

But what is personality? If it is the way in which a person acts, talks, and behaves himself towards others in his speech, then it is not particularly commendable or rational or anything worthy to preserve in afterlife. Like other animals, we can only [xxx] for a living, marring the landscape, erecting smoke stacks and oil derricks and littering the valleys and plains with piles of bricks and mortar, telephone poles and traffic signals, all of which is unimportant because the moment it is completed, we bomb it all from the air or blast it away with cannons. If human character is at the base of personality, how can we believe that the survival of it after death is important. Nevertheless, I must confess that I have a desire for the survival of my personality.

My desire is for the survival of personality. That's why a few years ago, I made an experiment along that idea. What brought it about was an anonymous letter sent to me two years before I had built my house in California. According to the post mark, the letter had been sent from Syracuse by a lady and was signed with a mystic symbol, a [xxx] circle. In the letter, she stated that she had had a dream in which she was the house I was about to build. It had forty windows and in front of it a lawn shaped like the half deck of a boat. She described the size, shape and topography of the land on which it would be built and informed me that the location was the centripetal force of some occult power

which she stated was the reason that prompted her to write and warn me to be careful, for that power could be an influence for either good or evil. The location, she explained was sacred ground where sacrificial rites were practiced, by an ancient tribe of Indians that lived there two thousand years ago. "Your building a house there might be an intrusion and might excite the wrath of their gods. Whatever you do, she insisted, be sure that when you build your house, you will never leave it in darkness

that you will always have a light burning somewhere. This light," she explained, "may conciliate the spirits. But never be left alone in the house or in the dark, for you are sure to have a visitation," she warned.

Of course, I dismissed the letter as one of the many I had received from various eccentrics. But, a few years later, after my house had been built

a friend of mine and I were discussing the types of strange correspondence we had received in the course of our movie careers and I happened to remember this letter. I related the story to him in which she described my house before it was built as having forty windows and a deck-shaped lawn.

I reiterated the story of its contents—of the sacred grove and the ancient Indian tribes and of the lady's dream in which she describes before it was built my house and its forty windows and the deck-shaped lawn.

When I had finished, my friend asked me if I had ever counted the windows.

Curiously enough, I have never thought of it. So, that evening, we preceded to count them. To my astonishment, I did find the house had precisely forty windows and on inspecting the lawn we found it was exactly the shape of the deck of a boat. Of course, we laughed at the coincidence, for that was what we decided it was - a coincidence. And, after many speculations dismissed the matter and my friend went home, but I must admit that I was very impressed with the coincidence and thought about it considerably for many days after.

I did not actually believe that there was any credibility to what she had stated in the letter, but the question always haunted me that perhaps there might be something to what she stated. I might even experiment and turn out the lights in the house. There was no harm in trying. Sunday was the servants' night off and I usually dined out on that evening, but on this particular evening, I told the servants to work up a big fire and to have me a pot of hot coffee or the [xxx]. And I would rummage in the ice box for a snack that evening.

At six o'clock all the servants had gone and the house was empty.

At six o'clock that evening, all the servants had taken their leave. The doors of the sitting room leading out to the lawn were open and a warm breeze that benighted the cool autumn day wafted through the house. I was still daylight and would be so for at least another hour. I surmised that if anything happened, it would not be before twelve o'clock midnight. In the meantime, I would have to amuse myself until then if I intended to stay in during the five hours I had to kill. I could brush up

on [xxx] experiments with time [xxx] reactional [?] book on spiritual and [xxx] phenomena. I intended that evening to have a one-man séance. But I was the proper ignorant as to the manner of going about it. I had, however, a theory of my own, one which was simply to sit in complete darkness and softly play organ music. The soothing vibrations of music I thought might incline the spirits to materialize. If that didn't work then I would sit in complete darkness and wait

The appropriate time for the séance would be twelve o'clock midnight. In the meantime, I had five hours to kill.

Instead of staying in the house for that length of time as I intended, it might be efficacious, I thought, to dine out and then return about an hour before twelve. Meanwhile the spirits would have the empty house alone to themselves and would have a chance to get acquainted with it. Driving home that evening, I felt somewhat foolish about the whole thing.

If my friends knew what I was going to do, they would think me mad. Yet I must confess, I was thrilled with the adventure of it, even if nothing came off. As a matter of fact, I didn't expect anything to come of it, but one never knows. Something might happen. However, I enjoy indulging myself in a little madness. When I have the key in the door, I found myself a little disappointed.