

50 Hands of the Cause Ayádíy-i-Amru'lláh

Appointment by Bahá'u'lláh¹

1. Hájí Mullá 'Alí-Akbar-i-Shahmírzadí, known as Hájí Akhúnd (1842-1910)
2. Mírzá Muhammad-Taquí, known as Ibn-i-Abhar (c. 1853 – c.1917)
3. Mírzá Hasan-i-Adíb, known as Adíb (1848-1919)
4. Mírzá 'Alí -Muhammad, known as Ibn-i-Asdaq (1850-1928)

¹“The Hands of the Cause, of Baha'u'llah's days, will be known to the friends by name when the history of the Cause in Persia and the Near East is written and available.”

–Letter from Shoghi Effendi, written on his behalf by his secretary, April 19, 1947

Referred to by 'Abdul-Bahá as Hands of the Cause²

5. Mullá Sádiq-i-Muqaddas, known as Ismu'lláhu'l-Asdaq (1800-1889)
6. Áqá Muhammad-i-Qá'iní, known as Nabíl-i-Akbar (1829-1892)
7. Shaykh Muhammad Ridáy-i-Yazdí (1814-1897)
8. Mírzá 'Alí -Muhammad-i-Varqá, the martyr (c.1856-1896)

² “*Memorials of the Faithful*, p. 5.

“You have asked me about the Hands: The Hands are persons appointed by the Pen of the Most High (Baha'u'llah), or addressed with such an appellation by the Pen of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and honoured by Him with such a title. Any one of the Hands who is firm in the Covenant is the genuine bearer of this title.” *Editor's note: Those referred to as Hands of the Cause in Published Tablets of 'Abdul-Bahá are included in this list.*

Appointed several posthumously by Shoghi Effendi

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|--|-------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 9. Hájí Abu'l Hasan, the Trustee of Huqúqu'lláh, known as Hájí Amin ³ (1832-1928) | | | |
| | Place of Service | Appointed | Died |
| 10. John Ebenezer Esslemont (1874-1925) | Holy Land | Nov. 22, 1925 | Nov. 22, 1925 |
| 11. Louis George Gregory (1874-1951) | Amer. Cont. | Aug. 6, 1951 | July 30, 1951 |
| 12. Keith Ransom-Kehler (1876-1933) | Amer. Cont. | Oct. 25, 1933 | Oct. 23, 1933 |
| 13. Martha Louise Root ((1872-1939) | Amer. Cont. | Sept. 28, 1939 | Sept. 28, 1939 |
| 14. Mustafá Rúmi (c.1846-c.1942) | Burma | 1946 | 1942 |
| 15. 'Abdu'l-Jalíl Bey Sa'd [or Sa'ad](c.1850-1942) | Egypt | May 25, 1942 | May 25, 1942 |
| 16. Roy C. Wilhelm (1875-1951) ⁴ | Amer. Cont. | Dec. 24, 1951 | Dec. 20, 1951 |
| 17. John Henry Hyde Dunn (c.1855-1941) ⁵ | Australia | April 30, 1952 | |
| 18. Muhammad Taqíy-i-Isfaháni (1860-1946) | Egypt | Dec. 1946 | Dec. 13, 1946 |

³ Letter from Shoghi Effendi to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Persia, July 1928.

⁴ Cable from Shoghi Effendi dated December 24, 1951.

⁵ Letter from Shoghi Effendi, written on his behalf by his secretary, to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Australia, April 30, 1952.

First contingent of living Hands of the Cause, appointed Dec. 24, 1951 by Shoghi Effendi

	<i>Place of Service</i>	<i>Died</i>
19. Dorothy Beecher Baker (1898-1954)	Amer Cont.	Jan. 10, 1954
20. Amelia Engelder Collins (1873-1962)	Holy Land	
21. ‘Alí -Akbar Furútan (1905-2003)	Persia	Nov. 28, 2003
22. Ugo Giachery (1896-1989)	European Cont.	
23. Herman Grossmann (1899-1968)	European Cont.	
24. Horace Hotchkiss Holley (1887-1960)	Amer. Cont.	July 1960
25. Leroy C. Ioas (1896-1965)	Amer. Cont.	July 22, 1965
26. William Sutherland Maxwell (1874-1952)	Holy Land	March 1953
27. Charles Mason Remey (1874-1974) **	Holy Land	
28. Tarázu’lláh Samandarí (1874-1968)	Persia	Sept. 2, 1968
29. George Townshend (1876-1957)	European Cont.	March 1959
30. Valíyu’lláh Varqá (1884-1955)	Persia	Nov. 1955

* Appointed in ‘46, but her appointment had not been made public

**expelled

Second contingent of Hands of the Cause appointed Feb. 29, 1952 by Shoghi Effendi

	<i>Place of Service</i>	<i>Died</i>
31. <u>Shu</u> ‘á‘u’lláh ‘Alá’í (1889-1984)	Persia	
32. Músá Banání (1886-1971)	Africa	Sept. 6, 1971
33. Clara Davis Dunn (1869-1960)	Australia	Nov. 18, 1960
34. <u>Dhikru</u> ’lláh <u>Khádem</u> (1904-1986) ¹	Persia	
35. Adelbert Mühlshlegel (1897-1980)	Germany	
36. Siegfried “Fred” Schopflocher (1877-1953)	Dom. Canada	
37. Corrine Knight True (1861-1961)	U.S.A.	April 1961

Hands of the Cause were appointed singly by Shoghi Effendi

	<i>Place of Service</i>	<i>Appointed</i>	<i>Died</i>
38. Amatu’l-Bahá Rúhíyyih <u>Khánúm</u> , Mary Maxwell; Rúhíyyih Rabbani (1910-2000),	Holy Land	March 26, 1952	
39. Jalál <u>Kházeh</u> (1897-1990), after passing of Siegfried Schopflocher	Persia	Dec. 7, 1953	
40. Paul Edmond Haney (1909-1982), after death of Dorothy Baker on	Amer Cont.	March 19, 1954	
41. Dr. ‘Alí Muhammad Varqá (1912-) succeeds his father	Persia	Nov. 15, 1955	
42. Agnes Baldwin Alexander (1875-1971) after passing of George Townshend	Japan	March 27, 1957	Jan 1, 1971

The third contingent of Hands of the Cause of God is appointed in October 1957

	<i>Place of Service</i>
43. Enoch Olinga (1926-1979)	Africa
44. William Sears (1911-1992)	Africa
45. John Aldham Robarts (1901-1991)	Africa
46. Hasan M. Balyúzí (1908-1980)	British Isles
47. John Graham Ferraby (1914-1973)	British Isles
48. H. Collis Featherstone (1913-1990)	Pacific Area
49. Rahmatu’lláh Muhájir (1923-1979)	Pacific Area
50. Abu’l-Qásim Faizí (c.1906-1980)	Arabian Peninsula

¹ Mr. Zikrullah Khadem, phonetic spelling, used by him.

Hands of the Cause Ayádíy-i-Amru'lláh

Name/ Birth and Death	Number of E-Photos in File
1. Hájí Mullá 'Alí-Akbar-i-Shahmírzadí, known as Hájí 'Akhúnd (1842-1910)	2
2. Mírzá Muhammad-Taquí, known as Ibn-i-Abhar (c.1853- c.1917)	1
3. Mírzá Hasan-i-Adíb, known as Adíb (1848-1919)	1
4. Mírzá 'Alí-Muhammad, known as Ibn-i-Asdaq (1850-1928)	1
5. Mullá Sádiq-i-Muqaddas, known as Ismu'lláhu'l-Asdaq (1800-1889)	1
6. 'Aqá Muhammad-i-Qá'iní, known as Nabíl-i-Akbar (1829-1892)	1
7. Shaykh Muhammad Ridáy-i-Yazdí (1814-1897)	1
8. Mírzá 'Alí-Muhammad-i-Varqá, the martyr (c.1856-1896)	1
9. Hájí Abú'l Hasan, the Trustee of Huqúqu'lláh, known as Hájí Amin (1832-1928)	1
10. John Ebenezer Esslemont (1874-1925)	1
11. Louis George Gregory (1874-1951)	4
12. Keith Ransom-Kehler (1876-1933)	1
13. Martha Louise Root ((1872-1939)	2
14. Mustafá Rúmi (c. 1846- c.1942)	1
15. 'Abdu'l-Jalíl Bey Sa'd [or Sa'ad] (c.1850 -1942)	1
16. Roy C. Wilhelm (1875-1951)	3
17. John Henry Hyde Dunn (c.1855-1941)	2
18. Muhammad Taqíy-i-Isfahání (c.1860-1946)	1
19. Dorothy Beecher Baker ((1898-1954)	2
20. Amelia Engelder Collins (1873-1962)	1
21. 'Alí-Akbar Furútan (1905-2003)	3
22. Ugo Giachery (1896-1989)	3
23. Herman Grossmann (1899-1968)	1
24. Horace Hotchkiss Holley (1887-1960)	3
25. Leroy C. Ioas (1896-1965)	1
26. William Sutherland Maxwell (1874-1952)	1
27. Charles Mason Remey (1874-1974)Expelled from the Faith 1960	0
28. Tarázu'lláh Samandarí (1875-1968)	1
29. George Townshend (1876-1957)	1
30. Valíyu'llah Varqá (1884-1955)	1
31. Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í (1889-1984)	3
32. Músá Banání (1886-1971)	1
33. Clara Davis Dunn (1869-1960)	1
34. Dhikru'llah Khádem (1904-1986)	2
35. Adelbert Mühlischlegel (1897-1980)	1
36. Siegfried "Fred" Schopfloch (1877-1953)	1
37. Corrine Knight True (1861-1961)	3
38. Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, Mary Maxwell; Rúhíyyih Rabbani (1910-2000)	3
39. Jalál Kháze (1897-1990)	1
40. Paul Edmond Haney (1909-1982)	2
41. Dr. 'Alí Muhammad Varqá (1912-)	2
42. Agnes Baldwin Alexander (1875-1971)	2
43. Enoch Olinga (1926-1979)	2
44. William Sears (1911-1992)	3
45. John Aldham Robarts (1901-1991)	2
46. Hasan M.Balyuzi (1908-1980)	2
47. John Graham Ferraby (1914-1973)	2
48. H.Collis Featherstone (1913-1990)	2
49. Rahmatu'lláh Muhájir (1923-1979)	2
50. Abu'l-Qásim Faízí (c.1906-1980)	3

50 Hands of the Cause
Ayádíy-i-Amru'lláh

**Hájí Mullá ‘Alí-Akbar-i-Shahmírzádí
known as Hájí ‘Akhúnd
(1842-1910)**

“The Dignified Prisoner”

Hájí ‘Akhúnd was born in 1842 and his father had been a Bábí until the defeat of the Bábís at Fort Shaykh Tabarsí in 1848. Hájí ‘Akhúnd continued to search for an understanding of God and Truth. When he was 19, he came across a copy of the Kitáb-i-Íqán, and after conversations with other believers, became a Bábí in 1861, and later became a Bahá’í. Throughout his life he was imprisoned repeatedly. Around 1868 Bahá’u’lláh gave instructions for him and another to remove the remains of the Báb from their hiding place in the shrine of Imám Zádih Ma’súm. (Interestingly, shortly after the remains were removed the shrine was rebuilt and had they not been moved they would certainly have been destroyed.) During the next 15 months Hájí Akhúnd continued to find ways to protect the Báb’s remains and at the same time became one of the main channels through which the Bahá’ís communicated with Bahá’u’lláh and received His replies. Over the years he was able to lead his father back to the Faith, and bring his two brothers and four sisters into the Faith as well.

In 1870 he traveled to ‘Akká to see Bahá’u’lláh, and immediately after was arrested yet again. Advised by friends to be more careful and perhaps to conceal himself from his enemies during the month of Muharram, a dangerous time for the Bahá’ís consisting of many Muslim Holy Days, he replied:

It is true that in the Holy Tablets we are commanded to observe wisdom. By wisdom is not meant to be fearful or to have no reliance upon God. It means to act with thoroughness, and to conduct oneself with truthfulness, benevolence and patience; it means to sow the seeds of the teachings of God in the pure and godly soil of the hearts. It does not mean fear or hiding.

Hájí ‘Akhúnd was among those arrested in 1891 and kept in prison in Tihrán and Qazvín for two years, during which time a photograph of him reached ‘Abdul-Bahá. The next year the Sháh wanted to see this prisoner, whom he had been told was distinguished, and looked at him from behind a window. Impressed with his dignity and bearing, the Sháh ordered his photographer to take a picture of him seated in chains and stocks. (It is unknown whether this is that photo or a recreation of the photo taken for the Sháh.)

He was released from prison in 1894, after Bahá’u’lláh had passed away. He traveled to ‘Akká and tried, unsuccessfully, to persuade those who were challenging ‘Abdul-Bahá to align themselves with the Covenant. He returned to Tihrán and helped develop the Bahá’í community there before he died in 1910. ‘Abdul-Bahá paid tribute to him:

...Openly at odds with his tyrannical oppressors, no matter how they threatened him, he defied them. He was never vanquished. Whatever he had to say, he said. He was one of the Hands of the Cause of God, steadfast, unshakable, not to be moved.

(1) Excerpted from Barron Harper’s
Lights of Fortitude, pp. 3-8.

**Mírzá Muhammad-Taquí,
known as Ibn-i-Abhar
(c.1853–c.1917)**

“One of His Servants”

Mírzá Muhammad-Taquí, known as Ibn-i-Abhar, was born in a village between Qazvin and Zanján to Mírzá Ibráhím-i-Abharí, one of the first Bábís. He was drawn to the Bahá’í revelation following the Declaration of Bahá’u’lláh, and became a follower in 1868. Bahá’u’lláh addressed him as Ibn-i-Abhar, son of Abhar.

In 1886 he made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and attained the presence of Bahá’u’lláh. That year he was appointed a Hand of the Cause and directed in a Tablet to teach in the cities. His teaching activities contributed significantly to the expansion and consolidation of the Bahá’í community in Iran.

He was imprisoned beginning in 1891 for four years, even wearing the same chains on his neck that Bahá’u’lláh had been forced to wear. Many of the Bahá’ís were very grieved over the terrible treatment he received and he wrote to them, writing in very small characters on the wrappers of sugar, tea and candles:

Would it be fitting for He who is the Ruler of all the nations and the Lord of all creation to accept tribulations in order that mankind might be freed from the fetters of prejudice, liberated from attachments to this mortal world and disentangled from animalistic evil passions, while this insignificant being, who considers himself as one of His servants, be exempt from similar sufferings?

After he was released from prison, which was after the death of Bahá’u’lláh, he made many pilgrimages to the Holy Land and attained the presence of ‘Abdul-Bahá. He wanted only to serve ‘Abdul-Bahá, heartbroken by the ascension of Bahá’u’lláh. He believed that he was not to do anything else, not even get married. Even when the Master suggested to him that it was time he was married, Ibn-i-Abhar refused to do so. When ‘Abdul-Bahá told him to go to Tíhrán and marry Munírih Khánum, the daughter of Hand of the Cause Mullá ‘Alí-Akbar, he protested again. ‘Abdul-Bahá said to him: “My good man! I am the Centre of the Covenant; when I say you will not break your vow by marrying, you will not!” Soon after that Munírih Khánum and Ibn-i-Abhar were married.

The couple worked together to promote the education of women in Iran and both served on a special committee in 1909 for the liberation of women. His wife helped establish the Girls’ School there.

(2) Excerpted from Barron Harper’s
Lights of Fortitude, pp. 13-16.

**Mírzá Hasan-i-Adíb, known as Adíb
(1848 – 1919)**

“Founder of Schools”

Mírzá Hasan-i-Adíb, known as Adíb, was born in 1848. As a young man in Iran he ranked highly in literary and theological circles and was well known throughout the country. He was a teacher at a school founded on western educational principles and published many books, articles and poetry for the Qájar princes who employed him as a writer. He was even, at one time, the Imám-Jum'ih, the leader of the prayers on Fridays.

He learned about the Bahá'í Faith through a close friend, talked with others and realized that his own views were very much in agreement with Bahá'u'lláh's teachings. He became a Bahá'í in 1889 and soon afterwards Bahá'u'lláh designated him a Hand of the Cause. Unlike the other Hands appointed by Bahá'u'lláh, Adíb never met Him, but is said to have arisen with a great intensity to promote the Cause of God.

Once he began to make it known that he had become a follower of Bahá'u'lláh, he immediately lost his position with the princes. He began to write poems about the coming of Bahá'u'lláh, and books about the history and proofs of the Faith. He also played important roles in the development of the Bahá'í community in Tihrán and in the founding and administration of the Tarbíyat Schools in Tihrán.

He went to Isfahán in 1903 at the request of 'Abdul-Bahá, and met with great sufferings as a result of the Mujtahid of that city, the Son of the Wolf being among them. He was imprisoned for a time there. When released he went to Bombay and from there to the Holy Land where he passed away in 1919.

(3) Excerpted from Barron Harper's
Lights of Fortitude, pp. 17-18

**Mírzá ‘Alí-Muhammad, known as Ibn-i-Asdaq
(1850-1928)**

“A Life-Long Servant and Teacher”

Mírzá ‘Alí-Muhammad, known as Ibn-i-Asdaq, whom the Exalted Pen addressed as Shahíd Ibn-i-Shahíd (Martyr, son of the Martyr), was the distinguished son of the great veteran of the Bábí Faith, Mullá Sádiq-i-Muqaddas-i-Khurásání, who, haltered and in the company of the incomparable Quddús, was paraded in the streets of Shiraz; fought on the battlements of Shaykh Tabarsí under the banner of Quddús and came safely through the holocaust; attained the Day of “Him Whom God shall make manifest”, gave Him his whole-hearted allegiance, served Him with exemplary devotion, and was honoured by Him with the designation of Ismu’lláhu’l-Asdaq.

Ibn-i-Asdaq was the son of such a father. He was a boy of tender years when, together with his saintly father, he was consigned to the dungeon of Tihrán. They were chained together for 28 months, and the child fell ill while he was in prison, but eventually the prison guard asked a Jewish doctor to tend to the boy. The doctor took care of him for two months, bringing him back to health, and soon afterwards became a believer himself. It appears that Bahá’u’lláh chose the son of Ismu’lláhu’l-Asdaq to be a promoter of His Cause, a faithful servant at His threshold, even when that future Hand of the Cause of God was yet a child!

When the father and son were released from prison they continued teaching the Faith throughout Iran. Ibn-i-Asdaq was still in his teens when, in the company of his father, he traveled to Baghdád, and into the presence of Bahá’u’lláh for the first time. Not only did he have that supreme bounty, but also the Most Exalted Pen was moved to reveal a prayer for him, in which we read these very significant words:

I ask Thee, O my God! To give him to drink of the milk of Thy bounty so that he may raise the standards of victory through Me, - a victory which is Thine – and arise to serve Thy Cause, when he groweth up, just as, when a youth, he hath arisen at Thy Command.

Bahá’u’lláh encouraged Ibn-i-Asdaq in his many travels for the promotion of the Word and later revealed another Tablet in his honor containing a well-known verse:

The movement itself from place to place, when undertaken for the sake of God, hath always exerted, and can now exert, its influence in the world.

He continued to teach after the passing of Bahá’u’lláh, for ‘Abdul-Bahá encouraged him to extend his range of travels to India, Burma and Russian Turkistan, where he always sought out the notables of every city. In one city he remained long enough to found a hospice and junior school. In Tihrán where he kept returning and where his family lived, he initiated the establishment of teacher-training classes for Bahá’í women.

Ibn-i-Asdaq lived well into the 20th century, and also served Shoghi Effendi, who named him an Apostle of Bahá’u’lláh.

(4) From *Eminent Bahá’ís in the Time of Bahá’u’lláh*, page 171
and Barron Harper’s *Lights of Fortitude*, pp. 9-12.

**Mullá Sádiq-i-Muqaddas, known as Ismu'lláhu'l-Asdaq
(c. 1800-1889)**

“Discovery Through Prayer”

He was renowned for his character, learning and eloquence and was given the rank of Mujtahid in 1843 by Siyyid Kázim, and while in Karbilá he became a close friend of Mullá Husayn, and first met the radiant youth, the Báb, while He was praying tearfully at the Shine of Imám Husayn. Around this time Mullá Sádiq invited Him to visit his house to attend a meeting devoted to the recital of the sufferings of the descendants of Muhammad, particularly the Imám Husayn. When the Báb arrived at the meeting, the very respected Siyyid Kázim and his disciples, previously all seated, rose and asked Him to take a seat higher in the room. This mark of respect to the Báb by a person highly respected in the community astonished those present.

Shortly after the Declaration of the Báb, Mullá Husayn traveled to Isfahán where Mullá Sádiq lived, having been told by the Báb that Sádiq would unhesitatingly embrace His Cause. And of course he did, for Mullá Husayn spoke to his old friend and fellow disciple about the advent of the message without mentioning any names, in fact saying it was forbidden both to ask and divulge His name. He asked if it would be possible to seek independently the grace of discovery through prayer, and when told that it would be possible, he went off by himself and communed with God. He recorded:

In the midst of my contemplation, I suddenly remembered the face of a Youth whom I had often observed while in Karbilá, standing in an attitude of prayer, with His face bathed in tears at the entrance of the shrine of the Imám Husayn. That same countenance now reappeared before my eyes. In my vision I seemed to behold that same face, those same features, expressive of such joy as I could never describe. He smiled as He gazed at me. I went towards Him, ready to throw myself at His feet. I was bending towards the ground, when, lo! That radiant figure vanished from before me. Overpowered with joy and gladness, I ran out to meet Mullá Husayn, who with transport received me and assured me that I had, at last, attained the object of my desire.”

This believer, as a Píshnamáz, a cleric who leads the congregation in prayer in a mosque, later suffered greatly for having obeyed the instructions of the Báb through Quddús to add a new phrase to the traditional call to prayer: “I bear witness that He whose name is ‘Alí-Qabl-i-Muhammad (a reference to the Báb) is the servant of the Baqíyyatu'lláh (the Remnant of God, referring to Bahá'u'lláh).” He and Quddús were immediately arrested, and asked about the materials that Mullá Sádiq had with him and had been reading. These indicated that the power of the world belongs to God and not earthly rulers. Mullá Sádiq confirmed this without hesitation and the cruel governor ordered him to receive 1,000 lashes.

An eyewitness reported that though to those present it seemed that the aged and frail mullá wouldn't survive even 50 strokes, he remained serene throughout the ordeal. He was asked by this same witness why he had covered his mouth with his hand during the lashing, and he replied that he was concealing a smile because “a feeling of joyous exultation had invaded” my soul. After the lashings the beards of both were burned, and a cord was passed through an incision in each believer's nose and they were lead around the city by a halter. ‘Abdul-Bahá said that even in that condition, Mullá Sadiq kept on speaking to the people composed and smiling. He died many years later after continuously serving the Báb, Bahá'u'lláh, and ‘Abdul-Bahá.

(5) Excerpted from Barron Harper's
Lights of Fortitude, pp. 32-40.

**Áqá Muhammad-i-Qá'íní, known as Nabíl-i-Akbar
(1829–1892)**

“The Learned One of Qá'in”

Nabíl-i-Akbar, also known as Fádíl-i-Qá'íní (the Learned One of Qá'in) was born in 1829, and came from a family of well-known clerics, so of course he received a religious education. He studied for five years under the most eminent Persian philosopher of the time, Hájí Mullá Hádí. In 1952, two years after the martyrdom of the Báb, he set out for the holy shrines of Najaf and Karbilá to complete his education and was mistakenly arrested for being a Bábí. He was released fairly quickly, but the incident left an impression on him and he became determined to know more about those he had been accused of being associated with. The result is that very shortly after that he became a Bábí.

His career as a cleric was not immediately impeded, however. He became a leading member of his teacher's company of disciples, that of Shaykh Murtaday-i-Ansari, and given the rank of mujtahid himself.

Later, while traveling back home from his stay of several years at the shrines, he met Bahá'u'lláh while heading through Baghdad. Bahá'u'lláh had not yet made His public declaration of His mission, and Nabíl-i-Akbar, called Áqá Muhammad-i-Q'íní at the time, presented himself as more prominent during public gatherings. It was only after hearing Bahá'u'lláh's explanation of a certain point did Nabíl-i-Akbar recognize Bahá'u'lláh's superiour knowledge. From then on he humbly and with much deference kneeled before Him, on occasion surprising other clerics.

He lost the respect of his peers once Bahá'u'lláh declared His mission and Nabíl-i-Akbar started actively teaching the Cause. As more people started becoming believers, this aroused the jealousy of the clergy, who began to spread lies about the Bahá'ís to incite the anger of the Shah. The Shah's friends, peers of Nabíl-i-Akbar, became afraid and turned against him, causing him to disguise himself and flee to Tihrán.

He continued to teach the Cause in secret, but was eventually arrested and imprisoned, and later released. He traveled in 1874 to Bahá'u'lláh, then in Ákká, and the Tablet of Wisdom was revealed in his honor. In this tablet, Bahá'u'lláh reveals for him the secret of successfully teaching His Faith.

