



the

# BANGS

## Sisters

and their

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PRECIPITATED  
SPIRIT PORTRAITS

**THE BANGS SISTERS**  
**and their**  
**Precipitated Spirit Portraits**

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**HETT MEMORIAL**  
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**Chesterfield, Indiana**

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1897

Lizzie and May Bangs, of 3 South Elizabeth Street, Chicago, Illinois are mediums of various phases, receiving spirit tests through clairvoyance, slate writing, typewriting, materialization, and later in the form of oil paintings. They have had many a battle with skeptics, but the phenomena occurring in their presence invariably made them the victors. Facts need no augmentation.

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## THE BANGS SISTERS

The Misses Elizabeth S. and May E. Bangs, of Chicago, Illinois, were mediums who had the gift of direct writing, drawing, and painting. The sisters' most spectacular and unusual phase was that of precipitated spirit portraits in color.

This portrait work was started about 1894, and the pictures were done in broad daylight before the "sitters" eyes, usually under test conditions. When this phenomenon was first developed by the sisters, a locked cabinet or curtained-off space was used, and several "sittings" were necessary.

The portraits were produced as follows: two identical paper mounted canvases in wooden frames were held up face to face against the window with the lower half resting upon a table, and the sides held by each sister with one hand. A short curtain was hung on either side, and an opaque blind was drawn over the canvases. The light streamed from behind the canvases, which were translucent, and after a quarter of an hour the outline of shadows began to appear and disappear as the invisible artist made a preliminary sketch; then the picture began to grow at a feverish rate. When the pictures were separated, the portrait was found on the surface of the canvas next to the "sitter." Though the paint was greasy, and stuck to the finger on being touched, it left no stain on the paper which covered closely the other canvas. Later, the works of art were openly precipitated as if by airbrush, and some took as little as five minutes to complete and only one canvas was used.



The portraits have been examined by art experts and they cannot explain the media used, as the pictures are not pastels, charcoal, oils, water colors, or any other known substance. It could be compared to the dust on a butterfly's wings.

The precipitated spirit pictures are from eighty to ninety-five years old, and have withstood time very well. Many of the portraits were hung in the old Auditorium and hotels at Camp Chesterfield for many years, and these buildings did not have heat in the winter months. Many "sitters" stored pictures in attics and basements, and the colors are as beautiful now as the day they were executed.

These outstanding works of art are the "sitters" relatives, friends, or guides who have passed on, with the exception of one portrait where the "sitter" appeared on the canvas with his twin daughters and wife, who were deceased.

The persons who "sat" for the spirit pictures were requested to bring a photograph of the departed, but were not asked to produce it. The portraits were not copies of the concealed photograph. When completed, the facial resemblance was amazing, and the color tones often grew richer and deeper.

Many of the portraits changed when taken home. The hair on some would be altered to look as it had when the subject was on earth. A few blouses and dresses changed to seem more familiar, and in several cases the eyes would open and close. In one portrait of a spirit guide, pearls appeared around the neck a few days later when the "sitter" said the girl always wore them. In another full length picture, more flowers appeared on a rose bush.

