

OLIVIA KELSEY - KNIGHT OF BAHÁ'U'LLAH:  
THE RECOLLECTIONS OF MY PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND  
AND MEETING THE BELOVED GUARDIAN

In the days of the beloved Guardian when we made the Pilgrimage to the Holy Land and met him and his co-workers there, and that last evening at dinner with him came. You see the pilgrims from the West have dinner with the beloved Guardian at the Western Pilgrim House and the pilgrims from the East have afternoon tea with him at the Eastern Pilgrim House. He went over to the Shrine of the Bab afternoons to chant for two hours and, afterwards, he would pass by the Eastern Pilgrim House and have tea with the pilgrims. We asked questions at these sessions. He taught us many things, answered our questions, told us directives and things he was doing around the world. And so, on that last night he would say, "You have imbibed. Now you must share." By that he meant that all that we had learned and heard and seen and experienced during those precious days we were to take back and share with the Baha'is of our community. He spoke of the flow from the communities to the World Centre and the outpouring of the spiritual forces from the World Centre back into the communities through this marvelous channel of the pilgrims. So that last night of his life on earth there in that third class hotel in London, as he worked on the progress chart of that Ten Year World Crusade; so ill, so weary, he spoke of many things he had to do. And he said he was not going to do them anymore. He was not going to do that when he went back. But one thing he would do, he mentioned, he said he would receive the pilgrims. There is a Tablet, unpublished, revealed by Baha'u'llah, telling them how to receive the pilgrims. Now let's go back a moment to the United States to the beginning of the Ten Year World Plan (sic). I know it must have been the same all over th world, but here in the United States we were stunned, amazed, electrified! I knew right then that I would go because I had been planning, I had been saving to go pioneering for a time, a long time. And I was ready. So one day a wire came from Edna True. She was chairman of the European Teaching Committee in the United States. And she had received a cable from the Guardian telling that Nelly French, who was the pioneer in Monaco, had suddenly passed away. And he wanted that post filled immediately. He said it took precedence over everything -- because he didn't want the momentum she had built up there lost. "Well," I said, "let me thing it over." "Well," she said, "think it over and wire me tomorrow." So that was it. Now, I had in the meantime written to the Beloved Guardian for the Pilgrimage for at that time you wrote a year ahead if you expected to get on the list. And, to my amazement his letter came back immediately granting the Pilgrimage. Well, I had no passport. I could not possibly get ready and I was in the midst of preparing to go pioneering, so I a to write and tell him this. And he said, his letter, his reply, he said, "Go, get settled in your new post and write me again. So it was on November the 26th, 1956 when his cable came. He sent it to the United States National Assembly and it was relayed to me from there. It read, "Pilgrimage permitted December." Well, we rushed down to the little office of the government of Israel and reserved tourist class on the little ship AKsa, sailed from Marseilles, and it took six days by water on the Mediterranean. We could see the

shores of Europe all the way to Cypress. Then we struck out away from the sight of land. And they told us, "Now, be ready tomorrow morning to disembark. We shall reach Haifa." That morning I looked out of my window. And there stood the Shrine of the Bab in the center of Mount Carmel. Ruhyyih Khanum described it as one of the most beautiful pieces of architecture on the Mediterranean Sea. Well, we rushed up; the rest of us. Most of the people were on deck. But I rushed up and there it was crowded. In the center, in the very center was the minister from Australia. You see the Christians, there were many Christian groups travelling to Jerusalem at that time of the year to the Holy Land. And he was in the center and he was pointing to the Shrine of the Bab on Mount Carmel. And this is what he said, "Now that, that is Baha'i. I don't know much about it, but they're for peace."

(?)the port of Haifa. The Guardian described it as semi-circular. By steamer you can see the coast stretching all the way to AKKa. I would strongly recommend ending the journey to the World Centre by steamer just to see the Shrine of the Bab in the center of Mount Carmel and the port of Haifa.

One day in the Eastern Pilgrim House 'Abdu'l-Baha looked out of the window and prophesied the future of AKKa and Haifa. He said they would be united forming one mighty metropolis. He said Israel would become the center of culture of the world. Mount Carmel and the Shrine of the Bab would be flooded with lights extending all over the mountain and down into the bay of Haifa. Much of what he foretold had already come to pass and is now in progress. And much greater things will still come to pass in the future. AKKa and Haifa are fifteen miles apart. His prophecy is to be found in the "New Era". It's under the heading "AKKa and Haifa". The Guardian drew his world plan for the World Centre from The Tablet of Carmel. He said, that is, the Guardian said that Israel is the meeting place of three continents: Europe, Asia and Africa. It is also the center of four great religions: Judaism, Christianity, Islam and the Baha'i Faith. For the Baha'i Faith it is also the Administrative Centre. I have been told that other religious leaders have asked the government there for the same priveleges the Baha'is have and they were told they could have them on the same conditions.

The climate is not healthy. I remember Jessie Revell was ill with a cold and the Guardian sent her to Switzerland because it just hung on. And then there was a Persian working in the Eastern Pilgrim House; he was ill with arthritis and the Guardian sent him away, too, to recover. And there is very little iodine in the Mediterranean Sea; not like the Atantic which is healthy. The children in these Mediterranean countries are sent to the mountains in the summer time for their health. The atmosphere of the World Centre is subtle. It is a blending of the spirit of repose and peace of the East and the vital and perversive spirit of the West. The climate is semi-tropical and resembles somewhat Florida and Monaco.

So, I disembarked and I got a taxi and I said, "Western Pilgrim House". Of course, the driver knew. So there I was. I ran up several cement

steps. The porch was cement. No room; no trimmings; two big, black shiny doors and shiny, brass knockers. I rang and a little-girlish person answered. I told her my story and she answered. And I understood not a word of what she said. But then she turned and looked around behind her and there between two pillars in that alcove in that beautiful room stood Milly Collins. She said, "I didn't know anyone was coming this morning, but thought I better go over." About twenty minutes after my arrival Laura Davis from Toronto, Canada arrived. She had come by plane to Tel Aviv and to Haifa by Taxi. They put us together in the same room. There were other guests and rooms were all filled up. We loved that and we have kept in touch ever since.

