

## I will explain about the "heavy religious messages"

One of the good things about the latest find of material has been the addition of information about later generations of the Chew family. The boxes we are in the process of adding contain materials related to the children of Samuel Chew (d. 1887). In addition to all of the office files that document the management of the family's estates and property, there are personal letters from Elizabeth B. Chew, Anne S.P. (Chew) Alston, Oswald Chew, Samuel Chew Jr. and others. In one envelope, there were a series of "messages" that looked like correspondence. I put them into the batch to be processed with Samuel Chew Jr.'s papers.

Last week, I was looking through the collection folders to try to find the original deed of gift, and I came across a bunch of inventories that proved to be very informative. In one of these inventories, there was a note about a group of messages from Samuel Chew Jr. that were written through the aid of a medium. When I asked Willhem if he had run across them, he said "Oh, *that's* what those were!" He had put them aside to see if they made sense in the context of the rest of Samuel's materials.

In a series of messages from 1920-1924, the Chew siblings attempted to contact their deceased brother Samuel Chew Jr. through a medium named Mrs. Duane. There are eight total communications, some of which read as sermons; others are more like question and answer sessions. In the first message, Samuel Chew addresses his friend John Ingram.

"Well, old man, here I am in the world of spirits + quite alive + able to sit up + take notice, + believe me, dear John, there is something to see. I am not very high up in heaven being, as you know, quite an old sinner on earth, but still I am not in the very lowest place as I had a few virtues, among them that of *Loving* not wisely but too well." He goes on to talk about his regrets and all of the things he has learned since his passage to the world of spirits. He also conveys pithy advice to his friend: "...use all the rest of your earth life for the good of mankind, forget yourself, your feelings, your loves, your hates in universal service for that is the only thing that *Counts* over here." (May 20, 1920)

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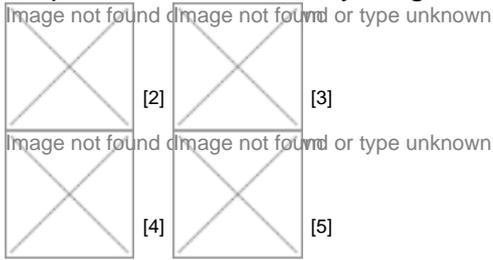


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In a later (undated) message, Samuel speaks directly to Oswald (who transmits the message to his sister Anne in the form of a letter). The messages have a pretty weighty tone to them, infused with the humor that Samuel Chew exhibited in his letters while he was alive.

The message to Oswald reads as instruction: "Oswald, old man, buck up about everything. I am the most alive of all of you, though so very well buried....You are really the pick of our bunch, though you thought I was. You are still young, as the world goes for a man, and I am proud of you, especially your war work. Now is your chance however to carry on, for never in the history of the world was there such a need of men. You have a lot more in you than you know and I am going to help bring it out.... I am ashamed that our generation of Chews should go down so unhonored, when the world needs us so much, and having made rather a mess of it myself, I am all the more anxious to see you make good....go slow, be sure where you go, and go straight."

Oswald closes the letter to Anne by saying that he read the message to their mother, who seemed glad to have seen it, but didn't believe in such things. He also notes that he will "explain about the heavy religious messages."

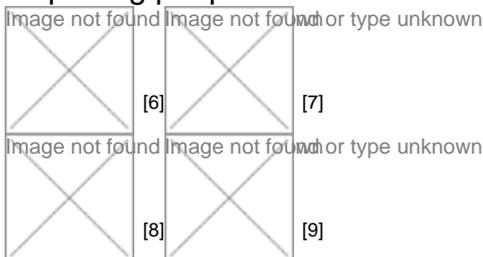


All of the messages attempt to relay to their recipients how important it is for them to do good things on earth, and explaining the way of things in the spirit world. In the third or fourth message, dated June 13, 1922, Samuel speaks once again to his brother Oswald. He gets deeper into explanations about "life everlasting, as we call it here...."

"It did not take me long to see I had made a lot of mistakes + no end of a mess of things on earth. I cannot very well go into details, but I want to say this, --that no one who does anything they know is wrong gets away with it here. One pays always.

Well, in some ways being a decent sort, I was not obliged to herd with the greatest sinners, but they were not as picked a group as the Philadelphia Club thinks it is. By the way, that is no criterion over here. Nothing counts but character--what you are....

I woke up here to my real self, I was a little upset + my first idea was 'Help me to keep others from these pitfalls,' + that saved me. The desire to save others literally saved my life from depths I don't like to think about. So they keep me busy + I am right on the job. Day after day I help bring people out of Hell."



These messages are really interesting examples of spiritualism in the United States, and show a more personal side of the children of Samuel Chew.

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### Links

[1] <https://hsp.org/sites/default/files/images/spiritltr001.jpg>

[2] <https://hsp.org/sites/default/files/images/spiritltr002.jpg>

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