

"INTERVIEW" WITH SPIRIT OF FORMER ST. JOHN SOLDIER

F. A. Thomas, "Doctor of
Spiritual Science" Recounts It

SERGT. HARTLEY FRENCH

Says Latter, Who Was Killed in
Action, Made "Manifestation,"
Declared Himself Happy and
Discussed the War

The story of an interview with the
shade of Sergeant Hartley French, a
native of St. John, who went overseas
with a New Brunswick battalion and
was killed in action, is given promi-
nence in a recent issue of the Boston
Sunday Post.

The "manifestation" is said to have
been made to F. A. Thomas, "doctor
of spiritual science," in the presence of
F. H. Williams, whose wife is a sister
of the late Sergeant French, at their
home in Boston.

The spirit of the soldier is credited
with reporting that he is happy, that
conditions in the spirit world are dif-
ferent from what he had expected and
that he sees a prospect of the United
States being drawn into the war, but
that even those in the spirit world can-
not tell when the war will end.

In his interview with the Post re-
porter, Mr. Thomas is reported as say-
ing:

"I called at the home of F. H. Wil-
liams, 708 Tremont street, where I now
live, and Mr. Williams answered the bell.
I had never seen Mr. Williams, did not
know any of his family or anything
about the roomers in his house. While
we were talking I saw a spirit standing
beside Mr. Williams.

"I described the spirit so closely that
Mr. Williams told me his name was
Hartley French, 38 years old, who with
his family had lived in Mr. Williams'
house for three years. While in Boston
he was employed as an automobile
chauffeur, and after he went to the war
his family went to live with some of
their relatives in Roxbury.

"When the war broke out Mr. French
went to his old home in St. John, N.B.,
and enlisted in the British army. He
felt it was his duty to go, as he was a
British subject, and wished to prove
loyal to his country. But he did not
believe the war would last long and
planned to return to Boston just as
soon as it was ended.

"He was sent to England and then to
France. He was fighting in the trench-
es at Verdun when he and several
others were literally blown to atoms by
the explosion close to them of a shell.
They were attempting to make a
charge at the time.

"As the spirit appeared there beside
Mr. Williams who had known French
so well and liked him very much, he
said:

"I want to send a message to my
family. Tell them I am happy. Some
day I will manifest directly to them.
"I have found things much different
in the spirit world from what I was
taught to believe."

"Mr. Williams suggested that I ask
him when the war would end. I did
so and he replied:

"All Europe will be in it yet, and
perhaps the United States, unless a
change takes place. There is no one in
the earth plain who is perfect and knows
it all. So here in the spirit world no-
body knows it all; therefore there is no
spirit here who can say when the war
will end.

"The men in the trenches do not
know what they are fighting for. They
know very little about the war. It will
never be known how many men are
killed. The suffering in the trenches is
so dreadful that the soldiers prefer
death to remaining there."

"The spirit of Mr. French then ceased
manifesting," said Mr. Thomas. "When
he first appeared he told me he did not
want to go to the war. He insisted he
was happy even though he passed out
under such awful conditions, his ma-
terial self being literally wiped out of
existence in the fraction of a second.
Mr. Williams told me that if the man
had been standing right there I could
not have given a better description of
him."

Speaking of an interview with Mrs.
Samuel Mitchell of 614 Tremont street,
Mr. Thomas says:

"When I was talking with Mrs. Sam-
uel Mitchell I noticed a spirit standing

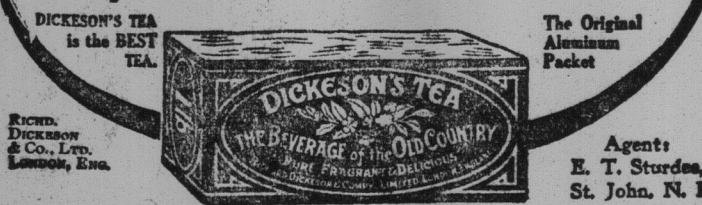
beside her. I described the spirit and
then gave the name. The spirit said:
Killed in Charge on Trenches

