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Theosophical History

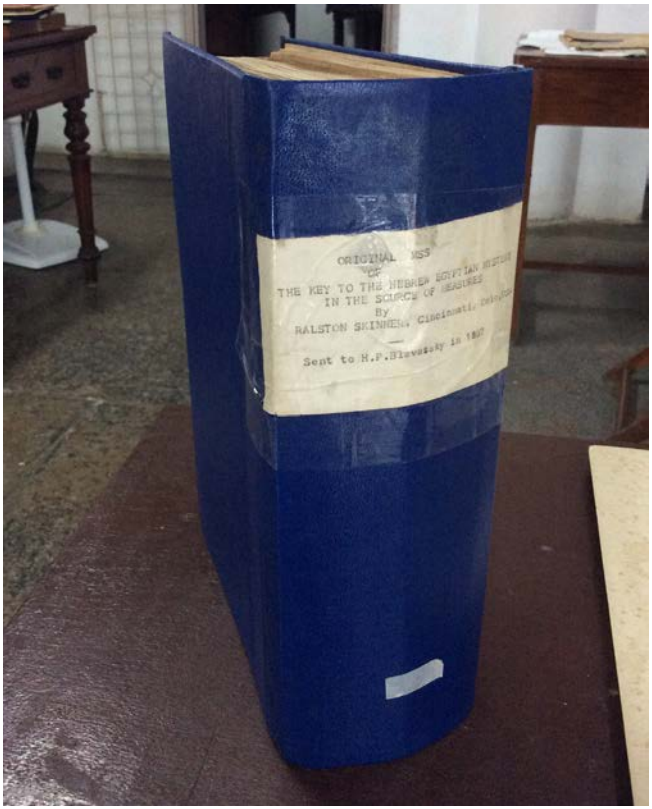


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October 2026
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Theosophical History

A Quarterly Journal of Research

Founded by Leslie Price, 1985
Volume XX, Issue 4
October 2026

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Theosophical History (ISSN 0951-497x) is published quarterly in January, April, July, and October. This issue has been published by Dr. James A. Santucci, Emeritus, California State University, Fullerton. Future issues will be published by Dr. Tim Rudbøg, University of Copenhagen. The journal consists of four issues per volume: one volume covering a period of one year. The journal's purpose is to publish contributions specifically related to the modern Theosophical Movement, from the time of Madame Helena Blavatsky and others who were responsible in establishing the original Theosophical Society (1875), to all groups that derive their teachings—directly or indirectly, knowingly or unknowingly—from her or her immediate followers. In addition, the journal is also receptive to related movements (including pre-Blavatskyite Theosophy, Spiritualism, Rosicrucianism, and the philosophy of Emanuel Swedenborg to give but a few examples) that have had an influence on or displayed an affinity to modern Theosophy.

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GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION OF MANUSCRIPTS

The final copy of all manuscripts—article, communication, or review—must be submitted in Microsoft Word (any version) electronically, preferably by email attachment.

Bibliographical entries and citations must be placed in endnote format. The citations must contain complete bibliographical information. For books, the publisher's name and the place and date of the publication are required; for journal articles, the volume, number, and date must be included. There is no limitation on the length of manuscripts. In general, articles of 30 pages or less will be published in full; articles in excess of 30 pages may be published serially in the journal or as a separate publication in the Occasional Papers Series.

Brief communications, review articles, and book reviews are welcome.

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Theosophical History logo by Eric Santucci (*www.ericsantucci.com)*

ON THE COVER. J. Ralston Skinner's unpublished MSS received by H. P. Blavatsky in Ostende from J. D. Buck in early 1887. The MSS is mentioned in both the Christmas letter and Blavatsky's subsequent letter (dated February 17, 1887). For further information, see note 3 to "H. P. Blavatsky's First Letter to James Ralston Skinner: December 25, 1886" (p. 386) and Boris de Zirkoff, *The Secret Doctrine*. Volume III: General Index and Bibliography (Wheaton, Illinois: Quest Books, Theosophical Publishing House, 1993), 445. Photo: Compliments of Ms. Jaishree Kannan, Librarian and Officer in charge of the Surendra Narayan Archives (Theosophical Society, Adyar).

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Transcribed by Ananda Wickremeratne
Transcript typed and corrected by Anita Atkins
Edited and annotated by James A. Santucci *and*

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Editor's Comments
In This Issue

James Santucci

THE CHRISTMAS LETTER

This final issue of volume XX completes two projects: the first having doctrinal importance regarding the development of Theosophical teaching, the second having historical importance regarding the Theosophical movement. The first project, one that has been ongoing for over ten years, completes an examination of Madame H. P. Blavatsky's growing understanding of certain elements comprising the "secret doctrine" or Kabbala. The second project expands the number of primary sources pertaining to The Theosophical Society in America's interpretation of its relationship with The Theosophical Society (Adyar).

Madame Blavatsky's correspondence with James Ralston Skinner, the author of *Key to the Hebrew-Egyptian Mystery in The Source of Measures*, reveals a side of her that is not often evident: an enthusiastic appreciation of the work of what some might regard as rivaling her own teachings. A better term might be "complement" rather than "rival," since she considered Skinner's insights important enough to incorporate into her upcoming *The Secret Doctrine* multiple times due to his understanding—"discovering," according to her comment in her second (February 17, 1887) letter to Skinner—one of the seven keys mentioned in *Isis Unveiled*. The employment of the term "key" is significance since it underscores the magnitude of his understanding of the ancient wisdom. Blavatsky claimed that the key must be turned seven times for this revelation to be complete. Blavatsky credited Skinner to having discovered one of the seven keys to understanding the "Esoteric Language and universal language" in her second letter to Skinner. The Christmas letter in a sense explains the statement in *The Secret Doctrine* I:318, wherein she derides the materialist criticism of "Kabalists and Occultists":

> But here again they will hardly be successful if they share the belief that the Jewish Kabalistic system contains the key to the whole mystery: for, it does not. Nor does any other Scripture at present possess it in its entirety, for even the Vedas are not complete.

The impetus of the present letter, according to Jirah D. Buck's account, was his response to Skinner's claim that Hebrew was the oldest language. Buck countered that Sanskrit was much older and advised Skinner to write to Blavatsky for her insight in this matter. A large portion of Blavatsky's communication was a lengthy description of various features of Hinduism, the Sanskrit language, and the possibility of applying the practice of gematria to Sanskrit letters and names. As is usual with Blavatsky's writing, she covers a diversity of topics and issues, so in reading the Christmas letter many related topics are raised that are of interest, especially the significance of the circle and π in sacred geometry, a topic later included in her discussion of Stanza IV of the Book of Dzyan. The events leading to Blavatsky's composition of the letter and its contents are discussed in the article, "H. P. Blavatsky's Christmas Letter to J. Ralston Skinner: The 1886 "Christmas Letter," and in the notes to the letter respectively.

As important as this letter is, however, knowledge of its existence was nearly lost to the wider Theosophical community. It is only because of the generosity of Daniel Caldwell, the founder and proprietor of the informative website "Blavatskyarchives.com," who shared this letter with me in the hope that it would receive a wider audience. As mentioned in my article above, the letter was once part of the Skinner Collection in the Harvard Divinity School Library special collections but has since disappeared from the Library holdings. There is no doubt, however, that the letter was donated as part of a collection of letters belonging to Mr. Charles Wiggins in 1978. Copies were obtained by a small number of scholars, including Ms. Anita Atkins (aka Sylvia Cranston). Mr. Caldwell received a photocopy of the letter from her, so there is no doubt that it was part of the Skinner collection. It is my opinion that the letter somehow was lost prior to the restoration of the Blavatsky-Skinner letters, which occurred in 1983.

The transcription of the letter that appears in this issue is mainly the work of Dr. Ananda Wickremeratne. Shortly

following the transcription in the early 1980s, Ms. Anita Atkins typed and partially corrected Dr. Wickremeratne's original transcription. What I received from Mr. Caldwell were photocopies of the original letter in Blavatsky's handwriting and Ms. Atkin's typewritten text of Dr. Wickremeratne's handwritten transcription. Although much of the transcription is accurate, there were numerous areas where I have changed the text based upon closer examination of the original letter. I leave it to the reader to ascertain the accuracy of the transcription.

* * *

THE AUTONOMOUS THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AMERICA

The second part of this issue consists of historical documents originating in the Ninth Annual Convention of the American Society of The Theosophical Society and First Convention of The Theosophical Society in America, held on April 28 and 29, 1895. These meetings include names of branches and members either attending or announced but not present at the Convention, the historical overview of The Theosophical Society—the original text as it appears in the Ninth Convention proceedings—and the legal opinion of the status of The Theosophical Society as interpreted during the proceedings of the First Convention of the newly-named autonomous The Theosophical Society in America. These three excerpts continue the list of documents in the preceding issue (XX, no. 3) in addition to my article on the origins of the T. S. A, also appearing in this issue. The primary contention of these documents is to assert that The Theosophical Society that developed in India following Col. Henry S. Olcott and H. P. Blavatsky's emigration to India in 1879 was never a legal part of The Theosophical Society in New York. This explains the disagreement in the shorthand language used to define the status of both societies by the members. Did the American Section of The Theosophical Society "split" or separate from Adyar in much the same way that the Southern states of the U.S. seceded from the Union? Or did the American Section declare its autonomy, arguing that it was never a legal part of The Theosophical Society that developed in India? The American Section's arguments presented in this and in the last issue affirmed autonomous status. Whether or not the Section's position would stand up in a court of law is beyond my expertise,

but before any final judgment can be made it is imperative that arguments on both sides be heard. Neither Col. Olcott's arguments nor the opponents of such a resolution attending the Ninth Convention have been examined, but it is hoped that these arguments will be included in future issues.

One issue that intrigued me was the formation of an independent Theosophical Society in America that succeeded the original Theosophical Society in America established by William Q. Judge and his followers. Not much is known about the Society, popularly known as the Hargrove Society. What we do know originates from the pages of its main literary outlet, *The Theosophical Quarterly*. The Society considered itself the "Parent Society" that was founded in New York in 1875 and in direct line of W. Q. Judge's Theosophical Society in America, the society that declared its autonomy from the Adyar Theosophical Society. Despite the expectation and supposition that this later T. S. A. adhered to the traditional teachings of Blavatsky, evidence indicates that the Society assumed a role that resembled



Theosophical Library and Press building
Photo: Compliments of Will Thackara, Theosophical Society (Pasadena)

one composed of "mild and respectable Theosophical Episcopalians" and an emphasis on "the Master Jesus." The inception of a form of Christianity into The Theosophical Society might be loosely compared to the introduction of the Liberal Catholic Church within the Adyar T. S. Furthermore, it also resembles the frequent writings and discussions of the Masters by C. W. Leadbeater and his colleagues. In later iterations, the "I AM" Activity of the Ballards, the Church Universal and Triumphant of Elizabeth Clare Prophet, and the theosophy of Alice Bailey and the Tibetan maintain a somewhat similar character. The inclusion of Hargrove's Theosophical Society in America into the area of Neo-Theosophical teachings to my knowledge has not been recognized, but numerous entries in *Theosophical Quarterly* leave no doubt that similarities do exist. One need only consult vol. XVII, wherein "Christ" is mentioned 144 times. This unexpected transition from what was originally a Blavatskyan or certainly Judgite Theosophical organization into what soon became a Christological organization certainly demands further study.



The remains of the Pasadena Theosophical Library following the Eaton fire.

Photo: compliments of Brett Forray, Alexandria West

* * *

THE THEOSOPHICAL LIBRARY CENTER

On January 9, 2025, the Theosophical Library Center, a building containing one of the most significant collections of Theosophical archival material, was destroyed in what was certainly one of the most devastating series of fires to occur in the history of Los Angeles County. The Theosophical Library Center was a direct descendent of the

library kept by Madame Blavatsky in her New York apartment. The collection remained in New York following her and Colonel Olcott's emigration to India in 1878–1879. The books, with further acquisitions over the years, were eventually housed in the New York headquarters, followed by their removal to Point Loma in San Diego, California. After the selling off of the Point Loma property, the Society and Library were transferred to Covina and finally to Altadena, the latter location for the longest period—about 75 years.

Information on the Theosophical Library is scattered in small increments in journals such as *The Path* and *Theosophy*, so we are very fortunate to have an article that recapitulates its history. The article, "The Genesis and Aims of the Theosophical University Library" by its then Librarian, John Van Mater, was originally a conference paper presented in London at the First Theosophical History Conference on July 20, 1986. It was an insightful and revealing talk on a subject in which most of the audience had little knowledge, especially regarding the latter days of the Library's existence. Subsequently published in *Theosophical History* II, no. 3 (July 1987), the article has acquired more than a mere general curiosity in the topic. It must now be regarded as one of the very few documents detailing the constitution and character of an institution now no longer in existence. For this reason, it deserves to be resurrected as a significant historical document that sheds light on the Theosophical Library as it once was.

The author, John Van Mater, was Head Librarian from 1972, the year of its opening to the public, to about 1997. Prior to this position, he was Secretary General of The Theosophical Society (Point Loma and Covina) from 1942 to 1948, followed by his assuming the head of the American Section in 1948, a position he retained until 1982. Mr. Van Mater joined the Society around 1937, when he became a resident of Point Loma under its Leader, Gottfried de Purucker. John's most well-known and perhaps greatest achievement is the preparation of *The Secret Doctrine Index*, which was published by Theosophical University Press in 1997.

* * *

MY LAST ISSUE

As many of my colleagues and acquaintances know, this will be my final issue as Editor of *Theosophical History* after some thirty-five years at the helm. It was never my intention



John Van Mater, Mrs. John Van Mater, and Leslie Price at the First Theosophical History Conference in London (1986).

to be an editor of any journal, but the person who persuaded me to assume this position was the late John Cooper, who, like many of the subscribers, saw great value in the unique role that *Theosophical History* assumed at the time. The 1980s saw a revitalized interest in the history of The Theosophical Society, a development recognized by the journal's founder-editor, Leslie Price. It was indeed his recognition of this fact that led to his initiative resulting in the creation of an outlet for historians in this field. Although Leslie gave up the position after only four years as editor, it had already made an impact on the field. Following in Leslie's footsteps, I continued the practice of inviting both Theosophists and academicians to contribute to the journal and to encourage a wide range of topics to be included in the journal publications. It is not for me to determine the result of such a policy, however. This is better left to the reader. One observation must be conveyed, however. The loyalty of the readership has been remarkable. Over the course of my editorship, very few have canceled subscriptions, indicating that we have achieved our intended purpose.

The pronoun "we" is not pretentious. I am not the only person who deserves credit for the journal's production. The production of the print and online versions of *Theosophical History* could only be possible with the aid and assistance of Robert Hütwohl, who volunteered initially to help me produce the print version of the journal. Over the years Robert has offered invaluable assistance in producing an academically-oriented product. Needless to say, the journal would not be a reality without his

expertise. To Robert, I owe my deepest gratitude.

The future of *Theosophical History* journals will now be in the hands of the new Editor, Dr. Tim Rudbøg, the Director of the Copenhagen Center for the Study of Theosophy and Esotericism, the Head of the Scandinavian Network for the Academic Study of Western Esotericism, and member of the Department of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies at the University of Copenhagen. In actuality, Tim has been the Editor-in-Chief of *Theosophical History* since 2023. By arrangement he has allowed me to produce this last issue as Editor, after which he will assume full responsibility of the journal as he already has with the *Theosophical History* Website and the *Theosophical History Occasional Papers*.

* * *

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Although their names have been cited elsewhere in the issue, Brett Forray, Ms. Jaishree Kannan, Daniel Caldwell, and Shawn F. Higgins deserve to be acknowledged for their contributions to this issue. Without their aid and generosity, this issue would be devoid of the documents, facts, information, and revelations necessary to reveal what is most certainly fundamental information pertinent to Theosophical history.

* * *

Communications

Lomaland Theosophy Archive and Perennial Wisdom Resources Library: 2025 Updates

Curator Kenneth Small

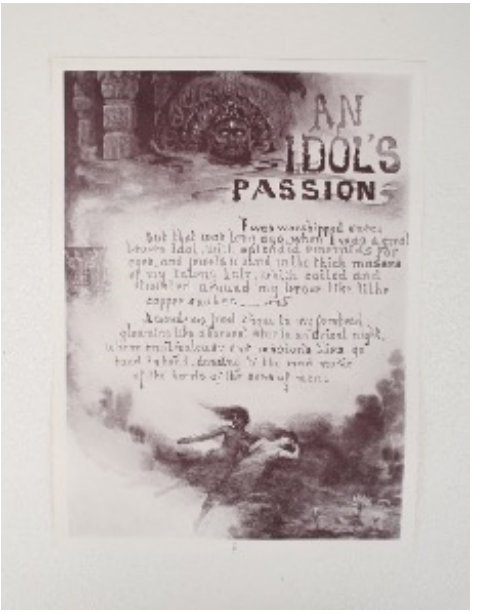
The Lomaland archive and library collection was on loan to San Diego State University from 2016 – 2022. We now are seeking support to continue its availability for scholars of Theosophy to study and access and further develop the collections holdings.

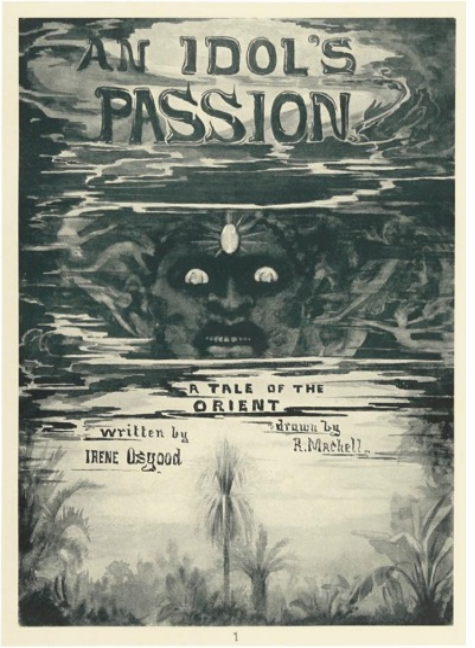
Some current (2025) highlights:

NEW ACQUISITIONS:

Rare magazines

The New Century Path, *The Theosophical Path*, *Raja Yoga Messenger*, *Theosophical Forum*: From the $10,000 donation, approximately $5000 has been pledged to cover the costs for this purchase by an anonymous donor. *The New Century Path* published at Lomaland w .. . . as the first magazine published by the community and is an indispensable resource for the early history of Lomaland from 1900-1911. *The Theosophical Path* was published at Lomaland from 1911-1929 and G. de Purucker was the assistant editor, but in practice he edited and assembled all the contents of each issue and is indispensable resource for both the history and culture of Lomaland. These Theosophical magazines are among the rarest of Theosophical publications. Additionally, there are quite a few *Raja Yoga Messenger*s, a magazine for children published at Lomaland and a set of the *Theosophical Forum*. After the recent fire and total loss of the Theosophical library in Altadena, there may no longer be a complete set of the *Raja Yoga Messenger* extant in one location. It is possible that a complete set can be assembled from a network of collections. This situation will persist until multiple libraries both in the U. S. and Europe are examined.





Rare Book

An Idol's Passion (see left column) by Irene Osgood, illustrated by Reginald Machell. This limited folio edition published in 1895 is a poem by Irene Osgood illustrated by the Theosophist and symbolist artist Reginald Machell. There are perhaps only five known copies in a collection anywhere.

Additional Items

Additional original art works by Lomaland artists have been acquired this year through a generous donation. These include works by Edith White, Leonard Lester and Maurice Braun.

A large oil painting (below) by Leonard Lester (1870-1952) painted at Lomaland between 1915–1920 with a view over the western ocean has been acquired by a donor for the Lomaland collection. An exceptional oil painting of



Helena Blavatsky's "Master," Kuthumi, executed in 1924 by a European, possibly the Polish artist, Parlavsky, completely restored and framed with support from a donor.

Presentations on the Theosophical culture and art of Lomaland for the European School of Theosophy May 2025:

•Lomaland Theosophical Community History Tour Video:
"Revisiting Visionary Utopia with Kenneth Small"
(*https://youtube/9JQ1EsYhX2U*)

• Lomaland's Raja Yoga Education with Kenneth Small, a series of presentation through the European School of Theosophy in May 2025
(*https://youtube/I0CQJ1xte-o*)

•Lomaland: A Global Village New Paradigm Foundation principles and themes for today's world
(*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gnhBkpwidiE*)

•The Drama at Lomaland – "The Soul's Interpreter" by Kenneth Small
(*https://www.youtube.com/live/meZ4h4eY-tc?si=EANtXLgcA4leC78j*)

•Global Mythology Art and Symbolism - Lomaland Art by Kenneth Small
(*https://www.youtube.com/live/DOWMuIYyLrU?si=Hpy0kgJ_bmCE0QFL*)

Upcoming in 2026:

We have initiated an inter-Theosophical collaborative project which will look to integrate into a larger digital library and archival resource for students and researchers with the project goal of developing a physical location.

•Additional presentations via Zoom on the Lomaland community

•San Diego Art Exhibit of Lomaland artists: Leonard Lester, Grace Betts, Maurice Braun, Reginald Machell *et. al.*

•Lomaland Theosophy Archive fundraising for a permanent location

•We have received 2,000+ more volumes from a Theosophical perennialism library which will be incorporated into our current collection growing now to over 4,000 volumes. Additionally, through a generous donation we were able to purchase the early 1900-1930's

rare Theosophical periodicals of the Lomaland community including, the *Century Path*, *Theosophical Path* and many issues of the *Raja Yoga Messenger*. These were originally held in the Point Loma Theosophical Library in Visingsö, Sweden.

•The Lomaland archival restoration project Wiki Website is projected to be active in 2026.

We continue to seek long term funding and support and donations toward the purchase of a building or land to build a long-term location to hold the Lomaland archive Perennial Wisdom Resources and library.

For more information, contact:

Kenneth Small

Lomaland Theosophy Archive and Perennial Wisdom Resources Library

All Inquiries:

Email: ***fohatdharma@gmail.com***



* * *

Latest Information on Robert Hütwohl's Project Appearing on *academia.edu*

Robert Hütwohl has recently initiated a project that makes available a number of generally inaccessible and little-known books, articles, and lectures to the general Theosophical and academic communities. He writes:

Posted to my *academia.edu* pages are a number of articles which I think are important to Theosophical historians and those in the wider field of Western Esotericism. Most will be on my website. Several have required translation from German and French. All have been posted in pdf format and are downloadable. All articles have been re-typset from the original since many of the articles are difficult to read in their original format as the print versions are aging, especially the early editions of *The Theosophist, Theosophical Review* and *Franz Hartmann, M.D.* articles. Mr. Hodson, a clairvoyant, was an important figure. His public lectures have been transcribed from audio to text and are currently being uploaded on academia.edu. Mr. Hodson was an important figure in the Theosophical Society (Adyar) because of his claim appearing in his *Diary* that he was told by a Master of Wisdom that he would fill the same role similar to that of H. P. Blavatsky, in his next incarnation.

For the upcoming website, there are some 3,000 articles that will be transcribed, many of which are translations by me in the fields of early Buddhism, Greek, Egyptian, Samothrace and Atlantis, Le Comte de St. Germain, etc. A downloadable PDF will be included with each article and book. The *academia.edu* is being used as a test site to which only about 700+ select few out of the 3,000 being working on. The entire 3,000 will appear on *spiritofthesunpublications.com* web site, which is currently under construction.

Work is proceeding on several larger fields of research, among the following:

- Protocanonical or Original Buddhism and its Correlations from a Theosophical Perspective
- Maps of the Human Soul and the Personality Alignment to the Solar Angel
- Speculations on Francis Bacon As the Author of the Shakespeare—Comedies, Histories, Poetry, Sonnets, Tragedies
- The Universality and Date of the Last Deluge or Flood Myth As Described By Various World Cultures [The Ring-Pass-Not and the Twilight Between Recorded and Unrecorded History]
- The Descent of Apes from Man
- The Pyramids at Gizeh, Egypt. Further Evidence of Atlantean Wisdom

* * * * *

Choreosophy Institute Archives and Research Center at Golden Apple Healing Arts, LLC, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

As noted elsewhere, Anita Atkins (Sylvia Cranston) was a central figure in revealing the existence of H. P. Blavatsky's two principal communications to James Ralston Skinner. Many of the documents that were in Ms. Atkins' collection were also in the Harvard Library. Mr. Caldwell, who in turn had received it from Ms. Atkins. Since there was a missing page in the sixteen-page letter, I requested the curator of Ms. Atkins' archive, Ms. Carin Elin, if she could locate the xeroxed original letter. Ms. Elin was not able to locate the letter in question. Years later, following Ms. Elin's death, Dr. Martha Libster, the current historian for the Atkins - Elin Collection, informed me that the xeroxes of both H.P.B.-Skinner letters (Dec. 25, 1886 and Feb. 17, 1887), as well as other material pertinent to the letters were in the collection, including Ms. Atkins correspondence. The Atkins-Elin Collection is available at the Choreosophy Institute at Golden Apple Healing Arts, LLC. Interested individuals may contact Dr. Martha Libster at:

Email:
Martha@GoldenAppleHealingArts.com

Mail:
6650 West State St. Suite D 95
Wauwatosa, WI 53213

Phone:
1- 765-412-1989

* * * * *

Section 1 : H. P. Blavatsky's Christmas Letter to J. Ralston Skinner

H. P. Blavatsky's Christmas Letter to J. Ralston Skinner

James A. Santucci

The Origins of the Skinner-Blavatsky Correspondence

The letters of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky are important as a research tool for many reasons, including the insights regarding her early life, her opinions of her contemporaries and colleagues, and most notably from our perspective, her understanding of various topics within *The Secret Doctrine,* and her development of Theosophical concepts. Regarding the latter, her two letters to James Ralston Skinner, dated December 25, 1886 and February 17, 1887,[1] reveal among other insights an admission to her ignorance of "mathematics and geometry," primary topics that were incorporated in *The Secret Doctrine*. The recipient of these letters was one James Ralston Skinner (1830–1893), "a gentleman of wealth, (and therefore leisure), and unusual penetration, added to through [sic] education."[2] He was by profession a lawyer and a Civil War veteran who served as "Judge Advocate of the volunteer Army of the Cumberland under the command of Major General William S. Rosecrans (1819–1898)."[3] Most importantly, Skinner was an auto-didact in geometry, metrology, arithmology, Hebrew, and gematria.[4] His most noteworthy publication encompassing this material was the *Key to the Hebrew-Egyptian Mystery in The Source of Measures*,[5] a book that has ensured his eminence in Masonic circles from its initial publication in 1875 and in Theosophical circles since the early 1880s. It is this work that came to Blavatsky's attention sometime in late 1885, according to Countess Wachtmeister[6] (1838–1910). In a letter to A. P. Sinnett dated January 4, 1886, she writes[7]:

> Madame had written many pages on the signification of numbers, and that the words Jehovah and Cain are simply algebraical numbers, when she receives by post a book from Arthur Gebhard[8] which he has found in America and sends it to her as he thinks it so interesting, it corroborates

> and confirms all that she has previously written, only from a mathematical point of view. The book is by Skinner.

Blavatsky had probably received *The Source of Measures* sometime during her residency in Würzburg, Germany (1885), having arrived in August. In May 1886, she visited the Gebhards[9] in Elbersfeld and remained until July because of her incapacity to travel due to a sprained ankle she suffered early in her visit. In July she left for Ostende, Belgium, where she resided from July 1886 to September 1887.[10] While in Würzburg, she was fully engaged in writing *The Secret Doctrine* according to a letter addressed to her sister Vera[11]:

> Let them fight for me; as for me, I am sitting quietly in Würtzburg [sic], waiting for Nadya's (Madame Fadeëf's) promised visit, and wont [sic] stir from here. I am writing a new book which will be worth two such as *Isis*."

The focus of *The Source of Measures* was the "Kabbala," defined as[12]:

> a species of symbolic writing among the initiated, setting forth the secret teachings of the Bible; and the key of Kabbala is thought to be the geometrical relation of the area of the circle inscribed in the square, or of the cube to the sphere, giving rise to the relation of diameter to circumference of a circle, with the numerical value of this relation expressed in integrals.

This subject proved to be an important constituent of her 1888 masterwork, *The Secret Doctrine*, as is evident to the numerous citations therein. Kabbalah,[13] however, was neither a topic of recent interest for Blavatsky, nor was her knowledge of the subject ephemeral. She claimed that she had "studied the Kabbalah under two learned Rabbis, one of whom was an initiate,"[14] and that her investigation of this subject has been ongoing "for nearer forty than thirty years."[15] It is not surprising, therefore, to find examples of her competency in her earlier writings, as early indeed as her first significant article, "A Few Questions to 'HIRAF,'"[16] in her first major work, *Isis Unveiled*,[17] and in a number of subsequent articles written prior to 1885, the year that she was introduced to Skinner's *The Source of Measures*.

Antecedent to Gebhard's posting *The Source of Measures* to Blavatsky

in 1885, her first inkling of Skinner's research[18] was probably through Jirah Dewey's article, "The Cabballah," which appeared in the November 1883 issue of *The Theosophist*.[19] Therein, Buck included Skinner's description of "Cabballah" as illustrated in his *Source of Measures*, which he mistitles as "System of Measures." The book, he observes, not only discusses the practice of gematria but also the importance of "sacred geometry," that field which[20]:

> gives the original concept, plan and purpose of such ancient monuments as the Pyramids and the remains of the "Mound-Builders" found here in America; and . . . connects these by an "eternal fitness of things" with measures, motions, times, and spaces of the heavenly bodies, through inherent relations, by a primary postulate, or unit of measure, and law of relation.

Whether the article made an impression on Blavatsky cannot be determined, but it is certain that the receipt of the *Source of Measures* from Gebhard two years later did. In her subsequent articles, Blavatsky saw fit to mention Skinner, the *Source of Measures*, or one of his other contributions whenever the subject of Kabbalah arose. Indeed, Skinner's importance as a contributor to the composition of *The Secret Doctrine* was such that he or his works had received more citations than any other author with the exception of Plato.[21] These citations were initiated with her article, "The Kabalah and the Kabalists at the Close of the Nineteenth Century," which only appeared posthumously in *Lucifer*[22] but was probably written in 1886 or 1887.[23] This article was followed by a number of others written around the same time period, most notably "The Tetragrammaton,"[24] "Classification of 'Principles',"[25] and "The Esoteric Character of the Gospels."[26]

Blavatsky's acquaintance with Skinner's contributions came not by accident but through the intercession of a mutual acquaintance, Jirah Dewey Buck (1838–1916). Both Buck and Skinner were residents of Cincinnati, Ohio, having become acquainted sometime around 1870. As Masons,[27] both had similar interests and participated in the same circles, including the Literary Club of Cincinnati and later the H. B. of L. Buck's own association with The Theosophical Society commenced in 1878,[28] a decision made following his receipt of Blavatsky's letter dated

November 29, 1878[29] in response to his letter of November 26.[30]

Buck's subsequent correspondence with Blavatsky included the mention of Skinner and his writings. This is partially verified in his *Modern World Movements*, where he mentions sending her "a complete copy in MSS of J. Ralston Skinner's work on *Kabala*, *the Zodiac*, and the *Great Pyramid of Gheza*."[31] This work was probably the manuscript mentioned in Blavatsky's second letter to Skinner.[32]

The discovery of Skinner's works was facilitated not only by Buck but also by fellow Cincinnati resident Arthur Gebhard. Gebhard lived in the United States (see note 8) during the 1880s and eventually became a citizen of the country.[33] Proof of his residency in Cincinnati derives from a letter dated November 2, 1885 by S. H. Randall, an acquaintance of both Buck and Skinner's, wherein he recalls that "Gebhard called on me at the office last Thurs. and staid 1½ hrs."[34]

The importance of Blavatsky's introduction to Skinner's works is revealed in an incident relating to her visit at the residence of Gustav and Mary Gebhard in Elberfeld during the spring and early summer of 1886.[35] Soon after arriving (May 19), Blavatsky suffered a sprained ankle requiring her to remain at the Gebhard residence until July. In June, she was visited by her niece, Vera Johnston (Vera Vladimirovna Johnston, née de Zhelihovsky) and by her sister, Vera Petrovna de Zhelihovsky, the latter "in the summer."[36] Mrs. Johnston recounted an interesting episode relating to her aunt's views on π[37]:

> "Vera," she said, "do you think you could tell me what is a pi?"
>
> Rather astonished at such a question, I said I thought a pie was some kind of an English dish.
>
> "Please don't make a fool of yourself," she said rather impatiently, "don't you understand I address you in your capacity of a mathematical pundit. Come and see this."
>
> I looked at the page that lay before her on the table, and saw it was covered with figures and calculations, and soon became aware that the formula $\pi = 3{,}14159$ was put down wrongly throughout them all. It was written $\pi = 31{,}4159$. With great joy and triumph I hastened to inform her of her mistake.
>
> "That's it!" she exclaimed. "This confounded comma[38] bothered me all the morning."

Vera Petrovna added one interesting observation concerning Blavatsky's understanding of "mathematics" or lack thereof, an observation that would prove significant in her letter to Skinner, an observation that would prove significant in Blavatsky's letter to Skinner and confirmed many times elsewhere, including *The Secret Doctrine*. She writes[39]:

> At the beginning of our stay there Helena Petrovna was not able to work, but as soon as she was better all our time was spent in very interesting, lively conversations on the terrace or in the garden, and sometimes in reading the materials for *The Secret Doctrine* she was then writing. During these readings two characteristic points struck me especially, *viz*., the wonderful picturesqueness of language and detailed descriptions when Helena Petrovna spoke, giving explanations on all kinds of questions asked her by specialists, and at the same time her perfect inability to keep to a purely scientific presentation of the evidences and the formulas.
>
> Her talk was always entrancing, but as soon as she came to mathematical data, it constantly occurred that she was not able to read the algebraical and geometrical conclusions written down by her personality.

Having mentioned that she studied the subject with George Henry Felt[40] a decade earlier, Blavatsky added this surprising revelation in her second letter to Skinner[41]:

> (Please excuse me if I put it stupidly for I say again I am a jackass in mathematics & unable to put my thoughts in figures & symbols on your plane.) But you understand my meaning. You are a great mathematician & I pay you no compliment at all in saying that I thoroughly & sincerely regard you as an (occult) genius, some reincarnation of an Archimedes or of a Euclides; and it breaks my heart to think that with such genius as yours you will not go beyond the Hebrew scrolls. If I could pass you what I know & add that knowledge to your mathematics I would die happy; for I would leave this Esoteric philosophy & the Theos. Soc. in your hands.

Blavatsky's limited knowledge of mathematics was matched by Skinner's ignorance of Sanskrit. The

latter observation was the impetus for Skinner's writing to Blavatsky as related in Buck's account.[42] His recollection of their conversation is recounted below[43]:

> While in my office one day, Mr. Skinner made the declaration that Hebrew was the most ancient language known to man. I denied it emphatically, though admitting my entire ignorance of Philology, no less than of Hebrew and Geometry, which entered so largely into his work. The reason he gave for his conclusions, was the *number-value* fixed to each Hebrew letter.
>
> I replied—I'll venture the Sanscrit [sic] had all this and forgot it before Hebrew was ever heard of". He replied—"I wish we knew". "Nothing easier than to find out," I replied. "How?" he inquired. "Write H. P. B.", I replied. "Do you think she knows, and will answer, if I write"? he asked. "Try her and see; she never yet scorned an earnest seeker for more light", I replied.

Skinner then prepared a fourteen-page abstract of "MSS" and, at Buck's urging, sent it to Blavatsky. The date of posting was about a month prior to Blavatsky's letter. Skinner then received her response sometime in late January 1887. The above account presumes that this was both Skinner's first letter to Blavatsky and that the Christmas letter was her first response.

Buck appeared to give a somewhat accurate description of the contents of the December letter despite confusing its length to be forty pages—the approximate length of the February letter—with that of the sixteen-page December letter. He recalls that she "gave him a diagram of a gable of an old temple in the mountains of India, so old that no one pretended to know when it was built, or by whom."[44] Within this diagram appears Skinner's[45]:

> *pi-value*", which was the Key to all his Cabalistic and Pyramid work . . . placed in symbols (lines, squares, triangles, double and triple triangles) so as to read unmistakably "3.14159+". She gave him the numerical value of ancient Sanscrit letters, and answered all his questions, covering 40 pages.

This description is a rough approximation of pages 7, 8, and 9 of the Christmas letter. One passage relevant to the above is located on page 9[46] states

that certain symbols:

> . . . are given above around the *chakra* painted in the oldest temple above the door of the sign of Vishnu, inside the six pointed Star, thus
>
> 
>
> reading geometrical figures from left to right—and thus producing the △ (3), the | (1), the □ (the cube or 4), the | [i.e., 1] and the ★ 5-pointed star or 5.

The inclusion of π and especially the discussion of the antiquity of Hebrew and Sanskrit metrology in the Christmas letter reflect to a greater degree Buck's description of events leading up to this letter. If, however, this letter's origin is firmly established, its subsequent history is less certain as will be illustrated in the following section.

The Provenance of the Original Christmas Letter

J. R. Skinner's high esteem for H. P. Blavatsky's knowledge of the Kabbala was unmistakable. The latter, recalling Skinner's receipt of either the Christmas letter or the longer, February 1887 letter, writes[47]:

> "*I've got it, Doctor, I've got it*!" "Got what? you crazy!" I replied. "*Got a letter from the old Lady*," he answered. "Well," I inquired, "does she know anything about your old Kabala? " "Does she?" he replied; "say, Doctor, she knows more Kabala than the man that made it. . . ."
>
> He had, with every resource and facility, been working on these lines for a quarter of a century, and he "*knew*". From that day to the day of his death his admiration for, and confidence in, H. P. B. were little less than reverence.

The contents of the Christmas letter were neither marginalized nor were they fleeting. Skinner saw fit to quote a small passage from the letter in his "Cabbalah—VIII," an article published in the April issue (1887) of the *Masonic Review*. The entire passage is worth quoting here since it is an example of his high regard of Blavatsky[48]:

> In a correspondence, he [Skinner] asked Madame H. P. Blavatsky, the authoress of *Isis Unveiled*, whether there were any vestiges in the ancient Hindu religious works, either written or in architecture,

of the use of this same geometrical relation. In reply, among other matters of great learning and interest, she says:

> "They (the numbers 31415) are found as they are given above, around the *chakra* (circle) painted on the oldest temples, above the door, in the sign of Vishnu, or inside the six pointed star, thus:
>
> 
>
> —reading the geometrical figures from left to right, and these producing the *triangle*, 3, the *straight line*, 1, the *square*, 4, the *straight line*, 1, and the *five-pointed star*, 5," in order, or together the 31415, which plainly must have had the object of this numerical reading, because they are placed at once on the bounds of the circle which these numbers rightly enunciate as having a diameter of *One*.

This quoted passage repeats, with some minor grammatical alterations, with the quote above from page 9[49] of the Christmas letter.[50] After some commentary, Skinner resumes quoting from the letter[51]:

> She further says:—
>
> "This method is very much used in the Trans-Himalayan temples where the six-pointed star, the sign of Vishnu, contains a circle with various geometrical figures & signs, of which there are many unknown to us."

Skinner then comments that Blavatsky claimed[52]:

> that the same numbers are made use of in the formula of 135 and two 7's, which can be expanded to 13514, which, read on a circle, as determinative of a special value and fact, can be read as 31415—the numerical definition of the Hebrew Alhim circle. . . ."

The quoted portion of the letter cited above is to my knowledge the only occurrence of the appearance of the letter in print prior to the publication of *The Secret Doctrine* in 1888. Since its publication, only one passage appeared over one hundred years later—1993—in Sylvia Cranston's biography of H. P. Blavatsky, which contains a quote from the letter[53]:

> I have read and re-read your *Hebrew Egyptian Mystery* twenty times over and recommend it to all our Kabbalists such as Rev. A. W. Ayton . . . and Mathers, a very good Kabbalist, only one

> who lose too much his head with ceremonial magic which I detest. [Certain] geometrical diagrams and figures especially have a power in them of reacting on the awakening to activity [of]the half blind and brainless creatures of the elements, which power and creatures you may deny . . . We of the esoteric Vedanta philosophy of Hinduism . . . know the power certain circles and diagrams have on the Elements. This is why I believe in but hate and *dread* ceremonial magic. Beware of *certain* figures and combinations thereof, Mr. Skinner . . . .

Regarding the fate of the letter, we presume that it remained in Skinner's possession for the remainder of his life and later in the possession of his immediate and, later, extended family. The existence of letters composed by Blavatsky in the Skinner collection only became known in 1978 with the donation of a large number of Skinner's letters, including the Blavatsky-Skinner letters, to the then-named Andover-Harvard Theological Library of the Harvard Divinity School in Massachusetts in the late 1970s. Housed in the Library's Special Collections, the "James Ralston Skinner Papers, 1863–1887" included, besides the Blavatsky letters, letters from Salmon P. Chase, Skinner's uncle and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court among other governmental positions[54]; John William Draper (1811–1882), the author of *History of the Conflict between Religion and Science* (1874)[55]; James A. Garfield (1831–1881), the twentieth President of the United States (1881), whose proof of the "Pythagorean Proposition"—the "Garfield Demonstration"—was counted as its two hundred thirty-first proof[56]; Hargrave Jennings (1817–1890), the author of *The Rosicrucians, their Rites and Mysteries* in 1870[57]; John A. Parker, the author of *Quadrature of the Circle*,[58] the inspiration for Skinner's own *Source of Measure*[59]; and Gustavus Seyffarth (1796–1885), a rival of Jean-François Champollion for the honor of deciphering Egyptian hieroglyphics.[60]

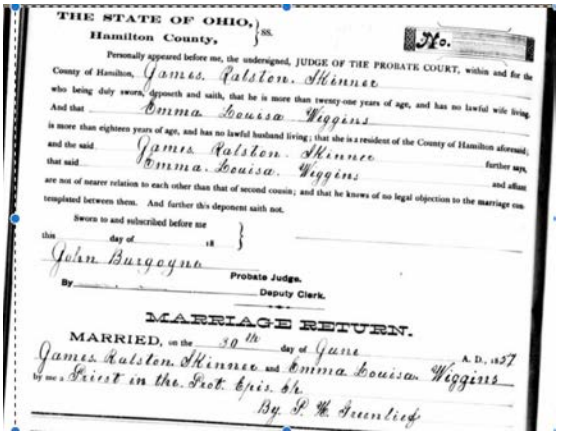
Four letters written by Blavatsky to Skinner were included in the collection—dated December 25, 1886, February 17, April 5, and May 27, 1887. Also included are two letters to J. D. Buck (March 3 and May 7, 1887) and one incomplete, undated, and unsigned note.[61] The Christmas Letter, despite its disappearance sometime prior to 1993, was corroborated by Miss Atkins. Indeed, she quoted a passage from the letter in her biography of H. P. Blavatsky.

The name of the donor of the

letters was unknown to all but the library representatives at the time of the donation. It was only in 2017 that the then head of Special Collections at the Harvard Divinity School Library, Ms. Maureen Jennings, discovered the donation letter to be Mr. Charles Wiggins III from Framingham Center, Massachusetts.[62] The donation letter in question was written on March 28, 1978, so we may assume that the Skinner letters were forwarded to Harvard shortly after this date. The name Wiggins is significant, since it was the family name of Skinner's wife, Emma Louisa.

More investigation is required to establish a continuous line from Emma's family to the year of the donation of the letter, but it seems reasonable that the Skinner Collection remained in the possession of the Wiggins side of the family until their donation by Mr. Wiggins III in 1978. One final observation that strengthens this argument. It is fairly well-established that the Skinner line of the family died out with the death of Skinner's son in World War I.[63]

Following the receipt and inclusion of the Skinner Collection within the Harvard Divinity School Library, in all probability during the latter half of 1978,[64] Dr. Ananda



THE STATE OF OHIO, Hamilton County, } ss. No.

Personally appeared before me, the undersigned, JUDGE OF THE PROBATE COURT, within and for the County of Hamilton, James Ralston Skinner

who being duly sworn, deposeth and saith, that he is more than twenty-one years of age, and has no lawful wife living. And that Emma Louisa Wiggins

is more than eighteen years of age, and has no lawful husband living; that she is a resident of the County of Hamilton aforesaid, and the said James Ralston Skinner further says, that said Emma Louisa Wiggins and affiant are not of nearer relation to each other than that of second cousin; and that he knows of no legal objection to the marriage contemplated between them. And further this deponent saith not.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this day of 18

John Burgoyne Probate Judge.

By Deputy Clerk.

MARRIAGE RETURN.

MARRIED, on the 30th day of June A. D., 1857

James Ralston Skinner and Emma Louisa Wiggins

by me, Priest in the Prot. Epis. Ch.

By P. H. Prentiss

Marriage Certificate

Wickremeratne,[65] a research scholar at the Harvard Center for the Study of World Religions investigating the significance of Theosophy and the Theosophical Society within the context of South Asian history, discovered the Blavatsky-Skinner letters during his residency between 1979 and 1981.[66] In early 1983, Anita Atkins,[67] whose *nom de plume* Sylvia Cranston is more familiar to Theosophists, confirmed in a letter, dated February 7, 1983 (see next page), to Dora Kunz, then President of the Theosophical Society in America (Wheaton), that Dr. Wickremeratne had indeed discovered the Blavatsky-Skinner letters "in the archives of the Andover-Harvard Theological Library." Not only did he discover them, Dr. Wickremeratne had also "transcribed most of them," the one major exception being the February

17, 1887 letter that was subsequently undertaken by Mrs. Aloyse Hume.[68] The transcriptions, however, were never typed up, a task that Ms. Atkins volunteered to undertake. Once the transcription and typing were completed, the complete set of letters were sent to Dr. Wickremeratne in order to pass them on to Ms. Kunz. In this same letter, Ms. Atkins remarked that if Dr. Wickremeratne had a problem in obtaining the letters, she would send Xerox copies from her files.[69]

Recently, the chronology surrounding these events was further clarified by Mr. Daniel Caldwell, who recounts that Ms. Atkins visited Harvard to view the letters in late 1981 or early 1982, shortly after Dr. Wickremeratne's discovery, at which time he received copies of her transcripts of the letters.[70]

Over a decade later, Ms. Atkins outlined these events in her biography of H. P. Blavatsky.[71] Also included were short excerpts of both the Christmas letter and letter of February 17, 1887.[72]

A year following the transcription and typing of the Skinner letters (1983), the Harvard Divinity School, with the financial support of Ms. Atkins' brother, A. Edgar Atkins, undertook to restore the Blavatsky-Skinner letters. The process, according to the description in an article in the 1983–1984 issue of *Harvard Divinity Bulletin*, is reported as follows:

> Badly in need of restoration and delicate with age, the letters underwent treatment by a private paper conservator, Allan Thenen. Restoration involved the difficult process of removing the letters from their acidic mounts; dry cleaning, washing and deacidifying each paper; mending deteriorated portions; and finally mounting the letters in protective folders.

An example of the restored and unrestored first page of the February 17, 1887 letter, reproduced on page 337, illustrates the necessity for the restoration of the letters.[73]

In January 1984, Ms. Atkins wrote to the Curator of Manuscripts, Alan Seaburg, acknowledging receipt of the article and confirming her and her brother's assistance in their preservation.

Ms. Atkins also mentioned in the same letter the availability of a second set of letters donated by Mrs. Genevieve Ludlow Griscom in 1968 that were to be released in January 1993.[74] These letters refer to the Blavatsky-Judge letters dated from 1885 to 1890 that were donated by the Genevieve L. Griscom

ANITA ATKINS

[redacted]

RESIDENCE [redacted]

February 7, 1983

Dear Dora,

It was so good to see the picture of so many of my friends at Wheaton in the December AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST. And my treasured visit to your headquarters came all alive again in my mind.

Many months ago, I sent transcriptions of a number of letters of H.P.B. to Ralston Skinner, to Ananda Wickremeratne, which he in turn was to give to you. I trust by this time he has done so.

When I was at Wheaton he told me about these letters which he had discovered in the archives of the Andover-Harvard Theological Library. He transcribed most of them but had never typed them up. I volunteered to do this--a horrendous job it turned out to be in reading Ananda's handwriting! I also went to Harvard to transcribe one long letter dated February 17, 1887, which Ananda never had time to to. He also asked me to check out obscure words he was not familiar with in doing the other letters.

Well, when I went to Harvard all my time was spent in doing the latter, and checking to see if I read Ananda's handwriting correctly. So Mrs. Aloyse Hume, whom you well know, said she would gladly do the February 17th letter. The complete set of the Skinner letters, as said, was sent to Ananada, for transmittal to you, per his request.

Now, Mrs. Hume left a lot of blanks in her transcription. Several people including myself have now helped in filling them in--save for a few undecifera?le words--and the enclosed is the result. Please be sure to substitute this for the one formerly sent to Ananda, and which surely he must have sent to you by now.

If he hasn't and there is a problem in securing them, it would be very easy for me to send xerox copies from my files. But if it is at all possible, do get the originals, as these have tracings of HPB's drawings, and the xerox copies do not give the needed clarity.

I am sending a copy of the February 17th letter to Dara Eklund and to Joy Mills, as they have, as you know, the complete sets of the letters as prepared by Boris de Zirkoff.

With best wishes and kind personal regards,

Anita

A. Atkins to Dora Kunz, February 7, 1983 letter. Compliments of Harvard Divinity School.

Charitable Trust[75] and catalogued under the title "Blavatsky, H. P. (Helena Petrovna), 1831–1891. Letters" (bMS 34).[76] The letters were also restored with the help of Ms. Atkins, which is verified through her letter dated April 13, 1993 and the note from Doris Freitag, the Conservator, to Dr. Seaburg dated April 20, 1993.[77]

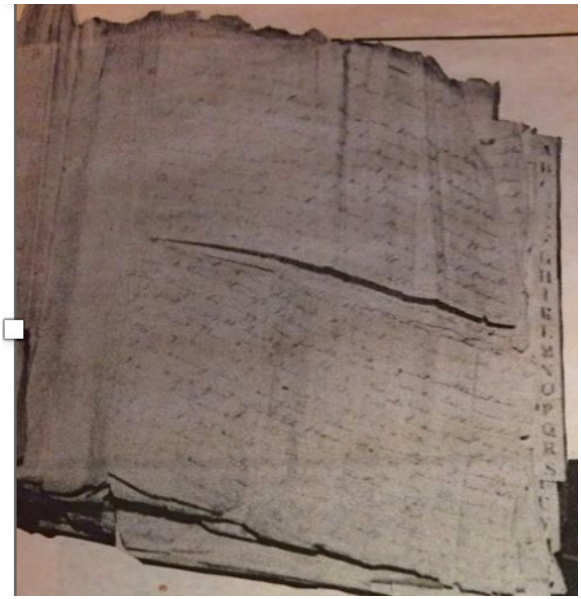
Besides her participation in the preservation of both the Skinner and Judge letters,[78] Ms. Atkins was responsible for facilitating access of the letters to the late John Cooper of Australia, who at the time was involved with the collection of both sets of Blavatsky letters. She mentioned Cooper's first volume of a projected three-volume "Collected Letters of H. P. Blavatsky"[79] in which the letters would eventually be included in the second or third volume. It was, therefore, her intention to present the Blavatsky letters from both collections to Mr. Cooper and to a select number of Theosophical researchers having an interest in Blavatsky's letters, including the executor of Boris de Zirkoff's estate, Dara Eklund, Joy Mills, and Dallas Ten Broeck.[80] This is evident from Ms. Atkins' (Cranston's) mention of the Ms. Eklund in her Preface in her biography[81]:

> The writer was fortunate in receiving from Dara Eklund, executor of the estate of Boris de Zirkoff (editor of HPB's *Collected Writings*) photocopies of some six hundred letters collected by him over a period of fifty years. Also gratefully received was a large amount of other Blavatskyana he had been gathering as to facts in HPB's life not obtainable from usual sources.

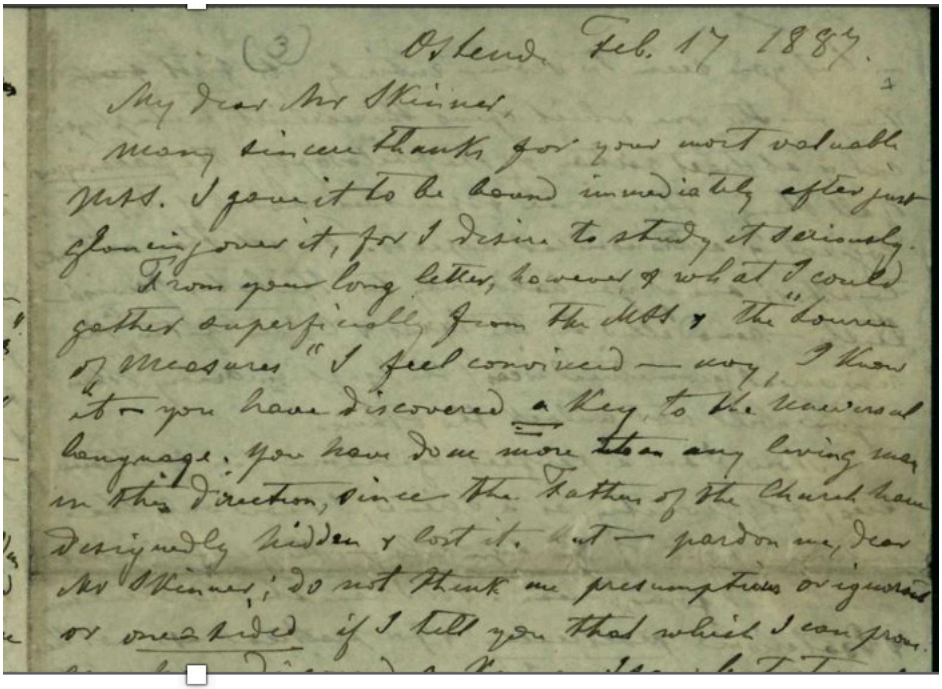
The historical importance of Blavatsky's letters was an important incentive to their preservation and eventual publication, a project that is ongoing to this day. It is no wonder that Ms. Atkins' interest extended not only to transcribing the letters but also to preserving and housing them in such archives as that of the Harvard Divinity School Library. Illustrative is an excerpt of a letter dated January 30, 1984 from Dr. Alan Seaburg, the Curator of Manuscripts at Harvard Divinity School Library stating that[82]:

> If you hear of other HPB letters needing a home, please think of Harvard. We would welcome them in our collection.

As far as we know, there are no Blavatsky letters in the Harvard Divinity School Library other than the Skinner and Judge collections. Ms.



The first page of the February 17, 1887 letter unrestored (top) and restored (bottom). The images were prepared by Daniel Caldwell.

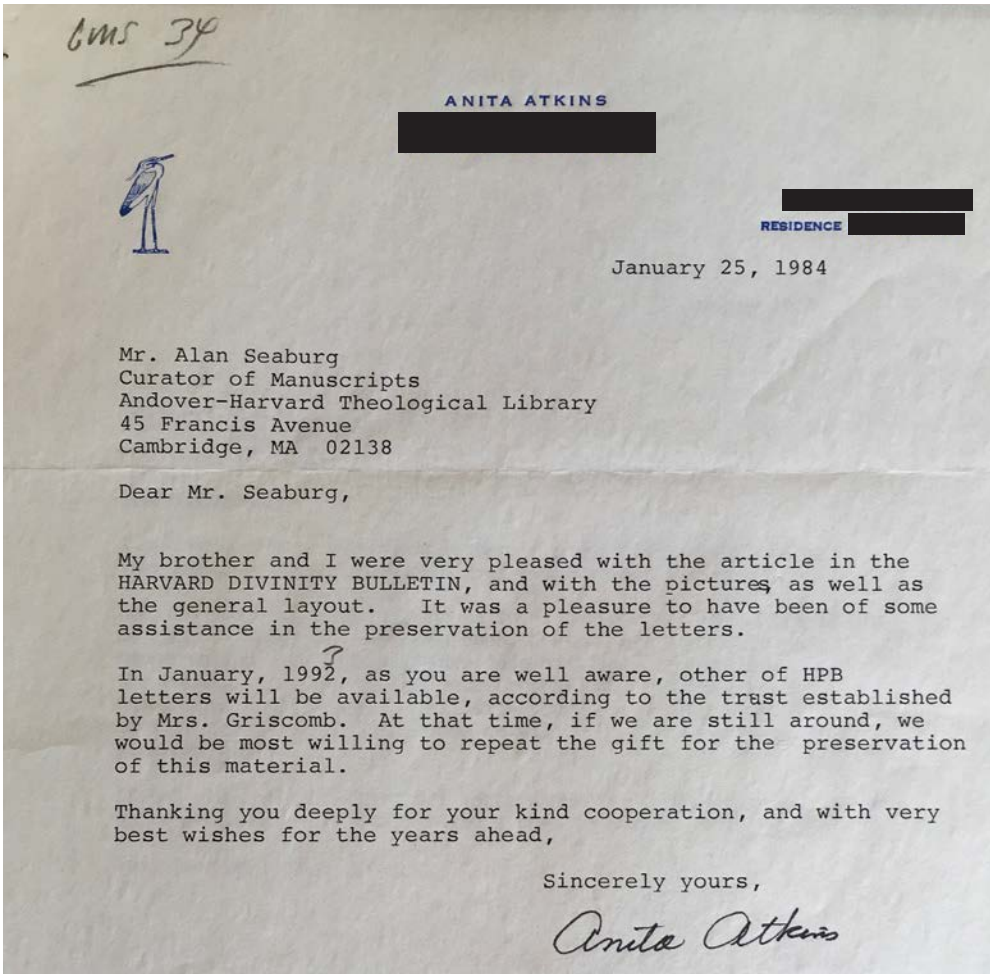


(3) Ostend Feb. 17 1887.

My dear Mr Skinner,

many sincere thanks for your most valuable MSS. I gave it to be bound immediately after just glancing over it, for I desire to study it seriously.

From your long letter, however & what I could gather superficially from the MSS & the "Source of Measures" I feel convinced — nay, I know it — you have discovered a Key to the universal language. You have done more than any living man in this direction, since the Fathers of the Church have designedly hidden & lost it. But — pardon me, dear Mr Skinner; do not think me presumptuous or ignorant or one-sided if I tell you that which I can prove.



ANITA ATKINS
[redacted]
[redacted]
RESIDENCE [redacted]

January 25, 1984

Mr. Alan Seaburg
Curator of Manuscripts
Andover-Harvard Theological Library
45 Francis Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138

Dear Mr. Seaburg,

My brother and I were very pleased with the article in the HARVARD DIVINITY BULLETIN, and with the pictures, as well as the general layout. It was a pleasure to have been of some assistance in the preservation of the letters.

In January, 1992?, as you are well aware, other of HPB letters will be available, according to the trust established by Mrs. Griscomb. At that time, if we are still around, we would be most willing to repeat the gift for the preservation of this material.