He taught continuously until his death in July of 1892. Commenting on the life and rank of this Hand of the Cause, 'Abdu'l-Bahá wrote:

A sign of guidance, he was, an emblem of the fear of God. For this Faith, he laid down his life, and in dying, triumphed. ...Of wide learning ...he...was an accomplished man of letters and an orator without a peer. He had a great and universal mind. Praise be to God, at the end he was made the recipient of heavenly grace.

(6) Excerpted from Barron Harper's
Lights of Fortitude, pp. 28-31.

Shaykh Muhammad Ridá Muhammadábádí Yazdí
(c.1814-1897)

“Fearless Teacher of the Cause”

Mullá Ridá from around Yazd was a fearless, and some would say reckless, teacher of the Cause. He was educated to be a Muslim cleric and was unrivalled in speech and in the knowledge of the Qur’án, in Islamic law and tradition. He was also a gourmet who lived and ate well. From a well-known family, tall in stature and imposing in bearing, he became a Bábí in the Faith’s early years.

Mullá Ridá believed that the organic unity of all substances would be established in the Bahá’í era and once said that if he were guided to discover this special “transmuting alchemy”, he would build a town and erect in it a huge Mashriqu’l-Adhkár of crystal with doors of solid gold.

He, like the other Hands, was often imprisoned, and endured the cruel beatings without any indication that he suffered pain. At one point, onlookers had thought that he had collapsed, but when they looked more closely, found that he was quietly cleaning his teeth during the beatings.

He was once called to appear at the court of the son of the Shah. Confronted by a gathering of eminent princes and prominent state officials, he fearlessly replied to every question. His logical responses were so on target and confounding to those present that they responded as they always do under such circumstances and stormed out of the room with orders to throw him and his friends in prison once again.

He was a man of powerful actions, some not easily explained. For example, he saw a lake in the vicinity of Kirmán at one point between his imprisonments and decided to dig the foundation for the wonderful Mashriqu’l-Adhkár that he envisioned years earlier. All by himself, the aged man gathered together around 500 digging tools and prepared the land for the building, but the work advanced slowly. He was again arrested, taken away and the people from neighboring villages took and kept all his tools.

Years later Mullá Ridá was caught up in the persecutions launched against the Bahá’í community after the assassination of the Shah in 1896. At that time, he was in a mosque in Qum when a clergyman said the Bahá’ís had murdered the king. Mullá Ridá, among the crowd at that time, defended the believers and was accused of being a Bahá’í. He admitted this was true and was then sent to Tihrán and incarcerated in the notorious Síyáh-Chál. The other Bahá’ís who were imprisoned with him asked him to please not be so outspoken, but he just couldn’t keep from attracting attention with the intensity of his Faith. He told his friends that the resulting harm caused to the Bahá’ís just showed the people how foolish the oppressors were: “Their foolish act resembles that of a man who tries vainly to spit on the sun,” he said.

(7) Excerpted from Barron Harper’s
Lights of Fortitude, pp. 21-27.

Mírzá ‘Alí-Muhammad-i-Varqá
(c. 1846-1896)

“Varqá, The Martyr”

Mírzá ‘Alí-Muhammad-i-Varqá was the son of Hájí Mullá Mihdíy-i-Yazdí, who became a Bábí as a young man when Vahíd taught openly in Yazd. Vargá’s father was later exiled from Yazd as a result of openly teaching the Faith as well, and Varqá, 22 at the time, his father and his two brothers all left the city on foot, traveling to Tabríz. There Varqá assisted a Bahá’í who was in the service of the Crown Prince, and in appreciation of assistance to the family, the parents gave their daughter to him in marriage. Just after the wedding, Varqá, his father and brother traveled to the Holy Land, but his father passed away just before arriving at his destination. Varqá continued on to Mazra’ih and attained the presence of Bahá’u’lláh. This encounter Varqá had foreseen in a dream many years before as a child. In the dream he was playing with his dolls when God came and threw the dolls into the fire, saying: ‘O Varqá! Cast into fire idols of vain imaginings!’ Varqá had forgotten this dream until Bahá’u’lláh repeated these same words to him during this first pilgrimage. He returned to Tabríz and his marriage produced four sons: Ázizu’lláh, Rúhu’lláh, Valíyu’lláh and one who died in early childhood.

Many years later Varqá attained the presence of Bahá’u’lláh a second time, about a year before His Ascension. Varqá was then accompanied by two of his sons: ‘Azizu’lláh and Rúhu’lláh. Rúhu’lláh was then no more than seven years old, but at that tender age his pure soul responded, in all its intensity, to the truth and reality of God as revealed to the world in the human temple of Bahá’u’lláh. He had inherited an ample share of his father’s poetic talent, and thus he composed, when only two or three years older, his paean of praise and adoration:

*O the joy of that day, when eyes at me stare,
As on gallows-tree, I the praise of the King of Glory declare.*

Following the ascension of Bahá’u’lláh, Varqá, together with Ázizu’lláh and Rúhu’lláh, made his third and final pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Where there the Master and the Greatest Holy Leaf showed particular admiration and love for Rúhu’lláh, and one day she asked him how he taught the Faith. The boy answered that he looked into the eyes of the people to determine who had the capacity to receive the Message of Bahá’u’lláh. He was asked to look into the eyes of two sons of Bahá’u’lláh, and he did so, sadly telling the Greatest Holy Leaf afterwards that their eyes were not worth looking into. Those were the two who joined forces with Mírzá Muhammad ‘Alí, the Archbreaker of Bahá’u’lláh’s Covenant.

As a result of teaching the Faith Varqá and one of his sons were later imprisoned, when Rúhu’lláh was twelve. One night the chief steward of the prison on Tihrán stormed the dungeon as he intended to immediately avenge his anger on the helpless prisoners in his custody, having just learned about the assassination of the Shah. He unchained the Bahá’ís and ordered them to go in pairs down a corridor towards an inner chamber. The first to pass through this corridor were Varqá and his son Rúhu’lláh. Upon being confronted with the charge of killing the Shah, Varqá serenely replied that he was not aware of having done anything wrong. The prison steward then immediately plunged his dagger into Varqá’s belly. When sneeringly asked how he was, Varqá’s dying reply was, “Feeling better than you.” As the poet was then being torn limb from limb, his blood flowing profusely in the room, Rúhu’lláh, who was there during this horrible action cried out, “O dear father, father dear, take me, take me with you.”

(8)Excerpted from Barron Harper’s Lights of Fortitude, pp. 42-49
and *Eminent Bahá’ís in the Time of Bahá’u’lláh*, page 171.

**Hájí Abú'l Hasan, known as Hájí Amin
(1832-1928)**

“The Trustee of Huqúqu'lláh”

Born in a village near Yazd, Hájí Abú'l Hasan became a staunch Muslim. His parents arranged his marriage when he was 17, but at the father of the bride's insistence, he took up residence in her home instead of his, as was the custom. His wife had six brothers, and all six of them Bábís. He was persuaded to investigate the Bábí religion and embraced the Faith shortly after His martyrdom. This youth then taught his wife, who also became a Bábí.

When he learned that Bahá'u'lláh had made His declaration, he immediately recognized His station and became a Bahá'í. He became utterly self-sacrificing, detached from worldly things, and completely dedicated to his Lord. He traveled throughout Persia, visiting the homes of virtually all the Bábís and telling them about the coming of Bahá'u'lláh. He became known as one who genuinely cared for the well being and spiritual development of all.

Hájí 'Amín was a devoted assistant to the first Trustee of the Huqúqu'lláh, and traveled with him. He earned his living by trading and writing letters for those who could not write and thus served by taking letters to Bahá'u'lláh, who gave both men the title 'Amín which means trusted one.

When they arrived in 'Akká, disguised as Arab merchants, they received word to meet Bahá'u'lláh in the public baths. Thus Hájí Abú'l Hasan was the first Bahá'í from outside 'Akká to meet Bahá'u'lláh within the city walls. However, when Bahá'u'lláh appeared at the bath he was so overcome by emotion that he fell to the floor, severely injuring his head and had to be carried out bleeding.

Around 1880 the two men were caught up in a massacre by Kurds in which the Trustee was killed. Hájí 'Amín was wounded in the leg, but survived and was then appointed by Bahá'u'lláh as the new Trustee of the Huqúqu'lláh.

Through the life-long example Hájí 'Amín set, the believers themselves more readily sacrificed. He disliked extravagance as diminishing the ability of the believers to support the Cause of God and when invited to meals, would often insist on eating only one dish of the simplest food and would ask that a little water be added to account for this share. This became a recipe that became renowned among the Persians as 'the soup of Hájí 'Amín'.

In 1891 he was arrested on the orders of the Sháh and his son and for three years was imprisoned with Hand of the Cause Hájí Akhúnd. The two were photographed in chains, evidencing resignation and calm, for the Sháh to see. 'Abdu'l-Bahá gazed on that photo and said that His heart rejoiced in their attitude, and placed the photograph in the hallway of His house opposite His room. Released from prison, Hájí 'Amín continued to serve and 'Abdu'l-Bahá named one of the doors of the Shrine of the Báb for him.

He moved back to Tihrán in his later years and upon his passing Shoghi Effendi conferred upon him the rank of Hand of the Cause.

**John Ebenezer Esslemont
(1874-1925)**

“The Victorious Doctor”

John Ebenezer Esslemont was born in Scotland in 1874. He was a talented doctor, and many felt he could have made important contributions to the field of medicine, if it weren't for the fact that he suffered from tuberculosis, which at the time was the most widespread disease in the world. In Great Britain, at least one person in seven died from it, and there was no cure. The only treatment available was rest, fresh air, and the special treatment centers (called sanatoriums), which were expensive.

Dr. Esslemont became interested in developing treatments for the disease and making them available to everyone. He worked to encourage Great Britain to adopt a national health system that would provide free medical care to all citizens, and worked in a sanatorium for tuberculosis patients. He understood how his patients felt and was devoted to them. He stayed up late with people who were dying, organized parties to keep people's spirits up and used his sense of humor to cheer those around him.

Living with tuberculosis wasn't easy, and sometimes Dr. Esslemont would grow very tired and have difficulty breathing. Sometimes he had to stay in the hospital until he felt better. Even so, he continued working and loved to study languages. Dr. Esslemont spoke German, French, Spanish and Esperanto. He first learned about the Bahá'í Faith through some pamphlets a friend gave him and recalled, "I was at once struck by their... power and beauty." His attraction grew – he was on fire with love for the Faith. To help his understanding of Bahá'u'lláh's words, he learned Persian and Arabic so that he could read Tablets in the languages in which they were written.

Dr. Esslemont saw the need for a book about the Faith and traveled to Haifa to get 'Abdu'l-Bahá's advice about chapters he had written. While there, he suffered a relapse of tuberculosis. 'Abdu'l-Bahá visited him before breakfast on the day he grew ill and spoke cheering words, assuring the doctor of His prayers. As He left the room, He asked Shoghi Effendi to have a quilt sent to warm Dr. Esslemont: "...my own blanket – from my room," 'Abdu'l-Bahá said. With the encouragement and help of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Dr. Esslemont finished *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*. Martha Root said, "Always happy, always smiling was Dr. Esslemont. He never spoke about his illness. One day when he could not work, I said to him: 'If you do not do anything, you are still doing much work every day, for your book is spreading the Bahá'í Message in every land.'"

As time went on, Dr. Esslemont was invited to live in the Holy Land where he served as a secretary to the Guardian, who had become his dear friend. It was here that tuberculosis flared up for the last time. At the age of 51, Dr. John Esslemont passed on to the 'Abhá Kingdom and was buried at the foot of Mt. Carmel.

The Guardian wrote the following letter after Dr. John Esslemont's passing:

“The Cause he loved so well he served even unto his last day with exemplary faith and unstinted devotion. His tenacity of faith, his industry and painstaking labors were traits of a character the noble qualities of which will live and live forever after him. To me personally he was the warmest of friends, a trusted counselor, an indefatigable collaborator, lovable companion. ...[B]y the beauty of his character, by his knowledge of the Cause, by the conspicuous achievements of his book, he has immortalized his name, and by sheer merit deserved to rank as one of the Hands of the Cause of God.”

**Louis George Gregory
(1874-1951)**

“A Most Heavenly Smile”

Louis Gregory was a member of the Green Acre school committee for several years during the 1940s. Green Acre remained one of the constant sources of pleasure in his life. He lectured and taught there often...One year he took charge of children's classes. He always loved children, and they in turn were charmed by his attentiveness to them. Margaret Kunz Ruhe, whose parents often entertained Mr. Gregory when he visited Urbana, remembers him as “an important part” of her childhood. Almost every morning of his stay she and her sister would enter the dining room to find their father and Mr. Gregory deep in discussion. Invariably Louis Gregory would make them feel as if their entrance were a joy to him, rather than an interruption; he would turn to them with a “chuckle” and “a most heavenly smile.” Catharine Nourse, who grew up in Washington, D. C., and Atlantic City, has described him in similar terms. He was, for her, “a bit of Heaven.”

At Green Acre the Louis Gregory Children's School, dedicated in 1970, stands as a symbol of the special relationship between him and the young visitors to the campus. He spent much of his time with them, obviously enjoying an opportunity that his adult life had seldom provided. Once, when Louis Gregory must have been more than seventy, Emanuel Reimer saw him join a group of youngsters playing on the lawn, take the hands of two little ones, and start to play Ring-around-the-Rosie – “and going quite fast, I was surprised to see,” Mr. Reimer remembers. “When they all tumbled down, as the story goes, Louis just dropped right down to the ground, *hard*.” Mr. Reimer went over to him, protesting, “Louis, goodness gracious, you're going to hurt yourself. You shouldn't fall like that.” But Mr. Gregory brushed aside the concern, saying that he wouldn't get hurt, that he was just having fun. Even in play he gave the children his whole-hearted attention.

Louis wrote about Green Acre:

Here idealists meet and strive to combine recreation with knowledge, rest with service, change with system, freedom with devotion, activity with service. The fame of this spot has spread around the world. Literature, art, science, statecraft, education, commerce and religion have been its patrons. But its greatest treasure is the hearts of those who have humbly served, making others happy through their warmth and glow...Green Acre has a message for those who seek the treasures of God concealed in man.

(11) Excerpted from “*The New Green Acre, Star of the West*,. Vol. 16, No. 2, Oct. 1930, 215-19; *Green Acre on the Piscataqua*, p. 73; and from *To Move the World*, by Gayle Morrison, pages 298-299.

**Keith Bean Ransom-Kehler
(1876-1933)**

“The First American Martyr”

'Abdu'l-Bahá raised up Susan Moody to aid the Persian friends. Shoghi Effendi, during another bleak time for the Faith in Iran, sent Keith Ransom-Kehler to cheer and defend them. Before she became a Bahá'í, Keith had been a Christian minister. She was an excellent speaker and had been part of Chicago's elite society world. As a Bahá'í, she gave up her social station for the Cause and traveled to teach all over the United States, Europe, India, and Australia. Keith experienced difficulties during her life. In 1923, as her husband lay dying, she wrote to May Maxwell, "Pray for me, May, it is my only refuge.... Through this bitter storm of trial in which every attribute of light is obscure or withdrawn, you still stand, a dazzling presence on the further shore toward which I struggle, a gift and evidence lent me by the Master..."

The suffering of the Guardian deeply touched her. She was in Haifa in 1926, only five years after the passing of the blessed Master. She wrote about the Guardian to the 18th Annual United States Bahá'í Convention: "... this youth under thirty, laboring day and night for us, sacrificing every human desire and tendency to further our efforts ... with no more personal life than a graven image, no more thought of self than a breeze or a flower, just a hollow reed for the divine melody. Any one of us is ready to die for him, but can we conscientiously number ourselves among those who are willing to live for him?"

In 1932, Keith was again in Haifa, where the Guardian personally trained her. The Guardian's secretary informed the National Spiritual Assembly that "she rendered wonderful services in both Australia and India and Shoghi Effendi trusts that she will do the same in Persia." He asked her to obtain permission from the authorities to bring Bahá'í literature into Persia. The heartbreak of this task, which seemed a constant round of meetings with suave, pleasant, but hypocritical officials, was somewhat softened by her many meetings with the Persian Bahá'ís, who dearly loved her, and whom she was able to encourage and strengthen. For a year, she pursued her mission. "How strange the ways of God," she wrote, "that I, a poor, feeble old woman from the distant west, should be pleading for liberty and justice in the land of Bahá'u'lláh..."

Exhausted by her work, she died during a smallpox epidemic in October 1933. A month before her death, she had addressed a gathering in honor of the Anniversary of the Declaration of the Báb, pointing out that the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh are the only solution to the world's problems. "Keith's precious life," cabled the Guardian, "offered up in sacrifice to beloved Cause in Bahá'u'lláh's native land." He named her a Hand of the Cause of God, and the first American martyr, and mourned his "earthly separation" from her, his "invaluable collaborator," "unfailing counselor," and "esteemed and faithful friend."

"...I have fallen," Keith wrote during that year of trial, "though I never faltered. Months of effort with nothing accomplished is the record that confronts me. If anyone in future should be interested in this thwarted adventure of mine, he alone can say whether near or far from the seemingly impregnable heights of complaisance and indifference my tired old body fell. The smoke and din of battle are today too dense for me to ascertain whether I moved forward or was slain in my tracks. Nothing in the world is meaningless, suffering least of all. Sacrifice with its attendant agony is a germ, an organism. Man cannot blight its fruition as he can the seeds of earth. Once sown it blooms, I think forever, in the sweet fields of eternity. Mine will be a very modest flower, perhaps like the single, tiny forget-me-not, watered by the blood of Quddús, that I plucked in the Sabz-i-Maydán of Barfurúsh; should it ever catch the eye, may one who seems to be struggling in vain garner it in the name of Shoghi Effendi and cherish it for his dear remembrance."

(12) Excerpted from Janet Ruhe-Schoen,
A Love Which Does Not Wait, pp.125-166.

Martha Louise Root
(1872-1939)

“Lioness at the Threshold”

Martha Root was raised in Pennsylvania during the Victorian era. Her parents were devout members of the Baptist church. She felt a particular bond with her father, and as a child she preferred books and writing, and unlike her mother, had no inclination towards domestic work. She graduated from college and then taught school, later serving as school principal in Union City, Pennsylvania. To satisfy her literary desires she developed a series of dramatic lectures based on the works of Shakespeare and presented these to clubs, schools and churches in Philadelphia and New York. By 1900 she began working as a journalist for the *Pittsburg Chronicle Telegraph*. She heard about the Bahá'í Faith in 1908 while in a restaurant while she was covering an interdenominational missionary convention. Roy Wilhelm, who happened to be seated next to Martha, commented that he had just returned from the East where he had met members of other religions who actively prayed for and promoted the brotherhood of man. At the time Martha was the Society and Religious Editor of the *Pittsburg Post*, and eventually she read the materials that Roy mailed to her, becoming a Bahá'í the following year.

During her travels in India, with fifteen youngsters Martha started a children's class and had them all memorize passages from the writings of Bahá'u'lláh. She was beguiling with children and was tolerant where others scolded. It was as if she saw beyond the occasionally annoying habits of the child to a full-blown, loving human being, encased within the miniature body.

She gave lectures, one to an audience of one thousand in a theater. And she paid visits to the Bahá'í school in Poona. “The children gathered round her,” one Bahá'í remembered. “they were not afraid of her as they were of other older persons who came, but the way she spoke made them feel one with her...she had a deep, rich voice, like a caress....they felt the love offering from her....”

Two sisters, Monira and Gol Yaganegi (later Monira Sohaili and Gol Aidun), vividly remember Martha's visit to the school on 7 February 1938. “Her face stayed with me throughout childhood,” Monira, then six or seven, recalled. “I could never forget the vision of this wonderful person, her face was so radiant...”

Martha sat at one end of the hall facing the twenty to thirty students. She had brought gifts for the youngsters: she called each one's name and gave each a prayer book with the name written in – for example, “Very dear Monira” – together with a spiritual message and encouragement to teach the Faith. When Gol, the older sister, was to receive her book, they were all gone, a miscalculation of one. But Martha said, “You can have my own little money bag.” And she took out a little purse and gave it to Gol. An older girl, about twelve, who sensed Martha's station, burst into tears at this prize, Martha Root's own little purse, given to some other child. She went into a room and would not come out. When Gol was asked to give up her gift to soothe ruffled feelings, she turned it over, reluctantly; years later she still regretted the necessity. Martha, ever resourceful, gave her a picture of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and wrote on the back words attributed to Bahá'u'lláh: “If one speck of a jewel be hid in a stone and that stone be beyond the seven seas, until I have sought and found that jewel, my hand from its search will not stay.” Martha added warm, personal words, the date, and place – February 7, 1938, Poona, India.

(13) Excerpted from *Martha Root: Lioness at the Threshold*, by M. R. Garis and from Barron Harper's *Lights of Fortitude*, pp. 112-114.

Siyyid Mustafá Rúmi
(c.1846- c.1942)

“Laying the Foundation”

Siyyid Mustafá Rúmi belonged to a noble family from Baghdád, was proficient in a number of languages, and was a scholar who knew the religious books of the Jews, Christians, Muslims and Buddhists. He moved from Persia to Madras, India, as a young man to help his aged father in his father’s new rice business. In 1876 he was about to leave India with his father since the business had not gone well, and attended a gathering of men who were discussing various philosophical and religious questions. He was immediately attracted to the eloquent talk and courtly manners of Jamál Effendi, otherwise known as Sulaymán Khan, who was sent by Bahá’u’lláh to be a teacher in India. This man showed people genuine friendship and love and people from diverse backgrounds sought enlightenment from him, attracting many people to the Cause.

When Jamál was called back to the north of India, Mustafá Rúmi changed his travel plans and followed his new mentor, working their way towards Calcutta. In Calcutta they joined up with two other Bahá’ís, sat spellbound by the reading of the Tablets and discussion. It wasn’t much later that he became a Bahá’í. He then traveled to Burma where about 200 people became Bahá’ís in the ensuing months. When they returned to India he was able to meet his aged father, yet continuing his travels on behalf of the Faith for several years. He married, raised a family, and during those years helped pay for the beautiful marble sarcophagus made by the Bahá’ís in Burma and was among those who delivered it to the Holy Land as a gift to ‘Abdul-Bahá in 1899. (However, ten more years passed before the Master was able to transfer the sarcophagus to the mausoleum on Mount Carmel, where the wooden casket containing the Báb’s remains was laid within in and the sarcophagus was interred in the Shrine.)

During these years Rumí devoted much of his time to his family and business, but in 1910 his business failed and his wife died shortly after. He then began to devote all his time to the service of the Cause. He received many Tablets from ‘Abdul-Bahá’ during those years and later served the Guardian fervently.

His methods of teaching were very successful, for he was able to present the teachings of many great religions in light of the Bahá’í message in a very convincing manner. He also helped form administrative groups, laying the foundation of many spiritual assemblies. He also translated many books into Burmese. He was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of India and Burma in the 1930s and served on it for several years.

During the Second World War the village where he lived was in danger, but he refused to leave, referring to his advanced age and his determination not to leave the place he had chosen to serve. On March 13, 1945 the village was attacked by a mob of 3,000 people who surrounded it in order to purge it from all foreign influence. The Bahá’í school, the Hazíratu’l-Quds and many Bahá’í homes were burned to the ground and property was looted. Eleven Bahá’ís were killed in the attack, and among them was Siyyid Mustafá Rumí.

(14). Excerpted from Barron Harper’s
Lights of Fortitude, pp. 123-127.

‘Abdu’l-Jalíl Bey Sa’d*
(c. 1850-1942)

“The Egyptian Judge”

The Egyptian Hand of the Cause ‘Abdu’l-Jalíl Bey Sa’d was noted for his courage, determination and self-sacrifice. Taught by the great Bahá’í scholar Mírzá Abu’l-Fadl who was sent to Egypt by ‘Abdul-Bahá in 1895, he profoundly loved the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh and sought every means to serve his Lord.

He was an imposing man, quite tall and something over 200 pounds in weight. He was always well dressed, particularly at Bahá’í functions, usually wearing a beautiful red fez. A judge in the civil courts, he wrote inspiring articles on the subject of religious freedom when the constitutional laws of Iran were being formulated in 1923. Maintaining that all religions should be treated with equal freedom, he succeeded in persuading the legislators to accept this principle.

He was able to help improve the conditions of the Bahá’ís in Egypt when in 1929 they were in great difficulty due to a court decision that ruled against the Bahá’ís of Kom El Sa’ada. In 1934 he was able to gain legal recognition of a document that would later facilitate transactions between the believers and the government of Egypt. At the same time a noted Muslim attacked the Bahá’ís in a series of articles and ‘Abdu’l-Jalíl Bey Sa’d wrote a series of his own in response with such zeal and detail that the detractor of the Faith was defeated, but his followers became angry. They appealed to the authorities demanding to know why a judge in a Muslim country was able to promote religious teachings determined to be contrary to the Muslim religion. He said he would stop his responses if the others would stop their attacks, and the Minister of the House of Parliament required both sides to stop.

