

THE TRANCE MEDIUMSHIP OF JOHN HOULDSWORTH
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The Golden Gate Spiritualist Church in San Francisco has been blessed with trance mediumship during most of its history. The church was founded in 1924 by a group led by Reverend Florence Becker, a trance medium. Reverend Becker's mediumship encompassed a wide range of Spiritual phenomena including trance, trumpet, and paintings precipitated on canvas directly from Spirit. Reverend Becker served her church from its founding in 1924 until she passed to Spirit in July, 1970.

Reverend Becker conducted classes in Spiritual development and unfoldment regularly during the almost 50 years of her pastorate. She taught lessons received through her mediumship from Spirit, some dictated by Spirit while she was entranced. The lessons received during the first 15 or so years of her Spiritual work were published after she passed as *The Science of Being* and are available through the National Spiritualist Association of Churches bookstore. (bookstore@nsac.org) or from the Golden Gate Spiritualist Church in San Francisco (engeltie@aol.com).

Reverend Becker usually conducted her classes in weekly sessions lasting 6 to 7 weeks. During the period of one of these classes in the latter part of the 1960's, a Native American of the Mohave people, Moonface, was brought to Reverend Becker from the Spirit side by his father in Spirit. Moonface had been on the Spirit side for about 80 years. He was brought to Reverend Becker because he wished to heed the call of his Soul to change his path and begin his Spiritual progression. He had chosen for his service to humanity the path of controlling and speaking through a person on earth.

Reverend Becker told us there were three types of trance mediumship:

1. Semi-trance or conscious trance, where the medium is aware to some extent of what is going on as Spirit works through them.
2. Trance where the controlling Spirit takes possession of the physical medium.
3. Trance where the spirit of the physical medium goes out of its body, remaining attached to the body by a magnetic cord, and the controlling Spirit moves into the body and uses it to speak to us. This is sometimes referred to as "dead" trance.

Reverend Becker was this third type of trance medium as was John Houldsworth and many of the thousands of trance mediums, such as Cora Scott Richmond, in the wondrous history of Spiritualism.

Moonface came to one of the weekly meetings of the class Reverend Becker was conducting at the time to choose the person he would work through. He said as he came into the class, he saw a "beautiful light" (Reverend Becker). He told us later there were two people in the class who had sufficient quantities of the necessary chemicals in their physical bodies to enable them to be used as trance instruments, a man and a woman. He

chose the man, John Houldsworth, to be his instrument because he was “a bigger challenge.” Thus began an association that was to span the next 30 years.

John Houldsworth was born in Blantyre, Scotland, on July 6, 1929. His father was a coal miner. John was not tall as an adult but nevertheless was powerfully built. He trained to be a machinist in Scotland, then entered the British Army, serving as a commando in the Middle East in 1948 – 49. Skilled at soccer, he played professionally in Scotland for a time.

In 1948, John’s parents and older brother emigrated to the United States, taking up residence in Honolulu, Hawaii. In 1951, John, his fiancée Margaret Lees and an aunt joined them in Honolulu. Four months later, John and Margaret were married. They remained in Honolulu until 1958 when they moved to San Francisco with their young son. Needing employment, John was hired as a night clerk on the desk of the St. Francis Hotel, one of San Francisco’s most prestigious. John worked his way up to credit manager of the hotel, a position he held until his retirement in the 1990’s.

Soon after arriving in San Francisco, the Houldsworths found their way to the Golden Gate Spiritualist Church and Reverend Florence Becker. Margaret Houldsworth had been raised in Spiritualism. Her mother was a Spiritualist medium in Scotland. After Moonface, under Reverend Becker’s guidance, came to work with John, a weekly circle was formed in the Houldsworth home. At some point, Reverend Becker directed the circle to move to the healing chapel of the Golden Gate Spiritualist Church.

It was in the healing chapel that Moonface began coming through John publicly. At first, the circle would hear only a shouted, “Moonface, Mohave!” Gradually Moonface began to speak through John. Moonface was learning English at the same time. His command of the language increased as his ability to use John as a channel improved. John and Moonface began to participate in services at the Golden Gate Spiritualist Church around 1969 or early 1970. John would appear to go to sleep while standing at the lectern. Within a few moments, Moonface would announce himself. From then until about 1990, Moonface regularly gave semi-monthly addresses and served as a message medium at the Golden Gate Spiritualist Church. He occasionally talked to the lyceum classes at the Golden Gate, taking questions from the children and adults. He and John also served other churches in the area.

Moonface had told us early in his contact, probably in response to someone’s question, that his birthday on earth was July 12. We note that Reverend Becker passed to Spirit on July 12, 1970 and John Houldsworth passed to Spirit on January 12, 1998.