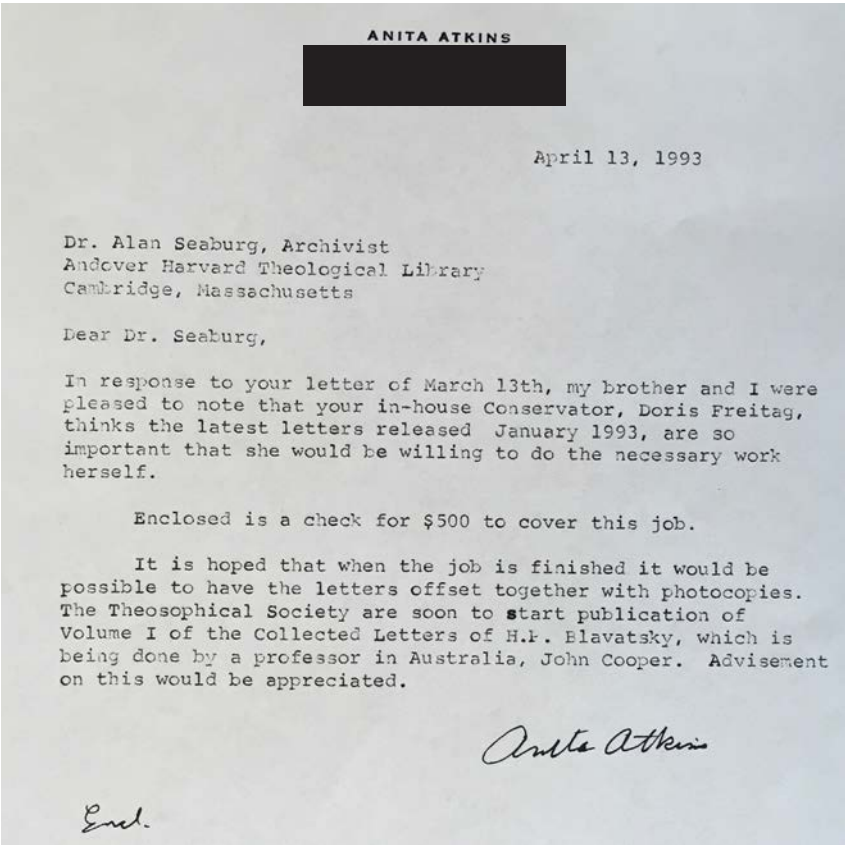
Thanking you deeply for your kind cooperation, and with very best wishes for the years ahead,

Sincerely yours,

Anita Atkins

Jan. 25, 1984 Anita Atkins letter to Alan Seaburg.
Compliments of the Harvard Divinity School.

Atkins was primarily responsible for their preservation and dissemination, to a few interested individuals. The original Judge letters now appear digitally online, with their transcription by Michael Gomes appearing in *Theosophical History* (V/2–VI/5) and the Dara Eklund-Nicholas Weeks



ANITA ATKINS
[redacted]

April 13, 1993

Dr. Alan Seaburg, Archivist
Andover Harvard Theological Library
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Dear Dr. Seaburg,

In response to your letter of March 13th, my brother and I were pleased to note that your in-house Conservator, Doris Freitag, thinks the latest letters released January 1993, are so important that she would be willing to do the necessary work herself.

Enclosed is a check for $500 to cover this job.

It is hoped that when the job is finished it would be possible to have the letters offset together with photocopies. The Theosophical Society are soon to start publication of Volume I of the Collected Letters of H.P. Blavatsky, which is being done by a professor in Australia, John Cooper. Advisement on this would be appreciated.

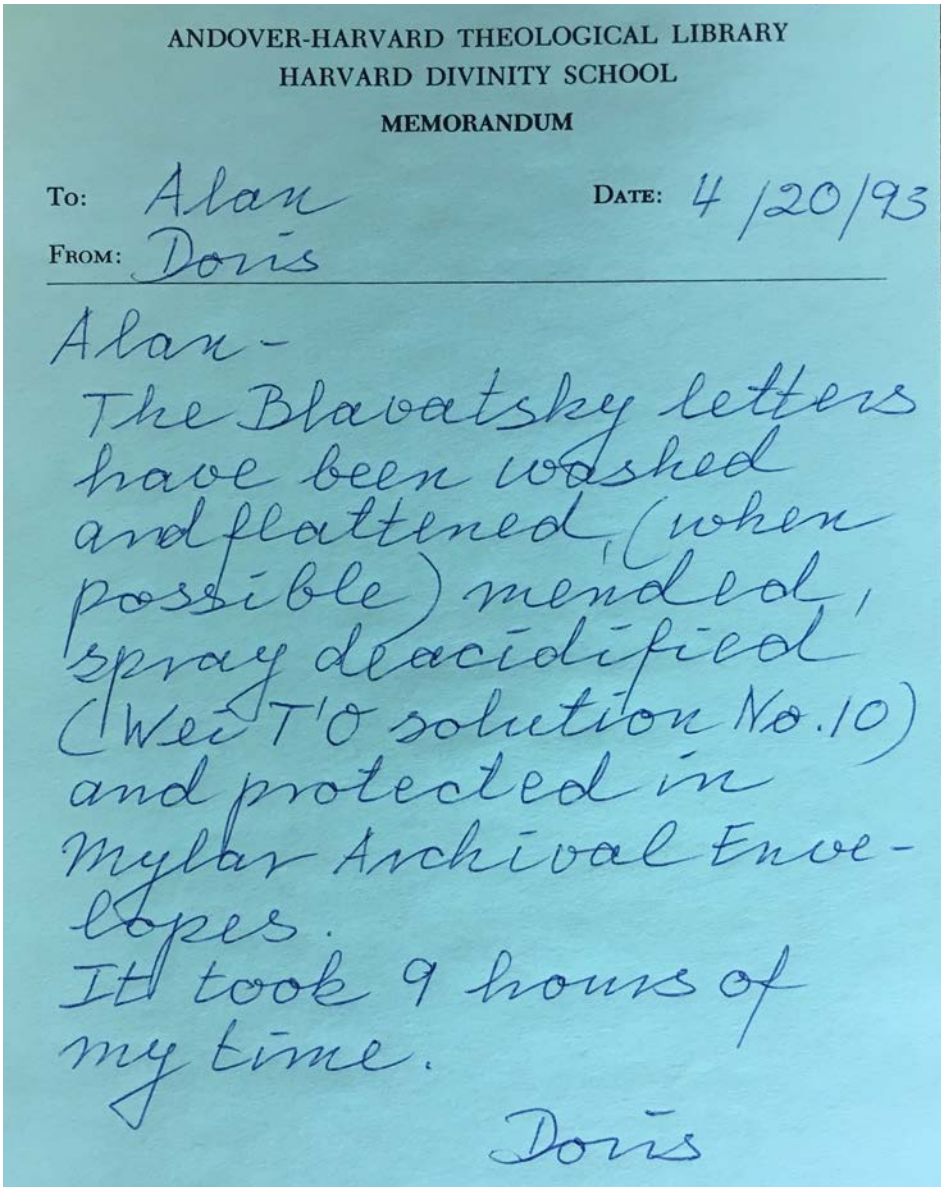
Anita Atkins

Encl.

Letter of April 13, 1993: Atkins to Seaburg. Compliments of the Harvard Divinity School.

transcriptions appearing on the Blavatsky Archives website.[83] The two principal Blavatsky-Skinner letters have now been recently transcribed, but the mystery regarding the Christmas letter remains: "What happened to the original letter in the Harvard archive?" We might also raise the question: "Was the Christmas letter ever preserved?" The last question determines when the Christmas letter disappeared from the Harvard archive.

The transcription of Dr. Wickremeratne has confirmed the inclusion of the Christmas letter in the donation of 1978. Despite their inclusion, there is no evidence that the letter was restored in 1983. Furthermore,



ANDOVER-HARVARD THEOLOGICAL LIBRARY
HARVARD DIVINITY SCHOOL

MEMORANDUM

To: Alan Date: 4/20/93

From: Doris

Alan -

The Blavatsky letters have been washed and flattened, (when possible) mended, spray deacidified (Wei T'O solution No. 10) and protected in Mylar Archival Envelopes.

It took 9 hours of my time.

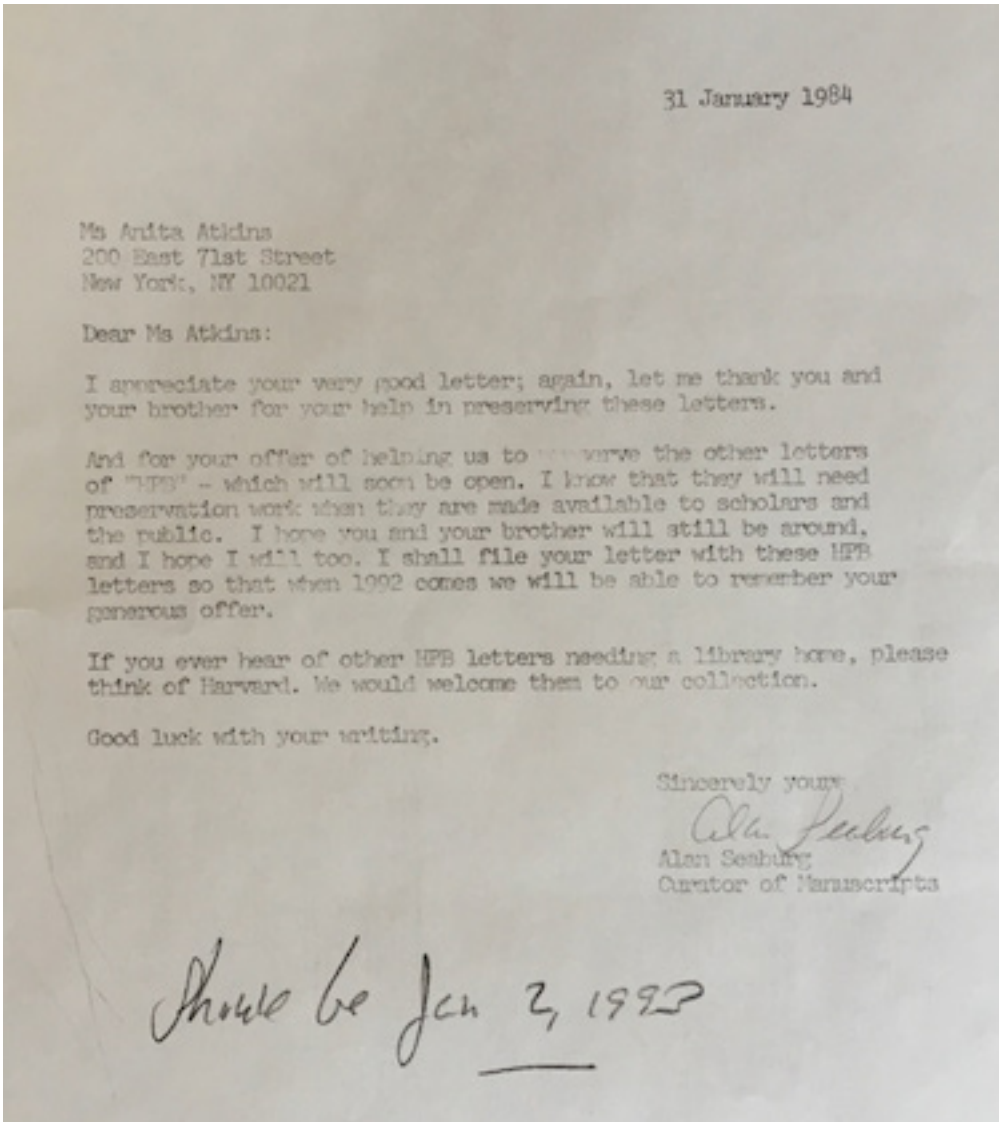
Doris

Note from Doris Freitag to Alan Seaburg-April 20, 1993.
Compliments of the Harvard Divinity School.

the photocopy of the letter, based upon Mr. Caldwell's statement, occurred in 1983 or earlier. The mystery remains why the original letter was not included in the preservation process nor was it ever referenced thereafter. It is true that Ms. Atkins quoted the letter in her 1993 biography, but she probably quoted from the 1982 photocopy and not the original letter. It was this photocopy that I received from Daniel Caldwell following the publication of the February 17, 1887 letter in *Theosophical History* (XVIII, no. 1–2, January-April 2016). His account is now available online at *https://blavatskyarchives.com/index.htm*

> It was in late 1982 or early 1983 that Anita told me over the phone about the discovery of the HPB letters to Skinner at Harvard. She said she would send me copies of her typescripts of these letters. Anita had personally gone to Harvard to see the originals of these letters.
>
> I clearly remember the day I received that large manilla envelope from Anita with the typescripts. I ripped the envelope open and read all these letters. Of course, the first letter I read was HPB's Christmas letter of 1886. At the top of the first page of this typed copy of the Christmas 1886 letter, a prefatory note by Anita reads: "Original in Andover-Harvard Theological Library Cambridge Massachusetts". Many years later, I also acquired a photocopy of this original letter in H.P.B.'s own handwriting that was found among the papers of the late John Cooper in the National Library of Australia.
>
> In 2016, upon learning that the original Dec. 25, 1886 letter at Harvard had somehow gone missing, I sent both Anita's typescript and the photocopy of the original to Dr. Santucci for publication in THEOSOPHICAL HISTORY."
>
> Daniel H. Caldwell, founder and organizer of THE BLAVATSKY STUDY CENTER/BLAVATSKY ARCHIVES.

Only one citation, in 1998, of the letter was recorded subsequent to Ms. Cranston's biography, again originating from Mr. Caldwell's collection.[84] Following this citation, the existence of the letter has effectively disappeared from the consciousness of Blavatsky scholars and even from those in charge of the Harvard Divinity School Library.



31 January 1984

Ms Anita Atkins
200 East 71st Street
New York, NY 10021

Dear Ms Atkins:

I appreciate your very good letter; again, let me thank you and your brother for your help in preserving these letters.

And for your offer of helping us to preserve the other letters of "HPB" - which will soon be open. I know that they will need preservation work when they are made available to scholars and the public. I hope you and your brother will still be around, and I hope I will too. I shall file your letter with these HPB letters so that when 1992 comes we will be able to remember your generous offer.

If you ever hear of other HPB letters needing a library home, please think of Harvard. We would welcome them to our collection.

Good luck with your writing.

Sincerely yours,

Alan Seaburg

Alan Seaburg
Curator of Manuscripts

Should be Jan 2, 1992

Seaburg-Atkins Letter of January 31, 1984. Compliments of the Harvard Divinity School.

The Preservation and Reproduction of the Blavatsky letters

Mr. Seaburg's letter to Anita Atkins (January 31, 1984) revealed not only Ms. Atkins and her brother's interest in supporting the preservation of the Skinner[85] and Judge[86] letters but also their reproduction. A letter from Anita Atkins to Mr. Gene McAfee (on page 345), the Assistant in Manuscripts and Archives at Harvard Divinity School Library, dated August 27, 1993, mentions the reproduction of the Blavatsky letters and their distribution to three individuals noted below on page 345. She writes[87]:

> I appreciate a great deal all of the trouble you have gone to in trying to find the best way to reproduce the letters of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky. I think your suggestion that you make copies of the letters from the microfilm is a good one and would like you to proceed in that manner.

Two photocopies of the Christmas letter were in Mr. Cooper's possession: one from Ms. Atkins and the second from Harvard Divinity School Library as indicated in the cover note to the letters.[88]

Subsequently, Ms. Atkins, in a letter dated October 19, 1993[89] (on page 345) acknowledged its receipt.

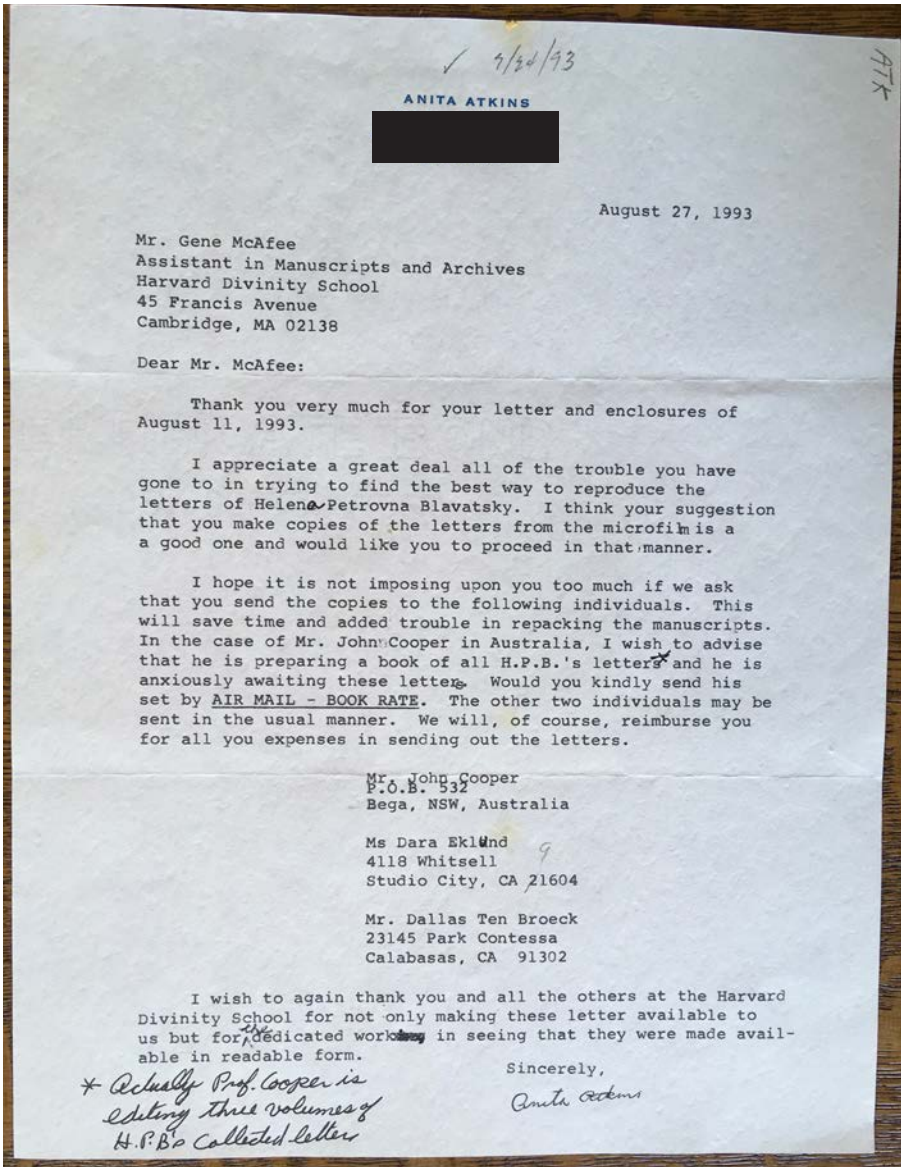
The two photocopies mentioned in Mr. Cooper's cover note suggests that they were received at different times: Ms. Atkins sharing the letter in the early 1980s and the Library in 1993. Since Mr. Cooper states that the letter ("1886 December 25, to Skinner") was "received in the same package as the Harvard Andover letters to Judge. Dara Eklund also received them & also out of order" reveals that the Library was still in possession of at least the microfilm and photocopy, but that for some reason the letter was missing a page and the pages were out of order.

The conclusion to these events reveals the existence of a letter donated in 1978, photocopied and perhaps microfilmed sometime around 1982, still available in 1993 but only in its unrestored state, with no evidence that the letter was ever restored. After 1993, the letter disappeared from the Harvard Divinity School Library, with no evidence that the letter was ever restored. "Finding Aids" for both the Judge and Skinner letters were issued after the mid-1990s. No mention of the Christmas letter appeared, nor were the staff aware of its existence when I raised the issue during my visit to the Library in 1917. This is the mystery that still

exists to this day. Whatever the reason for its disappearance, we are thankful that photocopies still are available.

The above account of the Skinner letters is straightforward and comprehensive. A cache of letters composed and received by J. R. Skinner was donated to the Harvard Divinity School Library in 1978. A portion of the collection, the letters by Blavatsky to Skinner, including the Christmas letter, was photocopied and microfilmed shortly thereafter. The Blavatsky-Skinner letters were then restored in 1983, with all letters accounted for with the exception of the Christmas letter. Only the unrestored version continued to be distributed among a small number of scholars from the early 1980s to 1993 and later, as demonstrated by Mr. Caldwell's account (p. 341) and Mr. McAfee's letter of August 27, 1993 (p. 345). Especially noteworthy is John Cooper's note comparing the photocopies from Ms. Atkins and from the Harvard Divinity School (p. 347). After 1993, the letter, both original and its photocopy, completely disappeared from the Harvard Divinity School Library. However, no mention of the letter in either form appears in the "Finding Aid"[90] to the Skinner Collection (bMS 516), suggesting the printing of the "Aid" no earlier than the mid-1990s but more likely in the late 1990s or early 2000s. If the Library possessed a record of the letter, it was completely lost, confirmed by the time of my visit in 2016. The realization that the Christmas letter disappeared from the collection of the Harvard Divinity School Library leaves us, therefore, not with a prosaic account of the letter but the disclosure of a mystery that may never be solved.

* * * * *



✓ 9/22/93

ATK

ANITA ATKINS
[redacted]

August 27, 1993

Mr. Gene McAfee
Assistant in Manuscripts and Archives
Harvard Divinity School
45 Francis Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138

Dear Mr. McAfee:

Thank you very much for your letter and enclosures of August 11, 1993.

I appreciate a great deal all of the trouble you have gone to in trying to find the best way to reproduce the letters of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky. I think your suggestion that you make copies of the letters from the microfilm is a a good one and would like you to proceed in that manner.

I hope it is not imposing upon you too much if we ask that you send the copies to the following individuals. This will save time and added trouble in repacking the manuscripts. In the case of Mr. John Cooper in Australia, I wish to advise that he is preparing a book of all H.P.B.'s letters* and he is anxiously awaiting these letters. Would you kindly send his set by AIR MAIL - BOOK RATE. The other two individuals may be sent in the usual manner. We will, of course, reimburse you for all you expenses in sending out the letters.

Mr. John Cooper
P.O.B. 532
Bega, NSW, Australia

Ms Dara Eklund
4118 Whitsell
Studio City, CA 91604

Mr. Dallas Ten Broeck
23145 Park Contessa
Calabasas, CA 91302

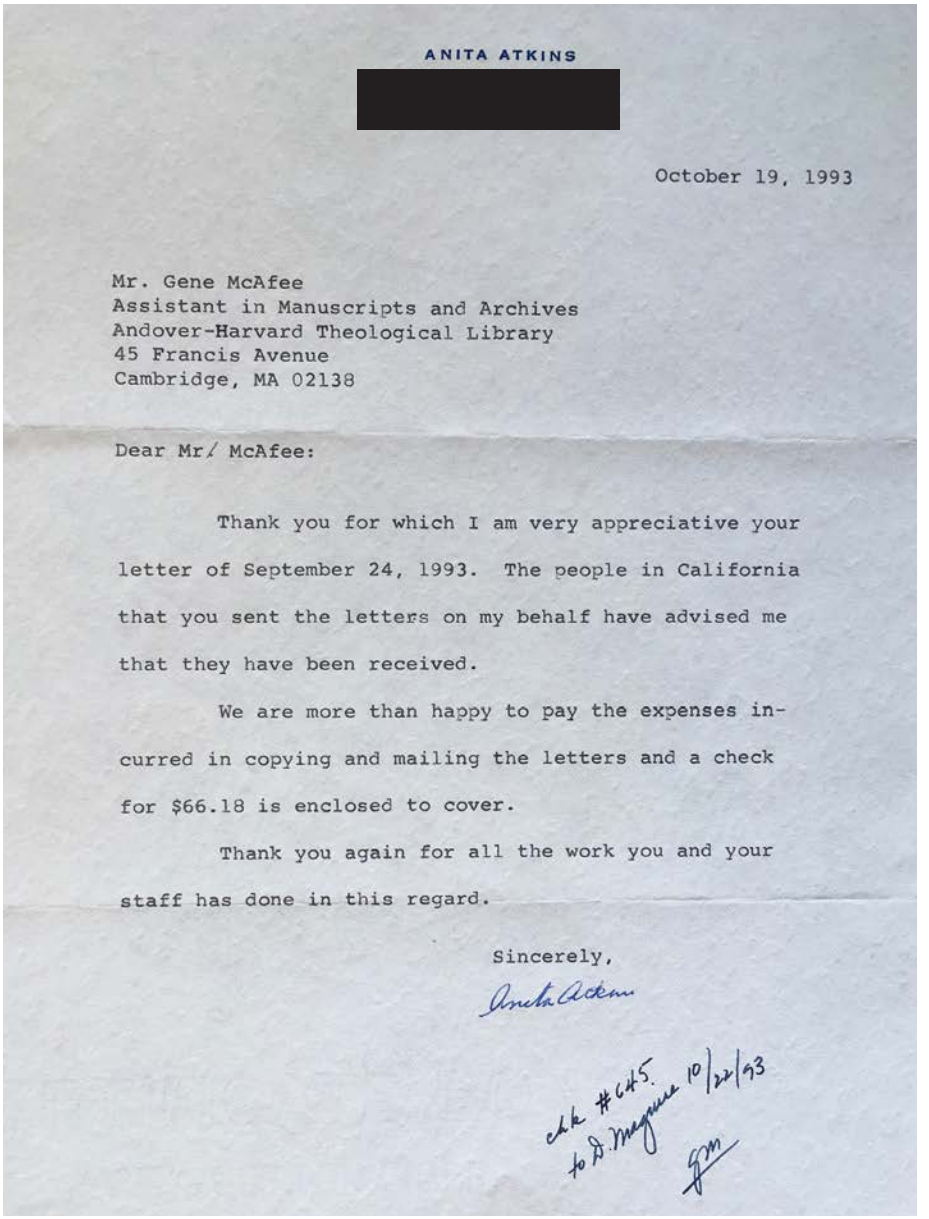
I wish to again thank you and all the others at the Harvard Divinity School for not only making these letter available to us but for their dedicated work in seeing that they were made available in readable form.

Sincerely,

Anita Atkins

* Actually Prof. Cooper is editing three volumes of H.P.B. Collected Letters

Anita Atkins letter to Mr. Gene McAfee dated August 27, 1993. Compliments of the Harvard Divinity School.



ANITA ATKINS

[redacted]

October 19, 1993

Mr. Gene McAfee
Assistant in Manuscripts and Archives
Andover-Harvard Theological Library
45 Francis Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138

Dear Mr/ McAfee:

Thank you for which I am very appreciative your letter of September 24, 1993. The people in California that you sent the letters on my behalf have advised me that they have been received.

We are more than happy to pay the expenses incurred in copying and mailing the letters and a check for $66.18 is enclosed to cover.

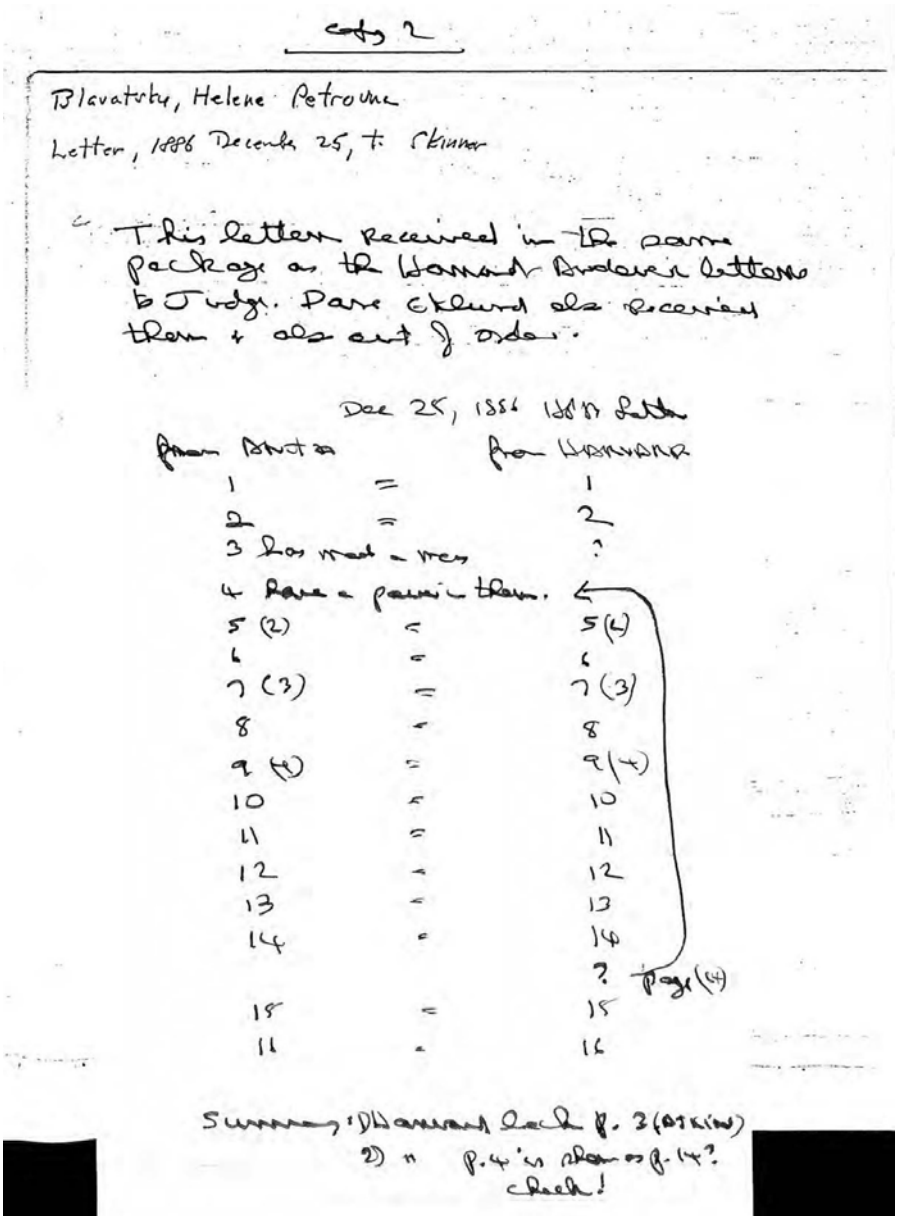
Thank you again for all the work you and your staff has done in this regard.

Sincerely,

Anita Atkins

chk #645.
to D. Magnus 10/22/93
gm

Letter to Mr. McAfee (October 19, 1993. Compliments of the Harvard Divinity School.


copy 2

Blavatsky, Helene Petrovna

Letter, 1886 December 25, to Skinner

This letter received in the same package as the Harvard Judge letters by Judge. Dare Eklund also received them & also out of order.

Dec 25, 1886 letter

from Boston		from Harvard
1	=	1
2	=	2
3 has mail – mrs		?
4 have a panic – them.		
5 (2)	=	5 (4)
6	=	6
7 (3)	=	7 (3)
8	=	8
9 (4)	=	9 (5)
10	=	10
11	=	11
12	=	12
13	=	13
14	=	14
		? Page (6)
15	=	15
16	=	16

Summary: 1) Harvard lacks p. 3 (Atkin)

2) " p. 4 is also p. 14? check!

Cooper Notes

Endnotes

1 For a transcription of this letter, see "Letter from H. P. Blavatsky to James Ralston Skinner: February 17, 1887." Transcribed by Jeffrey Lavoie; edited, amended, and annotated by Jerry Hejka-Ekins and James A. Santucci, *Theosophical History* XVIII, Issues 1–2 (January–April 2016): 24–75.

The James Ralston Skinner Collection is located online at *https://hollisarchives.lib.harvard.edu/repositories/12/resources/966*

The Collection Identifier is bMS 516.

2 *Letters to the Sage: Selected Correspondence of Thomas Moore Johnson*. Vol. One: The Esotericists. Edited by Patrick D. Bowen and K. Paul Johnson (Forest Grove, Oregon: The Typhon Press, 2016), 109. The quote originates from a letter by J. D. Buck to Thomas Moore Johnson, dated January 20, 1884.

3 Jerry Hejka-Ekins, "Introduction to the Blavatsky-Skinner Letter: J. Ralston Skinner (1830–1893)," *Theosophical History* XVIII, no. 1-2 (January-April 2016): 96. An online source that offers some general information on Skinner appears at *http://theosophy.wiki/w-en/index.php?title=James_Ralston_Skinner. The digitalized letters appear online at https://hollisarchives.lib.harvard.edu/repositories/12/archival_objects/205876*

Earlier mentions appear in Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings: 1890-1891*. Compiled by Boris de Zirkoff. Volume XIII. First edition (Wheaton, Ill.: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1982), 402–405 and *The Eclectic Theosophist*, No. 48 (September 15, 1978): 7 ("Items of Interest: "Skinner of *Source of Measures* Fame"). My thanks to Daniel Caldwell for the passage in the *H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings* [herein BCW].

4 Hejka-Ekins, "Introduction to the Blavatsky-Skinner Letter: J. Ralston Skinner (1830–1893)": 97–99. Metrology is "[t]he study of systems of measurement" (Oxford English Dictionary). For a contemporary (i.e., of Blavatsky's) discussion of metrology, see Charles A. L. Totten, *An Important Question in Metrology* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1884), xi–xiv and 95–111. According to Kieren Barry (*The Greek Qabalah* [York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1999], 195), arithmology is the:

> interpretation of numbers in the primary decad, to which words or letters were reduced by various methods, according to traditional philosophical associations and attributions given to each of these numbers or letters by Pythagoras, and extended by his followers in later centuries.

On page 29–30, it is defined as: "[a]rithmology dealt with the attributes, epithets, and magical powers of these [i.e., the numbers of the decade comprising the *tetraktys*] numbers, and identified them with a variety of animate and inanimate objects, as well as with gods and goddesses."

5 J. Ralston Skinner, *Key to the Hebrew-Egyptian Mystery in the Source of Measures Originating the British Inch* (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke & Co., 1875). The second edition, published in 1894, contains a 60-page supplement.

6 Information on Countess Wachtmeister is located online at Theosophy Wiki at *https://theosophy.wiki/en/Constance_Wachtmeister*

Her full name was Constance Georgina Louise Bourbel de Monpincon, but she is mainly known by her marriage name, having married her cousin in 1863, the Count Wachtmeister.

7 *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett and Other Miscellaneous Letters*. Transcribed, compiled, and with an introduction by A. T. Barker (Pasadena: Theosophical University Press, 1973), Letter CXXVII, 272 [Facsimile Edition, first published in 1925]. The letter is also online at *https://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/hpb-aps/bl-127.htm*

My thanks to Daniel H. Caldwell for this citation.

8 Arthur Gebhard (1855–1944), the son of Gustav and Mary Gebhard (see note 9) at this time was living in the United States, as noted by Countess Wachtmeister, who mentioned Arthur as having lived there for several years. She also states that he traveled to Germany and visited Blavatsky at Elbersfeld, after which she was anxious to hear "all the Theosophical news from that country." See The Countess Constance Wachtmeister and Others, *Reminiscences of H. P. Blavatsky and "The Secret Doctrine,"* edited by a Fellow of The Theosophical Society (London: Theosophical Publishing Society, 1893): 64. Additional information is located on Theosophy Wiki at *https://theosophy.wiki/en/Arthur_Gebhard*

Frequent mention of Arthur associating with members of the H.B. of L. in Cincinnati, including J. D. Buck, appears in Bowen and Johnson, *Letters to the Sage*, I. 415, 422, 425, 429.

9 The Gebhard family of Elberfeld, Germany—especially Gustav, his wife Mary, and sons Franz and Arthur—were major backers of The Theosophical Society. Gustav was an organizer of the Germania Theosophical Society in 1884; Mary, his wife, was Vice-President of the Society. Arthur, as noted above, was the person who sent Blavatsky the book by Skinner. The book was almost certainly *The Source of Measures.* On general information of the Gebhards, see *The International Theosophical Year Book: 1937* (Adyar: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1937), 206. For information online see:

https://theosophy.wiki/en/Gustav_Gebhard

https://theosophy.wiki/en/Mary_Gebhard and

https://theosophy.wiki/en/Arthur_Gebhard

For further information on the Gebhards, see note 2 to "Letter from H. P. Blavatsky to James Ralston Skinner: December 25, 1886" in this issue.

10 For an overview of Blavatsky's activities during this period, see James A. Santucci, "Helena Petrovna Blavatsky: Activities from 1877 – 1888," *Theosophical History* XVIII, no. 1-2 (January-April 2016): 111–35.

11 "Letters of H. P. Blavatsky. IX," *The Path* X, no. 5 (August 1895): 142 [139-142]. Cited also in *The Writing of The Secret Doctrine: H. P. Blavatsky's Magnum Opus: A Chronology.* Compiled by Daniel H. Caldwell (Tucson, Arizona: Blavatsky Study Center, 2015), 9.

12 Skinner, *Key to the Hebrew-Egyptian Mystery in the Source of Measures*, 12. The definition originated from John A. Parker's "Quadrature of the Circle," which comprises part of Section I (pp. 12–21). Skinner credits Parker with the "rediscovery" of "*a* quadrature value of the circle." John A. Parker, *Quadrature of the Circle and Practical Questions on the Quadrature* (New York: S. W. Benedict, 1851).

13 "Kabbalah" has been spelled in a number of ways, including *kabala, kabalah, qabalah, qabala, cabala, cabbala, caballah, cabbalah, kaballah, kabbala, kaballah, and qabbalah.* See the *American Heritage Dictionary* "Usage Note" at *https://www.ahdictionary.com/word/search.html?q=kabbalah*

14 H. P. Blavatsky, "The Tetragrammaton," *The Theosophist* IX, no. 98 (November 1887): 114. Blavatsky's understanding of Kabbalah has been investigated in detail by Julie Chajes, "Construction Through Appropriation: Kabbalah in Blavatsky's Early Works," located in *Theosophical Appropriations: Esotericism, Kabbalah, and the Transformation of Traditions*, edited by Boaz Huss and Julie Chajes (Beer Sheva: Ben-Gurion University of the Negev Press, 2016), 33–72. Also, in the same collection is the insightful article by Marco Pasi, "Oriental Kabbalah and the Parting of East and West in the Early Theosophical Society," *Theosophical Appropriations*, 151–66, esp. pp. 155–62.

15 Blavatsky, "The Tetragrammaton," *The Theosophist* IX, no. 98: 105. For the inclusion of Kabbala in Theosophical thought and the

association of Kabbala with "Theosophy," see Tim Rudbøg, "H. P. Blavatsky's Theosophy in Context: The Construction of Meaning in Modern Western Esotericism." Thesis submitted to the University of Exeter, 2013: 88–91 and 340 (note 1267). Kabbalah and its relation to the term Theosophy and Blavatsky's understanding of both is discussed throughout the thesis. Further references include John Patrick Deveney, "The Two Theosophical Societies: Prolonged Life, Conditional Immortality, and the Individualized Immortal Monad," *Theosophical Appropriations: Esotericism, Kabbalah, and the Transformation of Traditions*, 93-114 (esp. 97–98 and in the same collection Boaz Huss, "Qabbalah, the Theos-Sophia of the Jews:" Jewish *Theosophist*s and their Perceptions of Kabbalah," 137–66.

16 BCW *I*: 102, 104–107, 109–115. The article was originally published in the *Spiritual Scientist* (July 15 and 22, 1875): 217–18, 224, 236–37.

Two months following this publication, Blavatsky wrote in the same journal (vol. III [September 23, 1875]: 26) a description of "Cabala" in her "H. P. Blavatsky to Her Correspondents":

> The dogma of it is logical, easy and absolute. The necessary union of ideas and signs; the trinity of words, letters, numbers, and theorems; the religion of it can be compressed into a few words: "it is the Infinite condensed in the hand of an infant," says Eliphas Levi. Ten ciphers, 22 alphabetical letters, one triangle, a square and a circle. Such are the elements of the Cabala, from whose mysterious bosom sprang all the religions of the past and present.

17 H. P. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, two volumes in one (Los Angeles: The Theosophy Company, 1982). "Kabala" and "kabalist" are found in over 500 locations throughout the two volumes. See especially I. xxxiv, 14, 262, 271 (note), 313, 407, 433, 559, 579, 580; II. 35, 36, 38, 40, 143, 195, 205–207, 210–11, 212 (Chapter V), 251 (Chapter VI), 450, 459, and 465. For further discussion, see Chajes, "Construction Through Appropriation: Kabbalah in Blavatsky's Early Works," in *Theosophical Appropriations*: 47–52 and Deveney, "The Two Theosophical Societies," *Theosophical Appropriations*: 98–99.

18 Since Blavatsky was Editor of *The Theosophist*, she was certainly aware of the article and the mention of J. R. Skinner. However, Skinner's importance to Blavatsky's research must have been more pronounced from 1885 because of her deep involvement writing *The Secret Doctrine*.

19 J. D. Buck, "The Cabballah," *The Theosophist* V, no. 2 (50) (November 1883): 44–45.

20 Buck, "The Cabballah": 44.

21 Hejka-Ekins, "Introduction to the Blavatsky-Skinner Letter: J. Ralston Skinner (1830–1893)": 92.

22 H. P. Blavatsky, "The Kabalah and the Kabalists at the Close of the Nineteenth Century," *Lucifer X*, no. 57 (May 1892): 185–96. The article is also located in BCW VII: 250–68. A long quote from Skinner's "Cabbalah—No. I." *Masonic Review* 64, no. 2 (September 1885): 67 appears on p. 262–63 of the *Collected Writings* VII and pp. 192–93 of *Lucifer*.

23 This is the conjecture of Boris de Zirkoff, in his introduction to "The Kabalah and the Kabalists at the Close of the Nineteenth Century" in BCW VII: 250.

24 Blavatsky, "The Tetragrammaton": 105.

25 H. P. Blavatsky, "The Classification of 'Principles'," *The Theosophist* VIII, no. 91 (April 1887): 448–56.

26 H. P. Blavatsky, "The Esoteric Character of the Gospels": Part I, *Lucifer* I, no. 3 (November 15, 1887): 173–80; Part II, *Lucifer* I, no. 4 December 15, 1887): 299–310; Part III, *Lucifer* I, no. 6 (February, 1888): 490–96. Also in BCW VIII: 172–217.

27 Jirah Dewey Buck, *Modern World Movements* (Chicago: Indo-American Co., 1913), 41. Buck notes that Skinner received "his Third Degree in the Blue Lodge." Blue Masonry is explained by

Mackey in the following manner:

> The degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellow-Craft, and Master Mason, are called Blue Masonry , and lodges in which they are conferred are called Blue Lodges, because the decorations of these degrees are of this colour.

The three degrees, Entered Apprentice, Fellow-Craft, and Master Mason comprise Blue Masonry. Albert G. Mackey, *A Lexicon of Freemasonry*, sixth edition revised by Donald Campbell (London: Charles Griffin and Company, 1873), 37.

28 Buck's name does not appear in the T.S. Membership General Register, but a typed page accompanying the Register lists under the date 1878. It is by Buck's own admission that he joined in December 1878. See Jirah Dewey Buck, *Modern World Movements*, 67.

29 H. P. Blavatsky, *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky*. Volume 1. Edited by John Algeo (Wheaton, Illinois, and Chennai (Madras), India: The Theosophical Publishing House [Quest Books], 2003), 485–87.

30 On the date of Buck's entrance in The Theosophical Society, see Buck, *Modern World Movements, 67.*

31 Buck, *Modern World Movements, 39–41.*

32 The letter appears in *Theosophical History* XVIII, no. 1-2: 24 and note 3 (pp. 56–57). The "Kabala, the Zodiac, and the Great Pyramid of Gheza" is possibly the text from which several unidentified passages were quoted in *The Secret Doctrine*" (Santucci, "Helena Petrovna Blavatsky: Activities from 1877 – 1888," *Theosophical History* XVIII, no. 1-2: 122).

33 Theosophy Wiki, at *https://theosophy.wiki/en/Arthur_Gebhard*.

34 Bowen and Johnson, *Letters to the Sage*, I. 423. The letter is addressed to "My dear friend"—presumably referring to Thomas Moore Johnson. In the same letter, she later adds: "Gebhard said he would see me again before he left [sic] He has not done so yet, and may still be in town."

35 Letter from H. P. Blavatsky to H. S. Olcott, dated July 14, 1886 ("Echoes from the Past: H. P. B. at Home," *The Theosophist* 29, no. 8 [May 1908]): 752:

> Passing through Cologne on my way from Würzburg to Ostend, I was begged by all of them [the Gebhards] to come for a day or two to rest at Elberfeld. On the following morning (May 19th) I slipped on the parquet of my bedroom—made out of the second front parlor near the dining-room downstairs—(I could not walk up stairs anyhow) and now, instead of two days, had to remain two months nearly, six weeks positively, motionless in my bed from that sprain.

36 [Madame Vera Johnston], "A Note from Madame Vera Johnstone [sic], Niece of H. P. B.," in Countess Wachtmeister and Others, *Reminiscences of H. P. Blavatsky and "The Secret Doctrine,"* (London: Theosophical Publishing Society and New York: *The Path*, 1893), 107 [Appendix V].

37 "A Note from Madame Vera Johnstone [sic], Niece of H. P. B.," in Countess Wachtmeister, *Reminiscences of H. P. Blavatsky and "The Secret Doctrine,"* 108.

38 The text has 3*14159 and 31*4159. The symbol represents a comma in British style.

39 *The Secret Doctrine* [SD]. Two volumes in one (Los Angeles, CA: The Theosophy Company, 1974), vol. I, 504.

The quote appears in Madame de Jelihowsky, "A Free Translation from the Article in the 'Russian Review' of Moscow on Helena Petrovna Blavatsky," appearing in *Reminiscences of H. P. Blavatsky and "The Secret Doctrine,"* : 105–106.

40 See note 7 to the Christmas letter in this volume.

41 "Letter from H. P. Blavatsky to James Ralston Skinner: February 17, 1887," *Theosophical History* XVIII, no. 2: 50–51.

42 Buck, *Modern World Movements*, 40.

43 Buck, *Modern World Movements*, 40.

44 Buck, *Modern World Movements*, 40–41.

45 Buck, *Modern World Movements*, 41.

46 The "cube and triangle" are also mentioned in the February letter ("Letter from H.P. Blavatsky to James Ralston Skinner: February 17, 1887": 48):

> Now you have undeniably found out the real meaning of the cube, triangle, etc. etc. of the 4 & the 3.; & that it refers to male & female & the number of generation. This is on the terrestrial plane. Now take the perfect cube with the Sanskrit Aryas.

"Vishnu" is discussed in the February letter (Letter from H.P. Blavatsky to James Ralston Skinner: February 17, 1887," *Theosophical History* XVIII, no. 1–2: 46, 47, 51).

47 Buck, *Modern World Movements*, 40–41.

48 [J. Ralston Skinner], "Cabbalah—No. VIII." *Masonic Review* 67, no. 3 (April 1887): 132–33.

49 Identified as page 8 by the transcriber and 4 by Blavatsky. See page 9 of the letter in this issue (pp. 374–75).

50 In the same article (note on p. 140) Skinner quotes from the February 1887 letter. Noting "that the number 108 (or 1080) is of great Cabbalistic import," he refers to the 108 beads of the Tibetan rosary:

> On inquiry, he was informed by Madame Blavatsky that the Tibetan rosary has 108 beads, which brings the Hindu *Tarot* into the line of the same system of measures.

This is an obvious reference to the February 17, 1887 letter, wherein Blavatsky states:

> Tibetan rosaries? Well, every Hindu rosary has 108 beads answering to the 1008 names of Vishnu (or Siva or any other god).

The quote appears on page 29 of the original letter. See "Letter from H. P. Blavatsky to James Ralston Skinner: February 17, 1887," *Theosophical History* XVIII, no. 1-2: 51–52.

51 The quoted portion in "Cabbalah—No. VIII": 133 is located on page 9 of the letter (see note 49)…". Note the minor grammatical alterations from the original letter including the absence of "(that of Solomon in Europe)" following "Vishnu."

52 "Cabbalah—No. VIII": 133. "Alhim," the "numbers of *Alhim*," circle, and God are discussed in detail in Skinner's "Cabbalah—No. VI," *Masonic Review* 65, no. 5 (June 1886): 257–75 (esp. 257–60, 266–69). The above quote, "Numbers of Alhim" is located on page 259. "Alhim." See also SD I:91, 114; SD II:38–39 and J.R. Skinner, "Hebrew Metrology," *Masonic Review* 63, no. 6 (July 1885): 326.

53 Sylvia Cranston, *HPB: The Extraordinary Life an Influence of Helena Blavatsky, Founder of the Modern Theosophical Movement* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons [Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam Book], 1993), 367. The quoted passage is spread over pages one to four of the original letter with a few minor differences with the original Wickremeratne-Atkins transcription. Note 166 on page 600 simply identifies the passage as part of the Ralston Skinner Collection: "Blavatsky, *Letters to Ralston Skinner*."

54 Salmon P. Chase (1808–1873) was also a U. S. Senator for the state of Ohio, the Governor of Ohio, and Secretary of the Treasury in Abraham Lincoln's Cabinet. See Jeffrey Lavoie, "Contextualizing the Blavatsky-Skinner Letter: 17 February 1887)," *Theosophical History* XVIII, no. 1-2 (January-April 2016): 86, 93–95; Santucci, "Helena Petrovna Blavatsky: Activities from 1877 – 1888," *Theosophical History* XVIII, no. 1-2: 122.

55 Rudbøg, "H. P. Blavatsky's Theosophy in Context: The Construction of Meaning in Modern Western Esotericism," 160, 221.

56 Elisha S. Loomis, *The Pythagorean Proposition* (Washington, D. C.: National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, 1948 and 1960), 231–32.

Garfield was assassinated in 1881, cutting short his Presidency to only about six months.

57 Rudbøg, "H. P. Blavatsky's Theosophy in Context: The Construction of Meaning in Modern Western Esotericism," 88–89 and 224.

58 New York: S. W. Benedict, 1851.

59 See the introduction to *Source of Measures*, second edition (1894), 1–6, 14–46 and *passim*. Indeed, the book is actually a commentary on Parker's work.

60 For information on Seyffarth online, the article by Rebecca Munoz, the librarian of the Wilbour Library of Egyptology at the Brooklyn Museum gives a brief overview of his contribution to Egyptology and to his earlier collection, *Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca Manuscripta*, currently in the Library's holdings. Online at:

https://nyarc.org/blog/wilbour-library-collection-highlight-gustavus-seyffarth-and-his-obsession-with-hieroglyphs

An autobiography appeared in 1886 entitled *The Literary Life of Gustavus Seyffarth: An Autobiographical Sketch* (New York: E. Steiger & Co., 1886), which also contains a bibliography of his works (pp. 68–81) and his obituary appearing in the *New York Herald* on March 8, 1886.

61 For the reference to the complete collection see note 1.

62 The email from Ms. Jennings identifying the donor is dated December 17, 2017. Mr. Wiggins died in 2001 at the age of 87 as recorded in his obituary in *The Boston Globe* dated March 4, 2001, page 96.

63 My thanks to Jerry Hejka-Ekins for the reference to Skinner's son's death."

This information was revealed in his email, dated December 21, 2017.

64 The presence of the Skinner-Blavatsky collection in the Library has been documented by Daniel Caldwell on his Blavatsky site at *https://blavatskyarchives.com/#* and *https://blavatskyarchives.com/eyewitness.pdf*.

65 Dr. Ananda Wickremeratne was the recipient of two fellowships at Harvard: one in the Department of Anthropology and the other in the Center for the Study of World Religions, both of which were awarded in 1979. His name has appeared in past issues of *Theosophical History*: Vol. III, No. 1 (Jan. 1990): 29, note 13; Vol. III, No. 2 (April 1990): 62, note 13; Vol. IV, No. 8 (Oct. 1893): 247. Dr. Wickremeratne is the author of a number of books including *Genesis of an Orientalist: Thomas William Rhys Davids in Sri Lanka, The Roots of Nationalism in Sri Lanka,* and *Buddhism and Ethnicity in Sri Lanka*. Further information appears in *The Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, edited by Damien Keown and Charles S. Prebish (London and New York: Routledge: 2007), 863.

66 A letter from the then Director of the Center, John B. Carman, in response to a letter dated March 26, 1979 from John Kern, a Trustee of the Kern Foundation Trust Fund, acknowledged that "only a few students or research scholars connected with this Center have devoted themselves to a sustained investigation of theosophy until Dr. Wickremeratne." This appears in "Harvard Study on Theosophy and the Society," *The American Theosophist* 67, no. 7 (July 1979): 247. Following Dr. Wickremeratne's residency at Harvard, he assumed a Senior Lecturer position in the Theology Department of Loyola University Chicago.

67 An obituary of Ms. Atkins (1915–2000) is available at "Theosophy World": *https://theosophy.world/encyclopedia/atkins-anita*

68 Mrs. Hume was the wife of Professor David N. Hume, a member of the Department of Chemistry at MIT from 1947 to 1980. Prior to

that he worked on the Manhattan Project at the University of Chicago and at the Clinton Laboratories in Oak Ridge, TN. Mrs. Hume was the former Aloyse Bottenwiser. For an obituary of Professor Hume, see *https://news.mit.edu/1998/hume-0311/*

69 Letter to Dora Kunz from Sylvia Cranston, dated February 7, 1983. Located in the Harvard Divinity School Library.

70 This statement appears on Mr. Caldwell's website, *https://www.blavatskyarchives.com/*

I received the photocopy of the original letter and its typewritten transcription) following the publication of the February letter in *Theosophical History*.

71 Cranston, *HPB: The Extraordinary Life and Influence of Helena Blavatsky, Founder of the Modern Theosophical Movement*, 315–16.

72 The quote from the Christmas letter is given above (see note 53). Excerpts from the February letter appear on page 316 and in a note on page 380. The date of the letter given in the note on page 380 was mistakenly entered as 1886 rather than 1887. The excerpt from the Christmas letter was simply cited in note 166 as part of the Ralston Skinner Collection, "*Letters to Ralston Skinner.*"

73 My thanks to Daniel Caldwell for this image.

74 Michael Gomes announced the availability of the Blavatsky-Judge letters in the section "Communications: From the Archives," *Theosophical History* IV, no. 4–5 (October 1992 – January 1993): 109–110.

75 Mrs. Genevieve Ludlum Griscom (1868-1958) was the wife of Clement Acton Griscom, Jr. (1868–1918), both of whom were members of The Theosophical Society, after 1895 The Theosophical Society in America under W. Q. Judge, and finally The Theosophical Society in America under the guidance of E. T. Hargrove (1870–1939) and others. At the time of her death, Mrs. Griscom was associated with the Order of the Living Christ, with headquarters located at Chapel Farm in the Riverdale section of the Bronx, New York City. Mrs. Griscom wrote many Theosophical vignettes under her *nom de plume* Cavé.

76 The gift occurred in 1968 under the stipulation that the letters would only be released after twenty-five-years. Like the Skinner letters, the Judge letters have been digitalized at *https://hollisarchives.lib.harvard.edu/repositories/12/resources/762*

The Collection Identifier if bMS 34.

The donation of the Judge letters is mentioned in a letter from Robert E. Dobbs, Assistant Trust Office (Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York) to Mrs. Maria Grossmann, the Librarian of the Harvard Divinity School Library, dated December 26, 1967:

> In re: Genevieve L. Griscom Charitable Trust—PV267
>
> In accordance with our recent telephone conversation, I enclose a sealed envelope containing 18 letters from Mme. Blavatsky listed on the attached schedule as an addition to the Andover-Harvard Theological Library.
>
> The trustees are delivering this envelope to you with the understanding that it will not be opened for a period of 25 years from the date of its receipt by the Library.
>
> We would appreciate it if you would acknowledge the safe receipt of the enclosure by signing and returning the enclosed copy of this letter.

The letters have been digitalized and are available online at https://hollisarchives.lib.harvard.edu/repositories/12/resources/762.

77 Ms. Atkins stated that "we would be most willing to repeat the gift for the preservation of this material," i.e. to preserve the Judge letters when they become available in January 1993.

78 The interest of Ms. Atkins in the Blavatsky letters is revealed in a number of letters that are available in the Harvard Collections. These include those dated February 7, 1983 (to Dora Kunz); January 25, 1984 (to Alan Seaburg); April 13, 1993 (To Alan Seaburg); August 27, 1993 (to Gene McAfee, Assistant in Manuscripts and Archives),. Letters to Ms. Atkins include those from Alan Seaburg (January 31, 1984, February 18, March 13, and May 7, 1993) and Gene McAfee (October 19, 1993).

79 The first volume of the letters was completed. Although not published, it served as Cooper's Ph.D. thesis, "The Letters of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, 1862–1882" by Alfred John Cooper. The Ph.D. was awarded by the University of Sydney, School of Studies in Religion. Three hundred and fifty-seven letters were included in the 878-page thesis. Because of its size, the thesis comprises two volumes. Mr. Cooper's death was announced in *Theosophical History* VII, no. 3 (July 1998): 94. The following issue (VII, no. 4 (October) was dedicated to Mr. Cooper.

80 In an email dated January 6, 2025, Daniel Caldwell confirmed that he also "received photocopies of HPB's letters to Judge in 1993. I received my copies courtesy of Anita Atkins. I in turn made copies and sent them to Grace Knoche in early 1994." Dallas Ten Broeck (1922–2006) was an independent Theosophical historian with an interest in the life of H. P. Blavatsky, B. P. Wadia, and other leading members of the Society. His obituary appears at *https://www.carloscardosoaveline.com/william-dallas-tenbroeck/*

81 Cranston, *HPB: The Extraordinary Life and Influence of Helena Blavatsky, Founder of the Modern Theosophical Movement,* xxi.

82 Cranston, *HPB: The Extraordinary Life and Influence of Helena Blavatsky, Founder of the Modern Theosophical Movement*, xxi. The original letter appears above on p. 342.

83 "Some Letters of H.P. Blavatsky to W.Q. Judge and Other Miscellaneous Letters." in *https://blavatskyarchives.com/hpbwqjtab.html*

84 The citation of the Christmas letter appears in Mr. Doss McDavid's "Gematria, Senzar, and the Book of Dzyan," *The Quest* (September 1998): 4–12, both in the body of the text on page 7 and in the Bibliography (p. 12).

85 Mr. Alan Seaburg's letter, dated January 31, 1984, acknowledged the preservation of the Skinner letters. See page 341.

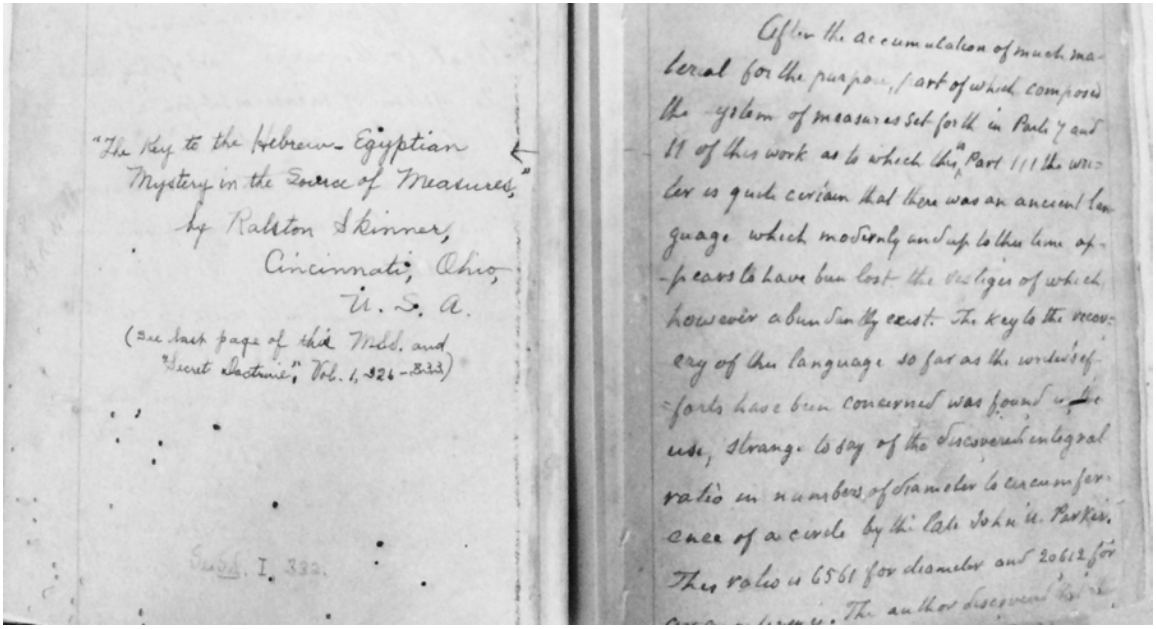
86 The note from Doris Freitag , dated April 20, 1993 is reproduced on page 339.

