



FOTA

The Friends of Theosophical Archives

Newsletter n° 2

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- **FOUNDER:** Leslie Price | **EDITOR:** Erica Georgiades

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in the articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position FOTA.

ABOUT FOTA

FOTA (The Friends of Theosophical Archives) is a charitable organisation being formed to promote knowledge of, and support for, the Theosophical archives across the world. For this purpose, "Theosophy" is defined in the same way as in the editorial pages of Theosophical History, and is not restricted to any one tradition or country. (For more information visit this link: <http://www.hypatia.gr/fota/>)

NEWS

ENGLISH FOTA

by Leslie Price

There was a meeting of the founding group on June 23rd at the Theosophical Society, London. It was agreed to introduce membership at £20 annually for individuals and organisations, from September 2014. FOTA membership will be open to all.

After the meeting, the group visited the English TS archives, which are being assembled in their new home at the Information Department.

At the end of the Theosophical History conference of September 20-21 at the T.S., Leslie Price will lecture on mysteries surrounding archives and Madame Blavatsky, and the opportunity will be taken to introduce FOTA.



International Conference on Theosophical History PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

- **DATE:** 20/21 September 2014
 - **LOCATION:** 50 Gloucester Place, London W1U 8EA
- For more information, please contact Leslie Price at:
leslie.price@blueyonder.co.uk

- **Saturday 20 September 2014**

09.45: Registration and coffee.

10.20: Welcome – Colin Price, National President, Theosophical Society in England

10.30: “1880 - When a British agent spied on Madame Blavatsky.” – Paul Johnson, (in absentia).

11.15: Refreshments.

11.45: “Oriental Order of Sikha and the Sat Bhai, Yarker and Blavatsky”

Geraldine Beskin and Barry Loft.

12.30: “A Necessary Evil: Theosophy’s Ambivalence towards the Human Body”

John L. Crow.

13.15: Lunch break.

14.15: “Osvald Siren, Theosophy and Chinese Art”. - CHUANG Chienhui.

15.00: “The Theosophical Society and Universal Brotherhood” - Tim Rudboeg.

15.45: Refreshments

16.30: “Towards a Morphology of the Modern Theosophical Movement”

Kevin Tingay.

17.15: Short break

17.30: “Sincere Jews: The Jewish Theosophical community in Basra, Iraq”

Boaz Huss.

18.15: End of conference day.

• Sunday 21 September 2014

10.00: Registration and coffee.

10.30: “Agardi Metrovitch and the nature of his relationship with HPB.”

Erica Georgiades (in absentia).

11.15: Refreshments.

11.45: “Blavatsky and Neo-Gnosis in Modern Eastern Orthodox Contexts”

Yuri Stoyanov.

12.30: Lunch break.

13.30: “Esotericism, Pan-Asianism, and still-sitting: Mirra and Paul Richard in Japan” - YOSHINAGA Shin’ichi.

14.15: “Theosophical Ideas of Collective Karma and their Relationship to Apocalypticism in America” – Erin Prophet.

15.00: Refreshments.

16.15: “Was the early Theosophical Society a Spiritualist Movement? – Jeff Lavoie.

17.00: Conference ends, but all who are registered for the conference are invited as free guests to the public lecture.

18.00: “Madame Blavatsky and the Seven Archival Mysteries.” - Leslie Price.

Utrecht Conference

by Leslie Price

On June 14-16 a conference was held in Utrecht “Preserving the Historical Collections of Parapsychology”, the first known such gathering to focus on archival problems. Reports on the conference can be found at: <http://hetjohanborgmanfonds.nl/>

Readers are recommended to download from that site, the brochure which contains the advance proceedings of the conference. This includes a written report by Gerd Hovelmann on the partial recovery of the papers of Prince Wittgenstein, a personal friend of Blavatsky, Mrs Britten and William Crookes.

http://hetjohanborgmanfonds.nl/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/PHCP-Brochure-2014_small.pdf

Theosophical observers at the conference included Prof. Dr Hans Gerding, Extraordinary Professor Emeritus of Metaphysics in the Spirit of Theosophy at Leiden University, and Dr Reinout Spaik of the TS Pasadena in the Netherlands. Leslie Price gave a paper about the Psypioneer Project which concluded with the emergence of FOTA. In “Archives in the Netherlands”, Marty Bax described how the archives of the Dutch T.S. had been transferred to Amsterdam Municipal Archives.

The Secret Doctrine Würzburg Manuscript

by David and Nancy Reigle

The *Secret Doctrine Würzburg Manuscript* has now been published. It includes H. P. Blavatsky’s first translations of stanzas from the Book of Dzyan with her unrevised commentaries on them. Only the stanzas from the Würzburg manuscript had been published until now, not her unrevised commentaries on them. These comprise cosmogenesis, and a few on anthropogenesis. The Würzburg manuscript also includes a large introductory section, comprising about half the book. Most of the chapters in this introductory section were later published in the 1897 third volume of *The Secret Doctrine*. As with the commentaries on the stanzas, here we have her unrevised versions.

