

HOW FACTUAL EVIDENCE SUBDUED TABLOID FICTION IN THE NEXT FRIENDS SUIT OF 1907

This article will allow the reader to explore two first-hand interviews that played an important part in providing evidence that contributed to the dismissal of a court action against Mary Baker Eddy, founder of the Christian Science Church. This action sought to wrench control of her person and property (including her copyright for *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*) away from her. The interviews, one by a prominent psychiatrist, Allan McLane Hamilton, and one by a well-respected journalist, Leigh Mitchell Hodges, offer us a unique window on Mrs. Eddy's actual mental and physical condition in 1907. Even though the court action was extremely unpleasant for Mrs. Eddy, it would, nonetheless, as she prophetically remarked to journalist Hodges, "cause the truth to stand out more clearly in the end." It is in this spirit that we provide these now largely inaccessible interviews.

Genesis of the Next Friends Suit

In the summer of 1906 the very newspaper that has the dubious distinction as the origin point in our language for the term "yellow journalism" — *The New York World* — launched an aggressive campaign, under the direction of Joseph Pulitzer (founder of the "Pulitzer Prize"), against Mrs. Eddy. The "news" barrage attempted to present Mary Baker Eddy as senile, decrepit and dying of some deadly disease (probably cancer),¹ and as a puppet and prisoner of her own household staff who were allegedly squandering her money. The sensational attack was published on the first page of *The New York World* on October 28, 1906. The purpose of such an attack and allegations against Mrs. Eddy and her staff were outlined in an editorial published in the *New York American* of November 3, 1906, titled "The World's Disgraceful Attack on Mrs. Eddy." The *New York American* summarized the nature of the lies as a "three-fold" attack upon a woman, old age, and religious belief.

But what prompted the attack in 1906, which culminated in the opening of the next friends suit in March 1907 spearheaded by ex-U.S. Senator from New Hampshire, William Chandler? Certainly the world-at-large was fascinated, awed, and sometimes envious of and frightened by the woman who from retirement in Concord, New Hampshire, could increase the membership of a church from 48,930 individuals in 1900 to 85,096 ten years later; or advance the number of Christian Science branch church

DAILY PATRIOT
CONCORD N. H. WEDNESDAY EVENING, AUGUST 21, 1907

COUNSEL FOR NEXT FRIENDS MOVE TO DISMISS CASE ACTION AGAINST MRS. EDDY

TO DETERMINE HER COMPETENCY
BROUGHT TO AN ABRUPT CLOSE

Plaintiffs Thereby Confess Utter Failure to Substantiate the Charges Made Against the Aged Lady in Their Bill of Equity Filed on March 1 of the Present Year--Proceedings Before the Masters on the Last Day of the Hearing.

Beaten at every turn, the counsel for the plaintiffs this morning, in the action Eddy v. Frye, filed a motion with the clerk of court for a dismissal of the present suit, and withdrew from the proceedings.

The motion, filed with the clerk of court follows:
STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
In the Superior Court.

April Term, 1907.
Merrimack SS.
Eddy v. Frye, et als.

The counsel for next friends in above suit, in their behalf, moved court that their petition in the suit be dismissed, and they hereby affirm the fact.

John W. Kelley,
Martin & Howe,
William E. Chandler.

This withdrawal ends the proceeding which was instituted in the superior court on the first of March last, and which has been on hearing before the masters to determine the competency of Mrs. Eddy for the past several days.

Starting with the allegation of the mental unsoundness of Mrs. Eddy and that she was possessed of delusions which so impaired her mind as to render her incapable of managing her business affairs, the counsel for next friends were unable to bring a scrap of evidence to substantiate their charges, and after going along, hoping against hope that something would arise to give them a standing, they finally threw up their hands and got out.

The beginning of the end was indicated when Mr. Chandler in his opening, occupied several hours in developing the disadvantages under which the next friends had worked in properly preparing the case for presentation to the masters. And the end came when Mr. Senter, on Tuesday, assented to the suggestion of the masters that foreign alienists be permitted to examine Mrs. Eddy on such times as masters and counsel might visit the aged lady at Pleasant View.

The early days of the proceeding developed on the part of the next friend an attack against the Christian Science religion, but this was stoutly rebuffed by the masters on Constitutional grounds as being in violation of the bill of rights. Next the plaintiff sought to show that Mrs. Eddy was the victim of progressive delusion, and an effort was made to conduct an inquiry on that point. However, years back to 1885, but the court ruled that the allegation of delusion was only admissible as showing its effect on Mrs. Eddy's capacity to manage her business affairs, and limited the scope of the inquiry to the period covered from 1885 to the present time.

