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The Mediumship of the Eddy Brothers

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Seven miles north from Rutland in the state of Vermont, in a wooded valley shut in by the slopes of the beautiful Green Mountains and lying high above the tide water, is the tiny hamlet of Chittenden. On a quiet back road, not far from this little community, facing away from the road, sits a large remodeled 19th century farmhouse. It is a well maintained two storey structure, with a covered porch built on and, typical of this New England region and many rural areas of the United States, it has five shuttered windows up top and bottom. If one is directly facing the front of the building, known for many years now as the High Life Ski Lodge, it can be seen that to the main structure another addition had been built, extending the overall length of the building into the rear of the property. Many, many decades ago, when the original farmhouse had been purchased, the main structure originally faced eastward, towards the road, and was then actually turned to face south, away from the road. The main structure then ran parallel to the extension.

To the casual observer, there is nothing remarkable about this particular dwelling, it is simply an old farmhouse that has been done over and is now the lodge that it is. But to some of the elderly residents of this remote farming district, certain historians and town clerks, and the last speck of the surviving relatives of the old generation Spiritualists who are buried out in the distant hills, they know of something else, something altogether different about the big white house on the back road. They know that connected to this particular acreage in the 1870s, heaven itself opened its doors and the spirits came, producing one of the greatest psychic events of the 19th century. To the Spiritualists, and to those who know and believe, then and now, there is truly only one area of notoriety that will forever be

connected to the hamlet of Chittenden, and that is that it was the nearest post-town to this very house, the homestead farm of the Eddy family of spiritual mediums.

The story of the Eddy family, as complete and wondrous a story ever to be put on record in the entire history of American Spiritualism, is due chiefly to the indefatigable efforts of one man, Colonel Henry Steel Olcott, who first visited the Eddy farm in the latter part of August, 1874, in the interest of the *New York Sun* newspaper and stayed only five days. He then returned unexpectedly, hired as a special correspondent for the *Daily Graphic*, also out of New York, who sent him up to investigate the phenomena and this time, most historically and importantly, he stayed right in residence at the Eddy house itself for an entire two and a half months. For a city person like Olcott, this was an incredible feat of endurance in itself, for these were plain fare, hard working dirt farmers and mostly illiterate. The result of Olcott's investigations was fifteen articles which appeared consecutively in the *Daily Graphic* in October and November of 1874 and which caused an absolute sensation throughout most of the country and even parts of Europe.

In 1875, his book, *People From The Other World*, was published and it established the Eddy's, for all time, in the hierarchy of physical mediumship and Spiritualism. A second work appeared in 1877 by Mary Dana Shindler, *A Southerner Among the Spirits*, and in this fine work were dedicated five chapters to her stay at the Eddy farm of twenty-three days. In her work, and also a third notable work by Epes Sargeant in 1901, *Proof Palpable of Immortality*, there are many valuable quotes by others who also witnessed the phenomena when there at the house. Interesting elements of Sargeant's work are the letters written to him by Henry Olcott prior to the publication of *People From The Other World*. For those who have no access to rare books, there are basic reference works available which, for the most part, do justice to the Eddy phenomena and the story of their lives - all of them are based on Colonel Olcott's work and will be listed at the end of this present article for *The Ark Review*.

This work which I have put together will be based solely on the eye-witness accounts mentioned above: they were there. Additionally, I have obtained reports from the Chittenden Historical Society, the Town Clerk, Mr. Don Meyer, and local newspapers and magazine articles. I have visited Chittenden and the former Eddy property twice, in 1989 and then again in 1992, both journeys, due to the enormous distance from where I lived, requiring overnight stay. While researching at the Chittenden local library, when I was discussing the Eddy family and

their phenomena with the librarian, I was approached by a gentleman who walked out of the side aisle. He said that he could not help but take notice in what I was saying. He was Steven Eddy, a direct descendant of the family tree. In this short span of time we call earth-life, no-one will ever tell me that spirits do not directly influence all that we do. It is not a matter whether it is a fact or not, but whether who realises it or not while sailing through this plane of experience and progression.

In this work, the first sections will deal with the information on their early lives obtained by Olcott; the beginnings of the manifestations and their subsequent trials and tribulations. The second part will deal exclusively with the eye-witness accounts of the séances of the Eddy's at the farm. But first, let us consider the author of the masterly work, *People From the Other World*.

Henry Steel Olcott was a highly intelligent and learned gentleman; he was a barrister and, it turns out, was quite fluent in almost half a dozen languages, both modern and classical. At a young age he became a prominent authority on agriculture and established an American school dedicated to the subject based on Swiss methods. After turning down the prestigious position offered to him by the United States Government of Chief Commissioner of Agriculture, he maintained his post as agricultural editor of the *New York Tribune*, working under Horace Greeley (a noted, open-minded investigator of the early manifestations of the Fox sisters). He joined the Union forces in the Civil War and saw and participated in much action, achieving the rank of Colonel. He received an honorable discharge for meritorious service. During the last part of the war, he was assigned as Special Commissioner for the United States War Department. It is interesting to note, and considered startling in its nature to some, that after leaving the Eddy farm when completing his investigations, he shortly after formed with Madame Helena P. Blavatsky - who had also visited the farm and met Olcott there for the first time - the Theosophical Society. Quite a leap from full-form materialisation phenomena and dark circle physical manifestations, to neo-Buddhism in India along with Annie Besant, eventually A.P. Sinnett and, of course H.P.B., but that is precisely what he did.

Identified with no psychic movement whatsoever before his journey to the Eddy farm, Olcott, clear-brained and scientifically minded, left absolutely no stone or board unturned in his attempt to fathom the mystery of the manifestations while there, thoroughly examining the floors, the ceilings and the walls to make sure there were no hidden trap doors to make possible the entrance and departure of spirit

visitors. The only way to proceed in his investigations he reasoned was to eliminate first, every other possible explanation until one was left with what William James, the first American president of the Society for Psychical Research, called 'white crows'. 'If you wish to upset the law that all crows are black', James wrote, 'you must not seek to show that no crows are; it is enough to prove one single crow to be white'.

During the course of his stay at the Eddy's, Olcott enlisted the services of an architect, a carpenter, two illustrators - Alfred Kappes, and T.W. Williams - to draw everything that he observed and witnessed, a mason, and eventually he ordered from Rutland, so that he could actually weigh the materialised spirits, a full size, Howe's Standard platform scale, set to perfect order, with a certificate signed by the company for its accuracy and quality, and lastly, a spring-balance, ordered and delivered by the same company (L.G. Kingsley), to test the power of the spirits materialised hands, with a weighing capacity of fifty pounds. In one of the most incredible instances ever recorded - which I will lay out in complete detail later in the story - Olcott had two different spirits on two different occasions, pull this device with their one arm extending from the makeshift cabinet; the spring-balance was fastened to a point outside the cabinet, and the spirit pulled the ring at the other end, with utmost strength and power I might add. There doesn't seem to have been any level of precaution, in the strictest and most thorough sense of the word, which Olcott omitted in his investigations, and this sets it far above many in the field.

First Impressions of Chittenden and The Eddy's

Henry Olcott's first visit lasted only five short days. Knowing nothing about the residents of the hamlet itself and most importantly, unaware completely of the torturous past of the Eddy mediums, he had this to say:

'The people of the vicinage are, apparently with few exceptions, plain, dull and uninteresting, seeming to know nothing and to care less about the marvelous things that are happening under their very eyes, or even the history of their section. Inhabiting a rugged country which exacts much hard labor for small pecuniary returns, they go the round of their daily duty, and trouble themselves about nothing except to get the usual modicum of food and sleep. Their rare occasions of enjoyment are the days of the country fair, the elections, raisings, huskings, and like country assemblages. Their religion is intolerant, their sect Methodist; within the pale of which body all persons are good, without which all are bad. The liberalising influences that in more thickly settled localities have, for the past ten or twenty years, seems to be unfelt in this region. Towards the heterodox these people have no yearning

bowels of compassion. Their weapons are both spiritual and carnal; and I judge from the sad story of the Eddy children that these zealots, if suddenly driven out of their beloved church, would feel more at home under the wing of Mahomet than elsewhere, for when prayer has failed of conversion they have resorted to fire and the lash to bring the lamb within the fold'.

About the Eddy's themselves, he stated: 'There is nothing about the Eddy's or their surroundings to inspire confidence on first acquaintance. The brothers Horatio and William, who are the present mediums, are sensitive, distant and curt to strangers, look more like hard-working rough farmers than prophets or priests of a new dispensation, have dark complexions, black hair and eyes, stiff joints, a clumsy carriage, shrink from advances, and make newcomers feel ill at ease and unwelcome. They are at feud with some of their neighbours, and as a rule are not liked in Rutland or Chittenden. They are in fact under the ban of public opinion that is not prepared or desirous to study the phenomena as either scientific marvels or revelations from another world'.

The length of Colonel Olcott's second stay at the farm enabled the true story of the Eddy's lives to unfold itself in a more complete and rational manner. He slowly started to understand that the effects he recognised on his first tiny visit of five days; clumsiness, hostility and suspiciousness, etc., were only the inevitable results of lives rent with suffering and misfortune. The Eddy's were not going to immediately trust anyone; it took time to know them so that they would feel comfortable in revealing things of a personal nature.

Olcott stated: 'When I say that my first reception by the family was most inhospitable; that during my visit of five days I never felt sure that at any moment I might not be requested to leave; that I was made to feel like an intruder whose room was preferable to his company; that I was struggling against all the prejudices one naturally would feel against persons who claimed to be able to summon an army of spirits from the other world; that I sat silent when members of the family made ungracious and threatening speeches against persons who might misrepresent them, clearly meaning me; that for fear my mission might be cut short and my ability to do my duty to my employers destroyed, I breathed not a word of my purpose to write for the newspaper, and left the place without having had a single opportunity to draw out their side of the story from the Eddy's, the public has reason to admit that in saying what I did in their favour, I was at least actuated by no feelings of partiality'. In another material source that I found and one that I was certainly not surprised to find out, Delia, one of the sister mediums of the family, confided to a friend that they certainly did know who Olcott

was and who he represented; these were, after all, some of the most powerful mediums in the country, of course the spirits informed them of who he was. Delia went on to say that she went up to Olcott on his first visit, and very pleasantly but almost facetiously enquired of him whether he could do an article on her for the newspaper. He was rendered speechless.

As the story of their lives unfolded itself, Olcott could easily see that the Eddy's had never done anything to deserve such blatant reprobation from their neighbours and townfolk, and he also discovered in due course that many of the negative reports reflecting upon their character were also discovered to be untrue and were born solely out of hatred, ignorance and prejudice. One of the more suspicious stories about the Eddy's stems from an accusation that they, many years before, had given an actual exhibition of certain of the commoner tricks of mediums, and charged money to do so. This, of course, was interpreted by the simple-minded townspeople, prejudiced against anything that smacked of diabolism, as the very reason why the family was so forbidding towards strangers, they might be discovered in their trickery which was furnishing them with a means of support. To this I add the following interesting report made by Epes Sargent: 'some ten years ago I satisfied myself by personal investigation of the genuineness of the Eddy's mediumship, and my convictions were not impaired by subsequent reports that two of them (he meant William and Horatio) had turned against Spiritualism, and were professing to make antagonistic exposures. It appears that in some Western town, finding themselves utterly destitute of money and of the means of raising it, friendless and longing for home, they were tempted by some unscrupulous adviser to give exhibitions for the 'exposure' of the phenomena of Spiritualism. This they did, and they got audiences and funds from the foes of Spiritualism, which they could not get from the friends. But the poor mediums were as helpless as was the ancient heathen medium, Balaam, when called upon to curse: 'How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed, or how shall I defy whom the Lord hath not defied?' Not one of the marvels wrought by spirits could be exposed or explained by any practical exhibition of trick or skill on the part of the two Eddy's; and these persons who had hoped to see Spiritualism finally shown up and exploded, went home in a sadder but wiser mood. Now we must exercise the largest charity for the moral weakness that led to such an attempt by the mediums. Only he who has experienced the suffering of extreme destitution is qualified to estimate their temptation'. They also related the same story to Olcott later on when discussing their lives.

When Olcott made his return trip to Chittenden, he had this to say:

'I was glad, when my second visit was so unexpectedly brought about, that things were just as they had been at the beginning, for I had heard all the evil stories in circulation and sifted them thoroughly, and was in a condition of mind to do justice to people who had not always acted so as to make friends, had few real ones, and fewer opportunities granted to lay their pathetic tale before the world. It was not because I had sympathy with their beliefs, nor that their welfare was a matter of greater personal concern than that of any other decent people, but because, in common with everyone else, my good wishes went with the weak and oppressed, and this family had been worried and torn by the spirit of intolerance, as a sheep by wolves. Manhood revolts at the persecutions, cruelties, and indignities they have been called to suffer in consequence of the direful inheritance of mediumship that was bequeathed them in their blood - an inheritance that made their childhood wretched, and, until recently, life itself a burden'.

The Eddy Family History

Zephaniah Eddy, the father, was a farmer living at Weston, Vermont, a few ridges and valleys to the south of Chittenden, and married Julia Ann Macombs, a girl of Scottish descent, who was also of Weston. She was first cousin to General Leslie Combs, of Kentucky, who changed his name to its present form (Macombs), and was distantly related to a noble Scottish family. About 1846, they sold their farm in Weston and moved to the farm in Chittenden where soon after, Julia would startle the neighbours and townsfolk with her amazing predictions and visions. Very significant to the story is the fact that not only was there an unbroken record of psychic power extending back over several generations of the family, but Julia's great-great-great grandmother was actually tried and sentenced to death at Salem for alleged witchcraft in the dark days of 1692, but escaped to Scotland by the aid of friends who rescued her from jail. Julia was clairvoyant, although back then it was called 'second sight'. She saw and conversed with spirits as commonly as though they were ordinary neighbours. She would hold speech with them, hear them plainly address their conversations back to her, and it seemed as if they followed her wherever she went. To enter deep trance and become someone else was nothing out of the ordinary for Julia. The neighbours though, lacking a psychological framework to logically explain Julia's symptoms, attributed them to the devil, a diagnosis Zephaniah came to share as each successive child born, with the sole exception of the first, John, who had the father's temperament, was born with Julia's peculiarities and, at tender ages, started to exhibit traits and indications of psychic power.

