

A Victorian Occultist and Publisher: Robert H. Fryar of Bath

Sydney T Chapman

“With reference to the Real Tarot the gentn. at Bath has already been worrying me about it, and so have Brother Yarker and Brother the Revd. William Ayton...”, So, on August 7th 1879, wrote Kenneth R. H. Mackenzie, author of the ‘Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia’, who was planning a book on the subject considered ‘archaeologically and symbolically’, to Freemason and occultist Dr William Wynn Westcott.⁽¹⁾ Today the latter is largely remembered for obtaining from Mackenzie’s widow the ‘Cipher Manuscript’, and providing the interpretation of it which led to the founding of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn with which W. B. Yeats, famously, became involved. Westcott and Mackenzie were, with fellow Freemasons John Yarker and the Rev. William A. Ayton, luminaries of the esoteric Masonic ‘Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia’. Yarker, Westcott and Ayton (the nervous incumbent of Chacombe who kept an alchemical laboratory in his cellar away from the prying eyes of his Bishop), were, moreover, members of the elite ‘Society of Eight’ founded by Mackenzie for the study of alchemy and hermeticism, and to which, residing in Bristol, also belonged Captain Francis Irwin, of whom more later.⁽²⁾ By 1881, Mackenzie was editing the early editions of a Masonic periodical founded by Yarker “The Kneph”.⁽³⁾ An influential, though controversial figure in the annals of Freemasonry, Yarker authored a prodigious amount of Masonic literature, his magnum opus being ‘The Arcane Schools’.⁽⁴⁾ As for the “the gentn. at Bath” he is almost certainly Robert Henry Fryar. Biographical information concerning him is scant, but as a private publisher of esoteric works known as the ‘Bath Occult Reprints’, he became, it seems, a figure of more than provincial significance as a point of contact for Victorian occult revivalists. He is usually described as a penurious clerk who had taken to supporting himself through private publishing. His advertisements describe him as of 8, Northumberland Place, Bath, to which I can only add that he was born in Marylebone in 1845, was residing in Bath

Bath Occult Reprint Series

(PROPRIETARY).

ROBT. H. FRYAR, BATH.

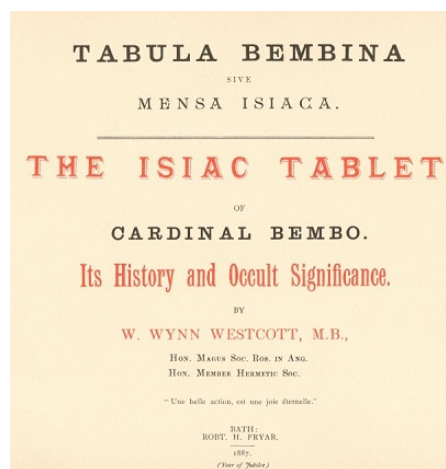
when he married in 1867, and at Bath progressed from being a decorator’s clerk to an accountant and died in the city aged 64 years in 1909.⁽⁵⁾ It would appear that Westcott’s ideas on the origin of the Tarot had been solicited by

Fryar over a number of years and eventually Westcott provided him with a monograph on the subject of the Isis Tablet, a bronze artefact discovered during the Renaissance in whose iconography he traced the roots of the Major Arcana of the Tarot back to ancient Egypt. This Fryar published in 1887 in an edition of 100 copies as ‘The Isiac Tablet of Cardinal Bembo. Its History and Occult Significance’ which, as well as advertising other titles in his Reprint series, carried another offering for sale packs of Tarot cards for those whose interest extended to their practical application: “Tarot Packs of ‘78 leaves, Hand Coloured, supplied to order”. Whether all of these were imported or some were of his own making is not clear.⁽⁶⁾

It is almost certain that Yarker came to Bath on several occasions, perhaps accompanied by his son John Lewis Yarker. On one of these it is likely that the latter met there Emily, eldest daughter of James Vowles of Bath whom he married at Withington, Manchester on Sep 29th, 1883. Yarker had Masonic business to attend to at Bath and while it is not clear whether Fryar was a Freemason he must have met up with him to discuss contributions to his publications and converse on spiritualist and occult matters, subjects on which the widely travelled Yarker was internationally recognised as an expert. Yarker had been installed a Knight Templar of the Jerusalem Conclave at Manchester (July 11th 1856) and became fascinated with its history, finding it had worked many degrees which he sought to revive. By 1870 he had linked up at Bath with Rose Croix members and like minded individuals of its ‘Antiquity’