Portion of first page, Concord [N.H.] *Daily Patriot*, August 21, 1907

buildings from 7 in 1890 to 1,104 in 1910.² Yet the immediate precipitating factor that brought extensive news coverage for this new denomination and its founder was the dedication of the new extension to The Mother Church edifice in Boston, scarcely a dozen years after the original edifice was completed. This new church building boasted an auditorium seating capacity of 5,000 and was dedicated, free of debt, on June 10, 1906. It seems that this growth was seen as a threat to Protestant Christianity since according to one source, "scores of the most valued church members are joining the Christian Scientist branch of the metaphysical organization, and it has thus far been

THE WORLD'S DISGRACEFUL ATTACK ON MRS. EDDY

It Combined a Good Many Unpleasant Features

It would be interesting to know just exactly why the New York World thought it necessary to make a bitter and untruthful attack upon Mrs. Mary Baker G. Eddy, the respected leader of the believers in Christian Science.

The attack was offensive in a three-fold manner.

It was an attack upon a woman.

It was an attack upon old age.

It was an attack upon religious belief.

It is not necessary to SHARE a religious belief IN ORDER TO RESPECT IT.

It is not necessary to be very much of a man to realize that a woman who has committed no crime should be left in peace, free from bitter, uncalled-for criticism.

And it doesn't take very much manhood in a newspaper editor to realize that a woman eighty-six years of age is entitled to veneration from every man, especially when her life has been exemplary, AND WHEN SHE HAS DONE NO ONE ANY HARM.

We are glad that Mrs. Eddy's good health made it possible for her personally to refute the inexplicable, slanderous attack upon her.

And we trust that the New York World, as far as it is possible, will see fit to confine its attacks to MEN, and, if it must attack WOMEN, that it will at least exempt THOSE PAST FOURSORE.

Editorial from *New York American*, November 3, 1906

impossible to check them."³ Whether this claim was factually true or not is perhaps of less importance than that it was believed by many to be true; and this, combined with the visible success of the new religion brought forth such comments from the religious press of the day bemoaning the fact that Christian Scientists built "a two million dollar temple for its own enjoyment, [but] it has no hospitals, no free dispensaries, no missions in the slums, no orphanages. ..."⁴

Finding herself the object of a blast of public scrutiny, Mrs. Eddy adeptly handled interviews from more than a half-dozen journalists during the summer of 1907, in addition to being evaluated at Pleasant View by three court-appointed masters on August 14th.⁵ Certainly this suit was less than pleasant for Mrs. Eddy, but it has provided for future generations a wealth of solid evidence regarding the physical and mental state of the leader of the Christian Science movement at that time.

What follows are the reports from these two interviews (abridged and edited for clarity and ease of reading) prefaced by a short biography of each interviewer. Neither of the men were Christian Scientists, nor favorably inclined to the religion or Mrs. Eddy, but they were both committed to honestly reporting what they found.

Leigh Mitchell Hodges

Leigh Mitchell Hodges was born in Denver, Colorado, on July 9, 1876. He graduated from high school in Carthage, Missouri in 1894 and then attended the School of



Joseph Pulitzer



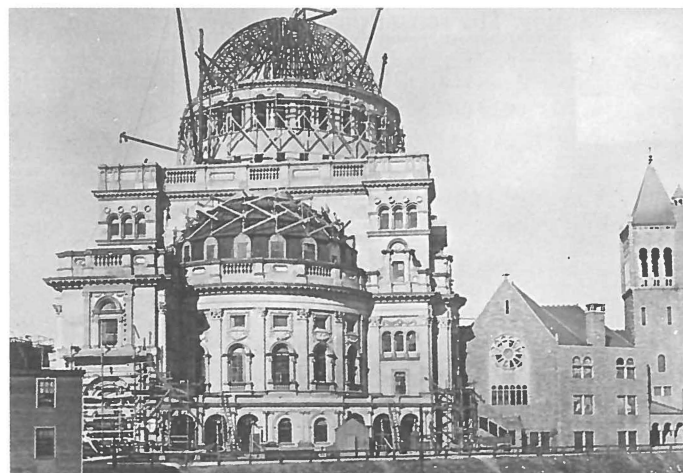
William Chandler

Fine Arts in St. Louis. Mr. Hodges worked as a reporter and editor for the *Daily Ledger*, Mexico, Missouri, 1895–96; *Kansas City Star*, 1897–1899; *Ladies Home Journal*, New York and Philadelphia, 1899–1901; *The North American*, Philadelphia, 1902–1925. He was one of the four founders in 1907 of the Christmas Seal program in the fight against tuberculosis and a member of the American Federation of the Physically Handicapped. Mr. Hodges was a contributing writer to *The New Yorker*, *Reader's Digest* and *The Times of London* and the author of eight books.⁶

Mr. Hodges' interview with Mary Baker Eddy
Monday, July 8, 1907

Published in *The North American*,
Philadelphia, Sunday, July 14, 1907
(published in the Boston edition of
The North American, Monday, July 15, 1907)

Last Monday afternoon the Rev. Mary Baker G. Eddy, discoverer and founder of Christian Science, extended the hospitality of her home, in Concord, N.H., to Leigh Mitchell Hodges, of *The North American*, and in a personal interview discussed freely the attempts now being made to discredit her mental ability to handle her private affairs.



