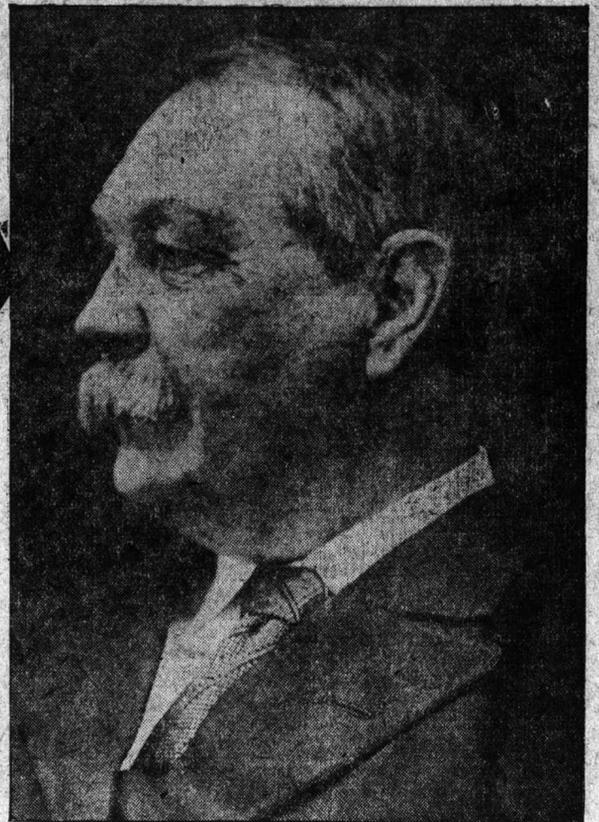


# Can They Photograph Spirits of the Dead?



## Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Colleagues Insist Evidence for Reality of Psychic Photography Is Overwhelming—"Fakes!" Cry Critics as They Denounce Ectoplasmic Pictures



Houdini, the strong man of the stage, is one of those who cry "fraud" and he maintains any clever medium can manipulate a camera to fool a zealous client

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who is now a "Sherlock Holmes" on a trail of concrete materialistic evidence of psychic phenomena, believes the camera faithfully registers pictures of the souls of those who have passed out of this world

"CAN the camera show us those who have passed beyond?" asks Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and answers his own question with an emphatic "Yes!" in his new book, "The Case for Spirit Photography."

"After a quarter of a century's investigation of the subject, I am not convinced there is such a thing as spirit communication," says Houdini, who presents himself as one eager for a sign from the Great Beyond. "Spirit pictures—I make them every night! It's a great trick, if you know how."

Which is right? Nevil Maskelyne, world famous magician, siding with Houdini, declares all spirit photographs are frauds, and says it is the easiest thing in the world to practice deception on people who go to a medium full of trust that they will receive a picture of departed friends.

Hereward Carrington, doctor of philosophy, who has devoted the greater part of his life to scientific investigation, says: "There have been many instances where pictures like these have appeared suddenly and apparently from nowhere. They are sometimes attributed to natural phenomena and sometimes to spirit origin."

"Ah!" say the editors of the Scientific American, "let us find out the truth of this matter."

Accordingly, they offer a prize of \$2500 to the "first person producing a psychic photograph under our test conditions," also \$2500 for psychic phenomenon of the physical and visible order.

J. MALCOLM BIRD, associate editor of the Scientific American, had pictures taken of himself by the carpenter-psychic, William Hope, of England, some of which developed what Mr. Bird states to be "either a genuine psychic phenomenon, or else a fraud," and he seems himself convinced that they are not frauds.

Mr. Bird states that he bought the plates himself, examined the dark room, the camera box, lens and plate holder, selected two plates, which he signed and placed in the plate holder. After the photographs had been taken, Mr. Bird took the plates to the dark room, accompanied by Hope, and developed them; whereupon one picture of Mr. Bird was discovered to have extra images on it.

And yet it was this same William Hope, carpenter-psychic, who was said to have been caught substituting plates by Mr. Harry Price, member of the Society for Psychical Research!

Mr. Price provided himself with packets of plates prepared so that when developed each would show one-fourth of a certain trade-mark. He placed two of these plates in the dark slide in the dark room, and while he was doing up the remaining plates, he saw Mr. Hope turn away and put the dark slide in his left breast pocket. Afterward the medium handed Mr. Price a slide, and they went to take the photographs.

