

Chapter 1 : Jack and Beverly's Spirit Photography: Doyle and the Spirits

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and the Spirits Note: The following essay is based on a segment from Skepticity. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is known for many things: the creation of Sherlock Holmes, a spectacular mustache, and his belief in spirits and fairies.

He read a book written by the US High Courts Judge John Worth Edmonds , one of the most influential early American Spiritualists, who claimed that after the death of his wife he had been able to communicate with her. Lycett When Doyle practised as a physician at Southsea, he participated in table turning sittings at the home of one of his patients, General Drayson, a teacher at the Greenwich Naval College. In his Memoirs and Adventures, he wrote: I was so impressed that I wrote an account of it to Light, the psychic weekly paper, and so in the year I actually put myself on the public record as a student of these matters. In , Conan Doyle gave his first public lecture on Spiritualism. Later he wrote books, articles and made public appearances in Britain, Australia and America to promote his beliefs. On the summit of his literary fame caused by the Sherlock Holmes stories, Conan Doyle, decided to abandon writing fiction and devoted himself almost entirely to the study of paranormal. Doyle was convinced that intelligence could exist apart from the body, and that the dead could communicate with the living. He believed that Houdini possessed supernatural powers. However, either of them had a different view about Spiritualism. Houdini was a fervent opponent of the Spiritualist movement in the s. Lady Doyle, in a hypnotic trance, wrote automatically a long message in English from Mrs. Houdini understood that it was trickery because his late mother barely knew English. He announced publicly that Spiritualism is a fraud and thus he ended his friendship with Doyle. The Coming of the Fairies In , two teenage girls in Yorkshire, Elsie Wright age 16 and her cousin Frances Griffiths age 10 , produced two photographs of fairies which they had taken in their garden. One of the photos showed Frances in the garden with a waterfall with four fairies dancing upon the bush. Three of them had wings and one was playing a long flute-like instrument. Conan Doyle accepted the photos as genuine evidence for fairies and wrote two pamphlets and a book, The Coming of the Fairies , in which he publicly announced that fairies truly existed. The book was widely ridiculed in the press and many people realised that Conan Doyle had lost his grip on reality. The book made him one of the leading Spiritualists of his time. Spiritualist Travels Conan Doyle promoted the ideas of Spiritualism all over the world, drawing big crowds wherever he went. He began his Spiritualist travels in , with visits to major cities of Great Britain. Then, during and , he made voyages to Australia and New Zealand. In and , he toured the United States with lectures on Spiritualism. Early in , he visited South Africa, and in the autumn, he toured several European countries. Many claims were set forth, but whether satisfactory communication was established remains a question. She asserted that she had seen clairvoyantly Conan Doyle sitting in the empty chair. She conveyed a message from Sir Arthur, though apparently only his wife in the front row heard it, everyone else being overmatched by a burst from an enthusiastic organist. His faith in the possibility of communication with departed souls was strong and he cared little whether others agreed with it or not. Sir Arthur claimed to have had conversations with the spirits of many great men, including Cecil Rhodes, Joseph Conrad, and others. In his later years he often expressed a wish that he should be remembered for his psychic work rather than for his novels. New York Times Obituary, July 8, How could Sir Arthur, a medical man and the creator of a super-rational detective, have come out as a committed spiritualist? This question is hard to answer. Paradoxically, Victorian Spiritualism was the natural child of rationalism and loss of religious faith; a strange hybrid of science and evolutionary metaphysics which attracted the minds of many people at the turn of the nineteenth century. It was a counterculture movement within Victorian and Edwardian society and its legacy is visible in later time. Victorian Spiritualism exerted an indirect influence on the emergence of the esoteric movements of modern Theosophy and New Age. It also had an impact on psychoanalysis the notion of the subconscious , and last but not least, the modernist artists and writers, such as William Butler Yeats, James Joyce the concept of epiphany , Ezra Pound and T.

Chapter 2 : Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Visited Tacoma for 'Spirited' Lecture in - SouthSoundTalk