Extension of The Mother Church during construction
in February 1906

FIRST SECTION

THE NORTH AMERICAN

FIRST SECTION

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North American Interviews Mrs. Eddy; Tho' 86, Shows Vigor of Woman of 70.

MRS. EDDY, 86, LOOKS 75, ASSERTS SHE IS MISTRESS OF HOME

Leigh Mitchell Hodges Interviews Christian Science Healer

had vouchsafed her any bodily hesitations whatever.

All things considered, she is extremely well preserved, and the casual observer would scarcely think her over 70.

When she rose from the great easy chair at her desk as Albert Miller and myself entered her study, which overlooks the beautiful valley of the Merrimac, there was no sign of unusual effort. The outstretched hand which reciprocated my grasp, while thin and somewhat transparent and tremulous, was warm to the touch, betokening a nearly normal flow of the vital fluid which age so often stagnates.

The steady eyes which returned my blue and in quiescence shorn of the sparkle that presently responded to a tenser mood — are deep sunk in a somewhat angular, rather small face, whose nose is its major emblem of strength, though none of the features is lacking in force or distinction.

ceded to black tracery. On one of her hands a group of small brilliants proclaimed a choice of old-time workmanship.

"I find support in the Word of God," she said, quoting the fifth and sixth verses of the Thirty-seventh Psalm.

"Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass. And He shall bring forth thy judgment as the noonday." Hence, I place my guidance wholly in the hands of God. Truth, who has thus far led me into the ways that were best for the cause in which I have labored, and to which my life is given," she continued, speaking rapidly, but most distinctly, and without the least semblance of strain on the part of either of her two listeners, who comprised her whole audience.

I could not but recall at this moment some of the wonderful prophecies gratuitously presented me by sundry persons previously to my arrival in Concord.

"Fermentation that the yeast the the dough for bread that will nourish, and this is only a fermentation under the waters which will bring the impurities to the surface and slough them off, leaving the remainder clearer and purer than before."

Talks of Her Son.

"They say I am not able to take care of my affairs," she went on. "My eyes were sparkling now and her voice trembled just a little. She drew the fingers of her right hand into a knot of determination and brought them down resolutely on the arm of the chair."

"My son, whom I took care of for many years, now wants to take care of himself. He is suddenly impressed with my incapacity for managing my business. It might not appear from his present condition that he himself has any surplus of ability in this line."

There was a proud little shake of the head, "but I must not say more."

Finally, as you know, it came out with these without the church she founded closer to Mrs. Eddy than any one else.

A passing twinkle, but no cessation of the uttered thought, which tripped forth as nimbly as from the lips of a child.

Reset by Treachery.

"Newspapers should be edited with the same reverence for Truth, God, as is observed in the administration of the most serious affairs of life."

"I am bent by ingratitude and treachery," she said, "but the will must be separated from the good, so it can be changed off. New gentlemen, that is, unless you have some questions to ask."

She rose as we did, and shook hands cordially. "It has been a pleasure to see you," she said, "but I must not say more."

which naturally have an interest for him on every side in the house. He in these without the church she founded closer to Mrs. Eddy than any one else.

Her whole manner was practical force, sounded by that electric bell.

There was nothing in it. When she returns from her drive, to make me feel I had been admitted to which usually lasts about half an hour, an inner shrine; on the contrary, the free she sits for a while in a large armchair in the library on the first floor of the nature of "just dropping in to talk a little."

And in so far as I am able to play the close communication with the members of the church, you have of her household she has had another plainly furnished study of the most famous woman in the world today.

A woman, tall physically, yet scarcely in accordance with her years, and intellectually robust, apparently in full possession and control of her mental faculties. A woman whose appearance in no degree suggests the supernatural or ethereal. A woman whose appearance in no degree suggests the supernatural or ethereal. A woman whose appearance in no degree suggests the supernatural or ethereal.

Hodges article on Mrs. Eddy in *The North American* [Philadelphia], July 14, 1907

Mr. Hodges is not a Christian Scientist. He has never been prejudiced either in favor of or against Mrs. Eddy, her claims and doctrines. His mission was not the discussion of dogma, but to ascertain, as nearly as possible, the actual state of Mrs. Eddy's physical and mental condition and the nature of her surroundings in that home which has, for some years, been shrouded in a mystery almost as impenetrable as that veiling the noted mistress thereof.

He had every opportunity to do this. No attempt was made to influence him in any way. The following narrative of his visit to 'Pleasant View' may, therefore, be accepted as a fair and impartial estimate of this remarkable woman and her domestic realm.