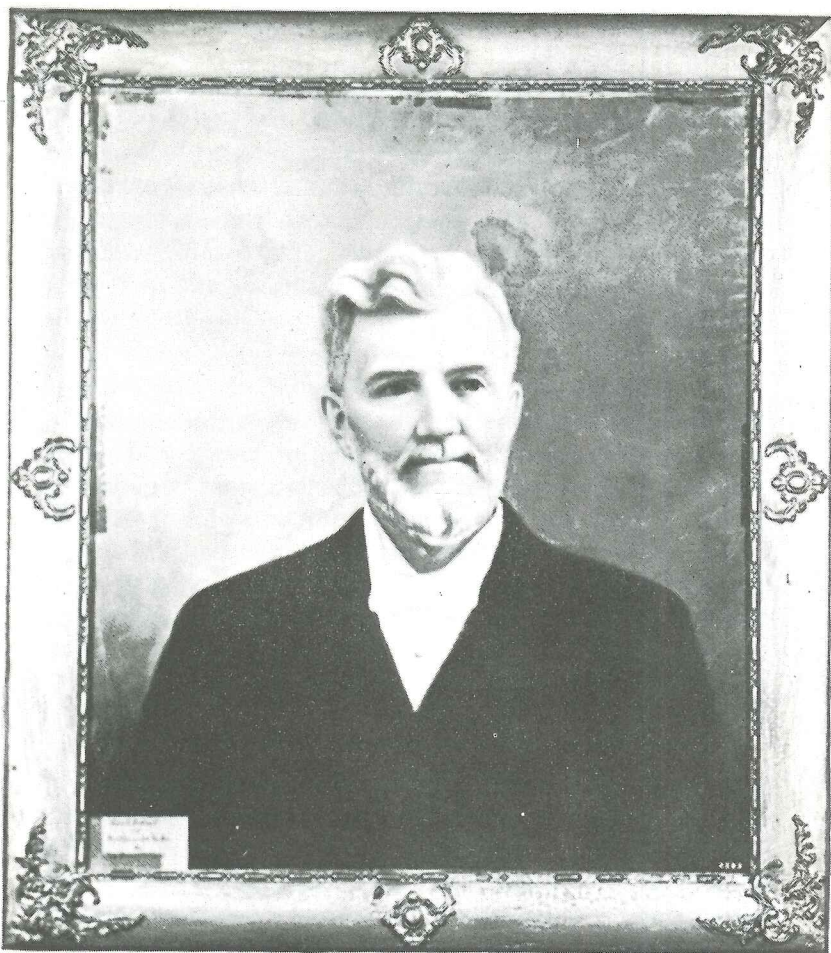
Vice-Admiral Moore, London, England noticed in his experiment that details were added if he did not look. Once when he mentally desired a gold locket to be larger and decorated with a monogram, the changes were made as he wished. He often bought his own frames, sealed the window, searched the premises, and closely watched every movement in the room, yet the pictures were obtained as before.

This glorious phenomena was presented in public halls and before great audiences, as the Misses Bangs traveled to many places with their wonderful work. At Camp Chesterfield, there are two portraits that were precipitated in the auditorium, one by the selection of an entrance ticket and the other by having the audience concentrate upon whose portrait they wanted to appear. In this case, the people thought of two different gentlemen, and when the face came through on the canvas, it was divided. This was a true demonstration of the wonderful power of the mediums.

The Dr. Hett Memorial Museum at Camp Chesterfield in Indiana is indeed fortunate to have twenty five Bangs sisters precipitated spirit pictures hanging in the art gallery. Three pictures are full length portraits and over six feet tall, and one is a landscape of the spirit world. All the pictures have been donated by relatives or friends of the deceased.

The mediums were on camp in the early 1900's. The Misses Lizzie and May Bangs were truly great mediums in the Spiritualist movement, with a fabulous gift that has not since been duplicated.





**Alex Park McKee**

0293

This precipitated spirit portrait of Mr. A. P. McKee was received at a public demonstration in the auditorium at Camp Chesterfield in the early 1900's. The mediums were the Bangs Sisters. They asked the audience to concentrate on whose portrait they wanted to appear.

Mr. McKee was a founder and early board member of the Camp. His granddaughter, Mrs. Rebecca McKee Fowler resides on Camp. Presented by: Mable Riffle