Now something about the Western Pilgrim House: the building of this house was started by Charles Randall an American. 'Abdu'l-Baha warned him to give more care to his business affairs, but he didn't heed and so he was unable to finish the building. Time passed and then when Milly Collins and her husband came to Haifa. Mr. Collins was a millionaire. He liked to travel by freighter when he went on water instead of steamer. And at that time it was fashionable to take the trip down the Nile. So, by freighter they went to Egypt and took the trip down the Nile by steamer. Then, to please Milly, they went to Haifa. When they arrived he said, "We will register at the hotel and then go up to leave our cards." But it didn't work out that way because the Holy Family was watching and nothing would do but that they must come in. So Mr. Collins met the Beloved Guardian. And that brusque businessman liked him. He liked the Guardian! Later he asked Milly about that unfinished house. He felt that was not right for the Guardian. So, he gave the money to finish the building of the Western Pilgrim House. But as he was not a Baha'i he gave it to Milly and she gave it. He gave her a home, a beautiful home up in New England and once later on when National got short of money, as happens; so, Milly sold it and gave the money to the Faith. And Mr. Collins never asked a question; never mentioned a word about it. When he died he left his entire fortune to Milly knowing she would give it all to the Faith. He was proud of her because she dared to step out and do something different.

The house of 'Abdu'l-Baha is diagonally across from the Western Pilgrim House: No. 7 Persian Street. And it has orange trees in the grounds behind it as I recall. There was an olive grove near the Pilgrim House and there were beautiful flowering trees such as you find in summer, tropical climate. Now you step from the porch, as I remember, right into the large room. It's long and square. To the left, that is, to the end of the left was the living quarters of Mr. and Mrs. Ioas. It was probably sleeping room and sitting room combined. He had a tiny reception room. There was a desk and a stove he had just brought from the United States. You see, there was no such thing as central heating. They told us; Ruhyyih Khanum, and Jessie and Ethel Revell; how they suffered for lack of heat when they first went there. But, they had become quite used to it. Going to the left now; there was another room used as a business office. But also, I think it was a bedroom. Then, Jessie's room. Then the two large doors and then the room occupied by Laura and me was next. Then you look to your right; and another large room at the end of the beautiful central room. It

had a great glass window and window seats. There was a stove and a large round table in the center and it was there that the pilgrims gathered and waited for the call to go down and dine with the beloved Guardian. On that side was a bathroom with descending stairs which was just some planks on some steps. The room led through a storeroom. It was used as a storeroom at that time. The dining also was not square; it was long. There was a long table with a beautiful linen cloth, exquisite china and silverware. Ruhiyyih Khanum told us that there were many, many sets of dishes; the dishes of the many members of the Holy Family, her mother's dishes, Mr. Ioas' and others and others. So there were plenty of dishes. The guests at that time were Dr. and Mrs. Giachery from Italy, Mr. and Mrs. John Allen from Africa, and Laura and I. Mr. Allen had brought the Guardian an automobile as a gift and Mr. Allen was running Mr. Ioas around to get things done. They felt they were really accomplishing things, but the Guardian stopped that. He said Mr. Allen was not getting the spiritual value of his pilgrimage. We hurried downstairs as fast as we could. Ethyl led the way to the dining room. Ruhiyyih Khanum, Mr. Ioas, and Jessie Revell were standing in their places at the table. The Guardian, the Beloved Guardian stood a few paces away. Ethyl shook hands with him taking his hand in both of hers. All in turn shook hands with the Beloved Guardian as he greeted us with the words, "welcome, welcome". Ruhiyyih Khanum told us to find our places; she helped and we were soon seated. Mrs. Giachery was seated at the head of the table. That was for that night. Each night he indicated who was to be seated at the head of the table. To our right sat the Guardian. Then Ruhiyyih Khanum, Mr. Ioas, Jessie. At the other end of the table sat Mrs. John Allen. Then to her right Mr. Allen. I sat next to him. Laura sat next to me and finally Dr. Giachery. Milly didn't come over that evening. She told us she wasn't coming. She didn't feel well. And Ethyl ate somewhere else. I think there wasn't room for another person. The Guardian served each guest that night, not every night, but that night he did, Persian palau; showering on us his hospitality and his love. How shall I describe him to you? A friend said to me, "If only you could make him a little clearer to us." But this is not possible. Dr. Kathrine True told in her pilgrim notes about the man who met him 17 (or was it 14?) 17 or 14 times. When he came out after the first interview he said, "He's short." When he came out after the last interview he said, "He is a giant." In stature the Guardian resembled Baha'u'llah. They spoke often how his hands resembled Baha'u'llah's. 'Abdu'l-Baha was taller than either the Guardian or Baha'u'llah. The Guardian's face was oval, olive-skinned, a closely clipped black moustache. He wore a black fez, soft white collar and a black tie. He wore a long, tan robe; loosely woven material with bright figure in it. His voice; it was melodious and his accent was not English as I had been told and as I had expected. It was what I should say "Harvard"; just a pure English. I have a phobia about voices and instantly glued my ear on the Guardian's voice. But I noticed something, this often happened, something imperceptible. It was within him rather than without. And usually he would seem to be appealing to Ruhiyyih Khanum. But I stopped instantly for I knew that I was interfering with his thinking, or I was doing something wrong. Ruhiyyih Khanum has said that his eyes were hazel. To me thy always seemed dark.

An extraordinary thing happened one evening. I don't remember which subject we were on, but suddenly the Guardian's eyes became two immense orbs protruding. They seemed to me to be ruby red with shafts of fire and light. It lasted ... I don't know, I can't say...perhaps thirty seconds, perhaps longer or less. There was silence. No one moved and no one spoke of it afterward strangely enough. Then he continued as usual. It seemed to me that he was witnessing something, but I don't know; I cannot say.