Day after tomorrow Mary Baker G. Eddy will be 86 years old. Mentally and physically she is remarkable. Almost without exception she seems more alert in mind and vigorous in body than any woman of her age with whom I ever came in contact. ...

When she rose from the great easy chair at her desk as Albert Miller and myself entered her study, which overlooks the beautiful valley of the Merrimac, there was no sign of unusual effort. The outstretched hand which reciprocated my grasp, while thin and somewhat transparent and tremulous, was warm to the touch, betokening a nearly normal flow of the vital fluid which age so often stagnates.

The steady eyes which returned my gaze — dim blue and in quiescence shorn of the sparkle that presently responded to a tenser mood — are deep sunk in a somewhat angular, rather small face, whose nose is its major emblem of strength, though none of the features is lacking in force or distinction.

Mrs. Eddy's Face

Enthroned above the thoughtful forehead, and falling in soft curly ripples to brush the temples and half frame the face, is an uncommonly generous mass of snow-white hair, in which is worn a comb of tortoise shell.

By comparison, the slightly-drawn cheeks are warm in tint, and the faintest tinge of pink shows upon, rather than through them. Her thin lips bespeak immense firmness and perseverance before they part to reveal with what skill man may supplant the work of nature, and to form well-chosen words, which are given birth in a high-pitched, spare voice.

A small but resolute and exquisitely chiseled chin completes the oval countenance, which admits a momentary and rather formal smile by way of greeting, then assumes a seriousness of expression which will yet deepen as she deals with certain subjects. On the whole, it seemed to me more sagacious than spiritual.

With ease-breeding informality she called attention to chairs close by, herself standing until we were well-nigh seated, then resuming her seat, and in response to an expression of gratitude for the interview, saying briskly:

"Oh, I always try to be kind, but when matters take such a turn as at present it is not easy to exercise the virtue as we should."

Finds Support in Bible

There was a barely noticeable tone of resentment in her voice and her look. As she sat forward, quite erect, the crown of flawless diamonds at her throat glowed and sparkled gloriously, while the cross of similar stones worn on her bosom was agleam with many colors. These were the only jewels that adorned the plainly fashioned waist of rich white satin brocaded in black tracery. On one of her hands, a group of small brilliants proclaimed a circlet of old-time workmanship.

"I find support in the Word of God," she said, quoting the fifth and sixth verses of the Thirty-seventh Psalm:

"Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass. And He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgement as the noonday."

"Hence, I place my guidance wholly in the hands of God, Truth, who has thus far led me into the ways that were best for the cause in which I have labored, and to which my life is given," she continued, speaking rapidly, but most distinctly, and without the least semblance of urging on the part of either of her two listeners, who comprised her whole audience.

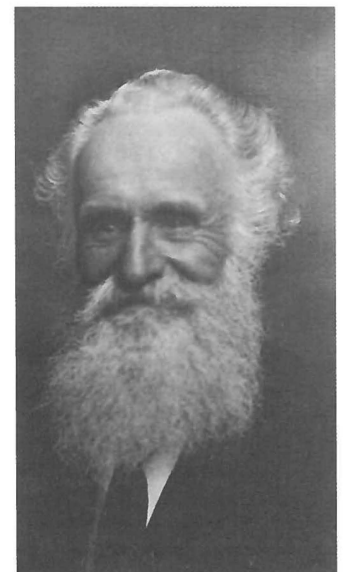
I could not but recall at this moment some of the wonderful prophecies gratuitously presented me by sundry persons previously to my arrival in Concord.

"You will never see Mrs. Eddy," one had said.

I was looking into her face as she talked, and I had made a close enough study of earlier and valid pictures to feel sure this



Leigh Mitchell Hodges



George Glover II

face was their burden, changed only as Time changes all of us. ...

She was talking as freely and unrestrainedly as might some old friend, and her manner was devoid of any pretense of authority. There was nothing the least mystical about her, and she made not the slightest effort to create an impression of superiority or special knowledge. ...

"What do you feel will be the result of the present controversy?" I repeated, referring to the suit brought against her by her son, George W. Glover, who claims she is not mentally able to resist the alleged efforts of certain of her confidential companions to run her personal affairs. I lifted my voice sharply, and there was no hesitation in the reply to my question.

"Why, good must come of it, of course. Hard as it is to bear, it cannot but cause the truth to stand out more clearly in the end. It is not so much a personal attack on me as a conspiracy against Christian Science. But we have undergone much, and we may yet have to undergo other trials.

"You know, however, it is only through fermentation that the yeast fits the dough for bread that will nourish, and this is only a fermentation under the waters, which will bring the impurities to the surface and slough them off, leaving the residuum clearer and purer than before."