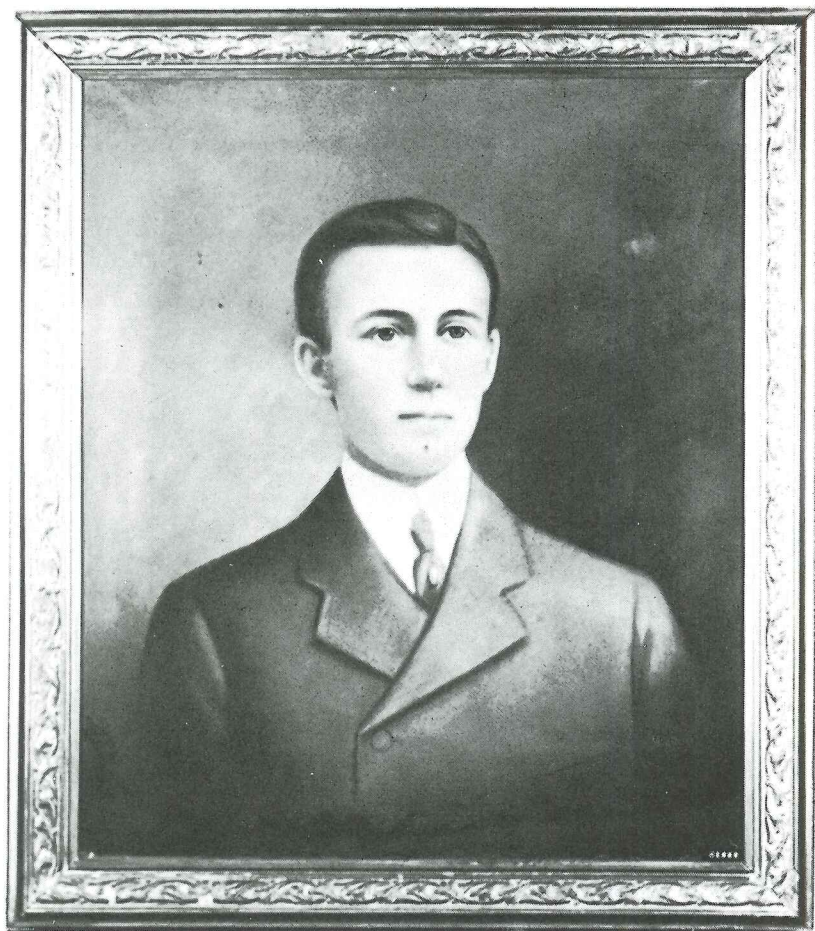
**Audrey Alford**

0310

Before a large audience in the Camp Chesterfield Auditorium, August 1911, a plain canvas was placed on an easel, which was examined by a committee who attested that it had no marking or painting of any kind, nor signs of chemical treatment. Tickets were given at the door and the number drawn belonged to Alice Alford. Mrs. Alford and her husband went to the rostrum to sit for the portrait which was done in 22 minutes, by the Bang Sisters. Mable Riffle, Ethel Post Parrish and Fanchion H. Dorsch were cousins of Mrs. Alford.

Presented by: The Frank Alfords'





