

This is a truly unique archive. Probably the world's largest archive of a single psychic, it also contains documents and newspaper clippings written in ten to fifteen different languages. Croiset was consulted by police forces and individuals from all corners of the world, seeking his help in missing-person cases, scientific research and healing. Van der Knaap discussed the scientific value of this remarkable archive, how we are working on an index of it to make the contents easily available for scientists to find their way through all the hundreds of missing-person cases, 'chair-test' protocols, healing documents and a huge amount of manuscript pages written by Croiset as he tried to describe how his powers might work, what they mean to him in his personal development and for humanity in general. By showing the audience three short sections of original film footage on how Croiset worked as a healer, was a subject in many – international – scientific experiments and how missing-persons cases were handled, she presented a clear and open insight into the life and work of Gerard Croiset.

Callum Cooper and David Saunders

Hidden Gems: Lessons Learned and Benefits Gained from the Preservation and Proliferation of Historical Documents

This talk was based on previous archival work that Saunders and Cooper, along with Rachel Evenden, had previously presented to the SPR, regarding donations of psychical research material to the Centre for the Study of Anomalous Psychological Processes (CSAPP) at the University of Northampton and work they carried out at the Eileen J. Garrett library in New York.[1]

Unfortunately, owing to a bereavement, Saunders could not be present, so Cooper presented a slightly different slant on the intended presentation. After covering the archival work they had been doing, Cooper discussed his own efforts in document preservation. This involved collections of the now rare journals of branches of the SPR, such as that of the Southern

Californian SPR and Texas SPR, through to finding runs of the *Journal of Paraphysics*, the *Indian Journal of Parapsychology*, and the *Parapsychological Journal of South Africa*, with the intention to digitize these in the future.

Cooper concluded by reading out some examples of a case that Saunders has been piecing together via available archived correspondence, gathered from the Eileen J. Garrett library. The correspondence concerns a series of dreams of a deceased individual experienced by Mrs Garrett while she was the test subject in pilot trials of a dream telepathy protocol at the Parapsychology Foundation. These trials subsequently acted as a proof of principle for the later famous Maimonides dream telepathy studies. The account was described as having several inconsistencies in the reports written around it; but provides the imparting of items of veridical information to Mrs Garrett by the deceased individual in the dream. Gratitude was also expressed to the SPR's Survival Research Committee, as within their archival research, Saunders and Cooper have been collecting rare accounts of dream encounters with the dead – the results of which will be presented at a later date.

Dr Melvyn Willin

The Quest for the Holy Grail: Apports, Books and Cassettes

In his capacity as Honorary Archives Liaison Officer, Dr Melvyn Willin has an in-depth knowledge of the SPR's manuscripts and apports housed in Cambridge University Library. He holds the audio-visual archives at his home in Essex, where he undertakes regular and frequent copying and cataloguing. In his talk, Dr Willin concentrated on the practical issues in archival work. With this in mind, various problem correspondences were investigated by the audience and they had the chance to listen to audio-recordings, the identity of which is obscure. For instance, the utterances of mediums – sometimes speaking in unknown tongues. Dr Willin also drew attention to the sad fact that

more recent archival material is not being deposited with the Society's archives, despite its security and historical significance. He reminded the audience that the important original

material exploring such fascinating cases as Borley Rectory, the Enfield 'poltergeist' and, donated on the day of the Study Day, the Batcheldor table-tilting files, can all be found in the archives. It is Dr Willin's hope that the archives will continue to receive donations and that new discoveries in the field of psychical research will remain in the United Kingdom, but also be made available for other researchers around the world through internet dissemination.

Dr Frank Bowles

The Cambridge Archives and a Tribute to Peter Meadows

The Archive of the Society for Psychical Research is held on deposit at Cambridge University Library. It is extensive, consisting of about 150 linear metres of material, whilst being very varied in its contents. It includes loose papers, bound volumes, newspaper cuttings, photographs and various objects and offers a fascinating insight not only into the workings of the Society and its members, but also into psychical research more generally from the mid nineteenth century right up to virtually the present day. The Society is still generating material which is deposited in the Archive on a regular basis. Dr Bowles gave an overview of the collection, highlighting various collections of papers within it, to illustrate what kind of material is contained in the collection and how it documents the history of psychical research and of the Society. He also gave details of the Manuscripts Department of the University Library, what is held there, how to access the collections, and the workings of the reading room. Lastly, he gave details of how to access finding aids and catalogues, both online and in paper form. Dr Bowles replaces the late Peter Meadows as the archivist responsible for the SPR Archives. ♣

The Study Day was dedicated to Peter Meadows, Archivist at Cambridge University Library, who passed away in 2015.

