

... description: 1947-1950, Gladys Weeden
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Gladys Weeden Pilgrim Notes

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The Glory of Glories rest upon you!

O ye the faithful loved ones of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá! It is incumbent upon you to take the greatest care of Shoghi Effendi, the twig that hath branched from the fruit (given forth by the Two hallowed and Divine Lote-Trees, that no dust of despondency and sorrow may stain his radiant nature, that day by day he may wax greater in happiness, in joy and spirituality, and may grow to become even as a fruitful tree.

For he is, after ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, the guardian of the Cause of God, the Afán, the Hands (pillars) of the Cause and the beloved of the Lord must obey him, and turn unto him. He that obeyeth him not, hath not obeyed God; he that turneth away from him, hath turned away from God and he that denieth him, hath denied the True One.

Excerpt from the Will and Testament of Abdu’l-Bahá.

As a member of the American Bahá’í Community, it was my rare privilege to serve our Beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, at the World Center of the Bahá’í Faith, in Haifa, (Palestine) Israel, from March 1947, until December, 1951, a total of four years and eight months. The fact that I was the “spiritual child” of Rúhíyyih Khánum, and a long time friend, accounted for the summons to Haifa during the troublous times of the above mentioned period.

While in New York City, awaiting the departure of the ship for Haifa, the Bahá’ís there were so kind to me and spoke of how I would be a help to the Beloved Guardian. It really had not entered my mind that I would work directly for Shoghi Effendi, I thought that perhaps I would perform odd chores in connection with the running of the household, and, perhaps help Rúhíyyih Khánum with some of her duties.

With mixed feelings of awe and love, and, the awareness of my great bounty, I was summoned to my first meeting with Shoghi Effendi shortly after my arrival. I had just returned from paying my respects at the Shrine of the Báb on Mount Carmel. Shoghi Effendi received his visitors in the Drawing Room, just to the left of the main entrance of number seven Persian Street, in the home that had been built for and occupied by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Rúhíyyih Khánum was always present during these wonderful interviews. My first impression was of his warm, loving smile and handclasp, making me feel instantly at ease, he indicated that I should be seated opposite him, across the room, a place that was mine whenever he summoned me thereafter. He inquired about my trip, and, about the Bahá’ís in the United States, spoke of the nature of the work carried on at the World Center, also, some of his hopes for the future. In the course of these interviews, I was to become increasingly conscious of his many great qualities, - his nobility, dignity, fire and enthusiasm, - his ability to run the scale from sparkling humor to deep outrage, but always, always, putting the Bahá’í Faith ahead of everything. On this first occasion, I could hardly be blamed if it seemed I was floating on air! Just to be at the “heart of the world”, to have visited the Shrine of the Báb and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, amid the exquisite gardens, as conceived and supervised by Shoghi Effendi; - to hear the lilting voice of Rúhíyyih Khánum as she chanted the Tablet of Visitation in Persian in each Shrine, surely my cup was running over, tears of joy were raining down my face as I tried to realize my great opportunity. As we strolled through the garden, on this, my first day in Haifa, the gardeners greeted us so respectfully and presented bouquets of flowers, which later filled my room at the western Pilgrim House with heavenly fragrance, Then, - to be called to the presence of our Beloved Guardian. This was a day to be remembered and savored. In his practical, logical manner, Shoghi Effendi made me feel both a welcome guest and a needed helper, he outlined some of my duties which started the very next day! His advice, given me on that initial visit, was to overshadow all my efforts on his behalf; he said he wanted me to follow his instructions explicitly, if I was unsuccessful, or, ran into difficulties, to report to him precisely and he would give me a new plan of action. At first, my duties were to send and collect the mail, daily. At this time, this was seven days out of seven, the Moslem day of rest was Friday, the Jewish, Saturday, and the Christians, Sunday. For the Bahá’ís working at the International Center, during this period at least, there was no special day of rest. It was then that one learned that each moment belonged to the Faith. As time went on, other duties were assigned, when the new state of Israel was born. In 1948, my fiancée came from the United States and we were united in marriage by the Bahá’í Spiritual Assembly of Amman, Trans-Jordan. The ceremony took place in the Old City of Jerusalem, the first Bahá’í marriage registered in the records of Israel. Then all sort of work came our way, we gradually came to learn the joys and sorrows of dear Shoghi Effendi. He said: - “the International Center of our Faith is like a powerful lighthouse, sending strong and brilliant beams out over the world, but, as with a real lighthouse, it is dark and in the shadow at the base.” The “joy” of Shoghi Effendi was to see the Cause of God progress, the “sorrow” was the petty struggles of everyday affairs in an upset country, with shortages of vital

needs, ineptitude of some of those surrounding him, apathy, indifference, and finally downright disobedience of those who should have been closest to him, the members of his immediate family, who were no longer living with him when I arrived in March, 1947. This was a blow to the human side of Shoghi Effendi that left its mark, it's "stain on his radiant nature." Once he was speaking of the unhappy events that touch all our lives at one time or another and stated words to this effect,-" I am reluctant to tell the Bahá'ís bad news until I am certain there is no other alternative."

Those of us who were privileged to serve him during these trying times, developed a protective instinct, which is curious in a sense, as Shoghi Effendi was strong, sure, and capable in all his approaches to life! We loved and treasured him, longed to spare him any unhappiness that could possibly be averted. He often said the Bahá'ís were his family, and the ones who understood the events that led to the disaffection of his own relatives, yearned to compensate for this by earning his trust and love. To meet him face to face was to be won over completely, to inspire us to carry out his instructions as perfectly as would be in our power.

Personal contact with the Bahá'ís from all parts of the globe, would have cheered his heart, and it seemed he longed for it, however, his burning desire to make every waking moment count, sleeping little, sometimes his light burned far into the night, he, as was his habit, put away personal wishes in his dedication to the Cause. It was difficult for him to take any recreation, he rarely used the automobile for a pleasure drive. To try to estimate how much it would have meant for the Bahá'ís to have met Shoghi Effendi in person is beyond conception. One sure point emerges, he wanted them to be self sustaining, to be active and to "live the life" as outlined in the Bahá'í Writings, not to be influenced by personalities. His greatest yearning was to lift the friends, step by step, into their great role; - the unfolding of a New World Civilization, destined to lead eventually to the "Golden Age" promised by God, through His Manifestations, to all mankind.

How often Shoghi Effendi lamented the fact that he had accomplished so little! To us, he was "God's Sign" living on this earth, as such we considered him the greatest man alive, bar none! He was shaping the future policies of the Bahá'í Faith, based on the message contained in the Holy Writings of the Founder's of the Faith. We who served him marvelled at his zeal, we believed that such a magnificent man should be surrounded by experts in all fields, we were so conscious of our inexperience, our ineptitude, but, we were the tools at hand and ours was the duty to carry out his instructions to the best of our ability. How we dreaded to report any failure to accomplish plans he had set for us to carry out, not because he would scold us, we only longed to do it right, to bring him good news. We yearned to spare him any unhappiness, knowing full well his happiness was the progress and attainment of the work involved in establishing the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh on this earth.

He was the "Guardian" in every sense of the word! He was like a lion in his

guarding! When the years have changed his “guardian-ship” into past history, books will be written telling of his accomplishments.

It is reported that he once said: - his greatest wish, as a youth, was to perfect his english, hoping to become a translator of the original Writings of Bahá'u'lláh. When he realized he was to be the first Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith. God alone knows what his inner feelings were, the indications are that he was overwhelmed, at first the responsibility crushed him. Eventually he made the adjustment to his new station in life, he then took the first steps in a lengthy process to establish the independence of the Bahá'í Faith, to disassociate the Faith from any other religion. This was not the easy road to travel, especially in the Holy Land, others, representing religious groups, wanted to claim 'Abdu'l-Bahá as one of their conviction, due to His beautiful character. His influence, His prestige, and they were accustomed to throng the home of Abdu'l-Bahá. The beloved Guardian had the courage of his convictions, he immediately began laying the foundation of the Bahá'í Administration, with emphasis on it's independence.

The indications show that very early in his Guardianship, Shoghi Effendi was aware that there were unscrupulous people who sought to use the prestige of the Faith to their own advantage. Though there were many individuals that Shoghi Effendi held in high regard, both inside and outside of the Faith, also near and far, -he possessed the faculty of a swift evaluation of character and personality. Many sought his presence and longed to share his spotlight, he was very well informed and had a keen interest in world affairs. We were constantly amazed at his grasp of the heart of a situation. There was a man who was high up in the Ministry of Religions, he begged us to arrange an interview for him with Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian felt it would turn out that there was an ulterior motive behind the request, he finally received the gentleman and discovered that he wanted to line up the Bahá'í Community behind his political party in the forthcoming elections!

It was the custom of the Guardian to visit the Shrines on Mount Carmel most every day, usually leaving in the afternoon and remaining until dusk. His plans for beautifying the gardens surrounding the Shrines, both in Haifa and Bahjí, were very dear to his heart, being a relaxation as well as an accomplishment. How his eyes shone when some difficult transplanting, or new effect turned out as he had anticipated. Though he did not claim to be a “landscaper”, he transformed the rough mountain area on every side, he dared attempt what others said would be impossible! Everything was utilized to the best advantage, he often pointed out that while the gardens had a lovely formal appearance, they were also a nursery, young trees and plants being skillfully placed in readiness to be moved where and when they were needed. When a new area was readied for expansion, so also were the plantings ready, each new development creating more and more beauty. The dear Guardian always lamented the fact that due to the climate, and the lack of sufficient water, it was not possible to have green lawns when all the exquisite flowering trees were in bloom. To compensate for this, he created lovely effects by special plantings under the trees, such as a huge

bed of coral plants under the flame tree, (Royal Poinciana) each in the height of its season. He seemed to derive keen enjoyment in experimenting with various grass seed, always hoping for the most velvety green specie to be found. There was one variety that pleased him exceedingly, sometimes this was difficult to obtain. At one time he became intrigued with cactus plants and proceeded to lay out a plan for a cactus garden, later this garden was playfully nicknamed "Arizona" in honor of that state being the home of so many species. This garden became a focal point of interest due to the fact that it was built in a section of the main garden where there had been a huge depression, the usual refuse from the existing gardens would have taken a long period of time to build it up to the proper level. As an aftermath of the street battles that took place in the city of Haifa in 1948, many old buildings were being demolished. The Bahá'ís received permission to remove as much rubble as was needed to fill this large hole. In a matter of days, the cactus garden began to unfold, it was found that many Haifa residents were growing cactus plants organically on their terraces and balconies! Some were purchased but many were donated by friends and strangers, later they would stroll through the gardens to see how their offerings were progressing. Shoghi Effendi had earth of various colors brought to this garden, some clear golden yellow, some warm pink, providing a striding contrast to the walks filled with small rounded white pebbles or coral colored crushed roof tile. In a comparatively short time this garden was completed and Shoghi Effendi would be driven to Panorama Road, at the top of Mount Carmel, where he could look down on his handiwork. It truly resembled a large mosaic from this vantage point.

Another magnificent effect had been created by the Guardian in what is known as the Monument Garden, across the street from the main gate to the Shrine Gardens. In this beautiful place is the pure white marble monument to the Greatest Holy Leaf, the beloved Guardian once likened its structure to that of our Bahá'í Administration. He said the three steps forming the base, which are like three circles placed on one another, diminishing in circumference, could be compared to the largest circle, or the base, representing the body of the believers supporting the next Circle above, representing the Local Spiritual Assembly, and the third step up, the National Spiritual Assembly, then rise the nine pillars supporting the dome, or the crowning achievement of our administration, the Universal House of Justice! In this harmonious and charming garden rest the remains of the Purest Branch, side by side with the Most Exalted Leaf, the saintly Navváb, his mother. The twin monuments chosen to mark these Holy Spots are also made of the pure white marble and reflect the exquisite taste shown by Shoghi Effendi in all his undertakings. In this garden, during the aforementioned period, were undeveloped sections which have since been beautified, even then, due to the graceful outline of Cypress trees, it had the shape of a harp when viewed from the height of the mountain. When the breezes started the trees to swaying, one could imagine they were hearing strains of celestial music! Shoghi Effendi often spoke of future plans to complete the beautification of the entire side of Mount Carmel, from the bottom to the top in a series of

eighteen terraces ending at the highest point with a fitting memorial honoring the Báb, then his thoughts would turn to the Temple site which will dominate the brow of God's Holy Mountain.

Over the years of his Guardianship, he had been consolidating our position in the Holy Land, building our prestige, step by step. This was a frustrating and gruelling task, often he would say; - "there are times when we are forced to take a step back, then a new way opens and we are further ahead than we expected to be." Only those who have had the experience of living under changing governments can appreciate the efforts made, only to have them tumble down like a house of cards. Due to the Guardian's diligence and determination, many obstacles were swept away with the result that we now have safeguarded, protected Bahá'í Holy Places. The magnificent Mansion of Bahjí was a ruin, a sorry neglected place, now it is as near to heaven on earth as one can get. Workmen were brought who knew what it looked like in the days of Bahá'u'lláh, walls were cleaned and restored to reveal hidden paintings and stenciling. The room of Bahá'u'lláh, located in the upper story, where He received Professor Browne of Cambridge University, His only Occidental visitor, and many other dignitaries of that period, is once again a treasured and hallowed spot, furnished very much as it was when He occupied it, with some of His personal belongings on view. Pilgrims visiting this room find a powerful peace and a peaceful power emanating from this Holy Place. A marble plaque has been set into the wall by the divan where Bahá'u'lláh usually sat, the "Place" where He sat is covered with a silken square, upon which fresh and fragrant blossoms are placed daily. To kneel in reverence and prayer, opening the heart in this room reminds us, once again, of the precious heritage bestowed upon us by the foresight of our beloved Guardian! The upper story of the Bahjí Mansion is a joy to behold, many items were placed there by the Guardian's own hands, then, as Bahá'í literature printed in countless languages arrived, they were not stacked haphazardly, but arranged on book shelves with an eye for color and artistic pattern. Everything was meaningful, the hangings, paintings, furnishings, all were placed with care and reason. One room a press room, another held the guest register, with the evidence of the world progress of the Faith adorning the walls. Everywhere and anywhere one looked were articles and items of interest, particularly the fascinating examples of calligraphy which will become more precious as the years pass. When the Guardian visited the Mansion, he had a favorite place to sit on the balcony, here he could look toward the Shrine of the Báb across Haifa Bay, while nearer to his right were the landmarks of the ancient city of 'Akká. Often he would invite someone to sit with him while sipping tea, many times no words were spoken, indeed they were not necessary, the silence was eloquent. It was a privilege to be in the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh at any time, but when Shoghi Effendi was present, it became an event. He always paid his respects at the Shrine immediately upon his arrival, chanting the Prayers of Visitation, if he had brought some treasure to be placed there, it was always done quietly and with great dignity, even when giving instructions to the helpers there, his voice was low and respectful. The surroundings of Bahjí were gradually developed and

beautified under the supervision of our beloved Guardian, with his usual combination of patience and persistence his dreams for Bahjí materialized, the houses of the Covenant-breakers are now non-existent, the Government of Israel has granted enough land to safeguard the sacred precincts of this Most Holy Shrine. It is now well known how quickly Shoghi Effendi put his plan for beautifying this area into action, it was transformed in a matter of hours! The interior of Bahá'u'lláh's Tomb-Shrine is a delight in its gem-like appearance. Down the halls of time, the very walls will re-echo the voices raised there in praise and glorification of God and His Messengers. In the days of the Guardianship, one remembers his dynamic and musical chanting as he paid his respects, those precious, hushed moments when all present had bowed at the Holy Threshold, amid the vibrant fragrance of Attar of Rose, mingling with the scents of the flowers of the Shrine garden, the rare lamps lighted and the candelabra casting a soft glow on the scene, then our dear Guardian chanting the Tablets of Visitation, the tonal changes being especially impressive. On one occasion of the commemoration of the Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh at three o'clock in the morning, the outside of the Shrine was bathed in a luminous light that reflected on the verdure of the blossoms in the adjacent gardens, as we were leaving this sacred spot, the dawn was approaching, the night birds had sung their songs, the birds of daytime were sleepily chirping, the first rays of sun were lighting the sky, in our hearts we felt that -God is in His Heaven and all is well with the world! This peaceful act of worship was made possible because we had a Guardian who looked to the future, who preserved and protected our Holy Places for posterity.

When the State of Israel was born in May, 1948, the slow process of the return to normal life began to take place. With it came new problems and possibilities, the Bahá'í position had to be reaffirmed and re-established with the new government. All during the hostilities, Shoghi Effendi had maintained an absolute neutrality, he had won the confidence of many because of his integrity. When asked for funds to support the "war of liberation" he ignored the request, instead, he made generous contributions to the "Mayor's Charitable Fund" which was dispensed to all the needy of Haifa, regardless of race, creed or color. When a machine gun nest was set up in the lower approach to the Shrine Gardens, on the bridge over 'Abbás Street, he did not seek aid from the military or the police, he simply sent some of the Bahá'í gardeners to ask the trespassers to remove the sand-bags and the guns, reminding them that this was Bahá'í property, and they complied immediately. On April 22, 1948, a battle developed in Haifa which lasted approximately twenty-four hours, this proved to be decisive for the Jewish residents of the city. A "citizens" group restored order and many dignitaries sent messages to Shoghi Effendi to inquire as to his safety and the security of the Bahá'í properties. They greatly respected him as he did not leave the city to get away from the troubles, as so many other prominent persons did. Among the first to phone were the two lawyers who had handled all Shoghi Effendi's legal affairs all through his Guardianship. They were his friends and well-wishers all through this long association that had involved all sorts of delicate and technical situations.

Although there were many newcomers, numbering in the thousands, flowing into Israel, some of which became officials controlling the affairs of state, the beloved Guardian received recognition as a religious dignitary, he was invited to attend all important events, such as the opening of their first Parliament, the reception held for the first Prime Minister, and a host of other occasions when he would often send his representatives. The members of the Diplomatic Corp invited him to their outstanding events, a number of world organizations valued his interest in their hopes and plans. The Esperanto Congress always sent him a greeting to which he would respond, the Men of Trees, another world-wide group desiring his friendship would contact him as well as others too numerous to mention here. In the late fall of 1950 and early in 1951, the Guardian sent for a few more helpers from the United States and one from England, this group formed a family type association, each being assigned various duties. When it seemed feasible, Shoghi Effendi named this group the "International Bahá'í Council" and appointed officers commensurate with their duties. He explained at the time of these appointments, that it was a temporary measure to lend dignity to our efforts in representing a World Faith at it's World Center, he said that in due time it would be supplanted by other institutions. Some of us felt it was a "bridge" to carry us over to the new developments which were swiftly unfolding. Shoghi Effendi began to close this gap by announcing several important steps, among them, the completion of the Shrine of the Báb in the heart of Mount Carmel, the appointment of the "Hands of the Cause", the four Intercontinental Conferences, and finally, the Ten Year Crusade culminating with the World Congress In 1963 and the election of the Universal House of Justice.

It was shortly after the gathering of the new helpers in the Holy Land, that the Guardian would bless us with his beloved presence at dinner each evening. He would lovingly greet us and used this time to share some of his hopes, plans and news from centers around the world. He made it clear that when he had something to tell the Bahá'ís, he sent his messages through the proper channels, therefore, no one made notes of his conversations unless he requested them to do so. Very often, his face beaming with joy, he would read some messages which would be sent out by cable the next day. At times the "Guardian would not appear for several days, when this happened it was like the sun going behind the clouds. We did not begin to be concerned about him if he missed one day, but when he did not come for several days, we would question Rúhíyyih Khánum, -"Is Shoghi Effendi feeling alright? - you are not keeping something from us?" She would then tell us that the Guardian was very preoccupied, busy with his work, hardly bothering with food or rest! It was then we realized that "divine inspiration" was working through him, for when he did rejoin us, he was usually sparkling with excitement and new plans, he would produce messages and letters from his pockets, oftentimes pushing his dinner plate away untouched, call for paper and pencil and thrill us all with his new ideas and hopes for the Bahá'ís to carry out. On one memorable occasion, he brought original letters he had received from Queen Marie of Roumania, showed them

to us and read excerpts, these letters were very precious to him, along with certain others from prominent people. In his book, "God Passes By" you can read the tributes he paid to Queen Marie.

It was just after the State of Israel was born that Shoghi Effendi made the great decision to start the completion and beautification of the Shrine of the Báb situated in the heart of Mount Carmel, God's Holy Mountain. He had already received funds earmarked for this project, but for years he had been unable to carry out this work due to unsettled conditions. It became his conviction that now was the time! William Sutherland Maxwell, P.R.I.B.A. (Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects) - father of our dear Amatu'l-Bahá, Rúhíyyih Khánum, and the beloved husband of lovingly remembered May Maxwell had been chosen by the Guardian to create the design for the beautification of the exterior of the Báb's Shrine. Mr. Maxwell had been working over a long period of time, drawing the plans for the structure that was to enshrine and protect the original building of native Palestinian limestone, which contained the sacred remains of the Holy Báb, and where, at a later date, 'Abdu'l-Bahá was placed in eternal rest. The beloved Guardian had certain basic ideas which he shared with Mr. Maxwell, all during the process of creating the design, they consulted often together, eliminating - adding - until one day the stage was reached where a plaster model could be made. This model had a place of honor in the huge central hall of the Western Pilgrim House. (The building at number 10 Persian Street, now used for offices.) Shoghi Effendi often spoke of times past when 'Abdu'l-Bahá would stand on the front steps of number 7 Persian Street, His home, and gazing up at the Shrine of the Báb as it stood in His day, would say: - "it is still unbuilt" - He even quoted the amount of funds which would be required to complete it, -Shoghi Effendi said that in terms of present day exchange and currency rates, the figure was very close to the actual cost. Due to the unusual location of the building, halfway up the steep mountainside, which would cause it to be viewed from below, presented a unique architectural problem. Frequently, when studying the plaster model, we would remove the lantern, and the clerestory, leaving only the section comprising the arcade, then Shoghi Effendi would ponder the problems and possibilities, finally he decided to at least build the arcade, he stated, among other things, this will show the new State of Israel that I have faith and confidence in their future. A great deal of preliminary study had gone into the research of suitable materials, they must be beautiful and enduring, also every care must be taken to insure the protection of the existing building and the precious remains interred there. In talking matters over, Shoghi Effendi spoke of the loving care taken by 'Abdu'l-Bahá when the sacred remains of the Siyyidi Báb were transferred to this, His last resting place. The Bahá'ís of India had sent a unique sarcophagus to hold the "sacred dust" - when the place had been prepared and the sarcophagus was open. It was found that the wooden box holding the precious remains was a trifle too large to be lowered into place. In the presence of those assembled to witness the scene, the excess wood was sawed off to make it fit and all the chips and sawdust were enclosed in the marble sarcophagus before the lid was sealed

on. This was done so that there would never be any legends develop around so-called relics with mystical powers. In the spring of 1948, Mr. Maxwell went to Rome, Italy, and aided by two other Bahá'ís, started a series of studies of available materials, craftsmen and marble dealers. Museums were visited, existing buildings and monuments were analyzed, keeping in mind the need for durability as well as beauty. One of the leading marble firms was finally chosen, employing the world's best marble cutters and draftsmen, also enjoying a long record of experience in erecting monumental buildings. Negotiations were commenced and when the facts and figures were ready, they were presented to the Guardian for approval. With some adjustments on both sides, the contract for the arcade was consummated. At one point in the discussion about costs, the marble firm said they would be willing to do the work without profit rather than lose the contract. Mr. Buffalini, the head of the marble firm, explained that due to the recent war and the resultant economic upheaval, there had been almost no construction requiring quality marble or skilled marble cutters. He said if we receive this contract it will hold our work-crew together until normal conditions return. He actually gave credit to the building of the Shrine of the Báb for saving the marble industry of Italy at this critical period. Mr. Buffalini ascended while work was in progress on the Shrine, his wife wrote that some of his last words were, - "be sure that the workmanship and materials for the Shrine of the Báb continue to be of the highest standard and quality." While discussions continued regarding costs, Shoghi Effendi stated that he didn't expect the marble firm to do the work without a fair profit, saying that business for the Bahá'í Faith was carried on in such a manner that a just price for both parties involved should be decided upon. Eventually a mutual agreement was reached and a very pleasant business relationship developed.

In Haifa, plans were shaping up to ready the area around the Shrine of the Báb for the new construction. In order to make way for the foundation of the arcade, many beautiful trees and gardens had to be removed. Meanwhile, the beloved Guardian was busily engaged in plotting the landscaping, he could hardly wait for the dust to settle before the new gardens began to take shape. Some of the new gardens were outlined as eight-pointed stars to honor the Báb who was eighth in the line of Manifestations. Not once, not twice, but many times Shoghi Effendi warned the engineers, through his representatives, that if there was any doubt about the construction disturbing the precious remains interred in the original building, they must abandon their present plan for sinking the supports that would eventually bear the weight of the clerestory and dome, study the situation and then submit a new plan. At length, Shoghi Effendi became satisfied and assured that his wishes would be carried out faithfully and the work commenced. Whenever construction was in process at the site, Bahá'í representatives were present, a pictorial record was made of the entire operation, many pictures and articles were published in the Bahá'í World Book and the Bahá'í News. It was during this busy period, when all those residing at the World Center had some part to play in this exciting project, that Shoghi Effendi began to visualize the completed building. He studied anew the Shrine

model, the costs, he longed to see the entire structure finished. He felt keenly that the artistry and quality of workmanship might not be the same if a long period were to elapse between the building of the arcade and the super-structure. Finally, with his usual courage and vigor, he announced to the Bahá'ís that the work would continue until the entire structure was completed, he then asked the friends to send contributions for financing these final steps, directly to the World Center. This flow of funds to Haifa made a favorable impression on the newly formed State of Israel, they were still in the process of consolidating their policies and position and foreign exchange was like a blood transfusion to this young and struggling country.

As the new beauty of the building unfolded, praise was heard from all sides, and when the arcade was finished, the authorities gave permission for it to be flood-lighted for one hour each evening, even at this time when electricity was rationed due to the increase of population and the corresponding drain on all public facilities. Under these conditions it was thrilling to be across the Bay of Haifa, on the upper balcony of Bahjí after dark to see the lights come on! It produced the effect of a precious gem placed on a background of black velvet.

What a bounty it was to be present on the occasion of the first commemorative visit to the Shrine of the Báb after the completion of the arcade. Picture, if you can, the glorious sight of the flood-lighted building, lights concealed amidst the garden shrubbery, the night air releasing the perfume of the flowers, the moon bathing all with its luminous rays! Inside, flowers, soft lights, the whispering rustle as the believers filed in to pay their respects at the Holy Threshold, then the expectant hush before the vibrant voice of our beloved Guardian broke the silence, chanting the Tablet of Visitation, Memories of dear Shoghi Effendi will be forever associated with what he brought into being and to fruition during his lifetime, carrying out plans initiated by Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

In 1947 the property known as Mazra'a was occupied by a retired English General and his wife, they had lived there for some time. The wife had been a long time friend of Queen Marie of Rumania and had become a Bahá'í through this association. She often visited the Holy Shrines and opened her home to Bahá'ís who wished to visit the rooms that Bahá'u'lláh had lived in after He left the prison-city of 'Akká, just prior to the move to the Bahjí Mansion. Shortly after the State of Israel was formed, this property became available, the military desired to establish Mazra'a as a rehabilitation center, due to its quiet location and serene beauty. The beloved Guardian presented our case so eloquently, stating that this was a Bahá'í Holy Place, and, as such should be preserved. It required time, patience and a great deal of correspondence, plus many meetings with officials, the army fought a good battle, but finally the Bahá'ís were able to add this historical house, completing the circle of Bahá'í Holy Places. The house at Mazra'a has characteristics that make it particularly charming, the interior plan is typical of houses built for hot climates, a two story high entrance hall, arched and vaulted ceilings in some of the rooms, terraces outside some of the rooms in the upper floor. Leading from the large hall on the ground floor is

at steep stairway, the treads are worn and hollowed with the passing of many feet through the years. However, it is the outdoor patio which invites one to linger, passing through it on one side is the aqueduct which brings water from the hills, in turn, a small sluice or water gate can be opened to divert the water to a cistern, from the base of the cistern, water can be let out into a system of canals to the gardens and trees below the terrace of the patio. Near at hand are some palm trees, and the eye can travel out over the large groves of citrus trees nearby. On one occasion a rather large group gathered for supper on the patio, the moon was rising like a huge golden globe, making the palm trees exotic silhouettes, while at the water line in the cistern, frogs hung suspended in the clear water singing their chorus of mixed notes, close at hand a shepherd was playing on his simple pipes. All these combined to create an atmosphere of rare beauty. Another treasure that might have been lost if we had not had a vigilant Guardian.

When Palestine - as it was known then, - was under the British Mandate, recognition of the period that Bahá'u'lláh spent in the Most Great Prison in 'Akká, was noted with the placing of a metal plaque over the door of the room He occupied, stating that He was imprisoned there and giving the date. Eventually, the new Government of Israel released all the prisoners, most of whom were there because of political offenses. Thus, the Most Great Prison was empty and its fate undermined for a period due to the pressing duties concerned with the forming of a new government and the flow of refugees arriving in great numbers, creating problems of housing and re-settlement. Imagine what it meant to the beloved Guardian to receive a letter from the Government of Israel stating that they would like to place the room that Bahá'u'lláh occupied in the prison at 'Akká, into the permanent custody of the Bahá'í Faith, asking that a meeting be arranged with the newly appointed custodian to complete the formalities. Those of us privileged to represent Shoghi Effendi when the key to this room was placed in our hands, will ever treasure this memory of the simple ceremony that followed, there were three of us and the custodian. We all left our shoes outside the door, and after a reverent silence, Bahá'í prayers were chanted in english and arabic while the mind tried to travel back over the events that had made history within these walls!

The Most Great Prison was now to become a Mental Hospital, it is possible to visit the room where Bahá'u'lláh was imprisoned without contact with the hospital itself, a flight of stairs leads directly to the wing of the building where the room is located. It was not long before Shoghi Effendi gave instructions to have this dreary, grey prison room, with its barred windows, cleaned and whitewashed. A few simple possessions of Bahá'u'lláh were placed within in reverent memory of this episode in the life of the famous "Prisoner."

This added still another authentic historical site to be visited by the pilgrims. The beloved Guardian expressed his gratitude to the Government with a generous cash gift, to be used for the hospital. Later he was advised that the sum was sufficient to purchase radio earphones for every patients bed.

As a result of the preservation of the house of Udi-Khammar, in ‘Akká, where Bahá’u’lláh revealed the Kitáb-i-Acqdás, the Bahá’ís have a treasure of historical value and significance. It is a fact that this house was used for many purposes during the years after Bahá’u’lláh had left it to reside at Mazra’a and Bahjí. At one time a section of the lower floor was used as a school, at another time as a distribution center for clothes for the needy, and so on. Shoghi Effendi longed to repair and fittingly embellish this “link” in the chain of Holy Places. Finally the day came, in 1950, when he could turn his attention to these requirements, under his careful direction, there emerged the meaning and beauty latent for so many long years. He had the gardeners bring “verdure” to the tiny, Jewel-like courtyard on the upper floor, which was open to the sky above, each room became enhanced and interesting, especially the room where Bahá’u’lláh revealed the Book of Laws. Now, the pilgrims may visit this unique building where in remembrance and prayerful meditation they may recapture the spirit of that period in the life of Bahá’u’lláh, with its stress and strain, when He revealed the Laws that constitute the warp and woof of His World Order. In addition the building will be of great historic interest as a fine example of the architecture of that era.

Until the present Archives Building was constructed, the three rear rooms of the Báb’s Shrine contained many precious articles associated with the three Founders of our Faith. They were carefully displayed or stored, in the room honoring the Báb could be found His Bayán, personal effects, among them one of the beautiful garments of exquisite green taffete which He had worn. Outstanding in the room of Bahá’u’lláh was His portrait. His authentic writings, even the begging bowl He carried when roaming incognito through the mountains of Kurdistan, in the room honoring ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’, we became aware of His travels and the fact that He was the Perfect Exemplar of our beloved Faith. The dear Guardian gave instructions to have these priceless objects aired and cleaned by people he absolutely trusted, more often than not he was present to supervise this important chore. When Shoghi Effendi was convinced of the authenticity of any article he would have it placed in the Archives, otherwise they were stored and catalogued. Placed in the house located in the Monument Garden, termed the “little archives”, were interesting articles associated with the growing history of our Faith, such as a cup that had belonged to the father of Bahá’u’lláh, the ruby brooch that Queen Marie of Rumania presented to Artha Root as a token of her appreciation to Miss Root for bringing her the “Glad Tidings” - a sword that had belonged to Mullá Husayn and many other items that will acquire added lustre in the years to come.

In the plain near ‘Akká, surrounded by a moat which used to contain water diverted from the Ma’an River, lies the tiny oasis, the “Garden of Ridván” - so-named after the original in Baghdád, where Bahá’u’lláh made His public declaration. Shoghi Effendi was vigilant in the preservation of this beauty spot, a favorite retreat of Bahá’u’lláh. Once, we were served mulberries from the very tree under which Bahá’u’lláh had sat, needless to say that our thoughts tried to penetrate the past and picture the scene as it was during His visits. Here

again, we felt a renewed appreciation of the safe-guarding of these Holy Places for posterity.

While consolidating the position of the Bahá'í Faith in Palestine, re-named Israel in 1948, the Guardian was carrying on avoluminous correspondence with Bahá'ís all over the world, with individuals as well as administrative bodies. Many were the hearts that were gladdened and comforted with the letters from Haifa, treasuring the message written in the Guardian's own hand, words that there is no doubt changed the lives of the persons who received them. The supreme patience of the Guardian with the Bahá'ís was an example to behold. He was their counselor and supporter in their griefs, the sharer of their hopes and aspirations, and, above all, the inspiration for their efforts to carry on the promotion of the Faith in all parts of the world. The cables sent by the Guardian were masterpieces of exact meaning, therefore, perfect copies had to be made from his own hand-written messages, oftentimes words were changed in the context by him and replaced with words of more precise meaning. Sometimes there were as many as five changes with arrows in the margins pointing to corrections! The typewritten duplicates were always returned to him with his original copy for his records. With the awareness in our hearts and minds of the greatness of our beloved Guardian, plus the fact that he was shaping global policy for the future of the Bahá'ís, we were scrupulous in our attention to correct detail, a good training and valuable asset in all of life's pathways.