An exhaustive and definitive study of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's career as a psychic investigator by Sherlock Holmes biographer Kelvin I. www.nxgvision.com author has been a prolific writer for a quarter of a century.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is known for many things: He possessed a religious, missionary, perhaps even messianic zeal to promote belief in discarnate spirits and life after death. In his writings on spiritualism, he displayed the same degree of levelheadedness and perspicacity that led him to conclude that this is an actual picture of a fairy: Some of the mediums had even confessed. None of this deters him. He is able to defend the supernatural abilities of anyone who seems to display gifts that in some way bolster his religious beliefs: In the light of our later, fuller knowledge we know that much that bears the appearance of fraud is not necessarily fraud at all. I How can an apparent fraud not be a fraud? On more than one occasion, an investigator grasped the foot Palladino was using to produce effects. This explanation assumes that skeptics are incapable of counting up to three. Doyle even believed that magicians, like his erstwhile friend Harry Houdini, possessed real supernatural abilities but refused to admit it. Doyle genuinely believed that when Houdini appeared to walk through a wall that he was actually dematerializing and walking through a wall Brandon They were shared by many contemporaries and are still common today. Doyle, however, combined credulity with arrogance, condescension, and an unswerving belief in his own rightness. He railed against scientists for not taking spiritualism seriously. No serious attempt of any sort, up to the formation of the S[ociety for] P[sychical] R[esearch] was made to understand or explain a matter which was engaging the attention of millions of minds. In discussing the work of the Society for Psychical Research he says, In an exaggerated striving after what was considered to be an impartial, scientific attitude, a certain little group within the society has continued for many years to maintain a position, if not of hostility to, yet of persistent denial of, the reality of physical manifestations observed with particular mediums. It has mattered not what weight of testimony was forthcoming from trustworthy men whose qualifications and experience made them worthy of credence. II While dismissing many scientists and sciences, he praises to the high heavens those scientists who shared his credulity and biases, such as Alfred Russel Wallace , the co-discoverer of evolution by natural selection. He is inordinately fond of the argument from authority, frequently citing the testimony of eminent men. He can be both snobbish and anti-intellectual. Worst, he can be uncharitable. Inevitably, he spends a considerable amount of time discussing Katie and Maggie Fox , who sparked the craze for spiritualism when they heard or produced knocks and raps in They were eleven and fifteen years old at the time. They were relentlessly exploited by their much older sister Leah. Leah ended up wealthy and secure and lived to a ripe old age. Kate and Maggie both descended into poverty and alcoholism, and Leah abandoned them when they became scandalous. If in such circumstances both their powers and their character were to deteriorate, it would not surprise any experienced Spiritualist. They deserved no better, though their age and ignorance furnished an excuse. He became a fervent, evangelizing proponent of spiritualism in the wake of World War I. His eldest son was seriously wounded in the war. After he had largely recovered, he died of Spanish flu. He needed to know that his loved ones were all right, that they still existed in some form, that he would see them again, that he could still communicate with them. People who claimed they could communicate with his loved ones took advantage of his grief and betrayed his trust, just as psychics continue to take advantage of grieving people today. It seems to have been a middle name, but Doyle sometimes used it as a compound surname. Related This entry was posted on Tuesday, August 19th, at You can follow any responses to this entry through the RSS 2. You can leave a response , or trackback from your own site.

Chapter 3 : Arthur Conan Doyle - Wikipedia

Conan Doyle became convinced that he really had witnessed psychic phenomena that was caused by the spirit of the dead child. The Public Fight for Spiritualism During October of Conan Doyle gave his first public lecture on Spiritualism.

The most inventive debut of , this clever, mind-bending murder mystery will leave readers guessing until the very last page. However nothing and no one are quite what they seem. Of all the many things Arthur Conan Doyle is known for, most people likely think instantly of Sherlock Holmes. Certainly that is what I think of. Well, I think of Benedict Cumberbatch first, because honestly. And then I think of Sherlock. Enter the Cottingley fairy pictures. They did this as a prank because Frances had gotten into trouble for falling into a nearby stream and getting her dress dirty. When asked how it got dirty, she told her mother it happened while playing with the fairies. Mother was not amused and punished her. When word of the Cottingley fairy photos started spreading, naturally there were plenty of skeptics. But lending credence to the photos was the voice of Arthur Conan Doyle, who wrote personally to the girls and their father, asking if he could use the images in an article he was writing for *The Strand* about fairy sightings. Griffiths and the girls were delighted to have been contacted by such a famous author and gave him permission to use the photos. But I think we also have to realize that, at the time, the world was just coming out of World War I and spiritualism was having a really big moment. Spiritualism is communing with spirits or ghosts, usually through the use of a medium. Spectral or spirit photography was also highly in fashion at the time as well. Many people were also bereaved by the war. As a result, people would pay a shitload of money for a photograph of a loved one who died in the war. Spirit photography was perhaps a more modern extension of the Victorian practice of death photography. Belief in fairies, the unseelie, the Little Folk, the fae, and whatever else you want to call them is simply in the bones of the earth in certain parts of the world. Britain, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, generally the Celtic lands, all happily have a still-thriving feel of the otherworldly. British literature from centuries past bears out a strong belief in the existence of fairies or other such beings. Fairies are fucking real in places like that. To a person who was deeply invested in the spiritualist movement, such as Conan Doyle and many others at the time were, the belief in fairies and spirits seems a natural response not only to their cultural and historical surroundings, but also to the lingering traumas of war. As with all myth and legend, fairy stories serve a purpose and fulfill a need on some level. The Cottingley fairies filled some kind of need in people, and Arthur Conan Doyle was no exception to that need. If you want to know more about the fairies, as Arthur Conan Doyle did, perhaps these books will pique your interest. Hit me up with some of your own recommendations as well! *The History of Spiritualism* by Arthur Conan Doyle I mean—this one has the entire history of spiritualism, up to the time it was written. It is a tome. A bible-length book you can use to learn about spiritualism, or as a blunt force weapon with which to make new spirits. Take this with a grain of salt, but this really is worth a look at. It is a cheeky book, written as though by a young girl out to catch faeries. *The Uses of Enchantment*: It deals with some ways in which psychology can be applied to fairy tales. *The Iron King* by Julie Kagawa Meghan has never felt quite right, or quite accepted, since her father disappeared before her eyes when she was six. Now weird things are happening to her, and oh hey! A fun, light read, perfect for a day at the beach, or in the woods while you look for fairies. Also *In This Story Stream*.

Arthur Conan Doyle is world famous as a writer and as the creator of Sherlock Holmes, but his life as a psychic investigator has often been neglected. This biography represents a wide cross-section of Conan Doyle's spiritualistic writings. It ranges from the case histories of mediums to transcripts.