The so-called Würzburg manuscript is a partial copy of Blavatsky’s early manuscript of *The Secret Doctrine*, written while she was staying at Würzburg, Germany, and then at Ostende, Belgium, in 1885 and 1886. Her manuscript of the almost completed *Secret Doctrine* was copied by two or more scribes to send to India for revision by T. Subba Row, which revision did not occur. Only part of this copy has been found. What we have is estimated to be about a fourth or a third of the whole that was sent to India. Fortunately, it includes the whole cosmogenesis section, all seven stanzas and their commentaries.

This book is a transcription of the Würzburg manu-



script, not a reproduction of it. The transcription occupies pages 1-258. The first 130 pages are the chapters forming the extensive introductory portion, most of which chapters were later published in the 1897 third volume of *The Secret Doctrine*. Then follow the stanzas from the Book of Dzyan and Blavatsky's commentaries on them. Pages 133-246 are on cosmogenesis, and pages 249-258 are on anthropogenesis, obviously incomplete. This book also includes two appendices. We had requested permission from Daniel Caldwell to include his not well enough known article, "The Myth of the 'Missing' Third Volume of *The Secret Doctrine*." He agreed, and this occupies pages 351-379. Not only did he agree to our request to include this article, he also volunteered to provide a chronology of the writing of *The Secret Doctrine*. This very detailed chronology occupies pages 261-349.

The Würzburg manuscript is in the Adyar archives. Our transcription of it was made from two different microfilms and two different photocopies that had been in circulation, none of which is completely legible. This added to the already great difficulties of deciphering and transcribing it. It is certain that the scribes who copied HPB's manuscript made scribal errors, and

it is certain that we have misread their hard-to-read handwriting in places. Some errata have already been received from readers, and have been posted online.

The book is available for purchase at Lulu.com

(<http://www.lulu.com/shop/search.ep?type=Print+Products&keyWords=secret+doctrine+wurzburg+manuscript&x=15&y=9&siteSearch=lulu.com&q=>), and is available for free download at the Eastern Tradition Research Institute website (<http://www.easterntradition.org/SD%20Würzburg%20ms.%20complete%20book%20bc.pdf>).

David and Nancy Reigle are co-authors of Blavatsky's Secret Books: Twenty Years' Research (1999). Some of their research can be found online at the Eastern Tradition Research Institute website: easterntradition.org, and at the Book of Dzyan blog: prajnaquest.fr/blog (or dzyan.net). Their research focuses on the Book of Dzyan, and the search for an original language manuscript of it (Sanskrit/Tibetan).



Locating Frederick Leigh Gardner's papers

by Tito Magrini

[Note from the editor: Leslie Price requested Tito Magrini to help to locate Frederick Leigh Gardner's papers. This is a brief report about what Mr. Magrini discovered.]

The Warburg Institute Archive, holds the papers of Aby Warburg, and of associated scholars like Frances Amelia Yates, Ernst Hans Josef Gombrich and the various directors of the institute.

I am at present indexing the institutional records, those records created from the day-to-day running of the institute, more in particular the general correspondence from 1949-1950. After having searched the entire holdings of the archive the name 'Frederick Leigh Gardner' came up in one letter, where Fritz Saxl, director of the institute mentions the book "A Catalogue Raisonné of Works on the Occult Sciences" by Frederick Leigh Gardner to Carroll Camden in 1929.

I looked up the library catalogue and found the aforementioned book and accidentally a second small book titled "The Alchemist of the Golden Dawn, the Letters of the Rev. W. A. Ayton to F. L. Gardner and others 1886-1905", edited by Ellic Howe, The Aquarian Press, 1985.

In the introduction to the book, by Ellis Howe, I finally discovered a few important facts: Frederick Leigh Gardner's sister sold the brother's papers to Michael Houghton, proprietor of the Atlantis book shop, during 1930s and from there the papers were acquired by or given to the English collector Gerald Yorke. I was almost giving up the trail, when talking to the senior archivist about my search, she made me aware that the Gerald Yorke Collection was donated by the Yorke family to the Warburg Institute in 1983. I then realised that the Warburg Institute Archive is totally detached from the Gerald Yorke Collection; it is an independent collection that sits within the library and to be able to see the content I had to meet the person in charge and be given permission.

I am going to follow my trail and see what that collection holds, based on Ellic Howe's history of the papers, published in his book, Gerald Yorke was in possession of a diary where Frederick Leigh Gardner recorded séances and the exchanged letters between Rev. William Alexander Ayton and Frederick Leigh Gardner.

