



Most writers who attempt to deal with psychic phenomena for fictional purposes, try to make a case for the genuineness of the phenomena. They seem to think that the story will not "stand up" under any other method of treatment. Not so with Mrs. Rinehart, who, on various occasions, has shown originality and methods of her own which have gained her a high place among American readers.

Mary Roberts Rinehart.

Without the psychic elements this would be just another mystery tale, made interesting by the skill of its writer, but not especially remarkable in any other respect; but under the able treatment which she gives the psychic characteristics, it becomes something to think about. She does not find it necessary to inculcate or defend a belief in spiritism, neither does she try to show that all manifestations in that line are the result of carefully devised trickery. One gathers that her personal attitude is that of the open mind. She is not to be deceived by charlatanisms nor, on the other hand, one to assert that the depths of the human soul have been plumbed or all the hidden resources of the human mind developed. She is willing to be enlightened and seems inclined to the belief that eventually science will provide the enlightenment. That is the spirit in which she weaves psychic phenomena into a story of human mystery.

The lamp which figures in the story is a fascinating instrument. Some of its manifestations are so weird as to be positively creepy; but the same people who witness its baffling influences never lose sight of the fact that its apparently phenomenal properties may have a natural explanation, or are just as likely to result from clever manipulation as from anything emanating from discarnate sources. Without the spooky attributes the story would not be nearly so good as it is; and these attributes are relieved by Mrs. Rinehart's gift for charming romance and diverting humor.

#### THE DIARY

Introduction to the Journal of William A. Porter, A. B., M. A., Ph. D., Litt. D., etc.

June 30, 1924.

A few weeks ago, at a dinner, a discussion arose as to the unfinished dramas recorded in the daily press. The argument was, if I remember correctly, that they give us the beginning of many stories, and the endings of as many more. But that what followed those beginnings, or preceded those endings, was seldom or never told.

It was Pettingill, of all persons, who turned the attention of the table to me.

"Take that curious case of yours, Porter," he said. "Not yours, of course, but near your summer place two years ago. What ever happened there? Grace and I used to sit up all night to see who would get the morning paper first; then—it quit on us. That's all, quit on us." He surveyed the table with an aggrieved air.

Helena Lear glanced across at me maliciously.

"Do tell us, Willie," she said. She is the only person in the world who calls me Willie. "And give us all the horrible details. You know, I have always had a sneaking belief that you did the things yourself!"

Under cover of the laugh that went up, I glanced at my wife. She was sitting erect and unsmiling, her face drained of all its color, staring across the flowers and candles into the semi-darkness above the buffet. As though she saw something.

It occurred to me then that many people throughout the country had been intensely interested in our Oakville drama, and had been left with that same irritating sense of non-completion. But not only that. At least three of the women had heard me make that absurd statement of mine, relative to the circle enclosing a triangle. There were more than Helena Lear, undoubtedly, who had remembered it when, early in July, the newspapers had announced the finding of that diabolical symbol along with the bodies of the slain sheep.

It seemed to me that it might be a duty I owed to myself as well as to the University, to clarify the matter in effect to say to them and to the world at large:

"This is what happened. As you see, the problem is solved, and here is your answer. But do not blame me if here and there is found an unknown factor in the equation; an X we do not know what to do with, but without which there would have been no solution. I can show you the X I have used it. But I cannot explain it."

As will be seen, I have taken that portion of my Journal extending from June 16, 1922, to September 10 of the same year. Before that period, and after it, it is merely the day-by-day record of an uneventful life. Rather

fully detailed, since like Pégys I have used it as a reservoir into which to pour much of that residue which remains in a man's mind over and above the little he gives out each day. Rather more fully detailed, too, since I keep it in shorthand, an accomplishment acquired in my student days, and used not to insure the privacy of the diary itself, although I think my dear wife so believes, but to enable me, frankly, to exercise that taste for writing which exists in all of us whose business is English literature.

And so—this Journal. Much the same as when, under stress of violent excitement or in the peaceful interludes, I went to it as one goes to a friend, secure against betrayal. In the main it remains as it was, the daily history of that strange series of events which culminated so dramatically on the night of September 10 in the paneled room of the main house at Twin Hollows.