Shoghi Effendi had told us that some of the manuscripts attributed to the Founders of our Faith, which were in his possession, would not be put in the Archives as he believed there was evidence that they had been tampered with. Although Shoghi Effendi had a truly unique handwriting style, not easily duplicated, we were careful to return his personally written messages and memos in order to protect their validity. Our own sense of protection to him and to our beloved Faith caused us to forego the impulse to keep something as a memento, other than what he actually inscribed to us. On one occasion we asked him why he sent such long messages to the Conventions by cable rather than by letters, he replied along these lines, - "the friends pay more attention to the cabled messages, it is my desire to stir them into action ." When we left Haifa to return to the United States, we asked the Guardian how we should answer questions that might be asked of us, especially those of a personal nature. He said that we should lovingly advise the friends that anything he wished to convey to them would be sent through the proper channels, then there would be no misunderstandings. Once again we had the heartwarming sense of his protection. He also emphasized that the friends should always feel free to write to him, when he received cables asking for prayers for someone who was ill or had gone to the Abhá Kingdom, he was most loving and thoughtful, usually responding immediately, sometimes sending one of us to the cable office just for a special answer. Did he not sign his messages, - "your true brother, Shoghi." One of the last instructions he gave us before we left was to - "give his deepest his deepest love to the friends whenever and wherever we met their."

Of the many accomplishments of our beloved Guardian, the writing of “God Passes By” will remain a lasting memorial to his great capacity to lend accurate meaning to both the letter and spirit of our great Faith. It is almost impossible to realize what this chronological record of the first hundred years of Bahá’í History will mean in the years to come. Can we appreciate the hours of labor involved in a work of this nature ? - only those close to the Guardian during the period of its compilation can evaluate the degree of effort, concentration and research such a gathering of facts required. As contained in the Writings of the Founders of our Faith, there are no “maybes or perhaps,” -there is the positive approach to the final and total consummation of the aims and purposes unleashed in the fateful days of the early rise of the Bahá’í Faith. The book is also unique because who else but Shoghi Effendi could have written it, who else had access to the authentic facts, who else was at the heart of the world at the conclusion of the first Bahá’í Century! In addition to this contribution to Bahá’í Literature, consider the messages written by Shoghi Effendi, too numerous to single out specific items, but, as a whole, the foundation of a workable administrative structure, conceived by our Founders and put into practical action during the years of his Guardianship. He not only planned the immediate present, but also for the years ahead, so well done that the momentum of his forethought is still animating the global plans of the Bahá’ís, and will continue to over-shadow these efforts for years to come. A firm basis of his divine guidance and inspiration during the embryonic stage of our administrative development.

It was a privilege and blessed bounty to be near the beloved Guardian. The chief aim of his life was the promotion and protection of our precious Faith, he was constantly planning our present and our future. He was way ahead of us, he once said something along these lines, - “ I do not ask more of the friends than I think they are capable of carrying out, - if I really told them what was in store for them, they would be overwhelmed!” Even now, so long after he has left us, we are carried along on the momentum of his plans. How fortunate we are to have the proper administrative bodies to continue the process of the spiritual unfoldment of humanity.

The beloved Guardian disliked very much to have his picture taken, therefore, any photographs extant do not reflect his true “image”. In the first place, the emotions flowed so rapidly over his features, that one would need a series to catch his many moods. It was a delight to see and hear him laugh, he was so often serious, he seemed to twinkle like a star when some plan had been successfully brought to a conclusion. His sense of humour was a Joy! He was like a high mountain, strong, always there, but never conquered, filled with unexpected heights and depths, at times, opening vistas of rare beauty, at times preoccupied with the fogs and mists of the times in which he lived, which he battled and overcame. He was extremely thorough and taught us all a new sense of perfection and attention to detail. He was in close touch with the expenditure of all funds, knew the figures involved with the placing of contracts in all phases of the building of the Shrine of the Báb, as well as the every day expenses of maintaining the World Center of the Bahá’í Faith. He was enthusiastically con-

cerned with Bahá'í statistics, sometimes a fresh listing of figures for publication in the Bahá'í World would have to be re-typed several times as cables arrived with last minute information, changing the number of countries where Bahá'ís resided or where Bahá'í Writings had been translated into another language! We could never appreciate his grasp of all affairs connected with activities at the “grass roots” right on up to the World Center. He had the ability to scan reading matter and pick out the significant kernels of information. He most certainly had a wide knowledge of the vagaries of human nature through the voluminous correspondence he received over the years. He knew us well, loved us and valued us.

Many there were who dearly loved him and who were in constant touch with him, some would attribute powers to him, which he, in his own words, - “did not claim to possess.” However, the facts speak for themselves, he was far beyond our ken, he drew us to him like a magnet. We longed for his approval, to those fortunate enough to be Bahá'ís during his Guardianship, it was like a personal treasure, yet there was enough for all the friends, a veritable spring, flowing and never ending.

In this attempt to paint a word-picture of such a precious “Sign of God” on earth, the record should include a tribute to his wife and constant companion, whom he designated a hand of the Cause of God, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm, who shared the burden of his responsibility. She became his extra “hands and feet” and drank deeply with him the joys and griefs commensurate with the high station bestowed upon Shoghi Effendi according to the terms outlined in the Will of Abdu'l-Bahá. Their personal relationship was the secret of their own hearts, suffice to say that when their eyes met, the message conveyed was deep and meaningful, this exchange brought joy to the heart of the observer. It was obvious that Shoghi Effendi placed great value on her loyalty and devotion, one might almost say, “to one to whom much is given, much is expected.” She never faltered in her destined path.

Love for the blessed Guardian was the “spring” from which the words contained in this tribute flowed, co-mingled with respect reverence and appreciation, also, an overwhelming desire to bring the Bahá'ís close to the “heat and fire” of this unique man who became the first Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith. As one Bahá'í remarked while visiting the grave of Shoghi Effendi, who was attending the World Conference held in London in 1963 - “As wonderful as the Conference is, I'd give it all up just to have had one glimpse of the beloved Guardian.

He left us too soon, too suddenly, yet at what time would we have been ready to think of a world without his overshadowing presence, the comfort of knowing he was there to guide us on our destined way. Yet, it was Shoghi Effendi that often reminded us that his was “God's Cause” - and - “God doeth as He Willeth.” If the Guardian could give us a strong cord to hold on to, it could well be - “rest assured and persevere.” The greatest honor we can give his memory is to dedicate our hearts, minds and resources to bring about the ultimate victory of our beloved Faith. It may be near, it may be far and though we may not

be fully aware of it, we, the Bahá'í Community are living in the shelter of the "Golden Age" as foretold by our Founders, our immediate aim is to share it with our fellow human beings as soon as possible.

A well known author, (Dimitri Marianoff) said: " The Guardian has a blessed pen!" We, and future generations have inherited the fruits of his pen, of his life, he was truly ours from 1921 until 1957, our true brother, Shoghi, so often and so lovingly remembered in our prayers and in our inmost hearts.

As John Stuart Mill said: One person with a belief is equal to a force of ninety-nine who have only interests."

The mysterious unfolding of an individual's experience in this physical existence is as normal as day and night, yet as exciting as the discovery of a new element. As human beings we have so much in common, but no two of us follow exact patterns in our lives. Why are certain ones touched with the ability to create great masterpieces in art, music, invention and science? The greater number come and go, leaving hardly a ripple on the surface of the pool of humanity. It has been said: "God must have loved the common people, he made so many of them!" Somewhere in between are the un-common ones, they are not the "genius" type nor in the slip-in and slip-out category. They are the people of the "book", the seekers after truth. Like a scarlet thread in a tapestry, they run through the pages of history as the ones who believed, the believers in God to such a degree that they recognize His Manifestations.

Such was my fate to discover the Bahá'í Faith, to believe in Bahá'u'lláh, the Manifestation for this day. As one of the ordinary individuals it was my joy and happiness to find a goal that lifted me out of my everyday routine and eventually led me into an experience that was the highlight of my life.

The great depression of 1929 in the United States was a time of testing, all material security was temporarily swept away, it was a period of self-appraisal and a probing of values. Either you lost something never to be regained or you gained something never to be lost! The latter applied to my situation, through the bounty of God the spiritual values emerged as the only ones that mattered, in 1933 my search ended when I heard of the Bahá'í Faith. Here was the answer to all human needs. Later I found this quote in Nabíl's Narrative of the early days of the Bahá'í Revelation: "Be thankful to God for having enabled you to recognize His Cause. Whoever has received this blessing must, prior to his acceptance, have performed some deed which, though he himself was unaware of its character, was ordained by God as a means whereby he has been guided to find and embrace the truth." I was anxious to share this wonderful discovery with all I encountered and found myself spreading the word before I knew what it was actually all about.

Among the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, the Manifestation of God for this day, is a work entitled, "The Seven Valleys and the Four Valleys" describing the experiences of a true seeker. In retrospect I noted that I had already walked through the valley of search and had entered the valley of wonderment. While wandering

in this valley, I looked at a new world with new eyes and began my life-long education. Each individual, regardless of race, creed color or nationality can be in the process of searching after truth, when it is found it answers all needs and forms a strong basis for a wholesome, fruitful life. A point to consider is the fact that so many seem to pass by the truth without seeing it. Jesus said: "Many are called but few are chosen." Also, when the truth is found, some can only take a spoonful, some a cupful and some submerge themselves entirely. The faithful ones, step by step, progress toward their goal through life's storms and strifes, never turning aside, confident and inspiring confidence - adding their share to the heritage produced by those who had gone before.

Many ages have come and gone and much acquired knowledge has accumulated as this account is written, still more has to be learned and assimilated in the field of human relationships.

No century heretofore has experienced change to the extent this twentieth century has witnessed. God's Plan for the human race will evolve and materialize in spite of the apathy or unwillingness on the part of the body politic. As stated in the Bahá'í Writings, "O Son of Being! Bring thyself to account each day ere thou art summoned to a reckoning; for death, unheralded, shall come upon thee and thou shalt be called, to give account for thy deeds" From, The Hidden Words, revealed by Bahá'u'lláh, #31.

FOUNDER'S OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

Title Born Died Station Ministry

Báb 10/20/1819 7/9/1850 Forerunner 9 Years

Bahá'u'lláh 11/12/1817 5/29/1892 Prophet 39 Years

‘Abdu'l-Bahá 5/23/1844 11/25/1921 Perfect Example 29 Years.

HEROIC AGE, Totaling 77 Years.

Continuity of the Bahá'í Faith - FORMATIVE AGE.

Shoghi Effendi Rabbání, Guardian, appointed in the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá. Born March 1, 1897. died, November 4, 1957. Thirty-six years of Guardianship.

Hands of the Cause, twenty-seven individuals, who protected and carried on the affairs and protected the Bahá'í Faith, until the election of the Universal House of Justice, the Supreme Administrative Body, having its seat on the side of Mount Carmel, Haifa, Israel.

A UNIQUE BAHÁ'Í EXPERIENCE.

While on a tour of the White Mountains of New Hampshire in 1932, at a natural beauty spot called Lost River, our party was joined by two girls from Montreal, Canada. As we were guided through this famous place, I became especially

attracted to one of them, though both were very interesting. I had a summer cold at the time and going in and out of cold, stony caves soon caused me to wait while others went through. After a while, one of the young ladies asked me if I would hold her large pocket-book while she investigated every crook and cranny. We all dispersed after this tour and at the next point of interest, Indian Leap, our group decided to have our picnic lunch. As we two girls started to spread our lunch, our two escorts went exploring, when they returned they said they had met the girls again and that this was their first trip through the mountains, so they had invited them to follow us for the rest of the day. The girls were having lunch in the next town and said they would wait there and join us as we came along. We were somewhat offended with our escorts, to think they already had two girls and seemed to want two more! However we summoned up our good graces and sure enough, they were waiting by the curb as we came along. The top was down on our convertible and we called out, "come on Montreal, let's go." At the next point of interest both cars stopped and introductions were made all around. Their names were Rosemary Gillis and Mary Maxwell. During the day we enjoyed their company and when we came to the city of Dover, New Hampshire, the parting of our ways, we called out "so long, Montreal." Mary jammed on her brakes and said, "wait a minute." She came over to our car and said, "surely we will meet again, telling us that she would be at a summer school, called "Greenacre" in Eliot, Maine, near Portsmouth, New Hampshire for the next few weeks, why not come and visit her there. About two weeks later, our group planned a beach picnic and decided to see that lovely girl again and see if she would care to join us for our cook-out. As we drove onto the grounds I said, "Oh dear, this is one of those religious places," and wasn't so sure I was glad we had come, after inquiring at the desk, we were told that Miss Maxwell was giving a talk and would be through shortly. At that time there was a dock built out on the river and we wandered down to pass the time while waiting. I recall saying I had left my pocket-book exposed on the shelf of the car, and a young man nearby remarked, "it will be perfectly safe here." Mary was pleased with our invitation and we had another good time together. Our friendship grew and though I did not see her again that summer we corresponded during the ensuing year. How could I possibly know that meeting this lovely girl would change my entire life.

The next summer, when she came to Green Acre, she contacted me and said she wanted me to meet her mother who was staying at the Rockingham Hotel, Portsmouth, New Hampshire. I was most certainly impressed with this beautiful lady and her daughter, by this time I realized that they had something different than most people I had come in contact with. I invited Mary to come and visit me in Haverhill, Massachusetts, where I lived. After lunch together I impulsively asked her to stay overnight. We had no home phone, so we went to a nearby drugstore, both getting in the phone booth and called her mother so she would not worry. After retiring, we talked of many things until she asked to be excused in order to say her prayers. It was then I got up the courage to ask her about her religious belief.

During previous visits to Green Acre, I had been asked if I were a Bahá'í, a name which meant nothing to me at the time. In fact, religion was considered such a personal matter that one seldom raised the subject in social contacts. After knowing Mary better, I was told that in those days the Faith wasn't mentioned to a person until that person has expressed himself regarding his views on racial problems, prejudices, if any, towards other religions etc. In fact It was not until the second summer of my friendship with Mary that I even heard of the Bahá'í Faith.

Mrs. Maxwell and Mary invited me to visit them in Montreal and circumstances developed that enabled me to accept their invitation and stay in that city for about three months. Two weeks of that period was spent as a guest in the Maxwell home. After that, I spent some part of each day in their home until my departure. If Mary was absent, I had precious hours with her mother talking of the Bahá'í Faith. How many wintry evenings I would be with her and as I left to return where I was living, she would bundle up warmly and walk to the corner of Pine Avenue West and Guy Street, then, not having finished our conversation, we would retrace our steps to her front door, only to continue walking back and forth several times. In retrospect, I can still hear the squeaky snow under our feet as the murmur of our voices mingled with the night sounds. It was a precious and loving experience.

As the New Year approached, one of the Bahá'ís, Fred Schofflocher, opened his gracious home for a New Year party, to be held immediately after the Bahá'í Unity Feast. Since I was not a Bahá'í, I could not attend the Feast, and as it became later and later, I thought they had forgotten to call for me as planned. I thought the New Year would roll in without me! Later, when I became a Bahá'í I found out that the Feast can be quite prolonged if a lot of business has to be taken care of. It wasn't until quite a few years later that the beloved Guardian instructed us to hold the Feasts during the Bahá'í day which starts at sunset of one day and carries over to sunset of the next day. When Mary did come to get me, it was a pleasure to drive through the snowy city full of sparkling lights, to enjoy the hospitality of Freddy, as he was affectionately known, then - as we were on our way home, we passed a Shrine where long lines of people carrying lighted candles made their way up toward the flood-lighted building creating the effect of flickering diamonds.

Young as Mary was when I met her in 1932, she was already a dedicated Bahá'í and longed to serve her beloved Faith in a meaningful way. She had been to Haifa twice before I knew her and had been in the presence of Shoghi Effendi both times. In fact, the entire Maxwell family were devoted to the beloved Guardian, and their distinguished services to the Bahá'í Faith are examples of their devotion.

Mary had written to Shoghi Effendi asking him to advise her in which way she could best serve the Faith. He replied that, if possible, she should go to Germany, learn the language so she could give Bahá'í talks in public and help with the teaching effort in that country. It was while I was a guest in their home, after

dinner one evening, that Mrs, Maxwell asked me to excuse them for a while. She said they were going to retire to a room upstairs together and pray for guidance on a matter that had arisen. Afterward I found out that they did not have the funds to send Mary to Germany as Shoghi Effendi had suggested, and by praying they hoped to receive guidance. I was very impressed with this action and wished this same thing could take place in my family. Eventually the way opened and Mary did leave for Germany, where that country was going through such agony. She did learn the language and was very helpful in teaching the Faith there. This language became so useful to her after she married the Guardian, as many many refugees from Germany came to Palestine to make new homes and open various types of business.

Mary was a lovely girl and it was always exciting to be with her. She once said that “life with her mother was never commonplace,” I believe that to be true of Mary, even to this day! The household in which she was raised was unique, her father, William S. Maxwell, was a gentleman of the old school, endowed with many virtues and talents, he was so gentle, courteous, had a ready wit and a generous portion of the “love of beauty.” Their home reflected his good taste in beautiful “objets d’art”. It was a great pleasure to be in their home when they entertained, socially, they were so gracious and hospitable. Mrs. Maxwell had a “way” with all individuals, especially in her relations with young people. She was young with them and they were at ease with her, enjoying her company. This was the atmosphere in which Mary spent her youthful life.

Some of my happiest memories stem from that period in Montreal. Up to this time, my life had been a work-a-day, uneventful routine, Mary planned many pleasant activities for me, each day we spent some time together, our ties of friendship grew strong, finally, the day came when I must return home and pick up the threads of my life. Mrs. Maxwell had been so kind to me, she made me feel like another daughter and took us on many happy excursions. The morning when I planned to leave came, I had stayed in the Maxwell home on my last night in Montreal, both mother and daughter went to the bus station with me for our last farewells. It was hard for me to leave, later, when I opened my purse to surrender my bus ticket, I found a most loving note from Mary tucked therein, she said we had become like sisters during my stay in that city. It was evident that Mary was the “apple” of her parents eyes and that her youthful years were quite carefree. This was the bounty of God, I am sure, her future was to have very serious aspects at times, as shown by the following copy of a letter that Mrs, Maxwell shared with me: -

Excerpts from a letter of Rúhíyyih Khánúm to her Mother, dated February 6, 1938.

“The Americans are already swamped in personalities, as a nation, and the Bahá’ís are also terribly personality conscious. Please do not let them follow their natural inclinations and fasten their thoughts on my personality. It would be a great, great pity, and if you share any of my thoughts with them, let it be this one: we Americans are adolescent, and I assure you, in my short year’s

experience near the Guardian, I have come to realize that this is no time for people to go wandering around in a set of lovely and pleasant dreams. They should take to heart, Bahá'ís as well as humanity, that an “unforeseen calamity” is following them. I don't mean that they should be frightened, but we, all of us, should be preparing our souls for the tests which are bound to come to us as well as to all mankind. This is something I feel too deeply for words,”

I feel very keenly that instead of the people saying that I was destined from birth to become the wife of the Guardian, or that I am so fitted, so qualified.....they should be praying I fulfill my task as a representative from the west. They should ask what my life is like, and is its discipline a symbol of the discipline they need and will get. They should turn their thoughts to the Guardian and to no one else on earth, and associate no one in thought with him, and study him, and ask themselves what their faults are as American Bahá'ís, where our weaknesses lie, what in our personalities, or in the Body of us as believers, are vulnerable points which when attacked and tested may not be strong enough to withstand and protect us. I am very serious about this. I assure you my time is not spent in trying to enjoy life and skimming along as a young married woman usually does - on the contrary, I am realizing just how serious one lifetime spent in the

Faith should be. The greatest fallacy in America is this, ‘Life,

Liberty and the pursuit of happiness’. It is bad medicine for people to go on thinking that either liberty or happiness, or even life itself is the thing to be pursued, especially at this time. Steadfastness, character, devotion, loyalty and faith are what I am now pursuing hot-footed. And I am not a bit unhappy! On the contrary, I like it! I think you, yourself, laid the bedrock of my faith when you told me that I should have such a belief in this Cause, that if you - my spiritual and physical Mother, left it, I would remain firm. It marked a turning point in my life when you said that to me! If I sacrifice for the Cause - the Guardian is drawn and quartered for it. So it seems to me the friends should, ‘stiffen their characters.’ That is what Shoghi Effendi says he is doing to me, and I feel much improved by it, I assure you!”

“If I can be an instrument perhaps to help the friends realize more about the Guardian, if they see things as they in reality are, never if they just let themselves go the way of our national habits, which is to eulogize some personality and get no further. I was thinking today in the Shrine, we may surround the Guardian and through our human relations feel close to him, but in reality we are like earth around alily - is there any close kinship between the wonderful flower and the earth at its feet?”

.. “The Cause of God, in Haifa, is like a kettle boiling all the time! and by this I do not mean the Guardian, he and all of us are enmeshed in something whose power is irresistible. Of course it manifests itself through him, through his decisions, but the atmosphere is like that. At first I felt like something under pressure but now I am getting (so) used to it that I am astounded at myself!”

“ Shoghi Effendi says I have no right to call him a mystery! But I can say that at

least to me he is a mystery and the result of my observations is that a Guardian is a, touchstone applied to us all the time There is no more dangerous maze for people to begin to wander in that the subject of the “personality” of either the Guardian, or the Master, or even the Manifestation. I do not doubt that Shoghi Effendi has his own personality and temperament, but I believe it useless to say “this is it, or this is not it”, because even his personality, I believe, is used in the grip of his station or the Will of God to test us. In other words, even the personality is shaped to further the interests of the Cause. It’s a wonderful subject to think about.”

“The Guardian Is training both my character and my soul. With all the richness of my life, I had outlived it and now here, in the presence of our own so dearly loved and long-beloved Guardian, he is training me with patience, with love, and yet with iron determination, and I have the assurance that he will make of me, if I will let him, what I should and can be. We get from Shoghi Effendi what we let come out! It is something in us that draws it out. It is a spiritual law. Just think, Bahá’u’lláh knew that hidden language and script all the time, even referred to it, but no one asked Him so He never gave it out.”

(Mrs. Maxwell enclosed these excerpts in a letter to me after I became a Bahá’í and was living in Worcester, Mass.)

By this time I was determined to study the Bahá’í Faith so that I would be qualified for acceptance. Mrs. Maxwell wrote a friend of her’s in the Boston area to find out who was the Bahá’í nearest me. It proved to be Lorna Tasker, in Beverly, Massachusetts. I called on her and she told me of a meeting soon to be held in Salem, Massachusetts.

In my correspondence with Mary, I had told her of personal problems in my life interfering with my study of the Faith, she suggested I write to Shoghi Effendi. Later I realized how bold I was to do this, however, I did write to him and opened my heart. His reply brought me so much hope and comfort. Mary had asked me to send her a copy of his reply, and wrote that she was very pleased with the fact that he addressed me as if I were already a mature Bahá’í. In his own handwriting he said: “ he would pray that these obstacles be removed from my path, that I should deepen in the Faith in order to help in the teaching effort and to rest assured and to persevere.

How surprised the Bahá’ís were at the meeting in Salem to learn that I already had a letter from Shoghi Effendi and was not yet a registered Bahá’í. The firm I was working for had decided to move to Worcester, Massachusetts, and much to my surprise there were two ladies from Worcester at that meeting. I had already found out that there was a Bahá’í Community in that city, and intended to make my declaration there. Needless to say, these two ladies were most gracious in their offer to help me settle in this city. Mrs. Florence Morton opened her home to me and was responsible for finding me a most pleasant place to live. As soon as I was settled in, I notified the Bahá’ís of my intention to join the Faith.

The Bahá'í Center was in a public building in the downtown area of Worcester. The Local Spiritual Assembly set a date for me to meet with them. I was asked to wait outside in the hall until the proper place on the agenda. When I entered I was asked the basic questions, then asked to wait in the hall while they voted. (Some different from today when this is written.) How happy I was when I found I was accepted. Then began a period of learning, deepening and experiencing, it was wonderful to have the guidance and loving understanding of the friends. Later on I was elected to the Local Spiritual Assembly which carried on the local affairs of the Bahá'í Community. Along about this time the Bahá'í Administration was unfolding under the guidance of Shoghi Effendi. I recall a visit with Millie Collins after she returned from Palestine, telling us of her meetings with Shoghi Effendi and bringing some of his instructions. She especially emphasized complete abstinence from alcohol, a Bahá'í Law which the Americans did not seem to take to seriously, she said we shouldn't even use it in cooking or eat candy which had alcoholic content. We Bahá'ís were beginning to realize that we had a strong Guardian and took comfort from this fact.

The news of the marriage of Shoghi Effendi and Mary Maxwell in March 1937 was announced while I was in Worcester. It was a complete surprise to everyone and a very happy union for the East and the West. In my immaturity, I felt desolated as I had expected to go pioneering with Mary after her German assignment was completed. We had often talked of going to Haiti, she loved the black race and believed we could accomplish something for the Faith in that country. When I wrote to Mary to offer my congratulations, I told her that due to her new station in life I felt our friendship would be on a different basis than heretofore. She replied that our friendship was like a circle, it had no beginning and no end! This heartened me considerably. I became convinced that our paths would cross again, somehow, somewhere.

Meanwhile the Bahá'ís were very much involved in the "Seven Year Plan" initiated by Shoghi Effendi to coincide with the ending of the first Bahá'í Century, in 1944. One objective was to have a Local Spiritual Assembly in every state of the United States. In 1941 I was a member of the New England Regional Committee, which covered all six states. In December 1941 the United States was attacked at Pearl Harbor and this changed my life, I was working for a company that manufactured shoes with rubber soles and we were notified that due to the war effort all rubber stocks would be confiscated, I could see that I would soon lose my position. It was just about this time that the Regional Committee planned to come to Worcester for their meeting. I went to the center early to prepare for their coming and the first to arrive was the secretary, she exclaimed - "all the New England States are covered except Vermont, if only someone could go to Vermont!" I spoke up and said, "I'll go," then I looked around and said, "who said that!" After discussion with the committee members they chose Brattleboro, Vermont as the objective, it was located in the southeast corner of the state and over the border in New Hampshire were a few scattered Bahá'ís who would support the activities in Brattleboro.

Mrs. Florence Morton very graciously offered to drive me, with my few possessions, to my post and she remained with me until I found a place to stay. Before she returned home she bought me a nice radio which shows what kind of a parson she was. She also was willing to subsidize me so that I could devote my full time working for the Faith. After a few months, I found I was not meeting people and felt I would have more opportunities if I obtained a position, which is the way it worked out. I was so grateful for her loving assistance and know she helped the Faith financially in many ways. Blessings on people like her!

It was all so new to me, trying to locate a suitable place to hold meetings, planning publicity, finding a few challenges and criticisms along the way. The small group of Bahá'ís in Hinsdale, N.H., just a short distance from Brattleboro, were loyal and devoted and supported all my activities. They were so glad to have a new Bahá'í contact to stimulate renewed interest in the Faith in that area.

Anyone who has tried to teach the Faith will agree that after an initial attempt, one has to settle down with a great deal of patience to await results, keeping busy meanwhile. It is like planting a garden, there is the preparation of the soil, the seeding, then the right conditions for growth, nurturing and finally the fruit. In the innocence of being an undeveloped Bahá'í, such as I was, you start out on a pioneering mission believing that the seeking souls are there and also that your every contact has a Bahá'í meaning. At least that was my attitude. This led me into a series of adventures, both good and bad. As an example, I entered into a friendship with a woman held in high esteem in the community, only to find out she was using this friendship to deceive her husband, saying she was with me when she was not. When I found this out, that was the end of her as a prospect for the Bahá'í Faith, she was only interested in her own ends.

At a book meeting in the Library, which I attended in the hope of meeting new prospects, a local minister was present. When he learned that I was a Bahá'í, he remarked that "I was undoubtedly attracted to the semantics involved!" At this point, I was not well enough informed to do verbal battle with a man of his background. (The day came when he resigned his pulpit and became a psychiatrist at a mental institution.)

Late that summer, Ruth Moffatt, (a very well known travelling Bahá'í teacher) notified me that she would be in Brattleboro, asking me to arrange a public meeting!! I plunged ahead with plans, arranging the meeting place, having notices printed to mail out and obtaining newspaper publicity. Our town had a "welcome Hostess" so I asked her if she could provide a mailing list, explaining what it was for. An interesting sidelight on this list was that I later found out that she had not put any Catholic names on it.

The Bahá'ís in this area supported this meeting and the publicity brought in a few inquirers with the result that Mrs. Moffatt considered this fertile ground, she obtained permission from the National Teaching Committee to return to Brattleboro for a weeks intensive teaching. What a week that was! We contacted

several service clubs to see if they would like a speaker for any of their meetings, most were booked up for the period that Ruth would be in town. However, the local Kiwanis Club said they had an opening as a speaker had disappointed them for their dinner meeting. Since these service clubs did not permit talks on religion in those days, Ruth submitted several titles to choose from, they decided on "The Destiny of America" and gave her fifteen minutes to present this subject! The president of this club was Benjamin D. Weeden and this was his first exposure to the words, 'Bahá'í Faith', he later accepted this Faith, still later he was called to Haifa, Israel at the request of the beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, where he served with distinction until ill health caused him to return to the United States.

Mrs. Moffatt had an excellent background, some people were especially interested in the fact that she had attended the forming of the League of Nations in Geneva, Switzerland. It was the custom of Mrs. Moffatt to advertize her talks on subjects of general interest, then have an intermission and invite all present to remain to hear about the Bahá'í Faith. It was my function to keep things running smoothly and one evening while she was speaking about the League of Nations, I noted a man in the hall outside of the meeting room, he had walked past the door several times, frankly staring in. I decided to invite him in, when I approached him, he said, "the most astonishing thing has happened, here I am in a small hotel in this remote town and I hear the name of my best friend mentioned when passing this door!" He was Rene Kraus, an author, who had come to a place where he was unknown to have peace and quiet for a book he was writing on the life of Winston Churchill. He did not wish to come in but asked me to come and get him when the meeting was over and Mrs. Moffatt was free to talk with him. They reminisced until the wee small hours. We never know who is listening!

There were some fruitful results from her visit and slowly we began to formulate our plans for a Local Spiritual Assembly. I was exhausted after this week of strenuous activity, I think I slept for almost three days, I had never seen a person with such vitality, Mrs. Moffatt did not retire any night during her stay until well after midnight.

When we realized that the date was drawing near when we must have an Assembly, we appealed to the National Teaching Committee for help and soon Bahá'ís began to move in assist us in obtaining our goal. The Brattleboro Local Spiritual Assembly was formed in April 1943 and there were only two so-called native believers, Edith Newcomb and Fred Hoffman. There has been an Assembly there ever since that date even though their numbers diminished at times.

Fred Hoffman was a staunch member of the local Methodist Church and a hard worker for it, how he labored on those church suppers! He had attended some of Ruth's meetings and we followed up with him after she left. You can imagine how I felt when he phoned and asked to see me, his first question was, - "how do I become a member of the Bahá'í Faith." I told him to get a transfer from

his church to the Bahá'í Community, since I was the only resident.

Bahá'í this amused him, however I assured him there would be more. The Methodist Church was very sorry to lose him and tried to have him change his mind, he never wavered in his decision and became a devoted believer. In order to meet people I joined several groups, one being a Nutrition Class and that is where I met Mrs. Newcomb, she became interested, studied and later joined our Community.

Many fine Bahá'í speakers came to help the teaching effort in Brattleboro, to mention some, Dorothy Baker, William DeForge, Charles Krug, 'Alí Kuli Khán, Professor Glenn Shook of Wheaton College. Mr. Krug, who had met 'Abdu'l-Bahá when He was in New York City, came several times. Each time a speaker came we would mail out publicity to the mailing list we had on hand. The father of Charles Krug was in Haifa at the time of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's passing and was the one who closed those precious eyes. His name was Florian Krug, a famous New York City doctor.

On one occasion Kr. Krug chose the subject, "Life after Death" this was the first meeting that Benjamin Weeden attended although he had received notices of former meetings. He came because he had just lost his mother. After the meeting he asked me if we had any books on the Faith, music to my ears as he was very well known in Brattleboro and a most distinguished gentleman. I suggested that he stop in the bank where I was working and I would have some literature for him there. That was the beginning of our friendship, and we became constant companions and studied the Bahá'í books together. The first book he chose surprised me, Bahá'í Administration, he spent hours studying and because of the choice English in the writings of the beloved Guardian, he purchased a new dictionary in order to more fully understand Shoghi Effendi's writings. On page 197 of "The Priceless Pearl" Rúhíyyih Khánum writes, - "In his (Shoghi Effendi) translations of the Bahá'í writings, and above all in his own compositions, Shoghi Effendi set a standard that educates and raises the cultural level of the reader at the same time that it feeds his mind and soul with thoughts and truth." In 1952, when Ben and I were travelling around the United States telling the Bahá'ís about our experiences with the beloved Guardian, I recall a lady saying, "I don't understand the writings of Shoghi Effendi very well but I know he is a writer of long sentences!"

Ben also purchased a new Bible, like most new Bahá'ís there is a thirst for knowledge of our spiritual heritage, especially as one of the principles of the Bahá'í Faith is the "oneness of religion," Prior to his becoming a Bahá'í, Ben had studied many religious and philosophical books which made a good foundation for his recognition of Bahá'u'lláh as the Prophet for today. One evening when we were on our way to a Bahá'í meeting, Ben had been reading his Bible that day and he said "did you know that Moses had the first zipper?" I looked at him in surprise? Yes, he said, "he had his wife, Zippora!"

As Bill Sears said, "God loves laughter."