**Jimmy Jessup**

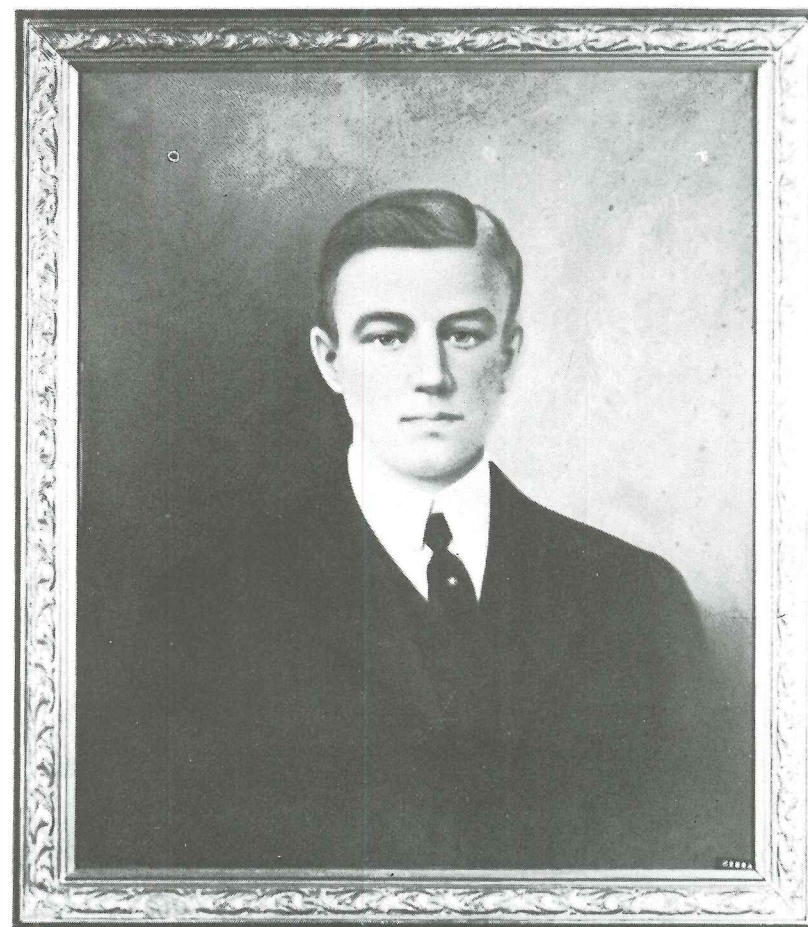
0288B

Brother of Earl (See 0288A)

This is a spirit portrait of the son of Wilson and Lydia Jessup. Mr. Jessup was an outstanding medium and a camp staff worker for many years.

A Bangs Sister precipitated spirit portrait.

Presented to the Art Gallery by his brother: Charles Jessup



**Earl Jessup**

0288A

Brother of James (See 0228B)

This precipitated portrait is the son of Lydia and Wilson Jessup. Mrs. Jessup was secretary on the board at Camp Chesterfield many years. A Bangs Sisters picture.

Presented by their remaining son, Charles Jessup.





**James G. Shepherd**

0294

Mr. Shepherd was an early day Spiritualist. This Bang Sisters precipitated portrait was received by a relative, and given to Anna Dennis, Pastor of the Madison Avenue Spiritualist Church, in Anderson, Indiana. The picture hung in the Temple Class room where it could be viewed by the public.

Presented to the Gallery by: Trustees of the Church.



**Ethel Helderle**

0277

Through the mediumship of Lizzie and Mae Bangs, this portrait of Ethel Helderle was precipitated in the presence of her parents, David and Rose Helderle and an old friend, Emil Schram. The Helderles were well known pioneer spiritualists.

Presented by: Brown Good, Peru, Indiana





**Edgar Bean**

0291

This is a precipitated spirit portrait by the Bangs Sisters of Edgar Bean, son of Dr. Albert and Zilla Bean.

Donated by: Mrs. Beatrice Keeny, Evansville, Indiana.

(See 0274)



**Edgar Bean and Aunt Anna**

0274

Edgar Bean was the son of Zella Bean. Aunt Anna was the cousin of Beatrice Keeney. Mrs. Keeney was given this Bangs Sisters portrait by her grandfather Cooper.

Donated by: Beatrice Keeney

(See 0291)





**Lillian Keeler**

0289

This precipitated spirit portrait through the mediumship of Liz-zie and Mae Bangs, is of Lillian Keeler, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Keeler, and brother Donald Keeler, of Fort Wayne, Ind.

Presented by: Joseph Keeler

(See 0290)



**Don Keeler**

0290

Don Keeler was drowned in the White River, just at the rear of Camp, while visiting here with his parents. This dramatics passing gave added significance to his spirit return and portrait, as he proclaimed that he still lived. He was known to all the young people of camp at that time. He was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Keeler of Fort Wayne, Indiana. The portrait is through the mediumship of the Bangs Sisters.

Presented by: Joseph Keeler

(See 0289)



