

A Royal Séance

Lilian Bailey was a deep trance medium who gave supreme survival evidence to many notable personalities in the 20th- Century. Kings and Princes consulted her because of her remarkable gift which allowed her spirit-self to leave its mortal shell and thus allow a communicator from the next world to take temporary control of it; after this, bereaved statesmen and people who had held high office were now able to speak directly to their loved ones whom they had left behind on the Earth.

Lilian Bailey was one of a handful of gifted 20th-Century British mediums who were responsible for Spiritualism becoming a State-recognised religion, owing to the impression that the stunning quality of her survival evidence made on all who witnessed it.

Her many clients included “The World’s Sweetheart” Mary Pickford, film star of the silent screen; Hollywood actress Merle Oberon, of Wuthering Heights fame; the inimitable Mae West; one of Canada’s greatest Premiers, Mackenzie King - and even members of the British Royal Family benefited from her gifts.

Gordon Adams, Lilian Bailey’s son-in-law, confided to Roy Stemman (Assistant editor to Maurice Barbanell for eight years) that a remarkable séance had taken place in 1953, not many years before he began investigating Spiritualism. He was sworn to secrecy and it was not until Lilian Bailey’s death in October 1971 that he and others who knew the story were free to discuss it.

Lilian Bailey knew there were people who required her to perform under the strictest test conditions before they would be prepared to accept the evidence of their own eyes and ears, and she always did her best to satisfy those demands, within reason, Adams told me. So when she received a request from a stranger to give a séance at a house in Kensington, she agreed. A limousine took her to a well-appointed property; then she was taken on to another address. She was required to put on a blindfold during the journey so that there were no visual clues about the person or people she would be meeting. Again, she agreed.

She was eventually led into a room, where she sensed others were gathered, and was asked to conduct the séance still wearing the blindfold. This was not a great hindrance, since she often worked in a trance. Puzzled but philosophical about the lengths to which people went to test her mediumship, she eased herself into a chair and soon felt herself drifting off into a trance, allowing her main spirit helper Bill Wootton, and others in the next world, to take over her body and speak through her lips.

In what seemed to her like no time at all, she returned to normal consciousness and was told she could remove the blindfold. As her eyes grew accustomed to the light she surveyed the sitters. Sitting in a circle on gilt chairs were the Queen Mother, the Queen, Prince Philip, Princess Margaret, Princess Alexandra and the Duke of Kent.

This astonishing experience, which happened a year after the death of King George VI, had clearly been arranged in the hope of receiving a communication from the dead monarch, and it was almost certainly successful. However, since she was in trance, Lilian Bailey knew nothing of the conversations that took place between members of the British royal family and those from the spirit world who wished to speak to them.

Unsurprisingly, none of those who participated has ever commented directly on the secret séance.

Royal biographer and Daily Telegraph court correspondent Ann Morrow included this story in her book, *The Queen Mother*. She had asked Gordon Adams if Lilian Bailey was unnerved when she removed her blindfold.

He replied: 'My mother-in-law had dealings with all sorts of people, such as the Chinese leader Chiang Kai-shek and the King of Greece. So she did not feel intimidated by royalty; it was all in a day's work for her.'

The Queen Mother is reported to have continued to phone Lilian Bailey for some time after the séance and further private sittings took place. Eventually, when she came to terms with her loss and was clearly satisfied that the dead king continued to watch over her from the spirit world, she asked the medium to come to Clarence House one last time. Removing a piece of costume jewellery from the dress she was wearing, the Queen Mother pinned it on Lilian Bailey's shoulder, saying: 'You know we do not have many possessions, but I would like you to have this.' It expressed her gratitude for the comfort she received. Almost immediately, she returned to public life.

Since the royal family have not confirmed the story, can we be sure that this remarkable event actually took place? Those who knew Lilian Bailey — who was awarded an OBE for services in France during the First World War, when she served with the Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps — are adamant that she would not have invented such a story to boost her reputation. She was already famous and, since the story was never published during her lifetime, it did not affect her standing among Spiritualists or the public. That may not satisfy sceptics.

More to the point is-an observation made by Ann Morrow. In writing her book, she received assistance from the Queen Mother and her private secretary, Sir Martin Gilliat. They saw proofs of the book and raised no objection to the inclusion of the report on the royal séance.

The story was repeated, again without objection, in Ann Morrow's *Without Equal: Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother*, published in July 2000 to mark her centenary.

King George VI, of course, knew all about mediums when he was alive. When his speech therapist, Lionel Logue, had told him that he had visited mediums to seek evidence of his wife's survival after death, the King was not shocked - in fact he was quite supportive and remarked, "My family are no strangers to Spiritualism."

Lilian had two main spirit-controls or spirit guides. The first was a young soldier named William Hedley Wootton, an ex-Grenadier Guards' Captain who had been killed in France in 1914-18 War. From beyond death, William gave his mother's full name and address, and letter from his parents in Boston, USA, verified his existence.

Lilian also obtained a spirit photograph of her guide via the mediumship of William Hope. The second control was a delightful little Singhalese girl who liked to be called 'Poppet'.

When asked about what her mediumship had taught her, Lilian Bailey replied: 'I am so sure that life goes on after death. It is not a hope – it is an absolute conviction. There is no question in my mind that we shall meet, and be with, those whom we love.'

As published by Zerdini on <http://spiritualistchatroom.forumotion.com>