

# The Civil "Servant"

Robert H. Schor: December 8, 1930—August 27, 2021



Sidney and Nancy Kirkpatrick

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*Robert Schor's meteoric rise from a lowly clerk to the Acting Assistant Commissioner of Customs in New York came as no surprise to anyone familiar with the trance reading he received from psychic Edgar Cayce*

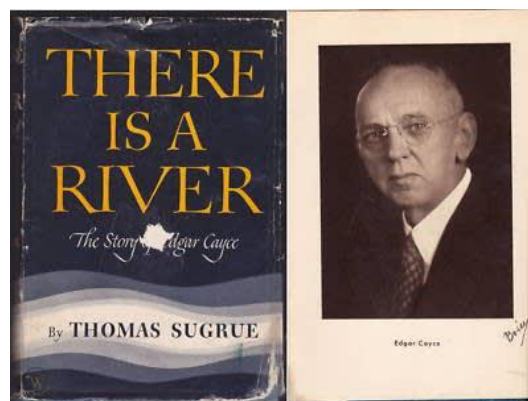
The twenty-minute Edgar Cayce life-reading Robert Schor received at age 14 in Queens, New York, on April 14, 1944, (#4084-1) had a profound impact on his life and, by extension, our understanding of how past lives influence the present. This wasn't, however, what Schor supposed would be the outcome when he first read the transcript of the trance session.

"Nothing about the reading seemed right," Schor told Nancy and me when we interviewed him in 2015. "I thought Cayce had mistaken me for someone else!"



*Robert Schor in 2015, at his favorite park, Untemeyer Gardens, in Yonkers, New York*

The teenage Schor had found his way to the Association for Research and Enlightenment (A.R.E.) after he and his mother read the Edgar Cayce biography, *There is a River*. With the encouragement of his mother, Schor wrote to Cayce in Virginia Beach requesting career and vocational advice. The typed transcript of the trance reading he received in the mail two months later greatly disturbed him. There was information on past-lives that was too fantastic to believe. He also couldn't make sense of Cayce's seemingly incomprehensible astrological references. And the final piece of advice—to attend Princeton University—seemed well beyond the reach of a Jew from Maspeth, New York.



*Schor's personal copy of the Cayce biography *There is a River**

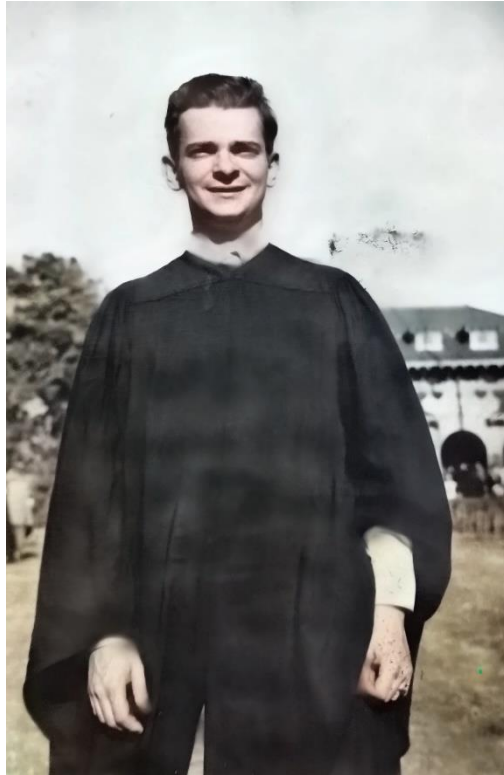
Schor never applied to Princeton. But even then, still in his teens, long before he embraced the spirit and wisdom in the reading, he understood that there was some substance to what Cayce had said.

"In Mercury we find one quick in its mental capacities," the reading stated.

No one in the Schor family could argue with that one. At only 8 months old he had figured out how to climb out of his crib without falling and went on to master ever greater logistical challenges in elementary and high school. He was a problem solver, born with an inherent ability to see the end result in the early stages of an undertaking while there was still time to make corrections.

"Mars gives the abilities of the entity as almost a tireless worker," was another of Cayce's remarks. This too had some substance. Schor loved to work. It didn't matter if he was sweeping up metal filings off the cement floor of a Long Island engraving company where he first worked as an errand boy, or later after he passed his civil service exam and was working in downtown New York while studying for a law degree at night.

Eventually, his hard work paid off. He graduated Cum Laude and Phi Beta Kappa from Queens College in Brooklyn, took a master's degree from Columbia University, and a law degree from Brooklyn Law School. In retrospect, he realized that Princeton had been within his reach if he had opened his mind to it.



*Schor eventually earned an Ivy League education*

Also notable in the Cayce reading was the remark, "Jupiter makes for the universal consciousness, as for the general welfare or benefit of the human family."

Schor put this in Cayce's hit column. Although he was born Jewish, he never looked upon himself as more than a card-carrying member of our greater human family. "There is a piece of God in each of us," he liked to say. "That piece of God in us, when allowed to express itself, is the basis for human compassion"

Schor had to acknowledge that Cayce had some things right, but the phrase in the 6th paragraph seemed to be outright wrong: "Venus gives appreciation of music... and its attunement to the harmony it brings into the experience."

Schor was tone deaf!

A half-century would pass before Schor grasped what he came to understand was Cayce's core message. Cayce wasn't referring to notes on a page of sheet music, but to cosmic harmony—how individuals or groups of people and entire nations interact with one another in a delicate balancing act. Venus

represented love and compassion, being in sync with our fellow man. Schor was, in fact, a gifted "conductor." He would make a career out of learning to listen to others.

Beyond the astrological insights, Schor's reading went on to highlight important past lives that Cayce said would be drivers of his present life. He didn't know or appreciate it at the time, but this aspect of the information ultimately proved to be so uncannily accurate that Hugh Lynn Cayce, Edgar's son, who kept track of Schor over the years, thought it miraculous.

The first and most recent past life Cayce described was in pre-revolutionary America, where he worked as a town clerk. His name at that time was Henry Beecher, an ancestor of the famous preacher Henry Ward Beecher and his equally celebrated daughter, writer Harriet Beecher Stowe, both of whom were deeply committed to the abolition of slavery. Cayce also suggested that in his capacity as a clerk he had learned public speaking, which was an unusual side-line for a village civil servant.

Several aspects of this incarnation would resonate with Schor as he grew older. The first was a heated intolerance for the practice of slavery, both the history of it in the United States and anywhere on Earth. This would lead him to lecture on this subject and others, most notably at the National Conference of Christians and Jews. Also, interesting to note, Schor was living at the time a short drive away from Litchfield, Connecticut, where he presumably lived in his past-life as an anti-slavery Beecher.



*The Litchfield, Connecticut, home where Harriet Beecher Stowe was born*

Cayce identified a second lifetime, this one in England, where he also worked as a civil servant. This time around he was customs agent Minor Cullum, where he learned skills in leadership, power of organizing, efficiency, and diplomacy.

Here was another aspect of the reading that proved marvelously accurate. After trying a myriad of different jobs in his youth, none of which he found particularly satisfying, he took the civil service exam and in very short order found himself working with the U.S. Customs, where he rose from a lowly staff position to be the Acting Assistant Commissioner of Customs in New York with an office in the World Trade Center.

"Everything came so naturally that I couldn't help but succeed," Schor said of the experience.

The third life referenced in his reading was in ancient Greece, in which he was a Xenophon\*, a soldier and historian in the Spartan army. His success as a soldier then was his strategy to evade a trap and lead an army home without serious losses.

Cayce again appears to have been prescient. As a civil servant, and later as an attorney specializing in international trade and relations, Schor would earn a reputation for leading people out of trouble.

And just as Schor later discovered a curious geographic connection linking him to the Beecher family, he did so again with Xenophon. He and his young wife Lily had spent their honeymoon on a one-month tour of Greece, Crete, Rhodes, Turkey, and Israel—all places where Xenophon had been.





*Robert and Lily Schor's honeymoon followed the same path as Spartan army general Xenophon*

The most unusual of all past lives referenced in his reading was as a Hebrew among the indigenous people of North America—a declaration that seemed wildly wrong, even preposterous. History books didn't list Hebrews as existing in pre-Columbian America!

Eventually, however, Schor understood Cayce to be referencing a past-life in which he was a member of the legendary "Lost Tribes" who fled Israel to escape oppression by the religious leadership. And what seemed patently wrong when Schor was a teenager, took on startling legitimacy when, decades later, evidence was discovered that suggested that indeed, Jews may have landed in what is today, Westchester, New York, and settled with the Iroquois Indians.

Cayce's reference would explain, for example, why the Iroquois are unique among the native tribes of our nation in that their traditions and social practices can legitimately be said to correspond to those of the Hebrew tribes of ancient Israel. The Iroquois also have a unique interpretation of the North Star constellation. The only other region in the world that had the same interpretation was Persia and some adjacent areas which include Israel.

Yet another unexplained anomaly that related to Cayce's pronouncement was the presence of an ancient beehive-style tomb that was found in a farmer's field nearby Schor's home. Such tombs are common in the Middle East and supposedly don't exist in North America. Yet one of these mysterious tombs came complete with a chiseled stone with ancient Semitic alphabet letters. This was not definitive evidence that Israelites came to New England, or that what Cayce said was true, but it certainly gave Schor much to think on.



*One of the beehive-style tombs near Schor's house in Hastings on Hudson*

In later years, Schor couldn't help but wonder how it was that he, a Jew, would be living in the same place he supposed he had lived earlier as a member of the Lost Tribes of Israel.

"How do the laws of the universe accomplish that kind of sequence?" Schor liked to ask of fellow students of the Cayce readings. "I have no idea. But there it is."

Schor pondered these things with Edgar's son, Hugh Lynn Cayce, with whom he bonded in 1950 when Hugh Lynn, then director of the A.R.E., invited him to Virginia Beach to participate in Project X, a pilot program launched to see if certain spiritual disciplines would improve one's psychic ability.





*Schor (upper right) and other participants in A.R.E.'s Project X*

19-year-old Schor spent three weeks living in the home on Arctic Circle where Edgar Cayce had given readings and where he and his wife Gertrude had died five years earlier. During this time, he and other young participants followed a strict discipline of meditation, fasting, and prayer in the hope that his spiritual and psychic development would be measurable.

The most lasting Project X legacy for Schor resulted from one of Hugh Lynn's daily assignments. Schor was to leave the house, find a stranger to talk to, then report back on his experience. The aim was to experience karmic patterns that might advance or inhibit the flow of communication with strangers. Schor was baffled by the assignment. He was painfully shy at that time and didn't know how to talk to strangers.

"Expecting failure, I was angry with Hugh Lynn and critical of myself," Schor later wrote of the experience. "I just felt stupid. But after a while, I decided not to think about the task or how to do it, but instead to respond to any opportunity that arose, to act spontaneously in reaction, and see what happened."

On his walk from the house, Schor came upon a child digging with the spoon in the dirt between the square slabs of cement that formed a sidewalk. The child—no older than 8—was so busy digging he didn't look up.

"How do you talk to a child who is ignoring you?" Schor asked himself.

Instead of trying to strike up a conversation, he crouched down and just watched him play. He didn't say a thing.

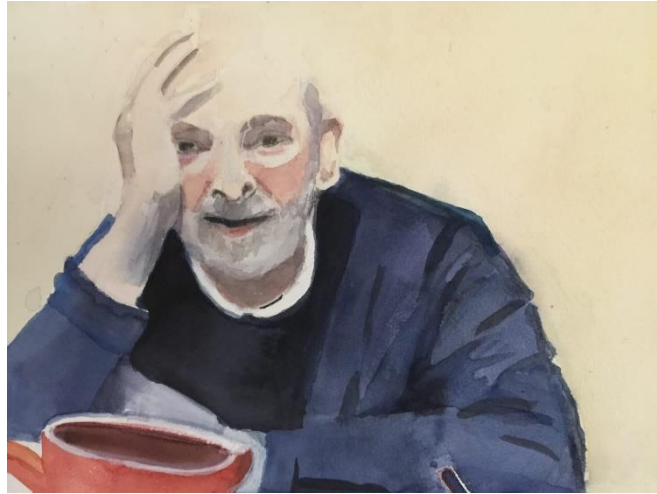
"I had no idea what would happen," Schor reported. "I just stayed and stared and said nothing. After about 10 minutes of silence between us, without looking up, he said to me: 'I am playing in the dirt right here, see?' 'Yes,' I said and nothing more. A few more minutes went by in silence. He looked at me for the first time, and told me his name, and said that he liked to play in the dirt. I said that that was great and that my name was Bob. One thing led to another and we got to talking pretty well."

Schor learned an important lesson: you have to be quiet before you can listen. And listening to others was at the heart of being a "servant," civil or otherwise. Listening, and then responding to their concerns. That had been his true calling in life.

"To get to know people it is OK just to watch them and not ask anything of them," Schor said. "People respond to being seen, recognized, and approached. Just my watching the boy got the two of us across that barrier. That technique to getting to know people really works. It was a great lesson and I am grateful to Hugh Lynn for setting up a challenging situation in which I could invent a solution to a difficult but worthwhile problem."

Schor turned this lesson into a spiritual discipline. He will, no doubt, take this gift with him into his next incarnation if indeed one is necessary.

Schor died on August 27, 2021, at his home on Hastings on Hudson, N.Y., with his beloved wife of 56-years, Lily, at his side. He had been an active member of the A.R.E. and a dedicated student of the Cayce readings for 67 years, was a keynote speaker with Nancy and me at Cayce Congress in 2017, wrote articles for *Venture Inward* magazine, and authored several book-length studies of the Cayce readings. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.



*artist Lily Shore's portrait of her husband*

Late in life, Schor frequently pondered his serendipity that he was lucky enough to get a Cayce life reading when so many others could not. Receiving that reading gave him a head start in understanding the components of who he was, and an entry into what became a life-long study of what he called "a great teacher's work." And although he never met Edgar Cayce in person, he did meet him in spirit. The meeting occurred a few years after Edgar had passed in 1945. While sitting in a chair, Schor had a vision of his teacher taking a seat next to him. Edgar's eyes were bright and shining, indicating that he was pleased to make an appearance to an old friend. A second later Cayce vanished. Schor never got to see him again, but always remembered that vision, just as he did his reading.

\*This is the phonetic spelling of the name given in Schor's reading, a subject he discussed with archivist Gladys Davis. To read more about this incarnation and Schor's research see his article in the Jan-Feb 2017 of *Venture Inward*.

Note from the author: One of Schor's books, "Abraham Blesses Us: Be a Blessing Too," is available for download on Amazon.



*2 Stars of the A.R.E.: Robert Schor with his friend, fellow artist, and student of the Cayce readings, Starr Messick, in 2017*

# The Biochemistry of Music

What the Edgar Cayce readings tell us



Sidney and Nancy Kirkpatrick

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\*The numbers referenced in this article refer to Edgar Cayce trance readings that can be accessed on the members' homepage at [edgarcayce.org](http://edgarcayce.org)



*The Boswell Sisters singing trio was so popular in the 1930s that Bing Crosby opened their shows. What their fans never knew was that Edgar Cayce was not only helping to guide their careers, he was providing one of the sisters with life-saving medical advice*

"MAKE MUSIC!" Edgar Cayce tells a 43-year-old divorcée looking to heal emotional wounds and jump-start her career (5201-1).\* Similar advice, with an emphasis on stringed instruments, is given to a New York socialite suffering depression (1804-1). The parents of a 5-year-old are told their daughter should study music to ensure her proper spinal development (5263-1). Treatment for an adult mental patient is listening to the Blue Danube, by composer Johann Strauss (2712-1). Music could help the blind to regain their

sight (453-2), the deaf to hear (2527-1), overcome the effects of aging (949-2), and improve appearance (5256-1).

These are but several references in the Cayce medical readings to the biochemical healing properties of music. Even more remarkable statements appear in Cayce's life or vocational readings.

Among them is encouraging news for a 20-year Broadway dancer. She has gained greatly by mastering the musical arts and is now one of eighteen people out of nearly 6,000 reading recipients for whom reincarnation is declared unnecessary (4353-4).

Reincarnation is also unnecessary for a middle-aged teacher whose attunement to the "divine from within" has resulted in her joining what Cayce describes as the "heavenly choir" (115-1). Let us also not forget that Edgar Cayce himself, in his previous incarnation as Ra Ta, was "rejuvenated" by the vibrations of sound—adding some hundred or more years to his life (294-150)—and that with techniques pioneered in Atlantis, he and his Egyptian engineers used song to raise the stone blocks used to build the Great Pyramid (2462-2).

Cayce credits no less than the creation of the universe to sound. This is the suggestion in 262-78 and 281-29, and is implicit in 2533-8, in which an esoterically minded insurance salesman asks the Source to reveal the penultimate vibration—God's WORD—that is referenced in the first sentence of the Gospel of John, and what scientists describe as the "Big Bang." Cayce gives the salesman much the same answer as he does to a scientist who has asked for the formula for anti-gravity. Mankind isn't yet ready.





*Conductor and composer Richmond Seay (#1861), pictured here with his wife Beatrice, received a comprehensive series of readings on the power of music*

Conventional music history, of course, does not reach back to the moment of creation, let alone Atlantis. Nor has sound or vibrational medicine studies reached the clinical trial stage. There is, however, growing acceptance of the therapeutic value of music along with scientific evidence to support many of Cayce's claims. The best news is that musical talent—even the ability to read music—isn't required. In other words, one doesn't have to play the harp to go to heaven, though it arguably could help (324-5 and 275-36)! Learning to listen to God's harmonies, what Cayce calls the "music of the spheres," is what's important.

"For it has been truly said," Cayce tells us in 933-1, "music alone spans the sphere of spiritual and mental attainment."

Edgar himself, in a waking state, didn't likely know that the phrase "music of the spheres" originated with Pythagoras some 2,500 years earlier. That some scholars think Cayce *was* Pythagoras in a previous incarnation, and so might have been channeling himself on the subject, is beside the point. The concept had spread far beyond Athens before Cayce revisited the subject in Virginia

Beach in 1933. It was considered science in the Middle Ages, was credited with inspiring the Renaissance and lived on for centuries in European thinking. Da Vinci, Raphael, Durer, and many other great artists affirmed its truth, as did the engineers who built the Notre Dame cathedrals, theologian Saint Augustine, pioneer physician Robert Fludd, and astronomer Johannes Kepler.

Underlying the music of the spheres concept was the belief that the stars and planets were held in place by a Divine harmony that could be expressed in mathematical ratios and tonal patterns played on musical instruments. Everything in the universe either obeyed God's vibratory harmonies or suffered the consequences. Stated most simply, all creation could be conceived as existing in God's giant musical instrument. Playing the correct notes, chords, and scales brings harmony, health, and healing (along with construction stability and aesthetically pleasing artwork). God, in this sense, was not only the Master Musician but the Master Geometrician and Great Architect of the Universe.

This concept is also fundamental to the Cayce readings. Life in its manifestations (or spheres), Cayce tells us, is vibration (699-1). Thoughts too are vibrations, as "mind is the builder" (906-3). Vibration which is creative or building, creates harmony or attunement, which brings us closer to God or Christ Consciousness (900-422). Vibration that is destructive or combative (driven by self-gratification, and disregarding universal law), brings us further away from God (1861-6 and 1602-5). An individual or group may raise their vibrations such that it can become "Divine Force" (281-3). Disease is dis-harmony, a body or its organs out of balance (2533-3), and healing is "attuning to the divine" (1967-1).

The term Master Musician is also interchangeable in the readings with Christ, as exemplified in 281-8, a reading for the Glad Helpers prayer group:

(Q): I saw each one on the prayer list as notes in music. Through our attunement and their seeking, the Master Musician began to play the notes and harmony reigned throughout. I felt this was an illustration of vibrations in healing. Is this how the healing takes place?

(A) Very beautiful illustration; but don't think it's all of it! No one mind may conceive all that may be done through the power of the Master Musician; for it may bud as the rose, it may be the song of the frog, or of any, even those that would be to SELF as those that would be GRATING vibrations... but to some would bring harmony and peace.

(Q) Is this why in meditation I often hear music and the words of a hymn present themselves?

(A) Then sing it! [The hymn] will help someone.



*Cayce readings identified orchestra leader Vincent Lopez (#2897) as a musician in several past incarnations, most notably in ancient Egypt*

The above reading equates prayer with music and the healing "help" that results. Attunement to God's vibration provides the Glad Helper the conduit through which she can reach out to others through song and vibration. Similarly, according to Cayce, sound and music were used for healing, cleansing, (and surgery too) at the Egyptian Temple Beautiful and Temple of Sacrifice.

Among those whose previous incarnations were described as having taken place back then, one entity's vocation was to raise the consciousness of initiates through dance. "Bestial desires" were transformed by example through "beauty, harmony, and rhythm," Cayce tells us, such that there could be the "building of self in body, mind, and spirit" (3418-8). This concept can also be found in 281-25, which provides insight into how the Broadway showgirl was able to transcend the cycle of reincarnation: "with music came the dance that enabled... [others] to become more erect, upright in body, in thought, in activity."

Cayce also reveals how Atlanteans used sound and song to not only connect with the Divine, but harness its power to accomplish massive engineering projects (519-1 and 2462-2). Cayce isn't alone in making such claims. Examples in the Bible are numerous and include young King David using his harp to drive evil spirits from Saul, and Elisha using music to channel God's words. Most famously there is Joshua 6:20, when temple priests use trumpets to bring down the walls of Jericho.

Difficult as it may be to accept the notion that our ancestors used sound as a motive force, one need only consider operatic tenor Enrico Caruso, who entertained audiences by using his voice to shatter glass, and how sonic weapons, once considered science fiction, are today cutting edge technology. And however quick skeptics are to dismiss the source and context of the information presented about how the Great Pyramid was built, acoustic levitation is scientific fact. Researchers haven't yet progressed beyond moving pencils from one place to another, but we need only remember that *Back to the Future* skateboard hovercrafts and driverless cars were mere science-fiction less than a decade ago.

Archaeologists are also helping to substantiate claims that were once dismissed as fantasy. Among the more recent findings is evidence that some 40,000 years ago Australian aboriginals used the equivalent of the didgeridoo to speed the healing of broken bones and torn muscles. Ancient Babylonians similarly used rattles and drums, the earliest known instruments, in their healing traditions. Pre-Columbian cultures in Peru used bells during surgical procedures for skull fractures.

The medical profession is also playing catch-up.

Among the many benefits today accorded music therapy is help for Parkinson's and Alzheimer's patients. Listening to music has been used to facilitate weight gain in preemie babies, boost the immune system, stimulate recovery from brain injuries, increase sensitivity, lower blood pressure, enhance athletic performance, make food taste better, and promote growth in plants. Most encouraging has been developments that came with ultrasound technology, which include breaking up kidney stones and shrinking tumors. Studies have been shown that sound frequencies can be used to help regenerate damaged optic and auditory nerves, just as Cayce suggested. Further, in development are technologies that detect weak vibrational signals and simultaneously deliver corrective frequencies.

Not to rain on the scientific breakthrough parade—so to speak—but Cayce discussed just such an "etheronic" device 80 years ago (440-3), and prototypes can be found in the Cayce archives in Virginia Beach!



*Author Sidney Kirkpatrick checking out the Etheronic device in the Edgar Cayce Foundation archives*

The Cayce readings also deliver a wide spectrum of sound and musical insights that exist nowhere else.

One gem can be found in a reading for an eight-year-old (3621-1). The distraught mother wants to know why her child walks and talks in her sleep. Cayce tells the mother that her daughter is listening to the music of the spheres. "(She is) close to the music that spans the distance between the finite and the infinite." (Recently deceased, Mrs. 3621 was remembered by her

children and grandchildren as a deeply religious and devoted member of her church choir.)

Another thought-provoking reading is for a woman who has reached such attunement that her akashic record is in the shape of a harp (1473-1), which the readings coincidentally indicate was Jesus's instrument of choice (5749-1). Then there are compelling business-related readings for such top entertainers as the Boswell Sisters (887 and 938), who are advised to put off marriage because they have so much still to give to the greater world. They are, in short, doing God's work by making music. Other advice was given to big-band conductor Vincent Lopez (2897), who was told that he had been a great artist in a previous incarnation just as he was in this one.

As so many music-related readings make clear, much can be gained by studying music. "If you learn music you will learn something about everything," Cayce declares in 3063-1.

Here again, modern science proves Cayce correct. Studies show that music-making children are "happier, more intelligent, and more creative" than their peers. Their cognitive and communication skills also measurably improve. Further, music-making students are not as aggressive, a subject that Cayce too touches upon in reading 622-6: "When the entity has sung Halleluiah, it was much harder to say 'dammit.'"

But what exactly constitutes good or healthful music?

Cayce provides commentary on different instruments—among them the banjo (2780-3), stringed instruments and the organ (3234-1) and reed instruments (1566-1; 276-3). He also offers advice on mantras or chants to be used in meditation (1861-18). There are also references to various composers—among them Chopin (949-13), Franz Liszt (2584-1) and Beethoven (3697-1 and 3633-1).

Cayce does not, however, offer specifics about what music to listen to. This is likely for the same reason that the readings don't endorse a specific Bible or church. Whichever Bible that someone will read and the church that they will attend is best. "The choices must be of themselves!" Cayce goes on record in 852-16. This is restated in 1861-12: "[Find] that to which the body-mind



responds; not just what it likes or dislikes, but that which strikes a vibrant chord within the consciousness of the individual."

Further, reaping the benefits of listening to and appreciating music, or of learning to play an instrument, does not require having musical ability or talent. This was the declaration of 5201, who expressed shock and surprise to be told that she ought to make music. "I seem so inept in that field," she declared, and admitted "being unable to distinguish a baritone voice from a tenor." Yet, five years after taking Cayce's advice, she wrote to express her happiness. Where music was concerned, the reading was "very, very true!"

Cayce doesn't provide us with an iTunes shopping list, but he does explain why seemingly meaningless tonal patterns that are unnecessary to man's biological survival—what in essence music is—have been so central to the human experience, and why certain melodies or masterworks have such staying power.

Cayce tells us that this is because each entity has a soul memory of hearing the music of the spheres. We heard the real thing after having passed through "God's other door." Certain composers are able to capture or imitate it better than others because they are able to more effectively tap into their subconscious memory. This is perhaps one of the keys to understanding the phenomenon of children born with astonishing musical talents, and why so many people who have had near-death experiences reference what they describe as "otherworldly" music. All of us, however, can learn to appreciate or be benefited from such divinely inspired masterworks because God's harmonies are everywhere around us.

"Listen to the birds. Watch the blush of the rose. Listen at the life rising in the tree. These serve their Maker... [through] that psychic force that is Life itself, in their respective sphere—that were put for the service of man. Learn thine lesson... from that about thee! (364-10)

"Think for a moment of the music of the waves upon the shore, of the morning as it breaks with the music of nature, of the night as it falls with the hum of the insect, of all the kingdoms as they unite in their song of appreciation to an all-creative influence that gives nature consciousness or

awareness of its being itself, and harmonize that in thine own appreciation, as to bring music akin to the song of the spheres." (2581-2)

The message is clear: God's music can be experienced in the harmony of nature. By listening and trying to imitate His resonating harmonies, we are imitating our creator, becoming co-creators.

"Make music!" isn't just good health advice, it's an invitation to connect with God, and a prescription for raising our own vibrations and those of others, one note at a time.

# Choosing Parenthood

An Edgar Cayce reading recipient questions the wisdom of bringing a child into a dark and fractured world



Sidney and Nancy Kirkpatrick

Mar 24 [6](#)



## *Eleanor Ostwald*

Thirty-four-year-old Eleanor Zentgraf Ostwald was in crisis. She had always imagined having children, but by May 1942, with her biological clock ticking, with war engulfing all of Europe and Asia, her husband's status under review by the draft board, and with mounting social, financial, and medical uncertainty, she questioned the wisdom of parenthood. Having a family seemed like a foolishly audacious act of insanity in an increasingly hostile and unstable world. What was the "right" thing to do? For insight and counsel, she turned to family friend and confidant Edgar Cayce. What came through in trance reading 457-10 is one of the American Prophet's short but most profound cosmic recitations on the blessings and responsibilities of parenthood.

