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First prepared in October 2006 by the Survival Research Institute of Canada (Debra Barr and Walter Meyer zu Erpen). Capitalization of any name or subject in the text below indicates that you will find an entry on that topic in the forthcoming third edition of Rosemary Ellen Guiley's *Encyclopedia of Ghosts and Spirits* (October 2007).

Creighton, Dr. William (1885-1972)

Medical doctor, psychical research associate of Dr. T. Glen Hamilton, and founding council member of the Winnipeg Society for Psychical Research. Creighton is believed to have been the first Canadian to photograph ECTOPLASM, ca. 1926-27, during his investigation of the MEDIUMSHIP of the Scottish-born Mrs. Elizabeth (Gibson) Young (1878-1929).

Born on 3 May 1885 in Alexander, Manitoba, William Creighton graduated in medicine from Manitoba Medical College in 1908 and began his medical practice in Winnipeg. In 1911, he married Florence Melita Graham (1889-1982). The couple had three sons. During World War I, Creighton served in the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps and was awarded the Military Cross (1917) "for conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty."

In an introduction to metaphysics dated January 1935 and published in *Intention and Survival* (1942), Dr. THOMAS GLENDENNING HAMILTON wrote that "The first investigator in Canada so far as I am aware, certainly the first medical man to record a teleplasmic mass, was Dr. William Creighton of Winnipeg. On March 20, 1927 (sic), in the presence of six witnesses and using three cameras simultaneously, he captured a photographic image of a strange mass falling from the mouth of the entranced medium—a Mrs. Y. [Mrs. Elizabeth Young]—which he had every reason to believe was teleplasm." Dr. Creighton reported that the mass secured with Mrs. Young "felt cold and gelatinous, the size of his thumb and in the form of a cord."¹ Dr. Creighton's youngest son remembers that his father likened the ectoplasm to an umbilical cord.

Though little is known about Dr. Creighton's study of Mrs. Young's mediumship, he was almost certainly assisted by his wife Florence. Mrs. Young and her husband James Dewar Young (1873-1963) also participated with the Creightons in the Hamilton experiments. Dr. Creighton's photograph survives in the T.G. Hamilton collection (University of Manitoba) and in the H.A.V. Green collection (SURVIVAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF CANADA), as well as in the possession of the Creightons' son. Those copies corroborate the fact that the medium was Mrs. Young, that the investigator was Dr. Creighton, that it was the first photograph of ectoplasm taken in Winnipeg, and the month and date, though the

¹T. Glen Hamilton, edited by J.D. Hamilton, *Intention and Survival* (Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, 1942), pp. 8-9.

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year is variously recorded as 1926 and 1927.

From at least 1924, William and Florence Creighton had participated in the PSYCHICAL RESEARCH experiments conducted by Dr. and Mrs. T.G. Hamilton. On 16 November 1924, Dr. Creighton wrote a report about a sitting held that evening in the Hamilton home at which a wax mould of a finger tip was found on the top of the cabinet. The mediumship of Mrs. Elizabeth Poole (1870-1935) was apparently responsible for production of the mould which was located only on the insistence of Mrs. Poole that the top of the cabinet be searched. The door of the séance room had been locked on the inside, and the finger form did "not correspond with that of any finger of any of those present." ² In addition, something cold and wet had touched the back of Mrs. Poole's neck during the sitting. Mrs. Poole, followed by Dr. T.G. Hamilton, Mr. H.A. Reed, and Mrs. J.D. (Elizabeth) Young, immediately verified the presence of moisture on the neck of Mrs. Poole. The report was signed by each of the sitters present that evening: Mrs. J.W. Doig, Mrs. J.A. Poole, Mrs. J.D. Young, Florence Creighton, H.A. Reed, James D. Young, William Creighton, Lillian Hamilton, and T.G. Hamilton.³

The Creightons were among those who attended the Winnipeg "Margery" séances during the December 1926 visit of MINA STINSON CRANDON and her husband.

Further Reading:

Notes of historical research conducted by the Survival Research Institute of Canada, including telephone conversations with the Creightons' son on 20-21 September 2005 and 6 January 2006.

²University of Manitoba, Dept. of Archives and Special Collections, MSS 14, box 9, folder 14.

³University of Manitoba, Dept. of Archives and Special Collections, MSS 14, box 9, folder 14.