The science of spirits. Dr Michael Hurley explains what happened next. Sherlock Holmes was a Cambridge man. Apparently, he read Natural Sciences. Not enough to make a definitive case, perhaps; but quite enough for fans to enjoy a field day of speculation. Nor was he a scientist. The whole event must seem thoroughly bizarre to us today. Although Conan Doyle was not without scientific training – he had studied medicine at Edinburgh and had practised as a doctor for a short time too – by the date of his visit to Cambridge, he had long since given up medicine. His international reputation rested not on science, but on his achievements as a teller of tales, as a writer of fantasy and fiction. Had there simply been a mistake? I like to imagine a scene where, heady with mischief after some formal hall, the appointed representatives of these Societies decided to switch the invitations for their respective speakers between them, deliberately putting them into the wrong envelopes. Indeed, his arrival must have been hotly anticipated, for it swelled attendance at the Society far beyond anything seen since its foundation two years earlier. It is no surprise that people thronged to hear Conan Doyle; he was by that time a major celebrity. But the topic of his talk compounds, rather than clarifies, the mystery of why he had been invited to speak in the first place. He did not talk about literature – there had been no mix up of envelopes – but the subject of the talk he gave nonetheless seems closer to science fiction than to science. For good measure, he also threw in some spirit photographs. Conversion to Spiritualism I have long been interested in Conan Doyle, and especially in how the creator of a paragon of logical deduction could, in the later part of his life, come to champion supernatural phenomenon, even advocating the existence of fairies at the end of the garden. Before he was a professed Spiritualist, he was a professed Materialist; and before that, he was a Catholic. There is a chain of connection between these apparently incompatible positions. Schooled by Jesuits at Stonyhurst College, he came to think that religion and science were at odds with each other. Not in the sense that he lapsed into apathy or agnosticism. Indifference and indecision were not in his nature; rather, the pendulum swung full course, and he put his faith in what he took to be the rival authority of knowledge offered by science. I should know, I was a schoolboy there myself. In the final paragraph of an article he wrote for Strand Magazine in , he nicely summarises what he came to regard as the impoverished purview of late- 19th century science. But his coda note usefully suggests why he might wish to even entertain such apparent silliness. But he had not, in his own view, come full circle. He figured his enlightenment instead as a fusing of religion with Materialism. Did his lecture bring the John Ray Society into disrepute, by making a mockery of rigorous proof and rationality? It is hard to imagine Sherlock Holmes standing for it. Holmes is not merely dismissive of the supernatural on this particular occasion; he rejects the idea of supernatural powers in general, and on principle. Was Conan Doyle merely being humoured by his hosts, or indeed being offered up as the unwitting object of humour? The minute book gives an inkling of how his talk was received: Sincerity is set against, rather than beside, truth. But even that sentiment shies from full-throated praise, since it is, of course, perfectly possible to be gripped by the spectacle of a lecture without concluding that its argument is, in the end, coherent or credible. But his visit suggests something more interesting about the academic climate of Cambridge in the s than that its urbane undergraduates could not be gulled by tales of table-rapping and ectoplasmic excretions. Which makes much more sense of why scientists should choose to give his views an airing. The year of his graduation from medical school, , was also the same year in which The Society for Psychical Research was founded. And by the early 20th century, science had, through its own advances, taken significant strides in challenging a straightforwardly material view of the world. Conan Doyle would not have been invited to talk to Cambridge scientists about spirits a few decades earlier; nor could he have been a few decades later. Find out how to receive CAM.

Chapter 5 : Conan Doyle " Star & Crescent

To celebrate the birthday of Arthur Conan Doyle, we're writing about all things Sherlockian/ACD today. This piece on Arthur Conan Doyle, spiritualism, and fairies is sponsored by The 7 ½ Deaths of Evelyn Hardcastle by Stuart Turton. The most inventive debut of , this clever, mind-bending.