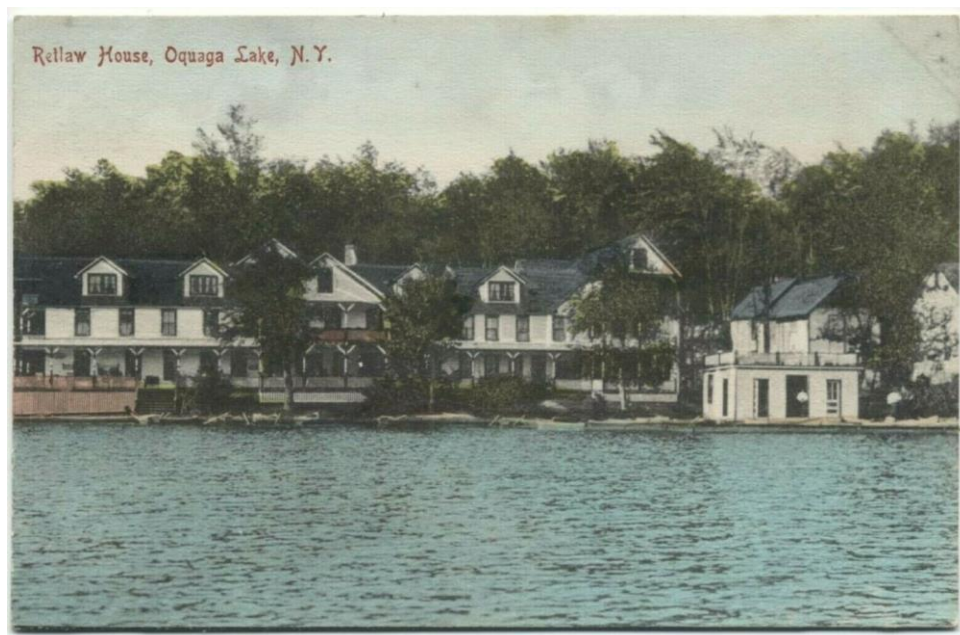


*Eleanor grew up in a large and wealthy family in Staten Island, New York. Front row seated [Left to Right] Ernest Zentgraf [senior], Margaret [middle daughter], Helene R. Zentgraf [mother], to her left standing is Lilian [youngest daughter]. Back row standing [Left to Right] Eleanor [oldest daughter], Philip [oldest son], Ernest [middle son] and Robert [youngest son].*

At this point in her life, Eleanor didn't need a psychic to tell her that the wealth and social status she had known in her youth wouldn't be available to her offspring. The granddaughter of the late German-American business tycoon Charles Zentgraf, she had grown up in a Staten Island mansion with 35 rooms, which included a ballroom, library, and music conservatory. She shopped at Tiffany's, whose iconic "Tiffany blue" bags and boxes were produced by her father, Ernest Zentgraf, the CEO of the most exclusive specialty paper and letterhead manufacturer in the US. She vacationed in the German Alps while visiting her great-aunt's chateau in Bavaria and summered at her family's 800-acre lakeside Catskill Mountains estate. She celebrated her parents' wedding anniversary in the grand ballroom of the Waldorf Astoria and worked alongside her philanthropist mother, Helene, to find housing, help educate, and teach English to German refugees displaced by World War I. She never imagined that the privileged lifestyle she had always known could so easily be swept away.



*The home where Eleanor grew up, at 400 St. Paul's Avenue, Staten Island, is today a historical landmark.*



*What was once property owned by the Zentgraf family on Oquaga Lake, in New York's Catskill Mountains, later became the setting for the TV show "Marvelous Mrs. Maisel."*

Eleanor had fallen in love with a German refugee who was not unlike many of the young men her mother helped settle on Staten Island. Adolph Ostwald, from Dusseldorf, had aced his German "Abitur," the qualifying test for university admission, and received an advanced degree in mechanical



engineering, but was unable to find work in a country devastated by war. Following in the footsteps of his older brother, Ernest Ostwald, a tailor by trade and veteran of Germany's ill-fated campaign in Russia, Adolph boarded a steamship bound for New York, desirous of making a new life for himself. Thanks to his higher education he was able to land a prestigious engineering job for the Kreuger Company, in Pennsylvania, manufacturing home air-filtration systems. His employment, however, ended abruptly with Kreuger's suicide in the wake of an embezzlement scandal. Two years later, in 1928, Adolph was living in New York and partnering with his brother in a company producing uniforms for chauffeurs and liverymen. He met Eleanor that September at a German-American friendship party held at the Zentgraf's Catskills estate. The night was magical for both he and Eleanor and, several weeks later, an invitation was extended for Adolph to visit her family at their Staten Island residence.



*Adolph Ostwald, an engineer by training, partnered with his brother in a clothing manufacturing company in Manhattan's garment district.*

The couple was clearly in love. Eleanor's father not only consented to his daughter's wedding, but he helped his future son-in-law expand his clothing business. Edgar Cayce, who routinely gave Eleanor's parents and siblings medical and business readings, put his stamp of approval on the new venture. Cayce also recommended that Eleanor should work alongside her husband



and that they should develop a line of clothing for marching bands. Cayce went so far as to provide a name for their company, "Uniforms by Oswald."



*Edgar Cayce not only helped to select the company's name but its product line.*

That the Zentgrafs consulted Edgar Cayce was to be expected from an esoterically-minded family that collectively received over 100 readings and whose patriarch, Ernest Zentgraf, was chairman of the board of trustees of Edgar Cayce's Association for Research and Enlightenment's (ARE).



*Helene and Ernest Zentgraf (far left), Edgar and Gertrude Cayce (center), secretary Gladys Davis (far right), and other Cayce family members and friends of the Association for Research and Enlightenment in 1931.*

Three of Eleanor's siblings had been successfully treated at the Cayce hospital in Virginia Beach, as had one of the family's employees who had had a near-death experience after falling through the ice on their Catskills estate. Most remarkable were readings for one of Eleanor's younger sisters, Margaret, whose genetic bone deformity was allayed by Cayce health treatments that included her learning to play the harp (healing by vibration!).



*Cayce's recommended therapy for Eleanor's sister Margaret was learning to play the harp.*

Of Eleanor's mother, Helene, whose love of life, dedication to the family, and generosity was an inspiration to all who knew her, Edgar would pay a most magnanimous compliment: "If I had to choose one woman out of the world to pattern my life after, it would be you."



*Edgar Cayce and his secretary Gladys Davis with Eleanor's mother and siblings. (Left to Right) Robert, Lillian, Edgar, Margaret, Glady, and Helene*

Cayce was only one of several psychics upon whom the family bestowed its largess. In addition to the seer from Virginia Beach, Ernest and Helene championed the work of German Mystic, Rudolph Steiner, the founder of Anthroposophy and what has become an international network of Waldorf Schools, still active today. In addition to studying Steiner's written works, the family would help to endow what is today the longest-running Steiner-inspired Waldorf school in the US or Canada.



*Mystic Rudolf Steiner standing in front of a scale model for the Goetheanum, what would become the headquarters for the Anthroposophical Society*

The Zentgraf family also helped support another German mystic, Johannes Greber, a former Catholic priest who received supernatural guidance and whose books, along with Rudolph Steiner's, were much on display in the family's Staten Island library. Among the prized texts was Greber's translation of the New Testament, which was said to have been drawn from an ancient but lost Greek codex that Greber located in the Akashic Records, the same psychic repository which Cayce consulted. What is interesting and unusual to note about Greber and Steiner's work is that Cayce—in trance—gave both mystics his stamp of approval. They were, according to Cayce's source, the real thing.



*Former Catholic priest Johannes Greber became a psychic explorer of the Akashic Records.*



Many other gifted psychics and spiritualists appearing in the Cayce readings were welcome guests in the Zentgraf and Ostwald homes. Among them was Dr. Emmet Fox, who was arguably the most popular and influential spiritual leader in New York City during the years between the two wars. His weekly "New Thought" healing services held at New York's Hippodrome and later at Carnegie Hall, drew crowds of over 5,000 people. Yet another house guest was renowned Irish-born medium Eileen Garrett, Europe's greatest psychic, who famously delivered a reading for Edgar Cayce in the Zentgraf family's sitting room on the same day that Cayce gave a reading for Garrett. What these pair of readings revealed about our multidimensional universe not only provided unique insight into how and why trance-induced information was made available, but the respective sources of that information.



*Irish-born psychic Eileen Garrett (left) was as popular in Europe as Cayce was in the US.*

Both Eleanor and her husband Adolph sat in on the Garrett trance sessions as they did a revolving door of lesser-known mediums and spiritualists. Besides Cayce, who inspired Eleanor to study naturopathy in the expectation that she and Adolph would be raising a family, a psychic who played a key role in Eleanor's subsequent parenthood dilemma was Horace Hambling, a famous British expatriate who channeled a 300-year-old Sioux Indian named Moon Trail. Hambling was purportedly so in tune with Moon Trail's spirit that he

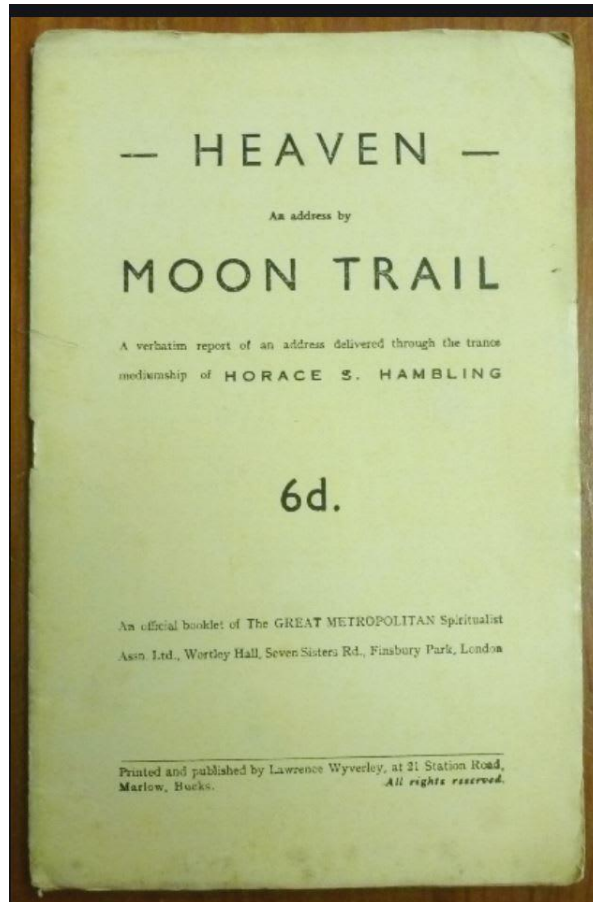
was described as taking on the facial appearance of a Native American when in trance and often-times lapsed into the Sioux language.



*British psychic Horace Hambling channeling Sioux Indian chief Moon Trail*

Most relevant to Cayce's subsequent 457-10 parenthood reading, Moon Trail reported seeing two spirits—a young boy and a girl—who hovered around Eleanor during seances and were presumed to be waiting in the wings for her and Adolph to start a family. What's particularly notable is that Cayce, too, saw a spirit child accompanying Eleanor. Edgar had a vision of a golden-haired boy protectively holding her hand and guiding her down the stairs of her family's Staten Island home.





*The Zentgraf family kept a large collection of esoteric literature in their Staten Island home library.*

Eleanor put off her decision to make a family for twelve years. The delay was a direct result of "Black Friday," when shares on the New York Stock Exchange collapsed in October 1929, precipitating what would become the deepest and longest-lasting economic downturn in world history. Adolph and Eleanor were on their honeymoon in Havana when clients began canceling their orders, and in the early months of the following year, worked night and day to keep Uniforms By Ostwald from shuttering its doors. Eleanor herself answered phones, took over billing and inventory, and personally inspected each garment before shipping. On many occasions, she would be sewing on buttons or making last-minute stitches on uniforms as a freight-handler was loading them onto a train for shipment to their destination. Adolph worked tirelessly on the shop floor repairing equipment and spinning out ideas on ways to streamline the manufacturing process.



*The Uniforms by Ostwald shop floor in New York's garment district*



Eleanor's father, Ernest, was certain that the economic downturn was a correction and that soon conditions would return to normal. Cayce, however, predicted something considerably more impactful. But despite Cayce's dire warning, he counseled Eleanor and Adolph to stay the course and that when the "evil days" passed, they would be stronger because of it. They were to keep working, institute austerity measures, and innovate with the changing times.

Though the Ostwald's financial position became more precarious and the couple moved into ever smaller homes and then a tenement apartment, Cayce's advice proved sound. Producing band uniforms was an ideal business when one-room schoolhouses were being retired in favor of ever larger schools with resources to buy band instruments and uniforms. Musical education would soon become an integral part of the curriculum, and marching bands would be performing at sporting and civic events.

Thanks to Cayce's step-by-step business as well as marital advice, the couple became partners in the truest sense of the word, and their company succeeded in an incremental but spectacular fashion. In this, a century before Velcro,

Adolph devised contractable and expandable one-size-fits-all uniforms which became cost-effective savings for high school and college bands. He also developed weather-resistant molded plastic inserts that replaced shellacked cardboard visors and shoulder pads which disintegrated when they got wet. The Ostwald uniforms, buyers discovered, could be worn in the rain. Another breakthrough was a distribution deal that Eleanor made with J.C. Penney. Uniforms By Ostwald had no salesmen nor the overhead associated with them, yet another major cost-savings that kept the company afloat.



*Ostwald band uniforms were distributed through J. C. Penney's department stores*

Adolph and Eleanor's dedication and creativity helped their company survive the Great Depression. And indeed, just as Cayce also suggested, band uniforms eclipsed all other sales. Still, there were times so challenging that employees went without salary, and creditors foreclosed on their warehouse with its upstairs apartment living-quarters. Adolph would later remark how Eleanor, who had grown up in a household with servants, met each new challenge with grace and humility, even when it meant moving to a below-

ground cockroach-infested tenement apartment and sharing 35-cent meals in the back room of a lower East-Side speak-easy. In one of Adolph's most humorous stories, he told of climbing the fire escape of their shuttered warehouse and breaking into the upstairs bedroom living quarters to retrieve a fur coat that Eleanor's mother had lent them.

Ernest Zentgraf, the major shareholder and CEO of the Louis De Jonge Company, had considerably more difficulty adapting to the spiraling economy. He too received Cayce trance advice recommending that he update his company's manufacturing procedures and find other cost-effective ways to consolidate his operations. Still, there is no evidence that he acted on the information. In numerous readings, Cayce detailed exactly what chemicals and solvents were to be used to produce his company's various paper products, how his equipment ought to be overhauled, and what personnel changes needed to be made. Most notably, Cayce provided guidance during what became a proxy war for control of the company and Ernest's removal as CEO.



*The Louis De Jonge Company headquarters at 73 Duane Street in Manhattan before its move to Staten Island*

In the absence of corporate records, it is impossible today to know if Cayce provided helpful advice. That Ernest and other family members continued to receive personal and business readings after he was removed as CEO, and that Ernest blamed himself and not Cayce for what happened, suggests that he

assumed fault. However, other readings, also conducted in 1933, make clear that Cayce's insights into Ernest's foreign business interests left much to be desired. Reading 3976-13 suggested that rumors of a new world war were "propaganda" and that "psychically led" Adolph Hitler would be good for Germany should their new chancellor avoid imperialism. Had Cayce accurately predicted the cataclysm about to unfold Ernest may not have made the decisions he did.

Either Cayce was not tuned in, or Ernest's attitudes in asking the questions made a difference. Regardless, it's interesting to note that, although Hitler's behavior cannot be interpreted as anything less than reprehensible, the readings referencing Germany's chancellor are not without insight worthy of closer examination. In the most notable, 3976-13, conducted at the Zentgraf's Staten Island home in November 1933, nearly five years before the Nazis marched into Austria, Cayce compares Hitler to the Biblical King Jehu, who had a divine mandate when he started out but then was condemned by God for his excessive zeal and bloodthirstiness in carrying out his mission. Maybe Ernest should have considered the text more carefully.

***\$173,529 IN 2 FUNDS GONE  
WITH TRUSTEE; E.W.  
Zentgraf, Missing Staten  
Island Executive, Is Called  
'Absconder' by Court.***

The family's downward spiral was only just beginning. In a failed effort to shore up one bad investment with another, Ernest lost his personal fortune, and with it, the Staten Island mansion and the Catskill's estate. Equally devastating, as the administrator of his extended family's trust, Ernest lost his siblings' entire savings—the equivalent of 35 million in today's dollars.

Despondent, Ernest decided to take his own life. After making funeral arrangements, he took the family pistol and left for the remote New Jersey



pine barrens. Had Edgar Cayce not intervened in some of his most unusual and uplifting trance sessions, this is where Ernest's personal story would reasonably have ended.

<b>FEAR STATEN ISLAND MAN SUICIDE HERE</b>	turer had registered last Tuesday at a hotel here, placed his suitcase, hat and topcoat in his automobile, and had driven to a garage for storage. That was the last seen of him, police said.
<b>Son's Search Fruitless; Locates Auto</b>	The missing man's son, accompanied by a friend, arrived here yesterday, after members of the family had communicated with New York police. The son recovered the car with the claim check mailed to Mrs. Zentgraf. The suitcase and clothes were in the car.
Following a fruitless search for his father, Ernest Zentgraf, jr., Staten Island, N. Y., left Reading yesterday.	
Police will continue their search today for Ernest W. Zentgraf, sr., 57, president of a glazed paper and book-binding company, who it is feared by the family may have contemplated suicide after mailing a claim check to his wife for his automobile, stored in a Reading garage. A check revealed the manufac-	
	<b>1/8 BARREL -OF- PURE SPRINGS \$2.25-BEER-\$2.25 HINES-WALTER CO. 23 S. 4th Dial 4-1771</b>

*Eleanor's brother Robert launches a search to find their missing father, Ernest*

The family counted their blessings that Ernest hadn't taken his own life, but the next tragic chapter in the Zentgraf legacy was already in motion. Rather than accepting financial help from Eleanor and Adolph, Ernest took his wife and three of their children to Nazi Germany, where Helene's family had gifted them a significant inheritance. The only catch was that the family had to give up their US citizenship and that the money they received had to stay in Germany. This wasn't a deal-breaker for the family in February 1938, before the declaration of war, when Ernest and Helene and three of their children made the move, but it became a problem when, later the same year, Hitler's policy preventing German assets from leaving the country became laws preventing Germans themselves from departing the country.





*Ernest and Helene Zentgraf in Bavaria, Germany*

Eleanor and Adolf had decided not to join the others in Germany. The primary reason, besides overseeing their now thriving company, was because Eleanor's biological clock was ticking. They wanted to raise a family but were undecided whether, given the circumstances, this was a good idea or not.

Desirous as she was to conceive, she feared for the future. In the previous war, German-language newspapers were either run out of business or chose to quietly close their doors, German-language books were burned, and Americans who spoke German were threatened with violence or boycotts. Her husband's name was Adolph, and their company's name was Uniforms By Ostwald.

"Here we have been fighting all these years to establish ourselves and now when there is a possibility of another dream coming true, this world goes crazy," she wrote Edgar in one of several heartfelt letters.

Eleanor had many other concerns, not the least of which was the fact that half of her family was trapped in Germany where they would likely remain throughout the war years, while family members left behind in the US, including her husband and two brothers, faced being drafted to fight a war that, quite literally, would pit one family member against another. Would her children ever get to meet their grandparents, aunts, and uncles, and if so, what would they know or believe about them?

REGISTRATION CARD—(Men born on or after February 17, 1897 and on or before December 31, 1921)			
SERIAL NUMBER T 1229	1. NAME (Print) ADOLPH OSTWALD		ORDER NUMBER T 10486
2. PLACE OF RESIDENCE (Print) 40 LEIGHTON AVE., YONKERS, WEST, N.Y.			
3. MAILING ADDRESS SAME			
4. TELEPHONE Yon 3-2165	5. AGE IN YEARS 41	6. PLACE OF BIRTH DUESSELDORF	
DATE OF BIRTH JULY 11, 1901 GERMANY			
7. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PERSON WHO WILL ALWAYS KNOW YOUR ADDRESS ELEANOR OSTWALD - 40 LEIGHTON AVE., YONKERS, N.Y.			
8. EMPLOYER'S NAME AND ADDRESS UNIFORMS BY OSTWALD INC. - 18 E 16 <sup>th</sup> ST., N.Y.C.			
9. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS SAME			
I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE			
D. S. S. Form 1 (Revised 1-1-42)		GPO 15-21630-1 (Registrant's signature)	

### *Adolph Oswald's draft card*

Eleanor, too, wrestled with medical concerns. With the stress of the Great Depression and keeping their company's doors open she had permitted herself to become overweight and worried that more than just her age might prevent her from getting pregnant and carrying a baby to term. Also distressing was her belief that mental illness, what today would be described as a bipolar disorder, ran in the family, and that she might pass a genetic predisposition for mental illness onto her offspring. At least one of her brothers had been hospitalized and a great aunt had committed suicide. So too, Eleanor believed, her father had suffered depression and manic behaviors long before his financial demise and decision to take his own life.



*Edgar Cayce seated at the desk in Virginia Beach where he corresponded Eleanor Oswald and many hundreds of other reading recipients.*

Readings conducted for Eleanor and Adolph between 1939 and 1941 (most notably 457-4) reassured her that should she fortify her body with supplements and practice a proper diet and other Cayce-related therapies, neither her age nor weight would be a hindrance to her having a child. Further, although a predisposition for mental illness ran in her family, this was present in the male line and would not be passed to her offspring.

Still, contemplating what might come through in a Cayce reading gave her the chills. "Even though I have absolute faith in the readings... [I am] fearful of the information which might come through," she wrote to Edgar. "Finally, however... I had more time to think of these things, I realized that the information has always been CONSTRUCTIVE. I might as well know the worst and if there was anything to be done about it you would tell me."

Despite her many reservations, she went ahead and asked for a reading, which was conducted in Virginia Beach on May 21, 1942 (see below for the entire text of this reading). Cayce had no trouble entering trance for a reading that volunteered answers to several questions that were on Eleanor's mind but notably, that she hadn't time to put in a letter.



*Edgar Cayce in the "Spook room" in Virginia Beach where he gave trance readings*

The substance of what came through in 457-10 can best be summed up in the reading's last paragraph: "For, remember, the soul that is brought into the earth is only lent to thee by the Lord. And the impressions, and that purpose that ye build into that... ye send back to thy Maker in the end."

The message conveyed here and throughout the reading is that the soul which Eleanor and her husband would bring into the world belonged to God, the supreme Creator, and hence it was not their place to determine the circumstances into which that soul would be born. That was God's job. Their responsibility was to care for that soul as they would treat a precious gift.

As the opening paragraph clearly states, Eleanor's task was to make preparations in "body, mind and spirit" for a soul's entrance into the material plane. She would, in essence, be offering herself as a channel. She and Adolph's attitude, or mindset, would create a vibrational field that would attract or draw the attention of a soul, but it was the soul's choice to be born to them.

The next remarkable concept was that she and her husband *could* influence the kind of person who would be born to them. While she was instructed to "leave... the spiritual aspects [of what is to happen] to God," Cayce also

suggested that they "prepare the mental and the physical body, according to the nature, the character of that soul being sought."

Mindful of what she and Adolph and their extended family had been through, Cayce recommended that she study the story of Hannah, the mother of Samuel, from the Old Testament. As described in the First Book of Samuel, Hannah had long desired to have a child but could not conceive and had also suffered many indignities as a result. In a crisis, she prayed for help from God and promised that a son born to her would be dedicated to the Lord. She indeed would give birth, not only to one son but three more sons and two daughters. In so doing, she became a prophetess with the ability to discern God's will.

The message here is that she should not fret over what might be, but put her faith in a higher power. Her task was for her and her husband to summon their courage and make themselves worthy of becoming a channel for the good that a soul could bring to the world.

"Is it right to bring a child into being in a world such as we have today, even though it may never know a normal life but only one of war and killing and anger and hate?" she asked.

Cayce responded by indicating that the mere asking of the question—the doubts she had created in her mind—required self-reflection. She must not doubt God's plan, regardless of the war and all that may come as a result. "If [your worries and concerns are] used as an excuse, if it is used as something to shield self and companion, then it is lost. If it is used as the opportunity, now, for fulfilling the purpose, it is gain. For, what is the first command by the Creator to man? 'Be thou fruitful and multiply.'"

Cayce's reference to God's commandment to be fruitful was not an order to produce as many children as possible but to view parenthood as a unique opportunity to multiply the love and goodness that parents are capable of bringing into the world. Expressing unconditional love is the opportunity that is being presented to them.

Once again in the reading, Cayce suggests that Eleanor look to the story of Hannah, who brought into the world a great leader during a time of challenge

and oppression. So, in answer to her question, Cayce is saying that there is never a bad time to nurture new leaders who can foster good in the world.

Next, Cayce says that Eleanor is to ask herself why she wants children. The answer must not be for self-gratification, but to better connect to the Divine, the Creative Forces, and become, as Cayce tells her, "That such shall be a channel of blessings to others."

Cayce goes on to answer questions that are of interest to anyone considering pregnancy and parenthood. The soul does not enter the child at conception, but may enter with his or her first breath, some hours before, or even afterward. This depends on circumstances that are out of the mother's control. The host mother, however, can have a positive influence on the soul by surrounding herself with beauty.

Eleanor also asked about what the child that may be born to her should be named. Horace Hambling, the psychic who told her that two souls were hovering about her, indicated that one of these souls was named Peter. She wondered whether this is the name she should give her child and whether this would make a difference. Cayce says that the child's name is more important to the people giving the name than to the offspring. "Names, to be sure, have their meaning, but as given by the poet, a rose by any other name would be just as beautiful or just as sweet."

Near the end of the reading, Eleanor asked about the vision Cayce had which parallels what Hambling reported. "Is the little boy Mr. Cayce saw, as a vision, with me, still waiting to come as my child?"

"This will depend upon the attitude of the individual," Cayce replied. What she and Adolph hold in their heads and in their hearts, Cayce makes clear, will impact the attraction of the soul that will be born to them. The soul born to them has free will. They are to prepare the way for that soul as best they can.

Cayce had echoed this same advice in the very first reading he had given her, 457-1: "Prepare self. Make way. Be sure that the body-physical, the body-mental, desires that as may make manifest that ideal as is sought to be shown



forth through the acts of the individual life, and the body-physical may be very sure there will be attracted to self THAT [what is] desired."

Lastly, Eleanor asks if there is anything besides prayer and meditation which she can do in preparation for receiving this new soul. This is the question that triggers the passage previously quoted that ends the reading. It encouraged the prospective parents to engage in: "the study of various phases of experiences of individuals through their relationship to Creative Forces, and their relationship to their fellow man. For, remember, the soul that is brought into the earth is only lent to thee by the Lord. And the impressions, and that purpose that ye build into that, is that ye send back to thy Maker in the end."

Thus, the reading ended.

Asking about whether to become parents, Eleanor learned that parenting is a creative choice by the parents. The reading freed her from the perspective that becoming a parent was an obligation that arose out of divine law, past-life karma, or predestination. It also freed her from the perspective that becoming a parent would ever be a mistake, even during challenging times. Asking about how to invite a new soul into her life, Eleanor was encouraged to focus on her mental and physical preparation and to leave the choice of the new soul to God.

Echoing the sentiment of many young women who have found inspiration in this reading, the message presented is distinctly non-judgmental. There is no reward or punishment associated with the quality of the parents' thoughts or intentions. Asking about how to develop parenting skills, the reading instead focuses on the same life skills that it encourages all individuals to develop through a focus on their relationship with the "Creative Forces" and with fellow human beings. The reading lovingly offered a sense of both liberation and empowerment to Eleanor and Adolph, allowing them to see themselves, and allowing us to see ourselves, as joyful partners with the spiritual forces in creating the future.

457  
"UNIFORMS BY OSTWALD" INC., 18 East 16th Street, New York City

September 14, 1942

Miss Gladys Davis,  
Arctic Crescent,  
Virginia Beach, Va.

Dear Gladys,

Don't remember your house address so am sending it to your office. Do you find it pleasant to have two addresses? I bet you do.

So now business first. I would like to have a copy of your circular on Meditation. I cannot find my old copy. Then I am sure that some weeks ago you or some one else from down there sent me something to sign for Mr. Cayce's new book. I'm sure I signed for it but I am not sure that I paid for it. Mr. Cayce wrote that no record could be found, so I want to make sure you have it. At any rate I think I only signed for one book and I want two- one Mr. Cayce can sign and write the message. The other I want to lend to people. So find enclosed my check for \$10.00.