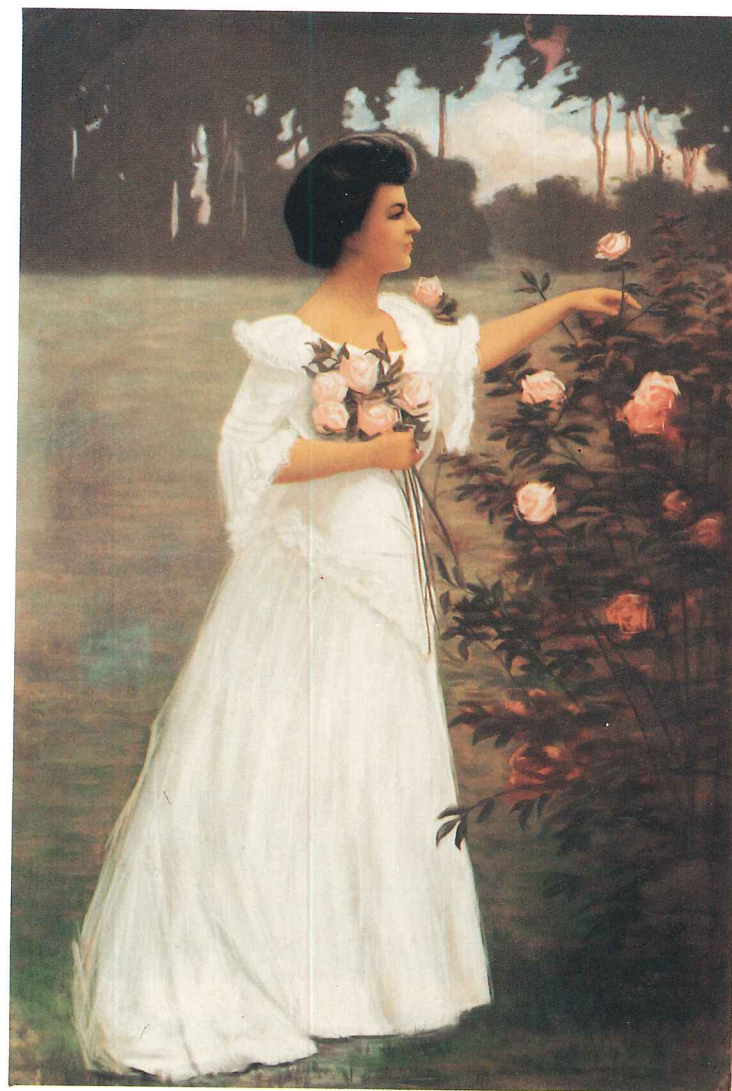


**Emily Carson**

0299

Dr. Carson's first wife, Emily. Precipitated in 1894 by the Bangs Sisters.

Presented by: Dr. and Mrs. R. C. Bishop  
(See 0300)



**Rose Carson**

0300

Made for Dr. Carson of Kansas City, in 1894, Rose was his second wife.

Donated by: Rev. George Barker  
(See 0299)





**Daisy**  
0309

Daisy is a ministering spirit, who was associated with Dr. Grumbine's mediumship. This precipitated portrait was received through the Bangs Sisters during a private sitting with Dr. Grumbine. This is an earlier work of the sisters and was made in 1893, in Chicago, Ill. Later that evening during a seance Daisy appeared and identified herself as the one in the portrait, and explained the coronet and star on her head designated the sphere on her abode in the spirit world.

Presented by: Mary Rose Grumbine



**Catherine Lipp**  
0308

This precipitated spirit portrait of Catherine Lipp, was received by her husband William Lipp, of Cincinnati, Ohio. Through the mediumship of Elizabeth and Mae Bangs in the year 1912.

