ONE PERSON'S SEARCH FOR A BETTER WORLD.

+P1

At the age of 74 it seems appropriate to look back on all those

years and try to find how it came about that one who was born on

a farm in England, has lived in four countries and visited over

50 others, is now married and is living in a small town in the

far west of America. We have four children, all happily married

to non-English partners. So far there are 3 grandchildren.

When I was young, the British Empire was at its height and thanks

to many intrepid Englishmen in past centuries,~ possessed

colonies all over the world. Yet life had changed so much, that

few Englishmen had ever been outside the shores of England

and,,~-~e rarely saw the face of a foreigner let alone a black

one. The Empire was resting on its laurels, but unknown to

anyone then, the Empire had come to an end and the whole planet

was on the brink of the biggest and most terrible war ever known.

My brother, sister and I had a very happy, though protected

childhood. We grew up on a mixed farm in the middle of England,

~4 t the ages of 24 & 23 Philip and 1, in our summer evenings

started to learn flying r F~e ~r~ at a nearby airdrome. Quite

suddenly, it seemed, world war two was upon us. We were both

very excited at the prospect of flying Spitfires in defense of

our country. Philip, who had put in more time flying than 1, was

drawn into a rushed program to train spitfire pilots, while I was

left driving a tractor on the farm: a most unjust situation I

thought, because he was born to farm while I had a great interest

in flying. I pondered deeply on this and found no answer.

Soon Philip was flying in the 'Battle of Britain' defending our

shores against the hordes of German bombers. When on leave, he

would tell us some of his adventures. Unknown to the Germans, we

had invented radar and this told us when the enemy was taking off

on a raid. Our Spitfires had ~ le time to take off and lay in

wait high above in large numbers. They ~uld then dive on the

bombers out of the sun and destroy ny. As a safety measure, they

would keep on diving until well out ~he way. In other

engagements many planes were lost on both sides. but the

+P2

invasion of England by Germany was stopped for good. However,

Philip was lost in the battle. With his plane damaged, he bailed

out, but fell into the sea before his parachute had time to open.

This was a great shock to all of us.

Now I was the sole remaining male to carry on the family name.

We did not know of any other males in the Cardell families,

though years later we did discover other branches in Cornwall,

where my father's family came from.

We had all been raised as Methodists and went to chapel every

Sunday. The Bible had become a great treasure to me, but I could

not relate it to modern life except in matters of personal

behavior. What, I wondered, is the future of the world? How

does nature come into God's overall plan? Was it just

window-dressing for us to enjoy? In philosophising about it -

Philip had given his life that all kinds of freedom would remain,

a most worthy cause, but this had happened unnumbered times

throughout history. I asked myself, 'Would there always be wars

on earth?' Years later a large stained-glass window was put into

Westminster Abbey, London, to commemorate the 'Battle of Britain'

heroes; all their names were listed, including Philip. Later a

school in Rhodesia was named after him. A book 'The Last Enemy'

by Richard Hilary, also a spitfire pilot and who later perished,

told memories of Philip and others. My parents were deeply

appreciative, but it could not bring back their son, and all the

other sons who had been sacrificed to the perfidy of mankind

through the ages.

The war went on fiercer than ever. There was no shortage of

young men volunteering to fly Spitfires, but farming was upgraded

in importance, for submarines were sinking food ships from

America at the rate of 10 to 20 a week. So I was put on the RAF

reserve indefinitely and told to produce food, because its was as

vital a necessity as fighting. This reasoning did not satisfy

me. After a year I applied for active duty, but was refused.

Back on the farm we were busy digging 80 acres of potatoes and it

was my job to supervise 40 German prisoners picking up after the

digger.

+P3

When we recaptured North Africa there were 40 Italian prisoners

in addition to supervise,~. This might seem a difficult job, but

not so, even though the German and the Italians had to be kept

separate for fear of friction between them. The Germans were

angry at the Italians for loosing their battles so easily and the

Italians resented the Germans. But neither was keen to go back

into the shooting war and most of them showed a strong preference

for potato picking! For this reason, few guards were needed.

Two English soldiers guarded each batch, but they had no bullets

for the rifles on their shoulders. Prisoners who volunteered to

work on farms were paid very little, so I asked them what I could

do to make it worth their while to put in a good days work. They

suggested a pack of cigarettes and half a loaf of bread each per

day. I went off to town to get these. My father, who had put me

in charge, came and found no one supervising, but all the

prisoners working well. He was very surprised until I returned

with a car load of bread and cigarettes and explained. Such

incidents encouraged him to put more trust in my sometimes crazy

ideas.

The work proceeded well but one day a German bomber appeared low

over the farm, with three Spitfires in hot pursuit. The unequal

battle ended quickly with the German crew bailing out as their

plane dived into the ground. It must have been a humiliating

experience for the prisoners, but I carefully refrained from

discussing it with them. Later we heard that one wounded German

airman was given a blood-transfusion while he was unconscious;

when he woke up and found that he had been given Jewish blood, he

tried to commit suicide. We were amazed at such prejudice.

Inspite of all this, we became quite friendly with all the

prisoners. After the war, six of the Italians stayed with us and

worked on the farm for years. They all lived together in a farm

cottage, did their own cooking and became happily integrated with

the villagers. Some even married local girls.

Another incident was more humorous. On a day of deep English fog

the Germans thought it a good idea to raid the power station near

us. They actually navigated quite well and came out of the fog

just near their target but too suddenly to drop the bomb. Our

army gunners who had been camped on the roof of the generator

house for many days, for just such an event, had felt that a

foggy day was a good time

+P4

to clean their gun and had it dismantled. Not a shot was fired

by either side. The plane never reappeared and everyone had a

quiet day and a long chuckle. A more sinister aspect of the war

was to wake up in the middle of the night as a German flying bomb

passed overhead. If the engine stopped, we knew it was for us.

These machines were pilotless and timed to run out of fuel over

some town and thus were not accurate, but ~hey held) quite a

psychological impact. They travelled faster than the spitfires,

so they were hard to shoot down, even in day time. However our

pilots soon learned to wait for them high above the English

channel. This gave them a chance to gain speed by diving. Thus

they could catch up and destroy them. But it was very dangerous

if they exploded, so the pilots learned to fly alongside the bomb

and give its wing a lift with their own wing tip. Since it had

no aileron control, it could not compensate for such an move and

would spiral into the sea.

Later on the V2 rockets pounded London with impunity. At a

descent speed of over 4,000 m.p.h. they exceeded the speed of

sound, so the victims never knew what hit them. Again a high

psychological impact on everyone. London was only 50 miles away

from the farm so,~e could often see the searchlights weaving the

sky looking for raiders. Tiny fireflies of light all over the

sky were anti-aircraft shells bursting.

Soon our factories were producing many heavy bombers and the

tables were turned. Eventually we were able to send fleets of

over 1,000 bombers out in one night to attack the German cities.

Many new airdromes were built, one next to our farm. Most

evenings lots of these heavy bombers took off low over our

village. The ever-present danger of engine failure on take off

with a load of bombs was accepted by the villagers as the price

to pay for freedom. One night a fully loaded bomber faltered on

take off and skidded to a halt in the middle of our bean field.

It did not explode, but onlookers said that the crew beat all

records getting out and running for cover. Another evening a

bomber hit a row of trees on take of f and crashed in pieces

between the houses. All the crew were killed and floods of

burning fuel swept into the chicken houses, but the bombs did not

explode, so the village was spared.

+P5

A happier side of the war was that the crew members of both the

British night-bombers and of the American day-bombers began to

accept our open invitation to use the farm house and garden as a

place to relax and play tennis. Our family always had

strawberries and clotted cream in the summer and my Mother

produced an endless supply of these to all the visitors. This

was a totally new experience for the Americans

and one which delighted them. It also required a lot of sugar

which a special American friend was rationed due to the war. ~ne

day lE~en~brought us a 10 pound bag of sugar taken from the

American mess when the cook was not looking. My mother ordered

him to take it back, but he maintained it was only justice in

view of all the sugar she had given the visitors on their

strawberries. When Ben added that he might get caught taking it

back, mother gave in. Ben was a special friend; though only a

corporal, he mixed naturally with the officers in our garden.

One day he turned up with two big black eyes and a rueful grin.

He had been out to a dance the night before and was cycling back

as fast as he could to beat the closing of the camp gates. The

rain, the dark and a few drinks all added up to him running

broadside into a cow. He was knocked unconscious and woke up in

hospital. He lost his stripes for being late back in camp. Ten

years after the war Ben revisited us and brought his son with

him. It was a most poignant event.

An intriguing experience for us was to hear how, outside the

military environment on our farm, all American ranks treated each

other as equals; a custom very different from the English who

kept their ranks at all times. We soon came to enjoy it and one

day Ben was playing tennis opposite a Colonel and gave him a

sizzling drive he could not reach. Ben delightedly shouted: "Get

on your bicycle Colonel!"

Often in the early mornings we would see 50 or more flying

fortresses circling in the sky as they gathered into a tight

formation before setting out on for Germany. The tight formation

gave them a big advantage over the attaCking German fighters who

had to face the combined firepower of many planes when they

attacked. Looking back now, I can of the circling armada of

plane still see in my mind the rising sun lighting up the

contrails~while the earth below was still in shadow. But it was

also a chilling reminder that we were at war and some of them

would never come back.

+P6

With both our own RAF and the American crews, from time to time,

well loved faces would be absent from our garden gatherings when

they had crashed or been taken prisoners. Their companions would

bring us the news and we would grieve deeply with them. My own

sister, Margaret was much in love with a bomber pilot, Ty Nelson,

who often visited us. One day he never came back. We were dimly

aware that there must be families in Germany who were also

grieving much over the loss of loved ones. On one occasion a

night bomber was forced to return to base because a flare it was

to drop and illuminate the target, had got stuck in the

mechanism. As the plane came in to land at its home base~ ~he

flare, which was set to go off at a low altitude, ignited and the

plane crashed.

At about this time I joined a hockey team with both male and

female members. We toured the area and often played mixed teams

at airdrome~. One day we were playing on the pitch at the end of

a runway as a damaged bomber came in to land with only one wheel.

We held our breath, spellbound as the plane touched down, lurched

over to one side and skidded a long way before coming to a halt.

It did not catch fire, and no one was hurt.

On another occasion one of our night-bombers was damaged over

Germany but managed to limp to neutral territory in north Africa.

They repaired it and flew home a week later. They arrived back

at our drome just as a high ranking officer was cracking down

hard on all crews because they often celebrated their return by

flying low over the buildings - there had been some bad

accidents. In the middle of the lecture the whole building shook

with a giant vibration as our heroes swooped low over the

building. The irate officer suspended the whole crew. The pilot

was later transferred to towing air targets for other planes to

shoot at.

About this time the Government created the 'Home Guard;' an

unpaid army composed of civilians. We were issued with uniforms

and light arms and learned how to harass a German invasion with

road-blocks and tank traps. Hitler had boasted that he would

invade England and make it into a satellite state. I well

remember Churchill announcing fiercely over the TV~ 'We will

fight on the beaches, we will fight in the streets and in the

towns house by house. We will never give in."

+P7

As good as his word, he gave the civilians the means to add their

bit to a bitter last stand in defense of their country. We used

to train on Sunday mornings and I had to make a conscious choice

between going to Methodist church and attending Home guard

practice. I chose the latter because I felt it was time for

action.

Soon I was commanding officer in charge of 25 men too old, too

decrepit or too young to serve in the army. Looking back it is

clear that we would have had little chance of stopping an invader

equipped with far greater fire-power, but we might just have been

able to delay them a little till our own army arrived. It was a

tremendous moral builder and we had lots of fun too. One night I

sent two patrols out on the same circuit, but unknown to each

other, in opposite directions so they would meet in the dark.

Fortunately, all ammunition was locked away, but they certainly

learned how to act in unforseen circumstances. Later that

evening they retaliated by hiding my motorbike.

Another day the Home Guard of our neighbouring village were

having practice grenade throwing from a trench. The first man

was told by the instructor, how to pull the pin, throw and duck.

He pulled the pin out and reached back, only to knock his hand on

the box of live grenades. -lis now live one with seven seconds

to go, fell into the, ox. "What am I going to do now?" he asked

the instructor. "Get the hell out of here!" Shouted the

instructor. They both dived out of the trench as the whole box

of grenades exploded.

Civilians were not allowed on the airdromes, nor in the planes,

but now I had a uniform and it was easy for my RAF friends to

take me on unorthorised trips in their planes. I was smuggled

aboard a Halifax bomber and we took off on a practice bombing

trip. They dropped all their smoke bombs but one, which they

left for me. I was told how to direct

then the pilot while aiming through the bomb-sight, and press the

button. I thought I had done everything just right but no one

ever saw where my bomb landed. On another occasion I flew in the

latest mosquito bomber. It was so fast on the turns that I lost

my breakfast and had to pay the ~round crew to clean up the plane

afterwards!

+P8a.

Ted's biography (insert in middle of page 8.)

World War II must have caused millions of people to think more

deeply about the meaning of life on earth and why all this chaos

mingled with much joy. What could be the nature of some eternal

plan into which all this apparent contradiction would fit? In

the relative quiet years after the war, life was pleasant on the

farm and Father gave me a lot of freedom to choose what work to

do each day during the winter time I had plenty of free time to

go for long walks and meditate about the mysteries of life. All

the new people I had met because of the war had opened up a lot

of new avenues to explore. I tried to examine my own mind and to

identify and control my own thoughts. I remember vividly how,

one day, as I was wading through the snow on the farm road and

meditating on these matters, that I suddenly realised that my own

thoughts govern what I do and think. "I am what I think!" I

could choose what to think about, and look for new meanings and

values.

Soon, however, I found that this very freedom was heavily

influenced by conditioning inherited from traditions and

experiences from the past. Every new thought had to be expressed

by words with old connections and ideas. And with them. came

all the familiar emotions which seemed to determine~ my actions.

There had to be more to it than this. In the days that followed

I gradually learned to watch my thinking and tried to break out

of the inherited pattern. Soon I discovered that when I became

detached and relaxed, new creative ideas would surface, ideas

which were not dictated by the past. This often led to a whole

different view of any problem and gave me the power to try

something quite new. This was particularly so in relation to

religion, for this seemed to wield enormous influence on mankind

and also to open constant new vistas. I used to study the Bible

at times and one day, struck by the glorious vision it gave me, I

said to myself -"This book is surely the most important thing in

existence! For the rest of my life I will read a verse from it

every morning ~r it will surely make a big change in me.

+P8

During the summer, large groups of city workers came to help on

the farm. These people, for the most part, had never worked on a

farm and for them it was a novel change from office work.

Conversation with them also brought a new dimension to my own

life. One introduced me to reading about spiritualism and other

ideas. Over the following two years I delved into many cults and

religions and collected a library of over 200 books on those

subjects. This broadened my outlook far beyond the current

Christian beliefs and no doubt drew me closer to a more universal

view of life.

In 1945 the war finally ended and everyone tried to get back to a

normal sane life again. The Home Guard was disbanded and told to

hand in all its equipment. Before complying, I determined to use

a few grenades for a useful purpose. I took them down to the

river, pulled the pins and threw them in. Masses of stunned fish

rose to the surface for me to collect. I left the little ones;

they recovered and swam away. A good day's fishing I thought to

myself. I wonder if there is a way to commercialise on the idea?

I continued farming under my father for a few more happy years.

My parents were deeply thankful that the war had not taken both

their sons, as had happened in some cases. One family had lost

all four sons. The response of the parents was to donate œ20,000

for a new bomber to the RAF. They asked only that it be named

after their family with the words: " Roberts Reply." ~yes~ ~

Now the process of my spiritual awakening brought about a big

change. Though bored with farming, I was happy at home, but all

the big world was out there becoming to me. At the age of 29,

just before harvest, I came to my parents, thanked them for all

they had done for me ~and announced that I was sailing for Canada

next week. They were amazed and my father said: "But you need to

learn farming so that you can take over when I go!" I said: "Yes,

I know you are right, but I have to go." I told them I did not

want to become a farmer and gave them my permission to sell the

farm when they wished. What would have been my thoughts if I had

been told that 25 years later I would come back with a wonderful

wife, take over the farm and raise our four children there? My

surprise would have been even greater if I were to know that I

would soon find

+P9

the answer to my quest for the meaning of life and also become a

professional photographer.

I sold my motor-bike for œ45, ($200 then) just enough to buy my

ticket to Canada on the Queen Mary. Landing in Canada,

everything about me was totally strange and exciting - the roll

and squeak of the much larger than English trains; the money, the

customs, the language and even the birds. I stayed a while in

Toronto, the capital, where I applied to the employment

department for work of any kind. I was given a cheap ticket to

Winnipeg to work on a remote farm in the far north. The owner

had only one tractor, but would not let me drive it for fear I

might break something. My assurance that my father had 15

tractors & I drove them all had not effect, but I enjoyed the

other work.

The first Sunday he invited me to go to his Pentecostal church.

Sitting in the front row, I was the main target of the fiery

preacher who, every now and then would pause and looking sternly

at me saying: "All those who want to be save, stand up!" This did

not move me in the least. Later I asked why such a small village

needed two churches and was told people wanted freedom to follow

religion their own way. This reminded me of a story I had heard

where a stranger came into a small village and found three

churches at one cross-roads. ~n asking why, he was told that

there used to be one, and it was called;: 'The Church of God.'

But they got to arguing about the Bible meanings and so, to be

civilised, and to stop the argument, one group built the second

church. They called it: "The Only Church of God.' Some time

later there was more argument and by the same process a third

church was built. It was named: 'The One and Only Church of

God.'!

As harvest finished and winter approached, I was told that we

could expect up to 40 degrees below freezing. I returned to

Winnipeg and found a job in a wholesale warehouse. When the snow

came it was 12 inches

thick and did not melt, like in England. It stayed thick and

pure white t at all winter. I had to wear ear muffs and watch,~

my nose did not get frostbitten :In the warehouse, I helped

unload big trucks of food. One day, since there were no trucks,

I sat down. The foreman said: "Don't let the owner see you doing

that." I replied: "But there are no trucks!". "Never mind, do

something." I took a brush and swept the entire

+P10

warehouse. The foreman was amazed.

At lunch time one day, I was browsing in a bookshop across the

snowpacked street. I asked the clerk if she knew of any

interesting religious groups in town. She said: "Well I used to

live in an apartment where there were Baha'is; I don' t know

anything about them except that they believe all religions are

one." She gave me a phone number and because it caught my

imagination I rang up. The person who answered was Ross Woodman.

"What is Baha'i?'' I asked. He suggested we meet for lunch next

day. There he briefly described a picture I had never thought to

hear. A new Prophet had appeared in Iran and He had declared all

religions to be really one! I said to Ross: 'Well then, you

think that Muhammad was the return of Christ?" "Yes" he said:

"but we must think rather of the return of the Holy Spirit, which

speaks through each Prophet." I wanted to know much more, but

there was no time. I told him I was looking for a better lodging

and he said that there was an empty room in his apartment

building.

That whole winter I lived in a room on the same floor as Ross and

we had many discussions. My life then was also mixed with the

strenuous one of learning to ski. Every Sunday I joined a

train-loaded with 300 skiers and spent the day in the hills 100

miles away. The train ~ ould back into a siding and provide a

warm resting place when needed and also a hot lunch. I started

to learn on the simple slopes, but later found that on a steep

slope my body would react automatically in the correct way; this

would save me wasting a lot of time learning by the slow method.

This was dangerous, of course, and it did not escape my notice

that each Sunday about 6 people with broken or sprained limbs

were brought back to the train on sledges. However, this was an

exciting experience I did not intend!to miss. Either the zest of

youth or some guardian angel must have protected me. I well

remember, one Sunday I decided to ski a slope labelled: "For

experts only." I joined the waiting line and as I came to the

head of the queue, found myself looking down what seemed to be

nearly a straight drop of 300 ft. What was worse, as I pushed

off, o~e foot caught in the snow. By a super-human effort I

forced it back onto the track just as the world began to rush

past me at an incredible speed. The guardian angel must have

been right alongside as I dropped almost like a stone. As I (we)

reached the bottom,

+P11

the sudden change from the near vertical descent to a horizontal

direction collapsed both my le~s and I shot out of the ski run.

an undignified heap travelling at high 5~ 1 much to the

astonishment of a crowd of onlookers who had come there to see

perfect skill. It\_ was clear to me that for the present, I had

identified my level of skiing ~b ~ y while.

and did no~ need to do that run again for quite a

Each Sunday evening, after returning from skiing, I would attend

a discussion in Ross's room where a lot of young people regularly

gathered to hear him talk each week about a different world

religion. Ross was the youngest professor in the university and

had a captivating way of teaching the English classes there.

Many of his students came eagerly to his firesides. For most of

them it must have been the first time they had seen a real

connecting thread between all the religions of the world. When

the course finished, he invited outside speakers from different

religious movements to tell us about their beliefs. \lone of

them seemed to make much impression on the students; and when the

Jehovah Witness spoke, the students found him prejudiced and

illogical.

I bought some Baha'i books and began to study them seriously. I

found a subtle beauty in the language in these; it attracted me

great@ly, even though there was much I could not understand.

About this time I was introduced to another Baha'i, Henry

Provisor; many years ago he had whole-heartedly accepted the

Baha'i Prophet, Baha'u'llah as the reappearance of the Holy

Spirit. This meant ~h~t he a Jew, had also accepted Christ I

was impressed. Henry was a professional photographer and was

about to start giving a 13 week, one night a week, course for

beginners. My friend, Ken Mac Laren and I eagerly enlisted.

Henry did not confine himself to the technical side but

emphasised creativity. He would say to us such things as: "Don't

copy others, look around you at the world; if you see something

interesting, you are a normal human being, take it!" Sometimes he

would take us all out in the snow at night, carrying tripods, so

that we could learn time-exposures and also see the beauty of the

lights on the snow. Many days I used to trudge alone through the

snow along the river bank and into the woods, carrying a large

+P12

camera I had bought. I submitted some snow pictures to the local

newspaper in Winnipeg. To my amazement, they bought them all and

started putting one on the editorial page each day. Henry ~-as

very pleased but surprised. He said they usually never bought

more than one picture from each photographer. Maybe everyone

else had given up taking snow pictures! I felt most of the

credit for this success was due to Henry's insistence that we all

continually look around us for new and interesting things; I was

learning a spiritual principle, as well as a photographic one.

One day Ross brought me an invitation from the local Baha'is to

attend their Feast. One of their special meetings. I was to

find it very nlci iguing. I h~li mus~ nav~ ~orl~lcier~d me

aimos[ a Baha'i, but I did not think of myself in that way. I

even said to Ross one day: "How did the Baha'is get all this

spiritual knowledge without going into spiritualism?" To which he

replied: "How did you get it without being a Baha'i?''

My regular reading of Baha'i Scripture continued. ( Unknown to

me then, it was to continue for the rest of my life.) I felt it

was leading me into a whole new way of life, and though often

obscure, I could not put it aside. One day I was sitting alone

in a cafe, drinking coffee and running over the idea that all the

Prophets of God represent a continuing theme of spiritual

unfoldment for mankind. It was very logical to me that God would

send a series of Prophets through the ages, but that alone did

not seem enough to show me that Baha'u'llah is the Voice of God

for this age. I went through all I knew once more and a~ain

found myself unable to ~o further.

For some years I had felt the world was in a state of great

change, such as was prophesied in the Bible, and hence it would

be logical for Christ to return; "but what form would that take?"

I asked myself. I went through my logic once again and suddenly

felt that I had to use some other part of myself as well as my

mind. Then I knew it was true! A ~ happiness filled me as I

walked back to the apartment. As I knocked at Ross's door and

went in, some rebellious imp made me say: "Ross, at about 3.30

this afternoon, were you praying I would become a Baha'i?" "Oh,

no Ted." he replied. "All right then" I responded. "I'm in!"

+P13

Quite suddenly it seemed, life had taken on a definite meaning.

No longer was God a vague, beneficent concept, but a reality Who

takes a continuing interest in every little thing and person. I

felt impelled to try and get a greater awareness of this

discovery. Unconsciously I began taking the steps He Himself has

laid down - reading the Writings and using His prayers daily. It

was not surprising that I found each day a new thing. As

Baha'u'llah puts it: "Let each morn be better than its eve and

each morrow richer than its Yesterday."

I knew I had found astonishing truth, but like the boy who starts

reeling in his catch and finds a giant fish on the line, I could

not know then th;~c i was following a path which offered to

mankind the power to change the world. Just one of these

bounties was going to be the end of war forever. Now, forty

years later, I am also beginning to understand the mysterious

hand which saved me from dying in a fruitless war, and decreed

instead that I live to help bring this great vision for mankind

into reality.

Soon, two more Baha'is came to live in the apartment building.

We were to become close friends. Gerda Christophersen and her

Native American Indian husband, Noel were both accomplished

artists and they helped me understand more about the artistic

side of photography. We spent many happy hours discussing the

Faith and life in general. Some evenings oel would teach me how

to dance to the Indian drums.

When spring arrived we decided to cycle together to the distant

west coast and then go south through California. We each bought

bicycles with luggage carries fore and aft, loaded our camping

equipment and took a train over the long featureless prairie to

Calgary. There we started our ride to the town of Banff, in the

Canadian mountains. We stopped to rest at a cafe housed in small

wooden shack. As I leaned my bike against the thin wall, it

sagged inwards perceptibly. I knew then that I had too much

luggage. The others found the same, and when we arrived at Banff

we all decided to camp there and rest up. In fact we got so

involved in painting and photography that we stayed there all

summer

+P14

In those days, Banff was a small, relaxed little town, surrounded

by the Rocky mountains. Its financial potential had not yet been

discovered by the business world and the masses of tourists who

would follow. It is situated in a district of great beauty.

Every day, until my money ran out, I would climb another mountain

and try to photograph nature at its best, while Gerda and Noel

were trying to put the scenes on canvas. In the evenings we

would meet at the camp, cook our flapjacks and sausages and

discuss the day over supper. The beauties of nature seemed to

symbolise the inspiration I was now receiving from the Writings

of Baha'u'llah which I was still studying daily in the quiet of

those enormous peaks all around me.

On one occasion I went climbing with two friends in the camp, who

were also nature lovers. When people have a common purpose it

inspires them to even greater heights. They carried the tent and

cooking utensils so we could stay out several days and I carried

my big camera and my own sleeping bag. We spent the first night

at Lake Louise camp ground. After erecting the tent, one of my

friends decided, to go back by train to Banff and bring more

equipment. It was not far, and he expected to get back to us

late at night, so we~\cooked our meal and lay down to sleep.

We had been warned about grizzly bears ransacking camps for bacon

or chocolate. I had a bar, so ate it, dropped the wrapping by my

An hour later sleeping bag and fell asleep. ,~ I was suddenly

brought to full awakening by the entire side of the tent suddenly

being split from top to bottom just where I had dropped the

chocolate wrapping. It was pitch dark, but I did not need my

eyes to tell me that it was a bear. I shouted at the top of my

voice, putting as much anger into it as I could. The bear must

have been even more surprised and run off, so we never saw him.

There was no alternative but to stitch up the tent and go to back

to sleep.

An hour later, a noise more sinister awoke me. Something was

actually coming in through the tent doorway. It must be the bear

again, this time becoming more bold. We would have to fight

it-off. I aimed a terrific punch at about where I thought the

bear's nose should be and received a real howl of human pain.

Our companion had just

+P15

come in by the late train and had run into the full force of our

counter attack! We finally placated him and all settled down to

sleep.

The next day we climbed a high mountain then scrambled across a

perilous hogs-back ridge to the next peak. There was no solid

foothold for 40 yards, for it was loose shale all the way, so I

knew I must not hesitate or I would slide down a thousand feet,

so I quickly followed the others across. That evening we came

down into the valley, pitched the tent and made a log fire to

cook our supper, some 'fool hens', a name given to these

partridge-like birds which had earned that name because of their

habit of standing stock still when in danger. We had knocked

over a few of them with stones.

We now returned to anff much refreshed by our contact with the

wilds. Since I wanted to set up my own photo business soon I

needed more experience, so I found a job at a local photo shop in

to~ n cl~d worked there happily for some mon~hs. a~

~e ~ hc u ~

By the end of summer, we all decided to give up our plan to cycle

to California. Noel and Gerda put their bikes on the train and

went back to Calgary. I took the train west, to Vancouver where

I spent two weeks exploring the idea of logging, a well paid j3b,

but finally took the train back east to Toronto. I needed a

steady job in my chosen profession and there I thought, was the

best place to find it. I was not mistaken, for soon I was

working at a large portrait studio, mixing chemical ,, sweeping

the floor, drying prints and learning the whole business from the

bottom up. It was a very happy time, m~de all the more so

because the Baha'i center was only a block away, enabling me to

make a lot of new friends.

At one of the first 19 Day Feasts, the chairman-l announced: "The

Assembly feels we n~ed to give new believers the chance to learn

public speaking, so tonight we are going to have a five minute

talk by Ted Cardell". I had never given a talk of any kind

before and to gain some help I reached for a copy of the Hidden

Words and read at random: "Ye shall be hindered from loving Me

and souls shall be perturbed as they make mention of Me. For

minds cannot grasp Me nor hearts contain Me." (H ~.66) I raised

my eyes to the ceiling and said to the heavenly concourse: "Gee,

that was all I needed!" 1~.

+P16

But maybe t~ne helplessness which that engendered was just right

for that moment for, inspite of my stumblings, the talk was well

received.

Perhaps the most important event for me in those days was the

regular Saturday evening firesides at the large home of Laura and

Victor Davis. These two wonderful people spared no effort to

make a hospitable atmosphere for the large numbers of people who

regularly came to hear a variety of experienced Baha'i speakers.

Refreshments were also there in plenty and many fruitful

discussion took place. Ross had been transferred to a new job in

Toronto, and was a regular speaker. I began to understand some

of the deeper aspects of the Faith.

After about 6 months, the slow season started at the portrait

studio. The thought occurred to me that my parents would be

grateful for a visit. I asked the owner if he could manage

without me while I made the tr ~ e readily agreed and offered to

keep my position open until I came back. I then wrote my parents

and said I was free for a while if they would like me to visit.

They were delighted and sent me the money for a return ticket.

Unknown to me then, I would not return to Canada for 30 years,

and then in very different circumstances. After a few weeks at

home on the farm I discovered there was a shortage of

photographers in London; I found a job as staff photographer in

Fleet Street, the center of the British newspaper industry. The

firm made photo journalistic stories for magazines all over

Europe. Every day they sent me out to do a story of human

interest. I would bring back the photos and the information to

the editor who wrote it up. It was thrilling to see my pictures

come back to the office in all kinds of magazines. Even big

newspapers and top quality magazines in England bought some.

I was now attending all kinds of Baha'i meetings and one day

found that I could help build a new Assembly by living in

Brighton, some

50 miles from London. A fast train got me to my job in less than

an ~ r.~c~ i~ hour and a half~, Several other pioneers came to

Brighton also, among them was: Evelyn Baxter, Claire Gung, and

Zeah Asgarzadeh. After two years of strenuous effort by all, we

had enough new Baha'is to make the Assembly. It was a great

victory.

+P17

For two years I had regularly sent to Shoghi Effendi, in Haifa,

photos of many Baha'i activities in England and he always thanked

me through his secretary. His short loving post-scripts added to

these letters had drawn me close to him. I believe this happened

to many other people who had written to him. One day, I wrote

him offering to make a teaching trip through several countries of

Europe on my motorbike. He wrote back thanking me but asked me

to wait a bit and help with the homefront ~ChTrt~e British Isles

was at that time struggling to complete a Five year Plan which he

had given them. ~his was our first plan. It called for an

increase of our Assemblies from five to nineteen. After two

years we had built none, and in desperation our National

Spiritual Assembly wrote asking his advice and prayers. He

replied, suggesting we establish one assembly in Scotland, one in

W ~ n~l ~nP in Tr ~ n~l ~n ~ t him know when we had done it.

T his had been achieved and a bit more when I arrived from Canada

but they were struggling with many other goals~with only a year

to go. An almost impossible task, it would seem. I think it was

the suggestion of the Guardian that we invite John Robarts (later

appointed a Hand of the Ca~ce) to come and do a teaching trip

over the whole country. From memory, that is what I was told on

my return to England.

John was chairman of the Canadian National Spiritual Assembly,

and I had met hi:-n often in Toronto at the regular firesides in

his home. In the winter evenings I would frequently make my way

through the snow, in fur-lined boots, to his house. I could not

go into his lounge with the boots, so left them at the door and

went in to lay barefooted under the piano listening to the talks.

The friends were all far too polite to comment on this til/ years

later when I found I had become known as the barefooted seeker

who lay under the piano and sometimes even went to sleep during

the talk.

To return to the main story, John had been using prayer on a

regular basis and even getting up regularly at mid-night to pray.

Unusual results had followed. He had convinced many other people

to use this method. They in turn had found results and came back

to tell him. When he spoke at meetings in England, he gave

endless accounts

+P18

of such answers to prayer. In fact, he had so many wonderful

stories that at each town he would enthuse about them

irresistibly for over 5 hours with only a lunch break. The

friends would listen enraptured, and many must have made a giant

leap forward in their attitude to prayer.

As the last few months of the Five Year Plan neared there were

still gaps in a lot of goal assemblies. This was not through

lack of interested enquirers, but they needed something

indefinable in order to see the truth. John now added something

more (so I was told by those who heard him.) He would talk

directly about Baha'u'llah, the proofs of his message and the

appropriateness of His Message for the modern world. The

meetings, I was told, would often end up with John holding cards

aloft and calling upon those who believed, to come forward and

sign. Some Baha'is were, I think, a bit shocked at such a direct

call, but it seemed to be just what was needed. Many signed and

the goals were\won! Looking back 40 years it is quite difficult

to recall all the wonderful details of those days, but the main

features were unforgettable.

~he next historic event was that the Guardian gave the triumphant

British community a new "Two Year Plan." Some of its main

feature~ were, consolidation and opening up the continent of

Africa to the Faith. .\~lanv People must have been astonished at

Africa being on the plan, for only about 3 of us had ever been

there, and conditions ~hoto were almost totally unknown. But

what an adventure for those w ho would dare. And what joy it

would bring to the heart of the beloved Guardian. If the

Guardian felt we could do it, we would accept!

We were now to do something we had never done before, start

opening up a vast continent. We knew that only with Divine

assistance could we succeed. We also had so.ne very real

resources because years ago the Guardian had sent some very

mature Persian Baha'is to England. Hasan Balyuzi was one of

these, and for many years he chaired our National Assembly with

great wisdom and loving care. There was also Dr Hakim, who had

lived in Haifa when Abdu'l Baha was alive. 1 ~.

+P19

Let me digress here to recount some interesting anecdotes I heard

from these wonderful souls themselves. Hassan told a group of us

how a certain over-enthusiastic Baha'i had been told by the

National Assembly not to do a certain thing, but he did it

anyway, was subsequently reprimanded by the Assembly and

apologised. A few months were to pass and he did it again, was

once more reprimanded and apologised. This happened again and

the Assembly was consulting whether to take his voting rights

away. Hassan said "But you can't do that; he has already

apologised!" He was right. They could not, for repentance is the

way to get reinstatement of one's lost voting rights.

Dr Hakim knew Abdu'l Baha well and felt that posterity should

have as many good photographs of him as possible. He took many

pictures of him with his Box Brownie camera, but became

embarrassed, so one day he hid in a bush near to where the Master

would pass. As the Master drew level with the bush, he stopped

and said loudly. "Hakim, come out!" Sheepishly, Hakim presented

himself before the Master, who said "Hakim, wherever I go, you

put me in your little box!"

We also had Canon George Townshend in the community. I remember

attending his class on Islam at Summer School, a most unusual

subject for a canon of the church to talk on! His manner was

humble but sure. He knew his subject well but did not wish to

impose his views. This rare combination of qualities produced a

rapt attention in the class. His faith was so certain, it was

magnetic. He was highly erudite, as is testified by the fact

that Shoghi Effendi sent him the finished script of "God Passes

By" to review before publication. The Guardian also asked him to

suggest a title for it, he suggested "God Passes By." George

Townshend was later appointed a Hand.

To return to the beginning of the Africa campaign, a matter very

dear to the beloved Guardian's heart; many British Baha'is, upon

hearing of the plan, immediately started looking for jobs in

Africa by searching the newspapers where Government jobs were

advertised. I heard that a film featuring Humphrey Bogart was

going to be shot in Kenya, and so I made an application for

working as an extra, but was not accepted. Claire Gung, then

living in Brighton, answered an advertisment for a matron at a

boys school, was accepted & went to Africa. The Guardian later

named her - "The Mother~of Africa." 20.

+P20

It was very clear to all African pioneers that we would be

sacrificing most of the things in life which we had become

accustomed to. These included even treasured events like Baha'i

Summer Schools, conventions and all normal Baha'i activities.

Little did we know that Africa, especially Nairobi was to become

the scene of much Baha'i activity, of a type never seen before.

The T~oYear F'1an gi~-en to the British called for the

establishing ol three

groups only, in either east or west Africa. This was a lar~.

task by Shoghi Effendi for such a small community, but one

carefully worked out to enable us all to develop higher capacity

for future tasks. Soon pioneers were established in Uganda and

Tanganika, many of them Persians. In Uganda this included Musa

Banani, his wife daughter Violette and his son-in-law, Ali

Nakhjavani. Kenya had some years ago received i~s first Baha'i,

Marguerite Preston, who had gone out there to marry a farmer. I

~as keen to go there, so the Africa committee asked the Guardian

if he would include it in his Plan. He gladly accepted, so I

intensified my efforts to find a job there. I sent Marguerite a

parcel of mt photographic work to show to possible employers but

it was stolen, fortunately after she had showed it to some

possible employers. Nothing grew out of all these efforts, so

the Africa committee decided to buy me a return ticket so that I

could look for work on the ~pot. I had about œ200 cash of my

own, and when that ran out, I was to return to England.