I have found my readings very wonderful. I so want our child to have the full advantage of all the knowledge that we have gained physically, mentally and spiritually in all these years.

457  
Ernest had such a good time down there. He was all enthusiasm for your Southern hospitality. I was always a little worried about the size of the furniture. I know what a time we had in placing some of the pieces in our house. How different they looked. But Ernest says it isn't so bad and I'm glad of that. At least you have some of the necessities for the present.

457  
Ernest is also convinced that it was a good investment and that is a very satisfying thought these days.

It is fun to have a home of your own no matter how simple, isn't it? It is pleasant to figure out improvements and make plans and see them take shape. It is just like planting some seed and nursing the plant, seeing it grow and finally enjoying the flower. But it is work too. And if you don't watch out the work can get monotonous too. Also in a family there is diplomacy to be learned and when there are older people it is not always easy to keep harmony. Best of luck to you, my dear, may your dreams come true. Love, Eleanor.

*"I have found the readings very wonderful," Eleanor Ostwald wrote to Edgar Cayce in September 1942. (The Ernest referenced in this letter is not her father, Ernest Zentgraf, but her husband's older brother and business partner, Ernest Ostwald.)*

Eleanor would continue to receive medical and spiritual advice from Cayce throughout 1942. She became pregnant that December and delivered a healthy baby girl the following year. While Cayce had told her that names have their meaning, but that a rose by any other name would be just as beautiful or just as sweet, he nevertheless named the child in the first reading that Eleanor and Adolph received for the babe, 3172-1.



*Eleanor and her first-born, Eleanor Emily Oswald, born on August 19, 1943*

Eleanor Emily Oswald would grow up to become a happy and healthy young woman who devoted her life to teaching the handicapped sign language and other communication skills. It is interesting to note, in this regard, that in her first life reading, conducted 3 days after her birth, Cayce declares her to be "gifted especially in voice and in the use of the feet and hands... For this entity, the ability for accompaniments for the voice, as we find, would be the real accomplishment of the entity. These abilities should bring not only joy and hope to those about the entity but hope and pleasure to the many."



*Adolph Ostwald holding Peter, the family's second child, born on August 12, 1947*

Peter, a golden-haired child, was born to Eleanor and Adolph four years after his sister. He did not receive a reading because, by this time, Edgar had passed. He, too would be a happy and healthy young man and become an example of good in the world. Today, he is a part-owner and investor in a corporation that produces environmentally responsible water treatment products and green technology.

Eleanor would count her many blessings over 64 years of marriage. Besides the birth of her children and the draft board determining the necessity of her husband serving his country in a civilian capacity, was news at the war's end from her parents and siblings in Germany. Food had been scarce, deprivations had been many, but they had survived the ordeal. Eleanor's mother had taught English as a second language, and her father had obtained work at a bank. Eleanor and Adolph, through their company, arranged sponsorship for the family to return to America and bought them a home in rural Pennsylvania where they opened a nursery school.

Uniforms By Ostwald remained a family business until 1980, employing as many as 500 people and producing upwards of 2,000 garments a week. So successful and highly regarded was their company that they were granted the exclusive contract to produce the uniforms for West Point cadets. Their uniforms were also proudly worn by the "All American Band," a program that brought the best two musicians from each state to march together in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade and other high-profile venues. A movie that showcased the family's philanthropic work with young people, "The Boy that Blows a Bugle will never Blow a Safe," was put into development but never reached theaters because producer Jessie Lasky, a fellow Cayce reading recipient and a pioneer founder of Paramount Studios, died before shooting commenced.





*The Oswald family in the 1960s enjoy a sing-a-long. (Left to Right) Eleanor Emily, Adolph, Eleanor, and Peter. (Careful observers will note the bound volumes of Edgar Cayce readings (Individual Reference Files) on the upmost bookshelf on the left.)*

One can't credit the Cayce readings for the family's business or marital success. Rather, it was the spirit that Eleanor and Adolph brought to everything they did. This was the conclusion by a popular Miami radio-show talk host who paid tribute to the couple several years before Eleanor and Adolf, in 1993, passed through what Cayce called "God's other door." Eleanor was 85, Adolph was 92. Though the radio host had known and interviewed some of the most powerful and influential people of her generation, she chose Eleanor and Adolph, names the public didn't recognize, to honor in this way:

"Long before I knew the Oswald story, I recognized that Adolph and Eleanor were somehow "special." A casual conversation with either or both of them always left me wanting to know more about their lives and their family... and once or twice, when they were guests on my radio program, I got some tiny hint that I had only scratched the surface... Certainly, there is wisdom ... a vibrancy.... a marvelous and heart-warming adherence to the practical and



down-to-earth... and always a twinkle... Now that I know more [about them], I understand what I sensed. It is greatness undefined in words.



*The All-American Marching Band, with Uniforms by Ostwald, marching at the Rose Parade, in Pasadena, Ca. at the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, 1967.*

Note from the authors: This article was written with the help of Peter and Susie Ostwald, the University of Maryland Library's Special Collections in the Performing Arts, the Staten Island Historical Society, the Broome County Historical Society, and the Edgar Cayce Foundation archives.



## P R E S E N T

Edgar Cayce; Gertrude Cayce, Conductor; Gladys Davis, Steno.

## R E A D I N G

Time of Reading 3:35 to 4:05 P. M. Eastern War Time. New York City.

1. GC: You will have before you the entity, [457], ..., NYC, who seeks a Mental and Spiritual Reading, keeping in mind preparation of the entity's mind and spiritual forces for the creation and best development of a child; answering the questions she has submitted, as I ask them:
2. EC: Yes, we have the body, the entity's mind and body, the desires and purposes and aims.
3. In giving information, or in answering questions respecting mental and spiritual attitudes, all of these should be approached from THIS basis of reasoning, - especially as preparations are made in body, mind and spirit for a soul's entrance into the material plane.
4. While as an individual entity, [457], presents the fact of a body, a mind, a soul - it has been given as a promise, as an opportunity to man through coition, to furnish, to create a channel through which the Creator, God, may give to individuals the opportunity of seeing, experiencing His handiwork.
5. Thus the greater preparation that may be made, in earnest, in truth, in offering self as a channel, is first physical, then the mental attitude; knowing that God, the Creator, will supply that character, that nature may have its course in being and in bringing into material manifestation a soul. For, in being absent from a physical body a soul is in the presence of its Maker.
6. Then, know the attitude of mind of self, of the companion, in creating the opportunity; for it depends upon the state of attitude as to the nature, the character that may be brought into material experience.
7. Leave THEN the spiritual aspects to God. Prepare the mental and the physical body, according to the nature, the character of that soul being sought.

8. The fact that there has been in the experience of this entity and its companion the mind of doubt, because of material needs and because of mental aspects as may have been or might be a heritage physically, has delayed or prevented such activities. Remember, there is an example of such in the Scripture that the entity would do well to study, to analyze; not merely as a historical fact but the attitude not only of Hannah but of those about the entity who doubted the purpose.

9. Then, in that same attitude as that entity may this entity in that way bring those activities as may best endow self, as well as the offspring, to be a messenger, a channel to the glory of God and to the honor of self.

10. Ready for questions.

11. (Q) Is it right to bring a child into being in a world such as we have today, even though it may never know a normal life but only one of war and killing and anger and hate? (A) The doubt as created in the self, from the very asking of such a question, may be answered best in considering the attitude, the conditions which existed in those people's minds and activities at the period given as an example. If that does not answer, then to this entity it cannot be answered.

12. (Q) Should any thought be given to the possibility of draft of the [planned baby's] father [Mr. [412]]? (A) Whether this has the correct attitude, in whether this is to be a duty, an obligation or an opportunity of the father - this, too, must be settled in self's own mind.

13. (Q) Has there been much lost in spiritual development in these past years of absorption in material existence, or was this experience a necessary foundation for that yet to come? (A) It can be MADE such, as an experience needed. If it is used as an excuse, if it is used as something to shield self and companion, then it is lost. If it is used as the opportunity, now, for fulfilling the purpose, it is gain. For, what is the first command by the Creator to man? "Be thou fruitful and multiply." Yet this sets a natural law, a mental law, a spiritual law in motion, according to whether such activity is for the gratification of the flesh, of the mental self, or the fulfilling of a COMPLETE relationship to the Creative Forces.

14. (Q) Should I read any books for my spiritual development besides "A Search for God"? (A) Read the Book of all books - especially Deuteronomy 30, and Samuel - considering especially the attitude of Hannah, the conditions, the circumstances which existed not only as to its relationship to its husband and to other companions, but as to the needs for spiritual awakening in that experience - which exist in the world and the earth today. If the entity can and will so place self, and then studying John 14, 15, 16 and 17 - can ye make yourself as one with Him? These, as combined with the study of the preparation physically, may give the understanding; not as duty but an OPPORTUNITY to be a handmaid of the Lord.

15. (Q) Do thoughts of future mother have any direct effect or influence on soul attracted to be her child? (A) This should be, as ever, left in the hands of the Creator. Prepare the self mentally and physically, and leave that to the Lord; not merely passively but actively, knowing that in the same measure ye mete to others ye mete to thy Maker. Then, what manner of soul are ye attracting?

16. (Q) Does soul enter child at conception or birth or in between? (A) It may at the first moment of breath; it may some hours before birth; it may many hours after birth. This depends upon that condition, that environ surrounding the circumstance.

17. (Q) Are there souls waiting on the other side to come to this world as my children? (A) If the opportunity is offered, they will come.

18. (Q) Is it possible to influence this selection by the mental or spiritual thoughts of the prospective mother? (A) These should be, as indicated, left to the will, the purpose of the Father-God. What do ye seek? That such shall be a channel of blessings to others, or to satisfy or gratify thine own desires, or that ye in thy desire may fulfill the whole purpose HE, thy Maker, may have with thee? Art thou willing to pay the price for such?

19. (Q) While carrying the child do thoughts and impressions have any effect on the child? (A) To be sure. Thus, if surrounded with beauty, the more beauty there may be. Hast thou not read how that when Mary spoke to Elizabeth, the child leaped within the womb?

20. (Q) Do emotions such as fright, excitement, etc., have any effect on the child? (A) Depends upon how much of this goes beyond the real purpose of the individual entity caring for, or carrying, the child.

21. (Q) Is not the mother when carrying a child very close to God? (A) If she puts herself so! If not, it is merely a physical condition. It's a law - universal law, mental AND material. It may be either, or any, or all. Remember, the Lord thy God is One.

22. (Q) What is the meaning of names? I have been told that Martha should be my real name. Is there a reason why? (A) This comes rather as to the minds and purposes of those who give names to their offspring. Names, to be sure, have their meaning, but as given by the poet, a rose by any other name would be just as beautiful or just as sweet. So may such be said of these. Yet, as given by Him, names have their meaning, and these depend upon the purposes when such are bestowed upon an individual entity entering the earth's plane.

Have ye not understood how that in various experiences individuals, as their purposes or attitudes or desires were indicated, had their names henceforth called a complete or full name meaning or indicating the purpose to which the individual entity or soul had been called? So, all of these have their part. They are not ALL, as indicated. For, ALL is one. One is all, but each individual is impressed by the various phases of man's consciousness in materiality. These, as we find, have varying degrees of effect upon the consciousness or the awareness of individuals. For, "My Spirit beareth witness with thy spirit" is complete in itself.

23. (Q) Do names have a spiritual influence on people? (A) As has just been given.

24. (Q) Would it make any difference to me whether called [457] or Martha? (A) Depends upon how the individual associates names with same.

25. (Q) When would it be best to choose a name for the child? (A) When ye have determined as to the purpose to which ye hope, and which ye will, which ye are willing to dedicate same.



26. (Q) Does this have anything to do with the time when soul enters new body? (A) Nothing.

27. (Q) Is the little boy Mr. Cayce saw, as a vision, with me, still waiting to come as my child? (A) This may depend upon the attitude of the individual.

28. (Q) Is there anything besides prayer and meditation which I can do for my spiritual development and for this new soul? (A) As has been outlined, the study of various phases of experiences of individuals through their relationship to Creative Forces, and their relationship to their fellow man.

For, remember, the soul that is brought into the earth is only lent to thee by the Lord. And the impressions, and that purpose that ye build into that, is that ye send back to thy Maker in the end.

29. We are through for the present.

# Love Beyond the Grave

An unexpected trance communication provided solace to Edgar Cayce's grieving wife



Sidney and Nancy Kirkpatrick

Aug 9 [7](#)



*Edith Estella Smith and cousin Gertrude Evans (the future Mrs. Edgar Cayce) had been best friends since early childhood. (They also appear to have visited the same hairdresser!) So close was their bond that the love they shared triggered one of Edgar Cayce's most remarkable trance sessions.*

Among the Sleeping Prophet's most fascinating communications are "volunteer" readings—those in which information was given without the conductor asking Cayce to provide it. In 953-10, Cayce volunteered the details of a Milwaukee train robbery and identifies the thieves. In 5749-1, he describes a vision of Christ, and in 254-79, offers a profound message of encouragement to the A.R.E. staff in Virginia Beach. Most inspirational is 5756-13, in which friends and family members reach out from beyond the grave to remind Edgar and his wife Gertrude of the continuity of life and the everlasting power of love. \*



*Estella Smith, standing on the porch of the family home with her brother Raymond and their dog*

5756-13 was volunteered on July 9, 1934, at the end of a check medical reading for Stella Smith, Gertrude Cayce's first cousin and childhood best friend in Hopkinsville, Kentucky. Fifty-four-year-old Stella, dying from uterine cancer, had been in pain for nearly a decade. As Gertrude was some 800 miles away in Virginia Beach, she was unable to comfort her friend and

was distraught at the prospect of her passing. Then came the uplifting 5756-13.

"It's one of those things that come [in the readings] at times when we wonder what it is all about," Edgar remarked in a letter to a friend.

The reading came through at the conclusion of 569-22, just after Cayce, in trance, spoke the words: "We are through." Only Cayce was thirty-five minutes from being through!

After Gertrude gave Edgar the suggestion for waking, he ominously lay silent for several minutes, then spoke again: "There are some here that would speak with those that are present, if they desire to so communicate with them."

Gertrude, surprised, told Edgar to go ahead. "We desire to have at this time that which would be given."

While still in a hypnotic trance, Cayce proceeded to act as a receiver for communications from a variety of deceased family members and loved ones, and similar to other trance sessions, would have no conscious memory of what transpired.



*A virtual stampede of Gertrude Evans Cayce's deceased family rushed to reach out to her through a reading her husband Edgar gave for Estella.*

Once the channel was opened, so it seemed, there was a virtual stampede of those on the other side waiting to come through.

Cayce, overwhelmed, blurted out, "Don't speak all at once!"

Gertrude, who was conducting the reading, and Gladys Davis, who was taking stenographic notes, and two others in the room—secretary Mildred Davis and Edgar Cayce's father, Leslie—didn't have a clue what Edgar was talking about until a minute or so later when familiar names were referenced.

The first name to come up was "Uncle Porter," who had died in 1891. Then came "Dr. House," the physician who had married Gertrude's Aunt, Carrie Salter, and had been the chief physician at the Cayce hospital in Virginia Beach before his death in 1929. The spirit speaking to Cayce at this point in the reading identified himself as Gertrude's brother, Hugh Evans, who had died from tuberculosis in Texas in 1910.

Most remarkable was that all these people, along with others who were soon to make an appearance in the reading, were together as a family on the other side, just as they were previously together in flesh and blood. And more than just this, they were apparently living together in the afterlife in a home built by Gertrude's beloved grandfather, Samuel Salter, who had been a noted architect and builder before his passing in 1897.

Just as the senior Salter had lovingly constructed the home where three generations of his progeny had lived and raised their families and was where Edgar and Gertrude got married, he was back at work again, only on the other side. Never mind that he and the others who came through in the reading were all buried in the same cemetery in Hopkinsville, Kentucky





*Gertrude Evans Cayce, her aunt Carrie Salter (soon to become Mrs. Thomas House), and Estella Smith*

So too was Gertrude's brother, Hugh Evans, back to doing what he most enjoyed in life. The former short-stop for the Hopkinsville Moguls baseball team was now, on the other side, captain of the team. The character played by James Earl Jones in the movie *Field of Dreams* nearly had it right: "Build it and they will come."



*Hugh Evans of the Hoptown Moguls was back with the team!*

Unfortunately for everyone concerned, Gertrude and the others in the room could only hear half the conversation—only what Edgar, in trance, was saying to the spirit group. "He spoke as if over a telephone and we could only hear his side," Gladys later remarked.

One of the spirits that Edgar desired to communicate with was his mother, but she wasn't present. Hugh Evans—or whoever was speaking at that moment in the session—said not to worry. She was in another dimension, or sojourning in another place, and would presumably be joining the others when the time was right.

Another of the deceased referenced in the reading, and living in the new Salter house, was identified only as "little baby," and was presumed by Edgar and Gertrude to be their deceased child, Milton Porter Cayce, who passed in 1911 when he was less than two months old. On the other side he was apparently fully grown and was soon to come back or reincarnate in the flesh and blood.



*“Little Baby” Milton Porter Cayce, who died in early childhood, was ready to incarnate again*

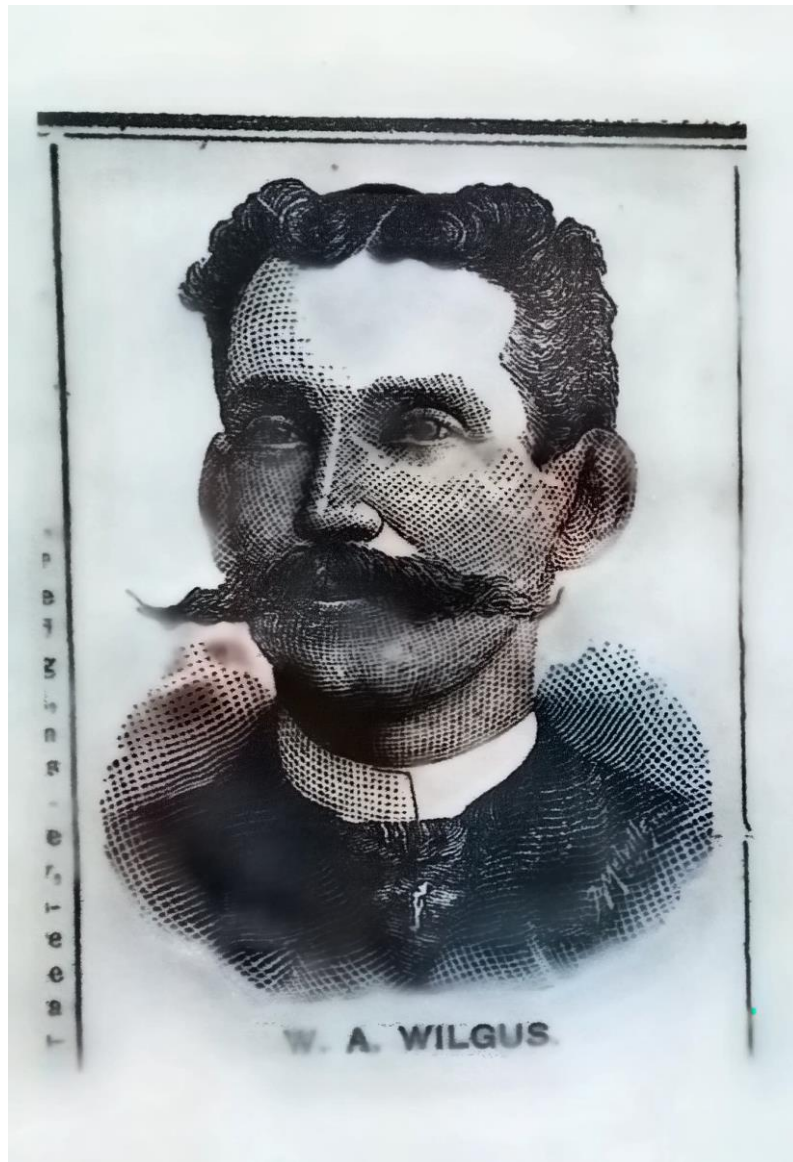
A message also came through for stenographer Gladys Davis from her deceased father, Thomas Jefferson Davis. Her father wanted Gladys to tell her older sister, Mary Frances, whose nickname was Tiny, not to be so severe on their younger sister, Lucile, who was called Cille. Unless she backed off, there would later be greater family discord.

Also came a message for Gladys' cousin, secretary Mildred Davis, who was sitting in on the trance session. But what exactly she was told, and by whom, isn't clear because those on the other side appear to once again be speaking all at once. Further, the meaning of remarks made when the reading was given is lost to us today because neither the Cayce nor Davis families submitted a report detailing who was who in the reading or what the significance of the messages was.

Among the more cryptic references are those pertaining to Cayce Jones, the son of Edgar Cayce's best friend and fishing buddy Lamar Jones. What makes this reference so fascinating comes from what we know about Cayce Jones from the 318 series of readings. Jones was the reincarnation of Edgar's deceased younger brother, Thomas Cayce, and in his present incarnation as Cayce Jones, he had the ability to see ghosts. Now, in volunteer reading 5756-13, Edgar Cayce speaks to one of the ghosts who visited with adolescent Cayce Jones. "It was you he saw!" Edgar blurts out but doesn't give us a name.

Similar to the cryptic Cayce Jones reference is an appearance by Cayce family friend William A. Wilgus, who had died in 1914, and was laid to rest in Hopkinsville's Riverside Cemetery along with virtually everyone else in 5756-13. Wilgus, who had once employed teenage Edgar as a hunting guide, had been so impressed with young Edgar that he had offered to pay his college tuition. Judging from the one-sided conversation now taking place, Wilgus had lost his interest in hunting, and taken to religion. Somehow or another he is arriving in town—presumably Hopkinsville—by train. Accompanying him in the Pullman are no less than the deceased Dwight

Moody and George Stewart, revivalist pastors who had been such an inspiration to Edgar as a young man.



*William Wilgus sought to set the record straight about a bequest he had left Edgar Cayce before his death.*

The otherworldly stream of consciousness ends with a matter-of-fact statement similar to how one might end a friendly telephone conversation: "Alright. Good-bye."

Some or all of the entities are back in 5756-14, which was conducted eight days later to make sense of the earlier reading.

One of several interesting points in this follow-up reading is the recommendation not to use the term "spirit communication" for what occurred in the previous volunteer reading, but to rather think of it as "soul communication." In other words, the otherworldly visitors were not ghosts or trapped spirits. They were the souls of loved ones who had continued the journey into the next dimension.

As Cayce poetically makes clear, "the soul lives on," and all that has changed is "the release of the soul body from a house of clay." The message here, as later in the reading, is the same. Those deceased whom you love and who love you are still with you, including deceased babies. Edgar and Gertrude are told: "They have gone nowhere; they are about thee EVER. Thou hast seen [the presence of] thine mother; thou hast seen thine child... that will come again."

Cayce goes on to describe that with the proper attunement, communication between the dead and the living may take place, and that such attunement had occurred while Cayce was giving the reading for Stella. The great love and empathy Edgar and Gertrude have for Stella has apparently permitted what is described as "a oneness of purpose." Further, Cayce is said to have the ability to use this channel on a more frequent basis to contact the dead, but is counseled from doing so. Delving into such realms creates great strain and may lead to dementia, he is told.

"And he is thought crazy enough anyway!" comes the message.

The most important thing conveyed is the assurance of the continuity of life and the power of love. This is poignantly stated in the second to last exchange when Gladys asks how it is that her beloved father came through in the message to her. Cayce says: "LOVE goes far beyond what ye have called the grave."





*the last known photo of Edith Estella Smith, 1880-1943, taken on as visit to Virginia Beach*

\*these and other volunteer readings can be accessed online at [edgar cayce.org](http://edgar cayce.org)

# True-life Ghost Stories from the Edgar Cayce Archives

Discarnate souls trapped on the earth plane do not necessarily come to us for our benefit, but for their own.



Sidney and Nancy Kirkpatrick

Oct 29 [8](#)



*The empty seats of the church began to fill with ghosts...*

The Edgar Cayce family of Virginia Beach were not ordinary folks and their neighbors knew it. Twice a day, nearly every day except for Sundays, Edgar would retreat to his study, enter into a hypnotic trance, and with the help of his wife Gertrude and stenographer Gladys Davis spend forty-five minutes to an hour communicating with the spirit world. What the neighbors didn't know was that Edgar, in a waking state, also entertained ghosts who dropped by for friendly chats, or in one case, briefly took-up residence in an upstairs bedroom.

Conversing with ghosts was nothing new for Edgar. As a five-year-old in rural Kentucky, he frequently visited with his dead grandfather, Thomas Jefferson Cayce, who had been killed after being thrown from a horse. Little

Edgar's ghostly conversations became a matter of great concern to his aunt, Lulu Boyd Cayce, who advised Edgar's parents that they should take their son to see a doctor. Either that or a priest. "He's got the Devil in him," Lulu told Edgar's father Leslie. "No good can come of this."



*One of the first ghosts to appear to young Edgar was his deceased grandfather, Thomas Jefferson Cayce.*

The subject had first come to the family's attention because Edgar was spending so much time alone in the family tobacco barn. When asked what he was doing, Edgar matter-of-factly declared that he wasn't alone. Grandpa was there. According to Edgar, Grandpa was out in the fields too, working alongside the farmhands, helping without them knowing it by reminding them of chores that needed to be done. Little Edgar went on to say that grandpa could sometimes be hard to see, that he frequently appeared in "beams of light," and that if Edgar looked really hard, he could see right through him.

Thomas Jefferson Cayce's favorite place to sit, Edgar confided, was under the eaves of the barn, near a robin's nest. Edgar offered to show his Aunt Lulu the spot, but she sternly declined. This was strange behavior indeed, but what really frightened her were the stories Edgar said his grandfather had been telling him about the Cayce family's distant past. These stories were not the kind easily produced by the overactive imagination of a five-year-old, but authentic accounts of the Cayce family's early years in Virginia, before

coming to Kentucky, stories that only the older generation would know about.



*Edgar's Aunt Lulu, seated at center with the Cayces of Beverly, believed Edgar should be examined by a doctor. Either that or a priest. "He's got the Devil in him," she told Edgar's father Leslie (top row, second from right). "No good can come of this."*

At age thirteen Edgar was visited by an angel. Some accounts say that the visitation took place under a favorite willow tree at the back of the house. Edgar himself, however, said that the spirit appeared to him in his bedroom, after he had spent a long day reading his Bible and asking how he could be of service to the Lord. He had eaten dinner and, as usual, gone to bed after helping his mother with the chores. His sisters were fast asleep in beds adjacent to his own when he suddenly awoke and saw what he described as a powerful light coming through the doorway.

"I felt as if I were being lifted up," Edgar later wrote. "A glorious light, as of the rising morning sun, seemed to fill the whole room, and a figure appeared at the foot of my bed. I was sure it was my mother and called [out], but she didn't answer. For the moment I was frightened, climbed out of bed, and went to my mother's room. No, she hadn't called. Almost immediately, after I returned to my couch, the figure came again. Then it seemed all gloriously bright—an angel, or what, I knew not, but gently, patiently, it said: 'Thy prayers are heard. You will have your wish. Remain faithful. Be true to yourself. Help the sick, the afflicted.'"

Edgar slept very little that night. Once the vision had faded, he rushed outside to his favorite willow tree, and through its branches, the moon seemed to shine more brightly than he had ever seen it. He knelt beside the tree and thanked God for answering his prayers. In the morning, as the sun began to rise, he awoke to find himself still sitting under the tree. A squirrel came down from one of the branches and searched for nuts in Edgar's pocket. He felt a sudden sense of joy and release as if the mysteries of his early childhood had come into sharp focus. It was at that moment that Edgar believed he had obtained his first true insight into the life that lay ahead of him. He would be doing "God's work," though exactly what he was to do, and how he was to prepare himself were questions he hadn't yet begun to address.

More than three years would elapse before he summoned the courage to tell anyone about the angel's visit. To have done so would surely have upset Aunt Lulu and the rest of the family, and even if he had felt up to facing an interrogation at home, and the one that would inevitably have followed at church, he didn't feel he had the skills to convey the intensely personal nature of his vision or to avoid public mockery and skepticism. "I had no way of knowing which was more real," he later confessed, "the vision of the lady or the pillow I rested my head upon."