Zephaniah Eddy, to the grave and unimaginable misfortune of the children, was a cruel, ignoramus brute, and a deeply bigoted religionist. In their early married days, Julia would keep to herself as best she could her inner revelations, refraining from ever mentioning them to Zephaniah. It had been alleged though that the very reason Zephaniah sold his farm and moved to this rugged, inhospitable out of the way mountain town was because Julia's mediumship was beginning to perturb the pragmatic Scotsmen of Weston. If this be so, and, whatever the case may have been, it did not stem the tide in the least of the psychic force which was growing as each successive child was born. With the addition of Julia, a fully developed medium in her own right, eventually, the entire house was filled with young, developing mediums, the majority of them physical, and of cyclone power.

Throughout the Eddy story, not much is mentioned of certain members of the family, and it seems as if they wanted to stay in the background and especially out of the public eye, although they did, on most occasions, add their battery strength when needed to the situations. William and Horatio were eventually to become the most famous, if one were to call it that, they certainly did not, the former for materialization and the latter for dark circle phenomena, but there was an older sister, Maranda, who, although taken from physical life at only 35 years in 1871, was said by the family to have been, without question, the most powerful medium of them all and believe me, that is really saying a lot when we are considering this level of power. I have discovered, from another source, that when Henry Olcott journeyed to the Eddy farm in 1874, the family, originally thirteen in total number were, at that time, reduced by marriage and death to five - three sons and two daughters. Let me now, at this point in the narrative, list the names of the Eddy family, then at least the readers will know who is who from here on in. Except for John, all of them mediums. In order of their dates of birth, there was born to Zephaniah and Julia Eddy, John - 1832, Francis - 1834 (died 1862), Maranda - 1836 (died 1871), William - 1838, Sophia - 1840, Horatio - 1842, Mary - 1844, James - 1846 (died 1862), Delia - 1849, Daniel Webster - 1853, and lastly, Alice - 1857.

Early Manifestations, Spontaneous Phenomena and Portents

No matter how hard Julia had wished for or tried to keep from Zephaniah the mysterious happenings - which must have been difficult for her considering the fact that she herself was prone to trance out at any given time - once the children were born there was no stopping the continuous unfolding; the sequential, the sudden, the extraordinary and the mystifying É the inevitable and unstoppable outcome of many mediums under one roof. With the newborn children, clouds formed in

their rooms, and mysterious sounds would be heard; their cradles would rock gently by themselves and voices whispered through the barren halls. As time moved on, disembodied hands and faces began to appear and, becoming increasingly clearer and more distinct were the ever-present voices, full-bodied, calling to them from the darkness. In the very early days, the children were extremely terrified and would huddle together in one bed, shivering in fear. Thank goodness for Julia, for she played the most important role of all in their early mediumistic lives; she was the sole link in helping to bridge their realisation of there being mysterious things happening about them, and their understanding of inherited gifts as part of their lives. They would play by the hour with beautiful children, visible only to their eyes and their mother's, who brought them flowers and pet animals, and romped right along with them. Once in a while, after they were all tucked away in bed, their little bodies would be lifted gently and floated through the air to different parts of the house, at times even outside. The Eddy's, I should point out, needed no development circle or any of the standard procedures associated with the building of mediumistic power by a circle, and so on. This was not the case. Every day, living itself, was a continuous unfolding, a spontaneous rising force. The manifestations would come at any given moment, without any warning or discrimination whatsoever. The Eddy children, trying to be normal, attended school but, of course, it was not meant to be. There was rapping on the walls of the classroom, the chairs moved by themselves, voices would suddenly speak as if out of nowhere, glasses would be overturned, slates written on by invisible hands and the chalk then thrown across the room, and the desks would levitate in the air. I cannot even imagine how they must have felt, but the mayhem in this one room schoolhouse escalated to the point where they were viciously attacked and barred permanently from ever returning to school. William, Horatio, and two or three of the Eddy girls had scarcely a month of schooling in their entire lives. Not surprisingly, especially in the lawless days of 1874, with the advent of being banned from school for reasons that may have involved the devil itself, the Eddy's became the target of taunts, jeers, and were ridiculed everywhere they went; they became the focus of inarticulate fears and prejudices. The psychic force did not abate, and only increased in strength.

Zephaniah would, on many occasions, look out to the open field where, behind the house, William and Horatio would be playing when suddenly there would be other boys and girls playing with them. When he advanced threateningly, they would simply vanish like steam right in front of him. When the late Alton Blackington, who did an extensive study on the Eddy phenomena, interviewed a number of people in

Rutland and Chittenden back in 1944 in preparation for his radio broadcast about the mediums, there was a man who well remembered the time he had called on the Eddy's, then young men, and found the brothers William and Horatio working alone in the cornfield. He hadn't been there but a few moments when 'two other figures' appeared out of nowhere and followed the Eddy's wherever they went.

The Ghostly Carriage

On a cold winter night in December, 1852, just before bed-time, the family was gathered in the sitting room by the fire. According to Colonel Olcott, who received the story directly from the Eddy family, 'suddenly they heard the noise of a carriage coming rapidly along the road from the northward. The circumstance was so strange, the ground being covered with snow which would prevent the noise of the wheels being heard, that all went to the front window to look. A full moon, shining bright on the new fallen snow, gave a lustre of mid-day to objects below' and they saw an old fashioned, open carriage, drawn by a pair of white horses with plumes on their heads, turn rapidly into the yard and stop.

Rushing to the back door and flinging it open, there stood the equipage before their astonished eyes. On the back seat was a lady, dressed in Scottish plaid and furs, with a feather in her bonnet. She looked kindly at them and bowed, but said nothing. On his high box sat the driver, a thistle cockade in his hat and a capacious coat with a standing collar muffling him to his chin. Every buckle and trapping of the harness was plainly revealed by the moonlight, and even the ornamental scroll-work on the coach panels.

The family, with characteristic rustic bashfulness, said nothing, waiting for the grand lady to manifest her pleasure. No-one doubted for an instant the reality of what they saw, and even the sceptical and hard-hearted father moved to the door so as to be ready to do what might be required for the belated traveler. But, as all eyes were fixed upon her, she and her equipage began to fade. The garden fence and other objects previously concealed behind the opaque bodies of the carriage and horses began to show through, and in a moment the whole thing vanished into the air, leaving the spectators lost in amazement. Old Mr. Eddy at once exclaimed that his wife and her mother had been up to some of their devilish witchcraft again; but they knew it was the portent of somebody's death. The boys, then only ten or twelve years of age, ran for the lantern and searched all over the road and yard for wheel-tracks, but their quest was fruitless. The phantoms had disappeared,

without leaving the slightest impression on the snow. Two months later the grandmother died.

Olcott learned later on, during one of the dark circles held at the Eddy house from a spirit that the phantom lady was a Scottish ancestress of Mrs. Eddy, who came to warn them of old Mrs. Macombs death. Portents and warnings would occur before the death of each member of the Eddy family, but always different from the predecessors, and happening unexpectedly.

Other Ghostly Events & Warnings

Mrs Eddy died in 1873 after a lingering illness. During the whole time she lay in bed, manifestations of spirits were frequent. When the children would grow weary watching her throughout the night, she would send them to bed under the pretence that she needed quiet, and they, watching secretly, would see their dead sister, Maranda's spirit, in full materialized form, doing the necessary bedside things for their invalid mother. They would hear the two of them talking, and when it was necessary to turn her, Maranda, with the help of other spirits, would do it.

One day, while all were sitting at dinner, they all heard the soft strains of music coming through the open door, and going outside, they heard harp and flute coming from the corner of the house, which eventually receded into the air. A week before the mother passed, her own mother materialized in full form with a basket of white roses in her hand to tell that Julia would soon come 'over the river' to her. Horatio was absent from home just before her decease and was sent for. Delia went to the table to write the letter of recall, and, leaving it open while searching for an envelope, when she returned, it had a postscript written on it from their spirit sister, Maranda, and signed by her with her familiar autograph. Julia materialized before her funeral and told Delia to remove the crepe they had hung on the front door, there being, she said, occasion for rejoicing rather than for mourning.

Of possible interest to others who do research on apparitions, there is, as a few examples, Robert Dale Owen's *The Debatable Land Between This World and the Next*, which has on pages 328-329, etc., three cases of ghostly wagons and carriages being heard in England and the United States, Catherine Crowe's *Night Side of Nature*, the horse and cart apparitions seen in Haverhill, Massachusetts, p.413, and from *Man's Survival After Death* by Charles Tweedale, pp.113-115, the phantom horse rider with his two grooms running beside him. All of

these examples are apparitions, but, unlike the Eddy's, were not precursors of death.

Colonel Olcott (an interesting quote)

'I am well aware that the materialization of spirits, is what the public is most anxious to hear about, but I cannot take up that phase of the subject, before at least skimming the surface of this family history for the other marvelous experiences to which its members have been subjected. It would be like Columbus returning from his gold hunt in the new country with no account of its geography, fauna, flora or human inhabitants. The stories I am recording were not gathered at appointed sittings, at which the narrator might have been tempted to stretch fancy to help make literary sensations; but in general social conversation, over our pipes around the evening fire, as the discussion of varied topics drew them out. And in every case they have been attested by more than one witness. Interesting is it not that the comparison drawn by Olcott was actually Columbus and his discoveries in the New World. Nothing could be more certain than the fact that while staying at the Eddy farm in Chittenden, Olcott discovered another world'.

The Lady on the Horse, the Tolling Bell and the Ghostly Soldiers

The son James died of diphtheria in 1862 in the north room-front, upstairs. A week before the event he asked his mother who the lady was who came on a white horse to visit him. His mother thought that his mind might be wandering due to illness, but he insisted that she came every day at the same hour, tied her horse to the hitching-post and came and sat in the room, waiting, as he said, for him to come to the Spirit World with her. At this very time, Dr Ross, of Rutland, the attending physician, prophesied the recovery of James, but the mother instinctively knew that the phantom visitor was a portent of death and sure enough, her fears were justified a few days later. The very night he died he appeared to his brother-medium-William, then a lad working in the dairy on a farm over in Westchester County; William started for home before the next dawn and, when arriving home weeping bitterly, said he had come for the funeral.

The day before Maranda's death, the family was sitting at dinner, when suddenly a heavy bell tolled once, in the air, right over their heads, and slowly the reverberation pealed away as they all listened in silence. Maranda announced to all that she saw brothers James and Francis in the Spirit World and then stated that she wanted inscribed on her tombstone the words, 'Not Dead But Risen. Why seek ye the Living

Among the Dead?'. Concerning Francis, while serving in the 5th Vermont Volunteers during the late war, he caught a heavy cold which quickly ran into consumption and he came home to die. He wrote in the family Bible the exact day and hour of his passing. A fortnight prior to his transition, the family was once again sitting by the fire and this time heard a wagon pull up to the front door, heard the latch open, and saw two soldiers bring a coffin in and place it in the entry, and then drive off without saying a single word. On the coffin was a plate with a name on it, which not being able to read in the obscurity they went for a candle, but upon returning, it had slowly vanished. After Francis entered the Spirit World they sent to Rutland by a neighbour - obviously one of the friendlier ones - for his coffin, and when it was brought, it was the exact counterpart of its spectral double, to the very plate and nails.

When I first visited Chittenden myself in 1989, I stood in the family plot of the Eddy's in tiny Baird cemetery right down from the old homestead. The original farmhouse may have been done over as such, but believe me, time has not reshaped this little graveyard in the slightest degree. The total and absolute reality of their beliefs and way of life; the feeling of mediumship and the religion of Spiritualism so obvious right there in front of you with the timeless 'ENTERED THE WORLD OF SPIRITS' inscribed on Julia's and Maranda's headstones. On my second visit in 1992, I found the resting places of William and Horatio, further down, in the overgrown little Pittsford cemetery. As it was near Halloween, I placed a pumpkin by the grave of William Eddy. The birds sang merrily in the trees, and the wind bristled through the hills and here, I thought to myself, lies, most likely, the greatest materialization medium of the 19th century.

The Spinning Ghost

In the north room on the second floor of the Eddy house is where four of the young boys slept. For years after she had passed to the spirit world, old Mrs. Macombs, Julia's mother, would appear, and attend to her spinning wheel as she used to. The wheel stood in the south-east corner of the room, behind the door. The children were greatly frightened at first to hear the 'click-click-click', and the buzzing and see no-one, but they soon grew familiar with the thing, and finally, to be sure that grandmother would awaken them, they hung a little bell on the wheel. The phenomenon, which had greatly frightened them at first so that they hid their small faces beneath the bed coverings, had become a nightly diversion. After a while the spirit fully materialised herself (let us not forget that there was four physical mediums in the room - NRH), feebly at first but stronger by degrees, until she would come looking exactly as when alive. The story, according to Olcott,

was attested to by every member of the Eddy connection that he had seen, and the sketch represents the scene with absolute accuracy.

Mending in the Arms of William.

In the Spring of 1863, the child of Sophia Eddy lay sick at the old Eddy homestead, of lung fever. Her death was expected by all, and Delia ironed a white dress and skirt for the little girl and laid them in the mother's trunk. One evening Horatio went out to the penstock for water, and, looking up, he saw his own room in the second story lighted up and two strange old women walking about, shaking the invalid's dresses and busying themselves in other preparations, apparently for the coming death. He ran upstairs, he said, and upon opening the door, found a table set in the middle of the floor, covered with a sheet taken from the bed and on it the child's clothes, which had been removed from the trunk in another room. The smoking wicks of two candles showed the source of light he had observed.

Knowing by experience what this sort of thing meant, he came down and told the watchers that the child would die. The mother, Delia, at once fell into a violent convulsion, which ended in a dead faint. Meanwhile Horatio had gone to the door and stood watching the re-lighting of the candles and the moving about by the ghostly women, when, just as Sophia had fainted, the light was extinguished, there was a rush of invisible feet down the stairs and into the chamber, and the child soon began to mend in the arms of William, who tended the little one with affectionate care. They were afterwards told that it was fully expected that the child would die, and spirit friends had gathered there to receive her, but the mother's alarming condition induced them to unite their efforts to keep alive the flickering spark of life. An interesting quote by Henry Olcott concerning the 'Phantom Carriage' mentioned earlier is the following: 'The literal accuracy of the sketch of the ghostly carriage, has been endorsed on three separate occasions since its appearance in the *Daily Graphic*, by what claimed to be spirits, who addressed me in audible voice - one of the three being Mrs. Julia Eddy herself - and all three assert that the apparition was sent by a guardian spirit. I know the full value of words,' Olcott went on to say, 'and I mean to say unequivocally that a woman 'a breathing, walking, palpable woman, as palpable as any other woman in the room, recognised not only by her sons and daughters, but also by neighbours present, as Mrs. Zephaniah Eddy, deceased 29 December, 1872 - on the evening of 2 October, 1874, walked out of the cabinet where there was only one mortal, and where, under ascertained circumstances, only this one man could have been at the time, and

spoke to me personally in audible voice. And nineteen other persons saw her at the same time, and heard her discourse'.