Sherlock Holmes[edit] Doyle struggled to find a publisher for his work. His first work featuring Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Doyle felt grievously exploited by Ward Lock as an author new to the publishing world and he left them. Doyle wrote the first five Holmes short stories from his office at 2 Upper Wimpole Street then known as Devonshire Place , which is now marked by a memorial plaque. He takes my mind from better things. In December , to dedicate more of his time to his historical novels, Doyle had Holmes and Professor Moriarty plunge to their deaths together down the Reichenbach Falls in the story " The Final Problem ". Public outcry, however, led him to feature Holmes in in the novel The Hound of the Baskervilles. In , Doyle published his first Holmes short story in ten years, " The Adventure of the Empty House ", in which it was explained that only Moriarty had fallen, but since Holmes had other dangerous enemies"especially Colonel Sebastian Moran "he had arranged to also be perceived as dead. Holmes was ultimately featured in a total of 56 short stories "the last published in "and four novels by Doyle, and has since appeared in many novels and stories by other authors. The latter popularised the mystery of the Mary Celeste [42] and added fictional details such as the perfect condition of the ship which had actually taken on water by the time it was discovered and its boats remaining on board the one boat was in fact missing that have come to dominate popular accounts of the incident. The Challenger stories include what is probably his best-known work after the Holmes oeuvre, The Lost World. He was a prolific author of short stories, including two collections set in Napoleonic times featuring the French character Brigadier Gerard. Barrie on the libretto of Jane Annie. He was an occasional bowler who took just one first-class wicket, although one of the highest pedigree as it was W. Doyle wrote, "I was much inclined to accept However, the distance and my engagements presented a final bar. He had moved to Little Windlesham house in Crowborough with Jean Leckie, his second wife, and resided there with his family from until his death in July She was the youngest daughter of J. Louisa suffered from tuberculosis. He had maintained a platonic relationship with Jean while his first wife was still alive, out of loyalty to her. He had two with his first wife: He had an additional three with his second wife: He stood for Parliament twice as a Liberal Unionist "in in Edinburgh Central and in in the Hawick Burghs "but although he received a respectable vote, he was not elected. Morel and diplomat Roger Casement. During he wrote The Crime of the Congo , a long pamphlet in which he denounced the horrors of that colony. He became acquainted with Morel and Casement, and it is possible that, together with Bertram Fletcher Robinson , they inspired several characters in the novel The Lost World. When Casement was found guilty of treason against the Crown after the Easter Rising , Doyle tried unsuccessfully to save him from facing the death penalty, arguing that Casement had been driven mad and could not be held responsible for his actions. The first case, in , involved a shy half-British, half-Indian lawyer named George Edalji who had allegedly penned threatening letters and mutilated animals in Great Wyrley. He resigned from the Lodge in , but returned to it in , only to resign again in These included attending around 20 seances , experiments in telepathy and sittings with mediums. Writing to Spiritualist journal Light , that year, he declared himself to be a Spiritualist and spoke of one particular psychic event that had convinced him. Nevertheless, during this period, he remained, in essence, a dilettante. The New Revelation was the title of his first Spiritualist work, published two years later. In the intervening years, he wrote to Light magazine about his faith and lectured frequently on the truth of Spiritualism. War-related deaths close to him certainly strengthened his long-held belief in life after death and spirit communication, though it is wrong to claim that the death of his son, Kingsley, turned him to Spiritualism, as is often stated. His two brothers-in-law one of whom was E. Hornung , creator of the literary character Raffles and his two nephews also died shortly after the war. His second book on Spiritualism, The Vital Message , appeared in Doyle found solace supporting spiritualism and its attempts to find proof of existence beyond the grave. He was a member of the renowned supernatural organisation The Ghost Club.

Some later commentators have stated that he declared the clairvoyance manifestations to be genuine. He reproduced them in the book, together with theories about the nature and existence of fairies and spirits. Initially suspected of being falsified, the photos were decades later determined to be faked along with admissions from the photographers. Doyle was friends for a time with Harry Houdini, the American magician who himself became a prominent opponent of the Spiritualist movement in the s following the death of his beloved mother. Houdini was apparently unable to convince Doyle that his feats were simply illusions, leading to a bitter public falling out between the two. Ernst, in which Houdini performed an impressive trick at his home in the presence of Conan Doyle. Houdini assured Conan Doyle the trick was pure illusion and that he was attempting to prove a point about Doyle not "endorsing phenomena" simply because he had no explanation. According to Ernst, Conan Doyle refused to believe it was a trick. Doyle defended Hope, but further evidence of trickery was obtained from other researchers. In Julius and Agnes Zancig confessed that their mind reading act was a trick and published the secret code and all the details of the trick method they had used, under the title *Our Secrets!!* Leslie Curnow, a spiritualist, contributed much research to the book. Milner says that Doyle had a motive—namely, revenge on the scientific establishment for debunking one of his favourite psychics—and that *The Lost World* contains several encrypted clues regarding his involvement in the hoax. Doyle was staying at the Lyndhurst Grand Hotel during March and made his most ambitious foray into architecture: The plans were realised in full, but neither the golf course nor the buildings have survived.

Chapter 6 : Phantom evidence - Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and the science of spirits | Alumni

Spirits and Fairies is a letter written by Arthur Conan Doyle first published in the *The Evening News (Portsmouth)* on 5 July *Spirits and Fairies The Evening News (Portsmouth)* (5 July).

