

EXPANDED EDITION INCLUDES NEVER-BEFORE-SEEN PERSONAL LETTERS  
AND THE MASTER'S INFLUENCE ON METAPHYSICAL HISTORY.



# MASTER OF THE MYSTERIES

NEW REVELATIONS ON  
THE LIFE OF MANLY PALMER HALL  
BY LOUIS SAHAGUN

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## DEDICATION

To Kris and Sophia, it's all for you.



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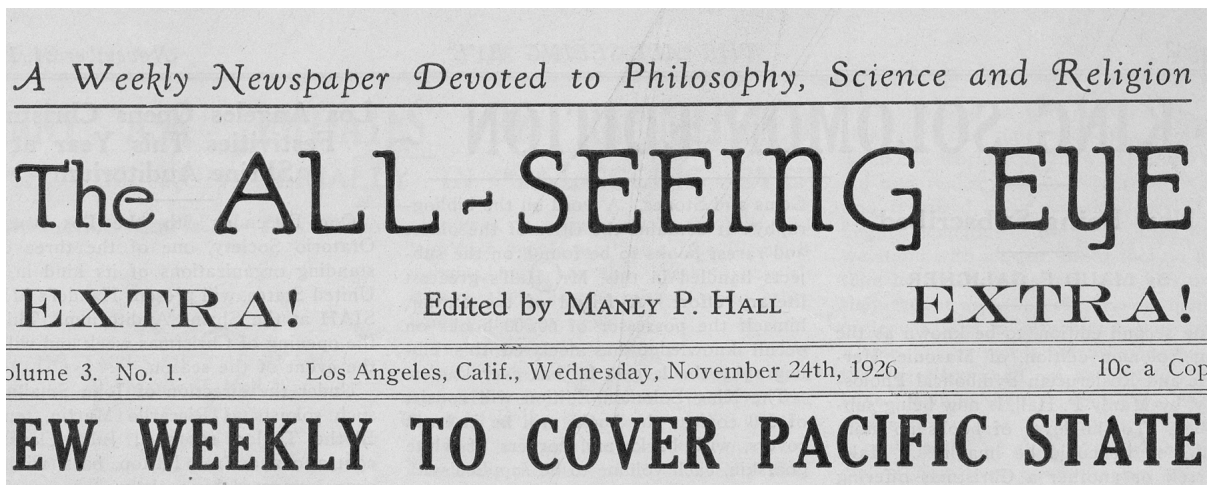
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

[Preface](#)

[Introduction](#)

[CHAPTER 1: City of Angels](#)

[CHAPTER 2: The Big Book](#)

[CHAPTER 3: Signs and Symbols of War](#)

[CHAPTER 4: Marie](#)

[CHAPTER 5: Mystics in Love](#)

[CHAPTER 6: Marie vs. the FBI](#)

[CHAPTER 7: Good Vibrations](#)

[CHAPTER 8: The Great Lost Society](#)

CHAPTER 9: On Fairies, Sex Magic, and Stuffed Potatoes

CHAPTER 10: Metaphysical Turbulence

CHAPTER 11: Heidi

CHAPTER 12: Hanging Out With the Halls

CHAPTER 13: “Dr. Fritz”

CHAPTER 14: The Maestro’s Transition

Epilogue

Endnotes

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# **PREFACE**

## ***to the EXPANDED EDITION***

THE ENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE TO THE FIRST EDITION OF *MASTER OF THE MYSTERIES: THE LIFE OF MANLY PALMER HALL* LED ME TO EXPAND THE BOOK YOU ARE HOLDING IN YOUR HANDS. INTRIGUED, MANLY P. HALL AFICIONADOS WROTE ASKING FOR MORE, AND MANY OFFERED LEADS ON NEW SOURCES OF INFORMATION.

After reading the first edition, some sources were no longer reticent to discuss their experiences, allowing me to fill critical omissions with their surprisingly candid details about quirky habits and intimate moments at home.

This edition contains five new chapters including one based on the previously unpublished love letters between Hall and the woman who would become his second wife, Marie Bauer. Dan York, a movie producer and friend of the Halls in the 1980s, preserved the letters, which he obtained from Marie before she passed away.

In addition to sharing the letters, York also provided his own unpublished memoir of an emotionally stormy winter afternoon spent with the Hall family in 1983. It offers the first portrait of these married mystics and their intense, often embattled relationship.

Another new chapter explores the unusual relationship between Hall and James Edward Baker, a.k.a. Father Yod, the middle-aged owner of The Source, a successful health food restaurant on Sunset Boulevard, and leader of a spiritual commune that included his 14 young wives. Inspired by Hall's attempt to create an occult environmental legacy in the 1970s, Baker's tribe attempted to join forces with Nature's invisible armies of magical spirits.



Since the book was first published, it was revealed that Al Qaeda founder Osama bin Laden was fascinated by Hall's writings. Other additions include a portrait of the niece who regaled Hall with her adventures in the counterculture, and recollections of Helen James, the flamboyant Hall family lawyer whose queries into the suspicious circumstances of Hall's death provided the Los Angeles Police Department with evidence it needed to launch a homicide investigation.

James reveals that she was both urged on and stymied by what she concludes was Hall's spirit, which she said kept coming to her in dreams and telepathic messages, attempting to direct the course of the civil case she brought against the man police believe took Hall's life.

Some may find this new information unsettling. A journalist's job is to turn over every rock, record what's underneath and follow that evidence wherever it leads.

There was a time while writing the first edition when I was sorely tempted to scrap the project. I questioned the very idea of focusing more attention on yet another self-styled mystic with all-too-human flaws who made a career out of telling people how to live right.

In that period of self reflection, I reached out to Huston Smith, the noted scholar whose book *The World's Religions* has sold over two million copies.

In 2006, over dinner at a restaurant less than a mile from Hall's Philosophical Research Society, the heart of Los Angeles' metaphysical community, I said, "Huston, help me out here. Manly P. Hall had serious personal issues. Khalil Gibran was a chain smoker who died of cirrhosis of the liver. Madame Blavatsky was exposed as a fraud, and had such bad personal hygiene that there were ulcerous sores on both her legs. Alan Watts spent his last years in a stupor, guzzling warm vodka by the quarts. Carlos Castaneda was a fraud and a jerk. Edmond Szekely's wife told me that he never discovered Essene documents in the Vatican—he made that up.

"Do these people deserve a moment of our attention?"

Smith smiled and, with a twinkle in his eyes, said, "Let me tell you a story.

"As a young man, I spent 10 years studying Zen in Tokyo. At the end of those 10 years, just before I returned to the United States, my master invited

me to his home. He said, 'Huston, before you leave, there are some things I want you to know.'

"At the appointed hour, I knocked on his front door. He said, 'Huston. Welcome. This is Miss So-and-so, she takes care of my personal needs.'

"Then he led me into an adjacent room and said, 'Huston, do you see this enormous television set? I watch Sumo wrestling on this television set. I love watching Sumo wrestling.'

"Then he pushed through the curtains of yet another room and said, 'Huston, do you see all these empty beer cans and all these empty wine bottles? I drank all this wine and all this beer watching Sumo wrestling.'

"Clearly, my master did not want me to leave with him on a pedestal. What he couldn't know is that after learning all these things, I loved him even more."

Thank you Huston.

—L.S.



# INTRODUCTION

ON THE EVENING OF MAY 26, 1990, MANLY PALMER HALL, THE 20TH CENTURY'S MOST PROLIFIC WRITER ON ANCIENT PHILOSOPHIES, MYSTICISM AND MAGIC, ENTERED THE IMPOSING SCOTTISH RITE TEMPLE ON WILSHIRE BOULEVARD IN A WHEELCHAIR, LOOKING FRIGHTFULLY PALE AND WEAK. ASSISTANTS LUGGED IN THE WOOD AND VELVET THRONE FROM WHICH HE WOULD DELIVER THE KEYNOTE ADDRESS AT A GATHERING OF MASONIC DIGNITARIES.

The 89-year-old seer was lifted onto the throne. Concerns that he wasn't up to the task melted away after he rested one hand on the arm of the chair, the other on his wooden cane, and launched into his chosen topic: Freemasonry in the New Millennium. The scene was classic Hall: there he was in the spotlight, flanked by two American flags, at once a philosopher and a master of narration, his blue eyes darting back and forth as though he were reading from an enormous scroll unfurling over the heads of the capacity crowd of four hundred people.

They leaned forward in their seats, hanging on every word as Hall chronicled the mysterious beginnings and mission of the centuries-old fraternity with a sure voice, projecting, in his phrase, "the hope of taking a major step forward. . . in a time of emergency," with such force one could virtually smell the fire pit of some great castle in the Age of Enlightenment.

"The 21<sup>st</sup> century has an extreme reminiscence to the 21<sup>st</sup> year of a person's life," Hall told them. "It is a year of coming of age. . . when a person becomes an adult." Similarly, he continued, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the United States must take on the responsibilities and labors of its own maturity at a time when natural resources were being squandered,

politicians were corrupted by power and greed, crime was spiraling out of control, education was failing children, and wars persisted worldwide. Mankind, he said, “has not the right to take a beautiful world with all its privileges and opportunities and turn it into a purgatory.”

“This situation should remind Freemasons that they have something to live for,” he said. “We have the power to build worlds, the wisdom to govern them, and the divine right to inherit the earth and preserve it in good condition in order to pass it on to our descendents as a place of happiness, usefulness and security for thousands of years to come.”

“We’re not asking for treason. We’re not asking for disobedience,” he said. “We’re only asking. . . that in every way possible, when they have the choice, stand for truth and, if necessary, take a little punishment for it.”

From a front-row table with a generous view, Michael Marsellos, a 33rd° Mason and Romanian movie actor, thought to himself, “This is a man of genius. I kept glancing over my shoulders to see how others were responding. Everywhere I looked there were dropped jaws.”

Hall’s 30-minute call to arms was one of his last public appearances in a career spanning nearly seven decades. On August 29, he died under bizarre and suspicious circumstances worthy of Raymond Chandler.

More than a decade later, Hall is still bestowed by adherents with such reverential labels as “Maestro” and “adept.” Much of his life—the magical story of his birth, the whispers of his supernatural powers and membership in secret societies, the dozens of books offering mystical solutions for difficult social problems, the thousands of lectures delivered in a Mayan-style compound nestled between Hollywood and Los Angeles’ Griffith Park, the homicide investigation into his horrible death—fits the image of a holy man hounded to death for the secrets he guarded.

This book tries to get as close as possible to the complex truth about the man and his myth, tracing his rise from a broken family in rural Canada; a chaotic and unhappy childhood; a life-altering dispute with famed escape artist Harry Houdini; stormy marriages; his climb to success in the metropolis that grew up with him; his ties to political bosses and the Hollywood film industry; and his tragic demise.

At the same time, it provides an inside view of the birth of a vibrant subculture in California comprised of mystically inclined artists, visionaries, authors, business and civic leaders who continue to have a



profound influence on movies, television, music, books, art and myriad products. Hall was one of its figureheads, making obscure and arcane spiritual texts and symbols of the remote past accessible to everyone just as Los Angeles started to unfold like a desert flower.

It was a time when flamboyant evangelist and faith healer Aimee Semple McPherson attracted more than 5,000 congregants to her Angelus Temple each Sunday, supported campaigns to uphold the nation's Christian heritage and ban the teaching of evolution in public schools. Hall was not afraid to challenge Christian dogma, and he did it with such poise, scholarship and confidence that thousands followed. In the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s in Los Angeles, many scholars of comparative religion and mythology owed a debt to him.

His longevity sets him apart from the thousands of other mystics and gurus who brought spiritualism to Los Angeles around the turn of the previous century. His writings continue to sell steadily around the world, while collections of his works are being republished for their enduring value and merit.

The widely-traveled Hall wrote quirky, fascinating books and essays illustrated with strange artistic renderings of deities and demons, forces and principles, atoms and solar systems, relics and rituals. They were mostly variations on a theme: clues to solving the mysteries of life were encoded within the symbols, myths and religious rituals of vanished civilizations.

A huge avocado of a man, six feet four inches tall and wide in the center, Hall had piercing blue-gray eyes and chiseled features worthy of a Barrymore. Ardent students of the occult viewed his imposing stage presence and hundreds of books and lectures as signs that he'd tapped into something authentic.

Hall's was also the most evasive of personalities. He was charismatic, arrogant, scholarly, deeply intuitive, humorous, at times deceptive, and self-destructive—a man who could be startlingly profound one day and disappointingly naïve the next. His favorite pastimes were children's games: solitaire and Chinese checkers. Onstage, he was bigger than life, seemingly channeling from the great beyond. Offstage, he was meek to the point of being brutalized by his diminutive wife.

Some critics dismiss Hall's work as biased interpretations of old philosophies and sacred texts by a man who played fast and loose with the

facts to prove the validity of magic, spirit manifestations and mind reading. Hall, they also point out, borrowed heavily from the works of others but rarely credited his sources.

They are right, to a point. Hall saw himself not as a scholar, who seeks knowledge for its own sake and the satisfaction of his own mind, but as a teacher who learns in order to bestow his students with knowledge and insight. He did not always practice what he preached, but always directed his teachings along utilitarian lines.

Hall deeply believed in the value of the testimonies of Plato, Buddha, St. Paul and the pagan martyr Hypatia as medicine for the dark side of scientific progress and materialism: pollution, congestion, crime, selfishness, stress and a steady erosion of ethical and moral standards. The same kind of mystical wisdom that awakened and nourished the soul in troubled times of some primordial golden age, he believed, could inspire new generations facing stony walls of conventionalized thinking and commercialized ideas.

His output over more than six decades has rarely been equaled. In more than two hundred books, hundreds of essays and 8,000 public lectures he displayed an astonishing breadth of knowledge of comparative religion, psychology, pagan rites and symbols, classical Greek philosophy, Eastern religions, early Christianity, Freemasonry, Neo-Platonism, mythology, world cultures, and the schools of art and literature they inspired over the centuries. Hall introduced thousands of readers to sages and seers from Francis Bacon to Gandhi who dedicated their lives to helping others attain wisdom.

Long before the Gnostic Gospels were translated into 21<sup>st</sup>-century bestsellers, Hall was promoting Gnostic beliefs as windows on the origins of Christianity. Before mainstream publications were touting doctors who incorporated a warm and friendly manner into their practice, Hall was urging physicians to also pay closer attention to their patients' mental and spiritual well-being and offer a handclasp and a smile. Before the advent of blockbuster movies with mythical settings such as *Star Wars*, *Lord of the Rings* and *Harry Potter*, Hall co-scripted the first major picture with an astrological plotline and actively encouraged entertainment industry leaders to grow new markets by producing more movies and radio programs based

on the spiritual visions and allegories of early civilizations in which sorrow, suffering and loneliness are builders of character. These were not inconsiderable accomplishments for a high school dropout from a broken home in rural Canada.

Hall was a collector of books, stamps, artwork—and good jokes, which he used to spice up his writings and public lectures. His favorites included this quote from Voltaire: “I envy the beasts two things—their ignorance of evil to come, and their ignorance of what is said about them.”

Hall, who rarely laughed out loud out of fear of embarrassment because he tended to wheeze when amused, liked to mimic W.C. Fields to deliver asides such as “Charity not only begins at home, but usually hates to leave the house.” And he was fond of irony. “You know,” he once told a friend, “the Theosophists built a hall for the second coming in Australia. Now it’s a dog track.”

It was all part of Hall’s mission to, as Rex Hutchens, past Grand Master of Arizona and a 33rd° Mason honored with a prestigious Grand Cross, put it, “bring mysticism down to earth.”

“Voltaire said one’s life is not determined by what the church tells you,” Hutchens said. “Breaking bonds with the church sent man on a new path—a path toward perfection of one’s own effort. Freemasonry came out of that. Hall took such ideas and said the same was true of all spiritual quests, which is why he wrote about Buddhism, alchemy, Sufism, Kabbalah and early Christianity. This made Hall seem anti-Christian, but he was born at the turn of the last century and wanted to write intelligent books for rational people about the immense diversity—and interconnections—of spiritual paths.

“Hall was never about truth, which is a childish vanity. He was about seeking truth, which is a spiritual quest,” Hutchens added. “He was a profound thinker and a skilled businessman and he knew what sold. So, on one day he wrote profound insights for those who could perceive them, and the next day he wrote trash for the mass marketplace. He earned a living doing this, and not very many people can.”

I knew none of this when I took a phone call late on September 2, 1990, while working night duty at the *Los Angeles Times*. “Manly P. Hall, the greatest philosopher of our time, has died,” an excited tipster told me. “You better get an obituary ready.” A few minutes later, I was in the paper’s

morgue, sorting through a hefty stack of news clippings about the man dating back to the 1930s.

For much of the 20th century he dazzled the rich and famous, counseled heads of church and state, and lectured at Carnegie Hall and the World's Fair as a collector and interpreter of ancient texts and symbols as mystical road maps to wisdom, health and longevity.

The founder of the Philosophical Research Society, a school of enduring wisdom teachings Hall established on Los Feliz Boulevard, was frequently quoted opining on the hottest topics and fads of the day: World War II, Zen Buddhism, space travel, unidentified flying objects and prospects for peace in the atomic age. Portions of his vast collection of books, artifacts and rare stamps accumulated from around the world were often loaned for display in city and county libraries, schools and department stores across the state. Hall was a frequent guest lecturer at universities and private colleges on the subject of comparative religion.

I was fighting a tight deadline and the paper had room for a brief obituary, which began, "Manly Palmer Hall, an eclectic philosopher and founder of the Philosophical Research Society, has died at 89, the society reported Sunday. The peripatetic philosopher, who authored more than two hundred books and gave more than 8,000 lectures—many of them from a throne-like chair at the society's Los Angeles headquarters—died in his sleep Wednesday of natural causes, a spokesman said. The death had been kept private for 72 hours at the request of his wife, Marie Hall. 'His wife said the silence had to do with his religious beliefs,' said Daniel Fritz, a trustee of the nonprofit educational society founded in 1934."

The obit lacked important information that was unavailable on deadline. How did Hall become a venerated expert on spiritual beliefs, philosophical principles and symbols? Where did the money come from to pay for his world travels and a treasure trove of artifacts and books? How relevant are his works in modern society? Exactly how did Hall die? Like everything else about Hall, the answers are complicated.

Gathering facts was not easy. Hall was never forthcoming when it came to details about his personal life or his credentials. Many of his closest associates had died decades earlier. The theories Hall promoted are subject to interpretation.

With a goal of letting Hall speak for himself, I have relied heavily on his essays, books, memoirs and unpublished letters, as well as court records, testimonies and interviews with his widow, stepchildren, friends and associates around the world, homicide investigators, coroner's officials, defenders and detractors.

Hall's was an extraordinary life, one entwined with the original idealists of formative Southern California at the dawn of the 20th century and Los Angeles, the city that nourished them.

He'd come to California in 1919 to be reunited with his mother, who had abandoned him in infancy. The 18-year-old Canadian immigrant—who had bounced from town to town as a child with his maternal grandmother, the peripatetic Florence Palmer—turned his back on a business career in New York City's Wall Street after she died suddenly.

Within a decade, Hall would take over a prominent Los Angeles church and then transform himself into a world-renowned philosopher and student of the occult—the hidden mysteries of the universe, of life and of death—in a place that was mushrooming into one of the most promising metropolises on the planet. Public fascination with magic, healing arts and “the other side” of life flourished in the 1920s. As if drawn by a magnetic field, others not unlike Hall came to the city: earnest seekers and enthusiasts, utopians, mystics, spiritualists, gurus, healers, quacks and cranks of every stripe.

In 1928, at the age of 27, Hall published his magnum opus, an introduction to ancient symbols and secret traditions called *An Encyclopedic Outline of Masonic, Hermetic, Qabbalistic and Rosicrucian Symbolical Philosophy*. Chapters of the lavishly published book, also known as *The Secret Teachings of All Ages*, open like portals into parallel universes. The diction is simple and strong, and punctuated with many lines taken directly from sources as old as the Pentateuch of the Bible and *The Divine Pymander* concerning Hermes Mercurius Trismegistus. This immense book is filled with strange, often disturbing illustrations, and uses Roman numerals instead of standard page numbers.

Publication of Hall's so-called Big Book initiated a new era of appreciation for ancient religions and symbols and catapulted him to the top of the list of America's scholars of mysticism and magic. He also gathered many acolytes, some of them trust funders of an earlier age seeking purpose in a world where their every whim had been fulfilled with little effort or

thought. A mother and daughter belonging to the Lloyd family, an oil dynasty of Ventura County, over the years would donate millions of dollars to Hall's projects. They helped underwrite his whirlwind tour of the world's centers of spiritual thought in 1923 and eventually helped establish his compound near Griffith Park in 1934.

When some groups pitched elaborate schemes promising to share divine secrets for a fee, authorities began to take notice. Eager to separate himself from the riff-raff of spiritualists, Hall worked briefly in 1939 as the eyes and ears of the Los Angeles District Attorney's office when it wanted to topple a cult known as Mankind United, believed to be bilking members of their worldly possessions.

Throughout the 1930s, he lectured from coast to coast, attending dinner fundraisers with influential people including Robert Andrews Millikan, chairman of the executive council of the California Institute of Technology, and legendary motion picture director Cecil B. DeMille. In 1938, he scripted an occult murder mystery for Warner Brothers titled *When Were You Born?* In 1940, he delivered a lecture at the New York World's Fair on the contributions of ancient Greece. Hall was enjoying the most successful period of his life. Still, a devastating personal crisis was falling into place at home. In 1941, his first wife, the sultry Fay Bernice Hall, committed suicide.

During World War II, Hall, a patriot to the core, tried to rally hope by drawing on obscure Masonic writings, fragments of Egyptian religious teachings and utopian fables by the likes of Sir Thomas More to suggest that the creation of the United States was part of a great experiment launched by leaders of an ancient league of nations to develop a philosophic empire. Thousands of years before Jesus, he said, they had charged the Western Hemisphere with special spiritual, mental and emotional forces. Evidence of what he called the "secret destiny of America" was first seen in the advanced civilizations of the Aztecs and Mayans, as well as the democratic systems and reverence for nature demonstrated by Native American cultures. With the nation on a war footing, the plan now required that America accept the challenge of leadership and establish "a new order of world ethics firmly established on a foundation of democratic idealism."

By then Hall had delivered thousands of lectures and published dozens of books on the teachings of sacred thinkers and basic principles of wisdom



teachings he felt were potent and timeless. His readers came to view his works as instruction manuals for harmonizing with the inflexible laws of the universe, laws that guide the motion of planets and human evolution, even the destiny of the nation.

President Harry Truman had Hall's books on his shelves. California Lt. Governor Goodwin Knight was a trustee of Hall's society, and influential Los Angeles politician Sam Yorty touted him as a valued citizen. Movie stars Bela Lugosi, Lew Ayres and Gloria Swanson were close friends.

But times were changing. By the late 1950s, some thought Hall's archaic ideals were out of step with materialistic progress, and the world had started to drift away from him. When some of Hall's concepts about early civilizations and the origins of religion were judged by modern archeological and anthropological standards, their flaws seemed glaring. Everything modern, bright and shiny as a new car had promise. Everything old suddenly seemed quaint, or useless. His ancient spiritual ideals did not seem to mitigate the anxiety and fear that accompanied the advent of weapons of mass destruction.

Hall stood firm, insisting that science couldn't fathom purposes or meanings of qualities of spirit; that courage and bravery can change the outcome of possibilities on the battlefield, in the laboratory or in the workaday world of the average family.

Doubting the supremacy of scientific breakthroughs and updated interpretations of philosophy, religion and history, he all but stopped buying new volumes for his fabled library. He chastised rock 'n' roll, jazz and modern art as potentially dangerous cacophony and watched arguably less talented peers such as Ernest Holmes, founder of the First Church of Religious Science, develop far larger metaphysical denominations.

Hall's warnings around this time of an impending "great decision" that would involve Western powers and Islamic nations could come straight from an early 21<sup>st</sup>-century news report. The great problem that faces the world, he forecasted in a lecture, centered in the area of the Eastern Mediterranean. "This center of tension," he said, "is probably more important than at first appears and will justify our thoughtfulness concerning the Mediterranean area, which is part of the world policy."

Amid the Utopian wonderment and experimentation of the 1960s and '70s, Hall's Hollywood compound attracted a new generation of people from surprisingly diverse fields and disciplines, from Burl Ives to astronaut Edgar Mitchell to Elvis. However, in a time of sexual liberation, mind-expanding drugs and hippie counterculture, Hall seemed strange, stuffy, and demanding to others, and, judging from his physical appearance, embarrassingly out of step with his own advice about the importance of self-discipline with diet and exercise.

By the 1980s, Hall knew all too well that his inconsistencies and personal failings were catching up with him and disappointing some acolytes. He had predicted that would happen in essays written decades earlier on the dangers of putting spiritual leaders on a pedestal.

"One cause of disillusionment in metaphysics is for the metaphysical teacher to prove to be more human than originally suspected," he wrote in an essay published in 1942. "The tendency is to so elevate personalities that we endow them with sacred powers. All our faith is put upon them as we hang tinsel on a Christmas tree. The leader is assumed to be infallible, whereas he is no more than one who is well-meaning, quite capable of contributing to the improvement of humanity, but still personally subject to innumerable ills. Doing the best he can, he is a good human being but a poor divinity. All followers who offer to adorn and deify their teachers set up a false condition. Human beings, experience has proved, make better humans than they do gods. We should be willing to accept a person who possesses wisdom as a friend, not deify him; it just won't hold up."

A year later he wrote, "Why did the disciples of Pythagoras always refer to the master as 'The Man,' as in the Bible we are enjoined to 'Behold the Man.' Why? Because in the old mysteries only the initiated were human—the rest were trying to get that way, and any greatness was measured by their accomplishment. Only the great initiated adepts were recognized as human; the rest were creatures crawling toward the light who, having eyes, see not, and are therefore blind; who, having ears, do not hear. It is in this manner that the Platonist tells us what they were trying to do at our stage of human development; not to make gods out of men, but to make men out of beasts, and so lift humanity up to its true estate of enlightened harmlessness, where men no longer prey upon each other."

He could have been talking about himself. Although he saw the validity of sacred truths, he was also swept away by questionable enthusiasms that were profitable and popular, like mental telepathy and the healing powers of gemstones. He could distill the salient principles of Neo-Platonism, but he enjoyed being the center of attention, and didn't trust anyone but himself.

For much of his life, Hall binged on cheap sweets such as donuts and malted milk balls, avoided physical activity, and sometimes cultivated relationships with followers by telling them, for example, that they had been close friends in a past life, or that secret societies had big plans for them. Putting himself in the role of a godlike man who could not be questioned opened the doors for idolatry and abuse.

On August 23, 1990, Hall's caretaker, executive officer and confidant, Daniel Fritz, who billed himself as a shaman and expert in alternative medical techniques, rushed to the ailing philosopher's office in order to resolve an urgent legal matter. He needed Hall's signature on a new will and living trust arrangement. It would help Hall's survivors avoid probate. After Hall died, control over the Philosophical Research Society, the compound and its contents, then valued at about \$5 million, would go to the successor trustee, Fritz.

And why not? The old man had neglected the place for years. Buildings were in desperate need of repairs. The copyright on some of his writings had been allowed to lapse. His personal library of 30,000 volumes lacked even fire alarms to protect them. Valuables, including gold coins, were inexplicably missing from his walk-in vault. And Hall, who was beginning to show signs of senility, had yet to groom anyone to succeed him.

Clearly, he told him, something must be done quickly. Hall agreed, and with a few strokes of his pen, he signed documents that essentially turned over his assets to Fritz, wedging out his second wife, Marie, and stepchildren who were to inherit everything, according to the last will and testament he had signed nearly two decades earlier.

Six days later, on the morning of August 29, Fritz telephoned a local mortuary to report that his boss had died in bed of natural causes. The corpse collectors and the Halls' family physician were alarmed by what they saw in the bedroom.

Hall's immense pale body lay on a bed without a single wrinkle; thousands of ants streamed from his ears, nose and mouth. A cleaning crew

was attacking reddish-brown stains on the carpet near the bed. Fritz and his helpers were busily carting Hall's clothes and valuables from the home to his car. The physician, growing increasingly suspicious, rescinded the death certificate he had signed a few hours earlier.

Fritz insisted that his boss died peacefully in his sleep. Los Angeles Police Department investigators have a different theory: that Fritz murdered Hall.

The case remains an open-ended Hollywood murder mystery.

# AMERICA'S FUTURE AND THE COMING AVATAR BY DOREAL



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EVENTS OF THE PRESENT AND FUTURE

BROTHERHOOD OF THE WHITE TEMPLE

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## CHAPTER 1

# City of Angels

IN THE EARLY 1900S, IT WAS EASY TO IMAGINE THE SUNNY CANVAS OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA AS A SORT OF PARADISE: A PLACE OF SPARKLING BEACHES AND IRISH-GREEN HILLS, VINEYARDS AND FRAGRANT ORANGE BLOSSOMS; A WESTERN OUTPOST EXPLODING WITH POSSIBILITIES AS A HOME TO THE FLEDGLING MOVIE INDUSTRY AND MYRIAD FRONTIER RELIGIONS. FABULOUS OIL WELLS WERE BEING STRUCK AND FERTILE VALLEY FARMLANDS ROLLED OUT LIKE CARPETS.

A place of adventure and change was not what Manly Palmer Hall was looking for when he stepped off a train in downtown Los Angeles in the fall of 1919. For Hall, the lure of Southern California was the chance to reunite with his mother, who had abandoned him in infancy. The 18-year-old Canadian immigrant, who never knew his father, had spent a confused and insecure childhood bouncing from town to town with his maternal grandmother, Florence Palmer. They had been living in New York City when she died suddenly, leaving Hall with little choice but to quit his clerk's job at a Wall Street firm, leave the city, and move into his mother's home in the beachside community of Santa Monica. [1]

Louise Hall, who had worked for 15 years as a chiropractic healer in the Alaskan gold fields, shared the modest house with her second husband, Charles Hall, a jack-of-all-trades who took her last name. [2]

If there were hard feelings between Hall and his mother, he never spoke of them; that is, beyond gentle chiding for burdening him with an odd name. As for the father he never knew, Hall would only say that husbands



who walk away from their families are irresponsible and inconsiderate men who antagonize their wives, polarize relatives and plague their children with lifelong “negative uncertainties.” [3] If anything, Hall thrived in his new home and soon shared his mother’s fascination with the emergence of utopian religious communities—from Ojai south to San Diego—all hoping to set the stage for a better way of life.

Hall believed he was witnessing a westward expansion of visionaries and seekers into a territory laden with gold and oil and rich with potential to be the birthplace of a spiritual revolution. The Midwest and East Coast of the United States were sedentary landscapes inhabited by people for whom a pioneering spirit was a thing of the past. The wide open spaces of California, however, were ruled by astrological fire signs of courage and action: Leo, Aries and Sagittarius. In this greenhouse of ambitious immigrants and freethinkers, Rosicrucians, Vedantists, Freemasons, Theosophists and fringe Christians were already changing the landscape with striking meditation gardens, ashrams, temples, occult lodges and churches.

If there was any place in the United States in which ancient wisdom would emerge and flourish it was here in the spiritual melting pot of Southern California. As Philip Jenkins writes in his *Mystics and Messiahs: Cults and New Religions in American History*, “Some of the new movements contributed to the cultural and economic development of the growing city of Los Angeles: in a sense Hollywood is built on occult foundations.” [4]

Hall enjoyed exploring Santa Monica’s seaside restaurants, shooting galleries and fun houses and fortune-tellers’ booths. One day, he noticed a store sign advertising “phrenology,” the pseudo-science popular at the turn of the 20th century that divided the brain into areas responsible for noble traits such as heroism and despised ones such as cruelty. Stepping closer to the window, he studied a grid map of the surface of the brain. Through the glass, he could see anatomical charts tacked onto a wall inside.

Curious, he ventured into the strange little studio presided over by Sydney J. Brownson, a diminutive horse-and-buggy doctor and Civil War veteran in his early seventies with a sweet smiling face, shoulder-length white hair, a full beard and thick spectacles. Hall casually asked, “Perhaps you would like to read my bumps.” [5]

Brownson winced and sternly replied that phrenologists do not read bumps; they make “calculations by measuring the radial length of brain fibers from the pons of the medulla oblongata.” Then he regaled the tall young man for hours about human auras, the magnetic fields of the human body, and reincarnation.

Hall was as enthralled by Brownson’s metaphysical topics as by the older man’s optimism and certainty of the human condition. Brownson was a private person and seldom discussed his personal life. But, taking a shine to his wide-eyed customer, Brownson told Hall that his life had been transformed by a mystical vision and a calling he received at the end of a Civil War battle that lasted all day and into the night.

Brownson also confided that he was having marital problems.

When Hall asked if he married the wrong woman, Brownson energetically replied he would gladly do it again if the choice were his because “we live in this world to learn, and I learned from her more about women than I ever thought there was to know.”

Nearly two decades later, Hall would remember those words as a sneak preview of his own struggles at home.

“All things work out well in the end,” Brownson assured him, and then cryptically added, “God does not make failures, but sometimes the Golden Age seems to be indefinitely postponed. But it will come when folks have stomachs as empty as their heads are now.” [6]

Brownson saw the makings of a capable apprentice in his young friend’s exuberant curiosity, his photographic memory and persuasive intellect, and his burning desire to explore the secret teachings of vanished societies. Tall and handsome with black hair and a debonair mustache, Hall was also a confident speaker, rather like Brownson himself at his age, only better.

The two began an intense mentor/student relationship that changed the way Hall thought about life. He was drawn deeper and deeper into the old man’s teachings of lost and hidden traditions, the golden verses of Hindu gods, Greek philosophers and Christian mystics, and the spiritual treasures waiting to be found within one’s own soul.

Less than a year later, Brownson invited Hall to speak to a half-dozen free spirits who gathered weekly in a room above a Santa Monica bank. Hall’s topic that afternoon in 1919 was his new obsession—reincarnation.

The audience of eight mostly elderly women showed their appreciation with offerings that totaled 65 cents. The philosophers—one five feet tall and weighing about 120 pounds, the other six feet four inches tall and on the heavy side—then splurged on chocolate sundaes at a drugstore down the street. [7]

A few weeks later, Hall and Brownson took the Big Red streetcar from Santa Monica to the corner of Fourth and Hill Streets in downtown Los Angeles, where Mrs. Eleanor Reisberg managed a metaphysical lending library and a small lecture hall used by religious seekers. Reisberg's guest speakers were allotted various hours based on the size of their anticipated audience. It was generally agreed that the 6 p.m. dinner hour was the least attractive time slot. [8]

And so the untested Hall gave his first real lecture on the mysteries of life at 6:15 p.m. The few dozen listeners of mostly new Californians offered up a total of \$1.65, a substantial take at the time. Within weeks, he drew audiences large enough to command the preferred 8 p.m. hour.

After years of living without fixed points or a real family, the universe was going his way. He believed deeply in the arcane notions he spoke of at the lectern even if no one outside his tiny group of listeners did. Moreover, his mother swelled with pride over his improbable new career: a spiritual version of the California dream.

Hall immersed himself in ancient myths and religious doctrines and punched up his lectures with current events and humorous asides. Gradually, by trial and error, Hall was developing an inspiring message and delivery.

Hall believed in the remote past there was a core religious belief—the universe was a manifestation of an invisible creating principle, which can conveniently be called God—that had been deliberately hidden in the symbols, myths and rites of the world's oldest societies. For a Hindu, that meant the universe and he or she are one. For a Muslim, God is as close as his jugular vein. Christians find Christ in their hearts; in essence, the search for God lies within. [9] [10]



*Hall c. 1920*

His sources ranged from Egyptian religion to the lives of Christian saints, and from classical Greek philosophy to the writings of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, a Russian mystic who claimed contact with ascendant masters whose wisdom shepherded the divine plan.

The universe, he proposed, is a living, expanding entity of eternal laws. The simplest way to study these eternal laws of existence was to observe the consequences of conduct. When we overindulge, we get ill. When we manage our desires, we are not ill. When we spend more than we earn, we are burdened with debt. When we neglect children, they turn against us. When we are critical, we lose friends. Therefore, Hall concluded, the answer to man's spiritual needs is self-discipline stemming from ideas that "impel the believer to remake his own life, correct his faults, strengthen his character, and deepen his knowledge." Moreover, he proposed, nature, out of her infinite capacity, brings forth at various times and places exemplary souls dedicated to passing this great secret of life on to future generations. [11]

Hall, his listeners assumed, was such a one.

Hall concluded his lectures—which typically took 90 minutes and were delivered without notes or a break for so much as a sip of water—with homespun common sense about modern living drawn from the spiritual beacons of all ages and cultures he had gleaned from occult books he owned, borrowed, or had checked out from the Los Angeles Public Library.

People were impressed by Hall's confidence, his knowledge and extraordinary physical stature, a tall silver-tongued orator who carried himself with a distinct air of superiority.

In late 1919, Hall was invited to address one of the most progressive religious forums in the city, the Church of the People, which met on Sunday mornings at the Blanchard Hall Building in downtown Los Angeles and followed up with lunch at Clifton's Cafeteria on Broadway. [12]

The church and its fellowship were founded by the broad-minded evangelist Benjamin Fay Mills, who had become a student of the transcendental philosophy of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau and the practical idealism of American psychologist and philosopher William James.

Mills was a liberal, energetic and brash preacher. His motto: "If I can't do it, and my wife can't do it, and the children can't do it, it can't be done."

Eventually, however, Mills lost faith in the transcendental ideals he had championed for years, reverted to the Presbyterian faith and left town. In his place stepped Los Angeles accountant Reynold E. Blight, a gifted speaker who stood less than five feet tall and had to buy his suits in the children's sections of department stores. Blight, a 33rd° Mason and student of comparative religion, became a bigger draw than Mills. He brightened the services with musical soloists and strengthened them with lectures on Greek philosophy and politics.

When Blight took a sudden leave of absence, Hall, who had been a regular member of the audience, became temporary pastor of the church's eccentric six-hundred-member congregation. Among its members were populists, intellectual socialists, utopians, single-tax enthusiasts, vegetarians, and young drifters seeking direction in life. "It takes a crank to make the world go 'round," his congregants liked to say around this time. [13]

Blight never returned to the pulpit. With Hall assuming increasing responsibility, the little church began to downplay political panaceas and

emphasize practical philosophy. Hall charged a dollar to attend his Sunday lectures, a set fee that continued all his life.

One adoring member of the congregation, an elderly Scotswoman, presented the young preacher with a rare and elegant four-volume 19th-century set entitled *The Works of Jacob Behmen (Boehme)*. It was the start of a collection of rare and unusual books that would eventually grow to 30,000 volumes. [14]

Hall was enchanted by the woman's curious personal life: she lived in an old-fashioned wood frame house, wore heirloom dresses, and kept a second place setting and the most comfortable chair reserved at her dinner table for an "unseen guest" who might be the presence of Christ one day, and the spirit of her long dead husband on another. [15]

Hall had no experience whatsoever in running a church—or anything else. But the 19-year-old was naïve and enthusiastic enough to take on the duties, which included counseling in a small office people old enough to be his grandparents. [16]

"This is something that has to happen to you before you can fully appreciate it," he said years later. "Factually, I had little to offer them. I had not solved any problems of my own. I didn't know exactly why I was leading a church, but it was one of those accidents or circumstances of fortune that you do not question. [17]

"So when these people came to me with their problems, I sat back with the supreme wisdom of a teenager and told them what I thought common sense would dictate, what seemed to me reasonable. And it worked in many cases." [18]

Peppered with a wide variety of personal questions from people seeking immediate answers, Hall began boning up on comparative religion, philosophy, sociology and psychology. He reported back with the warm, reassuring words and admonishments of Confucius or some other sage. Seemingly overnight, Hall became a one-stop source of an astonishing range of eclectic spiritual material that resonated with the intellect, and the subconscious.



# The Church of the People

Announces the Following

## DEBATES

Manly P. Hall

A. M. White

Maud F. Galigher, Chairman

Wednesday, May 7th. 8 p. m.

Resolved—That Religion should be Taught in the Public Schools.

Affirmative—Manly P. Hall.

Negative—A. M. White

Wednesday, May 21. 8 p. m.

Resolved—That Women of today have no Faith in God or Man.

Affirmative—A. M. White.

Negative—Manly P. Hall

Wednesday, June 4th. 8 p. m.

Resolved—That the United States should Police the World.

Affirmative—A. M. White.

Negative—Manly P. Hall.

Wednesday, June 18th. 8 p. m.

Resolved—That Optimism is Bluff.

Affirmative—A. M. White.

Negative—Manly P. Hall.

Wednesday, July 2nd. 8 p. m.

Resolved—That Conventionalism is Necessary to Civilization.

Affirmative—A. M. White.

Negative—Manly P. Hall.

Wednesday, July 16th. 8 p. m.

Resolved—That Motion Pictures under the present Regime are Destructive of Public Morals.

Affirmative—A. M. White.

Negative—Manly P. Hall.

Wednesday, July 23rd. 8 p. m.

Resolved—That the Modern Democracy is Detrimental to Culture.

Affirmative—Manly P. Hall.

Negative—A. M. White.

Wednesday, August 6th. 8 p. m.

Resolved—That Inventions Reduce Individual Efficiency.

Affirmative—A. M. White.

Negative—Manly P. Hall.

Wednesday, August 13th. 8 p. m.

Resolved—That the Congestion of Cities is a Curse and that the Freedom of the Country is a Blessing to Humanity.

Affirmative—A. M. White.

Negative—Manly P. Hall.

## SOCIAL EVENTS

Wednesday, May 14th. 8 p. m.

A Social Evening.

Dancing and Games.

Wednesday, June 11th. From Three until Six P. M.

Informal Tea

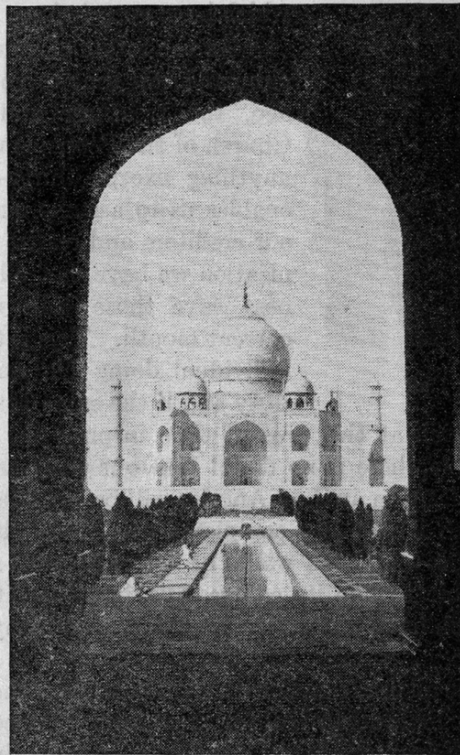
Wednesday, July 9th. 8 p. m.

Picnic. (Place to be announced later.)

# CHURCH OF THE PEOPLE

932 So. Grand Ave.  
Phone TUCKer 2603

MANLY P. HALL



PROGRAM

**For May, June, July and August**

1924



*Los Angeles, c. 1915*

It was a time when many civic and business leaders, judges, architects, physicians, engineers and entertainment industry figures were members of Masonic lodges, whose Neoclassical temples were among the most imposing buildings on the Southern California landscape. Among them was developer Charles E. Toberman, often referred to as the “father of Hollywood.” Al Ridenour, in a May 2002 *Los Angeles Times* article, wrote, “Master of the Hollywood Lodge in 1914, Toberman was not only responsible for enticing Sid Grauman into Hollywood to create the Egyptian, Chinese and El Capitan theaters, but also for construction of the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, Hollywood Bowl, Pantages Theater and Max Factor Building. Before any of these developments stood along the boulevard, however, Toberman built the new lodge headquarters there, in 1922. At the time, the temple was one of the most substantial structures in Hollywood’s sparse mix of buildings and citrus groves. [19]

“In those days when Hollywood was an independent city, the city attorney, city marshal, city treasurer and first mayor, George Dunlop, all were Masons,” Ridenour wrote. “Arthur Letts, founder of the Broadway department store, and artist Paul de Longpre, whose gallery and gardens drew many to the community, both were members along with prominent judges and a significant number of bankers. The city’s first newspaper and doctor’s office were established by members, and the city’s electric trolley car service was owned and operated by brothers of the lodge.” [20]

Hall hoped to catch their attention.

As a gateway into the world of ancient religions, Hall encouraged his congregants to explore Theosophy, a philosophical system founded in the late 1800s by Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky that embraced notions of

reincarnation, karma, the cyclic nature of creation and the interconnectedness of all life. According to Blavatsky, this Wisdom, in its pure form, existed before the dawn of civilization, but was given to and understood by only a handful of initiates and great minds throughout the ages.

“It was Blavatsky’s contention that the Wisdom could be partially recoverable from a ‘comparative study and analyses of selected philosophers,’” wrote James Santucci, a professor of religious studies and linguistics at California State University, Fullerton, in his *A Brief Overview of Theosophy*.

By those Blavatsky meant Pythagoras, Plato, Plotinus, Proclus, or schools of philosophies such as Neo-Platonism, Vedanta, Taoism, Kabbalah and the sacred writings of Christianity, Buddhism, Islam and Hinduism.

