

# PSYPIONEER

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Edited by Paul Gaunt

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**In January 2005, Psypioneer printed an article:**

### **EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN GRAVE NEWS**

**(Being a reprint of an account by “ Two Worlds” editor Ernest Thompson in the issue of April 15 1950.)**

**Malcolm Lewis has now provided an update on the subject for Psypioneer and, seeing the original article was short, I have re-printed Ernest Thompson’s article first for readers’ convenience.**

*I recently made a pilgrimage to the former residence of Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten, 'The Lindens', Humphrey Street, Cheetham Hill, Manchester. (First Street on the right of Cheetham Hill Road after the Darlington Street bus stop.*

*As I entered Humphrey Street I noticed a local police station and to save time I made enquiries regarding the whereabouts of 'The Lindens'. Two sergeants and two constables had never heard of the house, and the reason was probably due to the fact that 'The Lindens', is now a grocer's warehouse! Actually the house is almost opposite the police station.*

**Large Enough for Meetings**

*I knocked on the door and it was some time before Mr. Cain, the new proprietor, opened it. I explained my mission and he was quite interested, not having heard of its history. It is a large, double fronted, bay windowed house, and each of the four front rooms are almost large enough to hold meetings in. The Lindens is engraved upon the large stone above the front door.*

**Empty for a Long Time**

*Mr. Cain kindly showed me round and explained how the house had been empty for a long period, and that he only paid £240 for it (£30 deposit)! I was able to visualise in my I mind's eye what it must have looked like when Mrs. Britten lived there, and derived some pleasure from the visit, but was grieved to see rooms stacked high with boxes and cartons of various grocery commodities. (See new Photograph of house on page 665). (Not reproduced in PP.)*

**Visit to grave**

*It was a cheerless, cloudy day when I visited Mrs. Britten's grave at the Manchester General Cemetery, Harpurhey. As one approaches the cemetery the foreboding and massive stone built entrance buildings remind one of the grim Victorian days when it was built. About 150 yards down the main pathway, on the right, lies Mrs. Britten's grave. On this side, some old houses appear beyond the cemetery wall and after crossing over about seven or eight graves her grave is approximately opposite the fourth house from the bottom of the row.*

*It is a very simple and bare looking grave (No. 2111), overgrown with balsam, and consists merely of a slab of stone on which are engraved the names of the five persons whose bodies were interred there.*

*They are Anne Sophia Floyd (93) d. March 31, 1886; William Britten (75) son in law of Mrs. A. S. Floyd, d. November 24, 1894; Emma Hardinge Britten (76) (wife of Wm. Britten) d. October 2, 1899; Gilbert Robinson Wilkinson (81) son in law of Mrs. A. S. Floyd, d. May 17, 1906. Margaret Floyd Wilkinson (82) d. October 24, 1912. See Photograph of gravestone on page 664. (not reproduced in PP.)*

**The address of Margaret Floyd Wilkinson.**

*At the time of her passing, according to the Registrar's record, was 1,087, Chester Road, Stretford.*

*The above information will no doubt be useful to those who wish to make a pilgrimage to these places, dear to many who cherish the memory of our beloved Emma Hardinge Britten, founder of the Spiritualists' National Union.*

**What about the Movement placing a suitable memorial over this grave?**

**It only remains for Pspioneer News to add the question – do the house and the grave still exist, a half-century later?**

*Leslie Price*

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## **MALCOLM A LEWIS REPORTS**

I was greatly moved by a past article (January 2005) Emma Hardinge Britten "Grave News". Some time ago I e-mailed to say I would follow up the story on Emma's home and grave. [For PP readers, I should say that] I have wide experience of Spiritualism and physical mediumship and I am active in research here in the North West of England at the University of Manchester as a Social Scientist. Now the story, which I hope, your readers may wish to hear. I have had some 30 years experience in Spiritualism, but over the past few years have been investigating early American physical mediums. However reading Emma's books on this I thought it only right to look at history on my own doorstep!

About 5 years ago I was in close contact with Mrs Joan Adams, a Spiritualist and SNU minister in Manchester. She has now passed on, but lived in Prestwich, a suburb quite close to where Emma resided in Manchester. She informed me of her search for Emma's grave, and of obtaining the "Lintel". At the time I only acknowledged this in passing, but this lintel I believe to be the lintel over Emma's house, The Lindens. I believe this lintel has been saved, and is now residing in one of the Manchester Spiritualist churches as a memorial, but which one I am unsure of. Perhaps a reader may throw some light on this?