The British Library Back in August, it seemed that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the creator of Sherlock Holmes, was cleared of playing any role in one of the greatest hoaxes in scientific history. But in true Sherlockian form, there may still be a twist in this case that appears to be closed. It featured a human-sized skull with an ape-like jaw, and it fooled scientists for 40 years before it was debunked. So how did Conan Doyle get involved in this, and why should he still remain on the suspect list, despite the latest evidence? Stay with me as I dig deeper into this longstanding controversy. He believed that departed spirits walked earth, and thought it was possible to communicate with them. This was all the rage in British culture at the dawn of the 20th century, but for Conan Doyle it was more than a hobby. He used his status as an author and physician to promote the idea, and to this day you can hear Conan Doyle pushing spiritualism in his own words, thanks to a recording provided by the British Library. A reconstruction of the Piltdown Man skull. The Trustees of the Natural History Museum, London Notice his claim that there could be scientific evidence for the spirits. They ridiculed the famous author, pointing out that the spirit photographs were merely double exposures. Anyone could produce a spirit photograph if they controlled for all confounding factors, such as light, and so forth. And they were right, but they went on with their critique, saying that Conan Doyle did not understand how evidence worked. That really takes chutzpah! The Hoax The hoax was rather elaborate. Between and , somebody collected several human cranial bones, possibly from a Saxon graveyard, enough to show the form of two skulls. The perpetrator also obtained a fragmented orangutan mandible jaw bone and purposefully broke the part of the bone that articulates with the rest of the skull. Along with the cranium and mandible specimens, the hoax perpetrator gathered a plethora of bones and teeth from different mammals from various dig sites around the world, some dating authentically to the Pleistocene and Pliocene epochs hundreds of thousands to millions of years ago. The purpose of the staining was to give the specimens a uniform coloring matching the gravel of the pit and also to hide surface features that might reveal the forgery. This led some to believe it was a confession of guilt. Conan Doyle also lived in Sussex, not far from Piltdown, and he was seen frequently at the gravel pit. He could get there easily, since he was one of only a few people in the area to own a motorcar. Notably, he never came out and revealed the hoax if he planned it all, thereby embarrassing those who fell for it. As the hoax went viral with an increasing number of scientists coming to accept Piltdown onward from , Europe sunk into World War I. Conan Doyle was as patriotic as anyone else. Instead, he engaged politically , advising the government on war strategies. Alternatively, the government could have ordered the famous author to avoid trivial matters at such a critical juncture in history. Either way, the idea is that a vengeful plot to trap his tormentors could have fallen victim to poor timing. But scientists remained duped long after the war ended in and Conan Doyle lived until During those 12 years, he saw people toiling away their scientific careers. Knowing it to be a fraud and allowing it to continue for so long would be extremely vicious. For as long as he has been suspected, this factor has weighed strongly against Conan Doyle being the perpetrator. Top Suspects Conan Doyle has never been the primary suspect and in no way am I saying that he should elevated to that status. Instead, the privilege has always belonged to those who seemed to benefit the most when the Piltdown Hypothesis was in its heyday. Clearly, he was not a perpetrator, but a victim of the hoax. Who would victimize Smith Woodward? Possibly another researcher, Martin Hinton, who has been on the suspect list since the hoax was blown officially blown in , based on chemical tests showing that the cranial bones and mandible dated from different periods. As a young fossil authenticator, Hinton had a falling out with Woodward over a funding matter at the museum. A postcard showing excavations at Piltdown. Charles Dawson is on the left and Arthur Smith Woodward is on the right. So, here was a new fossil suggesting that the first Englishman was also the first cricket player. The cricket bat sounds like the work of a practical joker, and the plot still thickens. The contents included bones that Hinton had stained with the same chemicals used to color the Piltdown specimens, and then cut, apparently to see how deeply the stain penetrated. Hinton has

been suspected as being the perpetrator, but maybe he was just trying to figure out how the hoaxer had stained the bones and teeth. **New Evidence** This is where the newly published study comes in, because the authors “ Isabelle De Groote, and several of her colleagues ” imply that trained conservators should be taken off the suspect list. This is because analysis of the samples show evidence of sloppy work. Putty was set to harden too quickly, for instance, causing some bone to crack. Professionals like Smith Woodward and Martin Hinton would not have made this mistake. In addition to tying down the sources of the cranial and mandible specimens, the study reveals a consistent modus operandi in terms of how the bones, teeth and tools were stained and otherwise manipulated. This, the authors say, weighs in favor of the suspect who has always been at the top of the list, Charles Dawson. In fact, by removing Smith Woodward, Hinton and others who would have known how to forge fossils much better, it may elevate the famous author “ not to the point of overtaking the notorious Dawson, but certainly enough for us to raise an eyebrow.

Chapter 7 : Conan Doyle, the Horror Story and Spirits - Spooky Isles

Arthur Conan Doyle > Quotes > Quotable Quote "When the spirits are low, when the day appears dark, when work becomes monotonous, when hope hardly seems worth having, just mount a bicycle and go out for a spin down the road, without thought on anything but the ride you are taking."

The Case for Spirit Photography Preface The publicity given to the recent attacks on Psychic Photography has been out of all proportion to their scientific value as evidence. With characteristic promptitude he immediately decided to meet these negative attacks by a positive counter-attack, and this volume is the outcome of that decision. We have used the term "Spirit Photography" on the title-page as being the popular name by which these phenomena are known. This does not imply that either Sir Arthur or I imagine that everything supernatural must be of spirit origin. There is, undoubtedly, abroad borderland where these photographic effects may be produced from forces contained within ourselves. This merges into those higher phenomena of which many cases are here described. Those desiring fuller information on this subject are referred to "Photographing the Invisible," by James Coates. It was only when editing the matter in restricting this book to the necessary limits it has only been possible to make use of a small portion of this evidence. Many more cases have been placed on record and maybe published on some future occasion. Most of the letters accompanying these descriptions display a deep and genuine affection for the maligned mediums of the Crewe Circle. Our hearty thanks are due to all those friends who have so readily co-operated in this work and who are so willing to brave the discomforts of publicity for what they know to be the truth. The Crewe Circle An accusation of a damaging, and, as I believe, of an entirely unfounded character, has been brought forward by Mr. Harry Price against Mr. Hope, whose name has for more than seventeen years been associated with the strange phenomenon which has been called spirit photography. I will deal later with this accusation with which the Society for Psychic Research has unfortunately associated itself by publishing the report of it in their official journal. Before touching upon it I should wish to take a broader sweep and to show the overpowering weight of evidence which exists as to the reality of Mr. So also if a man is accused of dishonesty a long record of honesty would be his most complete defence. Therefore in considering the case of Mr. If the reader will have the patience to follow my facts and my argument, I hope to make it clear to any unprejudiced mind that there is overwhelming evidence that we have in Mr. Hope a man endowed with most singular powers, and that, instead of persecuting and misrepresenting him, it would be wiser if we took a sympathetic view of his remarkable work, which has brought consolation to the afflicted, and conviction to many who had lost all belief in the independent life of the spirit. Many speak of Mr. Hope and of the Crewe Circle without any definite idea of what the words mean. Let me explain, then, that Mr. William Hope, who is a working-man, discovered, some seventeen years ago, quite by chance, that this remarkable power of producing extra faces, figures or objects upon photographic plates had been given to him. This form of mediumship is rare, but from the days of Mumler, who first showed it in , there has never been a time when one or more sensitives have not been able to demonstrate it. Hope was greatly surprised at his own results, but he had the good fortune in early days to meet the late Archdeacon Colley, an enlightened member of the Anglican Church, who tested his powers, endorsed them and appreciated their value. It was he who gave Hope his first stand camera, the old-fashioned instrument to which he still clings, and which, with its battered box and broken leg, is familiar to many of us. No one knows the story of these beginnings so well as Miss Scatcherd, who was the intimate friend of the Archdeacon and shared the evidence which had so impressed him. Miss Scatcherd has kindly consented to jot down her reminiscences of these early days, that I may include them in the later pages of this volume. Suffice it if I say, at present, that Hope has been before the public for seventeen years, that during that time many special tests have been demanded of him and have been successfully met, that he has been closely observed by experts of all sorts-scientific men including Sir William Crookes , journalists, professional photographers and others - that he has patiently submitted himself to all sorts of experiment, and that he has emerged from this most drastic ordeal with the complete support and approval of far the greater part of his clients. That he has been fiercely attacked god without saying, for every