“A study of these philosophers, schools and religions by Blavatsky,” Santucci wrote, “under the guidance of two Masters of this Ancient Wisdom—one usually identified by the initials K.H. (Koot Hoomi), the other by the initial M. (Morya)—led to the writing of her two great works, *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*, works that partially revealed the Ancient Wisdom in a modern form.”

Her Theosophical Society’s mission included investigating higher powers she believed were innate in man, and teaching that everything in the universe, even human souls, races and nations are subject to progressive and cyclical evolutionary development.

One of the most prolific writers within the broader Theosophical movement was Max Heindel, a Christian mystic and German immigrant who established a spiritual commune in 1907 on a scenic bluff called Mt. Ecclesia in Oceanside, about 80 miles south of Los Angeles. Heindel subscribed to a mystical interpretation of human evolution that placed blacks and Jews behind Anglo-Saxons. Such views hardly raised an eyebrow among California’s new immigrants, most of whom were white like Hall and much of the rest of the country at the time. [21]

Dedicated to Jesus, astrology, the power of prayer and providing an explanation for the origin, evolution and future development of the world and man, Heindel’s Rosicrucian Fellowship soon became a favorite vacation spot for young Hall and his mother.

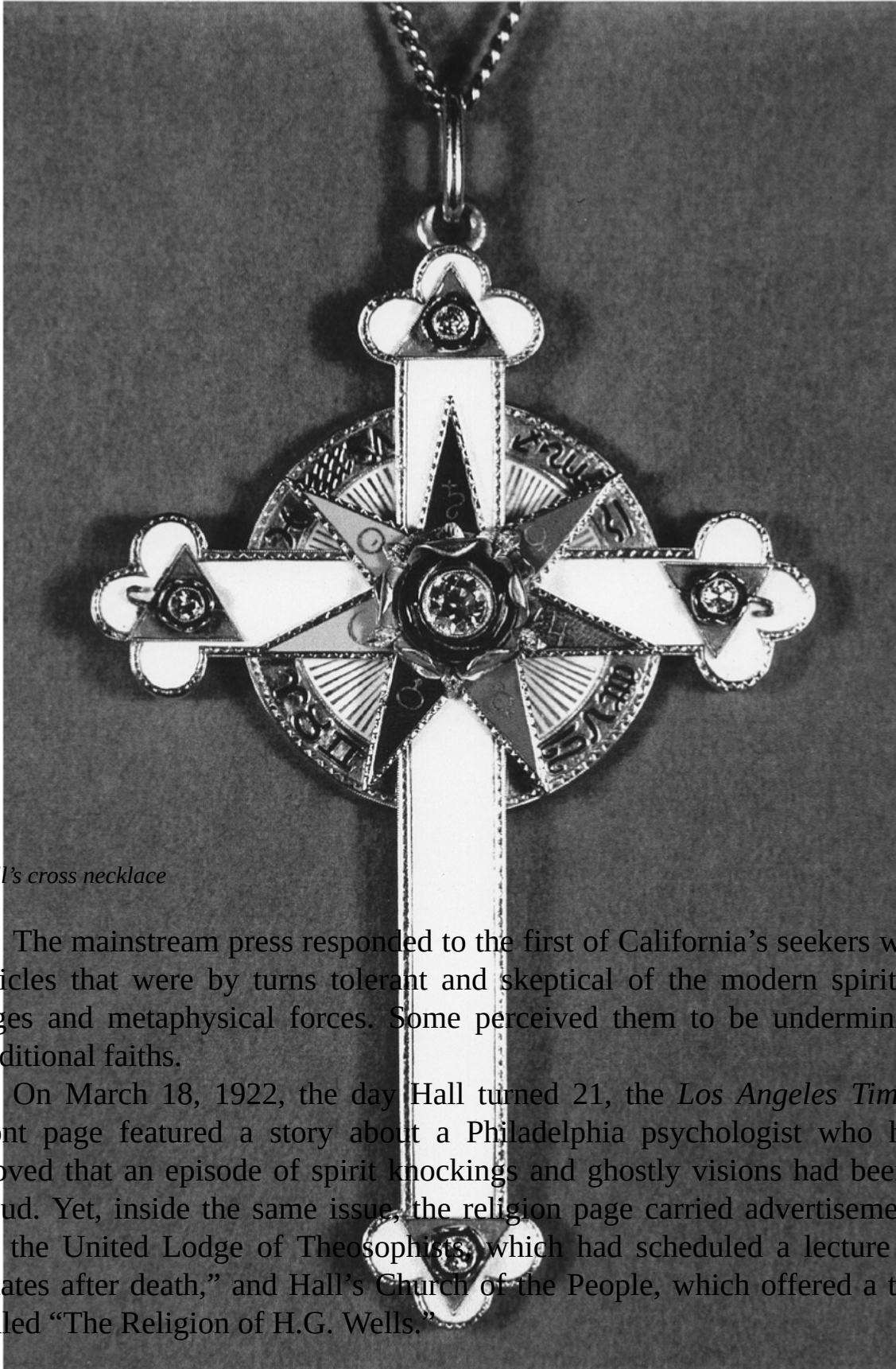
Their first trip to Mt. Ecclesia was in 1920, a year after Heindel's death. [22] His widow, Augusta, was struck by Manly's talent as a writer, his youthful pastoral work at the Church of the People, his graciousness and his intense interest in her husband's complex books, which essentially taught that Earth is a great school to which ever-evolving individuals come by way of reincarnation, life after life.

At Mt. Ecclesia, Hall grew so attached to Heindel's temperamental heavy-set widow that he started calling her "mother." She and her followers taught him astrology and the fundamentals of typesetting, printing and binding. From them, he also learned to avoid writing in longhand with an ink pen because it siphoned off one's vitality, an admonishment he obeyed for most of his life, preferring instead to dictate his books. He showed her how to play backgammon, and was her connection to prospective younger converts. Together, they wrote numerous articles for the fellowship's newsletter, *Rays from the Rosy Cross*, which compared life on the bluff to heaven on Earth.

"Why does this spot seem so beautiful?" Hall wrote under the title "Echoes from Mt. Ecclesia" in mid-1921. "There are many other places where the stars may be seen and studied, and thousands of people see the same glorious sunsets, and enjoy the same wonderful climate. But there is something here that is not to be found in any other part of the world. There is something here that is restful and different; it seems almost like holy ground. It is because of the love that is sent here by thousands of members and the lives of self-forgetting service that the workers are living day by day, that makes this the beauty spot of the earth." [23]

Mrs. Heindel would become distressed by Hall's active interest in hypnotism, which she considered one of the "black arts." [24] None of that, however, reached the ears of Hall's own Los Angeles congregation, which regarded his ties to the Rosicrucian Fellowship and its founder's widow as impressive spiritual credentials.





*Hall's cross necklace*

The mainstream press responded to the first of California's seekers with articles that were by turns tolerant and skeptical of the modern spiritual urges and metaphysical forces. Some perceived them to be undermining traditional faiths.

On March 18, 1922, the day Hall turned 21, the *Los Angeles Times*' front page featured a story about a Philadelphia psychologist who had proved that an episode of spirit knockings and ghostly visions had been a fraud. Yet, inside the same issue, the religion page carried advertisements by the United Lodge of Theosophists, which had scheduled a lecture on "states after death," and Hall's Church of the People, which offered a talk called "The Religion of H.G. Wells."

PLEASE READ THIS LITTLE BOOKLET THROUGH AND  
KEEP IT FOR A SOUVENIR  
IT WILL BRING YOU GOOD LUCK

GIVEN BY PRINCESS ZORAIDA  
IN THE FOLLOWING BRIEF SKETCH OF HER LIFE

## PRINCESS ZORAIDA



A few months later, *The Times* printed a front-page story about a trend-setting “all-night psychic pharmacy” in Chicago operated by three shifts of “love healers,” a lengthy book review of Maurice Maeterlinck’s compendium of enduring doctrines titled *The Great Secret*, and an above-the-fold news column called “Your Hidden Powers,” which claimed, “There is a purpose in every man. In each there is a seed, the seed of the soul. . . We water it with sweat and tears, around it we fertilize it with our agonies, our joys and our struggles, and we are not unaided. Nature helps us. In the conscience of every man there is a guidance.”

Hall entranced his Church of the People audiences with folksy interpretations of Pythagoras, Confucius, Lao-Tsu, Buddha, Plato, Jesus Christ, St. Paul, Moses ben Maimonides, St. Thomas Aquinas, Immanuel Kant, Baron Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibnitz, William James, and Herbert



Spencer, as well as of such obscure 19th-century writers on the occult as Albert Churchward, Arthur Dyott Thomson, Charles William Heckethorn and Arthur Edward Waite. The turn-of-the-century works of Irish biblical archeologist Elizabeth Anna Gordon inspired lectures on the religious traditions of Japan.

“It soon became clear,” Hall wrote years later, “that almost every problem brought to me in the course of a day or a month or a year had been handled by someone long ago. . . So it was very much safer for a novice like me to quote somebody who seemed to know, than to quote myself and realize that I didn’t know. For me it was just guesswork, but Confucius had worked it out.”

On March 17, 1923, Hall was ordained a minister in the Church of the People. [25] A few days later, he was elected permanent pastor of the church, and the congregation honored him with a Rosicrucian-style cross that was based on a design of his own and made of diamonds, platinum, gold and white enamel. Etched with emblems and symbols of astrology and ancient religious schools, it represented the ideals shared by all spiritual quests. Dangling from a chain around his neck, Hall proudly wore the flashy fist-sized cross as a symbol of spiritual authority in a state where alternative spiritual movements were becoming significant cultural forces.

The belief in reincarnation had become especially popular. One day around this time, Hall met an old chum on the street and noticed a large book under his arm. “What are you reading today?” Hall asked. With a twinkle in his eye, Hall’s friend answered, “First-year Spanish. I don’t expect to learn much of the language now, but I figure it will be more popular when I come back next time, so I might as well get a little start.”



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(The Spirit Man)

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Founder of the "All Truth" Society  
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OUR SLOGAN

Anti-Fanatic, Pro-Rational. With malice to none but love for all

Even flamboyant holy roller Aimie Semple MacPherson, who arrived in Los Angeles in 1918, was milquetoast compared to others setting up religious shops in town.

Hall kept track of the competition by collecting the advertisements they posted in local newspapers and magazines.

Dr. Nephi Cottam pitched "the great discovery of the new age, Craniopathy." Manneck of India promised "triumph through the wheels of adversity." Mystic Edwin J. Dingle, founder of the still-active Institute for Mentalphysics in the desert community of Joshua Tree, exhorted, "you, too, can have lots of pull!"

Charles Robert Wilson concluded his lectures on "esoteric meditation" with astrological forecasts for the week to come. The National Academy of Metaphysics offered courses on "ancient teachings modernized."

Crystal-gazer Princess Zoraida, smiling seductively under a turban studded with rhinestones and baubles, taught the "cult of Ptah."

Pneumandros, a spiritualist who called himself “The Spirit Man,” offered a \$5,000 reward to anyone who could prove his healing powers were fraudulent. Pyramidologist Prof. J.W. Parker claimed to have proof that the Great Pyramid of Egypt was “the Bible in stone.”

George Terry billed himself as the “pre-ordained, foreordained, predestinated Prince of Destiny, luminary mandate of imperial pre-eminence, Israel, seventh son of Melchizedek, hierophant of the universe.”



ISRAEL REDEEMER

Prince Of Healing

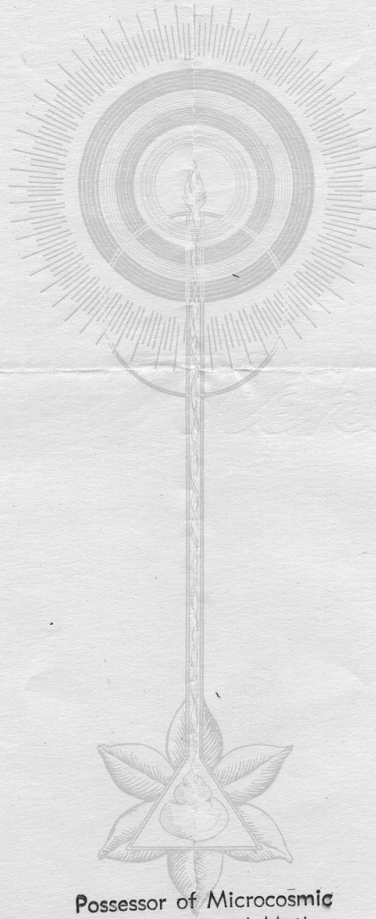
PREORDAINED  
FOREORDAINED  
PREDESTINATED

Om,  
Kali Avatar  
Of Vishnu  
Planetary Ruler.  
Seventh Root-Race  
Melchizedekian Order  
Washington, D. C.



SON'S OF GOD

Grand Mann



Possessor of Microcosmic  
Eternal Perpetual Motion  
Nature of Life

"EVERLASTING FATHER"



Dr. St. Yogi Geo. Terry  
LUMINARY MANDATE  
OF IMPERIAL PRE-EMINENCE

Israel

Seventh Son of Melchizedek  
Hierophant of the Universe

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A SUBSIDIARY OF A SACRED, SECRET, OCCULT COSMIC ORDER  
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 843 So. GRAND AVE., LOS ANGELES



Then there was Hall's friend, Count Louis Harmon, better known in his day as "Cheiro," who believed a person's character is revealed in the lines

of the palms and feet, and in the general shape of the hand, foot and toes. Cheiro, who owned two newspapers, was a tall, handsome, beefy man with influential friends, a cheery smile, a rich Irish brogue, and a reputation for entertaining extravagantly. Among those Cheiro claimed sought his private counsel to get clearer insights into their futures were England's Edward VII, Samuel Goldwyn, Oscar Wilde, poet Ella Wheeler Wilcox and actress Mary Pickford. Madame Blavatsky wanted him to join her Theosophical Society, he bragged. [26]

Cheiro, who died at age 70 in Hollywood, cast the horoscopes of nations and issued predictions, many of which later proved wildly off-base. He predicted a "war of wars" would break out around 1940 "when Israelites and their coworkers in Palestine open up Egypt, with its vast resources." This, he said, "would arouse antagonism from the followers of Islam, and Turkey, backed by Russia, will endeavor to recapture Palestine." [27]

Germany and England, he said, would eventually become allies and pour immense numbers of troops into Palestine and Egypt against Russia and Turkey.

Self-taught practical philosopher Ernest Holmes represented a Los Angeles-based religious empire spawned by his own wholesome brand of positive thinking for success on Earth and the hereafter.

Elsewhere in California, Theosophist Katherine Tingley was the "Purple Mother" of a community of three hundred residents at the Point Loma promontory west of San Diego. H. Spencer Lewis of New Jersey helped establish the Ancient and Mystical Order of the Rosy Cross center in San Jose, where some initiates tried to turn lead into gold in elaborate alchemical laboratories.

The New Thought faith healing movement, borne in the late 19th century, spun off dozens of influential ministries that mixed traditional Christian religion with metaphysical principles. It taught the use of positive affirmations: If you want to be rich, you need only to think rich. If you want to be beautiful you should realize you already are and just haven't noticed it yet.

Frederick Bailes, in his book *Hidden Powers for Human Problems*, promised "with complete faith, I can make this statement: If you practice the principles of the creative process as set forth in the following pages you will see and feel a new force in your life within seven days." [28] Anthony

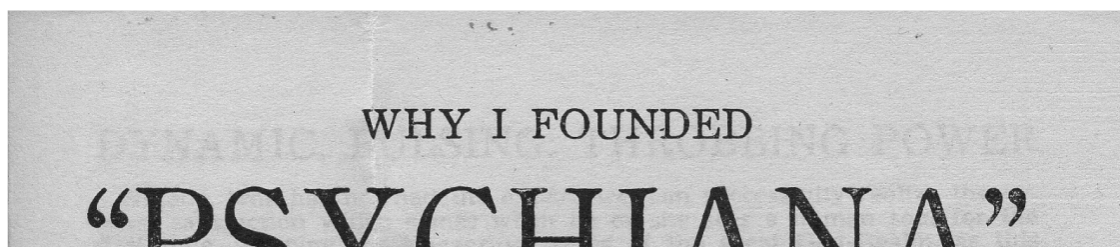


Norvell claimed to have personally “investigated the lives of geniuses, millionaires, titans of industry, writers, composers, bankers, financiers, actors and producers to come up with the million-dollar secret,” available for a small gift of love at the lectures he gave at rented movie theaters across the city. Similarly, Neville Goddard, who always appeared on stage wearing pure white suits, taught thousands of followers in Los Angeles “the miracle of imagination.” Trouble is, Hall wryly noted, “Everyone thought rich, and teachers of the doctrine prospered.” [29]

“Self-appointed teachers arose without adequate backgrounds, knowledge, or credentials, and swept through the nation,” Hall wrote years later. “It is entirely wrong to assume that this was a West Coast phenomenon. It was distributed throughout the country, affecting all of the larger metropolitan areas. Glamorous ladies in thousand-dollar evening gowns, waving ostrich-plumed fans, taught prosperity to the hungry and poor at \$25 a course, and those with adequate promotion counted their profits in the millions every year. Mysterious swamis, yogis, and the like, entranced audiences of from 2,000 to 4,000 at a meeting, and these were followed by food experts who draped the façades of our larger auditoriums with garlands of raw vegetables.” [30]

Hall knew them all. But unlike some competitors, who he felt were selling dubious shortcuts to peace, power and plenty during the swinging 1920s, he wanted to be known as a philosopher and a shaper of a new world, one that would guide the nation through the “dark years” that he predicted “lie ahead.”

“We need holy men and women,” Hall wrote, “to assist in the establishment of higher standards of right and wrong; to amend unjust laws on our statute books; to become the patrons of broader and nobler educational ideals; to foster the cause of world peace; to aid in the achievement of economic justice; and, most of all, to provide the millions of this generation with a workable, livable philosophy of life.”





# PSYCHIANA

(THE TEACHING WHICH IS BRINGING NEW LIFE AND POWER  
TO A SPIRITUALLY DEAD WORLD)

By

Dr. Frank B. Robinson

Author of "SHALL WE KNOW EACH OTHER BEYOND THE TOMB?" "AMERICA AWAKENING," "THE  
GOD NOBODY KNOWS," "CRUCIFIED GODS GALORE," "LIFE STORY OF FRANK B. ROBINSON," "WHAT  
GOD REALLY IS," "IS THE STORY OF JESUS CHRIST FACT OR FICTION?" "THE NAME OF THE BEAST—  
866"; Editor "PSYCHIANA" Quarterly; Organizer of "PSYCHIANA" Brotherhood, and Founder  
of "PSYCHIANA."

SUCCESS or FAILURE

GOD or ATHEISM . . . . . WHICH?

WEALTH or POVERTY

Hall's writings at the time reflect the vibrant spirit of California after World War I. This was a semi-arid land of perennial sunshine, citrus groves and oil derricks pumping the fuel used by new automobiles on freshly paved highways. There was plentiful eastern Sierra water hauled south by an aqueduct, and electricity surging through miles of cables stretched across towering standards that went up in former orchards. Cottages and mansions arose from the brush of hillsides and mountains. The ambience of Mexico was pervasive. Exotic Asia seemed a stone's throw farther east. The motion picture industry was spinning fabulous wealth from the dreams of average Americans.

## Introductory Message

READ YOUR WORLD OF IDEAS MESSAGE  
YOU STAND AT THE PARTING OF THE WAYS

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Historian Walton E. Bean noted the population of the Los Angeles metropolitan area in 1920 was five times larger than it was in 1900. A year earlier, Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company built a major subsidiary in Los Angeles because the city could deliver the eight million gallons of water needed each day to run the factories. The U.S. Navy's newly authorized Pacific Fleet docked at the bustling adjacent ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. A year later, Standard Oil opened an oil field in Huntington Beach,

and Donald Douglas helped Los Angeles become a center for aircraft production.

Over the next decade, the population of Los Angeles County exploded from less than a million people to slightly more than two million. The number of registered private automobiles quintupled to about 806,000. Los Angeles had more factory workers than San Francisco and Portland combined. [31]

During the same period slightly more than a third of the city's residents claimed membership in a mainstream religious denomination, according to Michael Engh, a Jesuit historian at Loyola Marymount University. Many of the rest of the spiritually inclined gravitated toward blends of Neo-Platonism and Egyptian magic, homespun interpretations of Darwin, Freud and Jung, and often watered-down and misguided notions about the esoteric traditions of Japan, China and India. Some teachers gained enormous followings by preaching certainty and success in the region they proclaimed to be the launch pad for the best that evolution had to offer.

"Los Angeles is the greenhouse of America," Hall wrote around this time. "It is a place of experimentation in which we are combining facts and producing new species. . . . It is primarily fitted to be the greatest cultural center of the world. A city that is sacred in being a nucleus where the finer principles of life can come into expression." [32]

Los Angeles was a sleepy agricultural center no more. Plans were being laid to build the world's longest and largest water system from the Colorado River to the western coastal plain. Two-lane roads were being replaced with broad highways. Housing subdivisions were poised to expand in all directions. Downtown was buzzing with proposals for massive industrial development. Radio was opening new windows on the world. The 22-year-old Hall hoped to help infuse the emerging civic life with the highest ethical standards and a conscience. Whenever Hall found a book he liked, he'd recommend it. If he found a lifestyle that worked, he told about it. His growing reference library informed his personal interests: religious, philosophical and occult books and manuscripts—the older and more arcane the better. [33]

Out of Hall's studies emerged a nagging sense that the sacred history of the world was being supplanted by a new religion of science and

engineering. Everything before 1900 was considered fallacy, superstition and myth. Everything after 1900 was profound, glorious and true. [34]

“All that didn’t make sense to me,” Hall said. “It seemed as though in the effort to be modern we forgot that wisdom was neither ancient nor modern. The truth didn’t belong to any century. It belonged to all time.” [35]

Vowing to set the record straight—and return dignity to centuries-old beliefs—Hall began making plans for a comprehensive survey of “secret teachings concealed within rituals, allegories and mysteries of all ages.” His proposed “big book” would lend to metaphysics and myth the same nobility and heft otherwise reserved for classical works.

In the meantime, Hall chronicled his adventures in ideas in booklets and newsletters.

In May of 1923, Hall began publishing a periodical, *The All-Seeing Eye*, out of the home of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Young, followers who lived on West 20th Street, southwest of downtown Los Angeles. [36] Hall, who had been renting a small room in an alley off of Hill Street, moved in with the Youngs after the untimely death of their son. [37]

The unschooled but widely read publisher displayed an ability to write with surprising confidence and depth. “Those who have found joy in reading and bringing into play upon their lives the wisdom of past ages as it is immortalized in ancient tomes,” Hall said in one of the first issues, “have reached a great point in the growth of their being. But, above all, if we realize that the book gives to us that which we have given it, we then understand that mirrored in its pages are the thoughts and ideals of our own lives.” [38]

The Youngs’ spacious home became a hive of activity. It was there, with the assistance of a dozen volunteers from his Church of the People, that Hall produced his first literary efforts—a series of illustrated mystical booklets with titles such as *Initiates of the Flame*, *The Maker of the Gods*, *The Face of Christ* and *The Last of the Shamans*. [39]

At the end of each workday, Hall and his workers gathered in Mrs. Young’s expansive red dining room over casseroles of pink beans baked with onion, garlic and cheeses. Under shelves festooned with the Young family’s china, Hall entertained them with theories about “truths which the mind can never know.” [40]



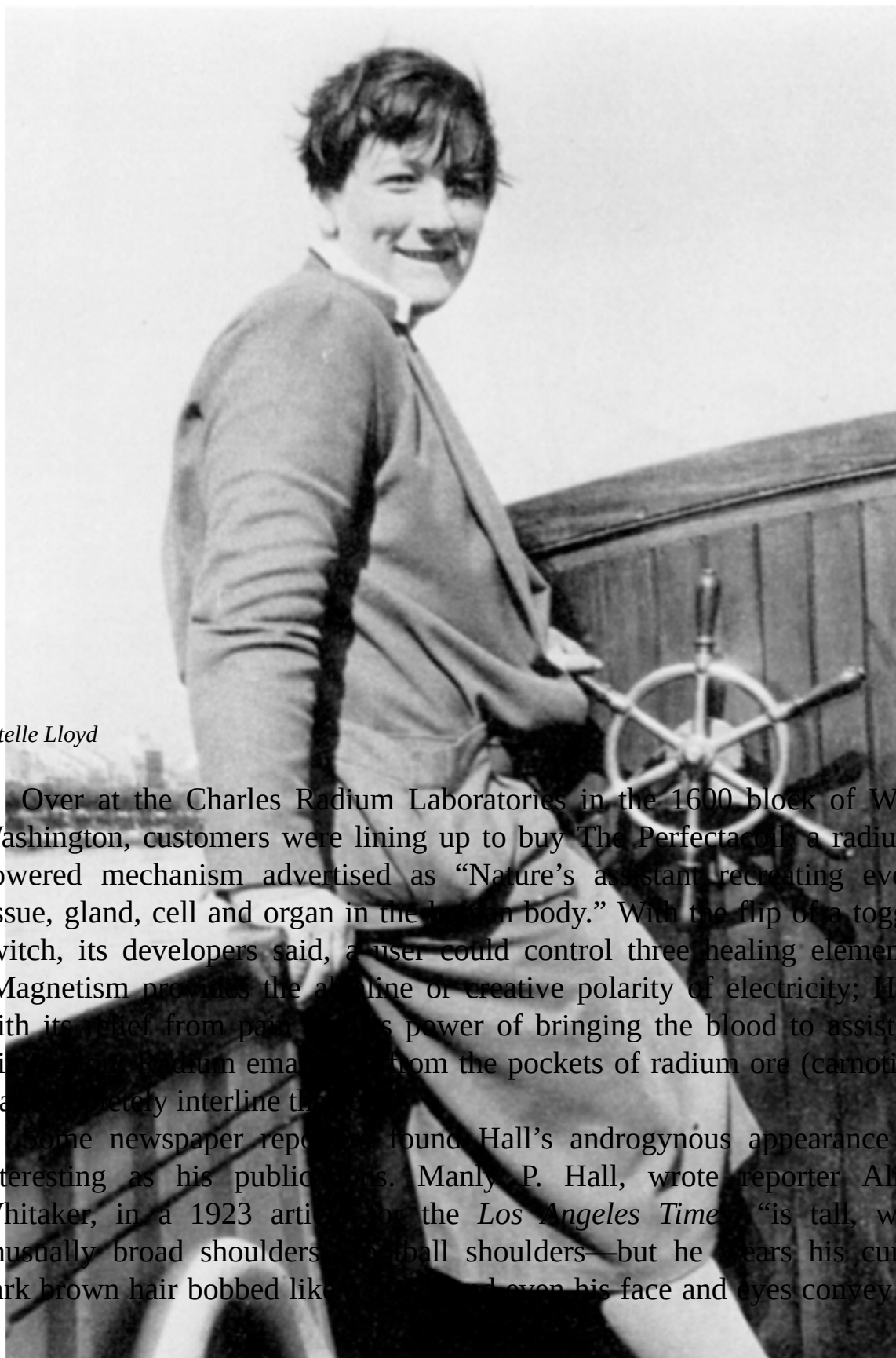
*Caroline Lloyd*

Hall stood apart like some Don Quixote, a little mad and steeped in old magical works, inviting others to join him on what he called “the road to inner light.” His newspaper’s advertisements reached out to an emerging subculture in a city where the most popular dance was the “Feather Flutter” and a ham sandwich with trimmings and apple pie à la Mode went for 10 cents. [41] The Rosicrucian Fellowship in Oceanside advertised a new occult boarding school for children between four and seven. Dawson’s Bookshop in the 600 block of South Grand Avenue offered “the most complete stock of occult books in the West.” The Eutropheon restaurants on Olive Street and Hill Street promised “fresh raw foods.” The Reed Brothers Company funeral home in the 700 block of Washington Boulevard in Los Angeles announced “a unique method of caring for the body until the time of burial or cremation. . . By means of a refrigeration chest the body is perfectly preserved for the three days which are necessary, according to

students of esotericism, for the complete and gradual disentanglement of the higher vehicles of man from his earthly body.”

The Psycho-Analytic Society in the 200 block of South Broadway promised “treatments for all psychopathic conditions and psycho-physiological aberrations.” A few blocks away, the International New Thought Alliance Convention challenged members and newcomers alike to learn to hook their minds up to the “power-house of the universe” to cure disease and achieve success.





*Estelle Lloyd*

Over at the Charles Radium Laboratories in the 1600 block of West Washington, customers were lining up to buy The Perfectacol, a radium-powered mechanism advertised as “Nature’s assistant recreating every tissue, gland, cell and organ in the human body.” With the flip of a toggle switch, its developers said, a user could control three healing elements: “Magnetism provides the alkaline or creative polarity of electricity; Heat with its relief from pain and its power of bringing the blood to assist in eliminating it; Radium emanates from the pockets of radium ore (carnotite) that completely interline the body.”

Some newspaper reporters found Hall’s androgynous appearance as interesting as his publications. Manly P. Hall, wrote reporter Alma Whitaker, in a 1923 article for the *Los Angeles Times*, “is tall, with unusually broad shoulders—football shoulders—but he wears his curly, dark brown hair bobbed like a woman’s, and even his face and eyes convey an

almost feminine impression.” Whitaker also remarked that a majority of the people in Hall’s church pews were women.

Among them were dedicated acolytes such as Caroline A. Lloyd and her daughter Alma Estelle, wealthy scions with a reputation for attaching themselves to writers and bohemians who could be, as one of their relatives put it, “engaging for a fee.” Conversely, Caroline’s special interests—sculpture, classical music, stamp collecting and world travel—would have lasting impressions on Hall. [42]







*Manly observes a holy man in India.*

Caroline, a pretty woman with pale skin and wire-rim glasses, had studied drawing and miniature painting in Paris. Her daughter, a mannish, full-chested woman who favored walking shoes, vacationed in Europe with Ernest and Hadley Hemingway and kept an apartment in Paris a few doors down from the protean artist Man Ray. They belonged to the clan that controlled a fabulously productive oil field in Ventura County. Their family already was financing young mystery writer Raymond Chandler. [43] When the women began sending a sizable portion of their oil income to Hall, who was a frequent lecturer in the salon of Caroline's home in Los Angeles' Los Feliz district, relatives feared they had come under the spell of an evil guru.

"Caroline and Estelle were so taken by Manly Hall that some relatives thought there must be some sort of romantic involvement at work," said attorney William Emerick, whose wife is a Lloyd family member. "There was none. He was only interested in their money." [44]

The Lloyds' financial donations started in the early 1920s and freed Hall to pursue a variety of interests and hobbies, most of them shared by Caroline. A stamp collector, he specialized in postage from countries that gave birth to the greatest saints and wise men. He traveled, exploring the world's religious centers. A lover of classical music, Hall and Los Angeles Philharmonic pianist Douglas Colin Campbell experimented in the 1920s with some of the city's first mood-enhancing light shows. "My father, who was known back then as the 'young Paderewski,' would perform while Manly lectured," recalled Campbell's daughter, Cai Taggart. "All the while, a color wheel would turn and cast various shades across the stage. It was all choreographed."

Donations from Caroline Lloyd and his own congregation paid for Hall's first trip around the world to study the lives, customs and religions of countries in Asia and Europe. Hall sailed out of San Francisco on the luxury

liner S.S. *Franconia* on December 5, 1923. He reached Yokohama in late December of that year, after a massive earthquake had devastated the Japanese city and left corpses floating in its harbor. [45] Years later, he recalled, "we found a city of a half a million people without a single building standing. We found pain, sorrow, and misfortune on every hand.

12/18/23

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Get Together and Go-Get-It</i></p>	<h1 style="margin: 0;">Wela-ka-hao</h1> <p style="margin: 0;">(STRIKE WHILE THE IRON IS HOT)</p>	<p style="text-align: right;"><i>Five C The</i></p>
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VOLUME 5. HONOLULU, HAWAII, U. S. A., DEC. 18, 1923

## Bizarre Preacher Startles Ad Club

**Manley P. Hall is Only 22 Years  
Old but He Tosses Aeon of  
Ages Around as if They Were so  
Much Chicken Feed**

As President Stanley McKenzie expressed it in thanking the headliner of the luncheon program last Wednesday, "you never can tell what's going to come off at an Ad Club meeting."

What came off at last week's meeting was something new, even in Ad Club history. The Ad Clubbers, meeting, as they do once a year, at the Central Y. M. C. A., heard the speaker of the day, Rev. Manley P. Hall, of Loce Ahng-hail-aise, state that Hawaii is 15,000,000 years old and is the tops of mountains once belonging to a continent whose emperors ruled the world. They heard him declare that these islands were once, for a short time, the residence of one of the 12 Masters of the world—a dozen that, he said, includes Christ, Buddha, Confucius, Zoroaster and the other great religious leaders.

It is a physiological fact that most of the Ad Club mouths hung gaping open while the speaker reeled off polysyllabic names out of the ancient and modern religions and spoke lightly of hundreds of millions of years as though they were but a day.

Rev. Mr. Hall is in physical appearance a striking figure. Dressed bizarrely, he wears his black hair in the fashion of the stage poet, cultivates a languishing glance and evidently yearns to be classed as a mystic. But he is modest. He disclaimed being the re-incarnation of Pythagoras, as a reporter for the morning paper had quoted him as saying he was, although he admitted being a believer in the doctrine of re-incarnation, which he said he had been preaching in his church in Los Angeles for two years.

Mr. Hall spoke too rapidly and juggled too deftly with strange names to be quoted in full. It will be sufficient to pick out a few highlights from his address. Here they are:

"All the religions of the world are only one in essence. There never was a false religion."

"The Hawaiian myths go back millions of years."

"The ancient Egyptians and the American Indians were one race."

The Indians were descended from Egyptians who came over to America by way of the now lost continent of Atlantis."

ideas and worshipped them ever since."

"A heathen is defined by the dictionary as a man that doesn't know God. That includes the entire Christian world."

The story of Jonah is the greatest fish story ever told. Its real meaning, however, is only the story of life being swallowed up in matter."

"But for the first time I became aware of the quality of the Japanese character which fused with me for a long time. My rickshaw man was to take me to the main hotel in Yokohama, which incidentally now was. . . a shack put together out of empty beer bottles with a cot in it. . . And he asked if he could stop for a moment. . . He wanted to pause for just a few moments to say a prayer in the block where his family had died. His mother, his father, his wife and his children had all died together. [46]

"After that experience with him, I asked him, 'How do you feel about all this? What does this mean?' He said, 'I have faith. I believe. . . I must accept. I cannot question. I believe that those whom I have loved have left here but they are still alive. I believe they will be born again. I believe they will live here. I believe there is no end. And in this hope of the continuance of their life I have peace.'" [47]

Photographs show Hall clad in white trousers, a heavy dark coat and pith helmet as he crossed to Korea, stayed briefly in Peking, China, and went on to Burma and India, arriving just as Gandhi was released from prison after a hunger strike. After delivering a lecture in Calcutta, he was invited to walk in a parade and his appearance was publicized in local newspapers. He traveled on through Egypt and central Italy.

Throughout that 38,000-mile journey he called the "single most important episode in my life," people were either fascinated or frightened by the imposing self-styled mystic from Los Angeles armed with endless stories of reincarnation, odd gods and lost continents. His remarks often provoked news articles with headlines such as "Bizarre Preacher Startles Ad Club," "Noted Radical Preacher from Los Angeles Speaks," and "A World Religion is Advocated by Tourist."

In Honolulu's *Wela-ka-hao* newspaper, a reporter wrote: "Rev. Mr. Hall is in physical appearance a striking figure. Dressed bizarrely, he wears black hair in the fashion of a stage poet, cultivates a languishing glance and evidently yearns to be classed as a mystic. But he is modest. He disclaimed being the reincarnation of Pythagoras, as a reporter for the morning paper had quoted him as saying he was, although he admitted being a believer in

reincarnation, which he said he had been preaching in his church in Los Angeles for two years.” [48]

# YOUNG MINISTER STUDIES CREEDS

## Los Angeles Pastor Believes He May Be Reincarnation of Pythagoras

Claiming that the pyramids are 125,000 years old and the source of Masonic thought, that "the Shining City" of the isle of Los Atlantis is still another source and believing in reincarnation so strongly that he feels he may be the reincarnation of Pythagoras, Rev. Manley Hall of Los Angeles, a passenger aboard the Franconia, has an unusual outlook on life.

Although an ordained minister, only 22 years of age, a towering physical figure with long, dark, curly locks and features which would make him valuable for the cast at the Oberammergau Passion play, Rev. Mr. Hall is a student of **Order of the Eastern Star**. He studies Buddhism, Brahminism and all the ancient faiths and believes in the philosophy of Zoroaster.

*Hall makes headlines in 1928.*

Hall dispatched dozens of letters to followers back home. One described his disgust with a white man he witnessed kicking and beating a Hong Kong resident for having "the audacity to walk on the same sidewalk with him." [49] Another spoke of the filthy roads of Jerusalem, where, Hall opined, life had not changed all that much since biblical times. Yet another told of the superhuman powers of a holy man in Benares who seemingly induced a mango sapling to grow on the spot with flute music.

He believes that the essence of all these philosophies will bring the world to the point of unity. He wears upon his breast, suspended from a black ribbon, a remarkable religious symbol, something like a cross and yet something that represents his ideal of all religions. It is studded with diamonds and other precious stones.



*A Weekly Newspaper Devoted to Philosophy, Science and Religion*

# The ALL-SEEING EYE

**EXTRA!**

Edited by MANLY P. HALL

**EXTRA!**

Volume 3. No. 1.

Los Angeles, Calif., Wednesday, November 24th, 1926

10c a Copy

## NEW WEEKLY TO COVER PACIFIC STATES

### MOST ELABORATE AND MOST BEAUTIFUL VOLUME EVER PRINTED ON COAST

**First Issue Distributed  
From Seattle to San Diego**

#### ODIN AND THE ODINIC MYSTERIES

**A Manuscript Never Before  
Published**

**By Manly P. Hall**

Before taking up a study of this remarkable individual, it will be well to call to mind the fact that Odin, the Father God of the Northern peoples, really existed, and that around his literal life story, have been wound many legends and stories which belong to the ancient mysteries which he brought with him from India. First it will be well to consider Odin the Initiate. In the general History, Encyclopedia and Dictionary of Freemasonry, Robert McCoy, Thirty-third Degree, writes as follows:

"It appears from the Northern Chronicles that in the first century of the Christian Era, Sigge the Chief of the Aser, an Asiatic tribe, immigrated from the Caspian Sea and the Caucasus into Northern Europe. He directed his course Northwesterly from the Black Sea to Russia over which, according to the tradition, he placed one of his sons as the ruler, as he is said to have done over the Saxons and Franks. He then advanced through Cimbria to Denmark, which acknowledged his fifth son Skiold as its sovereign and passed over to Sweden where Gylf who did homage to the wonderful stranger and was initiated into his mysteries, then ruled. He (Odin) soon made himself master here, built Sigtuna as the capital of his empire and promulgated a new code of laws, and established the sacred mysteries. He himself assumed the name of Odin, founded the priesthood

*(Continued from Page 6, Col. 1)*

**Delays in Publication "Masonic,  
Hermetic and Rosicrucian  
Symbolical Philosophy" Will  
Result in Better Book.**

**Printer, Platemaker and Artist  
Pronounce It Unique**



**MANLY P. HALL**

standpoint.

Mr. Hall has been industriously at work upon it since the first of the year. As time goes on, intensive research has brought to light a number of important subjects which he had not contemplated incorporating into the book. But the importance of the subjects has caused him to change somewhat the original plan, and the result will be a book considerably greater and more complete than the one first outlined. The changes which have been made have approximately doubled the cost of production, so that whereas the original book was being published at a loss, this new and improved outline will result in a volume costing in the neighborhood of \$50,000 to produce.

*(Continued on page 5, Col. 2)*

#### "All-Seeing Eye" Reincarnates

We have the pleasure of announcing the reappearance of "The All-Seeing Eye," Volume III. No. 1. After two years and seven months of incarnation, our monthly magazine reincarnates as a weekly newspaper.

You are now looking at the first copy. It will be devoted to philosophy, science and religion and the editorial staff promise that the readers will not be confronted with crime, scandal and sensational matter from the front page.

We have long felt the need of some channel through which we might keep our friends informed concerning our activities. As the official organ of our activities, "The All-Seeing Eye" will present many articles of interest to students of philosophy and ethics. Our family of friends has increased from a few hundred to over 25,000 on the Pacific Coast alone, and it is ever more difficult to keep this group in touch with the message we are seeking to disseminate. Therefore, a plan has been conceived by means of which it will be possible to deliver several lectures each week in your own home.

In each issue of this weekly messenger will appear news items covering current activities and outlining our future plans. Each issue will also contain several special articles. Other features of interest will include the reprinting of some of our first writings which have been out of print for several years, together with excerpts from hitherto unpublished manuscripts and sermons.

From time to time rare and curious items from old books and manuscripts will be published; occasionally an unusual plate together with its description will be reproduced.

*(Continued on page 4, Col. 2)*

Hall also wrote, "I once discussed the problem of miracles with a very learned Brahmin pundit whose conclusions on the subject may be

summarized as follows: ‘You Christians believe that He [Jesus] turned water into wine; that He raised the dead, healed the sick, passed through closed doors, and multiplied the loaves and fishes. Do you believe the day of miracles ended two thousand years ago? Your Jesus told His disciples that greater things than He did they should do. Why, then, do you declare the miracle-working of India to be false?’” [50]

He returned to the United States in February 1924 by way of New York, with more than four hundred photographs taken with a four-by-five Graflex box camera, which would accompany him for decades. [51]

When he next took to the pulpit at his Church of the People, he was sporting a beard. His adherents expressed their displeasure with his whiskers by dropping a few razors into the collection plate.

As Easter rolled around in 1924, the now worldly Hall was lining his church’s course with an array of novel activities including stereopticon slide presentations of his trip, and feisty public debates over provocative topics: Should the United States police the world? Is modern democracy detrimental to culture? Are motion pictures destructive of public morals? In one debate, Hall opposed the idea that “women have no faith in god or man.”

In November 1926, Hall revived the *All-Seeing Eye* as a 10-cent weekly newspaper devoted to philosophy, science and religion. Published out of Room 301 in the Trinity Auditorium Building near 9th Street on Grand Avenue in Los Angeles, it now also served as a clever platform in which to trumpet progress being made on Hall’s elaborate compendium of occult philosophy and symbols.

Hall’s weekly messenger drew heavily from his growing home library, and laid out the basic themes and principles and literary forms that he would rely on throughout his long, curious career. He included news items clipped from mainstream publications, question-and-answer sections, notices of upcoming events and feature articles on interpretations of biblical stories, Egyptian initiation rites, chakras and glands, alchemy, astrology, Buddhism and reincarnation. He also wrote about the mysterious magician Count de St. Germain, Madame Blavatsky and the theory that Sir Francis Bacon was the true author of Shakespeare’s plays.

Other articles spoke of the healing powers of arts and crafts, the grinding mindlessness of modern city life, the relationship between stress



and disease, and the false promises of most of the metaphysical pursuits that were suddenly all the rage in Los Angeles.

“Nearly all who spend a few years in modern metaphysics,” he warned in the March 23, 1927 edition of the *All-Seeing Eye*, “come out broken in mind and body, self-centered egotists who do not know where they are mentally, have lost all desire to work, and wander from one teacher to another searching for knowledge until at last the insane asylum or the state grave yard claims them.” City life, he observed a month later, “is just a rush from one street car to another, from one lunch stool to another, from one excitement to another. There is one general result of it all and that is a nervous breakdown.” For relief, Hall prescribed, among other things, the writings of Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim, the 16th-century Swiss medical physician and alchemist also known as Paracelsus.

The explorations of the brilliant, belligerent and pudgy Paracelsus, one of the first to stress the power of mind over bodily function, helped trigger a struggle between medicine and magic. Paracelsus proposed that conflicted spiritual convictions can lead to disease, and that the vital energy of life is channeled into the lives of living things. Energy out of control, or blocked, disrupts the mental and emotional life and renders the individual vulnerable to sickness. A great magician is a master of this energy, which he called forth with the magic wand of his will.