That first Local Spiritual Assembly in Brattleboro was composed of very different personalities, none of us had much administrative experience. We again appealed to the National Teaching Committee for help and they sent a mature Bahá'í with the Bahá'í Administration under his arm, a book we already had but didn't seem to know how to put into action, he didn't help us very much either. By this time Ben had become the tenth member of our community. He used to tease us saying he had nine people working for him! At the next Annual Meeting and Bahá'í election, Ben became a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly and I was elected chairman. In running the meetings, I was prepared to think that love conquered all, but the fact was, I was a very poor chairman, while Ben had a lot of administrative experience. How he must have suffered, I just do not see how he contained himself, he used to walk me home after the meetings and tried tactfully to tell me the functions of a chairman and how to control the meetings. At first I would be reduced to tears, even though I knew it was for the good of the Cause. Sometimes he would say, "you people just don't know how to run a meeting." Finally I said to him, "you are one of us now, so don't say you people, we are a unity, at least we are trying." Our friendship survived these discussions and I was determined to show him I could improve. Again referring to our travels around the United States, we found this same problem in many Bahá'í Communities. Things are much different now, I am sure.

Suddenly I realized that this friendship was not good for the reputation of the Faith, seeing so much of each other without it leading to marriage and I could see it bothered Ben also. He felt that it was too late in his life to start a new career and that he didn't have the income to support two people. We had talked about this problem, I also knew the local Bahá'ís were concerned. I loved Ben very much, he had such a beautiful character and such high ideals but it didn't seem to me that this love was reciprocated.

After praying for guidance, the way opened for action. A gift of money from an unexpected source prompted me to write to Rúhíyyih Khánum in November 1946, suggesting that we meet somewhere in Europe for a re-union, not having seen each other for over ten years. After that I would return to the United States and find a new pioneer post. She advised me that it would be impossible for her to leave the beloved Guardian but hopefully something would develop.

We had many tests and trials during the early days after forming our community, some Bahá'ís who came in to support us had to leave for one reason or another. They couldn't find work, or, as in one case had to return to their former state or lose their pension. There was quite a turnover, I personally felt that bringing in Bahá'ís from the outside was not the best policy.

Before I found a small apartment in Brattleboro, I lived in the Hotel Brooks for a month. During this sojourn I became acquainted with some of the regular guests plus two of the desk clerks. I had the opportunity to tell them what brought me to Brattleboro.

In the apartment building I found that I had several ladies as neighbors, I noticed that they were interested in my comings and goings. I decided to invite them to a buffet supper and tell them why I was there. They were always very nice to me after that but never showed any interest in the Faith.

I had been advised that a Bahá'í would be arriving on the New York train which stopped in Brattleboro at three o'clock in the morning, I had booked a room for her at the Hotel Brooks. The next morning I went up to greet her, I inquired at the desk if she had arrived safely, the clerk looked at me rather strangely, and said "is she one of your gang!" To say I had misgivings would be putting it mildly. This poor woman had the right spirit but she surely added to our problems. She had all her earthly possessions in a large duffle bag, including her cooking pots.

Needless to state that she did not fit into the scene and left after a period of a few months.

One of the Bahá'ís who came was black and caused quite a stir as I believe she was the first black to come and live there. She had difficulties at first but she was an excellent tailoress and obtained a position in the best department store in town and soon people were praising her work and the curiosity died down.

Imagine the joy and trepidation I experienced when I received the following cable in January 1947: - "Guardian approves your coming Haifa prolonged visit cable if you can arrange arrive early March dearest love. Rúhíyyih," I immediately cabled my acceptance and started to make my plans. It was difficult to arrange the trip so shortly after the war, the military had precedence for plane travel, the travel agency reluctantly secured passage for me on the "Marine Carp" a troop ship that had not been converted for civilian travel. It was the only way to get to Haifa at that particular time and I would sleep in a dormitory for twenty-four women. It really didn't matter to me, I believed I could stand anything just to get there. A visitors visa had been procured for me in Haifa and soon all the necessary documents were in order and I was ready to leave for New York City and expected to sail on March 1st, 1947.

I had contacted the National Spiritual Assembly and they had relieved me of my duties as pioneer to Brattleboro and supplied me with credentials to help me on my way. The night before I was to leave town the Bahá'ís gave me a farewell party and a gift of money. Ben walked me home as usual although I had asked him not to as I was feeling very low at the thought of leaving him. When we got to my door he suddenly took me in his arms and said:- "I just can't bear having you go out of my life like this!" I burst into tears and said this is a fine time to tell me when I am leaving for a war-torn country for an indefinite stay? With that, I invited him in and we talked about it and decided to say nothing about this development for a while and pray for guidance. I was so upset I didn't want him to help me to the train the next morning, I knew I would weep at this parting. However, he insisted on seeing me off and I wept most of the way to New York City! That evening he phoned and said it was like

looking down the wrong end of telescope, I was getting smaller and smaller!

The Bahá'ís of New York City were so kind to me taking me around and showing me the city, taking me to Art Galleries, Museums and a variety of restaurants. Each day I had to phone the steamship office to check on the sailing date, it had been delayed several times, eventually they said we would sail on the 15th of March. I had been worried that I would not get to Haifa in March as had been requested, the passage would take fifteen days. Some of the Bahá'ís said I would be a secretary for Shoghi Sffandl, however I didn't believe this to be possible, my work had been as a bookkeeper, I did not have secretarial skills. When I knew I was going to Haifa, I tried to empty my head as to why I was asked and what I would be doing. My only idea was that I might be a companion to Rúhíyyih Khánúm and perhaps do household chores. I was willing to wait and see what happened.

On the morning of March 15th I took a taxi to Pier # 84 in the North River feeling a bit lost. I must admit my spirits sank when I saw the accommodations, the bunks were so close that if you turned over in the night you could end up in the next bunk, I had one advantage.

I was on the end of a row so had only one occupant next to me to consider. There were approximately five-hundred passengers on this ship with only one small lounge, very sparsely furnished, it was more like a bar. Our deck had no portholes, at night the creaking and groaning of the ship made you wonder if it would stand the trip.

After leaving New York City and had entered the Gulf Stream, it became very stormy, many of the passengers were seasick, this sickness makes people so ill they become more like animals than humans, for two days the ship was in a terrible condition. Even the lavatories were "troop ship" rows of units without the privacy of doors.

Needless to say, the plumbing at this time was not functioning properly, just like the people and there was always foul water sloshing back and forth as the ship wallowed through the storm. After the storm, when we emerged into the sunlight, order was somewhat restored, but there wasn't much supervision by the ship's officers and some of the passengers had too much to drink and bothered the other passengers.

I made friends with a young Jewish girl who had been sent to Palestine during the rise of the Nazi regime in Germany, her mother had gone to relatives in New York City during the war. After the war, Miriam had come to be with her mother, however, she had fallen in love with Palestine and wanted to return thereto live. Hence she was cutting all family ties to make a new life for herself. She was an artist and made many interesting sketches and her company helped me to bear the discomforts aboard. Later on, I was in Jerusalem on business for Shoghi Effendi and met Miriam on the street and she invited me to come to see her home. She had taken over an abandoned house in a dangerous zone and

made it into her studio. She was a talented sculptress as well as a painter and later had her own one-man show in Tel-Aviv.

The first port of call for the "Marine Carp" was Beirut, Lebanon, the night before our arrival there was a ship's concert of sorts. Three groups predominated the passenger list, Greeks, Arabs and Jews. The Greeks had been in the United States for treatment of injuries sustained in the war, especially for facial wounds, there were those who had severe damage to the eyes and who could not be helped, they were blinded for life, nevertheless they performed in the traditional Greek dances, then the Arab group presented their program, lastly, the Jewish people, when they began to talk politics saying what they had done for Palestine, the Arabs grabbed the microphone shouting their views, determined to have their say, it became quite a hassle. Soon the ship's officers took control and dispersed the crowd. For the rest of the night an ominous silence settled over the ship and we were all thankful when dawn came and no more trouble erupted.

As we approached the harbor of Beirut, a wave of humid air filled with the fragrance of orange blossoms greeted us, after twelve days at sea, the land was indeed a welcome sight. Those of us who had no transit visas had to stay aboard, some of us had not been inoculated for cholera and had to have this done by the ship's doctor before reaching Haifa. Although we could not leave the ship, many unauthorized people came aboard and we had to keep a constant watch of our possessions, the ladies in our dormitory took turns guarding the entrance, much was stolen, not from us, but from unwary passengers who went topside without leaving a guard. Small boats came out from shore and confederates on board threw things down to them, when they had a load they went to shore and unloaded then returned for more.

Our ship had docked early in the morning and was due to leave for Haifa at midnight. The crew had shore leave and when they had left there was almost no supervision. All during the daylight hours, we took turns going up on deck, it was fascinating to watch the trading going on between the passengers and the people on the quay. Ropes were tied to the deck rail to draw up the baskets of merchandise offered by the traders, there was a great deal of haggling over prices, it was noisy, exciting and most entertaining.

I was awakened around midnight by the returning crew, from their singing and their voices it was obvious they had spent most of the time in the waterfront cafes. I put a coat on over my pajamas and found a secluded nook where I could watch their antics. Just before we were to leave, a taxi raced up and the driver had to literally drag his passenger aboard. As I turned to go below, I saw a ship's officer and remarked that I hoped we had a sober pilot! He said not to worry, the ship would be on automatic pilot as soon as we cleared the harbour. Someone neglected to raise the gangplank, as we started to pull away, it began breaking up with much creaking and splintering it fell into the harbor. Thank goodness there was a spare on board!

There was not much sleep for me the rest of the night, I knew we would be in

Haifa in the morning. I rushed up on deck at the first light to get a look at Mount Carmel, God's Holy Mountain. My reaction was that it was not as high as I expected. I soon learned to respect it when I walked to the top over the old Crusaders Road, which Bi-sected the Bahá'í Gardens in those days. Rúḥíyyih Khánúm and I often rode to the top of the mountain and then walked back down the mountain, the view of the Bahá'í Gardens and the City of Haifa, with 'Akká across the Bay and the snow-covered top of Mount Hermon in the distance, was superb.

The "Marine Carp" had anchored during the night out at the breakwater. Landing formalities took up most of the morning, it was nearly noon before I left the ship. Mr. Maxwell, Rúḥíyyih Khánúm's father, was there to greet me and to help me through customs. Being very naive regarding ship's travel, I was surprised when I was taken to a small room and examined quite thoroughly to see if I was bringing anything illegal into Palestine. I did have a small sum of British Pounds in my purse, as I had expected at first to fly via London, these were confiscated, later I picked up the equivalent in Palestine Pounds at a bank. The bulk of my luggage was held over until the next day. I was astonished to see all the evidences of war, there were barbed wire barricades and sentry's everywhere, the sky over the oil refinery located in the plains outside the city was filled with oily black smoke, the oil tanks having been set on fire in an act of sabotage. When I went back to the port to clear my luggage through the customs, the rain began to pour down as I approached a sentry box at the first barricade. The soldier on duty invited me to step inside the sentry box until the shower was over. My sense of strangeness soon evaporated when I noted that someone had written on the wall, "Kilroy was here!" The only duty I had to pay was for some neckties I had brought for Mr, Maxwell as a gift from his niece.

After getting off the ship and leaving the Port, Mr, Maxwell escorted me to a taxi nearby and within a few minutes we were alighting at #10 Persian Street, which was to be my Haifa home and where Mr. Maxwell lived. At that time it was known as the Western Pilgrim House, my room was at the upper end of the second floor, very pleasant indeed. Who can describe the joy of a reunion with a greatly loved friend, who had become like a sister, after all the years of separation. Rúḥíyyih Khánúm had placed beautiful gifts on my dresser and chest of drawers, stating that these were all mine to keep! After seeing my room, we went downstairs to the dining room for lunch, Mr. Maxwell joined us there. From then on Rúḥíyyih Khánúm usually came over to lunch but many times Mr, Maxwell and I were alone.

Directly after lunch we went by taxi up to the Shrine Gardens, about half-way up Mount Carmel. I was certainly amazed at the beauty that had been created by the beloved Guardian and carried out under his supervision. We went immediately to the entrance of the Shrine of the Báb, leaving our shoes by the door, we entered and approached the threshold of the inner room wherein lie the precious remains of the Báb, Forerunner of our beloved Faith. As I knelt and buried my

face in the fresh, fragrant blossoms on that threshold, Rúhíyyih-Khánúm was softly chanting the Tablet of Visitation in Persian, the tears streamed down my face in gratitude and joy at this wonderful privilege. We then visited the Shrine of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, next door in the same building, here again, the beautiful flowers and the same serene atmosphere. Rúhíyyih Khánúm later said that she never felt ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s presence there, it was if He was always away visiting the friends.

Rúhíyyih Khánúm left me to walk down the mountain by myself as she had duties to perform, she wanted me to absorb as much as I could on this, my first visit to the Holy Shrines. As I strolled through the gardens, the gardeners would put their hands over their hearts and give me the Bahá’í greeting, then they would present me with a lovely bouquet, finally my arms were full to overflowing with many beautiful flowers. When I returned to the Pilgrim House, I was literally floating on air, I arranged so many bouquets that my room was like a flower shop.

Soon one of the persian girls came to tell me that Shoghi Effendi was ready to see me. I was really agitated and wondered if I could measure up to meeting such a distinguished and revered person. Then I decided the only thing I could do was to be myself and let him be the judge.

Shoghi Effendi lived at #7 Persian Street, in the house that had been built for Abdu’l-Bahá, it was located diagonally across the Street from the Western Pilgrim House. At the front gate, a pair of tall Cypress trees reared skyward and a verdant vine flourished over the gate, the pathway to the front door was filled with smooth white pebbles and to the right was a small garden, in the center was a fountain pool.

As Khorshid led me up the steps, I noted lovely gardens surrounding the house. We entered a small hall which opened into a much larger hall, turning left was the door to the drawing room where Shoghi Effendi received his guests. As I approached, he arose and greeted me with a handshake and graciously inquired about my journey. I immediately felt the genial warmth of his vibrant, loving manner. He motioned me to a divan across the room, facing him,

Rúhíyyih Khánúm was seated to my left on a separate chair. From then on, whenever the beloved Guardian sent for me, we were always seated in these same places. It was so wonderful to meet this charming and delightful personality, whom all the Bahá’ís knew from a distance, but few there were who knew him from personal contact. One of my first thoughts was a sadness that all the friends couldn’t have this rare privilege. In another chapter I relate more about this first meeting and of Shoghi Effendi.

Here I was, in the presence of the great-grandson of Bahá’u’lláh, the appointed Guardian and the “Sign of God” on earth. He asked me what the Bahá’ís in America thought of him, I replied that I knew there was a great love for him, in fact, one Bahá’í told me that Shoghi Effendi knew all about us, even down to the size of our socks! With this remark, he laughed heartily and said:- “

the friends attribute much to me to which I make no claim.” He said many kind things to me, one being that I had become International without ever being National, another, that my “Star” was rising. By this time was like an intoxicated person, so filled with joy and happiness.

After this, he became serious and explained the reason I had been asked to come to Haifa, he spoke of the frailty of Mr Maxwell and how he had done all the mundane chores, getting and sending the mail, meeting with the authorities, lawyers, government officials and so on. I could hardly believe my ears, to think that he did not have a large and competent staff around him! I soon learned why, the Bahá’í Community that had been in Haifa before the war in the streets started had been dispersed, some for nationality, and the members of his own family had, in most cases deserted him. Ha also explained that life wasn’t easy at the International Center at this time and not everyone fitted into the situation. Even the American Bahá’ís that I knew wondered why I was chosen to help out in Haifa. One reason was that I was a long time friend of Rúḥíyyih Khánum and she believed I was trustworthy. Finally he rose, again shook my hands, wished me well and said he would see me again the next day.

During those first few weeks, Shoghi Effendi asked me to report to him each day, I would tell him what I had done, he would comment and advise me. He briefed me on the local situation, feeding me information as fast as I could absorb it. It didn’t take me long to realize how wonderful it was to have a Guardian, he said he would give me a plan for the work I was to do for him, if I found I could not carry it out, I was to report to him in detail, tell him the truth of the matter, then he would give me a new plan of operation. He placed such emphasis on my telling him the truth, that I received the impression that those who had been around him had told him what they thought he wanted to hear rather than what was factual.

My first day and night in Haifa are etched in luminous ink in my memory, so deeply, that I can call it forth, re-live and enjoy it all over again. When I returned to my room that night after dinner, dew had fallen refreshing the greenery, under my window a bed of stock in bloom was pouring out its fragrance, now, whenever I smell this flower, time turns back for me to that beautiful day in my life.

The morning after my arrival in Haifa started with my introduction to my new duties. Dear Mr, Maxwell, so gentle and kind, escorted me to the lower town where the Post Office, many business establishments and some of the Port facilities were located. I was Introduced to the local currency, met the officers of three banks, mailed what letters were ready, sent cables, learned where the offices of Shoghi Effendi’s lawyers were located and so forth.

Barclay’s Bank was British, and in my experience quite formal, the Anglo-Palestine Bank was Jewish and the third was run by Arabs, this last bank closed during the following year. A Mr. Sitton was president of the Anglo-Palestine Bank, (which became my favorite) we became the best of friends, he had a

deep respect for Shoghi Effendi and the Bahá'í Faith. I guess he liked Americans also, because he told me to always come to his desk whenever I had any kind of business in the bank. One day I was standing in line at a teller's window to cash a personal American Express check, he saw me, came over taking me by the arm, scolding me, saying, - "Miss Gladys, haven't I told you to always come to my desk?" He never failed to serve me tea or a cool drink and I can truly say I always enjoyed these visits. He had a deep chuckle and a great sense of humor, one day he told me this story, "the three banks in this area all have their own individuality, in the arab bank, their system is so old fashioned that they write items by hand in huge ledgers, they have to carry them from department to department by bicycles! The british bank has so much formality and red tape, if you go in to make a loan, the first payment is due by the time you leave the front door!" Of course, his bank's methods were right up to date, which was certainly true, he always treated me as a "V.I.P." on behalf of Shoghi Effendi and I have many fond memories of my transactions there.

Because of the warm climate, business hours are from early in the morning to one in the afternoon, then everything closes until four, and continued until early evening. I just couldn't get used to the fact that no rain fell from about March 15th until November 15th! I never knew when the growing season was, it seemed to me that the greenery was dying and growing at the sametime. I must say that I loved the tropical flowers and trees, there was a rose tree in the garden that produced the most gorgeous blooms. they were a delicate pink and one bloom would be as large as a small cabbage. People passing by would stop to look and admire it. March was the best month for the wild flowers. The fields and banks of the road would be filled with red anemones, oleanders grew in moist places, wild iris, double narcissus and so many other varieites, too numerous to mention. Herbs grew plentifully in the spring, you would see arab ladies out gathering greens to add to their food supply.

Ben and I exchanged letters once a week, I had so much to tell him, that it took hours to write him a letter. Meantime, things were happening to him, a piece of property that his grandfather had willed him was sold and he was able to re-invest this money which would bring him a better income. This augered well for our future plans to marry. I still had not said anything about this to Rúhíyyih Khánúm.

There were many fascinating things to see as I took my daily walks to town. At the lower end of Persian Street, there was a rather high curved wall, imagine my surprise to discover that a man lived there, he looked like a bundle of rags, each day found him stretched across the sidewalk, his bare feet hanging over the gutter. One either had to step over him or walk in the street, apparently he slept behind the wall. He would hold out his hand, muttering "baksheesh, baksheesh", if you didn't give him anything, he would spat at you. The shops I passed had merchandise such as I had never seen, grains, dried peas, beans in huge burlap bags out on the sidewalk with the tops open, bread was stacked up without any wrappers, all food stuffs displayed in the open air, certainly wasnot

sanitary. After our super-markets the shops seemed like holes in the wall, the largest food stores were operated by a british grocery chain called Spinney's. Even these were crude according to our standards.

Due to constant bombing the Post Office moved frequently. During my first year, March 1947 - 1948, there were many uncertainties and unpleasant incidents, It wasn't long after my arrival that Shoghi Effendi said I was to go to Jerusalem on business for him. He told me to go to Cook's Travel Office in Haifa and they would find me a place to stay in Jerusalem that was considered safe for americans, then to have them reserve a seat in a taxi, saying I would be more comfortable if I reserved ahead and asked for the seat by the driver. Most taxis plying between Haifa and Jerusalem were seven passenger cars made in the United States, the so-called dump seats were uncomfortable for a three hour drive, crowded three abreast in the rear seat wasn't very good either in this humid climate. On the few occasions when I had to take the back seat, my clothes would be wrinkled and damp from such closeness to my fellow passenger.

I made many trips to Jerusalem and was thrilled by them all, however, the first time you see this famous, historical city it is awe-inspiring. As we drove, first on the plains by the sea, then turning inland, passing through Lydda (now called Lod) and Ramleh, we went through valleys and over hills, each time we topped a hill I eagerly looked for my first sight of the "Golden City" , it was sunset as we approached and in the clear, cool air, the late rays of the sun bathed the buildings in a rosy glow. I felt some apprehension, wondering if there would be a language problem, then I remembered that during the British Administration, english had been taught in the public schools. I had no difficulties, Cook's had booked a room for me in the "Jasmin House" located in an enclosed area of buildings, called the British Compound. This small hotel was owned and operated by two brothers who were Armenian. I was to go there many times, always enjoyed my stay and came to know the proprietors quite well. The outer courtyard was set up as a tea-garden, tables under the trees, amid blooming vines and flowers. The dining-room was on the second floor, weather permitting, the diners could be served on the adjacent balcony overlooking the tea -garden.

I did my business in the morning, in most cases, when you entered the office, the man you had come to see would immediately order tea or coffee, then we would settle down to the business at hand.

Shoghi Effendi was always striving to promote the prestige of the

Faith, he told me to say I had come on behalf of "His Eminence

Shoghi Effendi Rabbání," whenever I conducted business on his instructions.

I had so much to learn, especially about protocol and tactful diplomacy. In addition to this was the dicipline of working under such a knowledgeable man. I will refer to one instance, a letter came to the Guardian requesting a charitable donation, signed by a lawyer, who was the chairman for the fund drive. One morning I was giving an envelope with a cash contribution for this charity. When

I went to the lawyer's office and asked for him, I was told he was out of town, so I left the envelope with his secretary. Later in the day when I reported to Shoghi Effendi what I had accomplished that day, he asked me what the lawyer said when I gave him the donation, I replied that he was out of town and I had left the envelope with his secretary. He instructed me to return to the office the next day, ask for the money back and make an appointment with the man who had signed the letter. Naturally I dreaded having to do this but I learned a valuable lesson and I never had to do something like this again. I really admired the Guardian's attention to detail, from then on I gathered all the facts I could before reporting to him. Another thing he advised me to do was to go to the top individual whenever I was doing something for the Faith, the Guardian did not want any glory for himself but he sure wanted the best for the Cause. His protection was marvelous to witness.

On one of my early visits to Jerusalem I completed my errands in the morning, so I hired a Jewish guide to take me on a tour of the Old City. There was only one other person with us as there were so few tourists at this period. Thousands of words have been written about this historical place, therefore I'll only touch on the highlights of this personal experience. Much to my surprise, the guide informed us that the keys to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher were in the custody of the Moslems, and being a Jew he could not even put his foot on the paved terrace in front of the church. He left us to enter and pointed out a small cafe nearby where we could rejoin him. As we entered the church, it seemed unusually dim, one had to purchase a long wax taper, it did make a pretty sight, small points of light flickering here and there, made you think of fireflies. To the right were several chapels cared for by the different religious groups. My impressions were of great age in the adornments, a very dusty odor, flashing diamonds and precious gems on the crucifix over the altar. The rotunda of the church had its own special atmosphere, with the Holy Sepulcher in the center, the area around the Sepulcher was divided among the various religious groups, each having a section like pieces of pie, woe unto anyone who tried to remove or place anything there without authority!

The Holy Sepulcher was always guarded and very small, it seemed full to me with three people in it. As for myself, I felt stunned to be, at long last, in such a revered and holy place, knowing it meant so much to so many. The ornaments enclosed there seemed so exotic and ancient. It was difficult to take it all in, in such a short visit.

As we started to leave the church, the religious dignitary in charge for that day, stepped from his office and asked us if we wished to have a certificate of pilgrimage. We certainly did, he signed and dated it and charged us a small fee. He also gave us a tiny packet of the earth of the Holy Land.

Upon rejoining our guide, we discovered the cafe was actually an antiquity, originally it had been erected as a church by the Crusaders, it was in the form of a cross! In the section where the cross beam would be, there was an open fountain filled with water, on the rim a battered tin cup was attached by a chain,

while we were there several patrons dipped in and drank this water which looked unsanitary to me, debris was scattered over the bottom of the pool. The rest of the cafe was filled with small tables with small stools around them. It happened that I was the only woman present and as we sipped our turkish coffee, many amused glances seemed to come my way. The men were all arabs, wearing the kaffyah, held in place by a black cord called the agal, some wearing floor length garment and otherwise wearing western dress.

We visited so many historical sites, synagogues with wells under the floor, others where a trap door was raised showing ruins of a previous building. The Wailing Wall was of particular interest, in spite of the troublous times, there were quite a few there wearing their skull caps and prayer shawls. They would press written petitions in the cracks between the massive building stones. We did not linger here as it had been the scene of so many unhappy incidents and emotions ran high in Jerusalem. My choice recollection is when we arrived at the portion of the Old City Wall at sunset, this section overlooked the Valley of Kidron with a view across the valley to the Garden of Gethsemane. The rosy glow enhanced the scene and I felt that inner exultation that comes only on extraordinary occasions. Another time, during 1947, I was again in Jerusalem with a free afternoon, having completed my errands in the morning. I decided to go to Bethlehem, there was a bus line called the "Egged" at the end of the line was the public square, not far from the Church of the Nativity. (Later I asked Miriam what "Egged" meant, she pondered a bit and said, "it is like a bandage between two cities! ") There were quite a few loungers around and as a boy on a bicycle passed near me, I asked him where I could find a guide. He beckoned to a handsome young man , calling out "hey, Shikri," who responded eagerly as tourists were few and far between just then. He soon informed me that he had spent some years in Texas, U.S.A., with relatives, but, longing for his old home, returned and planned to live out his life here. We went first to the Church of the Nativity, passing through the low doorway, so constructed as to keep large animals out and I also thought one had to bow in reverence at the same time. I was told that in past times the* "infidels" had sent animals into the church to insult the christians. One has to keep tongue in cheek at many of the stories the guides tell, it is their trade to make the trips interesting even if they embroider the truth. There were seats only in the forward portion of this church, a service was taking place so we talked in whispers and tiptoed about. The ladies attending the meeting wore the modified wimple head-dress that distinguished them as residents of Bethlehem. Instead of the long pointed cone indicative of medieval times, the end of the cone was out short but still draped with fine white cloth, graceful and most becoming. Another place where the crusaders had left an imprint. Quietly lifting a trap-door at the rear, the guide turned on an electric light and about five feet below where we were standing were the remains of a mosaic floor built during the Roman occupation. Next we went down to the lower section to see the creche, the scene of the Nativity of Christ. Here, as in so many other holy places, it seemed very, old, sort of dusty but so fascinating. We then passed through a narrow corridor in the adjacent

monastery to a balcony, the one which overlooks the fields where shepherds still kept their flocks, where the shepherds of old saw the “star.” It was here that I experienced that uplifting of the spirit that takes one back to that bygone day where history was made that changed the world.

On our way to other points of interest, we passed a small gift shop, the young proprietor was standing by the door, he motioned us to come in but my guide said we had other things to see first, so he invited us to come in and have coffee with him when we came back by.

In that vicinity were many shops where they were making objects of mother-of-pearl, jewelry, buttons, boxes, even furniture in-laid with the mother-of-pearl. Like so many shops in the Holy Land, there were corrugated shutters that were pulled down over the front when closing time came, then fastened to the metal loops in the threshold with padlocks. Such a clatter when they are raised or lowered, they made me think of old fashioned roll top desks. Soon we were back to the gift shop, while sipping my coffee I browsed around and found some souvenirs I liked. Then we talked so long I had to run to catch the last bus to Jerusalem before curfew. As I wrote to Ben, later on I glanced in the mirror and saw that I had stars of Bethlehem in my eyes after such a carefree, happy afternoon. It was fortunate that I was able to make these two visits, after that it became too dangerous, I would go where I had to go to carry on my work, then stick to the hotel like a burr.

Tel-Aviv was quite another kind of adventure, although I went there frequently, I usually completed my business as quickly as possible and returned to Haifa. Mr. Maxwell advised me to stay at the American House where he was well known. This was a small hotel run by Mrs. Fischer and her daughter from Brooklyn, New York. There was a home-like atmosphere there and they told me I would always have a place to sleep there even if I had no chance to make a reservation. Once I slept on a cot part way under their dining room table in their private quarters. This meant going to the roof in the elevator, stepping outdoors, crossing over to a box-like building, I called it their pent-house. Other times I have slept in the lounge which had little or no privacy.

I would have liked to see more of the city of Jaffa on these visits, from the distance it looked so fascinating, also it had its place in history. The two cities had become like one city due to the growth and expansion of Tel-Aviv. However, there was so much ill-feeling between the inhabitants, one could sense it and was wise to stay out of their affairs.

Going north from Haifa you come to the roads leading to Acre and to Nazareth, when I first saw the signposts indicating these well-known places, I felt I must be dreaming. These two cities have so great a meaning for so many that it almost defies description. Of the two, Acre takes first place with the Bahá'ís as this is the locale of the “Most Great Prison”, it was here that Bahá'u'lláh was banished with members of his family and some faithful followers under most inhuman conditions. In “God Passes By” are the details of the events that took

place in that city while Bahá'u'llah was incarcerated there. Note: "God Passes By" is the chronological record of the first hundred years of the Bahá'í Faith, written by Shoghi Effendi.

It was in May 1947 that I had a most exciting and interesting experience. A phone call asking for the secretary, (that was my title) brought one of the girls running over to the Pilgrim House to get me. When I reached the phone, a crisp voice informed me that a very important person wished to visit Bahjí, and they wished to be assured that someone would be there to receive him properly, for security reasons, no name was mentioned. A number was given me to call as soon as arrangements could be made. I reported this to Rúhíyyih Khánum and when Shoghi Effendi sent for me later that day he said he was sure it would be the All High Commissioner of Palestine, Sir Allan Cunningham, he then said I must be the one to be there to meet him! I said, Shoghi Effendi! - how can I do this.

I have had no experience with protocol or meeting titled people, I wouldn't even know how to address him! He replied, you just call him, your excellency, and don't worry I will tell you exactly what to do. I was really frightened at the prospect of this assignment, but when Shoghi Effendi asked you to do something, you got up the courage and did it. How often I wished the beloved Guardian had someone there to help him more worthy of his station and ability, yet I was there and had no choice but to rise to the occasion. A phone call was made to confirm the date for the visit, early in the day I dressed in my best summer suit, added white accessories, all of which had to pass inspection by Rúhíyyih Khánum, and took a taxi over to Bahjí. Shoghi Effendi had briefed me thoroughly as to my part in this affair, and also Salah Jarrah, the keeper of the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh. It went as follows: - A lovely bouquet was arranged for me to hand to His Excellency upon his arrival, I was to welcome him on behalf of Shoghi Effendi. At the appointed hour I took my place at the main entrance of Bahjí. In those days the roads leading to Bahjí were very sandy, in the dry season great clouds of dust would rise whenever a car approached. Before long, I saw the dust rising in the distance and along came a convoy of jeeps, one stopped by the entrance and out stepped the District Commissioner of Acre who took a place directly behind me, with his aides behind him. Shortly another convoy of military cars appeared, in the midst of the convoy was an english passenger car with British banners attached to the front fenders which drew up smartly in front of us and out stepped Sir Allan Cunningham! As I greeted him on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, I handed him the flowers, he delicately sniffed them and then handed them to one of his aides. He fell into step with me as we walked down the path to the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh. A rather large group was following us, but as Salah opened the door to the Shrine, only His Excellency and I entered, our shoes having been left at the foot of the steps outside. Quietly I approached the sacred threshold, kneeled, said a short prayer with my face buried in the fragrant blossoms, then backed away to a corner of the inner courtyard garden where I could look through the greenery and seated myself upon the floor. Sir Allen followed my procedure and joined me for a

short period of silent meditation. Not a word was spoken until we were again outside, whereupon, he remarked: - "that is as near to heaven on earth as one could possibly get."

We strolled over to the Mansion, as we entered the upper floor we went directly to the room that had been occupied by Bahá'u'lláh where we paid our respects, then I brought to his attention the framed tribute to Bahá'u'lláh by Professor Browne of Cambridge University, which hung just outside the door. We next visited the Press room where I pointed out the progress of the Faith in the world, while opposite, pictures of the tyrannical rulers who had persecuted, and exiled Bahá'u'lláh were hung on the wall to gaze on the proof that they had not stamped out the infant Faith by their actions.

Sir Allan spoke of the Bahá'í Books, noting the various languages, and the colorful arrangement of the books. As the top floor of the Mansion is like a museum, there was much to see, we ended our inside tour in the guest room where he signed the register and retired to the balcony. From here we could see across the bay to Haifa with a good view of the Shrine of the Báb halfway up Mount Carmel. Directly behind the lovely colored glass windscreen were two chairs, for Sir Allan and myself, Salah soon brought tea in delicate glasses, to our right we could see the dome and minaret of the Mosque in Acre. Soon the entire company was on the balcony, having their tea, Salah had taken them into the Shrine and on a tour of the Mansion. After a while, His Excellency rose saying he had other visits to make and regretted that his time had been so short in this peaceful place, he said he hoped to come again. We chatted as we walked back to his car, then they were off in whirls of dust, banners flying. The District Commissioner of 'Akká had remained behind and cordially invited me to have dinner at his home, even setting the day about two weeks hence. He said he would like to have me meet his family and would take me after dinner to visit the Most Great Prison, as I had told him that I hadn't been there since my arrival in the country.

Shoghi Effendi was very pleased with the report of the visit of the High Commissioner, also that the District Commissioner of Acre had invited me to his home, telling me by all means to accept his invitation. A few days after Sir Allan's visit I received the following communication: "Dear Hiss Anderson, Your kindness last Thursday when you received His Excellency, the High Commissioner, at Bahjí was very much appreciated. His Excellency was most sorry that his visit had, of necessity, to be so brief and hopes that on a subsequent visit to Acre he will be able to visit Bahjí again.

