

The Cheltenham Ghost

Morton, R.C. (1892). Record of a Haunted House, *Proceedings of the Society for Psychological Research* 8, pp. 311-32.

Preface by Frederic Myers

The first intimation which I received of the series of phenomena described below was in a letter received in December, 1884, from Mr. J. W. Graham, now Principal of Dalton Hall, Manchester. Mr. Graham had heard an account from the gentleman mentioned below as Captain Morton; had written this account out from memory, and had got it revised by Captain and Miss Morton. This account, and Miss Morton's letters to Miss Campbell which begin with the first appearance of the figure, are the earliest written records. Captain Morton was for a time unwilling to give further accounts, lest the house, which belonged to a friend of his, should again become depreciated in value; as it appears from Miss Morton's record that it has previously been. But on May 1st, 1886, he permitted me to call upon him; and from that date onwards I visited him at intervals and took notes of what he told me. I also saw Miss Morton and Miss E. Morton, and I interviewed at their own homes Mrs. Twining, a charwoman, and Mrs. Brown, a former parlour maid. In this case it is observable that the phenomena as seen or heard by all the witnesses were very uniform in character—even in the numerous instances where there had been no previous communication between the percipients. I have found no discrepancy in the independent testimonies, when collected, with the unimportant exception of General A.'s inability or unwillingness to recall one incident, which was already included in Mr. Graham's first account, soon after its occurrence, and six years before General A., an old man, was asked to repeat it.

Captain Morton's reluctance to allow the evidence to be collected until the haunting had ceased—a reluctance based on consideration for the owner of the house—has thus done less harm than might have been feared. It must be added that Captain M. and the members of his family in general, while feeling little scientific interest in the apparition, were unusually free from superstitious fears. Miss Morton, whose account is given below, is a lady of scientific training, now preparing to be a physician; and her narrative has received no accretions since I first heard it. The name Morton is substituted for the real family name. With that exception the names and initials are the true ones.

Record of a Haunted House, by Miss R. C. Morton

The house is a typical modern residence, square and commonplace in appearance. It is only separated from the road in front by railings with high gates and a short carriage-sweep. On one side, but completely detached, is another similar residence; on the other side runs a cross road, shut out from the house by the small orchard, referred to in the account, and by the garden, which also extends

some way at the back, being altogether of a very fair size. At the end of the garden are stabling and a small cottage, neither of which is in present use.

The whole is in thoroughly good repair; neither rats nor mice have ever been seen in the house, and there are no owls in the neighbourhood to account for any of the sounds heard.

It was built about the year 1860, on a site occupied by a market garden; while yet unfinished it was bought from the builders by the first occupant, Mr. S., an Anglo-Indian, who lived in it for about 16 years. During this time, in the month of August, year uncertain, he lost his wife, to whom he was passionately attached, and to drown his grief took to drinking.

About two years later, Mr. S. married again. His second wife, a Miss I. H., was in hopes of curing him of his intemperate habits, but instead she also took to drinking, and their married life was embittered by constant quarrels, frequently resulting in violent scenes. The chief subjects of dispute were the management of the children (two girls, and either one or two boys, all quite young) of the first Mrs. S., and the possession of her jewellery, to preserve which for her children, Mr. S. had some of the boards in the small front sitting-room [c] taken up by a local carpenter and the jewels inserted in the receptacle so formed. Finally, a few months before Mr. S.'s death, on the 14th July, 1876, his wife separated from him and went to live in Clifton. She was not present at the time of his death, nor, as far as is known, was she ever at the house afterwards.

She died on the 23rd September, 1878, and her remains were brought back to the town to be interred in a churchyard, about a quarter of a mile from the house in which she had lived.

After Mr. S.'s death his affairs were found to be much involved, and the house was sold as soon as a purchaser could be found. It was bought by Mr. L., an elderly gentleman, who, after thoroughly doing up the house, which was in a very dirty state, went there to live, with his wife, a lady of about his own age; two sons were there from time to time, but never for long together.

Old Mr. L. died rather suddenly within 6 months of going into the house, and, rather a curious coincidence, in the same small sitting-room (marked c) in which Mr. S. had also died, and where the jewels had been hidden, but in which the figure has never been seen.

Mrs. L. the widow (still alive) moved into a smaller house, very soon after her husband's death, and [----] remained empty for some years—probably four.

During this time there is no direct evidence of haunting, but when inquiry was made later on much hearsay evidence was brought forward: for example, an old job gardener, who often worked at the house opposite, is said to have frequently seen the figure of a tall lady in black in the garden of [----]. This old man was on inquiry found to be dead and his widow could not be traced.

A lady (Mrs. P.), who had at one time resided in the same town, and after an absence of some years returned there to live, was met by me at a friend's house, and expressed great interest in the apparition, which she said seemed to be identical with one seen in the same house shortly after the death of Mrs. S. After the lapse of time it was, however, found impossible to trace this story to its source. I was also told by a friend that during the summer of 1879 or 1880, the house was offered to a lady at a rental of £60, which is less than half of what is now asked and given. In April, 1882, the house was let by the representatives of the late Mr. L. to Captain Morton, and it is during his tenancy (not yet terminated) that the appearances recorded have taken place.

The family consists of Captain M. himself; his wife, who is a great invalid, neither of whom saw anything; a married daughter, Mrs. K., then about 26, who was only a visitor from time to time, sometimes with, but more often without, her husband; 4 unmarried daughters, myself, then aged 19, who was the chief percipient and now give the chief account of the apparition; E. Morton, then aged 18; L. and M. Morton, then 15 and 13; 2 sons, one of 16, who was, absent during the greater part of the time when the apparition was seen; the other, then 6 years old.

My father took the house in March, 1882, none of us having then heard of anything unusual about the house. We moved in towards the end of April, and it was not until the following June that I first saw the apparition.

I had gone up to my room, but was not yet in bed, when I heard someone at the door, and went to it, thinking it might be my mother. On opening the door, I saw no one; but on going a few steps along the passage, I saw the figure of a tall lady, dressed in black, standing at the head of the stairs. After a few moments she descended the stairs, and I followed for a short distance, feeling curious what it could be. I had only a small piece of candle, and it suddenly burnt itself out; and being unable to see more, I went back to my room.