In Edgar's later years in Virginia Beach, these and other stories about his childhood were widely circulated in newspapers, magazines, and *There Is A River*, the first Cayce biography. What wasn't publicly acknowledged were the visits by ghostly apparitions that were still a part of his daily life. Among the local villagers, he was already notorious for his hypnotic trance sessions, so he and the rest of the Cayce family were happy to keep quiet about what else was going on. An unconscious psychic (who channeled while asleep) was somehow less threatening, so the rationale went, than a conscious clairvoyant at large in the community. What would fellow parishioners at the Presbyterian Church think?

The irony is that some of the best-documented incidents actually occurred while Edgar was at church. On Tuesday, November 15, 1932, for example, Edgar was teaching his weekly bible study class. He was at first disappointed that so many of his regular attendees hadn't come that evening. But as he began his lesson—a biblical discussion of the admonition of Joshua—the



empty seats began to fill with ghosts. Edgar's father, Leslie, who was attending the class, couldn't see what Edgar saw, but from the look of astonishment on his son's face, he knew that something unusual was taking place. After the class, Edgar explained to Leslie what had happened: "I saw the entire section of the church fill with those disincarnate entities, people of many faiths ... Many I knew. Many I did not."

On another occasion, May 7, 1934, when Edgar was giving a talk on the second coming of Christ, the church again filled with the dead. The larger crowd this evening, as the readings suggest, was because Edgar, in a previous incarnation, had been Lucius of Cyrene—the follower of Jesus who wrote the gospel of Luke, which provided the most concrete and precise account of Jesus' birth, ministry, death and resurrection. Those in attendance in Virginia Beach's Presbyterian Church—both the living and the dead—may actually have been treated to what amounted to a first-person discourse on what was, and was to be. No wonder he packed the house!

Not long before that, on October 22, 1933, Byron Wyrick, a close friend of Edgar's, suddenly appeared in the Cayce's Virginia Beach living room while Edgar was listening to his favorite Sunday night radio gospel show. "I realized my friend was sitting there with me listening to the music," Edgar said. "He turned to me and said, 'Cayce, there is the survival of the personality... but [the life of prayer] is the only life to live.'" What made this incident extraordinary was that Wyrick had been injured in an accident and had died six months before this visit. (Incidentally, in trance Cayce had said that Wyrick had been, in a previous incarnation, the model for the face on the Great Sphinx at Giza.)



*Edgar enjoyed sitting in his Virginia Beach living room with the ghost of Byron Wyrick while listening to their favorite Sunday night radio gospel show.*

As Gertrude would later report, Wyrick became a regular visitor to the Cayce household after that, always making his appearance on Sunday nights in time to join Edgar listening to the gospel hour on the radio. But he was by no means the only unseen visitor to their home. As everyone in the household acknowledged, Edgar carried on one-sided conversations so frequently that they became almost commonplace. Three such incidents are worth noting because they provide insights into why—to Edgar's way of thinking—discarnate spirits sometimes remained "earthbound," and how he could help them make the transition to another plane of consciousness.

In one incident, late in 1936 in Virginia Beach, Gertrude, a light sleeper, awoke to the sound of rapping on their second-floor bedroom window. By now, accustomed to such phenomena, she elbowed Edgar in the ribs to wake him up and asked him to see who it was. Hovering outside was a woman named Bunchie, whom the Cayces had once employed at their photo studio in Selma, Alabama. Gertrude couldn't see her, but Edgar did. (She was well-liked by the Cayces in Selma, but not for her intelligence, something which may have figured into what came next.)

Edgar reported reaching out to touch her, but as soon as he did, she vanished, only to reappear a few minutes later. At Gertrude's request (she wanted to get some sleep), Edgar invited Bunchie to meet him downstairs at the front door. Bunchie's ghost came in through the door and she and Edgar proceeded to chat for an hour or so. She had come thinking she was ill and needed Cayce's trance medical advice, which presented a problem for Edgar since she was already dead.

Edgar did not learn when or how she had died, only that she didn't realize she had. She apparently had no sense of time, either, and spoke of seeing Edgar's father in Selma recently, though it had been many years since Leslie had been there. She also told Edgar that she was still being treated for an illness by a Selma physician, Dr. Furniss, who Edgar would later learn had also passed away. Asked how she had found Edgar, she said she had overheard a conversation in Selma about their move to Virginia Beach and had now come looking for him, hoping Edgar could save her life.

Edgar broke the tragic news to her. She had already succumbed to the illness and died. He told her to stop concentrating on the illness that had obviously obsessed her, and that she should "look for the light" that would lead her to where she was supposed to go. Bunchie never returned to the Cayce home again.

A year after this incident, another ghost visited the Cayces, only this time it was permitted to remain for more than a month, during which time everyone in the household became convinced of its presence. The ghost was Edgar's father, Leslie, who had died at age eighty-three on April 12, 1937, while on a trip to Nashville to visit his daughters, Annie and Sarah. A fire had broken out in the upstairs apartment of Annie Cayce's house, and while escaping the building, Leslie suffered burns on his head and neck, which, due to his advanced age, hastened his death. An emergency reading for Leslie that was conducted immediately after the fire, began, "It is the end."



*Leslie B. Cayce seated in the backyard of Edgar's Virginia Beach home before his death, soon to return to the home as a ghostly presence.*

About a week after Leslie's funeral in Hopkinsville, family members began hearing strange noises in his former bedroom at the top of the stairs in Virginia Beach. Hugh Lynn swore he heard his grandfather's distinctive heavy breathing. Gertrude and Gladys also heard someone walking around. Edgar went into the room to see for himself. When he came out, he reported the bad news first: "Leslie's back." The good news was next: "He'll only be here for a few [more] days." As if to casually explain the phenomenon, Edgar described the conversation he had had with his deceased father. "In his mind he is trying to straighten out his papers... He'll not be here long. Don't bother him because it will upset him and he can't communicate, can't make himself heard."

Hugh Lynn found it rather curious to be living with a ghost and availed himself of the opportunity to see if nonfamily members could hear or see what was apparent to Gladys and the Cayces. He decided to use the mailman as a test subject. The mailman, whom everyone in the family knew quite well, was invited into the house and asked to walk up the stairs to see if he could hear anything unusual. According to Hugh Lynn, when the mailman was halfway up the stairs he too heard Leslie's breathing. He looked at Hugh Lynn very strangely and asked, "Isn't that where your grandfather stayed?" Hugh answered: "Yes." Then the mailman asked what the sound was that he was listening to. Hugh Lynn said, "It's my grandfather. He's back." The mailman allegedly turned white and bolted from the house. From that day on he

wouldn't bring the mail to the door, but tossed it into the hedge, running as he left the yard.

A few days after the incident, a great deal of noise began emanating from Leslie's room. Hugh Lynn headed for the stairs to see what was the matter. "Don't do that," Edgar warned. Hugh Lynn didn't listen to his father and rushed up the stairs anyway, and at the top of the stairs ran smack into what he believed to be his grandfather.

"I could feel him," Hugh Lynn said. "Every hair on my head went straight up in the air. I don't know how I knew it, but I just knew it was my grandfather. It was cold, but quite a different chill, and it was like running into cobwebs in the dark woods, very fine when they touch you, but when you wipe them away there is nothing there."

Then there was the ghost of Frank Mohr, who had suffered a stroke in July 1937, brought on by arterial sclerosis, and died on February 1, 1938. In July 1940, Mohr appeared to Edgar in a dream, in which Mohr told Edgar that he would receive a letter from Mrs. Grace Wilson, a longtime friend of Mohr's who had received physical and life readings from Edgar in the late 1920s. A few days after the dream, Edgar did indeed receive a request from Mrs. Wilson for a reading for James Taft, her son-in-law, a musician who had recently been confined to a tuberculosis sanitarium in Monrovia, California.



### Mohr Funeral

Funeral services for Frank E. Mohr, aged 78 years, were held Thursday, Feb. 3, 1938, at Columbus, O., with burial in the Green Lawn cemetery there.

Mr. Mohr, who was born in West Salem township, Mercer county, was formerly president of the Mohr-Minton Coal Company of MoArthur, O., and of the Nortonville, Ky., Coal and Coke company. At that time he also was president of the Nortonville bank.

He built the railway between Gallipolis, O., and Point Pleasant, W. Va., and in later years engaged in the home building business in Columbus. He was a resident there for 43 years and a member of King Avenue Methodist Episcopal church.

Mr. Mohr is survived by his wife, Ella Myers Mohr; a daughter, Mrs. Helen M. Cooperrider, wife of Dr. George W. Cooperrider; three brothers, George of Columbus, William of Victor, W. Va., and Herman Mohr, of Maysville, and a sister, Mrs. Fred Koser of Dallas, Ore.

Thanks to the intervention from the spirit of Frank Mohr, Edgar immediately did the reading, which recommended a treatment not unlike that which had saved Gertrude's life from tuberculosis twenty-six years earlier. James Taft's health improved greatly upon following Cayce's recommendations but, several months later, his condition took a turn for the worse, and he died. Edgar shared the family's grief and was at a loss to explain what had gone wrong. Frank Mohr answered that question in a dream Edgar had a few days after Taft's death. Mohr told Edgar that the reading had been a good one and that the musician had died because he had neglected to follow through on the recommended treatments.

Mohr visited Edgar once more in an even more dramatic way—during a health reading for Mohr's wife, Ella, who had been suffering from a heart condition. In the middle of the session, Mohr appeared to Edgar, telling him, "No, no, Mr. Cayce, Ella wants to come on [to be with me on the other side]. Don't prevent her." Ella Mohr died the day after the reading. In Edgar's

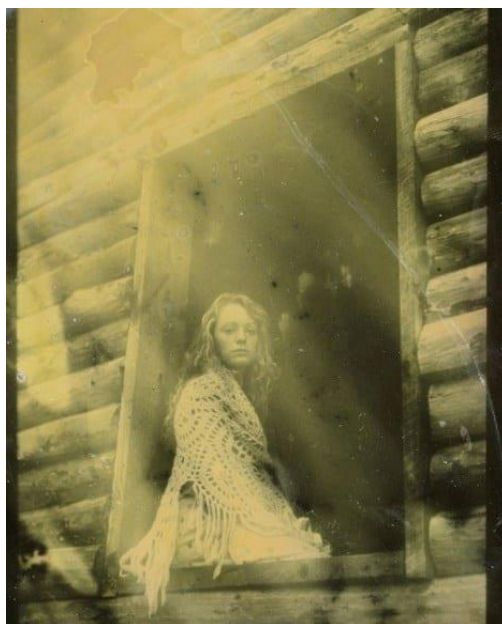
heartfelt letter of condolence to the Mohr's daughter, Helen, he assured her that Ella, like Frank, lived on in another plane. "They have only gone through God's other door and we must not worry too much for them."

These and other ghostly encounters suggest that discarnate spirits do indeed inhabit our earthly realm and that if an individual is sensitive or attuned to the spirit world, as was Cayce, communication can take place. How and why such spirits exist among us is determined, the readings tell us, by whatever "form" that spirit creates or "assumes itself to be." If, for example, a spirit can't accept its passing, or for a variety of reasons is unwilling or unable to move beyond the earth plane, this is where it remains until it chooses to leave. As the readings tell us, "many an individual has remained in what is called death for... years, without realizing it was dead... The ability to communicate and attempts to do so are what usually disturb or worry [the dead]."

Cayce, in trance, described these earth-bound discarnate spirits as manifesting as "pictures" or "expressions" of how they once appeared in flesh and blood. Also in trance, Cayce cautioned not to rely on information from them as these spirits are not necessarily any wiser, insightful, or helpful than they were before they had died. Simply because they no longer have human bodies doesn't bring enlightenment. Further, the channel or "pattern" of communication is dependent upon the ability or "attunement" of both the communicator and the receiver, much as, the readings tell us, a radio transmitter might work. In other words, as with any communication, there can be impediments and miscommunication. More often than not, the readings suggest, communication is limited to a subconscious or "thought form" level, as in a dream or a sudden and unexplained impulse.

Many other insights can be gleaned from the readings, but one of the most important relates to why visitations take place. Whether the communications are from angelic spirits or discarnate souls trapped on the earth plane, they do not necessarily come to us for our benefit, but for their own. In other words, discarnate spirits and angels too, have an agenda. The spirits want our help, not—as one would imagine—the other way around. This is why Cayce cautioned not to recklessly engage discarnate spirits by experimenting with Ouija boards and crystal balls (yes, Cayce acknowledged, such devices could

be used, with proper attunement, to channel the dead). "Know that they come to you for aid, not to aid you," the readings warn.



*Discarnates want our help, not the other way around!*

When confronted by a discarnate, Cayce advised providing the entity with aid or direction, whether it is guiding the discarnate to the light of God or sending them love and understanding through prayer. The important thing is to protect ourselves and loved ones in the process, by what we hold in our heads and in our hearts. Our intentions must be of the highest order.

Two ghost-related encounters from the Cayce readings make this quite clear, as they shed light on how an unwelcome discarnate can wreak havoc in our personal lives, and what we can do about it. The first was for Amanda White, a fifty-six-year-old Virginia housewife who was considering leaving her husband, who was alcoholic. She described how, after binge drinking, her husband would black out, become violent, acting as if he were someone altogether different from the man she had married. Cayce, in trance, told her that her concerns were warranted, and she should take action. The reason he blacked out when he was drinking was because a discarnate entity, hovering about him, seized the opportunity to "possess" him. The presumption here and in other readings, is that there exist spirits who are trapped in the earth realm because of their addictions, and who take the opportunity, when available, to slip into the body of a living person who shares their addiction, vicariously experiencing what they most craved in life.

Cayce, in trance, offered both medical and spiritual advice to the distraught woman and her husband. When sober, Mr. White should avail himself of the Radiac, a low-level electrical device that would help reduce his desire for alcohol. However, the sleeping Cayce said that her husband's recovery from addiction (and protection from the discarnate), would not be possible unless he truly desired to get well. As for Mrs. White, the advice was to be understanding and sympathetic to his condition, but to not put herself in harm's way or to debase herself by giving in to anger, resentment, and fear. She would find peace and protection from within, through "kindness, gentleness, and prayer."

The second reading was given for Cayce Jones, the infant son, (named in Edgar's honor) of his best friends in Selma. Edgar, in trance, described the child as being particularly psychic, one who would do well to enter the ministry or become a communicator of the realms beyond. (He became a radio talk-show host). Ten years later, when Edgar was visiting Selma, the child's mother related a curious phenomenon that was creating a great strain on their family life. She told Edgar that young Cayce Jones would not go alone into their new house unless accompanied by a parent. When the mother asked her son what the problem was, he simply replied: "You would not understand."



*Psychically inclined Cayce Jones, standing alongside Edgar (middle), and his father, Lamar (left), refused to enter his family's new home because of an unearthly presence inside.*

The parents asked Edgar to look into the matter. After discussions with the child, it soon became apparent that the boy had indeed begun to manifest the

psychic abilities foretold in his first life-reading. He confided to Edgar what he was reluctant to tell his parents: that he believed that the ghost of someone who had died in the house had remained behind. The child was "picking up" disturbing psychic vibrations from the discarnate. In discussions with Edgar, the problem was easily resolved. Cayce Jones had only to take a living thing into the room with him, something he loved or cared for, whether it was a caged bird or a potted plant, to offset the vibrations of the unwanted presence.

The lesson here, as in so many readings, is that love trumps all. As Edgar later reported in a letter to a mutual friend in Selma, the experience confirmed what he knew to be true, and what the child discovered for himself each and every time he subsequently entered the house. "A bird or the flower... [has] Life, and Life is God. [and God is Love.] And when He is with me... nothing can harm."



# Remembering George Conjar: 1924-2020

Edgar Cayce saved his life. By word and good deed, he passed the blessing forward



Sidney and Nancy Kirkpatrick

Nov 23, 2020 [7](#)



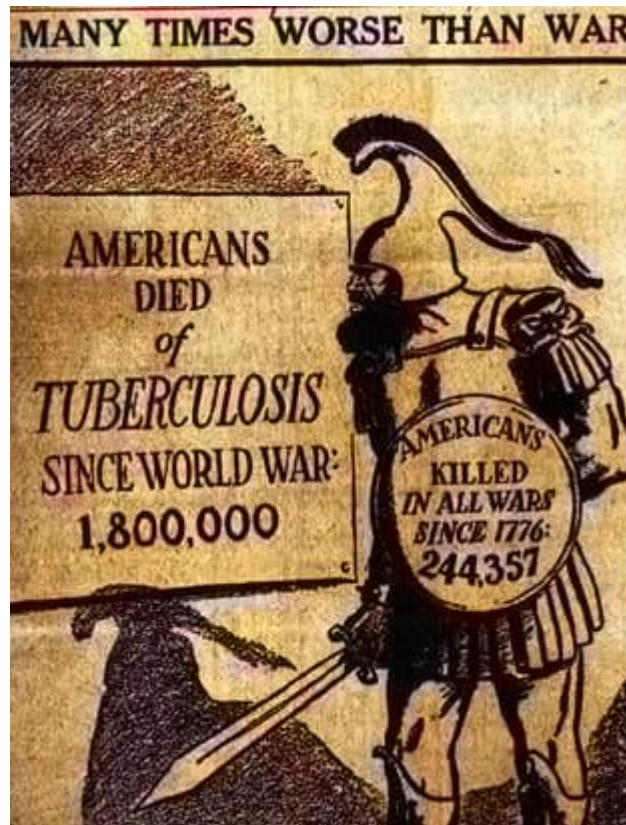
*George and Jacqueline Conjar of Middletown, PA*

## Remembering George

*"You're doing fine, just fine..."* nineteen-year-old George Conjar was told.

These were the words spoken by Dr. Charles Custer, chief of medical services at the Pennsylvania State Tuberculosis Sanatorium at South Mountain, intended to comfort the young man. Only Conjar, in room 441 of the South Mountain men's ward, in a building complex where he had lived for the past three years, knew he wasn't fine. Tuberculosis had destroyed his left lung and

the infection had spread to his right. He was spitting up mouthfuls of bloody mucus; fever and cold sweats kept him from sleeping; he had lost nearly twenty pounds in the last 11 weeks. But on this day, July 8, 1943, he had reason to believe his prayers would be answered. Three hundred miles away in Virginia Beach, Edgar Cayce was going into trance to try and save his life.



Four years earlier Conjar was a happy and healthy high school junior in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, one of five children born to a family of working-class Eastern European immigrants. An honors student, he was class president and played varsity baseball and football. Then, in the late fall of 1939, while playing an away football game on a particularly cold and rainy afternoon, he was injured and later became ill with pneumonia. He spent the Christmas holidays in bed and returned to school when the next semester began.



*George Conjar looked forward with great anticipation to Spring baseball season, 1939*

By all outward appearances, he seemed to be doing well, but when his school tested him for tuberculosis, the results came back positive for "incipient stage" TB in his left lung. TB being a contagious disease, he was taken out of school. By state mandate, he was then sent to a preventorium, an institution designed to contain and treat children who had been exposed to tuberculosis but were not yet symptomatic.



*Children arriving by bus at the South Mountain Preventorium*

Conjar's three-month stay at the South Mountain Preventorium was not altogether an unpleasant experience—more like a "*summer camp*," he later told Cayce researchers, except that the kids—ranging in age from 15 months to 18 years—were rarely permitted outdoors. There was still plenty of exercise, however, mostly in the form of calisthenics and swimming in one of two indoor pools, along with the occasional outdoor baseball game. In addition to the indoor pools, the massive four-floor building in which he lived contained an auditorium, a library, four classrooms where nutrition, hygiene, and a wide range of other subjects were taught, and lounges where patients could go to listen to the radio, play cards, and talk among themselves.



*George Conjar kept the above photo of three friends from the South Mountain Preventorium tucked in the pages of his bible.*

Conjar easily made friends among the approximately three hundred patients who lived in the dormitory-style sleeping quarters, and with regular visits from his family, the months passed quickly. He was sure that he had beaten the disease. He had gained weight, thanks to the generous helpings of food served three times a day and had put on muscle, the result of the calisthenics. He was looking forward to football and starting his senior year when, as a routine procedure before release, he was retested. The X-ray showed his left lung had worsened. Rather than being sent home, he was remanded to the South Mountain Sanatorium, a seven-floor hospital and cottages complex directly across the street from the Preventorium. As there was no known cure TB, this was where patients went to die. A few months or years. It was just a matter of time.





### *South Mountain Sanatorium*

Where patients in the preventorium were children, here there were young and old alike, nearly a thousand TB sufferers in total. With the constant reminder that death was the inevitable next step—the South Mountain TB cemetery was directly behind the building—there was a sense of gloom and despondency.

George experienced the same wide range of shifting emotions as the others: hope, despair, love, sorrow, happiness, and tragedy. He enjoyed playing cribbage, visiting the chapel, walking the hallways, and living in a quaint cottage where other patients with less severe cases lived. This was where he was staying when his first phrenicotomy was performed. The procedure involved making a small incision in the skin just above his collarbone and "crushing" the phrenic nerve, thereby paralyzing a portion of his diaphragm and diminishing the volume of air he could take into his lungs. The procedure may have been moderately effective in slowing down the progress of his infection but left him sick to his stomach and increasingly having to gasp for air.



*Patients at the South Mountain Sanatorium*

By the end of the first year, his disease was considered moderately advanced and he was moved into the main hospital building. Treatment was advanced to include pneumothorax, which consisted of pumping air into the pleural cavity around his left lung and thereby collapsing the diseased area. Still, his condition continued to deteriorate. In addition to coughing up blood, there was fever and night sweats. So sensitive was his stomach to food that he could eat only breadcrumbs. As would eventually become his routine, he kept slices of bread in his bedroom drawer and throughout the day put tiny crumbs on his tongue until they dissolved.

When X-rays showed that his right lung was also now infected, physicians recommended a thorocoplasty, in which several of his ribs would be removed to permanently collapse his left lung so that his right lung might be spared. For George—a former football and baseball player, once proud of his body and his strapping good looks—this was a nightmare. He had only to look across the dining room to see the thorocoplasty patients—*"slumped over like hunchbacks,"* as he said, to know his future.



Despondent, believing his life was over if he stayed at South Mountain any longer, he packed his things, and telling no one, slipped out the front gates and hitch-hiked home. He was warmly received by his family—not so friends and neighbors. Anyone who came into contact with him could potentially become infected. He was also too weak to even do routine chores around the house and was unwelcome at the local hospital. Physicians didn't want their patients exposed to him. Five months later, just shy of his eighteenth birthday, he returned to South Mountain, now resigned to his fate.

One of the roommates he enjoyed playing cribbage with was a young Presbyterian seminary student, Howard Roemer. Like George, he was in the critical stage of the disease. He had dropped twenty pounds, suffered nausea, and the mere sight of food made him sick. After one of their many conversations, Howard gave him a new book by author Tom Sugrue, *There Is*



*A River*, the first Cayce biography, which had only been released the month before. George liked it so much that he immediately decided to write to Cayce at the Association for Research and Enlightenment in Virginia Beach and obtain a reading. Had he known how many unfilled demands there were already for Cayce readings—the backlog was nearly two years ahead—he might have been discouraged from even trying. But George, as he later admitted, was naive. "I had to try."

State Sanatorium,  
South Mountain, Pa.  
May 31, 1943.

Dear Mr. Cayce:

An enclosing application you so graciously forwarded. Thank you very much for your kindness. Though I am without funds at the moment I shall not forget to realize my indebtedness to you when I am able.

Your letter failed to mention whether or no the distance reading for me, is suitable or not. Will you let me know in your next letter? In anticipation of your reading, my excitement really can't be described. I'll do anything in regards to it that will allow the most convenience for you.

Before closing, I want to say that your reading will be followed through completely, and everything pertaining or relating to its efficient discharge carried out. Thanking you again with all my heart

I remain in all sincerity,  
George F. Conjar  
State Sanatorium  
South Mountain,  
Penn.

In fine but unsteady penmanship, Conjar introduced himself in a letter dated May 25, 1943, devoting more words to his inability to pay to join the A.R.E. than he did describe his condition.

*"I have been told that a sum of twenty dollars is asked of members. You've probably realized by now that I am unemployed—that I have no money. I do get a few dollars from my mother now and then, and if need be, could fall back upon her... However, I'm against making this decision because I'd like to repay my own debt. After some debate I thought of the following: Mr. Cayce, if you gave me a reading that resulted in a cure, I'd offer you my services for eight hours of every day for one year in the practice of helping my fellow*

*man. I'd do this entirely free of charge, food, or board, and any type of work assigned me would be undertaken with a glad heart. In the event that no cure occurred I would anyway try in some degree to do a little handwork that might bring in a few dollars. This money I would send to your foundation in the hopes that another would perhaps be benefited... You probably understand my reason for the preceding sentence is not brought on because of any lack of charity; my health would require a stoppage at this point."*

In signing off, Conjar simply said: "Well, I guess I said about all there is that needs be mentioned. Closing in all sincerity, George Conjar."

Application for Associate Membership in the Association for Research and Enlightenment, Incorporated Virginia Beach, Virginia.

Having carefully read the Ideal and Purpose of the Association the undersigned hereby applies for Associate Membership in the Association for Research and Enlightenment, Incorporated, and agrees to pay the required membership dues as follows: \$20.00 Cash therein (if such sum payable to the Association)

I understand that I will receive the monthly Bulletin of the Association for one year from date.

Also, I understand that I am privileged to apply at this time for a Psychic Reading for myself or some dependent member of my family (as indicated below), from Dr. Edgar Cayce.

In requesting this Psychic Reading I understand that I am taking part in an experiment conducted by the Association for the purpose of ascertaining the value of psychic information and extending the knowledge of the laws governing its transmission. I realize that no claims or promises are made in connection with this Reading.

Signed George F. Conjar  
 Witnessed by Edgar Cayce State, Lee, South Mt., Penn.

Witnessed by: \_\_\_\_\_ (Member of the Ass'n.)  
 (Sign if Cayce himself)

Having read the explanation of "Your Alliance in seeking a Reading," I wish to avail myself at this time of the privilege of securing a Psychic Reading of the kind indicated below:

Physical  Life \_\_\_\_\_ Mental and Spiritual \_\_\_\_\_

This Reading is to be given for: \_\_\_\_\_ Date 4/1/48

Name GEORGE F. CONJAR  
 Home address 222 Lincoln St. Steelton, Pa.  
 Age 41 Date of Birth April, 1887 Place of Birth Steelton, Pa.  
 Occupation Student Religion Catholic  
 Married 20 Name of husband or wife \_\_\_\_\_  
 No. of Children \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of father and mother Lawrence & Barbara  
 Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ (Membership and Reading Committee)  
 Note: Read applications to the Association for Research and Enlightenment

*Conjar's application to join the A.R.E.*

Edgar responded three days later:

*"Have yours of the 25th. Am enclosing a blank [A.R.E. application]. Will be glad to try and be of a service—and it will be entirely up to you, whether you pay anything or not. Just feel from past experience with this trouble that you can be helped, but do feel you will probably have to be at home, but do not think the cost for your treatments will be very much... Just hoping to be the means of a service."*

A date, July 8, was set for the reading. To be certain that Edgar, in trance, would find him, George said that he would be in room 441 in the bed "*alongside the window*" and that when the reading was being given he would be in "*prayer and meditation.*" He also expressed, as he would repeatedly do in his correspondence to come, how grateful he was that Edgar would be doing this for him. "*Until then [when the reading is given],*" he wrote on June 11, "*I will say an inadequate thank you for the service you are so graciously rendering me. May God bless you always and may He reward you in some way for this kindness you have shown to me.*"

Conjar's month-long wait to receive the reading was difficult. He continued to steadily lose weight and twice collapsed unconscious in a state of shock and had to be revived. What pulled him through was the conviction that Cayce would provide help. Just prior to when he was to receive the Cayce reading, he wrote a letter to chief supervising physician Custer to share his excitement. In the same letter, he also expressed his intention to leave South Mountain the same day he received the reading and return home to begin the recommended treatments.

The following day Dr. Custer called Conjar into his office to tell him that he was making a grievous mistake. In so doing, Dr. Custer related a story about a mentally deranged young man who had put his faith in a "cult" and forgone professional medical help and met a tragic ending. He didn't wish George to make the same mistake. Conjar countered by telling the physician that Cayce did not want him to join a cult. He was acting out of kindness, seeking to help people who came to him by using his God-given talents.