Of this house itself, since it figures so largely in the narrative, a few words should be said. The main portion of it, the hall which extended from the terrace toward the sea through the rear and the drive, the paneled den and the large library in front of it are very old. To this portion, in the seventies, had been added across the hall by some long-forgotten builder a dining room opposite the library and facing the sea, pantries, kitchen, laundry, and beyond the laundry a nondescript room originally built as a gun room and still containing the gun cases on the walls.

In the rebuilding considerable judgment had been shown, and the broad white structure, with its colonial columns to the roof, makes a handsome appearance from the bay. A place restful and beautiful to the eye; a gentleman's home, with its larkspurs and zinnias, its roses and its sundial, its broad terrace, its great sheltered porch and its old paneling. But it stands idle. It will, so long as I live, always stand idle.

Of my Uncle Horace, who also figures largely in the Journal, a few words are necessary. He was born in 1848, and graduated from this university with the class of '70. He had died suddenly in June of the year before the Journal takes up the narrative, presumably of cardiac asthma, from which he had long suffered. A



A Gentleman and a Scholar.

gentleman and a scholar, an essential solitary, there had been no real intimacy between us. Once in awhile I passed a week-end in the country with him, and until the summer of his narrative, my chief memory of him had been of a rather small and truculent elderly gentleman, with the dry sharp cough of the heart sufferer, pacing the terrace beneath my window at night in the endless search of the asthmatic for air, and smoking for relief some particularly obnoxious brand of herbal cigarette.

Until the summer of the narrative—

"All houses in which men have lived and suffered and died are haunted houses," I have written somewhere in the Journal. And if thoughts are entities, which may impress themselves on their surroundings, perhaps this is true.

But dare I go further? Restate my conviction at the time that the solution of our crimes had been facilitated by assistance from some unseen source? And that, having achieved its purpose, this force forthwith departed from us? I do not know.

The X remains unsolved.

But I admit that more than once, during the recent editing of this Journal for publication, I have awakened at night covered with a cold sweat, from a dream in which I am once more

standing in the den of the house at Twin Hollows, the red lamp lighted behind me, and am looking out into the hall at a dim figure standing at the foot of the staircase.

A figure which could not possibly be there. But was there.

(Signed) WILLIAM A. PORTER.

June 16.

Commencement week is over at last, thank heaven. Usual reunions of old boys, with porters staggering under the suitcases, which seem to grow heavier each year.

Nevertheless, the very old 'uns always give me a lump in the throat, and I fancy there was a considerable amount of globus hystericus as the class of '70 marched onto the Field on Class day. Only eight of them this year, Uncle Horace being missing. Poor old boy!

Which reminds me that Jane thought she saw him with the others as they marched in. Wonderful woman, Jane! No imagination ordinarily, meticulous mind and only a faint sense of humor. Yet she drags poor old Horace out of his year-old grave and marches him onto the Field, and then becomes slightly sulky with me when I laugh!

A curious woman, Jane. . . . So another year is over, and what have I to show for it? A small addition to my account in the savings bank, a volume or two of this uneventful diary, some hundreds of men who perhaps know the Cavalier Poets and perhaps not, and some few who have now an inkling that English literature did not begin with Shakespeare.

What have I to look forward to? Three months of uneventful summering, perhaps at Twin Hollows—if Larkin ever gets the estate settled—and then the old round again.

Yet I am not so much discontented as afraid of sinking into a lethargy of smug iconoclasm. It is bad for the soul to cease to expect grapes of a thistle, for the next stage is to be "old and a cynic; a carrion crow." Like the old man in "Prince Otto," with rotten eggs the burthen of my song.

June 17.

After all, security has its points. I am the object of a certain amount of suspicion today on the part of my household! There is no place in the world, I imagine, for a philosopher with a sense of humor, a new leisure, and an inquiring turn of mind! These are times of action. Men think and then act; sometimes, indeed, they simply act.

But a philosopher, of course, should only think. . . .