87 This letter is reproduced on page 343.

88 This cover note is reproduced on page 345.

89 This letter is reproduced on page 344.

90 The Library has no information on the publication date.



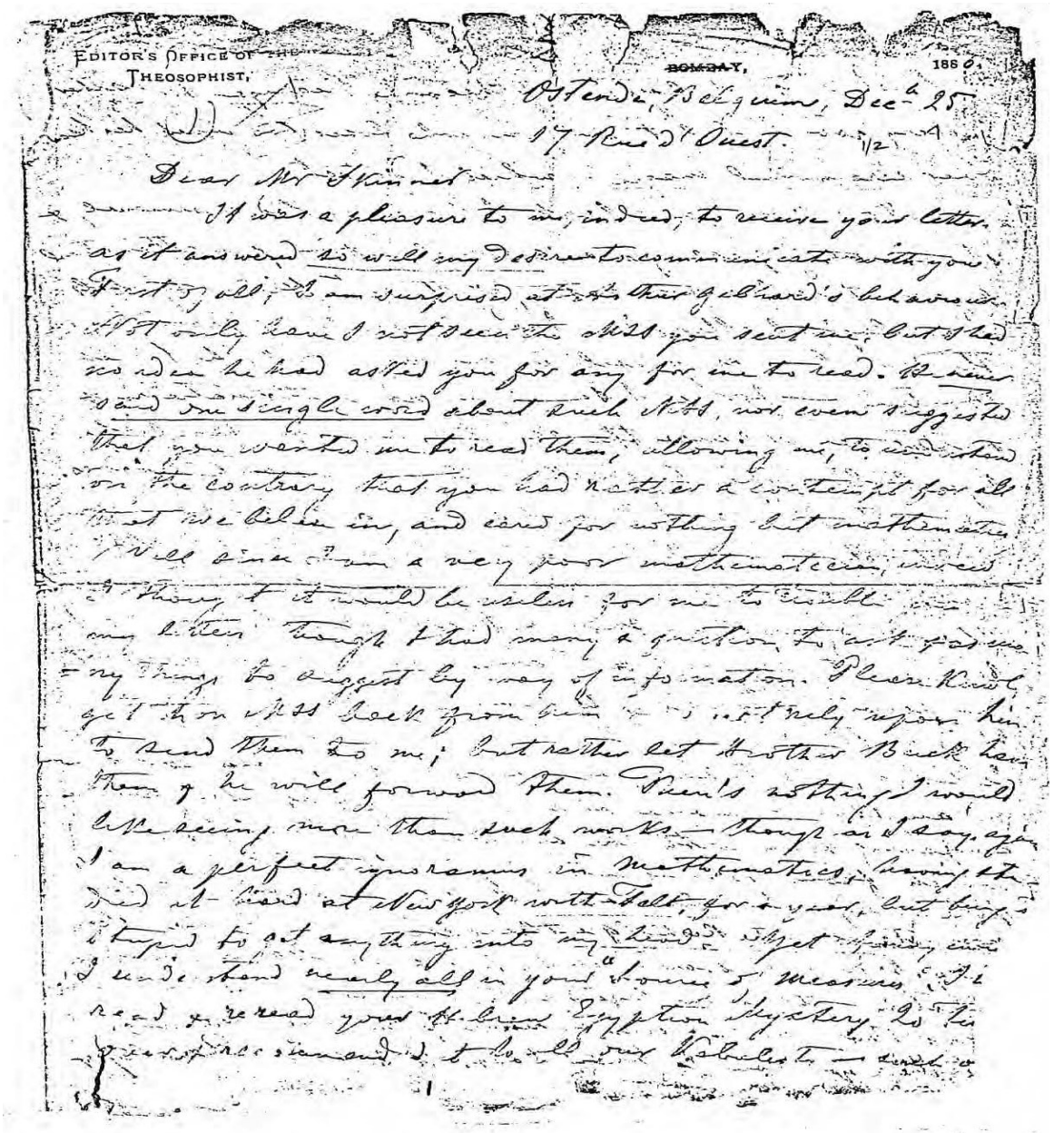
The inside cover and facing page of J. R. Skinner's MS.
Photo: Compliments of Ms. Jaishree Kannan

H. P. Blavatsky's First Letter to James Ralston Skinner: December 25, 1886

Transcribed by Ananda Wickremeratne
Transcript typed and corrected by Anita Atkins
Edited and annotated by James A. Santucci



Anita Atkins
Compliments of Dr. Martha Libster



EDITOR'S OFFICE OF THE THEOSOPHIST,
~~BOMBAY,~~ 188 6.
Ostende, Belgium, Dec^r 25
17 Rue d'Ouest.

Dear Mr Skinner

It was a pleasure to me, indeed, to receive your letter, as it answered so well my desire to communicate with you. First of all, I am surprised at Mrs Thurston's behaviour. Not only have I not seen the MSS you sent me, but I had no idea he had asked you for any for me to read. He never said me single word about such MSS, nor even suggested that you wanted me to read them, allowing me, to understand on the contrary that you had neither a conception for all that we believe in, and cared for nothing but mathematics. Well since I am a very poor mathematician, indeed [illegible] I thought it would be useless for me to trouble my letter. I thought I had many a question to ask you and many things to suggest by way of information. Please Read get from Mrs Cook from Cincinnati, not rely upon her to send them to me; but rather let Brother Buck have them & he will forward them. There's nothing I would like seeing more than such works — though as I say, again I am a perfect ignoramus in mathematics, having studied it — hard at New York with Felt, for a year, but being stupid to put anything into my head. Yet I may understand nearly all in your Source of Measures. I read & reread your Hebrew Egyptian Mystery. Is the [illegible] and I do all our Kabbalists — such a

Transcribed by Ananda Wickremeratne; Transcript typed and corrected by Anita Atkins; Edited and annotated by James A. Santucci

H. P. Blavatsky's First Letter to James Ralston Skinner: December 25, 1886

Transcribed by Ananda Wickremeratne
Transcription typed and corrected by Anita Atkins
Edited and annotated by James A. Santucci

Ostend, Belgium
Dec. 25 1886
17 Rue d'Quest

Dear Mr Skinner

[1[1]] It was a pleasure to me, indeed, to receive your letter[,] as it answered so well my desire to communicate with you. First of all, I am surprised at Arthur Gebhard's[2] behaviour. Not only have I not seen the Mss[3] you sent me, but I had no idea he had asked you for any for me to read. He never said one single word about such Mss, nor even suggested that you wanted me to read them, allowing me, to understand on the contrary that you had rather a contempt for all that we believe in, and cared for nothing but mathematics. Well since I am a very poor mathematician[4] indeed I thought it would be useless for me to trouble you with my letters though I had many a question to ask & as many things to suggest by way of information. Please kindly get those [?] Mss back from him and do not rely upon him to send them to me; but rather let Brother Buck[5] have them & he will forward them. There's nothing I would like seeing more than such works—though as I say again I am a perfect ignoramus in mathematics[6] having studied it hard at New York with Felt[7] for a year but being [too][8] stupid to get anything into my head. Yet reading more[9] I understand nearly all in your "*Source of Measures*."[10] I have[11] [?] read and re-read your Egyptian Mystery 20 times[12] over and recommend it to all our Kabalists — such as [2[13]] [end page 1]

Rev. Mr. W. Oxton of Chacombe Vicarage & Thatches a very good Kabalist only one who loses too much his head over ceremonial magic — which I detest.

Now from your book I have quoted enormously & showed many passages as a corroboration, a mathematical & geometrical corroboration, of the same Hindu symbols & analogical allegories. I am incapable of pounding on the same lines as yourself in my new work, the Secret Doctrine — for, as I say, I am no mathematician & rather see or sense the spirit of analogy through the symbolism, than by checking the figures on both sides. But the Hindus had such a basis as the one you discovered in the Pyramid & Bible most decidedly, but — it is all concealed in their astronomical personifications & the mode of working there out was different, since the letters (the Sanskrit or Devanagari, I mean) does not run parallel with or respond to numerals as in the Hebrew. It is in the figures that one has to take the head-lines, my Pundits taking great care to follow the numbers of days, months & kinsmen of the Rishis & Progenitors, and then comparing them with the astronomical treatises in which from Brihaspati (Jupiter) & the Dhruva the pole star) — he who is above the three worlds, above the Sun, moon, & above the Rishis (great Bears) etc. — down to the asterisms — every body in the starry depths has a human name & appears as upon earth with his own legend in the Puranas — it is only by this means that you can come to discredit the true meaning, & then you have to know Sanskrit for it. Bentley &

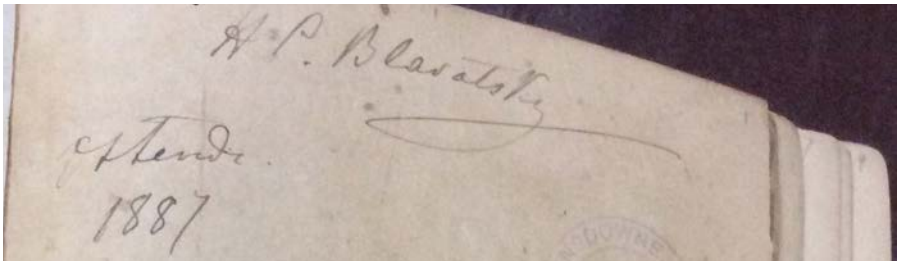
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[begin actual p. 2]

Rev. Mr. [?] A. W. Ayton[14] of Chacombe Vicarage and Mather[s],[15] a very good Kabalist, only one who loses too much his head over ceremonial magic—which I detest.

Now from your book I have quoted enormously & showed many passages as a corroboration, a mathematical & geometrical corroboration, of the same in Hindu symbols & analogical allegories. I am incapable of proceeding[16] on the same lines as yourself in my new work, The Secret Doctrine — for, as I say, I am no mathematician & rather see or sense the spirit of analogy through the symbolism, then [than?][17] by checking the figures on both sides. But the Hindus had such a basis as the one you discovered in the Pyramid and Bible most decidedly, but it is all concealed in their astronomical personifications and myths. The mode of working these out was different, since ____ [?] letters (in Sanskrit or Devanagari, I mean) does not run parallel with or correspond to numerals as in the Hebrew.[18] It is in the Purânas that one has to take the dead-letter myths taking great care to follow the numbers of sons and daughters and kinsmen of the Rishis and Progenitors and then comparing them with the astronomical treatises in which from Brihaspati (Jupiter? & Dhruva the pole star)—he who is above the three worlds, above the sun, moon, etc. above the Rishis (Great Bear), etc.—down to the asterisms [ev]ery[19] body in the starry depths has a human name & appears as a personification with his own legend in the Purânas—it is only by this [?means?] that you see [?] & come to [? unriddle] the true meaning.[20] [But] then you have to know Sanskrit for it[21] Bentley[22]

[end actual p. 2] [3[23]]



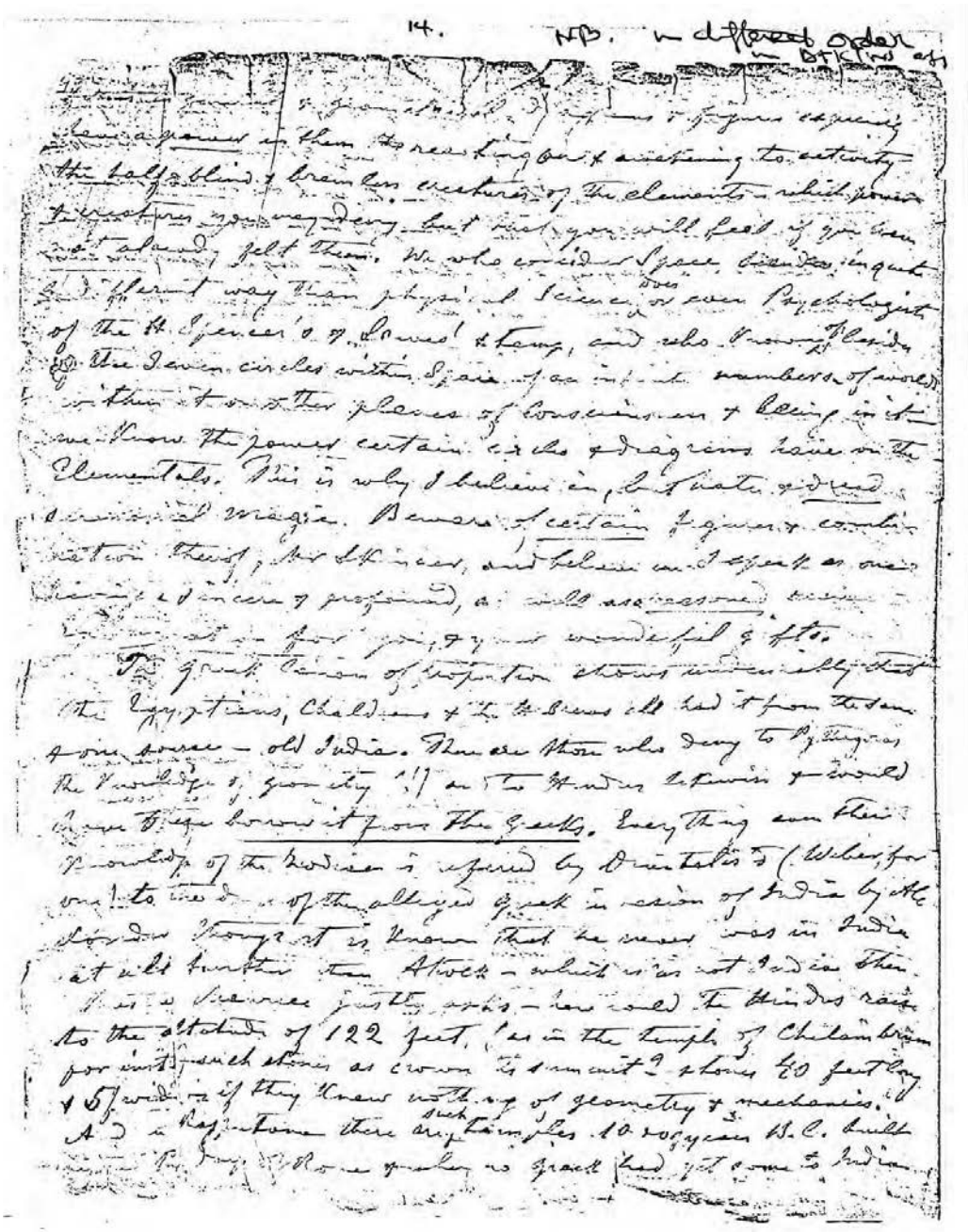
"H. P. B.'s signature and date of receipt of the Skinner MSS."
Photo: Courtesy of Ms. Jaishree Kannan

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[Page 3 of transcription; page 3 of the original letter is missing]

has made a mess of Hindu astronomy and Wilford[24] of their old symbols—the lat ter actually placing and identifying Atlantis "the White Island"[25] or Atala[26] of the Hindus in the 7th climate with the British Isles!!

This objective philosophy then "attempted to be cosmic in its embracement and couched in a language of symbolism" you inquire after, does exist undeniably but it is only the initiated mathematicians such as Subba Row[27]—who have the key to it. And he is more chary of his seer knowledge than any one else I know. He has almost quarreled with me for ever, for giving out some "of the most sacred mysteries of old Aryavarta,"[28] for "committing the sacrilege of throw[ing] up to the unholy world to prostitute to them, the holiest secrets of wisdom" (sic) ["sic" is H. P. B.'s][29] and he persists in saying that it is my Karma that threw me down and caused all those conspiracies of dirty slander and defamation by padres, missionaries and Coulomb with Co. Woldell perhaps he is right in his way. But yet I have never revealed but that which I was told to reveal. As you do not believe in the wisdom of our Masters, nor know of their existence, perhaps now I will not talk upon this subject. One thing I know and it is this. You would have never been the great mathematician and symbologist you are, your intuition would never have been opened as fully as it is now had you not had external help. Your own intellectual faculties may have been as great as any. You may be a born mathematician and anything you like, yet had you not been protected unconsciously to yourself you would have never been allowed to give the figures for instance given on p. 146 of your "Source of Measures" explaining the measurement of the King's Chamber.[30] You may laugh at me no matter. You reject everything mystical from the Kabala—it is you who know best. That which we do not believe in does not exist in nature. Remember this occult axiom. We of the esoteric Vedanta philosophy of Hinduism live in a world of Maya—illusion. But so do you and everyone else. Objective [4[31]]



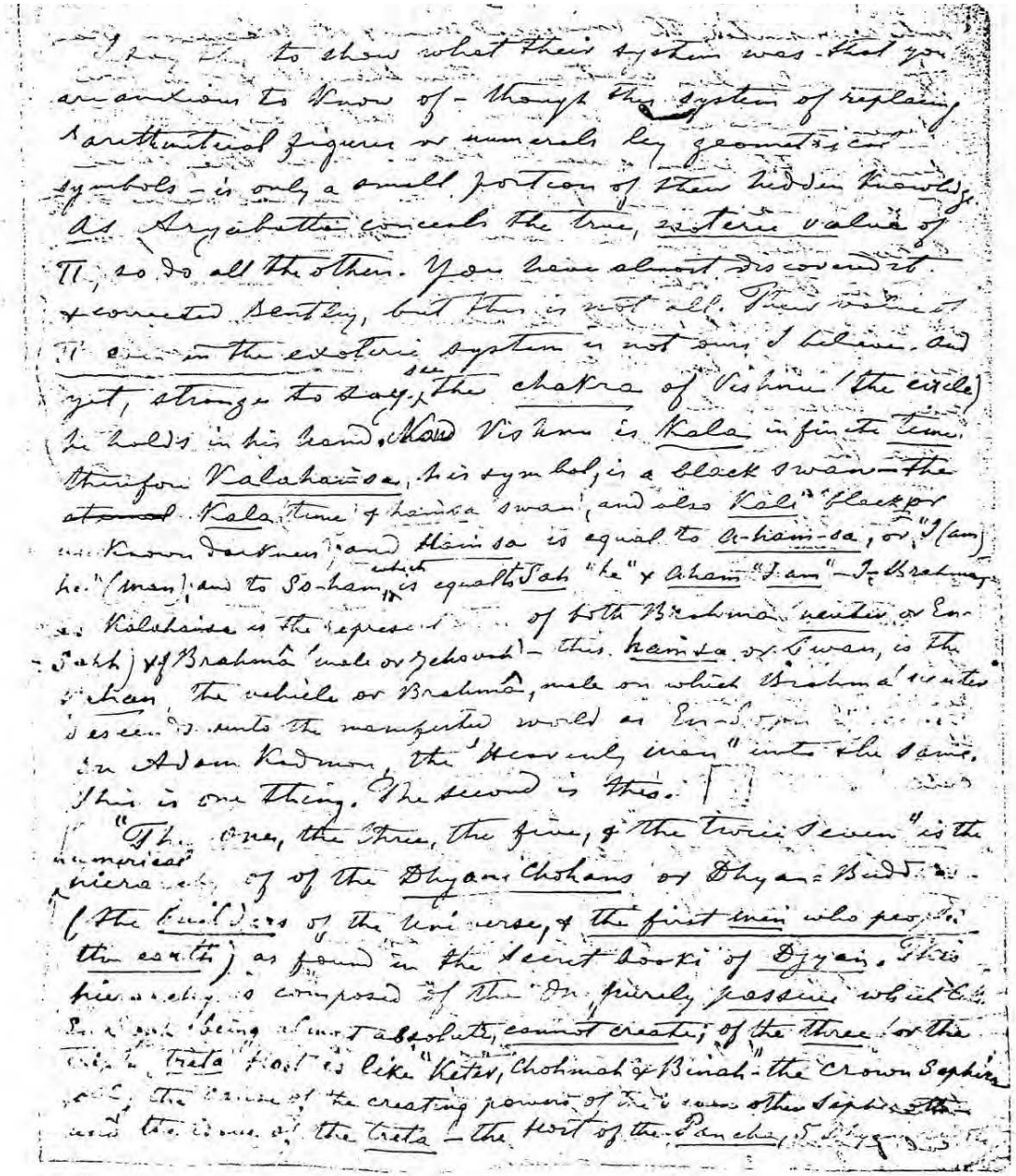
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[begin actual p. 4]

forms in general & geometrical diagrams & figures especially have a power in them reacting on and awakening to activity—the half blind & brainless creatures of the elemen ts—which power & creatures you may deny, but which you will feel if you have not already felt them. We who consider Space in quite a different way than physical science does or even Psychologists of the Spencer's & Lewes'[32] stamp, and who knows [of][33] besides of the Sevens within space of an infinite number of worlds within it on other planes of consciousness & beings in it—we know the power certain circles & diagrams have on the Elementals. This is why I believe in, but hate & dread ceremonial magic. Beware of certain figures and combinations thereof, Mr. Skinner, and believe me I speak as one having a sincere & profound as well as a reasoned respect and admiration for you & your wonderful gifts.

The Greek Canon of proportion[34] shows undeniably that the Egyptians, Chaldeans, & Hebrews all had it from the same and one source—old India.[35] There are those who deny to Pythagoras the knowledge of geometry (!)[36] and to Hindus likewise[37] & prove these [?] borrow it from the Greeks.[38] Everything even their knowledge of the Zodiac is referred by Orientalists (Weber[39] for one) to the days of the alleged Greek invasion of India by Alexander though it is known that he never was in India at all further than Atwek[40] which was not India then.[41] But as Maurice[42] justly asks, how would the Hindus raise to the altitude of 122 feet (as in the temple of Chilambrum[43] for inst.)—such stones as crown its summit? stones 40 feet long by 5 ft. wide, as if they knew nothing of geometry & mechanics. And in Rajputana there are such temples 1,000 of years B. C. built before the days of Rome and when no Greek had come to India.

[end actual p. 4] [5[44]]



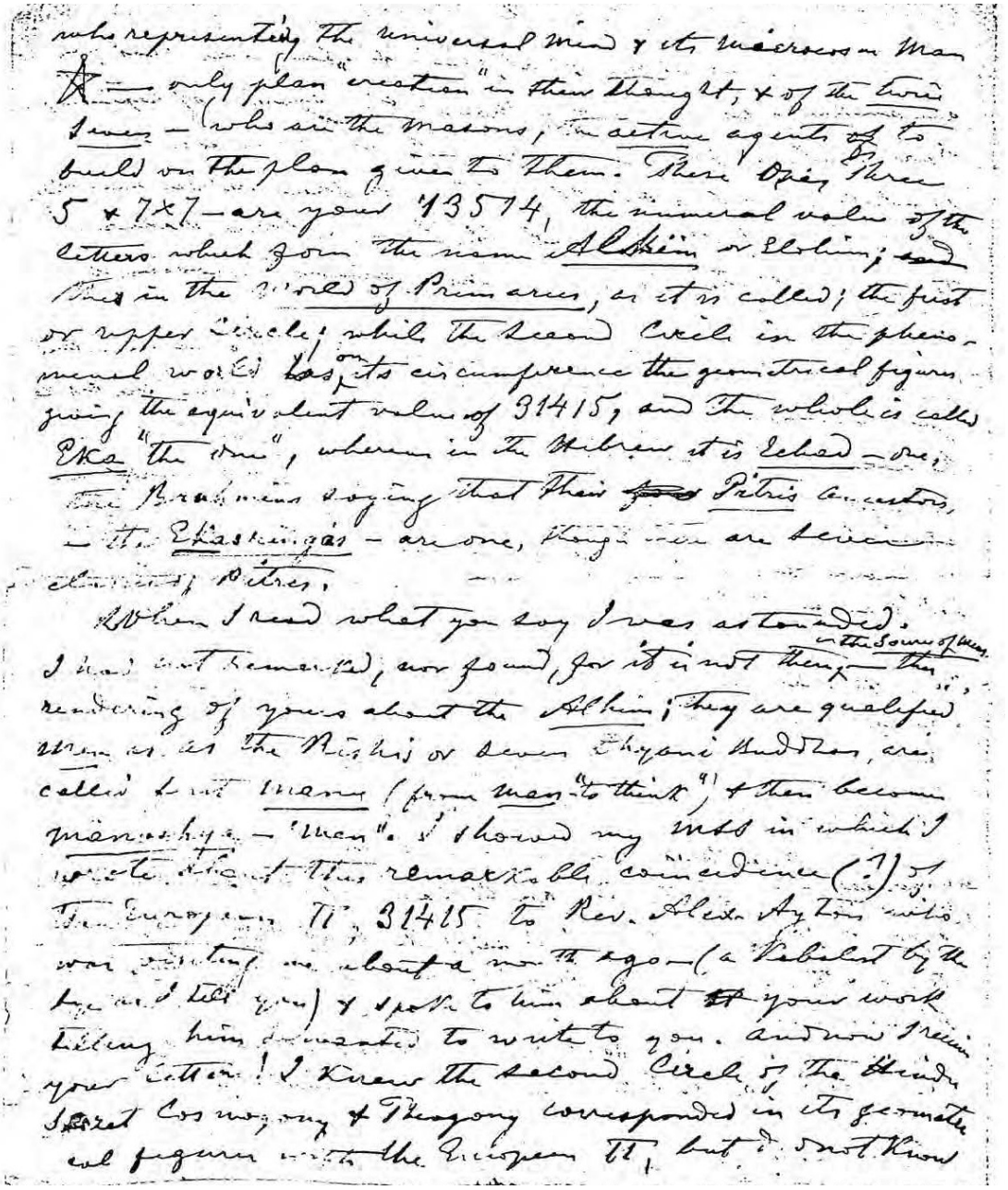
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[Begin actual p. 5]

I say this to show what their system was that you are anxious to know of though this system of replacing arithmetical figures or numerals by geometrical symbols—is only a small portion of their hidden knowledge, as Aryabatta[45] concedes the true, esoteric value of p,[46] so do all the others. You have almost discovered it and corrected Bentley,[47] but this is not all. Their value of π even in the exoteric system is not ours I believe. And yet, strange to say, see the chakra of Vishnu (the circle)[48] he holds in his hands. Now Vishnu is Kala,[49] infinite time,[50] therefore so'ham,[51] his symbol is a black swan.[52] The kala (time) and haṁsa (swan) are also kali (black or unknown darkness)[53] and haṁsa is equal to a-haṁ-sa, or, "I (am) he" (swan), and to So-ham, which is equal to Sah "he" & Aham "I am"—I –Brahma,[54] as Kalahaṁsa[55] is the representation of both Brahma (neuter or En Soph)[56] & of Brahmâ (male or Jehovah)[57]—this haṁsa or swan, is the vahan, the vehicle or Brahmâ, male on which Brahma (neuter) descends into the manifested world as En-Soph descends on Adam Kadmon, the "Heavenly man"[58] into the same. This is one thing. The second is this.

"The one, the three, the five & the twice seven" is the numerical hierarchy[59] of the Dhyan Chohans or Dhyan Buddhas (the Builders of the universe, & the first men who peopled the earth[60]) as found in the secret books of Dzyan.[61] This hierarchy is composed of the One, purely passive which like En Soph being almost absolute cannot create[62]; of the three or the triple (Treta[63]) Host is like "Keter, Chohmah and Binah"[64]—the crown Sephira, only the cause of the creating powers of the seven other Sephiroth[65] and the issue of the treta—the host of the Pancha, 5 Dhyani Buddhas[66] [6[67]]

[End actual p. 5]



who representedly the universal mind & its microcosm Man
A — only plan "creation" in their thought, & of the twice
seven — (who are the masons, the active agents of to
build on the plan given to them. Here Open Three
5 × 7 × 7 — are your 13574, the numeral value of the
letters which form the name Alhim or Elohim; and
that in the "World of Primaries, as it is called; the first
or upper circle; while the second circle in the phenomenal world has, on its circumference the geometrical figure
giving the equivalent value of 31415; and the whole is called
Eka "the one", whereas in the Hebrew it is Echad — one,
the Brahmins saying that their Pitris ancestors,
— the Elasvingas — are one, though we are seven
classes of Pitris.

When I read what you say I was astounded. In the Sound of Mem
I had not remarked, nor found, for it is not there — the
rendering of yours about the Alhim; they are qualified
when as at the Rishi or seven Dhyani Buddhas, are
called Manus (from man "to think") & then become
manushya — "man". I showed my MSS in which I
wrote this remarkable coincidence (!) of
the European π, 31415 to Rev. Alex. Ayton who
was visiting us about a month ago — (a Kabalist by the
by as I told you) & spoke to him about your work
telling him I wanted to write to you. and now I have
your letter! I knew the second Circle of the Secret Cosmogony & Theogony corresponded in its geometrical figures with the European π, but I did not know

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[Begin p. 6]

who representing the universal mind and its microcosm man[68] —only plan "creation" in their thought, & of the twice seven—(who are the masons, the active agents to build on the plan given to them[)]. These one, three, 5 & 7 x 7 — are your 13514, the numerical value of the letters which form the name Alhim[69] or Elohim; since in the World of Primaries[70], as it is called; the first or upper circle[71]; while the second circle is the phenomenal world has on its circumference the geometrical figures giving the equivalent value of 31415, and the whole is called Eka "the one", whence in the Hebrew it is Eched[72]—one, the [these?] Brahmins saying that their Pitris ancestors—the Ekasringis[73]—are one, though there are seven classes of Pitris.

When I read what you say I was astounded. I had not remarked, nor found, for it is not there in The Source of Measures[74]—this rendering of yours about the Alhim; they are qualified men—as are the Rishis or seven Dhyani Buddhas are called first manu (from man "to think"[75]) and then become manushya—"man". I showed my mss in which I wrote about this remarkable coincidence (?)[76] of the European π, 31415 to Rev. Alex Ayton who was visiting me about a month ago—(a Kabalist by the bye as I tell you) & spoke to him about your work telling him I wanted to write to you.[77] And now I receive your letter! I knew the second circle of the Hindus' Secret Cosmogony & Theogony corresponded in its geometrical figures with the European π, but did not know [7[78]]

[End p. 6]

about the Slokam corresponding to 31415 — I will now
alter my MS & insert (in quotation of course giving you
credit for it what you say, if you permit me to quote
from what is not yet published. So much the
closer, but a copy concerning that from my MS.
So that if you find in it anything to alter or remark
of you to insert I will be greatly obliged for, as I
say I am no mathematician. Pax et Vita

(Comment 4 to Stanza IV of Book of Dzyan)

"The One from the Egg, the six & the five give
the number 1065, the value of the "first-born"
Brahmâ Prajâpati — the creator or progenitor of
beings, who answers to the numbers 7, 14, and 21,
respectively. The Prajâpati are the Sephiroth, only
seven, if they include their triple Crown (Father) Syn-
thetically, the Sephiras from which they spring,
and ten — for other purposes. Thus, from Hira-
nyagarbha or Prajâpati, the Primeval
Vedic trimurti — Agni, Vayu & Surya (in esoterism
Manas), the six other emanate, or ten, if we disjoin
the first three which exist in the one, & the seven
all manifested, being comprehended within that "One" Sap-
tâsya Saraswati, called Gayatri Guhya, or "secret" and Sar-
vâtmika, "the seven Lords of being"
concentrated in Sarvâtma, like thoughts in one brain." So
are the Sephiroth. They are either ten absolutely, or

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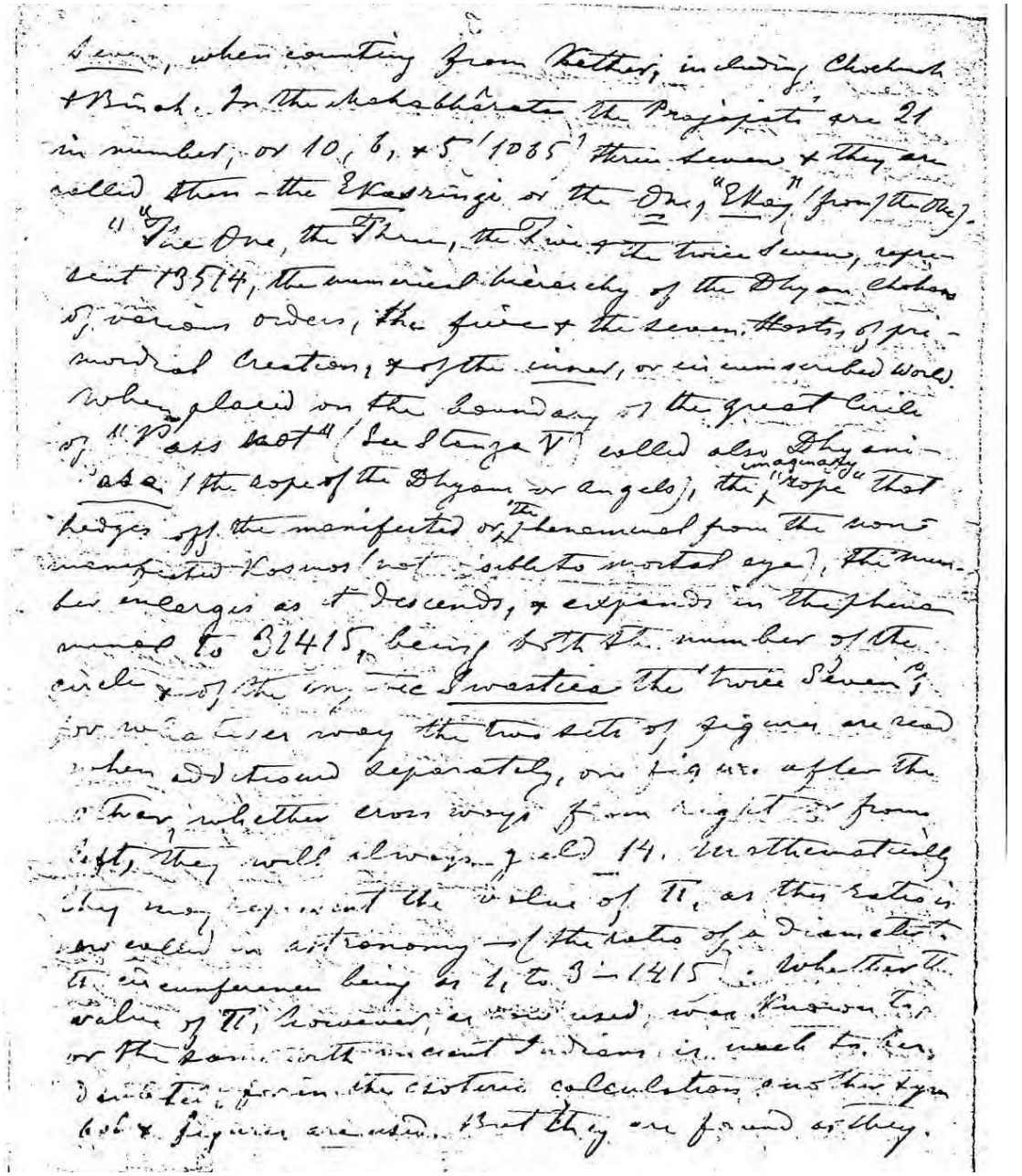
[begin p. 7]

about the Elohim corresponding to 31415—I will now alter my mss & insert (in quotations of course giving you credit for it) what you say, if you permit me to quote from what is not yet published. To make the thing clearer, let me copy concerning them from my Mss, so that if you find anything to alter or a remark of yours to insert I will be greatly obliged, for, as I say I am no mathematician.

(Comment 4 to Stanza IV of Book of Djyan [W.: "Dzyan")

"The One from the Egg, the six & the five ["] give the number 1065, the value of the "first born" Brahmâ Prajâpati — the creator or progenitor of beings,[79] who answers to the numbers 7, 14, and 21, respectively. The Prajâpati[80] are as the Sephiroth, only Seven, if they include their triple crown (–Kether) synthetically,[81] the Sephira from which they spring, & ten — for other purposes. Thus from Hiranya Garbha or Prajapâti,[82] the Triune, (the primeval Vedic trimurti[83] — Agni, Vayu, & Surya (in esotericism Marut[84]) — the six other emanate, or ten, if we separate the first three which exist in the one, and the one in the three [?], all mentioned being comprehended within that "one" Supreme Parama[85] called guhya, or "secret," and Sarvâtma or Supersoul. "The seven lords of being he concealed in Sarvâtma like thoughts in one's brain." So are the Sephiroth. They are either ten esoterically or [8[86]]

[End p. 7]



Seven, when counting from Kether, including Chochmah & Binah. In the Mahabharata the Prajapatis are 21 in number, or 10, 6, & 5 / 1065 / three sevens & they are called them - the Eka-rishis or the One, "Ekas" / from the One /.

"The One, the Three, the Five & the twice Seven, represent 13514, the numerical hierarchy of the Dhyan Chohans of various orders, the five & the seven Hosts of pre-mundial Creation, & of the inner, or circumscribed World. When placed on the boundary of the great Circle of "Pass not" / see Stanza V / called also Dhyani-vasa / the sojourn of the Dhyan or angels /, the "Rope" that hedges off the manifested or phenomenal from the non-manifested Kosmos / not visible to mortal eye /, the number enlarges as it descends, & expands in the phenomenal to 31415, being 5th the number of the circle & of the one, the twice Seven, for whatever way the two sets of figures are read when added up separately, one figure after the other, whether cross ways from right to left or from left to right, they will always yield 14. Mathematically they must represent the value of π, as the ratio of one called in astronomy — / the ratio of a diameter to circumference being as 1 to 3—1415 /. Whether the value of π, however, as now used, was known to, or the same with ancient Indians is much to be doubted — for in the esoteric calculations another system of figures are used. But they are found as they.

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[Begin p. 8]

seven, when counting from Kether, including Chochmah & Binah.[87] In the Mahabhârata the Prajapati[s] are 21[88] in number or 10, 6 & 5 (1065) thrice seven[89] & they are called then the Ekasringi or the One, "Eke"[90] (from) the One).

"The One, the Three, the Five & the twice Seven, represent 13514, the numerical hierarchy of the Dhyan Chohans of various orders, the five and the seven Hosts, of primordial creation & of the inner or uncircumscribed world. When placed on the boundary of the great circle of "Pass Not"[91] (see Stanza V) called also Dhyani Pasa[92] (the rope of the Dhyans or angels), the imaginary "rope" that hedges off the manifested or the phenomenal from the non-manifested Kosmos (not visible to mortal eye), the number enlarges as it descends and expands in the phenomenal [world] to 31415, being both the number of the circle & of the mystic Swastica the twice Seven, for whatever way the two sets of figures are read when additioned [?][93] separately, one figure after the other, whether crossways from right or from left, they will always yield 14. Mathematically they may represent the value of π, as this ratio is now called in astronomy—of the ratio of a diameter to circumference being as 1, to 3—1415. Whether the value of π, however, as is now used, was known to or the same with ancient Indians is much to be doubted [?], for in the esoteric calculations another symbol and figure are used.[94] But they are found as they [9[95]]

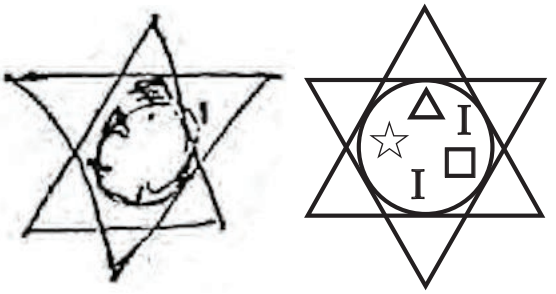
[End p. 8]

are given above around the chakra painted in the oldest temples above the door of the Sign of Vishnu, & inside the old pointed Star, thus  —reading the geometrical figures from left to right— the △ (3), the 1 (1), the □ (the cube or 4. the 1 (1) and the ☆ 5-pointed star or 5. This method is very much used in the ornamentation on Temples when the 6 pointed star the Sign of Vishnu (that of Solomon in Europe/~~the~~ contains a circle with various geometrical figures & signs of which there are many unknown to us. Thus while in the higher World, the Circle with the one central point in it has no number or figures except the pentagon, & is called the Anupadaka (the parentless, or "Self born") in the primary manifested World the Mundane Egg or "Circle" circumscribed within the groups called the Elder Sons, the triangle, the Pentacle, the second line of the Cube, or 13514; (the one in the Secondary World is read, described") — & when the Point having generated a line both ways ⊙ ⊖, then becomes a Diameter, which stands for the androgynous Logos, then only the figures become 31415, or a triangle a line a circle "when the Son separates from the Father he becomes the Father, the diameter then standing for Prakriti, the feminine Principle, Circle at rest, & in the world of Being the One Point signifies the

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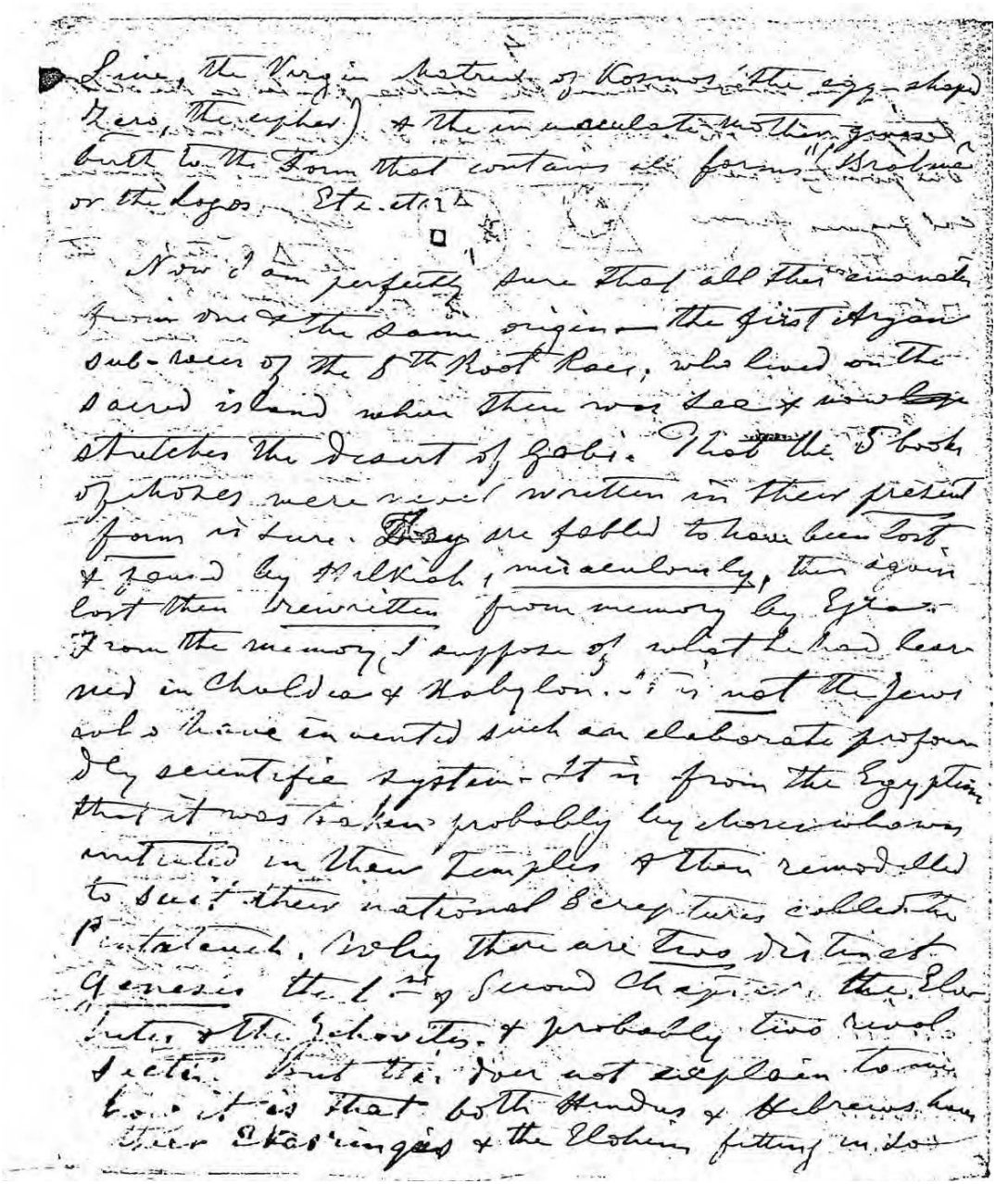
[Begin p. 9]

are given above around the chakra painted in the oldest temples above the door of the sign of Vishnu, inside the six pointed Star, thus



reading geometrical figures from left to right—and thus producing the Δ (3), the ׀ (1), the □ (the cube or 4, the ׀ (1) and the ☆ the 5-pointed star or 5. This method is very much used in the trans-Himalayan temples where the six pointed star, the sign of Vishnu (that of Solomon in Europe) contains a circle with various geometrical figures & signs of which there are many unknown to us. Thus while in the higher world, the circle with the one central point in it has no numbers or figures except the pentagon and is called the anupadaka[96] (the parentless, or "Self born") in the primary manifested world the mundane Egg or "Circle" is circumscribed within the groups called the Elder Line, the triangle, the pentacle, the second line, & the cube or 13514; (the one in the Secondary World is already described!!) — & when the point having generated a line both ways, ⊙ ⊖, thus becomes a diameter, which stands for the androgynous logos, then only the figures become 31415, or a triangle, a line, etc. etc. "When the Son separates from the Mother he becomes the Father, the diameter then standing for nature, the feminine Principle.[97] Therefore it is Law! ["] "In the world of Being the One Point fructifies the [10[98]]

[End p. 9]



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[Begin p. 10]

Line, the Virgin matrix of Kosmos (the egg-shaped zero, the cipher) & the immaculate mother gives birth to the Form that contains all forms[99] (Brahmâ or the Logos).” Etc. etc.

Now I am perfectly sure that all this emanates from one and the same origin—the first Aryan sub-races of the 5th Root Race, who lived on the sacred island when there was sea & now stretches the desert of Gobi.[100] That the 5 books of Moses were never written in their present form is sure. They are fabled to have been lost & found by Hilkiah[101], miraculously, then again lost then rewritten from memory by Ezra from the memory I suppose of what he had learned in Chaldea and Babylon. It is not the Jews who have invented such an elaborate profoundly scientific system. It is from the Egyptians that it was taken probably by Moses who was initiated in their temples & then remodelled to suit their national Scriptures called the Pentateuch. Why there are two distinct Genesis, the 1st of second chapter, the Eluhites [Elohites?][102] and the Jehovites, and probably two rival sects. But this does not explain to me how it is that both Hindus and Hebrews have their Ekâsringas[103] & the Elohim fitting in so [11[104]]

[End p. 10]

well with the ☿ of the astronomers!

If you would find the same system underlying in search for it in the Genesis. Now Brahmâ is both god & man, Adam Kadmon & Adam, Jehovah & Cain. It is said in Manu & other books that when he desired to create he divided himself into two parts. — male & female, & in her (the female Vâch) he created himself as Virâj." Virâj says. "I am Brahmâ, I am Manu etc. by rebirth & transformation. Brahmâ is red like Adam. Vâch is the mother of gods, & of all beings, & of all which is — the Satarupa or "hundred forms" — Nature in its or Eve was. Only while the Hebrew Genesis is bent in its symbolism only upon astronomy & physiology — the Hindu allegories are for ever complete & correct. — Genesis begins with the "seventh Creation" of Brahmâ — when man appears & in the Purânas, the Manvantara creation is preceded by six precedent evolutions, in which you can discretly the periods of gradual evolution the differentiated atom from the undifferentiated chaos, the appearance of the Nebulae of the worlds, & their Solar System, sun, planets & The word Brahmâ is from the root brih to grow, or swell in growing & Vishnu from Vish — just the same. The Sanskrit language has 2 genders for the Deity, the Supreme Being in its neuter

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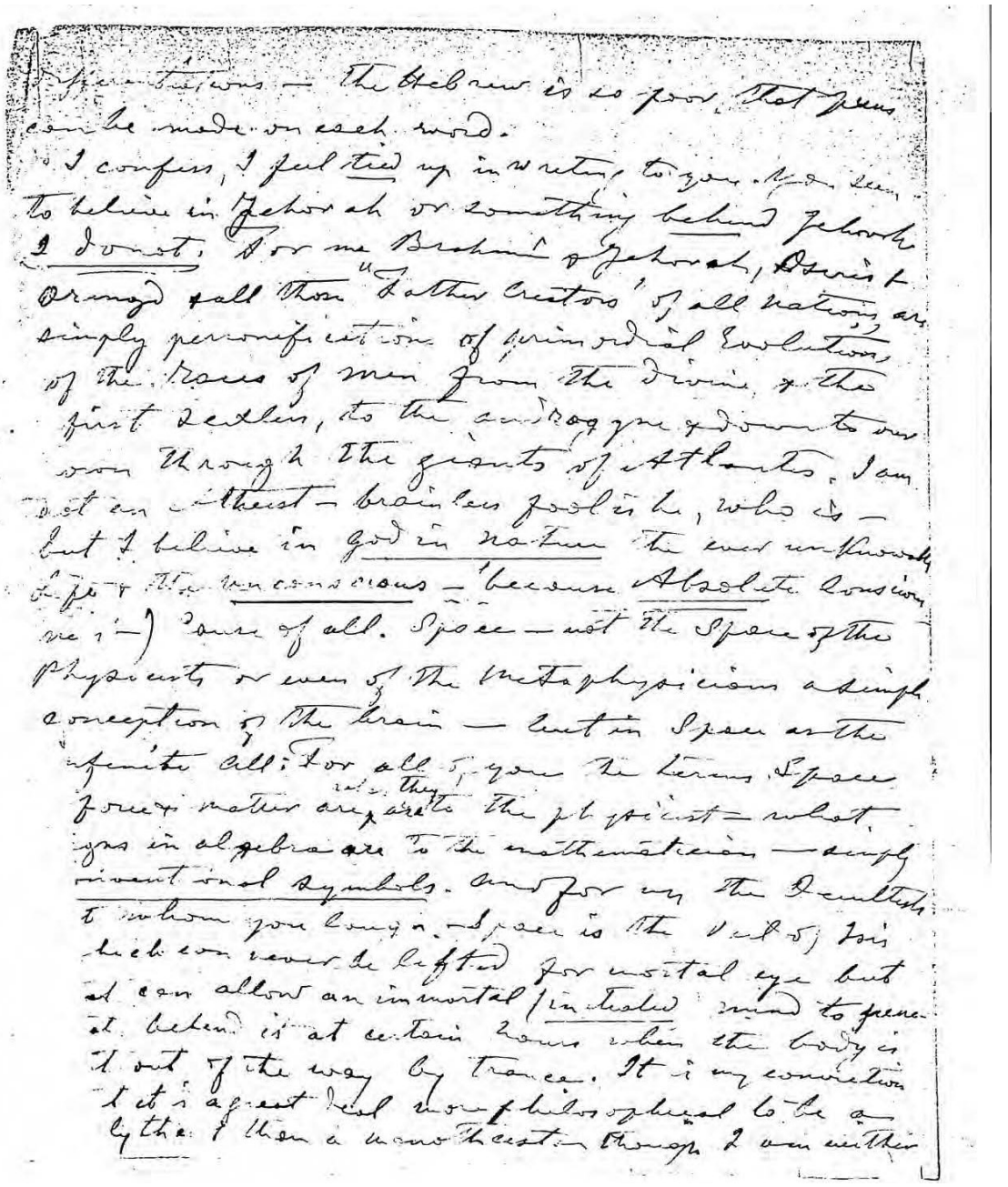
[Begin p. 11]

well with the π of the astronomers!

If you would find the same system underlying Hinduism search for it in their Genesis. Now Brahmâ[105] is both god and man, Adam Kadman and Adam, Jehovah and Cain. It is said in Manu & other books that when he desired to create he divided himself into two parts—male and female & in her (the female Vâch) he created himself as Virâj.[106] Virâj says "Know ye I am Brahmâ, I am Manu,["] etc. by rebirth & transformation. Brahmâ is red[107] like Adam.[108] Vach[109] is the mother of gods, & of all beings or of all who be—as the Satarupas[110] or "hundred formed"—Nature in short[111] as Eve was. Only while the Hebrew Genesis is bent in its symbolism only upon astronomy & physiology — the Hindu allegories are far more complete & scientific. Genesis begins with the "Seventh Creation" of Brahmâ—when man appears & in the Purânas.[112] The Arvaksrôta [i.e., Arvāk-srotas-] creation[113] is preceded by six precedent evolutions, in which you trace distinctly the periods &[114] gradual evolutions of the differentiated atom from the undifferentiated chaos, the appearance of the Nebulae of the worlds, stars[,] solar system, our planets & [so on].[115] The word Brahmâ is from the root brih [bṛh]to "expand" or swell in growing & Vishnu from Vis [viṣ][116] just the same. The Sanskrit language has 20[117] names for one and the same thing in its minute [12[118]]

[End p. 11]

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Speculations — The Hebrew is so poor that puns can be made on each word.

I confess, I feel tied up in writing to you. You seem to believe in Jehovah or something behind Jehovah. I don't. For me Brahmâ & Jehovah, David & Ormazd & all those "Father Creators" of all nations, are simply personifications of primordial Evolution, of the races of men from the divine & the first Sexless, to the androgyne & down to our own through the giants of Atlantis. I am not an atheist — brainless fool is he, who is — but I believe in God in nature the ever unknowable & the unconscious — because Absolute Consciousness = Cause of all. Space — not the Space of the Physicists or even of the Metaphysicians a simple conception of the brain — but in Space as the infinite all: For all of you the terms Space force matter are are the pet points — what signs in algebra are to the mathematician — simply convenient vocal symbols. And for us the Occultists to whom you deny it — Space is the veil of Isis which can never be lifted for mortal eye but it can allow an immortal & initiated mind to penetrate. It behind is at certain hours when the body is cast out of the way by trance. It is my conviction that it is a great deal more philosophical to be an Egyptian & then a man with a soul in through & through than

[Begin p. 12]

differentiations — the Hebrew is so poor that puns can be made on each word.

I confess I feel tied up in writing to you. You seem to believe in Jehovah or something behind Jehovah. I do not. For me Brahmâ & Jehovah, Osiris & Ormazd and all those "Father Creators" of all nations, are simply personifications of primordial Evolution of the races of men from the divine & the first sexless, to the androgyne and down to our own through the giants of Atlantis. I am not an atheist—brainless fool is he, who is—but I believe in god in nature, the ever unknowable Life & the unconscious—(because Absolute Consciousness—) cause of all. Space[119]—not the Space of the physicists or even of the metaphysicians a simple conception of the brain — but in space as the infinite all; for all of you the terms Space, and force (?form) & matter are [all?] they are to the physicist—what signs in algebra are to the mathematicians — simply conventional symbols. And for [us?] the Occultists, to whom you laugh, Space is the veil of Isis which can never be lifted for mortal eye but that can allow an immortal/initiated mind to penetrate behind it at certain hours when the body is first out of the way by trance. It is my conviction that it is a great deal more philosophical to be a polytheist than a monotheist—though I am neither [13[120]]

[End p. 12]

being an art post Pantheist.

Now please excuse me for I would not say an unjust thing if I can help it. I quote from you so often that I was obliged to remark in one place that I believed you belonged to those persons who like General Pike reject with anger the Principle Creator of the Cosmos thought Rita of the Grand Orient of France — & will have a Father in Heaven an anthropomorphic god. I cannot make you out. You make of Jehovah a Number, a Phallus, a simple symbol, & then you speak as though you believed in Revelation & the Holiness of the Bible. Please pardon me for my sincerity. Ye gods — if you have not given a description of the last initiation in India, in your Cosmogenesis (pp. 255–262) — these three type-sets then I do not know whether I am now writing in Ostend or Indra — why it is the secret drama of Visvakarma the Omnificent personification of the Creative Powers, the great architect of the Veda, etc etc, the Son of Brahma the all pervading spirit — who offered all the worlds a general sacrifice & ended by sacrificing himself to save them from an evil Saturn. It is he who is now Initiator; & the Sun, as Vikartana "born of this" who is the candidate for Initiation the Christos the gupta of Patala. The fable or allegory, shows Sa (Spiritual Consciousness) the daughter of Visvakarma —

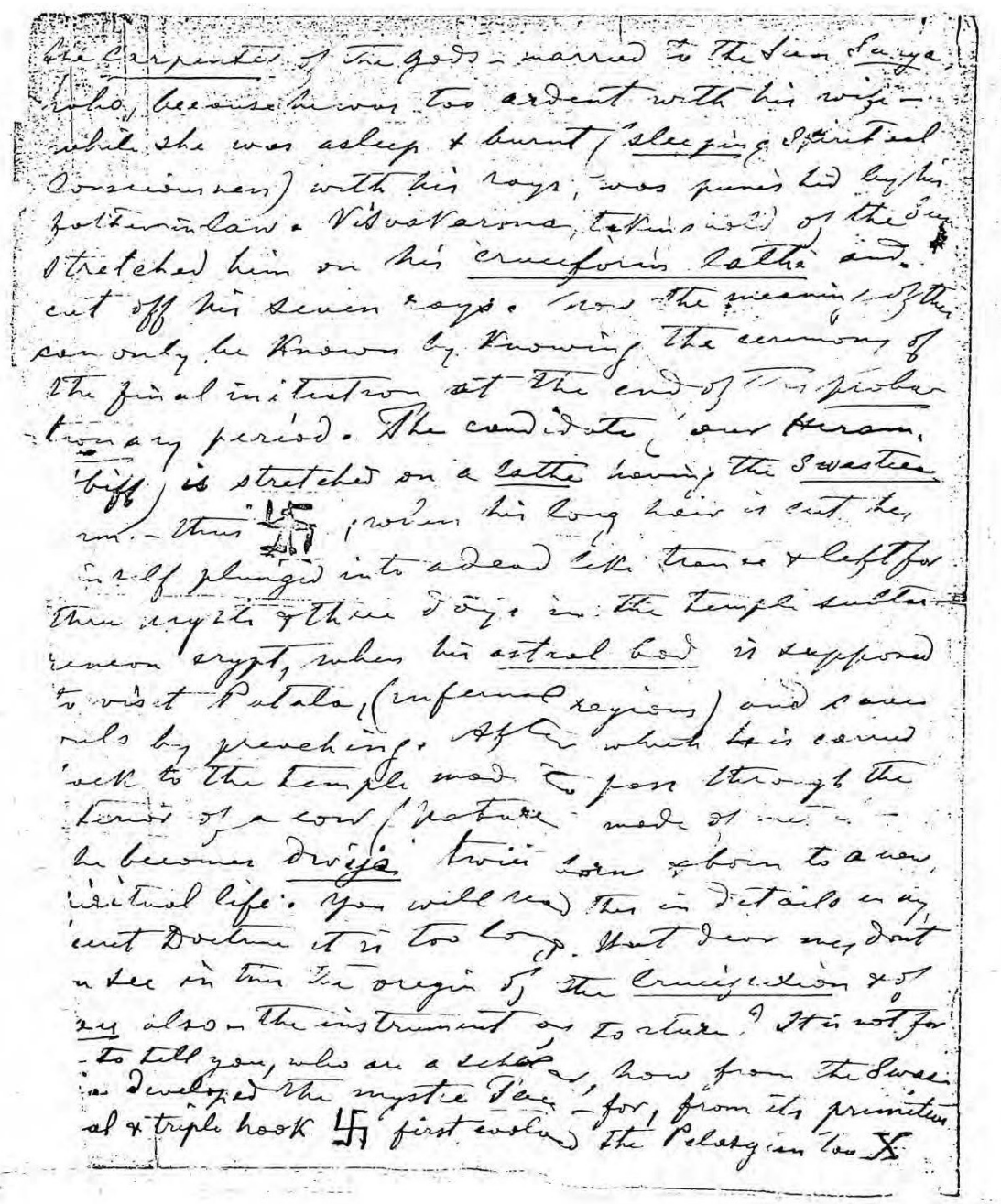
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[Begin p. 13]

being an out and out Pantheist.

