

PSYCHIC MESSAGES FROM MEN SLAIN ON FIELD OF BATTLE

Remarkable Instances of the Apparent Communication of Dead Soldiers with Surviving Friends—The Theory of Telepathic Communications Discussed by a Student of Such Phenomena.



British Soldiers off for the Front

By HERWARD CARRINGTON.

At the crisis of death—at that terrible moment when the soul is literally wrenched from the body—it is only natural to suppose that many strange things should happen. Mysterious psychic occurrences have, in fact, been noted at this time in all history, and especially might we expect to find this in the case of the soldier slain upon the battlefield. In the hour of death his thoughts, his longings and his sympathies would flow from him, together with his life blood, and would turn to that dearest of all places—"Home"—holding, it may be, wife and child, mother or sweetheart, destined forever to watch in vain for the return of him who had sacrificed his life for his country and his flag. This thought, this emotion, has in many a case seemed to set into activity some mysterious energy, which has been enabled to reach those waiting at home; and, in innumerable instances, "apparitions of the dying" have been seen, or a familiar voice has been heard, or a touch has been felt—warning those at home of what has just occurred.

The following cases are but a few of many which might easily be chosen as illustrative of this phenomenon:

A DREAM OF DEATH WHICH CONCERNED AN ABSENT BROTHER.

"On the morning of September 25, quite early, I awoke from a dream to find my sister holding me, and much alarmed. I had screamed out, struggled, crying, 'Is he really dead?' When I fully awoke I felt a burning sensation in my head. I could not speak for a moment or two. I knew my sister was there, but I neither felt nor saw her.

"In about a minute, during which she said my eyes were staring beyond her, I ceased struggling, cried out 'Harry is dead; they have shot him,' and fainted. When I recovered I and my sister had been sent away, and my aunt, who had always looked after me, was sitting by my bed. In order to soothe my excitement she allowed me to tell her of the dream, trying all the while to persuade me to regard it as a natural consequence of my anxiety. When in the narration I said that he was riding with another officer, and mounted soldiers following them, she exclaimed: 'My dear, that shows you it is only a dream, for you know dear Harry is in an infantry, not a cavalry, regiment.' Nothing, however, shook my belief that I had seen a reality; and she was so much struck by my persistence that she privately made notes of the date and of the incidents, even to the minutest details of my dream; and then for a few days the matter dropped, but I felt the truth was coming nearer and nearer to all. In a short time the news came in the papers—shot down on the morning of the 25th, when on his way to Lucknow! A few days later came one of his missing letters, telling how his own regiment had mutinied, and that he had been transferred to a command in the 12th Irregular Cavalry, bound to join Havelock's force in the relief of Lucknow."

"A DISBELIEVER IN SUCH THINGS" TELLS OF AN APPARITION.

The following experience is vouched for by a well known army officer—himself a "disbeliever in such things"—as his actual experience. A fellow officer had been sent to South Africa for the Boer War, and early one morning he woke up and saw, as he says, "standing by my bed, between me and the chest of drawers, a figure, which, in spite of the unwonted dress—unwonted at least to me—and of a full black beard, I at once recognized as that of my old brother officer. He had on the usual khaki coat worn by officers in active service. A brown leather girdle, with sword attached to the left side and revolver case on the right, passed round his waist. On his head he wore the ordinary white pith helmet of service. I noticed all the particulars in the moment that I started from sleep, and sat up in bed looking at him. His face was pale, but his bright black eyes shone as keenly as when, a year and a half before, they had looked upon me as he stood with one foot on the banister, bidding me adieu.

"Fully impressed for the brief moment that we were stationed together at C—, in Ireland, or somewhere, and thinking I was in my barrack room, I said: 'Hello, P., am I late for parade?' P. looked at me steadily and replied, 'I'm shot.' 'Shot?' I exclaimed. 'Good God! How and where?'"

"Through the lungs," replied P., and as he spoke his right hand moved slowly up to his breast until the fingers rested over the right lung.

"What were you doing?" I asked.

"The general sent me forward," he answered, and the right hand left the breast to move slowly to the front, pointing over my head to the window, and at the same moment the figure melted. I rubbed my eyes, to make sure I was not dreaming, and sprang out of bed. It was then 4:10 a. m. by the clock on my mantelpiece.

"That day I looked for news from the war, but found none. But the next day showed his name among those killed at Lang's Neck. The time corresponded almost exactly to my seeing of the vision. I believe he visited me soon after his death to tell me of his fate."