The figure was that of a tall lady, dressed in black of a soft woollen material, judging from the slight sound in moving. The face was hidden in a handkerchief held in the right hand. This is all I noticed then; but on further occasions, when I was able to observe her more closely, I saw the upper part of the left side of the forehead, and a little of the hair above. Her left hand was nearly hidden by her sleeve and a fold of her dress. As she held it down a portion of a widow's cuff was visible on both wrists, so that the whole impression was that of a lady in widow's weeds. There was no cap on the head but a general effect of blackness suggests a bonnet, with long veil or a hood.

During the next two years—from 1882 to 1884—I saw the figure about half a dozen times; at first at long intervals, and afterwards at shorter, but I only mentioned these appearances to one friend, who did not speak of them to anyone.

During this period, as far as we know, there were only 3 appearances to anyone else.

1. In the summer of 1882 to my sister, Mrs. K., when the figure was thought to be that of a Sister of Mercy who had called at the house, and no further curiosity was aroused. She was coming down the stairs rather late for dinner at 6.30, it being then quite light, when she saw the figure cross the hall in front of her, and pass into the drawing-room. She then asked the rest of us, already seated at dinner, " Who was that Sister of Mercy whom I have just seen going into the drawing-room?" She was told there was no such person, and a servant was sent to look; but the drawing-room was empty, and she was sure no one had come in. Mrs. K. persisted that she had seen a tall figure in black, with some white about it; but nothing further was thought of the matter.

2. In the autumn of 1883 it was seen by the housemaid about 10 p.m., she declaring that someone had got into the house, her description agreeing fairly with what I had seen; but as on searching no one was found, her story received no credit.

3. On or about December 18th, 1883, it was seen in the drawing-room by my brother and another little boy. They were playing-outside on the terrace, when they saw the figure in the drawing-room close to the window, and ran in to see who it could be that was crying so bitterly. They found no one in the drawing-room, and the parlourmaid told them that no one had come into the house.

After the first time, I followed the figure several times downstairs into the drawing-room, where she remained a variable time, generally standing to the right hand side of the bow window. From the drawing-room she went along the passage towards the garden door, where she always disappeared.

The first time I spoke to her was on the 29th January, 1884. "I opened the drawing-room door softly and went in, standing just by it. She came in past me and walked to the sofa and stood still there, so I went up to her and asked her if I could help her. She moved, and I thought she was going to speak, but she only gave a slight gasp and moved towards the door. Just by the door I spoke to her again, but she seemed as if she were quite unable to speak. She walked into the hall, then by the side door she seemed to disappear as before." (Quoted from a letter written on January 31st.) In May and June, 1884, I tried some experiments, fastening strings with marine glue across the stairs at different heights from the ground—of which I give a more detailed account later on.

I also attempted to touch her, but she always eluded me. It was not that there was nothing there to touch, but that she always seemed to be beyond me, and if followed into a corner, simply disappeared.

During these two years the only noises I heard were those of slight pushes against my bedroom door, accompanied by footsteps; and if I looked out on hearing these sounds, I invariably saw the figure. "Her

footstep is very light, you can hardly hear it, except on the linoleum, and then only like a person walking softly with thin boots on." (Letter on January 31st 1884). The appearances during the next two months—July and August, 1884—became much more frequent; indeed they were then at their maximum, from which time they seem gradually to have decreased, until now they seem to have ceased.

Of these two months I have a short record in a set of journal letters written at the time to a friend. On July 21st I find the following account. "I went into the drawing-room, where my father and sisters were sitting, about 9 in the evening, and sat down on a couch close to the bow window. A few minutes after, as I sat reading, I saw the figure come in at the open door, cross the room and take up a position close behind the couch where I was. I was astonished that no one else in the room saw her, as she was so very distinct to me. My youngest brother, who had before seen her, was not in the room. She stood behind the couch for about half an hour, and then as usual walked to the door. I went after her, on the excuse of getting a book, and saw her pass along the hall, until she came to the garden door, where she disappeared. I spoke to her as she-passed the foot of the stairs, but she did not answer, although as before she stopped and seemed as though about to speak." On July 31st, sometime after I had gone up to bed, my second sister E., who had remained downstairs talking in another sister's room, came to me saying that someone had passed her on the stairs. I tried then to persuade her that it was one of the servants, but next morning found it could not have been so, as none of them had been out of their rooms at that hour, and E.'s more detailed description tallied with what I had already seen.

On the night of August 1st, I again saw the figure. I heard the footsteps outside on the landing about 2 a.m. I got up at once, and went outside. She was then at the end of the landing at the top of the stairs, with her side view towards me. She stood there some minutes, then went downstairs, stopping again when she reached the hall below. I opened the drawing-room door and she went in, walked across the room to the couch in the bow window, stayed there a little, then came out of the room, went along the passage, and disappeared by the garden door. I spoke to her again, but she did not answer.

On the night of August 2nd the footsteps were heard by my three sisters and by the cook, all of whom slept on the top landing—also by my married sister, Mrs. K., who was sleeping on the floor below. They all said the next morning that they had heard them very plainly pass and re-pass their doors. The cook was a middle-aged and very sensible person; on my asking her the following morning if any of the servants had been out of their rooms the night before, after coming up to bed, she told me that she had heard these footsteps before, and that she had seen the figure on the stairs one night when going down to the kitchen to fetch hot water after the servants had come up to bed. She described it as a lady in widow's dress, tall and slight, with her face hidden in a handkerchief held in her right hand. Unfortunately we have since lost sight of this servant; she left us about a year afterwards on her mother's death, and we cannot now trace her. She also saw the figure outside the kitchen windows on the

terrace-walk, she herself being in the kitchen; it was then about 11 in the morning, but having no note of the occurrence, I cannot now remember whether this appearance was subsequent to the one above mentioned.

These footsteps are very characteristic, and are not at all like those of any of the people in the house; they are soft and rather slow, though decided and even. My sisters would not go out on the landing after hearing them pass, nor would the servants, but each time when I have gone out after hearing them, I have seen the figure there.