One evening Mrs. Giachery asked him if 'Abdu'l-Baha had left any instructions and he answered, "I had none. I had to find my way alone."

That first evening at dinner with the Beloved Guardian the conversation turned on the atomic bomb. For thirty years the Guardian had been reading the London Times and that morning the scientists had something to say about chain reaction. "The scientists are catching up with Baha'u'llah," he said. Shoghi Effendi referred specifically to what Baha'u'llah wrote about material civilization. Quote, "The civilization so often vaunted by the learned exponents of arts and sciences will, if allowed to overleap the bounds of moderation, bring great evil upon men. If carried to excess civilization will prove as prolific a source of evil as it had been of goodness when kept within the restraints of moderation. The day is approaching when its flames will devour the cities." What is material civilization... arts, sciences, government, progress, education, enlightenment? Nothing wrong with that. But unless combined with divine civilization, 'Abdu'l-Baha said there will be no results. What is divine civilization? When 'Abdu'l-Baha was in Paris they asked him, "What is the purpose of our lives?" He said, "To acquire spiritual virtues." That's divine civilization!

About the bomb, Baha'u'llah said, "A strange and wonderful instrument exists in the earth, but it is concealed from the minds and souls. It is an instrument which has the power to change the atmosphere of the whole earth and its invention causes destruction." The Guardian said that the word "instrument" was not a true translation and he set us to work to find the word. We found nothing right...force, substance, element. I suggested radiation because I had been studying the lives of Dr. and Madam Currie who had just discovered radium. And so I said, "radiation". "No, it's not radiation," he said. So Ruhyyih Khanum said, "There's a thing in the earth." And we left it at that. He said, "All the nations have suffered from the bomb and now it would be America's time. He said America is like a child. It has gone astray. It has to be punished. Americans are too attached to their possessions. No harm with material civilization. But attachment to it is wrong. That is materialism and that is evil." Shoghi Effendi said, "In case of war, the big cities would be the first to be bombed: New York, Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, San Francisco. The Bab was the first to say that His followers must forsake their homes in order to aid my Cause." "The large cities," the Guardian said, "have had great bounties bestowed upon them. They were visited by 'Abdu'l-Baha himself. Americans are too used to luxury and comfort." "Persia has learned this materialism from America through Europe. Persians are

leaving villages because they cannot get rich fast enough there," the Guardian said. I remember a Baha'i from Montpellier where I was at that time...southern France. He'd been there to Tehran. And he said when he returned they were simply mad upon the subject! Everyone was mad on the subject of making money.

One evening at dinner the Guardian spoke of the buildings to be erected on Mount Carmel. He took his pen and drew a semi-circle marked in the corner...and I forgot whether left or right corner...I think it was left...where the archives building would be. It was just beginning. The foundation was marked but not excavated. Often he would refer to the drawing that was on an easel in the corner of the dining room. One could see his joy and his pride in that archives building -- the first administrative building on Mt. Carmel. Then there would be the Universal House of Justice in a building resembling the Pentagon for offices and assembly rooms. There would be offices for the Hands for the National Assembly branch offices for every National Assembly in the world. At that time I think there were seven. All different types of architecture but harmonizing. Mr. Ioas interposed a question. It was not a statement or a question...between. And he said there would be a home for the Guardian. There was a silence. He did not reply. Afterwards when he passed away I recalled that strange silence. I think he knew then what was coming. A house will be built for the Guardian; a symbol of the Guardianship. One evening he told us that the future of the Guardianship is very great. He did not...or we did not understand that he meant when he was gone his writings, his interpretations, the administrative order he had reared would be our eternal guidelines. And the Guardianship did not suffer any decline when he left us. He explained the administrative symbolism in the Monument of the Greatest Holy Leaf. There are the steps surrounding the monument. That represents the local spiritual assembly -- the foundation. Then the pillars supporting the dome -- those are the national assemblies. The dome is the House of Justice and on it a smaller one. He didn't mention that, but Dr. Hakim did when he told us the same description of the symbolism. And he said that little one represented the Guardianship.

Now a few things that came up at the table at dinner. He said kings and dictators will again come into power because of the chaos as civilization breaks apart. Baha'is must expect all sorts of difficulties and troubles but should be strong of heart and have great faith. They should be filled with the spirit of consecration and dedication such as animated Martha Root and Hyde Dunn.

America is in great danger because of materialism. Too much emphasis is placed on material well-being. Through it we become soft and attached to things. Even the American negro has become almost as materialistic as white. He said Africa will come and teach negroes in America. We must use moderation in all things. Godlessness he said creates a vacuum and materialism fills it. Steadfastness, enthusiasm in our efforts -- purposefulness -- these are essentials.

A proof of the greatness of the Faith: that it was spread from prisons. This never happened from the beginning of history.

'Abdu'l-Baha told this to a British Admiral who asked for a sign or a miracle that had happened in the Cause.

About committees -- now I've forgotten who gave me this, but it's interesting to know. Committees must encourage individuals...must be a partnership between officials, bodies and individuals. But we must remember that we are serving the Cause of Baha'u'llah and not the committees or bodies. We must be internationally minded about the Faith.

The Bab emphasized the spiritual unity of mankind and Baha'u'llah said it would be a definite reality. There are prophecies concerning this. It will come during the Formative Age of the Faith. A super-state will be established and the Lesser Peace will first be realized. The first super-state will be non-Baha'i but the second will be the Baha'i World State, that is, under the auspices of the Baha'is. The Most Great Peace marks the birth of world civilization and will continue to develop throughout the ages and cycles for 500,000 years and will embrace the whole planet. We are now in the administrative phase of this Formative Age which will culminate in world order.

Regarding the Beloved Guardian: this is from a Tablet by 'Abdu'l-Baha to a believer, "Verily, that infant is born and exists. And there will appear from his Cause a wonder which thou wilt hear in the future. Thou shalt see him with the most perfect form, most great gift, most complete perfection, most great power and strongest might. His face glisteneth with a glistening whereby the horizons are renewed. Therefore, forget not this account as long as thou art living in as much as there are signs for it in the passing centuries and ages."

