

# **LEADING FIGURES IN THE SPIRITUALIST MOVEMENT**

As mentioned in the article on the history of Spiritualism, spirituality has been with us almost since the beginning of time and features in the cultures of many ancient civilisations with many of its various aspects being incorporated into some of today's modern religions (in various degrees) such as Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Scientology, Quakerism and many more.

Modern Spiritualism began to emerge through the writings of Swedenborg and the work of Mesmer as detailed below. However many spiritualists choose to recognise the date of 31<sup>st</sup> March 1848 as the official birth of the modern movement due to the events of that day involving the Fox Sisters and Andrew Jackson Davis in different locations. Since then there have been and continue to be many important and influential figures. Below we take a look at just a few.

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## Swedenborg and Mesmer

Before the Modern Spiritualist movement got properly underway in 1848, the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) and the teachings of Franz Mesmer (1734-1815) provided an example for those seeking direct personal knowledge of the afterlife. Swedenborg, who claimed to communicate with spirits while in trance states, described in his writings the structure of the spirit world. Two features of his view particularly resonated with the early spiritualists although he approached it from a Christian standpoint.

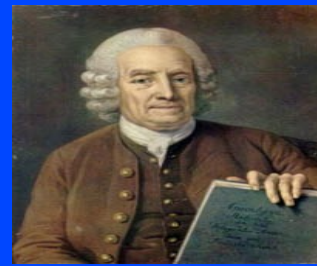
First, that there is not a single hell and a single heaven, but rather a series of spheres through which a spirit progresses as it develops.

Second, that spirits mediate between God and humans, so that human direct contact with the divine is through the spirits of deceased humans.

Mesmer did not contribute *religious* beliefs, but he contributed a technique, later known as hypnotism, that could induce trances and cause subjects to report contact with spiritual beings. There was a great deal of showmanship in Mesmerism, and the practitioners who lectured in mid-19th century America sought to entertain audiences as well as demonstrate a method for personal contact with the divine.



Franz Mesmer



Emanuel Swedenborg

## **The Fox Sisters**

Sisters Kate (1838–92), Leah (1814–90) and Margaret (or Maggie) 1836–93) Fox played an important role in the creation of Spiritualism.

In 1848, the two younger sisters – Kate and Margaret – were living in a house in Hydesville, a village near Rochester, New York with their parents. The house had some prior reputation for being haunted, but it wasn't until late March that the family began to be frightened by unexplained sounds that at times sounded like knocking, and at other times like the moving of furniture. During the night of 31<sup>st</sup> March 1848, Kate challenged the invisible noise-maker to repeat the snaps of her fingers. It did. It was asked to rap out the ages of the girls. It did. The neighbours were called in, and over the course of the next few days a type of code was developed where raps could signify yes or no in response to a question, or be used to indicate a letter of the alphabet. The entity creating the sounds claimed to be the spirit of a pedlar named Charles B. Rosma, who had been murdered five years earlier and buried in the cellar. The neighbours dug up the cellar and found a few pieces of bone, but it wasn't until 1904 that a skeleton was found, buried in the cellar wall. No missing person named Charles B. Rosma was ever identified.

The Fox girls became famous, and attracted imitators, or perhaps encouraged people who previously had hidden their gifts. At any rate, during the following few years, hundreds of persons would claim the ability to communicate with spirits. Both Kate and Margaret became well-known mediums, giving séances for hundreds of "investigators," as persons interested in these phenomena liked to call themselves. Many of these early séances were entirely frivolous, where sitters sought insight into "the state of railway stocks or the issue of love affairs, but the religious significance of communication with the deceased soon became apparent. Horace Greeley, the prominent publisher and politician, became a kind of protector for the girls, enabling their movement in higher social circles. But the lack of parental supervision was pernicious, as both of the young girls began to drink heavily.

Over the years, sisters Kate and Margaret had developed serious drinking problems. Around 1888 they became embroiled in a quarrel with their sister Leah and other leading Spiritualists, who were concerned that Kate was drinking too much to care properly for her children. At the same time, Margaret, contemplating a return to the Roman Catholic faith, became convinced that her powers were diabolical. Eager to harm Leah as much as possible, the two sisters travelled to New York City, where a reporter offered \$1,500 if they would "expose" their methods and give him an exclusive on the story. Margaret appeared publicly at the New York Academy of Music on October 21, 1888, with Kate present. Before an audience of 2,000, Margaret demonstrated how she could produce – at will – raps audible throughout the theatre. Doctors from the audience came on stage to verify that the cracking of her toe joints was the source of the sound.