‘Abdu’l-Jalíl Bey Sa’d was then sent to a remote part of upper Egypt and in spite of his isolation he loudly proclaimed the Cause of God through the creation of translation of the *Dawn-Breakers* into Arabic. Initially denounced, banned and the entire print-run housed and targeted for destruction, he worked tirelessly to overcome the opposition. He obtained the release of his work and it was distributed throughout Egypt. In 1941 he again called upon recognized law and was granted permission to build a Hazíratu’l-Quds in Cairo. However, involved personally in the work, and perhaps as a result of working so hard in the intense heat, he died suddenly in May 1942 following an operation.

(15) Excerpted from Barron Harper’s
Lights of Fortitude, pp. 57-59.

* (or Sa’ad)

Roy Cochran Wilhelm
(1875-1951)

“Wedded to His Faith”

Roy Wilhelm was born in Zanesville, Ohio, on 17 September 1875. When Roy was about 15 his mother, Laurie, became dissatisfied with Christian doctrine and began to investigate other religious teachings. In 1898 she received some Bahá'í pamphlets from a friend, and immediately accepted the Faith. When she sent Roy some clippings, however, he wasn't interested. Roy was satisfied with his life as it was. By 1900, he was living in New York, a millionaire and a respected entrepreneur in the coffee business, a man of habit who kept to the same routine every day.

One evening as he sat on his bed, changing his shoes and preparing for another typical evening of relaxation, everything changed. Roy was suddenly overwhelmed by a vision. He saw “a majestic figure with a long black beard, dressed in what appeared to be an oriental gown. The figure approached Roy, taking off His ring and placing it on Roy's finger and removing Roy's ring and placing it on His finger.” Roy was a practical man, and was unable to reconcile what he had seen with who he considered himself to be. He decided to tell no one about the experience.

In 1907 Laurie Wilhelm received permission to go to the Holy Land to see 'Abdu'l-Bahá. She told her son she needed him to accompany her. When they reached their destination, 'Abdu'l-Bahá particularly welcomed Roy and urged him to visit Bahjí. On the way, one of the Persian believers took him to a small white house in the Garden of Ridván where Bahá'u'lláh had often stayed. As he entered the house, Roy found himself in the room he had seen in his vision. Profoundly shaken, he afterwards shared his experience with 'Abdu'l-Bahá, who told him, “You had a spiritual experience... Bahá'u'lláh has wedded you to His Faith.” From that moment Roy Wilhelm was a Bahá'í.

Soon after returning to America, Roy moved into a house in West Englewood, New Jersey. When 'Abdu'l-Bahá came to America in 1912, a very special unity feast was held at His behest on the grounds of the Wilhelm home, on June 29. Juliet Thompson described the event: “Below us on the grass sat the people – that is, those who had lingered – who could not tear themselves away. Their white clothes in the dusk were as soft as moth wings. In their hands they held burning tapers – really to keep off the mosquitoes! – but the effect was of tiny wands tipped with red stars and the incense was like some Eastern temple. It was a fairylike picture. The Master took a chair in the center of the step, and delicately holding a taper Himself, He spoke in words of flame! I can see it all vividly still – and shall through my life – those trembling red stars among the dim white figures on the grass... Before He had finished He rose from His chair and started down the path... 'Peace be with you,' He said as He receded into the darkness, the rich liquid Persian and the quivering translation floating back to us from His invisibility 'I will pray for you!'” This memorable ‘Souvenir Picnic’, as it came to be known, is still commemorated every year.

Roy was keenly aware of the shortage of Bahá'í literature. He would often be seen in his unheated office after midnight making copies of the latest Tablets from the Master to be distributed to the believers. He saw the need for a form of literature which could be handed out liberally to people who came to Bahá'í talks, so they could take it home, read and understand it at their leisure, and pass it on to others. For the ninth Annual Bahá'í Convention in 1917, he prepared two small blue teaching booklets, one less than two inches square and the other slightly larger, which became known as “Little Bens” and “Big Bens.” They were so popular that the first edition of 15,000 ran out quickly, and a second run of 75,000 was soon used up also. Martha Root, who first learned about the Bahá'í Faith from Roy soon after his return from pilgrimage and kept in close correspondence with him, used these as her primary teaching aids in her world travels.

Roy passed away on 24 December 1951. Even after his death he continued to serve the Faith, as described in the following cable from Shoghi Effendi:

International endowments surrounding the tomb of the Prophet-Herald of the Faith on the bosom of God's Holy Mountain are considerably extended through the acquisition, after thirty years' effort, of a wooded area of over twenty-three thousand square meters, including a building overlooking the sacred spot, made possible through the estate bequeathed to the Faith by the herald of Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant, Roy Wilhelm...

(16) Shoghi Effendi, *Messages to the Baha'i World*, p. 48; Excerpted from Barron Harper's *Lights of Fortitude*, pp. 129-141; and from H.M. Balyuzi, 'Abdu'l-Bahá - The Centre of the Covenant, p. 225

John Henry Hyde Dunn
(c.1855-1941)

“Father Dunn, A Gentle Man”

Father Dunn was from London, England, heard about the Faith in Seattle, Washington and with Clara, his wife, established the Cause of God in Australia.

The son of a consulting chemist, he was, as a child, once bounced on the knee of Charles Dickens. As a young man he worked as a salesman in England and France and then he and his first wife immigrated to the United States. Using the name Hyde, his mother's maiden name, he was standing in a small tinshop where he overheard a Bahá'í remark to the shop's owner: "Let not a man glory in this, that he loves his country; let him rather glory in this, that he loves his kind." Hyde later recalled how hearing this utterance of Bahá'u'lláh touched his hungry, searching heart.

He accepted the Faith immediately and he and the person who spoke those words, Ward Fitz-Gerald began traveling teaching together. In 1907 on a trip to Walla Walla, a town in Washington State, he met Clara Davis in a medical center, and remarked later how she noticed a new light in his face. Both Hyde and Clara again saw each other in San Francisco in 1912 when 'Abdul-Bahá visited. Four years later his first wife, who previously had been unable to embrace certain aspects of the Faith, came to a better acceptance of it just before she died. Within two years Hyde and Clara were married and their home then became a gathering place for all, and they referred to each other as Father and Mother Dunn. In 1919 they responded to the Tablets of the Divine Plan's appeal for pioneers by beginning to make plans to serve in Australia, plans confirmed by 'Abdul-Bahá. They arrived in Australia in 1920 and the first Local Spiritual Assembly was formed in Melbourne at the end of 1923.

In 1934 the first National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Australia and New Zealand was formed and both Hyde and his wife were asked to address the inaugural convention. As Hyde 'rose to his feet every heart felt a throb of joy and thankfulness that these two chosen instruments, who had brought understanding and peace to so many of those present, were there to guide and inspire them to greater heights of achievement in His path.'

Although losing his strength as the years passed, Hyde wrote an article in 1936 for the first issue of *Bahá'í Quarterly*. Early believers who knew the Dunns described Hyde Dunn giving 'everyone a joyous welcome. He always had a sweet smile on his dear face...[His] manner was at all times kind and gentle. He always had a good answer for enquirers. He had great patience...[He] was always well dressed (with a neat bow tie), spotlessly clean and tidy and of handsome appearance.'

Six days before he passed away, Father Dunn attended 'the Healing Meeting at the Centre on Tuesday afternoon, February 11th, and was his usual bright, informative self,' as reported by the *Bahá'í World*.

(17) Excerpted from Barron Harper's
Lights of Fortitude, pp. 60-71.

Muhammad Taqíy-i-Isfahání
(c.1860-1946)

“A Smile of Peace”

Muhammad Taqíy-i-Isfahání was born in a village near Isfahán that had an active community supporting first the Báb, and then Bahá'u'lláh with a number of distinguished teachers and poets. It is thought that this is how he learned about the Faith and became a Bahá'í.

He was arrested in 1875 along with other prominent Bahá'ís, beaten and sent to prison in Isfahán, leaving Iran in 1878. He traveled back after his first pilgrimage, but it is thought that he stopped in 'Akká while on the way during a second pilgrimage and perhaps advised by Bahá'u'lláh to settle in Egypt. His last pilgrimage was in 1919 in the time of 'Abdul-Bahá.

'Abdul-Bahá traveled to Egypt several times between 1910 and 1913 and while he was there he visited with Muhammad Taqí in his home, the center of many Bahá'í activities. This is the home where Mírzá Abu'l-Fadl Gulpáygání lived the last year of his life in 1914 and where Lua Getsinger passed away in 1916.

Muhammad Taqí was devastated when 'Abdul-Bahá passed away in 1921 and immediately traveled to Haifa, being present when the Will and Testament of 'Abdul-Bahá was read. He was concerned that the young Shoghi Effendi would be vulnerable to attacks by the Covenant-breakers at such a sensitive time in the history of the Faith and began to write an extensive defense of the Bahá'í Faith. After he had written several volumes, he realized that his work was not needed, and that Shoghi Effendi was quite capable of defending the Faith himself.

He also wrote some articles and translated the Kitáb-i-Íqán and *Some Answered Questions* into Arabic. He had memorized most of the general Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá and could recount most of the historical events of the Cause. He was kind and hospitable, remarkably steadfast, and long suffering. His wife and eldest son both preceded him in death. He died 'with a smile of peace' in 1946 at his home in Cairo and was buried in the Bahá'í cemetery there.

(18) Excerpted from Barron Harper's
Lights of Fortitude, pp. 110-111

**Dorothy Beecher Baker
(1898-1954)**

“'Abdu'l-Bahá's 'Little Follower'”

When Dorothy Beecher was 13 years old, her grandmother took her to New York to see the Master 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Dorothy was terrified. Normally a happy child, she was also extraordinarily sensitive; events of extreme emotion caused her to tremble. Her parents were not Bahá'ís, and young Dorothy knew little of her grandmother's faith, yet she sensed that something of a tremendous nature was about to occur. As she and her grandmother entered the room, 'Abdu'l-Bahá greeted Mother Beecher but made no overture to Dorothy other than to motion for her to sit on a footstool at His feet, facing the audience. As 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke, Dorothy turned slightly on her stool, peering at Him from the corners of her eyes. The longer He spoke, the more she turned until, toward the end of the talk, she was gazing at Him in adoration. There was, however, no verbal communication between them.

Several days later Dorothy told her grandmother, "I want to write to 'Abdu'l-Bahá." Mother Beecher encouraged her to do so, and Dorothy wrote a note begging 'Abdu'l-Bahá to be able to serve the Cause. She signed it, "Your little follower, Dorothy Beecher." Shortly afterward a note arrived. In 'Abdu'l-Bahá's handwriting it said, "Oh, dearest child. I will pray that your great desire may be fulfilled and that you serve this Cause." Mother Beecher became ill a day or two later, but received word that 'Abdu'l-Bahá wished to see her. Hurrying from her sickbed, she asked, "What have I done?" "I called you," the Master said, "to tell you that your granddaughter is my own daughter. You must train her for me."

Mother Beecher's life was dedicated to the Bahá'í Faith and to her granddaughter; she was conscientious in training the girl in the teachings, especially during the summers at Green Acre School in Maine. On or about her 15th birthday, Dorothy declared her acceptance of the Word of Bahá'u'lláh.

Dorothy provided a stable and loving home for Conrad and Sally, the two children of Frank Baker, the man she married in 1921. They also had two children of their own: Louise and William. She served in the Buffalo community and enjoyed telling Bahá'í stories to the children and hosting weekly firesides. In 1926, Dorothy took Conrad and Sally to a lecture by Bahá'í scholar Dr. Ali Kuli Khan and during the talk she saw that Sally lifted her head and had tears streaming down her cheeks. Later that night when Dorothy tucked her into bed, Sally said, "I just want you to know, no matter what, that I'm a Baha'i." A few weeks later a medical examination revealed that Sally had leukemia and she died within weeks.

Several nights after Sally's passing Dorothy saw a vision of a brilliant light streaming in through her bedroom window. Down that path of light danced Sally with garlands of flowers in her hair and carrying two wicker baskets. She exclaimed, "Oh Muzz, I'm so happy! Look, I have all the wildflowers I want!" She looked at her father sleeping in the bed. "Tell him I'm happy, Muzz. Tell him how happy I am." And off she danced up the path of light.

The family moved to Lima, Ohio after the loss of that beautiful child, and Mother Beecher, now 88, moved in with them. Dorothy and Mother Beecher began studying the Holy Writings for an hour a day, frequently saying the Tablet of Ahmad for 19 consecutive days for the resolution of problems.

She began spending more time reading the Writings and making hundreds of note cards. From these studies, she developed speeches which she practiced again and again, and in 1931 she spoke at the first Louhelen Summer School near Davison, Michigan. She continued speaking about the Bahá'í Faith at Bahá'í summer schools and conventions, and to general audiences at colleges and over the radio. At Shoghi Effendi's request, she traveled to visit various parts of the world to teach the Faith.

Dorothy indeed dedicated her life to serving the Bahá'í Faith, and she served until the end, when her plane went down in the Mediterranean Sea on a return flight from India in 1954. Many were grieved at the earthly loss of Dorothy Baker, who had, as a 13 year old, begged 'Abdu'l-Bahá to let her serve the Cause, calling herself His "little follower".

**Amelia Engelder Collins
(1873-1962)**

“Benefactress of the Faith”

Even from childhood Milly, as she was called, had always wanted a gate. When she was small, she had built a tiny house for her dolls and tried to make a gate across the entrance. Later when she and her husband built a house in New England, Tom asked her about a gate but she did not want to spend the money at the time. When Milly embraced the Faith, she forgot about her gate along with other worldly things. Many years later, when Milly was serving in Haifa, she offered the Guardian a contribution for his personal needs. Some time after this she received a letter from Shoghi Effendi and a photograph of a very large and imposing gate. The Guardian had purchased the gate with the money Milly had offered him. This gate became known as the Collins Gate, and is placed at the beginning of the path leading to the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh.

She was raised, as a Lutheran, to appreciate the qualities of frugality and obedience that were so valued by the Central Figures of the Faith. As a young woman she married a successful businessman, Thomas H. Collins, who had mining interests in Calumet, Michigan and Bisbee, Arizona. She heard about the Faith in 1919 and corresponded with ‘Abdul-Bahá’. After His passing in 1921, her most earnest desire was then to please her beloved Guardian. In some ways, Milly, who had no children, came to regard Shoghi Effendi as her own son, while continuing to honor him with all the reverence due his station. She wrote:

‘Out of the immense treasury of all the Writings, I memorized one sentence and did my utmost to follow that one injunction. It served as a lamp of guidance, shedding light on the dark and obscure paths of my life. That phrase is from the Will and Testament of the Master, where he says that the friends should make Shoghi Effendi happy. Whatever steps I took in my life, any vote case in the Assemblies, any trip taken, even any thought, I would first ask myself whether my vote, words, trip or thought would make him happy. When I was sure, then I would take action without fear.’

In 1924 she was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly (NSA) of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada, serving on this body until 1933. Her husband passed away suddenly on board ship in 1937 while on a trip to Europe. Not long after, when she was on her second pilgrimage, the Guardian said to her, ‘Your husband is in the presence of the Master and is proud of your services.’ She again served on the NSA from 1938 until she was called by the Guardian to the Holy Land in 1951. In a letter from Shoghi Effendi, he acknowledged her service, not just her generosity:

‘The high rank you now occupy [as a Hand of the Cause] ...has been conferred solely in recognition of the manifold services you have already rendered, and is, by no means, intended to be a stimulus or encouragement in the path of service.’

Shoghi Effendi called her the ‘benefactress of the Faith’ for contributing so much to the Cause she loved so well. She was directly responsible for purchases of properties for the Faith in Africa, Europe, Australia, Persia, Central and South America, Geyserville, California, and on Mount Carmel, property for the Bahá'í summer school at Davison, Michigan, and helped to embellish the area surrounding the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh and to furnish the International archives building. She made possible the purchase of 19 Temple sites in Latin America, Europe and Asia, and much, much more. Her purity of heart and motive and whose sincerity and humility (most people around didn't realize the extent of her gifts) endeared her to the Master and the Guardian.

(20) Excerpted from Barron Harper's
Lights of Fortitude, pp. 202-210.

**‘Alí-Akbar Furútan
(1905-2003)**

“Friend to Children”

It was a hot summer night in Iran. A boy named ‘Alí-Akbar and his family left their stuffy rooms and went up to the flat roof of their home to sleep. It was much cooler under the stars. But sleep was impossible. Neighborhood children started shouting at them from the street below. Suddenly, a ball of fire flew onto the roof, then another! The boys in the street were throwing cotton that they had dipped in kerosene and set on fire. Like many people in the town, the boys were angry because the Furútan family had a new religion – they were Bahá’ís.

‘Alí-Akbar later wrote of those years, “peace and quiet were altogether absent from our house.” Then, when ‘Alí-Akbar was nine years old, his family moved to ‘Ishqábád, Russia. What a change! In ‘Ishqábád, which means “City of Love,” there were many Bahá’ís. There were Bahá’í schools for girls and boys. There was a beautiful Bahá’í House of Worship with a garden that ‘Alí-Akbar said was like “paradise.” On his first day in his new home, he went to a Bahá’í celebration filled with the fragrance of flowers and the melody of chanted prayers. ‘Alí-Akbar said, “we returned to our new home with a joy we had never experienced before.”

When ‘Alí-Akbar had studied reading and writing in Iran, he learned the Persian and Arabic languages. In ‘Ishqábád, he needed to know Russian, which had an entirely different alphabet. But ‘Alí-Akbar was a very good student. In five years he had finished elementary school and junior high school. And, at the age of 14, he became a teacher in his own school!

‘Alí-Akbar had a lot of respect for children. He said their hearts were as delicate as flower petals. He liked to play games with children and tell them stories. ‘Alí-Akbar devoted his life to teaching children and bringing them joy. While he taught school, he was also teaching youth and adults about the Bahá’í Faith. At that time the Russian government didn’t want people to believe in God. So the authorities told him to leave Russia. With a heavy heart, Mr. Furútan obeyed.

He went to Iran where he started a Bahá’í school and worked as a principal. He continued to write and speak about the Bahá’í Faith. Mr. Furútan was so helpful to the Bahá’ís that Shoghi Effendi named him a Hand of the Cause of God. Mr. Furútan wrote that this was a big change in his life. He said, “I have never been able to offer enough gratitude” for this honor.

Mr. Furútan moved to the World Center of the Bahá’í Faith in Haifa, Israel, when he was about 52. He met with thousands of Bahá’ís who went to Haifa to visit Bahá’í Holy Places. When children came to Haifa, he hugged them and seated them next to him during his talks. Wherever he spoke, he loved to tell funny stories. He was often surrounded by the laughter of the people nearby. If anyone wanted to find him in a crowd, all they had to do was follow the laughter.

Mr. Furútan traveled a lot in his work as a Hand of the Cause. One of his most joyous trips was to Russia, 60 years after he was forced to leave. He was so happy to be able to share what he had learned in his long life. As he grew older, Mr. Furútan wished that he would be able to help people until the day he died.

In November of 2003, Mr. Furútan had just finished a talk in Haifa. He walked out the door, and his heart failed. He was 98 years old. His wish came true – he served others until his last breath.

‘Alí-Akbar Furútan had come a long way from the fiery rooftop in Iran. Maybe his scary childhood helped make a special place in his heart for children. Whatever the reason, he showered love on them all. You can see this love in his gentle, smiling face.

(21) Excerpted from **Brilliant Star**, March/ April 2004, pp.10-11.

Ugo Giachery
(1896-1989)

“Indefatigable, Noble Lover of Language”

Ugo Giachery, born of an aristocratic family in Palermo, Sicily, had a strong appreciation for gardening and language – two traits that were repeatedly called upon in his many years of service to the Faith. During his youth he studied English, and he said that his study of Shakespeare, Byron and Shelley helped him develop a particular appreciation for the cadence and the freedom of expression inherent in the English language. Well educated in many areas, he taught inorganic chemistry at university level, was interested in foreign banking and the tourist trade. He met two Bahá'ís, Mrs. Louise Matthews and her daughter, during travels in the United States in 1924, and soon afterwards became a Bahá'í himself. He met his wife Angeline Westergren, of the Swedish royal family, through mutual friends. She had been introduced to the Faith while visiting Boston in the 1920s. They married in 1926 and settled in New York, serving the Faith immediately.

Twenty years later he translated, with his wife's help, Esslemont's *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era* into Italian. In 1947, they moved to Rome in response to the Guardian's call for pioneers after World War II, and by the next year, the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Rome was elected. He immediately was called upon by The Guardian to secure carved marble for the building of the Shrine of the Báb, and they worked together on this and other projects for nine years. He wrote about Shoghi Effendi:

No words will ever be able to describe the depth of my devotion and of my abiding love for him, nor the transformation I underwent under the influence of his warm and tender affection; an influence that changed my character, my outlook on life, my habits, and opened my eyes to the unending vista of new aspirations and horizons.

Dr. Giachery's admiration for the Guardian is also clear in his description of Shoghi Effendi's writings:

When Shoghi Effendi's first messages appeared, followed soon by his translations of the Sacred Writings, it was clear that a new style came into bloom, a new standard was set, and a perfect balance was achieved between the poetic and flowery Eastern languages of the original texts and the rationalistic Western idioms. I vividly remember spending long hours reading and living every word, feeling the joy of being part of some reality which reflected an unseen world as yet unknown to most human beings...

Dr Giachery worked with architect and Hand of the Cause William Sutherland Maxwell, establishing a close relationship with him as well. He overcame enormous obstacles as the cessation of the British Mandate in 1948 in Palestine led to the Jewish War of Independence at the same time that Italy was in the early stages of recovery from World War II, having lost almost its entire infrastructure. In late 1951, he was appointed a Hand of the Cause by the Guardian. When Dr. Giachery came to Haifa on pilgrimage about a year later, it was the first time he had ever met the Guardian. He described the meeting vividly:

“ ‘Welcome! Welcome!’ he said, with a gentle and yet compelling voice. ‘At last you have come.’ And with a rapid and unforeseen motion he embraced me with such a tenderness that for a time I felt I was in the arms of all the mothers of the world.”

Shoghi Effendi encouraged Dr. Giachery:

“The service you have rendered is not sufficiently appreciated today, but it will be fully appreciated in the future...you worked for so long all alone; and no one appreciates this more than I, myself. When you are alone, you have such a big weight to carry. Single-handed, you have rendered an historic service to the Cause.”

**Herman Grossmann
(1899-1968)**

“The Establisher of the Faith in These Lands”

As a German in the 20th century, Hermann Grossmann suffered through two world wars, first as a soldier in World War I and later as a Bahá'í in World War II. Born in Argentina, he experienced a totally different, open and accepting world before his family moved back to Germany, then ruled by Kaiser Wilhelm II.

When war broke out in 1914, Germany was the second largest industrial nation in the world, close behind the United States, and as a young man serving Germany in France during the final two years of World War I, he found war to be a shattering experience. Hermann searched for answers to the suffering he had seen. He learned about the Bahá'í Faith from a German couple that 'Abdul-Bahá had asked to travel teach in Germany. Arriving late to a meeting in Leipzig, Hermann saw a radiant woman proclaiming to the audience that all people are like leaves of one tree and the flowers of one garden. Hermann was immediately attracted to the message and accepted the new Revelation instantaneously. Two other people became Bahá'ís that same night and soon these three were visiting Alma Knobloch, who had become a Bahá'í in 1903 who lived in Leipzig.

Soon Hermann returned home to Hamburg and to his great joy, his mother and sister accepted his new Faith, and he immediately began to serve the Cause. He received a doctorate three years later and the next year was married. In a few years he built a house in a neighboring village for his family, his mother and sister and this home became the focal point for Bahá'í activity. During this time he published a labor of love, the world's only monthly magazine in Esperanto at that time.

During this time he served on the National Spiritual Assembly of Germany and Austria and taught Bahá'í children's classes, published pamphlets and an illustrated magazine called *Das Rosengartlein* (The Little Rose Garden). In several towns in Germany Little Rose Garden groups were founded to teach Bahá'í children.

One month after returning from his first pilgrimage in May 1937, the Faith and its administrative institutions were banned by special order of the Reichsfürer SS and chief of the German police (Gestapo) Heinrich Himmler. Bahá'í homes were raided, and Bahá'í books, letters, documents and other materials relating to the Faith, among them all the copies of his magazines were taken and destroyed. The persecution of the Bahá'ís in Germany was widespread. Hermann was fortunate that he was not otherwise personally targeted, and in August 1945 the American Army of Occupation issued a permit to the Bahá'ís in the Western zones enabling them to resume practice of their religion. Less than a year later Shoghi Effendi named him among the first contingent of Hands and his efforts became internationally focused, including many years of travel to South America, where he lived as a child.

Shortly after attending the 1967 International Conference in Frankfurt, he passed away and was laid to rest in a cemetery facing the beautiful and peaceful Neckar river valley in southern Germany. He was remembered at his funeral service in these words:

Now up on the slope [his] soul seemed free from all suffering and it was as if the heart of him would beat once more whose entire life was dedicated to the establishment of the Faith of God in the heart of Europe, in Latin America and in the whole of mankind. He truly was the Establisher of the Faith in these lands, a great educator, a scholar and a true brother.