Now please tell me for I would not say an unjust thing if I can help it. I quote from you so often that I was obliged to remark in one place that I believed you belonged to those masons who like General Pike reject with anger the Principe Createur[121] of the Antient & Accepted Rite of the Grand Orient of France—& will have a "Father in Heaven" an anthropomorphic god. I cannot make you out. You make of Jehovah a number, a phallum, a simple symbol, and then you speak as though you believe in Revelation & the holiness of the Bible. Please pardon me for my sincerity. Oh ye gods—if you have not given a description of the last initiation in India—in your crucifixion myth (pp. 255–262) Meschiac[122] type etc then I do not now know whether I am now writing in Ostende or London. Why it is the secret drama of Visvakârma[123] the "Omnificent" personification of the Creative Power, the great architect of the Veda, etc. etc., the Son of Bhu[r?] [?][124] the all pervading spirit—who offered all the worlds [in?] a general sacrifice, and ended by sacrificing himself to save them from annihilation. It is he who is now Initiator; & the Sun, as Vikarthana[125] "shorn of his [rays?]" who is the candidate for Initiation the Chrestos the pit, or Patala.[126] The fable or allegory shows Sa-[Saṃjñā][127] (Spiritual Consciousness) the daughter of Visvakarma—[14[128]]

[End p. 13]



the Carpenter of the gods - married to the Sun Surya who, because he was too ardent with his wife - while she was asleep & burnt (sleeping Spiritual Consciousness) with his rays, was punished by his father-in-law Visvakarma, (type used of the Sun) stretched him on his crucifixion lathe and cut off his seven rays. Now the meaning of this can only be known by knowing the ceremony of the final initiation at the end of the probation period. The candidate, (our Heroes, Biff) is stretched on a lathe having the 3 vestures removed - thus [illegible] (when his long hair is cut he, himself plunged into a dead like trance & left for three days & three nights in the Temple subterranean crypt, when his astral body is supposed to visit Patala, (infernal regions) and commits by preaching. After which he is carried back to the temple and to pass through the horns of a cow (nature - made of metal) he becomes Dwija twice born to a new, spiritual life. You will read this in details in my recent Doctrine it is too long. Now dear one, don't see in this the origin of the Crucifixion & of the Cross also - the instrument or Torture? It is not for me to tell you, who are a scholar, how from the Swastika developed the mystic Tau - for, from its primitive & triple hook 卐 first evolved the Pelasgic Tau X

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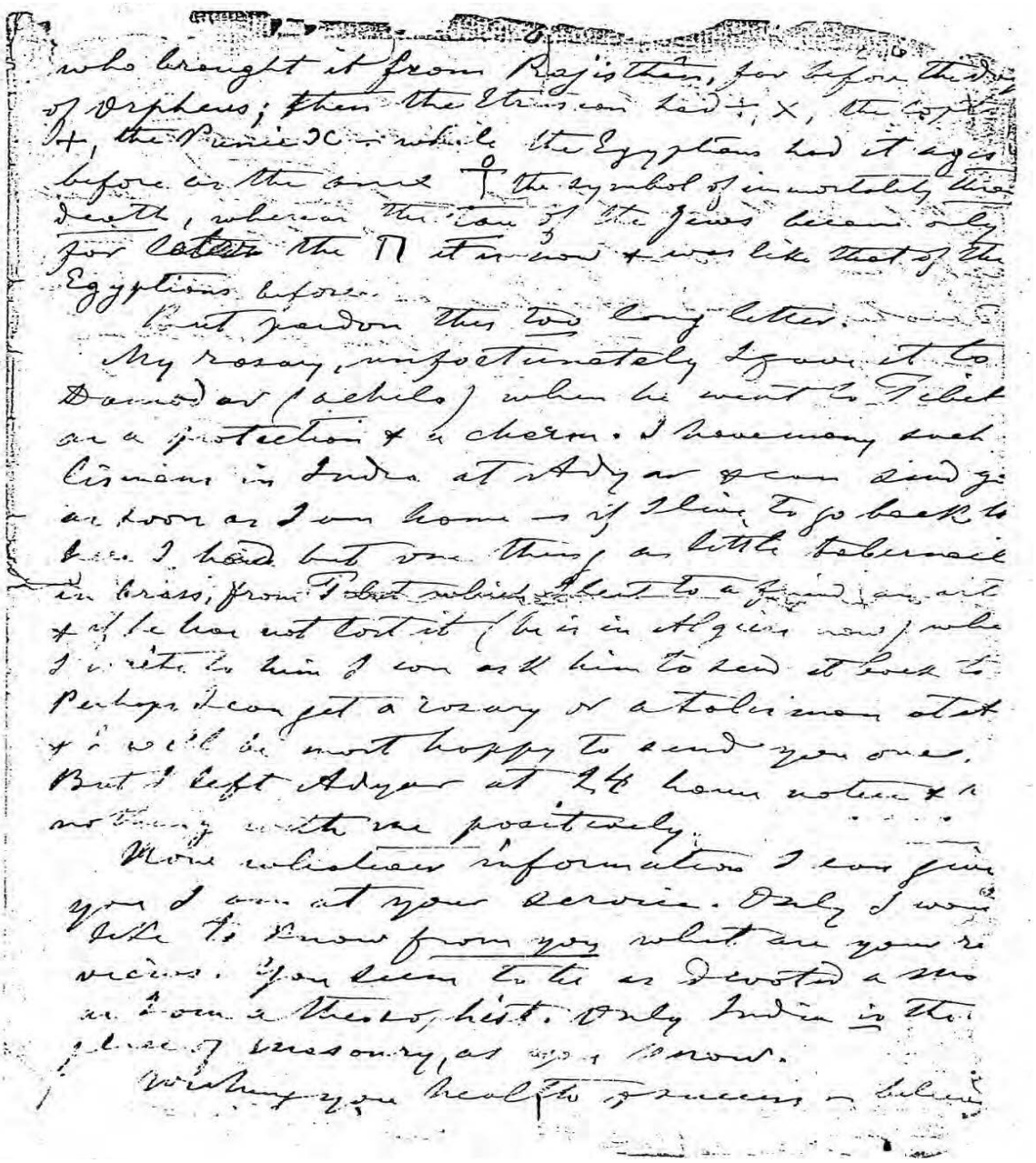
[Begin p. 14]

the carpenter of the gods married to the Sun Surya who because he was too ardent with his wife—while she was asleep & burnt (sleeping Spiritual Consciousness) with his rays, was punished by his father-in-law. Visvakarma, taking hold of the Sun stretched him on his cruciform lathe and cut off his seven rays. Now the meaning of this can only be known by knowing the ceremony of the final initiation at the end of this probationary period. The candidate (our Hiram Abiff[129]) is stretched on

a lathe having the Swastica form—thus 

(when his long hair is cut, he himself plunged into a dead like trance & left for three nights & three days in the temple subterranean crypt, when his astral body is supposed to visit Patala[130] (infernal regions) and saves souls by preaching. After which he is carried back to the temple made to pass though the interior of a cow (Nature) made of metal and he becomes dwija, twice born and born to a new spiritual life. You will read this in detail in my Secret Doctrine.[131] But dear me don't you see in this the origin of the Crucifixion & of Tau, also as the instrument of torture? It is not for me to tell you who are a scholar, how from the Swastica[132] developed the mystic Tau—for, from the primitive dual and triple hook  first evolved the Pelasgian Tau  [15]

[End p. 14]



who brought it from Rajistan, for before the d
of Orpheus; then the Etruscan had +, X, the cr
+, the Punic ✠ while the Egyptians had it ag
before as the cross ☥ the symbol of immortality the
death, whereas the ☥ of the Jews became only
for Cabala the Π it is now + was like that of the
Egyptians before.

But pardon this too long letter.

My rosary, unfortunately I gave it to
Damodar (Chela) when he went to Tibet
as a protection + a charm. I have many such
Cingalese in India at Adyar whom send y
as soon as I am home — if I like to go back to
them. I had but one thing, a little tabernacle
in brass, from Tibet which I sent to a friend in art
+ if he has not lost it (he is in Algiers now) whe
I write to him I can ask him to send it back to
Perhaps I can get a rosary + a talisman that
+ I will be most happy to send you one.
But I left Adyar at 24 hours notice + I
not [illegible] with me positively.

More valuable information I can give
you I am at your service. Only I would
like to know from you what are your re
sources. You seem to be as devoted a Ma
as I am a Theosophist. Only India is the
place of treasonry, as you know.

Wishing you health + success + [illegible]

Transcribed by Ananda Wickremeratne; Transcript typed and corrected by Anita Atkins; Edited and annotated by James A. Santucci

[Begin p. 15]

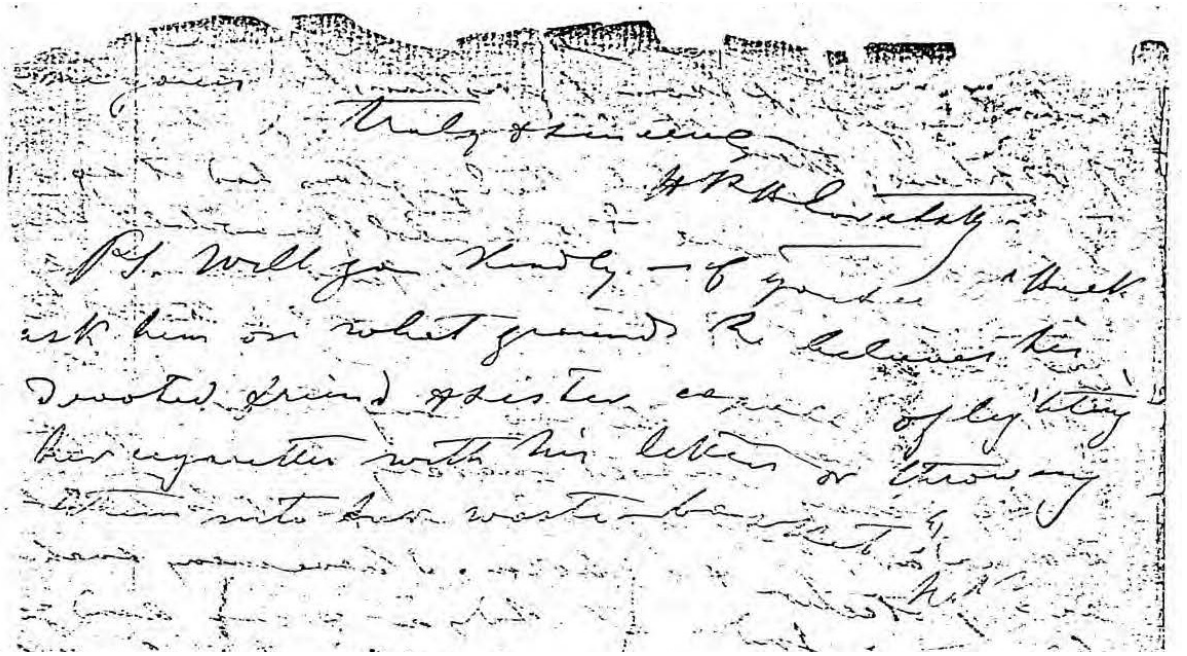
who brought it from Rajisthân [sic], far before the days of Orpheus; then the Etruscans had ÷, ×, the Copts , the Punic  —while the Egyptians had it ages before as the Ank ☥ [?][133] the symbol of immortality through death. Whereas the tau of the Jews became only far later the [⊓] it is now & was like that of the Egyptians before.

But pardon this too long letter. My rosary unfortunately I gave it to Damodar (a chela) when he went to Tibet as a protection & a charm. I have many such talismans in India at Adyar & can send you as soon as I am home—if I live to go back to there. I had but one thing a little tabernacle in brass from Tibet which I lent to a friend as art & if he has not lost it (he is in Algiers now) when I write to him I can ask him to send it back to me. Perhaps I can get a rosary or a talisman at Adyar and will be most happy to send you one. But I left Adyar at 24 hours notice & have nothing with me positively.

Now whatever information I can give you I am at your service. Only I would like to know <u>from you</u> what are your reasonable views. You seem to be as devoted mason as I am a Theosophist. Only India <u>is</u> the lost[134] place of masonry, as you know.

Wishing you health and success — believe [16]

[End p. 15]



Transcribed by Ananda Wickremeratne; Transcript typed and corrected by Anita Atkins; Edited and annotated by James A. Santucci

[Begin p. 16]

me your [. . .][135]

Truly & sincerely
H P Blavatsky

PS. Will you kindly — if you see Dr. Buck ask him on what grounds he believes his devoted friend & sister capable of lighting her cigarettes with his letters or throwing them into her waste basket!

[End p. 16]

Endnotes

[1] Page one of the letter is identified at the top of the original as page 2, the first page bearing notes by the person in possession of the original, very likely the late John Cooper of Australia according to Daniel Caldwell, the founder of the Blavatsky Archives (*https://www.blavatskyarchives.com*), in an email dated January 1, 2025. The note on this page reads: "This letter received in the same package as the Harvard Andover letters to Judge. Dara Eklund also received them and also out of order." The Cooper note is located on page 347.

Mr. Caldwell surmises that Dr. Cooper received this (second) copy from Anita Atkins and another (presumably copy one) from the Harvard Divinity School Library. The two copies were then compared, with the Harvard copy missing page 3 and page 4 misnumbered as page 14.

[2] The spelling seems to be Gibhard in the original. Arthur Gebhard (1855–1944) was the son of Gustav and Mary Gebhard, both of whom were important contributors to the Theosophical Movement. For information on the family, see Sylvia Cranston, *The Extraordinary Life and Influence of Helena Blavatsky, Founder of the Modern Theosophical Movements* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons [A Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam Book], 1993), 262.

Blavatsky's opinion of Gebhard did not change, since we find a similarly low assessment of Arthur in her letter to W.Q. Judge, dated November 3, 1886, stating that "Arthur. . . acts as no worst enemy could with regard to Olcott." Later, in the letter, she contends that Arthur has underestimated her:

> Please assure Arthur that he may be very wise in the eyes of his generation, but that nevertheless he is damned mistaken when he writes to his mother that the "O.L." [i.e., the "Old Lady": H. P. Blavatsky] was fooled by Coues. The O.L. was not.

And perhaps most telling: "I rather lose the whole American lot to the last man Arthur included than <u>you</u> [Judge]."

Both quotes appear in "The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to W. Q. Judge: Part II: Letter Dated 3 November, 1886," transcribed with notes by Michael Gomes. *Theosophical History* V, no. 3 (1994): 86–88. Arthur Gebhard and Elliott Coues are discussed in Gomes' introduction to the November letter on page 86; the first quote included above is on page 87; the second on page 88.

See also James Santucci, "Professor Elliot Coues," *Theosophical History* XIX, no. 1 (January 2017): 42–44.

[3] Information on Skinner's manuscript appears in *Theosophical History* XVIII, no. 1-2 (January-April 2016) in the following locations: "Letter from H. P. Blavatsky to James Ralston Skinner: February 17, 1887," transcribed by Jeffrey Lavoie and edited, amended, and annotated by Jerry Hejka-Ekins and James A. Santucci: 24 and passim, 56 (notes 3–5), 72 (note 94) and James A. Santucci, "Helena Petrovna Blavatsky: Activities from 1878–1887," *Theosophical History* XVIII, no. 1-2 (January-April 2016): 122, 123, and 134 (notes 103–106). A description of the manuscript appears in C. Jinarājadāsa's "A Unique Manuscript," *The Theosophist* LIV, no. 11 (August 1923): 564–68. Ten years earlier, Jirah Dewey Buck observed that Skinner prepared "a very carefully written abstract. . . in fourteen-pages of MSS" before sending it to Madame Blavatsky. See Jirah Dewey Buck, *Modern World Movements*, first edition (Chicago: Indo-American Book Company, 1913), 40.

[4] A view repeated in H. P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine* [SD], Two volumes in one (Los Angeles, CA: The Theosophy Company, 1974), vol. I:504: "The writer is no astronomer, no mathematician, no scientist. . .."

[5] Jirah Dewey Buck (1838–1916) and J. Ralston

Skinner (1830–1893) were close acquaintances as fellow residents of Cincinnati and as fellow Masons affiliated with the Blue Lodge. It is obvious that Buck had the highest respect for Skinner as a kabbalist, resulting in his encouragement to communicate with Madame Blavatsky. This mutual respect is reflected in statements from Buck and Skinner's statements recorded in his *Modern World Movements* (pp. 39–41 and 96) and in Blavatsky's letter of February 17, 1887: "Masters will be Dhyan Chohans someday in Eternity & so will you be & I & dear Dr Buck" (Blavatsky, "Letter from H. P. Blavatsky to James Ralston Skinner: February 17, 1887": 54).

Information on Buck appears in *Letters to the Sage: Selected Correspondence of Thomas Moore Johnson, Volume One: The Esotericists*, edited by Patrick D. Bowen and K. Paul Johnson (Forest Grove, Oregon: The Typhon Press, 2016), 106–122; Jerry Hejka-Ekins, "Introduction to the Blavatsky-Skinner Letter": J. Ralston Skinner (1830–1893)," *Theosophical History* XVIII, no. 1-2 (January-April 2016): 98–101; and my "Editor's Comments" in the same issue, pages 1–5, and in notes 3 and 5 to the Blavatsky-Skinner letter of February 17, 1887 on pages 56–57.

Buck was a member of The Theosophical Society from 1878. See *https://tsmembers.org/ts-general-register-1875-1942/book-1-5/book-1/book-1-a-1875-1885/* His name appears on a paper at the beginning of the Membership book under the caption "1878."

As a close colleague and friend of William Q. Judge, he remained loyal to Judge's successor (Ernest T. Hargrove) after the separation of the American Section from the Society in 1895. Buck, a resident of Cincinnati from 1870, became prominent in the medical (homeopathic) community, serving first "as registrar and professor of physiology and later as dean and professor of theory and practice of medicine" at Pulte Medical College" ("Deaths in Ohio," The *Ohio State Medical Journal* [Jan. 1917]: 36–37).

[6] In the February 17, 1887 letter, she states on page 50: "(Please excuse me if I put it stupidly for I say again I am a jackass in mathematics & unable to put my thoughts in figures & symbols on your plane.)" She also suggests in the same letter that he be acknowledged in her forthcoming *The Secret Doctrine* as "a great mathematician" or as "a Kabalist" as a means of maintaining his anonymity. This in fact is reflected in SD I:6 (note): "some American Kabalists"; "90 (note): "an American Kabalist"; 115 (note): "a Kabalist"; II:539: "the other Kabalist, giving the numerical meaning." Skinner is identified as a "mathematician" in Vol. I:310: "Recent discoveries made by great mathematicians and Kabalists," and 315: "some eminent mathematicians."

[7] George Henry Felt (1831–1906) was the inspiration for Henry Steel Olcott's (1832–1907) proposal to establish The Theosophical Society, based upon his lecture on the "The Lost Canon of Proportion of the Egyptians," given on September 7, 1875 in Madame Blavatsky's apartment in New York City. It would seem from the above reference to her instruction in mathematics from Felt that he played an even more important role in *Theosophical history* than assumed.

For information on Felt, see James A. Santucci, "George Henry Felt: The Life Unknown," *Theosophical History*, VI, no. 7 (July 1997): 243–61.

[8] The transcriber, Dr. Ananda Wickremeratne [hereafter W.] includes "too" in the transcription. It does not appear in the xerox copy in my possession since parts of the edges of the text are cut off in the copy process.

[9] W. transcribes the passage as: "Yet [strangely?] enough I understand. . ."

[10] The full title of James R. Skinner's book is *Key to the Hebrew-Egyptian Mystery in the Source*

of Measures Originating the British Inch and the Ancient Cubit by Which Was Built the Great Pyramid of Egypt and the Temple of Solomon; and through the Possession and Use of Which, Man, Assuming to Realize the Creative Law of the Deity, Set It Forth in a Mystery, Among the Hebrews Called Kabbala.

The book was originally published in Cincinnati by Robert Clarke and Company in 1875. A second edition was published in 1894, which included a 63-page supplement previously published in 1876. See Boris de Zirkoff's Index to *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. III (General Index and Bibliography) [= BCW: SD III:445].

[11] The right margin is missing so I am following the W. transcription.

[12] The right margin is cut, so "have" is taken from W.'s reading.

[13] Identified as page 3 by the transcriber at the top of the page.

[14] Rev. William Alexander Ayton (1816–1908) was a clergyman and Vicar of Chacombe, Northamptonshire, an early member of The Theosophical Society (listed as number 176, June 1, 1879 in the T. S. Membership book at *https://tsmembers.org/ts-general-register-1875-1942/book-1-5/book-1/book-1-a-1875-1885/* and one of the oldest initiates of the original Golden Dawn, having joined in July, 1888. As a "profound occultist" according to Kenneth Mackenzie, the author of the *Royal Masonic Cyclopædia*, Rev. Ayton was considered for membership in Mackenzie's highly-exclusive but probably still-born occult Order of Eight in 1883. Evidence of Blavatsky's respect for Rev. Ayton, an early member of The Theosophical Society (1878), is indicated by his having become a member of the Esoteric Section shortly after its formation in 1888. Ellic Howe, *The Magicians of the Golden Dawn* (York Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1978 [originally published in 1972 by Routledge and Kegan Paul , Ltd., London]), 31, 50, 56.

Ayton's membership in the T. S. is listed in the T. S. Membership. Mention is also made in R.A. Gilbert's *The Golden Dawn Scrapbook* (York Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser & Sons: 1997), 153. For an overview of Rev. Ayton's biography, see Gilbert, *The Golden Dawn Scrapbook*, 149–58.

Note that Mme. Blavatsky reversed the initials in Ayton's name to "A. W." In Mrs. Atkins typed transcription of W.'s transcription, "Aybon" appears rather than "Ayton." In her subsequent letter to Skinner (dated February 17, 1887), she describes "Reverend Doctor A. Ayton of Banbury, Vicarage Orton" as "an admirer, through me, one who worships you [Skinner]" and one who is "a great Kabalist" ("Letter from H. P. Blavatsky to James Ralston Skinner: February 17, 1887": 54 and note 107).

[15] It appears that the "s" is missing in Mathers, a reference to Samuel Liddell MacGregor Mathers (1854–1918), the co-founder (with Dr. William Wynn Westcott) of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn in 1888. Before that, he was associated with the S.R.I.A. (Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia) by 1885. See Joscelyn Godwin, *The Theosophical Enlightenment* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), 218–225 and Michael Gomes, *The Dawning of the Theosophical Movement* (Wheaton, Ill.: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1987), 157–58.

Further information on Mathers' association with the Golden Dawn appears in Gilbert, *The Golden Dawn Scrapbook*, 21–56. Gilbert observes that after Mathers' was deposed from the Golden Dawn, the Order was no longer of any consequence: "Mathers may well have been quite mad, but he was undoubtedly a magical genius, and without him no magical light shone within the Order. From the day of his expulsion the old Golden Dawn was dead" (56).

[16] W. transcribes this passage as: "I am incapable of producing on the same lines as yourself in my new work *The Secret Doctrine* for as I say I am no

mathemetician [*sic*] and rather *sees* or *senses* the spirit of analogy through the symbolisms than by checking the figures on both sides."

[17] The meaning changes significantly by reading either "then" or "than." W. chooses "than," but the original looks more like "then."

[18] W. transcribes the text as: "The mode of working them out was different, still they tell us (in Sanskrit or Devanagiri, I mean) does not run parallel with or correspond to numerals as in the Hebrew." This rendering may be more accurate since it is likely that W. possessed a more readable copy than the present one.

[19] The left margin is missing.

[20] W. reads the text as follows: "down to the asterisms (_____ery [corner of letter torn] body to the starry depts, had a human name and appears in _____nection [torn] with his own legend in the Puranas – it is only by this____ [torn] that you can come to understand the true meaning."

[21] Letters are missing due to a missing portion of the left margin. W.'s transcription reads as follows: "down to the asterisms (___ery [corner of letter torn] body in the starry depths, had a human name and appears in ____nection [torn] with his own legend in the Puranas – it is only by this ____ [torn] that you can come to understand the true meaning." The closing parenthesis that should follow "(___ery. . ." is missing.

[22] The content after "Bentley" down to "…had come to India" is missing in the original letter. The name refers to John Bentley (1756?–1823?), the author of "Historical View of the Hindu Astronomy." Blavatsky is perhaps responding to Skinner's remarks in his *Source of Measures*, wherein Bentley is mentioned on pages vii, 85, 86, 88, 89, 110, 207. In vol. II, page 431, she writes that "Europeans are unacquainted with the real Zodiacs of India, nor do they understand those they happen to know (witness Bentley). . ." Bentley is later mentioned in SD I:369 (note), 479, 490, 494, and 667; II, 63, 76 (and note), 253, 431, 499 (and note), 500 (note), and 550. The full title of Bentley's work is *A Historical View of the Hindu Astronomy from the Earliest Dawn of That Science in India to the Present Time. In Two Parts. Part I: The Ancient Astronomy. Part II: The Modern Astronomy* (London: Smith, Elder, and Co. 65, Cornhill, 1825). It has been republished by Cambridge University Press in 2013.

A brief biography of Bentley appears in *https://whowaswho-indology.info/666/bentley-john/* The data base was prepared by Professor Doctor Klaus Karttunen, the main page located at the Website *https://whowaswho-indology.info/*

[23] The original page is missing. The note attached to the beginning of the letter states that page 3 is missing.

[24] Francis Wilford (1761–1822) was a British Colonial Officer who wrote a number of articles for *Asiatic Researches*, among them "On the Ancient Geography of India" vol. 14 (1822): 373–470 and before that "On the Chronology of the Hindus," vol. 5, 4th edition (1807): 241–96. His ongoing essay, "An Essay on the SACRED ISLES in the West, with Other Essays Connected with That Work," appears in a number of issues, including vol. 8 (1808): 245–375, vol. 9 (1809): 32–243, vol. 10 (1811): 27–157, and vol. 11 (1812): 11–152. For a complete listing, see the *Index to the First Eighteen Volumes of the Asiatic Researches or Transactions of the Society* (Calcutta: Bengal Military Organ Press, 1835). See also

https://whowaswho-indology.info/5482/wilford-francis/

[25] Wilford writes this about the "White Island" in his 1808 essay (*Asiatic Researches* 8): 246:

> The Sacred Isles in the West, of which *Swetadwipa*, or the White Island, is the principal, and the most famous, are, in fact, the holy land of the *Hindus*. There the fundamental and mysterious transactions of the history of their religion, in its rise and

progress, took place. The White Island, this holy land in the West, is so intimately connected with their religion and mythology, that they cannot be separated: and, of course, divines in *India* are necessarily acquainted with it, as distant *Muselmans* with *Arabia*.

Blavatsky later repeats Wilford's opinion in SD II:147:

. . ."of that island (Plato speaking only of its last island) beyond the Pillars of Hercules, in the Atlantic Ocean, from which there was an easy transition to other islands in the neighbourhood of another *large Continent*" (America). It is this "Atlantic" land which was connected with the "*White Island*," and this White Island was Ruta; but it was not the Atala and the "*White Devil*" of Colonel Wilford (see "*Asiatic Researches*," Vol. VIII: 280), as already shown.

Wilford then suggests that by consensus the "White Island" is indeed England (*Asiatic Researches* 8): 246:

This I conceive to be a most favourable circumstance; as, in the present case, the learned have little more to do than to ascertain whether the White Island be *England*, and the Sacred Isles of the *Hindus*, the *British Isles*. After having maturely considered the subject, *I think they are*.

"White Island" is a translation of *śvetadvīpa*, which is identified as a mythical island in the Böhtlingk and Roth *Grosses Petersburger Wörterbuch* located online at:

https://www.sanskrit-lexicon.unikoeln.de/scans/PWGScan/2020/web/webtc2/index.php

Monier-Williams identifies the Island as "England," referencing "W.", i.e., H. H. Wilson, whose *Dictionary in Sanskrit and English*, second edition (Calcutta: The Education Press, 1832) states: "The white island, or a minor division of the universe so called: also termed Candra Dvīpa, and supposed by WILFORD to be Britain." Monier-Williams' 1899 dictionary is located online at:

https://www.sanskrit-lexicon.unikoeln.de/scans/MWScan/2020/web/webtc/indexcaller.php

Wilson's 1832 dictionary is located at:

https://www.sanskrit-lexicon.uni-koeln.de/scans/WILScan/2020/web/webtc/indexcaller.php/

In Hindu mythology, the island is situated 32,000 miles above Mount Meru and inhabited by those without sense organs and do not take food. Vettam Mani, *Purāṇic Encyclopædia* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1971 [4th edition] and 1975 [English edition]), 780.

In SD II:327, Blavatsky identifies the *śvetadvīpa* as consisting of "Greenland, Eastern and Western Siberia, and etc. and etc." See also II: 408 and note.

The mention of Ruta is especially interesting. This "last large island-continent" was the remnant of Atlantis, having submerged about 850,000 years ago. Its inhabitants belonged to the Fourth Race and according to Jacolliot spoke a language from which Sanskrit emerged. See SD II:650–51 and H. P. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, two volumes in one (Los Angeles: The Theosophy Company, 1982): I:594 (note). Her source for this latter observation appears in Louis Jacolliot's *Histoire des Vierges* (Paris: Librairie Internationale, A Lacroix & C[ie], Éditeurs, 1879), 14.

26 Atala as an epithet for Atlantis appears as an equivalent to "Atlantis" or "Atalantis." For a discussion of "Atlantis/Atalantis" and its related names—White Island, Atala, White Devil—see S. A. Mackay, *Mythological Astronomy* (London: Hunt and Clarke, 1822), 179–88. An earlier reference appears in Francis Wilford, "On Egypt and Other Countries Adjacent to the Cálí River, or Nile of Ethiopia," *Asiatic Researches* III (1794): 295–462. On page 300, he specifically identifies Atala with Atlantis. Atala itself is mentioned in the Purāṇas, as noted by Wilford in "An Essay on the SACRED ISLES in the West, with Other Essays Connected with That Work," *Asiatic Researches* VIII: 280 and 302; and "An Essay on the SACRED ISLES in the West, with Other

Essays Connected with That Work," *Asiatic Researches* IX (1809): 78.

In a later account ("An Essay on the Sacred Isles in the West, with Other Essays Connected with That Work," *Asiatic Researches* XI (1812): 11–152), Wilford gives a more extensive description of the White Islands and other regions, some of which is based upon Purāṇic sources. See especially, pages 21 (the White Island also called *ratna-maya* 'consisting or composed of jewels' and *ratna-dvīpa* 'jewel island' or 'island of jewels'), and 54 ("the *dvīpa* of *Sáca* or *Sácam*, which is the same as *Seaxum* or *Saxum*," i.e., Britain). Other conjectures are offered based upon passages in the Purāṇas (p. 56, 57, 65, 69, 70, 86, 87, *passim*).

[27] Blavatsky's high regard for T. Subba Row (1856–1890) was not misplaced. Born into the Niyogi caste of Smārta Brāhmaṇas associated with Advaita Vedānta philosophy, Subba Row contributed numerous studies of the "esoteric science" during his association with The Theosophical Society, including his lectures on the *Bhagavad Gītā*. The reference here regards his objections to Blavatsky's disclosure of esoteric teachings and his conclusion that her Secret Doctrine manuscript was full of mistakes. For an overview of his life and writings, see *T. Subba Row: Collected Writings*, two volumes. Compiled and annotated by Henk J. Spierenburg (San Diego, CA: Point Loma Publications, Inc., 2001).

[28] In Sanskrit, *āryāvarta*, the "(sacred) land of the Āryas," refers to the land between the Himālayas and Vindhyas (*Mahābharata*, *Śānti Parva* 325, *śloka* 15 as quoted in Mani, *Purāṇic Encyclopædia*, 92). The *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* (2.21) further defines the area as the land between the mountain ranges extending from the eastern to western sea (*'ā samudrāt tu vai pūrvād samudrāt tu paścimat tayor eva 'ntaraṃ giryor āryavartam vidur budhāḥ*). See Patrick Olivelle, *Manu's Code of Law: A Critical Edition and Translation of the Mānava Dharmaśāstra* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005), 95 and 406-407.

An early Theosophical discussion occurs in *The Theosophist* emphasizes the positive qualities of the individual who is "worthy, "honorable," or "highly esteemed," which is the translation of *ārya*, in opposition to "Hindu" ("Hindū," "Hindoo"), which represents a person who is "a liar, a slave, a black, an infidel, in short, a man possessed of every evil to be found in the world" (B. P. Sankdhar, "Hindu or Arya?" *The Theosophist* I, no. 7 [April 1880]: 170).

In grammatical literature, Patañjali, the commentator to Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, locates *Āryāvarta*:

> to the east of [where the river Sarasvatī] disappears [in modern Rajasthan], to the west of the Kālaka forest [near modern Allahabad], to the south of the Himālayas, and to the north of the Vindhyas.

This is M. Deshpande's translation of the passage located in Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya* 6.3.109 as quoted in Johann Bronkhorst's "Patañjali's Āryāvarta = Śuṅga Realm," *Academia Letters*, Article 291 *https://doi.org/10.20935/AL291* (2021)

[29] Inserted by W.

[30] The relevant passage on page 146 states:

> But while this result is so, agreeably to Parker, the standard length of the king's chamber multiplied by 8 gives this very value, or—
>
> (4.) 34.35333+ X 8 = 274.8266+ feet.

The importance of James A. Parker's *The Quadrature of the Circle* (NY: S.W. Benedict, 1851) on the "squaring" of the circle is explained in his Appendix (146):

> In geometry especially, the most beautiful and useful of all, there is something yet lacking , and that something lies at the foundation of all truth,—it is the QUADRATURE OF THE CIRCLE, or a knowledge of the exact relations between straight lines and curved lines, which has never yet entered into the structure of the science.

He adds the following (p. 14):

> All geometrical truth whatsoever, in nature, rests on two simple things—the properties of straight lines, and the properties of curved lines,—difference of angle and difference of curve are but modifications of the same principles. Of the properties of straight lines, geometers have long supposed themselves to be perfect masters, but of the properties of curved lines, and their relative value to straight lines, geometers have yet known nothing whatever, except by approximation. To find the quadrature of the circle, is simply to determine the relative value of straight lines and curved lines, and their relative value to straight lines. . . .

Skinner then explains Parker's practical contribution in his *Source of Measures* (p. 22–23):

> It is not, however, because of the intrinsic value of his work [i.e., explaining the quadrature] that it is so largely set forth; nor is it from any immediate motive to advocate or sustain it. It is (1) because his can be shown to be that identical measure which was used anciently, as the perfect measure, by the Egyptians, in the construction of the great pyramid, which was built to *monument it and its uses*; (2) because, from it, the *sacred cubit value was derived*, which was the cubit value used in construction of the Temple of Solomon, the Ark of Noah, and the Ark of the Covenant—the value of all which consisted in the value of the measures used; (3) because it affords that *kabbalistic value*, which, before all others, conveys in the Bible the idea of God, the meaning of the term, and the value of His works in the Cosmos; (4) because the geometrical symbols out of which it is seen to spring, with their primary numbers, are seen to have a kind of *elemental relation to each other*, and were made use of in the mysteries to convey the *esoteric teachings*; and, finally, (5) because it appears bound up in, and as making a fundamental part of, the British system of *long and land and time* measures.

On the "*kabbala*" or "*kaballah*" see George Henry Felt's definition in note 34. Skinner's definition is more attuned to subject at hand, that is, of the circle, π, and quadrature:

> Kabbala was a species of symbolic writing among the initiated, setting forth the secret teachings of the Bible; and the key of Kabbala is thought to be the geometrical relation of the area of the circle inscribed in the square, or of the cube to the sphere, giving rise to the relation of diameter to circumference of a circle, with the numerical value of this relation expressed in integrals.

A longer quote appears in SD II:544. Although this quote appears in Skinner, *Source of Measures*, p. 12 (1875 edition), I could not verify whether this was quoted from Parker as implied by Skinner and accepted as such by Blavatsky. The "SD References" quotes from Skinner but acknowledges that it derives from Parker (*https://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/sdrefs/sdr_vol-2.htm/*) If it originates from Parker, it is not from his publication of the same title.

[31] Although identified as page 14, this is actually page 4 of the original letter, as noted in Cooper's note.

[32] Herbert Spencer (1820–1903) was the well-known author of *Principles of Biology and The Synthetic Philosophy*. Among his most well-known observations was the suggestion that evolution could also apply to the sociological realm. Information appears in Wikipedia.

Like Spencer, George Henry Lewes (1817–1878) was a polymath who published in the fields of science and philosophy. Among his works were *Comte's Philosophy of the Sciences*, *Life and Works of Goethe*, and *The Problems of Life and Mind*. Information appears in Wikipedia.

[33] Added to the letter, presumably by Blavatsky.

[34] The "Canon of Proportions of the Greeks" harkens back to George Henry Felt's lecture, the "The Lost Canon of Proportion of the Egyptians," delivered on September 7, 1875 in the apartment of Henry S. Olcott and Madame Blavatsky. Following the lecture, Henry S. Olcott suggested the foundation of a society dedicated to the topics discussed in the lecture, thus resulting in the establishment of the Theosophical Society. Felt explained the topic in his Prospectus, "The Kaballah of the Egyptians,

and the Canon of Proportions of the Greeks":

> According to tradition, this Kaballah of the Egyptians was a geometrically and mystically arranged figure, intimately connected with all the works of nature, both animate and inanimate, which had been revealed to man in the very earliest ages; but what the Kaballah originally consisted of, or was composed, or anything relating to it, seemed to have been lost. . . .
>
> The Grecian Canon was a system of proportion brought from Egypt by Grecian sculptors and architects about B. C. 350, and in which they fashioned their statues of the human figure and their architectural works.

The passage also appeared in *The New York Dispatch* (May 26, 1872: 3), which may be accessed at the "Chronicling of America" Website:

https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/

[35] The reference to "old India" highlights its frequent use in *Isis Unveiled*. See, for example, I:xi, 515, 567, 583, 584, and 619 heading; II:30, 285, 286, 438, and 565. In I:584, she makes direct reference to Jacolliot's assessment of "old India":

> He shows the sources whence proceeded the revelations of all the ancient creeds, including the inspired Books of Moses, and points at India directly as the cradle of humanity, the parent of all other nations, and the hot-bed of all the lost arts and sciences of antiquity, for which old India, herself, was lost already in the Cimmerian darkness of the archaic ages. "To study India," he says, "is to trace humanity to its sources."

For information on Jacolliot, see Daniel Caracostea, "Louis-François Jacolliot (1837–1890): A Biographical Essay." *Theosophical History* IX, no. 1 (January 2003): 12–39.

[36] The denial that Pythagoras had a knowledge of geometry and that he was the originator of the theorem is a question that is discussed in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* ("Pythagoras"), online at:

https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/pythagoras/

(Carl Huffman, "Pythagoras", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2024 Edition), Edward N. Zalta & Uri Nodelman (eds.). In Section 5, Huffman writes:

> It should be clear from the discussion above that, while the early evidence shows that Pythagoras was indeed one of the most famous early Greek thinkers, there is no indication in that evidence that his fame was primarily based on mathematics or cosmology. Neither Plato nor Aristotle treats Pythagoras as having contributed to the development of Presocratic cosmology, although Aristotle in particular discusses the topic in some detail in the first book of the *Metaphysics* and elsewhere. Aristotle evidently knows of no cosmology of Pythagoras that antedates the cosmological system of the "so-called Pythagoreans," which he dates to the middle of the fifth century, and which is found in the fragments of Philolaus. There is also no mention of Pythagoras' work in geometry or of the Pythagorean theorem in the early evidence.

[37] Blavatsky was correct in questioning the denial of the "Hindu" contribution to geometry and the Theorem. G. R. Kaye suggests in his *Indian Mathematics* (Calcutta & Simla: Thacker, Spink, & Co., 1915) that the Pythagorean Theorem was employed in the *Śulva* (*Śulba*) *Sūtras* for the practical purpose of setting up the sacrificial altar in the Vedic ritual (pp. 3–7): the term *śulva* (*śulba*) referring to a "measuring cord," thus implying the means of measuring out the altar. Sūtra literature or aphorisms that were strung together (i.e., *sūtra*) to form a set of instructions or teaching principles comprised a portion of Vedic and post-Vedic literature, more specifically in this case to adjunct texts of the Veda (i.e., *Vedāṅga*-s) that served to give instructions on the proper performance of the rituals. Regarding the *Śulva-sūtras*, whose concern related to the construction of sacrificial altars, emphasis was placed on the geometrical and mathematical calculations involved in their construction, so it is understandable that an application of the

Theorem would be employed. Indeed, the term *śulva* (*śulba*) refers to a "measuring cord," thus implying the means of measuring out the altar. Among the *Śulva-sūtras*, emphasis has been placed on one that contained the Pythagorean theorem: the *Baudhāyana Śulva-sūtra*, which was first translated by Georg Thibaut in *The Pandit: A Monthly Journal, of the Banaras College, devoted to Sanskrit Literature* (Volumes 9–11). The date of the composition, however, is unclear, with scholars giving tentative dates between 200 and 800 B.C.E. Whatever the date, A. Seidenberg has noted the application of the Theorem may have occurred in earlier Vedic works, most notably the *Taittirīya Saṃhitā*:

> "the TS [*Taittirīya Saṃhitā*] knows at least one application of the Theorem of Pythagoras, the main theorem needed for the transformations of the kāmya altars. Thus the claim that the TS knows the philosophy has a great deal of plausibility to start with.

See A. Seidenberg, "Geometry of the Vedic Rituals," *Agni: The Vedic Ritual of the Fire Altar*. Vol. II. Edited by Frits Staal (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1983), 113.

From a Theosophical perspective, Blavatsky may have been acquainted with Thibaut's translation of the *Baudhāyana Śulva-sūtra* as also his article, "On the Sulva-Sutras," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* 44, no. 1 (1875): 227-75. More consequentially, however, was her and Olcott's meeting with Thibaut shortly after their arrival in India in 1879. Olcott identified Professor Thibaut as "Principal of Benares College, and an old pupil and protégé of Max Müller. Furthermore, Thibaut was both Professor of Sanskrit and Principal from 1879 to 1888. See Henry Steel Olcott, *Old Diary Leaves*. Volume 2 (Adyar: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1974), 129–133.

[38] This is also stated in the SD, wherein Blavatsky (II.225) remarked that some Western scholars were prejudiced against claims that Hindus predated the Greeks in their arts and sciences.

[39] Friedrich Albrecht Weber (1825–1901) was a prolific scholar of the Veda and Professor at Berlin University. For further information, see Karttunen at

https://whowaswho-indology.info/5402/weber-albrecht-friedrich/

Weber is mentioned in *The Secret Doctrine*, wherein Blavatsky noted that the Professor refused "to assign any great antiquity to the Indian Zodiac," further observing "that the Hindus never knew of a Zodiac at all till 'they had borrowed one from the Greeks'." See SD II:50. and also I:647.

[40] The reference to "Atwek" as the limit of Alexander's incursion in what is identified as India is clarified in SD II:418 (Note *):

> Alexander, who was better acquainted with Attock than with India (where he never went) could not have failed to hear the Indus near its very sources called Nil and Nilah.

The identification of "Atwek" with "Attock" is confirmed by references in E. Pococke, *India in Greece; or, Truth in Mythology*, second edition (London and Glasgow: Richard Griffin and Company, 1856). Its location at the time of writing is Northwestern India at 33.54 latitude and 72.13 longitude, which is presently in north Pakistan.

This placement matches the statement in SD II:417:

> Yet it so happens, that the river " Ethiops " is certainly the Indus, and it is also the *Nil* or *Nila*. It is the river born on the *Kailas* (heaven) mountain, the mansion of the gods—22,000 feet above the level of the sea. It was the Ethiops river—and was so called by the Greeks, long before the days of Alexander, because its banks, from Attock down to Sind, were peopled by tribes generally referred to as the Eastern Ethiopians.

For further references, see the "SD References" at:

https://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/sdrefs/sdr_vol-2.htm (to II:417–18

[41] During Alexander's time, Attock was located in Gandhāra.

[42] Thomas Maurice, *Indian Antiquities or Dissertations*, vol. III (London: W. Richardson, 1794), 13:

> "The pagodas that adorn the surface, and erect their lofty summits in every quarter of Hindostan. . .. The height, for instance, of the pyramidal gateway, leading to the magnificent pagoda gateway of Chillambrum, on the coast of Coromandel, exceeds 120 feet. . ."

For information on Maurice, go to:
https://whowaswho-indology.info/6806/maurice-thomas-2/

[43] This is a reference to the *gopuram* (gateway or entrance) to the Nātarāja Temple located in Cidambara, Tamil Nadu. The temple was built during the later Cola Dynasty (c. 1100–1300 CE).

[44] This page is identified as page 4 by the transcriber and 2 by Blavatsky.

[45] Āryabhaṭa (476–550 CE) was an Indian mathematician of the fifth century whose major work was the *Āryabhaṭīya* (c. 499 CE). Among his contributions were his suggestions "that the earth revolved around the sun and rotated on its axis." He is also credited with the discovery of the zero. See A. L. Basham, *The Wonder That Was India* (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1954), 491. See also pages 491 and also 495 (note) and 496. A recent work on the "zero" is *The Origin and Significance of Zero: An Interdisciplinary Perspective*. Edited by Peter Gobets and Robert Lawrence Kuhn. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2024.

In SD I:117, Blavatsky observes that:

> Hicetas, Heraclides, Ecphantus, Pythagoras, and all his pupils, taught the rotation of the earth; and Aryabhata of India, Aristarchus, Seleucus, and Archimedes calculated its revolution as scientifically as the astronomers do now. . .

This passage follows Alexander Winchell's *World-Life or Comparative Geology* (Chicago: S.C. Griggs and Company, 1883), 619. Noted in SD References at:

https://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/sdrefs/sdr_vol-1.htm (SD I:117).

[46] The mention of π is significant in the discussion. Skinner, and before him John A. Parker, considered the relationship of the circle's diameter to its circumference to be 1 to 3.141594 (its value necessary to establish the quadrature). The extended relationship appears in Skinner's "The Cabbalah–No. IX," *Masonic Review* 67, no. 4 (May 1887): 195–96. Even more importantly, Skinner asserts, in his discussion of "*kabbala*" (see note 30), that this ratio or relationship assumes even higher significance:

> The relation of diameter to circumference being a supreme one connected with the god-names Elohim and Jehovah (which terms are expressions numerically of these relations, respectively—the first being of circumference, the latter of diameter), embraces all other subordinations under it.

Elsewhere in the SD, π is discussed with Skinner and the Kaballah in II:38 (on the "light" and "Alhim" and the "Jehovah measure": also II:39–42 and II:465–6); II:465–66 (again Skinner's observations, Stanza IV in SD I; the "1,3,5, and twice 7" or 13514, "which on a circle may be read 31415" (465). For the quote from Parker in the *Source of Measures* (p. 12), see above in note 28. The full quote, as given in SD II:466.

Other passages include I:230 and 313 (Skinner and Parker's observations), and SD II:560.

[47] John Bentley (1756?–1823), is discussed in note 22.

Blavatsky was referring to Skinner's discussion in Section II of his *Source of Measures*, 77–95. Skinner, reviewing Bentley's discussion of the varying calculations of π "until coming to one very nearly approximating the true relation" (86), quoting the passage from *A Historical View*

of the Hindu Astronomy (sec. 3:156). The relevant passage [*Source of Measures* (1875 edition), 86] is as follows:

> But Āryabhatta [Āryabhaṭa; in the context of this quote, his writing known as the Āryabhaṭīya], in the 17th chapter [i.e., of the Āryabhaṭīya), in speaking of the orbits of the planets, gives us a nearer approach to the truth; for he there states the proportion as 191 to 600, or as 1 : 3.14136 which gives the circumference a small matter less than the proportion of Bhaskara [Bhāskara] in the Lilayati [Lāilāvatī: 1150 C.E.]

Skinner, however, settles on the 31415 based on various calculations and the use of *gematria* throughout his *Source of Measures*. See, for instance, pp. 111, 193, 200, 201, 219, 223, and 276.

The SD I:94 acknowledges the importance of letters possessing occult meaning:

> In the Sanskrit, as also in the Hebrew and all other alphabets, every letter has its occult meaning and its rationale; it is a cause and an effect of a preceding cause and a combination of these very often produces the most magical effect.

[48] The discussion of *Viṣṇu* and his *cakra*, his distinctive weapon the discus, appears in Edward Moor's *The Hindu Pantheon* (London: J. Johnson, 1810), 15–34 (*Viṣṇu*) and 24 (*cakra* or "wheel," "discus"). The *cakra* is part of a discussion of the "Circle," signifying "Boundless Space," "the Incognisable Deity," and "limitless Time in Eternity." Within the context of Blavatsky's commentary on stanza V, *śloka* 2 of the *Book of Dzyan* (SD I:108–116), the *cakra*, "or circle of Vishnu, the mysterious emblem which is, according to the definition of a mystic [i.e., J. R. Skinner], reads as follows, "a curve of such a nature that as to any, the least possible part thereof, if the curve be protracted either way it will proceed and finally re-enter upon itself, and form one and the same curve—or that which we call the circle" [SD I:114]. See notes 97 and 99.

This quote, originally identified in Secret Doctrine References, is slightly altered from the original text appearing in J. Ralston Skinner's *A Criticism on the Legendre Mode of the Rectification of The Curve of the Circle* [Cincinnati: Robert Clarke & Co., 1881], 13:

> *The curve of a circle is of such a nature, that as to any, even the least part thereof, if such part be protracted either way, it will finally re-enter on itself and form the entire circumference of the circle.*

The Circle as the "symbol of the Unknown," of "Boundless Space," and of "limitless Time in Eternity," is posited by Blavatsky to be located in "every nation": thus the Iranian "Mazdean" or Zoroastrian "Zeroana Akerne" ("the Chackra, or circle of Vishnu": SD I:114) is identified as the "Boundless Circle of the Unknown Time" (paraphrased from E. C. Ravenshaw, "On the Winged Bulls, Lions, and Other Symbolical Figures from Nineveh," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* XVI (1856): 115–16. Identified by "SD References"). The original text contains the following words:

> In Persia, they [winged circles and winged eyes] probably signified at first, "Time without bounds,"—Zarua Akerene [Zūrvan Akarana], described in the Zend-Avesta, as the "ever-soaring bird," the creator of Ohrmazd and Ahriman. A winged circle, which has neither beginning nor end, but appears to be soaring ever upward, was a not inappropriate emblem of eternity.

"Zeroana Akerne" (Zervan Ākarna, or *Zrvana Akarna* in H. P. Blavatsky, *Theosophical Glossary* [Los Angeles: The Theosophy Company, 1973 (1892), 386], is identified with the circle or cakra, in a later development of the Zoroastrian religion, Zurvanism (*zurvānīyya*). Zurvān (Avestan *zruuan-*, Pahlavi. *zrlwʾn* "Time") is the Supreme Being who superseded *Ahura Mazdā* (*Ohrmazd*) as the Supreme Being in this movement which extended from the fourth century BCE to the sixth or seventh century CE, assumed supreme position in the cosmos as "parent" of Ohrmazd and his evil twin Ahriman. As Supreme Being, Time is "infinite" or "unlimited" (*akarana*). Thus the Name Zurvān

Akarana, transcribed by Blavatsky, which she describes as "Zeroana Akerne," the "Boundless Circle of the Unknown Time."

The discussion continues in SD II:546, wherein she quotes Gerald Massey's *The Natural Génesis*, vol. I (London: Williams and Norgate, 1883), 421:

> . . . the Chakra, or Disk of Vishnu, is a circle. The names denote the circling, wheeling round, periodicity, the wheel of time. This the god uses as a weapon to hurl at the enemy. . . .

My thanks to Brett Forray for the source.

For a contemporary account of Zoroastrianism and the *Avesta*, see William D. Whitney, *On the Avesta, or the Sacred Scriptures of the Zoroastrian Religion* (from the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* V (1855–1856): 339–83. His description of "Zeroana Akerne" or "Zervan-akerene" appears on pages 380 and 381:

> There was wickedness, impurity, unhappiness, in the world; but this could not be the work of the holy and benevolent Creator Ahura-Mazda; the malevolence of Angra-Mainyus and his infernal legions must have produced it. Later, however, a reasoning and systematizing philosophy inquires: how came there to be such a malevolent being in the fair world of the benevolent Creator? can he have been produced by him? And why, if an inferior and subject power, is he not annihilated, or his power to harm taken away ? and then arises the doctrine that the powers of good and evil are independent and equal, ever warring with one another, neither able wholly to subdue its adversary. This latter phase of belief is known to have appeared very early in the history of the Zoroastrian religion; the philosophers aided its development by setting up an undefined being, *Zervan-akerene*, "time unbounded," from which were made to originate the two hostile principles, and for which they sought to find a place among the original tenets of their religion by a misinterpretation of certain passages in the sacred texts.

[49] This is so stated in SD II:564. The origin of this identification apparently derives from Julius Jolly's translation of the *Viṣṇu Sūtra* [= *Vaiṣṇava Dharmaśāstra* and *Viṣṇu Smṛti*] (*The Institutes of Vishnu*. Translated by Julius Jolly. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1880). In the Introduction (p. xxix), the translator writes:

> Most or all of the Slokas added at the end of Chapters XX (22–53) and XLIII (32–45) cannot be genuine; the former on account of their great extent and partial recurrence in the Bhagavad-gîtâ, Mahâbhârata, and other works of general note, and because they refer to the self-immolation of widows and to Kâla, whom the commentator is probably right in identifying with Vishnu; the latter on account of their rather extravagant character and decidedly Purânic style. . . .

[50] *Viṣṇu Sūtra* XX.21: "For Kala (time) is without either beginning or end" and so is "everlasting" (XX.22). The identification by the commentator Nandapaṇḍita also occurs in the note on p. 79. Nandapaṇḍita identifies Kāla with Viṣṇu in his commentaries to vss. 21 and 27. See notes to these verses.

See also "SD References" at:

https://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/sdrefs/sdr_vol-2.htm

[51] Hence her translation of *kālahaṃsa* as "Swan in the eternity" in SD II:465.

[52] Kāla (feminine *kālī*) also translates as "black." Moor (*The Hindu Pantheon*. 155) observes that *kāla*, "black," "means also, from its root, *Kal*, devouring: whence it is applied to Time, and, in both senses in the feminine, to the goddess in her [i.e., *Kālī*'s] destructive capacity."

Viṣṇu's *vāhana* or vehicle is the Garuḍa "half eagle, half man" (John Dowson, *A Classical Dictionary of Hindu Mythology and Religion, Geography, History, and Literature* [London: Trübner & Co., 1879, 330). I am not sure if Blavatsky refers to "symbol" as something other than a *vāhana*.

[53] The reference to "unknown darkness" refers to Stanza I, *śloka* 5 ("Darkness alone filled the

boundless all. . ."), which reflects Manu I.5: '(There) was this world, dark, mysterious, without characteristics, indefinable, totally insensate' (*āsīd idaṃ tamo-bhūtam aprajñātam alakṣaṇam / apratarkyam avijñeyaṃ prasuptam iva sarvataḥ* //)

[54] Now that *kāla* is translated as both "time"—in this sense eternal or "infinite" time—and "black" or "unknown darkness" ("*kali*" or *kālī*: the feminine form of *kāla*), she then alludes to the anagrammatic connection of *Kālahaṃsa* with Brahma: *kāl-a-haṃ-sa (ahaṃ sa*[*ḥ*]): "I [*aham*] (am) He [*saḥ*], the "I" referring to Brahma (neuter). This is explained in SD I:20. See note 55.

[55] The text is unclear. W. reads this as follows: "aham 'I am'. A _____ (torn) as kalahamsa. . ."

[56] W. transcribes "En Soph" as "ensapt" [". . . representation of both Brahma (neuter or ensapt) and of Brahmā. . ."].

"En Soph" ("Ain Soph") is discussed in the January 24, 1889 meeting that Blavatsky held with her students discussing *The Secret Doctrine* (H. P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine Commentaries: The Unpublished 1889 Instructions*. Transcribed and annotated by Michael Gomes [The Hague: I.S.I.S. Foundation, 2010), 63) as "the Absolute 'No-Thing', as the Ain-Soph, that which is perfectly unknown, endless and incomprehensible." Blavatsky attributes this quote to the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, which indeed regards Viṣṇu as "Brahma, who is Lord (*īśvara*)" (I.i.2), who is immutable (*avikāra*), pure (*śuddha*), eternal (*nitya*), the Supreme (*paramātman*) (I.ii.1), and the supreme Brahma (*paraṃ brahma*) (II. vii.40). See *The Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. Text and English. Translation and notes by H. H. Wilson and enlarged by Nag Sharan Singh (Delhi: Nag Publishers, 1980), pp.1, 2, and 313.

[57] This explanation is verified in the SD I:20 (Proem):

> Brahma (neuter) is called Kalahansa, meaning, . . . the Eternal Swan or goose (see Stanza III., Comment. 8), and so is Brahmâ, the Creator. A great mistake is thus brought under notice; it is Brahma (neuter) who ought to be referred to as Hansa-vahana (He who uses the swan as his Vehicle) and not Brahmâ the Creator, who is the real Kalahansa, while Brahma (neuter) is hamsa, and "A-hamsa," as will be explained in the commentary.

The commentary to Stanza III, *śloka* 8 (SD I:77–81) is the reference alluded to in the quote. There (p. 78) she affirms that:

> Hamsa is equal to a-ham-sa, three words meaning "I am he" (in English), while divided in still another way it will read "So-ham," "he (is) I"—Soham being equal to Sah, "he," and aham, "I," or "I am he." In this alone is contained the universal mystery, the doctrine of the identity of man's essence with god-essence. . .. Hence the glyph of, and the allegory about, Kalahansa (or hamsa), and the name given to Brahma neuter (later on, to the male Brahmâ) of "Hansa-Vahana," he who uses the Hansa as his vehicle." The same word may be read "Kalaham-sa" or "I am I" in the eternity of Time, answering to the Biblical, or rather Zoroastrian "I am that I am."