Shoghi Effendi was the "Sign of God on earth". He was descended from the Twin Lote Trees, that is Bab and Baha'u'llah ...through Abraham. He was appointed in the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha as Center of the Covenant and Interpreter of the Baha'i Teachings and Writings after Him. Baha'u'llah revealed the Administrative System; the New World Order. 'Abdu'l-Baha elaborated on it and delineated its functions and powers. And the Beloved Guardian erected the physical structure the visible structure which is the new world civilization throughout the world. For thirty-six years he was world leader of the Baha'i Faith. When he began his mission the Faith had reached thirty-five countries and there were twelve National Assemblies loosely hanging together; scarcely functioning. Only one functioned somewhat. When he passed away the Faith had reached 254 countries and there were 48 well-functioning assemblies; later on Nationals -- soon it was because he had many Regionals in preparation and when they were divided it soon reached the number of 81 National Assemblies. And literature was being translated into hundreds of languages. His mother was the eldest daughter of 'Abdu'l-Baha and his father a descendant of the Bab through the great Afnan. He was the chief builder of the House of Worship in 'Ishqabad. Shoghi Effendi passed away...Oh, I wanted to tell you, too...the property where he was born was in February, 1975 was purchased by the Universal House of Justice. There were about 7,000 square meters and all of a few acres...maybe 6-7 acres. He passed away in a third class hotel in London on November the 4th, 1957. And I

believe that the room in which he passed away has been reserved in his memory and that Baha'is passing through London from many lands go there to pay their tribute.

One night he told the pilgrims that the date 1957 mentioned in the New Era was not referring to a world event, but to a major crisis in the Cause...That was his passing. "All life," he said, "is made up of crisis and victory." And then he said with a smile, "Without the crisis you do not have the victory."

It was to the Greatest Holy Leaf to whom he turned for help, support, consolation. Dr. Katherine True said in her notes that his mother used to stand in front of the stairs all day long just to catch a glimpse of him. Well, you see 'Abdu'l-Baha told her to send for the Guardian six months before he passed away and she didn't carry out his instructions.

The austerity of the Guardian thrills me. He travelled second, third class. Stayed in second, third class hotels. Ate in the cheapest restaurants the cheapest meals. We had dinner with him six evenings. Two nights we spent in Bahji. One night he didn't come to dinner. He worked all night on the codification of the Aqdas. But with one exception he wore the same robe every evening at dinner. Once only did he change. It was a Holy Day. And he chanted in the Shrine. He wore a black robe. And that night he came to dinner in that black robe. It was glistening. He radiated such a radiance. When Laura and I retired to our room after dinner. We stood thoughtfully for a few moments; silent. And then we turned and suddenly exclaimed in unison, "Isn't he beautiful!"

That day we rode in the new car; Mr. Allen's gift to the Guardian. The driver picked us up at Western Pilgrim House and then stopped in front of 'Abdu'l-Baha's House for Ruhiyih Khanum. After a few minutes she came hurrying and got into the car very perturbed. "The Guardian and I can never enjoy these things," she said. "We are always rushing from one thing to another." They told us that the Guardian would suddenly go away; be gone a day, two or three; maybe a week. He just went. And when he returned...the same...nothing was said. They understood from this that there had been a crisis in the Faith somewhere and he had gone to take care of it. One he told us, "I dissolved the Assembly in Damascus. The money for the Hazira was being used for personal interests."

When 'Abdu'l-Baha was on earth the believers were in paradise. When the Guardian began his mission he put us to work, but there was still always wonder in the world when he was here; wonder, magic, romance!

When Mrs. Maxwell returned to the United States after the marriage of her daughter and the Guardian she told us about him; the work he did, the burdens he carried. And she would refer to him as "That Holy Man". She said, "The world is a mat at his feet!" The burdens he carried alone until Ruhiyih Khanum came to share his work and to help him. She protected him. And I have this to share with you from notes of Jesse Revell taken at the table. That was when we were there.



"Shoghi Effendi" she said, "has said that the story of Noah is reacted now with Godlessness and materialism. Baha'is must be different from others; not only in big things but in small things. This is what attracts more than anything else; to find this demonstrated in the actions of the believers. Coupled with God's plan and our efforts Baha'is must distinguish themselves because Baha'is have no ulterior motives. Sincerity and devotion will eliminate suspicion, distrust and sensitivity. The sacrifice that the Guardian speaks of is that we will serve the Faith at any cost." Once on another occasion he said, "Devotion is not enough. We must have character."

And now about his functions: to maintain the integrity of the Teachings, the unity of the believers, to interpret the Writings, to give infallible guidance. The Guardian set himself to accomplish two major tasks: (1) to stir the believers all over the world into working through purely organized, administrative channels as indicated by Baha'u'llah and defined by 'Abdu'l-Baha. (2) to see that year by year they became more emancipated from the bonds of the past; whether identified with former religious doctrines and organizations, or the following of the outworn and corrupt patterns of the conduct current in the society of their various nations and alien to the new standards. That's from "Twenty-Five Years of the Guardianship" by Ruhyyih Khanum.

Shoghi Effendi concerned himself with three divinely revealed charters which have set in motion three distinct processes in the unfoldment of the world order of Baha'u'llah. (1) The Tablet of Carmel revealed by Baha'u'llah for the development of the Institutions of the Faith at the World Centre; (2) The Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha, charter for the establishment of the administrative order throughout the world including the establishment of the supreme edifice of the Universal House of Justice; (3) charter of the Divine Plan constituting the charter for the propagation of the Faith and the spiritual conquest of the planet.

Another function of the Guardian especially at the World Centre was to win recognition of the Cause as a world religion entitled to the same status and prerogatives that other religions such as Christianity, Islam and Judaism enjoy. The first great major achievement of his life was the development of the World Centre. It can only be compared in importance to the spread of the Cause itself throughout the entire globe under his leadership. The second greatest concern of the Guardian was the construction of the Shrine of the Bab.