On August 5th I told my father about her and what we had seen and heard. He was much astonished, not having seen or heard anything himself at that time—neither then had my mother, but she is slightly deaf, and is an invalid.

He made inquiries of the landlord (who then lived close by) as to whether he knew of anything unusual about the house, as he had himself lived in it for a short time, but he replied that he had only been there for three months, and had never seen anything unusual.

On August 6th, a neighbour, General A., who lived opposite, sent his son to inquire after my married sister, as he had seen a lady crying in our orchard, which is visible from the road. He had described her to his son, and afterwards to us, as a tall lady in black, and a bonnet with a long veil, crying, with a handkerchief held up to her face. He did not know my sister by sight, as she had only been with us a few days, and had been out very little, but he knew that she was in mourning for her baby son. My sister was not in the orchard that day at all, is rather short, and wore no veil.

This was the second time the figure had been mistaken for that of a real person, the outlines being very distinct, and the whole appearance solid. It is only fair to say that the gentleman, who is a friend of the landlord's, now tells us that he has no recollection of this incident.

The same evening this General A. came over to our house, and we all took up various stations on the watch for the figure, which, however, was not seen by anyone.

That night my brother-in-law and sister distinctly heard footsteps going first up the stairs and then down. This was about 2 a.m.

On the evening of August 11th we were sitting in the drawing-room, with the gas lit but the shutters not shut, the light outside getting dusk, my brothers and a friend having just given up tennis, finding it too dark; my eldest sister, Mrs. K., and myself both saw the figure on the balcony outside, looking in at the window. She stood there some minutes, then walked to the end and back again, after which she seemed to disappear. She, soon after, came into the drawing-room, when I saw her, but my sister did not.

The same evening my sister E. saw her on the stairs as she came out of a room on the upper landing.

The following evening, August 12th, while coming up the garden, I walked towards the orchard, when I saw the figure cross the orchard, go along the carriage drive in front of the house, and in at the open side door, across the hall and into the drawing-room, I following. She crossed the drawing-room, and took up her usual position behind the couch in the bow window. My father came in soon after, and I told him she was there. He could not see the figure, but went up to where I showed him she was. She then went swiftly round behind him, across the room, out of the door, and along the hall, disappearing as usual near the garden door, we both following her. We looked out into the garden, having first to unlock the garden door, which my father had locked as he came through, but saw nothing of her.

On August 12th, about 8 p.m., and still quite light, my sister E. was singing in the back drawing-room. I heard her stop abruptly, come out into the hall, and call me. She said she had seen the figure in the drawing-room, close behind her as she sat at the piano. I went back into the room with her, and saw the figure in the bow window in her usual place. I spoke to her several times, but had no answer. She stood there for about 10 minutes or a quarter of an hour; then went across the room to the door, and along the passage, disappearing in the same place by the garden door.

My sister M. then came in from the garden, saying she had seen her coming up the kitchen steps outside. We all three then went out into the garden, when Mrs. K. called out from a window on the first storey that she had just seen her pass across the lawn in front, and along the carriage drive towards the orchard. This evening, then, altogether 4 people saw her. My father was then away, and my youngest brother was out.

On the morning of August 14th the parlour maid saw her in the dining-room, about 8.30 a.m., having gone into the room to open the shutters. The room is very sunny, and even with all the shutters closed it is quite light, the shutters not fitting well, and letting sunlight through the cracks. She had opened one shutter, when, on turning round, she saw the figure cross the room. We were all on the look-out for her that evening, but saw nothing; in fact, whenever we had made arrangements to watch, and were especially expecting her, we never saw anything. This servant, who afterwards married, was interviewed by Mr. Myers at her own house.

On August 16th I saw the figure on the drawing-room balcony, about 8.30 p.m. She did not afterwards come into the room, as on the former occasion. On looking out at the side door, nothing could be seen.

The gardener said that he had seen the figure on the balcony that morning early, about 6 o'clock.

On August 19th, 3 days after, we all went to the seaside, and were away a month, leaving three servants in the house.

When we came back they said that they had heard footsteps and noises frequently, but as the stair-carpet was up part of the time and the house was empty, many of these noises were doubtless due to natural causes, though by them attributed to the figure.

The cook also spoke of seeing the figure in the garden, standing by a stone vase on the lawn behind the house.

During the rest of that year and the following, 1885, the apparition was frequently seen through each year, especially during July, August, and September. In these months the three deaths took place, viz.:— Mr. S., on July 14th, 1876, the first Mrs. S. in August, and the second Mrs. S. on September 23rd.

The apparitions were of exactly the same type, seen in the same places and by the same people, at varying intervals.

The footsteps continued, and were heard by several visitors and new servants, who had taken the places of those who had left, as well as by myself, 4 sisters and brother; in all by about 20 people, many of them not having previously heard of the apparition or sounds.

Other sounds were also heard in addition which seemed gradually to increase in intensity. They consisted of walking up and down on the second-floor landing, of bumps against the doors of the bedrooms, and of the handles of the doors turning. The bumps against the bedroom doors were so marked as to terrify a new servant, who had heard nothing of the haunting, into the belief that burglars were breaking into her room, while another servant, who had a slight attack of facial hemiplegia, attributed it to terror caused by attempts at her door worse than usual one night; the doctor, however, thought the attack was caused by cold rather than fright.

A second set of footsteps was also heard, heavy and irregular, constantly recurring, lasting a great part of the night, often 3 or 4 times a week. On the first floor the same noises are heard, especially in the front right-hand room, formerly used by Mr. and Mrs. S.

Louder sounds were also heard in the summer of 1885, heavy thuds and bumpings, especially on the upper landing.

These facts were kept quiet, on account of the landlord, who feared they might depreciate the value of the house, and any new servants were not told of them, though to anyone who had already heard of them we carefully explained the harmless nature of the apparition. Some left us on account of the noises, and we never could induce any of them to go out of their rooms after they had once gone up for the night.

During this year, at Mr. Myers's suggestion, I kept a photographic camera constantly ready to try to photograph the figure, but on the few occasions I was able to do so, I got no result; at night, usually only by candle-light, a long exposure would be necessary for so dark a figure, and this I could not obtain. I also tried to communicate with the figure, constantly speaking to it and asking it to make signs, if not

able to speak, but with no result. I also tried especially to touch her, but did not succeed. On cornering her, as I did once or twice, she disappeared.