Now for the present day. Humphrey Street still exists off Cheetham Hill Road where Emma lived. Cheetham Hill road can be joined from Manchester city centre, and exits in a Northern direction towards Bury. It is a long road, and one that by passes the Jewish Museum on the right. The area is predominantly Asian today, but it was also a thriving Jewish area and in Emma's day was an affluent quarter of the city. A street map of the area will guide the curious, but Humphrey Street can be found on the right hand side of the road near Cheetham Hill shopping centre. This is a busy shopping area today, and the entrance to the street is next to a large Asian food market. It is a one-way street now, and you will not be able to drive down it from Cheetham Hill Road, so park and walk (it is also on a main bus route from the city).

From Cheetham Hill Road the entrance to Humphrey Street is unremarkable. I believe Emma's home was number 1, but nothing now exists except an open space (part of a parking area for the Primary Care Health Trust)

On the other side of the road there is a public toilet and a probation office. The road then dips slightly and turns to the left where there is more modern public housing. I have included some photographs of the street:

No 414 the view along the street to Cheetham Hill Road

No 415 the entrance from Cheetham Hill Road

No 413 the Empty plot. It was here that I believe Emma's house was

The date I did this tour was the 1st October, which turned out for interesting reasons to be significant. As you can see it was a rather dull day. In a way I did not expect much to exist (it has been 107 years since Emma's passing and much of Victorian Manchester has been razed to the ground now). I now needed to get to Harpurhey, a suburb quite close,

and get onto Rochdale Road. This is East of Cheetham Hill Road, about 2 miles distant (again, this can be easily found on the city street map). Once on Rochdale Road again follow it North towards Manchester General Cemetery, which is next to the park on the left side of the road, opposite a newsagents. The large Victorian entrance has gone. There is now a low wall and an iron gate and a single path running slightly downhill (the main path). This graveyard is Victorian and somewhat neglected. Go down the path (approx 150 yards and on your right) and as in the previous article the grave is about 8 graves in and numbered as indicated. It consists of a flat slab, so do not look for an upright tombstone. The old houses have gone, but to your right you will see some blocks of flats. I have included some photos of the grave – No's 416, 7 and 8. The inscriptions are reasonably clear, but Emma and her family lie in a somewhat neglected state. Note the stone is cracked at the top.

Here is my gripe. I was the only person in the graveyard; and here, stood at the last resting place of Emma's physical remains. As Spiritualists are well aware, her spirit is not here, but this is a sad reflection on British Spiritualism that they can allow the grave to be neglected in this way. The SNU in particular should be ashamed. Here lies the "mother of Spiritualism". My few flowers were all that was there that day, and it was a moving experience...the anniversary of her passing was the very next day: October 2nd. Coincidence?

Well that was my trip. I have found the grave and shall pay my respects whenever I journey to that area of the city... but please, British Spiritualists, do something about this stone and grave... the SNU can do better than this!

Fondest Regards  
*Malcolm A Lewis*

**Psypioneer is unable to reproduce the photographs that Malcolm has sent to support his research, anyone wishing to see these photos please e-mail [Psypioneer@aol.com](mailto:Psypioneer@aol.com) and I can send as a separate attachment.**

**I would like to thank Malcolm for this interesting update on the sad state of Emma's grave.**

*Paul J Gaunt*

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## **EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN and the National Federation of Spiritualists.**

It is claimed by the Spiritualists' National Union, (SNU), that Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten was the natural leader of a new movement, National Federation of Spiritualists, (NFS).<sup>1</sup> In reality, Emma had very little, if anything to do with the NFS. She was part of a group who supported yet another attempt at national organisation; this being mainly due to her positional contact as editor, (Nov. 1887 – Feb. 1892), of her newspaper, *The Two Worlds*, as founded by her in 1887, producing the first copy on November 18<sup>th</sup>, and running weekly until November 1960 when it became a monthly magazine. In its original newspaper format, *The Two Worlds* was very supportive of the SNU, for some time enjoying its own column under the heading of SNU News.

Mrs. Britten was never president of the NFS<sup>2</sup>, or as the position was referred to then, as President of the Day. She did however help bring together sixteen like minded people who were to become the original council, to meet and mutually agree to sustain one another in promoting the group interest of forming an organised spiritualist movement, bringing together individuals and societies alike. The concept and attempt was not new, as for many years Mr. J.J. Morse had himself worked towards such a goal.