For Colonel Olcott, a man of clear brain and high intelligence, his experiences at the Eddy farm were nothing less than spellbinding and were his maiden voyage into this mysterious other world; his articles in the *Daily Graphic* hit like thunder. Future parts of this article will deal exclusively with the materialisation and dark circle phenomena at the Eddy house, a short segment on the séances held out in the woods at 'Honto's Cave', and everything else I can possibly fit into the article. Thanks to the insight of Mr. Olcott in his 'leave no stone unturned' process, most of the spirits that manifested were able to be sketched by the artists he employed.

The Building Rage of Zephaniah - Their Darkest Days

With each passing moment, the mediumistic powers of the young family members slowly and steadily unfolded and increased in intensity, as did the rage of Zephaniah who, at first thinking that he must be bereft of his senses, now knew that he was not; there were too many instances now where he himself was seeing the actual figures materialising. In vain, he stormed and threatened, but all went on. He called his equally pious neighbours together - Harvey Pratt, Rufus Sprague, Sam Parker, Sam Simmons, Charles Powers, and Anson Ladd - all of them ignorant, imbecilic brutes, and they prayed and prayed that this curse might be removed from the house; praying to abate the nuisance, or, as Zephaniah styled it, to 'cast the devil out of his ungodly wife and children', and, that failing, he moved to more stern, verbally threatening coercive measures, and that proved equally inefficacious. One of the great mysteries to me in these spiritual and mediumistic matters is how Natural Laws - the respecter of no man, regardless of age - progress forward with absolutely no exceptions. In the case of these young mediums, as innocent to the understanding of their own inherited gifts as the freshly fallen snow, surrounded by violent, ignorant maniacs, their psychic force only increased all the more, as did their peril.

Soon, physical blows replaced prayers, and to get the evil spirits out of them, Zephaniah endlessly beat the youngsters until he made scars on their backs that, according to Olcott who saw the wounds, 'they will carry to their graves'. Their early lives could not have been worse. If the father would come upon any of the family members in trance - which, unfortunately for William he did on many occasions - they would be beaten with a rawhide strap or pounded with his fists all over their body. The mediums suffered incomprehensibly afterwards, because

seldom, if ever, did they come out of trance while being 'lambasted' by Mr Eddy.

Unconcerned with the sorrowful pleading of Julia, William and Horatio were, on many occasions, taken out and chained to trees in the deep woods; starved for days, and kept out of the house. William Eddy related to Henry Olcott while he was at the farm an incident that turns my skin cold for it was one of the most vicious things I have ever heard. One time, as a means to bring William out of a deep trance, Zephaniah, with the aid of his thug of a friend, Anson Ladd, punched and slapped William in the head repeatedly, and when this failed, they poured scalding water down his back and, as a last heroic operation, took a blazing ember from the hearth and fire branded his head with it. William, thank God, never came out of his trance, but the effect of this horrible cruelty was the great scars on his head and chest that he showed Olcott while telling him the story.

'So year after year', Olcott said, 'things went on, full of trouble and sorrow for all in the unhappy house. No wonder I found them 'Curt, repellent', and 'sensitive', and suspicious and calculated to arouse suspicion. I think I would be likewise under the circumstances'. Olcott was starting to really understand the story of their unfortunate lives. Unimaginably, this was only the beginning of an even more terrible odyssey which was about to befall them.

The Darkness is Falling

The year was 1857. For many years now, a great excitement was being caused throughout the Northeast by the Fox sisters and their phenomena. They had ushered in a new dispensation. Spiritualism. Additionally, Jonathan Koons in nearby Athens County, Ohio, between the years 1852 and around 1855, was causing quite a stir with the public demonstrations of mediumship he was holding in a log cabin he had built on his property; add to this the Tippie family, two or three miles distant from them, who held similar demonstrations. Psychic prodigies were springing up everywhere. Realising that he had a very valuable commodity, Zephaniah contacted an unscrupulous, money grabbing traveling agent, and did what any ordinary sociopath would do in the circumstances, he sold four of his own children to him; William, 19 years old, Horatio, 15, and their two sisters, Sophia, 17, and little Mary, only 13 years old; the contract was signed and off they went to be exhibited as mediums for money.

Book of Martyrs

From Horatio Eddy's own diary, dated November, 1867, came the following sad tale: 'This day . . . we suffered very much by severe tying and abuse from those who professed to be Spiritualists. But we like martyrs, bore our pain with fortitude. We thanked the Divine Power for preserving us from the gross treatment of our enemies. No mortal knows what brutish tying we submitted ourselves to. It would have made mother's heart bleed if she had known what her children were passing through in Canastota'. Olcott stated in *People From the Other World* that: 'The reader will please observe that I have not relied upon the diaries or verbal statements of the Eddy's themselves in making these strictures, but solely upon the testimony of the editorial descriptions of the whole press, for the journals of nearly every section are represented in this modern Book of Martyrs. Such details of the handcuffing and ligatures, the blistering and acid corrosions, the torture of constrained positions, of mouth-gags and halter nooses, as the newspapers did not supply, I have filled in after getting the necessary explanations from the mediums, and the drawings were made from life'.

The four Eddy teens were systematically marched from one state to another by this showman, and made to demonstrate their powers, or trickery as it was in most cases assumed, while their enemies, in brute force, tried everything in their powers to torture or constrain them to prove, by so doing, that the powers could not then manifest. It was nothing short of sadism, pure and simple.

During the course of these demonstrations, or whatever they were, the mediums were usually bound and gagged, often to an inhuman degree; at times their lips were sealed with hot wax - the scars of which they carried for the rest of their lives; all four of them were nailed into suffocating boxes resembling miniature coffins - all of these brutish practices done to ensure the fact that the manifestations were not coming from the mediums. The illustrations show some of the various tortures they were made to endure. Whether at private residences, on stage or otherwise, they were forced to hold many positions, pinioned, manacled or gagged for, in many cases, hours at a time. As a test to prove the depth of their trances, they were routinely pinched, their skin twisted and pricked with needles or sharp wires. When not on stage, their torment and peril was even worse, having to face mass protesters; religious fanatics, sceptics and groups of rowdy drunks and violent bands of thugs who felt they had been bilked out of their money by tricksters. Olcott said that the hands, arms and wrists of the sisters

as well as the brothers were permanently scarred with marks of ligatures, burning wax, and parts of their flesh pinched out by handcuffs. They were routinely attacked, shot at, beaten, stoned and chased out of town in certain areas. William and Mary showed Olcott their scars from gunshot wounds in the ankle and the arm; Horatio was stabbed, broke a finger and was once hit by a brick in the head which was thrown from above. Their cabinet - exactly similar to the Davenport's, with its three doors - was smashed to pieces by furious mobs on several occasions. William was once caught by thugs in Cleveland, ridden on a rail like a circus freak and, was it not for a desperate last minute rescue, would have been actually tarred and feathered. In Danvers, Massachusetts they were nearly killed when fired upon by zealots who believed them to be agents of the devil.

On and on it went for years on end. For a brief period, they were rented out to another agent who took them on a brief tour of Europe, the records of which I would love to find. How they ever survived fifteen straight years of this I will never know, but they did, and the manifestations throughout were absolutely extraordinary. I have personally never read, or have heard of any viable or honestly legitimate account of these young mediums having ever been caught in fraud.

There is a quote by Colonel Olcott which I think the readers will find interesting. He said: 'The story of the persecutions, mobbing, hardships and trials through which the Eddy children were obliged to pass, carries a moral with it, which the intelligent reader can hardly have overlooked. It must have been apparent that we are not dealing with the case of charlatans who have recently taken to the business of trickery for the sake of gain, for these girls and boys seem to have inherited the peculiar temperaments from their ancestry, and the phenomena common to most genuine 'mediums' of the present day, attended them in their very cradles. It will scarcely be said that children who, like Elisha, were caught up and conveyed from one place to another, and in whose presence weird forms were materialised as they lay in their trundle-beds, were playing pranks to tax the credulity of an observant public, which was ignorant of their very existence. It will not be seriously urged, I fancy, against youth, whose bodies were scored with the lash, cicatrized by burning wax, by pinching manacles, by the knife, the bullet and boiling water, who were starved, driven to the woods to save their lives from paternal violence; who were forced to travel year after year and exhibit their occult powers for others' gain; who were mobbed and stoned, shot at and reviled; who could not get even an ordinary country school education like other children, nor enjoy the companionship of boys and girls of their own age - it will not be urged against such as these that they were in conspiracy to

deceive, when they had everything to gain and nothing to lose by abandoning the fraud and being like other folk. The idea is preposterous; and we must infer that, whatever may be the source of the phenomena, they are at least objective and not subjective - the result of some external force, independent of the medium's wishes, and manifesting itself when the penalty of its manifestation was to subject the unfortunates to bodily torture and mental anguish'.

Well said, indeed. As terrible as their lives were, it is nonetheless of the highest evidential nature that if they were not in fact, genuine mediums, why would they have subjected themselves to such utter danger and peril? How much more can really be said I ask you? Zephaniah Eddy, accompanied by the sadness of absolutely no-one, passed away in 1862. The tumultuous journey of the Eddy brothers and sisters finally ended in 1872, and they made their weary selves back to the homestead farm and the waiting arms of their mother. Their sorrow unfortunately did not end here for Julia, their one loyal and trusted friend through thick and thin, passed to the world of spirits in December of that year.

Is it any wonder at all that by the time Olcott had arrived at the farm, he noticed them to be hostile, scorned men and women, who basically trusted no-one & at least, not at first. These were individuals who had been sold out every step of the way, starting with their own father. The Eddy's though, were tough, sturdy farmers - William and Horatio as strong as oxen - and they, in the most honourable sense, protected and brought home safely their sisters through the endless perils they had faced. They had made it home, battered and forlorn, but together, and with the help and aid of their loyal and steadfast spirit friends.

Now back at home, with Zephaniah safely out of the way, at peak mediumistic power and having the situation at last completely under their own control, it was decided that they would construct an upper section to the back of the farmhouse, to be used specifically as a circle-room to demonstrate their mediumship through public séances. They would, more or less, turn their house into a way-side inn, take in boarders and charge a modest fee, usually eight to ten dollars a week if even that. Those who were poor, which many of their clientele were, were charged nothing. When word of the Eddy manifestations got out, the farmhouse was besieged by visitors and the mediums were inundated with letters from all over the country. It was altogether impossible to accommodate everyone and many, even after having travelled great distances to come to Chittenden, were, for one reason or another, flatly turned away at the door. Houdini, I am very happy to say, was one of these unfortunates; there were many of your standard 'wolves in sheep's clothing' types, and many were duly thrown out, only

to usually proclaim the Eddy's as frauds afterwards. The circle-room, which would eventually become one of the most famous in all of Spiritualism, was finally finished in December, 1873, and officially opened to the public on January 1st, 1874. The opening séance started with a dark-circle at which the spirit, George Dix - one of the controls - in independent voice, gave a lengthy and dramatic dedicatory address.

Following this there was a materialisation séance where prayers and addresses were given by fully materialised spirits starting with Julia Eddy herself, Mrs. Eaton - another one of the controls - Mrs. Wheeler, and lastly, a Dr. Horton, late of Utica, New York, who stepped forward, fully materialised with his two baby children in his arms, and addressed his widow who was sitting in the audience. The elder of the children, little Minna Horton, slowly eased herself down from her father's arms and, as the living embodiment of an angel itself, quietly stepped forward and spoke words of comfort to her mother who was weeping uncontrollably.

Since that first historic and eventful evening at the opening of the circle-room, the Eddy's, with William and Horatio as chief mediums, and with the aid of the others where needed, held circles every single evening, with the sole exception of Sundays. In light of the usual serious exhaustion associated with this type of phenomena, it attests even further to the absolutely extraordinary power and stamina of these mediums, especially William, who sat for materialisation. On yet another note, they usually worked in the fields, and carried on with their rugged farm chores in the daytime. The Eddy house was eventually to be called 'The Spirit Capitol of the Universe', and also Spirit Vale.

Observations, Light & Dark Circle Phenomena and Full Form Materialization

My main concern is the eye-witness accounts of the manifestations produced by William and Horatio Eddy in their circle room séances, held nightly for the public at their farm. The main emphasis, and for good reason, will be on Henry Olcott's work, but to add evidential weight and balance there will be included additional accounts by Mrs. M.D. Shindler and Epes Sargent - whose work I mentioned by name in Part 1 - and within these, there are additional reports which had been made by others who had also witnessed the phenomena such as J.M. Peebles and Mr. Henry Lacroix through the famous Boston Spiritualist publication, *The Banner of Light* (Founded, 1857).

Colonel Henry Olcott was a pioneer in the truest sense of the word, his investigation into the Eddy phenomena predated the work of Geley, Crawford, Crookes, Madame Bisson and Schrenk-Notzing, to name

just a few of the weighty names associated with research into the scientific aspects of physical mediumship. The phenomena of fully materialized spirit forms - of which the Eddy Brothers probably have never been excelled - is so startling and extraordinary in its nature, that Olcott's reporting was met with extreme incredulousness and shock; manifestations seemingly regulated by no known law - as of yet - above and beyond even the understanding of science and the laws of nature, were being produced not only through two rude farmers, but ones that were supposedly unmannered and illiterate besides.

The Mediumistic Gifts Of The Eddy Family, In General. By Henry Olcott.

'It is scarcely exaggeration to say that this family of mediums, if we may believe their story, is the most remarkable as to psychological endowments of which mention is made in the history of European races. The phases of mediumship represented by the family members were rapping's; the disturbance of material objects from a state of rest; painting in oil and water-colors under influence; prophecy, the speaking of strange tongues; the healing gift; the discernment of spirits; levitation, or the floating of the body in free air; the phenomena of instrument playing and the show of hands; the writing of messages on paper up borne in mid-air, by pencils held by detached hands; Psychometry, or the reading of character and view of distant persons upon touching sealed letters; clairvoyance; clairaudience, or the hearing of spirit-voices; and lastly, and most miraculous of all (as Olcott stated it), the production of materialized phantom forms, that become visible, tangible, and often audible by all persons present.

