze, even though doors and windows were closed. There was no way of accounting for this cold.

That, however, was the least of the strange characteristics of this house. It obligingly put on a show for Mr. Price and his secretary the first day they arrived to begin their investigations. Mr. Harry Bull had died in 1927, and the clergyman in residence at this time (1929) was the Reverend G. E. Smith, who, with his wife, welcomed the investigators and gave them a free hand in their work.

Price and his secretary began by making a minute examination of the house from roof to cellar, measuring every room, passage and piece of furniture, and exploring all spaces under the eaves and even the chimneys. Then they sealed all the doors and windows upstairs. It was the evening of that first day that Price and the newspaper reporter Wall watched for the nun in the garden as described in the story of that apparition. As they were returning to the house after their fleeting glimpses of the nun, there was a loud smash and one of the thick panes of glass from the roof over the entrance fell in pieces at their feet. They went upstairs to check the seals on the rooms, and on their return to the main hall a red glass candlestick from the mantel of an unused room upstairs known as the Blue Room, flew past their heads and struck the stove in the hall, smashing to bits. They dashed upstairs again but found the seals over the doors all in order.

Turning out the light, the two men sat in darkness on the stairs waiting to see if something else would happen. Soon a small object was heard to come bouncing down the stairs. It hit Wall's hand. Turning on the light again they saw that this object was a moth ball.

This was quickly followed by pebbles, a piece of slate, and then more pebbles came tumbling down the stair in full light, as if someone were tossing them down from the landing.

Then the bells began to ring. The rector had been so annoyed by this phenomenon that he had cut the wires, but the jangling went on gaily, nevertheless. After supper all the keys in the doors of the library and drawing-room fell on the floor at the same moment. Price examined these keys and their locks carefully but they showed nothing that would account for their performance.

That same evening two of the Bull sisters arrived from the neighboring town of Sudbury to join Price in his examination of the rectory. After midnight they all went up to the mysterious Blue Room —where the strange lights had been reported—and made an attempt at a séance. This, incidentally, was the room in which Henry Bull, his wife, and his son Harry had died.

"If any entity is present," said Price, addressing the walls of the room, "will it please let itself be known?" This request he repeated two or three times. After a long while there came a sharp tap from the window, then another from the back of the mirror. Other quick raps followed, and Price called for a response by means of three taps for "yes" and one for "no," with affirmative rap for the desired letter of the alphabet while it was being called out. Three raps denoted assent to this arrangement.

Thereafter, most of the time in full light, a dialogue went on by spoken question and answering raps. The unseen entity, it came out, was not the nun but the Reverend Harry Bull, late rector of Borley and brother of the two Misses Bull who were present in the room. He said that it was his footsteps that had been heard about the house. Further, the various demonstrations that went on were done not to annoy but to attract attention. He added that he was not worrying over anything he had done in the flesh.

Upon this his sisters put a long series of questions regarding family matters. The answers came readily enough by "yes" and "no," but the alphabet method of spelling out a message did not work so well, resulting in much confusion.

The sitting lasted three hours, from one A. M. to four. About two

o'clock a cake of soap suddenly leaped out of its dish, struck the edge of the water jug so hard as to leave a mark on the surface of the soap and bounced to the floor. At the time no one in that circle was near the wash-stand and the room was brightly lighted.

The experiences of that first day, from lunch time to four in the morning, made up Price's initiation to the mysteries of the Borley rectory. Some two years later (1931) Miss Ethel Bull and her sister called on him in his London office to tell him that the poltergeists in their old home were now outdoing themselves, and wouldn't he be interested to make another personal examination?

By this time there was a new rector in residence, the Reverend Mr. L. A. Foyster. This gentleman and his wife had been there for nearly a year. They had not been told beforehand that the house was haunted, but speedily discovered the fact for themselves. Mr. Foyster told Price that he was most happy to cooperate in any investigation and offered to show him a diary that he had kept of the supernormal happenings that he had observed ever since he moved into the rectory.

This, says Price, "made remarkable reading," and that is an understatement. Objects vanished before the eyes of the Foysters. They and their three-year-old child were repeatedly locked in and out of their rooms. Things suddenly arrived out of nowhere. Sometimes they were the very objects that had vanished, sometimes they were strange odds and ends that they had never seen before. Once Mrs. Foyster received a stunning blow on her face which left her with blackened eyes and a swollen nose.

Accordingly, Price made up a party of observers to visit Borley again. His guests included two ladies of the Council of the National Laboratory of Psychical Research. After making a preliminary examination of the house, as before, the group including Mr. and Mrs. Foyster, assembled in a room on the ground floor for supper. The luncheon basket contained one bottle of Burgundy and one of Sauterne; Mrs. Foyster brought glasses; Price drew the corks and handed the Burgundy bottle to his hostess. She poured some into a glass. Instantly the red wine went black in the glass. It proved to be ink. One of the other ladies was at the same moment pouring

out a glass of Sauterne. Suddenly she cried, "It smells like eau de Cologne!" So it did and that was precisely what it was. A careful scrutiny of the glasses showed no possible explanation. Price is an amateur magician, but this was a trick beyond his repertoire. Fresh glasses were brought and this time the wines stayed wine.

After this episode, Mrs. Foyster, who suffered from heart trouble complained of feeling unwell and went upstairs, accompanied by her husband and one of the ladies who was a trained nurse, to help her to bed. Shortly after, an empty claret bottle was tossed down the stairs just as the candlestick had been two years before, smashing to bits on the stove in the hall. At that moment one of the bells began to ring violently. Everyone rushed upstairs but only to discover that all was quiet. Two little children were asleep in one room and Mrs. Foyster was in bed.

Scarcely had the group returned to the study downstairs when they were on their feet again with another wild burst of bell-ringing and the sound of pebbles rattling down the stairs. Then Mrs. Foyster was heard crying out from her room. Running upstairs, they heard her exclaim that first one and then the other door of her room had locked themselves. (The keys to these doors had long since disappeared.)

The rector fetched a holy relic that he had used before on such occasions. Then he and Price knelt on one side of the door while Mrs. Foyster knelt on her side. Thereupon Mr. Foyster read a reliquary prayer, after which all three joined in the Lord's Prayer. At the word "Amen" there was a click and the door unlocked! Finally, more glass and pebbles hurtled down the stairs.

This performance concluded what Price called "a night of miracles." The quotations that he gives from the hundred and eighty typed pages of the Foyster diary reveal the fact that during the previous months every kind of haunting phenomena ever reported took place under the roof of the Borley rectory. These include stone-throwing from the inside, as Richard Chamberlayne observed it in the Walton house. Sometimes these stones would be found afterwards heaped up under a pillow, only to disappear later. There were voices, loud calls, and whispers. Footfalls were commonplace.

Words were scribbled on the wall, as Dr. Phelps witnessed in his house at Stratford. Clothes baskets were dumped out and chairs and tables overturned, after the fashion described by Willis in his story of Mary Carrick.

Since there was no sign of let-up or improvement, the Foysters felt that something had to be done about it, for the house was becoming intolerable. Curiously enough, neither of these people felt any terror. Both husband and wife seemed to regard the poltergeist antics as only a nuisance, becoming unbearable to be sure, but something on the order of a plague of ants or cockroaches. They tried every means to rid themselves of their affliction, both physical and spiritual. First, they tried fumigating the house. This made no impression whatever. Then they tried exorcising by prayers. They called in the nephew of one of their neighbors—Sir George and Lady Whitehouse—a young man who was a Roman Catholic priest. It was observed that the poltergeist kept a respectful quiet while the prayers were being said, but after the Novenas were over he acted up as badly as ever.

Finally, it proved too much even for the calm and skeptical Foysters. They quit the house in April and stayed with the Whitehouses until the following July. Incidentally, the Whitehouses also were witnesses of much of what went on in the rectory. It seemed as if many of the manifestations were directed toward Mrs. Foyster. It was noted above that she once suffered a severe blow on the face. It was during the exorcism experiments that she was once thrown out of her bed and discovered on the floor, face down, with the mattress and bedding on top of her. In the mysterious scribblings made in pencil on the walls, "Marianne" was repeatedly written, and that was Mrs. Foyster's name. Some of these scrawls were illegible, but others asked for "a light mass and prayer," as if the nun were still begging for a Christian burial.

After the Foysters forsook the house it was put up for sale. Two small parishes were then combined and another dwelling selected for the rectory. By this time stories of the haunting had gone far and wide, started by Wall's articles in the London *Daily Mirror*. There were bus excursions run from neighboring towns for the sole

purpose of giving curious people a chance to take a look at the "place of spooks," and countless private cars swelled the traffic on the road that led past the rectory.

In 1937, Price himself rented the house for a year in order that he might investigate it freely and at leisure. It was at this time that he advertised for assistants and out of the many applicants he made a selection of forty, all of them strangers to him. For these he formulated a set of rules to follow during the times they stood watch in the house, and required written reports. A few of the observers got nothing and quit trying after one visit. Others witnessed a great deal. Chief of these was a Mr. Kerr-Pearse, of the staff of the British Legation at Geneva, who was then home on leave. He spent more time in the rectory than anyone else and turned in the most detailed and methodical reports.

Another one of the volunteer observers, but one who spent only a single evening in the house, was the noted Professor C. E. M. Joad, of the Department of Philosophy and Psychology at the University of London. When he arrived at the rectory he found another observer there for that same evening. The two men made a minute examination of the rooms together. They scrutinized with special care the various penciled scribblings on the plaster of the walls, each of which had been ringed with chalk the moment it had been discovered by previous watchers.

Professor Joad and his companion had supper together, and then made another examination. To their amazement they found a new pencil scrawl in plain view on a spot where it could not possibly have been missed in their first survey. In itself that "squiggle," as Professor Joad calls it, was a small thing, but it was to him a matter of great importance because it demanded an explanation which he could not supply.

In writing of this experience for *Harper's Magazine*, in the issue of July, 1938, Professor Joad says that his inclination is to doubt the facts, but "having reflected long and carefully upon that squiggle I did not and do not see how it could have been made by normal means. . . . The hypothesis that poltergeister materialize lead pencils and fingers to use them seems to be totally incredible. . . . And

the question of 'why' seems hardly less difficult to answer than the question 'how.' As so frequently occurs when one is investigating so-called abnormal phenomena, one finds it equally impossible to withhold credence from the facts or to credit any possible explanation of the facts. Either the facts did not occur, or if they did, the universe must in some respects be totally other than what one is accustomed to suppose."

Like Harry Price, Joad believes that the spirit hypothesis has not been established, but he confesses candidly that he doesn't wish to think it true. As to the whole business of poltergeist phenomena he asks, "What is one to do? The facts are totally fantastic. If one does not reject them as due to fraud or unsupported hearsay, one has no alternative but to postulate some totally fantastic explanation." That is the dilemma of all intelligent people.

In the story of the Borley nun, given in the first chapter, mention was made of Miss Helen Glanville's experiment with the planchette, which resulted in a script purporting to come from the nun herself. On March 27th, 1938, Miss Glanville had an impulse to try the planchette again, and sat down to it with her brother. In response to the question, "Does anyone want to speak to us?" there was an instant "yes."

"Who are you?"

"Sunex Amures," came in a large scrawl, "and one of his men [indistinct] mean to burn the rectory tonight at nine o'clock. End of the haunting. Go to the rectory and you will be able to see us enter into our own, and under the ruins you will find bone of murdered [indistinct] wardens [indistinct] under the ruins mean you to have proof of haunting of the rectory at Borley [indistinct] the understanding of which [indistinct] tells the story of the murder which happened there."

"In which room will the fire start?"

"Over the hall. Yes. Yes. You must go if you want proof."

"Why cannot you give us proof here?"

"We will," wrote the planchette, but that was the end.

Needless to say, the Glanvilles did not hurry to Borley that night. But they sent the script to Mr. Price to add to his records.

By this time the house had been purchased by a Captain W. H. Gregson, who renamed it "The Priory." He had been told that the place was haunted, but that did not worry him. At once, however, he too noticed strange happenings. His dog, for example, went wild with terror and ran away, never to return. One unique observation he reported was a track of blurred, formless, but distinct footprints in new-fallen snow that trailed along the garden and ended abruptly. They could not have been made by human being or any other known form of life, and they stopped in a way that defied explanation.

Captain Gregson did not have long to occupy the "Priory." At midnight of February 27, 1939, eleven months to the day after the "Sunex Amures" message, "the most haunted house in England" went up in flames. The fire started while Captain Gregson was dusting a pile of books in the hall. He said afterwards that he was stacking the books carefully along the shelf when a pile of them suddenly and unaccountably toppled off and knocked over the lamp, which immediately exploded. The flame streaked up the wall to the room over the hall, where it blazed fiercely. In a short while the entire house was gutted.

Yet even the fire did not put an immediate end to the ghosts. A month later, while two ladies were looking at the smoke-blackened walls from the Nun's Walk, they saw the figure of a woman move slowly past the vacant window. The floor of that room—the famous Blue Room—had been completely burned away. One of the ladies saw the specter for several seconds, the other for a shorter glimpse; but the only difference in their stories was that while one spoke of the ghostly garment as white, the other called it pale blue, which is understandable as the scene was bathed in moonlight. There were some "sound" hauntings that were reported after the fire, but on the whole when the rectory went up in flames the manifestations came to an end as "Sunex Amures" had said they would in the planchette message taken down by the Glanvilles. But the promised explanation of the haunting, and the murder mystery involved, have never yet been unearthed from the ruins.

So the strange dwelling came to an end, burying its ghostly secrets

in its own ashes. Apparently, during all of the sixty-odd years of its existence it had been famous for its mysteries. The stories come from as many as a hundred witnesses, many of whom are still living. This number includes every person who ever lived in the rectory for any length of time, the five rectors, their families and servants, also a number of observers. Among the latter were university men, engineers, army officers, doctors, and business men, altogether an impressive array.

At the conclusion of his book Harry Price asks the question, "Was the Borley rectory haunted?" And he, the skeptic, replies, "My answer is yes, decidedly!"

The foregoing stories are typical of the noisy haunts known as poltergeists. Of course, one is free to believe that all these astonishing phenomena sprang from either fraud or hallucination, and that is still the orthodox way of accounting for them. But the mere dogmatic assertion is hardly enough; what is the evidence to show that this is true? As noted earlier, Mr. Frank Podmore, followed by others, disposed of the Epworth mysteries by saying that Hetty Wesley must have been responsible for the noises and other disturbances. But where is the evidence? If she were, she must have been the greatest magician of all time. While on her knees at family prayers she could bang on the walls and ceiling; while in bed she could pound on the outside of the house; she could make herself invisible and shove her father repeatedly against his desk or the door of his study; also, open the kitchen door while her sister was trying to hold it shut; she could lift the bed several times while another sister was sitting on it in the midst of a game of cards. A girl who could perform these tricks would have made a fortune; as it was, according to the *Dictionary of National Biography*, she married "a plumber of low habits" and lived and died in poverty.

It is not necessary to go back as far as the Wesleys. The person who believes that poltergeist antics cannot be true is free to challenge witnesses who are living and ready to meet objections. There is "Harlan Jacobs," who doesn't believe in ghosts but spent "Four Months in a Haunted House." Still better, the scoffer might do well

to analyze Harry Price's book, *The Most Haunted House in England*. Here is the most recent documentary evidence presented by no amateur in the subject but a professional investigator. But merely to dispose of something that no one can understand by the statement that it must be false is neither good science nor good sense. And the scientists can dogmatize quite as recklessly as the theologians. Lord Kelvin once disposed of hypnotism and clairvoyance together as composed of "one half poor observation and the other half fraud."

At all events, if the silent haunts present insoluble problems the noisy ones are even more baffling. There are, however, certain characteristics which these poltergeist phenomena appear to have in common, and these are worth noting.

First, while the silent haunts, are seen but not heard, the rowdy ones are unseen but most emphatically are heard. They manifest themselves not only by noises but by the movement of physical objects.

Secondly, while the silent haunt comes to a house or church and frequents it for an indefinite time, the visit of the poltergeist is sudden and as a rule short-lived. It may be for months, weeks, or even for only a few days. How long the "ghost" might have haunted the Cape Cod cottage in Harlan Jacobs's narrative cannot be known because the tenants moved away at the end of their vacation time of four months, and the manifestations were still going on when they departed. In some instances reported the noises die down gradually; more often they stop as suddenly as they began. That fact sometimes embarrasses sufferers like Richard Chamberlayne and H. A. Willis, who, when investigators of an amateur sort did come to make inquiries, they arrived only to find that the bedlam had ceased. In a few instances children have been caught trying to make an imitation of the noises for the sake of putting on a show, and this has always made matters worse. In a case of that sort it was easy to point the finger of scorn and tell the afflicted household that it had been the victim of mischievous children all along.

Thirdly, these noisy hauntings appear to center in a person as well as a place. This person may be of either sex and is usually

young, but the common idea that it must be a child at or near the age of puberty is not borne out by the facts. There is no doubt that George Walton was the focus of the "Stone-throwing Devil," but he was a man with a grown son. Mary Carrick was certainly the center of the disruptions that plagued the Willis home, but she was a girl of eighteen. Mrs. Foyster of the Borley rectory, who received the roughest attentions of all in these stories, was the mother of a three-year-old child. However, in Dr. Phelps's story of the "Stratford Mystery," which was briefly touched on, he noted that his house was more violently affected when his eleven-year-old son was present.

Fourthly, and this is the most staggering fact of all, there seems to be some kind of intelligence behind this rough skylarking. The fact has been proved repeatedly by the responses that come from questions, replies conveyed by means of raps or blows on the wall or ceiling. A good instance of this was the three-hour session in full light held in the Blue Room of the Borley rectory the first night that Harry Price spent there. It will be remembered that during all this time a colloquy was carried on by questions and raps between the Misses Bull and some intelligence that purported to be their deceased brother, Harry Bull, chiefly on matters connected with the history of their family. It never occurred to the Wesleys to set up a code of rapping for communications but they repeatedly demanded and received an echoing number of raps to the stamp of their feet.

The most striking test of this invisible intelligence was made by Sir William Barrett in the course of a long and searching investigation he made on a poltergeist haunting. In this instance he asked *mentally*, without a spoken word, that the Invisible tell him by raps how many fingers he had outstretched on a hand he had buried in his pocket. Four times in succession he made this unuttered request, and four times there came a series of raps denoting correctly the numbers. This testimony coming from a man of Sir William's scientific eminence would seem to be difficult to dispose of as due either to cheating or credulity.

It must be admitted that the manners and habits of the poltergeists are shockingly bad. If there is any intelligence behind these

antics, is there also malevolence? That is one of the puzzling enigmas created by these phenomena. In this connection it might be interesting to quote the testimony of a friend of the Reverend Harry Bull as given to Price during his investigation of the Borley rectory. This friend declared that he was told by Harry Bull that he had often communicated with the spirits in the house; that the noisy manifestations were only the efforts of discarnate personalities to attract the attention of the living with whom they wished to get in contact. The Rector went on further to say that after his own death, if he were dissatisfied with conditions left behind and was anxious to communicate with the living, he would try to use the same methods of attracting attention.

In that Blue Room sitting, it will be recalled, the alleged Harry Bull stated that the noises made in the house were not done to annoy but to attract attention, a statement that fits in well with the other testimony of his friend. There may be a significant fact in this.

At any rate, the poltergeist manifestations are the most unpleasant of all the phenomena called "psychic." What lies behind them is anyone's guess or opinion. Are they, as their name implies, rowdy hobgoblins on a lark? That would suggest that stupid and silly, even malevolent entities exist on the other side of the dark border as well as this, and sometimes they are able to break through to create annoyance to people in the flesh. On the other hand, it is possible that there may be a sensible purpose behind some if not all of these pranks, and there is no other way to make living individuals concerned take notice. Childish and futile as these rappings and throwings seem to be, somewhere there must be a reason, an explanation.

Chapter III

Other Types of Haunting

THE great majority of ghost stories are easily divided into the two classes of Silent Haunts and Noisy Haunts, the one visible but silent and the other unseen but audible. The Borley rectory was unique in that it was famous for both kinds of haunting. There remain some other examples that do not fit into either class and yet are interesting enough to deserve a passing mention. Accordingly, this chapter will be a sort of postscript to the preceding two, garnering certain odds and ends of haunting experiences, none of them of sufficient compass for an extended narrative, yet each one as challenging in its mystery as the Dark Lady of Bognor or the ghost of the Cape Cod house. They show no regard for neat, scientific classification. They manifest themselves by other means and other sensations than sight or sound. If they do make themselves known through eye or ear, it is by some unconventional way. For example, one visual sign of haunting in the Borley rectory was a mysterious light that showed repeatedly in the empty Blue Room upstairs. It was seen at different times and by different people, but no amount of investigation ever revealed its source.

Sounds are chiefly associated with the boisterous performances of the poltergeists, but they need not be loud and unpleasant. Some well-bred shades who do not or cannot appear in visible form, seem to make themselves known by sounds that are as inexplicable as Old Jeffery's poundings but are soft and gentle, such as moving garments, especially the rustling of silk. Violet Tweedale, the Scottish novelist, narrates an experience that she and her brother had as children. It happened so often that they soon came to take it for granted. They called it "Silk Dress and Rumpus," and they remembered it so well that after they grew up they often talked about it

together.* Since the two children slept in the same room, they shared the experience. The noise came only when no one else was in the house. The room, says Mrs. Tweedale, seemed to be filled with the sound of rustling silk skirts and robes, a sound which both children heard always at the same moment. Then, although they could see nothing, they heard the sounds of furniture being moved about in the room and felt their own beds "reel beneath them." Yet the morning light showed nothing out of its appointed place.

This was an experience of childhood. The following is the story of the same kind of silk-skirt haunting, but this one was heard by a grown woman, and told to me by letter. She and her friends were American school teachers on a vacation in England during the summer of 1932. On arriving at the cathedral town of Exeter, she and her companions went to the Globe Hotel for the night. "We had picked the Globe," she writes, "because of its age and quaint situation on the Exeter Close. . . . Having arrived from Totnes at eight P. M., we walked a bit around Exeter before retiring. Dead to the world, as only a tired traveler may be, I was asleep by nine o'clock.

"However, at ten P. M. I found myself sitting bolt upright with eyes rolling in alarm. The room seemed filled with mysterious swirling and swishing noises as though ten bygone duchesses with long, satin trains sweeping along had sped through. I snapped on the light, ran to the window, felt the door locks and actually peered under the bed. Then, with a mental admonition to go to sleep I snapped off the electricity.

"At twelve, two, four and six o'clock similar noises aroused me. . . . At breakfast each one politely, but with unfeigned eagerness, asked, 'How did you rest?' The one in the room next to mine heard the mysterious sounds but, in addition, thought she was being smothered while I was being murdered."

It is inevitable that in a collection of experiences presented here there should be an overwhelming majority taken from English-speaking lands. But, as an example of the fact that these phenomena are of universal record, the following will serve the pur-

* *Ghosts I Have Met*, p. 234.

pose. A young lady of my acquaintance, whose native land is Colombia, South America, told me of an experience of her own with sound-hauntings. She was visiting in the hacienda of a friend on the outskirts of one of the principal cities in her native land, a house in which this girl friend and her aunt lived alone.

The first night after her arrival the guest and her friend were startled to hear a man striding along the stone flags of the patio. The young women got up hastily and peered out of the door. The patio was bathed in the splendor of a full moon, but not one human being or animal was to be seen. Yet, as the girls stood there, they heard again the man's footsteps. Now they appeared to be starting at one end of the patio and coming toward them. As they stared in amazement, the tramping went directly past the door where they stood and continued to the other end of the patio, where it stopped. Here was a ghost that "walked" with a vengeance.

But these footfalls were not the only signs of haunting in that house. All through her visit, the girl assured me, she saw the doors lift their latches as one approached them, and swing open, untouched by human hand. Sometimes, she said, a door would open and then close, dropping the latch in the face of the person starting to go through, as if in a spirit of mischief. Since there was no harm connected with these eccentricities, and there was no apparition visible, she soon got over her fright. After a while she did not mind doors opening and shutting by themselves or footsteps tramping across the patio. "But," she added quaintly, "I would have been terrified to death if I had *seen* a ghost!"

A pleasanter form of supernormal sound is music, and many instances of this are recorded. Only rarely is the phenomenon repeated often enough to be called a "haunt." The following instance has for its setting an old New England town. A man and his wife occupy as their summer home a rambling old house. Next door to it is another rambling old house. In the rear the ell of the one is so close to an addition built on to the other that one can lean out of the window and tap with a walking stick on the window of a music studio in the other house. The owner of the house with the studio was a singer, and her friends next door often heard her prac-

ticing. And, because her voice was so rich and so well-trained, it was always a pleasure to listen. From the back window one could see the lady at her piano, and often the friends called to each other from their windows.

The singer, however, had been in her house for only two or three seasons when she died, and the following summer it was locked up and silent. One day when the man next door came down from his attic work room, his wife exclaimed, "Oh, I've been hearing the most beautiful voice practicing in Elizabeth's studio. It sounded exactly the way she used to. Didn't you hear it? It has been going on for at least twenty minutes." She went on to explain that she had been ironing in the back room, which had a window close to the studio. Repeatedly, she said, she left her ironing to go to the window and see if she could see who it was practicing but had seen no one. There was no one seated at the piano at any rate.

"That's queer," her husband answered, "because I could always hear Elizabeth when I was writing in the attic, and this time I never heard a note. Who do you suppose it is?"

"I don't see how you could have missed hearing it," the wife insisted, "because whoever it is she must be a professional singer. She didn't sing any songs but went over her vocal exercises, just the way Elizabeth used to do."

The couple decided that the studio must have been rented to someone for the summer, though the rest of the house was shut up. But they were curious to know who it was that possessed that voice so much like that of Elizabeth; so they made inquiries that day. They learned that the studio door had never been unlocked since the owner had died. Then they recalled that there was another woman who sang, living at a considerable distance and in the opposite direction. Her singing, it was true, had never been audible before; the voice was light and small, not in the least like that of Elizabeth. But it was conceivable that this time she might be singing near an open window and a favoring wind had brought the sound in such a way as to make it seem as if it came from the studio. On being asked, however, she declared that on that particular day she knew for certain that she had not sung a note.

It was very puzzling, because no other singer lived anywhere near, and a phonograph or radio would have rendered songs, not vocal exercises. What the neighbor listened to as she was ironing in her back room was twenty minutes or half an hour of voice exercises in a rich mezzo soprano, "just like Elizabeth's," yet the husband writing in the attic had not heard a single note.

"Do you remember," he asked while they were talking it over, "hearing the piano?"

She thought a minute. "No, I don't remember ever hearing a note struck on the piano."

The following summer, when a tenant arrived next door and made use of the studio for piano practicing, there was no doubt about distinguishing the music that came from the studio, and music, or any other sound, that came from any other source. To the two friends of the dead singer the music of that morning, which one heard and the other did not, remains an unsolved mystery. Yet, if there is anything in the theory that a discarnate spirit returns to a scene to which it is drawn by happy associations, Elizabeth would certainly have come back to her house and her studio. And in that case it is not impossible to imagine that she might have done the one thing that would have recalled her presence to her friends next door.

Before leaving the phenomena of ghostly sounds one curious and inexplicable one has been reported by a number of apparently reputable witnesses, the sound of an approaching cavalcade that sweeps by, but with nothing to be seen. At the Borley rectory—certainly that house had everything ghostly!—the Reverend Harry Bull reported his own experience one time when he was coming up the highway near the house. He heard in the distance the sound of oncoming horses. He backed up against the wall by the side of the road to let them go past. He heard the horses galloping by, but there was nothing he could see.

Herbert Mayes, who was chauffeur to the Reverend A. C. Henning, reported to Harry Price that while cycling home on the night of May 16, 1939, a date only two weeks before Price inter-

viewed him, he had an experience that tallied exactly with the one reported much earlier by Harry Bull. Mayes said that it was a dark, moonless night. He was riding his bicycle past the burned-out ruins of the rectory when he heard the sound of stampeding horses coming toward him. He thought they must be those belonging to a Mr. Payne living near-by, and that they must have broken loose. To avoid being run down he got off his bicycle and stood with it as flat against the wall as he could, but he turned the lamp of his machine on the road in order to see what was happening. The clattering hoofs drew nearer and nearer, and finally they went storming past him, but there were no horses to be seen! As he stood there he heard the noises gradually die away in the distance. The sounds he had heard lasted three or four minutes, but as he looked over the road there was not a trace of horse or man.*

In the spring of that very year a similar sound-haunting of horses was reported by a Lieutenant-Colonel David Smith in a letter to the magazine *Light* and published in the issue of April 20th. It runs as follows:

My son has a large farm in a very secluded part of South Devon, not far from Start Point. The house stands in a combe, and as the back is almost built into the rock there is only a narrow passage round the back of the house. At the top of the combe, almost on the edge and only a few feet from the house, measured horizontally, is a road.

This road leads upwards from the farm buildings to a meadow, and in no way communicates with the ordinary roads. When one is standing in the passage in the back of the house it is not possible to see anything on the road owing to the height and the narrowness of the passage.

One morning, a short time ago, at about seven-thirty o'clock, my son was in the dairy (which is at the back of the house) when he heard the thud of hooves on the road above. Thinking that his cattle had stampeded he ran out into the passage, and was astonished to hear the noise of a large body of cavalry galloping down the road, the noise of accoutrements being clearly distinguishable above the sound of the horses.

* *The Most Haunted House in England*, p. 175.

For a few moments he was too astonished to move, but then ran round the side of the house and into a yard from where the road is visible, but he saw nothing, though the noise could be heard receding into the distance down the combe to which the road finally leads.

He examined the soft ground in the meadow, but there was no trace of horses or any other traffic apart from the cows which had not long before been brought down this road to be milked and were still in the farm buildings. There is no history of any fighting in this district and no troops have been in the neighborhood for as long as anyone can remember. My son, who takes no interest in psychical matters, was, and remains, very considerably puzzled.

David Smith, Lt.-Col.

Still another haunting sensation might be described as the "feel" of a room, a house or a place. Mr. Cecil Roberts, the English writer, in his autobiographical book *Half Way*,* tells of two such instances in his own life. Like so many people who want to be absolved of believing in the supernormal, he sounds off by saying loftily that he has "small tolerance for the humbug that is associated with any manifestation of the psychic or occult." The phrase "any manifestation" makes the statement sweeping indeed. But, strange to say, he wishes the reader to believe that his own particular manifestations of the psychic are not humbug at all. Twice in his life, he says, "there has come a presentiment, a deep consciousness with all the character of prophecy." Furthermore, it was a power that his mother possessed. Once, he says, she heard her husband's voice calling to her so clearly that she had the house searched to make sure that he had not returned. At that moment when she heard the cry he died in a house a half a mile away. Presumably this manifestation of the psychic or the occult was not humbug because it happened in Mr. Roberts's own family. Perhaps it is only other people's experiences that are tommyrot.

Thereupon he proceeds to give instances of his own sensitiveness to the associations in a room. Once, in the stateroom of a steamer, he was oppressed all night long with a sense of horror and sudden

* *Ibid*, p. 369 f.

death. He could not sleep and next day insisted on changing his room. Then from the steward he elicited the fact that on the previous voyage the man occupying that stateroom had thrown himself overboard. Apparently the mental suffering of that man somehow had registered in the room and haunted it.

On another occasion Mr. Roberts was being shown over a castle in Austria. As he entered one of the rooms he was again overcome with a sense of tragedy. He pressed his inquiries about that room and discovered that a former owner of the castle had been murdered there.

This sensitivity to the feel of a room or a house is not so rare as might be supposed. Violet Tweedale says that she possesses that power to the extent that she can feel out the haunted room or rooms in a house that she enters for the first time. The skeptical Harry Price confesses the same sort of sensitivity to the associations of a dwelling.

"When I enter a strange house," he writes, "I feel either miserable or happy or fearful. Many buildings and rooms depress me. My theory is that abodes and places retain something of the good and bad qualities of previous owners . . . certain rooms are saturated with the personalities of those who once lived in them." *

A Virginia lady of my acquaintance reported an experience of the same character on several occasions, sensing unpleasantness or tragedy in a spot about which she knew nothing beforehand. For example, when she was visiting at an old plantation home in Virginia she says that in one particular corner of the house she was suffused with a strange sensation of horror. This ceased when she went elsewhere but came back if she returned to it. Finally, she confessed her mood to her hostess, asking if that corner of the building had any tragic associations. It came out finally that in ante-bellum days the owner of the place had built a sort of small, brick oubliette against that corner of the house, and in that cell he would incarcerate such of his slaves as he wished to punish severely. It was known, or at least it was the tradition, that one or more had died there of slow suffocation.

* Quoted in *Ghosts That Still Walk*, M. S. Lowndes, p x.

Nor does this sensation of depression emanating from a room depend solely on a crime having been committed in that room. The tragic association may be merely one of innocent suffering. Mrs. Esmé Davis, in her autobiographical *Esmé of Paris* narrates an incident of this character.* On one occasion she and her mother came back to London to join the grandmother, who had engaged a studio apartment in Earl's Court. The day before they moved in, Esmé's mother stopped in one of the bedrooms and exclaimed, "Oh, this is terrible! Somebody has died here!"

The gypsy grandmother at once became terribly excited. "You're not going to mix me up with your spirits," she cried. "You can sleep in this room yourself!" The argument went on, says the author, in excited Spanish with wild gesticulations, and Esmé's grandmother and mother pushing each other about. Finally, the altercation was settled by giving the haunted room to Esmé.

"I will never know," she writes, "whether or not it was because they had stirred my imagination, but I felt at once there was something wrong with that room. All night long I heard choking breathing, heavy panting, the sound of someone shuffling about, and bottles on the mantelpiece being shifted. At about four in the morning I could stand it no longer, so I got up, and, groping my way down a dark corridor to my mother's room, woke her."

After breakfast there was a scene of intense haggling between the renters and the real estateman, but the latter finally broke down and admitted that the former owner, an elderly gentleman, had died of asthma in that very room.*

Apparently, then, there is a subtle kind of haunting that makes itself known to people who are sufficiently sensitive to respond to it simply by inducing a mood. Perhaps it need not be only one of tragedy. A woman on the verge of a nervous break-down after the death of her husband had for many weeks been unable to sleep without the use of sedatives. She came to visit a friend in an island summer resort, and this friend brought her to a small tea in the hope that meeting some new people might divert her.

The house was an eighteenth-century dwelling and the hostess

* *Ibid*, p 50.

showed the stranger through the downstairs rooms. On entering the dining-room the latter paused and her face suddenly lighted. "What peace here!" she exclaimed. "I feel as if I were wrapped in a silver mist." Again and again she returned to the sensation of peace in that room.

The next morning her friend called up the hostess of the tea, to say that her guest had already slept twelve hours, and she didn't know whether she ought to waken her or not. It was the sick woman's first natural sleep since her husband's death. She had refused to take any sedative the night before, declaring that she knew she would not need it. Again she spoke of the benediction of peace she had felt in that room. From that day she made progress back to health.

Her feeling about the room may have been mere fancy, due to the pale gray wall paper. It may have been that the room held certain vibrations left there by the life and character of a famous Quaker woman whose home the house once was, a character greatly admired and beloved for her gifts and her spiritual qualities. At any rate, if past unhappiness can be reflected from the walls of a room on the spirits of living people, we might cherish the hope that vibrations of peace and joy might do the same.

A further instance to be included in this discussion of haunting by special sensations is unusual in that it involves the sense of smell. It has importance because its central character was a figure prominent in history, the Empress Eugénie, queen of the Second Empire of France. The narrative comes from an intimate friend and associate of the Empress, Ethel Smyth, and was published by her in the memoirs of Eugénie that she wrote for *Blackwood's Magazine.* This particular episode appeared in the issue for November, 1920, the year the aged Empress died. Miss Smyth says in that article that she had heard the story many years before from Sir Evelyn Wood and Dr. Scott, who accompanied Eugénie on the expedition during which the occurrence took place. "But," she adds, "quite recently I questioned her about it, and all was just as they related."

It will be remembered that after the debacle of 1871, the deposed Emperor Napoleon III and his wife, together with their son Louis, fled to England where they were hospitably received by Queen Victoria. The son, "Lou-lou," as his mother used to call him, eventually was given a commission in a British regiment. That regiment was dispatched to South Africa. There, in the jungles of Natal, a skirmish took place between the British and the Zulus, and in this action the young prince was killed. This occurred in 1879.

Afterwards a search party was sent out to recover the body and give it temporary burial. To mark the spot a cairn of stones was heaped over the grave. On her husband's death, six years before, Eugénie had built a mausoleum for him in the town of Farnborough, which she had made her home. On receiving the tragic news from Africa, the bereaved mother determined that she would inter the body of her only child in the vault beside his father, and she wished to undertake the mission in person.

It was the following year, however, before she was able to set out for Africa. She was accompanied on this expedition by the two English gentlemen mentioned above by Miss Smyth. In a journey that in those days must have involved great hardships, Eugénie and her friends finally arrived on the wilderness scene of Zululand in the general area of the fighting in which the young man had been killed. It was a grim circumstance that the Zulu guides hired to take the party there included natives who had been in the band that had attacked the Englishmen on that day. They were so tactful as to convey to the bereaved mother the assurance that if they had realized who the young officer was they would never have killed him.

So the party set out into the tropical jungle to find the grave. But in the year following the death of the prince the shrubs and grass had grown rampant. By and by it became apparent that the guides were bewildered. They moved uncertainly in various directions. Finally, they confessed that they did not know where the grave was.

Eugénie and her two friends looked at each other in dismay.

The bereaved woman had made the long and arduous journey into the shadows of the Dark Continent, feeling sure in the knowledge that her son's grave had been so well marked by the cairn that it would be a simple matter to find it at the scene of the action. Now, as the Zulus admitted that they were unable to tell where the grave was, the situation seemed hopeless. Dr. Scott and Sir Evelyn glanced despairingly at each other and at the unhappy woman in their care. Walled in by the thick jungle, no one had the least idea where to turn next. There seemed nothing for it but to admit failure and start back.

Suddenly the two Englishmen were dumbfounded to see Eugénie's despairing face light up as if inspired and hear her cry exultantly, "This is the way!"

Instantly she turned and dashed off through the jungle like one possessed. Her companions followed after her as best they could, but she tore ahead, as they described it afterwards, "like a hound on a trail." On she plunged, never swerving from a straight line, stumbling over fallen logs, holes or tussocks, through grass so high that it beat her face as she drove through it. Then they heard a loud cry of joy. When they caught up with her she was on her knees exclaiming, *"C'est ici!"*

There, so completely overgrown with brush as to be hidden from the eye, they discovered the cairn.

Afterwards, of course, there came the inevitable question, "Your Majesty, how did you know where to go?"

Then she explained that as they stood in the jungle, looking at each other hopelessly, she suddenly became aware of a strong scent of violets. The first whiff was so unexpected and so overpowering that she almost fainted. She said that her *petit garçon* had had a passion for violet perfume, and it was the only toilet scent that he ever used.

As she breathed it in, the fragrance seemed to draw her along. She followed unquestioningly; she knew she was on the right trail at last. And in that headlong dash through the jungle she felt no fatigue. "I could have fought my way for hours," she declared, and she was then in her middle fifties. The odor of violets had led her

straight to the object of her search and then ceased.

The story is impressive as coming from Eugénie because she was not at all "psychic." She had not at any time had any supernormal experience except witnessing the feats of levitation performed by the medium Daniel D. Home, by her command, in the Tuileries. Indeed, it is fair to say that she had far more practical sense than her husband, the luckless Emperor of France. But this mysterious experience of the ghostly fragrance that led to the burial place of her son was what she told her friends in the jungle at the time, and it did not change in any particular when she retold it forty years afterwards.

Many of these stories are shuddery and grim. They tell of experiences that one is well content to have happen to someone else. Once in a while, especially among the specters that we have called "quiet haunts," a visitation occurs that is so peaceful and friendly that it has not a single frightening circumstance. So in the narrative that follows there is none of the startling effect of ghostly shape or spectral voice. Instead, the presence of a devoted mother returns quietly to the rocking chair by the window in her old home and, while remaining invisible, tells her story through an author's typewriter. There is charm and pathos in this simple tale that gives it distinction.

The percipient in this instance is a successful writer, particularly of short stories, and one who for many years conducted a column in a leading woman's magazine. Through her kindness as a friend, she wrote out the experience for this collection of Unbidden Guests. It is, therefore, direct testimony by the witness in her own words. It might be added parenthetically that the "Fred Howe" in whose cottage the visitation took place, was the late Frederick Howe, one-time Commissioner of Immigration for the Port of New York. The story needs no further introduction.

"This 'haunted house' is a cheerful yellow cottage on the top of a gentle slope which is called a hill in Siasconset, Nantucket Island. My friends, Fred and Mary Howe, owned the cottage. I knew noth-

ing of its history except that they had bought it from a man named Gardner. It was in the summer of 1918 that I encountered its ghost. I was living and trying to write in a small cottage where my six-months-old baby and her nurse and my husband were all enjoying their holiday by the sea.

"One night Fred Howe came in upon us and, learning what a difficult time I was having, offered his cottage as a writing office in the afternoon. His wife was in Europe for the summer, he spent his mornings writing a book and his afternoons on the golf course. There was no resident maid, only one who came in early mornings and put the house to rights. I should be entirely alone.

"I accepted joyously and the next afternoon found me settled in and busily at work. I felt very peaceful except that, when I got up to walk about the room and think, I found myself quite unconsciously rearranging the furniture. I pushed one or two chairs around and twitched a few other things to a little different angle. I realized that this was very bad manners, but because the room pleased me more that way I left it until just before I was ready to go home and then I put things back in place. But every day I changed it again when I entered.

"For two or three days I wrote happily, though now and then I would look over at the rocking chair that I had pulled directly in front of a window—I didn't analyze why I did this but finally I realized that I felt as though someone were sitting in the chair. It was a friendly feeling and I, who had been doing automatic writing for nearly two years, accepted the presence as a possibility and contentedly shared the room with her. I don't know why I made her female gender but I did. Nor do I know why I didn't ask in automatic writing who was sitting there, but I didn't. I was wrapped up in the serial I was writing and didn't do any automatic writing at that time. By the fourth or fifth day I would feel her sitting there when I entered the cottage and would greet her. I felt great peace and even good companionship. Then one day, when the story went immovable on me, I picked up my pencil to talk with my brother in the spirit world about what was the matter with the story. He wrote a few lines and then my hand was suddenly lifted and

placed lower down on the paper and 'Ann Mary Macy' was written.

" 'Well, who are you?' I asked.

"She wrote swiftly, 'This was my house. I lived and died here. And I love the way you have changed the furniture—that's more like the way it used to be. I sat in that chair by the window every evening and I died there. If you will go to your little machine that goes clackety-clack, I will tell you my story. I'd like to see it in print.'

" 'But I can't take automatic writing on a typewriter!' I cried.

" 'How do you know? I want to try it. I have loved watching you write on it. I like it when you laugh, and even when you cry, while you write that story you're telling. Go on—try it!'

"I went over to the machine utterly doubtful that she could get through to me that way, but I put my two fingers down (I'm one of those two-finger typists) and almost at once my fingers began to fly, writing much faster than I can; in fact, so fast that I could not read what was being written.

"This is her story as accurately as I can remember it. I sent the original copy to several editors who were very interested but were reluctant about publishing it. Then I sent the copy home to my family for them to read and it was burned in an express office out in Ohio. The carbon copy seems to have been lost. But my memory is very accurate, almost photographic, and I can vouch that every fact is completely authentic and the wording very nearly so. Here it is:

" 'My husband was John Macy. We brought this house over from Nantucket on wheels and here we lived with our little son, Johnny. We were very happy and quite well to do since my husband had a position in the Nantucket bank. One evening he came home looking very drawn and tired. He ate almost no supper. I didn't ask him any questions, but I knew that something bad had happened. After I put Johnny to bed he told me that he had to leave the Island that night and that I had to help him get away. He had been taking money from the bank and speculating with it on the market. Tomorrow the bank examiners were coming and

they would discover what he had done. He said, "You must drive me over to Nantucket, and there I have a boat waiting and a man to help me sail, and he is going to take me over to New Bedford tonight. I will get out of the country, I've got it all planned. I'm not going to tell you anything about it so when they question you, you won't know anything. I'll write you as soon as I can."

" 'I remember packing his bags with the tears running down my face so thick that they kept dropping on his clothes. It was like the end of the world. And it was the end of my world. We hitched Pompey up to the surrey. John carried Johnny out to the back seat without waking him and we started off. We didn't talk and I didn't cry any more. But we were very close. I knew that I would never see him again and I never did. I watched the boat pull away from the dock and I followed him with my eyes until he was out of sight. Then I got back into the surrey and turned around and drove home.

" 'I put Johnny back into bed and then I sat all night in the rocker by the window and thought about John and about what had happened to our life—the happy life of the three of us together. And I planned how I could make a living for Johnny and me. We had chickens and a cow and I could sew. I could sell milk and eggs and help people with their sewing.

" 'For three years I managed it. And then one day Johnny came home from school asking about his father. Some of the children had taunted him. I told him that his father was a good man, because John *was* a good man; he just wanted things for Johnny and me so much that he tried to make money faster than was right. But I didn't tell Johnny that part. I told him only that his father was good and that he'd gone away to another country and that when he could come back, he would. And that night I sat again and rocked in the chair most of the night making up my mind that I must send Johnny away or he would find out and grow up believing that his father was a thief.

" 'I had a brother in Boston who had children of his own, and when I wrote and asked him to take Johnny, too, he wrote that he would if I could help a little with his support. So a few days

later I took Johnny, who was seven, on the boat, and then by train to Boston. I remember when I had said good-by to him and was in the station I cried so that a station-master came and asked me if I was sick. Johnny didn't cry because he was excited about being with children and because he didn't know that he was never going to live with me again.

" 'He grew up into a fine boy and every year or so I went to see him. He used to wonder why he couldn't come to see me and why he couldn't come home on his vacations. But I told him it was because I liked to come to Boston to see him and that in vacations I'd rather he stayed with his cousins because there were no young people near me for him to have as friends. And so the years went by. I still sold eggs, chickens and milk and sometimes I sewed. I managed. And finally Johnny was in college. He worked his way through and graduated, and I saw him graduate. That was a proud time.

" 'Now that he was older, he knew that there was some reason why I never had him come to see me, but I never told him why. I just let him think that I was a little queer in some ways. He was happy in Boston and after a while he married and had his own home.

" 'About eight years after John left I got a letter from a Nantucket man who was traveling in Africa. He said he had seen John and that John wasn't going to live very long. He was working on an African farm and he was a very sick man. John had asked him all about Johnny and me and what the bank had done when they found out he had taken that money.

" 'I don't know just why I never destroyed that letter but it was the only news I ever had of John and I put it away in a little drawer in the desk that stood right over there in that corner.

" 'I went on with my life and it wasn't too bad. I had friends. And finally I was an old woman and very tired and one evening while I was sitting there in the rocking chair by the window, watching the light fade and the stars come, I saw my mother walking across the meadow where Sam Pitman kept his cows. She looked younger than I remembered and very happy; she came into my

room and smiled at me and took my hand. Without a word we walked away over the meadow together. I had no idea that I had died. I only knew that I was with father and mother and the old dear friends and in a place more beautiful than any place I'd ever seen.

" 'But after a while I felt something pulling at me and I found myself back in my cottage and it must have been several days later because Johnny was there and lots of people and they were having a funeral. It seemed strange to me at first but afterwards I rather enjoyed that funeral—all my friends were there and the singing was lovely and the minister said wonderful things. Later, an awful fear took possession of me. It was the next day. Johnny was going through all my things. He was standing at the desk taking out all the papers. I remembered that letter and I tried to distract him but I couldn't make him feel me. He took it out and read it. Then he went down the street to Sam Pitman's house. Sam was an old man then and he knew all about me and all about John. He told Johnny the whole story and at last Johnny understood why I had sent him away and would never let him come back. He understood about his father, too, but now it didn't matter, for he was a grown man and he knew how life is. He made Sam tell him again just how he'd found me sitting in the chair. Sam nearly always stopped to say good morning to me on his way home from the pasture after he'd taken the cows there in the early morning. He saw me sitting in the window and waved, but I didn't wave back. So he called me, but I didn't answer. Then he opened the door and came in, and there I was in the chair in my favorite place.

" 'Johnny came back to the cottage and I walked beside him, though he didn't know it, and when he came into this room he knelt down by this chair and cried like a little boy. I tried to comfort him and tell him it was all right, that because he had grown up to be such a fine man, it was all worth it to me. I couldn't make him feel me there but he did feel comforted.

" 'And that's the story of this house and me, and Johnny and John. I didn't come back to this cottage for a long, long time after that. But I did come back when Mr. and Mrs. Howe came here

to live. They are nice people, but I couldn't make them feel me. And then you came and something told me to come back once more, and I knew right away it was all right—you would know that I was here. And you pushed the furniture around the right way, too. And now I'll never come again, I think—it feels good to have the story all down in black and white and not in my keeping any more.

" 'If you want to know that all of this is true and that I've told you just how it all happened you go ask Sam Pitman—you call him Uncle Sammy but I always called him Sam and Sammy. And you can ask Sally Green, too. They both know all about it.'

"I did ask Uncle Sammy, not telling him why, but just asking him who lived in the Howe cottage before the Gardners. 'Why, Ann Mary Macy,' he said. And then told me this story just as I have told you, only not all the feelings, of course, because he couldn't know them, but all the facts. As I had never heard of Sally Green, I asked him who she was, and he said: 'Why don't you know her? She lives in the second house in the block right there across from me, just below here.' I meant to go and see her, but I never did. She was a very old lady and I didn't need any more proof."