medium has that experience, but each fresh allegation against him has ended in smoke, while his gifts have grown stronger with time, so that the percentage of blanks in his results is, I should say, lower than it used to be. No medium can ever honestly guarantee success, but it would probably be within the mark if one claimed that Hope attained it three times out of five, though the results vary much in visibility and value, being mere vague outlines in some cases, and in others so detailed in their perfection that the extra is clearer and more life like than the sitter. These variations seem to depend upon the state of health of the medium, the qualities of the investigator, the atmospheric conditions and other obscure causes. In person, Hope is a man who gives the impression of being between fifty and sixty years of age, with the manner and appearance of an intelligent working-man. His forehead is high and indicates a good, if untrained, brain beneath it. The general effect of his face is aquiline with large, well-opened, honest blue eyes, and a moustache which is shading from yellow to grey. His voice is pleasant, with a North Country accent which becomes very pronounced when he is excited. His hands with their worn nails and square-ended fingers are those of the worker, and the least adapted to sleight-of-hand tricks of any that I have seen. Buxton, who aids him, is a kindly, pleasant-faced woman on the sunny side of middle-age. Her mediumistic powers seem to be akin to those of Hope, and though the latter had all his earlier results independently, he is stronger when he combines his forces with Mrs. They both give an impression of honesty and frankness, which increases as one comes to know them more closely. I have never met two people who seemed to me from manner and appearance to be less likely to be in a conspiracy to deceive the public. They and all their circle are spiritualists of a Salvation Army type, much addicted to the hearty singing of hymns and the putting up of impromptu prayers. Hope, the most unconventional of beings, has been known in the midst of one of his photographic lectures which he delivers occasionally in his shirt-sleeves to say, "And now, my friends, we will warm up with a hymn," in which the audience, unable to escape, has to acquiesce. It is a type of character which associates itself sometimes, I admit, with a loathsome form of hypocrisy, but which has in it something peculiarly childlike and sweet when it is perfectly honest and spontaneous as it is, to the best of my belief, in the case of the two mediums in question. Some prejudice can be excited against Hope by the mere assertion that he is a professional medium. The public is aware that fraud - sometimes unhappily real, sometimes only alleged - is too often associated with this profession. Sufficient allowance is not made for the fact that the papers only take note of psychic things when they go wrong, and never when they go right. The dishonest medium is so easily found out that one could hardly make a living at so precarious a trade. In a very extended experience, which covers many hundreds of seances, I have only encountered fraud three or four times. Had I registered those cases and omitted the others, I would have given the impression of continued fraud, which is exactly how the matter is presented to the public who are continually hood-winked, not by the spiritualists but by the critics and so-called "exposers" who represent what is exception as being constant. It is exactly this prejudice which prevents a medium or his friends from bringing an action for libel, so that the unhappy man or woman becomes a butt for any charge or any ridicule, the assailants knowing well that the ordinary legal rights of a Briton are hardly applicable to one who can be represented as living from a profession which is not recognised by our laws. This cowardly medium-baiting will cease only when the public show, by abstaining from the purchase of the journals which pursue it, that they have no sympathy with such persecutions. I would wish to point out, however, that Hope is not in a strict sense a professional medium. I have never met anyone who seemed to me less venal than he. I am aware of a case where an exploiter approached him with a proposal to turn his gift into money, but was received in the coldest possible manner. Twice when I have sat with him at Crewe he has refused to take a fee, though he could never have known that the fact would be made public. It is true that on each occasion I disregarded him to the extent of leaving some remembrance upon the mantelpiece when his back was turned, but I have been assured by others that he has again and again refused all remuneration for his sitting, and has charged the ridiculous sum of 4s. This sum is calculated upon the average time expended at the rate of his own trade earnings. I do not wish to overstate this side of the question or to pretend that he would not be open to a present from a grateful client. Of how many of us could that be honestly said? But my point is that his gifts have been as open to the poor as to the rich - which all spiritual gifts should be. It is, of course, another matter when he comes to London and gives sittings by appointment at