Horace Hotchkiss Holley
(1887-1960)

“Unrivalled Services”

When Horace Holley left Williams College in 1909 he went to Europe where he traveled, studied and worked until war broke out in 1914. On that voyage he met a young artist, Bertha Herbert, who lent him a book to read, *Abbas Effendi, His Life and Teachings* by Myron H. Phelps. Compared with the literature now available in English it was inaccurate and inadequate, but it opened a new world to the mind of the twenty-two-year-old man who read it.

From that day he never turned back. His seeking mind and strong spirit had not only found personal answers to the problems of life but also the arena in which he was to express himself, to labour, to be tested, to suffer and win his victories for over half-a-century. His own attitude to the metamorphosis which took place in him over the years, he expressed in 1956: “At first it seemed possible to encompass the Revelation of Bahá’u’lláh by reducing it to a formula or confining it within a well-turned phrase. Gradually my ventures proved to me that I myself was to be encompassed, re-oriented, re-moulded in all the realms of my being. For religion in its purity reveals God, and only God can reveal man to himself.”

During the years in Paris, it is clear that in spite of a mind preoccupied with the social and economic problems of the world, the arts were the predominating influence during these early years. Horace enjoyed the entrée to many interesting circles of artists and intellectuals.

Returning to the United States in 1914, Horace moved in New York in very much the same circles as he had in Europe. These were the years when Horace changed. It is hard to define in words. A race horse has to give up racing and learn to pull a load; an artist, full of creative impulses, inherits a farm, needs a means of support, goes and farms and in the endless round of pressing chores all his practical, inherited farmer-ancestry comes out in him. Every now and then the dreamer inside turns over restlessly in his sleep. Such is what happened to Horace. But at the end of his life the dreaming Horace awoke again and the two men became one, a much greater person than either could have been alone.

His preoccupation with serving the Bahá’í Cause was steadily growing. In 1922 the first American National Spiritual Assembly was elected. In 1923 Horace became a member of that body, on which he remained until 1959, serving as its secretary for thirty-four of those thirty-six history-making years. In 1925 Horace gave up earning his living in various companies to devote his entire life to Bahá’í activity. It must never be thought that this was an easy step for a man of his character to take. It was only Horace’s passionate conviction of the rightness of Bahá’u’lláh’s Teachings that persuaded him to give up all thought of a personal, independent career and become the full-time servant of an administration in which all too often his fellow believers criticized him for doing so.

[With] a man of Horace’s caliber devoting his entire time and energy to its work, Shoghi Effendi found that he could set the forces of Bahá’í Administration in motion. Halfway across the world there was a collaborator who grasped the import of his instructions and interpretations of the Teachings and who, as the “indefatigable and distinguished” secretary of that Assembly [America] not only saw they were implemented, but expounded and classified them. This partnership was of an importance impossible to overestimate. That it worked so well, bore such fruit and survived the acid test of time, is a great compliment to the two people involved. The evolution of the Administrative Order and the part Horace played in its enfoldment is a vast subject, but the messages sent to him by Shoghi Effendi testify how great a role he played.

“Your ready pen, your brilliant mind, your marvelous vigour and organizing ability, above all your unwavering loyalty are assets that I greatly value and for which I am deeply grateful...”
“Assure you my ever deepening admiration your unrivalled services love abiding gratitude...” “Be assured and persevere in your historic services...” “Moved convey glad tidings your election rank Hand Cause... May sacred function enable you enrich record services already rendered for Bahá’u’lláh.”

**Leroy Ioas
(1896-1965)**

“The Great Planner”

Leroy was the brightest luminary of a large and united family whose services to Bahá'u'lláh began shortly after the inception of His Faith in North America. Leroy was born in Wilmington, Illinois in 1893. His father, Charles Ioas, accepted the Faith in 1898 and served it faithfully until his death in 1917. Leroy's mother, Maria, accepted Bahá'u'lláh with her husband. For her son, she was “one of the angels of the American Bahá'í Community”...

From boyhood Leroy was sensitive to the light of the Spirit. When, in 1912, ‘Abdu'l-Bahá came to Chicago, Leroy led his parents to Him in a crowded hotel lobby by the radiance which enveloped Him. Although only sixteen, he took the Master for his guide, and was aware of His guidance at several critical periods in his life. He was present when ‘Abdu'l-Bahá laid the cornerstone of the Temple in Wilmette, and as a young man he taught classes on its grounds. Also at sixteen, after high school and some commercial training, he began work in the railway industry, which he continued for forty years, rising from an insignificant post to become Passenger Traffic Manager in the Eastern United States. In 1919 he was married to Sylvia Kuhlman, and together they set out for San Francisco.

Almost his first act on reaching San Francisco was to address a letter to ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, begging confirmation for all his family and his children unborn, and for his own severance, knowledge, and steadfastness “that this faltering one may be quickened through that Divine Power, and thereby render some service which may be conducive to the happiness of the heart of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá.” By 1926 he was conducting classes for a hundred people in Oakland, an hour and a half away. Although they were extremely successful, he was very discouraged that he was so alone in his effort. He resolved to create a teaching plan that would unify all the individual efforts so as to have more effect:

Out of this period three different plans of teaching came to me. One was to establish in this liberal western area very large unity conferences...Another was the revised teaching plan which ultimately found its consummation in the first Seven Year Plan...The third was to find a place where people could gather for a period of one or two weeks for the dual purpose of deepening their understanding of the Faith and preparing them for public teaching. He planned such a successful amity conference in 1925 that it was carried on for several years and he was offered a scholarship to Stanford University—which he turned down due to his commitments to the Faith and his family. In keeping with his plans his efforts launched a first program on land owned by John and Louise Bosch later that year. Two years later a school was formed at that site. In 1932 he was the youngest person elected to the National Spiritual Assembly and was immediately appointed to the National Teaching Committee which he served as chairman for 14 years until he moved to Chicago with his work on the railroad and took up greater responsibilities as a trustee of the House of Worship during its final years of construction.

He was elected treasurer of the National Spiritual Assembly in 1950 and the following year appointed a Hand of the Cause by Shoghi Effendi, who asked him to come to Haifa and help with the enormous challenges. Greatly missed by the American believers, Mr. Ioas served the Guardian with such devotion that he named the Octagon door in the Shrine of the Báb for him.

(25) Excerpted from *The Bahá'í World*, v. XIV, p. 291; and Barron Harper's *Lights of Fortitude*, pp. 265-275.

William Sutherland Maxwell
(1874-1952)

“All Goodness”

Born in Montreal, Canada, William Sutherland Maxwell worked in his brother's architectural office as a youth until he was accepted in a Boston firm in 1895. His talent then led him to Paris where he received special training, met the person who introduced him to the Faith—who also became his wife. In 1902 he married May Ellis Bolles, and together they returned to Canada, where they lived for many years while he helped his brother design many of today's Canadian landmarks.

In 1909 his wife took him, a young man moderately interested in the Faith but not convinced about it, with her on pilgrimage to Haifa. There he met 'Abdul-Bahá, immediately accepted the Faith, and they returned home with a commitment to support the Faith. Their home in Canada then became the center of that country's Bahá'í activities and the home that 'Abdul-Bahá visited for several days in 1912 during his historic visit to North America. It was just before that visit that the young couple had an infant daughter Mary, a child very dear to them—promised to them by 'Abdul-Bahá three years earlier during their pilgrimage. She was to be their only, but very special, child, for she would later become the wife of 'Abdul-Bahá's eldest grandson and a Hand of the Cause herself.

Maxwell remained busy in Canada with his professional work and with local support of the Faith until the marriage of his daughter in 1938 and the passing of his wife who died while travel teaching in Argentina. At the request of his daughter Mary, and her husband Shoghi Effendi, he moved to Haifa. At this point his life radically changed, for he became a trusted friend to the Guardian and together the design and model for the superstructure of the Shine of the Báb began to take shape. The model was unveiled in May 1944 at the 100th anniversary of the Declaration of the Báb.

He also worked with Dr. Ugo Giachery on this project who described Maxwell's contribution: “Nearly every stone shows the gracefulness of the Maxwell artistic talent; in some instances the delicacy of the design is like a beautiful piece of embroidery or hand-made jewelry...”

While the crowning glory of his design work was being built in the winter of 1949-50, he became desperately ill and his daughter took him to Switzerland where he recovered. He then moved back home to Montreal, where he lived for two years before his death. Three months before he passed the Guardian appointed him a Hand of the Cause.

He had become a very close associate of the Guardian's. Through his nobility of character, devotion of the Cause and love for the Guardian, he enjoyed an intimacy with Shoghi Effendi that few ever achieved. Rúhíyyih Khánúm, following her attendance the 1953 Bahá'í Intercontinental Conference in Chicago, made her way to her father's gravesite, and there fulfilled Shoghi Effendi's wish. He had asked that she sprinkle some attar of rose he had given her on Sutherland's grave and to place on his resting place flowers taken from the Shrine of the Báb. When she returned to Haifa bearing photographs of her visit to her beloved father's grave, Shoghi Effendi looked at them for a long time and kept them for himself.

Tarázu'lláh Samandarí
(1875-1968)

“Ornament of God”

Tarázu'lláh Samandarí came from an illustrious family. His grandfather was a well-known and highly respected merchant who recognized the Cause of God from the earliest times and his father was an Apostle of Bahá'u'lláh. His grandmother was one of the companions of Táhirih. Bahá'u'lláh gave him his name when he was an infant, and “Tarázu'lláh” means “ornament of God” and his life proved this to be very illustrative.

An accomplished calligrapher, Mullá 'Alí, known as Jináb-i-Mu'allim, who had been introduced to the Faith by his father and had been praised by Bahá'u'lláh as the first teacher to put into practice Bahá'í principles of education, became his teacher. Tarázu'lláh was a good student and later became an outstanding master of calligraphy, revered as a highly educated man, due in part to his exposure to the many wonderful Tablets he copied. His craft enabled him to become familiar, to a unique degree, with the penmanship of the Báb, Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdul-Bahá and their various amanuenses, so that in later years he was asked to use this skill to identify many Tablets.

When he was 16 he went on pilgrimage from Iran to the Holy Land, arriving there in November 1891, was there for seven months, and was there when Bahá'u'lláh passed away in May 1892. He has shared many stories over the years. He found that he, like so many believers, was unable to describe His face, for he couldn't bear to look at it in His presence.

A story shared by Leslie Taherzadeh, widow of author Adib Taherzadeh, recalls one event several weeks in early spring, well before the passing of Bahá'u'lláh. He said that Bahá'u'lláh's tent had been placed in the garden and when it was time for Bahá'u'lláh to speak, he had been unable to find space in the tent, yet noticed that there was a section with a small table that had been set aside to provide for service to the people in the tent. This section had an open side of the tent directly in front of it, so that one could be “in the tent” but couldn't see inside, or be seen by those in the tent. So the young Samandarí stood there, essentially right behind Bahá'u'lláh, and could hear every word.

So he remained there throughout the time Bahá'u'lláh was talking to the believers. When it was over and people were leaving, they were each handed oranges from baskets by people at the sides of the tent, but there weren't enough for everyone. The young pilgrim was disappointed that he couldn't get an orange. At that moment Bahá'u'lláh walked around to the other side of the tent and gave him His orange. Mr. Samandari was so excited that he received an orange directly from His hand! There were quite a few other youth there, and they apparently saw what happened and began to approach him, perhaps with the intention of getting the very special orange. Mr. Samandari remembers running very fast back to the house, eating the orange as he ran, for he didn't want to share that special orange with anyone!

(28) Excerpted from Barron Harper,
Lights of Fortitude, pp. 307-316.

**George Townshend
(1876-1957)**

“Flame of Sacrificial Deeds”

“His sterling qualities his scholarship his challenging writings, his high ecclesiastical position unrivalled any Bahá’í western world...his fearless championship Cause he loved so dearly served so valiantly...one of three luminaries shedding brilliant lustre annals Irish English Scottish Bahá’í communities.”

– Shoghi Effendi, March 27, 1957 cablegram to National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the British Isles. (The other two luminaries were Esslemont and Breakwell.)

George Townshend was among the first to be named by the Guardian, in their lifetimes, as Hand of the Cause of God. He identified God with Truth and his search for Him was passionate, unceasing, disciplined, and relentless. Courage, humility, radiance, humor, gentleness, in addition to powerful intellectual qualities sustained by a profound scholarship are among the signs by which we seek to know him. But the man himself, selfless but inviolate, undemanding but powerful, temperate but direct, yielding but immaculate, belonged wholly to his Master and was not kept back from Him by anything which the world could do. He was an Irishman, a big man, and had been a runner at Oxford. He corresponded with 'Abdu'l-Bahá in and about 1918-20, and the Tablets which he received became his terms of reference. The Master had written, ‘It is my hope that thy Church will come under the Heavenly Jerusalem’, and from then on he devoted all his energies to the attempt to bring to the clergy of the Church of Ireland to a recognition of the Bahá’í Faith.

By 1947, his activities had provoked an enquiry through the Archbishops of Canterbury and Armagh, and in consultation with the National Spiritual Assembly, he resigned his clerical positions. Let it be recorded that a man of seventy, with family responsibilities, holding high office in an honored and well-rewarded calling, gave up all he had achieved, his beautiful country rectory – the scene of happy family life and long research – his position among the gentry, his future security in the form of pensions and other emoluments, to embrace poverty, indignity, the scorn and loss of friends, dependence on others, at the call of His Lord Whose authority he recognized in the Guardian. He and his family became founding members of the first Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of Dublin.

In the last stanza of a poem to Bahá'u'lláh, George Townshend wrote:

Make my whole life one flame
Of sacrificial deeds that shall proclaim
The new-born glory of Thy ancient name;
And let my death lift high yet the same
Triumphal chant of praise!

Some of George Townshend’s daughter Una’s earliest recollections of him are “of riding on his shoulders and of being taken for bicycle rides on the front of his bike, in a little basket seat. He was always lots of fun and very kind. He used to take my brother and me for walks, and he told us stories which he made up as he went along. The continuing story of Satchy, Watchy and Patchy – three little children – seemed to last for years, and their adventures became more exciting as we grew bigger. When we reached the stage of wanting to have frogs and insects for pets he explained that this was cruel, that ‘part of loving things was to love their freedom...’ You don’t need to touch things in order to love them.

“Daddo, as we called him, used to be the one to give us our baths and put us to bed. He taught us our first prayers and brought us up to think of religion from the Bahá’í point of view

though we were members of the Church of Ireland and knew nothing about Bahá'u'lláh. His reason for not telling us was that he was working with great care and tact to bring the Church of Ireland into the Bahá'í Faith, as 'Abdu'l-Bahá had mentioned in His second Tablet to my father. He felt that it was very important that nothing should be done to antagonize the members of the Church of Ireland and he was afraid that Brian and I, who were little chatterboxes, would really upset the applecart...

“We learnt the three R’s from Daddo before we were finally packed off to school. He loved to go for walks and would say, ‘ Let’s go out and commune with nature’. Our favourite walk was to a place called the horse park; this was a large area of grass, mainly for grazing cattle and sometimes horses. There was a small lake and migrating birds used to stop there. It was a lovely place, surrounded by woods and in the spring there were lots of bluebells. There was a high part where there were mostly beech trees and there was a little round tower; it seemed to be solid, but it was made of limestone, and Daddo said it was authentic Irish architecture. The entire fresh green of the beech trees, and there were some wild cherries along the edge – it was, I suppose, about a mile and a half from where we lived. We used to love to sit there and look down the hill towards the little lake, and then we would go back home.”

In an ode to his daughter, Una, on her third birthday, George Townshend wrote:

“O little one, my Una, April’s child, thou breath of the spring wind embodied!

The Bluebells cluster about thy knees; overhead the giant beech-trees spread their half-unfolded leaves; across the meadow the cuckoo calls, and from the distant bog comes the curlew’s lonely cry.

How happy art thou, leading the revel of the woods, their native queen, for whom a thousand springs have come and gone to weave thy flower-beauty, and to find their meaning and perfection in these fresh lips and laughing eyes of thine.

O little one, joys more rare than these await thy wakening heart! A richer spring has cast its bounty at thy feet, a greater glory shines from another Heaven. And never morning breaks nor evening falls but lovers’ prayers go forth to beg the early vision of God’s Golden Age for thee who playest here thinking all happiness is already thine!”

A Father’s Reflection

While they are at your side, love these little ones to the utmost. Forget yourself. Serve them; care for them; lavish all your tenderness on them. Value your good fortune while it is with you, and let nothing of the sweetness of their babyhood go unprized. Not for long will you keep the happiness that now lies within your reach. You will not always walk in the sunshine with a little warm, soft hand nestling in each of yours, nor hear little feet pattering beside you, and eager baby voices questioning and prattling of a thousand things with ceaseless excitement. Not always will you see that trusting face upturned to yours, feel those little arms about your neck, and those tender lips pressed upon your cheek, nor will you have that tiny form to kneel beside you, and murmur baby prayers into your ear.

Love them and win their love, and shower on them all the treasures of your heart. Fill up their days with happiness, and share with them their mirth and innocent delights. Childhood is but for a day. Ere you are aware it will be gone with all its gifts for ever.

(29) Excerpted from David Hoffman’s
George Townshend, pp. 221-223.

Valíyu'lláh Varqá
(1884-1955)

“A Life of Dedication”

Valíyu'lláh Varqá was the third son of Mírzá 'Alí Muhammad Varqá, who was martyred with his son Rúhu'lláh in 1896 when Valíyu'lláh was 12 years old. Both of his grandfathers were staunch believers in the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, but his mother was a fanatical Muslim (who later became a Bahá'í), the daughter of a woman who had sought the death of his father, thus causing an insurmountable breach between his parents, who divorced when Valíyu'lláh Varqá was young.

As a young child he and another brother, Badí'u'lláh, who died as a young child, were left in the care of this grandmother while the older brothers accompanied their father to Zanján. Valíyu'lláh was left to be raised by a woman whose hatred of the Cause was so deep that she spoke openly against his father to such an extent that the young boy wept for his father's apparent deviation from Islam, 'the true Faith'.

When he was 16, his paternal uncle moved the youth from his grandmother's home to his own home, and under the influence of this devout Bahá'í the young man himself became a believer sometime before he was 20. Once he was a confirmed Bahá'í, he wanted to visit the Holy Shrines and meet 'Abdul-Bahá. He began his journey and arrived first at Tabríz, planning to go further when the Local Spiritual Assembly of Tabríz consulted with him and directed him instead to go to Tihrán to be with his brother 'Azízu'lláh. He had no choice but to immediately obey the institution. Once he was living with his brother, he was able to enter the Tarbíyat School, and learned both English and Arabic. After that, he attended the American High School in Tihrán.

He then went on pilgrimage, met the Center of the Covenant, and from there continued his studies in Beirut, returning every summer to study in Akká at the invitation of 'Abdul-Bahá. He planned in 1909 to continue his studies in England, but his plans were changed once again, for 'Abdul-Bahá instructed him to return to Tihrán, where he was married and began to work for a time as a secretary/translator at the Turkish Embassy. In those early years he served on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Tihrán and on various Bahá'í committees. In 1912 he received permission to join 'Abdu'l-Bahá's entourage in America, where he acted as His treasurer and occasionally as His interpreter. He also accompanied the Master on His journeys to London and Paris.

When the National Spiritual Assembly of Iran was established in 1934, he was elected to it, occasionally serving as chairman. In 1938 when the Trustee of the Huqúqu'lláh, known as Amín-i-Amín passed away, Shoghi Effendi then appointed him to take on the responsibility. Over the years he and his wife had ten children, seven who survived to adulthood, all who were firm believers in the Cause of God.

Valíyu'lláh Varqá often received praise from the Guardian for his efficiency and faithfulness in carrying out his tasks. He was among the first contingent of Hands of the Cause appointed by the Guardian in 1951 and he then began extensive travels on behalf of the Faith until he died accompanied by other Hands of the Cause while they were in Germany in 1955.

When asked why his father was named a Hand of the Cause, Dr. Alí Muhammad Varqá said:

'Because Shoghi Effendi recognized in him this capacity, devotion and sincerity.

From him there was a feeling of nothingness. He devoted his life, mind and health to the Faith. The Faith for him was above all.

Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í
(1889-1984)

“Ray of the Sun of Divinity”

Shuá'u'lláh 'Alí was born into a Bahá'í family in Tihrán, and both his parents sacrificed for and were connected to the early believers. He studied at home until he was ten, when he was then sent to the newly-opened Tarbíyat School.

When Shuá'u'lláh 'Alí was seven, his father wrote to 'Abdu'l-Bahá and received a Tablet from Him in return. In this Tablet, 'Abdu'l-Bahá plays upon the meaning of the child's name, 'ray of the sun of divinity', and commands him to radiate and illumine the horizons. His father instructed his son to commit the precious words to memory:

O flame of the love of God! The ray must shed light and the sun must rise; the full moon must shine and the star must gleam. Since thou art a ray, beseech thou the Lord to enable thee to give illumination and enlightenment, to brighten the horizons and to consume the world with the fire of the love of God. I hope that thou mayest attain such a station, nay surpass it. Upon thee be his glory.

General 'Alá'í said in an interview when he was 84 years old that these words became his 'guide and refuge in life.'

He began attending medical school, but left it to study at the Polytechnic of Tihrán. At the age of 18 he was appointed a member of the committee established by the Hands of the Cause as the embryonic Central Assembly of Tihrán, the precursor of the Local Spiritual Assembly, to which he was first elected in 1913 and served without interruption for 30 years.

He married when he was 23 and had five children: Hishmat, Mihrangiz, Bihjat, Farhangíz and Amír.

He first worked for the Ministry of Customs in Tihrán, and then served as the financial officer of the city's police department. He then worked for five years as the treasurer of the Ministry of Justice and was such a responsible and careful steward that he was chosen to head north to give the soldiers their back pay during the freezing winter of 1921. For this service he received a promotion to chief controller of army finances and given the rank of general.

Because of his reputation as a financier, his rank of army general, his connections with diplomatic channels, as well as the sheer force of his personality, he could accomplish for the Faith what many others could not: he helped to manage the Bahá'í properties in Iran, a service that often involved negotiations with the government.

In 1934 the National Spiritual Assembly of Iran was elected and he was elected, serving until 1952, when the Guardian called upon him to assume worldwide duties as a Hand of the Cause. In 1978 he left Iran and moved to France, where he lived until 1981. The last few years of his life were spent in Scottsdale, Arizona. In 1984 he passed away peacefully in the presence of close family members and devoted friends.

(31) Excerpted from Barron Harper,
Lights of Fortitude, pp. 335-338.

Músá Banání
(1886-1971)

“A Youth Transformed”

Músá Banání was a man of remarkable exuberance, exceptional firmness, unhesitating obedience and utter humility. Born into a Jewish family in Baghdád, he suffered many hardships as a child. He suffered greatly when his father died when he was only four years old. As a consequence of this, he had no opportunity to go to school, thus he could only read and write Persian and Arabic in the Hebrew alphabet that he managed to learn as a child.

When he was 17, he left home, following his older brother to Iran. His brother became a Bahá'í, but Músá was not particularly interested. His brother attended a meeting in 1911 when a prominent teacher came to town. A photograph commemorating the event was taken, but instead of just serving as a memento, it also was used to assist the authorities to identify and consequently arrest the believers. Since Músá resembled his brother, he was mistakenly detained.

In prison he witnessed the torture of a frail, elderly cellmate who heroically refused to deny his beliefs. Músá told the authorities that he was not a Bahá'í, spoke badly about the Faith, and was therefore released. Once free he was relieved to be out of prison, but was immediately ‘seized by a profound spiritual convulsion’. He felt very badly, began to study about the Cause, attend meetings, and by 1913 became a Bahá'í.

His life was immediately transformed, astonishing many. For example, he made and lost a great deal of money during World War I, and then after the war looked up all his creditors and paid them all back. In 1925 he married the woman who was a daughter of the famous teacher whose photo had been taken with the Bahá'ís when he was arrested in place of his brother.

Mr. Banání went on pilgrimage in 1934, spending 26 days in the presence of Shoghi Effendi who ‘showered a joyful love upon him.’ When he returned to Persia he became a member of a national committee responsible for identifying and acquiring historic sites associated with the Faith. He was able to purchase and restore the house in Tihrán in which Bahá'u'lláh was born.

In 1950 a cable from the Guardian was sent to the believers in Iran, asking people to pioneer to Africa. He immediately put an end to all his business concerns, and pioneered to Kampala, Uganda with his wife, daughter, son-in-law and grand-daughter. The Guardian expressed his pleasure at their decision. The warmth of their Persian household in Kampala attracted many people wanting to know more. A special meeting was planned in Haifa for seekers from Africa during the time that Mr. Banání went on pilgrimage a second time. While there, one particular seeker, Enoch Olinga, declared his belief in Bahá'u'lláh to the pioneers from Kampala, and the Guardian appointed Mr. Banání a Hand of the Cause.

The Guardian asked Mr. Banání in 1953 to find and purchase the land for a temple site in Uganda and he was able to complete the task, in spite of poor health, within a week. He continued to serve his beloved Faith for more than 15 years, overcoming many health problems, including the loss of one eye and one leg, as well as the complete paralysis of one side. Even in this condition he offered continuous prayers for others experiencing distress.