It was clear that life would not be easy for me in that far off

country and it was not reassuring when my plane, after taxing out

for take-off caught fire in one of its engines. The captain

calmly came back to the passengers and announced: "I am not

satisfied with the performance of the plane, we must go back to

the terminal. A masterly understatement, I thought, as I watched

the flaming engine through the window. We all unloaded and

waited for 2 hours, then were called to board again on the same

plane, and took off.

t~

1~C'~, We landed~at Rome where I had planned to spend two days

with the very small Baha'i community there. It was for me a

great bounty. Not only was I :able to meet this lovely

community, but afterwards I was shown round the ancient Roman

ruins by Ugo Giachery. I took many photographs, one with Ugo's

feet astride the ruts in the street leading to the coliseum.

Roman chariots had made those ruts thousands of years before my

visit.

+P21

The next leg of the flight took me to Cairo where the Baha'is had

a nice national center building. Here I was honoured to meet

with 1~ct~) I the National Spiritual Assembly of Egypt. They

were delighted I was going to Kenya and promised their prayers.

I was given a guide to take me sight-seeing and especially to the

pyramids which were one short tram ride to the edge of the city.

I gazed in awe at the sphinx and the incredible pyramids while

Mustapha gave me pieces of their ~,oto ~ history. The sphinx has

no nose because Napoleon smashed it off with a cannon ball!

Travelling back into the city our bus ran into a large mob going

in the opposite direction and shouting. I hung out of the window

taking it all in, only to be hauled back into the bus by

usta;~na. ~-ndt are ~ney shou~in~-?" I asked " T hey ~- an~

dependance from Britain and they are shouting "Down with the

English, and you had better get you head down and keep it

there!~'

The plane took off for Khartoum the next day. When we landed, it

was so hot I could hardly believe it, but there was a warm

welcome from the Baha'is who were delighted to have an English

visiting Baha'i. We had a most unusual dinner of goat meat and

spices, followed by much discussion. That night we all slept out

in the courtyard. It was the first time I had seen lizards

running up the walls.

The next day I flew to Nairobi and stepped out of the BOAC plane

into a whole new world. On the long ride to the hotel we passed

through crowds of cheerful African people and saw their simple

wattle and corrugated iron houses massed on all sides, while

street hawkers were selling all kinds of things in a strange

language. But when we came to the city center I found it much

like a town in England.

It even had two super luxury cinemas which I found later, often

got the new releases before England did. The climate was much

better than in England, for although we were near the equator,

yet the altitude was nearly a mile high. This brought the

temperature down to comfortable levels most of the time. One

very strange thing discovered later was, that all the shops and

business were run by Asians, while the menial work was left to

the African people. At the top of the ladder were the Europeans

who had all the nice house~ with big gardens. I was to find that

these divisions also carried quite different incomes.

+P22

The next two weeks were very busy, for I was visiting every

photographic firm and~ne~spz ~er in the city; but nowhere was

there a sign of a job. It was only a small economy and there was

only one English speaking newspaper of note, and it had turned me

down because it could not afford a full time photographer. My

money was now gone and I was despondent; the only other kind of

work I was trained for was farming, and I definitely did not want

to do that. I could not even do manual work, for there were

plenty of Africans to do that at a salary I could not live on. I

went to my hotel room, lay down and weighed up the situation once

more. It still looked hopeless, so I prayed for guidance. Soon

I realised I was not alone; I represented the Baha'is of the

whole world and the British ones were rny s-;stainers. Besides,

Baha'u'llah Himself had given the instructions to take the

Message to every country, and I had come here to do my best. I

fell into a dreamless but happy sleep.

The next morning a thought came to me to go back to the "East

African Standard" newspaper. I went to the editor, Mr Kinear; he

was a kind hearted and practical man and knew his job well, but

somehow it had escaped him that in 3 months time, the newly

married Princess Elizabeth, heir to the British throne and Prince

Philip were coming to spend a few weeks in Kenya. The country

had built a small house in the hills as a gift to them and they

were coming out to live there for a while. Suddenly my future

editor knew he needed a full time photographer, me.

I was told by Mr Kinear that the following week the whole country

was holding a county show. Would I like to go as his

photographer, on trial. If the photographs were satisfactory, I

would be given the staff job. With a silent prayer for this last

minute intervention, I thanked the heavenly concourse.

The Agricultural show was the main social event for the large

farming p/~e~ 3 community. I photographed everything there,

especially the horse jumping. The film was developed and printed

and I went to see them in the editors office. Many of the

pictures were good, but the most P~cio I

+P23

important ones, the horse jumping, were all blurred. Yet all the

others were good. This told me that the high speed shutter must

be faulty. I had the camera with me and tried it on high speed.

It made an unusual noise, which we both heard. The Editor was

sympathetic and because the rest of the photographs were good, he

appointed me staff photographer at œ80 a month, a sum double what

I had been getting in London. I u-as walking on air. He asked

if I was short of cash and offered an advance of œ50, also

authority to build a darkroom, in an empty office and buy the

equipment for it. Assignments would come each day from the

news-editor.. The most important of all was the Arrival of

Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip for a two week stay in

Kenya.

Most of the big London newspapers were sending their own

photographers out to Nairobi to cover the arrival of the royal

couple at Nairobi airport. However, Nairobi only had one radio

station capable of transmitting photographs to London by a

special machine. The first photograph to arrive there would get

world importance and have the widest sales. Naturally our editor

was keen that we should win both of them.

We found out that the London photographers had all made

arrangements with the sophisticated RAF photo laboratory to do

rapid development of their pictures. We did not stand much

chance against such professionals but on discussing the problem

with a friend, he said: "Do you want to try a wild idea?" "What

is it?" I said. "Well, I once heard someone claim that you can

develop film in a quarter of the time by using paper developing

chemicals on the film, instead of conventional film developer.

The quality is not good, and you must take it out of the

chemicals exactly on time or the film will be ruined. Also you

do not need to wash and dry the negative. Just rinse it off and

print it wet by removing the glass film holder from the

enlarger." After several experiments, we found the right timing

and method. We could now gain about thirty minutes over normal

methods. But surely the opposition would surely als~"øs~ch

tricks. Only time would tell.

The editor nnw told me to advertise for a laboratory assistant to

do all the printing. Soon, a smiling Indian named Rodriguez was

working in the darkroom and turning out consistently good work,

Still more thing~ needed to be arranged. One of -the reporters

had a motorbike which could ~ through the massed traffic expected

at the Royal arrival. We laid careful plans for him to take the

film from me as ~ho~o

+P24

as soon as the royal arrival had been photographed and transport

it quickly to Rodriguez for developing. He would then rush it to

the radio station. When the day came, everything worked

perfectly. Our picture arrived first in London.- Everyone was

delighted.

Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip visited many places to

witness life in the British colony of Kenya, always with a large

group of photographers in attendance. On many occasions I was

close enough to Her Majesty touch her if I wished, so the photos

were good. One Sunday morning they were to attend a very small

church "up country" from Nairobi, ~ here there were many large

European farms. Unknown to me, all photographers had been asked

to give the royal couple privacy on this one occasion. Hence, I

was the only one to turn up. Whilst standing waiting with the

stewards of the church I was introduced to a well dressed African

named Mwangi. A steward explained that this man had built the

whole church himself. Labourers had carried all the supplies,

but he had personally laid every brick. He was to be presented

to Her Majesty. Impressed, and also sensing a story, I

photographed both him and the church. Noticing that the latter

was packed full with white farmers and their families, I remarked

to a steward: "I suppose there is a seat of honour reserved for

Mwangi?" "Oh no! "Was the reply: "We don't allow "niggers" in

our church!" "But he built the church!" I remonstrated. He

shrugged his shoulders. I recorded the Queens arrival and her

introduction to Mwangi, then her entering the church. Hurrying

back to Nairobi with my "scoop" I told the story to the

news-editor. But he declined to print it. It was too

inflammatory for this time of celebration.

I was not happy and took the story to the Christian Council of

Kenya, an inter-church organisation They were upset and advised

me to first talk with the Bishop of Mombassa. I phoned him and

explained, but he was angry and told me that if I valued my job I

would drop the whole matter. This, of course made me more angry.

The following day Musa Banani and his family arrived in Nairobi

to take a plane to Haifa for pilgrimage. The beloved Guardian

had recently reopened this honour after many years of closure due

to covenant breaker activity~ and this was the first group to go

from our area. I visited them

at the Avenue hotel where they were staying. Over supper, I

related to them all the above events and asked for advice from Mr

Banani. As Ali, his son-in -law translated ~c ~

+P25

my request, I wondered how such an unjust situation should be

handled, and expected him to suggest a brilliant solution. He

did exactly that with the brief words: "You did not come to

Africa to save the Christian church. I suggest you forget it. I

did!"

Part of the royal tour was for the Princess and Prince to follow

a trail into the jungle and like any other tourist, spend the

night in a giant treehouse over looking a watering hole where all

kind of animals came to drink under the protection of night.

There were plenty of white hunters with guns present to protect

them; also many trees had steps nailed onto them for getting out

of the way if attacked. That night, as they were watching the

animals under floodlights (which the animals ignored for some

reason), a message arrived from England: King George V, her

father, had died suddenly.~ Princess Elizabeth was now Queen of

England.

Everyone was shocked at the unexpected passing of the King, but

were somewhat awestruck to realise that Kenya was now

entertaining the Queen herself. As she made her way back to

Nairobi airport and England, the photographers with one accord

agreed not to take any photographs of her. This was out of

consideration for her personal loss.

The sudden succession to the throne caused considerable interest

all over the British Empire. Rightly assessing this, our editor

now produced two large booklets of all our pictures of her taken

in Kenya. One was published in London and one in Kenya. They

were sold widely all over the Empire, for people wanted to know

all about their new Queen.

With the departure of the Queen, life returned to normal in

Kenya. I began making friends with the Africans I met in the

city and also on the trips I made up country, 300 miles to the

north and west where life was much more simple. The newspaper

had loaned me the money to buy a car because I often had to

travel quickly to news-making events. On one occasion I was sent

by air to Dar-es-Salam (Arabic for "the abode of peace,"), to

Mombassa and to the island of Zanzibar. The purpose was to get a

good stock of photographs for future use~ A government agent, who

was my local guide and translator.

+P26

I even arranged for me to take a photograph of the Sultan of

Zanzibar with his wife. We met on the palace steps at 10 a.m.

Looking at them from close up, I gasped inwardly with surprise.

The Sultana, his wife, had taken this occasion to be photographed

without a veil; no doubt a praiseworthy effort for women's

rights. But she had re- placed the veil with a thick layer of

white powder, except for the eyes. She looked like a hollow-eyed

ghost standing smilingly beside the richly apparelled Sultan. I

took the picture and, bowing in respect

for their distinguished persons, stepped back before leaving. A

few years later

The Sultan lost his throne as an African government took over the

island.

~c 2 Zanzibar was a Moslem country, as was much of the coastal

part ~-ho~3 ø~ i~en~a. r early the Arab dhows would sail south

to Mombassa for their loads of wood which Arabia needed for many

purposes. The pk~ 4 radio station broadcast in Arabic and a

Moslem mulla gave talks on pk~ J their faith. At the radio

station I was introduced to the chief Mulla. ~'h~ø ~ He was

waiting to give his daily live broadcast. Over a cup of tea, we

conversed through an interpreter. Since he was reputed to be

very influential and popular, I opened a religious discussion

with him and introduced the Baha'i Faith. It seemed too good an

opportunity to miss. He listened attentively while I gave a

brief account. When I invited questions he smilingly declined.

After a while I said "You cannot possibly be agreeing with

everything I have said!" He courteously replied: "No, but I am

waiting for a later occasion when we have more time and one of us

can convert the other." I then realised I had made little

progress and was glad when he excused himself to make his usual

daily broadcast. This was my first and only attempt to discuss

religion with a Mullah. Later the beloved Guardian told the

pioneers to avoid discussions with Moslem authorities because

their ideas were so fixed and it might even arouse opposition.

Back in Nairobi, I found life very interesting and wrote

regularly to

my parents in England about my experiences. They were not

Baha'is they were at that time, but. happy I had found a

spiritually motivated path of service. However, they were

worried about their only son being in such a strange land. In

those days, Africa was looked upon by Europeans as the land of

wild animals, dangerous things and mystery. While growing up in

England, I had seen a horror film entitled "West ~f 7~n7ih~r" I

remembered this now and realised ruefully, that here

+P27

I was now living in Nairobi, west of Zanzibar! I dismissed the

thought with a chuckle. Everything looked fine, I had a good job

in a partly modern city in an interesting country. Little did I

know that soon I was to become involved in some very real

horrors, the photographing of the Mau Mau revolution from a~

front line position.

The dramatic change from English life where a black face was

almost never encountered, to the African scene was greatly

stimulating. So many things were different: it is hard to know

where to start describing them. Being young, 31, and single, I

had few worries about life and was constantly runr1ing in~o

totally new situations. First, the sky wa~ always sunny with

fluffy white clouds, winter and summer. Nairobi was only 100

miles south of the equator and it should have been unbearable,

but located at 5000 feet above sea-level, it was very pleasant.

The early white settlers had chosen the site well. Next, I

became aware that white faces were definitely a minority,

especially outside the city. The Africans lived in poverty, yet

seemed happy in general, though of course they were gradually

awakening to the luxuries of the Europeans. Occasionally I ran

into a situation of anger against the whites, but mostly there

was a happy ~:oo~ raLio11~ witli ~he African~ {loin~ all the

menial jobs in the city, and u~ually IeLIViI)g their wives and

families in the reservation to lo~ l; after ~heir SI1LII11b;~

I1eSe were small plots of land which grew slllaller ~ucll tilne a

u~.u~ died alld his ~hamba was divided b~tweell his ~a,~

ullil~ll~e~. It WLI; I-~aIIY an explosive situation because

there were very large e~tal~s own~(l by whites, many of whom

never came near them. An obvious one was owned by Lord Delamere,

about 20 miles outside t~lail-ol)i and ils 20,()0() acl-es

extended literally over the horizon, with nothing on it but a few

grazing cattle and a volcano name Longonot. It extended ri~ht

dowll the rift valley for about 50 miles.

rented a be(l-sitter in the home of a nice old Jewish lady, about

a mile from the city center. I was advised not to go out at

night because People had been attacked and robbed. So I always

used my nice new Ford Consul which the newspaper had financed for

me. The main street of the city was line(l wi~h rows of

jacaranda trees, aiR~AIei~ lovely blue flowers

~lorifi~d,~-.v~1-ytllillg. There were many other brilliant

flowers lilie boul gallvilliLl buslles lining streets and

gardens, lending a relaxed

+P28

and happy atmosphere to the European are~s. In the large African

suburbs it was quite different, for people lived in mud and tin

huts with few facilities. Yet city life was always attracting

people in from the reserves.

Kenya only has one port, Mombasa. Since it is at sea level,

everything from there is very tropical, and so the early settlers

went inland~ where the altitude made life more comfortable; but

this necessitated building a railroad 350 miles long. They

brought in large numbers of Indians from India to do this; when

it was completed, most of these Asians stayed on and

became shop keepers and the like. In fact they completely took

over and cities 211 ~he shops in thP ~o vns~ hen 1 arrived there

were three distinct cultures Whites, Asians and Africans. Their

salaries declined dramaticalLy with each step. Outside the

towns, the only road which was tarmac led from Nairobi to Nakuru,

100 miles to the north where most of the European farms were

located. All the other roads were dirt, but well kept.

Nevertheless it was quite an adventure to travel up into the

northern part of the country, and people often had their

windscreens shattered by a stone shot up by an approaching car.

Although about half of Kenya is desert, yet the rest is very

fertile and almost tropical. This meant that the most common

vegetation is the banana plant, which grows everywhere. Large

areas are suitable for all kinds of wild game and hence it is a

favorite tourist center for people from abroad. In fact only 15

miles outside Nairobi is a game park with nearly every kind of

animal. And there are no fences. Good dirt roads allow tourists

cars to travel all over this park Frequent notices tell tourists

to stay in their cars and keep the windows up. Apparently

animals have no fear of cars and do not even associate them with

life, so it is a haven for photographers. Ho~ever~ one road goes

ri~ht across the I.said to my friends: "I hope the lions can read

En~li~"

In the course of ~my job I mixed with some very friendly staff

members and got drawn into some social life. I even joined the

local mens hockey team. Only the fit can survive that for, at

5,000 ft the air is too thin to sustain heavy exercise for long.

When t~ah first arrived at the time of a critical match it was a

real challenge to nlav the whole game without a drink of water .

olLO ~

+P28a

Perhaps this is the time to note that, apart from Egypt and Sudan

where the Master Himself and some early Baha'is had spread the

Faith, there existed in all of Africa but three known Baha'i; two

lived in South Africa, Agnes Carey and Reg Turvey, and Marguerite

Preston in Kenya. The first two were elderly and Marguerite, as

mentioned earlier, had died in an air crash. Now there were two

groups of new pioneers, one in Kampala Uganda, and one in

Dar-es-Salam in Tanganyika. It was not surprising then that

being alone in Kenya, I felt close to Baha'u'llah.

This was a very real and precious experience for me but as the

coming Christmas 1952 approached, I realised that I had no real

human friends nearer than Kampala, 440 miles away; and I had only

met one of these. Although I was now a three year Baha'i I fully

committed to celebrating Baha'i Holy days instead of the

Christian ones, ~ Q~. were obviously the ones to be marked

socially. Yet some impulse led me to write to the Banani family

in Kampala and invite myself over there for the Xmas holiday

period. I did not even know whether I would be an imposition on

them. The warmth of their reply galvanised me into action. I

put the idea to my editor and he agreed, asking me only to take

some stock pictures for the newspaper wherever I went.

If I had known the rigours of such a journey on dirt roads, with

few towns, washed out roads and unknown conditions, doubtless I

would have spent Xmas in Nairobi. Most fortunately, I did not,

for the love and kindness I received from those wonderful people

in Kampala were to leave a permanent joy in my life. But let me

return to the journey it~elf.

n my brand new shining Ford Consul car, loaded with all the

provisions could think of, and all my photographic equipment, I

set off to Nakuru, 100 miles away. This was the only part of the

trip done on tarmac. Twenty miles outside Nairobi it wound down

the 2,000 ft escarpment into the rift valley, signs of this

gigantic geological fault stretch north thousands of miles, even

into Egypt. My journey would take about 12 hours, I calculated,

and could be done in one day with luck.

No serious difficulty appeared until nightfall, when a giant of a

thunder storm seemed to deposit its entire contents on my road.

Even the windscreen wipers and headlights could not give me a

clear view, but I soon r~alis~ that a few other vehicals were

also trying to navigate a dirt 28b.

+P28b

road which had been washed away. I need hardly say - African

roads do not have the foundations we are used to in Europe.

To go back would have been as impossible as going forward, so I

chose the latter. My new car bumped and groaned as we moved from

one hard rocky place to another. Finally we came to a large

expanse of water of unknown depth. Logic suggested I stop and

take off the fan belt which is usually to blame for lifting water

up from deep water and spraying it over the spark plugs -

bringing one to a dead halt in the middle of the hazard; but with

torrents of rain descending, to open the hood would have drenched

the engine anyway - so I cautiously urged the car on, declining

the third alternative of trying to get to the side of the road

where I could be sure there was enough mud to stall any car.

Soon the other side of the water appeared and the car scrambled

out aq~ After this episode, nothing ahead seemed to daunt me

and soon the town of Kisumu was reached. It was on the border of

Uganda and also on the shores of Lake Kisumu itself. Here I

found a hotel for the night.

Next day the skies were a clear innocent blue with hardly a cloud

to be seen. By midday I had arrived at the home of the Banani

family in Kampala and was given a very warm welcome and a large

meal. For the next few days there was a lot of lively discussion

as I recounted my recent experiences on the road and told them

about my life in Nairobi. There was also much talk about the

teaching work which was going on steadily and each day some

African friends came in to hear about the Faith.

Others living there included Mrs Banani and Violette, the

Banani's daughter. Violette was married to Ali Nakhjavani, who

was doing full time travel teaching, deputised by Mr Banani.

(who could not speak either English or any African language.)

There was also Ali and Violette's very young baby, Bahiyyih.

This reminds me of an amusing incident. Since there was much

poverty in Kampala, there was also considerable crime. The night

before my arrival, Bahiyyih had been robbed of all her

bed-clothes with out being awakened. The bed, being under the

open but barred window, had been an easy target and the thief had

slowly pulled all the blankets & sheets through it. Baby

Bahiyyih was discovered next morning, still sleeping peacefully

on a bare mattress.

+P28c

Claire Gung, as mentioned earlier, had been the first Baha'i

pioneer to arrive in Africa. The Banani family were next. To my

knowledge, no Baha'i had any experience at all in teaching the

Faith to the dear African people, so we all had to start from

scratch. For the Banani's this meant prayer, more prayer and yet

more prayer. The Guardian said later to a pilgrim, that Musa

Banani's prayers were the cause of all the highly successful

teaching done in Africa. Aziz Yazdi once told me that Musa

Banani had always been a fierce business man in Tehran, but when

the Guardian had appealed for volunteers to open up the African

continent, Musa Banani became a changed man and a spiritual

giant. Musa Banani, his devoted wife, their daughter Violet her

husband, Ali Nakhjavani dropped everything and set our for

Africa. Arriving in Kampala, they bought a house and settled

down. Ali obtained a job teaching in a local school, but after

six months . Mr Banani appealed to him to become his permanent

deputy. Ali confided in me that it was a strange feeling to give

up his career and accepted this full time service in the Faith; a

service which was to be of indefinite length. How were we to

know then, that here was a future member of the first Universal

House of Justice, which would be elected in 1963.

Ali started making long teaching trips "up-country" and

contacting friends of the African people they knew in Kampala.

We will never know the full details, I suspect, but there must

have been some remarkable experiences and there were certainly

very great results. Ali was so devoted to awakening the spirit

of the people that he accepted all difficulties with a humorous

serenity. For example, when he developed an allergy against

curry, an African dish served to special visitors, he continued

to eat it and take the tablets later to cure the allergy. He

became much loved by the people and it was not surprising that

these efforts of Ali and the help of later pioneers awakened the

hearts of the people. There started at first a trickle and then

a flood of declarations. The Guardian was delighted and

announced the victory to the Baha'i world.

But let us return to Christmas 1952. At the time of my arrival

in Kampala, the pioneers and Africans had reach nine in number.

Two of these were away teaching, but it was my privilege to

photograph seven of the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Kampala

and send the picture to the beloved Guardian in Haifa. He hung

it over his bed at Bahji, so dear was this victory to his heart.

+P29

When it was time for me to return to Nairobi, I asked if there

was a different route than the one which had been so perilous

coming to Kampala, Ali told me of a detour further north and I

set off full of hope and followed, of course, by Banani prayers

for my deliverance from the floods. This road seemed much

better, but soon I came to a about 100 yards which was thinly

flooded. I charged it at a good speed, but soon became stuck.

While wondering what to do next, I became aware that there were

people nearby. lt was obvious that they would be glad to give me

a push through the mud for a small consideration. With signs I

asked for this and offered them ten shillings. They were all in

high spirits and I secured a fine photo through my windscreen,

showing them leaning all over the hood discussing the offer. It

was agreed, and soon the car was sliding through the mud to the

tune of melodious chanting. In fact the mud was so thick that I

did not even have to steer, so I got out, locked the door as we

went along and stayed back to take a photo of my new car sliding

through the mud. These photographs are now cherished additions

to my album. When we r~ached dry ground I thanked them heartily

and added a bonus payment. The rest of the journey was

uneventful, thanks to daylight and a bright sun. When I went to

the newspaper office next morning and told some of the reporters

about this incident, they laughed heartily. Apparently it was a

custom for the people living in the reservation to dam up a

stream and divert it down a road, in order to catch motorists and

earn a little cash. I could not help but chuckle at their simple

logic.

A few weeks later I was joined by a most welcome pioneer, Aziz

Yazdi. When the Guardian had announced the Africa Campaign,

Aziz, then a businessman living in Tehran, had set up a small

office to collect information about Africa and encourage people

to pioneer there. He had become so interested in such a prospect

that he pioneered to Africa himself; leaving his wife and four

young children in the new house they had saved up for over many

years. He arrived in Nairobi, filled with devotion and eagerness

to start teaching; but this would have to wait. First he must

set up an import, export business to earn a living. Meanwhile,

in order to earn a little cash, he answered an advertisement for

actors to work on a movie which was soon to be made. They

dressed him up as a fierce Arab and took photos; but he did not

get the job.

Aziz family would join him when he had secured work of some kind.

Meanwhile we rented a house together and set out to find

interested Africans

+P29a

with whom we could discuss the higher meaning of life.

Making friends was easy, for they responded gladly when we

offered them a lift on the road. As we took them to their

destination, we quickly became friends and were able to show how

the Message of Baha'u'llah could solve all problems. We then

went back and picked up others. Soon we were able to invite

several to our house. We found that language was no real problem

for many spoke English. They were interested in the Faith,

especially as our lack of racial prejudice was new to them; but

even after two months we were no nearer finding deep interest.

Finally, Aziz suggested we get up for dawn prayer every morning

and implore help from

Baha'u'llah. We chose a little summer-house in the public park

as our meeting place and called it our Baha'i temple, Dawn was at

5.30 a.m. and after two weeks, my work began to suffer through

lack of sleep, so we prayed at home instead.

One day another Baha'i arrived in Nairobi. Richard St. Barbe

Baker, who with two friends, had just driven across the Sahara

desert from west to east, planting dates stones in the oasis they

came across. He had just parted with his two friends, and I

found him by accident, parked on the main street. Of course,

here lies a tale, for no normal person would do such a thing

without a definite purpose. St.Barbe had one. Forty years

before the present widespread concern over the environment, he

was saving whole forests of trees all round the world. He had

founded a "Men of the trees organisation" and single handedly had

interviewed governors, presidents and the like to suggest saving

their precious trees. Being very distinguished looking and

powerfully motivated from hidden sources, he would look these

world leaders in the eye from a position of equality and they

listened carefully to his philosophy. He had been instrumental

in saving a redwood forest near San Francisco, and other forests

in Africa and Europe. He had spoken with the president of-~htt ~

on the merit of planting trees and it was done. He had spoken

earnestly with the President of Israel himself and persuaded him

to order the planting of massive amounts of trees for the good of

the nation. He had visited Kenya many years before my own

arrival there and suggested to the Governor how ~reat a deed it

would be if he encouraged the Kikuyu tribe to plant gum trees in

their reservation. This very month he had been invited by Chief

Njonjo to attend a ceremony in his honour, for those trees were

now 50 feet high and were greatly treasured by the Kikuy ~

+P30

Before I had left England for Africa, I had met him by chance in

Trafalgar Square, London. He and his friends had parked their

Landrover next to a handcart whose owner was selling dates in the

street. Through his amplifier Baker was encouraging the crowds

to buy dates for their lunch, eat them and put the stones in his

barrels, so that he could plant them in the Sahara. They had

gone to with a will and filled his barrels with date-stones, much

to the delight of the astonished salesman. ~ow he had fullfilled

his promise to the London lunch crowd and planted the date seeds

in oasis after oasis, all the way across the desert. I hardly

need to say that Baker was not contented with saving or raising

forests in many countries. His real goal was to energise many

governments, and especially those on the edge of the Sahara, to

reclaim the Sahara desert itself.

This vision may have been before its time, but he was determined

mankind should get the idea. He had done research and found

there was evidence of underground rivers there. He had spoken

with Prime Ministers, Heads of States, and he had cajoaled,

pleaded and written books about it; now he had demonstrated its

feasibility. If an old man of 68 could diagonally cross that

desert and plant ~eeds, so could others, if thev wis.led.

It fell on me to be the news photographer who recorded his

arrival in Nairobi and brought him to the news-editor. For a

day, he was front page news; then he was off again on another

project. He did not slacken his efforts to improve the planet

until he died in his early ninetie~. The beloved Guardian had

greatly encouraged him and had become the first life member of

"The Men of the Trees" an international organisation which

St.Barbe Baker had founded many years before.

Here I should also mention Marguerite Preston who had moved to

Kenya some years earlier when marrying a Kenya farmer. They now

had two fine boys about 5 and 7 years of age. Marguerite was a

Baha'i of some experience but had found it difficult to teach the

Faith in Kenya while living "Up-country" and with a non-Baha'i

husband. However; she was very eager to help us in whatever way

possible. I remember having lunch with her as she was preparing

to visit her relatives in England. Her m ain worry was that she

was f Iying the next day and had not made a will directing that

her two boys be raised with a good knowledge

+P31

of the Faith, if she should die on the flight. Next day, the

radio gave the news of her plane flying into a mountain in

Sicily, on its way to England. There were no survivors. We

grieved with her family in their sore loss. I told them of

Marguerite's last wish, expressed to me verbally and asked if

they would like us to help the children know about the Faith, but

they wished to raise them in their church. We could do nothing.

Life went on as usual, but one day our milkman, who delivered on

a bicycle with a large carrier, ran into a tree with an awful

crash. We rushed outside to help. He was uharmed but surrounded

by smashed bottles and spilt milk. Figuring that he would have

to pay for it, we each gave him some money and he went off

singing cheerfully. We looked at each other in surprise. "Did

he do it deliberately?" Aziz asked me. We never found out.

Meanwhile, a few weeks later, the Banani family returned from

their pilgrimage. They again passed through Nairobi on their way

back to Kampala and I was greatly priviledgedto listen to their

experiences and drink in the divine fragrances of those holy

places. I had sent a message by the Bananis to Ruhiyyih Khanum,

saying that I was saving up to go on pilgrimage. They now gave

me her reply: "You have enough money, come now!" At first I was

dumbfounded, for my bank account was about empty. Also I had

only been in my new job a few months; how could I ask for annual

leave? Yet, emboldened by Ruhiyyih Khanum's reply, I felt

motivated to give it a try. After all, the editor was very

pleased with my work, and I did have a pay check due.

Sure enough, he was glad to give me a reward for good work well

done. I had 9 days for pilgrimage and sent a cable asking the

Guardian for permission. He gladly accepted. I began trying to

understand the spiritual significance of a pilgrimage.

Additionally it occured to me that no professional photographer

had, to my knowledge, yet recorded those holy places. All the

Baha'i world had were the amateur photos taken by Effie Baker; I

had seen these printed in the "Dawnbreakers". But how could I do

justice to such an historic project in only nine days, and also

make a pilgrimage? 32.

+P32

It seemed to me that the only solution was to ask the Guardian

for an extension of 10 days. Before asking his permission I went

down to the travel office and booked the extended reservation to

make sure of it. I thought this could be changed if the

extension was not granted. Then I wrote to the Guardian himself,

asking for the extension. I was hard for me to believe that my

editor would grant a further ten days, but when I explained my

problem he willingly agreed. A few days later came the

Guardian's reply: "Do not advise more than 9 days."

I went back to the travel office and tried, unsuccessfully, to

change the booking back to the original 9 days. I could only

hope that it would come before the day of take-of f, but it did

not. What was far worse, I now received a further cable from

Haifa: "Postpone pilgrimage - Shoghi." Five days later, on April

13th 1952 came yet another: "Obstacle removed welcome - Shoghi.

The reason for recording all this detail will be seen later, in

the light of what happened in Haifa. All these cable originals

are still among my treasured possessions. The cause of the

temporary postponement, I learned later, had been some serious

trouble with the covenant breakers who lived in the house next to

the Guardian.

When the day of my departure arrived, I presented myself at

Nairobi airport with three cameras, more equipment and a large

suitcase containing tinned food and a fresh African paw- paw; for

I had heard there were food shortages in Haifa. Knowing that I

was far over weight, I carried in my pocket œ50 in cash to pay

for it. As my baggage was weighed, I prepared to pay, but the

sympathetic lady in charge smilingly ignore the weighing machine

and waved me through. I gasped in relief, but then realise that

I would be breaking the law by taking ~50 cash out of the

country. I reached into my bag and, taking out a plain envelop,

pushed the surplus notes into it, addressed it to myself, put a

stamp on it and, leaning over the barrier, mailed it in a

providential mail box. Another miracle! When I finally returned

to Nairobi, I found that money waitin~ for me at mv address!

Landing at Lydia airport in Israel, I was passing through customs

+P33

wondering if I had any forbidden things. The official asked me

for the purpose of my visit: "Baha'i pilgrimage." I replied."

Without inspection, he passed me through with the cheery word:

"Please give my regards to Shoghi Effendi!" Even then, when there

had been few Baha'i pilgrims, all government officers had learned

to trust and honour Baha'is. This was due, no doubt, to the

exemplary lives of both Abdu'l Baha and Shoghi Effendi and their

frequently expressed coricern in word and deed for the state of

Israel. We read how Abdu' I Baha was knighted for his real

contributions to alleviate the sufferings of the people when they

were in desperate need. Shoghi Effendi continued this

relationship by such acts as sending greetings to the Prime

Minister on the State anniversaries and by sending a check to

help alleviate suffering when disasters occured.

Following the instructions of the Bananis, I took a bus to Tel

Aviv, ten miles away, and spent the night at a hotel. Enquiring

in the morning about transport to Haifa, 100 miles to the north,

it appeared that the cheapest way was a sharing taxi called a

"sheroot." After a cramped two hour journey with many locals, we

rounded the spur of Mt. Carmel and caught the first glimpse of

the Bab's Shrine. At that time there was no golden dome~ but I

had the feeling that great spiritual bounty awaited here for

those who could accept it. Though pictures of this holy mountain

and its sacred Shrine were not often seen in those days, yet the

regular letters from Shoghi Effendi to believers and Assemblies

around the world had built in us a deep awareness of its

spiritual significance for mankind. I was to find that life

there was redolent with the loving kindness which we had read

about in accounts of the days when Abdu' I Baha had lived there.

I was dropped off at number 10 Harparsim Street at a building

then known as the "Western Pilgrim House," later to become the

first seat of the Universal House of Justice. Ugo Giachery, whom

I had last met in Rome on my way to Kenya, hosted my initial tour

of the building and explained the custom that each evening, all

the friends gathered in the main lounge awaiting the arrival of

Shoghi Effendi from his house across the road.

+P34

That same evening, there were about ten of us waiting to refresh

our eyes with the sight of his blessed face, the "Sign of God" on

earth. Most of the members of the International [Baha'i] Council

were present (a body which the Guardian had appointed the

previous year to preceed the election of the Universal House of

Justice) also Ethyl and Jessie Revel who had been doing

secretarial work here for some years, and Ugo Giachery ~-ho was

supervising the erection of the crown and dome on the Bab's

Shrine in accordance with Sutherland Maxwell's designs. Mr

Maxwell, the Guardian's father-in-law, had been invited by him to

spend the remaining years of his life living in the Guardian's

home, and to help him with the design and construction of the

Shrine. The stone cutters in the Icalian quarries were, it was

said, astonished at the perfection of ~Ir Maxwell's designs, and

it was unnecessary to make working drawings beforecutting the

stones.

At 7 p.m. a maid-servant came up the circular stairs from below

and announced: "Shoghi Effendi is waiting for you." Naturally, I

hung back to ~all these esteemed people to go down the stairs

first, OUt ~or some r~aCGn they were all waiting for me. "The

beloved Guardian is waiting to hear about Africa, Ted!" Said Ugo.

In some confusion, I headed for the stairs and descended. At the

bottom stood a@@ Shoghi Effendi: "Welcome, Welcome" he said: "We

have been expecting you for a long time." He embraced me and it

seemed that 'Abdu'l-Baha Himself had spoken. "Marhaba!

Marhaba!" he would have said. The Guardian was short in stature,

but an air of calm, loving and strong purpose emanated from him.

He was wearing a black taj and long black jacket. I remember

noting that there was a small threadbare place on it just where

the coat would brush against the desk through many long hours of

writing to friends everywere and also in translating the holy

Texts. We went into the dining room and he seated me just across

the table from himself, with Ruhiyyih Khanum at his right. The

others took their chairs without saying anything, but taking in

every word. The very great respect and their instant obedience

to his every request, spoke volumes to this very new Baha'i. I

was instantly impelled to conform my own attitude to their own.

The Guardian asked me about the journey, Nairobi, my job and how

in Kenya was the Faith progressing? "So far there are no

declarations Shoghi

+P35

Effendi." I said. "But we are persevering in prayer and in

finding ways to talk with the African people. It is a beautiful

country and they are all friendly." He smiled and said: "You will

soon have an Assembly in ~airobi." His words were full of

assurance. Silently, I wondered ho~v it would come about. He

was not put off by the lack of visible results. I felt that,

since his prayers must have been regularly surrounding our every

effort, matters were falling into place with certainty, the

chosen ones were being steadily consumated; and so it turned out.

As dinner proceeded, I remained silent, content to wait for the

Guardian to sp~ak. He did not eat for some time, but questioned

me further about Africa, to which he was giving high priority at

that time. He carefully considered my replies, then said: "It is

very important to get the Faith established in Africa before

materialism and politics get a hold on the masses." I said: "It

has already got a hold on the people in the city" He replied:

"Yes, I understand, but you will find the people in the villages

much more receptive to the Faith." The way he discussed matters

gave me increased confidence because it was spoken as between

equals and I felt no pressure from him, just consultation on what

was to be accomplished. This kind of caring, helpful attitude

typified all his words during the time I was at his table.

