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AN INTERNATIONAL RECORD

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VI

IN MEMORIAM

ṬARÁZU'LLÁH SAMANDARÍ 1874-1968

Tarazu'llah (Ornament of God) was the name given by Bahá'u'lláh to the son of Samandar,¹ one of the nineteen Apostles of Bahá'u'lláh, and Ma'súmiḥ Khánum Farhádi, both from families of early Babis. 'Abdu'l-Bahá called him Mirza Taraz and bestowed upon him many honorifics including Taraz-i-Ilahi (The Divine Adornment). The beloved Guardian addressed him as Jinab-i-Samandari and appointed him a Hand of the Cause, one of the twelve in the first contingent, on December 24, 1951.

Tarazu'llah Samandari was born in 1874, in Qazvin, Persia, and was brought up by his parents and his grandmother, who was one of the companions of that immortal early heroine of the Faith, Tahiriḥ. His upbringing is described by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in a prayer revealed for him:

. . . I supplicate before the Throne of Thy mercifulness and the threshold of Thy oneness that Thou mayest rain down Thy manifold confirmations and favours upon this servant of Thine who was born in the cradle of Thy love, nourished from the breast of Thy knowledge, reared in the lap of Thy servitude, nurtured in the bosom of Thy life-giving Faith, until such time as he was fully developed through the outpourings of Thy bounty, attained maturity through Thy loving kindness and turned his jace with devotion toward Thy countenance, with his heart wholly centred on Thee and his reliance completely placed in Thee. . .

The life of Ṭarázu'lláh Samandari, his character and the quality of his service to the Faith, are best described by the pens of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi. 'Abdu'l-Bahá designated him in Tablets as "a luminous candle", "a cause of happiness of souls", "a mine of joy", and "a cause of happiness of hearts".

¹ Shaykh Kázim, surnamed "Samandar". See *The Baha'i World*, vol. III, p. 80.

The exceptional number of years of Ṭarázu'lláh Samandari's active service commenced in early youth and ceased only with his passing in his ninety-fourth year. His service spanned the last years of the ministry of Bahá'u'lláh, the whole of the ministries of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi, and extended through the period of stewardship of the Hands of the Cause. He lived to witness the election of the Universal House of Justice in 1963 and 1968.

Because educational facilities were limited in the Persia of his childhood, and often denied to the children of Bahá'ís, Tarazu'llah was taught at home by Mulla 'Ali who was praised by Bahá'u'llah as the first teacher to put into practice the Bahá'í principles of education. The child learned Persian and Arabic grammar, the simple bookkeeping of that period and calligraphy. At the age of thirteen he entered the office of his father who was a merchant.

Ṭarázu'lláh became one of the most distinguished calligraphers of Persia. He records that as soon as he could write well he started to copy Tablets and prayers, and this he continued to do his whole life. Many volumes of Scriptures have been copied in his beautiful handwriting. By this means he became well versed in the Baha'i Writings and could refer to relevant texts on any matter discussed or problem presented to him. The Divine Teachings absorbed and sustained him; he felt no need to refer to other writings. Throughout his long life and wide travels he was always accepted as a highly educated man; not even the learned imagined that he was without formal training. This was perhaps the fulfilment of a prayer revealed for him by 'Abdu'l-Bahá:

O Lord my God! Graciously aid him to attain this glorious bounty and to partake of this rare privilege. Gladden his bosom with the light of Thy knowledge and loose his tongue through the vitalizing breaths of Thy celestial might. Enable him to intone the verses of divine unity in the assemblies of the detached and to chant with sanctified melody in the rose gardens of Thy singleness. Grant him the joy of gazing upon the resplen-

dent light of Thy mercy in the mystic Paradise and enable him to reveal the evidences of Thy grace amongst Thy servants by the manifestation in his luminous temple of the signs of Thy bounty. . .

As a youth the desire of Ṭarāzu'llāh's heart was to gain admittance to the presence of Bahá'u'llāh who was then an exile in the Turkish penal colony of 'Akka. The pilgrimage of his brother and cousin increased his ardour for meeting his Beloved. This bounty was conferred upon him in 1891 when he made the arduous journey of several weeks from Persia to the Holy Land, accompanied by his sister and his maternal aunt, Hájár Khánúm. For six months he was in the entourage of Bahá'u'llāh in 'Akka and he remained about four weeks after the passing of the Blessed Beauty in 1892. Bahá'u'llāh received him, three days after his arrival, in the House of 'Abbud, and on other occasions in Bahji, the garden of Riḍván and elsewhere. Bahá'u'llāh has declared that the bounty of gazing once upon the countenance of one's Lord is equal to the sum total of the charitable deeds of past and future generations. Such a blessing was bestowed upon Taraz Effendi, and on many occasions he shared his memories of this priceless experience, the most memorable time being at the World Congress in London, seventy-two years later (in 1963) when he spoke to nearly 7,000 Baha'is from all parts of the world.

During his pilgrimage, he had the supreme honour on two occasions to be in the presence of Baha'u'llah at the time of revelation. Although he acknowledged that this experience was impossible to describe, he said the Words poured forth like a mighty torrent, while the greatest majesty was evident in His person. On other occasions, Baha'u'llah manifested His own title "Mazlumiyyih" (Wronged One).

On the morning of Naw-Ruz, Bahh'u'llah sent Taraz Effendi a gift of clothes, a robe, a shirt, a cummerbund and socks. The same day He received the friends in a small garden. The famous poets, Nabil and 'Andalib, had composed poems for the occasion. The garden was adorned with citrus trees; rain was drizzling. On this day the friends gathered at the Feast had the supreme bounty of hearing Baha'u'llah revealing verses. A banquet was served and

Taraz Effendi and other friends accompanied the Blessed Beauty on His return to Bahji.

An account of the celebration of the First Day of Riḍván is given in the words of Ṭarāzu'llāh Samandari:

"On the First Day of Riḍván, I and three other pilgrims were present, sitting on the floor, facing Bahá'u'llāh, Who was sitting on a chair. He started to chant the *Tablet of Sulṭán* with great majesty and grandeur, for about half an hour. He occasionally made a gesture with His hand or moved His foot and the power felt while He was proclaiming 'O Sultan!' was overpowering. The spiritual experience, the ecstasy, is beyond description.

"At the end, He said, 'Tarkz Effendi, arise and present a rose each to the friends.' The roses were spread on a sheet of dazzling whiteness on His bed. I obeyed His command and He said, 'Give Us Our share also.' I offered Him a rose and He bade me take one for myself. Then blessing us, He dismissed us from His presence.

"Another Day of Riḍván. He received us in the Garden of Ridvan—all friends, residents and pilgrims gathered together with utmost bliss in that Paradise, the envy of all the gardens of the world. The great poet, 'Andalib, recited an ode he had composed for the occasion. Bahh'u'llah showered bounties on all present, who were standing before Him in rows, giving them with His own hands rosewater, sweetmeats and oranges—and to 'Andalib, a bottle of rosewater and two oranges!"

One day Tarazu'llah accompanied the beloved Master, 'Abdu'l-Baha, to Bahji and witnessed His deep reverence in paying homage to His exalted Father. As soon as the windows of the Mansion were visible, He prostrated Himself, bowing His forehead to the ground, although there was a drizzle of rain. Taraz Effendi followed His example.

From Baha'u'llah, Tarazu'llah received a clear indication of the station of 'Abdu'l-Baha as shown by the following incident. After two weeks indisposition, during which time he had not been able to be in the presence of Bahá'u'llāh, Taraz Effendi went to Bahji and meeting one of the children of the Holy Family begged her to ask for permission for him to enter the presence of Bahá'u'llāh. This was granted. Baha'u'llah remarked that Tarazu'llah had complained that he had not been in His presence for two weeks, and asked if he had not



Tarázu'lláh Samandari

seen the Master. When he answered, "Yes, my Lord, every evening and every morning," Bahá'u'lláh asked him, "Then why did you complain that you did not have the reward of pilgrimage?" implying that meeting the Master was as meeting Himself.

He was amongst the pilgrims and friends who were summoned to the presence of Bahá'u'lláh while He was lying in bed ill and being attended by His family. His voice was clear, but softer, because of the fever He had contracted; He spoke about the importance of unity.

The intensity of the shock of losing his Beloved was so great that Tarázu'lláh had no desire to live, but 'Abdu'l-Bahá protected him. He was present with a large number of other pilgrims and resident believers when the Book of the Covenant was read. 'Abdu'l-Bahá instructed the pilgrims to relate all they had witnessed on their return to Persia. Taráz Effendi departed about four weeks later, travelling through Turkey to avoid an area of cholera. The journey was on mules and the homebound pilgrims met the believers *en route*.

Taraz Effendi received permission to make another pilgrimage in 1898. With a group of friends from Persia he stayed in 'Akká for four months and ten days, in the society of 'Abdu'l-

Bahá, gaining in spirituality and knowledge.

Several times he begged 'Abdu'l-Baha for martyrdom, but the Master told him he must live to serve the Faith with the spirit of martyrdom, saying: *Be sure, whatever I have desired for Myself, I have desired for*

One day, 'Abdu'l-Bahá with about eighty friends, proceeded from the Garden of Rídván to the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh in procession, each one carrying a pot of flowers and chanting odes and poems in praise of the Blessed Beauty. 'Abdu'l-Bahá told them this would be commemorated in the future by kings coming with bared heads and bare feet, carrying jewelled pots of Bowers

In 1908, Taráz Effendi made a third pilgrimage in a period when conditions in the Holy Land were very unsettled; 'Abdu'l-Bahá's life was in danger and the enemies of the Faith were emboldened by events which seemed momentarily to assure their ascendancy. Taráz Effendi was given a Bahá'í ring by the Master and shown a long scroll on which were inscribed the names of four hundred believers of America, with their declaration of loyalty to 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the Covenant. On the last day of his pilgrimage 'Abdu'l-Bahá gave him an envelope containing a Tablet for the friends in Persia, and the scroll from America, with the instruction that he and his companion should visit the communities and call the believers together in groups of nine, and ask them to make a covenant of unity in the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh, explaining to them that the loss of each soul is the loss of all, the gain of one, the gain of all; each should be ready to sacrifice for the others. Each of the nine should, in turn, make a covenant with another group of nine. The original scroll from America is now in safekeeping at the World Centre.

During many of his visits to 'Abdu'l-Baha at this time, he would hear of the importance of detachment and service to the Cause. This was in preparation for the announcement by 'Abdu'l-Bahá that when Taráz Effendi returned to Persia it should not be to work any longer in his father's office, but to spend his time travelling throughout that country, teaching and increasing the knowledge of the friends. 'Abdu'l-Bahá told him that he should go on His behalf, like Himself, with detachment and enkindlemerit—as a *globe of fire*.

After a pilgrimage of forty days Taráz

Effendi returned to Persia where he met his appointed partner for his journeys, Mr. 'Ali Akbar Kafsanjani. They spent some months in Ṭihrán learning from a Bahá'í doctor rudiments of medicine sufficient to enable them to deal with simple ailments. This was done to facilitate their journeys throughout Persia. Only two years previously a severe outbreak of persecutions had afflicted the Persian Bahá'í community and the enemies of the Cause were still ready to create trouble for the believers. The utmost wisdom had to be exercised. Against this background the pair embarked on a journey which was to last for five years and take them to many places in Turkistán and Persia, including remote villages. They travelled by mule, donkey, horse-drawn carriage and often on foot, always at the risk of attack by highwaymen. They were confirmed in carrying out 'Abdu'l-Bahá's instructions. A new life of activity came into existence. In many of His Tablets, 'Abdu'l-Baha expressed His satisfaction at these journeys and encouraged other friends to follow in their footsteps in spreading the Teachings.

Around 1895, Taraz Effendi married his second cousin whose name, Taraziyyih, was the feminine form of his own. She had been born a few months after him and had been given the name chosen by Baha'u'llah. She was a Farhadi, being related to his mother. During the lengthy journey of her husband Taraziyyih received a beautiful Tablet from 'Abdu'l-Baha offering consolation in their separation and praying that this temporary separation would be the cause of eternal reunion; whereas other unions end in separation, unity of spiritual aspiration and service elevated a marriage to the station of a real union, a meeting that has no end.

Ṭarázu'lláh Samandari writes about one of his happiest experiences when his wife was instrumental in opening a Bahá'í school for girls in Qazvín (Tavakkul), at a time when he was teaching in Shiráz. It is recorded in his notes that the news flooded him with "a new life and immeasurable joy; I raised my hands to thank 'Abdu'l-Baha, and tears of happiness streamed from my eyes, that my life-partner had received this confirmation." Ṭaraziyyih acted as principal of the school which was the result of the combined efforts of the friends in Qazvín. The school became a means of esta-

blishing a firm and dignified relationship between Bahá'ís and others and attracted the daughters of even the most fanatical elements of the town. Taraziyyih received another Tablet from 'Abdu'l-Baha in which He bestowed words of praise and encouragement and promised that she would be showered with endless bounties from every direction.

While Ṭarázu'lláh Samandari was in Shiráz in 1909, the enemies of the Faith attacked the Bahá'ís of Nayríz and despoiled their property. Eighteen Bahá'ís suffered martyrdom. Through the activity of Ṭaráz Effendi and 'Ali Akbar Rafsanjání, and with the help of influential friends, the refugees were returned to their homes and the community resettled. It was at this very time that, on Mt. Carmel, 'Abdu'l-Bahá laid to rest the earthly remains of the Bab in the mausoleum He had constructed, that sacred dust having been in concealment and moved from place to place for a period of sixty years. In a Tablet written shortly thereafter to one of the friends in Persia 'Abdu'l-Baha said that although the martyrdom of the friends was the cause of His shedding tears and was a heart-burning grief, the spiritual significance of the death of those innocent friends was a great bounty of God and a source of joy in the Abhá Kingdom. 'Abdu'l-Baha consoled the hearts of the Persian friends by saying that on the day the remains of the Báb were interred on Mt. Carmel a cablegram had been received from the believers in America announcing that a site had been selected for the construction of the first Bahá'í Temple of the West.¹

At the end of 1909 and beginning of 1910, their five-year teaching journey behind them, 'Ali Akbar Rafsanjání and Ṭaráz Effendi travelled to the Holy Land through Bombay and spent two months in the presence of 'Abdu'l-Baha who showered them with love and expressed the utmost appreciation of their devoted services which, He said, would never be effaced from the hearts and memories of the friends who had met them. Because of his poor health, Ṭarázu'lláh Samandari was advised to return to Qazvín where he remained for approximately seventeen years during which he taught actively, carried on a wide correspondence with many Baha'í centres, served as secretary of the Spiritual Assembly,

¹ *God Passes By*, Shoghi Effendi, p. 276.

produced a Baha'i newsletter which was circulated wherever Persian was read, and, at the instruction of the Guardian, he engaged in copying and verifying the authenticity of the countless Tablets revealed to the friends in Persia during the Heroic Age of the Faith, a task which required his close supervision for two years and resulted in the compilation of eighteen volumes of these priceless documents. One copy was sent to the Holy Land and one to the Spiritual Assembly of Tíhrán.

About six years after the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, at the suggestion of the Spiritual Assembly of Tíhran and with the full approval of Shoghi Effendi, who, in a letter written in November, 1927, addressed him as a "strong pillar" and an outstanding example of "obedience and dedication", Tarazu'llah Samandari resumed travel teaching. In that same month he journeyed with his wife and youngest son to *Ádhirbáyján*, after which he never had a settled home anywhere. The remaining forty-one years of his life were spent in travelling and teaching.

Space does not permit giving, even in outline, an account of his activities during these years; his own diary records them and reflects his dedication, self-sacrifice, detachment and the enthusiasm and joy he derived from service to the Cause of God. The nature and value of his contribution in this period is best illustrated by a few brief extracts from the many letters he received from the beloved Guardian:

"April 24, 1928

... Verily, thou art a faithful custodian of the fortified citadel and a dedicated servant and promoter of the religion of the Lord. Thou art in the foremost rank of teachers ...

November 1, 1928

... The brilliant, the continuous and sincere services of that chosen one of the Lord of all beings are engraved on my heart and inscribed in permanent characters in the records of the Abha Kingdom; the passage of ages and centuries cannot efface them. . ."

In subsequent communications Shoghi Effendi addressed him as "an Apostle of the Crimson Ark", a "strong pillar of the luminous Faith of God", and a "Knight of the arena of detachment" (June 19, 1933); a "foremost exemplar for the righteous" and "a true herald of the Greatest Name" (October, 1934); "the

most distinguished of friends" (December 22, 1939); and "the shining lamp among Baha'i teachers" (December 25, 1940).

For a few months in 1933, at the request of the Central Spiritual Assembly of Tíhrán,¹ *Ṭaráz Effendi* managed the national office, dealing with correspondence and receiving visitors, but the beloved Guardian requested him to resume his journeys. In the autumn of 1940 he and his wife were granted permission to make the pilgrimage to the Holy Land. During the fifty days spent there Shoghi Effendi surrounded them with kindness and made use of Tarazu'llah Samandari's ability by giving him a number of original Tablets to identify. When Tarazu'llah referred to his age and weakened health preventing him from serving as he had before, the Guardian replied that the "first" period of his service had terminated and gave him the responsibility of encouraging the friends of Persia to pioneer to nearby countries. On their return journey they were asked to visit various communities. On his arrival in Tíhran, he immediately met the National Spiritual Assembly. A pioneer committee was formed and through his encouragement a number of believers arose to establish the Faith in other areas.

In 1944 he was asked to go to *Shíráz* to protect the Faith from mischief-makers and he remained there a number of years. During this time his wife died at her pioneer post in Zanjan, Persia, not having seen her husband for three years. At her death on November 7, 1947, the Guardian wrote a moving letter of consolation praising the services of "that dear handmaiden of the Ancient Beauty", who had engaged in "spreading the Word of God . . . with absolute detachment and steadfastness." She resides now, he wrote, "in the loftiest mansions of heaven".

An outstanding service which he rendered in this period was the securing of the original manuscript of the *Kitáb-i-Íqán* which he sent to the Holy Land. His intercontinental travels commenced shortly after his appointment as a Hand of the Cause in 1951 and took him to the Far East and the West. He attended all four Intercontinental Conferences² at the opening

¹ The National Spiritual Assembly of Persia was formed in 1934.

² *Kampala*, Uganda, February, 1953; *Wilmette*, Illinois, U.S.A., April-May, 1953; *Stockholm*, Sweden, July, 1953; *New Delhi*, India, October, 1953.

of the Guardian's Ten Year Crusade in 1953 and visited a number of centres in the United States and Europe.

After attending the funeral of the beloved Guardian in London in 1957 he journeyed to the Holy Land to attend the conclave of the Hands of the Cause and was present at all subsequent conclaves. During these visits he was able to identify a large number of Tablets.

In subsequent years he travelled extensively in Africa, the Middle East, the Far East and Asia, traversing the globe as in an earlier period he had traversed his homeland from hamlet to hamlet. A new generation of Bahá'ís felt themselves blessed to be in his presence at the World Congress in London in 1963.

The celebration of the centenary of Bahá'u'lláh's proclamation of His Message in September/October, 1867, to the kings and rulers of the world opened with a visit in September, 1967, by a few appointed representatives of the Bahá'í world to the site of the house in Adrianople where the historic *Súriy-i-Mulúk* was revealed; Tarazu'llah Samandari was one of the Hands of the Cause who participated in "this joyful and pious act".¹ Immediately thereafter he travelled to the United States to represent the Universal House of Justice at the Intercontinental Conference in Wilmette. He was now ninety-two years old. His presence in the conference was deeply appreciated and inspired the 3,000 or more friends gathered to hear the only surviving Hand of the Cause whose eyes had been blessed by beholding Baha'u'llah, and his ears by hearkening to His Words. In spite of the cold he welcomed the programme for his tour of Alaska, Canada, the United States, England and Germany. In America he was able to meet thousands of friends in special conferences held in key towns where friends from outlying areas would gather. The Faith was proclaimed by means of press and radio interviews, public meetings and addresses in universities. A remarkable degree of respect was shown him by members of the press, all of whom extended the length of the interviews; in reality, it was the Hand of the Cause himself who conducted these gatherings and the atmosphere was always sympathetic.

Taraz Effendi was an arresting figure—small, trim, upright, with quick movements—and he

walked so swiftly that few could keep pace with him. His eyes were penetrating and dark, his hair neat and black (it never became quite white), his hands strong and sensitive and his voice clear and resonant. His rapidity of movement and mental agility remained with him to the end of his life. He personified courtesy, dignity and kindness.

He was a very early riser and neat and methodical in his ways. Coming from a background where women were veiled and transport was primitive, he was able to adapt himself to life in modern America, while retaining his innate dignity. He had some attractive, old-fashioned habits, such as keeping his prayer books and Scriptures wrapped in silk squares or in little cotton bags; and he kept his clothes, which were neat and simple and limited in number because of the long years of continuous travel, neatly folded and wrapped in cotton squares.

He rested only to gain strength to work and was always ready to serve others. Children and youth were drawn to him. Generations of youth inspired by his encouragement and example have matured as ardent, active Baha'ís acknowledging that it was he who set them on the path of service.

As age drew on him he would say with a smile, "Different organs of my body are trying to resign, one by one. I tell them: 'I won't accept this! As you came together, you must leave together!'" His wish was fulfilled; his mind was lucid, his sight clear, his voice ringing, his hearing sharp, his step firm and swift, his hand steady and his spirit radiant until the end.

Although barely recovered from a serious illness which had stricken him but a short time before, Mr. Samandari came to the Holy Land in late August, 1968, to attend the centenary commemoration of Bahá'u'lláh's arrival on those shores. Here Taraz Effendi's health deteriorated and he was taken to hospital where many friends visited him and found his radiance undimmed. He survived to see the day commemorating the arrival of Baha'u'llah and peacefully passed away on September 2, 1968. An account of his passing appeared in U.S. *Baha'í News*, No. 452, November, 1968:

"... Jinab-i-Samandari attained his wish—to die in the Holy Land... His funeral, by God's intervention, was an unforgettable

¹ The Universal House of Justice, *Riḍván Message*, 1965.

part of the historic arid eventful week of activities associated with the pilgrimage of an unprecedented number of friends from both East and West,

Nearly one thousand souls attended, most of them joining the funeral cortège proceeding from the Master's House, where the service was held, to the Bahá'í cemetery at the foot of Mt. Carmel . . . The funeral was one of the largest and most impressive since the time of the Master."

He rests beside the heroic arid immortal Hájí Mírzá Haydar 'Alí,¹ in fulfilment of a wish he had often expressed.

On September 3, 1968, the Universal House of Justice notified the Bahá'í world of the passing of the one Bahá'u'lláh had named "The Ornament of God" :

WITH SORROWFUL HEARTS ANFOUNCE PASSING HAND CAUSE GOD SHIELD HIS FAITH DEARLY LOVED TAKAZULLAH SAMANDARI NINETY-THIRD YEAR HIS LIFE ON MORROW COMMEMORATION CENTENARY BAHULLAHS ARRIVAL HOLY LAND STOP FAITHFUL TO LAST BREATH INSTRUCTIONS HIS LORD HIS MASTER HIS GUARDIAN HE CONTINUED SELFLESS DEVOTED SERVICE UNABATED UNTIL FALLING ILL DURING RECENT TEACHING MISSION STOP UNMINDFUL ILLNESS HE PROCEEDED HOLY LAND PARTICIPATE CENTENARY STOP EVER REMEMBERED HEARTS BELIEVERS EAST WEST TO WHOSE LANDS HE TRAVELLED BEARING MESSAGE HIS LORD WHOSE COMMUNITIES HE FAITHFULLY SERVED THIS PRECIOUS REMNANT HEROIC AGE WHO ATTAINED PRESENCE BLESSED BEAUTY YEAR HIS ASCENSION NOW LAID REST FOOT MOUNTAIN GOD AMIDST THROG BELIEVERS ASSEMBLED VICINITY VERY SPOT BAHULLAH FIRST TROD THESE SACRED SHORES STOP REQUEST ALL NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES HOLD MEMORIAL SERVICES INCLUDING FOUR MOTHER TEMPLES BAHAI WORLD BEFITTING LONG LIFE DEDICATED EXEMPLARY SERVICE LORD HOSTS BY ONE ASSURED CENTRE COVENANT LOVING WELCOME PRESENCE BAHULLAH ABHA KINGDOM STOP EXTEND LOVING SYMPATHY ASSURANCE PRAYERS MEMBERS DISTINGUISHED FAMILY.

MÍHDÍ SAMANDARÍ

HERMANN GROSSMANN

1899-1968

DEEPLY REGRET ANNOUNCE PASSING HAND CAUSE HERMANN GROSSMANN GREATLY ADMIRER BELOVED GUARDIAN STOP HIS GRIEVOUS LOSS DEPRIVES COMPANY HANDS CAUSE OUTSTANDING COLLABORATOR AND BAHAI WORLD COMMUNITY STAUNCH DEFENDER PROMOTER FAITH STOP HIS COURAGEOUS LOYALTY DURING CHALLENGING YEARS TESTS PERSECUTIONS GERMANY OUTSTANDING SERVICES SOUTH AMERICA IMMORTALIZED ANNALS FAITH STOP INVITE ALL NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES HOLD MEMORIAL GATHERINGS BEFITTING HIS EXALTED RANK EXEMPLARY SERVICES.

Universal House of Justice

To relate the story of Herrmann Grossmann is to describe a life spent entirely in the service of the New Revelation. It is perhaps of subtle significance that he was born to German parents in Rosario, Argentina on February 16, 1899 and was raised by a family who radiated love and tolerance. In Rosario people of different races and religions lived together in friendship and freedom, an atmosphere reinforcing the liberal influence of his home. He was born on the eve of the birth of the twentieth century when the established order was beginning to crumble. The sun of a new epoch in the history of mankind was rising, the era of the unity of mankind on this planet, becoming continually smaller by rapidly escalating technological progress.

When Hermann was ten years old the family returned to Germany. The young boy looked upon the country of his ancestors with eyes different from those of his peers. Where others were encouraged to follow blindly prejudices acquired in infancy, Hermann had doubts which stimulated him to search for truth.

Towards the end of World War I he had to serve in the German army in France. He returned to Germany saddened and weary, his questing mind and sensitive nature plagued by questions: Is it the fate of human society to be forever burdened with misery, hatred and destruction? How long must it continue like this? If a wise Creator created mankind for love and sent great effulgent Beings again and again to illumine the earth and to cause His creatures to progress spiritually, is it perhaps

¹ *Star of the West*, vol. XI, p. 343; 'Abdu'l-Bahá by H. M. Balyuzi, p. 525.



Hermann Grossmann

time for a new Messenger to come? The distress of the world, the universal ferment, the radical changes which were becoming increasingly apparent caused the young man to wonder whether such a great Teacher was still living or had recently lived. Only the Manifestation of God, he reasoned, could bring Teachings that would restate the purpose of life for the individual and society and forge a new pattern of society to rise in visible triumph from the ashes of a moribund order.

These and many other questions troubled Hermann Grossmann during his years as a student of arts and political science, his thoughts and his longing being reflected in the poems and essays he wrote and the pictures he painted during this period. In 1924 he graduated as a doctor of Political Science at Hamburg.

Hermann's earnest search for meaning and purpose eventually led him to the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh; he met Harlan and Grace Ober¹ in Leipzig, Germany in the summer of 1920. This well-known American Bahá'í couple were returning to the United States after being on pilgrimage in the Holy Land where they had visited 'Abdu'l-Baha. It was at the behest of

'Abdu'l-Baha that Mr. and Mrs. Ober were in Leipzig where they accepted an invitation from the Theosophical Society to speak about the Baha'i Faith. Here it was that Hermann first encountered the Bahá'í Teachings which were to have such an important bearing on his future life. In later years he would frequently recount the circumstances of that fateful encounter.

Arriving late at the gathering, Hermann entered the softly lighted room and saw a woman of radiant countenance standing at the speaker's table. Mrs. Ober at that moment was voicing the Utterance of Bahá'u'lláh that all men are the leaves of one tree and the flowers of one garden. The truth of these words struck a responsive chord in the young man. Later, Mrs. Ober approached Hermann and said, "I think I was speaking your thought." "Yes, indeed," he replied, "but tell me what it is." His recognition of the truth of the Message was instantaneous; his acceptance, whole-hearted.

The same night Mrs. Lina Benke also spontaneously embraced the Cause. Shortly afterwards her husband, George Adam Benke², also accepted. The services rendered by Mr. Benke in Bulgaria before his death in 1932 demonstrated "such an exemplary spirit of devotion that the Guardian felt impelled to call him the first European martyr for the Faith".³

Soon the three—Hermann and the Benkes—were eagerly visiting each day with Miss Alma Knobloch⁴ who was residing in Leipzig at that time. Through these meetings their knowledge grew, their faith deepened. Miss Knobloch had accepted the Cause in 1903 and at the request of 'Abdu'l-Baha had settled in Germany in 1907 to assist in the firm establishment of the Faith in that country.

In answer to his grateful and enthusiastic letter to 'Abdu'l-Bahá in Haifa, Hermann received the following Tablet from the Master dated December 9, 1920:

O thou who hast been guided by the light of divine guidance:

Thy letter hath been received. It indicated that thou hast turned thy face toward the Abhá Kingdom. Yield thee thanks unto God

² *ibid.*, vol. v, p.416.

³ Letter dated June 21, 1956, written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to the National Spiritual Assembly of Germany.

⁴ See "In Memoriam", The *Bahá'í World*, vol. ix, p. 641.

¹ See "In Memoriam", The *Bahá'í World*, vol. viii, p. 656; vol. xiii, p. 866.

that thou hast been enabled to rend the veils asunder, to gaze on the beauty of the Sun of Reality, and to walk in the path of the Kingdom. Thou shouldst be eternally obliged and thankful to those who were the cause of thy guidance, inasmuch as they conferred heavenly life upon thee and enabled thee to be admitted into this resplendent Kingdom. Upon thee rest the Glory of the Most Glorious.

When Hermann returned to Hamburg, it was to his great joy that both his mother and his sister, Elsa Maria, accepted his beloved new Faith. It was at this time that he found his life partner, Anna, who espoused the same ideals as he did. Their harmonious marriage brought them deep happiness.

With dedication and devotion, Hermann Grossmann began at once to serve the Baha'i Cause, first in Hamburg, then in Weinheim and later in Neckargemünd. The house he built in the last-mentioned location increasingly became a focal point for Bahá'í activity. People of every background and rank entered its doors and were made welcome. In this hospitable home where his dearest ones—his wife, his parents, his sister and his children—lived by his side, one could experience from the beginning and with increasing intensity the warm, all-encompassing wholeness which distinguishes the Faith of Baha'u'llah throughout the world from all other spiritual impulses, ideologies or socio-religious organizations of ancient or modern origin: God—the Manifestation—the revealed Teachings—the transformation of the individual through prayer and service—the social order created by the Divine Pen. The spirit of these Teachings permeated the Grossmann household and was reflected in the lives of its members.

In the interval between the two world wars much was crystallized that is now universally recognized by the growing Baha'i world community including a clear understanding of the nature of Bahá'u'lláh's covenant with mankind, seen both historically and theologically. Revealed texts comprising the Words of Bahá'u'lláh, the Bab and 'Abdu'l-Baha were translated into inspiring English by Shoghi Effendi and widely distributed throughout the world. These authentic translations were published in many tongues. The writings of the Guardian—his essays, letters, commentaries, and expo-

sitions—gave to the Baha'is an ever increasing insight into the significance of the Bahá'í Revelation. From the abundance of the Bahá'í Teachings the topics which most interested Hermann Grossmann were Bahá'u'lláh's reconciliation of the unifying purpose of science and religion, and His challenge to mankind to realize unity in diversity, and Hermann emphasized these two themes in his teaching of Baha'i youth. Over the years he carefully compiled texts on these and related subjects with a view to their use in a future Baha'i university. His *Institute for Religion and Science*, compiled during the German Five Year Plan (1948–1953) won the approval of Shoghi Effendi. Hermann used these compilations consistently as a basis for his own publications. His major writings about the Faith include: *The Economic Question and Its Solution According to the Bahá'í Teachings*; *The Dawn of a New Age*; *A Change-over to Unity*; *What is the Bahá'í Religion?* He also translated into German *The Seven Valleys* (Baha'u'llah) and *Paris Talks* ('Abdu'l-Bahá).¹

In the 'twenties a promising worldwide cooperation developed between the Bahá'ís and Esperantists. Outstanding early Baha'i teachers such as Dr. J. E. Esslemont, Martha Root and others learned Esperanto. Lydia Zamenhof,² the youngest daughter of Dr. Ludwig L. Zamenhof, the inventor of Esperanto, joined the Baha'i Faith and translated many Baha'i books into this new language. Hermann Grossmann also took up this idea and for a period of time during the 'twenties, and often at great sacrifice, published in Esperanto a monthly magazine for Bahá'ís, *La Nova Tago*, (The New Day) which enjoyed a worldwide circulation. In 1928 Hermann and Anna became the parents of a daughter, Susanne Bahiyyih, and five years later a son, Hartmut Harlan, was born.

About this time the Baha'is of Europe began to hold their first summer schools, an activity which had met with much success in the United States and which was strongly encouraged by

¹ See *The Baha'í World*, vol. XIII, p. 384.

² See "In Memoriam", *The Bahá'í World*, vol. X, p. 533. In August, 1944, eighteen years after accepting the Baha'í Faith, Lydia Zamenhof was cremated in the Jewish death-camp in Treblinka, near Warsaw, Poland. "... dauntless Lydia Zamenhof," cabled Shoghi Effendi, "... her notable services, tenacity, modesty and unwavering devotion fully merit high tribute..."

the Guardian. A few dozen Bahá'ís met, sometimes for a few days, sometimes for a week or more, to deepen their knowledge of the fundamental verities of the Baha'i Faith through lectures and discussion. Evening social gatherings reflected a happy holiday mood and warmhearted friendship. The "Hausle" (Little House) near Esslingen, Germany was then a place known and loved far and wide for such meetings. Hermann Grossmann often taught there. In 1932 he wrote his book *The Dawn of a New Age*.

A peak experience in the life of Hermann Grossmann was the pilgrimage he made with his wife and sister in March and April, 1937 when they visited the Baha'i Holy places in Haifa. For nine days he had the benefit of being in the presence of Shoghi Effendi who, in his conversations with the pilgrims, returned again and again to the subject of the embryonic administrative order of the Bahá'í Faith. Hermann was particularly concerned with finding ways and means of increasing the awareness of the Baha'is of this important aspect of the evolving World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, the full implications of which were yet but dimly envisioned by the friends in Europe and elsewhere.

Hermann brought with him to Haifa, as a gift for Shoghi Effendi, the original Tablet he had received from 'Abdu'l-Baha in 1920. The Guardian warmly accepted the document and returning with it the next day asked Hermann if he were aware that it was a highly significant Tablet. After a moment's hesitation, Hermann replied that indeed one sentence had always been of special importance to him: *Thou shouldst be eternally obliged and thankful to those who were the cause of thy guidance . . .* But Shoghi Effendi while affirming the value of that response, said that he considered 'Abdu'l-Bahá's words . . . *thou hast been enabled to rend the veils asunder . . . and to walk in the Path of the Kingdom* to be most significant for Hermann.

The breadth of vision of the Guardian, his clever answers and penetrating insights, his encouragement and suggestions, served to heighten the zeal of the enthusiastic pilgrims and were a source of inspiration in all their future years of service to the Cause. By the time they left Haifa the heartfelt devotion, respect and tender affection they had always

felt for Shoghi Effendi had become even more deeply rooted. Hermann Grossmann placed his love for the Guardian at the very centre of his being and a desire to bring happiness to his beloved became the animating purpose of his life. Shoghi Effendi's unexpectedly early death in 1957 was thus to be a most painful and cruel loss in his life.

Although Hermann returned to Germany in April, 1937 with a renewed determination to serve the Cause, ominous clouds were gathering and in June of that year Hitler imposed a ban on the Baha'i Faith in Germany. Bahá'í books were confiscated and destroyed, the homes of Bahá'ís were searched and the friends were interrogated or imprisoned. The internal and external political situation became more critical and plunged the world into a devastating war. In his professional life Hermann suffered concealed hostility, sometimes open brusqueness and contempt, from his colleagues who were Nazi sympathizers.

After long and strenuous negotiations with the Gestapo, he succeeded in effecting the release of his imprisoned sister. Later he spoke as a witness in the defence of nine believers who were tried by a Nazi court. In September, 1944 he himself was brought to trial and subjected to punishment.

Most of the early compilations of Bahá'í texts were seized and destroyed or irretrievably lost by the Gestapo. In that dark hour Hermann said, "If I did not think that it was a sacrifice for Baha'u'llah, I could not bear the loss." Nevertheless, he immediately turned to the task of making new compilations. The little literature which had been saved formed the basis of the national Baha'i archives. The short compilations, teaching aids and study outlines which Hermann prepared from the Bahá'í literature he had managed to preserve were mimeographed and bound in hard cover thus meeting the immediate need of supplying Baha'i literature to the German Bahá'í community as it struggled to arise with new strength amid the ruins of the country. The Grossmann home in Neckargemiind was spared destruction and many found there warmth, light and consolation. In 1945 the Baha'i community of Germany, strengthened by the tests it had undergone, prepared itself to welcome within its fold those Germans who, shattered by the catastrophe, found their way to the Faith of

Bahá'u'lláh; later, of course, as prosperity returned to the nation, a general attitude of materialism prevailed. In this interval Hermann produced various small but extremely useful books such as *A Change-over to Unity*, and a new edition of his pre-war work *The Dawn of a New Age* flowed from his pen.

Although Shoghi Effendi had alluded to certain individuals posthumously as Hands of the Cause it was in 1951 that he announced the appointment of the first contingent of living Hands of the Cause of God. Hermann Grossmann was among the first twelve raised to this station by Shoghi Effendi. In subsequent years the number of Hands of the Cause was increased to twenty-seven. Among their duties was the teaching of the Faith and the protection of the Baha'i community from those who would seek to violate Bahá'u'lláh's covenant. In this period Hermann Grossmann mainly, devoted himself to a study of the nature of Divine Covenants throughout religious history. The result of his researches was the publication, in 1956, of the small but fundamentally important book *God's Covenant in Revealed Religions*.

Hermann and Anna Grossmann returned to Haifa in the spring of 1957 for their second pilgrimage. From the treasury of his wisdom the Guardian traced for them the dazzling unfoldment of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. In particular, Shoghi Effendi discussed with them the design for the Mother Temple of Europe¹ to be constructed in the Taunus, near Frankfurt, the plans for which they had brought with them on behalf of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Germany.

In the tragic period following the death of Shoghi Effendi in the autumn of 1957, Hermann Grossmann brought the whole ardour of his being to bear on the discussions in the Holy Land when the Hands of the Cause gathered there; his breadth of vision and capacity to find a judicious balance were a valued factor in those vital consultations.

During his first pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1937, Shoghi Effendi had unexpectedly asked Hermann if he would care to return to South America. Hermann replied that it had taken him a long time to accustom himself to Germany but that he was now happy in that country. With an enigmatic smile the Guardian

¹ Dedicated July 4, 1964.

commented that perhaps one day Hermann would be happy to go back to Latin America. Hermann was to remember those words of the Guardian when, in 1959, the Hands of the Cause asked him to return to South America to assist the friends there in completing their goals of the Ten Year Crusade. At that time there were only two National Spiritual Assemblies in that vast continent, each responsible for five countries.² The Ten Year Crusade of Shoghi Effendi called for the establishment of ten National Spiritual Assemblies.

Hermann's first return visit to South America in 1959 took him around the entire continent and into the countries of the interior. An attack of typhoid and the strain on his system imposed by the high altitudes of the altiplano adversely affected his health and forced him to temporarily postpone further travels. As a result of the enthusiastic and optimistic reports he carried back to Haifa the Hands of the Cause decided to establish Riqvân, 1961 for the formation of the ten new national bodies.

In January, 1960 Hermann once again returned to South America, this time accompanied by his wife. This was to be his longest visit to the area. Indefatigably he travelled throughout the whole continent for more than seven months helping the friends create the conditions necessary for the election of their National Spiritual Assemblies. Again at Riqvân, 1961 he traversed the continent to witness the birth of these new national institutions, inspiring them to pursue their activities with vigour, and successfully protecting them from the intrigues of the opponents of the Faith. Again and again he called upon the friends to take the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh to the indigenous people, so dearly loved by Shoghi Effendi, and found extreme happiness in visiting the Indian believers himself and in visiting Punta Arenas, in the straits of Magellan, the southernmost Bahá'í community in the world.

Hermann started on his last journey through South America in 1962. Distinct signs of exhaustion had begun to show. Once more it was his galvanizing enthusiasm and iron will that took him from place to place and allowed him to bring "to a good end", as he later

² The Regional National Spiritual Assembly of Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay and Bolivia; and the Regional National Spiritual Assembly of Brazil, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela.

described it, one of his most difficult tasks in one of the countries in South America. Many seeds were sown at that time which subsequently blossomed and were reflected in the growth of the Faith in South America. The spiritual ties with the friends, the progress of the Cause in the countries of South America, the recollections of his visits there, were all a source of happiness to him until his last days. Nor was his love for Germany in any way diminished, for it was in that country that he had found the Faith of Baha'u'llah, and where he had served the longest, and in the German language he had developed superlative skill. Hermann's affections emanated from a deep love for humanity which radiated out to and was sensed by those who came close to him; this love made every country of the world a homeland to him.

The health of this courageous servant of the Almighty had weakened through hardship, self-denial, and the rigours of his travels, and although he had the bounty of witnessing, in April, 1963 the election of the first Universal House of Justice, the crowning of the Ten Year Crusade, and of participating in the World Congress in London, his travels became shorter and less frequent after these events. Increasingly he retired to his home and study. In 1965 he wrote *What is the Bahá'í Religion?* following in 1966 with *The Bahá'í Reliever and the Baha'í Community*.

Hermann Grossmann's separation from this perishable world was harmonious, though not without physical discomfort. On July 7, 1968 his soul was removed from the world's bustle and lifted to the invisible realm of peace and joy.

The life span of a human being has been described by Baha'u'llah as shorter than a breath; it is little more than a deep breath taken before advancing to the eternal life beyond. The breath is the symbol of life, the centre of our earthly corporeal existence, the symbol of the receipt and bestowal of gifts. The life of Hermann Grossmann was rich in fulfilment; he received and gave generously of the gifts of the spirit.

We have all been richly endowed, we who are permitted to live in this New Day whose advent the Great Ones of the past longed to witness. Let us be found worthy in passing on to others the Message of Baha'u'llah, the greatest gift.

ADLEBERT MÜHLSCHLEGEL

MÚSÁ BANÁNÍ

1886-1971

PROFOUWDLY MOURN PASSING DEARLY LOVED
HANDCAUSE MUSA BANAWI RECALL WITH
DEEP AFFECTION HIS SELFLESS UNASSIJMING
PROLONGED SERVICES CRADLE FAITH HIS EX-
EMPLARY PIONEERING UGANDA CULMINATING
HIS APPOINTMENT AS HAND CAUSE AFRICA AND
PRAISE BELOVED GUARDIAN AS SPIRITUAL
CONQUEROR THAT CONTINENT STOP INTER-
MENT HIS REMAINS AFRICAN SOIL UNDER
SHADOW MOTHER TEMPLE ENHANCES SPIRITUAL
LUSTRE THAT BLESSED SPOT STOP FERVENTLY
PRAYING SHRINES PROGRESS HIS NOBLE SOUL
STOP MAY AFRICA NOW ROBBED STAUNCH
VENERABLE PROMOTER DEFENDER FAITH FOL-
LOW HIS EXAMPLE CHEER HIS HEART ABHA
KINGDOM STOP CONVEY FAMILY MOST TENDER
SYMPATHIES ADVISE HOLD MEMORIAL MEETINGS
ALL COMMUNITIES BAHAI WORLD BEFITTING
GATHERINGS MOTHER TEMPLES.

Universal House of Justice

Músá Banani was born into a Jewish family in Baghdad in 1886. He was four years old when his father died. The years of extreme hardship and physical and emotional privation that followed were only partially relieved by the care and compassion of an elder brother. He left home and migrated to Persia when he was barely twelve. The grim struggle for existence left him no opportunity for schooling. To the end of his life he could only read and write Persian and Arabic in the Hebrew alphabet that he was taught as a small child.

In Persia his elder brother came into contact with the Bahá'ís and accepted the Faith, but Músá Banání had no interest in his brother's spiritual concerns. In 1911 he was living as a merchant in the Persian city of Kirmánsháh, when an event occurred that was to transform his life. A prominent Baha'i teacher, Fadil Mázandarání, accompanied by Siyyid 'Abdu'l-Husayn Ardistání, passed through the town on a mission by 'Abdu'l-Baha. At a Bahá'í gathering they were photographed with members of the Kirmánsháh community, including Musa Banani's older brother. Shortly afterwards the two Bahá'í teachers were arrested and maltreated. The photograph was used by the authorities to round up the Bahá'ís and force them to recant their faith. Músá Banani



Musa Banani

was mistakenly arrested for his brother due to their physical resemblance. In the prison he witnessed the radiant and heroic refusal of his cell-mate, Mr. Abrár, a frail old man, to recant his Faith despite cruel torture. But Musa Banání was glad to obtain his own release by telling the authorities that he was not a believer and reviling the faith of Baha'is. From that moment, Musa Banani was seized by a profound spiritual convulsion, a tumult of the soul. He reproached himself bitterly for having glibly denounced a Faith of which he knew so little. His efforts to dispel his ignorance of the Cause led to his becoming a BahB'i.

The transformation of his life and values was so complete as to amaze many of his associates. One of his earliest resolves after accepting the Faith was to marry only a Bahá'í girl so that his children would be brought up firmly in the Faith. Ironically, several years later when he married, he recognized his father-in-law to be Siyyid 'Abdu'l-Husayn Ardístání, the same Baha'i teacher whose visit to Kirmán-sháh in 1911 had set off the chain of events that led to his acceptance of the BahB'i Teachings.

In 1934 Músá Banani made his first pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Twenty-six days were spent in the presence of the beloved

Guardian, an experience which created an intense flame of love and loyalty that melted and fused the essence of Músá Banani's being. His devotion to Shoghi Effendi remained the hallmark of his character to the end of his life. The Guardian, in turn, perceived the simplicity, directness, unbounded energy, and spiritual potential of Músá Banani and nurtured these qualities by showering a joyful love upon him. Even at that stage the Guardian told a group of pilgrims that Musa Banani "is one equal to a thousand". Some could not understand why the Guardian spoke so glowingly of an unlettered man.

In Persia he was able to channel his active and decisive temperament in service to the Faith. His work as a member of the national committee charged with the responsibility of identifying and acquiring historic sites associated with the Cause culminated in the purchase and subsequent restoration of the House where Bahá'u'lláh was born in Tihiran.

In 1950, soon after Shoghi Effendi raised the call for the opening of Africa to the Faith, Músá Banani made the most decisive move of his life. Although his enterprise and activity had made him a man of considerable means, he put an abrupt end to all his business concerns and left Persia. Together with his wife, Samihih, his daughter, Violette, his son-in-law, 'Ali Nakhjavani, and his grand-daughter, Bahiyyih, he pioneered to Africa in 1951 and settled in Kampala, Uganda, a country hitherto unopened to the Bahá'í Faith.¹

If the nature of Musa Banani's services in Africa could be summed up it would be best expressed as "instant, exact and complete obedience" to the wishes of Shoghi Effendi. It was his confident, exuberant, unhesitating and instantaneous fulfilment of the Guardian's instructions that brought great joy to Shoghi Effendi and caused him to speak so lovingly of Músá Banani to those around him. In 1952, when he made his second pilgrimage, the teaching effort in Africa was already bearing fruit. It was an exciting period in the development of the Cause and a joyous reunion occurred. Daily the beloved Guardian would give him specific and detailed instructions for the successive stages of expansion and consolidation of the Faith in Africa. But not until the

¹ *Messages to the Bahd'i World, 1950-1957, Shoghi Effendi: p. 26.*

Banánís took leave of the Guardian on the final day of their pilgrimage did he tell them that he had already announced to the Bahá'í world the appointment of Músá Banani as a Hand of the Cause of God.¹ True to his unassuming nature and with characteristic directness, Musa Banani protested: "I am not worthy. I cannot read or write. My tongue is not eloquent. Give this mantle to 'Ali Nakhjavání who is doing the lion's share of teaching in Africa." But the Guardian replied: "It is your arising that has conquered the continent. 'Ali's turn will come."

The years of intense activity that followed witnessed the true spiritual conquest of Africa, the building of the Mother Temple of that continent and the establishment of an expanding number of Regional and National Spiritual Assemblies. At all times Musa Banani was able to communicate to others his sense of urgency and totality of effort. In the spring of 1954 the Guardian instructed him by cable to purchase a site for the Mother Temple of Africa.² Although he had just undergone eye surgery of a serious nature requiring intensive post-operative care and rest, Musa Banani interrupted his period of recuperation, launched and personally led a search, and within the week was able to cable Shoghi Effendi that the site had been selected and purchased, news which the Guardian was able to share with the Bahá'í world in his message of May 4, 1954.³

The passing of the Guardian in 1957 was an irremediable personal blow for him, but it made him doubly resolute in fulfilling Shoghi Effendi's plans. Baha'is who came into contact with him were deeply impressed with his simple and elemental spiritual strength. During the last ten years of his life when he was increasingly cut down by physical suffering—sustaining paralysis of one side of his body, amputation of a leg and the loss of sight in one eye—the radiant quality of his faith overwhelmed and conquered all. When he could no longer move about, his daily prayers were offered for those Baha'i communities which were experiencing distress.

He was, at the end of his earthly life, a truly

inspiring example of the triumph of the spirit over every earthly limitation. He had made a fortune and raised a Bahá'í family earlier; now he had spent most of his material substance in the crowning nineteen years of his life opening a continent to the Faith and adding thousands to the Baha'i family of the world. He was able to look back upon his life with a profound sense of humility and gratitude. He felt that God had been extremely generous to him. Bahá'u'lláh had given him everything in this life that he had ever wished for, and he was given the opportunity to give it back to Him. His death in Kampala on September 4, 1971, and his interment in his favourite spot in the soil of Africa, within the shadow of the Mother Temple of that continent, was the generous fulfilment of his last wish.

AMÍN BANÁNÍ

AGNES BALDWIN ALEXANDER

1875–1971

At this time, in the island of Hawaii, through the efforts of Miss Alexander, a number of souls have reached the shore of the sea of faith! Consider ye, what happiness, what joy is this! I declare by the Lord of Hosts that had this respected daughter founded an empire, that empire would not have been so great! For this sovereignty is eternal sovereignty and this glory is everlasting glory.

'Abdu'l-Baha,

Tablets of the Divine Plan, pp. 13–14

In the *Kitáb-i-Íqán*, Bahá'u'lláh makes the statement that were anyone to reach the station of the True Seeker, he would *inhale at a distance of a thousand leagues the fragrance of God, and would perceive the resplendent morn of a divine Guidance rising above the dayspring of all things*. Many more than a thousand leagues away from 'Akka, the abode of the Blessed Perfection, a little girl in far-off Hawaii dreamed of serving Christ, but in her own words: "His life seemed far away from me, and I always felt that something was lacking, that I had never been reborn." If ever a child was blessed with a brilliant and noble heritage it was this little girl, Agnes Baldwin

¹ *Messages to the Bahá'í World, 1950–1957*, Shoghi Effendi; p. 21.

² Kampala, Uganda; dedicated to public worship January 15, 1961.

³ *Messages to the Bahá'í World, 1950–1957*, Shoghi Effendi; p. 67.

Alexander, destined herself to become a star even more illustrious than any of her famous forebears.

Agnes's grandparents on her mother's side were the Rev. and Mrs. Dwight Baldwin who sailed from New Bedford, Massachusetts, with the fourth company of missionaries sent by the American Board of Missions in 1831. "My dear mother," Agnes would say, "was born in a grass house." On her father's side, her grandparents were the Rev. and Mrs. William Patterson Alexander, who arrived in the Hawaiian Islands in 1832 after a voyage of 186 days. One need only read James Michener's *Hawaii* to realize what hardships these newly-wedded servants of Christ were forced to endure on the decrepit, overloaded whaling ship of that era.

Though of delicate physique and gentle and timid by nature, Agnes was nevertheless to fall full heir to the courage of her ancestors. From childhood there was a special quality about her which her father recognized as unique; and possibly this insight led to his sending her abroad on a trip which was to change her whole life and bring to the Hawaiian Islands the light of a new Faith.

Agnes was born in Honolulu, on July 21, 1875. But her real life, as she saw it, did not begin until she was reborn as a follower of Bahá'u'lláh. "Until one has been awakened by the Breath of the Holy Spirit, one is asleep," she said, "for the only reality is that of the spirit. For twenty-five years I was asleep."

In 1900 it was most unusual for a young lady of Agnes's gentle birth, and of her then timid nature, to travel alone across oceans and continents, and indeed her father had not intended it that way when he suggested that she accompany some friends who were going to Europe. But as Agnes said later, her father unwittingly guided her to the light of a New Day, and God prepared her for her future role in His service when she was unexpectedly forced to cross the Atlantic alone. She was *en route* to Rome when suddenly she felt that she was nearing her goal. Indeed she was, though as yet she could not analyse such an intuition.

The story of her meeting with Mrs. Charlotte Dixon and her two daughters in a *pension* in Rome is one which Agnes never tired of telling, nor anyone ever tire of hearing: one can see Agnes surrounded by friends with awed faces



Agnes Baldwin Alexander

listening with rapt attention as she recounted the tale of her strange fascination for an unknown woman and her daughters. Shy as she was, she nevertheless stared at them until she was ashamed, for they exuded a radiant happiness. At last, unable any longer to bear the suspense she actually accosted Mrs. Dixon and asked to know the secret of their joy.

Mrs. Dixon had just returned to Europe after a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, but that evening as she talked to Agnes she made no allusion to the advent of a Promised One. What exactly she did say, we do not now know, but her words touched Agnes's heart and caused the tears to flow. In those early days the Message was seldom given directly; however, Mrs. Dixon gave Agnes a handwritten copy of a Baha'i prayer. In Agnes's words it "answered all the longings" of her heart.

Three days elapsed before Agnes discovered the truth. On the evening of the third day after meeting Mrs. Dixon, she retired to her room, but was unable to sleep; and then, in what she described as neither a dream nor a vision, she became overwhelmingly aware that Christ had returned to earth. In the morning upon encountering Mrs. Dixon she joyously exclaimed "Christ is on this earth!" Mrs. Dixon

replied, "Yes, I can see by your face that you know it."

Agnes was to say later, when mass teaching became widespread, that immediate acceptance of the Bahá'í Message was not a mystery to her; that her own instantaneous recognition was a "gift" to her from God. Without books, without being taught, she had recognized her Lord. Just three shining faces in a Roman *pension*, a little handwritten prayer, and the true seeker had found her spiritual home.

As with many other Bahá'ís, Agnes's first test came as a result of over-enthusiasm. One Sunday morning after attending church with some relatives she approached the pastor, certain that he would be astounded and grateful to know of Christ's return. He, however, drew her into his study and proceeded to enlighten her from the Bible as to her "folly". The timid young lady, slim and delicate with golden hair and blue eyes, appeared to be thoroughly worsted, for she could not answer. Though from childhood she and her family had prayed and read the Bible together, she had never really understood the Holy Book. But here that extraordinary steadfastness, that absolute and unwavering certitude which was to characterize her forevermore, came into play. Agnes knew in her innermost being that Bahá'u'lláh was the Promised One. Accordingly, she bought herself a Bible and for the next three months immersed herself in its contents, becoming delighted and exhilarated as proof after proof of the New Revelation unfolded themselves to her eyes. She still had the one prayer that Mrs. Dixon had given her and the later gift of a copy of *Hidden Words*. Now she yearned to meet and talk with others who shared her beliefs and her joy. Mrs. Dixon had also given her some addresses of other Bahá'ís. One of these, the nearest, was rue de Bac in Paris. Agnes wrote, asking for more information about her wonderful new-found Faith. She was in Milan when she received a loving letter of welcome from May Ellis Bolles, later to become May Maxwell, wife of the Wand of the Cause William Sutherland Maxwell, and mother of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum. Agnes readied herself and set out alone for that enchanted spot where so many of the early French, English and American believers were wont to gather in Paris. There, too, she met Mírzá Abu'l-Faḍl, that gentle, humble and

erudite Persian scholar who was sent by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to Europe and to America to deepen the knowledge of the friends.

One of the most memorable moments in her entire life was the meeting with May Ellis Bolles, author of that irresistibly beautiful letter which had drawn her to Paris. Though May herself was but a young girl at the time, she was to Agnes, as to many others, a "spiritual mother". The love she showered upon her "little girl", her "tender little bird", was, as described by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, "divine". As Agnes sailed away from Europe, May wrote that her tender little bird had flown the nest of its mother and was now to become a divine bird seeking "her eternal nest in His Bosom".