Talks of Her Son

"They say I am not able to take care of my affairs," she went on.

Her eyes were sparkling now and her voice trembled just a little. She drew the fingers of her right hand into a knot of determination and brought them down resolutely on the arm of the chair.

"My son, whom I took care of for many years, now wants to take care of me, because he is suddenly impressed with my incapacity for managing my business. It might not appear from his present condition that he himself has any surplus of ability in this line."

There was a proud little shake of the head by way of emphasizing this statement shaded with sarcasm; there was a graceful sweep of the right arm as she followed it, spiritedly, with:

"Ask any of those who here surround me whether or not I am the active head of this house. From roof to cellar I am mistress. I supervise everything that goes on within these walls. Outside them, on the place, everything is deferred to my decision. Ask any one who is in a position to know about this!"

Mrs. Eddy herself had answered this question to my full satisfaction by her very manner and speech, though I later saw many additional proofs. The vigor with which she endowed her words and the expression that accompanied them evidenced not only the possibility, but the extreme probability of her being this very thing.

Who thinks she is not the captain of her ship should have been there to see her at that moment.

Ignorant of Law

"When it comes to the law, I am an ignoramus," she continued, "but I cannot see how just laws can admit of such proceedings as those now waged against me."

"Who, pray, is not an ignoramus before the law?" I suggested.

"Who, indeed!" she replied, instantly catching the spirit of the quip, and coming nearer to a laugh than at any time during the interview.

Then she spoke of the press in general, and of one newspaper in particular. You must remember that few newspaper men ever get beyond the front door at 'Pleasant View.'

"I am at a loss to know why some papers have treated me as they have. There's the *New York World*. Years ago it came to me for information concerning my work, and in good faith I gave it what was asked. I had no ill-feeling against newspapers. I had been an editor myself. And when I edited our periodical I ran it on the same principles which I applied to my religious work. At

times, after I gave up that part of the work, I had difficulty getting the right persons to carry it on. I have them now, however.

"But I was speaking of the *World*. Suddenly, without any cause within my knowledge, it turned against me and spread many incorrect reports about me. Finally, as you know, it came out with the news that I was dead. I don't look it, do I?"

A passing twinkle, but no cessation of the uttered thoughts, which tripped forth as nimbly as from the lips of a child.

Beset by Treachery

"Newspapers should be edited with the same reverence for Truth, God, as is observed in the administration of the most serious affairs of life."

Her mind reverted once more to the lawsuit.

"I am beset by ingratitude and treachery," she said, "but the evil must be separated from the good, so it can be sloughed off. Now, gentlemen, that is all, unless you have some questions to ask."

She rose as we did, and shook hands cordially.

"It has been a pleasure to see you," she said, "but I must not neglect my work longer." ...

If Mrs. Eddy is being manipulated by her staff, the task is certainly pursued in a needlessly strenuous manner. But it became very evident to me that the person who manipulates Mrs. Eddy is Mrs. Eddy. I am no alienist [a psychiatrist who specializes in the legal aspects of mental competence], yet it would be difficult to alienate me from certain opinions I formed during my interview with her and my stay at her home.

I had not gone there to talk with her as the head of a great spiritual movement; to discuss any of its doctrines or declarations. Christian Science has taken its place among the active religious forces of the age in which we live, and from a single sponsor its beliefs have spread to millions. It can only be judged or criticised in like manner as any other form of religion.

Not once in our conversation did Mrs. Eddy touch upon any tenet of her belief. Her whole thought was devoted to certain material aspects of her present condition, which naturally have an interest for those without the church she founded as well as those within.

Her whole manner was practical, forceful, unaffected. There was nothing in it to make me feel I had been admitted to an inner shrine; on the contrary, the freedom and informality made it partake of the nature of "just dropping in to talk it over."

And in so far as I am able to play the camera and the phonograph, you have seen and heard exactly what I saw and heard during the time I spent in the plainly furnished study of the most famous woman in the world today.

A woman frail physically, yet scarcely in accordance with her years, and intellectually robust, apparently in full possession



Mrs. Eddy in her carriage at Pleasant View with secretary Calvin Frye on the box



REV. MARY BAKER G. EDDY.

Mrs. Eddy's home, Pleasant View [top left]; her study [bottom]; and a newspaper rendering of her from the March 4, 1898 Concord [N.H.] *Daily Patriot*

and control of her mental faculties. A woman whose appearance in no sense suggests the supernatural or ethereal, save as Time, robbing us of our ruddiness and rotundity, always invests us with a certain measure of the latter. ...

A woman who impresses one as thoroughly practical and eminently capable of managing her own affairs. Her work is largely literary. It is said by those close to her that she seldom allows a day to pass without making some revision, usually a slight one, as a mere change in words, in her book, "Science and Health," through which chiefly her religion has been spread. The average output of this book is now 1000 copies a week, and every two or three weeks a new edition is run off the presses, containing the last correction or change from the pen of the author.