The reference to Jupiter and his equation to Brahmā appears in SD I:357: "Jupiter assumes the form of a swan and Brahmâ also, because the root of all this is that mystery of mysteries—the MUNDANE EGG." See also SD I:359 on the Mundane Egg, wherein it is asserted that the:

> . . . ever invisible, mysterious Bird that dropped an Egg into Chaos, which Egg becomes the Universe. Hence Brahm was called Kalahansa, "the swan in (Space and) Time." He became the "Swan of Eternity," who lays at the beginning of each Mahamanvantara a "Golden Egg." It typifies the great Circle, or O, itself a symbol for the universe and its spherical bodies.

[58] Who is identified with Puruṣa, the Second Logos, an emanation from the First Logos, the latter having "neither time nor space," the former occurring "when space and time begin—periodical time" (Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine Commentaries*, 160).

In SD I:98 (to Stanza IV), the "Kabalistic 'Ancient

of Days' and the 'Holy Aged' (Sephira and Adam Kadmon) [are identified] with Brahm, the Creator. . .."

In SD I:214, as part of the commentary of the Stanza of Dzyan, Stanza VII, she observes:

> . . . Ain-Soph, THE ABSOLUTE ENDLESS NO-THING, uses also the form of the ONE, the manifested " Heavenly man " (THE FIRST CAUSE) as its chariot (*Mercabah*, in Hebrew; *Vahan*, in Sanskrit) or vehicle to descend into, and manifest through, in the phenomenal world. But the Kabalists neither make it plain how the ABSOLUTE can use anything, or exercise any attribute whatever, since, as the Absolute, it is devoid of attributes; nor do they explain that in reality it is the First Cause (Plato's *Logos*) the original and eternal IDEA, that manifests through Adam Kadmon, the *Second* Logos, so to speak. In the "Book of Numbers" it is explained that EN (or *Ain*, *Aiôr*) is the only self-existent, whereas its "Depth" (*Bythos* or *Buthon* of the Gnostics, called *Propator*) is only periodical. The latter is Brahmâ as differentiated from Brahma or Parabrahm. It is the Depth, the Source of Light, or Propator, which is the *unmanifested* Logos or the abstract *Idea*, and not Ain-Soph, *whose ray* uses Adam-Kadmon or the *manifested* Logos (the objective Universe) "male and female" — as a chariot through which to manifest.

Adam Kadmon is also called "Heavenly man" in *Isis Unveiled* II:41. In her commentary to Stanza VII, *śloka* 5 (SD I:239), Blavatsky remarks:

> The Chaldean *Book of Numbers* contains a detailed explanation ["the descent of life down to the appearance of man": SD I:22]. "The first triad of the body of Adam Kadmon (the three upper planes of the seven*) cannot be seen before the soul stands in the presence of the Ancient of Days." The Sephiroth of this upper triad are:—"1, *Kether* (the Crown) represented by the brow of Macroprosopos; 2, *Chochmah* (Wisdom, a male Principle) by his right shoulder; and 3, *Binah* (Intelligence, a female Principle) by the left shoulder."
>
> [* The formation of the "living Soul" or man, would render the idea more clearly. "A Living Soul" is a synonym of man in the Bible. These are our seven "Principles."]

An illustration of *Kether* (Crown) appears in Samuel Liddell MacGregor Mathers, *The Kabbalah Unveiled* [*Kabbala Denudata*] (Leeds: Cephaïs Press, 2003), 24. The *Kether* is the first emanation of the Macroprosopus "the Vast Countenance":

> Of Him it is said that He is partly concealed (in the sense of His connection with the negative existence) and partly manifest (as a positive Sephira). Hence the symbolism of the Vast Countenance is that of a profile wherein one side only of the countenance is seen; or, as it is said in the Qabalah, "in Him all is right side."

59 The text reads: ". . . is the numerical hierarchy of of [*sic*.] the Dhyan Chohans. . ."; "of" is repeated in the original letter.

The numbers quoted at the beginning of this paragraph perhaps originate from her manuscript of *The Secret Doctrine*, i.e., the "Würzburg Manuscript" (175):

> . . . . From the effulgency of Light—the Ray of the EVER-DARKNESS—sprung in Space (3) the reawakened Energies (Dhyani-chohans) the *One* from the Egg, the *six* and the *five*; then the ONE the THREE, the FIVE and the twice SEVEN the Sum Total (4).

In the 1888 edition, the highlighted passage was altered to read "THEN THE THREE, THE ONE, THE FOUR, THE ONE, THE FIVE—THE TWICE SEVEN THE SUM TOTAL." See *The Secret Doctrine Würzburg Manuscript* by H. P. Blavatsky. Introduction by David Reigle (Cotopaxi, Colorado: Eastern School Press, 2014), 175 and SD I:30. As Mr. Reigle notes, a side-by-side listing citation of the stanzas from the Würzburg MSS with the 1888 stanzas is located in George S. Arundale's *The Lotus Fire* (Adyar, Madras: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1939): 23–40 (the quote above appears on page 30).

60 SD I:22 and 233. See also the February letter to Skinner (*Theosophical History* XVIII, no. 1-2: 26, and 30. Geoffrey A. Barborka, *The Divine Plan*

(Adyar, Madras: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1964 [second edition; first edition, 1961], 45–46. On page 45, Barborka states: "The Powers are the three great Classes or Hierarchies, known under the generalizing term of Dhyāni-Chohans, who direct and guide the Classes or Kingdoms of the Elementals." SD I:380 (dagger note) reads:

> In Esoteric philosophy the Demiurge or *Logos*, regarded as the CREATOR, is simply an abstract term, an idea, like "army." As the latter is the all-embracing term for a body of active forces or working units — soldiers — so is the Demiurge the qualitative compound of a multitude of Creators or Builders.

This passage reflects an earlier passage in the SD (I:279):

> [*The Secret Doctrine*] admits a Logos or a collective "Creator" of the Universe ; a *Demiurgos*—in the sense implied when one speaks of an "Architect" as the "Creator" of an edifice, whereas that Architect has never touched one stone of it, but, while furnishing the plan, left all the manual labour to the masons; in our case the plan was furnished by the Ideation of the Universe, and the constructive labour was left to the Hosts of intelligent Powers and Forces. But that *Demiurgos* is no personal deity,—i.e., an imperfect *extra-cosmic god*,—but only the aggregate of the Dhyan-Chohans and the other forces.

On page 280, Blavatsky observes that the "other forces" are "composed of (a) the irrational brute energy, inherent in nature, and (b) the intelligent soul or cosmic consciousness which directs and guides that energy, and which is the Dhyan-Chohanic thought reflecting the Ideation of the Universal mind."

[61] Quoted in J. Ralston Skinner, "Cabbalah—No. VIII," *Masonic Review* 67, no. 3 (April, 1887): 133.

The sequence "1, 3, 5, twice seven" is mentioned in SD I:91 (Stanza IV, śloka 3) and SD II:465, which explains the sequence as "the esoteric hierarchy of the Dhyan Chohans. . . ." Her discussion is included in a general discussion of the "Holy of Holies"—the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, *Adytum* or inner sanctuary of a temple reserved only for the priests—including a number of symbols that are reflected or associated with "*Yave*, or Jehovah" (II:464). Since this section is based in part on Skinner's observations, including his unpublished MSS and presumably the letter to which she is responding, she cites his observation on the sequence (SD II:465):

> Of the 1, 3, 5, and twice 7, intending and very especially 13,514, which on a circle may be read as 31415 (or π value), I think there cannot be a possibility of doubting; and especially when considered with symbol marks on *sacr*,† 'Chakra,' or Circle of Vishnu."
>
> [Note: "† In Hebrew the phallic symbol *lingham* and *Yoni*."]

This note, appearing at the bottom of SD II:465, confirms notes 101 and 102 to the February 17 letter in *Theosophical History* XVIII, no. 1-2: 73. The term *sacr* appears on page 53:

> though "my" Brahmâ, the "first born" is sacr, Brahma is something more & better than this, Whereas turn your Jehovah either way make him male, female, or bisexual he will never be better in the Jewish Scriptures than a phallic number, a sacr and n'cabvah blended together.

Skinner then quotes a portion of Stanza IV (śloka 3) from this letter, wherein the above sequence is given: "The One from the Egg, the six, and the *five*," which, according to him, give the number 1065. Skinner also states that from the perspective of *gematria* this number reveals "the value of the first born," i.e., Jehovah's name, the *Jve* or *Jave*, or Jupiter. . ." (SD II:465–66). Elsewhere (SD I:89), she adds that the same numerical sequence in Stanza IV, the value 1065, is equivalent to that "of the first-born (later on, the male and female Brahmâ-Prajâpati), who answers to the numbers 7 and 14, and 21 respectively."

The number "1065" appears also in the Würzburg MSS on page 178 in a passage similar to SD I:89: "The *one* from the Egg, the six and the five," give the number 1065, the value of the *first-born*—Brahma Prajâpâti who answers to the numbers 7 and 14, and 21 respectively."

On the "1" equal to "10" see Skinner, *Source of Measures*, 10 and J.R. Skinner, "Hebrew Metrology," *Masonic Review* 63, no. 6: 326 (also cited from "SD References" at *https://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/sdrefs/sdr_vol-1.htm*): "Now the numbers 1065 are the significant ones of Jehovah's name, viz: *jod*, *vav*, *hé*, or 10 and 6 and 5. . .". The passage from Skinner's "Hebrew Metrology" (p. 326) appears as follows:

> The height of the grand gallery [of the Great Pyramid] is 339 British inches. This is radius to a diameter of 339 X 2=678 inches, or this very raven number ["'*Raven*', whose numbers . . . are 71 X 5 = 355, and the word '*and the raven*', the sum of whose numbers is 678"*]. The radius is taken to show division into two parts . . . which are 1065 each. For the ratio 113 to 355 multiplied by 3 equals 339 to 1065. Now the numbers 1065 are the significant ones of Jehovah's name, viz: *jod*, *vav*, *hé*, or 10 and 6 and 5, which the rabbin's extol so beyond all other numbers and say that by their uses and permutations, under the law of *T'mure*, the knowledge of the entire universe may be had.

The "Dhyan Chohans," identified in the commentary to the Book of Dzyan, Stanza IV, *śloka* 3 (SD I:90) as the "re-awakened energies" whose "numerical Hierarchy" is:

> . . .13514—the numerical hierarchy of the Dhyan-Chohans of various orders, and of the inner or circumscribed world." When placed on the boundary of the great circle of "Pass not" . . . the "rope of the Angels the "rope" that hedges off the phenomenal from the noumenal Kosmos . . ..

What this all means is explained by Gottfried de Purucker (*Fountain Source of Occultism* [Pasadena: Theosophical University Press, 1974], 181):

> The desire for manifestation . . . shows itself in the highest cosmic plane as the awakening of the divine part of fohat guided by the divine mind of the 'sleeping' universe. When we speak of fohatic awakening, this is really but another way of saying that the supremely high classes of dhyāni-chohans begin to stir out of their ages-long paranirvana, thus bringing about the evolutionary unfolding of the cosmic elements as they proceed steadily downwards through the cosmic elements as they proceed steadily downwards through the cosmic planes until finally the complete structural framework for the fully evolved universe appears once more.

In the Proem (SD I:16), Blavatsky summarizes this "unfolding" as a "fohatic awakening"—"Fohat" described as "the dynamic energy of Cosmic Ideation . . . the guiding power of all manifestation, the "Thought Divine" transmitted and made manifest through the Dhyan Chohans, the Architects of the visible World. They are the "re-awakened energies" (Stanza IV, *śloka* 3: SD I:30, 88), the "Builders" who are the "luminous sons of Manvantaric dawn" (Stanza II, *śloka* 1), the "AH-HI" (Stanza I, *śloka* 3: SD I:37, 38), the "Elohim" (SD I:38) who are seven in number (SD I:42), "the seven Rays" or "lower seven Sephiroth" emanating from "the upper Sephirothal Triad" (Stanza V, *śloka* 6: SD I:130), and "MIND-BORN SONS OF THE FIRST LORD (*Avalókitéshwara*) THE SHINING SEVEN" in Stanza VII, *śloka* 1(SD I:33 and 213): the seven referring to the "Rishis" [ṛṣi-s] as stated in SD I:114.

62 The inability of the En Soph to create reflects *Isis Unveiled* II:212–13: "En-Soph, the unrevealed forever, who is boundless and unconditioned, cannot create, and therefore it seems to us a great error to attribute to him a 'creative thought'. . .."

63 Although *tretā* "triad" usually refers to the *tretā-yuga*, the second of four world ages, it refers here to the three Sephiroth : "Keter, Chohmah and Binah."

[64] See note 58. The explanation of the "Hindu" (i.e., Buddhist-Brāhmaṇical) and "Chaldean" (Hebrew) or "Kabala" accounts of the pre-evolved and post-evolving universe mentioned in this letter is discussed in *Isis Unveiled* II:266–71, wherein a comparative commentary is provided for the two enclosed charts facing II:264.

The relationship between the "Dhyan Chohans" and the "first men" is stated toward the end of the second volume of *The Secret Doctrine* (SD II:732):

> Limiting the teaching strictly to this, our earth, it may be shown that, as the ethereal forms of the first Men are first projected on seven zones by seven Dhyan-Chohanic *centres* of Force, so there are centres of creative power for every ROOT or parent species of the host of forms of vegetable and animal life. This is, again, no "special creation," nor is there any "Design," except in the general "ground-plan" worked out by the universal law. But there are certainly "designers," though these are neither omnipotent nor omniscient in the absolute sense of the term. They are simply *Builders*, or Masons, working under the impulse given them by the ever-to-be-unknown (on our plane) Master Mason — the ONE LIFE and Law. Belonging to this sphere, they have no hand in, or possibility of working on any other, during the present Manvantara, at any rate. That they work in cycles and on a strictly geometrical and mathematical scale of progression, is what the extinct animal species amply demonstrate; that they act by *design* in the details of minor lives (of side animal issues, etc.) is what natural history has sufficient evidence for. In the *creation* of new species, departing sometimes very widely from the Parent stock, as in the great variety of the *genus Felis*—like the lynx, the tiger, the cat, etc.—it is the "designers" who direct the new evolution by adding to, or depriving the species of certain appendages, either needed or becoming useless in the new environments. Thus, when we say that *Nature* provides for every animal and plant, whether large or small, we speak correctly. For, it is those terrestrial spirits of Nature, who form the aggregated Nature; which, if it fails occasionally in its design, is neither to be considered blind, nor to be taxed with the failure; since, belonging to a *differentiated* sum of qualities and attributes, it is in virtue of that alone *conditioned and imperfect*.

"Keter" [Kether] is the first Sephira, "The Crown" containing the other nine Sephiroth. From Kether emanates the male active potency or Chohmah [Chocmah; Hokhmah] "Wisdom." Binah or "Intelligence"—the female inactive potency emanates from the Chohmah. See Albert G. MacKay, *Encyclopædia of Freemasonry and Its Kindred Sciences* (Philadelphia: Moss and Company, 1874), 389–91.

Isis Unveiled II:214-15 (note ||) discusses the Sephiroth. A discussion of the "Kabala" appears in volume II: Chapter V (212f.).

[65] The names of the ten Sephiroth, as given in the "Jewish Virtual Library," are *Keter* ("Divine Crown"), *Hokhmah* ("Wisdom"), *Binah* (Understanding"), *Hesed* ("Mercy"), *Din* ("Justice"), *Tif'eret* ("Beauty"), *Nezah* ("Eternity"), *Hod* ("Glory"), *Yesod* ("Foundation"), *Shekhinah* ("God's Presence in the World"). Online at

https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-ten-sefirot-of-the-kabbalah

[66] "Five Dhyani-Buddhas" appear in SD I:213 as part of a discussion based upon Stanza VII discussing the "hierarchy of Creative Powers," including the "Chief Hierarchies." This number appeared earlier in Edward Paske, "Buddhism in the British Provinces of Little Tibet," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute* 8 (May 28, 1878): 201:

> "The self existent Adi Buddha by five spontaneous acts of divine wisdom (jugán), and by five exertions of mental reflection (dhyán), created the Puncha Dhyani Buddha[s]. Each of these Buddhas again by the mere exertion of his inherent jugát and dhyán is said to have created a Buddhisatwa. All the above are celestial beings, the spontaneous emanations from the Divinity, who have never been subject to the pains of transmigration."

See "SD References" at:

https://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/sdrefs/

sdr_vol-1.htm

For information on Edward Paske, see:

https://whowaswho-indology.info/35123/paske-edward/

Earlier references to the Dhyani Buddhas include "Historical Researches on the Origin and Principles of the Bauddha and Jaina Religions" by James Bird. *The Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* II (July 1844 to July 1847): 77 (of which there are six, the sixth being "Vajra Satwa"), 101, 102, and 105 ("Akshobhya" is the Dhyani Buddha of the Eastern part of the universe and 'Ratnasambhava" of the southern part). See also Horace Hayman Wilson's "Notice of Three Tracts received from Nepal," *Asiatic Researches* XVI (1828): 458. In note 1 to Wilson's translation of the "*Naipaliya Devata Kalyána Panchavinsatiká*, he identifies the five Dhyāni Buddhas as *Amitābha, Amoghasiddha, Aksobhya, Vairocana, and Ratnasambhava*. A sixth, *Vajrasattva*, emanates from the Ādi Buddha.

Blavatsky also discusses the Dhyani Buddhas in Letter CXV to A. P. Sinnett (*The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett and Other Miscellaneous Letters*. Transcribed, compiled, and with an introduction by A. T. Barker. Pasadena, California: Theosophical University Press, 1973), 242–43. She writes: "The number of Dhyani Buddhas or Chohans is infinite, but only five are practically acknowledged in exoteric Buddhism and Seven in esoteric teachings." She then observes that:

> 7 Dhyan Chohans are appointed at the beginning of every *Round* to incarnate as Bodhisatwas—beginning by world A, then B, etc. The first corresponds to the Buddha of the 1st Race and being its protector, incarnates at a needed moment and then becomes a Buddha. The *Second* becomes a Bodhisatwa at the 2nd Race and does the same on every planet. The third etc., reappearing each *seven* times.

The order of Dhyan Buddhas or Chohans are "Vairachana," "Akshobyas," "Ratna," "Amitabha," and "Amogasiddha" (numbers 6 and 7 are not given. Their respective reappearance as Bodhisattvas are as follows: "Samanta Bhadra (end 1st Race), Vajrapani (end 2nd Race), Ratnapani (end 3rd Race), Avalokitesvara (end 4th Race), Visvapani). The sixth is blank and the seventh gives only "Mystery Names."

[67] This page is identified as page 5.

[68] The pentangle represents the "5" in the sequence "13514."

[69] The transcription has "Alkim." The original is unclear in the letter, but "Alhim" appears in the next paragraph. Skinner ("Cabbalah—No. VIII": 131–32) explains Alhim as follows:

> The god-word Elohim, or Alhim, indicated the numerical enunciation of what is called the pi value, or relation of circumference to diameter of a circle,—or the ratio of 31415 to One,—by the placement of the letters of the name upon the bounds of a circle. . . The god-word Jehovah, was merely a variant on the same ratio in another form of value, viz., circumference 355 to 113 diameter.

See Skinner, *Source of Measures*, vi, 12, 67, 68, 111, 161,193, 194, 219, 223, and 276 and Skinner *Masonic Review* 63, no. 6 (July 1885): 326. Blavatsky refers to Alhim in I:91, 114; II:37–38.

[70] The "Primaries" are explained in the *Encyclopedic Theosophical Glossary* as:

> Used in theosophy for the openings of the different dramas of life, as opposed to the secondary creation, their more or less present conditions and appearances. Yet primary creation in strict logic appertains to those primordial beginnings of manifested life which precede the operations of nature when it has once entered into its established habits due to past karma, these established habits or courses of action being the karmic results of precedaneous causes. For example, the creation of the hierarchies of the gods or dhyani-chohanic hosts, and of their various worlds and activities, belong to the so-called primary creation; and at the close of this creation opens the drama of established nature and of the hierarchies and their respective

operations beneath those hierarchies of gods.

Online at:

https://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/etgloss/etg-hp.htm

"Primary" creation is explained in a note appearing in SD II:312 stating that it occurs "when Earth is in possession of the three *Elemental* Kingdoms."

71 Perhaps related to the comment to Stanza IV in SD I:90. In context with what follows, it refers perhaps to "plain disc" mentioned in SD I:4, that is, "the bounding, circumscribing quality of the *All*, the Universal Principle which. . . embrace[s] all things, while embodying the potentiality of every action in the Cosmos" of every action in the Cosmos." This is quoted from *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett from the Mahatmas M. & K. H.* Transcribed, compiled, and with an introduction by A. T. Barker, second edition (New York: Rider and Company, 1926), Letter LIX], p. 346.

72 A commentary is given in SD I:112–13, partially quoted here (113):

> They [the "'three strides of Vishnu'"through the "'seven regions of the Universe', of the Rig Veda"] are all symbols, and emblematic, mutually and correlatively, of Spirit, Soul and Body (MAN); of the circle transformed into Spirit, the Soul of the World, and its body (or Earth). Stepping out of the Circle of Infinity, that no man comprehendeth, Ain-Soph (the Kabalistic synonym for Parabrahm, for the Zeroana Akerne [see note 48], of the Mazdeans, or for any other "UNKNOWABLE") becomes "One "—the ECHOD, the EKA, the AHU—then he (or it) is transformed by evolution into the One in many, the Dhyani-Buddhas or the Elohim, or again the Amshaspends, his third Step being taken into generation of the flesh, or " Man." And from man, or Jah-Hova, " male female," the inner divine entity becomes, on the metaphysical plane, once more the Elohim.

The topic arises in the commentary of Stanza IV, *śloka* 5 (SD I:98–103), with the "primaries" mentioned on p. 102.

73 The reading is "Ekasringis" or possibly "Ekasringas." This term refers to the Ekaśṛṅga-s, mentioned by Dowson, *Classical Dictionary* (235) as a "Klasse von Manen" (Böhtlingk and Roth *Grosses Petersburger Wörterbuch*), i.e., a class of Pitṛ-s or "fathers." He cites Fitzedward Hall's edition of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* III.339, wherein numerous sources regarding the classes of Pitṛ-s, citing a passage from the *Mahābhārata* II.45. Therein, seven classes of Pitṛ-s are identified: one group (*gaṇa*) consisting of four classes possessing a form or body (*mūrtimant*-) and one group of three classes that are embodied (*śarīrin*-). The first group includes the Ekaśṛṅga-s, the Somapā-s, Caturveda-s, and Kala-s, all worshiped among the four social classes (*varṇa*-s). The second group consists of the Vairāja-s, Agniṣvātta-s, and the Gārhapātya-s, all residing in heaven (*nākacara*-). This passage is quoted by Fitzedward Hall, III:339. See *Mahābhārata: Book Two, The Great Hall*. Translated by Paul Wilmot (N.Y.: New York University Press; JJC Foundation, 2006), 108.

Blavatsky renders them "formless" (*arūpa*-) for the threefold group and "corporeal" for the fourfold group (SD II:91).

The Fitzedward Hall edition also quotes a similar passage from the *Harivaṃśa*, *śloka* 932, the only difference being the substitution of *mūrtayaḥ* for *śarīrin*-. The translation is equivalent if *mūrti*- is rendered as 'embodied' rather than the usual 'body' or 'form'. The quote is located Fitzedward Hall III.157–58 (*Viṣṇu Purāṇa* III.14, note to *śloka*).

Wilson includes a long note on the Pitṛ-s, identifying them as "a race of divine beings, inhabiting celestial regions of their own. . ." Although they are usually identified as the Manes or ancestors, "the principal members of this order of beings are of a different origin, accounts provided in the *Vāyu*, *Matsya*, and *Padma Purāṇas*. All agree on the seven classes: "three of which are without form (*amūrttayaḥ*),

or composed of intellectual, not elementary substance, and assuming what forms they please; and four are corporal (*samūrttayaḥ*)." Furthermore, "the Pitṛ-s are born in the Manvantaras as the sons of the gods." See *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (Wilson, I. 463-64 III.14, note to *śloka* 1, note). Fitzedward Hall (III.340) also quotes a passage from the *Vāyu Purāṇa*, wherein Prajāpati created [emitted: *asṛjat*] the Pitṛ-s from his armpits (cited from Muir's *Original Sanskrit Texts* (second edition), I.78–79.

Further commentary on the Pitṛ-s appear in SD II: 89–97 and I:86: "the Pitris are *lunar* deities and our ancestors, because they *created the physical man*."

[74] Although we do not have Skinner's letter to Blavatsky, we can surmise from this an allusion to Alhim referring to "qualified men," an observation he made in his "Cabbalah—No. VI" (p. 259):

> The name Alhim is properly a mode of speech for "*men*," nobles, princes, etc. . . . This meaning of "*men*" is made use of to insure, to emphasize and confirm a form of definition. The numbers of *Alhim* are used to secure the geometrical enunciation 31415 to *One*. . . . care is taken to make the statement good by a collateral form of expression; debasing the character of the expression to the word "*Men*." This word, in Hebrew, is *Anâshim*, אנשים, the characterizing small numbers of which run 41351. Place these numbers on the bound of a circle, in their order, and like *Alhim*, they may be read 31415, or the same with Alhim.

[75] The root *man* possesses the meaning "think"; when the primary suffix -u is attached it creates an agent-noun: *manu*- "man"; *manus*- 'man'; *manus-ya*- > *manuṣya*- 'human'; 'man'. The latter form is directly related to *manus*-, the ending -*us* being a primary derivative as is -*u*. The secondary derivative is -*ya*, which is attached to the primary form: √*man* + -*us* + *ya*. (the -*s*- is replaced by -*ṣ*- following the -*u*- and preceding, in this case, the -*y*-).

[76] The question mark appears in the original text.

[77] It would appear that passages or ideas from Skinner's unpublished manuscript were reproduced in his later series of articles. For instance, in his "Cabbalah—No. XI", *Masonic Review* 68, no. 3 (October 1887): 138:

> . . . Elohim (god) made these (Sephiroth). But the Hebrew Sephiroth means *numbers*, and numbers can be made to represent the properties of all things; therefore, the power and force of the name Elohim by numerical use . . . its first manifestation being that of 31415, circumference of a circle whose diameter is *One*."

[78] Identified as page 6 by the transcriber and 3 by Blavatsky.

[79] "Brahmā Prajāpati" appears in the commentary to Stanza III, especially in SD I:80–81:

> Appearing with every Manvantara as Narâyan, or Swayambhuva (the Self-Existent), and penetrating into the Mundane Egg, it emerges from it at the end of the divine incubation as Brahmâ or Prajâpati, a progenitor of the future Universe into which he expands. He is Purusha (spirit), but he is also Prakriti (matter). Therefore it is only after separating himself into two halves—Brahmâ-Vâch (the female) and Brahmâ-Virâj (the male), that the Prajâpati becomes the male Brahmâ.

[80] The plural "Prajāpati" as the Sephiroth occurs in SD I:355, wherein there are ten, which is then reduced to seven with the separation of the "'Trimurti' or the Kabalistic triad of *Chochmah* (Wisdom)—'a masculine, *active* potency'"—BINAH, "a feminine passive potency, Intelligence, represented by the divine name Jehovah," forming "with Sephira the third, the Jewish trinity or the Crown, KETHER."

[81] The transcript has "symetrically," which is clearly incorrect.

[82] That is, Prajāpati. The long 'a' [ā] follows the 'j', not the 'p'. The correct form appears a few lines above.

Hiraṇyagarbha is equated with Prajāpati in SD I:90 as part of her discussion of Stanza IV,

śloka 3. On the preceding page, Hiraṇyagarbha is Brahmā, "the first male formed by the undiscernible Causeless CAUSE. Blavatsky may be alluding to Manu I. 7–10.

The identification of Hiraṇyagarbha "golden embryo," with Prajāpati is traceable to *Ṛgveda* X.121. Therein, the "creative principle has no name—and so is identified simply as "*ka*" ("Who?")—but is identified in verse one as the "golden embryo," conceived as the "world egg" in the later literature (i.e., *Vāmana Purāṇa*). In verse 10, the "Ka" or "Hiraṇyagarbha" is known as "Prajāpati." The above discussion is based on the introduction to the hymn in *The Rigveda*, translated by Stephanie W. Jamison and Joel P. Brereton, vol. III (Oxford: Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 1592.

[83] Trimūrti: "having three forms." This epithet often refers to Viṣṇu, Brahmā, and Śiva.

[84] Marut does not appear in the SD passage.

[85] *Parama*: "Highest" or "Supreme."

[86] The original page is identified as 7.

[87] The phrase "including Chochmah & Binah" was missing from the transcription.

[88] The *Purāṇic Encyclopedia* cites the Śanti Parva (Chapter 384) of the *Mahābhārata* as the source of this number.

[89] This paragraph appears in SD I:89–90 and is related to Stanza IV, *śloka* 3. In the SD, Blavatsky adds that the "first born" is "later on the male and female Brahmâ-Prajâpati."

[90] The final downstroke is unclear, but it appears that Blavatsky is explaining the *eka* "one" in *Ekasringi*. W. renders this passage as "the one 'Skas' from the one."

[91] The final statement in Stanza V (SD I:32), reads:

> THE LIPIKA CIRCUMSCRIBE THE TRIANGLE, THE FIRST ONE, THE CUBE, THE SECOND ONE, AND THE PENTACLE WITHIN THE EGG. IT IS THE RING CALLED "PASS NOT" FOR THOSE WHO DESCEND AND ASCEND. ALSO FOR THOSE WHO DURING THE KALPA ARE PROGRESSING TOWARDS THE GREAT DAY "BE WITH US." THUS WERE FORMED THE RUPA AND THE ARUPA: FROM ONE LIGHT SEVEN LIGHTS; FROM EACH OF THE SEVEN, SEVEN TIMES SEVEN LIGHTS. THE WHEELS WATCH THE RING.

Blavatsky's commentary on this passage appears on pp. 129–135. On p. 129, she writes:

> The esoteric meaning of the first sentence of the Sloka is, that those who have been called Lipikas, the Recorders of the Karmic ledger, make an impassible barrier between the personal Ego and the impersonal Self, the Noumenon and Parent-Source of the former. Hence the allegory. They circumscribe the manifested world of matter within the Ring "Pass-Not." This world is the symbol (objective) of the One divided into the many, on the planes of Illusion, of Adi (the "First") or of Eka (the "One") ; and this One is the collective aggregate, or totality, of the principal Creators or Architects of this visible universe.

The "Ring Pass Not" indicates the impossibility of those functioning on the lower spheres or outer spheres to come into contact with those of the inner or higher worlds or planes. This is explained in greater detail in Barborka, *The Divine Plan*, 164–68. See also the *Encyclopedic Theosophical Glossary*:

> The limit in spiritual, intellectual, or psychological power or consciousness, beyond which an individual is unable to pass until he evokes from within the strength and the vision to carry him forwards and over the circumscribing limits set by that individual's own karma.

[92] *Dhyānī pāśa*.

[93] W.'s transcription is "when added to ? separately."

[94] "The One, the Three, the Five & the twice Seven". . . in the esoteric calculations another symbol and figure are used" reflect the passage in *The Secret Doctrine Würzburg Manuscript* ("Commentary to Stanza IV" on pp. 178–79). In the SD I:90 the order is changed to "The Three,

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the One, the Four, the One, the Five." This sequence of "3,1,4,1,5" represent the:

> numerical hierarchy of the Dhyan-Chohans of various orders, and of the inner or circumscribed world. When placed on the boundary of the great circle of "Pass not" . . ., called also the Dhyanipasa, the 'rope of the Angels', the 'rope' that hedges off the phenomenal from the noumenal Kosmos (not falling within the range of our present objective consciousness).

In Letter CXVII to A. P. Sinnett, he writes:

> The numbers of the groups of Dhyan Chohans around the Circle "Pass Not," is 1, 3, 5, 1, & 4, and also 3, 1, 4, 1, 5; or when left running without separation they read 13514, and 31415. In both cases it is *twice seven*, for read whatever way, it will be 14 (when individually additioned).

Blavatsky was also aware of Skinner's equation of Alhim (or Elohim) and 31415 or 13514 (see above, notes 46, 69, and 74) as is evident in this same Sinnett letter:

> Funny that AL'HIM (Elohim) should also yield that very same number, without ciphers. Thus א (a) is 1; ל (l) is 3; ה (h(is 5; י (i or jodh) is I (O); and מ (m) is 4 (or 40). That yields exactly 13514, or anagrammatically, by the Themura method it may be written 31415—the blessed pi or π. . .

Mathers discusses this name "Alhim" in *The Kabbalah Unveiled* (p. 8) as "A= 1 , L= 30, H= 5 , I= 10, M= 40." On page 9, he describes "*Themura*" or *temura* as:

> permutation. According to certain rules, one letter is substituted for another letter preceding or following it in the alphabet, and thus from one word another word of totally different orthography may be formed.

[95] Identified as page 8 by the transcriber and 4 by Blavatsky.

[96] That is, *anupapādaka*, literally, "parentless" (see Burnouf's *Sanskrit Dictionary* and Monier-Williams and Böhtlingk and Roth's *Petersburg Dictionary*). In Buddhism, Eugené Burnouf states that this is a characteristic of a class of Dhyani Buddhas. For more details, see Eugene Burnouf, *Introduction a l'Histoire deu Buddhisme Indien*, second edition (Paris: Maisonneuve et Cie, Libraires-Éditeurs), 103–105 (Hathi Trust).

The *Encyclopedic Theosophical Glossary* argues that this term is a misreading for *aupapāduka* (from *upapāduka*), which has the same sense (Monier-Williams: "self-produced"; Böhtlingk and Roth: "*von selbst zur Erscheinung kommend, von selbst entstehend*").

The term appears in SD I:11, 21 (Stanza I), 47, 52 ("Anupadaka": explained), 62 (commentary to Stanza III), and 92.

[97] Both discs appear in SD I:1 and 4. For the first symbol, the SD states:

> [I.1] The one circle is divine Unity, from which all proceeds, whither all returns. Its circumference—a forcibly limited symbol, in view of the limitation of the human mind—indicates the abstract, ever incognisable PRESENCE, and its plane, the Universal Soul, although the two are one. . .. [I.4] In its third stage the point is transformed into a diameter, thus ⊖. It now symbolises a divine immaculate Mother-Nature within the all-embracing absolute Infinitude.

See note 48.

[98] Identified as page 9 by the transcriber.

[99] This passage ("Thus, while in the metaphysical world. . . gives birth to the Form that contains all forms") appears with some changes in SD I:91 and the *Würzburg Manuscript* 179.

The observation of the "One Point," "the Virgin matrix of Kosmos," and the "Form that contains all forms (Brahmâ or the Logos)" reflects the three stages of the process of emanation from the Omnipresent, Infinite, and Eternal Cause. This principle is symbolized by the "plain disc" or circle ○. The circle with a dot at its center ⊙ represents the "the first differentiation in the periodical manifestations of the ever-eternal nature" (SD I:4), i.e., the First or Unmanifested Logos or the "Germ" of Stanza II.

The Unmanifested Logos then further evolves into the Second Logos—the "ever-eternal nature, sexless and infinite 'Aditi in THAT', the point in the disc, or potential Space within abstract Space." This is followed by the Third Logos: "the Form that contains all forms." Further discussion of the Logoi appear in SD I:424–32.

In her subsequent letter of February 17, 1887 [*Theosophical History* XVIII, no. 1-2: 39], she explains these figures as:

> I believe in a Boundless, Eternal Infinite abstract Principle (abstract to my limited understanding); in a Causeless Cause, a Rootless Root of all that exists—your Circle, in short, as you defined it. & which no man can know. You call its diameter the One, so do we—but what you think of, or how you define it finally is not yet clear to me. But in Part I of my S. D. I give the various circles, differentiating from the first race to the last. It is, ○— pre-cosmic aspect; ⊙— at the dawn of the manvantara; ⊖ — the first manifested cosmic plane; mother-chaos or nature appearing across the infinite circle at its reawakening.

[100] The Gobi Desert, located in northern China and Mongolia, is discussed a number of times in the SD. *Apropos* this letter, the mention that it was once a sea is mentioned in SD II:5 ("the 'deluge,' that transformed the present Gobi Desert into a sea *for the last time*, some 10 or 12,000 years ago. . .") and 324. The Gobi Desert is the location of "Shamballah," the site where the elite of Lemuria took refuge (SD II:319).

[101] The first letter appears to be an "M", which might lead the reader to identify the name as "Melkiah" or "Milkiah," depending upon how one reads the second letter. Hilkiah's discovery of the "Book of the Law" is mentioned in 2 Kings 22:4-14, 23:4, and 2 Chron. 34:9–24.

[102] W. has "Eliv [?]." Perhaps [Elohites]. See SD II:514 (note). H.T. (Hull Terrell), *On the Use of Jehovah and Elohim in the Pentateuch*. London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1869.

[103] The Ekâsṛingas (*ekaśṛṅga-*) are not to my knowledge mentioned elsewhere in Blavatsky's writings. The term, however, appears in the *Mahābhārata* (II:47-48) according to the *Purāṇic Encyclopædia*, and is identified as one of the seven *Pitṛ*-s or Fathers (Mani, *Purāṇic Encyclopædia*, 268). See note 73. Blavatsky apparently refers to the "Ekâsringas" as a class of *Pitṛ*-s rather than as an individual Pitṛ. She refers to the *Pitṛ*-s throughout the SD, with an informative overview given in II.88–94. An informative presentation on this topic appears in Geoffrey Barborka, *The Peopling of the Earth* (Wheaton, Ill: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1975), 8, 77–82, 143–70.

Her reference to the Ekâsringas and Elohim and their "fitting in" with π is unclear. It seems to be a response to an observation made by Skinner in his letter to her. But see above, note 90.

[104] Identified as page 10 by the transcriber and 5 by Blavatsky.

[105] The text looks more like Brahmô but other examples in the letter leave little doubt that it is an "ā".

[106] W. reads "shem." Moor, *Hindu Pantheon*, 84–85 quotes *Manu* I:32–37, the source of this quote.

[107] Brahmā is represented with a red complexion according to Moor, *Hindu Pantheon*, 44.

[108] In Genesis 2.7, "the LORD GOD formed man from the dust of the ground. . .", the presumption on the part of some is that the "dust" was red-hued, causing Adam to be likewise.

[109] Vāc or Speech personified.

[110] W. reads "Satre rupas." The Sanskrit form is *śatarūpa*.

[111] The text is not clear. I follow W. in the reading. Perhaps "Nature implied."

[112] SD I:217:

> The Seventh Spirit, the last emanated from the "mother," appears as the first divine human form distinctly male and female. It was the seventh

Transcribed by Ananda Wickremeratne; Transcript typed and corrected by Anita Atkins; Edited and annotated by James A. Santucci

creation, as in the Purânas, wherein man is the seventh creation of Brahmâ.

In SD II:162, she traces the source of the description of the seventh creation to the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* I, chapter v, p. 71. In the Fitzedward Hall edition this reference appears in I.75: "The creation of the Arvaksrotas beings was the seventh, and was that of man." The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. Vol. I. Translated and illustrated with notes by H. H. Wilson and edited by Fitzedward Hall. London: Trübner & Co., 1866, 75. In this Purāṇa, *arvāksrotas* refers to the method of taking nutriments: in this case it is the downward current (*arvāk-* 'downward' and *srotas* 'current') in the creation of humans as opposed to the creation of beasts displaying a winding course (*tiryak-srotas-*) and immortals, their "nourishment being derived from the exterior, not from the interior, of the body" (*ūrdhva-srotas-*) [note on p. 72].

[113] This creation, if this is what Blavatsky refers to, appears in Chapter 20 of the *Agni Purāṇa*, Chapter 20 and the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*. This is one of many types of creation (*sarga*). In the *Agni Purāṇa*, Chapter 20, *arvāk-srotas-* is the seventh creation, also known as *mānuṣasarga* (human creation).

W. reads "Arva Usrota."

[114] W. reads "of." The text is unclear.

[115] W. reads "and so on." The text ends with "&." Perhaps Blavatsky simply overlooked the incomplete sentence.

[116] Only "V" appears in the text. I follow W. in reading it as "Vis."

[117] The text has "2." It is likely that the part of the text is missing as is the line above (note 54).

[118] Identified as page 11 by the transcriber.

[119] W. transcribes this passage in the following manner:

> . . . I believe in god of nature, the ever unknowable life and the unconscious (because Absolute Consciousness) cause of all Space—not the space of the physicists or even the metaphysicians, a simple conception of the brain—but in space of the infinite all. For all of you our terms, space, and form and matter are what they are to the physicist—what signs of algebra are to the mathematicians—simply conventional symbols.

[120] Identified as page 12 by the transcriber.

[121] The mention of both General Pike and *Principe Createur* appears in *Isis Unveiled* II:377, which quotes from the "Proceedings of the Supreme Council of Sovereign Grand Inspectors-General of the Thirty-third and Last Degree, etc., etc. Held at the city of New York, August 15, 1876," pp. 54. 55:

> "This *Principe Createur* is no new phrase— it is but an old term revived. *Our adversaries, numerous and formidable*, will say, and will have the right to say, that our *Principe Createur* is identical with the *Principe Générateur* of the Indians and Egyptians, and may fitly be symbolized as it was symbolized anciently, by the Lingae. . . . To accept this, in lieu of a personal God, is TO ABANDON CHRISTIANITY, and the *worship of Jehovah*, and return to wallow in the styes of Paganism."

For an overview of General Albert Pike, see Wikipedia at:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albert_Pike

[122] The page numbers 255–62 refer to Skinner's *Source of Measures*, where Skinner discusses the Messianic character and the term Messiah in all its forms: "Messiach," "Mashach," "Mashuach," "Meshiac" (255).

[123] Viśvakarman-; Viśvakarmā. Two hymns are dedicated to this deity in the *Ṛgveda*: 10.81 and 82. Later, in the *Brāhmaṇas*, he is identified with Prajāpati (= Brahmā), which establishes his position as architect of the universe On a general description of this deity, see *The Rigveda*, translated by Stephanie W. Jamison and Joel P. Brereton, III.1513–1517 and Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit Dictionary*, 994. The 1872 edition of Monier-Williams may have served as Blavatsky's

source. For this edition see under *viśva* on page 944. Also online at:

https://www.sanskrit-lexicon.uni-koeln.de/scans/MW72Scan/2020/web/webtc/indexcaller.php

[124] The name seems to be cut off. If not, it appears to read Bhu; if not, then Bhuvana as W. suggests. *Bhuvana* is the father of *Viśvakarman* (so therefore named *Bhauvana*) as Blavatsky rightly observes, as also her description of the god as "the great architect of the gods."

[125] *Vikartana*- or "cutting asunder."

[126] The transcription reads: ". . . who is the candidate for initiation the Chresto in the _____[?] Patala." In the *Source of Measures* (p. 264), Skinner writes that it "is the Jesus condition of Chrestos, or χρηστος, or descender into the pit, under the astronomical sign Libra."

In the section referred to above (255–62), Skinner writes (257–58):

> To a late day, the terms Chréstos and Christos for Christ, were used interchangeably. The two conditions were necessary to the full proportions of the whole Christian system. Jesus, as the suffering sacrifice, could not be the triumphant Christ until he had passed through the sacrificial Chrést condition. At Scorpio, he was Chréstos, in the pit, among the thorns, or blackened rays; but thence, passing around the circle, until the summit was attained, at Leo He became the triumphant Christos, as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, who had subdued all things under himself.

Skinner explains that according to his understanding, *chréstos* refers to death (i.e., "to live is death") and *christos* is life or resurrection ("to die is to live").

For a general discussion, see James A. Santucci, "The Conception of Christ in the Theosophical Tradition," in *Alternative Christs*, edited by Olav Hammer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 197–99.

[127] The scan cuts off this name. W. proposes "Sanjaya" but this is in the masculine gender. The daughter's actual name is *Saṃjñā*, which conforms to the translation given by Blavatsky: "Spiritual Consciousness." SD II:101:

> Thus Sanjna (Spiritual Consciousness), the wife of Sûrya, the Sun, is shown retiring into the jungle to lead an ascetic life, and leaving behind to her husband her Chhaya, shadow or image.

The story of her marriage to *Sūrya* probably originates in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, Chapter 47 (see *Purāṇic Encyclopædia*, 786.

[128] Identified as page 13 by the transcriber.

[129] The architect of King Solomon's Temple. See I Kings VII:13–14. The name figures prominently in Masonic circles. Mackay, *Encyclopædia of Freemasonry and Its Kindred Sciences*, writes extensively on this individual, with the following passage serving as summary of the opinion of the English and American Masonic community:

> The general theory was then, as it is now, that this architect was Hiram Abif, the widow's son, who had been sent to King Solomon by Hiram, King of Tyre, as a precious gift, and "a curious and cunning workman." This theory was sustained by the statements of the Jewish Scriptures, so far as they threw any light on the Masonic legend. It was the theory of the English Masons from the earliest times; was enunciated as historically correct in the first edition of the Book of Constitutions, published in 1723; has continued ever since to be the opinion of all English and American Masons; and is, at this day, the only theory entertained by any Mason in the two countries who has a theory at all on the subject. This, therefore, is the orthodox faith of Masonry.

See SD I:314.

[130] "Patala" (*pātāla*) refers to the lowest of the seven regions below the earth. Sometimes it refers to the lower regions in general. For a description of the region, see Mani, *Purāṇic Encyclopædia*, 580–82. Blavatsky mentions the region in a number of her articles as also the SD II:49, 98, 214 *passim*.

[131] Compare SD II:559:

> . . . remember the allegory of Visvakarma, the creative power, the great architect of the world, called in the Veda "the all-seeing god," who "sacrifices himself to himself" (the Spiritual Egos of mortals are his own essence, *one with him*, therefore). Remember that he is called *Deva Vardhika* "the builder of the gods" and that it is he who ties (the Sun) Sûrya, his son-in-law, on his lathe, in the exoteric allegory; on the Swastika, in esoteric tradition, as on earth he is the Hierophant Initiator, and cuts away a portion of his brightness.

Blavatsky then quotes from Skinner's *Source of Measures*, 204–205 in association with "crucifixion," related to tying Sūrya to the lathe.

[132] The spelling cannot be verified since the scan partially cuts out a portion of the word.

[133] The spelling is not clear.

[134] The scan is missing this word because of the attenuated right margin.

[135] There seems to be a short phrase following, but it cannot be deciphered.

Section 2: Ninth Annual Convention: American Section of the Theosophical Society and the First Convention of the Theosophical Society in America

Ninth Annual Convention of the American Section Theosophical Society and First Convention of the Theosophical Society in America, Held at Boston, Mass., April 28 and 29, 1895.

Report of Proceedings.
FIRST DAY.
MORNING SESSION, APRIL 28th.

The Delegates assembled at the New England Theosophical Headquarters, 24 Mt. Vernon street, Boston, some time before 10 a. m., the hour fixed for opening. There were also many visiting members. The Hall was crowded. The order of the Executive Committee for holding the Convention at Boston was read by William Q. Judge, General Secretary, who called



the meeting to order and asked for nominations for temporary chairman. On motion of Geo. D. Ayers, Dr. A. P. Buchman of Fort Wayne, Ind., was elected temporary chairman and took the chair. He asked that the business be proceeded with rapidly. Two Secretaries to the Convention were elected, Claude Falls Wright and Joseph H. Fussell.

On motion a Committee of three on Credentials was directed to be appointed by the Chair. The Chair appointed A. A. Purman of Fort Wayne, Dr. Allen Griffiths of San Francisco, and Geo. D. Ayers of Boston. [2]

The Chair then directed the Secretary to call the list of Branches, and said that all protests must be made at this time and would not be allowed after the list was closed. Mr. Wright read the list, and the following responded:

ALAYA T.S., Dr. Allen Griffiths, *Proxy*.

AMRITA T.S., Dr. J. D. Buck, *Proxy*.

ARJUNA T.S., Dr. J. D. Buck, *Proxy*.

ARYAN T.S., William Q. Judge, *President*; J. H. Fussell, C. A Griscom, Jr., Mrs. G. L. Griscom, Burcham Harding, Mrs. J. C. Keightley, Mrs. E. C. Mayer, E Aug. Neresheimer, Mrs. M. Neresheimer, A. H. Spencer, *Delegate*s.

ATMA T.S., John M. Pryse, *Proxy*

AURORA T.S., Dr. Allen Griffiths, *Proxy*

BLAVATSKY T.S., Dr. J. D. Buck, *Proxy*

BLUE MOUNTAIN T.S., Dr. Allen Griffiths, *Proxy*

BOISE T.S., Dr. J. W. B. La Pierre, *Proxy*.

BOSTON T.S., Robert Crosbie, *President* ; Miss M. J. Barnett, Hiram Benedict, J. Emory Clapp, Mrs. S. F. Gordon, Mr. F. E. Lewis, Mme. Petersen, Chas. H. Shackford, Dr. G. W. Van Pelt, *Delegate*s.

BRAHMANA T.S., Dr. J. D. Buck, *Proxy*.

BRISTOL T.S., Wm. H. Witham, *Proxy*.

BROOKLYN T.S., H. T. Patterson, *President*; Dr. Thaddeus P. Hyatt, Mrs. M. E. Hyatt, Mrs. M. B. Lull, John M. Pryse, *Delegate*s.

BUFFALO T.S., Wm. A. Stevens, *President*.

CAMBRIDGE T.S., Miss M. L. Guild, *President*; A. L. Conger, Wm. Healey, *Delegate*s.

CHICAGO T.S., Miss Leoline Leonard, *Delegate*; Alex. Fullerton, *Proxy*.

CINCINNATI T.S., Mrs. Elizabeth Burdick, Dr. W. A. R. Tenney, *Delegate*s.

COLUMBUS T.S., Mrs. M. L. Waggoner, *Delegate*; Dr. J. D. Buck, *Proxy*.

CORINTHIAN T.S., Miss Lizzie P. Chapin, *Delegate*.
DANA T.S., Claude Falls Wright, *Proxy*.
DAYTON T.S., Dr. J. D. Buck, *Proxy*.
DHARMA T.S., H. T. Patterson, *Proxy*.
DHYANA T.S., Dr. Jerome A. Anderson, *Proxy*.
ENGLEWOOD T.S., Miss Leoline Leonard, *Proxy*.
EUREKA T.S., Dr. Allen Griffiths, *Proxy*.
EXCELSIOR T.S., E. B. Rambo, *Proxy*.
FIRST T. S. OF JAMESTOWN, Miss Julia S. Yates, *Delegate*.
FORT WAYNE T.S., Dr. A. P. Buchman, A. A. Purman, *Delegate*s.
GILROY T.S., Dr. Allen Griffiths, *Proxy*.
GOLDEN GATE T.S., E. B. Rambo, *President*; Dr. Allen Griffiths, *Delegate*.
HARMONY LODGE T.S., Dr. Allen Griffiths, *Proxy*.
HERMES COUNCIL T.S., Chas. W. Newton, *President*.
"H. P. B." T.S., Miss A. M. Stabler, *President*; Dr. E. B. Guild, Arthur S. Pinkham, Sigmund Stern, *Delegate*s.
HOT SPRINGS T.S., Dr. J. D. Buck, *Proxy*.
INDIANAPOLIS T.S., A. A. Purman, *Proxy*.
INDRA T.S., Dr. J. D. Buck, *Proxy*.
ISHWARA T.S., J. C. Slafter, *President*; Dr. J. W. B. La Pierre, *Delegate*.
ISIS LODGE, Dr. J. D. Buck, *Proxy*.
KALAYANA T.S., Wm. H. Todd, *President*; Wm. H. Witham, *Delegate*.
KANSAS CITY T.S., Claude Falls Wright, *Proxy*.
KESHAVA T.S., Dr. Allen Griffiths, *Proxy*.
KRISHNA T.S., Geo. M. Stearns, *Delegate*; Louis F. Wade, *Proxy*.
KSHANTI T.S., E. B. Rambo, *Proxy*.
LAKE CITY T.S., Dr. J. D. Buck, *Proxy*.
LOS ANGELES T.S., Dr. Allen Griffiths, *Proxy*.
LOWELL T.S., Herbert A. Richardson, *President*.
LYNN T.S., Mrs. Helen A. Smith, *President*.
MACON T.S., Iverson Harris, *President*. [3]
MALDEN T.S., W. W. Harmon, *President*; Mrs. M. G. Barns, *Delegate*.
MEMPIS T.S., Claude Falls Wright, *Proxy*.
MERIDEN T.S., Isaac W. Bull, *Delegate*.
NARADA T.S., Frank I. Blodgett, *Proxy*.
NASHVILLE T.S., Claude Falls Wright, *Proxy*.
NEW ORLEANS T.S., Dr. J. D. Buck, *Proxy*.

OLYMPIA T.S., Frank I. Blodgett, *Proxy*.
PACIFIC T.S., Dr. Allen Griffiths, *Proxy*.
PITTSBURG T.S., Dr. J. D. Buck, *Proxy*.
PLEIADES T.S., Dr. Allen Griffiths, *Proxy*.
POINT LOMA T.S., Dr. Allen Griffiths, *Proxy*.
PORTLAND T.S., Geo. D. Ayers, *Proxy*.
PORT TOWNSEND T.S., Dr. J. W. B. La Pierre, *Proxy*.
PROVIDENCE T.S., Clark Thurston, President; Mrs. A. E. Percy, L. B. Sweet, *Delegates*.
REDDING T.S., Dr. Allen Griffiths, *Proxy*.
ROXBURY T.S., Miss Rhoda F. Oliver, President.
ST. JOHN T.S.,* Mrs. Louise A. Wait, *Delegate*.
ST. HELENA T.S., Dr. Allen Griffiths, Dr. J. W. B. La Pierre, *Proxies*.
ST. PAUL T.S., Dr. J. W. B. La Pierre, Claude Falls Wright, *Proxies*.
SALT LAKE T.S., Claude Falls Wright, *Proxy*.
SAN DIEGO T.S., E. B. Rambo, *Proxy*.
SANDUSKY T.S., Dr. W. A. R. Tenney, *Proxy*.
SAN FRANCISCO T.S., Dr. Jerome A. Anderson, *President*.
SANTA BARBARA T.S., Dr. Allen Griffiths, *Proxy*.
SANTA CRUZ T.S., Dr. Jerome A. Anderson, *Proxy*.
SANTA ROSA T.S., Dr. Allen Griffiths, *Proxy*.
SEATTLE T.S., Frank I. Blodgett, *Delegate*.
SEVENTY-TIMES-SEVEN T.S., E. B. Rambo, *Proxy*.
SHELTON SOLAR T.S., Frank I. Blodgett, *Proxy*.
SIOUX FALLS T.S., H. P. Pettigrew, *Delegate*.
SOMERVILLE T.S., W. H. Somersall, *President*.
SRAVAKA T.S., Dr. Allen Griffiths, *Proxy*.
STOCKTON T.S., Dr. Allen Griffiths, *Proxy*.
SYRACUSE T.S., H. T. Patterson, *Proxy*.
TOLEDA T.S., Mrs. Helen L. Wheeler, *President*; Miss E. S. Bouton, Mrs. L. H. Fisk, A. E. Lang, *Delegates*.
TORONTO T.S., Albert E. S. Smythe, *Delegate*.
TRIANGLE T.S., Dr. Allen Griffiths, *Proxy*.
VARUNA T.S., Mrs. Ida J. Wilkins, *President*.
VEDANTA T.S., Dr. J. D. Buck, *Proxy*.
WACHTMEISTER T.S., Miss Leoline Leonard, *Proxy*.
WESTERLY T.S., Dr. Lorin F. Wood, *President*.
WILLAMETTE T.S., E. B. Rambo, *Proxy*.

The list of Councillors was then read the following responded:

MRS. V. S. BEANE, by Dr. Jerome A. Anderson, *Proxy*.
MRS. ANNA L. BLODGETT, by F. I. Blodgett, *Proxy*.
HENRY BOWMAN, by E. B. Rambo, *Proxy*.
MRS. S. W. CAPE, *in person*.
MISS ANNA L. DUNBAR, by William Healey, *Proxy*.
EDGAR A. EDWARDS, by Dr. J. D. Buck, *Proxy*.
MISS KATHARINE HILLARD, *in person*.
MRS. W. Q. JUDGE, *in person*.
MRS. A. C. KELSEY, by Dr. J. D. Buck, *Proxy*.
DR. J. PHILLIP KNOCHE, by Dr. J. D. Buck, *Proxy*.
MISS LEOLINE LEONARD, *in person*.
FRANK NEUBAUER, by E. B. Rambo, *Proxy*.
JUDGE EDWARD O'ROURKE, by J. D. Bond, *Proxy*.
MRS. SARA M. READ, by Dr. J. W. B. La Pierre, *Proxy*. [4]
MRS. L. A. RUSSELL, by Dr. J. D. Buck, *Proxy*.
MRS. M. M. THIRDS, by Dr. J. D. Buck, *Proxy*.
CLARK THURSTON, *in person*.
MRS. H. L. WHEELER, *in person*.

Endnote

* This note explains the asterisk attached to the St. John T. S. on p. 420. Admitted afterwards, see page 17 of the Convention Proceedings. The entry on page 17 reads as follows:

> The Chairman (Dr. J. D. Buck): Before we proceed with the regular work, I have a special matter to present to the Convention. This morning in the examination of the credentials to ascertain who were delegates, there was one Branch which was reported as being in arrears for dues at that time. Since then the dues have been paid. It is for the Convention to decide whether this Branch shall be admitted to vote. It is the St. John Branch, and the delegate is present. The credential is signed by the Vice-President, George E. Frederick, and by the Secretary, Arthur A. Stetson. A motion to admit the Branch to representation it seems to me would be perfectly just and fair.

Dr. A. P. Buchman of Fort Wayne, Indiana was temporary chair (p. 1). He was succeeded by Dr. J. D. Buck as permanent Chair (p. 4).

* * * * *

"List of Identified Names": Identified by Ernest Pelletier, Edmonton Theosophical Society and Kenneth Small, Curator of the Lomaland Theosophy Archive and Perennial Wisdom Resources Library.

(1) W. Q. Judge

(2) Melissa Buck[1] or Mrs. W. Q. [Ella] Judge[2]

(3) J. D. Buck

[1]According to Ernest Pelletier. Melissa Bucks name does not appear on the list of attendees.

[2] According to Kenneth Small.

(4) Isabel Cooper Oakley

(5) Dr. Allen Griffith

(6) Claude Falls Wright

(7) George Ayers

(8) E. T. Hargrove

(9) Clement A. Griscom Jr.

(10) A. E. S. Smythe

(11) Jerome A. Anderson



(12) H. T. Patterson

(13) E. B. Rambo

(14) Archibald Keightley

(15) Julia Keightley

(16) Alice Cleather

(17) Robert Crosbie

(18) Joseph Fussell



"HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY"[1]

From the Records of the T. S., from 1875 to the present day.