The Phenomena Produced By William And Horatio Eddy In The Circle-Room:

- (1) The materialization of spirit-forms in the second story of the house;
- (2) The showing of materialized hands; the 'ring test' (which I will explain), writing of names of deceased persons upon cards, by detached hands; and playing on instruments in the light; which usually happen in a circle held at the conclusion of the materialization circle.
- (3) The playing of musical instruments; voices; the sound of heavy dancing; the moving of ponderous bodies; the floating of musical instruments through the air; the noise of struggles and sword combats between two combatants; the flashing of phosphorescent lights; the touching and patting of our persons by supposed spirit-hands; a concert of musical instruments, numerous enough to require the aid of at least four performers; solo-playing on the harmonicon, accordion,

violin, flute, guitar, or concertina; the improvisation of rhymes by a voice, upon a subject named by any person present; whistling; the imitation of a storm at sea, with the whistling and roaring of the gale, the force of the waves, the sucking pumps - all these in a darkened room'.

Olcott: 'Much account has been made of the story told by Lord Dunraven and Lord Adair (and, I may mention, confirmed to me personally by the later gentleman), of Mr. Home's having been 'floated' out of one third- story window at Ashley House and into another; but what will be thought of Horatio Eddy having been carried, one summer night, when he was but six years old, a distance of three miles to a mountain top, and left to find his way home next day as best he could; of his youngest brother Webster, when a grown man, being carried out of a window and over the top of a house from the presence of three witnesses (from two of whom I have the story), and landed in a ditch a quarters of a mile off; of William being carried to a distant wood and kept there unconscious for three days, and then carried back again; of Horatio being 'levitated' twenty-six evenings in succession, in Buffalo, in Lyceum Hall, when fast bound to a chair, and hung by the back of the chair to a chandelier hook in the ceiling, and then safely lowered again to his former place on the floor? Of Mary Eddy being raised to the ceiling of Hope Chapel, in New York City, where she wrote her name?'

Quotable Quote

'Let any fair man stay at the Eddy house for a week or two, take time to hear both sides of every story, and watch what occurs, and, my word for it, he will carry away food for reflection to last him the rest of his natural life'. (Henry S. Olcott, October, 1874).

A Motley Crowd

The impression that is given by every account is that the Eddy house and grounds were generally thronged with people. They themselves could only board just so many in the house so many others had to fend for themselves in the nearby hamlets. Nonetheless, Mrs. Shindler stated that there were, when she was there, almost fifty people boarding at the house. Henry Olcott's description of, or better yet, perspective of the visitors he saw at the homestead while there is one of the most classic statements of Spiritualism. After describing the stupendous beauty of the surrounding hills and green pastures Olcott, leading up though his statement says: 'But there appears to be slight

evidence that this scenery has exercised an ennobling effect upon the inhabitants. They are usually a prosaic set, and I have vainly watched for any responsive glow when I have called their attention to the natural beauties around us. The Eddy's themselves form rather an exception to the rule. True, they waste no enthusiasm upon their familiar hills and valley, but the tenderness of their hearts is shown in the gathering of pet pigeons, dogs, parrots, ducks, and chickens, about them, and their innate refinement, by the hours snatched from menial toil, to water and trim their plants and flowers . . . English visitors to this place would find abundant relaxation in the long walks or mountain climbing, but we Americans avail ourselves little of the privilege . . . but the minds of the people who come from far and near to this Vermont homestead, are so bent upon the pursuit of the marvelous, that all day long they sit and talk of last night's circle and past wonderful experiences, until one fairly gets a surfeit of the subject.

They are a motley crew, in sooth. Ladies and gentlemen; editors, lawyers, divines and ex-divines; inventors, architects, farmers; peddlers of magnetic salves and mysterious nostrums; long haired men and short haired women; the 'crowing hens' of Fowler, and the cackling cocks, their fitting mates; women with an idea, and plenty of men and women without any to speak of; people of sense and people of nonsense; sickly dreamers who prate of 'interiors' and 'conditions' and 'spheres' as intelligently as a learned pig or a chattering magpie; clairvoyants and 'healers', real and bogus; phrenologists, who read bumps without feeling them, under 'spirit direction'; mediums for tipping, rapping, and every imaginable form of modern phenomena; 'apostles' with one and two arms; people from the most distant and widely-separated localities; nice, clever people whom one is glad to meet and sorry to part from; and people who shed a magnetism as disagreeable as dirty water or the perfume of the Fetis-Americanus. They come and go, singly and otherwise; some after a day's stay, convinced that they have been cheated, but the vast majority astounded and perplexed beyond expression by what their eyes have seen and their ears heard. Through all, the family jog on in the even tenor of their unsystematic way, receiving newcomers with distrust, and letting life slide after a happy-go-lucky fashion. Those who stay longest with them have the most confidence in their mediumship, for they discover that their external misanthropy and curtness are the outcome of years of sorrow and injustice, the result of poor education and bad training. More than any man I have ever met, William Eddy lives an interior life; and to be in relation, of supposed relation, with the people of the Silent Land, seems as natural to him as it was to the ecstatic of the early centuries of the recluses of Brahma'.

Before moving on to the circle-room manifestations, I want to add to this work a few important issues which were brought to light in Olcott's work, *People From The Other World*. Those who are interested in this field of research and the historical aspects of Spiritualism and physical mediumship will especially find it significant. Olcott: 'The Salem witchcraft tragedies were followed by such a reaction, that tardy justice was done to the families of the victims of the popular frenzy, and nothing was said about supernaturalism - at least nothing, I think, that aroused general interest - until the present dispensation was ushered in at the little cabin of Michael Weekman, in 1847, where, in the family of John D. Fox, its then lessee, there bubbled up a tiny spring that is now so great a river. The raps and poundings which will always be known as the 'Rochester Knockings' and forever perpetuate the memory of Kate and Margaret Fox, were followed by many other and more wonderful forms of manifestation, such as the lifting of heavy bodies, the phenomenal increase and diminution of their normal weight (the lightest articles acquiring marvelous ponderosity and the heaviest equally notable levity), the ringing of bells, the playing of unseen performers on instruments, and, finally, by the materialization of spirit-hands, faces, and full forms.

At the same time, however, that these things were going on and the attention of the civilized world was arrested by them, similar phenomena were happening in other private families. The Davenports, of Buffalo, N.Y., were having some slight premonitions of the future career they were destined for, but the physical manifestations did not occur in their presence until February, 1855. A year before this the Koons family, of Athens County, Ohio, had instrumental and vocal concerts by the spirits, and materialized hands wrote communications. But the Eddy's tell me that they had been seeing materialized spirit-forms from their childhood, and their mother before them, and, in the absence of conflicting evidence, I suppose that the credit will have to be awarded to them of witnessing the first instances of this highest form of physical manifestation, occurring in our time.

One evening, in March, 1872, the Eddy family were sitting about the fire, when an event occurred that ushered in the series of materializations that have culminated in the public séances now given nightly. William had cut his foot very badly with an axe, and was confined to his bed in an adjoining room. Suddenly, without warning, the grandmother's spirit in full materialized form appeared at the threshold, and gave instruction for some salves to apply to the wound, and a cooling draught to abate the fever that had set in; after which she disappeared. Shortly after this, when Delia Eddy was engaged in reducing some maple-sugar over the kitchen fire, the spirit of a man of

short stature suddenly materialized himself, frightening her so that she dropped a pan of sugar she was carrying. The spirits then told the family that William was to be developed as the greatest medium of the age, and that he must no longer sit for the instrument playing exhibitions, as he had been doing for a number of years, but must go into the cabinet or closet alone and take no bells or instruments with him'.

Quotable Quote

'I did not content myself with merely attending the séances of these famous brothers, but watched them continually at their daily tasks, and in their hours of relaxation, and am firmly persuaded that all their manifestations were perfectly genuine. Especially did William impress me as a man of singular honesty and simplicity of character; too guileless to protect himself from the wiles and snares of others. I loved him as one of God's chosen instruments to bless and comfort the mourning hearts of those whose friends had been taken out of their sight'. (M.D. Shindler).

The Circle Room

This room had three windows on each side, 13 feet 9 inches from the ground. Olcott stated that there was no ladder on the premises. For the use of carpenters engaged in making some small repairs, one had been borrowed from another farmer in the neighbourhood. There was one door of entrance into the séance room, situated next to the main part of the house. The circle room was 37 feet 6 inches long and 17 feet wide, with a ceiling 9 feet 2 inches high in the centre, and 6 feet 11 inches at the sides. At the farther end was the kitchen chimney, 2 feet 7 inches by 3 feet 4 inches, in the centre of the gable. To the right of the chimney was a closet of the same depth - 2 feet 7 inches - and a length of 7 feet, with a window in it, 2 feet 6 inches from the floor, and having a 2 feet 2 inches by 2 feet 3 inches opening. The door to the closet - this was William's cabinet - was 5 feet 9 inches high by 2 feet wide. The ceiling of the cabinet at the chimney end was 7 feet 2 inches, and 5 feet at the other end, where the roof sloped (over where William sat). Three sides of the cabinet were lath and plaster; the fourth the solid brick wall of the chimney. There were no panels to slide, and no loose boards in the floor to lift. Every inch of the cabinet was tight and solid. Outside the cabinet there was a platform as long as the width of the room, and 6 feet 7 inches wide in its widest part, and was elevated 231 inches above the general floor level. Along its outer edge ran a balustrade, or handrail, 2 feet 6 inches high, making the height from the floor of the room to the top of the rail, 4 feet

5 inches. The outside measurements of this particular section of the Eddy house corresponded with the circle room Olcott stated.

For six months after the hall had been built, there was no window in the cabinet, but one evening during the excessively hot weather in July, the medium fainted upon coming out of the stifling cabinet, and a window was cut shortly after. A medium can handle just so much. This window, in consequence of insinuations of its possible use for the introduction of costumes and confederates (and what of the numerous manifestations prior to cutting the window?), Olcott obtained permission to completely seal up, which he did by tacking a fine mosquito netting over the frame outside, and sealed it with wax stamped with his signet. This precaution made absolutely no difference in what occurred inside the circle room. He examined the netting every day until he left the Eddy house, and found it just as he had left it. The audience occupied two or three uncomfortable straight benches and, on occasion, a chair was set up front for Olcott to the right of the benches (see floor plan). The circles were held by night and the only illumination was by a feebly lit kerosene lamp placed at the southeast end of the room. Olcott, who constantly questioned himself on whether he was being meticulous enough in his investigation I really believe had no idea just how thorough he was; little did he then realize that it would end up being considered one of the most thoroughly conducted investigations ever on record along these lines.

He hired a man, O.F. Morrill, of Chelsea, Mass., a mechanic, inventor and carpenter, to examine every inch of William's cabinet and, in brief, stated:

'I hereby certify, that, at the request of and in company with Mr. H.S. Olcott, I have examined thoroughly the walls, window, ceiling and floor of William H. Eddy's 'cabinet', and the floor of the platform upon which it opens, and that there is no possible means by which confederates could be introduced into the said cabinet, except through the open door, in full face of the audience; nor any place where costumes or apparatus could be stored. Furthermore, that after witnessing numerous materializations by alleged spirits, he is perfectly satisfied that the phenomena, whatever may be their origin, are not produced by jugglery, the personation of characters by William Eddy, or by chemical or mechanical device' (signed, O.F. Morrill).

After some singing and light dancing in the circle room, the people would then be invited to seat themselves on the benches, and William Eddy would then mount the platform and hang a thick shawl over the cabinet door, enter it and sit down on his chair. The lamp would then

be turned down very dimly, the sitters in the front row would be requested to join hands, and a violinist (sometimes flute or even accordion) placed at the extreme right of the row and nearest the platform, would play on his instrument. All would then be anxious expectation. Presently, the curtain would stir, would be pushed aside, and a form would step out on to the platform and face the audience.

Henry Olcott: 'Seen in the obscurity, silent and motionless, appearing in the character of a visitor from beyond the grave, it is calculated to arouse the most intense feelings of awe and terror in the minds of the timid; but happily the idea is so incomprehensible, the supposition so unwarrantable, even absurd, that at first most people (automatically) choose to curiously inspect the thing as a masquerading pleasantry on the part of the man they saw only a moment before, enter the cabinet'. In other words, most of them simply could not comprehend or believe what they were seeing because it was so incredible. Olcott then stated: 'The first impression is that there is some trickery; for to think otherwise is to do violence to the world's traditions from the beginning until now; besides which the feeling of terror is lessened by the apparition being seen by each person in company with numerous other mortals like himself, and the locked hands and touching shoulders on each side soon begets confidence. If the shape is recognized it bows and retires, sometimes after addressing words in an audible whisper or natural voice, as the case may be, to its friends, sometimes not. After an interval of two or three minutes the curtain is again lifted, and another form, quite different in sex, gait, costume, complexion, length and arrangement of hair, height and breadth of body, and apparent age, comes forth, to be followed in turn by others and others, until after an hour or so the session is brought to a close, and the medium reappears with haggard eyes and apparently much exhausted'.

After only his third séance, in a letter to Epes Sargent, published in *Proof Palpable of Immortality*, Olcott stated: 'I have seen shapes of Indian men* and women and white persons, old and young, each in different dress, to the number of thirty-two; and I am told by respectable persons who have been here a long while that the number averages about twelve a night. The Eddy's have sat continuously for a year, and are wearied in body and mind by the incessant drain upon their vital force, which is said to be inevitable in these phenomena. For want of a better explanation I may as well state that the Eddy's claim that the manifestations are produced by a band of spirits, organized with a special director, mistress of ceremonies, chemist, assistant chemists, and dark and light circle operators'.

Quite a number of Indian spirits materialized themselves every night at the Eddy's for Mrs. Eddy was, it was said, a noble, generous woman,

who cherished the most friendly relations with these red men and women when in the flesh, and one winter kept in her house a whole family of them that might otherwise have perished from the bitter cold.

Henry Olcott's First Séance: 17 September, 1874

'I reached Chittenden on my present mission, Sept. 17, 1874, and attended a circle the same evening. Outside a violent gale of wind was blowing, the clouds hung low, the rain fell, and the atmospheric conditions seemed unfavourable. A company of twenty-five persons assembled in the circle room, among them several who, like myself, had arrived that day. Shortly after seven o'clock, William entered the cabinet, and we waited expectantly for our weird visitors. To promote harmony of feeling among the persons present, vocal and instrumental music was resorted to, continuity of sound and rapidity of time seeming to be more necessary than quality of execution. We had not sat many minutes in our first circle before a voice - the piping treble of an old woman - addressed to us some remarks from behind the curtain . . . to the effect that this was a bad night for manifestations, and none but the strongest of spirits could show themselves'.