Mrs. Eddy is said to arise at 6 every morning. After a light breakfast, which she eats in her room, she goes over such of her enormous mail as her correspondence secretary deems it necessary or important she should see. It would be a physical impossibility for her to read all the letters that come. There are communications on nearly every subject under heaven from every part of the civilized world.

She insists upon answering from ten to a dozen of these letters each day in her own handwriting, and often the answers consist of three or four pages, written in a characteristic and rather bold hand, which sometimes discloses a trembling pen, as may be seen from the signature herewith reproduced, which she wrote for me the day of my visit.

Then there are occasional communications to be written for the official journal of the Christian Science organization and more letters to be dictated. At mid-day she eats sparingly, but with relish, of her dinner, and immediately thereafter goes for her famous daily drive. ...

... Often she will send for her cook, and make inquiries as to the bill of fare for the next meal, and very often these conferences result in a change of menu.

She keeps close track of the march of events within her four walls, and very little escapes her vigilance. By 9 at night she is in bed, and they say she always sleeps well. She looks as if she did.

Now I want to take you around 'Pleasant View,' her estate on the edge of Concord. Next to her book, it is the most famous thing with which her name is connected ...

As for the natural surroundings of the house, surely nothing could be more fair. The prospect is one such as the mind will recall in days to come, when the spirit is weary and needs refreshment. The home itself, a spacious old farm house remodeled, is set back a hundred feet from the road, and there is a porte-cochere in front. ...

Around the house, which is of frame and painted light green with white trimmings, spreads a truly velvety lawn of many acres. It slopes gently down to fields of waving grain in the rear and a little lake, by which stands a dainty boathouse. All told, 'Pleasant View' comprises perhaps eighty acres of well-nigh perfect land.

On every hand are flower beds. Some of them are in set forms and others are just the old-fashioned sort, with a medley of simple blooms. To the left of the walk that leads from the granite archway to the front porch is a huge cross of white and purple flowers. The air is filled with the perfume of the blossoms, and the birds are a great chorus of song to the peaceful symposium. A fountain is playing in the sunlight.

From the back porch the view is inspiring. Through orchards and across green meadows and yellowing fields the vision sweeps with the freedom of an eagle's flight. For miles and miles in three directions the gentle hillsides slope down to the banks of the Merrimac, the busiest river in the world, which turns more than half the spindles of New England in its journey to the sea.

Way over yonder, across the valley and up among the hills, you catch sight of a few roofs, and a tiny spiral of smoke that

swings peacefully skyward signals the spot near which Mrs. Eddy was born, in the village of Bow.

From the windows of her study this remarkable woman can look across the emerald floor, as if turning her gaze back over the years that are gone, and see the place where she romped and frolicked as a child.

So the house is well named, though I should have been tempted to call it 'Glorious View.' ...



Dr. Hamilton



General Frank Streeter

Allan McLane Hamilton

Allan McLane Hamilton was the grandson of Alexander Hamilton and was born on October 6, 1848. He graduated from the medical department of Columbia College, New York. Dr. Hamilton specialized in neurology and mental disease. He was employed by the United States in the case of President McKinley's assassin, Leon Czolgosz. Dr. Hamilton was often called upon as an arbiter in legal disputes between other experts and as an *amicus curiae* (friend of the court) to many judges in New York City. He served as a consulting physician in the Manhattan State Hospital for the Insane and as a professor of clinical psychiatry at Cornell University. He was a member of the American Neurological Association, founder and first president of the Psychiatric Society and a Fellow of the Royal Society at Edinburgh.⁸

Examination of Mrs. Eddy at Pleasant View Monday, August 12, 1907, 2 p.m.

In the summer of 1907 I [Dr. Hamilton] was sent for by General Frank Streeter,⁹ a well-known lawyer of Concord, New Hampshire, who was the counsel for Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy, the head of the Christian Science Church. ... It was only when I met General Streeter in Boston that I learned for the first time why he wanted me. I was secretly to examine Mrs. Eddy as to her sanity, and subsequently to testify in her behalf if I could do so conscientiously. ...

When I met General Streeter I said, "Perhaps you do not know that I appeared recently in the Brush case and attacked Christian Science?" to which he replied, "Yes, we know all that, and have also read your testimony from beginning to end, and your article in the *New York Evening Post*, but it was your fairness that has influenced us in retaining you." This was a gratifying statement of a critical and discriminating man, and his confidence upon this occasion was the ground for a deep and long-existing friendship.¹⁰

My visit to her house was made on the afternoon of August 12, [1907] at two o'clock. I found her to be an elderly woman of delicate frame, and evidently somewhat affected by the heat. There was, however, no visible indication of any motor symptoms of insanity or nervous disease. Her expression was intelligent and in consonance with what she said and did. She was dignified, though cordial, and possessed a certain sense of humor which led her to perpetrate a joke about the so-called "next friends," to whom she referred as "nexters." There was no tremor, no affectation of speech — I found nothing the matter with her. She fully understood the nature and object of my visit, and was willing to answer my questions. In doing so she did not manifest any excess of feeling, but responded quickly and intelligently in every instance.