At a meeting held in the rooms of H. P. Blavatsky, 46 Irving Place, New York City, Sept. 7, 1875, it was agreed to form a society for the purpose of occult study.

Upon motion of William Q Judge, Henry S. Olcott was elected chairman of this meeting, and upon motion of H. S. Olcott, William Q. Judge was elected secretary of the same.

Adjourned to Sept. 8, 1875.

Pursuant to adjournment, a meeting was held at the same place, Sept. 8, 1875.

Upon motion of William Q. Judge, it was voted that H. S. Olcott take the Chair. W. Q. Judge was elected secretary.

"The Chair then called for the names of those persons present who would agree to found and belong to a society such as had been mentioned. The following persons handed their names to the Secretary: Col. Olcott, Mme. H. P. Blavatsky, Chas. Sotheran, Dr. Chas. E. Simmons, H. D. Monachesi, C. C. Massey of London, W. L. Alden, G. H. Felt, D. E. de Lara, Dr. Britten, Mrs. E. H. Britten, Henry J. Newton, John Storer Cobb, J. Hyslop, W. Q. Judge, H. M. Stevens." (From the original minutes of the meeting)

Upon motion, a committee of four, including the Chairman, was appointed "to draft a constitution and by-laws, and to report the same at the next meeting."

Adjourned to Monday, Sept. 13, 1875, at the same place.

The original minutes of the next meeting are erroneously dated "Monday evening, September 18th, 1875," instead of the 13th, which was the true date; and this error was copied by Col. Olcott in his "Old Diary Leaves," *Theosophist*, Dec., 1892, p. 131.

Sept. 13, 1875, a meeting was held, pursuant to adjournment. H. S. Olcott acted as Chairman, and C. Sotheran as Secretary. The Committee on "Preamble and By-Laws" reported progress.

"At the suggestion of the Committee it was upon motion

"*Resolved*, That the name of the Society by the THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY."

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[1] "Ninth Annual Convention of the American Section Theosophical Society, and First Convention of the Theosophical Society in America, Held at Boston, Mass., April 28 and 29, 1895": 18–24. This passage appears in the Ninth Annual Convention (April 28).

A committee to select meeting rooms was appointed.

"Several persons then gave in their names, or were proposed for membership, and upon motion it was

"*Resolved*, That these persons be added to the list of founders."

Adjourned subject to the call of the Chair.

Pursuant to a notice dated at New York, Oct. 13, 1875, signed "Henry S. Olcott, President, *pro tem*." ("Old Diary Leaves," Dec., 1892, p. 135), a meeting was held at 206 West Thirty-eighth Street, Saturday , Oct. 16, 1875, "to organize and elect officers," as stated in the notice.

Eighteen persons were present.

The "Preamble and By-Laws" were laid upon the table and ordered printed. [19]

Adjourned subject to the call of the Chair. H. S. Olcott was Chairman and J. S. Cobb, Secretary.

Saturday, Oct. 30, 1875, the Society met at 206 West Thirty-eighth Street, Henry S. Olcott in the chair and J. S. Cobb acting Secretary.

Mott Memorial Hall, 64 Madison Avenue, New York City, was selected as the Society's meeting place. By-laws were adopted and a committee was appointed "to complete the work upon the Preamble, with power to adopt and print the same as the Preamble of the Society."

"It was resolved, that the election of officers be now proceeded with. Upon motion, it was resolved, that at the same time a counsellor-at-law be elected to act as Counsel to the Society."

Officers were elected as follows:—

President, Henry S. Olcott.

Vice-Presidents, Dr. S. Pancoast and G. H. Felt.

Cor. Secretary, Mme. H. P. Blavatsky.

Recording Secretary, John Storer Cobb.

Treasurer, Henry J. Newton.

Librarian, Charles H. Sotheran.

Councillors, Rev. J. H. Wiggin, R. B. Westbrook, LL.D., Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten, C. E. Simmons, M. D., and Herbert D. Monachesi.

Counsel to the Society, William Q. Judge.

"Upon motion, it was

"*Resolved*, that we now adjourn to meet at Mott Memorial Hall, on Wednesday, Nov. 17, at 8 p.m."

In the *Theosophist*, Nov. 1890, p. 66, Col. Olcott says: "On the latter occasion (Oct. 30), an adjourned meeting was appointed for the formal inauguration of the officers, and the opening address of the President. Thus the executive life

of the society dates from the evening last specified." (Nov. 17)

There is nothing in the minutes of the meeting of Oct. 30, 1875, to indicate that the "formal inauguration of the officers" was postponed to Nov. 17.

For historical purposes, we will give the entire minutes of the "meeting held at No. 64 Madison Ave., on Wednesday, Nov. 17, 1875.

"The meeting was called to order at 8:15 p.m., Henry S. Olcott, President, in the chair. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved; and the Rev. Geo. H. Hepworth and Mrs. Charles Sotheran were nominated for fellowship.

"Letters from Vice-President Geo. H. Felt, and Dr. D. G. de Lara, expressing regret at their absence from the meeting, were then read; after which the President delivered his inaugural address. [sic] at the conclusion of which it was moved by Treasurer Newton, that a vote of thanks be presented to the President for his able address, and that the address be printed.

"Moved by T. F. Thomas, as an amendment, that the address be stereotyped and five hundred copies be printed for immediate distribution. This amendment being accepted by Treasurer Newton, the resolution, as amended, was put to the meeting and carried unanimously. Upon motion, it was resolved that we now adjourn. (Signed) H. S. Olcott, President; J. Storer Cobb, Rec. Sec'y."

In the *Theosophist*, December, 1892, p. 139, the colonel says: "Thus the Theosophical Society, first conceived of on the 8th of September and constitutionally perfected on the 17th of November, 1875, after a gustatory period of seventy days, came into being and started on its marvellous career." Yes, it is true that from the 8th September to 17th November is 70 days, but the rest of it is not true. The Theosophical Society was "first [20] conceived of" Sept. 7, according to the record in the *Theosophist*, November, 1892, p. 68; and it was "constitutionally perfected" Oct. 30, 1875, according to the minutes of the society; but that would only be fifty-three days.

Quoting again from the *Theosophist*, December, 1892, p. 136, "Inadvertently, in our first published document, the Preamble and By-Laws of the Theosophical Society, the 30th of October was given as the date of organization." The title-page of the original "Preamble and By-Laws" of the Theosophical Society says that it was "organized Oct. 30, 1875," and that was and is in accord with facts.

The "gestatory period of 70 days" was, apparently, only thought of after several years, as we find the "Rules," etc., of the Theosophical Society, printed at p. 179 of the *Theosophist* for April, 1880, headed with the statement: "The Theosophical Society, or Universal Brotherhood. Formed at New York, U. S. of America, October 30, 1875."

The By-Laws adopted provided that "Nominations for fellowship shall be made in writing by two Fellows in good standing at a regular meeting of the Society, and referred, without debate, to the Council, which shall vote thereon not sooner than 30, nor later than 60, days thereafter." Also that "no alteration in the By-Laws of the Society, and no substitution of others in their place, shall be made unless offered in writing at a stated meeting of the Society, at least one month prior to final action and adoption, by a vote of two-thirds of the fellows present."

Regular meetings of the Society were held at New York, from time to time, and minutes kept. In 1878, Mr. Cobb, the Recording Secretary at the time of organization, was sent to London, where in June of that year he established the "British Theosophical Society." His commission, which we insert for historical purposes, was as follows:

"To the Corresponding Fellows of the Theosophical Society in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Greeting:—

"Know Ye, that the aforesaid Society, by its President and Council, doth hereby commission John Storer Cobb, LL.D., as its special representative, to call a meeting of Corresponding Fellows at the city of London, on the first Thursday of December, or such other day of the present year as may be most convenient, for the purpose of organizing a Branch Society to be known as the 'British Theosophical Society'; to represent the President of this Society at the same; to administer to such as may not have previously taken it, the obligation of secrecy; and to impart the grips, passwords, and signs by which Fellows may know each other in case of need. And we do enjoin upon you that you be faithful and discreet in all that pertains to your relations with this Society and with the Branch Society for whose organization this shall be your Warrant.

"In testimony whereof, we have caused these presents to be signed by the proper officers and sealed with the seal of the Theosophical Society, at the city of New York, in the year 1887 [sic.: 1878], and of the formation of this Society the second.

[SEAL]

H. S. OLCOTT, *President*.
ALEXANDER WILDER,
R. B. WESTBROOK, *Vice-Presidents*
H. P. BLAVATSY [sic], *Corresponding Secretary*.
A. GUSTAM, *Recording Secretary*."

In the *Theosophist* for November, 1890, p. 67, Col. Olcott says: "They ultimately organized in the year 1878, with the help of Dr. Storer Cobb as my official delegate." As was seen above, Mr. Cobb was the "delegate" of the T. S. and not of its President.

"Mr. C. C. Massey was elected President. In November of the same year it was resolved that the title of the Society should be, The Theosophical Society of London, a branch of the Theosophical Society of the Arya Samaj of Aryavart." (Report of the 1st Annual Convention of the "Theosophical Society in Europe," p. 36.)

In a letter quoted in the *Theosophist* for July, 1882, Supplement, p. 8, Swami Dayanand Saraswati said: "Afterwards they sent me a diploma as it was then intended to make the Theosophical Society a BRANCH of the Arya Samaj of Aryavarta. . . . Of course, neither the Arya Samaj nor the T. S. was to be considered a branch of the other, but only the Vedic Section of the T. S."

[21] Correspondence was held by the New York Society with the Swami in 1878, with the result that many members of the T. S. were given diplomas certifying to membership in "The Theosophical Society of the Arya Samaj of Aryavart."

In the latter part of the 1878, Col. Olcott and Mme. Blavatsky were appointed a "Committee of the T. S." in New York, to visit foreign lands and report to the Society. The *Theosophist* for October, 1879, Vol. I., No. I, p. 1, first item, says: "For the convenience of future reference, it may as well be stated here that the Committee, sent to India by the Theosophical Society, sailed from New York, Dec. 17, 1878, and landed at Bombay, Feb. 16, 1879, having passed two weeks in London on the way." In same vol., p. 95, Col. Olcott says he "came to India with two English colleagues and their learned Corresponding Secretary, Madame Blavatsky. They came only expecting to study eastern religion and Yoga Vidya, and report their discoveries to the Western Theosophists." On arrival in India, the Colonel had their pictures taken and sent to America, endorsed by him "the delegation to India." The Society in New York consisted of over 40 members at this time. From Oct. 30,

1875, to Jan. 1, 1879, all alterations of the By-Laws were made in regular and formal manner by the Society in New York, which organization was kept up for some seven Years or more, as originally constituted.

What purported to be "Revised Rules of the Theosophical Society" were adopted at Bombay in October, 1879, by a body which called itself the "General Council of the Theosophical Society." There was published in the *Theosophist* for April 1880, Volume I, page 179, "The Theosophical Society or Universal Brotherhood. [Formed at New York, United States of America, Oct. 30, 1875.] Principles, Rules, and By-Laws as revised in General Council, at the meeting held at the palace of H. H. the Maharajah of Vizianagram, Benares, 17th December, 1879." To this was subjoined the statement: "Revised and ratified by the Society at Bombay, February the 26th and 28th, 1880. Attest, Kharsedji N. Seervai, Joint Recording Secretary.

Just what sort of a "roving commisson [sic.]" was given the "Committee sent to India" does not appear in the records, but authority to admit active members could not have been given without amending the By-Laws, and no such amendment was made. The fact is, as has been shown above, that when the Committee left New York they went "only expecting to study Eastern Religions and Yoga Vidya, and report their discoveries to the Western Theosophists"; and Swami Dayanand says of them, as quoted in supplement to June *Theosophist*, 1882, p. 6, "They came to India as students, but have set themselves up as teachers, by establishing a Society of their own which has proved of no practical good to India."

Col. Olcott has, in many places, tried to show that when the Committee sailed away, the New York Society went into "innocuous desuetude," which is "United States" for *Samadhi*. In the *Theosophist* for December, 1892, p. 139, he says: "Mr. Judge, General Doubleday, and their associates in the original T. S., whom we left in charge on leaving for India." "We" did not leave anybody in charge. Gen. Abner Doubleday was elected President, *pro tem*., by the Society, to serve during the absence of the President; and this election was never revoked, and the position was legally held by the General up to his death. This authority was exercised more than three years after the departure of the Committee, as is shown in the *Theosophist*, November,

1882, Supplement, p. 2, where it says, "Prof. A. L. Rawson, LL.D., F. T. S., as delegated representative of Major-General A. Doubleday, Acting-President of the (New York) T. S., organized at Rochester, N. Y., on the 27th day of July, the local Branch for which a charter had been duly issued from the Bombay Headquarters." The application for permission to form this Branch is given in full in the Supplement to April, 1892 [sic: 1882], *Theosophist*, p. 2, from which we quote: "… hereby make application to the Parent Society in New York, [22] for a charter, with permission to form a branch association, to be known as 'The Rochester Branch of the New York Theosophical Society.'"

A letter printed in July, 1882, *Theosophist* (Supplement, p. 17), is prefaced: "From Major-General Abner Doubleday, U. S. A., President pro tem., Theosophical Society, New York."

At a meeting held in New York, March 22, 1882, "the initiation of Mr. John F. Oakey was then proceeded with," as is stated in the minutes.

In Supplement to November, 1883, *Theosophist*, p 22, Elliott B. Page, then President of the St. Louis T. S., says their members "were initiated (June 5, 1883) by Frank Kraft, who acted by authority of a special resolution passed by the Council at New York." All of which goes to show that the activity of the original Society was kept up.

A great deal of confusion has existed as to the "Parent" Society. That the T. S., as such, was founded and organized at New York, Oct. 30, 1875, there can be no doubt, and it would naturally follow that the New York Society should be considered the "parent"; and it was considered at least one of them, as we find an item in the supplement to December, 1882, *Theosophist*, p. 8 "Mr. John H. Judge, Acting Recording Secretary of the New York (Parent) Society. . . ."

But then it is not so strange that a society, as well as a respectable person, should have two parents, and we have many references in the early volumes of the *Theosophist*, is a letter signed "One of the Hindu Founders of the Parent T. S."

The time was ripe for such a Movement, and it quickly spread from New York to England, where it was first carried by Mr. C. C. Massey, one of the founders, and then the "Committee" introduced it to India and other Eastern countries Then, as now, it easily took root everywhere.

Independence of Branches and Lodges has been claimed from the beginning. The Simla Eclectic T. S.

always asserted it, as did the London Lodge which succeeded the British T. S. Mr. A. P. Sinnett, in a letter addressed to Col. Olcott (Rep. of the 4th Convention of Europe. Section, p. 39), said: ". . . I was glad to receive a letter from you recognizing the London Lodge as standing on an independent footing." H. P. B. in *Lucifer*, Vol. IV., p. 509, says: ". . . Sections and Branches like the 'London Lodge' and others, which *are autonomous*." (Again p. 508), she says: "H. P. Blavatsky will always bow before the decision of the majority of a Section or even a simple Branch; but she will ever protest against the decision of the General Council, were it composed of Archangels and Dhyan Chohans themselves, if their decision seems to her unjust or untheosophical, or fails to meet with the approval of a majority of the Fellows."

Again, same page, she says: "There is no longer a Parent Society; it is abolished and replaced by an aggregate body of Theosophical Societies, *all autonomous*." The italics are hers.

When the British Section was formed, the London Lodge refused to go into it and claimed its independence, which was allowed; it voluntarily became a part of the "Theosophical Society in Europe" in 1890, but withdrew in 1891, saying: "Clinging with great tenacity, however, to the principle of autonomy, it will now revert to its former status, and while heartily in sympathy with all bodies recognized as parts of the world-wide Theosophical Society which Mme. Blavatsky and Col. Olcott founded, it will not take any share in the administration or control of any other Branches." (rep. of 1st Ann. Conv. T. S. in Europe.)

In July, 1890, the following appeared in *Lucifer*, Vol. VI., p. 428:

> "NOTICE.—In obedience to the almost unanimous voice of the Fellows of the Theo-[23]sophical Society in Europe, I, H. P. Blavatsky, the originator and Co-Founder of the Theosophical Society, accept the duty of exercising the presidential authority for the whole of Europe; and in virtue of this authority I declare that the Headquarters of the Theosophical Society in London, where I reside, will in future be the Headquarters for the transaction of all official business of the Theosophical Society in Europe.
>
> "H. P. BLAVATSKY"

In a letter dated May 17, 1893, written by Col. Olcott to Mr. Judge, he

says:—

> "If you want separate Theosophical Societies made out of Sections, have them by all means. I offered this years ago to H. P. B., and even to A. P. S. [Sinnett]."

Though perhaps out of place here, we cannot refrain from quoting the following tribute from Col. Olcott to Mr. Judge:

> "Though so very much my junior in both age and experience, I liked him from the first; and have always fully appreciated his excellent qualities, as they developed themselves in the course of time. The crowning proof of my regard has just been given in my accepting him as my successor in office; which I hope he may fill even more acceptable than I have."
>
> (*Theos* Nov., 1892, p. 73.)

The Theosophical Society, as representing the *Theosophical Movement*, is the result of evolution and growth. Those who gathered together in September and October, 1875, in New York, had not the remotest idea of the present lines upon which the movement is conducted.

The second clause of the first sentence of the Preamble which H. S. Olcott wrote, said "they seek 'to obtain knowledge of the nature and attributes of the Supreme Power and of the higher spirits *by the aid of physical processes*.'" The italics are in the original.

In *Theosophist*, November, 1890, p. 67, he quotes the second clause of the sentence, but not the first, and says, "I drafted this document myself." Probably H. P. B. knew what she was about, but certainly the others did not. They were after "proof of the existence of an 'Unseen Universe,' the nature of its inhabitants, if such there be, and the laws which govern them and their relations with mankind." (Preamble.) They all thought that in Mme. Blavatsky they had found an extraordinary medium, nothing more; and the Colonel has not recovered from that delusion to this day, as witness his "Old Diary Leaves."

The connecting links between the original Society in New York and the present Federation of Branches in this country are all complete. The earlier Branches were formed by delegates from New York, and they established the old "Board of Control," which was superseded in regular from by the present Federation known as the "American Section T.S.," all done by delegates from the Branches, as is shown by continuous minutes kept in a

book that is still used for that purpose.

From a careful consideration of all the facts as above set forth, it follows: That the T. S., *as an organization founded at N. Y. in 1875*, never had any existence outside of New York City, and could not, and cannot, have. Its By-Laws were adopted by a vote and could only be changed by a like vote They sent a delegate to London and he founded a *new* society there. They sent a "Committee" to India and they founded a *new* Society there. They sent a "Committee" to India and they founded a new Society there. They were to "investigate and report," but as yet they have not rendered their report.

By formal "resolution," the original Society was named "The Theosophical Society," but at different times we find, "The Theosophical Society of the Ayra [sic] Samaj of Aryawart"; "The Theosophical Society, or Universal Brotherhood," and now "The Theosophical Society *and* Universal Brotherhood."

None of the various sets of "Rules," "Principles," "By-Laws," "Constitutions," etc., promulgated from time to time by alleged "General Councils," were ever sub-[24]mitted to the members of the Society in New York, and that Society never voted on any of them. They were never even submitted to any of the Branches, nor to any convention of delegates of Branches, anywhere, and are not binding on any one. No body representative of all the *Branches* ever elected Col. Olcott "President for life," and no such body ever "appointed" William Q. Judge Vice-President. Col. Olcott simply announced such appointment to the alleged "General Council," and the Convention of the Indian Section, and they "ratified" it! The whole business, *as an organization comprising al the Branches in the world*, is a "flapdoodle" from the beginning to end.

To what conclusion are we then to come? Simply this: THE UNITY OF THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT DOES NOT DEPEND UPON SINGLENESS OF ORGANIZATION, BUT UPON SIMILARITY OF WORK AND ASPIRATION; and in this we will "KEEP THE LINK UNBROKEN."

* * * * *

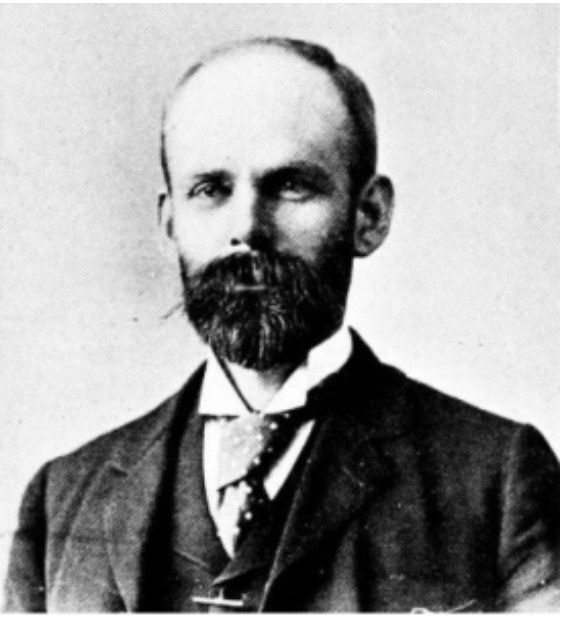
The Legal Opinion of the Theosophical Society and Its Branches and Members

From The First Convention of the Theosophical Society in America, April 29: 52–53

by George D. Ayers

APPENDIX.
LEGAL OPINION[1]

By Geo. D. Ayers, Counsellor-at-Law, Boston, on the statement of facts relating to The Theosophical Society:



George D. Ayers
Compliments of Shawn F. Higgins

Boston, *April 26, 1895.*
William Q. Judge, Esq., 144 Madison Avenue, New York City.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER: I have, at your request, carefully examined into the legal status of the so-called Theosophical Society, of its American Branches and members, and of the American Section thereof, basing my examination upon the historical statement to be read at the coming Convention of said Section in Boston, and upon an examination of the By-laws and records of The Theosophical Society which was founded in New York

in 1875.

I am of opinion:

(1) That the original Society in the present movement was founded in New York on October 30, 1875, and that no such Society, known to the world or to anybody, so far as I can discover, was founded November 17, 1875.

(2) That no amendment to the By-laws of this Society was ever regularly adopted changing the rule requiring the President to be elected annually, and that Col. Henry S. Olcott, if the Society can still be said to be in existence, is not President for life, and can, *at the very best*, be said to be no more than an officer whose term of office has expired, holding office until his successor has been chosen and qualified. I take up the question of Col. Olcott's actual relation to the presidency later on.

(3) That the Headquarters of this Society have never been removed from the city of New York, and certainly are not in India.

(4) That Gen. Doubleday, having been elected President *pro tem*. to serve during Col. Olcott's absence from the country, upon Gen. Doubleday's death some other person should have been elected President *pro tem*. during Col. Olcott's continued absence.

(5) That, under the present circumstances, even if said Theosophical Society were still in active existence, Col. Olcott could not exercise the duties of President, constituted as they are under the By-laws of that Society, while residing in India.

(6) That no persons, supposed to have been elected as members of the Theosophical Society, are in fact members of that body which was founded in New York in 1875, unless they were nominated in writing by two Fellows, in good standing, of that Society, at a regular meeting thereof in New York City; unless also their names were referred to the Council thereof and voted on by that Council not sooner than thirty, nor later than sixty days thereafter.

(7) That apparently the great majority of the so-called Fellows of The Theosophical Society are neither *de jure* nor *de facto* members of the original organization of that name.

(8) That, so far as the records disclose, only one or two organizations appear even regularly to have been affiliated with that body which has been supposed to

be the parent body of The Theosophical Society.

(9) That, so far as I can discover, since 1882 or thereabouts the original body has not manifested signs of life.

(10) That the so-called Theosophical Society, having Branches all over the world and headquarters in India, has no regularly-adopted Constitution or By-laws, no regularly-elected President, Vice-President or other officers, and none other than a de facto existence.

(11) That none of its Sections, so called, with General Secretaries, etc., have any other than a de facto existence as Sections of the aforesaid *de facto* body, whatever their existence as independent bodies may be.

(12) That, on the other hand, the various so-called Branches of The Theosophical Society in America have a *de jure* existence, not as branches of the so-called General Theosophical Society, but as free and independent bodies (except so far as they voluntarily may have yielded some of their rights and privileges to federations of such bodies), deriving their *de jure* existence, not from any charter of an organization which is *de facto* only, but from the voluntary agreement and association of their own individual members. [53]

(13) That, whatever may be the fact in regard to the European and Indian Sections, the federation of bodies heretofore known as the American Section of the Theosophical Society has a *de jure* existence, not as a section of a *de facto* body, but by virtue of the voluntary association of originally free and independent bodies, miscalled branches of the General Theosophical Society, so called; whereas so far as they are branches, they are branches only of the federation existing in America, and that, of right, said federation of American Branches is already free and independent of all bodies of the so-called Theosophical Society outside the federation of American Branches.

Fraternally,

George D. Ayers.

Endnote

1 This "Legal Opinion" appears in the 1895 Report of Proceedings after the First Convention of the Theosophical Society in America, held on April 29, 1895. This Convention followed the American Section's Ninth Annual Convention held on April 28. Both conventions were published together in the 1895 Report, and paginated consecutively. This passage appears on pages 52 and 53.

"The Theosophical Society in America," Redux

James A. Santucci

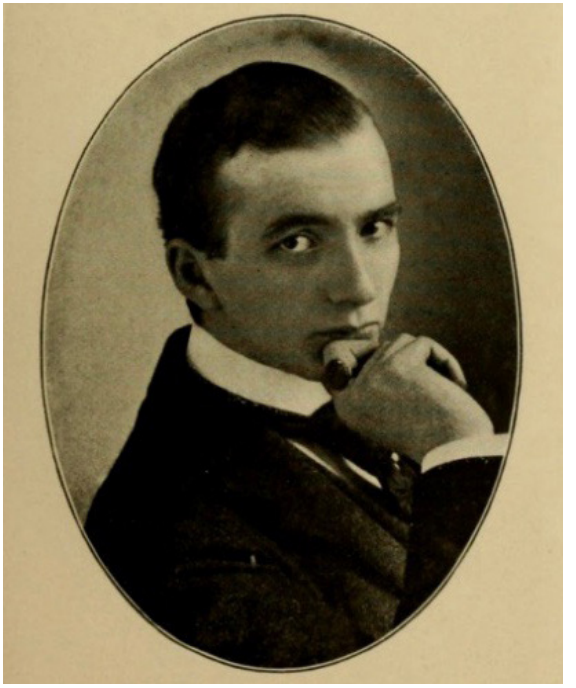
Introduction

The title "The Theosophical Society in America" first appeared subsequent to the American Section's declaration of autonomy from the Theosophical Society (Adyar) in 1895. Known as the American Section of the Theosophical Society prior to its declaration, The Theosophical Society in America considered itself a fully independent society claiming a continuity with the original Theosophical Society established in New York in 1875. In other words, The Theosophical Society had a de jure *existence, whereas the "so-called Theosophical Society, having Branches all over the world and headquarters in India"—i.e., Adyar— is a* de facto *body with "no regularly-adopted Constitution or By-laws, no regularly-elected President, Vice-President or other officers." According to the American Section and soon-to-be The Theosophical Society in America, the Adyar society could not identify with the original New York society founded and formed by Helena P. Blavatsky, Henry Steel Olcott, W. Q. Judge, and others. The Theosophical Society in America's existence under Judge, and for a short time after his death, Ernest Temple Hargrove and Katherine Tingley, was transformed into a subordinate organization of the Universal Brotherhood with the introduction of a new constitution in 1898. This constitution, proposed by Katherine Tingley and accepted by the delegates during the proceedings of the Fourth Annual Convention (February 18, 1898), defined the T. S. A. as an incorporated and subordinate body of the U. B. This action was declared to be illegal and therefore null and void by a minority of delegates. In meetings held later on the same day and again on the next day, it was agreed upon that The Theosophical Society in America remain an autonomous and self-governing entity. From the time of this decision (February 19, 1898), there were two separate organizations known as The Theosophical Society in America: (a) a completely autonomous organization; (b) a non-autonomous society serving as an "integral part of UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD" with specific duties "to establish and build up a great library." The paper which follows focuses on the*

autonomous organization sometimes known as the Hargrove Theosophical Society or less frequently the Griscom Theosophical Society. Whether The Theosophical Society in America (1898 to 1908), thereafter simply The Theosophical Society (1908–1938), is the only legal successor or continuation of the original Theosophical Society formed in New York in 1875, or is even considered (legally) as the successor to the first Theosophical Society in America (1895–1898) is best left to legal experts.

* * *

Subsequent to The Theosophical Society American Section's declaration of autonomy in 1895, the General Secretary, William Q. Judge, assumed the office as President of the newly-named and reconstituted Theosophical Society in America,[1] a position he maintained until his death on March 21, 1896, less than a year following his election. After Judge's death, Ernest Temple Hargrove (1870–1939) was elected President the following month during The T. S. A.'s Second Annual Convention held at Madison Square Garden (New York) on April 26, 1896. Also elected were Dr. Jirah Dewey Buck (1838–1916) to the Vice-Presidency and E. August Neresheimer (1847–1937) as General Treasurer. Clement Acton Griscom Jr. (1868–1918)—the husband of Genevieve (Sprigg Ludlow) Griscom (1868–1958) and a major supporter of the T. S. A.—was elected to the Executive Council.[2] Judge's position, however, was not limited only to the Presidency. He was also Outer Head of the Eastern School of Theosophy [E. S. T.], the



Ernest T. Hargrove

Compliments of Shawn F. Higgins



Clement Acton Griscom Jr.

Compliments of Shawn F. Higgins

new name (as of 1890) of the Esoteric Section. The founder of "The Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society" in 1888, Helena P. Blavatsky, served as its Outer Head (the Inner Heads being the Mahatmas belonging to the Lodge) until her death in 1891, after which the office devolved to two Outer Heads: W. Q. Judge as Outer Head of the E. S. T. in America, and Annie Besant—the president of the Blavatsky Lodge in London—as Outer Head of the E. S. T. outside America. Shortly following Judge's death, Hargrove revealed that the new Outer Head, the true "spiritual" leader and Judge's "occult heir and successor to the Outer Headship," was Katherine Tingley.[3] Although her appointment was originally intended to be kept secret for a year following Judge's death,[4] plans for a "Crusade" to be conducted throughout Europe required her to assume publicly her new position in order to conduct the campaign.[5] The E. S. T. was important as an organization designed to "promote the esoteric interests of the Theosophical Society by the deeper study of esoteric philosophy."[6] Originally, there was no institutional connection between the T. S. and E. S. T., which was evident when Blavatsky was Outer Head of the Esoteric Section and, later, the E. S. T., therefore independent of the Presidency of the T. S. under H. S. Olcott.[7] Tingley, however, would combine the positions of Outer Head of the E. S. T. and Leader of the newly reconstituted Universal Brotherhood in early 1898.[8]

Hargrove remained President until his resignation in September 13, 1897,[9] the stated reason being financial in nature.[10] His successor was the Vice-President, E. A. Neresheimer, but the one who was actually in charge was the Outer Head, who would soon assume the position of "Leader and Official Head"[11] of the Universal Brotherhood (replacing the previously-titled office of President of the Theosophical Society in America), thus replicating W. Q. Judge's positions during the earlier part of the decade.

Numerous actions were undertaken by Mrs. Tingley that would change the

direction of The Theosophical Society in America. The first indication of such a change was the renaming of the magazine *Theosophy*—the last issue under this title being the October 1897 issue—to that of *Universal Brotherhood* beginning with the November 1897 issue. Its aim was to promulgate "the principles of the Brotherhood of Humanity in the widest sense" and "to show that the Unity or Brotherhood of Mankind is an actual fact in nature."[12]

The Fourth Annual Convention, planned for Friday, February 18th at Handel Hall in Chicago, announced in the February 1898 issue of *Universal Brotherhood*. Tingley announced the beginning of a new cycle[13] in her January 3rd announcement, promising a "stupendous" convention in keeping with the "importance of this great cycle."[14] Based upon the report in the March 1898 issue, the promise was kept. "The Universal Brotherhood," founded by Tingley on January 13, 1898, was accepted by "an almost unanimous vote" at the Convention.[15]

The U. B.'s new constitution[16] revealed radical changes, chief among them the subordination of The Theosophical Society in America's. The T. S. A., designated as a department of the Universal Brotherhood, was responsible for disseminating Theosophical literature and supplementary literature of importance to the U. B. Furthermore, another Department was created, the International Brotherhood League, which was suggested in the June 1897 issue of *The Theosophical Forum*. The organization was designed to undertake "*unsectarian brotherhood work*," such as "that among convicts and the lower classes in larger cities, in addition to the work of the Lotus Circles[17] and the teaching and helping children."[18]

A number of delegates, however, objected to this proposal. In the February 1898 issue of *The Theosophical Forum*, an "Official Notice," composed by the Acting President A. H. Spencer on behalf of the Executive Committee, objected to the proposal to subordinate The Theosophical Society secondary status. This was based upon two procedural inconsistencies: 1) amendments must be filed with the President of the Society at least three months before the Annual Convention, after which they must be printed and disseminated among the Branches at least two months before the Convention; 2) the amendments must be approved by at least two-thirds of all delegates present and voting.[19]

Mrs. Tingley and her allies, however, continued with the incorporation of the

T. S. A. "as the Literary Department of Universal Brotherhood,"[20] with Mrs. Tingley being acknowledged as the "Leader and Official Head" of both the U.B. and T. S. A.[21] Those who objected to this attempt to subordinate the T. S. A. to the status of a "department" within the parent organization—the Universal Brotherhood—assembled later in the day during the February Convention at the Palmer House in Chicago. Therein, E. T. Hargrove was nominated for the office of President, which he declined. Nonetheless, he argued for the autonomy and independence of the T. S. A., following W. Q. Judge's views on the importance of self-government.[22] Furthermore, Hargrove raised another issue that he recognized would create a conundrum that could not be easily solved given the constitution of the Society. He reminded his audience of a question raised by a correspondent in the June 1896 issue of *Theosophy*:

> "Is the 'E. S. T.' any part of the Theosophical Society in America, and does any officer of the 'E. S. T.' have authority in the management of the exoteric Society?"

The answer, as quoted in *Theosophy*,[23] is given in the following passage:

> The E. S. T., or so-called Inner Circle, is an organization entirely separate from the T. S. A. There is no official connection whatsoever between the two bodies. Many members of the E. S. T. reside in Europe and are members of the Theosophical Society in Europe. Others are in India and Australasia. No officer of the E. S. T. has any voice in the control of the exoteric Society, merely because he holds such office. The T. S. A. is a self-governing and autonomous body, whose offices are elected at stated intervals by the votes of the Branches represented by their delegates in Convention assembled.

Support for the Universal Brotherhood and for the T. S. A.'s incorporation in it, however, easily passed at the Fourth Convention. Those who opposed the reorganization, a minority estimated between 200 and perhaps as high as 800 members out of a total of 2700 members,[24] refused to accept the new constitution, and continued to recognize the T. S. A. as "an autonomous organization existing

under and by virtue of, a regularly adopted Constitution and By-Laws, in conformity with which the Government of the Society is vested in its Branches in Convention assembled."[25]

Since the matter was not resolved between the two factions, a second convention was held at Cincinnati on May 29, 1898. Called by the advocates of autonomy and led by the Acting President, A. H. Spencer, its primary purpose was to reaffirm the Proclamation of the 1895 Boston Convention.[26] The legal status of The Theosophical Society in America was based upon three principal truths argued by Mr. Ayers, in his legal opinion of the historical events surrounding the formation and development of The Theosophical Society[27]:

> 1) The Theosophical Society, since it was formed in the United States, is the "*Parent Society*," not the Theosophical Society headquartered in Adyar;
>
> 2) According to the events held at the 1895 Convention, the Theosophical Society in America is not to be considered a "schismatic body organized to protect wrong-doing from Judicial penalty"—*i.e.*, the Judge Case;
>
> 3) Consequently, attempts to abrogate the autonomy of the T. S. A. and to place it under a leader who is head of an organization that bears no official ties with the T. S. A. in effect gives lie to the admonition "*keep the link unbroken*."[28]

It was, therefore, the opinion of the delegates that this reformed[29] or restored Theosophical Society in America constituted in 1898 continued to be in a direct line with Mr. Judge's T. S. A., which in turn claimed to be identical to the "Parent Society" that was founded in New York City in 1875.[30] Following these deliberations, the members elected Jirah Dewey Buck as its first President.[31]

The newly constituted Society continued to be associated with an Eastern School of Theosophy much like the Adyar and Point Loma societies. Its Outer Head was unknown to its members and continues to be unknown to this day.[32] In accordance with the School's original organization, there was no association between the Outer Head with the governing body of the exoteric Society.[33] The Outer Head's major responsibility was not administrative but rather one who guided students in their studies and aided in their interior development"[34] In any event,

the question over the dual leadership of The T. S. A. and E. S. T. became moot since the office of presidency of The T. S. A. became defunct by the time of the Ninth Annual Convention on April 26, 1903.[35]

Aside from the disagreements between the two Theosophical Societies, both remained loyal to the memory and Theosophical teachings of W. Q. Judge. Although Mr. Judge was the anchor for both Mrs. Tingley's society and The T. S. A., these societies differed in their approach to promulgating Theosophical ideals. Mrs. Tingley's society assumed a more extroverted and activist form of Theosophy, emphasizing education of the young, advocating peace activities, and organizing cultural events that were open to the community at large. All these activities were either planned and/or conducted at the Universal Brotherhood's headquarters at Point Loma, San Diego, California in 1897.

This was not the case with The T. S. A., however. One of the original and more influential members of the Society described the period between 1898 and 1903 as a "period of reconstruction" and "inner recuperation,"[36] a description introduced in 1919. Sixteen years following (1935), Mitchell, in his observations of the closing cycle at the end of the nineteenth century and the commencement of the new cycle—a subject which will be covered below—declared that this same period (1898–1903) was in fact a "period of indrawal and of silence, preparatory to the new advance which was begun with the founding of the QUARTERLY in 1903."[37] It would appear that Mitchell was contrasting the "indrawal" of The T. S. A. with the extroverted activities of the U. B. The allusion to an indrawal revealed an aspect of Theosophical teaching that was not as prominent in other Theosophical societies. Whether the teaching was interpreted in a manner that transgressed common sense or rationality is best left to the reader. However, the teaching suggested a total adherence and submission to cyclic law as understood by some Theosophists to a degree that is difficult to comprehend or rationalize.

Christ and Christianity within The Theosophical Society in America

The Theosophical Society in America, later renamed "The Theosophical Society" in 1908,[38] although completely loyal to Blavatsky's interpretation of Theosophical teachings, retained an

allegiance to her acolyte, William Q. Judge, that was more intimate and familiar. It was Judge who sustained and grew the American Section throughout the 1880s, and who inspired a large number of loyal and talented followers until his demise in 1896. Many of these followers remained in the Universal Brotherhood, a significant number in The T. S. A., and later, in the United Lodge of Theosophists. Doctrinally, all were closely aligned with Judge's presentation of Theosophy, whose approach in turn was faithful with Blavatsky's interpretation. This is partially borne out in an article that appeared in the U. L. T. journal, *Theosophy*.[39] Therein, the author harshly criticized leaders of the rival societies, reserving the harshest judgment for Hargrove, who was considered the leading figure of The Theosophy Society.

Hargrove was judged to be the worst of past and current Theosophical leaders, including Madame Tingley, her successor Dr. G. de Purucker, and the President of the Adyar T. S., Annie Besant. The criticism of Mr. Hargrove, however, had nothing to do with doctrinal matters. It was his attempt to impose[40]:

> "Madam Tingley on the 'E. S. T.' and the T. S. in A. as the "Successor" appointed by Mr. Judge; next, to try to upset her from her papal seat; finally, to take her role upon himself as "the Voice of the Master" who issued dictums "in the name of the Masters."

No mention arose regarding the emphasis on the teaching of the "Living Christ" that became dominant in the Society. The U. L. T. publication, *The Theosophical Movement: 1875–1925*, simply observed that the Society had become a "mild and respectable Theosophical Episcopalianism, with particular emphasis on 'the Master Jesus' and the 'theosophy' of the 'saints' of Catholic history."[41] A quarter century later, however, *The Theosophical Movement: 1875–1950* assumed a more critical stance, echoing the anonymous author's article in *Theosophy* magazine that Hargrove regarded himself as "Masters' Agent," that the Society's journal, *Theosophical Quarterly*, was "never much concerned with the dissemination of straight Theosophical teachings, but, … assumed increasingly an Anglican ministerial tone.[42] In so many words, this later publication accused The T. S. as teaching a predominantly Christian (Anglican or Episcopalian) form of Theosophy

that strayed from the Blavatsky-Judge message.

Without discounting the statements above, Alvin Boyd Kuhn added one component that elucidated the Society's attitude toward Jesus and (the) Christ: the emphasis on Western rather than "Oriental" esoteric traditions, specifically the prominence of "mystic elements in Christianity."[43] This was advocated by the Society's most revered leader and primary exponent and interpreter of Theosophical teaching, Mr. Judge, who noted that the beginning of "a new era … the era of Western Occultism"[44] was one in which Theosophists must "preach, promulgate, expound, illustrate, and make clear in detail all the great things we have learned."[45]

The Society's attitude toward Christianity, (the) Christ, and Jesus was, in my opinion, perhaps more in agreement with the early New York society than the T. S. in Adyar. Blavatsky's comments on Christianity, it is true, were negative toward doctrinal Christianity but not to "true Christianity." This is especially true in Judge's case, who mentions in an approving fashion Christianity a number of times in his addresses and articles. One example illustrating this attitude is a lecture delivered on January 9, 1894 before the Āryan Theosophical Society in New York. Entitled "Things Common to Christianity and Theosophy," Judge began with the assertion in no uncertain terms that "the Theosophical Society is not opposed to Christianity in either its dogmatic or pure form."[46] He identified Theosophy as the one truth underlying all religions, justifying the second object of the T. S., which asserts that the T. S. advance a "full and free study of all religions without bias, and without hatred or sectarianism." Christianity, as a relatively young religion when compared with such religions as Buddhism and Brahmanism, had borrowed certain doctrines and rituals from older religions, including karma and reincarnation. Judge concludes his lecture with the following statement[47]:

> We therefore must conclude that the religion of Jesus is in complete accord with the chief doctrines of Theosophy; it is fair to assume that even the most recondite of theosophical theories would not have been opposed by him. Our discussion must have led us to the conclusion that the religion of Karma, the practice of good works, is that in which the religion

> of Jesus agrees with Theosophy, and that alone thereby will arrive the longed-for day when the great ideal of Universal Brotherhood will be realized, and will furnish the common ground on which all faiths may stand and from which every nation may work for the good and he perfection of the human family.

Judge's view of "true Christianity" was retained and even enhanced by The Theosophical Society in America. As a loyal member of the Society and a colleague and recipient of a number of letters from Judge, Jasper Niemand (Mrs. Julia Ver Planck, later Mrs. Archibald Keightley) confirmed Judge's assessment of Christianity in an article that appeared in the *Theosophical Quarterly*[48]:

> "Theosophy" is the very soul and core of His teachings; that the spirit of Christianity and of Theosophy is one and the same, and that every Religion has one identical object. That object—and each one of us may make it his own—the object is:
>
> THE RESTORATION OF THE CHRIST.

The suggestions in the two editions of the U. L. T. publications, *The Theosophical Movement* (1925 and 1950), that the Society possessed an "Anglican ministerial tone" and displays a character resembling "Theosophical Episcopalianism," though mildly critical, carries the weight of veracity and accuracy. Though not generally known, some of the leading members of The T. S. were affiliated with the Episcopal Church, which strengthened



Chapel-of-the-Comforter

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the Society's interest in Christianity and maintained its emphasis on "(the) Christ," the "Master Christ," "Jesus," the "Living Christ"—all designations appearing in the *Theosophical Quarterly*—and especially its unspecified affiliation with an organization initially known as "The Order of the Living Christ."[49] The emphasis on "Jesus" and "The Christ" is apparent throughout the *Theosophical Quarterly*, and is best represented by the same author mentioned above, Jasper Niemand[50]:

> ["Christianity"] represents that aspect of truth which was taught by Jesus of Nazareth—whom some men called "The Christ," the Founder of the true Christianity, pure and undefiled. . . .
>
> Evolving on the one hand, we involve or draw in, on the other hand, that spiritual Life which we individualise and render self-conscious within us, furthering thus that return to the Father which was taught by Jesus the Christ. . . .
>
> Thus it has been said that Krishna taught Devotion. Buddha taught Brotherhood, love of all men and of all creatures. Jesus combined the two, but the distinctive note of is teaching was the relation of son to father between Man and Divinity. . . .
>
> Many of us believe the doctrine of Avatars[51] to be one of the great truths; that the Spirit of Divine Truth has its especial incarnations, from time to time, overshadowing or indwelling with the great spiritual Teachers. We look upon these holy ones as Masters, as Members of the Spiritual Lodge, and believe that Jesus the Christ was one of those.

The importance of the Episcopal or Anglican affiliation of some of the more important members of the Society has not been fully explored. Of the members, the Griscoms and E. T. Hargrove were the most prominent, lesser known but still an important figure was the Rev. Clarence Carroll Clarke[52] (1875–1973), who served as Director of the Chapel of the Comforter for nearly forty years (*ca.* 1911–1950).

We can assume that Clement A. and Genevieve L. Griscom were associated with the Episcopal Church because of their marriage ceremony on September 18, 1889 in the historic Grace Church,[53] an Episcopal church located on 802 Broadway (Manhattan). Later, he joined the Church of the Ascension in 1902.[54] Clement was a noted manufacturer and industrialist[55] and, as noted above,

a major financial supporter of the Society. Griscom's Episcopal connection remained until his death on December 30, 1918, his funeral taking place on January 1, 1919 at the Chapel of the Comforter,[56] which was affiliated with the Order of the Living Christ.

Similarly, E. T. Hargrove married his first wife, Aimee Virginia Neresheimer, in the Episcopal Church of the Holy Apostles on January 17, 1889.[57] He maintained a close relationship with Episcopalianism, highlighted by his position as lay reader in the Episcopal Church of the Ascension, which was affiliated with the Chapel of the Comforter. As early as 1908, *The New York Times* reported that he preached at the Church of the Ascension, with the explanation that he had "been in charge of work of Ascension parish at the Chapel of the Comforter, in Horatio Street." He assumed this position following the death of the assistant minister of Ascension Church and director of the Chapel, Rev. R. G. Quennell. *The Times* also reported that Hargrove "occupied the pulpit" at the Church.[58] These addresses were repeated several times following the above report.[59]

Hargrove's described his connection with Episcopalianism is explained in an account appearing in *The New York Times*[60]:

> I was described as an "ex-theosophist," and as theosophy means literally "divine wisdom," I am made to appear as one who has ceased to seek divine wisdom—which, I trust, is not correct.
>
> The fact is that a better understanding of theosophy has led me back into active membership in the Episcopal Church, in which I was baptized and confirmed, but which, some twenty years ago, in England, did not seem to me sufficiently tolerant and Christian in the true sense. So I drifted away, like many others. Recently I have found in my old Church a new spirit—the ever new spirit of Christ.
>
> Perhaps both the Church and I have broadened. But however that may be, I am doing my small best to serve the Church—without, I hope, any lessening of my interest in or devotion to "divine wisdom."

This letter helps to explain Hargrove's opinion of Theosophical teaching and Episcopalianism. The connection between the two was the acknowledgement of a non-doctrinal

Church revealing a constituent of the divine wisdom: the "new spirit of Christ." This "new spirit" entails the realization that Christ is an active and effective presence in this world, and not merely a figure from the past whose task has been completed. In other words, Christ the Agent in the present supersedes Christ the Exemplar from the past. This is illustrated by a response to the question, "In what sense can or should Christ be regarded today as living?" The respondent, E. T. Hargrove, identifying himself only as "T," answered by citing the post-Resurrection appearances of Jesus, including the vision of St. Paul.[61] Furthermore, the "Living Christ," the Master Jesus Christ, continued to be an active participant in saving his followers, and that the "organization started through Madame Blavatsky" is capable of reuniting the individual to "the Master, Jesus Christ our Lord, and to His Church."[62] The same author reminded his readers that "Madame Blavatsky never opposed the Master Christ or His own teachings, and, therefore, never was opposed to true Christianity…"[63]

Summing up these ideas, H. P. Mitchell stated two years earlier that the Lodge of Masters was the body that founded the world religions and the "initial impulse for the formation of the Theosophical Society," that Theosophy and Christianity are "united in their common source, their common truth, and their common leadership." Consequently, all Theosophists bear an obligation to all world religions, especially so to Christianity, and that those who bear this burden are "servants of the living Christ."[64]

The Christological emphasis of The Theosophical Society established a firm foundation of a relationship—doctrinal certainly, legally most probably—between the Society and "The Order of the Living Christ."

Our knowledge of the Order[65] is largely based upon a 1936 case brought before the New York Supreme Court for the purpose of deciding its tax status.[66] Established *circa* 1904 as "The Order of the Living Christ,"[67] the unincorporated institution later acquired, in 1916, corporate status with the new title, "The Outer Court, Incorporated, of the Order of the Living Christ." One year later, it rented the property known as Chapel Farm.[68] Twenty years later, it petitioned for tax exempt status the twelve-acre property in Riverdale, a section in the Bronx, a borough of the City of New York. The activities conducted on the property were described as "religious, charitable, benevolent, missionary and

educational." These activities were in keeping with the "Statutes for the Right Governance of the Order," which "formed the basis of the by-laws of the corporation."[69] The certificate of incorporation read as follows:

> To spread an understanding of the life and doctrine of Jesus Christ; to turn men's wills to conform to such understanding, and to do all things which will further those ends, particularly to proclaim and to demonstrate that discipleship is in all time an immediate possibility, and that Christ, our divine King, is a living Christ.

Prior to its incorporation, in 1908, the Order "took over" the Chapel of the Comforter,[70] located at 10 Horatio Street in lower-mid Manhattan from the Episcopal Church. This association is revealing because of statements by H. B. Mitchell recounting the relationship between The T. S. A. and (Episcopalian) Christianity at the time when the Society took on a more public stance. Mitchell's article, dedicated to the memory of C. A. Griscom Jr.,[71] recounted his financial support in bringing about the Society's "period of reconstruction" and "inner recuperation."[72] From 1903 on, the Society initiated a more active role in society, commencing with the *Theosophical Quarterly* in July 1903, launching the New York meetings in the Autumn of 1904, and arranging study groups as also the creation of "a living centre of true religion" in association with a "mission chapel" (?the Chapel of the Comforter). In order to centralize these activities, Mr. Griscom financed the construction of a studio in the back of his home (21 Washington Square North), which was intended to become the headquarters for the New York Branch.[73] More significantly, however, were the activities that were connected with the Chapel of the Comforter, including the founding of the Open Door Mission in 1913, which were intended "to create in it a living centre of true religion."[74] Mitchell related this activity with the Master Jesus and Mr. Griscom's considerable support in his closing remarks[75]:

> Behind it all was the Master's will and hand; and it was because "two or three" gathered together in His name, that what was done could be done. . . .
>
> But despite all [the materialism, socialism, and prejudice], their centre has continued, a growing evidence of the power of the Living Christ and

> of aspiration to His discipleship—a discipleship whose meaning and whose possibility Mr. Griscom's life alike makes clear.

The quote above confirms that the chapel's activities continued from 1908 to the writing of this article in 1919. These activities included the maintenance of a free school for children and the nearby Women's Community House located at 157 West Thirteenth Street. The Community House served as residence for those who worked for the Order, including the teachers of the school.[76] In 1914 the chapel was incorporated "as a parish of the Episcopal church under the Religious Corporations Law."

The relationship between the Chapel of the Comforter with the Episcopal Church is verified by an earlier account appearing in *The New York Times*,[77] which affirmed that the said chapel located at 8 and 10 Horatio Street was affiliated with the Episcopal Church of the Ascension on 36 Fifth Avenue. At the time (1898), the chapel underwent a remodeling conversion from its original use as an auditorium—Caledonia Hall—to that of a chapel with classrooms, all under the commission of the Ascension Mission Association. Consequently, the structure was to be used for social and educational gatherings and other outreach purposes, such as a boys' club, young ladies' clubs, and a choir among other uses.[78]

The Order added to its list of interests in lower Manhattan the rental of Chapel Farm, located north of Manhattan in the Riverdale section of the Bronx, the northern borough of the City of New York, in 1917. Chapel Farm was purchased in 1923, the "title being taken in the name of the Chapel of the Comforter, continuing the activities of the school. According to the Court's statement, the purpose of the rental and, later, purchase involved the maintenance of a religious retreat, including the study and training of its occupants and the continuation of its literary projects. These were enumerated as follows:[79]

> 1. To train its Members, and Postulants for Membership, in the path of discipleship and the way of the Cross.
>
> 2. To proclaim and to demonstrate that discipleship is in all times an immediate possibility, and that Christ, our divine King, is a living Christ.
>
> 3. To strive in all ways to draw souls to the love and knowledge of

Christ, and to the privilege of His service.

4. To educate children, so that, as Christ's faithful soldiers and servants, they may become noble and efficient men and women.

The size of the Riverdale property varied, since additional purchases of land occurred in 1925 and 1927.[80] Members of the order later bought homes north of the property up to 253rd Street after that portion of the land was developed between 1929 and 1931, primarily to maintain a quiet area for religious retreats. One of the more important functions of the Order involved conducting monastic retreats. This function was probably the most important since the property possessed some twenty-four cottages that were occupied at certain times of the year. The court decision reveals that the membership consisted of only thirty-seven men and women, divided "into members and novices of various degrees." Also revealing is the admission that the participants in the Order belonged to "different Christian denominations," that some also came from "foreign lands."

The financial maintenance of the Order was varied; however the support, all were voluntary gifts from its members. Contributions helped support the Order's specific activities and for the upkeep of the property. Most of the expenses, however, derived from the "three members of the first degree who are regularly at chapel farm." These anonymous[81] members comprised the board of directors who lived on the property year round, owning a total of eight parcels of real estate. All



Henry Bedinger Mitchell

Compliments of Shawn F. Higgins

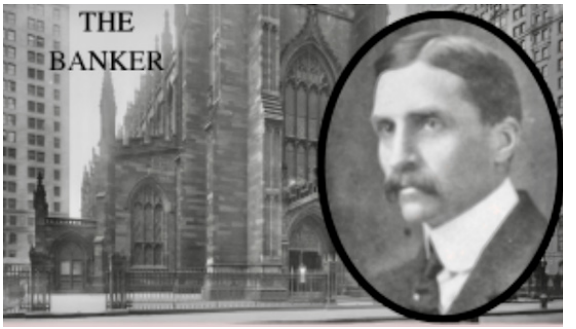


Theodora Dodge
Compliments of Shawn F. Higgins

organization that "appears to be conducted on a high religious plane, wholly devoid of commercialism."

Such was the assessment of Chapel Farm in Judge Cotillo's decision. All these activities conform with Episcopalian beliefs and practices. However, to what degree the Order was institutionally affiliated with The Theosophical Society is not stated. Its directors at the very least were both Episcopalians and Theosophists as were probably a percentage of its members, but it is unclear to what extent there was dual membership in The Theosophical Society and the Order of the Living Christ. We can only surmise that a fraction of the Society were members of the Order. The only list of names that confirm dual membership or association are those names that appear on the Ledger-Stone of

members of the Order belonged to one of three monastic degrees. Indeed, the Order's continued association with the Chapel of the Comforter and its adjunct activities such as its operation of a free school for children, its maintenance of the Women's Community House, its commitment to training of persons "responsive to Christian discipleship," and its publication of religious books, pamphlets and articles" suggest an



John Fulton Berrien Mitchell
Compliments of Shawn F. Higgins



Ledger-Stone of the Order of the Living Christ

Compliments of Shawn F. Higgins



Marker for the Order of the Living Christ

Compliments of Shawn F. Higgins

the Order of the Living Christ located in Woodlawn Cemetery (Bronx), names that we are certain were intimately connected with The Theosophical Society: the manufacturer and industrialist Clement Acton Griscom Jr.,[82] his wife Genevieve Ludlow Griscom—noted for her inspirational vignettes, "Fragments"[83]—Ernest Temple Hargrove, the Sanskritist Charles Johnston (1867–1931),[84] his wife Vera Johnston (*née* de Zhelihovsky), the mathematician and Columbia professor Henry Bedinger Mitchell (1874–1956),[85] Archibald Keightley (1859–1930), and the Egyptologist Theodora Dodge[86] (1871–1936).[87] Not listed on the Ledger but very likely dual members were John Fulton Berrien Mitchell[88] (1878–1956) and Rev. Clarence Carroll Clark (1875–1973).

"The Order of the Living Christ" coexisted with The Theosophical Society until the latter's indrawal[89] in 1938, the former surviving until 1960. The relationship between the two societies was primarily expressed through the membership of the principal members of the Society living in or near New York City. Whether there were members who belonged to the other branches of The T. S. outside the New York area is unknown. Considering the importance

of the "Living Christ" coupled with the involvement of many of the most influential members of The T. S. A., it is entirely possible that The Outer Court replaced that other organization having an informal, non-institutional connection with The Theosophical Society, the E. S. T. (Eastern School of Theosophy).[90] Indeed, one of the E. S. T. communications composed by its Outer Head[91] contains a clue regarding the relation between Theosophy and Christianity:

> The Mysteries were of two kinds—the Lesser and the Greater. The Lesser Mysteries comprised a body of teaching, both intellectual and ethical, which could be written in books and taught orally by a teacher to his pupils—though always with rigorous restrictions. . . .
>
> Now H. P. B. has left us in her books, the entire mass of the *Lower Mysteries*, with the Instructions for a key; not in detail, not all worked out, for no wise teacher does. . . .
>
> When it comes to the Greater Mysteries another Mose of procedure os [sic] obtained, since another set of conditions existed. The pupil who has prepared for initiation into these higher branches, was prepared in the fact, that by the three-fold training already outlined,[92] he had changed and raised his state of consciousness, had trained his mind and body to his will, and awakened the powers of his higher mind. Hence there existed between himself and his teacher a direct, conscious connection, not a matter of flashes of intuition or insight…but a regular unbroken communication. By means of this he was taught the Greater Mysteries.

The remarks on the Greater Mysteries may have developed in the subsequent teaching that Christ was that vehicle, for he is described as one "who has taught and teaches pure Theosophy of the highest, finest kind."[93] In the early years of the Society, Charles Johnston, writing as "The Author" in Henry B. Mitchell's *Talks on Religion*" remarked[94]:

> In Jesus humanity was divinity, and divinity humanity…. Traditional orthodoxy would restrict the description 'God manifest in the flesh' to Jesus alone. The New Theology would extend it to a lesser degree to all humanity, and would maintain that in the end it will be as true as every individual soul as ever it was of Jesus: 'as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they

> also may be one in us… I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.'

The above passages articulate a number of affirmations: a deep connection between (true) Christianity and "pure Theosophy," a distinction between lower and higher mysteries, and the fundamental teaching that even the lower mysteries must be lived in order to be fully understood, for it is stated in the same E. S. T. document[95] that "We can study the Instructions and the *Secret Doctrine* endlessly, but we cannot understand them until we have *lived* them. . . ."