Emma Harding Britten, like Morse had previously been involved at promoting an attempt for organised and united spiritualism. In 1888 Mr George Wilson, President of the Newcastle Spiritual Evidence Society put the motion: *'The time has come when spiritualists should organise, and become a united religious body'*. This meeting may well have been the inspiration behind the attempt two years later in 1890! That what was to become the Spiritualists' National Union. Due to the important significance of this meeting reported in *The Two Worlds*, August 17<sup>th</sup> 1888 I have copied the significant information:

### **NEWCASTLE SPIRITUAL EVIDENCE SOCIETY**

*At the quarterly meeting of the above Society, held July 25<sup>th</sup>, 1888, on the motion of Mr. George Wilson, President, it was unanimously resolved that: "The time was come when spiritualists should organize, and become a united religious body." It was also decided to ask Mrs. E. H. Britten, who was expected in Newcastle in a few days, to prolong her stay, so that we might have the benefit of her valuable counsel. Although very inconvenient to Mrs. Britten to do so, she kindly consented, and delegates from the surrounding societies in Northumberland and Durham were invited to attend a Conference, held on Tuesday, July 31<sup>st</sup>, at 20, Nelson Street, Newcastle-on-Tyne. About 50 delegates responded to the invitation, and the following is a brief report of the proceedings of the*

*CONFERENCE OF SPIRITUALISTS OF NORTHUMBERLAND AND DURHAM*

*Mr. George Wilson, President, in the chair, opened the proceedings. He said we had passed the experimental stage, and were now prepared to act out the principles of spiritualism. There had hitherto been too much of a spirit of criticism, which does not uplift the soul – too much of the head and not sufficient of the heart. He thought we ought to have a distinct religious organization, with a common basis of belief, and suggested the principles laid down by Mrs. Britten, at Oldham, as embracing a basis which all could accept. The direction the organization might take would form a subject for discussion, and he hoped the delegates would come forward and give views of their respective societies on the subject.*

*Mrs. E. H. Britten delivered a very eloquent address on the claims of spiritualism. She said it was with great satisfaction she was there to discuss the subject. Lancashire and Yorkshire felt the time was come, and they would be guilty of neglect if they did not do something in the way of organization. In Lancashire they had already determined to form district federations on a basis yet to be agreed upon, and to ask for quarterly meetings, with a movable annual conference. She thought we might all unite on the following principles:*

#### SUMMARY

*I believe in the Fatherhood of God,  
The Brotherhood of Man,  
The Immortality of the Soul,  
Personal Responsibility,  
Compensation and Retribution hereafter for all the good or evil deeds done here,  
And a path of eternal progress open to every human soul that wills to tread it by the path  
of eternal good.*

It is interesting to note that at this meeting discussions included; Central funds, Education and Lyceum. Mr H.A. Kersey seconded the motion, *with regard to a creed, he thought we might all unite on the principles laid down by Mrs Britten.* 3

Deja vu? This meeting could very easily become mixed up with the later meeting that had resulted in the SNU!

The concept was brought to fruition on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> July 1890 in Manchester, the meeting's president being Mr. John Lamont, from Liverpool. Mrs. Britten provided the opening invocation and later that day gave her summary of religious faith (same as the 1888 meeting), this time seconded by Mr. Newton of Leeds, (principles). [And around sixty years later, the SNU misreported Emma's previous speeches at Oldham by adding the name of Robert Owen as the spirit who gave Emma her summary of religious faith, later to become the basis of the SNU's Seven Principles.]

The first Manchester meeting was held in three sessions and was called the *National Conference of British Spiritualists* (NCBS). It would appear that Emma had no further

active link other than perhaps editorial support with the NCBS following this initial meeting or with the future SNF, (1891), progressing to the SNU, (1901).

It was not until 1891 at the annual conference in Bradford that the '*Spiritualists' National Federation*', (SNF) was formed and the first *constitution* approved<sup>4</sup>. The president still being John Lamont at this time, and I can find no indicative material to say Emma was present at this or any subsequent proceedings.

It is sadly clear that the true 'Leaders' of the SNF and those whose efforts preceded this formation have not as yet been recognised in the historical texts from the original meetings in 1888, 1890 to the formation of the NFS in 1891 and finally to the formation of the SNU in 1901.

The pioneering individuals who brought about a national spiritualism are rarely recognised or even known to the modern day SNU.

I have little doubt however, that Emma Hardinge Britten was - and remains today - the finest propagandist that the spiritualist movement has ever known. Without her numerous literary works recording the smallest of details much would have been lost; she was indeed a truly pioneering spirit throughout her active life and up to the end of her painful days.