Chapter IV

Restored Scenes of the Past

INDIVIDUAL ghosts of the dead are understandable, once we accept the spirit theory of human survival, but what shall be said of ghosts of bygone scenes, of buildings that no longer exist, of battles fought in the past, or some every-day scene involving ancient costumes and long-forgotten settings? What could be more fantastic than the ghost of a house, a forest, or a coach and four? And yet this curious type of apparition seems to have been so well supported by good testimony that it cannot be lightly dismissed.

What it amounts to is that certain people have perceived with their eyes and ears—or at least they thought they did—the reenactment of some scene long since vanished or some activity that took place in the past. It is as if these persons had opened a portfolio and come upon an old print depicting a bygone scene, a fête champêtre, a court ball, or a village market day, complete in costumes and properties of the period. Or, rather, since these reenacted scenes are usually full of life and movement, it might be better to compare them with an old newsreel thrown on the screen again after an interval of many years. If the problem of explaining individual ghosts is formidable, what shall be said of trying to make these resurrected scenes sound reasonable? Everyone is welcome to make out his own hypothesis.

It has been suggested that since no form of energy is ever lost, every past scene is registered somewhere in the ether as on a moving picture film, and that, very rarely, someone who is at the moment of the proper sensitivity to pick up the vibrations, is thereby enabled to see that strip of film played over on the screen of his consciousness. Thomas A. Edison, the "electrical wizard," was deeply interested in these psychical mysteries, and held the theory that

some day a radio receiving set might be constructed so sensitive that it could pick up words and sounds of the past. It is said that during his last years he was absorbed in that problem.

This type of apparition is introduced at this point in these pages because it bears a relation to the foregoing chapters on hauntings. Indeed it can be regarded as a kind of haunting because the apparition is associated always with a specific locality and apparently it tends to recur.

The following anecdote is offered here only as an illustration of this type of ghost story. It cannot be introduced as a "real" experience because it came to me some time ago and then only at second hand. The original narrator is beyond reach at this time.

Toward the end of the last war a young American officer was on furlough in a provincial city of France. He was browsing over old drawings and prints in an art shop when a man came up to him, asked him if he was specially interested in original drawings, and after a while invited him to see his own collection at his château near by. The officer gladly accepted, and to his astonishment discovered there the most remarkable gallery of paintings he had ever seen in one man's house, as well as etchings and drawings by the great masters.

He thanked his host warmly and went his way. When, some time later he was able to return to the town, his first thought was to pay a call on his friend the art connoisseur. On reaching the château, he was astounded to discover that it was desolate and tenantless. To the inquiries he made in the neighborhood he received the same answer; namely, that the château had not been lived in for about seventy years. The last tenant, he was told, was a wealthy man noted for his interest in the fine arts, possessing one of the finest private collections in France, but at his death these works of art had been scattered among many galleries.

Apocryphal or not, the story is typical of this class of ghostly experiences. A person suddenly steps into the past and lives it for a brief time just as Mark Twain's Connecticut Yankee found himself projected back into the time of King Arthur. The longer narratives that follow have been chosen for what seems to be as good

attestation as can reasonably be asked. It may fairly be added that this is the rarest kind of ghost story in the entire category.

I. THE PHANTOM BATTLE OF EDGE HILL

Of all the narratives in this collection the one that follows is the most venerable. It goes back to something that is alleged to have happened more than three hundred years ago. That fact in itself would tend to dismiss it as a mere legend, an outcropping of seventeenth-century superstition. But the experience described was so stoutly vouched for by so many good witnesses that at least it deserves a hearing. However it may be explained away, it remains a curiously interesting human document. It has the added advantage of having been told in print less than a month after it happened, when the occurrence was fresh in the minds of the witnesses.

This was done in the form of a small pamphlet, which as the title proclaims, describes "The Prodigious Noises of War and Battle at Edge Hill Near Keinton in Northamptonshire, and its truth is certified by William Wood, Esq. and Justice of the Peace for the same County, and Samuel Marshall, Preacher of God's Word in Keinton, and other persons of quality."

Those who know their English history will recall that the battle of Edge Hill was fought between the Royalist army of King Charles the First and the Parliamentary army under the Earl of Essex, on October 23, 1642. It was the first considerable battle of the Civil War, but, according to the historians, the result was indecisive, although the action itself was hard fought.

It is in Lord Nugent's biography of John Hampden that the story of the strange sequel to the battle is preserved. His lordship's life span began with the year of the fall of the Bastille and ended with the year of Wordsworth's death. That was a period when the phrase "psychical research" had not been invented, and all human experiences impossible to explain by natural causes were disposed of as superstition.

The pamphlet above mentioned was exceedingly rare even at

the time Lord Nugent was writing his book, and he is probably responsible for the fact that its text survives to this day. For, although what it tells is, in his eyes, rank superstition, he quotes it entire in his appendix and devotes a lengthy footnote to it in the body of his work.* That footnote will be quoted in full below. Lord Nugent's common sense tells him that the whole thing is "preposterous," to use his own term, and yet he cannot get away from the fact that so many reputable men testified to it. And this is his comment:

"The world abounds with histories of preternatural appearances the most utterly incredible, supported by testimony the most undeniable. Here is a ghost story of the most preposterous sort. Two great armies of ghosts, for the mere purpose, it seems, of making night hideous to the ignorant and scared townsmen of Keinton, fighting over again the battle of Edge Hill, which had been decided, as far as their mortal efforts could decide it, more than two months before. Yet is this story attested upon the oath of three officers, men of honour and distinction, and of 'three other gentlemen of credit,' selected by the King as commissioners to report upon these prodigies, and to tranquilize and disabuse the alarms of a country town; adding, moreover, in confirmation, their testimony to the identity of several of the illustrious dead, as seen among the unearthly combatants who had been well-known to them, and who had fallen in the battle. A well-supported imposture, or a stormy night on the hillside, might have acted on the weakness of a peasantry in whose remembrance the terrors of the Edge Hill fight were still fresh, but it is difficult to imagine how the minds of officers sent there to correct the illusion could have been so imposed upon. It will also be observed that no inference is attempted by the witnesses to assist any notion of a judgment or warning favorable to the interests or passions of their own party. It is a pure, inexplicable working of fancy upon the minds of shrewd and well-educated men in support of the superstitions of timid and vulgar ones who had for several nights been brought to consent to the same belief. The solution of it must be left to the ingenuity of the reader."

* *Ibid.*, p. 316.

The description that follows is taken verbatim from the pamphlet as reprinted in the Appendix to Lord Nugent's book. Spelling and capitalization have been modernized, paragraphs have been let in, and some of the longest and most labyrinthine sentences have been cut in two at a convenient semicolon. Otherwise, the story is reproduced as it was told in the resounding idiom of seventeenth-century English prose.

"On Saturday, which was in Christmas time . . . between twelve and one of the clock in the morning, was heard by some shepherds and their countrymen and travellers, first the sound of drums afar off and the noise of soldiers giving out their last groans; at which they were much amazed, and amazed stood still, till it seemed by the nearness of the noise to approach them; at which, too much affrighted, they sought to withdraw as fast as possibly they could. But then, on the sudden, whilst they were in these cogitations, appeared in the air the same incorporeal soldiers that made those clamors, and immediately, with ensigns displayed, drums beating, muskets going off, cannons discharged, horses neighing, which also to these men were visible. The alarum or entrance to this game of death was struck up; one army, which gave the first charge, having the King's colors, and the other the Parliament's in their head or front of the battles, and so pell-mell to it they went.

"In the battle that appeared, the King's forces seemed at first to have the best, but afterwards to be put to apparent rout. But till two or three in the morning in equal scale continued this dreadful fight; the clattering of arms, the noise of cannons, cries of soldiers, so amazing and terrifying the poor men that they could not believe they were mortal or give credit to their ears and eyes. Run away they durst not, for fear of being made a prey to these infernal soldiers, and so they, with much fear and affright, stayed to behold the success of the business, which at last suited to this effect. After some three hours' fight, that army which carried the King's colors withdrew, or rather appeared to fly, the other remaining, as it were, masters of the field, stayed a good space, tri-

umphing and expressing all the signs of joy and conquest, and then with all their drums, trumpets, ordnance and soldiers, vanished.

"The poor men, glad that they were gone, made with all haste to Keinton; and there, knocking up Mr. Wood, a justice of the peace, who called up his neighbor, Mr. Marshall, the minister, they gave them an account of the whole passage and averred it upon their oaths to be true. At which affirmation of theirs, being much amazed, they should hardly have given credit to it, but would have conjectured the men to have been either mad or drunk had they not known some of them to have been of approved integrity. And so, suspending their judgments till the next night, about the same hour, they with the same men and all the substantial inhabitants of that and neighboring parishes, drew thither; when about a half hour after their arrival on Sunday, being Christmas night, appeared in the same tumultuous and warlike manner, the same two adverse armies, fighting with as much spite and spleen as formerly; and so departed the gentlemen, and all the spectators, much terrified with these visions of horror, withdrew themselves to their houses, beseeching God to defend them from those hellish and prodigious enemies.

"The next night they appeared not, nor all that week, so that the dwellers thereabout were in good hope they had forever departed; but on the ensuing Saturday night, in the same place and at the same hour, they were again seen with far greater tumult, fighting in the manner aforementioned for four hours and very near, and then vanished, appearing again on Sunday night, performing the same acts of hostility and bloodshed, so that both Mr. Wood and others, whose faith, it would seem was not strong enough to carry them out against these delusions, forsook their habitations thereabout, and retired themselves to other more secure dwellings. But Mr. Marshall stayed, and some others; and so successively the next Saturday and Sunday the same tumults and prodigious sights and actions were put in the state and condition they were formerly.

"The rumor whereof coming to His Majesty at Oxford, he immediately dispatched thither Colonel Lewis Kirke, Captain Dudley, Captain Wainman, and three other gentlemen of credit to take the

full view and notice of the said business; who hearing the true attestation and relation of Mr. Marshall and others, stayed there till Saturday night following, wherein they heard and saw the forementioned prodigies. And so on Sunday, distinctly knowing divers of the apparitions or incorporeal substances by their faces, as that of Sir Edmund Varney, and others that were there slain; of which upon oath they made testimony to His Majesty.

"What this does portend God only knoweth, and time will perhaps discover; but doubtlessly it is a sign of His wrath against this land for these civil wars, which He in His time finish, and send a sudden peace between His Majesty and Parliament. Finis."

Because of the involved style of this strange tale, it may not be amiss to call attention to its unique features by a brief summary: On a Saturday night, two days before Christmas, 1642, some shepherds and other country folk witnessed a ghostly reenactment of the battle of Edge Hill, which had been fought in that same general area only two months before. These men hastened to town and told their story to the local minister and judge. The next night these dignitaries, together with many other townsfolk, went to the same spot and at the same hour beheld the ghostly battle with their own eyes. For a week thereafter nothing happened, but, on the Saturday night following, the conflict of ghostly soldiers was fought again with even greater clamor and fury, for a matter of four hours. Then again horse, foot and artillery suddenly vanished.

When the matter came to the ears of the King he sent three officers to investigate and put an end to the absurd rumor. These gentlemen took attestations from the principal witnesses and, staying on until the next Saturday night, were themselves witnesses of the battle scene. And the following night they saw the identical action fought all over again. So vivid was the picture that they declared that they could recognize the faces of officers who had been slain that day. All of this they reported back to the King and took their oath upon that testimony.

When one reflects upon the number and the character of the witnesses, especially the three officers who had been dispatched for

the purpose of putting an end to the rumor, also on the number of times this shadowy combat took place, one need not be surprised that even the skeptical Lord Nugent felt impelled to give it in full.

II. THE GEORCIAN MANSION

In a radio address made some years ago by Sir Ernest Bennett, he made a request of his listeners that they send him accounts of any personal experiences that they may have had in the realm of the supernormal. One of the responses that came was the story of a spectral house. The original narrative was written by Miss Ruth Wynne, an English school teacher, and is of the date of March 11, 1934. Nearly three years later he received a confirmatory letter from a Miss Allington, the other person concerned in the story, who was Miss Wynne's pupil. The original communications are published together in Sir Ernest's book, *Apparitions and Haunted Houses*, as "Case 102" on page 363.

The credibility of the tale is supported not only by the intelligence and character of the principal narrator but by the corroborating testimony of the girl who was with her at the time and shared the experience. If it had occurred to only one person it might be dismissed as a day dream by those who prefer not to believe these things, but when two people share the identical vision at the same moment it cannot be lightly disposed of as an hallucination.

"I am not what might be called psychic," Miss Wynne explains in concluding her letter, "and this is the only experience of the kind that I have ever had."

The time was an afternoon in late October, 1926. The weather was what one might expect of October in England, with an overcast sky threatening rain, and a wintry chill. The scene was the village of Rougham, situated four miles from the town of Bury St. Edmunds. Miss Ruth Wynne had recently moved to Rougham with her parents and her pupil, a girl of fourteen. Since the place was new to them, teacher and pupil used to take walks together after school hours to become acquainted with the countryside.

On this particular day Miss Wynne decided that it would be interesting to visit the church of the neighboring village of Bindfield St. George. As the shortest route was across the fields, the two started off in the direction of the church which they could see in the distance. The tramp over the fields brought them to a farmyard. Going through this they came out upon a country road. Since it was all new country to both of them, they were guided simply by the church itself which stood clearly visible ahead of them and to their right.

As soon as they stepped out of the farmyard and onto the road they noticed a high wall of greenish-yellow brick running along the opposite side. Ahead of them the road curved away to the left, and they kept on following this around the bend. There they stopped to admire tall iron gates set in the wall and to get a glimpse of the estate.

As they looked through the gates they saw a grove of tall trees towering over the wall, and from the gates a driveway swept back to a noble mansion so deeply embowered among the trees that only a part of it was visible from the road. Miss Wynne was able to observe, however, that it had a stucco front and its windows were of the familiar Georgian design.

"Who do you suppose lives here?" asked the girl.

"I can't imagine," replied Miss Wynne, "and it seems odd that I never heard of the owner of a place like this so near us. Since we came to the village so many people have called on my mother that it is strange no one from a house like this should be among them."

For a while they stood there looking through the iron bars of the tall gates into what was evidently a magnificent old estate. Then they took a footpath that branched off the road and kept on it until it brought them to the church which was the destination of their walk. After they had spent as much time as they wished in the sanctuary, they started back, and since it was beginning to drizzle they tried a shorter cut across the fields. This route made it unnecessary to return to the farmyard, the country road and the Georgian mansion.

On reaching home Miss Wynne described the estate to her par-

ents and discussed with them the question of who it could be living so near, one who was evidently of some consequence, and yet of whom they had heard nothing since their arrival in the village. After that, however, she dismissed the matter from her mind.

That October afternoon's walk was not repeated by Miss Wynne and her pupil until about four months later. Again it was a dull day with an overcast sky, but the visibility was clear. Once more they walked across the fields to the farmhouse, then through the yard out to the country road. So far all was familiar. But as they came out on the road both stopped and gasped, "Where's the wall?" For that high wall of greenish-yellow brick was not there. Instead, where it should have been there was a ditch running beside the road. And beyond the ditch where the great estate had been there lay an area of tumbled earth and mounds overgrown with a tangle of tall weeds and rough scrub. However, over all towered the same trees that they had seen on their first visit.

Bewildered, the two walked as before down the road and round the bend. Not only was there no wall but there was no trace of the tall iron gates, the driveway, or the great house under the trees. It was just a desolation of long-neglected land.

"They must have pulled it all down since we were here," was the thought that seemed at first to offer an explanation. But as they looked longer they could see in the tangle of mounds and shrubs a pond and various pools. It was clear enough that with all the lush growth in and around them they had been there a long time. No stretch of imagination could picture tearing down the walls and the house, ripping up the driveway, and transforming the noble estate into that ghastly jungle during a matter of four months.

It was all most confusing. Teacher and pupil prepared notes independently as to what each remembered about the scene they had looked upon that afternoon the previous October, and compared them. All that each recalled tallied perfectly with the recollection of the other. There was the high wall of greenish-yellow brick. There were, around the bend in the road, the tall iron gates, and through these they had seen a driveway sweeping up to a noble

Georgian house, half hidden among the trees. There was no doubt whatever that the farmyard and the country road were the same. Where was the estate which they had admired together, the details of which were so clear in their memories?

On returning home they mentioned the strange disappearance to Miss Wynne's parents, whose answer, as might be expected was, "My dears, you must have been mistaken."

Later, Miss Wynne made tentative inquiries of people in the neighborhood who lived near the site of their mystery-mansion, but she was told by everyone that they had never heard of a house on that spot, to say nothing of the handsome Georgian mansion she remembered so well. In fact, they made her feel foolish in asking such a question about that desolate area, and so she said no more. Then she attempted to find an eighteenth-century map of the countryside, but was unable to do so.

Of her own belief Miss Wynne says, "I am convinced that the house either once stood there or I shall meet it again somewhere else. I have often been past its site since, but I have never seen it again. The matter has puzzled me ever since, and I would be grateful if any light could be thrown on the experience."

That light has never come. To this day the splendid country seat with its high walls, its stately iron gates, its lawns and driveway, the great house itself with its stucco front and Georgian windows, admired by two persons simultaneously during an October afternoon, but never seen again, remains as impenetrable a mystery as ever.

III. A SUNDAY MORNING IN A SAXON CHURCH

The principal actor in an amazing adventure that took place in an ancient church was kind enough to permit me to have access to her notes made immediately afterwards, and to give me further circumstances from her own lips. She is Mrs. Eileen J. Garrett, the internationally famous sensitive, now resident in New York. She is the head of the Creative Age Press and the editor of the magazine *Tomorrow*. This is the story:

A few miles from the city of Bath, England, lies the town of Bradford-on-Avon, advertised in summer travel folders as "the prettiest village in Wiltshire." The chief treasure of this community is a tiny stone church, commonly accepted as the only Anglo-Saxon church standing in all England. It survived through the centuries because it was used as a barn or storehouse, with other buildings attached to it on all sides, so that its identity was lost. But in the nineteenth century a clergyman with an eye for archeology looked down from a height upon the huddle of buildings at this spot and decided that one of the roofs looked as if it had once belonged to a church.

He succeeded in interesting the antiquarians of the county, and work was begun on examining the structure. In the end, all the buildings immediately surrounding or built against it were stripped away, revealing this little stone shrine, complete in every detail, except that possibly some if not all the windows had been blocked up during the time it was used as a storehouse. Whether or not the church really dates from the tenth or eleventh century, as some people claim, it is certainly unique.

It is still hidden away from the main thoroughfares of the town, and if one man's experience in trying to find it is typical, most of the citizenry are still ignorant of its existence. But it is, nevertheless, well worth the pilgrimage from Bath to see it.

There is nothing else like it in the British Isles. In the first place, the church is unbelievably small. The nave is only twenty-five feet long by thirteen feet wide, and the porch is ten feet square. The height seems all out of proportion to the dimensions of the floor, and in those high walls there is scarcely a window. The narrow doorway, with its rounded arch and its sides sloping in toward the top, has the shape of a keyhole. The only adornment is a pair of crudely carved angels over the chancel.

Apparently it is the custom for the local clergyman to hold service in that little sanctuary from time to time. Absurd as it sounded, this cleric confessed that while conducting service he was disturbed by something he called a "Presence." He was emboldened to speak of this because his brother, who also was a clergyman and some-

times took the service, also had complained of the same upsetting experience. Still others who had taken the service there reported the identical, curious and unpleasant sensation. According to the vicar, this disagreeable feeling was experienced at or near the chancel and was particularly strong during a special service. Somehow it seemed to "take control." The vicar said that sometimes he felt actually nauseated, and for no reason in the world found himself out of patience, not only with the worshipers but even with the service itself.

The matter was brought to the attention of certain people who make a study of these mysteries of the mind, and one of them enlisted the cooperation of Mrs. Eileen J. Garrett, the well-known psychic. On many occasions she has devoted her unique gift to the investigations and experiments conducted by both British and American societies for psychical research.

Since the vicar had reported that Sunday was the day on which the "Presence" manifested itself most actively, Mrs. Garrett and her friends, Mr. and Mrs. Barber, chose a Sunday to make an excursion to Bradford and see if this sinister feeling could be detected. As Mrs. Garrett entered the church, instantly, and without warning, the scene changed before her eyes. She looked about her on the church, not as it was that morning but as it must have been centuries before. She could see, outside, a throng of people who were in the act of taking communion. To get a better view of them she walked to the left of the chancel rail, where she could could look through a spyhole. The men and women she saw were dressed in the costumes of the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries. She noted afterwards that she had "an acute awareness of all this in a strange way." And these people's faces were singularly grim and forbidding. She was conscious of them as "people who seemed almost forced to worship." There was no joy or peace in their eyes while they participated in the service. A long time afterward she learned that centuries ago there was a large leper colony at Bradford and, of course, these afflicted folk were permitted to worship only on the outside of a church, listening to what they could get of the service, coming through spyhole and window. This spyhole

may still be seen in many ancient ecclesiastical buildings in England.

While Mrs. Garrett stood there near the chancel rail looking out through the spyhole, she felt a sudden push behind the ear. Since no one else was in the church she thought, of course, that she had been inadvertently jostled by Mr. or Mrs. Barber, who perhaps were trying to look out of the spyhole, too. But she saw that neither stood anywhere near her.

Suddenly she became aware of a man of scowling and sinister aspect who seemed to be standing by something that looked like a door at her left. There was no such door in the church, she knew, and she walked over to look at it more closely, even though it meant approaching the forbidding figure of the man. Coming nearer, she saw that what she was looking at was not a door but an upright vault built into the wall of the church and marked by illegible lettering.

This was such an interesting discovery that she turned to draw Mr. Barber's attention to it. "Stanley," she called, "come here and look at this vault!"

Whether he did come to look or not she had to accept on hearsay, for she never knew. At that moment she felt a sudden quick push against her head that knocked her off ' er feet, and she lost consciousness. Two hours later she came to in the village inn, conscious of a miserably aching head, with a large and exceedingly sore bump on the back of it. She had been knocked flat on the stone floor of the church, and by an unseen hand.

Undismayed by that experience, which might well have resulted in a fractured skull, Mrs. Garrett tried repeatedly afterwards to return for another Sunday hour in the Saxon church. Time and again she made all arrangements to go there, but each time something made it impossible. When the vicar heard her story he said that he too had felt himself pushed but never so hard as to knock him off balance.

Mrs. Garrett's experience occurred in 1932. From her story it would seem as if from the moment that she entered the church she stepped back into some distant period of history. For, as noted above, the church itself looked different all at once, and on the

outside, where there still stands a number of buildings, she saw an open area filled with an unhappy looking assemblage of people in ancient habiliments, partaking of the communion service, but apparently against their will.

Was it because the priest was hateful to them? Certainly, there seems to have been some malignant influence still at work in the church. Who was the evil-faced man whom Mrs. Garrett saw for a moment standing by a vault which does not now exist? What hand gave her the push on the head the first time and knocked her to the floor the second time? Mr. and Mrs. Barber noticed nothing out of the ordinary that Sunday morning until they were horrified to see their friend struck to the floor. Certainly there was nothing imaginary about that.

It is to be regretted that Mrs. Garrett was never able to return to the church in order to test its "Presence" again. Apparently no one else has ever tried, and perhaps some other vicar is there now who is quite impervious to ghostly sensations. But from Mrs. Garrett's story it would seem as if on that Sunday morning in 1932 she was transported back some five hundred years to a scene when the leper colony was assembled outside the church for a communion service, and within the sanctuary an evil man was presiding over the sacred ritual, one whom these miserable creatures hated.

IV. "AN ADVENTURE"

One August day, in 1901, two English school teachers, while on a holiday in Paris, took the train for Versailles for an afternoon of sight-seeing in the grounds and buildings of the famous royal park. Like hundreds of thousands of other schoolmarms, English and American, they felt that Versailles was one of those sights that any conscientious traveler must "do" while in Paris, and they carried their Baedeker to make sure that they should miss nothing important.

These ladies, however, were not the average type of spinster school teacher. One, Miss Eleanor Jourdain, held the post of Taylorian lecturer in French at Oxford University. The other, Miss

Anne Moberley, was a teacher in a girls' school, also in Oxford. It happened that both were daughters of Church of England clergymen. They had a common interest in the history of music and the theory of harmony.

The most important characteristic that they possessed for their singular experience at Versailles was their psychic sensitivity. Both were conscious of this endowment but were reluctant to confess it. Each had deliberately avoided any exercise of this gift because of what they called their "horror of many forms of occultism." In the book they wrote on their experience they speak plainly of their revulsion against "stories of abnormal appearances," and they state that they "never had the curiosity or the desire to help in the investigation of psychical phenomena."

Nevertheless, Eleanor Jourdain, who was of Huguenot descent, confessed to "having powers of second sight," but she added that these were "deliberately undeveloped." Her friend Anne Moberley came from Scottish ancestry on her mother's side, and she admits that both her Scottish mother and grandmother "possessed powers of premonition accompanied by vision."

Miss Jourdain went to Paris for the first time in 1900, but as she spent all her time at the Exhibition with her French friends, she did not go to Versailles. The following summer when she returned to Paris she asked Miss Moberley to come with her. At that time the two women were acquaintances rather than close friends. It was on the first visit these two made together to Versailles, on August 10, 1901, that their "adventure" began. Altogether it was so extraordinary and inexplicable that they devoted themselves to the task of learning the historic background of the palace. This task involved painstaking research in the archives of Paris and Versailles, which covered nine years. Before any investigation began, however, independent narratives of that August afternoon at the Petit Trianon, written by the two women, were sent to the Society for Psychical Research.

Finally, after the nine years' work was completed, Miss Moberley and Miss Jourdain published their account in book form under the title, *An Adventure*. Unwilling, however, to face the un-

pleasant notoriety and ridicule always attached to the confession of a striking psychical experience, the authors used pseudonyms, Miss Moberley appearing as "Elizabeth Morison," and Miss Jourdain as "Frances Lamont." The publishers added a brief note on the fly leaf, affirming that "the signatures appended to the Preface are the only fictitious words in the book."

One August afternoon these two English school teachers boarded the train leaving Paris for Versailles. Neither had any clear idea of what there was to see there but they knew that no self-respecting tourist ever went to Paris without a day at Versailles. After arriving at the park they dutifully walked through the long rooms and galleries of the palace and then sat down to rest in the Salle des Glaces. The weather had been very warm that month but now the sky was overcast and a refreshing breeze came in at the open windows.

"Suppose we visit the Petit Trianon?" suggested Miss Moberley. She remembered as a girl reading a magazine article about Marie Antoinette amusing herself in a farmhouse in the Versailles grounds during the "back-to-nature" vogue in France. Miss Jourdain readily agreed. They scanned the map in their Baedeker and discovered that there were two Trianons, the Grand and the Petit, of which the second was the one associated with the unhappy Queen. Confident that they could easily find their way, they set off down the great flight of steps from the fountains and along the central avenue as far as the head of the pond. The breeze was cool enough to make brisk walking enjoyable.

After reaching the head of the pond they turned right and came to the Grand Trianon. Passing it on their left they found themselves on a broad, grassy drive, which was quite deserted. This would have led them straight to the Petit Trianon, but not knowing this, they crossed it and walked up a lane leading away in front of them. Miss Moberley was surprised that her companion did not ask directions from a woman who was shaking a cloth out of a window in a building at the corner of the lane, but she said nothing as she thought her friend must know the way. Meanwhile, they chatted

about mutual friends in England.

Soon they turned right, passing some buildings. They looked in at an open door but as there was no one about they did not enter. Ahead of them branched three paths. Seeing two men standing on the middle one, they took that one and asked the men the way to the Petit Trianon. Afterwards they referred to them as "gardeners," because there was a little wheelbarrow near them and a pointed spade, but they were clearly dignified officials of some sort. The strange thing about them was that they were both arrayed in long, grayish-green coats and three-cornered hats. They told the ladies to walk straight on.

As they stood there by these two men, Miss Jourdain noticed on her right "a detached, solidly built cottage with stone steps at the door." There at the doorway were a woman and a girl, the former holding a jug in her hand. The girl was looking up at her with uplifted hands as if just expecting to receive the jug, both figures seeming to pause and hold a pose as in a tableau vivant. Another strange feature about them was their dress. It was the costume of another age. Both wore kerchiefs tucked into their bodices, and the girl, though not over fourteen, wore a skirt of ankle length and a tight, white cap.

Miss Moberley, in her narrative, says that from the moment they left the lane to go out on this path she was conscious of an extraordinary depression of spirits, which she could not shake off. She was unwilling to mention this to her companion because it sounded so silly. She was not in the least tired and was more interested than ever in the scene. Later, it came out in Miss Jourdain's story that at the very same time she also was overcome by a feeling of gloom, which she too was careful to conceal. In fact, neither mentioned this sensation to the other until a whole week afterwards.

The middle path that they were walking on ended in another that crossed it at right angles. Before their eye rose a forest, within which was a light kiosk or small bandstand. Near this a man was sitting. At this spot there was no more lawn, only rough grass and dead leaves.

As the two visitors gazed about them everything took on an un-

natural look—uncanny and mysterious. "Even the trees behind the building," wrote Miss Moberley, "seemed to have become flat and lifeless *like a wood worked in a tapestry*. There were no effects of light and shade, and no wind stirred the trees. It was all intensely still."

The man sitting close to the kiosk was strangely dressed, like all the others. He wore a wide-brimmed soft hat and a cloak such as no one would wear unless in a play or a pageant. Suddenly he turned and faced the ladies, showing a countenance so repulsive as to be frightening. His complexion was singularly dark and rough, deeply pitted with smallpox. Worse still, this face bore an expression of evil past description, and yet somehow the eyes that looked on the two Englishwomen appeared to be unseeing.

Suddenly, and to the relief of the two ladies, both of whom felt an inward horror of this man, another figure appeared on the run, coming up behind them, as if from nowhere, on the instant. This person too wore the same sort of theatrical costume.

"Mesdames, mesdames!" he shouted, and when they turned he said in an odd accent, "*Il ne faut* (pronounced *fout*) *pas passer par là. Par ici*," he added, indicating by a gesture which way they were to go. "*Cherchez la maison.*" He said much more but neither of the women was able to comprehend it. Miss Moberley expressed her thanks. At once the man ran off. He disappeared as suddenly and unaccountably as he had appeared, but after he went the sound of his running feet continued and seemed to be close beside them. It was most peculiar.

Whoever the other ones were, the friends agreed that this man was a gentleman. But why that costume? On top of his long, dark, curling hair he wore the same type of large soft hat seen on the grim person sitting at the kiosk. He wore buckled shoes and across his chest was wrapped a dark cloak, hardly the thing for an August afternoon. His cheeks were florid and flushed with running.

Following this man's direction, the ladies turned right on the path and walked across a tiny rustic bridge that led over a trickle of a stream coming from a miniature cascade. The path beyond the bridge ran along a narrow meadow, much overshadowed by trees,

until the travelers came upon the English-garden front of the Petit Trianon. There was a terrace round the north and west sides of the house. On the rough grass which grew up to the terrace Miss Moberley noticed that a lady was sitting, holding out a sheet of paper from time to time as if she were sketching the trees in front of her and trying to look at her drawing at arm's length. As the two visitors passed, the lady looked up at them. Miss Moberley noticed that the face was not young or pretty, but she took in several details of her singular costume, the full skirt, the fichu, the wide white hat. She too was evidently in fancy dress, but why should anyone dress like that to go sketching?

As they went up the steps to the terrace, Miss Moberley had the sensation of being in a dream, the stillness and the oppressiveness of the atmosphere were so uncanny. As she reached the top of the terrace, she looked back at the lady who appeared to be sketching and noticed that the fichu she wore was a pale green color.

While they stood on the terrace a youth came out of a second building that opened on it, vigorously slamming the door behind him. He called out to the strangers that the way into the house was by way of the Cour d'Honneur, and offered to show them around. All the while he wore a mocking smile as if he found these English tourists very amusing. However, they kept on to the front entrance of the Petit Trianon. They then looked about the rooms, trailing a French wedding party. In contrast with what they had been witnessing this wedding party was a real everyday fact. At this point also the mood of depression had suddenly lifted for both Miss Moberley and Miss Jourdain.

Leaving the Cour d'Honneur, they took a carriage back to a hotel in Versailles, where they had tea. The two friends were in no mood for talk, and neither brought up the mysterious events of that afternoon in the park. They then returned to Paris.

For an entire week neither mentioned to the other the strangeness of so much that they had seen and felt during that walk to the Petit Trianon. Then one day, while Miss Moberley was writing a letter describing her days of sightseeing, she was conscious again of the "dreamy, unnatural depression" that she had felt that after-

noon in the grounds of Versailles. The feeling was so strong that she looked up from her letter and said to her friend, "Do you think the Petit Trianon is haunted?"

"Yes, I do!" came the unexpected and emphatic reply.

"Where did you feel that?"

"In the garden, where we met the two men; but not only there." Miss Jourdain went on to describe the sensation of depression and anxiety which had begun for her at that point of the walk where Miss Moberley had been affected in the same way. Then, as they talked over their experience, the strangeness and unnaturalness of many things came to light. Why were all those people wearing the costumes of the late eighteenth century? Why did they act so strangely? For instance, there was that man who ran up and spoke to them; they could not account for the suddenness of his coming and going, "the excited running that seemed to begin and end close to us and yet always out of sight, and the extreme earnestness with which he desired us to go one way and not another." Miss Jourdain also confessed to a feeling of physical revulsion against that dark, pock-marked man sitting at the kiosk, and the heartfelt hope that she would not have to walk past him.

Three months later, Miss Jourdain came to visit her friend at her home in England and they returned to the subject. In this conversation it came out that Miss Jourdain had never seen the lady sitting on the terrace sketching, and yet the two women had walked right past her together, and Miss Moberley had paused to look down at her from the top of the terrace, noticing other features of her dress, especially the pale green tint of the fichu. This circumstance of one person seeing the lady and the other not, led to the decision that each of them should write out an independent story of that afternoon's walk. As these notes were compared, it transpired that while Miss Jourdain had observed the cottage with the woman and the girl at the doorstep, Miss Moberley had not seen them at all. The mystery deepened.

On January 2, 1902, Miss Jourdain made a second visit to Versailles. This time the day was cold and wet, but she went anyway, determined to get at the bottom of the enigma if she could, and

that day was her first opportunity to revisit the scene. This time she drove direct to the Petit Trianon. On her way she noticed the Temple d'Amour, which was certainly not the building she and Miss Moberley had passed in their walk in this part of the grounds that August afternoon. Everything seemed natural and matter-of-fact. But when she walked over the bridge to go to the Queen's Village, she suddenly felt the old sensation strike with full force. It was just as if she had crossed a definite line with a "circle of influence."

To her left she saw a bare tract of ground with two laborers filling a cart with sticks. They wore queer costumes of pointed hoods, capes and tunics, one man in red and the other in blue. She turned away a moment to look at the village, and when she looked back, cart and men had all disappeared and the landscape had opened far in all directions.

Leaving the village, she lost herself in a maze of paths surrounded by thick woods. Again she saw a man in a cloak, like the one worn by the man she and Miss Moberley had seen and spoken to that August afternoon. He appeared to be slipping smoothly and swiftly among the trees. Then she heard a rustling behind her, as of many silk skirts. This seemed idiotic on a wet January day. "Just like French people!" she said to herself and turned quickly to look. But there was no one to be seen. Nevertheless, she was conscious of being hemmed in by a crowd of people who filled the path coming up behind, and were passing her so closely that she felt as if she were being pushed aside. She heard in this invisible throng the voices of women speaking French. The words "Monsieur" and "Madame" were spoken close to her ear. Then the crowd melted away. At this point, faint music, as of a distant band, was heard. Both the voices she listened to and the music of the band were diminished in tone, and she noted that the music of the band was pitched low.

At this point she took out her map and looked at it, but whenever she selected one path she felt strangely impelled to go by another. Hither and yon she wandered until she found herself back at the Orangerie, where she was overtaken by a huge, bearded man who seemed to be a gardener. In answer to her inquiry he told

her to keep on the path she had taken.

On returning to the town of Versailles she inquired whether there had been a band playing that afternoon, and was informed that there had been no music that day in the park.

After this January visit Miss Jourdain made several trips to Versailles with her school girls. On these occasions she found the grounds entirely different from what they were on the two other visits, the one in August with Miss Moberley and the other in January when she went by herself. When she reported this fact to Miss Moberley, the latter was frankly incredulous. But it was not until July, 1904, that the two friends were able to make another trip to Versailles together.

This time they found everything different, just as Miss Jourdain had reported. And they made two visits the same week. Gates that on that first excursion lay open were now closed, locked, and cobwebbed. The door which the youth had flung open so gaily near the Petit Trianon had never been open in the memory of man. The deep woods were gone, so was the cottage, the kiosk, the tiny bridge over the stream, and all the paths they had followed. Precisely where Miss Moberley had seen the lady sketching, flourished a huge shrub that must have been growing for many decades. And there was no terrace. Nobody appeared in fancy dress, and the place was alive with the usual crowd of tourists. It was indeed another Versailles from the one they had explored together in August, of 1901, and the one that Miss Jourdain had seen alone the following January.

This fact stirred them to undertake some research among the ancient files of Versailles, investigating one by one the objects they had seen on the earlier visit which they were unable to find again. The first of these, one noticed by Miss Jourdain but not by her companion, was a small hand plow lying on the ground. She learned on inquiry that no plow was kept at Versailles because there was no need for one. Also, that since the Revolution plows have greatly changed in shape. Further, that there is no mention of a plow in a list of tools bought for the gardeners there between 1780–1789. But in a list of effects sold after the King's execution,

there is mention of an old plow belonging to the previous reign and kept at the Petit Trianon. The engraving of this plow showed handles exactly like those that Miss Jourdain had noticed, but as the blade was represented buried in the ground, she could not compare that feature with the blade of the plow that she had seen.

Next was the question of those two men in long, gray-green coats and three-cornered hats. No such costume had been used for the officials or employees of Versailles since the Revolution. In fact, all the costumes, of both men and women, as observed by both the ladies on their first visit, corresponded to the period around 1789, costumes such as are familiar in the contemporary prints of the English artist Morland: the wide, soft black hats of the men, already superseding the ancient tricorne, also the long, full skirts and fichus, and the drooping shade hats of the women and girls. Incidentally, these investigators made sure that there was no costume pageant that August afternoon or any moving picture being taken on the grounds, or any other possible reason for period costumes.

It is not necessary to enumerate here all the results of the painstaking research made by these two women. But one is especially noteworthy. On that January visit when Miss Jourdain went to Versailles by herself, it will be recalled that she heard the distant music of a band played in a strikingly low pitch. As a student of music she listened carefully at the time and afterwards noted it down, to the extent of twelve bars. She said that this music was intermittent, with much repetition. When she showed this notation to a music expert, who of course had not heard the story, he said that the bars could hardly belong to one another, but that the idiom dated from about 1780. Further search through much unpublished music in the Conservatoire de Musique at Paris showed that these twelve bars represented the chief motifs of certain light operas of the eighteenth century as represented by five composers.

In short, the results of this research convinced Miss Moberley and Miss Jourdain that the park of the Petit Trianon which they had seen was that of the days of Marie Antoinette. August tenth, the date of that first visit, was the anniversary of the sacking of the

Tuileries. The authors of the narrative make the suggestion that possibly, in some way, they had stepped back into a memory of the Queen, one that recalled the peaceful and happy days when she played at being a farmer's wife in the Petit Trianon village. This memory might have been most poignant on that dreadful day in August, 1792.

After the book appeared some people came forward to say that they too had witnessed similar sights in the Versailles grounds, and others in Paris and Versailles testified to a popular legend to the effect that occasionally Marie Antoinette returns to the Petit Trianon and is seen there. On the other hand there was the usual chorus of ridicule and the elaborate explanations on natural grounds. One man even went so far as to publish what he modestly called "a complete solution," in which all inconvenient facts were lightly brushed aside.

"An Adventure," however, remains the best story of its kind on record. It deserves serious attention first, because it comes from two highly intelligent, cultivated women, to whom any manifestation of the occult was a matter of aversion, even though both were conscious of psychic sensitivity. Secondly, they spent nine years investigating the historical background of what they had witnessed in their "adventure," and presented their findings with as much methodical care as a Ph.D. thesis, but with infinitely more interest in style and subject matter. Their narrative is the most convincing evidence ever published pointing to the conclusion that on rare occasions some people step suddenly and inadvertently into a scene of the past.

Chapter V

Apparitions at the Moment of Death

IF THE reenacted scenes of the past are the rarest of all ghostly phenomena, the apparitions witnessed at or shortly after the instant of death are probably the most common. Many normal people who have never had any other psychic experience testify to this one, occurring usually on but a single occasion in a lifetime. Others, who possess the gift of sensitivity, may have such visions many times. At any rate the well-vouched for stories of this sort are so numerous as to make a selection difficult. And, to quote Andrew Lang, "the number of hallucinations corresponding with death or some other crisis is far too great to be regarded as merely casual."

The monumental work by Myers, Gurney, and Podmore, *Phantasms of the Living,* is a storehouse of cases of this sort. If that title sounds strange in view of the fact that most of the stories deal with people who have just died, it should be explained that Edmund Gurney, who was the chief author of this book, held a theory of "delayed telepathy" to account for the fact that so many of these ghosts were seen some time after the hour of death. Explaining that death is a slow process, he writes, "It is quite possible that a deferment of this kind may intervene between the moment of death and the phantasmal announcement thereof to a distant friend." This theory seems to have been a device by which Gurney could escape from being driven into accepting the fact of survival of personality by making telepathy explain everything. The hypothesis was that a telepathic impulse from a dying person might go to rest for some hours in a living friend's mind before rising to consciousness. That is, at the hour of death or some other great crisis, the afflicted person's mind naturally turns to a dearly loved relative or friend, most often a child. This would create a sort of

"thought form" or vision in the mind of the object of that thought, and this would be the ghost. In short, the apparition would be an illusion created by telepathy. And he made the arbitrary decision that any apparition witnessed within twelve hours of death would be a "phantasm of the living." That is, he gave telepathy twelve hours to fool around. Somehow all this does not sound like good science, but it saved him the necessity of admitting that there is a life after death, and there is no absurdity that some men will not accept to avoid that.

These visions of some loved one at, or shortly after, the moment of death are usually fleeting, and the recounting of any one of them can only be correspondingly brief. In the main they follow much the same pattern, and the ones that follow will serve as examples.

Captain Frederick Marryatt who, it will be remembered, discharged his pistol at the Brown Lady in Raynham Hall, had a visitation of this type. It occurred while he was still serving in the navy. At the time, he was commanding officer of a small vessel operating in the first Burmese war. One night while his ship was at anchor, he saw someone enter his cabin. Thinking it must be someone who had come to rob him, he sprang out of bed to seize the intruder. In the bright tropical moonlight that streamed into his cabin he recognized his own brother and saw him walk to the side of his berth. "Fred," the words came clearly, "I have come to tell you that I am dead!" Then he was gone. Marryatt at once got out his log book and wrote down all the details of the vision. On returning to England he was informed by dispatches awaiting him that his brother had died at the very hour that he appeared on the ship.*

The well-known author and clergyman of the last generation, Dr. Henry Van Dyke, Dr. Elwood Worcester, rector of the Emmanuel Church in Boston, and a gentleman named Campbell, were three close friends who had summer cottages near each other in a Maine village. One evening, at the opening of the summer season, these men were together at the house of Dr. Worcester, and the

* *There Is No Death*, Florence Marryatt, p. 8.

talk ran as usual on their common hobby of fishing. After a time Campbell rose and pleaded the necessity of returning to his cottage. He explained that he had just arrived and had not even unpacked his things. About twenty minutes after he had left, Dr. Worcester exclaimed, "Why, there's Campbell! I just saw him pass through the room!" Dr. Van Dyke replied in a startled voice that he had seen nothing but had distinctly felt Campbell's presence at that moment.

"Something may have happened to him," said the rector, rising from his chair. "Come, let's go and see if he is all right." On reaching the cottage they discovered that their friend had suddenly dropped dead.

The late David Belasco, owner and manager of the Belasco Theater in New York, once produced a play, *The Return of Peter Grimm*, dealing with the theme of a returning soul. In connection with the production of this play he issued a booklet in which he told the story that was the inspiration of that play. He opens with the statement, "My mother convinced me that the dead come back by coming to me at the time of her death."

This is his story: He had been directing rehearsals of *Zaza*, and one night, after a particularly trying day of it, dropped into bed, exhausted, and fell into a deep sleep. Almost immediately, however, he was wide awake. He felt a presence in the room and tried to rise, but found that he could not move. The next instant he was astounded to see his mother, whom he knew to be in San Francisco, standing close beside him. He struggled to rise and speak but could not move or utter a sound. She smiled at him and called him by his boyhood name, "Davy, Davy, Davy." Leaning over him, she kissed him. Then stepping back from the bed she said, "Do not grieve. All is well and I am happy." At that she moved toward the door and disappeared.

Belasco immediately fell asleep again. At breakfast he told the story to his daughter Augusta, who laughed it off as a dream. But he shook his head. "I know that my dear mother is dead," he insisted. "I *know* it."

He returned to his rehearsals. A few hours later he went to

lunch with a member of his staff, who brought him letters and telegrams from the box office of the theater. Among them was a wire telling him that his mother had died the night before at an hour that corresponded with the time he had seen her in his room. Afterwards he learned that just before she died she roused herself, smiled, and murmured three times, "Davy, Davy, Davy."

A mother figures in the following example also but in a different way. The narrator, from whom I heard the story, was the wife of the Dean of a cathedral in the Middle West. At the time of the incident she had recently received a cheerful letter from her mother, telling of her plan to make the trip from her distant home to pay her daughter a long visit during the summer. There was no reason to suppose that she was not in excellent health though she was well along in years.

One night, not long after the letter came, the daughter was suddenly awakened. Her bed was on the sleeping porch, and as she sat up she looked out on an open meadow, the dew on the grass sparkling in the light of an early summer dawn. As she looked she saw her mother walking along a path across the meadow. She was lifting her skirts with a characteristic gesture, to keep them off the heavy dew. But she did not look at her daughter. At the other end of the path stood two figures awaiting her with outstretched arms. They were her husband and another daughter who had died many years before.

"I never saw such a radiancy of joy as shone from my mother's face as she hastened up that path," said the one who witnessed that scene. "I knew that I was not dreaming, and I looked at the clock on my table to note the time. I saw that it was shortly after four-thirty. Then I lay down again and fell asleep."

Next morning she informed her husband about her experience and expressed her conviction that her mother had died. "Just a dream, my dear," was the response, as always, in such cases. But while they were still at the breakfast table the telephone rang.

"That's the news about Mother," she said as she went to answer. Her premonition was true for the message stated that her mother had died at about four-thirty that morning. All these details were

confirmed by the daughter's husband who was present while she told me the story.

In the *Atlantic Monthly* of May, 1862, appeared the following anecdote, in which a faithful and devoted servant figures, instead of a member of the family. The anecdote came direct from Harriet Hosmer, the first woman sculptor of the United States. While she was studying in Italy, she employed a servant named Rosa. The girl had to give up her job because of persistent ill health, but Miss Hosmer made a practice of stopping to see her every day while out on her horseback ride. On one of these calls she found the girl apparently no worse than before; in fact, she seemed really better, and was very cheerful. When she expressed a wish to have a bottle of a certain kind of wine, Miss Hosmer promised to bring it the next morning.

That night she awoke from a deep sleep with the feeling that someone was in the room, though she realized that no one but the maid had the keys to the two doors of the room, both of which were locked when she went to bed. There was just enough light to see dimly the furniture in the room. Around the foot of the bed was a screen, and Miss Hosmer decided the intruder must be hiding behind it.

"Who's there!" she called. There was no answer. At that moment the clock in the next room sounded five. Instantly she saw the figure of Rosa standing at the side of the bed. In some way, whether by audible speech or by mental impression, Miss Hosmer got the words, "*Adesso son felice, son contenta.*" And with that she was gone.

At breakfast next morning Miss Hosmer said to her friend who shared the apartment with her, "Rosa is dead."

"What do you mean by that?" she asked. "You told me she seemed better when you went to see her yesterday."

Miss Hosmer related her experience of the early morning, saying that at the time she had a strong impression that Rosa was dead. Naturally her friend laughed at her for believing in dreams.

"No," insisted Miss Hosmer. "I was wide awake; I am perfectly

sure of that."

As the friend continued to tease her about her dream, Miss Hosmer sent a messenger to Rosa's house to ask how the girl was. He returned with the answer that she had died that morning at five o'clock.

The next story comes direct from an English Roman Catholic priest, who shall be called Father C. This experience has a feature that sets it off from the foregoing because the apparition was at the time someone unknown, and identified afterwards only by chance. This vision occurred on December 3d, 1908. At that time Father C was living with the Bishop of Southwark at his house in London. One other priest also lived there, but at the time he was away, so that Father C and the Bishop had the house to themselves except for the servants who lived in the basement.

About six-thirty on the morning of December 3d Father C got up and went downstairs to the bathroom. As he turned the corner of the stairs and was going down the steps to the landing on the second floor, he saw an elderly man standing at the foot of the stairs. He was a stranger to Father C, and he looked at the figure closely. He saw that the man had gray hair, that he had a long, straight upper lip, and wore a cassock with a white "cotta" or short surplice. He stood with his hands joined together with his head on one side. He seemed to gaze on Father C with a curious look of inquiry.