Sometime in the summer of this year (1886), Mrs. Twining, our regular charwoman, saw the figure, while waiting in the hall at the door leading to the kitchen stairs, for her payment. Until it suddenly vanished from her sight, as no real figure could have done, she thought it was a lady visitor who had mistaken her way. Mr. Myers interviewed her on December 29th, 1889, and has her separate account.

On one night in July, 1886 (my father and I being away from home), my mother and her maid heard a loud noise in an unoccupied room over their heads. They went up, but seeing nothing and the noise ceasing, they went back to my mother's room on the first storey. They then heard loud noises from the morning-room on the ground floor. They then went half way downstairs, when they saw a bright light in the hall beneath. Being alarmed, they went up to my sister E., who then came down, and they all three examined the doors, windows, &c., and found them all fastened as usual. My mother and her maid then went to bed. My sister E. went up to her room on the second storey, but as she passed the room where my two sisters L. and M. were sleeping, they opened their door to say that they had heard noises, and also seen what they described as the *flame* of a candle, without candle or hand visible, cross the room diagonally from corner to door. Two of the maids opened the doors of their two bedrooms, and said that they had also heard noises; they all 5 stood at their doors with their lighted candles for some little time. They all heard steps walking up and down the landing between them; as they passed they felt a sensation which they described as "a cold wind," though their candles were not blown about. They *saw* nothing. The steps then descended the stairs, re-ascended, again descended, and did not return.

In the course of the following autumn we heard traditions of earlier haunting, though, unfortunately, in no case were we able to get a firsthand account.

1. A job gardener, who had worked several times a week at a house on the opposite side of the road, was reported to have several times seen a figure in our garden before we occupied the house. This figure he knew not to be that of a real person. On tracing him, we found he had died, and his widow had left the town, and her whereabouts was not known.

2. I met a lady at a friend's house, who told me that, when living in the town 7 or 8 years before, she had frequently been told that the house and garden were haunted by Mrs. S. After the lapse of time she could not remember the names of any people who were reported to have seen anything, and we could not trace anyone.

3. The apparition was mentioned by my uncle (since dead) at a mess-table in Halifax, Nova Scotia, when an officer then present said that while in the town 7 or 8 years before, he had been told that the house

was haunted, and remembered looking up at the windows with interest as he rode past to see if he could see anything at them.

We also now heard from a carpenter who had done jobs in the house in Mrs. S.'s time, that Mrs. S. had wished to possess herself of the first Mrs. S.'s jewels. Her husband had called him in to make a receptacle under the boards in the morning-room on the ground floor, in which receptacle he placed the jewels, and then had it nailed down and the carpet replaced. The carpenter showed us the place. My father made him take up the boards; the receptacle was there, but empty.

My father thought that there might be something hidden near the garden door, where the figure usually disappeared. The boards were taken up, and nothing was there but the original shavings and dust.

My father went to Bristol, and there found the register of Mrs. S.'s death, which had taken place on September 23rd, 1878, from dipsomania and intervening sub-gastritis. He called on the doctor who had attended her, and asked him if there had been any disfigurement of the face which would account for its persistent concealment. He remembered the case, and said that there had not been, though the face had become more full and round.

During 1887 we have few records; the appearances were less frequent.

On Friday, February 4th, my sister E. was coming downstairs at about 7.30 p.m., when she saw the figure moving across the hall from the front door to the drawing-room, she herself being at the top of the first flight of stairs. The gas was lighted in the hall at the time. In an interview with Mr. Myers on February 14th, she told him that she thought this was about the 10th time she had seen the figure. She went on into the dining-room and told my father; they called me from the morning-room, and we all three went into the drawing-room, of which the door was shut. Nothing was to be seen or heard.

During the next two years, 1887 to 1889, the figure was very seldom seen, though footsteps were heard; the louder noises had gradually ceased.

From 1889 to the present, 1892, so far as I know, the figure has not been seen at all; the lighter footsteps lasted a little longer, but even they have now ceased.

The figure became much less substantial on its later appearances. Up to about 1886 it was so solid and life-like that it was often mistaken for a real person. It gradually became less distinct. At all times it intercepted the light; we have not been able to ascertain if it cast a shadow. I should mention that it has been seen through window-glass, and that I myself wear glasses habitually, though none of the other percipients do so. The upper part of the figure always left a more distinct impression than the lower, but this may partly be due to the fact that one naturally looks at people's faces before their feet.

Proofs of Immateriality

1. I have several times fastened fine strings across the stairs at various heights before going to bed, but after all others have gone up to their rooms. These were fastened in the following way: I made small pellets of marine glue, into which I inserted the ends of the cord, then stuck one pellet lightly against the wall and the other to the banister, the string being thus stretched across the stairs. They were knocked down by a very slight touch, and yet would not be felt by anyone passing up or down the stairs, and by candle-light could not be seen from below. They were put at various heights from the ground, from 6 inches to the height of the banisters, about 3 feet.

I have twice at least seen the figure pass through the cords, leaving them intact.

2. The sudden and complete disappearance of the figure, while still in full view.

3. The impossibility of touching the figure. I have repeatedly followed it into a corner, when it disappeared, and have tried to suddenly pounce upon it, but have never succeeded in touching it or getting my hand up to it, the figure eluding my touch.

4. It has appeared in a room with the doors shut.

On the other hand, the figure was not called up by a desire to see it, for on every occasion when we had made special arrangements to watch for it, we never saw it. On several occasions we have sat up at night hoping to see it, but in vain—my father, with my brother-in-law, myself with a friend 3 or 4 times, an aunt and myself twice, and my sisters with friends more than once; but on none of these occasions was anything seen. Nor have the appearances been seen after we have been talking or thinking much of the figure.

The figure has been connected with the second Mrs. S.; the grounds for which are:

1. The complete history of the house is known, and if we are to connect the figure with any of the previous occupants, she is the only person who in any way resembled the figure.