On purchasing an old copy of Emma's Autobiography, I found in its pages a small printed booklet:

## H Y M N

DEDICATED 'TO THE LATE

**Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten**

*By faithful admirers of her life's work in  
the cause of Spiritualism.*

O Joy of the pure in heart ! They who can see  
The angels of light and love, hastening with glee  
To tell of Our Father's love, tell of Our Father's love,  
Tell of Our Father's love, boundless and free !

When tossed on life's stormy sea, strength almost gone,  
There shines the bright star of hope ever anon,  
To tell of His guiding love, tell of His guiding love,  
Tell of his guiding love leading us on.

Press onward, O drooping soul, angels are near,  
To save in the darkest hour, driving out fear;  
O, falter not by the way, falter not by the way,  
Falter not by the way, loved ones are near.

O hope of the trusting soul, their's is the grace  
That leadeth to wisdom's fount, God's Holy place,  
O trust in His mighty love, trust in His mighty love,  
Trust in His mighty love, and in His grace.

O rest of the peaceful soul ! they who did wait  
So patiently for the power to open the gate  
That leads to immortal love, leads to immortal love,  
Leads to immortal love, blissful estate !

*Spiritualist Society,  
Assembly Street, Normanton.  
Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>, 1913*

**References:**

<sup>1</sup> SNU course C20 (SD1) January 1999.

<sup>2</sup> The Two Worlds July 1<sup>st</sup> 1950, page 793 also July 8<sup>th</sup> page 807. (list of presidents since the onset of the NSF 1891)

<sup>3</sup> The Two Worlds August 17<sup>th</sup> 1888, page 524

<sup>4</sup> The Two Worlds July 1<sup>st</sup> 1950, page 793. Also, Light Vol. XX. 1900, page 317.

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**Leslie Price found the following article on a visit to The College of Psychic Studies, London (CPS). Please note the new website <http://www.collegeofpsychicstudies.co.uk> *The Spiritual Review* was founded in 1900 and edited by Mr J.J. Morse running until May 1902. James Morse at this point departed England for an extensive lecture tour to Australia, New Zealand and America.**

The author of this article is unknown.

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SPIRITUAL REVIEW  
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**The Cause in other Lands.**

**AUSTRALIAN SPIRITUALISM.  
BY AN OLD SPIRITUALIST.**

It would be difficult to say who was the original Australian Spiritualist, but as early as 1850 Dr. Berigny, a homeopathic physician, residing in Collins Street, Melbourne, held a circle in his rooms, which was accessible to any inquirers who satisfied him of their sincerity; and to my knowledge there were three private circles, the members of which had obtained satisfactory evidence of spirit communion, though the manifestations were of a rudimentary character, the table being the telegraphic instrument. The late Henry Edwards, the distinguished actor, was a member of one of these circles.

In Sydney Dr. J. Bowie Wilson was the first public man who openly avowed his belief. Public attention was first drawn to the subject in Victoria by some correspondence in the papers eight or ten years later, and, particularly, by a series of articles on "Spiritualism in America," published in the *Argus*, which was then the leading journal. Soon after that Mr. B. S. Naylor, a literary gentleman, and a comparatively recent arrival from England, having been cured of chronic bronchitis by a prescription given through a spirit medium, took up the cudgels on its behalf, and commenced a vigorous campaign, writing to the papers, lecturing, and finally starting a small monthly paper called the *Glowworm*. There was not a sufficient public interest aroused to assure a paying circulation, and after five months struggle for existence, he ceased to issue it. A little later on the *Harbinger of Light* made its first appearance, edited and published by Mr. W. H. Terry, who, at that time, was the proprietor of a depot for spiritualistic literature, and privately practiced medical clairvoyance. Mr. Terry's father, a very intelligent man and enthusiastic spiritualist, was in charge of the bookshop, and delighted to give information and evidence to inquirers. The publication of the *Harbinger* gave an impetus to Spiritualism. Associations were formed in Melbourne, Bendigo, and Stawell; the Melbourne body holding its meetings in the old Masonic Hall. A simple Sunday service consisting of an address or reading by a member with appropriate hymns and music, the introduction of interesting spiritual communications, and conversation on spiritual experiences. At a later date the Rev. John Tyerman, who had been suspended by his bishop for having publicly affirmed his belief in Spiritualism, became the regular speaker. The body, however, was not strong enough to permanently maintain him, and he started lecturing on his own account, subsequently removing to Sydney, where he ministered on a Spiritualistic platform for several years. A great impetus was given to Spiritualism by the arrival of Dr. (then Rev. Mr.) Peebles in 1872, accompanied by Mr. Dunn, a young man possessed of remarkable physical mediumship. Tied hand and foot with several ropes by experts, and placed with several musical instruments in an enclosure prepared by the investigators, immediately the door was closed bells began to ring, the violin to play, a tambourine was beaten, and guitar twanged; the door was rapidly opened by a member of the committee, and the tying found intact. The manifestations were repeated, hands of various sizes appearing at the opening from which the bell was ultimately thrown. Other manifestation followed, including the untying and re-tying of the medium, none of the committee being able to untie the latter; the tests were perfect, and everyone present was satisfied of the genuineness of the manifestations.