Second instalment:

Before making arrangements to see Frederick Leigh Gardner's papers, I had to consult the printed version of the Yorke Collection catalogue. The catalogue is described by series, OS and NS; they stand for Old Series and New Series. It is a very rich collection. I had to sieve through the entries of items, and the Frederick Leigh Gardner's papers entries are fairly large. Most of the material is about exchanged letters and postcards between Frederick Leigh Gardner and the members of the early Golden Dawn, like William Wynn Westcott, Samuel Liddell Mathers, and Allan Bennett; I found an entry for the very interesting diary recording séances; manuscripts notes about planets and symbols; the published exchanged letters between Frederick Leigh Gardner and William Alexander Ayton; Golden Dawn Flying Rolls copies belonging to Frederick Leigh Gardner; numerous manuscript notebooks penned by Frederick Leigh Gardner about Golden Dawn meetings, rituals, regulations, lectures; membership of admittance of Frederick Leigh Gardner as a Master Mason of Swedenborgian Rite; Frederick Leigh Gardner's certificate of enrolment in the Second Order of Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia; 'Astral Visions of Planets' by Annie Horniman and Frederick Leigh Gardner; 'A Gypsy Method of Divination of Cards' by Frederick Leigh Gardner. Entries are numerous but NS 33 is the only entry I ventured into: it contains material related to the Theosophical Society.

At the day of the appointment the Librarian brought around the requested NS33 file. It is a brown bound hardback notebook, which holds

together manuscripts and printed material about the Theosophical Society. It contains extracts of printed letters from Mahatma K. H. to Sinnett dealing with Kama-loha and Devachan; communication letters about election of officers of the London Lodge (1884) by Anna Kingsford; a printed letter from Miss Arundale; extract from a letter by Mme Blavatsky to Anna Kingsford; letters addressed to the fellows of the London Lodge; Mahatma K. H. letter of advice on the English branch, 'Chela'; application form to Fellowship of Theosophical Society; circular letter of formation of a new lodge, the Hermetic Lodge, views and general programme of meetings; London Lodge financial report; flyers for 'Lucifer' and 'The Secret Doctrine'; letter from Isabel Cooper-Oakley about Mme Blavatsky; letter to readers of 'Lucifer' and rules of the 'Blavatsky Lodge' of the Theosophical Society.

I had spent few hours on the file and I was made aware about the importance and fragility of the items contained in this bound notebook. I was musing about the luxury of having Frederick Leigh Gardner's papers available as digital scans, making them available to researchers and how easily I could make myself an enthusiast of such an interested figure also named as 'De Profundis Ad Lucem'. It was a brief encounter, but as a digital archivist, I seriously hope I will have the opportunity one day to work with Frederick Leigh Gardner's papers.

Tito Magrini has recently obtained an MA in Archives and Records Management, from University College London and he is currently doing internships at the Warburg Institute Archives and The Royal Anthropological Institute Archives.



The H.P.B. Library

by John Robert Colombo

Walter Meyer zu Erpen, with Colombo's permission, added some minor historical information about Mrs. Hildegard Henderson, the custodian of the library in Victoria, BC, Canada, from the 1920s until 1948.

A remarkable if little known resource that is lodged in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, is The H.P.B. Library.

The initial letters H.P.B. are recognized by students of occult thought and especially by members of the Theosophical Society, for they identify its leading founder, Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-1891), the Russian-born author of such books on occultism as *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*.

The H.P.B. Library was established in her honour as an independent centre distinct from the Theosophical Society by Madame's close friend Alice L. Cleather, a member of the Theosophical Society's Esoteric Section and later it's Inner Group. A personal pupil of Madame Blavatsky, Mrs. Cleather began to distance herself from developments within the Society under the leadership of Mrs. Annie Besant, Madame Blavatsky's chosen successor. So in London in 1917, Cleather established a lending library of basic books that would be consistent with the original aims and ideals of the Society.

How, then, did the library come to Canada, specifically to be lodged in the study of a private home in the West End of Toronto? It came about through the agency of Mrs. Hildegard Henderson (1863-1948), who was born on 13 July 1863 in New York City, the daughter of Henry Oelricks, an American wool broker of Polish origin. She grew up in New York City and encountered Mrs. Cleather in London, England, in 1910, and became her pupil. Mrs. Cleather transferred the responsibility of maintaining the collection to Mrs. Henderson in 1923, the year Mrs. Henderson and her husband Richard retired to Victoria, B.C. Mrs. Cleather died in 1938.

Mrs. Henderson cared for the collection and developed it to reflect the principles of the "Back

to Blavatsky" movement until her death in Victoria on 19 September 1948, aged 85, at her residence at 248 Foul Bay Road. Research in the Victorian City directories shows that Richard Henderson was the homeowner at the Foul Bay address as early as 1923, but he was not listed as retired until 1925. Unfortunately, the directories do not include the names of married women until much later. A tribute to Mrs Henderson and an account of the library appeared in *The Canadian Theosophist*, Dec. 1948.