Dr. Custer, suddenly irate, demanded to know who had told him about Cayce. Reluctant to implicate his friend Howard, George referenced popular radio show host Isabelle Manning Hewson, who had done a segment on Cayce. Instead of discussing the matter further, Custer reached for the phone and called the radio station which broadcast her show. To George's alarm, Custer proceeded to file a grievance, claiming that Hewson was driving his patients into "hysteria" with her ridiculous notions. He then referenced Conjar's name, citing him as a patient who had become mentally unbalanced by Hewson's discussion of Cayce.



"He thought that I would be forced to forget you," Conjar later confided to Edgar by letter. " He then said he didn't want me arousing the other patients with my crackpot ideas though I don't ever remember arousing anyone in any manner. All this time he had been speaking without any apparent idea of what your work consisted of, and this even though my letter concerning your readings was plain enough."

When a nurse in the room came to Conjar's defense, Dr. Custer became even more irritated. As George later wrote:

*"He then began speaking of my religion and how you were not in accordance with it. I replied that a Catholic priest who knows much more about my religion than I, was cured by following the readings prescribed treatment. 'I'll bet his name wasn't in the book,' he said. 'No,' said I, 'but any doctor may go down and examine the various case histories and see for himself the work of the readings.' This stumped him momentarily and then he told me to go and get the [Cayce] book. When I returned he was looking over my chart and then said to me, George, 'You're doing fine, just fine. I don't want you to go home and undo this good.' Well that certainly hit me... He tells me I'm doing fine. Just where did he get the information? He wanted me to put faith in the medical profession and him talking like that. I couldn't reply before he ushered me out into the hall."*

Dr. Custer missed his next appointment with Conjar, which was just as well, as George had received the Cayce reading in the mail, and with Custer too busy to see him, George's mother checked him out of the hospital and took him home. He couldn't wait to get started on a treatment plan.

#11,093-C-A. This Psychic Reading given by Edgar Cayce at the office of the Association, Arctic Crescent, Virginia Beach, Va., this 6th day of July, 1943, in accordance with request made by the self - Mr. Geo. F. Conjar, new Associate Member of the Ass'n for Research and Enlightenment, Inc., recommended by another member of the Association.

P R E S E N T

Edgar Cayce; Gertrude Cayce, Conductor; Gladys Davis, Steno.

R E A D I N G

GEORGE F. CONJAR

Time of Reading

State Sanatorium,  
Room 441, Men's Wing,  
South Mountain, Penna.  
(522 Lincoln St.,  
Steelton, Penna.)

3:55 to 4:10 P. M., EDT.

Mrs. C: You will go over this body carefully; examine it thoroughly, and tell me the conditions you find at the present time; giving the cause of the existing conditions, also suggestions for help and relief of this body; answering the questions, as I ask them:

Mr. C: Yes, we have the body here.

As we find, while the conditions are rather serious, and it is rather advanced stage, - if there will be the use of those things as may be suggested, and a consistency in the manner of the body's activity, - this disturbance may not only be allayed, and stayed, but the body may be capable of doing very good work, and contribute to the spiritual things of life.

These are the conditions as we find with this body:

For some times back there has been tubercle in the lung, and while the one lung has been collapsed, this is not as active as it might be under some circumstances.

The body should remain quiet (but preferably at home) and follow these suggestions, as we find:

First we would give that there be prepared a charred keg...charred inside; a gallon and a half to two gallon keg. Fill this about half full with Pure Apple Brandy (such as Healdick's Apple Brandy), not applejack. In one end of the keg prepare two holes, one a small air vent, the other with a tube attached to same. These tubes should not project into the solution itself, but into the vacuum above same. Keep the keg where evaporation will take place; that is, where it will keep rather warm. The holes should be kept tightly corked. But two or three times a day inhale into the lung's the fumes from the Apple Brandy; not the Brandy itself but the fumes that arise...the gas.

*Geroge Conjar's first Edgar Cayce reading*

The Source, speaking through Cayce, described Conjar's tubercular condition as being in "advanced stage" but was not so far gone that he wouldn't respond to treatment if he consistently followed the recommendations. "This disturbance may not only be allayed, and stayed, but the body may be

*capable of doing very good work, and contribute to the spiritual things of life."*

The recommendations, in brief, were as follows: he was to remain quiet, preferably at home, and inhale the fumes of pure apple brandy from a charred oak keg. Further, every other day he was to ingest a teaspoon full of Acigest, a commonly available type of hydrochloric acid, stirred in a glass of raw milk. He was also to take the calcium supplement Calcois, which he was to spread thinly on a whole wheat cracker as he would butter. And rather than remain indoors, as had been prescribed at the sanatorium, he was to go outside. *"Keep in the open when practical... Stay out of the night air, yet have plenty of ventilation... Keep in the sunshine, but not in the noonday sunshine—rather stay in the shade but out of doors. Rest a great deal... A little exercise may be taken; only such as walking or the like."*

Conjar was also advised to pay careful attention to his diet, which was to consist of eating seafood, bones included, twice each week. Chicken, stewed bones included, was to be eaten at other meals. No other kinds of meat should be consumed unless it was wild game. Further, he was to drink plenty of milk and milk products. Large quantities of cooked and raw vegetables and fruit were also to be eaten, but these were to be "yellow," such as yellow squash, yellow peaches, yellow yams, and yellow carrots. The Source didn't explain how foods with this particular color figured into the treatment equation, nor did Conjar ask, but the reason, as later would be evidenced in studies of phytochemicals, show that these fruits and vegetables are extremely high in organic chemical compounds which the body converts to vitamins A and C, omega-3 fatty acids, and folate.

This, along with a recommendation that he receive a check-up reading eight weeks into his treatment, was the extent of the advice. To help put the advice to best use, enclosed with the reading was an illustration of the charred oak keg and how it should be configured so that he could best inhale the apple brandy fumes.

Conjar received the reading on a Monday, arrived home the next day, and wrote Edgar on Wednesday. *"By Friday I expect to have everything in readiness and to be able to begin my cure... I am also enclosing four dollars*

*which I have managed to save from my allowance. Soon I hope to send you money regularly; first to try and pay in part for what you are doing for me and secondly, in the hopes that with it you may be helped by me in the continuing of your work for your fellow man. Thank you very much for your kindness; I can't express my gratitude appropriately."*

Conjar would continue writing Edgar, telling him of the progress he was making, asking questions, and invariably enclosing a dollar or two. However, hopeful and committed as he was to be carrying out the recommendations, he had challenges yet to be met. Foremost among them was obtaining a charred oak keg. In a letter he wrote to a manufacturer he indicated that he wouldn't be using it for distillery purposes, but to follow health recommendations for treatment of TB. In return correspondence, the manufacturer expressed his sympathy for Conjar and his condition but said that he wasn't licensed to sell kegs for medicinal purposes.

Conjar went to his upstairs bedroom and cried into his pillow, thinking that his treatment would have to be delayed until he could somehow obtain a keg. By then it might be too late. But the next day he was delighted to suddenly find one delivered by the same company he had initially made his request. Though the manufacturer hadn't been able to "sell" him one, the sales agent had been touched by George's letter and "given" him one. Then there was the problem of obtaining brandy. Apple brandy was not available in Harrisburg, only applejack. George's older brother solved this problem by making a road trip to Maryland. The other products, Acigest and Calcois—were more easily obtained. Thus, with a concerted and well-choreographed effort by his entire family—his father prepared the keg, his siblings brought the food, and his mother prepared it—his healing began.

Four days into the treatment plan Conjar reported "a queer, light-headed feeling for an entire day." Twenty-four hours later, however, the feeling was gone. He then experienced a slight fever which lingered for a week, and profuse sweating. He wasn't concerned; rather he was pleased that the treatment seemed to be having an effect.

As numerous times before, he expressed his thanks in a letter to Edgar. *"What you've done for me I'll never be able to repay you for. I thank God for letting*

*me come into contact with you... If God is willing that my health be restored through you it will make me, I believe, happier than anyone on this earth. I already am ecstatically happy for what has already come to me."*

Conjar's correspondence continued to be upbeat. In August, little more than three weeks since acting on the recommendations, Edger received a few more dollars in the mail, along with a note: *"I'm feeling fine since starting treatment, in every way. Really, a new man. The sunshine feels wonderful, too; it's the first I've been out in it for a length of time since 1940."*

In reply, Edgar encouraged him to stick to the regime. *"You are going to have days when you won't feel so good, but I sincerely believe from past experiences that if you will do all the readings suggested for you and don't overdo it, you are going to get real results and I know that you will be a new and a happy man and I am looking forward... to talk to you personally."*

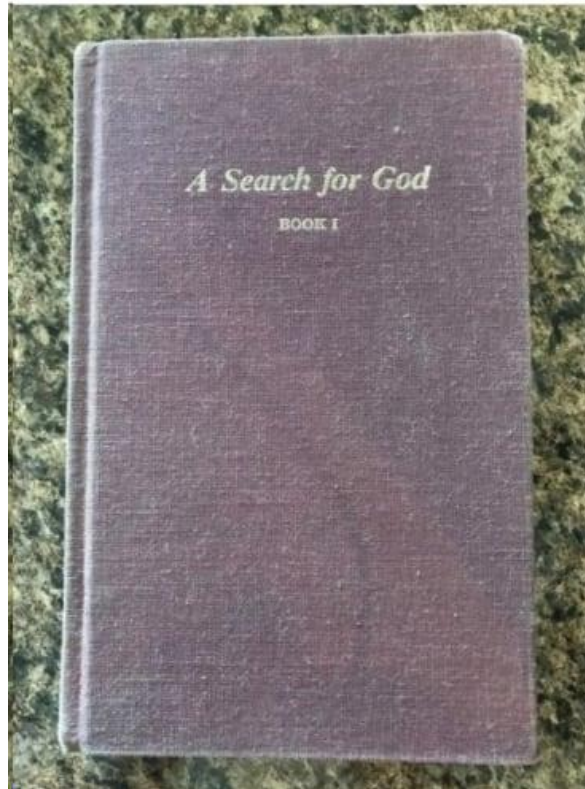
George too looked forward to that moment. This, written in early September, which accompanied his \$2 a month allowance:

*"With your permission I'll come to Virginia Beach and thank you personally. It won't be an adequate thank you, since I can't even begin to put into speech such a great 'thanks' as I feel... I am in need of spiritual help as well a physical, and since I've come to know you I am, I know, much better spiritually, and feel much better physically."*

Edgar was pleased that George should be thinking beyond his physical healing. He sent George a copy of a new book, *A Search For God*, which was a compilation of spiritual readings Edgar had given for the group of A.R.E. members in Virginia Beach and Norfolk who had come together out of profound desire to better understand themselves and their relationship to God.

In response to George's letter, Edgar wrote:

*"We need help in our spiritual lives, if we are to use our physical abilities better, and I am in hopes that you may through the offices of the Association find something worthwhile just as so many others... If you will stick right close to all of the suggestions indicated in your reading and be mindful of your diet, I feel that you are going to get along all right. Let us hear from you and... hoping to see you in the not too distant future."*



Eight weeks into the treatment Conjar applied for a follow-up check reading as had been indicated in his first reading. In an accompanying note, he also expressed his profound pleasure in reading the book Edgar had sent him, *A Search For God*.

*"It was like receiving a rare pearl after having already been given a rare diamond. You're so very good. No matter what I am or ever shall be, I shall never forget the kindness you've shown me, nor the joy you've given me nor will I ever stop working to strengthen myself spiritually so that I may duplicate part of this kindness toward another... I want you to know that whatever the outcome, I am a much happier man for having met you and will be always."*

Throughout this correspondence, Edgar never alluded to difficulties he was having with his own deteriorating health, the backlog of readings still to be conducted, or the feverish pace in which he was now giving them. The Source had said that Edgar, for his own health, ought to restrict the amount of trance sessions to twice a day. Gertrude was so concerned that she pulled him aside, requesting he put the brakes on. *"You're killing yourself,"* Gertrude had said. But Edgar wouldn't listen. He led her to the storage room off their kitchen pantry and emptied an entire mailbag of correspondence onto the



floor. *"How can I turn them away?"* he asked. *"It kills me not to do the readings. If I overdo it, that will kill me, too."*

Cayce never alluded to the drama taking place behind the scenes. He merely scheduled a follow-up reading for Conjar and apologized for him having to wait until January 1944. *"I know that is a long time... but it is the very best we can do at the present time. I thank you very much for what you have said. Our whole purpose is to be of a service wherever and whenever it is possible. I am sure if you keep your thinking right, then act just as you think and pray the same way, you will get much better."*

Edgar received no specific reports of Conjar's health in the lead up to the second reading; rather, he received a money order for \$4 and a promise of ten dollars a month to be put toward an A.R.E. life-membership. Then, just before the January 4 date the reading was to be conducted, this letter came from Conjar in the mail:

*"It has been almost five months since I began treatment as the reading suggested and I certainly must say I feel great. Since the 4th will divulge the extent of my improvement I am very much on pins and needles this day. For my entire three years spent in the sanatorium only one X-ray turned out favorable; the remainder—about 10 in number—were all rather disappointing. It has been a long while since I've felt as well as I do today. My heart owes you much, not only for my physical reading, but also for the spiritual help I've received through you. My life cannot help but be happy."*

The follow-up reading Cayce conducted lasted a mere five minutes. The Source declared that there was no longer an infection, yet he should continue the treatments as previously outlined to more fully restore his health. He could, in fact, begin physical labor, in moderation:

*"Do not work under conditions where the feet get cold or damp, or where there is not proper ventilation in the working surroundings. But the body can begin with its activities. Keep continually the constructive thinking within itself and within that which it would do for others. For in the manner ye treat thy fellow man ye treat thy Maker. Take time to be holy. Ye have made promises to self, to thy Maker, to thy friends. Remember—what thou hast vowed, keep. For the Lord hath need of those who are honest with*

*themselves."*

Conjar was ecstatic. *"Thank you from the bottom of my heart,"* he wrote on January 10. *"I can not—nor can words—express... the joy that fills my entire being every minute of every day. My gratitude to you is likewise inexpressible but believe that completely my heart thanks you always... As soon as I can make financial arrangements for a trip to Virginia Beach, I am going to visit you so that I can thank you personally for your great kindnesses to me."*

Despite the now overwhelming demands on his time, Edgar wrote back a long and heartfelt letter. This, in part, was what he said:

*"I am looking forward with a great deal of pleasure and interest to the day when I may meet you in person. I believe you are going to be entirely well of this trouble. I know my own wife, whom I hope you will meet when you are here, in 1910 was in a much worse condition than yourself, and is entirely well and has little or no recurrence... It will be very well for you to check on your condition with an X-Ray and I hope that you will get just as wonderful results as many others have. You ought to be entirely well, George, in possibly less than a year."*

Conjar went ahead and had an X-ray at the Harrisburg Hospital. No evidence could be found of the disease in his right lung. His left lung was scared but disease-free. The physician declared him healed. How he didn't know, but George's recovery, by any measure, was miraculous. He would never spend another day in the hospital.

The blessings were many. The tragedy—as Conjar would later tell us—was twofold.

Physicians had let so many others die when Cayce's treatment plan was so effective, inexpensive, available to nearly everyone, and had so many added healthful benefits. His entire body had been rejuvenated. The pharmaceutical-based treatment that was finally devised and used to treat TB in the 1950s, which would virtually eradicate the disease in the U.S., and is still the prescribed treatment, acts on the body as does chemotherapy. It kills the infection, but at great cost to the human body.



*Edgar Cayce before his death*

Conjar's other regret was that he didn't get to thank Edgar in person. In the year after getting well, while his brothers were off fighting in WW II, and he had to work to support his family, Edgar's own health had deteriorated. He was critically ill with pneumonia. He would pass before Conjar could afford the train ticket.

With the help of his family and a tight-knit circle of friends, Conjar kept secret his bout with TB and the help he had received from Edgar Cayce. He felt he had no choice: TB was contagious and had no cure—at least not one accepted by the mainstream medical community. Moreover, he well remembered the hostile reaction when he had told Dr. Charles Custer, chief of medical services at the Pennsylvania State Tuberculosis Sanatorium, about Edgar Cayce.

Still, George Conjar kept the promise he had made to Cayce and to God.

Conjar treated every day as a celebration of life. Each morning, at six a.m., he went to church to say a prayer for the blessings he had received and to silently meditate on how he could share his good fortune with others. He would go on to give a third of everything he earned to charity and for the betterment of mankind. At soup kitchens, charity drives, and many other forms of outreach, he endeavored to become a servant to all. That was his takeaway from *A Search for God*, the book that Cayce had given him.



*Conjar, on the far right, was an award-winning salesman for D&H Distributing, a major North American electronics distributor*

Conjar went on to receive a college business degree, marry a woman with whom he would be devoted for sixty years, and would work for the same Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, wholesale product distribution company for over four decades. Few salesmen worked as hard or were more successful.



*George and his wife Jacqueline took their grandchildren to Hotel Coronado, outside San Diego, CA*

Retirement in 1989 brought continued joy and a well-deserved rest after a long and well-lived life. Conjar celebrated his 74th birthday with friends and family, and a party was thrown several months later for his forty-fifth wedding anniversary. Among the celebrants were five children and seven grandchildren. He experienced a different kind of joy when, over five decades after receiving his trance readings, Edgar Cayce came back into his life.



George was sitting in an armchair in his living room drinking his morning coffee when he chanced to read a newspaper article about a new book about Edgar Cayce. Seeing Cayce's name in print brought back a rush of emotions he could not contain. He burst into tears and wept uncontrollably. His wife, Jacqueline, rushed to his side, fearful that something dreadful had happened. His tears, however, were of joy. He had no idea that Edgar Cayce was still remembered or that the association with whom he had corresponded in 1945 was still in existence.

Jacqueline, too, also wept. She had always known that her husband harbored a dark secret related to the war years, 1939-1945. She mistakenly suspected that he had been a draft dodger. Why else would George and his family go to such lengths not to discuss where he had been during those years and what he had been doing? She might otherwise have pressed him to confess the truth but he was such a fine husband and father that she let it go. Now the truth was revealed. Her husband had had TB and was cured by this man, Edgar Cayce, in Virginia Beach.

Conjar called Jeanette Thomas, archivist for the Edgar Cayce Foundation. Several days later, she and volunteer researcher (and future board-member) Paul Mazza, recorded his story for the Cayce archives. And with the support of his children and grandchildren, George finally came to Virginia Beach in 2014 as our special surprise guest at the 83rd Annual A.R.E. Congress, where he gave thanks to the man who had saved his life.





George Conjar passed through "God's other door" at age 96 on November 17, 2020. His friends at Cayce Universe salute a life well-lived, and the good, by word and deed, that he brought to the world. No doubt he has been greeted on the other side by a small army of those whose lives he touched. He did mine.

# Breast Cancer: Averted by a Hare

A 38-year-old wife and mother reaches out for life-saving medical advice from psychic Edgar Cayce, her former Sunday School Teacher



Sidney and Nancy Kirkpatrick

Apr 28 [8](#)



*"The doctors may be good, but they are too anxious to cut, and I don't want to be cut if there are other ways out." Mamie Gray to Edgar Cayce, 2/6/1930*



*Mamie Butler Gray with her grandson, 1943*

Jolly, fun-loving, gregarious, and outspoken were adjectives used to describe Mamie Butler Gray. Eccentric, however, was the favorite descriptor, thanks to her deep-seated belief in spirit communication, and her three-decade-long friendship with psychic Edgar Cayce, whose trance readings she believed had saved her from undergoing a mastectomy.

Most everyone to whom she told her story scoffed at the notion, as Cayce—a photographer and Bible study instructor with no medical training and an eighth-grade education—had recommended a seemingly preposterous psychic prescription: that she inject herself with blood from a rabbit and subject herself to high-frequency discharges from a Nikola Tesla "Violet Ray" appliance. This was as outrageous a notion as when the same skeptics dismissed a medical recommendation Cayce had provided Mamie's uncle: an organ transplant—something that wouldn't be performed for another half-century.



*Mamie Gray seated in a wheelbarrow at her family's Selma, Alabama, home in 1926*

Mamie, born in 1891, was the eldest daughter of Walter Butler, a Selma, Alabama, businessman whose Broad Street bookstore was three blocks away from the Cayce Art Company, where Edgar Cayce took portrait photographs, printed and developed film stock, and sold fine art and framing supplies.

**BUTLER'S**

**Easter Greeting:**

We are now open for business; new goods being received daily in every department.

**New Books.**

"Sins of the Father," by Thos. Dixon, author of Clansman, etc.  
"Japonette," (The Turning Point) by Robert Chambers, author of The Fighting Chance, etc.

**Artists Materials.**

Oils and water colors paints, canvas brushes, crayons and paper, gold paint. Write us your needs; call on us.

Metal boxes with lock and key for deeds and insurance policies.  
Blank books, notes and drafts, receipts, in s, mutilage, pencils, erasers, ink stands, fountain pens, rulers, filing cabinets, letter and invoice files, and every thing in office supplies.

Pictures, brass goods, photo albums, Horseman's character dolls, croquet (\$1.50 and up) dominoes, flinch Buttericks patterns and Delineator for May just in.  
Sunday school teachers Bibles and Pelonbet's Select Notes for 1912. Marbles and tops.

**Specials for this Week:**

Violet ammonia in pint bottles	10c
Talcum powder, 1 pound boxes	10c
Massage cream	25c
96 sheets linen cloth note paper and envelopes	35c
3,000 sheets toilet paper, 3,000 tooth picks and 6 cakes of toilet soap for	50c
Bankers linen letter paper per pound	19c
Type writer ribbons 75c, type writer carbon 25c dz.	
1,000 books regular price 35c to \$1.50	17c each

Delegates to the Sunday School Convention are invited to make our store their headquarters.

**Butler's Book Store,**  
Agents for Wernicke Elastic Book Cases

*Mamie Butler's family operated a bookstore at 122 Broad Street*

1916?  
(over)

**HANG THIS UP**

**PRICE LIST**

**FINISHING KODAK PICTURES**

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Any size up to 2 1-4 by 4 1-4 .....	3c each
2 1-4 by 4 1-4 up to 4 1-4 by 6 1-2, .....	4c each
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Best Results Obtained By  
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"LET US FINISH YOUR SNAPS"

**CAYCE**  
**ART COMPANY**

21 1/2 Broad St.      Selma, Alabama

*Edgar Cayce's photo studio was at 21 1/2 Broad Street (the 1/2 designator was because the studio was on the second floor*



*Edgar Cayce purchased the H.P. Tressler Studio (pictured here) before it became the Cayce Art Company*

Everyone in Selma knew the Cayce studio because of a roulette-style game that Edgar devised to draw attention to paying customers and to attract new customers. He placed a large clock in a wooden case, prominently displayed on the sidewalk in front of the entrance stairs. Portraits of patrons whom Cayce had recently photographed showed on a pinwheel in place of the clock

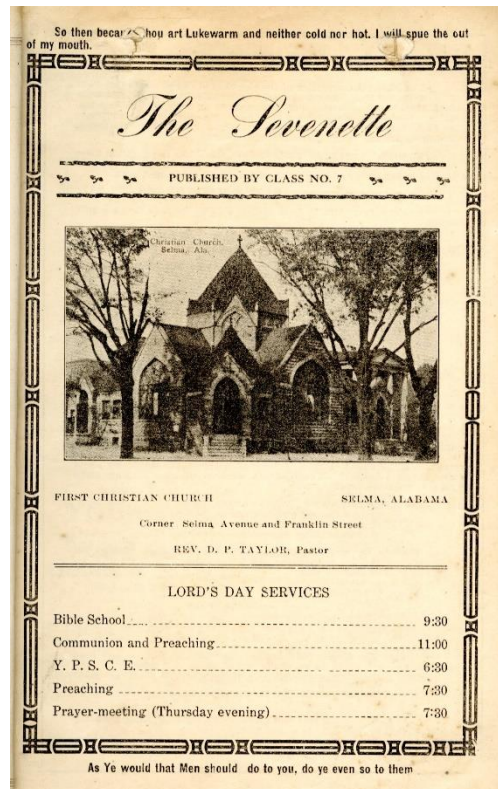


numerals. Passersby were invited to guess whose portrait would be nearest the clock's second hand when, after 8 days, the clock wound down and stopped ticking. Winners were awarded cash prizes and a discount on a future portrait that they, too, could expect to be prominently displayed on Selma's main thoroughfare.



*Edgar Cayce's roulette wheel "photo clock" on the street in front of the Cayce Art Company*

Like nearly everyone who strolled Selma's business district, the extended members of the Butler family—17 or more in all—delighted in playing the photo-clock game. They not only had their portraits taken, but they knew Edgar from the Disciples of Christ Christian Church, on what is now Martin Luther King Boulevard, where Mamie's father Walter was an elder and Edgar taught Sunday School to Mamie and other church youth. Edgar's Bible study program was so popular that members published their own newsletter, and teens attended from nearby churches.



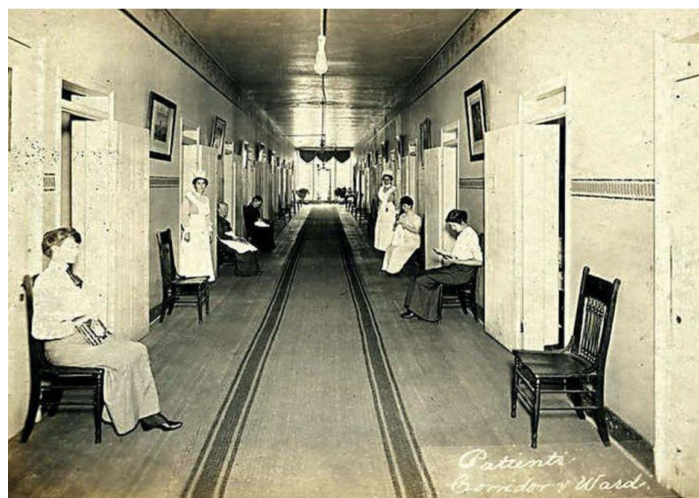
*Edgar Cayce's Sunday School class published their own newsletter, "The Sevenette," named because Cayce's bible study was held in classroom 7.*

Edgar was Mamie's favorite teacher. He told Bible stories as if he had been there (and indeed he had lived in Biblical times, as had she, in previous incarnations, one of the reasons she was drawn to him). But the greatest impact on Mamie and her family was Edgar's gift as a psychic diagnostician, a vocation he practiced by appointment only and without charge, from a sofa in the backroom of his studio. There, among assorted props Cayce used as backdrops, he would lie on a sofa, enter a self-induced trance, and psychically examine a subject's body, organ by organ.



*Back Room of H.P. Tressler Studio, pictured here, where Edgar Cayce later made portrait photographs and gave trance readings.*

Mamie's cousin, Flora Butler, confined to the Bryce Hospital mental asylum in Tuscaloosa, was one of the first family members to receive trance medical advice. In a most remarkable reading conducted in 1918—one that "Many Mansions" author Gina Cerminara researched extensively—Cayce identified the root of the problem as an infected wisdom tooth that affected a nerve leading to her brain. Her jaw x-rayed and the tooth removed, Flora was miraculously cured.



*Female patients in an east wing ward of the Bryce Hospital when Flora Butler was a patient.*

Even more remarkable was the organ transplant reading Cayce gave for Mamie's uncle, Alfred B. Butler. Cayce identified advanced cancer in Alfred's bladder, stomach, and kidneys, and recommended an operation which he said could be performed at the Mayo Brothers Clinic in Minnesota. In what must have seemed like science-fiction, surgeons were to substitute Alfred's diseased organs with those from a living animal. As reported by his son Roger Butler, who attended Cayce's Bible study classes with Mamie, such an operation seemed so unfeasible that no one acted on Cayce's advice. After all, this was 1918. Not until 1954 was the first successful organ transplant performed between humans, and it would not be until 1984, when an infant girl, popularly known as "Baby Fae," received a baboon's heart. Today, hundreds of thousands of heart patients have received valve replacements made from animal tissue, and thanks to gene-editing technology, surgeons are

well on their way to using animal replacement parts for damaged corneas and kidneys.