The latter decided that this must be a guest who had arrived at the Bishop's house late the previous evening. Father C was on the point of speaking to him when he disappeared. Thinking that the stranger must have slipped away into one of the two corridors, the priest searched for him in each, but he could find no sign of anyone. He went upstairs and came down again twice just to make sure that he had not been deceived by some reflection of lights from the street.

At breakfast he asked the Bishop if he had had an overnight guest, and was told he had not. Father C was puzzled but he put the matter out of his mind and went about his day's routine.

At lunch the Bishop told him that he had just received a telegram to the effect that a Father F, of Bromley, Kent, had died that morning at six-thirty. This news meant nothing to Father C, who did not know the dead priest. But five or six weeks later he himself was appointed to take Father F's parish at Bromley. After he was fairly settled in his new post he began to call on the members of his flock. In one of the homes he visited he saw a large photograph of an elderly priest, who "without the shadow of a doubt"—to quote his own phrase—was the man he had seen on the stairs that morning in December.

"Whose portrait is that?" he asked.

"Why, don't you know?" was the reply, "that was dear Father F."

In concluding this story Father C lists these points that he wishes to be noted. "1. The apparition was straight in front of me. 2. The subject of the apparition was entirely unknown to me. 3. At the relevant date there was no thought of my being appointed to a parish. 4. Although the only light was through the windows from the street lamps, I saw every detail of this apparition quite clearly. 5. At this time I was in my 38th year and had not had any previous occult experience." *

It might be added, however, that this same priest reported another instance of seeing an apparition of a stranger, one that occurred later.

There are other ways by which death is announced in a supernormal way. It may be a sudden vision of the accident or of the bursting shell on the battlefield. Richard Hillary of the R.A.F. tells, in his *Falling Through Space,* how he saw his friend Peter Pease killed by a Messerschmitt. At that moment Hillary lay in a hospital bed in England. The fact of Peter's death was confirmed two days later.

Sometimes it is a cry in the familiar voice heard though the person at the point of death is far away. So, Cecil Roberts states in a passage quoted earlier, his mother heard her husband's voice calling so distinctly that she insisted on having the house searched for him; that he must be back home. And that was the moment when

* *Apparitions and Haunted Houses,* Sir Ernest Bennett, 142 f.

he died in another house half a mile away.

Camille Flammarion tells of a letter he received from the composer Saint-Saëns, in which the premonitory sound took the form of music. He said that it was in January, 1871, the last day of the Franco-Prussian war. Saint-Saëns and a number of his comrades managed to get together some food and wine for a celebration. Everything was gay, "when suddenly I heard in my head, a plaintive, musical theme, of dolorous chords, which I have since used for the commencement of my *Requiem*, and I felt in my inmost being a presentiment of some misfortune. A profound anxiety unnerved me. That was the moment when Henri Regnault, to whom I was very much attached, was killed." In this instance of Saint-Saëns' the ghostly music brought no personal association, only the sense of death coming to someone for whom he cared. It was only afterwards that he learned of his friend having been killed at that very instant.

Another variant is offered by an incident described by George K. Cherrie in his *Dark Trails, the Adventures of a Naturalist*. He speaks of it as a dream. It was on the night of October 10, 1892, after a fine dinner and a pleasant chat, that he went to sleep at an inn in Costa Rica. He was aroused by a vivid dream. These are his words:

"I was back at my boyhood home, standing in the shadow of the great elms that surrounded it. I was being greeted by my old dog with tumultuous joy. The front door was open. As I entered, the figure of a woman rose before me and I felt the grasp of her hand in mine. No word was spoken while I was led unresisting to my mother's bedroom, a sanctuary of peace and quiet, dimly lighted as of old when she had led me there to soothe and calm me after some childish tragedy. There my mother lay, her bed between the two windows, her face still and white, reflecting utter peace. Instantly I knew that she was dead. I felt no sense of overwhelming grief—rather a feeling of infinite peace. No one seemed to be present; even the shadowy form of the woman who had led me to the bedside seemed to fade away and I was alone.

"I awakened and remained awake a short time only. *Three* times

during that night the selfsame dream was repeated, and each time the scene was the same."

At dawn he got up, saddled his horse and rode away. But before doing so he noted in his diary the details of the dream. Ten weeks later a letter from his sister told of the death of their mother on the night of October 10th. Every detail that he saw in his dream was confirmed, even to the circumstance of his mother's bed having been placed between the two windows.

This experience was unusual in that he himself was transported to his mother's death-bed instead of the mother appearing to him in his own room at the inn. And the supernormal character of that vision is indicated by the fact that it was repeated without variation three times in the same night, the identical night on which his mother died.

For more extended narratives of this character in which apparitions of the deceased appear to someone at or shortly after the moment of dissolution, three have been selected for retelling here. These three have been well substantiated; at least the integrity of the witnesses is above suspicion. There is no doubt that they believed every word of what they wrote.

The first comes from a clergyman of the Church of England, Reverend Charles L. Tweedale who, at the time he saw the ghost, was Vicar of Weston. The reports of the case he sent to the Society for Psychical Research, which published them in their *Proceedings*. He reprinted them in his book, *Man's Survival After Death*, (p. 92 f.).

His own narrative runs as follows:

"On the night of January 10, 1879, I had retired early to rest. I awoke out of my first sleep to find the moon shining into my room. As I awoke my eyes were directed toward the panels of a cupboard or wardrobe built into the east wall of my room, and situated in the northeast corner. As I gazed I suddenly saw a face form on the panels of the cupboard or wardrobe. Indistinct at first, it gradually became clearer until it was perfectly distinct as in life, when I saw

the face of my grandmother. What particularly struck me at the moment and burnt itself into my recollection was that the face wore an old-fashioned frilled or goffered cap. I gazed at it for a few seconds, during which it was as plain as the living face, when it faded gradually into the moonlight and was gone. I was not alarmed, but thinking that I had been deceived by the moonlight and that it was an illusion, I turned over and went to sleep again. In the morning, when at breakfast, I began telling the experience of the night to my parents. I had got well into the story when to my surprise my father suddenly sprang up from his seat at the table, and leaving his food almost untouched, hurriedly left the room. As he walked toward the door I gazed after him in amazement, saying to Mother, 'Whatever is the matter with Father?' She raised her hand to enjoin silence. When the door was closed I again repeated my question. She replied, 'Well, Charles, it is the strangest thing I ever heard of, but when I woke this morning your father informed me that he was awakened during the night and saw his mother standing by his bedside, and that when he raised himself to speak to her she glided away.' This scene and conversation took place at about eight-thirty on the morning of January 11th. Before noon we received a telegram announcing the death of my father's mother during the night.

"We found that the matter did not end here, for my father was afterwards informed by his sister that she also had seen the apparition of her mother standing at the foot of the bed.

"Thus this remarkable apparition was manifested to three persons independently. My apartment in which I saw the vision was at the other side of the house from that occupied by my parents, and was entirely separate and apart from their room while my father's sister was twenty miles away. My father noted the time as two a.m.; I did not take note of the time, but have since been able to ascertain it closely in the following way: The house in which we lived at the time faces due south, and the window of my apartment also faces due south. On the night of January 10–11, 1879, the moon was on the meridian at fourteen hours, nineteen minutes, Greenwich mean time—i. e. two hours, nineteen minutes, a.m., on January 11.

When on the meridian the moon illuminates the back and the east and the west walls of the apartment. I am certain that the east wall of the room was illuminated (for there I saw the face in the moonlight) and also the back of the room or north wall. The moon was, therefore, approximately on the meridian, and the time close on two a.m., thus confining my father's observation in an unexpected manner. The death of my grandmother took place at twelve-fifteen, and it is certain from the above consideration that the apparition to myself and my father occurred nearly two hours *after* death.

"My father died in 1885, but my mother is living and well remembers all the details. . . . In the case of the apparition to my aunt this did not take place until upwards of eighteen hours after death. I had not seen my grandmother for some years previous to her appearance to me.

"It is absolutely certain that the apparition occurred to each of the three independent witnesses *after* the death, and that this case is, therefore, an unmistakable instance of apparitions of the dead and proof that the personality survives. I am prepared at any time to make this statement on oath."

In corroboration of the foregoing statement Mr. Tweedale obtained and submitted letters from his mother and uncle, his father having died in the meantime. In the uncle's full and detailed statement he says that though his wife's mother lived with them, the fact of her death was kept from the daughter because she also at the time was critically ill. It was she who saw her mother standing at the bedside some eighteen hours after her death.

It would be interesting to know what Mr. Gurney would do with this story, because while Mr. Tweedale and his father saw the ghost some two hours after the grandmother's death, the aunt saw her eighteen hours afterwards. It could be a "phantasm of the living" for the first two witnesses, because the vision came within Mr. Gurney's twelve-hour limit for the wayward and lazy "thought-form" or "delayed telepathy," but for the third witness the interval of eighteen hours would be six hours over his limit and would have to be explained in some other way.

The second case has to do with a completely lifelike ghost that appeared in broad daylight.* On December 7, 1918, Lieutenant David M'Connel, while flying from Scampton to Tadcaster, in England, crashed to his death. His watch stopped at three-twenty-five, thus fixing the precise time. David's father, hearing that one of the lad's friends, Lieutenant Larkin, at Scampton, had seen a vision of him at about the time of the tragedy, wrote to him for particulars. In reply, Larkin wrote the following letter. He disclaims any belief in the supernatural, but tells exactly what he saw and heard on that day. These are his words:

"David, in his flying clothes, about 11 a.m. went to the hangars intending to take a machine to the 'Aerial Range' for machine-gun practice. He came into the room again at 11.30 and told me that he did not go to the range, but that he was taking a 'camel' to Tadcaster drome. He said 'I expect to be back in time for tea. Cheerio.'

"He walked out and half a minute later knocked at the window and asked me to hand him his map, which he had forgotten. After I had lunch, I spent the afternoon writing letters and reading, sitting in front of the stove fire. . . . I was sitting, as I have said, in front of the fire, the door of the room being about eight feet away at my back. I heard someone walking up the passage; the door opened with the usual noise and clatter which David always made; I heard his 'Hello, boy!' and I turned half round in my chair and saw him standing in the doorway, half in and half out of the room, holding the door knob with his hand. He was dressed in his full flying clothes, but wearing his naval cap, there being nothing unusual in his appearance. His cap was pushed back on his head and he was smiling, as he always was when he came into the room and greeted us. In reply to his 'Hello, boy!' I remarked, 'Hello! Back already?' He replied, 'Yes, got there all right, had a good trip.' I am not positively sure of the exact words he used, but he said, 'Had a good trip,' or 'Had a fine trip' or words to that effect. I was looking at him the whole time he was speaking. He said, 'Well, cheerio!' closed the door noisily and went out.

"I went on with my reading and thought he had gone to visit

* *Proceedings*, S.P.R., XXXIII.

some friends in one of the other rooms, or perhaps had gone back to the hangars for some of his flying gear, helmet, goggles, etc., which he may have forgotten. I did not have a watch, so could not be sure of the time, but was certain it was between a quarter and half-past three, because shortly afterwards Lieutenant Garner-Smith came into the room and it was a quarter to four. He said, 'I hope Mac (David) gets back early, we are going to Lincoln this evening.' I replied, 'He *is* back, he was in the room a few minutes ago.' He said, 'Is he having tea?' and I replied, 'I do not think so,' as he (Mac) had not changed his clothes, but that he was probably in some other room. Garner-Smith then said, 'I'll try and find him.' I then went into the room, had tea, and afterwards dressed and went to Lincoln. In the smoking-room of the Albion Hotel I heard a group of officers talking, and overheard their conversation and the words, 'crashed,' 'Tadcaster,' and 'M'Connel.' I joined them and they told me that just before they left Scampton, word came through that M'Connel had crashed and been killed, taking the 'camel' to Tadcaster. At that moment I did not believe it, that he had been killed on the Tadcaster journey. My impression was that he had gone up again after I had seen him, as I felt positive that I had at 3:30. Naturally, I was eager to hear something more definite, and later in the evening I heard that he had been killed on the Tadcaster journey. . . ."

Lieutenant Garner-Smith corroborated the conversation which took place between him and Larkin as reported above, and he said that the colloquy took place at 3:45. The item about the naval cap is significant. M'Connel's father explained that his son was proud of his earlier connection with the naval flying service and always wore his naval flying uniform about the aerodrome. Larkin himself adds the circumstances that the room in which he was sitting was a small one and the light was excellent. "There were no shadows or half shadows in the room."

It is hardly necessary to point out the unusual features of this apparition at the time of death. M'Connel was killed at 3:25. Within twenty minutes of that time he appeared to his friend Larkin, not in the night, as a misty, silent phantom, but in broad daylight, as solid, noisy and conversational as in life. First his step is heard out-

side. Then he flings open the door "with his usual noise and clatter." Then he calls out, "Hello, boy!" At the time he is dressed in his flying gear and is wearing his characteristic naval cap. In response to his friend's inquiry he says that he had a good trip, sings out "Cheerio!" slams the door and goes out.

All this while Larkin had his eyes on him and talked with him in a well-lighted small room. The distance between Larkin and the door, he says was only about eight feet. He was so certain of the reality of the M'Connel he had seen and talked with that he refused for some time to believe he had been killed. And yet all the while the aviator was lying dead in the wreckage of his plane.

Mr. W. H. Salter, who printed this story in his book, *Ghosts and Apparitions*, offers the theory that M'Connel was very tired on his long trip but had no idea he was going to crash. Just about that time, however, he *thought* himself back in imagination to his friend Larkin, and what the latter saw and talked to was just a "thought-form," or delayed telepathy. Anyone is welcome to accept that explanation, but on the face of it, the theory looks like a good example of the familiar method of explaining one supernormal occurrence by inventing another.

The third case was one published in the *Psychic News* by Arthur Findlay, in the issue of January 2, 1939. The apparition was witnessed by both a man and his wife at the same moment. The couple were friends of Mr. Findlay. "A few miles from my house," he writes, "near the market town of Great Dunmore, there lived a woman who shot herself one evening (Monday, December 5, 1938) after having shot her husband. The couple were alone in the house at the time, and the discovery was not made until 7:45 on the following morning, when the servant, who came by the day, arrived at the house to find the woman's body in the garden.

"She immediately informed the police, who were on the scene by 8:30 with a doctor, who certified that they must both have been dead since the previous evening. The radio had not even been turned off. There is, therefore, no doubt that these two people were dead at 8:30 in the morning. A husband and wife, both friends of

mine (who do not wish their names mentioned) gave me the following information:

"They were motoring to the station on the morning the discovery was made, to catch the 9:30 train. They passed the house where the tragedy occurred at about 9:20. As they came in sight of the house they saw the woman who had shot herself walking along the pavement towards them. She was seen first by the man driving the car, who said to his wife beside him, 'Oh, there is Mrs. —— She gives me the creeps.'

"His wife replied, 'Oh, so it is,' as she saw her. When they passed they smiled in recognition, though they cannot remember whether she responded or not. They thought nothing more about the affair, and after spending the day in London they bought an evening paper on their way home in which they read the story of the tragedy.

"This was the first they had heard of it and my friend went to the police on his return home and told them that the woman could not have been dead at the time stated as he and his wife had seen her at 9:20. The police, however, assured him that they were in the house by 8:30 that morning, and that the doctor had certified that the woman they saw had been dead since the previous evening.

"Such is the story told to me by my friends, who both agree about the facts. They have not the slightest doubt that the woman they saw was Mrs. —— who had killed her husband and then herself the previous evening. There was nothing about her dress which occasioned my friends any surprise, and when I asked whether she looked happy or sad I was told. 'She looked just as she always did.' All these details as to the time of death came out at the inquest and are to be found in the local newspaper.

"This is an interesting case because when my friends saw the apparition they were unaware that the woman was dead and discovered only some seven hours later that the woman they had seen that morning walking along the pavement had died the previous evening. Because they were going for a train they knew the time they saw her, and the police and the doctor were able to certify that the woman was dead when they arrived at the house an hour earlier. Both my friends saw the apparition and are quite definite that it

was Mrs. ——, the dead woman. Thus we have two witnesses who saw the apparition at the same time, which greatly strengthens the evidence."

The foregoing instances of apparitions at the moment of death or shortly after, were spontaneous and unexpected. There was no special reason for seeing them except that the percipients were usually bound to the deceased persons by bonds of affection or friendship. In some cases, as in the last one given above, there was no tie beyond the merest acquaintance. In the story of Father C, the priest who appeared to him on the stairs was a person wholly unknown to him. There is another group of stories of death-time visions that seem to spring from a compact made in life, by which each one pledged the other to manifest himself, if possible, after death. Of many of these pledges or pacts nothing has ever been heard after one of the parties has died. But there are others in which there is a fulfillment.

The Reverend Arthur Bellamy of Bristol, England, testifies to the following experience of this type, which Frederic W. H. Myers investigated and published in his *Human Personality* (vol. II, p. 350). Bellamy says that his wife as a school girl made a pact with one of her friends that the one who died first should appear to the other if possible. After school days the two were long separated, but in 1874 Mrs. Bellamy heard of her friend's death. The news reminded her of the agreement they had made, and she spoke of it to her husband. Mr. Bellamy, however, had never even seen a photograph of this friend.

One or two nights later, Mr. Bellamy woke suddenly and saw a strange woman seated beside the bed in which his wife was sound asleep. A brisk fire and a lighted candle illuminated the room so brightly that he could see the stranger distinctly, and he sat up in bed to look at her. He said afterwards that if he had been an artist he could have put her portrait on canvas. As he gazed at her he was especially impressed by the careful elegance with which her hair was dressed. He stared at her for some time and then she vanished. He immediately got up from his bed and looked to see if any clothes

might be hanging over the bed in such a way as to create an optical illusion, but there was nothing between him and the wall of the room.

When his wife awoke he described to her in detail the woman he had seen, giving her coloring, stature, features—everything that he had noted. Finally, he asked his wife if her school friend was noted for anything special in her appearance. She replied, "Yes, at school we used to tease her about her hair, which she always arranged with special care."

In this instance it is interesting to note that it was the husband who had the vision, and not the wife to whom the ghost apparently tried in vain to show herself.

The classic story of a death compact being fulfilled is the one told long ago by the famous Lord Brougham in his autobiographical *Life and Times of Lord Brougham*. He was all his life a skeptic in general and had an aversion to all matters supernatural in particular. In his narrative he takes pains to inform the reader that it must have been a dream, yet it made such an impression on him when he was a youth of twenty-one that he had to tell it in full when he came to write the story of his own life as an old man.

It was in December, 1799, that he was traveling in Sweden with friends, one of whom, named Stuart, accompanied him when he started for Norway. The rest may best be told in his own words:

"We set out for Gothenburg determining to make for Norway. About one o'clock in the morning, arriving at a decent inn, we decided to stop for the night. Tired with the cold of yesterday, I was glad to take advantage of a hot bath before I turned in, and here a most remarkable thing happened to me—so remarkable that I must tell the story from the beginning.

"After I left the high school, I went with G., my most intimate friend, to attend the classes in the university. There was no divinity class, but in our walks we frequently discussed and speculated upon many grave subjects—among others, on the immortality of the soul and on a future state. This question, and the possibility, I will not say of ghosts walking, but of the dead appearing to the living, were

subjects of much speculation; and we actually committed the folly of drawing up an agreement written in our blood, to the effect that whichever of us died first should appear to the other, and thus solve any doubts we had entertained of the 'life after death.' After we had finished our classes at the college, G. went to India, having got an appointment there in the civil service. He seldom wrote to me, and after a lapse of a few years I had almost forgotten him; moreover, his family having little connection with Edinburgh, I seldom saw or heard anything of them, or of him through them, so that all this schoolboy intimacy had died out and I had nearly forgotten his existence. I had taken, as I have said, a warm bath, and while lying in it and enjoying the comfort of the heat after the late freezing I had undergone, I turned my head 'round, looking towards the chair on which I had deposited my clothes, as I was about to get out of the bath. On the chair sat G., looking calmly at me. How I got out of the bath I know not, but on recovering my senses I found myself sprawling on the floor. The apparition—or whatever it was—that had taken the likeness of G., had disappeared.

"This vision produced such a shock that I had no inclination to talk about it or to speak about it even to Stuart; but the impression it made upon me was too vivid to be easily forgotten; and so strongly was I affected by it that I have here written down the whole story, *with the date, December 19*, and all the particulars as they are now fresh before me. No doubt I had fallen asleep; and that the appearance so distinctly presented to my eyes was a dream, I cannot for a moment doubt; yet for years I had had no communication with G., nor had there been anything to recall him to my recollection. Nothing had taken place during our Swedish travels connected either with G. or with India, or with anything relating to him or to any member of his family. I recollected quickly enough our old discussion and the bargain we had made. I could not discharge from my mind the impression that G. must have died, and that his appearance to me was to be received by me as proof of a future state; yet all the while I felt convinced that the whole was a dream; and so painfully vivid, so unfading was the impression, that I could not bring myself to talk of it or to make the slightest allusion to it."

Lord Brougham also added this important fact that "Soon after my return to Edinburgh, there arrived a letter from India, announcing G.'s death, and stating that he had died on December 19."

The following story of an apparition manifesting at the time of death is another of those that have been taken from the pages of the *Journal* of the American Society for Psychical Research. This appeared in the issue of April, 1945. The written report of the witness himself is fortified by letters of corroboration from the friend in Dallas to whom he first related the experience immediately after it occurred, from his wife, and from his mother living in Los Angeles. As is customary in nearly all these personal narratives, pseudonyms are used for publication, but the real names and addresses are on file in the editorial office of the *Journal*.

On the evening of April 20th, 1934, Mr. Chester Hayworth was teaching an astronomy class at the Y.M.C.A., in Dallas, Texas. As the class broke up later than usual that evening, it was about midnight when he got home. His wife was already asleep. He made his way to bed as quietly as possible in order not to disturb her and turned out the light. The bed lay across the double window, with its foot out at an angle so that one could readily pass between it and the window. There was enough light from the street lamps so that the furniture in the room was plainly visible.

For about fifteen minutes Mr. Hayworth lay on his back, thinking about a point in astronomy that he and his students had just been discussing. By this time it was about twelve-thirty. Suddenly, he felt curiously dizzy as if suddenly aroused from deep sleep. In a corner of the room he saw the seated figures of his mother and younger brother, who lived in Los Angeles. But it was only a fleeting impression.

At that instant he heard the door knob of the bedroom door rattle, the same door by which he had entered a few minutes before. He sat up in bed and looked toward the door. He saw it open, and in walked his father. There was never a doubt as to who he was. In his narrative Mr. Hayworth writes, "I could see him as plainly and with as much detail as I am seeing the lines on this paper as I write."

His first thought was that his father had suddenly returned from Los Angeles to Dallas on a visit, and that he must have plotted with Mrs. Hayworth to hide and then surprise him. The father was fond of little, harmless practical jokes and pranks, and such a plan would have been quite in character.

The father walked across the room, round the foot of the bed and stood directly opposite his son, who was now sitting bolt upright and staring but not saying a word. Indeed, he was expecting that any moment his father would speak, but he too was silent. Since the two men were now less than two feet apart, Mr. Hayworth had a good look at his father's figure and face. He noticed with surprise that he was wearing work clothes—tan-colored shirt, cap and trousers. He had brown suspenders, and in his shirt pocket were a celluloid pencil, a fountain pen, and a caliper ruler. One look at the face showed that this surprise visit was no piece of fun, for never had he seen on his father's countenance an expression so sad and downcast. It was clear that something was wrong, something very serious, as if a tragedy had occurred in the Los Angeles home and the father had come to break the news in person. Still not a word passed between father and son.

Then the older man extended his hand and his son took it in his. The father gripped hard, a warm, strong handclasp, "much harder," writes Mr. Hayworth, "than his usual handshake." Still holding his son's hand, he shook his head slowly and sorrowfully as if his message were too heartrending for him to tell. Suddenly he disappeared, and Mr. Hayworth found himself sitting up in bed with his arm outstretched, grasping nothing, his eyes staring at nothing. Between the time the door knob rattled and the moment his father vanished Mr. Hayworth estimates as half a minute.

For a moment he sat there bewildered. Then the doorbell rang and he got out of bed to answer it. He found a messenger boy at the door with a telegram in his hand. The message read: "Dad died at eight-thirty. Wire answer by Western Union can you come." The telegram had been dated at Los Angeles, April 20th, at 10:08 P. M., and received in the Dallas office at twelve-thirteen.

Mrs. Hayworth was awakened by the noise of her husband going

to the door, and when he came back he handed her the telegram. She was deeply devoted to her father-in-law, and as she read the message she burst into tears. Meanwhile, her husband sat in a chair apparently unmoved. To her indignant question as to whether he realized that his father was dead he replied, "My dear girl, I don't believe he is." Then he told her how his father had been there grasping his hand in that very room not five minutes before.

Eventually, however, he was compelled to believe that his father had actually died that night as the telegram had stated. It was not till the following June, however, that the Hayworths drove out to Los Angeles. There in his mother's home he told his story.

One of the first questions he asked was, "Mother, what kind of clothes did Father have on the day he died? . . . Wait a minute," he added, before she could reply, "Did he wear a tan shirt and trousers, with brown suspenders, and have one or more pencils and a caliper ruler in his shirt pocket?"

The mother looked amazed. She opened a closet door, saying, "Come here and look!" There hung a pair of tan trousers with brown suspenders, tan shirt and cap, and in the shirt pocket he saw a celluloid pencil, a fountain pen and a caliper ruler. She explained that the father had been working all day on the brother's car—hence the work clothes. When he went to bed he left them lying on a chair. Two hours later he died in bed of a heart attack.

One striking feature of this narrative is the verification in every detail of the dress the father had worn on the day he died, even to the items he carried in his shirt pocket. Another is the handclasp. So often in these stories the touch of a phantom hand—even the very presence of a ghost, is accompanied by the sensation of cold. The grip of his father's hand Mr. Hayworth describes as unusually firm and as warm as in life. This is one of the rare ghosts whose touch was solid and strong instead of impalpable. It is not strange that he could not believe that it had not been his living father who had come to his bedside and grasped his hand. A third feature worth noting is that just before he saw his father enter the room he had a fleeting glimpse of his mother and his brother seated in a corner.

This means that he dimly perceived "phantasms of the living" on the same occasion when he saw so vividly an apparition of the dead.

So it appears from these, and a wealth of other tales of this character, that recognizable ghosts are often seen, and sometimes seen and heard, about the time of the death of the persons whom these phantoms represent. Sometimes they appear to come and manifest themselves to some person or persons for no special reason. More often there is the bond of love and family associations. Occasionally, the apparition fulfills an agreement to do this very thing, a pledge made between two friends, as a rule made many years before.

This phenomenon of apparitions seen at or near the hour of death is not a matter of hearsay tales and old wives' fables. Thoughtful men and women have studied it for a long time. Sir William Barrett, in his book, *On the Threshold of the Unseen*, quotes a distinguished man of science, Dr. R. Angus Smith, F.R.S., who wrote him as long ago as 1876 that he knew of no law of nature, except the most obvious, that was sustained by so much and such indisputable evidence as the fact of apparitions at about the time of death.

It was some years after that letter was written that the Society for Psychical Research went about the task of collecting a mass of evidence on this subject, which was sifted and published in the two stout volumes, *Phantasms of the Living*, chiefly under the editorship of Edmund Gurney, the man who invented the "delayed telepathy" theory. Still more evidence was published in Vols. V and VI of the Society's *Proceedings* by both Gurney and Frederic W. H. Myers. The former received 6000 answers to an inquiry he sent abroad for experiences that had occurred in the preceding ten years. Following this, Professor and Mrs. Sidgwick made another survey, in which they studied 17,000 replies. Out of this they reached the conclusion that the proportion of true and recognized apparitions to those that were meaningless was 440 times greater than pure chance would allow. The Society gave an entire volume of its *Proceedings* (No. X) to an examination of this evidence. The final

conclusion was stated in these words:

"Between deaths and apparitions of the dying person a connection exists which is not due to chance alone. This we hold as a proved fact. The discussion of its full implications cannot be attempted in this paper, nor, perhaps, exhausted in this age."

Chapter VI

Ghosts with a Mission

IF THESE apparitions that people have reported seeing from time to time throughout history really do represent the personalities they resemble, it is only fair to assume that there must be a reason for their taking the trouble to manifest themselves. We are accustomed to taking it for granted that there must be some cause behind every phenomenon, natural or supernatural. This is certainly far from clear in many instances. Why should some house be plagued with poltergeist bangings and throwings about, or why should a wraith haunt its former dwelling on earth, doing nothing in particular except to frighten its present occupants?

There is, however, a large group of ghost stories in which the phantom appears to living persons on some definite errand clearly stated, and when the object of that errand is achieved it appears no more. This is the ghost on business. Sometimes the mission is matter-of-fact and practical, having to do with investments, wills, and important documents that have been hidden or mislaid. At other times it is to reveal the secret of a crime. Again it may be to relieve an emotional crisis in the loved one who is the object of the visitation. But all of this group are characterized by this expressed desire to perform a mission. To emphasize the wide variety in the intent of these ghostly errands the incidents that follow will be arranged under specific headings.

I. THE DESIRE FOR A PROPER BURIAL

It will be recalled that in the story of the Borley rectory the spectral nun, by means of scribbled words on the walls and by other means of communication, gave evidence of being obsessed by the

belief that she had never had the proper Catholic ritual at her burial. She asked for a "light mass," incense, and so on, as if the poor creature, after three centuries, was still chained to this idea of an improper burial.

One of the oldest ghost stories on record is told by the Younger Pliny in one of his letters. He says that the philosopher Athenodorus once bought a house cheap because it was said to be haunted. During his first night in the house he was awakened by the noise of chains dragging across the floor. Looking up, he saw an old man loaded with irons. Obeying the gesture of the stranger, Athenodorus got up out of bed and followed him to a place in the yard of the house. Then the ghost suddenly vanished.

The philosopher went to the judges with the story, and they ordered an excavation of the ground at that spot. The digging revealed a skeleton in chains. This was given an honorable burial, and after that, says Pliny, the haunting ceased.

In the Reverend Charles L. Tweedale's book, *Man's Survival After Death* (p. 130 f.) he tells of the worry of his Aunt Leah on a similar score. He says that she not only appeared at his home in ghostly form, but was frequently heard to speak loudly in "direct voice"; and all of this was witnessed not only by himself and the other members of his family but by the terrified maid servants as well. And these visitations were numerous. The purpose of all this was to remind the family that her name had not been incised on the family vault and she wanted it done at once. When, after long delays, the inscription was finally made on the memorial pillar at the family lot, Aunt Leah made a special visit to announce in a loud voice that her sister (Mr. Tweedale's mother) had at long last got the matter attended to. This news from the ghost came before word to the same effect was received from Mrs. Tweedale. Evidently Aunt Leah, in her discarnate existence, was offended at what seemed neglect on the part of her family to do her the last honor of putting her name with the rest in the family lot at the cemetery.

For another and still stranger instance of this kind of ghostly mission we turn to modern China. The story comes from Dr. Chung Yu Wang in a report in the *Journal* of the American Society for

Psychical Research for January, 1941. Dr. Wang is now resident in New York. He is a graduate of Columbia and an expert in the field of mining engineering.

The person chiefly concerned in this experience, however, was a friend of Dr. Wang, Dr. Wong Wen-hao. This gentleman is one of the foremost figures in modern China. He is a geologist of international fame, and was at one time Director of the Geological Survey of China. He is better known in recent years as Economics Minister, the genius who organized and conducted the movement of 120,000 tons of machinery across a hundred miles to save it from the advancing Japanese, and built up for the Chungking government a little Pittsburgh in the heart of China. Dr. Wang's narrative as printed in the *Journal* is largely a direct quotation from Dr. Wong Wen-hao's letter, describing something that happened to him which was past all normal explanation.

On February 16, 1934, Dr. Wong Wen-hao was critically injured in a motor crash, caused by the collision of his car with an obstacle on the road. From that moment, he writes, until April 6th, he remembers nothing, for the brain concussion resulted in prolonged unconsciousness. What happened in that interim he knows only as it was reported to him afterwards by his family. For though unconscious, he spoke repeatedly, and what he said was so strange that those who were at his bedside made notes of it.

First, he called for pen and paper, and then wrote with great difficulty three characters representing the name "Sze." On another day he complained to his nurse that a woman was pressing him hard and he wanted to have her driven away. His son-in-law and sister in Shanghai tried a planchette to see if they could get some guidance as to his critical condition. The writing that ensued announced the presence of Dr. Wong's mother. She wrote the name "Wong" in Chinese characters, then two more characters meaning "deceased concubine." Lastly came the words, "Make the grave early."

When this script was sent to Dr. Wong's father, he began inquiries at Ningpo among his relatives there. He discovered that his grandfather had been greatly helped financially in starting his business by a concubine of his named Sze. Further, he was informed

that in previous years when any one of the family lay dying he would say the same words, "the concubine has come to demand the removal of her tablet into our own family and the transfer of her coffin for reburial. Otherwise the consequence will be death."

Research into the family chronicles revealed that when this grandfather died no one in the family would recognize the concubine and she was cast off. In her extremity she entered a Buddhist nunnery, and when she died her funeral tablet was set up there and her body was given a crude burial by the country folk.

Then a peasant woman, famous for her mediumistic powers, was consulted and she gave a message coming from Sze to the effect that she had often before demanded an honorable burial from members of the family but without success. She said further that, with the help of two other spirits she had deliberately engineered the collision of Dr. Wong's car, and if her demands were not acceded to this time, he would die. For, because of the way she had been treated by the family, there was no one now to pay decent respect at her grave.

Dr. Wong's father was no believer in ghosts, but there was so much in these different messages that hung together to make a consistent story that he contracted a loan to cover the expense of a reburial for Sze's coffin and the setting up of her tablet in the hall of the family ancestors. At this time his son's life was despaired of, and the British physician had frankly abandoned hope for his recovery. However, three days after the new burial had been solemnized, Dr. Wong regained consciousness. This was followed by a sudden turn for the better and a rapid recovery. His doctor ascribed the change to a special act of God, a miracle.

At all events, Sze was given her honorable burial and recognition by her husband's family and thereafter she gave no more trouble. In this letter written by Dr. Wong he takes pains to insert these words: "As the events are of a superstitious nature, I cannot believe them." That is a sop to his scientific intellect. Yet he cannot forbear to write it all down and send the story to his friend as something he cannot believe, of course, but—it just happened.

II. HELP IN SICKNESS

In her book *My Life as a Search for the Meaning of Mediumship,* Mrs. Eileen Garrett, whom the reader has already met in these pages, tells the story of what happened one night when her daughter lay desperately ill with pneumonia. The crisis was expected at two in the morning. The mother dismissed the nurse and took her place at the bedside for the night, determined that if she could she would *will* her child past the crisis.

"Then came," she writes, "one of the strangest and most unexplained experiences of my whole life. I had taken the little one out of her bed; she gasped for breath; I was helpless but could not sit in agony and watch her fighting alone for breath. In desperation I held her close to me, as if to give her of my own strength; there was nothing else to do.

"Suddenly I heard a voice saying to me, 'Be careful! She must have air. Open the windows and allow a new current of air in the room.' I did not dare look or question from whence came that command; I just opened the windows. I remember watching the curtains flutter, and wondering if there were too much breeze. A moment later I saw the outline of a figure leaning against the bed, a short, lithe man; his face was turned away from me. I was too petrified to look very closely at him. Although my limbs were trembling, I knew I must approach the bed and put the child back on it. As I laid her down I was aware of this man, in gray garments, standing beside me with a sympathetic smile. His presence reassured me; fear left me and I knew he had come to help me save my child. I must have been sitting beside the bed when he left but I did not see him go. I do not remember how long I remained in that position. The next thing I recall was a resounding noise in my ears."

That was a knocking at the door by other members of the household who feared that the child had died in the night. Instead, they found the little girl sleeping quietly. At that moment the mother knew that her daughter would live.

The unusual feature of this story is that "the short, lithe man in

gray garments, whose face wore a sympathetic and kindly smile" was no one that she could recognize as ever having seen before. All she knew was that it was someone who had come to help her with her sick child.

The favorite instance of ghostly helpfulness in time of desperate illness is the one that was told repeatedly by the late Dr. S. Weir Mitchell, the eminent neurologist and author of Philadelphia.* He said that, after an exhausting day with his patients he put on his dressing gown and went to his bedroom with a book. After a few pages he dozed off, but was soon awakened by the ringing of his front doorbell. Since the maid did not answer it he got up and went to the door himself.

As he opened it he saw a little girl, thinly and shabbily dressed, with an old shawl around her shoulders. She was evidently in deep distress of mind.

"It's my mother," she exclaimed earnestly. "She's very sick, sir, won't you come, please?"

There was an icy wind blowing, laden with drifting snow. Dr. Mitchell replied that he was very tired that night, and there must be plenty of other doctors that she could get. But the child pleaded so hard that he gave in. He told her to wait in the hall while he dressed. Then, flinging on his overcoat, he followed her out into the night.

She led the doctor through a number of streets to a tenement and then up the stairs to a room where her mother lay. It took but a few moments after he entered to perceive that the woman was very ill with pneumonia, and in her he recognized a former servant. He went to the telephone to order what was necessary for the case and then he complimented the mother on the intelligence and persistence of her daughter.

"But my daughter died a month ago!" she exclaimed; "her shoes and shawl are there in that little cupboard."

Then Dr. Mitchell recalled that he had not seen the child enter the sick room after showing him in. He looked in the cupboard and

* Geo. H. Cherrie, *Dark Trails, Adventures of a Nationalist*, p. 13 f.

found the identical shawl and shoes that he had noticed on the little girl, but they were neatly laid away and were warm and dry. Obviously, they had not been out in the snow that night. But there was no doubt about the woman sick with pneumonia as a substantial fact, and he knew that a little girl had led him there to her bedside.

III. TO PREVENT A MATERIAL MISFORTUNE

The son of Dante, Jacopo, records the story that after his father's death thirteen cantos of the *Divine Comedy* were not to be found, and no amount of searching revealed the least clue to where they could be. But one night Dante appeared to his son in a dream and told specifically where to find a certain drawer in which the missing manuscript lay. On awaking, the son hastened to do as he had been bidden in the dream and found the thirteen cantos precisely as indicated.

This is typical of a number of stories where a ghost or a dream apparition comes to prevent a material loss of some sort. The following case was investigated by Richard Hodgson of the Society for Psychical Research in Boston, and then published by Frederic Myers in the *Proceedings* of the English society (vol. viii, p. 200), and in his *Human Personality* (vol. ii, p. 37). A poor farmer named Mike Conley, says the report, living in Chickasaw county, Iowa, was found dead in an outhouse at Dubuque. The body was taken to the Coroner's morgue, and because the man's clothes were filthy from the place where he had fallen they were thrown out on the ground to be destroyed later. The body was prepared for conveyance home and burial, and Conley's son came to fetch it. When he arrived home again with the coffin, one of his sisters, on being told that her father was dead, fell unconscious and remained in that condition for several hours.

When she was finally brought to she asked, "Where are Father's old clothes? He has just appeared to me, dressed in a white shirt, black suit and satin slippers, and he told me that after leaving home he sewed a large roll of bills inside his gray shirt with a piece of the same cloth as my red dress, and the money is still there." Again she

fainted and when she recovered she demanded that someone go to Dubuque and get the clothes.

Naturally, her family were impatient with her obsession, but the doctor advised that someone should go for the clothes, if only for the sake of setting her mind at rest. Accordingly, the son telegraphed the Coroner, asking if he still had the garments. That official replied that the clothes were still lying in the yard where they had been thrown out, and said that the young man could have them if he would come at once.

When the son arrived he told the Coroner what his sister had said. The man answered that the girl had described the burial costume of her father accurately even to the satin slippers. The son was amazed because he knew that his sister had not seen her father's body when it was brought home, and none of the rest of the family had seen more than the man's face at the coffin lid.

This seemed so striking a confirmation of the girl's vision that they unrolled the bundle of clothes with eager curiosity. They took out the gray shirt and found inside the bosom a large lump of something sewn up in a piece of red cloth. This the son recognized as exactly the same material as a dress worn by his sister. The stitches were large and clumsily made, like the work of a man unused to the needle. As they ripped open the seam out tumbled a large roll of bills.

Confirmation of the story was supplied in written statements by the editor of the Dubuque *Herald* and by the County Coroner. The latter said in his report of the matter, "It is more than true by my investigation. I laughed and did not believe in the matter when I first heard of it until I satisfied myself by investigating and seeing what I did."

There are some striking features in this story. One is the costume in which Conley was dressed for burial. That was something he certainly did not know when he was still alive, so that he could not very well have transmitted the details by any delayed telepathy. Nobody else but the Coroner knew that he had on satin slippers. More important still was the fact, known to no one else but himself, that there was a roll of bills sewed up in a piece of red cloth inside his

shirt. Yet both these circumstances—that of the costume and the roll of bills—were revealed to the daughter by the apparition of her father.

IV. THE CORRECTION OF AN INJUSTICE

Closely related to the message that averts a financial loss is the one that straightens out some tangle in business affairs, such as a lost will or other important document.

One instance of a ghost correcting an injustice involved in an inheritance is a matter of record in a North Carolina court, and of comparatively recent date. When the story was first published in the newspapers, a Canadian gentleman, who was interested in psychic phenomena, employed an attorney who was on the scene to make a careful investigation of the case, procure copies of the court records, all the newspaper accounts and affidavits from the principals concerned. The lawyer took pains also to examine strictly other individuals whose testimony might be involved. The result is a tale of ghostly intervention which is singularly well-buttressed by both testimony and the event. A brief report of the findings was published in the *Proceedings* of the (English) Society for Psychical Research (vol. xxxvi, 1926–7).

The case has to do with a will. James L. Chaffin was a farmer in Davie county, North Carolina. He had a wife and four sons, John, James, Marshall and Abner, named in order of seniority. On November 16, 1905, he made a will, attested by two witnesses, whereby he bequeathed his farm to his third son, Marshall, whom he named as sole executor. For his wife and three other sons he made no provision.

On September 7, 1921, Chaffin died as the result of a fall. Marshall obtained probate on the will a few weeks later. His mother and three brothers did not contest the will because they felt that they had no legal ground for such action.

It was in June, 1925, that James Pinkney Chaffin, the second son, began to have what he called vivid dreams of his father, who came to his bedside but said nothing. In the latter part of the month he

appeared as before at the bedside of his son James during the night. He looked exactly as in life but this time he was wearing a familiar black overcoat. On the occasion of this visit, James said that for the first time he heard his father speak. "He took hold of his overcoat this way [indicating the gesture] and pulled it back and said, 'You will find my will in my overcoat pocket.' " Then he was gone. At the time James thought that he was awake.

At any rate when he awoke in the morning he was fully convinced that his father's spirit had really come to him to rectify a mistake. He went to his mother's house and asked for the overcoat, but was told that she had given it to his eldest brother, John, who lived in Yadkin County, about twenty miles away.

Still determined to get at the bottom of the mystery, James made the trip to this brother's home and there he found the black overcoat. Examining the lining, he discovered that in one place it had been sewed together. He cut the stitches and found inside a small roll of paper tied with string. It was not a will, but there was a single sentence written on that piece of paper, and it was in his father's handwriting: "Read the 27th chapter of Genesis in my daddies Bible."

By this time James was so sure that he was on the track of something very important that he went to his mother's home again to find and examine that Bible. But he was wise enough to provide himself with a witness in case a will should be discovered. He persuaded a neighbor, Thomas Blackwelder, to go with him.

When they arrived at the house it took considerable searching to locate the old Bible, but at last it was found in the top drawer of a bureau in an upstairs room. When it was discovered, there were present, not only the two men but the widow, James's wife and their fifteen-year-old daughter. As they picked up the Bible it proved to be in such a dilapidated condition that it fell apart in three pieces. It happened that Blackwelder picked up the part that contained Genesis, and he turned to the 27th chapter, as the little scroll directed. There the searchers saw that the two leaves were folded together so as to form a pocket, and in this lay a document. Unfolding this, they read these words:

"After reading the 27th Chapter of Genesis, I, James L. Chaffin, do make my last will and testament and here it is. I want, after giving my body a decent burial, my little property to be equally divided between my four children, if they are living at my death, both personal and real estate divided equal; if not living, give share to their children. And if she is living, you must take care of your mammy. Now this is my last will and testament. Witness my hand and seal,

James L. Chaffin
This January 16, 1919."

The point of the reference to Genesis, Chapter 27 was that this is the chapter that tells how Jacob got for himself his father's blessing and birthright at the expense of his elder brother Esau. In the will that had been already probated four years earlier the sole beneficiary was a younger brother Marshall. The new will discovered in the Bible was not attested, but, according to the law of North Carolina, such a will is valid if it can be shown that it is all in the Testator's handwriting, and there was no doubt on that score.

It so happened that within a year of the father's death the son Marshall died, and the property, to which he had been the sole heir, went to his widow and son, who was then a minor. Accordingly, suit was brought against her to recover under the terms of the newly discovered second will. On the first day of the hearing the court house was crowded for the case had become famous. During the lunch hour, however, Marshall's widow had the opportunity of seeing the new will. Realizing that it was undoubtedly in her father-in-law's handwriting, she withdrew her opposition, and when court reconvened that day the counsel announced that a friendly settlement had been made on the terms of the second will. And so the ghost of James L. Chaffin managed to rectify an injustice for which he himself was responsible.

True, it was not the will itself which was in the overcoat pocket, as James had understood the ghost to say, but the result was the same, for the scrap of paper showed where the second will had been concealed. Up to the time of its discovery no member of the family had any idea of the existence of another will. The attorney who in-

vestigated the case added his own comment to the effect that he was impressed by the sincerity and high character of all the persons concerned.

As for James Chaffin, the man to whom the apparition came repeatedly and finally succeeded in conveying the message, he could say no more than the simple tale of the ghost and the words spoken. At the time, he told the lawyer he thought he was fully awake but was not sure, so he called it a dream. In December, about a week before the case of Chaffin versus Chaffin was called in court, the father appeared to James again. He appeared to be in a considerable temper, and he asked, "Where is my old will?" This cryptic question James interpreted to mean that he would win his suit, and he told his lawyer about it next morning. His final statement on the whole experience was simple and straightforward: "I am convinced that my father actually appeared to me on these several occasions, and I shall believe it to the day of my death."

Two more examples of the correcting of an unfair inheritance were narrated to me by a gentleman who is a distinguished traveler, lecturer, linguist, and former Government official at various posts in the Orient. He has unusual psychic sensitivity himself, and he became interested in the subject while a student under Professor William James, at Harvard. Here he shall be represented anonymously as H——.

For many years H——'s grandfather was editor of a religious weekly of national circulation and considerable reputation in his denomination. He made a will, which his grandson criticized as not fair to his family, but the old gentleman was as "set in his ways" as he was in his Fundamentalist theology, and the family were resigned to make the best of it. The old gentleman died and the will was read.

One night H—— was awakened out of his sleep by hearing his grandfather's voice saying distinctly, "You were right about that will. I did make another one afterwards. Don't rest till you find it!" That was all.

There was no phantom visible, but that voice was so strong and

unmistakable that H—— had no doubts as to the reality of the message. At once he went to his grandfather's house and began a thorough search of his effects. He knew that the old man had a habit of stuffing everything and anything into any one of the various pigeonholes in his desk. He found these crammed full. Patiently he went through piles of old letters, receipts, memoranda, and odds and ends of all sorts. Finally, he came upon a document that looked different from all the rest. He unfolded it and examined it. It needed only a glance to see that it was a will, postdating the one that was already offered for probate. The reason the existence of it had never been suspected by the family was that their lawyer knew nothing of any such instrument. But this will had been drawn up by another attorney, as if the grandfather was determined to keep it a secret. In this second will the particular injustice that H—— had criticized was corrected.

H——'s second adventure with a spectral messenger discussing an inheritance came from a stranger. It was on a Sunday morning when H—— was pecking away at his typewriter in his apartment in Boston. There was enough of the unsubstantial about the figure so that H—— knew instantly that he was in the presence of an apparition. But as he scanned the face he felt sure that he had never seen it before.

Then the stranger began to speak. He introduced himself as the father of a man whom H—— knew only slightly, having in fact met him only four times. The phantom had come, he said, to request H—— to carry an important message, indeed a command, to his son for the purpose of remedying an injustice to the widowed stepmother.

This was the story: The man had married his stenographer against the bitter opposition of his son and daughter, who declared that all the woman wanted was their father's money. To silence that charge, the stenographer signed an ante-nuptial agreement that she would accept no more than $10,000. from the estate in case the man died first.

As it happened this estate turned out to be much larger than had been anticipated. The ghost told H—— that the sum of $10,000. was

wholly inadequate to take care of his widow, and he wanted his son and daughter to make a more generous allotment for their stepmother's support. He insisted that H—— go to his son with the message. Incidentally, H—— had never seen this woman.

Naturally, when the son, who was the executor of the estate, heard the story, he was vastly amused and refused to take any action.

The following Sunday morning the phantom appeared again at the same place and expressed anger against his son. "Tell him this time," said the ghost, "that in the —— bank in Chicago I have a safety deposit box with a sum of money in it of which he knows nothing. Tell him he can go and get it." Much against the grain as the errand was, H—— faithfully conveyed the message, but again he was laughed at.