One of the most striking things about Agnes was her complete submission to the Will of God. Anyone who knew her would soon become aware of her complete reliance on what she called her "guidance" and her unqualified obedience to it once she had prayed for and received it. She was so fully confident in the outpouring of guidance that would come as a result of earnest prayer, that she never worried about the consequences of following it, never wavered in the face of opposition to it, never questioned or doubted or rebelled against it. Many who tried beforehand to get a decisive answer from Agnes would be frustrated by her reply, "If it is God's plan." But the moment she received what she felt was guidance in answer to her prayer, the action was decisive. All through her life Agnes's sensitivity to the Divine Will was to be confirmed by messages or cables from both the Master and the beloved Guardian; it may have seemed uncanny to others, but to Agnes it was routine.

Agnes had made her declaration of belief on November 26, 1900, and had written her letter of acceptance to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Now, seven months later in Paris she felt that the time had come to return to her homeland and proclaim the Faith to the people of the Hawaiian Islands. Her belongings were already packed and she was to leave for London the next morning when a messenger arrived with a Tablet for her from the Master in which He admonished her to be like a divine bird, return to Hawaii, spread the wings of sanctity over the island, warble melodies in praise of God, gladden thereby the Supreme Concourse, cause seeking souls to be attracted as moths to

a lighted lamp, and be the means of making Hawaii illumined by the Light of God.

Agnes arrived in Honolulu on December 26, 1901, the first Bahá'í to set foot on Hawaiian soil. Two generations after the Baldwins and Alexanders arose to establish Christianity in what were then known as the Sandwich Isles, their descendant carried to those shores and firmly planted the banner of Bahá'u'lláh. What poignant thoughts must have stirred within her!

There was such a great difference in Agnes's general demeanour that her father said the trip had been her "salvation", and though word had gone round that she had taken up some "weird cult," her sister said that if it made Agnes happy it must have some value. In Paris, when someone had asked whether Agnes was a Baha'i, another had simply said, "Look at her face!" But the change in her did not impel any of her immediate family to investigate the source of her happiness. Agnes realized that she would have to demonstrate in her life the power of the Faith to bring happiness and certitude to seeking souls.

For twelve years Agnes remained in Hawaii. In her published memoirs, *Personal Recollections of a Bahá'í Life in the Hawaiian Islands*, she describes in detail the progress made in those early years, relating the story of Clarence Hobron Smith, another scion of missionary families of Hawaii who was the second from the Islands to accept Bahá'u'lláh; of Elizabeth Muther, the famous "Uttie" of Louie Mathew's *Not Every Sea Hath Pearls*; of Dr. George Augur, one of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's nineteen disciples,¹ and Mrs. Augur, both of whom were among the first believers in Hawaii and also among the first to take the Faith to Japan; and of Kanichi Yamamoto, the first Japanese in the world to accept the Faith.

During this period, obeying as usual the voice of inspiration, Agnes had started to make a study of Japan and its culture. With many Japanese living in the Islands it was perhaps not unusual that one with an active inquiring mind should begin such a study, but Agnes felt it was another step preparing her for her role in life. In the spring of 1913 both her beloved parents passed away, her sister sailed for California, and the loving, close-knit family unity was at an end. Agnes was alone. Now she

decided that it was time to teach the Faith in other parts of the world, but first she would visit her "spiritual mother" in Montreal. May Bolles was now May Maxwell, and Agnes spent a blissful month at the Maxwell home before going on to spend the winter in New York. In that period she received a Tablet from 'Abdu'l-Bahá encouraging her to travel to Japan and promising an outpouring of divine confirmations. The Tablet was dated October 13, 1913, and had been written just as Agnes was leaving the Hawaiian Islands. Now she knew why she had been studying the culture of Japan.

She planned to journey to Japan by way of Italy where she had relatives, and hoped to visit the Holy Land *en route* to the orient, but she was delayed in Switzerland by the outbreak of World War I. In August, 1914, another Tablet from the Master reached her urging her to proceed directly to Japan, thence to India, and to the Holy Land, but making clear that the choice must be hers. It is not difficult to imagine how much Agnes longed to meet the Object of her devotion. Ever since those first wonderful days when the pilgrims from 'Akka returned to Paris filled with an overflowing love for the Master she had realized that no spot on earth was so like heaven. But totally in keeping with her characteristic unquestioning obedience to His slightest wish, Agnes went directly to Japan. As though protected by guardian angels she sailed safely through the perilous waters where so many other vessels had been bombed and sunk, arriving in Japan in 1914. For the next twenty-three years, although she made many trips home to Hawaii and to other parts of the Far East, Agnes made her base in Japan. 'Abdu'l-Bahá's appreciation of Agnes's exemplary service is contained in His *Tablets of the Divine Plan*, written about two years after her arrival in Japan. He wrote in the Tablet dated April 11, 1916:

Consider ye, that Miss Agnes Alexander, the daughter of the Kingdom, the beloved maid-servant of the Blessed Perfection, travelled alone to Hawaii . . . and now she is gaining spiritual victories in Japan! Reflect ye how this daughter was confirmed in the Hawaiian Islands. She became the cause of the guidance of a gathering of people. (p. 13)

The Tablet contains a further reference to

¹ See *The Bahá'í World*, vol. IV, pp. 118-119.

Agnes—the words cited at the opening of this memoir.

In 1921, Agnes spent one month in Korea; she was the first Baha'i to teach the Faith in that country. She wrote of that period: "During the month spent in Seoul, God's power had been triumphant. All doors had been opened. Japanese and Koreans, both Buddhist and Christians, had heard the Baha'i Message and were now free to search themselves. It could not be said they had been forgotten in God's great plan for the New Day." Through Agnes, many of the young Koreans were inspired to write to 'Abdu'l-Baha brief but very sincere expressions of appreciation for the Faith. These she sent to the Master on September 19, 1921, on her return to Tokyo. The answer which He penned to those "heavenly sons" came in February of 1922, more than two months after His passing. Agnes was never to see her Lord on this plane of existence.

In 1924, Agnes accompanied Martha Root to China where they spoke of the Baha'i Faith to Sun Yat Sen, the "George Washington of China", and presented him with two books. While they were in China these two remarkable ladies contacted many people of prominence and spoke at a boys school near Peking.

In the course of her travels, Agnes visited Taiwan, Hong Kong, the Philippines, the United States, Canada and Europe. She proclaimed the Faith widely on these trips among people of capacity and prestige, and she often used her knowledge of Esperanto to make contacts. She attended conferences on religion, meetings of such organizations as the Institute of Pacific Relations, gave talks at schools, universities, branches of the Young Men's Christian Association, and was a genius at obtaining publicity for the Faith in the media of mass communication.

While on one of her excursions out of Japan in 1927 she received a letter from Dr. Shiroschi, Dean of Tokyo Imperial University, which reflects the attitude of the Japanese toward this great lady: "As our steamer nears Yokohama, Fuji San is in sight. This is the symbol of our welcome to you! Come to Japan."

On January 10, 1928, in obedience to an appeal from Shoghi Effendi, she again set sail for Japan. The Guardian wrote: "I long to hear of your determination to return to Japan and pick up the thread of your unsparing efforts

and activities for the promotion of the Cause of God. I feel that your destiny lies in that far-off and promising country where your noble and pioneer services future generations will befittingly glorify and thankfully remember. May the Beloved remove every obstacle from your path and enable you to resume your active work in that land."

In 1937, Agnes again left Japan, this time to attain her heart's desire. She was permitted to make her pilgrimage to the Holy Land, at long last to meet her beloved Shoghi Effendi. To him she tendered that same love and devotion she had previously lavished upon his Grandfather; and he, on his part, appreciated her unceasing labours in the path of God no less than had 'Abdu'l-Baha.

The active role of Japan in World War II prevented her return to that country until 1950. Chronologically, Agnes was now growing old. She had already served the Faith for fifty years, yet she was as enthusiastic as ever, possessing a childlike quality of innocence and delight that seemed at times as though it should be at variance with those other qualities which enabled her to be the "founder" of a spiritual "empire". At fifty-four years of age she had climbed Mount Fuji with a band of Buddhist pilgrims; at eighty-five, on one of her jaunts to the Philippines, she accompanied Jack Davis to the mountains of Luzon where she had to ride for two hours in a jeep bumping along corrugated roads and then ford a stream. Three times over the years she went from cell to cell in the National Prison of Manila, teaching and giving solace to hundreds of prisoners, even those in murderers' row. Her reason? Because Baha'u'llah had been a prisoner.

I first heard from Agnes shortly after we were both appointed to the Auxiliary Board for Asia in 1954. To me, as to other pioneers in the area, she sent loving little notes on flowered paper and often enclosed excerpts from the letters of famous long-gone Baha'is, or quotations from the Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Baha and letters of the Guardian. Her notes expressed her perfectly, for she was forever saying that one must never worry, but must always trust in God and then everything would turn out right. In one of her letters she commented on the joy she found in serving the beloved Guardian under the loving guidance of the Hands of the Cause in Asia, not realizing that

she would herself be elevated to the rank of Hand of the Cause on March 27, 1957. With typical modesty, she wrote, in a letter to the Bahá'ís of the Pacific: "As you probably know, the beloved Guardian in one of his cables, gave me the assignment, after the passing of George Townshend :

AGNES ALEXANDER DISTINGUISHED PIONEER
FAITH ELEVATED RANK HAND CAUSE CON-
FIDENT APPOINTMENT WILL, SPIRITUALLY
REINFORCE TEACHING CAMPAIGN NORTH
SOUTH HEART PACIFIC OCEAN.

I have only quoted this that you might know the responsibility that our beloved Guardian has given me and that I may have your prayers that as one soul in many bodies we may all work for the one great purpose in life."

Agnes received approximately one hundred letters from Shoghi Effendi. In one of them, written during the early years of the Guardianship, he asked her to deepen the understanding of the friends in America in relation to the Covenant. She went from centre to centre, and also to Geyserville Summer School, stressing the Covenant and *The Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*. Thus she was responsible for helping many to bridge the period of transition from the Heroic Age to the Formative Age. Her total dedication was given successively to 'Abdu'l-Baha, Shoghi Effendi and the Universal House of Justice.

Like the waves of the sea, Agnes was always in motion. Typical of many of her letters to the friends is the following: "In January I had the great bounty to accompany our beloved Bahá'ís, Mr. and Mrs. Torii, to the Island of Shikoku where as yet no Bahá'í had been. Mr. Torii is visiting the schools for the blind and also blind associations of Japan . . . Everywhere I was permitted to speak of our glorious Faith. It was a wonderful week spent on that island! Returning, I came to Hiroshima where last year I was twice. Here I will have been a month when I return to Kyoto in a few days. It has all been glorious and nowhere has there been prejudice shown . . . I feel an especial love for these people. . . Our beloved Guardian wrote that the people of this city who had suffered so cruelly had a right to hear of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh for peace and brotherhood, so you can imagine I feel a deep interest and love here."

Not very long after Agnes's return to Tokyo in 1950 she moved from Tokyo to Kyoto. Always modest and unassuming, she lived at first in a tiny room, then moved to an almost equally tiny apartment. She cooked and served meals to her guests in a kitchen no larger than a closet, and often on trips to Tokyo would astonish visitors to her room by opening up a large suitcase filled with pots, pans, dishes and a hotplate and proceeding to cook them a meal. She had no financial worries, but she expended her resources on the Faith and others; on herself, she expended as little as possible.

No matter how far afield she travelled, Hawaii was always "home". She loved the Islands and the people and was thrilled when told by the beloved Guardian, at the height of the mass teaching successes in Africa: that now was the time for the brown race to outstrip the black.

When the National Spiritual Assembly of the Hawaiian Islands was formed in 1964, Agnes attended that first convention as the representative of the Universal House of Justice. Exciting as the event was to all those present, there was none more proud and happy, none who could appreciate the miracle of that moment more fully than that devoted servant who, sixty-two years before, had brought back to her homeland the precious gift of a new Light; and who had, letter by letter, kept her beloved Master advised that now there were two Bahá'ís, now three, now four and five, and finally enough believers for a Spiritual Assembly. How rewarding it must have been for her to look out at the sea of faces, all her children. How much progress had been made since those first days when she, Clarence Smith, and Elizabeth Muther, having no place to meet, would go on Saturday afternoons by trolley car up to Pacific Heights, there to read prayers and to share their Tablets from the Master.

Following the first National Convention in Hawaii, Agnes returned to her post in Japan. Once someone asked her when she would leave Japan. Opening her eyes very wide she replied: "Why, dearie, 'Abdu'l-Baha told me to go to Japan. He never told me to leave it!"

Altogether, she spent thirty-two years in Japan. She was well aware of its great destiny. Again and again, Shoghi Effendi had encouraged her in her efforts and assured her that her own destiny was irrevocably bound

up with that land. She remembered 'Abdu'l-Bahá's prophecies concerning Japan and cherished that first letter written by the young Guardian to the Japanese Bahá'ís, dated January 26, 1922: "Despondent and sorrowful though I be in these darksome days, yet whenever I call to mind the hopes our departed Master so confidently reposed in the friends in that Far-Eastern land, hope revives within me and drives away the gloom of His bereavement . . . I recall so vividly the radiant joy that transfigured His Face whenever I opened before Him your supplications as well as those of Miss Agnes Alexander. What promises he gave us all regarding the future of the Cause in that land at the close of almost every supplication I read to Him! Let me state . . . the most emphatic, the most inspiring of them all. These are His very words, that still keep ringing in my ears: 'Japan will turn ablaze! Japan is endowed with a most remarkable capacity for the spread of the Cause of God! . . .' On another occasion—how vividly I recall it!—as He reclined on His chair, with eyes closed with bodily fatigue, He waved His hand and uttered vigorously and cheerfully these words in the presence of His friends: 'Here we are seated calm, quiet and inactive, but the Hand of the Unseen is ever active and triumphant in lands, even as distant as Japan!'"

The busy years passed. Just how full they were is best realized through reading her own history of the Cause in Japan, written at the request of the Guardian. Agnes witnessed the formation of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of North East Asia, in 1957, with its seat in Tokyo, and was a member of that body from 1957 to 1963. During those same years she travelled back and forth from the Holy Land attending the meetings of the Hands of the Cause, sharing with them the grief occasioned by the unexpected passing of the beloved Guardian and the equally unexpected responsibility of carrying forward the work of the Ten Year Crusade without his living presence. She witnessed the glorious culmination of those five years in the formation of the Universal House of Justice in 1963, and attended the World Congress in London. In 1965, when she was about to attend the World Congress of Esperantists in Tokyo, she fell and broke her hip. She was never again to walk alone. Still, there was no word of complaint,

only a positive assurance that God had a purpose in confining her to a Tokyo hospital for two years. To Mrs. Barbara Sims, one of those who kept a close and loving vigil over her during those years, she said, "Dearie, nothing happens by chance." To another friend she commented: "It is my great hope and prayer that through this accident the hearts of all the Bahá'ís in all Japan shall be so united and love each other with such a deep love, it will be felt by all those around us. Then will the words of the Master be fulfilled, that Japan will turn ablaze." How deeply she understood the mystery of sacrifice!

Agnes had said that 'Abdu'l-Bahá had never told her to leave Japarr. But in 1967, after two years in hospital, still unable to walk arid, now unable to write, she looked homeward toward Hawaii. She who, with never a thought for her own will had always operated on the guidance she sought in prayer, now knew that she could come back to the Islands. A place had been prepared for her, almost across the street from where her childhood home had once stood. She was now ninety-two years old and very fragile. Her memory was failing and she was aware of it. Her mission and her life were both drawing to an end. Despite the urging of friends who felt she could not withstand the journey, Agnes was adamant. With a helper she returned to Kyoto, disposed of her books and trunks full of writings and relics, mementos of a Baha'i life truly lived to its fullest and, to the delight of the Hawaiian believers, came home.

It is not possible to convey to anyone who did not know her the strength of character possessed by Agnes—her extraordinary courage, her complete selflessness, the supreme degree of renunciation apparent in all her actions, and her unshakeable faith. She was a willing and loving thrall of the Cause, and in her bondage she was as free as that "divine bird" 'Abdu'l-Bahá had asked her to be. She was, through the years, so often alone, yet she was never lonely; she exemplified that phrase from one of the prayers, . . . *love for Thee is my companion*. A thread of joy runs through her many letters to pioneers and friends, and she would often look up and say, "but, my dear, I am so happy!"

Agnes slipped away quietly to the Abhá Kingdom on January 1, 1971. She is buried

only a few miles distant from the illustrious Martha Root, her fellow Hand- of the Cause. On January 4, 1971, the following cable was sent to the Baha'is of the world by the Universal House of Justice:

PROFOUNDLY GRIEVE PASSING ILLUMINED SOUL HAND CAUSE AGNES ALEXANDER LONG-STANDING PILLAR CAUSE FAR EAST FIRST BRING FAITH HAWAIIAN ISLANDS STOP HER LONG DEDICATED EXEMPLARY LIFE SERVICE DEVOTION CAUSE GOD ANTICIPATED BY CENTRE COVENANT SELECTING HER SHARE MAY MAXWELL IMPERISHABLE HONOUR MENTION TABLETS DIVINE PLAN STOP HER UNRESTRAINED UNCEASING PURSUIT TEACHING OBEDIENCE COMMAND BAHAUULLAH EXHORTATIONS MASTER GUIDANCE BELOVED GUARDIAN SHINING EXAMPLE ALL FOLLOWERS FAITH STOP HER PASSING SEVERES ONE MORE LINK HEROIC AGE STOP ASSURE FAMILY FRIENDS ARDENT PRAYERS HOLIEST SHRINE PROGRESS RADIANT SOUL REQUEST ALL NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES HOLD MEMORIAL MEETINGS AND THOSE RESPONSIBLE HOLD SERVICES MOTHER TEMPLES.

It seems fitting to close this account of Agnes Alexander's life with a paragraph from the chapter called "The Awakening" in her memoirs of the Faith in Hawaii:

"As I take my pen to write, my thoughts are of you, the yet unborn workers in His Cause, you who in future times will inherit whatever we of the Apostolic and Formative Ages have accomplished, you who will usher in the Golden Age, the Kingdom of God, the New World Order."

ELENA MARIA MARSELLA

DR. LUṬFU'LLÁH ḤAKÍM

1888-1968

Luṭfu'lláh Hakim was born into a family of distinguished Jewish medical doctors, his great-grandfather and his grandfather having served as physicians at the court of the Sháhs of Persia.

Hakim Masih, the grandfather of Luṭfu'lláh Hakim, accompanied Muhammad Sháh as court physician on his pilgrimage to Karbila, Iraq. While stopping in Baghádád, Ḥakím

Masih heard about the illustrious Ṭáhirih¹ and hastened to meet her. After listening to her discourse he was overwhelmed with admiration and wonder and openly exclaimed: "Not amongst women nor even amongst men have I ever seen such an erudite person; she is unique in knowledge, wisdom and eloquence." He could not ignore the interest she had awakened and day and night he searched and investigated, desiring to discover and understand the source of power and inspiration on which this unusual and noble woman drew.

The opportunity to further his understanding arose when he was summoned to a prison in Tihran to attend the sick child of one of the believers who had been imprisoned for his faith. Even after the child's complete recovery he would visit the prison to meet the father and son, chained and living under the most cruel conditions. Often he preferred to spend hours in the presence of Ismu'llah, the imprisoned believer, and neglected his clinic. The explanations that were given in answer to his sincere questions were accepted with the utmost love and reverence, and he became the first Jew in the world to embrace the Cause. When news of his acceptance reached Bahá'u'lláh a Tablet was revealed by the Exalted Pen in honour of Hakim Masih. This was followed by other Tablets which are unfortunately now lost to us, the paper having deteriorated through being hidden underground by the wife of Hakim Masih to avoid the persecution that would have resulted from their being found in the family's possession.

Hakim Masih had only one son, Hakim Sulayman, whose youngest child was Luṭfu'lláh Hakim. When his father and mother passed away, his elder brother, Dr. Araštú Khán, took him under his care and protection. Luṭfu'llah grew to be a very sincere and staunch Bahá'í.

In 1910 he went to England to study physiotherapy. During his studies he wrote frequently to 'Abdu'l-Baha in the Holy Land constantly expressing his deep longing to consecrate his life to His service. When 'Abdu'l-Baha reached London on September 4, 1911, at the outset of His historic journey to the West, He found

¹ "The Pure One", noblest of her sex and outstanding heroine of the Babi Dispensation; only woman among the Letters of the Living, and the first woman suffrage martyr. Born Qazvin, 1817-1818; put to death Tihran, August, 1852.



Dr. Lutfu'lláh Ĥakím

Lutfu'llah Ĥakím amongst the friends who had gathered to greet Him. Thereafter, Lutfu'llah was constantly in attendance on his beloved Master. Before 'Abdu'l-Bahá left London, He told him, "Mírzá Lutfu'llah, I will call you to Haifa." At the request of 'Abdu'l-Baha he visited Germany to serve as assistant and translator for an outstanding Persian Baha'i teacher who was serving the Cause in that country. From Germany Lutfu'llah wrote to 'Abdu'l-Baha saying: "In this trip I discovered three things: first, the love which Bahá'u'lláh has created in many hearts; second, now I understand what it means to be a Bahá'í and I believe in this Faith more than ever; third, after meeting the beloved Master, this trip gave me the greatest joy. I was not worthy of so many bounties. It is all due to the Master's abundant kindness and love showered upon me. I supplicate the Lord that whatever I do in my life will meet with Your pleasure."

The remainder of Dr. Hakim's life was spent in the service of the Cause, his sole aim being to follow the path of servitude with determination and detachment. He protected the friends like a brother from many tests and was often a link between the Master and the friends in England to whom 'Abdu'l-Bahá would often

relay messages through Luṭfu'lláh Hakim. In one moving Tablet 'Abdu'l-Baha assured Lutfu'llah that he was never forgotten and prayed that he would receive fresh confirmation every moment of his life.

At a time when 'Abdu'l-Baha was saddened by the publication in Europe of some books attacking the Faith, Luṭfu'lláh gladdened His heart by writing Him about an ardent new adherent of the Cause in England, Dr. John E. Esslemont,¹ and said that "this noble soul is studying the Faith with love and enthusiasm and desires to write a book about it to help the ready souls to reach the fountainhead of love and faith."

Soon after that the promise given him by his beloved 'Abdu'l-Baha was fulfilled and he was called to Haifa to serve the Cause at its World Centre. In *The Priceless Pearl*, pages 31-32, Amatu'l-Baha Ruhyyih Khánum relates that "Shoghi Effendi was still little more than a boy in 1920 when 'Abdu'l-Bahá sent him abroad for his studies, in the company of Lutfu'llah Hakim who was returning to England . . ." and at the Master's insistence Shoghi Effendi, who had exhausted himself in the service of 'Abdu'l-Baha and needed rest and recuperation, "took the rest that had been enjoined upon him in a sanatorium in Neuilly, a suburb of Paris", and after a stay of about two months "then proceeded to England in July".

Lutfu'llah was in Haifa when 'Abdu'l-Baha passed away on November 28, 1921, and his services during that poignant period of sorrow were so loyal, painstaking and steadfast that in later years Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Baha'i Faith, expressed his admiration of the vigilance and devotion of Lutfu'llah Hakim. After the passing of the Master, Lutfu'llah remained in Haifa and was one of those who with shattered hearts greeted the grief-stricken young grandson of 'Abdu'l-Baha upon whose shoulders had fallen such a heavy burden. He writes: "When we received the news of the arrival of Shoghi Effendi from London, we all hastened to the station. When the Guardian saw the friends who were there to receive him, he greeted them with such a sorrow-stricken voice that all trembled with sadness." Luṭfu'lláh assuaged his own grief through seeking to

¹ Appointed posthumously a Hand of the Cause of God by Shoghi Effendi, November 22, 1925; author of *Baha'u'llah and the New Era*.

serve and bring happiness to the tender youthful Guardian. In 1924 he returned to Persia and Shoghi Effendi encouraged him to write to him regular and informative letters. In his replies the beloved Guardian assured him that he would be remembered in prayers at the Holy Shrines and wished him an ever-growing measure of success in his services to the Faith.

In Tíhrán he married Bahiyyih Khánum, the daughter of a well-known physician, who bore him a son and a daughter and shared with him the responsibilities he carried. In this period he served as translator for, and assistant in the clinic of, Dr. Susan I. Moody, a devoted Bahá'í physician who in 1910 at the request of 'Abdu'l-Baha had left her home in America to serve the Cause in Persia.¹ It may be from this association that he was always called "Doctor" Hakim.

With the Guardian's approval, he transferred his residence in 1950 to England where he served the Faith and the friends with exemplary loyalty. He was in England when, in 1951, the Guardian summoned him to serve at the World Centre and he was later appointed to the first International Baha'i Council, serving as Eastern Assistant Secretary. In addition he rendered valuable services to the eastern and western pilgrims, conducting them through the Archives and escorting them to the Shrines and Holy Places in Haifa, 'Akká and Bahjí. This was an arduous occupation requiring that he cover large distances on foot several times a day, from the Shrine of the Báb to the home of the Master or to the lower area of town, climbing the long flights of stairs, hundreds of steps, over and over again, carrying messages, bringing the pilgrims to see the Guardian, assisting them to make their travel arrangements. Indeed, perhaps it was this ceaseless activity, so exhausting in itself and rendered with such devotion, that strengthened Lutfu'lláh's physical constitution enabling him to successfully recover from a serious illness in 1957 and thus prolonging his life until it was crowned by his being elected to the first Universal House of Justice in 1963.

To a nephew of Dr. Hakim who came on pilgrimage Shoghi Effendi spoke of his appreciation of the sincerity of Lutfu'llah Hakim's service, the effort he expended, the confidence

he reposed in him and the happiness he brought the pilgrims.

Lutfu'llah was in the hospital recovering from serious surgery when he received the news of the passing of Shoghi Effendi, a heart-rending blow which undoubtedly aggravated his condition and possibly contributed to the partial paralysis with which he was thereafter afflicted. Though feeble and sorrow-stricken, he hastened to be among those who received Amatu'l-Baha Ruhíyyih Khánum when she returned to the Holy Land crushed by the fateful events that transpired in London in that dark November of 1957. Thereafter Lutfu'llah would often ask the pilgrims to pray that his departure from this world would be hastened. He lived through those remaining years of separation from his beloved Guardian with great patience and endurance.

One of the last acts of Shoghi Effendi's life had been to call for the holding of five inter-continental conferences at the midway point of the Ten Year World Crusade which triumphantly concluded in April, 1963. The first of these was scheduled to be held in Kampala, Uganda in January, 1958 and he had designated Amatu'l-Baha Rúhíyyih Khánum as his representative, to be accompanied by Dr. Lutfu'llah Hakim, member of the International Bahá'í Council. Despite her personal grief and lack of heart to attend any function of any kind, and despite Dr. Hakim's sorrow and the necessity of using a cane when walking, they were united in their view that they must carry out the wish of their beloved Guardian. Their appearance at the Kampala conference was a source of joy and inspiration to the many believers assembled there.

An endearing gift of Lutfu'llah Hakim was his capacity for relating stories of the days of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the Guardian with a deep concern for accuracy. Whenever he told a story, it was exactly the same as he had recounted it many times before; even the words would be almost identical and his tone of voice would change at special points in the narration. Nothing would ever be altered to please his listeners nor was there any personal interpretation of his stories; it was sufficient for the individuals to listen and learn the wisdom which they conveyed.

He had a very acute sense of the history of the cause. He did not write history, but he

¹ *Bahá'í News*, vol. 1, pp. 3-4.

collected and preserved many important documents and photographs. The letters he had received throughout his life were carefully arranged and bound together every year. The numerous photographs he either took or collected were all carefully documented, each bearing an inscription on the back—the names of the people, the occasion and date. He would ask the pilgrims to give him a photograph of themselves with the date, their name and profession, and if applicable a note stating in which branch of the administrative or teaching work they had been active. If a pilgrim did not have a photograph, he would request him to send it by mail.

He himself was a good photographer and said that he had often taken pictures of 'Abdu'l-Baha. He enjoyed relating that one day 'Abdu'l-Baha approached him and said playfully: "Do not put me in this black box of yours any more; if you do, I shall slap you." Dr. Hakim replied: "I do my work and the Master will do whatever He likes." He continued to take photographs of 'Abdu'l-Baha, but never was he slapped!

Amongst his valuable papers were the memoirs of the Hand of the Cause Dr. John E. Esslemont, the illustrious author of *Bahá'u'lláh* and *the New Era*, a book written in part through the encouragement offered by Dr. Hakim and the first chapters of which Lutfu'lláh brought with him to the Holy Land for the perusal of 'Abdu'l-Baha.

Another outstanding personal quality of Dr. Hakim was his intense love for the Guardian. This mysterious power kept him alive, energetic and always happy. It was equalled by his loyalty which never wavered in the face of the repeated attacks of the Covenant-breakers, both in the days of 'Abdu'l-Baha and Shoghi Effendi. At the slightest attack or malevolent threat from the avowed enemies of the Cause, Lutfu'llah would bristle with indignation. Undoubtedly this great loyalty was one of the characteristics that endeared him to both 'Abdu'l-Baha and Shoghi Effendi and attracted to him such unique opportunities to serve the Faith and receive such high honours in doing so.

He would accompany the pilgrims to the Holy Shrines, urging them to pray also for the friends who were not there. His constant remark to every pilgrim was: "Appreciate every moment you spend here in the Holy Land."

No one remembers having heard from his lips the words, "I am tired", not even in the years when he was bowed with age and afflicted with paralysis and other ailments. Never did he complain. He was an eager and tireless guide to those visiting the Shrines on Mt. Carmel. Exhausted, ailing, bent with the burden of sorrows, under winter rain or summer sun, he would always reach the doors of the Shrines exactly at nine in the morning when the gardens were opened to guests.

Dr. Hakim also had a charming sense of humour. One day the beloved Guardian ordered tea for pilgrims. Lutfu'llah always had everything ready for the occasion. He brought the tea and the Guardian asked him his age. He immediately replied, "Not yet twenty-one, beloved Guardian." Shoghi Effendi's affectionate and sweet smile was his reward.

Illness took its toll and his health continued to fail. In October, 1967, the Universal House of Justice wrote to the Baha'i world:

"After a lifetime of devoted and self-sacrificing service to the Cause of God Dr. Lutfu'llah Hakim has asked the Universal House of Justice to accept his resignation from that Institution because his health and advancing age make it increasingly difficult for him to participate as effectively as he would wish in its work.

"The Universal House of Justice has regretfully accepted Dr. Hakim's resignation, but in view of the imminence of the next election, has asked him to continue to serve as a member until that time, and Dr. Hakim has kindly consented to do so.

"Having served the Master Himself in the Holy Land, as well as accompanying Him during His historic visits in England and Scotland, and been intimately associated with Shoghi Effendi in his youth, Dr. Hakim was called again to the World Centre by the beloved Guardian in 1951 for important service at the World Centre and was later appointed to the first International Baha'i Council, of which he was the Eastern Assistant Secretary. He continued to serve on that body and then on the Universal House of Justice with undiminished devotion but with increasing difficulty during the subsequent sixteen years, earning the love and admiration of his co-workers. . ."

Towards the end of his life, his illness grew worse and he was confined to hospital. All the

nurses who tended him praised him as a saintly man. The day came when he asked for the photograph of his grandson. He looked at it intently, prayed for the child, kissed the portrait several times and peacefully took his flight to the Abha Kingdom.

Amatu'l-Baha Rúhíyyih Khánum who had been ill in bed for more than three months during which time she was unable to leave her room hastened to the funeral of Dr. Hakim. Coming into the hall she placed a flower on the bier and placed her forehead on that flower, as if she were sending a message in care of the faithful servant of the beloved Guardian.

The Universal House of Justice announced the passing of this valued member of the supreme administrative Institution of the Baha'í world in these affectionate sentiments:

GRIEVE ANNOUNCE PASSING LUTFULLAH HAKIM
DEDICATED SERVANT CAUSE GOD STOP SPECIAL
MISSIONS ENTRUSTED HIM FULL CONFIDENCE
REPOSED IN HIM BY MASTER AND GUARDIAN
HIS CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH EARLY
DISTINGUISHED BELIEVERS EAST WEST
INCLUDING HIS COLLABORATION ESLEMONT
HIS SERVICES PERSIA BRITISH ISLES HOLY LAND
HIS MEMBERSHIP APPOINTED AND ELECTED
INTERNATIONAL BAHAI COUNCIL HIS ELECTION
UNIVERSAL HOUSE JUSTICE WILL ALWAYS BE
REMEMBERED IMMORTAL ANNALS FAITH BAH-
ULLAH STOP INFORM BELIEVERS HOLD BEFIT-
TING MEMORIAL MEETINGS ALL CENTRES STOP
CONVEY ALL MEMBERS HIS FAMILY EXPRESSIONS
LOVING SYMPATHY ASSURANCE PRAYERS PRO-
GRESS HIS RADIANT SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

The author is greatly indebted to Amatu'l-Baha Ruhíyyih Khánum who graciously accepted to review this sketch and without whose suggestions and additional material this would have been incomplete.

A. Q. FAIZÍ

IONITA WRIGHT

1915–1968

Ionita Wright, one of the first inhabitants of San Andrés Island to embrace the Faith of BahB'u'llah, was born on June 20, 1915, and ascended to the Abha Kingdom on May 5, 1968. Within a few days of first hearing of the

Bahá'í Faith, in October, 1966, from a pioneer to the island, Ionita embraced the Cause despite mounting pressure and opposition from relatives and friends who rebuked her for following a "false prophet". She deeply loved the beauty of the teachings and the prayers and her fondest hope was to be a successful Baha'í teacher; she would spend hours studying and memorizing the BahB'i Writings, as she was barely able to read and write. Known to her, but unknown to the friends, she was suffering from incipient cancer and she frequently said that the first Baha'í funeral in San Andrés would be hers. Her tall body was always frail and thin; she worked hard and for long hours caring for an aged, helpless father, a thirteen year old daughter and other relatives who were at least partially dependent from time to time on her generosity and labour. She was elected to the Spiritual Assembly in 1967 and was one of the most faithful in her attendance and participation. At times she would arrive at the gate of the meeting place of the Assembly and would have to wait to gather strength and steel herself against the pain before mounting the six steps to the house.

As death approached she elicited a promise from her brother and son that she would be given a Bahá'í funeral, a promise which was kept despite the pressure exerted against such a departure from island tradition. During her last hours she seemed to live increasingly in the world of the spirit. Her countenance grew luminous and saintly. She passed away peacefully repeating, "BahB'u'llah! BahB'u'llah!" To those who visited her at the hospital to insist that she summon a minister and be baptized, Ionita declared: "I am a BahB'i and I shall die a Baha'í, for I know it is right. If everyone forsakes BahB'u'llah, I shall not. If there be no other Bahá'ís left on this island, I will remain a Baha'í until I die."

Ionita's steadfastness unexpectedly led to the proclamation of the Cause on her native island—her prayers to become a teacher of the Faith were answered. Her funeral service was announced on the radio and was attended by nearly five hundred people from every stratum of society. The visitors pored over the mimeographed copies of the Baha'í readings and took them home to show friends and relatives; requests for copies were received long afterwards. The Baha'ís of the island found new



Ionita Wright

strength and capacities in themselves and inspired by Ionita's courageous example were loosed from fear of ridicule for being known as followers of Bahá'u'lláh.

HELEN HORNBY

MARIETTE GERMAINE BOLTON

1900-1968

The memory of the warm, generous and gracious nature that Mariette Germaine Bolton possessed will ever remain in the hearts of those who met and loved her.

Daughter of a French Canadian farming couple, with the background of a traditionally large Roman Catholic family, early in her life Mariette grew dissatisfied with the teachings of that church and commenced her search for spiritual beliefs which would fill her life with purpose. In 1924, with her husband, Stanley William Bolton, Mariette settled in Sydney, Australia. They quickly made many friends and were occupied with building a prosperous business and raising a family—Antoinette, Mariette and Stanley. From her earliest days in Australia, Mariette experienced long periods

of loneliness for in the course of his business her husband travelled throughout Australia and New Zealand. A woman of great courage, perseverance, determination and faith in her ability to succeed in making a good life for her husband and family, she remained undaunted even with the closure of her husband's business, in late 1929, due to import restrictions imposed by the Commonwealth Government of Australia.

In Sydney, Mariette and her husband met Clara and Henry Hyde Dunn, John Brogan and Dr. and Mrs. Coxon. From the Duns they heard of the Baha'i Faith; the son of John Brogan was to become the architect for the Mother Temple of the Pacific built in an outlying suburb (Ingleside); and Dr. and Mrs. Coxon's profession of chiropractic was to become the profession of both Mariette and Stanley. After three years of intensive study at the Palmer School of Chiropractic in the United States they returned to Australia in 1932 to again attempt to establish themselves in their chosen home. They devoted themselves to helping the sick regain their health and, in their private time, to spreading the Baha'i Faith and assisting to lay the foundation of its administrative order.

In the years that followed, Mariette's resolute personality and capacity for organization enabled her to achieve many goals for the Faith in Australia including the acquisition of a property at Yerrinbool where, in 1936, Henry Hyde Dunn laid the foundation stone for the first Australian summer school, "Bolton Place". She was a foundation member of the Local Spiritual Assemblies of Sydney, Yerrinbool and Kuring-gai, and a pioneer teacher to Caringbah, Yerrinbool, Wollongong and Orange where she saw her efforts contribute to the formation of assemblies. She was also a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Australia and New Zealand, serving as secretary from April, 1948 to April, 1951. Throughout this period she also served as hostess at the national centre and cared for her family, a very full programme for anyone to undertake and more especially so for one not using her mother tongue.

Mariette wrote frequently to Shoghi Effendi from 1932 until his death, turning to him for guidance in whatever she undertook for the Faith. In an early letter he expressed the hope



Mariette Germaine Bolton

that "Mr. and Mrs. Bolton after deep study will become active teachers for the Faith." Although they set out in 1939 to make the pilgrimage to Israel, the outbreak of war prevented their going to Haifa, but the encouragement given in letters from the Guardian sustained them in their teaching efforts.

In 1952, travelling alone, Mariette Germaine Bolton went to New Caledonia as a Bahá'í teacher, one of the first Baha'i teachers from Australia to the Pacific Islands.

The year 1953 saw Mariette and Stanley Bolton undertake an extensive world tour, crowned by their pilgrimage to the World Centre and meeting Shoghi Effendi. They attended the formal dedication of the Mother Temple of the West in Wilmette, represented the National Spiritual Assembly of Australia at the formation of the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Suva, Fiji, and participated in the Intercontinental Conference in New Delhi, India.

In 1956 Mariette travelled to New Plymouth, New Zealand, to aid in establishing the Local Spiritual Assembly, a necessary requirement at that time as a preliminary to the establishment of the National Spiritual Assembly of New Zealand as an independent entity.

Teaching in the United States and Canada on her own followed in 1957, and in 1959 she again visited New Zealand teaching in both the north and south islands. Seven months in 1963 were spent in visiting Bahá'í centres in Canada and the United States, teaching where opportunities were available; and, for Mariette, this meant anyone she spoke to, for she was a tireless teacher of the Bahá'í Faith. She attended the Most Great Jubilee in London in that year. Her last teaching trip abroad was in 1968 when she visited Noumea, New Caledonia a few months prior to her death on July 10. She must surely be recognized as one of the most successful Bahá'í teachers in Australia.

Mariette Germaine Bolton had a very profound knowledge of the Baha'i Faith and her conversation, always polite and gracious, was highlighted with many quotations from the Writings of Baha'u'llah and with explanations given by 'Abdu'l-Baha and Shoghi Effendi to elucidate the teachings which guided and sustained her in life. She had times of very severe setbacks but despite her personal sorrows and losses she always presented a happy, warm countenance to everyone she met. Having met Mariette only once, it seemed impossible for anyone to forget her. To remember Mariette was to remember what she believed in so sincerely, the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. To be a pioneer for forty years and to remain a firm, radiant believer after suffering the personal sorrows, tests, rebuffs and insults which she knew, one must surely have an unshakeable faith. Those who knew her well will remember Mariette as one who was, in effect, martyred for her beliefs. She worked ceaselessly for the Cause and for the underprivileged and was rewarded with a civil honour by the Council of Orange, New South Wales where she lived for many years.

Shoghi Effendi's appreciation of her efforts and his encouragement to undertake further goals for the Faith were her sustenance and inspiration.

In his last letter to her on October 30, 1956, the Guardian wrote: "May the Beloved, Whose Faith you have served and are serving with such splendid perseverance, exemplary devotion and love, abundantly reward you for your manifold and historic accomplishments, and enable you to win still greater victories in the days to come . . ."

The death of the beloved Guardian was a loss she never forgot, but her love for God was the companionship which sustained her as she taught, indefatigably, to her last breath. For many in the world today Mariette Germaine Bolton is not dead, but just teaching in another place, while they are left to continue spreading the Faith of Baha'u'llah without her loving nearness.

In reviewing the development of the Faith in New Caledonia, New Hebrides and the Loyalty Islands in the period 1968–1973, the National Spiritual Assembly of the South West Pacific Ocean, in a report prepared for the Universal House of Justice, stated that the visit of Mariette Germaine Bolton to New Caledonia in 1952, "which resulted in one person becoming a Bahá'í" was "the beginning of an evolutionary process" that eventually moved from "efforts by individuals to organized efforts by local institutions and area teaching committees"¹—a process which culminated in the formation of the National Spiritual Assembly of the South West Pacific Ocean, with its seat in Noumea, at Riđván, 1971.

On July 11, 1968, the Universal House of Justice cabled:

SADDENED NEWS PASSING DEVOTED EARLY
AUSTRALIAN BELIEVER MARIETTE BOLTON
STOP HER OUTSTANDING SERVICES TEACHER
FAITH MEMBER NATIONAL ASSEMBLY CO-
DONOR YERRINBOOL SUMMER SCHOOL IN-
DELIBLY RECORDED HISTORY FAITH ANTIPODES
PACIFIC AREA STOP ADVISE HOLD BEFITTING
MEMORIAL SERVICE TEMPLE PRAYING HOLY
SHRINES PROGRESS HER SOUL EXTEND LOVING
SYMPATHY FAMILY.

DORIS L. WHITING

MARIE CIOCCA HOLMLUND

1929–1968

Knight of Baha'u'llah

In the course of 'Abdu'l-Baha's travels in Europe and America when, as our beloved Guardian has written, "seeds of undreamt-of potentialities had . . . been sown in some of the fertile fields of the Western world,"¹ the city of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, was blessed by His footsteps, and mysterious forces were

unleashed. In a way, the story of the life of Marie Ciocca Holmlund begins with this historic event. Seventeen years later she was born in that same city, the first-born of Italian emigrant parents who had come to the new world in search of a new life and new hope.

When Marie was only six her mother, weakened by a hard life, died of tuberculosis. Her grief-stricken father, Michele Ciocca, decided on a wise course of action. Though a Catholic, he placed his three small children in a non-denominational home run by Protestant sisters. Here they could be raised and given the care that he alone was now unable to provide for them. This experience was of prime importance in the formation of Marie's character. In this home she studied the Bible and through association with children of all backgrounds learned that all men are equal, that diversity among men serves to embellish the human race. A seed slowly began to germinate.

When they were old enough, Marie and her eldest sister returned to create a home with their father. In the meantime the youngest child had been struck down by an incurable illness. As she worked to complete her studies, Marie, then a girl in her very early teens, was required to assume the responsibility of managing the household. As she grew into womanhood and saw more of the world around her, her sensitive nature rebelled at the prejudices, false standards and hatred of man for man which stood in direct contrast to the essential truths she had come to understand as a child. Those who knew and loved Marie can well imagine what must have taken place in her innermost self. Although short of stature, slight of build, her whole being was alive, alert and ever-seeking new heights until at times she seemed a giant. Her hazel eyes which danced as she brought joy to others could blaze with fire at the sight of injustice. She possessed an innate sense of proportion and an extraordinary vision of a new world that was to be, and these qualities carried her onward in her search. She found new hope in the nineteenth century writers, especially Tennyson.

In the evening of her life she recalled, writing in the third person, that "as a child she pored over the legends of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. In her daydreams she became a knight in white armour, saying her vows, pledging allegiance to her king." She

¹ *God Passes By*, p. 294.



Marie Ciocca Holmlund

records that she wrote an editorial for a school publication based on Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* in which she quoted: "The old order changeth, yielding place to new."

The stage was now set, that germinating seed about to reveal itself. After graduating from high school Marie took a secretarial course and was sent out for on-the-job training to the office of Mr. Elwood Revell. Here she first heard of the Bahí'í Faith and discovered that during His stay in Philadelphia in 1912, 'Abdu'l-Bahá had been in the Revell home. Mr. Revell's sisters, Jessie and Ethel, whose exemplary services are known throughout the Bahí'í world, immediately sensed Marie's receptivity and took her under their wing. Within a few months Marie had embraced the Faith, pledged allegiance to her "King" and begun her life of service and steadfastness in the Cause of Baha'u'llah. The year was 1949 and Marie was nineteen.

She set about immediately to bring the Message to others. She studied the Divine exhortations, immersed herself in the Writings, familiarized herself with the *Tablets of the Divine Plan* and followed closely the progress of the second Seven Year Plan then in course. Her heart became aglow with the desire to go

out into the world and raise the cry of *Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá!*

In 1953 the opportunity came. Marie searched prayerfully for her place of service in the Guardian's World Crusade. In October of that year she settled in Cagliari, the capital of Sardinia. Her childhood dream had come true; the beloved Guardian named her a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh. But it was just a beginning. She had returned to the nation of her ancestors and settled in an almost forgotten region of that country. She was twenty-four years of age and knew but few words of the language and nothing of the customs of the country. Her only purpose was to raise aloft the banner of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh among the Sardinians, a people steeped in age-old traditions and made passive and sceptical through the conquests of the ages but possessed of great dignity and a capacity to act and to love. It is recorded that Sardinia was the last territory in Europe to accept the message of Christ, some eight hundred years after His teachings were given to the world.

With her open nature Marie immediately attracted people to her and began speaking about the Faith. Some listened with interest, others ignored her efforts, yet others laughed and ridiculed, but Marie refused to be shaken in her determination. She met great hardships in trying to earn a living. Many received their first English lessons from her. She developed a new method for teaching English to children and through her great love and patience endeared herself to hundreds of children and their parents. "Miss Mary" they called her and this name spread throughout the island. She travelled alone and with visiting travelling teachers to many parts of the island and spread the divine fragrances. The sincere were increasingly attracted, but the harvest period had not yet come.

She persevered alone for nine years except for two very brief intervals when other Bahá'í settlers came to the island. Her sustenance, she often said, was the prayers of the friends, the visits of the believers and, above all, the praise and encouragement of Shoghi Effendi and his injunction to the pioneers to remain at their posts. Foremost among the many friends whose visits sustained her were the Hand of the Cause Ugo Giachery and his wife. They often came to see her and were like a father and

mother to Marie. She deeply loved them and appreciated their assistance and advice.

Not until 1966 was the first harvest gathered when Mrs. Livia Pargentino became the first Sardinian to accept the Faith. At long last the reward for fourteen years of devoted, diligent, steadfast service! Other declarations soon followed and a group was established in Cagliari. Further blessed in the meantime through the bounty of her pilgrimage to the World Centre, her marriage and the birth of her dear Dorothy Angeline and Michael Ugo, Marie's happiness was complete. The seed had become a firmly-rooted tree.

But unknown to those who loved her, Marie was already preparing to wing her flight to the *Abhá* Kingdom. In December, 1967, the doctors gave her a month to live, but her task was not quite completed. It was as if her tranquillity and serenity in those last months were meant to teach us something. Her passing came in August on the eve of the Mediterranean Conference in Palermo, on that sea where she had served so faithfully. She had answered the call of her beloved Master. His words, ". . . *as ye have faith so shall your powers and blessings be . . .*" had entered her heart and her life reflected their truth.

These words came from the Universal House of Justice at the time of her passing:

GRIEVED PASSING EVE MEDITERRANEAN CONFERENCE MARIA CIOCCA HOLMLUND . . . MAY EXAMPLE HER STEADFASTNESS FURTHER INSPIRE THOSE LABOURING HIGHLY PROMISING MEDITERRANEAN AREA.

JAMES P. HOLMLUND

ALVIN J. BLUM

1912-1968

Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

GRIEVED LEARN PASSING KNIGHT BAHALLAH ALVIN BLUM STEADFAST DEVOTED SERVANT FAITH HIS TIRELESS LABOIJRS PIONEER SOLOMONS UNFORGETTABLE ANNALS BAHAI HISTORY PRAYING SHRINES PROGRESS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

Universal House of Justice.

Alvin J. Blum was born in Elizabeth, New Jersey on May 15, 1912. Although born into an

orthodox Jewish family he was disillusioned by what he observed and was bordering on agnosticism when, in his twenty-fifth year, he encountered the Baha'i Faith. A sensitive Baha'i friend, knowing that Alvin Blum would reject direct exposure to religion, invited him to a meeting which he described as a gathering of "free-thinking people". Thus Alvin attended his first Bahá'í meeting at Evergreen Cabin in Teaneck, New Jersey. The impact of the Faith on his mind and heart was immediate and dynamic and, during that first week, he attended five fireside meetings. Outstanding teachers such as Roy Wilhelm, Billy DeForge, Curtis Kelsey and Philip Marangella were eager to teach him. The thin surface of agnosticism had concealed an almost insatiable hunger for spiritual truth. "You'd better digest what you've learned, Alvin, or you'll develop spiritual indigestion," warned a friend, but he was eager to absorb as much as he could so that he might immediately begin to teach and serve the Faith. During that first week after encountering the Faith, Alvin met a young woman named Gertrude at a youth meeting in New York; she was later to become his wife and companion in service to the Cause.

Within a few months, in 1937-38, as though anticipating the announcement of the first Seven Year Plan of Shoghi Effendi, Alvin arose to serve the Cause in the Southern United States, first in Kentucky and then in Tennessee. "I felt there was a need in the south," he later explained. He obtained employment as a travelling salesman which enabled him to meet the scattered Bahá'ís throughout the southern states. Here he met Howard and Mabel Ives, itinerant teachers, whose dedication, sacrifice and example had a marked influence on his life.

In 1941, as America entered World War II, Alvin entered the United States Army Medical Corps and providentially was sent to New Zealand where he spent two and a half years, an experience he movingly related in an article published in *World Order* magazine, July, 1946: "I was the first American Baha'i to come to New Zealand since Martha Root's visit in 1939," he wrote. "The friends promptly put me to work and engagements were made to speak before many organizations." Many doors were opened for him and never before had the Faith been so widely proclaimed in New



Alvin J. Blum

Zealand. The beloved Guardian wrote a letter expressing warm appreciation of his work there.

Alvin left New Zealand in 1945 on a medical troop ship bound for the Philippine Islands where active fighting was still going on. *En route*, the ship stopped at the Solomon Islands, later to become the arena of his crowning service. In the Philippines, Alvin contacted the Baha'i group established as a result of the visit there of Loulie Mathews¹ in 1938, a group fostered and nurtured by the Guardian through letters and gifts of books. As the first believer to visit the group he was lovingly received and he assisted them in forming a Spiritual Assembly.

When the war ended Alvin settled in Little Rock, Arkansas and resumed his career as a salesman. The choice of residence was made in the light of the needs of the Cause and in consultation with the National Teaching Committee. "An amusing incident illustrates Alvin's steadfast adherence to the principle of placing the needs of the Faith before all else," writes a friend. "He always combined business trips with Baha'i speaking engagements. When he entered a city he would engage a suite of rooms and display his merchandise to prospective buyers. Once when summoned unexpectedly to

¹ See *Not Every Sea Hath Pearls*, pp. 149-152.

a Baha'i meeting through a misunderstanding about the availability of his time, he set out the order books so the customers could write down their orders after viewing the merchandise, and hurried off to the Bahá'í gathering. When he returned to his hotel he found the largest order he had ever received, and a note from a puzzled merchant: 'Who is she?'"

Soon his growing restlessness caused Alvin to seek the advice of Shoghi Effendi about returning to New Zealand, and receiving the assurance of the Guardian that this course would be "highly meritorious" he made preparations. Rejecting two splendid employment opportunities he returned to New Zealand in July, 1947, with his wife and ten month old baby. "An outstanding characteristic of Alvin was his sense of timing," a friend records. "When his course was set he immediately acted upon it, not allowing obstacles to dull the brightness of his beckoning goal. A stray remark, a chance statement, an innocent mistake—he seized upon everything and placed it at the disposal of the Cause."

He entered business in New Zealand and was able to assist the friends in acquiring a beautiful summer school site of twenty-two acres outside Auckland. He also served on the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Australia and New Zealand throughout the period of his residence there. In 1951 he travelled to Fiji and assisted in welding together the young and struggling Baha'i community. While preparing to settle in Wellington to aid in the formation of a Spiritual Assembly in the south island, the Ten Year Plan was announced by Shoghi Effendi. Alvin responded with alacrity, cabling the Guardian for advice as to whether priority should be given to opening a virgin area or remaining in New Zealand. Shoghi Effendi cabled "Advise virgin areas Pacific", and so Alvin's course was set before he left to attend the 1953 Intercontinental Conference in India where he played an outstanding part as chairman of the steering committee. During the conference, learning that the challenging goal of the Solomon Islands posed an entry difficulty for the pioneer who had hoped to settle there, Alvin volunteered to go, thus realizing a long-held dream to return to the islands he had visited briefly before. As the Blum family boarded the small cargo vessel that would carry them to

the Solomons a cherished cable was received: "Loving prayers surrounding you. Shoghi." Before dawn on March 1, 1954, the shores of the Solomons were sighted. A small dinghy brought the Blum family ashore. Alvin's first words on setting foot on the soil of the islands were: "Ya Bahá'u'l-Abhá! The spiritual banner of Bahá'u'lláh is now planted in the Solomon Islands." The names of the Blums were inscribed on the Guardian's Scroll of Honour as Knights of Baha'u'llah for the Solomon Islands. Alvin had brought to fruition the wish of Shoghi Effendi expressed in a letter to him on March 6, 1946: "May the Almighty abundantly reward you for your manifold services, bless your efforts in the days to come, and enable you to win, in distant fields, memorable victories for our glorious Faith."

The peak experience of Alvin's life was his pilgrimage to the Holy Land and the opportunity it brought to meet Shoghi Effendi whose advice and approval he sought at every turn. Alvin drew strength from the words of the Guardian written to him while he was in New Zealand in 1948: "Your splendid services, so far afield, under such difficult circumstances, and with so few helpers, are indeed highly praiseworthy in the estimation of our Beloved, and will be regarded as an example worthy to emulate by the pioneers in the days to come. . ."

At the behest of Shoghi Effendi, Alvin engaged in business in the Solomons and quietly sought out those souls who were spiritually prepared for the Faith. After a slow and difficult beginning the path was opened. A highly respected chief and government employee, Hamuel Hoahania, having learned that an American couple had arrived and were teaching a religion of unity, sought out the Blums, accepted the Cause, and carried it to many hundreds of his island people.

"Looking back on the period of Alvin's life in the Solomons," reflected Mrs. Blum, "one can say he played a double role, one in the community of Bahá'ís and one in the non-Bahá'í community. He worked ceaselessly for the establishment and expansion of the Faith here and poured his strength and resources into the accomplishment of the goals of the Ten Year Plan. He also made a significant contribution to the public welfare by putting in badly needed service industries, by accepting

the appointment by the High Commissioner to serve as a charter member of the Honiara Town Council, by serving as chairman of the Medical Board, by assisting the Civil Aviation Committee, by helping to found the Chamber of Commerce and the Scout Movement, and by acting as financial adviser to the Young Farmers Club. He was known everywhere for his constant activity and lively presence. He was deeply happy to have seen the first Regional Spiritual Assembly of the South Pacific Ocean come into being and he served as its chairman until the National Spiritual Assembly of the South West Pacific Ocean was established. His other great joy was that he lived to participate in the World Congress and to witness the birth of the Universal House of Justice."

This ceaseless activity with its strain and stress took its toll. Alvin's health broke down and in his fifty-sixth year, on September 23, 1968, his spirit took flight to its eternal home. A prominent Melanesian speaking to the people of many races who were drawn to the funeral unwittingly echoed the words the Guardian had addressed to Alvin Blum in 1948: "Before Mr. Blum came there was a sickness in the land—white man and black man did not come together—but this is changed now and I feel it is Mr. Blum's example." His gravestone bears the eloquent legend: "He died where he chose to serve."

SARA M. KENNY

1900–1968

Knight of Baha'u'llah

Sara Kenny was born on March 20, 1900. She died in London during the latter part of September, 1968 while on a trip to Europe with her husband, Judge Robert W. Kenny.