After the family received these and other medical readings, but before Mamie requested one of her own, Cayce arranged for her, then aged 22, to be introduced to a fellow parishioner, 27-year-old Abiel Wood Gray, whom she married in 1913. As Anne Butler Hall explained in "Ever the Same," an unpublished memoir of the Butler family's decades-long relationship with the Cayces, the need for a formal introduction was not because Mamie was incapable of introducing herself. Just the opposite. Like her mother, she could be embarrassingly outspoken. But proper etiquette required that members of the opposite sex be formally introduced before speaking directly to one another. The long-running family joke was that once Mamie began communications with Abiel Gray, they couldn't be stopped, not in this life or the next!

Cayce himself, in a past-life reading conducted for Mamie in 1927, provided insights into her character that were much in keeping with what family members have shared and how an Alabama newspaper columnist bluntly described her: "Mamie is independent to the point of being annoying."

In reading 2457-2, Cayce declared her "one that is often misunderstood by others, one that finds many contrary-wise conditions...one that brings much joy, much happiness, in the lives of many," and "one that has many qualities that are exacting in others and not so exacting of self."

Medical advice that Cayce gave to Mamie and Abiel's daughter in 1923, to a second daughter born to them a year later, and for a son born in 1933, proved to be just as accurate. Their baby boy, who was named Edgar Gray in honor of Edgar Cayce, became the subject of another long-running family joke because the child hadn't cried at birth. "The doctor found he was tongue-tied," Mamie's mother reported to Cayce. "Think of anyone being kin to me [and Mamie] being tongue-tied!"



*Mamie and her husband, Abiel Wood Gray, in the early 1940s. Abiel Gray, a jeweler and optometrist, also championed Edgar Cayce's readings. Mamie said that he was so taken with a business reading that he received that he "wore it out carrying it in his pocket - read it every chance he had."*

After the Cayces moved to Virginia in 1925, Mamie was a frequent correspondent and visitor. Knowing how remote and desolate conditions were then in Virginia Beach, she shipped the Cayces a box of hatchling hens, "biddies," to accompany a cow sent by Edgar's mother.

As outspoken in her correspondence as she was in person, Mamie shared family challenges with the Cayces as they arose. Her husband sometimes drank to excess. Her daughter was dating out of the faith. Her sister suffered from mental health issues. However, none of this compared to the dread and apprehension she experienced when she self-examined her breasts. Cancer ran in her family.

"The lower half of my left breast was hard and had red streaks running through the upper half," she wrote to Edgar on March 22, 1930. "I am [emotionally] up one day and down the next. Seem to be too young for what ails me... All I can do to hold this pen. The least exertion gets me. For one who has always been so active this condition floors me... Can't even drive... Now you know I'm in bad shape..."





*Mamie Gray around the time she received reading 2457-4*

Cayce immediately scheduled a medical reading which was conducted in Virginia Beach on April 2, 1930, while Mamie was in her home in Alabama. Cayce's diagnosis appears in the first paragraph of trance reading 2457-4.

“Conditions are not so well with the body... The activity of forces...are beginning to become in the manner of producing within the system an element as of its OWN resuscitation, living upon the life OF the body-physical. That's a very good description of cancer, isn't it? For it IS malignant in its nature, and has already attacked the mammary glands, and is going to be rather fast in its operation unless there are means taken as to check same.”

Cayce then advised injecting a serum made from the tendons of an animal, preferably a hare. Cayce referenced what was commonly called a "wolve" or a "wolf" which is when both left legs of a rabbit are removed in preparation for cooking.



Asked how she was to obtain this serum, Cayce declared that she would have to manufacture it herself. This wasn't a medication available in a pharmacy—or anywhere else.

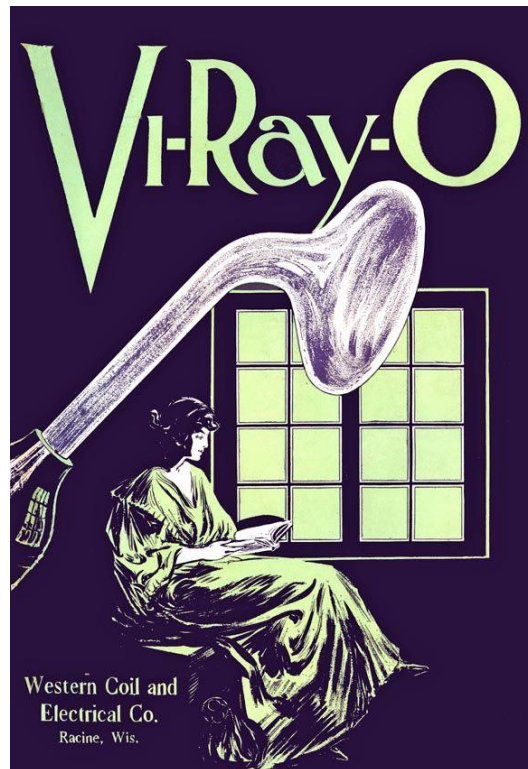
Cayce described the procedure in the ninth paragraph. Based on this reading and outlined in a similar breast-cancer treatment reading Cayce conducted, the rabbit was to be exposed to, or injected with, cancer cells from the patient's breast. The antibodies produced by the rabbit would then be prepared into a serum and injected back into the patient's breast.

"There must necessarily be experimentations, with the proper heat, the proper precautions taken as to the character of cell as is destroyed in the culture made and in the activity of the animal as well as human when being used," Cayce told Mamie. "But for this character of the condition this would be MOST effective in at least fifty percent of such ills."

Mamie is also advised to treat herself with "medicated ash."\* She was to consume at least an eighth grain mixed with water three times each day, and as outlined here and in numerous other Cayce readings, she was to apply the electric discharge from a Violet Ray to her body. The Violet Ray appliance, invented by Nikola Tesla, was a form of high-frequency low current electrotherapy which was hugely popular in the 1920s but today is largely unknown.



*(above) A Nikola Tesla inspired Violet Ray appliance and (below) advertising from 1921*



In conjunction with these treatments, Mamie was recommended to stay on a strict diet. "Feed ALL the food that is of a NOURISHING nature, but not from MEATS. Those of cereals, fruits, vegetables, AND such—or principally of the nature that are the foods of the hare, the foods of the beef - these are DESTRUCTIVE forces TO such as may be seen in the condition attacking system."

This sums up Cayce's recommendations. As Mamie's medical records no longer exist, there is no way to scientifically determine the efficacy of the treatment or even know the degree to which she adhered to Cayce's recommendations. All that can be said with certainty is that she committed herself to all or part of the recommendations, that she lived for the next 40 years, and that she died peacefully in her sleep at age 75 without a recurrence of the condition she described. And "eccentric" as the recommended treatments seemed in 1930, medical science appears to be catching up, just as it did with her uncle's organ transplant reading.

Among the most recent discoveries was one outlined in a research study published in medical journals in August 2020. This study conclusively demonstrated that antibodies derived from rabbits had pronounced therapeutic effectiveness on breast cancer cells.\*\* This is not all. The National Cancer

Institute itself has acknowledged that the highly specialized antibodies derived from rabbits have transformed our ability to detect and treat diseases such as cancer and HIV. The apparent reason, researchers agree, is that the rabbit's immune system is unique from other animals because they produce antibodies particularly effective on humans. If only Cayce's medical recommendations had been taken seriously a century earlier, who knows how many lives might have been saved!

Research into medicated ash, which has variously been referred to as "animated ash" and "carbon ash," has also received attention, most notably the result of health practitioners in Houston in the 1980s who were experimenting with Cayce's carbon ash health treatments to boost the immune response in HIV patients. Try as they did, the health practitioners couldn't achieve results. Other of Cayce's medical treatments performed spectacularly; just not carbon ash used in tandem with the ultraviolet light (considered an effective substitute for a Violet Ray appliance.) While researching why this might be the case, they compared notes with chemistry professors Richard Smalley and Robert Curl at nearby Rice University, who were also conducting experiments using carbon ash. The take-away from this meeting was nothing less than spectacular.

The Cayce researchers discovered that the commercially produced product they had been using did not possess the same molecular structure as the product available in Cayce's day. To achieve success, they had only to switch out the commercially produced product for the carbon ash which the Rice University professors made for themselves in their laboratory. In the process, the Cayce researchers came to a theoretical understanding of how and why the Cayce treatment worked as it did. After oral ingestion of the ash, carbon particles were released into the bloodstream. Exposed to the ultraviolet light, the particles vibrate, releasing oxygen. A more oxygen-rich environment strengthens healthy cells and weakens cancer cells. Less understood, but still relevant, there appears to exist a bonding action between the carbon particles and the damaged cells that also proves to be highly therapeutic.

This was just the start of the story that would reach national prominence a few years later. In their ongoing discussions, the Cayce health practitioners pointed out to the Rice University professors how their immune-boosting

research with carbon ash was far more effective when administered in tandem with exposure to ultraviolet light. The Rice University researchers were not only delighted by this discovery, but that knowledge reportedly contributed in a modest way to professors Smalley and Curl winning the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1996 for the discovery of a new form of carbon, what they called product C-60. The degree to which their discovery was foreshadowed by the Cayce readings is the subject for another article.

Sadly, further investigation of the possible uses of a combination of ash and ultraviolet light for medical treatments does not appear to be forthcoming. Nor is there a rabbit serum readily available to women with breast cancer.

Mamie, however, didn't need medical authorities to legitimize the efficacy of these treatments. She knew Cayce had saved her life and didn't hesitate to relate the story to anyone who would listen.



*Gray family portrait from the late 1940s. Wood and Mamie's two daughters flanking their parents and young brother Edgar, center*

Mamie regretted that Edgar didn't live long enough to meet her grandchildren. She did, however, have the pleasure of knowing Edgar's grandson, Charles Thomas Cayce, who would take over the Cayce work from his father Hugh Lynn Cayce by becoming the director of Edgar Cayce's Association for Research and Enlightenment (A.R.E), in Virginia Beach.



*Mamie Gray playing with Edgar's grandson Charles Thomas Cayce, 1945*

Mamie never found another psychic as good as Edgar, but this didn't stop her from looking. One medium of whom she became fond lived in St. Petersburg, Florida. Several times a year, Mamie traveled south from Selma to attend her seances and communicate with deceased relatives.

Family historian Anne Butler Hall recalls how Mamie's father would routinely tease her by asking how Grandpa Butler was doing in heaven. Mamie would laugh and launch into her latest contact with the spirit world.

On one occasion, Mamie reported to family members that the ghost of Grandpa Butler had playfully tugged on her hair. She laughed and told the ghost: "You stop that, you scamp!" The response from exasperated relatives was expected. "Mamie, you don't [honestly] believe in that stuff!" But she did.



Anne Butler Hall reports that on another occasion, Mamie told the family that she "dreamed" that her husband, Abiel Wood Gray, in bed beside her, playfully swatted her on her buttocks as he was on his way out of their bedroom. Several maiden aunts blushed and looked away as Mamie narrated this part of the story. But this was not all. When Mamie awoke the following morning, she found that he had died in his sleep. Instead of being grief-stricken and inconsolable over his death, Mamie accepted what she had been foretold in her dream as a blessing. She calmly called the funeral home and told them to send the hearse to "Come get Wood's 'overcoat.'" By this, she meant his body.

"That's how it was for Mamie," Hall reports. "Because of her spiritual beliefs in life after life, Mamie level-headedly viewed death as just another natural process, not to be feared or dreaded. That's the legacy she passed onto her children, grandchildren, and all of us, her extended family."



*Mamie Butler Gray before she died peacefully in her sleep at age 75, on March 6, 1966*

Note to the Reader: The information contained in this article is not intended for self-diagnosis or self-treatment. Please consult a qualified health care professional for assistance in applying the information.

\*Many health practitioners working with the Cayce readings believe the term "medicated ash" to be synonymous or used interchangeably in the readings



with "animated ash" and "carbon ash." Baar Products, supplier of Edgar Cayce health and beauty products, manufactures both Anidex® (animated ash) and Carbondex® (carbon and medicated ash), and offers customers a detailed reference manual. They also sell the Violet Ray machine. Interested parties should contact Baar Products, 610-873-4591, or [www.baar.com](http://www.baar.com). Readers are also encouraged to download the two "circulating files" on breast cancer from Edgar Cayce's Association for Research and Enlightenment (A.R.E.) which can be found in the members-only section of EdgarCayce.org

\*\*This article can be found at: <https://translational-medicine.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12967-020-02484-9#Sec2> see also: <https://www.nature.com/articles/emm201723> and <https://www.abcam.com/primary-antibodies/reasons-why-rabbits-are-capable-of-producing-superior-antibodies>

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Sid and Nancy Kirkpatrick

# When Bad Things Happen to Good People

A broken woman finds physical and spiritual renewal



Sidney and Nancy Kirkpatrick

Oct 30, 2020 [8](#)

*Out of suffering have emerged the strongest souls; the most massive characters are seared with scars — Khalil Gibran*



Gail E. Nelson, 1911 college yearbook photo

## When Bad Things Happen to Good People

by Sidney D. Kirkpatrick

In the tradition begun by Edgar Cayce's secretary, Gladys Davis, researchers at Cayce Universe continue to search for insights in the Cayce readings by studying the personal stories of the people who received them. Among these reading recipients is Gail E. Nelson, a college-educated government clerk working at the Bureau of Veterans Affairs in Washington D.C., who sought career advice from Cayce after suffering a horrific tragedy. A broken woman

who found physical and spiritual renewal, her story speaks to the Divine in each of us and suggests why it may be that a God capable of interceding in the lives of His children would permit bad things to happen to good people.

As our research would reveal, the tragedy referenced in the reading took place on the afternoon of Saturday, May 8, 1926. Gail, 35 years old at the time, was staying with her parents in Columbia Heights, in northwest Washington D.C., while she cared for her infirm mother, Christine. Eager to get out of the house after being homebound for several weeks, she accepted an invitation to take a short drive along the Potomac River with a man she considered a friend—43-year-old real estate agent Edward Barron. They had met and struck up a friendship two years earlier on a train to Kansas City where both were attending a Masonic Shriners hospital convention. Later, when Barron had professed his love and desire to marry her, Nelson had declined, in part because he was already married. She had made clear that a physical relationship was out of the question. Barron told her that he understood and would accept her decision.

That Saturday afternoon, with the encouragement of her mother and father, Nelson put on a brightly colored dress and joined Barron on what he said would be no more than a ten-minute drive. Concern became alarm when, after leaving the city limits and driving into Virginia, Barron exited onto Collingwood Road in Arlington, and refused to turn the car around. Minutes later, they were on their way to Carlin Springs, deep in the Arlington forest—what today is the 92-acre Glencarlyn Park—where Barron drove up a wooded trail and parked in a grassy clearing. As Nelson would later tell Edgar Cayce, and Gladys Davis would later report: "He had a crazy look in his eyes; kept saying over and over that if he couldn't have her no one else should."

As it turned out, Barron had no intention of returning her home. Nor was he planning on ever returning home himself. Before meeting Gail at her parents' house that day, Barron had revised his last will and testament, had it notarized and delivered to his attorney, and packed a tool kit of instruments with which he intended to torture her. He dragged Nelson from the car and threw her down on the ground, cut her face and scalp with a knife, smashed her on the head with an ax, drove a brass rod into her chest, and shot her twice. Somehow or another she maintained consciousness until he had finished with

her. She listened as he paced back and forth, reloaded his gun, and fired again.

Strangely, soon after hearing what turned out to be the shot that ended Barron's life, Nelson had the impression that he was still present with her. Only now, he was calling her to join him on the "other side."

The first miracle—that's how it would later be described—was the arrival three hours later of U.S. Naval Officer Holloway Frost, a celebrated Navy aviator and World War I submarine warfare officer. As was his routine, he rode his horse once a week on the same Arlington forest path where Barron had chosen to park his car. Nelson, blinded by her facial injuries, never actually saw the rider or his horse, but she could hear them.

Frost spotted Barron's crumpled body on the ground. The top of his head was blown off, and a shotgun lay on the grass beside him. He didn't notice Gail on the ground several yards away, even though she was wearing that brightly colored dress. Injured as she was, she couldn't call out to Frost or even move her body to catch his attention. This turned out to be a blessing in disguise. As her surgeon would later note, she would never have survived the ordeal of being lifted onto a saddle and ridden out of the woods.

The second miracle occurred before Frost could survey the crime scene. Just as he was about to dismount—when he would surely have noticed Gail's mutilated body—his horse inexplicably bolted into the woods. He could neither stop nor slow the horse down until they came to a farmhouse on Carlin Drive, approximately half-a-mile away. He dismounted and knocked on the door. When the homeowner answered, Frost explained that he had come upon a body in the woods and asked where he could find a coroner. There was no point in inquiring about a physician because the body in the woods was beyond resuscitation. The homeowner, Dr. Benjamin Swain, turned out to *be* the coroner. He was also one of Arlington's finest medical professionals. Without hesitation, he accompanied Frost back to the grassy clearing in the woods where he would find Gail's mutilated body. Swain immediately applied first aid to stem the bleeding. He knew better than to try to move Nelson without a stretcher.

The third miracle was that Gail lived to tell the story. Her recovery was in no small measure thanks to a surgeon visiting the Alexandria Hospital on Duke and Washington Street in Alexandria, Virginia. Surgeons weren't on staff on Saturday nights, but he happened to be in the ER when Nelson arrived by ambulance. After examining her, he concluded that her condition was fatal. Nelson had been slashed in the pupils of both her left and right eyes, her nose, both ears, cheeks, chest, and elsewhere on her torso for a total of 24 times. Her scalp was hanging loose from her skull. Bones in her head and throughout her body were broken, and the brass rod (which was used in a muzzle-loading rifle) was implanted eleven inches into her left lung. Even if she didn't die from blood loss, the wound to her lungs was sure to become infected, and she would die of blood poisoning (there was no means in 1926 to safely administer an antiseptic into a wound as deep as that suffered by Nelson). The surgeon communicated these things to Gail's parents and sister, who had been called to the hospital.

Despite the surgeon's pronouncement, he went to work immediately. More than just this—he felt strangely compelled to go beyond a reasonable measure to keep her alive. "Something kept him at it, even though he knew she was dead and couldn't live," one report stated. Other physicians eventually joined him. Later, they would marvel at her recovery and at the fact that, when her bandages were removed several weeks later, she had regained her eyesight. Moreover, her facial injuries did not require further reconstructive surgery. Several months after the assault, she had but one tiny scar at her side temple where her skull had been fractured. Her face returned to being perfectly smooth.

Nelson would go on to become an artist. There was no stopping her. She believed that her art was the reason she was alive. She sought confirmation of this when she obtained her reading from Edgar Cayce in February 1935. Her reading was conducted in Washington D.C. when Edgar was visiting the city from his home in Virginia Beach to inaugurate a new "Search for God" study group—a program in which students of the Cayce readings meet weekly to study, meditate and pray together. (Search for God study groups are still meeting in cities throughout the U.S. and Canada to this day!) Nelson obtained the reading and then joined Edgar, his wife, Gertrude, and their



secretary, Gladys Davis, for lunch. Six days later she would attend the #11 Search for God study group weekly meeting.

Among the reasons Nelson sought psychic help from Cayce was what she believed to be continued visitations by the spirit of the man who had assaulted her. Edgar Cayce, too, would feel the "horrible" presence of this malevolent spirit hovering over her. In fact, he was himself so physically sickened that he had to cut short his luncheon meeting with Nelson. As Gladys Davis would afterward tell a friend and colleague, Edgar's face suddenly went grey. Later, he would tell Gladys that what he saw hovering over her was an apparition he described as a "thing" which was trying to strike Nelson with a weapon. Barron was apparently still trying to kill her even though he had been dead for nearly a decade and both he and the weapon that he wielded existed only in some non-physical dimension. When Edgar saw this "thing" he was so sickened that he felt he would throw-up. As quickly as he could, almost knocking his chair over, he moved with "dispatch" and disappeared into the bathroom where he remained for some time.

There is no archival record of what Cayce did in the bathroom or how he may or may not have dealt with this haunting, but based on remarks later made by Gladys Davis, there is ample reason to believe he quietly handled the matter in his own inimitable way. Souls of the deceased who suffered a variety of mental and physical conditions, such as addiction to alcohol or sex, sometimes can't move on from the earth plane because of their obsessions. In such instances, Cayce would sometimes converse with the spirit, helping them to understand their condition, and encouraging them to release their hold on materiality. Apparently, in this instance, however, while Edgar was in the bathroom, he called for angelic reinforcements. Someone or something assisted Cayce in removing the "thing" haunting Nelson. No further details are known.

The Cayce reading conducted for Nelson that same day confirmed what she already knew, and what Cayce, in a waking state, would not otherwise have known. As a child growing up in Stillwater, Oklahoma, Gail had known since her earliest days that she would devote herself to serving humanity. A devout Christian and an active member of the Eastern Star, the Masonic women's

auxiliary, she had endeavored to always do good in the world, not to harbor evil thoughts, and to remain pure in heart. What she could not understand, and what she was now turning to Cayce for help in understanding, was the cosmic reason why she had undergone such a horrible tragedy. She had never harbored evil intent or had knowingly harmed anyone.

Cayce stated unequivocally in her reading that her vocation should be the arts and that it would be through painting and music too, that she would find meaning and expression in life, and would similarly help others do the same. Using biblical language, typical of many readings, Cayce said: *"As [your art] brings that harmony in self, that joy in the hearts of those that behold same, and as thou hast been awakened... so does it bring into thine own life and the life of those that behold ... that peace; and thus it comes a portion of thy labor of love in [what is considered] a sad and dismal life to many."*

Nelson didn't need Cayce to tell her these things, but she was pleased to hear him say them. Although she had worked as a pharmacist, and actually may have been Washington D.C.'s first practicing pharmacist, the profession had left her unfulfilled. She had then taken a job as a government clerk and once again felt there was something more important she ought to be doing. Her lifelong passions were painting and music, vocations to which she now devoted herself.

As was commonly found in what are known as Cayce's "life readings," Edgar outlined previous lifetimes which informed her present incarnation. Foremost among these past lives was an incarnation in the Holy Land where she had witnessed the crucifixion of Christ. This experience had touched her in profound ways and manifested in her nearly boundless capacity to show kindness to her fellow man. In a particularly beautiful passage in the reading, Cayce declared:

*The entity came for the purpose... of making more manifest... in the hearts of those that are weak and distressed and stumbling as in the dark, seeking the light, those beauties... of the enlightenment that enraptures the soul into becoming one... in love, in harmony, in grace, in hope, in faith, which lifts up the INNER man to the more perfect at-oneness with Him who gave...'forgive them, they know not what they do.' ... This is the greater purpose in the*

*present. As there has been and may be that lifting up, through the meditating upon those experiences in that experience in the earth, as the song of the heart, as the thought of the self as purified in Him, so do those beauties of the earth—through the fogs and doubts and fears of many a soul find through this entity that which anchors them to that trust, even in the cross that all must bear if they would enter in at the straight gate. For, only light may shine down a straight way, unless it becomes deflected or only a lesser light through its reflection upon others.*

Cayce's above reference to "*the greater purpose*" was not only in relation to Nelson's spiritual outlook—what she held in her head and in her heart—but a physical manifestation, too. And here is what makes the reading so unique in the greater body of Cayce's work. Nelson's "vocational" life-reading is mental, spiritual, AND what might be termed medical. Cayce provides a most remarkable "diagnoses" by declaring why she has undergone this horrible trauma: "*That there might be the regeneration of thy body to the glory of that illumination necessary for the full awakening within.*" In other words, on a soul level, she had sacrificed her former physical self to be physically reborn in such a way as she could better touch the lives of others, perhaps similar to how Jesus died on the cross and was later reborn.

This horrific tragedy was, it seems, her own earthly resurrection!

This passage is also particularly insightful as it posits an answer to the question of why God might permit evil, a concept that seems inconsistent with the existence of an omnipotent and omnibenevolent deity who, in Nelson's case, could reasonably be said to have "miraculously" shaped events that dispatched Nelson—not to the morgue—but to the Alexandria Hospital where her life was saved, against all odds. In response to Nelson's heartfelt plea for an answer, an explanation of why she suffered the unspeakable injuries, the reading did not confront her with a discussion of karma that could have simply accounted for her experience as the price she had to pay—or a lesson she had to learn related to some behavior in this or a past life. Instead, the reading offered her caring concern and inspiration and invited her to think about what had happened as an opportunity for her to bring about a higher good in this life. Horrendous as her experience was, the focus of the reading was on upliftment and empowerment.

*"Think not upon those things that make for questionings or doubts," Cayce said, in closing. "Let thy meditation be, 'Here am I, O God, use Thou me! In my every action let them be for the glorifying of Thee in and through my fellow man!'"*

Edgar Cayce, on a conscious level, could not have known how, in the years ahead, a higher good might manifest in Nelson's life, nor how truly remarkable that higher good might be.

Despite her doctor's orders that she not strain her eyesight by painting or reading, Nelson had begun doing both in earnest soon after the bandages had been removed from her face and eyes. Most notably, in 1932, four years before her Cayce reading, she had begun painting a portrait of Jesus. The canvas took her seven years to complete and later won her the acclaim of New York art critics. So compelling was Nelson's "Cosmic Christ" that it was hung in New York's Rockefeller Center.

Such was the transformational power of her art.

Cayce Universe researchers have found numerous press clippings referencing the 1939 national tour of Nelson's "Cosmic Christ" painting but have been unable to locate an image of the painting. Readers are encouraged to help us continue the search.

Newspaper accounts report that Nelson became a much-loved public speaker in addition to her career as an artist. She never married, lived for many years with her older brother, a Washington D.C. physician, pharmacist and attorney, died childless in 1969 at age seventy-eight, and was buried near her sister, brother, and parents in Glenwood Cemetery, on Lincoln Road in Washington D.C.\* Her legacy will, however, live on in her art, and in those who are inspired by her story.

\*The date on Gail Nelson's birth certificate and other important documents do not match the birthdate on her Glenwood Cemetery tombstone.

## **End Notes**

The above account has been assembled from the online database of reports and readings in the Edgar Cayce Foundation in Virginia Beach; the Virginia

Death Records, 1912-2014; Washington, D.C. Wills and Probate Records; articles in the *Capitol Times Newspaper*; *The Cushing Daily Journal*; *The Wisconsin Journal*; *The Washington Post*; *The Washington Times*, *The Washington Evening Star*, the Alexandria Hospital historical document collection in the City of Alexandria archives, and interviews conducted by Cayce Universe researchers in August 2020.

## **Sidney Kirkpatrick on Coast to Coast August 5, 2020. Edgar Cayce was to the world of psychics what Babe Ruth was to baseball.**

Sidney Kirkpatrick on Coast to Coast AM tonight.



Sidney and Nancy Kirkpatrick

Aug 6, 2020 [6](#)

We are pleased to welcome so many new visitors to our newsletter. Thank you for your encouragement! Please see below for more information on Edgar Cayce, the man, and his work.

If you are able and interested, please tune in tonight to Sid's interview on Coast to Coast AM with George Noory.

<https://www.coasttocoastam.com/show/2020-08-05-show/>

He will be the second speaker starting around MIDNIGHT PACIFIC TIME. (3 AM Eastern, 2 AM Central, 1 AM Mountain time) for about 2 hours. In the past Coast to Coast has re-aired the program immediately afterward. We are waiting to find out if that will be the case this time. To avoid any confusion, the title of this evening's talk, created by Coast to Coast is "How the Universe Ends." This is the topic of the first speaker who goes on at 10 PM PACIFIC TIME. Sid will be talking about the new research project we have been working on, which we have named the Cayce Universe. It is not ending—it is just beginning!

Cayce Universe researchers are currently at work on a new study similar to those we shared in our book *True Tales From the Cayce Archives*, (A.R.E. Press). Expect to see this startling new story later this month.

For new readers who may not yet be familiar with our work, we have posted below introductory essays from our two books on Cayce, *True Tales* mentioned above, and *Edgar Cayce, An American Prophet* (Riverhead—Penquin Group).



*Why Edgar Cayce?* tells the story of how Nancy helped Sid get involved in studying Edgar Cayce and what we discovered as a result. *The Open Door* tells the true story of how Cayce saved the life of a dying child, Tommy House, and how this set into motion the phenomenal Cayce work as we know it today.

Reading these should help get you started delving deeper into the stories and topics that are the heart and soul of Cayce Universe.