Later, he talked about the British believers, how they were

ingenious in rerouting many Iranians to goal areas as they

arrived in our country. He mentioned also that the British

probably had the highest percentage in the Baha i ~iorlcl, for

believers pioneering on the home front to fill the goals, each

year. From memory, it was about 48%. He mentioned what a big

loss it had been to us when the Hofman's had been forced to

reduce their Baha'i activities to devote more time to their own

publishing business, I had been present at convention in England

last year when, just before election, David Hofman had spoken to

the delegates in words such as these:- "Dear friends, I am not

allowed to try to infl~uence your vote, but I feel I must read to

you from a letter we have just received from Shoghi Effendi.

Quote: "I feel you should consider withdrawing from the

considerable services you have been giving to the

aclrninistration, in order to allow you to devote much more 36.

+P36

time to your business, until it is stronger. David and Marion

Hofman had both been on the National Spiritual Assembly of

England for some years and this took much of their time from the

business which was in difficulties. In this example, the common

sense appproach of Shoghi Effendi is seen balancing worldly

duties with service to the Faith. The Hofmans were not elected

to the National Assembly that year and for several vears

thereafter. Their business improved. '~ihat we did not know

therl was that in 1963 L)avid Hofman would be one of nine to i~e

elected to the first Universal house of Justice.

Baha'i temples were next discussed and the Guardian listed the

possible si,es for the possible sites for the next one: Cairo,

Haifa, Tehran or Kampala were all mentioned. As we now know,

Kampala was built soon after that time. It became a magnet and

an inspiration for over 20,000 Baha'is who would soon come into

the Faith in Uganda alone! When that tremendous growth took

place, we heard that India had enrolled over 100,000 believers.

Some cre said: "They are far ahead of us!" "Not so!" exclaimed

Hasan Sabri. "We only took five years to do this and India took

100 years to get their 100,000!" We read that the Faith ùva s

taken to India during the lifetime of Baha'u'llah.

To return to Haifa in 1952, Shoghi Effendi explained that

pilgrimage is not for the purpose of seeing ~he Gtlardian, nor

for obtaining information about the Faith, but to experience the

spirit Ol the holy Shrines and the holy places associated with

the Revelation. Here ~ should mention that all pilgrirns

weregently told not to take notes at the Guardian's dinner table.

He wanted their full attention to be centered on the spiritual

experience of the pilgrimage.

However, each night after supper, when the Guardian had returned

to his home across the road, we would gather in the lounge to

compare notes and write down what we agreed had been said. I

filled a notebook and am now trying to relate those memories as

clearly as possible. Of course these pilgrim notes have no

authority, but the Guardian encouraged al~ pilgrims to share

their experiences and notes, as long as it was made clear

thatAYare just personal impressions and nothing more. Re-reading

them now 38 years, later I can still clearly visualise those

surroundings and the Guardian as he talked with all of us in that

blessed Spot.

+P37

I asked if the Africans had ever had a Prophet. He said: "Yes,

but not in Africa." "Could it have been the Sabean Prophet?"

"Possibly"

"In each Revelation there is one mystery which is not explained;

in Christianity it is the virgin birth, and in the Baha'i

revelation it is the station of the Master.

He spoke of the 9 stages of the evolution of the Faith. 1.)

Ignored. 2.) Persecution. 3.) Recognition. "In most countries

we are still in 1 & 2, but the Egyptian court had already

declared Baha'i a seperate religion from Islam. This is a

victory!" Regarding the other six steps, the Guardian asked us

not to talk about them to the public, lest it aroused unnecessary

opposition. Stage 2 is not likely to be completed in this

century, but all nine would be achieved before the Golden Age.

"America will be Pur~ed in the crucible of war to prepare her for

her mission.

One evening Ruhiyyih Kahnum asked the Guardian why no women would

serve on the Universal House of J ustice. Perhaps she w as

asking this for my sake, for she must have been fully conversant

with the Guardian's thoughts on this matter. The Guardian's

reply contained some things which I had heard before, such as,

"it is a difference of function, not of women's rights, and the w

isdom of it w ill appear in the future." He went on: "It is not

women's function to run armies or be a Prophet. The greatest

work in the Cause today is teaching, and in this the women will

excel more than men; they are more courageous, bolder and have

more talent in this than men. Men and women are complimentary in

their functions."

"God's way is not men's way. What price glory? The w hite race

in Africa learned great lessons - to be free from prejudice,

establish equal opportunity and give precedence to minorities."

The East has given inspiration to the West and the East must now

learn practical lessons from the West." 38.

+P38

One evening, after Shoghi Effendi had left us and returned to his

house, we all sat consulting together in the upper lounge and

writing down what we could remember. The discussion turned to a

court case involving the Guardian and the Covenant-breakers.

It concerned the demolitlon of a small house close to the Shrine

at Bahji, owned partly by the Covenant Breakers and partly by the

Guardian. It was of great importance to Shoghii Effendi to

beautify a large areas around the most Holy Shrine. This

inferior building stood in the way. No one knew what the court

would decide. Ugo Giachery commented: "How much Shoghi Effendi

was suffering tonight." From this remark, it was clear to me that

although Shoghi Effendi was the "Sign of God on earth" with all

the ?rotection and guidance that implied, yet continual

watchfulness and a great deal of mental and ethical effort, as

well as much prayer, was required of him at all times.

The unrelenting opposition by the Covenant-breakers to every

project the Guardian embarked upon in the Holy Land must have

taken a great toll of his strength and constantly delayed

progress. It is illuminating to look back on the steps by which

he steadily eliminated them from the Baha'i properties and

reduced them to impotence, even while working on many other

projects for the Faith. This can especially be seen in the

stages by which he removed them from Bahji and its surroundings.

It was my bounty to hear the details from others in these late

night discussions.

It may come as a shock to many Baha'is to hear that Bahji

Mansion, where Baha'u'llah passed away in 1892, continued to be

occupied by the Covenant-breakers for 40 years, until 1932. Even

after that time they were still occupying the outbuildings until

1957, the year of Shoghi Effendi's passing. To return to 1927,

they had allowed the Mansion to fall into a terrible state of

delapidation. They asked Shoghi Effendi to repair the roof

for them. He replied that he would not start until they evacuat-

the rP.Dairs ed the building, which they did. Before~ were

finished, he persuaded the British High Commisioner (Israel was

then

+P39

a British Protectorate) to declare the Mansion a Holy Place.

This excluded it from all private occupation permanently. The

Covenant-breakers were thus excluded from from reoccupying it

ever again. ~hen we look back on the exemplary life of Abdu'l

Baha, we can see that,~ had won the admiration of the

authorities. He was eventually kni~hted by theBritish Government

for services to the people and the British army. This was

obviously of great help to Shoghi Effendi in his communication

with all the authorities in Palestine.

Shoghi Effendi now started refurnishing the Mansion after the

style of Baha'u'llah's time and added display and archival

material. He had a s;mpie beu pu~ in one cf the bedroGms for

himself, so that he could stay over night on this task of great

love. When I eventually sent him a photograph of the first

Assembly in East Africa, the one elected in Kampala, he put it

over his he~i in that r ~ m.

Another evening Shoghi Effendi spoke long and in detail about the

attempts made by the Covenant-breakers to cause trouble for the

Master when he was buying the land surrounding the Shrine of the

Bab. When he had erected the first simple building, they

reported to the Sultan of Turkey that it was a fortress for

starting a revolutionary movement, but Abdu'l Baha was able to

prove their accusations false. After the 1950 war, when many

thousands of Arabs fled and the State of Israel was found on ~

G2.~ ed, we were able to acquire several properties Awhich had

belonged to the Covenant-Breakers. In the more recent times,

Shoghi Effendi pointed out that Hitler was an enemy of the

Baha'is and if he had captured all of north Africa, he would have

gone into Egypt and Palestine and he would have exterminated the

Baha'is as had happened in Germany and Russia. But he was

preordained to fail.

The Mufti of Jerusalem would also have been a big danger to the

Baha'is in these circumstances.

Another topic touched on by the Guardain was prayer. He said

very clearly that it is not enough to pray about a problem; one

needs also to think about it and then to act.

+P40

The next evening started with a severe test for me. As we

entered the dining room, I was directed to the far end of the

table and two newly arrived pilgrims took my place opposite

Shoghi Effendi. I had become so magnetised by his presence that

it had never occurred to me such a thing could happen. As the

Guardian talked to the new arrivals, I began remonstrating with

myself for being unhappy; the Guardian was still there, but I

found myself perforce, relegated to listening only, as did the

members of the International Council. My mind had wandered from

the Guardian's words. As at a great distance I heard him say:

"Tomorrow a delegation from the Baha'i International Council will

present a letter of felicitation to the Governor ù-f Haif2 ~ n

the occasion of the 15th annual celebration of the founding of

the State of Israel. I want you to go with the delegation." I

looked up, and the whole table were looking at me, as was the

Guardian. "Yes Shoghi Effendi" I managed to say. "It will help

them to realise how widespread the Faith is, because you are from

Africa." I was uplifted and joyful to be given a task like this,

but nothing could replace being able to look across the t~hle

into his w arm, steady eyes. Ugc Giachery ~lason Remey and I

performed this mission the next day; we were received with much

warmth.

Jessie Revel reported that locusts were devastating trees in Tel

Aviv, only 100 miles away. "What shall we do if they start

destroying our shrine gardens? "We shall replant them" Was the

Guardian's reply. He then turned to me and said: "Your next job

is helping to found the institutions of the Cause in Kenya." Such

was his caring nature, that he had sensed my mood and reached out

to me.

Two days later, the Guardian's Buick, with his chauffer, Carlo

driving, took Ruhiyyih Khanum, Nellie French (another new

pilgrim) and myself 20 miles around the bay to Acca to visit

the "Most great prison" where the Blessed Beauty and many of His

followers and family had spent over two years under the most

terrible conditions. As we entered this massive, bleak building,

we tried to imagine the arrival of the Holy family. We ascended

by an open stairs to the third floor and entered a large area

surrounded

+P41

by a number of cells. To our left, the first cell had a brass

plate above the door stating "Baha' i Holy Place". It was

explained to us that the Israeli Government had made a law that

all the Holy places of every religion in the country should

become the property of that religion and be marked in this way.

Through the iron bars we could see a cell with three windows and

a raise portion of the floor where Baha'u'llah usually laid out

His mat to sleep. Bars covered the windows also. We entered and

sat on the rush mats to pray and visualise those incredible

times, less than 100 years ago. Afterwards we saw the skylight l

igh up in the ceiling of the central hall where the Purest Branch

had fallen to his death. We recalled his request to His father

that his life be a sacrifice for the world and especially that

pilgrims should be allowed to visit the Blessed Beauty.

Leaving the prison we went along the road behind the maCcive sea

battlements for about 200 yards to the House Aboud. For seven

years the Holy family had lived here, after the prison. Yet the

whole city was a prison for them and Baha'u'llah Himself was

confined to a few rooms. His own bedroom has a v erandah on

three sides, and we were told that pacing this narrow path,

looking out to sea, was His only permitted exercise. On the end

of a long divan rested a taj which He had worn. It ~I as

reverently covered by a delicate embroidered cloth. Again we and

His Presence prayed and tried to visualise those daysA. Another

room had been Abdu'l Baha's and in this room Baha'u'llah had

written much of the Aqdas, as well as letters to the Kings of

Europe.

Then, lea~-ing the city, our car took us two miles into the

country

+P42

north-east of Acca. The whole valley was ~ery fertile and

luxurio~, Our dirt road led us to an imposing stone archway, the

entrance ~o~ to an oasis. ',~ e entered and crossed a wooden

bridge over a stream and were greeted by a gardener. He had set

out a table very old and chairs under the shade of someAmulberry

trees to welcome us. An ornamental garden seat had been built

under these trees on one side of thi~ small retreat. On this

seat, Bah'u'llah had often rested and talked to His followers in

the later years of His life. The gardener, who was also the

custodian and lived nearbv, brought a horse and invited us to

watch while he harnesd it to a beam, centered on some ancient

machinery atop a tvell As the horse circled the well, water was

drawn up by a chain of cups and spilled into a pipe which carried

it to a fountain in the center of the garden. The peaceful clank

of the harness, the songs of birds and the splash of the fountain

as it rose from a pedistal produced an air of magic in that

fragrant spot. The water overflowed and ran down a channel past

Baha'u'llah's seat at the back of the garden and into what used

to be another streamA~ This stream bed was some years ago now

dried up because~the British army had blocked it to reduced the

incldence of mosquitoeC and malaria. We saw in imagination the

Blessed Beauty sitting talking with His followers and wondered

what He had said to them there. Ruhiyyih Khanum had brought a

picnic lunch which she now laid out. We sat eating and listening

to the fountain and the birds, each occul~ied with his own

thoughts.

Afterwards we were shown a small dwelling where Baha'u'llah had

sometimes slept. Some of His blankets and personal possessions

+P43

had been arranged in this bedroom, no doubt by the beloved

Guardian or Ruhiyyih Khanum. Baha'u'llah had named this small

island "The Ridvan Garden" in memory of that other Ridvan garden

in Baghdad. After this, we went further north a few miles to

visit the house of Masra'ih where Baha'u'llah had lived for two

years after leaving the prison. There were orchards and fields

surrounding the with blossoms house and the air was fragrantA.

We came upon the ruins of an ancient aqueduct which Baha'u'llah

had been instrumental in getting repaired. Now with mains water

everywhere, it was once more silent. We entered the mansion and

ascended the stone stairs which had known the feet of the Blessed

~eauty. His bedroom looked out over the beautiful scenery. It ~

as, we read; a deep joy to Him, aftPr 9 years in Acca, without

the sight of a blade of grass. varlous At dinner that evening

the Guardian talked about,l forms of Govern ment. He said that

the British triple stage elections were nearest to Baha'i and is

a go~ernmenr ù!f the peor~ h~,~ the best of the people. America

should learn this method. As sem blies In the future, Local A in

large towns may have double stage elections. Back to Africa,

Shoghi Effendi praised the teaching ~ ork of Ali Nakhjavani. "I

am very proud of what they have done so far." Ali and his brother

were raised in Haifa by the Guardian when their parents had died.

one of my fellow pilgrims

+P44

Shoghi Effendi said that Nellie French, one of my fellow

pilgrims, had, in a way, done the did same work as Martha Root

(who did it at an earlier time, when there were few

institutions.) The blessings of the Master had enabled her to

give the Message far and wide, especially in Italy. The thought

occurs to me that, at this present time, years later, manv

isolated Baha'is are still doing this in places far from the

cities.

In those days, all pilgrims were the guests of Shoghi Efendi.

Western pilgrims lived in the house across the street from the

Master's house and the Oriental pilgrims lived at the house near

the Shrine of the Bab, much higher up the mountain. It was the

beloved Guardian's cust~m to have dinner each night with the

Western pilgrims, so that they could talk informally with him.

In the afternoons, he would walk round the Shrine gardens with

the Oriental pilgrims and talk as they went. Of course, each

group felt it had a priceless privilege in this arrangement and

felt sorry for the other group, so everyone was happy! The next

day, being the 9th of Ridvan, we were~invited to the Oriental

pilgrim house where the Guardian gave a talk on the meaning of

this Holy Day. He spoke entirely in Persian, because I was the

only Westerner present. However, much to my embarassment, he

stopped in the middle and gave me a shortened account of what he

had been saying. I felt touched by his consideration. Looking

back, it was clear that he was making sure a minority did not

feel left out. Afterwards, we all went to the Shrine of the

E~ab. Surprisingly

+P45

the ladies entered a door on the north side of the shrine and the

men into a door on the south side with the Guardian.

I should explain, there are 9 rooms inside the shrine of the Bab,

'-71~ all about equal in size and arranged in three rows. The

center room of the middle group is the holy spot where the Bab's

remain are enshrined; each side there is aroom for the pilgrims

who approach a low step and offer their prayers, the men on one

side and the ladies on the other. Each can see into the center

chamber fror.1 opposites sides, through a wide mesh curtain

Later, Ruhiyyih Khanum explained to us that in future, it would

be changed, but now it was too much of a break with tradition for

Oriental men and ladies to pray together. She herself, of

courae, properly I ed t ,e ladies. 3ut to return to the 9th Day

of Ridvan; Shoghi Effenai stood just inside the door as the men

entered, and anointed them with attar of roses as each stepped

in. The first two Persians tried to kiss his feet, but he raise

them up and moved them along. When we were all gathered, Shoghi

Fffendi came to the threshold and recited the prayer of

Visitatior. in Persian; It hangs, framed, on the wall just to

one side. He then th~ knealt at the threshold for a few moments

ard backed out to the door, keeping his face to thethreshold.

Weall followed his example. The Guardian led us ne)~t into the

front section of the buiding where lies our beloved Master.

Similar devotions were followed there.

Both center rooms were covered with masses of flowers, arranged

with great care. All present must have been much uplifted in

spirit as we spent some time walking round the beautiful gardens

afterwards.

+P46

A few days earlier, Shoghi Effendi had requested me to take

photographs of the inside of the Shrine of the Bab, now that it

was specially decorated for Ridvan. He said he would advise me

when this should be done.

While we were waiting in the Pilgrim House one evening for the

Guardian to arrive for dinner, Ruhiyyih Khanum suddenly appeared

alone and said "Ted, the Guardian says that now is the time to

photograph the Shrine of the Bab. Dr Hakim will come with you

and the Guardian's car is waiting to take you up to the Shrine.

If you hurry, you will be back in time for at least the last h~lf

nf the Guardian's dinner.

Shoghi Effendi had told me I was to feel free to take the

photographs in any manner I wished. He had then remarked, "Have

you noticed that with colour photos, if you slightly underexpose,

th~ ~olors will be more brilliant?" It was the early days of

color photography and I was amazed that he was so knowiedgable

about it.- He continued, "If you place the camera centrally, the

picture will be perfectly symetrical, as you look through to the

inner shrine." This I took careful note of and made sure of

taking before anything else. ~.owever I also took one slightly

off center, for I felt this ,ave more depth. With three cameras,

I took many pictures and we finally arrived back at the Pilgrim

~iouse about 11 p.m. The Guardian had long finished his dinner

and gone back to his home across the street. Ruhiyyih Khanum was

waiting for us with a plate of sandwiches and must have noticed

my exhaustion and disappointment at missing dinner with the

Guardian. We said good-night and everyone retired.

Next morning, Ruhiyyih Khanum came across to the house after

breakfast and said, "Ted, the Guardian says that, if you feel it

wise, you may cable your editor in Nairobi to ask for a ten day

extension of pilgrimage." As mentioned earlier, due to my own

fumbling and miscalculations I had plagued my editor with a

number of different schedules and felt niost embarrased, about

it. Now I was considering upsetting my editor's affairs even

more, and by a simple cable which would not allow me to explain

or apologise. "It is too late Ruhiyyih Khanum, I said

+P47

"I dare not take the risk of upsetting my editor." "Well, think

about it Ted, and whatever you decide is alright with the

Guardian He feels there will be a lot to photograph, more than

you can do in nine days." After much thought, I discussed the

matter with Ugo Giachery and decided to send a cable. Anything

was worth an extra ten days. Together we walked down to the main

post office in town, a half hour's walk; and since it was then

nearly midnight, we went round to the rear entrance and found a

way in, sent off the cable and came back to the pilgrim house.

We said goodnight an went to our rooms. As I was getting into

bed I suddenly remembered I had put the wrong return date on the

cahle. There was no option but to get dressed, go down town and

send off a corrected cable. Once more I was getting into bed and

realised that again I had made a mistake. I dressed and returned

to the post office. And yes, a third time I saw a mistake and

had to send off a third cable. Now my editor would surely lose

his patience, but curiously I did not in the least worry about

it. Sufficient that the Guardian had given me a chance to spend

ten more days in the Holy Land, taking photographs for him. It

did not occur to me that there was very much more in this matter

than I was aware of, but subsequent events amply repaid all my

worries. For two years I felt too ashamed to tell anyone about

it, but one day Aziz and I were chatting about the Will of God

and many things, so I recounted my bungling experience. "Hmm!"

he remarked "maybe God was trying to tell you something?"~ "What

could that be?" I enquired. "Perhaps that if an event is the

Will of God, then whatever mistakes we make, it is still going to

happen." "That is curious", I said "The last thing the Guardian

said to me as I departed was, "We are very glad you were able to

stay the extra ten days, it was evidently the Wirl of God." As

you will have guessed, two days after sending off the three

conflicting cables I received a reply "Extension permitted."

+P48

On another occasion, the Guardian discussed the rescue of the

Bab's body which was thrown outside the moat of the city after

the execution. There is a tradition that the remains of the Imam

would be preserved. The Mullas thought that wild dogs would

devour the remains and thus prove to the public that the Bab was

not the promised Imam. However, some of the believers bribed the

soldiers to turn their backs while the Holy remains were spirited

away and hidden in a silk factory. The son of this factory owner

had just arrived on pilgrimage and the Guardian welcom;ed him

warmlv.

The Guardian spoke of the great significance of this Day, saying,

"~dam and all the other 7i c?he~s were preparing the world for

Bah'u'llah Who w-ould cast His shaddow over the next 500,000

centuries. Six thousand years of preparation to be followed by

500 centuries of fullfillment. There will be other

Manifestations Who will repeal the Aqdas (if They wish) and there

will even be minor Prophets after the Thousand or more years. We

must distinguish between the Baha'i cycle and the Spiritual cycle

of 5u(~,0( -J c~nturles. " "~o ' he repiied in answer tO a

questicn, "The Guardians are not minor Prophets."

There had been 200 pioneers from Persian to Arabia. No other

such efflux had occured except to Africa.

One morning Ruhiyyih Khanum arrived as Ugo and I were having

breakfast in the pilgrim house. The Guardian wanted photographs

taken of many of the holy relics in the archives room. These

were at present kept in the back section of the Shrine. She

would come with me and bring them out into the sun to be

photographed. So, on Thursday, May 1st 1952, the Guardian's car

took us up to the Shrine where began the difficult ask of finding

a suitable backgound for laying out these precious relics. Here,

in the brilliant sunshine we photographed many of these personal

possessions of the Holy Ones - the Bab's copy of the Koran and

His own Bayan and ring. As I was arranging these to photograph

Ruhiyyih Khanumcame out of the Shrine saying: "Hold out your arms

Ted." I did so, and she laid the Bab's green robe upon them. I

stood speechless. [Include story of "The Robe".]

Later we photographed the personal effects of Baha'u'llah, His

seals, His pens and pen case, His rings and taj.

+P49

The following day, I was sent to Bahji in the Guardian's car.

Here Salah, the custodian, took charge of me. He was an Arab who

had great devotion for the Guardian. To him, looking after the

holiest place on earth was a most great responsibility, one to

which he devot~d body and soul without restraint. He lived very

simply. He showed me into Abdu'l Baha's tea-room, as it is

known. Here, while the sparrows flew in and out of the door, -

busily building their nests in the big rafters, we ate from a

picnic basket which Ruhiyyih Khanum had thoughtfully provided.

He told me stories of the early believers and of the history of

Bahji. As we talked, the chirping of the sparrows gave the place

an air of peace and upliftment. After a prayer, he led me to the

Shrine an~ vpening cne (loor, snowed me the threshold of the room

where Bah'u'llfih's earthly remains rest. I stood as one in a

trance, hardly daring to believe that I had at last arrived at

this most sacred spot. What does one do in such circumstances?

Sala must have been a bit shocked that I just stood there; he

said in a quiet voice "Ted we generally kneel and pray here. His

remark was meant with the best intentions, but it struck me as an

intrusion between Bah'u'llah and me. I knelt at the raised

threshold and prayed a while and meditated some more and then

looked around me. I was in a kind of conservatory garden with

tall plants filling the center, and in one corner the door to a

roorn where the holy casket lay under a large embossed brass

plate in the floor. Beautiful flower filled vases stood at each

corner and on the threshold were sprinkled rose petals, some of

which I guiltily swept into my prayer book, not realising that

they had been put there for just this purpose. ~S ~n o.

Ornamental lamps glowed in many places, giving a warm feeling.

They were antiques, made of pewter. The heat of the plain of

Acca had made- them droop under their own weight. Another

prayer, and we both backed out, to reclaim shoes and cameras

outside the door.

Next we visited the mansion itself. The ground floor was all

service areas, and we mounted to the main living part, up a lon~

fliaht of stone stairs. It did not escape me that my feet

+P50

were literally following in the footsteps of the Blessed Beauty.

Upstairs, I entered a large central hall with various rooms

opening from it. They were partly furnished according to those

custom of those times and partly used to display Baha'i books and

documents from many countries.

A curtain covered the door of a large corner room. Sala pulled

it aside and motioned me in. Leaving shoes ~ camera outside, I

entered Baha'u'llah's bedroom. His bed and slippers lay on a

lovely Persian carpet which covered the whole floor. His taj,

covered by lace, rested on one end of a long divan which graced

the far wall; mute but powerful reminders of the holy Presence

Who had lived here for twelve years. I imagined Professor Brown

coming in as I had done and hearing a mild, dignified voice sa ~

ing "''raise te tc God th-~; .hou h\_st at~..ined.

The next day Salah and I walked the two miles to Acca and as we

wandered through its ancient byways he told me that all the

streets of Acca haci touched the feet of Baha'u'llah or the

Master. I tried to imagine Them also sitting in a cafe in one of

those streets, drinking coffee and talking with the people tnere.

The Master, Salah told me, had made many secret visits of charity

in Acca, usually while the city slept.

I had asked Ruhiyyih Khanum, when I arrived, how was it possible

for me to make a pilgrimage and also take photographs? TheA did

not seem compatible. She sympathised and suggested that one idea

would be to leave the cameras in my bedroom on alternate days.

Sometimes I did this, for every day was a king of days; how could

I be concerned with photography.? And how could I not have a

camera with me at all times to record those holy places and the

inspiring momentC spent there? Now, as we followed the winding

alleys carrying my large camera bag between us, I was able to get

many pictures which will in future enable those who will never

manage to make the pilgrimage, at least to glean some of the

atmosphere of that holy city and its august Prisoner.

Back at Bahji for one more night and day, I was forced once again

to unite pilgrimage and photography. The beloved Guardian had

asked me to photograph all of the inside of the shrine of

Baha'u'llah. Sala left me quite alone during this and the deep

silence and fragrant atmosphere

+P51

kept me as in a spell while I went about considering composition

and exposures. That night, as on the two previous nights, I

slept in the mansion of Bahji. My room was the nearest one to

the Shrine and for a long time I paced the verandah which circles

three sides of the Mansion. It was a clear night and I could see

Mt.Carmel and the floodlit shrine of the Bab across the bay,

about 15 miles away. The wind blew softly through the gum strees

surounding Bahji while I prayed for spiritual guidance. I could

look down on the Shrine of Baha'u'llah only 50 feet away and

meditate on the inconceivable significance of this Revelation and

its import for mankind.

The next day was spent visiting the prison in ~cca and later, the

house of Aboud where Baha'u'llah had been incarcerated for over

seven years. While there, He had, I believe, written again to

the Kings of Europe. He had also composed much of the Aqdas.

Abdu'l Baha had been married there. I wandered along the

battlements of the sea wall and pondered on the Muslim tradition

"Ble~sed is he that counts 40 waves in Acca.

My stay in Acca had come to an end; I had missed about four

dinner times with the Guardian and hurried back to Haifa by

public bus. The friends there were busy preparing a special

dinner to entertain some of their J ewish friends from the city.

R~hiyyih Khanum said ~ "I am determined to have friends that I

like and have a good time with them. The International Council

members and the Hands present were all joining in with the

festivities, but I could only think that I would be missing

another dinner with Shoghi Ef fendi, a steep price to pay for

such a party.

The next night at dinner, the Guardian asked me about my

experiences at Bahji ~nd I tried, stumblingly to put some of them

into words. Although none of the extensive gardens at Bahji one

sees today had even been created then, yet the whole area had

seemed most holy and far beyond mortal understanding. Coming

back to the inner Shrine itself, the Guardian asked my

impression. I felt it was a most fitting and unusual Shrine

whose items had been assembled with great care and devotion. I

mentioned the lights held up by sagging light brackets and

wondered if they could be straighted? He said "They are antiques

and would probably crack off if we tried it. This reminded me of

his other remarks on my second day of pilgrimage. He had sent

Millie Collins with me to the Shrine of the Bab. Over all the

great beauty there, I had noticed

+P52

a marble pillar on which stood meth ldtulips, painted gold. When

he had asked for my impressions, naturally l,~praised the most

wonderful Shrine and the extensive gardens, so expertly laid out;

but I also expressed surprise at the metal flowers. The answer

was very simple. "In the hot summer, no other flowers survive!"

The Guardian went on to emphasise the great need for developing

the World Center in Haifa, together with the administration all

over the world. It will be the world nervous system. He spoke

with great love of those who had done so much towards this -

Martha Root, May Maxwell, Keith Ranson Keller, Dr. Susan Moody

and the Dunns in Australia. "They are now buried all over the

world according to the Master's instructions. 'Go ye into all

the world.' "We must always think in terms of "World Crusade,

World Order, World Plan and World concepts in everything."

He spoke of the com ing World Plan 1953-1963 which would take the

Faith to every part of the Globe. He will send instructions to

each of the coming Inter-continental Conferences.

Here I must pay tribute to the efforts of all the friends who sat

at the Guardian's dinner table and afterwards, as we sat in the

upstairs lounge, helped each other record all the remarks the

beloved Guardian had made that evening. As I have mentioned, the

Guardian did not wish any notes to be taken at the table.

"Pilgrims come to experience the Spirit of the Holv Shrines, not

receive information." He is reported to have said. It goes

without saying that all these records I have are just pilgrim

notes and nothing more. There is no authenticity in them. They

are notes of wonderful hours spent with the Guardian; I pass them

on with the hope that they may help the reader to glean just some

of the spiritual food that was offered to us during those soul

stirring days.

He touched on the subject of the coming world calamity mentioned

by by Bah'u'llah in Gleanings: (p.l 19;1) ". . . there shall

suddenly appear that which will cause the limbs of mankind to

quake. Then, and only then, will the E)ivine Standard be

unfurled . . ." He emphasised that this refers to a literal

catastrophy, world-wide. There would be no escape for anyone,

the Baha'is would suffer with the rest of mankind. All we can do

is to get on with the teaching and help to alleviate it. This

disaster would affect every part of the world systems and would

awaken

+P53

mankind. There would be mass conversion after it. In Africa,

this mass conversion may come before the calamity. It depends on

the qualities of the Baha' is!

At that time, the Covenant-breakers were still active and the

Guardian mentioned that their machinations had prevented him for

three months from considering the coming Inter-continental

Conferences. He said that the covenant breakers are now few and

des~erate.

He went on to talk about the materialistic civilisation so

rampant In the world and reminded us of Baha'u"lah's statement

that in excess it leads to turmoil and burning of cities.

"Divorced from the spiritual it will lead to a breakdown. It

should be complimentary. Moral stimulus comes from the

Prophets." He affirmed.

The Guardian went on to say: "The impulse of the colonial people

for independence is good. We should encourage it but guard

against its extremes." Little did I know that I was soon to be

involved in the British Government's handing over of Kenya to

independence. When that happened in 1963 I was a Government

servant and had to help train the local people to do my job. All

"whites" were to be replaced by Kenyans. We all wondered if they

would be able to do the work, but for many years they made a very

good job of it under President Jomo Kenyatta.

The Guardian described the misuse of the Press media in U.S.A.

They influence the masses and this is not democracy. On the

confrontation between the U.S.A. and Russia he said that we

should side with neither for both are wrong, one is extremly

materialistic and the other atheistic. The Baha'i administration

is not democratic but embodies the best parts of all systems,

with much more besides.

"Palestine has acquired spiritual potency due to the Prophets.

It is also the junction of the three continents. The Holy Land

is now becoming the world spiritual center as well as the world

administrative center under Baha'u'llah's dispensation. They

will never be seperated again, as in past dispensations." We now

own 50 cares on Mt.Carmel and all of it is exempted from taxes.

Five acres are for the coming temple. To buy land here now is

strategic, spiritually."

+P54

Continuing the m atters touched upon by the Guardian, he said

that Turkey now has three Local Spiritual Assemblies and wanted a

National Assembly, but it was premature. He followed with :"lt

has taken twenty years to build the institutions so that the Holy

Spirit can function through them." He had ju~t received a

postcard from the Pacific, telling of the declartion of the first

among the brown races. "Now we have all the races. He said.

"The Bab's relatives took the Faith to China."

At this time the GuardiarL was gathering the members of the newly

appointed International Council, which was to preceed the

election of the Universal House of J ustice. R~hlyyih Khanum

asked him if Ted should take a photograph of them, but he said

that it was too early.

Shoghi Effendi asked Mason Remy if he had modified part of the

drawing for the Haifa temple, as requested. Mason went out and

brought in the design for the cupolas which will cap the pillars

and laid it before the Guardian. He considered it for a while

and the said: "Yes that is better." From this I inferred, that

althought Mason was designing the temple, yet the Guardian w as

supervising every little detail and Mason was merely his pen.

How could we have known that on the Guardian's passing, only six

years hence, Mason Remy would become a Covenant-breaker by

claiming to be the next Guardian, against all the conditions laid

down by Abdu'l Baha.

The Guardain was asked the meaning of "Gog and Magog" as

mentioned in the Bible. He said that perhaps they symbolise good

and evil, but as long as the teachings throw no light on the

matter, we must be liberal and follow the scholars or those who

are expert in these matters. Other interesting rem arks were

that each Prophet in the past had appointed a successor, but none

of them had written it down on paper as an explicate authority.

Paul usurped Peter and started the first schism in Christianity.

The Califs usurped Ali. But in this Faith it was explicit.

Someone asked what are the things we should emphasise in teaching

today. His reply was that we should tell of the existence of

God; the immortality of the soul; the necessity for religion; the

oneness of humanity; the coming of age of humanity. We should

concentrate on the main teachings of the Master, not on tradition

or prophecies. Appeal to the reason of the individual, not to

his feelings. Teach the necessity for true religion, as seperate

from creeds.

+P55

The Guardian continued: "What is the purpose of God's creation?

It is the purpose of all the Prophets - to prepare mankind for

the recognition of the station of Baha'u'llah. "Some Answered

Questions" and the "Iqan" are the most important for teachers.

We must both spread the seed and try to make converts. . .

Later, "The Guardian will be above all the leaders of mankind.

The Hands will each be the center of a !star ~ st~r "

There was an interesting sequel years later to my question to the

Guardian, about the antiques lamp holders in the outer court of

the shrine of Baha'u'llah. Earlier I have reported that he had

said they might break if we tried to straighten them. In 1973 I

was again visiting the Shrine. After prayers I once more looked

at the droopping lamps in the outer court and wondered what would

be the penalty in eternity for breaking one of them. I took hold

of the nearest one and straightened it up. It did not break! I

did the next and still no disaster. I resolved to stop if any

broke, but I was able to straighten all the rest without a break

and was overjoyed at the improvement. The Guardian had long

since passed to the Abha Kingdom of course (in 1957). The

Universal House of J ustice was now in charge. I told Amos

Gibson what I had done and he looked pleased. Five years later I

was again on pilgrimage as a delegate. When I entered the shrine

I saw that every one of the lamps had sagged back to its original

position! The summer heat on the plain of Acca had been too much

for the soft metal.

To return to the beloved Guardian's dinner table in 1952, one

evening he was in a light hearted mood. He looked at me with a

loving twinkle in his eye: "The English teaching effort is like

its weather, a steady drizzle. Oh but a much appreciated

drizzel! Now the American teaching effort is also like its

weather. When they receive a letter from me they rush off and do

thing with great energy, like their stormy weather. After a few

weeks it dries up and I have to send them another letter!" I saw

him really laugh for the first time. It was clear that he had

great love for both communities and was trying to urge them on.

"The world is now like the Roman empire was, prior to its

collapse. There are few leaders left in England and the U.S.A.

There is poverty in art and finance. General Eisenhower

president - what a pity! !

+P56

"Christianity did not have the institutions that we have at this

stage Now the question is, do we have the courge and the spirit?

The Popes were the true citadel and had great courage.

The Guardian said: "Recently, Musa Baha'i, 8 Covenant-breaker,

had Invited the British Consul to a party to spread lies about

the Faith. We took counter-measures to inform the authorities of

the difference between ourselves and the Covenant-breakers."

"We should not observe uniformity in prayer and worship at the

Shrines. But we all stand for the Prayers of Visitation.

"The soul is much more important than the body, and the body is

more important than a member. The soul uses the body to progress

higher. The soul is the revelation of Baha'u'llah. Each part of

the body must play its part. It is the same in the Faith. Some

Persian Baha'is feel the Cause is to advance Persia, but they

must sacrifice everything to the purpose of Baha'u'llfih and then

have loyalty to their country."

Baha'u'llah said: "If the Cause had appeared first in Europe, it

would have attained ascendancy over the thought of mankind

because of the freedom of intelligence in the background culture.

The culture of Europe was due to Socrates who studied with the

Jews, a result of Moses efforts with a decadent, thieving race in

Egypt.