Encampment of Knights Templar - whose Mizraim and Scottish rites particularly appealed to him - to form a Royal Grand Council of Rites to promote the higher grades. By the following year he was a member of Bath Antiquity Encampment which forthwith appointed him Royal Grand Commander for Lancashire. Bath had links with the Baldwin Rite operating at Bristol dominated by the aforementioned Captain Francis Irwin of Bristol where a College of Rosicrucians had been established by 1872, and of which Yarker described himself as a member. ⁽⁷⁾ In occult literature Irwin is remembered in connection with his spiritualist and scrying séances - familiar territory for Yarker and, as we will see, Fryar - as described in his 'Spiritual Journal'; therein, for example, Irwin recorded himself as having communicated with the eighteenth century occultist Alessandro Cagliostro who, he said, dictated almost word for word the ritual of the 'Fratres Lucis'. ⁽⁸⁾

Fryar began a regular correspondence with the Rev. Robert Hargrave Jennings (1817-1890) another Rosicrucian and Freemason and author of 'The Rosicrucians, Their Rites and Mysteries'(1870). Jennings, echoing the occult phallicist studies of dilettante gentlemen



scholars of an earlier generation like Richard Payne Knight, author of 'On the Worship of Priapus in the Kingdom of Naples', held that religion, and its symbols had evolved from rituals concerned with sex and fertility or as he succinctly put it in his 'Phallicism, Celestial and Terrestrial, Heathen and Christian' (1884) that 'Religion is to be found alone with its justification and explanation in the relations of the sexes. There and therein only'. Jennings knew the black American spiritualist and tantrist 'sex magician' Paschal Beverly Randolph and it was in fact concerning Randolph that Fryar had started corresponding with Jennings ⁽⁹⁾ who eventually obliged Fryar with a Preface for a de-luxe edition in the Bath Occult Reprint series of the writings of Hermes

Trismegistus: 'The Divine Pymander, from the Text of Dr. Everard, Ed. 1650'. It appeared in 1884 being described by Fryar as in "Old Faced Type, on Antique Hand-made Whatman Paper ... with a choice Symbolical Cabbalistical Frontispiece, Title-Page in two colours, and a fac-simile of the Smaragdine Table" and "bound up with other esoteric works in one splendidly illustrated volume - Price on application". In this work Fryar revealed for the first time the existence of 'The Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor', essentially an offshoot of the 'Brotherhood of Eulis' which promoted a form of tantrism based on Randolph's manuscripts with sex the key to unlocking occult powers. Fryar had probably encountered Randolph during his second European tour of 1861 when he forged links with those involved with the London Spiritual Magazine, Fryar soon becoming himself the focus of a small Randolphian coterie, and the agent in England for obtaining Randolph's teachings, though whether this was through some form of licence or reprint is again uncertain. ⁽¹⁰⁾ Eventually, after Jennings's death, Fryar published their correspondence as a 'Bath Occult Reprint' in 1895, a 71 page quarto in boards in a limited subscribers' edition of 100 titled: 'The Letters of Hargrave Jennings, Author of The Rosicrucians, Phallicism, &c.,&c., Forming the Unabridged Correspondence with the Editor of the Bath Occult Reprints, between 1879 and 1887, with Frontispiece'. For this Yarker obliged him with an Introduction - as he had for Fryar's reprint 'Aureus. The Golden Tractate of Hermes Trismegistus'(1886) with an essay 'Alchemy and the Alchemists', and would for 'The Assistant Genies and Irreconcilable Gnomes or Continuation to the Comte de Gabalis'. (1897). The editor of the Antiquary Magazine (Vol 31), however, while paying tribute to the quality of Fryar's 'Letters &c' - describing it as nicely printed in a large type, on clear paper - voiced public scepticism towards the whole idea of esoteric studies which were becoming fashionable in sections of the intelligentsia and was rather dismissive of Jennings and the contents of the book adding that it contained "some fearful and wonderful things in the way of hieroglyphics". It was in this edition of Jennings's

letters that Fryar advertised titles in his 'Esoteric Physiology Series' illustrative works which apparently extended to six works which would attract the criticism of at least one body dedicated to guarding the morals of the nation. ⁽¹¹⁾ These offerings were linked with the programme of spiritual and magical sex adopted within the Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor.