The cracking of joints was the theory sceptics most favoured to explain the rappings, a theory dating back to 1851. Spiritualists familiar with the wide range of raps produced by the sisters, as well as the fact that raps could emanate from any part of a room, were not much impressed by the fact that raps could emanate from Margaret's toe. Much more damaging was the realization that Margaret could produce raps at will, when the raps were supposedly produced by spirits. But Spiritualists such as Arthur Conan Doyle were soon able to accept that, up to a point, the medium's own will could influence the preternatural phenomena of the séance.

Margaret recanted her confession in writing in November, 1889, about a year after her toe-cracking exhibition, when she realized that she would earn little money this way. Kate's first letters back to London after Margaret's exhibition express shock and dismay at her sister's attack on Spiritualism, but she did not publicly take issue with Margaret. Within five years, both sisters died in poverty, shunned by former friends, and were buried in pauper's graves.



## **Andrew Jackson Davis – seer and writer**

Andrew Jackson Davis was born on August 11, 1826 in Blooming Grove (Orange County), NY. This town is a small hamlet along the Hudson River. His father was unstable and did odd jobs as a cobbler and weaver. His mother was illiterate and strongly religious. The family frequently moved and he had very little schooling. At an early age he became an apprentice to a shoemaker for 2 years.

In 1838, the family moved to Poughkeepsie, NY. When he was 17 (in 1843), he attended a lecture in his town on Mesmerism given by a travelling Doctor (Dr. J.S. Grimes, Professor of Jurisprudence in the Castleton Medical College). At first, he had no success with it. A short time later, a local tailor (William Livingston), who was experimenting with mesmerism, threw him into a trance. He found that he was clairvoyant and could understand incredible truths from a higher plane of consciousness which he found himself in. He was able to read closed books, diagnose illnesses, and also prescribe treatments which usually worked. Note that this is very similar to what Edgar Cayce did about 50 years later. Being in this superconscious state, he claimed that he could understand the universe, and its causes and effects. Divine truths and the laws of the universe were also revealed to him. He said that he had reached the Superior Condition, beyond clairvoyance where he received truth from the spiritual sun beyond the spiritual world. Davis also claimed to be able to visit the spiritual world at will. He stated that all spirits continue to progress throughout eternity.

Davis was the first person to diagnose and prescribe cures for individuals while himself in a trance state about 50 years before Edgar Cayce. He also described in detail what happens to the soul at death, and explained spiritualism and other metaphysical phenomena. His scope of knowledge extended to education, health, psychology, philosophy, and government.

In 1846, for 15 months, he dictated a book based on these revelations. This book, Principles of Nature, was published in 1847. He was 21 years old at the time. Up to this time, he had about 5 months of schooling and never read more than a half dozen books. He eventually wrote and published over 30 books in 45 editions. His spiritual writings included topics such as the seven planes of existence, mental and physical health, astronomy, physics, chemistry, philosophy, education, government, and many others. In his writings about the human body and health, Davis described how the human body was transparent to him in this trance state. Each organ of the body stood out clearly with a special luminosity of its own which greatly diminished in cases of disease.

In 1844, Davis was suddenly overcome by some power which transported him to the Catskill Mountains (40 miles away). In this semi-trance state, he claims to have met the philosopher and Greek physician Galen and the Swedish Seer Emanuel Swedenborg, both of whom had been dead for some time. He also experienced a great mental illumination at that time.

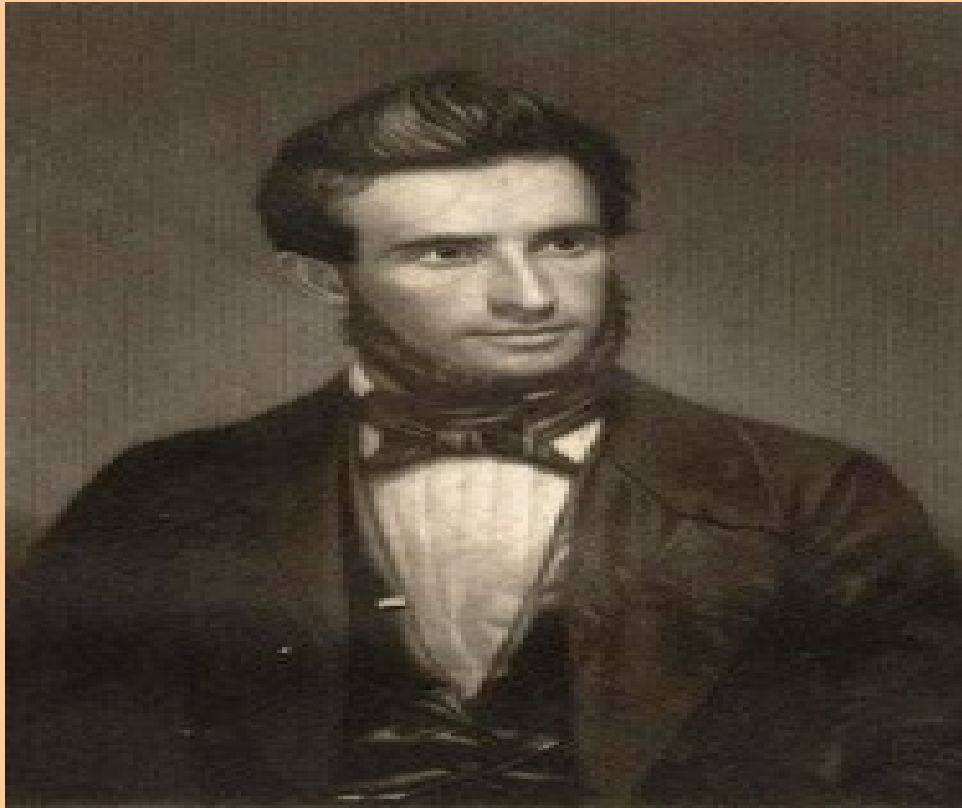
His writings open up an entire new world and they speak to your inner most being. He claimed that his purpose was to help people advance spiritually and his writings help to do this.