Mrs. Kenny graduated from Stanford University where she was a member of Phi Beta Phi and Phi Gamma Delta sororities. In the early 1930s she was an invalid for a number of months during which time she searched for a faith to which she could fully subscribe. Shortly after her recovery she became acquainted with the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh through talks given by Beulah M. Lewis of Los Angeles and before long she declared her acceptance of the Baha'í Faith.

Mr. Kenny served as Senator from Los Angeles County, as Attorney General for the State of California, and as a Superior Court Judge. The fact that her husband had a worldwide circle of acquaintances presented Mrs. Kenny with the opportunity to give the Message of Bahá'u'lláh to many of the leaders of the United States as well as to those of foreign governments. Especially did these opportunities come to her during the time of the formation of the United Nations in San Francisco when she was socially active among statesmen of the world.

During and subsequent to this time Mrs. Kenny found it difficult to serve the Faith administratively and at the same time fulfil her obligations as wife of the Attorney General. In a letter written on his behalf by his secretary, the Guardian wrote to her on March 13, 1944: "He feels that as Mr. Kenny is evidently a man of marked capacity . . . you are fully justified in devoting more of your time to him, and letting other believers carry on the committee work you may not be able to do." And in his own handwriting, Shoghi Effendi referred to Sara's "distinguished husband." Although he never became a declared Bahá'í, Mr. Kenny rendered outstanding service to the Faith on many occasions.

In frequent demand as a speaker, Mrs. Kenny served also on the National Teaching Committee, on the Spiritual Assemblies of San Francisco and Los Angeles, and on the Area Teaching Committee for the Western States, Hawaii and Alaska. For many years she was one of California's delegates to the National Baha'i Conventions.

Sara Kenny's love for and appreciation of the Guardian were excelled by few Bahá'ís. She regarded the compilation *Bahá'í Administration* not merely as a guide and definitive exposition of Bahá'í principles but as a book of beauty and as a key to the character and personality of Shoghi Effendi. She introduced that book to many, many believers.

The pilgrimage she made in May, 1957, was the culmination of Mrs. Kenny's Bahá'í life. She wrote, "No one, in any way, was able to describe the Guardian to me. One is not in his presence very long before one senses that he is another order of being . . . his forthrightness is unbelievable."

When Shoghi Effendi called for dispersal



Sara M. Kenny

in 1953, Mrs. Kenny with her mother, Ella Duffield, departed as soon as possible for the Madeira Islands and was named by the Guardian a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh. In June, 1954, with the permission of Shoghi Effendi she moved to Nice, France. When the National Spiritual Assembly of France was formed in 1958 she was elected one of its members and served as vice-chairman until the end of the Ten Year Crusade when she returned home after not having seen her husband for seven years. Her greatest suffering came when, after the death of the Guardian, a number of her highly admired and beloved friends turned away from *The Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá* and became Covenant-breakers. She wrote: "I didn't think I could go on living."

Sara's death occurred in London. She is buried only steps away from the resting place of Shoghi Effendi whose funeral she had attended there ten years earlier. On September 24 the Universal House of Justice cabled:

GRIEVED LEARN PASSING KNIGHT BHAULLAH
SARA KENNY DEDICATED SERVANT CAUSE
NATIVE LAND STALWART PIONEER MADEIRA
WHOSE DEVOTED LABOURS FRANCE MEM-
BERSHIP FIRST NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND

STAUNCH DEFENCE COVENANT CONTRIBUTED
 FIRM ESTABLISHMENT FOUNDATION THAT
 NATIONAL COMMUNITY STOP ASSURE FAMILY
 PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HER SOUL
 ABHA KINGDOM STOP REQUESTING NATIONAL
 ASSEMBLY FRANCE HOLD BEFITTING MEMORIAL
 SERVICE.

ROBERT B. POWERS

MAUD BOSIO

1899–1968

Emily Maud Waterworth Bosio was born on July 4, 1899, in Staten Island, New York. Her father was an Englishman recently settled in America. Her mother's family had deep roots in New England and went back to the Rev. John Davenport, founder of the New Haven colony in Connecticut.

Maud graduated from St. Mary's Hall School in Burlington, New Jersey, in June, 1917, as America was thrust into the first World War. She joined the Red Cross, working for it until the war's end. A few years later she went to Italy accompanied by her widowed mother. In Florence she met and married a young Italian architect, Gherardo Bosio. During the next dozen years she dedicated herself to the upbringing of her four daughters, lived the life typical of her time and her circle, and watched as her husband won honor and recognition as one of the most promising young architects in Italy.

World War II drastically changed Maud's life. In April, 1941, her husband died, leaving her to care for four young daughters. The situation was further complicated when America entered the war and Mrs. Bosio found herself cut off from her native country. The experience of death, destruction and loneliness made her search for answers to the ultimate questions of life. She prayed, read the mystics of various religions, but did not find tranquillity and peace.

In 1949, she met Marion Little,¹ an outstanding Bahá'í teacher pioneering in Italy. The two became close friends. Maud could not fail to be impressed with Marion's joyful spirit, and her total dedication to the Baha'i Faith. However, it took Maud almost five

years of study and many inner battles before she was prepared to embrace the Faith of Baha'u'llah.

Becoming a Bahá'í had a profound effect on every aspect of her life. To many of her friends in the stodgy, Catholic society of Florence, her behavior seemed scandalous. She was promptly deserted by them. Since there was virtually no Baha'i community in Florence as yet, Maud was now almost as isolated as she had been in the war years.

Tests and difficulties served to temper her spirit. Two of her daughters and her eighty-seven year old mother embraced the Faith, providing her with spiritual companionship and moral support. She developed close friendships with Bahá'í pioneers and teachers, among them Mrs. Mildred Mottahedeh and Mrs. Tabandeh Payman, and immersed herself in Baha'i activities. She served as librarian and member of the Teaching Committee in Florence and was elected to the Spiritual Assembly. She served as a correspondent for Baha'i News, took part in the organization of the first Italo-Swiss Summer School, and, on moving to Switzerland, entered into the life of the Swiss community and was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of Italy and Switzerland.

After a few years residence in Lausanne, Mrs. Bosio returned to Italy where a separate National Spiritual Assembly was formed in 1962. Two years later she was elected to that body, serving on it to the day she died. Her various Baha'i activities in the 1960s were too numerous even to list. Among them was the opening of new cities to the Faith, service on the Italian Summer School Committee, and participation in teacher training institutes. Somehow she found time and energy to pour her love on her many grandchildren, to travel, to read and keep in touch with an ever-growing circle of friends. In 1966 she organized and led one of the committees to aid the victims of the great Florentine flood, providing food, medicine and clothing as well as advice and moral support to hundreds of families.

In 1967, Mrs. Bosio was elected chairman of the Italian National Spiritual Assembly and, in 1968, went to Haifa to participate in the second International Convention and the election of the Universal House of Justice. That same year she was appointed to the committee

¹See "In Memoriam", p. 547.



Maud Bosio

that made arrangements for the first oceanic conference, held in Palermo August 23–25, 1968.¹ It was an arduous task beyond the physical capacity of a sixty-nine year old woman with a weak heart, yet she carried it out disregarding her health and jeopardizing her very life. The success of the first international Bahá'í conference ever held on Italian soil was also her triumph.

The demands of the conference exhausted Mrs. Bosio. She was physically spent, yet her spirit soared. Those who knew her could not help noticing the joy and the serenity she achieved in the last months of her life. It seemed as though she had fulfilled her mission in life and was ready to leave the world. She died on October 2, 1968, after three weeks of suffering brought about by several successive heart attacks.

The Universal House of Justice paid tribute to Mrs. Bosio's memory when it cabled on October 3, 1968:

DEEPLY GRIEVED LEARN PASSING DEVOTED
MAIDSERVANT BAHAUULLAH MAUD BOSIO EARLY
BELIEVER ITALIAN COMMUNITY HER SACRI-
FICIAL SERVICES SUCCESS FIRST MEDITER-

RANEAN CONFERENCE LOVINGLY REMEMBERED
PRAYING SHRINES PROGRESS HER SOUL ABHA
KINGDOM ADVISE HOLD BEFITTING MEMORIAL
GATHERING . . .

FIRUZ KAZEMZADEH

ADDIE NORDSTROM

1885–1968

Addie Nordstrom was born on April 10, 1885 in the mid-western part of the United States. She grew up in Milwaukee and then moved to the west coast, married and established a home. Her only child, Ruth, was born late in her marriage. Tragically, this daughter was diabetic, eventually went blind, and passed away in her twenties.

After giving up membership in the church, Mrs. Nordstrom persisted in her lifelong search for spiritual fulfilment. She was about fifty-five years of age when she heard the Message of Bahá'u'lláh and she immediately accepted it. Through her prayers and steadfastness the attitude of her family slowly changed from ridicule to acceptance. Her daughter, who was at this time blind, accepted the Teachings, and later her husband entered the Faith. Mrs. Nordstrom had a special interest in the work of the Bahá'í Committee for the blind. The family home became a focal point of hospitality in the Kirkland-Seattle area.

Following the death of her child and husband Addie lived alone for a time and as she aged and her powers dimmed her youthful spirit longed to explore new areas of service to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. In her seventy-eighth year, while living with Ruth and Gordon Craig and their children who had offered her a home, Addie resolved to enter the pioneer field. In consultation with the Craig family the Aleutian Islands were selected as the goal.

Disposing of her burial plot next to the resting place of her husband and daughter, Mrs. Nordstrom travelled north to those islands notorious for their severe weather. Accompanied and assisted by the Craigs she made the trip to her new home, a small isolated village on the island of Unalaska and instantly recognized the village as one she had dreamed of a number of times before departing from Seattle.

¹ Seep. 73 for a report of this conference.

that they should not fail to gain the laurels of pioneering even if they must bury their bones in foreign soil".

R. L. HUDSON



Addie Nordstrom

Prayer was Addie's main support in her pioneering post. Rarely well enough to leave the Baha'i Centre, she maintained a programme of prayer and reading that surely drew untold blessings to the island. During her eightieth year she kept the nineteen-day Fast. The Aleut people came to love her deeply and shaking off their customary shyness they would come to visit. If she were up they would accept her hospitality and if she were confined to bed they would sit near her and talk quietly. She was loved by so many, from the matriarchal head of the village to the housewives and their children and the rustic fishermen. She gave the Teachings to those who were seeking, telling everyone, "This is God's Day." Everyone marvelled at her strength and the power on which she drew to renew her spent energy. Her greatest joy in this interval was to visit her Aleut neighbours and to occasionally travel short distances out of the village to see the surrounding country. In 1966 she attended the Baha'i Summer School in Juneau, Alaska.

After a brief illness, Mrs. Nordstrom passed away in her eighty-third year. In a letter dated February 23, 1969, the Universal House of Justice stated that she had "admirably fulfilled the Guardian's admonition to aged believers

KAYKHUSRAW MUQBIL

1909-1968

It is difficult to write about this bosom friend of my childhood, my valued companion in pioneering posts, and surely nothing I could say would be adequate tribute to his outstanding qualities and signal services.

Muqbil was a member of a prominent Zoroastrian family of Persia. He, his brothers and his sisters, owed their Bahá'í education to their illustrious and devout mother. As a small child, Kaykhusraw displayed exceptional qualities and a remarkably powerful memory. After hearing a Tablet recited or a page of the Writings read aloud he could repeat the passage accurately; his gift of total recall made it appear that he had a tape recorder in his head.

Even as a young man, and for years thereafter, he took a particular interest in conducting classes for Baha'i children. These were sometimes held in quarters of Tīhrán where fanatical opponents of the Faith were free to break into Bahá'í homes and disrupt the small bands of children gathered to study their religious lessons. Always scrupulously punctual, he was known to be late on only one occasion. He expressed apologies for his delay to the eager students but did not explain the cause of his lateness. Only later was it learned that his sister had died that day and he had undertaken the arrangements for her burial, traversing the city from the extreme east to west, and hastening on to the class in order not to disappoint the students.

When the call was raised for pioneering he was one of the first to settle in a very small town in southern Persia. The stories of his sacrifices and teaching exploits there are many, but one is particularly noteworthy and has been circulated far and wide by his friends. A nocturnal burglar entered his home one night and when Kaykhusraw awakened he assisted the thief to carry out the goods he was intent on stealing, saying to the thief words to the effect that his dire need must have led to his



Kaykhusraw Muqbil

burgling. Startled by this reaction and his heart softened, the thief accepted Kaykhusraw's invitation to remain in his home as a guest and spent some days in this loving atmosphere. His host provided him with a little capital. The former thief found an honourable occupation, began life anew and remained forever grateful to his benefactor.

In a later period, Kaykhusraw distinguished himself in Baghdád, rendering assistance to the many pioneers who passed through on their way to various parts of the world. He strengthened their courage, helped them to arrange their visas, provided warm hospitality, aided them to pack their goods and was always the last to eat and find rest. Once, when he was ill, he would pace about on the roof each night, lest his sufferings disturb the sleeping believers. He married a girl from a distinguished Bahá'í family of Baghdád.

Undoubtedly the hardships endured at his various pioneering posts shortened the life of Kaykhusraw Muqbil. He passed away while reading aloud to his family some verses from the *Kitáb-i-Íqán*.

ABU'L-QÁSÍM FAÍZÍ

LOYCE DRUGAN LAWRENCE

1905-1968

Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

Loyce Drugan Lawrence, born in 1905 in Winchester, Massachusetts, was the eldest of three children whose mother died when they were young. Loyce lived with her grandparents and an aunt in Beverly, Massachusetts, where she graduated as a Registered Nurse in 1926. She did private nursing and later was appointed night supervisor of Addison Gilbert Hospital, Gloucester. For two years she worked in the southern United States. To satisfy her inquiring mind and adventurous spirit which created in her a desire to know more about people, religion and places she travelled in her free time. In the course of her search for a pattern on which to base her spiritual growth Loyce learned of the Baha'i Faith. Her early teachers were Lorna Tasker and Mr. and Mrs. Harlan F. Ober.

In 1942 Loyce married Gustavus G. Lawrence and thereafter spent her time between Gloucester and California. When in Gloucester her home was open to the Bahá'ís for meetings and gatherings of the friends of the Faith. She actively engaged in Bahá'í activities and attended Green Acre Bahá'í School to deepen her knowledge of the Faith. In the period 1948-1950 she served on the staff of editors of *The Bahá'í World*.

Mr. Lawrence never became a Bahá'í but he was always cordial to the friends whenever they were in his home. "The marriage was one of unity and love," writes Elizabeth Kidder Ober whose Baha'i life is closely interwoven with that of Loyce Lawrence. "Her bereavement was great when her husband died in 1951 because their hearts were so firmly knit. My husband and I spent much time with Loyce in this period and her heart was lightened by the plans she formulated to attend the European Intercontinental Teaching Conference to be held in Stockholm in July, 1953, and the Asian Intercontinental Teaching Conference to follow it in New Delhi in October, 1953. She was able to attend both gatherings and to complete a trip around the world but her commitment to serve the Cause, to make it the central interest in her life, came into full focus in Sweden. At the Conference in Stockholm she was captivated by the vision of the global crusade des-



Loyce Drugan Lawrence

cribed by Shoghi Effendi in his message and stirred by his call for pioneers to arise and carry the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh to the most remote corners of the earth. Her response was immediate. She offered to settle in the Lofoten Islands within the Arctic circle and left immediately for Svolvaer, an act which brought joy to the heart of the Guardian and won for her the title Knight of Baha'u'llah. Remembering how much she enjoyed a warm climate, I knew she had been led by her heart in selecting a northern goal."

Loyce established herself in Svolvaer, made friends, won their confidence, and taught the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. It was her joy to participate in the establishment of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Svolvaer and then to serve on the National Spiritual Assembly of Norway. She travelled throughout Scandinavia teaching, serving in an administrative capacity, transporting youth to Summer Schools and entering into any and all Baha'i activities. Her automobile, a beach wagon, became a veritable bus for the Baha'is and she generously placed it at the disposal of the friends. She made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and met Shoghi Effendi whose dinner talks about the future of the Cause in the North were a source of inspira-

tion to Loyce. He spoke to her about her meritorious services in pioneering so far afield. In 1968 she returned to Haifa to participate in the election of the Universal House of Justice.

In 1961 I had the happy experience of travelling in Scandinavia with Loyce. Meticulous and thoughtful, she had made every possible detail of the journey crystal clear in letters and had provided me with a typewritten itinerary. We met in Svolvaer. It was early February and the weather was stormy. The Norwegian Bahá'ís showered us with hospitality. I was the only other American Bahá'í they had seen. We talked about the Cause and their reactions to Loyce as a stranger who had come to make her home among them and work for the Bahá'í Faith. She blended with the Norwegians in physical appearance and felt great empathy and love for their culture. We visited and spoke in various centres throughout Sweden, Finland and Denmark. In Turku, Finland we were reunited with Mildred Clark, Loyce's fellow Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for the Lofoten Islands. Twice I was with Loyce in London where we visited the friends and spent an afternoon at the resting place of the beloved Guardian.

A year or two later, on the advice of her physician to seek rest and treatment in a warm climate, Loyce was the guest of Harlan Ober and his wife, Elizabeth, at their home in Pretoria, South Africa. At their invitation I joined Loyce there. We observed the Fast together and enjoyed a marvellous Naw-Rúz celebration. Through the kindness of Harlan and Elizabeth we were able to visit Bahá'í centres in South Africa and Swaziland.

Later Loyce came to the United States and for nearly a year nursed her aunt, Miss Berthe Drugan, who was suffering from terminal cancer. After the death of Miss Drugan, Loyce returned to her pioneer post. Her last visit to the United States was in 1966. She visited the Baha'i House of Worship in Wilmette and met with Baha'is who were acquainted with the Scandinavian languages and who might find it possible to serve in Scandinavia even for a brief time to aid in the teaching work. She visited isolated pioneers and friends who worked with the American Indians. Every consideration was given to strengthening old Bahá'í ties. Then Loyce returned to Svolvaer and it was a little while before I heard from her.

In 1968 the Oceanic Conference was scheduled to be held in Sicily but Loyce did not plan to be there. I thought this strange. My phone call from the airport in Rome to an address she had given me in Trondheim, Norway, brought no response. When I returned to the United States after the Conference I called again and learned that Loyce had had surgery. Although she assured me that she was feeling well the sound of her breathing told me that something was very wrong. In October, learning that Loyce's condition was rapidly deteriorating, her sister Ruth and I hastened to Trondheim for a three week period. The Norwegian friends from far and near called and came to Trondheim to ask whether there was something they might do to serve Loyce. There was nothing; the end was approaching. One of the most difficult things I have ever done was to leave her. We talked freely about death and the Faith. We read prayers and studied the Writings. Her Lofoten friends longed to take her home to Svolvaer, but it was far too late to move her. They came and sat with her daily while in Trondheim. Seven days after Ruth and I left, Loyce was released from the suffering of terminal cancer.

A letter from Helene Drechsler, the first to accept the Cause in Svolvaer, describes Loyce's last hours: "It really was a bounty to me to be able to be with Loyce, to serve her, and help her slip away from this life, although it bothered me to witness all her pain and suffering . . . She was firm in her belief, patient and courageous, and always had strength to inspire and uplift others. She said that if her pain could open the hearts and minds of people then she could only thank God for giving it to her . . . About a week before her passing Loyce insisted that her wedding ring be engraved with words from the Writings of Baha'u'llah . . . She is missed so very much."

On December 19, 1968, the day after her passing, the Universal House of Justice cabled:

GRIEVED LEARN PASSING DEVOTED KNIGHT OF
BAHAULLAH LOYCE LAWRENCE HER SERVICES
ESTABLISHMENT CAUSE GOD LOFOTEN ISLANDS
UNFORGETTABLE STOP SUPPLICATING HOLY
SHRINES PROGRESS HER RADIANT SPIRIT ABHA
KINGDOM.

LEONORA P. NORMAN

NI'MAT 'ALÁ'Í

1890-1968

Ni'mat 'Alá'í was born in Tīhrán, Iran, of a distinguished and dedicated Baha'i family. His father, Názim'u'l-Aṭṭibá, Siyyid Muhammad, became physician to the Court of the Sháh.

Mr. 'Alá'í was educated at the Baha'i school in Tīhrán. He completed his studies at the age of sixteen, when he entered government service. From his early youth he was a staunch and knowledgeable believer and put into practice the Bahá'í teachings and principles in his work and private life. He brought to bear upon all he did his strong sense of justice and although he provided generously for his family he possessed to a significant degree the quality of detachment. His aim throughout his life was to serve the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh which he succeeded in doing both in his professional career and in his personal life as a pioneer and teacher. He was honoured many times by receiving Tablets from 'Abdu'l-Baha and letters from the Guardian.

While in Tīhrán Mr. 'Alá'í served the Bahá'í community actively, placing his administrative skills at the disposal of the Local Spiritual Assembly and various committees of the National Spiritual Assembly. He was frequently a delegate to the National Convention. He always maintained that the youth and adult members of the community should mingle as much as possible to the advantage of both. He set an example of this from an early age and was greatly loved by the older Baha'is.

Mr. 'Alá'í's honesty, integrity and love for humanity, as well as his efforts on behalf of the underprivileged, won for him the trust and respect of his fellow Baha'is and fellow workers, high government officials, the people who worked under him, the rich and the poor. His lack of concern about his status or position and his fearless presentation of the true nature of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh aroused opposition among the Muslim clergy and fanatical elements of the population. On twelve occasions an order of death was secured against him and a number of demonstrations were carried out protesting his Baha'i activities, but surely through the protection of God he remained unharmed. Mr. 'Alá'í was instrumental, through his professional influence, in obtaining



Ni'mat 'Alá'í

valuable historical documents relating to the early rise and development of the Baha'i Faith.

About 1945 Mr. 'Alá'í sought an early retirement from his position and with his family of seven pioneered to Afghánistán. After a period of nine months they were exiled from the country escorted by armed guards, and dispossessed of their belongings. Returning to Iran, Mr. 'Alá'í was invited to return to government service, special provision being made by parliament allowing him to do so.

Although he suffered from acute arthritis, Mr. 'Ala'i was eager to participate in the Ten Year Crusade. With his wife and two youngest children he pioneered to Samoa, joining one of his sons who had already settled there. Here they served for four years and despite language difficulties Mr. 'Ala'i was much loved and respected as a teacher.

After the firm establishment of the Spiritual Assembly of Apia in Western Samoa, Mr. 'Alá'í and his family, acting on the advice of Shoghi Effendi who encouraged them to settle in an area where there were no Bahá'ís, pioneered to Hastings, New Zealand and by 1963 had established a group there. Mr. 'Alá'í's winning nature enabled him to establish friendships with a wide variety of people

including Maoris and government officials.

Following a serious heart attack, the family settled in England, at Oxford, where Mr. 'Ala'i was able to obtain needed medical treatment and his youngest daughters could continue their education. Here Mr. 'Alá'í made contact with leading literary men and intellectuals to whom he gave Bahá'u'lláh's Message. In December, 1968, as the family was preparing to pioneer to assist the friends in American Samoa, Mr. 'Ala'i fell ill and passed away. During the last few weeks of his life he was very joyful and appeared to be waiting to join his Beloved. His funeral was held very much according to his own wishes; it was simple and full of Baha'i spirit. The service in Attleborough, Norfolk was reported in the Norwich newspaper and this, together with memorial services held there, created an interest in the Baha'i Faith and led to regular meetings being arranged. Memorial services were held also in Tihiran and in Samoa. Learning of his passing the daughter and son-in-law of the first Samoan believer cabled:

PLEASE ACCEPT SINCERE CONDOLENCES PASSING BELOVED TEACHER STOP GREAT LOSS TO FAITH AND SELVES STOP CHERISH MEMORY SERVICE TO BAHAUULLAH.

Expressing its sorrow to his brother, the Hand of the Cause Shu'á'u'lláh 'Ala'i, the Universal House of Justice cabled:

GRIEVED LOSS BELOVED BROTHER NIMAT STAUNCH SUPPORTER VALIANT PROMOTER FAITH HIS STEADFASTNESS DEVOTED SERVICES CRADLE FAITH PIONEERING FIELD UNFORGETTABLE WORTHY EMULATION STOP PRAYING SHRINES SPIRITUAL PROGRESS HIS RADIANT SOUL STOP CONVEY MEMBERS FAMILY LOVING SYMPATHY.

HAROLD THOMAS FITZNER

1893-1969

Knight of Baha'u'llah

In 1927, at a meeting addressed by Mr. Henry Hyde Dunn, Harold Fitzner and his companion Miss Florence Parry, who later became his wife, first heard the Message of Bahá'u'lláh. Its beauty struck an answering chord in their

souls and from that night they became dedicated servants of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. The life of Harold Fitzner became the embodiment of the prayer which requests assistance in rendering "instant, exact and complete obedience".

Harold and Florence married in 1931 and their home became a magnetic centre drawing large numbers of people to hear of the return of the Spirit of Truth. In that home many of the Bahá'ís of Australia had their first contact with the Teachings. Mr. Fitzner worked tirelessly, serving on the Spiritual Assembly of Adelaide, on various committees and as a visiting teacher to outlying centres. For some years he was chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of Australia and New Zealand. He was an avid student of the Writings, knew many prayers and Tablets by heart, and once copied out in longhand the entire text of *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* in order to know it better.

In 1953, at the Intercontinental Conference held in New Delhi, the impassioned plea of Shoghi Effendi for pioneers to arise to serve in territories as yet not opened to the Faith inspired Harold, with characteristic directness, to immediately offer to go to Portuguese Timor. Before returning to Australia he had already taken steps to obtain the necessary visas. In Australia he arranged for early retirement, underwent surgery, secured the required documents to enter Portuguese Timor and was already on his way to his post before the letter from the Guardian, written through his secretary on June 6, 1954, reached him: "He (Shoghi Effendi) is deeply moved by the spirit of devotion which animates you both in your longing to arise and serve at this time. We know that the state of the heart of the believer attracts the Divine outpourings and the granting of the visa to Mr. Fitzner to enter Portuguese Timor, after so much effort, is clearly an evidence of the working of this great spiritual law."

Mr. Fitzner arrived in Dili, the capital of Portuguese Timor, on June 30, 1954, and was named by the Guardian a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh. He was sixty years of age and had lived all his life surrounded by the security of family, home and friends. For the next four months, until his wife could join him in Dili, he was alone. He immediately began making friends among the Portuguese, Timorese and Chinese



Harold Thomas Fitzner

communities, bestowing love indiscriminately upon all.

Mrs. Fitzner was by profession a school teacher. Upon her arrival in Dili they opened a school to teach English and in this way met many young people and, through them, their parents. Through the holding of English classes many heard of the Faith and accepted it. By the example of his life, Harold Fitzner won the hearts of the people many of whom would respectfully bow in the traditional manner when they passed him on the street. A few years later Mr. Fitzner built an eleven-room house to provide classrooms for a larger school and to accommodate visitors.

After more than ten years of labouring to establish the Cause on this island, Mr Fitzner's health began to fail and by 1966 he was very ill. Mrs. Fitzner's responsibilities grew heavier. Many islanders of various races had accepted the Faith, one Spiritual Assembly was formed and the English school was well established. Each month saw a deterioration in Mr. Fitzner's health as his body became ravaged with cancer. Watching over him day and night, his wife prayed for his recovery. But on his part, Harold's one plea was that he be allowed to be a sacrifice for the establishment of the

Faith in Timor, and that he might die at his post. On February 3, 1969, after softly repeating the Greatest Name and beseeching the assistance of Bahá'u'lláh, Mr. Fitzner drifted into a deep sleep from which he did not awaken. He is buried in the Chinese cemetery on a high plateau commanding a glorious view over the town and the people whom he loved so dearly and among whom he was the first to raise the banner of the Baha'i Faith.

On April 27, 1957, Shoghi Effendi paid tribute to Mr. Fitzner, writing: "May the Almighty, Whose Cause you serve with such splendid devotion, perseverance and love, reward you abundantly for your historic labours, and enable you to enrich continually the record of your unforgettable and highly meritorious services to His Faith."

The cable of the Universal House of Justice advising the Baha'i world of the passing of Mr. Fitzner read:

DEEPLY GRIEVED LEARN PASSING DEARLY
LOVED KNIGHT BAHULLAH HAROLD FITZNER
AT HIS PIONEER POST PORT DILI DEVOTED
SERVICES REMEMBERED ANNALS FAITH STOP
CONVEY LOVING SYMPATHY FAMILY FRIENDS
ASSURE PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS
SOUL ABHA KINGDOM

ERIC S. G. BOWES

FORSYTH WARD

1897-1969

In 1921, the year that 'Abdu'l-Baha ascended, Nairne Forsyth Ward, usually known as Forsyth Ward, first heard of the Bahá'í Faith. He was then a senior at Cornell University in the College of Mechanical Engineering. At that time he had contracted scarlet fever and had been placed in the University infirmary, his textbooks forbidden. He was restless to read so Miss Hetty Belle Townley, his nurse and a Bahá'í brought him Baha'i literature. His interest was awakened and he embraced the Faith.

After receiving his degree he continued his studies and became an instructor on the staff of Cornell University, remaining until 1927 when he received his M.M.E. degree. During these years he continued his Bahá'í study and was active in the Baha'i community of Ithaca,

New York. At this time no University Bahá'í Clubs had been established.

Mr. Ward married Janet Nundy in 1926. Three children were born of the marriage: Nairne Forsyth, Jr.; Alicia N.; and Roderic C. With his wife who embraced the Faith shortly before their marriage, Mr. Ward transferred to Berkeley, California where he was Assistant Professor of Mechanical Engineering at the University of California. During the fourteen years they lived there the Wards were active members of the community and served in many capacities. Mr. Ward gave generously of his time speaking on the Faith at meetings in neighbouring communities. When vacationing or on a business trip he would always place himself at the disposal of the Baha'i friends in the areas he visited to serve as a public speaker. Frequently he gave radio addresses on Baha'i topics and served on national committees including the Geyserville (California) Bahá'í Summer School Committee. He had attended the formal opening of the school in 1927 and grew to love it dearly, devoting as much time as he possibly could to the institution and its activities. From 1927 to 1941 the Ward family spent the summer months at Geyserville where Mr. Ward directed activities, lectured during the sessions and dealt with any emergencies that arose. He was ever ready to extend a willing hand in any capacity. The summer home built by Mr. Ward for his family's use on the school land at the invitation of Mr. and Mrs. John Bosch, donors of the Geyserville property, was foreseen as a retirement site. Years later, while serving in the Holy Land. Mr. Ward donated the house to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States. A similar home was built on the property by Mr. and Mrs. Leroy Ioas¹ and the two families became lifelong friends. Mr. Ward assisted in overseeing the construction at the Geyserville School of the Amelia Collins Hall and Dormitory.

Mr. Ward's employment in the aircraft industry took the family to Seattle, Washington, in 1941. A year later he was transferred to Kansas where he was obliged to remain until the end of the war. During these years he remained an active Bahá'í, always helping in the community where he was living, as well as

¹ Leroy Ioas was appointed a Hand of the Cause of God on December 24, 1951.



Forsyth Ward

in neighbouring areas. Despite the prohibitions and restrictions which confined his activities during the war years he never lost an opportunity to offer encouragement or to speak of the Faith. After the war the Ward family returned to California where Mr. Ward continued to work for the government. Only a few years later he and his family were transferred to Tempe, Arizona where they became home-front pioneers and aided the lone resident Baha'i in the establishment of a Spiritual Assembly.

However, Mr. Ward's real goal—to pioneer in a foreign land—had not yet been fulfilled. The opportunity arose upon his retirement in 1959. Rex and Mary Collison, two American believers who had left their home to settle in Kampala, Uganda had visited the Wards in 1957 and encouraged Mr. and Mrs. Ward to join them in Uganda. Two days after Mr. Ward's sixty-second birthday he and his wife left Tempe for Uganda to fulfil his dream. All personal property had been given away or sold; the five trunks holding their possessions had been sent on to East Africa; all was in readiness. Another dream, cherished since 1921 was about to be realized. Permission had been received to make the pilgrimage to the Holy Land *en route* to Africa.

The pilgrimage was a beautiful and heavenly experience; it culminated in an invitation being extended to the Wards by the Hands of the Cause of God Residing in the Holy Land to remain at the World Centre as custodians of the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh at Bahjí. What a privilege! What an honour! Of course he said "Yes!"

Mr. Ward brought his skill and knowledge to bear on the many technical problems involved in the repair and maintenance of the extensive gardens and properties at Bahjí, projects which could be executed only during the brief summer period when the flow of pilgrims ceases. Throughout the pilgrimage season, from November to June, all effort was directed to the comfort and aid of the pilgrims. Mr. Ward served as a guide and chauffeur to the friends visiting the Holy Land. He guarded the Shrine, opening it for pilgrims whenever they wished to enter. He derived great joy from the opportunity of serving the Hands of the Cause when they gathered at Bahjí for their autumn conclave.

With cheerful determination Mr. Ward met the difficulties of adjusting to a new climate, language barriers and an unfamiliar lack of amenities. But the reward of having served was all that he desired; he was happy.

Mr. Ward remained in the Holy Land for over ten years, from 1959 to 1969, during which period he served as custodian of the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh under the direction of the Hands of the Cause of God, the International Council, and the Universal House of Justice. He passed away while walking in the gardens at Bahjí—that sweetest of settings—early in the morning of June 8, 1969, and was laid to rest in the Baha'i cemetery at the foot of Mt. Carmel. The news of his death was cabled by the Universal House of Justice:

GRIEVED ANNOUNCE SUDDEN PASSING NAIRNE FORSYTH WARD DEVOTED BELIEVER WHO WHILE ENROUTE PIONEER POST AFRICA DURING CRUSADE RESPONDED REQUEST HANDS CAUSE REMAIN BAHJI AS CUSTODIAN SACRED SHRINE BLESSED BEAUTY SERVING WITH WIFE JANET IN THAT EXALTED POST UNTIL HIS PASSING STOP HIS DEVOTED SERVICES AMERICAN HOME-FRONT SINCE EARLY TWENTIES LONG REMEMBERED STOP VIEW HIS INTIMATE ASSOCIATION GEYSERVILLE ADVISE HOLD BEFITTING MEMO-

RIAL SERVICE DURING SUMMER SCHOOL
SESSIONS THERE STOP PRAYING SHRINES PRO-
GRESS HIS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

JANET WARD

ETTY GRAEFFE

1897-1969

GRIEVED LEARN PASSING ETTY GRAEFFE HER
DEVOTED **SELFSACRIFICING** SERVICES DEVELOP-
MENT CAUSE BAHAUULLAH SWITZERLAND IM-
PERISHABLE ANNALS FAITH EUROPEAN CON-
TINENT STOP ASSURE PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES
PROGRESSHER SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

Universal House of Justice

Etty Graeffe was born in 1897 in Brussels of a German father and an English mother, and attended school in Brussels. Among her schoolmates was Doris Lohse. Their families were good friends. Little did the girls know that in future years they would meet again as **Bahá'í** pioneers and work together throughout Europe for the establishment of the Faith of **Bahá'u'lláh**.

Later Etty studied at the University of **Tübingen**, Germany. She married at the age of twenty-one, in 1918. Two years later her husband died as the result of an accident. Then, forced to earn her living, and with an infant son to care for, she established and operated a home for children. At this time she adopted an orphan child whom she reared together with her own son.

Disturbed by the growing political unrest in Germany, Etty left for the United States in 1936, taking her two children with her. It was in the early 'forties that Etty, who up to this time had always declared herself an atheist, encountered the BahB'i Faith and immediately accepted it. She became an outstanding and remarkable Baha'i and an able and compelling teacher of the Cause. She was generous, hospitable, steadfast and devoted and was possessed of the power of the spirit that is the gift of the truly humble. Etty Graeffe was more than an arresting personality; one felt that she was an example of true servitude to **Bahá'u'lláh**. Although afflicted by a serious heart ailment she grasped every opportunity to serve the Faith.

The account of the passing of Etty Graeffe appearing in the September, 1969 issue of the United States *Bahá'í News* describes the beginning of her service abroad: "Mrs. Graeffe was one of the first contingent of pioneers from the United States to set forth for Europe on September 7, 1946, under the aegis of the European Teaching Committee in the first year of the Second Seven Year Plan (April, 1946-April, 1953). Her particular assignment was to carry out the request of the beloved Guardian to the European Teaching Committee to set up an office in Geneva, Switzerland as an adjunct to the **Bahá'í** International Bureau which functioned directly under the Guardian for many years. This office was to make a survey of the goal countries in Europe and to carry on certain services for the European Teaching Committee." Accompanied by Miss Edna True, chairman of the committee, Mrs. Graeffe proceeded to Geneva where, after much searching, a suitable office was found and the opening of the ten goal countries of Europe commenced.

After two years of intensive teaching activity at the BahB'i Centre in Geneva during which interval Mrs. Graeffe visited the ten goal countries and performed other duties she suddenly suffered a severe heart attack and was obliged to return to the United States for a brief period to be with her family. When she was able to return to Europe she again entered the pioneer field and served in many countries. At this time she suffered the tragic loss of her son who died of a heart attack while on a business trip to Finland. Again she demonstrated her exceptional fortitude, her grateful resignation to the Will of God, increasing all the more her services.

She then went to pioneer in Luxembourg, a country which much attracted her and whose destiny in the Cause absorbed her interest, because her mother had lived there for many years. She was of great assistance to the friends in Luxembourg and attracted and confirmed many seekers through her firesides and public meetings.

From Luxembourg she travelled to Belgium, serving actively in Brussels and Antwerp. An ardent Esperantist, she was a frequent speaker at their meetings and participated in the deliberations of the International Esperanto Association at their World Congresses. She also



Etty Graeffe

spoke regularly before the English Debating Society. In her addresses before the various groups who called upon her to speak she would vividly describe her experiences in both world wars and the conflict between nations and religions, and capably present the solution she had found in the Bahá'í Teachings. She showed great interest in the work of the United Nations Organization and UNESCO. With rare intelligence she outlined the spiritual reality underlying the concepts of human rights and of progress.

From Belgium, Etty left for Switzerland where again she rendered valuable services. She served on the National Spiritual Assembly of Switzerland for several years. Because of her knowledge of German, French and English she was of particular assistance to the Swiss Translating Committee.

Etty Graeffe's last pioneer post was the goal city of Locarno, where she toiled to establish the first Spiritual Assembly. Confined to bed for many months because of her defective heart, she carried on her teaching work from her bedside, her failing health sustained by her longing to see the coming into being of the Spiritual Assembly of Locarno.

Perhaps this vignette will illustrate the

humility of Etty Graeffe. A lady was visiting Locarno and was deeply impressed with Etty whom she met in hospital several times. Etty had spoken to her of the work in Locarno and of her hopes for the establishment of an Assembly. A highly successful public lecture given at that time by a young new believer from Italy brought Etty the greatest happiness. She told her listener that she had worked for many years to make this public meeting possible. Then she remarked to her visitor that she had only just then become entirely a Bahá'í, for only now could she truly supplicate, in the words of the *Tablet of Visitation* of 'Abdu'l-Baha, *Make me as dust in the pathway of Thy loved ones, and grant that I may offer up my soul for the earth ennobled by the footsteps of Thy chosen ones . . .* Many who visited Etty in her last days on earth spoke of the sublimity of her happiness. It was with this joy in her heart that she slipped away to the Abha Kingdom on July 26, 1969.

The outstanding contribution made by Etty Graeffe to the advancement of the Cause of the Blessed Beauty in Europe cannot be measured. We only know that she loved her Lord and served Him faithfully.

HONOR KEMPTON

CHARLEY ROBERTS

?-1969

Little is known of the early life of Charley Roberts, the first Athabaskan Indian north of the Arctic Circle to embrace the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. We first met on the ice of the Yukon River in Fort Yukon, Alaska, in April, 1962, the last year of the Guardian's Ten Year Crusade. It was really more of an experience than a meeting; he looked into my eyes as if he were seeing clear through me and reading my soul.

My wife Beverly and I had pioneered to the village of Fort Yukon and found employment as school teachers. Having been cautioned by the officials about teaching our Faith, we were circumspect. I wished to cement a friendship with the elderly man with the penetrating gaze but planned to avoid any talk about religion. I walked the two miles through the snow to Charley's cabin. Charley immediately brushed

aside my attempt at caution. I had no more than entered his cabin when he said, "What church do you belong to, John?" That day Charley learned about Bahá'u'lláh.

At our fourth meeting, on May 22, Charley and I went hunting. The day coincided with the first day of pilgrimage for Beverly and our eight year old daughter. Charley said, "Tell me about it again, John." While he sat calmly on a river bank whittling the end of a shell so it would better fit his gun, I told him again about Bahá'u'lláh. After confirming that he believed what I had told him, I simply said, "Then you are a Bahá'í, Charley." Without looking up from his whittling, he softly answered, "I hope so, John."

This simple statement of faith signalled the beginning of a dynamic phase in Indian teaching in Alaska. Within ten weeks a Spiritual Assembly was formed in Fort Yukon, largely due to Charley's efforts. Shortly afterwards he moved to Fairbanks. There his teaching resulted in the Faith reaching both Nenana and Beaver, two other villages which formed Spiritual Assemblies during that final year of the Ten Year Crusade. Charley moved to Nenana to assure the formation of that Assembly. He gave generously of his time, his energy and whatever money he could earn.

Charley, though illiterate, spoke five languages and dialects, and he taught the Faith in all of them. His presentation was simple and direct: "There is only one God; all men are brothers; if you believe that, you are a Baha'i." Once he expressed impatience at the lack of response in a woman he had told about the Faith: "She can't see it, and she even knows how to read and write!" Then he softened, "But some people are slow; it took me a long time." That "long time" consisted of three conversations during a six-week period. When Charley was unable to reach someone he would insist that another Baha'i attempt to unlock the gates of their understanding.

Charley was fiercely independent and had a strength and depth of conviction that was rare. A day or so after his acceptance of Bahá'u'lláh a local missionary attempted to dissuade him. When asked "What did you tell him?" Charley's hand sprang up as in oath. With snapping eyes and stern countenance he thundered his conviction: "No man can make me change my mind about my religion."



Charley Roberts

Ten years before direct teaching on an organized basis got underway in Alaska, Charley had a vision of the potential response in the north and grieved at the inability of his fellow Bahá'ís to meet the pace he set. The pain of having the insight but not full and organized support for direct mass teaching drove him to seek solitude; at times he would go off for months by himself into the woods, returning with renewed strength. Charley was a man to fear; he had a flash temper and the strength of two men. When Bahá'u'lláh touched his heart, an overwhelming love conquered his rage and he developed remarkable patience.

With that sense of urgency and intensity of faith which must have burned in the breasts of the martyrs, Charley foreshadowed the fulfilment of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's prophecy: . . . *should these Indians be educated and properly guided, there can be no doubt that through the Divine teachings they will become so enlightened that the whole earth will be illumined.* Though unlettered, though he had difficulty mastering the pronunciation of the name of his Lord, the fire of his faith and his love for Baha'u'llah burned with a brilliance that has continued to shed illumination in the north long after his passing. His magnanimous spirit

was matched by his hearty laughter, his love of children, the songs he would sing and the stories he would tell of the old days, of the crow, the bear, the fly or the salmon. He loved to tease and had a knack for giving his loved ones, especially children, endearing though whimsical Indian names that captured their personalities.

I last saw Charley the winter before he died. He was over seventy then but his spirit and enthusiasm were boundless still. As we sat in the dim yellow kerosene light of his small cabin where we had first talked of Bahá'u'lláh I think we both sensed that it was our last meeting. He was planning to travel to the village of Chalkyitsik because there was someone there "who will join us". He had an enrolment card and asked me to fill in the address; he would take care of the rest.

Charley died on August 6, 1969. His Bahá'í burial, the first in the area, was conducted with quiet dignity that contrasted sharply with the prevailing atmosphere of fear, opposition and prejudice. The funeral was a momentous teaching occasion; it took a spirit with Charley's strength to achieve it. His grave marker is a wooden cross bearing a plaque with the Bahá'í ringstone symbol carved in it symbolic of how, through Charley, these two great religions are shown to be one in reality.

Though illiterate, Charley was never without his well-worn prayer book. In it was found the unsigned enrolment card for his friend in Chalkyitsik; Charley did not complete his trip. Curiously, the man for whom it was intended died a short time before Charley did. It was almost as though Charley would go anywhere to tell someone about the Baha'í Faith.

JOHN E. KOLSTOE

EVELYN BAXTER

1883 ?-1969

Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

Evelyn Baxter, born about 1883, was at the age of nine left by her missionary parents in the care of relatives. Although little is known of her early years no doubt this enforced separation played a part in shaping the character of Miss Baxter who possessed a sensitive nature, an independent and inquisitive mind and a deep spiritual thirst.



Evelyn Baxter

A graduate from Sheffield University, Miss Baxter was a natural scholar and through the reading of Bahá'í books she became, early in 1923, before meeting any Bahá'ís, a convinced believer in the Teachings of Baha'u'llah. She served the Faith with utter devotion as a teacher, administrator and pioneer. She served on the Local Spiritual Assembly of London and on the National Spiritual Assembly of the British Isles for many years before arising as a pioneer in the Six Year Plan (1944-1950), first to Birmingham and then to Nottingham, Hove, Oxford and Cardiff. Whenever a need arose in the Cause, Miss Baxter would respond with wholehearted enthusiasm.

Required by her health to retire early from her profession of teaching, Miss Baxter lived modestly on a small pension. She disliked waste of any kind. Many friends remember with affection and sympathy her practice of reusing envelopes for her wide correspondence. Through prolonged self-denial she gradually saved enough money to achieve her heartfelt, long-held desire to make her pilgrimage to the World Centre.

The finest hour for Evelyn Baxter came in 1953 when she responded immediately to the call of Shoghi Effendi at the outset of the Ten

Year Crusade and arose in September, 1953, to open the Channel Islands to the Bahá'í Faith. One of the immortal Knights of Bahá'u'lláh, her name is thus inscribed in the circlet of beautifully painted flowers on the Scroll of Honour at the World Centre as the one who first raised the Standard of Bahá'u'lláh in the island of Jersey. With characteristic determination she remained steadfastly at her post until her death on August 21, 1969. The fruits of her sacrifice and her devoted service were realized with the triumphant formation, at Riqdán 1972, of the first Spiritual Assembly of Jersey.

At the memorial meeting held to mark her passing the following cable from the Universal House of Justice was read:

DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING KNIGHT BAHULLAH
EVELYN BAXTER STOP AMONG FIRST PIONEERS
SIX YEAR PLAN HER LONG FAITHFUL SERVICE
BRITISH BAHAI COMMUNITY PROVIDES EX-
AMPLE DEVOTION FORTITUDE STOP ASSURE
PRAYERS HOLY SHRINE PROGRESS HER SOUL.

GLADYS IRENE PARKE

?-1969

Knight of Baha'u'llah

Gladys Irene Parke was born in Ballart, Victoria, Australia, in the latter half of the last century. When she was a small child her family moved to Launceston, Tasmania, and settled in that city. In her early years she manifested a deep sympathy for the sick and infirm and it was a natural step when she enrolled as a student nurse at the Launceston General Hospital. She dedicated her working life to tending to the needs of the sick and her experience of life as a nurse heightened her sympathetic understanding of her fellowmen. Miss Parke's abilities were soon recognized and after graduation there followed a steady rise in her chosen career resulting in appointments to a number of hospitals. These included St. Thomas's Hospital, London, the matronship of a New Zealand Hospital; and Launceston General Hospital where her career terminated.

Miss Parke's retirement from her profession, she later realized, marked only the beginning of her true life's work and the years she had devoted to alleviating the physical sufferings of



Gladys Irene Parke

humanity, she came to understand, were merely a preparation for the part she must play in carrying to mankind the healing, redeeming spiritual truths taught by Baha'u'llah. She learned about the Faith in Launceston through Miss Gretta Lamprill,¹ the first believer in Tasmania, who was also a retired nurse, and quickly accepted it, thus becoming the first Baha'i in Northern Tasmania. A close spiritual relationship sprang up between the two women who became affectionately known throughout the Tasmanian Bahá'í community as "The Two G's".

In 1953 Gladys accepted the appointment as hostess at the Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in Sydney, Australia, a role she carried out with characteristic graciousness, dignity and efficiency. Later in that year, inspired by the Guardian's call for pioneers to arise and fill the goals of the Ten Year Crusade, Miss Parke and Miss Lamprill volunteered to go to Tahiti, the major island of the French Polynesian group called the Society Islands. In recognition of their sacrificial effort the Guardian named them Knights of Baha'u'llah.

Four times they journeyed to Tahiti. As Australian citizens their stay was limited by the

¹ See "In Memoriam", p. 534.

French authorities to three months. However, because of the goodwill shown by the two friends the authorities extended their fourth visa to six months. In the intervening periods they continued to teach the Faith, on one occasion assisting with the work in the Cook Islands. Eventually their efforts were rewarded and they witnessed the establishment of the first Spiritual Assembly on the island of Tahiti.

On her return to Tasmania Miss Parke settled in Launceston and her beautiful home "Waiho" became a magnet of attraction, the setting for regular firesides, study classes and conferences. Her presentation of the Faith lingers in the memory of all those who heard her speak: the Faith was a perfect, unblemished jewel offered with tremendous dignity in an exquisite setting, and always the Message was given with warmth and sympathy in its purest form, from the words of Baha'u'llah or 'Abdu'l-Baha.

In 1962 Gladys pioneered again, with her friend Miss Lamprill, to Devonport where they assisted with the establishment of the first Spiritual Assembly, remaining until the community reached full strength and maturity and later, despite advancing age, they embarked on an active teaching campaign in Launceston. In 1967, with great reluctance, the women bowed to the demands of their years and took adjoining flats in a complex of retirement cottages for retired nurses. But retirement was not a word in Glad's vocabulary and soon her flat was again a focal point of teaching activity. When questioned about this she instantly referred to the journeys of the Master to Europe and America towards the end of His life.

In August, 1969, after a brief illness, the earthly life of Gladys Irene Parke ended. A friend writes: "A few weeks ago I paid a visit with dear Gretta to Glad's resting place in the Launceston General Cemetery. We stood before a double grave and said some prayers. A black marble headstone marks her resting place. A similar headstone to the right remains unengraved. I shall always remember the love in Gretta's eyes as she said on leaving, 'I yearn for the day when I can lie beside my beloved Glad.' Surely there is no greater testimony to the power of Baha'u'llah than the spiritual love that binds together His enthralled servants in the companionship of the faithful."

The souls who have been enlightened with the light of the Kingdom . . . shine, like unto the stars, upon the horizon of everlasting glory.
'Abdu'l-Bahá.

ALBERT BENSON

JEANNE GWENDOLIN ALLEN

1911-1969

Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

Jeanne Gwendolin Allen, Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for Cape Breton Island, Canada, passed to the Abhá Kingdom on September 30, 1969. Born on February 3, 1911, she became a Bahá'í through the Collin family in 1940 in Armstrong, British Columbia. She married Fredrick Allen in April, 1941, and took up residence in Vernon. Theirs was one of the earliest Bahá'í marriages in British Columbia.

The Allens were instrumental in establishing the first Local Spiritual Assembly in Vernon and remained in the area until they moved to Edmonton, Alberta in 1950. While attending the Intercontinental Conference in Wilmette in 1953 they offered their services as pioneers in the Ten Year Crusade and in that same year they settled in Sydney, Cape Breton Island.

Employment opportunities were limited in their adopted goal and therefore the Allens operated a small grocery store a few miles from Sydney. This required their working long hours and remaining open during the evenings, but it provided an opportunity to meet many people and Jeanne was never too weary to invite them to her home to talk about the Baha'i Faith. She had great tact and patience in explaining the principles of the Faith and in answering the questions of seekers. They remained at their post until 1962 when economic conditions rendered a longer stay unfeasible.

While in Cape Breton, the Allens drew comfort from the companionship of their fellow pioneers, Grace and Irving Geary, who lived about fifty miles away at Baddeck. In addition, the loneliness of their stay in the Maritime region was broken by the visits of travelling teachers, members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada and other Bahá'ís going to and from Labrador, Newfoundland, and the islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon. The highlights of their stay in Cape Breton Island, as



Jeanne Gwendolin Allen

recorded by Jeanne, were the visits of the Hands of the Cause Amatu'l-Baha Ruhiiyyih Khánum to Halifax, and John Roberts to Sydney and Moncton.

On their return to British Columbia the Allens served in various communities in the Okanagan Valley area. Jeanne confided to a friend who visited her during her illness that she was peacefully resigned to leave this world if it were the will of God. Burial was in Lakeview cemetery overlooking the calm turquoise of Okanagan Lake, the heart and centre of the area in which Jeanne had embraced the Faith that she served with a quiet and steadfast distinction.

TOMMY KABU

1922-1969

Tommy Kabu, the first Papuan believer, came from an area of large rivers and steaming tropical country, in the Gulf District of Papua. There people live in houses on stilts, and the bush is so dense that all travel is by river. For the most part they are poor with few occupations and poor soil for gardens. Civilization

has penetrated only in the form of a mission station with its hospital and one or two schools, and also an oil company.

My husband and I had been in Papua for one year before we met Tommy. He was a middle-aged man who, because of his dignity and thoughtful air, appeared much older. He was looked upon as a leader amongst his people and possessed the befitting traits of wisdom and kindness. He taught himself to read and write, served in the police force, visited Australia, and was a champion of his people. He sought to improve their economic position by establishing a trading business for them. He was often misunderstood, lost money because of it, and nothing actually succeeded. But he was respected and went forward doggedly, forsaking many private concerns in his efforts to assist his people.

When he first came to us with some others who had expressed an interest in the Bahá'í Teachings, he sat and listened in a kindly way and said little. He borrowed *The Good Message*, returning the book a week later. He had carefully read the first page. "This is just what I think," he said. "It is true." And as we listened carefully to his indistinct English, he added: "If you had found me when you first came here, you would not have waited a year in vain."

Soon other Papuans, all from Tommy's area, also embraced the Cause and in April, 1966, the first Spiritual Assembly of Port Moresby was formed. Tommy returned to his home village and with our help endeavoured to start a saccac (native housing material) weaving industry among his village friends. The government assisted for a time but eventually the venture failed.

Tommy contracted tuberculosis but despite this handicap and that of geographic isolation from other Baha'i teachers, he continued to spread the Glad Tidings. We went ourselves and sent visitors to see him and the Bahá'ís of the area. On one occasion Tommy accompanied a Chimbu Bahá'í from the highlands on his teaching trip to villages further along the river and many new believers were enrolled.

The spread of the Faith alarmed the missionaries who urged Tommy to discontinue teaching. Tommy informed them that no one is forced to become a Baha'i and that if one feels an attraction of the heart for the Cause he has the right to identify with it.



Tommy Kabu

Tommy's physical condition worsened and he was confined for a long time in the antagonistic atmosphere of the mission hospital. When we visited him in April, 1969 he was living in a house and seemed better. He was thrilled to be with Baha'i friends again, but unhappy that his condition made it impossible to teach and travel as much as he would like. When translations of the Writings into Motu reached him, he wrote saying how delighted he was to have material he could fully understand and to again be travelling about and teaching.

Although elected a delegate to the first National Bahá'í Convention to be held at Lae, Tommy was unable to attend because of transportation difficulties. Inspired by the convention, however, another Chimbu teacher left for the Gulf District and met Tommy on his arrival. Other believers from upriver arrived the same day. Tommy said he could see that the Baha'i Faith brought a true love and unity. In a letter written in this period he mentioned that he was still trying to sell saccac by another means to benefit his needy people.

Early in October, 1969, at the age of forty-seven, he passed away. His remains were interred in a pleasant burial ground near his home village, Mapaio. Following his death the

well-known anthropologist, Nigel Oram, in a newspaper article, described Tommy as he had known him in the days before he was a Bahá'í: "Perhaps most impressive was his quality of self-control. When dealing with meetings, he spoke his views clearly and forcibly, but he was never put out when the feeling of the meeting went against him on a particular point. He gave an impression of inner calmness and strength."

SUE PODGER

MARY HOTCHKISS BODE

1896-1969

Mary Hotchkiss Bade, whose services as a pioneer spanned a quarter of a century and took her to three continents, was the daughter of one of the very early and active Bahá'ís of Washington, District of Columbia. She was privileged, as a child, to meet 'Abdu'l-Baha during his visit to America. To Mary, He gave the Persian name Ruqiyiyih ("lofty" or "exalted"), and to her sister, Helen Hotchkiss Lielnors, the name Laţífih ("pure" or "radiant"). Her mother, Mrs. John Burton Hotchkiss, received from the Master His signed photograph, and a Tablet in which He supplicated that "*thy two blessed daughters may be encompassed with the grace of the Kingdom.*" Mary and Helen also received Tablets from 'Abdu'l-Baha and, in 1919, at the Annual Convention held in New York City, the two sisters formally presented that portion of the Master's *Tablets of the Divine Plan* known as the 'first' and 'second' Tablets to the Southern States. Miss Mary Maxwell (now the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum) also participated in that programme, presenting the 'first' and 'second' Tablets to Canada.