Dr. Peebles commenced his lectures at the Temperance Hall, under the auspices of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists, and so successful were they that the Prince of

Wales' Theatre had to be engaged for his second series, and this was barely large enough to contain the audiences that flocked to hear him.

The Children's Progressive Lyceum had been inaugurated only a short time before the arrival of Mr. Peebles, and both he and Dr. Dunn, energetically co-operating with the conductor (Mr. W. H. Terry), soon worked up the institution to its full complement, and a high state of efficiency, and everything connected with Spiritualism wore a rosy hue.

Mr. Charles H. Foster was the next sensation, arriving in Melbourne early in 1874, his wonderful tests were the means of convincing several hard-headed skeptics, including Mr. H. J. Browne, and Drs. Rohner and Muller, all of whom subsequently have done yeoman's work for Spiritualism. The manifestations at the "Energetic" circle, conducted by Mr. Denovan, of Sandhurst, attracted considerable attention about this time, and Mr. Denovan subsequently published a large volume, entitled, "The Evidences of Spiritualism," which included the local experiences, which were varied and interesting.

During the next few years Spiritualism was brought very prominently before the Melbourne public, Dr. Peebles (second visit), Mrs. Britten, Professor Denton, and Mrs. E. L. Watson occupying the Sunday platform at the Opera House and Bijou Theatres, under the auspices of the Victorian Association of Spiritualism, and delivering brilliant lectures to attentive audiences of from one to two thousand people, whilst a visit from Dr. Slade, and the exhibition of his phenomenal slate writing, and the materializing séances of Mr. George Spriggs, both of which phenomena were new to Australians, gave stamina to the philosophical teachings. Some lesser stars followed, but from this time forward no great spiritual luminary came amongst us, and though the Victorian Association and the Lyceum have continued their work and commanded a certain amount of public attention, a number of the prominent men connected with both of them have passed beyond the veil, others have withdrawn from public identification with the subject, and but a few of the same class have stepped forward to fill their places. There are Spiritualists in all directions and few educated persons now deny the phenomena attributed to Spiritualism.

The third visit of Dr. Peebles, though he gave but few lectures, awakened enthusiasm. Mr. Colville's more recent visit, and the presence here at the present time of that famous test medium, Mrs. Ada Foye, whose public test meetings elicit the most convincing evidences of spirit identity, fail for some reason to arouse the enthusiasm of the public, whilst the secular press, with one exception, has studiously held aloof, and will not even abuse us! For all that Spiritualism as a fact is making headway, and in my opinion only wants the public countenance of some of its prominent believers to give it a higher status with the general public. *The Harbinger of Light*, which has been its steady and intelligent organ and advocate for upwards of thirty years, has an ally in *The Messenger*, a somewhat smaller, but well-conducted journal, which devotes more attention to local doings, and society work. There is some talk of still another visit from the veteran Dr. Peebles, who is sure to make a stir and bring some of the shy ones out of their shells. We have some good local mediums, but our oratorical talent is not adequate to our requirements, and the association is not peculiarly strong enough to pay the heavy expenses of introducing high-class speakers; the collections on which they have to

depend being quite inadequate to cover expenses. Spiritualists are less liberal to their associations, as a rule, than Christians are to their churches, probably the shepherds do not look them up sufficiently, or else the flock turns a deaf ear to them, but so it unfortunately is. Possibly some day a generous and well-to-do Spiritualist may unbutton his pocket and furnish the means for a Spiritual Hall or Meeting-house, the possession of which would materially aid the introduction of high-class speakers capable of giving another marked impulse to the movement; for this we must not only pray but work.

Melbourne, January 15th, 1901.