2. The widow's garb excludes the first Mrs. S.

3. Although none of us had ever seen the second Mrs. S., several people who had known her identified her from our description. On being shown a photo-album containing a number of portraits, I picked out one of her sister as being most like that of the figure, and was afterwards told that the sisters were much alike.

4. Her step-daughter and others told us that she especially used the front drawing-room in which she continually appeared, and that her habitual seat was on a couch placed in a similar position to ours.

5. The figure is undoubtedly connected with the house, none of the percipients having seen it anywhere else, nor had any other hallucination.

Conduct of Animals in the House

We have strong grounds for believing that the apparition was seen by two dogs.

1. A retriever who slept in the kitchen was on several occasions found by the cook in a state of terror, when she went into the kitchen in the morning—being a large dog, he was not allowed upstairs; he was also seen more than once coming from the orchard thoroughly cowed and terrified. He was kindly treated and not at all a nervous dog.

2. A small skye-terrier, whom we had later, was allowed about the house; he usually slept on my bed, and undoubtedly heard the footsteps outside the door. I have notes of one occasion, on October 27th, 1887. The dog was then suffering from an attack of rheumatism, and very disinclined to move, but on hearing the footsteps it sprang up and sniffed at the door.

Twice I remember seeing this dog suddenly run up to the mat at the foot of the stairs in the hall, wagging its tail, and moving its back in the way dogs do when expecting to be caressed. It jumped up, fawning as it would do if a person had been standing there, but suddenly slunk away with its tail between its legs, and retreated, trembling, under a sofa. We were all strongly under the impression that it had seen the figure. Its action was peculiar, and was much more striking to an onlooker than it could possibly appear from a description.

We have no horses, and the cat, as a rule, lives only in the kitchen; we have never noticed anything peculiar about her behaviour.

In conclusion, as to the feelings aroused by the presence of the figure, it is very difficult to describe them; on the first few occasions, I think the feeling of awe at something unknown, mixed with a strong desire to know more about it, predominated. Later, when I was able to analyse my feelings more closely, and the first novelty had gone off, I felt conscious of a feeling of loss, as if I had lost power to the figure.

Most of the other percipients speak of feeling a cold wind, but I myself have not experienced this.

In writing the above account, my memory of the occurrences has been largely assisted by reference to a set of journal letters written at the time, and by notes of interviews held by Mr. Myers with my father and various members of our family.

R. C. Morton

April 1st, 1892.

See also separate accounts of:—

- I. Miss Campbell
- II. Miss E. Morton.
- III. My brother, W. H. C. Morton.
- IV. MRS. K.
- V. MRS. Brown.
- VI. MRS. Twining.

I

I beg to certify that the letters from which Miss Morton has largely quoted were written to me by her on the dates mentioned, and are still in my possession, but being of the nature of a diary, contain so many allusions to private matters that neither Miss Morton nor I at present see our way to making them over to the Society for Psychological Research.

Miss Morton wishes me to state that, although I have never seen the figure, I have heard the footsteps, and that they certainly are unlike those of any member of the M. family, and could not possibly be attributed to them. The servants are excluded by the fact that they were all changed during the time that the footsteps continued, and were unaltered in character.

I may add as a curious circumstance that on the night on which Miss Morton first spoke to the figure, as stated in her account, I myself saw her telepathically. I was in my room (I was then residing in the North of England, quite 100 miles away from Miss Morton's home), preparing for bed, between 12 and half-past, when I seemed suddenly to be standing close by the door of the housemaid's cupboard (see plan of second floor) at-----, so facing the short flight of stairs leading to the top landing. Coming down these stairs, I saw the figure, exactly as described, and about two steps behind Miss Morton herself, with a dressing-gown thrown loosely round her, and carrying a candle in her hand. A loud noise in the room overhead recalled me to my surroundings, and although I tried for some time I could not resume the impression.

The black dress, dark head-gear, widow's cuffs and handkerchief were plainly visible, though the details of them were not given me by Miss Morton till afterwards, when I asked her whether she had not seen the apparition on that night.

(Signed) Catherine M. Campbell
77, Chesterton road, North Kensington, W.
March 31st, 1892.

To this account Miss Morton adds:—" Miss Campbell was the friend to whom I first spoke of the apparition. She suggested to me that when next I saw her I should speak; but of course she had no idea when this would be. She wrote an account to me the next day of what she had seen, and asked me if I had not seen the figure that night; but naturally did not know that I *had* done so, until she received my

reply. Miss Campbell asks me to say that this is the only vision she has had, veridical or otherwise."

II

(1) The first time I saw anything unusual in the house was in July, 1884. Crossing the upper landing, after having come to bed at about 11.15 p.m., I had an impression of something unusual, which caused me to start back, and then some little way in front of me I saw a figure as of a widow in black preceding me down the stairs. I watched it down one flight, and it then disappeared; of course, in this position it had its back to me.

(2) The next time I saw the figure was one evening at about 8 o'clock, in July, 1885, a fine evening and quite light. I was sitting alone in the drawing-room singing, when suddenly I felt a cold, icy shiver, and I saw the figure bend over me, as if to turn over the pages of my song. I called my sister, who was in another room. She came at once, and said she could see it still in the room, though I then could not.

(3) After coming up to bed, one night in July, 1886, my mother, myself, and one of the maids heard noises downstairs in the hall. On going down to investigate the cause, we saw nothing, and the noises ceased. After again returning to the top landing, the "noises" began again. It sounded as if people were throwing heavy articles, such as boots, across the passage and down the stairs. Door handles seemed to rattle too, the night being still and no one about. Two maids and my two sisters and myself listened on the top landing, with lighted candles in our hands, when we distinctly heard the footsteps pass and re-pass us quite close, but saw nothing, most of us feeling what we term the "icy shiver."

(4) I had just gone upstairs, on February 4th, 1887, to fetch some prescriptions for my father, when I saw the same figure preceding me down the stairs. It went into the drawing-room, which was then not being used. My father and I lighted a candle, and stayed in the room for some little time, but saw nothing.

The figure appears to me as that of a tall woman in old-fashioned widow's weeds, with the left hand partly hidden under the folds of her dress, and the right hand with a handkerchief placed to her face, almost obscuring the whole of the face, with the exception of the upper part of the forehead and hair. The hands are long and very well shaped. Edith Morton.