Upon her death, responsibility for the library was assumed by one of her pupils, Mrs. Edith Fielding, who had an eighteen-year association with Mrs. Henderson. In 1969, it went on to Mr. Michael Freeman, a retired fruit grower in the Okanagan, who as a very young man had been a student of Mrs. Henderson.

With the death of Mr. Freeman in 1991, responsibility for the collection was assumed by Mrs. Joan Sutcliffe, who knew Mr. Freeman very well through correspondence and through numerous visits to the library. Since then the books have been housed at her address at 284 Ellis Avenue, Toronto, Ont. M6S 2X2.

Consider the lineage: H.P.B. – Cleather – Henderson – Fielding– Freeman – Sutcliffe. Phenomenal.

Mrs. Sutcliffe was born in Yorkshire, England, in 1940. She studied at Leeds University and later worked at the Bradford Public Library. As she wrote in a letter to me dated 2 Nov. 1999:

During this period I became involved in spiritualism and explored various psychological and spiritual groups. In 1964 I came to Canada with my husband, Alan, and a few years later our two sons were born. At this time I became interested in

Eastern philosophy and studied Sanskrit for two years at the University of Toronto and practised meditation with a Buddhist group. In 1969, I joined the Toronto Theosophical Society and was its secretary for about ten years. In the winter of 1978, I met Michael Freeman who came to Toronto to republish Alice Cleather's book *H.P. Blavatsky: A Great Betrayal*. He invited me to visit the H.P.B. Library the following summer at his home in the Okanagan. This visit evolved into a sort of yearly pilgrimage for me. For many years I have also been involved with an Ashram in South India, which looks after and educates poor or destitute children. The guiding motif of the Ashram is spiritual, and while basically of the Hindu tradition, there is a theosophical outlook through the president. Three years ago my son and I spent some time there, and presumably I am running a sponsorship program from Canada.

She concluded:

As to the future of the library, I really have no idea, especially in this changing age. Someday I shall have to pass it on to some younger person, but who that will be I do not have any inkling at this time.

The H.P.B. Library consists of rare and original publications of Theosophical and occult interest. The printed catalogue to the collection lists books by the following categories (with numbers of titles in parentheses):

H.P.B. & the Theosophical Movement (39)

Occultism and Theosophy (174)

Buddhism, Tibet & the Far East (95)

Vedanta & Mystical Philosophy of India (81)

Egypt, Islam & the Near East (33)

Greek & Roman Philosophy (41)

Western Occultism (132)

Native American Indian Teaching (23)

Science, History & Psychology (52)

Pamphlets (166)

Magazines Bound in Volumes (21)

Reference Books (17)

Oriental Art (16)

If my arithmetic is correct, 890 books are arranged in 14 categories.

There are some fascinating titles here, especially the following (one from each category: *The Hall of Magic Mirrors, Exploring the Great Beyond, Man and Mystery in Asia, From Adam's Peak to Elephanta, The Todas, The Realms of the Egyptian Dead, The Wisdom of the Ancients and the New Atlantis, Guide to Glastonbury's Temple of the Stars, The Swastika & Atlantis & the Pyramid of Xochicalco, Heredity in Light of Esoteric Philosophy, The Best Food for Man, The Prasnotara, Lucifer, Thirteen Tibetan Tankas*.

Books may be borrowed from the Library in person or by post. (The reference works may be consulted only on the premises.) There is no borrowing charge, though donations to defray postal charges are appreciated.

Note by Walter Meyer zu Erpen: Edith Fielding, also of 348 Foul Bay Road, was the informant on Hildegard Henderson's death registration. She did not know the name of Hildegard's mother and reported that Hildegard had resided in Victoria for 23 years, which suggests arrival in 1925. Perhaps the house was purchased during a preliminary visit to Victoria in 1923 and the actual retirement and move took place over several years?

John Robert Colombo, CM, is a Canadian author, editor, and poet. He has published over 140 titles, including major anthologies and reference works.

Walter Meyer zu Erpen is the President of the "Survival Research Institute of Canada.



Historical Importance of the Ross Collection

by Joseph Ross

Why is the Ross Collection so unique and valuable?

Directly and indirectly the collection documents the preservation of the original documents and materials relating to the history of "Krotona" and the Adyar Theosophical Society. The Collection provides reference services for scholars and those interested in a more extensive study of the relationship J. Krishnamurti had with the founding of Krotona in Hollywood 1911, his connection with the Esoteric School, and those responsible for how he was raised, educated and groomed to serve as the World-Teacher. The Collection contains a unique recorded of the life of A.P. Warrington, the founder of the Krotona Institute in Hollywood, including some of the richest and most influential members of Hollywood society, building the Hollywood Bowl and nearby Greek Theater, today known as the Ford Theater, and the history when the Krotona Institute moved to Ojai, California in 1924. The Collection comprises of dozens of film reels around the time period of 1920's, the 1935 South American Tour, as well the 1925 Adyar Convention, and The Manor.