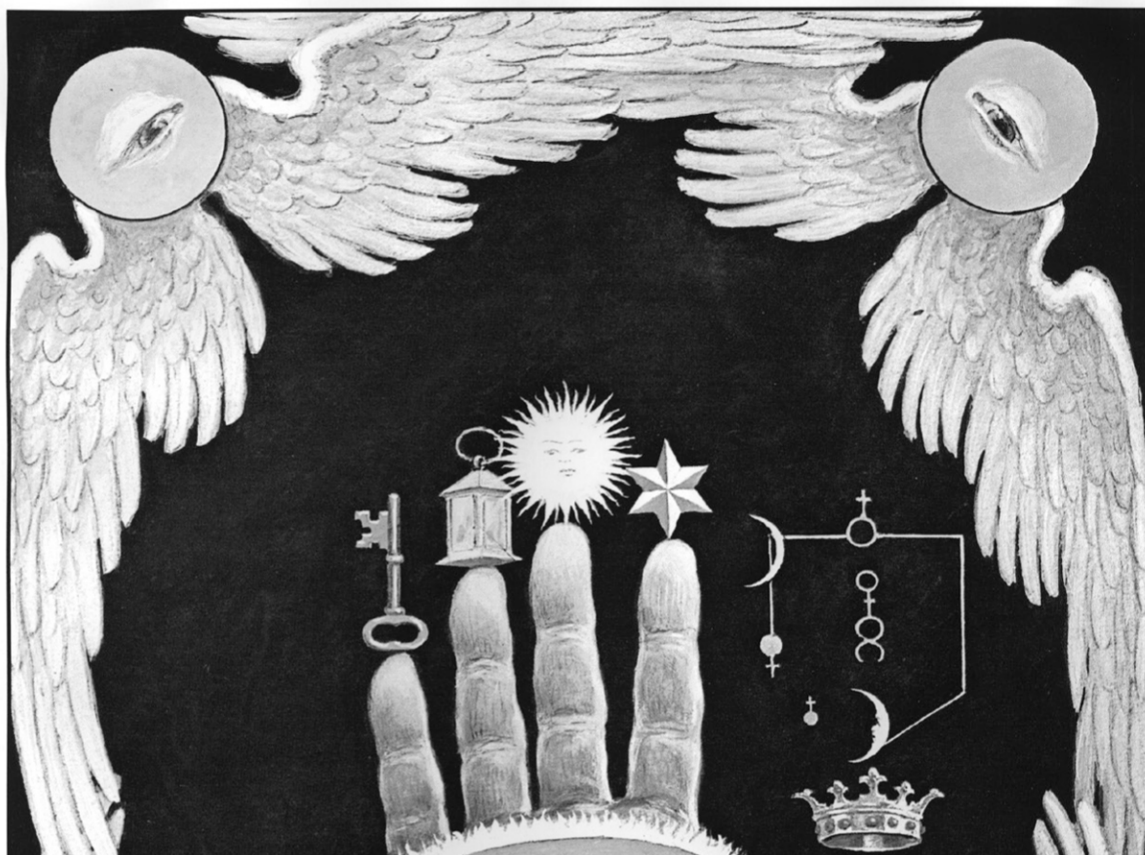
Paracelsus did not invent these ideas. They were adapted from myriad early mystics and religious doctrines. Socrates, for example, once chose a secluded, shady place to meet with his disciples because the spirits who inhabited that spot would contribute dignity and richness to the discourse. Iamblichus believed in guardian spirits not unlike Guardian Angels of Christianity. Pythagoreans described Deity as an infinite being whose body is composed of the substance of light and whose soul is composed of the substance of truth. Kabbalists regarded the psyche as an organism, and physical creation as a manifestation of spiritual emanations. Ancient Oriental acupuncture procedures in which small needles are inserted into certain body points to improve health grew out of the belief that disturbances in the flow of natural life forces lead to a disease state.

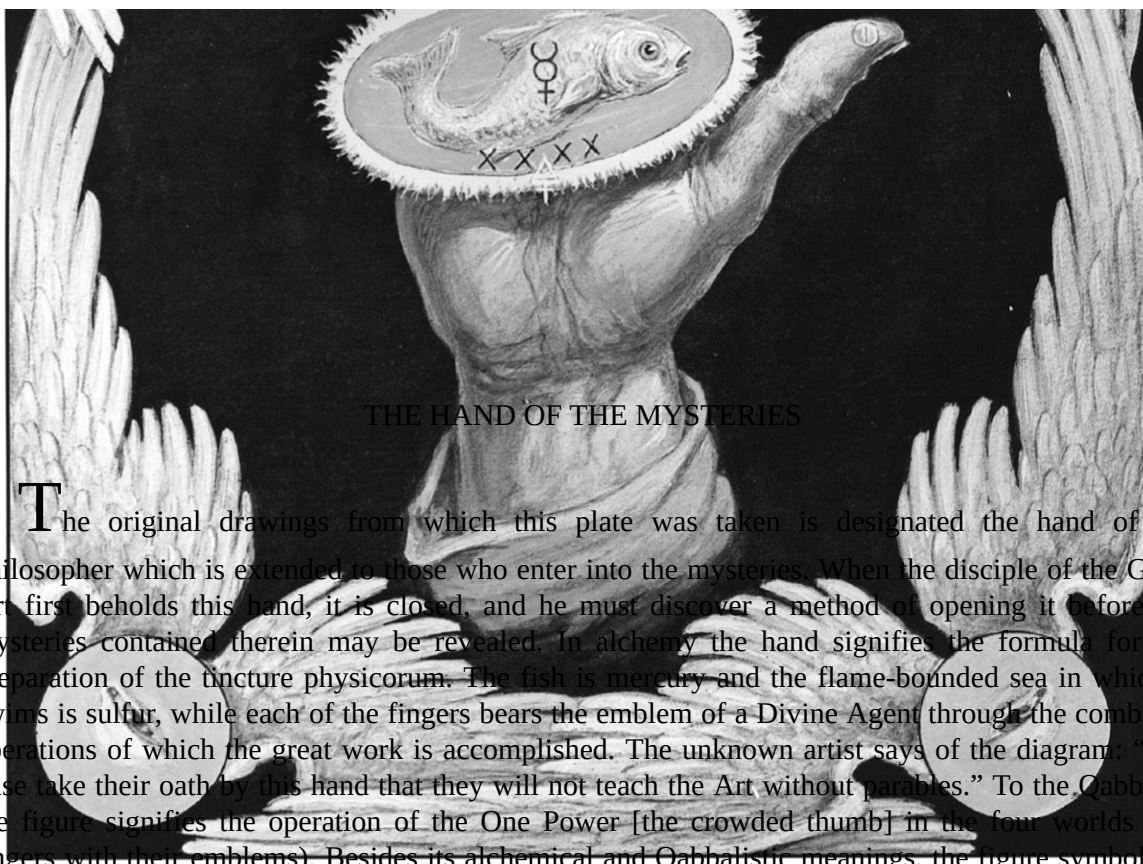
“Paracelsus,” Hall wrote, “the hermeticist and the mystic, the original thinker who gained his knowledge not from long-coated pedagogues but

from dervishes in Constantinople, witches, gypsies and sorcerers; who invoked spirits, captured the rays of the celestial bodies in dew, of whom it is said he cured the incurable, gave sight to the blind, cleansed the leper, and even raised the dead, and whose memory could turn aside a plague—this ‘magician’ is the father of chemical medicine.” [52]

Long before psychologists began talking about complexes, obsessions, various neuroses and stress-related diseases, Paracelsus had identified them as harmful parasitic organisms that feed off the abnormal thoughts and emotions of the person who has the problems. Paracelsus’ medical therapies included the cultivation of wisdom and positive thoughts.

“As a man may have a moldy piece of bread,” Hall wrote, “so he may have a mind on which certain lichens have fastened, growing and flourishing off of his vitality. . . This is not a rational creature, but something that lives for self-preservation, like all living things. Most of us have one, highly developed, and most people have several.” [53] Lichens or not, Manly P. Hall was about to become one of the most celebrated spiritual figures of the 1920s.





The original drawings from which this plate was taken is designated the hand of the philosopher which is extended to those who enter into the mysteries. When the disciple of the Great Art first beholds this hand, it is closed, and he must discover a method of opening it before the mysteries contained therein may be revealed. In alchemy the hand signifies the formula for the preparation of the tincture physicorum. The fish is mercury and the flame-bounded sea in which it swims is sulfur, while each of the fingers bears the emblem of a Divine Agent through the combined operations of which the great work is accomplished. The unknown artist says of the diagram: "The wise take their oath by this hand that they will not teach the Art without parables." To the Qabbalist the figure signifies the operation of the One Power [the crowded thumb] in the four worlds (the fingers with their emblems). Besides its alchemical and Qabbalistic meanings, the figure symbolizes the hand of a Master Mason with which he "raises" the martyred Builder of the Divine House. Philosophically, the key represents the Mysteries themselves, without whose aid man cannot unlock the numerous chambers of his own being. The lantern is human knowledge, for it is a spark of the Universal Fire captured in a man-made vessel; it is the light of those who dwell in the inferior universe and with the aid of which they seek to follow in the footsteps of Truth. The sun, which may be termed the "light of the worked," represents the luminescence of creation through which man may learn the mystery of all creatures which express through form and number. The star is the Universal Light which reveals cosmic and celestial verities. The crown is Absolute Light—unknown and unrevealed—whose power shines through all the lesser lights that are but sparks of this Eternal Effulgence. Thus is set forth the right hand, or active principle, of Deity, whose works are all contained within the hollow of His hand.

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## CHAPTER 2

# The Big Book

WHEN HALL STOOD BEFORE CROWDS IN DOWNTOWN AUDITORIUMS AND THEATERS AND TALKED ABOUT THE URGENCY OF SEARCHING FOR THE WISDOM HIDDEN IN THE MYTHS AND SYMBOLS OF ANTIQUITY, IT WAS HARD NOT TO BELIEVE HE WAS SPEAKING FROM THE HEART.

Part showman, part shaman, Hall wore a dark tailored suit and sat mid-stage, his hands resting palms down on the arms of a baronial chair that was bathed in light. He spoke for one and a half hours—not a minute longer. Whether his subject was Egyptian initiation ceremonies or mythic water sprites, he concluded abruptly with the same sign-off: “Well, that’s about all for today, folks.”

Hall also drew audiences on visits to the Bay Area, where he took out large advertisements in the *San Francisco Examiner* trumpeting upcoming talks by the “author, lecturer and world traveler” on such subjects as “the occult anatomy of man” and “the tree of the universe.”

At 24, Hall was living up to the fundamental Masonic codes he summarized in a note he penned in ink (in apparent violation of Max Heindel’s warning) that remains one of the few generous samples of his handwriting beyond his characteristic sign-off: Sincerely Yours, Manly P. Hall. “To learn is to live, to study is to grow, and growth is the measurement of life,” he wrote. “The mind must be taught to think, the heart to feel, and the hands to labor. When these have been educated to their highest points, then is the time to offer them to the service of their fellow man, not before.”

Between public appearances Hall was working at a furious pace, researching his massive survey of myths, magic and symbols, which he promised would be “the most elaborate and most beautiful volume ever printed on the West Coast.”[1] He dictated portions of the book four hours each day to a stenographer at the southwest Los Angeles home of Mr. and Mrs. Young. After the manuscript was about two-thirds done, he started looking for a publisher.[2]

Hall took his rough draft to H.S. Crocker Co. in San Francisco, which made him an offer. If Hall could secure the interest of book designer John Henry Nash, who once worked as a printer to the Vatican, the Crocker Co. would publish the effort. Nash was persuaded to sign onto the project. Hall wrote the closing chapters of the book while the first were on the press.[3]

The result was a gorgeous, dreamlike book of mysterious symbols, concise essays and colorful renderings of mythical beasts rising out of the sea, and angelic beings with lions’ heads presiding over somber initiation rites in torch-lit temples of ancestral civilizations that had mastered latent powers beyond the reach of modern man. While others in his domain tended to build walls around their narrow fields of expertise, Hall’s book tried to embrace the whole of esotericism.

Seven years in the making at the staggering production cost of \$150,000—much of it raised through advance sales—Hall completed his *Encyclopedic Outline of Masonic, Hermetic, Qabbalistic and Rosicrucian Symbolical Philosophy*, also known as *The Secret Teachings of All Ages* and *The Big Book*, before his 28th birthday.

Magnificently illustrated with 54 original full-color plates of ancient and medieval emblems and figures by noted illustrator J. Augustus Knapp and two hundred black-and-white illustrations borrowed from rare occult works, the 14 ½-pound book resembled the old volumes on esoteric arts and sciences that he’d been collecting for more than a decade.

Within its massive 13-inch by 19-inch covers Hall had assembled an impressive collection of esoteric lore drawing from more than six hundred sources. It remains a veritable “open sesame” into the world of occult traditions. The human body in symbolism; the Pythagorean theory of music; ceremonial magic; talismanic jewels; the significance of the Egyptian scarab; the practice of alchemy, and Hebrew mysticism were just some of the subjects explored in Hall’s tightly written essays.



Hall dedicated *Secret Teachings* to “the proposition that concealed within the emblematic figures, allegories and rituals of the ancients is a secret doctrine concerning the inner mysteries of life, which doctrine has been preserved in toto among a small band of initiated minds.”[4]

Legendary publishing magnate William Randolph Hearst wrote Hall to tell him that he had discovered the only typographical error in the book: in the index, Madame Helena Blavatsky’s first name was misspelled Helen.

The first two editions of the book totaling 1,100 copies sold out in advance at a cost of about \$100 per copy. Subsequent editions sold for \$75 on terms of \$15 down and \$15 a month. Its instant success catapulted Hall into the national spotlight. “Into this volume has been compressed the quintessence of a colossal learning,” said George Barron, curator of San Francisco’s de Young Museum of fine arts. “It is a living human document pulsating with mental and spiritual vibrations of a profound thinker. It takes all knowledge for its province, and reduces whole libraries to the compass of a single tome.”

A special edition bound in full vellum and stamped in gold was presented to the Crown Prince of Sweden at a ceremony held in the Mayflower Hotel, Washington, D.C., on October 15, 1928. Among the celebrities who signed the event registry were U.S. General of the Armies John Pershing; the charge d’affair of France; the secretaries of the German and Japanese embassies, and the grand master of masons in the District of Columbia. [5]

Hall personally presented a copy of the first edition to his old friend, Sidney J. Brownson, who was by then a fragile and ailing man in his eighties. “Toward the end of his life, the book must have seemed large and heavy,” Hall recalled in an essay decades later. “But he toted it about with great joy.”[6] Brownson was 88 when he died in his garden in his sleep with a copy of the Hindu holy book *Bhagavad-Gita* on his chest and a small New Testament in his hip pocket.

Eighty years later, with more than a million copies sold, *The Secret Teachings of All Ages* remains one of the most popular introductions to esoteric traditions.[7]

Hall’s life would never be the same. Overnight, he went from being just another earnest young preacher in the City of Angels to becoming an icon of the increasingly influential metaphysical movement sweeping the



country in the 1920s. His book challenged assumptions about society's spiritual roots and made people look at them in new ways. His presence at a dinner gathering or civic event inspired awe.

But he didn't bask in the attention for long. A year later, he published his *Lectures in Ancient Philosophy: An Introduction to the Study and Application of Rational Procedures*, which features a frontispiece portrait of Hall wearing a cape and striking a Byronic pose that was photographed by noted Hollywood cameraman William Mortensen. In 471 pages drawn from lectures delivered in San Francisco and Los Angeles, it amounted to a literary complement to his *Secret Teachings of All Ages*. There are the familiar voices from the pagan metaphysical pantheon, but also those of psychologist Sigmund Freud, botanist Luther Burbank, educator Samuel Johnson and the so-called "Plato of Masonry," Albert Pike.

The book opens with a discourse on space, form and potential that sounds surprisingly similar to Big Bang creation scenarios offered by modern cosmologists. It's all reflected in the simplest of symbols: dot, line and circle. Think of a blank piece of paper, he says, as that space which contains all existence in a potential state. The universe issued forth out of that indefinable fullness as a state of universal intelligence, or unity, comparable to a dot, much as an oak tree emerges from an acorn. The conscious activity of that emergence is reflected in the line. "The center and the circumference are thus blended in the connecting line—conscious activity or intelligence," he writes. [8]

Continuing that analogy, a human being's greatest potential is realized by applying intelligence, emotion and purpose in a manner least prone to error or illusion: philosophy. It follows that the highest form of consciousness, enlightenment, is born of a highly disciplined mind.

The same principles applied to the average modern family, where young persons were being raised with all the comforts, but little discipline, Hall said. The hope of achieving strength in character and success later in life, he argued, was remote "without having first experienced any snappy toeing of the mark at home." [9]

In a passage titled "Symbolism, the Universal Language" he writes: "Confront the untrained mind with some symbol or fable, and it will construct a confused and meaningless explanation, usually far more

complex than the figure warrants, and as senseless as a macaw's chatter.”  
[10]

“Symbols consequently change the meanings according to the level of intelligence upon which their interpreter functions. . . The purpose of symbols is to uncover the limitations of mortal consciousness by continually emphasizing the insufficiency of the interpretations placed upon them.” [11]

Hall freely sorts through a tossed salad of spiritual imagery from disparate times and places and discovers common ground, and patterns: the universe is alive and consists of a network of mathematical connections between different levels of reality. “In the Ancient Wisdom it was also declared that the sacred mountains of the world rose in seven steps or stages (as the Meru of the Hindus),” Hall writes, “and it was from the high place, or the seventh step, that offerings were made to the Lord whose name is Blessed. Not only did the holy place rise in seven platforms or levels, but upon its topmost level was usually erected a triform symbol of the Divine Nature itself. Thus, the seven steps, complemented by this three-fold figure, became the mysterious Pythagorean decad, or the symbol of the tenfold order of the universe. Jacob's ladder then actually becomes the symbolic mountain or pyramid.”[12]

Conventionally-minded skeptics dismissed that kind of talk as nonsense. Believers figured Hall was onto something profound and exciting. But the festive prosperity of the 1920s was about to implode into a decade of depression that would bring unemployment and personal hardship to millions. When the stock market crashed in the fall of 1929, Hall watched as many who got rich by exploiting pioneer dreams quietly disappeared or retired to enjoy their gains, while their adherents were left sadder, wiser and poorer.

Hall, with books like his *Secret Teachings of All Ages*, was more in demand than ever. Hailed as one of the world's most promising young thinkers, Hall was called Maestro by his congregation. In a magazine article, Hindu author Basanta Koomer Roy referred to Hall as “the greatest sage in America” and compared his mind to Albert Einstein's. A feature article published in the *Los Angeles Examiner* in 1930 described him as “an original. Distinct. In a class by himself.”

“I do not recall anyone who resembles him in appearance, in personality, or in mental viewpoints,” the article said. “He is positive. He is poised. He is an orator. He spurns manuscripts or notes. He has a clear, vibrant voice. Fluent of speech, his style is epigrammatic, and is marked by the frequent employment of striking antithesis.”

Hall was still in his twenties and he was chumming with the rich and famous. That made him a sort of icon for Hollywood hangers-on who imagined their chances of grabbing a piece of the action would be vastly improved by knowing him. Hall was also an unlikely sex symbol, given that a few years earlier he had preached against intimacy, even in marriage, as an obstacle to reaching the highest levels of human consciousness.

That didn’t stop Caroline Lloyd’s lesbian daughter Estelle from proposing marriage to the philosopher, who let her down gently. “Her infatuation with Manly was not so much physical as intellectual,” recalled physicist Donald Lloyd, Estelle’s nephew.

Then 28, the high-profile, eligible bachelor expressed a change of heart on the issue of celibacy in a little book of essays published in 1929 under the title *The Child’s Place in the Plan*.

“Among the early pagans, celibacy was not regarded as a priestly virtue, yet their standards of ethics far surpassed that of our own day; nor were their aesthetics in any way compromised,” he wrote. “Nearly all the renowned philosophers and World Savors were married men.” [13]

He pointed out that the Egyptian Hermes; the fire prince of Persia Zoroaster; the Greek philosophers Pythagoras, Socrates and Aristotle; Gautama Buddha and Mohammed were all fathers. “The individuals who fear that a family may retard their progress toward perfection may be well satisfied if they reach a degree of excellence comparable with those here listed,” he wrote, “and at the same time give other unfolding lives an opportunity to bask in the sunlight of their superior wisdom.”

On April 28, 1930, Hall married his secretary of five years, Fay B. de Ravenne, a strikingly attractive petite 28-year-old brunette astrologer from Texas with fine features and big plaintive eyes, perhaps expressing the sadness of the pain of her inner life. It was Hall’s first marriage, and Fay’s second. The ceremony was conducted without fanfare at the Rosicrucian Fellowship in Oceanside and officiated by Hall’s friend, mentor, and frequent guest lecturer Augusta Heindel. She announced the marriage in the

June 1930 edition of the fellowship's *Rays* magazine under the banner: "Wedding bells are ringing, mocking birds are singing." "The writer was not a little surprised to have Mr. Hall and his lady, Fay B. de Ravenne, call on her on Monday, April 28, when she had the honor of performing the marriage ceremony," Heindel wrote. "The bride has been associated with Mr. Hall as his secretary for about five years. We know that all their friends join us in wishing this bride and groom much joy and a long and successful life." [14]

Not much is known about the dark beauty. Fay rarely appeared with her husband in public, and all references to their life together were mysteriously excised from Hall's voluminous archives after her death. Then, too, Hall's closest friends were fiercely protective of his public image and never gossiped about his private life. All that can be said about Fay exists in available census data, a wedding certificate, a few photographs, a coroner's report and a handful of sketchy anecdotes.

Hall's young wife was plagued by various illnesses, and grew jealous and angry as his popularity soared and the lecture circuit took him away from home on lengthy trips. It didn't help that Hall had failed to credit Fay for her help in completing his *Secret Teachings of All Ages*, or that his personal valet had a serious crush on her.

Close friends recalled Fay acting sullen and resentful at Hall's lectures while sitting beside a small table and taking money for his books. "I only saw Fay a few times," recalled Pat Levitt in an interview. "But I knew there were troubles there."



*Manly and Fay Hall. Photo by William Mortensen*

Initially, the Halls lived with Mr. and Mrs. Walter Young on West 20th Street, then hopped from one modest apartment to another on the north side of downtown. Among their closest friends were William Mortensen, one of Hollywood's most famous photographers, and his ravishing wife and principal model, Myrdith. Based in a cottage tucked in Laguna Canyon, Mortensen was a darkroom artist best known for his highly stylized portraits of celebrities including actresses Fay Wray and Marlene Dietrich and musician Jascha Heifetz. He was set photographer for director Cecil B. DeMille's 1926 movie *King of Kings*. [15]

During their years together, the Halls and the Mortensens shared mutual interests in the occult, magic, and parlor magic, according to Anson and Peggy Beman, who were students of Mortensen in 1951. Hall, for example, liked to stand in Mortensen's yard and appear to pluck silver dollars out of the air, then toss them in a bucket. "Some of the best times were after dinner when Bill would sit in his favorite chair, smoking his ever-present pipe and we would have discussions about psychic phenomena, magic, old Hollywood," Peggy Beman recalled decades later in a memoir entitled *Memories of Our Friends in Laguna Beach*. [16]

"Bill and Myrdith were great friends with Manly Hall, a well-known magician in the 1930s," she wrote. "They, along with other friends, experimented with Ouija boards, séances and table tipping at their little adobe house in a big orchard in the canyon. The house was built over an old Indian burial ground and they swore they contacted one of the Indians, and that Myrdith actually saw him. I don't know if they were drunk or sober at the time. I do know that they both firmly believed in such things."

Beman added that Mortensen "always said, 'Don't get involved with psychic phenomena of any kind, it's too dangerous.'"

Hall was working harder than ever, and he shifted his philosophic activities to include private counseling and public service. In late 1930, a six-month lecture campaign carried him to the nation's largest cities including Chicago and New York, where he attracted capacity audiences at Town Hall, the Pythian Temple and Carnegie Hall. He also spoke regularly on New York radio station WOR, and began preparing for a trip to Mexico and Central America.



## COMMENTS

on Mr. Hall and his work



"Not since H. P. Blavatsky wrote *The Secret Doctrine* has a mind of such synthetic power coupled with a magnificent measure of clarity been brought to bear upon the esoteric doctrines of the Ancient Wisdom."—*The Messenger*, (Official Organ of The American Theosophical Society.)

"In the minds of many who are eminently capable of judging, the mind of Manly P. Hall is one of the truest running, highest reaching and deepest searching that has appeared,—at least, in modern times."—Arthur Cartland Bailey, M. Sc., Head of Physics Department, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Siam.

"Mr. Hall's great encyclopedia is already in most of the important Masonic libraries of America and the great educational centers of Europe. It will long be a prized reference work, and those Masons whose official duties render it necessary for them to address groups of the Craft will find it an invaluable aid in the preparation of lecture material."—*The Masonic Chronicle*, Chicago, Ill.

"Perhaps his attainments are his most remarkable assets, but I believe otherwise. Manly P. Hall is original. He is distinct. He occupies a class by himself. I do not recall anyone who resembles him in appearance, in personality, or in mental viewpoints. He is positive. He is poised. He is an orator. He spurns manuscript or note. He has a clear, vibrant voice. Fluent of speech, his style is epigrammatic, and is marked by the frequent employment of striking antitheses."—*Los Angeles Examiner*.

## MANLY P. HALL

• Chicago Program •



Oct. 2nd to Oct. 30th, 1930



MASONIC TEMPLE

32 West Randolph Street

Assembly Hall—Fourteenth Floor

In the spring of 1931, he left New York by boat for the entry port of Progreso on the peninsula of Yucatán to conduct research at Mayan ruins on the myth of the snake-bird god Quetzalcoatl. Then he proceeded by train to Mexico City, where he made short trips to the region's Toltec and Aztec archeological sites, where he hoped to confirm flamboyant American political reformer Ignatius Donnelly's claims of a submerged paradise that existed eons ago.

Later that year, Hall's name cropped up in a story published in the *New York World-Telegram* under the headline "Head of Supreme Government of the World Inc. Wants His \$1,400 Back." A man identified as "Brother Thomas" had invested in an occult bookstore owned by a transplanted

California mystic. Thomas wanted out of the arrangement immediately after reading an article in Hall's magazine *All-Seeing Eye*, which he hoped to use as evidence in a jury trial. It warned, in part, "Not a few sincere but sentimental people have impoverished themselves, hazarded the future of their families and wasted the best years of their lives in ill-advised attempts to attain that abstract state commonly denominated 'spirituality.'" [17]

The same could be said about astrology. But Hall reserved a special fondness for the storied association between the planets and human characteristics. Hall was an admirer of Evangeline Adams, astrologer to the rich, famous and powerful, who by 1914 had gained enough leverage to challenge and have modified New York's statute against fortune telling as it applied to astrologers. Her clientele ranged from working folks to powerbroker financier John Pierpont Morgan, who reportedly boasted, "Millionaires don't use astrology, billionaires do." Tenor Enrico Caruso reportedly never crossed the Atlantic during World War I without first consulting Adams to get the safest times and dates for traveling.

In late October 1932, Adams was about to undertake a risky business venture in the depths of the Great Depression: writing a book listing the good and bad astrological aspects to watch for during each month of the following year. Her prospective publisher felt that sales would have to be strong right away, given that the book would be of no use in 1934. Adams offered to pay Hall \$100 if he would write an introduction to the book, an endorsement, she explained, that "would help the sale of the book here in the East, as well as in California." [18]

Adams died in New York about a month later. Her book, *The Evangeline Adams Guide for 1933*, was published posthumously. The introduction by Hall begins:

"The right of a branch of learning to exist is determined from its use-value, and the distinguished position always occupied by astrology in the history of nations is due largely to its practical value in unraveling the tangled skein of circumstance."

The book sold well, earning warm reviews in venues including the *Saturday Review of Literature*. In any case, Hall generally ignored the *Guide for 1933's* New Year's admonition for those who, like himself, were born on March 18: "This is not likely to be a favorable time for making purchases, for there will be a tendency toward extravagance," and, "Avoid

catering to your love of the good things of life, and especially avoid over-eating and drinking.” [19] Instead, he binged on sweets and avoided exercise, personal failings exacerbated by long hours of sedentary research and thyroid problems that were making him obese. To cover up his physical problems, Hall ordered up tailored coats that draped over his expanding waistline like navy-blue parachutes. Some of his congregants contrived a story to explain his sagging stomach: He’d contracted elephantiasis, a disease characterized by thickening of the skin and underlying tissue, during a trip to India.

With the financial assistance of the Lloyds, the early 1930s were Hall’s most intensive years of book and artifact collecting, a quest he called rich in adventures that brought him in contact with many unusual individuals and institutions. Hall traveled to France and England, where he acquired his most extensive collection of rare books and manuscripts on alchemy and esoteric fields from London auctioneers, Sotheby & Company. [20] Because of the serious economic depression afflicting the world at the time, bidding was relatively conservative, and Hall, through an agent, was able to acquire dozens of books and manuscripts at reasonable prices. They included an original triangle-shaped manuscript by 18th-century magician Comte de St. Germain purporting to hide clues to the locations of all treasures lost at sea; instructions for finding diamond, gold and silver mines; and formulas for living longer than a century with the freshness of a man of 50. [21]

In 1934, Hall attended a special meeting of the World Fellowship of Faiths in London, where he met explorer and political administrator Sir Francis Younghusband, who was instrumental in opening Tibet to British trade after the turn of the 20th century. Through contacts provided by Younghusband, Hall secured the Ripley Scroll, a 20-foot-long, hand-painted manuscript considered one of the outstanding artistic alchemical works. In Atlantis, an obscure bookshop on a street leading to the main entrance of the British Museum, he bought several choice items including a manuscript on vellum explaining intricate diagrams drawn from the Kabbalah, a Jewish mystical tradition passed lip to ear. At an auction of the holdings of the late movie idol Rudolph Valentino, Hall secured a bishop’s silver ring of the 12th century, which Valentino had worn in the film *The Son of the Sheik*.

LUTHER BURBANK  
SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA  
U. S. A.

January 4, 1926.

Manly P. Hall,  
Stewart Hotel,  
San Francisco, Calif.

Esteemed friend Hall:

Just now I have received "The Hermetic Marriage, The God of the Atoms" and "Atlantis, The Lost World" all of which will be read with the greatest pleasure at my first opportunity, and I hope to make that opportunity very soon.

We have read some of your work which you so kindly left before and find it is fundamental and of extreme interest. You have the ability to secure a good foundation before you put on the roof and decorations. Many writers fumble around the tops of the house before they have any foundation to build upon.

I thank you, and with profound admiration and esteem, I am

Faithfully yours,

*Expect the 8 vol. sets soon.*



Letter from Luther Burbank, 1926

Browsing Mexican bookshops around this time he was able to make an especially valuable addition to his research collection: a post-Columbian work on the early societies of Mexico and Central America known as the Florentine Codex of Friar Bernardino de Sahagún. Hall made photographic copies of the Codex for use by university libraries. [22]

His circle of friends expanded along with his collection and included some of the nation's most famous thinkers and mystics. One was famed botanist Luther Burbank, a short, gentle man with a shock of white hair who taught him that "if we meet the challenge of the future with the simple wisdom bestowed by nature and exemplified through cooperation and brotherly love, we can build a strong new people in America, and the children of the future will have a better chance to fulfill the destiny which nature and nature's God have decreed." [23]

In his lectures, Hall attributed much of the Santa Rosa plant breeder's strides developing new, economically important varieties of fruits and flowers to the fact that he often got down on all fours and prodded them with kind words. "He was not sure that the shrubs and flowers understood

his words,” Hall recalled in an essay, “but he was convinced that by some telepathy, they could comprehend his meaning.” [24]

At an Authors Club meeting at the Hollywood Athletic Club, English scholar, scientist, and gentleman naturalist Ernest Thompson Seton talked about his books, which brought the wonders of nature to city-dwelling children. No sooner had the big rangy man with long gray hair and bright, humorous eyes completed his talk than Manly Hall strode up, extended his hand and said, “Mr. Seton, I want to know you.” [25] Seton, who was nicknamed “Chief” because of his affinity for American Indians and their culture, had an iron grip. They took to each other easily. Over the years, Hall was a frequent guest at Seton’s huge estate in New Mexico, which was topped with a rambling house dubbed “The Castle.” From there, Hall and Seton rode out on horseback to watch Hopi ceremonies and rain dances, and witness the flagellant rites of Penitentes reenacting Jesus’ journey to Calvary. [26]

On the East Coast, Hall’s followers were as fascinated by his growing reputation as an enlightened initiate as by his authoritative writings on astrology, Freemasons, the mysteries of life and his exciting predictions. He prophesied that by 1950 “robbery and thievery” would be done away with because people would be more honest and have everything they needed.

Hall was especially popular lecturer among the “town-car” audiences at the 29-story Roerich Building museum on New York’s Riverside Drive, which had been built by Russian artist and mystic Nicholas Roerich to showcase his paintings and be a creative center for outstanding writers, spiritual leaders and artists. The first few floors housed Roerich’s paintings. But an upper-floor penthouse suite with spectacular views of the Hudson River and city in all directions was used for private gatherings and occult explorations. Hall, who had been invited to deliver a series of lectures and classes at the museum, was a regular participant in the elaborate tableaux hosted by choreographer and dancer Natacha Rambova, the former wife of screen idol Rudolph Valentino, Theosophical writer Talbott Mundy, newsman turned philosopher Paul Brunton, and Svetoslav and George Roerich, the handsome sons of Nicholas and Helena Roerich. [27]

Hall initially planned to spend a month or so at the Roerich museum and elsewhere in New York, but extended his trip to include a series of lectures at the Pythian Temple. During his six-month tour, Hall presented more than



a hundred lectures and radio talks. He also made time during his busy schedule to study sculpture at the museum, later fashioning remarkable likenesses of Theosophist Blavatsky, the Masonic philosopher Pike, and Mahatma Gandhi.

In her two-volume *Collected Letters, 1929–1939*, Helena Roerich expressed a particular fascination with a portion of Hall's book *The Occult Anatomy of Man*, opining on the composition of blood long before the electron microscope became a standard medical tool: "The blood of every man is individual. When crystallizing, it forms into geometric patterns which differ with every person... The story of one's soul is written in his blood. The position he occupies in evolution, his hopes and fears, are all imprinted on the etheric forms which flow through his bloodstream. . . so that by means of blood analysis a far surer system could be evolved for crime detection." [28]

Those kinds of ideas were spreading like wildfire among some of the most acclaimed creative minds of the era. Even such internationally famous artists as Piet Mondrian, Wassily Kandinsky and Constantin Brancusi, and inventor Thomas Edison, for example, touted Theosophical notions. Edison would spend his last days trying to build a receiver capable of picking up signals from the dead.

It galled Hall that such notions had no place in American universities, which to him stood as bastions of science and technology. He decided to counter ivory-tower materialism with a spiritual center in Los Angeles of his own design and purpose, one he envisioned as "the center of a new way of life in the midst of the great Pacific theater of the future." [29] Its mission would be to teach the "practical idealism" preserved in over 100,000 of the wonder-texts of antiquity, develop programs for the good of society, and then excite his students' desire to put them to work in everyday life. It would be, he believed, a guiding light for a city that was growing out of its skin. Hall would be its occult theologian.

On November 20, 1934, Hall's nonprofit Philosophical Research Society bought a prime piece of real estate overlooking Los Feliz Boulevard and the hills leading to Griffith Park from Capitol Holding Company for a mere \$10, according to county records. The three-quarter-acre lot was originally owned by Anna D. Bockius, who paid \$700 for it in 1918. [30]

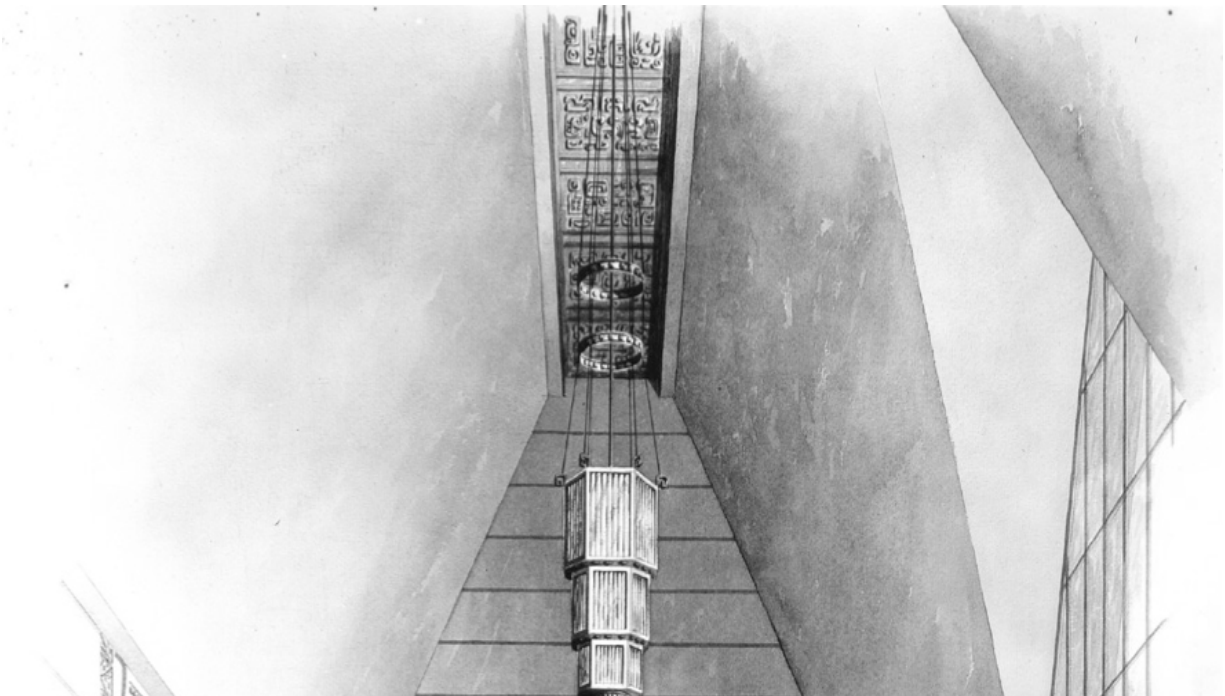
By the time she died in 1933 it was valued at \$6,720, and controlled by her son, Charles R. Bockius, a vicious ex-con with a drinking problem and a formidable criminal record. He was on parole at the time after being released from San Quentin in connection with a drunk-driving incident that left one man dead and another seriously injured. In a separate, earlier case, Bockius beat and then shot a man in the leg after learning the victim had been having an affair with his wife. [31]

At the time of the sale, Bockius, who billed himself as a realtor, was involved in nasty divorce proceedings. It was not clear how Hall managed to get the land for a pittance, although county officials speculated it may have been acquired in a partnership arrangement, or essentially given to him in the depths of the Depression.

On an overcast early morning on October 17, 1935, about one hundred people assembled in a field of wild mustard on the property and broke ground for his Philosophical Research Society. The first cornerstone was laid at a specific moment just after midnight to coordinate with stars aligned for maximum longevity. According to Hall, the crowd looked up to see those stars shining brightly through a brief break in the clouds. [32]



*Rendering of Hall's proposed PRS center*





*The proposed lecture hall*

“This society,” Hall said at the opening ceremony, “is dedicated to the ensoulment of all arts and sciences and crafts. In harmony with the classical point of view we feel that there is a pressing need for a nonaligned institution without creed or dogma, where persons of all beliefs can seek a better understanding of life’s plan. The society requires no membership, and no one is expected to accept any arbitrary dogma. We are all here to grow—to become better and more useful.” [33]

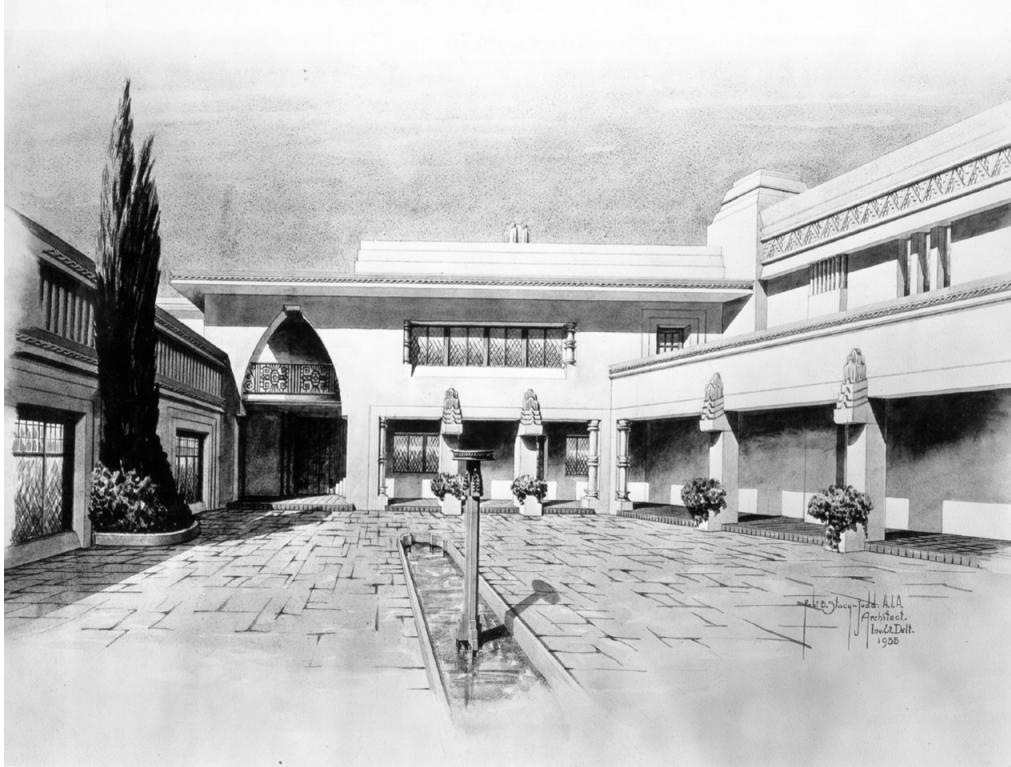
The architect was Robert B. Stacy-Judd, a British architect, amateur archeologist and explorer who instilled a distinctly Mayan and Egyptian flavor into many Southern California buildings over the years. Stacy-Judd even wore feathered Mayan costumes to cocktail parties. [34]

“The architecture of the new building will be Mayan, simplified looking, perhaps, something like one of the buildings on that fabled continent of the Atlantic that sunk into the sea before the beginning of what we call history,” Hall told *Los Angeles Times* reporter George Addison in 1935.

It began with a single unit of reinforced concrete that included a front office, print shop, bindery, and library. Before long, its dark wood shelves were lined with the donated book collections of scholars of comparative religion and his own rare books and art objects Hall had collected in his travels around the world: a copy of the Egyptian Book of the Dead from 500 B.C., Babylonian and Chaldean writings on clay tablets, Chinese oracles inscribed on human bones, the original works of great philosophers, authors and poets, and sacred writings of almost every religious doctrine, past and present. Hall’s print shop was a hub of activity, a cluttered room with large windows where he spent long workdays directing layouts, linotype operations and binding for his newest books. A few doors down was Hall’s office, a cramped quarters featuring a large brown desk and cabinets containing books and such cherished curiosities as a life-size statue



of an Egyptian cat—a symbol of the clairvoyant’s ability to “see in the dark”—which he habitually stroked a few times before leaving to deliver a lecture. [35]



*The proposed courtyard*

On some days, Hall and his friends would ride horses in the hills of sprawling Griffith Park. Occasionally, they would converge in a circle with horses facing each other while Hall delivered impromptu lectures jokingly referred to as “sermons on the mount.” [36]



## Thoughts That Enslave Minds

Tortured souls. Human beings, whose self-confidence and peace of mind have been torn to shreds by invisible darts — the evil thoughts of others. Can envy, hate, and jealousy be projected through space from the mind of another? Do poisoned thoughts like mysterious rays reach through the ethereal realm to claim innocent victims? Will wishes and commands born in hate gather momentum and, like an avalanche, descend upon a helpless man or woman in a series of calamities? Must humanity remain at the mercy of evil influences created in the minds of the vicious? Millions each year are mentally poisoned — are you safe from this scourge? “Mental Poisoning” is the title of a new book just written by Dr. H. Spencer Lewis, which fearlessly discloses this psychological problem. It is sensational in its revelations. Read it and be prepared.

### An Exceptional Offer . . .

Forewarned is forearmed! Therefore, this neatly bound, well printed book has been economically produced so that it can be placed in the hands of thousands. It is more than a book; it is a *daring message*. Order yours today. Price, including postage, only \$1.25.