Olcott was suspicious at first, thinking that William was simply speaking in falsetto, but eventually learned from experience - having seen her materialized on several occasions and address him personally - that Mrs. Eaton was one of the controls/cabinet spirits of William Eddy; she will be mentioned on and off throughout the story, and so will this next famous little squaw of energy and vivaciousness. The curtain presently stirred, and the Indian woman named Honto, stepped on the platform. She was, according to Olcott, 'young, dark complexioned, of marked Indian features, lithe and springy in movement, full of fun, natural in manner, and full of inquisitiveness'.

Olcott, in his drive to be as exact as possible, painted a scale, full length down the side of the cabinet door. Honto measured 5 feet 3 inches and bore not the slightest resemblance to William Eddy (having seen her at least thirty times or more while there, Olcott said). Honto would change her dress frequently, sometimes appearing in a dark skirt with light overdress, shaped like the garment called a polonaise; sometimes with shades of colour reversed; sometimes with light clothing throughout with a sash around her waist, or bands over her bosom; sometimes with a cap, and at others bareheaded; sometimes with her black hair a yard or more in length, flowing over her shoulders, and again with it braided in a single rope down her back. The list is almost endless with what this little energy ball could do; at certain

times she even had phosphorescent buttons gleaming in the obscure light like diamonds. Honto was indeed one of the stars of the show.

Olcott stated: 'The sketch (I have drawn), represents one of the phenomena attending the appearance of this spirit-girl, and what I witnessed on the evening in question. Honto steps either to the wall or to one of the two persons – Mrs. R. Cleveland and Mr. E.V. Pritchard, of Albany, N.Y. - who usually occupy chairs on the platform, and suddenly produces a knitted shawl or a long piece of gauzy fabric, apparently from the air itself, and exhibits it to the audience. She threw the slender fabric over the railing, and so gave us an opportunity to see that its strands were perfectly opaque (on some illustrations the railing on the platform has been omitted by the artist). Then throwing it over her head as a Spanish woman wears her mantilla, she produced another, woolen, black and apparently striped; and then passed both behind the curtain. Mrs. Cleveland was allowed to come up and feel the beating of Honto's heart; the bare flesh of her chest was cold and yet moist; the breast was a woman's, and the heart beat feebly yet rhythmically; the same pulsation was felt in the wrist. After Honto retired, various other spirits of Indians and whites (among the latter two little children) appeared before us . . . the next was that of a dark faced squaw, who calls herself 'Bright Star'. She is shapely, tall, well-proportioned, and of a dignified carriage . . . next came 'Daybreak', another squaw, dressed in dark costume, who danced to the playing of the violin, and then suddenly passed into the cabinet . . . then came 'Santum', whose appearance as regards stature and bulk is calculated to excite surprise. He measures 6 feet 3 inches tall, full half a foot taller than the medium; his dress appears to be a hunting-shirt of dressed buckskin, stripped perpendicularly and fringed at the seams, leggings of the same and fringed the same, a feather in his head, and sometimes he wears a powder-horn, slung by a belt across his shoulder. After Santum came two other Indian men, and then several whites made their bow to the audience. The first of these was William H. Reynolds, Utica, N.Y., a Colonel in the 14th N.Y. Artillery who died May 6th, 1874, of injuries. He was dressed in black and wore a full beard . . . his shirt was white . . . this spirit was followed by his brother, John E. Reynolds, who died in 1860. He wore a dark suit but no beard, but a moustache . . . then young Steven R. Hopkins, a lad of fifteen, with light curly hair. We were next favoured with the appearance in the cabinet door, of the tall figure of the late William Brown, of York, Pa. He is the father of Edward Brown, who married the medium, Delia Eddy. The phenomena of the evening concluded with the re-uniting of a family'.

A German music teacher, named Max Lenzberg, was at Chittenden

with his wife and daughter. At the request of William Eddy at the beginning of the evening, he played on the flute during the séance, and so occupied a chair in advance of the front row. After Mr. Brown's disappearance, the curtain was again drawn aside, and standing at the threshold were two children. One was a baby of about one year, and the other a child of twelve or thirteen. Behind, them, very indistinctly, could be observed the form of an old woman, who held up the curtain with her left hand and supported the baby with her right. Mrs. Lenzberg, with a mother's instinct, recognized her departed little ones, and with tender pathos, it was said, eagerly asked in German if they were not hers. Immediately there came several loud responsive raps, and the little Lena (the daughter in the audience), as if drawn from her mother's side by an irresistible power, crept forward and peered at the forms that stood at the edge of the black shadows of the cabinet. There was a moment's silence as she strained her eyes in the gaze, and then she said joyfully: 'Ja! Ihr seid meine kleine schwestern! Nicht wahr?'. There came again responsive raps, and the spirit-forms danced and waved their arms as if in glee at the re-union.

Sceptics of the Eddy's said that the baby forms seen at their séances were William with either pillows or white wrappings around his legs. Olcott said that on several occasions he had seen babies in someone's arms come from the cabinet nestled in the necks of their bearers, and heard those forms while standing - like the Lenzberg children - speak. A very sweet little girl who often appeared, blew a kiss to Olcott every time; she appeared in a short white frock, low necked and short sleeved, with a sash around her waist and ribbons at the shoulders.

Olcott said: 'The night of my arrival, the voice of the spirit, Mrs. Eaton, called me to bring a light and see the condition of the medium, the instant the last shape retired behind the curtain. I found everything as usual in the cabinet - no costumes scattered around, no signs of dressing having been going on. The window was closed against the admission of light, by a small black shawl and a piece of horse-blanket held against the panes by a bar of wood, cut to fit inside the frame. The last forms that had shown themselves were those of the two Lenzberg children, clad in white, but, although not more than thirty seconds had elapsed, no white drapery was to be seen. The medium was in a deep sleep, his features relaxed, his breathing almost imperceptible, his skin free from moisture, and every indication presented, of profound obliviousness to external things. The glare of the lamp and the noise of my footsteps, did not awaken him, but, when I shook him and called him by name, he opened his eyes and regarded me with the startled look of one suddenly aroused from slumber and seeing something unexpected at his bedside'.

From *Proof Palpable of Immortality*, by Epes Sargent we have the following interesting information: 'Mr. Max Lenzberg, in a letter to the *Daily Times*, of Hartford, Conn., gives an account of his and his family's experiences at Chittenden. He describes the battery test applied to Honto, the Indian spirit-maiden, by Dr Beard, a skeptic. The full power of the battery was let on, and Honto received it without flinching. No mortal could have stood it. Mr. Lenzberg states that the spirit-form of his wife's brother, Abraham, who died seventeen years ago in Texas, appeared on the stage at Chittenden in his shirt sleeves; and he adds: 'My wife recognized him at once, and said to him, 'Let me introduce you to my husband'. I spoke to him in German (and he answered in German) trans. 'Yes, it is I; I am much delighted'. It was a very distinct apparition; there could be no mistake as to the reality of the figure, and my wife said there was none as to identity'. The older woman spirit who led the Lenzberg children from the cabinet was, it turns out, Mrs. Lenzberg's mother'.

Quotable Quote

'It has been observed by frequenters of the Eddy circles that the appearance and behavior of Honto are good indications of the general character of the manifestations for the evening; if she is active, the séance will be a good one; if not, the reverse'. (Mr. Henry Lacroix, Chittenden, 1875).

Light-Circle Phenomena With Horatio Eddy

Henry Olcott's record of this is: 'The illustration represents what happened on the first evening of my visit, after William's materialization séance closed. It shows some of the visible manifestations at Horatio G. Eddy's light circles. Thousands who have attended the public exhibitions of the Davenports and other traveling mediums, will recognize them as familiar. I was chosen as one of the committee, on the evening when the Davenports first appeared in the Cooper Institute, several years ago, and saw five hands simultaneously thrust out of the aperture in the cabinet- door and, grasping one, had my hand squeezed so that I felt the bruise for hours (pardon the digression, I could not help but add that statement - NRH). Instead of using a wooden box, Horatio Eddy hangs two shawls upon the line that stretches from the chimney in the circle-room to the south wall, leaving an open space between it and the ceiling of about two feet.

The one next to the chimney, and behind Horatio's chair, is a short

one, and does not reach the floor by nearly three feet; and therefore, if it were possible for him to execute tricks behind the other curtain, without betraying himself by movements of his head, feet shoulders and body, or the disturbance of the shawl, he would be favourably placed to do so. I have watched him closely, and have never detected any such indication of fraud. Besides, it will appear in the course of my narrative that, even if he had both hands free to do what he chose, he could not have done any one of several things that I will recount.

The shawls merely form a screen, behind which it must be almost as light as in front, by reason of the open space between the cord and the ceiling. A table is pushed into the corner, and on it is laid the following: one guitar, one concertina, seven bells of various sizes, two tambourines, eight harmonicons, one flute, one piccolo, one flageolet, one tin ditto, and one triangle. Horatio sits on a chair in front of the curtain, to the left, next to him some gentleman selected from the audience, and at the right of the latter a lady similarly chosen. I give these positions as they are upon the platform . . . William Eddy then pins across the breasts of the two males a third shawl, attaching the ends to the curtain. A bright light is thrown upon the group from a kerosene lamp placed near and turned up high. Presently there is a commotion among the articles on the table, and loud knocks resound. The bells ring, various instruments are displayed above the curtain; the guitar is played upon near the ceiling, beneath the sitters' chairs, between the chimney side and Horatio's chair to the left, flat against the south wall, beyond the lady sitter to the right, and elsewhere; a familiar air is played in concert by a number of the instruments; bells are wrung singly and in harmony together, and hands of various sizes and tints dart into sight through the aperture in the curtain, or show themselves above the cord.

On the occasion referred to, the gentleman sitting next to Horatio was requested after a while, to give place to a lady, who, when she had taken her seat and the shawl was re-adjusted, was caressed by a child's hand, a tiny little thing, that might have belonged to a girl of two or three years. It patted her cheek, was held at the lips to be kissed, laid upon her head, smoothed her hair, and when her eyes filled with tears, wiped them away and renewed its caresses . . . I had an unobstructed view of all that transpired; but when this little hand was thrust from another world to cheer and encourage the mother, whose bosom it had so often clasped in life, I had drawn close up front, and saw the very dimples on it. I am, therefore, entirely able and ready to affirm that, even if the medium were an imposter, and had wished to deceive the sitters with a clever juggle, he did not then nor could not, for he could not transform his long, brown, bony, sinewy hand, and his wrist, mutilated by the cruel tying of many 'committees', into the size,

colour and shape of the baby-hand that was materialized before my eyes.

A call was soon made for writing materials, and a succession of spirit-hands clutching the pen that William offered (see illustration) them, and using my note-book as a tablet, wrote names on cards and threw them towards the audience. Some were names of the dead, some of the living; none, I am satisfied, familiar to the medium. The performance of the evening concluded, at the request of a visitor, with a series of imitations of the boring, sawing, and splitting of wood, the filing of iron, and the pumping of water, the sounds occurring behind the curtain, and all being so true to nature as to evoke great applause.

During the entire sitting, as during each of the like character, Horatio's two hands are supposed to have clasped the bared left arm of the person next to him; his eyes were closed, and, as I said before, there was neither rustle of the curtain, nor movements of his feet, body, or shoulders. For all the attention he apparently gave to what was going on he might have been in a stupor, or enjoying a nap after a full meal. Now, these experience offers, perhaps, as favourable an opportunity as any for the application of the theory, that no reliance should be placed upon the evidence of the senses. I either saw the baby-hand, and other larger ones, not the medium's, heard the coincidental playing upon several instruments, and saw the guitar played upon, not only beyond the reach of Horatio's arm, but also flat against the south wall, in a position where he could not possibly hold, much less play upon it; or I did not'.

On the second night of Colonel Olcott's visit he said that Honto was the first spirit to appear, and that she remained in sight nearly fifteen minutes. Mr. Pritchard and Mrs. Cleveland occupied their usual chairs on the platform, and Honto danced with the latter in an extremely lively manner; balancing, advancing, crossing-over, and turning the old lady as though 'the whole delight of her soul were in the figures of dance'. She then allowed her height to be measured against the backs of Mrs. Cleveland and a gentleman from the audience, Mr. Ralph. At a later séance, she allowed Mrs. Cleveland to cut a lock of her hair; had Mr. Olcott fill his pipe, hand it to Horatio and he in turn handed it to her and she smoked away while prancing back and forth on the platform.

On the following evening, seven Indians and five whites appeared and the majority of them were so obliging as to back up to the wall and allow themselves to be measured. Clearly, it could be seen and once again demonstrated that it would be altogether preposterous to imagine that William Eddy was somehow impersonating all of these

figures. Giant Indians such as Santum and Swift Cloud, and little children appeared and Olcott even timed the intervals between each one's appearance from the cabinet. On average, a little more than a minute transpired between the departure of one spirit and the arrival of another, all differing in size, shape and dress.

Before moving on to Horatio Eddy's dark circle phenomena, I am adding details from an interesting letter, dated 21, October 1874:

'We hereby certify that at a circle, held on the 28th of April last, in the new hall at the Eddy homestead, among other things that occurred, was the following, which we regarded as very conclusive as to the genuineness of the spirit materializations: 'Santum' was out on the platform, and another Indian of almost as great stature came out, and the two passed and re-passed each other as they walked up and down. The stranger chief retired first, and Santum followed him. At the same time, a conversation was being carried on between George Dix, Mayflower, old Mr. Morse, and Mrs. Eaton, inside the cabinet. We recognized the familiar voice of each. We had all examined the cabinet that evening, and helped clear it of some loose plaster which had fallen. There was no window in it then'. (Signed: R. Hodgson, M.D., George Ralph, Sarah A. Ehle, Cora C. Ehle, Herman Ehle).

Referring to one of the materialization séances, Mr. Olcott stated:

'On the next evening I saw more spirits than on any other single occasion but one, during my whole visit. Seventeen showed themselves, and all were whites. There were of babies, 2; small children, 3; women, young and old, 5; and adult males, 7. The theory that deceptive imitations of little children were made by wrapping white rags around one or both the medium's legs, as occasion required, was destroyed by the circumstance that the smallest child, not a babe, I saw that evening, bowed and curtsied to its mother, in reply to her question as to its identity. Mr. Pritchard, who sat next to me on my right in the front row, was called to the platform by Mrs. Eaton's voice, and when he reached there, his two nephews William and Chester Packard, late of Albany, N.Y., came out in turn to greet him; the former shaking hands with him, and laying his left hand upon his uncle's shoulder'.