Yours sincerely,

M.A. Andrew. Acre, 13 May 1947.

Sir Allan Cunningham was the epitome of dignity and refinement, he was slim and trim in his military uniform with medals and ribbons on it, he had pure white hair and a small neat white mustache. I certainly enjoyed my role as

official greeter, it was a special occasion to add to so many new and interesting experiences.

I have had no experience with protocol or meeting titled people, I wouldn't even know how to address him! He replied, you just call him, your excellency, and don't worry I will tell you exactly what to do. I was really frightened at the prospect of this assignment, but when Shoghi Effendi asked you to do something, you got up the courage and did it. How often I wished the beloved Guardian had someone there to help him more worthy of his station and ability, yet I was there and had no choice but to rise to the occasion. A phone call was made to confirm the date for the visit, early in the day I dressed in my best summer suit, added white accessories, all of which had to pass inspection by Rúhíyyih Khánúm, and took a taxi over to Bahjí. Shoghi Effendi had briefed me thoroughly as to my part in this affair, and also Salah Jarrah, the keeper of the

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stamped out the infant Faith by their actions.

Sir Allan spoke of the Bahá'í Books, noting the various languages, and the colorful arrangement of the books. As the top floor of the Mansion is like a museum, there was much to see, we ended our inside tour in the guest room where he signed the register and retired to the balcony. From here we could see across the bay to Haifa with a good view of the Shrine of the Báb halfway up Mount Carmel. Directly behind the lovely colored glass windscreen were two chairs, for Sir Allan and myself, Salah soon brought tea in delicate glasses, to our right we could see the dome and minaret of the Mosque in Acre. Soon the entire company was on the balcony, having their tea, Salah had taken them into the Shrine and on a tour of the Mansion. After a while, His Excellency rose saying he had other visits to make and regretted that his time had been so short in this peaceful place, he said he hoped to come again. We chatted as we walked back to his car, then they were off in whirls of dust, banners flying. The District Commissioner of 'Akká had remained behind and cordially invited me to have dinner at his home, even setting the day about two weeks hence. He said he would like to have me meet his family and would take me after dinner to visit the Most Great Prison, as I had told him that I hadn't been there since my arrival in the country.

Shoghi Effendi was very pleased with the report of the visit of the High Commissioner, also that the District Commissioner of Acre had invited me to his home, telling me by all means to accept his invitation. A few days after Sir Allan's visit I received the following communication: "Dear Hiss Anderson, Your kindness last Thursday when you received His Excellency, the High Commissioner, at Bahjí was very much appreciated. His Excellency was most sorry that his visit had, of necessity, to be so brief and hopes that on a subsequent visit to Acre he will be able to visit Bahjí again.

Yours sincerely,

M.A. Andrew. Acre, 13 May 1947.

Sir Allan Cunningham was the epitome of dignity and refinement, he was slim and trim in his military uniform with medals and ribbons on it, he had pure white hair and a small neat white mustache. I certainly enjoyed my role as official greeter, it was a special occasion to add to so many new and interesting experiences.

The day of my visit to the District Commissioner's home in Acre arrived and I was ready and waiting at #7 Persian Street, when two cars stopped at the front gate. The District Commissioner came to the door and explained that terrorists had blown up a portion of the Most Great Prison in order to liberate some of the Jewish prisoners, he said his brother-in-law was in the one of the cars and would take me to Acre, because he, himself had to go and see to the affairs at the prison, he would join us later. My escort took me through the Old City Gate, his car was small, even so we twisted and turned as we made our way through the city, while he pointed out historical landmarks. The disturbance at the

prison had made everyone nervous and cautious. The family received me most cordially, their home was located in the newer section of Acre with attractive plantings surrounding it, they had just received an electric refrigerator which was proudly displayed in the dining room. We had a delicious meal and social hour together and my previous escort drove me back to Haifa. He was quite dashing in a dark blue suit, wearing a red fez with a black tassel, he was tall for an arab, had liquid brown eyes , black hair and moustache, like a character in an arabian movie. Our return trip was much less formal as we were better acquainted, he said he would like to show me around, especially to take me out to the desert where no lights interfered with the beauty of the moon and the stars! I explained that I had come to Haifa expressly to assist in the work at the Bahá'í World Center and that my social life would be curtailed for the time being. My dashing friend was unaware that I had a fiance in the United States. After receiving a written invitation from him I had to gently inform him of the facts.

Conditions in the streets worsened as the date drew near for the end of the British Mandate, which was May 15, 1948. So much was to happen before this came about, it was a common thing to hear sporadic shooting and sometimes bombs. By this time I was on a routine schedule, breakfast at 7:30 A.M., then report to Rúhíyyih Khánúm over at #7 Persian Street, waiting in the tea-room for my mornings work. At times there were delays as those two beloved persons worked over knotty problems upstairs in their own private apartment. Then I would hear Rúhíyyih Khánúm coming down the stairs with her arms full of papers, including her writing portfolio, and she would hand me my work for the day. I never knew what to expect, it could be an appointment with the lawyers, the land registry, the Municipality,(the equivalent of our city hall) most anything but always the mail and the cables.

It was the custom of Shoghi Effendi to send handwritten cables over to me which I carefully copied on the proper form for sending out the next day, I always returned his copy along with mine to be certain that they were correct, he had the duplicate for his records. Sometimes in the wording of his messages, he would make changes several times in order to have the exact meaning, I recall one instance when he had inserted at least six different words, crossing out until the final word was way over in the outside margin. He had some special, very expensive stationary, with the Greatest Name embossed at the top of the sheet, on the few occasions when he asked me to type an important letter, he would send over his outlined letter which I transferred to this costly paper being extremely careful as he would send me only the sheets actually required, no mistakes allowed! I would space up the letter on scrap paper before I typed the one that would go out. 1947 Observance of the Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh.

As May 28, 1947 drew near, Shoghi Effendi instructed me to obtain passes for the Bahá'ís to go by taxi to Bahjí to observe the passing of Bahá'u'lláh. There was a curfew in Haifa which meant we would have to be out of Haifa by six P.M. and could not return to the city until six A.M., the following morning. Upon

inquiry I found that the office that issued passes was in a secret place. I had to contact a special man who would escort me to this place, he left me at a street corner and I did not see which building he entered, and in a short while he returned with the necessary documents.

The Bahá'ís in the general area, some from Trans-Jordan, came for the Holy Day observances whenever possible, this time our party was comprised of six taxis and we passed through all the road-blocks on the way to Acre without incident.

The ladies and children gathered in the Pilgrim House and the men were with Shoghi Effendi in the Mansion. Just before the sunset hour, chairs were placed around the edge of the garden adjacent to Bahá'u'lláh's Shrine. Lights in the garden and around the eaves of building were turned on and shed a luminous glow on the greenery.

Inside the Pilgrim House, Rúhíyyih Khánum was talking to the ladies in Persian, at times she would turn to me and tell me in English that she was sharing news of the Bahá'í World with them. A large Persian rug had been placed in the center of the room for the small children, they sat very straight with their arms folded over their chests, sometimes their little backs would get tired and they would slump down, then they would catch their mother's eye and straighten up quickly. The children chanted prayers as their part in the observance. We could hear the voice of the beloved Guardian from the garden where he was speaking to the men, telling them the latest Bahá'í news and of his plans for the progress of the Faith.

At midnight, word came for the ladies to enter the Shrine, we went around the rear of the building so that we would not disturb Shoghi Effendi and left our shoes outside, as we entered, each lady held out her hands, palm upward, and Rúhíyyih Khánum drew the glass stopper of a vial of Attar of Rose across each palm, then the lady would raise her palms to her forehead anointing herself with this precious fragrance, soon the beautiful aroma permeated the whole interior. Each one knelt in reverence at the Holy Threshold and then retired to a small room to the left of the Holy Tomb. A chair was placed in the doorway of this room for Rúhíyyih Khánum, I was standing directly behind her so I could see the men as they came in and paid their respects, then they stepped back and knelt on the floor around the gem-like garden in the covered courtyard of the Shrine.

When all was quiet, Shoghi Effendi entered, approached the Holy Threshold, knelt in reverence, backed away a few steps and knelt. There was absolute silence, then he raised his beautiful resonant voice and chanted the Tablet of Visitation. It was my impression that his chanting was in two parts, the first I would describe as in the tenor range, the second part in a much deeper voice. Then, he again approached the Threshold, knelt there for a moment, then backed away step by step, leaving the Shrine, each man did the same, the only sound was the whisper of their stockinged feet, then the ladies did the same thing until

the Shrine was empty.

Oh, how lovely it was, all the lights were on, the glowing colors of the persian rugs,, the dainty garden, the objectd'art placed here and there, the perfume, but above all the privilege of being there. Outside the night birds were singing, the air was soft and balmy, the moon was shedding its light, truly a taste of paradise.

At this point everyone retired for a rest until called again to enter the Shrine to be there at three o'clock in the morning, the hour of Bahá'u'lláh's Ascension. The earlier scene was repeated.

Had it not been for the curfew, we would have returned to Haifa immediately, as it was, we got what rest we could, then, at dawn, we left Bahjí. It was hard to leave this peaceful place, the sun was rising, the birds were singing and etched on the sky-line was a line of arab women with containers on their heads going to the well for water. As we drove toward Haifa, there was a thick ground fog covering the road which slowed our progress. Suddenly, as we neared the outskirts of the city, our caravan was challenged and halted by a road-block, armed men thrust their guns through the windows of the taxis and we were advised that our passes had been cancelled and that we would not be allowed to enter Haifa. There had been a serious disturbance during the night! A conference was held with Shoghi Effendi, with the result that he sent Mr. Maxwell and myself to the nearby police station where we explained our position and why we were there. Due to the excellent relations that Shoghi Effendi had with the British authorities, some phone calls were made and we were allowed to continue to our homes. The streets of the city were deserted and there was an eerie, foreboding atmosphere as we passed through the silent streets. I sincerely hope and pray that all future observances of this Holy Observance will find this country at peace. We all had a short rest and then took up our usual daily routine.

Mr. William Maxwell, the father of Rúhíyyih Khánum, lived in the opposite end of the Pilgrim House from where my room was, he also had an office in that area where he worked on his architectural designs. He was a precious person and I had come to know him rather well on my visit in his home in Montreal in 1935-36. He was busily engaged on the design and details concerned with the beautification of the Shrine of the Báb. The beloved Guardian had approved the design and a plaster model of it stood on a table in the central hall of the house. He was a great comfort to Shoghi Effendi, they would consult together and come up with ideas for decorative gates, graceful steps, pediments to support large urns to hold flowering plants and many other items. I understand that Shoghi Effendi was always noting architectural details during his travels, also becoming familiar with materials for monumental buildings that would be strong, lasting and beautiful. This knowledge was reflected in his choice of the lovely monuments in the upper Shrine garden on Mount Carmel. He asked Mr. Maxwell to create many things, among them was a suitable plaque to insert into the wall in the room of Bahá'u'lláh in the Bahjí Mansion, near where Bahá'u'lláh always sat. Now visitors may see this plaque which has been executed in several tones

of marble with the Greatest Name in gold leaf.

Mr. Maxwell was a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architecture, in his native Canada are many examples of his fine creative efforts. Although he was in his seventies, his hands were as steady as a rock, even his signature was artistic. He was able to go to Italy in 1948, to consult with representatives of the marble industry, to select materials and to see part of his beautiful design for the Shrine of the Báb erected before he returned to his home in Montreal, Canada, where he died in 1952 after two years of illness. This gracious homo on Pine Avenue, West, in Montreal, had been the scene of much Bahá'í activity, the only home in Canada visited by 'Abdu'l-Bahá during His travels in North America. In 1953 this home was presented to the Canadian National Bahá'í Assembly and is now designated a Bahá'í Shrine.

On December 24, 1951, Shoghi Effendi had appointed Mr. Maxwell a Hand of the Cause, upon the death of Mr. Maxwell this mantle fell upon his daughter, Rúhíyyih Khánum.

When the beloved Guardian and Rúhíyyih Khánum went away on their annual rest, it was my pleasant duty to look after Mr. Maxwell, we had our meals together and I had been instructed to see that he would get some exercise and often we would go to the top of Mount Carmel to his favorite tea-garden and take short walks in that vicinity. If I hadn't taken him in hand, he probably would have worked around the clock! Eventually he found an assistant who aided him in the drawing of the plans, relieving him of a lot of the routine work.

Sporadic shooting would break out frequently, one night shots began in our immediate neighborhood, with the windows open, they sounded very near. I quickly found Mr. Maxwell and chose a safe corner in the central hall where we sat down on the floor until the firing subsided, when, at a later date we were subjected to air-raids, our instructions were to take Mr. Maxwell to the lower floor where a small room had been blacked out and where the walls were very thick. He would calmly pick up something to read and I have a mental picture of him sitting in that room quite oblivious of what was going on outside. Indeed, a remarkable personality.

Over the garage at #7 Persian Street was a pleasant apartment which was occupied by Husayn Ikbal. I believe his age was in the early eighties. He wore a persian aba and a red fez, it was a delight to enter the gate and see him seated in all his dignity on the rim of the fountain, amid the flower garden, sunning himself. If I came up the path while he was seated there, he would immediately arise, cross his hands over his chest and say the Bahá'í greeting, "the Glory of God be upon you." He was the Persian secretary for the beloved Guardian who trusted him completely.

Husayn Ikbal did not speak any english, therefore, when he required something from me, he would ask Salah Jarrah, the custodian of the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh to write notes to me in english. Below, is a sample of one of these requests:

Dear Bahá'í Sister, Mrs. Weeden,

With great respect and obedience I beg you to type eight envelopes like the attached.

I am sorry to disturb you in this matter and I thank you forever in thousands thanks in advance and in sacks. Please give my obedience to Mr, Weeden, the noble Bahá'í.

10/8/50 (signed) Ḥusayn Ikbāl

This dear person has long since gone to his reward but I still think of him fondly and always enjoyed his notes.

Shoghi Effendi was very kind and gentle with Ḥusayn Ikbāl and sometimes he would invite him to go in the car with him and I would drive them to the top of Mount Carmel to a vantage point where they could look down on the Báb's Shrine and the gardens, and on other

Occasions over to Bahjí. Later on, Ḥusayn Ikbāl lived in the so-called Eastern Pilgrim House right at the end of the main entrance road in the garden surrounding the Shrine of the Báb. Frequently, after Shoghi Effendi had been supervising work in the garden, he would join Ḥusayn Ikbāl on the balcony of the Pilgrim House for tea, they would sit there sipping tea and having conversation, as it grew darker, the lights of the city would come on, they sparkled and twinkled in the clear air as if handfuls of jewels had been scattered about. It was possible to see Mount Hermon in the Lebanon, usually snow-covered, from this vantage point. The lighted ships in the harbor and the city of Acre across the bay added their beauty to the scene. As I waited by the front door I could hear the vibrant voice of Shoghi Effendi, as the dusk deepened he would come out to his car and I would drive him down the mountain. Precious moments for me to remember.

I never knew the exact number of Bahá'ís at the International Center, some lived over in the plain of Acre in the Garden of Ridván on the Ma'an River, others on farms nearby where they raised produce which supplied some of the needs of the household in Haifa, then there were the Persian girls who did the housework and some of the cooking, and the gardeners, most of whom lived up in the gardens near the Shrine of the Báb. 'Alí, a Bedouin, was the main cook and lived in his own quarters at the rear of # 7 Persian Street. Food was prepared for everyone by 'Alí and someone always came down from the Eastern Pilgrim House and carried their food up in special containers. There was a long flight of steps in the area of the Shrine gardens which made the trip down fairly easy, but it was a long climb back. When 'Alí cooked a turkey, it was so delicious, he would spend the entire day at the side of a huge kettle on the floor of the back kitchen, he would baste it carefully until it was golden brown and tender.

'Alí also took it upon himself to raise some turkeys and he did very well until there was a grain shortage, we were saddened once when some of his baby

turkeys went under the fence into a neighbors yard, the young children playing there broke the legs of every one! I really hate to admit it, but there was a lot of cruelty to animals.

In the spring 'Alí's mother came to see him and one day Rúḥíyyih Khánúm sent word to me that 'Alí's mother was going to show us all how to make bedouin bread. I went over on my way to town and found her sitting on the floor of the kitchen, on one side she had a pan of flour, on the other side a container of water, she would start with the flour and pour on a bit of water then working back and forth between the two, she would finally seem satisfied with the result, she then covered the dough with a cloth and I was told to come back in the afternoon when she would show us how to bake it. When I returned after lunch, she had a small fire going on the tile floor of the back kitchen, a round dome-like metal cover was over the fire, supported by stones, under the metal cover, sticks were extending beyond the fire and that was how she controlled the heat, need more heat, push in the sticks, too much heat, she pulled them out. We had such a merry time watching her and finally we were encouraged to try it. She would pinch off a fairly small lump of dough and spin it over her hand, then very gracefully place it on the metal cover, if a tiny hole appeared she would patch it with a piece of dough, after browning to her satisfaction, she would remove it, fold it in quarters and start a stack at her side.

We had a hilarious time trying to spin this dough! It would begin to droop over our hands and then to try and hit the metal cover, well, you can imagine that it was not like hers! The girls had a solution, they produced a small pillow covered with immaculate white sheeting, we would spin the dough until we could no longer handle it, then flop it on the pillow and reach under the dough and pull it until it was the size of a large dinner plate, then to hit the surface of the metal cover correctly took some doing. Freshly baked this bread tasted terrible and had the consistency of rubber, how- ever after it had cooled we found that toasting it made it crisp and delicious.

I was very intrigued with the appearance of 'Alí's mother, she wore the traditional long black flowing garment, also her head was covered with a black head-dress, according to bedouin custom, there were tattoo marks around her mouth in the form of small crosses to show that she was a married woman. These ladies bake bread every single day of their life and preparing it takes a lot of time. I understood that they ate a lot of grains in the form of mush and only had meat on special occasions. Out on the plains between Acre and Haifa, you could see their black goats-hair tents, they would move with the season of growing grass and other greens that the goats would eat. The tiny hooves of the goats would trample the roots of the greenery so these bedouin would be constantly on the move to new pastures, they also had to go farther and farther afield to find food for them.

At #7 Persian Street, a Bahá'í was the keeper of the keys and he was useful in obtaining household and food supplies. He had friends among the Druse, some of whom earned their living by hiring out their trucks, these contacts were

invaluable later on when the construction of the Arcade of the Bá'b's Shrine commenced. Most of the Druse in the area lived in a village on top of Mount Carmel. They dressed like the arabs with one exception, they wore a small multicolored cap that showed under the edge of their kaffyah, this identified them as Druse.

The persian maids kept the house beautifully clean and they felt greatly honored to be serving in the household of the beloved Guardian, on quiet sunny days it was a quaint picture to see them on the pation adjacent to the kitchen working over huge trays of dried foods such as grains, peas and especially rice, all had to be picked over carefully for bits of debris- The only girl who could speak some engllsh was Khorshid so she took care of Mr. Maxwell and me over at the Pilgrim House. She would bring our food over and clean up after each meal. It was very refreshing to me to come home from my morn-ings work and find a nice cool drink waiting for me and every after- noon about four she would bring us tea and quite often Rúhíyyih Kha-num would join us for a short while.

When Shoghi Effendi's work-room needed a thorough cleaning, they would wait until he had left to go to the Shrine Garden, then they would all work together, being very careful to put things back where the Guardian had left them. On one day they needed an extra pair of hands, so I went to help them, of course, Rúhíyyih Khánum was always present when this cleaning was done, she also helped. I noted that this room was most orderly, spartan, a single electric bulb hung from the ceiling, a small bed near his work table, Iwas told that sometimes he took his rest in this bed, but still had his papers spread around him, in fact, he had the capacity to scan reading matter rapidly and he had material from all over the world. I was to discover that he even read regional bulletins!

The superintendant of the Shrine Garden in Haifa was a devoted and loyal Bahá'í, he was half persian and half arab. He was so impetuous by nature that he sometimes created problems that others had to unravel. To him, Shoghi Effendi's word was law and he would disregard the laws of the country. As an example, he knew that Shoghi Effendi needed a car, one day he came to my office and asked me to tell Rúhíyyih Khánum that he had a car for the beloved Guardian and to ask him to please look out the window, across the street from #7 was an empty lot, sure enough there was an american Studebaker parked there. It was from Trans-Jordan and even if we could have accepted it, it would be in Palestine illegally! Of course he had to return it. He spoke some english and would rush into my office and say, "give me a packet, give me a packet" what he wanted was an envelope. He was always writing notes to Shoghi Effendi and asking one of the girls to take them upstairs to Rúhíyyih Khánum who would then give them to the Guardian when he had a break in his work. He really was a help, he went about the city and reported what was happening and at times this information was very useful.

The caretaker of the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh at Bahjí was Salah Jarrah, he had been postmaster at Samakh, Palestine before Shoghi Effendi asked him to come to Haifa. He was a fine young man and had been taught english in his school.

Whatever he was asked to do, he did it well and he had some adventures later on which I will tell in the proper sequence of their happening.

There was a Bahá'í man and wife that lived in the next house above the Western Pilgrim House, the husband had a gift shop and I purchased some mother-of-pearl prayer beads from him before he went out of business due to the increase of the warlike atmosphere.

There is a lovely room in the house at # 7 Persian Street which is called the tea-room, the windows at the end of the room overlook the patio at the rear of the house. This was where the ladies of the household received their guests. There are mandars on three sides of the room, these are like settees with seat and back cushions made to fit and usually have a protective covering of white material, kept spotlessly clean. Every few feet there would be a taboret or nested tables that could be put in front of a guest to hold her tea-cup. Often the tea was made in a samovar, which, in my estimation created a festive atmosphere. I was surprised to learn that the maids slept in this room, rolling up their sleeping mats and storing them under the mandars during the day, I had visions of a girls dormitory, while going about their dally chores, they chattered like magpies, so I could imagine how they talked over the events of the day upon retiring. All these girls were very modest, their dresses were fairly long, high at the neck, with long sleeves, dainty white head coverings and wearing white aprons. When there were guests they wore their prettiest aprons, sometimes they were made of white embroidered china silk. It always amazed me to see them washing the tile and marble floors, they would bend from the waist, moving the washing cloth in great sweeps,

On the rare occasions when we had a dinner party, they reminded me of butterflies as they circled the table serving the guests, Khorshid became my favorite and I was so happy to see she was still there when I re-visited Haifa in 1973-74.

One of the girls supervised the preparation of food for Shoghi Effendi and Rúhíyyih Khánum would inspect the tray before it was carried up to him to be sure everything was in order and tempting.

The first few months in Haifa were enlivened for me as I walked about the city I would hear the sounds of many interesting things, the clip-clop of a little girl walking on clogs, the clinking of small cups held in the hand of a turkish coffee vendor which he used like castanets, the tip-tapping of the feet of tiny donkeys and the calls of assorted vendors.

There were horse drawn carts delivering cooking and heating oils to the housewives, the carts had a large sunflower painted on the rear, the driver calling a long-drawn out " gaaaassss", the arab lady who went by each morning calling "leban, leban", we call it yogurt, if you wished to buy you came to the gate with a container, she would lower the can from the top of her head and ladle out the amount you required, A man with a huge tray on his head would sell fresh poppy seed buns which were delicious.

The coffee vendors had beautiful urns, carried on their backs, if they found a customer, they would swing the urn around, very deftly, rinse out the little cup and pour out a fresh coffee for you, they would put cardamon in it which added a delicious aroma and flavor. Due to the fact that they burned charcoal you could smell them before you could see them and this tickled your taste buds! I never purchased street coffee, I wasn't sure how sanitary the cups would be.

The nut vendors were usually Sudanese boys, wearing light blue tunics over their white pantaloons, a red fez on their head and a red sash around their waist, they were most colorful and very fine looking. They would set up their business on a tripod of three sticks, place a wooden tray on it with a small charcoal burner at one side over which they roasted the nuts. They were usually inexpensive varieties including sunflower and watermelon seeds. Someone said if you want to feel like a moron, buy a packet of watermelon seeds, find a tree you could sit under and spend an hour or so shelling them! If you purchased any nuts, the vendor made a small cone of newspaper for you to carry them in. You could also buy lunches on some street corners, the stands made me think of our pop-corn stands, more often than not, they would be selling arab bread which had been out in half, making a pocket, these would be filled with minced meat, vegetables or small balls of grain fried in deep fat. In season, fruits were piled up at the edge of the sidewalk and I have seen push-carts filled with cactus fruit, called sabres, on a bed of cracked ice. In this case, the man selling them had a very sharp knife, hooked at the end, with gloves on his hands, he would slit the fruit skin and you would remove it yourself. I have seen people on their lunch hour buying five or six of these eating them right on the spot.

It was not unusual to see strings of camels on the city streets, most often there would be a donkey and rider, leading a string of three, Camels roped, together. The camels have such a snooty expression and very long eyelashes, when they were shedding their coats they looked like bags of rags. I saw some on the empty lot across from where I was living, with their legs folded under them and chewing their food, the lower jaw swings from side to side.

There were many sidewalk cafes in the lower town, mostly near the arab quarter, small stools were out during the day and usually filled with arab men playing backgammon and sipping coffee. One day I saw a man there who had purchased a live chicken, the poor chickens legs were tied together, and the man had put it on the sidewalk with its head hanging over the gutter and that was a sad sight as the chicken would be right in the hot sun, panting for lack of water! One never got used to this kind of cruelty. I saw a man waiting for a bus with a brown paper bag full of pigeons, it was obvious that they were stacked one over the other and each one had its head out of a hole cut in the bag like a porthole.

Bread was delivered to our house by motorcycle, it was carried in the sidecar with no wrapping. The driver would stack up the loaves on his arm, sometimes he would drop a loaf, it would roll in the gutter, he would calmly pick it up and deliver it with the rest! He kept a weekly tally in pencil on the wall by the gate, at the end of the week he would add it up and after being paid, erase it and

start over again the next time he came to deliver. This bread was from a jewish bakery made in round loaves, we also bought bread from the arab bakery, this was made from white flour and was round and flat. I noted that this bread was often used to mop up food by tearing off a small portion, running it around the plate until one had a nice mouthful then popping it in the mouth. Also, I have seen it used as a sort of napkin, they would wipe their fingers on it and eat that portion too! This kind of bread was delicious when toasted.

The milkman would have a neighborhood distribution point where large cans would be left, he then would take small containers around to the different houses, siphoning it off from the larger cans. You just had to stop thinking of sanitary precautions.

There was a man with a tiny monkey who would come and sit by the Gate, he had a drum that was very ingenious, it was made of a Kraft cheese can with sheepskin over each end, he even used the tin curl you get when opening one of these cans, attaching it with a thong so that it would hit the drum head with each turn of the handle. It was more like a rattle than a drum, the monkey would perform all kinds of antics to the beat and after the performance was over the man held out his hand for a contribution. I fbusiness wasn't profitable he just moved on to another location. He had extra drums to sell if you wished to buy.

As the disturbances deepened most of these colorful people disappeared and I missed seeing them, the streets had become so dangerous, you never knew what was going to happen, bombs exploded, there was sniping and once I saw a man kill himself with a hand grenade. These hand grenades were sold in the arab quarter, they were in piles on the sidewalk and the price was about the equal of our fifty cents.

Very few knew how to handle them, in the case of the man who killed himself, he had it in his home and was examining it, came out on his balcony with it then because he didn't know any better, he pulled the pin. You would see men on the streets with grenades hanging from their belts.

The Jewish quarter was half-way up Mount Carmel and in some respects more modern than the lower town. It was people from the european countries that had homes and shops here, mostly german, Rúhíyyih Khánum could easily converse with them and this was most helpful when shopping. There was one store that had beautiful things to sell that people had brought in, linens, silver and fine furniture, this had to be early in their immigration as later on I do not think they were allowed to take anything with them. The top of Mount Carmel was sparsely settled and had a lot of greenery. it was mostly residential. Most buildings were made of blocks of Palestinian limestone. There are amny ravines on Mount Carmel, some with very steep sides. As the crow flies, the distance, across is short, if you wished to visit someone on the opposite ridge, you would have to go back to the center and take the road out on top of the ridge!

Under the British Administration, it was the rule that no building could be

more than four stories high, I wish this rule was still in effect, however I guess we must bow to progress. By the time I returned in 1973 I hardly recognized the top of the mountain, the lush greenery had given way to modern streets, quite high buildings and shops of all descriptions, even huge super-markets.

On Mount Carmel there is a Catholic Church built over a cave that they call the "Cave of Elijah", this is located on the sea end of the peninsula, lower down , where the mountain descends toward the sea there is a small square Building which is purportedly built over the "Cave of Elijah". We asked Shoghi Effendi which one was the true cave, he replied, "there are amny caves on Mount Carmel and Elijah probably slept in them all!" The river Kishon flows through the plain between Haifa and Acre and one remembers that this river flowed red with the blood of the priests of Baal slain by Elijah!

On a trip to Nazareth, we visited the usual places of interest, among them a visit to a Church presumably built over the cave that was Joseph's carpenter shop, the guide gave us a long spiel about it, one person in the group went up to him afterward and said, - I don't believe a word of it! The guide replied, - only about ten percent do! It is not possible to visit these famous places and not be affected by it, geographically, the land is the same land, Mount Tabor still Mount Tabor and so on.

Shoghi Effendi lamented the fact that he must depend on public taxis for transportation and how decrepit they were due to the lack of replacement parts and proper care. Consequently I soon found myself on the way to Jerusalem to visit the office of Import and Export licenses to see what could be done about purchasing an american car. The official Italked with inquired why Shoghi Effendi wanted an american car, why not an english car which were easily obtainable. I told him that the size of the american cars were more in keeping with the dignity of the Head of a World Faith, inasmuch as there would always be a chauffeur and many times there would distinguished guests in the rear seat. At this point he advised me that no import license could be granted at this time due to the currency regulations, however, he said if someone should send Shoghi Effendi and american car as a gift, then permission would be granted to bring it into the country. This information soon reached the right ears and it wasn't long before we received a notification that a new Buick Roadmaster would be shipped as soon as the proper papers were in order. After another trip to Jerusalem, the authorities agreed to let the car come in. You can imagine the anticipation experienced when we knew that the beloved Guardian would have a proper car. There was much satisfaction when we were notified that the car had arrived and was actually in the port. When they pulled the car on the weighing platform, they had attached the pull cain to the radiator and th_is damaged it so we were plagued with this problem from the very first.

Before the arrival of the car, Rúhíyyih Khánúm informed me that I would be the driver! Iwas really frightened at this prospect, I am not mechanically minded and the thought of the responsibility of the precious Guardian was enough to floor me, I tried every argument I could think of to convince her that this was

not proper, that I had not driven a car for many years, and, being a woman, how would that look in this country where women do not have much standing, and so on. Rúhíyyih Khánúm pointed her finger at me and said, Shoghi Effendi says you have to get your drivers license, so what could I do, that ended the argument. I located a driving school with a dual control practice car and took a refresher course. My instructor was jewish and as our street bordered on the arab section, I suggested he meet me in more neutral territory, he was young and brave and insisted on picking me up where I lived. So many people had been killed by the terrorists just for their cars! The doctor who attended our household came one day and when he left he took the street parallel to Persian Street, a group of arabs stopped him, pulled him from his car and it was only because someone recognized him as saving a member of his family that they let him go but told him not to use that street again! He could have lost his life just because of that car.

My first lesson showed the instructor that I at least had rudimentary driving experience so he took me right through the jewish shopping center right up to the top of Mount Carmel. This drive was complicated by the fact that the easier access road was closed to civilian traffic and the route we had to take had a series of hairpin curves plus barbed wire barricades in staggered positions that we had to zig-zag through. Needless to say I was wringing wet after these expeditions but the day came when my instructor said I was ready for my driving test. The country was still under British Administration so I had a british examiner. I was extremely nervous and made a poor showing at first but in due course he passed me and I found myself the possessor of a Palestinian Driving license.

The garage at # 7 Persian Street was right at the edge of the street and was half-filled already with the large Cunningham car that had belonged to Abdu'l-Bahá, it was covered with a huge canvas. I had to drive in cater-cornered and the inevitable happened, I miscalculated and tore off a small metal trim, I just felt terrible to do this to the Guardian's new car! I lost some sleep over it until I had it repaired. Luckily I never did any more damage while I drove it, when Ben came over he became the chauffeur. I had some interesting experiences as the result of driving this shiny new american car. My favorite was when I had taken the beloved Guardian to the dentist located in the area of the jewish shopping center. After I had parked and opened the door for Shoghi Effendi, I noted an elementary school just across the street. While I was waiting, school let out and about eight children were attracted by the car, they swarmed all over it, commenting in hebrew, the only words I understood was when they patted the mud-guards calling " nylon" and "radio" when they poked their heads in the window. Suddenly, out of the corner of my eye I saw Shoghi Effendi coming down the walk, I hurriedly walked around and opened the rear door when as many children as could climb in! Imagine my embarrassment, Shoghi Effendi slowed his walk and smiled at my predicament. In order to get them out I had to open the rear door on the street side and literally push them out!

One day when I was in the jewish shopping area, a man approached me saying

he had noticed me driving an american car and surely it would be better if we hired him as the chauffeur. This individual became rather annoying, it seemed I would meet him everywhere, even in the lower town. He apparently made it his business to find out where I lived, I was working in the garden one day when he spoke to me through the wrought iron fence that enclosed the property.

On another occasion, Mr. Maxwell and I were having tea in the little garden by the side door when this same man entered the gate and came toward us, before I could say or do anything, Mr. Maxwell very graciously offered him tea. Poor man, it was easy to see that he wasn't quite right mentally. It was spooky to find him always in the vicinity wherever I went on my daily errands. Apparently he still had hopes of becoming our chauffeur. Later on, when Ben had come to Haifa, one of the girls said a man was waiting downstairs to see him, it was this same person, he wanted Ben to finance a trip to America for him, claiming he had some sort of an invention that would make a lot of money. So many people think that all Americans are wealthy!