And now we will talk about the Shrine of the Bab. It took more than one hundred years for Baha'u'llah, 'Abdu'l-Baha, and Shoghi Effendi to finally discharge the Sacred Trust which the Bab's Remains meant for them; a trust which lasted from the day of His martyrdom in 1850 until the final completion of His Shrine in 1953. From the moment of the execution of the Bab until he ascended in 1892 Baha'u'llah had watched over that Sacred Trust. He had not only to protect that Sacred Dust from the enemy but from the Babis as well for had they discovered it they would have stampeded the place. The body of the Manifestation according to the Koran is indestructible. And that is why the enemy was so anxious to recover it. During a visit to Mount Carmel

Baha'u'llah had pointed out to 'Abdu'l-Baha where the Bab's body was to rest instructing Him to purchase this piece of land and bring the hidden Remains from Persia and inter them there. 'Abdu'l-Baha, a prisoner, succeeded in having the small wooden box containing the Remains of the Bab and His martyred companion conveyed by caravan and boat from Persia to AKKA. When the first group of western pilgrims visited the Prison City in the winter of 1898 and 9 this precious casket was already concealed in the Master's home; its presence a carefully guarded secret, although He did tell some of them--the Americans about it. So 'Abdu'l-Baha carried out the work of the foundation and the construction of the six rooms. In 1928 the Guardian had the work started on the excavation of solid rock of the mountain behind the building in order to make place for the three extra, massive vaulted and high-ceiling rooms required to complete the ground floor.

The second greatest concern of the beloved Guardian had two aspects; the completion of the building itself and the protection and preservations of its surroundings. This involved the construction of three additional rooms as well as a super-structure, an entire building in itself which undoubtedly is one of the most beautiful edifices on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. And secondly, the gradual purchase during a third of a century of a great protective belt of land surrounding the shrine and reaching from the top to the bottom of Mount Carmel. On November 22, 1954 a great obstacle was removed permitting the purchase of 1500 meters of land strategically situated on Mount Carmel in the vicinity of the Bab's Shrine. It was owned by the sister of Varid. Varid was a Covenant breaker; one of the worst. He came to the United States with 'Abdu'l-Baha in 1912 and he was His most terrible test. He was responsible for having the Guardian return to Haifa from Naples. What happened nobody knows, but the journey was cut short at Naples. This sister had held on to this property for thirty years asking an exorbitant price which the Guardian wouldn't pay. For some reason she finally sold it to the government of Israel and they sold it at half the price to the Guardian. From early morning until dark, often more than eight hours on his feet, mud to his knees, day after day, month after month, the Guardian directed the work of removing the rocks around the Shrine. It was certainly not his work to do this, but he was determined to insure that it was done, not only quickly but economically and there was no one else with the will power and stamina it required to take his place.

They say the finest marble quarries are in Italy. If you have read the book the Agony and the Ecstasy: the Life of Michelangelo by Stone, a particular quarry is mentioned there. He tried at the end of his career to get marble from that quarry [for] his overwhelming work for Popes, but there were no facilities to bring it out at that time. At the time of the building of the Shrine there were. When first taken from the quarry marble is not hardened and set. It is flexible, not like arquitectural concrete, but flexible.

At the very beginning of the project (now this is about the dome), when Mr. Maxwell came to Rome in 1948 the Guardian sent verbal instructions to begin the search for a suitable and lasting material for the outer finish of the dome. Many possibilities were then examined and after

Mr. Maxwell's departure the opinion of experts was secured to crystallize the choice of materials which were available and offered the durability required. One by one such materials were rejected leaving the possibility of using [fired?] tiles to prevent infiltration of moisture from rain or snow. For the dome's covering was an essential requirement on the part of the architect and could be carried out only by using tiles of a shape which could be properly manufactured and manipulated. When it was definitely agreed with Shoghi Effendi's approval to use tiles, the difficult part of the task began; to find a producer, a factory.

At the fourth European Teaching Conference in the Netherlands in 1951 Dr. Giachery spent two days visiting. He wrote, "Our enquiries..." when he was visiting factories. They had a list of a hundred and he wrote "Our enquiries were received even with incredulity, formally declined for technical reasons." You see nothing could be done about it in Italy and Holland was known as a good prospect to look into. He told me that he had an inspiration one Sunday morning early to go out to a small factory on the outskirts of [Utekt?]. That was the last one named on the list of a hundred [anort?]. That is where it was achieved. There he met engineer [Juncher Debrough?]. That Debrough had been trained as chemist was a great asset to our project because three of the four problems in the production of the Shrine's tiles were of a chemical nature. The composition of the tiles, the golden coating and the glazing--all the way Mr. Grove (?) was very proficient. The story from there is very interesting and exciting; the interest, the reverence with which the men worked. They built a replica of 1/18 of the size of the dome out of wood for all tests and experiments as if the dome actually existed. They needed 12,000 tile to cover 250 square meters of dome surface; over fifty sizes and shapes; 85 rows and 8 leaves. [Jaqu'de'brau?] because of his high connection with the government was able to procure the pure gold to cover by a chemical reduction process. Each tile with a thin layer of gold. Each tile was dipped in the solution and baked in an oven.

Form of the dome as designed by the architect Southerland Maxwell combines a cylinder sphere and a cone. Before shipping it was dusted and packed in such a manner that delivery was made in Haifa without damage or breakage of a single tile. On the 29th of April of 1953 the Beloved Guardian followed by Dr. Hakim who later became a member of the Universal House of Justice and Mr. Leroy Ioas climbed the scaffolding to the base of the dome and reverently placed a small silver box containing a fragment of plaster from the ceiling of the Bab's prison cell in the castle of Maku beneath one of the gilded tile of the dome, came down the ladder, circumambulated the roof of the arcade, walked around the gardens for some time and then entered the shrine for prayer and praise.