**Clara Davis Dunn
(1869-1960)**

“Mother Dunn, a Magnetic Personality”

Mother Dunn, along with Father Dunn, was a spiritual conqueror of Australia and New Zealand. But there were many times it didn't look like that would be at all possible. Clara was the sixth child of Thomas and Maria Holder in a London family continuously struggling against poverty. Her father was a stern Methodist and her mother an attractive Roman Catholic. She grew up surrounded by troubles stemming from their meager resources and her parent's disputes about money and religion, making her childhood very unhappy.

Perhaps because of this situation, she married early and moved away, marrying William Allen Davis at the age of 16 and moving to Ontario, Canada. She was the mother of a son by the time she was 18, and when the child was one year old, Davis was killed in a railroad accident. She decided to support herself working as a nurse for she loved to care for the sick and helpless, and her eldest brother agreed to raise the child. Always sorry that she could not bring him up herself, Clara felt that she was to blame for most of his problems.

It was at her place of employment in a medical center in the United States, in Walla Walla, Washington, fourteen hard years later, that she met two Bahá'í gentlemen one day who invited her to attend a lecture on the Faith that evening. Clara went to the lecture but wasn't impressed. In fact, she was put off, for the person speaking appeared very well to do. She asked if the Faith was 'for everybody in the world, for every kind and color.' Assured that it was, she listened further and became a Bahá'í, working hard for the next five years to teach the Faith, but without obvious signs of success.

During 1911 Lua Getsinger gave a series of lectures in San Francisco and Clara heard from reading about them that 'Abdul-Bahá was planning to be there in 1912. She then borrowed money for the trip to see him, and tired and hungry, sought out the house he was staying at directly upon her arrival. All she knew was that he was staying on Market Street, so she asked the tram conductor if he knew where the Persians stayed. He knew and dropped her off in front of the house. She knocked on the door, but no one answered. It was unlocked, so she let herself in, eventually meeting 'Abdul-Bahá, dining with Him and the Persians, and was told by Hyde Dunn that he was the person who was to have answered the door.

During the years that followed, Hyde Dunn's first wife passed away, and Hyde and Clara were married. Their home became a center of Bahá'í activity from 1917 to 1919, they responded to the call for pioneers and received blessings from 'Abdul-Bahá to go to Australia. They served together for 21 years there, known to all as Father and Mother Dunn.

A friend described Mother Dunn as possessing a magnetic personality and reflecting a wonderful light and sweetness of the Holy Spirit. She attracted people to meetings, and her husband confirmed those people through his talks and kind, gentle nature. He passed away in 1941, having greatly assisted in the development of the Faith in Australia and New Zealand and being appointed a Hand of the Cause. In her mid 80s, in 1952, she was also appointed a Hand of the Cause. As an example, in 1956 she attended the 21st annual summer school in New South Wales, and was among the 72 people there, 50 of them being youth, and she didn't miss a single session. A lovely photo exists that shows her surrounded by 13 young people with a book on her lap.

At the age of 88 and physically frail, she traveled to the Holy Land in 1957 and attended all the sessions of the Conclave of the Hands upon the death of Shoghi Effendi. She passed at the age of 91 with a prayer on her lips: "Wholly unto Thee do I turn, fervently imploring Thee with all my heart..."

(33) Excerpted from Barron Harper's, *Lights of Fortitude*, pp. 349-361; and O.Z. Whitehead's *Some Bahá'ís to Remember*, pp. 153-175.

Dhikru'llah Khádem
(1904-1986)

“Ever-Present Love”

Zikrullah Khadem was born in 1904 Tihrán, Persia, the second of six children to devoted and hardworking parents...As a child, Zikrullah's home was graced with the presence of two exceptionally courageous and outstanding grandmothers. One of these, whom he called 'Bibí Jan,' repeatedly accompanied another dedicated and fearless lady, Ábjí Susan, as they placed their lives in jeopardy in order to claim the precious bodies of martyrs for befitting burial. Clad in chadors, they would hasten to the site where the bodies had been thrown in disrespect. Crying, "My brother, my brother," they would rescue the remains, wash them with tender love, and bury them with due respect, in accordance with Bahá'í law.

The Khádem home was totally dedicated to the Cause and open to all...Love and hospitality so permeated the atmosphere of the Khádem home that it was well-known among the Bahá'ís and was a haven for traveling teachers. Great Bahá'í scholars passed through and left behind traces of their zeal and devotion...Bahá'í teachers and pilgrims from the Holy Land also passed through...bringing the latest news of the victories of the Faith, and messages and Tablets from 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The believers would excitedly assemble to peruse the divine Tablets by the light of a few candles or sit enthralled as they witnessed the transformation of a seeker upon accepting the proofs of the coming of the Promised One. This devoted group of lovers of Bahá'u'lláh was momentarily oblivious to the fanaticism and turmoil of the world beyond their sanctuary. Soon, however, they had to venture out into the labyrinthine passageways to return to their homes. En route, as they dodged the stones hurled at them, they would be subjected to the verbal hostility of street urchins shouting curses and invectives.

These were the forces which shaped Zikrullah Khádem's character...From his early childhood, Zikrullah Khádem demonstrated great spiritual potential...While still a young boy, Zikrullah was very alert to the needs of the Faith. Thus, when the Central Spiritual Assembly of Persia advised the friends to convey their loyalty to the beloved Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, Shoghi Effendi, he whole-heartedly followed this recommendation. With tears in his eyes he wrote a letter filled with great love and devotion, professing his loyalty...

The following story is told by Mr. Khádem's daughter, May Khádem – Czerniejewski:

“When I was seven, I went with my parents and my brother Ramin on an extended trip through the United States and Europe. So many wonders and adventures flash through my mind as I recall those days. My father would give talks to large audiences while I sat with my mother and played with my doll, Susie, or colored pictures. Every once in a while he would mention Ramin's or my name in a story or would smile at us from the platform. His affection was always evident. Yet the most outstanding and memorable event of that prolonged trip was when my father's ever-present love (which I expected and took for granted) was magnified by the unexpected love and attention of the Hand of the Cause of God Abu'l-Qasim Faizi. We met him in Geneva. I adored him from that moment on. He used to hold me on his lap and read stories to my doll, Susie. His tender heart was so attuned to the special needs of children and his love was so bountiful that he intuitively provided what each child most desired. One time I was especially captivated when he made a point of running after us to say good-bye to my Susie. There was no child who was not charmed by him.

“My father, likewise, appreciated my attachment to Susie. I took her everywhere I went. When my brother teased me about her, my father would come to her defense and boast that Susie was a very special doll. Being dragged around for years took its toll on Susie; one day her leg ripped off. I was devastated. My mother cried in sympathy. I think even my father was affected by it. He very gently calmed me, saying, ‘Things like that happen even to people. They simply have to go to a doctor to get it fixed.’ He assured me he could fix it. Meticulously, he sewed my doll back together. I was so relieved and so grateful.”

Adelbert Mühschlegel
(1897-1980)

“A Wonderful Example of Bahá’í Life”

On June 16, 1897, Adelbert Mühschlegel was born in Berlin, Germany. During his "cheerful childhood," he and his little sister were given much love and attention. His father was a doctor. He gave his son a sense of discipline, encouragement in sports and the desire to become a doctor himself. His mother was the daughter of a Christian minister. She gave her son a passion for a spiritual life.

True to his parents' examples, he studied medicine and often thought about spirituality. He was certain that a new spiritual time had begun, but he didn't know where or how to find proof. It was then that he got an interesting letter from his mother. She had found a religion that was meant for everyone in the world – the Bahá’í Faith. There were only a few books about it available. Adelbert read them all and became a Bahá’í.

In 1936, Adelbert opened his first doctor's office, married Herma Weidle and had five children. Adelbert and Herma were fortunate to be in the presence of the Guardian while on pilgrimage. Amazingly, Shoghi Effendi spent time alone with Adelbert. This was unusual because the Guardian was always so busy. 16 years later, in 1952, Shoghi Effendi would appoint him a Hand of the Cause of God.

After the Mühschlegels returned from Haifa, Adolf Hitler came to power in Germany. As a result, the Bahá’í Faith was outlawed. Spiritual Assemblies could not meet and Bahá’í books were burned. The lives of Bahá’ís were threatened as Hitler tried to get rid of anyone who was part of a religion other than the one he had chosen.

In spite of the dangers of war, the family survived. They settled in a new home that quickly became a center of friendship and humor. When money and food were scarce, Dr. Mühschlegel would write a song or a poem about the problem so that the family and visitors would laugh instead of cry.

It was because Dr. Mühschlegel was both a Hand of the Cause and a medical doctor that he was urgently called to London in 1957. Sadly, Shoghi Effendi had died unexpectedly. Dr. Mühschlegel was asked to wash his body, anoint it with attar of rose and wrap it in clean white silk in preparation for burial.

Dr. Mühschlegel was deeply affected by his time alone with Shoghi Effendi's majestic face and still body. "Something new happened to me in that hour that I cannot... speak of, but I can mention the wisdom and love that I felt pour over me. ...I thanked those beloved hands which had worked and written to establish the Covenant, those feet that had walked for us, that mouth that had spoken to us, that head that had thought for us." As he worked, Dr. Mühschlegel prayed and meditated, asking God that he might follow Shoghi Effendi's example of service.

From that time on, Dr. Mühschlegel's every move was made for the Bahá’í Faith. He traveled constantly, going wherever he was needed to teach the Faith and encourage the Bahá’ís. Finally, at the age of 80, he settled in Greece as a pioneer.

Before his 84th birthday, Dr. Mühschlegel left this world. A cable was sent from the Universal House of Justice, praising everything that he had accomplished in his long life. Adelbert was always willing to serve. He was dearly loved for his gentleness, humility and cheerfulness. Perhaps most of all, Hand of the Cause of God Adelbert Mühschlegel will be remembered as the Universal House of Justice proclaimed him – a wonderful example of Bahá’í life.

**Siegfried “Fred” Schopflocher
(1877-1953)**

“Chief Temple Builder”

Fred Schopflocher was born in Germany and raised as an orthodox Jew. When he finished school he began calling himself an agnostic, but kept searching for a more universal religious expression. He moved to Canada and became the founding president of an industrial company in Montreal. He married Florence Evaline “Lorol” Snyder in New York City in 1918 and the couple continued to live in Montreal. Mrs. Schopflocher met May Maxwell, who also lived in Montreal, and they traveled together to Green Acre Bahá’í School where Lorol became a Bahá’í after the summer of 1920. She then invited her husband to come with her to Green Acre the following year, and during his time there he shared her attraction to the place and to the Faith and became the first person from Montreal of Jewish background to become a Bahá’í.

Not long after he became a Bahá’í, Fred was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the United States and Canada, and served on this body for 15 years at different times between 1924 and 1947. Fred was a champion of Green Acre during the years that Sarah Farmer was ill and the possession and control of Green Acre passed to the Green Acre Fellowship. He donated several important properties to the school and took an active part in its upkeep and extension of its facilities. Along with his assistance, the Fellowship and a number of trustees managed the affairs of the school until 1925. At that time Fred spoke convincingly to the desirability of the school coming directly under the control of the National Spiritual Assembly.

His business took him to many parts of the world, and he made many trips to Haifa. He met Martha Root in Said in 1925 as she was waiting to sail to Europe, providing her the necessary funds on which she was able to continue her voyage. In later years the Guardian asked the friends of Australia to take advantage of Fred’s presence when he had to travel there for business. The Guardian wrote:

...He is truly one of the most distinguished believers in the West. He has a deep knowledge of the Cause, and especially of the Administration, and has contributed a unique share towards its establishment and consolidation in the States.... The friends owe him indeed a great debt, and can never be too grateful for what he has accomplished, and is still so splendidly accomplishing, for the Faith in the West.

While Fred traveled and served the Cause, Lorol was blazing her own amazing path of service, and was able to reach many prominent people of the East. One of Fred’s greatest services to the Cause was the impetus he gave to the building of the House of Worship in Wilmette, IL. It was reported at the 1928 National Convention that Shoghi Effendi had said he believed that the Bahá’ís had lost confidence in the National Assembly and that it would not be able to stick to its budget, nor meet its commitments. Upon hearing this Fred immediately made a special contribution and also contacted his wife who was in Haifa at the time, and she agreed to add even more to it. The result of their combined efforts provided a sense of hope and inspiration to the delegates, and in turn, to the believers in the U.S. The National Assembly not only met its goal that year but good progress on the building of the temple continued.

Fred also stimulated fresh interest for the completion of the temple by showing heightened interest in the need for the completion of the exterior decoration at a time when many believers had seemed to have lost interest. His dedication to the construction of the temple was much appreciated by the Guardian, who called him the “Chief Temple Builder.”

He learned of his appointment as a Hand of the Cause while on one of his trips to Haifa. Rúhíyyih Khánúm was present at the Pilgrim House table when Shoghi Effendi told him of his decision. She said: “Freddie turned so white I thought he was going to faint!”

(36) Excerpted from Barron Harper’s
Lights of Fortitude, pp. 384-390.

**Corrine Knight True
(1851-1961)**

“Tower of Strength”

One autumn day on a southern plantation, Moses and Martha Knight were blessed with a baby daughter, Corinne. Corinne grew up on the plantation and loved dancing and horseback riding. She was a good student and learned a lot about the Bible from her father. As a child, she often said, "How wonderful it must have been to have lived in the days when Christ was on earth."

The Knight family moved to Chicago when Corinne was 15. She met the boy next door and fell in love. Corinne married Moses True when she was 20 years old. Corinne and Moses had eight children, but tragically, two of them died young. Corinne and Moses tried to find comfort in religion. Corinne attended a lecture where she first heard about the Bahá'í Faith. Soon after, at the age of 38, she became a Bahá'í and began to grow stronger.

In 1906, Corinne was given permission to visit 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the Holy Land. She brought a petition signed by 800 Bahá'ís, asking 'Abdu'l-Bahá for permission to begin construction on a Bahá'í Temple in America. The Master picked it up from the pile of gifts for Him, held it high, and said, "This ... this is what gives me great joy. Go back ... and work for the Temple; it is a great work, the best thing you could do, Mrs. True."

And that is exactly what she did. It was rare for women in the early 1900s to have jobs typically held by men, such as handling large amounts of money or understanding architecture and construction. But 'Abdu'l-Bahá insisted that she have a major responsibility in the Temple work. Her role as the financial secretary encouraged the equality of women and men – a basic teaching of the Bahá'í Faith.

Though Corinne was shy about giving speeches, she wrote and spoke about her visit to 'Abdu'l-Bahá to inspire Bahá'ís to contribute to the Temple funds. Over the many years it took to build the House of Worship, she personally wrote thousands of thank you notes for the contributions that flowed in. She was so dependable and dedicated to her Temple responsibilities that Bahá'ís began to call her the "Mother of the Temple."

As the hard work grew, Corinne became stronger and stronger. She held regular firesides and weekly deepenings in her house, served on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Wilmette, Illinois, and helped all those who came to her. She faced sadness, exhaustion, disunity about the Temple work, and the death of her dear husband. Still, she had a firm determination to finish the Temple.

On the day the Temple cornerstone was laid, Corinne unburdened her heart to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. She said, "I have had a great many sorrows... I have had a sad life – sad things to bear." "I know, I know, Mrs. True," He replied, "because I have sent them to you." 'Abdu'l-Bahá explained the need for spiritual tests to Corinne. He explained that we are like travelers on a ship filled with food. The ship, tossing and diving through waves and wind, is going to people who badly need nourishment. We may feel uncomfortable, but the ship must deliver the life-giving food. Although we might suffer through the journey, the result will nurture life. Similarly, there may be tests in our work as Bahá'ís, but our efforts will be fruitful.

So Corinne sailed on. Then, in 1953, Corinne finally attended the dedication of the Bahá'í Temple in Wilmette after decades of work. When she was 91 years old, Shoghi Effendi made Corinne a Hand of the Cause of God. He once wrote to Corinne, "My heart is filled with gratitude for the fresh evidences of untiring activity, of exemplary loyalty, of steadfastness and devotion that you have so powerfully manifested... You are truly a tower of strength...." Corinne Knight True died quietly on April 3, 1961. She was 99 years old.

**Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum; Mary Maxwell; Rúhíyyih Rabbani
(1910-2000)**

“The Little Rose”

The story of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, also known as Mary Sutherland Maxwell, starts from before the time she was born. Her mother was May Bolles Maxwell. May was much loved by 'Abdu'l-Bahá because she “breathed no breath and uttered no word save in service to the Cause of God.” She and her husband, William Sutherland Maxwell, a famous Canadian architect, were on pilgrimage in 1909. One day, May was holding one of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's grandchildren in her arms. 'Abdu'l-Bahá asked, “Would you like to have a baby?” He knew, though no person had told Him, that May and her husband had prayed to have a child. With love and adoration, she looked at 'Abdu'l-Bahá and said, “I choose whatever God chooses. I have no choice but His.” 'Abdu'l-Bahá hugged her and said, “That is the best choice. The Will of God is the best choice.”

A few months later, even though May was no longer young, she happily discovered that she was pregnant. Just a year and a half after her conversation with 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Mary Sutherland Maxwell was born. 'Abdu'l-Bahá wrote to May and Sutherland. “In the garden of existence, a rose has blossomed with the utmost freshness, fragrance, and beauty.”

Mary, the little “rose” grew. When she was two years old, 'Abdu'l-Bahá visited Montreal and stayed in her home. 'Abdu'l-Bahá “lavished much love upon her,” hugged her and occasionally gave her chocolates. When Mary was old enough for school, her mother started a school for her and a few other children. Later, she studied with tutors at home, learning about Bahá'í service from the example of her parents. Mary gave her first Bahá'í talk when she was 15, and served on more than one Youth Committee. She went to Bahá'í school in Michigan in her young days. She not only spoke and studied there – Mary acted the part of an angel in a play, she rode horses, and even brought her pet snakes along for company.

Mary made three pilgrimages to Akká. On the third one, when she was twenty-seven, something very special happened. The little baby girl, blessed and prayed for by Shoghi Effendi's Grandfather, and raised in a loving Bahá'í family, became the wife of Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith! The wedding was quiet and joyful. Shoghi Effendi took Mary to Bahjí, the graceful white and blue mansion where Bahá'u'lláh once lived. Here, he placed the ring upon her finger. This special ring had the Greatest Name engraved on it. Best of all, it had been a gift from Shoghi Effendi's Aunt, the Greatest Holy Leaf. The wedding itself took place in the room of the Greatest Holy Leaf in Haifa. From then on, she was no longer called Mary Maxwell. She was Rúhíyyih Khánum or Madam Rabbání.

From this time on, Rúhíyyih Khánum was immersed in work for the Faith. She was a secretary and proofreader for the Guardian's work. She represented the Guardian at events he could not attend, such as the dedication of the House of Worship in Wilmette. She carried out everything he asked of her, and more.

In 1951 Shoghi Effendi established the International Bahá'í Council as a forerunner to the Universal House of Justice. The next year he enlarged it, adding, among others, Rúhíyyih Khánum as liaison between himself and the Council. Eighteen days later, she was appointed a Hand of the Cause of God to replace her father who had passed away the year before.

The lives of the Guardian and Rúhíyyih Khánum were packed full of work and adventure for many years. Shoghi Effendi worked so hard that he was worn out from his demanding duties. He was not an old man when he died unexpectedly in 1957. Rúhíyyih Khánum was broken-hearted. She didn't think she could go on for another moment without her beloved husband.

But she did go on. Once, Shoghi Effendi had mentioned to her that she should travel after he was gone. And travel she did. From the age of fifty-three, she visited at least 185 countries, major islands and territories during the following 30 years. She traveled in boats for thousands of miles on the Amazon River, drove her Landrover 36,000 miles through 34 African countries and spent days, months and years in places far from her home. All of this travel was to teach the Bahá'í Faith to as many people as possible.

When she was very old Rúhíyyih Khánum said that she hoped that people would remember one thing. “I tried,” she said. Indeed she did. May we all try as hard as did Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum!

Jalál Kházeh
(1897-1990)

“The Essence of Humility”

“What ability does this insignificant, shameful, modest atom possess to be honoured by such a high rank and such grace and to be chosen for this?” asked Jalál Kháze h in his reaction to his appointment as a Hand of the Cause in 1953. His friends noted that his handsome stature, warm personality, and beautiful eloquence in Persian, Arabic, and English (and some knowledge of Spanish) always seemed to be brightly contrasted by his extreme humility, wrapped in loving devotion and felt by all.

His father, who was one of the staunch early Bahá’ís who endured persecution and hardship, died when Jalál was seven years old. Jalál’s mother raised him and made sure that he received the best education that she could arrange. His primary years were spent at the Tarbiyat School in Tihrán. When he was 19, he married and they established a family, having two sons and three daughters. He entered the Iranian army in 1916, retiring from it as a Colonel in 1943. During much of that time he was stationed in many towns around Iran.

The year after he retired he was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of Iran and then also the Local Spiritual Assembly of Tihrán, serving as the secretary for three years. In 1951 he resigned from both assemblies, went on pilgrimage and then began to travel throughout Iran as a full-time teacher of the Faith. He received word that Shoghi Effendi agreed with his plan to help the Iranian Bahá’ís understand the Ten-Year Crusade and to stimulate them to arise and fulfill its goals.

Only two years later, in 1953, Shoghi Effendi appointed him as a Hand of the Cause of God, and his work was extended well beyond the boundaries of Iran for the next 25 years. When he returned to Iran from a trip in 1978, however, he found himself in serious danger, for Revolutionary Guards entered his house and confiscated all of his correspondence, documents and books. He went into hiding, helped by his daughter, and eventually left the country through Pakistan in 1984. The two traveled to Toronto, Canada, where they lived near one of his sons for the next six years until his death in 1990 at the age of 93.

(39) Excerpted from Barron Harper’s
Lights of Fortitude, pp. 164-167.

**Paul Edmond Haney
(1909-1982)**

“The Pure-Hearted One”

Miriam Haney was expecting a baby when she and her husband went on pilgrimage in 1909. While there ‘Abdul-Bahá bestowed His blessings on the unborn child. Immediately after the child, Paul, was born, they wrote to ‘Abdul-Bahá. In a letter to Paul that his mother wrote to him many years later, she shared the reply she received from Him at that time, confirming that Paul was His namesake: “He [‘Abdul-Bahá] confirmed what you were given. Paul for the outside world. His [Your] real name is ‘Abdul-Bahá.” She received many letters from the Center of the Covenant over the years containing loving references regarding the young boy, references which he kept close to his heart as he grew.

His father was a successful attorney and businessman, but he died when Paul was only ten years old. Miriam moved with Paul to Washington D.C. and was appointed to the National Teaching Committee. As a result, Paul grew up attending many conventions and conferences, accompanying his mother and making friends with other young Bahá’ís. Growing up in the American capitol, Paul became known for his charm and unusual height.

He moved back to the Chicago area to attend Northwestern University, where he earned a degree in economics and an M.B.A. When he was 25 he published his first article, titled: “The Economic Organization of Society in the New World Order” which appeared in *The Bahá’í Magazine* in 1934.

He met Helen Margery Wheeler at Green Acre in 1940 and two years later they married, living in Washington D.C., near his mother. In 1946 he was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the United States and Canada and served as Chairman from 1950 to 1957. Three months after Dorothy Baker died in a plane crash in the Mediterranean Sea, he was appointed a Hand of the Cause of God. His mother received the following cable on behalf of Shoghi Effendi about the appointment:

He hopes that dear Paul will ever-increasingly be able to render the Cause important services. Surely you and his father in the Abhá Kingdom must rejoice to see how your cherished hopes are being fulfilled in this beloved son, who is so devoted, and has the interests of the Faith so completely at heart.

The sudden passing of Shoghi Effendi in 1957 required a gathering of the Hands of the Cause of God to continue the work of the Guardian. Rúhíyyih Khánúm later described this first Conclave:

...we were faced with the inescapable obligation of voting from amongst the membership of the Hands of the Cause for who would, if chosen by all of us, accept to live and serve at the World Centre as one of the nine legal Custodians. For those who were not already part of the body of the Hands in Haifa this meant literally burning all their bridges behind them. I can remember the words of Paul Haney, an economist just promoted in the prominent investment firm to which he had belonged for some years, with the assurance of financial increases and a substantial pension on retirement, as he bowed his head and said, ‘You are only called once.’

The sacrifice Paul then made also separated him from his beloved 85-year-old mother. She wrote to Rúhíyyih Khánúm: ‘...naturally I miss Paul – the pure-hearted – but I believe I am with him daily in his service. Distance is no real separation when there is understanding and love.’

Paul’s life then became fully oriented towards serving the Cause of God. He traveled widely and represented the Hands of the Cause at many national conventions, and also helped his fellow hands work through the agonizing problems brought about by the defection of Charles Mason Remey, one of his good friends. In 1963, the Universal House of Justice asked him to be one of the five Hands to remain in the Holy Land, so he remained there in service until his sudden death in an auto accident in 1982.