Davis also predicted the coming age of Spiritualism and is sometimes referred to as the John the Baptist of Spiritualism. In his Principles of Nature (1847), he states "It is a truth that spirits commune with one another while one is in the body and the other in the higher spheres - and this, too, when the person in the body is unconscious of the influx, and hence cannot be convinced of the fact; and this truth will ere long present itself in the form of a living demonstration. And the world will hail with delight the ushering in of that era when the interiors of men will be opened, and the spiritual communion will be established." Several years later, on March 31, 1848, the Fox sisters in Hydesville, NY began hearing

spirit rappings and this event shook the world into the possibility of communications with spirits.

In 1850, in his book *The Great Harmonia*, Davis talks about how man evolved from animals and that evolution also took place in plants and animals up to man. He says that this is not a popular idea since many at that time believed in creationism. This is 9 years before Charles Darwin published his book *On the Origin of Species*. It must be noted that in 1842 and 1844, Darwin wrote relatively short summaries of his theory, but they were not widely read outside of British scientific circles.

He predicted the existence of the planets Neptune and Pluto before their actual discovery. He wrote about *The Theory of Evolution* a decade before Darwin published "*On the Origin of Species*" and discovered many other scientific laws before their discovery.



## **Sir Arthur Conan Doyle - writer, physician and spiritualist**

Just as Andrew Jackson Davis was called the "John the Baptist" of Modern Spiritualism in the USA, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was called the "St. Paul" of Spiritualism here in the UK. He was a prolific writer on the subject and an avid proponent, and, of course, he is renowned for his Sherlock Holmes stories.

Sir Arthur's introduction to Spiritualism took place while he was a physician at Southsea . During the years 1885 to 1888, he was invited to participate in table turning sittings at the home of one of his patients, General Drayson, a teacher at the Greenwich Naval College. The medium was a railway signalman, and some amazing phenomena and apportations took place.

Shortly thereafter, he joined the Society for Psychical Research (SPR) and carried out a series of experiments with a Mrs. Ball. From these experiments, Sir Arthur was convinced that telepathy was genuine. As far as survival and mediumship were concerned, in 1902, when he first met Sir Oliver Lodge (world renowned physicist and psychical researcher), he had not arrived at any definite conclusions. However, Myers' classic, "Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death", made a deep impression upon him.

For nearly 30 years, Sir Arthur continued his studies and investigations. Finally, at the peak of his literary career, at the age of 58, he took a decisive step and wrote "The New Revelation" and "The Vital Message". In these books, he firmly associated himself with the cause of Modern Spiritualism.

His critics attributed his newly found faith to bereavement suffered during the war; he vehemently denied these statements. His youngest son, Kingsley, died of pneumonia during the war. A year after his son's death, he attended a sitting held by a Welsh medium; there, his son spoke to him. Later on, he stated: "It was his voice and he spoke of concerns unknown to the medium." Shortly after this, he saw his mother and nephew, in his words: "As plainly as I ever saw them in life!" The cynic would call his jump into Spiritualism nothing more than a manifestation of grief. The clear-headed thinker would see this as an answer to his prayers and worries.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's most substantive book on Spiritualism is the two-volume set, "The History of Spiritualism". Within its pages, he discusses a wide range of subjects and personalities linked with the Modern Spiritualist Movement, both in America and the United Kingdom.