Then for the third time the apparition stood before him, and this time he was very angry. "I'll *make* him go to Chicago," said he. Then he proceeded to tell H—— something he said that even his children did not know. "They are the offspring of my *second* marriage," said he. "Before that I had married a woman secretly and had to divorce her for infidelity. The papers of that divorce are in my strong box"—he gave the number—"at the —— bank in Chicago. Further, I have ten thousand dollars' worth of Government bonds in that box, and you can note down the serial numbers as I give them."

Reluctant as he was to go to the son again, H—— felt that this information was so circumstantial that it could not be ignored. This time the son ridiculed the idea of a former marriage, but put the question up to the dead man's brother who had been his associate in business during most of their lives. Surely he would know. But he too scoffed at the idea, and certainly, he said, if there ever had been such a marriage he would have known about it.

But the son was sufficiently interested by this time to communicate with the Chicago bank. He discovered that it was true that there was a safety deposit box there under his father's name. On learning this he made the trip to Chicago. When he opened the strong box and went through the papers he discovered not only the

government bonds to the value of ten thousand dollars, with the serial numbers as specified, but also the papers relative to that secret first marriage and the divorce that ended it. Of the bonds, it is worth noting that all the coupons were uncut.

The son returned home greatly impressed, but he and his sister decided on a final test. As H—— had never seen the father in life, they asked him to try to identify the face from a handful of family photographs as the one whom he had seen three times as a ghost. H—— went over the pictures, one by one. It was clear that he was puzzled. Finally, he put his finger on one of a man with a beard. "If it weren't for that beard," he said, "I would say that was the man I saw."

"Now I *believe!*" cried the son. "Father always wore a beard, and shaved it off only a week or two before he died." After that corroboration the son and daughter made a proper provision for their stepmother, and H—— never saw the apparition again.

It is hardly necessary to point out the fact that for "evidential" support this ghost story is hard to beat.

V. A MISSION OF HELPFULNESS

There is also the friendly ghost who comes with the purpose of helping a person in the task that he has in hand. Many writers have testified to receiving help from some unseen spiritual source, which at times has all but dictated their writing. Kipling frankly confessed to that, especially in the composition of his *Jungle Books*. Galsworthy once spoke of his own work almost as if it came by automatic writing. The seventeenth-century mystic Boehme and the nineteenth-century mystic Blake attributed all their work to a power outside themselves.

The experience that follows, however, is exceptional in that the assistance is rendered by a visible phantom in a spoken word, who came not merely once but repeatedly over a long period of years. Mr. Elliott Daingerfield, who has been described as the most imaginative, the most poetic of American artists of the last generation, is the central figure in this story. Incidentally, his work may be seen

in the Metropolitan Museum, the Brooklyn Museum, the National Gallery, and elsewhere throughout the country. It is treasured in many private collections, and may be seen today on the walls of the Church of Saint Mary the Virgin in New York. The facts that follow were kindly given me by his daughter.

It was not, however, to the artist himself that the apparition came, but to his wife. The vision occurred always at night, and always the same. When first she saw it she described it as a dream, but a strangely vivid one. She saw the figure of a man standing by her bed. He wore a peculiar costume, a large, wide-brimmed soft hat, like the one worn by Rubens in his familiar self-portrait, and, for that matter, in the fashion one sees in practically all the male portraits of the Rembrandt-Rubens-Van Dyke period. The hat was worn so low and it was so wide that it shaded the face completely, she said, so that she never could see the features. From the shoulders down the figure was completely covered by a long, gray cape that reached almost to the floor.

The phantom spoke, but it was a message for her husband not for herself. It had to do with a painting on which the artist was then engaged. This message was in the form of a critique, such as a teacher might give a pupil; it dealt with details in the picture, such as values, composition, and the like. "Tell him," he said, "to deepen the value of the tree in the foreground and move the cloud nearer the middle of the sky. Make the trees rounder." All this was Greek to the wife because no member of the family ever entered the studio while the artist was at work on a painting until it was ready for framing.

When Mr. Daingerfield received the first message from his wife, fantastic as it seemed to accept the criticism of a dream, he thought the words over and came to the realization that they were just right. He altered his picture accordingly and was gratified to see how greatly it was improved. He then confessed to his wife that he had been puzzled and dissatisfied with the work for some time and could not figure out what was wrong.

That first dream seemed strange enough, but it was only the beginning. From time to time during nearly thirty years of married

life, the same figure in the large hat and long gray cape would come to the artist's wife by night, bringing a message for him. As on the first occasion, it was always a suggestion, or a command, rather, to make certain alterations in the painting which was then on the easel, matters of color, values, line, mass, or drawing. On each occasion the painter confessed to his wife his feeling of dissatisfaction with his canvas and his inability to decide what was wrong. He never disobeyed, for each experience proved how right the criticisms were.

This was a secret which outsiders never knew, but all through Mr. Daingerfield's career he accepted the word of his ghostly master. "Sometimes," said his daughter, "the gray figure might not appear more often than once in a whole year. At other times he appeared much more frequently." For these visitations seemed to be dependent on the artist's need for help. When it happened, his wife would announce the next morning simply, "He came again last night." It could no longer be called a dream.

"What did he say?" the artist would inquire eagerly, and she would repeat the instructions, clearly remembered. These were so penetrating, so constructive, that the painter had no doubt as to their coming from a source higher than himself. He told his wife that he believed the ghostly visitor was the spirit of one of the seventeenth-century masters, who found in him a congenial temperament and was interested in helping him.

Only once did a message come to him direct. One time he had been struggling with a painting of the Madonna and Child. It was a large, square canvas. He was dissatisfied with the composition, and nothing he tried made any improvement. Late one afternoon he laid down his brushes in utter discouragement and sat alone with his painting in the twilight. Suddenly he heard a voice in his ear as clear as if it were that of a man standing at his shoulder. It was a rich voice, deep and resonant. "My boy," it said, "enclose it in a circle." These words were repeated distinctly three times. That was all. The artist sprang from his chair and tied a piece of chalk to a string. Then he swung a circle round the center of the canvas. Instantly he saw that everything in the composition fell into line.

That was all it needed. This painting is now in the private collection of Mr. Haley Fiske, president of the Metropolitan Life. It is more widely known through reproductions and more beloved than any other of Mr. Daingerfield's religious pictures.

Helpfulness may also take the practical form of financial assistance in time of need. A couple who shall be called Mr. and Mrs. Wilson, living in Los Angeles, had an experience of this sort, which runs a close parallel to the stories related above dealing with lost wills. Mr. Wilson was a graduate of the Naval Academy, who some years after the First World War, in which he served, resigned and went into business. He married, but within three years thereafter he and his wife were overwhelmed by financial disasters. Along with the disappearance of their money went their fair-weather friends, and even their families seemed to display an impatience with them as if they were to blame for their misfortune. To make matters worse, the anxiety and distress of mind that they suffered broke them down physically to the point where neither was fit to work. Soon they were reduced to a situation approaching destitution. They had so little to eat that when they had spent the day in the usual desperate round of seeking for employment they would reach their door so weak and famished that they could hardly drag themselves to bed. The future looked desperate, and they prayed as they had never prayed before.

One evening about sunset, at the end of another hard and fruitless day, they threw themselves on the bed and lay there hopeless. Then they talked aloud into space, "If there is any force or power on the other side of life," they said, "let it be manifest now. We know we can't be entirely alone and there must be help over there! Certainly there is none on *this* side," they added bitterly.

At that moment the husband cried out, "Laura, I see my father, and he is trying to tell me something, for I see his mouth moving, and he has some kind of paper in his hand."

"Wait," said his wife. "I know if I try, I can get the message mentally. I have the gift," she added. "I was born with it."

Accordingly, she listened and repeated to her husband what she

heard with her inner ear. "I have in my hand," the voice said, "an old insurance policy which I took out for you [the son] over forty years ago. It was a child's policy in your name. Now you must write to your mother in Michigan and tell her to go upstairs and look for this policy in an old trunk. It's a small one with yellowish green paint on the outside of the tin. There she will find this policy with the payments almost up to date, and this I am sure will prove to be of help to you. From this side of life I can see it has been forgotten. I am so glad to be able to help you both." At this the ghost rolled up the paper which he had been holding all the time that he was speaking. Then he vanished.

Almost immediately Mrs. Wilson fell asleep. Curiously enough, when she awoke the next morning the strange experience of the evening before had passed completely from her mind. She saw her husband writing letters but did not inquire what they were about. Some time later she saw that he had received letters, but as he said nothing about their contents she asked no questions. Still she had no memory of the message she had relayed to her husband that evening while he was gazing at the apparition of his father. Nor did he mention the matter to her. She did observe, however, that he was much more cheerful.

One day he suggested that they drive to Hollywood. She hesitated because it meant use of precious gasoline, but since his nervous breakdown she had made a point of humoring him and she consented. They drove off, and to her dismay he suddenly turned in at a parking lot where the fee was fifteen cents. She knew they did not have fifteen cents, and she protested.

"Don't worry," was the answer, "I can fix it up, I'm sure." He led her into a bank and asked for the assistant manager, whom he knew. Then he introduced his wife with the statement that he wished to open an account in her name. The expression on her face showed that she thought her husband must have lost his mind. At this point he drew out of his pocket a check and spread it before her startled eyes. The figure was $950.

"Don't you remember," he began, and then he recalled to her that evening, between two and three weeks before, when he had

seen his father and she had been able to get his message. As the apparition had directed, Mr. Wilson wrote to his mother asking her to look in a certain old tin trunk which he described in his father's words. There the mother discovered the insurance policy. It was promptly turned in, and the result was the check for $950. Never did such a sum of money mean so much as it did to this couple. "Not only was that appreciated beyond words," Mrs. Wilson wrote in a letter to me, "but a far greater thing was made manifest to us; namely, that this great power is eternally standing ready to guide and help us through His messengers."

Perhaps this is as good a place as any to introduce a singular phenomenon which, in the usual sense, is not "ghostly" and yet seems related to these other instances of helpfulness from spiritual or supernatural sources. The prophets of old used to proclaim "Thus saith the Lord," as if they were certain that their words were not of their own devising, but a Divine message.

Socrates was conscious of his spirit guide, who from time to time warned him of what he must not do. The philosopher spoke of this invisible monitor as simply and naturally as if it were his father, the difference being that while he might have disobeyed his father on occasion, he never refused to do the bidding of his "daimon." He went to his death with serenity because his guide did not command him to do otherwise.

Joan of Arc was burned by the English priests as a heretic and a witch because she steadfastly held to her statement that she heard "voices." These voices called her to her mission to save France, and she would not deny them.

These are well-known historical instances of some inexplicable inner voice that was more real and more impelling to those who heard it than any other sound that ever beat on their ears. It is interesting to note that this is not so rare as might be supposed; Socrates and Joan of Arc were not the only ones who ever had that experience. The instance in kind that follows comes to me direct from a friend, and she has told it to only a very few. She too is conscious, at crises in her life, of a specific guidance. It is not so

a voice as a conviction with the force of command.
· example, shortly after a medical check-up she received the
that she must return at once to the doctor. Some critical con-
ı in her system had been overlooked in the examination. It
l for an operation at once; if neglected, it would prove fatal.
ɔhysician was surprised and visibly annoyed to see her again
ɔn on such an errand. "Why," he said reprovingly, "this isn't
ou, Mrs. Joyce! You have just had a check-up." It was clear
ıe thought her just another one of his silly female patients.
en she specified the nature of the unsuspected condition and
ɜd on his looking for it. To the doctor's amazement and chagrin
ɜcovered this to be true and the operation was performed.
e afternoon she received the inner message that her father
lying. At the moment he was apparently resting quietly on
ɜd, having given no sign even of illness. Without hesitation—
npression was so powerful—she sprang to the telephone to
ıon help. In a short time the inexplicable warning was veri-

out fifteen years later Mrs. Joyce awoke at seven-thirty one
ing with the certainty that her mother would not live out the
nd that her brother could not be reached because he was in
ɜean. Both ideas seemed out of reason. The mother had been
valid for some time but in no apparent danger, and the
er had recently been heard from in a letter that gave no hint
ing abroad. At nine-thirty that morning a wireless came from
ɜxplaining that he had been suddenly called to Europe on an
t missiɔn. At two-thirty a long-distance telephone call bade
Joyce take the first train to her mother's bedside. Shortly after
rived her mother died.
five critical occasions in her life, Mrs. Joyce said, this strange
ction has come to her.
id it ever occur to you to disregard a message?" I asked.
would never dream of questioning," she answered gravely. She
ılso that her father, to whom she had been particularly de-
in his lifetime, was to her a frequent, invisible presence, one
he sensed keenly. Possibly it was the father who stood watch

over her, and when a crisis came impressed a definite fact upon her mind.

At any rate, as in the case of religious visions, the purely subjective character of the phenomenon does not alter the fact of its profound reality to the person who experiences it. And where, as in the last instance, the conviction is corroborated by the facts, it is worth serious consideration.

VI. TO SAVE ONE'S GOOD NAME

The man who is responsible for the following anecdote was interviewed by Edmund Gurney of the Society for Psychical Research. So much as could be corroborated was attested to by the man's wife in a written statement. It is published not only in the Society's *Proceedings*, but also by Sir Ernest Bennett in his *Apparitions and Haunted Houses* as "Case 45." In fact it is one of the best known stories of this class. It is also one of those borderland cases which occur at night and are described often as dreams.

The narrator says that he once took into his employ a lad named Robert Mackenzie, who, after three or four years' service, quit his job on the ill-intentioned advice of some of his fellow workers. A few years later this former employer saw a youth at the gate of the poorhouse, wolfing a crust of bread. The boy had the look of one more than half starved. Stopping to speak to the poor fellow, the man recognized his former employee. The lad confessed his folly at ever having left a good job, and when he was offered it back again he broke down in tears of gratitude.

Thereafter his relations with his employer were those of a faithful dog and his master. In time the employer moved from Glasgow to London and gradually his former workmen passed from his memory. One Tuesday morning, shortly before eight, "I had," he writes, "the following manifestation; I cannot call it a dream." There was, he explains, none of the "blurring outline" characteristic of dreams.

At any rate, he found himself seated at a desk engaged in a business talk with someone at his right. Just then Robert Mackenzie came toward him. He spoke to the youth sharply: "Can't you see

that I'm engaged?" Mackenzie went back very reluctantly and then stepped forward again. His employer rebuked him angrily on his want of manners. At this point the man who had been talking to him got up and left. Once more Mackenzie advanced to the desk.

"What is all this, Robert?" cried the man. "Didn't you see I was engaged?"

"Yes, sir," he answered, "but I want to speak with you at once."

"What about? What is it that can be so important?" As he looked at the youth he noticed that his face had a strange, bluish tinge with spots on his forehead that he took to be great blots of sweat.

"I wish to tell you, sir," he answered, "that I am accused of doing a thing I did not do, and that I want *you* to know it, and to tell you so, and that you are to forgive me for what I am blamed for because I am innocent. I did not do the thing they say I did."

"But how can I forgive you if you do not tell me what you are accused of?"

The reply, says the narrator, he can never forget. It came in the Scottish dialect with emphasis, and it was solemnly repeated twice or three times, "*Ye'll sune ken!*" (You'll soon know.)

At that the man awoke. He was still wondering about his "dream" when his wife burst into the room in great excitement with an open telegram in her hand.

"Oh, James!" she cried, "here's a terrible end to the workmen's ball. Robert Mackenzie has committed suicide!"

Now sure of the significance of his vision he answered, "No, he has not committed suicide."

"How can you possibly know that?"

"Because," he replied gravely, "he has just been here to tell me."

The next mail, however, brought a letter from his manager in Glasgow saying that he was wrong in sending the message about Robert's suicide. It transpired, he said that on Saturday night, after the workmen's ball, Mackenzie had gone home, and there he had poured out a liquid which he thought was whiskey but which was *aqua fortis* [nitric acid] used for staining wood. He drank it all at one gulp and died in agony the following day.

Recalling the peculiar color of the face that he had seen in

that vision of Robert, he consulted a medical book on the symptoms of poisoning by *aqua fortis* and found these words: "the skin covered with a cold sweat, countenance livid and expressive of dreadful suffering . . . The external stains, if any, are yellow." He remembered the spots on the forehead which he had taken for "great blots of perspiration."

"I attribute the whole," concludes the narrator, "to Mackenzie's yearning gratitude for being rescued from a deplorable state of starvation, and his earnest desire to stand well in my opinion. I have coloured nothing, and leave my readers to draw their own conclusions."

VII. HELP IN AN EMOTIONAL CRISIS

It is not an uncommon experience for a person in great mental stress to hear—or at least to believe he hears—words of comfort and healing from an unseen source. For instance, a lady of my acquaintance returned from her mother's funeral in a despairing and unbalanced state of mind. She and her mother had been bound together by exceptionally close ties. She felt hopeless as she stood alone in her room; there seemed nothing worth living for. All at once she felt the pressure of a hand on her shoulder, as real and as natural as if someone had come up quietly behind her. Turning in astonishment to see who it could be, she heard her mother's voice, " 'Not my will but Thine be done.' "

That was all, but it was enough to give her assurance that her mother was not "dead" but still living in a new life of her own and still near her daughter. With that assurance came back the comfort of a renewed faith.

This experience consisted only of a feeling of a hand and a few spoken words. In the following instance, also told by the witness herself, there was a complete apparition, together with the message. The young man to whom the lady was engaged had been taken to the hospital for an ailment that was not considered serious. One day she went there to visit him. Afterwards she was lingering in the building talking to one of the nurses when word was brought

to her that by some sudden complication, his heart had given out and the young man was dead.

In that instant it seemed to her as if her whole world and her life had been crushed out. When finally she reached her apartment she flung herself on the bed in a paroxysm of grief and despair. She made up her mind that there was no point in living any longer, as there was nothing to live for.

Suddenly her fiancé stood before her, smiling. She did not hear him speak, but she understood that all was well with him, that he was very happy in his new life and that he had come to assure her that she must not grieve. Then he leaned over her and laid his hand on her forehead. She felt his thumb and fingers on each of her temples, and they were cold as ice. She struggled to speak but found that she could not utter a word. Then her lover vanished.

But after that the tortured nerves were calm. She might have thought it was all a hallucination or a dream, she said, but for the icy sensation that remained in her temples. That cold lingered there for a matter of two weeks or so afterwards. And, she added, the same sensation has returned in later years, even to this day, when a new crisis and strain comes upon her, as if it were a token that her loved one is still with her.

VIII. HELP IN THE HOUR OF PERIL

Out of the First World War comes the story of a phantom soldier who came to the aid of his comrades in a time of danger. Probably there are many other instances of this character, but this narrative comes direct from the man who heard it. He was a young Canadian captain who was billeted with other officers of his newly arrived battalion to a British front line in order to learn the ways of trench warfare under fire. There he met the English captain commanding the company, a university graduate and a splendid all-around officer, adored by his men. At the time he had been wounded three times, and ten days after he related his story he was killed.

"Have you ever seen any of these queer visions on the battlefield, like the 'Angels of Mons'?" the Canadian asked in the course of their conversation.

"No," was the reply, "I've heard of such things, of course, but I never saw any myself. I can tell you, though, of an experience that is something of that sort, one that happened right here in my company. One night a sergeant, who was standing watch, came to my dugout in great excitement to report that he had just seen over the parapet a brother sergeant who had recently been killed, and that ghostly sergeant had warned him that the Jerries were coming across No-Man's Land on a sneak attack without the usual artillery preparation.

" 'Jenkins,' I said, 'you're badly in need of sleep; you're seeing things that aren't there. Go to your post.'

"Soon he was back again, white and shaken. 'Sir,' he cried, 'the sergeant's come again, and he says the Jerries are creeping toward us and we *got* to be ready!'

"I felt sorry for the poor fellow. 'I order you, Jenkins, to find another non-com to take your post. You turn in to your bunk and get some sleep. That's what you need.'

" 'Yes, sir.' The man went back along the trench. Suddenly I heard him shout 'Stand-to!' This is a command anyone can give in a moment of danger, and instantly officers and men came pouring out of the dugouts lining up on the firing platform. Hardly were they ready with their rifles when a wave of German helmets swept up over the crest of the parapet. But the men were there in the nick of time, and we succeeded in beating the Jerries back.

"Afterwards the sergeant told me what had happened. As he was walking along the trench looking for a non-com to take his place, as I had ordered, he saw for the third time his dead comrade standing on the parapet. "There's not a second to be lost!' cried the phantom sergeant, 'the Jerries are almost here!'

"This time Jenkins did not wait to report to me but gave the alarm, and his quick action saved us. And for that we have to thank the ghost of a dead comrade."

The gentleman referred to as "Mr. Wilson" in the story of the insurance policy given earlier, has been favored with many other supernormal experiences, and all of them of a helpful mission in a time of need. The apparition he saw in the episode of the insurance policy he recognized as the likeness of his deceased father. In some of his other experiences, he tells me, the figure that appeared to him was like no one he had ever seen. The ghost that figures in the two anecdotes that follow was unmistakably his sister who had died in early childhood. He refers to her as "Little Sister."

Both of the incidents narrated here occurred while he was still in the Navy, during the aftermath of the First World War. It was at the time of the Russian Revolution and the scene was Vladivostok. "I was ashore with one of my machine-gun crews," he writes me, "guarding American civilian property in the city of Vladivostok. The streets are narrow and run generally in the valleys between the flanking hills. There were five minor rebellions or revolutions in Siberia following the 'White-Red' revolution, which caused the overthrow of the Czarist government. It was during one of the Japanese-sponsored revolts called the 'Gaida Rebellion' that the incident occurred.

"The Reds, who were in power, were shooting at the rebel troops under General Gaida from behind houses, down streets and across them from hilltop to hilltop. As on several other occasions when I have been in great physical, mental, moral or financial danger, the spirit of my sister appeared. It was evening, and the illumination from the moon and stars was not very great. Sister appeared and pointed down near my feet. Without thinking, I bent over to see what she pointed at only to find a useless, small splinter of wood. But in that instant a shell passed over exactly where my head and shoulders would have been, which was directly behind the gun. The entire crew were killed by that shell.

"A similar incident," he continues, "occurred at Vladivostok the following winter while we were loading coal. I was standing next to my Boatswain's Mate, who was giving signals to the hoistmen to haul up the coal sacks from the lighter, to be then un-

loaded on deck into the well shoots. I was supervising several other groups of my crew, walking from one coaling-boom to the other. When I arrived at the Number One Boom I stood about one foot behind and to the right of my Boatswain's Mate. My sister appeared again, as she had on previous occasions, and pointed down to the deck, and I stooped over to pick up a burned match—the only thing I saw. Just as I stooped over, the coal bag, with about one ton of coal, caught on the barge edge. The strain on the cable leading to the steam winch exerted such an excessive strain on the ten-inch coal boom that it broke in the middle. The lower half, swinging like a scythe, and at lightning speed, swung half round, missing my head by the space I had bent over, and crushing the head of my Boatswain's Mate to a pulp, together with his neck and shoulders."

In both these escapes from sudden death, which happened within less than a year, Little Sister used the same means, inducing her brother to bend double at the exact moment when, if he had been standing erect, he would have been killed.

The foregoing are brief tales of apparitions that came with a purpose. Some of them come from a single witness and others are buttressed by the testimony of others. Each of them deals with a definite errand, ranging from the triviality of having a name cut on a family memorial in the cemetery to the importance of saving a loved one from death. Many more could be cited but these are typical. Two longer narratives will serve to conclude this chapter, covering strange events, each of which, in its day, gained considerable fame, and is too striking to be forgotten now.

IX. THE TESTIMONY OF A GHOST IN COURT

Among rare American pamphlets of the early nineteenth century is one entitled: AUTHENTIC ACCOUNT OF THE APPEARANCE OF A GHOST IN QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND. PROVED IN SAID COUNTY COURT IN THE REMARKABLE TRIAL, STATE OF MARYLAND, USE OF JAMES, FANNY, ROBERT AND THOMAS HARRIS VERSUS MARY HARRIS, ADMINISTRATRIX OF JAMES HARRIS. FROM ATTESTED NOTES TAKEN IN

COURT AT THE TIME BY ONE OF THE COUNCIL, BALTIMORE, 1807.

These notes, written in the most matter-of-fact, dry-as-dust style, embody the story of a ghost who came back to correct an injustice in the handling of the inheritance of his property. Apparently, though this is not clear from the pamphlet, that testimony settled the issue in the suit.

The presiding judge in that singular trial was the Honorable James Tilghman, a member of a famous Maryland family, and the counsel for the plaintiff was Robert Wright, who at the time the pamphlet was printed (1807) was Governor of Maryland. The trial took place in 1798 or 1799.

The story begins on a day when Thomas Harris and his younger brother James were stacking sheaves in the farmyard. Suddenly Thomas was stricken with an illness which laid him on his bed and soon proved fatal. After his death his will was probated. This provided that his land be sold and that the proceeds be divided among his four children. James was named executor, and he went about the business of making an inventory of his brother's possessions and selling the land.

However, in drawing up the deed of sale, the lawyer discovered that by some technicality the land was entailed, so that Thomas had no right to dispose of it to anyone outside of his heirs. But the four children, being illegitimate, were ruled out of the inheritance.

Accordingly, James laid claim to the money brought in by the sale of the property. This left the children with nothing.

Then there occurred something so incredible that no one, least of all a court of law, would have paid any attention to the story were it not for the fact that it came from a man who was universally respected in the community. A person of his integrity could not be laughed off. His name was William Briggs, forty-three years old, and a veteran of the Revolutionary War. It happened that he was the intimate friend of Thomas Harris from boyhood and was with him when he died. That event took place in 1790.

It was not long afterwards when certain ghostly visitations be-

gan, as Briggs testified under oath in court. One day the following March Briggs was riding near the lot where his friend lay buried. The horse he rode had once belonged to Harris. This animal, after fording a small stream, suddenly began to walk very fast. It was a sunny morning between eight and nine o'clock, and Briggs could see nothing out of the ordinary anywhere. In fact, he was alone on the road. When he turned into a lane next to the plot in which Harris was buried, the horse suddenly wheeled about, went to the fence and, looking over it in the direction of the grave, neighed loudly as if he recognized his master.

At that moment Briggs saw Tom Harris walking towards him, dressed in the same sky-blue coat he had worn when last seen in health. Briggs sat on his horse in stunned silence, while the animal pricked up its ears and neighed as if he too had seen and recognized his former owner. Harris continued to approach, but just before he reached the fence he turned sharply to the right and vanished. That was all. No word was spoken on either side. Briggs said that at the distance he could not see clearly the features, but he could have no doubt who it was. As soon as Harris disappeared, the horse of its own accord wheeled away from the fence and took to the road again.

This happened in March, and Briggs had no recurrence of the experience until about the first of the following June. He was then plowing his own field, which was some three miles from the plot of ground in which Tom Harris was buried, the place where he had seen the ghost two or three months before. It was after sundown, the time of early summer twilight. Suddenly he saw Harris alongside of him, dressed as before in his blue coat. He walked along with Briggs about two hundred yards, then he stopped at a distance of not more than two paces from his old friend as if he were going to say something. But at that moment Briggs's helper, John Bailey, came up, and as he did so the figure of Harris disappeared. When asked, Bailey said that he had not seen anyone with Briggs, and the latter decided not to tell him.

Still not a word had been spoken between Briggs and the ghost. The matter so preyed on Briggs's mind that it affected his health.

He felt sure that his old friend had come back to convey a message of importance, and yet in two visits nothing had been said. Although Briggs had been called to Harris's bedside in his last illness and was with him when he died, there had been no special parting word expressed at that time.

Once, while lying in bed, near the hour of midnight, Briggs heard a loud groan, the very echo of the sound Harris had uttered just before he died. It was so loud, in fact, that Mrs. Briggs heard it, and getting out of bed she searched the house to see who could have made such an outcry. One other night after that, while in bed, he saw a shadow pass against the firelight on the wall and felt a great weight resting on him. Then, shortly after that he was rudely awakened by a blow on the face that blackened both his eyes and left a swollen nose.

It was not, however, until the middle of August that he saw Harris again. On this occasion Briggs was alone. It was after dark, but a clear, starlit night. This time the phantom came directly up to his friend, stretched out his arms and rested them on Briggs's shoulders. But they gave no feeling of pressure. Again, not a word was uttered and in a flash the ghost was gone. Shaking with fright, Briggs went back and got a young man to accompany him the rest of the way back to his house. On reaching home, for the first time he blurted out the story of the repeated visitations. Up to this time he had confided only in the brother, James Harris.

It was the twilight of an early October morning when Tom Harris came again. This time Briggs saw him about a hundred yards from his house, walking fast, as if on some important business, with his head to one side. Briggs saw him clearly at that moment; there was no mistaking that figure in the sky-blue coat and the characteristic bearing.

A few hours later, that same morning, about eight o'clock, while Briggs and John Bailey were at work together in the farmyard, Tom Harris came walking along the garden fence to within fifteen feet of Briggs, only to disappear again.

Briggs called out excitedly to his helper, asking him if he had not seen Tom Harris, and pointing to where he had stood by the

fence, but Bailey replied that he had not seen anyone. He looked curiously at his employer, who seemed not quite right in his mind. But less than two hours afterwards, while the two men were still stacking grain, Tom Harris returned and leaned over the fence not more than ten feet from where Briggs was at work.

"Look there!" he cried, pointing to the apparition.

"What's there?" Bailey asked.

"Don't you see Harris?" shouted Briggs. But whatever Bailey replied was of no consequence at that moment, for Briggs left him and walked to the fence, climbed over it and strolled away with his old friend. The latter began talking rapidly, but the voice was so low, Briggs said afterwards, that he couldn't catch much of the content.

"Why don't you go to your brother instead of to me?" he pleaded.

"Ask me no questions!" Now the words were clearer.

"Your will is doubted." Briggs wanted his friend to know that the expressed intent of Harris's will had been set aside by the technicality of the law.

"Ask my brother if he does not remember the conversation which passed between us on the east side of the wheat stacks the day I was taken with my death sickness. I wish all my property should be kept together by James until my children are of age. Then the whole should be sold and divided among them; not now. The children will be most needful of the property while they are minors, so I changed my will. You will see me again. Turn!" And he was gone.

Briggs testified that his friend did not speak in the same voice as in life, and frequently he could not understand what he was saying. Curiously enough, he said that he did not feel at all frightened while the figure was with him, but when it was gone he was terrified.

Immediately after this experience Briggs went to James Harris. He told him that he had seen Tom Harris three times that very day. He asked the question put by the ghost as to whether James recalled the conversation he had had with his brother that day they were stacking wheat. James replied that he did clearly. "I know

now that you have seen Tom," he said, "because no one on earth but he and I knew of that conversation." Then he promised to carry out his brother's wish regarding the children's right in the property.

That very evening, as Briggs was returning home about an hour before sunset, Tom Harris appeared for the fourth time in a single day. He came alongside Briggs, and as they walked together Briggs told him of his recent talk with James and the latter's promise to carry out his brother's wish in regard to the children's right in the inheritance.

Then followed more conversation but on a different subject, said Briggs. He was importuned in court to tell what it was about but he stoutly refused. The more the lawyer tried to get it out of him the more agitated Briggs became. He claimed the protection of the court because he had already told everything that related to the case. As for that last conversation, he declared that he had never mentioned a word of it to any living soul and never would, that nothing short of death could force it out of him.

The secret of that last colloquy between him and the ghost of his old friend died with Briggs. What it could have been, therefore, is a mystery never to be solved. But his story of the ghost was told in court and there listened to with respect. For the matter had to be taken to court because, though James Harris promised to straighten out the matter in regard to the children, he died not long afterwards, and his widow had no intention of letting go anything that the law had given to her husband. As far as she was concerned, the four children of Tom Harris were only so many bastards, with no legal standing for inheritance. And so the suit was brought against her in their interest.

The testimony of William Briggs was accepted in court because no one ever doubted his word. There were, of course, no other witnesses to the apparition. John Bailey was called in on the case to tell what he knew. He testified that while working with Briggs on that October morning he was suddenly asked by Briggs, "Look there, don't you see Tom Harris?" And he had answered "No." Then he said he saw Briggs climb over the fence and walk across the fields for some distance. All the while he seemed to be deep

in conversation with someone at his side, someone whom Bailey could not see at all.

X. A MURDERED MAN'S STORY

The town of Lily Dale in northern New York state is the headquarters of the Spiritualists in the United States. The central shrine is a small, plain frame house of a story and a half. It has a central door in front flanked by a window on each side. Originally this house stood in the hamlet of Hydesville, in Wayne County, some twenty miles east of Rochester in the same state, but in 1916, what was left of the dwelling, after years of neglect and decay, was brought to Lily Dale by the Spiritualists and there set up and restored. In fact, it had to be practically rebuilt throughout.

The reason for this solicitude for the house is because it is regarded by Spiritualists as the birthplace of their sect. And this is because there occurred under its roof, nearly a hundred years ago, a series of strange happenings culminating in what the Spiritualist regards as the first instance in modern times of communication between the living and the dead, carried on in the presence of witnesses. In fact, this Hydesville affair became so notorious that its fame spread not only over the whole country but also across the Atlantic. The facts appear to stand upon unusually strong foundation of evidence, because they are supported by the formal written testimony of at least a half dozen witnesses.

In the year 1847, a Canadian farmer named John Fox, settled in northern New York state. He took a farm near the village of Hydesville, and while a house was being built for him he moved with his family into a small frame dwelling which stood in a cluster of such houses. The family at that time consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Fox and their two little girls, Margaretta and Catherine, the former between twelve and thirteen and the latter eight or nine years old. There seems to be no accurate information as to just when these children were born, for the stories differ by a year or so in each case.

At the time he moved in John Fox was told that the house was "queer." Some said that it was haunted. A man named Weekman

had lived there eighteen months and then moved away because of its unpleasant noises. But Fox and his wife were good Methodists who scouted the idea of ghosts and they had no fear of the Devil.

Soon after the Fox family moved in they heard curious faint sounds that were impossible to explain as due to rats, bats or mice, and as the weeks passed these noises grew stronger. Soon they could hear what sounded like footsteps at night, but no amount of searching revealed any clue as to who was walking. It was in December that the Fox family moved in, and by the following March the disturbances had grown so bad that sleep was broken for both parents and children. Now the house actually trembled under the reverberations. Loud raps sounded on walls, and chairs and tables began to move of their own accord. Bedclothes were snatched off and little Katie complained of feeling a cold hand on her face.

March 31st was a grim, cold day with snow on the ground and no promise of spring in the icy wind. A son David, who was working on a farm three miles away, came to spend the day with his family. When they told him of the awful noises he laughed heartily. He was the first one that Mr. and Mrs. Fox had taken into their confidence and they got small sympathy from him. As far as he was concerned, they were being fooled by someone, and that was all there was to it.

Shortly after David went back to the farm the entire Fox family turned in, hoping by going to bed very early they might snatch a little much needed sleep. But luck was not with them. Scarcely were the girls tucked in when they cried, "Here they are again!" Sure enough, and now the sounds were louder than ever. Again John Fox tried doors and windows in desperation, though he had gone through the same thing a hundred times already on previous nights. Little Katie, sitting up in bed, agog with excitement, noticed that when her father shook the window sashes to see if they were snug the raps echoed each sound. "Mr. Splitfoot," she called out impudently to what she supposed was a creature of hoofs and horns, "do as I do!" At the same time she clapped her hands repeatedly. Instantly there came the same number of knocks. Then she made repeated but silent gestures of snapping her fingers. Again the exact

number of raps responded.

"Look, Mamma," she cried, "it can see as well as hear!" Katie was the least frightened of the four. "Oh, Mamma," she went on, "tomorrow is April Fool's day and someone is trying to frighten us!"

But the mother was impressed with the echoing raps when the child made repeated motions with her hands. So she called out "Count ten!" Ten knocks echoed back.

"How old is my daughter Margaretta? How old is Katie? How many children have I?" Each time the answer was prompt and correct. As to the third question the answer came back seven, which seemed to be wrong. When the query was repeated the answer was again seven. Then she asked, "How many children have I *living*?" and the correct answer came, six. "How many dead?" One. And the age of that child was correctly indicated by three raps.

"Are you a man that makes these knocks?" the mother continued. "Rap twice for 'yes.'" Silence. "Are you a spirit?" Two loud knocks responded, so violent that the house trembled under the blows. "Will these noises keep up if I call in the neighbors?" Two raps indicated "yes."

Upon that Mrs. Fox sent for her nearest neighbors, who came in high glee, expecting to show up a practical joke. But when the first woman discovered that by asking for response by raps she was told not only her own age but that of others in the room, a hush of amazement fell on them all.

One of the neighbors who had come in at Mrs. Fox's invitation was a William Duesler, who with his father had once lived in that house. He had his wits about him sufficiently to begin a systematic inquiry with the invisible knocker. He asked if he or his father had been responsible for any injury that the spirit had suffered. Silence indicated no. Then Duesler conducted a series of questions as to what trouble was responsible for the disturbances in the house. In the slow and laborious method of raps for "yes" and numbers, also the checking off of the right letters of the alphabet as they were recited, Duesler drew out a sensational story in the presence of the Fox family and a roomful of awestruck neighbors.

According to this tale, the invisible said that he had been murdered, that his throat was cut with a butcher's knife, and that the crime had been committed for the sake of $500. and some goods that the man carried with him. The story went on to say that the victim's body had been dragged down the cellar stairs and buried in the middle of the cellar under ten feet of earth.

As for his own identity, the name "Charles B. Rosna" was spelled out, but the process of checking on the right letters of the alphabet was so confusing that there was some doubt as to the spelling of the surname. He gave his age as thirty-one, and said that he had a wife and five children but that his wife had been dead two years.

All this was so sensational that Duesler sent for another neighbor, Artemus Hyde, and in his presence repeated the chief questions, receiving the identical answers. Then he satisfied the incredulity of a third person who came in by repeating the process.

Naturally, once the story got abroad, as it did with dispatch, people flocked to the Fox house from near and far. Mrs. Fox took the two children and fled the place, but her husband stayed behind, largely, no doubt to protect his belongings from the curiosity seekers who crowded into it.

The communication by raps between Mrs. Fox and Duesler on the one side and the invisible on the other took place on the night of Friday, March 31 (1848). The next day the little house was packed with spectators who had come to see the wonder, while others milled about the yard trying to get in. It is said that the crowd numbered about three hundred. But no manifestations started until night. Meanwhile, John Fox and his friends started digging in the cellar to find the body of the murdered man. They soon came to water, however, because the house stood on low land and the spring rains had drenched the ground. Accordingly, further digging was postponed until the ground was dry.

The question on everybody's lips was, "Who was the murdered man?" There had never been any story of a Hydesville person done to death. Meanwhile, to protect their names and set the story straight before it began to grow, Mr. and Mrs. Fox and others made out affidavits. Mrs. Fox's statement bears the date of April 11, less

than a fortnight after that sensational Friday night. Her husband made out a shorter one. But a long and detailed document was written and signed by William Duesler the following day.

There is a note of weary pathos in what Mrs. Fox wrote. She says at the end, "I am not a believer in haunted houses or supernatural appearances. I am very sorry there has been so much excitement about it. It has been a great deal of trouble to us. It was our misfortune to live here at this time; but I am willing and anxious that the truth should be known, and that a true statement should be made. I cannot account for these noises. All that I know is that they have been heard repeatedly as I have stated. I have heard the rapping again this Tuesday (April 11) morning. My children have also heard it."

The matter had not been noised abroad long before a young girl named Lucretia Pulver came forward with a story that she thought might throw light on the murder mystery, and that tale was long and circumstantial. As everyone in the village knew, in the year 1843–44 the house was occupied by a Mr. and Mrs. Bell. During the last three months of their tenancy Lucretia was their "help." One day a traveling pedlar stopped at the door, a man about thirty, well-dressed in black frock coat with light trousers and vest. Lucretia said that Mrs. Bell seemed to recognize him as a previous acquaintance. The pedlar carried a basket and a tin trunk, or box, containing his articles of merchandise. As the wandering fraternity did in those days, he arranged to spend the night in the Bells' house.

Shortly after he arrived Lucretia was astonished to be told by Mrs. Bell, with no warning, that she couldn't afford to keep her any longer, and that as she was driving to the village the girl could pack up at once and go with her. Before leaving, Lucretia picked out a piece of dress material from the pedlar's merchandise, asking him to leave it at her father's house the next day when he came by. This he promised to do.

Mrs. Bell and Lucretia drove away, leaving the two men by themselves in the house. But the next day the pedlar did not leave the dress goods at Lucretia's home, nor any day thereafter. Three

days later Lucretia was surprised to be sent for by Mrs. Bell to return to her old job. As she did so she found her mistress engaged in remaking some coats, which she remarked were too large for Mr. Bell. Lucretia noticed also that Mrs. Bell possessed many articles that she remembered seeing in the pedlar's pack.

From the time of her return the girl began to notice rappings that seemed to come from the floor under the foot of her bed. This was the room that had been given to the pedlar that night Lucretia went away. She had no way of accounting for these curious sounds. Once, when the Bells were away, Lucretia sent for a girl friend and a younger brother to spend the night with her. During the night all three of them heard noises; some of them sounded like a man walking from the bedroom to the kitchen, and then down the cellar stairs; after that the footfalls were heard on the ground of the cellar. Then suddenly they ceased.

All were much frightened and busily fastened doors and windows, but there was no sleep for them the rest of the night. To make matters worse, their dog sat under the bedroom window outside and howled till morning. But there was no sign of the presence of any burglar next day.

Shortly afterwards, while Lucretia was on an errand in the cellar, she stumbled and fell into a hole filled with soft soil. At her sudden scream, Bell came down in a hurry.

"Why is the cellar all dug up?" she asked.

"Rat holes," he answered. After that, said Lucretia, for several nights Bell was busy in the cellar, "filling up rat holes;" as he explained, using earth that for some reason he brought in after dark; and at the same time he had a load of stones brought up, such as a farmer uses for fences.

During the rest of Lucretia's stay in the house the inexplicable sounds continued. Mrs. Bell complained bitterly of them to Mrs. Pulver, Lucretia's mother, who was a frequent visitor. The latter said that she found the woman in a state of nervous collapse, due to lack of sleep. Mrs. Bell declared that all night long she could hear a man walking about the house, yet there never was anybody there.

It was more than the Bells could stand, evidently, for they moved away. Then the Weekmans moved in. Weekman said that he frequently heard knocking on the outside door but when he went to open it he found no one there. Sometimes the door would open of itself before his eyes, even while he held fast to the latch in order to fool the mischief-maker. Then followed noises in the cellar and the sound of footsteps. Mrs. Lafe, a woman who lived with the Weekmans, said that once she saw a strange man in the bedroom next to the kitchen. There was only one door to that room and it led out from the kitchen, so she could not account for anyone getting in there without passing by her. She had been busy in the kitchen a long time. She described the stranger as a man in black frock coat with light pantaloons and vest, adding, "I know of no one like him." In consequence of these uncanny happenings, the Weekmans fled the house.

All this testimony gave new force to the story rapped out by the invisible, and the excitement redoubled. Mr. Bell, at whom the finger of suspicion pointed, was then living at Lyon, New York. Indignant and aggrieved, he sent a statement as to the beauty of his character signed by forty-four members of the community in which he lived. This statement was to the effect that they did not believe that Bell was capable of murder. Certainly, the evidence against him was not enough to stand up in a court of law.

First of all, there was no *corpus delicti*. Fox had dug in the cellar again in June when the ground was dry. He discovered a vacant hole, a plank, a bit of wash bowl, and, according to one account, some strands of hair and bits of bone, together with lumps of charcoal and traces of quicklime. A physician declared that the hair was human and the bits of bone belonged to a human skull, but that was all in the line of incriminating evidence.

Meanwhile, the noises went on worse than ever. Doors opened and slammed, beds were shaken so badly that the children's mattresses were laid on the floor. Then the floor itself would rock as if in an earthquake. Night after night there were the sounds of some death struggle—choking cries, the thud of a falling body, and then the slow dragging of a heavy object down the cellar stairs.

The parents noticed that the demonstrations were at their worst when the girls were in the house, so Mrs. Fox took both of them to Rochester where a much older married sister Leah was living. Alas, the knockings followed them there, despite earnest prayers that this curse might be taken from them. As the news of the haunting got abroad, the whole family became the objects of persecution. Poor Leah, who gave music lessons, lost nearly all of her pupils. Ministers offered their services to exorcise the Evil One, but all the result they achieved was that there was silence while they prayed but a mighty pounding when they came to their amens, as if in mocking applause.

To the people of Rochester it was clear as daylight that these Fox people were in league with the Devil. The persecution became so violent that once there seemed to be danger of lynching. Leah's husband was wild with anger. He despised anything that smacked of the supernatural, and the mocking spirit singled him out for special attentions with all the poltergeist antics in the repertoire.

Then a kindly Quaker friend, Isaac Post, came to the rescue, and as William Duesler had done on the night of March 31st, he inaugurated a method of communicating by raps. The unexpected result was that not only the murdered man but deceased relatives "came through." And so, without intending to do any such thing, this friendly Quaker started mediumship. It turned out that Leah was "gifted" as well as the two little girls. She took them to New York and began business as a professional medium, making at times as much as a hundred dollars a night. Horace Greeley became interested, and made arrangements for Katie's education. At once mediums sprang up all over the land, a brand-new and sensational profession. Possibly, if Samuel Wesley had thought of devising a system of raps for "yes" and "no" when his rectory was plagued by noises, this phenomenon might have occurred two centuries earlier.

At any rate, the Fox sisters enjoyed a great vogue, and for a while they prospered. As each found a husband she dropped her trade. Margaretta had rather pronounced failings. After the death of Dr. Elisha Kane, the arctic explorer, she claimed that she was his

common-law wife and published a volume of his love letters to prove her case. For years she had been addicted to the bottle, and she speedily sank about as low as she could. Evidently Leah, who had married again very prosperously, did not dole out as much money as Margaretta demanded. She set out, therefore, to ruin Leah, and she got her sister Katie to assist in the enterprise. Accordingly, she came out with a confession, stating that everything that Leah and the others had done was sheer fraud. She went on the lecture platform and demonstrated that she could make noises by cracking her toe joints.

At this there was great jubilation on the part of the skeptics, and not only the three sisters and their imitators but the whole Hydesville story was dismissed as a fraud. Then Margaretta, finding that her lectures were not very profitable, recanted her confession, saying that it was done under the influence of alcohol and her need for money. But this time no one cared to listen. Sunk as low as she was at this time, she would have, as someone remarked, denied her mother for a five-dollar bill.

Three years afterwards the poor, sodden wreck of a woman lay dying in a wretched tenement room in Brooklyn. The woman doctor who attended her last hours—who was not in the least interested in Spiritualism—testified afterwards that though the dying woman was unable to move hand or foot, and there was no closet or other hiding place in the room, knockings sounded, now in the wall, now in the ceiling and again through the floor. Margaretta heard them, too, and she muttered that they came in response to questions that she had put to her "guide." The doctor had no explanation to offer, but she said that there was no cracking of toe joints going on then.

By the time of Margaretta's death much had happened since that March night, in 1848, when the little house trembled under knocks from an unseen source responding to Mrs. Fox's questions. A great civil war had racked the nation, and as for spirits, the confessions of Margaretta and Katie Fox had branded the whole subject with the word fraud. A new generation had grown up who had never heard of the Fox sisters or the Hydesville house. Except by a few

Spiritualists, the whole story had been forgotten.

Then, on November 23, 1904, there appeared in the Boston *Journal* a small news item that few noticed. It told of some children playing in the cellar of an old, deserted house in Hydesville, New York. Suddenly the east wall of the cellar had fallen down, partly burying one of them. The rest of the children ran screaming for help. When the men came and rescued the child from the débris, they discovered that the wall that had tumbled down was a false partition, and there was a space between it and the original cellar foundation. Within that space they discovered the headless skeleton of a man, and beside it a tin trunk or box, such as pedlars used.

It was this false wall that had deceived John Fox and his friends when they dug over the cellar to find the body. Evidently Bell had cut off the victim's head and burned it with fire and quicklime so as to prevent recognition. Then, after Lucretia had fallen into the soft earth, he had reburied the body behind a false wall that he had erected at one end of the cellar. And so, sixty-one years after a dapper young pedlar, arrayed in light trousers, fancy vest and black frock coat, stopped to do a little business at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Bell, in Hydesville, and never was seen again, the mystery was solved. And that headless skeleton, with its tin box alongside, confirmed the story told by a series of knocks on the wall made by an invisible hand many years before.

XI. WAS IT SUICIDE?

In September, 1910, Dr. James H. Hyslop, Professor of Logic at Columbia and at the time the leader of psychical research in the United States, received a letter from a lady whom we shall call Mrs. James N. Smith, telling of a striking experience of her own, which was linked with the death of her son. The tone of the letter suggested a desire to obtain help from a man who was a specialist in the study of these phenomena, and its story proved so interesting that Dr. Hyslop wrote her for a more detailed report on the facts and such corroboration as was possible to obtain. On the basis

of her reply he requested his friend Mr. George A. Thacher to undertake a detailed investigation and report. Since Mrs. Smith lived in a city on the West Coast, it was necessary for Dr. Hyslop to delegate this task to someone who lived near enough to attend to it personally. Mr. Thacher performed the investigation thoroughly during a period of over three months. His report was analyzed by Dr. Hyslop, who published the complete account in the *Journal* of the American Society for Psychical Research, together with his own comments and findings, particularly as to the legal aspects of the case. The article covers nearly seventy pages in volume five of the Society's *Journal* for the year 1911. Since there is an alleged suicide involved, this story makes another interesting parallel to the "Ye'll sune ken" apparition of Robert Mackenzie narrated earlier in this chapter. Dr. Hyslop did not hesitate to publish the real names of all the persons involved in the story, and anyone sufficiently curious to identify them may read his account in the *Journal*. Here, however, pseudonyms will be used for reasons which should be obvious as the story develops.