Mary gave the Bahá'í Message to many, including Edward Bode whom she married in 1936. Together they assisted in establishing the first Spiritual Assembly of Beverly Hills, California and, between 1941 and 1942, served on the Inter-America Committee, arranging for and assisting prospective pioneers to Central and South America.

From 1937 until the time of his passing, Mary engaged in frequent correspondence with Shoghi Effendi, seeking his guidance in selecting

¹ *Star of the West*, vol. x, No. 4, p. 57.



Mary Hotchkiss Bode

the areas of greatest need in the Baha'i Cause to which she could direct her efforts. In 1946 she and her husband embarked on their first pioneering assignment abroad, choosing Brazil as their goal, and assisted in establishing the first Bahá'í Assembly in that country. On January 28, 1948, Shoghi Effendi wrote to Mrs. Bode: "I deeply appreciate your high and constant endeavour for the establishment of the Faith in Brazil, and feel truly proud of your historic achievements. I urge you and your dear husband to persevere in your task, however great the sacrifice involved, and to rest assured that the Beloved is well pleased with you both, that He will watch over you, and aid you to render still greater service to His Cause." Later that year Mary and Edward settled in Chile to assist with the work there, and then pioneered to Panama, Mexico, Portugal and Holland, serving for nine years in the latter country.

In March, 1969, at the suggestion of the Universal House of Justice whose guidance they sought, the devoted couple settled in Funchal, Madeira Islands. While attending a teaching conference in Lisbon, Portugal in October of that year, Mary became seriously ill and passed away within a few days. Her

resting place in the British Cemetery in Lisbon is surrounded by a beautiful garden.

An appreciation of her rich record of service is contained in the cable sent by the Universal House of Justice on October 16:

DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING STEADFAST DEVOTED
PIONEER MARY HOTCHKISS BODE STOP CHILD-
HOOD ILLUMINED MEETING ABDULBAHA STOP
ASSISTED FORMAL PRESENTATION TABLETS
DIVINE PLAN LATER RENDERED WITH BELOVED
HUSBAND EXEMPLARY SERVICES QUARTER
CENTURY PIONEER FIELDS NORTH SOUTH
AMERICA EUROPE FINALLY YIELDING LIFE
OUTPOST EUROPEAN CONTINENT STOP ASSURE
PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HER
SOUL.

DORIS FOYE CORBIN

1904-1969

"This is the cornerstone laid by 'Abdu'l-Baha in 1912. Baha'is often come here to pray." Carl Scheffler spoke these words to two young ladies from Seattle, Washington, who were visiting the Baha'i House of Worship in Wilmette in 1927. One was a Bahá'í, the other, Doris Foye Corbin, had just heard about the Faith that evening for the first time. Doris had never been taught religion at home, much less to pray. Their guide turned, walked away, and left them alone.

Doris felt incapable of prayer and indeed did not know how. An informal but totally sincere supplication formed on her lips: If this is the truth, I want to believe. She felt attracted to the principles of the Faith and a sense of regret that she had not encountered it earlier. On leaving that evening Mr. Scheffler gave each one a gift. To Doris he gave the last of the ring stones 'Abdu'l-Baha had given to him which later she had set into a ring as a gift for her husband on their first wedding anniversary.

When she returned to Seattle, Doris became a convinced believer and began a productive life of Baha'i service in the fields of teaching, pioneering and administration extending over forty-two years during which she never failed to regard Baha'i activities as the first obligation in her life.

After her marriage to Donald Corbin in 1940 the couple pioneered to Texas and assisted



Doris Foye Corbin

in the formation of the first Local Spiritual Assembly in that State, in Houston, and later served at posts in Palacios, Corpus Christi and San Antonio. During the war years they assisted in the formation of the first Spiritual Assemblies of Roseville and Grosse Point Farms in Michigan. A skilled verbatim stenographer and highspeed typist, Doris made a valuable contribution to any committee on which she served and made available to the friends her complete notes taken of conferences and addresses of visiting Bahá'ís. In periods of difficulty she would type Bahá'í manuscripts to share with the believers so that even her darkest hours were translated into service.

Doris fulfilled her two greatest wishes, to make a pilgrimage to the World Centre and to live always in a pioneer post. In 1966 she attained the Thresholds of the Sacred Shrines in Haifa. As a pioneer she served the Faith in Sweden for several years beginning in 1949 under the Second Seven Year Plan, and in Grenada, West Indies, under the Ten Year Crusade. She possessed insights which particularly qualified her as a successful pioneer: a desire to remain in the background, and to concentrate on confirming and training the newly-enrolled believers to teach.

A pioneer to the very end, Doris passed away on November 1, 1969, in Florida where she assisted in the formation of the first Spiritual Assemblies of Fort Myers and Lee County. At the time of her death she was working in the business departments of Edison Junior College where her husband was an instructor. An accomplished musician, she had assisted in creating the college's first Fine Arts programme. In appreciation of her services to the college and the community, the auditorium of the newly constructed Learning Resource Centre of the college was named the Doris Corbin Auditorium, and a music scholarship in her memory was established.

The cabled tribute received from the Universal House of Justice read:

GRIEVED LEARN PASSING DEVOTED SERVANT
CAUSE DORIS CORBIN HER PIONEER SERVICE
EUROPE AND ISLANDS CARIBBEAN MERI-
TORIOUS CONTRIBUTION TEN YEAR CRUSADE
STOP ASSURE HUSBAND PRAYERS PROGRESS
HER SOUL.

MUSTAPHA BOUCHOUCHA

1900-1969

It was with deep sorrow that the Bahá'ís of Tunisia and many others abroad learned of the passing of Mustapha Bouchoucha in his sixty-ninth year during the early morning hours of November 2, 1969. He had not been seriously ill and his death occurred while he was sleeping.

Mr. Bouchoucha was one of the earliest believers in Tunisia and for almost half a century he devotedly served the Bahá'í Faith and was identified with it by all who knew him. He was loving and kind to all and a source of encouragement and confidence to those who sorrowed. His lightheartedness, the warmth of his nature and his sparkling wit made him a delightful companion and a source of comfort and happiness to all who came into contact with him. He indefatigably proclaimed the Faith to his friends and to public figures, constantly drawing attention to its status as an independent world religion and to its spiritual verities and humanitarian principles.

A photographer by profession, Mr. Bouchoucha toward the end of his life achieved wide recognition for his work in television. His par-



Mustapha Bouchoucha

ticipation in television programmes brought him into every home and heart in the area and won him the sincere love of young and old.

The funeral of Mr. Bouchoucha was attended by representatives from all strata of Tunisian society, including the poor he had befriended and the youth whose ideals he had helped form. Despite the opposition of unsympathetic relatives, through the efforts of his staunch wife and daughters permission was obtained from the government for a Bahá'í burial.

The message cabled by the Universal House of Justice at the time of Mr. Bouchoucha's gassing read:

GRIEVED LEARN PASSING MUSTAPHA BOU-
CHOUCHA EXTEND SYMPATHY RELATIVES AS-
SURE PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS
SOUL.

RUTH RANDALL BROWN

1887-1969

Ruth Randall Brown was born in Boston, Massachusetts, on September 5, 1887, and died in Durban, South Africa, on November 3, 1964.

Following her education and marriage, when a very young woman, to William Henry ("Harry") Randall¹, a Boston businessman, two events had an extraordinary influence upon the remainder of her life—a sudden illness which seemed fatal, and the mysterious response to a meeting with 'Abdu'l-Baha.

At the time of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's visit to Boston in 1912, Ruth was lying ill with what was considered an incurable illness. She has often related that her husband, who was a deeply religious man in search of spiritual knowledge and understanding, was moved to appeal to 'Abdu'l-Baha to meet his wife and heal her. During the brief interview in which 'Abdu'l-Baha leaned over her couch on the open verandah of her home in Medford, Massachusetts, Ruth, in recalling the important moment has said: "'Abdu'l-Bahá took my hand, looked with His beautiful, searching eyes into mine, and I knew in that instant my life was an open book. 'You are not sick,' He said, 'you are the healthiest person here,' and repeated the words three times." From that moment healing began and an inscrutable recovery, which baffled her doctors, took place.

This event set a new direction to the lives of Ruth and Harry Randall. Through study and prayer they became followers of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's teaching that Bahá'u'lláh, His Father, was the Manifestation of God for the new spiritual era which He inaugurated.

In the ensuing years both Ruth and her husband gave time and money to creating new Bahá'í centres, to many meetings and conferences, to the development of the Green Acre property at Eliot, Maine, as a Baha'i Summer School, and wholeheartedly supported many activities for the introduction and advancement of the Bahá'í Faith.

In response to an invitation from 'Abdu'l-Baha, at the close of World War I, the Randalls, their daughter, Margaret, and a few friends, made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in November, 1919. The significance of those wonderful days was recorded in pilgrim's notes which were published upon their return under the title *The Light of the World*. Borrowing from its pages a glimpse of 'Abdu'l-Baha, He "sat there before us, at times silent, but when He spoke every word vibrated with power. As He talked of world conditions, His irresistible logic, the

¹ See "In Memoriam", *Star of the West*, vol. xx, p. 22.



Ruth Randall Brown

splendour of His universal mind, were a continual astonishment. As He paused, told a humorous story, laughed about Fugita, heaped more food on Margaret Randall's plate, His great love set all our hearts in uproar. It is not the Master's human personality, attractive as it may be, but the light, the truth of God shining through His selfless spirit that makes Him so wonderful and His words like the Water of Life" (p. 27).

The architect of the Western Pilgrim House on Mount Carmel has recorded one result of the pilgrimage of the Randalls: "Before I left America for Europe and the Holy Land in July, 1920, Mr. Randall spoke with me of the plan for building a Pilgrim House at the foot of Mount Carmel, which he had talked over with the Master, 'Abdu'l-Baha, on his recent pilgrimage to the Holy Land . . . In the early days of my visit with our Master last winter, He broached the subject of the Pilgrim House which Mr. Randall was to build, asking me to prepare designs for a building suitable for the purpose, to be built upon the site chosen. The preliminary drawings for this design were made under the Master's direction. Sketches for several possible solutions were presented to Him, and He chose one as being the best suited

to the conditions, suggesting some changes in its arrangement . . . Then the Master told me to send the drawings to Mr. Randall, which instruction I carried out . . . The Pilgrim House is to be built . . . on the opposite side of the street from the house of the Master" (*Star of the West*, vol. XII, p. 184). Shoghi Effendi, in *God Passes By*, has written: "The site for a Western Pilgrim House was acquired in the neighbourhood of 'Abdu'l-Baha's residence, and the building was erected soon after His passing by American believers" (p. 307).

Ruth returned to Haifa in 1921 just after the passing of 'Abdu'l-Baha and had the privilege of sharing the grief of the Holy Family and of comforting Shoghi Effendi upon whom had suddenly fallen the responsibility of Guardianship of the Faith of Baha'u'llah.

After the death of her husband in 1929, Ruth married Mr. Bishop Brown, a Bahá'í who had been appointed to a professorship at the University of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. In the years 1929 to 1953, Ruth and Bishop Brown actively served the Faith at the University, at home, in local centres, summer schools and on national committees. While attending professional meetings abroad, following World War II, Ruth and her husband visited Bahá'í centres in Sweden, Switzerland, Belgium, France and England. In 1953 they arose to participate in the Guardian's Ten Year Crusade. In response to his suggestion they became pioneers in South Africa, and made their home in Durban. A letter dated September 5, 1953, written by the Guardian's secretary on his behalf, bears a postscript in Shoghi Effendi's handwriting: "May the Almighty abundantly reward you for your prompt, exemplary and spontaneous response, bless richly your high endeavours, guide and sustain you always, remove all obstacles from your path, and enable you to win brilliant victories in the service of His glorious Faith."

At her death in 1969, Ruth Randall Brown was survived by her husband, Bishop Brown, and two children by her first marriage, Mrs. Margaret ("Bahiyih") Randall Ford and Mr. William ("Baha'i") Randall, both of whom live in Johannesburg, South Africa.

After gaining her health and becoming a Baha'i, Ruth devoted her many and varied talents to the service of the Faith. She was a musician with an exquisite singing voice; she

wrote and lectured; and she was always a practical housewife, creating with her family homes that welcomed countless people through the years. Her beauty of spirit will linger in the hearts of many for years to come.

The Universal House of Justice cabled:

GRIEVED LEARN PASSING RUTH RANDALL
BROWN STOP HER LONG LIFE DEVOTED DIS-
TINGUISHED SERVICE CAUSE BAHAUILLAH SHIN-
ING EXAMPLE ALL PIONEERS STOP PLEASE
ARRANGE BEFITTING MEMORIAL HER BEHALF
STOP CONVEY HER FAMILY OUR LOVING SYM-
PATHY ASSURANCE ARDENT PRAYERS DIVINE
THRESHOLD PROGRESS HER SOUL.

BISHOP BROWN and
MARGARET BAHÍYYIH RANDALL FORD

CLARENCE ULLRICH

1894-1969

GRIEVED PASSING DEVOTED SERVANT CAUSE
CLARENCE ULLRICH HIS LONGTIME RECORD
ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED MOTHER TEMPLE WEST
CROWNED BY PIONEER SERVICE CUBA JAMAICA
WORLD CRUSADE STOP CONVEY DEAR WIFE
FAMILY ASSURANCE PRAYERS PROGRESS HIS
SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

Universal House of Justice

Clarence Ullrich was born in Chicago, Illinois, on October 10, 1894, and lived in the suburb of Oak Park for many years. After graduating from the Illinois Institute of Technology, he passed the Illinois State Board examination for architects, and later qualified as an engineer.

As a young boy, Clarence acquired the attitudes and beliefs that would one day make him a dedicated Baha'i. He established friendships with people of various religious backgrounds and believed that the faithful follower of any religion could find favour with God if he lived a good life. As a young man, he left the Catholic church and became a mason. Later, when he encountered the Baha'i Faith, he could readily accept its Teachings because he already believed in most of them, but he did not see why it was necessary to accept Baha'u'llah. Thus, although he had a Bahá'í wedding in 1922, it was not until the late 'thirties that he came to a fuller understanding of the station of Baha'u'llah and became a registered Baha'i.

Clarence served on the Maintenance Committee of the House of Worship in Wilmette from the earliest days of his association with the Faith and later was a member of the Landscaping Committee that developed the gardens surrounding the completed House of Worship. He was a member of the Spiritual Assembly of Oak Park, Illinois, until moving to Mansfield, Ohio, in 1941. Here Mr. and Mrs. Ullrich before their departure in 1945, assisted the isolated believer there to form a strong and active Baha'i group. Back in Oak Park, Mr. Ullrich was once again a member of the Spiritual Assembly.

In 1954, Mr. and Mrs. Ullrich made their pilgrimage to the World Centre of the Bahá'í Faith, accompanied by a niece and Mrs. Viola M. Tuttle, sister of Mrs. Ullrich. In addition to the bounties of visiting the Shrines and meeting Shoghi Effendi, the group enjoyed a happy reunion with the Hand of the Cause Leroy Ioas, who was the brother of Mrs. Ullrich and Mrs. Tuttle, and who, with his wife Sylvia, was assisting in the work at the World Centre.

Making an early retirement, Clarence Ullrich and his wife, Marguerite, accompanied again by Mrs. Tuttle, pioneered to Camaguey, Cuba, during the Ten Year Crusade, arriving at their post on January 1, 1960. A Spiritual Assembly was required in Camaguey by Riḍván, 1960, preparatory to the establishment of the National Spiritual Assembly of Cuba in April, 1961. In February, 1960, the group was joined by two Cuban believers one of whom was bilingual and served as interpreter. A young Cuban man who volunteered to assist in transporting their luggage from the hotel to an apartment became the first local believer in Camaguey. The hotel desk clerk and another young man who spoke English rather fluently became the seventh and eighth members of the group. Another man who had befriended Mr. Ullrich and assisted him in locating an apartment overcame the opposition of his family and enrolled as the ninth member, thus assuring the formation of the Spiritual Assembly.

The birth of this Assembly took place against a background of great political unrest. The three Americans were under surveillance. On one occasion a police search party armed with machine guns interrupted a fireside with about nineteen people present, interrogating each person, conducting a thorough search of the



Clarence Ullrich

apartment and inquiring about the nature of the meeting. When the police left, the meeting continued. The calmness of the Bahá'ís in the face of trying circumstances deeply impressed one of the inquirers who returned the next day to declare her acceptance. Shortly thereafter a number of her relatives also became Bahá'ís. The Faith had taken root in Camaguey.

During the absence of Mr. and Mrs. Ullrich from Cuba in December, 1960, conditions worsened. Because of the severing of diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba permission for their return was not obtained from the American government. They assisted with the teaching work in Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles, for three months and then in March, 1961, they pioneered to Jamaica. Here they served on the first National Spiritual Assembly formed at Rídván, 1961, and on the Spiritual Assembly of Kingston.

Clarence Ullrich had a particular love for the people living in the mountainous region of Jamaica and displayed a marked gift for teaching them. Although many of them were poor and illiterate they had a purity of spirit that rendered them responsive to the Bahá'í Teachings and those who accepted the Faith were eager to spread the Teachings to others.

Clarence gave great assistance in the formation of the Spiritual Assembly of Yallahs. Simultaneously, once or twice a week he travelled about eighty miles through the mountains to assist with the teaching work in May Pen where a large and active Baha'i community became established.

As members of the Spiritual Assembly of Jamaica, Mr. and Mrs. Ullrich enjoyed the bounty of participating in the election of the first Universal House of Justice in 1963, and also attended the World Congress in London. Although they loved Jamaica, their friends and the work there, they settled in Florida in 1963 because of Mrs. Ullrich's health. Back in the United States, they travelled extensively on teaching trips throughout the mid-West. At the time of his passing on December 16, 1969, Clarence Ullrich was serving as chairman of the Spiritual Assembly of Manatee County, Florida.

Clarence Ullrich enjoyed life fully and had an enthusiastic appreciation of and interest in many things. He always had a friendly smile and a kind word for all he met. He told everyone that he was a Bahá'í and his life truly exemplified the Teachings. He showered love on all those who crossed his path and, in return won their affection. ". . . dearly-loved Clarence Ullrich," wrote the Hand of the Cause Dhikru-'Ilah Khádem, ". . . is always alive in the Abha Kingdom and in our hearts."

MARGUERITE ULLRICH

PACORA BLUE MOUNTAIN

1889-1969

The full measure of your success is as yet unrevealed, its significance still unapprehended. Ere long ye will, with your own eyes, witness how brilliantly every one of you, even as a shining star, will radiate, in the firmament of your country, the light of Divine Guidance, and will bestow upon its people the glory of an everlasting life.

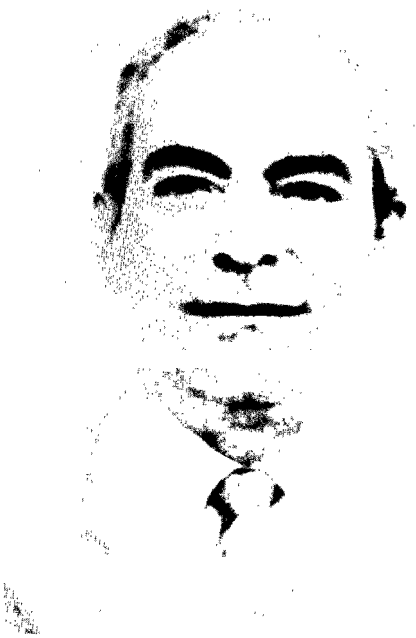
'Abdu'l-Baha,

Tablets of the Divine Plan

Salomon Pacora Estrada, known as Pacora Blue Mountain, was one of the first of Inca descent to embrace the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. He was born in Sullana, Peru, in 1899, and became

an accomplished pianist and performer, and composed folk music with an Indian or Latin American motif. Around 1938, he went to the United States with an Inca musical group from Peru and there came into contact with Mrs. Irma Martin of New York who introduced him to Mr. and Mrs. Edward B. Kinney,¹ at whose home he attended Bahá'í meetings. This was during the opening phase of the first Seven Year Plan (1937-1944) under which the Guardian called upon the American believers to, among other things, establish a permanent centre of the Faith in each of the republics of Central and South America and intensify teaching among the indigenous peoples of the Americas in fulfilment of the mission entrusted to them by 'Abdu'l-Baha in the *Tablets of the Divine Plan*. Through the Kinneys, Pacora accepted the Cause and immediately arose to serve it, having imbibed from these early believers who had been in the presence of 'Abdu'l-Baha a great love for the Master and the Guardian. Although the exact date of his acceptance is uncertain it is clear from a letter written to Shoghi Effendi by Mr. Kinney on August 9, 1941, that Pacora was by that date confirmed in the Faith and engaged in spreading the Teachings. Mr. Kinney wrote: "Pacora Blue Mountain, an . . . Inca Indian, has been most important in the spread of the Cause in both Mexico and South America. He is a faithful attendant to my meetings and absorbs deeply all I have had to say . . . I have been giving out the strongest kind of spiritual food, dealing with actualities and truth—indeed, he says it was just that which made him a Baha'i." On October 11, 1941, the Guardian's secretary wrote on his behalf to Mr. Kinney: "The Guardian was most happy to learn that you have been able to confirm souls from South American countries, such as Mr. Blue Mountain and Mr. Torres. He will pray for their dedication to the wonderful work of spreading their new-found belief in Baha'u'llah amidst their countrymen who so greatly need these glorious Teachings. He was particularly happy that Mr. Blue Mountain, an Inca descendant, should have embraced the Cause, thus bringing nearer the realization of the Master's command to confirm the Indians." And on March 28,

¹ Edward B. "Safá" Kinney, see "In Memoriam", *The Bahá'í World*, vol. xii, p. 677; Carrie "Vafa" Kinney, see "In Memoriam", *The Bahá'í World*, vol. xiii, p. 864.



Pacora Blue Mountain

1942, "He was very happy to hear of the successful teaching work which Mr. Blue Mountain is carrying on. The conversion of the original inhabitants of North and South America to the Faith is a cause for great rejoicing, and will no doubt bring rich blessings in its wake."

On March 16, 1961, Pacora pioneered to Ecuador where he served the Faith both as a teacher and through his music. At Riǫván, 1961, he was elected to the Spiritual Assembly of Guayaquil and for a brief time commencing in October of that year, at the request of the National Assembly of Ecuador, he assisted the Indian village of Alausi achieve its goals, dividing his time between that community where he had established temporary quarters and his lodgings in Guayaquil. He persevered in this task despite the difficulties imposed by restrictions for holding meetings. His efforts were finally rewarded, as he himself expressed in a letter dated April 7, 1964, saying that now the seeds he had planted in that area had started to give fruit. With the aid of Mr. and Mrs. Miguel Solis of Alausi a Bahá'í group of eight believers was established in the village of Naranjapata within a period of two days, and other interested inquirers were given literature to study. Pacora continued to make periodic

visits to the friends in Naranjapata and, for a time, maintained a room for Bahá'í meetings.

A letter written by Pacora from his teaching post, in April, 1964, describes his love for Shoghi Effendi and his efforts to bring the Bahá'í Teachings to the native people, an activity in which he had been encouraged in letters he had received from the Guardian: "I am still alive and happy . . . I cannot wait for people to knock on my door to get the Baha'i Message! I feel that if I am not teaching I deprive myself of the bounties and protection of Bahá'u'lláh—I do not yet know how to take a siesta! . . . Every day is a new chapter of experience in pioneering work. I feel very, very happy trying to do this for my beloved Guardian . . . I have given the Message in every town, city and village I passed through, in stations, parks, churches, on trains and buses."

Describing a short but typical teaching trip in the Indian areas, he stated: "The faithful pioneers in Otavalo, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Kappus, with their children and I walked each morning about four miles up the mountain to visit and teach the Indians . . . When I talk to the indigenous people, my heart feels their pain . . . but there is the spiritual power of 'Abdu'l-Baha and the love of the Guardian to give comfort and happiness . . ."

Pacora's attendance at the first major Indian Teaching Congress in Ecuador, held at the famous Indian centre of San Pablo del Lago, in 1961, was significant for the following reason. In a moment of bounty the author had the opportunity of mentioning this memoir to the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Baha Ruhyyih Khánum who stated—and I quote her words with permission—"the beloved Guardian considered Mr. Pacora Blue Mountain to be the first known Baha'i of Inca descent, and for this reason had a photograph of Mr. Pacora Blue Mountain placed in the Mansion at Bahjí where it may still be seen."

In his ardour to convey the Message of Bahá'u'lláh and open new doors for the Faith, Pacora gave many piano recitals interspersed with readings from the Baha'i Writings, and sometimes gave radio talks in various localities in Ecuador. The most outstanding of these was a series of musical programmes known as "The Voice of Certitude" which extended over a period of several months on "*Ondas del Pacífico*" in Guayaquil. Mr. Medina colla-

borated in these programmes, usually presenting selections from the Bahá'í Writings with musical accompaniment by Mr. Blue Mountain.

Before his death, Pacora made a gift to the National Spiritual Assembly of Peru of property he owned in his birthplace, Sullana, consisting of a small house set in an orchard.

On January 3, 1969, the National Spiritual Assembly of Ecuador wrote: "It is our sad task to inform you of the death of our beloved Bahá'í friend Pacora Blue Mountain (Salomón Estrada) in Guayaquil, on December 25, 1969. He was buried that same day in a cemetery in Guayaquil with a Baha'i funeral service by the friends in the Guayaquil community. Pacora has served the Ecuadorian Bahá'í community as a pioneer since the establishment of our first National Spiritual Assembly in 1961, and was constantly occupied in giving the Message of Bahá'u'lláh wherever he travelled. His loss is deeply felt by all the Baha'is in the country and we are offering devout prayers for his rapid progress in all the worlds of God. We are sure that Baha'u'llah will richly reward him for his long years of dedicated service to His Cause."

Informed of his passing, the Universal House of Justice wrote of Pacora Blue Mountain: "His long and devoted services to the Faith in Latin America and in Ecuador will be long remembered. Be assured of our loving prayers at the Holy Shrines for the progress of his soul in the Abha Kingdom."

GAYLE WOOLSON

CURTIS DeMUDE KELSEY

1894-1970

HARRIET MORGAN KELSEY

1894-1971

On June 9, 1922, Dr. Diya Baghdádí (Zia Bagdadí)¹, an Eastern believer living in Chicago wrote to the members of the Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of New York City:

"I beg to inform you of the joyful report this servant received from Haifa in regards to the illumined and sincere youth, Mr. Curtis Kelsey, who has been wonderfully blessed and confirmed in rendering one of the great services to the Cause of God. He has successfully illu-

¹ See "In Memoriam", *The Bahá'í World*, vol. VII, p. 535.

mined the Holy Shrines of Baha'u'llah, 'Abdu'l-Baha and the Bab, and above all the blessed Master was very pleased with him . . . This is, I am sure, because of the purity of his heart, sincerity of his aim and obedience to the blessed Commands. Verily, God confirms whomsoever He wishes in whatsoever He wishes.

" . . . I never forgot how the Master acted and what he said regarding the illumination of the Blessed Shrine (of the Bab). It was on the anniversary of the martyrdom of His Holiness the Bab, while all pilgrims were at the Sacred Shrine. The beloved Master remained silent for (a) few minutes . . . standing at the Holy Threshold. His silence broke with gushing tears and (He) cried loudly, saying: *In all the years of imprisonment (in Máh-Kú¹), the Báb spent all the nights in utter darkness. Yea, not even a candle was allowed (Him) . . . Therefore, God willing, I shall illumine His Sublime Shrine with one hundred electric lamps. . . .* Now the news has come that on the last day of the Feast of Riḍván the three Blessed Shrines were illumined with electricity and the light is flooding the Bay of 'Akka. Indeed, Mr. Kelsey deserves a thousand praises and commendations."

Curtis DeMude Kelsey will be remembered most for having fulfilled that cherished desire of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

He was born in Salt Lake City, Utah, on March 6, 1894, to Frank Clay and Valeria DeMude Kelsey. His father was a civil and hydraulic engineer and at various times was City Engineer for Portland and Seattle. His mother was a gifted poetess and author, active in civic affairs, and at one time president of the Robert Browning Society. Curtis was one of four sons. His parents were industrious, idealistic people, and the atmosphere in their home encouraged independent thinking. Curtis spoke often during his life, with gratitude and appreciation, of the examples his parents had set for their children. As a child he attended several different churches. His hero was Abraham Lincoln; he used to carry copies of his sayings in his pockets. As a youth, however,

he subscribed to his father's dictum: "Just live a good life and always keep your word. Your word is your bond. There's not much value to formal religions because they cannot agree among themselves." Perhaps for this reason Curtis was not receptive when his mother brought the Baha'i Faith to his attention in 1909, in Portland, Oregon. Although she accepted the Faith at that time and became an ardent and enthusiastic believer, it was some time before it captured Curtis's attention.

Several years later when the family was living in Van Courtland Park, New York, Curtis, who was working for his father on a wood pipeline, became very ill with typhoid fever. He wrote the following account of a strange and wonderful experience which occurred while being nursed in his parents' home: "The ache and pounding in my head became so acute I turned over in bed and was pushing my head into the pillow, when the pain suddenly stopped and I heard a very beautiful orchestra playing in my room. I had never had an experience like this and I turned around quickly to see what was there. However, there were no actual instruments in the room and as I sat up the music faded away. I called to my mother and she came running into the room to see what had happened. I told her about the experience and she at once brought some Baha'i books and said, 'Perhaps we can find the answer in these Writings.' We both began to read and as I was reading my attention was focused on the Writings and I was impressed with what I read. All of a sudden I said, 'Mother why have you not told me more about these Writings before?.' "Although they did not find the answer to the "music" at that time, the next day a procession of Baha'is started to visit Curtis and together they continued to search the Writings. Among these early Baha'i friends were Hooper Harris, Mary Hanford Ford, Howard Colby Ives, Mrs. Florian Krug and others. It was in this way that Curtis was awakened to the reality of the Message of Baha'u'llah and began his life-long study of His Writings. This ardour for the Faith never diminished for the next fifty-two years of his life.

Soon after becoming a Bahá'í in 1917, Curtis was elected to the Spiritual Assembly of New York City. In the words of the Hand of the Cause Ugo Giachery, ". . . he was a trail blazer in the difficult years of the establishment

¹ Aprison-fortress in north-western Ádhirbáyján where the Báb was confined for three years. He attests in the Persian Bayán "that at night-time He did not even have a lighted lamp" and in a Tablet stated "that the inmates of the fortress were confined to two guards and four dogs." See *God Passes By*, by Shoghi Effendi, pp. 16-19.

of the administrative order in America. . .” Also serving on the New York Assembly at that time was Roy Wilhelm,¹ who became a close friend. Roy one day asked him, "How would you like to go to Haifa?" Roy had sent three lighting plants to the Holy Land and had written to 'Abdu'l-Baha asking that Curtis, whose hobby was electricity, be permitted to install them.² The Master replied by cable: CURTIS KELSEY PERMITTED. Curtis felt very strongly that he must go at once, sold his possessions and with some financial help from his father and Roy Wilhelm left almost immediately.

He arrived in the Holy Land in September, 1921, and stayed until April of the next year, during which time he illumined the Shrine of the Bab, the Mansion at Bahjí and the home of 'Abdu'l-Baha, No. 7 Haparsim Street, Haifa. The Master passed away on November 28, 1921, before the completion of the work, but His wish, that the lights be turned on, the first time, simultaneously, was fulfilled. Curtis often said he did not fully appreciate at the time the priceless privilege bestowed upon him, but as the years passed and his awareness deepened, the full realization impressed itself upon him. He was able to repair the car that had been a gift to 'Abdu'l-Bahá and in which he took the Master for rides; he walked with Him by moonlight along the shore of the Mediterranean; he stood behind Him in the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh while the Master chanted the Tablet of Visitation; he ate his meals with 'Abdu'l-Bahá; even his diet was selected for him by the Master.

On one occasion 'Abdu'l-Baha summoned Curtis into His room, had him sit opposite Him, and just looked into his eyes for several minutes, not saying anything. Curtis could not stop returning the Master's gaze. Then the Master smiled His wonderful smile and dismissed him. It was some time before Curtis realized the meaning of that incident, but as the



Curtis DeMude Kelsey

years passed the face of 'Abdu'l-Baha would always appear to him in moments of difficulty and his problems would seem smaller.

On another occasion, Curtis asked the meaning of the "music" he had heard in his room when he had had typhoid fever and was told by 'Abdu'l-Baha that it had been a real experience; that he had heard the music of the Kingdom and it had caused his spiritual awakening.

After he returned to the United States, his mother received a letter from the Greatest Holy Leaf, sister of 'Abdu'l-Baha, in which she said, "We earnestly hope that this will be the first of the services by which Mr. Kelsey is to prove his devotion to our dear Lord, and we are sure that His grace shall ever help him in his lifetime."

Curtis served on the Teaneck (originally West Englewood) Assembly in New Jersey for about thirty years; helped to rebuild and enlarge Evergreen Cabin, built on the spot where 'Abdu'l-Baha was host at the first Unity Feast in America; served on the National Teaching Committee for the North-eastern States; was Chairman of the Maintenance Committee for the Wilhelm Trustees and the Green Acre Development Committee; and served on

¹ Roy Wilhelm was appointed a Hand of the Cause by Shoghi Effendi on December 24, 1951. See "In Memoriam", *The Baha'i World*, vol. XII, p. 662.

² "... the instalment of an electric plant, the first of its kind established in the city of Haifa, flooding with illumination the Grave of One Who, in His own words, had been denied even 'a lighted lamp' in His fortress-prison in Adhribáyyán" is mentioned by Shoghi Effendi as one of the developments which "may be regarded as the initial evidences of the marvellous expansion of the international institutions and endowments of the Faith at its world centre". *God Passes By*, p. 346.

the first Audio-Visual Education Committee. He travelled extensively over the years throughout the United States, Canada, parts of Europe and the Near East. He conducted classes at Summer Schools in America, Alaska, Hawaii and Canada. Many times he was elected as delegate to the National Bahá'í Convention. For twenty-five years he held weekly firesides at the Kelsey home in Teaneck, conducted study classes at Evergreen Cabin, and served as a member of the Auxiliary Board in North America, working in close collaboration with the Hand of the Cause Dhikru'lláh Khádem, whom he dearly loved. Always there were stories of 'Abdu'l-Baha to tell wherever he went.

Curtis was privileged to serve Shoghi Effendi, acting as purchasing agent for some materials sent to the Holy Land for use in the Bahá'í Shrines and gardens. At one time, at the request of the Guardian, he designed and had specially built in Hackensack, New Jersey, a ladder intended for use in cleaning and maintaining the Shrine of the Bib. In 1953, at the invitation of the Guardian, Curtis and his wife, Harriet, visited Haifa where, in addition to their pilgrimage, they enjoyed an extended stay of twenty-six days during which time Curtis installed a pump and water system for the gardens surrounding the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh at Bahjí.

During all these years of service to the Cause, Curtis did not neglect the business inherited from his father, and for over forty years served first as secretary-treasurer and finally as owner and president of the Continental Pipe Manufacturing Company in New York City, winning for himself a reputation as the foremost expert in the field of furnishing and installing large wooden stave pipe lines for the hydroelectric plants of leading utilities companies. When Curtis "retired" to Bradenton, Florida, in 1959, his son, Allyn, took over the business until his untimely death at the age of thirty-five. Retirement was an impossibility for Curtis, and in 1961 he became Resident Manager of the largest brokerage firm in Florida. Although he had little formal education and joked about his rather unsuccessful school experiences, Curtis was truly educated through his ardent and continual study of the Baha'i Teachings and was their knowledgeable exponent. He was characterized by wit and genuineness and possessed an ability to communicate profoundly



Harriet Morgan Kelsey

with an audience in a direct and unassuming way. His experiences with 'Abdu'l-Bahá were undoubtedly the central focus of his life and whenever he spoke of the Faith, and especially about 'Abdu'l-Bahá, he would be transformed, conveying the ineffable spirit of the Master to his listeners, awakening them until they, too, became transformed. He was absolutely dedicated to the Faith from the moment of his acceptance and through his unchallengeable certitude and assurance was able to help many people to better understand the Cause.

On August 6, 1928, Curtis married Harriet Morgan Kelsey who had become a Bahá'í through her friendship with Mrs. Valeria Kelsey. Although unlike in personality and appearance Curtis and Harriet complemented each other in their variety of interests and many who knew them thought of them as an example of Bahá'í marriage and family life. Indeed, it is difficult to think of Curtis without Harriet, or Harriet without Curtis. One could not remain unaffected by this small, loving and radiant woman whose devotion to the Faith, to her husband, to her family and to all who received her attention, helped them along the path of life. Harriet constantly effaced herself in service to those entrusted to her care, but

she was a remarkable person in her own right and was a gifted musician and teacher. She studied piano with Walter Damrosch, Ernest Hutchison, Dean of the Juilliard School of Music, and Frederick G. Bristol, who coached her in organ and voice. She taught piano and singing, accompanied and coached various musicians and performers including Helen Jepson of the Metropolitan Opera Company, taught at the Pierre-Royston Academy of Music in New York City, played in chamber groups and gave concerts, many at Green Acre Summer School. She had a long association with Edward B. "Şafá" Kinney¹ and Maud Gaudreaux, a prima donna of the Chicago Opera Company trained by Mr. Kinney. Harriet taught what was known as the Kinney method of singing, a method that 'Abdu'l-Baha praised while in America.

Curtis was often away, attempting to earn a living in difficult economic times, and the brunt of raising their four children fell on Harriet. When there was difficulty of any kind she would turn to prayer. Her children recall seeing her strolling on the grass around their home, barefooted, the moonlight falling on her slight figure, praying for the resolution of difficulties, sometimes far into the night. At any mishap, large or small, the Greatest Name was on her lips. The many sacrifices she made for her family were made with joy; she remained uncomplaining and full of indomitable faith and hope. One of her outstanding qualities was the ability to make people feel specially loved. Her love contained elements of warmth, humour, genuine concern and a full recognition and acceptance of human foibles. When her family grew older, she travelled with Curtis to summer schools, often teaching courses and sharing her music wherever she went. The climax of their years of service together came just before Curtis's death when he fell ill during the planning stage of a large public proclamation programme to be held in Bradenton, Florida, in February, 1970. It was Harriet who carried out the last strenuous arrangements for the state-wide event. She was even then not well. Although ill with cancer and wanting nothing more than to join her husband she prayed ardently about it and informed her children that it seemed unfair to go on so soon after the loss of their father, so she would do

everything she could to prolong her life. Her heroic struggle ended on March 18, 1971, a full year and one month after the passing of her husband. Her life had been further enriched by the fact that her four children, their spouses and fourteen grandchildren were all Bahá'ís, a "special blessing", Shoghi Effendi had told her, for which she should be very grateful. Informed of her passing, the Universal House of Justice cabled:

GRIEVED LEARN PASSING DEVOTED MAID-SERVANT HARRIET KELSEY HER DEDICATED EFFORTS COMPANY LATE HUSBAND BEHALF CAUSE AMERICA FROM TIME OF MASTER WELL REMEMBERED CONVEY FAMILY ASSURANCE PRAYERS PROGRESS HER SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

Curtis, in the last two years of his life, in poor health, but still anxious to serve, travelled to Alaska to teach at the Bahá'í Summer School. Then, in December, 1969, although facing the prospect of dangerous surgery, he travelled alone to Hawaii, speaking afternoons and evenings about his favorite subjects: 'Abdu'l-Baha, immortality and BahB'i education. He delightedly reported upon his return that he had been free of sickness during all his strenuous island-hopping and teaching. He resumed working out last minute arrangements for a state-wide proclamation conference to be held in Bradenton—the homefront pioneer goal to which he had retired—but he was stricken by a series of heart attacks and was unable to carry on. He awaited visitors and news of the conference with joyful anticipation, met with various participants at his bedside, and rejoiced with them in the success of what proved to his last endeavor. Four days later, on February 20, 1970, following emergency surgery, he passed to the next world. At the time of his death a Bahá'í conference on education was being held in Wilmette, Illinois; the believers present voted to dedicate the conference to him.

Mrs. Florence Mayberry who served at that time as a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors in North America wrote the day after his passing: "Curtis had the resilience of a youth, even though he was honoured by many years. His spontaneity, his enthusiasm, and above all the spirit of 'Abdu'l-Baha which he reflected so constantly in his talks made him one of the most sought after speakers by

¹ See "In Memoriam", *The Bahd'i World*, vol. XII, p. 677.

youth. Indeed, he was so popular with the youth that sometimes we called him the 'youth' member of the Auxiliary Board. It was beautiful to see the touching affection between Curtis and the young people. The Indian people, so sensitive to the spirit, loved him. In fact, all of us loved him. And we knew clearly that he was an historic figure . . . The Counsellors are deeply honored to have had the treasure of his friendship."

Guest of honor at the Bradenton conference was the Hand of the Cause William Sears who wrote: "For many years, dearest Curtis has carefully planned, prayed for and energetically worked toward this end, the holding of this conference. All his fondest dreams came true. Although he could not participate, his presence was felt every minute throughout the weekend gathering. The conference created a feeling of precious closeness to our beloved Master, 'Abdu'l-Baha. Throughout his long years of service to our cherished Cause, Curtis has always brought us especially close to 'Abdu'l-Baha. It seemed as though the Master were there at each session to fulfil every hope that Curtis had, and to see the glorious fruition of all his plans."

Curtis often told his family and friends that his most profound impression of 'Abdu'l-Baha was of His humility and service and even as a young man Curtis determined to follow in His footsteps. He was also greatly affected by a statement made to him by 'Abdu'l-Baha. In the words of Curtis, "'Abdu'l-Baha said the only difference between Him and us was that He was dependent on Bahá'u'lláh every instant, and we sometimes forget."

One had the feeling that Curtis's pace never slackened, his ardor and courage never diminished, that his death was just a momentary, fleeting transition from one field of service to another. An extract from 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Tablet to Roy Wilhelm dated October 12, 1921, conveys the spirit and essence of Curtis Kelsey:

. . . Mr. Kelsey, the electrical technician, has arrived. He is a true gentleman. Indeed, this loving friend is engaged in the service of the Cause of God with the utmost endeavour and this is but a token of heavenly grace.

CAROL RUTSTEIN
JUNE REMIGNANTI
MARY LOUISE SUHM

REZSI SUNSHINE

1888-1970

SADDENED NEWS PASSING REZSI SUNSHINE
DEVOTED CONSECRATED SERVANT BLESSED
BEAUTY STOP PRAYING DIVINE THRESHOLD
PROGRESS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

Thus read the cable from the Universal House of Justice about Miss Rezsí Sunshine who ascended to the Abha Kingdom on March 6, 1970, at the age of eighty-two, after having served tirelessly as a pioneer in the first and second Seven Year Plans, and the Ten Year Crusade of the beloved Guardian, and later in the Nine Year Plan given to the Bahá'í world by the Universal House of Justice.

Little is known of her early years save that she emigrated to the United States from Hungary when she was sixteen years old. She began her new life as a seamstress in New York City and later became an established modiste, creating expensive and elegant gowns for wealthy society women of the area. Many years later she laughingly recalled that when she pioneered in the Middle West she was offered only a dollar or two to make simple cotton summer dresses.

In New York she met Miss Jean Silver, her spiritual mother. There was an immediate attraction and affinity between them. Both were the daughters of rabbis and they had like characteristics of enthusiasm, devotion, independence and radiance of spirit.

In 1938, responding to the call for pioneers in the virgin States in the first American Seven Year Plan, Rezsí went to Arkansas and taught in Hot Springs and Little Rock. She continued pioneering in that area throughout the second Seven Year Plan.

During the Ten Year Crusade, in 1955, she pioneered to Bolivia and largely through her constant teaching efforts, the Spiritual Assembly of Cochabamba was formed at Riqván 1956, the fourth Assembly in the country.

From 1959 until 1963 she spent three and a half years in Paraguay, teaching in Villarica, Pedro Juan, Encarnacion and Concepcion. Her most notable contribution in this period was the establishment of a Spiritual Assembly in Concepción in 1962. She also served as a member of the first National Spiritual Assembly of Paraguay.



Rezi Sunshine

Returning to her beloved Bolivia, she settled in the little city of Tarija near the Argentinian frontier. In 1967 the first Spiritual Assembly of Tarija was elected. She wrote to the Bolivian National Assembly before leaving for that post: "Indeed, I am all poised for Tarija. What a great privilege to start out again on another Divine adventure for Bahá'u'lláh! Can we ever be grateful enough?"

Finally, in 1970, Rezi, so capable in opening up virgin places, offered to pioneer in San Luis, Argentina. She left Bolivia in January of that year, but her pioneer mission had now ended and she passed away in Cordoba, Argentina, on March 6.

This account of Rezi's service would be incomplete without a reference to her unique personality. She embodied the teaching "*Be unrestrained as the wind, while carrying the Message . . .*" and "*Let God be all-sufficient for thee. Commune intimately with His Spirit and be thou of the thankful . . .*" Rezi lost no opportunity to give the Glad Tidings. She would meet people at all hours, considering no one as a stranger. She taught in the parks, in the shops, in the markets, and in any byway in which she happened to find herself. Her hospitality and generosity are well remembered.

Everyone's sad story affected her heart; she wanted to feed and clothe all the poor, tend and heal all the sick. She took no thought of the morrow as she freely used her small resources for the Faith, for the needs of others and for purchasing great quantities of Bahá'í literature which she presented as gifts to anyone who would accept. The dynamic qualities of this dedicated pioneer can best be glimpsed through a few incidents told about her. A North American pioneer who accompanied her on a journey to Encarnacion, Paraguay, recounts:

"We registered in a small hotel in the late afternoon. Rezi would not rest for a moment. She wanted to start out immediately to look for a local Bahá'í centre. It was almost sunset as we walked down a long hill to a little plaza near the river. There, seated on a bench, we recited the *Tablet of Ahmad*. When we finished, Rezi asked whether I had stood before her during the prayer; when I replied that I hadn't she explained that she had felt some Presence in front of us. Then she rose and said decisively, 'Now we will walk to the corner.' At the corner, 'Turn left'. In the middle of the next block we were led to a perfect little modern house, ideal for a centre. Rezi paid the rent, purchased a mattress, and moved in immediately. No one had more faith in Divine Guidance than Rezi Sunshine. That little house served as the local Baha'i centre for the next several years."

A Bolivian believer relates that she unexpectedly found herself in Tarija without any idea as to where she could locate Rezi. Attracted by the music of a street fiesta she paused and discovered Rezi, whirling and dancing like a young señorita, an eternally youthful spirit in spite of having already passed her eightieth birthday!

Sr. Athos Costas, a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors in South America, has written: "Rezi Sunshine lived only for the Faith and freely gave the Teachings to all who crossed her path. We still meet people who remember her with love and who received the first words about Bahá'u'lláh from her. A month before her passing, I visited Tarija. I found it very difficult to follow her in every direction as she took me to meet her numerous friends. In that one week, we had seven Bahá'í meetings. She spoke with enthusiasm about her transfer to San Luis, Argentina. As she spoke,

she told me that she saw the face of 'Abdu'l-Baha before her."

Only a special event could take Rezsi away from her pioneer post even for a few days. One of the brightest moments of her last years was the visit of the Hand of the Cause of God Amatu'l-Baha Ruhiiyyih **Khánum** to Bolivia in 1967. As Rezsi entered the National Bahá'í Institute in Cochabamba she was overwhelmed at the large gathering of Bolivian friends and pioneers and recalled her early efforts to teach some of the first Bolivian believers. With tear-filled eyes she repeated the Greatest Name over and over again and expressed praise and gratitude to Bahá'u'lláh. She returned to Tarija and never left again to attend any other Baha'i event in Bolivia.

Such precious pioneers as Rezsi Sunshine cannot be described. They are like quicksilver which children try to touch and cannot catch or hold. We can only be grateful that we have known briefly some of these indefatigable servants. As the Guardian said frequently of such dedicated ones after their passing: "Their services are unforgettable."

ELLEN SIMS

ELSA STEINMETZ

?-1970

GRIEVED NEWS PASSING VALIANT STEADFAST
PIONEER ELSA STEINMETZ HER DEVOTED SER-
VICES CAUSE OVER LONG YEARS ETERNALLY
WOVEN ANNALS FAITH SWITZERLAND EURO-
PEAN CONTINENT PRAYING SACRED THRES-
HOLD PROGRESS HER SOUL ABHA KINGDOM

Universal House of Justice

On March 13, 1970, our dear Elsa Steinmetz was called to her Eternal Home. None of us who knew her will ever forget this faithful American pioneer who, with her sister, Mrs. Fritz Shaver, came to Switzerland in 1947 to assist in the building of Baha'i communities.

The first Baha'i community was established in Berne largely through the devoted efforts of Elsa Steinmetz. She quickly mastered the German language and was able to conduct Baha'i meetings with little or no assistance. As she became fluent in the language she prepared a series of carefully planned lectures which attracted the hearts of her listeners and were a rich testimony to her deep knowledge of the



Elsa Steinmetz

Faith. Her presentations of the Cause were marked by a beauty of language which she strove hard to achieve. A spiritual atmosphere and great personal warmth and charm always surrounded her when she spoke.

Berne very soon became a true home for Elsa and Fritz and in 1949 they saw established there the first Local Spiritual Assembly in Switzerland. In spite of their love for our beautiful, old city they responded to the call of the European Teaching Committee and arose as pioneers to the city of Basel where they witnessed the establishment of a second Spiritual Assembly. Unfortunately Elsa's sister became very ill and passed away in Basel. A moving account of the services of Fritz Shaver, written by Elsa, appears in *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII, p. 918.

Although she felt deeply the loss of her sister, Elsa proceeded to a new post in Lucerne, responsive once again to a request for help. Where there was need, Elsa always stood ready to assist.

The Baha'i Faith made of Elsa Steinmetz a true world citizen who won the love and respect of her fellow pioneers of that period and of the new Baha'is. She was a valuable member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of

Italy and Switzerland and later was elected to the new all-Swiss National Assembly. She served both bodies most conscientiously as recording secretary over a period of many years.

One of the high points of Elsa's life was her pilgrimage to the Bahá'í World Centre where, for nine days, she was the guest of Shoghi Effendi. She returned to her post spiritually refreshed and took up her task with, if possible, even greater dedication. As a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Switzerland, Elsa returned to Haifa in April, 1963, to participate in the election of the first Universal House of Justice.

In the spring of 1968 Elsa accepted the invitation to live indefinitely in the Bahá'í Home for the Aged in Wilmette, Illinois. Thus she returned to the United States. But she soon found that she could no longer adjust to American life. Her heart was in Switzerland where she had served for more than twenty years. In June, 1969, she returned happily to Berne.

Elsa Steinmetz loved life. She exemplified and taught her religion faithfully to the end in her own special way. We Baha'is of Switzerland owe her deep gratitude.

O Thou who art the Lord of all men! Grant then, O my God, that thy servant may consort with Thy chosen ones, Thy saints and Thy Messengers in heavenly places that the pen cannot tell nor the tongue recount.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

ANNA KUNZ

HILDA YANK SING YEN

1905-1970

Hilda Yen will be remembered by future generations of Chinese because she strode into the twentieth century with a boldness of vision and an independence of mind rare in a woman of any country, but spectacular in a woman of the China of that time. Although China has produced many prominent women in this century, few have had the universal outlook which characterized Hilda Yen.

Hilda was born on November 29, 1905, to F. C. Yen and Siu Ying Chow. Her family were both wealthy and prominent in public affairs. They held an undisputedly high po-



Hilda Yank Sing Yen

sition in the new China which emerged after the revolution of Sun Yat Sen. Hilda grew up in a milieu composed of the leading figures of her country. Like many of them, her family adopted the Christian Faith and Hilda was confirmed in the Episcopal Church. When Hilda was eight years old, her father brought his entire family to New Haven, Connecticut, where he entered the Yale Medical School. Hilda was enrolled in an American school where she studied until she was twelve when the family returned to China. The budding young woman during her teenage years became a famous beauty and there is no leading Chinese figure of her period who did not admire her. But admiration was never Hilda's goal and her independent mind and spirit grew restless under the yoke of traditional Chinese family life. At sixteen, without informing her family, she took the examination as a university cultural exchange student and won an entry into Smith College, the youngest Chinese to have won this award. There she majored in history, a subject that remained a lifelong interest. She graduated from Smith and returned to Shanghai where her beauty, intelligence and daring mind became the talk of the city.

Hilda's marriage to P. T. Chen, Deputy

Minister of Finance and **Director** of the Central Bank of China, was arranged by her family; from this union a son and a daughter were born. But Hilda Yen found it impossible to settle down to the traditional role prescribed for a Chinese wife and mother and she obtained a divorce, leaving her children with her husband.

In **1923** the uncle of Hilda Yen, Dr. Y. S. Tsao, President of Tsing Hua University, Peking, heard of the BahB'i Faith through Martha Root¹ and both he and his Swedish wife became devoted Baha'is. His translation of Esslemont's *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era* into beautiful classical Mandarin continues to be a valuable book for Chinese studying the BahB'i Faith today. Knowing her ardent search for truth, Hilda's uncle told her at length about his belief. Although Hilda realized that the BahB'i Faith might be the answer to the new world she sought, she was not ready to accept it yet.

She accepted the invitation of her uncle, W. W. Yen, Ambassador to the U.S.S.R., to become his hostess in Moscow. When he was transferred to Berlin she went with him. Ambassador Yen was asked to represent China at the League of Nations and Hilda accompanied him to Switzerland. These three years with her uncle developed her into an international person and she never again was able to adapt herself to the traditions of Chinese family life.

When the Manchurian war broke out, Hilda realized that it was the beginning of a world conflict. She came to the United States, learned to fly a plane and bought her own aircraft which she named *The Spirit of China*. In her plane she flew from city to city in the United States giving lectures in which she warned the American people that the Manchurian conflict would spread, leading to a conflagration involving the whole world. During this period she made contact with the Baha'is several times but she did not achieve the conviction that it could be her Faith. When her aircraft crashed in **1937** she suffered multiple fractures and was in hospital for many weeks. During her convalescence the insight dawned that she had been allowed to escape death for a purpose greater

than any to which she had yet directed her attention. She returned to war-torn China in **1942** and remained for two years during the bombing and havoc. She lived at Chungking with her father who was serving as Minister of Health in the Cabinet of Chiang Kai-shek. In **1944**, while China was locked in the grip of a bitter civil war, she returned to the United States.

She came to Wilmette, Illinois, to observe the BahB'i Annual Convention. When she arrived at the BahB'i House of Worship she saw the writer of this memorial embrace one of the black Baha'is. It was a spontaneous gesture between two loving friends who had not seen each other for a long time and not at all an unusual experience for Bahá'ís, yet this simple incident evoked in Hilda Yen a moving response; she recognized in it the reality of the BahB'i teaching about the oneness of the human race and she immediately enrolled as a Baha'i.

When the end of World War II was in sight, Hilda Yen was part of the Chinese delegation at the Dumbarton Oaks Conference. In **1945** she joined the Department of Public Information when the United Nations was formed and was sent all over the United States to lecture and win support for this new world organization.

During her years at the United Nations, Hilda Yen spoke for the Baha'is at many large public meetings in the United States and Canada. Her keen understanding caused her to realize that the unity of the human race, as envisaged by Baha'u'llah, went further than the limited political union afforded by the United Nations. In addressing audiences on behalf of the United Nations she often spoke of these limitations and of the need for evolving a greater plan for the unification of mankind. In her lectures to Baha'i and non-Baha'i audiences she frequently quoted Shoghi Effendi's words depicting the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh "whose supreme mission", as the Guardian in one place defines it, "is none other but the achievement of (the) organic and spiritual unity of the whole body of nations. . . signaling through its advent the *coming of age of the entire human race*".²

At a later period her active mind sought a new outlet and she entered Columbia Univer-

¹ See "Appreciations of the Bahá'í Movement" by Martha L. Root, *The Baha'i World*, vol. iv, 1930-32, p. 429.

² *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, Shoghi Effendi, p. 163.

sity to train as a science librarian. She obtained her degree and began to work in this new field.

A series of illnesses dimmed the final years of Hilda Yen who died on March 18, 1970. A legend in her lifetime, she will always be remembered for her courage, her intelligence and the breadth of her vision. She performed a great service for the Bahá'ís of the world by bringing an early recognition in the international field. The future history of the BahB'í Faith in China will make an enduring place for Hilda Yank Sing Yen.

Today there is no greater glory for man than that of service in the cause of the 'Most Great Peace'. 'Abdu'l-Baha.