What are the major content categories contained in the Collection?

It is estimated the Collection contains over 20,000 correspondences and transcripts, audio recording of C. W. Leadbeater, George Arundale, Sydney Field, Monica Ros, and many more. Hours of personal interviews and memoirs with Rukmini Devi, original photographs, and photo albums, first edition books and pamphlets, many esoteric and private documents describing activities and ceremonies of the Liberal Catholic Church, Round Table, many of which involved Krishnamurti and his grooming as the World-Teacher. Legal documents documenting court cases, the 1906 Leadbeater scandal, and many others.

How did the Collection evolve?

In the 1970's I became acquainted with Rukmini Devi, wife of the Third President of the Adyar Theosophical Society, George Arundale. The Collection began when she asked me to catalogue her private collection, which included that of her husband, private letters of Annie Besant, C.W.

Leadbeater, C. Jinarajadasa, Miss Dodge, Miss Arundale and many other influential leaders, and especially the transcripts of occult sessions in 1925 that caused tremendous conflicts with Krishnamurti and the death of his brother Nitya. This began a forty-year process when other private and personal collections were added from Betty Warrington, Joan Donath, Geoffrey Hodson, Herbert Staggs, Byron Casselberry, and Marie Russak. Today the Collection contains over 100 bank boxes.

How will the complete Collection be released and made available.

We have created a new database that indexes each document by searchable categories; the document title, box number, folder, source, who authored the document, to whom, dates, and major themes such as Annie Besant, Krishnamurti and other key individuals, the Esoteric Section, the World-Teacher, Masters, discipleship, and many other key words. A form is used to categorize each document adding notes and comments. The original document is scanned and uploaded to the database where it is linked to the indexed summary of that document. As the indexing and scanning process is completed researchers can search the complete collection using any combination of key words, Annie Besant and Krishnamurti for example, George Arundale and the Egyptian Rite, C.W. Leadbeater and the Liberal Catholic Church, countless other categories will be made. Being web based the complete contents of the Ross Collection can be accessed from anywhere in the world and high-resolution PDF copies of the originals downloaded.

And we are still exploring ways to transfer ownership of the originals to appropriate archives in the United States.

What materials in the Collection are of most interest to scholars and researchers?

Virtually every branch of the Theosophical Society, and especially those outside the organization will be interested in the Collection. It contains original documents of the Esoteric Section founded by H.P. Blavatsky with the first publications of the Eastern School of Theosophy Instructions, and the split within the Society between W.Q. Judge and

Annie Besant. Pamphlets such as: *Australian EST Bulletins*, *The Disciple*, *The Link*, *The Magnet*, and *Sishya*, and many more. The Collection contains documents regarding the World-Mother movement, history of the Egyptian Rite of the Ancient Mysteries, Co-Masonry, and the Liberal Catholic Church. George Arundale correspondences telling the evolution of Self-Preparation after the 1929 statements made by Krishnamurti, and their lack of understanding of Krishnamurti's teachings resulting in denial and betrayal. Slides, sheet music written by early theosophist, silk paintings of C.W. Leadbeater, Annie Besant, Colonel Olcott, and H.P.B.



The Story of Joseph Ross

Indira Gandhi, Elizabeth Taylor, Martha Graham, Mae West, Peter Sellers, Cleveland Amory, an author who was the founding father of the modern animal protection movement, Kathryn

Etienne, Malka Ruddick-Stanned, early silent movie stars of old Hollywood, and John and Robert Mitchum known as Them Onery Mitchum Boys.

Those were just a few of the luminaries whose paths crossed that of Joseph Ross, now of Taormina California.

Joseph grew up and was educated to the secondary level at St. Joseph's Catholic School in Akron Iowa. While there, he discovered that he had a natural aptitude for ceremonial religion, but he was questioning the Roman Catholic dogma.

After graduation in 1962, he returned to California and attended San Joaquin Delta College in Stockton. Later he settled in Walnut Creek. There he encountered Theosophy in the person of an elderly English lady, Mrs. Rhoda Martin, and her theosophical inclined cohorts. Theosophy, being etymologically divine wisdom, or wisdom about things divine, resonated with Joseph's Catholic upbringing, but better, in that Theosophy as promulgated by The Theosophical Society, headquartered in Adyar, a suburb of Chennai (formerly Madras) India, leaves one perfect freedom in matters of belief.

Joseph soon learned that Ojai had a School of Theosophy, at the Krotona Institute of Theosophy.