Addressing the remarks of his critics, he writes in The History of Spiritualism the following:

*"The sight of the world which was distraught with sorrow and which was eagerly asking for help and knowledge, did certainly affect my mind and cause me to understand that these psychic studies, which I had so long pursued, were of immense practical importance and could no longer be regarded as a mere intellectual hobby or fascinating pursuit of a novel research. It was this realization which, from early in 1916, caused me and my wife to devote ourselves largely to this subject, to lecture upon it in many countries, and to travel to Australia, New Zealand, America and Canada upon missions of instruction."*

*As for the charge of credulity which is invariable directed by the unreceptive against anyone who forms a positive opinion upon this subject, I can solemnly aver that in the course of my long career as an investigator, I cannot recall one single case where it was clearly shown that I had been mistaken upon any serious point, or had given a certificate of honesty to a performance which was afterwards clearly proved to be dishonest. A man who is credulous does not take twenty years of reading and experiment before he comes to his fixed conclusions."*

## The Cottingley Fairies Incident

In 1917, two teenage girls in Yorkshire produced photographs they had taken of fairies in their garden. Elsie Wright (age 16) and her cousin Frances Griffiths (age 10) used a simple camera and were said to be lacking any knowledge of photography or photographic trickery. Photographic experts who were consulted declared that none of the negatives had been tampered with, there was no evidence of double exposures, and that a slight blurring of one of the fairies in photo number one indicated that the fairy was moving during the exposure of 1/50 or 1/100 second.

Hardly anyone can look at these photos today and accept them as anything but fakes. But spiritualists, especially, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle not only accepted these photos as genuine, he even wrote two pamphlets and a book attesting the genuineness of these photos. Some thought Conan Doyle crazy, but he defended the reality of fairies with all the evidence he could find.

Over the years the mystery persisted. Only a few die-hards believed the photos were of real fairies, but the mystery of the details of how (and why) they were made continued to fascinate serious students of hoaxes, frauds and deceptions. When the girls (as adults) were interviewed, their responses were evasive. In a BBC broadcast interview in 1975 Elsie said: "I've told you that they're photographs of figments of our imagination and that's what I'm sticking to."

Then, in 1982 the girls admitted, in interviews with Joe Cooper, that they had faked the first four of the photos.

As many had suspected all along, the girls had used paper cut-outs of fairy drawings. No great photographic skills were required, though the photos do show good artistic composition. Elsie had artistic skill, and had even worked for a few months in a photographer's shop retouching photographs. But the girls probably did no retouching on these photos. The simplest of means, just cut-out drawings of fairies stuck on the shrubbery, was all that was required to dupe gullible and predisposed minds.



Arthur Conan Doyle as a young doctor

## Harry Houdini (1874-1926)

The illusionist and escapologist Harry Houdini is considered a key player in the spiritualist movement although in the latter part of his career, his interest in the way of life seemed to have turned aggressive as he sought to challenge the movement.

### Houdini vs. the Spiritualists

The death of Houdini's mother focused his attention on the thriving business of spirit mediumship, or the contacting of the dead. Whether Houdini was genuinely outraged at the victimization of the bereaved, or whether he simply saw an opportunity to capitalize on public interest, Houdini spent the last 13 years of his life in a highly publicized battle with the spiritualists. Using his knowledge of illusion, Houdini was able to duplicate the ghostly apparitions, noises and mysterious levitations produced by the working mediums and their "spirits". His "exposures" became so popular with his audiences that they took up more than a third of his regular program. Coached by the famous psychic Anna Eva Fay, Houdini cleverly became, in his way, the most famous "spiritualist" of all.

In 1926, he testified at Hearings on Fortune Telling held in the House of Representatives before the Subcommittee on Judiciary of the District of Columbia. Houdini's book, *A Magician Among the Spirits*, was published two years earlier. In this work he exposed many of the prominent mediums of his time.



Harry Houdini and his wife Bess

## Sir Arthur Findlay (1883- 1964)

Sir Arthur Findlay was an accountant, a stockbroker and Essex magistrate, who left his house and gardens (Stansted Hall) to the Spiritualists' National Union in his will.

He was a student of comparative religion from the age of seventeen, his parents were staunch Christians and burned his library of books to discourage his inquiry.

Founder, in 1920, of the Glasgow Society for Psychical Research. Founder and Chairman of the International Institute for Psychical Research. Honorary member of the American Foundation for Psychical Research. Honorary Member of the Edinburgh Psychic College. Honorary President of the Institute of Psychic Writers and Artists and a former Honorary President of the Spiritualists' National Union

He took a leading part in the Church of Scotland's enquiry into psychic phenomena in 1923.