The firm; something about it now; the firm of the builder of the Shrine: the firm was world-renowned, founded in 1800 by Bernando Fabricuti (?). The head of the firm that did the work on the Shrine was Guido M. Fabricuti. Two sons-in-law ran the business. They were located in Cabara (?), the marble capital of the world. Professor Andre Rocho (?), architect, deserves very special mention according to

Dr. Giachery. He was a graduate from the academy of Bozart's (?) in Carara (?), a brilliant architect. His knowledge of granite, marble and other building materials not only in Italy but in many parts of the world could hardly be matched anywhere. And he was from a long line of marble craftsmen. It was during the war and his office could not be maintained, so he went about to the different clients to see what was going on, and he entered the offices of the Fabricuti's this special morning when the two young men were consigning a letter to the waste basket. It was a letter from the Guardian. "Something about a grandiose mausoleum to be erected in the Holy Land," they told him. With considerable persuasion he got them to retrieve the letter and read it. And with still more effort he persuaded them to answer it. They had called it a "preposterous" request. Profesor Rocho became an enthusiastic supporter of the project. He was the head of the firm. Guido M. Fabricutti passed away before work on the Shrine was completed. On his death bed, speaking to his sons at his bedside, he said, "Take good care of the work for the Shrine of the Bab. Do your best for this is the greatest work of our lives!"

For their work on the Shrine the names of Dr. Giachery, Southerland Maxwell, and Leroy Ioas are inscribed above three of the doors. The Guardian sent Dr. Giachery a picture of the Shrine. It was taken from the west. The first photo of a kind I had ever seen, Dr. Giachery says. And on the back, penned by the loving hand of the Guardian was written, "To dear Ugo in loving appreciation of his historic services to the Shrine of the Bab, Shoghi." In speaking of the contributions of those who participated in the completion of the Shrine, the Guardian said that the work of Southerland Maxwell even transcended his own.

I was there in December of 1956. Millie Collins told us that during the summer the chandelier in the Shrine of the Bab had fallen to the floor. She took two men and went up and they had it lifted up and replaced. Miraculously no harm was done. But of course it was a great shock, especially to the Guardian.

Dr. Giachery worked as a librarian in the Vatican. He was a Catholic. There he came across the Tablet of Baha'u'llah to the Pope. He told us that when the Muslims (or the Moors) were driven out of Spain the Church took all the books and placed them in the Vatican. There there was a biography on Muhammed containing forty volumes. One volume alone devoted to Kadijih.

Now I have listed some 19 achievements--great achievements of Shoghi Effendi, but here I am going to take out time for just one. He directed the purchase of properties on which future Baha'i institutions would be built and secured their exemption from taxes, thereby raising the value of properties owned by the Baha'i world community from 1000 square meters (That's about 63 1/2 acres.) to 257,000 square meters in AKKa; and from 10,000 square meters to 230 on Mount Carmel. That's something over 57 acres.

Now something about the Baha'i properties and archives in Haifa. You know the Shrine of the Bab of course. 'Abdu'l-Baha is there, too; their rugs and tapestries, chandelier of crystal. The International Baha'i Archives Building; the House of 'Abdu'l-Baha (It's large.), No. 7 Persian Street and the room where 'Abdu'l-Baha passed away is reserved. There's a room also where 'Abdu'l-Baha and Shoghi Effendi received. And Ruhyyih Khanum told us the story -- the Greatest Holy Leaf stopping 'Abdu'l-Baha from giving away the last rug. She stood there at the door and she said to him, "If you give away that rug, you will have no place to receive." And then on top of the building was the apartment of shoghi Effendi which he built at the time of his marriage to Mary Maxwell. There was the Wester and Eastern Pilgrim Houses; the little rest house near Eastern Pilgrim House...full of treasures. Archives in the Shrine of the Bab and Minor Archives in Memorial Gardens. All of these no doubt are now in the Great Archives. There's an obelisk and land on top of Mt. Carmel where future House of Worship will be built. Milly Collins gave the money for the purchase: an hundred and eight thousand dollars and Dr. Hakim told us that these buildings in Haifa and AKKa contained one/one hundred percent of Baha'i Archives still in Persia. Shoghi Effendi had Mr. Ioas take us up by taxi to view the land on Mt. Carmel and Mr. Ioas told us it was really one of the greatest purchases of the real estate in Haifa. It's like a promontory surrounded on three sides by the Mediterranean and the House of Worship will be facing AKKa.

There are 19 steps leading down from the Shrine of the Bab to the main street of Haifa. And Dr. Hakim told us that in the future these steps will be lined with gold, for gold will not have the great value it now has. He said kings and queens will come, circumambulate the Shrine after removing their crowns, then they will go to pioneer.

In the Minor Archives we saw a picture of 'Abdu'l-Baha and letters from

Ruhullah, the child martyr. In the rest house we saw the sword of Mulla Husayn; photo of Queen Marie given to Martha Root; slippers of Navvab; ring of Quddus of turquoise and silver; blood stained stones and clothes of the Purest Branch; Tablet to him from Baha'u'llah after his death; locks of hair of Navvab; her mirror; two kinds of glasses and rings; letters from secretary of the Bab in answer to a question from a Muhammedan Shaykh; coffee cup of the father of Baha'u'llah; two letters from Dr. E.G. Brown of Oxford to Dr. Hakim and an order from the Shah to exterminate the Babis.