the British College of Psychic Science. That college is an expensive and most useful establishment, which is run, with a yearly deficit, through the generosity of Mr. Hewat McKenzie, and it is only right that those who use it should contribute an adequate sum to its maintenance. East, of 36, New Street, Port Talbot, who describes an experience which he had in For the sitting, nothing. This is a gift from God and we dare not charge for what is freely given us. Our pay is often the wonder and joy depicted on the faces of those, like yourselves, who have found that their loved ones are not entirely lost to them. We get all kinds and classes of people here. Some even are threadbare and too poor to pay train-fare, but we treat them all alike as we recognise in each a brother or sister. And when I read of men who try to make those two persons appear something detestable I go back in memory to that day when it was our good fortune to meet them and recall their more than kind attitude to two bruised hearts. God bless them, say I. We are, of course, always open to the objection that a man may be perfectly honest fifty times and fraudulent the fifty-first. That is undeniable and constitutes the great difficulty in dealing with isolated cases where no impartial witness was present, and where both the accusation and the defence are equally ex-parte statements. We can only say in rebuttal that previous honesty must predispose us to assume that there is no fraud, and remind our readers that if we can only show one single case, which is absolutely beyond criticism, then we have for ever settled the larger contention, that it is possible in the presence of certain individuals, whom we call mediums, to produce effects which are super-normal and which would appear to indicate separate intelligences acting visibly quite independently of ourselves. Some Personal Experiences I will first give an account of my own visit to Crewe which was in the summer of I bought my plates in Manchester and then travelled over to keep the appointment which had been made a week before. Arriving at Crewe, I went down to the little house in Market Street, which is so modest and humble that it furnishes an argument in itself against any undue cupidity on the part of its tenant. Two spiritualistic friends, Mr. Oaten, editor of the Two Worlds, and Mr. Walker, were my companions. Buxton were waiting for us, and, after a short religious service, Mr. Hope and I went into the dark room. There I opened the packet of plates, put two into the carrier and marked them then and there. The carrier was then taken into the room and Mr. Hope inserted it into the camera. We three spiritualists sat in front with a rug, or blanket, as a background. The exposure having been made, the carrier was taken back into the dark room where, with my own hands, I took out the plates, developed them and fixed them. So far as I could judge, there was at no stage any possibility of changing the plates. But this question does not really arise. No changing of plates would account for the effect actually produced. This effect I have shown in Figure 1. There is a hazy cloud covering us of what I will describe as ectoplasm, though my critics are very welcome to call it cotton-wool if it eases their feelings to do so. In one corner appears a partial materialisation of what seems to be the hair and forehead of a young man. How can we determine that the message was really from Archdeacon Colley? The obvious way would be to get a sample of his writing in life and to compare it with that upon the plate. This I have done, as shown in Figure 2.

Chapter 8 : Spirits and Fairies - The Arthur Conan Doyle Encyclopedia

The Case for Spirit Photography is a book written by Arthur Conan Doyle first published by Hutchinson & Co. on 14 december The book was written to defend William Hope and the Crewe Circle because their spirit photographs were accused of fraud by Harry Price at a sitting in january

Sir, " In a kindly notice of my work, your paper has one sentence to which I should like to take good-humoured exception. You say, His ghost and fairy photographs simply will not bear, quite apart from logical common-sense, the light of experts analysis. So far as logical common-sense goes, every new departure " the wireless, the heavier-than-air flying machine, and many others " seems to be ruled out. We must realise that it is only actual experience which counts. As to the spirit photographs, I have in the last two months exposed under test conditions 28 plates with Mrs. Deane the same medium who got the Cenotaph picture , and I have had 18 psychic results. In the course of these experiments I have taken with me the editors of three great London papers names enclosed for your own information , who checked the proceedings and marked the plates which they had brought. None of them could suggest any possible precaution which had been neglected. What is the worth of the opinion of those who were not there against such testimony as that? Now for the Collingley fairy photographs. They are artistic and beautiful to the last degree. We submitted the negatives to Mr. Snelling, who was for 30 years expert of the Autotype Co. He certified two things: After getting this opinion, I submitted the negatives to two experts of the Kodak Company. They found no evidence of superposition or any other trick. Several minor authorities have given the same verdict. None have ever been able to pick any hole, though there have been several newspaper inquiries upon the subject. Every fresh fact which has come to light has served to strengthen the case for the honesty of the girls. That being so, what is the excuse for imputing credulity to me in the matter? What negative evidence is there to put against the volume of positive evidence which I have collected in my book upon the subject? I should be really interested to hear of it, as my mind is always open.

Chapter 9 : Spirit photography - Wikipedia

Harry Houdini really wanted to believe in the spirit world like his good friend Arthur Conan Doyle devoutly did, but he too often found charlatans in his midst. Irked by their fakery, the magician.