‘Ali Muhammad Varqá
(1912-)

“The Family Legacy”

His baby picture was shown to ‘Abdul-Bahá when He was in the United States in 1912, for the new-born baby’s father, Valíyu’lláh, was in The Master’s entourage. His uncle ‘Azíz’lláh had taken the baby’s picture and sent it because the child had been born while they were away and he knew the proud father would want to see it and share it with his friends.

One of the believers showed the photo to ‘Abdul-Bahá and He wrote the following on the photo up and down the arms of the baby: ‘Yad-i-Mu’yyad’ which means “Confirmed Hand”, and He also gave the child the name of his martyred grandfather, ‘Mírzá ‘Ali Muhammad Varqá’.

One can only imagine how that father, a devoted follower of Bahá’u’lláh, felt!

‘Ali Muhammad grew up in Tihrán and earned degrees in economics and history from the university there, and married in 1935. For his doctorate he went to the Sorbonne in Paris, returning to Iran to teach at the University of Tabríz. His father was appointed Hand of the Cause in 1938, and passed away in 1951, when Shoghi Effendi appointed the son to replace his father as a Trustee of the Huqúqu’lláh.

In the ensuing years he continued to live in Iran but spent his summers in Haifa, serving as the substitute Custodian who then relieved the Hands of the Cause of God who were living in Haifa so they would be free for other duties.

When, in 1960, Charles Mason Remey defected from the Faith and the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of France was gravely impacted, Dr. Vargá, who had learned French while studying in Paris, was dispatched by the Guardian to help strengthen the new Assembly that was immediately elected.

Dr. Vargá was also a representative of the Custodians in 1963 and traveled world-wide on assignments including the special task of assembling reliable accounts of the early days of the development of the Faith in various parts of the world. For this he gathered narratives, documents, tapes and other materials from early believers and pioneers. When the Iranian Revolution erupted in the late 1970s he delayed his return home, eventually going instead to Canada, where he lived for a number of years before being called to service in the Holy Land by the Universal House of Justice.

He has spoken to Bahá’ís all over the world, often focusing on the victories that come with self-discipline, and he has advised the youth in the crucial role they play in the work of pioneering, teaching and child education. He continues to live in Haifa and, as the last remaining living Hand of the Cause of God, speaks to the thousands of pilgrims who present themselves to the Holy Sites seeking transformation of the spirit.

(41) Excerpted from Barron Harper’s
Lights of Fortitude, pp. 183-188.

**Agnes Alexander
(1875-1971)**

“Stalwart Sister of the Faith”

Miss Agnes Baldwin Alexander, the daughter of several generations of Christian missionaries, was born in 1875 in Honolulu. She attended several schools, including the University of California - Berkeley, and returned to Hawaii where she taught school. As a way to improve her chronically poor health, her father sent her when she was 25 on a trip to Europe and she met several Bahá'ís who also stayed at the same *pension* with her in Rome.

She read a handwritten copy of a Bahá'í prayer which she later said ‘answered all the longings’ of her heart. She declared her belief in Bahá'u'lláh in November 1900 and, as was usual at the time, wrote a letter of acceptance to ‘Abdu'l-Bahá. The following spring she went to Paris, and met many of the early French, English and American believers. She stayed at Green Acre during the summer and returned to Hawaii by December of 1901, the first Bahá'í to step foot in Hawaii.

Her father was pleased that she seemed so well and he and her sister said that if her newly-found Faith made her happy, it must have some merit. None of her family were ever moved to investigate the Faith however although she tried for more than eight years to share it with them. The year her parents passed, in 1913, she received a Tablet from the Master encouraging her to travel to Japan.

The first person to become a Bahá'í in Japan was an 18-year-old student, Kikutaro Fukuta, who accepted the Faith in the spring of 1915. Her greatest successes came from her contacts with the blind and with Esperantists. She lived in Japan for 23 years.

Around 1922 Miss Alexander wished that the Japanese girls attending her meetings might contribute to the building of the House of Worship in the U.S. She bought some Japanese dolls and asked the girls to make kimonos for them, and eventually more than one hundred beautifully dressed dolls were sent to be sold.

In 1922 a major earthquake shook Japan and two-thirds of Tokyo burned. Miss Alexander was talking to a Bahá'í friend on the phone when the earthquake struck and she and her roommate ran out of the house to the street in time to see the front wall of their house fall out.

Many survivors were left homeless, for what the earthquake didn't shake down, the fires, which raged for three days, burned down. The small group of Bahá'ís started an orphanage and joined with others to care for some of the many abandoned children. Agnes' roommate went back to the U.S. to collect clothing and money from the Americans, which she sent back for the children.

(42)Excerpted from Barron Harper's *Lights of Fortitude*, pp. 21-27 and
Barbara R. Sims' *Traces That Remain: A Pictorial History of the Early Days of the
Bahá'í Faith Among the Japanese*, pp. 43, 44, 67-72

Enoch Olinga
(1926-1979)

“ ‘Are You Happy?’ ”

It was June 24, 1926. In a small town in Uganda, a new son was born to the Olinga family. They named the baby Enoch, which means “Teacher.” Enoch Olinga was a quiet boy and a loving child. When he grew up, he studied economics and learned six languages. Because he was good at languages, he became a translator and wrote three books. Everything was going well when he married and the first of his eight children was born. Then, he started facing dark days in his life. He began to drink alcohol heavily.

During this time, Enoch met a young Bahá'í, ‘Alí Nakhjavání, who had settled in Kampala, Uganda with his wife Violette, and her family. He liked what he heard about Bahá'u'lláh from ‘Alí, who would one day be elected to the Universal House of Justice. One night in 1952, a big meeting about the Bahá'í Faith was held in ‘Alí Nakhjavání’s home. Many Ugandans attended, including Enoch, but no one stayed to talk.

Disappointed, the Bahá'ís wondered how they would ever reach the Ugandan people. Then Enoch returned. He asked lots of questions, including, “How does one become a Bahá'í?” The following morning, Enoch started his new life as the first member of the Teso tribe to become a Bahá'í.

Immediately, he stopped drinking alcohol. The darkness he had felt was gone. He was filled with hope. Mrs. Olinga saw the change in him, and she became a Bahá'í, too. Before long, more people Enoch had taught about the Bahá'í Faith became Bahá'ís. He helped form the first Local Spiritual Assembly in Kampala.

In 1953, Enoch learned that Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, was asking Bahá'ís to pioneer. Enoch, with ‘Alí and Violette, started traveling across Africa. Their car broke down in the jungle. Enoch volunteered to walk 50 miles for help.

Enoch was a city boy. He wasn't used to the jungle. Not only that, he also knew that there were tribes in the area who might not know he was friendly. He was afraid of being killed by strangers or wild animals, or being bitten by snakes. It was raining, and the mud was deep and hard to walk through. Enoch began to feel ill with a fever. “You fool! Why are you doing this?” he thought to himself. Crying, he fell asleep.

While he slept, he dreamed about the Guardian. Shoghi Effendi lifted him up and hugged him, assuring him that all would be well. When Enoch woke up, he felt wonderful! He hoped that every day would be as amazing as this day in the jungle, the rain, and the mud.

Enoch spent 10 years in West Africa. Through his teaching work, he was responsible for hundreds of new Bahá'ís. Because he was the first Bahá'í in the British Cameroons, Shoghi Effendi named him a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh. In 1957, Shoghi Effendi gave Enoch another title, “Abu'l-Futúh,” which means “Father of Victories.” Then, only four years after becoming a Bahá'í, Enoch Olinga was given the rank of a Hand of the Cause of God. He was 31 years old, the youngest Hand of the Cause ever appointed.

From then on, Enoch Olinga traveled around the world helping others. He loved to be with people, especially children. Often he would take time to talk with children and listen to what they wanted to share. “Are you happy?” was a question he often asked. People would smile and say, “Yes,” happy to see such a radiant smile and noble spirit. This is the Day for happiness, he would say to them, the Day of Bahá'u'lláh.

In September of 1979, he was home in Uganda. The country was in the middle of a civil war. Men roamed the streets with guns, killing people in the towns and cities. On the evening of September 15, Enoch Olinga, his wife and three of their children were shot at their home in Kampala. Their tragic deaths shocked Bahá'ís who knew and loved “Papa Olinga,” the only native African Hand of the Cause of God. The Universal House of Justice praised Enoch Olinga’s “radiant spirit” and “his all-embracing love.”

William Sears
(1911-1992)

“The Man Who Loved To Ask Questions”

Does God have a wife? Where is His house? Can He speak Chippewa Indian? Does He really love everybody? Why did He make mosquitoes? William Bernard Patrick Michael Terence Sears VII asked these questions, and many more, when he was growing up in Minnesota. He was very interested in God and wanted to know all about Him. On September 20, 1912, when William was one and a half years old, he dreamed about a “shiny man.” He told his parents that the shiny man had called him "Peter." Peter was a fisherman in the Bible, the first person who followed Jesus.

William dreamed about the shiny man several times. When his grandfather heard about the dreams, he encouraged William to find out what they meant. "Don't you quit asking questions and searching for what's in your heart," he told William, "or your dream will never come true."

William listened to his grandfather and learned. "When I grow up," William said, "I'm going to find out all about everything, then I'm going all over the world and tell people so they won't hurt each other any more."

When William was a young man, he became a sports announcer on the radio. He was very good at his work and ended up on television in a very popular program called *In the Park*. William starred with a chipmunk puppet named Albert. He and Albert asked and answered lots of questions, because William played a man who could talk to animals.

Meanwhile, William found out answers to some of his childhood questions. He met a young woman named Marguerite Reimer. Marguerite told him about the Bahá'í Faith. He was interested, but he wasn't convinced that the Bahá'í Faith was for him. When William dreamed about the shiny man after they were married, Marguerite showed him a picture of an old Man with a white beard and silvery hair.

"This is the Man," William said. "That," said Marguerite, is 'Abdu'l-Bahá." William began to read everything he could about the Bahá'í Faith. A short time later, he told Marguerite, "I am a Bahá'í."

William not only believed in Bahá'u'lláh, he started writing books for people searching for the Faith. One of the first ones was called *Thief in the Night, or The Strange Case of the Missing Millennium*, a mystery story about religion.

In 1953, Shoghi Effendi made an appeal for people to leave their homes to teach the Faith. William gave up his job with CBS television and moved to South Africa with his family to start a new life on a farm.

These were the happiest and most exciting years of his life as a pioneer. The Sears family raised peacocks, grew fruits and vegetables and attracted many neighbors to firesides and study classes. They prepared food from their farm produce and lit hearts on fire with love for Bahá'u'lláh.

When Mr. Sears was 42 years old, he went to Haifa on pilgrimage and met Shoghi Effendi. "I watched the Guardian with rapt attention and ever increasing devotion. This was as close, in our day, as man could come to the direct source of the power of God, His Majesty, His Justice, His Mercy, His Love. I felt them all flowing from the Guardian." His service to the Faith, already immense, increased.

Four years later, Mr. Sears was appointed a Hand of the Cause of God by Shoghi Effendi. His work as a Hand took him around the world 20 times. He memorized parts of the Sacred Text and used them in his loving, energetic talks. He loved the Bahá'ís and joyously urged them to arise to teach. Even when he suffered from diabetes and arthritis toward the end of his life, he was full of energy when he stood before the Bahá'ís to speak.

There was always a warm spot in Mr. Sears's heart for children. He claimed all the Bahá'í children as his grandchildren on the music album *Happy Ayyám-i-Há*. When you listen, you can hear the love and joy in his voice.

In 1992, three days before his eighty-first birthday, Mr. Sears passed away. The world misses this loving grandfather and Hand of the Cause of God. Luckily, he has left books and recordings behind, so that we can read and listen to his stories and ask lots of questions.

**John Aldham Robarts
(1901-1991)**

“Reliance on Prayer”

When John Robarts was wondering if he should become a Bahá'í, he said prayers to help him decide what to do. Sometimes, when people ask God for help with a decision, they ask Him to send them a sign. John decided that instead of asking for a sign, he would give a sign to God. So he gave up smoking. Not long afterward, he knew in his heart that he believed in Bahá'u'lláh.

Long before John knew about the Bahá'í Faith, when he was six years old, he began delivering newspapers. From that time on, he was known to be trustworthy, honest, and enthusiastic. Because of these virtues, he was always offered work when he needed it. While John was trying out work experiences, he met Audrey, his wife-to-be.

Audrey and John loved music and dancing. But it was difficult for them to meet. They lived far away from each other, and the roads between their homes were in bad condition.

Then Audrey left for France to study music. They were finally married in 1928, when John was 26 and Audrey was 23. Six months before the wedding, John met his aunt, Grace Robarts Ober. John and his aunt became very good friends. A few months after John and Audrey got married, they visited Grace and her husband, Harlan. For the first time, John and Audrey asked to learn something about the Bahá'í Faith.

John explains how he discovered that he was a Bahá'í. “One evening, in November, 1937, after Audrey and I had dined with the Obers, I realized, while we were praying, that I had accepted the station of Bahá'u'lláh.” A few months later, he and Audrey declared themselves Bahá'ís. They began teaching immediately.

John traveled across Canada, helping to raise and strengthen Bahá'í communities. He and Audrey helped establish a Spiritual Assembly where they were living. John began weekly lunchtime firesides for his business associates. At the same time, John and Audrey hosted lively firesides in their home. At first no one attended. But the warm hospitality began to attract seekers. Many young people and traveling teachers came.

This was the beginning of a life of Bahá'í service. Every time Shoghi Effendi announced a Plan, John traveled to help countries reach their goals. He and his family pioneered to Africa. John and Audrey were each given the title "Knight of Bahá'u'lláh" for being the first Bahá'ís in Bechuanaland (now Botswana).

Then, in 1957 when John was 55, a cable arrived. It was addressed to John and Audrey Robarts. John read the cable and thought it was for Audrey. Audrey read the cable and knew it was for John. Shoghi Effendi had appointed John a Hand of the Cause of God.

As a Hand of the Cause, John went wherever the Guardian (and later, the Universal House of Justice) asked him to go. He gave talks to new Bahá'ís and visited Bahá'í communities. Hands of the Cause have a special responsibility to cheer and educate. John raised the spirits. He inspired hearts. His talks made people laugh. They made people cry.

And always, John Robarts called the Bahá'ís to teach and to pray – every day.

"One thing," John said, "is that wherever there are Bahá'ís there are people waiting, ready to accept Bahá'u'lláh, to give their love and life to Him. We are surrounded by these devoted seekers. God will guide us to them, or them to us, if we will turn to Him in that greater intensity of devotion."

John never stopped praying and teaching. When he was 83, he was adopted as an elder by the Tlingit people of the Yukon and honored with the name Wolf Teeth. John was still making international teaching trips when he was 85.

A few years later, on June 18, 1991, John's luminous soul ascended to the next world. The Universal House of Justice sent a long message to the Bahá'ís of the world full of praise for the life of John Aldham Robarts. They spoke of his travels, his distinctions, and his teaching, and praised his “reliance and emphasis on prayer.”

Hasan M. Balyuzi
(1908-1980)

“Beloved Author”

Hasan Balyuzi was descended from the relatives of the wife of the Báb and his family was well educated and respected in their community. His early childhood was spent in Búshíhr where his father served as the governor of the Persian Gulf Ports and Islands. However, in 1915 during World War I, the British pillaged the family’s house, so they resettled in India, living there for four years. Although those were difficult years after the war, they felt they were treated well and were sustained by numerous Tablets from ‘Abdul-Bahá. Their home was often visited by pilgrims on route to the Holy Land, which helped maintain a connection to the Faith even though they weren’t able to be a part of a Bahá’í community.

Hasan began to study English at the age of four. In India he continued these studies, including that of Persian, Arabic and history. When the family returned to Iran they moved to Tihrán where his father accepted the post of Minister of the Interior. Unfortunately, his father died in 1921 when Hasan was 13, so he moved to Shiráz with his mother where her relatives lived.

Since there were no high schools there, he later left to attend the Preparatory School of the American University in Beirut. At this time he did not consider himself to be a Bahá’í, for he really had not learned a great deal about the Faith since restrictions had prevented discussion of the Faith in the household. This changed when he decided to stop over in Haifa on his way to Beirut, having been given a drawing room in the house of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in which to spend one night. Shoghi Effendi, having been up much of the night with a dying friend, John Esslemont, stopped by the young man’s room and spent about an hour with him. The Guardian talked with him with such kindness and patience that the 17 year-old youth was immediately confirmed in the Faith.

When he continued on his journey to school, he began to correspond with believers in Europe and America, sharing news about Bahá’í activities. In 1932 he earned his Master’s degree in diplomatic history, then went to London where he continued his studies in this area, concentrating on the relations of the European Powers to the Persian Gulf States, and began his work on a doctorate. He was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of the British Isles and the Local Spiritual Assembly of London. He rented a place that served as the London Bahá’í Center and became the hub of activities for the Bahá’ís there. However, he was still learning about what was, and was not, appropriate in terms of involvement in the world of government. He received a stern response in 1934 from Shoghi Effendi immediately after an article he had written about the current political situation in Europe was published. He then realized that he would have to make a sacrifice regarding career development in his field of choice as a Bahá’í and immediately refocused his energies.

In 1940 he accepted an appointment with the newly formed Persian Service of the British Broadcasting Corporation, which assured his continued residence in England when the war began. His broadcasts included talks on Iranian culture, Western history and culture, translations into Persian of many classics of English prose and poetry, and features on current affairs and interviews with Iranian personalities. He married Molly Brown the next year and they had five sons. He was named Hand of the Cause of God in 1957. He spent his last years writing the much-loved books *'Abdu'l-Bahá: The Centre of the Covenant of Baha'u'llah*, *Bahá'u'lláh: The King of Glory*, *Edward Granville Browne and the Bahá’í Faith*, *Eminent Bahá’ís in the Time of Bahá'u'lláh*, *Khadíjih Bagum: The Wife of the Báb*, and *The Báb: The Herald of the Day of Days*.

**John Graham Ferraby
(1914-1973)**

“Pillar of the Administrative Order”

John Ferraby was an Englishman from a liberal Jewish family whose ancestors had migrated from the Netherlands to England. The family changed its name from the Germanic-sounding Friedeberg to Ferraby after the Nazis came to power in the late 1930s.

He was educated at an English public school and won a scholarship to King’s College in Cambridge. He was working for a trade organization at the time a friend introduced him to the Bahá’í Faith. After hearing about it, he went to the library and looked it up, finding a copy of John Esslemont’s book, *Bahá’u’lláh and the New Era*. He tried to find out more from the publisher, but was disappointed, so he decided to try to find the London Bahá’ís, but the center was often closed due to the bombing. Eventually he met Hasan Balyuzi, and began to spend every evening talking with him, until John accepted the Bahá’í Faith.

He immediately began to assist the community and in the following year he was elected to both the National Spiritual Assembly of the British Isles and the Local Spiritual Assembly of London. In 1943 he married Dorothy Cansdale, who had become a Bahá’í in 1934 and whom he had met at the Bahá’í Center in London in 1941. By 1946 he was elected the secretary of the National Assembly, the duties of which he carried out in his spare time using a room in his home as an office. Within four years his responsibilities, including the management of the British Bahá’í Publishing Trust, required his full attention and by 1950 the National Assembly, with the approval of Shoghi Effendi, resolved to pay him for his services.

He and his wife responded to the call for pioneers to Africa in 1953, but the Guardian answered their cable with one of his own that advised the Ferrabys to remain in England. He was appointed a Hand of the Cause of God in 1957 and barely had time to come to terms with this when he learned of the passing of the Guardian and was immediately called upon to assist in all the necessary arrangements of the Guardian’s funeral. In 1959 he was chosen to be one of the Hands of the Cause who were resident in the Holy Land and moved to Haifa, remaining there until the election of the Universal House of Justice at Ridván in 1963.

His wife described him thus: “John’s whole life as a Bahá’í was one of activity and intense devotion. From the moment of this declaration the Faith came absolutely first with him and nothing else mattered, and this was true until the end of this life, whatever his circumstances and condition.”

(47) Excerpted from Barron Harper’s
Lights of Fortitude, pp. 449-454.

**H. Collis Featherstone
(1913-1990)**

“The Investigator of Truth”

At the time Collis Featherstone was born ‘Abdul-Bahá was concluding His Western tour with a third visit to Paris and Shoghi Effendi was attending school in Beirut. Collis was on the other side of the world, the son of a railroad stationmaster of the South Australian Railways.

He was raised a Christian and confirmed in the Church of England at 15 years of age, but he had misgivings. One was due to the unforgiving attitude he noticed that the church authorities had about the fact that his family had not had him baptized. Another was a sense of uneasiness he felt when a violent storm exposed the decomposing remains of his pet dog and his uncertainty about the resurrection of the body was confirmed. He decided he needed more information and began his own investigation, beginning with visiting a number of other churches. He also began reading about other religions in the library, but the demands of life pulled him away from this study after awhile.

As he grew older he worked days and studied engineering nights, eventually learning about how to set up a turning and die-fitting business. He joined with a partner in 1938 and married Madge Green and began raising a family that included five children.

Then two things happened that brought him back to his earlier search. He didn’t even know about the first event, an event of the spirit, for quite a while. Two Bahá’í pioneers, Bertha Dobbins and Katherine Marcus, had been traveling, walking in the spirit of the Dawnbreakers who walked on foot, and the women stopped to pray for a home to be opened to the Faith in Adelaide. The intersection, between a road and the railroad line, was next to the Featherstone’s home.

The second event was when a friend of Madge’s invited her to hear something important from a former school teacher and she learned, for the first time, about the Message of Bahá’u’lláh from Bertha Dobbins, one of the women who had prayed for the home to be opened. Madge began to attend afternoon meetings with three of her children and when she told her husband about the women and the teachings he was instantly attracted and asked for a good book to read. Bertha responded by lending Madge a copy of *The Dawn-Breakers*. When Collis got to page 92, the Bab’s address to the Letters of the Living, he recognized that this Message was from God:

Scatter throughout the length and breadth of this land, and, with steadfast feet and sanctified hearts, prepare the way for His coming. Heed not your weaknesses and frailty; fix your gaze upon the invincible power of the Lord, your God, the Almighty...Arise in His name, put your trust wholly in Him, and be assured of ultimate victory.

At the time he became a Bahá’í there were three Local Spiritual Assemblies in Australia, but the joy and excitement felt by those few was so great that it seemed to him that there simply had to be so many more. He expressed regret that he had not learned about the Faith early enough to have had the opportunity to meet Hand of the Cause Father Dunn, yet he had the opportunity to know, and help, Mother Dunn. When the Guardian passed, he and Mother Dunn traveled in mourning together to Haifa for the Conclave of the Hands of the Cause.

Collis simply got things done. He exerted ever-widening and beneficial influence on the believers in South Australia, giving deepening classes, hosting firesides and supporting teaching activities. His last 24 years were spent in service to the Universal House of Justice helping to develop the Faith in Australia and surrounding lands. He passed away from a heart attack on his way to a youth conference in 1990 in Pakistan.

Rahmatu'lláh Muhájir
(1923-1979)

“The Good Doctor”

Rahmatulláh Muhájir was born in 1923 into a distinguished Bahá'í family. Three of his forebearers attained the presence of Bahá'u'lláh and later were recipients of a Tablet from 'Abdu'l-Bahá bearing the salutation *Ay Muhájirán*—‘O Pioneers’—in which He exhorts them to thank God that they were able to meet the Blessed Beauty and prays for their success in rendering ever-increasing services to the Faith. The name Muhájir was adopted as their family name from that day.

Rahmat, his brothers and five sisters were brought up in a home that was a center for many Bahá'í meetings and firesides attended by great Bahá'í teachers. Rahmat participated in all these meetings from early childhood and brought many seekers to hear the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. If by chance there was no one to accompany him he would invite the corner shopkeepers, promising them a good Persian meal. He always remembered this period of his life as a very happy one during which he received a thorough Bahá'í training that had instilled in his heart the love of Bahá'u'lláh and devotion to His Faith. He chose the path of service early in his life and did not deviate from it.

His first experience of pioneering came following his graduation from high school when he postponed going to university and went to the province of *Ádhirbáyján* for two years. His remarkable planning skills were apparent even at that early age. He organized youth and children's activities, taught adults in the evenings and prepared lessons and taught Bahá'í classes...

After this period of pioneering he entered medical school. His friends recall that he sustained and even increased his Bahá'í activities. To the astonishment of all, a few months before graduation from medical school he suspended his studies and devoted three months to assisting in the accomplishment of the goals of the Forty-Five Month Plan of the National Spiritual Assembly of Irán. After the successful completion of the Plan he returned to his studies and graduated with honours from medical school.

In October 1953 the National Spiritual Assembly of Australia and New Zealand announced that a physician was needed to fill their goal in the Mentawai Islands. Rahmat volunteered without hesitation. He resigned from his job and sold all his worldly belongings. Pioneering to Mentawai Islands opened a vast and exciting field of service to Rahmat. Although coming from a very different background and culture he felt very much at home in his new environment.