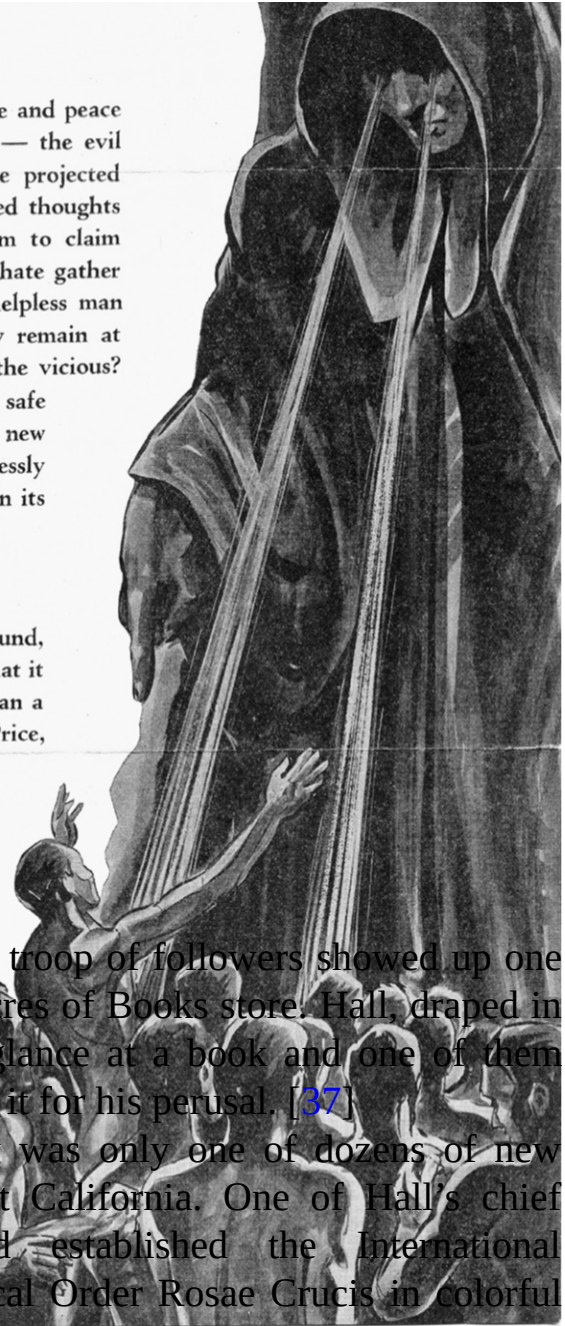
### Rosicrucian Supply Bureau

*Avoiding evil thoughts Rosicrucian-style*

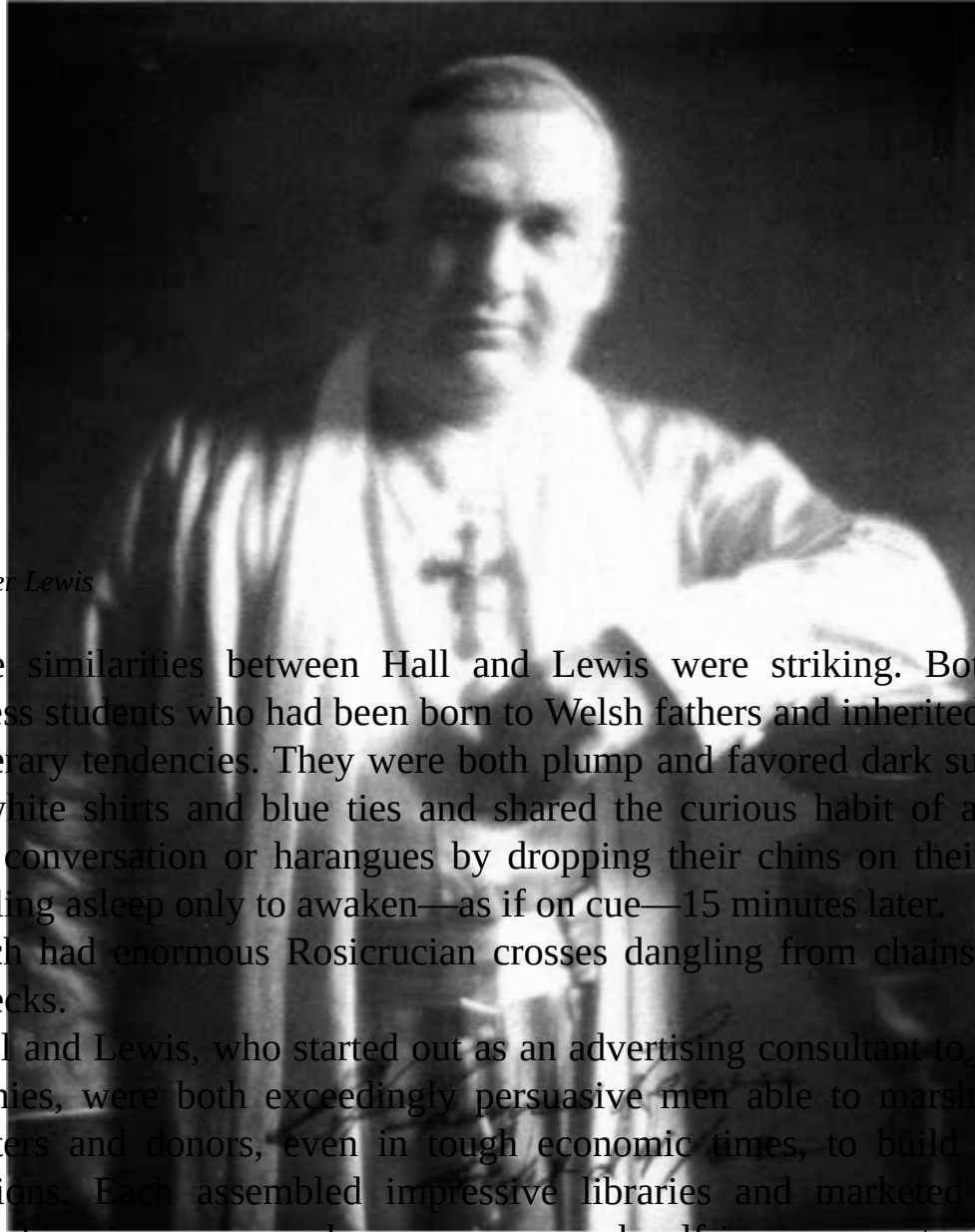
SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA, U. S. A.

They still talk about how Hall and a troop of followers showed up one day in 1935 in Long Beach's popular Acres of Books store. Hall, draped in a flowing black cape, only needed to glance at a book and one of them would take it off the shelf, and then open it for his perusal. [37]

The Philosophical Research Society was only one of dozens of new mystical retreats established throughout California. One of Hall's chief rivals, Harvey Spencer Lewis, had established the International Headquarters of the Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis in colorful replicas of Egyptian temples erected in a park-like setting in downtown San Jose, a few hundred miles to the north. The enclave included research laboratories and a clinic where latter-day alchemists tried to cure people of ailments ranging from depression to cancer with mind-over-matter techniques.







*H. Spencer Lewis*

The similarities between Hall and Lewis were striking. Both were relentless students who had been born to Welsh fathers and inherited artistic and literary tendencies. They were both plump and favored dark suits with crisp white shirts and blue ties and shared the curious habit of avoiding boring conversation or harangues by dropping their chins on their chests and falling asleep only to awaken—as if on cue—15 minutes later.

Each had enormous Rosicrucian crosses dangling from chains around their necks.

Hall and Lewis, who started out as an advertising consultant to railroad companies, were both exceedingly persuasive men able to marshal loyal supporters and donors, even in tough economic times, to build esoteric institutions. Each assembled impressive libraries and marketed ancient philosophies in correspondence courses and self-improvement plans, as well as books and essays—all on the premise that a highly developed consciousness and spiritual insight would allow a sincere and dedicated student to achieve success, avoid illness and live in peace.

Curiously, both men were overly trusting and fearful of confrontation with subordinates. When confronted with evidence of an in-house crime, Lewis and Hall would shrug it off with the same phrase, “Just let the matter rest.”

And both were territorial. In the early 1930s, Lewis made a point of assuring his followers that Hall, who frequently lectured on subjects such as

“The Doctrine of the Rosicrucians,” was not an expert on Rosicrucian philosophy and should not be taken seriously on such matters.

What set them apart was that Lewis developed an organization with worldwide support and membership. And unlike Hall, who highlighted the idealistic teachings of sages and seers in his lectures and books, Lewis packed his students’ formal lessons with instructions for such things as recalling events of past incarnations, becoming invisible, magnetizing a glass of water with one’s hands to invigorate the glands, treating cancer by directing the spiritual forces of the body through the thumb and index finger, visualizing financial success—or a healthy heart if that organ was ailing. [38] Although Hall frequently sought out the help of healers, he cautioned his followers that “in the battle between bacteria and prayer there is a slight tendency for the bacteria to win in the end. This has been proven in the County Hospital.” [39]

Lewis died of heart disease in 1939 at the age of 55. His organization continues on. [40]

Throughout the 1930s, Hall gave well-attended lectures on Eastern and Western philosophies. The authority in his voice, the magical themes of his books and lectures and his intensely private nature all gave an aura of mystery to everything he said or did, and made him a target of the fantasies and projections of would-be disciples. Some of Hall’s followers insisted that he often scrutinized them with a “third eye,” communicated with them telepathically, even recruited them into his cause by casting strange vibrations their way. Others said the thousands of volumes in his library were arranged in such a way that they told a coherent and seamless narrative of the wisdom teachings of all ages. Still others whispered that he was one of a dozen wise men in the world divinely appointed to shepherd the destiny of mankind. A few suspected that beneath those navy-blue suits Hall was part man and part woman—like the gods he lectured about.

Adherents assumed that a mysterious ring Hall purchased at a New York shop called Esoterica was imbued with magical powers. Hall would only say the stone the size of a quarter was found by one of Napoleon’s soldiers—but at that time it was set into a button discovered on the body of a dead Arab’s burnoose. The reddish-brown carnelian—cut in the shape of a two-headed fowl symbolizing the Gnostic god Abraxas—had been carved in the second century after Christ. Napoleon acquired it and presented it to the

Polish Countess Marie Walewska, his mistress at the time. The shop owner claimed to have been a direct descendant of Walewska. [41]

Abraxas, it was said, represented 365 emanations from the First Cause. Carnelians were used by Arabs as shields against men and women possessing the power to harm others by merely looking at them, according to Sir E.A. Wallis Budge, keeper of the Egyptian and Assyrian antiquities in the British Museum, in his book *Amulets and Talismans*. [42]

Living in the spotlight was not easy for Hall, who struggled to apply his teachings to his own life. His home life was a catastrophe of marital strife, physical ailments, alternative health regimens, and overeating all the while he tried to live up to his image as a “maestro” of practical esoteric philosophy.

Like other spiritual leaders claiming familiarity with secret wisdom such as Madame Blavatsky and Greco-Armenian mystic George Ivanovich Gurdjieff, there was a glaring dissonance between Hall’s public image and his private reality. He delegated his business affairs to amateurs and took many of his medical problems to healers with questionable credentials. Although he did not have a university degree, he did not correct those who addressed him as “Dr. Hall.” He advised against trying to develop occult powers, yet dazzled starry-eyed followers with demonstrations of his alleged mind reading and predictions of future events. He claimed he could absorb the contents of books just by sleeping next to them. [43]

Hall’s contradictions at this time were reflected in some of the books and essays he wrote during the 1930s. Their content wavered between witty, urbane philosophy and bizarre accounts of magic and mystery. In *Fire, the Universal Deity*, he writes that “the auric body of a snake is one of the most remarkable sights that the clairvoyant will ever see, and the secrets concealed within its aura demonstrate why the serpent is the symbol of wisdom among so many nations.” [44] In *Magic: A Treatise on Esoteric Ethics*, he warns of people who have mastered nature’s forces “to such a degree that they can stop the heartbeat of a person on the other side of the earth with a mental ray, or burn a two-inch hole through a foot and a half of ebony with astral fire...” [45] And in *Freemasonry of the Ancient Egyptians*, he asserts that Egyptian priests could walk on air, become transparent and live under water. [46]

**BOOKS**

by Manly P. Hall

MASONIC, HERMETIC, QABBALISTIC AND ROSICRUCIAN SYMBOLICAL PHILOSOPHY  
THE PHOENIX  
LECTURES ON ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY  
MAN, THE GRAND SYMBOL OF THE MYSTERIES  
ASTROLOGICAL KEY-WORDS  
WAYS OF THE LONELY ONES  
INITIATES OF THE FLAME  
SHADOW FORMS  
THE LOST KEYS OF MASONRY  
THE STORY OF ASTROLOGY  
FACING THE FACTS  
THE SPACE BORN

BOOKLETS

THE SACRED MAGIC OF THE QABBALAH  
TALKS TO STUDENTS  
WHAT THE ANCIENT WISDOM EXPECTS OF ITS DISCIPLES  
DEATH AND AFTER  
SUPER-FACULTIES AND THEIR CULTURE  
FACING THE FUTURE  
UNSEEN FORCES  
THE CULTURE OF THE MIND  
THE CHILD'S PLACE IN THE PLAN  
THE NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH

*In order to keep in closer personal contact with his friends and students in all parts of the world*

Manly P. Hall

is publishing

*A Students' Monthly Letter*

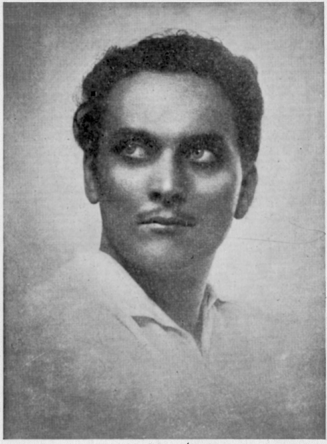
*devoted to Spiritual, Philosophical and Social Problems.*

*In addition to an inspiring and informative article each letter will contain comments on current topics, questions and answers and helpful editorial material.*

*If you are interested in the teachings which Mr. Hall has been disseminating for the past fourteen years you will appreciate this message from him, coming directly to your home each month.*

*The cost of this letter is most moderate, only one dollar a year to defray cost of preparation and postage.*

*Your subscription will not only bring Mr. Hall's message to you but will be of great assistance to him in spreading those spiritual and ethical truths so greatly needed by the world today.*



Program of Lectures  
by  
Manly P. Hall  
San Francisco 1934

Hall's visit to Dawson's Book Shop near Pershing Square in downtown Los Angeles left a lasting impression on store clerk Warren S. Rogers, who had secured a rare book from abroad that Hall was anxious to get his hands on. However, the book was being held at a local customs office and could only be released to Rogers in person. In order to satisfy Hall, who had arrived in a friend's Ford coupe, Rogers agreed to travel with them to fetch the book.

It was a tight squeeze, given Hall's size. "The only way the three of us could fit into the coupe was for me to sit on Mr. Hall's lap, which I did," Rogers recalled in his memoirs, *My Own Los Angeles, 1894–1982*. [47]

Hall recounted various dramatic birth stories. In a version he told often over the years, Hall said he was born a premature blue baby on the morning of March 18, 1901, in one of the first Caesarean operations ever conducted at Nicholls Hospital in Peterborough, in the Canadian province of Ontario. He said the attending physician, a Dr. Lapp, deciding he was dead, placed the infant in a basket, wrote a death certificate, then turned his attention to the infant's mother, who was in critical condition. Some time later, the baby let out an urgent howl, as though suddenly enlivened by a soul that had

dived into the infant's body from the great beyond. The doctor held him up by his feet and said, "If he lives he'll be a big fella." [48]

An improbable story? When questioned, Hall said his birth records were destroyed in a hospital fire. [49] But according to documents, census reports and Peterborough historians, Hall's mother entered Nicholls Hospital on March 15, and delivered her son three days later at 5:30 a.m. with the assistance of resident physician and nursing school lecturer Dr. William Dixon Scott. She was discharged on March 29. [50] Although one record noting Mrs. Hall's admission to the hospital lists the word "miscarriage" under a column titled "Disease," historian John Walter Martyn said, "miscarriage" was used in error to mean premature labor. There is no record of a surgical procedure of any kind. The hospital's bill for services was \$20. [51]

Hall also liked to say that his mother was a physician who launched a career in medicine in 1903 after handing him over to his grandmother when he was two years old. [52] Close family relatives now say Louise was a chiropractic healer who hoped to make a business out of treating miners in the Alaskan gold fields.

The facts about Hall's confused and insecure childhood are unusual enough. When Hall was born, his parents already were living apart. His father, 29-year-old dentist William S. Hall, was living alone in downtown Peterborough's finest hotel, the Oriental, and earning a respectable annual salary of about \$2,400, according to census records. He moved away from Ontario in 1904 when Manly was three years old and was never heard from again, family members say. [53]

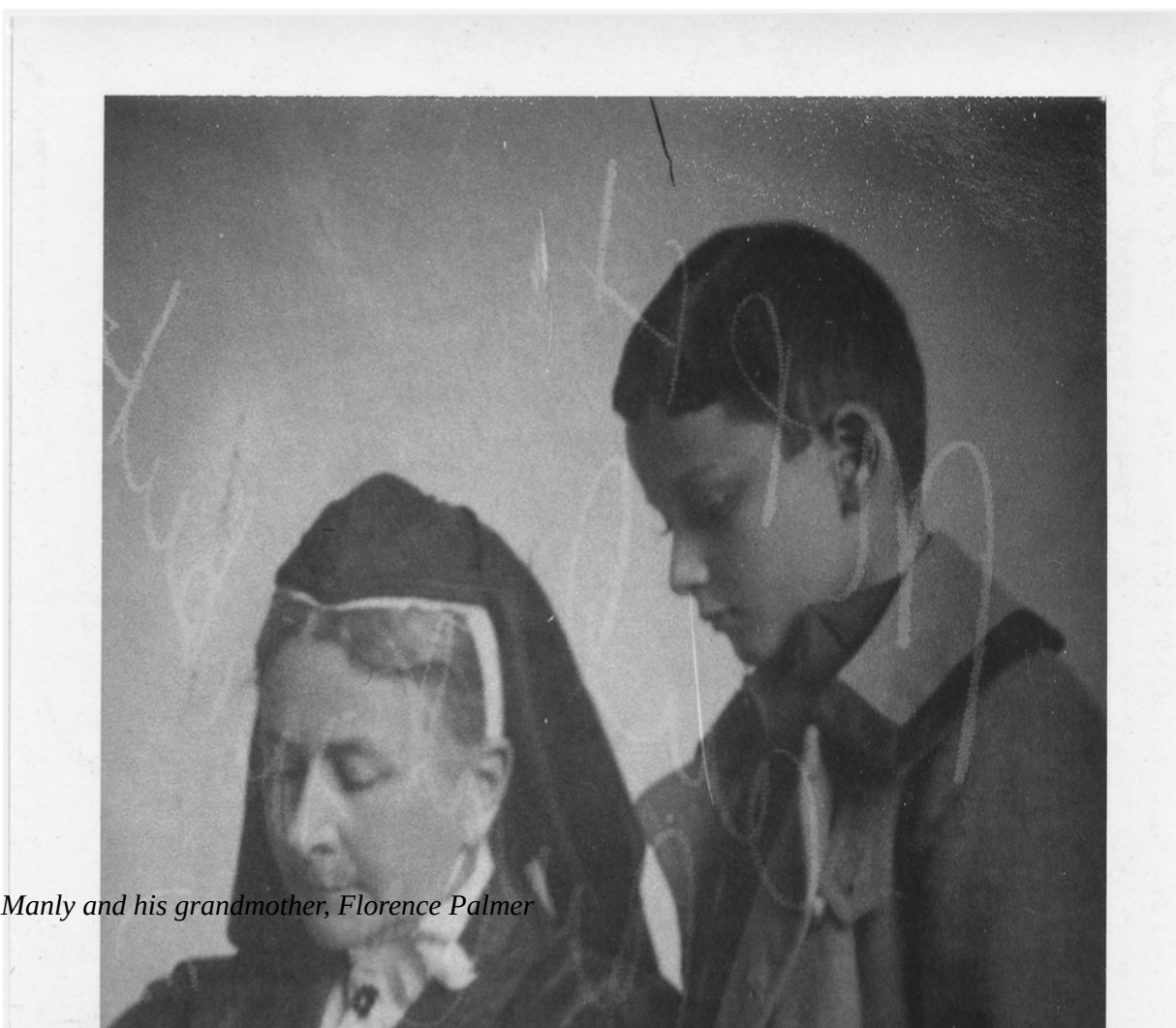
The failed marriage sent Louise spinning into a downward spiral that ended with her decision to leave it all behind and seek her fortune in Alaska. Hall was raised by his grandmother, Florence Louise Palmer, a Victorian-era widow whose husband had owned a varnish factory. [54] After her husband's death, she sold their assets and then set out to discover America. With Hall in tow, they traveled from town to town, seldom staying in any one of them longer than six months.

Clad in knickerbockers and ribbed cotton stockings, Hall was four years old when his 50-year-old grandmother had him admitted into the U.S. as a Canadian immigrant in July, 1905, in the District of Chicago. [55] They settled briefly in a hotel in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.



There, they attended Native American Indian dances, Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, and circuses. When Secretary of War William Taft was campaigning for president and made a stop in town, she took her grandson to meet the candidate. The tall man in a starched white vest and long black coat leaned over, patted the young boy on the head and shook his hand. [56]

In 1907, they lived briefly in the California cities of San Francisco, Santa Rosa and San Diego, where their next-door neighbor was the son of Gen. Ulysses S. Grant. Next they lived in Germantown, Pennsylvania, an old stronghold of Quakers and Mennonites. Then, in Chicago, the young boy began to read voraciously. He and his grandmother, who loved good books, read together by lamplight. Their favorite author was G.A. Henty, whose well-written adventure yarns first introduced Hall to words like "guru" and "astrology." [57]



*Manly and his grandmother, Florence Palmer*

When he reached school age, Hall's grandmother decided he was too advanced for kindergarten and enrolled him into the first grade, where he opened a textbook to find the letters of the alphabet an inch high in various bold colors. "When I was asked to identify these letters and pronounce them in class, I was decidedly embarrassed," Hall recalled in an essay years later. "At home at that particular period, grandmother and I were deep into Victor Hugo."

Hall was quickly promoted to third grade, where he was confronted with multiplication tables. "This did not hold my attention," he said, "for at that time I was handling most of grand-mother's bank accounts." [58]

His grandmother enjoyed entertaining friends. On rainy evenings, when she wanted to impress them, she would select curios from a little cabinet chock-full of interesting items collected over the years and present them with the skill of a professional curator. It was a pastime that Hall would eventually make an important part of his own life.

In 1914, Woodrow Wilson was president and Hall's grandmother moved into a genteel boarding house about three blocks from the White House in Washington. [59] Among the boarders was Señora Carenza, a Spanish woman who used her mysterious gift as a "burn stroker" to cure second- and third-degree burns of others at no charge. "We noticed that Señora Carenza always stroked the burn very lightly and toward her own heart," Hall recalled. "While doing so, she whispered a little verse. With my natural curiosity, I finally persuaded her to recite the verse for me in English." Her secret of Spanish folk healing, which Hall said worked wonders, was this: "Three wise men come out of the East, Melchior, Gaspar, and Balthazar. Go heat, come cold. Come cold, go heat. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." [60]

In 1917, Hall and his grandmother moved again, this time to New York, where Hall joined a military training program and found work as a clerk at an insurance company in the financial district of lower Manhattan. [61] Along with a starting salary of \$30 a month, he received some stern advice from the firm's vice president: When a young man becomes associated with an old and reputable firm, it is his duty to live an exemplary life. His associates should be chosen for their respectability. He should attend church and have a savings account. He should select a girl of good character and

avoid debt. Loyalty to the company established a bond that would last a lifetime.

One day, the head bookkeeper with a spotless record of 47 years was found dead at his desk. A standing clock was delivered to the man's home by way of appreciation for his services. Within a few weeks, he was never mentioned again. [62]

Hall quit, believing there must be a better way to earn a living.

His next job, which was slightly better than the first, involved clerical work at a Wall Street firm. Disillusionment with that company turned to deep depression with the sudden death of his grandmother. "Here I was starting out in life with no background that would give any particular support or strength to the problems I was facing and would face," Hall recalled. "I looked around and could not see any way in which I could get the instruction and help I needed. There did not seem to be anyone to turn to." [63]

All that changed the day he wandered into the dilapidated "House of a Thousand Memories" at 493 Sixth Avenue. The Martinka brothers, Antonio and Francis, presided over this emporium for stage magicians, who were all the rage on vaudeville stages. Among its frequent patrons was escape artist and stage magician Harry Houdini, one of the greatest showmen of all time.

The front door opened to store counters and glass cases stacked high with magician's equipment. Behind the store was a large room with a small stage surrounded by chairs for audiences that gathered on weekend afternoons to enjoy examples of the conjurer's art. Beyond that room was a yard where magicians boarded pets used in their performances—doves, rabbits, goldfish, dogs and cats. Houdini wanted to board an elephant, but found the facilities too small.

One Saturday, Houdini dropped by and delighted Hall and other admirers with an old favorite. The short, stocky and slightly bow-legged magician stood on the backroom stage and seemed to make a package of needles and a spool of thread appear from nowhere. Then he put a half dozen needles and a foot of thread in his mouth, and started chewing with gusto. Hall was amazed when he started pulling the thread from his mouth. The needles were threaded about an inch apart.

In Martinka's back rooms, Hall said he engaged in late-night debates with Houdini, Howard Thurston and other famous magicians over whether

miracles could be wrought without stage paraphernalia. Their talks invariably led to discussions about the practices of East Indian fakirs, Egyptian snake charmers and Native American medicine men.


Houdini told Hall that the only reason he could perform his feats was that he copied them from Asian jugglers and magicians. He also admitted that he did not know exactly how they did their tricks, only how to mechanically reproduce their effects. In Hall's mind, that was practically conceding that there were supernatural aspects about such things that he did not understand. [64]

**I***T is now more than four years since Mr. Hall has met with his students in the Bay Cities. Since his last visit to San Francisco Mr. Hall has made two extensive lecture tours speaking to large audiences in Chicago and New York.*


*He delivered three important addresses at the "World Fellowship of Faiths" held in Chicago during the Century of Progress Exposition. One of these addresses "The Conquest of Fear" is included in the present San Francisco program.*

*In addition to intensive lecturing Mr. Hall has written several books on Philosophy and Metaphysics.*

*Mr. Hall feels that the four lectures on Self-Analysis included in this program is one of the most practical course of lessons he has ever prepared. After this series he is leaving immediately for New York where he opens a lecture program about November first.*



## Program of Lectures




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### Scottish Rite Temple - Sutter at Van Ness

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*IN THE AUDITORIUM*

MON. OCT. 1ST *The Conquest of Fear.*  
TUES. OCT. 2ND *Astrological Predictions for 1935.*  
WED. OCT. 3RD *Atlantean Records on the American Continent.*  
*[Illustrated with rare and unusual pictures.]*  
THUR. OCT. 4TH *Right Thinking the Royal Road to Health.*  
FRI. OCT. 5TH *The Divine Plan Behind the Present World Changes.*

*IN THE LECTURE HALL*

TUES. OCT. 9TH *Restating the Theory of Education.*  
WED. OCT. 10TH *The Ten Greatest Thinkers of all Time.*  
THUR. OCT. 11TH *Celebrated Prophecies Concerning the United States and its Future.*  
FRI. OCT. 12TH *Man, the Grand Symbol of the Mysteries.*

*FOUR LECTURES ON SELF-ANALYSIS*

MON. OCT. 15TH *Psycho-Analysis and the Sub-Conscious Mind.*  
TUES. OCT. 16TH *Character Reading by Physiognomy.*  
WED. OCT. 17TH *Lines of Fate in the Hand.*  
THUR. OCT. 18TH *Analysis of the Twelve Zodiacal Types.*

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ALL LECTURES START PROMPTLY AT 8:00 P. M.

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FREE-WILL OFFERING

Houdini went on to buy Martinka's, which had been serving magicians since just after the Civil War. He also launched a high-profile public crusade to expose as fraudulent all psychics, fortune-tellers, and spirit mediums, a class that flourished after World War I as friends and relatives of slain soldiers desperately tried to communicate with their loved ones on the other side. [65] To Houdini, spiritualism was nothing more than mental intoxication resulting from the seductive words and promises of con artists.

Hall, however, headed west, firm in the belief that the universe was stranger and more interesting than Houdini wanted to admit. Over the next



10 years Hall would undergo striking intellectual and personal changes, and render himself an adventurer in the realm of the spiritual self. By the late 1930s Hall was enjoying the richest years of his life.

Hall began spicing up his holiday season lectures with astrological horoscopes of the world, the United States and California. Usually, the forecasts were so ambiguous and obvious that they left plenty to chance. But on May 20, 1934, he told his congregation sometime between 1940 and 1942, the civilized nations of the world would be plunged into cataclysmic political unrest and violence. [66] His source was a booklet published in 1860 by Dr. L.D. "Astrological Doc" Broughton, a medical physician and astrologer from Washington, D.C. who was famous for having predicted the assassination of President Lincoln. In that booklet, Broughton declared that the return of Uranus to the constellation Gemini in 1942 would undoubtedly be accompanied by years of anguish and strife at home and abroad. [67]

In the meantime, Hall was making new, powerful allies during his travels. At the Pythagorean Society in New York in 1935, Hall met a serious student of Platonism and reincarnation who would become His Grace, Athenagoras I, spiritual leader of the Greek Orthodox Church. They became devoted friends; when meeting on the street the tall, husky and bearded religious leader would throw his arms around Hall. Many of Hall's books were in the Patriarchate Library in Istanbul. At one Easter service in New York, Hall walked in solemn procession with Athenagoras I. [68]

Also in 1935, Robert Andrews Millikan, a Nobel Prize winner and chairman of the executive council of the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, invited Hall to attend a fund-raising dinner for troubled youths. The guest speaker was former President Herbert Hoover. The master of ceremonies was comedian and actor Joe E. Brown. Sponsors included pioneer motion picture director Cecil B. DeMille, one of many influential Freemasons in Hollywood at the time. [69]

Such high-profile public appearances lent further credibility to the man who behind the scenes was quietly investigating shamanistic formulas for bending the laws of nature. He studied the magical aspects of minerals and gems, concluding that manic states could be balanced by keeping a piece of lead in one's pocket; nervous tension could be remedied with green tourmaline and copper, depression by silver and zinc. [70] He slept with his head to the north so that the magnetic currents of his body would



“correspond with the vaster currents moving about and through the earth.” [71] He applied Pythagorean theories about the therapeutic value of music, and entertained the idea that people in bathing suits would get more out of stirring string music than heavily clothed individuals because bare skin responds positively to pleasant sounds. [72] Hall also claimed that without too much training, students with the right frame of mind could learn to read playing cards placed face down on a table. [73]

Hall was profiled in an extensive *Los Angeles Times Sunday Magazine* article, published in August 1935, as a world-class expert “in the so-called Mystery Schools of the ancient world which, instead of nurturing a semi-barbarism as most modern historians assume, was really in most ways superior to the addle-pated present.”

“Now, it is Mr. Hall’s idea to attempt to reconstruct these Mystery Schools,” said the article by George Addison. “He holds that this can be accomplished by decoding the ciphers, symbols, hieroglyphs, fables, myths, and legends which abound in classical writings. He further hopes that some key documents escaped destruction and, in the course of time, will be found in the Sahara Desert, Gobi Desert, and possibly in the ruined cities of Central America.”

The discovery of such codes, Hall predicted, might be of more value in setting man on the right path of knowledge than all the accomplishments of science and technology.

At the time, Hall also was trying with the help of actor friends to break into the movie business, which he believed should have been incorporating more mythical and magical themes in its major motion pictures. In 1939, eight years after Tod Browning’s adaptation of Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* hit the silver screen, Hall wrote a proposed sequel and dispatched it to Stanley Bergerman, associate producer of *The Mummy*.

The nine-page treatment would have made Stoker proud. It begins where the first movie left off: Dr. Van Helsing driving a stake through the vampire’s heart. Only there’s a twist. The “vampire howls with fiendish glee and shams death,” Hall wrote, because the assassination attempt occurred seconds after nightfall, when Dracula is invulnerable.

Three decades later, after old age and death has claimed the lives of Dracula’s foes, “the lid of the great sarcophagus rises by some mysterious mechanism,” Hall wrote. “The gruesome hand bearing the ring of Voivode

Dracula appears and the vampire slowly rises. He has had no blood for many years, therefore he is now a white-haired man, aged and bearded. His face is hollow with sleep of years and his clothes are rotted about him.”



*Portrait of Hall as guru by Schuyler Crail, 1938*

Meanwhile, in Argentina, Señorita Martinez has a frightening secret: she has always known the sinister count was not dead. Worse, she learns he plans to visit her home along the La Plata River “in a strange vessel.”

Later, “there is a mist upon the river,” Hall wrote. “Through the fog suddenly appears a magnificent black streamlined yacht bearing the name *Nemesis III*. The yacht enters the south basin slowly. . .”

A group of detectives dispatched to investigate the craft discovers that its crew is dead. “There is apparently nothing alive but a great black cat that hisses violently at them,” Hall wrote.

A shadowy figure creeps along the dock. [74]

Eventually, Martinez and her closest admirer learn the horrible truth: Dracula “has come to claim his bride according to the blood-pact made thirty years earlier.” [75]

Hall never mentioned the manuscript, which was offered for sale on eBay in Canada in 2007 for \$800.

In an interview in the late 1930s with entertainment industry reporter Philip K. Scheuer, Hall explained, “There is a ready-made audience of 10 million for definitely metaphysical themes in the United States ... It is the richest untouched field of entertainment that remains to be exploited, for nearly every human being has an experience he cannot explain, yet cannot forget! And in such times as these, we turn eagerly toward that which may provide a clue, a key, to the Answer.” [75]

In an essay during this period, Hall wrote, “With such problems as reincarnation, karma, evolution, the super physical perceptions in man, the motion picture studio could make the world familiar with these subjects in a way no book, college professor, or anyone else could possibly do. Presenting them in the form of entertainment is one of the most powerful methods of converting the public mind, because after all, what you see in the pictures is so real, you never question it.” [76]

He was not the only person who felt that way. Fantasies and mythical horror stories swept through movie studios after Walt Disney’s full-length cartoon fairy tale *Snow White* broke box-office records in 1938. In the works were *The Wizard of Oz*, a full-length motion picture based on the 1900 children’s novel by practicing Theosophist L. Frank Baum, and Disney’s *Fantasia*, which would feature a segment starring Mickey Mouse as a hapless sorcerer’s apprentice. [77]

According to Hall, famous musical composer Leopold Stokowski, who had been retained by Disney to help develop a score and images for *Fantasia*, showed up at his home one day seeking advice on how various scenes should be filmed. “There are vague incidents in the film as I suggested them to Stokowski,” Hall recalled in an essay decades later. He did not elaborate. [78]

Warner Brothers tapped Hall for story ideas and solid advice on myth and magic that could be developed into screenplays. Hall set right to work, pounding out a series of imaginative stories for the silver screen and dispatching them to Bergerman’s office on Sunset Boulevard. One of them

celebrated the life of the 18th-century mystic adventurer Comte de Saint Germain. Others included an untitled outline for a mystery that involves a murderer who develops a paralyzed arm after fatally shooting a woman with a similar malady and stealing her jewels.

Only one of his efforts, a screenplay that depicted astrologer Evangeline Adams as a “kind, old lady” who happened to be a powerful influence on the stock exchange, intrigued the powers-that-be, provided Hall tweaked the storyline a bit. [79]

The plot would be more saleable as a murder mystery, they said, and more believable with a mysterious and sultry female lead. Hall grudgingly agreed, and came back with a revised version that became the only one of his original stories that was ever actually produced. It was an occult murder mystery for Warner Brothers titled *When Were You Born?* starring Hall’s friend Anna May Wong as an astrological detective. The 1938 story co-authored by Roger Whatley featured 12 murder suspects, one for each sign of the zodiac. It also called for a pet marmoset, but since the only marmoset available had already been rented out, Hall compromised on a little brown monkey named Venus. [80]

Hall consulted the stars for the best starting date and time: exactly 11:26 a.m. February 9. It was reported that he must have gotten his stars mixed up because leading lady Wong was in bed with a cold that day. [81] Hall insisted that although the studio had lived up to the letter of his starting time, it had not observed it in spirit. Director William McGann had shot the first scene at the prescribed moment, Hall agreed, but he had spent an hour or more rehearsing his cast before that. He complained that only one actor in the film was actually born under the sign of the character he played—in his case, Pisces, the fish. [82]

As a final touch, it was decided that the movie should open with Hall making an introductory on-camera speech explaining how astrology can forecast future events and, as he says, solve crime. Hall lamented having to do the scene, calling his cameo appearance a final blow to the project that had been tinkered with so much that he barely recognized it as his own. But the movie’s producers felt it was needed to help the public understand what the movie was all about. [83]

The scene, which called for absolute nonchalance, was shot “in temperature of about 106, surrounded by men, noise and excitement,” Hall



recalled years later. It took a day and a half to complete, with most of Hall's work ending up on the cutting room floor.

Test-marketed in a small theater in Beverly Hills, the film's first showing drew mixed reviews. A few people actually liked it. Others didn't know what it was all about. Still others wondered why it was made at all. Pressing ahead, Warner Brothers mounted an aggressive advance publicity campaign that included a séance for the press held at Hall's residence at that time, a low-slung, Mayan-style fortress of crumbling granite blocks in the Hollywood Hills that was designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. Against a backdrop of Chinese, Japanese and Indian antiques, the party began at 8:16 p.m. sharp because he said the stars indicated that as the most propitious moment.

An hour later, the lights were doused and the guests queued up for a candlelight buffet dinner. Hall gave a talk about astrological history. Then a musician named Feodor Kolin played his own eerie piano compositions. Later, a "Count Roman Ostojá" enthralled the crowd by lacerating his flesh with pins and needles, and then controlling the blood flow by thought alone. Actress Joan Blondell was delighted when Ostojá rid actor Dick Powell of a headache he'd suffered for days. [84]



*Hall with actress Anna May Wong on the Hollywood movie set of *When Were You Born?**

Jumpy guests were offered cocktails “so everybody had reasonably quiet nerves when the fun began in the dark,” recalled reporter Frank Mittauer in a 1938 article about the spooky proceedings. “Table-rapping, materializations and other spine-chilling amusements finished off the festivities, but you can learn to like anything.” Through it all, Anna May Wong was seated regally on a pedestal of white marble.

Just before the movie was released, Hedda Hopper plugged it in a column that began: “I may not know, but I believe Manly Hall has something. His eyes have a strange hypnotic look—sort of faded blue, which look at, through and beyond you. I kept turning my head to see who was behind. He could sit under any tree and you’d know he was a mystic or a yogi without putting a sign over his head.” [85]

The American Film Institute catalogue would later point out that the film’s plot was a lot like Warner Bros.’ 1933 film *From Headquarters* with the device of forensics substituted for astrology.

The movie bombed after it was released. Still, Hall found reason for hope. “It was produced by great travail and labor,” he wrote at the time, “but we will say it is the first picture ever made by a major motion picture studio of the world dealing with the subject of astrology except as a joke or a fraud. That may start something. If it does, it may open the way for a great cycle of occult philosophy. If that occurs, we feel the effort was not in vain.” [86]

Warner Brothers encouraged Hall to keep trying. He developed a scenario titled *The Angel of Lucknow*, in which a nurse mysteriously appears on a battlefield and sets to work performing almost miraculous healing until she disappears without a trace. For horror film star Boris Karloff, Hall developed a screenplay called *Witch’s Sabbath*, the tale of a robber baron in medieval times who sells his soul to the devil.

He worked even harder for friend Bela Lugosi, who was already bankrupt and 50 years old when his masterpiece *Dracula* was released in 1931. Hall and Lugosi shared a love of great classical music, comparative religion and stamps, which they bartered and sold as sideline sources of income. Hoping to revive his friend’s movie career, Hall researched and prepared a project for Lugosi called *The Emperor of Atlantis*. He also developed a scenario called *The Mysterious Abbey*. Neither made it beyond a script book.

In 1940, the year Hall spoke at the New York World’s Fair on the contribution of classical Greek art to the life of modern man, they teamed again for a publicity gimmick to promote Lugosi’s fourth film with Boris Karloff, *Black Friday*: A promotional film trailer purported to show Hall, with a nurse at his side, hypnotizing Lugosi for his small role in the movie. In the film, Lugosi portrays a man who steals a gangster’s bounty, then suffocates in a locked closet. Lugosi’s alarmingly realistic on-camera panic and death throes were attributed to the trance Hall had allegedly induced. [87]

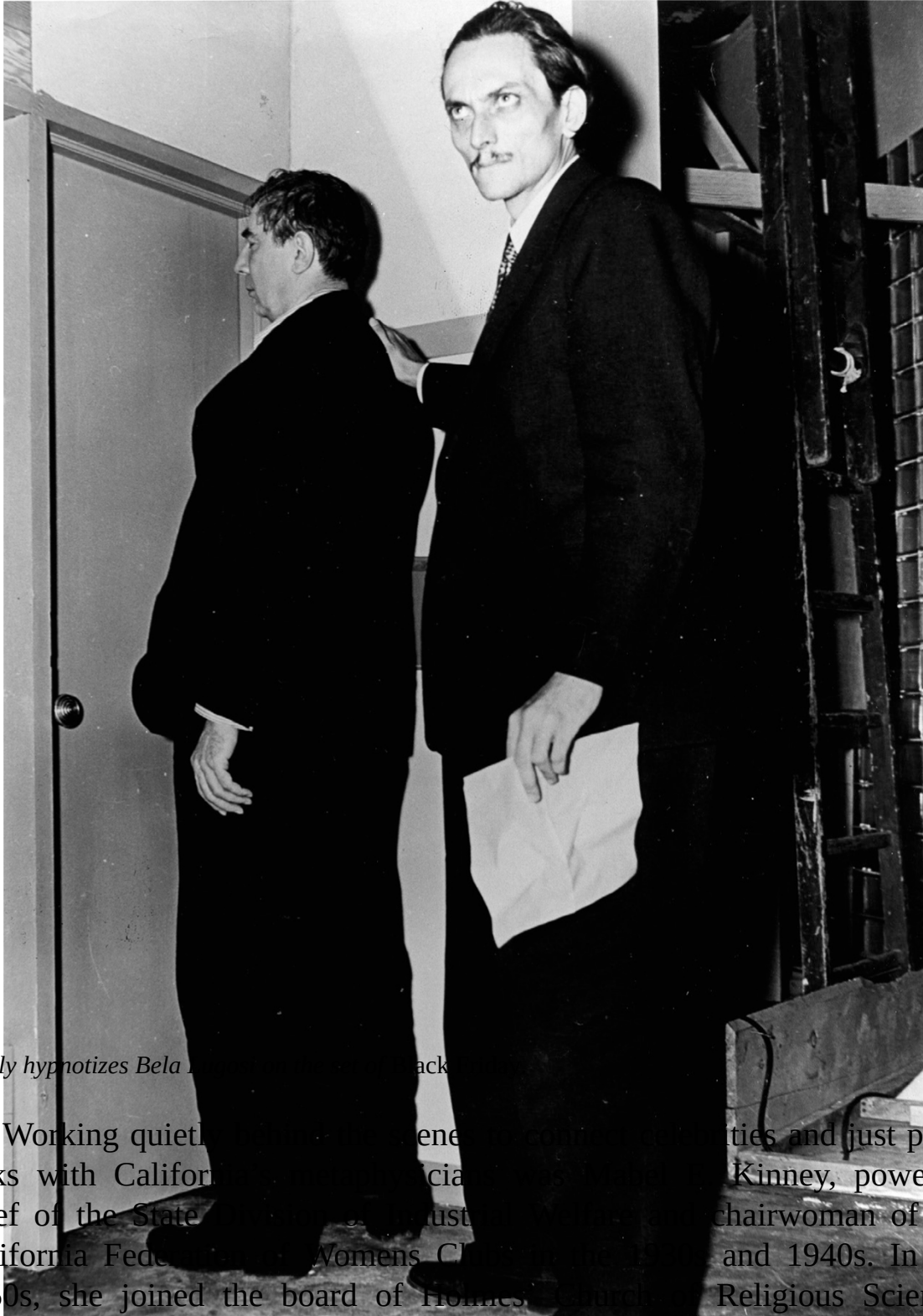
A newspaper article published January 28, 1940, spoofed the role: “As a result of its successful experiment the other evening in hypnotizing Lugosi for a scene in *Black Friday*, Universal is convinced that entirely new and unsuspected vistas have been opened in the cinema. Evolved strictly as a publicity stunt by the press department, the effect on Lugosi was so amazing that the studio’s exploitation engineers believe that hypnosis can

be practiced on writers to make them finish scripts, on press agents (although one member of the department doubted there would be any difference), on critics to assure good notices, but most of all on actors.” [88]

Not everyone took Hollywood’s magical preoccupations so lightly. Actors were particularly drawn to psychics and meta-physicians advertising shortcuts to Louis B. Mayer’s office, and then stardom as the next Carole Lombard or Clark Gable. In the late 1920s, designer Natacha Rambova, an expert on metaphysical teachings and a friend of Hall’s, had famously attended séances to communicate with the spirit of her late husband, the silent screen lover Valentino.

Actor Dewey Martin, whose marriage to singer Peggy Lee was performed by metaphysician Ernest Holmes, conceded, “We sincerely believed that our careers were going to be helped, or somehow assisted by these philosophies. I remember typecast Western actor Red Barry, who was at Holmes’ church every Sunday, saying, ‘Dewey, I just know this stuff is going get me roles outside of my cowboy image.’ And it did. He was never a star, but he started landing character roles, which made him happy.”

Martin, who was Humphrey Bogart’s protégé in the 1940s, also recalled how he and other actors relied on mystical notions to protect them from ruining their own careers by yielding to temptations and “breaking the morals clause tucked inside the contracts that each one of the five major studios made us sign.” [89]



*Manly hypnotizes Bela...*

Working quietly behind the scenes to control celebrities and just plain folks with California's occultic powers was Kinney, powerful chief of the State's Bureau of Investigation and chairwoman of the California Federation of Womens Clubs in the 1930s and 1940s. In the 1950s, she joined the board of Holmes' Church of Religious Science. Throughout her life, Kinney, who was the daughter-in-law of Abbot Kinney, founder of the California seaside community of Venice, arranged to



have her favorite spiritual leaders receive official public proclamations, honors and awards from lawmakers.

