



# The Voice Box

*Seeking to Establish Knowledge and Understanding*

[/www.the-voice-box.com](http://www.the-voice-box.com)

[/tvbwebmaster@btinternet.com](mailto:tvbwebmaster@btinternet.com)



## Jack Webber – Physical Medium

Jack Webber, a British medium who was still active in the last war. Jack was a Welsh ex-miner; Jack Webber was born in 1907 into a Christian family, but was introduced to Spiritualism through his wife's acceptance of this. He discovered his mediumistic abilities when attending a home circle, and messages began to flow through table-tipping; in time, he developed trance, and following his guide's instructions, 'development came quickly and levitation of the trumpets and objects followed soon after'.(1) Subsequently, he developed healing faculties. His mediumship continued to develop until a stage when communicators' voices not only spoke through the trumpets, but independently of them, and there were also materializations. As a number of other physical mediums, he was accompanied by noises, object movement and voices when he was not conducting a séance, and his presence also affected nearby electrical apparatus.

Jack Webber demonstrated his mediumistic abilities throughout this country in home circles, and in public demonstrations to as many as five hundred persons; shortly before his passing, he gave up to two hundred being secured during a demonstration as he was conscious of

the possibility that accusations of fraud could be made against him. Maurice Barbanell was one person who testified to what he witnessed during a séance with Jack Webber as the medium; in this, infra-red photography was permitted and high quality photographs were taken of trumpets, levitated by the ectoplasm originating from the medium, and of table levitation. Barbanell also detailed how the medium was secured to a chair and in fourteen seconds his jacket was both removed and replaced, the stages of this event also being photographed. He concluded that while this was not actual evidence of survival, it nevertheless clearly demonstrated the presence of other-worldly intelligence that was not only active, but fully capable of reasoning.(2) Linda Williamson reports how the voices spoke to sitters in their own language, and the trumpets were frequently still moving when the guide requested that the area be lighted. She also records how the highly-sceptical journalist, Cassandra, witnessed Jack Webber's mediumship and conceded, 'I went there to scoff, but the laugh is sliding slowly round to the other side of my face'. Another person who witnessed a demonstration testified that it 'Was overwhelming. You couldn't be frightened and you couldn't have any doubts about it'. (3)

Bernard Gray, a journalist, submitted an affidavit concerning a séance with Jack Webber, and other sitters that included such persons as a police officer, an engineer and the healer, Harry Edwards. In this, Gray recorded how he witnessed materialization together with trumpets 'shooting about the room three at a time, with the speed and accuracy of swallows in flight.' One next-world visitor, apparently retaining an adventurous sense of humour decided to tie Gray and Harry Edwards together by their own hair. Gray concluded his testimony by saying 'although many of my friends will think I've gone crazy - I say again: I saw it happen'. (4)

After Colin Evans, B.A., attended a séance in 1939 as 'a sceptical investigator', he reported how subsequent to carefully examining Jack Webber's bonds, he saw the trumpets rising and moving about the room, each being some distance from the other. There was the levitation of other objects and then the materialization of a sitter's 'dead' child who spoke; the child had not materialized on any previous occasion, and neither the other sitters nor the medium knew of her. Evans recorded how, by direct voice, two 'dead' friends spoke to him, and 'other sitters also received through direct voice what they accepted as good personal evidence. Voices and accents were well differentiated'. (5)

As will be gathered, séances with Jack Webber were highly eventful, e.g. the movement of trumpets occurred at remarkable speed that

resulted in the luminous area appearing to be a straight line of light. It was also noted that when the trumpets returned to Jack Webber, this happened with tremendous force, but despite this, there was never any sign of the slightest injury, or even a mark on him. The séances also included apports: during a gathering at a London location in November 1938, Paddy, one of Jack Webber's guides, announced that he wanted to produce an apport; he chose a bird made of brass, situated in another room. As on many other occasions, another of Jack Webber's guides advised when a photograph should be taken; this instruction was followed, after which there was the noise of an object falling to the floor, and once the light was restored, the brass bird was found in the séance room. When the photograph was developed, this showed the bird had not only been transported from one room to another, but had passed through the medium's body assisted by ectoplasm that was necessary to complete the process. In the case of the levitation that occurred during the séances, this necessitated strong ectoplasmic rods; these were seen by sitters during instances when the séances were not held in absolute darkness, or luminous articles supplied the required illumination. In respect of the voices manifested, photographs were taken where it could be seen that an ectoplasmic form had been produced that facilitated speech from the communicators. It was also observed that on occasions, more than one voice was heard, i.e. not only a guide speaking through Jack Webber, but a communicator and these occurred simultaneously. There were even instances of three voices when a guide was heard speaking, and two communicators were present and spoke some distance from the medium; again, all simultaneously. There was also the occasion when Paddy, and Reuben, another guide, both sang, and each clearly had very different voices. In fact, Reuben's singing of hymns was so pleasing that Decca Record Company made a recording of this. The fact that the communications originated from actual persons was demonstrated by conversations through the trumpet, these being conducted in different languages such as French, Swedish and Portuguese. Harry Edwards pointed out that Jack Webber 'was an unlettered man' who rarely read a book and 'in fact, his only reading matter was the newspapers and children's comics'. (6)