The following experience, taking the form of a warning of danger, occurred in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870:

"During the Franco-Prussian War, about the time of the battle of Gravelotte, a German lady, whose son was in the German army, two hundred miles away from his home, found an impression taking hold of her mind, with vast and vivid force,



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that her son was at that particular time in some special danger. She tried, without success, to shake off the notion, and proceeded to spend the night in prayer for him, and, noticed, in her anxiety and faith in the Divine aid, she had uttered his name out loud no less than three times.

"It was subsequently found out that on that very night there had been no battle, nor even an exchange of shots between the outposts. So, for a while, the impression faded from her mind. But when the war was over and her son came home he told his mother—who, on her part, had not mentioned the incident—that during a certain night, when he was sleeping out, without tent or cover, he seemed to hear her call out his name most distinctly. Three times this occurred, and the third time he felt instinctively impelled to move his position. The next moment he heard the unmistakable 'whirr' of a shell sweeping through the air, which all at once fell and burst in the very place in which he had so recently been sleeping."

In the following case the incidents were not only seen but the words were heard. This frequently occurs:

"On September 9, at the siege of Mootan, my husband, Major General Richardson, was most severely and dangerously wounded, and, supposing himself dying, asked one of the officers with him to take the ring off his finger and send it to me. At that time I was fully 150 miles distant, at Porepore. On the night in question I was lying in my bed, between sleeping and waking, when I distinctly saw my husband being carried off the field, seriously wounded, and heard his voice saying: 'Take this ring off my finger and send it to my wife.' All the next day I could not get the sight or the voice out of my mind. In due time I heard of General Richardson having been severely wounded in the assault on Mootan. He survived, however, and is still living. The time of the accident corresponded exactly with my vision of the scene." General Richardson confirmed this account.

PREDICTIONS RELATIVE TO THE DRAWING OF NUMBERS.

Belgium is now very much to the fore in public estimation. It may be of interest to mention here a series of remarkable predictions which took place some years ago relative to the numbers drawn in the conscription of the Belgian army. Professor G. Hulst, of the University of Ghent, sent the facts to Professor Sidgwick, then president of the Society for Psychical Research. Five cases of right numbers being predicted during the years 1888-'94 are given on good authority, the numbers in the four cases being, respectively, 90, 112, 216, 111 and 115. The first case was an exceedingly striking one, the "externalized" vision of the number 90 appearing to the subject and producing a strong impression in his mind, convincing him that he would draw that number. In the fifth case the man who was to draw first announced that his number would be 116, and on being told that that was already drawn, said it would be 115, which turned out correct. The other cases were very similar.

For the following narrative I am indebted to the kindness of London friends. Of the good faith of the narrators there cannot be a doubt: "In the month of September Captain G. W., of the 6th Dragon Guards, went out to India to rejoin his regiment. His wife remained in England, residing in Cambridge. On the night between No-

vember 14 and 15, toward morning, she dreamed that she saw her husband, looking anxious and ill, upon which she immediately awoke, much agitated. It was bright moonlight, and, looking up, she perceived the same figure standing by her bedside. He appeared in his uniform, the hands pressed across his breast, the hair dishevelled, the face very pale. His large, dark eyes were fixed full upon her. Their expression was that of great excitement and there was a peculiar twist of the mouth, habitual to him when agitated. She saw him, even to each minute particular of his dress, as distinctly as she had ever seen him in life, and she remembers to have seen between his hands the white of his shirt bosom, unstained, however, with blood. The figure seemed to bend forward, as if in pain, and to make an effort to speak, but there was no sound. It remained visible, the wife thinks, for as long as a minute, and then disappeared.

"Her first idea was to ascertain if she was actually awake. She rubbed her eyes with the sheet and felt that the touch was real. Her little nephew was in bed with her. She bent over the sleeping child and listened to its breathing. The sound was distinct, and she became convinced that what she had seen was no dream. It need hardly be added that she did not again go to sleep that night.

THE WAR OFFICE CONFIRMS THE WIFE'S FEARS.

"Next morning she related all this to her mother, expressing her conviction that, though she noticed no marks of blood on the dress, Captain W. was either killed or grievously wounded. So fully impressed was she with the reality of the apparition that she thenceforth refused all invitations. In December a dispatch was published stating that Captain W. had been killed in the afternoon of the 15th. Mrs. W. asserted positively that there must have been a mistake, in spite of the statement of the War Office, and that her husband was killed on the 14th. Investigations were made and it was found that this was correct—Captain W. was killed on the afternoon of the 14th, and not on the 15th, as stated. Thus, he appeared to his wife a few hours after his death. The wound from which he died was not upon his chest, upon which there was no blood—as indicated by the apparition."