MILDRED MOTTAHEDEH

BENJAMIN DUNHAM WEEDEN

1892-1970

Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

Benjamin Weeden was first attracted to the Baha'i Faith in 1942 as a result of pioneer activity in Brattleboro, Vermont where he then lived. He had been a student of religious and philosophical thought for many years prior to his learning of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh. The first BahB'í book he chose to study was *Bahá'í Administration*. Later, as he probed deeper into the Teachings, he purchased a new Bible and dictionary because he realized that the Guardian's beautiful translations into English of the Writings of the Faith required a full understanding of the exact meanings. Having the time and the inclination, he studied the Bahá'í Teachings for hours on end and declared his belief in Bahá'u'lláh in 1943.

Although a quiet, modest person, Ben accepted the challenge of serving the Faith, one of his first activities being to broadcast a series of BahB'í talks over station WKNE, Keene, New Hampshire. From the time of his declaration of faith, until 1948, he served on the Spiritual Assembly of Brattleboro, on the New England Regional Teaching Committee and was a delegate to the National Convention.

Early in 1948 he was invited to serve the Faith at the World Centre in Haifa, Israel, where his fiancée, Gladys Anderson, had been assisting in the work of the beloved Guardian during



Benjamin Dunham Weeden

the previous year. The marriage of Ben Weeden and Gladys Anderson was the first Bahá'í marriage performed in the newly-born State of Israel.

In April, 1948, at the request of Shoghi Effendi, he accompanied Mr. Sutherland Maxwell, architect of the Shrine of the Bab, on his journey to Rome, to meet with marble-cutting firms and to study suitable materials for the construction of the superstructure to be erected over the Sepulchres of the Bab and 'Abdu'l-Baha on Mt. Carmel. With the good offices of Dr. Ugo Giachery, a BahB'í residing in Rome, the next few weeks were filled with meetings and discussions. All the information obtained was presented to Shoghi Effendi for his approval. When this was forthcoming, the initial contracts were placed and Mr. Maxwell and Ben returned to Haifa, in May, 1948. Then the real activity started with the preparation of the building site for the new structure. Ben became the liaison between Shoghi Effendi, Mr. Maxwell, the chief engineers and the master stonemason. In addition, he supervised the transportation of the shipments of stone arriving from Italy from the port of Haifa to the building site. The story of these exciting, difficult and dangerous days is recorded, in

part, in *The Priceless Pearl* by the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm. Ben was asked to photograph the work as it progressed and to prepare written reports. These appeared in the United States *Baha'i News* and in *The Baha'i World*, vol. XI. 1946-50. He also discharged many assignments in connection with the daily life of the World Centre.

In February, 1951, due to ill health, Ben returned to the United States, where he was joined by his wife in January, 1952. At the request of Shoghi Effendi they were asked to visit as many Baha'i centres as possible to tell of their experiences at the heart of the Bahá'í world. Their tour covered a distance of thirty-four thousand miles and took them to all the then forty-eight States where they visited seventy-five major Bahá'í communities. They also attended the United States National Convention.

The Guardian named the Weedens Knights of Baha'u'llah when they pioneered to Antigua, British West Indies, in October, 1953. Here they remained until Ben's declining health forced them, reluctantly, to return to the United States. After a period of rest and building up, he again picked up the reins of Baha'i service in New Hampshire, until illness took its toll on April 14, 1970. The following cable was received from the Universal House of Justice:

EXTEND LOVING SYMPATHY PASSING DEAR
HUSBAND BEN HIS DEVOTED LABOURS WORLD
CENTRE SERVICE BELOVED GUARDIAN AND
PIONEER ACTIVITIES CRUSADE WINNING AC-
COLADE KNIGHT BAHAUULLAH WELL REMEM-
BERED SUPPLICATING HOLY THRESHOLD PRO-
GRESS HIS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM ASSURANCE
LOVING PRAYERS YOUR BEHALF.

GLADYS WEEDEN

MAMIE LORETTA SETO

1885-1970

Mamie Loretta O'Connor was born in the vicinity of Port Huron, Michigan, on April 10, 1885. She had the Irish disposition and a pride in her heritage; she loved a good joke and a hearty laugh, was a fighter for what she thought was right, and was a hard worker. Her childhood with her brothers and sisters was a happy one.

Circa 1914 Mamie married Anthony ("Tony") Yuen Seto,¹ whom she met when visiting one of her neighbours whose son had brought Tony home for a weekend visit from Detroit College of Law. They moved to Honolulu in 1916 when Tony was admitted to practise law in that territory. They both were earnest teachers of the Faith. Mamie had a gift with children who, sensing her love for them, responded well to her approach. For several years in Hawaii, Mamie taught Baha'i children's classes.

The young Seto couple bore with exemplary spiritual resignation the loss of their stillborn son, their only child. From a Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Baha written to them on September 22, 1920, they selected as an epitaph for inscription on the infant's headstone: *I implore a heavenly blessing for the child, Thomas O'Connor Seto, so that he may in the Divine Fortress, under Divine Protection, be bestowed with a spiritual power.* On the anniversary of the birth of the baby, Tony always arranged for flowers to be placed on his grave.

Mamie was well versed in all phases of the Baha'i Faith and versatile in her capacity to serve it. She was particularly concerned about the support of the Bahá'í Fund as an expression of one's devotion to the Faith and often, at the request of the National Spiritual Assembly, she travelled extensively to discuss this subject with the believers. She was a popular teacher in Baha'i summer schools, appealing to young and old alike. In teaching individuals she followed the advice that one should listen to the seeker, let him empty his cup, learn what he wants and needs and then give him first that part of the Teachings that would satisfy his primary need.

The Setos were part of that small army of loyal, devoted, self-sacrificing teachers and pioneers whose names are indelibly associated with the history of the first century of the Faith in the West. They all knew each other and worked together. Among the papers left by Mamie are many letters that went between them, and notes or writings of those earlier ones before them, kept and referred to faithfully. Some of these were from such early teachers as Martha Root, Lua Getsinger, May Maxwell, Juliet Thompson, Ella Cooper,

¹ See "In Memoriam", *The Baha'i World*, vol. XIII, pp 886-889.

Helen Goodall, Amelia Collins, Agnes Alexander, Leroy Ioas, Horace Holley, and Dorothy Baker, all of whom were working diligently to promote the Cause.

In 1932 Mamie and Tony left Hawaii to settle in San Francisco where they continued teaching and lecturing on the Faith. In January, 1944, as part of the first Seven Year Plan, they set out to pioneer in Canada, going first to Prince Edward Island, and spending six months touring in the Maritime Provinces. Well-meaning friends in the United States attempted to dissuade them, warning them that Canadians were conservative and somewhat peculiar, that their response would be apathetic and no publicity would result from their tour. This was enough to trigger Mamie's Irish indignation. She replied that her mother was Canadian and not "peculiar" and that Divine assistance was vouchsafed to those who arose to serve. Mamie's huge scrapbook of press clippings attests the warmth of their reception in Canada and the degree of publicity their visit inspired.

The Setos were living in San Francisco in 1945 when the United Nations organization was formed and they actively participated in presenting the Bahá'í Faith and its principles to representatives from the many countries who attended that historic gathering. From then on, Mamie was active in the United Nations Association in the United States, and also in Hong Kong where she served as social secretary for the organization.

In September, 1954, Mamie and Tony left San Francisco for their Ten Year Plan pioneer post in the British Crown Colony of Hong Kong. Their decision to pioneer had been communicated to the Guardian who wrote to Mamie Seto through his secretary on September 6, 1953: "The Guardian greatly values your devoted services to the Faith, both in the teaching and in the administrative fields. Your determination to pioneer in one of the virgin areas of the globe will serve as a glorious crown to the highly meritorious services which you have rendered."

No crown of victory is easily won. In 1956 the Setos were obliged to return to the United States to seek specialized treatment for Tony whose heart condition, suffered since 1950, was adversely affected by the heat and humidity of Hong Kong. They returned to their post in February, 1957, and made plans to attend the



Mamie Loretta Seto

the first Convention of the Bahá'ís of North East Asia for the election of the National Spiritual Assembly of that area. At the very hour of leaving Tokyo, Tony passed away suddenly and was laid to rest in the International Cemetery in Yokohama.

In spite of poor health, aggravated by the extreme heat and humidity in the summer months, Mamie remained at her post in Hong Kong although she was offered the alternative of finishing her Ten Year Plan commitment in New Zealand where the climate was much better and where the believers would greatly benefit from her teaching and administrative experiences.

She finally returned to the United States in 1963 and settled in Burlingame, California. She attended the World Congress in London and travelled in Europe for some time with a friend. Her pilgrimage to the Bahá'í World Centre was made after Tony had passed on. She missed him deeply. Although she continued to serve with undiminished zeal, her grief at the passing of Shoghi Effendi was that of one who had served him faithfully and with profound love throughout his entire ministry.

Mamie's failing health began to deteriorate rapidly in 1969, culminating in her death on

April 15, 1970. From the Universal House of Justice the cabled message came:

GRIEVED LEARN PASSING DEVOTED MAID-SERVANT BAHAUULLAH MAMIE SETO HER EXEMPLARY SERVICES CAUSE GOD SPANNING MORE THAN HALFCENTURY MARKED BY EFFECTIVE CONTRIBUTIONS NATIONAL LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE INSTITUTIONS DISTINGUISHED BY HIGHLY FRUITFUL TEACHING AMERICA AND PIONEERING WITH HUSBAND ASIA STOP PRAYING RICH REWARD ABHA KINGDOM.

Because of her active participation in the programmes of the United Nations Association and the Hong Kong Council of Women, Mrs. Seto and Tony while he was alive, met many prominent persons among the Chinese, Indian and English residents and visitors in the Crown Colony who often offered their platforms to Baha'i speakers, particularly on the subject of peace. Representatives from the press often attended these meetings' and gatherings in the Seto home, and through their reports the Faith received a great deal of publicity. Acting on the advice of 'Abdu'l-Bahá that the believers should speak to the Chinese about the "Supreme Peace" of Confucius and his description of the New Day, these two stalwart pioneers paved the way for the future direct teaching campaign which was to be launched at a later time under the guidance of the Universal House of Justice.

GRACE A. STEVENSON

HOWARD J. SNIDER

1884-1970

Knighth of Baha'u'llah

Howard J. Snider was born in 1884 in Jeffersonville, Indiana, the only son of parents who farmed and who thought their son would follow in their footsteps, but he had a burning desire for higher education and left the farm. He always thought that he was divinely guided to set out for the University of Illinois, instead of going to the nearer Ohio State University. It was while a student at the University that he met two young men who were very much interested in religion stripped of all the superstition and emotional oratory of that time. These three visited all the churches in Urbana-Champaign looking for a religion that satisfied their inner

longings. They heard of the Bahá'í Faith through Albert Vail who had met 'Abdu'l-Baha and was on fire with love for Him.

Mr. Snider was very much attracted to this new Faith. In 1915 he married Lucille Fischer who was studying at the University of Illinois to become a missionary. It was he who brought the message home to her and it was she who delved into her Bible to sort and check each bit of news. He recognized Bahá'u'lláh with his heart and she convinced his intellect, for to her joy, never in her long hours of study into the early hours of the mornings, did she find one discrepancy between what she had read in her Bible and this wonderful new Baha'i Faith. They both became firm and devoted followers of Baha'u'llah. For many years both served on the Spiritual Assembly of Urbana, Illinois. The Snider home was open always to Baha'i meetings and to Bahá'í guests from then on until Lucille passed away in 1960 and Howard gave up his home to go, at the age of seventy-six, pioneering to Switzerland.

Howard Snider's early struggles to obtain an education caused him to appreciate it deeply. He gave encouragement to many young people to get as much education as possible. Until his mind began to fail, in his eighties, as a result of a series of minor strokes, he studied something. As a result, he knew quite a lot about a wide range of subjects and could talk intelligently on topics ranging from agriculture, to history, to nutrition, astronomy, and of course, many aspects of his beloved Faith. After his retirement, at sixty-seven, he studied writing and sold numerous articles, mostly to farm-oriented magazines, since agriculture was his life work, but he sold some articles on other subjects too. While he was pioneering in Switzerland, he studied German and used this as one means to tell about the Faith. He did the same thing with Spanish, when he pioneered in Mexico near the end of his life.

Mr. Snider could never turn his back on any one who was in trouble. He helped quietly and selflessly more people than any one ever knew. He believed in not letting his left hand know what his right hand was doing, so most of his deeds of kindness were known only to him and to the recipients of his generosity. After his passing, a number of people we hadn't known of before, wrote or called to say how much he had helped them with money, food, encourage-



Howard J. Snider

ment, or sound advice. He tried to "live the life" and his deeds far exceeded his words. It was amazing and touching for us, his daughters, to find how much he had done so quietly.

In our home there was always enough good food, clothes, books and what was needed for our education and health, but Howard Snider didn't believe in having a lot of luxuries and frills. When plain and simple things would serve, he decided against the fancier things. An inexpensive car would get us and other Baha'is to and from the meetings as well as an expensive car would, and would leave more money for the important things—giving to the Baha'i Funds. To his daughters, growing up, this was often dismaying, but to his daughters, grown up, this attitude has been a source of strength. We honour him for his dedication to Bahá'u'lláh. He gave regularly and unstintingly all his life to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. He gave his money, his time, and his life to the Baha'i Faith.

In 1953, after he was retired from his position on the Faculty of the University of Illinois, Mr. Snider responded to the call for pioneers and was sent to Key West, Florida. For this service he was made a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh. Lucille stayed behind to sell their house and settle their affairs and then joined him in Key West. Her

health failed rapidly in that climate and her doctor ordered her to return to the north. The Sniders went to Decatur, Illinois where their daughter, Virginia Eilers, was working to establish a Bahá'í group. Howard and Lucille were able to devote their full time to promoting the Faith and they rendered heroic service. Lucille's health was not good and Howard cared for her himself until her death in 1960. He would accept only as much help from his daughter as was absolutely necessary. He preferred to keep house for himself.

After Lucille's death, Howard Snider was asked by the Western Hemisphere Teaching Committee to go to Switzerland. He served there for four years, helping to organize the Swiss Archives and teaching the Faith. He came to be loved and respected by many of the Swiss people he met. He returned to the United States in the Fall of 1964. In March, 1965, he went to pioneer in Barbados. After that, he went again to Switzerland for a short tour of duty. He then settled in Smyrna, Georgia for a year to help form an Assembly there. He pioneered in Bermuda for a time and then in Oaxaca, Mexico. While there, he began to suffer minor strokes and had to return to the United States. He went to live with his daughter, Elaine Eilers, in Smyrna, Georgia. She cared for him, with some assistance from Virginia, who still lived in Illinois, until his passing to the Abha Kingdom. Even when he was weak and ill, his burning desire was to go pioneering and to teach the Faith of Baha'u'llah. As long as he could speak, it was beautiful to hear the sound of prayers coming softly from his room in the early morning and at night. A hush would fall over the house as energetic youngsters—his devoted grandchildren—quieted in the prayerful atmosphere. Howard Snider served tirelessly in whatever capacity, however small and humble, for fifty-five years until he died in 1970 at the age of eighty-six.

At the time of his passing the Universal House of Justice cabled:

GRIEVED LEARN PASSING KNIGHT BAHAUULLAH
HOWARD SNIDER DEVOTED STEADFAST DEDICATED
BELIEVER DISTINGUISHED SERVICES PIONEER
FIELD STOP CONVEY FAMILY ASSURANCE PRAYERS
PROGRESS HIS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

VIRGINIA S. EILERS
ELAINE S. EILERS



Nils Rutfjäll

NILS RUTFJÄLL

1895–1970

Nils Rutfjäll was not a young man when he first heard of the Faith of Baha'u'llah through his wife, Sigrid, who accompanied a believer to some Baha'i activities which were held in Tanndalen early in 1961, yet although hampered by failing health he served steadfastly until his passing on August 2, 1970, at the age of seventy-five years.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Rutfjäll were retired school teachers and were attracted by the principle of the oneness of mankind. They independently investigated the truth of the Baha'i cause, studied the literature which was made available to them and extended hospitality to visiting Baha'i friends. After a period of four years both Nils and Sigrid declared their acceptance, thus achieving the distinction of being the first *Samer* (Lapps) to embrace the Faith.

In tribute to Nils Rutfjäll, the National Spiritual Assembly of Sweden has recorded: "Nils was well known among his people and had been one of their official representatives. He was a kind, good soul and he strove to better the conditions of, and to enlighten, his people."

An American friend who was the guest of the Rutfjäll family on a teaching trip among the Lapps recalls: "Nils Rutfjäll was a proud man of impressive dignity and almost regal bearing. His distinguished appearance, his quick wit and friendliness, attracted one at once. I shall never forget the warmth of his hospitality. His was a true Baha'i home and in its loving atmosphere Nils sought to introduce his people to the Teachings of Baha'u'llah and to bring together in unity people of all races and backgrounds. I think of his contribution to the Faith in the light of the promise of 'Abdu'l-Baha: *If you desire with all your heart friendship with every race on earth, your thought, spiritual and positive, will spread; it will become the desire of others, growing stronger until it reaches the minds of all men.*"

HAIK KEVORKIAN

1916–1970

Knight of Baha'u'llah

Haik Kevorkian was born on October 1, 1916, in Aleppo, Syria, and learned of the Bahá'í Faith from his father who had embraced the Cause in 1911 in his birthplace, Gaziantep (Aintab), Turkey.

In 1937 the Kevorkian family were encouraged by a relative in Argentina to settle in that country. They embarked at Beirut on the s.s. *Jerusalem* February 22, 1937, and reached their first port of call, Haifa, the next day. Haik and his father were already active members of the Bahá'í community of Aleppo.

In his conversations with them the beloved Guardian spoke of pioneering, presented them with material about the Faith including literature and photographs, and wished them success in their new home.

The Kevorkians arrived in Argentina on March 29, 1937. At that time there was very little organized Baha'i activity and only isolated individuals knew about the Faith. On May 8, 1937, Shoghi Effendi's secretary, writing on his behalf, stated: "The Guardian has just received your most welcome letter dated April 9 and is indeed delighted to hear of your safe arrival in Buenos Aires. He is also pleased to know that you stopped on your way in Bahia and called on our distinguished

pioneer friend, Miss Leonora Holsapple, for although short, your visit must have meant so much to her. She herself has written about her meeting with you and your family, and expressed the great joy and inspiration which this contact with Eastern believers had brought to her heart."

The real activity within the Faith in Argentina began in 1940. On February 29 of that year Mrs. May Maxwell, accompanied by her niece, Miss Jeanne Bolles, arrived in Buenos Aires. It was from Haik that she received "by telephone the first Baha'i welcome to Buenos Aires; her mood was radiant,"¹ and although he wanted to see her at once, she wished to rest that night, and so they said goodbye. The following day when the Kevorkians called at the City Hotel, it was too late; Mrs. Maxwell had passed on during the night. Haik felt privileged to be able to assist Miss Bolles and Mr. Wilfrid Barton in their search for a "befitting spot" for the interment of one whom, Shoghi Effendi had cabled, attained the "priceless honour" of a "martyr's death".² Mrs. Maxwell's arrival and sudden passing had the effect of congregating in one nucleus those persons who knew of the Faith in Buenos Aires and a Spiritual Assembly was formed shortly thereafter³ on which Haik and his father served.

Haik devoted himself to caring for the grave of Mrs. Maxwell and it was his charming custom always to visit her resting place on the anniversary of her death. The cemetery caretakers befriended Haik and permitted him to visit even after closing hours. Struck by his devotion, the present caretaker once asked Haik's fiancée, Miss Aurora de Eyto, "Was she his mother, or a relative?" It was Haik's pleasure to accompany any Bahá'í visitor to Buenos Aires who wanted to visit the grave. On the eve of his departure for Galapagos Islands—although Miss de Eyto was not yet a Bahá'í—he asked her to visit Mrs. Maxwell's resting place during his absence and ensure that it was properly cared for.

Haik often used his vacation to teach the Faith and to visit the friends in the interior of Argentina—Rosario, La Plata, Córdoba—and made some international teaching trips to



Haik Kevorkian

Uruguay, Paraguay, Bolivia, Peru, Chile, Brazil and Ecuador. He assisted in the formation of the Spiritual Assembly of Guayaquil, Ecuador, in October, 1945.

In 1953 he responded to the call of the Guardian for pioneers in the Ten Year Crusade and settled in the Galapagos Islands in May, 1954. This service merited him the title Knight of Bahá'u'lláh.⁴ He returned to Argentina in 1956.

Mrs. Gayle Woolson, also named a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for her service in the Galapagos Islands, has written: "Haik was very devoted and possessed a friendly and outgoing personality. His warmth and sincerity won him many friends. Although he generally displayed a jolly attitude his nature was deeply serious. He had great spiritual depth and was well grounded in the Bahá'í Teachings. He was at ease in conversation and had a ready supply of charming anecdotes and analogies with which to illustrate his points. He was casual in his manner and had a delightful sense of humour. He worked diligently on the island of Santa Cruz and won friends and sympathizers for the Cause there and established some con-

¹ See "In Memoriam", May Ellis Maxwell, *The Bahá'í World*, vol. VIII, p. 642.

² *ibid.*, p. 642.

³ See "Directory", *The Bahá'í World*, vol. IX, p. 652.

⁴ See "Knights of Bahi'u'llih", *The Baha'i World*, vol. XIII, p. 452.

tacts on the island of San Cristobal and the penal colony island of Santa Isabela which he also visited."

Haik left a diary of his experiences at his post. The entries speak eloquently of his efforts to be patient in awaiting opportunities to speak of the Faith, of his loneliness, of his prayers for his fiancée and "all my dear ones who have passed away, including Dorothy Baker, Philip Sprague, May Maxwell . . ." He lived in a small hut without sweet water or lights, unaccustomed to the limited diet of the island which offered no vegetables and only rarely meat. The solitude of the island, the environment, and the peace he found there helped him to meditate. Throughout the years he corresponded with the Guardian and drew much strength from Shoghi Effendi's replies which were full of encouragement. The quality of Haik's faith was profound and exceptional and it withstood even the painful test created by the estrangement from the Cause of some of the members of his family.

A friend who knew him well and served with him has provided this tribute: "I was always deeply impressed by Haik's uprightness; he did and said what he felt to be right, an admirable quality in a world so lacking in rectitude. He was most generous, especially with the poor and disadvantaged. I heard of his giving away his clothes on more than one occasion when he came in contact with the underprivileged."

On October 19, 1957, Haik married Miss Aurora de Eyto, who was by then a Bahá'í. Their son, Daniel Claudio, was born in 1960; a second son, born in 1963, died in 1964.

In the early morning hours of August 3, 1970, Haik passed away in Lomas de Zamora, Buenos Aires province. His remains are laid to rest beside those of his parents and infant son in the British Cemetery.

The Universal House of Justice cabled the National Spiritual Assembly of Argentina at the time of his passing:

SADDENED LEARN PASSING KNIGHT HAIK
KEVORKIAN STOP SUGGEST HOLD MEMORIAL
MEETING HIS NAME STOP PRAYING DIVINE
THRESHOLD PROGRESS HIS SOUL.

STANLEY WROUT

1929-1970

DEEPLY GRIEVED TRAGIC PASSING STAN
WROUT STOP HIS PIONEER EFFORTS HIGHLY
PRAISEWORTHY ASSURE RELATIVES PRAYERS
PROGRESS SOUL.

Universal House of Justice

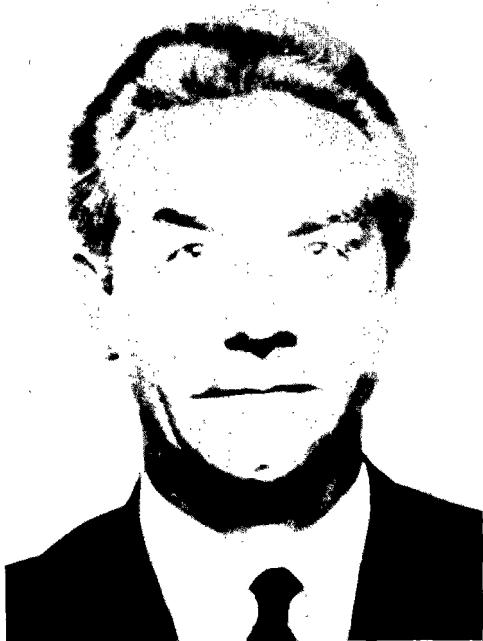
At a time when a small band of Baha'is of the Republic of Ireland were struggling to build up the two new Spiritual Assemblies of Cork and Limerick, essential to the establishment of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Republic of Ireland at Ridván 1972, the Hand of Providence suddenly robbed them of one of their most dedicated and self-sacrificing pioneers, Stanley WROUT.

When the call for pioneers was raised at the Teaching Conference in Birmingham, England early in 1970, Stan, a relatively new Baha'i, was the first to respond. Filled with a spirit of faith, trusting in Bahá'u'lláh, he gave up his job in London and in May pioneered to the small city of Limerick where the prospects of employment were not good. With great confidence he persevered day after day in search of work.

On August 9, 1970, the police found his motor-bike and clothes and some personal belongings, among them his prayer book, *The Hidden Words* of Baha'u'llah and some teaching brochures, beside a deserted beach on the south side of the Shannon estuary where he had been spending a brief holiday touring the countryside. Being a poor swimmer at a place where the currents are known to be strong, he was drowned. His body was washed ashore a week later on the north side of the estuary at a place near Kilbaha.

Grieved by this tragic loss, almost the entire Irish Bahá'í community attended his funeral at the Kilbaha cemetery situated in an open field beside the ocean. Those who attended can never forget the spiritual atmosphere which was created in that beautiful spot. No doubt those who, centuries ago, called this place Kilbaha (many towns in Ireland begin with the word "Kil", meaning church) were inspired to do so. And now this small village has been eternally linked with the history of the Faith in Ireland.

Stan was a believer of outstanding qualities.



Stanley Wrouth

His devotion and love for Bahá'u'lláh, his steadfastness in the Faith, the love and sincerity he radiated and his courteous manner derived from a high degree of humility and self-effacement which so well characterized him—all these attributes endeared him greatly to his Irish friends.

In a letter to the Goals Committee of the Republic of Ireland, written on August 31, 1970, the Universal House of Justice commented: "His passing was indeed sad for all his Baha'i friends but, of course, we cannot know the workings of individual destiny. What we are sure of is that he was a devoted Bahá'í and that the promises of Baha'u'llah are sure and bountiful . . . Stan will have his place in the history of the Cause in Ireland and will, no doubt, rejoice when you achieve your National Spiritual Assembly, a goal to which he was so devoted. . ."

MARY GALE COLLISON

1892-1970

Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING KNIGHT BHAULLAH
BELOVED MARY COLLISON STOP HER LONG

BRILLIANT RECORD DEDICATED SELFLESS SERVICES UNITED STATES AFRICA IN COLLABORATION DEAR HUSBAND IMPERISHABLE STOP PRAYING FERVENTLY HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HER RADIANT SOUL.

Universal House of Justice

The death of Mary Collison on August 11, 1970, brought to an end an enviable record of forty-six years of uninterrupted, indefatigable service, fifteen rich years of which were spent in the continent of Africa. The record of her accomplishments parallels the rise and development of the administrative order on the homefront in the United States, and matches the culminating international role the believers of the maturing North American community were increasingly called upon to play on foreign soil in fulfilment of the Master's cherished hope for them, echoed in the poignant entreaties of the Guardian.

Mary Collison was born at Adelaide, Ontario, Canada on November 13, 1892 and was but nine years old when her family settled in New York State. Mary entered William Smith College at Geneva and graduated with the degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1914. For the next six years she taught in several high schools in the State of New York. In 1920 she married Reginald (Rex) Collison who served on the staff of the New York Agricultural Experiment Station at Geneva, affiliated with Cornell University.

In 1924 the young couple first heard of the Baha'i Faith from Howard and Mabel Ives and, with seven others, declared acceptance and a Spiritual Assembly was formed. Group acceptance being an unusual development in that period, a flow of outstanding itinerant teachers visited the community bringing the benefit of their wisdom—Martha Root, Roy Wilhelm, Louis Gregory, Dorothy and Frank Baker, Horace Holley, May Maxwell, to name but a few. It was an auspicious beginning. "Mother" Beecher aided the group to achieve Assembly status and the Collisons felt a deep spiritual kinship with her.

The role of Mary Collison was to pioneer in one way or another. She served on the first Outline Committee appointed by the National Assembly to prepare deepening study outlines on various subjects, relating them to the literature of the Faith. The first of these was



Mary Gale Collison

"Science and the Bahá'í Faith" prepared by Mr. Collison, and later many others followed. In 1928 the Collisons made a 17,000 mile teaching trip by automobile from coast to coast, across the Old Spanish Trail and back through the northern United States, visiting the widely scattered Bahá'í communities and isolated believers. Perhaps it was this experience that inspired Mary to inaugurate a correspondence course designed to weld together and deepen the knowledge of far-flung believers, a project which she vigorously pursued during the 1930s. She served on the National Teaching Committee and was a valued participant and teacher at Green Acre and Davison Baha'i Schools. When Mr. Collison retired in 1945 the family moved to the site of the Bahá'í Summer School at Geyserville, California and made an important contribution to the programmes there. Between 1945 and 1952 Mary made a number of extensive trips through the western States, concentrating her attention upon the teaching work in Utah, Idaho and Montana.

Then began another form of pioneering. In 1952, a year before the announcement of the Ten Year Crusade, the Collisons pioneered to Kampala, Uganda under the aegis of the

National Spiritual Assembly of the British Isles. Here they served on the committee charged with the responsibility of supervising construction of the Mother Temple of Africa, prepared plans and supervised construction of the custodian's cottage on the Temple grounds, established a small nursery from which to draw shrubs and trees to landscape the Temple grounds and were members of the first Inter-continental Conference Committee in 1953, and the later committee in 1958 when the cornerstone of the *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár* was laid by the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Baha Ruhiiyyih *Khánum*. In addition to assisting in the formation of the Spiritual Assembly of Kikaya Hill, where the Temple is built, Mary served as a member of the Publishing Trust established in Central and East Africa and helped mimeograph Bahá'í literature in a number of African languages.

But a fairer laurel was yet to be won. When the Ten Year Crusade was launched in 1953 the Collisons were the first American believers to arise. Accompanied by Mr. Dunduzu Chisiza, a young Nyasaland African who served as their interpreter and shared their home for over a year, they settled in Ruanda-Urundi. The trio were named Knights of Bahá'u'lláh by Shoghi Effendi. They served here for a year and a half until government policy required them to leave the country. Behind them in their adopted goal they left approximately twenty well-grounded Baha'is who became the foundation bedrock upon which the Faith developed throughout Ruanda Urundi and the eastern Congo.

The Collisons returned to Kampala in 1955 and were again custodians of the Baha'i Centre and later of the Mother Temple of Africa until 1966 when, for various reasons, it was deemed advisable to return to the United States. At home in Geyserville Mary served on the International Goals Committee for northern California and was a member of the Spiritual Assembly until her final illness. "Mary's passing just twenty days short of our fiftieth wedding anniversary ended her forty-six years of dedicated Bahá'í activity," writes Mr. Collison, "and terminated our plans to pioneer in Jamaica."

The passing of Mary Collison was marked by a memorial gathering in the Mother Temple of Africa and, learning of the passing of the

mother of their community, the Bahá'ís of Ruanda-Urundi (now Burundi-Rwanda) cabled:

PLEASE CONVEY REX COLLISON OUR DEEPEST
GRIEF SYMPATHY LOSS DEAR MARY VALIANT
KNIGHT BAHUULLAH BURUNDI RWANDA STOP
FRIENDS THIS REGION WILL ALWAYS RE-
MEMBER COLLISONS SERVICES PROMOTION
FAITH.

FLORENCE EVALINE (LOROL)
SCHOPFLOCHER

1886-1970

The hope which 'Abdu'l-Bahá cherishes for you is that . . . through you the fame of the Cause of God may be diffused throughout the East and West, and the advent of the Kingdom of the Lord of Hosts be proclaimed in all the five continents of the globe.

'Abdu'l-Bahá,
Tablets of the Divine Plan

Little is known about the early life of Florence Evaline Schopflocher, often called "Kitty" or "Lorol". A Canadian Bahá'í who knew her in the early years recalls that she had been interested in Theosophy and "in the early 1920s or sooner" met May Maxwell whose home in Montreal was a centre of attraction for those of an inquiring mind. She was invited by Mrs. Maxwell to Green Acre, Eliot, Maine (later the Bahá'í Summer School) and there became a Bahá'í. She developed a deep affection for the tranquillity of Green Acre and its environs and invited her husband, Siegfried Schopflocher,¹ who "leaned towards an agnosticism which included a search for a more universal expression of religion", to visit and share her attraction both to Green Acre and to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. Shortly thereafter, Mr. Schopflocher accepted the Faith and rendered outstanding and distinguished services.

Mrs. Schopflocher's travels on behalf of the Cause took her a total of nine times around the world, where she visited no less than eighty-six countries, some of them several times. Accounts of some of these travels appear in the early volumes of *Star of the West*.

¹ Siegfried Schopflocher, appointed a Hand of the Cause July 27, 1953. See "In Memoriam", *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XII, p. 664.

One account² describes a visit to India, Burma, Iran, Africa and Europe. "Mrs. Schopflocher has proven herself an intrepid traveller," the introduction states, "venturing into regions difficult of access, dangerous even for travel. With brave heart and with a blazing enthusiasm for the Bahá'í Cause she has been enabled to reach many prominent men and women of the East and present her message to them." A further editor's note characterizes Mrs. Schopflocher as an "intrepid, alert and gifted Baha'i teacher."

In her review of "Teaching in Europe, Asia and Africa", published in *The Bahá'í Centenary (1844-1944)*, the brilliant Keith Ransom-Kehler, later to be appointed a Hand of the Cause and designated by Shoghi Effendi the first American martyr to die on Persian soil, speaks of her own journeys in 1933 and pays tribute to the early teaching work performed by Lorol Schopflocher in Hawaii, Japan and China, in company with Miss Agnes Alexander, also appointed a Hand of the Cause; describes meeting Mrs. Schopflocher in Burma where she had visited a number of communities including Daidanaw, traditionally known as "'Abdu'l-Baha's village"; and mentions the teaching trips of Mrs. Schopflocher to India, Írán and Íraq. Of Mrs. Schopflocher's sojourn in the latter country she states: "Mrs. Schopflocher's visit left a deep impression and wrought good results. She had several audiences with His Majesty, the late King Feisal. Incidentally, I know of no better place to mention Mrs. Schopflocher's memorable visit to Russia; the only American Bahá'í, so far as I am informed, to teach in the Soviet Union."

Elsewhere in the same volume, Mr. and Mrs. Schopflocher are listed among those who first undertook travel teaching in Central and South America and, in the case of Lorol, Africa.

A Canadian friend relates: "Her travels included trips on the first international air routes in the 1930s . . . These trips by air provided her with an opportunity for publicity for the Faith which was not readily obtainable in that period. As an unusual world traveller, she was newsworthy, and where possible she made excellent use of the media for the Faith.

"When I just saw her in Green Acre where she spent the last years of her life, she told me

² *Star of the West*, vol. XVIII, Nos. 3, 5 and 6, 1927, pp. 90, 150, 186.



Florence Evaline (Lorol) Schopflocher

that she had visited the beloved Guardian some eleven times and had always been greatly encouraged and inspired by these visits. In the course of her travels she often spoke on the subject of the World Order letters of Shoghi Effendi,¹ at a time when this subject was less often treated than other more Christian-oriented religious subjects, and she churned out and distributed mimeographed compilations on this theme. She was undoubtedly captivated by the letters of the Guardian describing the unfolding World Order of Bahá'u'lláh which to the Baha'is in that period seemed then a very long way off."

A tribute to Mrs. Schopflocher's ability to captivate an audience who had gathered to learn about the Baha'i Faith is found in the words of Josephine Kruka, an American pioneer to Finland, whose first visits to that country to establish the Cause were made in 1938 and 1939: "Mrs. Lorol Schopflocher of Canada spent some time in Finland between my first and second trips, and went also to Viipuri (Vyborg, U.S.S.R.) and, I believe, to the Arctic. She had a fireside in a first-class hotel in Helsinki. Those attending were so

charmed that the meeting lasted until midnight. It was a new experience to them: roses, perfume, a lovely setting, and a charming, dynamic, vivacious speaker presenting a wonderful Truth."

Of her visits to Írán it has been written by one of her interpreters: "That Mrs. Schopflocher's first visit to the cities of northern Persia left a remarkable and ineffaceable impression upon the hearts of those who crossed her path, was most evident when, upon hearing of her return visit to that country last spring (1927), there was great rejoicing and all anxiously looked forward to a reunion with this gifted and beloved sister and teacher. No greater tribute to her glowing influence and work could be given than the inspiring welcome accorded her every place. On this second visit some of the cities in central and southern Persia were visited for the first time by any Western Baha'i."

Another of her interpreters on this journey states: ". . . she was really inspired every time she spoke. She addressed audiences of several hundred to a thousand or more at many meetings, and the ovation given her was unprecedented . . . always she especially emphasized the position of women in this age and the great part they are to have in bringing about a better social order. How she did plead for the emancipation and education of women! How courageous she was! How inspired! What a profound impression she made on her audiences, and what a powerful influence the messages she brought had upon them!" At one large gathering ". . . a distinguished poet of Persia arose and chanted a poem he had composed eulogizing the work Mrs. Schopflocher had accomplished as a Baha'i teacher." The poem refers "to the seeds of love, knowledge and truth which she has scattered throughout India, Persia and elsewhere", but perhaps in the opening sentence of the verse is found the epitaph of Lorol Schopflocher: "A radiant star went from the West to the East."

PERCY MEADE ALMOND

1890-1970

Slowly the scaffold is being dismantled from the edifice of the Baha'i Cause in South

¹ Subsequently published (1938) under the title *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*.



Percy Meade Almond

Australia. One by one the early supports of "Father" and "Mother" Dunn in rearing the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in this State are being reclaimed by the Master Builder and taken back into His eternal keeping.

With the passing of Percy Meade Almond on November 11, 1970, a few days before his eightieth birthday, another support of the early structure has been removed, leaving those who remain to prove the strength of that which they built.

Mr. Almond and his wife, Maisie, were the two first believers in South Australia. As the result of attending a meeting in 1923 at which Mr. Hyde Dunn (Father Dunn) was speaking, they immediately responded: "This is it!" Letters from Father Dunn to Mr. Almond in those early years 1923-1926 show clearly what love and devotion existed between the two men. An accountant by profession, Mr. Almond became treasurer of the first Spiritual Assembly of Adelaide, South Australia.

Firesides were being held regularly at the home of Mrs. Silver Jackman in North Adelaide, and Percy Almond would arrive in his little Renault motor car overloaded with inquirers to hear the Message from Father Dunn. No Baha'i books were available to the

friends and Father Dunn would supply type-written copies of extracts from the Sacred Writings. It was not until approximately 1931 that the first Bahá'í book reached the friends in Adelaide when Mrs. Keith Ransom-Kehler visited the area and presented them with a copy of *Bahá'í Administration*.

From those early days of the infancy of the Faith in Australia, when Mr. Almond was elected in 1934 to the first National Spiritual Assembly of Australia and New Zealand and served as its national treasurer, he lived to see the completion of the first House of Worship on this continent, and took great joy in participating in the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Faith in Australia. Later, he attended the Intercontinental Conference held in Sydney in 1958 and the World Congress in England in 1963. Subsequently, at the request of the National Assembly, he visited the believers in New Guinea to assist them in establishing their administration.

Of a quiet, retiring disposition, Mr. Almond nonetheless enjoyed humour and possessed a sense of fun, as well as having a deep awareness of spiritual values. Never forceful, nor a prominent speaker, his Baha'i service was illumined by his sincerity and distinguished by his great love of his fellow Bahá'ís. To Percy Meade Almond might well be applied the words of Bahá'u'lláh:

Great is the blessedness awaiting thee, inasmuch as thou hast adorned thy heart with the ornament of thy Lord.

ERIC S. G. BOWES

ELIZABETH STAMP

1887-1970

Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

ASSURE STAMP LOVING PRAYERS. SHOGHI

May 11, 1954

Thus did Shoghi Effendi lovingly acknowledge the arrival of Mrs. Elizabeth Stamp, Knight of Bahá'u'lláh, on St. Helena Island, one of the virgin territory goals of the Ten Year Crusade. Mrs. Stamp was to remain steadfastly at her post for over ten years, leaving only when circumstances on the island forced her to do so.

Elizabeth Stamp was born on March 25,



Elizabeth Stamp

1887, in Bagenalstown, Carlow, Ireland, and received her education in Dublin. After emigrating to the United States, she made her home in New York City, becoming a United States citizen and a member of the New York Bahá'í Community in 1939, where she remained one of its active supporters until she left for her pioneering post in 1954. Mrs. Stamp was noted in the community for her warm hospitality and her frequent teaching trips to the South and Midwest. She spoke at numerous firesides and public meetings in such scattered cities as Houston and San Antonio, Texas; Danville, Connecticut; and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Less than three months after the Ten Year Crusade had begun and the call for pioneers had been raised by the beloved Guardian, Elizabeth, now a widow, volunteered her services to the National Spiritual Assembly. In her written offer, dated July 21, 1953, she mentioned her desire to go to South Africa, where a non-Bahá'í sister resided. After further prayer and meditation, she wrote again to the National Spiritual Assembly, asking that she be permitted to settle on the island of St. Helena in the South Atlantic Ocean. Her offer was immediately and enthusiastically accepted, as St. Helena was one of the virgin territories

mentioned as a goal of the Crusade by Shoghi Effendi. She arrived at her post on May 4, 1954, thus becoming a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh.

St. Helena, site of the famous exile of Napoleon I, is a tiny mound of volcanic ash and rock located 1,150 miles west of Angola, lying between Africa and Brazil in the South Atlantic Ocean. The island has an area of but forty-seven square miles, and very little of that expanse is inhabited. Life is generally hard and the indigenous peoples poor, but Elizabeth managed to remain entirely self-supporting throughout her long pioneering assignment.

The tests which had accompanied Elizabeth's formal entrance onto the island were small compared with those she faced when she arrived. Because she was listed with the British government on her visa papers as a Baha'i (the island being a British colonial territory), she was known to the bishop of the Church of England on the island even before her arrival. One of the two vicars serving that bishop was particularly unhappy at the prospect of this new resident and took every opportunity to warn his parishioners against becoming involved with this new religion from the East. In spite of his hostility, one of the first visits Elizabeth made was to this vicar, and through patience and diplomacy she was able to win his grudging respect and even present him with several Baha'i books.

Virtually all the native population are members of the Church of England, with small minorities belonging to the Salvation Army and the Baptist and Seventh Day Adventist denominations. Because the economic and social ties of the native population to the Church of England were so strong, Elizabeth could do little direct teaching. However, throughout her years on this tiny island, she consistently devised ways to inform the inhabitants of the truths of the Cause. The patience, steadfastness, and dedication which she displayed during these lonely years in this isolated spot will perhaps be remembered as her most glowing attributes.

For over ten years Mrs. Stamp faithfully remained at her post, with only the bi-monthly mailboat to bring her news of the Bahá'ís, and infrequent brief visits to her family to ease the isolation. In April, 1963, Elizabeth fell in the hotel in Jarnestown where she lived and broke her ankle in several places. After a lengthy

recuperation in South Africa, she returned to her post on December 5, 1963. Circumstances on the island, however, continued to worsen and she was forced to leave her post permanently at the end of 1964. That she left behind a nucleus of four enrolled native believers to carry on the work of the Cause is evidence of her unquenchable spirit.

In spite of failing health and advanced age, Mrs. Stamp worked actively for the Faith in South Africa until 1966, serving on the Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Durban. On June 21, 1966, she returned to the United States, where she spent her remaining years in Waterbury, Connecticut, near her son and his family.

Elizabeth Stamp passed away as the result of a heart attack on November 11, 1970, at the age of eighty-three and is buried next to her husband in Washington, Connecticut. Her spirit of shining faith and of unyielding determination are worthy examples for all who, in the present or future, aspire to serve this Cause in the pioneering field.

ISFANDÍYÁR YAGÁNAGÍ

1892–1971

Over the past century, economic reasons compelled farmers from Yazd, in the central Persian desert, to abandon their homes in that waterless region and emigrate to India. Settling on its western coast, they gravitated into the catering business and through hard work (which still was infinitely less onerous than what they had been accustomed to) and taking a low profit (which still yielded them an infinitely better living than they had ever hoped to secure from their sterile farms), they and their descendants and successors secured, at the end of several decades, the virtual monopoly of catering to the middle classes in Bombay and in the few other towns where they settled.

The Yaganagi brothers from the village of Qásim-Ábád, Yazd, were among those who, following this trend eventually owned a restaurant in Poona, just over a hundred miles from Bombay. Isfandiyar was married and senior to Surúsh by a few years, but though of different temperaments each had qualities which offset and complemented the other's and so their business partnership was a happy and prosperous one.



Isfandiyár Yagánagí

They were of the Zoroastrian persuasion and although vaguely aware of the divine origin of the Arabian Prophet from Scriptural references to Him, they still awaited the advent of the world Saviour, Sháh-Bahrám, promised in their sacred books. What they had been told about the Baha'i Faith was not calculated to encourage further investigation on their part so it was fortunate for them that a chance acquaintance struck up with one of their regular customers which ripened into friendship led to a study of the Mathnaví of Jalalu'd-Din Rúmi, the renowned mystic poet of Persia. This study did exactly what their teacher (who, unknown to them, was a Baha'i) designed it to do: it led them to a recognition and acceptance of the Faith.

Isfandiyár's wife was averse to and bitterly resented his forsaking the Faith of his forefathers and although this did not dissolve their marriage, it was not conducive to a more pleasant life either. Things stood this way until the time when on pilgrimage in the Holy Land, Isfandiyár besought the Guardian's prayers for her belief. When he returned home he found to his joy that his wife had accepted the Faith while he was away.

Isfandiyar embraced the Faith in a com-

munity that was geared for progressive action. He had the spiritual capacity to imbibe the blessings generated by such an atmosphere and of contributing his share, in turn, to its further development: just like the fertile seed planted in genial soil, which draws its sustenance from it and then bears goodly fruit for others.

Through whole-hearted participation in all local activities, Isfandiyár Yaganagi developed into a firm Baha'i, a staunch supporter of its institutions and a stalwart pillar of the Faith. Without much formal education, he yet had the happy knack of making the right decision in most courses of action by listening to the promptings of his sincere heart. His decision to go on pilgrimage was one such instance. It was a snap decision, executed with promptitude. On return, he confided the reason of the hasty action. In addition to the bounty of pilgrimage to the Holy Shrines and the blessing of attaining to the Guardian's sacred presence, he had desired the privilege and the honour of meeting the Greatest Holy Leaf. It was not long thereafter that she passed away.

On his second visit to the Holy Land, in 1955, Isfandiyar Yaganagi had the joy of the company of his wife as a Baha'i pilgrim, too.

Another of his impulsive actions was his purchase of the National Hotel at Poona from its Baha'i owners who were emigrating. It was his aim to maintain the tradition of hospitality which that place had acquired over several decades and he secured what to him was a substantial loan to conclude this deal. When he got possession, a flourishing business suddenly seemed to dry up. Agitated, he disclosed his predicament to Miss Martha Root, who was at the hotel at that time, on a teaching trip. She prayed with him. She asked for Bahá'u'lláh's grace on Isfandiyár's head. The flow of customers was resumed. The situation was saved.

Isfandiyar Yaganagi turned this blessing into a channel for further service to the Cause. His hotel was always open to friends and teachers. Many illustrious visitors stayed there. Conventions and Conferences were held in it. He assigned one room for use as a National Office for two years. He was lavish in his hospitality. He carried on faithfully the tradition of the hotel as a home to Baha'i visitors and teachers and a centre for Baha'i activities.

Isfandiyar Yagánagi was a member of a

Local Spiritual Assembly all his Bahá'í life; of the National Spiritual Assembly for one year.

He pioneered with his family to Panchgani where, in conjunction with the labour of other friends, he formed a Local Spiritual Assembly and helped in the firm establishment of the Baha'i school. Later, he pioneered once again with his family, on this occasion to Baroda.

The joy at the sight of a rose in full bloom, the pleasure the fragrance of its perfume imparts, live on long after the rose is no more. So also, now that dear Isfandiyar is gone, his devotion and attachment to the Faith, the moral and material support he extended to its institutions, his affection for his fellow-men and the generous way in which he expressed that love, the simplicity and sincerity of his life, will continue to inspire future generations to emulate his example to serve the Cause and our fellow-beings.

Informed of his passing, the Universal House of Justice cabled:

GRIEVED NEWS PASSING SELFLESS BELOVED
SERVANT HOLY THRESHOLD ISFANDIYAR YAGANAGI STOP HIS DEVOTION DETACHMENT
GENEROSITY SERVICE FAITH DURING LONG
DECADES INDIA UNFORGETTABLE STOP ASSURE
RELATIVES FRIENDS ARDENT PRAYERS BESEECHING MERCY BLESSINGS ABHA BEAUTY
UPON HIS SOUL STOP ADVISE HOLD BEFITTING
MEMORIAL GATHERINGS. *Universal*
House of Justice.

RUSTOM SABIT

AMINDA JOSEPHINE KRUKA

1892-1971

Aminda Josephine Kruka was given the title "Mother of Finland" by the beloved Guardian because of her devoted service in establishing the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh in that country where her name will be eternally honoured. She will also be lovingly remembered for her dedication as a pioneer in laying the foundation of the Baha'i Faith in Habana and Cienfuegos, Cuba. Shoghi Effendi's secretary wrote on his behalf in a letter to Josephine Kruka on May 3, 1956: "You must thank God that, in His mercy, He has enabled you to do so much in two different hemispheres; a rare privilege indeed!"



Aminda Josephine Kruka

Born on September 3, 1892, in Wolverine, a small mining community in Michigan, Aminda Josephine was one of seven children born to immigrant parents. Her mother came from Finland, her father from Sweden, in the latter part of the nineteenth century when so many Europeans flocked to America seeking a new world. Josephine caught the spirit of this search for a new way of life. Her father died when she was ten years old and Josephine was profoundly influenced by her mother's study of the Bible, her search for prophecy concerning the return of the Christ Spirit, and her service to humanity. Gustava Kruka did not speak English and Josephine became her mother's constant companion, reading the Finnish newspapers to her daily and absorbing the wisdom Gustava Kruka imparted.

Josephine went to France in 1918, serving as a Red Cross nurse. She returned to the United States at the end of World War I and attended Columbia University. Her education was interrupted by failing health.

After spending several years in a sanitarium, Josephine settled in Washington, D.C., during the mid-twenties. Here she met Selma Gustafson, a fellow Red Cross nurse, who introduced her to the Bahá'í Teachings and be-

came her "spiritual mother". Josephine worked with the early believers in Washington to develop one of the leading Bahá'í communities in the United States. Her life in Washington was devoted to the care of her mother and to the Bahá'í community. Because of her frail health, Josephine and her mother spent many winters in Miami, Florida, where she also served the Faith.

Following the death of her mother in 1935, Josephine, fired with the zeal born of her discovery of Bahá'u'lláh as the fulfilment of biblical prophecy about the return of Christ, responded to the Guardian's call for pioneers to Latin America during the first United States Seven Year Plan (1937-1944). Her early pioneer work in Cuba was shared with Jean Silver.¹ Together, these two established the Cause of God in Habana, teaching English to children and adults and bringing them the Message of Bahá'u'lláh. During the winters of 1950 to 1956 Josephine continued to return to Cuba, consolidating the work in Habana and opening the community of Cienfuegos, with Jean Silver. Josephine had a great love for the Cuban people who will long remember her warm and generous nature.

Josephine's extensive correspondence with the Guardian between the years 1936 and 1957 reveals how frequently her untiring efforts brought him happiness and inspired his admiration for her. On November 23, 1941, Shoghi Effendi's secretary wrote on his behalf: "It is quite impossible for the pioneers and pioneer teachers to realize fully how great the services are which they are rendering the Faith of God, and their fellow-men, at this time. But future generations will know how to value their self-sacrifice, and the fact that, when the need was greatest, they did not fail their beloved Cause but gave up home and comforts to serve it unstintingly." In response to a report about the progress of the work in Cuba, Shoghi Effendi wrote to her in his own hand on May 25, 1944: "I was delighted to receive your most welcome message. I feel truly proud of your achievements. I am deeply grateful for your incessant and noble exertions. I will continue to pray from the depths of my heart for the extension of your valued activities. Persevere, nay redouble in your efforts, and rest assured the

¹ See "In Memoriam", *The Baha'i World*, vol. XIII, p. 942.

Beloved will richly bless your noble exertions."

In addition to her facility with the Spanish language, Josephine spoke Finnish fluently. In July, 1938, at the beloved Guardian's request, she made her first trip to Finland. Martha Root had previously made two brief visits there and through her efforts a number of Esperantists and Theosophists had heard of the Faith. However, it was a young Finnish minister who became the first believer in Finland after quiet prayer and study with Josephine Kruka. In December, 1938, she returned again to Cuba. During her first visit to Finland, Josephine toured several larger cities. She found the most receptivity in Viipuri, a city that is now part of Russia. On her second visit to Viipuri in 1939, Germany marched into Poland thus interrupting her work in northern Europe.

During her second journey to Finland in May, 1939, Josephine met considerable resistance to the Baha'i Faith. The Foreign Ministry refused to extend her visa and forbade teaching of the Faith. Finland at this time was experiencing political difficulties with Russia; war was imminent and Josephine was forced to return to the United States. She was able to arrange passage on a ship with many other returning American citizens. "We were packed like cattle in the hold of the ship," she wrote to her sister. A month later, Russia invaded Finland and the world was enveloped in another war.

During this time Josephine was arranging for the translation of Bahá'í literature into Finnish with the assistance of Ida Hiltanen, a Baha'i of Chicago, and Elsa Vento¹ of Toronto, Canada. Earlier, Josephine had found a Finnish newspaper printed in Duluth, Minnesota, which contained an account of the Baha'i Faith with an elaboration of its principles. She had one thousand copies printed for distribution. This was the only Baha'i literature in Finnish which she took to Finland to begin her pioneer work in 1938.

After World War II, Josephine did not return to Finland to pioneer until 1950. She continued to spend the summer months in Finland and winters in Cuba through 1956. But in 1957 she went to Finland to remain for six full years. The years following the Russo-Finnish war were difficult. The Finns were working night

and day to repay the debt demanded by Russia. Teaching the Bahá'í Faith in Finland was slow, and the bitterly cold winters were difficult for one whose health was frail and who traditionally spent the winter months in warmer climes. Yet Josephine persisted at her post. She had tenacity and an unfailing devotion to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh and to the beloved Guardian who had asked her to pioneer in Finland, a service to which he said he attached "the greatest importance". He wrote to her on December 30, 1946: "Your past services to our beloved Faith have been crowned with great success, and I truly admire, and feel deeply grateful for, your splendid pioneer services. I will pray that, in the European continent, your high endeavours for the promotion of the Second Seven Year Plan² will also be crowned with signal success. Persevere, be happy and rest assured."

Josephine used her own meagre funds in her teaching efforts. Describing conditions in Finland during her six year stay she wrote: "There was now much more tolerance. Communism had made inroads. Belief in God had weakened. Editors no longer rushed you to the door. You were not scoffed at nor considered queer. No irritability was evinced even in official circles. but still no one invited a Baha'i to speak at his club or group. The principles were generally accepted, but not the Station of Bahá'u'lláh. Meetings were tried in different sections of the city. There werestill some protestations, at times rather violent. Fortunately, the Finns are great readers and by now *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, Baha'i Prayers* and several pamphlets were available in the Finnish language."

The Guardian's secretary wrote on his behalf on December 11, 1952: "The Guardian wishes me to assure you of his very deep appreciation of your outstanding services in Finland. Single-handed, you have been able to establish a Spiritual Assembly there,³ which will stand to your eternal glory."

In 1962 the National Spiritual Assembly of Finland was formed with its seat in Helsinki. Josephine had the joyous bounty to represent Finland at the first election of the Universal House of Justice in Haifa, Israel, in 1963. She attended the World Congress in London before

¹ See "In Memoriam", *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII, p. 900.

² 1946-1953. ³ Helsinki.

returning to the United States for the first time in six years.

For the next four years Josephine made her home with her niece, Rhea Akemann (Wendt), a Baha'i in Kokomo, Indiana. She continued to serve Bahá'u'lláh and while she was in Kokomo, a firm Local Spiritual Assembly was formed. In 1967, with failing health, Josephine chose to join her original teacher, Selma Gustafson, in Dayton, Ohio, where she passed away on January 7, 1971, leaving an unforgettable record of service to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

All who knew Josephine Kruka loved her warmth, her generous and loving spirit. In her seventy-first year, reflecting on her services, she wrote to a friend: "I enjoyed the work both in Finland and Cuba—they were my happiest years!"