III

(1) On or about December 18th, 1883, I was playing with a school-friend on the path in front of the drawing-room windows, when on looking up at the drawing-room we both saw a tall figure in black, holding a handkerchief to her face with her right hand, seated at the writing-table in the window, and therefore in full light. We came in at once, but on going into the room found no one there, and on making inquiries found that no stranger had been in the house that afternoon.

As far as I can remember, this was about 3.15 in the afternoon. At all events, it was full daylight at the time.

Since then I have seen the figure twice.

(2) Once when coming out of the drawing-room, about half-past eight (just after the gas had been lit throughout the house), I saw the figure going down the passage towards the side door, thus having her back to me. It finally disappeared in the direction of the kitchen stairs.

(3) The other time, on coming out of a room at the end of a passage on the first landing, I saw it going along the passage towards the staircase, but it turned back and finally disappeared through the door of another bedroom. This was about 6 o'clock in the evening, the gas not yet being lit, and so the light was somewhat dim.

(4) Another time I was in the morning-room, and had a momentary glimpse of the figure, but not long enough to be absolutely certain of having seen it. This was in the evening, the gas having been lit both in the room and in the passage outside.

Besides these appearances I have occasionally heard noises like a person walking about with soft slippers, but on looking out I have seen nothing, and sometimes the noises have stopped, but at other times have gone on without interruption.

Previously to seeing the appearances (1) and (2) I had heard nothing about anything unusual being seen in the house.

W. H. C. Morton.
December 31st, 1891.

IV

Whilst staying at-----, in the autumn of 1883, I was coming down the stairs, about five in the afternoon, when I saw a tall figure in black cross the hall, push open the drawing-room door, and go in. At the time I thought she was a Sister of Mercy, from her long veil, the figure being entirely substantial, and like that of a real person, although on others making inquiries, no one had called.

This, I may mention, was the year before I heard of any appearance being known of in the house. At another time I thought I saw her in the summer of 1884 looking in at the drawing-room window from outside. This time the figure was not so distinct, the gas being lit in the room, while it was semi-dark outside. Soon after my sister, who had also seen her, saw her enter the room; but she was not then visible to me.

I saw the figure once more in the spare room at night, having been awakened, as I constantly was, by footsteps in the room. I often heard footsteps at night up and downstairs, like a person wearing flat list or cloth slippers, and I have heard the swish of woollen drapery, and on several occasions the sound of heavy bodies on the landings and

against the doors, and overhead the handles of doors turned, the sound of something heavy being dragged overhead, on the top storey. My husband and nurse have heard the same.

I myself was much terrified at the sounds.

F. M. K.
March 29th, 1892.

V

[I called, February 15th, 1890, on Mrs. Brown, 10, Mitre-street, St. Luke's, C., and heard from her the following account, which I wrote down the same evening and took to her to-day, February 16th, when she read, corrected, and signed it.—F.W.H.M.]

About 7 years ago I went as parlour maid to----- . At that time nothing had been said about the ghost, although I believe that Miss Rose (the eldest Miss M.) had seen it for about a year.

I think that the first person besides Miss Rose who saw it was Master Willy. He was then about 8 or 9 years old, and was playing in the garden with another young gentleman, when they both looked in through the drawing-room window, and saw a widow in the room. They ran up to their mother's room;—she was an invalid and seldom left her bed,—and told her what they had seen, but Miss Rose, who was there, laughed it off.

The next time that it was seen was by Mrs. K., the married sister, who used to come and stay a month or so in the house every year. She had been there three days when she said that she had seen a widow in the drawing-room. Then Master Willy called out that that must have been the same woman whom he had seen; and after that Miss Rose told that she had been in the habit of seeing the figure.

So all those in the house knew; but when a new servant came we used to take care not to tell her, because it was hard to get a girl to stay.

Some months after the thing became known I was alone in the house one evening with Lizzie, a new cook, (I do not know her address now), and we were standing at the door of the servants' hall, on the basement floor. The passage was lit with gas. Lizzie had heard nothing of the ghost, I am sure. Suddenly we both saw a dark shadowy figure, dressed in black, and making no noise, glide past us along the passage and disappear round a corner. Neither of us spoke as it passed; but directly after we looked at each other, and each saw that the other had seen it, and we mentioned it to each other. We had seen just the same thing. I have myself never seen any white about the figure; but I know that others have seen her hold a handkerchief up to her face. The figure has never looked to me quite solid; but it has always vanished too quickly for me to look closely at it.

The next time that I saw it was in the drawing-room, when I went in to light the gas at dusk on a summer's evening. I saw a dark figure

walk round the ottoman and disappear. I was not much frightened. The next time I saw no figure, but I was more frightened than any other time. I was going off next day on a holiday, and I sat up late in my room with some sewing. My room was between Miss Morton's and the schoolroom, on the top floor, where the sounds were apt to be worst. I heard a loud noise and looking up I saw the handle of my door twisted round, as if someone were trying to come in. The door was locked, and this was not a mere slip of the handle. The handle was quite firm and never slipped of itself. I knew that no one was up or about and I was motionless with fear. I could scarcely go to bed. Next morning when I looked at myself in the glass I saw that one side of my face was twisted by a slight stroke. I had been perfectly well the night before, and I could not believe that such a thing had happened. I thought it must be my fancy. But when I went downstairs the other servants saw it. I went for my holiday, Saturday to Wednesday, and when I got back I went at once to Dr. F., and he applied blisters to my face and it gradually got straight again. He said that the twisted face might have been caused by a draught as well as by a fright—but I had been in no draught. I have no doubt that it was the fright; and for some time afterwards my hand was very shaky and my nerves upset. But I went on with my work as usual, as I knew the thing could not really hurt me.

I saw it twice more, both times in the drawing-room. Once it was as I was lighting the gas, as I had seen it before. The other time was when I entered the room in the morning and had taken down one shutter. I then saw it close by me, and was frightened, and called another servant to come to me. I stayed on in the place and was married from thence. One housemaid while I was there saw the figure, she said, on the road just outside the gates. She said that she saw her face.

We often heard someone running down the steps from the approach to the back door, and went to open the back door, and found no one there.