Rahmat always believed that entire villages should be brought to the Faith as this prevented disunity and friction amongst the people and allowed them to progress much more in following the principles of the Faith. He put this idea into practice in Mentawai. He worked for the village as a whole and directed all aspects of the villagers' lives according to the teachings. Many of the children who sat at his feet on the damp ground learning Bahá'í prayers and the alphabet by the light of a small candle and sometimes the glow of the moon went on to live at the Bahá'í dormitory in Sumatra which Rahmat had initiated and some became doctors and engineers. They remember him with love and affection and say they owe all to this gentle and kind man who sat them on his knees and chanted prayers and songs in his melodious voice.

Rahmat traveled to India many times, encouraging the friends to realize that the time had come for entry by troops in that vast subcontinent. His visit in 1961 was endowed with the blessing of the start of mass teaching. In 1961 there were 850 Bahá'ís and in 1963, 65,000. He wore the spiritual mantle of a Hand of the Cause with dignity and humility.

Abu'l-Qásim Faizí
(c. 1906-1980)

“A Special Sweetness...”

HEARTS FILLED WITH SORROW PASSING INDEFATIGABLE SELF-SACRIFICING DEARLY LOVED HAND CAUSE OF GOD ABUL-QASIM FAIZI. ENTIRE BAHÁ'Í WORLD MOURNS HIS LOSS. HIS EARLY OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS IN CRADLE FAITH THROUGH EDUCATION CHILDREN YOUTH STIMULATION FRIENDS PROMOTION TEACHING WORK PROMPTED BELOVED GUARDIAN DESCRIBE HIM AS LUMINOUS DISTINGUISHED ACTIVE YOUTH. HIS SUBSEQUENT PIONEERING WORK IN LANDS BORDERING IRAN WON HIM APPELLATION SPIRITUAL CONQUERER THOSE LANDS. FOLLOWING HIS APPOINTMENT HAND CAUSE HE PLAYED INVALUABLE PART WORK HANDS HOLY LAND TRAVELLED WIDELY PENNED HIS LITERARY WORKS CONTINUED HIS EXTENSIVE INSPIRING CORRESPONDENCE WITH HIGH AND LOW YOUNG AND OLD...[HOLD] SPECIAL COMMEMORATIVE MEETINGS HIS NAME IN HOUSES OF WORKSHIP ALL CONTINENTS... -- Universal House of Justice, 20 November 1980

As the news spread, thousands of Faizi's lovers wept in every part of the world... Among the hundreds of messages of grief which reached the World Center of the Bahá'í Faith, there was one which expressed the feelings of all. It came from a fellow Hand who was closely associated with Faizi for many years, and it said... "A special sweetness has gone out of the world and out of my heart."...

Faizi, as he wished to be called, did not like the celebration of birthdays, except those of the Manifestations of God, and did not know the exact date of his own birth which was probably in 1906. Of his early days in the city of Qum he always spoke with a touch of sadness, for he was surrounded by fanatical people. One of the happy memories of his childhood was the local gymnasium—the *zúr-kháníh*—a traditional Persian establishment which is not only for the purpose of physical training, but also for inculcating human virtues such as chivalry, modesty, and chastity in those who must bow in humility as they enter through its low door.

After a short period of rudimentary studies in Qum, Faizi moved with his parents to Tihrán. The atmosphere of his life completely changed, as though he had come out of a stifling room into fresh air. His father, who was a Bahá'í at heart, allowed him to go to the Tarbiyat School—one of many schools started by Bahá'ís throughout Írán. Here he excelled in studies and sports.

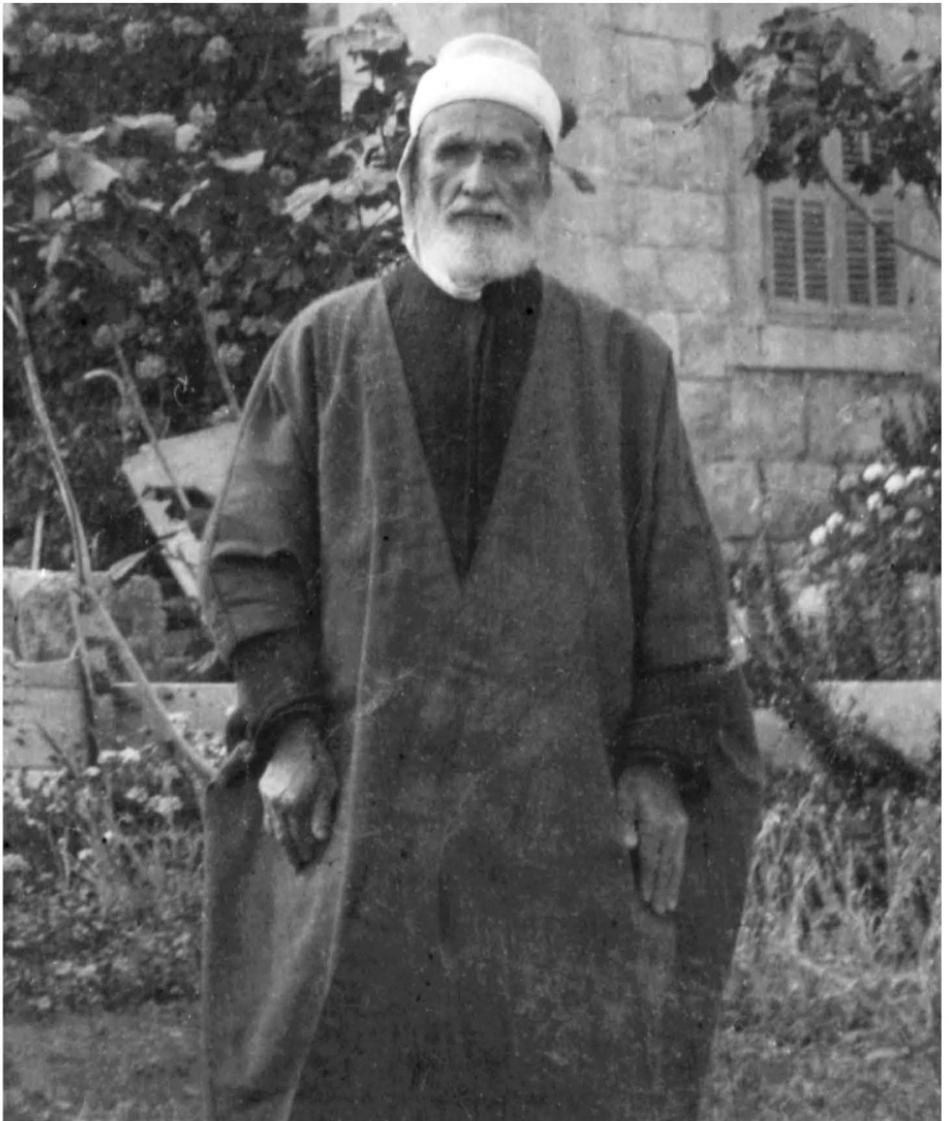
One Friday, not long after Faizi joined the Tarbiyat School, his Bahá'í classmates took him to their 'character training classes'... He began to attend these Friday classes regularly... Although Faizi had never known Bahá'ís before coming to Tihrán, he was attracted to his Bahá'í classmates and his acceptance of the Faith was quite natural as though he had been a believer all his life. When his mother realized her son was a Bahá'í... she encouraged him to observe the rules, which his new beliefs prescribed. A devout Muslim herself, she would rise at dawn during the Bahá'í month of fasting to prepare his breakfast and make sure he woke up on time... This saintly lady became a firm Bahá'í many years later.



**Hájí Mullá 'Alí-Akbar-i-Shahmírzadí, Hájí 'Akhúnd
(1842-1910)**



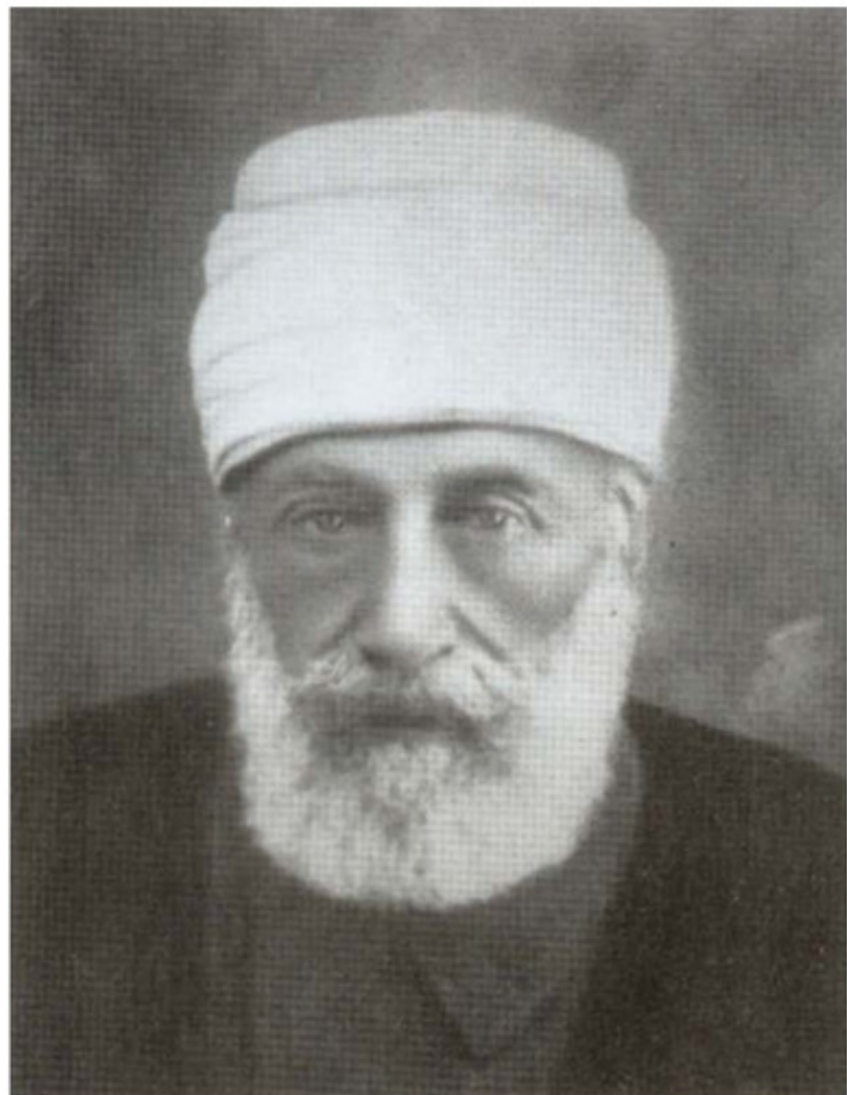
**Hájí Mullá 'Alí-Akbar-i-Shahmírzadí, Hájí 'Akhúnd
(1842-1910)**



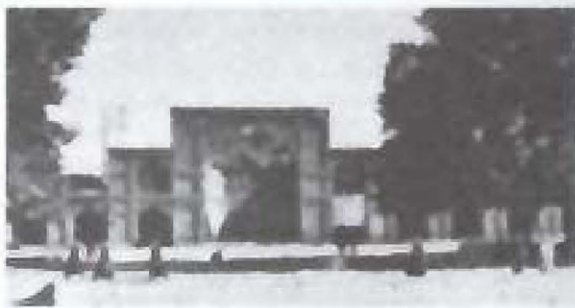
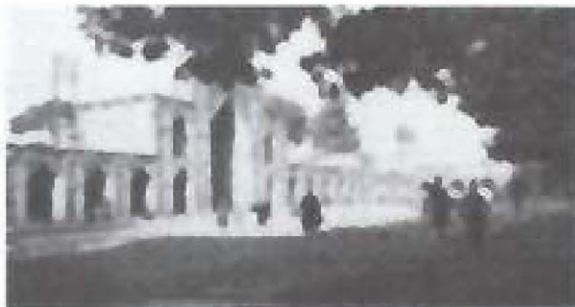
**Mírzá Muhammad-Taquí, Ibn-i-Abhar
(Mid-19th Century – 1917)**



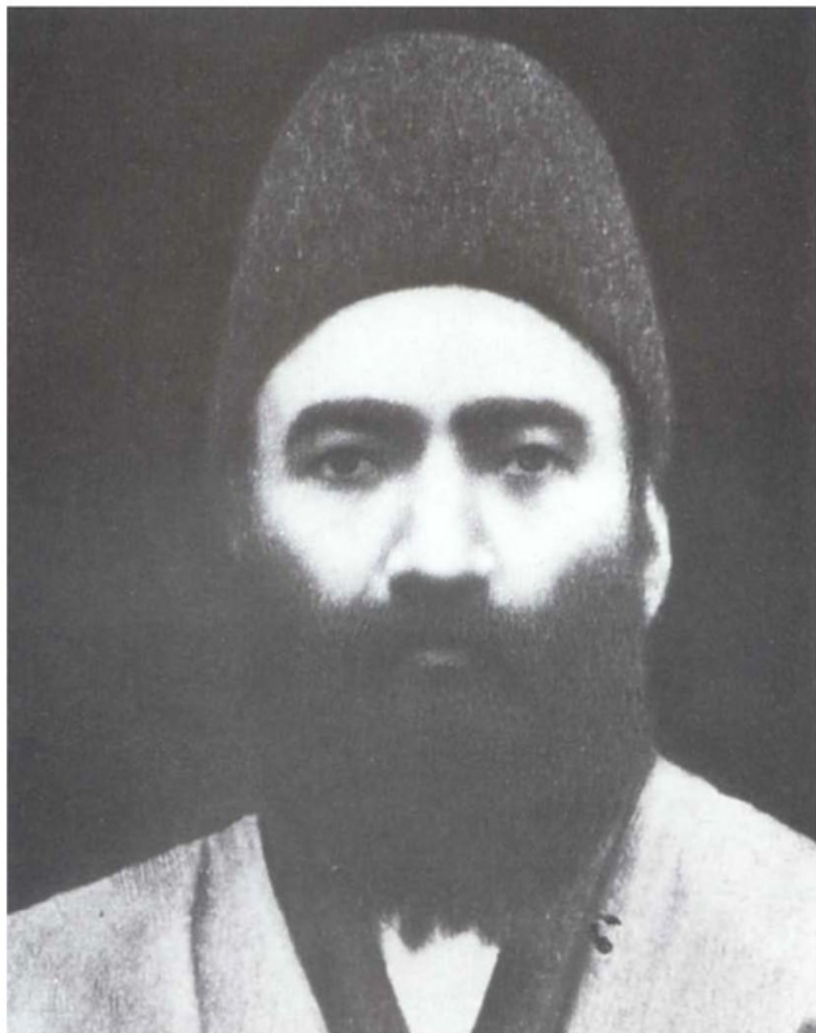
**Mirzá Hasan-i-Adíb, Adíb
(1848-1919)**



**Mírzá 'Alí-Muhammad, Ibn-i-Asdaq
(1850-1928)**



The Masjed-i-Naw, the mosque where
Mullá Sádiq-i-Muqaddas, Ismu'lláhu'l-Asdaq
lead the call to prayer that included references to
the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, astounding the congregation
(photo from The Dawnbreakers, p. 144)
(1800-1889)



**Áqá Muhammad-i-Qá'íní, Nabil-i-Akbar
(1829-1892)**



**Shaykh Muhammad Ridáy-i-Yazdí
(1814-1897)**



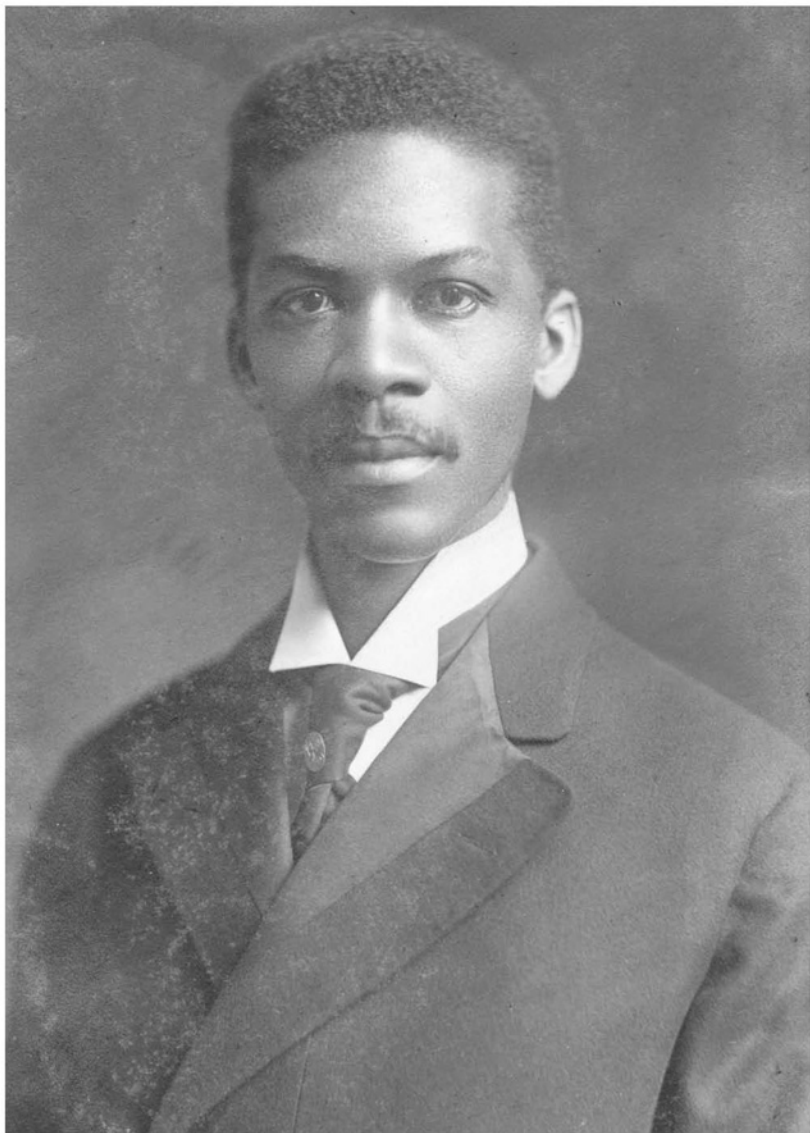
**Mirzá 'Alí-Muhammad-i-Varqá,
the martyr and his son
(1856-1896)**



Hájí Abú'l Hasan
(1831-1928)
Trustee of Huqúqu'lláh, Hájí Amin



John Ebenezer Esslemont
(1874-1925)



**Louis George Gregory
(1874-1951)**



Louis George Gregory
(1874-1951)



**Louis George Gregory
(1874-1951)**



**Louis George Gregory
(1874-1951)**



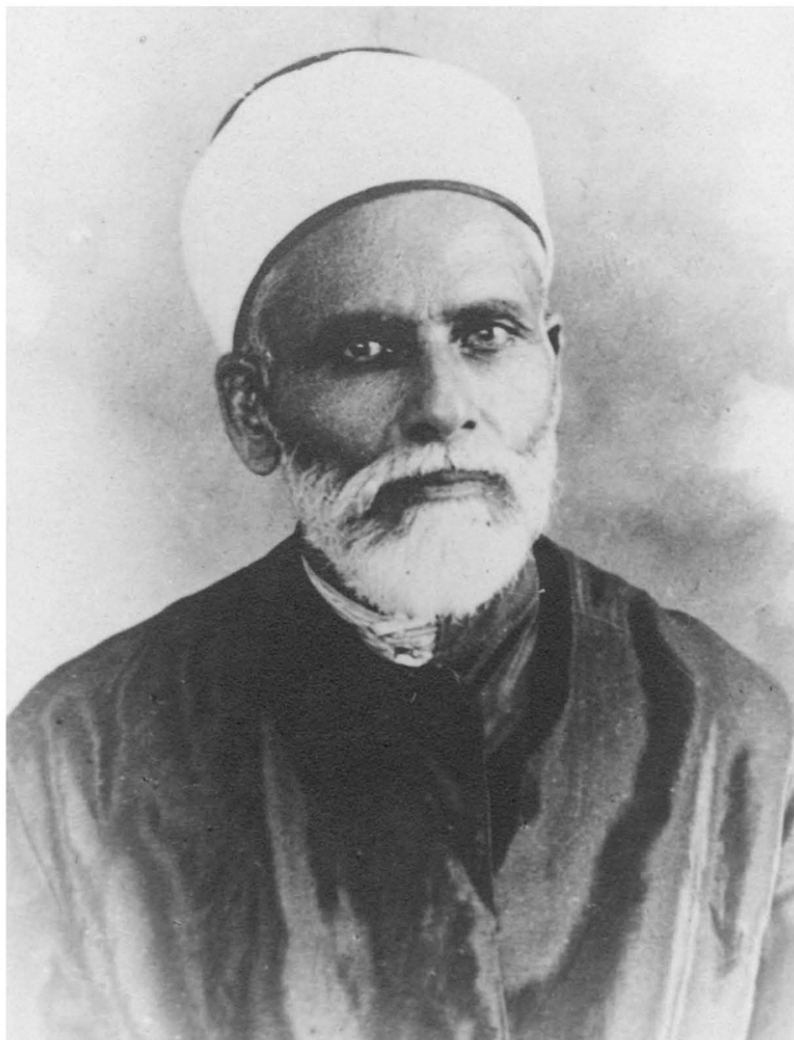
Keith Ransom-Kehler
(1876-1933)



Martha Louise Root
((1872-1939))



Martha Louise Root
((1872-1939))



Mustafá Rúmi
(1846-1945)



'Abdu'l-Jalil Bey Sa'd
(?-1942)



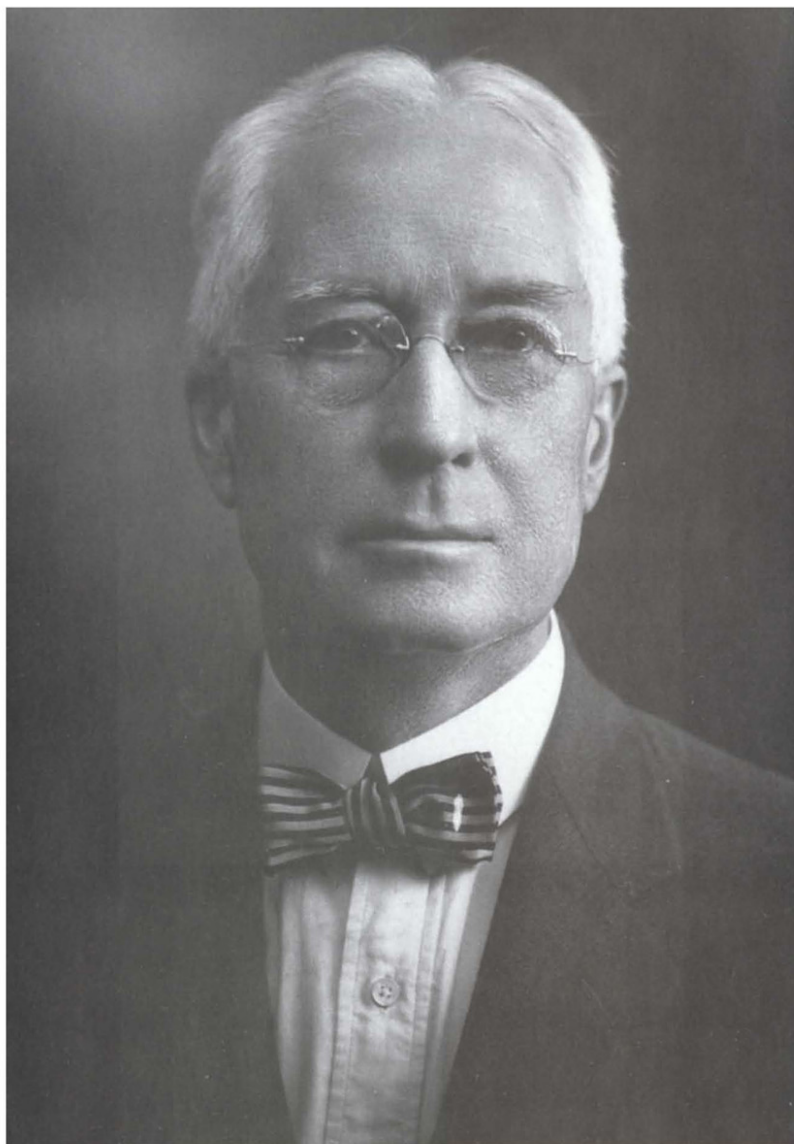
Roy C. Wilhelm
(1875-1951)



Roy C. Wilhelm
(1875-1951)