We are so pleased to be able to share our passion and what we have learned, and continue to learn about Edgar Cayce, his team, and his work!

See below for more info on Cayce and [for resources, please visit this page.](#)

Our best,

Sidney and Nancy Kirkpatrick

### ***Why Edgar Cayce?***

(from the introduction to *True Tales from the Cayce Archives, Lives Touched and Lessons Learned from the Sleeping Prophet* by Sidney and Nancy Kirkpatrick)

Like many journalists, I [Sidney] once arrogantly believed that psychic phenomena was a subject unworthy of serious study, and that anyone who put their faith in a trance medium was either fooling themselves or the unwitting victim of fraud. Then along came Nancy Webster, who would become my writing partner and wife. "Edgar Cayce is going to be the subject of your next book," Nancy prophetically declared. Not wishing to be rude or condescending, I politely declined further discussion. But Nancy, a dedicated student of Cayce's work since she had been in high school, was unrelenting. Books and articles about the so-called "sleeping prophet" of Virginia Beach appeared in my mail box with such regularity that, to finally put the matter to rest, I read one.

To say that the Cayce story challenged my imagination is an understatement. A backwoods Kentucky farm boy with an eighth grade education, he allegedly had the ability to enter into a deep hypnotic trance from which he

could diagnose illness, witness events in the distant past, preview the future, and converse with angels. No subject was off limits, regardless of how simple or complex the question, whether it was help finding a lost pocket watch, how to perform a surgical procedure, or what to expect in the hereafter. Cayce would lay down on a couch, fold his hands over his stomach, seemingly drift off to sleep, and miraculously answer any question put to him. Rarely, if ever, was he proven wrong.

In the course of his forty-one year career, Cayce reportedly saved hundreds of people from intractable diseases and crippling injuries. A hospital dedicated to his healing arts was built in Virginia Beach, where patients received his trance readings, and specialty technology, years ahead of its time, was used to treat them. He guided the business interests of Detroit auto parts manufacturers and helped New York stock brokers and Texas oilmen become millionaires. He identified the location of buried treasure, solved a murder, and dictated trance-induced Hollywood screenplays. Yet Cayce and his family led lives of constant struggle and hardship, moving from home to home, often under threat of being persecuted for fortunetelling or practicing medicine without a license. He didn't profit from giving trance counsel, or promote himself, and for much of his life, he earned his livelihood as a portrait photographer as well as a much admired husband, father, and church deacon.

Cayce's story seemed altogether too incredible to be true. This was why, I suspected, fifty years had elapsed since a comprehensive biography of Cayce had been written. No serious writer or journalist would devote time to making a rigorous examination of the facts because they wouldn't stand up to scrutiny. Dig deeper and Cayce's story was sure to unravel. Or so I supposed.

Always a step ahead of me, Nancy would send me transcripts of Cayce's trance readings. Accompanying them were physician's reports and convincing first-person testimony of how his recommended health treatments—frequently dismissed in his lifetime as the fanciful products of his imagination—had later become fully accepted by the mainstream medical community. Trance discourses he gave on such subjects as foods for health and healing, hydrotherapy, massage, and the intimate connection between psychological and physical health would earn Cayce distinction as the

undisputed father of today's holistic health movement. Information he gave on world history, physics, electrical engineering, and earth sciences also proved uncannily accurate. And though he died decades before wide-spread popular interest in paranormal phenomenon, Cayce's trance readings on subjects such as remote viewing, life after death, reincarnation, the secrets of the Sphinx, and the lost continent of Atlantis, would set the standard by which nearly all metaphysical information has subsequently been judged. He was to the world of psychics and mediums what Babe Ruth was to baseball.

Most compelling, Cayce didn't speak in vague, ambiguous terms that were open for interpretation, but used precise medical and scientific terminology well beyond his education and training. Further, he didn't perform these superhuman feats a few hundred times in the course of his career. He gave well over sixteen thousand trance readings, each one different, and some lasting thirty minutes to an hour. On many occasions professors from Ivy League universities, notable church leaders, bank presidents, historians, physicians, inventors and scientists attended his trance session. Master magician Harry Houdini, having dedicated himself to exposing the fraudulent practices of hundreds of occult mediums and spiritualists, failed to debunk or explain the Cayce phenomenon, as did Hugo Münsterberg, of Harvard Medical School.

Even this, however, was not what made the Cayce material most relevant. As his trance readings make clear, their ultimate purpose was not simply to provide diagnostic insights to aid physicians, bring about miraculous cures, locate lost treasure, or to excite the intellect. They were provided to help individuals to understand and accept the truth of the multi-dimensional world in which we live. Cayce had provided incontrovertible evidence for the existence of a consciousness beyond our five senses. His work was an open door into another dimension through which we can more fully understand ourselves and our place in the universe.

The question that I was soon asking myself was not whether Cayce did what he was alleged to have done—the evidence was overwhelming—but how he did it. Thus began our study of Edgar Cayce, and along with it, a partnership was formed between myself, a nonbeliever, and Nancy, whose faith in Cayce never faltered. Together we would research Cayce's life and work as it had

never been conducted before, producing his definitive biography, *Edgar Cayce, An American Prophet*, authoring numerous articles, contributing to movie and television projects, and most important, endeavoring to apply his trance guidance into our everyday lives and those of our four children.

A trip to Virginia Beach, Virginia, was our starting point. Here, at the Association for Research and Enlightenment (A.R.E.) are housed the Edgar Cayce archives, which consist of an estimated half-million pages of trance readings, correspondence, family papers, and photographs. As Cayce primarily gave readings for particular individuals who requested his help, and follow-up biographical research had been conducted to determine the effectiveness of his advice, we had a massive collection of additional reference material which we would use to track down the people who received the readings and judge the truth for ourselves. The vast majority of names of these individuals meant little or nothing to us at the onset of our research, for they led regular lives as farmers, housewives, building contractors, musicians, students and nurses—even an Alabama tombstone cutter. Children and adults alike, and for nearly any profession one can name, came to Cayce for advice.

However, among these individuals were names that we instantly recognized. Composer George Gershwin and Hollywood film pioneer Jessie Lasky had readings, as we suspect, had inventors Thomas Edison and Nikola Tesla, electrical engineers at RCA and NBC, and the president and founder of Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company. Readings were conducted for the mother of Ernest Hemingway, for the husband of aviator Amelia Earhart, and though shrouded in secrecy, there is evidence of readings for President Woodrow Wilson. This aspect of Cayce's work had not heretofore been called attention to because Cayce had never promoted himself. He didn't trade on the names of the rich and famous who consulted with him for the same reason he didn't charge a fee for giving readings. He believed that his gift was from God and not to be used for selfish or self-serving purposes, but for the brotherhood of man, what the readings say is our collective purpose or soul's destiny.

In Hopkinsville, Kentucky, where Cayce lived and worked for the first half of his career, Nancy and I camped at the edge of farmer's field, walked the

woods where Cayce played as a youth, and visited the tobacco barn where he had first begun communicating with the spirit world. In Selma, Alabama, we visited the First Christian Church, in whose archive we read the minutes once kept by its church secretary, Edgar Cayce. In Cleburne, Texas, we met the son of a newspaper reporter who worked with Cayce to develop the Desdemona oil-fields, one of the largest petroleum and natural gas deposits ever found. In Dayton, Ohio, we interviewed a man whose employer's dream was to build the hospital dedicated to Cayce's healing arts. Many others who knew Cayce personally or received readings came forward with stories that had previously gone unrecorded. As we would discover, their enthusiasm for Cayce went beyond the trance counsel he provided. They enjoyed his company—whether he was teaching Bible study, working alongside them in the photo studio, or joining him at his favorite fishing hole. A humble, kind, and affectionate man, he preferred the company of children, friends, and co-workers over and above his many rich and famous acquaintances. He touched their lives, and they touched his.

Herein lies the theme of this book. Edgar Cayce could not do what he did alone. Deep in a hypnotic trance, he had no conscious memory of anything that was said. He needed someone—more often than not his wife Gertrude—to guide him into trance and put questions to him. He also needed someone to record and transcribe what he said, a task which would ultimately fall to his devoted secretary, Gladys Davis. He needed plenty of others—physicians, nurses, physical therapists, scientists, engineers and Biblical scholars, even an Alabama tombstone cutter, to help recipients of the readings make the most of the advice that was provided. Most important, he needed someone who genuinely wanted his help. The more deeply felt and true the desire for that help, the longer, more detailed and often more profound was the information that came through. He needed a team, just as the trance readings tell us that all of us need a team or partners with whom, and by design, we are to share life's experience.

Now, more than two decades after first entering the Cayce vault in Virginia Beach, it is not just Edgar that keeps us coming back for further research and study, but the many people whose lives gave shape and meaning to his trance readings. Understanding their challenges, triumphs, failures and desires is to

understand the higher purpose of our own life's journey. This is what is meant by "Cayce's work." It's not *his* work, but *our* work.

### ***The Open Door***

(from the introduction to *Edgar Cayce, An American Prophet*, by Sidney and Nancy Kirkpatrick)

Nine years after the turn of the twentieth century, a photographer named Edgar Cayce stepped off a Pullman onto a crowded passenger platform in Hopkinsville, Kentucky. Edgar might normally have paused to greet acquaintances at the station or warm himself beside the coal stove in the ticket office, but he had more pressing business on that cold February night. He pulled up the collar on his thin cotton jacket and ventured into the downpour to meet a waiting carriage.

The driver, Lynn Evans, quickly ushered Edgar inside his cab. As chief ticket agent and superintendent at the Hopkinsville depot, Lynn was the natural choice to be on the lookout for his brother-in-law's arrival on the northbound local from Guthrie, Kentucky. Knowing the urgency of Cayce's visit, Lynn likely reached for the horse's reins the moment the tall, lanky photographer emerged from the cloud of steam billowing out from under the eighty-two-ton locomotive.

Framed in the yellow halo of light from the overhead oil lamps on East Ninth Street, Edgar looked too young to be a church deacon or the owner of one of Kentucky's most respected photography studios. His shy, pensive smile and clean-shaven face gave him the youthful appearance of a college sophomore coming home for the holidays. His tousled brown hair was cut short, accentuating his high forehead, deep-set blue-gray eyes, and receding chin. His large feet and hands seemed better suited to an awkward boy on the verge of manhood than a thirty-two-year-old husband and father.

A closer look at Cayce revealed the truth of his age and occupation. Having spent much of the last decade in a darkroom, his complexion was pale and his fingers were stained brown from the chemicals he handled routinely in the developing baths. The acrid odor of those chemicals still clung to his clothes as Edgar knocked the mud from his high-top leather shoes and climbed into



the carriage for the mile trip through Hopkinsville to a house known to Edgar and Lynn as "The Hill."

The journey was familiar territory for both men. Edgar had traveled it many times on foot and by bicycle during his courtship with Lynn's sister, Gertrude, and though he now had the luxury of taking a horse and carriage, Cayce knew the unpaved streets of the city and its squat two- and three-story redbrick buildings as intimately as he knew the darkroom in his photographic studio in Bowling Green, Kentucky.

Behind the teardrop spire on the train station was the downtown business district where Edgar had once clerked at the Hopper Brothers Bookstore. To the east was the block-long tobacco planters' warehouse, which had been built by his great-uncle George, and which housed the crop that gave Hopkinsville and greater Christian County the distinction of being the largest producer of pipe and chewing tobacco in the nation. Beyond the clock tower on the fire station shone the lights of the Hotel Latham, where he had photographed Theodore Roosevelt during his campaign for president.

Lynn Evans drove the carriage east on the Russellville Road, passing the ivy-covered boys' dormitory at South Kentucky College on Belmont Hill. The grand Victorian homes lining the road were painted in rich pastels and were festooned with scalloped shingles, copper weather vanes, flag poles, and white picket fences. The farther they went from the center of town, the less ornate the homes became. The asphalt soon gave way to an unpaved road where the massive wrought-iron gates of the Hopkinsville mental asylum, Christian County's largest building, dominated the bleak landscape. The carriage rattled past a few lonely stands of ash and elder trees, shorn of leaves, and the dirt road became two muddy lanes running between the rolling brown hills and the still bare tobacco fields that were the primary source of Hopkinsville's wealth.

The house called The Hill sat on a high promontory a few hundred feet within the city limits. It was a single-story, four-bedroom home of classic antebellum design, painted gun-metal gray and dominated by four white Doric columns. The front of the house had a large open veranda shaded by oak and maple trees. At the rear of the property, separated from the main house by a

carriage walk and rose garden, were the kitchen, smokehouse, chicken coop, barn, and dog run. The many outbuildings, like the home itself, had been designed and constructed by Dr. Samuel Salter, Lynn and Gertrude's maternal grandfather, a respected civil engineer, an unlicensed physician, and one of the county's leading building contractors.

It had been the late Salter's dream that The Hill would always be a safe haven for his family and their progeny, and he had seen to it that the house, its adjoining orchard, and ten acres of farmland were free of debt before his death. He had assembled an extensive library of technical and reference books, kept a full store of medical supplies in a large cedar chest in the dining room, and stored enough food in the root cellar and smokehouse to feed a family of eight for an entire year. It wasn't enough, however, that his family be materially independent. In the spirit of Franklin and Jefferson, he wanted all five of his children—three daughters and two sons—to become free thinkers. He sent them all to college, where they studied Plato and Shakespeare, and urged them to read newspapers, attend rallies, and engage in intellectual discussion. Their opinion counted, no matter what political or social cause they chose to support.

To Edgar Cayce, who had been born in a tiny frame cottage on a remote Christian County farm, who had ended his formal education at the age of sixteen in a single-room schoolhouse, and whose mother and sisters didn't dare to express an opinion of their own, The Hill held an attraction that went beyond his love for Gertrude and his affection for Lynn Evans. The Hill was an intellectual hothouse that both stimulated and challenged his deeply felt notions of religion and spirituality. At The Hill, Edgar didn't feel the need to confine his creative interests to the darkroom or conform to rules preached by the church elders. He could freely explore a part of himself that he had kept hidden from his pastor and from his clients at the photo studio. At The Hill, he was free, as Lynn liked to say, "to experiment."

As the carriage approached the main entrance, Edgar felt the familiar sense of security that accompanied all of his trips to The Hill. Lynn brought the horse to a halt, and as he tended to the carriage, Edgar walked quickly up the muddy path to the veranda where he was greeted by Hugh Evans, Lynn's older brother. The two briefly exchanged pleasantries before entering the

parlor, where the rest of the family was gathered around the fireplace. Lynn's mother, Elizabeth, was there, along with their aunt Kate and her son Hiram, and their aunt Carrie and her husband, Dr. Thomas House. Everyone's attention was focused on Carrie and Thomas's infant son, Thomas House Jr., who lay on a small, white, embroidered pillow in his mother's lap.

The infant had been suffering convulsions since his premature birth three months earlier. The convulsions had become so frequent that they now occurred every twenty minutes, leaving the helpless child too weak to nurse from his mother's bosom or to wrap his tiny hands around her fingers. Tommy House was on the verge of death from malnutrition and lack of sleep, a diagnosis confirmed by the child's father, a doctor, and by the family's two personal physicians, Dr. Jackson, a general practitioner in Hopkinsville, and Dr. Haggard, a pediatric specialist from Nashville who had been attending the child since birth. Although the three doctors disagreed about what treatment they should provide, all agreed that Thomas House Jr. had little or no chance of living through the night.

They now turned to Edgar Cayce, a photographer with an eighth-grade education and no medical training, to save little Tommy's life. Carrie wasn't sure Edgar could help her son—no more than Edgar himself was—but she wanted him to try. In previous "experiments," Cayce had demonstrated a remarkable ability to put himself into a hypnotic trance and obtain medical and other information beyond the grasp of ordinary people.

Even as a child, Edgar only had to close his eyes to locate a lost ring or pocket watch. He could read a deck of playing cards that were face down on a table or recite the contents of a closed book or sealed envelope. By merely thinking about someone he could wake the person up from a deep sleep, induce him or her to make a telephone call or write a letter, or in the case of young children, hold them in a particular pose long enough to have their portraits taken. He had solved a murder, found missing persons, diagnosed illness and disease, and recommended cures. He didn't use a crystal ball, playing cards, or a Ouija board. Nor did he belong to a temple or arcane spiritual fraternity. He needed only to close his eyes, as if putting himself to sleep, and after a short period of quiet and meditation, he was able to help any

person who asked for it. The greater the person's need, and the more sincere their motivation, the more astonishing were the results.

The mere arrival of Cayce at The Hill was enough to provoke Dr. Haggard to pack his bags and leave. Like many doctors in the area, he had heard accounts of Cayce's alleged powers and wanted no part of his "trickery." Dr. Jackson shared his colleague's skepticism, but as the family's longtime physician, he had seen Cayce do things that he could not readily explain. Dr. House was also skeptical, but he also knew Cayce too intimately to believe that trickery was involved. The Cayces were simple tobacco farmers from the rural hamlet of Beverly, and Edgar was the least educated and most unassuming of the lot. House had reluctantly agreed to call Edgar to The Hill only because House's headstrong wife, Carrie, had insisted he be consulted.

Doctors House and Jackson accompanied Edgar from the parlor into the master bedroom across the hall. Inside, Edgar took off his jacket and shoes, removed his tie and collar, and laid himself down on the embroidered linen bedspread covering the large oak bed. He pulled a down comforter over his stocking feet, adjusted himself on his back, and then, feet together, hands across his chest, he lay back in bed and stared at the ceiling.

More than a minute passed. In a silence broken only by the rain pounding on the roof and the weak cries of the dying child in the next room, Edgar's breathing deepened and his eyes closed. "You have before you the body of Thomas House Jr. of Hopkinsville, Kentucky," Dr. House said. "Diagnose his illness and recommend a cure."

By all appearances, Edgar was fast asleep—his arms crossed, legs straight, eyes closed, breathing slowly—but Dr. House knew better. He had once seen the young photographer go into a trance so deep that fellow physicians thought he was in a coma. When one of House's colleagues had jabbed the blade of a knife under one of Cayce's fingernails and another had stuck a hypodermic needle into his foot, he had not even flinched. And yet, the "sleeping" Cayce could answer questions as if he were wide awake.

Cayce began to speak in his normal voice: a deep, rich baritone with a distinctly southern accent. At first his words were garbled, almost a hum, and then, like a phonograph needle that has found the groove on a record, his

voice cleared and his words became well-modulated and easy to understand. "Yes, we have the body and mind of Thomas House Jr. here," he said.

Cayce proceeded to report the infant's temperature, blood pressure, and other physical and anatomical details of his body. He described the child's condition in such a cool, calm, and detached manner that an observer would have been left with the impression that he was a physician describing to fellow colleagues an examination he was in the process of conducting. In this case, however, the physician had his eyes closed and his patient was cradled in his mother's arms in the next room. Cayce appeared to have the ability to see right into his patient's body, to examine each organ, blood vessel, and artery with microscopic precision.

Doctors House and Jackson listened intently as Cayce described an epileptic condition that had caused severe infantile spasms, nausea, and vomiting—evidently the outcome of the child's premature birth—which in turn had been the result of his mother's poor physical condition during the early months of her pregnancy. Cayce prescribed a measured dose of belladonna, administered orally, to be followed by wrapping the infant in a steaming hot poultice made from the bark of a peach tree. Cayce ended the trance session himself when he stated, "We are through for the present."

House instructed the "sleeping" Cayce to regain consciousness. Cayce dutifully followed instructions and awoke, only to find himself alone in the bedroom. In the two or three minutes it took him to open his eyes and stretch his arms, the two doctors, deep in discussion and agitated by what he had said, left the room and returned to the parlor.

As unbelievable as the source of the information was, House and Jackson both agreed that the diagnosis sounded perfectly reasonable. It was the recommended cure that upset them, for the sleeping Cayce had prescribed an unusually high dose of a toxic form of deadly nightshade. Even if the peach-tree poultice could somehow leach the poison out of the infant's system, administering such a large dose of belladonna to a child as small and weak as Thomas House Jr. was tantamount to murder. Jackson expressed his sentiments to his colleague and the child's mother in no uncertain terms: "You'll kill little Tommy for sure," he said.

Tommy's father had no choice but to agree. Although homeopathic belladonna was sometimes used to treat lung and kidney ailments, pure belladonna, in the form Cayce recommended, was used only in topical ointments and was certainly not something to spoon into the mouth of a three-month-old child.

Edgar joined the two doctors in the parlor but couldn't contribute to the discussion taking place. He had never been able to remember anything he had said or heard in a trance state and had little more than a rudimentary knowledge of medicine in his waking state. Even so, he grew more and more concerned as he listened to the doctors' ensuing debate. Until now, his sessions had been an experiment—a way of seeing if his abilities could help the people who came to him. He now had to face the grim reality that something he had said in a trance might result in the death of a family member.

It was the child's mother who made the decision to administer the drug. Having seen Cayce work miracles in his sleep, she believed that he was touched by the Divine, that a heavenly spirit spoke through him when he was in a trance. In previous experiments, she herself had been advised not to undergo an abdominal surgery recommended by her doctors, which indeed turned out to be unnecessary. Cayce had also predicted that she would become pregnant, something that her husband and two specialists had said was physically impossible. He also foretold the date of birth and said she would deliver a boy. And the spiritual message accompanying this information—that God's love and forgiveness must be foremost in her heart—had inspired her to minister to the patients at the Hopkinsville asylum. Now, she believed, God's mercy, love, and compassion were reaching out to her. If Edgar Cayce said that she had to poison her son in order to save his life, then that was what she was going to do.

Dr. House could not make the same leap of faith. As a highly respected general practitioner with aspirations to become the county health commissioner, everything he had seen and heard in the bedroom ran contrary to his training, experience, and common sense. Although he was aware of the experiments at The Hill, he hadn't condoned them nor given them much credence. He had permitted his wife to participate because she derived pleasure



and comfort from them. He had looked upon Edgar's activities as entertainment, a mere parlor game. But what he had just seen and heard in the bedroom a few moments earlier terrified him. Cayce hadn't spoken in terms that were open for interpretation. Without physically examining Tommy, Cayce had recited the child's blood pressure and temperature, figures that House knew to be correct because he and Jackson had taken them a few minutes before Edgar's arrival at The Hill. Cayce had also described body organs with the expertise of a skilled surgeon conducting an autopsy. House didn't dare let himself speculate why Cayce had used the plural form "we" when conducting his trance examination, or why he apparently needed to contact little Thomas's "mind" as well as his "body" before the examination could proceed.

At his wife's insistence, and despite his very great reservations, House ultimately agreed to prepare the belladonna. He justified the decision by saying that his son would surely die anyway if nothing else were done. He and Dr. Jackson might be able to prolong the infant's life by a few hours, but they were powerless to keep him alive through the night. At the very worst, giving little Tommy belladonna would put the child out of his misery.

Edgar and Lynn Evans went outside to collect the ingredients for the poultice that had been recommended in the treatment. By the light of an oil lamp, Edgar climbed a peach tree in the orchard behind the barn. Using a penknife, he skillfully cut the bark from around the youngest shoots he could reach, then handed them down to Lynn Evans. They took the bark to the kitchen at the rear of the house where Aunt Kate had put a kettle on the stove to boil.

Aunt Kate prepared the hot poultice and then carried it into the parlor where Dr. House had already measured out the belladonna. He dissolved the white powder into a spoonful of water, and Carrie forced her son to swallow it. Edgar didn't join the others in the parlor to see what would happen, because, as he later said, he "couldn't stand the thought of seeing Tommy House die in his mother's arms."

Medical records do not exist to describe the child's physiological reaction to the belladonna, or to the steaming hot towels dipped in peach-tree solution in which the naked child was immediately wrapped. All that is known is that the crying stopped as soon as the mother spooned the poison into her child's

mouth and that he fell into his first deep and uninterrupted sleep since birth. Thomas House Jr. awoke hours later, drenched in sweat, cheeks pink, and breathing steadily. He was never to have a convulsion again.

No one at The Hill that night knew who or what had intervened to save the child's life. They knew only that their lives, like that of little Tommy House, had been irrevocably changed. There was no turning back. The tears in their eyes and the pounding in their hearts told them that what they had experienced could neither be ignored nor denied. Edgar Cayce had saved the child's life.

Dr. House had witnessed something that would make it impossible for him to return to the medical profession as he knew it. Twenty years later, he would close his practice and dedicate the remainder of his career to operating a hospital devoted to Edgar Cayce and his healing arts in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Carrie House would become the Cayce Hospital's supervising nurse and an outspoken proponent of the Divine "message" that she believed was being communicated through the man to whom the hospital was dedicated. Thomas House Jr. would grow up and spend his adult life designing and building innovative medical technology based on Cayce's trance readings, and, at great personal expense, would frequently drive hundreds of miles to deliver readings to patients unable to come to Virginia Beach.

Edgar Cayce also had undergone a change: he had once again proven to himself that good might come from his special talents. He had taken one of his first apprehensive and faltering steps away from the refuge of his dark-room and closer to the moment he would, as he later said, "step out into the light" and turn himself over to what became known simply as "Cayce's work," or "the work." Foremost among his many challenges would be overcoming the fear and trepidation he experienced every time he went into a trance: never knowing what might happen when he closed his eyes, what he might say while he was "under," and whether or not he would be able to open his eyes when the session ended.

In the years ahead, the work became such an integral part of Edgar Cayce's life that it was impossible to separate the man from his trance-induced communications. There were times when the readings threatened to tear his

family apart, and times when they were all that held it together. Edgar Cayce would be catapulted to national prominence on the front page of the *New York Times* and then vilified by the *Chicago Examiner*. He would be championed as a savior and reviled as an agent of the Devil. But he would continue giving readings, twice a day, nearly every day, on topics as diverse as organ transplants, cures for breast cancer and treatments for arthritis to the design of the universe and the purpose of man's existence on earth. No subject was off limits. He provided trance commentary on Jesus and His disciples, the role of women in the founding of Christianity, and the secret of the sphinx. He offered insights into how to improve relations between men and women, the spiritual role that parents play in choosing the child that will be born to them, and the possible causes of homosexuality. During his forty-three-year career, which ended on September 17, 1944—three months before his death—Edgar Cayce gave 14,145 fully documented readings for 5,744 people. Transcripts of these readings—which sometimes run as long as twenty single-spaced typed pages—and the approximately 170,000 pages of correspondence, diaries, medical reports, and notes documenting the work now comprise what is the most unusual and voluminous archive that has ever existed on a practicing psychic.

The only consolation Edgar would have in his long and frequently perilous journey out of the darkroom was knowing that he had the unqualified love and support of those closest to him. Despite Gertrude's worry that her husband was slowly going insane and might, one day, have to be put into the Hopkinsville asylum, she devoted her life to conducting his trance sessions and battling the ever-present financiers and speculators who sought to exploit him. Accompanying Edgar on his journey was a young woman from Alabama named Gladys Davis, a stenographer and secretary who became an indispensable part of the work by making verbatim transcripts of everything Cayce said while in trance, and whose appreciation and love for the "messenger" as well as his "message" raised the level of Edgar's trance readings to that of an art form.

Edgar Cayce's partners through the years included physicians, stockbrokers, inventors, soldiers, film producers, and Texas oilmen. These men would help build the Cayce Hospital in Virginia Beach and establish the first and only university whose faculty underwent psychic scrutiny before being hired.

Despite the fact that these partnerships sometimes ended in costly and humiliating lawsuits, they also brought Cayce many hundreds of grateful recipients of his trance counsel. As his son, Hugh Lynn Cayce, once said, "Edgar was like an open door into another dimension. People were attracted to the light."

Master magician Harry Houdini, having dedicated himself to exposing the fraudulent practices of hundreds of occult mediums and spiritualists, failed to debunk or explain the Cayce phenomenon, and neither did police and FBI agents who launched an investigation into how he was able to accomplish the seemingly impossible. That Cayce didn't charge admission to witness his trance sessions, that he didn't conjure ectoplasm or summon phantom spirits in a darkened room, presented unique and entirely unfamiliar challenges. That he built no church, had no disciples, and avoided the limelight confounded and confused them. As the novelist and psychic researcher Arthur Conan Doyle said of Cayce: "He was in a class all his own."