On the evening of October 12, 1907, some time between eight-thirty and nine, Mrs. James N. Smith, while sitting in her home, felt a sudden blow, as if someone had struck her on the head. "Mercy!" she cried out. "What was that?" As she asked the question a dreadful conviction overwhelmed her. Somehow she *knew* that a terrible disaster had befallen her son James. "Something has happened to Jimmie!" she cried aloud. "O, God, save him!"

To the other members of the family who were present and heard this cry the mother's sudden apprehension seemed absurd. The boy was all right when last heard from. He had recently resigned from the Naval Academy at Annapolis and had been commissioned second lieutenant in the Marine Corps, stationed at what was then a marine post situated across the creek from the Naval Academy grounds. As Mrs. Smith rose and left the room in an agony of grief, her daughter followed her mother to her room. There for a while she read aloud to her, thinking that the mother had suffered an unaccountable nervous attack which might be quieted by reading. But the well-intentioned effort had no effect. Mrs. Smith's

dreadful premonition was so overpowering that all night long she wept and prayed for her boy. Nor was there any relaxation of this terrible sense of doom as another day dawned. At six o'clock she rose and went to mass, in order to pray in church, but she was too restless to sit long and she returned home.

At about one-thirty that afternoon she heard the telephone ring. Her husband answered it, and she thought it must be a call from the office of the Southern Pacific Railroad, of which Mr. Smith was an executive, because she heard him leave the house immediately. As for Mrs. Smith, she remained in her room, still bathed in tears and still praying for her son. An hour later she heard her husband return. As he entered the front door, she said that she saw their son Jimmie come in also. She exclaimed to her daughter, "Jimmie is here!"

"Oh, Mother," she protested. "Last night you thought he was killed or hurt and now you say he is here."

"No matter," insisted her mother, "Jimmie is here." At that instant her husband entered the room.

"Can you stand bad news?" he asked.

"Anything. Is Jimmie hurt?"

"He is dead."

"Has he been ill?"

"No."

"Has he been hurt?"

"No."

"Then how can he be dead?"

"He committed suicide, they say."

At those words, she declares that she saw her boy standing before her. "Mamma," she heard him say, "I never did." He reached out his hands toward her. "My hands are as free from crime as they were when I was five years old. Oh, Mother, don't believe them. Case struck me in the head with the butt of a gun and stunned me. I fell on my knees and they beat me worse than a dog in the street. Mamma, dear, if you could only see my forehead you would know what they did to me. Don't give way, for you must clear my name. God will give you the men to bring those

men to justice."

All this was as clear to the mother as any words ever spoken, and there before her eyes stood her boy. She turned to her husband and daughters. "Do either of you see Jimmie or hear what he is saying?" They looked at each other in a way that indicated a belief that she was losing her mind under the shock. "Oh," she went on eagerly. "Listen! He is here and I hear him." Then she repeated to them the words that she had just heard. But the story was not finished.

"Mamma," she heard him continue, "they beat me almost to death. I did not know I was shot until my soul went into eternity. They either knocked or struck me in the jaw for there is a lump on the left side. I never had a chance to defend myself."

The telegram which Mr. Smith had received from the Navy Department read, "It is reported from Annapolis that Lieutenant James W. Smith committed suicide at one-twenty this morning, October 13, 1907." Since there is a three-hour difference of time between the Atlantic coast and the Pacific, the hour of death coincided closely with the time when the mother felt her sudden premonition.

This telegram was all that the family knew until seven o'clock that evening when a reporter called and said that the news his paper had received was to the effect that the young officer had gone to a dance at the Academy, had drunk too much, went "crazy mad," and on the way back to his quarters "blew the whole top of his head off."

The apparition of her son was still clearly visible to Mrs. Smith, and again she heard him say that this story was not true. He kept repeating, "Oh, Mother dear, if you could see my forehead you would know how they beat me. They broke my watch with a kick as I lay on the ground," he went on. "They jumped on me with their feet, and I wonder that my ribs were not broken."

For four days the figure remained continuously with the mother. She described him as appearing always dressed in his uniform as second lieutenant of marines and wearing his regulation overcoat. Before he disappeared he said, "Mamma, don't lose your mind

because you've got to clear my name." He described how his face had been beaten and how a bandage had been wrapped round the forehead to conceal the bruises on the head. He added, "They put my body in a basement and left it there. Hill managed and directed the whole affair." This was a name that had not been heard of before.

Mrs. Smith promised that she would see for herself what injuries had been inflicted and prayed that God would keep the body just as it was when it was laid in the casket until such time as she could come to it.

One night she was awakened by the voice of her boy saying, "Don't move or open your eyes. I am permitted to show you my face." She obeyed and saw the face bruised and discolored. Then he asserted that the gun said to be his was not, and he asked her to trace it, saying that if she did so she would find out that it came from the South. He mentioned also losing his shoulder knot.

Meanwhile, the night after the telegram was received, one of Mrs. Smith's daughters had a dream in which somebody seemed to be showing her a face which she could see clearly, as if she were looking at a photograph. But it was a face that she did not know. And she heard a voice say that this was the man who managed the affair. Later, her eyes fell on a picture in a newspaper account of the affair and she recognized it as the face she remembered in her dream. It was Lieutenant Hill.

In fact, Mrs. Smith's psychic sensitivity was apparently inherited to a degree by the children. James himself had had a premonition of death. He had taken out a life insurance policy, and he wrote to his father on September 30, of the same year as his death, "I feel in my bones that something is going to happen, but it is a feeling most people laugh at." His brother at West Point dreamed of seeing him in a uniform he had never seen him wear in life, that of an officer of marines, with sword.

A married daughter made the journey across continent to attend to her brother's funeral. While dozing on the Short Line train that ran between Baltimore and Annapolis, she too dreamed she saw her brother and heard him say that he had been murdered.

On her return she brought back her dead brother's effects in a trunk. It was found that one shoulder knot was missing from his uniform coat, and when the watch was taken out its crystal face was seen to be shattered in many places.

Just then Mrs. Smith said, "Jimmie is here; listen to his watch ticking."

"Why, you are crazy!" exclaimed her daughter.

"Listen," the mother repeated. The watch began to tick again and kept on ticking for three minutes. It had stopped at one-fifteen. The mother went on, "Jimmie says 'That's how long I suffered.' "

The daughter shook her by the shoulder. "Mamma, you have lost your mind!"

"Listen!" her mother repeated. "It's ticking again." It ran for another two minutes and stopped at one-twenty. Then she said, "I heard him say, 'That's how much longer I lived."

This watch was taken to a jeweler but it was weeks before he could make it run at all. After being repaired it was carried by the brother at West Point. For years it always stopped at one-twenty. Finally, a jeweler in New York succeeded in making it run normally.

Naturally, after so many visions of her son, combined with his explicit statements to her of the circumstances under which he was killed, Mrs. Smith was not going to accept the official verdict of suicide. Besides, she was a devout Catholic, and to one of that faith suicide is an unspeakable crime that leads to eternal damnation.

As for the naval authorities, two inquests were held. The second was convened during the July following. The story presented to this court was that the three officers were returning to their quarters after attending a dance at the Naval Academy when Smith, who had been drinking, became quarrelsome. He threatened to kill the others, went to his quarters and returned with two pistols. The other two tried to overpower him and put him under arrest. Shots were fired and it was seen that Smith had deliberately shot himself through the head. This story was accepted; certainly that version was much the best for the Navy. It would never do to admit that two marine officers could have turned on a brother officer, beat

him to a pulp and then shot him dead. Congressmen and newspapers would make a nasty mess of it. There was already strong popular resentment against the two Service academies over the frequent outbreaks of brutal hazing, but if it was agreed that young Smith killed himself, nobody but he could be blamed for his death.

At any rate his mother soon discovered that she could make no headway in trying to clear her son's name of suicide, and the lawyer who was present to look out for the interests of the two officers described her in his concluding speech as a "tigress," thirsting for the blood of two innocents.

Mrs. Smith remained in the East for some time, evidently, continuing to battle for her cause. Twenty-three months after her son's burial she had the body exhumed in Arlington in order to examine the head. She found all the marks precisely as she had seen them in the vision her son showed her, and conforming with his repeated descriptions: bruises, four cuts on the face, the lump under the left jaw and the head wrapped in a bandage. She says in her letter to Dr. Hyslop that at the July inquest three Navy doctors had sworn on the stand that there was not a scratch on his face and no sign of his having received a beating! She adds further that she traced the pistol that fired the fatal shot, and found that it came from Tennessee. This was a .38 and his own was a .32. This was another corroboration of what the apparition had told her.

The foregoing statements embodied Mrs. Smith's narrative as submitted to Dr. Hyslop, and it was the story that he asked Mr. Thacher to investigate. This he proceeded to do in a systematic manner. He obtained corroboration from various members of the family for such facts as lay within their knowledge, notably Mr. Smith and the three daughters. Friends and neighbors also were interviewed. Following the personal inquiries, he devoted himself to a review of the testimony offered at the naval inquests. Finally, after more than three months of work on the case, he submitted the material to Dr. Hyslop. Mr. Thacher said that he came away from his investigation with the highest regard for the intelligence, courage, and integrity of Mrs. Smith, the prime witness, and all the other members of the family. Naturally, he came upon

reluctance in certain quarters among those who were hostile to anything that smacked of "psychic stuff," and those who preferred not to have their names used. And there was a general feeling that it was better to drop the whole matter in order to put an end to unwanted publicity, which was an understandable attitude.

As a possible check on what might have happened in the death of James Smith, Mr. Thacher enlisted the services of an amateur trance psychic, whom he knew well as a personal friend. He brought her to the Smith home without telling her anything about the matter or even mentioning the name of the family. In trance her "control" described the killing in much the same terms, as dictated by the victim. There was no drinking, he declared, but when he fell one hand was caught under him. "The big one got on me and crushed me," and so on.

A striking circumstance about this trance statement was a description of the scene of the tragedy. "To me," she said, "there was a slight rise, directly from the road. I knew I stood near a tree. I felt as if I had just crossed a bridge but a short distance back, and that something rattled." Anyone who knew the Academy in the year 1907 will recognize the scene. There was a gentle slope up from the road. In those days the bridge over the creek, "but a short distance back," had loose timbers that rattled every time a vehicle went over it.

When Dr. Hyslop finished his study of the Thacher report he made his own analysis of the testimony offered in the naval courts and reached a conclusion entirely different from the official verdict of suicide. And this from a professor of logic at Columbia is certainly worth something. His detailed analysis of the evidence is too long to reproduce here, but he points out many reasons which he believed worked strongly against the official verdict. His conclusion is that "the whole situation makes it intrinsically absurd that Lieutenant Smith committed suicide intentionally. . . . The testimony of the men to that effect must always labor under the suspicion of having been manufactured to insure self protection. . . . The parties would be deeply implicated in any verdict against suicide. . . . When we eliminate the interested and contradictory

testimony, most persons would suspect that homicide is the best explanation of the facts." In a word, it was either manslaughter or murder.

This conclusion Dr. Hyslop reached on the study of the printed evidence alone. As for Mrs. Smith's visions of her dead son and what he told her, that is another matter. But the truth of all that seems buttressed by a strong body of evidence and testimony. First, as the family were able to testify, Mrs. Smith was suddenly struck with the conviction that a dreadful fate had befallen her son Jimmie. This stayed with her all the night and the following day. But the premonition, if it can be called that, came fifteen hours before the telegram. Then there were the names of the other two men concerned, the details of the marks of the beating the victim received, confirmed when the body was examined, the broken watch, the lost shoulder knot and so on—all were verified afterwards.

Mr. Thacher discovered that Mrs. Smith had experienced other striking and evidential psychic phenomena, some before and some after this vision of her son and his message, and he recounts four of these. After the exhumation in Arlington, she said, her son came to her only rarely. But the three daughters and the surviving son told of having seen or felt impressions of his presence. Three other persons, relatives and close friends, told Mr. Thacher that they too had seen the apparition of James Smith, but they would not permit him to say who they were.

By the time Dr. Hyslop published his extensive study of this case it was four years after the mysterious death of Lieutenant Smith. The tragedy was by that time forgotten by the public, and the *Journal* of the American Society for Psychical Research was the kind of magazine that commanded only a very small reading public at best. It is also safe to say that no one in the Navy ever read it. But as a story of a ghost that comes on a definite mission to rectify an injustice and a slur on his name, and does so with so much evidential detail, this tale of Lieutenant James Smith, U.S.M.C., has few rivals.

Chapter VII

Ghosts that Merely Come and Go

BESIDES the phantoms that are said to haunt a dwelling, a church, or a spot of ground, and the others that come on a special errand, there are still others reported that seem to appear and disappear for no reason that anyone can discover. Sometimes these phantoms are identified, more often not; some are seen repeatedly and others show themselves only once. In Sir Ernest Bennett's collection of "cases," as he calls them, in his book, *Apparitions and Haunted Houses*, a large proportion are instances of this kind.

The following are typical anecdotes: A couple were returning to their home one afternoon when they saw ahead of them what was evidently an elderly woman dressed in old-fashioned clothes. They caught sight of her at the moment when she was entering through the open gate of their front yard. She was only a few steps ahead of them, so near that they both noted the details of her costume, the plaid shawl, the bonnet with a touch of color on it, and so on. But neither the man nor his wife had ever seen her before. They both exclaimed, "Who is that?"

As they looked at her in bewilderment, she walked briskly to the door, went up the two steps from the walk, raised her hand as if she were about to pull the bell and then faded into the door and out of sight. This happened at a distance of only a few paces from the master of the house who was coming up behind with latch-key in hand. As quickly as he could he entered and looked for her in the house, but no one was there. The couple never saw her again. Who the old woman was and why she should visit that house in spectral form no one ever knew.

Most ghost adventures are reported in and about dwellings. Here is a group of stories about phantoms on English country

roads. One afternoon, about dusk, two ladies were walking home from tea at a friend's house. As they were approaching the end of their walk they saw a tall figure of a man striding toward them. He wore the uniform of a policeman, with the characteristic helmet and cape. After walking a few steps in the direction of the ladies, he turned off the road and strode several paces over the grass between the road and a tall hedge that marked the grounds of a private house. It was so thickset that no dog could have penetrated it. When still about six feet from the hedge the figure suddenly vanished. It appeared that others had seen the ghostly policeman on the same road. But what was it doing there and why did it have to frighten two ladies who had never had dealings with the police?

A somewhat similar experience was reported to Sir Ernest by two men who did not hesitate to allow their real names to be published. They said that they were bicycling together one afternoon in good light before dusk, when all at once they saw an old woman in bonnet and dress of a Victorian type pass through a hedge beside the road and come out upon it. She was not more than four feet away from one of the cyclers so that he was able to get a good look at her face.

A moment later his companion asked, "Why did you slow up suddenly and reach for your bell?"

The man answered that he had seen an elderly woman come through the hedge and come out on the road close to him.

"Why, I saw her, too," said his friend, and at that instant it came over them both that there was something queer about the way that woman got through the hedge. So they turned and rode back to the spot. But there was no old woman on the road. As they looked about they saw that the long grass between the hedge and the highway showed no sign of the pressure of a footstep. But at the point where the old woman had come through the hedge they discovered, hidden under a mass of brambles, the remains of an old gateway.

"I was so impressed," wrote one of the men, "that I feel that I could pick her out in a crowd of grannies even if they were all dressed alike, after all these years." (The incident occurred in

1912 and the letter to Sir Ernest was written in 1936.) "The apparition was too plain, and the movements too distinct, and the light too good, for either of us to have made a mistake over a shadow."

The third roadway adventure was contributed by a lady quoted by her initial only as "Mrs. W." She writes that one bright October morning, about eleven-thirty, she and a friend were driving in a dog-cart along a road in the village of East Vicarage, Somerset. She notes that it was so cold that morning that she had borrowed her sister's fur coat for the drive. As the dog-cart came to the foot of a hill the mare slowed down and stopped four times. Finally she refused to budge, but stood quivering with sweat shining on her flanks.

Mrs. W. flicked her whip and said laughingly, "It's a case of Balaam and his ass again." Hardly had she spoken the words when a figure was seen gliding down a steep path to the right. To their astonishment the two ladies saw that it was a woman, who, despite the cold, was dressed in a high-waisted, pink muslin gown with a trailing skirt, trimmed with cream-colored lace. "What a dress for a day like this!" Mrs. W. said to herself. Over her head the stranger wore a white lace or silk scarf.

The ladies had scarcely time to notice the details of the costume when they observed something very strange about the way the figure moved toward them. She did not walk, she *floated,* over the ground and at about a foot above the level. She drifted across the road ahead of the dog-cart and as she passed she looked directly at the two ladies. The expression of that face Mrs. W. described as "horrible." Her companion fainted. In her own written account she said, "I can never forget that look; it was one of intense agony, and the skin and the eyes looked like gray dust."

The mare at the same moment reared in terror and then bolted up the hill in spite of its steep slope. Indeed, Mrs. W. did not succeed in pulling up for a matter of at least two miles. She says that it was singular good fortune that kept her and her friend from being thrown out and killed. At the end of her narrative she adds that

although she has passed the same spot many times, she has never seen the lady again.

It is worth noting that each of the foregoing stories tells of a ghost that was seen by two people at the same time, from each of whom an independent account was received. And they serve as well as any to illustrate the type of apparition which shows up here and there for no apparent reason that can be discovered, either in the locale or by the people who see it. And, as a rule, in these instances, the same specter never appears again to the same people.

The phantoms we have just described were not recognized; one could only speculate as to who they were in life. About the lady in the Empire gown Mrs. W. discovered a legend in the neighborhood of a man who had been murdered by his wife long years before, and thinks that there might possibly be a connection between that crime and the specter with the horrible expression on her face. But again, that is only speculation. There is, however, another group of experiences in which the faces and forms of the ghostly appearances are recognized by the friends and family, or later are identified by a photograph or a description.

Dr. S. Weir Mitchell, in one of his letters, said that after he received the news of the death of his intimate friend, Bishop Phillips Brooks, "I saw his face smiling, and it never left me for a week . . . It was seen on the left side only." The exceptional feature of this phantasm was that it remained with Dr. Mitchell continuously for a week. But again there was no word, no message.

In the book *Esmé of Paris*, already quoted in a previous chapter for an instance of haunting by "feel," or sensation, the author says that her mother once rented an old-fashioned house in Fontainebleau, which had a large garden. She used to sit by herself in the drawing-room and look out on the garden. On many of these occasions she would see a little gray-haired woman with a sweet face pass through the French windows, bow to her apologetically and leave by another door. Esmé's mother described the old lady as wearing a gray dress of "an early Victorian period," and she always carried a basket of flowers from the garden.

At first, the mother spoke of the strange visitor rather diffidently, and only mentioned her once or twice. But one day she came upon an old daguerreotype of a woman whom she instantly recognized as the little gray lady who came in from the garden. On making inquiries, she learned that the original of the daguerreotype was an aunt of the owner of the house, and she had been dead for many years.

Perhaps this incident might be classed among the "quiet haunts," because the old lady seemed to have attached herself to the house and garden. But she seems to have appeared to no one besides Esmé's mother, and she always acknowledged her presence by an apologetic bow as if she knew she was intruding and was sorry.

The next instance came to me direct from a friend who was the witness. At the time of the occurrence she had been avoiding all social activities for a long while because of the death of her husband. But one day her sister begged her to yield to the earnest request of a friend and neighbor to make a fourth for one table of bridge. Two sisters, who were strangers in the community, were visiting in town and the little bridge party was in their honor.

Reluctantly the young widow consented. She arrived with her sister at the house of her hostess ahead of the others. A few minutes later she saw three ladies arrive together and go into a bedroom to lay off their wraps. She felt relieved to see that there were three because she thought it would be easy to insist on the extra person taking a hand, and she herself would not be compelled to play long.

Soon two of the ladies came out, the introductions were exchanged, and then all four sat down at the card table. To my friend this seemed strangely discourteous to the third lady who had not yet emerged from the bedroom. The cards were dealt and the play began, but still no sign of that other guest. What could have happened to her?

She turned to her sister, "What has become of the other lady?" But the question was ignored and the play went on. Still no one came out from the bedroom. Finally, she insisted in a determined voice that she *must* know about that other lady who had come in at the same time as the two at the card table. She might be ill, stay-

ing there so long. Something must have happened to her. "Until I know," said the speaker firmly, "I cannot put my mind on the cards."

"*What* other lady?" chorused the others.

"There were three of you when you came in. I saw all of you myself when the three of you went into the bedroom."

"Three?" the sisters exclaimed. "But there are only two of us." Then, after a moment, "What did the third lady look like?"

"She was an older woman," was the reply. "She was thickset, with bobbed gray hair and large black eyes. She carried her head forward as she walked."

There was a half-stifled scream. "Why, you have given a perfect description of our mother! She died four months ago."

On that occasion no one was able to perceive the ghost but a young woman who had never seen the person in real life. But to her the figure was as solid and lifelike as the two daughters she came in with, so lifelike, in fact, that she was able to describe the woman in terms that the two daughters instantly recognized.

The story that follows was published originally in *Phantasms of the Living*. In one respect it is unique in that the apparition was seen in reflection rather than directly. The narrative was sent in by Mr. Charles A. W. Lett, of the Military and Royal Naval Club of London, and certified to be accurate by his wife and his sister-in-law, two of the witnesses.

Mr. Lett's father-in-law, Captain Towns, died in his home near Sidney, New South Wales, in April, 1873. About six weeks after his death Mrs. Lett went up to one of the bedrooms one evening, accompanied by a young lady, a Miss Berthon. The room was lighted by gas. On entering, they were amazed to see, reflected on the polished surface of the wooden wardrobe, the face of Captain Towns. It was "barely half figure," showing head, shoulders, and part of the arms, like a medallion portrait, and the Captain was wearing a gray flannel jacket like the one in which he was accustomed to sleep. The face was very pale.

Startling as this apparition was, the two ladies supposed that the wardrobe must be reflecting some newly hung portrait on the op-

posite wall, but when they turned to look they saw no such portrait—no picture at all. At that moment Mrs. Lett's sister, Miss Towns, entered the room, and before either of the others could speak she cried out, "Good gracious, do you see Papa?"

As one of the housemaids was passing downstairs just then, she was called in and asked if she saw anything. "Oh, Miss!" she cried. "It's the Master!"

Then Captain Towns's old valet was sent for, and he exclaimed as soon as he entered, "Oh, Lord save us! Mrs. Lett, it's the Captain!" Next the butler and Mrs. Lett's nurse were summoned; they too recognized the face in the wardrobe. A shout went up for Captain Lett to come, but he was in a distant room and did not hear. Lastly, the widow herself was sent for, and she too knew the face instantly. She walked up to it as if she would touch it. Then, as she passed her hand over the panel, the vision gradually faded from sight. It was never seen again.

Besides the singular feature of an apparition seen by reflection in a polished wood surface, as in a mirror, this story is remarkable for the fact that the face was seen and recognized by seven independent witnesses as the "Captain," "the Master," or "Papa," and these seven saw that face at the same time.

A much more recent instance of the ghost who returns to his familiar haunts, yet says and does nothing in particular, is one that was investigated as late as 1932. In life, the chief character was a humble chimney-sweep, but what happened after his death was so extraordinary that it attracted the attention of the high and mighty. Admiral Hyde Parker, who lived in the same town as the chimney-sweep—Ramsbury, in Wiltshire—obtained the facts and conveyed them to Lord Selborne. That gentleman then wrote to Lord Balfour to say that Admiral Parker would be glad to cooperate with the Society for Psychical Research in examining the case. Lord Balfour responded promptly, and he and Mr. Piddington of the Society studied and made their report on the case jointly.

The chimney-sweep was named Samuel Bull. He is described as being, despite his disagreeable and dirty profession, "A man of very pleasant and high character." He died of what is called sooty

cancer, leaving an aged and bedridden widow and a grandson of twenty-one. Since the widow was helpless, a daughter, with her husband and five children, came to live with the mother in order to take care of her. With so large a family, the living conditions were intolerable, for the house was small and ramshackle at best.

In February, 1932, some five or six months after Samuel Bull's death, the children complained to their mother that they could not sleep because there was someone outside the door. But no one could ever be found there. A little later, however, "Grandpa Bull" was seen to go up the stairs and pass through a closed door into the room in which he had died. Since then, this room, having been condemned as unsafe, had been kept shut up and unused.

On the occasion of his first appearance the old man was seen and recognized by his daughter, and by the grandson immediately afterwards. Then the visits became so frequent that he was seen by every member of the family, both singly and collectively. At first, these appearances inspired terror and the children screamed. But as they continued, and no one was ever harmed by them, they were accepted "in quiet awe," as the narrator puts it.

This narrator was the local vicar, Reverend G. H. Hackett, who made a long and detailed report on the matter in compliance with Lord Balfour's instructions sent to Admiral Parker. The major part of these instructions was a series of eight questions to which he requested answers. Appended to these were notations added by the vicar himself.

In brief, the report revealed that the apparition was seen and recognized by all the members of the family; even the smallest child knew it as "Grandpa Bull." Sometimes he appeared when some members of the family were absent, but whenever he did come, all who were present saw him. His features were distinct, as in life, they said, and he was dressed "as in the evenings when he had finished work." The figure appeared to be quite solid, but only one member of the family ever felt his touch, and that was the bedridden widow. It seems that the apparition always went to her bedside, and on two occasions he laid his hand on her forehead. The old woman said that the touch was firm but cold. She added that

once she heard him speak her name, "Jane." The daughter, Mrs. Edwards, noted particularly in his appearance the "poor, work-worn hands," the knuckles of which seemed to be coming through the skin.

As to any color, the family were unable to say except that the muffler was different from his drab clothes. He appeared at all hours of the day and night, but at night-time was always seen in candle light. One curious circumstance they all spoke of was the fact that the family were conscious of the presence of Grandpa Bull for a half hour before he became visible.

The vicar asked if the old man had ever said in life that he would try to manifest himself after death, and the answer was no. In fact, the first vision came as a great shock. At first, said the daughter, the old man looked very sad, but in the later appearances his face looked much brighter. This change she attributed to the fact that the town council was on the point of moving the family to a better house. Of course, that was merely her guess; no word was spoken. Finally, it might be added that these visions of Grandpa Bull were not fleeting glimpses but on occasion lasted from half an hour to several hours.

Following the vicar's report, Lord Balfour and Mr. Piddington of the Psychic Research Society went to Ramsbury and had a long interview with Admiral Hyde and the Vicar. Then all four of them called at the Bull cottage and talked briefly with the daughter, Mrs. Edwards. The interview had to be short because she was then in the act of moving out of the house. But they described her as "a good witness" who "answered the questions put to her simply, naturally, readily, and briefly."

Apparently, after the move to better quarters, Grandpa Bull appeared no more. It has been suggested that the whole story was concocted for the sake of attracting attention to the wretched living conditions under which the Bull family then existed. Of course, there is the possibility that an elaborate lie was fabricated by the family, in which they all shared successfully, from the five-year-old child to the bedridden old grandmother. And it is true that no stranger ever saw Grandpa Bull. But the town council of Rams-

bury was planning to provide better housing for the family anyway, and it is not clear how the wraith of the old chimney sweep could have helped in the matter. Certainly he never uttered a word except the name of his wife, spoken once in the course of all his allegedly numerous visits. If the story were a plot it would seem as if the old man might have been represented as saying something to the point.

On the other hand, if these people were honest in their story, as they appeared to be to a singularly distinguished group of investigators when this is a specially interesting case, because the apparition was seen by the entire family, nine in all, and sometimes when the group were all together.

In this story, too, as in the other examples narrated above, there is no evident purpose shown in the manifestations by the old chimney sweep. He drifts in and out of the house, time and again, touches his wife twice, speaks her name once—but that is all. There is a wealth of stories of this type among the records, usually of very brief appearances and all of them seemingly pointless, even when the ghost is recognized.

Most of the accounts, therefore, are brief, for there is nothing to tell beyond the fact of a sudden and fleeting vision. But there are others of greater substance. Of the six longer stories given below the first was selected for its unusual features; the remaining five, because, while they are of this apparently purposeless type, they seem to be unusually well-corroborated. The first came to Edmund Gurney from a man who, contrary to the general rule, gave his own name and address and permitted it to be used in publication. In most instances, while the real name was always demanded by the investigators, the writers have preferred to remain anonymous in print. This narrative was received in 1883, but the adventure itself occurred nearly thirty years earlier.

I. THE MAN WITH AN IRON HOOK

One day, in the eighteen-fifties, a young man named Stone was hurrying along the street of an English town, going from his place

of business to a stationer's shop situated in P Street, to place an order for a quantity of catalogs that his employers needed for a coming auction of hides. That day happened to be only a week before the St. Leger horse races, and as he walked along on his errand he was thinking about a small bet he had made on a certain horse and decided that after he had finished with the stationer he would hunt up a friend who was wise in the lore of the race track and talk the horses over with him.

He was thinking of this when he started to cross P Street. There he met the familiar figure of an old man whom he had known well in former years. This man had been a customer of the young man's father, who was a brewer. The man had operated a pub, and Stone had known him well because for many years young Stone used to go to the pub to collect the money that the innkeeper owed on the ale he had bought for his business. But that had been long ago and the young man had not thought of him for years.

This publican was a jolly, easy-tempered character, well-liked. In appearance he was ruddy of face, and he affected the manner and dress of a farmer rather than a townsman. The outstanding feature of the man was the fact that on his right arm he wore an iron hook in lieu of a hand that had been cut off in his youth. He used to say that this hook was a most effective asset when he needed to subdue someone in the pub who had taken aboard more liquor than he could handle.

As Stone recognized him, he went up to speak to his old friend. He noted the details of his costume: the round felt hat, the thick blue silk scarf with white polka dots on it, the characteristic cut of the jacket, and the heavy gold watch chain. The old man's face lighted with pleasure when he recognized his young friend, and he gripped Stone's hand with his own left, as he always had to do in shaking hands. Both stopped where they were in the street and began talking. Stone, knowing the old fellow's familiarity with the race track, hastened to consult him about the bet that he had made and the prospects of the coming races generally. He jotted down a memorandum or two. After a conversation that lasted about

seven minutes, Stone again shook the old man's left hand in parting, and hurried on to order the catalogs. As he went he decided that, after his talk with the old innkeeper, he would not need to consult the other friend he had had in mind about the races.

After he had put in his order at the stationer's Stone sauntered back toward his office. When he reached that part of P Street where he had met his old acquaintance, he suddenly stopped and stood motionless, and his whole body shook with terror, for only at that moment did it dawn on him that the innkeeper had died four years before, and he had attended the funeral. It was a bright, warm day, but he shivered with an uncontrollable chill. Something was wrong, incredibly wrong. He pulled himself together with a great effort and tried to reason with himself.

Was he ill? Certainly not. No stimulants to blame. No emotional upset. Was he mistaken in the man—an optical illusion? Not in this case. It was bright daylight; none of the darkness or spooky moonlight creating shapes that did not exist. Might it have been someone else who looked exactly like the old publican? Not likely by a thousand miles. Besides, the unmistakable features there was that iron hook on his right arm. It would be too much to believe that someone else not only looked precisely like the old fellow but also had an iron hook for a right hand. Although Stone had not seen him for some time, he had known him for many years and could not possibly mistake him. Besides all that, his speech, the things he said, could only have come from the man himself. "It was *him!*" he said to himself. At any rate, he must have been talking with somebody out there on the street. It wasn't likely, with all the people passing, that he was out there talking and shaking hands with himself for seven minutes. That spectacle would have drawn a laughing crowd round him in a few seconds, with a bobby in the background.

At first Stone told himself that there must be some simple explanation, for there always was, when queer things happened. Certainly he did not take any stock in the supernatural, but the more he tried to figure it all out the more he was baffled. "From that

day to this," he wrote in concluding his narrative, "I still remain in profound ignorance of what was the cause or meaning of what I saw."

II. THE SPECTRAL RIDER

This incident occurred in the year 1854, when the narrator, Major General R. Barter, of the British army, was a young subaltern in the Indian service. The General sent the story to the Society for Psychical Research in 1888, and it appeared in the *Proceedings* (vol. v, 459). It was substantiated by letters from his wife and brother officers, who testified that they remembered clearly hearing the story as Barter had told it to them immediately after the occurrence. An unusual circumstance of this apparition is that the principal figure was on horseback attended by two servants—all specters.

When Lieutenant Barter was ordered to duty at the mountain station of Murree in the Punjab, he was unusually lucky. For one thing, his assignment placed him in magnificent hill country, seven thousand feet above the steaming plains of southern India, and in the second place, he had been able to obtain a house. Many other officers had to be content with living in tents, for the hill station had only recently been selected as a place for a sanatorium, and the buildings were only begun. The house Barter was able to rent had been built only a year or two before by another officer, Lieutenant B——. This officer had died at Peshawar the preceding January, and Barter arrived on the scene in the early summer.

One evening shortly after the young officer and his wife had moved into "Uncle Tom's Cabin," as they called the bungalow, they entertained another officer and his wife. The guests left at about eleven, and Barter strolled with them to where the footpath to his house joined what was called a bridle-path, up which his friends had to clamber to reach the newly built road leading round the hill, a road that the soldiers had nicknamed the "Mall."

It was a glorious night. A full moon shone in the clear mountain sky so bright that, as Barter said afterwards, he could easily have read a newspaper by the light. He stood at the juncture of the paths

watching his friends work their way up the slope along the zigzag trail. He was smoking a cigar, and his two dogs were nosing busily in the underbrush near him. The view before his eyes was magnificent. "Uncle Tom's Cabin" stood on a spur of the mountain, and on all sides rose the foothills of the Himalayas bathed in brilliant moonlight.

"Goodnight!" He heard the call and looked up to see his friends reach the level of the Mall. After turning round to sing out their farewell, they went on out of sight, and Barter himself faced about to return to the house.

At that instant, however, he heard the ring of a horse's hoof as its iron shoe struck a stone on the bridle-path. He turned round to see who it could be riding along that path at such an hour of the night. Presently he caught sight of a stovepipe hat worn by a man evidently riding the horse he had just heard, and coming down the bridle-path. This had only recently been dug out of the hillside, and where Barter was standing it was some eight or ten feet above his level. Between him and the path there was a mass of loose earth that had been thrown up when the bridle-path was excavated.

The officer watched intently as the hoofbeats clattered nearer. In a few seconds, round the corner, there came in to full view, bathed in moonlight so that every detail was as plain as at noonday, a man on horseback. He was attended by his two "syces" or grooms, and he was a strange figure indeed. He wore full evening dress, with white waistcoat and high silk hat. Barter described his mount as a strong hill pony, dark brown in color with a black mane and tail. The rider sat his beast with a strangely listless air, his reins hanging loosely from his hands. On each side of the pony's head walked a native syce. Barter could not see their faces because the one nearest him had his back turned and the other's face was hidden by the pony's head. With one hand each held the bridle close by the bit and rested his free hand on the thigh of the rider as if to steady him in the saddle.

Since that path could lead nowhere else on the hill except to Barter's quarters, he called out in Hindustani, "*Koi hai?*" (Who is it?) There was no reply. The party kept on in silence until they

came directly in front of Barter. Exasperated at their refusal to reply to his hail, he shouted in English, "Hallo! What the devil do you want here?" Again there was no response, but the group instantly halted, the rider pulled up his reins and turned his face on the speaker. Until then he had been looking away on the landscape. For a few moments horse, rider, and servants stood motionless on the spot, exactly as if they were posing in a tableau. Then Barter recognized the rider as Lieutenant B——, the man who had formerly owned "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and whom Barter had once known in the Service.

As he looked intently at the stranger, however, he noticed that his appearance had changed. Formerly, his face had been clean-shaven; now it was surrounded by a fringe of dark whiskers from ear to ear, after a fashion that used to be called in England "the Newgate fringe," because of its fancied resemblance to a hangman's noose. And the face itself was that of a dead man, with a waxen whiteness that the moonlight made all the more startling. Barter noticed also that the man's body was much stouter than it was when he had known him.

At the same time, however, he realized that Lieutenant B—— had died six months before, and far from this hilltop. "Whatever that is," he said to himself, "I'll lay hold of it!" He sprang ahead and tried to run up the bank to where the group still stood motionless, but the loose earth piled up between him and them gave way under his feet and he pitched forward on his hands. He was up again in an instant, but as he regained his footing and looked again, horse, rider, and grooms were gone. They could not have ridden down the hill because the path which, so far as Barter knew, no one had ever tried to ride before, ended in a precipice only twenty yards below; and it would have been impossible for them all to turn round on the path and get out of sight up the slope in a split second. However, Barter dashed up that path on the run for a hundred yards, until he had to stop because he was out of breath, but there was no sign of them anywhere.

He turned back to the house, and then for the first time noticed that his dogs, who never before had strayed far from his heels, had

lingered behind in the underbrush. He told his wife what he had seen, and next morning went to a friend, Lieutenant Deane, who had been in the same regiment as Lieutenant B——. Gradually he led the conversation around to that officer.

"How stout he had become lately," said Barter, "and what possessed him to allow his beard to grow into that horrid fringe?"

"Yes," said Deane, "he became very bloated before his death; you know he led a very fast life, and while on the sick list he allowed the fringe to grow in spite of all we could say to him. I believe he was buried with it."

Then Barter asked where the lieutenant had got the pony, describing it in detail. Deane turned a startled look on him. "Why, how do you know anything about this? You hadn't seen B—— for two or three years and the pony you never saw. He bought him at Peshawar and killed him one day riding in his reckless fashion down the hill to Trete."

Only then did Barter tell what he had seen the night before.

For six weeks longer Barter and his wife remained in "Uncle Tom's Cabin." During that time, as they testified in writing, they repeatedly heard the sound of someone galloping down the path leading to the house. Once, when the clattering hoofs sounded more loudly than usual, Barter rushed out on the veranda. There he found one of his Hindu servants with a "tattie," or screen, in his hand.

"Why do you stand there?" asked his master.

"A sound came riding down the hill," he explained in his own tongue. "It passed me like a typhoon and went round the corner of the house." He said he was determined to waylay the thing, whatever it was. "*Sharitan ka ghur hai,*" he muttered grimly in his beard. ("It is a devil's house.")

III. A SISTER RETURNS

The year before General Barter wrote his letter to the Society for Psychical Research, a young man in America sent a letter describing an experience of his own, and addressed it to the American

branch of the Society. Professor Josiah Royce of Harvard and Dr. Richard Hodgson of the Society vouched for the high character of the young man, whom they knew in Boston. The story was considered so striking that it was published in the *Proceedings* of the British S.P.R. The author of the letter is referred to by his initials, "F.G."

It was shortly before this that the American Society had issued a request for actual experiences in psychical phenomena, and F.G.'s communication was one of those that came in response to that request. The writer says that in the year 1867 his sister, a girl of eighteen, died suddenly in St. Louis. The attachment between the brother and sister was unusually deep, and her death was a severe blow.

Shortly afterwards he took to the road as a commercial traveler. He was on one of his western trips in the year 1876 when the event occurred which, as he expressed it in his letter, "made a more powerful impression on my mind than the combined events of my whole life." He adds for the benefit of the skeptics who think he must have been out of his head at the time that he was never in better health of body or mind.

One morning he had been busy covering the city of St. Joseph, Missouri, on his customary business, and he return to his room in the Pacific Hotel to send in his orders. He felt particularly happy that day because these orders had turned out to be unusually large. As he wrote them out he was thinking how pleased his employers would be to receive them. His mind was absorbed in his business. At that time he had not been thinking about his sister, or for that matter of anything at all related to his past life. He was smoking a cigar as he wrote, and the time was noon, with bright sunshine streaming into the room.

Suddenly he became aware that someone was sitting at his left, with one arm resting on the table. Turning instantly, he saw his dead sister, and for a few moments looked her squarely in the face. He was so sure that it was really she that he sprang forward eagerly, calling her by name, but as he did so she vanished.

Dumbfounded, he sank back into his chair, wondering if his eyes

had played him false or if he had been dreaming. But he had his cigar in his mouth, his pen in his hand, and the ink was still wet on the letter he was then writing. No, he had certainly been wide awake.

The more he reflected on that vision, the more real it seemed. He was near enough to have touched her had it been possible. He remembered every feature, her expression, even the details of her dress. No one in the flesh could possibly have seemed more alive. Her eyes looked into his with perfect naturalness, and her skin was so life-like that he noticed the glow or moisture on its surface. It was all exactly as she had appeared in life.

He was so shaken by that experience that he threw up his business trip on the instant and took the next train for Boston. When he told his strange story at home, his father was inclined to laugh at him. But as he went on with the details he spoke particularly of a bright red line that looked like a scratch on the right side of his sister's face when she appeared to him and which was distinctly visible.

When he spoke these words his mother rose trembling to her feet and nearly fainted. When she had recovered sufficiently to speak she said, with tears streaming down her face, "You have indeed seen your sister." Then she explained that while she was giving some loving touches to the body of her daughter as she lay in her casket she had accidentally made a scratch on the right cheek. At that time the mother was alone. Distressed to think that she had done this to the face of her beloved child, she carefully covered up the scratch with powder, and never mentioned the circumstance to anyone, not even her husband. No one else in the family, therefore, ever saw that scratch or had any knowledge of it. But, writes F.G., "*I saw the scratch as bright as if just made,*" and the italics are his.

That night, even after she had gone to bed, the mother was still so overcome by this literal mark of identification that she got up and dressed and, coming to her son, she told him again in deep earnestness, "I *know* you have seen your sister." It was only a few weeks afterwards that the mother herself passed on, but she died happy in the assurance that she would be with her daughter.

Frederic W. H. Myers, in commenting on this case, notes that if the vision had come after the mother's death no living soul would have known the significance of that scratch on the cheek. Only the mother could make that identification perfect. He inclined to the belief that the departed daughter was aware of the approaching death of her mother and made the recognition possible through her brother. But that is only speculation. The phantom girl, when she appeared to her brother, said nothing, left no message or sign. She simply manifested herself at his side, smiled into his eyes, and was gone.

IV. A FAMOUS CLERGYMAN TELLS HIS STORY

One of the best known Baptist ministers of the last hundred years in the United States was Russell H. Conwell. His was a lifetime filled with good works. He was pastor of the Baptist Temple in Philadelphia. He founded two hospitals, and created Temple University, of which he became President. He was the author of many books, chiefly biographical, but was best known throughout the length and breadth of the land, for his lecture entitled "Acres of Diamonds," which he delivered nearly six thousand times. It was by his lecturing that he succeeded in raising a million and a half dollars, which he devoted to his cherished plan of providing an education for poor young men.

The ghost story that he told was published in the *American Magazine* for July, 1921. It appeared there as part of an interview with him conducted by Mr. Bruce Barton. In the course of their conversation Barton asked Dr. Conwell whether he had ever seen instances in which a dying person's face became suddenly transfigured, just before the end, as if he were looking upon another world. Dr. Conwell replied that he had witnessed that phenomenon literally hundreds of times, when the soul does evidently "hover hesitantly between two worlds."

This topic suggested something in Dr. Conwell's own experience. The speaker paused a moment and then said:

"Some years ago I had a dream that recurred every morning just

before I awoke. It seemed to me that the figure of Mrs. Conwell appeared each morning and sat smiling at the foot of my bed. I said nothing about it to anyone; it must be, I thought, a delusion of age, yet the figure was as real as life, smiling, and asking questions and answering my own.

"One morning I said, or seemed to myself to say, 'I know you aren't really there.'

" 'Oh, but I am!' she replied.

" 'But how can I be sure?' I persisted. 'Are you willing that I should test you?'

"She nodded, still smiling.

" 'All right,' I said, 'tomorrow I will ask you a question. Will you be ready for it?'

"She nodded again and, with another smile, disappeared. The next morning she was there again.

" 'I see you have come,' I said. 'Are you still willing?'

"She smiled and nodded, seeming to enjoy it all immensely.

" 'Tell me, then, where is my army discharge paper?' I had not seen it for years, and to the best of my knowledge was utterly ignorant of its whereabouts.

"In a voice that seemed as distinct as if she had uttered the words aloud, she answered, 'Why, it is in the black japanned box behind the books in your library.'

"I got out of bed and went into the library. There, after some search, I found the box, hidden away behind a row of books; in it, under a varied collection of documents, was the discharge paper.

"Again the next morning she appeared, with a little smile of triumph, as if to say, 'You see it was there, just as I told you; *now* will you believe?' But I was not satisfied, of course. I asked her if I might make another test, and with the same happy smile, as though the game entertained her greatly, she promised again.

"That morning at breakfast I spoke to one of the maids, who had lived with us for fourteen years.

" 'Mary, you remember the gold fountain pen that Mrs. Conwell gave me years ago. I want you to take it off my desk today and hide it. And you are not to tell me or anyone else where you hide it. Do

you understand?'

"Again the next morning the figure appeared, and we seemed to joke about it for a little while. Finally, I said:

" 'Do you know where Mary hid my pen?'

" 'Of course I do.'

" 'Can you tell me the place?'

" 'Get out of bed and come with me,' she answered laughingly. I rose and, seeming to hold her hand, was led to one of the closets in my room. The top shelf of the closet had been built into a little closet with a door which covered only a part of the closet front. She motioned me to it, and I took a chair and climbed up. I ran my hand over the shelf this way and that, but without encountering the pen. I felt then that the whole thing must have been a delusion, and turned to step down from the chair.

"But she was still in the doorway and pointed again to the shelf, shaking her head emphatically, as if to say, 'It is there! Look again; you will find it.'

"I did look again. I stretched my hand far in behind the door on either side, and this time, to my amazement, I found the pen."

Again, in this instance, there seems to have been no point in the repeated visits of Mrs. Conwell's shade except the pleasure of making herself known to her husband. The means of confirmation employed twice—once by locating the army discharge paper and a second time by finding a pen deliberately hidden—were devised by Dr. Conwell himself and acceded to by the ghost. At all events, this story is not one to be lightly disregarded because, although it comes from the testimony of only one person, the word of a man of Russell Conwell's character and intelligence rules out any possibility of deceit.

V. COMPANION ON THE MARCH

The scene was a dinner party, and the conversation had centered on apparition experiences. The hostess turned to one of her guests, a friend of long standing, and said, "Tell them your ghost story." This gentleman had been a major in the Canadian army during the

First World War, but since that time has been a successful author in New York. Since the others at the table insisted on hearing the story, he yielded, though with evident hesitation. He prefaced the anecdote by saying, "If, after I have finished, you believe that I am the worst liar in the world, I can't blame you. But this is what happened to me, and that is all I can say in explanation.

"It was in 1915, and we were stationed at Ypres. I was then a captain, and my company and its battalion were in the front line trenches for a prolonged stretch of duty. For nine days we were in that trench without relief. All that time we had been under constant fire, we had lived on sparse rations, and we were worn out. Finally, on the evening of the ninth day, the relief showed up in the communication trench, and we filed out for a rest billet, cold, hungry, and dog-tired. At that we had ahead of us a march of about nine miles, following a roundabout route to our destination. First we had to take a road that ran parallel to our trenches for a considerable distance until it came to 'Suicide Corner,' a right-angled junction with another road leading back to the rear. This was a spot which the Germans shelled every night in the hope of catching troops or supplies in movement.

"We reached the Corner and were lucky enough to make the turn without suffering any shell fire. In order to diminish the number of casualties in case a shell burst on the marching column, the battalion was spread out thinly, with spaces between the platoons. The commanding officer of my company was up with the forward ranks, and my duty was to bring up the rear.

"On each side of the road and parallel to it ran a line of ditch with water in the bottom. Men had been known on these roads to drop out of ranks from sheer fatigue, fall into a ditch and drown there. The fields on either side were then mere wallows of soft mud, so it was my special duty to see that none of the men straggled and none fell while on the march.

"As we slogged along mechanically, we could hear shells bursting on Suicide Corner behind us, and we congratulated ourselves on our luck in missing them. We quickened our pace because the next burst might fall upon our route of march. Soon a man in the rear

rank of the platoon in front of me gradually dropped back until he was abreast of me. I recognized him as Private Burke.

" 'Tired?' I asked.

" 'No, sir, not very,' he answered.

" 'Cold?'

" 'No, sir.'

"I had eaten so little that day that I took out of a pocket a bottle of milk tablets and shook out four or five into the palm of my hand and put them into my mouth.

" 'Hungry?'

" 'Yes, sir.'

" 'Have some?' I offered the milk tablets to the man tramping along beside me.

" 'Yes, sir, thank you,' he replied, and he held out his palm while I shook out some tablets for him. I steadied his hand so as to be sure not to spill any of them. I was miserably cold myself, but when I touched his hand it felt like a piece of ice.

" 'You *are* cold,' I said to myself. Then we marched along in silence for a while, keeping together. Gradually he began to lag until he was about half a pace back of me. All at once, I realized that he was behind me. I knew I must not let him do that, and turned sharply to order him up. But there was no one there. Fearing that he had dropped into a ditch, I took out my pocket flashlight and walked back, playing the light on the ditches on each side of the road for some distance, but there was no trace of him. I was bewildered and worried. I was responsible for allowing no man to fall out on the march, and this man had dropped behind me for only an instant to disappear completely!

"Suddenly it came over me that Private Burke had been killed three days before and I had seen him buried. I knew him well, as I was bound to know the men in my company with whom I had served for months. Was it possible that in the poor light my eyes had deceived me and I had mistaken another man for Burke? But whoever he was, he had dropped behind me and vanished. I was worried, as I had good reason to be. But when our long march was

ended at the rest billet and the muster roll was called, not a man in the battalion was missing."