Materializations at Jack Webber's séances were recognized 'very many times' by sitters, and different ones were seen at the same time, and as many as six different forms were observed at a single séance. In the record of a séance in February 1940, one of Jack Webber's guides requested that the floor area be covered in white powder; materializations appeared, and on then examining the floor, it was found that the powder had not been touched.

One of the most wonderful displays of Jack Webber's mediumship was that of 'the astral head'. A photograph was taken of the medium that

displayed a duplicate head. At first sight this could be interpreted as no more than double exposure, but the manner in which the photograph was taken and what would have been involved renders the hypothesis of double exposure untenable. A guide advised that the duplicate was part of the medium's astral body that had gone beyond the physical body. This aspect is actually extremely important; many philosophers have rejected the concept of survival as they maintain that meaningful existence without a physical body, i.e. in a wholly disembodied state, is impossible. Although the notion of the astral body is not an idea that has found much favour in the West, it is nevertheless a belief of Spiritualists, and an important one, as it adequately overcomes the philosophers' objection. In addition to there being sight of the medium's astral body, there were also occurrences of parts of his physical body dematerializing; Harry Edwards notes how on the first occurrence, Jack Webber's wife was 'rather alarmed' to see that much of her husband had disappeared.(7)

Jack Webber passed over in 1940, after a short illness, at the age of thirty-three; it should come as no surprise that after only a day, he made his presence known to various mediums, e.g. Bertha Harris, Harold Evans and Harold Sharp. A short time later, Jack Webber's father, who was not an ardent Spiritualist, saw his son and instinctively shook his hand, only then realizing what the situation was. He remarked that he 'saw his son as if he were "really there", and felt his hand as he shook hands'.(8)

There can be little doubt that the phenomena generated by physical mediums such as Jack Webber were not only spectacular, but the means by which attention was drawn to the proclamation that life continues beyond physical death. The references to Jack Webber's mediumship in *Two Worlds* and *Psychic News* during 1939 is a clear attestation to this.(9) It is indisputable that since 1940, interest in Spiritualism has declined, for a number of very different reasons;(10) even though these no longer exist, if there is to be a successful return to those halcyon days, despite the hostility towards physical mediumship and the apprehension that prevails, physical mediumship must be revived, encouraged, defended, and returned to the mainstream of Spiritualism. Physical mediumship, as demonstrated decades ago by such mediums as Jack Webber, and now made available through the NAS, is intrinsically the lifeblood of Spiritualism.

It seems apposite to conclude by citing Harry Edwards's own conclusion to his record of Jack Webber's physical mediumship; in this he says that through spirit activity, we can be sure 'that there is no "death", but a new phase of individual existence, greater than any we can now conceive'.(11)

Bibliography.

- (1) Harry Edwards, *The Mediumship of Jack Webber* (London: Rider and Co., 1940), p.19.
- (2) Maurice Barbanell, *This is Spiritualism* (London: Spiritualist Press, 1959), pp.178-179.
- (3) Linda Williamson, *Mediums and the Afterlife* (London: Robert Hale, 1992), pp.61, 62.
- (4) Harry Edwards, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 36, 39, 41.
- (5) Harry Edwards, *Ibid*, pp. 47, 48.
- (6) Harry Edwards, *Ibid*, p.87.
- (7) Harry Edwards, *Ibid*, p.68.
- (8) Harry Edwards, *Ibid*, p.116.
- (9) e.g. *Psychic News*, 8/7/1939; *Two Worlds*, 3/3/1939.
- (10) G. K. Nelson, *Spiritualism and Society* (London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1969), pp.162-164.
- (11) Harry Edwards, *Op. Cit.*, p.119.

NB. This article appeared in the December 1995 NAS Newsletter.