“People trembled when they heard Mabel’s name because she was powerful politically,” recalled actress Barbara Fuller, who played the character “Claudia” in the popular *One Man’s Family* radio drama during the 1940s. “She was very helpful in getting people like California Gov. Goodwin Knight and others into our metaphysical events and things. She’d tell bigwigs in Holmes’ church to do something, and they did it, because she was influential and she was helping them.” [90]

Mystics and magicians had become hot combinations at Hollywood parties where telepathists and mind readers were replacing rhumba experts and tennis instructors. Hungarian Yogi Rolf Passer was a popular guest at actress Joan Crawford’s cocktail parties. MGM producer Edgar Selwyn amazed his friends by trotting out Pat Marquis, a boy who could “see” with his eyes blindfolded. [91]

Amid the frivolity, resentment among skeptics was gathering momentum. It had started a decade earlier when tent revivalist Aimee Semple McPherson vanished while swimming near Venice, California, only to reappear in a small town on the Arizona-Mexico border claiming she had been kidnapped and held for ransom. A grand jury investigation led to charges of giving false information designed to interfere with a law enforcement investigation. The case was dismissed. But circumstantial evidence revealed she had spent a portion of her disappearance in a Carmel honeymoon cottage with a radio operator of her church. Novels such as Sinclair Lewis’ *Elmer Gantry* and Dashiell Hammett’s *The Dain Curse* sharpened public disdain toward fraudulent spiritual icons. [92]

By the late 1930s, the magical claims of occultists and cult leaders had law enforcement authorities on the warpath. In Los Angeles, a headline-grabbing criminal case against the “I AM” movement, a variant of Blavatsky’s Theosophy, shook dozens of organizations promising riches and protection from supernatural forces for a fee.

In 1940, Edna W. Ballard, whose late husband had assumed the roles of mythical 2,000-year-old mystic St. Germain and Jesus to their I Am followers, and her son David, who said he was an “accredited messenger of the Ascended Masters,” were indicted on federal charges of fraudulently seeking and receiving money through letters sent through the mail. The

charges against their St. Germain Foundation were based on allegations that the Ballards sold I Am books through the mail describing supernatural capabilities that inspired “love gifts” of more than \$3 million from followers. [93]

The most poignant testimony during the eight-week trial came from Margaret Huntly Schall, widow of the late Thomas D. Schall, a blind senator from Minnesota. In a small yet firm voice, Mrs. Schall told the jury of her vain attempt to restore her husband’s sight by following the advice of Mrs. Ballard.

“I tried that without success,” the little gray-haired woman testified. Lowering her voice, she added, “two months later, the Senator was killed in an automobile accident.” [94]

Schall said her interest in the movement began in 1935. She was acting as her husband’s secretary at the time and received a leaflet through the mail saying the Ballards were in Washington. After several preliminary meetings, Mrs. Ballard told her to visualize a ray of light from the I Am Presence passing through her husband’s head and moving out at right angles and passing through his eyes. Schall told of going to classes, morning, noon and night in Washington, San Francisco and Los Angeles, where she was informed that Los Angeles was the City of Angels and after a coming cataclysm the ascended masters would make it their headquarters.

The Ballards were convicted in 1942. Mrs. Ballard was sentenced to a year’s imprisonment and fined \$8,000. Looking trim in a pale lavender dress and white hat with matching corsage, she received her sentence stoically. Her son was sentenced to 30 days and fined \$400. [95]

The convictions were appealed, launching a lengthy review process during which the U.S. Supreme Court ruled twice. In the first instance, the court threw the convictions out on a technicality. In the second, it issued a ruling that included what remains among the most often quoted church/state legal opinions. [96] In a landmark dissent, Justice Robert Jackson said although he could see in the Ballards’ teachings “nothing but humbug, untainted by any trace of truth,” he also believed “the price of freedom of religion or of speech or of the press is that we must put up with, and even pay for, a good deal of rubbish.” Nonetheless, the movement was barred from using the U.S. Postal Service for I Am materials until 1954. [97] The

Ballards subsequently decentralized their operations and moved their headquarters to New Mexico.

Just as the Ballards' case was getting started, Hall joined forces with federal internal revenue authorities and the Los Angeles District Attorney's office in an investigation of Arthur Lorber Bell, founder of a San Francisco-based organization called Mankind United.

Through its Institute of Universal Research and Administration, Mankind United hawked "vitally confidential information" of a supernatural nature at weekly meetings across Los Angeles, which would enable average people to create utopia at a personal profit. While getting rich, they would also help rid the world of war, saving civilization and thwarting the world's "hidden rulers." [98]

All this for just \$20, which could be paid in installments. The organization, which claimed alliance with a society of small humanlike creatures living in the center of the Earth, had been blanketing Los Angeles with invitations to its meetings, and palm-sized books with indigo blue covers. Some of its mission statements were being distributed in Clifton's Cafeteria sandwich wrappers.

Mankind United's message seemed to resonate most strongly with people who had lost everything during the Depression. Philip Jenkins, distinguished professor of history and religious studies at Pennsylvania State University, estimates that 14,000 Californians joined the movement between 1934 and 1941. [99] Among them were members of Hall's own congregation. Incensed at losing people to those he considered blatant crooks, Hall launched a personal investigation into the group and its leaders, and then handed the information over to law enforcement authorities and a *Daily News* newspaper reporter.

Hall's sworn remarks to state and federal authorities were transcribed by a stenographer. During a meeting in downtown Los Angeles on April 23, 1940, U.S. Internal Revenue Service special agent Frank A. Chase asked, "We understand that you have been making an independent investigation of this movement in the Los Angeles area and that you are willing, as a public spirited citizen, to give your government the benefit of such investigation, is that correct?"

"That is correct," Hall responded. "We investigated it from the standpoint of a political racket and a fraud scheme," and a possible anti-

American activity.

Hall told investigators that he and the reporter had been questioning Mankind United managers at their homes and apartments across the city. A meeting at the home of Mankind United recruiter Eugene Brown became testy. “Dr. Brown was the only one who became violent and stated that anyone who ‘opposes us’ will be destroyed, by violence, if necessary,” Hall said. “About two days after the investigation, I received a postcard with a skull and crossbones threatening my life. I turned it over to the (*Daily News*). I also received two letters advising me to lay off, or else.”

The card read as follows: “This is a last warning. Mr. Hall—hands off Mankind United—if you want to stay healthy. Don’t show this. A man who knows.” In the upper right corner glared the crudely drawn skull and crossbones.

Chase asked Hall to describe the methods by which Mankind United’s managers aimed to achieve their goals. “Dr. Brown was very confident of the way that it was to be done,” Hall responded. “It was going to be done and if anyone got in the way of it, God help them. . . It was the general feeling that by the time [the organization] had secured two hundred million members they would take over the entire system because they would be united—would simply vote themselves into power and no one would have a chance. The two hundred million would assume a collective dictatorial place in the world.”

In a confidential report to Robert Singer of the Los Angeles District Attorney’s office, Hall provided a more detailed account of Brown’s threat.

“Dr. Brown said he was 73 years of age and studied economics for 60 years, which indicates that he must have been a rather precocious youngster,” Hall said with tongue in cheek. “Brown’s approach was that of a psychic who had contacted the sponsors on the ‘inner planes,’ and therefore had an advantage over us. To pointed probing somewhat gently but firmly administered, Dr. Brown became somewhat violent. He suddenly turned to Saldana and exclaimed: ‘If your paper should do anything, it will be destroyed. The advertisers will be contacted, strings will be pulled, the paper will change hands!’ Then he turned to me: ‘Anyone who opposes us will be destroyed by violence, if necessary.’”

Mankind United withered under the law enforcement scrutiny in the 1940s. But its founder soon replaced it with a new Church of the Golden

Rule, to which its new followers also donated heavily, Jenkins said.

Until 1940, Hall's life was tightly controlled, ordered, on the right side of the law and above damaging gossip. Still, the elements of a crushing personal crisis were falling into place. That year, he had his thyroid gland surgically removed in a Los Angeles hospital. Hall believed that the horseshoe-shaped gland in the isthmus between the body and the head is a mediator between emotions and intellect, and in control of what he believed were pleasing aspects of one's personality. [100] In his case, its removal may have only increased his propensity for obesity.

On another front, Hall and his wife were fed up with their life in the spectacularly flawed Mayan-style house designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and constructed on a hill crest at the north end of Vermont Avenue. They were among a series of notables who had been invited to temporarily live rent-free in the unusual two-bedroom granite bungalow during the late 1930s.

Trouble was, it had a fireplace in the living room that was decorated with a Tiffany mosaic—but there was no flue. The grand entrance was under the kitchen, and its bedrooms were separated by a long hall with clear glass panels on both sides. The bathroom ceilings were gold leaf, but steam from the bathtub muddled their luster. In heavy rain, two feet of water gathered on the roof and leaked into the living quarters. Then there were the bees and wasps that built hives in the eaves. [101]





Manly displays his Buddhist relics. From his own home, Los Angeles

One day, while Hall was sitting quietly in the living room, the doorbell rang and Hall invited in Frank Lloyd Wright himself, wearing a stylish black velvet jacket and black neckwear. In an essay years later, Hall recalled, “He walked up the steps inside the house and suddenly appeared aghast, staggered a little, regained his balance and then announced that someone had taken his red floor tile and put brown and white marble in their place.” [102]

The Halls moved into a modest apartment a few blocks away where their domestic problems only worsened. As one of the hottest tickets on the metaphysical lecture circuit, Hall was rarely home. As a consequence, Fay’s loneliness and depression only deepened. Not surprisingly, divorce was becoming a frequent topic in Hall’s lectures and annual astrological forecasts for those born under the sign of the fishes—as he was. He warned Pisceans “there is a very grave probability of an unusually difficult relationship with some person around you—either in business or in the home. Some person who might be stricken with illness, or the trouble may come through temperament and disposition.” [103]

He told his congregation that a broken home was often something over which the individual had no power because of the peculiar stress and strain of modern urbanity. It was no longer possible to say there was no time in which divorce was reasonable. [104]

When necessary, the Halls mustered a cheery façade. On January 3, 1941, the *South Coast News* reported that photographer Mortenson and his wife on New Year’s Day had entertained “Mr. and Mrs. Manly T. [sic] Hall of Los Angeles.”

Less than two months later, after a brutal series of rainstorms that triggered landslides, flooding and dozens of fatal automobile accidents on Los Angeles roads, his wife committed suicide. She was 38. [105]

On February 22, 1941, at the end of the city’s wettest winter in 25 years, Fay parked at the rear of a theater near their modest apartment at Vermont Avenue and First Street, stuck one end of a garden hose onto their car’s exhaust pipe and the other into the passenger compartment, then rolled up the windows and started the engine.

A few single-paragraph obituaries in local newspapers are almost all that is known about Fay’s final hours. One of them said she had left parting words in a note addressed to her mother, Rose Parrish. “Mama, dear,” she

wrote, “I had to do it. The pain of living is more than that of dying. Sickness, heartaches, insomnia. Forgive me.” [106]

Hall, who had counseled for years that suicide was a breach of metaphysical ethics that condemned the soul to wander in some karmic limbo indefinitely, was devastated. [107] But after a relatively brief period of mourning, he purged his personal files of all references to his 11-year marriage and pressed ahead with his career.

Though Hall never spoke of Fay again, shocked friends and relatives speculated wildly about what might have pushed her over the edge. Some whispered that Hall had been “messing around with dark forces and Fay couldn’t take it anymore.” Others suggested that Hall was homosexual, and that he married for convenience. Rumors circulated that Hall had asked for divorce because Fay was having affairs. A few concluded Fay went mad with jealousy over Hall’s growing friendship with Marie Bauer, a beautiful German immigrant on a spiritual crusade to save the world. Law enforcement authorities told obituary writers Fay had been ill for some time. One lifelong family friend said Fay had a brain tumor.

A year after Fay’s death, Hall offered another explanation in an essay titled “Case History: The Pseudo-Psychic,” which ostensibly chronicled the tormented life of a mentally ill woman identified only as Mrs. Incognito. [108] The patient under consideration, he said, was actually a composite of three case histories blended together in order to “protect the identity of the sufferers.” Nonetheless, like Fay, she had dabbled for years in New Thought, metaphysics, and yoga; was subject to mood swings; suffered from insomnia; was trapped in a bad marriage, and considered herself a writer. Mrs. Incognito, Hall writes, was harassed by angry voices in her head. The entities kept her from sleeping and created distrust of friends and relatives. They identified themselves as deceased members of a certain religious order, and threatened to destroy her by metaphysical means unless she published their comments in a book that would amount to an exposé of their religion.

“Much terrified, the patient agreed to write the book,” Hall said. The manuscript she produced was as “ungrammatical and disorganized” as her personal life. Over time, Mrs. Incognito began hallucinating and developed a distressing pressure in her head and eccentric muscle twitches. Eventually,

the entities became visible and insisted that she commit suicide and join them on the other side.

Mrs. Incognito was saved by an unnamed sympathizer who simply “applied common sense to a series of misunderstandings,” and demonstrated how every line in her book was symbolic of neuroses related to an earlier marriage to a man she despised that was forced upon her by her mother.

“Within a few days of the clarification of the domestic situation all psychic symptoms ceased,” Hall wrote. “Of her own volition, the patient tore up the manuscript produced by automatic writing.”



BY MANLY PALMER HALL



# *The* SECRET DESTINY *of* AMERICA

The American continent was set apart for establishing here a great democratic nation long before the Founding Fathers and colonists envisioned the Union . . . .

Fragments of a little known and mysterious history suggest that the seeds of democracy were planted here a thousand years before the Christian era . . . .

The brilliant plan of the ancients survives to our time, preserved through hundreds of years by secret societies and individuals pledged to condition America to its destiny for leadership in a free world . . . .

The American nation desperately needs this vision of its own purpose.





## CHAPTER 3

# Signs and Symbols of War

WITH THE NATION ON EDGE, THE MESMERIZING GLARE OF HALL'S SPIRITUAL CERTAINTY MADE HIM A SOURCE OF COMFORT, STRENGTH AND GUIDANCE. PEERING INTO THE FUTURE FOR REPORTERS IN SAN FRANCISCO, HALL DISMISSED ADOLF HITLER AS A DESPOT, INCAPABLE OF ACHIEVING HIS ULTIMATE GOALS.

“Questioned about the fate of these United States, Hall’s slanting blue eyes blaze,” said an article published in the *San Francisco Chronicle* on June 25, 1940. “America, he says, will not become seriously involved in European affairs before 1942. Prior to that there may be some static, ideological conflict, but nothing serious. After 1942, Hall does not hazard a guess, at least, not for the record. However, he does not envision the defeat of England; nor any economic collapse for the United States.”

Closer to home, Hall’s patron Estelle Lloyd asked an unusual personal favor in the fall of 1941, one that would require all the special powers he could muster. Lloyd’s first cousin, Berkeley architect Lewis Dobbins, had been diagnosed with leukemia. The family tried a variety of possible remedies including an early effort at radiation treatment. But his health continued to decline at an alarming rate. Lloyd called Dobbins’ wife and suggested that a personal visit by Hall might turn things around for the 37-year-old patient.

“My mother said, ‘Fine, have him come. I’ll not be blamed later for failing to let someone try to help,’” recalled Dobbins’ daughter, Elizabeth Simmonds. “My mother often talked about the day Mr. Hall showed up on

her doorstep, a tall, stately, strong man wearing a long black cape. He swept into my father's room with great dramatic flair, exuding an aura of extreme power, almost as though he was surrounded by a crackling electric field. They spoke alone for several hours. For two weeks after that, my father experienced a resurgence of energy." [1]

It didn't last. "Eventually, his health began to slip," she said. "He died that November. But mother always felt Mr. Hall was a powerful person, with something special inside of him."

Similar accounts abounded. One of racketeer Al "Scarface" Capone's boys was said to have attended the first in a series of lectures Hall delivered in a Chicago Masonic Hall around this time. At the next lecture, a member of the audience stood up and announced, "Sorry to interrupt. But last week we had quite a few coats and hats missing in the cloak room." Without missing a beat, Hall began to expound on the virtues of kindness and honesty. Later that night, the story goes, a tough-looking man walked up to Hall and said, "You saved my soul. If there is anything I can do for you. . . ." Hall asked him to find out who was stealing the coats. "We never lost another coat," Hall recalled years later. "And some that had disappeared mysteriously returned." [2]

As the great military drama of World War II unfolded, ships and aircraft rivaled agriculture as California's most important products in a historic expansion of defense industries that saw Los Angeles' labor pool rise. [3] Powered by electricity surging out of Boulder Dam, defense plants and shipyards were turning out fighter planes and bombers, and a "Liberty Ship" every 25 days. They also were offering thousands of women and minorities their first crack at good wages on assembly lines and in skilled occupations. [4]

With Los Angeles on a war footing and the United States military fighting on two fronts, Hall donated the metal plates used to make colored illustrations in *Horizon*, the quarterly periodical he launched six months after Fay's suicide, to the federal government for use in making military equipment. *Horizon* also gave up its handsome suede-like cover, given that the military needed both cotton pulp and chemical dyes for defense purposes. "America first and last," Hall announced in February 1942. "*Horizon* from now on will be going, so to speak, into uniform." [5]

A Look Into the Future?

## A Prognosticator Comes to S. F.

"There shall come a time when a George, the son of George shall come to the throne of England. And then, at that time, an eagle shall drink the blood of princes from a headless cross.

"And at that time death shall fall from the sky and an army of sleeping horsemen, from beneath the earth, shall come forth and drive the enemy from the land."

In the eleventh century this strange prophecy was circulated throughout England and the continent of Europe. Whence it sprang no one knows, but it has been brought to San Francisco, still couched in its ancient phraseology by Manly P. Hall, director of the Philosophical Research Society of Los Angeles.

Here to deliver a lecture tonight at Scottish Rite Auditorium, Hall finds the ancient prophecy capable of many interpretations. By coincidence, the Hohenzollern spread eagle is the symbol of Germany's Hitler. By coincidence, he says, the swastika is a headless cross. But, by coincidence, he shrugs when asked to interpret "the sleeping horsemen from beneath the earth."

### HALL IS NO MYSTIC

Although no mystic, Hall goes in for prophecy. Unusually tall, with long dark hair that sweeps his shoulders, he prides himself on the accuracy of past prognostications regarding world events.

In 1924 he went on record as viewing 1940 with alarm; anticipating the advent of Hitler and the bloodless conquest of three nations. In 1934 he again made so bold as to chart the course of the present year, dipping into Spengler's "Decline of the West."

*Hall's WWII prophecy*

Hall used the magazine to instill hope in his congregation in wartime and at the same time appeal to its members' patriotic spirit. In article after article he reminded that the wise man obeys the laws of state, and that the rigors of boot camp would provide young students of metaphysics with precisely the kind of obedience training and focus needed to master mystical philosophy. So, a year or two or even more under a top sergeant is not at all a bad start for our young people; it will concentrate for them more discipline and training than most of them would otherwise experience in a



MANLY P. HALL  
He's optimistic about England

program will grow slowly and continue long. Therefore the people will benefit."

Hall expressed belief, based on psychic information, that Russia will become involved in the current embroglio, but against Germany as Hitler attempts an anti-Slavic entente. This involvement of the USSR with England, he said, will

be a major protection for the United States.

Pontifically, Hall warns against any policy of isolation for the United States at the present time and finds many "compensating factors" for the new world in the disintegration of the old. He advocates a policy of hope for the general public and insists that the spine of democracy never will be broken.

normal life,” he said. “Never can we be truly wise until we have brought strength to wisdom. We are on the way to acquiring it through obedience which in turn will build up the philosophical faculties of man.” [6]

Another article was aimed at older residents who were worried that bombings like the kind punishing London would soon reach the shores of California: “But if it should strike closer to us, the code of the wise man under the vicissitudes of fortune applies today as it did in the classical world of ancient Greece,” he said. “Poised, secure in his realization, seeking with all his strength and knowledge to confer his vision upon others who are ready and who need his encouragement, the wise man faces war as he faces age or pain or death: with a perfect realization that all these things are only aspects, passing forms, fancies and fantasies. Beneath them all, through them all, like the thread upon which all the beads are strung, moves the steady course and progress of human development.” [7]

As the war intensified, he lectured with a new rhetorical flourish about a secret plan for America, one he said had been devised in Egypt 3,000 years earlier. American democracy, Hall declared, was part of a divine plan first envisioned by the world’s first democrat, Pharaoh of Egypt, Akhenaten. He ruled in 1349 B.C., Hall said, dispensing the notion that “the duty of the ruler is to protect for all life the right to live well, to think, to dream, to hope, and to aspire.” Such ideas were advanced by the philosophers of classical Greece and then infused into to the very soil of the Western Hemisphere, which, he claimed, had been “anciently set apart for coming generations in the great human experiment of the democratic commonwealth.” Democratic ideals, he contended, were shepherded in the American colonies by philosopher Sir Francis Bacon and his associates. Those “learned strangers,” Hall said, had often appeared at critical junctures in the nation’s history to ensure implementation of democratic ideals and symbols such as the design of the American flag and the signing of the Declaration of Independence. [8]

Hall’s colorful revision of history, which had been cobbled from the works of obscure 19th-century romantic Masonic patriots, could be viewed as metaphorical. The stranger who appears and disappears without a trace after accomplishing his urgent task may represent the flashes of consciousness that somehow come in time of greatest need.

Take Hall's tale of the "unknown speaker" who appeared in the room just as the nation's founders were having second thoughts about signing the Declaration of Independence. "Faced with the death penalty for high treason, courageous men debated long before they picked up the quill pen to sign the parchment that declared the independence of the colonies from the mother country. For many hours they had debated in the State House at Philadelphia, with the lower chamber doors locked and a guard posted, when suddenly a voice rang out from the balcony. A burst of eloquence to the keynote: 'God has given America to be free!' ended with the delegates rushing forward to sign. The American patriots then turned to express their gratitude to the unknown speaker. The speaker was not on the balcony; he was not to be found anywhere. How he entered and left the locked and guarded room is not known. No one knows to this day who he was." [9]

Program notes for a talk he gave at Carnegie Hall in 1942 advised that his topic, "The Secret Destiny of America," was "especially significant in the light of recent world events." Framed by advertisements for war bonds, female figure enhancers and "Helena Rubinstein's Famous Wake-Up Facial Cream" the program notes point out, "Manly Palmer Hall is possibly the most significant thinker in America today, primarily due to the fact that he remains completely unconditioned by the traditions of modern intellectualism." Tickets sold for \$1.10, slightly less than those for a performance by the Trapp Family Singers a few days later.



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## LECTURE

CARNEGIE HALL

WEDNESDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 2, AT 8:30

# MANLY PALMER HALL

Speaks On

## "THE SECRET DESTINY OF AMERICA"

INTERPRETING FRAGMENTS OF A MYSTERIOUS  
HISTORY

Tickets On Sale Now At Carnegie Hall Box Office.

55c to \$1.10. Boxes \$1.65-\$2.20 Tax included.

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## SCHROON LAKE

REUNION AND DANCE  
"In the Heart of the Adirondacks, N. Y."  
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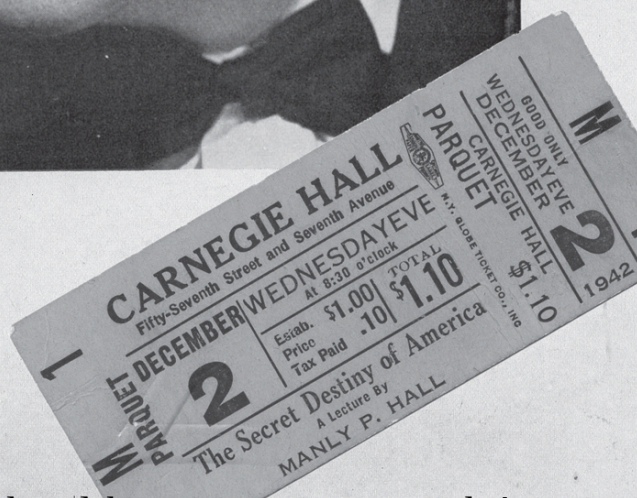
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# CARNEGIE HALL



His new message—that God and his visionaries created America and brought it to its position of strength for some great purpose even as military

installations were expanding dramatically—connected with some international celebrities and heroes. Among them was Helen Keller, whose triumph over blindness and deafness brought new faith to the physically handicapped. Like Hall, she actively supported America's involvement in the war. Keller shared Hall's fascination with the metaphysical imagination of Emmanuel Swedenborg, a 18th-century Swedish clairvoyant and mathematician who claimed he communicated with spirits dwelling in what he called "the invisible universe." [10] He also claimed familiarity with human-like inhabitants of other planets including the Earth's moon. Many of Swedenborg's contemporaries dismissed him as insane. For Hall and Keller, he was a visionary worthy of intense study. [11]

Keller in Braille read everything transcribed from Swedenborg, and through sign language had every word he ever wrote read to her. That would have been quite an accomplishment. Swedenborg wrote 60 volumes, many of them in small print and eight hundred pages long. [12] Keller's appreciation of Hall's spiritual support was expressed in a book inscription: "To Mr. Manly Hall, in whose heart there is no east or west, north or south, but the vision of all men created in brotherhood."

As his star continued to rise, Hall's growing fame and expanding circle of associates triggered intense jealousy and rivalry among peers who depended on the same prominent people Hall did for support and financial donations. Hall and Paramahansa Yogananda, a high-profile Hollywood swami dubbed the "father of Yoga in the West," could scarcely stand the sight of each other. [13] Hall felt that Yogananda's yoga techniques were dangerously out of place in the United States. "Various forms of yoga, breathing exercises and kundalini stimulation are among the most dangerous teachings which have come from the East," Hall wrote. "These teachings are perfectly reasonable and normal to the East Indian who devotes his life to purification of his body and the unfoldment of the spiritual perceptions, but as a plaything for Occidental people who hope they can breathe themselves into a state of grace, such systems are entirely inappropriate." [14]

Hall saved news articles about Yogananda, who founded the Self-Realization Fellowship in Hollywood, in a dossier and told friends that the ostensibly celibate yogi was a skirt-chaser and a con man. Yogananda confided to his own associates that Hall was an arrogant bore, his

philosophical work thin soup. They kept their mutual loathing largely under wraps. In an inscription penned in a copy of his immensely popular *Autobiography of a Yogi*, Yogananda wrote to Hall: “With love and very best wishes for the great spiritual service you have rendered to truth seeking souls. May the infinite shine forever on the altar of your soul, and may you establish his love in the temple of true souls.”

If Hall took pleasure in his stature as a popular American mystic, he was not altogether happy with the impact his notions were having on members of his congregation. Eager to please their minister with signs of progress, a distressing number of men and women were reporting back to him in breathless tones that they, too, were beginning to see auras blazing around people and animals. Others mailed him detailed descriptions of their prophetic visions and dreams, or recalled the glorious experiences they’d had in past lives in Egypt, Babylon or Atlantis. Some thanked Hall for messages he had transmitted telepathically for their consciousness only.

Then there were the death threats in the mail. “Do not drink any water or eat any food given to you, not even from your best friend,” warned one anonymous letter. “There are 25 different ways in which they try to get those whom they want to get out of the way. The last one, if all others fail, is that you would be shot while delivering a speech.” [15]

Facing crackpot claims from his adherents, anonymous threats, lingering anguish over his wife’s suicide, a law enforcement crackdown on people claiming magical powers, and a raft of new books blasting Blavatsky, Gurdjieff and others as frauds and con artists, Hall began to temper his convictions. Before World War II, Hall touted as gospel the essential tracts of California’s metaphysical movement—Madame Blavatsky’s *Secret Doctrine*, Ignatius Donnelly’s *Atlantis*, and Max Heindel’s *Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*. In essays and on lecture tours that zigzagged across the nation in trains and planes, Hall began to argue that these teachings were metaphors, not literal. Blavatsky’s “ethereal masters,” he said, were a state of mind, not real men. The mysterious Rosicrucians in all probability never existed. [16] Searches for the Philosopher’s Stone were sad hoaxes perpetrated by hustlers. Atlantis was a period of time, not a place. [17]



April 15

MANLY HALL.

Do not drink ANY water  
or eat ANY food, Given to you,  
Not even <sup>FROM</sup> your best friend,  
Outside of your Home where  
You would know that the food  
was free from poison.

There are 25 different  
ways in which they try to get  
those whom they want to get out  
out of the way. The last one, if  
all others fail is that you  
would be shot while delivering  
a speech.

Our Advice is to Go to Mexico  
And work up a nice following



there. Mexico City and Tam-  
Pico, both we guess would be very  
good fields for you to investi-  
gate.

Why not go there till dangers  
are past and maybe leave  
your family here, — at least for  
a while?

We want your life saved,  
and that is the only reason —  
we are writing these words.

Mr. Fonduac is also listed  
for death through Geostocah.

Death threat, 1940

Yet he did not discount the possibility of attaining higher powers of perception. In what may have been disheartening to seekers expecting an easy formula for bending the laws of nature, Hall advised in an essay titled "Five and Ten Senses," "It is a mistake to attempt to develop isolated psychical powers—that's following things in reverse order. You should not try to become a psychometrist. The thing to do is to try to become wise; and the psychometry, among other things, will be added to you—when the normal development you have reached justifies it those who wish to become possessed of extra-sensory perceptions must refine and integrate and organize and use the faculty perceptions they already possess until they

become obviously inadequate. The moment nature finds a man's present equipment inadequate, it supplies that which is necessary." [18]

Take Jesus, for example. To hear Hall tell it, "the Christ that interests the modern thinker is in the story of a man living as an obscure Syrian prophet, with almost no opportunities or privileges, yet a man whose personal life and personal accomplishments and personal dreams were so extraordinary that they changed the whole course of history; a human being who accomplished a great good. How? That is the question." [19]

Short of earning the degree of self-improvement that generates supernatural powers, Hall offered a tip his readers could try at home. In an article titled "Thought Transference," which appeared in the August 1943 edition of his *Horizon* magazine, he wrote: "Another experiment you can try is this: Two persons sit down at different places at the same time, one to be a receiving station and the other a sending power. One then thinks of something like the color red, to see if the other person at the other end can receive thought. If there is a considerable amount of sympathy between them, it will be amazing to see how well this can be done. From these simple experiments you can then proceed to a more careful and critical study, and after a time it should be possible to read a printed page of a closed book."

Hall warned against using such techniques for personal gain, but he also liked to point out that an unnamed man had relied on them to win big at a racetrack in England. Occasionally, for close friends, he put a closed book on his chest and then read aloud from a particular page, or so he said. [20]

# First Principles of Philosophy

by  
**MANLY PALMER HALL**

## Step by Step Through

**METAPHYSICS**  
which includes theology,  
cosmology and the nature of  
being

**LOGIC**, or the doctrine of  
reasonableness

**ETHICS**, or morality  
and character and the discovery  
of the nature of good

**PSYCHOLOGY**  
the field of mental phenomena

**EPISTEMOLOGY**  
primarily the problem of  
whether knowledge in itself can  
exist in an absolute form

**ESTHETICS**  
the science of the reactions  
caused by beauty, harmony,  
elegance and nobility

and

**THEURGY**  
the actual process by which one  
becomes a philosopher

Still, his work overall began to take on a more practical and less magical slant. As a writer, Hall was prolific, publishing a stream of books designed to help readers understand the forces of light and darkness. One of his most popular works, *First Principles of Philosophy*, a course in metaphysics, ethics, psychology, and epistemology, was published in 1910. The book sounded a warning that the world was becoming a civilization built upon ignorance. Those who have lived through the difficult years which have followed the war: "A simple term standing for all that is real in knowledge."

Equally popular was Hall's *Self-Realization*, which was published in 1912. It was a leisurely 12-step lesson plan with which to make spiritual ideals an integral

A PUBLICATION OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

part of one's everyday life. The book is illustrated with photographs of mandalas and drawings of a Buddha-like monk who seems to grow brighter with each chapter. Essentially, it is a self-help book, and its best quotes and sharpest insights are about what not to do and the common self-defeating errors and ruts people get themselves into. "Confront a problem, accept that problem as a personal responsibility, and solution is imminent," Hall writes. "Self-analysis and self-correction will in themselves reward you for conscientious efforts even if you should go no further in metaphysical disciplines. After all, only self-mastery through discipline can bring you temporal security and those good things of life which everyone desires."

[\[21\]](#)

MANLY PALMER HALL'S

*The*

# PHILOSOPHY OF ASTROLOGY



In text and diagrams *Self-Unfoldment* strongly resembles *The Secret of the Golden Flower* by Richard Wilhelm and Carl Jung, and *The Quest of the Overself* by newspaperman turned spiritual leader Paul Brunton, both published about a decade earlier. Like those works, which Hall read, it also warns that undiluted forms of Eastern yoga and breathing exercises can be hazardous to a Westerner's health. "Because we are very different from Easterners, and because we are different from the ancients," Hall writes in the book, "we must adapt their mystical philosophies to present conditions." [22] For Hall, that means students should avoid "suffering their way into a spiritual state." That is, they should spend modestly, eat normally, dress simply, keep their day jobs, beware of metaphysical organizations offering fast and easy paths to nirvana, and read *Self-Unfoldment* at least once a year. Above all, he adds, they should be "grounded." [23]

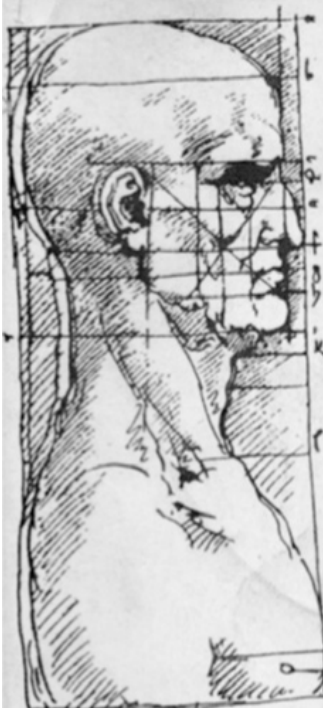
THE PRINCIPLES OF WISDOM  
IN THE

COSMIC MOTION OF THE STARS

A PUBLICATION OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH  
SOCIETY



*Healing, the Divine Art*, a survey of the history and application of metaphysical medical techniques, was published in 1943 and dedicated to Hall's mother. Hall promoted these writings as the eternal truth of health. "Mohammed, during his long vigils in the cave on Mt. Hira, prayed that the simple and eternal truth of primitive religion might be made known to the world," Hall writes in the book. "In the same spirit, I have tried to tell in this book, something of the simple and eternal truth of health, as it has been taught by the wise men of all ages." [24] Hall claimed the book was based on research and case histories he collected over the years. It zeroes in on what Hall called the great American disease, nerves. "Chronic dispositional tendencies result in chronic physical ailments," Hall writes. "The peculiarities of disposition as we nurse them through the years set in upon us as bodily ailments, affecting our later years with innumerable misfortunes which destroy our happiness and peace of mind." [25]



LEONARDO DA VINCI'S  
DEL CENACOLO

# MAN

## THE GRAND SYMBOL OF THE MYSTERIES

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Though Divinity seems so far removed, Its  
image in man remains as a witness before  
men...To the chemist, the human body is a

laboratory. To the jurist, the embodiment  
of abiding law. To the poet, rhythm in  
action...To the mathematician, crystallized  
geometry...To the theologian, the living  
temple of the living God...To the physician,  
perpetuities incapable of adjusting to change. Chronic stomach trouble is  
most frequently found among worriers and those with fragile egos. [26]

By the 1940s, he was becoming an increasingly  
social figure. By the 1940s, he belonged to an assortment of influential

mainstream organizations, often by invitation: the Archiatrist Society, the  
International Mark Twain Society, the International Society for General  
Semantics, the Federated Philatelic Club of Southern California, the  
Chinese Culture Society, the Authors Club and the Indian Association of

GEMS OF THOUGHT IN OCCULT ANATOMY  
BY MANY PALMER HALL

America among them. With personal appearances crowding his daily schedule, Hall relied on volunteers and disciples to manage his speaking engagements, record and publish his lectures, protect his income and ensure his privacy. Few worked harder than Virginia B. Pomeroy of Long Beach. In the time before portable tape recorders, it was her job for three decades to sit front row center with notebook and pen in hand, and take down every word he said in shorthand. After each lecture, she rushed home to her modest apartment to type up the notes. The routine usually produced 10 to 14 pages of single-spaced material, which was mimeographed and sold for \$1 a copy.

Where Do We Come From? We Solve Religious Differences In the Home? What Is the Trinity?  
What Is the Difference Between Religion and Philosophy?  
Who Wrote the Bible? What Is Cosmic Consciousness? Where Are We Going?

# QUESTIONS ANSWERED ON THE PROBLEMS OF LIFE BY MANLY PALMER HALL

Sometimes, Hall's mother, who suffered from crippling arthritis, would find a seat in the back of the lecture hall. Louise Hall could be seen beaming with astonishment and pride at her son, who seemed to have the world's ear. "Louise was a very lovely lady, about five-foot four-inches tall with gray hair, blue eyes," recalled Patricia Levitt, who worked at a Santa Monica Newberry's five-and-dime store frequented by Hall's mother. "She was so proud of her boy. She'd come see me sometimes to just to chat or buy a hairbrush or fingernail file. She'd say, 'Pat, look at me. Don't you see a strong resemblance between me and Manly?' I'd say, 'Why yes. How about that.'" [27]

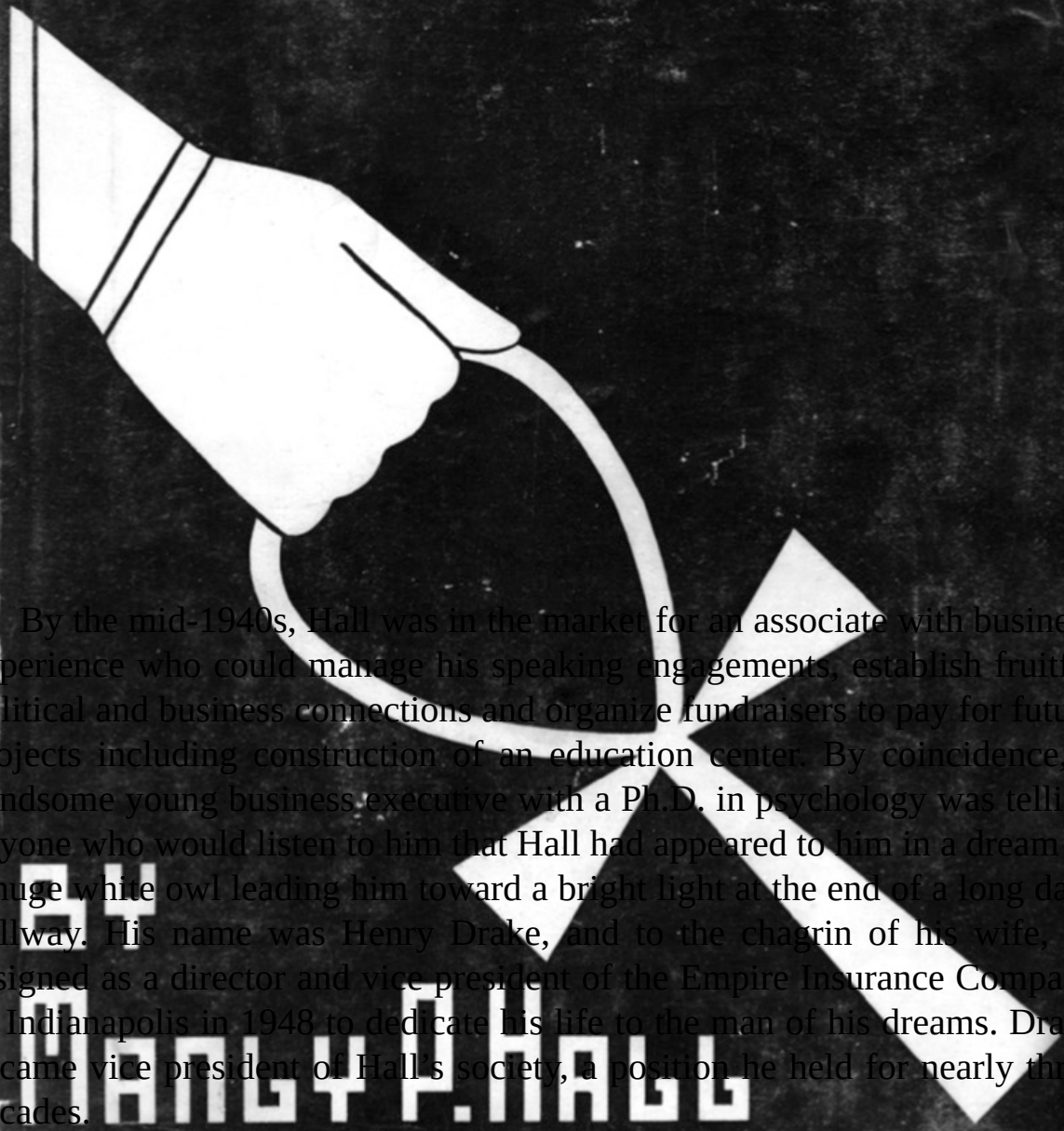
To cut costs on the lecture circuit, Hall often drove himself from one engagement to another in a two-door Chevrolet modified to accommodate his increasingly expansive waistline and huge legs. The front seat was

removed and the pedals and steering wheel extended so that he could drive while sitting on a wooden fruit crate in the rear of the car.

In the San Francisco Bay Area, he spent a great deal of his free time sharing pots of coffee, cakes, pastries and racy jokes with Harold S. Stein, a pharmacist and active Mason. “Manly and my parents would talk all night long,” recalled Harold’s son Larry, who was in his early teens at the time. “He was a lovely, beautiful human being with a childlike naïveté about things. But nobody liked raw stories more than Manly. His balls itched like anyone else’s.” [\[28\]](#)

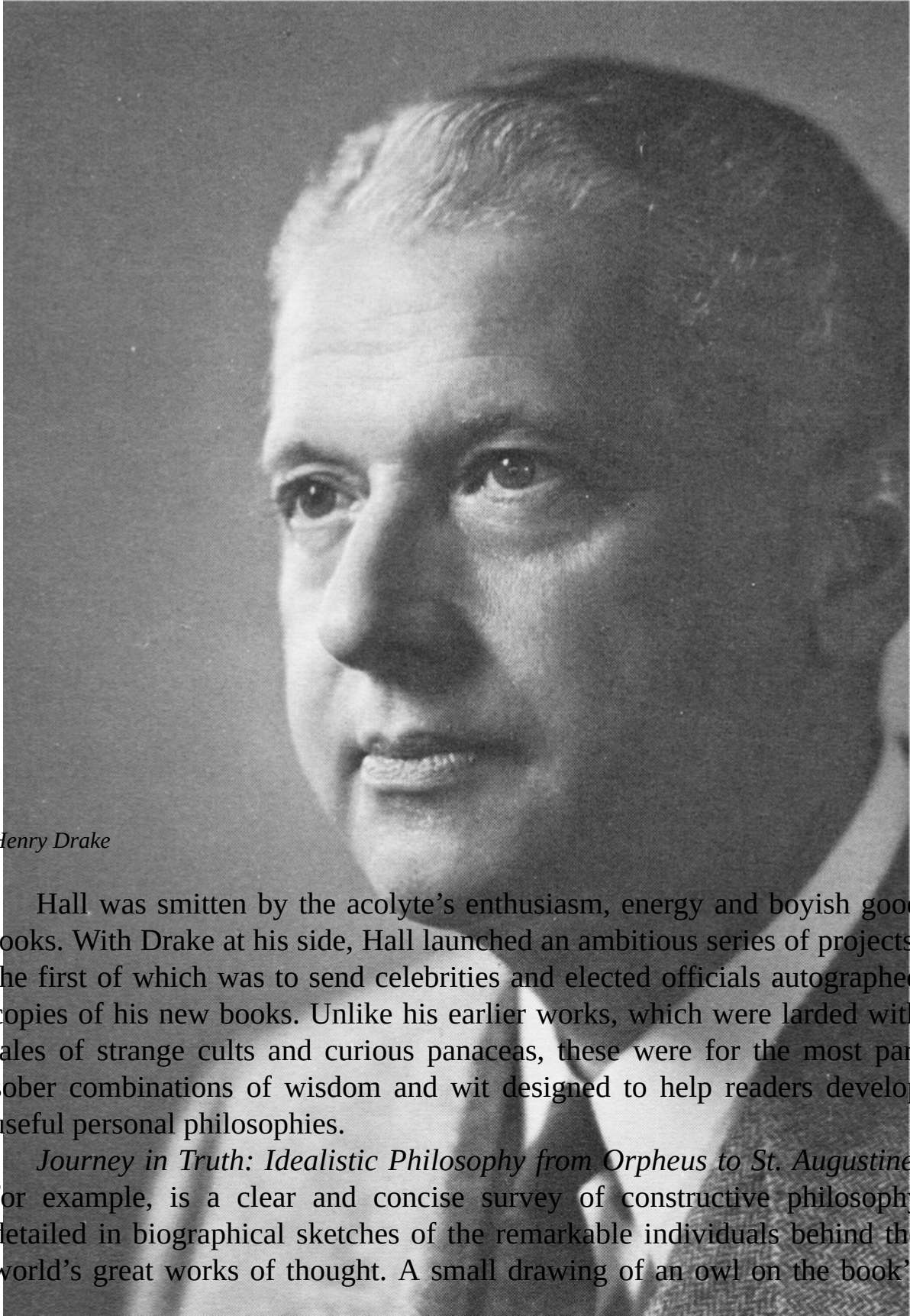


# FREEMASONRY OF THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS



By the mid-1940s, Hall was in the market for an associate with business experience who could manage his speaking engagements, establish fruitful political and business connections and organize fundraisers to pay for future projects including construction of an education center. By coincidence, a handsome young business executive with a Ph.D. in psychology was telling anyone who would listen to him that Hall had appeared to him in a dream as a huge white owl leading him toward a bright light at the end of a long dark hallway. His name was Henry Drake, and to the chagrin of his wife, he resigned as a director and vice president of the Empire Insurance Company of Indianapolis in 1948 to dedicate his life to the man of his dreams. Drake became vice president of Hall's society, a position he held for nearly three decades.