Presented by: William F. Lipp



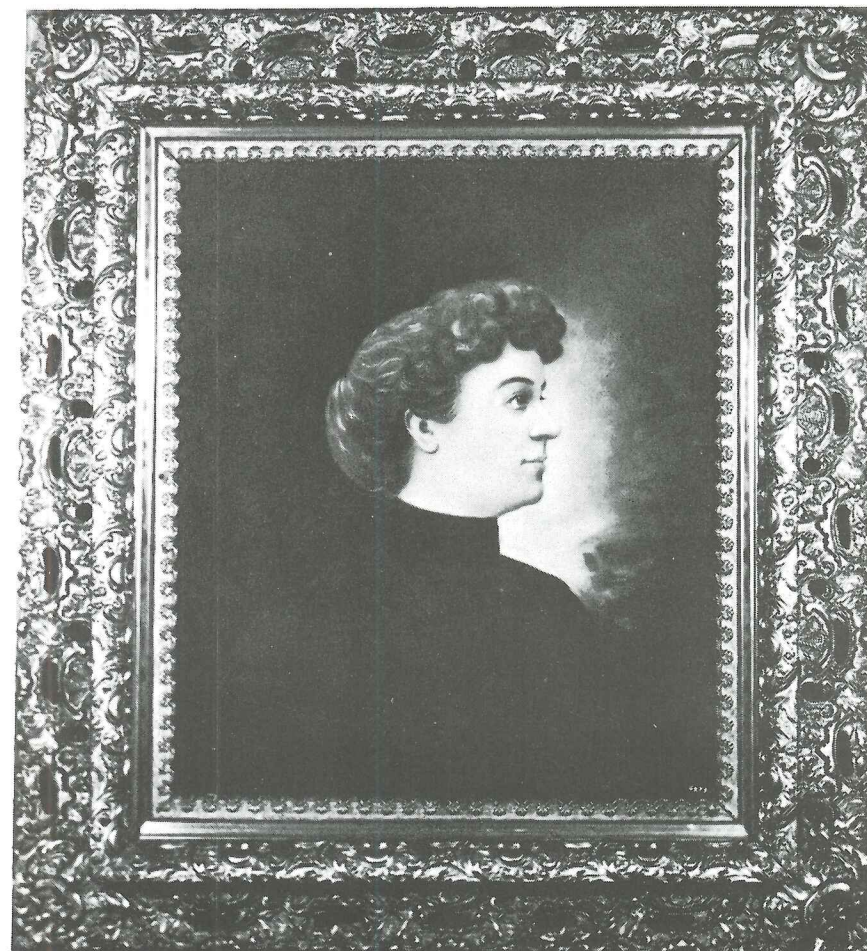


**Bernal Tobias**

0292

Son of Addie and Henry Tobias, nephew of Mable Riffle. Died at the age of four on Christmas Eve. This was precipitated at the Bangs Sisters cottage at Chesterfield Camp. The canvas was placed in front of a window with black draperies on either side. A cloud appeared and then took form. The blouse was different, and when told this the sitters were informed to take it home and at an appointed time to sit in concentration, and the shirt that is now visible appeared. The eyes were closed, but opened and closed several times.

Donated by: Father, Henry Tobias



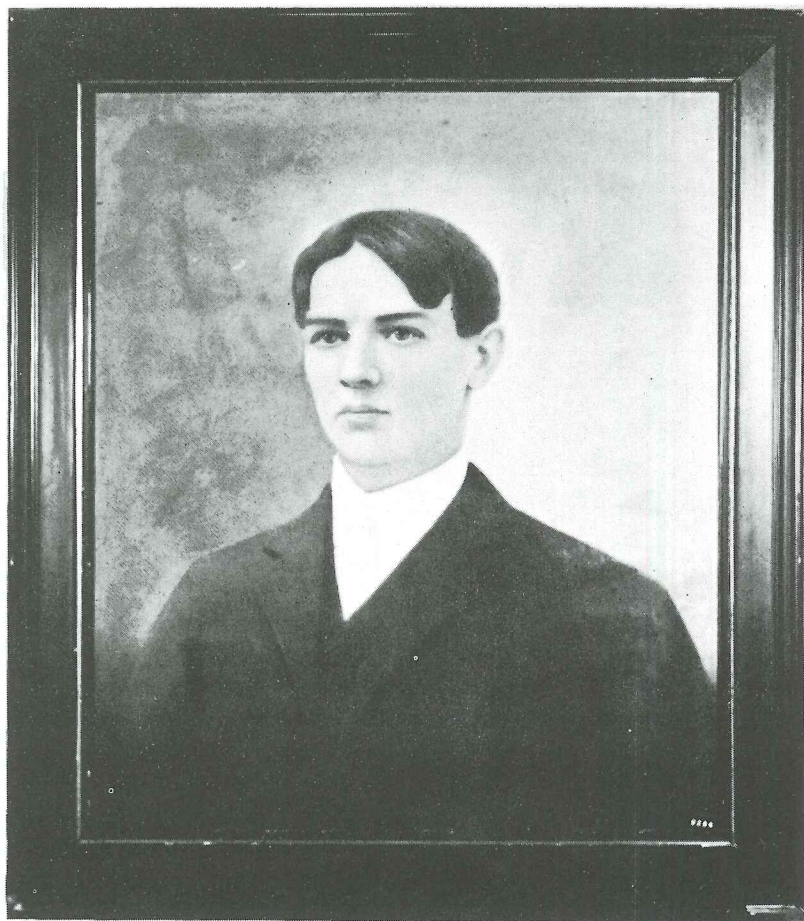
**Allen Woodmansee**

0275

This spirit picture is a precipitated of Allen Woodmansee, received by her aunt, Cora Smith, through the mediumship of the famous Bangs Sisters. Allen was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Woodmansee, of LaPorte, Indiana.