"America is desperately in need of material help against

Communism. America is the citadel of the Faith, but their

materialism is based on the negation of justice. The Outer

citadel will crumble but the inner will survive. There is a fear

creeping over the Americans, greater than the fear of any other

nation ever. (This was in 1952)

On the last day of my pilgrimage, I was privilaged to meet the

beloved Guardian in his reception room with only Ruhiyyih Khanum

present in addition. The notes I made afterwards while waiting

for my plane at the airport were as follows: "Please tell the

British believers how much I admire their organising ability,

their devotion and their many services to the Faith.

+P57

Please send me the proofs of all the photographs you have taken

and I will indicate which I would appreciate having enlargements

of and how many of each. When you send them, I will send you a

check."

I was much disturbed at the idea of accepting any money for this

and hastened to assure Shoghi Effendi: "O, no, Guardian, this is

my contribution. I do not wish to charge you anything." I said.

He looked at me very directly and said quite firmly: "You must

allow me to have an interest in this." "Yes Shoghi Effendi." I

said obediently.

He then said: "All the photographs you took inside the Shrines of

the Bab and Baha'u'llah, please send to me; but all of the

others, you must feel free to sell to the friends. David Hofman

sells his books to the friends, and you can sell the

photographs."

Inwardly, at this moment, my deepest concern was that I was now

leaving Haifa where the very air seemed heavenly, and where the

human relationships must surely be a foretaste of the Kingdom of

Heaven Itself. Some of this must have shown itself in my face

for the Guardian said "Do not be sad; you will come back, you

will come back!" I wondered how this could ever be, since I now

had nothing left in the bank at all and an uncertain job. (Later

note in 199 . I have now been back 8 times.)

The Guardian went on: "We hope you will have a Local Spiritual

Assembly in Nairobi by the time of the Africa Conference in

Kampala next year. (1953) We live for the ~ay when the first

African believers will arrive in Haifa. Perhaps youwill bring

them." We did achieve our Assembly within a year. What is more,

in 1963, only eleven years later, the entire National Spiritual

Assembly of Central and East Africa came to Haifa as delegates

toh,~ee~ect the first Universal House of Justice. There were

five African members and four pioneers in that Assembly,

including myself. But the beloved Guardian was no longer there

to receive them.

Shoghi Effendi's last words to me in this world were: "We are

glad you were able to stay the extra ten days. God meant it to

be. Now that you have been here, you can come any time you want

in spirit." He embraced me firmly on each shoulder, and left.

+P58

Back in Nairobi, Aziz and I continued our efforts to make friends

with the African people and of course our prayers were much

inspired by Shoghi Effendi's encouraging remarks. One Saturday

afternoon some friends turned up at our house for a fireside. I

shall never forget the rapt attention with which they listened to

Aziz talking about Baha'u'llah. One of these was an old woman

from the Kikuyu tribe; she seemed especially interested. She had

suf fered much but still had faith in her Creator. She urged us

to go and introduce ourselves to some adult students at the

medical school. I remember two of their names, Jacob Kisombe and

Joseph. When the friends had gone home, Aziz was still uplifted

by the apparent deep nature of the proceedings. "You know Ted,"

he said "their enthusiasm was so heart warming, that if I were

not alrady a Baha'i, I would have declared myself!

How mysterious and unaccountable are the ways of God! We pray

and then go out and do what seems the right thing, then God turns

it in the direction he desires. We never saw any of those lovely

people again, but this day was the key to the opening of the

Faith in Kenya. The six medical students received us warmly,

almost as if they had been expecting us. They started coming

regularly to public meetings which we began holding in the United

Kenya Club building; soon, all of them declared their faith in

Baha'u'llah. We learned later how deep was their conviction, for

J acob went home to Mombasa for the holidays and while there he

told his father and other leaders of the community about his new

discovery. They sat up all night trying to get him to give it up

and go back to the church. Their arguments and pleading had no

affect at all on J acob who staunchly held to his conviction. As

the dawn came up, his father put his arm around Jacob and said

"My son, if it means that much to you, you stick to it!"

More declarations followed and I remember Francis Jumba and

others who became alight with the Faith and took i~back to the

reservation in Maragoli district, near the Uganda boarder. Soon

Aziz and I were invited to go with him on trips to Maragoli

district and spend weekends teaching the people in their own

villages. At last we were able to meet the people in their own

homes, to eat with them sing songs togethor and sleep in their

huts. Meanwhile,

+P59

several new pioneers began to arrive in Kenya. Claire Gung moved

up from Rhodesia and found a job in the hospital, Tahereh

Vatamparast arrived from Iran and found a nursing job, and Ursula

Samandari arrived from England. Ursula tried hard to get a job

in Nairobi, but was unsuccessful. In desperation she accepted a

job at an isolated farm. She became the "nanny", looking after

the farmers children.

Ursul~ had recently married Mehdi Samandari, son of the Hand of

the Cause and now set about trying to get her new husband

accepted by the Kenya immigration. Since she was English, they

agreed, but when they found out that Mehdi was Asiatic, they

refused, because the Government was not allowing any further

Asians into the country.

The Mau mau rebellion was just starting up and demanding

independance for Kenya. To make their point, they had started

murdering isolated farmers out in the country and Ursula knew

this but had no option but to accept the nanny's job if she

wanted to stay in the country. One night, Ursula was alone with

the children at the farm and hearing sounds of forced entry in

the back of the house she assumed she was to be the next victim.

She put on her burial ring and started praying - the

noisestopped. She continued praying all night. She and her

husband eventually found a job in West Africa and spent many

devoted years building the Faith up to National Assembly status

there.

Next to arrive in Kenya were Tahereh and Ainee Alai, a very

devoted couple of Persian pioneers. I remember going up country

on a teaching trip with them. We were entertained most

hospitably by the African villagers, who felt much honoured by

the visit of two foreigners who were obviously used to very much

higher living conditions and now fitted in naturally with this

very simple life. We 8hared their food and slept in a room of

their house. This became a frequent practice for all the

pioneers, for the teaching work was 300 miles from Nairobi over

dirt roads.

Not long after this three pioneers from the U.S.A. arrived.

Fred and Beth Laws and Fred Schecter. They described how their

ship had called at a port called Walvis Bay, on the west coast of

Africa. It was the only port for the large British territory of

S.W.Africa, a most desolate

+P60

miles inland. A single ralway line and a dirt road led inland to

the isolated town of Windhoek. In that deslote country they

raised sheep for the karakul pelts of the unborn lambs. There

was also a diamond mine, and a uranium mine. In the far north

there was some jungles and wild animals but not enough to attract

tourists. There were no Bahfi'is liviRng there, so the three

pioneers joked with each other about, who would be the lucky

person to oneday bring the Faith to this territory. More about

this later.

Let us turn back to Kenya. In 1952 the whiteman still ruled

everything. Although there was very friendly relations between

black and white, the old servile customs still held~Each whiteman

had a modern house. He employed three native servants at the

tiny wage of 30/- (about $3) a month plus primative native

quarters. These three men each had their clearly defined dutes

which they kept to as rigidly as any trade union. One was cook,

under madam's supervision, another was house-boy and the third

looked after the garden. In the country it was worse; when the

whiteman travelled over the long dirt roads, his wheels raised

clouds of dust a mile long. If any Afr›ican was walking along

that road he would stand and doff his hat while the car went by,

thus being completely enveloped in the dust cloud for about 15

minutes.

Another strange situation existed. Between the white man and the

African worlds there was an Asian culture. A hundred years ago,

large numbers of Indians (from India) had been brought in to

build the railway which started at Mombasa, on the coast, and

would its way inland 400 miles to the city of Nairobi which,

since it was at 5,000 feet, was quite pleasant to live in,

although only 100 miles from the equator. Later, the rail was

extended anothe 440 mile to the inland city of Kampala, the

capitol of Uganda. When it had all been built, the Indians did

not return to India but settled down as shop keepers and artisans

at a wage intermediate between the white and black populations.

They did so well at it that by 1952 they had a complet monopoly

of these occupations and would not allow Africans to enter them.

They even built their own Hindu temple and founded an elaborate

culture of their own. It was a tidy arrangement in many ways, at

least for those on top of others, but it must have been a major

factor in driving the African population, (by far the majority),

to raise in later years a fierce call for becoming an independant

African nation.

+P61

Although the teaching work in Kenya was still in its infancy, yet

in Uganda it was forging ahead into large numbers of

declarations. The beloved Guardian had told us that we should

not insist on full knowledge of the Faith before accepting a

declaration. "The African peoplen, he said, "are more atuned to

feelings of the heart and if you feel that the heart of a person

has been touched by the Faith, then you may accept his

declaration and everything else would come in time.

When Musa Banani had arrived in Kampala with his family, Ali

Nakhjavani his son-in-law had at first taken a job as school

teacher, but this did not allow him much time for travelling two

or three hundred mmiles "upcountry" where the Message of

Baha'u'llah was now taking root. Mr Banc.r could only speak k

anian and therefore appeared to be unable to help physically. He

appealed to Ali therefore, to become his full-time deputy and

accept his financial support for doing so. Ali gladly agreed and

soon the numbers of declarations increased dramatically. The

Guardian was, of course, greatly delighted and must have been

backing up the pioneers efforts closely with prayers at the holy

shrines. He soon felt that it was time to call for a major

Baha'i conference in Kampala and announing this to the Baha'i

world, asked the Local Spiritual Assembly of Kampal to arrange

the details. Donations from many countries had already provided

the funds to purchase a special house in Kampala which became the

Baha'i Center, and the large garden was to be the scene of that

gathering.

Shoghi Effendi was determined to make it a real success and was

well aware that the main bulk of the new declarations came from

people living far from Kampala and that it was doubtful if they

would make that long trip unaided. He therefore sent a message

to the Kampala Assembly that all these new wonderful Baha'is were

to be his guests at the conference. He sent funds to hire a

whole fleet of buses to bring them to town and also ordered the

renting of living quarters for them in Kampala for the four days.

He provided food also.

Pha~ When the time came, the conference was a great success and

well attended. At the Guardian's request, all eleven Hands of

the Cause attended. At his urging, many Baha'is from all over

the world attended. I asked my editor for a few days holiday and

he gladly agreed, suggesting that

+P62

I take the opportunity to photograph the city and its people for

later use in the newspaper.

The overseas visitors filled all the hotels in town and the few

cars owned by the pioneers were kept busy ferrying the people

between them and the conference site. I well remember one

occasion when I had three Hands of the Cause and Mildred

Motahedeh in my car. She was crammed on the back seat with a

Hand on either side and delightedly announced that this was the

first time she had been sque~ed between two hands.

Matthew Bullock representing the N.S.A. of America and gave a

stirring talk about the African people being able to hold their

heads up with pl l any other country. Dorothy Baker continued

on the same theme of helping them to be proud of their race.

Unfortunately this was still a E3ritish Colony where whitemen

were superior. A government secret service man who had been

invited to attend was very upset at these remarks. It took a lot

of explanation of Baha'i principles to explain to him that there

was no revolutionary intent in these remarks.

I had been to large Baha'i conferences in England and Europe, but

this one seemed to have unusual power and inspiration. Everyone

knew that something historical was happening during those few

days in the middle of Africa. The Guardian had sent the portrait

of Baha'u'llah to be shown and it made a big impression on us all

as we queed up to see that wonderful face and look into His eyes

where the whole universe seemed to rest in perfect serenity.

When the four days were over, we could hardly believe it was time

to get back into the old world again.

Soon after my return to Nairobi my newspaper, the East African

Standard informed me that they had to make economical moves and

that my photographic depzrtment was to be closed down. This was

a big shock for me. But on discussing it with a friend who owned

a pharrnacy nearby, he offered to open up a small commercial

photo department for me and split the profits between us. The

result was that I was then able to offer my services as before to

the newspaper and also start building a commercial business with

Robby, my friend.

+P63

Life went on as before and now we would soon be able to elect the

first Local Spiritual Assembly of Nairobi. My photo business

began to expand and I was able to continue radioing photographs

of the Mau Mau rebellion to London newspapers as I had done in my

previous job. Next I was able to secure a government contract to

make identity photos of the entire Kikuyu tribe, one by one for

identity cards. A rival photographer photographed me doing this

and got it published on the front page of the Daily Telegraph

newspaper. My parents sent me a cutting.

One day I was working in mv darkroom I was told that a lady

wanted to see me. I went out into the shop and met Irene

Benette, just arrived from England. Her relatives had told her

about the Faith and to contact me if she wanted to know more. We

had some discussion, but she suddenly remerhered her bicycle.

Going outside, we found it had been stolen, so we toured the town

looking for the thief, but to no avail. But the Baha'i

discussion went on unabated. I took her to meet the other

pioneers and she became a regular attendee to all our meetings.

Soon she recognised Baha'u'llah and progressed speedily in

knowledge of the Faith. We were now able to elect the L.S.A. of

Nairobi. Irene eventually pioneered to central Africa and was

appointed a Board Member.

Loving Fersian Baha'is gave us the money to build our own Baha'i

Center in Nairobi. Land was secured and the entire Baha'i

community enthusiastically rolled up their sleeves and cleared

the site. Providentially Ruhiyyih Khanum herself came and turned

the first sod. When the building was finsihed it became an ideal

training

+P64

center for groups of 20 travel teachers to live there and

complete a deepening course before going out all over Kenya.

''iG~t The Faith grew steadily in Uganda Kenya and Tanganyika.

The Guardian øqshowed his joy by announcing the election of an

Area National Spiritual ~-tr~4 Assembly to administer these

territories. In Kenya the N.S.A. ~'~ 5 appointed five District

Teaching Committees to supervise all the teaching work and make

sure new declarations were real. This was in accordance with the

Guardian's advice that we should train the most reliable African

Baha'is to carry the Faith to their people, for they would know

better than we how to do it. The pioneers were now released to

concentrate more on deepening the friends, but such were the

numbers of new Baha'is and so great the distance of their homes

f-om Nairobi that it was an almost impossible task.

To further these aims, Hand of the Cause Millie Collins donated

$40 to buy each roof for any village up country which first built

O ~ the walls~w,~ wood and mud. Eight of these Centers were soon

in operation and became a big attraction. There was only one

small snag, since the roofs were of corrugated tin , it was

almost impossible to hear any speaking inside them when there was

a tropical down pour hammering on the roof.

One day Aziz and I arrived up-country on a Feast Day and called a

large gathering to celebrate it. We had previously distributed

many simple prayer books in Swahili, but none could be found on

this day. However Wilfred Masinde came to the rescue. He said

he had memorised a prayer. He recited it with much fervour, but

in the middle we heard our own names. Afterwards, Aziz turned to

me and said "That's funny, I dont remember being mentioned in any

of Baha'u'llah's prayers!" We rounded off

+P64a

One day, Aziz had a brilliant idea. On one of his teaching trlps

up country he bought about 100 eggs from the African friends to

give them some income. He had brought a lot of cardboard

seperators an~,~piled the eggs safely between them on the back

seat. On the long ride home ~11 went well until he was about to

pass a cyclist who at that moment t~obbled across the road in

front of the car. Aziz stamped hard on the brakes and received

the ~hole batch of eggs in the back of his neck. He had to stop

and clean the car out ~hilst the cyclist went on wobbling down

the road quite unaware of the catastropy he had caused. Aziz was

a highly devoted pioneer and yet he seemed to run into more

trouble than most. On a following trip his windscreen ~as

smashed by a stone thrown up by an approaching car. There was a

three hundred mile journey to do, so he and his friends wrapped

themselves up well and drove ~ome. "How was the journey"?

journey?" I asked him. "~ell it was fine until we ran into a big

cloud of gnats at 60 m.p.h. Can you imagine it? Gnats in your

eyes, hair ears and nose at high speed!" ~e wanted to do some

social service for the African people, so one ~eekend some of the

lady pioneers from Kampala and some from Nairobi met in the

reservation and gave cooking classes to a whole village. It was

a great success and they were really appreciated. W ~ had heard

that there was a taboo against women eatin~ eggs. Men however

were Lmmune from harm. Trying to ~vercome this ~

~nfoun~edltrnadition the ladies gave lessons on cooking

omelettes. The aroma was so attractive that several women were

persuaded to eat them. However Violette recalls the memory of

one native women holding a baby on one arm and an omelette in the

other hand and trying to choose between them. She was determined

to eat the omelette but wailed sorrowfully: "But who is ~oing to

look after my baby when I die!" Wilfred Masinde was one of our

best teachers. He had been a teacher for the Christian

missionaries. As an experienced Baha'i

+P64b

he knew the Guardian's instructions that however many wives a

person has on becoming a Baha'i, justice dictates that he keep

them, but no more were allowed. Wilfred knew that now he was a

believer he could only have the wife he~already married; but one

day he told Aziz that African custom now required that he take a

second wife and he wanted to do so. We were all very surprised

by this and told him definitely "No." m ere was silence for some

weeks, then we received a letter from Wilfred saying he was no

longer a Baha'i. He also enclosed a new declaration card dated

t~x~ weeks ahead, asking us to use it on that date. We all had a

go~d chuckle at his ingenuity but told him "No dice". Which

brings me to the time ~.~en I was entertained by Crispin Simba, a

rich man with eight wives. I asked him how he became a Baha'i.

He replied: "Well I used to be a Jehovah's Witness and they told

me I was wicked to have eight wives, I should give up seven of

them now I ~s a Christian." '~hat did you say?" "I said that the

Bible tells how Solomon had 95 wives, so why could I not have

eight? They could not answer me, so I became a Baha'i." Although

there were quite a number of declarants who did not understand

the Faith, yet great nu~bers truely had their hearts touched by

it. And this, the Guardian said, was acceptable. Gn one trip

Aziz and I made to Malava a rather bizare event happened. We

arrived at Festo Mukalama's house one evening and slep

comfortably. In the morning Aziz visited the little house in the

garden. It was built over a very deep pit and was quite

servicable. When he came back he discovered that his wallet was

missing from his hip pocket! It had in it about $300 for the

travelling teachers expenses. (There were a lot of travel

teachers and we paid them bus fare and food). I knew what had

happened, so took a flashlight and shone it down the deep pit -

there was the ~allet floating on the mud! How to get it up? I

called for a bamboo stalk and lashed a coat hanger to one end,

hook down and lowered it down. I had to lash two more bamboos to

reache the wallet. I got it at first swing and hauled it up in

triumph!. The budget was saved!

+P65A

This seem an appropriate time to tell more about Claire Gung.

When Shoghi Effendi announced the Ten year Crusade 1953-63,

Claire immediately started answering job adverts in the national

newspapers. One was for a Matron's post in a boys school in

Rhodesia. Claire was amazed to find herself accepted and due to

fly there shortly. She had been pioneering for many years on the

home front, always with her sewing machine. That morning when we

sat in a cafe together before she left England she was quite at a

loss to visualise herself setting out for unknown Africa in a few

days time. To make it worse, she had just received the necessary

injections and was aching all over. Soon, I was photographing

her boarding a train to the airport as wave~ goodbye to about

twelve loving but jealous, unsuccessful wouldbe African pioneers

and friends. I sent the picture to Shoghi Effendi and it must

have warmed his heart to see such prompt and unquestioning

obedience to his call for pioneers.

About 38 years later she passed on to the Abha Kingdom with great

glory, having made Africa her permanent home. When on pilgrimage

the Guardian delightedly told her she was the Mother of Africa.

At that time she had only her long devoted service to show and

had not been able to do much teaching because of the restricted

nature of her work in the school. Her response to his statement

was: "But Guardian, I have never converted a single Baha'i!"

"Never mind" he said: "You went and the others stayed at home."

From this we learned how the beloved Guardian valued those who

immediately responded to his call with action.

Later, she moved to Nairobi and became a member of its first

Assembly. Following this period she moved to Kampala where she

fotlrld her destiny, Claire built the first inter-racial nursery

and kindegarten school for the African children she loved so

dearly. Uganda had achieved national independance while she was

there. Government officials all wanted their children to learn

English as well as get an education. They discovered that Auntie

Claire's school was the door to these goals. Soon she had over

100 pupils and a waiting list to get in. She made enrollment

conditional upon school fees being paid in advance. After a

while, she had enough money to build a whole school premisis to

her own design, instead of using a rented house. For many years

she taught there, and you can be sure that a full knowledge of

the Baha'i Faith and God's plan for mankind was in the

curriculum. The children were all~(became fully conversant with

its teachings and must have taken much of it home. Claire was to

survive two violent revolutions in Uganda. The first time the

fighting

+P66

broke out around her house, since it was just outside the

Kabaka's palace. The second time Amin brought a real blood bath;

so bad were the conditions that the Universal House of Justice

had to disband the National Assembly of Uganda and all the

European pioneers had to leave the country except Claire. Even

the temple on Kilolo Hill was left without anyone to look after

it. Fortunately Claire's school was only half a mile away, at

the foot of the hill.

All businesses were nationalised and when Claire received a

notice that her school would be taken over. ~he went to the

ministry office concerned and, waving the paper angrily at the

official asked him if he knew what he was doing. Suddenly she

recognised him as one of her former pupils. "Hello Auntie

Clair~"' he said. She greeted him joyfully and then said; "Don't

you know you cannot Africanise my school? A controlling interest

already belongs to Africans'n Some years ago she had legally

given 51% of it to three African National Assembly members. The

school was saved, not only then but for when Claire passed on.

But dear Claire was not to escape completely from the horror of

revolution. One day, Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga his wife and

several of his children, then living in Kampla, were brutally

murdered in their home by terrorists. The perpetrators then took

the bodies 7 miles to Claire's school and left them outside her

door. One can hardly imagine the great shock Claire underwent

the next morring when she found them. She tried to !)hone the

Universal House of Justice and the National Spiritual Ass~mbly in

London, but cou!i not get through to ~ither; in desperation she

phoned our house wher~ she related everythinœ to Alicia. Alicia

then pa~sed on the information to the National Assembly.

No one knows really what the motive was, for this terrible crime.

The most likely thing is that the revolutionarie, wanted to S~ Y

that the government was not able to control the; ountry, so they

ch~se to martyr the Olinga family b-~cause they we-e wide~y

respected. Taking them to Claire's school was :31SO bound to

make their point abroad. Great was the loss to the world and

deep the anguish we all went through, but we had to realise that

all ~hings have a place somewhere in God's eternal plan. Perhaps

thi~ martyrdot~ spurred on the lovers of Baha'u'llah everywhere

to make yet more strenuous efforts to compensate for such a

grievous loss.

+P67

To return to Kenya, the Mau Mau rebelion now began to become

serious business and the army was called out to protect lives and

to hunt down the revolutionaries in the jungle areas. When that

failed to control the situation, all white males of service age

were conscripted to swell the army. My conscription papers came

in with the rest. Here I was, coming to Kenya to bring the

healing message to the African people andi~ow~ was tghoaltng to

find myself killing some of them. I wrote to the Africa

committee in England to see if I could apply for exemption from

military service on Bah2'- ~round~ and thev asked the Guardian.

He indicated that Mau Mau was an internal revolution and not war,

so it was more like a police action which would not come under

Baha'i exemption.

On talking this over with my friend Robby, he became angry at the

sweeping powers of the army and submitted to them that Mr Cardell

is a one man business and if he was conscripted, the business

would fail. To our amazement, it succeeded and I was excuses

military service.

About this time, Irene Bennett returned from pilgrimage and

brought with her a world ma~ from Shoghi Effendi. It was

inscribed with all the goals of the Ten Year Crus~de,which was to

start shortly. I remember well how we 9 pioeers spread the map

on the floor and started discussing it. The beloved Guardian had

told Irene that there werenOw too many pioneers in Nairobi and

surely some of them could fill goals on the map. There ~7ere

only 12 M.S.A's in the world then and the Guardian had divided

the unconquored countries between them in proportion to their

resources and ~aha'i population. England had only been given 6

territories and when Aziz saw this he traced each blue line from

England to goal countries and specially drew my attention to the

one line leading to S.W.Africa. "Look Ted"

+P68

S.W. Africa has one port, Walvis Bay. This was the country which

the three new pioneers from U.S.A. to Kenya had joked about that

some pioneer would one day come~to bring the Message of

Baha'u'llah . It was mostly desert or scrub. "I am nct ~cing!"

I announced very firmly indeed. Everyone laughed, but I knew

then that I was going to pioneer to S.W.Africa. I remembered

that Shoghi Effendi had tola me that one gces on pilgrimage 5~ to

get ones~batteries charged, so that he could do great things for

the Faith. I felt confident I could do it, and what was more, I

was probably the only single English Bah2'i with Africa~

exp~-ience. I wrote to Leroy Ioas of my intention and wondered

wether I should first visit my non-Baha~i parents in England.

~he beioved Guardian had specially appealed for pioneers to go

immediately, and defini~ely before the birthday of Eaha'u'llah.

I told Leroy not to worry the Guardian about the matter, but I

would go first to ~ngland. Would he let me know himself if it

was the right course of action.

I did not have the funds for all the journey ~ut wrote my parents

and they paid my passage back to England. I was their only son.

and they were longing to see me. I had not been back in England

a week when a cable came from the Guardian "Approve visit England

prior pioneer new post." This even~begins to show the personal

caring nature of the Guardian, and how he closely considered all

aspects of a person's piGneering and his family life, and with rG

delay. I felt very close to him because of this. With much

er.~husi~sm I took a ship to Capetown and thenthe three day rail

jOUrney north to the small capital city of S.W.Africa, Windhoek,

arriving just befo~ ~aha'u'llah's birthday ~ent off a cable to

the beloved Guardian saying I had arrived during the centenary of

the Holy year.(1953)

+P69

The Guardian considered the arrival of a pioneer at his post to

be of historical significance and a great victory. Later

pilgrims tell of how he had the world map on the wall in his

dining room and at dinner, he joyfully marked on it each victory

of the Ten Year crusade as it occured. Yet it is obvious that

the teaching now had to start in that territory. For South

Africa and its League of Nations Trust territory, South West

Africa there was an added problem, the apartheid regime. The

Guardian had warned all pioneers who went there to be extremely

careful to avoid being thrown out of the country for showing

friendship to the local Africans. He metioned that this would

not hurt the pioneer, but it would set back the Faith there for

many years. As I write this in 1991, the South African

government has at last been rorcea t,O repeal the apartheid laws.

Thus anv confrontation ~1 h~e with the authorities would~,set

back the Faith 38 years. Yet because all pioneers followed the

Guardian's advice, there is today a National Spiritual Assembly

in both South Africa and S.W.Africa. In fact the N.S.A. of

South Africa was able to offer the government a series of

recommendations to help them adjust to joint black and white

government. The goverment greatly appreciated it and stated that

the Baha'is were the only ones to offer them a spiritual

solution.

But let us get back to the arrival of this lone pioneer in the

city of Windhoekin 1953. Finding a job was clearly the first

order of business and since the two main languages were Africaans

and German, though many spoke English, it was not going to be

easy. Further it was only a small city with little industry.

After two weeks of effort had turned out fruitless I was offered

a low paid job at a local photography shop if I would start to

learn German.

A simple apartment turned up on a hill overlooking the town and

this became a site of frequent prayer for guidance. It is a

precious experience for any Bahati to journey to and live alone

in a country thousands of miles from home, for ones life motive

become really clarified. One has not come here to make a

fortune, for fame or for any normal reason. It is only to bring

the healing Mesage of Baha'u'llah and nothing else. Further,

there is no one else to turn to but God. This then becomes the

focus of ones whole life.

+P70

After a few month, I was informed that business was bad and the

job ended. This seemed at the time to be quite a disaster, but

it may have been an answer to my prayers, for the job did not

offer any chances of meeting the Africans of Windhoek. I soon

found another job, working in a wholelsale warehouse where there

were five African workers, but this did not last long for after

one month the manager called me into his office and told me he

had to let me go. I asked him why and he said "I cannot tell you

that." I replied, "Well may I tell you the reason why? The

police have told you I am a communist" He was taken aback and

said "You are correct, and since you have been frank with me I

will tell you what happened. From your very first day, the

police have been watching you from my office window and thev saw

you speak in a friendly way to an African worker. They told me

to sack you. I can help you get a job in the post office if you

like, for there you will not meet any Africans." This man was not

an Africaaner but a Jew. As such he had no opinion about the

apartheid policy, but obviously had to conform.

I thanked him for the information and the offer but said I would

try selling life insurance, for a dutch friend had been

suggesting this to me. For the next year I had a lot of freedom

as my own master as an insurance agent and one day invited one of

my African workers from the wholesale shop for a ride in the

country. Whitemen often had African servants with them on a

journey, so it was not too dangerous. We came to a crossroads

and an old African was in need of a lift, so we picked him up and

chatted along the way. As I left him at his home, he said

"Thankyou boss." I replied "I am not your boss, I am your

brother."

Next day my landlord, a friendly person came to me and said "The

police came to enquire from me today, "Do you think Mr Cardell is

a communist?" I said "What did you tell them?" "I told them you

may be a bit crazy but not a communist. By the way I advise you

not to use the word brother." This was a real shock to me for the

only occasion I had used that word was the previous day to the

old man. This meant that the other African whom I had befriended

had reported our conversation to the police. Fortunate Iy my

landlord's good words had been effective and I heard no more of

the matter, but I resolved to learn a lesson from this event.

+P71

My insurance business was making enough money to live from, but

it I had been in Windhoek nearly two years and made no progress

at all in teaching the Faith, only a few blunders. What was

more, the Guardian's plan called for the translation of a Baha'i

pamphlet into the Kunyama language. I had not even found a

Kunyama yet and no one seemed to know about them. Most of the

Africans in Windhoek were from the Ovambo tribe. I wrote to the

British Africa committe and suggested they write the Guardian and

recommend he change the language to Ovambo. They declined.

Every day I would walk along the hill top near my house and

recite the Tablet of Ahmad for guidance. One morning after the

prayer, my eyes rested on a church in the town below. I wondered

if they had a Kunyama Bible. I descended the hill and entered

the church. On enquiring about Kuanvama the priest replied,

"Yes, the language has just been put into writing for the first

time and we have now been able to publish the New Testament in

Kunyama. I bought a copy and also a simple grammar booklet which

they offered. I had the idea that I could compare it with the

English Bible and perhaps draw out a vocabulary. So it turned

out. I composed a single page pamphlet about the Faith and began

to translate. Obviously it would be a very bad translation, but

I could think of no other way ahead.

Next came another piece of luck. My landlord took on a new

garden boy who was from a neighbouring tribe to the Kunyama.

Each day he also had to sweep my room, so when he came in, I got

him to read a few sentences of the new pamphlet and make

corrections. Bit by bit it was finished and I was elated.

I tried many ways to get talking with the African people but it

was slow going and I was extra careful now. One day I was

visiting the Methodist minister and his wife. As we alked round

their garden we came to an African garden boy. The ministers

wife introduced me, "This is Joseph, he is a Kunyama." My heart

leapt a beat and I tried to keep the enthusiasm out of my

greeting. "Hello Joseph." He smiled and responded and we walked

on. That evening af ter dark I wandered past the garden and got

talking with Joseph. He spoke quite a lot of English, so I told

him about my pamphlet and asked hirn to look it over. The

following night we met again and he told me the pamphet was

confused, but that he had a friend who was an official translator

for the police, he would show it to him. I firmly declined.

+P71a

I had now been working for the Old Mutual, a South African

insurance company, for a year and had completed the amount of

business required. It would be good to take two weeks leave and

tour Southern Africa, visiting the Baha'is in each country. I

wrote them all and received warm invitations. Claire, who was

now in Nyasaland added, "Shorten your visits and spend extra time

at Bill Sears farm near Johanesburg, there is a wonderful spirt

there, just like Haifa." My company agreed and I was off. First

I visited Eric Manton and his son in Souther Rhodesia. They

really loved Africa and the son invited me to spend a night in a

tent in the bush near the house. I was doubtful of the safety

angle but not willing to show it. I slept fitfully and every

russel in the undergrowth woke me up. In the morning we were

back in the house having breakfast listening to the radio news.

Item. Only ten miles from us lions had broken into a shamba and

killed a man! I thanked God we had been overlooked. The friends

were able to teach the Faith openly there & I joined in with

enthusiasm.

Next stop was Clair Gung in Nyasaland. It was a warm reunion of

the times we had pioneered together in Brighton, England. She

was full of enthusiasm as usual. Then on to Durban and East

London. In each place it was a great uplift for me to be amongst

devoted Baha'i pioneers for a few days, after being isolated for

so long. Finally arriving in Johanesburg where Marguerite and

Bill Sears picked me up and drove to their small -- holding 15

miles out of town. The warmth of their hospitality was

indescribable.

Bill and Marguerite had recently been on pilgrimage. At dinner,

the Guardian had told them to pioneer. "Where, beloved

Guardian?" "Africa." "Which part of Africa, beloved?" "South

Africa." "What part?" "Johannesburg!" And so here they were.

Bill was at that time one of the most well-known radio and TV

sports commentators in the U.S.A. and I think his salary was

over $50,000 a year. Near the top level in those days. (1952).

He was now working in the same occupation in Johanesburgh for

about $3,000 a year and really struggling to make ends meet

financially. But they were greatly thankful to be able to help

bring the Faith to AFrica, and also to please the beloved

Guardian.

The teaching work had already begun in much secrecy, in deference

to the aparteid laws which strictly limited any such friendliness

to the local natives. However several enthusiastic seekers came

regularly to the farm and listened with much interest to the

teachings of Baha'u'llah.

+P71b

Next stop was Mafeking, where John and Audrey Robarts from Canada

had moved in to pioneer Becuannaland. I had known them from my

Canadian days and attended their firesides in Toronto regularly.

It was good to see how effective they were in teaching the Faith

in Africa.. They had already brought a few into the Faith even

though the aparteid policy was in force. Much prayer had been

their constant practice. John often rose at midnight to say his

daily prayer because it was easier to concentrate then. They

were also very long time Baha'is. I should mention here that

both Bill Sears and John Robarts were later named Hands of the

Cause by Shoghi Effendi. John was now working in life insurance

like me, but for an English company, the Prudential. I was able

to learn a lot from him about this business since he had been a

company manager in Toronto. Now, living in Mafeking they were my

nearest Baha'i neighbours, about 600 miles from Windhoek. John

later visited me there for a few days and left me feeling much

uplifted by his inspiration.

On to Capetown where I stayed with Lowell Johnson and his wife;

Lowell was also in radio announcing. The teaching there was

spreading sucessfully among both Africans and coloureds and so

interesting was it that I over stayed my two weeks leave to join

in.

Arriving back at Windhoek I was amazed to find my company angry

at my overstayed leave; they gave me the sack. I was amazed,

since I had served them well. I wrote to John Robarts about this

and he recommended me as an agent for his company. The general

manager came up from Capetown to interview me. He asked my old

manager why he had sacked me. On hearing that it was because of

my over stayed leave he said: "You are crazy to lose this agent,

I will be delighted to offer him a job. Now I became the first

full time representative for the Prudential in S.W. Africa!

One morning, soon after my arrival back in Windhoek I received a

phone message from the police. "Mr Cardell, we understand you

are a Baha'i. We would like to know more about it. Could you

come in for an interview tomorrow?" Although the tone of his

voice was mild I realised this was very serious. What had I done

now to break the tight secrecy I had been keeping about the

Faith? The next morning the officer in a friendly way

+P71c

asked me to tell about Baha'i. I did this briefly, being careful

to avoid anything which might upset him. Then, to my surprise he

pulled out a Baha'i pamphlet and read from it the twelve

principles. He asked if this was correct and I agreed with it.

Wondering if I should elaborate I realised that the less I said

the better. Remembering that I had a printed statement on

"Relations of Baha'is to government prepared by the National

Spiritual Assembly of the U.S.A. I told him about it and offered

to bring him a copy the next day. He was pleased. I asked him

how he had heard that I was a Baha'i and to my astonishment he

replied: "The Rhodesian police told us about it." After I

delivered the statement the police never worried me again. It

was obviously clear to them that Baha'i was no real threat at

present and that since there was some international anger about

aparteid at that time, it was probably best not to go into it

further unless the Baha'is started doing something more obvious.

Little did they know that the spiritual springtime had arrived

and that within 20 years they would have to grant independence to

the country and apartheid would be abolished for ever in both

S.W.Africa and South Africa itself.

+P72

told him not to do so, lest it get to the police, but the

following evening he introduced me to Hilifa, the police

translator. Hilifa and I drove out into the country each night

and by flashlight started going over the script. I took it home

and retyped the new part and met him the next night for more.

This went on for many nights, for he kept improving his own

translation. Finally we had a good edition. I was elated, and

Hilifa felt very pleased to help. In my mind I can still see the

wonderful smile on his face. He was also learning a lot about

Baha'i.

I had made friends with two young Dutchmen named Harry and Bill

and told them about the Faith in confidence. They suggested we

all go for a holiday together at Swapukmund on the coast and

arrange to have Hilifa visit his friends down there at the same

period. And so it happened, we rented a small holiday cottage

and moved in. Each night we covered the windows with blankets

and Hilifa came in and sat talking with us. I told him a lot

about Shoghi Effendi and said he would be delighted to receive a

letter from the first Kunyama. He immediately started writing

with enthusiasm. We could not mail the letter as censors often

opened t~ I was going on lea~,o tO En~land soon and would mail

the letter from there. th~ Next day Hilifa and I drove along~

desert coast, far from civilization, laid out a rug and sitting

near the ocean began studying the book Baha'u'llah and the New

Era. We had been doing this for some time when, on looking up I

saw two whitemen had driven up, stopped their car and were gazing

in astonishment at a black and white man relaxing on the rug

reading and talking together as equals. They got out their

fishing tackle as a cover and started walking towards us. I made

a plan, I would walk along the coast and draw them away so that

Hilifa could make for the car. It worked well, they followed me.