The interview was opened by her disavowal of any prejudice against physicians. In fact she said that her cousin was a regular doctor who had become a homeopath ...

She referred to the fact that she had done and was performing an enormous amount of work, which I knew to be true. She said that she had no doubt that she was going to win in this matter ...

She stated that she had taken care of her son, built him a house and furnished it from top to bottom, and had done everything for him ...

From my knowledge of the case and a careful study of all the letters and documents submitted to me, and from my examination of Mrs. Eddy, I am firmly of the opinion that she is competent to take care of herself and manage her affairs, and that she is not coerced in any way. In fact it would appear as if she takes the initiative upon all occasions. The allegations concerning Mrs. Eddy's belief in "malicious animal magnetism" are ridiculous.¹¹ ... She has been subject to sufficient annoyance to entertain the fear that she is to be subjected to further disturbance. False reports that she was dead are among these ...

Throughout the entire conversation she showed no evidence whatever of any mental disease. She did not manifest any delusions, which she probably would have done had she been a paranoiac, as it has been asserted she was, nor did she once refer to malicious animal magnetism, which I understand was alleged to be an evidence of her state of mind. In person she was neat and clean, I am informed is most careful about the condition of her house, quickly noting any changes that may be made in the arrangement of furniture, books, or decoration; that she gives her own orders, manages her own servants, and suggests the selection of food. ... She pays her own bills ... takes an intelligent interest in the affairs of her native town and the events of the day.

Before leaving, she sent for a copy of her book, "Science and Health," and inscribed her autograph ...¹²

For a woman of her age I do not hesitate to say that she is physically and mentally phenomenal.¹³



The house that Mrs. Eddy had built as a Christmas gift in 1899 for her son and his family in Lead, South Dakota

Chronology: Next Friends Suit

1906

- June 10** Dedication of the extension edifice to The Mother Church.
- Oct. 15** *New York World* reporters have interview with Mary Baker Eddy.
- Oct. 28** Sensational *New York World* article about Mrs. Eddy is published.
- Oct. 30** Mrs. Eddy is interviewed by 12 reporters in her library at Pleasant View.
- Nov.** Mrs. Eddy's son, George W. Glover, II, is sought out by the *New York World* to bring legal action against his mother.
- Dec.** First of Georgine Milmine's and Willa Cather's hostile articles on Mrs. Eddy's life history begin appearing in *McClure's Magazine*.

1907

- Feb.** Mrs. Eddy considers trusteeship for property.
Mark Twain's book *Christian Science* is published (with Twain's typical cynical approach).
- Mar. 1** Next friends suit is initiated by William Chandler with support from Joseph Pulitzer of the *New York World*.
- Mar. 6** Mrs. Eddy appoints trustees to manage her property.
- May 16** Mrs. Eddy writes letter to Judge Robert N. Chamberlin, Superior Court, Concord, New Hampshire, to express her feelings about the lawsuit.
- June 8** Arthur Brisbane of *The Cosmopolitan Magazine* has an interview with Mrs. Eddy at Pleasant View.
- June 15** Edwin J. Park of *The Boston Globe* has an interview with Mrs. Eddy at Pleasant View.
- July 8** Leigh Mitchell Hodges of *The North American*, Philadelphia, has an interview with Mrs. Eddy at Pleasant View.
- July 10** Dr. Edward French, a psychiatrist, has an interview with Mrs. Eddy at Pleasant View.
- July 17** William E. Curtis of the *Chicago Record-Herald* has an interview with Mrs. Eddy at Pleasant View.
- Aug. 12** Dr. Allan McLane Hamilton, a psychiatrist specializing in neurology and mental disease, has an interview with Mrs. Eddy.
- Aug. 14** Court appointed Masters (Judge Edgar Aldrich, Hosea W. Parker and Dr. George F. Jelly) interview Mrs. Eddy at Pleasant View.
- Aug. 21** Next friends suit collapses without coming to any finding, leaving open the possibility of reopening the suit at some future time during Mrs. Eddy's lifetime.
- Aug. 25** *New York Times* publishes Dr. Allan McLane Hamilton's remarks regarding his August 12th interview with Mrs. Eddy.