In 1886, the year he concluded his correspondence with Jennings, Fryar reprinted a classic on the subject of sex and the occult, with, as noted earlier, Yarker's introduction, the 'Comte de Gabalis' (1670) dealing with sexual intercourse with elementals, under the title 'Sub-Mundanes, or The Count of Gabalis, From the 1680 Edition, (Illustrated) A Rosicrucian Book. Being The History of Spirits, from the Text of the Abbe Villars, with Appendix from the Suppressed Occult Physiological Work of the Very Rev. Father Sinistrari, of Ameno, on Demoniality, or Incubi and Succubi'. Fryar described this as 'one of the most celebrated works on the Occult Sciences, dealing especially with the sexual questions elucidated by Mr Hargrave Jennings in the 'Rosicrucians,' and 'Phallicism', (showing the real nature of the Adamic Apple, &c.)', adding it was available 'Post Free, 10/6. Only a few left'. It should be remembered that at the time the idea of sex with elementals was being discussed widely in occult and theosophical circles, Madame Blavatsky even going so far as to condemn two male contemporaries of wantonly fathering children on the astral plane. Fryar's edition of de Gabalis at least, along with another mentioned below on 'Mental Magic' by Thomas Welton which incorporated his own writings on the 'magic mirror' and 'magic crystal' and with the same reference to limited stock, appears to have found a more ready market. In the case of the former this was more likely due to interest less esoteric and occult than earthy and pornographic but which could masquerade as erudite, gentlemanly and dilettante within the antiquarian tradition alluded to above, and to which Fryar was heir himself judging by the fact that he owned a set of Giulio Romano's pornographic 'Situations Gracieuses' lent to Jennings for the purpose of comparison. ⁽¹²⁾ Unfortunately he was forced to compromise his loftier pitch by reminding the public it was "the great tabooed Work which, on account of the peculiar subject and its free treatment, is almost virtually 'boycotted' except when supplied direct from this house" (given as 8, Northumberland Place, Bath). In the case of the latter, 'Mental Magic', the lure was the promise of the achieving the seemingly impossible - acquiring the power of remote vision, in this and other earths in the universe.

In 1887 Fryar issued Westcott's study, referred to above, on the origin of the Tarot 'The Isiac Tablet of Cardinal Bembo. Its History and Occult Significance'. In it Westcott discussed Athanasius Kircher's thoughts on the Tablet published in his 'Oedipus Aegyptiacus' (1654) - a work which subsequently influenced Masonic philosophy as expounded by Pignorius and Montfaucon - fostered 'Egyptian Freemasonry', and would fashion the thinking of MacKenzie and contemporaries like Eliphas Levi, the French occultist, to whom Westcott referred specifically in this work, and Tarot exegesist Manly P. Hall. ⁽¹³⁾ A later advertisement for it placed by Fryar would, however, draw somewhat dry tongue-in-cheek remarks from the editor of 'Notes and Queries for September 29th 1900' compounding the negative note sounded by the Antiquary Magazine: "Occultism and Mysticism are to the fore at present, and the work and explanation will doubtless be to the tastes of a class of readers. We seem to trace on the tablet, with modifications, the figures of Thoth, the Scribe of the Gods, and various Egyptian deities; but we are not Oedipus, nor even Rawlinson and we must leave to others the unveiling of the mysteries herein depicted. The tablet can be obtained from Mr. Fryar".

Fryar's 'Mental Magic' by the late Thomas Welton published in 1884 contained supplementary work of his own and others' authorship. Dedicated to the Victorian astrologer and scryer the late Captain Morrison, it dealt at length with another avenue of occult practice with which Fryar was much preoccupied - scrying with the use of crystals and mirrors, which had come to the occult fore through the writings of the leading contemporary adept Frederick Hockley (1809-1885) another member of the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia ⁽¹⁴⁾ In the case

of mirrors, while various types were described by Fryar, he favoured the blackened Indian variety known as a 'battah' mirror which he advertised for sale (see below). This he is reported as having used in scrying sessions at Bath assisted by his wife. Mrs. Fryar, it seems, appears to have won some acclaim for proficiency in the art, her husband speaking of her as 'The British Seeress' while her talents were praised in spiritualist publications.⁽¹⁵⁾ The exotic advertisement for Welton's work, Fryar's latest title, is given here in full conjuring up as it does a vivid picture of the occult world in which he and his associates had immersed themselves:

"MENTAL MAGIC," by the late THOS. WELTON, F.S.A. (Illustrated.) The A. B. C. of Elementary Experimental Occultism, and now complete with an additional page of Supplementary Notes, &c., ad cleram, illustrating the "Ritual" of the "Phallic" personæ Machinery and Ceremonial so graphically related therein. Being the Author's most recent experimental investigations, enlarged with an Esoteric Appendix, entitled the "History and Mystery of the Magic Mirror," being the concluding part of the Editor's Brochure, the "History and Mystery of the Magic Crystal," including the chapter "Miroirs Magiques," viz.: Miroirs Theurgiques, Miroirs des Sorciers, Miroir de Cagliostro, Miroir du Potet, Miroir Swedenborgian, Miroir Magnetique, Miroir Narcotique, Miroir Galvanique, etc., specially and for the first time Translated from the French "Magic Magnetique," of L. A. CAHAGNET, for this Work. Also, with Col. FRASER'S suggestive narrative of the mysterious sexive Mirror Dance of India: Making of the Bhatt—the two brides—the grooms; the Colonel and the Sheikh; The Hills of Mahadoe; The tripod and the test; The Mystic Dance—"O Sahib, it is only Lust and Hatred that keep closed the eyes of the Soul!—In those crystals we can see what takes place on earth, and in other worlds than this!" The trial and the test—extraordinary—a British Skeptic sees what takes place 12,000 miles away!—Its demonstration. Mundt, Lowry, Palgrave, Morier, Lane and Jennings all confirm the Mirror facts, the higher uses of a good Mirror, etc., etc Nearly 200 pages, quarto. 10/-, Post Free. Only a few left. '