Sir Arthur Wrote extensively on finance, economics, religion, philosophy, science, Christianity, history, psychical research and direct-voice mediumship.



## **Edgar Cayce – trance medium**

Edgar Cayce (pronounced Casey) was an American who claimed psychic abilities. He claimed an ability to channel answers to questions on subjects such as health, astrology, reincarnation, and Atlantis while in a self-induced trance. Although Cayce lived before the emergence of the New Age movement, he remains a major influence on its teachings.

Cayce became an American celebrity towards the end of his life and the publicity given to his prophecy has overshadowed what to him were usually considered the more important parts of his work such as healing (the vast majority of his readings were given for people who were sick) and theology (Cayce being a lifelong, devout member of the Disciples of Christ). Skeptics challenge Cayce's claim to psychic prowess, while conservative Christians also question his unorthodox answers on religious matters (such as reincarnation and akashic records). He may have been the source for the idea that California would fall into the ocean (though he never said exactly this).

Today there are tens of thousands of Cayce students. Most are located in the United States and Canada, but Edgar Cayce Centers are now found in 25 other countries. The Association for Research and Enlightenment (ARE), headquartered in Virginia Beach, is the major organization promoting interest in Cayce. Baar Products, Inc. is the Official Worldwide Exclusive Supplier of Edgar Cayce Health Care Products, Baar has worked closely with Cayce's Association for Research and Enlightenment, Inc (A.R.E.), to ensure that original formulations are used whenever possible. Edgar Cayce was born into a farming family on March 18, 1877 near Beverly, seven miles south of Hopkinsville, Kentucky. One convenient way to divide Cayce's life is according to geography: 1877 to 1920—the Kentucky period.

In December 1893 the family moved to Hopkinsville, Kentucky and occupied 705 West Seventh, on the south-east corner of Seventh and Young Street. During this time Cayce received an eighth-grade education; discovered his spiritual vocation; left the family farm to pursue various forms of employment (at Richard's Dry Goods Store, then in Hopper's Bookstore both located on Main Street).

Cayce's education stopped with the eighth grade because his family could not afford the costs involved. It should be noted that at that time a great deal more advanced material (especially in mathematics and practical sciences) was often presented at an earlier level in public schools; an eighth-grade education might be the equivalent of high school today, at least in some subjects, and was often considered more than sufficient for working-class children. Much of the remainder of Cayce's life would be characterized by a forlorn search for employment and/or money.

Throughout his life Cayce was drawn to church as a member of the Disciples of Christ. He read the Bible once for every year of his life, taught at Sunday school, recruited missionaries, and is said to have agonized over the issue of whether his supposed psychic abilities—and the teachings which resulted—were spiritually legitimate.

In 1900 he formed a business partnership with his father to sell Woodmen of the World Insurance but was struck by severe laryngitis in March that resulted in a complete loss of speech on April 18. Unable to work, he lived at home with his parents for almost a year. He then decided to take up the trade of photography, an occupation that would exert less strain on his voice. He began an apprenticeship at the photography studio of W. R. Bowles in Hopkinsville.

A travelling stage hypnotist and entertainer called "Hart - The Laugh Man" was performing at the Hopkinsville Opera House in 1901. He heard about Cayce's condition and offered to attempt a cure. Cayce accepted and the experiment took place on stage in front of an audience. Remarkably, Cayce's voice apparently returned while in a hypnotic trance but allegedly disappeared on awakening. Hart tried

a post-hypnotic suggestion that the voice would continue to function after the trance but this proved unsuccessful.

Since Hart had appointments at other cities, he could not continue his hypnotic treatment of Cayce. However a local hypnotist, Al Layne, offered to help Cayce in restoring his voice. Layne suggested that Cayce describe the nature of his condition and cure while in a hypnotic trance. Cayce described his own ailment from a first person plural point of view (“we”) instead of the singular (“I”). In subsequent readings he would generally start off with “We have the body.” According to the reading, his voice loss was due to psychological paralysis and could be corrected by increasing the blood flow to the voice box. Layne suggested that the blood flow be increased and Cayce’s face supposedly became flushed with blood and his chest area turned bright red. After 20 minutes Cayce, still in trance, declared the treatment over. On awakening his voice was alleged to have remained normal. Relapses were said to have occurred but were claimed to have been corrected by Layne in the same way and eventually the cure was claimed to be permanent.