It is in the higher mysteries that a true connection to Jesus Christ is revealed, for it is written that "a direct, conscious connection," "a regular, unbroken communication" between "himself and his teacher" must be maintained in order to be taught the "Greater Mysteries."[96] Although the E. S. T. document does not reveal the teacher, there is little doubt that it referred to Jesus, who is described as an avatar, adept,[97] and who is identified as "the living exponent of what is greatest, even among Masters,"[98] the latter an expression as confirming the presence of Jesus in this world as a Nirmanakaya.[99]

Although the Order is rarely mentioned in the *Theosophical Quarterly*, and never by its full title, it appears certain that the interests and actions of the principal members of the society recognized Jesus and the Christ as pillars of the teaching of the Society and the guiding light of their actions. This is evident in G. W.'s (George Woodbridge's) eulogy of Clement Griscom[100]: "Have we never heard Mr. Griscom speak of his living Master and friend, and of the fact that the Passion continues unto this day, because of our sins and failures?"

The emphasis on the "Living Christ" persisted to the end of the Society's activities in 1938. This is evident by Hargrove's remarks contained in his report as Chair of the Executive Committee at the Annual Convention held on April 25, 1936. Maintaining that the true teachings of the founders of religions are distorted by their followers and analysts by distorting and even perverting the true teachings to suit their own ends. This presentation is a document that sheds considerable light on the Master Christ as the foundation of Theosophy, of Christianity, and of the E. S. T. If a question were to remain regarding the Society's association with the Order of the Living Christ, this

address certainly dispels any doubt. What follows are the relevant highlights of Hargrove's report[101]:

> From the beginning men have interpreted the teaching of great founders of religions to suit themselves…. And the gulf is almost as great between the teachings of Christ and those of the various churches [as the difference is between "the Taoists of to-day with the teachings of Lao-tsze"]….
>
> Clearly the need is to bring the Churches, one by one, more closely into line with the spirit and purpose and doctrine of Christ—which, as we know, is Theosophy…—the fact that Christ is a living Master, an eternal, ever-present reality, as much in the world, though not of it, as he was when incarnated in Palestine, or when he talked and ate with his disciples after his Resurrection….
>
> All Avatars—including Christ—were "the Word made flesh", were at one with the Logos or Oversoul,[102] and therefore lived in spontaneous, instinctive obedience to universal law.…
>
> You may be asked to reconcile seeming contradictions. For instance, the Apostles' Creed says that Christ "ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty"; how, then, can Christ still be in the world, and, if you believe that he is, how accept the Creed? But suppose you question in your turn: just where is "the right hand of God"? Surely no one would suggest that God occupies a particular spot in space to the exclusion of all other spots; surely, wherever Christ is, *is* "the right hand of God".
>
> Help people to think; but above all let us keep vividly in our own minds and hearts the conviction, the realization, that the Lodge is the greatest reality in life, and that Christ represents the Lodge in this western hemisphere,—*is* the Lodge, in effect, for those whose natural approach to it he is. For it is our own realization that counts; it is this that carries light and hope,—the realization that the inner world, the "kingdom of heaven" with all its denizens, is not remote from this world, but as much here is our midst as anywhere. . . . It can be said that Christ, infinitely more real as an individual than any of us, is also the light and life within all of us who are his children.
>
> Above all we must insist that the work of Christ is only beginning; . . . and that not only the clergy, but

> every so-called Christian, should strive with all his might to discover the next step away from the world toward the eternal and the real. If they will do that, they will find Christ ready and more than ready to help them; will find him grateful—miracle though it seem—for their least desire to help him; will find him to be human, divinely human, and therefore lamenting over the world as over Jerusalem old. . . .

The above passage presented *apropos* the Living Christ might suggest to some a Theosophical Society that has placed an undue emphasis on a topic that is not in itself inappropriate in the context of Theosophical teaching. As a Master, Jesus was part of the Lodge that sent a Messenger—Blavatsky—to reveal the ancient wisdom to a society that was becoming more agnostic and even incompatible to the ancient wisdom. From the evidence included above, The Theosophical Society remained loyal to the teachings of Theosophy expounded by H. P. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge but endeavored to emphasize more the goal of the Society—fashioned by the Master (Christ)—to discover and ultimately experience the eternal and the real. Theosophically, one must participate and conform to the natural function of the Cosmos. The function in question was cyclic and recurrent, an operation that cannot be ignored or transgressed if one wishes to attain the emancipation.

The Law of Cycles and the Indrawal

Cycles and cyclic law are fundamental components of Theosophical teaching, so much so that it was included a one of the three propositions in the Proem of *The Secret Doctrine*.[103] Among the cycles that Blavatsky and Judge[104] discussed was the centennial cycle[105] due to close by the end of the then current nineteenth century. The uncertain and apprehensive consequence of such a change was heightened because of two other significant cycles that were said to be closing: the 5000-year Kaliyuga[106] and the 2155-year Piscean Age.[107] The closing of these cycles was first suggested to be 1897,[108] which was later extended to the year 1898.[109] A few years later, Judge projected a duration of three months from November 17, 1897 to February 18, 1898 as the conclusion of the Kaliyuga.[110] What was expected to occur in the following cycle during the twentieth century was for the most part undefined for most Theosophists, with a tendency by some to view the

future in optimistic terms. Blavatsky herself asserted this viewpoint[111]:

> Shall we then expect at some future recurring cycle to *rebecome* that which "we already have been," or that which we are now?

In her final message to the American Convention in 1891, she expressed some hope for the Western world through Theosophical work[112]:

> After all, every wish and thought I can utter are summed up in this one sentence, the never-dormant wish of my heart, "Be Theosophists, work for Theosophy!" Theosophy first, and Theosophy last; for its *practical* realization alone can save the Western world from that selfish and unbrotherly feeling that now divides race from race, one nation from the other; and from that hatred of class and social considerations that are the curse and disgrace of so-called Christian peoples…. In your hands, brothers, is placed in trust the welfare of the coming century; and great as is the trust, so great is also the responsibility.

This anticipation of a major cyclical shift was much discussed by Theosophists in the early 1890s. After all, the final quarter of the century—1875 to 1900 in this instance—was an especially appalling time that witnessed spiritual confusion and ignorance, largely brought on by materialism and skepticism. This state of affairs required the Lodge of the Masters of Wisdom to send a Messenger, *i.e.*, Blavatsky, at the onset of this quarter to overcome this dire condition. The focus of her and her Masters' attention involved the enlightenment of the West, infected by Skepticism and Materiality, the destroyers of the "key to the secrets of nature.[113] That the Messenger was identified as H. P. Blavatsky is not surprising since she hinted at her status and assignment shortly following her arrival in New York.[114] The result of this intervention was "an outpouring or upheaval of spirituality" and a disclosure of occult knowledge.[115] It was during this period also that the Masters maintained a direct link with a small number of individuals within the Society,[116] examples of such include H. P. Blavatsky, A. P. Sinnett, H. S. Olcott, W. Q. Judge, Julia Ver Planck (Jasper Niemand), W. T. Brown, Francesca Arundale, S. Ramaswamier, A. O. Hume, and Laura C. Holloway. Direct communication, therefore, was

a necessary means of advancing the influx of spirituality. The abrogation of this connection with the Masters in the following cycle caused considerable uncertainty and pessimism. Despite this apprehension, the hopeful and encouraging messages of Blavatsky and Judge were enough to determine what amounted to an anticipated radiant future. Judge provided a justification for the withdrawal of the Masters from public participation by suggesting that any further effort might cause a reaction, a "dark shadow" that could bring a negative outcome. Although the Lodge no longer participated in human affairs, their work was nonetheless carried on by the writing of H. P. Blavatsky, most notably *The Secret Doctrine*. Furthermore, these writings would provide the information required to "keep the T.S. alive as an active, free, unsectarian body during all the time of waiting for the next great messenger, who will be herself without question."[117] This new era is described as an era of "Western Occultism,"[118] one in which Theosophists must "preach, promulgate, expound, illustrate, and make clear in detail all the great things we have learned."[119] It is clear that the new era was to be especially significant, with Theosophy, in Judge's view, instigating "a renewed occult effort centered in America in order to 'bring out for the West that kind of teaching from which it is proper'."[120] Add to this the expectation of a new (sixth) sub-race, the successor to the current fifth sub-race, to appear in America,[121] and the importance of the succeeding decades of Theosophical work. How this work was to proceed during the next cycle was viewed quite differently by Mrs. Tingley, which in part necessitated a response from the Hargrove Theosophical Society.

In light of Judge's assertions Mrs. Tingley's society embarked on a number of pioneering innovations, among which were the move of the headquarters from New York to Point Loma, California coupled with the change of the name of the organization from The Theosophical Society in America to Universal Brotherhood. Furthermore, Mrs. Tingley established the Isis League of Music and Drama, the International Brotherhood League, the Children's Department (the Lotus Groups) of the International Brotherhood League, the introduction of Raja Yoga education,[122] prison reform through the establishment of the International Theosophical League of Humanity and Work in Prisons (1911),[123] the campaign against vivisection as one of the undertakings

of both the Woman's International Theosophical League, the anti-war crusade, and the introduction of the publication, *The New Century*, beginning with the September 30, 1897 issue. It was obvious that the Tingley's Universal Brotherhood intended to affect a major advance in humankind in the new cycle. The U. B. was at least equal, perhaps superior to the rival Theosophical Society (Adyar) in its efforts in advancing societal goals.[124]

The Theosophical Society in America, on the other hand, proceeded on a very different path. Looking back thirty-five years, H. B. Mitchell, as Chairman of the 1935 Annual Convention interpreted the closing and opening cycles very differently. Speaking of the "great law of cycles," he observed that the[125]:

> harvest of the closing cycle must be garnered the seed for the cycle that is opening. In-breathing must follow out-breathing…. [Judge] did his utmost to live, knowing that he was needed, as there had not been time in which to make ready his intended successor; but he was killed at his post; and so, in 1897–8 there came Mrs. Tingley's debacle,[126] in which the Society was all but destroyed. It was the end of the cycle, the crucial period precisely foretold by H. P. B. in her last words to the Society. . . . [declaring] that if the Movement were to fail, she might not be here to see it. . . . It did not fail, but was carried over the crisis and the end of the century, into a cyclic phase it had never entered before. This was ushered in . . . through a period of indrawal and of silence, preparatory to the new advance which was begun with the founding of the QUARTERLY in 1903, and the resumption of the meetings here in New York. This "period of silence," marking the transition from one cyclic phase to another, the in-breathing that must come between out-breathings, has very special significance for us now [*i.e.*, in 1935].

The indrawal[127] between the years 1897–1903 was a temporary period of inward-directedness focusing on the Society's preparation of future activities. It did not refer to complete inactivity, only inactivity regarding activities outwardly directed. External activities were initiated in 1903 with the publication of the *Theosophical Quarterly,* the resumption of the New York meetings in the Autumn of 1904,[128] and the initiation of study groups. All these activities were

facilitated by the construction of a studio in back of Mr. Griscom's home that became the headquarters for the New York Branch.[129]

Aside from the Society's administrative and propagandist activities of this period, the active and external work of the Society arose "for the Christian Church," which "opened to the group of which Mr. Griscom was a member. The work began in "a little mission chapel and from then on, Mr. Griscom and his fellows labored to create in it a living centre of true religion."[130] Aligned with this activity was the establishment of The Order of the Living Christ, an institution engaged in "religious, charitable, benevolent, missionary and educational" activities. Mitchell's closing remarks in his memorial to Mr. Griscom in 1919 are illuminating[131]:

> But despite all [the materialism, socialism, and prejudice], their centre has continued, a growing evidence of the power of the Living Christ and of aspiration to His discipleship—a discipleship whose meaning and whose possibility Mr. Griscom's life alike makes clear.

The focus on "indrawal," the preferred term representing cyclic contraction, "in-breathing" as opposed to "out-breathing," was initiated during the 1934 proceedings of the Society's annual convention, when it was reported by E. T. Hargrove that the Society's activities stagnated.[132] The stagnation, according to Mr. Hargrove, was not due to a lack of energy, funds, or membership but to a conformity to spiritual cycles.[133] The "Law of Cycles" in relation to indrawal was explained by Hargrove in the following passage[134]:

> H.P.B. and Judge knew the Law of Cycles: who else brought it to our knowledge? They knew that if the Work inaugurated by them were to survive the turn of the tide at the end of the nineteenth century; if it were to forge its way, as it has done, into the very heart of the twentieth, then the Society would have to lose in quantity as it gained in quality. This is why, at that earlier period, they worked for quantity: they foresaw the great sifting process which must inevitably take place if a nucleus were to survive.

The gain in quality through the "sifting process" was described by Hargrove as the purging of the "mud and scum of human nature," which

could only be eliminated through the indrawal. The other Theosophical societies—Adyar, Point Loma, and Robert Crosbie's United Lodge of Theosophists—all ignored cyclic law, in Hargrove's opinion, by continuing to pursue public propaganda "in spite of the turn of the tide, in spite of the indrawal of the spiritual forces which were poured out, through H. P. B. and Judge, during the last quarter of the century."[135] The result of this presentation was the affirmation that the "true Movement *must* indraw, away from the world, back toward the Lodge, as the spirit leadeth."[136]

Many of Mitchell and Hargrove's statements confirm that indrawal was part of the cyclical process, and that the particular cycle in question—based upon the reference to the final quarter of the century—was the centennial cycle.

Indrawal was not only a means of eliminating negative traits of human nature, it was also a process of maintaining the Theosophical Movement until the arrival of the next Lodge Messenger.[137] The arrival of the Lodge Messenger was central to The Theosophical Society as also with the other Theosophical societies. For The Theosophical Society, the introduction of a seventy-five year cycle was necessary in order to explain the cyclical movement from the close of the previous cycle to the advent of the Lodge Messenger in 1975[138]:

> The present cycle, a period of seventy-five years, beginning with the present year, is to be a time of assimilation—assimilation by humanity at large of Theosophical truths. The Lodge has given sufficient teaching to last until their next direct and public effort, and we now have to work on that material, making it our own and giving it out for the welfare of all. This we must do of our own motion if we are going to do it at all, "by self-induced and self-devised efforts."

Thirty-eight years later, H. B. Mitchell, speaking as Chairman of the Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society on April 30, 1938 confirmed the events given above[139]:

> We all remember what H. P. B. wrote of the hundred-year cycle . . . the cyclic law permitting them [the Masters] to make a special effort, in the last quarter of each century. . . . She told us that that outgoing and outgiving from the Lodge had

to come to an end with the close of the century, and that the Masters could not send again . . . until the last quarter of the next century.

. . . Precisely as foretold, there came the crisis at the end of the century, between 1898 and 1900. But for the first time in the age-long history of the Movement, the shattering force of the crisis was met by a greater power of love, which, holding fast to the Lodge, carried the Movement over the close of the cycle . . . . It did not disintegrate as in the past, when the direction of the cyclic current changed, but, maintaining the link unbroken, gave to the Lodge what it had never before had in our western civilization, a focal point in the world from which to work in the in-breathing phase of the cycle.

From 1900 on, therefore, our continued existence has created wholly new conditions. . . . However thin our line of connection may at times have been, we have still kept it unbroken, and still pressed forward into unexplored territory. Seventy-five years separated us from the time when we might expect a new Messenger or group from the Lodge to take over the work that has been ours. Do we realize that to-day half of that seventy-five years has passed? A full twenty-five year cycle and half of half of another? The twenty-five years of its "expectation of life" brought it to November, 1900. To May, 1938, is just thirty-seven and a half years more, and brings us to the dead-centre of our course.

Indrawal, as part of the cyclic process is the "period of silence, marking the transition from one cyclic phase to another, the in-breathing that must come between out-breathings,"[140] a period that is "preparatory to the new advance" as was the case in 1903 with the founding of the *Quarterly*. In the one article devoted to indrawal, the author states presciently that there will be time when[141]:

> . . . the very existence of the Society will be hidden from the surface of the earth, cut down to the root; that the day will probably come when there will be no more public meetings, no more QUARTERLY as we now know it, no more Conventions.
>
> This statement startled and, perhaps, dismayed some of our members. . . . We should not make the mistake of supposing that cutting down to the root will mean that the

> Movement is being snuffed out, or has ended in failure; but, on the contrary, that indrawal means transference of energy from the outer to the inner. . . . And one of the gifts of the Masters is this period of indrawal, when in order to find our own Master we must seek him with all our heart. . . .
>
> Are we prepared, do we really desire, to enter into that inner life of the spirit. . . ."

Indrawal became the dominant topic in 1935 and 1936 but it appeared earlier, at the Annual Convention of 1934, when, as noted above, Mr. Hargrove acknowledged that the Society's activities were not increasing,[142] Examples of this included reduced book sales,[143] an important source of income for the Society. Also, there was the admittance that all members have been effected by the Depression.[144] In an attempt to make sense of the financial conditions at the time, Mr. Hargrove suggested that "nine-tenths of [the financial Depression]" was due to "psychic causes,"[145] This declaration, made in 1932, was amended in 1934. Hargrove now claimed that financial and economic difficulties for the Society were the consequence of "spiritual law," that is, that the activities of the Society were due to a conformance to cyclic law,[146] the cycle now ebbing where prior to this period there was an outpouring of spiritual forces. Hargrove describes it in this way[147]:

> All of these outside organizations have carried on public propaganda as if the Law of Cycles did not exist, that is to say, in spite of the turn of the tide, in spite of the indrawal of the spiritual forces which were poured out, through H.P.B. and Judge, during the last quarter of the century.

From this time on, the emphasis of the Society was on the subject of indrawal, which was of central importance to the major figures at least. The prestige and authority of the two figures who defined the impending indrawal and who emphasized the magnitude of this subject did not transfer to the other Theosophical societies. What was central to the Society was either totally ignored or criticized in no uncertain terms by the other societies.[148] Moreover, the aforementioned journal, *Theosophy*, contained a negative assessment of The Theosophical Society and an *ad hominem* attack on Crosbie.[149] The author in the U. L. T. article comments that:

> The membership has varied but little during its nearly forty years

> of existence…With depletions by death and advancing age, the future of this society appears a barren prospect indeed. The last published figures permitted to appear will be found in the Convention Report printed in the (*Quarterly* for July, 1932). From this it appears that membership dues received during the preceding year amounted in all to $337—a tell-tale indication of the size of the membership. The Report of this year's Convention (*Quarterly* for July, 1935), gives no figures of any kind, but does contain, like preceding numbers, astonishing matter to Theosophists at large, were they but acquainted with this officially published magazine. Always opposed to active Theosophical propagandum, it is announced publicly that a period of "indrawal" is now at hand, and Mr. Hargrove in his Convention remarks envisions the suspensions of publication of the *Quarterly*, the cessation of all public work, and the retirement of the membership within the monastic seclusion of their "E. S. T."

The expectation of the full consequence of the indrawal asserted in the final sentence in the quote above came to pass in 1938.[150] The *Quarterly* ended publication following its thirty-fifth volume, and nothing was heard after that. Mitchell stated that since the current, seventy-five year cycle completed half this circuit, the period of outreach was concluded and the time for withdrawal has arrived[151]:

> We withdraw from the world that, as the clamour is silenced, we may hear more clearly the voice of the Society's own Soul, and the will for it of its "Father in the Heavens."

These words were delivered on April 30, 1938. At the conclusion of the Convention, the following Resolution was adopted[152]:

> *Whereas*, We, the members of The Theosophical Society, founded by Masters, realize to some extent the dire need of the world for help and guidance which Masters of the Great Lodge alone can give; and
>
> *Whereas*, We realize also the imperative need of the Society to produce chêlas[153] from within its ranks if our link with the Lodge is to be kept unbroken, and if the Society is to continue to serve as a bridge between the Lodge and the world; therefore be it

> *Resolved*, That we, members present at this Convention [not necessarily *all* the members], humbly but unreservedly offer ourselves, individually and collectively, for service, promising to do our utmost to dedicate our lives, and to give our hearts and minds, to the purposes of the Lodge, while always praying that some among us, by the completeness of their self-giving, may make themselves acceptable as chêlas, and may thus become able to complete the Work begun by H. P. B. and Judge.

A question was raised in the "Questions and Answers" section that helps to place the indrawal in context: "Does the Convention appeal and Resolution supersede or abrogate what has been said on the subject of indrawal?" The response by "T." [*i.e.* Hargrove] was as follows[154]:

> It does not. In the first place, it remains to be seen whether the Resolution will bear fruit as well as leaves. In the second place, if it should bear fruit, indrawal of the right kind would be insured, while, if it should bear no fruit—that is, if ship should not result—withdrawal rather than indrawal would be inevitable, for while some measure of indrawal would still be possible for the individual, the Society itself would have failed to keep the link unbroken.

Chelaship, therefore, confirms the link between Lodge and the Society, therefore requiring the Society to produce chelas in order to maintain this link in the world.[155] The importance of the chela is highlighted is stressed in the "Questions and Answers" section of the *Quarterly*. In a response by G. M. W. K. [Kobbé], the chela develops "his *whole* nature wisely, putting it … at the disposal of his Master; becoming at one with him in mind, in heart, in strength, so that he instinctively, and with understanding carries forward the plan and purpose of his spiritual Father."[156] The second respondent, G. H. M. [Gardiner H. Miller] considers the chela as one who "becomes," not made, a process involving "growth in self-knowledge," "understanding the laws of Nature, of the Universe, and of the spiritual world," and one who grows in likeness to his Master, until he becomes an "accepted chêla," when his mind and heart and will are united with his Master's."[157] A third response is added by "J. F. B. M." (John Fulton Berrien Mitchell) characterizing the chelaship as "the next step in human evolution" and "a higher, richer and more selfless state of consciousness."[158]

Publication of the *Quarterly* ended in 1938 with volume thirty-five. The last number of the volume, number 4 (October 1938), was delivered with an enclosed letter, presumably from its editor, Mrs. Griscom,[159] declaring that the law of cycles "teaches us that outer activities, beneficial during one period, at another do more harm than good, and that spiritual progress can be achieved only by indrawl [*sic*]." This was also the message of Hargrove, who remarked years earlier that[160]:

> H. P. B. and Judge knew … that if the Work inaugurated by them were to survive the turn of the tide at the end of the nineteenth century; if it were to forge its way, as it has done, into the very heart of the twentieth, then the Society would have to lose in quantity as it gained in quality.

Of course, if the Society was preparing for indrawal, so must its members. This was confirmed by Hargrove in his address to the participants of the last convention[161]:

> Now, that work, since the last [1937] Convention , has been one of indrawal in the true sense,—that is to say, both members and Branches have tried harder than ever to find and to work from their real centre: and we to-day must crown that effort; we must enter, so far as we can, the world of the Real, our true home…



Mrs. Genevieve Griscom and her children, Acton and Ludlow (top)

Compliments of Shawn F. Higgins

"The Real world" that Hargrove alluded to was described in terms of the *Mahāsudassana Sutta* in the Pāli Buddhist *Dīgha Nikāya*. Therein, the king, Mahāsudassana, having achieved

every wish, having renounced craving, ill-will, and hatred, entered the inner chamber of his palace and entered into a state of joy and ease.[162] The analogy that is suggested compares the attendees to the Convention to the King. Just as the King, having approached the inner chamber and having renounced craving, etc., entered the chamber passing into a joyful state and receiving the Treasure, so too the attendees, having entered the Convention hall have initiated the indrawal, and as the Convention proceeds are drawn still further into the indrawal.

With regard to the Society and its Branches, general outreach and involvement with the world was to be avoided. For individual members, it was considered as a means of "letting go," to what degree is left up to the individual. The example from the *Mahāsudassana Sutta* involved a complete transformation of the King from someone who reached the summit of success during his entire life to one who, facing death, abandoned all objects and desires of this world.

This passage, together with the previous Conferences addresses by Hargrove and Mitchell emphasized a cyclic contraction focusing on inner directedness designed to eliminate the negative traits of human nature. Of special importance was the necessity of producing chelas,[163] those individuals who maintain a link between the Lodge and the Society, and who carry on the Movement in the world in much the same way as H. P. Blavatsky, the Messenger and chela of the Lodge, maintained the link in the nineteenth century.

Aftermath

Following the indrawal, the Society, was never heard of again. Newspaper announcements of lectures by Theosophist speakers often appeared, but The Theosophical Society referred to was the Adyar society or its American affiliate in Wheaton, Illinois, the Theosophical Society in America. The question that naturally arises is whether the indrawal of 1938 was intended to be temporary, as was the 1897–1903 indrawal, or permanent. If cyclic law is followed, it would only be temporary although of uncertain length. Certainly, it would end with the projected arrival of the Lodge Messenger.

Whatever the teaching of the Society, the expected cyclic shift never occurred. If a Messenger arrived in 1975, he or she has not been unanimously recognized by the Theosophical community.

Furthermore, the teachings *apropos* Christ took on a singular importance with the members of The Outer Court. Chapel Farm took on the appearance of an Episcopal monastic retreat.[164] Earlier in this article, I mentioned the emphasis on the Western esoteric tradition, the role of Jesus as Master of this domain, the agreement of the "religion of Jesus" to be "in complete accord with the chief doctrines of Theosophy," that Jesus combined the Devotion taught by Krishna and Brotherhood taught by Buddha, and that Blavatsky's Society was "capable of reuniting the individual to 'the Master, Jesus Christ our Lord, and to His Church'." What is not stated is the allegation, advanced by the popular press, that the purpose of the mansion on the property built by Mrs. Griscom in 1928 was constructed for the purpose of becoming the home of Jesus following his second coming. No evidence justifies this claim, however. What is more likely is that the mansion was used by Mrs. Griscom as a study and retreat center. The purpose of a pipe organ in the mansion may have been for services, but Mrs. Griscom, a proficient organist, most certainly enjoyed playing it for her own amusement.

The Theosophical Society was in indrawal, but The Outer Court continued the goals of The Theosophical Society and of true Christianity. The Outer Court's purpose included the training of members and postulants "in the path of discipleship," to proclaim the "living Christ," to draw all to the love of Christ, and to educate children, "as Christ's faithful soldiers and servants." Theosophists were the leaders of The Outer Court, including C. A. Griscom Jr., his wife Genevieve, E. T. Hargrove, H. B. Mitchell.[165] According to *The Riverdale Press*, The Outer Court continued to operate "a mission, a school for nurses and several day schools."[166] Not generally known was that the Chapel of the Comforter ministered "mainly to the families of longshoremen in Manhattan's Chelsea section," including teaching their children in the Chapel's day school according to the Episcopal Reverend W. Sydney Fisher, a Chapel Farm resident in the nineteen thirties.[167] The Outer Court, therefore, continued work that was initiated in 1904 until the deaths of Henry B. Mitchell and Mrs. Genevieve Griscom over fifty years later.

The nineteen fifties witnessed significant events that would have both a negative impact on Chapel Farm and a positive impact in academe. The first event was negative with immediate

impact. On February 1, 1956, a fire broke out at Chapel Farm. *The Herald Statesman*[168] reported that the library at Chapel Farm was destroyed. The extent of the destruction of the library is unknown since it appears that the collection was not in one location. Indeed, it was reported elsewhere that the mansion contained about 30,000 books. Nonetheless, it was a serious incident since it was reported that many valuable items were destroyed.

Secondly, a series of discussions, planning, and actions leading ultimately to the creation of two institutions on major academic campuses came to fruition by 1958: the Center for the Study of World Religions at Harvard Divinity School and Chapel House at Colgate University. Both institutions were established in 1958 from endowments made by Mrs. Genevieve Griscom, the motivating force behind the proposal, and presumably with the support of the members of The Outer Court, Incorporated, of the Order of the Living Christ and J. F. B. Mitchell before his death in February, 1956.

The details of the establishment of the Center for the Study of World Religions and the subsequent establishment of the "Fund for the Study of the Great Religions of the World" appear in John Carman and Kathryn Dodgson's *Community and Colloquy*[169] and in Theodore Trost's *Douglas Horton and the Ecumenical Impulse in American Religion*.[170] Mrs. Griscom, who preferred to remain anonymous and so was simply referred to as "The Lady,"[171] proposed in her "Statement of Intent," dated *circa* October 1956, that an endowment "to encourage the sympathetic presentation of the religions of the world as they are seen by believers in each faith." It appears that discussions on the proposed Center occurred in the early 1950s with Dr. Kenneth W. Morgan[172] —a graduate of Harvard Divinity School who was then affiliated with Colgate University—largely responsible, along with Dean Douglas Horton of the Divinity School, in establishing the Center at Harvard Divinity School. The proposed plan for a center was then approved by the faculty.[173] Mrs. Griscom's letter of intent, received in October 1956, explained the purpose of her endowment: "expose students of religion to devout practitioners of other faiths so that the student might attain 'a deeper appreciation of the spiritual insights of their own faiths.'"[174] It was through Dr. Morgan as intermediary who, in February 1957, negotiated with Harvard on Mrs. Griscom's

behalf that the proposed center be established according to her terms and that she approve the first director of the program. The person chosen as director, Dr. Robert H. L. Slater, turned out to be ideal for Mrs. Griscom due to his impressive work in Theravāda Buddhism, including his book *Paradox and Nirvana*, his experience in Burma before and during the Second World War, in addition to his status as an ordained Anglican priest. With his selection, an agreement was signed on Christmas Eve, 1957, after which Dr. Slater assumed the position in the Fall of 1958. An endowment, known as the "Fund for the Study of the Great Religions of the World," was established, allowing for the transfer of the $400,000 gift from Mrs. Griscom to Harvard.[175]

Shortly after the inception of the CSWR, the anonymous Deed of Gift establishing Chapel House and center in 1958 was established at Colgate University in 1959. Dr. Morgan was again mentioned as the individual responsible for directing Mrs. Griscom's interest to Colgate. As with CSWR, Chapel House was founded with the same purpose following the wishes of Mrs. Griscom, whose name remained anonymous as the donor. In the words of John Ross Carter, the Director Emeritus of Chapel House[176]:

> All major religious traditions would be represented in the books, the music, and the art. Chapel House would welcome anyone who was willing to take the initiative to read the books, listen to the music, study the works of art, to meditate or pray in the chapel, and to learn to live in privacy and silence.

Dr. Carter's description of the donor, Mrs. Griscom, sheds some light on her views on religion and the impact on her life as a Christian. He adds:

> . . . early in her life [she] had discovered, in what she described as a time of spiritual dryness and doubt, that the study of the writings, the music, the art, and the discipline of religious traditions other than her own, illuminated and gave new vitality to her faith as a Christian.

Mrs. Griscom, born in 1868, was at the time of the donations to Harvard and Colgate Universities in her eighty-eighth year. Her Theosophical roots allowed her to explore the world's religions without prejudice, described as the "Wisdom that existed before the dawn of humanity, preserved and transmitted by great teachers such as Pythagoras, Buddha, Krishna, and

Jesus."[177] Furthermore, this Wisdom did not disappear with the teachers but was at least partially preserved and often hidden within the world religions. This description explains the purpose of CSWR and Chapel House. The Theosophical Society, to which Mrs. Griscom belonged from its inception in 1898, viewed these institutions as the culmination of her Theosophical principles. As with The Outer Court, Chapel House is a "retreat for people questing" a place of "silence" offering "an opportunity to heal, replenish and learn in a unique setting."[178] The original mission statement, quoted from the 1958 Deed of Gift confirms this purpose by describing Chapel House's role as a[179]:

> Meditation Center . . . to encourage personal religious devotions through meditation, Meditation Center . . . to encourage personal religious devotions through meditation, prayer, and study of devotional literature and religious art and music, and such other appropriate means as may be devised to help people to recognize their need for personal religious disciplines […] a place of devotion, a place of retreat to which people will retire for a time when they wish to be alone to face personal difficulties, to renew their faith, or to seek for deeper religious understanding and devotion. It is hoped that the Center will be used by the students and faculty of Colgate and neighboring universities, by ministers, priests and rabbis, by theological students, and by laymen regardless of the nature of their daily work or religious affiliation. Religious leaders of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, and Hindu swamis, Buddhist bhikkus [sic] and priests, and scholars and laymen of all the religions of the world will find themselves welcome at the Center and will be able to make their own contributions to the life of the Center and of the University. It is hoped that the Center will serve as a place for seeking deeper religious insight by people of all faiths, and by those who acknowledge no religious faith.

On September 2, 1958, Mrs. Griscom, aged ninety years, died at Chapel Farm.[180] Following her death, The Outer Court continued to exist but within two years, in 1960, the property was sold to a developer, Robert F. Farman, for $700,000.[181] Although the Chapel Farm community no longer exists, the name for the area persists, as

also the mansion built by Mrs. Griscom. The common lore that the mansion was built for the second coming of Jesus still persists although, as mentioned above, there is no reason to assume that is the case[182] As much as the popular press portrayed The Outer Court as a cult, the individuals within both societies—The Theosophical Society and The Outer Court—were educated, focused, directed to the inner life, the outside world holding no spiritual value. H. B. Mitchell observed in the last issue of *Theosophical Quarterly*:

> [O]ne fact emerges unmistakably. Our whole sentient life is supported by, and evidences, the working of a formative power, which, acting from the unseen to the seen, is constantly bringing us new vision of truth or beauty or holiness (or, alas, since we are open below as well as above, of their perversions and opposites); constantly forming within us new images of reality; constantly making new moulds for a new will and a new spirit. Our physical senses tell us of an outer world made up of things already formed, individual and separate,—separate, individual stars and men and women, insects and trees and grains of sand. Our inner world is no less rich in individual and separate forms,—formed and separate thoughts, feelings, desires and emotions. But as we look inward and watch our inner life, we see that these separate things, created in the past, are of chief moment to us now as being the sole medium which we can offer for the present action of the inflowing and in-forming spirit. These two aspects of Being, the formed and the formative, are never, and can never be separated.[183]

* * * * *

Endnotes

1 The title, "President," suggests a leader of an independent or autonomous society completely separate from The Theosophical Society, Adyar. A precedent of this usage was H. P. Blavatsky's declaring "herself the president of the European section." See Brett Alexander Forray, *Troubled Emissaries* (Turlock, CA: Alexandria West, 2016), 301. Also, Mr. Forray reveals that Clement Acton Griscom Jr. suggested the name for the new society, "The Theosophical Society in America" (p. 279).

2 This was reported in "Theosophists Make a Declaration," *Chicago Tribune* (April 30, 1895): 3.

The Griscom connection to Theosophy includes, besides husband and wife, their son, Acton Griscom (note 56) and Mrs, Griscom's father, General William Ludlow. Information on General Ludlow appears in Shawn F. Higgins' blogs:

https://www.patheos.com/blogs/marginalia/2023/11/the-porkington-manuscript/
https://www.patheos.com/blogs/marginalia/2024/06/legends-of-ascension/

3 On Katherine Tingley's relationship with Judge, see Forray, *Troubled Emissaries*, 207–213, 226–32. Further information is available on line in Shawn Higgins' series on "Ernest Temple Hargrove." The pertinent parts are:

"Hargrove (II): "The Purple Mother" at *https://www.patheos.com/blogs/marginalia/2024/05/hargrove-ii-the-purple-mother/* ;

"Hargrove (III): "Kitty Tingley, Despot" at *https://www.patheos.com/blogs/marginalia/2024/05/hargrove-iii-kitty-tingley-despot/* ; and

Hargrove (IV): "Villa Maria" (*https://www.patheos.com/blogs/marginalia/2024/05/hargrove-iv-villa-maria/*

The timeline for Katherine Tingley assuming the position of Outer Head is detailed in Forray, *Troubled Emissaries*, 317–33.

4 Details are given in "The Screen of Time," *Theosophy* XI, no. 3 (June 1896): 65–70. The first public disclosure of Tingley's position appeared in the March 18, 1896 issue of the *New York Daily Tribune*, p. 7. Hargrove, as president of the T. S. A. disclosed Tingley's position as Outer Head. Hargrove's announcement was made at Theosophical Headquarters (144 Madison Ave.):

> The time has come when circumstances require the publication of the identity of the real successor of William Q. judge in the occult and inner work of the Theosophical movement. Although we did not at first expect to give out the name of this person for one year, we have come to the conclusion that it is no longer necessary or advisable further to conceal it. …It is sufficient to state now that a public work on a world-wide scale, in which this person will take a leading part, will John Fulton be begun on June 13, and that on and after that date it would be in any case impossible entirely to maintain the previously existing secrecy. Therefore, we now state that the real leader of the Theosophical movement throughout the world and the heir to the occult succession of those preceding her is Mrs. Tingley, of New-York City.

5 "The Screen of Time," *Theosophy* XI, no. 3: 67–68. The need for a Crusade is alluded to in "Mirror of the Movement," *Theosophy* XI, no. 3 (June 1896): 91–96. More details are given in the July and ensuing issues of *Theosophy* including a preliminary report written by Katherine A. Tingley under the title "The Crusade of American Theosophists around The World, appearing in *Theosophy* XII, no. 7 (October 1897): 366–74.

6 "The Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society," *Lucifer* III, no. 14 (October 15, 1888): 176.

7 This period of Theosophical history is rather complicated and open to considerable interpretation. The latest discussion of this period is Forray's *Troubled Emissaries*, 317–41, 344.

For further insight into this period, see *The*

Theosophical Movement: 1875–1950 (Los Angeles: The Cunningham Press, 1951), 264–74, 279-89; *The Theosophical Movement: 1875-1925*: *A History and a Survey* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1925), 622–83. No authors are given for either text. Robert Crosbie certainly provided much material for the earlier work, which was partially based upon the periodical *Theosophy*. The updated edition published in 1950 was largely, if not wholly, written by Henry Geiger.

8 Forray, *Troubled Emissaries*, 340 and Emmett A. Greenwalt, *California Utopia: Point Loma: 1897–1942*, revised edition (San Diego: Point Loma Publications, Inc., 1978), 38–39.

9 E.T. Hargrove, "The Screen of Time," *Theosophy* XII, no. 7 (October 1897): 377–80. Information on Ernest Temple Hargrove is available in Shawn F. Higgins' "The Porkington Manuscript" at *https://www.patheos.com/blogs/marginalia/2023/11/the-porkington-manuscript/*

An eleven-part series dedicated to Hargrove's life has recently appeared online at the following sites:

https://www.patheos.com/blogs/marginalia/2024/05/hargrove-i-refined-english-atmosphere/

https://www.patheos.com/blogs/marginalia/2024/05/hargrove-ii-the-purple-mother/

https://www.patheos.com/blogs/marginalia/2024/05/hargrove-iii-kitty-tingley-despot/

https://www.patheos.com/blogs/marginalia/2024/05/hargrove-iv-villa-maria/

https://www.patheos.com/blogs/marginalia/2024/05/hargrove-v-dr-leyds-occultation-of-world-politics/

https://www.patheos.com/blogs/marginalia/2024/05/hargrove-vi-the-south-african-situation/

https://www.patheos.com/blogs/marginalia/2024/05/hargrove-vii-the-conciliator-of-south-africa/

https://www.patheos.com/blogs/marginalia/2024/05/hargrove-viii-transvaal-vs-churchill/

https://www.patheos.com/blogs/marginalia/2024/05/hargrove-ix-the-seances-of-thomas-welton-stanford/

https://www.patheos.com/blogs/marginalia/2024/05/hargrove-x-the-white-stag/

https://www.patheos.com/blogs/marginalia/2024/05/hargrove-xi-the-hair-line-of-duty/

The events surrounding Hargrove's resignation are contained in Part III of the series: "Kitty Tingley, Despot." His resignation was actually tendered on September 1 but Mrs. Tingley waited until September 13 to accept it for the occult reason that "all big things are done on that date." The notice of Mr. Hargrove's resignation in *The New York Tribune* (September 19, 1897): 16 does not contain any mention of a disagreement with Mrs. Tingley's leadership.

10 Hargrove, " "The Screen of Time," *Theosophy* XII, no. 7: 377.

11 The title appeared in the "Resolutions" proposing the "Universal Brotherhood," articulated during the Fourth Annual Convention of the T. S. A. J. H. Fussell, "Miscellaneous News: The Fourth Annual Convention of the T. S. A." *Universal Brotherhood* XII, no. 12 (March 1898): 319. See note 13.

12 "Announcement," *Universal Brotherhood*," XII, no. 11 (February 1898): opposite page 256. This title is followed by the description: "devoted to *The Brotherhood of Humanity, the Theosophical Movement, Philosophy, Science and Art*."

13 The first day of the new cycle is recognized to be February 18, 1898 according to the first resolution proposed during the convention:

> *Resolved*, that we, the delegates and representatives of all branches of the Theosophical Society in America now in convention assembled, and having full power to act on their behalf, hereby declare that we fully and unequivocally adopt and accept the plan hereby presented by the recognized Leader of the Theosophical movement, and the Outer Head of the Esoteric School, Katherine A. Tingley, as being necessary to unite at the beginning of this

great cycle all departments of Theosophical work in one organization, and under the direction of one Leader and Official Head, Katherine A Tingley.

"Miscellaneous News: The Fourth Annual Convention of the T. S. A." Universal Brotherhood XII, no. 12: 319. This passage also appears in the *Theosophical Forum* 3, no. 5 (February 1898): 6.

14 "Miscellaneous News," *Universal Brotherhood* XII, no. 11 (February 1898): 254.

15 Fussell, "Miscellaneous News: The Fourth Annual Convention of the T. S. A." *Universal Brotherhood* XII, no. 12: 313, 316–20. What follows is an excerpt from Katherine Tingley's Proclamation (p. 316, 317):

> Every day it has become more apparent that for the best interests of this work we require an organization which shall stand as an invincible stronghold against the storms which constantly beat around it. No one will question the fact that our experience in the past emphasizes the need of this step being taken….
>
> In this plan which I am now presenting to you, these words have not been overlooked: "the T. S. has not been neglected." The Theosophical Society in America will form one of the most important departments of the UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD. Through it will be disseminated all literatures regarding the Theosophical philosophy…. A literary staff will be appointed, including all the able writers at present in the society, and some outside of it. Through their efforts as much as possible of our present literature will be amplified, and made more suitable for general distribution, and indeed, all literature of any value or importance in this great work for UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD will also be introduced and distributed through the Theosophical Society in America.

16 The Proclamation, Resolutions, Preamble, and Constitutions for both the Universal Brotherhood and the Theosophical Society in America, and By-laws for the Universal Brotherhood were published in *The Theosophical Forum* III, no. 5 (February 1898): 4–14. The Proclamation and Resolutions also appear in *Universal Brotherhood* XII, no. 12 (March 1898): 313–20.

17 For historical insight into the Lotus Circles, see W. Michael Ashcraft, *The Dawn of the New Cycle* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2001), 53, 72–80, 90–93, 159. See also "Lotus Circle Work." *The Theosophical Forum* II, no. 2 (June 1896): 29. The title, "The International Brotherhood League," appears for the first time in the following issue of *The Theosophical Forum* II, no. 3 (July 1897): 46–47. The full details of the League appear in *Universal Brotherhood* (1899): "Its Departments, Methods and Scope": 16–22. This issue also contains descriptions and constitutions of all the departments of the "Universal Brotherhood Organization."

18 "Children's Work, Reorganization of Lotus Circle Work." *The Theosophical Forum* III, no. 2 (June 1897): 29.

19 "Official Notice," *The Theosophical Forum* III, no. 5 (February 1898): 1–3.

20 "Memorandum of Proceedings of Convention at Handel Hall, Chicago, February 18th, 1898: Resolutions," *The Theosophical Forum* III, no. 5: 6.

21 "Memorandum of Proceedings of Convention at Handel Hall, Chicago, February 18th, 1898: Resolutions": 6.

22 Address by E. T. Hargrove in "Minutes." *The Theosophical Forum* III, no. 5 (February 1898): 15.

23 "Questions and Answers." *Theosophy* XI, no. 3 (June 1896): 88. The respondent was E. T. Hargrove.

24 "The Convention," *The Theosophical Forum* IV, no. 2 (June 1898): 10. The total membership of the Society prior to 1898 was estimated to be 2700.

25 H. B. Mitchell, Secretary. "Minutes (Of a Meeting of Members and Delegates to the

Fourth Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society in America, held in Room W, Palmer House, Chicago, at 4:30 P. M., February 18, 1898)." *The Theosophical Forum* III, no. 5 (February 1898): 20.

26 The resolutions that were declared at the first session of the Ninth Annual Convention at Boston on April 28, 1895 proclaimed the autonomy of the American Branches under the name of "The Theosophical Society in America." The full list of resolutions appears in *The Path* 10, no. 2 (May 1895): 66.

27 George Ayers' legal opinion appeared in the First Convention of The Theosophical Society in America, April 29. The proceedings were published and appear in this issue from pages 432 to 435.

28 Letter from E. T. Hargrove (May 29, 1898) in *The Theosophical Forum* IV, no. 2 (June 1898): 12. This was the "Legal" Opinion of George D. Ayers and also asserted in the "Historical Sketch of the Theosophical Society," both documents appearing in this present volume.

29 The leaders or spokespersons for The Theosophical Society in America considered their organization "restored" to its original principles. Whether the term employed herein is "reformed" or "restored," the intended meaning is identical.

30 The continuity of The Theosophical Society in America with the Parent Theosophical Society established in New York City in 1875 was confirmed by Charles Johnston in a lecture presented in 1928:

> The Theosophical Society, which has invited you to this lecture, is the representative, the continuation, of The Theosophical Society founded in New York by Madame H. P. Blavatsky, W. Q. Judge and others, in November, 1875. It has maintained a continuous life for more than half a century, working for the same ideals,, advancing toward the same goal. It is in no way connected with other societies calling themselves Theosophical, which are under the guidance of Mrs. Annie Besant, Mrs. Katherine Tingley, or whoever it may be.

It is curious that Henry Olcott was not mentioned as one of the founders of the society and that November was specified as the month pertaining to the origin of the society. The historical overview of The Theosophical Society presented in 1895 was adamant that the month of origin was October (1875) because of the adoption of the By-laws at its meeting of October 30. This historical overview as it appeared in *The Path* (X, no. 2 [May 1895]: 55–60) was reproduced in *Theosophical History* XX, no. 3 (July 2020): 294–300. The "Historical Sketch" as it appears in the Ninth Annual Convention is reproduced in this volume beginning on page 419.

31 "The Convention," *The Theosophical Forum* IV, no. 2: 8.

32 Some observers assume that it was E. T. Hargrove, which is very plausible.

33 An early article on the subject of the Hargrove E. S. T. is by the late John Cooper, in his "The Esoteric School Within the Hargrove Theosophical Society," which appeared in *Theosophical History* IV, no. 6–7 (April 1993–July 1993): 178–86. Mr. Cooper apparently had access to the entire collection but never identified the location of the collection. Recently, Kenneth Small informed me that the source of Mr. Cooper's information on the E. S. T. came from his visit to Mr. Small's parents, Emmett and Carmen Small. He also verifies that the Hargrove Esoteric papers are now located in the Kenneth R. Small Archive of the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society at Lomaland, 1874-1960. Series 4: E.S.—Esoteric Section. Folder 4: Eastern School of Theosophy—American Section (Hargrove/Mrs.Griscom), 1898-1906. Email dated November 22, 2025.

The entire collection of Esoteric Instruction from 1898 to 1907, identified as Numbers 8 to 18 have recently been printed up by Shawn F. Higgins,

The Order of the Living Christ: Esoteric Instructions: Nos. 8–18, 1898–1907.

Mr. Cooper offered an interesting and intriguing statement concerning the mysterious Outer Head:

> The School governed itself and the Outer Head did remain unknown and his or her name was never given to the members. Here I should mention that I believe that I know who was the Outer Head but as his or her name is just about unknown to present day Theosophists and as I have no proofs for this statement I prefer to keep this information private for the present.

Mr. Higgins has dealt into the Esoteric School. In *Patheos* (online at:

https://www.patheos.com/blogs/marginalia/2022/11/the-esoteric-section/), mention is made of a meeting of the Esoteric School prior to the general meeting of the Eleventh Annual Convention under the chairmanship of Charles Johnston. Whether the Esoteric School continued for the remainder of the existence of The T. S., or was replaced by the Order of the Living Christ is an open question.

The eleven-part series on E. T. Hargrove that appears on the *Patheos* site. See note 9.

34 Letter from E. T. Hargrove to the members of the Eastern School, dated October 17, 1898. The quote is taken from Cooper, "The Esoteric School Within the Hargrove Theosophical Society," IV, no. 6–7: 180.

35 The last reference to a President of The T. S. A. was at the Fifteenth Annual Convention, April 28, 1901. Dr. J. D. Buck was President at the time. The only other President recorded was A. H. Spencer.

36 Henry Bedinger Mitchell, "A Stone of the Foundation," *Theosophical Quarterly* XVII, no. 1 (July 1919): 16.

37 H. B. Mitchell, "Address of the Chairman of the Convention," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXIII (July 1935, XXXIII, no. 1: 41.

38 The argument for the omission of the phrase "in America" was presented by Charles Johnston, the Chairman of the Committee on Resolutions, during the Thirteenth Annual Convention held on April 27, 1907. The proceedings are located in *Theosophical Quarterly* V, no. 1 (July 1907): 103–104). It was in recognition that the society was in fact international in scope with branches in Venezuela, England, Germany, and Canada. In the same issue, the title, "the Theosophical Society in America" would seem to contradict the international flavor if one were to identify, for instance, the English branch as "the Theosophical Society in America in England"

The following year, when the change took effect, T. S. Knoff, writing to the Secretary of the T. S., noted that the former T. S. in Norway was chartered "as a Branch of the international Theosophical Society, whose headquarters are in New York, U. S. A." This action was taken "as soon as the latter proved its international character by dropping the words "in America" in its name." A separate communication to the Executive Committee of the T. S. written on the same date as Mr. Knoff's letter: November 14, 1908. See *Theosophical Quarterly* VI, no. 3 (January 1909): 293.

39 [Anon.], "Aftermath," *Theosophy* XXIII, no. 12 (October 1935): 536–50.

40 [Anon.], "Aftermath," *Theosophy* XXIII, no. 12: 545.

41 *The Theosophical Movement: 1875–1925*: 682.

42 *The Theosophical Movement: 1875–1950*, 279.

43 Alvin Boyd Kuhn, *A Modern Revival of Ancient Wisdom* (New York: H. Holt and Co., 1930): 323.

44 W. Q. Judge, "The Closing Cycle," *Echoes* II, 11 (*Irish Theosophist* III, no. 1 [October 15, 1894]: 54–56). Other references include "India: A Trumpet Call at a Crisis," *Echoes* II: 52 (*Lucifer* XII, no. 68 [April 15, 1893]: 146) and "Subsidiary Papers,"

Echoes III, 451 [*Subsidiary Papers No. A: Issued in the Western Division*: "Nirmāṇakāyas"].

All articles by Judge have been published in *Echoes of the Orient*, compiled by Dara Eklund. Second and revised edition, 2009 (vol. I and II), 2010 (vol. III), and 2011 (vol. IV) (Pasadena: Theosophical University Press, 2009. First editions published in 1975, 1980, 1987, and 1993 respectively).

Judge's "Western Occultism" is discussed by Brett Forray in his article, "William Q. Judge's and Annie Besant's Views of Brahmin Theosophists," *Theosophical History* X, no. 1 (January 2004): 5–34 and in his book, *Troubled Emissaries*, 128–29, 171–72, 196, 205, 217, 233, and 267–69.

45 Judge, "The Closing Cycle," *Echoes* II, 11 (*Irish Theosophist* III, no. 1: 56).

46 [W. Q. Judge], "Things Common to Christianity and Theosophy," *Echoes* III, 104.

47 *Echoes* III: 104–111. The discussion of reincarnation and karma appears on pages 110–11.

Elsewhere, Judge states that "Theosophy is not Christianity nor is it against Christianity. … today there is no Christianity in practice, though there is a good deal in theory. There is churchianity, and the Christian religion is divided into sects, but if Christianity is what Jesus taught there is none of it" ("Wisdom of the Gods: Mr. Judge's Explanation of Theosophy," *Echoes* III: 174–75).

48 Jasper Niemand, "Theosophy and Christianity," *Theosophical Quarterly* VII, no. 3 (January 1910): 247. Mention of Jasper Niemand appears in *Echoes* I, xxix and lvii.

49 "The Order of the Living Christ," From 1916 on, The Order was known as "The Outer Court, Incorporated, of the Order of the Living Christ."

50 Niemand, "Theosophy and Christianity," *Theosophical Quarterly* VII, no. 3: 241, 244, 245, 246.

51 "On the Screen of Time: Theosophy and the Great Religions," *Theosophical Quarterly* IX, no. 3 (January 1912): 269: "But no one who knew Madame Blavatsky or Mr. Judge personally, can doubt the veneration in which they held Christ as Avatar and Jesus as Adept." Blavatsky defines "avatar" as:

> a descent of the manifested Deity—whether under the specific name of Siva, Vishnu, or Âdi-Buddha—into an illusive form of individuality, an appearance which to men on this illusive plane is objective, but it is not so in sober fact. That illusive form having neither past nor future, because it had neither previous incarnation nor will have subsequent rebirths, has naught to do with Karma, which has therefore no hold on it.

This passage is quoted from "The Doctrine of Avataras," in Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings: Miscellaneous*. Volume XIV. Compiled by Boris de Zirkoff and assisted by Dara Eklund (Wheaton, Ill.: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1985), 373–74.

A similar passage appears in Section XLI of *The Secret Doctrine*, third edition (London: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1897), 488–504.

The term "adept" refers simply to one who is accomplished in some area. It may take on a specific form of expertise such as a form of spiritual attainment as suggested in this passage. Blavatsky writes: "In Occultism one who has reached the stage of Initiation, and become a Master in the science of Esoteric philosophy." H. P. Blavatsky, *The Theosophical Glossary* (Los Angeles, CA: The Theosophy Company, 1973), 6 [photographic reproduction of the original edition issued at London in 1892].

52 John F. B. Mitchell predeceased his brother, Henry B. Mitchell, by five months (February 13, 1956). No mention of the Order of the Living Christ appeared in his will.

Last Will and Testament (West Virginia, U. S., Wills and Probate Records, 1724–1985).

Reverend Clark was ordained an Episcopal priest in 1911 and was Director of the Chapel of the Comforter for over forty years, from approximately 1911 to 1950. He was the author of numerous articles appearing in *Theosophical Quarterly*, including "The Hidden Life of the Soul," vol. IX, no. 1 (July 1911): 26–37; "The Spiritual Element in XXth Century Poetry," vol. XIV, no. 1 (July 1916): 17–24; "Cyclic Law in Art," vol. XV, no. 2 (October 1917): 116–27. He was also a contributor to "The Religious Orders" series, an example being "The Friars Minor and St. Francis of Assisi," vol. XVIII, no. 2 (October 1920): 136–47.

The Clarence Carroll Clarke Papers are located in the Robert S. Cox Special Collections & University Archives Research Center at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. For information on the collection, go to

http://scua.library.umass.edu/clark-c-c/

See also Matthew Namee, *Lost Histories: The Good, The Bad, and the Strange in Early American Orthodoxy* (Chesterton, Indiana: Ancient Faith Publishing, 2024), Chapter 34.

53 *The New York Times* September 19, 1889: 4. According to Shawn F. Higgins, Clement Acton Griscom was a vestryman (one who was involved in the governance of the church) in the Church of the Ascension. *https://www.patheos.com/blogs/marginalia/2024/05/hargrove-xi-the-hair-line-of-duty/*

54 Shawn F. Higgins, "'The Benedick'. An Analysis of Talks on Religion (1909)": 32–34 and note 46. The rector (1893–1927) of the Church of the Ascension was Percy Stickney Grant (1860–1927), who was identified as "The Clergyman" in *Talks on Religion: A Collective Inquiry*, recorded by Henry Bedinger Mitchell (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1908).

55 For details of Griscom's life see Shawn F. Higgins and Henry Bedinger Mitchell, *Henry Bedinger Mitchell's Talks on Religion* (Duffield and Willoughby, Shawn F. Higgins, 2025), 20–21.

This dual association extended also to Clement and Genevieve's son Acton Griscom (1891–1961), an Episcopal clergyman who was identified as a "Curer [? Curate] of a Greenwich Village church," most likely the Chapel of the Comforter ("Prof. Parry Editing Latin Classic History," *The Daily Illini* [Urbana, Ill] (October 7, 1927): 6. Later in life he became a Presbyterian clergyman as also "a pastor of a Caracas, Venezuela interdenominational English speaking church just before his retirement" *circa* 1950. *Abilene Reporter-News* (May 30, 1961): 14. See also May 31, 1961): 17.

Rev. Griscom's association with The Theosophical Society appears in the *Theosophical Quarterly* a number of times, having contributed a long article "Alsace and Lorraine" in vol. XV, no. 3 (January 1918): 244–58; vol. XV, no. 4 (April 1918): 320–35; vol. XVI, no. 1 (July 1918): 34–42; vol. XVI, no. 2 (October 1918): 169–84: vol. XVI, no. 3 (January 1919): 249–57; vol. XVI, no. 4 (April 1919): 350–61; vol. XVII, no. 1 (July 1919): 45–52; vol. XVII, no. 2 (October 1919): 179–91; vol. XVII, 3 (January 1920): 248–55. Other articles include "Notes on the Word Theosophy," vol. XIX, no. 3 (January 1922): 247–59; [identified as A. G.], "Nirvâna," vol. XX, no. 2 (October 1922): 144–53; [identified as A. G.], "Memory," vol. XXI, no. 2 (October 1923): 153–59.

Rev. Griscom also participated a few of the annual conventions of the Society. See, for instance the conventions of 1918 (*Theosophical Quarterly* XVI, no. 1 [July 1918]: 100); 1919 (vol. XVIII, no. 1 [July 1920]: 77 and 82); vol. XXI, no. 1 (July 1923): 82.

56 Griscom was cremated at Ferncliffe Cemetery in Hartsdale, New York and buried at Woodlawn Cemetery, the Bronx, in a plot owned by the Order of the Living Christ. *The Riverdale Press* (September 11, 1958).

57 *New York Daily Tribune*, January 18, 1899: 7.

58 "Ex-Theosophist in Pulpit," *The New York Times* (October 26, 1908): 9. As "lay reader" Hargrove was not allowed to preach Scripture, only to give "an address."

59 Announcements appear in the newspapers on a fairly regular basis, examples including *The New York Tribune*, June 19, 1909: 10, June 24, 1911: 9, and June 24, 1911: 9.

60 Hargrove referred to the article published three days prior to this letter. See note 58. Hargrove's communication is dated October 27, 1908.

61 "On the Screen of Time," *Theosophical Quarterly* XIII, no. 3 (January 1916): 287–89.

62 "Some Aspects of Theosophy: As Seen by a New Member of the Society," Part VI, *Theosophical Quarterly* X, no. 2 (October 1912): 143. The article is signed "Servetus."

63 "Some Aspects of Theosophy," *Theosophical Quarterly* X, no. 2: 143.

64 H. B. M. [Mitchell], "Notes and Comment," *Theosophical Quarterly* VIII, no. 1 (July 1910): 8–9.

65 Higgins, "'The Benedick'. An Analysis of Talks on Religion (1909)": 16–75.

66 This information derives from "People ex Rel. Outer Court, Inc., v. Miller." Supreme Court, Special Term, New York County. 161 Misc. 603 (New York Supreme Court 1936): 292 N.Y.S. 674. Decided Dec. 21, 1936. Heard by Judge J. Cotillo. See also Higgins, "'The Benedick'. An Analysis of Talks on Religion (1909)."