Communications

Respecting any further Information about Books, MSS., Mirrors, Instructions, or Advice on the Subjects embodied in the "Woman's Book" (see Synopsis), must be addressed (always enclosing stamped addressed envelope, which alone ensures attention) ONLY to the Editor of this and all the other Copyright Reprints.

ROBT. H. FRYAR,
BATH.

Personal Interviews declined, except on Occult matters, and by previous special arrangement by letter.

Fryar added that the work contained 'a clue to the "Ansairctic Secret," for which complete "Secret" many had paid 100 dollars. This was a reference to 'The Ansairctic Mystery - A New Revelation Concerning Sex' and 'The Mysteries of Eulis' privately circulating teachings of Randolph expounding his method of sex magic.⁽¹⁶⁾ Fryar's practical knowledge of scrying would have been gained or developed through his painstaking copying of old manuscripts including those of the astrologer Dr Ebenezer Sibley 1752-1799. This is referred to in a letter to Francis Irwin dated June 18th 1874 written by Frederick

Hockley, aforementioned, who had worked for John Denley, seller of occult books and manuscripts in Covent Garden⁽¹⁷⁾:

A Mr Fryar has copied the MSS correctly – they are worth the money he charges 30/-, 15/- & 25/-

though he disapproved somewhat of his method adding:

'he sent me a copy of his sixpence pamphlet on Crystal work but in it they are all worked by planetary spirits – they are to me objectionable.

Fryar also referred to his copying of manuscripts by hand for sale in his Introduction to Welton's work:

Mr Robert H Fryar, Bath, who in his 'Trade Circular' on this subject disinterestedly admits 'all cannot use Seering Mirrors, etc will supply on application written copies of an old MSS on 'Crystallomancy, or the Art of Drawing Spirits into the Crystal'.

Here he also offered "Bhattah mirrors" imported by him 'from India, per SS. Chatterton' and ' "Automatic Insulators" of which he was the Inventor in 1882'. It appears that the Insulators were to be used with the crystal ball, presumably to protect it from negative influence, as suggested by his advertisement in the magazine 'The Medium, and Daybreak' of July 3rd 1885 which described them as 'almost human':

ROBT H. FRYAR, the Inventor of the almost human "Automatic Insulator" on Crystall Balls, the planchette of the future, still supplies the Black Concave Ovoid Mirror for developing clairvoyant faculties (his original spécialité) by which untold numbers have been awakened to Lucidity or Soul-sight. See circulars. "Mental Magic", post free 5s. 6d. ROBT H. FRYAR Bath

The description of the mirror here, incidentally, would equally describe the 'Claude Glass' as used by artists from the seventeenth to early nineteenth century to 'compose' landscapes.

In 1898 appeared another in the series edited by Fryar - ' Magnetic Magic, A Digest of the Practical Parts of the Masterpieces of L. A. Cahagnet H.F.T.S., "Arcanes de la Vie future dévoilés" and "Magic Magnétique" ' (the latter having been included in the edition of Welton's work as stated in the advertisement reproduced above) 'Now translated for the first time from the French by the Editor, with the portrait of the Author: Privately Printed for Subscribers'. This latest offering again drew the attention of the Editor of 'Notes and Queries' (January 21, 1899) who indulged in the same sort of wry criticism we saw aimed at Fryar's title on the 'Isiac Tablet' by Westcott:

We have here, in an edition limited to one hundred copies, "a digest of the practical parts of the masterpieces of Louis Alphonse Cahagnet," to whose name are affixed the mysterious letters H.F.T.S. The works in question are the 'Arcanes de la Vie Future Devoilés' and the 'Magie Magnetique.' These are but two out of the many writings of this voluminous expounder of mysteries, and the digest deserves its name, since it compresses into a few pages matter in the original spread over volumes. Prefixed to the book, which may be obtained through Mr. Robert H. Fryar, of Bath, is a portrait of Cahagnet, the date of whose birth is given as 1803, instead of, as we believed, 1809. The work deals with theurgic mirrors, cabalistic mirrors, and similar objects, in which the young and pure may or may not see marvels, with pacts, talismans, and other magic or mysterious objects, the very names of which are unknown to us. We are not of the initiate, and have gazed intensely and long into magic crystals and the like, and have seen nothing. We are glad, however, to tell those who seek further information where they may look for it. The work, which is intended to be strictly private, constitutes, we are told, "an elementary initiation into Experimental Occultism." What this may mean we know not. Many things with which as the remnants of exploded superstitions folk-lorists concern themselves are spoken of as still operative, and we learn to some extent only, since the instructions can scarcely be held to be practical how, with Sister Helen, to melt our waxen man, as was reputedly done with fatal effect by a dramatist recently deceased against an unappreciative critic.

Limited success as a publisher of occult works probably accounts for Fryar's branching into minor and decidedly submundane printing some of it directed towards the tourist market at Bath. There was, for example his photographic reproduction of the print of Hogarth's portrait of Wilkes, as we learn from Notes and Queries (July 23, 1892):

MR. ROBT. H. FRYAR, of Northumberland Place, Bath, writes to express his readiness to supply, for purposes of illustration, a few cabinet full-length photographic reproductions of Hogarth's original print of John Wilkes, which, caricature though it be, is still a speaking like-ness.

A similar purpose is likely to have motivated his request for the likeness of the mistress of Beau Nash which appeared in the issue of Notes and Queries for October 17th 1891:

FANNY MURRAY. – Will any reader having any portrait of this lady, a Bath beauty about 1735, who was the daughter of a musician, and whose married name was Ross, kindly correspond with me, and by so doing very greatly oblige ROBERT H FRYAR. 8, Northumberland Place, Bath

In 'Notes and Queries' (August 22, 1903) under the heading 'Bathonian Dickensiana' it was announced he could supply something of Bath interest to students of literature and of Dickens in particular:

Mr. R. H. Fryar, of Bath, is issuing a plate presenting, in a composite form, the spots illustrative of the associations, personal and literary, of Dickens with Bath, Royal Crescent, The Saracen's Head, the Pump Room, the Beaufort Arms, and No. 35, St. James Square, are among the places depicted.

In the issue for March 26, 1892, and connected, in part at least, with his interests in the occult he made an appeal through the Editor who obliged him with:

"MR. ROBERT H. FRYAR, of Bath, writes": Will any gentleman having any of the following works kindly correspond with me? 'Man of Two Lives '; 'Poor Man's Best Friend,' Mackay; ' Magnetic Magic ' (Eng.), Cahognet."

Finally we learn again from 'Notes and Queries' that Fryar had placed a notice which it referred to as a 'Literary Curiosity' in the Bath 'Argus':

The following, from the Bath Argus, may interest readers of ' N. & Q.':

Having come into possession of an almost, it is believed, unique copy of the following extraordinary work, I shall be pleased to give any further particulars, or even to show it for a short time to bibliophiles, &c. Yours respectfully, ROBT. H. FRYAR, 8, Northumberland Place, Bath. "A Brief (but True) Account of the Certain Year, Moneth, Day and Minute of the Birth of Jesus Christ. By John Butler, B.D., and Chaplain to his Grace James, Duke of Ormond, &c. And Hector of Lichborrow, in the Diocese of Peterburgh, 1671".

It would be very interesting to discover whether Fryar was part of a coterie devoted to occult studies in Bath itself or indeed anything more concerning his life there though one suspects it was likely to have been somewhat dull and his interests compensating ones. The world in which he and these individuals was immersed was far removed from the materialism and commercialism of the Victorian age and its attendant professions and trades and seems to have afforded an escape from it - Yarker a Manchester importer of Turkey goods being a perfect illustration of the phenomenon, and typical of those whose enthusiasm has been described as leading them to 'while away the hours in the last thirty years of the nineteenth century reviving and inventing more and more outlandish degrees and orders on the fringes of Freemasonry, as well as indulging in matters spiritualist and magical'.⁽¹⁸⁾ Criticism of the sort levelled against him by the Revd. Ayton he would certainly not have welcomed in a city still preserving the aura of respectability and good taste. In reply to a prospective candidate for the Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor who was also soliciting Ayton's opinion regarding the magic mirrors being advertised by Fryar he wrote that Fryar's "worst feature" was that "he became the agent for the sale of posthumous MSS works of the suicide Randolph. These works contain the worst kind of Black Magic by means of sexual intercourse ... these MSS have been sold by this person to several young men with devastating results. Col.Olcott himself told me that Randolph tried to practise Black Magic upon him but that he was able to turn the circle back upon him and that he immediately committed suicide" sententiously adding "As a Freemason you will understand that he was accessory to his own destruction & paid the penalty of his own obligation".⁽¹⁹⁾

NOTES

(1)

'The Game of Tarot: Archaeologically and Symbolically Considered'; see Ellic Howe, *The Magicians of the Golden Dawn*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1972, p 30 (note).

