


W.T. Stead Resource Site

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### Julia's Bureau: An Attempt to Bridge the Grave

The Review of Reviews, vol. XXXIX, May, 1909, p. 433

The *Fortnightly Review* publishes an article by W. T. Stead, entitled "The Exploration of the Other World."

THE OPENING OF JULIA'S BUREAU.

Mr. Stead says:—

On April 24th I opened a Bureau in London for the purpose of attempting to bridge the abyss between the Two Worlds. It is established in my old office at Mowbray House, Norfolk Street, London, and is under the direct control of the Friend on the Other Side who, for the last fifteen years, has been urging me to allow her the opportunity of making good her words.

Those to whom the conception of the close and constant communication between the incarnate and discarnate halves of the human race is new and strange will naturally regard this announcement with amazement. But to those who know that such communications do take place, the creating of such a Bureau will seem so obvious and proper that the only ground for amazement will be that it had not been established fifty years since.

A BRIDGE BETWEEN THE LIVING AND THE DEAD.

The problem is a serious one. The proposal to construct a bridge across the abyss will stagger most people by its audacity. Some will regard it as profane. But all those who have taken any intelligent interest in the progress of psychical research will admit that the time is at hand when such an enterprise ought to be taken in hand by serious investigators, and resolutely prosecuted to its final conclusion.

The only question is, what are the facts? Can we or can we not organise such a service of trustworthy persons whose eyes have been opened, to undertake the guidance of the pioneers who are endeavouring to build the bridge between the living and the dead?

I think that with patience and perseverance it can be done. Julia, who fifteen years ago first insisted upon the duty of opening such a Bureau of Intercommunication, has now undertaken to direct its operations from day to day.

## WHY THE BUREAU IS ESTABLISHED.

The fundamental hypothesis on which the Bureau rests is as follows:—

I believe that when our friends and relatives die they are merely liberated from their mortal bodies. They go on living, without losing their sense of personality. In some cases after death there is unconsciousness which lasts for some time. But in most cases the dead are very much more alive than they were before they ceased to breathe, and usually whenever they loved much they are extremely anxious to comfort their sorrowing friends by assurances of their welfare and of their continued existence.

## HOW THE BUREAU WILL BE WORKED.

That is the hypothesis. The Bureau proposes to act upon it as follows:—A Directory of competent Sensitives, a muster roll of those whose eyes are opened, will be compiled after careful and continued investigation, test and experiment. When anyone who has lost a beloved friend or relative wishes to ascertain whether or not he can communicate with him, and applies to the Bureau, he will be informed of the conditions under which alone such an attempt can be made. Should he assent, the sanction of the Director must then be obtained. It will be refused to all who do not seek to hear from those whom they have loved and lost.

## ITS LIMITATIONS.

On this point Julia is very positive. She writes:— "The watchword of the Bureau is to help those who love to find each other again after the change called death. It will be a kind of Dead Letter Office, in which missing messages will be sorted out and re-delivered. Where there are no messages of love and of longing from either side, there is no place for its work. Or the officer at the Bureau may also be compared to a kind-hearted policeman who exerts himself to find a child lost in the crowd and restores it to its sorrowing mother. When he has brought them together his work is done. There will be a constant temptation to transcend this function and to constitute the Bureau a centre for the exploration of the Other World. To yield to this would be fatal. Not that I have any objection to such exploration. It is the natural and necessary and most important outcome of your work. But the Bureau, my Bureau, must not undertake it. It must confine itself to its first duty, the building of the bridge, the re-linking of broken ties, the establishing of communication between the bereaved."

## THE GREAT EXPERIMENT.

When the Director has approved, and the applicant has subscribed to the regulations of the Bureau, the experiment will begin. Accompanied by a stenographer, sworn to secrecy, the applicant will be sent in succession to three Sensitives of proved integrity but of differing gifts. The first might be a natural clairvoyant, the second a trance medium, the third an automatic writer. The sittings would be held apart. No communication would be allowed between the mediums. The stenographer would report every word spoken on either side. The stenographic report would be submitted to the applicant for confirmation or otherwise of the accuracy of its contents, and an attestation of the success or failure with which the Sensitives had been able to obtain communications which could be recognised as coming from the deceased. If in only ten per cent, of such cases the applicant were convinced that he had obtained authentic communications from beyond the grave, the experiment would surely be worth trying. But judging from preliminary experimental tests, the proportion would be much greater than ten per cent.

## THE STAFF ON THIS SIDE AND ON THE OTHER.

Here indeed is a field wide and fertile enough to demand the energies of innumerable workers.

It will be Julia's Bureau, not mine, although, of course, I accept the responsibility for seeing that her directions are carried out. The staff at first will be small, consisting of a sub-director, with stenographer and archivist. It will be in constant touch with psychics, or those who possess the sixth sense, and it will search for the most gifted of those Sensitives as for hid treasures. In the beginning there will be no attempt to do more than to deal thoroughly with cases which, in Julia's judgment, are suitable for submitting to the threefold test. It will be better to do half-a-dozen cases thoroughly with careful record of both successes and failures rather than to scramble through a hundred cases.

I would not assume the responsibility of making the attempt if Julia had not assured me that she will personally decide which cases the Bureau shall take in hand.

Those who believe that Julia is only a phase of my subconsciousness will be puzzled to explain how it is that she communicates with equal ease through me or through two or three other Sensitives. For the proper functioning of the Bureau my personal attendance will not be necessary. Nor is Julia alone. Many others are actively co-operating with her in this effort to bridge the abyss. If any reliance can be placed upon assurances and communications received from the Other Side, both my son and Mr. Myers are actively interested in making this Bureau a success.

#### AN APPEAL FOR HELPERS.

I shall be extremely glad to hear from any Sensitives whose eyelids are opened, who sympathise and are willing to help in this work. Nor shall I be less glad to hear from those who are personally interested in the quest and are willing to aid me in this great emprise.

If it fails it will not be for lack of earnest and sincere cooperation on both sides. But if it succeeds—! ♦

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See also..

- A. G. Gardiner on Stead & Spiritualism ([gardiner.php](#))
- Stead & Spiritualism ([/spiritualism/index.php](#))



#### Who is behind this website?

I founded this website in 2001 to assist me in my own research on W.T. Stead, little knowing then that it would become the largest online resource on Stead's life and career. Today this site is used by students, scholars and institutions around the world and has significantly contributed to the Study of W.T. Stead and the evils which he campaigned against.

If you have a question or query, feel free to Contact me (<mailto:info@yarm-webcraft.co.uk>) and I will get back to you at my earliest convenience (*but please don't ask me to do your research for you!* ).

Owen Mulpetre, BA (Hons) MPhil

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