Mr. Price, however, had taken the precaution of marking the slide he had



This is one of the spirit photographs around which wages a dispute. The picture to the right is a photograph of Mrs. R. Foulds, of Sheffield, England, with a so-called psychic photograph of her mother, who is dead. The photo to the left is that of the mother as she appeared when living and was taken some years before her death. This and the photos shown at the bottom of the page are shown in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's latest book, "The Case for Spirit Photography," by George H. Doran Co., New York

loaded, and when he looked at the slide Mr. Hope had handed back to him, he found it was not the one he had marked. The two plates were exposed, and when they were developed, there was a so-called spirit photograph on one, but the trade-mark design was missing!

"Unfair! Unfair!" cries Sir Conan Doyle, rushing to the defense of his friend, Mr. Hope, to whose vindication he devotes much of his late book.

The trade-mark design was made with X-ray. Yes, says Sir Arthur, but experiment by several investigators, including Dr. Cushman, of Washington, shows that with long exposures, such as Hope gave, the X-ray marks vanish, so that this test, as is admitted by the Imperial Company who made the plates, ceases to be valid.

Mr. Price says he made pin-pricks in the carrier he had, which were not found upon the carrier actually used.

"Who says so?" cries Sir Arthur. They were only pricks, after all, and there's no independent evidence of their existence!

Hope made a gesture to his left pocket in the dark room, accuses Mr. Price. "What does that prove?" demands Sir Arthur. "What became of the old carrier, in that case?"

That the glass of which the plates were made and on which the spirit photographs appeared was different in color and thickness from the glass of the Imperial Company brought by Mr. Price for the experiment is admitted by Sir Arthur. But he denies that it was Hope who made the substitution.

fingered people who were hostile to Hope's claims, and who had frequently averred that the opening of sealed packets was an easy process."

SIR ARTHUR details at length a number of instances of what appear to him conclusive proof that spirits of the dead come back to pose for their pictures on plates with relatives, friends, or even strangers.

W. Marriott, psychic expert, however, proved on one occasion to Sir Arthur and an auditor that he could obtain trick photographs under usual conditions of

test so as to deceive the most watchful spiritualist.

Sir Arthur was present, and the editor took every precaution to render the trickery futile. He signed the plates and endeavored never to let them out of his hands. While he was in the dark room, he dictated to a stenographer outside exactly what he was doing all the time. Four plates were exposed, and in spite of the watchfulness of the editor, when they were developed two bore "extras." One of these "extras" was on a plate bearing the editor's signature, clinching its authenticity; the other showed some fairies dancing around 'Sir Arthur. Yet the editor asserted the plates had never left his possession or been touched by Mr. Marriott.

When he consulted the notes made by the shorthand writer, however, he found that he had for one moment let the

plates go from his hands. He did not remember letting them go, but the notes proved that he had done so. The fairies appearing on the plate were taken from a well known poster of fairies dancing round a night light.

"But," says Sir Arthur, "because one medium is accused or proved to have been dishonest is no reason for crying fraud upon the whole creed."

"In every science the methods of advance are to pay strict attention to the positive results and to regard the negative ones as mere warnings of what to avoid. This process has been reversed in considering psychic photography, and the world has been deceived by those who should have been its guides. Truth will, of course, prevail, but its progress has been grievously retarded by this unhappy and unscientific mental attitude."

EACH of the cases given in his book, Sir Arthur contends, is impressive in itself, but their cumulative effect should be overpowering. He admits that one or two might be the result of imperfect observation or incorrect statement, but he cannot understand how so long a list of honorable witnesses, with actual photographic results, and with the complete exclusion of any possible trickery, should all be explained in any normal fashion.

Ferd Barlow, secretary S. S. S. P., who adds a chapter to the book, asserts that he looks forward "with confidence to that day, not far distant, when all this talk of fake and fraud shall be no more, and when the psychologist and scientist shall combine the investigation of this vital problem."

Here is the Scientific American ready, eager and anxious to receive proof, under reasonable test conditions, and willing to pay \$2500 for the privilege of receiving such proof.

The camera is to be used for the diagnosis of disease, if tests now being conducted by Dr. Alfred D. Hitchings, director of the Anseo Research Laboratory, are successful. Each disease has a specific photo reaction which will identify the ailment from which the patient is suffering, if studied, according to the doctor.

Can the camera also show us those who have passed beyond?



To the left is shown a photograph of Mr. William Jeffrey and his daughter, and the white wraith is described as an "ectoplasmic bag," which purports to be the material substance of a spirit as yet unrevealed. But in the photo to the right the ectoplasm is held to have taken on form in the next exposed plate, and that fact is held to resemble in excellent likeness, although slightly distorted, the deceased wife of Mr. Jeffrey