Dark Circle Phenomena with Horatio Eddy.

Usually, every other evening after William Eddy's materialization phenomena, Horatio would hold one of his dark-circles. The preparation for this event would consist of hanging shawls or blankets

over the four windows nearest the platform, to exclude even starlight, removing the table from the platform - with its array of musical instruments - to a position on the main floor just in front of the railing, and then tying Horatio in a chair, placed to the right of the table and in front of the spectators. Upon the extinction of the light, immediately the gruff voice of the sailor-spirit George Dix, and the piping whisper of the little girl spirit Mayflower - the two main controls of the dark circle - would greet the audience, special mention often being made by favourite acquaintances of these curiously matched copartners for these striking séances. Dix asserts, that he was drowned at the wreck of the Steamship President, and Mayflower's story was that she died of fever, a century ago, while captive among the Indians of the Maine wilderness. Olcott said that he could not understand the underlying spiritual law associated with her but, when she re-visited this world, she did so as a child of twelve years, and manifested juvenile traits in all that she did. Mayflower had a talent for improvisation and would rattle off a verse upon any subject named impromptu by anyone in the audience; she was also an accomplished performer on various instruments, which she would play with rare power and expression. She was simple, innocent, and kindly to all; her heart was warm and sympathetic. George Dix, on the other hand, was a manly, powerful spirit, with a grip like a vice, a rollicking prankish nature, and a hoarse voice, like that of one accustomed to shout in storms from maintop to deck. He was an ingenious fellow, who sang, played well on violin, whistled like a Bohemian flute, and was always ready to keep the séance moving.

Compliments being exchanged, a medley performance begins. Colonel Olcott recorded:

'There is a dance of a pack of a dozen howling, leaping, skylarking Indians, who beat on the drums, rattle the tambourines, blow the horns, ring the heavier bells, and make a din so hideous that one easily fancies himself caught in the dance of live redskins about starting on the warpath. If Horatio were unbound and using all four of his locomotive and prehensile members, he could not imitate this dance. The creatures yell, and one can hear their stamping on the floor in cadence with their rude music. The dance is preceded by a stillness so dead that, for any sound of life, we might fancy the room empty. A slow beating of the time, a few clangs of the big dinner-bell, a measured beat of the tambourine, and then the time grows faster and faster, until, in a moment, we are in the midst of the hurly-burly. It needed no stretch of the imagination to see, even in the Egyptian darkness of the hall, the wild figures circling round and round, for their demonstrations were of so obstreperous a character as to frighten all but habitués of the coolest temperaments. As an exhibition of pure brute force, if such

a term may be applied to the occult power that produces it, this Indian dance probably is unsurpassed in the annals of spiritual manifestations.

Following this episode, upon the evening in question, came a sword-combat, apparently between two persons, for the hacking of the two blades was, it seemed to me, too violent to be done by one man operating in the dark, at the risk of chopping off a finger, or mutilating a wrist. The play in weapons ended in a sudden groan, and the falling of a man's body on the floor at my feet . . . with a match being struck and candle lighted, the medium was found sitting quietly in his chair, with his bounds undisturbed, and no sign of perspiration on his skin. The floor, however, was littered with musical instruments and bells, and the swords of the unseen combatants were lying along with them.

Accordingly a gentleman present, Mr. George W. Nichols, of New York City, sat in Horatio Eddy's lap, while I, drawing up my chair in front of him, placed my feet upon Horatio's toes and held Mr. Nichols's hands, thus making it impossible that either of the three should move without each of the others knowing it. Moreover, Horatio could not move if he wished, for his hands were tightly bound to the back of his chair, and even if he could disengage them, he could not move them forward to touch us, or the instruments scattered about; his slightest motion would be instantly detected by the man sitting on his lap. The light was again extinguished and a new performance began. Hands, cold, clammy and firm, stroked our faces, patted our heads and hands, slapped me on the back and legs, and Mr. Nichols on the parts of his person not leaning against the medium, a pair of lips kissed my cheek, and two huge hands tickled me under my arms at one time. Then the accordion, concertina, and tambourine were played all about us, bells were rung, blows given on the floor with the swords, and the guitar, floating through the air or resting upon my head, played one or more familiar airs. Meanwhile every person in the front row of the audience sat with hands joined, which is the same as saying, that no one, even if so disposed, could get to us to do what was done . . . light was called for, and we then took our seats again in the circle.

The next thing in order was the improvisation of rhymes by Mayflower. The dear child, who came and laid her little hand on mine for an instant, allowed me to name the subject, and then reeled off a score of limping hexameters . . . when she breathed the words through the stops of the harmonicon, with exquisite modulation of the sounds, her 'golden stars' and 'silver shores' and 'Heavenly fields' seemed almost to come before us as pictures of a fairy land'.

Then George Dix's voice announced that the band composed of spirits known as Electa, Honto, Santum, Rosa, the little girl, French Mary,

Mayflower, and himself, would render the piece called 'The Storm at Sea'. The musician, Max Lenzberg, was present, and in his letter to Olcott for 'People From The Other World', he stated (condensed): 'The concerted pieces were an imitation of a storm at sea, by the violin, with the accompaniment of the mouth harmonicon, tambourine, concertina, triangle, guitar, and several bells. In the storm, the whistling of the wind was made apparently by bowing on the guitar with one hand, and at the same time sliding the other up and down the fingerboard, producing harmonic notes. The heavy blowing of the gale was imitated by a tremolo on the violin, accompanied by a confusion of sounds from the other instruments. The shock of waves against the ship was forcibly suggested by lifting a heavy table and beating on the floor with its legs. There was one sound that could not possibly be imitated by any instrument, viz.: the pumping of water, with the suck of the piston, the gurgle of water in the tube, and its splash, as if running off the deck.

Throughout the whole entertainment, the medium sat in a chair in front of the spectators, with his wrists tied together and to the back of the chair. A light was struck instantly after some of the most remarkable performances, and he was found in the same position and tied in the same manner as at the first'.

Miscellaneous Wonders

In the light circle with Horatio, a standard feature was the writing of notes by the spirits and then having them handed out to members of the audience. One night, a number of blank cards were called for and handed to one of the spirit's arms that thrust itself through the curtain. The pen and inkstand were then passed through in like manner, and immediately a number of cards were showered upon Henry Olcott, who was sitting in front of the curtain. The ink was so fresh, he stated, that he had to lay the cards on the railing to dry. Olcott said that he was greatly pleased at the favor shown him by the spirits and that the facsimiles he was going to print would, no doubt, be very interesting to the public. When he said this there was ringing of bells, strumming on the instruments, and pounding on the table, that gave a sufficiently marked response that they were quite pleased.

In one of the most unprecedented experiments ever attempted for that time, Olcott had procured in nearby Rutland one of Howe's Standard platform scales - the signed certificate of its quality and accuracy included in his book - and had it placed upon the platform to the right of the cabinet. When Honto came out she saluted everyone in her usual way then turned and scrutinized the strange machine with Indian-like

hesitancy. After being told what was desired, she boldly stepped on to the scale, and bent forward to look at the movements of Mr. Pritchard as his hand moved the poise along the beam. When the balance was attained, Honto stepped off the pad and passed into the cabinet. Upon a match being struck, it was verified that the spirit weighed 88 pounds. Honto then reappeared and was asked by Olcott to make herself lighter. She again mounted the scale and this time was 58 pounds; the next sequence she weighed the same, 58, and for the last attempt, the beam showed 65 pounds. She changed her weight three distinct times and, I must say, the picture of Honto on the scale is one of the sweetest things I have ever seen.

The Return Of Julia Eddy

On the day that Mr. Olcott and his artist friend were making the sketch of Julia Eddy's grave, he suggested that it would be a genuine test of the power of the spirits if Mrs. Eddy herself could come from the cabinet that evening; they would keep the matter to themselves and see what might come of it. There were fourteen people in the audience and nine spirits showed themselves. First came William Brown, who, it turns out, was the chief control of the materialization demonstrations during the summer months, then came Maria Ann Clarke; then a Mrs. Griswold, who was murdered in Vermont not long ago, and who, upon a former visit to the circle-room, gave all the details of the crime.

The fourth spirit was Julia Eddy herself, who stood motionless at first looking at Olcott and his artist friend. She bowed and then retired into the cabinet, then immediately returned to address the audience . . . 'Death, where is thy sting? Grave, where is thy victory?' were her first words. Her voice, according to the report, was so clear and loud that it could have filled a New York city auditorium they said. She wore a white waist and dark shirt. Her hair was in ringlets. She said to Olcott, 'Your writings are true, and be assured the Truth will prevail. A thousand spirits are watching your every step, and wishing you Godspeed. They see the rapid spread of Truth upon earth; and they and a countless host besides are helping it on. Go on, my friend; we will welcome you in gratitude and joy when you come to the other world, for daring to tell the truth, and helping to disseminate it. I thank you for your kindness to my children, who have suffered so much and so long for the good cause'. Olcott said: 'I needed no stenographer to fix upon my memory this astounding address, of which I gave only a fragment. She spoke of her own sufferings and trials upon the earth, and denounced the bitter and unstinted anger of all who slander and persecute mediums, especially her own children'.

Spirit Power - The Spring Balance Demonstration

Two Howe's Standard spring balances were purchased from L.G. Kingsley of Rutland so that Olcott could test the power of the detached hands coming through the curtain during Horatio's light-circle. The experiment was two-fold, viz.: to ascertain how much the hands could pull horizontally, and how much vertically. One of the balances was fastened with a stout cord to the handrail, allowing a sufficiency of cord to bring the hook of the balance within easy reach of the spirit- hand, for the horizontal pull. The other was attached to a strong ring, made for the purpose, and screwed into the floor, between the left foot of the gentleman sitter and the right foot of the medium. There were twenty-six persons present, the date was September 30th, 1874. After some instrument playing and card writing, the guitar, tambourine, and several bells were thrown over the curtain, after which a hand was thrust out, and by the opening and closing of the fingers, indicated that they were ready for the experiment. Olcott stepped on to the platform and handed the hook to the hand, which grasped it, moved its fingers on and off the hook to get a firm hold - as anyone would do - and then, easily, steadily, and without spasmodic action, compressed the spring until the pointer ran down to the 40 pound mark. The spring was held there in place until Olcott reached out his hand to take back the balance, and then simply recoiled as gradually as it had been compressed. The spirit hand was the left one, large, broad and white. Olcott stood within a foot of it when it pulled and noticed that upon the wrist there were two thin parallel lines of tattooing in blue India ink. In one of the finest statements that I have ever heard concerning spirit phenomena, Horatio said that while the pulling was being done by the one hand of the spirit, he braced his other hand against the back of Horatio for leverage, causing Horatio to lean forward; obviously if the medium was the one pulling, he would have leaned the opposite way.

The vertical pull was done by the right hand of George Dix, the powerful sailor spirit. The date was October 2nd. Adding superior evidential value to the Eddy phenomena was the fact that Dix had a little finger missing from his right hand. The hand, according to Olcott, was white as marble, and he could actually see the tendons contracting during the strain of the pull, and the blue veins of the wrist. The pull was steady, as the other, but much more powerful, for the entire 50 pounds was indicated by the pointer. After this incredible feat of strength, Dix slapped Olcott heartily on the back and tickled him in the ribs. Olcott stated that Dix could most likely have easily pulled 100

pounds more, and assent was given by Dix issuing a thunderous pound on to the table almost shattering it into a thousand pieces.

Quotable Quote: Henry Lacroix, Chittenden, 1875

'We can very well understand that a skeptic, coming and remaining here but a night or two, and seeing the manifestations of materialization under their ordinary aspect, returns home dissatisfied, and, more than that, with a strong suspicion that he has been fooled. Hence the rumors, widespread, take consistency here and there, that the specters of Spirit Vale, as Chittenden is called, are unreal, intangible, and but objects of trickery. We would certainly advise all skeptics, and even investigators who have made some headway, to go elsewhere - to see about home what is produced by inferior mediums, and furthermore, to prepare and educate their powers of understanding. It is unsafe for those who have been in darkness to satisfy their desire for light by rushing out at once into the full blaze. The subjective and objective realities of Spiritualism are no mere child-playthings; they cannot be comprehended with initiation; and the thick-headed, which form the majority, need not expect to get ahead of others who step by step have advanced, and now possess conviction and comprehension.

Some over zealous people, in wishing to instruct the visitor about the - queer- ways of the great mediums, will tell you to be cautious how you express yourself before them, or to those around; how to deport yourself in every way - as the very sensitive, 'bear-like, uncouth, uncivilized' brothers may dismiss you on the slightest grounds, and when least expected. It is due to truth, and to the medium brothers that we should lay bare the case, and in a few words. We have found, by personal experience, unsought, unlooked for, that the brothers, far from wishing harm to those parties who try to injure them, or being inclined to resent on the innocent the injuries received, take such little notice of these fly-bites, numerous as they are, as to render unto their enemies good for evil. The two brothers who minister unto the spiritual wants of so many are simple in their ways, language, and dealings; manhood, beside, being stamped upon their brows in unmistakable characters. Accustomed as the principal medium for materialization (William) is to the inner life, his manners reveal less of the outward than is found in Horatio, who enacts what are called the light and dark circles. Both, however, endeavor in every way to make themselves agreeable to their guests, and are always ready to answer questions in a genial mood. The active care of the farm devolves upon William, who is seen all day long, and every day, attending to such work. The outside business, and attendance of the guests, is performed by

Horatio. The lady guests are often seen in the kitchen helping the cook, and sometimes William, who occasionally in the morning performs that drudgery, as well as washing of linen, under the influence of the spirit of an Irish washerwoman, named Ann Cuddy'.

Excerpt from A Southerner Among the Spirits:
The Banner of Light, October, 1875. Henry Lacroix.

'A goodly number of Indian spirits make their appearance here, but we heard none of them speak except one . . . that class of control comes oftener, we are told, when the medium is unwell, or in bad condition, so as to give him strength. On Tuesday, August 3rd, six of these Indian spirits appeared, attired in gorgeous manner; some of their head-dresses were ornamented with beautiful flowing plumes, which they bent forward in the full light outside the door of the cabinet. As one of them, called Massasoit, protruded his head outward, three beautiful pond lilies (of which none are to be found in the neighbourhood) were seen among the other ornaments upon his head. Another, who came to the medium Mrs. Cutter, had a gorgeous costume and a brilliant head-dress from which a seemingly living serpent, of the milk-adder species, coiled around it, dangling its head'.