Presented to the J. E. Hett Art Gallery by: Amelia Harbarth Hullinger, of Michigan City, Indiana





**George Shinness**

0296

This portrait is a precipitated spirit drawing by the famous Elizabeth and Mae Bangs, who were mediums on Camp Chesterfield in the early 1900's. This picture was received by the brother of George, Dr. Benjamin Shinnes.

Presented by: Dr. Benjamin Shinness



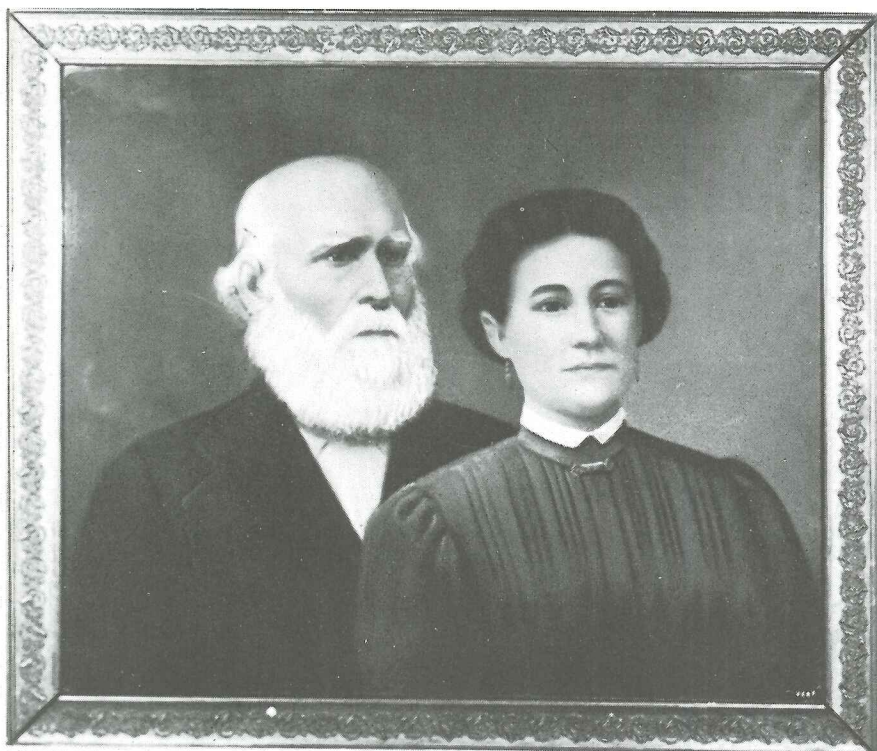
**Twin Portrait**

0287

Dr. Daughtery attended the Science Church of Spiritualism in Richmond, Indiana in the early 1920's. He sat for the portrait of his wife, Lizzie and she appeared, he asked why the twins Mary and Christina could not come, and they then appeared. Dr. Daughtery was not in spirit, but was sitting for the portrait. He was a member of the official board in Chesterfield in its pioneer days. This precipitated picture is through the mediumship of the Bangs Sisters.

Donated by: Rev. Mable Riffle





**Martha and John Wesley Gray**

0295

A precipitated portrait of John Wesley and Martha Gray, parents of Joel W. Gray, Attica, Indiana. This picture is by the Bangs Sisters. When this portrait was finished, the hair at Mr. Gray's ears was flat. This was mentioned to the Bangs Sisters and after the picture was taken home the hair appeared in a natural style.