(2)

R.A. Gilbert 'From Cipher to Enigma: The Role of William Wynn Westcott in the Creation of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn'; Frederick Hockley and Benjamin Cox were also members.

(3)

The *Kneph* - (1881-1900) was the official publication of the Ancient and Primitive Rite of Memphis-Misraim.

(4)

For a discussion of Yarker's life and work see John Hamill (article) 'The Seeker of Truth. John Yarker 1833-1913' in *Wege Und Abwege. Beitrage zur Europaischen Geistesgeschichte der Neuzeit. Festschrift fur Ellic Howe zum 20 September 1990*; Hochschul Verlag, Freiburg 1990; (article) 'John Yarker: Masonic Charlatan?', in *Ars Quattuor Coronatorum Vol. 109 (1996)*, 191-214.

(5)

1881 and 1901 Censuses; marriage: March quarter 1868 Vol 5c, page 945; death: December quarter 1909 Bath 5c, page 350.

(6) Ellic Howe (op cit. p. 30) states (without reference) that they were imported from France. See also note 13 for further information about the Isis Tablet.

(7)

A list of Yarker's memberships is given on the title page of his *Notes on the Scientific and Religious Mysteries of Antiquity: The Gnosis and the Secret Schools of the Middle Ages &c'*: London 1872. Ultimately the activities of Yarker and the Encampment Masons at Bath brought them into conflict with the Knights Templar whose Grand Conclave decreed that they should abandon all but the Malta and Temple degrees. All of this is alluded to in Yarker's 'The Arcane Schools': 'To obtain a union of Bristol Knights with the Grand Priory of England that body in 1866 agreed to allow the practise of the old degrees of Heredom Kadosh, by its older Encampments, now termed Preceptories. Manchester revived the old Dunckerley degrees of Red Cross, Heredom, Kadosh, 1869-70. The trouble with Bristol led to a similar trouble at Bath in 1871, and they revived their old degrees together with the whole of the degrees which they had had from 1811 of the Scottish Rite. In 1872 they received and certificated seven "Noble Knights" of the Manchester Chapter, and formed an alliance with them, their Certificates including the whole of England, Scotland, and Ireland and an alliance was formed".

(8)

These séances did not always meet with success; one occasion at least Cagliostro announced 'the Crystal you have will be of little use. It is charged with an antagonistic principle.'; and on another 'I am afraid that at present I cannot give you anything to be continuous.' (See Ellic Howe 'Fringe Masonry 1870-1885' in *Ars Quattuor Coronatorum*, Vol. 85, 1972); the *Fratres Lucis* was an order founded by Francis Irwin which drew on the teachings of Pasqualis, Cagliostro, Swedenborg and recalled the Brotherhood of Light founded in Florence in 1498.

(9)

Refs., passim, to Jennings and Fryar in Christian Chanel, John Patrick Deveney, Joscelyn Godwin: *The Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor. Initiatic and Historical Documents of an Order of Practical Occultism*, Samuel Weiser Inc. Maine, USA, 1995.

(10)

See 'The Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor' (esp. pp. 43-44) which traces Randolph's influence within occult circles in England and abroad and touches on the enigmatic Fryar link. When Fryar found that its Secretary T. H. Burgoyne had defrauded him of money he placed an advertisement in 'Lucifer' magazine in May 1886 and *The Theosophist* of May 1886 distancing himself from the Order with which he had publicly linked himself by the inclusion of a note at the end of his edition of the 'Divine Pyramander' (op.cit. p.355).

(11)

See 'Esoteric Physiology' section of List of Publications, below. Joscelyn Godwin in 'The Theosophical Enlightenment' records that Fryar mentions in his edition of Jennings's letters (1895) that he encountered the opposition of the National Vigilance Association and was persuaded to withdraw them.

(12)

Noted by Adam McClean ed., *The Hermetic Journal*, Vol 45 p. 70. Fryar probably lent it when Jennings was working on his 'Phallicism Celestial and Terrestrial Heathen and Christian: its Connexion with the Rosicrucians and the Gnostics and its Foundation in Buddhism with an Essay on Mystic Anatomy', published in 1884 by G. Redway, London. Advertisements at the end of Fryar's edition of Westcott's *Tabula Bembina* include one showing that he had reprinted some of the illustrations: "Romano (Giulio) *Situations Gratieuses Humains*, a set of 20 designs to illustrate 'The Worship of Priapus', and was offering 'Figures Libres' imported only to order, for Subscribers' directed in both cases more likely than not to the market for mild pornography as much as serious occultism.