"I am Ernest Shields and am a
cousin of Mrs. Mitchell. Before going
to the war and coming to spirit land I
lived with my father, who was chief of
police of Belfast, Ireland. My brother
William, worked on a lake steamer owned
by E. P. Pope of Detroit, Mich.
"I was killed on the battlefield in
France a little time ago. I am very
weak and cannot manifest as I would

like to. I longed to come and visit you
while I was on earth but now that I
cannot I am manifesting myself to you
in spirit.
"I was in a charge on the German
trenches when I was killed. We were
mowed down as fast as we left the
trenches. The odds were so great that
we had no chance from the beginning. I
thought it a great mistake for us to
charge under such conditions. But army
orders are orders that have to be obey-
ed.
"We all knew that it meant sure

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death when we started out of the trench-
es." Continuing his message to Mrs.
Mitchell, said Mr. Thomas, "she spoke
of an accident in which Mrs. Mitchell's
brother, David John Shields, who was
severely injured. But he will get well,"
the spirit said, declared Mr. Thomas.
"Mrs. Mitchell knew her brother and
her cousin were both in the war but
had not heard that anything had hap-
pened to either of them. In a few days
a letter came announcing that her coun-
cil had been killed and that her brother
had been very seriously injured by an
explosion of gasoline, but was then re-
covering. The news of her cousin's
death had been delayed, as some time
elapsed before it reached his former
home in Ireland, and then more time
passed before it reached this country.

"The spirit message even went so far
as to state that Mrs. Mitchell would re-
ceive the letter on the next vessel to
come into Boston harbor, which would
prove what he was saying to be true.
The letter came. Mrs. Mitchell still
has it."

To show that he is not the only me-
dium in Boston who has received these
messages, Mr. Thomas says that Miss
Claudia M. Ferring got one fully as
startling as any he has had. The mes-
sage she got for a Boston woman said
both her brother and uncle had been
killed, and word has since come to that
effect.

"These spirits can be seen very plain-
ly through the spirit eye," Mr. Thomas
explains. He says they have even taken
on so much material form near him
that their weight has sent the beam of
a set of scales up until it registered 46

pounds. But such materialistic demon-
strations are very rare. They are usu-
ally wholly spiritual. He further-
more affirms that many of the messages
are lost because none of the hearers
take them down in writing, and the
mediums cannot recall them later be-
cause they are in a semi-trance state
when they catch them.

Mr. Thomas has worked in many
places in New England outside of Bos-
ton, including Providence, Pawtucket,
Fall River and Brockton. He is now
serving a society in Dover, N.H., in ad-
dition to his Boston work. His wife
is a talented musician and furnishes
the music at his meetings.

BRITAIN WAGES WAR ON JUVENILE CRIME

Its Constant Increase Results in
Conference to Solve the Prob-
lem

London, Nov. 17.—Plans are being con-
sidered to combat the great increase in
juvenile crime which has become more
apparent since the war began. Home
Secretary Samuel met fifty representa-
tives of boys' and girls' brigade organiza-
tions to discuss what he described as a
very urgent and very difficult problem.
The king and queen had expressed their
grave concern at the increase of juvenile
offences.

Mr. Samuel thought the war had en-
couraged the spirit of adventure among
the boys, darkened streets gave facilities
for wrong-doing, and in the absence of
so many millions of fathers on war ser-
vice there had been a weakening of home
influences. It had been found that the
influence of some moving pictures encour-
aged the spirit of lawlessness, and he
purposed to establish a central official
censorship of all motion picture plays.

At the same time he thought much of
the trouble arose from misdirected en-
ergy, and proposed to consider various
suggestions which were put forward by
the representatives of the organizations,
and by Sir Edward Baden Powell, organ-
izer of the Boy Scout movement.

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