Hilifa headed for the car and I then turned back quickly, jumped

in the car and we drove off. The two men were left gazing

helplessly after us without even having taken the number of the

car. We laughed long and loud.

The next day Hilifa brought his friend David to meet us and this

time we drove inland into the desert. We sat talking about the

Faith and since it was a feast day we actually celebrated it

together. I stood my camera on the tripod and took a historic

photo of the three of us. David later became a Baha'i.

Back in Windhoek, in order to keep in touch with Hilifa I started

teaching him to drive my car. He showed good skill and we

enjoyed each others company.

+P72a

The time for me to go on leave to England arrived and Hilifa was

still not ready to become a Baha'i. I gave him a copy of

Baha'u'llfih and the New Era, embraced him and promised to

return. Flying first to Johanesburg I attended the election on

the Sears farm, of the first National Spiritual Assembly of South

and West Africa. The previous year when they had elected the

L.S.A. of Johanesburg, the Guardian had instructed the Baha'is

to obey the law in S.Africa forbidding committees of mixed races

and it had been and all black Assembly. Now he told us that the

National Spiritual Assembly must be of mixed races, also that he

was looking forward eagerly to see what the proportions would be.

The event proceeded without a hitch. The membership of the new

N.S.A. was found to be about equally black and white. Paul

Haney was the Guardian's representative and a big inspiration.

Reg Turvey, an old time white resident and a Baha'i of many

years, was assigned to watch at the gate to the farm in case the

police came to investigate. He had a telephone on a long line to

warn us. Reg actually fell asleep on the job!

Back in England I often thought about Hilifa and S.W.Africa. One

day a letter arrived from Hilifa. He was so glad I had left him

the book. He had been reading the chapter about how to

distinguish between a true Prophet and a false one. Now he knew

that Baha'u'llah was a true Prophet. There was much more and

with great joy I sent this letter, together with the one he had

written to Shoghi Effendi, off to the Guardian. Within a week a

reply came. Ruhiyyih Khanum's phrase put it clearly. We are so

glad that your chick has at last come through the shell! Please

give Hilifa our love and the enclosed lette when you return. At

the bottom was a prayerful encouragement from Shoghi Effendi.

After some time I returned to Africa, stopping first in Kenya for

a few days teaching in the Maragoli district. On arriving back

at the Sears farm near Johanesburg I became very ill. Dr Alice

Kidder, a Baha'i friend tried to treat me by wholistic massage.

It failed completely. As I lost consciousness I pleaded with

Marguerite to take me to hospital. I woke up three days later

having been through a severe bout of malaria, probably caught

while in Kenya. Soon I was back at the farm recuperating.

During this time I became friends with the Sears two sons, Mike

and Billy, a connection which was to have interesting results.

Finally, back in good health I bought a good second hand car and

drove the long trip to Windhoek.

+P73

One day I received a letter from Mike Sears who was living with

his parents near Johanesburg. Mike wanted to come and work in

Windhoek. He had been offered an apprentice position with an

architect there. I was joyful. At last another Baha'i to talk

with and celebrate feasts. He arrived and settled in. Hilifa

introduced us both to his friend Nicodemus who then joined us

often in our clandestine meetings. Soon he became the second

Kunyama to recognise his Lord. We were now four!

I was now forty-two years old and still single. Looking in the

mirror one day I decided I had better think seriously about

finding a wife. I was also the only male member of the Cardells

to carry on the family name. My non-Baha'i parents had been very

patient and supportive of my move to Africa, but longed to see

me. I wrote saying I would visit them if they bought me a return

ticket and they accepted gladly.

It was now October 1957. Early one morning I received a cable.

"Shoghi Effendi seriously ill, need everyones' prayers.

Ruhiyyih." Next day a second telegram came - "Grieve inform

Baha'i world Shoghi Effendi passed away, London. Earnest prayers

entreated Guardian and security Faith Ruhiyyih. Mike and I were

shocked and stunned. Slowly the situation regarding a future

Guardian came to our attention. Had he left a will? Did he have

any children? If not, had he appointed another? I arrived in

England to find the whole Baha'i world asking the same questions.

The funeral had taken place before I got there and I could only

kneel at his graveside and pray for understanding.

I spent some unsettled weeks with my parents and then decided to

go to the U.S.A.and see what they thought about the matter.

Maybe I might even find a wife over there. It also ocurred to me

that since I was from Africa, the National Teaching committee

might like me to spend a few weeks travel teaching and talking

about Africa. I received an enthusiastic reply to my enquiry and

sailed for America aboard the Queen Mary. Arriving in New York,

the local Baha'is gave me a warm welcome and then I started on a

journey visiting the cities the N.T.C. had suggested and funded.

So, by bus and train I covered a lot of the U.S.A., arrivinv in

Chi~ Fn illCt in time for convention.

+P74

Convention was a big uplift after being away from Baha'i

event~like this for some years. In the middle of it I was

introduced to Alicia Ward and her mother. Alicia told me later,

that she knew right away we would be married. My analytical mind

was still open on that subject but we shared the whole convention

together in a spirit of ever growing oneness. I took her to the

plane for Phoenix making sure I had an invitation to visit her

soon. However the N.T.C. secretary wanted me to do another tour

of cities, talking about Africa. I turned it down, saying I had

a date in Tempe, near Phoenix. She suggested a tour through

various places and ending up at Tempe. I accepted.

Arriving at Tempe by Trailways bus some weeks later I stepped out

into heat greater than I had ever experienced, even in Africa. I

thought I must be standing in the exhaust of the bus, so moved

away. To my astonishment, the heat was still there and the truth

dawned on me. This was normal Arizona weather' When Alicia came

to fetch me from the bus station I knew for sure this was my

future wife, for here was a lady I could love and trust. She had

arrived at the age of thirty unmarried because she had not been

satisfied with any of the young men so far. Her spiritual

character showed in her actions and speech and her family were

long time Baha'is. Unseen forces drew us ever closer together in

a joy inexplicable. She was delighted to go back to A f rica

with me. After about three months living wiih her family we were

married. On Aug 9th 1958 we had a Baha'i wedding. After a

honeymoon we drove Alicia's Volkswagon across the U.S.A to New

York, sold it, and sailed to England on the Queen Elizabeth.

Since we were short of funds, we asked for their cheapest cabin

and found ourselves in the bow of the ship. We could hear the

swish of the water rushing past and the occasional clank of the

anchor chain against the side of the ship as we went to sleep.

In England, my family were delighted to meet Alicia and all the

relatives gathered for a second wedding celebration. We had

brought the top layer of the wedding cake with us, but the ocean

journey had been too much for it; inside, it was green with

mould, but the spirit of the occasion was not dampened. After a

few weeks we found a cheap charter plane back to Windhoek via

Nigeria. Alicia explained to the company that she was a one time

stewardess on United airlines; she wondered if they could give

her a cheap fare. They gave her the navigator's spare seat just

behind the pilot at half price. We rejoiced at the economy, but

soon found that the chair was a simnle stool, not even bolted to

the floor! We worried about

+P75

it for obvious reasons, but soon a teenager pleaded to be allowed

to exchange seats with her so that he could watch the pilot. We

were happy to oblige.

The flight was uneventful until we reached Kano in Nigeria where

we were allowed time to go into the city. Here, for the first

time we found ourselves in a majority Moslem country and were

much attracted to the way people lived there. The next leg of

our flight took us to Windhoek in S.W.Africa. Mike Sears had

already spent his one year there and had now gone back to his

parents home near Johannesburg. He had left the car I had lent

him, with friends and the key was hidden in a prearranged place.

We found ~e k~ and were now able to search for a small apartment

in the town. Then I went back to work for a British company, the

Prudential Insurance company selling life insurance to

Africaaners who were often prejudiced against ~ ~ to them,~

foreign company. It was hard work, but I managed to make a

living this way and got a lot of freedom to meet with Hilifa,

Nicodemus and their friends. They were delighted to see us of

course.

Now be~J~ 2 ~.~Vh~ ni w cnapter ir. our !hes, living no longer

as single people but as a happily married couple, far from our

native homes in the service of Baha'u'llah. Life was peaceful

and ordered and we even had time to play card games and see the

latest movies, which for some reason often came here from America

before going to England.

We were most excited with the arrival of a letter from a Baha'i

family in Germany, and here lies a wonderful story, true in every

part. Their names were Gerda and Martin Aiff; they owned a small

duplicating business and had five small children. By some

miracle they had managed to get their relatives to look after the

children while they went on pilgrimage. Dinner with the Guardian

was to them an unexpressible joy. One evening the Guardian said

"Martin, I want you and Gerda to lead the German youth to

Africa." Martin, in a logical frame of mind replied "But beloved

Guardian, I have no money, no job in Africa and five children.!"

It speaks volumes for the Guardian!s reliance at all times (and

for all people) on the unfailing assistance of the unseen world

when I record that the Guardian did not even deign to answer this

problem at all. To him it was the will of God that this family

would go to Africa so he answered with a disdainful humph! and

then moved on to the next topic. The affect on Martin and Gerda

was dramatic. They got the message loud and clear and from that

moment

+P76

on the~ began planning their move to Africa. They felt that the

best country for them would be S.W. Africa where Alicia and I

lived. It used to be a German territory before the first world

war and was given to England as ~I~de ~ ~ue ~ ha~7~

reparations~and England asked South Africa to look after it for

them. Hence the main business language there was German, and

there was a good German school for their children. It took them

two years to get everything in order and they finally arrived by

ship at Walvis Bay. Alicia and I met them at ~ho~ the dock and I

have a lovely picture of Gerda and Martin leading six children

off the boat. Alicia and I had rented a large old house which

could be divided in two, so that they had at least a home to come

to. We started having firesides there for Hilifa, Nicodemus and

their friends. We were now started in earnest on the teaching

work. But Martin scoured the town

for a job and got nowhere. We all prayed frequentlyt for all

their small capital was gone. They started unpacking but found

that nearly all of their precious crockery had been smashed due

to insufficient packing in the crate. Finally a business offered

him work at half the salary he would need to live on; he could

start at the end of the month. All relaxed but at the end of the

month the jo6 4~Y ~ cl . The next few weeks were tense, but

finally he was offered a job as a travelling salesman selling

goods in the distant villages all over tht vast territory. This

meant that he would be away from his family for many weeks at a

time. He accepted and Gerda was left, with our help, to look

after the family.

This was difficult enough but one day one son got hit by a car.

Amazingly, it was Hilifa who got to the scene first, picked up

the injured boy and got him to hospital. Martin continued his

travelling and employed a Herera man to go with him. Long drives

and much discussion resulted in this man being ready to recognise

Baha'u'llah. One day they stopped near the sea and went in for a

bathe. The Herera man was carried out to sea and drowned. Poor

Martin was desolate, but to the police it was just a statistic.

Later on, with another Herera he was travelling between

settlements and his truck with its clothing samples caught fire.

Everything was lost. One more adventure for Martin must be told.

This time it was a victory. He heard one day that the police

were suspecting him of friendship with the Africans and that he

was a Baha'i. He decided it was the time for all or nothing. He

went straight to the police headquarters and asked for

+P77

an interview with the chief officer. He asked him "Why are you

following me?" The reply was "Because we hear you are a Baha'is

and are being too friendly to the Africans." "Is there a law

against this?" Martin queried. The officer had to say there was

no such law. (in practice it was an unwritten part of the

aparteid policy.) "Then may I have your permission to hold weekly

Baha'i meetings in the African township?" Strangely, they

accepted. From then on the teaching was open and progressed.

Perhaps it was an advantage for the police to hear for themselves

wether Baha'i is subversive or not, for they could send their own

representative to the meetings to watch. Further, they had my

own written document stating the non-political nature of Baha'i.

About a year after the Aiff family arrived, we discovered that we

were to become parents. This caused us to think in more real

terms about our future income. My insurance business was failing

because I could not keep up the hard sell technique which was

required and in any case it was not my chosen career. We decided

to move back to Kenya where I would be able to restart mv

profession as a photographer.

Most of the above adventures of the Aiff family occured after we

had boarded a small steamer and travelled round the Cape of Good

Hope to Kenya. On the way we stopped for a few days at Capetown

and stayed with the Baha'is. Then we caught another ship to

Durban and stayed with the friends there arriving finally at

Mombasa, the main port of Kenya. We were met by a lovely Italian

family, the Rupps, who were friends of Aziz. They helped us get

our things from the ship to the station and with a warm goodbye

from our new friends, we began our long winding journey inland

and climbing up to 5,000 feet in 400 miles (~ \I~YO6~.

We had written to the Yazdi family before hand and they had

ar~nged for us to live in the guest house in their garden. It

was a real warm home coming and and a welcome haven for Alicia

especially, for the Yazdis acted like true parents towards us,

helping wherever they could. But our plans were all to be

changed. The British Govbernment had announced they were going

to give independance to Kenya in 4 years. It would be impossible

for us to set up a viable photo businss, for most of the white

people would be leaving Kenya, and there would not even be good

schools for our expected children. We began searching for jobs

once again, realising that our time in Africa was now very

limited, for I was not trained for anything but

+P78

farming (English style) and pnotography. It made more sense to

go back to England soon and train to be a school teacher or

secretary then we could pioneer again to many places in the

world. But for now we needed an income. My job search in

Nairobi produced no results and at last Aziz offered me a

position as travelling salesman for the medicines he was

importing.

A few weeks later Aziz took me on an extended sales trip into

northern Uganda, to open up new customers. All went well until I

phoned home from Uganda and Alicia told me our firstborn would

soon be arriving. We headed back immediately. Baby Catherine

was born soon after and I shall never forget the excitement we

experienced at realising that we now had our very own family.

Our firstborn, Catherine, was born on October 18, 1959.

I now felt impelled to look for a job more to my liking, for I

was not a salesman type. On answering an advertisement for a

Cotton Officer in the Department of Agriculture, I foud myself

accepted with almost indecent haste, even though I told them I

had no idea what a cotton plant looked like. Maybe it was my

previous farming experience in England, but after all the hard

job searching we had done we saw it as a great bounty. They

planned to send us down to the coast where the climate was

suitable for cotton growing. We would live in a small settlement

named Malindi where the climate was tropical and the living

conditions primative. We gladly accepted, though we did not

realise just how primative it would be.

It was just at this time that my parents, who had only once

before left the shores of England, now decided to come and visit

us in Africa. They were able to spend a few days with us in

Nairobi before my new job started and this enabled them to get to

know the new baby and also Alicia whom they had only met briefly

in England when we were on our way back to Africa. They were

also very pleased to see that at last their son was settling down

to a reliable government job. Little did we know how short that

would be.

It may be of interest to parents now raising children and

anxiously trying to get them to take up some reliable profession,

if there is such a thing these days, to hear that at the age of

18 I had no idea what career to follow. I stayed on the farm

another eleven years and then immigrated to Canada in search of a

profession and a meaning to life. Over the next 23 years I held

17 different jobs. True, many of these happened in Africa where

I had to take almost any kind of a work that came along. After

leaving Africa in 1963 we finally settled down running the family

farm for 20 years. That is where our four wonderful children

grew up.

+P79

But to return to Africa and my parents arrival there in 1959. We

first introduced them to the wild anima park just ten miles

outside Nairobi. There are no fences to keep the animals in, but

they stay in the natural habitat which has been left for them.

As one enters and buys tickets there is a large notice "STAY IN

YOUR CAR AND CLOSE ALL WINDOWS." Strangly enough, the animals do

not associate motor vehicals with humans. Perhaps it is the

smell of gasoline, but they continue in their normal-behavior I

shall never forget the intense surprise on my mother's face when

a male lion walked up to our car, cocked his leg up and weed on

our bumper. After driving for an hour we came to a clearing in

the bush to find a notice which said you may get out of your car

here, it is safe." My father to stretch our legs said

apprenhensively as we got out to stretch our legs: "I hope the

lions can read!"

Their next adventure was to drive with us down to Malindi through

simila wild animal country. It was a happy though dusty journey

and at one point we stopped to change the baby's nappies. We

threw the dirty one into the bush much to the delight of a troup

of baboons who came out enmass to receive their gift and carry it

off in triumph into the jungle. We did not stop laughing for a

long time!

We arrived at Mombassa port which beins at sea level was much

hotter than Nairobi. Also, for the first time we noted a lar~

proportion of the population was Arabs, especially at the docks

where pictureque Arab dowhs were loading cargoes of trees to take

back to Arabia. After a night at a hotel pervaded by all kin~ of

unaccustomed noises we set off, next day on the journey north

+P80

50 miles along the coast to Malindi which consisted of a hotel,

block of flats surrounded by many native huts and a cotton

ginning mill. I found the office of the local senior cotton

officer and was given the occupancy of one of the flats. Our

windows looked out on probably the most perfect and enormous

sandy beach I had ever seen. It stretched perhaps for 20 miles

in each direction and we had it all to ourselves. Happily a

strong wind blew in from the Indian ocean. We later found that

it never seemed to cease blowing; what is more, it was heavily

moisture laden and within two weeks, all our precious books would

develop a strong mould.

My parents put up at the hotel and found it comfortable. The

next day I was shown my job. It was to walk to all the small

shambas (plots of ground) and talk with their owners, describing

to them the big advantages of growing pure stand cotton instecd

of interplanting it with maize. This would increase their income

and also make the owner of the ginning mill more happy. The mill

had machinery for teasing the cotton buds into bales for

shipping.

There were no roads and few paths between the shambas and I was

forced to walk through the long grass. This was not too bad,

except that it was said to be the most snake infested part of

Africa; a claim which I was soon to substantiate when on the

first day I came upon a clearing on the bank of a creek where a

most bizare fight was going on. Some natives had come upon a

very large snake (18 feet long) which was in the act of

swallowing a smaller one some men had therefore decided to kill

both snakes while they were struggling. The large snake, still

with its victim half swallowed had sought an escape in the water.

An African with a large two foot knife called a panga, had

followed it in. As I watched, he cut off its head to loud cheers

and ribald shouts from his friends. Back at the office, I sought

advice on

+P81

avoiding snakes during my tours. I was advised to carry a

snakebite kit and then hope for the best. For my whole term I

did this and found years later that the kit would have been not

only useless but dangerous if I had used it. Meanwhile I walked

happily through the long grass daily to talk with the native

women about cotton raising.

One day I was helping a woman plant the new cotton seeds in rows,

the best way to get them to follow my advice, when the woman

beside me gave a strangled exclamation. I looked up to see

advancing towards us about ten yards away, a snake even bigger

than the one I had previously encountered. Its head was raised

two feet above the ground while its tongue tasted the air around.

Grasping the addage that `snakes are more scared than humans' I

threw a lump of dirt at it, but to no avail - it still kept

coming towards us! Desperately I threw more dirt and it suddenly

made off. I recalled that snakes have ~ery poor eye-sight. so

probably it had not meant to attack at all, but we both had a

real scare, wondering how we would have fought the thing off.

The season had now arrived for plantinQthe new crop and I was on

duty at the seed store, handing out free seed to all commers. A

long line of Africans waited patiently as I filled each shopping

bag presented to me. Suddenly I became aware that the young girl

next in line was staring at me with wide eyes. Obviously she had

never seen a whiteman before, a not uncommon thing in that wild

area. I looked at her and, before she could ask the question on

her lips I said "How did you get so black?" To which she replied

"How did you get so white? Then everyone collapsed in laughter.

+P82

That evening Alicia, baby Cathy and I went shopping for the

weekend supplies. We were directed to the meat market whlch

consisted of a butcher working behind a high wooden wall in which

there was a foot square hole serving as a counter top. When we

gave our order, it arrived through this hole partly wrapped in

newspaper and grasped in a bloody hand. Such was the hygiene!

For some reason we accepted the meat and suffered no ills, but a

gradual accumulation of such incidents made us think of other

employment nearer to civilvation.

Since we were living on the equator at sea-level and in primative

conditions, it may come as no surprise to hear that all the women

went topless the whole time; Alicia often joked about her husband

beinq fully educated on the matter of women's breasts-of all

ages.

We had been six months on this job and learning to understand the

native life and devise the best ways to teaach the Faith. We had

made a number of friends and got on well with the people, but we

began to see that conditions were too primative for the health of

the new baby, so soon after my parents went back to England I

answered an advertisment for an executive officer in the

Department of Trade and supplies. I was successful and we went

back to live and work in Nairobi. Much as I lovedthe country, it

was a relief to be back in the city, working at a desk job.

I was now put in charge of making cash loans to small businesses

to help them expand and develop. It was my task to sort out the

applicants which could be trusted to make their monthly

repayments. The U.S.A. had kindly donated half a million pounds

to this worthy project.

+P83

The original nine pioneers who had lived in Kenya when the Ten

Year Plan started had now been reduced considerably. Fred

Schecter had pioneered to Somalia , Claire had gone to Uganda and

started her infant classes. Others went elsewhere and there was

only Aziz, Claudio Rupp, Aziz and myself able to travel up

country in the teaching work. Our wives sometimes were able to

come, but mostly were raising their children. Ainee and Teheren

Ali, devoted Persian pioneers helped where they could and I shall

never forget one trip I made with them upcountry when this highly

cultured couple lived for a few days in the African's huts,

eating with them and clearly revelling in their company. Alicia

and I also made such a trip.

Susy, our second baby soon joined us and life became more

complicated but challenging. However, on one occasion Alicia\_was

able to come with me on an upcountry teaching trip and I treasure

.. .. my photo of her sitting in the shade of a hut teaching a

large class about the life of Baha'u'llah. We even managed to

buy a small slide projector which, powered by long leads from our

car battery, projected pictures onto the white-washed wall of a

hut. By this method we were able to show the~the livesof Baha'is

round the world and also sG.ne~of themselves taken on previous

trips. One man kept requesting a repeated viewing of a certain

slide. When asked why, he proudly revealed that this picture was

of himself addressing the meeting. In another picture, someoneJs

rooster had got into the picture and this made it a favorite

slide for everyone.

On another occasion we were able to borrow the use of a backroom

of a beer-hall in a small village. The highly spiritual

discussion was frequently interrupted by the din of customers in

the beerhall, but the Message was clearly and convincingly

explained.

+P84

Christianity had come to this country over 100 years agao.

Infact 6y ~ ~ eO~ that we were told that it had arrived

in 1844 and this fullfilled the Biblical prophecy ". . . and

this Gospel shall be preached unto all the world, and then shall

the end come." Kenya may have been the last country to receive

the Christian Message. By 1951 there were many missionaries in

Kenya, and from different groups, but their disunity over

interpretation had confused the Africans. When the Baha'is had

applied to the District Comissioner for permission to build a

Baha'i Center at ~he ~illage of Kabras, it was refused. I

visited the Comissioner to discover why and was told~that there

were various fanatical Christian sects there already and their

arguments had caused unrest in the area; he didnot want any more

to make the situation worse. When I explained the unifying and

peacef~lteachings of Baha'u'llah he happily ga~e ~ er~iscion.

~evcted Persian ccntributions had already provided the funds and

we soon had a new and very adequate meeting hall which the local

Baha'i~began to use regularly. I have photos of Hand of the

Cause Olinga addressing a large meeting there.

One of the earliest believers in that area was Festo Mukalama.

He spoke good English and ~as also quite musical in the African

way. Soon he had composed many songs tel~ing the story of

Baha'u'llah and also His teachings. These became a great

favourite among the people and a most excellent wa~ ofsp the

Faith. At this time Bob and ~eith Quigley from America visited

us and donated a portable battery tape recorder on which I

captured these songs and sent copies to the U.S.A. and to South

American Baha'is. In later years Festo was appointed a Board

Member and to this day continues to serve Baha'u'llah in an

exemplary manner, simply bubblinq over with ioY and devotio~ time

pio~e~rs visit his area.

+P85

When Alicia and I had returned to Kenya, we found that the temple

in Kampala had been compleated while we were in Windhoek. Soon

after our return Ruhiyyih Khanum came to perform the dedication

of this beautiful building which had drawn interest over a very

wide area. Bearing in mind the Guardian's guidance, the National

Spiritual Assembly spared no efforts to make this a big occasion.

Full publicity in the press and liason with the Government of

Uganda was only the start. The news was carried all over Uganda,

Kenya and Tanganyika and also to overseas news syndicates. The

ruler of Uganda, the Kabaka, sent his son to attend the ceremony

and the Governor's representative sat in a place of honour

between Ruhiyyih Khanum and our Chairman, Ali Nakhjavani. Many

Baha'is from overseas were present, including five from South

Africa.

That evening there was a big public meeting at Makerere college

in the city. Here David Hofman who had flown specially from

England to represent that National Spiritual Assembly, made a

presentation of one of the Guardian's letters to our N.S.A.

Ruhiyyih Kahnum was presented with a native spear to take back to

Haifa. Once again, as in 1953, the streets and hotels of Uganda

rang with the comings and goings of a multitude of Baha'is of

many races and countries.

Some time later Nairobi received a rather special guest, Dr

Niederreiter from Abbysinia. He was on his way to the Belgian

Congo to investigate reports of extraordianary Baha'i

developments there. Some months previously Rex and Mary Collison

had pioneered from Kampala to the territory of Ruand Urundi.

They had taken with them a devoted Uqandan believer. The Faith

had been

+P86

established strongly and the Collisons had returned to Kampala,

leaving their companion to carry on the work. Some of the new

believers had then taken the Faith to a neighboring territory,

the Belgian Congo; there it had spread rapidly until whole

villages had entered the Faith - so the rumours indicated. The

good doctor was on his way to investigate and help. About two

months later he returned to Nairobi highly elated. The rumours

were not only true but in some places the local Baha'is had built

Baha'i Centers for their activities and also built their own

houses around the Center, as was the custom of the Christians who

often made their churches their village center.

Dr Niederreiter had mostly travelled between villages on foot,

accompanied by a g-oup of Baha'is. This was done without

preplannins and they arrived unannounced in one village to find

the Ninteen Day Feast in full swing. They were able to join in.

An interesting situation occured during the early days of the

Faith in Kenya when I reported to the Local Spiritual Assembly of

Nairobi that in my country ~ourneys coverin~the Mau Mau

revolution for the Newspapers, I had often been exposed to the

risk of being attacked. As a pioneer I obviously did not want to

get involved in the fighting but I asked the advice of the

Assembly wether I should carry a gun for self-protection. The

Asembly decided that I should be free to do so, but I never did

feel inclined to doi-~ ; rather I chose to retire away from the

biggest dangers even if it meant missing importantnews photos.The

result was that I missed covering one very important development

when an entire village was masacred by the Mau Mau for

colaborating with the Europeans. My London newspaper sent an

urgent message for

+P87

pictures of the gruesome event. I was unable to supply these, so

they cut off my picture privilages at the radio station. (They

had been paying the costs of transmitting photos by radio to

London.) I had, in the words of the trade, "Let them down", but I

had also probably saved my own life and the life of some African.

There was such a demand from all the London newspapers that I had

little difficulty in getting picture privilages from a

competitor. I continued sending them pictures at their expense

and both sides ~gency were satisfied. One day my old

newspaper~wrote reinstating my privilages and sending a cutting

of the trial of Jomo Kenyatta, the leader of the Mau Mau as an

example of the kind of pictures they would like! I recognised my

own picture sent to the new firm!

The reason why I record so much detail is that an interesting

sequel transpired when Ruhiyyih Khanum next visited us and I told

her the decision of the Assembly allowing me to carry a gun. She

spontaneously replied "I don't know about you Ted, but if I had

come out to Africa to teach the Message of Baha'u'llah to the

African people, I would rather die than kill one."

I had recently been appointed secretary of the Kenya teaching

committee under the N.S.A. of Central and East Africa. (Kenya

did not yet have its own N.S.A.) and as such was in

correspondence with a lot of the friends. My office was in the

newly built Baha'i Center in Nairobi and Charles Mungonye, a very

devoted Baha'i was my full time assistant and typist. We got

various projects going, such as a song sheet in two languages, so

that everYone could join in.

+P88

We also encouraged people from different language areas of Kenya

to translate a basic pamphlet, even though they were all rather

similar to Swahili, the official language.

My job at the Department of Trade was now developing and one day

I found myself at the desk which ordered shiploads of sugar from

abroad to supplement production from our own two sugar factories.

I had no experience of this work but there was a very efficient

clerks staff of Hindus~who did all the calculations and brought

me the papers to sign. One m~rning in discussing their religion

with them I found they had received permission to be absent on

their religious holidays. Since we now had Baha'is working in

various government departments I made an official application for

them also to have their Holy days recognised and this was

granted. This was one more step on the way towards official

recognition of the Faith.

The following April, much to my surprise I found myself elected

to the N.S.A. of Central and-East Africa and had to make monthly

journeys to Kampala, a ten hour night trip by bus or a one hour

plane trip. The first time, since there was only limited time

free from my office, I took the plane. The National Treasurer,

Hasan Sabri gently suggested that in future it would save the

fund a lot of money if I took bus, even though it was very

primative. It was quite an experience be crammed tightly into

such a bus overnight with all kinds of tribesmen, but I certainly

found myself more able to appreciate their kind of life and

although the driving was quite macho, we never had any accidents.

Later I found that both Clair Gung and Hasan Sabri much more

exciting rides, one bus had its fuel tank drop off and the other

ran off

+P89

the road and they had to wait all night to be towed out in the

morning.

As mentioned earlier, the Mau Mau terrorists sometimes attacked

isolated Europeans. One day I was driving the 300 miles to meet

the Baha'is up country when I rounded a bend in the road and

found a row of 8 inch boulders strung across the road. The idea

was obvious, I would stop to remove them and be open to attack.

It is amazing how fast one thinks in such situations and without

slowing, I aimed one front wheel at a small gap and prayed hard

that the other wheels would find a way. By some miracle all

wheels passed through and I continued without incident.

Another weekend, four pioneers drove up country and found some of

the main roads had been re-routed. We got thoroughly lost and as

darkness fell it began to pour with rain. We were unable to find

the Baha'is houses and had nowhereto spend the night. Happily,

after wandering around we came upon a Europen mission. We

knocked and were received warmly by the missionaries. They gave

us real hospitality , a hot meal and beas. In the morning they

fed us again and set us on the right road. We were most grateful

No religious discussion took place, surprisingly. Be~ore~o

Africa the Guardian had indicated that we should concentrate

completely on teaching the African people and not the white

people.

Perhaps this is an appropriate place to try to give some idea of

the beloved Guardian's relationship with the friends everywhere.

Almost no one had met him, as pilgrimages had been closed for

many years, due to the machinations of the Covenant Breakers.

+P90

All we had were his steady flow of letters and cables, yet this

alone produced a magical effect upon the hearts of the believers.

In England we were luckier than most countries, for the Guardian

had sent Hasan Baluzi and Dr. Hakin to live in our country.

Both had met the Master frequently and his spirit seemed to come

to us through them. In later years Hasan was named 'Hand of the

Cause' and Dr Hakim became a member of the first Universal HOuse

of Justice. Since we also had quite a number of the Writings of

Baha'u'llah in English it served to galvanise us to move towards

a spiritual awakening. At Summer Schoo~, Conventions and other

occasions there was a spirit quite different from our normal

working lives. It was not surprising that when in 1951 the

Guardian gave us a Two Year Plan to establish three groups in

East and West Africa, there was a conceerted move to fullfill his

wishes, even though cnly one couple had ever been there and the

British community was probably no more than 600 souls.

Many years later, in 1982, Alicia and I met Helen Bishop in

Portland, Oregon, U.S.A. Helen was quite old but had a very

clear memory of her meetings with Abdu'l Baha and with Shoghi

effendi. She told us how she had once visited Oxford in England

and found herself invited to a banquet and was sitting next to

the Principal of Baliol College where Shoghi Effendi had studied.

She asked him his impression of the young Shoghi Effendi. His

reply was "He was an excellent student, hard working and full of

enthusiasm, but what a pity, in the end they made him the head of

some queer religion." Helen in her next letter to Shoghi Effendi

described the conversation, but omitted the last sentence, only

to receive a letter in return saying "Now tell me the rest." We

all had a good laugh.

+P91

Another most unusual event took place one Sunday in the village

of Givogi. I had arrived one ù~eekend in Givogi where Mr

Asalache ha~ exten(led warm hospitality for a deepening course.

It was Sunday afternoon and I was preparing to finish up and

start the 5 hour journey back to Nairobi before dark when a young

lad came puffing into the circle from the ne.Yt village. "Please

Bwana" he said "Come to our village an(J tell us about this new

religion." "Bless you" I said, "but it is not possible, I have

just enougl1 time to drive back to Nairobi." "Well then just come

ancl spend 15 minutes with lls. I will wait and take you there."

How could I refuse! He waited wltile we finislled the course and

thl n he took me over ~he hill. 1 here I foun-l a group oi about

a ~ozen people and a headman waiting under the trees. They

welcomed me ~ armly and I gave them a brief account of

Baha'u'llah's l\!lission. Then the heacJman rose and thanked me

also sa~ ing that now the 15 minutes was up and I should start

my journey. I left with much jo-. The sequel came I a years

later when I had left Kenya and was on a teaching trip in

N.lreland where I met Francis Beard. She had pioneered to Kenya

long after I ha-l Ieft and become very energetic in serving the

Afrieall people. She had become much loved. I~lany other

pioneers had also gone to Kenya and the work had e.Ypanded

greatly too; I think,~ over 300 Assemblies. Francis asked me "Do

you rememher that village near Givogi?" I said "Yes". "~Vell the

people there still remember the fair -haired youl1g man who f

irsL brought the Faith to them in a few minutes before he had to

rush ot f to Nairobi. And now the whole valley is inhabited with

Baha'is."

About ten years later Alicia and I returned to Kenya just for a

visit and attend the Nairobi Baha'i Conference. Francis was not

forgotten by them. One man enquired very eagerly after her. She

must have been a wonderful person.

It is somtimes difficult to remember the exact time-order of

event;, but about two years after the passing of the Guardian

Ruhiyyih Khanum having somewhat recovered from the great shock,

began making long teaching trips all over the world. This

besides giving tlle friends everywhere much consolation, gave a

fine example for travel teachers to follow. She first made a

trip through the mass declaration parts of Uganda and then came

to Kenya where a group of Baha'is took her on a trip to our most

useful areas. I tried to join them but could not get permission

from my job. About 2 months later she returned to Kenya again

for more teaching and this time I was privilaged to accompany her

for three whole days as her driver. Another car followed behind

with Aziz and Sue Yazdi and one or two Kenya Baha'is.

+P92

Of course I had met Ruhiyyih Khanum while on pilgrimage but just

imagine, I now had her to talk with for the most part of three

whole days as we drove across the plains of Kenya. Looking back

on it, it seems that we talked the whole time with little

respite. She told me that it had been 25 years since she had

been on a teaching trip of any kind, because the Guardian could

not spare her from the work in Haifa where she was almost his

sole helper in the massive correspondence he kept up with

thousands of Baha'is all over the world. He was also writing to

all National Assembl ies regularly and I believe received all of

the minutes of their meetings which he read carefully and

suggested new kleas for them to considcr. Also he wrote ~,od

l'asses Bv and many other works . How he ever managed to do all

of this and still meet with pilgrims is surely more than one can

understand. However talking with Ruhiyyih Khanum I was able to

glean some idea. I had already~ ask~i her why the Guardian di(l

not ask for volunteers from overseas ~o help, beeause I was sure

very many would willingly come. I even asked her to tell the

Guardian I would do so at any n1oment h~o. wished. She replied

that "It is no small matter to ask someone to serve so close to

the light. It is a spiritual experience which might be too

intense and perhaps dangerous. I heard but have kept hoping

someday I could a~tain such a bounty, regardless of the risk.

Also the Covenant breakers who lived just next door to the

Guardian had caused him all manner of deep troubles by trying to

detalne the ~aith and himself and would be waiting to trick any

unsuspecting Baha'i ~vho came there to work. I understand that

since those days they have been grea~ly reduced in power and

numbers.

To return to what must have been about the most wonderful three

days I ever had in Kenya our little group visited many Baha'i

communities in Maragoli. At each place the friends gathered

eagerly while she talked to them for hours in a manner they well

understood, using simple analogies from their daily life to

illustrate the spiritual wisdom she was giving them. One evening

we stayed a government rest camp and on another when we had

driven up into the Nancli hills, a district~not yet reached by

the Faith. We stayed talking long after sunset talking round a

wood fire before she retired to one of the local huts which had

been readied for tler arrival. She and the ladies slept in the

one room and Aziz and I in the back of his car. It was a clear

cloudless night, which was just as well, since we discovered in

the morning a large hole in the roof over the bed an~ she found

it a huge joke. We all had breakfast round a

+P93

small table set up outside the hut. On another occasion we

bought some fish at the market in Kisumu and drove up intothe

Maragoli hills Here we found a stream where we relaxed, built a

fire and cooked the fish for lunch. Our guest greatly enjoyed

the experience and we were much uplifted to see her recovering

from the passing of Shoghi Effendi.

On our three day trip Rhuiyyih Khanum showed much interest in how

the pl~ ~teaching work was going. I told her we had a great many

declarations but because the area was so far from Nairobi city

where all the pioneers lived and because there were only about 5

of us, it was impossible to do any real deepening; obviously they

all needed repeated visits to really understand the wonder of the

Message. It looked as thouc,h ~ were forced to choose between

expansion or deepening. We discussed the matter at great length

but could find no answer. Looking back it now seem that it would

have been impossible to seperate the two activities for at each

meeEng there was always a lot of new faces. I hea~ months later

that when she was in India on a similar trip, Ruhiyyih Khanum

found the simple answer. "Nowhere in the Writings does it give

you permission to cease from teaching."