In many of his talks, Moonface tried to help us learn to live simpler, righter, more spiritual lives through perceiving our Oneness with the Great Spirit and each other. He once told me, “It’s not the words I say, it’s the *meaning*. Get the *meaning*.” His constant theme was *Gratitude*. He sometimes quoted leaders of his people, the Mohave, and others of the Indian Nations he called “Great Chiefs.” He would often share with us, both in public talks and privately, this quotation from the “Chiefs of my people,”

*Keep a silent tongue,
A sacred heart,
And an attentive ear.*

This was the greatest power he could give us, he said, and that if we perceive and practice this, we would “Walk through life untouched.” These three ideas join as the sides of a Triangle of Power. If we wish them to form the sides of the Square of Foundation, Moonface said to add *Gratitude* as the fourth side.

Moonface counseled us to “meet our adversities,” not fight them, not seek revenge. He did not learn this until he was in Spirit and then understood he had made a serious mistake when on earth by not meeting his adversities. This was not only his failure, he said, but the failure of his People. He often quoted the Great Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce who, when he saw the children, women, and men of his tribe massacred by the United States Army as they tried to escape into safety in Canada said,

*From where the sun now stands,
I will fight no more Forever.*

“If we can use and perceive this,” Moonface said, “we can turn the power of hate into good, into healing.”

We meet our adversities through “Patience and Tolerance.” Meet them “face to face,” he said. Our biggest adversity collectively on earth, Moonface told us, is “the non-equality of women.” Women “walk physically behind but spiritually in front.”

In our dealings with each other, he counseled us to live more spiritual lives here on earth. Moonface said a number of times,

*In the Silence there is Power.
In Giving, there is Strength.
There is nothing stronger than Gentleness,
Nothing Gentler than Real Strength.*

He talked often of the need for all of us to try to do what is Right. He would say,

It is easy to do justice, it is hard to do Right.

In one of his talks, he told us of the difference between “justice” and “Right.” When we are not sure whether something we are going to do is “justice” or “Right,” if another person is going to be hurt by what we do, we are doing “justice,” not Right.

He sometimes asked us to pray in certain ways. To help all humankind, Moonface asked us to pray to God or the Great Spirit,

*I pray that the year before us be as beautiful,
as the beautiful flower that grows from the earth.*

When we see others who need help, Moonface suggested we pray to God,

*Dear God, I would like you to guide their footsteps
in the Pathway of Truth and Love.*

In one talk, he spoke of the *New Horizon* we are approaching when the “World of matter will be changed drastically for the better.” In the late 1930’s Spirit announced through the mediumship of Reverend Becker that a *New Dispensation* was beginning to come to humankind, a new time of peace and brotherly love. Moonface spoke of this *New Horizon* and asked us to pray to God and say,

*Loving Father God, I pray that this New Horizon
be shown before us and the Dawn of this
New Day come soon.*

He said, “I promise you here and now there will be a *New Horizon*.”

Moonface’s teacher on the Spirit side was Benjamin, a rabbi. Benjamin had progressed to the Seventh Sphere of the Spirit World, the highest we can attain and still communicate with those on earth. Benjamin talked through John a few times at the Golden Gate Spiritualist Church or during a meeting of the Houldsworth home circle. Moonface told us it took Benjamin 6 weeks to lower his rate of vibration sufficiently to talk through John at church. When addressing anyone directly, Benjamin usually prefaced the name with “My loving brother” or “My loving sister.” God was “My Loving Father God.” On one occasion, Benjamin told us that if we see or know of one seriously in need, we should pray,

*Loving Father God,
I pray that you would alleviate their condition
Or take them Home with Thee.*

In his last communication to the Houldsworth circle, Benjamin said this:

*There may be times when the clouds of sorrow surround you.
There may be times when you think the energies,
You have given forth have gone in vain.
But I can tell you here and now,
That any energy spent by your physical body,
Coupled with Love and Goodness from within,
Never goes in vain.*

*There may be times when you wonder,
“Why does this happen to me?”
But I would like you to understand here and now that obstacles,
Yea, though they may seem big,
To the physical eye and physical heart,
Are nothing but a step, a piece of education to help build,
The Spiritual self.*

*Many a time I have watched the tear of sorrow,
As it left the physical eye,
Lo and behold, before it reached the height of the chest,
Had turned to a tear of gratitude.
So each and every thing that may be thrown in your pathway,
Pick it up with both hands and convert it to energy and love,
As you gradually dispose of it.*

*Tear from the outside of it the knowledge and education,
The lesson learned,
And so free the meaning of it to the wayside.
Even though it stings,
It flies on the Pathway of Life, out of the sensitive Id,
From a Volume of Knowledge preserved,
And may you never forget it.*