So he moved to Ojai in 1971 and joined the Esoteric School while attending the Krotona Institute. He was also able to experience his first talk of J. Krishnamurti in the Oak Grove near Krotona. After a few months, Joseph became a resident and worker at Krotona for several years.

Although he didn't realize it at the time, he was 28 and it was the summer of 1971 that he was invited to visit Far Horizons, a Theosophical camp in the Sierras. Rukmini Devi Arundale, wife of the Third President of the Adyar Theosophical Society was there, giving a lecture. After the lecture, Rukmini asked him if he would like to come and work with her in India. He did not respond immediately. She said, "Think about it." By October 1972, He was off to India assisting Rukmini in her work in the Fine Arts College, Kalakshetra, which she founded. He also assisted in the Maria Montessori School in the art department on her campus and helped catalog her collection of Indian art objects and museum pieces. Since that time she encouraged him to start the Ross Collection. He had devoted a greater part of the 40 years to building the rare archives and caring for the collection to be known as the Ross Collection. Traveling on four continents looking for theosophical and Krishnamurti material. The collection contains about 100 boxes of authentic letters and documents showing Krishnamurti's relationship to the Krotona Institute and the Adyar Theosophical Society from the turn of the century to 2010.

Joseph has seen numerous rare or unique documents that have been listed in an archives list or in a bibliographic reference, which have now apparently disappeared, ranging from an entire sets of magazines and pamphlets that have proved impossible to locate. Destruction of documents have been seen firsthand by Joseph, which includes not only shredding of private documents, but collections of precious material soaked with water through leaky roofs, rats and mice building their nests using a very rare newspaper in file cabinets among letters and documents, and of course, acidic deterioration so severe that the material simply disintegrates when handled. It seems to Joseph, that our responsibility is to actively gather as much of this material for preservation as we reasonably can. Much has already perished forever, and things that might seem easy to get today are impossible to get tomorrow. he feels that we must mindfully collect it as we go. Some projects can wait, but every day of delay in establishing a vigorous will-funded acquisitions

program means further loss of legacy.

A related major issue for any organization is the excluding publications, denying access to qualified researchers whom we fear might criticize the Adyar Theosophical Society including the Krotana Institute's E.S. work, by distorting their history. Joseph feels that such censorship is a real danger when historical materials are housed within specialized organizations as they censor or destroy material on the grounds that it is meant for private eyes only, and not for the uninitiated. Their intellectual and financial interest decides what the world ought to know about their heroes or places so called sacred. Censorship and concealment would harm the Adyar Theosophical Society, as well the Krishnamurti legacy including the Krotana Institute directly. We are fortunate to know objective facts about potentially controversial aspects of Krishnamurti's life and the work at the Krotana Institute, which was built for Krishnamurti, regardless, these documents are of historical importance regarding the Krotana Institute and its relationship to the Esoteric School and the Adyar Theosophical Society for the future of humanity. It is up to us to do what we can to ensure the continuation of that work, but first and foremost by understanding and living the teachings to the best of our ability.

Major Donations to the Collection

Major donations to the Collection came from Betty Warrington containing original letters and documents of Albert P. Warrington, her husband, and Rukmini Devi Arundale containing original letters and documents of her husband, George Arundale, and the history of the Egyptian Rite of the Ancient Mysteries. Over the years, donations to the Collection have been over thirty-five donors.

Mark Lee, writes in the forward to the last volume of the six volumes Krotana Series¹:

"As there is no oeuvre of Theosophical Society history world-wide or in America except for the several volumes that comprise the Krotana history in California by Joseph Ross the reader has no other source to refer to that could provide the larger framework that would make sense of the history of the Society, Krotana as the Esoteric center, and of Krishnamurti's association with the Society."

"Having curated these documents and images and feeling responsible for them", the

author Joseph Ross relates, "I also have felt the need to make their story accessible. The Theosophical Society has been a very chapter in the West's approach to new religious ideas and ideals, and had an important role in the coming of J. Krishnamurti onto the world stage. For these reasons, I have felt really compelled to complete the Krotana Series."

This special collection represents a selection of original letters; manuscripts, artifact's and photographs' relative to the history of the Adyar Theosophical Society, and an Esoteric Center of Theosophy called Krotana Institute.

The work is revealing how religious movements work internally as institutions, especially in the face of unexpected change says Theosophical scholar Robert Boyd (ibid):

"Volume six is a shattering account of the activities of the early leaders of The Theosophical Society, including their attempts at coercing Theosophical members into agreement... Much of this information is not available anywhere else."

This soon became a home and base for the proclaimed World-Teacher, J. Krishnamurti. By 1914 the Krotana Institute was recognized as a big part of propaganda because it had put the Krotana Institute and the Theosophical Society on the map, a thing that had never yet been done in America.

Ross had not written only six books, but eight, these books are not an advertisement for Theosophy, but as a factual history, as far as they go shedding light on the role the Adyar Theosophical Society had on the relationship with Krishnamurti. These books are not easy to read, but they are a collection of historical documents, and should not be read as a novel, but used as reference source for future research.