I can hardly believe that for much of those three days I was

alone in the car, talking with Ruhiyyih Kahnum. Her enthusiasm

was uplifting and this was also because as she said, "I have been

li-~ing in Haifa for 25 years helping the Guardian and this is

the first teaching trip I have done in all that time. There was

usually a large group of African children sitting up front at all

her meetings and she was amazed to see how quiet and obedient

they-were. They seemed to sense that this was perhaps the

greatest moment of their lives.

+P94

After the departure of Ruhiyyih Khanum from Africa, the Faith

grew more rapidly than ever before, but my own job once more came

to an end. The British Government had decided that the time had

come for Kenya to be give independance and govern herself. My

offical task now was to train an African clerk to do my job

and~leave. There would be no other jobs open to Europeans, for

everything as given to Africans, no matter how untrained they

were. Alicia and I and the two children began preparing to leave

Africa and go back to England where I hoped to go to college and

train as a school teacher. As such there should be many openings

in under-developed countries, which though of short duration,

would enable us to pioneer again somewhere on the planet. Also

the schools would not be developed enough for our children and

they could get better schooling in England.

It was just at this fortuitious time that the Ten Year Crusade

was coming to a victorious conclusion and what is more, the Hands

of the Cause, as "Custodians of the Faith', appointed by Shoghi

Effendi in his last letter to the Baha'i world, had called for

the election of the very first Universal House of Justice. As a

member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Central and East

Africa, I was one of the delegates called to Haifa to take part

in the election. The Hands had also written and asked me to be

the official photographer at that very great ceremony and also at

the first World Baha'i Congress in London which was to follow in

May 1963.

One of the arresting statements made to me by Shoghi Effendi when

I was on pilgrimage in 1952 (and there were no African Baha'is in

Kenya then) was that perhaps one day I would accompany a member

of the African race to Haifa. I was astonised to find myself

only 11 years later, accompanying no less than five African

believers to Haifa, not only on pilgrimage but as full

+P95

members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Central and East

Africa, come there as delegates to elect the first Universal

House of Justice! All nine of us arrived by plane and gathered

with about 125 de~egates from many countries of the world, some

of them dressed in their national costumes. It was a

breath-taking experience to be gathered all together in the

Master's house on Harparsim Street in Haifa to cast our votes.

At the back of the room were seated all the Hands of the Cause as

witnesses. They had asked that they should not be voted for

because their function a~ Hands made it inappropriate. My

ownthoughts on this are that as the twin pillars of the Faith are

the Guardianship together with the Hands who served him were one

pillar,and the entire Administration, including the Universal

House of Justice, comprised the other,one could not expect a

person to serve on both institutions.

As the House of Justice stated later in one of its letters to

the world, it was an absolutely unique event in the world's

religious history for those who were the appointed custodians of

the Faith after the passing of the Prophet, to ask not to be

elected to the governing body of His followers.

Like all the other delegates, I had been giving a lot of

prayerful thought on which nine names to put on the ballot paper

but I could not think of any Baha'i who I knew, who could

possibly have the estemed qualities for such a divine body.

After further though~I realised that the beloved Guardian had

given us some help in this matter. For he had himself appointed

the International Council two years previously and they had aided

him in an exemplary manner.

+P96

I happily entered the names of the male members of the

International council but then realised that the other four were

women and therefore ineligable. There was a temptation to leave

four blank spaces, but that would make the ballot disqualilfied.

I reasoned that the Hands could be voted for, even though they

had asked for us not to do so. Therefore I completed the~ballot

with the names of four Hands.

It should be mentioned that before the election took place all

the delagates were sent by bus to visit the shrine of Baha'u'llah

and all the other holy places one visits on pilgrimage, and this

was added bounty. It also reminded me of the Guardian's last

words to me on leaving Haifa, "Do not be sad, you will come

back."

For three days after the election, the delegates attended

consultati~ in a large hall about half a mile away from the

shrine on Mt.Carmel. Each day was to me equal to a thousand

ordinary ones, so fragrant was that experience. There was also

the task of photogrphing every aspect of this occasion, so

spiritually significant for all mankind.

As history records, the following week, all of these delegates,

together with about 6,000 other Baha'is from all over the world,

gathered for a week~long congress at the Albert Hall in London.

Alicia, who had flown directly to England with our firt two

children, Cathy and Susy, was able to be at this congress and

join in spiritual inspiration. On one morning Ruhiyyih Khanum

talked to us about the beloved Guardian an~ his passing. In the

middle she was overcome by the memory of that heart rending event

and could not go on. After a while the African Baha'is started

singing softly and contiuously "Allah'u'Abha - Allah'u'Abha -

Allah'u'Abha " and all the audience

+P97

joined in and swelled that holy refrain till the very rafters

vibrated with power. How high must all the heavenly concourse

have raised that acclamation to the very gates of heaven surely.

Another notable happening was the address by Hand of the Cause

Samandari, who as a boy had actually been in the presence of the

Blessed Beauty and served Him. His Persian words rang clearly

through the giant hall as he recounted that pLace and those

surroundings. His ~ords were most heautifully translated by

Marzia ~ale and at one point she added extra words of

explanation, at which Samandari raised a wave of delighted

laughter from the audience by commenting "Did I say all that?"

which Mar7ia also translated for us all.

A leading London newspaper produced a special edition filled with

four pages of photogr2phs and comments. Vendors outside the hall

did a brisk businesc, selling to the delgates an historical

record of that great day. And as the Baha'is emerged from the

building in a flood of joy I noted that even the famous double

decker London buses unwittillgly proclaimed this great occasion

by sending their rcut~ number 9 to bus stops outside the hall.

Which tribute I did not fail to photograph for posterity.

This ccngress was clearly the first time many of the friends had

met 211 of the ~ands of the Cause and their presence added

special uplift. Which reminds me of a delig~tful happening

re~arding Hand Samandari. For many years after this he traveiled

all over the ~,~orld filling h~arts with memories of the Blessed

Beauty. In tnese travels he came again to ~ngla:ld and since he

was no-~ 95 yea-s Old ar.d very precious to all of us, ~ie

persuaded him

+P98

to go to a doctor for an overall health check up. He came out

with flying colors. This amazed the doctor, in view of his age.

He asked Samandari for his secret. I cannot tell you." Was the

reply. iWhy not?" enquired the doctor. 'iBecause it is rude."

'Come on, I'm your doctor, you can tell me anything. ' Well, if

you must know, my secret is that I stay away from doctors!"

To return to the Albert Hall Conference in London, the first

'IWorld Cogress" of the Faith. I had a privilaged position. As

the official photographer I could go anywhere in the hall and get

right close up to the speakers and any other event. Taking

photos did not prevent me from listening to all the very

excellent talks which were given during those six days. On the

final day about 60 Baha'i attended in their national costumes and

sat together, a most impressive sight! The Universal House of

Justice members, were of course, the main focus at all sessions.

It was a breath taking experience for eveyone present to see

before our very eyes, day after day, the supreme Baha'i

institution, just created, at last.

Between session the 6,000 Baha'is milled around inside and

outside the giant hall. The police had been expecting problems

and were amazed to find the most obedient and well behaved crowd

they had ever seen. After the conference, many visitors spent

time visiting friends in England. We were specially blessed and

were able to invite to our farm two American Indian believers

Annie and Chester Khan. We were able to get them to record some

of their inner experiences and views on life on our tape machine.

They in turn were fascinated by such a close up view of life on

the farm. My parents were specially impressed at meeting real

Indians at last, after all the wild west stories they had read

about and seen on the movies. When it came time for them to

return to the U.S.A. we drove them to London and they asked to

be allowed to spend a few hours wandering alone in that vast

city. We were afraid they might get hopelessly lost but Chester

smiled at our doubts and promised to meet us at a predetermined

spot in four hours. They did just that.

I set about trying to get into college and be trained for school

teaching. Thus we would be able after about four years, to

return to the pioneering field; but this was not to be.

Financial problems interveened and prevented it. The only

+P99

other career I was trained for properly was farming. Now I

recalled the time when 26 years ago, after living the first 29

years of my life on the farm, I had told my parents I loved them

but I was going out into the world to find a career different

from farming and also a philosophy for life. I had sold my motor

bicycle for œ50 and bought a ticket on the Queen Mary liner to

Canada and sailed westwards. Now like the prodigal son in the

parable, I came back to my father and offered to return to the

farm if he would have us, family and all. My parents were

delighted to accept us, though as jokingly said: ' We don't

really need you on the farm.'~ (He employed 22 workers and all

was working very smoothly). The 16 intervening years had been

very fruitful, I had found my Faith, my wife, a family and also

my profession, photography.

After two years Father retired to Bedford city, fifteen miles

away and gave us the farm. Now, far from being bored with

farming, I began to enjoy it greatly. Must have been something

to do with being my own boss at last! Soon babies James and

Julia were added to our family, inspite of some peoples view that

no family should have more than 1.4 children because there would

not be enough food on the planet for more than that! During the

next 17 years our four children grew up on the farm and attended

the local government school. Each Sunday Alicia would talk to

them about God and His Manifestations while they practised

caligraphy round the kitchen table.

We also had youth weekends~n the house was literally full of

Baha'is. We found ~hat the very large farm house could easily

accomodate about 60 youth if they slept on the floors in all the

rooms. The girls had the top two floors and the boys the ground

floor. Everything went very smoothly and for the youth it was

like going to camp in the country. There were plenty of fields

to roam in between sessions. One weekend I noticed a long line

of girls quing up outside the bathroom. Ten minutes later it had

not moved. I took a chance; I knocked on the door and went in.

There was our five year old J ames sailing his boats ~n ~e ba

while the que waited patiently outside! We often chuckle about

that.

Every summer we had Sunday picnics lasting all day in our big

garden. It became quite an institution and people came from far

and wide to enjoy the country scenery and the relaxed atmosphere.

Usually 100-200 people brought their own food, pets, friends and

relatives. We supplied gallons of tea and coffee all day. My

father had always been very careful to prevent people walking in

the standing wheat crop, because they would knock down the grain.

However I found that few of these visitors had ever been on a

farm so at one picinic, just as the grain

+P100

was ripening for harvest, I led a line of about 50 Ipeople on a

walk through the standing grain. They love~ the experience and

there was lit~le damage to the crop. In memory I can s~e today

the long winding straggly line of people as they followed me

through the fields, marvelling at the profundity of nature and

how man is able to control it for his own purposes. The ne.~ct

year, picnic was held during harvest and grain was pouring into

the store near our house. I was able to take about 20 kids up

onto the overhead walk where they could jump into a literal sea

of loose grain and romp around in the 500 ton heap.

[Photograph of Childrens' class at Mary Hardy's in Henley.]

Another popular feature of the farm picnics was tractor rides

round the farm. I prepared a four wheeled trailer with saftey

rails and straw bales to seat about thirty kids and adults and

towed them around the farm, stopping at times to show them

things. At one point I drove through a low tunnel under the

railway line and sometimes explained that Abdu'l Bahfi must have

travelled this line on his way to Edinborough in Scotland. The

line ran through the middle of our farm. Many a trailer load

demanded to go on this trip and I did not have time to organise

the tea making which was needing constant attention. Alicia was

busy hosting. Finally the visitors took over the whole process.

As the children grew, they entered the local elementay school,

and I recall the time when Susan, at the age of about seven, had

her first day there. Unlike the U.S.A, where it is fobidcen to

teach religion in government schools, in England it is the law

that religion must be taught. On Susan's first day, the head

master was addressing the entire school and ended up with the

Lord's prayer. As they all went out to their various classes,

Susan headed to the Principle's office and knocked on the door.

"Yes Susan?" he enquired. "Please sir, you should not say that."

"What Susan?" "The Lord's prayer." "Why not?" 'IBecause He has

already come!" "Oh, come in and tell me about it." For half an

hour he sat listening to Susan's account of Bahfi'u'llfih and His

Mission. Thanking her, he sent to class. Then he telephone me

on the farm. "Mr Cardell, you will never guess what I have been

doing for the last half hour!"

He was a kind and well adjusted man and very devoted to Christ.

This was the begining of a real friendship and later, at his

invitation I addresed the entire school, including all the staff,

on the teachings of Bahfi'u'llah. He once said to me that

although it is the law that Christianity must be taught in his

school, yet none of his staff wanted to do it. He had found that

the staff did not feel sure enough on the subject. They always

wandered off into social problems and the like. The young peple

in this age are taught to search for information and

+P101

the teachers were unable to answer their queries where

metaphorical stories like Adam and Eve appeared to contradlct

what they were learning in their science classes.

Cambrldge city was only about 20 miles from our farm and we often

joined in their Bahfi'i activlties. Soon Baha'is and their

friends from surrounding towns began to go there also for Baha'i

Sunday Childrens' classes. Eventually the classes were

transferred to our farm where there was more room and also

recreation facilitles. Allcia was a member of the national Chtld

Educaioll Committce and was full of enthusiam and Ideas. For two

years we had classes for five age groups and one for adults,

studying there every Sunday.

Alicia dld a lot of research on the Master's visits to thc

British Isles and wc made several trips to the London area to

track down the sites where he had spoken and took slides for the

archives. I did the same in Edinbourgh when on a visit. This

came to its climax when the Sunday classes hired an 80 seater bus

and took all the kids and families on a trip to London, only 60

miles away. We toured a lot of the sights assoclated with the

Master's visits and told stories about him over the bus's

amplifier. These sites included the City Temple church where the

Master gave his first talk In the west and Westminster Abbey

where, in the deanery Abdu'l Baha had dlned with Arch Deacon

Wllberforce. Here the wlfe of the present Dean took us to the

nearby church of St. J ohn where the Master spoken.She had never

met hlm, but was his fervent admirer and referrcd to him "Abdu'l.

In the church she gathered us all for a long account of his

vlslt. During her talk a cry}ng chlld Interrupted her w~t~is,She

took It Into ~ ~ arms an comforted It. Nor would she go on untll

It was happy agaln. We received the impression that she was

spontaneously reacting the way the Master would have done In that

situation.

At the school we made offlcial application for our children to be

absent on Baha'i holy days. Soon their fellow students began to

ask why they were absent and were told about the Faith. Because

of the general atmospher of religious scepticism so common in

those days, it was not long before class mates began to ridicul~

this rellgion with a strange sounding name, but our children

learned,~auseful lesson In patience whlle explaining It to them.

One day a child sald to Cathy: "I wish I had a rellglon llke

yours!"

On two summers we had Youth camps at the farm. Every one lived

in tents

+P102

The tractor house was emptied of machinery and straw bales set up

in rows for seating. Meals were provided by a whole army of

cooks. It was called "Action Camp." On another occasion fifty of

us hired a coach and went to a Teaching Conference in

Switzerland. In 1979 Alicia and I attended a large Baha'i

confernce in London and at this even met the now grown up

children of Martin and Gerda Aiff, the family who had pioneered

with us in Windhoek in S.W.A. 21 years ago.

A most historical series of events which happened to our whole

family was appointment of Alicia's parents as custodians to the

most holy shrine of Baha'u'llah near Acca, Israel. For ten years

they fullfilled this blessed service and on three seperate

summers they invited our whole family to stay with them at Bahji.

They put beds for us all in Abdu'l Baha's tea room and we stayed

in those holy precincts for two month each year. I well remember

Janet, my mother-in-law, showing me where the key to the Shrine

hung. "You can take this key any time of day or night and go in

by yourself." She said. It seemed far too great a bounty.

Several times I went into the Shrine, once in the middle of the

night, and prayed with no sound to break the magical silence.

During the day time our four children, then aged about 8-11,

walked round the gardens and absorbed a spirit which will stay

with them for eternity.

In those days we also visited many historical places of ancient

Palestine.

+P103

Much more bounty was to follow. In 1970 Janet and Forsyth took a

three week holiday from their job at nahji and came to stay with

U8 on the farm. They offered to look after the four children and

the farm while we went to Iran to visit all the holy places

connected withthe Faith. We were dumbfounded and further itS~ ~

impossible to arrange all the details for such a trip in that

short time. Ilowever we set about it and everything worked out

well. Then we happened to mention our plans to Marion Hofman who

said: "Well, why don't you arrange to visit Baha'u'llah'5 house

in Edirne, Turkey, on your way there and then ask for permission

from the ~louse of Justice to make a three day visit to Haifa, on

the way back. Amazingly, everything fell into place without a

flaw. We took this as a sign that it was the wish of God.

Soon we were in Constantinople where the local ~aha'is were

delighted to look after us. They showed us where ~aha'u'llah had

lived in that city and also the site which had been purchased for

the temple ground; a beautiful spot on a high hill overlooking

the l;os~l)ol ~IS ~ st r ip of Sda joinillg thd Cas~ian sea with

the mediteranean)with the city in the background.

Next we were put on a bus for Edirne (Adrianople) This 150 mile

journey had been made by the holy family

+P104

under great hardship in heavy snow and on horseback. We felt

embarrased to h do it by modern bus in just a few hours.

The house of Baha u llah is kept in good repair, and as we walked

through it and round the garden, we tried to visualise the holy

family living there. They had lived in several other house

before this one, but from here the letters to the Kings had gone

out. At an earlier house Baha'u'llah had been poisoned by Mirza

Yahya. The doctor who attended Him pronounced the case hopeless.

He had offered his own life in exchange. It was accepted, for

soon he died and Baha u'llah recovered. But for the rest of His

life, Baha'u llah suffered serious after-effects.

We also visited a second garden nearby. This had been used often

by Baha u'llah and even today it is well.kept. There was a big

mulberry tree, full of delicious ripe fruit. The custodians

spread a blanket underneatnand then gave the tree a good shake,

this producea a heavy shower of white mulberries. We all carried

the blanket back to a large table in triumph and had a feast.

Returning to Constantinople, now renamed Adrianople, we flew on

to Tehran. At this time the Shah was still in power and

persecution of the Baha'is had abated, but there was a feeling

that it would take little to cause its recurrence.

As our plane landed at Tehran airport we found ourselves in quite

another world. We were overwhelmed at our good fortune in

visiting the land where Baha'u'llah had lived. Some Baha'i

friends had been alerted to watch for us and we soon located

their waving arms. They took us and our bags out to a waiting

limousine which, we found out later, belonged to a Baha'i army

general (national serice is obligatory) and were whisked away

into the craziest traffic I have ever seen. It seemed to have

one major principle, "Do what you can while you can!" Ordinary

policemen do not have authority to ticket cars, and drivers take

all the liberties they wish. It is regarded as normal there!

We registered at our hotel and then went to the National Baha'i

Office to request permission to visit the holy Baha'i places. We

were greeted warmly by the Nationa Secretary who asked us which

of the holy places we wished to see. I held out my copy of the

Dawnbreakers and said All of these!" He was quite at a loss for

words because there are so many and time was short, but also

fanatics were always ready to abuse Baha'is, especially visiting

ones.

+P105

The Universal House of Justlce had instructed the National

Spiritual Assembly to severely limit all such visits, They had

already put all of these places off limits to Baha'is living in

Iran and wanted to restrlct vlslting B~h~'ls considerably.

He said that the committee responslble would h~ve to ~uide us. .

Could we come back in two days tlme. He introduced us to Atto,

another visiting pilgrim from America, who spoke good Iranian and

was looking for companions to share the pilgrim~ge with. This

was ev~idently another interv~ention of Prov~idence. How could

we hav~e possibly found our way round Iran without an

interpreter? The r.ext two day we spent investigating the very

modern city center c~ nd~ften came upon unusual slghts. Imaglne

a mother and three teenaged daughters shopping in a store, she

wore the ancient ~raditional dress complete wlth yachmack ~ell

over the lower hal~ of her face - the daughters all wore modern,

western clothes and no veils. To us this showed clearly that the

ancient and the modern cultures exist here side by side. In f~ct

we foun~ out l~ter that the Shah was trying to encourage western

lde2s ~nd the Mullas were trying to ret~in the ancient Moslem

wa~s. At this tlme the Shah was wlnning easlly, kut some ye~rs

l~ter ~,e lo~t ~lls throne and Ayatullah Khomeni led the country.

When we returned to the National office, the National Secretary

suggested we start off by visiting the House of the Bab in

Shiraz, 600 miles to the south. He must have felt that would

keep us busy much of our alotted time. Of course we accepted

gladly. It was a most logical place to start our pilgrimage.

Soon we ~ere abo~rd ~ long dist~nce bus for the Iit-st le~; OI

OUt- Journey)~Isphan, 300 miles away As we wound our way throu~h

the massed row~ of tr.~fftc in the Clty, Atto told us of a recen~

American visltor who had brought his own car over here and in

seven day h.~d six accidents. Feeling he had too much ~.o learn

about driving in Tehran, he took a taxl whlch lmmedlaleiy shot

orf ~t speed into the chaos. He went through no less than three

red lights, but coming to a green, stopped. His passenger

enqulred why he stopped and was told that certainly some cr~y

~ool ~ould be coming through from the other direction!

Looking around at the occupants of the bus we saw people of every

class and occupation, all talking animatedly in Iranlan..We

prevailed upon Atto to translate some of it and began to relate

to !ife around us. At the back of the bus sat an attendant wlth

large JU~5S of water and two glasses to refresh any passenger who

called him.

+P106

They all used the same glasses with a bare rinse. Since there

had been a warning ~bout ~ cholera epidenic on the rdaio, we

decided to contain our thirst until a rest stop.

Soon we were speeding over rough tarmac into the countryside. On

our map we saw that the road skirted an enormous desert which

stretched over most of the center of Iran. Atto recalled that

Iran, the old Persia, had for several thousand years been the

site of great battles between competing tyrants. It had been the

custom of whoever won, to burn and destroy the wnole countryside.

Thus this desert had all been beautiful country at one tlme.

We covered many featureless miles and passed through a few

hamlets until, five hours later the bus drew up at an eating

plac~. We wondered wether it was safe for tourists to go in ~nd

if the food was clean. Atto ~ssured us ;~nd we entered ~ barren

room, full of crude tables and chairs where true pea~ants sat

smokin~ their hubble-bubble pipes and eagerly ~atched ~ TV screen

show in~ thP Olymplc games stralght from ~ OSCO'r~ W~2 found

P~pslco!~ to drink and the food was simple but adequate and

reboarded our bus refreshed. But the next hours of bumpy, dusty

travel brought only one real change in the scenery. We carre to

a place where an underground ri~er surfaced and the people wer~

drawlng, pur~ water from it. Our bus stopped while we all fllled

our containers.

On ~11 this ~journ~y ~e were mindful th~ the blessed B~b h~d

t~r~versed this same road on horse bac~; over a hundred years

ago. under mu~h different conditions. It had '~a;~en Him man~,~

days. not 10 hours sitting in a comfortable bus. By evening we

came to the famous and beautiful city of Isphan. the mid-pGint

of vur Journey. To say that the whole city is a treasure-house

of entrancing architecture onl~ part,~r describes this ~iewel oi

a city. Everywhere there was evldence of thoughtrully created

beaut y~ in the buildings, the streets and the people. It was a

sudden ch~nge from Lk ~ nt.ry ~ . W~ p ~ p .~t ~ h~t~~ -~hlch ~

s mor~ lik~ an art museum.

The next morning some local B~h~is c~me ~nd took us to th~ 1~2

house of the Beloved of ~artyrs and the Kin~ of M~rtyrs, Whe~l

,they h~d been kllled by the mob, all the contents of this house

h;~d been ransacked and the families were destitute. A maid,

howe~,~er. ~øU~!R found a few coins in the wreckage and brought

them to the wife. With great disdain she threw the colns lnto

the mob wlth the words: ~What God has taken. I will not take

back.!~

+P107

The present custodians of the house told us this story ~nd also

reminded us th~t when the B2lb! on his Journey north, h~d

visited this home, these two martyrs were then only about ten and

twelve years old. They were helping to serve the visitors and

became so upllfted by the words of the Bab that they asked Him

for Martyrdom. The Bab accepted. It was years later when they

were grown up and had devoted their lives to Baha' u'll~h, that

they attained martyrdom.

Our guides next took us to see their extensi~e archi~re building

which had somehow survlved the years of persecution. Many

historical Baha'i relics were on display, but perhaps the mo~t

breathtaking were two full front pages of an ancient Russlan

newspaper, yellow with a~e~ but still clearly depicting dr~matic

and earth shaking events. The first was a drawing of the

executlon o~ the Bab, showing the firing squad, the smoke from

their guns and the two V~ctlms flxed to the wall. The other was

a life-like drawing of God~s most great Manifestation, Bah~u~llah

on a white horse, entering Bahji with His servants and family.

The detall was so good that we could see the expression on the

face of Baha'u'llah as he looked with power an authority towards

the artiat. So real was the drawing that we stood gazing at it

with awe for some time. Naturally, I photographed both exhibits

and later sent coples tO the Univers~l H~use of Justice, ~sking

if we may kee~ them. The reply w~s th~. the House did not know

o~ their authenllcity, but that we m~y keep them. However. we

should not show them to the frlends. Now, as I look at them,

those photographs seerr. ~o speak o~ worlds beyond this world.

The next morning we boarded ~nother bus ~nd set o~f, o~lly to

come to a halt at the city boundary. The dnver parked the bus

and disappe~r~3 f~ r .~ n hol~r ThPn ~e were told th~t by l~w

driver is not allowed to drlve more th~n ei~ht hcurs. H~ had

driven all night to arrive at Ispahan and now had to be repl~ced.

Two or three hours later another driver arr~ ed and we continued

our iourney.

There was little of significance during the next days iourney,

}~Ut as dusk began to fall on that desolate landscape ~e saw in

the distance our road winding across ~ valley and entering ~

gaint ston~ gate. As we came up to lt, we saw that it was

cvvered in Arablc lettering, ~Look Ted and Alicia, th~ Kor~n

Gate.~ E~claimed Atto. We passed through and entered the city of

Shiraz, the blrthplace OI the Bab.

+P108

We found a hotel, got a hot bath and a real night's sleep. Next

morning we phoned the number of a local B~h~'l whlch the National

Secretary had supplied and he came to guide us around the City

and to the Bab's house. We went first to see the very impresslve

and beautiful shrine to the famous poet Saacll. Wal~ing roun~

t~e ornamental pools and into the cool shrlne we were told of

Saadl's prophecying the arrival of the B~b. Next we saw the

equ~lly beautl ful monument to another poet who had prophecled

this ~reat Day, Haaflz. Our gulde then had to return to hls

business and suggested that the following day we mlght like to

vlsit the ancient ruins of Persepolls about 50 miles to the

north. He would then return to us. We wandered for a whlle in

the street and were suddenly halled ~oyfully by a young man. We

recognlsed hlm as one o~ t~e Persian Bah~'is who live in England

now and had ~ctual-ly visited us on our farm last year. His name

was Baghram. ~What on earth are you doing here?" We exclaimed in

astonishment. "I live here. this is my home town which I have

come to visit.~ We t,old him of our own ~risit and shared many

memories together.

Early next mornin~ we took a taxi to the ruins of Persepolis, the

ancient seat of King Darius. The road from Shlra~ was thro~lgh .

more cultiv~ted part of Iran ~nd v~ried crops could be seen on

~ll sldes. Once more we were struck by th~ strange contrasts in

this l~nd. We saw a farmer harvesting wheat as they had done in

Blbllcal tlmes, spreading wheat sheaves on the ground and dr~ n~

oxen over them to trample out the ~rain; ~nother man was throwing

the grain and chafI up in the wlnd tO sep~r~te therr~ 75 Arriving

~t Perespolis we wandered thoughtfully ~mon~ the rulnC. ~ After

the reign of Darius his kingdom had been eonquored and the~ f the

whole city ~nd pal~e destroyed. Only Iew gl~nt ~ton~ p~ 4i~ and

some carved statues remained. All was kept in excellent order

for the tu~iri~t,S. L~ter w~ retired to a lovely tea house and

in the cool o~ the evening sat eating a large water melon be~ore

returnln~ to Shiraz.

The next morning our guide took us first to the gaie in the south

of the city where on that historic day, May 23rd 1884, the B~b

greeted Mullah Husayn. The gate had been demolished, but we were

shown two large trees ~t the entrance to a market where lt had

stood. I descended from the taxi and set up my tripod and large

c~mera, determined to do this in a proressional way, only ~.o

have a heavy hand take me by the shoulder. Looking up I found

my~olf ~ntr-~nt~?~ by a poilcemen giving a stern message in

Ir~ni~. 1 h2L~ .isicns o~ nguis~in~, in a primitive forel~n

.i~il but Atto turned up and translated. He says that this is

for~idden

+P109

because these people are very backward and hate all forelgners.

You are likely to cause a riot. Hastily packing up, we departed

without a picture, but vowing to come back the next morning and

shoot through the taxi window. Those pictures turned out well.

Next came our actual visit to the House of the Bab. Our guide

again impressed on us the importance of protecting the House. He

explalned that once before the mob had ransacked the House and

smashed the preclous wlndows. Fortunately the Baha'ls had

anticipated the attack and replaced the original windows with dup

licates before the attack. Iranian clothes were loaned to my

wlfe, complete with a yashmack to cover the lower part vf her

face. My european cloths were common to the Iranians and

required no disguise. How great had been the need for such

precautlons we C~h now appreciate,twenty years later;~day there

is no trace of this sacred house. The mob and the government

have razed it to the ground. But to return to our vls~t.

We proceeded on foot, along various pathways between the houses,

but as we passed a small boy sltting in a doorway. he looked up

and smilingly greeted us in Engllsh - "H~llo!" ~;o much for our

disguise! We had no alternatlv~ but to p.~s~ on with a chuckle.

~oon we came to a heavy wooden door on which our ~uide knocked.

It was opened and we passed into a small garden. Here we were

led to the opening of an underground tunnel wh~ch connected with

the g~rden next door. As we emerged from the tunnel. I remember

nothing of the garden, for infront of us was an archway through a

tall brick wall. Through this archway could see into the

courtyard of the Bab ' s house . In the center was a small ciear

pool OI water P|lGtv|0CI and beside it an orange tree, ~

descendant of one the Bab had planted there over a hundred years

ago. We advanced into the courtyard and looked around us. To

the left was the well from which must have been drawn the water

whlch was brought t5 wash the ~eet of I~luila Husayn. ~ooking

up, we ~a~ed upon a large ornate window on the next floor. It

had five ver~lcal sections - featuring desi~ns in colored ~lass.

To our rlght was the main entrance from the street. Through this

door the Bab had led Mulla Husayn with the words: "Enter in pe~ce

secure.~' But now it was permanently secured and never used.

Near lt was the IOOt OI a red carpeted stairs leading to that

upper room. ReverentlY we ascended the stairs and found

ourselves on a small landing wlth an open doorway on our left.

We stood looking through that door over a high step which also

functioned as a threshold ~or prayer A~ we kneeled at that

threshold we gazed upon a scene we will lon~ remember.

+P110

Rich Persian carpets covered the whoie floor; in t,he far corner,

next to the large window stood an old f~shioned oil l~mp; perhaps

the .spot where the blessed Bab had been seated when He spoke

wlth Mulla Husayn... Let the reader pause here and take up his

copy or the Dawnbreakers. On page 65 are shown photographs of

the main street entrance and also the stairs up which we had just

climbed. Then let hlm turn to page 59 which gives three vlews o~

the room at the top of the stairs.

As we gazed across to that corner by the window, the words from

~he Dawnbreakrs ~ame to our mlnds "Now is the tlme to r~ve~l the

Surih of Joseph." We ~eeme~ to hear Mulla Hus~yn ~escribe hls

state: ~'I sat spellbound by Hls utterance, obllvlous of tlme and

those who awaited me." And again: ~The entlre ch~mber seemed t~o

have been vltalised by that celestlal potency which eman~ted from

H~s inspired utterance. Ever~thin~ in th~t room seeme~ to be

vibrating w~th this testlmony "Verlly, verlly, the d~wn o~ ~ new

Day has broken. The Promised One is enthroned in the heartc of

men . . ~'

All the colors in that room were harmonlous. They seemed to

spe~k t.o ~lS of ~n in~ff~bl~ ~lor~ The low~r p~n~l~, on ~ch ~

were light green with white trims. Abo~e this there worQ ~evQr~l

alcoves along each wall, recessing about 6 inches !nto the walls.

Patterns in brown~ picked out in white covered these alcoves :~nd

e~er~rthin~ up to the ceiling T~.e morning sun was ~tre~min~ n

through the delicate window panes, causing pa~terns or colorea

light to fall upon walls and carpet. The ceilin~ was ~

deli~h~fui sight, a continuous pattern of crosses inside circles,

olored li~ht brown and on a cream back~round.

Across the roo.rn ~ e s~ n th~r p~ir of doublc door~. ie;~d~

perhaps to oth~r p~rts of th~ hous~ J~ knel~ t ~.he r-~ls~1~

.r.~p .~t our own doorway ~nd prayed each in his own way. Aft~r

;~om~ tlme we ~rose ~nd took photogr~phs. I dld not h~ve ~ wlde

.~ng lense. so took 13 overla~in~ Dictures to cover the entire

room.

Downstairs we moved from room to room tryin~, to visualise ltS

o~up~nts going aboul their daiiy tasks. Finaiiy we wenl out lntG

t~ curtyc-rd clnd ~thered a few cf the ~r~nges which h~d fallen

~rom the tree. These we tre~sure today in our own small f~l~m~

rchi~es. Atto then called us into the small ~rden b~r which we

h~d entered ~nd there tea w~s ser~,~ed by ~n elderly lady

+P111

dressed in clothes of a century ago. She was one of the

custodlans. Atto talked with her for ~ while in Persian;

suddenly he burst into delighted laughter. We pressed hlm to

explaln; here is his account. "You see this old lady, dressed in

the fashlon of the old d~ys? Recently, on a Holy D~y, she had

bathed and put on her best clothes. She was passing alon~ the

street ne~r by when ~ teenaged youth from next door, spat upon

her as she passed by~ Wlth one sweep of the back of her h~nd she

knocked hlm to the ground. A man saw this and shouted "Hey, old

woman, why dld you do that?~' "He sp~t upon me !" She replied.

"So he should, you are a B~bi!~ He said. She drew herself up and

looked him in the eye wlth a power which belied her age and

forcefully replied "I am ready, you do it too!" The man

retreated, abashed at such faith.

As we retraced our steps to the maln streets? our hearts arld

mlnds were trying to ad~1ust to all these inspinng events. But

there was one more to come. We were taken next to the

MasJld-l-Vakll mosque to see the pulpit from which the Bab had

addressed the

We read hcw the Shah summoned the Bab to Tehran for a full

in~v~estigation, but after the Bab had left Isfahan. the chief

Va~ir had persuaded the Shah it mlght be dangerous for hlm to

meet the B~b, who seemed to h~ve a maglc power to ch~nge people.

The Shah had t.hen ordered the B~b to turn ~way ~rom Tehr~n and

~o to the prison of M~hku to await hls ple~sure. ~n the w~y, the

B~b had spent ~ome time in Tabrl~, being lmpnsoned in the ~ort

named 'IThe Citadel'l. It seems that we were now destined to

~ollow the same route, for the next day we ~lew bac~i to Tehran

and c~noe ~gain consulted with the Natlon~l Secret~ry ~nd he

su~gested we go to T~brl~. We spent that nlght in a hotel in

Tehran and were amazed to see on the hotel register the names of

Hand or the ~ause Blll Sears 2~nd his wlIe Marguente. From our

room, ù~e r~n~ th~m and pretended to be phoning from England, but

when we disclosed that we were in the same building they ln~lted

us o~, er and we were able to have a long t~lk with them about

thelr own travels round Ir~n, performed at the request o~ the

Universal House of Justice. They had just returned from r~ahku,

where we were hoping to ~o~ but since they had been surrounded by

a mob ~nd Iorced to leave town, they ~dvised us not to go there.

However they f~lt it would be in order to go to Tabri . That

afternoon ~re attended a giant Baha~i meeting for women in

Tehran. It was addressed by the Hand of the Cause.

The next morning we flew to Tabriz. Looking at a map, we saw

+P112

that our plane would pass over Zanjan, w here many Bab ' is had

been beseiged in .~ fort ~nd l~ter m~rtyred. ~,Ve followed our

fll~ht ù~n the map and found ourselves c~er 7?,n l~n ~t ~ grc~t

h~l~;ht, hl.lt ~nabl~ to see it bec~use lt was dlrect-ly

underneath us. However. soon the plane ~,rarled lts course and

we were ~ble to get a photo~raph of the whole city.

Tn T2~briz ~re found a lively Baha'i community ~nd attended a

large firesi~e. As we left, they pointed out some men nearby

who, they said, alway~ wait2d outside Baha'i meetings to persuade

enquirer3 ~ was wlcked to go ther~. W~ were all ver~J ~mused at

t~h~ tlm~. Little did we know that in a few years, masslv~

persecutlons would rear ItS ugly head agaln an~ COSt many llv~s.

The friends later took us to the Cltadel, a massive run of a

fort. The window of the room where the B~b had been lncarcerated

was p~ stlll ~risible ~t the top right hand sid~ of this

building. We fo.un~ 2 way to climb up to that room and looked

out o~er the city from ~ great helght. What had ke~n the Bah s

thoughts as He had stood here?

