

Pioneer of the Month

Mrs. Cora L.V. Hatch

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This profile of Mrs. Cora L. V. Hatch (1840-1923), comes from the 17 July 1858 issue of Banner of Light, page 8, and was written by Dr. Asaph Bemis Child. It's a long profile, so I have abridged it here.

—Sharon DeBartolo Carmack, MFA, DSNU

Mrs. Cora L. V. Hatch

Mrs. Hatch was born in April 1840 in Cuba, a small town in the interior of New York State.[1] Her mother, Mrs. L. Scott, possesses medium powers large and well developed, in character similar to those of her daughter, but more developed, perhaps, by her superior age, and consequently more of the impressive character. She has a strong intellectual and spiritual nature, comprehensive in her perception, and poetic in her taste, was always very intuitive.

Her father [a blacksmith] was a man of strong mind, a powerful will, and endowed with a large share of good, common sense. He was eccentric, for he was independent in action—followed his own dictates—did things his own way, though his way was generally different from everybody else.

When almost ten years old, Mrs. H., with a slate and pencil, retired alone to the arbor in her father's garden to write a composition, which was required by her teacher. She awoke, as she supposed from a sleep, and found her slate written all over. The last she remembered was seating herself in the arbor, and growing sleepy. Being surprised at what was written on her slate, which she supposed someone to have done while she was asleep, she carried it immediately for her mother to read. On perusal, her mother found the communication to be addressed to herself, from a sister who had been in the spirit world some years. A short time previous to the waking up of Mrs. H., a little sister, four years old [Emma], ran to her mother and said, "Mother, Cora is in the arbor writing her slate all over." No person except this little child who could neither read or write, was in the arbor during the time Mrs. H. was in the arbor.

[1] She was born 21 April 1840, Cuba, Allegany County, New York, to parents David W. Scott and Lodensy Veronica Butterfield. FindAGrave.com, Memorial #57864287, Graceland Cemetery, Chicago, Cook Co., Illinois; 1850 U.S. federal census, New York, Allegany Co., Cuba, p. 241b; posted family tree by Marc Demarest of Cora Lodencia Veronica Scott, all on Ancestry.com. Cora was married four times, so her name changed with each marriage: Benjamin Franklin Hatch, Nathan W. Daniels, Samuel Forster Tappan, and William Richmond. She died at age 82 on 3 Jan. 1923, in Chicago.



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The [??] manifestation was considered the first [??] of her medium development.[2] Immediately after this, Mrs. H. was developed an unconscious [??] medium....

Mrs. Hatch's education may be summed up and measured in the very limited amount of knowledge ... acquired by a little girl of ten years in a common country setting. Her scholarship, during this period, was neither dull or extraordinary brilliant, but might be called good. She studied only the branches usually taught children of her age, viz.: spelling reading, writing, and in but a slight degree had knowledge of the simple elements of arithmetic, philosophy, and astronomy. Grammar and rhetoric she never studied.

From Mrs. H.'s first entrancement to the present time, she has heeded and followed the direction of her spirit guides. During the first year of her mediumship, she was frequently entranced; and though so young—not having arrived at the “full years of discretion,”—spirits spoke through her with fluency, correctness, and beauty, and, for many months, Mrs. Hatch herself did not believe what her friends told her of being entranced, and communicating to them holy thoughts, in classical language, through her own lips.

About the age of eleven—one year subsequent to her first entrancement—she was controlled by the spirit of a celebrated German physician, who prescribed for disease of various kinds through her when entranced; the result of which was many very extraordinary and astonishing cures of diseases considered incurable. For two years, her time was devoted as a medium for prescriptions, given by this physician, and the impartation of magnetism, which relieved a vast amount of pain and suffering. She had never given the subject of medicine a moment's study; yet, what was given through her, purporting to come from this spirit, evinced a thorough and profound knowledge of all the branches of medical science—being equally familiar with anatomy, physiology, and pathology in its unnumbered phases. Communications on these subjects were tested by the most scientific, and found faultless. And knowledge given through her, even reached beyond the records of science, and presented facts hitherto unknown to medical men.

What an extraordinary test is here of the manifestation of spirit-intelligence! A young girl, at the age of eleven years, making the diagnosis, the prognosis, and indicating the proper remedial agents for every disease presented, with a knowledge even superior to the practitioner, who has spent almost a life-time, with all the advantages of science and experience brought to his aid in studying and curing disease! The philosophy of our schools and colleges cannot account for this. *Spiritualism alone can....*

[2] The digital copy of the *Banner of Light* with Cora's profile is extremely faint and impossible to read in some parts.

This phase of her mediumship continued about three years in the whole of which time the organism of the delicately-formed child was subservient to an intelligence and power, which through her wrought many important cures, some of which [were] miraculous.

At the age of fourteen, she became a public speaker, manifesting extraordinary powers of elocution and logic—superior, even to the most finished scholar....

From the age of fourteen Mrs. H. has lectured constantly—averaging from that to the present time about three lectures each week—making in all for the past four years nearly six hundred lectures—no two of which are alike or similar. This precludes the possibility of preparing, or compiling and committing to memory, as many accuse her of doing.... When spirit-influence is fully upon her, her whole being is enlivened and vivified—is lit up with the light and love of heaven.

At the age of sixteen, Mrs. H., married to B. F. Hatch, M.D. [1817-1907],[3] a gentleman possessing a mind of a different mould from her own. His strong will and determined purpose and powers of mind, acting with her passive and feminine mildness, are doubtless well calculated to bring out and present her medium excellences in a way to effect the greatest amount of good for the people.

The spirits, through Mrs. Hatch, stand before a public audience of from five hundred to five thousand people, and call for the audience to select any subject for a lecture and challenge any questions for answer; and their success on all occasions has been uniformly triumphant....

In delivering her public lectures, Mrs. H. is perfectly unconscious at the time, and after, of anything spoken through her lips. She has evidence that her spirit, during these trances, is free to, and does, roam at its own pleasure, to visit her friends, in both the material and spiritual world.

[3] See Marc Demarest, "The Devil On All Sides of the Matter: Some Notes on Cora Hatch's Divorce," 8 Sept. 2015, <http://ehbritten.blogspot.com/2015/09/the-devil-on-all-sides-of-matter-some.html>, for a disturbing account of their marriage.



Cora wrote the following books, all available online for free:

- *The Soul: Its Nature, Relations, and Expressions in Human Embodiments* (1887)
- *Psychosophy* (1890, 1915)
- *Abraham Lincoln* (1910)
- *My Experiences While Out Of My Body* (1915)