From hundreds of pages of documents and correspondence that have never before been made public there is evidence that such scientific luminaries as Thomas Edison and Nikola Tesla were given trance readings by Cayce, as were engineers at RCA, IBM, Delco, and the president and founder of the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company. The inventor Mitchell Hastings credited Cayce with helping him to develop FM radio. NBC founder David Sarnoff and his family had secret readings. Innovative electronic technologies designed by Cayce in trance are now used in almost every large hospital and airport in the world.

Edgar Cayce gave readings for Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, Gloria Swanson, and the concerned mother of Ernest Hemingway, who consulted Cayce about her son's writing career. Marilyn Monroe practiced beauty aids recommended by Cayce in trance. Business tycoon Nelson Rockefeller and labor organizer George Meany availed themselves of Cayce's medical advice. High-ranking foreign diplomats and church leaders consulted Cayce, as did government agents and politicians whose trance readings were conducted and transcribed privately. And although the details remain unclear, circumstantial evidence suggests that Cayce conducted psychic readings for President Woodrow Wilson, as he sought to make peace in the aftermath of the "war to

end all wars." Cayce predicted the failure of prohibition, the great stock market crash, the beginning and end of two world wars, the deaths of two presidents, and made startling assertions about the second coming of Christ and the next millennium.

Despite the overwhelming success of his medical readings, and despite the fact that the recipients of many of these readings were some of the richest and most influential people in the country, Edgar Cayce would spend much of his adult life living in poverty, moving from home to home, constantly under threat of being persecuted for fortune-telling or practicing medicine without a license. His readings were often conducted in makeshift conditions and sometimes had to be transcribed on sheets of recycled wrapping paper. At times, he didn't have enough money to feed his children and had to rely on his friends and in-laws to bail him out of debt—or even jail.

That Edgar Cayce persevered and continued giving readings for four decades was perhaps the greatest miracle of his life. And however inseparable the readings became from the man who gave them, it was not his trance communications that endeared him most to family and friends. A humble, kind, gentle, and affectionate man, Edgar preferred the company of children over and above his many rich and famous acquaintances. He invented card games to entertain visitors, bottled his own preserves, kept a dazzling garden, and maintained a lively correspondence with a vast array of people whom he had never met—from child prodigies and bank presidents to railway conductors and undertakers. Though demands on his time were so great that appointments sometimes had to be scheduled months in advance, he rarely missed his weekly Bible study class and never turned anyone away who was in genuine need.

Like the engine on the locomotive that had brought him from Bowling Green to Hopkinsville to treat Thomas House Jr., a powerful force drove Edgar out of what might otherwise have been a comfortable and ordinary existence as a church deacon, photographer, and husband. Exactly where he was going and what he would find when he arrived were questions he hadn't yet answered on that cold February night—nor had he, in fact, even begun to ask them. That his journey would be helpful to others was not in doubt. The life of Thomas House Jr. was evidence of that. That he had the courage to overcome his fears

and, as he said, "step out into the light," made his journey all the more remarkable, given how frightening and blinding the glare of that light could sometimes be. His life became a series of sometimes joyful, often excruciating steps toward self-discovery, and although he may have never fully grasped the unimaginable forces that had chosen him as a messenger, he would one day discover what he believed to be the real purpose of his work.

As Edgar Cayce himself, in trance, once said: "There are no shortcuts to knowledge or wisdom or understanding... these must be lived and experienced by each and every soul."



# Called Back from the Borderland

Clues were forthcoming that presented an altogether frightening picture of a tormented soul



Sidney and Nancy Kirkpatrick

Nov 10, 2020 [6](#)

Nancy and I have received such positive response to our true story of Gail Nelson, "When Bad Things Happen to Good People," that we are posting the story of Anne Neumark, a young woman who also overcame trauma, and with the help of Edgar Cayce, found new meaning in her life. This article, "Artist in the Asylum," has been adapted and expanded upon from our book, *True Tales from the Edgar Cayce Archives, Lives Touched and Lessons Learned*, (A.R.E. Press, 2015)



- Water-color painting by Anne Neumark, circa 1936

## **Anne Neumark: The Artist in the Asylum**

By Sidney D. Kirkpatrick

Thirty-two-year-old Anne Neumark, strapped to a gurney at New York City's largest insane asylum, was a perplexing case. Her mental condition was considered hopeless and her physical state deteriorated to the point that she was having to be fed intravenously. How her twin sister, Sadie, found her way to Cayce and obtained help for Anne, was nothing short of a miracle.

Sadie Neumark discovered Edgar Cayce's work at a presentation by Cayce and three New York holistic health physicians whose patients routinely sought his council. The lecture was given on the evening of December 6, 1938, in the ballroom of the McAlpin Hotel, on the corner of Broadway and 34 Street in Midtown Manhattan, what is today New York's Herald Towers. Among the topics Cayce and the physicians discussed were alternative therapies for the mentally ill. At that time, mental illness was rarely discussed outside of medical school. A presentation open to the general public was even rarer.



- The "Three physicians and a Psychic" lecture at the McAlpin hotel.  
(Edgar Cayce is seen seated on the stage at the far right.)

Sadie had not intended to be at the McAlpin Hotel that evening. She knew nothing about Edgar Cayce or his holistic approach to mental health.

Exhausted after a long day of work as a seamstress, Sadie had been walking

home along Broadway to the Greenwich Village apartment she shared with her mother and younger sister. She was passing the McAlpin Hotel when she was caught in a sudden and thunderous downpour and ducked into an open service door for shelter. Once inside, she found herself standing at the back of a hotel ballroom where a lecture was already in progress. She might not otherwise have paid attention to what was being said on stage had it not been for the dramatic appearance of an unexpected visitor who was also standing at the back of the ballroom.

Speaking from the podium was osteopath Harry Dobbins who was sharing the story of a former New York postal employee who had been sent to an upstate mental institution. Physicians had diagnosed the postman as suffering from a stress-related mental illness but were unable to ascertain the cause of his condition. An otherwise normal and well-adjusted forty-six-year-old husband and father, he had returned home after work and exploded with sudden rage, beating his wife and nearly killing one of his three children. The police had been called in, and he was subsequently remanded to an insane asylum, placed in a padded cell, and could not be safely examined for several days without wearing a straitjacket. The postal worker's wife knew about Cayce from her sister, who was a nanny for the children of David Kahn, Edgar's best friend, and a long-time champion of the trance readings. With Kahn's help, she obtained a Cayce reading, and thanks to Dr. Dobbins, treatment for his condition. The reading identified the root of the problem as an accident in which the postman had slipped on a patch of ice in front of the post office and injured his spine. Dobbins administered the osteopathic treatments recommended in the reading and after fourteen sessions, the patient recovered completely.

Dobbins' words came as a revelation to those in the audience as it illustrated how instances of apparent mental illness could have physical causes. "Postal rage," at the time, had not yet been given a name.

As Dr. Dobbins recounted the story, he had no idea that his former patient, Thomas Scanlon, was in the audience. To everyone's great surprise, Scanlon, described as a giant of a man, stood up at the back of the room and announced: "I am that man, and everything that the doctor said was true!"

Scanlon had never before publicly identified himself. Mental illness was one of those conditions that was generally only discussed in private among family members and physicians. Seriously mentally ill patients were simply locked away in asylums.

Scanlon chose to go public about his experience because he wanted to help others. He also wanted to meet and thank Edgar Cayce in person. He had been restrained in the hospital in New York when Cayce, in Virginia Beach, had diagnosed his condition and recommended a treatment. They had never met in person.

As Scanlon stepped up to the podium to shake Cayce's hand and tell his own story in his own words, Edgar began to cry, as did audience members. Among them was Neumark's twin-sister, standing in the back of the room.



- Both Sadie Neumark and Tom Scanlon were both standing at the back of the ballroom when the lecture was given



Unbelievable as the story seemed to her, there was Scanlon himself, returned to his former position at the postal service, substantiating the treatment provided by Dobbins that had been recommended by Cayce, also on stage.

What Sadie didn't know, but something that would later prove crucial to her sister's recovery was that David Kahn, who had paid for Scanlon's osteopathic treatment, and Edgar's son Hugh Lynn Cayce, who had been instrumental in coordinating their efforts, sat in the audience. And joining Cayce and Dobbins on stage were Dr. Harold Reilly, considered by many to be the father of physiotherapy, and Dr. Henry Hardwicke, New York's pioneer nutritionist. By sheer coincidence—Divine intervention fans of the Cayce work would later say—the six people who would be necessary to save Anne Neumark's life were together in the same room.

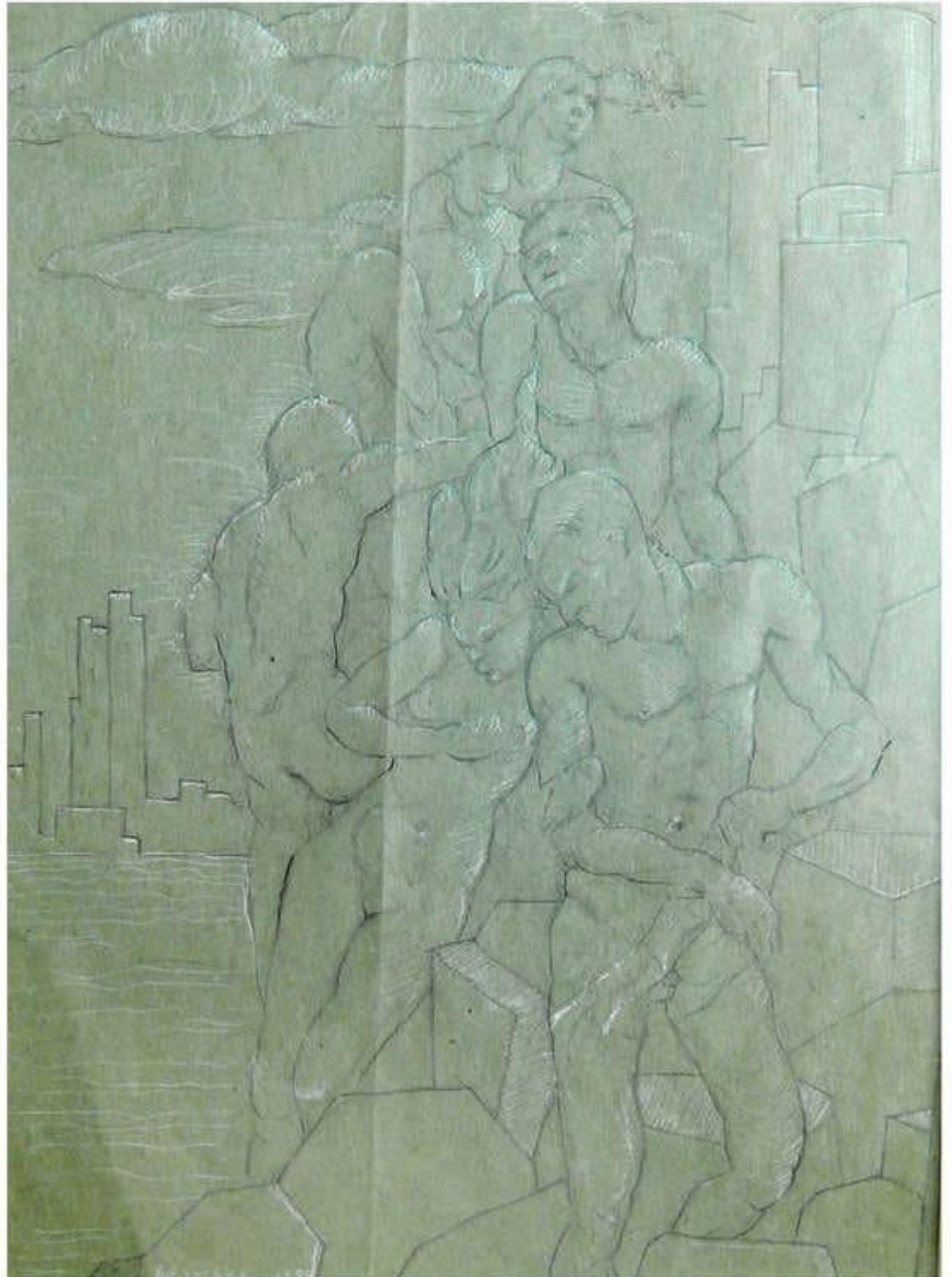
No sooner had the lecture ended than Sadie rushed to the front of the stage and begged Cayce to listen to her sister's tragic story.



- (left) Anne and Sadie Neumark and their younger sister (right) Goldie in their 1923 passport photo



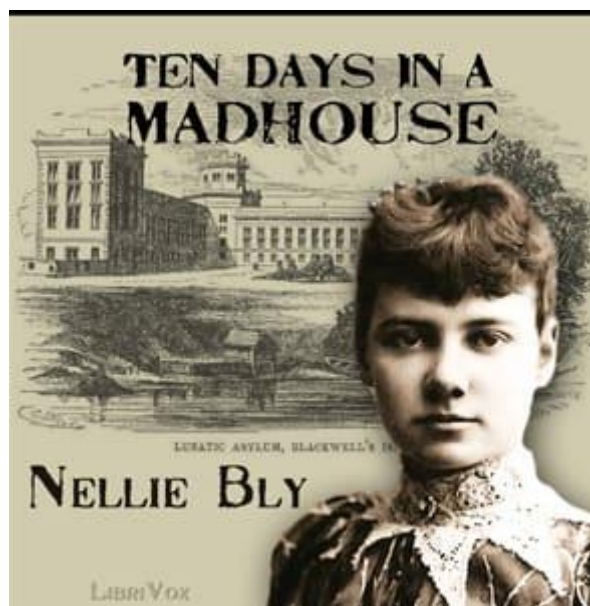
Anne, a Boston art student, had moved with her mother and two sisters to New York with the dream of becoming a professional portrait painter. The first public showing of her work in the city, at a prestigious Manhattan gallery, had been extremely well received, and she was poised to gain a foothold in a difficult and highly competitive profession.



- "Climbing the City," a drawing by Anne Neumark in 1930

Then, inexplicably, Anne began to act irrationally. She would suddenly burst into tears and become violent, and the next moment, laugh uproariously and fall into a stupor. She destroyed some of her own artwork and art supplies, injured herself, and then others. Physicians did not know how to help.

For her own sake and those around her, Anne was committed to the psychiatric hospital on Wards Island, what had formerly been known as Blackwell's Island, which is adjacent to Ellis Island, the Port of New York. "The island of the undesirables," as the property was referred to in the press, had a history of employing convicts from a nearby penitentiary as guards and orderlies, a practice that contributed to grim tales of madness, mistreated patients, wretched conditions, and wrongful confinement. "The insane asylum on Blackwell's Island is a human rat-trap," investigative reporter Nellie Bly wrote. "It is easy to get in, but once there, it is impossible to get out."



- Nellie Bly's expose on the Blackwell Island insane asylum

Not surprisingly, Anne's condition continued to deteriorate. After an episode in which she tore up her mattress with her fingernails, restraints had been put on her. Unable or unwilling to eat, her weight dropped to a mere 80 pounds and she was now being fed intravenously. She no longer recognized family members, nor could she communicate in any comprehensible manner.

Electroshock therapy proved ineffective, and she was now considered so weak from anemia that any sudden shocks to her system might result in her

death. At the rate at which Anne was losing weight, Sadie and her other sister, Goldie, and their mother, Helena, believed that she might not live out the new year.

After hearing her story, Edgar took hold of his son Hugh Lynn's arm and told him to set up an emergency appointment for a medical reading. David Kahn, too, stepped in and volunteered to visit the asylum and consult with her physicians to ascertain the veracity of the story. He would eventually do much more by having his attorneys intercede on behalf of the indigent Neumark family to obtain Anne's release from the asylum.

Edgar was initially reluctant to give the unfortunate girl the attention she so desperately needed. This was not out of lack of empathy, but because her condition was so advanced. He already had a long waiting list of desperately ill people waiting for readings.

"Possibly should not have undertaken this reading for Anne Neumark," he confided to Kahn, "but have been so anxious that something be done for her—wanted to do what little we could, so tried it; and yet, have a lot on the waiting list that have been and are overanxious."

Kahn—the first member of the Cayce team to visit her at the hospital—was under no illusion as to her mental health. "Had you seen her the first day when I visited her, I believe you would have thought, as did the doctors, that she would never recover," he reported to Cayce in Virginia Beach. "She was absolutely a wild maniac."

Edgar's friend was also made painfully aware of how difficult it would be to get her the help she needed at the hospital. There was "no treatment except mis-treatment," Kahn wrote. Subsequently, he and his attorneys succeeded in overcoming the monumental legal hurdles to remove her from state care. He rented her an apartment and hired a full-time caregiver who assisted Dobbins and the other physicians who treated her.

The first of six medical readings, conducted on January 13, 1939, suggested that her condition was indeed dire, but recovery was possible. Similar to the condition suffered by postal-worker Tom Scanlon, the cause of her mental illness was linked to a spinal injury in her lower back in the lumbar and

coccyx area. Strangely, no explicit reference was made in the first reading to how she had suffered the injury. This was a curious thing considering the frequency with which commentary was provided in most other medical readings.

All that was said regarding the cause of her condition was that "*unspeakable*" advances had been made to her, which had caused both physical and emotional injury and resulted in her impaired mental state.

*"The activities through which the entity passed have shattered its hopes, its aspirations—by the advances that were unspeakable to the entity, the MENTAL self, the higher self. And in the attempt to escape, and finding self trapped as it were, the physical exercise and activity in the attempt shattered the connection between the cerebrospinal and sympathetic system, especially in the coccyx and lumbar areas. Losing consciousness, the entity became a prey to those suggestive forces as were acted upon, and by the injection of outside forces to keep that hidden as attempted upon the body. Then, in its present environs, there have been only moments of rationality; and then NO one to respond brought greater and still greater depression to the better self."*

Whatever the experience, Anne had become "prey" to the desires of another. To "*escape*," her higher-self or soul-forces had become detached from her earthly physical self. She had entered what Cayce called "*the borderland*," and he strongly recommended that great care needed to be taken as she was "*so near possession*." What exactly this meant was never made clear. However, in the months ahead, as more readings were given, clues were forthcoming that presented an altogether frightening picture of a tormented soul.



① of ②  
*Background*

DAVID E. KAHN  
206 LEXINGTON AVENUE  
NEW YORK  
LEXINGTON 2-7660

1789

December 27, 1938

*lts. P-DEK*

1789

Mr. Edgar Cayce,  
Virginia Beach, Va.

1789

### Application For Associate Membership IN THE ASSOCIATION FOR RESEARCH AND ENLIGHTENMENT, INC. VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA

The undersigned hereby applies for Associate Membership in the Association for Research and Enlightenment, Incorporated, and agrees to pay the required membership dues as follows: \$20.00 Cash herewith.

I wish to avail myself at this time of the privilege of receiving through Mr. Edgar Cayce the psychic reading which is offered me through this membership and of the kind indicated below:

Physical  Life

In requesting this psychic reading I understand that I am taking part in an experiment conducted by the Association for the purpose of ascertaining the value of psychic information and extending the knowledge of the laws governing its transmission. I understand that no claims or promises are made in connection with this reading.

Date *Dec 27, 1938*  
Witnessed By *Sadie Neumark*  
Recommended By *David Kahn*  
Approved By \_\_\_\_\_

(Membership Committee)

Samples of Publications Will Be Sent Upon Request.

Name *Wm. Neumark*  
Address *Manhattan State Hospital  
wards Island - Rooms 14A*  
Age *32* Date of Birth *May 3-1906*  
Place of Birth *Boston Mass*  
Occupation *Artist* Position \_\_\_\_\_  
Married or Single? \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Husband or Wife \_\_\_\_\_  
No. Children \_\_\_\_\_ Names \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Father and Mother *Helene L. Neumark*  
*Sister - Sadie Neumark*

NOTE: Send applications, together with payment of dues, direct to ASSOCIATION FOR RESEARCH AND ENLIGHTENMENT, INC., Virginia  
Appointments for readings will be made in order of receipt of applications except in emergency cases.

to get into... who came in is a dressmaker...  
As soon as I get the Reading from you, I will know what... If it is at all...  
...give it my time and attention. ...right away, it would...

- Anne Neumark's application for membership in the Association for Research and Enlightenment

Foremost on the list of Cayce's recommendations was to remove Anne from the hospital and place her in an environment Cayce described as one of *"gentleness, of kindness, of patience."* A full-time constant care attendant was necessary, someone who was physically able to control her, but also do so in a *"loving, kind and patient manner."* That person, Cayce said in her second reading, should be someone who acted *"not merely for the money,"* but in *"the Christian spirit."* Further, Cayce said, *"if those who are desirous of being of help will pray ABOUT it, they will receive direction!"*

Malnutrition, not anemia, was at the root of her weight loss, a condition that could be remedied with plenty of nutritious whole foods. In addition to osteopathy, which would help repair her cerebrospinal system, she was to undergo treatments with a "wet-cell," a device frequently recommended by Cayce hospital which transmitted a mild electrical current through the body. In Anne's case, the appliance was to be used in conjunction with a solution of gold chloride, which would modify the current to a particular frequency that would supplement the body's ability to heal itself. Although any number of physicians could conduct the treatments, Dobbins was identified by name as being the most suitable.

In closing, Cayce encouraged everyone working with her to know that the results would be well worth their efforts: *"The beauty of this soul, its abilities as a creative influence in the lives of those who may bring it back... from the very borderland, is worth all the effort, all the love, all the kindness one may give."*

Kahn, who visited Anne several times before the reading was given, confirmed everything that had been conveyed by Cayce. Anne had the appearance of an anorexic, and her body was covered with black and blue marks from efforts the staff had made to restrain her. And this was putting a positive spin on what Kahn described as the brutal manner in which she was being treated in a hospital where a small staff of physicians, nurses, and orderlies were caring for a population of over three-thousand mental patients. The last "bout" with her caretakers had somehow resulted in the bones of one of Anne's feet being broken. It thus came as no surprise that the first



recommendation that came through in the reading was to remove her from the hospital.

Kahn took the opportunity to conduct interviews with the hospital staff, Anne's mother, and her two sisters. His sleuthing, combined with the references in subsequent readings, suggested that there had indeed been some undisclosed physical as well as mental injury which had brought on her condition. Specifics would not be discovered for several weeks, but from what Kahn learned, immediately prior to her mental collapse, she had made an appointment with a man who claimed to be interested in buying her artwork and introducing her to the greater community of New York art patrons. Anne's mother and sisters did not know whether or not she had visited the man, but it seemed too great a coincidence that the scheduled appointment had coincided with her outbursts. Family members had not been able to query her on the matter because, by the time details were forthcoming, Anne couldn't be communicated with. She had begun raging and was incomprehensible. Strangely, she would rant about a man carrying a black umbrella.

As Kahn continued to investigate this matter, and Dr. Dobbins began daily osteopathic treatments, another reading was conducted in Virginia Beach. The news was hopeful. Her condition was improving; treatments, as specified in the first reading, were to continue. Further, the legal hurdles had been overcome and arrangements made for Anne to be moved into private care. The most important determining factor was the care provided by the person hired to be with her.

*"Willing for hire is one thing," Cayce cautioned. "Willing because of the love and the human element is another. Willing because of the physical, mental and spiritual experiences is still another."*

Anne was moved into a private home in close proximity to Dr. Dobbins' Staten Island office so that he could more easily visit her. Here, she improved remarkably. She still couldn't communicate in any comprehensible way, and wasn't at the point of being able to feed herself, but the outbursts were fewer and farther between. A straitjacket was no longer necessary.

When Cayce conducted his fourth reading on May 4, 1939, there had been so much improvement that a full-time professional caregiver was no longer necessary. Her mother took over, aided by her two sisters. Anne was now able to communicate in full sentences. Though she couldn't remember events prior to her hospitalization, she hadn't lost her painting skills. Though there were periods when she merely stared blankly at her easel or wouldn't go near it at all, she gradually began sketching.

As Kahn would report: "On my visit... she was as quiet and demure and sane as any person you have ever met. The past is an entire blank to her. She does not understand how she is in her present surroundings except that, as I told her, it was for rest, quiet and proper care in a convalescent hospital for people who have had shocks."

The fifth reading in the series, conducted on July 26, confirmed what the family knew to be true: Anne continued to improve in just about every way. The only unusual aspect about this reading was a curious remark in which Cayce, in trance, revealed details of her mental condition that, the reading clearly stated, were not to be shared with the patient. She was too emotionally fragile; the injury which had led to her mental illness had left scars that were not physical, and still needed healing. This was indeed a most unusual thing to come through in a reading, and was repeated in a subsequent reading: "*There's so much to withhold... This had best not be given just now. There are too many turmoils still within the experiences...*"

Kahn, with the help of family members, the Cayce readings, and eventually Anne herself, ferreted out clues to what may have happened. Anne had been asked to bring samples of her artwork to the apartment of a potential customer. She did so, and was brutally attacked. In the struggle to free herself, she had injured her spine. The nervous shock coupled with the injury had brought on her insanity. No mention was made of the mysterious umbrella, but one could only imagine.

There might have been more than this alleged assault that triggered her mental condition. Anne's sister, Sadie, confirmed a reference in the readings to 1936, when the family was living in Boston, before coming to New York. Anne had received a commission to paint a portrait of a woman who had

recently died. The woman's husband loved his wife dearly and wanted Anne, working from photographs, to capture her likeness exactly as he remembered her. Anne, who much preferred working from a living model, struggled with the portrait as never before. She would shutter herself up in her room for days at a time, obsessing over the painting and neglecting everything else.

Was the "possession" referenced in Cayce's first reading for Anne somehow related to her 1936 portrait commission? If David Kahn or Edgar Cayce discovered the truth or learned more about what had happened, there is no record of it in the Cayce archive or Kahn's personal papers.

Anne's physical healing, and then emotional healing, continued to improve as further readings were conducted. Though at this point Anne was not yet aware of the trance readings being used to treat her, or even who Edgar Cayce was, she knew something strange and unusual was taking place. A man named David Kahn gave her a job in his office, and some of his friends from faraway Virginia Beach were helping her family.

Kahn continued to note her daily improvement, as did Dobbins, who reported in July: "She looks perfectly marvelous, is much more active, laughs a great deal more, and I caught her singing several times. We try to find excuses for anything that is funny. I think there's nothing better than good hearty laughing to loosen one up."

Over time, she started asking who Edgar Cayce was. When she found out that he was the source of the medical help she was receiving, she wrote him a letter, and he, in turn, wrote her back, offering encouragement.

He then received a response back to his letter several days later. "Dear Mr. Cayce: Thank you very much for the letter. I appreciate your interest in me a lot. I too have heard so many nice things about you; it seems so strange to write to you and have you all [in Virginia Beach] like me without ever having seen me. I trust someday to be able to do something for you in my own work."

Her ongoing pen-pal relationship with Edgar would result in her obtaining what was called a Life Reading, which proved to be most revealing. In the incarnation before being born as Anne Neumark, she had been a woman

named Mana Smyrth, who lived in Salem, Massachusetts, during the witch hunts, where she had suffered persecution and been brought "*under submission*" by being repeatedly dunked underwater. From this incarnation she had developed a fear of men, a condition exacerbated in the present. Her love of art and talent as a painter had been developed in an earlier incarnation, when she had been a student of Peter Paul Rubens, one of the greatest artists who ever lived.

*"Hence in the present we find that the entity's activity should follow in this line [of artistic endeavor], whether in oil or in the watercolor,"* Cayce reported in her seventh reading, which was conducted in November 1939, nearly a year after Sadie happened into the McAlpin Hotel lecture.

Neumark followed the advice in the readings. She would go on to become a highly accomplished New York art teacher and portraitist, with paintings in several museum collections. Today, after Neumark's passing, at age 91 in 1997, her reputation is still growing. The portrait she painted that Edgar personally prized was one she did of him when Edgar visited her in New York in 1940. He hung the portrait over his mantle in Virginia Beach, not only for the beauty he found in it but as a constant reminder of the good that could come from the readings.



- 1940 portrait of Edgar Cayce by Anne Neumark



- Gertrude and Edgar Cayce in their home with the Neumark portrait over the fireplace.

#### End Notes

The above account has been assembled from the online database of reports and readings in the Edgar Cayce Foundation in Virginia Beach; the Kahn family archives in Montauk, N.Y., the New York State Death Records 1935-2014, the *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 2007, *1933-1934 Yearbook for the Designers Art School, Fine and Applied Art, Boston, Massachusetts*, the



Wilmington, Delaware Evening Journal, and interviews with art dealer Leonard Davenport.