During some nine months of the year I bring home to Jane from the lecture room the mere husk of a man; exhausted by the endeavor to implant one single thought into a brain where it will germinate, I sink into my easy chair and accept the life of my household. Tea. Dinner. A book. Bed. And this is my life. My existence, rather.

It dawns on a man now and then that he knows very little about his wife. He knows, of course, the surface attributes of her mind, her sense of order—Jane is orderly—her thrift, and Jane is thrifty. She has had to be! But it came to me suddenly that I knew very little of Jane, after all.

I am sometimes aware that she possesses certain qualities I do not possess. For example, it would be impossible for me to imagine, as Jane did on Class day, that I saw Uncle Horace. But it is equally impossible for me to deny that she did see Uncle Horace, and there has been a certain subtle change in her since which convinces me of her sincerity.

What then, I considered, is the difference between Jane's mind and my own? She has some curious ability, which she hides like one of the seven deadly sins, and which makes her at times a difficult person with whom to live.

Take that incident when she awakened me at seven o'clock and said she had seen Uncle Horace lying dead on the floor of the library at Twin Hollows.

"Dreams," I said drowsily, "are simply wish fulfillments. Go on back to bed, my dear. The old boy's all right."

"I wasn't asleep," she said quietly. "And you will have a telephone message soon telling you I was not."

And so true was this that she had hardly ceased speaking before Annie Cochran called up to tell us she had found him, at seven o'clock, dead on the library floor.

(Note: In preparing these notes for publication one thing occurs to me very strongly, and that is this: it is curious that my wife's vision, or whatever it may be called, did not occur until some hours after the death. If there came some mental call to her, why not when he was in extremis? Not only would it have helped us greatly in the mystery which was so soon to develop, but it would have been more true to the usual type of such phenomena.)

In this case, if we are to admit anything but coincidence, it is easier to accept the fact that we are dealing with mental telepathy. In other words, that the servant Annie Cochran, who actually found the body at seven in the morning, at once thought of Jane and so flashed the scene to her.

But I admit that this is merely explaining one mystery with another.)

What portion of Jane went to Twin Hollows and found Uncle Horace on the floor?

It was an interesting thought, and I played with it out of sheer joy in idleness. The Jane then, whom I could reach out and touch at night, might only be the shell of Jane, while the real Jane might be off on some spirit adventure of her own! I considered

this. It has, one must admit, its possibilities.

Had she true clairvoyance, whatever that may mean? Or was telepathy the answer? She is Scotch, and the Scots sometimes claim what is called "second sight." I know that in her heart she believes she has this curious gift. She was, they say, a queer child, seeing and hearing things unseen and unheard by others. And I know she fears and hates it; it is somehow irreligious to her.

But—has she?

No immediate answer being forthcoming, I consulted the dictionary on clairvoyance, and found that it was the faculty of being able to perceive objects without the customary use of the senses.

It was "vision without eyes."

But if Jane can see without her eyes, if she can perceive objects not visible to those of us who depend on the usual senses, then is one to admit that she saw Uncle Horace, as she said she did, marching at the head of his class procession last Tuesday?

(Continued Next Week)

#### President Hoover Endorses C. M. T. C.

Our new President, Herbert Hoover, had this to say about Citizens' Military Training Camps: "The experience of eight years has thoroughly justified the establishment of these centers for the voluntary training of the youth of the nation. They have made their own place in our plan of democratic government, and I look with hope and confidence to their continued and increasing usefulness."

When making this statement President Hoover voiced not only his own opinion but also that of organized labor, of capital and of religious and educational bodies.

For the past eight years, as reported by the Military Training Camps Association, a non-political civilian agency, 234,358 young men have been enrolled to the camps while 372,293 applied for such enrollment.

In eight years the number of camps increased from ten to fifty-one. So pronounced and obvious have been the benefits that no effective dissentient voice has been raised against them. To oppose them is generally considered as ridiculous as to oppose good citizenship and the feeling prevails that so long as the youth of the land manifests such interest in the C. M. T. C., we shall know that peace and prosperity have not resulted in "fatty" generation of man's mental, moral and physical being.