Layne had read of similar hypnotic cures effected by the Marquis de Puységur, a follower of Franz Mesmer, and was keen to explore the limits of the healing knowledge of the trance voice. He asked Cayce to describe Layne’s own ailments and suggest cures, and reportedly found the results both accurate and effective. Layne suggested that Cayce offer his trance healing to the public but Cayce was reluctant. He finally agreed on the condition that readings would be free. He began with Layne’s help to offer free treatments to the townspeople. Reportedly he had great success and his fame spread. Reports of Cayce’s work appeared in the newspapers, inspiring many postal inquiries. Supposedly, Cayce was able to work just as effectively using a letter from the individual as with having the person present. Given the person’s name and location, he claimed he could diagnose the physical and/or mental conditions and provide corrective remedy. Cayce’s accuracy in diagnosing the problems and providing effective cures was less than chance, but nonetheless he became popular and soon people from around the world sought his advice through correspondence.

Cayce’s work grew in volume as his fame grew. He asked for voluntary donations to support himself and his family so that he could practice full time. He continued to work in an apparent trance state with a hypnotist all his life. His wife and eldest son later replaced Layne in this role. A secretary, Gladys Davis, recorded his readings in shorthand.

The trance reading was alleged to have produced a visible strain on Cayce’s health. He attributed the occasional failure in his accuracy to the stress involved in his work. He claimed to be scrupulous in giving refunds to unsatisfied clients, but since the clients were on several occasions already dead when Cayce gave readings it is unclear how he could have managed this.

1920 to 1923—the Texas period

The growing fame of Cayce coupled with the popularity he received from newspapers attracted several eager commercially minded men who wanted to seek a fortune by using Cayce’s clairvoyant abilities. Even though Cayce was reluctant to help them, he was persuaded to give the readings, which left him dissatisfied with himself and unsuccessful. A cotton merchant offered Cayce a hundred dollars a day for his readings about the daily outcomes in the cotton market. However, despite his poor finances, Cayce refused the merchant’s offer. Others wanted to know where to hunt for treasures; some wanted to know the outcome of horse races. Several times he was persuaded to give the readings as an experiment. However he was not successful when he used his ability for such purposes, doing no better than chance alone would dictate. These experiments allegedly left him depleted of energy, distraught, and unsatisfied with himself. Finally, he claimed to have come to the conclusion that he would use his gift only to help the distressed and sick.

He was persuaded to give readings on philosophical subjects in by Arthur Lammers, a wealthy printer. While in his supposed trance state, Cayce spoke unequivocally of past lives. Reincarnation was a popular subject of the day, but is not an accepted part of Christian doctrine. Cayce reported that his conscience bothered him severely over this conflict. Lammers reassured and argued with Cayce. His “trance voice”, the “we” of the readings, also supposedly dialogued with Cayce and finally persuaded him to continue with these kinds of readings. In 1925 Cayce reported his “voice” had instructed him to move to Virginia Beach, Virginia.

#### 1925 to 1945—the Virginia Beach period

Cayce’s mature period, in which he created the several institutions which would survive him in some form, can be considered to have started in 1925. By this time he was a professional psychic with a small staff of employees and volunteers. The “readings” increasingly came to involve occultic or esoteric themes.

In 1929 the Cayce hospital was established in Virginia Beach sponsored by a wealthy recipient of the trance readings, Morton Blumenthal.

Cayce gained national prominence in 1943 through a high profile article in *Coronet*. Claiming that he couldn’t refuse people who felt they needed his help, he increased the frequency of his readings to 8 per day to try and make an impression on the ever-growing pile of requests. He claimed this took a toll on his health, as he said that it was emotionally draining and often fatigued him. He even went so far as to claim that the readings themselves scolded him for attempting too much and that the reading had limited his workload to just 2 readings a day or they would kill him.

Edgar Cayce suffered a stroke on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1945. He died a day later on January 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Skeptics of Cayce’s purported powers point out that all of the evidence for Cayce comes in the form of anecdotes and testimonials from true believers, none of which is considered scientifically rigorous. They are also critical of Cayce’s support for various forms of alternative medicine, which are now regarded by skeptics as quackery.

Cayce’s followers accept that he was sometimes inaccurate. Cayce’s sons, Hugh Lynn Cayce and Edgar Evans Cayce, even co-authored a book called *The Outer Limits of Edgar Cayce’s Power* detailing some of their father’s mistakes. They theorize that Cayce’s accuracy depended on many variables, such as the spiritual motivation of those seeking the reading. Skeptics identify these theories as excuses intended to prevent paranormal claims from ever being disproven.

Cayce’s prophecies occupy somewhat shaky ground. Examples of erroneous Cayce prophecies include him stating that 1933 would be a “good year”, when in fact it was one of the worst in the Great Depression, and stating that US scientists would discover a “death ray” from Atlantis in 1958. Other predictions that have not as yet occurred include massive earth changes and that China would one day be “the cradle of Christianity as applied in the lives of men”. Furthermore, many of the predictions claimed as successes are little more than vague statements that can be interpreted in a wide variety of ways, and hence can be upheld as “true” simply because of their inherent vagueness.