(13)

The *Mensa Isiaca*, or *Bembine Tablet*, is a bronze sheet inlaid with silver, gold and base metals, and thought to date from around the first century AD. While Egyptian in theme its origins are probably Roman. For Athanasius Kircher (1601/2-1680) it was the key to Egyptian hieroglyphs. The tablet is preserved in the Museum of Egyptian Antiquities (Museo Egizio) in Turin. The catalogue describes it as "Bronze inlaid in other metals Roman Period, 1st century AD; Provenance: acquired in Rome from Pietro Bembo 1527, acquired by Charles Emanuel I of Savoy in 1628, first displayed in the Museo Egizio, 1832; Inv. Nr. C. 7155". Fryar's edition of Westcott's work reproduced a drawing of the artefact executed many years earlier by the writer who observed that it was the first time that an illustration of it had been printed in England.

(14)

On the occult career of Frederick Hockley see J. Hamill and R. A. Gilbert 'The Magical Writings of Frederick Hockley, Aquarian Press, Wellingborough, 1986.

(15)

Christian Chanel, John Patrick Deveney, Joscelyn Godwin. *The Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor*, Samuel Weiser Inc., 1995 p. 194.

(16)

John Patrick Deveney. *Paschal Beverly Randolph A Nineteenth-Century Black American Spiritualist, Rosicrucian, and Sex Magician*, p 217.

(17)

J. Hamill (ed), *The Rosicrucian Seer. Magical Writings of Frederick Hockley. (Roots of the Golden Dawn Series)* The Aquarian Press, 1986 p. 60.

(18)

J. Hamill. 'The Seeker of Truth: John Yarker 1833-1913' in *Wege und Abwege. Beiträge zur Europäischen Geistesgeschichte der Neuzeit. Festschrift für Ellic Howe zum 20. September 1990.* Hochschul Verlag Freiburg, 1990.

(19)

Reproduced in John Patrick Deveney. *Paschal Beverly Randolph A Nineteenth-Century Black American Spiritualist, Rosicrucian, and Sex Magician* pp 255-256

Robert H. Fryar
LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

Articles authored by Fryar

Visions in Mirrors and Crystals, *Religio-Philosophical Journal* 25, no. 1 (September 7, 1878).

The History and Mystery of the Magic Crystal; advertised in 'Mental Magic' by Thomas Welton (see below) along with its concluding part The History and Mystery of the Magic Mirror; the former previously published (1870) in Emma Hardinge Britten's magazine "The Western Star".

Crystal Gazing The Rosicrucian Brotherhood 1, No. 4, 9 October 1907: also published in *Historic Magazine and Notes and Queries* 25, No 10, (October 1907): 241-243.

Crystallomancy, or the Art of Drawing Spirits into the Crystal **

Books edited or part-authored by Fryar

The Divine Pymander of Hermes Mercurius Trismegistus. Translated from the Arabic by Dr. Everard (1650) with an Introduction and Preliminary Essay by Hargrave Jennings (includes also Fragments and Asclepios on Initiation). Bath Occult Reprint Series 1. Bath: Robert H Fryar, 1884. (G. Redway, London for R. H. Fryar).

- item 11.4 in A. Pritchard *Alchemy. A Bibliography of English-Language Writings.* Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1980

Mental Magic, by the late Thos Welton, F.S.A. (Illustrated.) The A. B. C. of Elementary Experimental Occultism, and now complete with an additional page of Supplementary Notes, &c 1884

The Virgin of the World of Hermes Trismegistus now first rendered into English with Essay Introduction and Notes by Dr Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland: George Redway, London, 1885 (Fryar as ed). (G. Redway, London for R. H. Fryar); also published by Kailasam: Madras, 1885.

- item 36.1 in A. Pritchard *Alchemy. A Bibliography of English-Language Writings.* Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1980

Aureus The Golden Tractate of Hermes Trismegistus. Concerning the Physical Secret of the Philosopher's Stone. In Seven Sections. Introduction by John Yarker, Bath: Robert H Fryar, 1886. (translation from Mary Anne Atwood's 'A Suggestive Enquiry into the Hermetic Mystery', 1850; concludes with the translation of the Tabula Smaragdina. Reprinted in A. Cockren, *Alchemy Recovered and Restored: Rider* (1940) and McKay, Philadelphia, (1941).

- item 6.2 in A. Pritchard *Alchemy. A Bibliography of English-Language Writings.* Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1980.