One day I received a phone call from a lady inviting me to a party at her home, she had seen me driving an American car and thought I was a visitor to the country. Knowing how careful I had to be, I politely declined, later on I met her through the American Consulate and she reminded me of her former invitation. We became very good friends, her husband was the head of the 'Iraq Petroleum Company and they lived in one of the most beautiful houses in Haifa.

A short while after we had the new car, I was over at #7 Persian Street having lunch with Rúhíyyih Khánum when the front door-bell rang, the girl who answered the bell came and told us that a man wanted to see Rúhíyyih Khánum, something about the car! We all rushed to the door and he informed us that the car had been taken by five armed men in a Jeep! The war-like conditions in Haifa had caused the Jewish community to form a civilian guard, people were assigned to certain areas to report any unusual happenings. This was the guardian of our street, he said he was down at the end of our street when he saw the jeep drive up and start jimmieing our garage door, he ran towards them to tell them the car belonged to the Head of the Bahá'í Faith, who was highly respected. As he approached they threatened him and told him to go about his business if he knew what was good for him. He thought the best course of action was to phone to his headquarters for help. By the time he got back, the group of men had left, the garage looked normal, as he looked through the key-hole, he saw that the car had really been taken. What consternation, Shoghi Effendi's beautiful new car had been stolen. How we disliked telling this news to the dear Guardian, he had so much on his mind anyway and then to have this. He sent instructions that we must notify the police, the military, and go to the barricades at each street, describe every detail, also we organized a small group of people, including myself and went to different sections of the town looking for the car. We were a weary lot after having tramped around with no results. Later in the afternoon, Rúhíyyih Khánum and I went to Hadar-Ha-Carmel to do some errands, of course we had to walk and on the way home we passed a

shop with a display of “English Lavender” in the window. At first we said we should buy some as there might not be another shipment for a long time, then Rúhíyyih Khánum thought she had spent all the money she should, but, after a few steps by, we went back and made a purchase. When we went to leave, the proprietor remarked: - Madame Rabbání, I was so surprised to see that you had sold your fine American car.” We were astonished and so glad to hear news of the car, he told us he saw the car in the lower town with five men in it! We dashed right over to the police station and told our story, when they heard this, they said they thought they knew who had taken it and would call us when they had information regarding it. Early the next morning I received a phone call that they had the car waiting at the Police Station and if I would come right up they would have it running and take me to a place where they could fix the ignition, which had been tampered with. When it was taken it still had the United states number plates on it even though we had the British ones ready to put on, we found that it had only been run fifteen miles, and the American number plates were missing. We found out later that the Jewish underground had taken it thinking that it belonged to an arab. At least this was better than having it stolen by arabs, they would have had it over the border and we would never have seen it again.

Shoghi Effendi rarely used the car for pleasure, he did like to be driven up to the top of Mount Carmel to Panorama Road which overlooked the Shrine and gardens, I’m sure that as he gazed about he was making plans for the future development of the Bahá’í property, he spoke so often of the plan he had for a fitting monument for the Báb at the highest point of the land, also that there would be eighteen terraces from the bottom of the mountain to the top, which bordered on Panorama Road. Viewed from this height, the Monument garden had an outline that resembled a harp lying on its side, outlined with cyprus trees, when the breeze would start the trees moving one could almost hear celestial music.

Shoghi Effendi usually went to the Shrine of the Báb the latter part of each afternoon, returning about dusk which varied in time with the season. He would visit Bahjí or other Bahá’í properties when something needed to be decided or supervised. Quite often when he returned home there would be some Bahá’ís waiting just inside the gate to take up some matter with Shoghi Effendi, to show their respect, some tried to kneel to him or tried to kiss the hem of his garment, he scolded them for doing this, he was always trying to build prestige for the Faith but didn’t want his personality idealized. The persian Bahá’ís are very respectful in their attitude toward the Faith, the americans are a shade too informal, the beloved Guardian said we could learn from each other. However, one of the fine things about our Faith is the diversity in unity!

Shoghi Effendi and Rúhíyyih Khánum usually went away during the extreme heat of the summer, this being ray first year delayed their

Departure until they were sure I could handle the situation while they were gone. In the course of one interview, Shoghi Effendi said we must devise a cable address

for you, this is most economical as it is registered with the cable office for a small fee and the address is condensed into one word. A few days later he produces a combination of my first and last name, "Gladerson".(Gladys Anderson)

When all travel arrangements had been completed, I drove them to a small hotel not far from the airport, the next day they would go by taxi to the airport for their departure.

It seemed as if the sun had gone behind the clouds when the Guardian was absent from Haifa, yet, he certainly needed this change and to get away from the petty interruptions of daily life in Haifa. His work followed him but he at least had privacy to turn to other facets of his important activities. I was so amazed to learn that he not only wrote "God Passes By" but typed the manuscript himself on the portable typewriter he had worked with over many years. In fact there is a picture of him on page 105 in the "Priceless Pearl" seated at this same typewriter!

I was instructed to make a detailed, weekly report which I forwarded to Rúhíyyih Khánúm and in turn I would receive instructions. At all times matters concerning the Bahá'í Community in Haifa were channelled entirely through Shoghi Effendi's hand, he kept his finger on every pulse, he was extremely concerned with expenditures.

Rúhíyyih Khánúm was his liaison officer, she became his right arm, and it was her chief aim in life to cherish him and to share his responsibilities.

My first summer in Haifa was a lonely one, I had no social life and of course had not made any friends. When I really got the "blues" I would go for long walks to use up some of my latent energy. I wouldn't think of using the car for anything except essentials, for that matter, where would you go in those days without the possibility of danger.

I was so happy when the cable came for me to meet Shoghi Effendi and Rúhíyyih Khánúm at the little hotel, the whole picture lighted up when they were in residence. I had arrived early so I parked down the street a way, then I saw Rúhíyyih Khánúm waving to me to come forward, they were ready for the drive home. While on the road Shoghi Effendi was kind asking how things had gone for me while he had been away and I could see he was already beginning to plan his activities, life was more exciting when he was at home.

While I was adjusting to a new country and a new way of life, I was in weekly correspondence with Ben, I had come to the conclusion that more help was needed here and had sounded Ben out to see if he would come to Haifa if asked to do so by Shoghi Effendi. Ben replied in the affirmative and after Rúhíyyih Khánúm had been back home for a while, I found an opportunity to tell her about Ben and how we had decided to marry and how it all came about. She was certainly surprised and said let's think this over, I'm sure something can be worked out. In due time, Shoghi Effendi was told and at one of our interviews he questioned me closely regarding Ben, also he was interested in his background.

The beloved Guardian was quite pleased when I told him that Ben was a first-rate photographer and had won prizes when his pictures were shown in traveling salons, and, among other things in his life he had worked in a brokerage office. Shortly after this Shoghi Effendi instructed me to send Ben a cable and to say that important news would follow in a letter, then he told me to write Ben a letter stating that he was invited to come to Haifa but to make it very clear that this was to be Ben's own decision, his own free choice. Then Shoghi Effendi looked at me with mischief in his beautiful eyes and said: - I'm not in the marriage business you know!"

You can imagine how happy I was, I could hardly wait to run across the street and get that cable on its way, as it was I spent the whole evening composing the letter to Ben. He told me later that when the cable arrived he thought I must be returning home. He used to tease me saying that in the first paragraph of the letter I said the beloved Guardian said it must be of his own free will, but in the second paragraph I asked him to bring this and to bring that! You can see I was absolutely sure he would come.

I sent off both the cable and the letter the next morning. That evening when I had my usual meeting; with Shoghi Effendi he asked me if I had sent the cable, I replied, Oh yes! Then he said, when you send the letter - then he paused when he saw the look on my face, his eyes got as round as saucers, he said:- have you sent it already? I had to confess that it was on its way how his eyes twinkled, I wonder what went through his mind! Well, he said, I guess we had better start making some plans.

Ben lost no time in replying, he cabled he would come and that he was starting to make arrangements immediately. Each interview with Shoghi Effendi after that included some discussion of the forthcoming marriage. Due to the war and the fact that there was no functioning Local Spiritual Assembly in Haifa, the first plan was to have Ben meet me in Cairo, Egypt, Shoghi Effendi said it would be good for the Egyptian Bahá'ís to officiate at a Bahá'í wedding of two Americans. Then, he said, for our honeymoon we could stay at the famous Sheppard's Hotel and take a trip up the Nile, plans which thrilled me and made me realize how very dear it was of the beloved Guardian to take such an interest in my affairs. I was also surprised to find him so romantic! Relations between Egypt and Palestine were strained due to the Arab-Jewish conflict and I had to make several trips to the Egyptian Consulate in Jerusalem before they would grant me a visitors visa. Then I reserved a seat on a plane to Cairo, so I was all set. Meantime, Ben was in New York wording on his plans. Some Bahá'ís in New York City were trying to help him but progress was slow, in fact, the Egyptian authorities kept him dangling, saying neither yes or no. In the end they refused him a visa to enter their country, We were never sure what the reason was but Ben already had his passport with the Palestinian visa stamped in it and the fact that his name was Benjamin they probably thought he was Jewish and they were not fond of the Jews at this time.

Because our marriage was to be carried out according to the Kitáb-i-Aqdas

(Bahá'í Book of Laws) and under the sponsorship of Shoghi Effendi, meant we must be married ninety-five days after public announcement of our intentions. The days were flying by and new arrangements must be made, all this in addition to the exciting events taking place all around us in Haifa. Explosions, street battles, general disorder in all government and business offices, chaos in the port and danger around every corner.

Shoghi Effendi continued his regular schedule, remaining in Haifa all during the fighting, going daily to the Shrine of the Báb, supervising the work of beautifying the area, calmly proceeding as though all was normal around him. One of his lawyers suggested he leave the country until the situation cleared, but this he refused to do. Others were fleeing daily, many homes were closed up, some boarded up. The British administration was falling apart and it was becoming more and more difficult to accomplish anything. The beloved Guardian had the foresight to anticipate this slowing down, he stepped up his plans, culminating in the purchase of land to enlarge and safeguard the area adjacent to the Shrine gardens. Some of this land was obtained under great stress as titles had to be cleared and in some cases with absentee land-owners who had fled the troubles and were glad to get rid of the property. On some of the newly acquired land there were buildings that had to be torn down and Shoghi Effendi was always in the center of the activity, directing the work.

We used to say the Shoghi Effendi always did the impossible and I venture to say that the tensions and trials of this period must have taken years off his life. In retrospect I wonder how he could have accomplished so much with so many obstacles and frustrations! He went ahead with his plans with an iron determination and we must remember that all decisions rested on his shoulders.

The news was seldom good, each day we heard of massacres, retaliations, kidnappings, looting. People were leaving the country in large numbers. A United Nations Commission had arrived in the country to decide what would happen when the British Mandate ended on May 15, 1948. It is now history that an attempt to partition the country was made. This brought a great anxiety to Shoghi Effendi, if this partition took place, Acre, Bahjí, with Bahá'u'lláh's Tomb Shrine, and Mazra'ih would be in Arab country with borders requiring visas and passports, and, it is doubtful if these documents would even be granted especially as there were some fanatical Moslems who publicly avowed to destroy Bahá'í property.

While this was going on, some of the gardeners reported that a machine gun nest had been placed on the bridge over 'Abbás Street, this is Bahá'í property as it supports part of the steps that lead up to the Báb's Shrine from Mount Carmel Avenue. They wanted to know if they should notify the police or the military, Shoghi Effendi said, neither, just go up and tell them that they are trespassing and to remove the guns. This was done and no further attempts were made, it must have required a lot of courage for the gardeners to do this as the fighters were inclined to be "trigger happy" in these troublous times. There was a Jewish man who was expert in applying gold leaf to the various wrought

iron ornaments and to the beautiful gates in and around the Shrine Garden. One day he was working on the main gate at the entrance, he usually had the protection of a canvas tent-like structure to keep the gold leaf from blowing away, somehow the gardeners got word that the arabs were coming to get him so he was swiftly whisked away to safety.

It got to the point where I didn't want to expose a jewish taxi driver to danger, there was an arab neighbor on our street who took it upon himself to guard the upper end of Persian Street. So when I had to shop for household supplies in Hadar-Ha-Carmel, I would hire a taxi to take me to the main gate of the Shrine garden and then someone would call an arab taxi to take me home. On one trip, my taxi drew up to the entrance. Mansour started up to help, the driver thought he was an arab, he threw my parcels out of the car, grabbed his fare and drove off furiously. Our arab neighbor had guns, a knife in his belt and a bandolier of bullets draped over his body, if we came down the street in the car, he would stop us, make us open the trunk and examine parcels to see if we were carrying weapons.

The confidence that the beloved Guardian inspired in those around him to proceed with assurance in our daily duties, enabled the work to continue to go forward.

One afternoon, I was driving Rúhíyyih Khánúm home from the Jewish section when a car in back of us kept tooting his horn and tried to crowd us, he pulled in front of us at the barricade and told the guards we were enemies! The guards recognized the car and let us through.

A BAHÁ'Í MARRIAGE.

Eventually the plans for our Bahá'í marriage crystalized, Ben would fly from New York and meet me in Jerusalem at the Jasmin House, the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Trans-Jordan would be notified to come to the Old City to perform the ceremony. A member of the Amman Assembly would come to Haifa to receive instructions from Shoghi Effendi and with Mansou r Irani, (who spoke some english) they would accompany me to Jerusalem.

Came the day for me to leave, the night before Shoghi Effendi had given me my final instructions. Among other things, he told me to go to the United States Embassy immediately following the ceremony and inquire if we should do anything further to legalize our marriage. As he was telling me these things, Rúhíyyih Khánúm was looking very nervous, suddenly Shoghi Effendi turned to her and said, "whats bothering you/" She replied that she was worried that we might not be able to register our marriage and would we really be legally married with only the Bahá'í ceremony. The beloved Guardian replied, - "of course they will be legally married with only the Bahá'í ceremony!"

Rúhíyyih Khánúm fixed a lovely corsage for me and had put it in a plastic bag to keep fresh until the day of the ceremony. At the appointed time a small car

drew up and amid the good wishes of all who were thereto seemme off, we set out on our journey I shared the back seat with Mansour and the Bahá'í from Trans-Jordan sat in front with the driver. As we left the city, Mansour advised me that we would no doubt be stopped many times as we were taking the inland route which went through arab towns. He said if we were stopped for me to keep my head down and say as little as possible. Both he and the gentleman from Trans-Jordan had two hats, a fez for arab territory and berets when passing through jewish areas. If we hadn't been so tense, it would have been comical, as we approached a town or a barrier, they would get out the kind of cigarettes the guards liked and put on the proper hat, the other hat tucked down on the floor of the car at their feet. They changed hats several times on this journey, about midway of the trip we had left all the jewish towns behind but we were stopped over twenty times, when this happened the guards would swarm around the car and sometimes shove their guns right in the windows. At Nablus we were taken into a school-yard and the car and luggage was thoroughly inspected. In most cases the road-blocks were made of wood and barbed wire and they were movable, our papers were examined each time. Nothing serious happened to us but we were all very nervous.

It was arranged that the men would stay at a small hotel called the Swiss Pension in the old city and I would get a taxi and continue on to the Jasmin House. Ben was due to arrive the next day and it was left that I would phone Mansour as soon as Ben had come and he would then alert the Bahá'ís from Trans-Jordan. I didn't sleep much that night!

Needless to say, I was filled with all sorts of emotion as I sat in the lobby of the Jasmin House expecting to see or hear from Ben. I found that all communication with the airport at Lydda was cut off, there was no way to find out if planes were coming in. I tried to read but I couldn't concentrate, it is cold in Jerusalem in March so I hired a portable electric heater, you had to put a coin in every so often, each time the door opened my spirits would lift, only to fall again when no Ben was in sight. About mid-afternoon, one of the porters started bringing in suitcases and they had the initials

"B.D.W." on them! When I saw Ben coming in the door, I almost fainted with joy and relief. It was like a movie scenario, reunited after more than a years separation, the relief after the frustration of making plans only to have them broken, so many obstacles and at last he was really here. I immediately phoned Mansour and he said to come to the Swiss Pension at nine o'clock the next morning, March 20, 1948.

What a rosy glow Ben and I shared, as soon as he was settled in his room, we went for a walk, arm in arm, and caught up on each others news. He told me that Air France only took him to Paris, because the last flight out of Lydda Airport had been fired upon and they refused to send in any more of their planes! At first, he didn't know how long he might have to stay in Paris and was told to stay close to a phone. He was finally notified that they had secured space on another airline. When this plane landed at Lydda, there was no transportation

to Jerusalem! Ben pointed out that his ticket said his destination was Jerusalem and it was up to them to see that he got there. After some consultation they found someone who was willing to take him. They were stopped several times, luckily there were no untoward incidents.

After dinner that evening, we sat in the lobby and noted that the hotel was a base for some international newsmen and women, among them Danish, French, English and American. There was also a very chic french lady who had been the owner of a fashion boutique, she had been bombed out and was living in the hotel temporarily. She owned a large black dog and one of the newsmen had a honey colored

Labrador Retriever, they were both in the puppy stage and played together like two small children, it was like a floor show!

Ben and I were both glad to retire early, the day had been full of tensions. My room was on the second floor and unluckily for me some of the newsmen were playing poker in the adjacent room! Tired as I was, I couldn't get to sleep and the noise next door didn't help, finally, about three A.M. I tapped on the wall and asked them if they please wouldn't call it a night as I had to get up early the next morning. When I arose I felt as if I had sand in my eyes, some bride I said to myself as I put on my lovely wedding dress. Nevertheless I was radiantly happy to think this was our wedding day.

Promptly at nine we arrived at the Swiss Pension, just inside the wall of the old city, it was like another world. As we entered the lobby, which was mid-eastern in décor, we saw a tiny arab lady sitting cross-legged on one of the divans, two long braids hung around her face, the ends had been dipped in henna, a charcoal brazier in front of her was filled with hot coals which she was casually turning with a pair of tongs. Such a fragrant aroma and an exotic touch to set the scene for a memorable occasion.

As we were led up the stairs to a lobby on the second floor, we saw the quorum of five men from Trans-Jordan seated at the end of a long table. Mansour motioned us to two chairs halfway down the table, explaining that he would translate for us. First, one of the gentlemen annointed us with Attar of Rose, then there was the chanting of suitable prayers and the Marriage Tablet, then the dowry was exchanged, just as we exchanged our vows, a huge explosion went off nearby. In the excitement they found they had not brought the stamp to authenticate our marriage certificate and would have to take all four copies back to Trans-Jordan to have them stamped! Also, the wedding ring that Ben had for me had been off-loaded with some other luggage in Piraeus, Greece! They hustled us out so fast before anything else happened that we didn't even have any wedding refreshments which stood on a small table nearby, they did give us the vial of Attar of Rose that they had used for anointing us which we treasured.

Shoghi Effendi had a calligrapher make four hand-done marriage certificates in Arabic, one for the Trans-Jordan Assembly, one for Haifa records, one for Ben and one for me. Here we were, outside on the street, no ring and no proof of

our marriage! However, we were in a pink cloud of happiness and not bothered by any of these problems. We went directly to the narrow steps that led to the Post Office and sent word to Haifa and our relatives that the marriage had taken place. We started to the American Embassy which was within walking distance, as we took the stairs that led to street below the level of the street we were on, we noted an oriental gift shop at the bottom of the stairs. Ben said lets go in and buy you something to celebrate the occasion. While browsing around I saw a tray filled with rings, among them, wedding rings which I brought to Ben's attention, the proprietor heard our discussion and when he realized we had just been married, he got all excited, he dragged two ornate chairs made of carved wood inlaid with mother-of-pearl to the center of the shop, rushed to the door calling for the coffee boy and began inviting passers-by to come in and meet the bride and groom! We had our reception after all! Ben bought me a lovely necklace and a silver wedding ring.

We continued on to the embassy and found the front of the building had been the scene of a bombing and was all boarded up with barbed wire strung along the approach. An arrow directed us to the rear of the building and as we went up the alley, Ben put the ring on my finger and we had our wedding kiss!

A military attache was on duty at the entrance and we stated our business, he informed us that the ambassador was in Tel-Aviv, but a vice-consul was in charge and he would see us. As we explained the reason for our call, the vice-consul stated that he had only arrived in Jerusalem the previous day and hadn't any idea of what would be the proper procedure! This took a load off our minds as we hoped that no other ceremony would be necessary as we wanted our Bahá'í marriage to be legal in itself. As we left, we asked the military attache where we could safely go for a few days honeymoon, he pondered the question, saying that events changed from day to day, sometimes americans were in favor with the jews, sometimes not, and the same was true with the arabs. Finally, he suggested Jericho if we could find someone to take us there, which he rather doubted. We left again by the side alley and just around the corner we found a taxi, it was a fairly new Studebaker, with decorations inside, bluebeads hanging from the rear-view mirror, to keep off the "evil eye" artificial flowers, plus a very garish rug tacked to the back of the front seat. The driver could have qualified for a part in a movie, young, handsome, flashing white teeth and a small black moustache. He wore a white shirt and black trousers, but had the arab kaffiyah on his head, he was most dashing. While on our way back to the Jasmin House, we inquired about the possibility of getting down to Jericho for a few days, he said he would take us and we arranged for him to come for us about two o'clock,

We told our hosts at Jasmin House that we had just been married and they immediately wanted to toast us with champagne! We explained that we were teetotalers so they graciously invited us to be their guests for lunch. We told Mr. Haddad we would be back in three days and set off on our next adventure.

Shoghi Effendi told us to take as long as we wanted but we felt that it would be wiser to return to Haifa as soon as possible, the battle of the streets was getting

serious, in fact, it was not too long before Jerusalem was cut off from the rest of the country. The inhabitants went through a period of near starvation!

Even as I write this, I relive the excitement of this wonderful experience, even though some of it was dangerous. As our taxi circled the Old City of Jerusalem, we passed many famous sites, it was as if time had rolled back and visions of past history filled our eyes. Ben had on a hat which the driver asked him to remove, the road wound down between rocky barren hills and the driver pointed out snipers nests in cave-like formations high over the road, he believed we would be shot at if they thought we were americans!

As we came down out of the hills, we rode along the shore of the Dead Sea, the driver pointed out a rocky formation shaped something like a human being and said it was Lot's wife that had been turned into a pillar of salt and it had been moved close to the road so the tourists could see it! The guides in the Holy Land sure embroidered their stories, you never knew just what to believe.

We registered at the Palace Garden Hotel and asked the taxi driver to come back in three days. There were no rooms with private bath, and the wooden structure creaked and groaned with every step, but it was lovely after the cold of Jerusalem to come into warm humid air smelling of orange blossoms. Shortly after we had settled in, someone in a nearby location started playing on a tinny, out of tune piano, and you will never guess what they were playing. "Way Down Upon the Swanee River!" We adopted this for our theme song, we never heard this song without being transported right back to Jericho! We thought it wise to stay close to the hotel, there were only a few guests, mostly british soldiers on leave, every so often a truck-load of guerrillas would speed through the town shooting their guns in the air, everything and everyone got out of their way. One day, at lunch, there was a man and his wife in the dining room, the proprietor had a guest who was an officer in the Syrian army and us, suddenly we heard the roar of a truck speeding through, the men shooting in the air as usual, it sounded as if the bullets were coming right in the windows, I was seated with my back to the window and I felt as if I was going to be hit any minute, the man got down on his knees and crawled from the room leaving his poor wife to fend for herself. The rest of us couldn't help but laugh at this display.

We enjoyed sitting on the small terrace in front of the hotel watching the passers by, small flocks of sheep, goats, some camels and an odd assortment of people. It was so beautiful at sundown, with the sky so clear it took on a lemon color tinged with rose and the hills around us seemed to be cut out of purple cardboard. All present would gather around the radio when it was newstime to hear the latest developments, when the broadcast was over there would be a heated discussion, we wondered if even this would cause trouble. At this juncture it was a three way war between the british, jews and arabs, so there was plenty of room for argument. Lots of little shoe-shine boys were around and few customers, Ben had his shoes shined several times a day, these little urchins were very persuasive!

When our taxi returned the driver had his young son with him and our trip

back to the Jasmin House was uneventful. We were limited in what we could do in this war of the streets and the first day after we returned we tried to go to the Thomas Cook office to arrange our trip to Haifa. This proved impossible as so much shooting was taking place in that area. As we strolled along a street above the lower town we approached the jewish shopping center, there was a barbed wire barricade manned by a british soldier, he swung it wide to let us pass. Almost immediately a taxi full of men came hurtling toward us, pulling over directly in our path on the sidewalk, we were certainly startled and a lady nearby said in english, "do not be afraid, they only want to check your documents, we had so many bad incidents here of late." The men motioned us to get in the car and we were driven to a security post in a school yard, our passports were taken from us and were asked to wait in a small cubicle. Ben had a policy which I adopted, say nothing and await developments. Finally our papers were returned and we were taken by taxi back to the barrier and told not to return to that section of the city again! We wondered why the guard didn't inform us that we might be picked if we entered that area.

As we walked along the street to return to our hotel, we heard "thunk-ing" sounds hitting the wooden fences that had been erected in front of the houses, suddenly we realized they were from bullets coming in our direction from the arab quarter below us. We soon hurried our pace to a safer place. We decided that sightseeing was not for us.

It being March and still quite cold and wintry, we again hired a small electric heater and retired to our room with some reading matter. That evening, about dusk, we were sitting by the heater in the center of the room, reading, when all of a sudden there was a tremendous explosion nearby, near enough to blow open our windows and there was Ben looking out the window to see what was happening! He had been an ambulance driver in the first world war and could take this in his stride but I leapt back into the corner of the room instinctively, afterward Ben said he never saw anybody move any faster than I did. I called to him to come to a safer spot and he said. "the danger is all over for the present!" An old truck had been rigged up with explosives and pushed to a point where it could be rolled down an incline toward the King David Hotel which was a center for military personnel and United Nations observers, actually it did not roll far enough to do the damage they thought it might.

Each evening as it neared curfew time we would sit in the lobby and watch the return of the news correspondents, they gave us very little information, when asked what was going on they would say "sporadic shooting"! There was an english girl reporter who saw the ambush on Mount Scopus when the jewish people were on a bus that was set on fire, as they left the burning bus they were shot cold-bloodedly. Naturally she was extremely upset and a feeling of gloom and doom settled over us all. One of the reporters was an american, he had a bright red M.G. each evening he would drive it up on the sidewalk near a huge tree and run a chain from the steering wheel around the trunk of the tree. All of these people were very interesting.

As soon as we were able to get to the Thomas Cook office, we found that the best way to get to Haifa was through arab territory however we would have to get special permits from the Arab Higher League and someone would have to vouch for us. Their headquarters were in the Old City. Cook's was able to make arrangements for someone to escort us who was known to the arabs in charge. The next morning we were ushered into a reception room at headquarters, several of the newsmen from the hotel were there and were surprised to see us there. We were treated respectfully, our passports were taken and soon we were served turkish coffee, we also were asked to supply some passport pictures, they asked no questions of us and soon we received our safe-conduct passes. They were written in arabic so we have no idea what they said.

The next morning a driver from Cook's arrived in an american Stude-baker, a fierce looking man who spoke no english, he had a fez on his head, wore a heavy coat with a large wool muffler wound around his neck, his large moustache was twirled at the ends! He had all our papers which he produced whenever we were stopped. As we left Jerusalem and wound our way down the hills and through the valleys. It began to rain hard, the roads were slippery as the rain had turned the dust on the road to slimy mud, as we approached a long straight stretch of road, a large truck crowded us, the driver swerved to avoid it and we hit the soft shoulder and our car turned completely over, landing on its wheels in the soft dirt in the nearby field! My first thought while hurtling through the air was, my, that was a short marriage! Ben had put his arm out to protect me and had bumped into the rear of the front seat, we found out later he had a broken rib, I hit my head on the roof and cut my ear, otherwise we seemed unharmed. The car suffered a lot of damage, all the glass in the front was broken and all the doors were jammed, the top was crushed like an eggshell. While we were taking stock of ourselves and the damage, a british army lorry pulled up to help us. They pried open the doors and helped us out, as I stepped on the road, one of the soldiers said, - "why, Miss Anderson, what has happened to you!"

He had met me when he was in the escort of the All High Commissioner when they visited Bahjí. They helped us aboard the lorry and drove us to the police station a short distance away, leaving someone to help the driver and to find out if the car was too damaged to continue our journey. They wanted to give us a strong drink, but we settled for a mug of good black tea. In the rest room I got a glimpse of myself in the mirror, my eyes looked like two black coals in a face as white as a sheet. A bit later we were informed that they had brought the car to the station and run it up and down a bit, it seemed mechanically able and the driver was willing to continue on to Haifa. What a wild ride that was, with no glass in the windshield the wind buffeted our faces and we were sort of in shock. Soon we approached some jewish villages, our driver took out a revolver and held it on the ready in his right hand, resting on the steering wheel! As we went down Kingsway, along the waterfront in Haifa, shots were being exchanged up ahead, so the car was pulled over and parked by the curb, it soon became evident that the shooting would continue and the driver turned

the car around and parked on the opposite side of the street, he got out and drew a long knife from the glove compartment, at first, we wondered if he was going to finish us off, then he started to clear the soft dirt from the frame of the car with the knife point. After a while I realized we were near the arab bazaar and made motions to the driver saying “souk, souk” he got the idea and as we drove through we could see piles of hand grenades on the sidewalk curbs!

As we arrived at the gate, Rúhíyyih Khánúm was just coming across the street from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s house, she thought we had been hit by one of those hand grenades! Ben gave the driver extra money because of the damage to the car , even though the price we agreed to through Cook’s was exorbitant.

We had such a nice welcoming lunch with Rúhíyyih Khánúm and Mr. Maxwell who were meeting Ben for the first time. As we described our adventures, it was decided that Ben must see a doctor, we found he did have a broken rib which was well strapped up with adhesive tape. Although he was uncomfortable, we paid our respects at the beautiful Shrine of the Báb and later in the afternoon we were interviewed by the beloved Guardian who gave Ben a warm and loving welcome. Shoghi Effendi spoke of many things but primarily of his hopes and plans for the protection and beautification of the Shrine containing the Sacred Dust of the Báb and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. The funds were available to at least start the construction , having been in the bank for some time awaiting a reasonable period of peace.

Ben drove Shoghi Effendi to the Shrine of the Báb each day and he was always invited to accompany the Guardian when he made his visits. On the first occasion Ben said he cried like a baby and couldn’t seem to control himself, he apologized to Shoghi Effendi who comforted him saying that most everyone was affected that way on their first visit. Ben was thrilled with everything, falling in love with the country, what he was able to see of it.

As the date May 15, 1948 came closer, there was chaos in the city around us all through the rest of March and into the month of April. Each day brought news of more kidnappings, more cars being stolen, more shootings, bombings, vandalism and hand grenades being thrown. Most Jewish residents were living half-way up Mount Carmel or on the top of the mountain, the arabs were in the lower town. So much harassment was taking place that tensions were building up in quarters. About this time Shoghi Effendi decided to send Mr. Maxwell and Ben to Italy to start investigation and negotiations for materials relative to starting the construction on the Shrine of the Báb. Another reason for sending them at this time was that several prominent englishmen had been kidnapped, in some cases killed, one of them was killed in an orange grove, his body tied to a tree, when he rescuers found him they were killed also as the body had been booby trapped. Both Mr. Maxwell and Ben were tall, distinguished looking gentlemen, very conspicuous amidst the general population.

Mind you, this decision was made two weeks after Ben and I were married! I used to joke about it, saying that Mr. Maxwell went on my honeymoon. I

became very busy making the travel arrangements, air reservations were no problem, the difficulty was to get them safely to the airport, also there wasn't time to get an Italian visa for Ben. It was decided to notify Ugo Giachery in Rome to try to get permission for Ben to land there, otherwise Ben would have to continue on to Switzerland and get a visa at the Italian Consulate there.

The only transport to Tel-Aviv would be by armored taxi, this meant that the only visibility out of the car was a small space for the driver, the plan was for them to stay in a hotel in Tel-Aviv until the local travel office could confirm their plane to Rome. Each day they had to check with the Peltour Travel Office, in turn we could phone the Haifa office and they would pass on messages to their office in Tel-Aviv. You can Imagine how we all felt, Rúḥíyyih Khánúm putting her dear father in what seemed to be like a black box and I feeling the same way about my dear Ben! It was weird seeing only their white faces in the gloom of the back seat of that car.

While the plans for Italy were in the making, Shoghi Effendi said that Ben must go to Bahjí to pay his respects at the Holy Tomb of Bahá'u'lláh, another problem, how would we get there, the road around the Bay of Haifa was mined and many skirmishes had taken place on certain sections of it. Mansour was asked to inquire a-round to see what the possibilities were. He discovered that a fishing boat was ferrying people across the bay, for a price! Most of the passengers were running away from the bad situation. Ben and I were alerted to be ready to go at a moments notice, before long Mansour told us to be ready the next morning, we went by taxi to a place on the beach on the outskirts of the city, there we found a motley group of people, small rowboats were taking the passengers out to where the boat was anchored, the oarsmen were standing in the water and would pick up a person in their arms and place them in the boat, how I would have liked a picture of Ben being carried by an arab much shorter than he was, his arms and legs were dangling over the water! On board the fishing boat we found a strange assemblage, people of all ages, chickens, goats, parcels of possessions and some bicycles. We had to wait until the boat was filled and it was interesting to see all the water-craft going by, one was a motor boat with two rowboats linked to it and each rowboat had a donkey standing in it. Smaller fishing boats circled around our boat selling fish to the passengers, I venture to say that some of these people didn't know where their next meal was coming from!

After a long time the boat finally got under way, we suddenly realized that we were approaching Acre by way of the sea, just as Bahá'u'lláh and the rest of the exiles did in August 1868. It was a tricky situation and we could never have managed if Mansour hadn't been there to take care of everything.