Now about the properties in AKKA: the Shrine of Baha'u'llah and land around it; the Bahji Mansion restored by the Guardian; it was stripped by the Covenant Breakers when they finally left; the plain of AKKA (quite a tract of land around there); the Garden of Ridvan; an house where Baha'u'llah used to go; and the bench where He sat and talked with pilgrims (We sat on that bench and drank tea; and they gave us oranges from the orchard there.); the House of Abbud, east and west, large house containing many archives; room where 'Abdu'l-Baha was married (We had lunch there. The Persian ladies and Laura and I.); Mazraih where Baha'u'llah lived two years as a prisoner (He was guarded. The guard became a believer and his descendants are Baha'is and serve there at the World Centre. There was a long flight of stairs. I remember how we climbed up (I expect it was a hundred); the prison room in the prison where Baha'u'llah was incarcerated for nine years (It has been transformed into an asylum for the mentally afflicted by the government of Israel. Oh yes, I should say that there are fresh flowers--roses--placed in the Shrine of Baha'ullah every day. The pilgrim is also shown old AKKA and the gate through which Baha'u'llah entered AKKA. The people went there to see the "God of the Persians" come in.) Then there's the house where the Guardian was born; adjacent to the barracks which was recently purchased by the Universal House of Justice. That was in 1975. Seven thousand square meters--that's about...less than two acres of land. Now Bahji as you know was the mansion where Baha'u'llah lived and passed away in 1892. There he received Profesor E.G. Browne from Cambridge University, Oxford, England. We saw the room and the furniture and His clothing; the room where He passed away. Everything was restored by the Guardian. He sent Martha Root and Marion Jack to take photographs before the things were destroyed and taken away. We saw the coffin of Navvab. The Guardian had her dus removed and placed in another coffin before being interred in the Memorial Gardens on Mt. Carmel with the Greatest Holy Leaf and the Purest Branch. There was a large table, a central room in the Mansion covered with many archives: the model of temples and many papers and documents; incorporation papers for example...a country called... There was the table in Bahji where 'Abdu'l-Baha sat and answered the questions of Laura Clifford Barney which became the great book Some Answered Questions; and it was at this table that we had dinner the two nights we were in Bahji. 'Abdu'l-Baha's room; plain, simple; a bed, table and things in which He was served tea or coffee; His chair. There was the room of Baha'u'llah where He wrote the Aqdas and wrote the final Tablets to the rulers of the world; Napoleon III second letter; Queen Victoria; Czar of Russia; and Pope Pius IX; Bahiyyih Khanum's room.

Now of the Shrine of Baha'u'llah I must mention...in The Memorials of the Faithful 'Abdu'l-Baha has spoken of Nahjar. He was a carpenter and a master craftsman. He took on the carpentry work of the Holy Tomb and to this day the glass roof which is over the inner courtyard of the Shrine of Baha'u'llah remains as the product of his skill. His grave is in Akka.

And I want to tell you a story about Salah; we did love him. He was the keeper of the Shrine of Baha'u'llah. He was an Arabian. He was employed at the post office in Tel Aviv and even had head of a department. His one consuming desire was to be keeper of the Shrine of Baha'u'llah. One day the Guardian sent for him and appointed him "Keeper of the Shrine". He told me that he could not be away from the Guardian more than two weeks. Then he would have to drum up some excuse to go to Haifa just to see him.

Ruhiyyih Khanum told us this story at lunch one day. Salah was very much plagued by the Covenant Breaker who lived in the house nearby and who were always spying on him. One day he saw the old man looking out at him and he ran over, climbed up the window and faced him. The old Covenant Breaker took off his slipper and hit Salah over the head with it and then promptly had him arrested. Ruhiiyyih Khanum had to go down to bail him out. She said, "He was not at all concerned about being in the cell or being arrested. But he was very red in the face and furious at the Covenant Breakers for spying on him.

Now some more about discussions at dinner. "Sentiment is against Israel and the United States. It will change. When you pray in the Shrines the first thing you ask for will be the first thing answered." It's true. I know. "Those who work with him here," the Guardian said, "in this world will be with him through all the worlds of God." He said New York is the most wicked, the most depraved city in the world. It will be destroyed." I said, "I thought you said that Paris is the most wicked." He leaned over to say this, "Paris is the most immoral. New York is the most wicked." Capital and labor: "Both Russia and United States are wrong. Communism takes away initiative. Capitalism has gone too far. The workers became embittered. Capitalism tried to do something about it, but it was too late." May Maxwell told us (that's once in New York at the Center; she was there), "The Guardian said that Americans lack patience, depth and reverence." "America is in very great danger", he said, "and Europe is in very great danger. In fact, the Holy Land itself is in very grave danger. It is possible that Europe will be taken and used as a springboard for the war on America. American cities will be destroyed. In fact, it is possible that two thirds of the world will be destroyed." I asked this question one evening at dinner and he said, "It is possible." He would never say otherwise. "We must not forget though," he said, "that this destruction is just the prelude to the glorious future foretold by Baha'u'llah."

When the British received a general letter from him they would make an effort. It didn't amount to much, but the Americans didn't move and he would have to plead with them and cable follow up with a powerful plea. Then they acted. But you know I think it wasn't that they were lazy or

didn't want to do it. I think that they just couldn't keep up with him.

The Most Great Peace marks the birth of world civilization. The Baha'is must direct their attention to the body which is the Cause, not the Temple of Baha'u'llah but the Message He brought, for the Teachings are greater and more important than His Prophethood.

It was Martha Root and Sutherland Maxwell who brought the greatest joy to the Guardian. Ruhyyih Khanum spoke often of her father and how his coming to the World Centre brought life and joy to the Beloved Guardian. His great help as a distinguished architect was especially something wonderful for the Guardian.

When her mother passed away in Argentina the Guardian said to her, "Your father is alone. We must ask him to come and make his home with us." So they did.

No one could mislead or cheat the Guardian. Whenever an estimate was too high he flatly refused it. And even stated on one occasion that he would stop work on the Shrine indefinitely as he had no intention of paying what he felt was an exorbitant price.

Baha'u'llah was a prisoner for almost fifty years. At the end of His life there was a great flow of wealth to Him, but He continued to live in humble circumstances.

Milly Collins told us, "We have two saints at the World Centre: Dr. Hakim and Ethyl Revell. They want nothing." Milly lived with austerity. She had no running water in her room. The Guardian once said, "The more spiritual the teacher, the more mysterious his or her way of teaching. All of the Prophets at some time in their mission went to the Holy Land. Noah, Zoroaster, all of Them."

Mr. Mohtjahede joined us a few days after we arrived. When I asked him, "How do you like the Guardian?" he would simply wag his head from side to side and say, "That Guardian! That Guardian!"

