

wide U.S. interview survey, in which 27 per cent answered 'yes' to the question: "Have you ever felt that you were really in touch with someone after he had died?"

Detailed interviews were conducted with as many respondents as was feasible (127) on the nature and content of the experience and the psychological and environmental circumstances attending it. Only first-hand, waking-state, non-mediumistic experiences were analyzed, thus reducing the number of cases to 100, reported by 35 men and 65 women.

Sensory modality. In 84 cases the experience was of an apparitional nature; in 16, only a vivid feeling of some imperceptible presence. Visual apparitional experiences were most common, being reported by 59 respondents. They comprise 70 per cent of the total number of apparitional experiences. Auditory experiences, many non-vocal, were claimed by 24 per cent. Tactile experiences were reported by seven and olfactory ones, such as experiencing a favorite perfume of the deceased, by five, while one reported a feeling of cold along with a visual experience. One sensory modality was involved in 62 cases, and 22 cases involved two or more, again with visual experiences dominating.

Psychological and environmental conditions. According to popular belief, most apparitions are experienced in darkness or twilight. Our cases did not conform to that view; 44 respondents reported experiencing apparitions in daylight or in full electric light, 20 in semidarkness, and only nine in darkness. According to Gurney's old hypothesis, apparitions tend to occur when the mind is in a restful state and not actively engaged. One-third of our respondents had been physically active in some way, working or going about their daily activities. Another one-third was at rest, sitting or lying in bed. The rest were just awakening or on the point of falling asleep. In thanatological literature, apparitional experiences have frequently been associated with bereavement and grief. In only 11 of the 73 cases where the appearer had been identified, were feelings of grief reported at the time or just prior to the experience.

The fact that most of these reported experiences of the dead occurred under normal lighting conditions, and only rarely when the respondent was in a state of grief, gives some evidence of their being relatively independent of the state of the percipient, and supports the more agent-oriented theories of Myers and Hart. However, one-third of our cases occur near the time of sleep, suggesting some importance of a psi-conducive state of the percipient. These apparently contrasting results beg for a larger sample which one might divide to find out whether the appearer characteristics of the more percipient-dependent and more agent-dependent cases do perhaps differ in a significant and meaningful way.

Characteristics of the appearer. Of the appearers, 63 were identified as men and 19 as women, and two-thirds as relatives or friends. Five cases of crisis-apparitions were reported. A dispro-

portionately high number of the appearers (23 per cent) had suffered violent deaths. In 43 cases more than one person had been present, and apparitions were collectively perceived in one-third of them, which compares well with the Census of Hallucinations.

This high percentage of collective apparitions, the crisis-apparitions and the high number of violent deaths among the appearers lend some support to theories of apparitions which argue for the importance of the appearer.

#### A MEMORY THEORY FOR APPARITIONS

W. G. Roll (Psychical Research Foundation, Durham)

Nearly 100 years ago Edmund Gurney (Gurney and Myers, PSPR, 1888-89, pp. 403-485) found recognized apparitions of the dead to "... fall under two heads, which we may distinguish as the personal and the local. That is to say, this experience either befalls some person who has been linked with the deceased by close ties, or it befalls someone in a place in which the deceased, when alive, was strongly interested. Sometimes ... the two characteristics are combined" (p. 408).

The observation that apparitions are connected with inanimate or animate physical systems (though not necessarily reinforced by close emotional ties) is supported by Eleanor Sidgwick's collection (PSPR, 1885, pp. 69-150), "Phantasms of the Living" (PSPR, 1923, 23, 23-429), and Louisa Rhine's (JP, 1957, pp. 31-46) analysis of 49 visual apparitions. Among the latter 15 were local or "haunting" type occurrences in which the percipient did not know the appearer; 16 were personal, nine local and personal, and eight were personal of the "bystander" type where the percipient did not know the deceased, but saw the apparition near a third who had known the deceased.

Rhine notes that the bystander cases "are suggestive of the haunting cases, the main difference ... being that in these the link is a person rather than a geographical location" (p. 39).

If the personal or local connection of apparitions is not a sampling or reporting artefact, what can we make of this connection between psi images and physical space?

Among the four theories for apparitions proposed by Eleanor Sidgwick (PSPR, 1885, pp. 69-150), the second "... is one I can hardly expect to appear plausible and which, therefore, I only introduce because I think that it corresponds best to a certain part of the evidence.... It is that there is something in the actual building itself--some subtle physical influence--which produces in the brain

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that effect which, in its turn, becomes the cause of a hallucination" (p. 148).

Though Gurney (Gurney and Myers, *PSPR*, 1888-89, pp. 403-485) preferred a telepathic hypothesis for apparitions, some cases suggested to him "...the survival of a mere image, impressed, we cannot guess how, on we cannot guess what, by [the deceased] ... person's physical organism, and perceptible at times to those endowed with some cognate form of sensitiveness" (pp. 418-419). Similarly, H. H. Price (*PSPR*, 1939, pp. 307-343) suggests that images are "Persistent and dynamic entities, which when once formed may have a kind of independent life of their own, and may escape more or less completely from the control of their author.... An image or a group of images might get itself localized in a particular region of Physical Space.... Once localized there, they might continue to be so localized for a considerable period, retaining the telepathic charge which they had at first, though this might gradually diminish in intensity" (pp. 325-326).

Such localized images in a manner of speaking are the "memories" of an area or object in physical space. The localized memories, we might say, are "remembered" by the percipient of the apparition, much as he or she remembers events associated with an object which is always near, the person's own brain.

William James (*PSPR*, 1909, pp. 2-121) sketched a memory theory along the same lines, not for apparitions, but in his study of the Piper mediumship. James suggested that after death memory traces may exist "psychometrically" in the physical objects associated with the person while he or she was alive. This "system of physical traces" may be activated during a mediumistic session--or, we might add, during an apparitional sighting--amounting to a "spirit redivivus" of the deceased and of "recollection and willing in a certain momentary way" (p. 120).

The picture which begins to form is that of a psi structure or organization which encompasses two or more individuals and the environmental situation where they find themselves. An apparition of a deceased person would not be an independent entity but the product of a relationship which includes the deceased, the living percipient or percipients and the situation in time and space where the apparition is seen. This network of relationships may be the same as Rosalind Heywood has in mind when she speaks of localized holons. As with holons, psi structures may be parts of larger and more complex structures.

If apparitions are mnemonic structures, we would expect them to show the decline characteristics of memory processes (Gurney and Myers, *PSPR*, 1888-89, pp. 403-485). Myers observed that "...the recognised apparitions decrease rapidly in the few days after death, then more slowly; and after about a year's time they become so sporadic that we can no longer include them in a steadily descending line" (p. 427).

We should also expect apparitions to be associated with psychological states which tend to give memory images the reality of hallucinations. The hypnagogic condition is such a state and apparitions are often seen at night as the person wakes up or before going to sleep. Near death conditions are also hallucinogenic and apparition-conducive, as Osis and Haraldsson have shown.