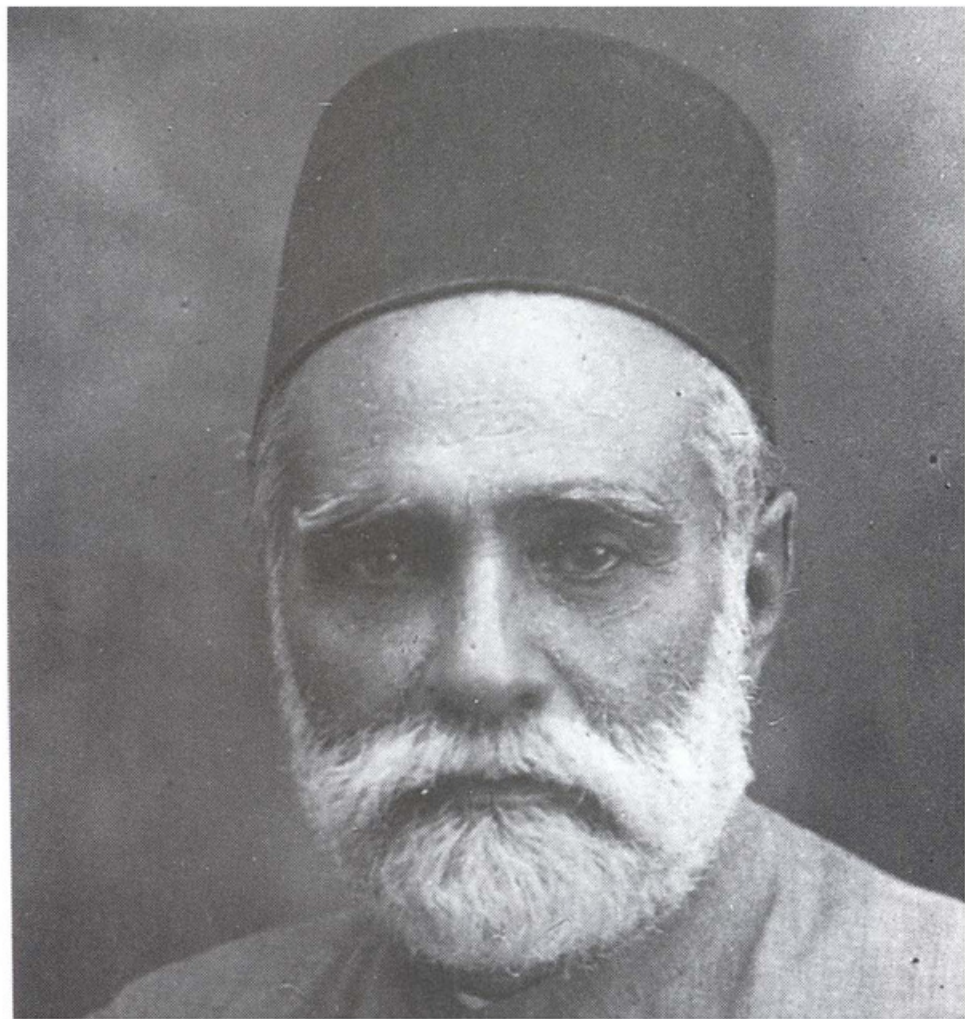
**Roy C. Wilhelm
(1875-1951)**



**John Henry Hyde Dunn
(1855-1941)**



John Henry Hyde Dunn
(1855-1941)



Muhammad Taqiy-i-Isfahání
(1860-1946)



Dorothy Beecher Baker
(1898-1954)



Dorothy Beecher Baker
(1898-1954)



Amelia Engelder Collins
(1873-1962)



**'Alí-Akbar Furútan
(1905-2003)**



**‘Alí-Akbar Furútan
(1905-2003)**



**‘Alí-Akbar Furútan
(1905-2003)**



Ugo Giachery
(1896-1989)



Ugo Giachery
(1896-1989)



**Ugo Giachery
(1896-1989)**



**Herman Grossmann
(1899-1968)**



**Horace Hotchkiss Holley
(1887-1960)**



**Horace Hotchkiss Holley
(1887-1960)**



**Horace Hotchkiss Holley
(1887-1960)**



Leroy C. Ioas
(1896-1965)



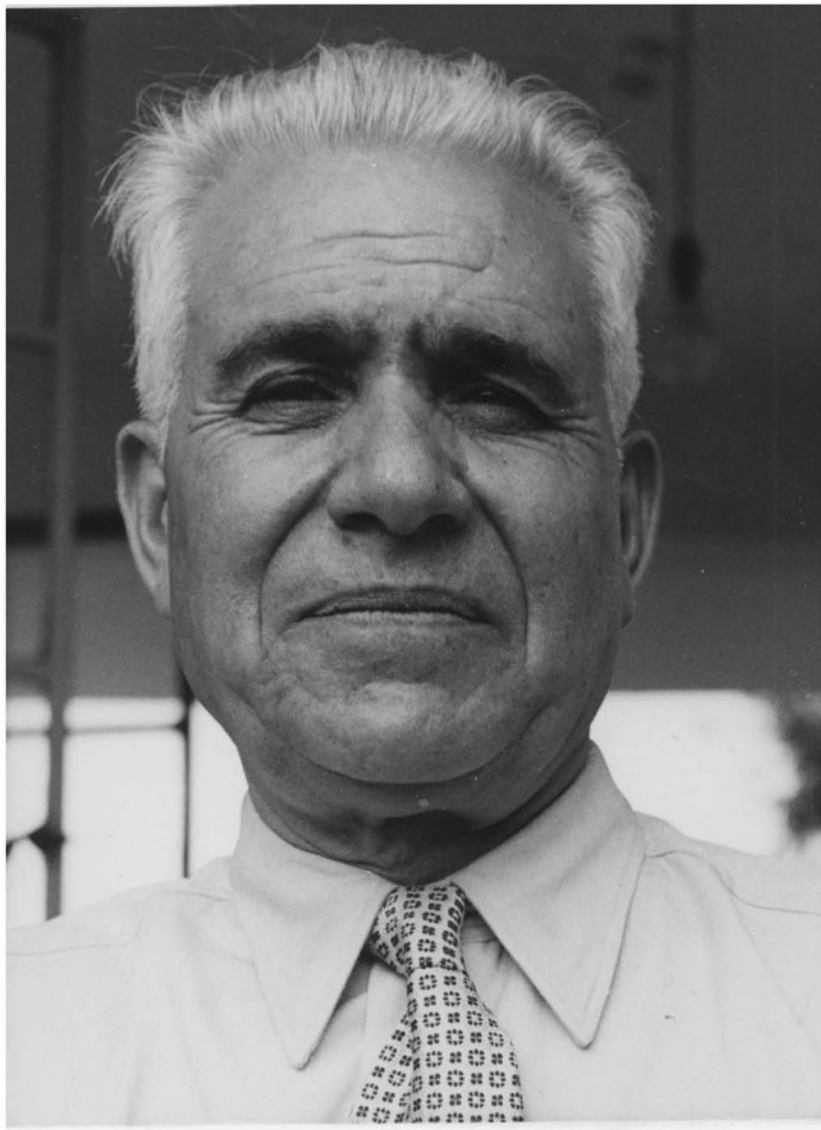
**William Sutherland Maxwell
(1874-1952)**



Tarázu'Iláh Samandarí
(1874-1968)



**George Townshend
(1876-1957)**



Valiyu'lláh Varqá
(1884-1955)



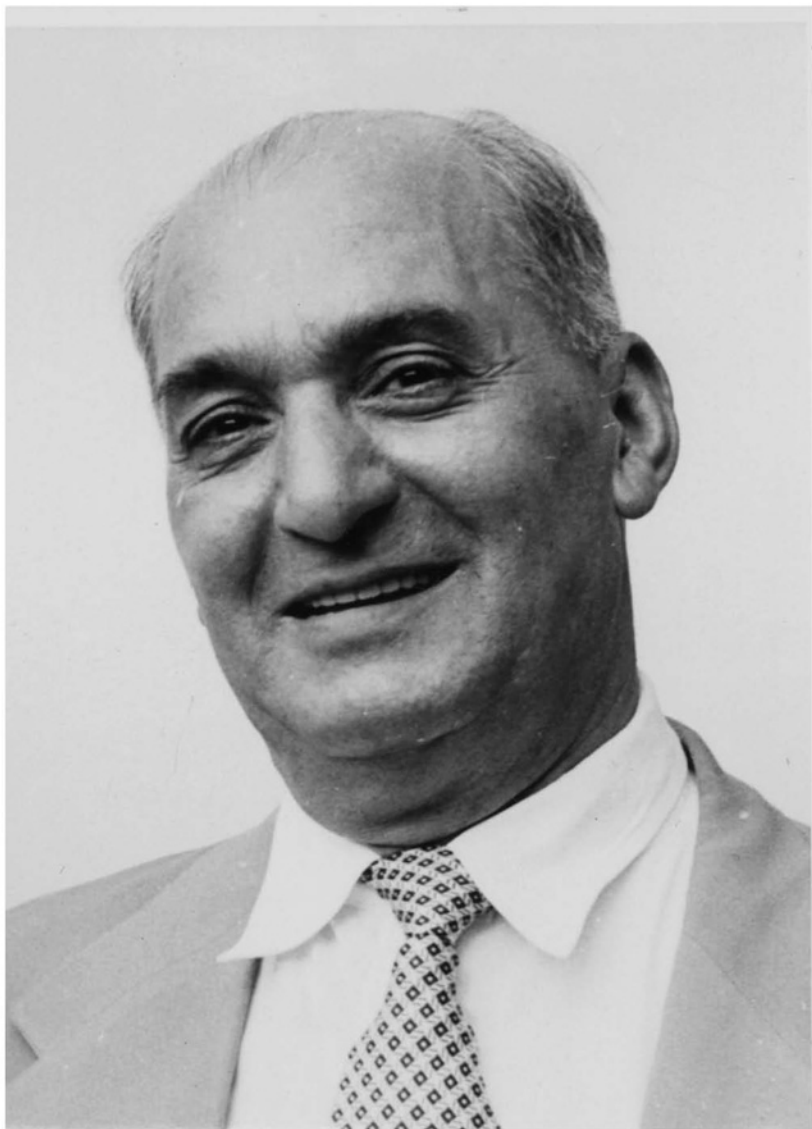
Shu'á'u'lláh Álá'í
(small child on far right)
(1889-1984)



**Shu'á'u'lláh Álá'í
(1889-1984)**



**Shu'á'u'lláh Álá'í
(1889-1984)**



Músá Banání
(1886-1971)



Clara Davis Dunn
(1869-1960)



Dhikru'llah Khádem
(1904-1986)



Dhikru'llah Khádem
(1904-1986)



Adelbert Mühlshlegel
(1897-1980)



Olinga, Khádem and Mühlshlegel



**Siegfried "Fred" Schopflocher
(1877-1953)**



**Corrine Knight True
(1861-1961)**



**Corrine Knight True
(1861-1961)**



Corrine Knight True
(1861-1961)



**Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum,
Mary Maxwell; Rúhíyyih Rabbani
(1910-2000)**



**Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum,
Mary Maxwell; Rúhíyyih Rabbani
(1910-2000)**



**Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum,
Mary Maxwell; Rúhíyyih Rabbani
(1910-2000)**



Jalál Kházeh
(1897-1990)



Paul Edmond Haney
(1909-1982)



Paul Edmond Haney
(1909-1982)



Dr. 'Alí Muhammad Varqá
(1912-)



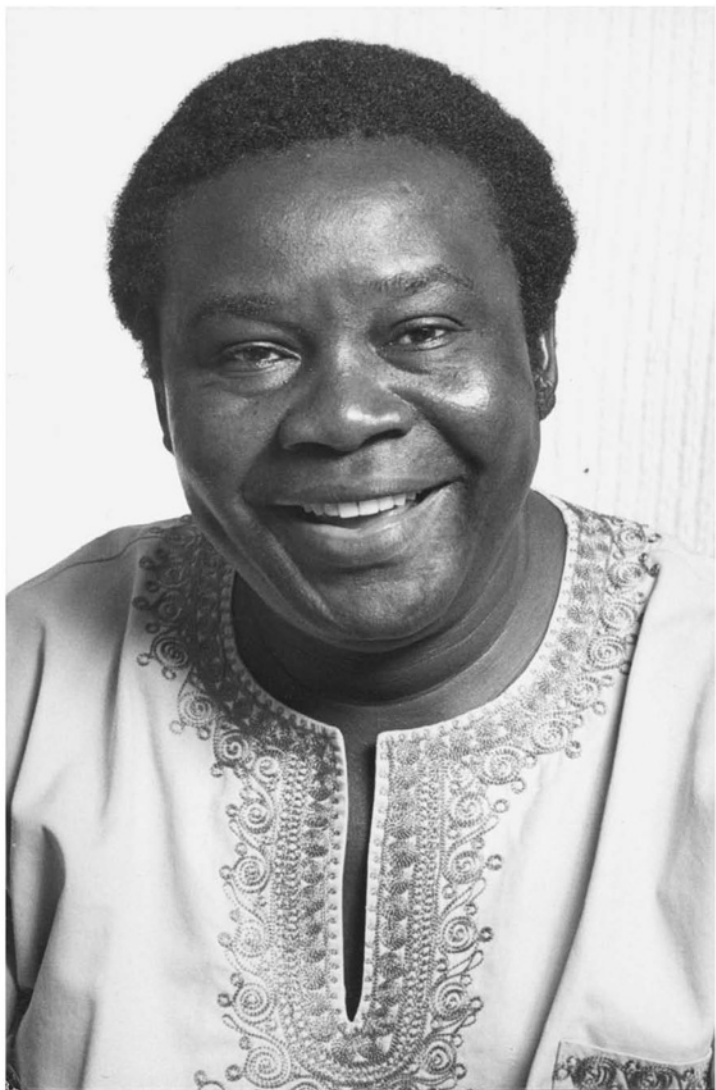
Dr. 'Alí Muhammad Varqá
(1912-)



**Agnes Baldwin Alexander
(1875-1971)**



**Agnes Baldwin Alexander
(1875-1971)**



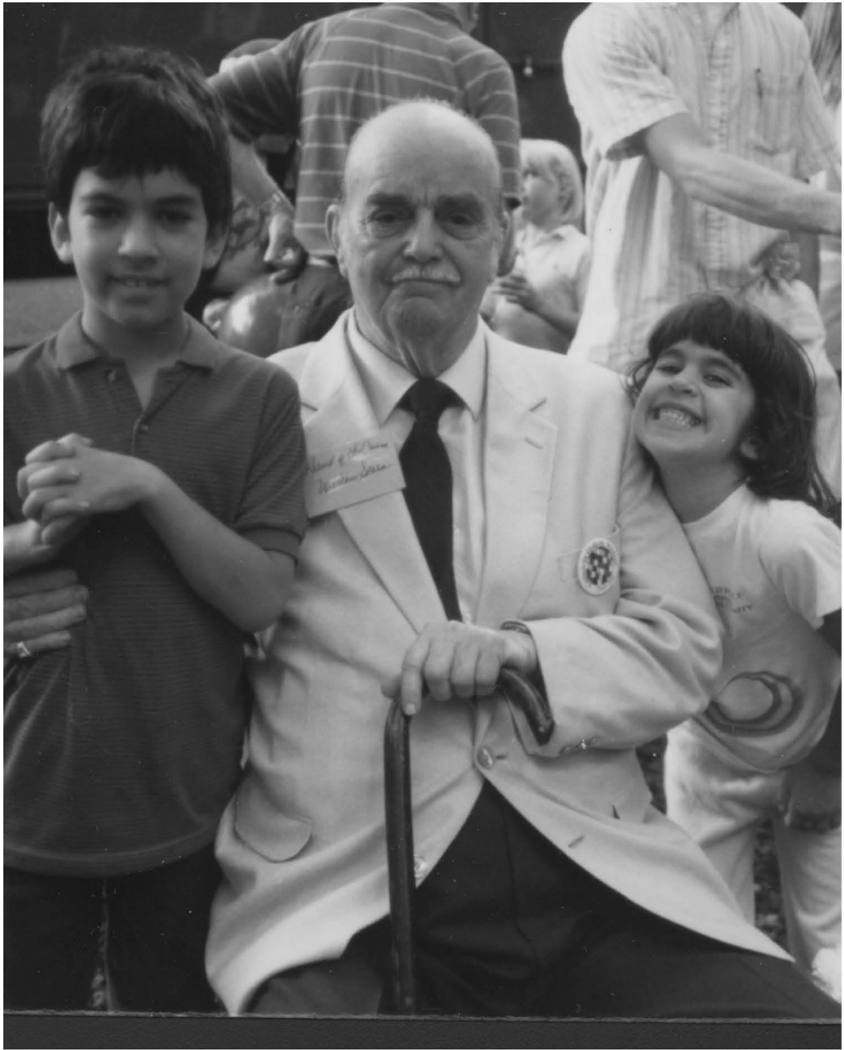
Enoch Olinga
(1926-1979)



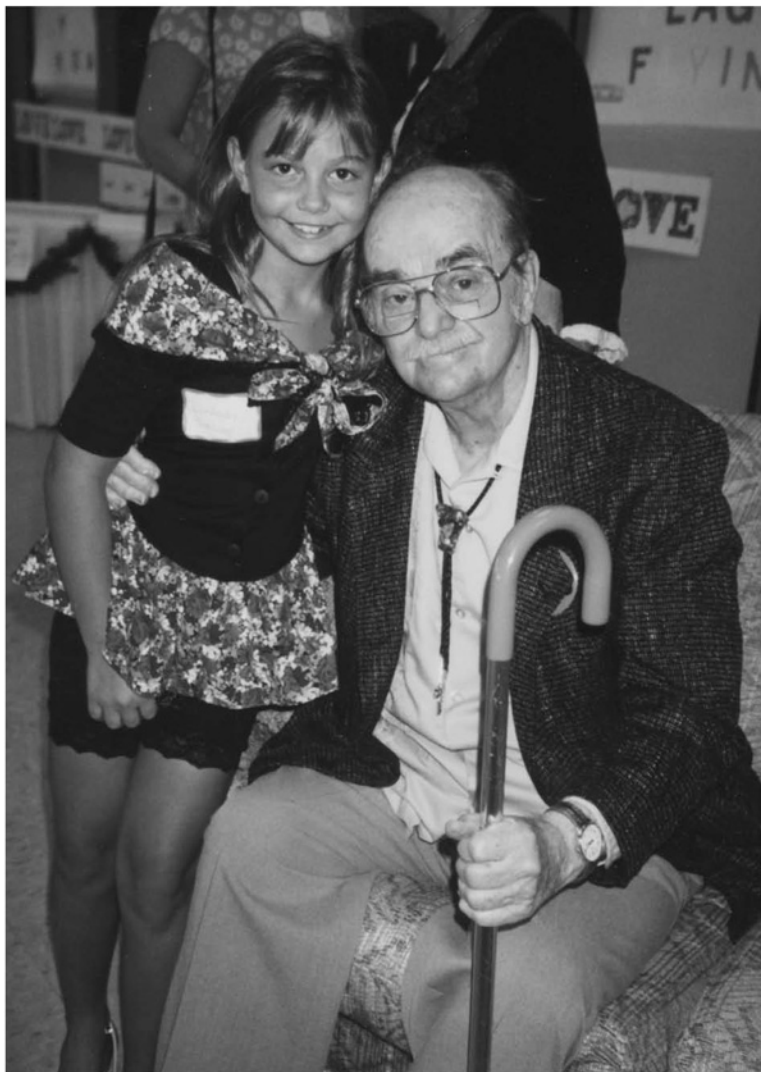
**Enoch Olinga
(1926-1979)**



**William Sears,
William Bernard Patrick Michael Terence Sears VII
(1911-1992)**



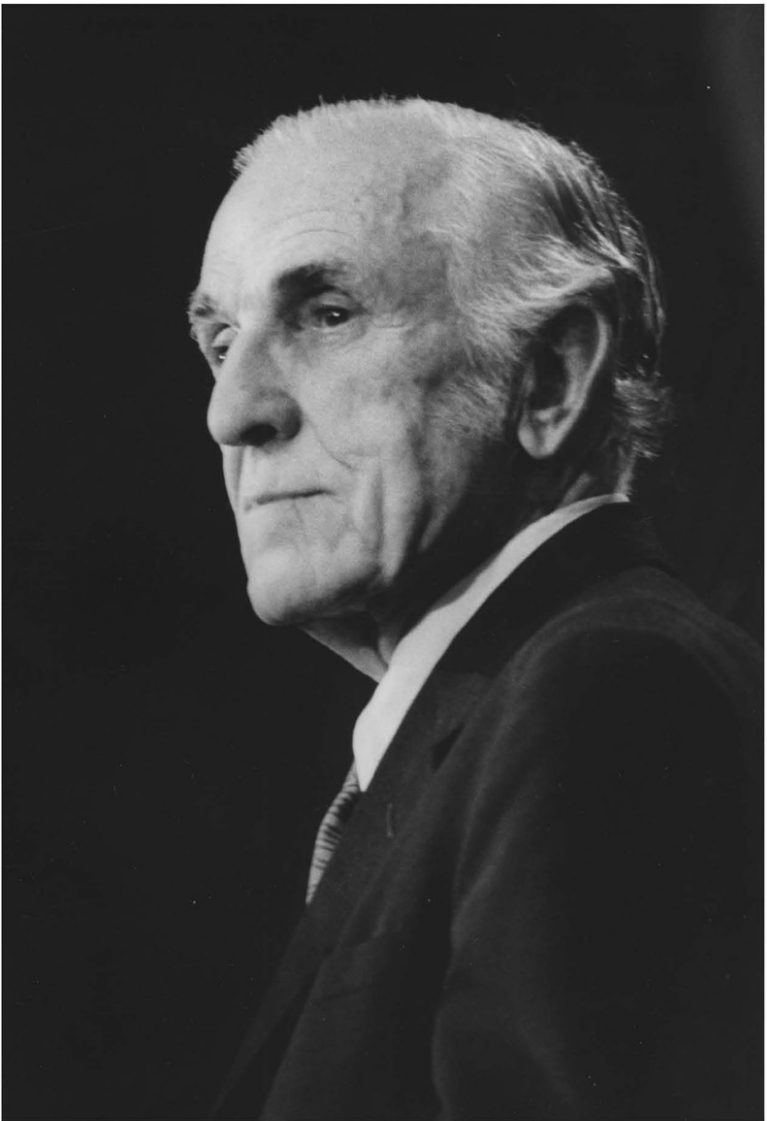
**William Sears,
William Bernard Patrick Michael Terence Sears VII
(1911-1992)**



**William Sears,
William Bernard Patrick Michael Terence Sears VII
(1911-1992)**



**John Aldham Roberts
(1901-1991)**



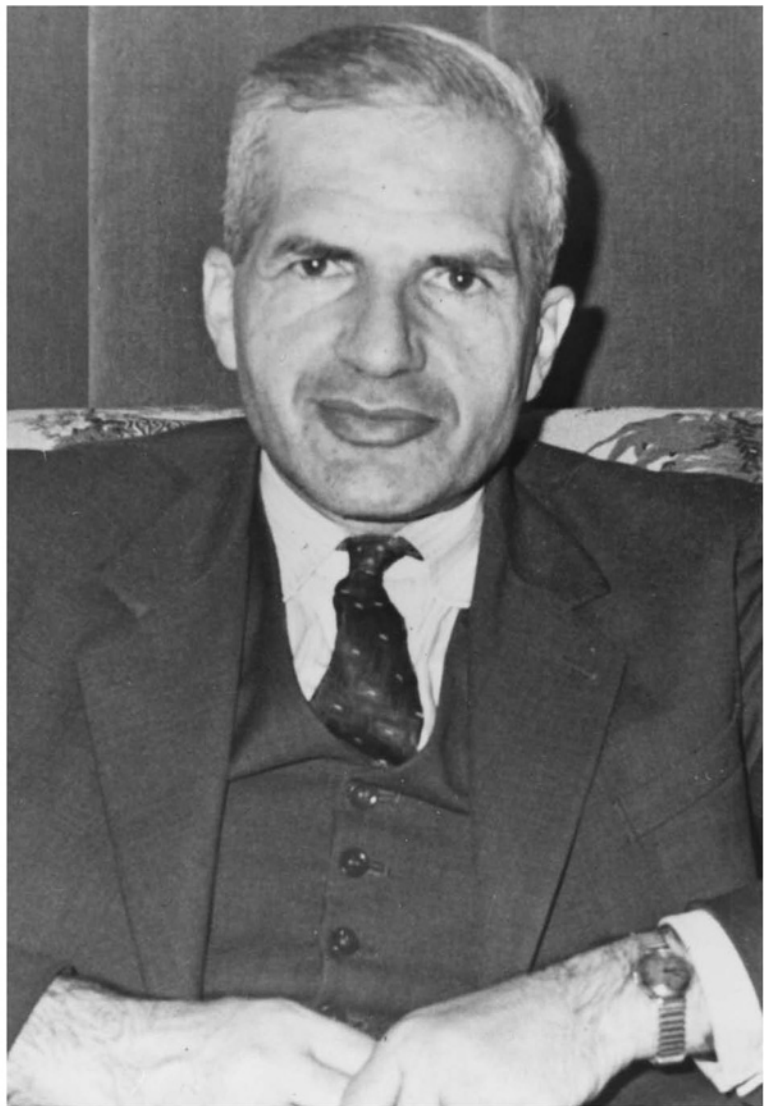
**John Aldham Roberts
(1901-1991)**



Hasan M. Balyuzi
(1908-1980)



**Hasan M. Balyuzi
(1908-1980)**



John Graham Ferraby
(1914-1973)



**John Graham Ferraby
(1914-1973)**



H. Collis Featherstone
(1913-1990)



**H. Collis Featherstone
(1913-1990)**



Rahmatu'lláh Muhájir
(1923-1979)



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(1923-1979)



Abu'l-Qásim Faizí
(1906-1980)



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