1. What is interesting about this claim is that it had been made regularly since the 1880's and that, ultimately, she would outlive many who made these claims. She did, however, feel it necessary to contradict these claims in a letter she wrote to the *Boston Herald* on October 19, 1906 (published in the paper the following day), "To the Editor of The Boston Herald, Dear Sir:—Another report that I am dead is widely circulated. I am in usual good health, and go out in my carriage every day. Truly yours, Mary Baker G. Eddy"
2. H.K. Carroll, *The Religious Forces of the United States Enumerated, Classified, and Described; Returns for 1900 and 1910 Compared with the Government Census of 1890; Condition and Characteristics of Christianity in the United States* (New York, 1912), pp. xiv & 98 and Gaustad, Edwin Scott, *Historical Atlas of Religion in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), pp. 134–136.
3. *London Times*, May 26, 1885.
4. "Christian Science," *Methodist Review*, LXXXVIII (Sept.–Oct. 1906), p. 826.
5. The most complete chronicle of the next friends suit is found in Michael Meehan's *Mrs. Eddy and the Late Suit in Equity* (Concord, NH: Privately Printed, 1908). Additionally helpful background regarding the next friends suit can be explored in the following sources: Peel, Robert, *Mary Baker Eddy: The Years of Authority* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1977), pp. 260–291; Beasley, Norman, *The Cross and The Crown: The History of Christian Science* (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1952), pp. 416–470; Powell, Lyman P., *Mary Baker Eddy: A Life Size Portrait* (Boston: The Christian Science Publishing Society, 1991), pp. 214–226. Perhaps the most important source of information about the suit apart from newspaper accounts, is contained in the papers of William Chandler at the New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, New Hampshire. The Chandler papers detail the deeper and often hidden motivations of the various parties that brought this legal action.
6. *Who's Who in America: Vol. 3, 1951–1960* (Chicago: Marquis, 1963), p. 406 and "Leigh M. Hodges, Columnist, Dies," *The New York Times*, Monday, April 5, 1954.
7. Albert E. Miller, C.S.B., of Philadelphia, later of Boston. Mr. Miller became a member of The Mother Church on July 3, 1897 and first advertised as a Christian Science practitioner or healer in the December 1899 issue of *The Christian Science Journal*. Upon Mrs. Eddy's recommendation, Mr. Miller was elected an Executive Member of The Mother Church on September 3, 1903 and went through the normal class in The Christian Science Board of Education that same year.
8. Meehan, *Mary Baker Eddy and the Late Suit in Equity*, pp. 367–368.
9. Frank Sherwin Streeter was born on August 5, 1853, in East Charleston, Vermont. He graduated from Dartmouth College in 1874 and was admitted to the New Hampshire bar in 1877. He served as counsel for the Boston & Maine Railroad. Mr. Streeter was a trustee of Dartmouth College and a member of the American Historical Association, New Hampshire Historical Society and the American Bar Association. He was a Unitarian by religious belief. (Michael Meehan, *Mrs. Eddy and the Late Suit in Equity*, p. 333.)
10. Allan McLane Hamilton, *Recollections of an Alienist: Personal and Professional* (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1916), pp. 310–311.
11. Dr. Hamilton noted, in his 1916 book *Recollections of an Alienist* (pp. 314–315): "It had been alleged in court that she believed in what was called 'Malicious Animal Magnetism' and that this was of course an insane delusion. When this was gone into I found that all she meant was that when a person really hated or even disliked another it was possible, by keeping up a hostile attitude, to do some harm to the victim, either passively or actively by word or deed; so there was nothing very extraordinary about all this."
12. Meehan, *Mrs. Eddy and the Late Suit in Equity*, pp. 236–240. Several weeks later, after returning to New York City, Dr. Hamilton gave a statement to the *New York Times* as to his view of Mrs. Eddy in which he noted: "I must confess that I approached this conference with Mrs. Eddy in a decidedly prejudiced state of mind. I had read the current abuse of her that one finds in the magazines and newspapers, and from this reading had become imbued with a distinctly adverse feeling toward Christian Science and its chief exponent. But when I saw and talked with the latter, and read and analyzed her correspondence, I experienced a complete revulsion of feeling, and this to such an extent that I now become candidly of the opinion that Mrs. Eddy is not only sincere in all she says and does, but I believe also, that she unselfishly spends her money for the perpetuation of a church which, in her estimation, is destined to play an important part in the betterment of humanity ..." (*Ibid.*, pp. 244–245.)
13. Meehan, *Mrs. Eddy and the Late Suit in Equity*, p. 245.

Quarterly News Correction:

Since the publishing of *Quarterly News* Vol. 30, Nos. 3 & 4, 1993, "Christ and Christmas: 'Song and Object Lesson'" it has been found that an adjustment should be noted in the information on page 471 regarding significant changes in the book's illustrations "Truth Versus Error" and "The Way." Although, as the article states, the first full edition to feature the changes was the Fourth Edition (1898), **some** copies of the Third Edition, revised (1897), **do** contain the revised illustrations. We apologize for this oversight.

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