Drake, who had privately entertained metaphysical notions for years and read through all of Hall's books, arrived at the society with a plan to devise and market special goggles that would enable their wearers to see human auras. With Hall's blessings, he began ordering parts for the gadgets. They were based on the idea that all phenomena, including the human body, could be defined in terms of vibrations that, under "certain scientific conditions," could be viewed, measured and photographed. In a letter to the Corning Glass Works' Pyrex Division in Corning, N.Y., he requested "an oblong vial made of the best thin glass approximately  $2 \frac{3}{4} \times 2 \frac{1}{2}$  inches with a width of 6/16th inch and a small opening at the neck allowing the vial to be filled and emptied with chemical liquid." [29] From Wilson Products Co. of Reading, Pennsylvania, he asked for rubberized "headgear, which may in appearance when completed look like a very large pair of aviation goggles." [30] Drake managed to build a prototype: a clunky, handmade gizmo with side panels, rotating lenses and a leather strap. They did not work, although Drake was fond of showing them off to friends at dinner parties.



*Henry Drake*

Hall was smitten by the acolyte's enthusiasm, energy and boyish good looks. With Drake at his side, Hall launched an ambitious series of projects, the first of which was to send celebrities and elected officials autographed copies of his new books. Unlike his earlier works, which were larded with tales of strange cults and curious panaceas, these were for the most part sober combinations of wisdom and wit designed to help readers develop useful personal philosophies.

*Journey in Truth: Idealistic Philosophy from Orpheus to St. Augustine*, for example, is a clear and concise survey of constructive philosophy detailed in biographical sketches of the remarkable individuals behind the world's great works of thought. A small drawing of an owl on the book's

jacket was borrowed from the reverse of an Athenian silver coin of the period of Plato, who regarded the depiction as a symbol of essential learning. The writing is crisp and to the point. “It is a mistake to think that man’s idealism will unfold naturally, without direction and discipline. The adequacy of man’s spiritual life will be insured only when each individual makes himself subject to his cultural institutions and adheres to a positive program of personal improvement. Spirituality is not an accident of nature, nor is it bestowed by the grace of the gods. Education in spiritual values is the only way to attain the spiritual state. The human being is not a philosopher by nature. The reasoning powers which order the life and secure the mind from intemperances of thinking can be acquired only through a balanced program of philosophical education.” [31]

*Journey* garnered a rave review from then-Congressman Sam Yorty, who passed copies on to Anna Roosevelt and President Harry S. Truman, who expressed his gratitude in a letter. “Dear Sam,” Truman wrote to the man who would become one of the most controversial mayors in Los Angeles history, “I greatly appreciate your thoughtfulness in sending me that copy of Manly Hall’s book, *Journey in Truth*, inscribed by him, and am placing it with the volumes I want to read at the first favorable opportunity. Many thanks and best wishes.” [32]

Closer to home, Hall was telling personal stories at social gatherings and dinner parties guaranteed to excite interest and respect. For example, Hall said he had been hired by 20th Century Fox to help write the dialogue between the character Larry Darrell, played by Tyrone Power, and a holy man, played by Cecil Humphreys, in a slick adaptation of Somerset Maugham’s book *The Razor’s Edge*. Hall also sheepishly conceded that he had actually wanted the guru role for himself, but was edged out by Humphreys.

While Hall and Drake were chumming up power brokers from Hollywood to Washington, a high-voltage German immigrant fashion plate was in the society’s library researching 17th-century manuscripts for coded references to a vault she believed had been buried by Francis Bacon beneath a tower at the Bruton Parish Episcopal Church in Williamsburg, Virginia. It was her mission in life to unearth the vault and share its bounty: gold chalices and copper cylinders containing “lost Shakespearean originals,” a plan to end war and establish a United Brotherhood on Earth,

and keys to the location of similar vaults buried elsewhere around the world. The woman was Marie Bauer, a petite brunette with hazel eyes who believed God had chosen her to unveil Bacon's plan and, with Hall's help, save the human race from imminent destruction. Marie took to her assignment like a U.S. general in attack mode. She assembled an army of supporters, solicited funds and resources from potential corporate and Congressional sponsors, and prepared to invade Williamsburg and liberate the supposed vault's contents with shovels and pickaxes.

The only people standing in Marie's way were her two children and her husband, George Bauer, an engineer at the Curtis Wright Technical Institute at the Glendale Airport. He was so dismayed with her obsessions that he referred to men's restrooms as "manly pee halls." He equated Marie's obsession with the "the laws of life" to the "loss of life." [33]

In a letter to English writer and poet Walter Owen, Marie confided in 1946 that given her divinely inspired task, she had no choice but to divorce her husband George and then try to remain "best of friends" with him and their two young children, Jo Ann and Peter. Their lives, she wrote Owen, who was living in Buenos Aires at that time, "will be less complex under a friendship arrangement, and my energy will be no longer divided. It has proven to be too much several times, and when there is a job as important as the one the Lord trusted me with, I trust that with good intentions on my part the proper guidance will adjust things in a way which is fair to all.

"If I am the mother through whom the child is coming to life," she went on, "Manly is the father, and Lord Bacon the Godfather. No matter what the personal relationship may be, Manly's work and mine cannot be kept apart—they are interrelated in the manner that the Eastern Wisdom-principle is related to the Love-principle of Christ, and essentially that is the manner in which three is related to the four. The fact that I have been in love with Manly ever since I met him the first time made me even more uncompromising, stern with myself and even undiplomatic, very often rude toward Manly, even when I didn't want to be like that at all." Added Marie: "A choice is necessary, and under no circumstances would or could I make any other choice besides my work." [34] That work included trying to spark a national "Vox Populi," or voice of the people, movement to persuade the government of the United States to sponsor the unearthing of the vault that Marie insisted was vital to the salvation of our war-torn world.



Hall took a fancy to the woman who would later affectionately call him “my Canadian Bacon,” but kept a cautious distance from Marie’s crusade, preferring to focus on an ambitious project of his own: infusing American culture with the kind of philosophical ideals that could see it through tough times. “Adversity cannot be faced by the individual who is without a philosophy of life that really justifies the reason for living,” he said in a lecture on the “Panorama of Religions” delivered at the University of Southern California in March 1948. “A nation is an inert mass also if it has no appropriate and adequate idealism. Any culture that is materialistic cannot survive because it lacks a vital principle.” [35] The speech had been announced in an article that appeared in the USC *Daily Trojan* on March 1. The ad included a caveat that raised questions about his credentials: it described him as a speaker who had made five hundred radio broadcasts, delivered 6,000 lectures, and written 72 books and more than 1,000 magazine articles, but “was privately tutored, never having had formal academic education.”

The new decade opened with Hall pitching holy heroes and the virtues of patience, humility and self-discipline on a weekly 25-minute FM radio program titled “Tales of the Wanderer.” The program aired at 9:35 p.m. and opened with theme music and a melodramatic introduction narrated by Hall: “I am a wanderer upon the face of the earth. . . Strange places I have seen beyond the far horizon, and strange tales have come to me from wise men, and from old books, and in ancient places . . . Come, let us cross the threshold together into another world!” [36] For material, Hall recycled earlier essays and lectures involving mysterious nurses and wise old strangers who, like the Lone Ranger, appear mysteriously to solve a crisis, then vanish without a trace. He also shared personal anecdotes about his world travels. On one program, he told of a Chinese conjurer who could toss handfuls of paper butterflies into the air and then, with quick movements of a fan, make them seem to come alive. They separated, darting from the group and then returning, twisted about each other. “Some ascended almost to the ceiling of the high ballroom, but in due time they always returned to the old man,” he said. “The effect was simple but indescribably beautiful, requiring consummate skill and years of patient practice. It was a memorable occasion and I doubt if any Western conjurer could equal the performance, especially under the conditions which

prevailed. Magical exhibitions of this kind have been popular in China for thousands of years.” [37]

But no sooner had World War II ended than Americans with dependable union jobs and GI benefits became absorbed with affordable single-family tract homes, automobiles for no money down, college educations, hula hoops, television, buxom platinum blondes, quiz shows offering large cash prizes, and drive-in movies featuring American heroes at war with communists, Japanese and German soldiers, mutant insects and space aliens. There were also entirely new anxieties and nightmares bubbling up: a polio epidemic, the spread of communism and fear of nuclear annihilation unleashed at the beginning of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union.

In a post-nuclear age of insecurity, Southern Californians were no longer tossing their hopes and trust around like wedding rice. Jean-Paul Sartre’s novel *Nausea*, which espoused a universe without purpose, was attracting the attention of liberal academics who a few years earlier had regarded Hall as an outstanding authority on universal truths. Times were changing, fast. Even Hall’s glamorous mystic adventurer friend Natacha Rambova dumped automatic writing and spiritualism in favor of yoga and scholarly archeological pursuits. Rambova’s mother, a Theosophist who had regarded herself as something of a spiritual trendsetter, gave Hall a large commissioned portrait of “Russian Sphinx” Madame Blavatsky that had hung in the séance room of her chateau in France for years. [38]



## CHAPTER 4

### Marie

MARIE BAUER HAD JUST DRIVEN HER 1935 DARK GRAY TWO-DOOR FORD THROUGH A SURPRISING NUMBER OF CONSECUTIVE GREEN LIGHTS ALONG GLENOAKS BOULEVARD ONE SUMMER DAY IN 1950 WHEN SHE DECIDED THAT, YES, SHE WOULD MARRY MANLY PALMER HALL.

Marie had already contrived an exotic appearance for him by donning bright colors, wearing metallic bracelets shaped like serpents, and shaving her eyebrows so she could paint them on with the ends turned up like a goddess'. Marie had always believed she had the clairvoyance of a goddess, the senses to see hidden messages and visions invisible to others. Sometimes she saw them in freeway billboard signs, or received them by way of imagined conversations with President Abraham Lincoln, Sir Francis Bacon, or a plump Buddha adorned with Christmas lights that appeared once at her bedside. Occasionally, the messages were conveyed in casual conversations with strangers she decided had been dispatched by secret societies with special plans for her.

She believed that her hypersensitive brain picked up apocalyptic signals. For example, in 1941 a gopher snake crossed her path while she was walking her daughter to a birthday party in Glendale. It was not long after Hall's first wife committed suicide. Marie bashed the snake with a rock. That encounter was followed by a mental breakdown and weeks of hospitalization. [1]

Those visions, plus her talent for drawing complicated renderings of what she described as "divine geometry" and her headline-grabbing quest



for a secret cache of documents and golden goblets she believed were buried in Williamsburg, Virginia, by Bacon, brought her to the attention of students of the occult and mysticism, as well as a few scholars and scientists, who thought she possessed rare powers of perception. Marie, her followers liked to point out, was a living example of how “there is a fine line between genius and madness.”

There were two Maries. There was Marie, the five-foot two-inch beauty with raven black curls, sparkling eyes and a penchant for big jewelry and flashy outfits punctuated with embroidery and crocheted flowers she designed and knitted herself. She loved bright colors, sunshine streaming in through the windows, and working with her hands: turning soil for a flower garden in the morning, and disappearing into a basement full of fabrics in the afternoon to sew sweaters and dresses for friends and relatives. That Marie was a talented and thoughtful woman who challenged business executives and religious leaders—including her husband—to improve the role of women in the workplace and more accurately reflect the role of women in history.

But there was another Marie who was alternately fawning and cruel, and prone to temper tantrums. She was the Marie who berated Hall alone and in public for emphasizing male philosophers in his books, for not watching his calories, for failing to promote her ideas in his books and Sunday lectures, and for having her institutionalized against her will several times over the years. That Marie was superstitious and self-centered and spoke louder than anyone else in the room.

Their relationship would be similar to that of Socrates and Xantippe. In his book *Journey in Truth*, Hall wrote that the woman’s tirades “were little short of sacrilege to the disciples of the master; but even in the most embarrassing moments Socrates sided with his wife.” [2]

Recalling their relationship during an interview in the living room of their home in 2001, Marie said her husband needed grounding. “There was an awful lot of idolatry in connection with Manly, and he supported it,” she said. “It came naturally to him,” she said, “He had the physical stature. He took it for granted that he was adored. That didn’t appeal to me much and I told him so, plenty.” [3]

Whether at a dinner party or at one of their favorite hangouts such as the Brown Derby restaurant, Hall’s usual reaction to her yelling was to slump



into his chair, stare at the floor, munch on cookies or pretend to snooze. [4]

For Marie, marrying Hall would open doors to the highest levels of public life, exactly what she needed to continue her search for Sir Francis Bacon's buried vault and its blueprints for Utopia.

She was born Marie Schweikert in a village in the foothills of the German Alps on June 25, 1904. One of eight sisters, she was sent to good schools on the modest income of her father Wilhelm, a school teacher and devout Roman Catholic.

Like Hall, Marie too described a fanciful birth story rife with strange events and coincidences.

She claimed that at the moment of her first cry, the sounds of a church choir backed by trumpet and violins issued from just beneath a bedroom window of the Schweikert home. The incident heralded the advent of the "approaching new world," she said.

Marie liked to say that she was only a few weeks old when she uttered the word "licht," or light, to her mother. In the third grade, she claimed mysterious recruiters from a "New Age Undertaking" came and gave her a special test. [5]

After World War I, the inflation that ravaged Germany wiped out her family's savings. [6] Desperate to move to the United States, Marie arranged to be a nursemaid to the daughters of a banking official in Leonia, N.J., until her transit ticket was paid off. [7] Her starting salary was \$25 per month. [8] She quit after a few months to be a file clerk at a foreign money exchange. [9] A year later, she became a receptionist at New York's Savoy Hotel, where she said a "nice, rather short and friendly" George M. Cohen once asked, "What are you doing behind an office desk with that head of hair? Would you like to go on the stage?" [10]

Marie ignored him. But she accepted a subsequent offer to run an office at the Manhasset Yacht Club in Port Washington, Long Island, where she befriended the Bauer family: widow Ann and her two sons, Carlton and George, who had graduated from Cornell University with a degree of mechanical and aeronautical engineer. [11]

The euphoria of being in a position of authority was soon superseded by a personal tragedy so devastating that Marie only mentioned it to her closest friends. [12] She was assaulted and raped by a group of men who left her bleeding on a boathouse floor. Marie became pregnant after the attack and

George Bauer helped her arrange an abortion in upstate New York. In her journals, Marie would only say that she abruptly decided to quit the yacht club, close out her bank account and buy a one-way ticket to Los Angeles, where she found work as an extra in 15 motion pictures. [13] But she gave up her dreams of a Hollywood career for marriage to George Bauer in 1931. [14]

Once married and living in New York, Marie suffered mood swings and griped about not having a sense of purpose beyond that of simply being George's wife and mother to their first child, Peter. A wedding gift from her husband's brother would change all that. It was a tablecloth with a wide border decorated with scenes of colonial buildings and a church with an ivy-mantled tower in historic Williamsburg, Virginia. Marie was deeply moved by the imagery. [15]

Within a few years, she sought out that very tower and the dull sounds of shovels and pickaxes would be echoing in its shadows as the code-cracking mystic with Shirley Temple curls directed a sensational quest for Bacon's buried treasure. What possessed Marie? She may have felt she could never do enough to outshine Manly Hall, who she met under mysterious circumstances one day in 1934.

In her biographical book *Quest for the Bruton Vault*, Marie said she was out shopping in New York when a handsome stranger suggested she take a nickel subway ride from 33<sup>rd</sup> to 70th Street to attend a lecture at the Pythian Temple. Somehow, the idea "struck me as just right," she recalled. [16] The lecture was already underway when she arrived and took a balcony seat. Marie was spellbound by the "articulate fluency and conviction" of the man on stage, and a slide-show presentation of architectural drawings of a philosophical school he wanted to build in Los Angeles. "To me it was a straight answer from heaven and meant only one thing," she wrote in *Quest*. "It was the school Peter would attend, and we would therefore have to move to Los Angeles 'for good' as soon as we could manage." [17]

Marie immersed herself in studies of astrology, esoteric philosophy, and every book by Manly P. Hall that she could find. For a brief time, she worked as a clothing designer in order to raise \$100 to buy a copy of Hall's *Secret Teachings of All Ages*. In 1937, Marie persuaded her husband to

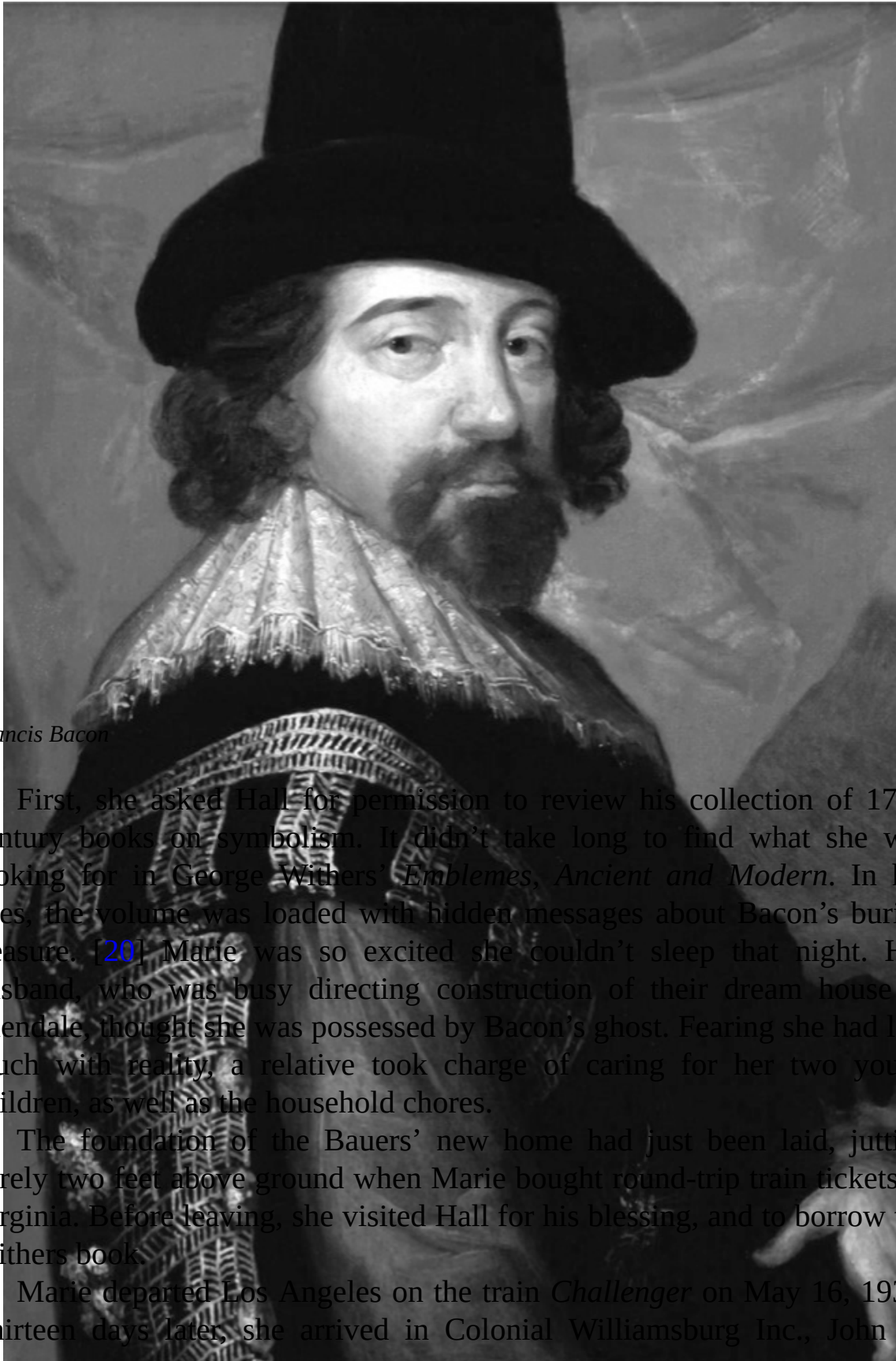
move his family to Glendale, placing her only a few miles away from Hall's headquarters. When he was old enough, she would enroll her son Peter in Hall's school. In the meantime, Hall thrilled her with personal tours of his stunning collection of alchemy books, and asked her to translate some of the old German texts he had collected.

To her, no one better personified the American metaphysical dream than Manly P. Hall. In April 1937, for example, Hall had lectured at a tea in his honor at the opening of an exhibition of his rare Elizabethan books sponsored by the British Empire Chamber of Commerce in New York's Rockefeller Center. Hall told a newspaper reporter assigned to cover the event that deep scientific and philosophical secrets extremely dangerous to even speak of had been hidden in Bacon's cryptic writings. The reporter's subsequent article erroneously concluded that Hall was fluent in 40 languages and was an authority on almost every philosophy and religion ever practiced.

The following year saw the release of *Lost Horizon*, a motion picture with a mystical theme and starring Sam Jaffe as a memorable High Lama. The movie's production crew included set photographer Schuyler Crail, who had Hall pose in costume—wearing dark facial makeup, a beard and a white turban—for a series of unrelated portraits, which were never made public.

The visits with Hall at his retreat imbued Marie with what she described as “the most focused sense of home” she'd ever felt. [18] One day in early 1938, Marie was volunteering at the PRS library when a visitor waiting for an appointment with Hall drew her into a casual conversation. He was Dr. Wallace McCook Cunningham, a balding middle-aged economist listed in *Who's Who* as a scholar of Shakespeare. [19]

Cunningham told her he'd devised a system of “anagrammatic codes” that enabled him to decipher hidden messages in the bard's plays and sonnets. Reading behind the lines, as it were, he told her that Bacon had stashed a treasure in gold, secrets to world peace and lost Shakespearean manuscripts in a vault buried in the Bruton Parish Episcopal Church grounds in Williamsburg, Virginia. Marie felt as though she had been hit by lightning. Rather than just talk about the vault, she thought, “Let's go dig it up!”



*Francis Bacon*

First, she asked Hall for permission to review his collection of 17th-century books on symbolism. It didn't take long to find what she was looking for in George Withers' *Emblemes, Ancient and Modern*. In her eyes, the volume was loaded with hidden messages about Bacon's buried treasure. [20] Marie was so excited she couldn't sleep that night. Her husband, who was busy directing construction of their dream house in Glendale, thought she was possessed by Bacon's ghost. Fearing she had lost touch with reality, a relative took charge of caring for her two young children, as well as the household chores.

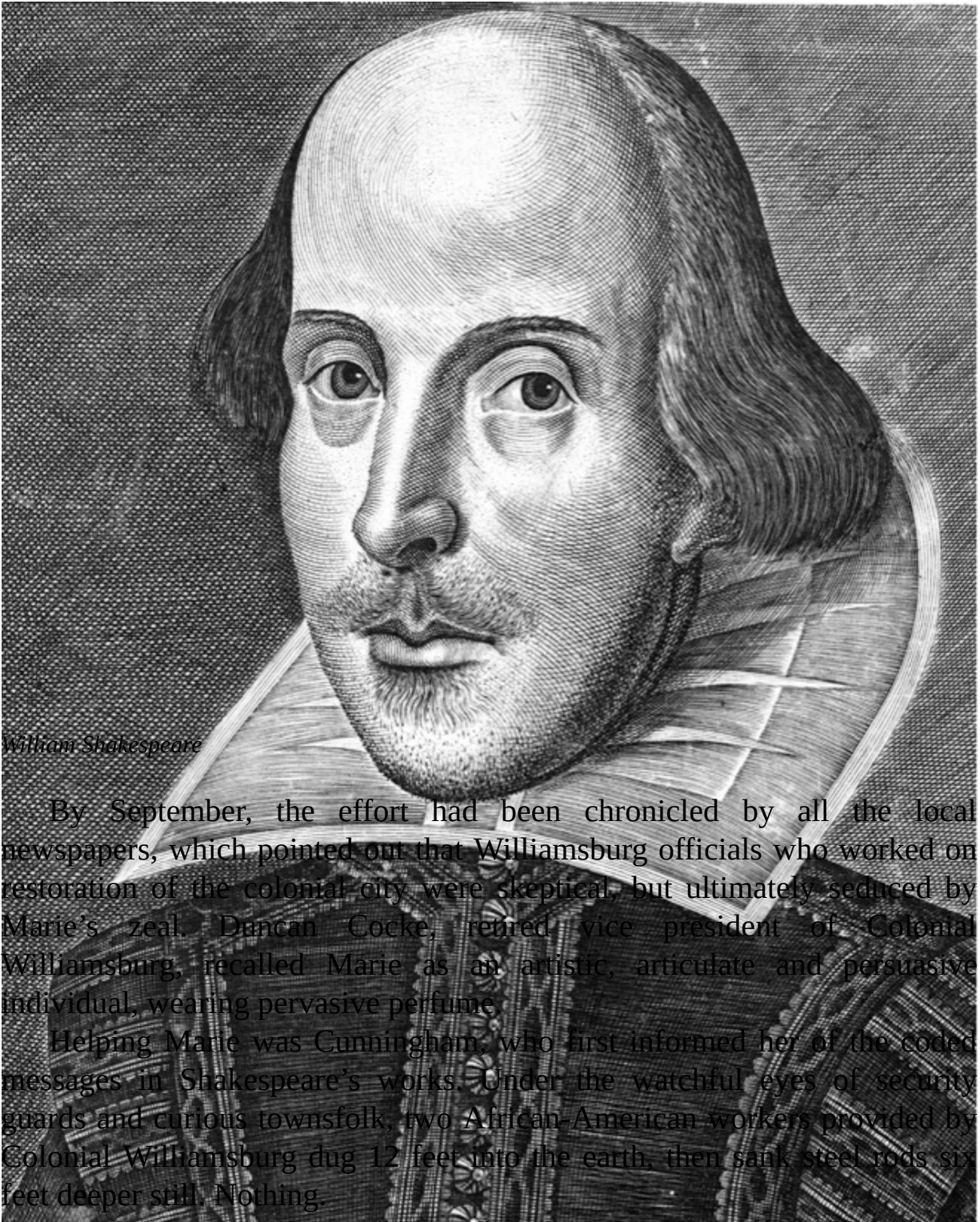
The foundation of the Bauers' new home had just been laid, jutting barely two feet above ground when Marie bought round-trip train tickets to Virginia. Before leaving, she visited Hall for his blessing, and to borrow the Withers book.

Marie departed Los Angeles on the train *Challenger* on May 16, 1938. Thirteen days later, she arrived in Colonial Williamsburg Inc., John D.

Rockefeller Jr.'s \$20 million restoration project, armed with Withers' book, an original copy of Bacon's *New Atlantis* and a copy of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*. She heard the peal of an afternoon bell, and it sounded to her like a warm welcome.

In a decade of discovery crackling with excitement over the unearthing of Egyptian tombs and expeditions to the last frontiers of South America, Africa and Asia, Marie's project soon attracted the interests of an assortment of spiritual dilettantes and dreamers.





*William Shakespeare*

By September, the effort had been chronicled by all the local newspapers, which pointed out that Williamsburg officials who worked on restoration of the colonial city were skeptical, but ultimately seduced by Marie's zeal. Duncan Cocke, retired vice president of Colonial Williamsburg, recalled Marie as an artistic, articulate and persuasive individual, wearing pervasive perfume.

Helping Marie was Cunningham, who first informed her of the coded messages in Shakespeare's works. Under the watchful eyes of security guards and curious townsfolk, two African-American workers provided by Colonial Williamsburg dug 12 feet into the earth, then sank steel rods six feet deeper still. Nothing.

Hecklers on the sidelines reportedly asked aloud how it could have been that Bacon—politician, poet, scholar, dramatist, philosopher and founder of modern science—could have found the time to write Shakespeare's volumes. If Bacon wrote Shakespeare, who wrote Bacon? Undaunted,

Marie studied the inscriptions on nearby tombstones and decided that they too contained hidden codes, directing them to a different spot. “Dig here!” she ordered, gesturing to a nearby plot where they uncovered an old foundation that seemed to jibe with her predictions. [21]

As dirt flew in the air and photographers leaped into the pit for a closer look, Marie and the workmen chipped a piece of a wooden box lined with thumbtacks. Excitedly she proclaimed it was a chunk of Bacon’s treasure, which by now she had dubbed the Bruton Vault.

But Colonial Williamsburg officials balked. They said it was a coffin and forbade her from digging any deeper. Before leaving for home, however, Marie enlisted the services of Mark Malamphy, an engineer with Hans Lundberg Company of Toronto, Ontario, who, on her behalf, made history by conducting the first geophysical survey for an archeological application in either North or South America, according to geophysicist Bruce W. Bevan, who in 2000 published a scientific analysis of the effort in *Archeological Prospection*.

Malamphy’s “electrical potential measurements” suggested the existence of a large object in the work site. Decades later, subsequent explorations at the site revealed, however, that it was anything but a cubic stone vault filled with 17th-century documents in copper cylinders. In an interview, Bevan said, “Malamphy was right; there was something unusual down there: a natural change in the composition of the sediment of compacted sand and shells.” [22]

Marie, who knew none of that at the time, returned to Glendale in triumph. The Bruton Vault had been found “without a shadow of doubt,” she proclaimed in her first book, *Foundations Unearthed*, published in 1942. The book spoke of a plan to create a “United Brotherhood of the Earth,” and the need for a national movement demanding that the federal government take on the job of opening the vault. [23]

When federal authorities came calling a year later, it wasn’t about her book. Somehow it was reported to the War Department that she had the notion that Hitler might release a “deathly thing” on the world if he was pushed into a corner. [24]

She also bragged of having discovered a formula “which would control energy and force released by electrons and atoms,” according to FBI documents. An inquiry by the Manhattan District of the United State’s

Engineer's Office in Chicago—a branch of the same federal agency that was secretly developing the first atom bomb at the time—eventually led to the doorstep of Marie's mentor, Manly P. Hall. Hall told investigators that while Marie was an expert in cracking codes buried in Lord Bacon's writings, he did not believe that she had been able to “tune in” to anything “big.” He also suggested that she had gleaned her ideas from three-hundred-year-old books in his library. Federal authorities dropped the inquiry.

Marie's staunchest ally was Fred Cole, a trim, dapper Long Beach electrician who said he “made a solemn vow” in 1947 to devote his life—and much of his income—to her cause. True to his word, Cole became her one-man army. Cole had a terrible crush on Marie, and great respect for Hall. In any case, he couldn't have asked for a more obliging spiritual leader. She almost instantly consented to let him accompany her to the homes of local metaphysicians such as Hubert Stowitts, the first American star of the Russian ballet who spent the later years of his life in Redondo Beach painting mandalas. [25]

Stowitts, who was smitten by Marie, gossiped wrongly that her idol, Hall, suffered from syphilis. Marie confided to friends that Stowitts liked her mystical drawings so much that he planned to abandon his own work in order to promote hers. [26]

Marie and Cole were inseparable. They traveled to astrological conventions on the East Coast and to Washington, where they tried to solicit help from Congressional leaders, FBI Chief J. Edgar Hoover, the U.S. Department of Justice, the Library of Congress, the People's Republic of China Consulate, and the President of the United States. Cole researched and wrote two bills seeking federal support for Marie's cause—the “World Peace Act of 1950,” and the “Leadership Emancipation Act of 1950”—then lobbied Congress for their passage. The same year, Cole planned to hire an aircraft to drop thousands of leaflets about Marie and her visions over the nation's capital. The plan was aborted at the last minute, he recalled.

It is not clear whether Hall knew the full extent of Marie's campaign. Yet her flirtatious nature and moxie had energized and stimulated him at a time when he was becoming increasingly sedentary, gray-haired and heavy. Having a beautiful, energetic woman on his elbow felt right at a time when California was gearing up for the postwar boom, Disneyland, and movies

starring fun-loving, occasionally misguided, teenagers. Beyond all that, he was swamped with invitations to prestigious gatherings across the city.

Hall was keynote speaker for graduating classes at the College of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons in Los Angeles. He delivered lectures on comparative religion at USC. He was master of ceremonies at the American Federation of Astrologers annual convention banquet held at the Hotel Biltmore in 1950.

Manly P. Hall and Marie Bauer stood together on December 5, 1950, in a small ceremony at the Hollywood home of Blanca Holmes, astrologer to stars including Marilyn Monroe, a minister in the Arcane Church of Astrology and wife of movie actor Stuart Holmes. At the critical moment, Holmes forgot the words to the wedding vows. Hall whispered them to her so that she could speak them back aloud. [27]

The newlyweds are believed to have honeymooned briefly at Riverside's Mission Inn, 45 miles southeast of Los Angeles, before moving into Hall's home on Commonwealth near Griffith Park. He had received the house—an unassuming structure with heavy drapes and pink interior—along with \$15,000 cash under terms of the last will and testament of his patron Caroline Lloyd, who died in 1946. Lloyd also left Hall a roughly \$10,000 portion of her estate's annual income from shares in the world's largest oil companies for 38 years. [28]

Lloyd family historians say Caroline's daughter, Estelle, was even more generous to Hall in her own last will and testament.

Hall was aware that as public figures he and Marie symbolized a modern occult marriage, one that fulfilled their own idealistic books and teachings. In fact, their home life was as rocky as it was unconventional. From the beginning, Manly and Marie slept in separate bedrooms. Her paranoia and explosive temper kept friends and relatives on edge. Not long after they were married, Marie had a nervous breakdown at Los Angeles International Airport after returning from an East Coast campaign to solicit support for her Bruton Vault project. Their first Christmas as husband and wife was a disaster. Marie believed the holiday season brought personal bad tidings because of the juxtaposition of the sun, moon and stars. [29]

In late 1950, while Hall was out of state on a lecture tour, Marie sold his Commonwealth house and bought a spacious Mediterranean-style estate a few blocks away on Hillhurst Drive.

Marie went to work redecorating the new place inside and out. Interior walls disappeared. Trees and shrubs were planted. With the help of Hall's handyman stepfather, Charlie Hall, a Japanese tea house was erected in the backyard.

"Charlie was a wonderful guy—he was the only one who never negated me," Marie recalled in an interview. "I'd say, 'Charlie, smack this wall out and put in some windows.' He did it. Meanwhile, I'd be outside mixing cement."

Marie and Charlie quickly transformed the property into a lush, exotic garden. Hall was angry that she had not consulted with him before buying the new home. But he could not deny the new house on a shady lane in the upscale north side of Los Feliz was a move in the right direction. Not quite far enough, according to Marie's daughter, Jo Ann.

"Ours was not a happy home," recalled Jo Ann, who was a teenager at the time of their marriage. "Mom had a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde personality. On top of that, there were all these people seeing things in Manly and mom that just weren't there. The inconsistencies and hypocrisy were depressing." For example, Marie's followers didn't mind that from the beginning of her writing career she had resolved never to use a dictionary, for definitions or spelling, because, as she explained in an essay called "Inquiry into the Nature of Space and of Life in Space," "I wanted to write for everybody, not just intellectuals or book-worms."

Marie's tirades were getting on Hall's nerves. In frustration, he placed late-night calls to Marie's youngest sister, Agnes, who lived in California at that time. Occasionally, Hall would stay at the home of a friend until the storm was over. "Manly called me many times when Marie went overboard with her crazy ideas," recalled Agnes Avery, 81. "Desperate and almost in tears, he would ask, 'Can you come over? I can't handle it. I don't know what to do.'"

"I'd go in there," she said, "and say, 'Marie, if you want to believe these things, fine. But why not cool off and let people around you have their peace?'"

In many ways, though, Hall had never had it so good. Although Marie picked on him relentlessly, she gave him a semblance of a family life. Beyond that, her looks were striking, and she really did try to please him by



whipping up his favorite meat and potato dishes, sweet cakes, cookies, puddings, pies, and strudels.

Hall rarely spoke harshly of his wife in public or in private. Instead, he quietly endured her attacks while working behind the scenes to ensure that she didn't hurt herself, others or his public image. That wasn't easy. Shortly after they were married, law enforcement authorities showed up at their doorstep wanting to talk to Marie. Exactly what they wanted from her is unclear. Marie's children believe it had to do with a failed attempt by local Nazi Party members to recruit her during World War II. But it could just as easily have been about Marie and Cole's repeated unsuccessful efforts to meet with federal officials about the Bruton Vault.

For a brief time, Cole had even lived in Washington as her "ambassador in residence." [30]

"While working as a maintenance man in Washington," Cole recalled, "I was changing light bulbs in a capital building office when I spotted W. Averill Harriman [then an advisor to President Eisenhower] and tried to tell him about the Bruton Vault. My boss screamed, 'Hey, you're not supposed to be talking to these people!'

"Another time, I shoved some of Marie's booklets under the arm of a young and promising Congressman by the name of John F. Kennedy, who just gave me a funny look."

Cole returned to Los Angeles in 1951 with news of defeat. "I sat in Manly and Marie's living room one night and burst into tears," he said. "I told them, 'I tried to represent your work and I failed.' They commiserated."

From then on, however, Hall referred to Cole sarcastically as "The Senator" behind his back.

The Halls still appeared as an occult celebrity couple in Los Angeles. They drove to dinner parties and fundraisers in Hall's big black Lincoln. They hosted lively spiritual gatherings in their home. They lectured at PRS on how best to improve harmony in marriage, raise well-adjusted children and conquer anxiety amid the proliferation of nuclear weapons. They experimented with alternative medicines and healing techniques, and injected themselves with B-vitamin energy boosters, all popular with the movie industry crowd.

Hall used his celebrity to counter a number of postwar ideas that were attracting huge followings. Existentialism, which holds that each individual must oppose a basically hostile and purposeless universe through the exercise of his free will, was a dangerous “emancipation from purpose” at a time when “sympathetic forms of spiritual nutrition” were needed, Hall said. [31] He railed against an emerging corporate culture, calling it “shrewd, competitive and efficient,” but “not profoundly wise, ethical or good.” He dismissed psychiatrist Karl Menninger’s notion that the search for permanent peace was actually a thinly disguised wish to die, as antithetical to time-tested religious prescriptions for harmonious living through tradition and custom.

“Unless we attain some degree of freedom from personal chaos,” Hall wrote in his magazine, “it may be difficult to bring about a reorganization of society or the improvement of the collective human pattern.” [32]

Other essays addressed issues closer to home. An advice column he wrote for his *Horizon* magazine seemed aimed at Marie and Cole. “There is also something amiss in the rather familiar situation of some so-called visitor from the hinterland burdening a totally unqualified mortal with a project which would require the wisdom of Solomon and the ingenuity of an international banker . . . To entrust a docile housewife with the formation of a world religion or some tired businessman, who has never been able to balance his own budget, with reconstruction of the economic system, would appear decidedly unreasonable.” [33]

Probably it was a desire to relieve his congregation of anxieties and harmful dreams that moved Hall in the early 1950s to issue a stream of easily digestible essays. Students who had been prepped for Egyptian magic, Masonic rituals and alchemical secrets were now being told to relax and consider the philosophy of Oriental flower arrangements, the need for internal maturity and guardian angels.

Hall had not turned his back on magic and utopian ideals, but more and more, he was sharing such notions only with a select few. Leila Sherman, an artist with an open mind who had been following Hall’s work since the 1940s, was more interested in the chiseled lines of the philosopher’s face, which were prominently displayed on PRS letterhead, book covers and advertisements.



*Rocket scientist and occultist Jack Parsons*

Sherman was 39 and living in a Hollywood apartment complex owned by actors Wallace Beery and his brother Noah when Marie learned that she had created a remarkable bas-relief carving of Hall's head. "Manly and Marie came by the apartment wanting to see it," Sherman recalled six decades later. "When they walked in the door, a friend of mine directed Manly to a chair that she said would be comfortable. He chuckled and said, 'My dear, it's not a question of comfort. It's a question of sturdiness.'" [34]

"He was pleased with the sculpture and they stayed for afternoon tea," she said. "But Manly didn't say boo the whole time because Marie talked a blue streak about digging something up that would prove Shakespeare's plays were written by Lord Bacon."

"I was a little in awe of Manly just the same," she said. "He was tremendously egotistical. The middle of his body was large and very round. His legs were very strong. His eyes piercing, but cold."

A dinner party at Hall's home for *Brave New World* author Aldous Huxley, his wife Laura, and Church of Religious Science founder Ernest Holmes, also fell flat amid Marie's relentless self-aggrandizing chatter. [35]

The year ended with a setback that marked the end of an era for Hall by claiming the lives of two people who had been with him from the start. On December 23, 1951, 83-year-old Walter Young, who had donated his home to the philosopher's publishing business three decades earlier, was in conversation with Hall at a Vermont Avenue theater when he collapsed on the floor. Young was taken to a local hospital where he was pronounced dead. About 45 minutes later, his wife, 75-year-old Mary Young, went to the hospital, where she collapsed and died after being informed of her husband's death. [36] The \$33.73 that Walter had in his pocket, and the couple's modest bank savings, were donated to Hall and his society.

Los Angeles got a shocking view of the darkest fringe of the occult world on June 18, 1952, when rocket expert John "Jack" Parsons, co-founder of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena and secret practitioner of sex magic, was killed in an explosion that ripped apart his garage. Parsons was 31 when he dropped a batch of mercuric fulminate, setting off a blast that blew off his right arm, breaking his other arm and both legs, and leaving a gaping hole in his jaw. Later that day, his mother committed suicide by taking sleeping pills.

Parsons was a student of Aleister Crowley, the English occultist who called himself "Beast 666" and was branded by the press as "the wickedest man in the world." Parsons and his associates had been trying to conceive a "magical child" on a black altar inside his two-story home on South Orange Grove in Pasadena. [37]

There is no indication that Hall ever visited Parsons' home, or even crossed paths with those who did. Hall's writings would probably have seemed far too watered down for their tastes. However, he was familiar with Crowley and his works. Depending on who he was talking to, Hall variously described Crowley as "a horrible man" or "a great poet."

In any case, he owned a collection of Crowley's books, which were stored on a library shelf that was off-limits to the public. He also for years kept an autographed copy of one of Crowley's paeans to debauchery, *Summa Spes*, in the top drawer of his office desk. That poem was written in 1903 and opens with the lines:

Existence being sorrow,  
The cause of it desire,  
A merry tune I borrow  
To light upon the Lyre:  
If death destroy me quite,  
Then I cannot lament it;  
I've lived, kept life alight,  
And damned if I repent it!

Let me die in a ditch,  
Damnably drunk,  
Or lipping a punk,  
Or in bed with a bitch!  
I was ever a hog;  
Dung? I am one with it!  
Let me die like a dog;  
Die and be done with it!

When asked by an associate what such a thing was even doing in his office, Hall explained that it served as a constant reminder of how low human intellect can go in the name of art.





AUSTIN CH  
MANAGER

RMSEY

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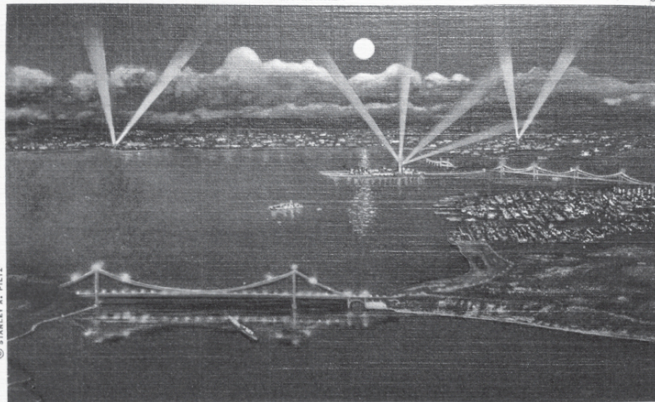
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15TH AND HARRISON STREETS  
OAKLAND 12, CALIF

Mrs Maine B. Hall  
2308 N. Hillhurst  
Los Angeles 27  
Calif.

NIGHT VIEW, SAN FRANCISCO BAY METROPOLITAN AREA



SAN FRANCISCO IN FOREGROUND, OAKLAND, BERKELEY, ALAMEDA AND EAST BAY CITIES IN DISTANCE

Manly  
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## CHAPTER 5

# Mystics in Love

THE LOVE LETTERS BETWEEN MANLY HALL AND MARIE BAUER SPAN A PERIOD OF SEVEN YEARS, FROM 1944 TO 1951.

These years were among the most important of Hall's career, and in many ways they also were among the most difficult.