It's the source materials in the Ross Collection that make these works possible, according to documentary videographer Michael Mendizza², who is working on a documentary of Krishnamurti's early life:

"Joseph has a rare and in-depth understanding of Theosophy, the intent and practices of the Esoteric Section and equally a solid appreciation for Krishnamurti's necessary

transcendence of the forms and images that frame the society. Without understanding the forms, images and structures that Krishnamurti went beyond, one has a very limited appreciation for what has been called Krishnamurti's teachings. There would be no Krishnamurti or 'the teachings' were it not for Krishnamurti's struggle to go beyond the limitations and constraints of these forms. Joseph, like no other that I know explores what and how this transcendence took place."

Ross says there are three more books to finish the Krotona Series, which includes the 1945 policy of Disassociation of the Adyar Theosophical Society. Although a great deal of unused material still remains in the Ross Collection to be researched.

In 1976 he returned to this country, settling in Santa Barbara, and pursued further studies in theology, psychology and counseling where he received a certified certificate from the Human Relations Center, as an advisor in the field of marriage and family counseling, now called the Joseph Campbell University. During the same time, he maintained contact with Srimati Rukmini Devi. Traveling several months of the year as her secretary when she visited educational centers around the world. He also returned to the Krotona Institute as a guest lecturer for the Fall and Winter Terms in 1978-79.

Since traveling extensively around the world, visiting 42 countries, meeting leaders of the different branches of the Theosophical Society, his interest continues to grow. Collecting letters, articles, books, photos, and memorabilia of the important personages to document the history of the Krotona Institute. He also began to write articles, which appeared in Theosophical journals around the world, and some were translated into other languages.

In the early 1980's, Ross founded the International Lalita Kalas Foundation (ILKF). ILKF was a nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation of the fine traditional arts of both eastern and western cultures fostering a comprehensive understanding of mankind's multifaceted culture. As he began work on the history of Krotona, which resulted in his establishing El Montecito Oaks Press, Inc., and his own Professional Word Processing business in Montecito, California, preparing page layouts for such magazines as *Celebrity Society*, Beverly Hills, CA, and designing a cover for a news magazine in

Holland. Through El Montecito Oaks Press he published his first book in 1989, *Krotona of Old Hollywood, Volume I ¾ 1866-1913; Revival of the Traditional Puppet Theatre of Kerala*, by G. Venu; and a reprint of *Dance and Music* by Rukmini Devi. In 2004, Volume II on the history of Krotona (1914-20), in 2009, along with Volume III (1921-30) and IV (1931-99), was the book, *Spirit of Womanhood; A Journey with Rukmini Devi*, in 2011 as an eBook, Volume V (1927-31), in 2012 as an eBook, Volume VI (1932-40). Volume VII, VIII of Krotona history are in preparation.

In 1985, for the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Ross presented an audio-visual educational culture log on "Traditional Art and Life in Southern India." In 1991, he gave a Seminar at the Rose Croix University Cultural Center in San Jose on "Krotona of Old Hollywood".

During the late 90's he was the owner of Uptown Books and Antiques, in Sonoma, California, and owner of Montecito Oaks Books and Antiques in Twain Harte.

Ever since first hearing J. Krishnamurti speak in Ojai and in Switzerland, Ross has read his books, listened to tapes and videos of his talks and attended his talks where possible. No one could attain the stature of Krishnamurti as a mystic-teacher without undergoing an intense training and inner discipline. This documentation is covered in the book, *Krishnamurti: The Taormina Seclusion*, published in 2001, 1912, describing four months of that intense discipline.

Most recently, in the summer of 2000, Ross authored a series of columns appearing in the Ojai Valley News, under the column title "A View from Krotona;" May 12, "From Hollywood to Ojai, theosophy spread principles of humanity;" June 2, "Performances came to Ojai with the Krotona Theosophical Colony;" June 16, "Newcomers gave Ojai a new spirituality and a church;" June 28, "Krotona Hill's influence continued after 1924 move from Hollywood;" and July 28, "Tents dotted the Krotona Meadow for the Star Camp Congress".

In Ojai, Joseph Ross calls himself the "Book Doctor". He spends a great deal of his time painstakingly caring for and mending rare and new books that have frayed stitching, crumbling pages, spines coming unglued and cracked covers. Appearing in the Ojai Valley News for June 10, 1998 "The Doctor

Is In”.

Revelation of J. Krishnamurti and the Historical Importance of the Theosophical Society

From Joseph's point of view, Krishnamurti occupies a prominent place as one of the very important “World-Teachers” as Annie Besant and C.W. Leadbeater predicted. He is one of many inspired teachers of the 20th Century.