## Winifred Moyes – trance medium

Perhaps only those who were closest in the work could truly judge the remarkable gift of mediumship possessed by Miss Moyes, and the sensitiveness which enabled her to be used by Zodiac. Suffering from ill-health from the age of ten, when she was eventually used as an instrument by Zodiac, her weak physical body was compensated for by an iron will and a determination which forced the body to do the bidding of the Spirit. Such was her state of health that there were many times when Spirit Power alone enabled Zodiac to control his instrument and deliver his message. The strength of Miss Moyes lay in her implicit faith in the Christ power around her. Zodiac's first act on "taking control" was to place his medium under the protection of the Cross on the altar with upstretched arms and using the invocation: "Saviour Christ, into Thy hands I commend the spirit of this Thy child".

Miss Moyes dedicated her gift of mediumship entirely to Zodiac's work. How closely she was attuned to the higher vibrations of Zodiac is shown in the perfection of the messages given. They are given in purity, unobstructed by the physical mind.

Miss Moyes was told by Spirit that she must give up her office work because she would be too weak to be used by Zodiac, and so having handed in her resignation wondered how she was going to make ends meet. However, her spirit was strong, and Miss Moyes made great personal sacrifices travelling around the country on a weekly basis, often in great physical pain, and the Greater World gained a sure foothold in the material plane. Miss Moyes wrote in June 1933: "Had it not been for Spirit power, I should not now be in the body. At times I still suffer great pain, yet the loving protection of the Great Father is demonstrated constantly through the guides, for although I have not had a holiday for five years and work 14 to 16 hours a day, I find that 'His grace is sufficient for me', and every year I am getting stronger".

Zodiac always gave his addresses with the medium in the trance state. Miss Moyes possessed this gift in outstanding measure, and she used it in the way that God intended all the gifts of the Spirit to be used, namely: to bring the light of the Spirit into the darkness of the material world. In ordinary life, the psychic or mediumistic side was balanced by a vast amount of practical work: in organizing, in her highly inspired writings, and in the philanthropic work she felt urged to do, especially in the founding of the Free Night Shelters for Homeless Women.

So much has hinged upon the loyal spirit of this dedicated woman, and the gift of mediumship entrusted to her; and upon the one who, over the years, was her faithful companion and helper - Mrs Margaret Hoare, one of the note-takers for the Zodiac Messages and other messages often given by developed guides permitted by Zodiac to address the Zodiac Circle.

The celestial messenger Zodiac addressed packed audiences through Miss Moyes in Jersey at the Town Hall, St Helier, after the Second World War. Her public work continued until 1957. She passed into the Higher Life on 12th December, 1957.



## **Helen Duncan - Medium Nov. 25 1897 to Dec. 6 1956**

Helen Duncan was a Scottish medium, best known as the last person to be imprisoned under the British Witchcraft Act of 1735.

During World War II, Duncan held a seance in Portsmouth at which she indicated knowledge that HMS Barham had been sunk. Because this fact had been kept from the public, the British Admiralty chose to attempt to discredit her. Police arrested her after another seance. She was initially arrested under section 4 of the Vagrancy Act 1824, a minor offence tried by magistrates. However, the authorities regarded the case as more serious, and eventually discovered section 4 of the Witchcraft Act 1735 which was triable before a jury.

Duncan was barred by the Judge from demonstrating her alleged powers as part of her defence against being fraudulent. The jury brought in a guilty verdict on count one, and the Judge then discharged the jury from giving verdicts on the other counts, as he held that they were alternative offences for which Duncan might have been convicted had the jury acquitted her on count one. Duncan was jailed for nine months.

After the verdict, Winston Churchill wrote a memo to Home Secretary Herbert Morrison, complaining about the misuse of court resources on the "obsolete tomfoolery" of the charge. It is rumoured that Winston Churchill himself was a keen spiritualist and visited Helen in prison several times.

On her release in 1945, Duncan promised to stop conducting seances; however, she was arrested after another one in 1956.

On that fateful night, again in Portsmouth, reputed to be second only to York as Britain's most haunted town, police raided the seance being led by Helen. Bringing her out of her trance too quickly by touching her, she is reported to have ingested an unhealthy dose of ectoplasm and became immediately ill. She died a short time later.