RHEA AKEMANN WENDT

HÁJÍ AḤMAD ḤAMDÍ MULLÁ
HUSAYN
1882–1971

The death of Haji Aḥmad Ḥamdí Mullá Husayn on the eve of May 20, 1971, deprived the 'Iraqi Bahá'í community of a staunch friend, a zealous teacher, a prolific writer and a doughty champion of the Faith.

Born in Basrih in 1882, in a Muslim family of the Sunni sect, Aḥmad Hamdí received his primary education at home, followed up by a secondary course under the clergy, particularly under his own father, who was the imam (prayer leader) of a local mosque. Thence he went on to Mecca to complete his study of religious subjects and such others as history, philosophy and astronomy.

When his father died, a royal edict, under the seal of Sultan 'Abdu'l-Ḥamid himself, installed Aḥmad Hamdí as the imam of one of the larger mosques of Basrih. He taught in the secondary school, lectured in private classes and contributed articles on various topics to the press. He was elected as president of several social reform societies, wrote books on diverse subjects and was wont to read his poems at public gatherings. Withal, he was a successful business man and his commercial operations were on an extensive scale.



Háji Aḥmad Ḥamdí Mullá Husayn

Following the 1920 revolution in 'Iraq, Aḥmad Hamdí was appointed along with other 'Iraqi notables to go to Baghdád on a deputation to welcome King Feisal I, the popular King of 'Iraq, whose installation as sovereign inaugurated a reign of independence and self-government for the land.

Aḥmad Hamdí's acquisition of learning, vast as it was, had left him unsatisfied. He felt a void in his heart and so he undertook a journey to India, ostensibly to further his business interests but in reality to see if he could fill this gap by his association with Muslim scholars in that country and the spiritual knowledge he might imbibe from them.

Among his wide circle of friends in Bašriḥ was a Mr. Ra'úf 'Abdu'llah Attar, the Director of Education, and they met regularly to discuss abstruse subjects.

Once during the course of such a visit, Mr. Attar asked about the Baha'i Faith. His ignorance of the subject started Aḥmad Hamdí on a search which led him to embrace the Faith. He secured a copy of the *Kitáb-i-Íqán* with some difficulty, engaged the services of a Persian to translate it into Arabic for him orally, was stirred by its contents, pursued his search further till he met some Bahá'ís

further afield, association with whom finally convinced him of the truth of the Cause.

He joyfully announced this fact to his friend, Mr. Attar and to all and sundry. His kith and kin, his colleagues and friends took alarm when the news of his conversion spread and started a campaign of vilification and persecution of him. He had been a popular idol; their aim now was to destroy him. No opposition, however, could daunt Ahmad Harndi; no affliction silence him; no adversity dampen his zeal.

He continued teaching the Faith until a community of some thirty Bahá'ís from various backgrounds came into being there.

These Baha'is wrote to the beloved Guardian and received loving replies encouraging them to carry on their teaching work and turn to their National Spiritual Assembly for guidance and help in forming a Local Spiritual Assembly.

After the Second World War, Ahmad Hamdi moved to Baghdad with his family and was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly. In this new role he enriched the record of his services by lending fresh stimulus to the teaching work by his unstinted support of the funds, and by widening the sphere of teaching through his writings.

He wrote many volumes, citing chapter and verse from Islamic sources to support the Baha'i claim and challenged his former co-religionists to disprove or accept it. He literally distributed thousands of copies of his books throughout the Arab world and these stand today as a monument to his long and useful record of service and invite those who follow him in those fields to emulate his noble example.

ROBERTA K. CHRISTIAN

1913-1971

Knight of Baha'u'llah

GRIEVED TRAGIC PASSING KNIGHT BAHAU'LLAH
ROBERTA CHRISTIAN HER DEVOTED SERVICES
ALASKA NINE YEAR PLAN WORTHY ADDITION
LAURELS GARNERED PIONEER EFFORTS RHODESIA
AND GREECE COMPANY LATE HUSBAND
WILLIAM KENNETH CHRISTIAN DURING WORLD
CRUSADE CONVEY FAMILY ASSURANCE PRAYERS
PROGRESS HER SOUL ABHA KINGDOM

Universal House of Justice

Roberta Kaley Christian was born March 19, 1913, in central New York state and at the time of her death had been a Baha'i for about thirty-five years. She married William Kenneth Christian and together they served the Faith, each complementing the other, but functioning independently in their fields of specific interest.

Kenneth was a college professor, lecturer and writer, and he served for five years as a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States. Roberta was editor of U.S. *Bahá'í News* for three years. She is the author of *A Bahá'í Child's A.B.C.* and wrote the verses for *A Bahá'í Child's Song Book*, two popular and widely translated books which filled a vital need for children's literature in the Faith.

When the beloved Guardian issued the call for pioneers in the Ten Year Crusade in 1953, Kenneth and Roberta set sail in December for Southern Rhodesia and were named Knights of Bahh'u'llah by Shoghi Effendi. Frustrated in their efforts to secure employment and unable to teach the Faith openly in the circumstances that then obtained there, they received permission from the Guardian to settle in Greece where they assisted in forming the first Bahá'í group of Athens. On September 1, 1956, the secretary of Shoghi Effendi wrote to Roberta on the Guardian's behalf expressing his pleasure at receiving a photograph of the group and extending a warm welcome to the first believer of Greece who, he prayed, would "become a spiritual guide to his people". Shortly thereafter, Kenneth and Roberta made their pilgrimage to the Holy Land and were showered with words of encouragement and appreciation by Shoghi Effendi.

Soon they were again bound for another pioneer post, and were *en route* to Djakarta, Indonesia when Shoghi Effendi died in November, 1957. This was a crushing blow to them but they had received his assurance that their efforts in the World Crusade were pleasing to him.

Kenneth was always frail and he died suddenly on May 4, 1959, in Djakarta. A moving account of his service to the Cause, written by Roberta, appeared in *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII, p. 907. Roberta never fully recovered from the emotional shock of her husband's passing in his forty-sixth year, but her work for the Faith continued unabated. She was not only a writer but a very capable secretary,



Roberta K. Christian

dressmaker and fashion consultant and made her living at various times in these fields. At the time of her death she was employed by the Geophysical Institute of the University of Alaska, situated at College, Alaska, in a project described as "pioneering a new field of education for Alaska's bush country".

Roberta first came to Alaska from California in January, 1967, to assist in completing the goals of the Nine Year Plan in that country. She was frequently invited to address Bahb'i conferences and summer schools on the subject of pioneering. Subsequently she went back to California but returned to Alaska in February, 1971, to join her son and his wife who had recently settled in the Fairbanks area. A tragic fire took her life on July 30, 1971. Now, at last, she has gone to rejoin Kenneth in the Abhá Kingdom.

JANET W. STOUT

PETER SIMPLE

1899 (?)–1971

Peter Simple had just finished reading aloud these words of 'Abdu'l-Baha in explanation of Bahá'u'lláh's teaching about the oneness of the

world of humanity: *Some are asleep; they need to be awakened. Some are ailing; they need to be healed. Some are immature as children; they need to be trained. But all are recipients of the bounty and bestowals of God.*¹ He lowered the book and looked at me with his gentle brown eyes. After what seemed an endless silence he spoke. Softly, in a voice at once solemn and dignified, he said, "I feel like I'm waking up for the first time in my life." Thus began the Bahb'i life of Peter Simple of Fort Yukon, Alaska, the second Athabascan Indian north of the Arctic Circle to become a Bahb'i and one of the true "treasures" promised by Bahá'u'lláh, ". . . men who will aid Thee . . ."²

Called "Pete" by those who knew and loved him, he was born just before the turn of the century near Fort McPherson in the Northwest Territories of Canada. Pete was left an orphan at an early age and was raised mainly by his grandparents. His grandfather told him that the day would come when the Indian people would fall into confusion, that many different religions would come, that the white man would say "do this" and "do that" and the Indians would not know what path to take; but then One would come Who would unite all. Pete clung to that belief.

Although he never went to school Pete learned the names of the letters of the alphabet. When he was seventeen, hauling freight by dog sled along the MacKenzie River, he experienced the thrill of discovery. Night after night he would lay in his bedroll looking at the letters T-E-N-T. Over and over he would say the letters, knowing they spelled something. Then one night he leaped from his bedroll and shouted for joy: "Tent! It spells tent!" He had no one to tell but his dogs.

In everything he did there was a special mark of quality, of excellence. He was not just a good river man and pilot; he was one of the best. Nor was he just a competent trapper; again, he was one of the finest. It was his quest for excellence and his desire to know more that led him to approach me, a school teacher, and ask to help him learn to read better. Soon after hearing about the Baha'i Faith he expressed the desire to learn more about it in order to qualify himself to translate the Teachings into Athabascan.

During his first year as a Baha'i, Pete

¹ *Baha'i World Faith*, p. 246.

² *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 21.



Peter Simple

attended the Indian Council Fire in Arizona, U.S.A., representing the Baha'is of Alaska; he taught a course on *The Hidden Words of Baha'u'llah*; he helped form the first Spiritual Assembly of Fort Yukon; and made a teaching trip to Beaver, Alaska, which enabled the believers there to form their first Assembly. Over the years he served in many ways the Faith he loved so well. We worked together in writing *Baha'i Teachings*, a simplified outline of the Faith in pamphlet form which has been translated and distributed on four continents. Pete was frequently a delegate to the National Convention, served on the Teaching Committee and realized his hope of assisting with the translation of Baha'i prayers into the Athabascan tongue.

His wit endeared him to everyone. A course he gave in 1962 at the Winter Workshop in Fairbanks, Alaska, followed a very scholarly presentation by another believer who had used many books and reference cards drawn from a large briefcase. Pete opened his course with the words, "I'm not like the previous speaker who has to have a suitcase to carry his brains around." He then pulled out a single sheet of notes and added, "I keep everything I know in my back pocket."

At a Bahá'í Summer Institute in 1970, Pete and I agreed that I would read a prayer in Athabascan, and he in English. Always one to see the humour in a situation, Pete commented, "This is an amazing religion! Where else can you turn a white man into an Indian, and an Indian into a white man?"

On August 17, 1971, Pete Simple was struck by an automobile in Fairbanks, fell unconscious and did not survive the night.

Pete was among the first to reflect a glimmer of that Divine illumination which 'Abdu'l-Bahá in *Tablets of the Divine Plan* said could enable the Indian people to be a source of illumination to the whole earth.' Through his life and service many of us, Indians and non-Indians alike, caught a first glimpse of the tremendous potential enshrined in that weighty prophecy of 'Abdu'l-Baha. We are so much richer because of this "treasure" of Baha'u'llah. The vision of what lies ahead, both in potential and challenge, is made more clear because of Pete.

In summarizing the meaning of one of the verses, from *The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh*, Pete used to say "God made us perfect, and that's how He wants us back." Pete has returned to Him now, and we are thankful for having met him along the way.

JOHN E. KOLSTOE

MURASSA' (YAZDÍ) RAWĤÁNÍ

1887-1971

CONVEY ABDUL VAHHAB RAWHANI AND FAMILY DEEP SORROW PASSING MURASSA KHANUM STOP RECALL HER ASSOCIATION HEROIC AGE DEDICATED SERVICES PIONEERING FIELD STOP PRAYING SHRINES PROGRESS HER SOUL.

Universal House of Justice

With the passing of Murassa' Rawhani on October 6, 1971, the Bahá'í Faith lost another of that dwindling band who in their own lifetimes came into the physical presence of Baha'u'llah and feasted their eyes on that Blessed Countenance. She was born in the fortress of 'Akka in 1887 and grew up in the Sacred Household under the shelter of the Greatest Holy Leaf, the daughter of Bahá'u'lláh. The name Muraşsa' (one who is be-

Tablets of the Divine Plan, p. 10.



Murassa' (Yazdi) Rawhani

jewelled) was given her by Baha'u'llah from Whom she received two Tablets. She was a member of a pious family who were privileged to render services to Bahá'u'lláh and His household, and was the granddaughter of Hájí 'Abdu'r-Rahim-i-Yazdi, one of the first bearers of the Sacred Standard, whose story is told in *Memorials of the Faithful*.

In her later years, from a rich store of precious memories, Murassa' was able to vividly recall for the friends treasured reminiscences of this early period of her long and fruitful life. She recalled, as a young child, being ushered into the presence of Bahá'u'lláh Who caressed her and then, holding her hand, led her to His own room and showed her a shelf where some sweets of two kinds had been placed. Bahá'u'lláh asked her which she preferred. She chose the sweetened almonds with which Bahá'u'lláh filled her cupped hands to overflowing, smiling and touching her cheeks. When she related events of this kind she was flushed with a luminous tenderness. Invariably she would say: "I remember this as if it were happening now. I remember Him and His overwhelming majesty, awe and glory! I remember it in detail."

With her family, Murassa' moved to Alex-

andria, Egypt where for a few months she was in charge of cleaning the private room of 'Abdu'l-Baha by Whom she was given the name 'Akkaviyyih (one who belongs to 'Akka) and was asked by Him several times to sew some of His clothes. She was also asked by the Master to chant for Him prayers at dawn.

From the period of her life associated with the Ministry of 'Abdu'l-Bahá two favoured recollections are drawn. One day the Master asked the people in His presence if anyone had a piece of fabric suitable for a garment. Upon hearing this question, Murassa' slipped silently from the room, hired a carriage, hastened home and returned with a length of cloth which won the approval of 'Abdu'l-Baha and from which, acting on His instructions, she fashioned a garment for Him. On another occasion Shoghi Effendi, who was then a young boy, asked her to accompany him in singing "O my God, Thou art my soul and my life . . ." Overhearing their voices the Master called to them, "Well done! Well done!" and asked them to repeat the song. The bitterness the family suffered in their separation from 'Abdu'l-Baha was eased by the balm of His loving assurance: "I always remember you. . . I always think of you. . . You are always with Me and you will never be forgotten."

The marriage of Murassa' Yazdi to 'Abdu'l-Vahhab Rawhání¹ in 1921 reinforced her dedicated services, their home becoming a centre of attraction, hospitality and confirmations of the spirit.

Mrs. Rawhani was the first woman to become a member of the Spiritual Assembly of Alexandria and dedicated her time to deepening the women in her locality, an activity in which she was strongly encouraged by the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith who in one of his communications written through his secretary expressed the hope that she would be "aided to render an outstanding service to the women".

In February, 1957, when in her seventieth year, Mrs. Rawhani arrived as a pioneer in Rabat, Morocco, with the approval of the beloved Guardian. She actively participated in the formation of the Spiritual Assemblies of Rabat and of Sale, and despite her advanced age she regularly engaged in deepening the friends and teaching the children in these two localities. She had a particular gift for teaching

¹ See "In Memoriam", p. 539.

children and would often repeat the injunction of the Master that children must be educated with love, not coerced by force. Until her passing at the age of eighty-four she conducted a voluminous correspondence with Baha'i teachers and pioneers, never failing to respond to their letters by offering encouragement and comfort.

Mrs. Rawhani remained conscious to the last moment of her life, her thoughts fixed firmly on service to the Cause. Her burial in the Bahá'í cemetery at Rabat was attended by a large number of believers and many others whose respect and admiration she had won. Also in attendance was a representative of the Iránian Embassy in Rabat.

S. R. ROUHANI

LAURAWALSH

1893-1971

Laura Walsh, soon after the death of her husband in Michigan, sold or gave away all of the material possessions which could not be packed into her car, and drove alone to Mexico where she had never been before, arriving in Puebla in April, 1958.

With determined resolution to dedicate the remaining years of her life to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, she immediately became a part of Bahá'í activities in Mexico and especially devoted a large part of her time to the teaching of children, preparing for their classes study material which made use of her own drawings. She was a retired school teacher who had worked with retarded children. She seemed to understand the needs and ways of children, and was much loved by them.

In the last year of her life when her health began to fail, she moved to Guadalajara, Jalisco, for a few months, then to Tuxtla Gutierrez, Chiapas, for a brief period, always with the hope of regaining her strength and continuing with the teaching of children. She was in the process of moving again to Puebla when she lost consciousness while walking on a street in Mexico City. She passed from this world, apparently without regaining consciousness, in October, 1971. The National Spiritual Assembly conducted a beautiful last service and arranged for her burial in a ceme-



Laura Walsh

tery in Mexico City, which will be marked by a befitting plaque.

Laura was in her seventy-eighth year at the time of her death. After more than thirteen years of complete dedication to her Beloved, in a foreign land, she further assisted His Cause by leaving to it all her earthly possessions. Her courage and devotion will never be forgotten by all who knew and loved her.

EDNA FORD

ḤABÍB MU'AYYAD (ḤABÍBU'LLÁH KHUDÁBAKḤSH)

1888-1971

The name "Mu'ayyad", meaning "confirmed", was given to Habibu'llah Khudábakhsh by 'Abdu'l-Baha. Ḥabíb, as he was generally known, was born in 1888 in Kirmánsháh, Persia. He received his elementary education in Kirman and continued his education at the American school in Hamadán. His father, Khudábakhsh, was an intoxicated lover of the Cause who, when his eldest son, Murád, was martyred, went to the man who had put an end to his son's life and kissed his hand.

In October, 1907, Ḥabíb came to the Holy Land where he spent a month imbibing wisdom from 'Abdu'l-Baha. Although he was planning to proceed to the United States for further study, at the suggestion of Hakim Harhn and with the approval of the Master, Ḥabíb directed his steps to Beirut where he enrolled as a medical student at the American University of that city. During this period he had the bounty of serving Shoghi Effendi and sought spiritual knowledge from such outstanding scholars as Mirza Haydar-'Ali and Mirza Abu'l-Fadl. He was engaged in the service of the Baha'i friends in corresponding with various communities, in extending hospitality to visitors and pilgrims and in receiving and despatching Tablets to their ultimate destination. During the summers he had the privilege of visiting 'Abdu'l-Baha in the Holy Land and in catching glimpses of His infinite wisdom and knowledge. In one of His Tablets 'Abdu'l-Baha has written, in effect referring to that period of Dr. Mu'ayyad's life, that Ḥabíb's presence among the students of Beirut caused them to become like fresh blossoms adorned with the love of God; that with the utmost detachment and sanctity he arose to unite the hearts of the friends to such an extent that "the fragrances of Beirut" perfumed the Master's nostrils, He said.

When 'Abdu'l-Baha departed for Europe and America, Dr. Mu'ayyad was intermediary for the despatch of the Master's Tablets and telegrams. He also had the honour of rendering personal services to Mirza Abu'l-Fadl and he participated in the activities of the Baha'is of Beirut.

Ḥabíb graduated from the American University of Beirut in 1914. In July of that year he and 'Azízu'lláh Bahádúr were requested by 'Abdu'l-Baha to visit a number of countries in Europe to counter the activities of Aminu'llah Faríd who had defected and was travelling in Europe in defiance of 'Abdu'l-Baha seeking to undermine the Covenant.¹

After completing this mission, Ḥabíb returned to the Holy Land. World War I had begun. For a period of time he operated a dispensary which was open to Baha'is and non-Bahá'is in the Druze village of Abú-Sinán, north-east of 'Akka, where the Master had settled the Baha'is temporarily.² The modest



Ḥabíb Mu'ayyad

room set aside for Ḥabíb's clinic also served as a school room for the classes taught by Badi' Bushrú'í.³ Although the world during this period was greatly convulsed and troubles raged about him, Dr. Mu'ayyad was often heard to say in later years that this time spent in nearness to 'Abdu'l-Baha and the Greatest Holy Leaf was among the sweetest, most precious and memorable segments of his life.

Dr. Mu'ayyad later returned to Haifa upon the instructions of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and soon after he was instructed to proceed to Persia. During the last days of his stay in the Holy Land the Master gave him daily lessons in devotion to the Cause, fortifying his spiritual powers, feeding his heart and soul with the living waters of illumination and guidance and directing him in his future endeavours and services to the Faith. Upon his departure for Persia, 'Abdu'l-Bahá addressed a Tablet to Ḥabíb's father stating, in effect, that he should thank God for such a "worthy son" and describing Ḥabíb as a "lamp enkindled with the love of God" and as one "engaged in the service of humanity". The father would, the Master wrote, "infinitely rejoice in beholding his countenance and in inhaling the fragrances of his presence."

¹ See *'Abdu'l-Baha'*, by H. M. Balyuzi; George Ronald, Oxford; pp. 407-408.

² *ibid.* p. 411.

³ See "In Memoriam", p. 545.

Upon returning to his native land in 1915, Ḥabīb settled in Kirmánsháh and, following the advice of 'Abdu'l-Baha, he forged personal ties with the local government officials and with the local population of every class and creed. Although engaged in his medical profession, he spent his time, as circumstances permitted, in spreading the Baha'i Teachings among those he found responsive. He was always firm in the face of difficulties and was a shield protecting the Bahi'i friends against attacks by enemies of the Faith. He was a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Kirmánsháh for nearly forty years and for a long period he served, with devotion and distinction, on the National Spiritual Assembly. When he returned to Persia he married and had seven children most of whom are under the shadow of the Cause following in their father's footsteps and striving to emulate his noble example.

During his lifetime Dr. Mu'ayyad wrote and published two volumes of reminiscences which are replete with exhortations and admonitions based on the principles of the Covenant, and illuminating accounts of the history of the Cause. He also wrote several articles published in various Baha'i periodicals. It may be that his best-known work is the poem known as "Hold Thou My Hand, O 'Abdu'l-Baha!" This verse has been set to music and is much loved by the Baha'is of Persia who sing it frequently at their gatherings.

Informed of the passing of Ḥabīb Mu'ayyad, the Universal House of Justice cabled on October 29, 1971:

GRIEVED NEWS PASSING FAITHFUL DEVOTED
STEADFAST PROMOTER FAITH ḤABIB MUAYYAD
WHOSE LIFE ENRICHED THROUGH SERVICES
RENDERED MINISTRIES MASTER GUARDIAN
CONVEY LOVING SYMPATHY FAMILY ADVISE
HOLD MEMORIAL MEETINGS PRAYING SHRINES
PROGRESS HIS SOUL.

NAPOLEON BERGAMASCHI

1935.-1971

Magnanimity is necessary, heavenly exertion is called for. Should you display an effort, so that the fragrances of God be diffused amongst the Eskimos, its effect will be

*very great and far-reaching . . . 'Abdu'l-Baha,
Tablets of the Divine Plan*

Napoleon Bergamaschi, called "Nip" or "Bergie" by his friends, was part Eskimo. He was born in Nome, but lived in south-eastern Alaska from the time he was twelve years of age. He was orphaned as a young child and attended the Bureau of Indian Affairs Schools at Wrangell and Sitka. He adapted well to life in the south-east, married a girl from Metlakatla, settled in Ketchikan, and became part of the sophisticated life and cash economy there. Successfully acculturated, his Eskimo heritage seemed remote indeed.

In July, 1961, Napoleon became a Bahá'í. He was a quiet, though vital, member of the Ketchikan community. Five years later he arose to plant the banner of the Faith of Bahi'u'llah in the one remaining unopened territory assigned to Alaska in the Nine Year Plan, St. Lawrence Island—a lonely spot in the middle of the Bering Sea, closer to Siberia than to the Alaskan mainland, difficult to reach, offering only a subsistence living from hunting and fishing, blighted by severe weather and long, cruel winters. The only settlements on the island are Eskimo villages, Savoonga and Gambell, with a language, culture and customs different from other Eskimo communities. Napoleon had never been a part of primitive life nor had he followed the old ways of the Eskimo people, but with his three children aged ten, eight and four, he settled in Savoonga where he found he had a half-brother who extended hospitality. Because there was no other housing available—a common problem in northern communities—the families lived in crowded conditions in a small, two-room cabin for nearly a year during which time Napoleon became a worthy boatman, learned to speak the language and won the love and respect of the island people who, in turn, won his heart. Lack of accommodation caused Napoleon and his family to leave their post until arrangements could be made to house them. A prefabricated house was designed in Juneau, financed from Kodiak, organized from Anchorage, and constructed in Savoonga by Napoleon from materials gathered in Seattle and shipped on the boat that makes one visit to the island annually. *En route* to Savoonga Napoleon learned that Keith Koontz who had expressed an interest in the Cause during



Napoleon Bergamaschi

Napoleon's first sojourn there had embraced the Faith. "Yahoo!" was Napoleon's enthusiastic response as he threw his hat in the air; the first fruit of his pioneering in Savoonga had been garnered.

After two years a group of dedicated Bahá'ís existed in Savoonga and Napoleon faced the difficult decision of having to return to the mainland where his eldest child could enter high school. The family then pioneered to Wrangell where Napoleon assisted to form the first Spiritual Assembly at Riqván, 1971.

On November 7, 1971, while driving down an icy street to meet a friend who had called for assistance, a sudden crash quickly crushed out his life. Napoleon Bonaparte was turned back by the icy blasts of a Russian winter. Napoleon III contemptuously cast aside the Tablet addressed to him by Bahá'u'lláh and sank from glory into oblivion. Napoleon Bergamaschi restores honour to the name he bears as he rises from obscurity. He recognized his Lord, joyously received His Word, and planted His banner in the frozen heart of the Bering Sea.

JOHN E. KOLSTOE

ELTON MASON SMITH

1909-1971

Born on March 4, 1909, in a rural area of upper New York State, Elton Smith spent his boyhood on his family's farm where his love of nature—the soil, animals, trees and birds—and warm family ties left a lasting impression. Farm life was pleasant in spite of much hard work, and he credited his gentle mother with giving him the encouragement to go to college where he hoped to learn things that would enable him to help people.

After graduation from Cornell he worked for the United States Agricultural Extension Service and Farm Credit Administration. Meanwhile he maintained his earlier goal of wanting to help people. It was while he was working for a canning co-operative in 1948 that he learned about Bahá'u'lláh. He readily accepted His Teachings and was soon conducting classes for children attended, among others, by his sons, Peter and Paul. He also served on an Area Teaching Committee in western New York State.

Early in 1953, with the hope of being able to pioneer in India, he applied for a position with the State Department (Institute of Inter-American Affairs). But he qualified for a position open in Colombia, South America, and was happy to go there with his family to assist the country people with the development of an irrigation system and, at the same time, serve the Faith. While living in Guamo, Tolimo, Colombia, a third son, Stephen, was born to the Smiths. Bahá'í example was the best means of teaching under the restrictions surrounding the activities of the friends in that period—permission for meetings was required and then only a few could meet—and Mr. Smith's co-workers appreciated his wisdom, helpfulness and patience. Despite insistent efforts to require Christian baptism, Stephen was exempted.

In 1955, Mr. Smith became Chief Agriculturist of the American foreign aid mission in Bolivia, where Bahá'í teaching trips took him to all parts of the country. One of the greatest joys of his life in the service of Bahá'u'lláh was helping to give His Teachings to the first two Bolivian Indian believers, Andrés Jachakollo and his cousin.

Elton's next "tour of duty" in 1958 took the



Elton Mason Smith

Smith family to Ankara, Turkey, where his work continued to involve him with country people and where he contributed to the work of the Cause despite the circumstances obtaining there which restrict the Baha'is in their teaching activities.

A four-year rotation assignment in Washington, D.C., saw Mr. Smith active in the Spiritual Assembly of Montgomery County, Maryland, where he again taught a youth class. He also served on the Area Teaching Committee for the Middle Atlantic States.

Finally, there was Kenya where Elton again served the people—both professionally and spiritually—for six and a half years until failing health forced him to return to the United States. His humility and understanding of African people endeared him to their hearts. He was a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Kenya for five years during which time he came to know and love many of the believers throughout the country. Teaching trips and conferences took him not only to the cities but also to small villages and remote rural communities.

At his passing to the Abha Kingdom on November 9, 1971, messages from Kenya included the following: "We shall never forget

his loving attitude toward us. All Bahá'ís in Kenya, particularly the Africans, really love Elton because he was working hard to lay the foundation of the Baha'i administration in Kenya. We are sure he is at the right place in the spiritual world, and now he is with us in spirit."

Another message read: ". . . To us he was like our father, and his services to the Cause in Kenya will never be forgotten. We are sure he is in the presence of Bahá'u'lláh, the Bab, 'Abdu'l-Baha, Shoghi Effendi, and all the dear and spiritual souls who left this world."

From Uganda, the Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga and his wife, Elizabeth, wrote: "Our hearts are consoled and our spirits cheered by the knowledge that dear Elton is not dead. He is living and radiant with the lights of spirituality and oneness, and in our hearts he lives forever. Elton was dearly loved in East Africa. . . they still remember him and mention his name with respect and admiration."

In its letter dated December 27, 1971, the Universal House of Justice stated: "His record of devoted service . . . will always be remembered."

MEREDITH SMITH

ESMIE BURTON

1907-1971

The mention of Mrs. Esmie Burton's name inevitably brings a smile and cheerfulness of heart to those who knew her, as thought brings to memory the many fine qualities of one whose exemplary life was characterized by an undying love for Baha'u'llah.

Mrs. Burton was born, surnamed Forrest, in the parish of St. Ann, Jamaica, in 1907. She was a well-known primary school teacher, respected by all and dearly loved by her family. Eventually she had to give up the school room due to ill health.

She accepted the Bahá'í Faith in 1951 in the parish of Portland, birthplace of that beloved soul, Dr. Malcolm King,¹ who first brought the Faith to Jamaica. She served on the Spiritual Assemblies of Port Antonio and Kingston and was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly

¹ See "In Memoriam", *The Bahá'í World*, vol. xrv, p. 316.

for a number of years until her death. At one time she was national treasurer. Fervency, zeal, and radiant acquiescence to the problems of life were some of the many beautiful qualities she possessed. Her faith was unshakable and praise of Bahá'u'lláh was often on her lips. Dedication and dynamic hope radiated from her, often communicated by an emphatic gesticulation of head and arm that spoke of spiritual youthfulness and alertness which belied her years. In her dying moments she comforted her stricken family with the joyful assurance that she was being released to a fuller life. Her final words were Words of Bahá'u'lláh.

At her Bahá'í funeral service on December 19, 1971, a Christian minister who knew Mrs. Burton and her family well, movingly eulogized Mrs. Burton as a Bahi'i extolling her outstanding character, exemplary life and devoted service to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. She will long be remembered for her glorious spirit, her wholehearted devotion to Bahá'u'lláh and His Faith which she loved so much, and for her fervency and constancy to the hour of her death.

ELLA C. QUANT

?-1971

On November 15, 1971, nineteen Bahá'ís gathered at her graveside to lay to rest the human temple that had borne the soul of Ella C. Quant.

Ella's association with the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh began in the spring of 1903, and by the autumn of that year she had received the first of the three Tablets addressed to her by 'Abdu'l-Baha. The first, dated August 1, 1903, was delivered through Mrs. Isabella D. Brittingham and read, in part: *He is God. I ask God to make thee firm in His religion, to confirm thee through the Breath of the Holy Spirit, so that thou mayest speak forth the teachings of God and guide the people into the Kingdom. . . Verily, the bounty of God upon thee is great, great! If thou remainest firm in the path of the love of the Lord, thou shalt behold the doors of success and progress open before thy face from all sides. . .*

Another Tablet, translated in November, 1909, contained praise, advice and encouragement to teach the Cause of God, and exhorted

her to give thanks to her teacher, Mrs. Brittingham.

A third Tablet, translated on July 20, 1919, stated: *As thou wert endowed with the power of insight, thou hast in this manner discovered the truth. Whoever is firm in the Covenant and Testament is today endowed with a seeing eye and a responsive ear and daily advances in the Divine Realm until he becomes a heavenly angel.*

Additional messages for Ella Quant were contained in the Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá addressed to other early believers. These messages from her beloved Master, and the meeting with 'Abdu'l-Bahá in New York in 1912,¹ were Ella's inspiration. Later correspondence with the Guardian, extending from 1925 to the year of his passing, 1957, sustained her in her tireless efforts for the Faith. Her service covered a period of nearly sixty-eight years, years that were to fulfil the prophetic dream that Ella would see the Bahá'í Faith as vast as the seas covering the earth. In all this she had a part. She was one of that excited group of American friends who gathered at the pier to welcome 'Abdu'l-Baha on his arrival in New York in 1912; there were the years of association with those outstanding early Western believers who carried the Faith across the North American continent and laid the foundation of the administrative order; she witnessed the rise and completion of the Mother Temple of the West; she served devotedly throughout the ministry of Shoghi Effendi and lived to rejoice with the Bahá'í world at the first and second elections of the Universal House of Justice. All who met her carried away a glimpse of the spirit of 'Abdu'l-Baha and a fuller understanding of the Covenant.

When she was in her eighties, Ella undertook what was described in the January, 1964, issue of Canadian *Baha'i News*, as her first international teaching trip, visiting a number of small, struggling communities in western Ontario. Reporting on her journey to the Canadian National Teaching Committee she stated: ". . . I feel I must assure you, as I have been assured, of the many wonderfully dedicated Bahá'ís it has been my privilege to meet. I am not a trained speaker, neither do I think of myself as a Bahá'í teacher, the distinguishing feature of my life being the five days spent 'In the Presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in

¹ See "In the Presence of 'Abdu'l-Baha", by Ella C. Quant, *The Baha'i World*, vol. XII, pp. 917-921.

MARTHA ROSS DEAN

1951-1971

DEEPLY DISTRESSED DEATH YOUTHFUL PIONEER MARTHA DEAN . . . PLEASE CONVEY FAMILY FRIENDS OUR LOVING SYMPATHY PRAYING HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HER SOUL ABHA KINGDOM

Universal House of Justice



Ella C. Quant

New York City, at His arrival in 1912, and the ensuing story of that experience under that title which our beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, placed in permanent form in *The Baha'i World*, vol. XII." Then saying that she wished to add some personal thoughts to her report, she continued: "I believe the birth of the first Universal House of Justice (1963) has propelled the Baha'i world into a new era, in which we can no longer fail to recognize the great responsibility placed upon the Local Spiritual Assemblies. We must indeed, I feel, work towards a unity of understanding effort, no longer seeing ourselves as nine individuals (when in session) and working more and more fully towards a oneness of decision, becoming truly as a strong pillar supporting this marvelous institution of the Faith of Baha'u'llah, the Universal House of Justice. With every blessing to you all, in the Greatest Name, your sister, Ella C. Quant."

It was in memory of that spirit that a year after the interment of the human temple that bore the soul of the Maidservant of God sixteen friends gathered again to place on her gravesite a rose-tinted granite headstone, inscribed, "Dearly Loved Baha'i—Ella C. Quant".

FRED H. REIS

Martha Ross Dean, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Rhoades Dean, was born on July 18, 1951, in Chicago, Illinois. The fifth of seven children, she spent most of her childhood and early youth in the town of Edwardsville, Illinois. Martha, known to her friends as "Marty", was raised in a warm and loving household by deeply religious Christian parents whose example inspired in their children an abiding reverence for God and love for His creation.

Marty's childhood and adolescence were characterized by a sunny disposition, a keen sense of humour and an ability to win friends easily. She had a lovely singing voice and participated in church and school choirs. As a young child she often expressed the desire to be a missionary when she grew up.

Marty learned of Bahá'u'lláh while she was in high school. She studied the Faith for more than a year, attended informal discussion meetings, study classes and Bahá'í conferences. On August 28, 1967, she declared her belief in Bahá'u'lláh as the Manifestation of God for this age. She was then sixteen years old. Marty saw her acceptance of the Baha'i Faith as the turning point in her life. In service to Bahá'u'lláh and His Cause, she found her *raison d'être*, the focal point to which all her life plans and goals must needs refer.

After graduating from high school in 1969, Marty was undecided as to what course to take. She worked during the summer following graduation at the Green Acre Baha'i Summer School, Eliot, Maine, and then went to Little Rock, Arkansas, where she worked first in a Catholic orphanage and later in the Arkansas Medical Centre as a nurse's aide. Throughout this period she experienced the dilemma confronting so many Bahá'í youth, an indecision as to how best to serve the Faith. More than anything else, she wanted to pioneer abroad, and yet she understood the need to prepare



Martha Ross Dean

herself through further education to better serve the Cause she so loved. After much prayer and consultation, the answer came. She was offered the opportunity to join her sister who was pioneering for the Faith in Rhodesia.

In October, 1970, Marty left the United States for her adopted goal. She stopped in London to visit the grave of the beloved Guardian, and was granted permission to visit Haifa to imbibe the fragrances of the Shrines.

In Bulawayo, Rhodesia, Marty quickly became a dearly loved and highly valued member of the BahB'i community. She enrolled in the Bulawayo School of Nursing and was well liked by classmates and patients alike. She participated in a wide range of BahB'i activities and strove to fulfil her personal goal of completing her training as a nurse so that she would be qualified to serve in African hospitals far from the large cities of Rhodesia. Although she was happy in Rhodesia and loved the Bahá'ís and the activities of the Faith there she often expressed a sense of frustration that her hospital duties limited the amount of time she could devote to proclaiming the healing message of Bahá'u'lláh. Her constant prayer was that she might be used as a more effective instrument in the Cause of God.

Marty's life ended in tragic circumstances on December 24, 1971. She died of strangulation at the hands of an intruder who entered the sleeping compartment of the train that was carrying her to Bulawayo after she had paid a visit to BahB'i friends in Wankie, Rhodesia, some 200 miles north-west. Her motiveless killing was the act of a deranged assailant who was subsequently apprehended, tried, convicted and sentenced by the Rhodesian courts.

The grief occasioned by the sudden loss of any loved one is always terrible; how much more so when the beloved is taken when in possession of health, beauty, vibrancy and youth. Her untimely death was a numbing shock to her family, friends and the BahB'i community who took solace in the knowledge that whilestill at the threshold of life Marty had recognized her Lord and with joy and courage arisen to do His bidding. Baha'u'llah has written:

They that have forsaken their country for the purpose of teaching Our Cause—these shall the Faithful Spirit strengthen through its power . . . By My life! No act, however great, can compare with it, except such deeds as have been ordained by God, the All-Powerful, the Most Mighty. Such a service is indeed the prince of all goodly deeds, and the ornament of every goodly act.

MARGO DEAN

SIDNEY I. DEAN

1920–1971

Sidney I. Dean earned his doctorate in psychology from the University of Portland, Oregon, in 1956. In 1960, he and his wife, Isabelle, settled in Honolulu, Hawaii where Dr. Dean secured a position as a clinical psychologist with the Department of Health. As he placed his books on a shelf a BahB'i leaflet fluttered to the floor. He picked it up, saying: "I have carried this about for fifteen years. If I ever become interested in religion, I'll look into the Bahá'í Faith!"

His investigation of the Baha'i Cause commenced in 1962 and both he and his wife accepted it with scarcely a moment's hesitation. From the start, Dr. Dean desired to pioneer for the Faith, and in 1963, after



Sidney I. Dean

attending the World Congress in London, the Deans left for a pioneer post in Hong Kong. They remained there for fourteen months after which time, in response to a need described to them by the Hand of the Cause Rahmatu'llah Muhájir, they settled in Panchgani, India, where Dr. Dean served as the principal of the New Era School. They stayed there for a period of two years.

The Deans then spent a few months in the Philippines as travelling teachers. While there, they were asked to go to Taiwan to help form the National Spiritual Assembly. They remained in Taiwan for one year and then returned to Hawaii for reasons of health and to consolidate their financial circumstances. In 1968, Dr. Dean secured a position with the Department of Health in Hilo, Hawaii, and stayed there until the end of June, 1970. Their desire to pioneer was always foremost in their minds, and Dr. Dean, especially, was intent on going to Africa.

After stops in Guam and the Philippines, the Deans visited Malaysia where they stayed long enough to publish Dr. Dean's book *Bahá'í Talks for All Occasions*. They were then called to Singapore to assist with the organization of the Oceanic Conference of the South

China Seas held from January 1 to 3, 1971.

On April 21, 1971, they shipped their belongings to Mombasa, Kenya, and set out for Africa via Burma, Nepal, India and Iran. It was while they were in Tíhrán that a cable from Haifa reached them granting their request to visit the Holy Land on pilgrimage. After leaving Haifa, they stopped in Addis Ababa, where Dr. Dean was kept busy with public meetings, and then visited Nairobi, where he was interviewed on television.

After lengthy negotiations with the Zambian government, Dr. Dean was invited to fill a position as head of psychological services for the Ministry of Education in Lusaka. However, in order to be engaged it was necessary for him to leave the country temporarily. Therefore, he and his wife travelled to the United States to visit family and friends while awaiting receipt of travel documents and visas which arrived after a lapse of three months. Their departure was fixed for December 26, 1971; but on December 25, while addressing a Bahá'í fireside meeting, Dr. Dean was stricken with a heart attack and passed away at 1.30 a.m. on the following day.

Wherever he travelled, Dr. Dean sought every means possible to proclaim the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. He had a persevering nature and an indefatigable desire to ensure that everyone he met learned about the Bahá'í Faith.

On December 27, 1971, the Universal House of Justice cabled:

GRIEVED LEARN PASSING SIDNEY DEAN HIS
SERVICES MANY PIONEER POSTS MEASURE HIS
DEVOTION CAUSE BAHAUILLAH CONVEY DEAR
WIFE FAMILY ASSURANCE PRAYERS HOLY
THRESHOLD PROGRESS HIS SOUL ABHA KING-
DOM

HÁJÍ ABU'L-QÁSÍM SHAYDÁN-
SHÍDÍ

1882-1972

GRIEVED PASSING STEADFAST DEVOTED
TEACHER SHAYDANSHIDI ASSURE RELATIVES
FRIENDS OUR SUPPLICATION HOLY SHRINES
PROGRESS HIS SOUL

Universal House of Justice

Abu'l-Qásim Shaydán-Shídí was born in Yazd, Írán, in 1882. His father, Mírzá 'Abbas, was

held in great esteem by the people in his locality because of his learning and piety. His son, likewise, became well known and respected in Yazd because of his devotion to the Imams of the Muslim Faith, his eulogy of those holy souls and also his spirituality, which trait was discernible in his character from a very early age. As a result of contact and discussions with Bahá'í teachers like Hájí Muhammad Táhir Málmíri and Hájí Vá'iz Qazvini, he accepted the Bahá'í Faith.

Aflame with zeal, he determined to devote the rest of his life to service to God's Cause and under the guidance of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Írán he immediately set out on teaching trips which took him throughout Yazd and Kirman and Mashhad and Shíráz and Rafsinján. He endured much hostility and persecution by the enemies of the Faith, culminating in a violent assault on his person in a bath one day where, at the instigation of a Muslim priest, one Husayn by name, he sustained broken ribs and bones and damage to his eyes, which eventually blinded him.

The Guardian referred to his services in various epistles and in one of them advised him to teach in the Rafsinjan area. Here and in and around Kirman, Shaydán-Shídí spent

the balance of his days teaching the Faith to the people until he passed away in 1972 at the age of ninety.

CARL A. HANNEN

1895-1972

THE MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY ARE GRIEVED TO LEARN OF THE PASSING OF CARL STOP HIS LONG AND MANY SERVICES TO BAHAUULLAH WILL LONG BE REMEMBERED BY HIS NUMEROUS GRATEFUL FELLOW BAHÁIS AROUND THE WORLD STOP WE ASSURE YOU OF OUR PRAYERS FOR PROGRESS OF HIS SOUL IN ABHA KINGDOM AND FOR COMFORT OF YOU AND YOUR FAMILY IN YOUR GREAT SORROW STOP HAVE CABLED WORLD CENTRE FOR PRAYERS AT HOLY SHFUNES.

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States

Carl Anthony Hannen was the son of Pauline A. Knobloch Hannen¹ and Joseph H. Hannen² of Washington, D.C. He was born in that city on May 4, 1895. His parents were dedicated Bahá'ís who had been told about the Faith by Mirza Abu'l-Faḍl in 1902. Carl and his brother Paul were reared as Bahá'ís from that early date.

In 1908, Carl's parents made a pilgrimage to 'Akka. While there, they asked 'Abdu'l-Baha whether Carl could be sent to Germany where his aunt, Miss Alma Knobloch,³ was teaching the Bahá'í Faith. Permission was granted and in 1909 Carl was sent to Stuttgart, Germany, for two years of schooling.

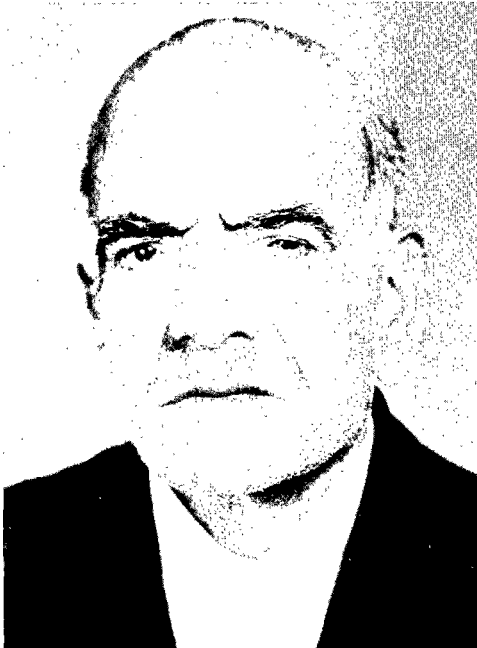
Mr. and Mrs. Hannen received many Tablets from 'Abdu'l-Baha in which Carl and Paul were remembered with love and prayers. 'Abdu'l-Baha gave Carl the name "Natiq" (Eloquent). Both Carl's grandmothers embraced the Cause, in the early 1900's. Carl and other members of the family met 'Abdu'l-Baha in Washington, D.C., and in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1912.

In 1918 Carl married Mineola Barnitz, also an early Bahá'í, in Washington, D.C. In a Tablet dated February 18, 1916, sent to the

¹ See "In Memoriam", *The Bahá'í World*, vol. VIII, p. 660.

² See "In Memoriam", *Star of the West*, vol. X, p. 345.

³ See "In Memoriam", *The Bahá'í World*, vol. IX, p. 641.



Hájí Abu'l-Qásim Shaydán-Shídí



Carl A. Hannen

young couple at the time of their engagement, 'Abdu'l-Baha described them as two heavenly doves who desired to alight on one branch of the rose bush to warble in unison melodies in praise of God, and He supplicated that their union would endure throughout eternity.

For nine years Carl served at the House of Worship in Wilmette assisting Edward Struven in overseeing the construction of the Temple. "This was, I believe, the happiest period of our lives," wrote Mineola Hannen. "Being near the Temple, living on the grounds, helping with guiding the many visitors to the structure, seeing the finishing touches of outer ornamentation and steps go into place was wonderful. Our home was open to Baha'i visitors, and for any Baha'i occasion."

Barbara Griffen, one of Carl's daughters, recorded her recollection of her father's great happiness in deepening the knowledge of the believers: "This was Dad's life. He was always so proud when those to whom he had spoken and helped with understanding the Teachings would then become active pioneers in other communities."

Carl served on the Maintenance Committee of the House of Worship while he lived in Glenview. The Hannens helped strengthen this

community and after several years, at the time of Carl's retirement, they moved to a warmer climate where, in Orlando, Florida, they served to build a strong local and state community. Wherever they were they served on Local Spiritual Assemblies.

Carl Hannen's entire life was characterized by boundless love and devoted service which he lavished upon all. No piece of work was too small or too big; it was attacked with selfless consideration and accomplished with complete dedication. His many friends deemed it a bounty to know him and were inspired to emulate him. We loved him very much.

Informed of his passing on February 4, 1972, the Universal House of Justice cabled:

GRIEVED LEARN PASSING CARL HANNEN HIS
STEADFAST DEVOTION CAUSE SINCE DAYS
MASTER LONG PERIOD DEDICATED SERVICE
HOUSE WORSHIP WARMLY REMEMBERED CON-
VEY FAMILY ASSURANCE PRAYERS PROGRESS
HIS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

GERTRUDE K. HENNING

ANNA KOESTLIN

1884-1972

On May 27, 1972, Anna Koestlin, one of the earliest followers of Baha'u'llah in Germany, ascended to the Abha Kingdom in her eighty-eighth year.

Anna was born in 1884 in Stuttgart. In 1907 she heard of the advent of Baha'u'llah from her school friend, Annemarie Schweizer,¹ who had received the Message from Dr. Edwin Fisher,² an American dentist in Stuttgart, who was one of the first Baha'i pioneers in Germany. Together the friends searched for the truth and soon they recognized the universal importance of the glad tidings of Bahá'u'lláh and became Baha'is in their hearts.

Anna Koestlin's parents owned a shop at Esslingen where they sold sewing machines. Anna brought the message to Esslingen, spoke of it to friends and relatives, customers and neighbours, and soon a circle of many young people regularly gathered in Koestlin's home to hear more of the New Day of God. Anna

¹See "In Memoriam", *The Bahá'í World*, vol. xxxr, p. 890.

²*Star of the West*, vol. xvii, p. 358.



Anna Koestlin

knew that the children of today are the adults of tomorrow and therefore she taught not only adults, but children too. Every Sunday morning a crowd of children came to "Aunt Anna's" to hear about the Master, 'Abdu'l-Baha, and the significance of His Father's teachings for the whole of mankind.

In 1911, Anna was invited to visit 'Abdu'l-Baha in Paris, and once more in February, 1913. Who is able to describe her joy when 'Abdu'l-Baha accepted her invitation to visit Esslingen! In honour of His visit on April 4, 1913, "Aunt Anna" arranged a children's celebration and reception.¹ This event was really the summit of her long life of service to the Cause. In her diary we read: "O Esslingen, you happy town! Do you know why the hearts are throbbing with happiness and joy? No, you do not know! Otherwise you would hurry to receive in deepest humility this Lord Who is honouring you today with His holy visit; you would adorn yourself for the wedding and offer Him praise and gratitude for the high favour of His Holy Presence—'Abdu'l-Baha 'Abbas, Centre of the Covenant of God, will stay today within your walls!"

After this introduction she tells of her happy

children, how they welcomed the Master and offered Him flowers. She quotes the speech of 'Abdu'l-Baha, describes the taking of a photograph and the Master's departure from Esslingen: "The Master sent . . . for me, and in a hurry I made my way through the happy crowd of children, and then I was standing at the car with my beloved Lord . . . words in Persian language reached my ears like heavenly music. O how happy I was, how indescribably happy!"

An account of that gathering, written by Miss Alma S. Knobloch,² appeared in *Star of the West*, vol. IV, p. 155: "We have had some wonderful meetings; the one in Esslingen surpassed them all . . . About fifty children and eighty adults were present . . . the children had been assembled holding flowers in their hands, forming two lines for 'Abdu'l-Baha to pass through . . . He looked so pleased and delighted to see the dear children." The Master distributed sweets to the children and said of them, *These children are of the Kingdom, they are illumined with the Light of God. . . I love them very much. They are mine. I hope they will receive Divine education, that they may receive heavenly training; become fragrant plants in the Garden of Abhá. They are very dear to me. May God guide and protect them, make of them useful men and women for the advancement of the Kingdom on earth.*

When 'Abdu'l-Bahá departed the children surrounded His car, each handing Him their fragrant token. "I cannot describe it, so wonderfully sweet!" another eyewitness reported. "The children waving their dear little hands, and 'Abdu'l-Baha in the auto, covered with flowers, waving His blessed hands to them. 'Abdu'l-Baha said that this event would go down in history."

Addressing an audience the following day, 'Abdu'l-Baha was recorded as saying: *That was a spiritual meeting, a heavenly meeting; the Light of the Kingdom was shining upon it; the confirmation of the Spirit surrounded that meeting.* (*Star of the West*, vol. IV, p. 162)

Until 1930, "Aunt Anna" held her Sunday classes with the children; she called her classes "the little Rose Garden".

After the difficult years of the first World War, when the Esslingen friends sometimes walked to Stuttgart to join the Bahá'í friends,

¹ *God Passes By*, by Shoghi Effendi, p. 287.

² See "In Memoriam", *The Bahá'í World*, vol. IX, p. 641.

the Esslingen group began anew. Nine young friends formed the "Baha'i Working Association" of Esslingen, a forerunner of the Local Spiritual Assembly. This group did pioneer work and published the first German Baha'i magazine *Sonne der Wahrheit* (Sun of Truth). In 1921 all the Bahá'ís of Germany were invited to attend a Baha'i Congress in Esslingen. Always Anna Koestlin was busy, not always initiating, but guiding, arranging and sometimes wisely and lovingly cautioning restraint when young Bahá'ís waxed too eager in enthusiasm. All the friends in Esslingen were active but the Koestlin shop was the centre and focus to which many turned for advice and assistance. In this period Anna served on the National Spiritual Assembly of Germany and Austria as it was known in the years 1923–1959. In 1959 the National Spiritual Assembly of Austria was established as a separate entity.

A new upsurge of activity resulted from the purchase by the Esslingen believers of a garden property on which they constructed a Baha'i Centre,' mostly through their own labour and in the face of enormous obstacles. On its completion in 1931, the Esslingen Bahá'ís invited a group of young friends there to study the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh and deepen their knowledge of the Faith; thus the first German Baha'i Summer School came into being, which spread many blessings over Germany and the surrounding districts. Throughout the period of construction, as the Bahá'í volunteers toiled to dig the foundations, mix the concrete, and lay the bricks and tiles, Anna would visit the site almost daily bringing both material food and spiritual nourishment to the workers. Although many bombs fell in the surrounding area during World War II, the building and garden remained unharmed.

After the war when the Baha'is were able to resume their work, once more Anna Koestlin's shop was the heart of the activity of the Esslingen community. In her humility she sought to remain in the background but she was the "mother" of the Esslingen group until the last years of her life, and she did everything she could to encourage full participation by younger members of the community. She was a model of a true Bahá'í and to the end of her life continued to attend the Nineteen Day Feasts and to hold weekly fireside meetings, despite failing

health during her last year. She missed only one Feast, shortly before her death.

In addition, Anna conducted an extensive correspondence with Baha'is and other friends around the world. She spent her last years in a home for the aged where she won many friends because of her friendly nature and joyful spirit. She helped in the kitchen with the dishes, and in the sewing room with the mending. She cared for the sick and if there were disputes or conflicts she was often able to reconcile the differences and establish harmony.

Later, in the hospital, although she suffered severe pain, she continued to be friendly and patient. One day, before leaving this world, she told the nurse: "Sister, it is *beautiful* to die!"

Informed of her passing, the Universal House of Justice cabled:

GRIEVED PASSING ANNA KOESTLIN STEAD-
FAST FAITHFUL BELIEVER SINCE TIME BELOVED
MASTER STOP PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PRO-
GRESS HER RADIANT SOUL ABHA KINGDOM

GERHARD BENDER

BUZURGMIHR HIMMATÍ

1931–1972

Buzurgmíhr Himmatí, known to his many friends as "Bozorg" (Great), was born in Írán on August 5, 1931. His early childhood was spent in Kirmán, in the south central part of the country. During these years his grandfather had a profound influence upon his development. Often he would speak to the boy about medical subjects and he instilled a thirst for knowledge and a desire to serve humanity. The grandfather laid a strong foundation of faith in Buzurgmíhr, and consolidated it with love. "The Word of God must be your standard in whatever you undertake and your study must be a preparation for service to the Cause of God," he told the child, who was guided by this advice throughout his life.

I first met Buzurgmíhr approximately fifteen years ago when he was a young medical student in Bonn where he had pioneered from Tübingen to help form the Local Spiritual Assembly, thus combining his studies with service to the Baha'i Faith. He had a stately bearing, a handsome and expressive face dominated by warm and penetrating eyes, and an affectionate nature.

¹ *The Baha'i World*, vol. IV, p. 67.



Buzurgmíhr Himmatí

I carried away alasting impression of the beauty of his spirit and the sincerity of his desire to serve Bahá'u'lláh.

Eventually he completed his studies and became well known in his field of specialization but he remained modest, humble and tireless in his efforts for the Faith. Despite his academic and professional achievements he retained a childlike simplicity and purity of spirit; it was as though each time I encountered him in subsequent years I were again meeting the youthful student I had known in Bonn. He was a popular and effective speaker and much loved by the Baha'i youth. "Glory does not consist in acquiring material position and possessions," he would counsel them. "The purpose of this earthly life is to develop spiritual perfections." On one occasion he declined an opportunity to lecture at a university in order to address a Bahá'í meeting. When the chairman of the Bahá'í gathering thanked him he replied that opportunities to serve the Cause of God are precious and should not be abandoned for lesser pursuits.

Although already stricken with the fatal illness that claimed his life, Buzurgmíhr made the pilgrimage to the Holy Land with his devoted wife. Only she knew of his discomfort

and his night-long struggle against pain; he was a cheerful and radiant pilgrim.

When I last saw him he was in hospital. He spoke constantly about the progress of the Cause in Europe. On June 30, 1972, with *Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá* on his lips, he ascended to the immortal realm. In this perishable world he lived only forty-one springs. He left for a world of everlasting spring where there is no sorrow or pain.