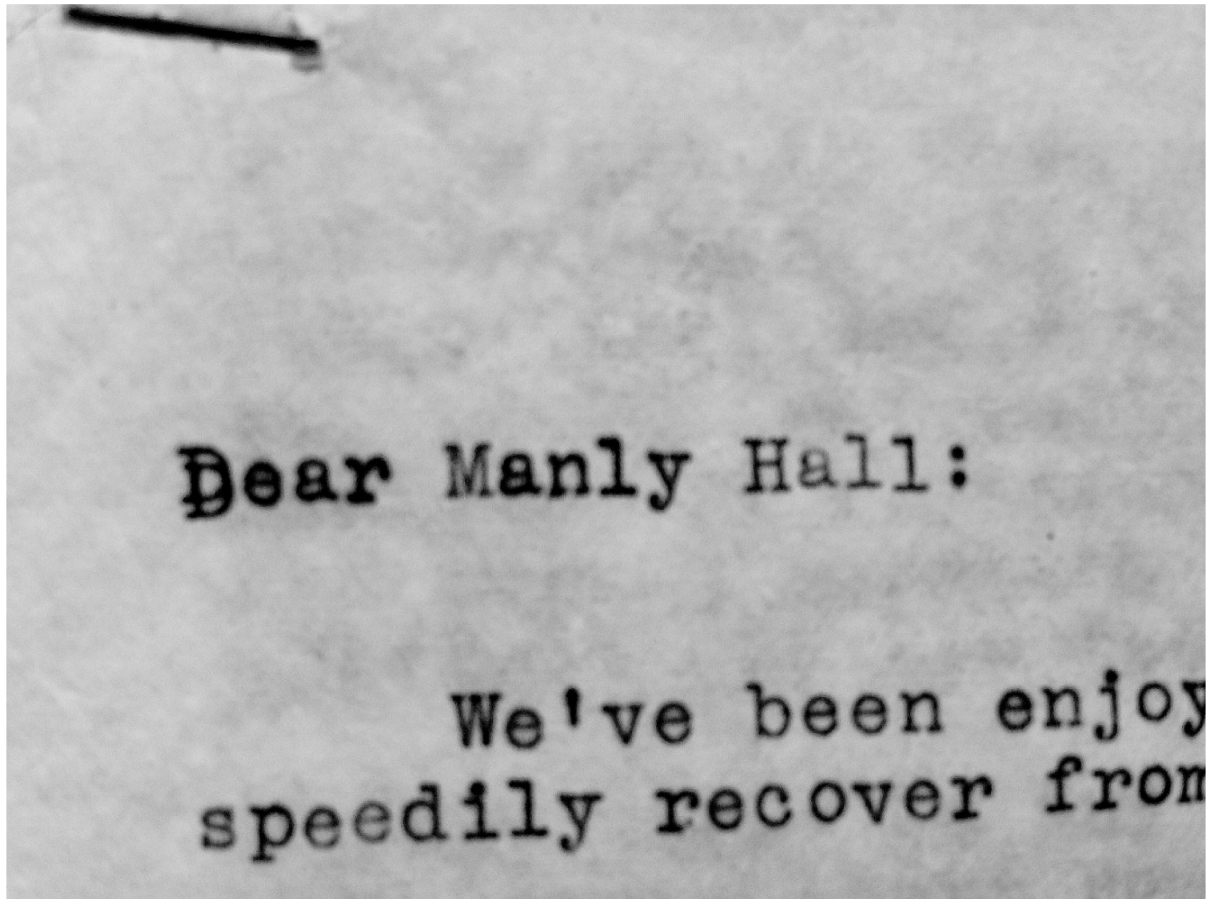
The letters—hastily typed, handwritten and scrawled on hotel stationery just before and after Hall and Bauer married—are the closest thing to an unvarnished autobiographical portrait of these Los Angeles mystics in love. Through them, we participate in the interplay of clashing spiritual notions, egos and dueling personal needs that foreshadow the stormy years that would follow.

The letters were culled from a larger body of correspondence preserved by the couple's friend, film producer Dan York, for their relevance and interest. More than half were written in the 1940s, a period when Bauer, a mother of two, was living in Glendale, California, and preparing to divorce her husband to start a new life with Hall, who was emerging from the pall of his wife's suicide in 1941.

Some of the letters have been reproduced in full. Relevant passages of others shed light on how they were living and loving at specific points in time.

Many of Hall's letters are scrawled in longhand. That's significant because Hall, for most of his life, preferred to dictate his letters, lectures, books and essays. That's because he adhered to the Rosicrucian notion that writing in longhand sapped one's vitality.

Where possible, dates and locations are given. With few exceptions, only portions of Marie's letters to Hall are included. As readers will quickly realize, she has a penchant for long, convoluted metaphysical manifestos involving her search for the long-lost Bruton Vault. In some letters, she writes in the third person, as though in a sort of trance.



*Marie to Manly*

When Hall met Bauer for the first time, he was 33 and struggling through a bleak and stultifying marriage to his former secretary, Fay B. de Ravenne, an astrologer and aspiring writer hounded by persecutory voices and unseen forces.

Bauer, 30, also was prone to hallucinations and mood swings, and she was always on the lookout for hidden codes embedded in posters, advertising billboards, books and movies. In many of her letters, Bauer tries



to convince Hall that they were made for each other because of their past lives.

She also warns Hall of her family's close connection with "Teufel," her name for demonic forces. "I hope that doesn't scare you," she says.

Several of her letters begin as a criticism of something Hall said in a lecture or in one of his books, then unspool into nonsense: "To the mind of man, for instance, a creative triplicity can only become a trinity when the concentrated three-nature of Spirit is conceived as being circumscribed by its own unity-conception, the divine four-nature of Love. Thereby concentrated, male-female divinity (4:3) contained within the radius of causal three-nature, is correlated to the created 4:3 or seven constitution of the universal structure, also within the causal three-nature. That correlation is testified to by the divinity of Space itself."

Bauer never hid her flaws from Hall, including that she was a lousy wife to her husband and a cold fish to her two small children: "Even to this day, I don't know how to act normally affectionate with the children. I know it isn't good for them, and might cause them similar troubles. It is the main reason why I think they are better off in schools than too much around me. Otherwise I wouldn't let them go."

Hall, a grieving widower at the time, was intrigued. To him, she was attractive, energetic and hungry to absorb the most abstract notions of an occult universe, whose existence Manly P. Hall sought to describe and define.

But it wasn't easy containing her explosive temper and hyper-defensive personality. In one letter, Hall advises, "There are some simple rules, Marie, for folks like us who are trying to do a very big job. Accept these rules without question or resistance, for they can never be broken by any human being, but if you try to break these rules, they will break you."

Bauer, however, had a plan. She felt certain that, with Hall on her side, Hollywood would soon come calling. She even expected to play the lead role in an epic motion picture of her search for the Bruton Vault. The producers "will have to do some grooming," she concedes, "but I'd try anyway."

In 1944, a year before her divorce from George Bauer became final, a new mood—and a new strategy for securing Hall's support for her cause—began to take hold of her.

Bauer for the first time acknowledges that her feelings toward Hall are “not entirely platonic.” She also breaks the surprising news that, like it or not, she’s “pregnant” with a literary work in progress about the Bruton Vault that has two fathers—Hall and Francis Bacon.

“As surely as I am the mother to whom the child is coming to life, so sure are you, Manly Hall, the father,” she says. “Not only did my first acquaintance with metaphysics come through you as a powerful and instantaneous impact, but you know well that you also introduced me to Francis Bacon—for which I am ever grateful. Though my general immaturity was at first centered in hero worship of both you and Bacon, I did derive from it initial courage and persistence.”

“So please,” she adds, “don’t think that my saying you are the Father of the work, is any accusation; much less a threat that you have obligations, or that I have a right to expect anything.”

In the same breath, however, she demands that Hall edit, publish and promote the “work” she believes is the last hope for saving a world gone wrong.

It’s hard to imagine that Hall, a minister with years of experience in helping congregants grapple with troubled personal lives, could succumb to such extraordinarily selfish pestering.

Yet sometime in April, 1947, their relations became intimate. “Personally, I have no sense of guilt on account of it having happened, but am glad it did,” she writes. “I also am convinced that by your evaluation of life and circumstances you don’t really need me much. Not as much as I need you.”

Exactly what transpired may never be known. Decades later, Bauer confided to relatives and friends that “Manly never consummated our marriage. He preferred men.”

Yet the letters Hall wrote after their marriage in 1950 are filled with unabashed affection and endearments. He is her “Adam duck.” She is his “Eve duck.” Together, he joshes lovingly, they are partners in a law firm he calls “Duck and Duck.”

“I don’t plan to go to the office before Monday unless there is an emergency—maybe we can do something special over the weekend!!!” he writes in 1951. “All kinds of hugs, squeezes, umphs, ou-u-u-s, and the like, until I can deliver them in person. I’m getting more homesick and lonesome



every minute—take good care of yourself and keep my room warm and happy with very high duck vibrations.”

He closes the letter with three cartoon renderings labeled, in turn, Adam Duck, Eve Duck and Serpent Duck. Such humor speaks volumes about his devotion to a second mentally unstable wife with spiritual pretensions of her own.

December 21, 1943.

Dear Mr. Hall:

Since I have gotten in the habit of writing you, - and don't send cards -, please accept my very best wishes for Xmas and all of 1944!

Had firmly intended to hear your lecture Sunday, but was promptly confined to bed with a cold.

Anyway I have one very sincere and personal Xmas wish, - hope you don't mind if I say it: - That some day you will really know the Xmas mystery in your heart, - even as related to Christianity. Not in the conventional, generally accepted sense, but the way it will be taught to all peoples, - maybe by you.



November 26, 1944

*Dear Manly*

*The only loyalty I believe in is loyalty to the ideal. It unites without chaining and doesn't use "devotion" as a substitute for habit.*

*You need not be afraid of me on any such implications. That I do love you is true from my point of view. I finally told you because "nervous breakdowns" do make people awfully upset, and also afraid that another one will come along if you don't do something about it.*

*But I assure you, it is neither the love of a "cold fish" or of a frustrated female whose ultra-devotional attitudes are unrequited. It is honest, warm and very human, and quite reconciled with the definition of friendship in testament of Beauty: "Friendship is in loving rather than in being loved, which is its mutual benediction and its recompense." Maybe I should leave out the word mutual. But if you are inclined to think I am running after you for unworthy reasons, please give me credit for trying to win a friend for the work and for me, because it is awfully hard to do without.*

*I also learned that it is pretty risky business to dare going to hell after somebody. Because you're likely to get the hell you dared for without making the rescue intended. But then it may be good training for any other hells I might be going to. That kind of training needs to be gradual, else you don't survive.*

*Still, if Cupid has even an ounce of justice in his system, and should still be sport shooting his arrows indiscriminately, were I to trail you to earth or anyplace else again, I hope he will hit you instead, and that it bounces back at him, so you both get a taste of the medicine. And I also hope I won't still have big enough a hang-over to rush and bandage it right up!*



December 26, 1944

*Dear Manly*

*Sometimes I am sure I knew Mary Magdalene quite well. For the simple reason, that Christ had to chase away seven devils out of her before he*

could teach her. One thing I am sure of, that being himself, and knowing her, he realized well, that she would retain liking and understanding for the seven, and maybe for some others who went before. Maybe Christ and Mary M. understood each other so well, because Christ deeply loved Lucifer, his twin brother, and she was pretty closely related to him.

I suppose to some people this would sound awful. But maybe it isn't coincidence that my grandfather was a "teufel." A very nice one. To make it somewhat worse by trying to make it better, they named him "Christian Teufel." Grandmother and mother were "Magdalene Teufel." Grandmother died Christmas Eve after having given birth to sixteen children at the age of forty. Being the first girl in our family there was big argument about naming me Magdalene, but father insisted I be named after the mother of Christ.

In one way or another a relationship to Mary Magdalene has trailed through me through my whole life in sort of funny ways. Not alone because Martha had to take over my whole family when I went off, but long after that. When I was still very little my parents received a beautiful large oil-painting for me from an old artist. It is a portraiture of Mary Magdalene, no other figures present. The whole composition is very dramatic. One breast of the figure is bare, though she is otherwise heavily robed.



January 21, 1945.

Dear Manly:

Shortly after I wrote you I began to feel lots better. So I am quite all right again. There must be some cathartic or therapeutic value in coming out with things, and stopping them before they get too much of a hold. I don't know how you feel about it, but I am surely glad I am learning to help myself that way. I do hope you don't mind too much, because you probably will get letters from me for some time.

Along with getting back to normal, I got a very good idea, which would help Bacon's work, yours and mine, without pinning it directly to either. I am quite eager to see what you think of it. If there are any good objections you will have to find them, because I can't see any. Funny it didn't occur to me before.

Wish you'd see me for a bit this coming week. I am going to pick the Bible-book up on my way down-town Tuesday. I think I can spend a few hours in the Library Friday afternoon. Would Friday work all-right with you? I'll find out from Dave.

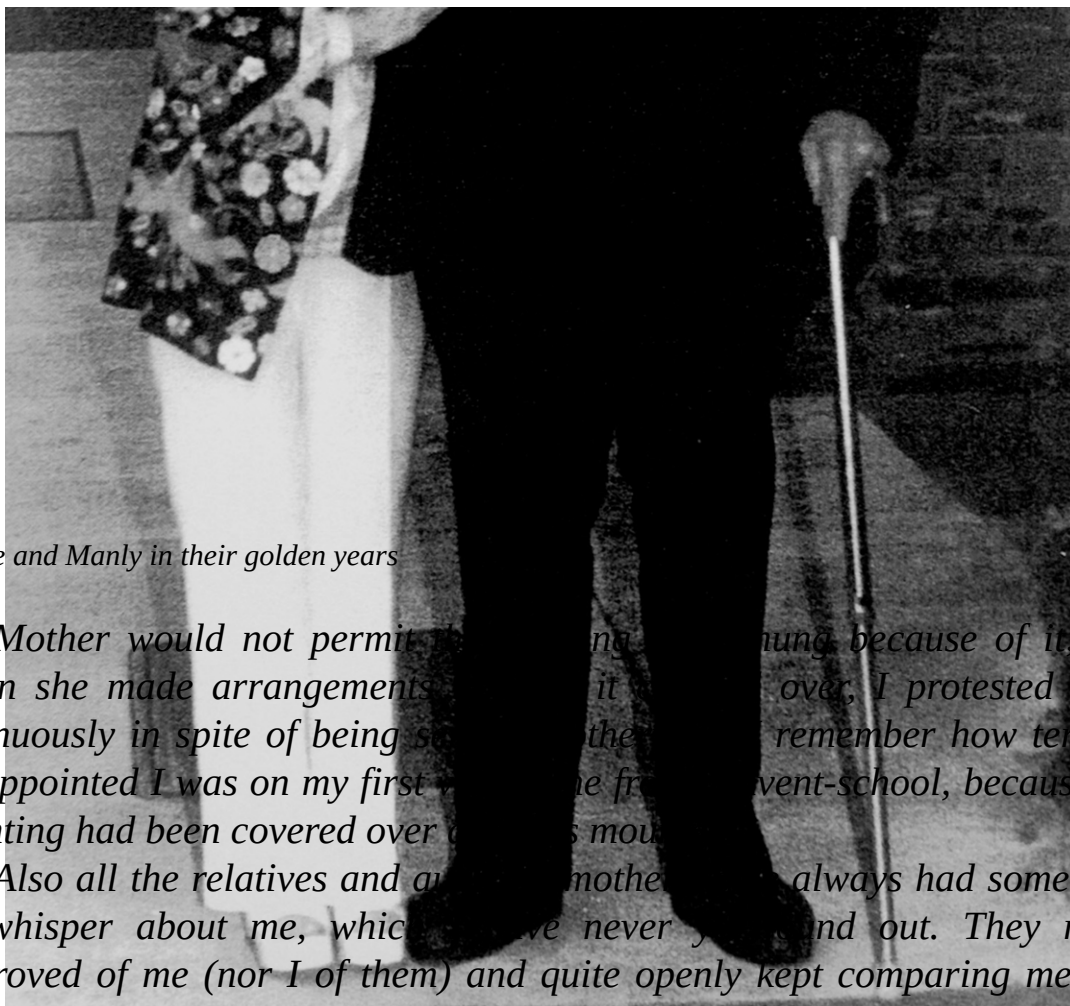
Hope you are fine and not working too hard.

Marie

Marie to Manly, 1945







*Marie and Manly in their golden years*

Mother would not permit the painting of the church because of it, and when she made arrangements for it to be done over, I protested quite strenuously in spite of being so young. I remember how terribly disappointed I was on my first day at the convent-school, because the painting had been covered over and the church was mouldy.

Also all the relatives and acquaintances of Mother's always had something to whisper about me, which I have never found out. They never approved of me (nor I of them) and quite openly kept comparing me to a notorious "witch" in the family, who had been grandmother's sister, and who had been rumored about through the whole countryside.

I don't know what makes me go back to my childhood, which seems many centuries removed, except that these psychoanalysts seem to insist upon digging in that direction. And when you think about things, almost anything takes on significance. Personally, I don't put much stock in it, except that it might explain my natural partiality for the devil, without which I don't think I could have truly understood Christ.

Hope my talking like this doesn't scare you, because it is really true.



January 13, 1945

Dear Manly

*When I pass out, it usually has a good deal to do with the same situation, and coming back it is the same drawing-point. There must be some way of adjusting to it so it doesn't get violent. If you know a way, I promise to abide by doctor's orders. I don't think I'm otherwise so unreasonable, but in this instance, my reason and pride and whatever else is mixed with it, has certainly a pretty mean way of aggravating it.*

*Wish you needed my help just half as much as I do yours, then I'd feel more even about it all around.*



February 16, 1945

*Dear Manly*

*Seriously stating the purpose of this letter: For you I hope that having gained insight into my work the way you have, and having known me fairly well, will at least contribute to bringing your personal life and your work to a truly living and creative focus. Hope someday you will be honestly glad our paths have crossed. I am glad they did.*

*For myself I hope that this will finally secure me an honest release from your "psychological harem." God only knows why I got caught in it. I hope he doesn't mind helping me get out if I have served my time.*

*Often I have tried back-doors to escape and have always landed in some dark alleys and back again from where I started. Though I've been in it a long time, I never became of it, because real love protects from servitude, no matter how eager it makes one to be a real service. I think it is something you don't really know, but I hope someday you will find out.*

*I do admit that each time I came back from these dead-end attempts, I saw clearer where I personally stand in this involvement with you. So this time it occurred to me to leave by way of the front door. To state progressive conclusions in a nutshell:*

*My attachment is by no means as 'heroic' as it ought to be if I were 'big.' It is not nearly as platonic as it used to be when I still wanted to be big, and you were much bigger in my eyes than you are—which was a lot bigger than any human being ought to be in any human being's eyes (disregarding the actual true estimate).*

*In size you will always have a jump on me in more ways than one. But that point can easily be conceded to Nature's sense of equilibrium playing tricks on shrimps or crabs, to make them fall for big fishes.*

*Until some months ago I thought on basis of your work and mine there could actually grow real friendship and eventual co-labor. I don't think so any more, though I would very much like to turn out to be wrong.*

*I don't think so not alone because the basis for friendship with me is lacking in you, but for quite different reasons, it was never there with me either. Only I didn't see it very clear. Though there hasn't ever been anyone with whom I wanted more to be friends, I can realize that there is quite a lot of truth in the general contention that when a person falls in love it is hard for things to stay on friendship basis. I never believed that before, and maybe that is why I had to find it out this way.*

*I don't think you will understand what made me see clearly. But you might catch on theoretically. I'll tell you anyway because I truly think nothing better could happen to you, provided you can apply the situation to either some 'harem-favorite' or better still to your 'lady of dreams' who I hope is outside of the harem.*

*If there is not a real living one in your life now, I sincerely hope that there will be one who can knock you and your placidity plenty off your feet, has just a little modern and positive ideas and attitudes, and wants to be the mother of your child.*

*I'm glad it came out easier than I thought. That last line did it. I realize that when you are a mother who loves her children, even though she isn't what you would call a good mother, and when you're a wife who has never really changed her affection for her husband, she can't just say she would like to be the mother of somebody else's baby. But when those are the facts which slowly but surely dawned on her, how else can she say it without lying.*

*Maybe it just goes to prove that idealistic loves which grow retroplatonian, are very unorthodox. Likely because the people to whom they happen, grow up that way by nature. But if Nature lets crazy people be born with an instinctive fear of marriage, and an even more instinctive desire for babies, she ought to expect almost anything, especially when she proceeds to present the idea with unmistakable emphasis—and after the crazy person had become sane enough not to want any babies anymore.*

Child-psychology surely can get very complicated on the simple basis that mothers want more babies. Or else it is just the natural family-version in a case where a girl marries a very nice fellow because she likes him, because it is better for babies when parents are married and because she thinks they can really build something worth building. They have very nice children and love them, but all the time the mother, who never could get to feeling like a wife ought to, is miserable being married until she gets it sealed with a divorce. There hasn't been any change in affections nor offence in relations, and yet it is easier to be married to the same fellow when you're divorced from him.

I often hoped George would find someone who has better qualities as a wife and a companion, but he doesn't want to. He says I turned out better than he expected, which makes me wonder how he ever got the courage to get married.

Having learned to see things differently at least with my mind, I sincerely hope next time I won't be dispatched to earth so inhibited about expressing affection, that even as a tiny baby I wouldn't let my mother or anyone kiss me, and later loved my father because he didn't do such things.

Even to this day I don't know how to act normally affectionate with the children. I know it isn't good for them, and might cause them similar troubles. It is the main reason why I think they are better off in schools than too much around me. Otherwise I wouldn't let them go.

Funny, a friend of George just called to remind us that today is our wedding anniversary. Must be as good a day as any to be writing this letter. Never realized before how close we came to picking the anniversary of the beginning of the Flood. (Noah's Flood)

Sometimes I think that the way I am hooked up with you and with George is similar to the way Eve was hooked up with Cain and Abel in my Bible-book. Only this time, I hope, it is on the way up instead of down. Even astrologically his sun and yours are very close together. Sun 18 Pisces, Jupiter 4 Pisces.

Manly I know Bacon loves you very much, and I think me too. And maybe he staked his whole hope for the final coming to life of his endeavors and the faith and confidence born of it. He realized that a great deal you have sincerely tried to reawaken, teach and propagate through lecturing and writing, will go with the waters of the flood. But he also knew that

*continued sincerity, and endeavor born of love for truth, will gather and preserve the life essence of your work, and make your teaching truly fruitful.*

*He must have known my relationship to you better than I did. He probably felt pretty sorry for me because of all the mixed-up weaknesses and dreams which were always bigger than I, and he became the father of my work through you, because he knew your work would take life in it too.*

*He knew too, that the child could feed on the emotional intensity, elation and tears that keep going on inside of me. He took a chance that I would grow up with the growth of the work, and that my vision would clear so that I couldn't possibly help wanting to make you and the word see. In his heart he knew that you wouldn't let him down.*

*You needn't take all this literally, but in essence it is true. And so are a great many other things, Manly, which you would probably smile at and think they are silly talk, and much too 'personal' in approach.*

*You probably won't believe this, but it is nevertheless a fact. I've already tried several times, but someday I'll find out in detail, if it was instigated by the doctors, or if the people around me could see her too, or if I only did. It certainly is the clearest thing I remember about the Sanitarium in Pasadena. Only I was surprised to find out that you had a grandmother. I never had known any of mine, and had never thought of you in connection with any.*

*Three years or so ago, after I came out of the coma, I had to learn to walk again, and it took me a while to catch on where I was. The nurses and doctors appeared to me very automatic in motion and sort of dead. I didn't want them near or to assist me.*

*But there was a little old gray-haired lady, who was always there when I tried. She had her hands folded as if she were praying, and told me quite often that she was your grandmother, and she would help me and protect me against the others. I didn't mind her at all and she was very glad about it. After that week at the hospital I never saw her again.*

*I've often thought about it and wondered what made her say that. When I think back she seemed very eager and worried about something, and maybe she was trying to make me understand, and all I did was feel relieved when she was there. In case you never knew your grandmother, she might have been troubled about never having taught your mother something*



*about raising you, or she was worried about you. Else it was just a good psychological trick by the doctors, though I don't see why they would pick on your grandmother. I suppose I'll be haunting my grandchildren's troubles one day.*



June 29, 1945

*Dear Manly*

*Happenings, not necessarily out of the ordinary, are so timed, that they keep answering back to thoughts and observations quite continuously and consistently. What I know, for instance, to be symphonic music, on the radio, becomes clearly, and very revealingly articulate, so I hear words with the melody. It all is very elating and often surprising, so that I can't help comparing and checking up, or making remarks to those around.*

*I can well realize that much of it, particularly inquiries about things they maybe do not hear or see, seem disquieting and irrational to them, and they start to worry. But it takes me a while to catch on to the fact, and by that time surroundings, and the way things ordinarily appear, become quite insignificant. I've also noticed that at the time I can look straight at the sun for any length of time (even when it is directly overhead) without feeling any hurt in my eyes. I can see beautiful color patterns, etc. Altogether there is certainly nothing irrational about any of it, much to the contrary. But I do realize that the present sort of recedes and seems quite unreal, while I can see mentally way into the past and way ahead into the future. But it doesn't alarm me in the least, except that I want to reassure the family when they start acting worried. It certainly doesn't register as a danger signal nor do I by any stretch of the imagination expect to land in the hospital.*

Dear Manly:

I loved being with you very much. Maybe you will be glad to hear that the prolonged calm, I hardly recognize myself

My whole washbasked full of this wee with the greatest of ease with the iron board in day-dream-fashion. That is not you. Besides I slept sound as a baby the

Now I know what the correspondence of

Marie to Manly

*If only they would let things take their natural course, it would come to a focus for a few days when I should be left alone, probably in bed, because I can see things of great value, which usually take on deep significance later, and help me to understand.*

*In the meanwhile, it was decided I needed shock treatments. Nothing is said to me about it. I suppose the assumption is that I am 'off.' So I am humored and under false pretenses taken to a hospital. Once in, try to get out! Luckily the machine for shock treatments went out of function about the time I landed there. It had to be repaired at Cal Tech. So I was put to bed to rest. Aside from having food stuffed down my throat, when certainly it wouldn't hurt to go without it for just three or four days, and some other interruptions, which I'd rather tell you than write about, things did come to a focus, and went off normally (at least to me) anyway.*

*By the time the machine came back, I certainly no longer needed shock treatments, even according to their diagnosis. But they were administered*

anyway. I protested and evidently antagonized the psychiatrists plenty. Besides I was justly incensed over treatment accorded to other patients by the nurses. I suppose if I had sense I should have kept still. But I didn't. Called arrogant, conceited and defiant, and I don't know what else, I was made to pay for it in no uncertain terms. All in all, if I hadn't lived through it, I would believe it possible.

Though the shock treatments do knock your memory for a loop temporarily, luckily they didn't erase recollection of the experience—good and bad. After a while, the doctors and nurses changed their attitudes and in a perplexed way began to question me about metaphysics, etc. Even though I had no personal resentment, I didn't feel inclined to say much while I had to stay there. Besides some things I wouldn't know how to explain. I know some of the doctors are much puzzled and interested. When I left it was arranged that I come back within a month or so to talk about it. Please, Manly, talk to me first.

But I do feel related to you because you are the Father of my work. Having accepted things as they are this long, I would be happy and contented if at least you can feel friendship for me as the mother. What worries me most is that you might be scared away from my work because of me. Especially now when I am much calmer, and much of the pain has gone out of me. Please take another chance. If you gave me up for hopeless I couldn't take it.

Adjustment with the family appears to be going in the right direction. I know they mean well, and I can see where I can use a lot more sense, and stop being on the defensive, or try to force things, at home and with my work.

The divorce became final in May. I wanted to go through with it. George feels pretty bad about it, and asked me not to. Even if I am not much of a wife, he feels pretty lost when I'm not around. I have to admit that during the last year he has made more spontaneous and sustained effort toward better understanding than I ever thought he would. I've decided to try for another year as well as I know how.

I have a plan in mind, which, I am quite certain, you will like too. And if you do, you'll see, I won't be hard to handle, and it could work out very well in a lot of ways. No matter what you think about me, I have full faith in your integrity, and of late a whole more into your better judgment. I am

*pretty much convinced that in connection with my work I simply can't get along without you for a good many reasons. Besides, I know for sure that your work not only shouldn't, but can't very well stay apart. So if you have a better sense, there ought to be a way. It's the main subject I'd like to talk to you about.*

*So, please, Manly, will you see me sometime in July?*



No Date

*Dear Manly Hall*

*As far as my whole relationship to the work is concerned, it is in every way like giving birth to a child, only much more so and on a different level. True to form, I have had a number of psychological fainting spells, just as I had physical ones when carrying Peter and Jo Ann. All that really matters is that the child will live and be as well formed as possible. Without having any martyr complex, I'd give my life for that and more, if it would help. But I suppose all mothers feel they are going to die in childbirth.*

*As surely as I am the mother to whom the child is coming to life, so sure are you, Manly Hall, the father. Not alone did my first acquaintance with metaphysics come through you as a powerful and instantaneous impact, but you know well that you also introduced me to Francis Bacon—for which I am ever grateful. Thought my general immaturity was at first centered in hero worship of both you and Bacon I did derive from it initial courage and persistence.*

*So please don't think that my saying you are the Father of the work, any accusation; much less a threat that you have obligations, or that I have a right to expect anything.*

*That plea is: please stand by me and help me through. Since it started almost 8 years ago or so, 9 years may be the approximate span, and the time cannot be so very far off. There isn't anyone else I know who could help.*

*If you don't want to, you won't have to acknowledge the child. Still, I wouldn't be a bit surprised if it is going to look so much like you, that you*

*can't deny it. Maybe it will manage to win your heart. Children have a way of doing that.*



November 23, 1945

*Dear Manly*

*You have told me, and I know I'll have to condense my writings, organize and remold the language with due respect to semantics, and stress the applied and workable aspect of abstracts. Also it should definitely be decided what ought to and what ought not be brought out, how and when, by somebody with more practical judgment than mine.*

*The way it is: Lately, when I try to condense I find that insight has somehow expanded so, that the condensed form is at least 10 times as long as the original. Trying to remold language—I really don't know how. Maybe because I've been talking these things so long just to me and my typewriter. Abstracts have come to look so fundamentally concrete to me, that I can hardly tell when they are naked or properly dressed. What to bring out what not: to my judgment is very inadequate without yours, because I naturally seem to see it from your and my angle. Besides, my enthusiasm hasn't learned to respect my judgment enough not to drown it out. But I would like to listen to yours.*

*Two. For varied reasons I feel and know that I ought to go out lecturing pretty soon. With you on my side, or with me somehow, I'd feel strong and unafraid, without you lost and nervous, maybe intimidated again. Furthermore, even though I've got a lot to talk about, and when it comes out spontaneously, I have everything there is to learn about lecturing, and would rather learn it from you than anybody, and be most likely to become an apt pupil. Besides, as far as subject matter is concerned it is increasingly difficult for me to keep mine and yours apart, because they don't want to be and can't much longer anyway. And when others start bringing up points of apparent difference I can't keep on saying, Personally, I love Manly very much, but on this point or that I'll have to contradict, etc. It would be different if you were right there and it were just sort of a friendly platonic*



discourse for the purpose of showing two different approaches, leading to the same projected unification.

Three. I'd like to solicit the proper and necessary cooperation of a group of people, capable mentally, artistically, and if need be financially (at least soliciting) to start things rolling. Not my work separately, but yours and mine, because I can't and won't separate them. Particularly is that necessary on political scale, with respect to the educational system and proper visual projection through motion pictures, etc. Mainly, too, from a philosophical religious point of view. I could bring up a lot more points. Maybe your attitude toward the fourth will be sort of doubtful. But Manly in that case, you should really let me proof it.

Four. If you really want to see me get comparatively calm so I'll live a while longer, cooperative so I can be trusted no matter what, and honestly, sincerely and courageously persuasive without too much bluntness, it certainly depends a lot on you. You know I can get that virtuous only through your influence, and if anti-polar deviltry stirs up with it, at least you know me well enough not to be too worried. Personally, I think I'd be very happy besides. I always am around you.

The first practical step in the right direction would seem to me to have a group of people like I mentioned. I know quite a number who would like to. Some have offered to do it at their places, etc. But the main catch is, I'd like you to be the main boss and referee. I've told all I've mentioned anything to that you are as familiar with the subject as I. I need to try and verbally convey it on hands of drawings, etc., so I can get the material somewhat organized and get some experience in lecturing. You would generally outline the subject for the evening and give your opinion on it, etc. Also stop and correct me in expression, etc., when I am doing some explaining. I don't just know how to describe it—but when I don't want it to look as if I am some teacher or something. Rather, by your recommendation, they would become cooperative in helping to decide and guide things the way they ought to go. I am sure that benefit would be mutual all around, and something really worthwhile could come of it.

So it would be best to have the meeting in the library or wherever you say in your place. I would like you to meet the ones I would invite first, and you could see how you feel about them. You could treat me in whichever way you see most fit, just so long as you will take the lead. At the same time,

*they could become much better acquainted with the library, etc. and if they all came to the decision that a larger place is needed, at least for temporary headquarters for my work too (pending your wanting it to become permanent eventually, or not, as you like) we could get them campaigning for getting your place finished. After all that is really what I was going to do before Bacon even entered the picture.*

*Then suppose you turned me out into a good lecturer, maybe I could really buy a financial business-partnership and pay for publishing of books, provided you would help me direct the editing. And if you did it for some of mine, I'd help with some of yours. If other people can, why couldn't I?*

*After the meeting is over, we could all have some fun—like a cup of tea or something. But maybe we could really manage to have fun all the way through. And who knows, a small beginning like that could work into a vital, fundamental focus for the light of the New Age. After all the addresses need not necessarily be Washington or some such place. Los Feliz air is cleaner and has more vital oxygen.*

*It sounds as if I am systematically scheming out ways trying to interfere with your life pattern. But even if it sounds like it, Manly, it doesn't look like that to me, and I don't mean it like that either. I think you know it.*



December 10, 1945


*Dear Manly*

*I am getting quite philosophical about it because I know that love just is or isn't—and that there is nothing anyone can do about it. Even if it is one-sided, I am glad it is, and don't care who knows it. I also know that in spite of appearances you do need the kind of love I have for you (several kinds all mixed up) and I don't mind if you keep what you can take of it without returning it. (In a way I do, but not terribly). Enough of that.*

*Manly, I don't know whether or not you believe it, but Bacon's work, yours and mine are the triple approach to teaching a Cosmic life pattern which is centered in the four-principle of Christ and which shall be fruitful on world-scale not by individual interpretation of its dispensators or teachers—but by the authority and life-inspiration of truth and love itself.*

*But Manly, the divided triple approach of the teachers must unite to a trinity-state of cooperative endeavor before the labor can actually begin to become fruitful on a collective scale. Seeing it so clearly causes most of the personal and impersonal agitation in me. And if we could begin to at least prepare it now maybe a great deal of calamity could be prevented, and the mysteries of love and of life be taught with all the dignity and gentility of wisdom, even during our lifetimes.*

*Even if not with your heart, at least mentally you can see Manly that there is some sort of Eve-serpent relationship between your work and mine (and at least the way I feel between you and me too). That would direct a good deal of guilt in this direction, but at the same time, even while the generation of humankind was still in the involuntary stage, Enoch was the son of Eve and Cain, even though the reversal to evolutionary motion on collective scale was by parenthood of the Holy-ghost and Mary. But this is more than enough of this.*



January 3, 1946

SANTA FE, N.M.

*Dear Manly,*

*Because there is a good basis for friendship with you in me. One-sided love is friendship in so far as it is real. The need for it in me is sort of fatal and compulsory. I wouldn't be surprised if I actually made some pact with Bacon before I was born, not to come to my rescue. But he could at least try to make you see it a little.*

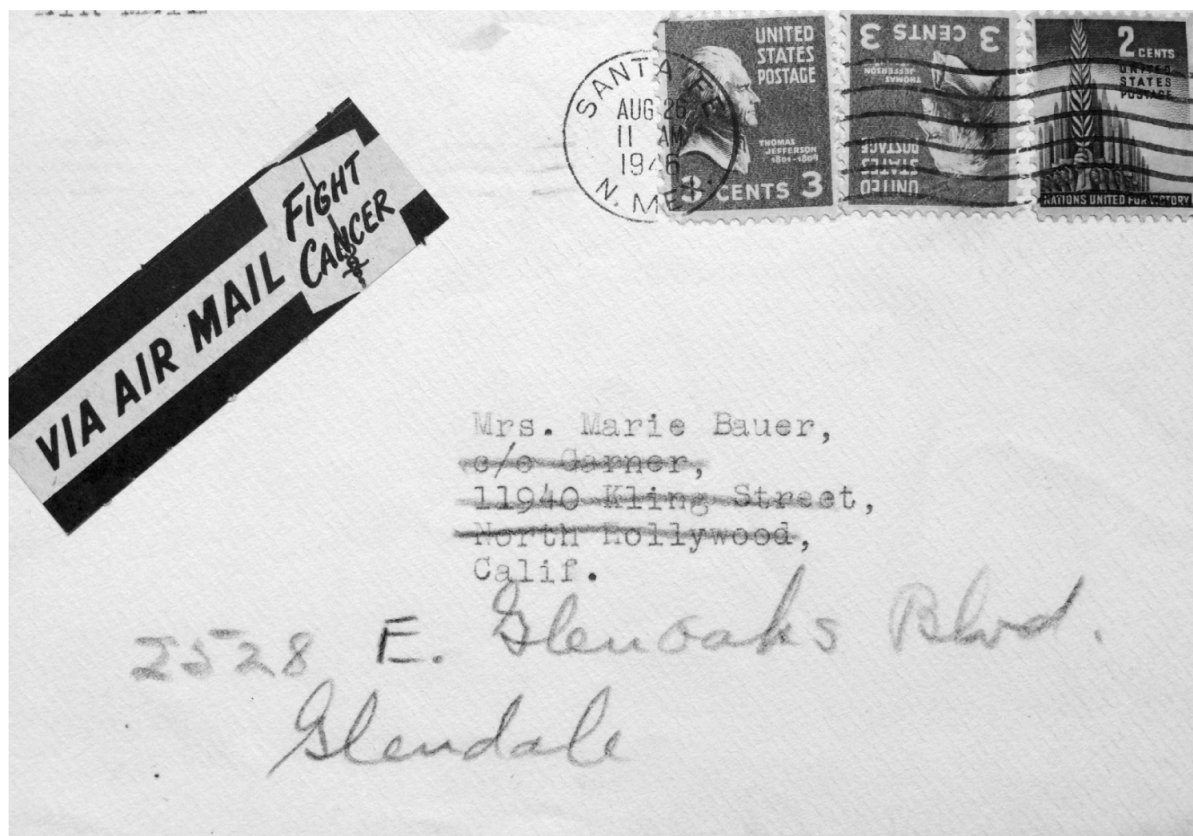
*I know the way you feel about it, friendship is as hopeless as love just because I happen to be a woman, and you haven't enough confidence or faith in me to even give it a fair chance. Sometimes I can hardly understand why, at least on the basis of your work, you wouldn't at least give me the benefit of the doubt.*

*Manly how do you mean it when you say you don't want to add to my delinquency? It is true, if I had the time and leisure to go around collecting karma for next time, I'd rather do it in cooperation with you than anybody.*

*But you see when you are born with such a fatal lack of alternative, as being in love with you makes me, there is little margin for either virtue or vice. If you would, you couldn't, and if you could you wouldn't. But if there were a friendship basis you could at least to a measure share work and play and joy and sorrow of living, even if living together is out of the question. It is certainly true that love without response makes facts very cruel. But friendship with some response could make the same facts fine and very constructive.*

*I know, I really have little reason to complain. Because in the last few months things have become more friendly between us, and tension in me has eased considerably. Seeing you more frequently and talking with you make me love you still better, but it also makes me feel happier, more hopeful and confident; sometimes full of deviltry, but not with bad motives.*

*You have been very nice asking me to come over whenever I can or feel like it. The catch is, I feel like seeing you most of the time, but I don't want your whole staff—and maybe you too—start thinking I am running after you.*



*Airmail letter from Manly to Marie*

*Suppose I promise never to ask you for a date or special appointment, and if something bothers me too much I write a letter. If you feel like responding, or wouldn't mind talking to me, and you do have some time, you could let me know in some way. If it isn't in your principles to call anyone like me on the phone, I don't think Dave would mind giving me a ring. Aside from just wanting to be with you for no reason whatever, there is, as you know, so much I'd like to ask you and talk to you about. That anytime I can get away couldn't be better or more pleasantly spent.*

*The general effect on me, after seeing you, is usually very good and lasts for considerable time. And in general, Manly, I am not really any disturbing or demoralizing influence on you, am I? Even though I'd much rather be that than nothing at all—in your case—if you treated me just halfway on friendly basis, like you do Dave and Jim, maybe you would find it worthwhile, and wouldn't think me hard to handle.*

*Love*



July 3, 1946

TAOS, N.M.

*Dear Marie*

*Your last letter and mss. arrived safely, and I am certainly sorry that things are not moving more smoothly inside of you. You looked fine when I saw you over at San Juan.*

*You are not the only one not able to get much done at the moment. It has been exactly the same with me, but most of my interruptions have come from outside. With the exception of finishing up a couple of the Chinese Stories I have accomplished exactly nothing. I know just how you feel about your work, I have been through all those kinds of emotions many times. Gradually, however, I have learned how to control my impulses, and you must try to do the same. Life is just one long series of problems, moods and uncertainties, seasoned with impatience and spells of discouragement. We*



*must take these things in stride, unless we can get ourselves organized we can do very little for others in these difficult times.*

*I certainly do intend to come up to Taos, but I am not yet quite sure when I can get there. I have several practical and pressing things to do here in connection with the Setons. The old Chief is not a bit well, and depends on me for advice in certain business matters that certainly require immediate attention.*

*I had expected that they would drive me up to Taos, in fact, we had the plans pretty well formulated, but after the short trip to San Juan, the Chief was completely tired out, so it is not wise to attempt the trip, especially in this heat. If we make the trip he would insist on coming so we are letting the idea die out for the present.*

*We had also planned to go to the Gallup festival, in this case we have even started to arrange for reservations at the hotels. But now, it is evident that he could not stand the trip, and Julie does not dare to leave him home alone.*

*I will come to Taos just as soon as things here get a little more settled, in the meantime I am trying to get a little of my own work under control. Because, as I told you in California, these are small towns with very large ears, and extremely busy tongues, it will be best if I stay at the Harvey Hotel, I don't know the name it goes under, but you undoubtedly do. I would like to stay for several days, probably the five day limit. We would then have an opportunity to discuss your work and also I want to gather up some data that is lingering around waiting to be gathered.*

*If in the meantime you want to see me by driving down here, drop me a note in advance so that I will be sure to be here. I am not always available. I suggest the note as our phone is a party line with a large number of families connected on the wire, and their favorite pastime is to listen to each others' calls, and then rush to the neighbors with the news. I have learned by long suffering, that the fewer strangers or even friends who know one's business, the better and safer life remains.*

*If your friends invite you to travel about through the Indian or Spanish-American towns I would most certainly accept. There is much here that is important to our way of thought. I think I told you that Madame Blavatsky lived for quite a while in Santa Fe, and said that this country is second only to Tibet in metaphysical importance. It would be wonderful training for you*

*to do real research among the beliefs and religious customs of these people, and it would extrovert your mind from a large part of the internal pressure that is causing you trouble.*

*Don't try to solve anything by drinking Marie, learn to get your mind off yourself by putting it on some interesting outside line of thought, that is close to your subject. We all have to do this and the sooner you learn, the happier you will be. Instead of thinking all the time about what you must do to enlighten humanity, study humility as it is in everyday living. Become a trained observer of the ways of others, learning from them, and not feeling all the time that you must teach.*

*There are some simple rules, Marie, for folks like us who are trying to do a very big job. Accept these rules without question or resistance, for they can never be broken by any human being, but if you try to break these rules, they will break you.*

**1. Never take yourself or the things you are doing so serious that you have no mind or time for other interests.**

**2. Never lose your sense of humor, and never get so that you can't laugh at yourself when you start taking yourself too seriously.**

**3. Do the best you can, but don't try to do everything, leave something for the gods and future ages. Generations still unborn will also have important ideas.**

**4. We never help others by wrecking ourselves. Your philosophy must make you happy, or it is of very little practical value.**


*Of course I realize that none of us can be completely happy, but we must relax and create a deep sense of calmness and peace inside, or we tear our bodies to pieces and then we can do nothing for ourselves or anyone else.*

*You have to make yourself master of your own thoughts, or they will run away with you. The mind is just like a growing child, it must be taught to obey, or it will become a problem to itself and everyone else.*

*If it helps you to write me and get some of your pressure out of your system, go ahead and write, and I will help as much as I can. I cannot, however, solve your life for you, each of us must finally set up our own rules of self-discipline. You can do it, and you must do it, or your work will suffer.*

*This is a pretty long letter for me, so I had better bring it to a close. Good luck and success in everything.*

*Always*



July 27, 1946

SANTA FE, N.M.