M. D. Shindler: 'During one of William's séances, a young woman emerged from the cabinet, holding a young baby in her arms. Mr. Brown, the husband of the medium, Delia Eddy, at once recognised his sister, and asked her if that was Delia's baby. The spirit form bowed her head in affirmation. 'May Delia go to the platform?' he inquired. Again there was an affirmative bow. Delia accordingly went upon the platform, took the apparently living, moving baby in her arms, kissed it affectionately, and returned it to its spirit nurse. With bowed head and streaming tears she returned to her seat beside her husband, amid a silence broken only by the suppressed sobs of other mothers who had witnessed the affecting scene. No mother who was present on that occasion will ever be persuaded that this was not a real spirit scene'.

Henry Olcott: 'One night Mayflower told me, as evidence of the superior knowledge of spirits, that she herself could harden and weld copper, and make a small machine that would lift the house we were in, as easily as I could my hat. When I asked her why she would not impart some of her knowledge for the benefit of the world, her reply was that, when our men of science got so far progressed as to lose their empty conceit, and discover that they hardly knew the alphabet of science, and were prepared to learn, these and many more important discoveries would reward them'.

The Ring Test.

Colonel Olcott: 'When the ring test was about to begin, I was requested by the medium (Horatio) to take both his hands in mine and keep a firm hold . . . our hands crossed, my right holding his right, and his left my left. The iron ring used for the experiment was then exhibited through the shawl by another hand, so that all could see it, and then dropped upon the floor at my feet, striking it with a metallic sound, and rolling off the platform. After all who chose had had the opportunity to examine it, it was passed back, and taken behind the curtain by the spirit hand. I then felt an arm and shoulder pressing against my back, as I sat touching the edge of the table behind me, and the ring, and a cold hand that held it touched the bare, warm skin of my left forearm. A tremendous shock ran through the medium's body, and instantly the iron ring slid down from his arm over my right wrist and hung there'.

The Table And The Glass

After a spirit concert one night, George Dix, the sailor spirit requested Joe Rugg, one of the Eddy family's faithful farm hands, to bring a small stand and a glass of water. These directions were complied with, and the water being placed upon the stand, the light was extinguished again, and, for a moment, the audience was in total darkness. The candle was re-lighted, and the glass of water was inverted upon the stand, the water still within the glass, and nothing over the mouth to keep it in. The light was put out again, and when again called for, the stand was upside down on the floor, and the tumbler, with its contents, right side up, balanced upon the point of one of the legs. The light was extinguished again and re-lighted, and then the tumbler was on the floor, at the feet of Olcott, the water gone, and a wreath, weaved together with ribbon and sea-shells by beautiful Mayflower (see next section), inside, as dry as a bone.

Mayflower And Her Beautiful Gift

Colonel Olcott, when in Rutland, procured some ribbon of three colours and sent them to Chittenden in the care of Mr. Luther B. Hunt, a friend of Horatio who was visiting the homestead. The parcel sent by Olcott, with a note, Mr. Hunt said he put in the pocket of his coat, which hung in his bedroom, intending to take the ribbons with him to the next dark circle, and hold the little maid - Mayflower had promised Olcott one of her beautifully braided ribbons - to the fulfillment of her promise to him. On the same day, William being, as he many times was, under influence, said to Mr. Hunt, 'if you will go upstairs and look in your pocket you will find something'. Mr. Hunt went and searched his coat,

but found nothing, and returning, reported his ill-luck. But William said that he had not looked in the right place, it was in the vest-pocket where the articles were. And in the vest-pocket, sure enough, he found two wreaths, one for Olcott and the other for another gentleman.

The next evening at the dark circle Mayflower, addressing Mr. Hunt, said that he had overlooked the note that she had left for Olcott with the wreaths. Another search of the vest disclosed a tiny note, written on a small square of thin paper, and being to the effect that Mr. Olcott was her dear friend, and she thanked him for his kind expressions, and hoped that he would keep the wreath to remember her by (all of us should be so lucky). The wreath illustrated on the left was how it looked originally. Olcott, carrying out a little test of Mayflower's powers, in total darkness, laid the wreath on the lap of the woman sitting beside him. Of course immediately Mayflower noticed it and said: 'Oh, Mrs. Murphy, what have you got in your lap? It's my wreath! Mr. Olcott, you want me to braid it over again for you?'. He said he did, in another pattern and with the ribbons passed through some perforated sea-shells (she had done this before for a woman).

Mayflower stated that she did not have any sea-shells with her at the moment, but she would get some and re-braid the ribbon again, and return it next time they met. Olcott secretly then dropped the little wreath on to the floor - it was total darkness still - and when the light was struck, the wreath was gone. Ten days later, after the Indian dance, and the 'Storm at Sea' demonstration, the beautiful little wreath braided through with sea-shells appeared in the final stage of the table and glass demonstration - previously mentioned - under the inverted glass, as dry as a bone. I would give anything to know where it is right now.

Evidence Of The Highest Level

In order to conclusively prove that the upstairs hall, the hollow platform, the cabinet floor, nor the mysterious window in the cabinet - which had so troubled the souls of the many superficial skeptics, or anything about the circle room for that matter, had anything to do with the manifestations, just before the usual time for the circle, it was suggested on the spur of the moment by Olcott (finding, as he said, the Eddy boys in an unusually tractable mood), that the sitting should be held downstairs in the reception room where they were presently gathered about the fireplace. Without hesitancy, this was assented to by William, and the old shawl that hung over the cabinet door upstairs was brought down. The old rough mattress and some working clothes

were removed from the dark closet room beneath the stairs, and they were ready to begin the séance.

The shawl curtain was arranged and all took their seats; the lamp was placed on the far chimney-directly across from room B. Within a few minutes, the shawl was lifted and out jumped Honto, as lively as a squirrel. She was dressed in a light outfit throughout, with a scarf around her waist, and her beautiful hair hung loose down her back. She stepped to the dining room door (H), lifted the latch and threw it open; then began prancing and capering about in her usual ways, as if she were in the finest of spirits. Shawl after shawl she twitched from old Mrs. Cleveland's and Mr. Pritchard's feet and shoulders, astonishing them each and every time. Then she stepped to the right of the cabinet door, and stood directly opposite Olcott and stared at him, then looked intently at the floor by the mop-board. There was nothing to be seen at first but bare planks, but presto! As Olcott watched, there suddenly appeared a heap of something black; material of some kind, which she stretched out her hand and daintily picked up with her thumb and forefinger, held it open, and there it was - one of her shawls. Next came out old Mrs. Pritchard from the cabinet, who was dressed, as usual in her grayish frock, and white apron and kerchief. She spoke to and stood by her son before retiring.

Next, in one of the most beautiful and unforgettable scenes ever beheld, a young woman stepped out from the closet carrying a little child in her arms and stood to the side of the opening for everyone to see. She was immediately recognised by her sister who was sitting in the audience, as Josephine Dow, late of Chittenden township. She had passed away twenty-four years ago at the tender age of nineteen. Her robe was pure white and flowing, gathered in at the waist by a string, so that the folds of the upper part lay over it after a very classical fashion. Her auburn hair fell in a mass over her shoulders, and as she stood there petting the child, Olcott said that he had never seen a prettier sight.

She then stepped back into the cabinet, and the voice of Mrs. Eaton then told Olcott that she would be coming back out because the spirits wanted her for the subject in the artist's illustration. She stepped back out without the child and looked the artist right in the face as she stood next to the cabinet door with her right arm crossed over her waist and her left hanging by her side. The artist, obviously chose to illustrate both the maiden and her little angel. After the 'Madonna and Child', came William Packard, late of Albany who, upon the artist's request, moved along the wall where his figure was thrown into high relief. He wore a dark coat and single-breasted vest, with white shirt collar. Next came out Mrs. Eaton herself, a little old wrinkled woman, in old

fashioned muslin mop-cap with a ribbon about the crown, a grayish dress, and a check woolen shoulder-shawl. She talked to Olcott about conditions in the séance room - in general - and how they were subject to the conditions around them, and where a circle was constantly changing, and never the same two evenings in a row, they could not do all that he demanded or even what they, the spirits, wished. Although not illustrated, there came an old, gentlemanly looking man dressed in a well-tailored black suit, a young woman named Augusta, 14 years old and in a pure white dress, and lastly, Jeremiah McCready, late of Cayuga County, N.Y., bringing to a close one of the most astounding demonstrations on record, and certainly one of the most evidential.

Spirits From Far Cathay

Madame Helene Petrovna Blavatsky, the future founder of Theosophy, arrived at the Eddy farm on 14 October, 1874. The arrival of this distinguished and eccentric Russian woman marked the beginning of an interesting series of events in the history of the Chittenden manifestations, for not only did it substantiate even further the awesome physical mediumship of the Eddy brothers, but the séances held in the circle-room allowed an extraordinary host of foreign spirit-visitors to make their appearance in her honour.

Madame Blavatsky stayed at the Eddy's for two weeks, and Henry Olcott's long mission which had lasted for more than two and a half months as special correspondent for the Daily Graphic, ended shortly after. Although they had only met for the first time while in Chittenden, Olcott and Madame B. were destined to be together - for the most part - for the rest of their lives. They both met up again in New York City where Olcott wrote *People From the Other World*, and where Madame B. started writing what would eventually be considered the textbook of Theosophy, *Isis Unveiled*.

The Eddy family, and their spirit friends, had always kept Colonel Olcott at a distance for the entire duration of his visit and, believe it or not, few special favours were ever granted to him, and they never completely trusted him. In their mysterious way, the spirits must have seen the future, because from the moment Madame Blavatsky arrived, he was then kept almost completely at a distance and was never treated the same again.

Madame B., in her letter to Epes Sargent, stated that while at the Eddy's, she saw no less than one hundred and nineteen spirits

materialise, seven or eight of which she personally recognised; Olcott, during the course of his investigation, saw more than four hundred spirits in the circle-room materialise. Spiritualism teaches and seeks communication with spirits; Theosophy, which Madame B. and Henry Olcott would spend almost every waking moment of their future promoting as a world religion and philosophy, puts down all such spirit communications as emanating from astral 'shells' or evil spirits, and also taught 'conscious development and a mastery of man's psychic faculties with an additional doctrine of a series of 'compulsory reincarnations'. How could this be after what Olcott and Blavatsky had experienced at the Eddy's? Nonetheless, the manifestations were extraordinary and that is what I am concerned with; I will leave it to others to try and explain the Theosophical contradiction. I have combined Olcott's report with the report written to Epes Sargent by Madame B.

Moments after William Eddy entered the cabinet, the curtain was drawn aside and out sprang Honto as quick as a deer and with her left hand placed on to the top of the railing, sprang right over it and landed herself on to the floor of the circle-room, gave everyone a good look, placed her left foot up on to the platform edge, her left hand once again on to the railing and jumped clear over it again landing back on the platform. Immediately after this she raced over to the side of the cabinet door and, motioning for everyone to observe as she placed her back up against the wall, showed her height, her feet, the bead running around her dress, and then unplaited her hair and shook it out over her shoulders, then stood with her back to the audience and let it hang over the rail so everyone could see its length then, inviting Mrs. Cleveland up to the stage, allowed her to cut a lock of her hair. The giant Winnebago Indian, Santum, then came, stooping down as he always did so his height could negotiate the cabinet door; then came the braves, Wando and Wasso, and then the first of the Russian lady's spirit visitors made his appearance. The illustrations show the spirits who came to see her while she was visiting, and I will include an explanation of who they were as I said, from the reports of Olcott and Madame B. This spirit was a Georgian boy, dressed in historical Caucasian attire, jacket with loose sleeves and long pointed over sleeves, an outer coat, baggy trousers, leggings of yellow leather, and a white skullcap, or fez, with tassel. He was recognised immediately by Madame B. as Michalko Guegidze, late of Kutais, Georgia, a servant of Madame Witte, a relative of Madame B. who questioned him in Georgian about circumstances known only by herself, and he unhesitatingly answered her. His hand is the one protruding through the curtain in the illustration at the beginning of Part IV. During the light circle, Madame B. requested Michalko -in his native tongue -to play the

Lezguinka, a Circassian dance, and he did so immediately on the guitar. He appeared numerous times.

The spirit M. Zephirin Boudreau, late of Canada, appeared, the father of the lady who had accompanied Madame Blavatsky to the Eddy farm and who, it was noted, was also attending her first séance. She addressed her questions to him in French, and he responded by rapping with his hand against the doorframe of the cabinet, except in one instance when he uttered the word 'Qui'. He had an aquiline nose, hollow cheek-bones, and an iron grey beard upon his chin. In stature he was tall, and in figure slim, with the air of a gentleman.

The curtain was lifted, and out stepped this gentleman who, according to Olcott, 'was of so marked an appearance as to make it absolutely absurd to imagine that William Eddy could even attempt to personate such a character'. This very attitude, by the way, after he had, up to this point, witnessed at least three hundred materialised spirits was, I believe, the reason why they distrusted him. The spirit was portly personage, with an unmistakable air of high breeding, in an evening suit of black cloth, with a frilled white shirt and frilled wristbands. About his neck he wore the Greek cross of St. Anne, attached to its appropriate ribbon. At first, Madame B. thought her father was standing before them and almost fainted, but the spirit advanced closer and uttered in Russian the word 'Djadja' (uncle), and she recognised her father's brother who bore a strong resemblance to her father. This was M. Gustave H. Hahn, the late President of the Criminal Court at Grodno, Russia; he passed away in 1861. This spirit was an old woman who came out from the cabinet dressed in the costume of a Russian peasant woman. She immediately addressed Madame B. in Russian calling her by an endearing term that she used in her childhood. She was wearing Russian head-gear, and was an old nurse of the family and took care of Madame B. and her sister in their early childhood.

A Hindu coolie, or an Arab athlete, as he was described, stepped upon the platform. He was dark-skinned, of short stature, a lean, wiry, active form, with no fat on his frame whatsoever (a 'greyhound in working condition', said Olcott). He had long, mere bones and sinew, with a cat-like suppleness. For dress, a closely fitting vest, seemingly cotton, drawers tucked into what might have been sock or gaiters, a sash about his loins, and upon his head a dark red handkerchief. He came to Madame B., and made her a profound obeisance, but she failed to recognise him; he bowed and departed back into the cabinet.