VI. A NAVAL OFFICER'S STORY

Among these apparently pointless visitations of phantoms there is one narrated in a report sent to the American Society for Psychical Research by a lieutenant of the Navy. It was printed in the Society's *Journal* in Volume xxxv, for the year 1931. This story has several striking features, as will appear in the course of the narrative.

In the summer of 1926 Lieutenant H—— was assigned to the Naval Powder Factory at Indian Head, Maryland. On reporting for duty, he moved into his assigned quarters. His family consisted of himself and his wife, and they had two dogs, a collie and a Chesapeake Bay spaniel, both of which they had owned for eight years. As is customary in naval stations ashore, the officers are quartered in double houses. The occupants of the second half of this house were soon ordered elsewhere and a new family moved in. They were Lieutenant G——, with his wife and nine-year-old boy. The two families became great friends. At Christmas, Lieutenant H—— and his wife met Mrs. G——'s mother, but no mention was ever made of her father.

Early the following March, Lieutenant H—— was working one night in his "den," as he calls his study. He was sitting at a card table absorbed in a problem of navigation. Both dogs were asleep on the floor of the living room, off of which the den opened. At about half an hour past midnight he heard the spaniel growl. Then both dogs got up and hurried past him through the back hall into the dining room. There they growled again, and then suddenly tore madly across the hall and up the stairs. They made such a racket that they woke Mrs. H—— who was asleep in her room.

The lieutenant looked up in surprise and saw a man standing in the living room near the hall at a spot some twenty-two feet from where H—— was sitting at the table. He knew that all the outside doors and windows were fastened at that time of night. Men often

came to his quarters to see him on business, but he could not understand how anyone could have got into the house at that hour without waking any member of the household. Naturally, he felt annoyed that any man would make an entrance without having the decency to knock or ring a bell.

As he stared sharply at the intruder he realized that he had never seen him before. For a matter of ten to fifteen seconds he continued to sit there at the card table gazing intently at the stranger, expecting him to explain how he got there and what he wanted. In fact, the man looked all the while as if he were on the point of saying something, but not a word came. The officer rose and took two steps toward him, when suddenly he was not there. He simply vanished on the instant while H—— had his eyes fixed on him.

H—— was not frightened but puzzled, for he took it for granted that he had seen a real man standing there in the living room. What gave him concern was the fact that somebody had managed to get in unobserved and then to slip away so suddenly and quietly right before his eyes. He snapped on more lights and examined all the doors and windows to make sure that they were locked. After that he made a careful examination of every room on the lower floor, expecting to find the intruder hiding in some corner, but he discovered no one.

When he went upstairs his wife asked why the dogs had made such a rumpus, but he made up some kind of explanation. He did not want to alarm her by telling of the strange man in the house.

One evening about nine o'clock, a week after this happened, Lieutenant H—— was alone in his quarters. The dogs also were out at the time. He went down cellar to fetch some sticks of wood for the open fireplace in his den, and was returning with his load in his arms when, just as he entered from the back hall he saw the same man standing in the middle of the living room. He was about twenty feet away, the light was excellent, and the officer could see the stranger's features distinctly. Again the visitor seemed to be on the point of speaking. The lieutenant laid down his wood, brushed off his coat and waited for the man to explain his presence. There was no reason to be frightened, for, whoever the fellow was, he

looked as real as any man ever did. This time the officer decided to wait and let the stranger speak before challenging his being there. He waited, he says, about fifteen minutes, but no word came. Again he took two strides toward the man and again he wasn't there.

On that first occasion, he had told himself, he might have been mistaken somehow, but there was no question now with this second visit. He was absolutely sure of what he had seen. He could describe that man accurately. His face he would know anywhere. His figure was that of a person weighing two hundred pounds. Indeed, he looked very solid and substantial. His face was tanned as if he had lived much out of doors. He wore a light gray suit. There was no missing of any detail because he stood all the while under bright electric lights.

This time Lieutenant H—— felt that he must talk the thing over with somebody. Ten minutes after the strange visitor had disappeared the officer went next door to see his friend G—— and told frankly the whole story. "What do you think about it?" he wanted to know. Just then Mrs. G—— came in and her husband repeated the experience to her.

"He has seen a ghost," said he, "but he swears it's no relative of his." His wife then brought out a collection of about twenty of her own family photographs and asked him to look them over. He did so, scrutinizing them one by one. At about the seventh or eighth that he came to he exclaimed, "*That's* the man I've seen! There's no doubt in my mind as to its being the same man," he went on. "I would know him in a thousand!" He stared at the photograph dumbfounded. "That's the man," he repeated. "Who is he?"

"That's my father," replied Mrs. G——. "He has been dead several years."

Ten days or so later, Lieutenant H—— was walking from the kitchen to the dining room, at about eight-thirty in the evening, when he saw the same man again. As before, the visitor said not a word, but this time H—— came within ten feet of him before he vanished.

Still another ten days passed. Then, one evening, while he was passing through the hall, H—— suddenly felt a draft of intensely

cold air. Since it was raining outside he thought that perhaps someone had left the cellar door open and a draft from outdoors was coming in. "It was very, very cold," he wrote afterwards. But he found the cellar door closed and everything else snug. He could not account for that sudden arctic chill.

Turning back from the cellar door, he saw once more the same man, standing about four paces away, this time in the hall. He stood between the officer and the lights of the kitchen. Of these there were three, one of one hundred watts in the ceiling fixture and two of forty watts each in a bracket over the sink. Where the man stood H—— noticed that his bulk *blanked out completely* the two lights over the sink. For a few seconds the officer stood there frozen to the spot, staring. Then once more the form vanished and H—— found himself gazing into the two lights over the sink.

After that the ghost was never seen again. Two months later Lieutenant H—— was transferred to sea duty, with the mystery still unexplained. He had seen the man on four occasions in bright light. Each time the figure had looked lifelike in every particular. On the last appearance the body had been sufficiently solid to block out two forty-watt light bulbs behind it. The face was so clear on each visit that the lieutenant was able to identify it positively from a photograph as that of Mrs. G——'s father. The terror of the two dogs on the first visit, when they were present, and the icy cold that accompanied the last one are characteristic of so many of these ghostly adventures.

Yet, as in the other instances quoted in this chapter, there seemed no purpose in the visit. The figure always seemed on the verge of speaking, but never succeeded in saying a word. This phantom apparently could appear to a stranger, to whom he meant nothing, but could not make himself visible to his daughter living next door. But even to Lieutenant H—— he was unable to convey a word or a sign. It was as if he wanted to tell his daughter something but could not get it through.

This is not one of those "collective" ghost stories; there are no other witnesses than the officer who tells the story. The validity of

it depends on the integrity of an officer and gentleman, and his identification of the ghost from a photograph. The Naval Academy turns out an exceedingly practical type of mind. Lieutenant H—— was no exception. He did not believe in ghosts, and he makes that clear. But he concludes his report by declaring, "I am willing to swear to the truth of the above statements." He adds that he feels sure that "there must be some reasonable explanation of this. I would hate to have my faith in a ghostless world shattered." Unfortunately for that faith, the Society for Psychical Research, to whom he turned for help, could only tell him that undoubtedly he *had* seen a ghost.

Of all the spectral phenomena reported, these purposeless ghosts that have figured in the preceding pages least resemble the ghosts of fiction. The fictional story writer borrows the sounds and movements of the poltergeists and speaking voices of the phantoms that come on an errand, but whatever the spirits do must have some point to it. Somewhere in a closet, cellar, or attic there is a mouldering skeleton, or else there is a death impending to some member of the family. These fictional wraiths drag their chains and shake the walls, but always to some purpose in the development of the plot. Otherwise, there would be no point in bringing them in at all. The spook in fiction must earn his keep.

But these aimless ones that are reported by so many witnesses float on and off the scene as carelessly as a cloud or a fluff of thistledown on the wind. As we have seen, sometimes they are clearly recognized; at other times the percipient has no idea who it is or was. Why they should take the trouble to manifest themselves in human form to some terrified mortal is not clear from the way they act.

Nor do they support the popular idea that an apparition bodes coming disaster or death, as the Irish Banshee is supposed to do by either its silent or shrieking visitation. In the stories narrated in this chapter these aimless spirits were not harbingers of trouble to anyone of the witnesses concerned. The ghosts walk or flit along

a country road, they walk through locked doors, they come to the bedside, they appear in all sorts of unlikely places, but that is all that the visit amounts to. And yet this very characteristic of apparent aimlessness makes them all the more baffling when one sets about trying to explain them.

Chapter VIII

Miscellaneous Types

There are a number of ghostly instances which do not permit being pigeonholed in any one of the large classifications which have served so far as chapter headings and must therefore be put into the capacious basket-term, "miscellaneous." Not all of these can be noted but those that follow will serve to suggest their wide variety.

I. LIGHTS

One of the many baffling phenomena reported from the Borley rectory was a mysterious light in the famous Blue Room upstairs. Sometimes this room appeared to an outside observer to be lit up, while to someone within it was dark. Sometimes a watcher in the room saw a patch of light, about a foot long by five inches wide, shining on the ceiling and moving slowly back and forth while the rest of the room remained in darkness. It was impossible to account for it by any lights from outside. A similar phenomenon was reported to me as having been seen by two people in an apartment of an old house in New York, except that the appearance of the blazing patch of light, seen in a room at night with every shade drawn, was of only a brief duration. It was, however, accompanied by ghostly whispers at times, and sensations of pressure. In any case such an appearance is meaningless to the observer.

Dr. Elwood Worcester, the rector of Emmanuel Church, Boston, who was mentioned in an earlier chapter, had a curious and impressive experience with light. When he was seventeen, his family had suffered so much financial loss that all plans for his further education had to be abandoned. He took a job in a freight office of the New York Central railroad at Rochester.

One particularly gloomy day he was eating his lunch from a dinner pail and thinking sadly that now he could never hope to go to college. The sky, heavy with leaden clouds, was in harmony with his spirits. Suddenly he saw that the dull yellow wall opposite him showed an area shining so brightly that he felt sure the sun must have broken through and was shining directly on the spot. He went to the window and looked out, but the sky was still dark with clouds. Turning back, he was amazed to see that the wall was shining brighter than before. Then he heard a voice, saying distinctly, "Be faithful unto me and I will be faithful unto you."

That evening he told the story to his rector, who listened understandingly. That experience of the strange light proved for Dr. Worcester to be the turning point of his life, for it opened the door to his career.

Other ghostly lights have been reported in the form of luminous clouds forming in a room. More striking and certainly more meaningful are the messages in shining letters formed on the walls, such as "Beware Titanic," which caused one person to miss her scheduled sailing by deliberate delays, and "Alice is dead," seen in the stateroom of a steamer by a relative hastening to the bedside of a sick woman in England on the night she died. These suggest the famous writing on the wall which terrified Belshazzar in the midst of his banquet. Charles L. Tweedale devotes a whole chapter in his book *Man's Survival After Death* to these luminous appearances, some of which came to himself and his family.

II. PHANTASMS OF THE LIVING

This is the title of the book quoted or referred to already in these pages several times, a collection of cases made by Gurney, Myers and Podmore. It will be remembered that Gurney invented an hypothesis of delayed telepathy to account for the visions of persons seen shortly after the moment of death. These cases in the book were assembled from reports published by the Society for Psychical Research in England. When Gurney came out with his theory, hypnotism had just emerged from the stigma of fraud into

the light of respectability, and telepathy was still hooted at by the men of science. But thought transference between living minds was easier to accept than the survival of a personality after death, and this became a favorite theory among psychic researchers. After John Tyndall had declared that the idea of a soul was a "base superstition," few intellectuals cared to admit that they believed in the soul.

The idea of ghosts of actual live people sounds even more fantastic than ghosts of the dead. And yet many well-attested reports are on record of precisely this phenomenon. Often the vision comes at a time of crisis in the life of the person who is perceived, just as it does so often at, or shortly after, the moment of death, in the examples narrated in an earlier chapter.

For example, a lady, who was especially close to her father in temperament and affection, told me that one night she awoke and saw her father looking at her sadly with outstretched arms. She had been asleep, she said, but at that moment was wide awake. So startling and so vivid was the brief vision that next morning she telegraphed to find out if her father was well. The reply was that during the night he had been suddenly seized by a heart attack so severe that the family had given him up. Finally, however, he rallied and was recovering. In this instance death had been narrowly averted.

Another personal narrative recounts a dream of such intense reality that it awoke out of a deep sleep the woman who experienced it. She had the sense of a vividness too clear to be merely a dream. She awakened her husband and told him that she had just seen her mother in an overcrowded boat rocking on the ocean swell and seemingly in imminent danger of being swamped. Naturally her husband protested that it was only a bad dream. Why should she get excited when she knew perfectly well that her mother was at the time safe in England? But the wife insisted that there was something about that dream that made it different—it seemed true and it was terrifying. She could not sleep.

Next day came the news of the *Titanic* disaster, and when the passenger list was published she read her mother's name. It turned

out later, after the mother's safe return home, that she had secretly taken passage on the *Titanic* in order to make her home-coming a surprise. At the time the daughter had the dream-vision her mother was actually in the crowded boat, expecting every moment that it would be swamped, and her thoughts were centered on her child, whom she did not expect to see again.

These instances are typical of the visions of living persons perceived by a loved one when these individuals are at a grave crisis or in immediate peril of their lives. But there are other apparitions of this class that do not fit this rule. For example, at the close of the last war the head of a Y.M.C.A. unit in Italy was writing a letter to his wife. He ended by saying, "In two months I shall be back, and then we shall never be separated again." At that moment, with due allowance for the difference in time between Italy and upper New York State, his wife saw him standing beside her, in his uniform, uttering clearly the words, "We shall never be separated again." In that little episode there was a distinct vision with spoken words, but no crisis, no danger whatever, merely a moment of yearning and love from a husband to his wife.

The New York *Herald Tribune* for December 30, 1941, told of a vision or vivid dream that came to a Mrs. W. L. Stewart, the mother of a boy in service. Three weeks before, the Navy Department had notified her that her foster son Carl had been killed in the Pacific campaign. In her dream she spoke to him and he answered. She was so firmly convinced that he was still alive that she refused to accept the proceeds of his life insurance policy. After a while another message came from the Department saying that Carl was wounded but would recover. Evidently, good news as well as bad can come by way of these visions.

A curious instance of the ghost of a living man was published in the *Journal* of the American Society for Psychical Research in a report submitted by Mr. Hereward Carrington. The time was 1898 and the Spanish American War. A Miss Spink, the one who tells the story, had a cousin who volunteered as an officer in the war, and she saw him go away in his blue uniform. At that time he was clean-shaven. For no reason apparently she saw him four times in six

months as an apparition. The fourth time was the most singular. She had not been thinking about him for some time when, at two o'clock one summer afternoon, as she was going down to the wharf to board a yacht to join some friends, she heard his footsteps on the board walk. They sounded exactly as in life. When he stepped off the walk upon the grass, the noise of footsteps ceased and sounded again when he went back on the boards. It was lifelike in every respect, and it was this sound that made her turn about to look. She saw him striding toward her, but as she looked at him she noticed that now he was wearing khaki instead of blue and he had grown a beard. The figure continued to approach her until it came within about three feet of her, then he was gone.

The friends in the yacht who were waiting for her saw nothing out of the ordinary, but they told the girl later that they were puzzled at seeing her stop suddenly, turn about and look fixedly at something they could not see, and to their repeated hails she made no reply.

It was afterwards that she learned of her cousin's changed uniform and the beard he had grown, confirming the aspect of the living ghost. But in this instance there was no emotional stress, no special bond, and no peril; nothing whatever to explain four distinct visions of a living man, the last one outdoors in the middle of the day. And the details of the uniform and the beard, both at the time unknown to the percipient, make the identification all the more remarkable.

The following incident of a living ghost has unique features, and it comes strongly attested. It was published in the American Society's *Journal*, in 1922. The principal narrator was Miss Louisa Osgood, a person well-known to the editor of the *Journal*, who characterizes her in a prefatory note as a person of education, intelligence, and standing.

On the afternoon of June 25, 1918, Miss Osgood was resting in her home at Plainfield, New Jersey, after reading a book on the war. Her thoughts naturally turned to her foster brother, J. O. Sewall, who was then in active service with the Navy, and she longed for his safe return. As she was thinking about him, suddenly

she saw him with their father. Neither of them looked at her, but each seemed absorbed in the joy of seeing the other. The father had died two years before. She exclaimed aloud, "I'm here, but you don't see me!" What her father wore she did not notice particularly, but she noted her brother's Navy uniform. The vision lasted several seconds and then was gone.

She told her mother about it at once, and the latter was distressed for fear the young man had been killed. Because he had been seen talking with his deceased father she thought it must mean that both were dead. The daughter, however, disagreed strongly, arguing that the father must have come to the boy to stand by him in an hour of danger.

Toward the end of August news came that the brother's ship had arrived at Norfolk and that in a day or so he would be home. The night before he was expected Miss Osgood reminded her mother of that vision of the 25th of June, and said that she would try to discover if it had been just a trick played on her by her own brain.

Next morning, shortly after breakfast, the sailor returned home. A married sister hurried over to join in the welcome and the three women sat on the porch listening to his story. He related that he was a member of an armed guard on the U.S.S. *Lake Ontario*, a little steamer carrying TNT from Norfolk to the Navy base on the coast of Scotland. On one of the trips across, a U-boat struck the convoy. Hearing the call to quarters, he came up on deck in time to see one of the ships go down. Then he saw a submarine break the surface not far away. It looked as if the *Ontario* would be the next victim.

As he reached this part of his story his face lighted up. "That night," he said, "I had the most wonderful experience of my life."

His sister Louisa, sensing that it had some connection with the vision she had seen, asked, "What day was that?"

"The 25th of June," he replied, "at half-past nine at night. I shall never forget the day as long as I live!"

His sister asked what the difference in time would be between Plainfield, New Jersey, and the coast of Scotland. "About five

hours," he answered," and added, "It would have been about four-thirty here."

"And," Miss Osgood went on, "Father came to you."

He turned on her in amazement. "That is just what happened, but how on earth did you know, Louisa?"

"I was there," she said simply, "but you did not see me."

Then the mother verified the story to the married sister, who had not heard of the vision, and told how Louisa had brought up the incident again the evening before.

The narrative of this strange experience, written by Miss Osgood and submitted by her to the American Society for Psychical Research, was accompanied by a brief letter or attestation by her brother. In this most unusual occurrence she saw in daylight a vision of her living brother and her deceased father together. At the same moment, her brother saw his father come to him in an hour of peril at sea. But she herself was only an unobserved bystander in this meeting.

III. GHOSTLY VOICES OF THE LIVING

Sometimes the mysterious visitation of a living person is by voice rather than by form. As a rule there seems to be in these cases, some deep emotional crisis or peril of death that evokes the cry.

Mr. George Cherrie, in his book, *Dark Trails: The Adventures of a Naturalist*, describes his own experience in hearing the voice of a friend who was far distant. It will be remembered that he told the story of the thrice-repeated dream of seeing his mother in her room, just after death, and learning afterwards that on that night she had died. On another occasion he was camping in the jungle when he heard his name called repeatedly in a voice that he instantly recognized, and it had an accent of deep distress or anxiety. Although he knew that this friend was hundreds of miles away, he heard the voice so strongly that he went out of his tent to investigate. Long afterwards he discovered that this friend had actually been in a state of profound apprehension at that time and had inwardly called on him to help.

An English officer of the merchant marine, William Guy Carr, published a book entitled *High and Dry* (1938), which recounted his adventures at sea. He had no interest in psychic matters, but he tells more than one experience that he could not explain. One of these dates from his early married life, when he was serving on a collier.

One day, while he had the middle watch, he was thinking how fortunate he was. The Great War was over, he had two fine children, a good position and prospects of promotion. "I should have been happy," he writes, "but somehow, for some reason, I wasn't; my mind seemed to be troubled and ill at ease. Thus my thoughts ran on this particular night in March, the 9th, to be exact, when suddenly, just before the watchman struck four bells, I heard a piercing cry . . . a wail. It was my wife's voice, and she cried out so that I heard her as plainly as if I had been in the room with her: 'Oh, Billy . . . Betty is dead!'

"Betty was my youngest child. She had been perfectly well when I had left home six days before, and yet that cry reached me over thousands of miles of land and sea; it was so convincing that I spoke to the second engineer about it. He told me afterwards that he thought I had suffered a nervous breakdown, due probably to the reaction after my service in submarines. The story got around and I cannot blame the other officers aboard if they thought I had gone crazy . . . When we arrived in Port Said, there was a cable awaiting me. It read: 'Betty died two a.m., March 9th. Broken-hearted. Bessie.' Later on my wife wrote and told me how the little one had had a sudden attack of influenza with pneumonia following; how she (the mother) had fallen asleep with the child in her arms for just a few moments. On awaking she found the baby dead. The shock was such that she cried out in her anguish, just as I had heard, and in the very words I had heard."

The stories of mortal peril to the person who is heard crying out are probably more numerous. Camille Flammarion, in his *Death and Its Mystery*, tells an incident that came from an officer of the Royal Navy, Commander T. W. Aylesbury. The story was written by him in 1882, but the incident had occurred many years before.

when he was a boy of thirteen. Apparently he was serving as a middy on board a man-of-war at the time. One day he fell overboard. When the boat's crew picked him up, they were amused to hear him call aloud for his mother, and when he got back to his ship he was forced to take a great deal of teasing in consequence.

Several months later, when he was back in England, he told his mother what had happened. "While I was under the water," he said, "I saw you all sitting in this room. You were working on something white. I saw you all—Mother, Emily, Eliza, and Ellen."

Instantly the mother confirmed this. On that day and hour, allowing for the difference in longitude, all four of them were sitting in that room. The lad went on to describe where each one sat, as he had seen them, and certain details of the room, such as the Venetian blinds, and so on. Then his mother took up the story. "I heard you call me," said she, "and I sent Emily to look out at the window."

In reply to a letter of inquiry about this incident, one of the sisters wrote out a detailed narrative. "I shall never forget it," she wrote. "We were seated and working peacefully one evening when first we heard a feeble cry of 'Mother!' " One of the group exclaimed, "Did you hear someone cry 'Mother!' " Twice again the voice made the call, its tone "stamped with terror like a cry of agony." They all rose. "Go to the door," cried the mother, "and see who it is." The girls ran out into the street but there was no one in sight. They returned to find their mother in an anguish of fear over what might have happened to her boy.

In that story the ghostly voice of the midshipman in far eastern waters was heard simultaneously by the mother and the three sisters; and that voice was heard three times, so distinctly that the girls ran outdoors to investigate. None of them had any idea what the voice meant until the boy reached home.

A similar cry to his mother was heard coming from a young American soldier in France during the First World War. A woman living in an Indiana town had two sons in military service. She knew the older one, John, was in action somewhere in France and she was in constant anxiety about him. The younger boy, Fred, was

at Camp Upton on Long Island, undergoing training. She was thankful that he was safe for the present.

One afternoon, despite bright sunshine, she felt overwhelmed with a foreboding of evil that she could not shake off. Naturally she associated it with some peril to her son John somewhere on the battle front. She went out of the house to work in the vegetable garden in order to shake off her depression by manual labor in the fresh air and sunshine.

Suddenly she heard clearly the cry, "Oh, Maw!" It was a cry of agony and terror, but it was the voice of her younger son, Fred. "It's Fred, in danger!" she cried aloud, and dropping on her knees she prayed, "Oh, God, save my boy!" while the tears streamed down her face.

When finally she had collected herself she went back into the house. Making a note of the time, she wrote to Fred at Camp Upton, telling him of the strange cry she had heard and begging to know if he was well. No reply was received for many weeks. At long last came a brief scrawl in Fred's hand dated at a base hospital in France. It transpired that a contingent had been secretly rushed overseas from Camp Upton and thrown into combat soon after their arrival. Fred had been struck by a bullet that had penetrated his helmet and wounded him so badly that at first his recovery was not expected.

Later, a comparison made of the time of the wounding and the cry heard by the mother—making the due allowance between France and Indiana—revealed that they were identical. The cry must have been heard at the moment he was struck.

So runs the story. The relative of mine who heard it from the mother, said that after the war she met Fred on his return home.

"Did Maw tell you a queer story about hearing me call when I was hit?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Well," he answered gravely, "every word of it is true."

IV. SPECTERS OF ANIMALS AND INANIMATE THINGS

Practically all the apparitions reported appear garbed in their characteristic garb, whether it is the nun's dress at Borley, the sixteenth-century gown and ruff of the Brown Lady of Raynham, the uniforms of naval and military men, or the plain poke bonnet and shawl of some old servant. Once in a while a ghost is seen in some nondescript white garment, but this is exceptional. Accordingly, not only is the personality visible in face and form as in life, but the frock coat, or knee breeches, spectacles, or clerical garb form a part of the picture. These inanimate things appear in ghostly form too.

Nor it is merely a matter of costume. There are tales of ghostly animals. It will be remembered that when Lieutenant Barter saw the specter of that deceased officer at the mountain station in India, the latter was riding his pony, which was so distinctly seen that Barter was able to describe it perfectly afterwards.

Mr. Pierre Van Paassen, in his *Days of Our Years* (p. 308 f.), tells of an adventure he had in France with a spectral dog. One evening, as he sat in his room, he suddenly felt chilly, and went down to throw coal on the fire. This was at about eleven o'clock. On returning, he felt something brush past him on the stair, and turning round he saw that it was a large black dog which he had never seen before. It was scampering down the steps. He was surprised because he could not imagine how any strange dog could have got into the house. He turned on all the lights and made a search, but could not find the animal anywhere. This was all the more puzzling because he knew that all the windows and doors were shut and bolted. As a precaution, he unlocked the front door and called in his two police dogs.

The next night he saw the same black dog, and this happened on several ensuing nights. Then for five weeks Van Paassens was absent on an assignment in Rumania. When he returned, he was told that his servant was leaving, and this because she declined to work in any haunted house. Already she had taken to sleeping out. She

complained that she was awakened at night by a big black dog which pushed her door open and came in. The story spread through the village.

A friendly neighbor and his nineteen-year-old son volunteered to watch with Mr. Van Paassens, and they came armed with cudgel and army pistol. The three men sat in his room with all lights turned on. At eleven they heard the patter of a dog's feet coming down the stairs from the second story. The watchers ran into the hall, and there at the foot of the steps was the same black dog, which calmly stared back at them. One of the men whistled and the dog wagged his tail. Thereupon, all three men started to descend the stairs, keeping their eyes fixed on the creature; but they had not gone three steps when they saw the beast's outlines grow hazier and fainter until it disappeared before their eyes.

On a subsequent evening Mr. Van Paassens brought in his police dogs to watch with him. At the first sound of the paws walking on the floor above, the dogs pricked up their ears. Then their hair stood on end, and they began to back away from the door, growling and showing their teeth. But this time their master could see nothing of the apparition. Suddenly the dogs let out a dreadful howl, as if in fearful pain, and began biting and snapping about them as if they were fighting something that was attacking them, but a something that their master could not see. He stood there with a stout cudgel in his hand but was unable to perceive what it was that his dogs were battling so desperately. Suddenly one of them gave a dreadful howl, as if stricken with a mortal wound, and collapsed on the floor, dead. The other backed abjectly into a corner, whining and whimpering, while his whole body quivered. At that point the battle was over.

Next morning Van Paassens went to the Abbé, as he had been advised to do, and related his story. The priest did not laugh at him, but offered to watch with him that night. Again the neighbor and his son came to help. As before, they heard the sound of a dog's paws on the stairs, and when they went out to look, there was the black dog staring at them and wagging its tail. But as Van Paassens stepped forward it growled. Once more, as they looked, the shape

began to grow hazy, and soon it had faded into nothingness.

The Abbé said that he knew something about poltergeists. He said that these phenomena happened sometimes when there was a child of puberty age in the house. Accordingly, he advised his friend to dismiss the young errand girl in his employ, giving her a month's wages. Mr. Van Paassens followed the Abbé's advice and the big, black dog was seen no more. One extraordinary feature of this animal apparition is the fight that the author and his friends witnessed between that phantom dog in invisible form and Van Paassens' two dogs, one of which was killed.

A much pleasanter experience with a dog ghost is recorded by Mr. Bayard Veiller in his book *The Fun I've Had*. The Veillers had a dog, "Penn," whom they loved dearly. As he became very old his days were only a matter of prolonged suffering, and with much heartbreak it was decided that he should be gently eased out of his pain. His master took him to the office of a doctor who also was devoted to Penn and he was put in his last sleep.

Coming home, Mr. Veiller buried Penn in the garden with his own hands and planted on the grave myrtle and lilies of the valley. For Mr. Veiller and his wife it was a day of tragic grief, for Penn was not merely a pet, he was a member of the family in a very real sense.

"Now," the author continues, "here is the part I don't expect anyone to believe." He goes on to say that it had been a hard day, and he went to bed early. At three o'clock he was awakened out of a heavy sleep by the sound of Penn barking. Mr. Veiller declares that he is not superstitious or given to imagining things that don't exist. He has never thought much about a Hereafter, but he swears that this is what he heard and saw:

The barking that woke him was, he says, "gay, boisterous, excited." He got up and went outdoors to see. The garden was bathed in bright moonlight. Over the hill behind the house he saw Penn come tearing down to the lawn, tail waving, gay and carefree as a puppy. It was unmistakably Penn. He ran around the yard for a few minutes, then dashed across the flower beds and all at once he

was gone. "I can't explain this," the author says, "and it wasn't a dream . . . But I'll take my oath he came back."

Next morning he said nothing to his wife about that vision of Penn, but she told her husband that she had heard Penn barking that night and had gone to the window. There on the lawn and in the garden she too had seen him romping gaily about until suddenly he wasn't there. She interpreted the apparition as her husband had done, that Penn had come back so that his master and mistress would know that everything was fine with him, that he was now young again, strong and happy, and that they must not grieve.

The striking fact of this story is that the ghost of the dog was seen and heard by both Mr. and Mrs. Veiller independently of each other at the same time.

Inanimate objects are still more difficult to understand when they appear in spectral or immaterial form, but they have to be put into the problem, too. In the story of Versailles and of the Georgian mansion there seemed to be ghosts of buildings, high walls, gates, even of long-forgotten types of plow, wheelbarrow and spade.

A favorite piece of ghostly "property," as they say in the theater, is the coach or carriage. This also is one of the amazing repertory of phenomena possessed by the Borley rectory. One of the maids looked out of the window one afternoon and saw a vehicle on the grass. She ran to her mistress, Mrs. Smith, the wife of the rector, exclaiming, "There's such a funny old coach on the lawn!" But when they looked, the coach was gone and there was no trace of hoofs or wheels on the grass. The maid described what she had seen as "something like a big cab" with two bay horses. It was headed down the garden. Two days later she saw the same coach again, but this time it was headed in the opposite direction.

The Rectory gardener, Edward Cooper, told Harry Price that one moonlit night he looked out of his window and noticed on the meadow by the church, on the opposite side of the road, the movement of bright lights. These drew nearer, and he saw them to be the headlamps on a old-fashioned coach sweeping rapidly across

the hedge and the road, heading directly toward the Rectory. The picture was so clear, he added, that he could see the glitter of the metal on the harness. On the box were two figures wearing old-time high hats. He shouted to his wife to come and see, but just as she reached the window the coach swept into the farmyard and vanished. Cooper estimated that the equipage was visible for about thirty seconds, but all the while he did not hear any sound of wheel or hoof or harness.

In *Phantasms of the Living* there is the story of a closed carriage and pair of horses with two men on the box that was seen one night rolling down the driveway of a house in England. The tenant ran out, shouting for them to stop because they were headed for a steep bank. His son followed with a lantern, but the carriage stopped abruptly at a brook, turned and drove across the lawn only to lurch away again out of sight. Meanwhile, the wife and daughter also watched it come and go, and wondered what it could be. There was something so strange about its sudden coming, stopping, and abrupt departure that the man and his son made an examination of the ground afterwards. In spite of the fact that four members of the family had seen the equipage, there was no mark of wheel or horse's hoof on either the gravel of the driveway or the soft turf.

V. VISIONS OF THE DYING

It is a commonplace truth, observed by many physicians and clergymen, that a dying person, when conscious near the moment of death, acts or speaks as if he saw standing near loved ones who have already died. Dr. Russell Conwell told Bruce Barton in the interview quoted earlier in another connection, that he had witnessed this phenomenon "literally hundreds of times."

This has been known to occur with one who has been unconscious a long time, incapable of word or movement. An extreme case in my personal knowledge is of an old lady who became not only bedridden but mindless, yet lingered as a breathing organism for about eight years. She was unable even to turn herself in bed. Just before she died, however, she suddenly rose to a sitting posture,

the blank face was illumined with an expression of joy, and she looked upward as if she recognized someone she had dearly loved. She smiled—and fell back dead.

Often, when the dying person is conscious, he or she has described the friends seen at the bedside, whom no one else can perceive. And these visions are always of the dead, never of the living. It would be simple to dismiss these visions as hallucinations of minds on the verge of dissolution except for the fact that sometimes the dying person recognizes someone among the ghostly visitors that he or she could not have known to be dead.

An instance of this was furnished by the Reverend Minot J. Savage, who knew the names and addresses of the persons concerned. Two little girls, about eight years old, Edith and Jennie, were schoolmates and intimate friends. Both fell ill of a prevailing epidemic, and Jennie died. Edith's parents and her doctor took pains to keep from her the fact for fear that it might have a harmful effect on her. At noon of her last day she selected two of her photographs to be given to Jennie and sent her a good-by message. In the early evening she became conscious again and spoke of the people she saw about her. Then suddenly and with every appearance of surprise she turned to her father and exclaimed, "Why, Papa, I'm going to take Jennie with me!" Then she added, "Why, Papa, Papa, you did not tell me Jennie was here!" And she reached out her arms as if in welcome and said, "Oh, Jennie, I'm so glad you are here."

On very rare occasions the watcher at the bedside also sees the same apparition as does the dying one. A striking instance is supplied by the last hours of Horace Traubel, the disciple, imitator, and biographer of Walt Whitman. In August, 1919, Traubel was in the home of Mrs. Flora MacD. Denison at Bon Echo, Ontario. Evidently he had been invited to grace the dedication of a huge, rocky bluff, some two miles long and three or four hundred feet high at its summit, to the memory of Walt Whitman.

At this time Traubel was suffering from a heart ailment, and it soon became evident that he could not recover. It was during his last days here that his hostess, Mrs. Denison, noted certain phe-

nomena which she considered so significant that, in order not to forget any detail or give the story unconscious coloring afterwards, she made notes at the time. From these she wrote an article which was printed in an issue of *The Sunset of Bon Echo*, in 1920. This was a little magazine which was published occasionally for the Whitman Club.

On the evening of August 28th, as Traubel was being carried in from the veranda of the cottage, his face was radiant. "Look, look, Flora!" he exclaimed. "Quick, quick! He is going!"

"What, where, Horace?" she answered, "I do not see anyone."

"Why," he answered, "just over the rock Walt appeared, head and shoulders, and hat on, in a golden glory—brilliant and splendid. He reassured me, beckoned to me. I heard his voice, but did not understand all he said, only 'Come on!' "

At that point his friend Frank Bain came in and Traubel repeated the story to him. All the rest of the evening, said Mrs. Denison, Traubel was uplifted and happy.

On the night of September third he was very low. He asked Mrs. Denison to turn him and as she did so he suddenly appeared to be listening to a voice. "I hear Walt's voice," he said. "He is talking to me."

"What does he say?"

"Walt says, 'Come on, come on.' " Then he added, after a pause, "Flora, I see them all about me, Bob and Bucke and Walt and the rest." With a smile he told the story of Bob Ingersoll writing to Whitman, "May the Lord love you but not too soon."

On September sixth, Traubel was seen to be sinking fast. A friend, Colonel L. Moore Cosgrave, came in and sat by the dying man's bedside for his last three nights on earth. The Colonel's part of the story he sent to Dr. Walter F. Prince, of the American Psychical Research Society, in the form of a long letter under date of June 1, 1920, and followed it up with another filling in certain important details. Colonel Cosgrave had served with the Canadian forces from 1915 to the Armistice and was familiar with death in a thousand forms.

That night the sick man, who was now unable to move, was

semi-conscious and evidently in no pain. In the early morning hours Cosgrave felt his eyes drawn irresistibly to a spot in the darkness of the room toward which Traubel himself was looking intently. "Slowly the point at which we were both looking," wrote Cosgrave, "grew gradually brighter; a light haze appeared, spread until it assumed bodily form and took the likeness of Walt Whitman, standing upright beside the bed, a rough tweed jacket on, an old felt hat upon his head, and his right hand in his pocket, similar to a number of his portraits; he was gazing down at Traubel, a kindly, reassuring smile upon his face; he nodded twice as though reassuringly, the features quite distinct for at least a full minute."

While both the dying man and his friend were gazing at the apparition of Walt Whitman, it moved closer to Traubel. "There is Walt," he murmured. At that instant the specter passed through the bed to Colonel Cosgrave and touched his hand as if in farewell. The feel of that touch, Cosgrave said, was like that of a "low electric charge." Then Walt smiled at Traubel and faded from sight.

After that, Cosgrave noted that Traubel's face lost the strained look it had worn all the evening. At once the Colonel related the facts to Mrs. Denison, who wrote them down. On the eighth, Traubel died.

In his letter to Dr. Prince, Cosgrave says that he does not regard this experience at Traubel's bedside as so extraordinary because he had witnessed "similar phenomena at crucial moments during heavy casualties in France." One could wish that he had recounted some of these, but it is safe to say that this experience of sharing a vision with a dying man is most unusual and also most significant.

VI. VISIONS OF CHILDREN

As everyone knows, children often live in a world of make-believe, and the tall tales they invent to impress their playmates and families are almost a part of normal childhood experience. These are not so much "lies," as stern parents of an older day used to call them, but works of fiction, in which the children who make them up often come to believe themselves. When, therefore,

a child says that he sees persons or things invisible to others of the family, the obvious explanation is that the youngster is romancing again. Sometimes, however, a child is so positive and circumstantial about a playmate he sees that one is pushed to the conclusion that this vision is real to the child anyway. Sometimes the apparition is a stranger; sometimes an adored member of the family or a playmate who has died.

A friend once told me of her own memory of such an occurrence. When she was little, her grandmother, to whom she was devoted, died, and she could distinctly remember the solemnity of the funeral service that followed. Shortly afterwards, she went to play in Grandma's room, as she was accustomed to do, and to her great delight she found the old lady sitting as usual in her arm chair by the window. The little girl had been told that Grandma was in heaven, but here she was back home again. There was no doubt about it, for everything was just as before, and she played happily about the old lady's voluminous skirts and chattered with her as she always had done. As a woman of sixty, when she related the story, she said emphatically that she could still see in her mind's eye the way her grandmother looked as she sat there, and how she rolled the broad satin ribbons of her cap round her fingers.

Afterwards, the child told her mother of her happy discovery of Grandma in her arm chair again, and how she had been playing with her. She noticed a queer, startled look on her mother's face. After that the door to Grandma's room was kept locked, and the little girl never saw her again.

A striking example of these child visions is given in Mrs. Eileen Garrett's *My Life as a Search for the Meaning of Mediumship*. When she was about four years old she saw one day, framed in a doorway, three children, two girls and a boy. But as her aunt, with whom she lived, never permitted her to play with other children, she turned away and quickly forgot them. Later she saw them again, and this time she joined them to play. After that they came to her every day. She soon discovered, however, that she had to look for them mostly outdoors; that they seemed unhappy in the house. But from that time those three children were the most vital and

precious part of her life. She called them simply "My Children." She frequently touched them, she says, and "found them as soft and warm even as I."

At first she talked about them as a matter of course, but was both laughed at and scolded by the elders in the house. The aunt was very angry and indignant over what she called "Eileen's lies." The uncle was more tolerant. He merely smiled and said to the little girl, "Maybe so." But she soon learned to keep her Children to herself. Nor did she worry about who or what they were. As a child she had never heard of ghosts, and in her aunt's house no one ever talked of fairies, brownies, or pixies. The lonely child just accepted happily and unquestioningly the companionship of these three playmates.

Like all those gifted with a special psychic sense, she saw, even as a child, the forms of human beings surrounded by an aura or nimbus of light. It was only as she grew older that she learned that other people did not see human beings that way. And these children were different from ordinary ones in that, though they were solid to the touch, they seemed to be wholly made up of that light.

Sometimes these mysterious playmates came by night as well as by day. Then she would know that they wanted her to slip out and play with them in the garden. It made no difference whether it was moonlight, starlight, or the pitch blackness of an overcast sky, she would slip outdoors with them as a matter of course. Time and again she was caught in the garden at night and punished, but it never occurred to her to refuse to go when the Children came for her.

One curious circumstance about them was that she never saw them coming or going. She would look up to find them there, or as suddenly they would be gone. After she was grown up she could not recall hearing spoken words pass between her and them; they understood each other perfectly, but the process seemed to be by thought and not by speech.

At any rate she says that all the happiness she had in her childhood came from the Children. They guided her to the first wild flowers in the spring, and to the new birds' nests; they told her

when and where lambs and puppies were born. And, since she was permitted to see the village urchins only at a distance, these were the only children she had ever known. She and they made up a little blissful world of their own into which no one entered. All the while, to the grown-ups of her family and their friends she was just a queer, sullen child, disobedient and given to extravagant romancing. The only adult in whom she could confide, one who listened understandingly, was an old gypsy woman. She knew about the gift of special or second sight because she possessed it herself. Meanwhile, as the girl grew older she was confirmed and took her first communion, but without finding in those rituals the spiritual uplift that she had hoped for. Still all her satisfaction came from her association with the Children.

In time, the uncle with whom she had made her home died. He had been kind to her and was more sympathetic and understanding than his wife. A few weeks after his death the child was sitting in her room in the twilight hour waiting for the lamps to be brought in. She was restless and unhappy. All at once she saw the door open quietly of itself, and there in the hall outside, standing under the lamplight she saw her uncle. And now he looked well and strong. At once he began talking to her. He begged her to obey the wishes of her aunt as far as she could. He said that he understood her troubles, but he predicted that in two years' time she would be free, for then she would leave the house and go to London. At that the door closed quietly and she saw him no more.

But as he went a feeling of peace came over her. It did not occur to her that she had "seen a ghost" and ought to be terrified. Her uncle was sorry for her, that was all, and had come to speak comforting words. Nothing could be more natural.

The prediction he made that day was fulfilled, for in less than two years she left the house and went to London. As for the Children, she says that they were with her daily from the time she was four until she was thirteen, when she saw them for the last time. That is the most amazing circumstance about this story. One might understand a child of four imagining a group of playmates for a while, but that the same playmates were still the daily companions

of a girl of twelve or thirteen suggests that they must have been more than the creation of fancy. For nine years they were the only happiness of a lonely orphan child, and to her the most important reality in her life.

VII. THE RELIGIOUS VISION

The literature of all religions is studded with stories of supernormal or "miraculous" apparitions, and this is particularly true of our own Bible and the legends of the Saints in the Christian Church. The first instinct of the skeptic is to dismiss these as hallucinations created by abnormal emotional and mental states, aggravated by ascetic practises. And yet it is possible that, if laymen see ghosts that appear to be more than the illusions of the imagination, some at least of these religious visions may have some real, objective basis. But it is specially difficult to produce any evidence to back up the reality of one of these because the apparition seen is not that of some human being capable of being recognized; but, whatever the figure may be, it is interpreted by the percipient as an angel or saint or the Virgin or even the Saviour Himself. But if some remarkable consequence flows out of that experience one may raise the question whether it was not more than imagination or an ordinary dream.

The story of Caedmon, the Anglo-Saxon poet, is an example. The tale goes back to the eighth century and the abbey of Whitby on the eastern coast of England. One night, in the stable of the abbey, a cowherd flung himself on the straw to sleep. There was a feast going on, but he had left it because while others, including his own companions, could join in extemporizing the alliterative poems of that day and chant a song, he could not make up a line. He had crept away humiliated and ashamed.

As he lay in the straw, suddenly the stable was filled with light, and in the midst of it stood a shining figure, whom Caedmon took to be the Christ.

"Sing, Caedmon," said the apparition, "sing some song to me."

"I cannot sing," was the sad reply, "for this reason came I hither."

"Yet," the voice insisted, "thou shalt sing to me."

"What shall I sing?"

"The beginning of created things." And then within him, says the legend, Caedmon felt a new power. The shining vision passed, but he straightway went forth and told of it. Hilda, the Abbess heard the tale, and from the Latin scriptures she related to him in his own tongue the story of Creation. Next day Caedmon recited that story in verse form, and all who heard him declared that the grace of God lay upon him. Thereafter he was taken into the brotherhood of the monastery, and for the rest of his days he shaped the Bible narratives into Anglo-Saxon verse. There was none to compare with him, though many tried.

It is a pretty story with not a shred of evidence to support it. But whatever the experience actually was, out of it a cowherd became the first Christian poet of England. Similarly, at a much later date, the life of Saint Francis was suddenly changed from that of a frivolous, rich young man into the character that more nearly than any other person in history followed the footsteps of his Master. And this change came about through a dream.

The daylight apparition is always more impressive than the one that comes at night and which can be dismissed as merely an extraordinary dream. One instance is already well-known because it has been popularized in book form and moving picture. It is the tale of Bernadette. Because it is so familiar it needs only a brief summary here. In the year 1858, a strange rumor ran through the streets of the provincial town of Lourdes in southern France. It seemed that a dull, homely, sickly girl of fourteen, Bernadette Soubirous, claimed that she had seen a vision and would not be dissuaded from her story. Everyone agreed that this was absurd on the face of it because, in the first place, the age of miracles is past, and even if a holy visitation were to come it would be to some nun noted for her piety. This girl was a commonplace child. And in the second place, such a vision would come at the altar or some other holy place, whereas this girl insisted that she perceived her holy visitant in a sort of grotto in the rock, situated—of all places—in a dumping lot outside the town, a place where garbage was burned.

Yet there the girl affirmed without the shadow of doubt that she had seen a "beautiful lady," and had held wordless conversation with her. And there she returned day after day, to meet the lady as she had been bidden to do.

The story spread, and the townspeople showered her and her family with ridicule. Yet there were some who testified that when Bernadette came away from one of these wordless communions with her beautiful lady the ugly girl actually looked beautiful herself; she was transfigured.

"Who is your lady and what does she say to you?" the neighbors asked her. Bernadette seemed bewildered. Once she replied that the Lady had said that she was the Immaculate Conception, and another time she had bidden her "Do penance."

The local clergy were not pleased with the story, and they tried to discipline the girl, to make her confess that she had been romancing. But it was all to no purpose, for Bernadette was stedfast in her story. Later, however, the Lady told Bernadette where to find a spring that lay hitherto undiscovered. This spring was to be for the healing of the sick. Bernadette found the spring, and strange to say many persons have found in it healing for their infirmities. It was this spring, indeed, that became the world's most famous shrine for healing. No less an authority than Dr. Alexis Carrel has testified that there, under the influence of prayer, he has seen miracles of healing take place. Finally, in 1933, Bernadette was canonized.

A recent book, entitled *Release*, by a man who signs himself "Starr Daily," is the life story of a former convict and habitual criminal, and the point of the narrative is the influence on him of a vision that came to him in prison. He says frankly that from the age of fourteen he was a hardened criminal, escaping punishment for some of his evil deeds but serving sentence for others. Five times he was sent to prison. There he made a name for himself as the worst of recalcitrants, continually making trouble and always attempting escape. In the workshops he did his stint as badly as possible. Altogether, he fancied himself as the ring-leader of the

"hard guys" whose spirit no prison discipline could break.

Finally, he was sent up as a habitual criminal, with a sentence of twenty years. Desperate and embittered, he determined to escape, no matter what the cost, and made three futile attempts. Reasoning that a break would be easier from the prison hospital than from any other part of the "Big House," he made himself sick by eating prison soap. But since this ruse did not deceive either the wardens or the doctor, Daily plotted a general revolt at mealtime. A stool pigeon gave this plan away. The consequence for Daily was that he was sentenced to the dungeon or "hole," and the deputy who locked him in assured him with a grin that when his time was up he would creep out on his knees and whine for mercy.

This dungeon was a dark, stone cell, cold, damp, and vile-smelling. Daily had to put his hands through the bars of the door, resting them on a cross piece just above the level of his head. There he was hand-cuffed every morning at six and released every night at six. At the end of two weeks he could no longer stand, but merely hung from his manacles. His daily sustenance was a piece of bread and a tin cup of water. Through all his torment he was upheld by his burning hatred of the deputy. At last he could no longer be handcuffed to the bars but lay on the filthy floor of his dungeon for more weeks, his arms and legs swollen and lifeless.

During this period of collapse he began to dream. Remembered dreams of his childhood came back, with no continuity or point, just like ordinary ones. Then, he says, the figure of Christ appeared to him "as in a garden." The apparition came toward him, lips moving but uttering no sound, paused at his side and looked into his eyes. "In all my life," the writer says, "I had never seen or felt such love in the human eye as now glowed and radiated in his eyes." The scene faded out into a mist that curled and drifted until it formed in irregular letters the word "Love." That, too, melted away. After that he dreamed again and there passed before his vision a procession of all the individuals whom he had injured and who had injured him. Somehow, love seemed to be the answer for them all.