The Universal House of Justice cabled:

DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING VALIANT SERVANT
BAHAULLAH BOZORG HIMMATI REQUEST HOLD
MEMORIAL SERVICE MASHRIQLADHKAR BE-
FITTING HIS OUTSTANDING SERVICES PRO-
MOTION FAITH GERMANY URGE BELIEVERS
THROUGHOUT THAT LAND EMULATE HIS DE-
VOTED SPIRIT PIONEERING PRAYING HOLY
SHRINES COMFORT STRENGTH BEREAVED FA-
MILY PROGRESS HIS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM FUL-
FILMENT HIS HIGHEST HOPES VICTORY CAUSE
HIS ADOPTED HOMELAND.

(Adapted from an English translation of an article by the Hand of the Cause Abu'l-Qasim Faizi published in *Baha'i News of Germany, Baha'i Nachrichten*, August 1, 1972.)

PARVÍZ ŠÁDIQÍ

1949 (?)–1972

FARÁMARZ VUJDÁNÍ

1952 (?)–1972

PARVÍZ FURÚGHÍ

1947 (?)–1972

In a message addressed "To the Bahá'ís of the World" and dated September 19, 1972, the Universal House of Justice said:

"With feelings of deep sorrow we relate to the Baha'i world the distressing circumstances surrounding the murder of three Iranian Bahá'í students, pioneers to the Philippine Islands.

"Parviz Sadiqi, Fararnarz Vujdani and Parviz Furúghí were among a number of Iranian Baha'i youth who answered the call for pioneers. With eleven others they registered at the Universities in Mindanao with the intention of completing their studies and proclaiming the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. These three had conceived



Parviz Şadiqi



Farámarz Vujdáni



Parviz Furighi

the plan of making teaching trips to a rural area inhabited by Muslims. When on July 31, the authorities of Mindanao State University were notified that they had left the campus the previous day and had not yet returned, search parties were immediately formed and the assistance of the police and local authorities obtained. After enquiries and search, led entirely by President Tamano of Mindanao State University, the bodies of the three young men were found in a shallow grave. They had been shot, grievously mutilated and two had been decapitated. The bodies were removed and given Bahá'í burial in a beautiful plot donated for the purpose.

"Immediately upon receipt of the tragic news, Vicente Samaniego, Counsellor in Northeast Asia, in close cooperation with the National Spiritual Assembly of the Philippines, acted vigorously on behalf of the Baha'is and was given the utmost cooperation and sympathy by the authorities, police, military and civil. A convocation was called, attended by more than 900 students, faculty members and University officials. Prayers were said in English, Arabic and Persian. The President of the University gave a talk in which he said that the murdered Iranian students are not ordinary students, for with them is the Message of Bahá'u'lláh which is the way to unity. The Council of the Student Body asked that their new Social Hall be renamed Iranian Student Memorial Hall. Three thousand people marched in the funeral procession and six hundred went to the burial site to attend the interment.

"A dignified burial was conducted by the Bahá'is in the presence of University authorities and friends.

"The relatives and friends of these three young men, who gave their lives in the service of the Blessed Beauty, are assured of the loving sympathy and prayers of their fellow believers. The sacrifice made by these youth adds a crown of glory to the wonderful services now being performed by Bahá'í youth throughout the world. Bahá'u'lláh Himself testifies:

They that hath forsaken their country in the path of God and subsequently ascended unto His presence, such souls shall be blessed by the Concourse on High and their names recorded by the Pen of Glory among such as have laid down their lives as martyrs in the

path of God, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsistent."

On August 3, 1972, the Universal House of Justice cabled to the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán:

. . . PLEASE CONVEY FAMILIES OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY ASSURE THEM OUR FERVENT PRAYERS PROGRESS SOULS THEIR BRAVE DEVOTED SONS WHO SACRIFICED THEIR LIVES SERVICE BELOVED FAITH.

BARERE OTINIERA

1924-1972

Barere Otiniera of Buakonikai village, Rabi Island, Fiji, who died on August 2, 1972, became a Bahá'í in 1967. He was one of the Baha people from Ocean Island who settled on Rabi in 1945.

Barere was a strong supporter of his local Baha'i community. He was one of the earliest believers in Buakonikai where he served on the first Local Spiritual Assembly. He also made trips to Tonga and to the Gilbert and Ellice Islands to advance the Baha'i Cause.



Barere Otiniera

He was a continuously active teacher on Rabi. He did not hesitate to point out to his Christian neighbours the need for a new Divine Revelation capable of uniting the divers sects and creeds. Because he had a warm, friendly personality and could be both comical and disarming, he was able to present cogent proofs of the validity of the Baha'i Message without causing offence. He was well known as a teller of humorous stories.

In 1969, Barere served as translator to Mr. and Mrs. Russell Garcia, professional musicians from the United States, who travelled through the islands of the Pacific aboard their trimaran delivering the Message through word and song. Mrs. Garcia recalls: "Barere Otiniera was a kind, happy and friendly fellow. He sailed with us aboard *Dawn-Breaker* for about a month. He not only helped with sailing, which meant taking a three-hour watch at the wheel twice a day, but his humorous ways seemed to make the long days at sea pass quickly."

Barere's example of steadfast faith in a village where there were but few Baha'is was followed by the Buakonikai Assembly who ensured that his funeral, although attended by many of his friends of every persuasion, was a Baha'i one.

DR. PETER J. WOODROW

WILLIAM PAUL COPPOCK

1933-1972.

Perchance, God willing, the call of the Kingdom may reach the ears of the Eskimos . . . The continent and the islands of the Eskimos are also parts of this earth. They must similarly receive a portion of the bestowals of the most great guidance.

'Abdu'l-Bahá,
Tablets of the Divine Plan

William Paul Coppock, known as "Bill" or "Willy" to those close to him, learned of the Baha'i Faith through Maynard Eakan and accepted it on July 27, 1969, in the Matanuska Valley. He became a dearly loved member of that community and was deeply missed after he left.

Bill's manner was quiet and thoughtful. He



William Paul Coppock

was gentle, sensitive, dependable, honourable and he was responsive to the needs of others. Bill was an Eskimo and proud of his heritage. His love for his people was a deep and beautiful emotion which was reflected in his actions.

When word was received that a teaching team was being formed in Juneau to engage in a project called "Massive Encounter" which was designed to spread the Message of Bahá'u'lláh throughout Alaska, Bill spoke at great length about his longing to be part of the travelling team; yet he recognized the need for the Bahá'í Teachings to be brought to his own home village, Kotzebue. He weighed all the considerations; on one side was his longing, and on the other a need which he could most effectively fulfil. His decision to return to Kotzebue took great courage and a heart full of love. He knew there would be some rejection of the Message he was to give; how much more difficult it is to bear rejection from those who are close and dear to us!

Bill was a man of few words and countless deeds. He was like a fountain, constantly giving of himself, forever doing something for someone. He taught many of the children's Baha'i classes; it was a heartfelt, sincere teaching effort, with results that will long be felt here in

Kotzebue. Bill's greatest happiness was felt when he was teaching. His lifeline was the Faith; he counted the days between the newsletters and issues of *Bahá'í News*. And he was truly thrilled when a letter would arrive proving he was remembered and thought of by a friend.

In his home, Bill taught by action. His love for his family was shown by silent teaching; he taught by his efforts to live the life. The whole village learned by his deeds which far outweighed any words that could be spoken.

On August 5, 1972, Bill was drowned in a boating accident at sea. A small measure of what this village felt for him was perhaps reflected in the large numbers who attended his funeral to pay their respects to a very dear and much loved friend.

William Paul Coppock loved children, his family, his friends and his people. He loved fishing, boating and the sea. Most of all he loved God, and to give the Message of the Cause. If you needed help he was always close at hand. He was a wonderful friend. In lonely hours he was a companion, and when needed he was a chauffeur, a baby-sitter, one to shovel snow, deliver groceries, a janitor—and always he was a servant of God.

LORI EAKAN

ISHRÁQ KHÁVARÍ

1902-1972

GRIEVED LOSS PREEMINENT SCHOLAR VALUED PROMOTER FAITH ISHRAQ KHAVARI STOP HIS PRECIOUS INDEFATIGABLE SERVICES OVER SEVERAL DECADES WON HIM APPRECIATION BELOVED GUARDIAN STOP HIS SCHOLARLY CONTRIBUTIONS IMMORTALIZED THROUGH NUMEROUS USEFUL COMPILATIONS TREATISES BEARING ELOQUENT TRIBUTE HIS DEVOTION DEDICATION CAUSE GOD STOP URGE HOLD APPROPRIATE MEMORIAL GATHERINGS ASSURE RELATIVES FRIENDS FERVENT PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES.

Universal House of Justice

'Abdu'l-Ḥamíd Ishráq Khávarí was born in the city of Mashhad, in the province of Khurásán, Persia, on October 12, 1902, in a family whose members had ranked high among the Ithná-



Ishráq Khávarí

'Ashariyyih sect of Shí'ah Islám. He commenced his education under the tutelage of his father and grandfather and pursued it in the religious schools which abounded in Persia in that age. He also studied logic, literature and philosophy and being talented and blessed with a good memory was enabled to learn by heart numerous passages from the Muslim scriptures. Having come across the writings of Shaykh Aḥmad-i-Aḥsá'í and Siyyid Kázim-i-Raṣhti, the twin luminous stars who heralded the coming of the Bab, he left home and wandered from place to place in search of the truth, ever adding to his store of knowledge, but ever missing the object of his quest.

So far, his total knowledge of the Bahá'í Faith had been derived from literature hostile to it. Nor was his first contact with Baha'is themselves any more helpful because the two zealous friends who tried to attract him to the Cause were unable to give logical answers to his line of arguing and this antagonised him, and caused him to veer from the Bahá'í course of search for two whole years. Then, one day, in a public park he heard melodious chanting of some verses which captured his attention and stirred his soul. Surely, he reflected, these Words are not man's composition, they are

God-inspired. He approached the reciter of those verses. It was Mirza Yusuf Khán-i-Vujdani, a well-known Bahi'i teacher, who had been chanting Bahi'u'llah's *Tablet to Násiri'd-Dín Sháh*, the king of Persia. He talked and Ishráq Khávarí listened. It set his heart on fire, it captivated his soul. He accepted the Faith of Bahi'u'llah and resolved to dedicate the rest of his days to its service.

When this reached the ears of the 'ulamas, it angered and enraged them. They roused the rabble against him and threatened his life. To ensure his safety, the friends had to smuggle him under cover of darkness to sleep in a different Bahá'í home every night. Ultimately, he had to move to another town, Hamadán, where he taught in the Baha'i school. But not for long, for the enemies caught up with him there and he was forced to move again. Over a period of several years this went on and he was subject to severe tests and trials. The even tenor of his life was shattered for no matter where he went or what job he took, he was forced to leave it through the machinations of his foes or the uncongenial nature of his occupation or environment. The day came when he felt he had had enough; could just take no more.

Distressed and distraught, he unburdened his soul to the beloved Guardian and received from him a loving reply bidding him take heart, reminding him that gold was purged of its dross only by fire, advising him to arise and carry the Message to the people and good cheer to the friends. This communication breathed new life into Ishráq Khávarí and marked the turning point in his career. Not long thereafter, the National Spiritual Assembly of Persia assigned him a teaching job in Sulaymaniyyih, the capital city of Kurdistan, in 'Iraq. This, they explained, was in response to a directive from the Guardian who had desired them to delegate a competent teacher to go to that town for a period and teach under the jurisdiction of the 'Iraqi National Spiritual Assembly.

Securing a passport was no easy matter at that time, but this problem and others of a like nature were overcome and on the fourth of February, 1936, Ishráq Khávarí was on his way to Sulaymaniyyih. Without any Bahá'í resident there to help him, he succeeded in arranging several meetings with the Sunni leaders. At one in particular, held in the Takyiy-i-Mawlana Khálid (theological semi-

nary) he discussed the Faith openly with the 'ulamas and was able, single-handed, to discomfit them all. The local divines signed a warrant for his death and lodged a complaint with the central government at Baghdád. The matter was even raised in the National Parliament and commented upon in the national press.

His four-months' stay at Sulaymaniyyih ended when a government order required his return to Baghdád. The object of his visit had been achieved, however. Through the grace of Bahá'u'lláh, the Cause had been publicly proclaimed and reported, many people had heard of it, literature had been distributed among high and low, and before his departure he had had the satisfaction of seeing a Baha'i pioneer arrive to keep alight the torch that had been lit.

Back at Baghdád, Ishráq Khávarí was under the constant surveillance of the authorities. He paid a short visit to the Mosul Baha'is at the advice of the 'Iraqi National Spiritual Assembly and on his return to Baghdád received an order from the government expelling him from the country. At the same time a letter from the Guardian to the National Assembly suggested he return to Írán.

Back home, his time was devoted to teaching and although based for a period in Tihiran to conduct study classes, he was constantly on the move, travelling to different centres to teach the Faith and stimulate the friends to greater levels of service. He visited numerous towns in Persia; in fact, he visited most of the Bahá'í centres in Írán and a full list would look like an index page of an atlas. One incident at Qazvín is worth noting. He lost his sight completely and all efforts by the best doctors in Tihiran to restore it were of no avail. After nine months of treatment, they gave up his case as hopeless. A friend then reported the matter to the Guardian who wired back an assurance of his prayers. The day after the receipt of this message Ishráq Khávarí could see again, to the astonishment of everyone, specially his doctors.

During 1957-58, Ishráq Khávarí visited the Baha'is in Pakistan, Djakarta, Singapore and India and participated in the Conferences held there. At the suggestion of the Hands of the Cause, he also met the friends at Dubai, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrayn and on a subsequent trip re-visited these places as well as Jeddah, Beirut, London and some towns in Germany. He

attended the Palermo Conference and made a pilgrimage to the Holy Shrines.

In the middle of the night of August 5, 1972, **Ishráq Khávarí** got up with a pain in the chest but before any help could be rendered he passed away.

Ishráq Khávarí translated into Persian *The Dawn-Breakers; Tibyán va Burhan* (two volumes); *Dalíl va Irshád*. His original works include a calendar, recording important data during the first Baha'i century; a study outline for the *Kitáb-i-Íqán* (in four volumes); study outlines for two epistles from the Guardian, dated 100 and 105 B.E.; a refutation of an attack on the Cause; *Muházarat* (talks on various subjects at Bahá'í Conferences); a short account of the life of the Purest Branch; a brief biography of Muḥammad 'Alí Salmání. In addition, he authored books on non-Bahá'í subjects and made many compilations from Bahá'í Holy Writings. One of the most useful of these is *Ganjínih-i-Hudúd va Ahkám* which gives the laws and ordinances of the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* and texts from other Holy Writings bearing upon them.

These books, essays and compilations will remain as a lasting tribute to **Ishráq Khávarí's** services to the Cause of God in the early stages of its Formative Age.

RUSTOM SABIT

ETHEL MURRAY

1884–1972

The exhortation of the Centre of the Covenant, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, to carry the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh to the Indians of North America evoked wholehearted response from Ethel Murray. If obedience to the Centre of the Covenant in this world is the source of joy to Bahá'ís in the Abha Kingdom, she is now reaping that eternal harvest; for Mrs. Murray, in her many years as a believer, enthusiastically supported the teaching plans of the beloved Guardian, built on the foundation of the *Tablets of the Divine Plan*, and in the advanced years of her life found strength and purpose in teaching the Faith in the heart of the Cherokee Reservation in North Carolina where she lived under difficult circumstances as a lone pioneer from June, 1954, to November, 1970.¹

¹Letter dated August 10, 1972, from the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States.

Born in 1884, Ethel Murray was the younger and weaker of twins, with such delicate health that her activities in childhood were restricted. From the time of becoming a Baha'i in the early 1920s, until her passing in 1972, her health improved markedly and she seldom saw a doctor.

After she became a Baha'i in Springfield, Massachusetts, Mrs. Murray, a photographer by profession, ardently devoted her abilities to the service of the Cause. When her marriage ended, she moved to Montclair, New Jersey, and for some time was in charge of "Fellowship House", a centre of Baha'i activities and hospitality. In a letter to Shoghi Effendi, she described her hope for the expansion of this house and upon receiving his reply to the effect that this was not the day for the friends to gather themselves together away from the world but rather this was the time for the believers to scatter and teach the Cause, she immediately relinquished the idea of the centre and pioneered to the nearby community of Bloomfield.

Constantly seeking opportunities to teach more actively, in 1936 she pioneered under the first American Seven Year Plan (1937–1944) to Richmond, Virginia. Here her economic circumstances were rendered more difficult because of lower rates of pay for her photographic work, but she remained at her post for several years.

The call for pioneers in the Ten Year Crusade (1953–1963) inspired Mrs. Murray to extend her service in a new field. The United States *Baha'i News* of September, 1958, records: "Ethel Murray was among the first Baha'is in this country to arise to pioneer among the American Indians in the beginning months of the Ten Year Crusade. Leaving her home in Providence, Rhode Island, in November, 1953, Mrs. Murray settled first in Asheville, North Carolina, then in Bryson City, and finally in Cherokee, which she had chosen as her ultimate destination. This Reservation was of special importance to the Crusade, for the Cherokee language was the one chosen by the Guardian for the first American Indian translation of the Baha'i Writings."

Since residence on the Reservation was restricted to Indians or those to whom the Indians would rent, Mrs. Murray felt her prayers were answered when she finally man-



Ethel Murray

aged to establish herself in Cherokee, first in a house and later in a dilapidated shack which had not been habited for some time. She felt that this move, to a building without heat or plumbing, helped very much to draw her closer to the Cherokee people, many of whom lived in similar circumstances. Although a slightly better home became available later, it was without running water until the very end of her stay. Throughout those years she had to gather drinking water in a rainbarrel. She walked four miles to a small general store to obtain food and provisions and felt that Bahá'u'lláh had showered His blessings on her when a new bridge was constructed, shortening the distance to the store by a mile and a half.

Visiting Ethel Murray was like a continuous deepening class. To observe her actions was to witness the movements of one totally centred in the propagation of the Faith. She gathered clothing to sell for a few pennies and with the proceeds purchased mattresses for Indian friends who were without. Over the years, through prodigious effort and spartan economies, she saved enough money to purchase twenty-three mattresses for the needy, though she herself slept on a thin quilt laid over a chest. She prayed ardently for waiting souls to come

to her door and always had shelter and food for anyone who came. She answered the letters which reached her in increasing numbers as her service in the teaching field became known, always expressing her great happiness at the privilege of serving in Cherokee.

"It is difficult to summarize the varied experiences of the last five years, years when I have been wholly dependent on Bahá'u'lláh," Mrs. Murray wrote in 1958. "I felt that the first thing that should be done was to find someone to translate some of the Bahá'í Teachings into the Cherokee language. This took some time and effort, but finally two were selected who could work together . . . As distances to most of the Indian homes are so great that it was difficult to reach many of these people, and some other doors were closed, I decided to follow 'Abdu'l-Baha's' example and try to get some people to come to me . . . My home was open to all, and I soon became known as 'the Baha'i lady'. I made it a point to follow Baha'u'llah's teaching in *The Hidden Words*, No. 30, from the Arabic: *Deny not My servant should he ask anything from thee, for his face is My face; be then abashed before Me.*"

For some time Mrs. Murray published a column of religious news and ideas in the local newspaper until the opposition of resident clergymen brought it to a halt. But by then some of the newspaper personnel were her staunch friends and she had proclaimed widely the Message of Baha'u'llah.

She wrote again in 1958: "There have been many happy experiences, some humorous and some discouraging, but Bahá'u'lláh has gradually opened doors of service, and made it possible to establish a suitable place for a Baha'i Centre, with a display in front, where many of the thousands of tourists from all over the country can stop if they wish and learn something of the Faith; or they will, at least, see the name 'Baha'i Faith.' A few come into the Centre for literature . . . almost every day I have callers and am able to say a few words for the Faith."

One who had the privilege of visiting Mrs. Murray a number of times at Cherokee has written: "On each visit there were fresh signs of sacrifice and selflessness on the part of Mrs. Murray. I remember marvelling at the amount of space in her small home which she had set aside as the Baha'i meeting room. Then, when

I came on a later visit, I noted that she had had a carpenter move the partition, thus reducing her small share of the space and increasing that of the meeting room. It was always neatly arranged, with Bahá'í books, pictures and posters, and in front of the small home was a large sign, 'Bahá'í Centre.' ”

The physical hardships she experienced were considerable, but she did not speak of them. At the end of her life she recalled: "I was satisfied, for I had as much and more than most of the Indians; I did not come to make them envious, and they knew I was not paid as a missionary."

Only the future can make clear the result of Ethel Murray's dedication; and each step taken on that Reservation must one day yield its fruit, for 'Abdu'l-Bahá has promised: *One pearl is better than a thousand wildernesses of sand, especially this pearl of great price, which is endowed with divine blessing. Ere long thousands of other pearls will be born from it.*¹

Mrs. Murray passed away on August 5, 1972, in Asheville, where she moved following a serious accident which she suffered one night when she fell into a ditch running alongside the unlighted road on which she was returning to her cabin from shopping in the general store.

BETH MCKENTY

PAUL FRED THIELE

1911–1972

Paul Fred Thiele was born in Hamburg, Germany, on October 28, 1911. He was one of six children. The family came to America in 1923 and settled in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where Paul graduated from Milwaukee State Teacher's College, now the University of Wisconsin. Paul had a versatile career in teaching, selling, building, and he served for a time in the Merchant Marine. He married Helen Phillips of Kenilworth, Illinois, in 1937, and they have one daughter.

Paul became a Bahá'í in April, 1962, in Carmel, California, and in 1964 he moved to Honolulu where he was a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly for several years. He was very active in Baha'i community life and he

¹ *Tablets of the Divine Plan*, p. 52.



Paul Fred Thiele

served on many committees, including the Maintenance Committee, to which he made an invaluable contribution.

In February, 1967, he was engaged as supervising engineer for the construction of the Mother Temple of Latin America at Panama and worked assiduously for its completion. He became seriously ill three months before the formal dedication of the House of Worship which took place on April 29, 1972—a date corresponding to his tenth Bahá'í birthday—and was unable to attend the event. At his passing on August 9, 1972, the Universal House of Justice cabled:

DEEPLY GRIEVED NEWS RECEIVED FROM HAWAII PASSING DEVOTED SERVANT BAHÁULLAH PAUL THIELE ADVISE HOLDING BEFITTING MEMORIAL SERVICE MOTHER TEMPLE LATIN AMERICA TRIBUTE HIS OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION ITS CONSTRUCTION.

It was typical of Paul that his arrival in Panama on April 5, 1967, was quiet and unobtrusive; there was a courteous letter to the National Spiritual Assembly announcing his arrival, followed by a telegram confirming the time and date. He came and immediately set to work; within days of his arrival his first reports

on the building of the road giving access to the Temple were flowing to the Universal House of Justice. From the time of his arrival until illness terminated his activities, he was an outstanding example of devotion and unsparing dedication. His tall, strong figure and the quality of his faith became a symbol for us of dependability, of security for our growing Temple. Those who knew him the best cannot speak of him without tears in their eyes; even those who knew him only through casual contact or by sight remark, "He was a wonderful man." Those who knew him intimately speak of his many kindnesses, his unpublicized charity and his spontaneous generosity. He had a deep understanding of the Faith and his explanations of its teachings were so clear and simple that the faces of his listeners lighted with comprehension and joy.

It is difficult to write about his personal life; he lived so quietly. Many times he slept at the Temple site; he worked day and night; he was always the first one there in the morning and the last one to leave. An occasional dinner at the home of his friends was his only recreation.

During the oppressive heat of the dry season, Paul never forgot the workmen labouring on the treeless hill in blazing sunlight; twice daily he carried to them plastic containers of ice cold drinking water. A friend has written: "His vitality and total absorption in the work enabled him to succeed in bringing into reality the architect's design, and his talent was united with the highest sense of responsibility."

Paul was always happy to conduct visitors around the site and to offer lucid explanations as to the significance of the structure that was rising on Cerro Sonsonate. Not all the visitors were dignitaries, officials or Monseignors. On one occasion a group of small boys from a nearby summer camp for underprivileged children emerged from the pampas grass at the Temple site; uncertain of their welcome and perhaps made timid by Paul's booming voice, they came waving a white flag on a stick. They explained that from their camp site, at a slightly lower level than the Temple land, they had watched the work for days and wondered what this strange new building was; they had finally gathered their courage to come and ask. Paul escorted them about the site and then sat with them on the wide steps and told them about the Faith of Baha'u'llah and the significance

of the House of Worship, answering their eager questions with the utmost courtesy. He told us later, with a wide smile, that they behaved beautifully and gave him their earnest attention; finally, they thanked him and asked if they might visit again.

When illness first struck him, he returned to Hawaii for surgery, and within five weeks was back in Panama. He seemed annoyed by his illness, impatient with it. When it struck again and he felt his strength failing, he appeared to be driven, as though he must finish the work in a race against time. He drove himself and those working with him. He left Panama as silently as he came, attempting to conceal from his friends the seriousness of his condition. We felt deep grief that he was not able to see the consummation of his efforts. Mrs. Thiele and her daughter attended the dedication of the Temple in his stead; friends from around the world expressed their loving appreciation of Paul's efforts.

A moving moment occurred during the memorial service held for him in his beloved Temple. While a young Persian Bahá'í chanted the prayer for the departed all the lights in the House of Worship went out. Those sitting in the darkness, with that beautiful tenor voice soaring up into the dome, felt in the cool breeze blowing through the unlighted building a sudden peace and joy. We felt that Paul knew, and was happy, and with us.

MARION GOLDSTEIN

ETHEL MAY BOWMAN HOLMES

1904-1972

Knight of Baha'u'llah

Ethel Holmes, who was born on May 18, 1904, was a Roman Catholic when she married Maurice Holmes. Professor Holmes was a Baha'i. He would relate to her the Teachings, and point out the beauty of the Writings of Baha'u'llah. Once, during their discussions, he presented her with a copy of *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* and invited her to read it and then give him her opinion of the Faith. When he came home for lunch and later when he returned for dinner, she was reading the book, and was still engrossed when bedtime came. Her intense absorption continued for

about a week. Finally she completed her study of the volume and announced her acceptance of the truth of the Bahá'í Revelation. She never doubted Bahá'u'lláh or His Teachings again.

Mr. and Mrs. Holmes left their home in Miami, Florida, to pioneer in the outer islands of the Bahamas, arriving at their goal in October, 1953,¹ for which service they were accorded the title, Knights of Bahá'u'lláh, by Shoghi Effendi.

They settled in Hopetown, a village on a small island off the east coast of Great Abaco Island. There were less than one hundred inhabitants at that time, Professor Holmes recalls, but there was a church, a library and a small elementary school with classes to the eighth grade. It was primarily a fishing village and boat building was the chief industry. The diet available on the island consisted, in the main, of conch meat, fish, turtles and lobster; there was no agriculture. Occasionally a ship would put in at the harbour, bringing supplies. As there was no electricity or refrigeration, meat was available only when a villager would kill a pig and divide it among the people.

For three years, Mr. and Mrs. Holmes remained at their post, holding many meetings, observing the Bahá'í Feasts and Holy Days, but finding little response in the tradition-bound atmosphere of the island. Rapidly deteriorating health required Mrs. Holmes to return to Miami for surgery. Unable to return to the island because of Mrs. Holmes' health, the couple visited various centres and then settled in St. Augustine, Florida. While there, they were notified that their home in the Bahamas had burned but their Bahá'í library was saved. The Holmes donated their Bahá'í books to the public library on the island.

After a long illness Mrs. Holmes ascended to the Abha Kingdom on August 24, 1972. Maurice, her constant companion, recited the prayer for the departed as she passed on. She is buried in Evergreen Cemetery in St. Augustine.

In *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, xv, p. 36, we find:

O My servant, who hast sought the good-pleasure of God and clung to His love on the Day when all except a few who were endued with insight have broken away from Him! May God, through His grace, recompense

thee with a generous, an incorruptible and everlasting reward, inasmuch as thou hast sought Him on the Day when eyes were blinded.

EUGENIE MEYER

1884–1972

Sometime in the early days of the Bahá'í Faith in the United States, Eugenie Meyer, while living in Miami, Florida, visited the public library in that city. While browsing among the books on religion she came upon a copy of *Kitáb-i-Íqán* (The Book of Certitude) by Baha'u'llah, a book described by Shoghi Effendi in *God Passes By*² as “. . . foremost among the priceless treasures cast forth from the billowing ocean of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation.” Eugenie took the book to her home and in a quiet moment opened its pages. Years later she told a friend that the contents of the volume went right to her heart; tears coursed down her cheeks as the Words of Bahá'u'lláh came alive for her. Thus she became one of the early believers of the Faith.

About 1945 Eugenie began pioneering in South Carolina, particularly in Columbia and Greenville. She remained in the south teaching the Faith until the death of her husband about 1960. At this time she was 76 years of age. Again she became a pioneer, this time in the Ten Year Crusade, and took up a post in Biel, Switzerland. Biel is a city of two languages, German (Biel) and French (Bienne). Eugenie had spoken German as a child but had long since forgotten the language; however, immediately after arriving at her post she started taking German lessons so that she could more effectively fill her role as a pioneer in the German-speaking section of the city. Later, in consultation with the National Spiritual Assembly of Switzerland, she settled in Thun to assist with the teaching work there.

Eugenie became ill about 1970 but would not give up her feeling that there was pioneer work for her to do. She made a good recovery and was able to resume the teaching work again. When a member of the Swiss National Teaching Committee asked her whether she could consider settling in Lugano in the southern part of Switzerland to be the ninth member of the



Eugenie Meyer

Assembly in that goal area, Eugenie responded with gleaming eyes. With a look of sheer joy she explained, "I knew Bahá'u'lláh spared me for this." She moved to her new pioneer post before Rídván, 1972, and was very happy there. Soon after this, she suffered a brief illness and passed away at the age of 88.

The Swiss friends remember Eugenie especially for her deep understanding of the Teachings and because, when she read a prayer or a passage from the Holy Writings, every word carried forth a power that was felt by every heart.

RICHARD BACKWELL

1914-1972

"A stirring quest grows as it feeds anew . . .
Possession of a pure, kindly, radiant heart
wins for him the promised sovereign state:
Ancient! Eternal! Everlasting! True!"

From *Odyssey of a Baha'i*, by
Richard Backwell

Richard (Dick) Backwell was born at Southsea, Portsmouth, on October 20, 1914, the first son

of a distinguished colonial administrator, and spent his early years on the Isle of Wight. An Exhibitioner from Charterhouse School, he entered King's College, Cambridge, where he took his degree in Classics. He declined the invitation to pursue an academic career and went to Sarawak as a District Officer in 1938. He left there in 1942 to return to England where he joined the Royal Air Force. During his stay in England he renewed his friendship with John Ferraby¹ in London, a friendship dating from school and university days. Mr. Ferraby told him about the Baha'i Faith and he attended a few meetings before being posted to Ceylon as an Intelligence Officer. To Dick's surprise and delight, he found in the library of the liner-turned-troopship on which he travelled, a copy of the translation of *Kitáb-i-Íqán* which he had been unable to obtain in England, and which he was allowed to keep as no one else had apparently manifested interest in it.

After his arrival in Ceylon, Dick was put in touch with the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of India, then responsible for Ceylon. After concentrated study of the Teachings it was to that body he made his declaration of faith in 1944, this being, possibly, the first enrolment in Ceylon. Although he corresponded with Baha'is during this time, he did not again meet any for a period of eighteen months until he visited India on his way back to Britain after the war.

From 1946 to 1950 Dick devoted himself almost exclusively to serving the Faith, pioneering successively to Nottingham, Newcastle, Glasgow and Edinburgh. While in Nottingham, where he was a member of the Local Assembly, he took a diploma in Adult Education and had the degree of M.A. conferred upon him by his old college. As well as serving on the National Spiritual Assembly from 1947 to 1955 and filling, for a time, the office of treasurer, he served on Local Assemblies, was an invaluable member of the Assembly Development Committee and other national as well as local committees, and became part-time manager of the British Publishing Trust during which time he compiled *Principles of Baha'i Administration*, *The Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh*, *Pattern of Baha'i life* and *Bahá'i Prayers*. During two separate periods he also served as editor of the British *Bahá'i Journal*. Apart from this he

¹ Appointed a Hand of the Cause in October, 1957.



Richard Backwell

contributed splendid articles, poems and compilations to the *Bahá'í Journal*, the *Assembly Development Review*, and the *Bahb'í Youth Bulletin*.

During the British Six Year Plan (1944–1950) he introduced and taught the Faith to his parents, both of whom accepted it and became active and valued members of the British community. In this period he travelled tirelessly from goal town to goal town and to already established communities serving as a public speaker "of compelling logic who never bored", as one friend expressed it; at fireside and informal meetings, "he spoke simply and was acutely sensitive to an enquirer's needs . . . at summer schools, an evocative and brilliant teacher." It should be mentioned that his participation in the programme of the first Bahá'í Summer School of Scotland, held at St. Andrews in 1971, is a memory dear to the attendants from the mainland and the islands. It could be seen even then that he was far from well, though he was as radiant, gentle, brilliant in discourse and in humour as ever.

In 1951 he married a fellow Bahá'í, Vida Johnston, in Leeds, Yorkshire, where they lived until they pioneered to British Guiana (now Guyana) where Dick worked as personnel

manager of a sugar company and assisted greatly in improving conditions for the sugar workers. The Spiritual Assembly of Georgetown was formed and incorporated and extension teaching was undertaken elsewhere in British Guiana as well as in French Guiana and Surinam. This work, in which the Backwells played a significant part, laid the foundation for the formation in 1970 of the National Spiritual Assembly of Guyana, Surinam, and French Guiana.

Dick, Vida and their three children returned to England in 1961–62 where Dick helped in consolidating the teaching work in Liverpool before pioneering with his family, in 1963, to Northern Ireland, first to Bangor and later to Larne Rural District where they helped to found the first Spiritual Assembly. In 1963 he was again elected to the British National Assembly on which he served until 1968 when he was appointed a member of the Auxiliary Board for the propagation of the Faith in Europe—being responsible for the work in Ireland and Scotland—which task he executed with dedication and success until 1969 when he became seriously ill. After surgery his health improved for a time but the condition recurred and the last year of his life was spent in much pain and increasing weakness which he bore bravely and patiently, uncomplaining and cheerful, remaining in constant contact with the Baha'í friends and retaining his deep interest in the activities and progress of the Faith until his death on October 4, 1972. Relatives, Bahá'ís and many other friends from all parts of Ireland and the United Kingdom attended the deeply moving funeral service and burial in a beautiful hillside cemetery at Ballycarry.

Perhaps one of Dick's most outstanding qualities was his ability to listen patiently and attentively to one's difficulties, problems or doubts and then to assist in finding an answer in the Bahá'í Writings. As has been written of him, "he exemplified . . . nobility of character and disinterestedness of service to all human beings without any exception whatsoever; admirably versed in the Teachings, he was uncompromising and immediate when anything wobbly or unsure was propounded, courteously giving chapter and verse from the Writings to support his point."

The British *Bahb'í Journal* of February,

1973, carries "An Appreciation" of Richard Backwell and a review of his last book, published posthumously. Surely the final paragraph of that review is an echo from the hearts of all who had known him, worked with him and learned to love him: "Dick's permanent services to the Cause of God attain their zenith in his final book *The Christianity of Jesus* (Volturna Press, Portlaw, Co. Waterford, Ireland, 1972) . . . To read this book of one so recently passed on to the Abha Kingdom is an enriching and lovely experience and for those who have known this charming, devoted and scholarly man, it is to recall his illuminating and refreshing conversations. His gift to us is the fruit of many years of loving thought and is very precious."

On October 5, 1972, the Universal House of Justice cabled:

GRIEF PASSING EARLY AGE RICHARD BACKWELL GREATLY ASSUAGED TERMINATION HIS SUFFERING CONTEMPLATION DISTINGUISHED RECORD SERVICE SOUTH AMERICA BRITISH ISLES SPIRITUAL RADIANCE EVENING EARTHLY LIFE STOP EXTEND FAMILY FRIENDS LOVING SYMPATHY ASSURANCE ARDENT PRAYERS SACRED THRESHOLD PROGRESS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM THIS OUTSTANDING **BELIEVER**

LEONG TAT CHEE

1910-1972

In 1955, in a quiet little town of Malacca, Malaysia, an event took place that was destined to affect the progress of the Bahá'í Faith throughout that country. Leong Tat Chee, a Chinese, learned of the Faith through the efforts of Dr. and Mrs. K. M. Fozdar, early pioneers to the area. As an official of a society which was a federation of five religions—Taoism, Confucianism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islám—Mr. Leong was intrigued by the new Teachings, but suspicious and defiant about Bahá'u'lláh's claims. He finally accepted a challenge to read the Writings for himself, took two full weeks leave from work and locked himself in his room with every available Bahá'í book. When he finally emerged, he was a Baha'i, and from that day onward he never looked back for a single moment. His sincerity and steadfastness gradually won over



Leong Tat Chee

his very orthodox wife and antagonistic family of seven grown children, each of whom accepted the Faith separately over a period of many years and became strong, active Bahá'ís in their separate home centres.

Mr. Leong was elected chairman of the first Spiritual Assembly of Malacca which was formed in 1955 and he filled the vacuum left by the departure that year of the resident pioneers. The progress of the Faith in Malacca was exciting and dramatic at a time when there was very little activity in any other part of the country. As the community developed, however, opposition grew in many quarters and there was much confusion among the believers. In this period of growing pains, Uncle Leong, as he was lovingly called by everyone, stood out as a beacon light around whom the steadfast believers could rally and his wisdom steered the friends through the crisis. This was an important period in the history of the Cause in Malaysia, for from this group of believers arose many of the pioneers and travelling teachers who later influenced the growth of the Faith not only in Malaysia but in many other parts of the world.

Uncle Leong was himself beset with many personal problems which he overcame with

exemplary courage. He donated his house, which was the Bahá'í Centre of Malacca, to the National Spiritual Assembly of Malaysia. Like many other conservative Chinese homes, there hung outside this house, a large traditional name-board, handed down through the generations; and when Uncle Leong replaced this with a sign board on which "Baha'í Centre" was boldly printed, his friends and relatives were convinced that he had definitely parted with his sanity.

Uncle Leong served as treasurer to the Regional Spiritual Assembly of South East Asia which functioned from 1957 until 1964; he had the priceless privilege of being the only Malaysian to attend the International Convention held in Haifa in 1963 to elect the first Universal House of Justice; and at the World Congress in London that year he was singularly honoured to represent the seven hundred million members of the Chinese race.

In 1964, Uncle Leong was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of Malaysia, and in that same year was appointed to the Auxiliary Board, the first Malaysian to serve in this capacity. In his new role Uncle Leong's services to the Malaysian community were intensified and his little car was always bursting with Baha'ís being taken on regular teaching trips to near and distant places throughout the country. He was a valued employee of the government of Malaysia which bestowed upon him the Pingat Jasa Kastria award for outstanding services rendered to the country. As the demands of the teaching work grew he made an early retirement in order to devote more time to the Faith.

Although he was deeply involved in local teaching, Uncle Leong's vision was always world embracing. In 1965, accompanied by Mr. Yan Kee Leong, he embarked on a teaching tour of Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan, intensified his study of Mandarin, assisted in the translation and publication of Bahá'í literature into Chinese and, awakened the Malaysian believers to their great responsibility towards China. Although he could not fulfil his great desire to pioneer to that region, he inspired others to do so.

Singapore was Uncle Leong's other great love. Despite his failing health he and Mrs. Leong left their comfortable home in Malacca in 1969 when the Universal House of Justice

called upon Malaysia to prepare Singapore for the establishment of its National Spiritual Assembly. Prior to this, his frequent visits to Singapore had resulted in the establishment of a second Local Spiritual Assembly; for approximately fifteen years only one Assembly existed on the island, and five were required to fill the goal. A report written by Mr. Yan Kee Leong in December, 1969, illustrates how indefatigably Uncle Leong worked: "All goals will be accomplished . . . Leong Tat Chee, in spite of his suffering, wakes up early in the morning, supplicates to the Almighty, and then we plan the day's work. . . We get into Leong's car and return to the Centre only when the day's work is done . . ."

In 1971, five Assemblies were elected in Singapore largely through the assistance and inspiration of Uncle Leong who regretfully had to leave because of ill health before the election of the National Spiritual Assembly of Singapore at Ridván, 1972. A lingering illness slowed down his physical activity, but he continued faithfully to discharge his duties as an Auxiliary Board member through extensive, loving and regular correspondence with pioneers, Assemblies, committees, editors of Baha'í bulletins, youth groups and isolated believers. Many despondent friends were cheered by the warm encouragement flowing through his letters which often contained generous contributions to assist in their work. Not a murmur of complaint was ever heard by anyone through all his long months of physical agony; rather, his radiant spirit was a shining example to all who came in contact with him.

Uncle Leong passed away while saying his prayers a few minutes after midnight on October 9, 1972. Beside him was a cherished photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and in his prayer-book was found a long list of names of those he remembered in his supplications. Uncle Leong was, himself, one of Bahá'u'lláh's greatest gifts to the Bahá'ís of Malaysia—one whose deeds exceeded his words. At the time of his passing the Universal House of Justice cabled these words:

DEEPLY GRIEVED NEWS PASSING SINCERE PROMOTER CAUSE LEONG TAT CHEE HIS DEVOTED LABOURS INCLUDING SERVICES AS MEMBER AUXILIARY BOARD WILL LONG BE REMEMBERED STOP HANDS JOIN HOUSE IN CONVEYING

RELATIVES FRIENDS LOVING SYMPATHY ASSURANCE FERVENT PRAYERS SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL.

SHANTHA SUNDRAM

MARY TILTON FANTOM

1897-1972

"Mrs. Mary Fantom is the first one of Hawaiian blood to accept the Cause. Her great heart of love and pure spirit have enabled her to keep the friends together when Kathrine Baldwin was away. Her home in Spreckelsville has been the centre where the meetings were held in love and unity." Thus wrote the Hand of the Cause Agnes Alexander in *Personal Recollections of a Bahá'í Life in the Hawaiian Islands*.

Mrs. Fantom served faithfully for many years as the recording secretary of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Maui which was established in 1928 and contributed generously of her efforts and resources. She was among the first to hold children's classes on Maui. Each year, in June, Bahá'ís and their friends gathered in her spacious gardens for a special Unity Feast. Long confined to a wheelchair, but undeterred by this physical handicap, she was a devoted servant of the Faith to the end of her life.

Born in Lahaina on July 7, 1897, Mrs. Fantom lived in Spreckelsville until March, 1968, when she gave up her home and moved to I-Ionolulu to spend her remaining years at a retirement centre. She ascended on October 24, 1972.

A letter she wrote to Miss Alexander in 1941, describing the observance of the birthday of Bahá'u'lláh, held at her home, captures something of the spirit of this radiant friend: "It was a wonderful gathering. I greeted everyone with Allah-u-Abha. Oh, everyone seemed so happy! Even before the meeting someone said, 'I am so happy that I came.' I said, 'Yes, this is a special happy day for all of us because it is Bahá'u'lláh's birthday. Let us sing *Tell the Wondrous Story*, and as we sing, think that we are singing to the whole world!' " To each friend who attended she gave the gift of a plant, a symbol of the Faith, as one guest remarked, "for they bear seeds and will keep growing."

To all who knew her, she was "Aunty May". Although she and her husband, James, had no



Mary Tilton Fantom

children of their own, she may truly be regarded as an "international mother", for her love and generosity extended to many now scattered across the face of the globe.

LILLIAN CHOU

ANDREW F. MATTHISEN

1885-1961

NINA B. MATTHISEN

1895-1972

Knights of Bahá'u'lláh

Andrew and Nina Matthisen had the honour of being named Knights of Bahá'u'lláh by the beloved Guardian as a result of their pioneering to the Bahama Islands in January, 1954.¹

Andrew F. Matthisen was born on May 31, 1885. His mother, Hannah Matthisen, was one of the early American believers. Andrew accepted the Faith as a young man and was associated with Albert Windust in carrying out various projects in the early years of the establishment of the Faith in the United States. At the time of his marriage to Nina Z. Benedict.

¹ *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII, p. 449.



Andrew F. Matthisen



Nina B. Matthisen

in 1922, Andrew was already a confirmed and active Baha'i.

"Matty", as he was known to everyone, was a tall, well-built man with sandy hair and blue eyes which would glow with enthusiasm or twinkle with amusement. Although retiring in social conversation, he was dynamic when speaking of the Bahá'í Teachings. An excellent teacher, he had a thorough knowledge of Bahá'í literature and a broad understanding of the religions of the world, resulting from his study of them and of ancient and modern philosophy. He seemed to know instinctively what an individual was seeking or needed, and was always able to approach one's spiritual, emotional or intellectual needs in a manner uniquely suited to the individual. He seemed never at a loss to provide the well selected and applicable word, simile or analogy; a story drawn from the life of 'Abdu'l-Baha illustrative of a point; a purely logical analysis of a problem; or even a bit of poetry to stimulate one's interest and lead the discussion to a spiritual level.

Once, as a very new Bahá'í, I was confused about a problem and eager to find a response appropriate to a follower of Baha'u'llah. I wrote to Matty asking his guidance and clarification of certain of the Teachings which might

be applied to the matter. A few days later I received from him fifteen typewritten pages and in them, my answer. He had searched the Bahá'í Writings and made a wonderful compilation, logically assembled and embracing many facets, so that everything became clear. He had a great concern for all people and his private charities were many.

In the Matthisen home there was a warm welcoming hospitality and an atmosphere of harmony and spirituality; one was caught up in an aura of wide vistas of spiritual and intellectual vision, which was so much a part of both of them. I once mentioned to the Hand of the Cause Amelia Collins how much I missed this atmosphere in other places. She replied, "My dear, of course you will find it in *this* home; you will have to try to create it elsewhere."

When the Guardian called for pioneers in the Ten Year Crusade, Andrew and Nina volunteered and with their daughter, Mary Jane, they settled in Nassau, Bahama Islands. They immediately established fireside meetings once or twice a week, with an average attendance of sixteen or seventeen people, many of whom had to be transported by automobile to their home. The first one to accept the Cause was a young man from Barbados, a member of

the police force; after listening to a talk on prayer, he asked: "Teach me to pray." By April 20, 1955, there were enough believers so that the first Spiritual Assembly of Nassau was formed.

In March, 1955, Sunday afternoon meetings were started in Adelaide, a small community about fifteen miles from Nassau, but although the attendance averaged about sixteen, the Faith did not take root. In May of that year the Matthisens spent a week in a thatched-covered hut at Bluff, on the island of Eleuthera; and the name of Bahá'u'lláh was planted in the hearts of this completely native community. They also spoke at Current, another small community on Eleuthera island, going there without advance notice. They rang the school bell and within minutes a large audience assembled, people even standing outside with their heads in the windows. Although invited to return there, the way did not open before the Matthisens had to return to the United States.

In Nassau, the Matthisens enjoyed conducting a class attended by about twenty-five native children. Nina frequently commented on the ease with which the children memorized prayers and quotations from the Sacred Writings.

Using the pen name "A. Channel", Nina contributed a weekly column titled "The Treasure Chest" to the *Nassau Guardian*. As its popularity grew the editor asked permission to use her real name; from then on it was headed with her photograph. The column was a compilation of quotations on various subjects and the names of the Central Figures of the Faith, and of Shoghi Effendi, often appeared under the quotations.

During their stay in Nassau, the Matthisens were privileged to serve as members of the American Teaching Committee of the Greater Antilles from 1955 until 1959, when Nina's health made it necessary to return to the United States. They left behind, for use by the community, a well-stocked library of Bahá'í books and study outlines. They settled in Fort Myers, Florida, and assisted in establishing the first Spiritual Assembly there.

Nina was advised by the family physician not to let Matty know that he was succumbing to a terminal illness and for a time she lived in private distress with that knowledge. When she finally shared the knowledge with Matty, he said with a smile, "You should have told me

sooner; doctors don't understand Bahá'ís."

On October 14, 1961, Andrew died, as radiantly acquiescent to that transition as he had always been to whatever life had brought him, this beloved servant and Knight of Bahá'u'lláh.

Nina Benedict Matthisen was born on July 31, 1895 and became a Bahá'í six years after her marriage. Long after that she was to say to me in a tone of chagrin, "Can you imagine! I walked around that house for six years with a Bahá'í book on every table, and refused to even open them!" Her later service made up for what she considered were those wasted years.

Nina composed a number of musical selections with Baha'i themes and, with Matty, served in various capacities at the House of Worship in Wilmette. At various times, before leaving for her pioneering post, she was a member of the Spiritual Assembly of Chicago. She had a lovely speaking voice, but had never had occasion to use it on a public platform. With a view to increasing her service to the Cause she took public speaking lessons and thereafter gave many talks at schools, clubs, the Bahá'í Centre in Chicago, the House of Worship in Wilmette, and over the radio. Perhaps the largest audience to hear her speak was the National Convention of Federated Women's Clubs. Her friends were many and she conducted a wide correspondence; toward the end of her life her mail came from all over the world. After many years of heart trouble, her final illness was a short one. She passed away on November 9, 1972.

My final tribute to this devoted handmaiden and Knight of Bahá'u'lláh is this: I always felt nearer to the Kingdom when I was with her.

HAZEL MEESE

JOY HILL EARL

1912-1972

GRIEVE PASSING FAITHFUL HANDMAID BAHÁ-
ULLAH JOY EARL HER EXEMPLARY SERVICE
PIONEER FIELD FAR EAST OVER LONG PERIOD
AND TEACHING HOMEFRONT GREATLY VALUED
ASSURE DEVOTED HUSBAND PRAYERS HOLY
THRESHOLD PROGRESS HER SOUL

Universal House of Justice

By one of those mysterious coincidences which we can never explain, the one whose memory

was honoured by this cablegram was born exactly ninety-five years after Bahá'u'lláh, even to the hour of the day, at dawn on November 12, 1912. She was named by her grandfather, a Christian minister, quoting Psalms 30:5, "... *Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.*" And this verse seems to have been the keynote of her life, for although plagued with ill health from childhood, undergoing physical pain and successive operations during most of her adult life, for the more than thirty years that she served the Faith, Joy was a constant source of inspiration and illumination to all who knew her. Of Negro background, with an admixture of American Indian and Scottish-Irish blood, she transcended the barriers which racial prejudice would attempt to place in her path by the deceptively simple expedient of ignoring them and proceeding on her way.

Her college training was in the field of music, at which she was so successful that in 1932 she was awarded the Nadja Boulanger scholarship for study at the Fontainebleau Conservatory in France. Although the Depression made it impossible for her to take advantage of this opportunity, she retained her musical interest and artistry at the piano to the end of her life.

Attracted to the Faith in the late 1930s, Joy eagerly sought out older believers and engaged them in long conversations, drinking in everything they could offer. The one who had the greatest influence on her spiritual development was Louis Gregory.¹ He took a special interest in her, and she reciprocated with such love and admiration that soon she was calling him "Uncle Louis".

In the 1940s, Joy began public speaking, and went on many circuits under the auspices of the national Race Unity Committee and College Speakers Bureau. She was also called on to teach at Louhelen (now Davison) and Green Acre Bahá'í Summer Schools, and in both Cleveland and Detroit she served on the Spiritual Assemblies and held unusually successful firesides.

In 1950, Joy and her husband moved to New York so that he could pursue studies at Columbia University preparatory to pioneering in Japan. Joy threw herself into the activities of



Joy Hill Earl

this area, helping Juliet Thompson² with her fireside, serving on the Spiritual Assembly of New York, and spending much time at Green Acre. Thus it was that she was at Eliot, Maine, when Louis Gregory passed away in 1951, and because of the close tie between them, most of the arrangements for his funeral devolved on her. How thrilled and delighted she was when the cable from the beloved Guardian named her "Uncle Louis" a Hand of the Cause!

According to long-cherished plans, Joy and her husband were to be in Japan by Naw-Rúz of 1952. Joy's hospitalization during the winter of 1951-52 made no difference. Her passport photograph had to be taken in the hospital, but she left on schedule. After a storm-battered 17-day trip across the Pacific, the two new pioneers set foot on Japanese soil on March 14, 1952, and the Naw-Rúz feast was celebrated as planned with the Bahá'ís of Tokyo (at that time the only Bahá'í community in the entire Far East).

Joy's radiant spirit and deep knowledge of the Teachings soon began to bear fruit; there are still some active believers who were confirmed in her fireside during that first year in

¹ Posthumously appointed a Hand of the Cause in 1951.

² See "In Memoriam", *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII, p. 862.

Japan, and the present Spiritual Assembly of **Kōfu** grew from extension teaching in which she participated at that time. Then, in the spring of 1954, the Earls moved on a two-year assignment to Yamaguchi in western Japan, where they were completely isolated. A fireside was soon started among largely agnostic college students, and from the efforts of one precious soul confirmed during that period has developed the present Spiritual Assembly of Ube. In addition to serving on the Spiritual Assembly of Tokyo at a later period, Joy found time for extensive teaching trips in Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macao and Malaysia, and was a frequent teacher at summer and winter schools in various communities.

In 1959, the Spiritual Assembly of North East Asia asked the Earls to live at the **Hazratu-'I-Quds** (which also served as the Tokyo **Bahá'í** Centre) and arrange all activities there. In fact, the responsibility fell on Joy, since her husband's work kept him away from Tokyo for four to six months of each year. At Joy's hands, the Centre took on new life with a constant round of activities including firesides and deepening classes, musical programmes, parties, and eventually, even **Bahá'í** weddings. Many were the souls attracted and confirmed during that period, lasting until the end of the Ten Year Crusade, in 1963.

Although Joy never completely mastered the intricacies of Japanese grammar, she developed an almost flawless accent in speaking the language. One wonders how she could possibly have found energy for anything outside the activities of the Faith, and yet in those six years Joy achieved considerable recognition in Tokyo women's affairs, filling such posts as Chairman of the Music Workshop, member of the Board of Directors of the Tokyo Women's Club, President of the Imperial Ball, and President of the College Women's Association of Japan. Her associates in these organizations all knew that Joy was a Baha'i and respected the Faith because of her.

After attending the World Congress in London in 1963, the Earls gladly accepted an opportunity to move to Korea, where mass teaching was just beginning to create urgent need for consolidation. Then, near the end of that year, Joy had the inestimable bounty of being included among the first group of pilgrims to Haifa scheduled after the election of

the Universal House of Justice. Her pilgrimage, coinciding with the commemoration of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Ascension, was not only a glorious spiritual experience but one which sent her back to Korea with a feeling of awe and reverence for the newly-established Divine Institution. Despite deteriorating health, Joy made a significant contribution to the work of the Cause in Korea in the two years she spent there.

In the summer of 1965, the Earls returned to the homefront after thirteen years spent almost continuously in the pioneer field. Some years later, following an operation, Joy's health had improved remarkably. Accordingly, the Earls arranged a trip for the latter half of 1972, on which they would start with a visit to the grave of the beloved Guardian, continue with a pilgrimage to **Írán**, and carry out teaching assignments in Malaysia, Japan and Korea, with briefer stop-overs in the Philippines and Taiwan. However, even in London, Joy was again experiencing difficulty in walking. Naturally, nothing deterred her from visiting the House of the Bab in **Shiráz**, the House of the Martyrs in **Işfáhán**, and the House of **Bahá-'u'llah** and the site of the **Síyáh-Chál** in **Tihran**. But by August 6, when she reached Malaysia, Joy was feeling serious weakness and pain, and walking any distance was impossible. Nevertheless, she carried out the itinerary set up for her, with firesides, deepening classes and public meetings for two weeks in Penang, **Butterworth**, **Alor Star** and **Kuala Lumpur**. Her last public talk, a triumph over pain and illness, was given on August 18, at **Kuala Lumpur**.

Although unable to carry out her plans for the Philippines and Taiwan, Joy was surprised and cheered by a massive welcoming party at the Tokyo Baha'i Centre on September 3, attended by over fifty friends, including some she had known for as long as twenty years.

Throughout her life, Joy had drawn her strength from invisible sources and poured her entire resources into the teaching work; but now her body could be pushed no further. In November, her husband brought her back to Ann Arbor, Michigan, where she passed to her reward on November 27, 1972, exactly nine years after her first pilgrimage to Haifa. Her beautiful and inspiring funeral was attended by about 200 friends, **Bahá'í** and non-**Bahá'í**. She was laid to rest under a hawthorn tree at

Washtenong Memorial Park in the outskirts of Ann Arbor.

DAVID M. EARL

GRETTA STEVENS LAMPRILL

1890–1972

Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

SADDENED NEWS PASSING KNIGHT BAHAUULLAH
GRETTA LAMPRILL FIRST BELIEVER TASMANIA
FORMER MEMBER NATIONAL SPIRITUAL AS-
SEMBLY AUSTRALIA STOP HER DEVOTED SER-
VICES AUSTRALIA SOCIETY ISLANDS LOVINGLY
REMEMBERED . . .