Mention of the "Outer Court of the Order of the Living Christ" appears in Charles M. Stang, "Calling a New Séance: The Theosophical Origins of Harvard's Center for the Study of World Religions," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 89, no. 4 (December 2021): 1146–1147. This account is based upon an article by Nicholas Adams, "'You Young Men Are So Sure'" Architectural Ethos at J. Walter Severinghaus' Chapel House." SOM 10: 8–23.

"People ex Rel. Outer Court, Inc., v. Miller."

67 H. B. Mitchell recounted many of the events that took place around 1904. He mentioned that "the active outer work for the Christian Church opened to the group [that is, those members of the New York Branch meeting at Mr. Griscom's studio in the back of his home] of which Mr. Griscom was a member. They began in a little mission chapel and from then on, Mr. Griscom and his fellows laboured to create in it a living centre of true religion."

The chapel may refer to the Chapel of the Comforter. Mitchell, "A Stone of the Foundation," *Theosophical Quarterly* XVII, no. 1: 20–21.

68 Information on Chapel Farm is located in the library of New York University, Special Collections, New York Historical, "Chapel Farm Records 1911–2008." For information, go to *https://findingaids.library.nyu.edu/nyhs/ms108_chapel_farm/*

69 "People ex Rel. Outer Court, Inc., v. Miller."

70 On the relationship between the Chapel of the Comforter and the Church of the Ascension, see "Church and Mission at War," *N. Y. Times* (March 16, 1894): 2. The Chapel was under the administration of the Board of Trustees of the Ascension Mission. A falling out between the Rev. Edward H. Van Winkle, the Chapel's pastor, and Rev. Percy Stickney Grant, the rector of the Church of the Ascension, the latter the *ex officio* President of the Board of Trustees, demanded the resignation of Rev. Van Winkle due to a disagreement in how the religious service was conducted.

Higgins also mentions an incident in 1910 that repeats this earlier event. A disagreement occurred between Rev. Grant over activities of Alexander Irvine, resulting in removing Irvine from the pulpit. This resulted in the Order of the Living Christ assuming operations of

the Ascension mission. "'The Benedick.' An Analysis of Talks on Religion (1909)": 61–62.

71 Mitchell, "A Stone of the Foundation," *Theosophical Quarterly* XVII, no. 1: 9–21.

72 Mitchell, "A Stone of the Foundation," *Theosophical Quarterly* XVII, no. 1: 16.

73 Mitchell, "A Stone of the Foundation," *Theosophical Quarterly* XVII, no. 1: 18, 20.

74 Mitchell, "A Stone of the Foundation," *Theosophical Quarterly* XVII, no. 1: 20–21.

75 Mitchell, "A Stone of the Foundation," *Theosophical Quarterly* XVII, no. 1: 21. For the "Open Door Mission," see notes 77 and 86.

76 In a slightly altered account, Higgins asserts that it was in 1910 when a number of Theosophists, whom Higgins identifies as the "inner group of the GTS [the Griscom Theosophical Society], known as the Order of the Living Christ, assumed control of the operations of the Ascension mission. From that institution the OLC would develop the Chapel School, and the Open-Door Mission." Higgins, "'The Benedick'. An Analysis of Talks on Religion (1909)": 62. Because of the importance of Clement Acton Griscom in the affairs of The Theosophical Society, it is equally appropriate for the society to be identified as either the "Griscom Theosophical Society" or the "Hargrove Theosophical Society."

77 "New West Side Chapel," *New York Times* (March 26, 1898): 5.

78 The previous address of the chapel was 814 Greenwich St. "Want to Keep their Pastor," *The* (New York) *Sun* (March 15, 1894): 1.

79 "People ex Rel. Outer Court, Inc., v. Miller."

80 The court decision mentions ten to twelve acres, but other accounts claim that it was sixteen and eighteen acres.

81 The one member of the board who definitely was a resident at Chapel Farm was Mrs. Griscom was Mrs. Griscom. The other two were likely E. T. Hargrove and Henry B. Mitchell.

82 For details of Griscom's life see Higgins and Mitchell, *Henry Bedinger Mitchell's Talks on Religion*, 20–21.

This dual association extended also to Clement and Genevieve's son Acton Griscom (1891–1961), an Episcopal clergyman who was identified as a "Curer [? Curate] of a Greenwich Village church," most likely the Chapel of the Comforter ("Prof. Parry Editing Latin Classic History," *The Daily Illini* [Urbana, Ill] (October 7, 1927): 6. Later in life he became a Presbyterian clergyman as also "a pastor of a Caracas, Venezuela interdenominational English speaking church just before his retirement" *circa* 1950. *Abilene Reporter-News* (May 30, 1961): 14. See also May 31, 1961): 17.

Rev. Griscom's association with The Theosophical Society appears in the *Theosophical Quarterly* a number of times, having contributed a long article "Alsace and Lorraine" in vol. XV, no. 3 (January 1918): 244–58; vol. XV, no. 4 (April 1918): 320–35; vol. XVI, no. 1 (July 1918): 34–42; vol. XVI, no. 2 (October 1918): 169–84: vol. XVI, no. 3 (January 1919): 249–57; vol. XVI, no. 4 (April 1919): 350–61; vol. XVII, no. 1 (July 1919): 45–52; vol. XVII, no. 2 (October 1919): 179–91; vol. XVII, 3 (January 1920): 248–55. Other articles include "Notes on the Word Theosophy," vol. XIX, no. 3 (January 1922): 247–59; [identified as A. G.], "Nirvâna," vol. XX, no. 2 (October 1922): 144–53; [identified as A. G.], "Memory," vol. XXI, no. 2 (October 1923): 153–59.

Rev. Griscom also participated in a few of the annual conventions of the society. See, for instance the conventions of 1918 (*Theosophical Quarterly* XVI, no. 1 [July 1918]: 100); 1919 (vol. XVIII, no. 1 [July 1920]: 77 and 82); vol. XXI, no. 1 (July 1923): 82.

83 Assuming that Mrs. Griscom was the individual writing under the pseudonym Cavé. Her

commitment to Chapel Farm coupled with her apparent spiritual status strengthens the argument that she was the inspirational writer Cavé. In addition, it has been suggested that she was also the anonymous Outer Head. If the latter, it explains her absence from The T. S.'s proceedings and activities as well as her active role in acquiring Chapel Farm in Riverdale and her subsequent commitment to the Order.

84 Higgins and Mitchell, *Henry Bedinger Mitchell's Talks on Religion*, 16–19.

85 Higgins and Mitchell, *Henry Bedinger Mitchell's Talks on Religion*, 1–8. Mitchell's obituary in the *Riverdale Press* ([The Bronx], August 9, 1956: 5) includes a few pertinent details about his life. Besides having taught mathematics at Columbia University, he served as director of the Griscom-Russell Company (manufacturers of heat exchange equipment) in 1912 and was Chairman of the Board from 1939 to his death in 1956 and a member of the executive committee. The obituary confirms that he was a member of the Order of the Living Christ and occupant at Chapel Farm, where he was director of the property. He is also credited as co-founder of the Chapel of the Comforter at 10 Horatio St. (N. Y.) and founder of the Open Door Mission, 1913. There is, however, some disagreement concerning the last item. Higgins ("'The Benedick'. *An Analysis of Talks on Religion* [1909]": 34) notes that C. A. Griscom, Jr. was "co-founder of the Open Door Mission" in 1913.

The Herald Statesman ([Yonkers, N. Y.], June 2 1958) later reported that the Mitchell estate was estimated to be worth $1,515,203 according to the State Transfer Tax Department, $419,000 of which was bequeathed to "his friend and associate" Mrs. Genevieve Griscom (*The Riverdale Press*, Second Section [February 22, 1968]). Additional information appears in the Preface of Shawn Higgins' "The Benedick [Preface]: Talks on Religion," at

https://www.patheos.com/blogs/marginalia/2023/02/the-benedick-preface/

Mitchell's Last Will and Testament (West Virginia, U. S., Wills and Probate Records, 1724–1985) states that his body shall "be cremated and the ashes interred under the ledger stone which bear my name, with those of other members of The Order, in the lot of The Order of the Living Christ in The Woodlawn Cemetery, New York." Mitchell was unmarried so his property was divided among members of the family (sister, nieces and nephews). Among the other recipients was Mrs. Griscom, in part to "further the religious, literary, educational and charitable work and purposes of the Order of the Living Christ" and such "other exclusively religious, charitable, literary or educational purposes as they may seem to be appropriate and to be in harmony with the purposes of the Order of the Living Christ." It was obvious from Mr. Mitchell's will that the Order of the Living Christ was a functioning organization under the leadership of Mrs. Griscom. Mitchell died on July 30, 1956. This information was accessed through

https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/9087/

https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/9087/images/004715608_00484?queryId=b8008abd-cd49-4121-a28f-238e0e03528c&usePUB=true&_phsrc=Tyi18&_phstart=successSource&pId=302716

86 Theodora Dodge wrote an account of her life around the time of the First World War in the *Theosophical Quarterly* under the title "War Memories," appearing in nineteen parts. The writer of this account only identifies herself as "Volunteer," which was one of several pseudonyms she employed as noted on page 244 of the *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXIII, no. 3. See the *Theosophical Quarterly* XXVI, no.2 (October 28): 129–41; vol. XXVI, no. 3 (January 1929): 210–22; vol. XXVI, no. 4 (April, 1929): 315–25;

vol. XXVII, no. 1 (July 1929): 21–30; vol. XXVII, no. 2 (October 1929): 123–33; vol. XXVII, no. 3 (January, 1930): 230–41; vol. XXVII, no. 4 (April 1930): 329–40; vol. XXVIII, no. 1 (July 1930): 25–33; vol. XXVIII, no. 2 (October): 154–63; vol. XXVIII, no. 3 (January 1931): 245–55; vol. XXVIII, no. 4 (April 1931): 342–53; vol. XXIX, no. 1 (July 1931): 46–53; vol. XXIX, no. 2 (October 1931): 136–50; vol. XXIX, no. 3 (January 1932): 223–37; vol. XXIX, no. 4 (April 1932): 340–352; vol. XXX, no. 1 (July 1932): 39–48; vol. XXX, no. 2 (October 1932): 159–69; vol. XXX, no. 3 (January 1933): 225–37; Vol. XXX, no. 4 (April 1933): 301–15.

Her other pseudonyms include Hetep Ne Heter were her articles on Egyptian mythology, an example being "Horus of Edfu" in vol. 31, no. 3 (January 1934): 207–212.
Shawn F. Higgins, "Theodora Dodge: The Creeping Shadow,"
https://www.patheos.com/blogs/marginalia/2024/06/theodora-dodge-the-creeping-shadow/

87 Information on Woodlawn Ceremony originate from Shawn F. Higgins' "The Benedick: Silence" at *https://www.patheos.com/blogs/marginalia/2023/02/silence/*

88 John F. B. Mitchell, the brother of Henry Bedinger Mitchell, as a member of The Theosophical Society and The Outer Court, Inc., of the Order of the Living Christ, was a resident at Chapel Farm and frequent contributor to the *Theosophical Quarterly*. He was a banker at Redmond, Kerr & Co. and was identified as President of Griscom-Russell Company. According to Shawn F. Higgins, Mitchell was involved in the creation of the Center for the Study of World Religions at Harvard University. Higgins and Mitchell, *Henry Bedinger Mitchell's Talks on Religion*, 24–25 and *https://www.patheos.com/blogs/marginalia/2023/02/silence/* See also Shawn Higgins, "The Benedick [Preface]: Talks on Religion" (Preface) at
https://www.patheos.com/blogs/marginalia/2023/02/the-benedick-preface/

89 The sense of the term in the context of the passage seems to be a cessation of outer work on the part of the Society. Nicholas Adams, "'You Young Men are So Sure': Architectural Ethos at J. Walter Severinghaus' Chapel House." *SOM* 10: 132, mistook the word to be a neologism ("indrawl") but gave a credible explanation of the term: "It referred … to a waiting period, a pause as the group looked forward to a more auspicious moment."

90 There is no doubt that the E. S. T. existed in the early years of the Society, but it may very well have been the case that the E. S. T. waned in the later years of the Society, possibly having been replaced by the Order of the Living Christ. This, I assume , is Shawn F. Higgins assessment in his "'The Benedick'. An Analysis of Talks on Religion (1909)," *Dewey Studies* 6, no. 2 (2022): 61–62. Therein he identifies the Order of the Living Christ as "the inner group of the GTS [Griscom Theosophical Society]." This opinion is strengthened by the observation of the anonymous U. L. T. author, namely that the members of The T. S. were about to retire "within the monastic seclusion of their 'E. S. T.'" See [Anon.], "Aftermath," *Theosophy* XXIII, no. 12: 546.

91 E. S. T.: Routine Business No. 8, March 1, 1899: "The Mysteries." Source: *Kenneth R. Small Archive of the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society at Lomaland, 1874-1960. Special Collections & University Archives. San Diego State University. Series 4: E.S.—Esoteric Section. Folder 4: Eastern School of Theosophy—American Section (Hargrove/Mrs. Griscom), 1898-1906.*

I thank both Shawn F. Higgins and Ken Small for copies of this document.

92 The threefold training comprises the following:

(a) a soul must be awakened by the life;

(b) the higher mind, by the intellectual effort

linked to aspiration, (the fire of Kundalini playing on the pineal gland); and

(c) the registering on the brain of the knowledge thus acquired. But one fact must never be forgotten; we must live the life to know the doctrine.

These training steps appear in the preceding paragraph.

93 "Some Aspects of Theosophy," *Theosophical Quarterly* X, no. 2 (October 1912): 140.

94 *Talks on Religion: A Collective Inquiry*, recorded by Henry Bedinger Mitchell, 286–87. The speaker giving this opinion is identified only as "The Author" in the book. He is identified as Charles Johnston in Shawn Higgins and Henry Bedinger Mitchell, *Henry Bedinger Mitchell's Talks on Religion* (Duffield and Willoughby, 2025), 16–19.

95 E. S. T.: Routine Business No. 8, March 1, 1899: "The Mysteries."

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> a descent of the manifested Deity—whether under the specific name of Siva, Vishnu, or Âdi-Buddha—into an illusive form of individuality, an appearance which to men on this illusive plane is objective, but it is not so in sober fact. That illusive form having neither past nor future, because it had neither previous incarnation nor will have subsequent rebirths, has naught to do with Karma, which has therefore no hold on it.

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98 C. A. G. (Clement A. Griscom), "The Masters," *Theosophical Quarterly* XIII, no. 4 (April 1916): 386.

99 Masters may be "Nirmanakayas," those who remain in this world, and Dharmakayas, those who leave this existence "in some Nirvanic condition" no longer in contact with this world. Jesus was a Nirmanakaya who retained his humanity to serve in this world.

The terms originate in Buddhism but are more prominent in the Mahāyāna and Tibetan traditions. One of the Mahāyānic schools, the Yogācāra school views the *nirmāna-kāya* as the Buddha nature in physical form, *i.e.*, the body in which the Buddha appear on earth. The *dharmakaya* is the Buddha-Nature, devoid of all characteristics, immeasurable, illimitable, and the basis of the *nirmāna-kāya*.

100 G. W. ["Clement Acton Griscom"], *Theosophical Quarterly* XVII, no. 1 (July 1919): 25.

101 E. T. Hargrove, "Report of the Executive Committee," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXIII, no. 3 (July 1936): 219–20, 223–26.

102 H. P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*. Two volumes in one (Los Angeles: The Theosophy Company, 1974), I: 17:

> The fundamental identity of all Souls with the

> universal Oversoul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root… no purely spiritual Buddhi (divine Soul) can have an independent (conscious) existence before the spark which issued from the pure Essence of the Universal principle,—or the OVER-SOUL,—has (a) passed through every elemental form of the phenomenal world of that Manvantara, and (b) acquired individuality, first by natural impulse, and then by self-induced and self-devised efforts (checked by its Karma), thus ascending through all the degrees of intelligence, from the lowest to the highest Manas, from mineral and plant, up to the holiest archangel (Dhyani-Buddha).

103 Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine* I: 16–17.

104 A summary review of cosmic cycles appears in Blavatsky's unfinished article identified by Boris de Zirkoff as "On Cosmic Cycles, Manvantaras, and Rounds." *H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings: 1890–1891*. Volume XIII. Compiled by Boris de Zirkoff (Wheaton, Ill.: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1982), 301–306.

Blavatsky wrote a number of articles appearing in *The Theosophist* and *Lucifer* as also her earlier major work, *Isis Unveiled*, two volumes (New York: J. Bouton and Co., 1877), I. 6, 21, 30, 31 38,135, 156, 294, 296 and 553 ("circle of necessity"), 622, II: 273, 366, 369, 420, 461. Her articles include "The Theory of Cycles, *The Theosophist* I, no. 10 (July 1880): 242–44; "Our Cycle and the Next," *Lucifer* IV, no. 21 (May 15, 1889): 177–88. "The Tidal Wave," *Lucifer* V, no. 27 (November 15, 1889): 173–78; "The Cycle Moveth," *Lucifer* VI, no. 31 (March 15, 1890): 1–10; "Fragments, "*Lucifer* XVIII, no. 108 (August 15, 1896): 449–455; "On Cosmic Cycles," H. P. Blavatsky, "Secret Cycles," in *H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings: 1890–1891*, XIII, 373–74.

Judge's articles include W. Q. Judge, "Cycles," *Echoes* I, 121–31 (*The Path* IV [December 1889]:272–81); "The Signs of This Cycle," *Echoes*,I, 292–94 (*The Path* VII [October 1892]: 205–207); "Cycles and Cyclic Law," *Echoes* II, 164–68 (presented at *The Theosophical Congress*, 1893); "The Closing Cycle," *Echoes* II, 9–11; "Cyclic Impression and Return and Our Evolution, " *Echoes* I, 514–27: "Hidden Hints in *The Secret Doctrine*," *Echoes* II, 223–39 (cycles: 234) "An Important Cycle," *Echoes* III, 283–85. Other works by Judge include *The Ocean of Theosophy* (Pasadena: Theosophical University Press, 2011), 142. [This edition is verbatim with the 1893 second edition.] The relevant passages appear in Chapter XIV, "Cycles." The pamphlet "The Epitome of Theosophy" is located in *Echoes* III, 53–66.

105 The hundred-year cycle is based upon Blavatsky's remarks in her *Key to Theosophy* (Pasadena, CA: Theosophical University Press, 1972), 306–307. For a discussion of this cycle, see David Reigle, "The Centennial Cycle, *Theosophical History* XI, no. 4 (October 2005): 5–15.

106 Judge, *The Ocean of Theosophy*, 142.

> The first 5000 years of *Kali Yuga* will end between the years 1897 and 1898. This Yuga began about 3102 years before the Christian era, at the time of Krishna's death. As 1897–98 are not far off, the scientific men of today will have an opportunity of seeing whether the close of the five thousand year cycle will be preceded or followed by any convulsions or great changes political, scientific, or physical, or all of these combined.

See also Judge, "The Kali Yuga," *The Path* IX, no. 8 (November 1894): 234–36.

107 H. P. Blavatsky, "The Esoteric Character of the Gospels," *Lucifer* I, no. 3 (November 15, 1887): 174 (note).

108 Blavatsky, "The Tidal Wave," *Lucifer* V, no. 27: 173.

109 H. P. Blavatsky, "H. P. B.'s Message to the Convention, American Section T. S., 1891," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXII, no. 1 (July 1934): 81.

110 "Answers to Correspondence: Question 26 (H. H.)," *Echoes*, III: 390.

111 Blavatsky, "Our Cycle and the Next," *Lucifer* IV, no. 21: 178.

112 "H. P. B.'s Message to the Convention, American Section T. S., 1891," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXII, no. 1: 82–83.

113 Blavatsky, "The Cycle Moveth," *Lucifer* VI, no. 31: 1.

114 On page 58 of her Scrapbook (Vol. I), she writes that she received orders from her Masters "to establish a philosophico-religious Society and choose a name for it—also to choose Olcott" *H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings: 1874–1878*. Vol. I, third edition compiled by Boris de Zirkoff. (Wheaton, Ill: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1988), 94. Elsewhere, in her pamphlet, "An Explanation Important to All Theosophists" (*H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings: 1888–1889*. Vol. X, compiled by Boris de Zirkoff. [Adyar, Madras: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1964], 139), she quotes her Master:

> "We have not abandoned her; she is not 'given over to chelas.' She is our direct agent. I warn you against permitting your suspicions and resentment against 'her many follies' to bias your intuitive loyalty to her.

115 H. P. Blavatsky, The Key to Theosophy, 306. Judge, "The Closing Cycle," *Echoes* II, 9–11.

116 W. Q. Judge, "Answers to Correspondence No. 4: March 1893: We have not been deserted," *Echoes* of the Orient III: 411–13.

117 Judge, "The Closing Cycle," *Echoes* II: 10 (*Irish Theosophist* III, no. 1: 54).

118 Brett Forray, "William Q. Judge's and Annie Besant's Views of Brahman Theosophists," *Theosophical History* X, no. 1 (January, 2004): 13–15. One additional reason why occultism was expected to flourish in the West was due to the downgrading of India, likely by the colonial power, leading to its loss as a "vital spiritual center of evolution." W. Q. Judge, "Subsidiary Paper No. B: East and West," *Echoes of the Orient III*: 458.

119 Judge, "The Closing Cycle," *Echoes* II: 11 (*Irish Theosophist* III, no. 1: 56).

120 Forray, "William Q. Judge's and Annie Besant's Views of Brahman Theosophists," *Theosophical History* X, no. 1: 14. The quote within Mr. Forray's statement appears in "Subsidiary Paper No. A: Nirmāṇakāyas," in *Echoes of the Orient* III: 451.

121 The United States was assumed. Annie Besant, in her pamphlet, "The Coming Race," Adyar Pamphlets No. 76, Adyar: Theosophical Publishing House, 1917,13–19. Yet, "America" is ambiguous because it can apply anywhere on North, Central, or South America. This argument was presented by the founder of the Theosophically-based Aquarian Society, Brother XII (Edward Arthur Wilson), who located the cradle of the sixth sub-race in Canada, specifically British Columbia. In an article appearing in *The Theosophist* XXXVIII no. 11 (August 1917), "Active Preparations for the Sixth Root Race," the author, Robert K. Walton, observes that the sixth sub-race is developing not only in the United States, but also Canada, and to a lesser degree, in Australia and New Zealand. He notes that "Southern California is particularly rich in examples of the new type," which he identifies as a "new American race" (p. 543).

Regarding Tingley's Universal Brotherhood and Hargrove's T. S., the location is most definitely the "Americas" according to *Ocean of Theosophy*, 29 or simply "America" according to his "Rings, Rounds, and Obscuration" *The Path* VIII, no. 8 (November 1892): 256.

122 "Raja Yoga" refers to the educational philosophy exhibiting "the perfect balance of all the faculties, physical, mental, and spiritual." Greenwalt, *California Utopia: Point Loma: 1897–1942*, 78. This form of education is discussed in Greenwalt, 76–99 (Chapter VIII) and in W. Michael Ashcraft's *The Dawn of the New Cycle: Point Loma Theosophist and American Culture* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2002), 85–107 (Chapter 5). Of special interest is Mr. Ashcraft's account of Raja Yoga at Point Loma (pp. 93–107) and the chapter, "Higher Womanhood: Women and Girls at Point Loma" (pp. 110–127).

123 Greenwalt, *California Utopia: Point Loma: 1897–1942*, 167–72.

124 This is only a portion of the many innovations introduced by Tingley. Greenwalt's *California Utopia* devotes most of his research in Tingley's accomplisments.

125 H. B. Mitchell, "Address of the Chairman," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXIII, no. 1 (July 1935): 40–41.

126 E. T. Hargrove, "Report of the Executive Committee," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXII, no. 1: 56: "Mrs. Tingley's personal ambition and self-seeking became as notorious as the superstition of her followers…."

127 This term is a rather rare term which only occurred once in its verbal form in the earlier issues the *Theosophical Quarterly* (XIII, no. 1 [July 1915]. In an article by C. A. G. (C. A. Griscom), "Disciples," the author writes on page 66:

> To go back to the soul, therefore, it gradually gained the object of the whole evolutionary process, self-consciousness. Then the outward tide of expansion stopped and began to recede. This portion of the universe reached its uttermost outer or "lower" expression and began to indraw; the path began to lead back home; the souls of men, having gained self-consciousness, turned toward their divine source, enriched by their newly acquired gift.

128 Mitchell, "A Stone of the Foundation," *Theosophical Quarterly* XVII, no. 1: 16.

129 Mitchell, "A Stone of the Foundation," *Theosophical Quarterly* XVII, no. 1: 18, 20.

130 Mitchell, "A Stone of the Foundation," *Theosophical Quarterly* XVII, no. 1: 20–21.

131 Mitchell, "A Stone of the Foundation," *Theosophical Quarterly* XVII, no. 1: 20–21.

132 Ernest T. Hargrove, "Report of the Executive Committee," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXII, no. 1 (July 1934): 53.

133 William Q. Judge, "An Epitome of Theosophy," in *Echoes of the Orient*, III: 59. For more information on cycles, see H. P. Blavatsky, "Secret Cycles," in Blavatsky Collected Writings XIV: 358–68.

134 Hargrove, "Report of the Executive Committee," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXII, no. 1: 53–54.

135 Hargrove, "Report of the Executive Committee," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXII, no. 1: 57.

136 Hargrove, "Report of the Executive Committee," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXII, no. 1: 57.

137 H. B. Mitchell, "Address of the Chairman," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXIII, no. 3 (July 1936): 206–207.

138 J. Z. "The New Cycle," *Theosophical Forum* 5, no. 12 (April 1900): 235. A description of the changing cycles also appears in the E. S. T.: Routine Business No. 8, March 1, 1889: "The End of the Cycle."

139 Mitchell, "Address of the Chairman of the Convention," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXV, no. 3 (July 1938): 206–207.

140 H. B. Mitchell, "Address of the Chairman of the Convention," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXIII, no. 1: 40.

141 H. G., "Indrawal, Our Great Opportunity," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXIII, no. 1 (July 1935): 152.

142 E. T. Hargrove, "Report of the Executive Committee," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXII, no. 1: 53.

143 "Report of the Secretary T.S. for the Year Ending April 29, 1933, *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXI, no. 1 (July 1933): 60; "Report of the Secretary T. S.: Book Department," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXII, no. 1: 50.

144 E. T. Hargrove, "Report of the Executive Committee," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXX, no. 1 (July 1932): 66.

145 E. T. Hargrove [a short address to the Convention], *Theosophical Quarterly* XXX, no. 1 (July 1932): 78.

146 Hargrove, "Report of the Executive Committee," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXII, no. 1: 53.

147 Hargrove, "Report of the Executive Committee," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXII, no. 1: 57.

148 Hargrove, "Report of the Executive Committee," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXII, no. 1: 54–57. Hargrove's negative assessment of Robert Crosbie, the founder of the U. L. T., reflected the U.L.T.'s assessment of Hargrove given above in *Theosophy*. On page 56, Hargrove observed:

> Mrs. Tingley's personal ambition and self-seeking became as notorious as the superstition of her followers; the same is true of the so-called United Lodge, though in different ways. As many of you are aware, Robert Crosbie was its inspiring genius. Some of us knew him well, years ago, in Boston. He was one of Judge's minor sorrows,— because Crosbie was psychic, always having " visions", always imagining that he was getting " messages", and so forth. Judge, of course, thoroughly understood him, and often grieved over him to us. Later, at a time when there was no excuse for it, as everyone had been warned, Crosbie followed Mrs. Tingley to Point Loma. When he finally discovered (much good his psychism did him!) that she was not what he had imagined her to be, he left Point Loma, and then, when he had obtained the financial backing he needed, set up as a " guru" on his own account, establishing the United Lodge as recruiting instrument.

149 [Anon.], "Aftermath," *Theosophy* XXIII, no. 12: 546

150 I assume that the date of the indrawal is December 31, 1938. I could find no activity following the publication of Volume 35 of the *Theosophical Quarterly*. Yet, this last volume of the *Quarterly* does not give any hint of the impending indrawal. The issue still contained the address for communications. It is possible, however, that the indrawal took place a few years later, 1943 to be exact. The Wikipedia article, "Theosophy Society in America (Hargrove)" claims that the last convention occurred not in 1938 but in 1943, after which the Society disbanded. This is problematic because the two cited sources provide no evidence or mention of this later date.

151 Mitchell, "Address of the Chairman of the Convention," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXV, no. 3: 207.

152 "Report of the Annual Convention," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXV, no. 3 (July 1938): 229.

153 The term chela originates from Hindī celā "pupil" or "disciple." The term is derived from Sanskrit "ceṭa" and is a cognate of Kāśmīrī cela.

Although chela is translated as "disciple," it is considered superior according to the respondent in "Questions and Answers," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXV, no. 2 (April 1938): 174. The question submitted was the following: "What is the difference between a saint, a disciple, and a chêla?" Of the three, the chela is superior to the disciple, who in turn is superior to the saint.

Discipleship is actually a preliminary stage to the chela according to one respondent, according to "G. H. M" [Gardiner H. Miller]. This respondent also states that a "saint" possesses "intense love and devotion to his Master," the disciple possessing the qualities of the saint "minus the limitations of creed and dogma which narrow the vision of the saint," and the chela "the completion of discipleship."

"J. F. B. M." [John Fulton Berrien Mitchell] adds that there are grades of chelas, including "lay-chêlas, probationary chêlas, accepted chêlas, etc. its higher grades are said to involve a closeness, a degree of union with the chêla's Master beyond anything in our experience.

Blavatsky defined a chêla "one who has offered himself or herself as a pupil to learn practically

the 'hidden mysteries of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.' " "Chelas and Lay Chelas," *The Theosophist: Supplement* IV, no. 10 (July 1883), 10.

The three degrees of chela cited by J. F. B. M. originate from W. Q. Judge's "Masters, Adepts, Teachers, and Disciples" *Echoes of the Orient* I: 365–67 [*The Path* VIII, no. 3 (June 1894): 65–68].

154 "Questions and Answers," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXV, no.3 (July 1938): 262.

155 Remark by Mr. Kobbé in the *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXIII, no. 3 (July 1936): 246.

156 "Questions and Answers," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXV, no. 2 (April 1938): 174. The question submitted was the following: "What is the difference between a saint, a disciple, and a chêla?" Chela, although translated as "disciple," is viewed as superior to the disciple, who in turn is superior to the saint. Blavatsky, as a chela, claimed to be the Lodge's direct or "immediate" agent.

157 "Questions and Answers," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXV, no. 2 (April 1938): 174.

158 "Questions and Answers," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXV, no. 2: 174.

159 The letter is mentioned by Nicholas Adams in his article, "'You Young Men Are So Sure': Architectural Ethos at J. Walter Severinghaus' Chapel House." SOM 10: 132. This is also cited in Charles M. Stang, "Calling a New Séance: The Theosophical Origins of Harvard' Center for the Study of World Religions," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 89, no. 4 (December 2021): 1147.

160 Hargrove, "Report of the Executive Committee," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXII, no. 1 (July 1934): 53–54.

161 E. T. Hargrove, "Address of the Chairman, Executive Committee," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXV, no. 3 (July 1938): 203.

162 The passage in question is section 2.1–3. The *Mahāsudassana Sutta* is number 17 of the *Digha Nikāy*a collection 17. For a complete translation, see *The Long Discourses of the Buddha*, translated by Maurice Walshe (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995), 279–90. Rupert Gethin, in his "Mythology as Meditation: From the Mahāsudassana Sutta to the Sukhāvatīvyūha Sūtra" (*Journal of the Pali Text Society* XXVIII [2006]: 92–93), summarizes the passage as follows:

> [This is] a mythic narrative of the Buddhist path. The outer city is the place for the household life; it is in effect the ordinary world, the world of the five senses (*kāma-dhātu*). The Palace of Dhamma is the place for the celibate and spiritual life (*brahma-cariya*) of an ascetic; its rooms are for the practice of meditation, of *jhāna*, and to enter them is in effect to enter the world of pure form (*rūpa-dhātu*). Having practised *dāna* [i.e., charity] and *sīla* [*i.e.*, right conduct], the king is ready to move from the outer city to the inner Palace of Dhamma. Here he practises the *jhānas* [*i.e.*, the four or eight meditations] and *brahma-vihāras* [*i.e.*, the four divine states: friendliness, compassion, joy, and disinterest], following which he meditates on the impermanence of all conditioned things. This is a very straightforward and clear narrative of the Buddhist path: *dāna* and *sīla* followed by bhāvanā [*i.e.* cultivation of the 'mind' through meditation] consisting of the practice of *samādhi* [*i.e.*, concentration] or samatha [*i.e.*, calm] and *paññā* [*i.e.*, understanding] or *vipassanā* [*i.e.*, insight].

163 This is stated in the Resolution and quoted by Hargrove in his "Report of the Annual Convention," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXV, no. 3: 229":

> *Whereas*, We realize also the imperative need of the Society to produce chêlas from within its ranks if our link with the Lodge is to be kept unbroken, and if the Society is to continue to serve as a bridge between the Lodge and the world; therefore be it….

164 Louise Jamieson, "Secrets Linger at Chapel Farm Estate," *The Riverdale Press* (November 27, 1986): 1.

165 Besides the other names mentioned, including

Rev. Clarence Clarke and one Reverend W. Sydney Fisher, who was a resident at Chapel Farm for about eight years in the 1930s, ending with the death of Mr. Hargrove in 1939, who he described as a mentor. "Chapel Farm's Secret World," *The Riverdale Press* (November 27, 1966): B1.

166 "'Mystery' of Chapel Farm Solved," *The Riverdale Press* (September 11, 1958): 3.

167 Jamieson, "Secrets Linger at Chapel Farm Estate," *The Riverdale Press* (November 27, 1986): B1.

168 "Fire Levels Library At Chapel Farm, Theosophist Retreat In Riverdale," *The Herald Statesman* (February 2, 1956): 1.

169 John B. Carman and Kathryn Dodgson, *Community and Colloquy, The Center for the Study of World Religions* 1958–2003 (Cambridge, MA: Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard Divinity School), 11–28.

170 Theodore Louis Trost, *Douglas Horton and the Ecumenical Impulse in American Religion* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press for Harvard Theological Studies, Harvard Divinity School, 2003): 168–71.

171 Carman and Dodgson, *Community and Colloquy*, 12–13.

172 Professor Kenneth W. Morgan (1908–2011) was a Professor of Religion at Colgate University, a Director of Chapel House at Colgate, and Director of the Fund for the Study of World Religions. He is the author of numerous works including *Islam: The Straight Path: Islam Interpreted by Muslims, The Path of the Buddha: Buddhism Interpreted by Buddhists, and The Religion of the Hindus.* The Kenneth W. Morgan Papers (A1357) are stored at the Special Collections and University Archives, Colgate University Libraries.

173 Carman and Dodgson, *Community and Colloquy*, 12–13.

174 Trost, *Douglas Horton and the Ecumenical Impulse in American Religion*, 168.

175 Trost, *Douglas Horton and the Ecumenical Impulse in American Religion*, 168 and 171; Carman and Dodgson, *Community and Colloquy*, 15–19. For an only overview of the Center, go to: *https://cswr.hds.harvard.edu/about/history.*

176 John Ross Carter, "How Chapel House Came to Be," online at:

https://cswr.hds.harvard.edu/sites/g/files/omnuum4346/files/hds_cswr/files/how_chapel_house_came_to_be.pdf

177 "Theosophy and the Theosophical Societies," online at the *Academia.edu* site:

https://www.academia.edu/59708606/THEOSOPHY_AND_THE_THEOSOPHICAL_SOCIETIES

178 "Questing at Chapel House": *http://www.jubileeinitiative.org/sacredchapelhouse.html*

179 "Original Mission Statement" Online at:

https://www.colgate.edu/about/campus-facilities/chapel-house/vision-statement

180 "Veil of Secrecy at 'Mystery Estate' Lifted Following Death of Founder," *The Riverdale Press* (September 11, 1958): 1.

181 "Developer Pays $700,000 for 18 Acres in Fieldson," The Herald Statesman (February 19, 1960): 20; "Griscom Widow's Estate More Than 5$ Million," *The Herald Statesman* (November 30, 1962): 8.

182 "Riverdale's Ultimate House on a Hill," *The Riverdale Press* (October 8, 2009). Online at:

https://www.riverdalepress.com/stories/riverdales-ultimate-house-on-a-hill,42633

The mansion and the second coming also appear in the *Daily Mail* (October 18, 2012) at:

https://www.dailymail.com/news/article-2219794/Theres-room-inn-Inside-15million-mansion-built-second-coming-Jesus-Christ.html

and on December 27, 2015 at:

https://www.dailymail.com/news/article-3375500/A-home-fit-Christ-Mansion-built-second-coming-Jesus-hits-market-10M.html

183 "Inspiration," *Theosophical Quarterly* XXXV, no. 2 (April 1938): 107.

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Section 3: The Theosophical Society Library and Archives

The Genesis and Aims of Theosophical University Library

John Van Mater

One day while working in the Spiritualism section of the library I came across a book titled The Clock Struck One, by the Reverend Samuel Watson, Christian Spiritualist, published Louisville, KY, 1873. I thought to myself "What an interesting title. I wonder how the library came by this book." Looking to see if there was a bookplate or some other means of identifying its former owners, I found inscribed inside the cover in a well-known hand-writing, "H. P. Blavatsky, New York, 1874."

This discovery and others like it started the project embodied in this paper—to trace the history of what is now called Theosophical University Library, but which has been known by several names in the course of the last hundred years. Who were the major contributors? Has it always been open to the public? Were books loaned by mail? Who were the librarians? What were its objectives?

As mentioned in the prospectus, when H. P. Blavatsky and H. S Olcott left for India December 18, 1878, she had been in the United States for six years, had founded the Society, and written *Isis Unveiled*.[1] We know from Colonel Olcott's memoirs that H. P. B.'s working library numbered scarcely a hundred books, and he lists a few of them.[2] Some of these traveled with her to India. Others obviously remained in New York City and later found their way into the American Headquarters Library there, and many of these last are still with us in Pasadena.

While Olcott and H.P.B. were still in London *enroute* to India, General Abner Doubleday was appointed President of the Theosophical Society *ad interim*. As W. Q. Judge was already Counsel to the Society and its Recording Secretary, the two were empowered to conduct the routine work of the Society until a Headquarters could be established in India.[3]

For some years the Society languished in the United States. It was only in the mid-80s after Mr. Judge was free to give it his attention that the American work began to grow. In

April 1886 when Judge founded *The Path* Magazine there were but nine Branches.[4] Two years later a New York Headquarters was established in Room 45, 115 Nassau Street,[5] with W. Q. Judge General Secretary of the American Section and President of the New York Branch.[6] In March, 1889 he was elected Vice President of the Parent Theosophical Society[7]; and that same month the American Headquarters moved to larger facilities at 21 Park Row.[8]

Now at last, in June 1889, we may report the establishment of a Circulating Theosophical Library at the New York Headquarters. The rules were spelled out and the books listed that could be borrowed one at a time in person or by mail. The cost for borrowing *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* was 10 cents per week other works 5 cents per week.[9] By October the number of volumes in the circulating library had reached 220.[10]

In December 1889 the Aryan Press was established,[11] and a tract mailing scheme was commenced at the same time.[12] These tracts were free handouts printed at the Press and sent throughout the United States for members to distribute. By January 1891 the number circulating came to nearly a quarter million.[13] From this date onward the Section publications increased and over the following years including in time not only *The Path* Magazine and the tract scheme but also Judge's *Theosophical Forum*, the *Path Branch Papers*, the *Oriental Department Papers*; plus editions of *The Ocean of Theosophy*, *Yoga Aphorisms*, *Bhagavad Gita*, and others. Mr. Judge was agent in the United States for theosophical works published in London, including *The Secret Doctrine*.[14] In November 1893 Mr. Judge established a Correspondence Class in Theosophy.[15] and by May next year enrollment was 243.[16]

In October 1891 the idea of purchasing a National Headquarters was broached,[17] with notice given in April 1892 that property at 144 Madison Avenue Headquarters had been obtained.[18] In the June 1892 issue of *The Path* the Madison Avenue Headquarters was described in detail. The Aryan Library was located in the hall on the first floor. On the third floor a reference library and a complete Theosophical library were available at all hours, books not to be taken from the room.[19] Thus we learn there was a lending library and a reference library, a division still in force today.



Library front room
Photo: Compliments of Will Thackara, Theosophical Society (Pasadena)

General Abner Doubleday died in March 1893.[20] It was his gift to the Society of over 70 books that had formed the original nucleus of the Section library, which by 1893 was described as a "large" library.[21] Over the years *The Path* continued a book review section, and these works were either purchased, donated, or received for review. These in turn became part of the Section library. Our facilities in Pasadena include a number of these early volumes with bookplates tracing the evolution of the library from Nassau Street, to Park Row, and finally to the Madison Avenue Headquarters.[22]

A matter of curious interest that was eventually to produce a substantial gift to the Theosophical University Library was the announcement described in the May 1894 *Path* [IX, no. 2] (p. 60), that the Reverend S. J. Neill of Auckland, New Zealand, scholar and Theosophist, had been "deposed from the ministry . . . on suspicion of heresy" because of his open endorsement of Theosophy. The Reverend Mr. Neill and his wife were later invited by Katherine Tingley to become resident members at Point Loma, where he brought his excellent library, now part of our holdings in Pasadena.

William Q. Judge died March 21st, 1896,[23] and within a year Katherine Tingley became head of the T .S.[24] She began to transfer the Headquarters from 144 Madison Avenue, New York City, to newly acquired land on Point Loma, San Diego, California, where on April 23rd, 1897 she founded the School for the Revival of the Lost Mysteries of Antiquity.[25] In 1900, Katherine Tingley consummated the move of the Society's international offices to Point Loma where she enlarged the publishing program of the Aryan Press founded by Judge. In the ensuing years some five or six magazines were issued, including *Universal Brotherhood*, *The New Century*, and *The New Way*, the latter for prisoners. In 1905, she founded the *Raja Yoga Messenger* for children, which continued until 1929 when it was replaced by *The Lotus Circle Messenger*. In 1911, Madam Tingley commenced *The Theosophical Path*, an illustrated monthly that became noted for its superb articles from a large number of scholars and theosophical students. She also began *El Sendero Teosofico* for Spanish-speaking readers.

During her administration the Point Loma press issued editions of *Isis Unveiled* in 1906, 1910, 1917, and 1925. In 1909 the first Point Loma edition of *The Secret Doctrine* appeared, with subsequent editions in 1917 and 1925. The magnitude of printing and binding these large works gives some idea of the growth of the printing plant, which also kept in circulation the works of Judge, five volumes from Katherine Tingley, along with the *Bhagavad-Gita*, *Light on the Path*, magazines, booklists, brochures dealing with the work of the Theosophical Society and with the activities of the School and University.[26] The Temple and Academy, the first open air Greek Theater in the United States, the Headquarters and executive buildings, Lotus Home, scores of cottages springing up over the hillsides—quite a transformation

from sage-brush covered hills to an International Headquarters and campus overlooking the Pacific.

These activities had a very direct bearing upon what is now known as Theosophical University Library, because the writing and editing of the various publications required a corps of authors and editors. The School, Academy, and College needed teachers and professors. Katherine Tingley had gone to great pains to draw together at Point Loma most gifted members from various parts of the world to help realize her plans. With them came or were later purchased the books and periodicals needed for their specialties. These works have come down to us, forming, together with the nucleus from Judge's New York based organization, the kernel of our present library. For example, under her direction efforts were made to check the quotations in *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*. This necessitated either procuring the relevant works, or calling upon members in Europe and elsewhere for assistance in checking the references in books, or articles in the various learned journals in France, England, Germany, the United States, and elsewhere. This project is still ongoing.

The *Isis Unveiled* editions received the meticulous attention of Fred. J. Dick, formerly Astronomer Royal of Ireland, a devoted and erudite man.[27] He was assisted at the outset by William E. Gates, who joined the Society under H. P. B., and became Professor of American Archaeology and Linguistics at the Point Loma School of Antiquity.[28] Dr. Gates is gratefully remembered by all who are connected with the library for the scores of priceless volumes he bequeathed. Professor Gates later moved to Maryland where, in conjunction with Johns Hopkins University, he continued his pioneer work in Mayan research.[29]

Dr. Gottfried de Purucker, one of our most able scholars, the future head of the Society from 1929 to 1942, worked with Professor Dick on the first Point Loma Edition of *The Secret Doctrine*. In the course of his 49 years in the Society, de Purucker accumulated scores of volumes dealing with the classics as well as the wisdom of India and the Far East; all these are now incorporated in our holdings.

Indeed, a running account of the major donors to the library would read like a *Theosophical Who's Who*. Such would include Dr. Oswald Siren, F.T.S., Curator of the Oriental Section of the Stockholm Museum, whose many volumes also grace our shelves.[30] Dr.

Kenneth Morris, Professor of History and Literature at the University who, when he left for Wales in 1930,[31] gave the library his collection of Welsh literature as well as some of his own poetry and prose. Lucius Cannon, a member from Judge's time, sent many dozens of valuable books to the library, mostly during the 1930s.

One of Dr. de Purucker's first acts on taking office as Leader of the Theosophical Society in 1929 was to appoint Miss Helen Savage (now Helen Todd) librarian of Theosophical University Library. His object was to combine the School of Antiquity Library with other smaller libraries at Headquarters and with certain books from earlier times still in crates. There were also library books scattered in the homes of various members of the Headquarters staff. He asked Miss Savage to assemble all these, arrange them under proper headings, and to catalog them. The library was first housed in several rooms of the temple building, and in 1934 was moved to the former home of Mr. and Mrs. Albert G. Spalding, a spacious building which Mr. Spalding had built and occupied in the early 1900s.[32] In November 1935, Mr. Guy Ponsonby was appointed librarian, a post he retained for ten years.[33]

In June 1942, Dr. de Purucker moved the International Headquarters from Point Loma to a 40-acre site formerly occupied by the California Preparatory School and located in what was then the countryside near Covina in Los Angeles County.[34] There was ample room for the personnel, offices, Press, Library, and other facilities. Three years after his death (September 27, 1942), Colonel Arthur L. Conger, a member of the Society since Judge's time, assumed the responsibilities of Leader.[35]

By then the library was comfortably housed in what had been the school's gymnasium. It was a fine setting, with phalanxes of uniform bookcases constructed by our carpentry department. Helen Savage had instituted the Dewey Decimal system, which was continued by Mr. Ponsonby, Katherine Heck, and others.

By 1946 the library was in constant use by the resident staff as well as by students attending Theosophical University, a number of whom qualified under the GI Bill. Mr. Clarence Wesner was then Librarian. There was a steady increase in its holdings to meet the college demands and also to supply material for *The Theosophical Forum* with its flow of research articles that characterized the magazine under the

able editorship of Colonel Conger, a Harvard graduate in Philosophy and Music.

In October 1950, Colonel Conger felt the need to consolidate the headquarters activity and inaugurated the transfer of all facilities to the Pasadena area, where the administrative offices, library, editorial and publishing departments are presently housed.[36] As most of the GI students had completed their undergraduate studies, the Colonel closed the academic aspect of Theosophic University. From a hundred or so at Covina, including college students, the staff now numbered forty.

Upon the death of Arthur L. Conger in 1951[37] James A. Long became head of the Society.[38] Theosophical University Library at first was housed in a four-car garage with an extensive basement.

There A. Studley Hart, Chairman of the Cabinet and Treasurer General, unpacked the entire collection and over the course of some months arranged it roughly by countries and civilizations and, broadly, by Religion, Philosophy, and Science. About 1960 Mr. Long asked me to assist in the library and gave instructions not to try to return to the Dewey Decimal system, but to develop and refine the general plan begun by Mr. Hart, as he felt this more sensitively reflected the Theosophic approach to history and the development of civilizations, with their accomplishments and beliefs.

We have therefore devised a number system based upon civilizations and nations, ancient and modern. Each nation has its own number and is divided into History, Religion, Philosophy, Science, Art, Literature, and Language, each of these sub categories having its own number. History, for example, is three, Religion five, and so forth; and under these they may be subdivided indefinitely. Thus India Religion would be 36-5, 36 for India, and 5 for Religion; but since there are so many aspects of Hindu Religion, each major classic work may be given its own number. The *Bhagavad-Gita*, for example, is 36-5-32; the Vedas 36-5-12, and so forth. And under these numbers the books are separated as to Texts and Commentaries. Modern Western Science and Philosophy, Christianity, and Comparative Religion are not separated by regions or countries because of the one-world characteristics of these fields.

Under Mr. Long's administration the library received a lasting impulse. His interest in it was unflagging, looking to the time when it could be



Theosophical Library and Press building
Photo: Compliments of Will Thackara, Theosophical Society (Pasadena)

opened to the public. He foresaw its future value as a research tool for not only Theosophists of any affiliation or none, but for scholars in the area of our specialties. Mention should be made of the generous support given the library by Hugh Harrison, which allowed us to update many of the scientific and cultural areas. And we should not close this section of our remarks without remembering warmly the handsome donation of hundreds of volumes, many of them rare, by Manuel Oderberg of Australia, when he joined the Headquarters staff in 1962.

Mr. Long died July 19,1971 at which time Grace F. Knoche became Leader.[39] In the Spring of 1972, a gala occasion, Theosophical University library was once again open to the public.[40] The library now occupies nearly the entire first floor of the Press building at 2416 North Lake Avenue. New shelving was purchased for the front room as well as up-to-date card files, and carpets were laid down.

Miss Knoche, herself a scholar and lover of books, is alert to see that we keep in touch with the latest discoveries and worthwhile trends, and presently



Library front room
Photo: Compliments of Will Thackara, Theosophical Society (Pasadena)

we are in process of procuring the translations and editions of texts dealing with classical, mid-eastern, and far-eastern scriptures and commentaries. But we shall return to this subject in more detail later.

. . . . . .

Having briefly described the genesis of Theosophical University library, we now turn to its aims and objectives. In this regard allow me to quote from a letter by Dr. de Purucker to Guy Ponsonby, dated 24 July, 1936.

> I would suggest that you have no "Index Expurgatorius" whatever

> . . . to have our members think for an instant . . . that we are bigoted and dogmatic in our Theosophical views. . . . My policy runs directly contrary to this. . . . Let people read . . . and draw their own conclusions. There are also other books . . . which are almost wholly attacks on the T. S., or upon some branch of it, and these seem to have been quietly taken and put into the "non-circulating" list, and I think this is another capital mistake. Please let anybody who wants to, read all the books attacking the T. S., for I think it the best way to aquaint (sic) our members . . . with what goes on, and indeed to show how stupid or limited or blind some of these attacks are—often merely hack-work written by people seeking to gain some public notoriety, and a possible income from books seeking to stir up controversy.

These words accurately summarize the current policy of Theosophical University Library concerning all published Theosophical Material. We are a research and learning center where all may come to further their particular interests. With our limited funds we do not necessarily seek books of a quasi-theosophical or pseudo-occult nature, unless they directly comment upon or denigrate Theosophy; but books attract books, and we have assembled many such over the years. We have a fairly complete selection of the works issued by the various Theosophical organizations, including histories of the T. S., biographies of their presidents and other prominent figures, as well as attacks upon Theosophy, H.P.B., or other individuals. While we do not lend these out, anyone is free to consult them during library hours or by appointment.

We subscribe to or exchange *Sunrise* for the leading Theosophical magazines and journals, and are presently seeking to obtain all back issues. Our ultimate goal is to have all the works of the various Theosophical Societies and to have a complete file of their magazines neatly bound; also to obtain copies of the attacks upon and defenses of their activities and personnel. This for the record, so that we may offer the researcher all the published material, most of which with the passage of time will grow more and more difficult to obtain.

The library is also used by the Theosophical Society for its regular discussions on Theosophy and allied themes, which are open to the public free of charge, as are the bi-weekly classes conducted by Eloise Hart, using as a

basis the texts and questionnaires of the Theosophic Correspondence Courses. Sunday morning studies in *The Secret Doctrine* are led by Grace F. Knoche for members and serious students.

In the general area of learning, we continue to seek out the great religious and philosophical texts as these are translated or re-translated, or commentaries thereupon. The *Puranas* are gradually appearing in English, and the Nag-Hammadi finds are currently being issued and commented upon; because of it a Gnostic revival is underway. Two new translations of the *Popul Vuh*, and two of the *Mabinogion* have surfaced. The Sacred Books of the East (fifty volumes), edited by Max Muller, has been reissued. The Loeb Classical library published by Harvard University consists of several hundred volumes with the Greek and Latin text facing the translation. These are particularly useful for locating H. P. B.'s numerous references to Greek and Roman authors. Reprint publishers are re-issuing thousands of titles from the 19th century and before, including here and there some of those quoted by H.P.B. in *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*. Our long-range plan is to have in the library all the books and articles in learned journals quoted or referred to by H.P.B. in any of her works.

The library lends by mail or in person any of the books listed in our Theosophical University Press catalog. There is no charge except for postage. The main bulk of our collection, however, is for reference only and does not leave the premises, for so many of these writings and periodicals are irreplaceable. Starting with a few hundred volumes in Judge's time, growing steadily in the intervening century, our present holdings, counting Theosophical publications and magazines, runs in the neighborhood of 45-50,000 volumes. We seem to be forever expanding our shelf-space and searching among the staff for "victims" to help catalog new items or collections that like *syzygies* of the planets, come upon us periodically. A welcome invasion indeed!

To change the metaphor, we would wish to become theosophical archaeologists and expose to the public gaze the priceless philosophical and historical materials that may be uncovered in the periodicals, pamphlets, and books that have been issued by the Theosophical world since 1875. Our goal is to make available the insights theosophy has to offer in the fields of philosophy, religion, and

science, to reply to the interdisciplinary upsurge taking place today, and which is a direct reflection of that same spirit now moving among the various theosophical organizations.

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The remains of the Theosophical Library following the Eaton fire.
Photo: compliments of Brett Forray, Alexandria West

Endnotes

1 C. J. Ryan, *H.P.B. & The Theosophical Movement* (Point Loma: Theosophical Press, 1937), 30 (arrived in New York City July 7, 1873); Chapter 7 (wrote *Isis Unveiled*); H. S. Olcott *Old Diary Leaves: First Series, America 1874–1878* (Adyar, Madras: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1974), Chapter 13 [Reprint of the second edition] (wrote *Isis Unveiled*); Ryan, op. cit., 79 and Olcott, *Old Diary Leaves*, I: 481-83 (left for India).

2 Olcott, *Old Diary Leaves*, I: 207–208.

3 General Doubleday had a very distinguished career: Graduated West Point 1842; served in the Mexican War, also the Seminole campaign. He was second in command at Fort Sumpter when fired upon 12 April 1861, which ignited the Civil War. General Doubleday served in nearly all the major encounters in the Eastern U.S; was made Brevet Major General on March 13, 1865. He served in the South after the war and retired on December 11, 1873. He joined the T. S. shortly after its founding, his name appearing "second on the first page of the American register of members." Fellow of the N. Y. Branch from its inception, serving for years as its Vice President. He translated from the French two books by Eliphas Levi: *Dogma and Ritual and Fables and Symbols*. See *The Path* VII, no. 11 (February 1893): 362 and March VII, no. 12 (March 1893): 372-74. See also Olcott's "Official Order No. One" from England appointing Doubleday and Judge *ad interim* (in Pasadena Archives).

4 *The Path* I, no. 1 (April 1886): 32.

5 *The Path* III, no. 6 (September 1888): 203.

6 *Ibid*. [Ed.: The General Secretary is not identified in the September 1888 issue. However, in the following issue of *The Path* (III, no. 7 [October 1888]: 234), Judge is identified as such. The position of Presidency of the New York Branch (the Aryan T. S.) is listed on page 396. My thanks to Brett Forray for this information.]

7 Olcott's Presidential Report, *The Path III*, March 1889, p. 394. [Ed.: This discussion is part of the "The General Convention of Adyar" (pages 393–94). Therein, Judge's "election" as Vice-President of the "Parent Theosophical Society" is noted on p. 394. The previous issue (February 1889, p. 362), however, states that he was "selected" as Vice-President. My thanks to Brett Forray for this information.]

8 *The Path* III, no. 12 (March 1889): 395.

9 *The Path* IV, no. 3 (June 1889): 95.

10 *The Path* IV, no. 7 (October 1889): 230.

11 *The Path* IV, no. 9 (December 1889): 290.

12 *The Path* IV, no. 9 (December 1889): 290.

13 *The Path* V, no. 10 (January 1890): 327.

14 *The Secret Doctrine* was published simultaneously in England and the U.S. H.P.B. sent Judge authorization for the American distribution of same, now in the Pasadena Archives.

15 *The Path* VIII, no.8 (November 1893): 263–64.

16 *The Path* IX, no.2 (May 1894): 68.

17 *The Path* VI, no. 7 (October 1891): 231–32.

18 *The Path* VII, no. 1 (April 1892): 32.

19 Notice (*The Path* VII, no. 1 [April 1892]: 32); Renovation (VII, no. 2 [May 1892]: 60); Description (VII, no. 3 [June 1892]: 94–95).

20 *The Path* VII, no. 12 (March 1893): 372–73.

21 *The Path* VII, no. 12 (March 1893): 373.

22 Bookplates.

23 *Theosophy* (continuation of *The Path*) XI, no. 1 (April 1896): 27. The official announcement of Judge's death by the Society's Vice-President, J. D. Buck, appears on pp. 28–29.

24 *Theosophy* XI, no. 3 (June 1896): 67–69.

25 *Theosophy* XI, no. 12 (March 1897): 386.

26 See Emmett A. Greenwalt, *California Utopia: Point*

Loma: 1897–1942, revised edition (San Diego, CA: Point Loma Publications, Inc., 1978), 153. The Point Loma printers won the gold prize at the Leipzig Exposition in 1914.

27 Correspondence between Dick and Katherine Tingley, Pasadena Archives. Also see Greenwalt, *California Utopia*, 95.

28 Papers of the School of Antiquity No. 1, "The Spirit of the Hour in Archaeology," December 1915, title page.

29 The library has many of his Mayan Studies and Codices.

30 Greenwalt, *California Utopia: Point Loma: 1897–1942*, 129 and note.

31 Letter from Morris to J. H. Fussell, February 18, 1930, in Pasadena Archives.

32 G. de Purucker to Guy Ponsonby, November 9, 1935, in Pasadena Archives.

33 Letter from de Purucker to Guy Ponsonby, November 9, 1935, in Pasadena Archives.

34 *Theosophical Forum. New Series XX*, no. 11 (November 1942): 524–25. [Ed.: These pages, quoted from the *Covina Citizen*, October 8, 1942, provided information regarding the Theosophical Society and its recent move from Point Loma to Covina.]

35 *Theosophical Forum. New Series* XXIII, no. 12 (December 1945): 551.

36 *American Section Lucifer* XIII, no. 2, (Nov-Dec I950): 21-3 and (Jan-Feb 1951): 32. [Ed.: I cannot verify this source.]

37 *Theosophical Forum. New Series* XXIX, no. 3 (March 1951): 129 and note.

38 *American Section Lucifer* XIII, no. 5 (April 1951).

39 *Sunrise Magazine* XX, no.11: inside back cover; also XX, no. 12 (September 1971): 353-55.

40 Invitation Card for library Opening.

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