The fishing boat anchored in the deep water outside of Acre and we were transferred to small boats. The arrangements were such that we had to step out on a narrow ledge, about two feet wide, at the foot of the city wall and all had to pay a fee in order to enter the city. We walked a short distance before we found a taxi to take us to Bahjí, what a rattletrap it was, we felt as if we were sitting on

bare springs and wondered if it could even complete the trip. After the turmoil and tension of the journey, what a blessing to enter the serenity and peace of the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh with its lovely surroundings.

Shoghi Effendi had told us that we might have to stay overnight, possibly longer depending on conditions. We spent the day amid the historical items on display inside the Mansion and late in the afternoon were seated on the balcony when a taxi from Haifa arrived. Matters had settled down somewhat and a driver had been found who was willing to undertake the trip. One of the Bahá'ís from #7 Persian accompanied him and did all the talking, we were stopped several times at road blocks, later he told us that he told the soldiers guarding the barriers that Ben was an important diplomat from the United States and no harm should come to him or they would be in real trouble. All concerned breathed a sigh of relief when we arrived safely home.

Peltours kept us in touch with what was happening to Mr. Maxwell and Ben in Tel-Aviv, we also learned from them that they had a difficult trip to Tel-Aviv, the taxi was stopped by the British and the passengers had quite a long walk through a rough field, carrying their luggage. A bus finally arrived and took them to the city. The trip usually took an hour and a half, this trip took five hours. The flight reservation that they had was canceled and they had to wait five days before they could leave. Ben's notes stated, "we were notified by Peltours to leave at one P.M., for the airport in an armored bus, all twenty-eight on board were inspected for weapons, a boy with four hand grenades and a tommy gun sat at a rear gunport." They were supposed to have a room at the airport hotel to rest in before a two A.M., departure but two other men claimed the room so Mr. Maxwell and Ben had to try and get some rest in the waiting room, it was a long hard day for them.

It was such a relief to learn that when they arrived at Rome airport, Ugo Giachery was waiting and had an entry visa for Ben. Luckily we had communication with Italy and after many anxious hours, we were informed of their safe arrival.

Ugo had set up appointments with key people and this started a series of meetings with representatives of firms chosen to carry out the plans for protecting and beautifying the Shrine of the Báb. According to Mr. Bufalini, the head of the marble firm, no ornamental buildings were being built in the aftermath of the war, and if this contract hadn't come at just this time, all the expert stone cutters would have dispersed to other countries to enable them to earn a living. We were told later that the purchase of the marble and granite as well as labor for the artisans saved the marble industry of Italy! At one point in the discussions, Mr. Bufalini said he would be willing to carry out this work with little or no profit in order to keep his craftsmen together. In an exchange of messages, Shoghi Effendi conveyed the idea that the laborer was worthy of his hire and a price was agreed upon that satisfied both parties.

Mr. Maxwell and Ben expected to be away for three to four weeks, after changing plans several times, they were able to book passage on the

“Argentina”, a medium size ship carrying jews emigrating to Israel, or Palestine as it was still known at this juncture. They ended up spending six weeks in Italy and arrived in Haifa Bay on the evening of the fourteenth of May, 1948 and disembarked the next day. The British Administration ended at midnight, May 14th, 1948, and a ship was in readiness for their departure, this was for key people as many of the soldiers and former residents had already left.

While Mr. Maxwell and Ben were away, the local situation rapidly became worse, authority was breaking down on all levels. Although life went on as usual with the Bahá'ís at the world center, we were greatly affected by the outside conditions. All sort of rumours were being circulated as to what would happen when the mandate ended. What a fateful four weeks lay ahead! It was getting extremely difficult to send or receive mail and cables. Street fighting became constant. We were notified that a large shipment of books had arrived at the post-office branch located on the outskirts of the business section of Haifa and I went down to get them. As I was approaching the area, I noticed an unruly group at the entrance armed with piles of rocks for ammunition, I retreated down Kingsway searching for a taxi, when I found one, the driver was jewish and when I told him where I wanted to go, he refused until I saw a british policeman nearby and he agreed to accompany us, he hooked his arm through one of the window supports, hung on, and we sped up to the post office, neither of the men would help me with the books, I had to make several trips back and forth, carrying the cartons myself, at least there was no rock throwing while we were there.

On my regular route to town, the arabs had closed off an alley with cement blocks, leaving small apertures through which guns protruded!

It did make me rather nervous to pass this place, later, one of the Bahá'ís told me he had been asked to tell me to go another way to town or I would be taken behind this barrier for interrogation, they thought I was a spy and if taken in, it would not be pleasant! I needed no prodding to choose another route.

Each day brought new incidents, fires, looting and things stolen, there was a lovely lead ornament in the garden at # 10 Persian Street that was taken in the dark of one night. Law and order had broken down, I spent many hours at the Customs office in the harbor trying to collect refunds due us from previous deposits. There was very little shipping going on and customs duty cash was just trickling in. I would seat myself on a tall stool behind the collection window and as soon as any cash came in I would present my refund slips, we collected most of what was due us, if I hadn't stayed right there, the money would have disappeared for some other purpose.

Whenever we received a shipment with ornaments for the gardens, we were obliged to pay the duty, then place the article in its permanent position, then we would make an appointment for an inspector to come, he would sign the necessary papers for a refund, because we were a religion we were supposed to be tax exempt. One such shipment came during this troubled time and the time

came when the item was ready for inspection, the inspector phoned me and said he was an arab and would prefer to meet me at the head of the steps in front of the Báb's shrine as he would come up from the arab quarter. He didn't want to come by the front gate as he was uneasy in the Jewish neighborhood. I went to pay my respects before the appointed time. As I waited and wandered around waiting for him, the gardeners gave me bouquets of flowers. The inspector was a very refined, dignified looking man and respectfully accompanied me to note the position of the newly positioned ornaments. As we walked back toward the stairs he began to tell me how worried he was about the situation, he had sent his family away for safety, out of Palestine and was wondering if he should follow them or remain through the troubles to safeguard his property. I sympathized with him in his dilemma, impulsively I handed him the flowers I held and said I hoped they would cheer him up then he went on his way.

Later that afternoon I was to report to Shoghi Effendi the results of the inspection, when I entered the drawing room I could see he was upset, his eyes literally flashed fire, he said: - "do you know what happened this afternoon ? - I sent the keeper of the Báb's Shrine back to his home village! " It seems that someone overheard him tell another person that I had met a lover in the garden near the Shrine, Shoghi Effendi said, - "I flew to your defense like a lion!" I was sorry for the man, he was an elderly persian that wore the abba and a fez and looked so picturesque seated on the tiles at the entrance to the Báb's Shrine. A lesson for us to realize the results of Backbiting.

There were many raids on jewish business near us, one was a tire store on the next street, it was set on fire and completely destroyed, the smell of burnt rubber lingered in the air for several days. An iron-monger had a large stockyard at the foot of Persian Street, as he was jewish it became dangerous for him to operate it in that area, we heard he barely escaped with his life through a rear entrance, his place was invaded and for days his goods were hauled off, in many cases by small children, they would lift up iron rods, the type used in re-inforced concrete construction, balance the ends on their shoulders and drag them off, these could well be disposed of on the black market as they were in short supply.

Retaliations took place until the conditions became intolerable. I was all alone at # 10 Persian Street, with the men in Italy and one night I became terrified, I thought I heard foot-steps coming down the hall toward my bedroom door, I had securely locked it before retiring but when a war is going on you never know what to expect. It was decided that I should sleep over at #7, it being too dangerous for me to be in that big house alone at night.

Not long after my move across the street, we were awakened by a heavy bombardment, the battle for Haifa had begun, it raged all night and by daylight the city fell to the jews. They had the advantage because it was easier to lob shells down on the lower city, than for the arabs to lob them up to the heights. All along the infiltrators had advised the arabs to leave the city for two weeks and then when they had pushed the "jews into the sea, they could come back and have all the possessions that had been left behind." They left alright but

not as they had expected, they became panic stricken and all during the day following the battle the arab population evacuated the city, they flowed down Persian street like a human river, carrying only a few possessions. We heard that the scenes at the water-front were indescribable, the british were helping them to flee, using boats and ships of all description, I was told by someone who had personally witnessed it that, in their desperation, adults would trample children to get on board, in one case, a large man used the body of a child as a step to get on the boat! Conditions in Acre must have been terrible with all these refugees arriving, it was estimated that about forty thousand took refuge there!

For several weeks prior to the evacuation, the mayor of Haifa had sent trucks through the city which were equipped with loud-speakers, his message to the populace was repeated in three languages, english, arabic and hebrew, he implored them not to leave the city, he said we need you to run the port facility, your knowledge of olive and orange culture and promised that there would not be a massacre if the jews should take over! To no avail, when panic sets in, reason is lost. All government offices and many business establishments were in complete disorder. Of course, no fresh foods were delivered, we lived on stores that we had been acquiring for just such an emergency.

For several days no mail or cables came in or were sent out, soon, public services began to function and we were in communication with the outside world, even though at times it was very irregular. Other battles were taking place in the country, such as the takeover of the town of Lydda and the airport, we were told this battle was fought from house to house. Mind you, this was only mid-April and the mandate was not due to end until May 14th at midnight, it was all so disorganized that the ones in charge looked the other way. It was as if a ball had started rolling and there was no way to stop it.

Now we had to realize that the jews controlled large portions of the country, and that we were surrounded by three arab countries, no way to get out except by air or sea; It was at this time that fate stepped in to change the plans of the United Nations regarding Palestine. Nahariyah, a jewish resort settlement north of Acre, was completely cut off, they were low on supplies and had no electricity. All the attempts to go to their assistance were thwarted, after the city of Haifa fell, the jewish defenders decided to march around the bay regardless of the fact that Acre was crowded with arab refugees and the possibility that they might run into road mines. According to reports, when the fleeing arabs heard that the jews were coming, they again became panic stricken and another river of humanity flowed up the coast over the boundary into Lebanon, and there some of them are to this day!

Consequently, the borders as defined by the United Nations Partition no longer applied, the jews had occupied the area. You can well imagine what a relief this was to the beloved Guardian, had the partition stood as it had been outlined, all the Bahá'í historical places in Acre, Bahjí and Mazra'a would have been in another country which would require visas, passports and probably these

documents would not have been obtainable from enemies of the Jewish state. The matter wasn't entirely settled but for the time being, the worry had lessened.

For some time we had been sending messages to a Bahá'í in Istanbul, Turkey to forward to Persia and other countries where there was no direct communication. One day I received a personal letter from him which pleased me so much that I saved it and quote the following:

“ Dear Bahá'í Sister,

Your kind letter of March 8th, 1950 enclosing a letter for our spiritual brother, ‘Abbás Adib Ikbál, came to my hand yesterday. I sent the enclosed envelope immediately by air mail. I am, dear sister, always at your disposal for such services.

I have been wondering for some time past who may be this lady correspondent, this Mrs. Weeden, that enjoys in these exceptional days the privilege of treading so softly the hollowed alleys and streets of our sanctified world center like an ethereal angel, an embodiment of the spirit of devotion?

Then came the illumination. The other day while turning over the leaves of the back numbers of “Bahá'í News”, I came across the story of your marriage. So you are our dear Sister Gladys. The same spirit dedicated to a life of service in the cause of our Lord under any name whatsoever. Hail to thee! “

The balance of the letter referred to other matters but I loved being called an “ethereal angel!” He spoke of the “hollowed alleys” either it was a typographical error or he didn't realize it should be “hallowed.”

There were times when even Turkey was cut off, therefore, Shoghi

Effendi sent Salah Jarrah, the keeper of the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh,

Beirut, Lebanon, with some important material to forward to various places. It happened that May 15th came while Salah was absent from Palestine and it became the State of Israel. There was no way that Salah could get a visa for his return. He was very resourceful and went over to the Island of Cyprus to see what could be done there. Eventually we received a cable from him asking Shoghi Effendi's permission to return, which was granted. We had been so worried about him and were relieved to learn that he could return. Then one day we got a call from the harbor police, they said they were holding a member of our community who had entered the country illegally! They asked that someone come down and straighten the matter out, we were glad to comply and to show you the good will toward our community they gave him the proper credentials to enter.

As far as Salah was concerned no living authority was greater than that of the beloved Guardian to whom he was devoted completely! Salah spoke English and Arabic and learned Hebrew after the new state was formed which was most helpful.

It was a constant source of irritation to him that some covenant breakers lived

in the house close to the Bahjí Mansion, these people entertained quite a lot and when their windows were open, the noise disturbed the serenity of the Shrine area. One day after Ben had returned from Italy, we drove to Bahjí on an errand, when we knocked on the door of the Pilgrim House, Salah 's mother answered, we enquired for Salah, she spoke only arabic and couldn't understand us and we couldn't understand her. She called one of the gardeners but he wasn't much better, however, he did manage to convey to us that Salah was taken away by the police, motioning toward Acre. We parked by the sea across the street from the police station, I decided Ben could handle the situation and waited in the car, after what seemed a long time, Ben came out with Salah in tow, looking like a black thunder-cloud. Not a word was spoken on the trip back to Bahjí. On our way back to Haifa, Ben told me what had happened. A party was in progress in the house next to Bahjí and Salah lost his patience with the noise and put a ladder up to the windows, closed them and started nailing them so they couldn't be re-opened. Of course the owners heard this banging and came to investigate, not only did they push the ladder away knocking Salah to the ground, but they hit him on the head with a slipper! In the East this is the insult of insults, the worst thing that can happen to you. The police were called and the charge was breaking and entering, when the hearing was held, the man said he would not press charges if there was an apology and a promise that such a thing would not happen again. Shoghi Effendi was very cross with Salah, among other things he told him that he had put Mr, Ben in an embarrassing position, having to apologize and shake hands with a covenant breaker! It shows that devotion carried to extremes can cause serious problems.

A very pleasant incident concerning Salah took place a few months after the new state was born. He had established excellent relations with the authorities in Acre and had invited some of the new officials to Bahjí. The most Great Prison had been empty after the new government had released all of the prisoners, most of whom were there for political reasons. We all wondered what the property would be used for, we had heard rumours that it would be used as a mental institution, there was no doubt that such an institution was needed, so many of the new immigrants had been exposed to terrible experiences.

One would see people on the street who were definately unbalanced, there was one lady who made her home on the sidewalk at the Mt, Carmel Avenue end of Kingsway, she had a cot and during the day, all her possession were stacked on it and covered with a tarpaulin, you would see her in doorways in the business center wrapped in yards and yards of pink cotton material like a cocoon, others walking in the streets muttering to themselves, not to mention the man who was following me around.

Imagine our amazement when a letter addressed to the "Bahá'í Community arrived stating that the authorities wished to turn over the room that Bahá'u'lláh occupied to the care of the Bahá'ís into perpetuity and would we please arrange for someone to come and accept the key! The beloved Guardian could hardly believe his eyes! Usually anything along these lines had to be negotiated, in-

volving many visits to offices, letters and delays, this one fell into our hands like a golden apple.

The date for the ceremony for receiving the key was set up and Ben, Salah and myself were appointed by Shoghi Effendi to carry out this meaningful assignment. With the head of the institution, the three of us met in the prison room, entirely bare on this occasion and prayers were solemnly intoned in three languages. During the British Administration a plaque had been placed over the doorway stating that Bahá'u'lláh had occupied this room, also noting the dates. Shoghi Effendi immediately, took two actions, he sent a generous donation to the director and started plans for refurbishing the room. He had simple articles placed there in memory of the period of Bahá'u'lláh's incarceration. This Holy Place is now visited by Bahá'í pilgrims from all over the world. Later, we were advised by the authorities that the money sent by Shoghi Effendi was used to buy earphones for all the beds of the patients enabling them to tune in to radio broadcasts.

The wing where this room is can be reached by an outside stairway, therefore visitors are not aware of the activities in the rest of the building. The opposite room is dedicated to the memory of a Jewish hero and is set apart in his memory. Another link in the chain of unusual events occurring at this time.

It was very strange to look down at the lighted port, trying to pick out the "Argentina", the ship that had our loved ones aboard, praying that no untoward incident would take place until they were safely ashore and back home. I went down very early the next morning to wait for them to land. The quay was lined with lighters that were waiting to be unloaded, crowds of people were there awaiting relatives. About nine o'clock, lighters carrying passengers appeared, as the lighters approached the people began to sing the Jewish National Anthem, which had been written and widely circulated in anticipation of this day. Many trips between ship and shore were made, there were about five-hundred aboard, there was a lighter filled with bags of grain at the point where they were landing and they were stacked up like stairs, it was some sight to see them coming over these "stairs" and fall down and kiss the ground.

Such jubilation, the first day of the new State of Israel, everything was free, no customs examinations or charges!! I was caught up in the spirit of rejoicing, tears in my eyes to see people embracing and all talking at once. It was almost noon before Mr, Max-well and Ben landed, you can picture my feelings as I greeted them after all they had been through since I had last seen them. There was such confusion in the port that they stamped Ben's passport with their new state stamp, making him a citizen of Israel, this was corrected later on.

How they loved that hurriedly made rubber stamp proclaiming the "State of Israel"! Although it is safe to say that many of the Jewish people rejoiced and celebrated the birth of their own state, some of the population were apprehensive. Of course there were many problems still to be solved but it was remarkable that the turnover in the government was accomplished with a min-

imum of disturbance, at least as I, an outside observer saw it. I can only say that an administrative framework must have been prepared in advance.

Food and electricity shortages were the order of the day as more and more immigrants began to arrive. I was told of an airlift from Yemen, these jewish people had lived in an arab culture and were afraid of planes, they said the passengers preferred to sit on the floor and how odd it was to look back on empty seats when they knew the plane was full. As offices sprung up to take care of the needs of the people such as housing, rationing, etc., the halls would be full of people sitting on the floor waiting their turns.

When the city of Haifa fell to the jews in April, 1948, and the arabs had fled, we learned that two streets away from us a grocer was selling his entire stock as he wanted to leave the country. We rushed over and supplemented our supplies as best we could, noone knew when new supplies could be obtained. Luckily we had plenty of dried foods but as time went on we ran out of cooking oil, excepting coconut oil (ugh!) then we had no onions, potatoes, cheese or other dairy products.

Not long after Ben returned from Italy, we started proceedings to register our marriage. We called at the American Consulate, met the consul, he said my passport could be changed to my married name upon receipt of a certificate validated by the new state. At the Municipality of Haifa, they were functioning under a provisional government, carrying on as the British had for the time being. We were told that they would recognize our marriage if they had been recorded under the previous administration. This had been done so the proper form was filled out by Rúhíyyih Khánúm and signed by Shoghi Effendi, we then took it to the registry where it was endorsed on the back by the new government in hebrew. With this evidence in hand we returned to the consulate and they issued a new passport to me under my married name. Shoghi Effendi was very pleased with these events as we had now set a precedent to smooth the path of future Bahá'í marriages in the State of Israel. Shoghi Effendi said that this was no doubt the reason why our plans to be married in Egypt didn't work out! (See Bahá'í World 1946-50, page 317 for photostat of the certificate.) I venture to say that not many people have a marriage certificate endorsed with the signature of the beloved Guardian.

Before Ben arrived in the country, we began to prepare his room, we scraped down a wooden bedstead, covered a divan with new material and furnished the small room between the two bedrooms and that became our "home". Now, the rooms we occupied have been turned into offices as this house has been used as headquarters for the Universal House of Justice until their new building is completed, We had our meals with Mr. Maxwell. Now that I look back on it. I think it odd that we never gave it a thought that we might somehow have a home of our own because we did expect to live our lives out at the world center. I guess it was due to the fact that we became engrossed with the plans of Shoghi Effendi and took everything a day at a time, first things first!

An amusing thing happened to me one day, I was going to Jerusalem but planned to stop at the post-office first, it was in a heavily guarded building with a path outlined with barbed wire leading up to the entrance, at a turn in the path was a guard, when I approached with my small overnight bag, he asked me to open it, I had to put it on the ground as it was shaped like two halves, he poked through it to see if I was carrying any weapons, when I went to stand up, the veil on my hat caught on his coat button! As I struggled to get it loose, I noted, out of the corner of my eye, at the next turn in the path, a guard in the sentry box had his gun trained on me. Another time, I was in Tel-Aviv on business in a public building, I was just starting up the staircase, when down the stairwell, a very clipped British voice called down, "my, word, I believe I see a hat, a real hat!" Most people went bareheaded or wore a scarf to cover the hair, I finally gave up hats too, as I seemed so conspicuous, besides there is a jerky wind blowing a lot of the time in this climate.

Some time after May 15, 1948, the new state decided it had to raise cash to run the country and they set up a system of short term Bonds. Shoghi Effendi asked Ben to consult with Mr. Sitton about this. Money had been on deposit in the bank for sometime earmarked for the addition to the Shrine of the Báb, it was gathering interest but the return would be greater from the bonds. Ben found out that this short term loan was guaranteed by United States dollars, so the funds were invested. Another benefit derived from putting money into the loan, especially for business men, was the fact that it gave them purchasing power in the United States for goods that were lacking in Israel. As we were not in business, we found we could sell our "dollar rights" and this brought us added profits. This turned out to be an excellent investment and bolstered the fund toward paying for the construction of the exterior of the Shrine of the Báb. Before Mr. Maxwell and Ben went to Italy, Shoghi Effendi would study the model, the clerestory and dome could be removed, he would walk around it, noting how it would look if only the arcade was completed, then he would ask Ben to put on the clerestory to see how it would appear if construction stopped there, it was clear that he would have liked to place contracts for the entire building. When the men left for Italy, the only contract to be made was for the arcade. It was after they returned that the decision was made to place contracts for the entire structure and that was when Shoghi Effendi asked the Bahá'ís to make contributions to complete the beautiful building. He had often remarked that it would be too bad not to have the entire carving done by the splendid artisans who had worked on the arcade.

When the Bahá'ís responded with their donations, I would spend hours with a clerk in the postoffice, all mail containing funds were held in a certain place until a responsible person came and the letters were opened in their presence, a deposit slip for the bank was made out and the next day the funds would be credited to our account. This was government control of foreign exchange.

As soon as negotiations in Italy were completed, things began to happen at the Báb's Shrine, it seemed a pity, but the beautiful gardens close to the building

had to be torn up to make way for the foundation of the arcade. A first class supervising engineer and construction engineer had been found and a fine head mason who was with the project until its completion. A small railroad track was laid from the main road to the site to transport the material. Most everyone's energy and attention was focused on the operation. We learned that before any shipment was made from Italy, a whole wall was erected to be certain that the stones fitted together as there was only the space of a thin piece of cardboard between each stone, each one of the stones were numbered and had its exact position. When it came time to sink the pylons to support the structure, Shoghi Effendi had to be assured and re-assured that the precious remains in the Shrine would not be disturbed. As the work progressed, Shoghi Effendi asked Ben to write progress reports which were published in the Bahá'í News.

The area around the Tomb Shrine became a scene swarming with workers, many, many conferences took place between the Mr, Maxwell, Rúhíyyih Khánum, Ben and the engineers, all this information was relayed to Shoghi Effendi who made the decisions.

Often when Ben was driving Shoghi Effendi up to the Shrine, they would discuss the progress of the work and Ben would be amazed at the information the beloved Guardian would have at his finger-tips, including the financial reports.

The general public was excluded from the work area during the construction, yet, many came as close as possible to watch the progress of this beautiful edifice. All the able bodied Bahá'ís in Haifa were involved in this huge effort as well as many outsiders.

After the completion of the arcade, the head mason disappeared and we heard that he had said he just couldn't work on ordinary construction, putting stone on stone after handling the beautiful material from Italy. When it was announced that the building would continue while the matching marble and granite could still be obtained, the head mason appeared as mysteriously as he had disappeared and asked to be re-hired, he later said his hand had touched each stone in the entire structure.

Mr. Fred Waller became consul in Haifa in 1949, when we had business at the Consulate he apparently took a liking to us for he did many kind things. We were invited to his home to meet his family and he added our names to the social list which meant we were invited to social affairs of other Consulates. A Strong friendship developed and we were often in their home and especially for holidays. Not long after we had met them, Mr. Waller told us that stored in the Consulate were food supplies that had been kept on hand in case the resident Americans had to take refuge there due to the worsening of war conditions. He now felt the emergency was over and he was willing for our community to have first choice to buy as much as we wanted. What a blessing! There was tinned cheese, butter, many kinds of dehydrated foods that had been fortified also some army field rations. These items helped us through a very difficult period. The good will generated by this friendship was deeply appreciated.

Through the Wallers we met many other people whom we liked and soon a social life developed. Once in a while we gave a dinner party, persian style, as some food became available. Rúhíyyih Khánúm had a real knack for making the table look beautiful. One of our new friends was the head of the 'Iráq Petroleum Company and he went by plane once a week to Cyprus, he had enjoyed the persian dinner so much that he offered to bring any supplies we lacked back from Cyprus anytime we wanted to have another dinner party. I must say we never had a refusal to our invitations. These affairs were held in the central hall of #10 Persian Street and usually we had twelve guests. Shoghi Effendi never attended these affairs, but I know that Rúhíyyih Khánúm enjoyed them exceedingly.

There were two wrought iron chinese lanterns by the front door in which we would place candles, flowers in large vases were placed here and there and candles and flowers graced the table. Four of the persian girls served the meal and looked so attractive in their best head scarves and aprons, they seemed to enjoy the party as much as we did even though they did the work. We usually had a delicious concoction of fruit juices to start the dinner off and our more sophisticated friends never seemed to miss the stronger beverages. Shoghi Effendi said we could serve wine to the guests if we explained why we abstained but we never did this because the fruit drink was so well received.

Much later on we had open house each Wednesday from four to seven. I would buy plain coffee buns at the bake shop, cut them in small pieces as there was a sugar shortage preventing home baking. Of course the samovar was the real attraction, the tea tasted like nectar, even now when I smell charcoal burning, the memory of these days comes flooding back. Sometimes as many as thirty people came and we made many new friends.

Several occasions stand out as very special, the "Empire" training ship of New York State came to Haifa with about five-hundred cadets aboard. They were entertained in groups of fifty to one-hundred around the State of Israel. The Haifa Consulate had a lawn party for one of the groups and invited Ben and me to be co-host and hostess. The captain of the training ship was so grateful for the hospitality shown that he invited about five-hundred local people to a buffet aboard the ship. It was a thrilling sight, the visitors had gathered at the quay-side about dusk, the ships in the harbor were lighted and the "Empire State" had a festive appearance, a canopy had been erected and the deck was strung with lights over the buffet table. As lighters came from the ship filled with the cadets, row on row in their white summer uniforms, they filed off and the civilians took their places for the return trip. The captain's "gig" swirled up to the quay to gather up the important guests and swiftly returned to the ship. The band was playing as we boarded and as the guest mingled, delicious food was spread before us. After the strict rationing we were experiencing you can imagine how fast the roast beef, turkey and ham disappeared! There were tempting desserts and they ran out of ice-cream. What a treat for those of us who were fortunate enough to be invited. Later, as the lighters returned with

the cadets, we all came back to shore full of good food and happy memories.

It came as a surprise to me to learn that when aship from the United States came in, the captain reported to the consulate immediately with the ship's papers. One of the ship's captains had his wife aboard and the Waller's planned a dinner party for them. It was quite a co-incidence to discover that Captain Findley was the same age as Ben and born a few houses away from Ben's home in Quincy, Massachusetts. They became good friends immediately and the next time the ship came to Haifa, we entertained them and the Wallers, taking them to Bahjí and returning to #10 for dinner. In return, Captain Findley invited us to "roast beef" night on his ship, he knew we had short meat rations and that they were very poor quality. Though the ship was one of the merchant marine, we were as happy as if we were on the Queen Mary! The ship's cook was Chinese and he made two beautiful cakes to serve at the Fourth of July reception at the consulate, decorated with colored frosting American flags! Unfortunately the ships sailing order came for them to depart the evening of the third of July so they could not come to the party. Those sweet cakes were certainly enjoyed by all present.

One day Mr. Waller brought me a letter from the American Ambassador in Jerusalem that had been forwarded to him to take care of. It concerned an inquiry from an American Bahá'í who said he had written several letters to Shoghi Effendi and had not received a reply to any of them, he wondered if Shoghi Effendi was ill or absent from Haifa. Shoghi Effendi had been very patient with this individual who had constantly been writing to him and finally decided to ignore his letters. There were those who liked to show letters from the Guardian around to indicate they were close to him! The beloved Guardian asked me to write a reply, on our best stationery, to the ambassador to the effect that the letters of the man had been received and no replies were necessary.

Mrs. Waller was most gracious to me, taking me with her on jaunts and many times either picking me up in her car when I was on my way to town or offering us the use of the consulate car and chauffeur.

To this day, the Waller family are close friends, now retired and living in California, whenever Fred would introduce either Ben or me to new people, he would say, "have you ever met a Bahá'í?", if they replied that they hadn't, he would say, "well, you are meeting two of them now!" I shall always be grateful for this lasting friendship.

It was evident that Ben was becoming very exhausted from his responsibilities under the trying circumstances, there was no day of rest for the Bahá'ís in Haifa. Friday was the Moslem Holy Day, Saturday the Jewish and Sunday for the Christians, consequently, business went on every day of the week. One felt that every waking moment belonged to the Faith.

In December 1949, Ben and I flew to Cyprus for two weeks vacation. Before we left, Shoghi Effendi asked us to note the lonely, single grave beside the public road of Mírzá Yahyá, one of the half-brothers of Bahá'u'lláh as compared with

the glory, honor and beauty of the Tomb of Bahá'u'lláh at Bahjí! (Note: see chapter 10 , God Passes By.)

We were so fatigued that we spent the first few days in bed, then did some exploring and enjoyed the rest of the time. This was the first vacation that we had since coming to the Holy Land. Food was plentiful, especially meat, and we ate too much at first, later we used better judgement. We asked a friend in the Travel Office what we could bring back to him, he had been so kind to us over the years, he said he would like some “pink veal” which translated meant canned ham! When we returned to Haifa to resume our responsibilities we remembered him.

Ben made a good friend in the shipping office that cleared our stone when it arrived from Italy. He could see that Ben was losing weight and would give him things from “Care” packages that other people did not want, mainly canned applesauce. We heard him referred to as Abou George, we mispronounced it as “Apple George” thinking it was because of his gifts of applesauce! Of course we found out he had recently become a new father and “abou” means father!

One of Shoghi Effendi's aunts had come from Egypt before the British Mandate ended and she was in Lebanon when the country became Israel. She frantically implored us to help her get back into the country. Due to the fact that Shoghi Effendi was in such good standing with the new government they granted permission for her to return. It became one of my duties to go and get her at the border which happens to be on top of a huge limestone cliff, I'll never forget turning the car around in a narrow space atop this cliff with the sea many feet below, also, how sad it was to see people on the Lebanese side begging to return, some on their knees pleading when the barrier was opened. There were some Bahá'ís in this group who were allowed to return at a later date.

This aunt had an empty flat she wasn't using as she was far from well and was staying at # 7 and finally had to go to the hospital. Somehow, Abou George heard about this flat and asked us to intervene on his behalf as he needed a larger place with a new son added to his family. We got the key to the flat and when we arrived, there was an immigrant family that had taken possession, sitting on the hall floor with their scanty belongings and they refused to leave!

They couldn't speak any language that Abou George knew so an interpreter had to be found, an exchange of money took place and the immigrants left. Due to the influx of so many immigrants there was a housing shortage and people just took over when they saw an empty place, people didn't dare to even leave for any length of time, they might come back and find their places occupied by strangers! We were glad to do Abou George this favor as he had helped us so often with our shipments over a long period of time.

I hunted around as much as I could to find things for Ben to eat, the leban, or yogurt was made of skim milk and had no nourishment. One morning around six o'clock Ben called me to his room, he had been suffering severe pains all through the night! I asked him why he didn't call me before and he said he

didn't want to bother anyone. When the doctor came and examined him, he said: "your husband is a hero to stand all that pain, he has had an attack of kidney stones." This seems to be a rather common ailment in this part of the world, probably due to the lime in the drinking water. To try and build Ben up the doctor gave him some liver injections, but, he told me he couldn't live on them, he would just have to have better food.

There were some air-raids that disturbed the nights and when the big gun on the point of Mount Carmel boomed out it sent chills up your spine, I guess it sounded worse than any damage it inflicted. I recall being in the lower town when air-raid sirens blew and people didn't even bother to take shelter. In the Post Office the clerks all wore helmets, they used to ask me why I stayed in Israel when I could go home to a safe America. I did see one plane come over the city and the "bomb" it dropped made a very small hole near the Post Office.

The nearest I came to being hit was in broad daylight, I was passing through a side street when I saw some British soldiers getting behind a shelter with their guns on the ready, some random shots came down from the arab neighborhood, all persons in sight ran to doorways for shelter, including myself. A bullet ricocheted from the curb causing a scar across the calf of my right leg!

Some odd things happened in my search for food to supplement our Table. I noticed a pool in the window of a fish market filled with live fish, when I entered I found that they were large carp, in my estimation a very tasteless fish. However, it was edible, the clerk asked me how large a fish I wanted, I replied enough for two people, he seized a club-like stick, watched his chance, hit the fish, slapped him on the cutting board, cut off his head and skin, wrapped it in a newspaper and handed it to me. I put the package in my string bag, a few doors away from the market I noted a sign saying that air-mail letters could be sent from there. I went in and found it a very tiny place, next to me at the counter was a man who suddenly turned and gave me an odd look, I then realized that the "fish package" was jerking back and forth in a muscular reaction, I explained my predicament and all laughed about it. The package jerked all the way home and it wasn't worth the trouble, it had no flavor at all.

Another time I passed a fruit stand and saw some fresh pears, I thought that will something different and picked out some. The clerk said, "they are russian" at least that is what I thought he said, I replied, "I don't care where they are from, I'll take them", then it dawned on me, he meant that they were rationed. Of course I did-not have any ration tickets so I had to pass them up.

Mr. Sitton told me that he had heard that they were taking fresh fruits out to sea from Beirut and dumping them as they had no market, he said, "oh how I would like some bananas for my grandchild." On one of the trips to Cyprus by Mr. Kaulbach, he brought back a few bananas, I immediately thought of Mr. Sitton and shared them with him, he thanked me with tears in his eyes, he said they were more precious than diamonds.