I often heard noises on the attic landing near my room—scuffling and knocking. Sometimes I would hear Miss Rose open her door and go downstairs. I know now that she was following the ghost. But I heard her before I knew about the ghost at all.

M. E. Brown.

VI

December 29th, 1889, 5 p.m.

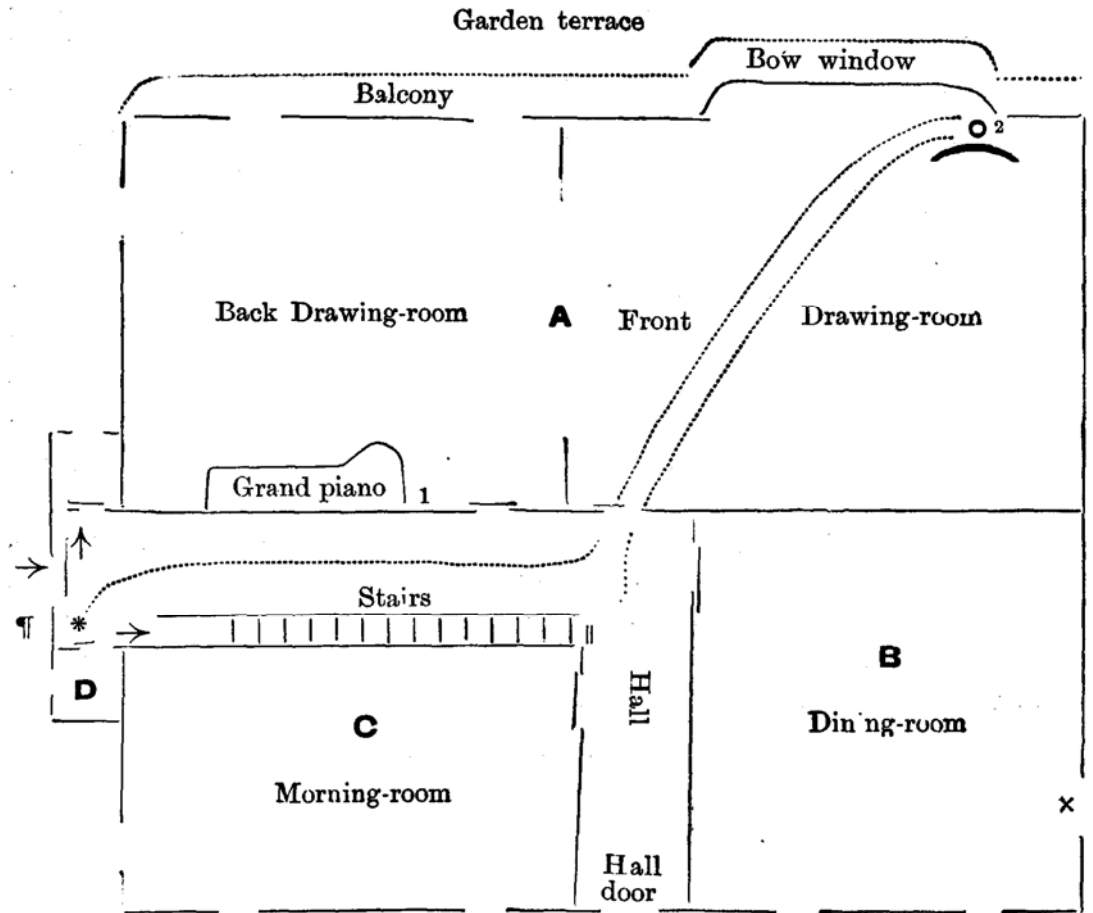
[I have just called on Mrs. Twining, charwoman, Chapel-place, Great Norwood street. Mrs. Twining is a sensible, trustworthy person, who has worked for the Mortons for 8 or 9 years. She is illiterate, and I dispensed with her signature, but made notes during my visit from which this account is taken.—Frederic Myers]

"About 3 years ago, one summer evening between eight and nine, when it was twilight, I had been at work at the Mortons and was waiting for my pay. I stood at the top of the kitchen stairs, where

there is a door into the garden behind the house. I saw a lady pass by, rather tall, in black silk, with white collar and cuffs, a handkerchief in her hand, and a widow's fall. I had heard about the ghost, but it never struck me that this figure could be a ghost—it looked so like an ordinary person. I thought that someone had come to call and missed her way to the door. The family were at tea and I was merely waiting, so out of curiosity I followed the lady round the house. Just outside the morning-room window she suddenly disappeared. I was quite near her; it was quite impossible that a real person could have got away.

"I went into the house and began telling the housemaid that I had seen the ghost. She stopped me,—pointing to the parlour maid, a new one, whom they were anxious to keep in ignorance of the ghost—as the maids often left on account of it. The parlour maid had seen from one of the windows the same figure, though she had not known that it was the ghost. I believe that she left at the month's end.

"I was there when a former parlour maid, now Mrs. Brown, got the fright which caused a stroke so that her face was twisted. I believe that she saw the figure in her bedroom. She had seen it several times before. She went away by the doctor's orders and then came back and married from the house. The Morton family are very good, kind people."



PLAN OF GROUND FLOOR.

The two drawing-rooms are separated by a wide archway formerly filled by folding doors.

1 Position of music stool, while sitting on which E. M. saw figure behind her. 12/7/84.

2 Sofa on which figure sat, dot marking position behind, which it took up when sofa was occupied.

* Marks spot where figure usually disappeared.

|| Marks position of mat.