In brief, that was the mystical vision that came to this felon as he lay prostrate on the floor of the dungeon. The significance of it lies in the result. "Before this experience," he writes, "I was an ingrained and calloused criminal. After it I was completely healed of my criminal tendencies." He describes the change in himself from that moment, and he was helped in his upward path by an old lifer, who had become a deeply spiritual character. Daily was fortunate in being transferred to this man's cell. Naturally, his former pals of the prison hazed him unmercifully as a quitter, who could not stand the torment of the "hole," and they made life hard for him. But he persevered, and became the prison's leading trusty. Since his release he has devoted his energies to the amelioration of prison conditions and the problem of curing the sick souls of the men wearing prison stripes.

The reader may protest that such visions as came to Bernadette Soubirous or Starr Daily should not be included among real ghosts because they are obviously subjective. No one else saw the Beautiful Lady but Bernadette, or the Christ but Daily. That is true of all mystical visions from that of Saint Paul on the road to Damascus down to the present day. But, whether it is Saint Francis of the thirteenth century, Bernadette of the nineteenth, or Starr Daily of the twentieth, the dream or vision that they saw meant everything. To these and to many others who have known the mystical apparition, nothing else in life was half so real and nothing else in life mattered by comparison. To this fact their subsequent lives bear eloquent witness.

Chapter IX

Postscript

SOME ghost stories are difficult to classify, even under the various headings employed in the preceding pages. Some experiences combine features of two or more groups and contain peculiar features of their own. The three narratives that compose this chapter can only find a place for themselves under the same convenient term "miscellaneous," which was used for the preceding chapter, yet they do not fit in anywhere under its subheadings. At the same time they are sufficiently unlike any of the ghost stories told elsewhere in this volume to claim the right to appear somewhere on the basis of singularity alone. Two of them come on direct testimony; the third is a matter of printed record, but the publication has lain forgotten for nearly a century.

I. THE HOUSE-BOUND SPIRIT

The same friend, indicated as H——, to whom this collection is indebted for three stories in the chapter, *Ghosts with a Message*, related also the following as still another apparitional experience that came to him. This had to do with his grandmother, a woman noted in her lifetime for her piety and good works, and her loyalty to the Fundamentalist theology in which she was bred. She took this doctrine as a matter of course—a part of the Divine law—and strongly disapproved of her grandson's tendency toward "unsound" if not heretical thinking. Her life was wrapped up in her home and her family, which, with her church, was her entire world. In the course of time she passed on.

One Sunday morning H—— was sitting in his Boston apartment when he heard the indignant words, "They lied to me! There *is* no Heaven!"

Turning in his chair, he saw his grandmother, dressed in the clothes she had worn in her coffin. Her expression of face and voice showed that she was in distress of mind. She hastened to explain. She said she had come to him because she knew he was always speculating in original ways about death and the hereafter, and she thought he might be able to help her. Anyway, she had discovered that all her life she had been lied to about Heaven. She did not know what to make of her situation; she was lost. And she was eager to talk about it.

As for her own death, she said that after a period of unconsciousness she came to and saw herself lying motionless on the bed. Later, when she was standing in the doorway, her husband entered, passing right through her. Then she realized that she must be dead. But being dead was not at all what she had been taught. She was not wafted to any place of pearly gates and golden streets. She was not given a white robe and golden crown; no angel handed her a harp with an invitation to join the celestial choir singing hosannas around a Great White Throne. She hadn't seen Jesus, and for that matter she had not met any of her loved ones who had preceded her over Jordan. On the contrary, she found herself still wandering round her old house, terribly lonesome because evidently nobody saw her and there was not a soul to pass her a kind word. When she tried to attract attention she got no response. Her grandson H—— was the first person who seemed able to see her and hear her. It was a great relief.

There was no doubt about it, Grandma was eager to talk. She described minutely her own funeral, but she said that she did not go to the cemetery because she thought that would be "rather morbid." During the funeral ceremony the family sat upstairs in a room by themselves. The friends and neighbors sat downstairs, with the casket in the hall. Grandma said that she heard what these people said about her to each other and she was not entirely pleased. She named in particular one woman who had remarked to her neighbor, sotto voce, that the old lady's life had been so narrow and restricted. After this talk the apparition vanished.

On his next visit to his grandmother's house during the week,

H—— made a point of inquiring of the lady quoted as to whether she had made that remark about the narrowness of Grandma's life, and she confessed that she had, but could not understand how he could possibly know because he was upstairs at the time.

Next Sunday forenoon, about the same time, Grandma came again in the same room where H—— was enjoying his day of rest. All other days would have found him at that hour busy at the office. Coming on the Lord's Day, as she did, the old lady forbore to scold him, as she would have done in life, because he was absenting himself from church.

On this second visit her complaints were on the same theme. She was unhappy. Since her departure the housekeeping had gone slack, and people were taking improper liberties with her things. She lodged a particular accusation against her "companion," who was now sitting in the old lady's favorite rocking chair. "I can't sit in it myself," she protested, "if somebody else is sitting there, and it's *my* chair."

Accordingly, on his next visit to the house H—— made inquiries about the use of that chair. At first the companion stedfastly denied using it, but a maid divulged the fact that when all the family were downstairs, this woman "always made for it."

On the following Sunday Grandma appeared again as before. This time she was indignant because the old nurse in the family who attended to some of the sweeping downstairs, was neglecting her work. She had swept round the big settle in the front hall instead of going beneath it, with the result that there was an accumulation of dust there. When H—— taxed the nurse on that score he was told indignantly that, having worked in that family for thirty-four years, she was not the one to skimp her sweeping. However, he took her to the settle, hauled it out from the wall, and thereby revealed accumulated "fluffs" of many days. Then the woman had to confess that she had left the settle for the last when she swept the hall and had forgotten to go back to it and clean beneath it.

When these spectral visits began H—— wrote to Professor William James about them. As will be recalled, he had been a student

under James at Harvard. The latter suggested certain questions to ask Grandma's ghost about conditions of her new existence and report back to him. The substance of her answers was that she felt lost, lonely, and unhappy. She said that she found that she could move at will, without walking, but she was still in her house, and she had expected to be in Heaven. As for seeing, she reported that at night she could see as well as she used to see in life at twilight. She felt no need for sleep.

For his part H—— told her that her trouble came from the fact that she was wholly "earthbound," or rather housebound, and that until she could get rid of her obsession with housekeeping and trifling family matters she probably could not go on to a higher existence. He advised her to try to think of something worth while, as compared with dust under the settle and another woman sitting in her rocking chair.

It must have been a great comfort to her to be able to come and talk with her grandson, even if he had to lecture her, because she was so lonely and lost. She appeared practically every Sunday, at about the same hour for ten or a dozen visits. Each time that she appeared, says H——, her form was not solid in appearance but rather filmy, as it was of the other ghosts he had seen in his life. Her voice was clear. "I could have recognized it blindfolded," he asserts, but "the sound seemed to come from a distance."

Gradually, as the visits and the conversations continued, Grandma said that she began to see other shapes than the familiar ones of her household. These new figures she recognized as deceased old friends and members of the family, who appeared to be trying to welcome her. At the same time she said that living people now began to look blurry. At one stage toward the end of this strange relationship she described both types of shapes as being equally indistinct. Then she announced happily that the new apparitions were now clear and distinct, while the old, familiar ones were fading out. Then she realized that at last she had broken the old fetters of dustpan and broom and was going on to a different sort of heaven from any that she had ever imagined, but perhaps, after all, a better one. Other spirits, she said, were now coming to her, in

order to take her with them to the heaven where they were. At any rate, she must have found herself at last, for she never visited her grandson again.

II. "IMMORTALITY PROVED BY THE TESTIMONY OF SENSE"

These words form the title of a pamphlet written by Rev. Abraham Cummings, an obscure Baptist preacher of the early eighteen-hundreds. His ministry was chiefly on the Maine coast. In 1793, he was supply pastor for a Congregational church in Bath. Some of his parishioners presented him with a sail boat, and he conducted most of his later ministry from this boat, cruising alone along the coast and going ashore to preach in the small settlements among the islands and on the mainland.

He is described as an absent-minded, unworldly person, who never worried about food, shelter, or raiment, and he had unconventional ideas for a Baptist minister. One of his unorthodox beliefs was his conviction of the reality of the world of spirits and of their nearness to human life. Like Swedenborg, he was acutely aware of the unseen world. The foundation of that conviction was an experience which he had, one that proved survival "by the testimony of sense." That is, by the eyes and ears. He deemed this so important that he published a pamphlet about it. There was probably an early edition, of which there is no record, but one was certainly printed in Bath, in 1826, the year before his death, and another was issued in Portland as late as 1859. Of these editions there are, so far as is known, only three copies extant.

The pamphlet relates a fantastic story of a ghost that appeared in a Maine seaport village, which, one may guess from internal evidence, must have been near Machiasport. The author tells his story badly. He leaves out important data such as the name of the place—he assumes that everybody knew that—and he wastes many pages in theological argument to prove that specters and ghostly communications are not contrary to Holy Writ. But he did have the good sense to collect affidavits from witnesses; not all, because

there were over a hundred of them, but a-plenty. And Cummings is scrupulous enough to divide these into two groups, those who saw, heard and still doubted, and those who saw, heard and believed that the ghost was really the spirit of their deceased neighbor, Mrs. George Butler. The favorite theory of the dissenters was that, while the wraith of the dead woman resembled her exactly it must have been a simulacrum fashioned by the Devil. In so doing, of course, Satan was up to no good. This was the position taken by the dead woman's sister, who, however, never was able to see the apparition, though she heard the voice. Many others came out boldly with the statement that they believed the vision to be really the spirit of Mrs. Butler. Among these was the woman's husband.

One cannot read these affidavits, whether from the doubters or the believers, without being driven to the conclusion that something astounding must have happened to that community. The only alternative is to believe that this unworldly minister of the gospel concocted a deliberate fraud and invented all the affidavits, and that he carried his hoax to the point of getting the story printed. That would have been an idiotic thing to do, for once his deceit was exposed, his career as a minister would have ended in disgrace. Certainly his contemporaries accepted it as an honest tale. At any rate, here it is in brief:

On the night of August 9–10, 1799, in a sea captain's house on the Maine coast, a voice was heard coming out of nowhere, announcing that the speaker was going to appear in the village. Practical, seafaring folk naturally laughed at spectral voices and the people who reported such nonsense were, in their eyes, "teched in the head." Therefore, the persons who heard the voice kept it to themselves or whispered the tale to only a few intimates.

Nothing more of the sort happened for months. Then, on January 2d, the promise was fulfilled. The voice sounded again in the house of Captain Paul Blaisdel—practically every adult male in the community was called "captain"—and the phantom voice ordered the family to send two messengers to fetch David Hooper.

It was the voice of a woman, and she said that she was the deceased wife of George Butler. As David Hooper was her father, she wished to talk with him.

No one dared refuse such a voice and Hooper was sent for, crazy as the mission sounded. Wondering, ridiculing and grumbling, the old man came. Evidently his curiosity got the better of his common sense. As soon as he arrived the voice began, and it was so unmistakably the tone and manner of his daughter that he was completely convinced. Later, in his affidavit, he wrote that she gave him "such clear and irresistible tokens of her being the spirit of my own daughter as gave me no less satisfaction than admiration and delight."

It is not clear from the pamphlet whether the "Specter," as Cummings invariably refers to her, showed herself in visible form on that first occasion when her father was present, but she did soon after. Blaisdel was walking through a field one day when he saw an unreal-looking figure of a woman at a distance. In a few moments she moved rapidly toward him. He wrote afterwards that in moving she never touched the ground but seemed to float just above it. Her raiment, he said, was "as white as possible." He was literally dumbfounded by the apparition; then it vanished.

The next evening she appeared in his house and rebuked him for not speaking to her in the field, old friend and neighbor as she was. Then, for a while, there was a surcease of visitations, to the vast relief of the Blaisdel family.

In March, she came back again, but this time by voice alone, simply to make the unwelcome announcement that she would return that very day. Sure enough, at two o'clock, she was in the house, and for two hours kept up a running fire of conversation with four terror-stricken members of the Blaisdel household. She remarked that "though my body is consumed and turned to dust, my soul is as much alive as before I left the body." For this interview she insisted on her auditors going down into the cellar. In fact, in all her subsequent visitations she used the Blaisdel cellar more than any other spot in the village for her manifestations. It was a poky sort of audience chamber, but as one of those present de-

clared, the gloom of the place was "enlightened by her radiance."

Then the late Mrs. George Butler skipped a month, but she was back again in May for six days of appearance in close succession. One morning she came to the Blaisdel house at eleven o'clock, and at once the terrified family fled the place. Then, fearful of the consequences if they displeased the Specter, they straggled back again. There she was waiting for them, and she marshaled them like so many trembling sheep into one room. Already it had been observed that, in these visitations, although most people could both see and hear her, there were a few who could hear but never were able to see, despite the shining white garment that the others described.

All the foregoing and much more came to the ears of the Reverend Abraham Cummings, who at the time, evidently, was ministering to the spiritual needs of these people. Naturally he was amused. As a college man—he was a graduate of Brown—and a theologian, he could feel a pitying sorrow for these ignorant folk who could take such ridiculous stories seriously. Perhaps it would be a good thing to preach a sermon on the subject of ungodly superstitions. Perhaps he himself might be able to show up the fraud.

During June, there were no more visits from the Specter. One evening in July, however, some excited individuals ran in upon the parson to tell him that the ghost of Mrs. Butler was back again. Ten minutes later he left his house to see for himself. Not knowing where in particular to look, he started to cross the open field that lay in front of his door. Certainly he was not expecting any miracle, but he felt that it would be an excellent thing to put an end to the nonsense which had the whole community by the ears.

About twelve rods ahead of him there was a slight knoll or rise in the ground, and he could see a group of white rocks on the slope, showing dimly against the dark turf. "Probably that is all the ghost amounts to," he told himself, and kept on walking. Two or three minutes later, he looked up again, and his jaw dropped. One of those white rocks had risen off the ground, apparently, and had now taken the shape of a globe of light with a rosy tinge. This was

so amazing a spectacle that he turned toward it to examine it closely.

As he went toward it he kept his eyes fixed on it, for fear it might disappear, but he had not gone more than five paces when the glowing mass flashed right to where he was. Instantly the light resolved itself into the shape and dress of a woman, but small, the size of a child of seven. Staring at it in amazement, he thought, "You are not tall enough for the woman who has been appearing among us." Immediately, the figure expanded to normal size, and now, he wrote afterwards, "she appeared glorious," with rays of light shining from her head all about and reaching to the ground. What should he do? Remembering having read somewhere that if one ever met a ghost he must let the apparition speak first, he kept silent. All the while, as he gazed at the vision, he said that he was filled with two strangely conflicting emotions. One was fright, "but," he adds, "my fear was connected with ineffable pleasure."

In another moment the Specter was gone, but the influence of that radiant apparition never left him. After that, he said, all mundane things seemed dull and commonplace and of no real value. Gone now was his amused contempt for the poor, ignorant yokels who were taken in by ghost stories. He had seen for himself.

It was the month following, August, in which the visits of the Specter occurred most often. She showed herself almost every day between the first and the fourteenth. By this time she had been seen and heard so often that much of the first terror had worn off among those who, like the Blaisdel family, were the chief objects of her attention. Once, on a visit in May, she had said to the Blaisdels, "I have come again. Be not afraid—you need not be. I never hurt you, did I? And I shall not hurt you now. Put your things in place." This command referred to the fact that through fear the children had moved their beds into their parents' room. By midsummer the whole countryside was so stirred by the story that people flocked to see and hear, out of curiosity, whenever and wherever word went out that she might be expected. Once as many as fifty people packed into the Blaisdel cellar.

One of these, a stranger who came from a distance to see the ghost for herself, was a young married woman, Mary Gordon, from whom Cummings obtained one of his many affidavits. Her story is typical of the strange sessions conducted by the Specter. Mary was staying at the Blaisdels' on the night of August fourth. The regular procedure of the ghost was to announce her coming by a series of loud knocks. It was a barrage of these that woke Mary "about two hours before daylight." Hastily dressing, she went downstairs, and there, joining the rest of the assembly—most of whom must have slept on the floor, for they numbered about twenty—they all trooped down into the cellar, which by this time was known to be the Specter's favorite resort. "Then," writes Mary, "I heard such a voice speaking to us as I never heard before nor since. It was shrill but mild and pleasant."

Captain Blaisdel then addressed the voice, for the figure was not as yet visible, explaining why there were so many strangers there. Out of the darkness came the words, "I was once N—— H[ooper]." Then she started off on a fluent monolog. Straightway there appeared a shapeless mass of light. This grew into the figure of a woman, just as Cummings had seen it do in the field. The Specter then ordered her audience to stand in ranks about four or five feet apart. This done, she slowly passed and repassed between these ranks "so that any one of us could have touched her." Mary goes on to say that "when she passed by me her nearness was one of contact so that if there had been a substance I should certainly have felt it. The glow of the apparition had a constant tremulous motion."

At last, the shining form "became shapeless, expanded every way and then vanished in a moment." But that was not all to this visit. As a voice, the Specter ordered them all to stay where they were and talked to them for an hour until it was broad daylight. She told them that on account of her visits to this house the Blaisdel family had been subjected to cruel and wicked gossip and false accusations, and predicted that these would grow even worse. She then quoted Isaac Watts and abruptly ended the interview.

This persecution of the Blaisdels arose largely from the fact that

the Specter gave orders that Lydia Blaisdel should marry George Butler, the man who had been the ghost's own husband. Spiteful people, who had neither seen nor heard the Specter, declared that the whole story of a ghost was concocted by Lydia and her sister to get a husband, that Lydia used a "sounding board" to make the sepulchral voice.

In all that the Specter is reported to have ordered of her listeners she was as arbitrary as Queen Victoria, and she exacted the same obedience. In the end she got her way over all opposition. The most conspicuous example was this matter of the marriage between Lydia Blaisdel and George Butler. The girl protested tearfully that she would never marry a man who was scared into matrimony by a ghost. Her parents and his joined in opposing the idea. Once that summer Lydia tried to board a vessel lying in the harbor bound for York, where she had friends with whom she could stay. But it was all in vain. Somehow, in the end, the various parties came together in agreement and Lydia Blaisdel became George Butler's second wife. Within twenty-four hours of that wedding the Specter came to the husband and said, "Be kind to Lydia, for she will not be with you long. She will have but one child and die within the year." Cummings says that ten months after that prediction Lydia gave birth to a child and died next day.

One other command came to pass through the insistence of the Specter and the grudging obedience of the people she addressed. This was the exhumation of an infant's body and its reburial at another spot not far distant. Cummings is exasperatingly vague about this because he says simply that there seemed no reason for doing this at the time it was ordered but eighteen months later its purpose was understood.

The Specter made other predictions besides the death of Lydia in childbirth. She foretold a legal suit involving the Blaisdels, evidently growing out of the gossip of this affair, and just how it would result. On one of her earliest visits Captain Blaisdel asked her about his father, who, he had heard, was sick. The father was then living in York, two hundred miles away. The Specter answered promptly that the father was dead. Later Blaisdel learned that the

death had occurred seven days before. But of that fact he had no means of knowing at the time. Incidentally, Captain Blaisdel was, according to Cummings, a man noted for his piety and upright character.

The foregoing is only a bare outline of the story as it may be pieced together from Cummings's own statements and the contents of the numerous attestations. It is an astounding tale and it is adorned by circumstances that are grotesque. One can hardly read the accounts written by the witnesses without being convinced that they are honest words. It is clear that Cummings himself is baffled by the story, by whatever good it was that the returning spirit of Mrs. George Butler expected to accomplish. But he does know that, disbelieving, he saw for himself, was convinced as to the reality of the Specter, also that many others did likewise. Hence he gives the narrative to the public; for here, at last, on the word of many trustworthy witnesses, is evidence of eyes and ears, the "testimony of sense" to the truth of the belief in immortality.

A brief résumé of this story of a ghost may serve to conclude it here. Usually a single appearance of a spirit form or voice is a matter of great wonder, but here was a ghost who came by the audible word or visible shape, or both, on at least twenty-five different occasions. And usually, when she came, it was for no fleeting moment but for a matter of hours. The visits were as often by day as by night, outdoors as well as in. Time and place made no difference, though she was partial to the Blaisdel house and particularly the cellar there. She appeared at other houses, also. She showed herself to Cummings in the open field; once she brought up the rear of a procession which she had ordered, of people walking two by two in solemn step, "as at a funeral," who trudged a matter of a couple of miles and back again. This time she floated along with Lydia as her partner, much to the latter's dismay. In one of her sessions, in which George Butler was present, she convinced him by repeating a conversation which she and he had held together privately in life and of which no living person knew a word. In the presence of a score of people on this occasion Butler tried to put

his hand on the apparition, but it passed through the shining substance, feeling nothing. It seemed to be a matter of indifference how many auditors she had; sometimes she manifested herself to only two or three; at other times to as many as fifty men, women, and children. One time when she had a large audience in the Blaisdel cellar, she ordered Lydia—on account of the gossip—to go upstairs, attended by two women, and sit on the hearth in one of the rooms. Then the Specter carried on triumphantly in the cellar, proving that what she said was not the work of Lydia and "a sounding board."

Of the witnesses—and Cummings declares there were upwards of a hundred in all—most could both see and hear. Others could only hear a voice but got the words distinctly; a few said they heard a strange voice but could not distinguish the words spoken. Also there were those who were unable on the first occasion to see the Specter but succeeded in doing so after repeated visits. All who saw agreed on the form and features being those of the deceased woman, and they all testified to the bright light which came from her, so that it illumined the field at night and shone like a lamp in the cellar. Those who saw her outdoors said that she did not walk but seemed to float just above the ground.

Even after a close perusal of Cummings's narrative of the mysterious visitation that came to a Maine seacoast village it is hard to see what good was accomplished by the Specter. Poor Lydia became her successor as Mrs. George Butler, but died after less than a year of married life. Her family were persecuted by gossips and were burdened with a suit in court, besides being overrun by curious people who came from far and near to see the ghost. They might well have wished their deceased friend and neighbor had stayed where she belonged on the astral plane. Certainly, if anyone were making up a ghost story as a hoax, it would have more point to it than this. But there it is. And in the sum total it may make a strong claim, on account of the many appearances and the numerous witnesses, to being the most extraordinary ghost story on record.

III. A GHOST IS LAID

All religions have had some rite or magic formula for the "laying" or dismissal of troublesome spirits. Among primitive peoples misfortune and sickness are explained as the work of evil spirits; consequently, priests and medicine men have a great deal of exorcising to do. In the Christian church the practice of exorcism has dwindled to the business of expelling malevolent spirits from persons that are thought to be suffering from "possession," and more rarely from places that are afflicted by what the Churchman calls "diabolical infestation."

This ritual has disappeared from the Episcopalian prayer book, but according to the *Catholic Encyclopedia* exorcism is still a recognized practice in the Roman Church. The chief instruments in this rite are holy water, consecrated oil, and salt, accompanied by prayer. It is added that "the exorcist should be vested in surplice and violet stole." While emphasis is laid on personal exorcism, "houses and other places supposed to be haunted by unclean spirits are likewise to be exorcised with similar rites." It will be remembered that at Borley a priest tried exorcism but without conspicuous success.

For the most part, however, even the most loyal Catholic churchmen, including the priesthood, say little nowadays about the rite of exorcism. Few would admit the reality of ghosts or "diabolical spirits," anyway; and certainly, if there are no such things, why should there be any rite for banishing them? In Pierre Van Paassens's story of the spectral hound in his house it will be recalled that the Abbé, to whom he appealed for advice in the matter, did nothing to cure it with bell, book, holy water, oil, and salt. Instead, he told his friend to dismiss his young servant girl.

It has apparently proved more successful in recent years, at least, to employ the services of a person who is known to be a "psychic," or medium. In the Introduction to this collection of ghost stories it was said that no mention would be made of specters that had been produced or evoked by mediums—no "materializations," no direct-voice phenomena and the like. The story that fol-

lows need not be regarded as an exception to that principle because the ghost was already on the scene and the services of a psychic were used only for the purpose of dismissing it.

In this instance the medium is a person whom the reader has already met several times in these pages, Mrs. Eileen Garrett, and to her kindness I am indebted for access to her secretary's notes taken while she was in trance. For further important details I am indebted to the two chief witnesses, Dr. Elmer A. Lindsay, and to Dr. Nandor Fodor who was in charge of the affair. The story has features that make it unique.

For obvious reasons the real names of place and persons intimately concerned are not given. The scene was a house that we shall call Lynn Manor, situated in a small community in southern England at a distance of an easy three-hour motor drive from London. The time was July, 1936.

Two years before, a man and his wife—we shall call them Kirk—acquired possession of the Manor. Fragments of its walls were said to date back as far as the time of Edward the Confessor. But the place had been destroyed and rebuilt many times in the wars of the intervening centuries. Mr. Kirk obtained the estate at a low figure. He had not been informed that it was haunted, and would have laughed if he had. Lynn Manor was an attractive, rambling country seat with its twenty-four acres of lawn and gardens and rural landscape surroundings.

The first indication of a haunting occurred about five months after Mr. and Mrs. Kirk and their daughter moved in. On November 18th, the owner was awakened at three-thirty-five by three violent blows on his bedroom door. He got up and went down the hall to his wife's room to ask if she had heard anything. She said yes, she had heard three loud bangs. They discussed the noise for a while but without reaching any explanation.

The next night at the same hour two loud knocks smote the door, and the third night, also at the same time, just one. This mathematical regression series sounded like a deliberate intention, but who or what made these sounds was the mystery.

For a few days Kirk was called away on business, and while

he was gone the Manor was at peace. On the 25th he was home again. In his subsequent statement to Dr. Fodor he says that he found his room unnaturally cold. In addition, he had a queer feeling about the room that made him nervous. He had not forgotten the banging on his door. Accordingly, he decided to stay awake until three-thirty-five, and he left his door open and the lights on. This time he wanted to see what happened if the noise returned. About three o'clock, however, he snapped out the light and soon dropped asleep.

Twenty minutes later he was awakened by another one of those resounding bangs on his door, and he sat up in bed with a jerk. In the doorway he saw "a little, oldish man, dressed in green smock, very muddy breeches and gaiters, a slouch hat on and a handkerchief round his neck." Kirk's first thought was that a servant must have left the door open and a tramp had entered.

"Who are you?" No answer. "What do you want in my house?"

Still the intruder stood there staring in a stupid fashion and making no reply. Naturally Kirk was furious. He sprang from his bed and dashed for the man. He reached to seize him by the shoulder, but his hand went through the figure. Kirk cried out, lost his balance, and fell heavily. He thought that he must have fainted, but he soon scrambled to his feet and ran to his wife's bedroom.

To the great alarm of his wife and daughter he came staggering in, babbling incoherently, his eyes staring and his countenance livid with terror. He had barely lurched into the room when he collapsed. Mrs. Kirk's first thought was to get some brandy, and she ran out into the corridor and back toward the servants' rooms to get the keys to the wine cellar. This room was next to her husband's, but raised. As the hallway was dark she had her eyes lowered to watch for the steps. At her husband's door she noticed, first, a pair of feet and leggings. Looking up, she saw what she described afterwards as a little old man, "very solid, absolutely clear." She spoke of his costume as an old smock and "Elizabethan leggings and boots," covered with mud. Round his neck was tied a red handkerchief. His chin was clean-shaven, but with hair under it, and he wore "A little round, pudding-basin hat." The face was very red,

the eyes malevolent, and the mouth open and dribbling. "He stared at me with the look of an idiot."

She thought that someone had broken in and was playing a practical joke on her husband.

"What do you want?" she cried in anger. "Who are you?" It never occurred to her that this strange figure was an apparition, for it looked like any living man, solid, substantial. When no answer followed she hit at him with her fist as hard as she could. Her hand went right through and smashed against the lintel of the door, cutting the skin badly. The pain and the force of the blow spun her round. As she turned about, there the man was still standing "as solid and immovable as before."

Then she realized that this was no living man but something from another world. Terrified, she turned and ran down to the cellar. As the Kirks looked back on the experience of that night, they recalled that although there was no light on in the corridor, that grotesque figure was so clearly visible that each of them was able to note the details of his costume and the look of his face, and yet the apparition did not seem to emit any light from itself.

This visitation was only the beginning. The phantom was seen by Mr. and Mrs. Kirk about two dozen times. At first, the intruder stood only in the doorway of Kirk's bedroom. After a while he took to walking around inside and disappearing at the chimney. Whenever he appeared the husband would shout for his wife. Then she would come and touch the ghost with outstretched hand. This made it vanish.

On the third night that they saw him, the specter deliberately raised his head showing that the throat was cut from ear to ear. The wound was horrible, with ragged edges and tissues protruding.

One night it was Mrs. Kirk and her daughter whose room was invaded. They heard heavy footsteps pounding down the passageway toward their room. Mrs. Kirk thought that it must be her husband, but as she glanced at her dog she felt creepy all over, for she saw that the animal was petrified with fear. She looked toward the door, which was bolted on the inside, and to her horror saw it open. All the while a bright electric light illuminated the room. The door

opened, but no figure was to be seen entering. Instead, mother and daughter heard "an invisible man" tramp slowly across the room. Despite their fright they noticed that when the steps crossed the carpet their noise was not softened in the least. The terror-stricken dog, his hair bristling, could only follow the sound of the footfalls with staring eyes. Then the noises rose into the air as if the Invisible were mounting a staircase that did not exist. A moment later the trap door in the ceiling flew open, and after that the measured tread died away in the attic.

Afterwards it was learned from a previous owner that there had been a flight of steps in that room leading to the attic but it had been removed long since. Also, although the heavy tramp of feet was heard in the attic, at that time all the oak flooring had been removed and there was nothing to walk on up there but the joists.

As the haunting continued to grow worse rather than better over the months that followed, the Kirks were reduced to desperation. They tried the exorcism of the church, but it had no effect. Then Mr. Kirk applied to Dr. Nandor Fodor for help. Dr. Fodor was for several years Director of Research of the International Institute for Psychical Research in London. To him, as an expert in such matters, many people had sent their own experiences of hauntings, and sometimes these were accompanied by a plea for help. Dr. Fodor went to Lynn Manor and spent a night there, but he neither saw nor heard anything unusual. However, he examined the house and took depositions from Mr. Kirk, and from Mrs. Kirk and her daughter jointly. He learned in the village that the Manor had the reputation of being haunted, but during the seven years prior to the Kirks' occupancy everything had been normal and peaceful there.

Dr. Fodor decided, as an experiment, to obtain the services of Mrs. Eileen Garrett, one of the outstanding psychics of Britain at that time, and one who was exceptional in the fact that she was not herself a Spiritualist. However, under the guidance of Mr. J. Hewat McKenzie, Secretary of the British College of Psychical Science, she had been successful over a period of ten years in ridding certain dwellings of poltergeist disturbances. She readily con-

sented to see what could be done at Lynn Manor.

Accordingly, a party was formed for the purpose, consisting of Mrs. Garrett, her daughter, Dr. Fodor, Dr. Elmer A. Lindsay, an amateur investigator, and Mr. Rouse, Mrs. Garrett's secretary. On the afternoon of July 25, 1936, they drove out from London. Mrs. Garrett was told nothing about the Lynn Manor ghost except the mere fact that the place was haunted.

That evening, this group, joined by the Kirks, assembled in the host's bedroom, where he had first discovered the apparition at the door and had so often seen him since. Mrs. Garrett soon went into trance. "Uvani," her control, came through and gave his customary salutation: "It is I, Uvani, I give you greeting." This is said by Mrs. Garrett entranced, bowing formally with arms crossed over her chest.

Dr. Fodor then explained that the house was disturbed by a ghost, the owners felt that it was suffering and they themselves were distraught. Was it possible to do something both for them and the unhappy spirit?

"You will not mind if I say," Uvani replied, "that when there is unhappiness in a house and there is an impression of someone coming back it is because you make for that spirit a Garden of Memory in which it can live and revive its sufferings . . . If you are happy, all is pleasant—no constraint in your heart or mind—no visitation. You can't get a visitation from the fragment of something that is tied to its environment unless you yourself supply that environment."

This was an interesting theory, intimating that a bad emotional conflict in the Kirk family had provided the setting for the unhappy human memory to relive its suffering.

Dr. Fodor objected that this specter seemed very substantial, but Uvani stood to his thesis. "Life cannot die," said he. "You can explode its dynamism but you cannot dissipate its energy . . . A sensitive person may easily vivify not one but a thousand memories. About five hundred yards from this house there was in the early part of the fifteenth century, a temporary jail for prisoners of state. Many men and women lost their lives there. There are dozens of

unhappy souls about. If a particular one comes to trouble you it is because that one had some affinity with you. If you are nervously depleted and live in this room, you give out energy with which the ghost builds itself up like a picture on the stage."

Again Uvani addressed directly the occupants of the house. "Unless you of the household are unhappy, unless you are in constraint with each other . . . he cannot come and worry."

Dr. Lindsay then asked, "What about uninhabited houses that are haunted?" Uvani's answer was that energy comes from the people who go there out of morbid curiosity, especially if a murder had been committed there. "We go there," he said, "and give out a life force that vivifies. Even an empty house can be kept haunted by the energy emitted as we hurry by, afraid." He stated frankly that Mr. Kirk was in a low state, mentally and emotionally, and this created the basis for the unhappy ghost.

Dr. Lindsay then inquired, "What makes the sounds?" referring to the noises of knocks and footsteps.

"Nothing in life is lost," was the reply. "If you could get an instrument of sufficient sensitivity you could immediately hear the sounds of the past. If you wind back the clock of time it is possible for you to hear the prophets speaking or your own Christian One—you could see everything that happened. If this personality is trying to get in contact with you and you are sensitive to sound, you will be able to hear that sound. It is present in the record of timelessness."

The next query was, "What can be done to cure the haunting?" Uvani answered that the method was to call the memory into being and permit it to take possession of the medium. Then it could be dissipated. "I shall allow this chamber to be filled with the memory of the past. I shall stand aside. When that memory takes possession of this instrument [Mrs. Garrett] I shall be out of possession . . . I promise you that when this memory is dissipated there will be no further trouble."

Dr. Lindsay then asked, "While this memory is vivified is the actual soul of the man in possession? Does *he* haunt the house?"

"While he is solid to you he does not know that he haunts the

place. You must tell him that he does. It is possible that he is not at all aware of it . . . The form may not be aware of the fact that time is not what it was. He may even mistake you for something out of his past."

All this time Mrs. Garrett, in trance, sat with her arms folded across her breast, bending forward but relaxed. When Uvani had finished speaking, the tempo of her breathing changed, she groaned as if in profound sleep, and stretched out to full length, rigid on the edge of her chair. The breathing became labored as if she had a stricture of the throat. It was evident that someone else was in possession instead of Uvani. She pointed to her lips, ran her fingers round her neck, feeling it up and down as if the throat had been wounded. Apparently it was now the ghost who was in control of the medium. By touching the lips "he" seemed to be trying to indicate that he couldn't speak. Next, Mrs. Garrett beckoned to Dr. Fodor, as if the spirit were anxious to make sure that the scene was real, and when he came near gripped his right hand so hard with her left as to make him cry out. Dr. Lindsay tried to help loosen the fingers from that vise-like grip but failed to break it. Soon the hand went numb. It was swollen and painful for the two days following, and was still sensitive two weeks later.

Suddenly Mrs. Garrett fell on her knees with pleading, helpless gestures. The members of the circle tried to concentrate on making the ghost understand that he could speak. There was a struggle to articulate. Dr. Lindsay touched the medium's tongue, and there followed a strangled cry.

For about fifteen minutes Mrs. Garrett remained on her knees. There was an evident struggle for speech with pleading gestures. Finally, the first word came, "Eleison." At first it was mistaken for "Alicia," but when repeated later was recognized as the second part of "Kyrie eleison!" the Greek phrase for "O Lord, have mercy on us!" in the ancient church ritual. Dr. Lindsay, assisted by one of the other gentlemen, lifted Mrs. Garrett back into her chair. The hand groped down along her side as if searching for quill and ink bottle, and the feel of the feminine clothing was seen to be unfamiliar. Again the hand went to the throat. The next word was

"Huntingdon." From fragments of words and phrases that followed the listeners guessed that this may have been the name of his liege lord.

Someone asked, "Did he do all that to you?"

"Taken everything," was the answer that came with difficulty. He then asked for his wife. "Prithee, friend, find me her resting place." It was clear afterwards that this phrase meant her dwelling place. Then he asked for his son; he said he was waiting news from him. At this point there was confusion because the group were unable to understand his diction. On his part the speaker was evidently baffled by the accents of the persons speaking to him. Dr. Lindsay spoke as an American; Dr. Fodor, as a Hungarian, spoke English with a slightly foreign accent; the others had the speech of modern England. However, the name "Buckingham" came clearly. The voice continued, "He offered me ducats and broad acres for my wife, my liege lord. He my enemy leaves me to rot here without my son. I wait for news from my son."

At this point the medium's face took on a tortured look, with half-open mouth, half-closed eyes and sunken cheeks. It was no longer the face of Mrs. Garrett. Mr. Kirk stepped forward to look closer. "It's the exact image!" he exclaimed. Then his wife looked and cried, "O my God!" She turned away shaking with sobs. It was, she said, the very expression she too had seen on the ghost.

From the fragments of speech that followed, it appeared that England was at war and the ghost's son was involved. Someone asked him to identify himself. "Charles Edward," he replied. "My father, liege lord of Henley. My lands in Huntingdon and Buckingham you are familiar with. My son, John Edward Charles, fights for my ungrateful king."

"Which king?" asked Dr. Fodor. "Can you tell his name?"

There was a long silence. Then, "I mention not his unworthy dealing with me and my son. Henley he takes from me and leaves me alone."

Then, as if realizing that his auditors had difficulty in following his speech, he said "quill." Dr. Fodor handed the medium his pencil and notebook. Holding the pencil in a queer, vertical posi-

tion, the hand wrote in shaky and curious letters "Henley." This is the present name of a farm near the Manor. Then followed in a strange, tangled script, "Edward Charles," followed by "Lord Huntingdon."

Since it was clear that the group were in the dark as to the relationship between the ghost and these names, he went on, "Buckingham not my name but friend of childhood. Dorothy my wife. He forced her eyes [seduced her?]. Maulgré her father lies buried in Esse."

At first the old French word "maulgré" was not grasped in its meaning of "notwithstanding," and "Esse" was later discovered to be the ancient name of a neighboring village. He went on, "Buried in yonder grave. He did this to me. But this royal bastard forgets and takes. May his soul burn forever in that hell through which there can be no escape."

At this point several members of the group spoke, urging the unhappy spirit to abandon the thought of vengeance. But he repeated often that his only wish was to wreak revenge on Buckingham. He asked his auditors for help in attaining this end. When asked if he would like to see his wife, the unexpected reply was no, because she would not recognize him now. But he did desire news of her and of his son.

Dr. Fodor then said that the ghost must realize his position, that he is no longer where he thinks he is; centuries have passed and he is what men call "dead." But he really is alive and he can be happy and meet his wife and son again if he calls for them and abandons all thought of revenge. That is something he must leave to God. He should pray that both he and his enemies might be forgiven.

His reply to this little homily was, "You prate to me of God. I want my vengeance."

Dr. Lindsay took him up at once by saying, "We prate to you of God. We also prated to you that you have your tongue and that your body is well. Therefore, why don't you permit us to prove to you that we are right concerning God as well?"

"Well spoken, sir," was the answer. But he insisted that he wanted nothing for himself; only for his wife and son. And he was

told that all depended on him. He could see them again, but he must give up this passion for revenge.

"Which do you prefer," Dr. Lindsay asked finally, "your vengeance or to see your wife and son?"

The voice stammered. At last he said, "It is for them. I shall ask for myself nothing." When pressed for a yes or no on this matter, he answered, "For them, yes." Then he pleaded, "Will you speak to me again? . . . Hold me, I cannot stay. I am slipping. Don't leave me!"

Mrs. Garrett fell back in her chair and the grip on Dr. Fodor's hand was relaxed. Someone spoke again about the wife and son, but there was no reply. It seemed as if the instant the desire for revenge was relinquished the tortured spirit had been released. Shortly afterwards Mrs. Garrett came out of trance.

To Dr. Fodor and the others in his party it seemed as if the session had been both interesting and successful, but the Kirks were not satisfied. They said he had promised the ghost too much. Suppose he didn't find his wife and son, wouldn't he come back worse than ever? True enough, twenty-four hours after that sitting, Dr. Fodor received a telephone call from Mr. Kirk: "My God, he's here again! He is standing in the doorway, trying to open his mouth and speak." He had already called up Mrs. Garrett with the same message.

Dr. Fodor then arranged with her for a private sitting to hear more from Uvani about the case. The latter sketched a devastating picture of Mr. Kirk's private life and character and the emotional conflict going on in that house between him and his wife. This confirmed what Dr. Fodor had already discovered.

Three days after the session in Lynn Manor, in the forenoon, Dr. Lindsay had a private sitting with another psychic, Mrs. Ruth Vaughan, at the headquarters of the British College for Psychical Research. She knew nothing of the evening at the Manor. When the session began he remarked to the control, giving no names, "We had an interesting time last week."

"How do you like laying ghosts?" was the reply. "That too was a double laying." This was in reference to a previous experience of

Mrs. Garrett, of which Dr. Lindsay knew. It came out later that at Lynn the haunting was not only that of the prisoner, Lord Henley, but of his jailer as well.

Then Mrs. Vaughan was possessed by the ghost. She took on the same agonized expression that Mrs. Garrett's face had shown, and there were the same pleading gestures. And Mrs. Vaughan seized Dr. Lindsay's wrist in a tight grip, as Mrs. Garrett had done with Dr. Fodor.

"Let go and I'll speak," commanded Dr. Lindsay.

"I came the next night"—that was the time Mr. Kirk had seen him and telephoned—"and you weren't there." The voice was a whisper. Dr. Lindsay explained that they had made no promise to return the very next night. Then the ghost said that he had made contact with his son but not as yet with his wife. At that point Mrs. Vaughan's control returned and there was no more from Lord Henley.

That very afternoon, however, the same group that had met at Lynn Manor came together for a sitting in Piccadilly. Again Mrs. Garrett went into trance. When Uvani introduced himself, Dr. Fodor put to him some questions about the session of three days before at the Manor. Uvani replied that there had been no proper cooperation on the part of the Kirks. They had tried exorcism, but there was no prayer from the heart and so it was useless. "They have created for themselves an atmosphere in which this unhappy creature could express himself. They supply the energy to permit this haunting." Continuing, he made a remark of special significance to those who are bereaved: "This giving the dead a place in your heart is good only if you do it to release them. Continued sensitivity to your own grief makes for them a living death."

When asked what the group had accomplished for the unhappy spirit he replied, "We shook somebody out of a deep sleep . . . a nightmare . . . What we have done is to let him recognize that this [nightmare] was a phantasy he hung on to, not a reality. All he seeks to know is, 'How do I get away from this so that I may not dream again? Please stay with me in sympathy until such time as I shall not be afraid to fall down if I depart into the light!' "

Uvani continued with a long story of what happened to the unhappy spirit. He said that Henley had been a Catholic and the leader of a movement against the Tudor régime. While Henley was away in Scotland and France, Buckingham promised that Henley's family should be under his protection. Instead, Buckingham robbed him of both his wife and his lands. In addition, Henley's own namesake, a self-appointed Pretender to the throne, turned him over to arrest and by that means was able to escape the country and save his own head. In this betrayal Henley's own foster-brother had a share. At the age of thirty-four the poor wretch was seized and dragged away at the end of a rope to a lifelong imprisonment. To stop his outcries his tongue was slit. Despite his sufferings, he lived on until his middle sixties, supported only by a burning passion to get revenge on those who had so cruelly wronged him.

"Remember," said Uvani, "when we have an idea in our minds it is difficult to take it away . . . Tell him the house of his dreams has gone with all the other things. In a little while you would be speaking to a reasonable gentleman . . . He still thinks of himself as unclean, unkempt, unrecognizable."

Then followed a long, pathetic speech from the ghost, of which the following is only a brief extract: "I came to greet you. Prithee, good sirs, I say I have found speech . . . I have found my son . . . Is this all well? I beseech you play not with one who is sick unto death. Am I in truth no longer in this life? Err not for a moment's peace of mind, for I have stood so much . . . Give me strength to speak more that I may be sure that I am not again deceived.

"You give me speech. You give me a clean body . . . I have been dead these many years and yet imprisoned. List to me well, good sirs . . . List with ears that are unaffected by guile. I have prayed by the cross allegiance to my Lord, kissed the sword to do Him service. Men of my faith have taken my all. What of my Lord, does He permit that those who call His holy name shall torture one who served Him? . . . What have I done that He has forgotten?"

Dr. Fodor asked for the year of his captivity. He answered, "Anno

Domini . . . of my marriage it is clear. It was in His name and on His day of Nativity, 1536."

Dr. Fodor told him that he was living only in a dream house now.

"You make a mistake . . . You come to see me . . . It is truth? . . . Is it because of my title that you release me?"

Dr. Fodor answered that they had heard of him by accident. Then the voice inquired about the jailer. Gradually it dawned upon him that the jailer had no power over him now.

"His bones lay with me for many days and nights," he said, "but his spirit held me. Have mercy, have pity and tolerance for me. I lived alone with his rotting body while his spirit moved not from me. He is no more? . . . There is no affliction to come out of this? . . . I may go in peace?"

"You may go and find your friends."

"Then let all the misery and hatred pass with me . . . I depart and take with me peace . . ." At this point Mrs. Garrett came out of trance.

It was a dramatic and tragic tale, and it would be most interesting if there were historical records that confirmed it. However, no results came from Dr. Fodor's efforts to look into the local history of the sixteenth century. No marriage records were kept there in 1536. A handwriting expert was unable to identify the curious handwriting made by Mrs. Garrett's hand in trance except to say that it was not "medieval" script, which was beside the point for a sixteenth-century story. The expert tried in vain over a matter of several hours to get Mrs. Garrett to write a passable imitation of that writing.

There was a curious sequel. Shortly after this sitting Dr. Fodor heard a frightened voice over the telephone. It was Kirk, again on long distance, and evidently much agitated. "The ghost is *within* me now!" he cried. "I can't go to sleep at night. He haunts my mind. I shall never get rid of him!"

Dr. Fodor then sent him a copy of Uvani's character sketch of him.

To Dr. Fodor's great surprise the man called up again the next

day and said, "Dr. Fodor, what Uvani said is terrible but absolutely true." The fact was, says the Doctor, that Kirk, despite his means and social position, was utterly debauched, being both a drunkard and a homosexual. His wife had a brilliant mind and came of distinguished ancestry, but it had a long record of reckless living. At the time of the haunting she was a morphine addict. Between these two depraved souls violent conflicts went on. This was the unhappy emotional atmosphere Uvani spoke of as the basis for Lord Henley's appearance and the reenactment of his wretched memories and hates.

Strange to say, the shock of seeing that revelation of his own character, coming in that supernormal way from Uvani, did something radical to Kirk. Somehow the bond between him and the ghost snapped, and no more was heard of the unhappy specter of Lynn Manor.

Chapter X

Conclusion

THE unhappy shade of Lord Henley must serve to end this parade of Unbidden Guests. These examples of "real ghosts" could readily be doubled in number, but enough have been presented to illustrate the variety of these mysterious phenomena that people who appear to be honest and intelligent have reported from time out of mind and are still reporting. The reader will naturally scan these testimonies with a critical eye. Some may point a doubtful finger at a tale here or there that they think might possibly be attributed to honest self-deception, but it is not likely that any of the witnesses quoted in these pages need fear the charge of wilful lying.

It is interesting to discover from the wide time range of these stories that the experience of seeing or hearing a ghost, which one naturally relegates to the age of superstition, continues to be reported in this skeptical twentieth century. And some of the best of these narratives come from individuals who take pains to declare that they don't believe in ghosts at all; they only wish someone would explain what happened.

It has also been interesting to discover, while assembling these experiences, how many people have seen ghosts but will never breathe a word about them unless they are sure of a sympathetic ear. For, inevitably, to admit having had such an experience raises the suspicion that one has gone crazy, even if friends are too polite to put it that way. At any rate, one fact has been clearly demonstrated in the making of this collection of ghost stories; namely, that a surprising number of normal people have had striking manifestations in their own lives but are careful to say nothing about them.

Before heading into a Conclusion about real ghosts perhaps some

mention should be made, in passing, of a few that in their time gained so much publicity that they have become legends. Naturally, what might be called legendary tales have been omitted up to this point because their "reality" would be challenged at once.

For example, there were two mysterious visitations in England, centuries ago, that enjoyed so much fame in their day that to leave them out entirely might seem inexcusable, and so it will be appropriate at this point to dust them off for a brief glance. Certainly, in their day they were regarded—for a while at least—as true occurrences by those who were most closely associated with them.

The earlier of the two is known as "The Drummer of Tedworth." The story is related with a wealth of detail by the same Reverend Joseph Glanvill, Chaplain to King Charles the Second, in the same volume, *Sadducismus Triumphatus,* which contains the tale of the spectral battle of Edge Hill mentioned earlier in these pages. Indeed, Dr. Glanvill investigated the Tedworth mystery in person and says that he was an eye-witness of many of the manifestations. These began in the year 1661 and lasted over two years. The first edition of his book appeared shortly afterwards.