In the early days of my sojourn in Haifa I was asked by Rúḥíyyih Khánúm to

make a cake for Snoghi Effendi. Our stove was a three burner oil stove, the oven was separate, you placed it over two burners and pre-heated it before baking. I was supposed to make a two-layer cake with a custard and jam filling and cover it with chocolate icing. The ingredients were not up to standards in the United States and I was so disappointed to note the rising quality was not as successful as I hoped for, nevertheless, I used the poorest appearing layer for the bottom and completed the cake. With fear and trepidation I sent it over to #7 for Shoghi Effendi. I was so relieved when the verdict came back that he enjoyed it very much and would like me to make another at a future date. I never could do this as the materials became unavailable and the stove became erratic. I endeavoured to make some lemon tarts and for some reason, the soot from the stove came into the oven and spoiled them all, I tell you these things to show you how frustrating life can be under these conditions.

In our personal quarters we had a round "Perfection" oil stove with a handle that made it portable. In fact, I used to worry about Mr. Maxwell when he carried his from his bedroom to his office, as he walked down the hall, flames would be shooting out of it!

During the Fast, Khorshid would bring the makings of our breakfast up the night before and I find it amusing to remember Ben and myself cooking on top of this stove. We had to do each thing separately, first the coffee and set it aside, then scrambled eggs and finally the toast. We used to break our fast at sundown with a hot drink, because dinner was never served until dark, real dark, so it made a long fasting day.

Rúhíyyih Khánum and I went up to the Jewish shopping center one afternoon on foot as Shoghi Effendi was using the car. There was a guard on duty surrounded by barbed wire barricades near Mountain Road, (now U.N.O. Avenue) at the edge of the area. It was almost curfew time as we headed home, Rúhíyyih Khánum started down a street that bordered the Arab quarter and I said "don't go down there, they call it dead-man's street" she replied, "nobody will shoot at us, and I'll walk on the exposed side, so don't worry!" We had not gone far when we heard the "thunking" sound of bullets! Rúhíyyih Khánum sort of jerked and I said what is the matter, she replied, "I don't want to be hit in the widest place!" As we came to the barrier at Mountain Road, the guard said - "you shouldn't cross here, you will be shot at." Rúhíyyih Khánum said, "God will take care of us!" - then the guard swung the barrier open and replied, - then God go with you! We arrived home safely, God did take care of us.

When rationing went into effect by the new government, the Bahá'í farmers near Ma'an river, adjacent to the Garden of Ridván, did not grasp the meaning of this, for them, the needs of Shoghi Effendi's household were not a law. They were accustomed to bringing produce to Haifa, coming by bus. I received a call to come down to the bus depot where they were holding some Bahá'ís and they wanted an explanation. After giving me a summons to appear in person on behalf of the Bahá'í Community to the head of the rationing bureau, the produce was confiscated and the Bahá'ís were allowed to return to their homes.

I reported all this to Shoghi Effendi and he instructed me to take "Some Answered Questions" with me when I kept the appointment and show the man in charge the reference on page 76, in the last paragraph, quote: - "Yon can see that from all parts of the world tribes of Jews are coming to the Holy Land; they live in villages and lands which they make their own, and day by day they are increasing to such an extent, that all Palestine will become their home."

When I presented myself at the Ration Board, I had the book under my arm. As I entered the office, I was greeted rather curtly, then the official in charge reached for his phone - I thought: 'he is going to have me arrested!' Instead, he ordered two turkish coffees! He scolded me at first, saying that he never thought the Bahá'ís would be guilty of breaking the law! He finally softened up and I was able to show him the excerpt in "Some Answered Questions."

However, we had a bit more trouble at the time of the grain harvest, the intentions of the Bahá'ís were to save some for the household, so they didn't declare the full harvest and hid some of the bags of grain! So, I had to return again to the Ration Board and smooth up matters and again the grain was confiscated. These actions did nothing to help the beloved Guardians peace of mind.

Many people came to #7 Persian Street for one reason or another and some were referred to me. One such case was an arab who had worked for the Palestine Railways. He was neatly dressed in a white shirt, shorts, shorts and knee- high white socks, in other words, his appearance impressed me. He confided in me that he had left the country during the troubles and was now in Israel illegally? He and his wife had literally crawled over the border in the dark of night and were presently being sheltered by relatives in Haifa. The problem was due to rationing, there was not enough food for them all and they hardly dared to leave the house as they could be stopped on the street by security people and asked to show their I.D. cards. My advice to him was to go to the authorities, speak of his past record with the railway, confess that he had come back illegally, he might have to serve some time in jail, but, he would either be given citizenship or expelled, either way, it would be better for him to know how he stood, beside that, I knew that the new government needed experienced people to help run the railroad. If he got picked up, it would go harder for him then if he turned himself in voluntarily. I am happy to say that he later called on me and told me he spent one month in custody and because they needed his background experience, he had received full citizenship and his old position with the railway! One happy ending.

Speaking of the railway, when the state was first born, we would hear the train whistles hours on and, the jews were operating it for the first time and treated it like a toy! They eventually took it seriously but they had a good time with it at first!

I had to go to the Security Office very often myself to get I.D. cards for people in the Bahá'í Community, at first they were good for only a short time so I had to make many trips. This was a very unpleasant chore as the waiting room

would be full to overflowing, we were packed in so close you could hardly raise your hand above your head. On a rainy day the odor of damp clothing and close packed bodies was offensive. In fact, I think this is what caused me to become ill with some form of typhoid, I had to be hospitalized for about two weeks!

When I had been in Haifa a few months I realized that Rúhíyyih Khánum took no thought of herself for a change of routine. We both loved movies and I had learned there was a theater that showed american movies. When I noticed a film I thought she would enjoy I would phone her from town and ask her if she could be spared from her work that afternoon, she would consult with Shoghi Effendi and if she could spare the time I would get the tickets so we wouldn't have to stand in line at opening time. One movie was "The Sons of the South" and Uncle Remus sings a song entitled, "Everybody Needs a Laughing Place," I convinced her that this was something she needed! The result was that she started a plan for one of the rooms on the main floor, she designed a desk and a chest of drawers among other things. There was a connecting door into another room set in the wall so deeply that she could put the chest of drawers in the space, above it, on the door itself she created a beautiful cover by sewing peacock feathers on a brocade background, framing it like a picture and putting glass over it to protect it, the effect was just lovely. There was a small balcony off this room and sometimes the live peacock would be there sunning himself on the rail of the balustrade.

It is sad to relate that the room didn't get used too often, however, I do remember one tea-party there in order for her to meet some ladies I had met through my contact with Mrs. Waller. When I returned in September, 1973, I found this room totally filled with fascinating items she had collected in her travels which will someday be her own museum.

When I first arrived in Haifa, Rúhíyyih Khánum helped me to acclimate myself, I had so much to learn, among other things she said it depended on how I worked out as an american Bahá'í as to whether Shoghi Effendi would invite other americans to come and help, I took this responsibility very seriously.

In telling of our marriage, I forgot to mention that after our return to Haifa, Mansour came to call on us to say how glad he was that we had safely returned, he added, " Miss Gladys, on that trip to Jerusalem, my knees were full of afraiding!" Another expression he used was - "those jews are full from clever" he touched his forehead to indicate that they were brainy!

Another time when he came to see us, he looked so dejected, he sat in our living room quite a while before he spoke, finally he said, - "when I die, I don't have to sit at the feet of Bahá'u'lláh, a thousand seats away is good enough for me!" It seemed that he had received a scolding from Shoghi Effendi for another of his helpful deeds that often produced more trouble than help. Like the time we had a call from the police that they were holding him at the Police Station, when Ben went up to see what he had done this time, he said Mansour looked absolutely black with rage and refused to answer any questions, only that he

wanted to be a martyr!

There was a large depression near the Pilgrim House in the Shrine garden and the garden refuse was not enough to fill it, so Mansour got the idea that he could hire the Druse trucks and get a lot of rubble from the arab quarter that had been destroyed in the battle of Haifa and this would fill the hole to the top! As they were loading the trucks, they were stopped by the police and Mansour was taken into custody. When Ben arrived he got the story of what happened and they not only let Mansour go, but allowed us to take enough rubble to fill this large hole. This is what underlies the beautiful cactus garden, nick-named "Arizona" because of these lovely plants.

It is interesting the way some things work out, an unidentified person brought a letter to #7 Persian Street, an the outside was written, - "to whom it may concern." This was brought to Shoghi Effendi who found it was a letter intended for the Land Registry in Haifa from some covenant breakers who had fled the country at the advice, they said, of some of the jewish officials, "until the disturbances were over." It was a plea to the authorities to safeguard their properties until they could arrange their return. The irony was the fact that they claimed to be Bahá'ís in good standing, thinking this would help their case, the letter was never intended to be read by the beloved Guardian, the person who delivered it made an error. Shoghi Effendi instructed me to take the letter to the Land Registry and advise them that the letter was delivered to us by mistake, that they were no part of the Bahá'í Community and that we could not support their claim.

After the country settled down, many visitors came to visit Bahjí. I had occasion to drive over there one day, in the parking area was a bus so I knew a group was visiting. Imagine my surprise when I walked around the building to see Salah standing at the entrance path with a light chain across, barring the way. He was holding the whole group at bay because they were not suitably dressed to pay their respects at such a Holy Spot! They were told they would be most welcome when they were suitably attired and much to my amazement, they only put up a token argument and quietly left.

There were two houses in Haifa that belonged to the Bahá'í Community, as I understand it, they had been willed to u s by Bahá'ís wh o had lived in them. In the last days of the Mandate, it was report ed to us that they stood empty, the unlocked doors swinging back and forth. One of these houses was a double house and had been occupied by two arab families. We learned that the people had just locked up and fled, fully expecting to return. Then the battle of Haifa took place, we checked on this building often and nothing was disturbed, then came May 15th and the end of the Mandate. The influx of the immigrants took place in earnest, you really couldn't blame the people, they were desperate for places to live and the new government had not had time to set up a housing authority, the result was that these people just moved in wherever they could. In our case we learned that trucks had come and removed the possessions of the former tenants and were stored in warehouses. Before we could take any action,

seven families moved into the double house and I lost count of the number of people in the other house! Shoghi Effendi asked me to make arrangements with one of our lawyers and see if he wouldn't ask the people to leave until we could renovate the property for proper living for so many, they were adamant in their refusal to leave, in fact, they would only open their door a crack so that we could even talk to them, in addition, many could not speak any language the lawyer knew. At last we were able to convince them we meant them no harm and leases were signed. It is my understanding that Shoghi Effendi could acquire land in or near the Shrine by exchanging some of these properties.

As you can readily see many and varied decisions had to be made during this transition period and much as we would like to spare Shoghi Effendi of any further anxiety, all matters had to be referred to him in their true perspective. He had the faculty to note any weak spot in our reports and would not take any action until he had all the facts, then he would give us our instructions. It was in the fall of 1950 that Shoghi Effendi began to think of asking other Bahá'ís to come and help with the work at the Bahá'í World Center, Luṭfu'lláh Ḥakím came from England, the first to arrive, then, in December, Amelia Collins and Charles Mason Remey came from the United States, in January 1951, two sisters, Jessie and Ethel Revell arrived, they were both excellent secretaries.

Shoghi Effendi began to join us for dinner after the arrival of the friends and it was wonderful to have a full table each night when he came over. When the meal was ready we would be called to the dining room which was on the lower floor of #10 and we would keep our eyes on the gate at # 7 to see the beloved Guardian come across the street. He spoke so lovingly to us and called us his family!

Milly Collins sat at what would be called the head of the table and Shoghi Effendi would be at her right, Ben was at the other end of the table, Rúḥíyyih Khánúm was next to Shoghi Effendi and I was placed next to her, the rest of the group sat across from us. I was so happy to look past Rúḥíyyih Khánúm into the beautiful face of Shoghi Effendi when he was talking, also, when he turned toward Rúḥíyyih Khánúm, I could see his love for her in his eyes!

Sometimes the beloved Guardian would push away his dinner plate in his enthusiasm to tell us some important news or explain one of his new plans, then Rúḥíyyih Khánúm would ask him to please eat his food while it was hot, doing her wifely duty. She had already told me how difficult it was to get him to eat properly. She had learned during her travels with him that he liked blue dishes, so she would use blue and white tablecloths and blue and white china to tempt him. especially when he had meals in their own apartment.

In talking of his plans for the Bahá'ís he said he never asked them to do more than they were capable of accomplishing, he said, if they knew what lay ahead for them they would be overwhelmed!

He was so pleased to tell us that the authorities had given permission to turn the floodlights on the Arcade for one hour each evening even though electricity

was rationed due to the drain on the utilities by so many newly arrived refugees.

One night he brought over some original letters from important people, pulling them from various pockets in his clothing. He reveled in the ones he had received from Queen Maria of Roumania and told of how saddened he was when she came to make her pilgrimage and was prevented almost at the very foot of Mount Carmel. A reference to this is found on pages 107-117 in "The Priceless Pearl."

Another evening when he came over his eyes were full of mischief, he had previously asked England to take responsibility for opening Africa to the Faith and for them to send pioneers. Meanwhile, in Persia, the man who had been secretary to their National Spiritual Assembly for years, had written Shoghi Effendi several times begging him to intervene so that he would not be made secretary again as he wanted to go pioneering. Shoghi Effendi wrote him that if he was elected, he would have served. Finally this man decided to move to England and while he was on the high seas, the African Committee in England had appointed him secretary for this committee. This really caused Shoghi Effendi's eyes to twinkle with amusement to think this man would have a secretarial job again.

For some time some beautiful Persian rugs were ready and waiting in Persia, to be shipped to decorate the Shrines and properties at the World Center. After the new state was formed, there came a time when it was considered safe to send them, we received word that they were on their way by plane. There were many bales and we had instructions to open all the bales and pile up the rugs in the upper hall at #10. This was done and after dinner one evening we all went up and as each rug was shown to Shoghi Effendi, he told where it was to be placed. Notes were kept as to their disposal and when they were all accounted for, Shoghi Effendi turned to us and said, -"I did that pretty quick, didn't I!" Some were so lovely that they would be hung on walls, never to be walked on.

The terrace garden in front of the Báb's Shrine was actually created over a huge cistern, water to fill it was pumped up from a well at the rear of # 7 Persian Street. I heard that some said nothing would ever grow there, Shoghi Effendi went ahead with his plan, even placing trees and shrubs there and everything flourished! Nothing seemed impossible to him.

We rarely asked questions at the dinner table because Shoghi Effendi had so much to tell us. One evening he was talking about the unification of our world, then he seemed to become contemplative and said after this had been accomplished, then it would be the other planets, after that the universes and after that, the cosmos! Then he settled back in his chair and said in a rather awestruck voice, "after that there are all the realms of God," All I could think of was a sky rocket taking off and bursting in the heavens into beautiful light patterns.

There were times when he was so full of his plans he would push his dinner plate away and ask for paper and pencil, he was so vehement in drawing out his design on one occasion that he broke two pencils! Ethel, the perfect secretary always had another to hand to him.

When the meal ended, Shoghi Effendi would arise and say, “ I must get back to my work.” We all stood up and when he passed by me, I almost had to hold my arms down, they just wanted to encircle him in loving protection! Our precious “Sign of God on Earth!”

Shoghi Effendi rarely accepted social invitations, though he received many, he usually sent representatives. Over the years he had found that these affairs were time wasting, his chief interest was the safeguarding and promotion of the Bahá’í Faith.

Much more is written about the beloved Guardian in “The Priceless Pearl.” I have only tried to give some personal glimpses that I remember and possibly are not found elsewhere. building, Luṭfu’lláh called some of the men to remove the urns from the trunk of the car. I waited for some time, then Luṭfu’lláh came and said that Shoghi Effendi wanted me to enter the Shrine. After I paid my respects at the Holy Threshold, the beloved Guardian pointed out the new placement he had been supervising and in a low voice told me that they would be wired so that they could be lighted from within and spoke of how beautiful they would be with the soft glow of light coming through the alabaster. I have now, many years later, returned on a visit to Haifa and when I see these urns, my thoughts turn back to the day when they were placed in position.

The last time I saw Shoghi Effendi was at the observance of the Ascension of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, November 28, 1951, a few days after that I left for the United States to be with my dear husband, Ben.

Much more is written about our beloved Guardian in “The Priceless Pearl” and other publications, I have only tried to convey how privileged I felt to help him to the best of my ability and to give personal glimpses that I have remembered which possibly may not be found elsewhere.

It was a great relief to all concerned to have more helping hands at the world center. Each one h?d a specific task assigned to them.

Although Ben and I expected to spend the rest of our lives at the Bahá’í World Center, the shortage of good nourishing food, plus the responsibilities and frustrations involved with the construction of the Arcade of the Báb’s Shrine had taken it’s toll and had affected Ben’s health. He was very exhausted and had lost forty-five pounds, he was so thin that he began to break through the reed-work of the dining room chairs! We put some cushions where he sat to protect him and the chairs. This decline in his health caused us both to be very concerned and after consultation and prayers, we decided to ask permission to return to the United States so Ben could see his own family doctor. Shoghi Effendi granted this permission and we then started our plans to go to America.

Jessie was taking over my work most efficiently and the work on the Báb’s Shrine was halted temporarily, it was difficult to leave as Shoghi Effendi had just formed the International Bahá’í Council, which he said was a fore-runner to the Universal House of Justice, a sort of bridge to take care of the growing

number of Bahá'ís in the world and to deal with the new State of Israel in a dignified manner. We were privileged to be appointed members of this Council even though it was short-lived as it turned out.

In late February, 1951, we flew to Rome where we remained for a week until Ben felt he could, stand the trip to the United States, it was an arduous flight as this was before jet engines came into use. We expected to land in Boston, as the time drew near, a stewardess came and knelt by our seat, she said there was a heavy snow-storm over Boston and as we were the only passengers getting off there, they were waving us on to New York! Later, we found out that some of the Boston Bahá'í Community were waiting to greet us at the airport, they learned that we would be coming in on a local flight later and many of them were on hand when we finally arrived, after a long delay.

After Ben had been to the doctor and had the usual tests, he was told that he could be built up with rest and nourishing food, but if he had to return to the same severe conditions, he would go downhill again, be of no use to anyone, in fact, the doctor said he would die.

We cabled the gist of this information to the beloved Guardian who replied, saying, "Ben must remain in the United States, but I must return." We received this news on Naw-Rúz, March 20, 1951. The beautiful part of this test was the fact that not for one moment did we question the Guardian's decision. However, it was not easy, we sat in a big chair together in the home of Ben's sister, where we were staying, and wept and prayed for strength to bear this separation. We were to speak to the Brattleboro Bahá'ís that evening and just didn't see how we could do it, somehow we gathered our forces, being with the friends brought us comfort.

There were several good reasons why I should return and we both realized it. I had been in the process of negotiating with the new government of Israel regarding the preservation of the land around Bahjí. in order to protect that Holy Place and to make lonely gardens in a big circle around it. The matter was proceeding smoothly at this point and Shoghi Effendi did not want to upset the delicate balance. Then we had to establish the status of Shoghi Effendi and the Bahá'í Community with the Israeli Department of Religions who wanted to lump us in with other religious groups and with many meetings and consultations we achieved recognition as an independent religion. Then thereother phases of governmental regulations that had to be re-established. In addition to this, the beloved Guardian needed his summer rest and I was used to the routine during his absence from Haifa.

Ben and some Bahá'í friends came to the airport in Boston to see me off, I planned to break my journey with a one night stopover in Rome. Ben wrote later that as my plane became airborne, long streamers of flame were coming out of one of the engines! He was greatly worried until he received a safe- arrival cable from me.

Imagine what a pleasant surprise it was for me to find Millie Collins staying

for one night in the same Hotel in Rome that I was staying at! She was on a mission for Shoghi Effendi, after that was completed, she planned to go to the United States to attend to her affairs before returning again to Haifa.

Millie informed me that there would be a meeting that evening at the home of Ugo Giachery and that Madame Dr eyfus Barney would be present. I was emotionally drained but knew I would feel better to be with the friends. At one point Mrs. Giachery told the group that I was returning alone to Haifa, leaving Ben in the United States, I am sorry to report that the tears flowed freely much to my chagrin. After returning to the hotel Millie and I talked and lovingly prayed together to the wee small hours, trusting that each of us would fulfill our obligations.

The next day she went her way and I returned to Haifa. I arrived at the gate of # 10 Persian Street, by taxi, about four o'clock in the morning, I couldn't arouse anyone there even though I called out to Jessie -aid Sthel whose bedroom windows were open. Finally I had to ring the bell at # 7 Persian Street which I disliked to do as I didn't want to risk disturbing Shoghi Effendi. One of the boys answered my ring and let me in to #10 which I found empty, everyone was over at Bahjí!

After sleeping a few hours I started to town to send a cable to Ben. Mrs. Waller came down the street in the American Consulate car and offered to drive me anywhere I needed to go and was willing to loan me the car and driver for the day if I wanted it. She was always so helpful.

I resumed my usual activities but the household was saddened due to the illness of dear Mr. Maxwell. The time came when the decision was made to take Mr. Maxwell to Switzerland to better doctors. Arrangements were made and shortly after plans crystalized, Rúhíyyih Khánum, her father and the nurse left, I was to drive Shoghi Effendi to a small hotel, not far from the airport, where he usually stayed when leaving the country. This took place a few days after Rúhíyyih Khánum and her father had left. Luṭfu'lláh Ḥakím accompanied Shoghi Effendi and we -ll had rooms near each other on the second floor of the hotel. The beloved Guardian's dinner was ordered sent to his room, then I went down to the dining room, when I returned, Luṭfu'lláh went down for his dinner, while he was there, the electricity went off and he could not make his way upstairs in the darkness. Shoghi Effendi was unaware that the lights were off as he was seated on his private balcony enjoying the afterglow, it was much lighter outside than in. Suddenly I heard Shoghi Effendi calling "Luṭfu'lláh, Luṭfu'lláh," so I tapped on the door and explained what was happening. He then asked me to remove the remains of his meal as the odor of the food bothered him and asked me to come out on the balcony afterward .

It was a very dear and precious moment, when I came out of the door, he looked at me so tenderly and so lovingly, his eyes seemed to be letting me know that he appreciated my returning alone, leaving Ben so ill and so far away. He inquired if I had recent news of Ben and told me that Ben would recover sufficiently to

serve the Cause again and asked me to give his love to Ben when I next wrote to him. He then reached in his breast pocket, brought out a small envelope with several of the old-fashioned Bahá'í ring stones in it, oval and amber colored, he asked me to give them to Ben when I returned to the United States.

Soon the lights came on and the next day we all went our respective ways. In Haifa, the usual routine continued and it was much nicer for me, having Jessie and Ethel for company, though we all missed Shoghi Effendi and Rúhíyyih Khánum and were already anticipating their return.

Later on we learned that Mr. Maxwell had improved to the extent that he could return to his lovely home in Montreal, Canada and had some time to enjoy it before he went to his reward. He left a wonderful legacy in his many and varied accomplishments.

The news from Ben was good, he had gone to Phoenix, Arizona, where the climate was suitable to help clear up his lung condition and he was beginning to gain weight. He wrote me long letters, weekly, and of course I wrote to him weekly. His letters were so beautiful that I have kept them to this day. The Bahá'ís in the area watched over him so lovingly and then Millie Collins came to her brother's house where she had an apartment, her home base when she was in Arizona. Ben became much better acquainted with her, and, as all others, came to love her very much.

Ben improved to the extent that he helped the local Bahá'ís with their teaching efforts. He did become ill with shingles that affected the upper part of his face, however, I did not learn about this until he was well on his way to recovery, too late to worry about it.

There were two social events that summer for me that were outstanding, they still linger in my memory, one was a cook-out on the beach not far from the walls of the old city of Acre. An American ship had come into port and Mr. Waller obtained some stores, such as the usual cook-out foods unobtainable in Israel and so reminiscent of happy times back home. A group of about thirty were invited to the party to partake of these delectables. We gathered about sundown and the cars were driven over the sand right down to the edge of the sea. Huge fires were built and as they burned down the meat was toasted over the coals. After living so long with shortages of all kinds you can imagine how good this feast tasted. Later we threw fresh wood on the fires and sat around in a huge circle singing familiar songs. The sun sank into the sea like a red-hot fireball and then the moon rose like a silver disc, such a happy, well fed contented group, it was one of those evenings that you wished could go on indefinitely.

Previously we had received some large canned hams from Holland, sent by some devoted Bahá'ís, I asked Rúhíyyih Khánum if we could get permission from Shoghi Effendi to use one of these to repay the hospitality that had been shown to us. This was arranged and it was decided to hold the affair at Mazra'a, it was again set for the sunset hour and was held on the out-door patio overlooking the cistern, which was open like a beautiful reflecting pool. The citrus groves

stretched away in the distance and in the early dusk, the water flowed down the aqueduct, the sluice was opened and along with the gurgling murmur of the water, the frogs rose to the surface of the pool to cling along the sides and started croaking in various tones. Outside the gate of the property was a caravanserai where a shepherd had bedded down his flock for the night, to cap it all, he began to play on his shepherds pipes. I had planned this party to take advantage of the full of the moon, it was perfect in every way, many of the people that attended spoke of it afterward the guests were members of the diplomatic corps and said they would often remember that lovely evening. These same friends included me in many social activities that summer which helped me to accept my separation from Ben.

One afternoon we had to go on an errand to Bahjí, as it was a Feast day and near sunset when we left Bahjí, we drove into Acre and parked the car near the Most Great Prison. We climbed the wall opposite, Jessie, Ethel and Salah Jarrah were with me. We each said prayers, below us the sea was surging back and forth causing spurts of water to come up through holes in the rocks, worn by the constant action of the sea.

There is an old tradition found in the Epistle of the Son of the Wolf, pages 176 - 181, that says that anyone "that looketh upon the sea at eventide, and saith: 'God is Most Great! ' at sunset, God will forgive his sins, though they be heaped as piles of sand.'" "And he that counteth forty waves while repeating: 'God is Most Great! ' - exalted be He - God will forgive his sins, both past and future." One of the benefits of being a Bahá'í and accepting Bahá'u'lláh's Message for this day, is the "oneness" we gradually acquire with all other religions, a spiritual rapport. So, we four shared a delightful sense of Comradeship as we silently called out the Name of God, forty times, in this ancient setting where so much history has been made. A peace settled over us as the glowing sun sank out of sight and we spent some time watching the afterglow before returning home to Haifa.

So, time passed, rather routinely and then the summons came for me to drive to the hotel, not far from the airport, to bring the Beloved Guardian and Rúhíyyih Khánum back to Haifa. I arrived a bit early so I parked the car a short way down the street and was dusting it off when I noticed Rúhíyyih Khánum beckoning me to come forward. Both these precious people looked refreshed and benefited by the change and the rest they had been having but one could almost see the "wheels" of resumed activity begin to turn.

Although I had reported weekly during their summer absence, Shoghi Effendi enquired how everything was in Haifa and it was during this drive home that he advised me that I could make my plans to rejoin Ben after the observance of the Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá which would take place on November 28th. He suggested that after my return, if I found Ben equal to it, that we visit as many Bahá's as possible and tell them of our life and experiences at the Bahá'í World Center. Knowing human nature, I realized that the friends might ask personal questions so I asked Shoghi Effendi how we should handle this.

He replied that if the matter arose, we should tell the friends that when he had important news, he conveyed it through the proper channels. What a marvelous protection to have the advice of the precious Guardian. This was our standard reply whenever it became necessary; the facts are that we really knew very little about his personal life and always respected his privacy.

The tempo of daily life increased and I again drove Shoghi Effendi wherever he wished to go. Some beautiful alabaster urns had arrived that were to be placed in the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, this was one of the last times I drove him, accompanied by Luṭfu'lláh we went to Bahjí, I parked the car in the usual place at the rear of the teahouse. After Shoghi Effendi had walked around the corner of the Lauions. Her family was reluctant to part with her cheerful presence but realized that it would make her happy to be using her talents for such a good purpose.

When we visited her she would lament the fact that she couldn't be with the Bahá'ís in groups. It was decided to ask the New England Regional Committee if it would be possible to plan to hold a conference at Crotched. This was done and we received permission to use the large hall at the Center. About sixty Bahá'ís attended and Barbara's eyes sparkled with happiness when she saw all these Bahá'ís, her new family.

A prominent Bahá'í named Guy Murchie lived near us in East Sullivan, New Hampshire. Barbara wondered if he would be willing to come and be interviewed, she felt certain that the Globe would accept a profile on such a distinguished and interesting person, also she thought how nice it would be for a Bahá'í to write a featured article about another Bahá'í! It would be excellent publicity for the Faith. Guy readily accepted and the article was published in the Boston Sunday Globe, October 2, 1955 along with a picture of the Bahá'í Temple in Wilmette and a picture of Guy.

In the course of her work Barbara was exposed to the general public and we who loved her, realized the danger if she caught cold or some other respiratory disease. In 1958 she was hospitalized with a severe cold and we lost this dear person whose life had been an example to us all. She was in her early thirties and her funeral was attended by many prominent people from the area of Concord, New Hampshire as well as a large group from the Rehabilitation Center.

It was arranged that Ben would come to New York City to meet me, I planned to return to the United States partly by air and partly by ship. My good friends, Mr. and Mrs. Waller escorted me to the airport where I would take a plane to Cyprus, stay overnight, then fly on to Rome. I had sent the bulk of my luggage by ship to Naples, Italy, to be transferred to the S.S. "Independence". I was very tired and thought the five day voyage on the ship would refresh me and also give me the opportunity to travel on a fine ship after the unpleasant trip to Haifa in 1947 on the unconverted troop ship, the "Marine Carp."

While waiting on the airport lounge, it was a happy surprise to see Mr. Kaulbach come in having just arrived back from Cyprus, he introduced me to one of his

colleagues who was leaving on the same plane I was taking to Cyprus. The result was that I was escorted from the airport in Cyprus to my hotel in the company car. All went smoothly and the next day I left for Rome, Dr. and Mrs. Giachery were very kind to me and the following day Dr. Giachery escorted me to Naples, by train, that evening the Bahá'ís in the area gathered at the hotel where we were staying for a meeting. It was very pleasant to meet some of the Italian friends and speak to them of life at the World Center under the direction of our beloved Guardian.

After the meeting was over, the Bahá'ís wanted to take a picture, they had very old style equipment, using flash powder, when this was lighted there was a sharp report like a pistol shot. Because of touchy conditions, the proprietor came rushing in as well as several patrons and all were so relieved to find it was only a picture taking incident. Although Dr. Giachery had to interpret for us, I felt the warm Bahá'í love of this Italian gathering and again realized that the whole world could be like this if only people would follow their religious teachings. The next morning Dr. Giachery took me to the port and placed me in the care of a porter, a Bahá'í, who had been at the meeting the night before. We could not address each other, but I assure you I was cared for as if I was a precious jewel and realized once more the true bond between the Bahá'ís wherever you meet them.

I made many interesting friends on the ship which was due in New York City December 15, 1951 and about the last ship from Europe before the holiday season. There were some celebrities in first class and they used to come down to our festivities in cabin class. Mr. Waller had asked me to convey his greetings to the captain if I had the opportunity. This chance came when the captain came to our lounge for his "cocktail party". I quietly went up to him and spoke of Mr. Waller, they knew each other well because this captain was on the regular run of the SS "LaGuardia" from New York City to Haifa. I was quite embarrassed at this point as the captain invited me to sit beside him, I saw drinks being prepared so I whispered that I was a teetotaler, he promptly whispered back, so am I and we will have orange juice together!

Today the planes fly faster and travelling by ship has almost gone out of existence, this is a pity as it is a fine experience. About mid-ocean we passed the sister ship of the SS "Independence", the SS "Constitution", a nice ceremony was carried out as we approached each other with the ship's horns and whistles saluting in great style.

After the strict rationing in Haifa, I found I could not eat the huge meals served on the ship, such abundance after so little.

My shipboard friends teased me about my longing to be re-united with my husband, who was so precious to me, they said I put on my hat five-hundred miles out! A bit of an exaggeration but I will admit I was very impatient as we neared the shore.

While passing, through the Gulf-stream the ocean was so rough that the pro-

pellers came right up out of the water causing the ship to shudder and vibrate, when the ship came down on the water again we were terrified. It didn't help our peace of mind when one of our table companions remarked that he had heard of a ship that had broken in two under conditions such as these!

We came into New York harbor during a late December sunset, the lights of the city were coming on and they twinkled like stars. My heart was filled with joy at the prospect of seeing Ben again after eight months of separation. After disembarking, I had to wait for my luggage to come up from the hold before I could go through customs. My cabin-mates husband had come to meet her and as he was connected with the United States diplomatic corp he didn't have to wait behind the barricade as others did. As I was introduced to him I described Ben and asked him to seek him out and tell him I would be along shortly. Ben told me later that when he saw these people motioning, he turned around to see who they were waving at, when they came right up to him and greeted him, he was astonished, then they gave him my message. We were later entertained by them when we visited Alexandria, Virginia. It was early evening by the time I was cleared through customs and we were settled in our hotel. I found him greatly improved and after a delicious re-union dinner we strolled down Fifth Avenue, it had started to snow, very fine and glittering, the shops were filled with Christmas decorations and the music of carols was softly playing in many places. As we neared Rockefeller Center, throngs of people were viewing the beautiful lighted Christmas tree and the skaters on the ice below were whirling bits of color. All the romance one could ask for after months of separation. Back in our hotel room we stood by our window watching the snow fall on Central Park, while we discussed plans for our future. Ben said we had several choices, we could find a small town, settle down and do what we could for the Bahá'í Faith in that area, or purchase a small car and visit as many Bahá'ís as possible as Shoghi Effendi had suggested. Ben was feeling almost his old self so we decided to contact the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States to see if our plan was acceptable to them. Meanwhile we would make our headquarters at the home of Ben's sister in Brattleboro, Vermont.