We re~d h~w He w~s subsequently t~.en to the prisons of M~h-ku

and t.hen Chihrlq, ~inally being brought back to T abn- IO race

the leading l~ul!as. In answer to thelr questlon "~.~ho are

YOU-~" He h~ replied~ m, I ~Im! I ~m the Promised On~ nd

ne o~ my companlons polntecl o-lt a l~r~e white bulldlr~ o~lt ~1

mlle awa~. "This building" he said: "now covers the .~ctuai ~ o

r the B~b's martyrdom on May ~7rd 18~ ~hvto~ Back in Tehran, we

visist another holy place, the house where Baha'u'llah was born.

So ended-our historic and inspiring visit to Iran. We boarded

our plane to Haifa. ~J'~ h~d to take a circ:u1~r route tO avold

flyin~ o~cr Syrla. ~ s meanrv once more flying over T~briz,

M~hku and I hen Mt.Ar~r~t in T~lrkey where lt is sald Noah~s Ark

came t.o rest aIter ..he .looa-We meditated on that ~reat

catastrophy which had descended upon theJ world bec~use of its

wickedness and ~or reJecting the Prc,phet Gl ~od. What, we

wonci~red, would be the f.~te of this ~ener~tion b~rore lt wo~lld

recognlse God's Promlsed One"~ t.ne Holy Land we were able to

visit the Shrines OI both Baha~u~llah ~nd the Bab and pray that

mankind would soon open its splrlt.ual eyes and realise th.~t the

Day of God Himself has dawned.

+P113

When my father retired and left me the farm in England he often

came over to llelp with advice. We had several very good years,

but Father warned me that until I had been farming for ten years

I could not call myself successful. It was a time when farmers

were being forced to be economical and I gradually changed the

farm from mixed croping and raising animals, into a wheat only

farm. I was able to reduce the labour force from 22 to one and

use big machinery to handle the wheat crop much more efficiently.

Fortunately all of the men turned off were able to get good jobs

elsewhere and r3ertie Vout, who had been with the farm for 20

years, was able to do all the ploughing and harvesting with odd

help in harvest time.

Of course there was danger in going into one crop continuously

and pe~ple reminded us of the Alllerican dust bowl which had

destroyed thousands of acres by that method. However we had

heavy clay land which was more stable. Also we had plenty of

good advice from the local Ministry of Agriculture and crop

yields did not fall, but even increased.

Soon another farming revolution arrived. We found that we no

longer needed the plough! By using heavy tynes behind a big

tractor it was possible to creat a much finer tilt. The

traditional plough left us with slabs of clay which became hard

and were very

+P114

difficult to break down into a fine tilth for planting next

year's seeds.

Further revolution came with crop fertilisation. We had always

kept many animals to the land. The reason why I now gave up

keeping animals was that the 2,000 bacon pigs we produced each

year had only given us enough manure for 10% of our 400 acre

farm. Now I had the land analysed and found that it was in good

heart and further, it did not need all the regular dressing of

Nitrogen, phosphate and potash which tradition said it should

have. In fact the autumn wheat needed nothing until spring.

Further, the land only needed potash every third year. ~ll this

meant a great saving in costs. Results from harvest after these

new inovations proved that yield was not fal)ing. In fact,

together with the new types of wlleat being developed every year

our average yield increased over 10 years from about 24 cwt per

acre to 40 cwt.

Father had left me one bagging combine machine and one bulk

machine. The first left 30 tons of grain in bags, scattered all

over the field each day. This had to be loaded onto trailers by

hard work. We therefore sold it and did the harvest quicker by

the bulk machine which poured the grain into a holding tank.

l~rom there it was transferred by

+P115

truck to the barn, where newly installed machinery transported it

to a bulk heap 7 feet ù1e~p all over a giant floor. Underground

air ducts then driecl the grain down to 14% moisture.

We finally broke all of the traditional rules of farming by

giving up the plough altogether and forcing the new seed into the

ground with an extra heavy drill. From all of this it is clear

that great savings were made and also it was possible to run the

farm on a part time basis. Now there was mucllrnore free time to

help spread the healing Message of Bah 'u'll h.

In 1972 Alicia and I found time to fly back to Nairobi for a big

Baha'i conference there. Then we hired a car and spent some days

upcountry visiting Baha'is in different villages.

As mentioned, from 1971 I served on the National Spiritual

Assembly of the Baha'is of the United Kingdom. Life was much

more interesting serving on a body directly under in the

Universal House of Justice. In 1973 and,~1978 N.S.A. members

from all over the world gathered in ~aifa to elect a new

Universal ~louse of Justice. It was a great bounty for us all

and it was my 7th and 8th time of visiting the ~loly Shrines, I

remembered that when in 1952, Shoghi Efendi was sending me back

to Africa after a 19 day pilgrimage

+P116

he said to me: "Do not be sad, you will come back.ll At that

moment I was almost penniless and had wondered how this could

ever come about. In 1978 I had become a prosperous farmer, the

Faith itself had expanded to cover the whole earth and my

comprehension of it had considerably developed.

The Haifa convention of 1978 also marked a giant step forward,

for the building of the House of Justice now stood in its

skeletal form on the slopes of Mt. Carmel, awaiting the

dedication ceremony. In front of over 500 delegates prayers were

read. Then lland of the Cause Ruhiyyih Khanum spoke to us about

how the beloved Guardian had prayed so earnestly for this great

day, had laboured for it over a lifetime and how, from the Abha

Kingdom, he must be witnessing this occasion with great joy.

Next she mounted a teMporary staircase which had been erected at

the front of the main entrance, which faced Bahji. She placed a

box containing soil from the resting places of the Bab and

~aha'u'llah in a specially prepared nich.(Later this was sealed

forever). Afterwards lland of the Cause Faizey speaking to us

about the significance of this solomn occasion said:. "A Hadith

in Islam tells that when, thousands of years ago, the Prophet

Noah had completed the building of the Ark, he placed in it soil

from the graves of Adam and Eve. Now "He said, "We are

performing a similar cermony with the Arc of the Cause of God on

Mt. Carmel,

+P117

from which the Law of God will go out to all the world, as

prophecied in the Bible.

Back at the pilgrim house, many rows of chairs had been arranged

in the open for Ruiyyih Kahanum to address the delegates further.

I was filming the faces of the audience when suddenly the

proceedings were halted for a special announcement. Ruhiyyih

Khanum read it out and my movie camera recorded a wave of joy as

it swept across the faces of the delegates. Some wept openly:

"His royal Highness the King of Samoa had just deca~ared his

belief in Baha'u'llah." This was first King to declare his

acceptance of the Faith." Much rejoicing followed.

A few years later the N.S.A. of the United Kingdom received a

message from the Universal House of Justice: "His royal highness

Talifi Xumalita of the Samoan Islands will be arriving in London

to visit the resting place of Shoghi Effendi, please announce to

the friends and appoint photographers." I was both a memeber of

the N.S.A. and one of the photographers. There was a large crowd

of Baha'is waiting when the King arrived at the Gt. Northern

Cemetary. We all went with him to the gravesite and prayed

together. The House of Justice had asked that the King be

+P118

given due respect by photographers when praying. However, when

his Majesty stood at the graveside with three Hands of the Cause

I felt impelled to take a picture from a distance and leave it

for Haifa to decide wether it was inappropriate. Out of all the

pictures, sent to Haifa, this was the one they chose.

There were other useful experiences in those days. As mentioned

earlier, from 1971 to 1980 I was a member of the National

Spiritual Asembly of the United Kingdom and spent frequent long

weekends in London at their meetings. It was a most refreshing

experience seeing the affairs of the Cause from a national point

of view. I was to discover a lot more about the art of ~aha'i

consultation. I remember on one occasion I had expressed my view

on a matter under consideration by the Assembly; the next speaker

showed I had not given due consideration to the whole pictureand

I said aloud "Oh dear, I did put my foot into it, didn't I!" A

voice from the other end of the table replied: 'Confucious said

'He who does not open mouth cannot put in big foot."' The

laughter did a lot to relax us all.

On another occasion we were all getting too tense in the

discussion, each impatient to speak. George Bowers, who could

usually be relied upon to get us back to normal, also leaned

forward and said in a quiet voice: "Kiss me!"

+P119

Not all situations had a satisfactory outcome, however, at one

meeting I felt that some members were doing too much talking and

the rest were not being allowed to speak much; finding it

difficult to make a contribution myself I got more and more

upset. Realising that this was not the way ahead I relaxed

somewhat. Soon I heard myself saying: "Mr Chairman, may we have

a round of opinion please." This we did and I was happy to see

that no one had been hurt by my interjection. But soon we seemed

to have returned to the old situation. Once more I raised my

hand and asked for a round of opinion. This happened several

times and the situation eventually became more normal. In fact,

it began to go the other way. Now everyone, finding they could

easily claim their right to speak, began to do so at great

length. The chairman's efforts to get members to shorten their

contributions failed and we were unable to gert through the

agenda in the days available to us.

While on N.S.A. matters, it may be appropriate to record an

interesting situation which Hand of the Cause Hasan Balyusi told

me once. A certain believer in his enthusiasm, had over-stepped

the orders of the N.S.A. and had said publicly some things which

though true, were not wise. He was interviewd by the Assembly',h

humbly apologised and the incident was dismissed. Later however,

he did it again and

+P120

was once more reprimanded. This happened more times and the

Assembly was discussing taking a~lay his voting rights. One

member suddenly realised something: "He has again apologised, ~e

cannot take away his rights!" No doubt he was however advised

that if he did it again he would loose his rights.

My parents were good Methodists and took their three chiildren e~

to Sunday school frequently. I therefore grew up with a great

love of the Bible. At the age of 29, as metioned, I set off for

Canada to find a new career and also a philosophy. I eventually

became a Baha'i and on returning to England two years later I had

tried to explain the Faith to my parents, but the time for their

reoognition of it had not arrived. However we often discussed it

and such items as the state of the world. One evening my father

had been to a Baha'i public meeting in a hired hall. He was

feeling very happy about it and reached for his check book

saying' "I want to pay for the cost of the hall, how much was

it?" I replied: "You know you cannot do that, only ~aha'is can

contribute." "I am a Baha'i!" he responded. I was breathless.

"Do you accept Baha'u'llah as the Manifestation of Gbd for this

age?" "Of oourse I do he announced." I was delighted and brought

out a decLaration card for him to sign. These were the last few

days of his life and he always listened intently as, on some

evenings I read to him from the holy Writings. Not long after

that he passed to the next world. I missed his lovely person

deeply but did not grieve, he was far happier now.

My mother outlived Father by many years and we often discussed

the needs of mankind and the Baha'i teachings. Her favourite

comment was: '~hat is in Baha'i that is not in the Bible?" I

explained the fullfillment of the Covenant of God, the

Adninstrative Order and new principles like equality of men and

women, but she somehow felt that these were all implied in the

message of Christ. I agreed, but tried to show her that tody we

have all the divine guidance and instructions to unite all races

and nations and set up world government. Qne day, as I came into

the house she greeted me with. "I have been trying to find out

where Christ said

+P121

we are only allowed one wife and I cannot find it." "Got you I

replied. "Does Baha'u'llah?" she enquired.1He sure does." I

responded. On another occasion we were in the middle of

comparing ideas ù~hen she exclaimed; "Yes I know Baha'u'llah is a

Prophet of Gbd, but why did he say . . . " "Mother, what did

you just say?" I exclaimed! "Qh you knaw whatI mean." She

replied. I did not feel I should follow this up at that time,

but am convinced that she had recognised her Lord.

One day we ù~ere visited by Mr & Mrs Ghandi, fram India. They

came to thank us deeply for helping their four children to settle

dawn in England and oomplete their schooling. They extended an

invitation for us to visit India and stay with them. They owned

5 large girls schools in India and these were run on Baha'i

lines, though they accepted students of all religions. Cathy,

our eldest was about 18, studying teaching and keen to go to

other countries. By same miracle it became possible for Alicia

md Cathy to visit India. Though I oould not get away fram the

farm, I felt the Ghandis and the other Baha'is ~ould look after

them and sent them off.

They arrived at the Ghandis in time foYstudent graduation. It

was the cust~m there to honour the parents as well as the

graduating children and they did this by weighing the mother in

flowers, a beautiful ceremony indeed. Cathy was asked to address

a school of 500 students about the Faith and afterwards they

surrounded her and asked all kinds of questions. ~rhey also felt

it an honour to be visited by people fram overseas.

Alicia and Cathy did some travel teaching and travelled by bus

with a male Baha'i escort. On one such journey they were

surround ed by people of all kinds and the air w~as filled with

much excited chatter. One man was talking excitedly with the

driver, and the Baha'i escort turned pale. He translated for

Alicia and Cathy. "He demands that the drived stop the bus so

that he can rape the white women." They were wondering

frantically what to do when suddenly the bus ran into a tractor

on the road

+P122

The ensuing chaos had saved the day!

They had many wond^rful ex~eriences~in India, certainly a great

step forward in their spiritual education. What is more, they

were hi~hly appreciated and must have caused many people to take

new heart in the spiritual meaning of life. Of course, a lot of

it came through difficulties and even tribulation, such as there

being no safe water to drink and also discovering at first hand

the great poverty in that land. When I asked Alicia to sum up

their month in India she said: "It is more terrible and more

t~onderful than you can imagine!" Although several young Baha'i

ladies went fram Europe to teach in India unaccampanied, yet it

does seem that travelling in small groups is best.

We had now been back on the farm 17 y~rs since leaving Africa in

1963. m e children were all in their teens and attended a

variety of private and government schools and Cathy was in

college but James had some learning difficulties. We had always

planned to retire ~rly and go back into overseas pioneering. In

consultation t~7e decided that we should leave the farm for good

and go to the U.S.A. to camplete the children's schooling and

then perhaps pioneer in South America or ~Jherever was most

suitable.

Since Alicia was born in California we would be able to use the

newest methods of education there, so we moved to Portland,

Oregon, bought a house near the oommunity college and put the

children into high school. Soon James had caught up well in his

education and even appeared on the Principle's oommendation list.

m is ù7as a great joy to us, for the English education r~l p

system had classified his problem as being more serious.

I found a useful way of spreading the Faith. Each morning I 3 ~

c~ aGc~ walked over to the nearby college and sat in the giant

cafeteria, ~choo. studying things like quantum mechanics and the

Faith and getting into conversation with the students. m ere

~7ere many fram overseas and life was very interesting. I was

able to get 20 signatures asking the college to set up a Baha'i

Club to discuss the Faith and its relation to current world

problems. Unfortunately most

+P123

students, though much interrested in this kind of discussion,

posessed limited finances and had to restrict their college time

to their main studies. However I continued getting to know

people and developing an interest in their affairs; in this way I

could help them to find solutions for their problems and get a

higher view of their objectives in life. Thus they felt that I

cared about them and we became friends. When I then intrcduced

the Faith they were much more appreciative and often asked for

literature. I had been developing this kind of approach with

strangers in cafes in England and continued it in the U.S.A.

I felt that if my I was consciously trying to get a declaration,

it would seem insincere in their eyes, and they would rightly

resist; so I put effort into getting to know them as real friends

and helping them along their own chosen way. I did not w,orry if

I was not always able to introduced them to the Faith but I hoped

that our conversation had perhaps helped them along their chosen

path. I knew that path would eventually connect with the Faith

somewhere. In this way I ~las free f m m an intellectual urge to

make new Bahais.

Since spiritual progress cannot be imposed on people, but must

come f mm their ~n hearts, it seemed illogical to try and convert

-them.~ It is however our duty to offer them information and

encourage them to work out its implications. I discussed it with

some of the Portland Baha'is and most appreciated it, but one

Board member felt that this method would not bring in lots of

declarations. However, I still try to follow Abdu'l Baha's

advice to make friends with new people first, so that they would

trust me, even if it takes a long time. Never the less I always

tried to raise their interest in the Faith so that they would

want a pamphlet. In this way I gave out many pamphlets, very

often at the rate of one per day. This amounted to giving out

about 260 per year and I felt that this ~as seed corn well worth

sowing, even though actual declarations were few. There is no

doubt that a few spiritually awake people c~ recognise

Baha'u'llah immediatelyj but that the masses liJ';e me wish to

take their time over it.

+P124

Like all good parents, Alicia and I were concerned about helping

our n~ grown childre~øfind spiritually orientated marriage

partners. Alicia was looking through a Baha'i news sheet on~

d~y~ came up w~ith a bright idea. "Look, there is a Baha'i youth

conference in Alaska next month, let's go." "m ere are plenty of

such conferences much closer" I observed. "It is a very long way

to go for a 3 day event!" "But our children need to ~ on~ tqt~ ~

~ng ~" She replied. "~ow on earth will they do that up there.

It will take us all a day to recover from the journey and the

conference time will fill up all the rest."

My logic was flawless, but I allo~ed it to be over ruled by a

mother w~ho, I suspected, was more open to higher guidance; Also

I had been invited to be one of the speakers at the conference.

So, off to Alaska we went, all six of us. It goes without saying

that the scenery and the warm hopitality were outstanding;

however, the unexpected happened. Cathy stayed a week longer and

went travel teaching with a y~vup. ane of that group was Ramin

Yavrom, a young man from a distinguished Persian family. A few

months later they ù~ere married and pioneered to Carjamaca, a

small city high up in the Andes. m eir t~o daughters Camilia and

Claudette were born there.

Susy now went to co~lege to study apparel design and also took an

apartment with a friend, Julia entered training as a hairdresser

and went to live with friends near her-college. James was i~-art

collegaand this all added up to our being free to do full time

travel teaching. We gave up our house and bought a big

recreation vehical. This was to be our home for several months.

We wrote to the ~ational Teaching committee in Wilmette offering

~ to spend several weeks visiting Baha'i communities all over the

U.S.A. They arranged an excellent 10,000 mile tour for us and in

83 days we gave firesides in 51 towns. During this trip t~hl~

we arrived in S.Carolina to take part in the official opening of

the Baha'i radio station WLGI. It was rather fascinating because

we were late arriving and were following the ceremony on our own

radio. When we finally arrived, we were able to take part in the

event we were listening to. This trip also enabled

+P125

us to spend seven days at the temple in Wilmette where we

attended a course for overseas pioneers. We were able to talk to

and study with these 30 dedicated and enthusiastic pioneers.

Also it was useful, for us because were soon to pioneer to Peru.

Following this big trip we made another one through western

Canada where we gave 52 firesides in 73 days. This took us up

north to Lake Louise and into Indian country. At one small

village we stayed with a couple ~ho had become much loved by the

Indians. They told us a typical true story of how they never

locked up their house and after a trip came home to find a whole

family of Indians had come to visit. Finding them away, they had

felt enough at home to sleep and eat there till their hosts came

back. One Indian had not been there before and felt

uncomfortable about taking over the house while its owners were

away, but his friends told him: "Oh, don't worry, these people

are real Baha'is!

On this trip we travelled to communities all the way up Vancouver

Is. and also attended a big Indian Pow Wbw at Neah Bay. m e

Trail ~o ~U~ of Light, was a yrOUp of 7 tribal Indian Baha'is who

had come from South America and were touring the U.S.A. This Pow

Wow was held in an Indian community center and over 200 of the

local Indians joined in. Everyone was much impressed by Kevin

Lock's display of hoop dancing. I was able to get some excellent

photographs of all these people, black, red and white, dancing

together to the drums.

The action was inspiring and I went outside and brought in a tall

step ladder to get a high view point of the action. As I was

about to ascend, a video cameraman pushed me aside and went up to

take his pictures from the top. I decided to be a good Baha'i

and not camplain and we both got good pictures. TWD years later

I discovered the man to be Charles Nolley, the audion-visual

manager at the Temple and we became great friends. Over the

previous 10 years I had been making slide shows on the Faith and

Charles ordered 12 sets of these for use at the temple.

+P126

The time had come for us to investigate pioneering in Peru on the

spot. Alicia and I flew to Lima, the capital and then took a bus

300 miles inland up into the Andes. Our destination qas

Carjamarca, a busy little town at 9,000 ft where our eldest

daughter Catherine and her family had been living for two years

with Ramin's elder sister, Shafligeh. They had received very few

visitors from the U.S.A. and were delighted to see us but had

recently suffered a major loss. All their Baha'i books had been

stored in a disused shower bath. (don't ask me why!) Uhknown to

anyone a back pressure on the water system had flood all the

books. They were trying desperately to dry them out before mould

appeared, it was almost hopeless. Fortunately they were in the

process of moving into their ~n house nearby and we went with

them and help spread the sodden books on the floor.

Since they were starting up a small fast food cafe in town, they

had to be economical in all things. This house was cheap - just

mud walls, unfinished. A primative bathroam out in the yard and

a water and electric supply which often disappeared altogether,

but it was home and they were pioneering in a very needy place.

In town there was a plentiful supply of hot water from

underground sources. For 5 cents each the whole family were able

to bathe together in a bricked hole in the ground. We were told

that these baths "Los banyos" were using the same water supply

that the Inca kings used thousands of years ago. It was most

refreshing. The water came to each bath through long open air

channels. It was too hot and we mixed it to our liking by moving

a brick and letting in some cold water.

The teaching work was going on steadily and everyone except us

oould speak fluent Spanish. Ramin's favorite activity was

sitting in the park and chatting with the local people.

There were large numbers of Campasinos (country folk) doing their

shopping in town and their attire was very picturesque; the women

wore voluminous colored skirts and black round hats. All were

+P127

in town to do shopping or seeing relatives. One morning I awoke

to the sound of chanting and the tone of a wierd horn. Grabbing

my camera, I went outside and tracked it down to a group of

workers planting potatoes in a field. An old man had a horn

about ten feet long. When he blew, the workers responded with a

chant and then planted more potatoes until the next blast came.

They greeted me cheerfully and did not mind being photographed.

I then ù~ent on to a ne~hbours hut to collect our daily jug of

rather dubious looking milk; this we always boiled. After

breakfast I set about putting several sodden books out in the sun

to dry. In each case I had to gently open every page. Some of

the books, like Dawnbreakers took a long time but the sun was

strong and soon I was making real progress. After several days I

had dried them all out and then had to glue solme of them backto

their bindings. Eventually nearly all were brought back to a

usable condition.

Shafligeh's son Moojan was married and he found a living, here in

a unique way. He painted coloured designs on glass and sold them

in varying sizes. Some of his big ones were put up in churches

(with appropriate designs) and they looked much like real leaded

glass windows. Although most of the population was very poor

indeed, there were still a lot of rich people who gave high

prices for Moojan's work. For some years he has been making a

good living out of it. He was also excellent at teaching the

Faith because he had a sunny disposition and many people in town

knew him because he used to work in the tax office.

Ramin and Cathy now decided to move dc~tn to the coast where

there was more business and he could earn his living better. He

visited Trujillo and rented an apartment. Returning to Carjmarca

he noticed big trucks regularly brought food up from ~ the coast

and returned emptly. ~e walked around town until he found ane

and offered the man money to take all his furniture to Trujillo

a big town down on the coast. Alicia, Cathy and her baby took a

plane and Ramin and I ù~ent with the truck. There was no room in

the cab for me so I crawled in under the kitchen table and lay

dcwn on a mat. We set off as it grew dark. Soon were stopped by

a patrol who asked ~hnut our business. We were

+P128

apparently breaking the law in some way but suddenly the

policeman recognised us as the relatives of Moojan's little girl

and waved us through. The truck then churned its way up another

thousand feet to go over a mountain pass. Here we stopped at a

very primative hut at 11,000 which was an eating house for

travellers. I woke up and scrambled out frc,m under the kitchen

table. We entered a dingy roam lit by candles and an oil lamp.

Ramin ordered a dish of rice and meat ~hich was eventually

produced. I had noticed a giant dog in the corner as we came in,

and he had given us a friendly wag of his tail. On biting into

the meat in the semi darkness, I realised why; the meat was

uneatable; the dog received it with enthusiasm as I flung it into

his corner. Back on the dirt road again, all night long we wound

our way down to sealevel and along the coast . Much of this

coastal road crept along a sheer precipice with little passing

room. Illogically I was glad to be under the kitchen table where

I could not see it. Strangely I must have slept for the whole

eight hour journey. Perhaps it was because I realised things

were out of my control and I was entirely in the hand of God.

In Trujillo, Ramin began setting up a soft drink and snack shop

near the market and this was to sustain them for some years

until giant inflation of 3,000 per cent gripped the country. ~e

stayed with the family for a few weeks and then went to Lima city

to look into educational and job facilities for our now grown

children. Then we flew back to the U.S.A. to pack up all our

portable belongings for a real move to Peru. I had the big job

of selling our recreation vehical and crating up all our things

into six giant packing cases. Alicia and Julia flew back to

Lima, stayed with some Baha'is and started looking for

accomodation.

It was lonley being without family, but there was much for me to

do but one day I received a phone call from Alicia. She had

contracted serious asthma in the very dusty city of Lima, where

it never did rain. Her case was so dangerous that I told them

both to ccme back to the U.S.A. immediately for treatement.

+P129

Alicia and Julia had made good friends with a lot of people in

Lima. They had both spent much time helping run the Baha'i

center there and Julia had become quite friendly with a fine

young Peruvian named Ramiro who ~as a bit older than herself.

She asked permission to remain in Lima. m e family of her friend

offered to look after her while Alicia came back to the U.S.A.

so she stayed on and gradually fell in love with Ramiro. He was

a very active Baha'i. Among his services was the giving out of

the Promise of World Peace booklet. He and another lady had

visited 63 foreign embassies in Lima (after applying for an

interview each time) and sucessfully delivered a booklet to each.

They were treated with real respect.

On one of these missions, the Ambasador of a Moslem state ù~as

the recipient. After receiving the Message he asked the Baha'is

a question: "Why are they persecuting the Baha'is in Iran?" Since

they had decided beforehand that they should not speak to the

Ambasador about the Faith, Ramiro replied: "May I have your

honour's permission to reply with a question?" "Certainly." "Does

your honour accept Muhammad as the Prophet of God?" "Of course.

"Do you accept Muhammad as the Seal of the Prophets?"

"Certainly". The questions continued on all the basic Moslem

beliefs until Ramiro offered. "Your honour, this is what Baha'is

believe!" m e ambasador was deeply impressed.

I have included these details not only to suggest that Ramiro is

a good Baha'i actively serving the Faith, but also to show that

we had very good reason to consider him a trustw~rthy son-in-law,

for within a few weeks he had proposed to Julia and been

accepted. We could not afford to go to Peru for the wedding and

we gave our parental permission on what we knew about him. m ey

were married in the home of his parents and a few months later

they immigrated to the U.S.A. Although neither of them could

speak the other's language at first, yet now they were both

fluent in both. Soon each had a good job in the U.S.A. and a

year later Ibmmy ~las born. Ramiro's parents write to us very

warmly from time to time, through an interpreter, showing their

love and great respect for Julia and her parents. Now,

+P130

some years later it has turned out to be a very good marriage.

We hope that one day ~e will all be able to meet these lovely

relatives o~ ~n~iro and rejoice together in this link between our

tt~ nations.

To return to our own plans, for the next three years we tried

every kind of treatment for dear Alicia. Sometimes we thought we

had found something useful for her ailment, but nothing offered a

lasting cure. IIowever, with care she was able to lead a normal

life. She decided to get trained as a travel agent, so we ~ent

to live at San Carlos, California, where there was a suitable

colege. Elowever, the prospects of her making a useful career in

this way did not turn out well, so we moved to Capitola~ by the

sea because we had been told that the ozone released by the ocean

was beneficial for asthma.

It was about this time that Susan, our second eldest found the

right young man. Although not a Baha'i he was much inclined to

its teachings. Within a few months he became an active Baha'i

and soon they were married. Susan's health was not always good

and George turned out to be a most understanding and helpful

husband.

Cathy and Ranin now visited from Peru and then went on to a

pilgrimage in the Holy Land. m ey returned to their pioneer post

in Peru much uplifted. ~other big influence in our lives was the

fact that Posch ~aha'i Summer School was quite near by and each

year ~e ~ere able to spend some days there. The peacful serenity

coupled with meeting so many dedicated people fro,m far and wide

seemed to bring a blessing which was accentuated by the beautiful

forests all around

Finding that the ocean air had not improved Alicia's health after

a year, we moved to the dry desert conditions of Las Cruces in

New Mexico. Here we found a happy, lively Baha'i community and

soon Alicia was setting up a weekly Baha'i class for the children

of the whole area. She had developed such schools twice before,

at the farm in England an in Portland, Oregon. She first

gathered together about 12 concerned mothers

+P131

anl formed them into a School Board. The Board then worked out

all the pract details of the proposed school, including the

choice of venue and curriculum. When all was ready the School

Board submitted themself to the Local Spiritual Assembly of Las

Cruces as their parent authority who were delighted with the

project. They started training the teachers several months

before starting the classes.

When the classes began, parents and children from other assembly

areas, even El Paso, 50 miles away joined in. Difficulties came

up of course, but everyone was determined the school should

thrive and give their children the steady spiri sustenance that

Baha'u'llah has stipulated. Three years later (1992) it is still

fl ishing and growing.

In 1990 our son James married a lovely Chinese lady from Taiwan.

They had me at the California College of Art in Oakland, where

they were both students together. Michele Tu had been educated

in the Bay area but she was not a Baha'i when they were courting.

James used a lot of gentleness in showing her the Faith and after

a long time she recognised Baha'u'llah. Now, after two years of

marriage they are both keen active Baha'is and both serving on

the Local Spiritual Assembly as well as on the School Board.

To return to Alicia and myself. After one year in the dry

conditions of Las Cruces, we had to leave, because the electric

storms seemed to adversely aff~ Alicia's asthma. We packed up

and drove our rented U-Haul van with all our furniture in it,

westwards to look for a small town without polluted air and w we

could buy a cheap house on mortgage. After investigating several

towns w~ found our ideal home in Red Bluff Judicial district.

Well it was nearly ideal, it did have short spells of high

temperature in summer, but we had a good ai] conditioner and our

house looked out onto green country.

Here we settled in very happily with warm encouragement from the

local Bah group. Soon there were two new declarations, Lisa and

Kurt Harms. Then two other Baha'is, Jan Marina and Sheila

Granger moved into Red Bluff town grou Our good fortune

continued, for a few months later J acqueline and Gene Wild from

San l ose moved up to our area and we now have a strong

community.

Aliicia had for many years been working on a curriculum for

Baha'i schools a she continued to research this project steadily.

I started working on the fruit trees and building a green house.

I also dug the ground and Alicia did all the plann and planting.

We began building what is called "Square foot gardening." Six

foot square boxes filled with correct soil mixture and planted

with vegetables

+P132

We felt that we needed income to serve the Faith more fully,

Alicia tried continually to find an occupation. Her main effort,

spening two years learning to be a travel agent had not matured.

She tried many other avenues without success. Sometimes she

found part time work and threw herself whole heartedly into it,

but thereby making new friends to whom she gave the Faith. But

one day she was feeling frustrated at her inability to find a

job, she said to me I wonder if the world really needs me and

whether my life has been a success." I replied Oh really! Well

then can you show me any Baha'i family in the whole world which

has raised four active, devoted Baha'i children, who have married

four active Baha'i partners of four different races, Iranian,

Peruvian, American and Chinese? You their mother did most of

this by your unselfish, hard-working efforts in raising those

children while 1, their father, was usually out working on the

farm. On top of that, you have been the driving force and

inspiration which has started Baha'i Sunday classes for children

first our farm, for the whole area and then in the U.S.A at

Portland Oregon, Las Cruces and now Red Bluff."

Truely this is a devoted, loving, persevering servant of

Baha'u'llah who in spite of being restricted by her ailments,

persevered in the way of loving service to mankind. Even today

occasionally a grown up Baha'i would greet her with ' Hullo

Auntie Alicia, do you remember me?' In our 18 years in England

she had for years been secretary of the Child Education

Committee; one her duties was to send out birthday greetings

every year to each of the 800 odd Baha'i children on her rolls.

She became well known by the new generation in many countries.

How many souls did she save for the new race of men, like those

who many years later, as active Baha'is greeted her with "Hullo

Auntie Alicia!"

We did not know it when we came to Red Bluff, but Alicia's duties

in the physical world were slowly drawing to a close. Her asthma

and other problems increased, but she kept working hard as

secretary of the Assembly and organiser of the childrens classes

and a hundred other things to make those around her happy. We

kept closely in touch with our four children and occasionally had

big family gatherings at our home. These gatherings included

three grand-children, Camilia, Claudette and Tommy and great were

the celebrations at those times we had together.

One day her heart just stopped and her immortal soul took its

flight to the real world beyond our earthly vision. There she is

continuing her journey through all the worlds of God. On her

worldly resting place are engraved these words:-

`The light which these souls radiate is responsible for

the progress of the world and the advancement of its

peoples.'

- Baha'u'llah, Gleanings from the Writings of

Baha'u'llah, p. 157

+P133

All four children and their families came to the funeral and then

stayed a week longer; we shared our deep grief together and

started planning for the future. During that week Alicia

appeared to several individuals in various ways. Typical was

Julia who, sleeping in her mother's bed, woke up in the middle of

the night and rushed into my room. "Dad, Mum has just told me to

go and comfort you and say "I did not have much spare energy

while I had a sick body, but now I have all the energy I want!"

Julia went on "Dad, you must not think of that room as a sad

place, it is filled with power!"

When the families had all gone I went up to Bosch Summer School

and worked for my keep the whole summer. In that time I was

surrounded with many people who know Alicia and myself and their

support was greatly warming. I got a lot of work done in the

gardens and attended all the session I chose. After the summer I

spent two or three weeks living with each of my children. They

all wanted me to stay permanently of course, but I had heard of

the great progress of the Faith in Romania and began planning to

go there. It just happened that recently the N.S.A. of the

United Kindgom had received a suggestion from the Universal House

of Justice, that it could be useful if they invited overseas

British Baha'i to come back for a teaching trip in England; they

sent me an invitation. I also received an invitation from the

new N.S.A. of Romania to help with the teaching there. And

above all an invitation came from Haifa to be present there for

the 100th year celebrations of Baha'u'llah's passing and placing

the scroll containing the names of the Knights of Baha'u'llah at

His the threshold of His shrine. I am therefore embarking on a

five month trip, visiting the three countries and returning to

California. It seems to me that it if I find the needs of the

Faith in Romania as urgent as I have heard, that it will be hard

to resist going back there for a long time.

I have just been told that seven Persian Baha'i families are

wanting to buy a building for a Baha'i Center in Romania and are

looking for a caretaker. Who knows what will happen! ~Verily we

are all from God, and to Him shall we return.

THE END FOR NOW

REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL TEACHING TEAM TO THE FAR

EAST

November 15 to December 1 1987

`O that I could travel, even though on foot and in the

utmost poverty, to these regions, and, raising the call

of "Ya Baha'u'l-Abha" in cities, villages, mountains,

deserts and oceans, promote the Divine teachings!

This, alas, I cannot do. How intensely I deplore it!

Please God, ye may achieve it.'

-`Abdu'l-Baha,

Tablets of the Divine Plan, p. 39.

In response to the summons of `Abdu'l-Baha (quoted above) 36

Baha'is left the U.S.A. on November 15th 1987 and travelled to 5

countries in the far East to show by their actlons the depth of

thelr love for Baha'u'llah and for all manklnd.

It also seemed that we were seeking to unite our intellectual

Western approach with the splrltual one of the Orient. Some of

the Eastern blessings soon became apparent in the relaxed,

patlent and frlendlY receptlon we all received in our flrst 5

days whlch were spent in Taiwan. rrom the airport we went into

Taipei, the capital, by special tour bus and first visited the

Lung Shan Buddhist temple, the largest and most famous in Taiwan.

Here crowds of workers and housewives carrying incense stlcks

bowed to varlous shrlnes then knelt to pray with sreat

earnestness. Astonishlngly we were told that photography was an

accepted as natural. We walked amongst them and founc that thl~

close contact wlth the people was a warm experience, in spite of

our embarrassment at mixing cameras with worshlppers. It seemed

that it was an indication that if motives were for the good of

all, then such a mlxture can be harmonlous. Our lnterest was for

splrltual treasure, not materlal ones.

+P134

Our breakfast at the hotel each day was In our own dining room

where we also had prayers, readings and consultations for two

hrs. The second day five National Spiritual Assembly members

joined us. Mr. Said Kadivian, their chairman, very warmly

welcomed us and told how desperately we are needed. He jovially

appointed us all to the "Extension Travel Teaching Committee".

They have had nearly 900 new believers recently and 70% of these

were educated youth. He told us how when the House of Justice

had announced new persecutlons, they haa replied with "'~e have

just haa 300 new believers!" Thl~ was no card-slsnlns e~erclse,

he sald but true acceptance. The Fund also Increased 70%

Jean Bellows, a ploneer, gave a fine slide show on the teaching

that is going on in Taiwan. She told us of a dream she had of

the whole west coast of Taiwan opening up and its people flooding

onto the malnland of Chlna. Said Kadivian appealed to us to

return here again and help teach the masses. They need at least

17 more travelling teachers. Also. Please teach the Chinese

everywhere in the U.S.A.

He told us of the ambitious goals of their Publlshing Trust,

especlally the creatlon of their own kind of pamphlets, not just

translatlons of the Amerlcan ones. Empnasls is to be plcced on

pamphlets whlch use the creatlve Worcs of God. "Intone, O My

servants, the Words of God...!"

Part of our slghtseeing took us to the Memorlal of Chlang Kai

Shek and Dr. Sun Yat Sen. Martha Root had spoken wlth him.

+P135

It was interesting to find that the basis of the new Chlnese

Republic, founded by Dr. Sun Yat Sen, is the Three People's

Principles; "of the people, by the people and for the people."