Duncan's trial almost certainly contributed to the repeal of the Witchcraft Act, which was contained in the Fraudulent Mediums Act 1951 promoted by Walter Monslow, Labour Member of Parliament for Barrow-in-Furness. The campaign to repeal the Act had largely been led by Thomas Brooks, another Labour MP, who was spiritualist. However, her original conviction still stood, and a campaign to have her posthumously pardoned continues



## Doris Stokes 1920 -1987– Psychic Medium

Doris Stokes , born in Lincolnshire in 1920, was one of the most best known and influential psychic mediums of the twentieth century. Her down to earth, practical manner helped demystify mediumship and brought belief in death survival to the masses. She filled the Albert Hall to capacity and Sydney Opera House three nights in a row. She made many television appearances and toured extensively despite her own illness and personal tragedies she was determined to bring hope and succour to as many people as possible.

Already well known in Britain, Doris became famous the world over when in 1978, she undertook a series of tests on television in the USA, which were a stunning success. Suddenly she was in demand everywhere. Her books became best sellers and she had many public appearances. Doris had waiting list for private sittings that ran in to the thousands and many famous people of the day sought her advice.

Doris Stokes had been aware of her gift as a young child, and she saw dead relatives as clearly as if they were still alive. One faithful visitor from the other side was her Father who told her just before he died "All you've got to do is put out your hand and I'll be there to take hold" he brought her remarkably accurate personal messages from beyond. She recalls in her book 'In My Ear' "The bedroom door flew open so sharply I thought it was my mother bursting in, and there stood my father. My mouth dropped open. He looked as real and solid as he did when he was alive... "Dad?" I whispered " I never lied to you, did I Doll?" he asked. "I don't think so". I said. " I'm not lying to you now. John is not with us and on Christmas day you will have proof of this." Then as I watched, he vanished. Three days later the War Office informed her that her husband John was dead. To everyone's amazement she refused to believe it. She clung to her hopes. Just as her father had predicted her husband was found, although badly injured but alive and she was indeed notified on Christmas day.

Doris Stokes popularised mediumship and was an inspiration to many to develop their own psychic ability. After an extensive illness Doris died in 1987 but she has left a wonderful legacy in her books. All Doris' books are very accessible and a great place for anyone beginning an interest in spiritualism or anyone who just wants a really good read.



**Eckhart Tolle - born 10 February 1948 - spiritual teacher and writer.**

Eckhart Tolle is a German-born writer and spiritual teacher now living in Vancouver, Canada, who claims to have had a radical spiritual awakening at the age of 29 after suffering long periods of depression. This shift in consciousness for most people is not a single event but a process, a gradual disidentification from thoughts and emotions through the arising of awareness.

His non-fiction best-seller "The Power of Now "emphasizes the importance of being aware of the present moment as a way of not being lost in thought. Instead of you using your mind, the mind uses you.

In his view, the present is the gateway to a heightened sense of peace. He states that "being in the now" brings about an awareness that is beyond the mind, an awareness which helps in transcending the ego (false identification with form: body, mind, thoughts, memories, social roles, life-story, opinions, emotions, material possessions, name, nationality, religion, likes and dislikes, desires, fears, etc.) and "the pain-body", which is created by the cumulation of suppressed emotions, the suffering of non-acceptance of what is. Our true "identity" is the underlying sense of I Am, which is consciousness itself. . People are very important, because we are here to enable the divine purpose of the universe to unfold.

His later book A New Earth further explores the structure of the human ego and how this acts to distract people from their present experience of the world. In the world of form for everything gained, there is something lost and for everything lost, there is something gained.

He recommends listening to the body when we eat, because the body knows more about food than your mind ever will.

Among his many followers and fans is TV host and entrepreneur Oprah Winfrey.



## **Contemporary Mediums**

The multimedia age has meant that many more mediums are “in our living rooms” on a regular basis. Spiritualism and the paranormal have become more closely linked and a heightened awareness and appetite among the public for all things spiritual and paranormal has helped raise the profile and credibility of the movement. It has also unfortunately led to a rise in the number of people setting themselves up as psychics and healers and an increase in the number of fake or fraudulent practitioners. Many venues, such as pubs, old country homes etc. have also seized upon the opportunity to jump on the bandwagon of “ghost tourism” by marketing themselves as being “haunted” or having spiritual activity happening when there is little evidence to suggest this.

Today, throughout the UK, the US and other parts of the world, many hundreds of thousands of genuine mediums and spiritual healers work tirelessly with and for spirit. They may not be as famous as some of the celebrity mediums listed below but the work that they do and the comfort they give to people is no less important. Shown below is a selection of British and American TV mediums.

***Derek Acorah***



***Colin Fry***



***Gordon Smith***



***Mia Dolan***



**Sally Morgan**



**Tony Stockwell**



**David Wells**



**Ian Lawman**



**American Mediums**

**John Edward**



**Allison DuBois**