The National Spiritual Assembly invited us to come to Wilmette to discuss what we had in mind. With their approval and under the sponsorship of the National Teaching Committee we left early in January 1952 on a journey that was to last nine months, during which we covered thirty-three thousand miles, visited all forty-eight states and slept in over ninety-five motels. Many times we were offered hospitality by the dear friends but we found this difficult as often we found the friends would be giving up their bedroom to us, then too, they would want to talk until the small hours and we found this too tiring. As we were teaching under the auspices of the National Teaching Committee, we had a list of the secretaries of the Local Spiritual Assemblies, after discussion, Ben and I decided that I would plan the itinerary and notify the secretaries of the communities we would visit and Ben would write the reports to the National Teaching Committee.

I shall never forget how forlorn I felt the first night in a motel, it almost seemed as if I had no past and no present or future. Our entire possessions were in suitcases in the car and we had no home base! Very early in the trip we found it best for Ben to do the driving and for me to be the so-called "cruise director". This worked very well and few mistakes were made. We found we were good travelling companions, usually we had our lunch by the side of the road after purchasing our needs at small stores along the way. We stopped early enough to get motel rooms at reasonable rates and have a good dinner each night. Motels were just becoming popular and if we paid seven dollars and fifty cents per night we thought we were very extravagant! We soon became adjusted to this gypsy living and the Bahá'ís along the way were so wonderful to us. Quite often we were able to tell other guests at the motel where we were staying about our beloved Faith.

We visited over seventy -five major Bahá'í communities and many small ones, I cannot express the admiration I hold for the way the friends opened their homes and their hearts to us. Often we would stay two days in a city, holding a meeting the first night for Bahá'ís only and the second evening would be a public meeting. Ben would usually give the talk on the Faith, going back in religious history and background of the Holy Land, then, after a short intermission I would give a talk describing what had happened to the country while we were there, the birth of the new nation of Israel, describe the climate, flowers and the people,

There came a time when we felt we hadn't enough money to complete the tour of the entire United States and we notified the National Teaching Committee. They replied that they would help us financially to complete the trip as they believed we were really helping the friends.

We spent two happy weeks at the Temerity Ranch in Colorado Springs, a beautiful place which later had to be given up as the United States Government wanted this location for the United States Air Academy. Ben and I both gave courses at this school. Later, we were to go to Geyser-ville, California to give courses there. Strange that both these schools had to give way to progress and development. The school at Geyserville had a beautiful huge tree on the grounds where many a happy class was held under its spreading branches as well as outdoor meals. (The new

Geyserville is now located in Santa Cruz, California and is called the "Bosch School". It is in the midst of a thickly wooded section that is just beautiful. Many of the Bahá'ís work on the grounds grooving and improving the landscape. The building is very hospitable and overlooking the swimming pool is a large deck so conducive to good fellowship and recreation after the serious study classes. It was off season when I had the opportunity to visit the school in 1976 and found a group of young people busily engaged in working on the grounds and found then instant friends! (End of footnote,)

Wherever we travelled we made instant friends. Our trip around the United

States was a great bounty in all ways, we were able to visit most of the beauty spots as we zig-zagged up, down and across the country and were able to include all forty-eight states and many prominent cities. We experienced no difficulties and it was an education in the background and individuality of our states, yet, a wonderful example of the unity in such diversity. A pattern for the future of the world when the Bahá'í Faith is securely established.

All during our trip, we had good advance publicity and had many newspaper, radio and T-V interviews, also spoke at some colleges. It seems almost impossible to sacrifice for our beloved Cause, you receive so many blessings and bounties in return for your efforts. As Ben often remarked we are so richly blessed with our spiritual wealth.

At the conclusion of this most satisfying experience, we were at loose ends. Ben was extremely tired but had managed the trip better than we had expected. It so happened, that an apartment became available to us in Swampscott, Massachusetts for a period of six months. This enabled us to have a much needed rest to take stock of ourselves and plan for the future. It seemed an answer to our prayers for guidance when the National Teaching Committee asked us to go to Greensboro, North Carolina to help the Bahá'ís there.

We spent five months in this lovely city and its environs, the center there was a small room above a seed store heated by a stove, sometimes the sides of the stove would be so red I expected it to explode. When I would walk by the churches in the city, my heart would turn in gratitude to our little meeting room because all races were welcome there, which was not true in the churches at this juncture. In April 1953 we left Greensboro to attend the Inter-Continental Teaching Conference and Jubilee Celebration in the Chicago area, the commemoration of the one-hundredth anniversary of the Mission of Bahá'u'lláh. After this exciting and eventful occasion we again had to make some decisions. Our thoughts were turning toward pioneering so we felt it was guidance when we received a letter from Dorothy Baker, she wrote of her plan to pioneer with her husband, Frank, on the island of Grenada in the Windward Island Chain, she suggested that we consider someplace in the Leeward Chain. We had some misgivings about going to this part of the world, especially Ben, who had some experience with this type of climate. Nevertheless we contacted the National Teaching Committee and a chain of events was started which ended with our arrival on the Island of Antigua, near the capital city of St. John. On my first visit to St. John I was quite dismayed to discover that most of the food available was tinned, fresh fruit was stolen from the trees before it was ripened! 'Poverty was rampant, the population was mostly black with very large families living under austere conditions. We were told that Christopher Columbus gave this Island its name due to the lack of water. We were living at a small hotel by the sea about six miles from the city of St. John, one of the maids said that due to the lack of rain to fill the cisterns, she had to leave the island on one occasion with her child as there was not enough water to care for the child properly. All water had to be boiled which gave it a very flat taste. We spent quite a lot of time trying

to find a suitable place to live, the places we felt we could live in were terribly expensive and the owners wanted to be paid in United States dollars which was against the laws of the country. We became aware that the food situation would be just as bad for Ben as it had been under the war-like conditions in Haifa. After a futile and heart-rending study of the situation, we reluctantly decided that we had to leave. It was a very difficult decision to make and our hearts were very heavy as we made plans to return to New England, sadder but wiser and with a huge dent in our funds.

Pioneers who went to their posts were designated “Knights of Bahá’u’lláh”. We never felt we deserved the title because we only remained in Antigua six weeks before we came to the conclusion that it was not the place for a person in precarious health. (Footnote: During my visit to the World Center in Haifa in 1973-74, I was told that the beloved Guardian had not removed our names from the list of “Knights of Bahá’u’lláh”).

Arriving back in Boston, Massachusetts, we started looking for a place to live. We drove around investigating several small New England towns, finally one of our relatives spoke of a house that was being renovated in the town of Henniker, New Hampshire. Ben knew this town as his family had owned a summer home on a small lake located there. Since we were going back to Brattleboro, Vermont for the time being and had to pass through Henniker, we decided to inquire about this rental. We discovered that the house was located about five minutes walk from the center of the town. The landlord was on the premises and said he had just put the “For rent” sign in the window that day! It filled our needs exactly and we believed we had been guided to this location. We returned in a few days and purchased a few simple requirements and moved into our first home since our marriage. As of this date, December 1953, there were about thirty Bahá’ís in New Hampshire, several of them lived in or near Portsmouth.

The nearest Bahá’í to us lived in East Concord, New Hampshire, it was not long before we made contact, her name was Barbara Hayden. The bond between Bahá’ís is so close that formalities are soon dispensed with and we were “family”. Her story is so unique that I am impelled to note some of the highlights. As a girl in her teens she became afflicted with a severe case of polio, and was in an iron lung for some time. The loving care showered upon her by her devoted parents and brother enabled her to eventually leave the iron lung, however, she must spend the rest of her life in a wheel-chair. She had to be lifted in and out of bed and every breath she drew was a conscious effort on her part. In spite of this grievous handicap we discovered that she had taken courses in free lance journalism and by the time we made her acquaintance she was writing articles and a column for the Globe, a prominent Boston, Massachusetts newspaper. She was well known in the Concord area and had made many friends. Often when we would go to see her she would be having callers and usually found the opportunity to speak of her new found Faith. She would never allow you to dwell on her problem, she would turn the conversation to other subjects.

The family had formerly lived in Massachusetts, where her father ran a shop

for making keys, they all longed for a life nearer to nature, after searching for a small farm they finally moved to Concord, N.H.; started raising chickens and tried their hands at farming. Barbara wrote many humorous articles about their varied experiences, both good and bad.

The point I wish to make here is how she became a Bahá'í, shortly after the move to New Hampshire, Barbara became affiliated with a local church.

Then, one day in 1953 she was watching television, a program presented by the Bahá'ís of Boston, Massachusetts, came on. By the time the program was over she informed her parents that she had finally found her religion! They became very distressed but she immediately wrote to the address supplied by the program and in due time some Bahá'ís from Manchester, New Hampshire came to visit her. This was quite a step for her to take, especially as her parents looked askance at the idea. After she became a member of the Bahá'í Faith she tried to interest her family. We usually planned to visit Barbara on Feast Days, we would meet in her bedroom, not quite close the door and read and pray together.

Some time passed, then her brother and his wife accepted the Faith, when we would all get together we used to reserve a time for special prayers that the parents would become Bahá'ís and eventually they did. All these Bahá'ís as a result of that one broadcast! As Bahá'ís, our prime objective is to give the message and often we get discouraged, so take heart from this story and continue your efforts or you might miss a precious opportunity, there really are waiting souls, and what a bounteous feast awaits them.

About twenty-four miles from Henniker is Crotched Mountain Mountain Rehabilitation Center, in Greenfield, New Hampshire. At first it was just for children, then as time went on it was expanded to include adults. They heard about Barbara and visited her at her home to see if she would come over to Crotched Mountain to write up some publicity for them as they had previously been unable to produce results. They thought that with her connections and ability they might have a fresh approach. They offered her good care in exchange for this service. She went over there on a temporary basis and the Globe accepted her articles. Ultimately she was asked to become part of the staff and take charge of public relations. Her family was reluctant to part with her cheerful presence but realized that it would make her happy to be using her talents for such a good purpose.

When we visited her she would lament the fact that she couldn't be with the Bahá'ís in groups. It was decided to ask the New England Regional Committee if it would be possible to plan to hold a conference at Crotched. This was done and we received permission to use the large hall at the Center. About sixty Bahá'ís attended and Barbara's eyes sparkled with happiness when she saw all these Bahá'ís, her new family.

A prominent Bahá'í named Guy Murchie lived near us in East Sullivan, New Hampshire. Barbara wondered if he would be willing to come and be interviewed,

she felt certain that the Globe would accept a profile on such a distinguished and interesting person, also she thought how nice it would be for a Bahá'í to write a featured article about another Bahá'í! It would be excellent publicity for the Faith. Guy readily accepted and the article was published in the Boston Sunday Globe, October 2, 1955 along with a picture of the Bahá'í Temple in Wilmette and a picture of Guy.

In the course of her work Barbara was exposed to the general public and we who loved her, realized the danger if she caught cold or some other respiratory disease. In 1958 she was hospitalized with a severe cold and we lost this dear person whose life had been an example to us all. She was in her early thirties and her funeral was attended by many prominent people from the area of Concord, New Hampshire as well as a large group from the Rehabilitation Center.

“When the victory arriveth, every man shall profess himself as believer and shall hasten to the shelter of God’s Faith. Happy are they who in the days of world-encompassing trials have stood fast in the Cause and refused to swerve from its truth.”

Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh.

“BEN”

From the first moment I saw Ben I realized he was a rare and unique person, not only from his handsome physical appearance but from the strength of character that emanated from him. I never expected to get to really know him, I was content to admire him from afar.

I soon discovered that he had retired from the business world and was living on a small income from the estate of his grandfather. He was an amateur photographer with considerable ability, some of his pictures won prizes in travelling salons sponsored by the local camera club. For several years he had been “Official Photographer” at Ski Jumping Meets under the auspices of the Brattleboro Ousting Club, one of the first such clubs started in the United States, many of the expert foreign skiers attended this competition. He was president of the Kiwanis Club at this period and I learned that he contributed considerable time to voluntary services, in addition, I noticed that people valued his advice and often brought their troubles to him for consultation.

As our friendship grew, we began studying the Bahá'í Faith together, it became apparent that he had been investigating several of the various religions and philosophies. He told me of new spiritual ideas that I had never heard of, such as an “Oaspe Bible” that reputedly was written by the author holding his hands over a typewriter and letting “spirit writing” do the work.

Eventually he made his decision to become a Bahá'í, this was a big step for him to take due to his conservative nature. Naturally this brought joy and happiness to our small group, he became the tenth member and he used to tease us, saying he had nine people working for him, referring to the fact that

prior to his acceptance we only had enough Bahá'ís to form the Local Spiritual Assembly comprising nine individuals. The Bahá'í Administration was one of the first books he studied and I later realized what a test it was for him to see how inept we were in the application of the administration. The majority of our members were women who had almost no administrative experience, including myself. At the next annual meeting, he was elected to the Local Spiritual Assembly.

Often when we were walking home after a meeting, he would gently point out some of our inadequacies and I tried to take this in the proper spirit but sometimes the tears would flow, yet I realized this was for my own good to better serve our beloved Faith.

As Ben deepened he did many kind things, I was elected delegate to the National Convention and he gave me a generous sum of money to help on my travel expenses. He took his contributions to the Faith seriously and used to say his money was Bahá'u'lláh's. He told me this story of his only experience with Sunday-school. Some of his young friends told him of the wonderful Christmas party at their church and the fine presents they received. Prior to this his only religious instruction had come from his mother and I must say she gave him an excellent foundation. For the next year he attended Sunday-school giving a small sum from his allowance each week. When the time came for the party he said all he received was an orange and some Christmas candy! That was the end of his attendance at Sunday-school, he said he would rather spend his money for something tangible.

As a youth Ben told me he had a problem with stuttering which he controlled quite well and he worked to overcome this by engaging in physical activity, in High School he played on the basket-ball and foot-ball teams and was an officer in his senior class. While discussing the possibility of going to college, the thought occurred to him that a trip around the world by ship would broaden his outlook and the challenge of new faces and places would undoubtedly help him to overcome his speech, difficulty. Luckily, one of his close friends came from a family with means and he liked Ben's idea of travel as an education. They teamed up and left for an extended period. All went well until they reached Panama where his travelling companion, Godfrey Crosby, contracted malaria. They were delayed for several weeks and then left for San Francisco. Here Godfrey had a relapse and there was another delay. Finally they embarked for Hawaii where they had a fine time and met some famous people, but the illness returned and they had no choice but to return home.

Not long after World War I broke out Ben tried to enter the armed services but was rejected due to a heart murmur. He tried for an office job in Washington, D.C. but this did not work out, then he heard there was a need for volunteers in the Red Cross ambulance service who would pay for their vehicles and expenses. He was accepted and gave a good account of himself. When the United States entered the war it was decided that any Americans serving in France would be inducted into the service. Ben had to sign a statement that the government

would not have to take responsibility if he died of a heart attack.

When the war ended he felt at loose ends. His fathers business was concerned with plumbing supplies which certainly did not appeal to him, although his father was very upset when Ben did not choose to follow in his foot-steps. Eventually Ben had a desk in a stockbrokers office, he had the foresight to see the handwriting on the wall and liquidated his assets before the financial crash of 1929. Later he was manager of an automobile finance company, one of the first of its kind. While working in Boston, Massachusetts, he lived at the Boston City Club and led a very active social life, he became an expert bridge player, and was part of a group of friends who attended the first nights of the theatre openings. He was always interested in sports, became very good at handball, played golf and indoor polo. When I met him he was an average skier and learning archery, when I asked him why he had given up the other sports he said that when he felt he had reached his potential in one sport he tried another. Apparently his heart murmur caused no problems in any of these pursuits.

Not long after he became a Bahá'í Ruth Moffett came to Brattleboro on a teaching trip and contact was made for some talks at WKNE, the radio station in Keene, New Hampshire. As Bahá'ís we always try to do what is asked of us to serve the Faith. Both Ben and I were asked to do some broadcasts, I was so nervous that the script shook so hard I could hardly read it. Meanwhile Mrs. Moffett was coaching Ben, he who had always been so conservative and reluctant to speak in public now carried on the rest of the broadcasting series. He had a fine speaking voice, though rather soft. I told him I thought he would be good at singing, he said definitely not! - because his teacher at school asked him not to sing as he put the others off due to his flat notes.

It was wonderful to be in his company, his standards were so high it gave one something to live up to. He had three close friends, all bachelors they used to dine together one night a week, one of them was courting a girl and would go regular as clock-work to spend Sunday evening with her. I begin to see a pattern emerging along this line in my friendship with Ben, coupled with this, I felt that the local Bahá'ís were disturbed and I realized that I would have to take some steps to correct the situation.

Obedience to the Lsws of God must take precedence over all else if a person loves his Faith. He must protect these laws even at the cost of personal feelings and emotions. It may seem difficult at the time but in the long run there are many blessings and not just in chastity and marriage laws but all the spiritual laws. As our -awareness develops, it becomes increasingly clear that the earthly life is fleeting compared to eternity which is the reason for acquiring spiritual attributes.

When guidance comes, usually in unexpected ways, the path opens, especially when a person has done what they can to solve a problem. If I had not had an unexpected gift of money, if I hadnot felt it would be wise to leave Brattleboro, I would not have written Rúhíyyih-Khánúm as I did suggesting that we meet

somewhere for a re-union after not seeing each other for ten years.

While awaiting a reply to my letter, I kept my own counsel, not mentioning my plans to anyone. When the cable came in January 1947 inviting me to Haifa, it was a complete surprise to the friends. Even if I had a change of heart, the summons to Haifa took precedence. I had no inkling of how Ben was taking the news that I was to leave, he co-operated in every way, giving me good advice and a farewell gift of a matched set of luggage. I notified the National Spiritual Assembly that I was leaving my pioneer post and they supplied me with travelling credentials. By this time I was alternating between joy and sadness at the thought of leaving. In a previous chapter I have described what happened the night before I left Brattleboro and the events that brought about our marriage and what a very happy marriage it was!

When, after I had been in Haifa a year, the beloved Guardian decided to ask Ben to come and help, he was delighted and made preparations to come. The editor of the local newspaper, The Brattleboro Reformer, was a friend of Ben's and wrote a fine editorial about him praising him for having the courage of his convictions in his new religion and leaving his home to serve at the World Center in Palestine. Many of Ben's past experiences proved helpful in Haifa and it was a great bounty for him to carry out tasks for Shoghi Effendi.

On one occasion when they were in the "little" archives, Ben noticed a sword hangin on the wall. Shoghi Effendi said "that was Mullá Ḥusayn's sword" and suggested that Ben take it down and look it over. As Ben pulled it from its scabbard, he began examining the blade. With a twinkle in his eye, Shoghi Effendi said, "what are you looking for"? Ben was thinking of the story in the "Dawn Breakers" (page 331) where Mullá

Ḥusayn pursued the assailant of a fallen companion who had taken refuge behind a tree and with a single stroke cut across the trunk of the tree, the barrel of the musket and the body of his adversary! So, Ben said "shouldn't there be some nicks in the blade?" Shoghi Effendi replied, "Mullá Ḥusayn had many swords!"

In addition to his other duties and responsibilities, Ben took all the pictures of the work concerning the construction and materials of the Arcade. He wrote several progress reports at the request of the beloved Guardian which were published in the American Bahá'í News along with many of the pictures he took of the construction and close-ups of some of the beautiful ornamental sections.

Shoghi Effendi chose Ben's picture of the north facade of the Báb's Shrine for the frontispiece of the Bahá'í World, volume XI, 1946-50. All the beautiful pictures from page 8 through 92 of this same volume are the result of Ben's expertise with his cameras. Some of these pictures were developed and processed by him with materials he had shipped over from Brattleboro as photographic supplies were almost unobtainable in Haifa. One of the basement rooms was fitted out as a dark-room at #10 Persian Street sometimes we worked together developing and printing. When it worked out that Ben's health prevented his return to Haifa, I asked Shoghi Effendi if he wanted me to dispose of the equip-

ment, he said to do so as no one would be using it so I called in the proprietor of a camera shop who was very happy to buy it.

As a token of appreciation Shoghi Effendi had an enlargement made in a beautiful sepia tone of the north facade of the finished Arcade and gave it to Ben. The beloved Guardian also gave us a copy of Volume X of the Bahá'í World, 1944-46 and inscribed the following:

To Gladys and Ben in appreciation of their many services to the Faith at its World Center.

Shoghi (signed)

During our visit to Brattleboro in February, 1951, to check with Ben's doctor, I received an invitation from Mr. Persons, president of the Brattleboro Trust Company, where I had worked before I left for Haifa. He asked me to come and speak to the staff, after banking hours, about my experiences at the Bahá'í World Center. Later, Mr. Persons commented to me that it was strange that he and Ben attended a Bahá'í meeting together and Ben got something out of it that led him into a grand adventure, while Mr. Persons was still a small town banker?

In the course of our travels around the United States, Ben used to analyze the beautiful prayer revealed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá that begins with: "O God, refresh and gladden my spirit" and even today I meet friends who remember him doing this, saying he made that prayer more meaningful for them. In this prayer we make promises to be a happy and joyful being, to no longer be sorrowful and grieved, also not to dwell on the unpleasant things in life!

As time passed, Ben's illness began to take its toll, he found it difficult to sleep at night and often would awaken me to say his favorite prayers, especially the Tablet of Ahmad. We used to talk of the next world during these night hours and he would say: - "if you didn't take such good care of me I'd be in the Abhá Kingdom by now!" Even as his illness progressed he kept his sweet, loving disposition. He said all the nice things a wife likes to hear and I treasure these memories.

I knew he was very uncomfortable, not eating or sleeping well, so I decided to call the doctor and he sent him to the hospital. During his three weeks stay he showed very little improvement. Then, one day, the doctor phoned me and bluntly told me that Ben was dying and that they were sending him to a nursing home. As I visited him each day, I could see it would not be long before he had his wish to leave this world.

On the fifth morning after he had gone to the nursing home, I felt very strongly that the end was near, I prayed that Bahá'u'lláh would release him that day. In the early afternoon, I went to see him, I took with me his prayer beads, some dried petals from the Holy Shrines and the vial of Attar of Rose with which we had been anointed at the time of our marriage. I kissed his forehead and asked him if he could hear me to squeeze my hand twice. When I was sure he

understood, (I knew he was under medication) I told him what I had brought with me. I annointed his forehead with the Attar of Rose and placed the prayer beads and petals in his left hand and said I was going to pray continously that he would be relieved of his suffering that very day! I held his right hand all through the afternoon, every so often he would squeeze my hand to let me know he was aware of what I was doing.

About five o'clock I noticed a change in his breathing pattern and went to call the floor nurse. She looked at his hands and then told me he was nearing the end. I had been told to expect a struggle for breath at this point, instead he took deeper and deeper breaths and in this manner he gently breathed his sweet life away. Although I was filled with grief and sadness I also felt an exaltation that I had the bounty and privilege of being at his side when he began his journey into the Abhá Kingdom where he so longed to be. He was seventy-eight years old.

When grief overcame me and I realized I had lost my precious dear one, I remembered our beautiful conversations in the night hours and the promises I had made, among them, that I would be a happy and joyful being, that I would rely on God and not be sorrowful and grieved. My greatest concern now was to serve our beloved Faith in any way possible and pray that I would be worthy to be his companion when we are re-united in the next world. I am cetain this will happen if I live out my life in a way that will earn that spiritual reward.

“When the victory arriveth, every man shall profess himself as believer and shall hasten to the shelter of God’s Faith. Happy are they who in the days of world-encompassing trials have stood fast in the Cause and refused to swerve from its truth.”

Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh, however, I usually have found new ammunition and rocketed off in another direction.

Even the grievous blow I received when I lost Ben was easier to bear when I remembered what a beautiful life we shared and the romance of how it all came about.

May many such blessings come into your life by whatever path you may have chosen.

Deepest love,

“A letter to the Friends.”

Dear Friends:

There is no doubt I am a better letter writer than the author of a book, however, because I was the fortunate one to be invited to Haifa during the perilous years in which the State of Israel was born, the experience became a matter of historical record. Due to this I have always felt I had something to live up to and that the facts should be recorded.

The present period in human development is one of permissiveness, courtesy seems to be outmoded and a responsible attitude toward anything is labeled “old-fashioned”! Well, this too shall pass away.

There are, among us, people who wish to contribute something to foster better relations in this sorely troubled world. A recent survey indicated that one major problem is the inability, of humans to get along with each other. The Golden Rule is found in the revealed writings of all the major religions in one form or another. Jesus said: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all the heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” St. Matthew, chapter 22: verses 37-40.

This spiritual guidance has always been there to draw upon in one form or another ever since the first known revealed religions. The crux of the situation is to inspire people to investigate independently to find out what is going on in the world that is building up rather than deteriorating. The Bahá’í Faith is the most recent of God’s Plans for an ever advancing society.

Until I was four years old my name was Olive Evelyn Hoyt. My mother died when I was four and my aunt took care of me until she and my uncle decided to adopt me and change my last name to theirs. The children I played with often teased me calling me pickled olives, stuffed olives, so I asked to have my whole name changed. After thinking it over, my aunt decided to name me after two little girls she had lost, Gladys and Christine. This has led me to believe that I am living for three people because so many exciting and wonderful things have happened to me!

Because I was adopted, my other aunts and uncles seemed to have a hand in my upbringing, I found it hard to try and please them all. I learned that my grandparents emigrated from Sweden with their six children and the reason they came to the United States were the usual ones, religious freedom and the hopes for a better life. I was told that they were not allowed to read the Bible for themselves in Sweden, the minister was the only one who had the right to interpret the Bible for them. Be that as it may, ours was a church-going family. In particular, one of my aunts became a deaconess and was constantly admonishing me for not becoming a baptized, full fledged member of the Baptist Church. I did attend Sunday -school and church service regularly but never felt any particular spiritual inspiration.

As I made friends in my early teens, I often attended their various churches and I began to wonder why there were so many denominations, the services all seemed to have the same messages with slight variations. I asked my mother what made them have different names, she couldn’t explain it to me even though she had been a church-goer all her life.

This type of religion puzzled me, there didn’t seem to be any in depth study to find out what it was all about, at least I cannot remember too much about

what was said.

The members of the family found work wherever they could, Grandpa was a carpenter, one of my uncles (my favorite) was a novice plumber and went on through hard work and study to become a master plumber with his own business, others found employment in the local shoe factories.

The neighborhood where I was raised represented many foreign backgrounds, french, polish, italian, irish you name it, they were there. By this time our family had become American citizens. I went to school with the children of all these different families and had many after school snacks in the various homes. I found that they had the same hopes and aspirations that we did, it was a wonderful way to break down the barriers of national origin. There were several well known black families in our city who were accepted as a natural part of the inhabitants. Hence, I am grateful that as I grew older I had no racial or national prejudices to overcome.

In my early twenties, I began to notice reports of a woman in California who Was dramatizing religion, her name was Aimee Semple Mac Pherson. I couldn't accept everything she countenanced at face value but felt she had the right idea, religion needed a new stimulus. If nothing else came of this it started me thinking of my own spiritual future. It was at this juncture that I met Mary Maxwell and formed a friendship that changed my life.

Youth is a period of finding oneself, when the pattern we will follow is emerging. How fortunate indeed to find a direction leading to a goal that satisfies heart, mind and soul and gives a purpose that lasts a lifetime. The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh fills every human need, it explains so many aspects of this earthly experience and as much as we should know at present about life hereafter and all the realms of God. I decided to make a commitment, to stand up and be counted.

Shortly after I became a Bahá'í, I had a most unusual and beautiful dream. I was standing near the edge of a small clear pool of water, peering in I noted that the bottom was smooth, shiny and black, I thought that was strange when suddenly the bottom seemed to be rising! When it broke the surface, it was a small whale and it spouted a crystal clear stream of water. Of course I interpreted this dream to be my search for spiritual enlightenment, especially as water has spiritual significance and it was crystal clear to me that I had found a fountain of knowledge just gushing out.

In this, the latest of the Manifestations of God we learn that this is the time for the coming of age of the human race. Heretofore, humanity has been passing through successive stages of development in preparation for the "Golden Age of Mankind." Now we are asked to find the points on which we can agree rather than emphasize our differences. The essence of all the Teachings of the Prophet is the same, the difference being the time, place and the capacity of the people among whom they lived.

The Faith became very precious to me as I studied, among other things, it was wonderful that all our prayers are addressed directly to God and not through a personality. There is no clergy in the Bahá'í Faith which was a relief to me as I had witnessed problems in the churches due to members who were not pleased with the minister, also the time had come in human progress for us to have charge of our own spiritual destinies.

As I deepened in my studies, I realized that I was partaking of all the essence of the past revealed religions as each age succeeded the other and God in His mercy sent new teachings to guide humanity. Like the colors in the spectrum, I was part of it all and felt I had something in common with the adherents of all Faiths.

When I found the Bahá'í Faith I thought it so wonderful that I expected everyone who came in contact with it would accept it as the solution to the woes of mankind. Alas, I discovered that it is the nature of humanity to cling to what is known, even though prophecy was being fulfilled right before their eyes.

Jesus said: "I have yet many things to say unto you but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come; he will guide you unto all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."

St. John 16: 12-13. How much more explicit can it be!

One could ask, why this interest in the spiritual side of life? There are many answers, instinct, intuition, an inner voice are some of them. Perhaps it comes to some after a real hard test that causes a person to question the purpose of this life. Most of all it comes with the realization that it is the eternal life that counts and each one of us faces the fact that the earthly experience ends.

In a revised edition of "The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh", the introduction is written by George Townshend and contains this wonderful paragraph: "The quelling of this ego, the severance from selfish desires is indeed the essential task that confronts the aspiring soul. The final challenge to the faithful with which Bahá'u'lláh closes this ethical work is: "Let it now be seen what your endeavours in the path of detachment will reveal". The Creator has left this imperfection in man's constitution and given him freedom of will to strive against it in order that man may, through his own endeavor, "become worthy to meet Me(God) and to mirror forth My Beauty". Were not the ego there man could not earn praise and reward; he might be spared test and trial but he would be a mere automaton. This demand for effort, this privilege of free choice, may make this planet a place of torment but it makes earth-life a field of possible victory, an arena where moral attainment is really a man's own deed, won under the beneficent law of justice by his own knowledge, determination, and action. In the "next world" this opportunity of achieving worthiness is not given. Man, for his advancement there depends not only on self-effort and justice but on God's mercy. Therefore Bahá'u'lláh counsels man to seize the opportunity here and

now, for it will come to him no more. The fires of hell, it is explained elsewhere, are the sense of priceless opportunities thrown away and now lost forever.”

It is usual for every individual to have ups and downs in this life experience and I had my share before I became a Bahá'í, I floundered a lot but due to the Bahá'í teachings I learned how to handle problems and they didn't seem problems anymore, just learning experiences. Most of all I found real guidance for the first time in my life and my Faith became my education. Adults need guidance as well as youth and like a spiritual well-spring, I will have this to rely on upon as long as I live.

In the course of my development I had the benefit of being on the Local

Spiritual Assembly of Worcester, Massachusetts, Brattleboro, Vermont and Greensboro, North Carolina and also many committees. Then came the call to serve at the Bahá'í World Center, in Haifa, Palestine (Israel). It was exciting enough to be traveling to a foreign country but rather scary also to realize that I would soon be in the presence of the Head of our wonderful Faith. How I wondered if I would be tested and found wanting.

My reason for writing of this personal experience is because I wish that everyone who reads it will realize the “bounties of finding the Faith and accepting it. The following quotation from the early history of the Faith, “The Dawn Breakers” is usually pointed out to a new enrollee: “Be thankful to God for having enabled you to recognise His Cause. Whoever has received this blessing must, prior to his acceptance, have performed some deed which, though he himself was unaware of its character, was ordained by God as a means whereby he has been guided to find and embrace the Truth. As to those who have remained deprived of such a blessing, their acts alone have hindered them from recognising the truth of this Revelation. We cherish the hope that you, who have attained to this light, will exert your utmost to banish the darkness of superstition and unbelief from the midst of the people. May your deeds proclaim your faith and enable you to lead the erring into the paths of eternal salvation. The memory of this night will never be forgotten. May it never be effaced by the passage of time, and may its mention linger for ever on the lips of men.” Nabíl's Narrative, p. 586.

There are many ways to serve the Faith, it all starts with putting our individual house in order, then expanding our efforts. In the Bahá'í Administration, built on the spiritual foundation which was revealed by our Founders, we find ordinances governing the important aspects of this earthly “schooling”. We live up to them because we love God and for no other earthly reason.

During one of the early interviews I had with the beloved Guardian he mentioned that I had become international without ever having been national. Recently I received a call to go out to Wilmette, Illinois, our National Center, to help out with a back-log of letters. Although

1981 I wasn't sure I had the ability to carry out this assignment, I realized it would complete my circle! It also gave me another perspective of the importance of

the work carried on by our administrative bodies. We are actually living in the New World Order of Bahá'u'lláh! There are Bahá'ís in every part of the World and the obligatory prayers circle this planet every hour of the day in many languages, we are a world family dedicated to the unity of mankind. Once it was pointed out to me that in the word "unity" the "you" comes before the "I."

Our greatest joy in life is to share this great message with whoever wishes to hear. Our first duty is to love God and recognize His latest Messenger, Buha'u'llah, and accept His teachings, next in importance is the duty of teaching one's self.

I consider all the bounties I have received to be like a string of valuable pearls, each new Bahá'í experience adds another bead. I live with the expectancy of much more to come before I leave this earthly life and if I am worthy, join my wonderful Ben in the next world which the Bahá'ís know as the Abhá Kingdom.

‘Abdu'l-Bahá, the eldest son of Bahá'u'lláh is our perfect example to guide us in our daily life. We try to live as if He is present in our homes. One of the prerequisites of the Bahá'í Faith is the independent investigation of the truth and the treasures to found in the writings are there for all to partake if they wish. Not to be proffered on a silver platter but as the result of one's own effort.

In my estimation the fruitful part of my life took place after I became a Bahá'í and the high-point was certainly when I left for Haifa in March 1947 and my marriage to Ben which took place in March 1948. Sometimes I feel I went up like a sky-rocket and came down like a stick, however, I usually have found new ammunition and rocketed off in another direction.

Even the grievous blow I received when I lost Ben was easier to bear when I remembered what a beautiful life we shared and the romance of how it all came about.

May many such blessings come into your life by whatever path you may have chosen.

Deepest love,