

... description: 1923, Olivia Kesley  
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#### Now something about Western Pilgrim House

The building of this House was started by Charles Randall. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá warned him to give more care to his business affairs, but he did not heed. And so he was unable to finish the building. Time passed and then one day Milly Collins and her husband came to Haifa. Mr. Collins was a millionaire; he liked to travel by freighter, instead of steamer and at that time it was fashionable to take the trip down the Nile. So by steamer they went to Egypt and took the trip down the Nile; then to please Milly, they went to Haifa.

When they arrived he said “We will register at this hotel and then go up and leave our cards.” But it didn’t work out that way, because the Holy Family was watching and nothing would do but they must come in, So Mr. Collins met the Beloved Guardian. And that brusque business man liked him — he liked the Guardian.

Later on he asked Milli about that unfinished house and he felt that was not right for the Guardian; so he gave the money to finish building western Pilgrim House. But as he was not a Bahá’í he gave it to Milly and she gave it. He gave her a home up in New England; and the National got short of money; Milly sold it and gave the money to the Faith. And Mr. Collins never asked a question. Never mentioned a word about it. When he died, he left his entire fortune to Milly, knowing she would all give it to the Faith. He was proud of Milly. Proud because she had courage to something different.

The house of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is diagonally across from the Western Pilgrim House, No.7 Persian St. and has orange trees in the grounds behind it. There was an olive grove near the Pilgrim House. There were beautiful flowering trees such as you find in semi-tropical climate

You step from the porch, as I remember, right into the large room; its long, not square, to the left end was the living quarters of Mr. and Mrs. Ioas. It was probably a sleeping and sitting room combined; he had a small receptions room; there was a desk; and a stove he had just bought from the United States. You see there was no such thing as central heating. They told us — Rúḥíyyih Khánum and Jessie and Ethel Revell, how they suffered for lack of heat when they first gent there, but they had become quite used to it.

Going to the left there was another room used I think a business office but also a bedroom; then, Jessie's room; then the two large doors; and the room occupied by Laura and me was next. Then you looked to your right and another large room at the end of the beautiful central room; d a large glass window and window seats; there was a stove and a large, round table in the center and it was there that the pilgrims gathered and waited for the call to go down to dinner with the Beloved Guardian. On that side was a bathroom, the descending stairs; some planks on some steps, the room it led to was used at that time as a store room. The large central room that you entered from the porch was beautifully furnished; there were pillars and an alcove.

The dining room, also, was like it; not square but long; there was a long table, with a beautiful linen cloth, exquisite china and silver. (Rúḥíyyih Ehanum told us there we many sets of dishes; the Holy Family, her mother's, Mrs. Ioas and more)

The guests at that time were Dr. and Mrs. Giachery, Mr. and Mrs. John Allen from Africa, M r. Allen brought the Guardian an automobile and he was running Mr. Ioas around to get things done. But the Guardian stopped that. He said Mr. Allen was not getting the spiritual value of his pilgrimage.