Universal house of Justice

The ascension of the Knight of Bahá'u'lláh Miss Gretta Lamprill on December 11, 1972, was an irreparable loss to the Bahá'í community in Tasmania. Her gentle nature, compassion and deep spiritual love for mankind attracted the hearts of all who came in contact with her. Known as "The Mother of Tasmania", she never failed to inspire the Bahá'ís of this island state to exemplify the Words of Bahá'u'lláh: *Be unrestrained as the wind, while carrying the the Message of Him Who hath caused the Dawn of Divine Guidance to break.*¹ These words were engraved on her heart from the time she accepted the Faith in 1924 and became the first believer in Tasmania. She was born in the capital, Hobart, on September 26, 1890.

"This is what I've been waiting for!" Gretta was heard to remark when she first learned of the Bahá'í Teachings at a meeting attended by Mr. and Mrs. HydeDunn² and Miss Effie Baker who made a teaching trip to Hobart in 1924. A few days later, in order to learn more about the Faith, Gretta attended an informal gathering sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Hyde Dunn. Recalling that event in 1971, in her eighty-first year, Gretta recorded: "Mr. Hyde Dunn spoke passionately about the Faith. Then and there, with the whole of my inner and outer being, I dedicated my life to Bahá'u'lláh and the Baha'i Faith. . . ." Unknowingly, Gretta had initially heard of the Bahá'í Faith indirectly through her mother who, sometime between 1908 and 1912, drew to her daughter's atten-

¹ *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, CLXI, p. 339.

² Clara and John Henry Hyde Dunn were appointed Hands of the Cause in 1952.



Gretta Stevens Lamprill

tion a paragraph in a local newspaper stating that in the British Museum there were letters (Tablets) from a man in the East who claimed to be the Prophet for this age: this was the first known mention of the Cause in Tasmania.

In the latter part of 1924 Martha Root visited the lone Bahá'í in Tasmania and addressed a meeting in Hobart. A second visit was made by Mr. and Mrs. Hyde Dunn in 1925. They frequently wrote letters of encouragement to Gretta. By 1939, when Martha Root again came to Tasmania, she met the Hobart Bahá'í community which had then three members.

With untiring effort, Gretta continued to teach the Faith throughout the state and planted seeds wherever she went. Although possessed of a beautiful soprano voice, the economic circumstances of her family dictated that she choose another career. She entered the Public Health Department as a nurse, served with distinction, and eventually was appointed Supervisory Sister of School Medical Services in Tasmania, a position she held until she retired. Her profession gave her the opportunity to travel to all parts of Tasmania and was a vital factor in the growth of the Faith there. By 1942, the Hobart community had six members; two years later, in

1944, the Hobart Baha'i Centre was opened and dedicated by "Mother" Dunn, with Gretta as first secretary of the newly formed Local Spiritual Assembly. On October 20, 1949, Shoghi Effendi's secretary wrote on his behalf: "He appreciates your . . . ceaseless service to the Cause of God very much, and feels that, in spite of the temporary set-backs in the work there in Hobart, the friends will succeed in holding the advantages they have gained after so many years of patient labour. The work throughout Australia and New Zealand is now progressing at a much faster rate, and the foundations laid so faithfully and permanently by the dear Dunns are proving their strength and capacity to uphold the administrative edifice now erected upon them." Pinned in the handwriting of the Guardian were the words: "The services you have rendered, and are rendering, our beloved Faith, deserve indeed the highest praise, and I feel deeply grateful to you . . . Persevere in your noble endeavours, and rest assured that our beloved Master, whose Cause you serve with such devotion, will watch over you and reward you for your labours."

When the Guardian called for pioneers at the beginning of the Ten Year Crusade in 1953, Gretta was one of the five members of the National Spiritual Assembly to answer the call. She was, at that time, secretary of the National Assembly and her dearest friend, Knight of Bahá'u'lláh Miss Gladys Parke¹, was hostess at the former Haziratu'l-Quds in Paddington, Sydney. They sent a cable to the Guardian which read: SHALL LAMPRIILL PARKE VOLUNTEER TEACH TAHITI. The answer came back: HEARTILY APPROVE LOVE, SHOGHI.

It is now Baha'i history what was achieved by these two dedicated women in Tahiti, the major island of the Society Islands group; yet it is little known that, although young in spirit, both were over sixty years of age when they set forth to serve as pioneers. They arrived at their goal in December, 1953, and were named Knights of Baha'u'llah by Shoghi Effendi. Three times they had to leave Tahiti when their visas expired. Each time this happened they continued to teach in New Zealand and Rarotonga, Cook Islands, while waiting to return to their post,

Again the call went out in 1963 for a determined effort to fill the goals of the Ten Year

Plan in Australia. At the time Gretta and Gladys were settled in Launceston in Northern Tasmania. Without hesitation they left their home and settled in Devonport where they helped form the first Spiritual Assembly. They were then over seventy years of age. When the community had grown to twelve members the "Baha'i Twins", as they were affectionately known by all the friends, returned to Launceston where they continued to teach unceasingly.

In September, 1969, Gretta was heartbroken when her dearest friend and co-worker, "Glad" Parke, ascended to the Abha Kingdom. Her dearest wish was then to join her Bahá'í sister in that world.

During the last two years of her life her memory began to fail and she had difficulty remembering people she knew well. On one occasion she scarcely recognized well-known friends who visited her hospital bedside; yet, when she glanced through the window and noticed the word "Bahá'í" on a placard, her attention was arrested and she gave a most lucid and compelling talk on the Faith.

I can think of no better tribute to Gretta's memory than the words she spoke during a tape-recorded interview at Ravenswood in 1971 when she was eighty-one years of age. Asked if she had a message for the Bahá'ís of the future, she replied: "In the words of Bahá'u'lláh, Go *thou* straight on! And that is what the Baha'is are surely doing everywhere and every day."

ALBERT BENSON

MATTHEW W. BULLOCK

1881-1972

Knight of Baha'u'llah

On December 17, 1972, Matthew W. Bullock, a Bahá'í whose talents had won him distinction in many areas, died at the age of ninety-one years. From the beginning of his life until his death, Matthew Bullock forged new trails, broke through old barriers, and fought for recognition of human worth and human dignity. "A pioneer—all the way" might be a befitting epitaph for Matthew Bullock, for the period in which his life unfolded offered no substitutes for self-effort, self-discipline, and courageous faith in a future for mankind. The achievement and recognition he won had an

¹ See "In Memoriam", p. 457.



Matthew W. Bullock

impact on the Baha'i and non-Bahá'í communities where he lived. He will be remembered as one who blended material and spiritual progress, and kept his life on the course of high and constant commitment to the oneness of God and the unity of mankind.

It was on September 11, 1881, that Jesse and Amanda Bullock of Dabney, North Carolina, first looked upon the face of the new son they named Matthew. They were humble parents, not too long out of the searing experiences of human slavery, struggling to raise their family against the backdrop of poverty, hostility and fear which had accompanied the drama of emancipation in the South. We have been left no record of what his parents experienced as they saw the life of Matthew unfold, but to them he must have been a hope and a promise, for even in the early years young Matt gave evidence of having distinctive gifts: a strong and well coordinated body, an inquiring militant intellect, the resonance of good and gifted vocal chords, and a sensitive, radiant, outgoing spirit. Perhaps it was the atmosphere of promise in this son that impelled Jesse Bullock to move his family from Dabney when Matt was eight years old. He could not doom this child to the prevailing life-style of ignor-

ance and self-effacement which could enable him to survive the hostilities and prejudices so ingrained in the customs and sanctions of an old South dealing with its blacks. So it was that with hardships known only to God, Jesse Bullock took his family to Boston in 1889, arriving, as he later described it, "with seven children and a ten dollar bill".

Life in Massachusetts had its hardships, but it gave young Matt his first access to the kind of education which developed his talents. In 1900 he graduated from Everett high school with scholastic honours and with the historic distinction of being a black who was captain of four of his school's five athletic teams. School afforded him his first pioneer experiences, and it must be remembered that his victories were not easily won in the climate of that period.

High school had given Matt confidence and ambition, and he yearned to go on. His goal was that symbol of excellence, Dartmouth College. Jesse Bullock, seeing the promise in his son, yearned to afford Matt that opportunity. However, he had to face the reality that his menial wages could never finance a college education. They barely covered the necessities of his large family. Yet, with a love he could not express in words, Jesse gave Matt the painfully saved sum of fifty dollars and set his son free to try his wings and pursue his objective. One has only to realize how much Jesse needed the help of a working son to understand the love and sacrifice he made in giving Matt the freedom to choose and to strive on his own.

Matthew met the challenge of self-effort and discipline. He enrolled in Dartmouth and raised funds for his expenses with his fine baritone voice. Accompanied by a classmate he gave concerts at churches and hotels and was billed as "the famous baritone singer of Dartmouth". Despite the pressure of working to get the funds he needed, he was a diligent student and further developed his athletic ability. He was a member of the track team, distinguished himself in the broad jump and high jump, and brought fame to Dartmouth as a star football player. One sports historian, Edwin Henderson, in evaluating his performances during the critical games faced by Dartmouth from 1901 to 1903, observed that "Bullock was one of the brainiest men of football ability the game has ever had."

After completing his B.A. Degree at Dartmouth in 1904. with scholastic honour dis-

tinctions and with fame for his athletic achievements, Mr. Bullock entered Harvard; college and high school coaching earned his tuition fees. He was engaged by Massachusetts Agricultural College and achieved a double "first" as the first salaried coach and the first black to serve as a head coach at a predominantly white institution. Malden high school also obtained his coaching services. He graduated from Harvard Law School in 1907, again with a distinguished record.

The struggle for opportunity, achievement and respect during these school years brought Matt Bullock into many bruising encounters with prejudice and hostility. Opposing athletic teams had developed special strategies to "get the coloured player". Out of college he found that the doors usually open to well-qualified professional graduates were closed to him as a black American. And even among his colleagues, he met grudging acceptance as a person. In his memoirs, Matt recounted that one colleague, after forty years of class reunions, finally condescended to introduce Matt to his family. Thus Matt, early in his life's experiences, learned to pioneer against bitterness and rage in himself and in others.

Finding no suitable opportunity in Boston, Matt accepted an offer from Morehouse College (formerly Atlanta Baptist College) to serve as an athletic director and teacher. This took him back into the South in 1908. His work there enabled him to develop some of the "cleanest and finest football teams in the South". In 1912 he opened his law office in Atlanta, Georgia, and although time has regrettably yielded no evidences of his pioneer experiences as a black lawyer in the deep South—which was the "old South"—they would probably make a poignant and interesting story. During this challenging period in his professional career, romance somehow entered his life. His marriage to Katherine Wright was a long and stable one. They were eventually blessed with two children, who in their lives and in their way have expressed the standards of achievement their parents afforded them. The son, Matthew W. Bullock, Jr., is a judge in the Common Pleas Court in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The daughter, Mrs. Julia Gaddy, is a librarian in Detroit, Michigan.

Mr. Bullock's professional career was interrupted by World War I. Refused active mili-

tary service because of a heart condition, he went to Camp Meade as an educational secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association organization which served the military forces. He was sent to France with the 369th Infantry, becoming a part of the American Expeditionary Forces. His vigorous opposition to certain racist policies he encountered in his overseas experience incurred the hostility of certain commanding officers; he served fifteen months in the front lines without being granted a leave and was reassigned when he applied for accommodations to return to the United States. He was recommended for the *Croix de Guerre* medal for his leadership and bravery during his front line service but the colonel of the regiment refused to approve it for reasons of bias, an incident described in the autobiography of the black educator, Dr. John Hope. Mr. Bullock also received a letter from Army chaplain Robeson, brother of Paul Robeson, who referred to Matt as an "unsung hero of the battle of the Argonne".

After the war, Mr. Bullock settled in Boston where he soon became recognized as an outstanding citizen and leader and was encouraged to run for public office, and where he served in a career of law and public services spanning more than twenty years, constantly pioneering for social justice and human dignity. As a distinguished leader and citizen his influence was never based upon the exploitation or manipulation of hostilities and tensions. He was above hatred and bigotry, impelled by a love for justice in behalf of all mankind.

Mr. Bullock's first encounter with the Baha'i Faith came during this busy period of professional and civic responsibilities. As president of the Community Church of Boston he attended a dinner for a Bahá'í travelling teacher, Mrs. Ludmilla Bechtold Van Sombeek. There he asked many searching and challenging questions about the Faith. He was especially interested in the racial attitudes of white members. He was answered in such a way that he was stimulated to read. He obtained a copy of *Some Answered Questions* and studied it; thereafter, he and Mrs. Bullock visited Green Acre Bahá'í School. Mr. Bullock's contact with the Baha'is and his investigation of the Faith lasted many years during which the friends who knew him treated with great patience and kindness his reservations and

the issues that troubled him. Outstanding in influence among these friends was Mrs. Van Sombeek, his first teacher, who became a warm and understanding friend who stimulated him to study the Teachings and afforded him opportunities to broaden his experiences with the Bahá'í way of life. To her he paid the tribute of recognition as "spiritual mother" when he accepted the Faith in 1940 and throughout his life he expressed profound appreciation for her friendship and association.

As a BahB'i he gave unstintingly of his leadership skills and his devotion. He served as chairman of the Boston Spiritual Assembly, was appointed to many national committees, and in 1952 was elected to serve on the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States. A deep student of the Teachings, and an effective speaker, he travelled extensively and frequently at his own expense to promote the Faith. He visited Haiti, Costa Rica and Mexico. Wherever he went his deep commitment to the BahB'i Faith stimulated interest in it. Mrs. Bullock's death in 1945 left a great gap in the personal life of Matt Bullock; however, in that year of grief and loneliness, yet another honour came to him when the Secretary of the United States Navy invited him to join a special commission of distinguished citizens and participate in an inspection tour of naval installations in the Pacific areas.

In 1953 while Mr. Bullock was a member of the National Assembly he was asked to join a representation from that body and attend the first Intercontinental Bahá'í Conference in Uganda, East Africa, and received permission to visit the Holy Land on pilgrimage prior to attending the Conference. The visit to the Holy Shrines and the cordial reception given him by the beloved Guardian were profound experiences which had a great spiritual impact. He expressed it in these words: "The Guardian has cleared up many things for me. My visit to him and to the Holy Shrines are experiences beyond words. I don't think I will ever be able to express what it meant to me; nor do I think that any Bahá'í is the same after being with the Guardian. I wish every Bahá'í could have the bounty which has been mine."

What words could not express, Matt Bullock's life expressed thereafter. He was a careful observer at the African conference and a deeply inspired participant. Filled with a

special radiance of spirit, he left the conference and travelled to the Belgian Congo. Returning through West Africa he visited Liberia where he met the Liberian President and the American Ambassador and was able to broaden their understanding of the BahB'i Faith, his presentation so affecting the President that he invited Mr. Bullock to a special dinner and presented him to twenty-five distinguished personages from Liberia and other countries. Mr. Bullock spoke of the BahB'i Faith and its programme for humanity, and stated that he was in Africa as a representative of the American National Assembly.

When he returned to the United States he found that the American community had received increasingly stirring messages from the Guardian urging Bahá'ís to pioneer in the World Crusade. Matthew was then seventy-two years old, an established and prominent citizen of his community, enjoying the fruits of a life of hard work and sacrifice. There was no doubt in his mind about the priority of spiritual service in pioneering. Overcoming the reservations of his age and those near to him, wrenching himself free from the home community and land, Matthew Bullock was one of those who rose to his feet at the 1953 American BahB'i Convention and offered his life in pioneer service. He was one of the five National Spiritual Assembly members who resigned in that memorable year and went pioneering.

Matthew settled in Curaçao, Dutch West Indies, and helped to establish the first BahB'i Assembly there. He was one of the believers on whom the beloved Guardian conferred the distinction of being known as a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh.¹ As a pioneer he taught and travelled and extended his services to other areas of the West Indies in the formation and strengthening of other Bahá'í Assemblies.

In 1960, feeling the onset of extreme age and the disabilities it brings, Mr. Bullock returned to the United States. In the city of his former home, Boston, he remained for a while to teach and serve as best he could. Age and illness however, continued to trouble him. The Boston friends who had known him so long treated him with much love and sympathy. Among them must be mentioned a long time BahB'i friend, Miss Bernice Ball, who with a special BahB'i love and compassion helped him

¹ See *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII, p. 451.

through the dark days of pain and incapacity. How grateful and humble with loving appreciation Mr. Bullock's tired heart must have been. By 1967, illness had so weakened him that he moved to Detroit where his daughter lived and later entered a nursing home where he maintained his contacts with the Baha'is, and with Dartmouth and Harvard which contributed so richly to his early life. The colleges, equally committed to him, did not forget him in his declining years nor his outstanding accomplishments as a student and as an alumnus. In 1970 Harvard University conferred upon him an honorary degree. In 1971, Dartmouth College called him back for their commencement programme and conferred upon him the honorary degree Doctor of Laws, including him in a distinguished group of honourees, among them Gunnar Myrdal.

Matthew Bullock was then ninety years old. As he stood for the presentation and the reading of his citation he received a standing ovation from the five thousand persons present. What poignant memories must have been his on that memorable day! How he must have rejoiced to hear the mention of his beloved Faith in that citation from Dartmouth. It read, in part: "Concern for your fellow man continued to occupy your energies after retirement. You are a recognized leader of the Bahá'í Faith, and you have travelled all over the world at your own expense in the interest of that religion. You believe very deeply that the establishment of universal justice and freedom requires the spiritual and moral awakening of all people . . ."

Mr. Bullock returned to Detroit strengthened by so many memories of the great moments of his life and with a tranquillity of soul to wait upon the opening of that door to other existence. Death, that "Messenger of Joy", came for him on December 17, 1972.

With his customary orderliness in living, he left a will in which he provided for a Baha'i funeral and he had even selected the passages from the Writings he wished to have read. In death, as in life, spiritual dignity, love and unity distinguished the atmosphere.

A very great honour and tribute came to him from the Bahá'í Faith he had so loved and served. The Universal House of Justice, the supreme institution of the Faith, cabled the following message to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States:

GRIEVED PASSING KNIGHT BHAULLAH MATTHEW BULLOCK DISTINGUISHED PROMOTER FAITH CONVEY FAMILY ASSURANCE PRAYERS HOLY THRESHOLD PROGRESS HIS SOUL ADVISE HOLD MEMORIAL GATHERING MASHRIQUL-ADHKAR.

On February 17, 1973, the National Spiritual Assembly held that memorial gathering in the beautiful Baha'i Temple in Wilmette. Thus the music of a life so devoted to serving the principles of a great Faith was caught up and amplified in the chords of eternity.

H. ELSIE AUSTIN

'ABDU'L-VAHHÁB RAWḤÁNÍ

1892 (?)–1972

'Abdu'l-Vahhab Rawḥání was the son of Bahá'í parents and in 1910 had the bounty of attaining the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in Alexandria, Egypt. This experience became a determining factor in the course of his life and did much to dispel the sadness caused by the premature death of his father a few years earlier.

Accompanied by his mother and sister, 'Abdu'l-Vahhab left Cairo and found a new life in Alexandria where he never failed to attend the meetings at which 'Abdu'l-Baha spoke to the friends. The house of the Master was a magnetic centre to which were drawn many outstanding scholars and teachers of the Baha'i Cause whose influence on the intelligent young Rawhani served to refine his agile mind. He had an extraordinary memory and an idealistic, poetic nature.

'Abdu'l-Vahháb felt irresistibly drawn to a young boy in the entourage of the Master. This child, he learned, was the grandson of 'Abdu'l-Baha, named Shoghi Effendi. He related his first meeting with the youth to whom he felt so attracted in these words:

"'Abdu'l-Bahá one day summoned me to His house. I hastened there and when I knocked at the door, a small boy with a heavenly countenance opened the door and greeted me with words so compelling and profound that they were engraved on my heart forever. I sat on the upper seats of the room and he placed himself on the other side. He then asked me most gently as to the purpose of my meeting. When I explained to him, he hurried to the Master's

room. Upon returning he had the majesty of a king, sat on a higher seat and told me that the Master was ill-disposed and had delegated him to meet me on His behalf. He then showered me with such kindness that the roots of a life-long love were deeply planted in my heart. This bond grew stronger with every passing day. What a dignity that child possessed! What a stream of beautiful words he uttered! What a heavenly presence this small boy had!"

In 1919 'Abdu'l-Vahhab received permission to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Added to the joy of visiting the Holy Shrines was the bounty of again being in the presence of 'Abdu'l-Baha and Shoghi Effendi who even at that tender age, 'Abdu'l-Vahhab often related later, was like a moth constantly circling round the light of his Grandfather; and even in his boyhood he attempted to alleviate the burdens carried by 'Abdu'l-Baha for the sake of the Cause. One particularly cherished memory of his pilgrimage was an afternoon spent with the young Shoghi Effendi on the seashore at 'Akka where the young man recounted the sufferings of his Grandfather and the flood of difficulties which surrounded Him.

'Abdu'l-Vahhab's grief at the passing of the Master was softened by his love for Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Baha'í Faith, to whom he turned in absolute obedience and whose happiness he sought by striving to be of increasing service to the Cause.

One day soon after the Master's passing 'Abdu'l-Vahhab's heart impelled him to board a train for Port Said. Not knowing the reason, he followed the call of his soul. On his arrival he met one of the friends who was astonished to see him there, seemingly without purpose. The next day brought the joyful news to all the friends that the beloved Guardian would be aboard a ship that would dock briefly at Port Said en route to Haifa. 'Abdu'l-Vahhab rejoiced, feeling that he understood the mysterious impulse that had prompted him to visit Port Said. This was his first and only meeting with Shoghi Effendi, as Guardian of the Faith, and the cordiality shown him by the Guardian was a sustaining memory that brightened his last years.

Mr. Rawhani served devotedly throughout the Heroic and into the Formative Age of the Faith, providing invaluable services in the teaching and administrative fields in the terri-



'Abdu'l-Vahháb Rawhání

tories of North Africa where his knowledge of Arabic and his profound grasp of the Teachings greatly assisted particularly in the education of the newly-enrolled Bahá'ís.

Although he lost his sight after an operation in 1962, he continued to serve devotedly and without relaxing his teaching activity until his death on December 31, 1972. In accordance with his wish, he was buried in the Bahá'í cemetery of Rabat close to his wife.¹

GRIEVED PASSING ABDUL VAHHAB RAWHANI
HIS INDEFATIGABLE SERVICES HEROIC FORMATIVE AGES IN TEACHING ADMINISTRATIVE
FIELDS TERRITORIES NORTH AFRICA LOVINGLY
REMEMBERED . . .

Universal House of Justice

S. R. ROUHANI

WINSTON EVANS

1903-1973

Winston Gill Evans, Jr., was born in Shelbyville, Tennessee, on March 11, 1903. Evans Senior died in 1914, but Winston's mother,

¹ See "In Memoriam", p. 499.

Carrie Frierson Evans Sandusky, lived on till 1963, aged ninety-one. Winston grew up in Shelbyville, and attended Sewanee Military Academy from 1917 till his graduation in 1919. That September he entered the University of the South at Sewanee, where he won three medals for scholarship, receiving his B.A. in 1923. After some months in a Shelbyville bank he obtained a position with the National City Bank in New York City and was then transferred to the National City Company. Sent to Nashville, he was one of the company's top executives from 1926 to 1929, when he suffered severe losses in the stock market crash. During World War II he was drafted into the army but was later released as over age.

Winston has written that following 1929 he was bankrupt not only financially but spiritually. He visited every denomination, "everything that came to Nashville". In December, 1936, as he was leaving a Unity centre, he overheard a lady asking her way to the Hermitage Hotel: offering her a lift, he first learned, from Marion Little, "the BahB'i story". He was soon helping her arrange a racially integrated meeting in Nashville, attended by members of the National Spiritual Assembly. He became a BahB'i in 1937.

Only the future can properly assess Winston's record-breaking accomplishment. He taught the BahB'i Faith to university audiences, to leading theologians, to authors who would then include the Faith in their writings, to celebrities of whom he chanced to read. He obtained remarkable press coverage for the Faith, and he sparked proclamation activities in Canada and throughout the United States. He pioneered "thirty-three months out of fifty", in the period 1960-1964, on Grenada, British West Indies, leaving behind some forty-five new believers. He represented the Faith at such distinguished gatherings as the World Council of Churches which met in Evanston in 1954, at which time he conducted some seventy-five delegates and visitors to the House of Worship at Wilmette; and again when that body met at Uppsala in 1968. Institutions of learning where he addressed classes on the Bahá'í Teachings and/or visited leading scholars include the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (at the invitation of Huston Smith); Harvard; Yale; Princeton; Union Theological Seminary; the Santa Barbara Center for the



Winston Evans

Study of Democratic Institutions (as the guest of Bishop Pike); the University of Chicago; Notre Dame; Wellesley; Rutgers; Temple; Mt. Holyoke; Vanderbilt.

His teaching projects, first devised by himself, then coordinated with BahB'i administrative institutions, were basically of two kinds: they focused on communities, including areas or even countries; or they focused on outstanding individuals. He attended many Christian retreats, like those of E. Stanley Jones who, although he did not personally embrace the Faith, wrote that he would never oppose it; and who, indeed, in *The Way* tells of a black porter, reading a BahB'i book on a train "because it teaches me brotherhood." Asked, "Doesn't Christianity?" the man replied, "*This* kind transcends race."

Winston introduced the BahB'i Faith to many Christian leaders. After leaving Grenada, he contacted some forty of them. One who remained his friend for nineteen years, till death, and who more than once wrote well of the BahB'i Faith was the noted professor of philosophical theology, Nels Ferre, who used the BahB'i book *The Divine Art of Living* in his morning devotions. Meeting and admiring Gabriel Vahanian, Winston was aware of the

"death of God" movement long before it became popular. He was often surprised to find that Christian scholars not only "knew nothing about BahB'i" but did not believe in such basic Christian tenets as Bible prophecy or the Advent, and he compared them to the virtuous but foolish virgins in Saint Matthew 25. When fundamentalists, to audiences in the millions, began hammering on the Advent again, Winston felt they were opening doors to our Faith. Addressing Mormon friends he would say: "What was Joseph Smith's primary mission? To prepare the world for the coming of the Lord. His timing was perfect."

Encouraged by Dorothy Baker¹, Winston developed his first lay interview with Henry C. Link, religious writer. Other well-known writers whose attention he directed to the BahB'i Faith include Hendrik Van Loon, who had seen 'Abdu'l-Baha in Dublin, New Hampshire; and Aldous Huxley who received Winston at Palmdale, California, and passed him on to minister Allan Hunter (who averred Huxley was "a tough nut to crack.") Lloyd C. Douglas, author of *The Robe*, remarked of the BahB'i Founders: "I cannot explain them—they must have been men of God . . . But what would my nice neighbours think if I got mixed up in this?" Frank Laubach, worldwide literacy promoter, told Winston: "If I made any change, it would be to Baha'i." At a California institute in 1944, William E. Hocking of Harvard showed little interest in the Faith, but Blanche Fields, impressed by Winston, invited him to meet Dimitri Marianoff, the former son-in-law of Albert Einstein. "When you've been through two revolutions, you're not afraid of a Revelation," Marianoff responded. "Dima" and his wife both became Baha'is and he began work on one of Winston's cherished projects, a life of Tāhīrīh.² Paul Hutchinson of the *Christian Century* addressed a BahB'i centenary gathering in 1953. The famed Marcus Bach continues to write memorably of our Faith.

Bishop James Pike was, Winston believed, "the only Christian church leader to publicly urge his audiences to investigate the BahB'i

Faith." "Your coming is a blessing," Pike wrote him. In the Bishop's letters they were "Win" and "Jim". The Bishop addressed a historic BahB'i gathering in Chicago in 1967³ and more than once visited the BahB'i Shrines in Israel.

Winston's crowning dream, pre-planned for years, was a North American tour by the Hand of the Cause Tarazu'llah Samandari.⁴ This came to fruition late in 1967 when Mr. Samandari, with his son as translator, addressed audiences from coast to coast in the United States, including Alaska, and across Canada and into the Yukon. Catching Winston's enthusiasm, writers including top religion reporters George W. Cornell, David Meede, and Dan Thrapp brought to millions of readers their accounts of the nonagenarian Hand of the BahB'i Faith who had seen Bahá'u'lláh.

Winston, who electrified his audiences, was a born teacher, and his pamphlets, *Lord of the New Age* and *Power to Renew the World*, are attracting thousands. "The BahB'i story is very simple," he would say. "Give them the big picture. Tell them the Manifestation has come to do two things: to regenerate the individual soul, and to establish a new world civilization." He was partial to aphorisms, time-capsules of handed-down wisdom. "I always try to find God's first choice," he would quote from Martha Root.⁵ "You can't call your shots" meant you must seize an opportunity when it offers. "Never change a winning combination" was his counsel when things were going right. "*All are His servants*" (words from a Baha'i prayer) suggested to Winston that non-Bahá'is are also helpers. And "*God doeth whatsoever He willeth*" was his daily guide. As age drew in, he often urged that this was "the last, ir retrievable chance", and that time was "running out". His stories remained with the hearer, like that tale about geese flying south. They saw a comfortable farm and stopped to rest. When they took off, one stayed behind, saying he would join them later. They wintered down south, but he never showed up. When they honked to him on their way home in the spring, he tried to join them, but failed—too fat now to get off the ground.

¹ Appointed a Hand of the Cause on December 24, 1951. See "In Memoriam", *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XII, p. 670.

² See "Thralls of Yearning Love", by Dimitri Marianoff and Marzieh Gail, *World Order Magazine*, vol. 6, no. 4, Summer, 1972.

³ *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIV, p. 233.

⁴ See "In Memoriam", p. 410.

⁵ Appointed posthumously a Hand of the Cause on September 28, 1939; See "In Memoriam", *The Bahá'í World*, vol. VIII, p. 643.

Supporting himself haphazardly as a salesman of what were then avant-garde products (slant boards, yoghurt), Winston did not concern himself much with the practical side of life, but constantly taught, planned and travelled. His car, crammed with Bahá'í books to give away (he favoured those of the Hand of the Cause George Townshend), texts by Christian leaders and the latest news magazines, was a sort of bachelor's ambulating pied-a-terre. Always an attraction, he was welcome everywhere. Crowds would gather, the local media came alive, new Bahá'ís appeared. His slight southern accent was often affectionately referred to, as were such individualisms as his offbeat diets, and the fact that, having studied eye training with W. H. Bates, he never wore glasses. Tall, elegant, in the old phrase "to the manner born", he is best seen as he issued from the Wilmette House of Worship in the Columbia Broadcasting System documentary film *His Name Shall Be One*.

Following a period of ill health, Winston died in Sewanee on January 13, 1973. His survivors include a sister, Mrs. Harry G. Goelitz of Oak Park, Illinois, two brothers, Robert F. and N. Peyton Evans of Tennessee, and five nieces. He is buried in Shelbyville. The Universal House of Justice cabled its acclaim for his untiring devotion and outstanding service. And the Guardian had written him, in a letter dated May 31, 1957, "This is the kind of work the Bahá'ís should concentrate on, because one soul of great capacity can set a continent ablaze."

MARZIEH GAIL

GRETA JANKKO

1902-1973

Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

From the very beginning, Greta Jankko was destined to lead a wanderer's life. Born in Suonenjoki, Finland, on August 18, 1902, she lost her mother at an early age. Greta's father was a railway station master and moving from place to place became a familiar pattern of life for the family. Greta was always a nonconformist, not possessing the nationalistic feelings of her contemporaries. Her disgust with nationalism combined with her innate restlessness led her to emigrate to Canada in the



Greta Jankko

1930s. She returned to Finland for a visit, only to be prevented from leaving again by the outbreak of war. After the war she settled in the United States where she married. Within a few months of her marriage her husband died. Greta has recorded that she became a Baha'i in San Francisco in 1951 through her friendship with Gertrude Eisenberg. As has been the case with many outstanding Baha'is, Greta accepted the Teachings in all their depth very quickly and immediately set about teaching others.

She was living in West Vancouver, Canada, in 1953 when the Guardian's call was raised for pioneers in the Ten Year Crusade. Greta writes of this: "I did not feel that it concerned me at all. The beloved Guardian had earlier accepted that I translate Baha'i literature into Finnish, and I had arranged my working conditions so that I was free a part of the day for this most important work." But after prayer and meditation on the subject, and at the moment of reading Bahá'u'lláh's description of the nature of true liberty, "the greatest joy and peace filled my soul, and I knew that I had to answer the call and go out. What a fool I was to have hesitated; naturally, the translation work could be done anywhere."

Mary Tuataga, then secretary of the Canadian pioneer committee, describes Greta's service in the Marquesas Islands; for opening this territory to the Faith, Shoghi Effendi named her a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh: "Armed with complete confidence in Bahá'u'lláh and the most meagre of material possessions, she set out for her goal, the least known virgin goal assigned to the Canadian community. Arriving in Tahiti she encountered many obstacles which she resolutely set about clearing away until finally the French Consul, amid warnings and exhortations, granted her an eight months visitor's visa for the Marquesas. Persistent inquiry was rewarded when a berth was obtained on a small supply ship calling at these remote Pacific islands, and in March, 1954, Greta raised the Call '*Ya Bahá'u'l-Abhá!*' in the Marquesas. The only accommodation available to her was a small room, primitively furnished. Her diet consisted mainly of bread-fruit and bananas; rarely were the luxuries of meat, butter, eggs or milk available. Letters took months to reach her and not being fluent in French she was unable to converse freely with the local people. Despite this great obstacle, she discreetly mentioned the Faith whenever an opportunity arose. The tropical heat adversely affected her health and she lost weight rapidly, but these discomforts did not deter her from working daily on the project that had won the approval of Shoghi Effendi, the translation into her native Finnish of *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*. After a few months she was forced to make the difficult journey back to Tahiti to plead once again for a visa to remain in her goal. Miraculously permission was granted and again she returned to the Marquesas. This time she was required to leave before the expiry of her visa. One night a prowler broke into her rude hut; she was attacked and almost strangled to death. An immediate inquiry was held and she was advised by the Chief of Police that she must leave as quickly as possible, as he could not be responsible for her safety."

Writing from her goal, Greta said: "All the time on those islands I was very happy. I loved the people and we were very close to each other; they asked me many times never to go away from the islands. My typewriter was a miracle to them; they would sit on the floor silently for long hours as I typed the translation. An old

seaman, who knew some English, was the interpreter, but how much he understood of what I was saying, I never knew. We would talk about the great happenings of this Day of God. They had their Bibles, and I tried to show them important prophecies which were fulfilled. The older generation could not read or write; they would nod their heads and were eager to listen. They felt something, I am sure, but how much they grasped I cannot say. They used to stand in awe before the Greatest Name, and the small children almost every morning brought fresh flowers 'for the Prophet', placing them before the picture of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. I told them every time that it was the great Son of the Prophet, the Master; but each morning they would repeat, 'for the Prophet!'"

Mr. Jean Sévin has provided this tribute: "I had the privilege of meeting Greta in Papete, Tahiti . . . What struck me first was her very great spirituality; she was a soul who liked to pray and meditate, and thus to keep in constant touch with the divine source. She had told me that she was teaching the small children of her island to say, '*Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá!*' and '*Alláh-u-Abhá!*', and that they would place flowers before the Master's portrait in her room. She knew that sooner or later this seed of love would germinate, that the power of the divine Word would make known in future the results of that period of her life. I think that she bore in herself the patience and wisdom of a saint."

Greta wrote: "I felt so sad to have to leave my post . . . but our beloved Guardian had accepted that I go to Finland; all that happened must have been for the best. I arrived in Finland in the beginning of February, 1955. Here I pioneered first in Helsinki, Hyvinkaa, Lahti and Tampere. In spite of our feebleness, our Beloved has graciously been with us all the time blessing this small community by leading some souls in, by and by, in spite of so many difficulties. In 1957, I had the great privilege to pioneer for one year in Oslo, Norway; then, in the period 1961-1963, in both the Swedish and the Finnish areas of Lapland, in Swedish Karesuando, and Finnish Karesuvanto, Rovaniemi and Utsjoki, after which I again pioneered in Helsinki and Lahti. In all these years I have been tremendously happy; nowhere have I ever been lonely, only happy and grateful all the time. There is no greater joy

for a pioneer than to find a truly receptive soul . . . after having spoken to numerous souls without any seeming results, what a great joy it is to find one who really listens and feels the truth. I can never be grateful enough for this great bounty, having been privileged, in spite of my nothingness, to work on a little corner in His Divine Plan. I would not change my share with anyone in the world!"

Within a ten year period, Greta served on all the Spiritual Assemblies which existed in Finland during the greater portion of the Nine Year Plan, a record which is thus far unmatched. These periods of living in different cities were punctuated by periods of residence in Lapland during which she spread the Faith among the Lapps. She usually did not leave a place before she had found at least one soul who accepted the call of Bahá'u'lláh. She was artistic and although she had few possessions she was always able to set up housekeeping wherever she was. She had wooden boxes for her books and clothes, which were designed to serve, when empty, as a desk, chair or stool. Artfully wrapped in decorative paper or some inexpensive covering, her "furniture" looked very modern; needless to say, her home was always a true Bahá'í centre. Indispensable to Greta was her typewriter, which was usually the first "household" item to be taken out when she arrived at a new place, for one of her most outstanding achievements was her translation work. In addition to editing and re-translating sections for the second Finnish edition of *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*, she translated the first Finnish language editions of the following works: *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, *Baha'i Prayers*, *Some Answered Questions*, *The Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, and *The Dispensation of Baha'u'lláh*, to which must be added numerous pamphlets, booklets, prayers and essays. Her translations of *The Seven Valleys*, *Kitáb-i-Íqán*, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf* and *Release the Sun* exist in manuscript form but have not yet been printed.

Although in very poor health during the last four years of her life, nearly blind despite an operation for the removal of cataracts, and weakened by several serious ailments, she nevertheless toiled for the fulfilment of the goals of the Nine Year Plan to the very day of her death on February 26, 1973. She had by

then moved to Salo where she hoped to serve as a member of yet one more Local Spiritual Assembly; however, only a few weeks before its formation she was released from her frail body. She longed with all her heart for ascension to the Abha Kingdom and it appeared that only the overwhelming needs of the Nine Year Plan enabled her body to keep functioning.

When Greta came to Finland, in 1955, there was only a handful of Baha'is, mostly elderly ladies in the Helsinki area. When she was laid to rest at her last pioneer post, there were nearly a hundred friends, mostly youth, by her graveside. Truly, Greta Jankko's name will be for ever linked with the early annals of the history of the Faith in Finland.

On learning of her passing, the Universal House of Justice cabled:

GRIEVED NEWS PASSING VALIANT KNIGHT
BAHAULLAH GRETA JANKKO HER INDEFATIG-
ABLE SERVICES CAUSE GOD RANGING FROM
REMOTE ISLANDS PACIFIC OCEAN TO NORTHERN
REGIONS EUROPEAN CONTINENT PERSISTING
TO LAST MOMENTS LONG EARTHLY LIFE ILLU-
MINE ANNALS FINNISH BAHAI COMMUNITY
PROVIDE EXAMPLE FUTURE GENERATIONS
BELIEVERS STOP SUPPLICATING SACRED THRES-
HOLD BOUNTIFUL REWARD ABHA KINGDOM.

LISA OJA
DONALD OJA

MÍRZÁ BADÍ' BUSHRÚ'Í

1892-1973

Mírzá Badi' Bushrú'í, later given the honorific title "Badi' Effendi" by 'Abdu'l-Baha, was born on December 15, 1892 at Bushrúyih in the Province of K^hurásán, Iran. He entered his first school in 'Ishqábád, while still very young. Even then his bright eye and sweetly modulated voice indicated a startling and lively intelligence.

His father died tragically early. Providence then ordained that his well of filial love and devotion should flow to a new "father"—'Abdu'l-Baha. When Badi' arrived in Palestine at the age of ten, in trembling anticipation of meeting Him Whom he had long adored from afar, he was lovingly received. Thereafter his course of life was determined by a pious submission to Him Who was the Father of All.



Mirzá Badi' Bushrú'í

After three years of living in blessed proximity to 'Abdu'l-Baha, Badi' Effendi returned to Tihiran in 1905 to visit his mother. From then on every stage of Badi' Effendi's life was shaped and ennobled by the guidance of the beloved Master. Accordingly he embarked almost immediately on a course of Persian and English studies in Írán. Less than a year later, however, intent on preparing this youth for "a great cause in the future", 'Abdu'l-Baha sent him to the American University of Beirut (then the Syrian Protestant College).

Badi' Effendi entered the preparatory Department in October, 1906, graduating on June 27, 1910, with first class honours. 'Abdu'l-Baha was well pleased with this success and wished him to continue his studies. He accordingly studied for a further four years at the Syrian Protestant College, eventually graduating as B.A. with high distinction.

World War I brought 'Abdu'l-Baha acute anxiety. He was greatly concerned for the safety of the believers resident in Haifa, then in danger of attack. These friends were all instructed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to leave Haifa for a safer place far inland from the coast. Badi' Effendi was sent to the Druze village of Abu Sinán, situated to the east of 'Akka. Here he

was to run a school for the Baha'i children, while his companion, Dr. Ḥabíb Mu'ayyad,¹ was to take charge of the dispensary. The two young men laboured under the supervision of the Greatest Holy Leaf, 'Abdu'l-Bahá's sister and faithful companion. Accounts of the success of Badi' Effendi's school have been set down in Dr. Mu'ayyad's well-known diaries of that period in the life of the beloved Master.

By May, 1915, it was possible for the two friends to return to Haifa. They were then entrusted with the delicate task of returning the portraits of the Bab and Bahá'u'lláh from the refuge of the Druze village to Haifa.

In 1916, 'Abdu'l-Baha arranged for Badi' Effendi to continue his studies in Beirut. He was appointed teacher in the School of Arts and Sciences at the University, while continuing his own studies in English and Philosophy. In June, 1917, he obtained his Degree of Master of Arts with distinction.

After the war, between 1918 and 1919, the British Mandate Government in Palestine was seeking qualified young men to help establish an efficient administrative system. 'Abdu'l-Baha put forward the name Badi' Effendi who thus, in 1918, entered the service of the Civil Administration of the Government of Palestine. Few Arabs can have served the native people of Palestine with such love and devotion. But these virtues, offered so freely and ungrudgingly, were manifestations of the will of 'Abdu'l-Baha. Thus inspired, Badi' Effendi, first appointed Private Secretary to the Phoenicia District Governor at Haifa, was repeatedly promoted until finally appointed Acting District Commissioner of Nablus, the highest rank a non-British subject could achieve under the Mandate Government, which he served for a period of thirty years in Haifa, Tiberias, Nazareth, Nablus and Jenin.

He helped to build roads, medical clinics and schools. But, above all, he acted as a kind and loving father to the thousands of villagers and fellahin under his jurisdiction. His name became a byword for justice and benevolence, and, when the history of that time is written, he will assuredly retain an honoured place among the great but silent reformers of society, a man of both courage and compassion.

In 1947, Badi' Effendi was among those selected few who were still living in the Holy

¹ See "In Memoriam", p. 501.

Land and had remained faithful and steadfast and had won Shoghi Effendi's confidence and blessings, but the beloved Guardian advised him to select one of three countries to move to after May, 1948. It was in Alexandria, 'Abdu'l-Bahá's city in Egypt, that Badi' Effendi and his family found their new home. Badi' Effendi found everywhere reminders of the beloved Master; he took long walks to the scenes visited by the Master, deriving comfort and strength from all that was remotely connected with Him.

'Abdu'l-Baha had once told him: "Badi' Effendi, I need you for a great cause in the future." These words, uttered forty years before, came true when in the path of service to the beloved Master and in strict obedience to the wishes of the beloved Guardian, Badi' Effendi led the Bahá'ís of Egypt during the darkest hours in the history of the Cause in that land, serving several times as chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of Egypt and the Sudan during this last phase of his life.

On February 1, 1973, Badi' Effendi died in his sleep, mourned by all the friends in Egypt. From 1948 to 1973 he had been their faithful servant, their loving friend and father. Even during the last six years of his earthly life, when paralysed and speechless, he was for the Bahá'ís of Egypt a symbol of that love and devotion which 'Abdu'l-Baha had so deeply instilled in him. Both in his earthly life and in his illness he was what 'Abdu'l-Baha wanted him to be—the humble servant of all.

On February 6, 1973, the Universal House of Justice cabled:

DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING BADI BUSHRUI HIS
INDEFATIGABLE DEVOTED SERVITUDE PRE-
SENCE ABDULBAHA HIS VALUED SERVICES
DIFFICULT PERIOD WORLD CENTRE IMMEDIATE-
LY AFTER MASTERS PASSING HIS DEDICATED
CONTRIBUTIONS WORK FAITH IN EGYPT LAT-
TER YEARS HIS RICHLY BLESSED LIFE LOVINGLY
REMEMBERED STOP CONVEY DEEP SYMPATHY
YOUR MOTHER MEMBERS FAMILY PRAYING
SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL.

MARION LITTLE

1891-1973

Marion Little, with her characteristic radiance of spirit, and while reciting in a strong voice,

"Thy Name is my healing. Allah-u-Abha!" ascended to the Abha Kingdom on March 10, 1973, in Paris. While pioneering in Metz, France, she had recently undergone three serious heart attacks, but only a month before her passing she had written a dear friend in Haifa that her health was much better and added, "All the prayers from the Hands, the Universal House of Justice and all my friends everywhere have brought me back—there is something yet I must do!" Teaching the Message of Baha'u'llah was the central purpose of Marion's life to her last breath.

To her many devoted friends the following beautiful cable of March 12 from the Universal House of Justice brought comfort and happiness, expressing as it did, awareness and appreciation of the unique qualities and achievements which had endeared Marion to all:

ASCENSION ABHA KINGDOM MARION LITTLE
STEADFAST DEVOTED SERVANT BHAULLAH
MORE THAN FIFTY YEARS TEACHING PUBLISHING
PIONEERING UNITED STATES SOUTH AMERICA
EUROPE DEPRIVES AMERICAN BAHAI COMMUN-
ITY ONE ITS BRIGHTEST ORNAMENTS EUROPE
ONE MOST RADIANT PIONEERS STOP HER
LOYALTY CHEERFULNESS COURAGE UPLIFTED
SPIRITS FRIENDS ASSURES BOUNTEOUS REWARD
STOP OFFERING PRAYERS SACRED THRESHOLD
PROGRESS HER SOUL RECOMMEND GERMAN
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY HOLD BEFITTING
MEMORIAL SERVICE MOTHER TEMPLE EUROPE.

Marion's heritage and upbringing seemed to be preparing her for the historic tasks she was to perform for the Bahá'í Faith. Her birthplace, New Orleans, was in an area of the United States particularly known for its predominantly French influence and tradition. She was born on October 2, 1891, to Delos Carpenter Mellen, an attorney-at-law, and Corinne Castellanos Mellen, whose respective parents had been born in Paris and Northern Spain. Marion and her two brothers, Grenville and William Francis, were brought up as Roman Catholics, and she was educated in the Sacred Heart Convent of New Orleans. Marion's fluency in French, the household language of her grandmother, and her naturally sympathetic understanding of the culture and religion of the Latin people proved of inestimable value years later, especially in her teaching work in the Catholic areas of Europe.

It was in New York City, when in her twenties, that Marion met Mrs. Loulie Mathews¹ and first heard of the Bahá'í Faith. Her acceptance of Baha'u'llah was instantaneous. From that time until Loulie's death, these two beautiful souls, very much alike in their complete dedication to the Cause, their zeal and initiative, planned and carried out several unique and rewarding undertakings. One of these was the highly successful Summer School at Mrs. Mathews' "Temerity Ranch" in Pine Valley, Colorado, established especially for the encouragement and deepening of pioneers for Latin America.

By 1928 Marion had entered actively into the national and administrative work of the Faith, serving as secretary of the Publishing Committee located in New York, and becoming, in effect, its business and production manager. She also served as a member of the National Teaching and the Inter-America Committees.

In the publishing field, one of Mrs. Little's first achievements was the production of *The Baha'i World*, Volume III, winning "the unqualified gratitude" of Shoghi Effendi, "in producing such a noteworthy publication".

Her most outstanding contribution to the publishing efforts of this time was the highly important and successful publication of *The Dawn-Breakers*, a most challenging task carried out under the close guidance and direction of Shoghi Effendi.

For more than a year this undertaking demanded Marion's undivided attention, with the many exacting requirements and difficult problems being worked out in closest collaboration with Shoghi Effendi. Often he graciously accepted suggestions advanced by her. For instance, the use of an artist's rendition, rather than a photographic reproduction of the Inner Shrine of the Bab, was recommended by Marion and resulted in the delicate and lovely frontispiece to this book. The Guardian sent to New York for reproduction the priceless autographed Tablets of the Bab to the Letters of the Living, including the one to Baha'u'llah Himself. These were satisfactorily reproduced photographically and the Tablets safely carried back to Haifa by Mrs. Little.

On completion of the general edition of *The*



Marion Little

Dawn-Breakers, Shoghi Effendi cabled to Marion on April 12, 1932: EXCELLENT PRODUCTION EMINENTLY SATISFACTORY EVERY RESPECT ABIDING GRATITUDE. This message was followed by his handwritten note of May 5: "It is a striking and abiding evidence of the efficiency, competence and exemplary devotion which characterize your work for the Cause. . . . May success crown your inspiring efforts for the propagation of His Faith." Again on May 15 he wrote in his own hand: "The appreciations I have received from men of authority and eminence in both Europe and Asia regarding *The Dawn-Breakers* are highly encouraging and I am sure the reception it has been accorded is in no small measure attributable to your devoted and painstaking efforts."

The Guardian also praised the "really beautiful and exquisite workmanship" of the advanced limited edition bound in Moroccan leather which, he said, won the highest praise from the many distinguished men to whom he sent a copy.

Marion's husband, Raymond D. Little, a prominent publisher in New York, died suddenly in 1931. About two years later Marion returned to the South, establishing her residence at first in Covington and later in New

¹ See "In Memoriam", *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIV, p. 360.

Orleans, Louisiana, and devoting herself to travel teaching. Her charm and extraordinary abilities in carrying the Message of Baha'u'llah to others attracted many people to the Faith throughout the southern United States, and she was affectionately designated by many Baha'is "a one-man teaching committee".

When the Guardian announced the Second Seven Year Plan (1946–1953) with one of its principal objectives the opening to the Faith of western Europe, Marion's activities became centred in this new field of service. In response to the Guardian's call for itinerant teachers to assist the pioneers serving in those war-torn countries, Marion departed in 1947 on a mission of travel teaching, but remained in Europe the rest of her life as a pioneer.

It is regrettable that the services which Marion Little performed for the Faith on that continent are too numerous to describe in any detail in an article of this length, for much encouragement and inspiration would surely be gained from them. Such noted pioneers as Honor Kempton and Virginia Orbison recall with loving and abiding gratitude her invaluable assistance to their work in Luxembourg and Spain respectively. Her joy of service, her love and unusual abilities to accomplish victories for the Faith were equally praised in all the goal countries she visited.

After a teaching trip to Spain, during which she initiated activities leading to the formation, in face of the difficult circumstances obtaining in that country, of a second Local Spiritual Assembly, Marion went to Italy. She began her first service as a resident pioneer in Florence. In 1949, through her devoted and concentrated efforts, the Local Spiritual Assembly was established and an outstanding community developed. It was there in 1953, with the Convention sessions held in her apartment, that the historic Italo-Swiss Regional National Spiritual Assembly came into being, with Marion one of its original members. This was a very happy and productive time for Marion during which period she worked closely with Maude Bosio,¹ the first believer in Florence who accepted the Faith through Marion, and who became an outstanding servant of the Cause.

Later, when a special need for pioneer assistance arose in Switzerland, Marion devoted several years in the administrative and teaching

work there, centering most of her efforts in Vevey where she greatly strengthened that weakened community, and in Lausanne where a new community was brought into being.

It was a cherished experience and bounty for the members of the European Teaching Committee, in their close association with this precious co-worker, to have a continuing opportunity of witnessing her unique qualities and achievements. They came to know and value her marked abilities and gifts of organizing, and deeply appreciated her invaluable assistance so generously given in the preparation and carrying out of the yearly International Conferences for which the Committee was responsible. In later years she was to use these skills in planning and organizing the very excellent Summer Schools and conferences in Europe.

France, which Marion had visited many, many times, was to receive the last of her pioneer services. It was characteristic of her usual courage and zeal that she consented to settle in Metz, an exceptionally difficult teaching goal. With much sacrifice at a time in life when her health and strength were ebbing, this staunch pioneer was made happy by another victory for the Faith in the formation of a Local Spiritual Assembly in this, her last pioneer post.

To one of her spiritual children from Florence, on pilgrimage in Haifa in January, 1957, the beloved Guardian spoke of Marion Little as a very spiritual person, exceptionally dedicated to the service of the Cause. He stated that her sociable nature attracted people to hear about the Faith and her qualities as a teacher helped to confirm these souls. "The combination of these qualities," the Guardian added, "is very rare."

So, too, were Marion's other lovely characteristics; her warm, friendly and compassionate nature, often finding expression in encouragement and assistance generously given to other pioneers; her wonderful sense of humour, joy and cheerfulness, a source of comfort and uplift to those around her; and her irresistible charm of personality. All combined to distinguish Marion Little as a "bright ornament" and "radiant pioneer" of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

EDNA TRUE

¹ See "In Memoriam", p. 443.

LUIS MONTENEGRO

1932-1973

O Son of Being! Seek a martyr's death in My path, content with My pleasure and thankful for that which I ordain, that thou mayest repose with Me beneath the canopy of majesty behind the tabernacle of glory.

The Hidden Words, No. 45 (Arabic)

Luis Montenegro was born in Choconta, Colombia on April 23, 1932. From the moment he accepted the Bahá'í Faith, in 1951, he was a constant, sincere, firm and active worker. He was a man of marked capacity and conscientiousness and had a high sense of responsibility.

Mr. Montenegro participated energetically in the activities of the Spiritual Assembly of Bogota and later he was elected a delegate to the sixth annual convention of the National Spiritual Assembly of South America as it was known in the period from 1951 to 1957. In 1958, the company for which he worked moved to Cartagena and there he formed a Bahá'í group, and later assisted in the formation of the Spiritual Assembly. The marriage of Mr. Montenegro to Miss Inés Romero, in 1959, was the first Bahá'í marriage to take place in Colombia.

He was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of Colombia each year from the time of its establishment in 1961 until the time of his death, holding the office of secretary on that body for six consecutive years. He also served on various national and local committees including the maintenance committee of the National Haziratu'l-Quds, a function which consumed much of his time in the supervision of repair work and related activities. He devoted himself wholeheartedly to laying the foundation of the Bahá'í administrative order and was very helpful in the establishment of Spiritual Assemblies. In addition to lending his support to the administrative work of the Cause he was a splendid teacher and he participated in institutes, summer schools, conferences, conventions and firesides. His greatest pleasure was to dedicate his vacations, weekends and holidays to teaching the Faith in the cities and more particularly in the rural areas. What he enjoyed most was teaching the Indians and the peasants, as he perceived that their



Luis Montenegro

hearts were pure and receptive. As Riḍván, 1973, approached, he again offered his services to go among the Motilon Indian believers to help them form Spiritual Assemblies. While he was climbing the mountains of Casacara on Friday, April 20, to assist in the formation of Assemblies in the district of the Motilonos, he experienced severe pain in the region of his heart. He told his companions, César Vargas and Orlando Dangón, to continue on to their destination, that he would rest for a while and then join them. After a short time his companions noticed that his condition was worsening; they laid him on a hammock and after a few minutes he passed away. His friends, assisted by others they met on the way and who voluntarily offered to help, carried him in the hammock walking almost the whole night. At the hospital in Codazzi the doctor declared that his death had been instantaneous. His passing was glorious for he ascended to the Abha Kingdom as a firm and faithful soldier of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, culminating his service by sacrificing his life. He is buried at Codazzi.

In his private life, Mr. Montenegro was distinguished for his sincerity, loyalty, humility, frankness, simplicity and for his spirit of ser-

vice as a son, a father, a husband, a friend and a servant of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

Expressions of sympathy were received from the members of the National Spiritual Assembly whose hearts were saddened by the loss of their co-worker, and from the members of the Continental Board of Counsellors who wrote of their sorrow in losing a devoted collaborator the circumstances of whose death were a testimony to his spirit of service. The cabled message of the Universal House of Justice read:

GRIEVED PASSING LUIS MONTENEGRO DEVOTED SERVANT BAHALLAH EFFECTIVE TEACHER ADMINISTRATOR STOP EXTEND SYM-

PATHY FAMILY ASSURANCE PRAYERS SACRED THRESHOLD PROGRESS HIS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

At a teaching conference held in Cali, on April 12–14, 1974, to launch the Five Year Plan of the Universal House of Justice, the assembled believers held a memorial service for Mr. Montenegro. The most moving event of the conference occurred when Mr. Montenegro's ten year old son, Sergio offered to travel every weekend to teach the Faith and specifically pledged to visit Villavicencio, a town where he and his father had travelled and taught together.