### **New Zealand Celebration.**

The Wellington Association of Spiritualists celebrated the opening of the New Century Hall in Kent Terrace by holding a concert and social in the building on December 11, 1900. A long and interesting programme, says the *Wellington (N.Z.) Evening Post*, had been arranged, and the large audience present testified to its appreciation of the. Efforts of the performers by frequent encores and loud applause.

At the conclusion of the programme, the President (Air. W. McLean) delivered a brief address. Their object in building the hall, he said, had been to get a building, which would be worthy of the cause of Spiritualism and worthy of New Zealand. Their next aim should be to get as far as possible into communication with their spirit friends. Surely that was a desirable object surely every one present would be glad if they could realise honestly and sincerely that they could come into communion with those who had gone before. It was quite possible that they might lose many earthly friends if they declared themselves Spiritualists. He had himself lost many earthly friends, but for every earthly friend he had lost he knew he had made a hundred whose friendship was eternal, and, therefore, he would sooner lose a hundred friends on earth than two or three of those friends whom he knew were true and loving, and would stick to him for ever. Mr. McLean went on to refer to the spread of Spiritualism among all classes in all countries, and said that they could prove beyond the shadow of a doubt, by living witnesses on their oath, that hundreds of spirits to day were able to come and talk to them personally.

If it was the last word he was to say upon earth, he was prepared to say that he had met not one but hundreds of spirits, as beautiful, as enlightened, as any of the company present. This building, by the way, was the first in the Australian colonies dedicated purely to the Society of Spiritualists, which was registered by Act of Parliament. He might mention that during the reign of King James 1, 30,000 people were burned at the stake for believing in what was termed witchcraft, which we now called Spiritualism. In conclusion, Mr. McLean proposed a hearty vote of thanks to the performers, to the contractors for the building, and to the committee of management, which was composed of Mr. Isaac Plimmer (vice-president), Messrs. W. D. Gorham, P. Russell, W. L. More, W. Jamieson, Mesdames McLean and Plimmer, and Miss Mountjoy, with Mr. T. Volkmann as honorary treasurer, and Mrs. E \More as honorary secretary.

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## THE MYSTERY OF FOX COTTAGE



For many years, I have been rather mesmerised by these two images of Fox Cottage.

The drawing/engraving featured in *Psypioneer* – Newsletter No: 12 was of the original image as shown by Mr. E.E. Lewis in *'A Report of the Mysterious Noises Heard in the House of Mr. John D. Fox'*. Lewis could not have known that this 40-page booklet, the first publication on Modern Spiritualism, would become the foundations in its history. (1)

As observed in *Psypioneer* – Newsletter No: 9, *'What is Known of the Hydesville Peddler'*, (2) it was noted that the events as originally recorded by Lewis had since been reprinted with errors, speculation, sensationalism; in general 'misquoted'.

The Lewis report however, contains an image in the booklet showing Fox Cottage with a large extension on the west side of the property. Early photographic images and descriptions of the building have no such attachment?

Whilst researching for the *'Hydesville Peddler'*, I noted a description of the house interior in *'Talking to the Dead'*, by Barbara Weisberg (3) Again the description does not include the extension as so clearly illustrated in the Lewis report. The lack of clarity to the Lewis image makes it difficult to identify the artist. This image/interpretation of the cottage has been repeated, and at the head, (left), of this page a similar image as used by Lewis appears with courtesy of Garth Willey at Woodlands Sanctuary, Australia, and is taken from *'An Old Story Retold'*, by Arthur Conan Doyle, in the Strand Magazine, September 1920. It appears that the Strand Magazine image originates from *'The Missing Link'*, (4) of 1885 by the elder Fox sister, Anne Leah Underhill.

Leah's book features a drawing of *'The House at Hydesville'*, on the last page. Its artist being either DEMAREST or DENAREST, NY. The image in the 1920 Strand Magazine appears structurally equal to that in Leah's book, but some of the featured trees although sited the same seem to have grown significantly. There are other subtle differences to

note, for example the number of slats on the gate decreasing slightly, wheel tracks differ slightly, but on the whole the structural image of the house remains from Lewis to Doyle.

The original Fox Cottage images depicting the west extension have been used throughout spiritualist literature, old and new. *Psychic World* used Leah's image in their 150 years Anniversary Supplement in 1998. *Psychic News* used a simple line drawing, showing the large west extension in their Hydesville Day edition of 2002. Leah's image is also found today on modern websites showing the advent of Modern Spiritualism.