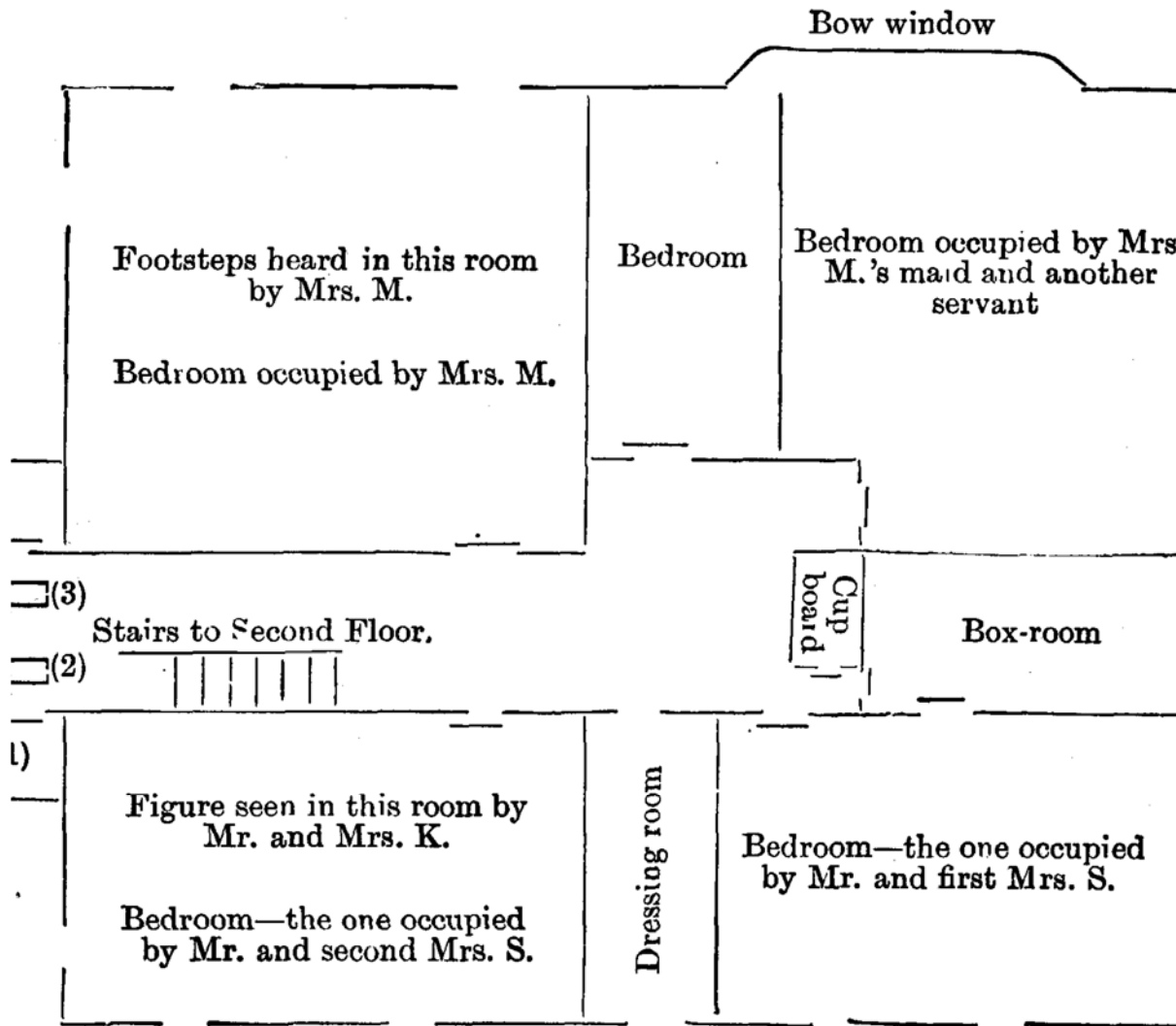
..... Marks usual track of figure when followed downstairs, into drawing-room, along passage to garden door, where it disappeared.

x Window looking on to orchard.

⌋ Garden door by which figure disappeared.

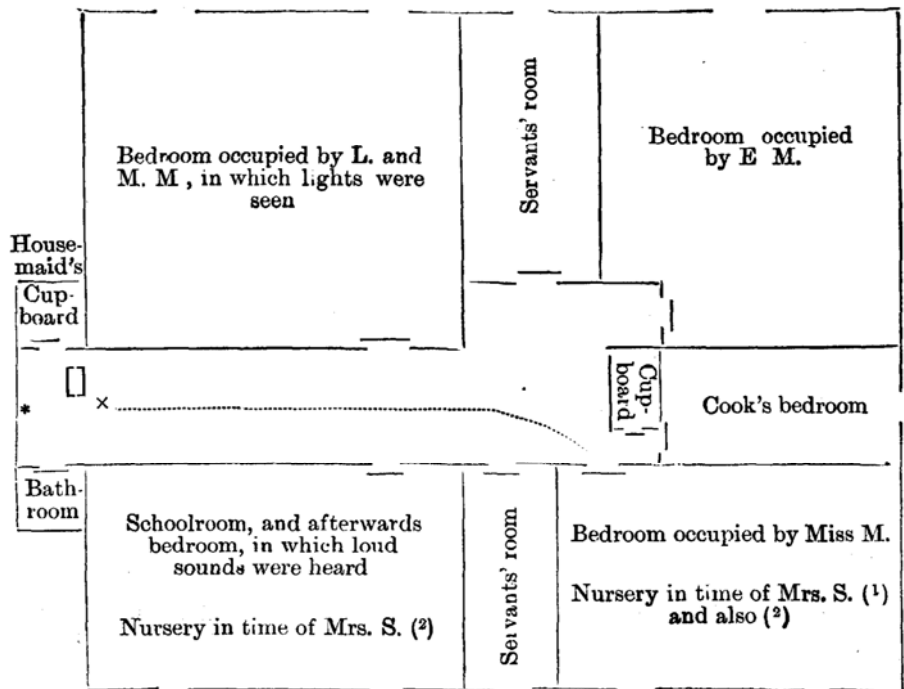
→ Shows direction in which doors open.

D Small lobby from which stairs go down to basement, and a servants' staircase leads up to half-landing between ground and first floors.



PLAN OF FIRST FLOOR.

- Half-landing between ground floor and first floor.
- 1) Door opening from servants' staircase.
 - 2) Stairs from ground floor.
 - 3) Stairs up to first floor.



PLAN OF SECOND FLOOR.

- * Half-landing between first and second floors.
- x Marks position of figure when first seen by Miss M.
- Marks course from Miss M.'s bedroom door to head of stairs, where figure usually paused, looking towards bath-room door, and then continued straight down the stairs, not stopping on the first floor, and on the ground floor pursuing the course marked.