"Sub-Mundanes," or "The Count of Gabalis." From the 1680 Edition, (Illustrated.) A Rosicrucian Book. Being The History of Spirits, from the Text of the Abbe Villars, with

Appendix from the Suppressed Occult Physiological Work of the Very Rev. Father Sinistrari, of Ameno, on Demoniality, or "Incubi and Succubi, Bath: 1886 [one of the most celebrated works on the Occult Sciences, dealing especially with the sexual questions elucidated by Mr Hargrave Jennings in the "Rosicrucians," and "Phallicism," (showing the real nature of the Adamic Apple, &c)]

Tabula Bembina sive Mensa Isiaca. The Isiac Tablet of Cardinal Bembo. Its History and Occult Significance. by William Wynn Westcott, Bath: Fryar, 1887. ["Illustrated with a Composite Frontispiece of the plates from the Work of Nicholas Flammel, and prefaced with an Introductory Essay on Alchemy and the Alchemists, by Jno. Yarker, Esq. ... including an illustrated Key, descriptive of the principle plates in the above Hermetic volume. Those who consider the Eleusinian Mysteries to have been phallic will find a confirmation of their theory in this Key, which relates the means taken by Baubo to gladden the mournful Demeter"].

Sepher Yetzirah. Translated out of the Hebrew and collated with Latin Versions by the author of the Monograph on the "Isiac Tablet." (William Wynn Westcott), 1887

The Letters of Hargrave Jennings, Author of 'The Rosicrucians', 'Phallicism', &c.,&c.,, Forming the Unabridged Correspondence with the Editor of the Bath Occult Reprints, between 1879 and 1887, with Frontispiece. Yarker, John (Intro); Invictus (sc. Fryar, ed.), Robert H. Fryar: Bath, 1895

The Assistant Genies and Irreconcilable Gnomes or Continuation to the Comte de Gabalis or New Discourses upon the Secret Sciences. Translated and Introduction by John Yarker, Bath: Robert H Fryar, 1897

Supernatural Generation (n.p.): Privately Printed for the Editor (Fryar), 1896
(on sexual union between gods and humans from the works of Thomas Inman)

Magnetic Magic, A Digest of the Practical Parts of the Masterpieces of L.A.Cahagnet H.F.T.S., "Arcanes de la future dévoilés" and "Magic Magnétique", Now translated for the first time from the French by the Editor, with the portrait of the Author (n.p.) : Privately Printed for Subscribers, 1898

Fryar's Esoteric Physiology series

Sexagyma. A Digest of the Works of John Davenport "Curiositates Eroticae Physiologiae" and "Aphrodisiacs and Anti-Aphrodisiacs" with a Bio-Bibliographical Memoir of the Author. Privately Printed for Subscribers, (By R H. Fryar). (London), 1888
(Rolf S. Reade, Registrum Librorum Eroticorum, item 1267).

Veneres et Priapi. A facsimile reprint illustrating the work Sexagma, a digest of the works of John Davenport etc. Bound up with 70 Mounted Prints of the Gems described in the Text. Privately Printed (London), 1888
(Rolf S. Reade, Registrum Librorum Eroticorum, item 1268).

D'Hancarville's Veneres et Priapi, uti observantur in gemmis antiquis

Colonel Fanin's Peintures, Bronzes et Statues &c Erotiques Du Cabinet Secret of the Royal Museum at Naples, being the Sixty Illustrations in that "Cabinet Secret" reduced and adapted, with abridged letter-press, uniform with "Veneres et Priapi," etc., with facsimile title-page.

Romano (Giulio) Situations Gratieuses Humains, a set of 20 designs to illustrate "The Worship of Priapus" Figures Libres imported only to order, for Subscribers. (advertised at the end of Fryar's publication of Westcott's Tabula Bembina sive Mensa Isiaca, 1887):

Richard Payne Knight's Worship of Priapus with Essay on the Worship of the Generative Powers during the Middle Ages of Western Europe by Thomas Wright

Miscellaneous

The Mount of Initiation. Cabinet Photos, direct from this beautiful Symbolical Work of Ancient Art

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Tableau des Lames du Livre de Thot, qui etait Place Dans le Memphis. This artistic embodiment of the complete Tarot Pack is indispensable to students of the "Isiac Tablet," and can be supplied separately from the above, for framing or binding. (This was also available bound in a volume containing the Divine Pymander The Virgin of the World, and alchemical tract, "Aureus,"

The above small Remainder (Divine Pymander) can now only be had, bound with the Companion Work, "The Virgin of the World," and the rare Alchemical Tract, "Aureus," in one splendidly illustrated volume; including an additional whole page Tableau des Lames du Livre de Thot, qui etait place dans le Memphis

** (referred to in Christian Chanel, John Patrick Deveney, Jocelyn Godwin The Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor , Samuel Weiser Inc., 1995, p194).