The structural depiction of Fox Cottage changes with the introduction of more reliable early photographic prints coupled with detailed descriptions from those who stayed or visited the house. **These photographs and descriptions neither show nor describe the west extension.**

It may also be noted between the two images, (top right of the page shows a photograph of Fox Cottage taken in 1852, there is another photograph possibly earlier but the quality is too poor to print) that the drawing is rather vague and disproportionate to the photographic image; the shape and position of the chimney are very different for example.

Robert Dale Owen visited the house in 1859 after maintaining close links with the Fox family, and made a detailed description of the house interior as it was in 1848, quote: *It is a story and a half high, fronting south; the lower floor consisting; in 1848 of two moderate-sized rooms, opening into each other; east of these a bed-room, opening into the sitting-room; and a buttry, opening into the same room; together with a stairway (between the bed-room and buttry), leading from the sitting-room up to the half-story above, and from the buttry down to the cellar.* (5)

This description is supported by the Lewis report with its varied informative statements as given.

A paper read before the Rochester Historical Society, October 29<sup>th</sup> 1925 by Adelbert Cronise, entitled '*The Beginnings of Modern Spiritualism In and Near Rochester*', (6) further enforces the theory of there **not** having been a west extension, in giving probably the best independent description of the cottage. Like Owen, Cronise actually visited the property in 1905. Not only is the interior described, but also photographs of interior and exterior alike were taken. The interior description is complementary to Owens description and the photograph taken from the front room, shows the east bedroom with the stairs leading to the half-storey/attic space clearly to the left of the east bedroom as described by Owen.

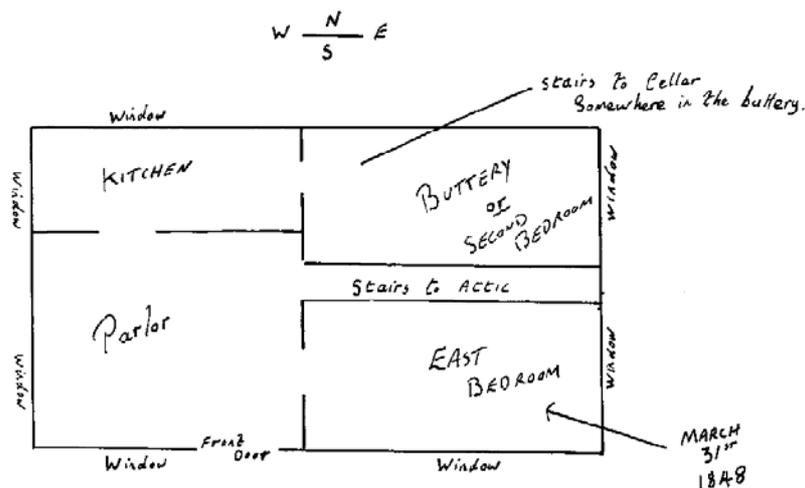
It is interesting to note from the Cronise paper that the author makes a disclaimer, saying the paper was not about Spiritualism. A subject he had never attempted to investigate purely bringing together many sources of records pertaining to historical interest of Rochester.

To modern times and modern literature including Barbara Weisberg's, *Talking to the Dead*: Barbara gives a description of the cottage interior as follows: *The front door*

opened directly into the south facing parlor. The kitchen was set back, on the northwest side, and had its own door to the yard. On the east side, a buttery – sometimes used as a second bedroom – connected to the kitchen, and the main bedroom adjoined to the parlor. An enclosed staircase between the buttery and main bedroom led up to a large attic, while another staircase led down to a dirt-floor basement. (7)

Although the accounts and descriptions I have cross-referenced have differed in the names given to the interior of the house, i.e., basement/cellar; front-room/parlor; buttery/pantry, main bedroom/east bedroom; there has been a sharp consistency with the cottage as being a small frame dwelling with only **four** rooms along with a cellar and an attic/half-storey room. **There have been no descriptive additions of a west extension with its own front entrance and windows.**

I have closely studied and made diagrams of all the descriptions that I have found on the Fox Cottage layout, the diagram below would be very similar and agreeable to the various sources I have studied, as to the true living quarters of the Fox family in 1848.