The following narrative was received from Captain Russell Colt, of Coatbridge, N. B.:

"I had a very dear brother, Oliver, lieutenant in the 7th Royal Fusiliers. He was about nineteen years old and had at that time been some months before Sebastopol. I corresponded frequently with him, and my last letter reached him just as he was about to receive the sacrament from a clergyman who has since related the fact to me. Having done this, he went to the trenches and never returned, as a few hours afterward the storming of the Redan commenced. He, on the captain of his company falling, took his place and led his men bravely on. He had just led them within the walls, though already wounded in several places, when a bullet struck him on the right temple and he fell among heaps of others, where he was found in a sort of kneeling posture being propped up by other dead bodies) thirty-six hours afterward. His death took place, or, rather, he fell, on September 8. "That night I awoke suddenly and saw, facing the window of my room, by my bedside, surrounded by a light sort of phosphorescent mist, as it were, my brother, kneeling. I tried to speak, but could not. I buried my head in the bed-

clothes—not at all afraid, but simply to collect my ideas, because I had not been thinking or dreaming of him, and, indeed, had forgotten all about what I had written to him a fortnight before.

"I decided that it must be fancy—the moonlight playing on the towel, or something out of place. But on looking up there he was again, looking lovingly, imploringly and sadly at me. I tried to speak, but found myself tongue-tied. I could not utter a sound.

"I sprang out of bed, glanced through the window, and saw that there was no moon, but that it was very dark and raining hard—by the sound against the panes. I turned and still saw poor Oliver. I shut my eyes, walked through the room and reached the door. As I turned the handle before leaving the room I glanced back once more. The apparition turned its head and

Colonel W. remained distressed and uneasy, fully convinced of the death of his brother. Three days brought them the news that he had been killed at precisely the time of the apparition's appearance."

The reader may fancy that these are exceptional cases, and that there are, probably, so few of them that they can be accounted for by some theory of chance coincidence. It has been proved mathematically that this is not the case. The English Society for Psychical Research collected more than thirty thousand cases in its great "Census of Hallucinations," published some years ago, and from the returns calculated the probabilities, on the theory of chance coincidence. The number of coincidental cases were found far too numerous to explain on such a theory. The committee, after much careful investigation, was forced to the conclusion that "between deaths and

ask: "What is the nature of this connection? What are these figures, seen at the moment of death? Of what are they composed, and how and why do they appear?"

The last word of psychical science upon this momentous question is somewhat as follows: While it is possible that a few of these figures may be objective, outstanding entities—thought-forms, astral bodies, etc., as is shown by their ability, on occasion, to move material objects—it is certain that, in the vast majority of cases, they are not objective, but subjective; not physical, but mental, things. They are so-called "telepathic hallucinations." They are creatures of the brain, without real existence; yet they nevertheless owe their origin and existence, so to say, to some source beyond the brain of the person perceiving them. Let me explain a little more fully.

TRANSFERENCE OF VISUAL IMPRESSIONS BY MENTAL TELEGRAPHY.

It has been shown possible to transfer to another mind, by a process of mental telegraphy, visual impressions and images—a card, a figure, a scene, etc. This being true, it is only natural to suppose that the image of a person might be transferred in the same way. And that is what happens! Each person has a vivid subconscious impression of his own appearance. At the moment of death—or some great emotional crisis—added energy is given to that portion of the brain capable of transmitting these telepathic messages, and this centre, thus energized, sends its message to the one attuned to receive it. Thus the impression is sent. It may be received in various ways—as a visual impression (a form), as an auditory impression (a voice), as a tactile impression (a restraining hand), etc. They are the same in origin. The distant brain transmits its message. It is variously externalized or rendered objective (apparently) at the receiver's end. Thus we have the theory of so-called telepathic hallucinations.

Many a soldier has thus sent back his last message of love, his last benediction and words of hope and comfort to the dear ones at home. Many a heart has thus been comforted. There is hardly a war in history where such incidents have not been recorded. It is certainly true that in the present war numerous instances of the kind will take place. Some have actually taken place already. And many more will follow. Connected



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On the Way Home



She Returns

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again looked anxiously and lovingly at me, and I saw then for the first time a wound on the right temple, with a red stream from it. His face was a waxy pale tint, but transparent-looking, and so was the reddish mark. It is almost impossible to describe the appearance: I only know I shall never forget it. I left the room and went into my friend's room, and remained there the rest of the night. I told him why. I told others in the house, but when I told my father he ordered me not to repeat 'such nonsense,' and especially not to let my mother know.

"On the Monday following we received a note from Sir Alexander Milne, telling of the storming of the Redan, but no particulars. I told my friend to let me know if he saw the name among the killed and wounded before I did. About a fortnight later he came into my bedroom with a very grave face. I said, 'I suppose it is to tell me the news I expect?' and he said, 'Yes.' Both the colonel of the regiment and one or two officers who saw the body, confirmed the fact that the appearance was much according to my description, and the death wound was exactly where I had seen it. . . . Months later a small prayer book and the letter I had written him were returned to Inveresk, found in the inner breast pocket of the tunic which he wore at his death. I have them now."