One night in a darkened hotel room in Southsea, a group of convinced Spiritualists joined hands in an effort to contact the dead. The strange events of that evening were to astound him and strengthen his commitment to a new religion that was sweeping the world. The night was September 12th, , nearly a year after the end of the Great War that had devastated so many families across the UK. His son, Kingsley, weakened by injuries sustained in battle, had died of pneumonia in . On the night in question, Sir Arthur had just finished delivering a talk entitled *Death and the Hereafter* which was reported in the press as a resounding success. Now gone after bomb damage in World War II, the hall was at the time the largest assembly room in Southsea, seating people. On that night it was sold out as people thronged to hear the celebrity writer speak. Indeed, earlier that year a huge National Spiritualist Memorial Service held at the Royal Albert Hall had pulled in around 7, Spiritualists to celebrate the transition of their loved ones from Earth to Summerland, the world beyond the grave. In a few brief years, Spiritualism had become a genuine rival to Christianity. Desperate families who approached mediums for consolation were often rewarded with direct news of or conversations with their loved ones from the Other Side. Doyle himself had for a long time been fascinated by Spiritualism. A psychical researcher since his early years in Southsea in the s, he had announced himself to the public as a committed Spiritualist in at the height of the war. Throughout and he spent much of his time on missionary work around the UK, speaking about his first Spiritualist book *The New Revelation*, and then giving a series of talks entitled *Death and the Hereafter* in which he argued that the Church had forgotten the true meaning of the New Testament and that Jesus himself was the most powerful Spiritualist the world had ever known. It was this talk that drew him to Southsea again. In that room that night, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle met his dead son. This is how the encounter was reported in *Light* magazine, a Spiritualist publication Conan Doyle regularly wrote for, and which is still published to this day. Conan Doyle, it will be remembered, in his recent address at Wimbledon, referred as already reported by us to a sitting he had had with Mr. Powell, the Welsh medium, at which he had spoken with his son who had passed over. Powell returned with me to our rooms, and most kindly gave us a sitting. There were present my wife, sitting on my left, Mr. MacFarlane, leaders of the Portsmouth branch; and on their right Mr. Harry Engholm, once well known upon the London press, and now one of the leading cinema producers, in the world. This gentleman was intellectually convinced of the truth of Spiritualism, but had never before been to a seance. Powell insisted upon being searched, and was then bound by me to a wooden armchair. Remembering the possibility of getting out of bonds of rope especially such cable-like rope as is used by Mr. Maskelyne in his absurd bogus performances I cut six lengths of stout twine, and tied the medium in six places to the arms and legs of the chair. So thoroughly was this done, that at the end of the sitting it was quite impossible to loosen him, and we were compelled to cut him free. A small megaphone belonging to the late Admiral Moore was placed beside him. This was circled with luminous paint so as to be visible in. The lights were then turned out, and the room in total darkness, we sitting in a semi-circle round the medium, but none of us touching him, though we joined hands with each other, so as to intervene between him and the room. Within a couple of minutes the breathing of the medium became loud and stertorous. A voice then addressed us, which issued from his own lips, but which was quite unlike his normal voice, and remained absolutely consistent throughout. It was deep, strong and virile, while that of Mr. Powell was essentially Welsh, gentle, musical and rather clipped. The voice greeted the company, and announced the presence of Black Hawk, the control. The deep voice spoke with an air of good-humoured raillery, addressing us by name. There was an interval of silence while the steady snoring of the medium sounded in the darkness. Then we saw the luminous band of the megaphone rise in the air, and it circled round our heads, sometimes slow, sometimes swift, as smoothly as if it were swung at the end of a string. Then it remained motionless, poised in the air above us. Presently it vanished, and returned with flowers taken from the mantelpiece inserted into its narrow end. These flowers, I may say, were at our backs and quite out of

reach of the medium. They were carried round to our noses in the dark with an accuracy which showed that whoever held them could see very plainly where we were. We were then touched by various objects which proved to be taken from the mantelpiece and elsewhere, but lay within the circle when the light was eventually turned on. Black Hawk had spoken from time to time, and the breathing of the medium continued steadily from the same Position. We can trace no way by which her name or existence could have been known to the medium. My wife assures me that the voice was that of the dead lady, but I could not hear enough to be able to corroborate. Then came silence again, with a brisk current of cold air which played upon our faces. Shortly afterwards we turned up the light, and found to our surprise that a great wooden pedestal, weighing, I should think, from forty to fifty pounds, had been brought from the corner and placed in the centre of our semi-circle. Some people may reasonably ask what is the use of heavy phenomena of that sort in the presence of the finer ones, but at least in its solid materialism it gave a sufficient answer to those who might be rash enough to suppose that our imaginations had produced the other results. Next evening we sat at the same hour, under the same conditions, save that the medium was weary, having delivered an exhausting address. Physical phenomena and movements of the luminous trumpet were as before, and the huge pedestal was once more lifted into the circle, and was placed upon my head. An examination had shown us that the heavy crown of this pedestal was balanced upon a single loose screw in a wide socket, so that any careless handling would have sent it down with terrific effect upon our skulls. In spite of the darkness it was held so steadily that there was no accident, but the strength which placed it so gently on my head, and afterwards rubbed the side of it down my cheek, must have been enormous. Then came what to me was the supreme moment of my spiritual experience. It is almost too sacred for full description, and yet I feel that God sends such gifts that we may share them with others. There came a voice in the darkness, a whispered voice, saying. There was silence, and I feared he was gone. Engholm and some voice at the other end of the semi-circle. We could not have recognised the voice as we could the other. A few loving words were said, and then a small, warm hand patted both our cheeks, with a little gesture which was full of affection. Such were my own experiences. In a letter which lies before me, Mr. All my senses were alert, and whilst Sir Arthur and his boy were carrying on a conversation of a very private and sacred nature, I was suddenly addressed by a very dear old friend, a. There were as a result two distinctively different voices speaking at the same time, each of which could be recognised by voice characteristic alone. My ears did not deceive me. Watch out for further announcements. Photography by Sarah Cheverton.