This astonishing figure stepped out of the cabinet on the second evening. According to Madame Blavatsky: 'He was dressed as Persian

merchants generally are. His dress is as perfect as a national costume. Everything is in its right place, down to the 'barouches' that are off his feet . . . he speaks his name in a loud whisper. It is Hassan Agha, an old man whom I and my family have known for twenty years at Tiflis. He was a 'medium' who divined with conjuring stones. He had on a long yellowish coat, Turkish trousers, a bishmet, or vest and a black Astrakhan cap, pappaha, covered with the national bashlik, or hood, with its long tasselled ends thrown over each shoulder'. This figure next stepped out of the cabinet on the next evening and astonished everyone. He was a tall, spare but powerful negro, 'black as ink' according to Olcott, dressed in one of the most curious costumes. Upon his head he had a coiffure . . . four horns with bent tips, similar to those of the chamois, or African antelope . . . the points of the two in front were turned backward, and those of the two in the rear, forward, while a brass or gilt ball hung suspended from each tip. Madame B. did not recognise him at first, but as he stepped forward she then saw him as the chief of a party of African jugglers whom she had encountered once in Upper Egypt, at a celebration of the feast of 'The Ramazan'.

I have saved until last this spirit visitor because it was one of the most wondrous and extraordinary manifestations ever witnessed in the history of séances. In the year 1851, Madame Blavatsky was passing the summer at Daratschi-Tchag, an Armenian place of summer resort in the plane of Mount Ararat. Her husband, being vice-Governor of Erivan, had a body-guard of some fifty Kurd (Konde) warriors, among whom one of the strongest and bravest, named Safar Ali Bek, Ibrahim Bek Ogli (the son of Ibrahim) was detailed as the lady's personal escort. He rode after her everywhere on her daily equestrian excursions, and delighted to display his unusual skill as a cavalier. This very man walked out of the cabinet of William Eddy, dressed to minutest detail of dress as when she last saw him in Asia. There was no mistaking the identity and he was recognised immediately. He came out empty handed, but soon bent forward, as if picking up a handful of mould from the ground, made a gesture of scattering it, and then pressed his hand to his bosom - a gesture familiar only to the tribes of Kurdistan; then he suddenly held in his right hand a giant spear, more than a dozen feet in length with the butt of it still extending into the cabinet. It had a long steel head of a peculiar shape which was surrounded by ostrich plumes. Where, I wonder, could the critics of William Eddy have gone with this one? A twelve foot spear materialised from a cabinet which was seven feet by two feet. Long live the glorious name of William Eddy.

The Eddy's had purchased a parlor organ to enhance the séances and one night, while Madame Blavatsky was playing it, the playful sprite herself, Honto, stepped out from the cabinet, came right over to the

railing, stooped down and peeked right at her up close in her playful and unendingly curious manner. One night, Mr. Ralph, Mr. Pritchard, and Mrs. Cleveland, who had been invited to sit on the platform by the spirits, were all suddenly requested to take their seats among the audience, and the benches were ordered pushed back farther than usual. Honto then reappeared (she had been out before doing some of her usual tricks) examined in the minutest detail the parlor organ, and with one foot on the pedal, played a few notes. She then retired to the cabinet, reappeared, and, taking a chair that Mr. Ralph placed for her, sat down and played a wild, disconnected melody as an accompaniment to her voice; this was her first time attempting to sing. On this evening alone, Honto - the mini-tornado of energy - danced up a storm, played the organ four times, smoked a cigar, made numerous shawls and tissues from the thin air, danced a jig with Horatio (who hated dancing), took a bracelet from a lady visitor as a present, and sang a song. A leading woman in a variety show could not have done more!

Apport Encounters Of The Extraordinary Kind

On the evening of October 24th, with a full moon shining about the valley, and atmospheric conditions of considered damp, but favourable, in the dark-circle, as soon as the light was extinguished, the spirit control George Dix, addressing Madame Blavatsky, said: 'Madame, I am now about to give you a test of the genuineness of the manifestations in this circle, which I think will satisfy not only you, but a sceptical world beside. I shall place in your hands the buckle of a medal of honour worn in life by your brave father, and buried with his body in Russia. This has been brought to you by your uncle, whom you have seen materialised this evening'. Presently all heard an exclamation, and, a light being struck, they all saw Madame B. holding in her hand a silver buckle of a most curious shape, which she regarded in speechless wonder.

When she recovered herself a little, she announced that this buckle had, indeed, been worn by her father, with many other decorations, that she identified this particular article by the fact that the point of the pin had been carelessly broken off by herself many years ago; and that, according to universal custom, this, with all other medals and crosses, must have been buried with her father's body. As to the authenticity of this present, so wondrously received, she possessed ample proof, in a photographic copy of her father's oil portrait, in which this very buckle appears, attached to its own ribbon and medal. A buckle transported from the very grave of Madame Blavatsky's father, five thousand miles away, and laid directly in her hands in pitch

darkness while sitting in the circle-room of the Eddy's Vermont farmhouse. Olcott stated . . . 'Was there ever a manifestation more wonderful than this?'

Long live the glorious name of Horatio Eddy.

Other items that were apported on to the circle-room floor of the Eddy's were the following: A large stone, weighing more than sixty pounds, the signed document of which I am looking at attesting to its reality, written by Mr. George Ralph, of Utica, N.Y. With the doors and windows sealed-in the lower sitting room - the stone was suddenly dropped at his feet. He had noticed the stone outside in a field during the day; a cart wheel, two large mother-of-pearl shells, and ear of Egyptian corn (said to have come from a mummy's tomb), a specimen of rare mineral, and gold vest-chain, a heavy gold ring, two small spotted shells, a miniature ivory die for a watch 'charm', a small quartz crystal, and a cut white carnelian seal-stone, all said to have been brought by spirit-visitors. On many occasions, the spirits had brought money to give to people in need. One gentleman stated that in one extraordinary instance, seven different communications were written, on an equal number of pieces of paper of as many different colours, and sewed, each with a silk of a colour to match the paper, upon a child's pocket-handkerchief. Strangest of all, upon each paper was stitched a lock of hair, said to have come from the very spirit who had written each individual communication, taken from their graves.

The Sure Foundation

As we are now entering the last segment of this Eddy story, I think it would be quite fitting to include some of the perspectives of Henry Olcott, the pioneer of this historic investigation. Although it was, I believe, very wearisome to the spirits that Mr Olcott remained what can only be called 'on the fence' regarding any phenomena that had even the slightest chance or possibility of being produced by fraud or trickery - and at times, I found this 'scientific' attitude absolutely preposterous considering the unfolding marvels - nonetheless, he sought to also defend the genuineness of their mediumship wherever he could. The following is an interesting quote by him: 'It is upon such tests as these, spontaneously given (a spirit wrote his name in Russian during the light-circle, and it was recognised without hesitation), that I have based my confidence in these Eddy boys. Granted that they may be able to tie and untie themselves, float' instruments, ring bells, and fool intelligent persons into the belief that their hands are on their arms when, in fact, they are in quite a different place; admitting all this, I

exclude from my case every individual phenomenon that can be explained upon the hypothesis of trickery, and still, as I conceive, have an abundance remaining to prove their mediumship. If the 'grand expositor' had shown the public a theory broad enough to cover all the appearances in William's circle, - the talking children, the wrinkled old men and women; the young girls in the suppleness, freshness, and plumpness of youth, with their white, bare arms, shapely hands, and well-set heads; the diversities in height and bulk, so great as to be inexplicable to any frequenter of the coulisses upon the theory of personation; the speaking of various languages, some the most unusually known in this country; the changing of complexions from white to copper, and black to white; the faces without a sign of beard, while the medium wears a black moustache all the while; these, and, further, the exceptional tests given in Horatio's light-circle, and the music playing and other marvels of his dark-circle, I would have only to confess that my two months' labour had been wasted, and I was one more of the fools of the senses. This is just what I have waited for, and what I have not discovered. Until I do, I stand upon my story of phenomena observed, with the confidence of one whose house is built upon a sure foundation'.

In another interesting perspective, Olcott was very much aware of the suspicious and sometimes repellent nature of the spirits, and the mediums, towards him. There is no doubt whatsoever that the spirits, especially when Madame Blavatsky arrived, had the foresight to sense danger. The spirits sensed Olcott's future 'turn-around' regarding the nature of phenomena as explained through the teachings of Theosophy, and so they, likewise, turned around. On a personal note, I think that the thrill of adventure - which it certainly turned out to be - was a very attractive element for Olcott in going with Madame Blavatsky; he left his entire family for her. The most important thing is that he was there at Chittenden and carried on one of the most thorough and concise investigations ever put on record, narrated so frankly and clearly as it was and this, has enabled me to be able to convey to you the readers the essential elements of this incredible, historic and wondrous story of the Eddy family. Henry Olcott at times, throughout his work, was very moving and poetic in his words. I thought it would be nice to end this article by including the words written by him in describing William Eddy, for it seems to put the entire story in perspective.

Twenty Years Too Late: In the World, But Not Of It

'And now let the intelligent reader cast his eyes upon the life-like, full-length sketch of William H. Eddy, as he appears every day, all day, and, barring the hat, at the moment of his entrance into his 'cabinet',

and say whether he fills my outline in any particular. He has not one peculiarity of temperament, or physical organisation, in common with a professional actor. He is clumsy instead of supple; never acted on any stage or privately in his life; is five feet nine inches high, and weighs 179 pounds; has not a shred of theatrical clothing in the house, nor a wig, nor stage shoes, nor properties; the ghosts appear after intermissions of from half a minute to four and five minutes; Indians succeeding whites, or vice versa, men and women, or the contrary, and children grown persons, the most striking dissimilarities in person, being as often after the briefest as the longest intervals; his cabinet is pitch dark, the door is never closed, and only a woolen shawl hangs before the entrance, through which the gleam of even a rush light would show plainly; his cabinet measures two feet in width by seven in length; there is neither shelf, nor cupboard, nor hanging-closet, where properties could be stored, and the only window is effectually sealed up with my own signet, against all access from without; his temperament is bilious - nervous, his movements slow and devoid of springiness, his eye sad and introspective; household duties, such as women ordinarily engage in, occupy him to the very time when he begins his séances; he has lived within himself, a simple, quiet, suffering life, making few intimate friends, being in the world but not of it; a recluse, in fact, by nature, who seems more familiar with the beings we call uncanny, than those who jostle us in this world, as we move along towards our common goal. And as for his linguistic accomplishments, he speaks his own mother tongue with a very strong New England accent of the vowels, and knows nothing of any other. Add to all this that, after an acquaintance with him of nearly two months, and the opportunity of seeing him every day, almost every hour of the time, he gives me the impression of being, at least, at the present time, a man pure of mind and heart, tender and truthful, giving to the poor every spare dollar he earns, frank and open to all, having no vices, disguises, concealments, or pride, hardly ever casting even a glance at the busy world that lies beyond his native hills, and it must be conceded that we have before our camera the unlikeliest of all men to take rank among the great impostors of history. I pray the reader not to fancy I am sketching a perfect man, I mean, one whom we would turn to for comfort and companionship in life. His very temperament unfits him for general acquaintance. His childhood was one of injustice, oppression, and cruel treatment from his natural protector - from the father, who is usually to his child the ideal of justice and benevolence, the earthly embodiment of the Divine wisdom and patience. Where other boys receive constant tokens of affection and indulgence, he got blows, revilings, and bitter denunciations. His mystic endowments, instead of proving a blessing, brought only misery in their train; and the poor lad, who loved his mother with the warmth of a girl's heart, was

forced to see her subjected to the same outrageous rudeness as he received himself.

Then this father of his, showing the innate meanness of his petty soul, made traffic of the very constitutional peculiarities that he had striven so hard to flog out of his children, and sent this boy and his brothers and sisters out with a traveling showman, to be robbed and shot at and ridden on rails; half-starved, ill-clothed, denounced as impostors, tortured by sceptical committees, and by inconsiderate Spiritualists, overdoing precaution in the desire to inspire confidence in what might be manifested in the presence of the young.

Fancy a child enduring all of this, finding enemies instead of friends at every step, knowing not whither to turn for sympathy except to the world of spirits, and to that most loving and sacred of all friends, his mother, and who can expect to find the man of thirty affable, cool, inexpressible, equable, suave, and accessible like other men? He suffers from his enforced seclusiveness all the while, but it cannot be helped. Many hearts warm towards him, and would show their tenderness, but they come twenty years too late. The seeds of distrust were planted in boyhood, watered with tears, grafted with sorrow, and the garden is choked with bitter fruits. He has turned from man to the animal kingdom for companionship, and surrounds himself with pets, which, at least, he thinks, do not repay his care with deceit'.

Well my friends, another journey into the realms of American physical mediumship we conclude and, as always, it has been a great honour to bring it to you. It was also, on both occasions, an enormous thrill and humbling experience for me to have travelled to where the Eddy family lived on the little winding road in the outback of Chittenden, surrounded by the beautiful Green Mountains. The area is now dense woods, but when the Eddy family lived there it was all rolling hills and pasture land. Horatio Eddy passed away in 1922, and William, the old guard himself, outlived them all, and reached the age of 99 years, crossing the river at last in 1932. They held public séances for quite some time after the frenzy of the years 1873 to around 1878 died down, and then slowly returned to the quiet lives of farming, holding private séances whenever they wished.

The article I have written could have been, easily, three times its size, there were many more instances of phenomena which had to be overlooked for the sake of condensing. For instance, on many a moonlit night, the Eddy's, along with small groups of visitors and friends, would march their way through the dense woods - their one glowing lantern faintly lighting the way - and hold séances at a grotto they affectionately called 'Honto's Cave'. It was two absolutely

enormous boulders leaning up against one another; William would sit in the little area between them, shawls would be hung up on both sides and, after a brief moment, out would come the spirits, mostly Indians. At other times, they would wrap shawls around the trunks of closely grouped trees, and William would simply sit inside. Within seconds out the materialised forms would come. It must have been something to see men dressed in complete suits and evening dress, right in the dead middle of the Vermont woods . . . but they certainly did.

One of the great gifts for me in having these Spiritual Truths ingrained within my heart and soul is knowing that someday, somewhere out there, I will one day at last have the glorious opportunity of meeting William Eddy and his family, and all of the beautiful Indians who were so much a part of their lives and mission. I would bet that William is living in a peaceful and serene grassy valley, in a simple little house, surrounded by his beloved animal friends. We shall see. There are many who I will be making the journey to see when I myself arrive in the Summerland. Once again I say to you all, let those who are meant to be involved in the movement of physical mediumship within the cause and teachings of Spiritualism, be drawn to it naturally. Seize the moment and be happy my friends.

NB. This article appeared in the Noah's Ark Society,
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