Next morning, after our breakfast session, we headed in our

speclal bus to the town of Tsao Tung, sbout three hours distance.

The entire way was spent in discussions and entertainment over

tne amplifier as Tony Lease, our tour director, drew from each of

us some of our Baha'i experiences. Sugar, a vivacious Chlnese

Baha'i, taught us a Baha'i songs, in Chinese, one of which went

like this: (my own alliteration): "Wa I nee (I love you) La nee I

wa (and you love me) Dai chee chow see see (I am Baha'i).

At Tsao Tun we all had lunch with some of the local pioneers and

others at a very modern cafe. They told us that most new Baha'is

had been attracted by the Spirit of the Faith, even though they

know llttle ~bout the administration.

Clothing here is very cheap but no use for Americans ~unle~s lt

1Y e~peclalIy talIored) because they do not make clothes in the

larger slzes we need.

We were frequently reminded not to start pushing the Falth here,

for lt is a bl~ enough happening for the local people to suddenly

see 36 Amerlcans appear together. We should just be natural,

frlendly anc carlr.g. We vlsited the modest Baha'l center here

in this vlIlage, said prayers and had a group picture taken wlth

an

+P136

elderly Chlnese gentleman who had been a Baha'l only a very short

tlme.

One evening we went to a fireside at the Taipei Center and the

place was flIled to overflowlng. After some prayers talks were

given by two or three persons. Our group nearly depleted the

supply of special books, calendars and other materials printed in

Talwan. Every one felt the warmth an~ unlty auring the

fellowship and refreshment time. We all felt lt c great bounty

to share our prayers and experlences. A young lady at our hotel

had become lnterested In the Falth through contact wlth some of

us. 3 She attenaed a flreslde and declare~ that evening.

In our consultatlons we learned that the Chinese are not famlllar

wlth the Chrlstlan Idea of Prophets, so we should RATHER MANIFEST

THE SPIRIT. At no time should we do anything to upset the local

teaching work but synch~onl~e at all times with the local and the

Natlonal. Just our travelling he.e In such a larse group has a

blg teaching effect.

Breakfast at the hotel, Asla World, the next morning was a

splrltual as well as materlal feast. One ploneer jolned us after

rl~ing at 5 AM to get here from the next town. He was Mansour

Kheraamandam from Chung Ll. The rest of the day was spent going

out to the markets and shops and mingling joyfully wlth the

people.

Our last evening In Talpei was a celebration dinner wlth the

local Baha'i guests. Victor Tom, known to many of us was there

and gave a ~hort talk.

+P137

Another inspiring talk was given by Jack Davis who wlth Kenton

Dunbar and other pioneers started the teaching here, whlch has

acceleratea now lnto mass converslon. We were reminied of the

letter of the Universal House of Justice whlch has given great

lmportance to the teaching work in Taiwan. In view of this we

should remind the American community of how much thelr help is

nee~ed by sencing ~eacners anc also teaching the Chlne~e in the

U.S.A.

We sent joyful cables to the Unlversal House of Justlce and to

the Hand of the Cause Bill Sears.

The next day we flew to Hong Kong, changed planes and arrived in

Bangkok late evenlng. What a wonderful surprise awaited us. We

were greeted by about 30 Baha~ls car~y!ng a large ~anner.

Bangkok gave us a true Baha'i welcome.

SUNDAY. Nov. 22nd We all vlsltea the Royal Museum and then the

chlef Buddhl~t shrlne in all the worlC. Hls Hollness the Buddha

l~ en5hrlned here, in an all golcen bullding known the world over

for lt magnlflcence. We remove~ our shoes and entered to pray

wlth crowds of others. Then we toured the enormous buiIding

complex, perhaps the most ornate in the world, at every step a

new won~er of beauty greete~ us. Every lnch Is decorated for

here resides the Emerald Buddha, now in winter ~ress.

That evening we attended the local Baha'i Feast. Maybe the

s~ying is "East Is East and West is West and never the twain

shall meet.." but at that Feast this was no longer so. It was

+P138

here that the warmth and unity of Splrit melded the twain!

During the consultatlon perlod four of the Amerlcans gave a 10

minute talk, each on a different aspect of the Faith. The social

part of ~he Fea~t fllled wlth Joyous song and wonderful frults

and ~weets. The place was crowded to overflowing.

MONDAY NOV. 23RD We arose at 5:30 AM for breakfast, prayers and

discussions. At 8:30 we ~oaraed a long narrow fast boat for a

trip on the Chao Payee ~Rlve~ Payee, sometlmes CGlIed the Rlver

of the Klng~). How can I descrlbe that experlence? Imaglne a

very broad rlver flowing past the hotel and swarming with boats,

ocean going vessels, great ba~es and boats of every size for the

tourlst. Many of the tour boats were long and narrow wlth a

truck englne mounte~ on a swivel at the rear, from this extended

a 12 foot propeller shaft. At full throttle the ~oat almost

leaps out of the water and the passengers hang on for dear llfe

while an ever nonchalant boatman skillfully steers them through

the trafflc. We had a larger, slower version and were constantly

passed by these whlle we lelsurely enjoyed every inch of this

strange, wonderful trip along the river and kl~ngs,~canals) of

this incredible city.

Ou~ gulde, Sam Is the local representatlve of Tony Lease Tours

~nd was a constant source of lnformatlon and ioy. He referred

affectlonately to the speeding boats as our "Local Kamakazis".

It was alon~ these canals,or klongs, we saw how the poor, and not

so poor, people llved. Some of the very poorest looking

buildings

+P139

were the river resldence and buslness site of persons who had

homes elsewhere. We saw the daily routine of many of the rlver

people from bathing and washing their teeth whlle stanaing waist

deep in the river, washing clothes, loading boats, and cooking

the family'5 meal. This was a timely e~perience for us, tourists

from the luxury Shangra La Hotel.

Along the way we saw well kept patches of water plants grown for

food ana other uses. Tropicdl fru.ts, orchias ana other

brilliant flowers flourished. Throush ~.nese narrow canals the

kamakazis kept roaring past us making high tidal waves which

everyone took good naturedly. Soon we reachea our destination,

the floating market of Bangkok,the tourlst haven. So many boats

were tled up to the pier whiIe their passensers ransacked the

multltude of stalls for barsains, that some of the passengers had

to walk across two or three boats to get tc thelr own. We were

among the ~argaln hunters but so well was i~ all organl7ed,

however, by "our great leader", dS Sam referrec to Tony Lease,

that we lost not a slngle person and all were present when we

gathered back at the boat an hour later. We returned to the main

rlver with lt~ scurrying boats, enormous grain ba~ges going

down to the sea and ferries crisscrossing between them all.

Often we passed beautlful well kept temples but none could

compare with the Temple of Dawn, a massive complex of incredible

shrines, temples, and market stalls. Everything was in living

technlcolor. As the cameras came out, so did the sun from the

early morning overcast and we were able to get pictures to our

hearts content.

+P140

Every morning breakfast was a joyful event with prayers and plans

for the day's teaching and shopping. In spite of having to

choose from over 25 dlshes, the mood was spiritual ~nd this was

taken up iby the hotel staff who must have ~een amazed to flnd

~such an atmospnere in thelr luxury hotel. I askea one walter if

he understood English ~nd he noddea. I sald, UDo you understand

what is hcppenins?" He noddec. I save hlm a brief explanatlon

and a pamphlet. Several tlmes in the ne~t days he came back to

me and e~pressed warm frlendship, remlnaing me that I had spoken

to him.

One day two travelling Baha'l tedchers mlraculously found us and

Jolned ln. They were Myrlam Marrero, pioneer to Surinam and

Hlllegonda Van der Zee from Holland. Another day a member of the

i Natlonal Splrltual Assembly of Malaysla, ~Ir. Kurama Das spoke

to us. They now have lOO,OOO bellevers, 150,000 lf you count the

chlIdren.

Other guidance given to us wa~ that we should speak to these

peopleq in thelr own manner. They do not use the word "God" but

the "Great Splrit". They are not famlllar with the Blble

Prophets or wlth progresslve revelation. Tell them rather that

Baha'u'llch is the Great Teacher for today.

One thlrd of all Chlnese llve outslde Chlna, befriend them

whereever You flnd'them. In Thalland educatlon has been

compulsorY slnce 1921 and now only 8% of lts adults are

llllterate. Already they have ~een following this teaching of

Baha~u~llah for many years! But more than this, from the poorest

to the richest they

+P141

are always turning a bright, shining and frlendly face to

everyone, as He has commanded. They truly made us feel at home.

Our last evening in Bangkok was spent in a massive restaurant

eating Thai food and watching Thai Gancers In tradltlonal dres~

to the sound of throbbing Instruments we had never seen before.

And fInally a~ we leave this hot, humld, enchanted clty wlth its

w~rm and loving people, It seems we hardly notlce~ the humldlty.

This wa~ especlally true when srouPs of us were taken off by

local Baha'ls to visit thelr frienCs and meet informally wlth the

people. On one such venture slx of us taxied acros~ the clty to

meet wlth the head of an Internatlcnal School. We found the

~chool dlsplaying many examples of ~he multl-natlonal aspects of

the world. They were doing this because it was the obvlous way

ahead and the head was surprlsed when we told hlm he was obeying

the Wlll of God. Several others went off to see something of an

agrlcultural nature.

At our last breakfast in Bangkok Sammy Smith, the Secretary of

the Local Assembly, told us that they are sending two books, ~The

New Garden " and "The Peace Statement" to 2,000 schools. We

offered to help address these but she said, "Only lf you can type

in Thal." She had brought some examples of the products of

cottage lndustrles the Baha'ls of Northern Thailand had producea

to help them earn a living. They were very fine set~ of

placemats and nap'klns made from the raw cotton grown in the

area. One teacher told how In a bus a man had overheard her

telling about the Falth and pulled her aside demanding to know

"what is Baha'i"

+P142

because it is just what he belleves.

NOV. 28-31 HONG KONG TO CANTON (in Guangdong Province)

Our first evening in Hong Kong we split into two groups wlth one

going to a fIreside at the Baha~l Center and the rest took an

hour bus journey to the town of Tal Po. In ~oth firesides the

same warm spirit of love and unity was shown. We met pioneers,

Iocal te~chers ana local non-Baha'is. e met a Malaysian who haa

come with eleven others to do teaching work here. One of them

had presented the Peace Message to thlrteen ~chool heads and

plans to do twenty more. She did it without appointments and had

a fine receptlon.

Late that evening we gathered at the hotel to observe the passing

of 'Abdu'l-Baha. Some local believers were there also. The

program W2~ planned by Mr. Kurama Das. and lasted till about 1:30

Chester Lee, National Spiritual Chairman, reminded us that the

Baha'i News had reported that after Beijing Book Fair, the

Government of China asked for a translation of three more Baha'i

books. He said they use such books for research and for reports

to thelr people. They have already mentioned Baha'u'llah in

reports.

Early next morning we arose for breakfast at AM. The train trip

to Canton ~Guant~ou) China was a three hours long. It was

raining as we passed through partially harvested rice fields.

There were other crops but we could not distinguish what they

were. Going through customs at Canton was very easy and a Bus

from the Garden Hotel was waiting for us. Our guide, Johnny, an

adopted

+P143

English name that sounds much like his own, that back in the days

when he graduated, alt young people were sent to the countryside

for two or three years. (This is no longer done) ~e has a wife

and one spn. His wife works in the hospital as a lab tech and

the child stays at his kindergarten which is at the hospital at

cost of food only. All big work places ~o ehis. Women In China

have more freedom than the ones in America because they can

become train divers (englneers~ ana heavy equi?ment workers, etc.

Francis, a beautiful lady guide supplied ~y the Tony Lease office

In Hong Kong spoke very good EnglIsh t.avelled to Chlna wlth us

and was a great help not only with our entry to the hotel but

when Johnny got stuck. One of these times was when he trled to

exp I a I n how when the " Gang of Four u was over thrown, the I

and that had been communes was gl ven ~ack to the peop I e . We

had to stop by the Dlstrict Office to get s~il I another guiae (a

local one~ before we could visit a typlcal farm famiIy who ralsed

ducks ana geese . The elderly couple welcomea al I J6 visi tors

who only just managed to squeeze into their main room. This was

in the town of Dall. They had flve chlldren and were lucky that

was before the ruling of only one chlld per famlly or severe

penaltles for each extra chlId. We returned the local guide to

her district offIce.

We also visited a ceramic factory, a siIk factory, a jade factory

and a Museum School that had formerly been a Taoist Temple. The

temple used to ~e used for famllY worship and contalned mlnlature

flgures deplcting all aspects of family llfe plus many large

statues representing warrlors as well as Gods.

+P144

Wlth much persuaslon we were allowed to visit a local hospltal f

at the town of Po Shan. Health care Is free. The hospltal was

very primitive by our standards but the people there seemed to

get good care. There were two dispenseries or pharmacies, one of

Western type medicines and the other Chinese Herbals. Everything

in China would have been enjoyed much more if we had not been so

cold. We had been told that the temperature would be much llke

that of Hong Kong (and it was), but a cold front had come down

from the north and with the wind and rain we were most

uncomfortable. All the heavy luggage had been left at the Park

Lane Hotel in Hong Kong. We brought wlth us only the barest

neccessities in an overnighter or carry on bag for such a short

stay. Even though we shivered in spite of wearing two or three

shirts, we found great frlendliness everywhere in Canton. We had

plenty of meetings with the local people, mostly when shopping

and in the hotel. There was llttle conversation , of course, but

we ald share wonderfully warm, frlenaly greetings In our own way.

They ~ldn't obJect to having thelr plcture taken in fact they

wanted u~ to do so. We saw no pollce of any klnd an~ Just a very

few soldlers seemingly off duty.

It was generally felt by us that the Chlnese are a gentle,

wonderful, sensltlve people with an unusual sense of beauty which

is qhown in their surroundings and thelr great works. Of course,

as tourlsts we saw mostly tourlst p~aces, but we did see much of

the common people and their homes while driving through the small

country towns and villages of all kinds.

+P145

was wlth ~reat reluc~ance that ~e had to retur-. home ~Lter cnly

one more brlef day in ~ong Kong. It was ver~ hcrd to sa~ soodbye

to Chester and the others. Two persons in our qroup stayed, one

in Hong Kong and one went back ~o ~aiwan. Others re ~lanning to

retur. soon.

+P146

Highly Significant Celebrations at the World Center

The entire last week of l~ay ~99~ saw some most Sl9n~icant events

occuring in the Holy Land. In ascending order they were:-

1. The placing of the scroll, listing the names of the Knights

of Baha'u'llah, under the floor at the entrance to the shrine of

Baha'u'llah.

2. The commemoration of the Centenary of the ascension of

Baha'u'11ah on ~ay 2gth 18~2. 3. The processlon or 3,400

Baha'is from all over the world up the Avenue of the Kings on

Mt.Carmel, circumambulating the shrine o~ the Bab and then

climbing up to the seat of the Unlversal House or Justice to vlew

a near life sized portra~t or the Blessed Beauty. rhe beloved

Guardian once said to a pilgrim ~. . . the bounty of making a

pilgrimage is that you may become spiritually strong to go out

and do great serv~ce ~or the Faith. Thus th~s mass pllgr1mage

wlll doubtless ~ecome the cause of great new capaclty amongst the

~rlends. rowards the end of ~ay planes began del~ver~ng pllgrims

rrom all over the world to the Holy Land. National Spiritual

Assemblies from 175 countries had each been asked to send ninteen

Baha~is to take part in this cele~ration. As they arrived

+P147

at the World Center, 3 whole day was given to registration and

for meeting long parted friends. ~any were the Joyl'ul greetings

between Baha'is who had long been ser~ing the Faith in faraway

places. Try to imagine the pilgrim house near the shrine of the

Bab, acustomed to ~ccomod3ting a grnup of lOo pilgrims, now being

used to welcome ~,400 on this day. So packed was it wlth old

friends that one could hardly walk a yard without being hailed

and embraced. We had been preYiously asked not to telephone to

the hotels in town to find special friends, for i~ everyone dld

this is would jam the telephone system. It was potnted out to us

that the social side of this celebr:~tion must take strlctly

second place to the main events themselves and the~r splrltual

si9nlricance~ Further, television crews from Europe would be

recording everything so we were asked not to run around taking

plctures ourselves. The World Center ~t~ff would cover

everything.

On May 27th, the second day, a reception was held by the

Universal House of Justice for those Knights of Baha'u'llah who

were still alive. (about 109 out of 257). Fortunately our group

arrived at the House of Justice building about an hour ear~y and

so we were able to walk around the beautiful gardens. We were

told that at this time of the year the grass would normally have

been be dead throu~h summer heat and lack of rain, but that

fortuitously there had been a massive downpour. Grass and

+P148

flowers were at their peak condition as a result. However, it

was not all progres~ for the rain had washed great numbers of the

famous geraniums out of the ground and the storm had blown down

some of the tall ornamaental trees. The hard pressed ground

staff had been forced to go out into the town and buy more plants

and to remo~Je downed trees. On thts day there w~s no sign of

the damage anywhere.

The gathering took place in the maln hall. Short addresses were

gi~en by the Chairman of the House of Justice and by Hand of the

Cause Ruhuiyyih Khanum. The latter gave a very warm welcome to

the Knights. Then she drew our attent~on to the great importance

of taking advantage of world conditions to use the spiritual

power now at our disposal to make real progress in awakening

mankind to the Divine outpouring. She sa~d, from memory, that

she hoped we would not go back to our countries and just say

things like ~Oh we had a wonderful t~me and everyone was uplifted

and Ruhiyyih Khanum W3S looking younger than we expected.~

(laughter). But that we should go back and ar~use the ~riends

everywhere to the tremendous spiritual opportunttles now open tor

teaching the Faith in this Holy Year.

There followed refreshments and the opportunity for the Knlghts,

many of whom had not seen each other for very many years, to

greet each other, discuss old times and see the scroll,

+P149

which was laid out on a long table. Later it would be rolled up

and inserted into a metal cylinder, vacuumed and hellum gas

inserted before sealing. Each name on the scroll had its own

ornamented place, and was coupled with the name o~ the territory

opened and the date it was opened.

At 10 a.m. the next morning, buses collected all 3,400 attendees

~rom their hotels and brought us, in carefully organised

sequence, to Bah~i where a large hayfteld had been rented to park

the 60 buses with great precision. Everyone would be able to

relocate their own bus after the ceremony of placing the cylinder

at the entrance to the Shrine.

Rows ot cha~rs accomodated all the pilgrims around the outer

perlmtter ~nd on the mound. Pr3yers were read and expl3natlons

given; then the House members, Hands, Counselors and all the

Knights went forward to the shrine entrance and watched while

Ruhiyyih Kahnum, with help, laid the cylinder in an open trench

~ust inside the Shrine door, filled around it with sand and

replaced the flagstone and carpet. TeleYision cameras recorded

the whole oper3tion and it will no doubt soon be transmitted to

Baha'i communities all over the world, and probably to public

channels also.

The following day, May 29th 1992 we celebrated ~he ascension

+P150

of Baha'u'llah which had taken place exactly 100 years earlier.

All pilgrims were picked up at their hotels at staggered times,

starting at 1.30 a.m., and taken to Bahji where, in the dark of

the night an astounding sight met our eyes, setting a deeply

moving atmosphere. As we left our buses and walked down the road

in a steady stream towards the Shrine, we saw that from the

Collins gate right up to the entrance o~ the holiest Shrine,

there were twin rows of flame in the night, one on each side of

the path. On closer approach we found that they were ~ormed by

twin rows or candles sheltered in glass. Later we were to

discover that all paths in these holy precints had been treated

in the same manner. In the darkness of the night, six thousand

candle-lights, together with all the brilliant electric lamp

standards produced an atmosphere of great beauty in those

per~ectly arranged gardens surrounding the most holy shr~ne. It

was strongly reminiscent of Nabil's narrative where he described

the arrival of the Blessed Beauty at Bahji in 1880 to the

accompaniment o~ banners ol' light from the Abha Kingdom.

As the two hour session might grow cool, blankets had been tssue

at the hotel. I much apppreciated this, for as we took our seats

there was a nlght ~og and all the seats were wet with dew. The

organtsers had thoughtfully le~t ~ paper towel on each seat.As

the crowd of pilgrims slowly filed into their seats I managed to

make my way up onto the large elevated terrace

+P151

which Shoghi Effendi had created on the left of the entrance;

from here there was a wide view of the entire illuinated gardens,

whlle at my ~eet ran a line of candles joyously flickering in the

night.

We watched, as the members of the Universal House o~ Justice and

the Hands of the Cause went into the mansion itself and mounted

to the bedroom where the Blessed Beauty had passed on. Here they

said prayers and then returned to the gardens ~or the devotional

program relayed through many speakers. It was a precious

experience to listen to those heavenly words in this Illuminated

haven, surrounded on all sides by impenetratable night.

At the end of the readings we all filed back onto the circular

path and began our circumambulation o~ the Shrine. When laying

out the gardens, occasional trees had been left to grow in the

mlddle of the path, and each of these had its overhanging

branches which were lit by a flashlight held by an attendant,

lest we bump into them in the dark.

It was 6 a.m. when we arrived back at our hotel and we were all

looking forward to a healthy bereakfast, but the dining room was

not open, so most people went to bed and slept soundly. Two

hours later I awoke and had a good breakfast before returning to

+P152

bed till noon.

At 1 p.m. we were once more loaded lnto our bus. We were

transported to the foot of ~1t.Carmel where we were to climb the

avenue of the Kings. A number of people were too old or in

wheel-chairs and could not could not make it up the mountain, so

the the buses took them by road up to the Shrine. ~ost of us

climbed upwards, passing through large areas ~f bulldozed terrain

where construction of the nine new terraces was being laid out.

At the top we walked around the shrine of the Bab and went on to

the House of Justice building. Since we had to cross a major

trunk road, the police held up traffic periodically and let us

cross in batches of fifty, to continue on up the Arc.

We were now to view a speclally prepared portrait Or

Baha''u'llah. Ahead of on the path we could see several other

groups waiting for their turn to enter the building. By viewing

the portrait in small groups, all would have a close view.

When our turn c~me, we saw th~t the entire end ~f the hall had

been blocked of r with elaborate paneling, while in the center of

this and at about seven feet from the floor was a back-lit

projection screen. As we gathered, the lights gradually went out

and we stood silent in the total darkness for a few moments; then

slowl~ there appeared before us a life-size

+P153

picture of the Blessed Beauty. He seemed to be looking directly

into oureyes with all the wisdom of the ages, and to ~e including

us and all creation in a deep and ~Jnderstanding love.

We hardly dared to breath or move. After about a minute only,

the portrait slowly dtsappeared to leave us once more in

darkness. The lights came gently on again and we passed silently

out of a side door and down the mountain side to our waiting bus,

each occupied with his own thoughts and deeply aware of the

in~inite bounty bestowed upon us.

The next morning was departure day, and most people left, but due

to a mistake in booking, I had one more day before my flight back

to U.S.A. I joyfully went down town and found a bus back to

Bahji for uninterrupted prayers, and meditation. Then also, I

was able to get some new photographs of those holy precincts.

I recalled wist~ully how in 1952 I had made my first pllgrimage

and each evening was able to bask in the uplifting presence of

Shoghi Effendi. When it had come to departure time he saw how

downcast I was. "Don't be sad~ he had said, "You will come

back!" I accepted this but wondered how I would ever again find

the funds. So blind are we to the workings of destiny - this

present visit in 1992, 40 years later was infact my ninth visit

to these holy Shrines! I meditated on the vast developments

+P154

the Faith during those years. In 1963 there were 135 delegates

in Haifa to elect the first Universal House of Justice. In 1968

there were about 500 delrgatrs preseny. On this Celebrstion

there were 3,400 Baha'is gathered on the mountain of God!

The World Order of Baha'u'llah is in fact appearing before our

very eyes daily. For example, in Africa, giant strides have been

made. In 1953, there were only three Baha'is in all of that vast

continent, (If one did not count Egypt and the Sudan whicn was

conquored in the days of Abdu'l Baha). Now there are now nearly

100,000 Baha'is in Kenya alone. The same kind of picture must

exist all over Africa today!

Tears filled my eyes, for Shoghi Effendi had longed to see this

day . Soon howeverJI realised that he must be joining in with

the great re~oicings in the Abha Kingdom. This 100 th

anniversary of the ascension of the Blessed Beauty celebrates

this enormous development of God's Kingdom on earth. It also

marks the centenary of the acceptance by the followers of

Baha'u'll~h, of His appointment of Abdu~l Baha as the infallible

interpreter of His Revelation. Thus man has fullfilled at long

last, the Eternal Covenant of God with man. The above

develprnents are surely just a part of the Divine response

promised to mankind when we should finally fulfill that Covenant.

E N D

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE HOLY YEAR 1~

~ince the Univ~?r~l H~u,e of Jus'.i-~ h~s ~ske.~l US, in thelr

letter of Rldvan 1~3~31? tO 11. . . pay befltting re~rd to

the ›entenary of the Ascension of B~h~"u'llah and of the

in~u~ur~tion of His world-unifying Covenant, ,t will be of v~lue

for e~ch of u~ to ~o thi~. The followin~, are a~few thou~hts of

onl~J one per~on ~nd should be regarded as such.

With the passing of the Bless~d Beauty to th~ h~venly world one

hundred years a~,o we were deprived of His phys~cal ternple, but

not of His reality. ~aha'u'llah is stiIl wlth us today.

"We are with you at all times, ~nd shall ~tr~n~th~n yGu through

the power of Tr-uth."Gl.137:16.

For ~ome reason no Manifestation of God h~s ~vet- rem~ined

physically on earth for more than a normal sp~n of hum~n lif~.

Perhaps this was, among other reasons, to demonstrate that no

earthly combinatlon or elements was ever lntended to b,e

permanent. It would also be a deliberate reminder to us, about

the dual nature of the Manifestatlons and to demonstrate that

thelr divine station must not be confu~ed with their e~rthl~

st~tlon.

Their first st~tiorl; "Through their appear~nce the RevelatiGn of

God is m~d~ m.~nifest, and by Their counten~nce the Beauty of God

is revealed. "GL. 53 .

Their second station: ". . . Viewed in the li~ht of Their

second station . . They manliest absolute servltude . . .Even

as He hath sald: "I am but a man like unto you." Gl.53.

The occaslon of Baha'u'llah's physlcal passing from thiS worid

was, to the belivers, a tremendous depriv~tion, but seen in the

eternal plan of God it might seem to be the moment of our being

turned loose to pro~ress by our own decisons, but aided by Hi~

Writinss and by His ever-present splrltual reallty. In other

words, not being -7 dependant upon the physical form.

Baha'u'llah. unlike any pre-~icus Manifestation, left not only a

record of .H tearhings in His own

handwriting but also gave us three lnstitutlons endowed wlth the

gift of infallible ~,uidance. Those institutions are -A~dull

E~ha, the Guardian and the Universal House OI Justice.

The iocus o~ our celebratlon during this holy year ~s thererore

twofold, the ascen~ion of B~ha'u'll~h in triumph to His tru~

habitation in the relms above and secondly the lon~ ~walt~d

inauguration of the Covenant which has alre~dy brou~ht great

splrltual development to manklnd.

Regarding ~ . . . the inauguration of His world-unif ying

Covenant." this was long promised in the Bible. Let us therefore

ask ourselves what exactly happened to lnau~urate the Covenant a

hundred years ago.

By "in auguration" one underst~nds th~t both parties have kept

their own slde of the agreement. For thousands or years Prophets

have offered this Covenant and mankind has ~ailed to keep it; but

now, at last we have fullfill~d it by being absolutely faithful

to Baha'u'llah~s appointment of Abdu'l Bah.~ as the sole

inIallible lnterpreter the Word or God after His passln~.

We can cle.~rly see that b~ this act the tollowers ha~e remained

totally united. They were able to avoid hreakin~ up Into sects

over a multitude of conflicting interpret.~tions of Scripture, as

~11 vther religions had done in the past. Such total unlty

amon~, th~ followers of Baha'u'llah may be the secret key not

Just to an lnIlnltely h~gher ~orm of consclousness ror man~ilnd,

but even Ior a higher form of life. This is, of cow-se depend~nt

on the real unity of its parts, an essential condition for the

l~ext step in our evolution - the spiritu~l birth of humanity.

God's Et.ern~l Covenant lS, surely, the lnstrument deslgneci to

2~c:hleve thl~ tr~nsfol-m~tlon

But unity alone is not enou~h, lt must be ac.c&rding to the

divine plan. Abdu'l Baha spoke about two forms of creation,

accidental and divine. He said that the former is temporary but

that t.he latter, because it is done according to the divine

plan, is eternal. Also that when the constituent parts are

assemkled in the div~n~

way it, attracts a higher order oi ~pirit. The pu, pose of God

i~ evldently that manklnd should now take a ~lant new step

Iorward, therefore mankind must first learn to kee,~ the

Covenant; this will assure that we will build according to the

divine plan. The purpose of this plan has been stated clearly by

B~ha'u'llah Himself:

"He Who is your Lord, the All-Merciful, cherlsheth in Hls the

heart the desire o~ beholding the entlre human race as one soul

and one body." Gl.~13.

Abdu'l Baha described how this can take place and the result.

". . . when the e~istin~ elements are ~athered to~ether

accordin~ to the natural order, and wlth perfect strength, they

become a magnet for the spirit, and the spirit will become

manifest in them wlth all its perfectlons." SAQ.201.

The Covenant must surely h~ve be~n m~de when the hum~ spirit

first emanated from ~od. The Hidden Word P.1~. ~eems t~ refer

to this:-

"O MY FRIENDS! Have ye for~otten that true zlnd radi~nt morn,

when in those h.~llow~d ~nd bless~d surroundin~,s ye were all

gathered in My presence beneath the shad~ of th~ tree of life,

which is planted in the ~ lorlous paradise? Aw~- truck ye

llstened as I gave utter~nce to these three most holy wor~; O

friends! Prefer not your will to Mlne, ne~er deslre that which I

have not desired for you, and approach ~Ie not with lifeless

hearts~ defiled with worldly desires and cravin~s. Would ye but

sanctify your souls, ye would at this present hour recall that

place and those suroundings, ~nd the truth of My utterance should

be made evldent unto all o~ you.

The "three most holy words" would seem to be the conditlons which

God laid down for us sv that we m~y return to Him after passing

through earthly life. This is called the Covenant. At the same

time God created the 'ITree of Life~, the train of Prophets, to

help us compl-y. Typlcal of this would be the Covenant God made

through ~Aoses:

"Now therefore, lf you wlll obey my volce lndeed,,2.nd keep my

Covenant then yGu shall b~ ~ peculiar tr~asure untG me above all

people: for all the earth is mlne

And Moses came and called ~or the elders of the people and laid

before their faces these word~ which the Lord commanded him. And

all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord

hath spo~.en we will do. And Moses returned the words or the

People to the Lord.~ Exo~.us 1~3v.5 ~ 7

Another thought is ,th~t when all mankind wlll h~ve accepted

Baha'u'llah's te~ching of pro~,ressive revel~tion, they will in

~act have accepted all the prev1ous Prophets. Thus manklnd wlll

hav~ realised the onenes~ of all reli~,ions, the oneness of

m~nkind and the oneness o~ God; again a result of our

~ccept~llc.e ~f th~ Covenant and a necessary condition for the

ne.Yt stage of our evolutlon.

Since mankind, has now kept the eternal Co~nant, God will now

keep His part of the agreement in ~ull, as ~ar as mankind as a

whole is concerned. The ability OI humanlty tc, rlse to the next

higher form of life is now assured. But for us ~s individuals

however, there is still the responsibility to keeF, the Covenant

in our daily lives, by obeying the laws B~ha'u'll~h h~s ~iven us.

For example, Baha"u'llah sald in the Kitab-l-Aqdas

"Recite ye the verses of God every morning ~nd e~en1ns. Whoso

reciteth them not hath truely failed to fullfill his pledge to

the Covenant of God and His Testament and whoso in this day

turneth away therefrom, hath indeed turned ~way from God ~lnce

time immemorial. . ." Aqdas and, Compllatior~ on Prayers ~

M.p.l.

This may seem a rather drastlc statement, but let us a~ree, that

li one accepts a Manifestation ~s the ~foice of God, then it is

illo~,ic~l of us not to obey His teachin~s. II we do not follow

them, then we c~n hardly say we have complete faith.

~Iowever, all is not lost if we fail in this, for God well knows

that

we are created to progress by ste.~dy growth. God is the

forgiving ,so it would seem ~ccep~le if, when we fai1 .n our dut~

we do not look back but rorward, and try to do ~etter in the

future. Then, to the extent that we mana~e to k~ep the Covenant

in our daily lives, will we continue to progress towards God.

The lmportant thing Ior us is that in pa~t dispens~lons they did

not have access to infalliblity after the Prophet left; today, i~

~ur efforts, we have all the necessary and authentic cre~tlve

Words of God together with the institutlons for infalliblly

interpreting them until the next Manlfesttion comes..

Clearly, for us as individuals, there is still no free admitt~nc~

into the Heavenly Kingdom for we still have free will and c~n

turn away from God. Every soul must learn to use lts Iree wlll

corre~tly; in this way it will continue to ~,row towar-ds the

~t~tion when it will remember its Creator all the times.

However, lf any soul becomes immersed in wordly affairs his

spiritual senses will have become atrophied, and he will be

powerless to benerit from the great bounty of recognising the

ManifestatGn and thus cut himself off from God.

~'He indeed is a capt1ve who hath not recosnlsed the suprerrle

Redemer, but hath suffered his soul to }~ecorne bound, di~tressed

and helPless, in the fetters OI hlS d~s1res ' Gl 16

God has decreed that the Kingdom OI God shall now be rnade

manifest on earth for man~ind as a whole. But all individuals

must continue to use their freewill in order to become attuned to

the will of God. Thus freewill is our most precious ~ift from

G~d, for only by lts use in trial and error wlll we learn to

d1I~erentl~t~ between the spiritual world and the material one

and consciously chose the former..iust for the love of it.

To return to the celebration of the centenary of the Covenant,

its vital importance become cl~ar- when w~ reali~e that, had the

followers of Baha'u'llah failed to accept Abdu'l Baha as the

Center of his Father's Covenant, we would have been deprived OI

all the instltutions requlred ~or lnIalllble lnterpretatlon of

the holy Words. Further, there w~uld not ha~re "eer. a Center

~f

the Coven~nt an~ a Gu~rdian o ~-,o~r u-trative Order. We would

have been thrown onto our own Iallible powers to interpret the

Words Gf God ~nd wGuld have end~d up ar~uing and fighting about

it as in past dispensations.

Let us consider another irnplication o~ the lnaugur~tion o~ the

Covenant. By accepting the appointment of Abdu'l Baha, perhaps

we accepted the first totally perfect human being ~Manifest~tions

~part) This is of course only ~urmise. A3~du'1 Bah. is the

Mystery o~ God ancl hls true reallty ~as not ~een expl~lned in

the Writings.

To continue with this thought about the perfect human bein~,

because in the splritual world there is no such thing as time,

the begining and the end are the ~me. As Christ s~id "I am Alph~

~nd Omega, the begining and the end." Baha'u'llah said:

rather consider the bey,inin~, a~ th~ end itself . ." TAB.183

It is reported th~t when Abdu'l Baha had laid the foundation

stone of the temple he sald:

"The temple is now built!"

With the arrival of the first perfect human being and ow-

acceptance of him, ~nd because the begining i~ the same as the

end, perhaps we could say that all humanity h~s now become li~;e

him, in the spiritual world.

This is surely proof that we each have the potential to be

perfect. We always had this potential, but now the arch-type has

appeared on earth in Abdu'l Baha. And did he not saSr

"Look ~t rne1 be ~s I ~rn''l

Since the hol~ ~ear ~ele~rations in~luded honourirlO the Kni~hts

of Bahalu'llah, let us apply this prln~iple of the non-ex~stence

of time in the wo~ld of realit~J, to the Ten Year Crusade. The

Guardian, when speakin~, about the Crusade ~ 53-63), regarded the

arrival of a pioneer lr. a v~r~in terr~tor~ (the ~eglning) ~s

havin~ conquored that whole terrltory (the end). It seems once

more that the begining is the same as the end in the spiritual

world. This may help us to understand the enormous lmportance

thQ Guardian ~ave to the success of the Ten Year Crusade and

perhaps sorne suggestion as to why he horloured the Knl~hts.

Again, by conquoring ever~ territory on the planet in this

manner, we have asembled the constituent parts of a divine

creation~ and brought lnto beln~ the World Order of B2lha'u'llah.

This Splrlt is endowed wlth attributes ~nd powers far exceedine~

those of ind1vldualst races and countries.

No doubt the lncredlble new concepts and advances which manklnd

is now making in the world, (if we look at the positiv~ side of

things) are some of the results of these new powers. How much

more so are we, the builders of the New World Order now endowed

with very great powers in everything we do, If we are keeping to

the Covenant in our daily lives. Perhaps this is the personal

tran~formation which Baha'u'llah sp~aks OI and to which th~

Universal House of Justice has ur~ed towards immediat~ly.

Perhaps further this is one re~son why the Univers~l House OI

JU~t~lCe ha~ now ~rought into action the Aqd~s.

To sum up7 it seem~ that in this hol~ ~Jear~ we are c~l~bratirlg

both the trlumphal return of Baha'u'llah to Hi~ h~av~ ly hom~ and

also, through our obedience to His world unifyin~-Covenant~ the

arrival of Spirit on a planetary level.\_