

From: [REDACTED]  
Subject: RE: 20150323 re Twine A onzo.pdf  
Date: December 3, 2021 at 11:43 PM  
To: Steven Koons [REDACTED]



I have no objections to your posting and blacking out my name.

The letter I wrote to the Universal House of Justice is as follows:

To the Universal House of Justice

Dearly loved Trustees of the Cause of God:

On 24 October 2014, an article by Dr. Louis Venters appeared on the Good Men Project website. It is about Alonzo Edgar Twine, the first Baha'i in the state of South Carolina. He was a lawyer of African descent who was taught the Baha'i Faith by Louis Gregory.

<http://goodmenproject.com/featured-content/good-man-battled-racism-died-keep-fighting-hundred-years-later/#sthash.LArhEHtw.gbpl>

Alonzo Twine's advocacy for the Baha'i Faith and race unity, in a state notorious for its vicious racial segregation and debilitating laws that disadvantaged black people, led to his being arrested, convicted by a white judge of being a menace to society, and committed to an insane asylum. The particular asylum had horrific conditions for black inmates. Twine's former pastor deprived him of his Baha'i books and nutrition was so lacking that Twine died of pellagra. Here is a record of his grave:  
<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=63157468>.

More on Alonzo Twine is available in Dr. Venters' doctoral dissertation (attached), pp. 42-50. The edited dissertation will be published in spring 2015 by the University Press of Florida as *No Jim Crow Church: The Origins of South Carolina's Bahá'í Community*.

I read of Alonzo Twine about four years ago in Dr. Venters' dissertation. Since learning of him, I have reflected at some length on Twine's experience of being a highly educated black man in the Jim Crow south advocating both a new religion and the unity of the races. That his incarceration in a notoriously squalid and cruel asylum for the insane was the result, not of his actually being insane, but of his advocacy of the Teachings of Baha'u'llah and racial amity. Just as Eduardo Duarte Vieira was imprisoned and tortured in Portuguese Guinea for the mere fact of being Baha'i, so too was Alonzo Twine committed to a mental institution because of his faith, in the sure knowledge of those who so committed him that he would die there a young man.

Consider these martyrs of unquestionable sincerity, to whose truthfulness testifieth the explicit text of the Book, and all of whom, as thou hast witnessed, have sacrificed their life, their substance, their wives, their children, their all, and ascended unto the loftiest chambers of Paradise. Is it fair to reject the testimony of these detached and exalted beings to the truth of this pre-eminent and Glorious Revelation, and to regard as acceptable the denunciations which have been uttered against this resplendent Light by this faithless people, who for gold have forsaken their faith, and who for the sake of leadership have repudiated Him Who is the First Leader of all mankind? This, although their character is now revealed unto all eyes, hath been recognized through the ages, and will in the ages to come.

unto all people who have recognized them as those who will in no wise relinquish one jot or one tittle of their temporal authority for the sake of God's holy Faith, how much less their life, their substance, and the like. (Baha'u'llah, Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, XCI)

I wonder if it is possible that Alonzo Twine, the first Baha'i in South Carolina, was also the first American martyr of African descent. I wish to propose that the Universal House of Justice investigate further in the archives and the historical record uncovered by Dr. Venters, and consider the possibility that this young educated man of African descent, afire with faith in Baha'u'llah, was imprisoned, tortured, and silenced solely because of his Baha'i beliefs.

I think that that such a designation would greatly encourage African-American believers, the Baha'is of South Carolina, and the American friends.

With deep devotion,

██████████  
██████████████████  
██████████████████  
USA

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**From:** Steven Kolins ██████████  
**Sent:** Friday, December 3, 2021 23:19  
**To:** ██████████  
**Subject:** Re: 20150323 re Twine Alonzo.pdf

Thank you!

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Do you have objections to it being posted publicly with blacking out your name if you want?

On Dec 3, 2021, at 11:17 PM, ██████████ wrote:

Hi Steven,

The letter Louis Venters quoted from is a letter written to me. Here it is.

██████████  
<20150323 re Twine Alonzo.pdf>

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Steven Kolins

██████████████████  
██████████████████  
Possess a pure, kindly and radiant heart!