Presented by: Dr. Ben F. Clark Indianapolis, Indiana



**Dr. John Sharp**

0297

Dr. John Sharp was the spirit guide of Etta Wriedt of Detroit, Michigan. Dr. Sharp said he was born in Glasgow, Scotland, in the 18th Century. He lived all his life in the U. S. A. as an apothecary farmer and died in Evansville, Indiana. Under his able guidance Mrs. Wriedt conducted seances for many distinguished personalities. She received the Queen Victoria gold watch from W. T. Stead for her outstanding service to Julius Bureau.

Donated by: Loretta Schmitt.





**Dulcie**  
0307

This precipitated spirit portrait, by the Bangs Sisters, is of Dulcie, spirit guide of Rev. Anna Throndsen, staff medium at Camp Chesterfield from 1900, until she passed into the higher life. The pearls appeared after the portrait had been taken home. Presented to the Hett Art Gallery by Rev. Throndsens' son: Frank Throndsen.



**Portrait of a Young Girl**

0283

Precipitated spirit picture by the famous mediums, Elizabeth and Mae Bangs.

Name on portrait — — — — Ethel





**Symine Berkett**

0276

Symine Berkett was a member of the First Spiritualist Church of Peru, Indiana. This precipitated spirit portrait of this pioneer spiritualist was given through the mediumship of the Bangs Sisters.

Presented by: Mary Lytle, Pastor of the First Spiritualist Church N. S. A., Peru, Indiana



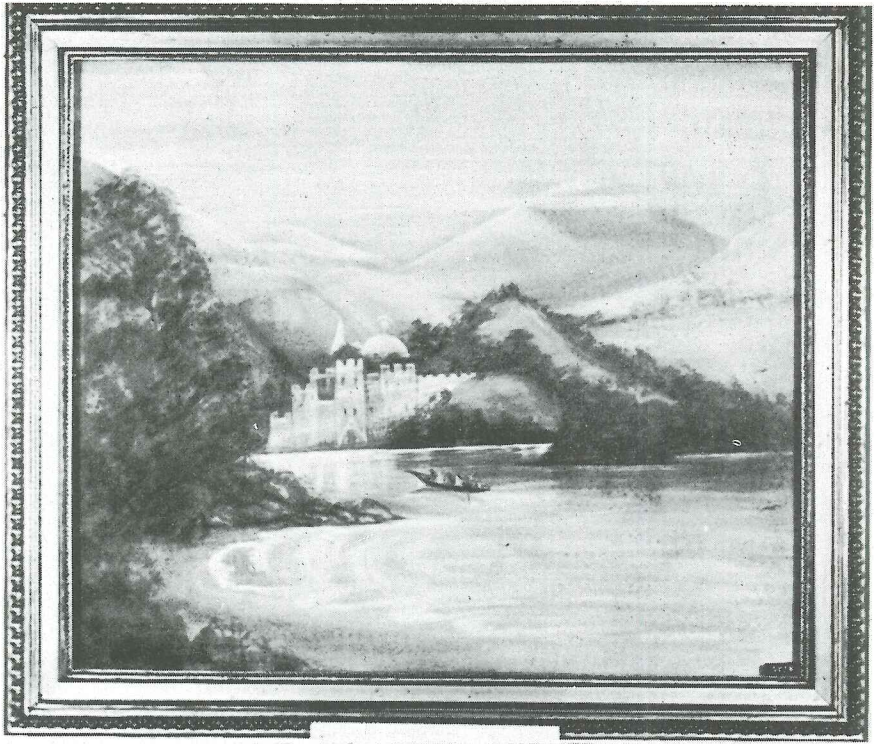
**Queen Victoria**

0298

Portrait of Queen Victoria of England was received by Dr. Carson of Kansas City, for his gallery in his home. The mediums were Elizabeth and Mae Bangs.

Presented by: Bishop Barker





### **Landscape in the Spirit World**

0278

This remarkable scene of the Spirit World was received through the mediumship of the Bangs Sisters by Cora Smith, from her cousins in spirit, Mr. and Mrs. J. U. Woodmansee (Anna) and her brother David. They are seated in the canoe crossing the river to their castle where they reside in the Spirit World.

Presented by: Amelia Harbarth Hillinger, Michigan City, Indiana

(See 0275)

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