**GROUND FLOOR:** please note that this is not a proportioned sketch, simply the layout.

There is a general layout to the downstairs of the property. The usage of the rooms may have changed, dependant upon occupant, as well as the siting of doors. For example in the Lewis report on page 28 – (Pspioneer 12), it clearly states 'There was only one door to the bedroom and that opened into the kitchen. (This is when the buttery doubled as a bedroom at the time of Mr. & Mrs. Weekman's occupancy). In Owens description, however, the buttery/bedroom is said to open into the sitting room, but it is to be noted that Owen omits the placement of the kitchen that on all accounts is shown to be behind the sitting room/parlor, Owen describes these two rooms as opening into each other, so he could be talking about the back room opening into the front room, which would mean that the buttery/bedroom led into the back (kitchen) of these adjoining rooms. (It is to be remembered that Owen visited the house eleven years after the Fox residency, but he

does say that the description is as it was in 1848 presumably told this by members of the Fox family), this description would then sit with the Lewis report.

I can confirm that there were two rooms opening as Owen states opening onto each other as I have a photograph which shows this to be correct. This photograph was taken while the building was vacant, but in its original state at Hydesville.

I contacted Chris Davis who is the Town of Arcadia's historian, also the Executive Director of Newark-Arcadia Historical Society & Museum. When asked the question about the west extension of Fox cottage, Chris Davis responded to me that the: *Image/drawing of Fox cottage in Hydesville with the wing/addition on the left side is news to me. He told me that, I have seen a number of postcards, photographs, souvenir china pieces, etc., and none have shown this edition.*

I have at the end of this article put the details of Newark-Arcadia Historical Society & Museum.

My conclusionary thoughts are thus. It seems strange to me as to why Lewis would use an incorrect image of Fox Cottage and why he would commission, or produce himself, a false image? Perhaps the image held no importance or relevance to Lewis or to his report, as this was a rush job!

The report printer, Mr. Little of State Street, Rochester, possibly fronted the image as simply 'cosmetic artwork'. This 'artwork' then became the projected presumed image of Fox Cottage, an imaged addition to perhaps bring to the report a sense of realism, truth and believability to readers outside Rochester. The inherited image as used by Leah and *The Strand Magazine* being simple artist impressions of the Lewis image, not reflecting the true image produced by later evidential photographic imagery.

- (1) All Psypioneer-Newsletters can be found on [www.woodlandway.org](http://www.woodlandway.org)
- (2) As above.
- (3) Barbara Weisberg. *Talking to the Dead: Kate and Maggie Fox and the Rise of Spiritualism*. Harper Collins. 2004. ISBN 0-06-056667-1
- (4) A. Leah Underhill. *The Missing Link in Modern Spiritualism*. 1885. Thomas R. Knox & Co. New York. Page 477.
- (5) Robert Dale Owen. *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World*. Trubner & Co. London. Page 204.
- (6) Adelbert Cronise. *The Beginnings of Modern Spiritualism In and Near Rochester*. The Rochester Historical Society Publication Fund Series. Volume V. 1926. Pages 3-4. Published by the society.
- (7) Barbara Weisberg. *Talking to the Dead*: Page 14.

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**Historical Society**  
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*Founded 1992*

315-331-6409  
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Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m. (July & August)  
[arcadiahistory@novocon.net](mailto:arcadiahistory@novocon.net)

<http://www.cgazette.com/towns/Newark/standing/organizations/arcadiahistorical.htm>

## HISTORICAL NEWARK AND ARCADIA

The very historic site at the corner of Hydesville & Parker Roads in Arcadia, where Modern Spiritualism was founded in 1848, has a new structure built by the *National Spiritualist Association of Churches*, owners of the property. On one side of the building is a granite historical marker. The building covers the foundation of the Fox family's home, where Maggie and Katie Fox first communicated with a dead peddler buried in the cellar. The recently excavated foundation can be viewed from large windows on all sides of the new building. The large corner lot is now very park-like. Some five years ago the site was a jungle of weeds and small trees.

People interested in Spiritualism and its fascinating history are beginning to visit the site. Plans are underway for a 160th celebration to take place in Newark in 2008. Meanwhile, the Newark-Arcadia Historical museum has a new display with some rare and unusual artifacts.

*Paul J. Gaunt*

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### How to obtain this Newsletter

The Psypioneer newsletter is at present available, complete with all back issues on the web site [www.woodlandway.org](http://www.woodlandway.org) and we are greatly indebted to our Australian friends for hosting and posting this Newsletter. You can obtain it free and direct by sending an e-mail entitled "Subscribe" to [psypioneersub@aol.com](mailto:psypioneersub@aol.com) or "Unsubscribe" to [psypioneer@aol.com](mailto:psypioneer@aol.com).

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