Ruhyyih Khanum said even in the day of Baha'u'llah when a new believer was found Baha'u'llah would say, "The Kingdom is being built." There was great rejoicing over the one.

He asked us one evening how long our journey took to get there. "In the future," he said, "you will come in minutes."

The "ark" is the Universal House of Justice and the members are those who ride in it. The "arc" is the whole body of the believers. When asked, "What is the Everlasting Covenant?" he answered, "They are all everlasting."

Maintenance -- that was something. No such thing exists in the East. It was practically the same all over the world. America is ahead of course. I read a book, a man who said that when he went into a country the first thing he asked for was to look at the book on maintenance and



he could tell the state of the nation.

Meals were prepared centrally. There were about 30 permanent workers there at that time; '56. And then it was sent in great containers to the different places for the meals.

One evening Mrs. Collins announced regarding that she had that day seen an important man in Haifa. He asked, that is the Guardian "Did you tell him that you are Vice President of the International Baha'i Council?" She said, "No." He said, "You should have." He meant for the prestige of the Cause.

When the House of Worship is built on Mount Carmel the worshippers will walk up. This is so we shall remember the sacrifice of suffering of the Martyrs and those who established it. This was at lunch one day with Ruhyyih Khanum that this came up.

"There will always be evil in the world," the Guardian said, "but its scope will decrease. Evil will be restricted and there will be no wars. They will be abolished from the face of the earth. We shall never attain absolute perfection in the world but can approach it. Some of the older religions will continue but in a smaller scale. England must give up her pageantry. Every nation must sacrifice something to get the peace. The East will ultimately adopt the calendar of the West. So Feasts and Holy Days will be held the same day all over the world. We pray to God or to Baha'u'llah but not to 'Abdu'l-Baha. We can ask 'Abdu'l-Baha to intercede for us."

We saw the original copy of the Dawn-Breakers in the handwriting of Nabil in the Eastern Pilgrim House. There were notes and handwriting of Baha'u'llah in the margin. 'Abdu'l-Baha read it also. The Guardian edited it before making the translation. I heard some of the comments from university students regarding some of the lines being strange or something to that effect. I noticed that but then I remembered that the Guardian had sent copies to Queen Marie and to his professor at the Oxford University, England, and that man wrote him, "It is a masterpiece of translation! No one would know he was reading a translation."

Milly was the greatest benefactress of the Faith. Others were richer. This station it seems was give to her. The design of Mr. Reemey was approved by the Guardian for Mount Carmel, that is the Mashriqu'l-Adhgar. 'Abdu'l-Baha had placed it in Bahji when the reward was given to Louise Borgiouse (?) and Mr. Reemey was so disappointed that his was not chosen. Mrs. Florence Krube (?) told us about that.

We were asked (oh, we felt this was a great honor) we were asked to help usher at the Shrine of the Bab on Saturday morning because they were short of help and so we stayed over for lunch. We had to watch the gates closely, so many people at a time to enter the grounds. It was quite an experience.

At the of your tour you are shown pictures of the Bab and Baha'u'llah; the pentacle, the five-pointed star with 360 names and attributes of

God which was designed by the Bab was lost; the original was lost. We saw a copy. No one know what became of the original. The Aqdas was revealed in the House of Abbud in 1873 in AKKa and the Katab-i-Iqan was revealed in Bagdad. It was copied by hand by 'Abdu'l-Baha.

Not until 'Abdu'l-Baha interpreted the Writings was it understood that only monogamy is legal in the Faith. Jewish law allowed two wives, Mohammed four but conditioned on justice which is impossible, therefore four are not possible. The Bab allowed two.

The trials in this religion are unprecedented in any religion. Yet they have never brought about a permanent split. The difference in other religions have been caused by differences in interpretation. He said, "The decline of the West would be worse than Babylon, Rome and Pompei." I saw Pompei. They were petrified. I mean people were petrified when this happened. There was an oven; this woman was standing, leaning over and she stood petrified, a tiny woman, in her tracks she was petrified. He said he told us these things not to frighten us, but so we would not be living in a fools' paradise.

This is Ruhiiyyih Khanum's tribute to Shoghi Effendi. I love it. "Shoghi Effendi's divine and indifeasible right to assume the helm of the Cause of God had been fully vindicated through thirty-six years of unremitting, heart-breaking toil. It would be hard indeed to find a comparable figure in history who in a little over a third of a century set in motion so many different operations. Who found the time to devote his attention to minute details on the one hand and on the to cover the range of an entire planet with his plans, his instructions, his guidance and his leadership."

The prayer of Shoghi Effendi: "Let us pray to God that in these days of world-encircling gloom when the dark forces of nature, of hate, rebellion, anarchy and reaction are threatening the very stability of human society; when the most precious fruits of civilization are undergoing severe and unparalleled tests we may all realize more profoundly than ever that though but a mere handful amidst the seizing masses of the world, we are in this Day the chosen instruments of God's grace, that our mission is most urgent and vital to the fate of humanity, and fortified by these sentiments arise to achieve God's Holy Purpose for mankind."

A correction: the property belonging to 'Abdu'l-Baha where Shoghi Effendi was born and which was recently purchased by the Universal House of Justice near the prison of AKKa is not 7 acres but something under 2 acres.

I wish to express my gratitude to Kent McConnell and Judy Harringhouse for bringing the tape recorder. Their idea was that I should record some historical recollections, but I decided to tell about my Pilgrimage and meeting with the Beloved Guardian. I wish also to express my gratitude to Sharp Davison for his help with the mechanics without which it would never have been accomplished. I am sorry I couldn't have done it better, but due to my illness this is the best I can do just now.

"The tent of the order of the world is raised and established on the two pillars, reward and punishment. In despotic government carried on by men without divine faith, where no fear of spiritual retribution exists the execution of the laws is tyrannical and unjust. There is no greater prevention of oppression than these two sentiments: hope and fear. They have both political and spiritual consequences." "Wisdom of 'Abdu'l-Baha"

This tape was made by Olivia Kelsey and was completed August 17, 1979.