The message in the bedroom

15 April 1921 · The Sydney Morning Herald · p. 9

A contemporary account describes a visiting Spiritualist prompting Minnie to address her deceased sister. The message was reported through Minnie; the report does not describe an independently audible voice. This distinction matters when later summaries say that a spirit spoke.

GUYRA MYSTERY. / LITTLE GIRL'S STATEMENT. / CLAIRAUDIENT MESSAGES.

> The girl was standing before the wall whence four rappings had proceeded. The gentleman requested the girl to ask, "Is that you?" referring to a deceased sister whose death occurred a few months ago. The girl demurred on the ground that her sister was not there. Subsequently she complied with the suggestion, and said she had received the answer "Yes." The alleged replies were received clairaudiently.
>
> The next question was "What do you want?" Answer, "Tell mother, I'm quite happy and safe in heaven, and it is her prayers that got me here, and I'll look after her for the rest of her life."

READING NOTE

Selected passages transcribed from the Trove article text. Obvious OCR mistakes, line breaks and punctuation have been normalised. The original page image could not be retrieved for word-by-word comparison; this reading edition is not a facsimile or a certified diplomatic transcription.

https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/15947174

What Minnie admitted

3 May 1921 · Star (Christchurch) · p. 7

This New Zealand report reprints Sydney coverage and a statement attributed to the Inspector-General of Police. It combines a limited admission with a broader police explanation. Separate those propositions rather than reading the headline as a complete confession.

THE GUYRA GHOST. / CONFESSION BY A GIRL. / WATCHERS THROW STONES.

> The development which convinced the police of the material origin of the Guyra disturbance, was the confession of the twelve-year-old girl that she had upon two occasions knocked upon the wall of the bedroom when going to bed, and that at other times she had gone outside and thrown small stones upon the roof with the idea of frightening her little sister. She disavows all knowledge of the larger stones which broke the windows and scared the inhabitants, and disclaims any participation in the elaborated form which the mystery took as time went on. She declares that she was not working in complicity with anybody else at any time.

From the separately quoted police statement:

> A Mr Starr, a respectable local farmer, watched the northern side and saw a girl throw several stones at the cottage. He informed the police, who questioned the girl. She at first denied any knowledge of stone throwing on that day, but when confronted with Mr Starr, in the presence of her parents, she admitted throwing stones.

READING NOTE

Selected extracts from the archive OCR, with obvious recognition errors and punctuation normalised. The statement is a newspaper reproduction, not an original signed police report. Other papers describe the intended target as a sister-in-law, so the relationship in this extract should not be silently harmonised.

https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/TS19210503.2.71

Reports after the solution

2 and 19 May 1921 · New Zealand newspaper reports

Claims of further activity complicate the announced solution. They do not establish a paranormal cause. The Glen Innes account below also records a renewed suspicion of deliberate knocking.

Ashburton Guardian, 2 May 1921, p. 5; Sydney dispatch dated 30 April:

> The Guyra "ghost" has taken a new lease of life. The stone-throwing was resumed while the girl who had previously admitted that she was responsible for the trouble was inside the house.

Wanganui Herald, 19 May 1921, p. 6; report headed THE GUYRA "GHOST":

> Shelton's friend was invited to tea, and during the meal the farmer closely watched the girl. The farmer declares that he saw the girl deliberately bump the wall with her elbow. The farmer accused the girl of the act, but she stoutly denied that she had touched the wall.
>
> Sergeant Ryan was called in and spoke plainly to the girl, telling her that if she started her tricks here she would have to be sent away. The girl again denied having knocked on the wall. Everything was quiet for the rest of the night.

READING NOTE

Archive OCR has been normalised for reading. The Wanganui Herald text carries a Sydney dateline of 4 May, whereas another report describes an outbreak on 9 May. The precise sequence requires comparison with the original Australian reporting. Publication date is not automatically event date.

https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/AG19210502.2.19
https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/WH19210519.2.83