The scene of the strange occurrences was the town of Tedworth in Wiltshire. A vagrant, with forged papers, was arrested and sentenced, but finally let off. His sole possession was a drum. He claimed to have been a drummer under Cromwell during the civil wars. This drum was confiscated, despite his protests, and taken to the home of the local magistrate, John Mompesson. Never was there a more unfortunate acquisition of property. Soon that drum, or some invisible one, was beaten with professional skill by an unseen pair of hands. The noise could be heard all over town. In the magistrate's house beds were banged, shaken and lifted, horrendous thumps were heard on the roof and walls, and furniture began to move of its own accord. The little children, especially, were plagued and scared out of their wits. Altogether, the details as related by Dr. Glanvill make up a first-class poltergeist story. It was worse than most such experiences, for the Mompesson house was afflicted for over two years with these noises and movements.

Naturally, the fame of it went abroad and reached the ears of

the King. Evidently, not willing to depend on Dr. Glanvill's testimony alone, he dispatched a group of messengers to Tedworth. However, the day these men arrived the Mompesson home was enjoying one of its rare days of peace. Seeing and hearing nothing, the royal envoys rode away again with much scornful laughter.

Now it came to the ears of certain worthies that the same vagrant who had been deprived of his drum had boasted to his cronies that he knew the black arts, and that he himself had been responsible for the bangings and thumpings that had descended upon Judge Mompesson's home. Accordingly, he was haled to court at Sarum, and there duly and solemnly convicted of witchcraft. For some reason he was not hanged but was sentenced to transportation. After he was sent away, peace descended upon Tedworth and the Mompesson family. Thereafter, it became the fashion to laugh at the Drummer of Tedworth, but, thanks to Dr. Glanvill and the antiquarians, the legend still persists.

About a hundred years later another ghost story was reported, which became much more famous. It once had the whole city of London by the ears and deeply impressed the literary dictator of the time, Dr. Samuel Johnson himself. It is called the Cock Lane Ghost, and the most readable, as well as the least prejudiced account of it, was written by Howard Pyle for the August, 1893, issue of *Harper's Magazine*.

Cock Lane was a dirty little street in a slummy section of eighteenth-century London. On this alley stood the house of a man named Parsons, who was the clerk in the neighboring church of Saint Sepulchre. He had a twelve-year-old daughter, who suddenly became the center of strange manifestations. In her bedroom were heard scratchings and rappings, which could not be accounted for. Once she declared that she had been terrified by the apparition of a woman. The same story was told by a publican in the Parsons house who was so frightened that he dropped a whole pint of beer on the floor and ran for his life.

It is too long a story to reproduce here, but it can be said that it has much in common with the Hydesville affair of eighty years later. For crowds came milling in and out of the Parsons house,

agog with curiosity. Also, a scheme of raps was used to correspond to questions, and out of this a tale of murder was evolved.

All London was excited by the reports, and the affair became such a scandal that the authorities intervened. Since the raps always took place in the child's room, she was held to be responsible for them. First, the officers of the law tried to make her confess, but with no success. Then they gave her the "third degree." They told her that if she did not make the ghost sound off again within a half hour, she herself and her parents would be sent to Newgate prison. The terrified child asked to be put to bed again to see if some more noises would come. After a while there was the sound of a faint scratching, which obviously was coming from near her waist line. Investigation showed that she had concealed a piece of board under her nightgown and she had been scratching on it. The witnesses declared that this sound was not in the least like the noises that had been heard before, but that made no difference. The little girl had been caught in a fraud, and that was the explanation of the whole story. She had given the police what they wanted. There was loud laughter in the coffee houses of London, and much fun poked at those who had been disposed to take the ghost seriously. Parsons was stuck into the pillory three times in one month, and imprisoned for two years. His wife went to jail for one year. No more was heard of the Cock Lane Ghost.

As for haunted houses, here in America, as well as in the Old World, there are countless dwellings, usually venerable ones, which have their own traditions of spirit possession. The Octagon House of Washington, for example, which was the scene of several tragic events, used to be famous for its ghosts in the years when it was still used as a dwelling. The house of Governor Tazewell, at Norfolk, Virginia, was moved out of the city into the suburbs many years ago, but what is supposed by the present owners to be the old gentleman's ghost has gone along with it. Those members of the family who slept in the Governor's bed repeatedly heard knockings made on the headboard and the foot, sounds made by no human hand. Occasionally, a terrified guest would come to breakfast, reporting that during the night he not only heard the raps

on the bed itself but had the bedclothes snatched off him. Since all this comes on direct testimony, perhaps it should not be classed as legend, except that it is a typical haunting story which has its counterpart in many places where the corroboration is not so good.

Although practically every old town in the United States boasts its houses that are haunted—at least, according to popular legend—the most famous ghost of American folk-lore was not a haunt, in the usual sense, for her operations extended over a wide area. This was the "Bell Witch," or the "Hag of Red River," a discarnate shrew who is still a legend in eastern Tennessee, and whose activities were made the subject of a publication by the Federal Writers Project, in 1934.

In her lifetime she was Kate Batts, reputed by her neighbors to be a witch. She believed that she had been cheated in a business transaction by one John Bell, and she vowed vengeance even if she had to accomplish it after death. According to an extremely lively legend, she kept her word in the most annoying succession of persecutions that can be imagined. She was never visible, but she introduced herself by name. She screamed her imprecations at John Bell, she threw objects about, she pulled the hair of the girls, jabbed invisible needles into all members of the family, and whacked them painfully. For good measure she frightened travelers on the roads, carried on outrageously at revival meetings, and in general had the whole county upset. Once it is said she had a tart interview with Andrew Jackson himself.

Finally, having broken up a love affair of John Bell's daughter and driven him to suicide, she departed. When she took her leave she threatened to return in a hundred years, at which time, she declared, she would be the bearer of evil tidings for Tennessee and the whole nation. For a number of years now that return visit has been overdue, but she is still remembered.

Before leaving the matter of folk-lore ghosts it may be added that the most widely current tale in America—one that has many variations—is the story of the hitch-hiker. According to this, someone driving a car picks up a young woman trying to thumb a ride.

She accepts the lift gratefully, and asks to be set down near a certain home on the route. She chats pleasantly with the driver until the car reaches the destination.

At this point the driver gets out and goes up the steps of the house to ring the doorbell. For some reason the girl stays in the car. When he turns back for her he finds nobody in the car. It comes out that she had recently been killed in a motor accident on that highway near the spot where she had begged a ride.

Probably almost everyone, at one time or another, has heard that story over the length and breath of the country. Usually it is related as something that "happened to a friend of a friend of mine."

I. HOW REAL IS A GHOST?

So much for the ghosts of legend, whose name is legion. The subtitle of this book uses the phrase "real ghosts." Now that the series of tales has come to an end it is high time we should pause to review the evidence of that alleged reality. Unquestionably, all the stories included here were believed to be true by the men and woman who told them. And there are so many of them that come from individuals of high character and intelligence. It is true that since so much depends on the credibility of testimony, allowance must be made for the frailty of human memory, for inaccuracy of observation and for the unconscious tendency toward "coloring" a story to make it better. For this reason science is impatient with any evidence that is based on even an honest person's memory and powers of observation. Nevertheless, the principal fact may be true. If a dozen witnesses to the Johnstown flood were examined, no doubt there would be wide discrepancies in the details of what they had seen and could remember, but there can be no doubt that the flood occurred. After all, whether or not testimony is a type of evidence agreeable to science, it is the sort we build our lives on. It is the same kind of evidence that judges and juries act upon when they send a man to the rope or to the chair.

The crux of the matter is the question propounded in the Introduction, *What objective reality is there to these phenomena?* What

evidence can be adduced pointing to the existence of a spectral form or voice outside the percipient's own mind? That is a question of vast significance, because its implications for the nature of human personality are immense if it can be shown that there is such a thing as a real ghost, something objective, existing by itself and not a figment of the imagination.

As noted already, this is not a question to be settled in a laboratory. "I can call spirits from the vasty deep," boasts Glendower to the practical minded Hotspur.

"Why so can I; so can any man," he replies, "but will they come when you do call for them?"

That is the trouble, they are not on call. Ghosts come and go as they please, and the coming and going are rare occasions. The great majority of us mortals go through life without ever seeing a specter or ever expecting to see one, and for many who do, the experience comes but once in a lifetime. In 1889, the Society for Psychical Research, as an early major undertaking, called for a yes or no response to the following question: "Have you ever, when believing yourself to be completely awake, had a vivid impression of seeing or being touched by a living being or inanimate object, or of hearing a voice; which impression, so far as you could discover, was not due to any external physical cause?" This question was sent out to a representative sample of the British public. Answers came from 17,000 persons; of these 15,316 said no and 1,684 answered yes. These figures suggest that only about ten percent of human beings have this supernormal experience. Of that ten percent, sixty-six percent reported that it had occurred only once in their lives.

This survey was called a "Census of Hallucinations," and that word calls up the crux of the whole problem of seeing ghosts. Is the experience only a hallucination? That word commonly means an illusion, existing only in the mind, like the disordered fancies evolved in sickness, in delirium, or by the effects of alcohol and narcotics. There is nothing outside the mind that corresponds to those imaginings.

For example, whoever reads the account of the "devil" that the

poet Shelley declared tried to assassinate him, will naturally shake his head and say "hallucination." Shelley declared that he saw a face against the window pane, fired at it with his pistol, and then ran out to catch the villain. He found a devil leaning against a tree and grappled with him. Later, he even made a sketch of the devil with horns and diabolical grin. But careful examination of the premises failed to bear out any feature of the story, except that the poet did run out into the stormy night as far as a tree. There was no sign of the bullet that the devil was supposed to have fired at Shelley. Besides, his own accounts of the adventure were not consistent with each other.

In an article on Apparitions in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, the writer suggests that anyone who thinks he has a vision would do well to shut his eyes. If he can then still see the supernatural figure, that means that it is an illusion. If, on the other hand, shutting the eyes blots out the vision, then he must be really seeing something.

Perhaps there are more ways of testing the objective reality of a ghost. This is the heart of the matter. If seeing a ghost is only a hallucination, it does not mean anything; if it is perceiving something that really exists outside the mind, it may mean a world of significance. What sort of evidence is there? Anyone who has read the narratives in this collection will have noted already many evidential circumstances, but it will be worth while to summarize the case at this point.

(1) The Physical Evidence

This phrase at once suggests the noisy haunts or poltergeist stories. Who or what made the knocks on the ceilings and walls, threw the stones, upset the kitchen utensils, shoved the furniture about and generally raised hob with so many well-ordered households? These things were not imagined; they happened. What went on in the home where Mary Carrick worked, and the strange phenomena that plagued the Cape Cod cottage, for example, are impressive stories because they were told by intellectuals who did not believe in ghosts.

In the famous Borley rectory there were other physical evidences

besides the usual poltergeist tricks of throwing things about. Doors opened and shut of themselves; their keys shot out simultaneously on the floor or disappeared completely. A gold wedding ring once appeared in the middle of a floor, every inch of which had been examined minutely a short time before. A shabby coat was found hanging in a closet, a garment no one had ever seen before. A lady felt the belt of her coat lifted and dropped by an unseen hand. Perhaps the most unusual of all the physical phenomena there was the scribbling of names and words on the walls. This was what baffled Professor Joad. It will be recalled that while he and his companion were standing watch at the Rectory one night, they discovered on the wall a brand-new scrawl; Joad called it a "squiggle." It was only a meaningless mark, but to him it was most important because it had not been there when he made his examination shortly before, and no living person could have made it. An explanation is demanded, and the learned professor is honest and frank in admitting that he does not have it.

To the physical side of the evidence must be added the effect of terror on all animals present when an apparition is seen. Often the animal appears to see it before the person does, or to sense its presence. There must be something objective that drives cats, dogs, and horses into a state of panic. No hallucinations in a human being's mind could have any such effect as that.

So also there is the feature of chill that is reported in so many of these stories. This is not a matter of imagination. It often precedes the vision itself. "The Most Haunted House in England" never could be made decently warm, as a thermometer set by Harry Price on a midsummer's day testified. Upstairs also there was what was called "the cold spot," where the chill was even more pronounced.

Still more on the objective side is the frequency with which a ghost's footsteps are heard. Rose Morton and her sisters, for example, always heard the soft tread of the Dark Lady in the passage outside their bedroom doors. The college professor and his wife in their Cape Cod cottage heard footsteps coming up the walk to their door over and over again, and the tramping of a man's feet both

downstairs and up within the house. These ghostly footfalls are one of the commonest features in the literature of phantoms. Something objective must strike the gravel or the boards with sufficient power to send sound waves to the ear.

As to the objective substance of the ghost itself there is interesting evidence. In one of the cases quoted by Sir Ernest Bennett in his *Apparitions and Haunted Houses* * is the description of a spectral woman seen by daylight standing in the garden. She wore "a soft gray gown," on which the shadows of the pergola behind her threw a pattern exactly as on a living body. The American naval lieutenant at the Powder Factory, when he saw the ghost of the man for the fourth time, noticed that as he stood between him and the two electric lights over the kitchen sink the spectral bulk "blanked them out" until he vanished.

The following experience published in the *Journal* of the American Society for Psychical Research in its volume for the year 1928, has a special bearing on this question of the objectivity of a ghost. A man who may be conveniently called William Smith, was for many years Senior Warden of a small Episcopal church in New England. He was the treasurer and chief contributor for many years. When far advanced in age he suddenly woke up to the fact that the investments he had made with the church funds had turned out badly. The fact preyed on his mind; he felt that he was to blame. But since he had suffered financial loss himself in the same reverses, he could not make up the losses for the church.

He was in his accustomed place the following Easter morning service and passed the plate as usual, but his friends noticed that he looked depressed. Next day he committed suicide. At the next Sunday morning service two wardens, as usual, took up the collection, a new warden having been appointed to fill Mr. Smith's place. They had passed the plates and returned to the chancel steps when the Rector who stood there awaiting them was seen to stagger back suddenly as if he were taken ill.

In one of the front pews at the extreme left of the church stood his cousin, a Miss Barry, who was alarmed by his appearance. Al-

* *Ibid.*, p. 135.

most at the same moment that she saw the Rector stagger backwards she noticed that there were three men, not two, standing in front of him, and the third man was William Smith. There he stood, she declared afterwards, "as lifelike as ever in thirty years' attendance." The next instant she heard a woman's shriek on the other side of the church.

As soon as the service was over Miss Barry asked her cousin what happened to him when he stood there before the wardens.

"Well, I don't know," he began hesitatingly, "I thought I saw—"

"I know what you saw," she interrupted. "I saw him, too. Willy Smith was in church this morning in his accustomed place."

"Yes," the Rector answered, "he stood as plainly as he ever did when alive."

A few days later Miss Barry met one of the ladies of the congregation, a Mrs. Davis, who asked her whether she had been in church the previous Sunday. Then she inquired whether Miss Barry had heard her scream.

"Yes," she answered, "but I didn't know who it was."

"It was I," said Mrs. Davis. "Do you know, I saw Willy Smith standing at the chancel steps as plainly as ever I saw him!" Then Miss Barry told her that both she and the Rector also had seen the deceased warden, but apparently no one else in the church had done so.

Since Mrs. Davis was at the extreme right, this apparition of Mr. Smith was seen and recognized at the same moment by *three people at three different angles*. The Rector met him face to face, Miss Barry saw him from extreme left and Mrs. Davis from the extreme right of the church. Any phantom seen independently by three people from three angles must have had some kind of substance.

An obvious method of demonstrating the "reality" of a ghost would be to photograph it. But, as Rose Morton found out, ghosts, even if they live in the same house with one, are not obliging enough to pose in a good light and wait till someone can fetch a camera. A great many alleged spirit photographs have been pub-

lished, especially those taken by a special type of medium who professes to do this sort of thing. Unfortunately, nothing is so easy to fake, not even a "materialization," as a spirit photograph. A few years ago Harry Price published a series of articles in the *Journal* of the American Society, exposing the tricks of this nefarious trade.

Yet it is quite possible that there may be genuine photographs of ghostly faces and forms. The Reverend Charles L. Tweedale devotes a whole chapter to the subject in his book, *Man's Survival After Death*. There he makes his own affidavit to the fact that in the presence of his wife and son he took a photograph of a wraith which his wife could see distinctly but which was invisible to both his son and himself. He aimed the camera in the direction his wife indicated and when he developed the plate it showed dimly but unmistakably, in a corner, the head of a man with flowing locks and beard. This head blocked out the furniture behind it. The picture is reproduced in Hereward Carrington's *Modern Psychic Phenomena* and Coates's *Seeing the Invisible*, having appeared originally in the *Psychic Gazette* for April, 1916. This seems like a strong case because no one doubts the integrity of Mr. Tweedale.

Another example of a spirit photograph was attained by accident, and no one is likely to question the truth of this story because it comes from the late Dr. William Lyon Phelps, the beloved teacher of English Literature at Yale. It is told in his *Autobiography* (p. 385).

While Dr. and Mrs. Phelps were in Winchester they went to see the house where Jane Austen lived. "We had a curious experience in front of this house," he writes. "It was a cloudless morning. I asked my wife to take a picture in front of the house; accordingly the camera was pointed at the front door. This door was closed and there was no one in front of it or near it. The camera clicked. But when the picture was developed there was a woman in black standing close to the door. We have no explanation whatever for this, so we have decided to call the unknown the ghost of Jane Austen. It was such a clear day that every corner of the porch and of the front door appeared in sharp relief; we could almost have

seen a fly. There was absolutely nothing; but there stands the woman in the picture."

Another well-attested case of ghost photography is especially interesting because it brings back the famous Brown Lady of Raynham Hall, whom Captain Marryatt attempted to dispose of with his pistol many years ago. The instance is all the better because the two men concerned in it knew nothing about psychic phenomena and cared less.

In September, 1936, Captain Provand, Art Director and professional photographer for thirty years, and Mr. Indre Shira, of the firm of Indre Shira, Limited, Court Photographers, of Piccadilly, London, were associated in the task of taking pictures of Raynham Hall. This is now the country seat of the Marquis of Townshend. The photographers were there in pursuance of an order from Lady Townshend.

The two men were on the scene and starting to work by eight o'clock on the morning of September 19th and put in a full day. By four in the afternoon they were ready to photograph the great oak staircase. Captain Provand took one picture of it, while Mr. Shira, holding the flashlight pistol, stood behind him. He was looking at the stair while his partner had his head under the focusing cloth. Suddenly Mr. Shira saw what he described afterwards as "an ethereal, veiled form," moving slowly down the staircase. He shouted, "Quick, quick, there's something! Are you ready?"

"Yes," answered the other, his head still under the cloth. At the instant Mr. Shira flashed the light and Captain Provand exposed the lens.

Pulling the cloth from his head, he asked, "What's all the excitement about?"

His friend explained that he had seen, coming down the stairs, a transparent figure through which he could see the steps. This explanation brought a good laugh, and by this time neither man could see any such form on the stairs. On their way back to London they spent the time discussing the incident. Captain Provand insisted that any spirit photograph would have to be taken by a medium at a séance. He had never attended a séance, but that is

what he had once been told. All Mr. Shira could say was that he certainly did see a form descending the great oak stairway and the camera must have caught it. So the two made a bet of five pounds on the outcome.

They were working together in the dark room over the plates taken that day when suddenly Provand exclaimed, "Good Lord, there's something on the staircase negative after all!"

The other looked to see, and then called in a third person as a witness. This was the manager of a chemist firm located downstairs. He entered the dark room in time to see the negative lifted from the developer and placed in the hypo. He said afterwards that if he had not actually seen the negative put into the fixing solution he would never have accepted the plate as genuine. He was an experienced amateur photographer who operated a dark room of his own.

The story and the picture, full size, appeared in *Country Life* for December 26, 1936. Mr. Shira avers in his concluding remarks that both he and Captain Provand "can vouch for the fact that the negative has not been retouched in any way. It has been examined critically by a number of experts. No one can account for the appearance of the ghostly figure, but it is there and clear enough . . ."

The editor of the magazine submitted the photograph to Harry Price, because of his expert knowledge of trick photography. His report printed together with Mr. Shira's, testifies that he cross-examined the two men and scrutinized the plate. "I could not shake their story," he writes, "and I had no right to disbelieve them. Only collusion between the two men would account for the 'ghost' if it is a fake. The negative is entirely innocent of any faking."

The photograph is worth looking up the files of *Country Life* to see. It is seven and a half inches by six and a half inches. A spectral female figure is descending the stair. It looks like an exceptionally tall woman dressed in flowing white. It is a misty shape, and the steps are visible through it. Face and hands cannot be made out, but the folds of the dress can be seen. From the head there hangs what

looks like a wimple, and below the neck a shape that might be a ruff.

So much space has been devoted to the photographic type of evidence because it would seem to be the most impersonal and objective imaginable. Of course, the camera is capable under skilled hands of doing all kinds of tricks but if the picture is taken without artifice the result ought to be as good evidence of objective existence as one could ask. Neither lens nor plate suffers from overdeveloped imagination, upheavals of the subconscious, hysteria, or any of the other weaknesses of which people who see ghosts are generally accused. And, as everyone knows, photography is often used in science to record the presence of objects which the eye cannot perceive.

(2) Mental Evidence

So much for the physical evidence for reality. The mental will have to be disposed of briefly by reference back to the narratives already told in the preceding chapters. It will be convenient to arrange a series of headings. Assuming that the source of the story in each case is a person of sound mind and character, we may say that the mental type of evidence for the objective reality of a ghost is good under the following conditions:

(a) *When an apparition is seen in fulfillment of a compact:* That is, an agreement made in life between two friends, relatives, or man and wife, to try to manifest one to the other after death. The classic example is the story told by Lord Brougham, but there are many others.

(b) *When an apparition is seen by several witnesses independently of each other and described in the same terms:* A good instance of this is the experience reported by Fred Cartwright, the workman, who saw the Borley nun four times in two weeks at the same place and the same hour, leaning on the gate of the Borley rectory. Only afterwards, when he told his story, did he learn of the ghost that haunted the Rectory. Until then he had assumed that she was a living person.

(c) *When the apparition is seen collectively:* That is, when two or more persons see the same figure at the same instant in the same place. The preceding anecdotes in this collection contain many examples of this group. We need not leave the Borley nun to find an example. The four Bull sisters, it will be remembered, saw the nun at the same time and at the same spot by daylight in their garden. Abraham Cummings's amazing Specter was seen by as many as forty or fifty persons at one time. In the vision of the dead warden just given, the ghost was seen by the Rector, his cousin, and another lady at the same moment and in the same spot. There are many other incidents of this type, and they are important because normal people are not likely to be struck with the identical visual hallucination at the same instant.

(d) *When the apparition is someone not known to the percipient but is identified later:* A good illustration is the story of the Roman Catholic priest who one morning met on the stairs another priest whom he had never seen before. The stranger disappeared inexplicably when the other tried to find him. Some time later the priest comes upon a large photograph which he instantly recognizes at once as the person he saw that morning, and discovers that this priest was his predecessor in the parish; also that he had died early the very morning on which he was seen. So too the naval lieutenant at the Powder Plant identified the strange man in his house by a photograph, one that proved to be the portrait of the deceased father of his next-door neighbor. A third instance is H——'s story of the ghost who demanded that his widow receive more of his estate from his son and daughter. Again the man was a stranger, but H—— was able to identify the face from a handful of photographs. "If it weren't for the beard," he said, "I'd say this was the man." And it turned out that the father, whose picture this was, had worn a beard up to a short time before his death.

(e) *When the apparition is not known to be dead at the time he is seen:* The many stories of ghosts seen at, or shortly after, the moment of death are illustrations of this class. The most familiar, perhaps, is the one told by David Belasco about seeing and hearing his mother on the very night she died. Probably there is no more

impressive case than the report made by Lieutenant Larkin of the R.A.F. One afternoon, it will be remembered, he saw his friend and brother officer, David M'Connel, open the door and sing out "Hello, boy!" in his characteristic breezy way. He was wearing a distinctive naval cap. He answered Larkin's question about the flying trip and breezed off again with a cheerio and a banging of the door. Larkin never dreamed that he had not seen the living M'Connel until some hours later when he was forced to accept the news that his friend had crashed to his death just before he made that appearance in Larkin's quarters.

(f) *When the apparition conveys information unknown to the percipient though known to one or more others:* An excellent illustration of this is that testimony of the commercial traveler, who saw his deceased sister sitting beside him while he was writing out his orders in a hotel room. On her cheek he noticed a red scratch, and he mentioned the circumstance when he told the story at home. Then it transpired that this scratch had been made accidentally by the mother in preparing her daughter's body for burial, but she had carefully concealed the mark with powder and had told no one. So also the ghost of Tom Harris told his friend Briggs of a conversation about which no living soul knew but Harris's brother.

(g) *When the apparition conveys information known to no living soul:* This particularly strong type of evidence is illustrated by the story of Mike Conley, who came to his daughter after death and told her of a roll of bills sewed up in his gray shirt wrapped in a piece of red cloth, the same material from which she had made a dress. This shirt had been thrown out with the rest of the clothing he had on when he died. Investigation proved that every word of the message was true. No one but Conley himself knew of this secret hoard of money.

Similarly, the ghost of James Chaffin directed his son to look in an overcoat for the clue to another will. That clue was discovered sewed into the lining, and by following it the searchers found, in an old Bible, a will, the existence of which no one had suspected.

A still more striking example is the information given to H——

by the apparition concerning his first secret marriage and divorce, and of the serial numbers and amounts of the bonds in the deposit box at the bank. No living soul, immediately concerned, knew these facts.

(h) *When the apparition foretells an event which is unexpected but which proves true:* Such cases are rare, but they are to be found among the records. Abraham Cummings, in his pamphlet on the Specter lays stress on the predictions she made, all of which were fulfilled. One foretold that Lydia would give birth to a child and die within a year of her marriage. Another specified a suit at law in which the Blaisdel family were to be involved and prophesied its outcome. And Cummings alludes to other predictions, all of which he says came to pass.

(i) *When a percipient on his death bed perceives the form and face of one whom he cannot know to be dead:* There are so many instances of this type that Sir William Barrett devoted a whole volume to this kind of phenomena, *Death-Bed Visions.* One is Minot Savage's story of the little girl on her death-bed who asked to have certain keepsakes given to her intimate friend. Suddenly she recognized this child, whom she supposed to be alive, greeting her, together with those who she knew had gone on before. "Papa, Papa," she exclaimed, "you did not tell me Jennie was here!" The death of Jennie had been carefully kept from her during her illness.

(j) Finally, *when one apparition combines two or more of these evidential features the case for objective reality is all the stronger:* For instance, the Dark Lady of Bognor was seen independently by members of the family and the servants. She was also seen collectively, and her coming was usually accompanied by the sound of footsteps in the passage. In addition her comings and goings were made the subject of study and record over a number of years.

The Borley nun was seen independently and collectively many times over a long period of years, and in this case the ghost was accompanied by all kinds of physical manifestations as well. And the Specter of whom Abraham Cummings writes, had everything

in the ghostly repertoire besides some original accomplishments of her own.

In a great many of these apparitional experiences there seems to be an initiative on the part of the ghost. This is particularly true of the group designated as "Ghosts with a Message." Frederic W. H. Myers, the great pioneer in psychic research, carefully studied the enormous amount of material that came to him and came to the conclusion that there is at times a real invasion by the deceased into the realm of the living. In some way, rarely attained, it is true, it seems as if personalities on the other side of the line manage briefly to cross over into the consciousness of the living. That is a hypothesis that is violently contested by the great majority, and yet it is possible that it may be true. If so, its implications are profound and far-reaching.

II. WHAT IS A GHOST?

So much in the way of evidence for the objective reality of a ghost. The next question follows inevitably: If an apparition is something real, what *is* it? That is a harder riddle than the first. To be frank, there is as yet no satisfactory answer. But it will be worth while to study the problem.

First of all, treating the ghost like any animate creature in the natural world, we might ask about its habits. Are there any generalizations they point to, which might be helpful in the quest to discover what it is? The answer seems to be that the phantom observes few rules, if any, as far as mere mortals can observe. Certainly, it does not conform to the popular legend about it.

First, as to the hour of midnight. The ghost of the elder Hamlet appears repeatedly on the battlements at midnight or the stroke of one, but he has to flee at the first streak of dawn, when the glow-worm "'gins to pale its uneffectual fire." To the real ghosts, the witching hour means nothing, nor does daylight drive them away. In fact, it is interesting, in looking over the stories of the

preceding pages, to see how often a wraith reveals itself during daylight hours. Dr. Walter Prince, in his lifetime a leader in American psychical research, took at random 210 ghost stories from the files of the American and British societies and from Flammarion's book, *Death and Its Mystery*. Out of all these, exactly two specified the hour of midnight.

It is true that many, if not most, of the visitations do occur at night, and often the percipient is not sure whether at the moment he was asleep or awake. Perhaps the relaxed condition of the mind in sleep is particularly favorable to receiving an impression. Yet there have been, as these stories show, phantoms seen when the witnesses were wide awake and going about their business in the daylight hours.

Another tradition that will not stand up in the light of the evidence is the notion that ghosts like to frequent deserted houses and dismal spots like churchyards. On the contrary, it is almost always the occupied house that is haunted. The ghost, like misery, loves company. Indeed it seems as if apparitions depend on some force emanating from living people to make their presence visible. As for graveyards, not a single story in this collection is staged in a cemetery.

A third popular idea is that specters come back because they cannot tear themselves away from the scene of some crime—usually a murder—which they had committed in life. This is seldom the case. They come for all sorts of reasons, some intelligible and some not, but rarely is there an association with crime. It is quite possible that a crime is invented sometimes to account for the ghost.

At the same time it is true that a "presence" is usually seen at or near a scene closely associated with its earthly life, like the Millvale Apparition manifesting in his old church and Dr. Harris back in his favorite seat at the Atheneum.

Still another popular piece of ghost-lore is that apparitions love to "walk" in very old dwellings, preferably crumbling, dank, and moss-grown castles. That is sometimes given as a reason for believing that the best ghost stories come from old countries like France

and the British Isles. A new country like America cannot offer such congenial stamping ground. It is true that good ghost stories have come from ancient houses, but the most amazing manifestations have been reported in quite modern dwellings. Nothing from medieval castles can compare with the stories of the Bognor house and the Borley rectory. These dated as buildings only from the eighteen-sixties. And the Cape Cod cottage was so new that it had never before been occupied when Professor and Mrs. Jacobs rented it for that tumultuous summer.

So much for the legends that are not true. What can be said on the positive side; how do specters behave? Again, the answer here is that they seem to do as they please. If there are any rules about their comings and goings they do not seem to be aware of them. Some come and go abruptly; others fade in and out. Sometimes they are accompanied by a light in darkness, or seem to emit a light; at other times the specter makes itself visible somehow in the dark with no apparent source of light.

In contrast with the luminous ones, others appear exactly like any normal person and are always mistaken at first for a living figure, looking solid and bulky from head to foot. Frequently, as in these instances the entire figure is seen. Other apparitions appear in part only, tapering off into a mist, and showing clearly only the head and shoulders. Still others are so transparent all over that objects can be seen behind them.

One striking fact about ghost behavior is the fact that often an apparition may be clearly visible to one person but not to another. For instance, it will be recalled that Rose Morton, her sisters and younger brother, repeatedly saw the Dark Lady, but Captain Morton never could see it, even at a time when Rose pointed it out to him in the spot where she could see the phantom standing. Apparently, to see a ghost requires a certain gift of sensitivity, which many if not most people lack. This must be one reason why the experience is so rare. It seems to be a form of "clairvoyance," and like all psychic gifts it is something that can be inherited. Julian Hawthorne, for example, told an intimate friend that often while walking along the street he saw his father keeping step beside him. It

will be recalled that of all the people who went to the Atheneum, apparently the elder Hawthorne was the only one who saw old Doctor Harris.

Another variant in spirit behavior is the matter of speech. The majority, evidently, do not or cannot speak. Like the ghost of Doctor Harris in the Atheneum, they come repeatedly but never say a word. All that have been called "Quiet Haunts" and the "Ghosts that Merely Come and Go" belong to this speechless type.

In contrast with these are the revenants that have a definite message to convey and speak it audibly. Some of the witnesses say that they seemed to hear the words in their minds rather than with their physical ears, some declare that, though clear, the voice sounded as if it were coming from a distance, still others testify to the naturalness of the utterance, as if a living person were speaking. In certain instances, only the voice is heard; nothing is seen.

One of the many mysteries about ghosts is that, though they appear to be made of so tenuous a stuff that no matter how natural they may look, no one has been able to lay hands on them, yet they are capable of exerting pressure on a human body; they open doors no matter how solidly bolted and locked, or how hard one may push against them to keep them shut. Some phantoms come and go by doors and passageways and walk up and down stairs like ordinary folk. Others pass through closed doors and walls at will, not bothering with conventional exits and entrances.

Already, in speaking of the objective evidence, we noted the sensation of cold that accompanies so many of these phantom visits. Also the terror that all animals display in the presence of a ghost. This same terror paralyzes most human beings as well. It is expressed in Job: "Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up." This seems to be a physical horror, for which there is no reasonable explanation except the fear of the unknown, for the ghost seldom does the percipient serious harm. The concubine Sze, in Dr. Wang's story, is exceptional in her vindictiveness against her husband's family. In rare instances a physical blow is delivered. During the course of his experience with the ghost of his friend Tom Harris, Briggs was struck in the face during one

night by a blow that blackened his eyes and gave him a swollen nose. The same thing happened to the wife of the Rector in the Borley house. But in the overwhelming majority of instances reported the visiting shades either do no harm whatever, beyond occasioning fright, or they bring some helpful message. According to logic, therefore, we should welcome the visible or audible presence of a deceased friend or relative, but this seems to be one of those situations in which logic does not rule the emotions.

So much for ghostly habits and habitats. What is to be done with all this testimony? Again the scientist cries out that it is all anecdotal, not experimental, but that is the only way that even scientists can learn of strange lands which they never expect to see themselves, and this is indeed a strange land that is under consideration, with strange inhabitants. How to account for the facts, how to coordinate them into a hypothesis is a stupendous problem, and bold would he be who would come forward with a ready answer. We know as yet almost nothing about the human mind. The first step is to admit that these mysterious things do occur, and that they seem to defy all the laws with which we are familiar. However, they too must follow law and some day we shall hope to learn what it is. That attitude of mind would appear to be more reasonable than the cock-sure way of disposing of the subject that is the fashion now.

A friend of mine, Head of a Department at a famous eastern college, once had a ghostly experience. His wife was with him at the time, and she saw the vision at the same time he did. It happened outdoors in the middle of the forenoon, and there was no possibility of illusion. He told his colleague, the Professor of Psychology, what he and his wife had seen.

"Very simple," replied the pundit. "You had in your stomach, let us say, a bit of undigested bacon from your breakfast." This recalls Old Scrooge's explanation of Marley's ghost. "That set up some disturbance in your blood stream," continued the professor, "which resulted in a queer image in your brain. Your wife, as she glanced at you, caught the same picture from you by a sort of mental infection, so she thought she saw the same thing."

If that is the science of psychology, it is fearfully and wonderfully made. The gentleman and his wife might have reported seeing that morning, not an astonishing apparition, but a double rainbow. This is an unusual phenomenon and almost as intangible and ephemeral as a ghost. Suppose the same explanation was given for that spectacle; namely, an imaginary piece of bacon sending an imaginary impulse to form an imaginary picture on the brain. And that the wife, who presumably had no undigested bacon in her stomach, got the picture of the rainbow by mental infection, likewise a pure assumption. Not even a psychologist would accept that explanation. The difference seems to be that double rainbows are known to appear at times, and they can be explained by the spectrum. When it comes to the ghost there is no explanation ready, and the logic seems to be that if one does not understand a phenomenon it can't be true. This dictum would be a surprise to a good many research men, especially in the fields of physics, astronomy and physiology.

The work known as *Phantasms of the Living*, referred to frequently in these pages, is a treasure house of true ghost stories, methodically collected and compiled as one would collect shells or butterflies. It will be remembered that the chief burden of this work was borne by Edmund Gurney, one of the three whose names appear on the title page as authors. He tried to make telepathy cover all the evidence. That word, he wrote, "embraces all transmissions of thought and feeling from one person to another by other means than through the recognized channels of sense, and among these we shall include apparitions." His theory of latent or delayed telepathy has been touched on elsewhere in connection with the stories of apparitions. To account for a ghost seen by several people at the same time he devised a theory of "infectious" telepathy. This last seems much like the psychology professor's explanation given above. At any rate, it was a way out of admitting that ghosts mean that the personality of a deceased person survives death. The reader is welcome to use his own judgment as to how reasonable these theories are, especially as they are only assumptions without a vestige of evidence to support them.

In their day, Gurney, Myers, and the rest of that group of pioneers in psychic research accepted telepathy as a proved fact, and some of them clung to it with something like desperation to make it explain all these mysterious phenomena. Myers did not wholly agree with his colleagues on that point, as he makes clear in the appendix to *Phantasms of the Living*, but it is fair to say that telepathy was the magic word for that group.

The *Phantasms* was published some sixty years ago. Telepathy is still fighting for acceptance despite what Dr. Alexis Carrel and other noted men of science have said. The trouble with telepathy, as with ghosts, is that it obeys no known laws. It does not operate like any other radiating energy in nature. While every other form of energy loses force according to the square of the distance, telepathy works as easily at three thousand miles as thirty feet. And telepathy has been proved experimentally many times. Naturally, that makes it anathema to the type of person that has everything neatly arranged and labeled on the shelves of his mind and is desperately afraid of anything that might so upset the whole system that he would have to begin all over again.

More recently someone suggested that the ghost is a "thought-form." Perhaps it is, but what is a thought-form and how does it act? How can a thought-form become visible and audible? In a sense it is true that whenever we look at another person we are seeing only a thought-form. Our conception of that person's appearance is due to what rays of light reflected from his body do to the retina of our eye as interpreted by the brain. If the human eye were sensitive to ultra-violet, infra-red, cosmic, and X-rays, the man we are looking at would still be the same but the picture we received of him would be utterly different from what it is now.

In this sense the ghost is unquestionably a thought-form, but what is the objective reality behind it? For example, when a ghost comes to tell me of the existence of a will, about which no living soul knows, and also how it may be discovered, I can only feel that there must be something to account for it better than a mere word like "thought-form."

It is no easy problem to explain ghosts. So far we have been

speaking as if all ghosts were apparitions of the dead, but, as we have seen in the stories of this collection, the term must cover ghosts of living persons, of buildings and scenes, of animals, even of coaches and wheelbarrows. Why, incidentally, does one never hear of ghostly automobiles and bicycles? The questions only begin to pile up at this point.

To go back to the revenants, or returning spirits of the dead, what are they? What matter are they made of that they can affect the retina of the eye? With what vocal cords can they make air waves vibrate with audible speech? What is the power with which heavy objects are thrown about, as in the poltergeist manifestations, or doors opened despite locks and bolts? Why is it that so few people see ghosts? Unless they have a message to convey why do they show themselves at all? So often they flit across the scene with a preoccupied air, paying no attention to the people who see them. Why should they haunt the scenes of their earthly life anyway? The questions might run on indefinitely.

Although the only answer is that nobody knows, it might be repeated that nobody yet knows much about the mind or human personality. We speak of a conscious mind and a subconscious mind, but mind is not the same as brain, which is its instrument as the violin is the instrument of the performer. There is no question about the fact of mind, but no one has any good answer as to what mind is, what it is made of and what it is capable of doing. When we know more about what the mind is we may have more light on the ghost, and vice versa.

The oldest theory of all and the simplest is that man consists of an immortal mind or soul dwelling in a mortal body. Death releases the soul, which continues existence on some other plane without the physical body. On rare occasions this discarnate personality can manifest itself to mortal men. This theory does not take care of all ghostly phenomena, but it serves for explaining the apparitions of the dead. The scientific revolution that began about a hundred years ago swept the soul into the limbo of superstitions. It will be remembered that John Tyndall disposed of the concept as "a base superstition." Yet it is possible that, after all, there is a

soul, despite the Tyndalls, the Haeckels and the Spencers, and the ghost may be a piece of evidence that points to the fact. What do we mean by the word? Soul has been defined as "that portion or aspect of a personality which can observe and operate apart from its physical body." *

Can any other evidence be adduced that suggests the existence of a mind or personality independent of the physical body? If in life a soul were proved to have left the body consciously, traveled away from it, and then returned, keeping the memory of what it had seen and done on its excursion, that would seem to be good evidence that there really is a personality, a mind or a soul—whichever name is used makes no difference—that can exist outside the body, a mind that can think and remember independently of the brain. In that case, if there is telepathy between living minds attuned to each other, why not between a disembodied mind and a living one?

There is considerable evidence on this point. More than once people who have been near death in the sick room or on the operating table have testified to finding themselves outside their bodies and looking down on the scene as if they were detached completely from the form that lies unconscious. I have had that experience described to me by more than one who at the time it happened had been given up for dead.

Another much wider excursion was narrated by another friend, and this deserves telling at some length because it is so strongly evidential. The lady who made this strange journey had been partially asphyxiated by a defective gas jet in a country hotel. She was revived sufficiently to go through with a lecture which she was scheduled to deliver but collapsed immediately afterward and was taken to a private home in a critical condition.

While she lay there unconscious, with the doctor and nurse working over her, she says that she felt herself leave her body, and on the instant found herself in her husband's bedroom at her home many miles away. As she came there she noticed that his friend and neighbor was asleep in the same room with her husband. Leaning

* "*The Immortality of Man*," Hornell Hart, Garvin Lecture, 1943.

against the head of the bed she saw a stout cudgel, with some of the bark still on it. As a good housekeeper she was distressed to discover that the room was in a shocking state of disorder, as if it had been swept by a cyclone. She laid her hand on her husband's face and stroked it; next she touched his friend's face also, thinking she would wake them up, but they slept on. Then she told herself, "I must get back to my body." Once more she found herself back where she was lying in the hospital. After a blank space she recovered consciousness.

The doctor and nurse told her that at one time they had decided that she was dead. When she was strong enough she told her strange experience, and the doctor was so much impressed by her evident sincerity that when she was able to travel home he sent the nurse along with her, partly to look out for her but more to find out if anything checked up with the story. Every detail was verified. It turned out that her husband's friend had come to spend the evening at the house. During that time a rat ran across the floor. The two men got a club and chased the creature all over the house, upsetting everything in the excitement of the hunt. The friend accepted the invitation to spend the night there and when they went to sleep they left the cudgel standing by the head of the bed in case they heard the rat again during the night. This stick was still to be seen, a stout club with part of the bark still on it. In a word, not a single detail was missing from the picture, and not one was anything that she could possibly have expected to happen.

It will be remembered that Mr. George Cherrie told of a similar involuntary soul transference, if one may call it that, which in his case took place in a vivid dream thrice repeated. This took him to his mother's bedroom on the night she died. Every detail that he noticed of the furniture arrangement was confirmed later by letter, as well as the fact of her death on that date.

A similar instance is reported by M. Gabrielle Delanne in his *Evidence for a Future Life.** The author says that he once found himself standing outside his body and able to move through a wall into an apartment on the other side, which he had never

* Quoted in *The Other Side of Life*, C. W. Leadbeater, 327–330.

seen. He moved about the rooms, observing the arrangement of the furniture and noting particularly the titles of some books on a shelf. After he came back to his body and returned to normal consciousness he obtained permission to visit that apartment, and was then able to confirm in every particular what he had seen while he was dissociated from his body.

These are instances of involuntary excursions of the personality. Still more impressive is the "projection" that is accomplished deliberately. This seems to be possible only to those gifted with what is called psychic power, and this to an unusual degree. Mrs. Stewart Edward White, the "Betty" of the well-known series of Betty books from the pen of Mr. White, revealed this ability. In *Across the Unknown* (p. 88) Mr. White speaks of "her repeated demonstrations that she could even travel some thousands of miles and look in on the doings of her friends. That she was there, somehow, she had proved beyond doubt by reporting to me all sorts of details . . . and these details had subsequently been checked as accurate by correspondence." Again, in his *The Road I Know* (p. 154), he refers to the same achievement, which he calls "leaving the body," which Mrs. White appeared to be capable of performing at will. He speaks of her going in this strange fashion "3000 miles to the sick room of a relative. She reported to me how he was, she described the room and what they were doing, details confirmed to the last item by letter."

There have also been rare examples of this kind of mental excursion taken by a person who is near death. In this, an apparition of the dying person is seen and recognized by the one on whom that person's thoughts are centered. This too is a "phantasm of the living." But in this type of visitation not only does the traveler tell of where he has been and what he has seen, but the person at the other end reports seeing him come. In a case of this sort the phantasm of the living merges into the apparition seen at the hour of death. At all events the testimony in general suggests that, as the moment of dissolution approaches, the bond between mind and body relaxes.

If, then, both by voluntary and involuntary experience, a per-

sonality can forsake its body and return to it, bringing back detailed memories of what it saw on the excursion, that would seem to be reasonable evidence that mind can exist outside the physical brain. Perhaps, after all, there is a soul.

It must also be clear, from a large number of the ghost stories in this collection, that the manifestations, whether of living or dead, often, though not always, come on some powerful surge of emotion. In each case the apparition seems to be a kind of projection of the mind into visible and audible form. How this is done or of what substance that projection is formed, none can say.

As for the ghosts of animals, it may be that the higher and more intelligent types possess something that, in some degree, corresponds to the human mind. Certainly, one is aware of striking differences in what might be called personality between horses and dogs of the same breed.

To explain the phantom Versailles or other reenacted scenes of the past there seems little material as yet on which to base a reasonable theory. Rare as that phenomenon is, it will have to be reckoned with. And much the same problem is raised by the specters of material objects that so often accompany an apparition. One may say that these are "thought-forms" but that is only pasting a label on the mystery, not explaining it.

Reverting to the Stewart Edward White books, Betty's communications in the *Unobstructed Universe* repeatedly emphasize the physical fact of vibrations and their varying rates of speed or "frequency." Physicists tell us that everything in the universe is in an unimaginable state of vibration, the component parts of the atom, the ray of light, the wave of radio energy. Of all these the human sense organs can pick up only a very limited range of vibrations. A dog, for example, can hear a sound too high for human ears. A camera can make a picture with rays that the eye cannot see.

Following this line of thought, Betty, in the *Unobstructed Universe*, explains that the reason we are unable to perceive the forms of discarnate spirits about us is that their rate of vibration is so high that we see through them. Some individuals are so gifted

that they can step up their frequency or sensitivity so that they are able to make contact. These are the people we call "psychics." The great bulk of the human race can never tune in. They never see ghosts; they have no powers of telepathy and clairvoyance.

Perhaps it is a merciful fact that we do wear these blinders. Were we constantly aware of disembodied forms and voices about us we should never be able to put our minds on our work. It is our business to run the race; it does not help to be looking at the grandstand.

At any rate the vibrations theory is interesting and suggestive. Certainly it is better than a suppositious piece of undigested bacon to explain seeing ghosts. And it links up with physics, as a hint that all truth is fundamentally one.

As far back as 1848 a woman named Catherine Crowe published a book called *The Night Side of Nature,* dealing with this same phenomenon of apparitions. In that year there was no such thing as a society for psychical research and modern science was still in its swaddling clothes. But she approached her subject with a remarkable scientific attitude of inquiry. In 1901, a new edition of this book was published, for which T. J. Hudson wrote a preface. That contains the following passage:

"Scientists have at last been constrained to admit that a psychic fact is as truly a fact as the planet Jupiter, and that it is as much entitled to a scientific examination as any fact in the physical sciences. The result has been the discovery that psychic facts are of infinitely greater interest and importance to humanity than are any others with which science is acquainted, and that it is through them alone that man is enabled to know himself, to find his place in Nature, to trace his Divine pedigree, and to make an inductive examination of his title to the Divine heritage of immortality."

Thomas A. Edison was fond of saying in his later years that in the study of these mysteries lay knowledge of greater significance to the future of the human race than in all his experiments in the field of electricity. Chief of these mysteries, perhaps, is the ghost. There it is, a fact of human experience, the world over, from time

immemorial. True, it is a very rare phenomenon, but that makes it all the more interesting. And most challenging of all is the fact that it seems to transcend all our known laws of nature. Yet, obviously, it has locked up within it some profound secret, some grand truth, which would lead us to a better understanding of human personality and the significance of life.

In his essay on "Divination," the skeptical Cicero makes his brother Quintus say with reference to things that happen but which cannot be explained, "I am content with my knowledge that it [the mystery] does occur, although I may not know why." We cannot explain the ghost as yet, taking into account all its manifestations, but until we know far more than we do now about the human mind this modest attitude expressed by Quintus would be worth imitating. This would be the first step toward finding out new truth.

"The philosophy of six thousand years," writes Emerson, "has not searched the chambers or magazines of the soul. In its experiments there has always remained, in the last analysis, a residuum it could not resolve. Man is a stream whose source is hidden."

To a generation steeped in a mechanistic and materialistic philosophy the very word soul is anathema—it is "base superstition." And since the very fact of a ghost indicates something in man that survives death, ghosts are laughed out of court. For once you admit the existence of souls that survive death you ditch the beautifully contrived machine on which this generation has been rolling down hill to a world war. Now, for the sake of mass slaughter, Science has learned how to split the atom and add immeasurably to the powers of destruction. If the Machine Age philosophy of materialism still holds its grip on man, all that will be achieved will be the suicide of civilization. For what is the use of ethics if there is nothing more to life than a few decades of animal existence?

At any rate, there stands the ghost as a fact. The priest cannot exorcise him nor the scientist annihilate him. Neither can the wit laugh him out of existence. He keeps coming back, somewhere, to somebody, just when everyone has been told that there is no such

thing. Perhaps, if we took him seriously enough to study him, in time he might lend a hand to help pull the world back on the old highway of spiritual truth, the only road on which mankind can ever fulfill its destiny.

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