Assuming that this unfortunate world survives for very long, there is an opportunity to preserve in great detail the life and work of such a teacher.

The importance of searching out these early writings, which are, related historical data from around the world are important, and the difficulty of preserving this record from human destruction. This first came to public attention in The Adyar Theosophical Society circles in 1910, until 25 years later, when Krishnamurti's work reached a certain degree of maturity. Bringing Krishnamurti to about 40 years of age.

Why is it important to preserve this early theosophical material? Is it not to have the text of the writings available undistorted and in their original form for later researchers? Having a very detailed record enables the researcher to really document objectively, and know very well what the leaders did and said. The Adyar Theosophical Society early history shows the relationship between Krishnamurti and Theosophy, which is very much discussed and debated today on the Internet worldwide.

The importance of the documents relating to the Adyar Theosophical Society is that it provides concrete evidence to the world of the existence of new

gifts to mankind waiting to be actualized once man can realize the possibility and see that the quality of the new brain is attainable. The Ross Collection fills in the missing links how the Adyar Theosophical Society being the cornerstone of a New Religion and Krishnamurti's vision what the Religious Mind is. The ultimate truth is free from all forms, inner and outer. No words can therefore describe the quality of a religious mind, the cornerstone of a new religion.

NOTES:

(1) Ross, J., 2012, *The Krotona Series*, Volume 6, 1932-1940: *Krishnamurti's Departure from the Theosophical Society*, California.

(2) Mendizsa quoted at Krotona Archives web-site:

<http://www.krotonaarchives.com/home.htm>

Joseph Ross is the author of eight books on the history of Theosophy, with several titles upcoming. He was a resident at the Krotona Institute of Theosophy around 1971, and later was a guest lecturer at the Krotona School Institute during the Fall and Winter terms 1978-79. To read more about Joseph Ross visit this link: <http://www.krotonaarchives.com/joseph-e-ross>

Krotona Archives You Tube Channel:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCelo_gwEuOXITBmP7rUnDgg



Joseph Ross

The Archives of the Early Theosophical Society in Russia and the Archives of Blavatsky's Family

by Konstantin Zaitzev

Members of the Theosophical Society in Russia are scanning and digitizing the magazine of the early Russian Theosophical Society (1908-1918). The magazine was entitled *Vestnik Teosofii* (Messenger of Theosophy) and was issued ten times per year, each issue had around 100 pages.

The Adyar Library has many issues, but their

quality is often inferior to those in Russian libraries. We shall make recourse to them when all issues which are here at hand will be processed.

Today we have got in digital form all issues for 1908-1911 (among them 5 issues badly digitized by Google to which we will have to return after processing all others), and several is-

sues for other years; also we have full indices for 1908-1914 and several more relative to other years.

The indices and magazines in djvu format are available for download at:
www.theosophy.ru/vt-index.htm

After finishing all the indices, we will propose them to the United Index of Theosophical Periodicals.

Most of the contents of the magazines are translations of English articles. There are some original articles and poems of Russian Theosophists, chronicles of Theosophical movement and book reviews.

The archives of the early Russian Section were confiscated by the communist authorities in 1920, when they closed down the Theosophical headquarters. Leaders of the Section were then interrogated but not arrested.

If the archives still exist now, they should be in the archives of the Federal Security Service, follower of former KGB (Committee of State Security). They were very precious, because they contained not only papers of the early (1908-1918) Russian Section (including the first Russian translation of *The Secret Doctrine* which is

regarded to be lost, and survived in parts (only around 150 pages), but also the archive of HPB's, family which could surely contain her original letters.

The only thing which survived is several portraits of Masters, which probably belonged to the Esoteric Section of that time. They were kept apart of all other papers and thus escaped confiscation. We also have a very old edition of *Isis Unveiled* (from the 19th century, but not the first edition), as well as the first edition of HPB's letters to Sinnett.

Additionally, we have several disconnected magazines published by Russian Theosophists in emigration.

For today, we have no archives at all. All we have is the material copied in the libraries, museums and so forth.

Konstantin Zaitzev was born in 1968 in Moscow. Studied electronics and computer technology in 1980's. Since childhood he had an interest to paranormal phenomena but had no access to any Theosophical or occult literature till 1990. In 1993 he applied for membership in Theosophical Society but was admitted in 2005 only. Since 1992 he translates Theosophical literature into Russian language. During 1990's and 2000's he took part in many digitization projects, in 1997 he started a Theosophical website. In 2008 he has renewed the magazine "Vestnik Teosofii" which is published irregularly though.

You Can Help

If you wish to participate in the formation committee, contribute to the archival preservation fund, or identify an archive in need of preservation, contact Leslie Price: leslie.price@blueyonder.co.uk

If you wish to join FOTA's mailing list, subscribe to our newsletter by clicking here:

<http://www.hypatia.gr/fota/index.php/news>

