

Of Mice and Mourners

The Survival Files — Case 29 — ESS = 158.7

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The term “OBE” had not been coined when this text was published in 1859, so the experience is described as a dream. Whatever its appellation, it remains astonishing.

“In the winter of 1835-36, a schooner was frozen up in the upper part of the Bay of Fundy, close to Dorchester, which is nine miles from the river Pedeudiac. [*eds. note:* This is on the east coast of New Brunswick, Canada.] During the time of her detention she was intrusted to the care of a gentleman of the name of Clarke, who is at this time captain of the schooner Julia Hallock, trading between New York and St. Jago de Cuba.

“Captain Clarke's paternal grandmother, Mrs. Ann Dawe Clarke, to whom he was much attached, was at that time living, and, so far as he knew, well. She was residing at Lyme-Regis, in the county of Dorset, England.

“On the night of the 17th of February, 1836, Captain Clarke, then on board the schooner referred to, had a dream of so vivid a character that it produced a great impression upon him. He dreamed that, being at Lyme Regis, he saw pass before him the funeral of his grandmother. He took note of the chief persons who composed the procession, observed who were the pall-bearers, who were the mourners, and in what order they walked, and distinguished who was the officiating pastor. He joined the procession as it approached the churchyard gate, and proceeded with it to the grave. He thought (in his dream) that the weather was stormy, and the ground wet, as after a heavy rain; and he noticed that the wind, being high, blew the pall partly off the coffin. The graveyard which they entered, the old Protestant one, in the center of the town, was the same in which, as Captain Clarke knew, their family burying-place was. He perfectly remembered its situation; but, to his surprise, the funeral procession did not proceed thither, but to another part of the churchyard, at some distance. There (still in his dream) he saw the open grave, partially filled with water, as from the rain; and, looking into it, he particularly noticed floating in the water two drowned field-mice. Afterward, as he thought, he conversed with his mother; and she told him that the morning had been so tempestuous that the funeral, originally appointed for ten o'clock, had been deferred till four. He remarked, in reply, that it was a fortunate circumstance; for, as he had just arrived in time to join the procession, had the funeral taken place in the forenoon he could not have attended it at all.

“This dream made so deep an impression on Captain Clarke that in the morning he noted the date of it. Some time afterward there came the news of his grandmother's death, with the additional particular that she was buried on the same day on which he, being in North America, had dreamed of her funeral.

“When, four years afterward, Captain Clarke visited Lyme-Regis, he found that every particular of his dream minutely corresponded with the reality. The pastor, the pall-bearers, the mourners, were the same persons he had seen. Yet this, we may suppose, he might naturally have anticipated. But the funeral had been appointed for ten o'clock in the morning, and, in consequence of the tempestuous weather and the heavy rain that was falling, it *had* been delayed until four in the afternoon. His mother, who attended the funeral, distinctly recollected that the high wind blew the pall partially off the coffin. In consequence of a wish expressed by the old lady shortly before her death, she was buried, not in the burying-place of the family, but at another spot, selected by herself; and to this spot Captain Clarke, without any indication from the

family or otherwise, proceeded at once, as directly as if he had been present at the burial. Finally, on comparing notes with the old sexton, it appeared that the heavy rain of the morning had partially filled the grave, and that there were actually found in it two field-mice, drowned.

“This last incident, even if there were no other, might suffice to preclude all idea of accidental coincidence.

“The above was narrated to me by Captain Clarke himself;* [*Footnote in Owen's text:* * In New York, on July 28, 1859. The narrative is written out from notes taken on board his schooner.] with permission to use his name in attestation of its truth.”

ESS Score

As an OBE, the CS rating is “ee” CS = 101.

The WR rating is “h”. WR = 57.

The IC rating is “q”. IC = 0.7.

Total ESS Score: $101 + 57 + .7 = 158.7$

For Further Information See: [*Footfalls On The Boundary Of Another World*](#). by Robert Dale Owen, first published in 1859 by J.B. Lippincott & Co., reprinted by Kessinger Publishing, pages 178-182.

END CASE 29

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