AT DUSK IN A BARRACK ROOM AT SYDNEY COVE.

The following interesting case occurred in America: "In the month of November Sir John Sherbrooke and General Wynyard were sitting before a dinner in their barrack room at Sydney Cove. It was dusk, and a candle was placed on the table at a little distance.

"Suddenly a figure, dressed in plain clothes and a good round hat, passed before the fire. While passing Sir J. Sherbrooke exclaimed, 'God bless my soul, what's that?' Almost at the same moment Colonel W. said, 'That's my brother, John Wynyard, and I am quite certain he is dead!' Colonel W. was much agitated and paced up and down the floor. Sir John said, 'The fellow has a devilish good hat; I wish I had it!' (Hats were not to be got there, and theirs were worn out.) They immediately got up, took a candle and went into the bedroom—into which the figure had entered. They searched in every corner, to no effect.

apparitions of the dying person a connection exists which is not due to chance alone. This we hold as a proved fact." This solemn conclusion opens up the road for much speculation. Once the actual fact is established we are entitled to

with war and the battlefield there are many strange psychic experiences, and the present war will doubtless disclose them. To psychic students they are of great interest, and we should study them. Let us wait and see—and study!

HOW REGIMENTS GOT NICKNAMES

SUCH nicknames as the "Death or Glory Boys," the "Black Watch" or the 42d Highlanders and the "Tigers," so called because the Leicesters have a tiger for their regimental badge, are well known and commonly used, but there are others, mentioned by "Tit-Bits," which are extremely curious, such as the "Snappers," the "Cherry Pickers," "Strawboots" and "Pontius Pilate's Bodyguard."

The "Snappers" are the East Yorkshire Regiment, and this title is one of great honor, although it sounds frivolous enough. On a memorable occasion their ammunition gave out, and, in ordinary course, there was nothing to be done but to turn and flee or stand still to be shot or taken prisoners. However, although they had no cartridges they refused to budge, and continued to snap their triggers in the faces of the enemy with such vigor that they were dubbed the "Snappers" ever afterward, much to their credit.

The "Cherry Pickers" are probably not so proud of their sobriquet because, although it is no disgrace to them, it is no particular honor. It is surprising how many regimental nicknames belong to the period of the Peninsular War, and this is one of them. It applies to the 11th Hussars, who have been known by this name exactly a century by reason of the fact—or fiction—that a number of men of that regiment were captured by the enemy in an orchard actually engaged in refreshing their parched mouths with cherries. "Strawboots," which is the nickname of the 7th Dragoon Guards, does not sound very euphonious, but it is a finer title than many a high sounding one. It recalls a time of devotion and bravery and fortitude in very distressing circumstances. It was, in fact, bestowed upon them by their admiring compatriots when they returned from Warburg, for their boots being completely worn off their feet, they had bound them round with straw to keep out the wet and cold.

The 1st Foot have been called "Pontius Pilate's Bodyguard" time out of mind. At one time the regiment was temporarily in the French service

and a campfire dispute raged as to whether they were not an older establishment than the men of Picardy, with whom they were associated. The result is reminiscent of the story of Murphy, the Irishman, who claimed that his family preceded the flood, and when faced with the fact that none of that name is in the records of the ark, replied, "Did I inebriety ever hear of a Murphy with out a boat in his own?"

In the same vein the men of the Picardy regiment claimed that as one of the Roman cohorts they were on duty on the night of the crucifixion, as indeed some of their ancestors might have been. To this fact the British retorted that they also were there and very wide awake, too, for they were acting, while the Picardy men were asleep, as Pontius Pilate's bodyguard.

MINES IN THE OPEN SEA.

A mechanical mine, such as the Germans have probably centered in recent years in the North Sea, says "Tit-Bits," is filled with gunpowder and dynamite, the charge varying from 30 pounds to 500. The latter is contained in a spherical steel case, some thirty-nine inches in diameter, and is supported buoyant by containing air spaces. It is constructed so that it will float from ten to sixty feet below the surface of the sea, according to the strength of the charge. A "contact" mine of this kind is fired either by a small electric battery, a pistol, a spring or a suspended weight. The impulse which actuates the firing gear is given by the contact of the vessel or other object against which it bumps. After it has been placed in the desired position by the mine layer a safety pin can be withdrawn and the mine, which may or may not be moored, is ready for its deadly work.

The only possible course which may be taken by a country desirous of clearing its seas of mines laid by an enemy consists of towing a wire net, weighted so that it will drag along the bottom and the two towing ships steam along about a hundred yards apart.