Each year finds more young men applying with the consequent result that the latter applicants have to be denied the privileges of these camps. Not only must a young man apply early to be assured a place in the camps but he must comply as well with all the requirements for acceptance. The date he completes meeting these requirements is the determining factor as to whether or not he goes to camp. Many young men lost their places in camps last year because they did not promptly submit evidence of satisfactory inoculation against typhoid and vaccination against smallpox.

Young men from this state can secure information concerning these camps and submit their applications to C. M. T. C. District Chief, 420 Farmers National Bank Building, Winston-Salem, N. C.

#### State May Acquire Valuable Raleigh Lots

The question of whether or not the state of North Carolina will buy that piece of land directly opposite the supreme court building and capital square, bounded by Fayetteville, Morgan, and Wilmington streets, in Raleigh, is now before the legislative appropriations committees. The council of state has authorized an option at \$325,000. If the legislature provides the money the land will be bought.

#### NEW BELK STORE

Jim Stephenson, one of the proprietors and managers of the Stephenson-Belk Company at Rockingham, is opening a new store in the Belk chain at Winstonsboro, S. C. He will retain his interest at Rockingham. Management of the Rockingham store devolves upon Joe Stephenson, who has assisted his brother since the firm was established some twenty years ago.

#### ANCHORING HILL GETS UNDER WAY

Sounds funny to talk about tying down a hill so it won't move away, but that is exactly what is being done to historic Kill Devil Hill near Kitty Hawk, scene of the first airplane flight. The sand dunes in that section are constantly moving, and a force of workmen are now building a strong fence around Kill Devil to hold it one place.

The secretary of the bar association was very busy and very cross one afternoon, when his telephone rang.

"Well, what is it?" he snapped.

"Is this the City Gas Works?"

asked a woman's soft voice.

"No, madam," roared the secretary.

"This is the Bar Association of the City of Louisville."

"Ah," came from the lady's end in the sweetest of tones, "I didn't miss it so far, after all, did I?"

666

is a Prescription for Colds, Grippe, Flu, Dengue, Billious Fever and Malaria It is the most speedy remedy known

#### DEVELOP COMMUNITY SPIRIT

A community lives and thrives according to the public spirit which it manifests. The best way to show real public spirit which develops your community is to support your local business places. They are here for your convenience and for your benefit. The community will prosper to the extent that they prosper, so SPEND YOUR DOLLARS WHERE THEY WILL DIRECTLY BENEFIT YOU. As any community prospers, many improvements can be enjoyed that otherwise would not be possible.

#### THE BANK OF MONCURE MONCURE, N. C.

#### IT'S NO JOKE

It was a wise cracker who declared: "It takes a Scotchman a long time to reach a givin' point." They poke a lot of fun at the thrifty Scotchmen.

But it is better to be considered "close" and have funds at the bank, than to be known as a good fellow—yet "broke." To be sure, the Scotch are a saving people. They are frugal and industrious, two habits those who poke fun at them might well adopt. Start a bank account. It is no joke to be broke.

#### THE BANK OF GOLDSTON

HUGH WOMBLE, Pres. T. W. GOLDSTON, Cashier  
GOLDSTON, N. C.

#### THERE ARE NO WEAK LINKS IN OUR CHAIN!

This bank is strong—strong in Security, Courtesy, Honesty and Service.

This bank stands ready to serve you—as it serves many others in Chatham County.

We transact business in a business-like way—we are modern in every respect.

Just come in and consult us—we'll tell you of the many advantages that accrue to letting us handle your finances.

#### BANK OF PITTSBORO PITTSBORO, N. C.

#### Last Car of Soy Beans

TO BE DELIVERED AT

PITTSBORO, MONDAY, MARCH 11

Consisting of Yellow Mammoth and Laredos

This is our last Co-operative Order of soy bean seed, so please be on hand promptly to unload them and save expense of storing.

The car was shipped from Washington, N. C., March 4, and should be here by Saturday.

#### N. C. SHIVER COUNTY AGENT