*Dear Marie*

*You are quite wrong in thinking I am disgusted with you. It just happened the last time you called I had an appointment in town, and the Chief had a date with his doctor.*

*I am happy to do what I can to further your efforts, but you, yourself, have created a very complicated situation, which makes it difficult for me to be of real assistance. I know that you do not realize that this is true, but nevertheless, it is a fact. After all I have made a long and careful study of religion, and have had many years of practical experience with people and their spiritual needs and problems. I have a far better knowledge of what you are trying to do than you realize. This feeling that you have, that I do not “see” the ends toward which you are working is untrue. But after all, you did come to me for advice and help because you believed in my honesty and experience. But how can I help you when you insist upon dictation the terms upon which you will accept help? You want me to accept all of your ideas without reservation and incorporate them into my own activities, whether or not my own judgment tells me it is the wise thing to do. I must be true to my own convictions, Marie, or I would not be worthy to serve others in any capacity. Can’t you see how you would feel if someone did the same thing to you?*

*Don’t feel in your heart, Marie, that I am a lost soul unless I see things exactly your way. And don’t feel that you have failed in your mission unless*

*you convert me to your convictions. Have a little faith in the message that has come to you, and relax. If you will only carry the whole problem a little more lightly and gratefully, you will be able to accomplish a great deal more and others can help you much more effectively.*

*Now try and snap out of your mood, I am sincerely your friend and will continue so, and will do all I can to be helpful.*

*Certainly you can quote any part of my writings that you wish, and we will talk about it at your leisure.*



August 6, 1946

*Hello Marie*

*The one thing you have to learn to accomplish is relaxation. If you will stop worrying about the gods, and whether or not you will be “submissive” life will be a lot easier for you.*

*It doesn't seem to me that it would be a good idea to attempt to revise your new book until the first manuscript is completed. You will have many other things to do in the near future, so it will be best to meet the days as they come and not try to do more things than you can.*



September 9, 1946

*SANTA FE, N.M.*

*Hello Marie*

*Another thing that you must learn is that when you make a decision, be happy about it. Judge all things carefully first, but once you have made up your mind, have no further regrets. If your decision was wise, all will come out well in the end, and if it was not wise, you will learn, and we must all be prepared to face the consequences of our decisions.*

September 13, 1946

SANTA FE, N.M.

Dear Marie

*This is just a little line to tell you how much I appreciate your kindness in making me the perfectly grand sweater.*



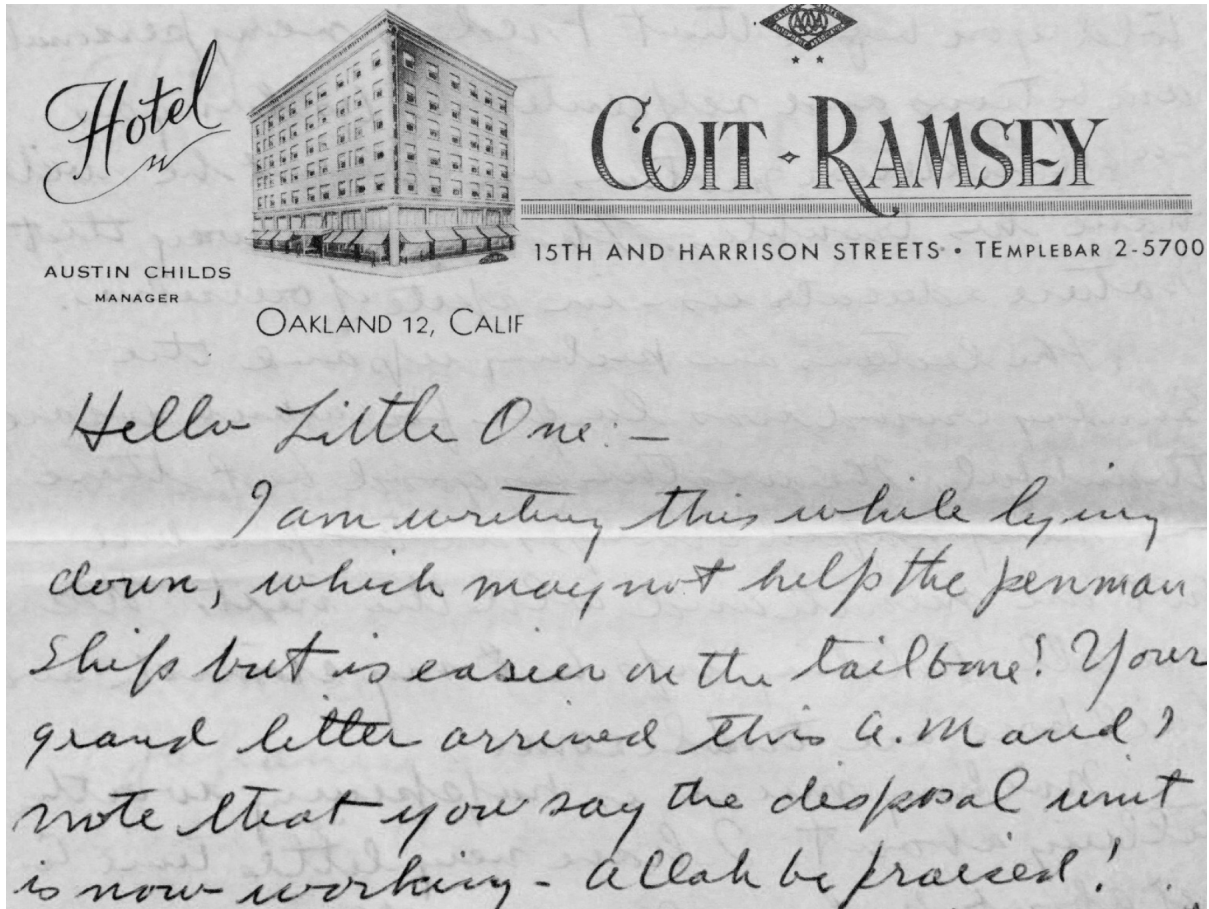
February 19, 1947

Dear Manly

*About two months ago a friend who works in a studio came to call on me with a fellow who is a professional in radio. Nice fellow, never met him before or since. I was not interested to bring the subject of you or me up, because I didn't like him to talk about it to his friends. But he promptly did. Said he knew you. I asked him how he liked you. The radio-man asked if I really wanted to know. I said of course. He said: "Mr. Hall is a man of extreme vanity, who is building a monument, not to truth, but for himself."*

*I was taken aback because of his harsh judgment, pronounced in a seemingly kindly way. Very calmly I pointed out to him how mistaken he was: and that I was completely convinced of your personal sincerity. He looked at me in sort of a sorrowful way and said: "Never forget, even when love is not blind, it has a strong tendency to want to shut its eyes."*





Manly to Marie

He didn't influence me about you in any way, Manly, but what he did say about love is very true.

April 21, 1947

Dear Manly

When you were away last week I went through another session with myself. Much less disturbed emotionally, though I missed you. I know I can never in this life abandon personal desires as completely as one is supposed to, because I couldn't earnestly say, I'd be willing to give up being friends with you. So suppose life will sort of force it on me sooner or later.

*But I do know that our relationship should change to a clear friendship without personal intimacy as man and woman, at least not physically. There are many reasons, but in general it is not because I like you less, Manly, but because I like you too well. Personally, I have no sense of guilt on account of it having happened, but am glad it did. But as far as my responsibilities, plans for the future and economy of physical and psychological energy are concerned, I have no right.*

*I also am convinced that by your evaluation of life and circumstances you don't really need me much. Not as much as I need you ...*

*If we continued stealing hours together here and there, something would be found out and you pay with your peace of mind, I with your friendship. Else it would cause both of us to talk about marriage and save appearances. We both would feel it as a tie, and I don't believe in ties of that sort.*

*From a point of view of outer circumstances, marriage would have obstacles which need not in any way interfere with friendship.*

*First there are the children. I want to keep the home up for them and have them here as much as possible. You are not used to children. With a woman who is a mother—and has sort of an unconventional mother-streak like I—anybody's children can feel to her like her own. With men it isn't like that.*



No date

*Dear Manly*

*When Madame Blavatsky—returned to earth scale as M.H. a recurrence of long past human history took place at least as regards archetypal relationships. When the ‘serpent-lamech, Lazarus-Paul’ returned—Eve-Zillah, Mary-Magdalene, followed him, probably by instigation of those who had trained her, and probably out of personal love. By physical fatherhood of Abel, she bore the children who once, long ago—had been Lamech-Zillah's: Tubal-Cain = Peter, and the first girl child reported in the Bible, Naahmah, who during the time of Christ had been the daughter of the*

priest whom Jesus awakened from the dead, and of whom he said: *She is not dead, she sleepeth.*”

On psychological scale, she was strangely brought into relationship with poetical works, of most recent endeavor in connection with Lord Bacon’s work—such as “*Testament of Beauty*,” before marriage to George.

After three of the mentioned experiences had taken place, she met M.H. for the first time at a lecture. Interpreting the Secret Doctrine of Madame Blavatsky. Through the stirring nature of the encounter with the message of the Secret Doctrine, as well as the personality of M.H., plans modulated in her mind, which provoked her decision to move to California for future religious education of Peter, and which became closely related to the birth of Jo Ann.

As far as basic preparation of ideology—the wisdom aspect of the great message of the New Aquarian Age, is concerned—the work I progress by M.B. is closely related to that of M.H. and cooperative endeavor is greatly desirable—not alone for purposes of giving life to Madame Blavatsky’s work—but of revealing the true Life of Christianity and of the Secret Doctrine of the East, as well as the philosophical depth and profundity of all Ancient Teachers—such as Buddha, Plato, Pythagoras, etc.

Though her reasons for seeking sincere and personal cooperation of M.H. may be as personal as human relationships and human history are long—they are also impersonally personal as is the unifying nature of divided personal love, which becomes Mother love in life-projection, and as devoted to Christ’s ideal, as Mary Magdalene was to Jesus.

She realizes that the work is very big and very vital, that she alone is weak—because wisdom and love when reflected through a human personality are naturally colored thereby. She is also sincerely devoted to Lord Bacon’s cause, in spite of the fact that she has accused masonry of “criminal secrecy,” etc., and in spite of the fact that she does not wish to receive knowledge directly from any source or Masters outside of stimulated discernment. If it is necessary, they could give it to someone else, and she would willingly cooperate—but she does not want to be bound in any way or form to obligations of “keeping secrecy” on anything that might tend to general enlightenment.

Three times, when perhaps personal weakness and lack of historical or educational background [sic], might have caused natural interruption of

*the flow of truth-ideas—and because cooperation by those who would be capable, was not forthcoming, she reached a state of “extra sensory perception” where she learned a great deal through that which was recalled by memory of experiences taking place while she was physically unconscious, or judged mentally insane.*

*Each time, things perceived through hearing and seeing (with senses) were considered by her rather skeptically—for by means of modern projection such visions while in a waking state could have been induced.*

*It is her contention that during a state of either physical unconsciousness or so-called mental insanity when she lost touch with direct environmental implications, her mind was impressed with patterns to be rescued by her later endeavors. For often they are corrective of former endeavors and the implications of the extra sensory experiences do not become clear until much later they are a thrilling verification of what has been discerned in the course of writing and drawing.*

*The person who during Christ’s time became Judas, and who on a spiritual scale is the luciferian twin to him who became Adam, has been directly involved, and is personally known to M.B. There is a chance for him personally—and for those in his likeness, to make retraction of otherwise fatal karmic debts in connection with the revelation of the wisdom-love and of life-projection in the New Age.*



September 11, 1951

*HOTEL COIT-RAMSEY, OAKLAND*

*Hello, Honey*

*I hope that all is going well with you and Dolly & the house. I wish I was home, but the days will soon pass. Be a good little girl and think about your wandering serpent from the garden of North Hillhurst.*

*All my love and prayers are with you—say hello to Dolly.*

*Your hubby, Manly*



September 15, 1951

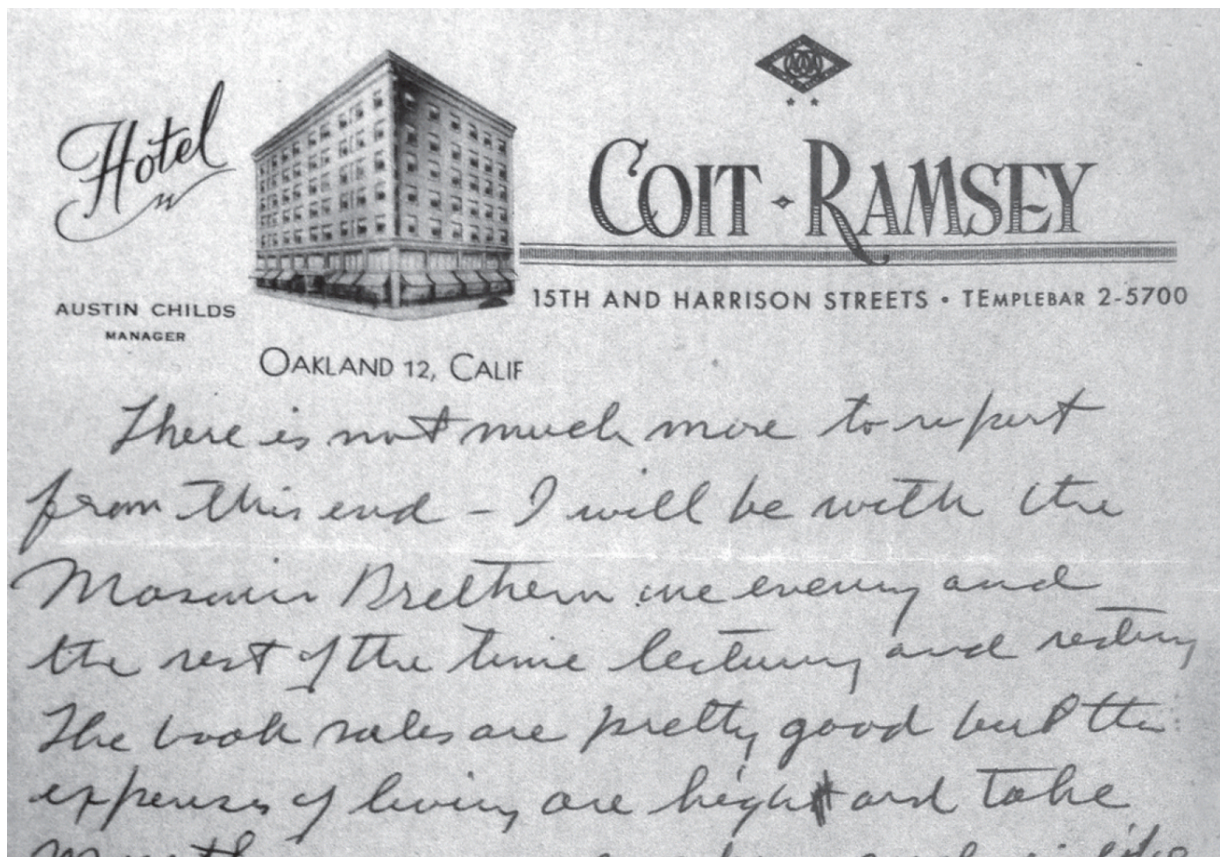
*HOTEL COIT-RAMSEY, OAKLAND*

*Hello Baby*

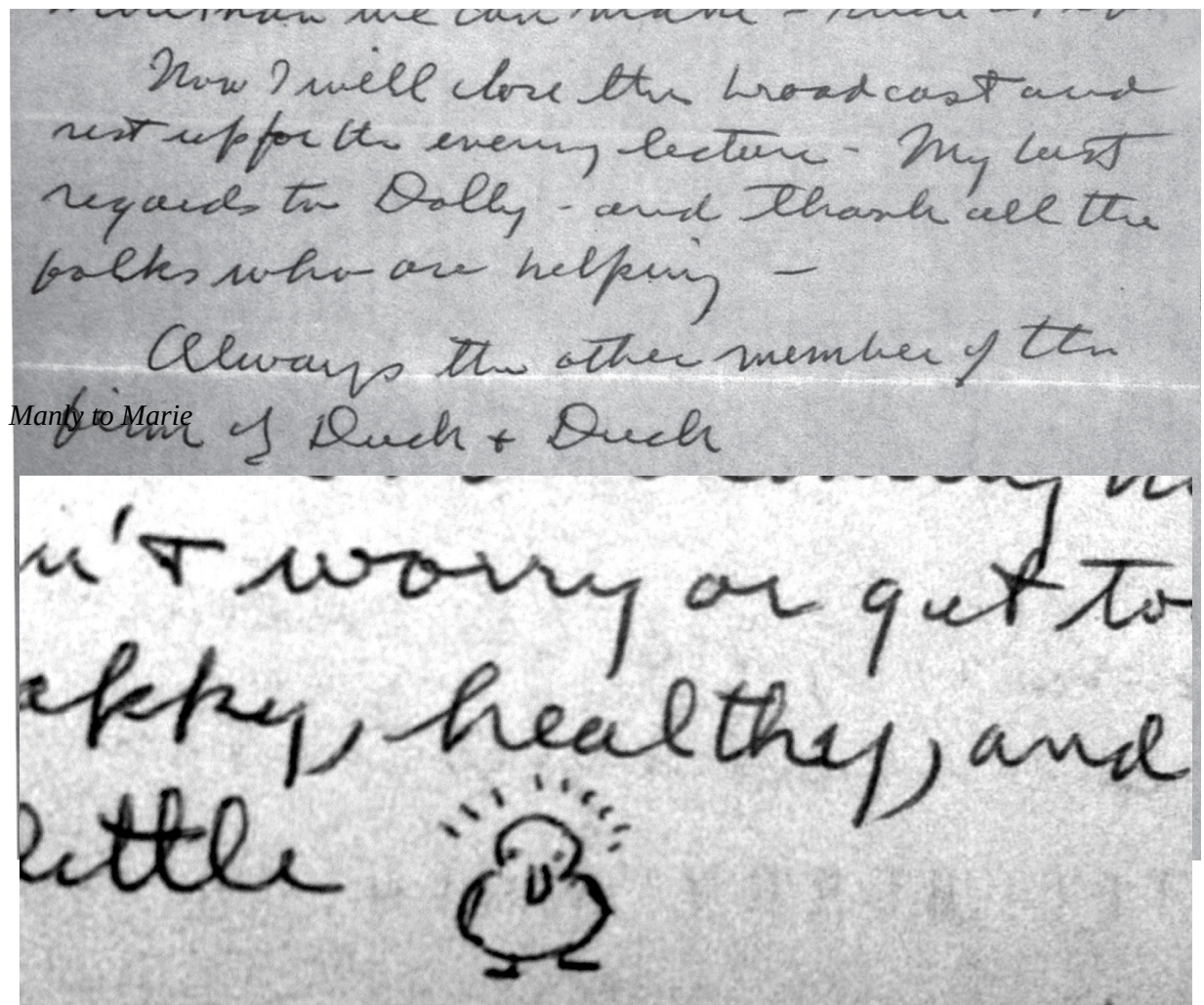
*I hope that the [stool softener] treatment helps you, but I have never had much luck with that type of approach to health problems. At least it should purify the system, but just take another kind of laxative and feel that something is solved. When I get home, we will have to go into this long-standing difficulty of yours thoroughly and scientifically.*

*Mrs. Young has had three treatments from Mr. Gray and is feeling well right now. I hope that she will have no more trouble.*

*Among other things, my driver's license expired on the trip and I had to take the examination for a new one here in Oakland. Believe it or not, your special duck passed the first time with a score of 100%. It surprised me more than the Oakland License Board!*







Manly to Marie

Give yourself a very big and very tight hug from me and get in good health so we can have a home coming celebration!!! My kindest regards to Dolly.

Always the old papa duck

Love

---

September 19, 1951

HOTEL COIT-RAMSEY, OAKLAND

*Hello Little One*

*Your grand letter arrived this a.m. and I note that you say the (garbage) disposal unit is now working—Allah be praised! Maybe the washing machine will be next.*

*I'm getting awfully homesick.*

*Delighted that you decided to keep the bed warm until I return.*

*So my bed is in the alcove—maybe it's a good thing that I am the old snake, I can wiggle in and out more easily!*

*I do hope that your diet is going to be a real help—you have certainly been faithful. Maybe I will try it too, when the office is not so pressing.*

*Because I am coming home pretty soon, don't worry or get too lonesome. Be my happy, healthy and eternally little (drawing of a glowing duckling).*

*Always the other member of the firm of Duck & Duck.*

*Your loving hubby*

*Manly*



September 22, 1951

*HOTEL COIT-RAMSEY, OAKLAND*

*Dearest Baby (drawing of a duck)*

*If you eat so much toast that you gain 10 pounds that will be OK with me!!!*

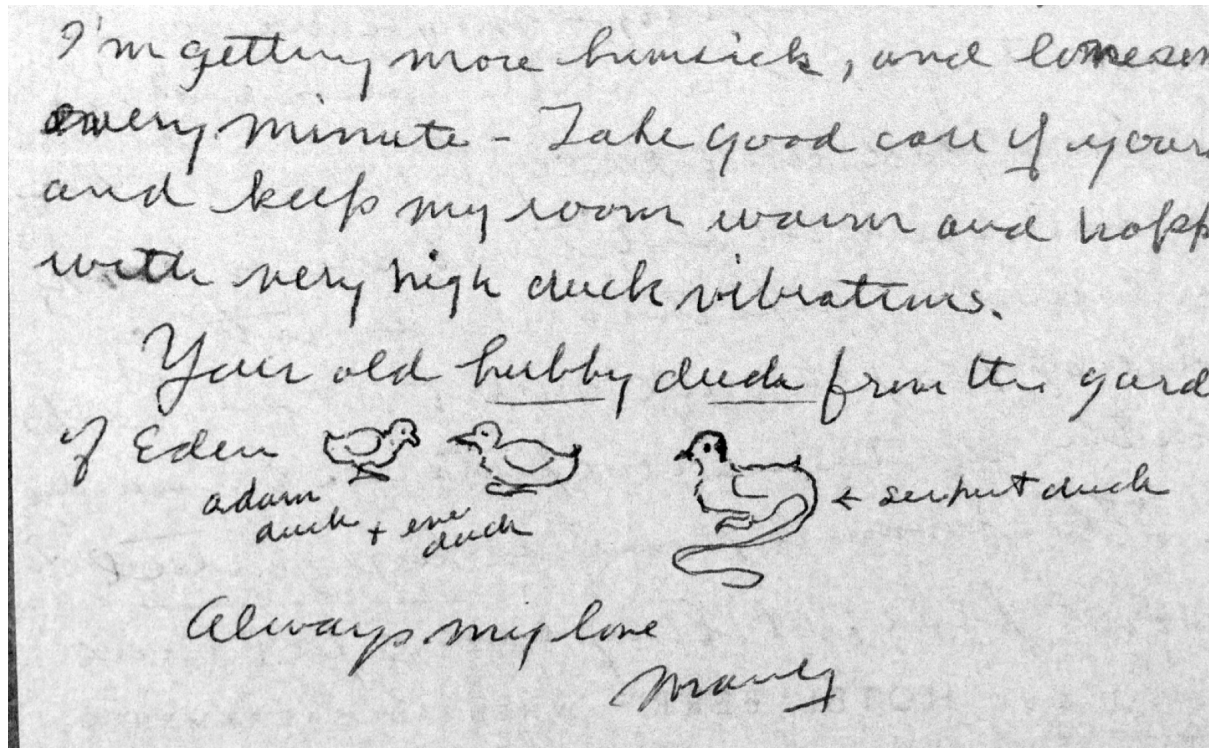
*In any event we could be in by noon on Thursday. Don't make any appointments for that day as I want you all to myself. I don't plan to go to the office before Monday unless there is an emergency—maybe we can do something special over the weekend!!!*

*All kinds of hugs, squeezes, umphs, ou-u-u-s, and the like, until I can deliver them in person. I'm getting more homesick, and lonesome every minute—take good care of yourself and keep my room warm and happy with very high duck vibrations.*

Your old hubby duck from the Garden of Eden. (drawings of three ducks: Adam Duck, Eve Duck and Serpent Duck)

Always my love

Manly



Manly to Marie



2308 No. Hillhurst Avenue  
Los Angeles 27, California  
November 21, 1959

Mr. Tolson	
Mr. Belmont	
Mr. DeLoach	
Mr. McGuire	
Mr. Mohr	
Mr. Parsons	
Mr. Rosen	
Mr. Tamm	
Mr. Trotter	
Mr. W.C. Sullivan	
Tele. Room	
Mr. Holloman	
Miss Gandy	

Mr. J. Edgar Hoover  
Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation  
U. S. Department of Justice  
4936 Thirtieth Place  
Washington 8, D. C.

Dear Mr. Hoover,

Knowing of your deep concern over the well being of our people and in view of your own public statements of the need for ethical and cultural enlightenment, I respectfully submit the accompanying material for your consideration.

It is my sincere hope that you will find it possible to read these articles carefully and thoughtfully or place this material in the hands of a person qualified to give you an adequate report.

These chapters are parts of a comprehensive work covering all major fields of human activity and need. Should questions arise in your mind I will be happy to answer them directly, and I will deeply appreciate your reactions to the basic concepts set forth therein.

Respectfully yours,

*Marie Bauer Hall*  
63-6805-X3  
(Mrs.) Marie Bauer Hall

MBH/CR  
Enclosures

REC-73

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## CHAPTER 6

### Marie vs. the FBI

HALL'S MOTHER, WHO HAD SUFFERED FROM ANGINA FOR TWO DECADES, DIED ON JUNE 25, 1953. SHE WAS 76.

It's easy to imagine the famous philosopher examining his conflicted feelings about Louise Hall—a chiropractic healer and single mother who abandoned her infant son to treat the aches and pains of gold miners in Alaska—as he traveled from one sold-out lecture to another, flying first class in new DC-7s, crossing the country in slightly over six hours, averaging 450 miles per hour.

On November 22, 1954, Hall was raised in San Francisco's Masonic Jewel Lodge No. 374, after decades of writing about Masonic history and lore. A year later, he joined an Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry group in San Francisco, which quickly elevated him to its highest ranks. [1] In accordance with the secretive fraternity's rules of membership, Hall never wrote about Masonry again.

A legal storm was brewing at home. In 1954, Marie's clamoring for federal help in uncovering the Bruton vault snagged a meeting with the FBI. Separately, a Mrs. Robert Woolsey of Pasadena sent the FBI a postcard the same year urging the agency to "have a look at Mr. Manly Hall's wife. You see, he is mixed up with astrologers and they hold dinner meetings etc. So, once or twice she says she will speak on such and such subjects and it turns into a quarrel with rough men taking her side. Contact Mrs. Hall. Worth a look." [2]

In November 1954, Marie showed up at FBI headquarters in Washington demanding a meeting with Bureau Chief J. Edgar Hoover.



Hoover had other things to do, but he dispatched a special agent from the Bureau's crime records section to hear her out. The agent described Marie as a charming and cultured woman who, however, would become so carried away with her story that she forgot what she was talking about.

So what was Marie's urgent message for Hoover? The agent never managed to figure that out. Marie's rambling tale began with the birth of Adam and Eve and continued through the formation of a "government behind the government" led by disciples of Lord Bacon. Now, it was Marie's job to give birth to the final phase of Bacon's democratic enlightenment. As a responsible citizen, Marie assured the agent that her new government structure would be in line with the U.S. Constitution.

Marie said she had lots of charts and diagrams that could make her theories "crystal clear," the agent wrote to his superiors. Unfortunately, she left them in the taxi on her way to FBI headquarters. The agent noted that Marie was "quite surprised" when he informed her that "the matters to which she referred were not within the scope of the Bureau."

Over the years, Marie would continue to have run-ins with the FBI. Her name popped up on the Bureau's radar in 1956 when an Atomic Energy Act-applicant investigation of her ex-husband, George Bauer, described her as "mentally unstable."

In 1959, she started forwarding portions of her books in progress to the FBI for review. The agency promptly returned them without comment or cover letters. In 1962, a special agent tactfully persuaded her to stop sending such materials. During that conversation, Marie agreed that her work was often incoherent and unintelligible, but blamed the problem on the lingering effects of a nervous breakdown. In 1963, Marie wrote a letter to President Kennedy, seeking his help in uncovering the Bruton Vault. Enclosed was a black-and-white copy of her American Red Cross wall poster which, she pointed out, included a figure "with a close resemblance" to Kennedy.

A year later, she wrote an urgent letter to J. Edgar Hoover, imploring the FBI chief to drop by her home for dinner. "Please Mr. Hoover, do consider paying us a visit," she wrote. "In Washington, all I can do is talk. Here, I could back it up. Besides, no one would need to know of your visit unless you told them yourself. I could always say that we have a friend who looks more like Edgar Hoover than Mr. Hoover himself."

RE: REQUEST TO SEE DIRECTOR, 11/5 or 8/54

11/2/54

CHECK OF BUREAU FILES

Bureau files failed to reflect that we have any identifiable information on Mrs. Eleanore Kendrick, Mrs. Alfred Kendrick or Mrs. Manly Palmer Hall. A reference, however, does appear to Maria Bauer in which she is mentioned as the subject of an inquiry by the Manhattan District of the United States Engineer's Office, Chicago, Illinois, in November, 1943. At this time, Mr. Manly Palmer Hall, then located in the Masonic Temple, 32 West Randolph Street, Chicago, employed her. He was in the Chicago area at that time engaged in lecturing on "The Spiritual Development of Animals." It had been reported to the War Department that Maria Bauer had the idea Hitler might release a deathly "thing" on the world if he was pushed in a corner. She, it was claimed, had discovered a scientific formula, mathematically ~~approvable~~, which would control energy and force released by electrons and atoms. The Manhattan Engineer District interviewed Hall who said Maria Bauer worked for him in his library in Los Angeles and had devoted herself to the writings of Sir Francis Bacon having done a great deal of work on the Bacon Cipher and she was reported much disturbed by the Bacon Society and thought it planned to rule the world. Hall explained that Miss Bauer was amazingly proficient in handling ciphers and had worked out mathematical formulas which astonished mathematicians and universities in California. Hall said he did not believe that she had been able to "tune in" on anything "big" and he said only that in his library there were books some 300 years old and only through this research could she have arrived at such a fanciful theory.

It appears we conducted no investigation of her (Maria Bauer Hall) before or since 1943. (100-190625-672)  
Report on Marie Hall

ACTION TAKEN

Her invitation was answered by an FBI secretary who informed that Wick, at 9:40 a.m., 11/2/54, telephoned Mrs. Kendrick and told her that "would not be visiting in California or have any opportunity to see you in the event you come to Washington." By that time, the FBI had already officially classified Marie as a "chronic nuisance" according to federal documents. On a separate front, Hall was catching hell from Marie over his relationship with actor Bela Lugosi, who earned lasting fame as an iconic horror movie character. "Bela," she said in an interview, "was a symbol of darkness" who could hurt their public image. [3] But to Hall, Lugosi was a lovable American-Hungarian patriot with deep religious convictions, although he was not a member of any church. Hall also felt sorry for the

actor who had been typecast in horror roles instead of more worthwhile parts.

On April 21, 1955, Hall accompanied the 72-year-old Lugosi to Los Angeles General Hospital, where the actor made headlines by pleading for help in kicking his addiction to morphine. Lugosi told reporters that he had been a slave to the drug since he was wounded in World War I.

Lugosi entered Metropolitan State Hospital in Norwalk. Three months later, he was released and the actor married his fifth and last bride, Hope Linniger, in the living room of Hall's Hillhurst home. "With Lugosi's 17-year-old son, Bela Jr., as best man and Pat Delaney, a police department employee as matron of honor, the couple repeated their vows in front of a huge hearth guarded by two Chinese devil dogs," according to an article that appeared in the *Los Angeles Times*. "The odor of incense filled the room." [4]

Standing tall and gray in a blue double-breasted suit adorned with a white carnation, Lugosi thanked the news reporters on hand "for giving an old man a chance for a comeback."

A little more than a year later, Hope found her husband dead in the bedroom of their Hollywood home. He died clinging to a script of what he had hoped would be his next movie, *The Final Curtain*. [5]

Hall's dream of leading a center that would attract the brightest minds in religion and philosophy, and provide a prominent forum for his own lectures, finally seemed to be coming true. Earlier in the year, PRS amended its charter to show that its intentions included becoming a formally recognized degree-granting institution specializing in instruction in philosophy, psychology and comparative religion. With that goal in mind, Hall and PRS vice president Drake, who received a Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Calcutta, began offering a two-year correspondence course on "The Basic Ideas of Man" aimed at metaphysical students of all ages. They opened a counseling center in which Drake offered guidance, analysis and therapy at competitive hourly rates. They were actively lobbying local government officials for permission to construct a city school or library—or state government building—on an unimproved portion of PRS property. More ambitious was their campaign to raise \$250,000 for a special project honoring Hall's 35 years of public service: a

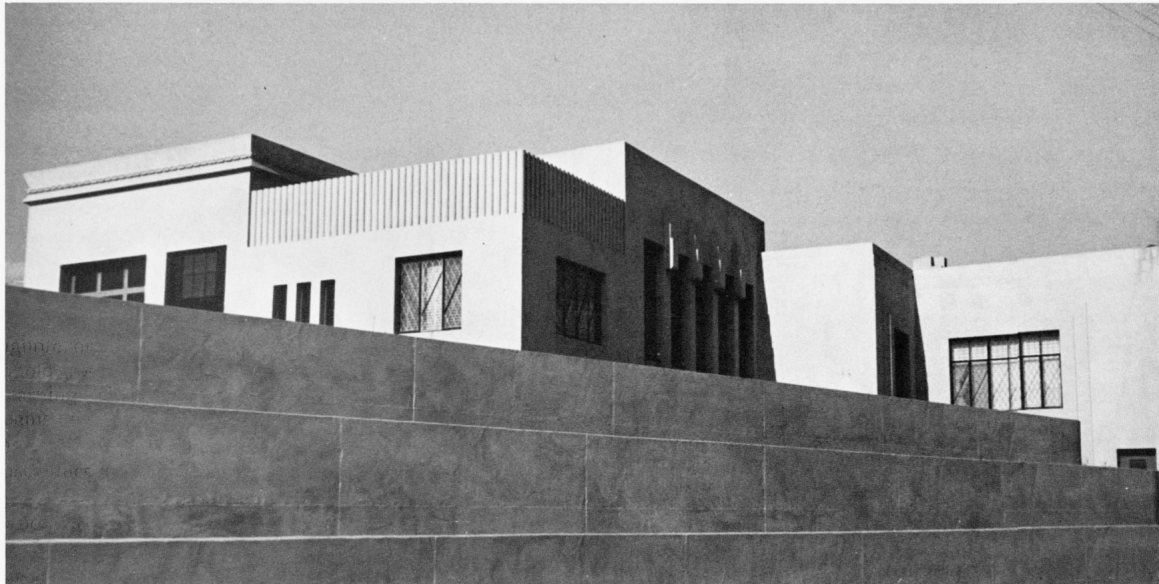
new lecture hall designed to resemble a magnificent Mayan temple surrounded by cedars and swaying palms. [6]

Four major undertakings in so short a time seemed auspicious for the little society. But Hall, a recent inductee in the influential fraternity known as the Masons, had friends in high places.

Among his ardent supporters was friend, fellow astrologer and California Gov. Goodwin Knight, a trustee at PRS. The husky influential Republican governor kept a secret file of the horoscopes of every friend and foe he had to deal with while overseeing investments of the public's money in California's 20th-century marvels: public universities, schools and freeways. [7] Hall also counted as supporters noted Beverly Hills federal tax attorney John Ervin, who had a legal office on Rodeo Drive, and actor Lew Ayres.

Hall dispatched PRS staffers across the sprawling metropolis with detailed instructions for enticing donations. "Do you not agree that there should be, in this broad progressive land, one noble and enduring monument to the splendor of the human soul?" Hall asked rhetorically in a letter to his canvassers. "Is it not just as important as schools, bridges, freeways, hospitals, libraries?" To those who offered a significant donation, Hall promised "we will all feel better, think better, and find a permanent improvement within ourselves and our relations with others. . ." [8]

# PROGRAM FOR EXPANSION AND RESEARCH



THE PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY, INC.

*An Institute for Advanced Study in Philosophy, Religion, and Psychology. 3910 Los Feliz Boulevard, Los Angeles 27, California*

*Pamphlet for program of expansion*

The fundraising effort achieved only modest results; many donors failed to make good on their pledges. The society's blueprints for the enormous replica of a Mayan temple of tapering arches, columns and serpents carved out of stone failed to meet new building codes. Specifically, there were not enough parking spaces at PRS to accommodate the anticipated crowds. [9] Hall went to Los Angeles City Hall to personally plead with elected officials and planners to make an exception for his society's expansion plans. But they refused to budge: the plans would have to be drastically scaled down. [10]

Hall's architect, Robert Stacy-Judd, found another purpose for his renderings of the exotic Mayan temple that was not going to be built after all: he used them as Christmas cards in 1955.



As if all that were not enough, the Basic Ideas of Man course meandered amid a general lack of interest, a male staff member at PRS was being accused of stealing money from the PRS safe, and Drake, whose psychological counseling service never served more than a half-dozen clients each year, had become the target of criticism from within his own ranks as his own marriage was falling apart.

Hedda Lark, an intensely focused woman who was Drake's secretary at the time and typed and edited his manuscripts, was dismayed at "how many mistakes he made and how bad his writing was. I was disgusted that he passed himself off as a psychologist and philosopher."

"Once, Drake asked me to find out if a certain lady gave all her money to PRS, could she still get social security benefits," she recalled. "I refused to do it." [11]

The bickering between Hall's first lieutenant and his hard-working brutally honest secretary escalated to the point where Hall had to choose one over the other. Eventually, Lark was asked to leave. Lark was only one of Drake's problems. Drake, who worked for wages of less than \$100 a week, was never able to persuade his wife that he wasn't throwing his life away at PRS.

"My mother felt betrayed; when they married he said he would stay in business," recalled Drake's daughter, Adrienne Drake, an Orange County physician. "Instead, he took the mystical path." [12]

Drake and his wife went on a world tour in 1956. The trip was cheerfully described as "extensive Eastern wanderings" and "a marvelous adventure" in a PRS publication. His wife, who was never interested in mystic undertakings, returned to Los Angeles after only a few weeks. "When dad arrived home, mom handed him divorce papers," their daughter said. "After the divorce, which was ugly, mom would take me to visit dad four times a year."

During those visits, Drake proudly took his daughter to PRS and escorted her around the grounds, showing off his master's books, and the old Tibetan prayer wheel from which, he suggested, prayers fly first-class to God.

Inevitably, their strolls ended with a visit to Manly's office. "I was afraid of Mr. Hall, and I could never understand why dad put him on a pedestal," she said. "It was always dark, strange and intimidating in that

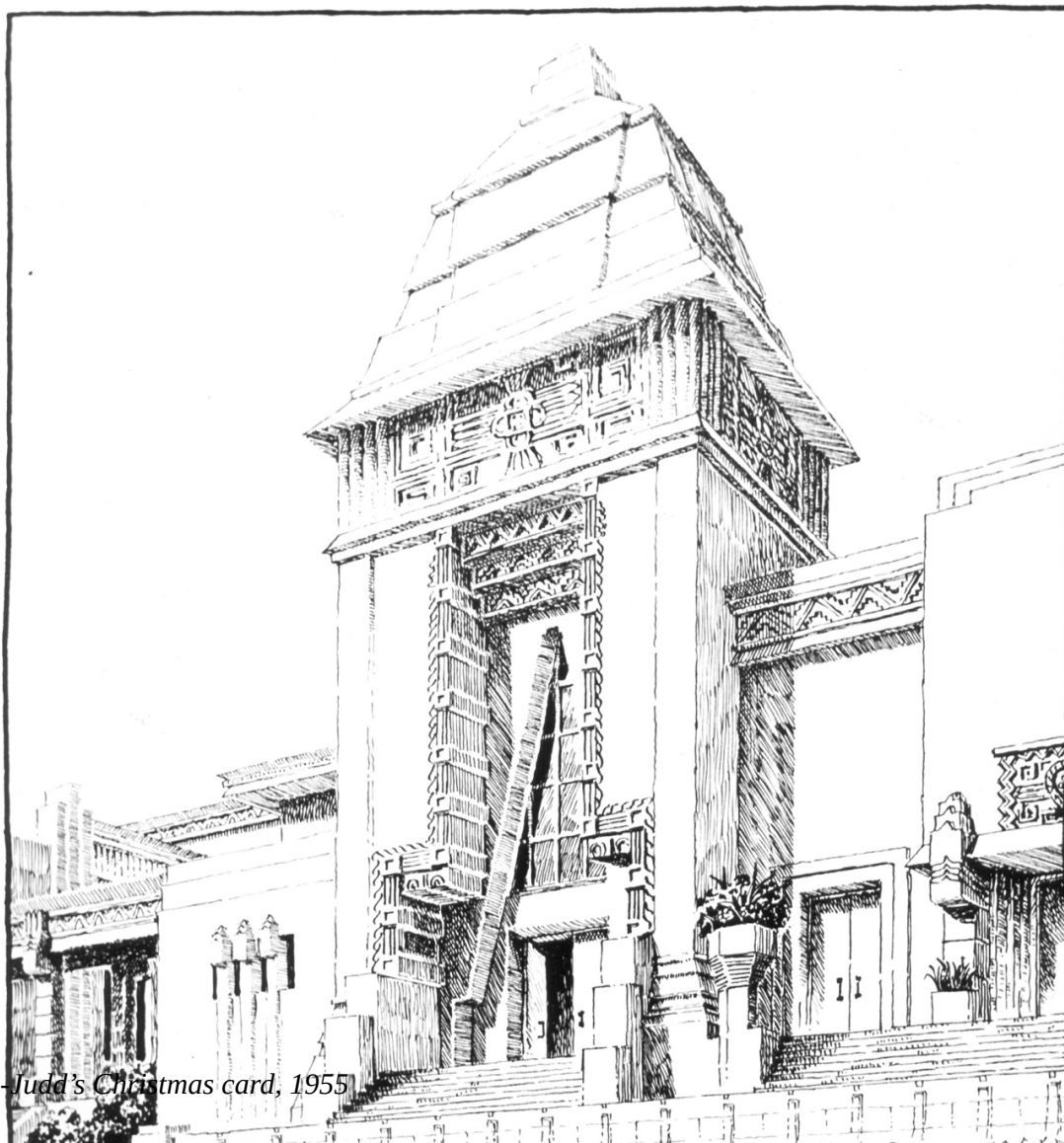
office. Hall sat in a big chair that was higher than any other in the room. He was so big and strangely aloof. I didn't like his smile. It was hiding something. I was always happy to get out of there. I wondered, 'What does my dad see in this man?'"

But Hall had a magnetic effect on the half-dozen students he would hand-pick each year for special one-on-one tutoring at PRS. Among them was Don Ingalls, who credits Hall, in part, for his later success as a writer and producer of several successful television series and movies.

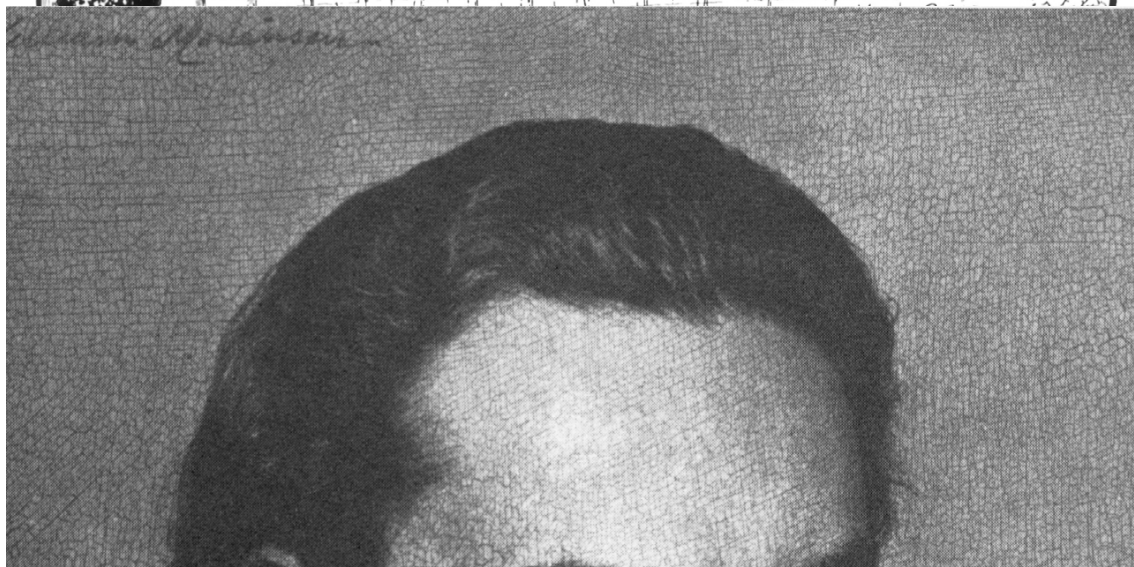
The former B-17 bomber pilot, who saw extensive action in Europe during World War II, was a Los Angeles Police Department officer assigned to the public information detail when Hall took a shine to him. Ingalls' partner at the department was Officer Eugene Roddenberry, who later created the enduring *Star Trek* television series. [13]

As it happened, an ex-secretary of Hall's, Addy Sheldon, an attractive brunette whose first husband was silent film comic Fatty Arbuckle, had worked for Ingalls' boss, Capt. Stanley Sheldon. At her suggestion, Ingalls, who was an active Mason familiar with Hall's books about Masonic history, dropped in on one of the philosopher's Sunday lectures at a movie theater on Vermont Avenue. After the presentation, he went backstage and introduced himself. "Before long I was a trusted insider at PRS," he recalled. "We'd sit at a round table for afternoon green tea with Mr. Hall in a room filled with the smell of burning incense. He would pick a topic to talk about and we would listen and ask questions."

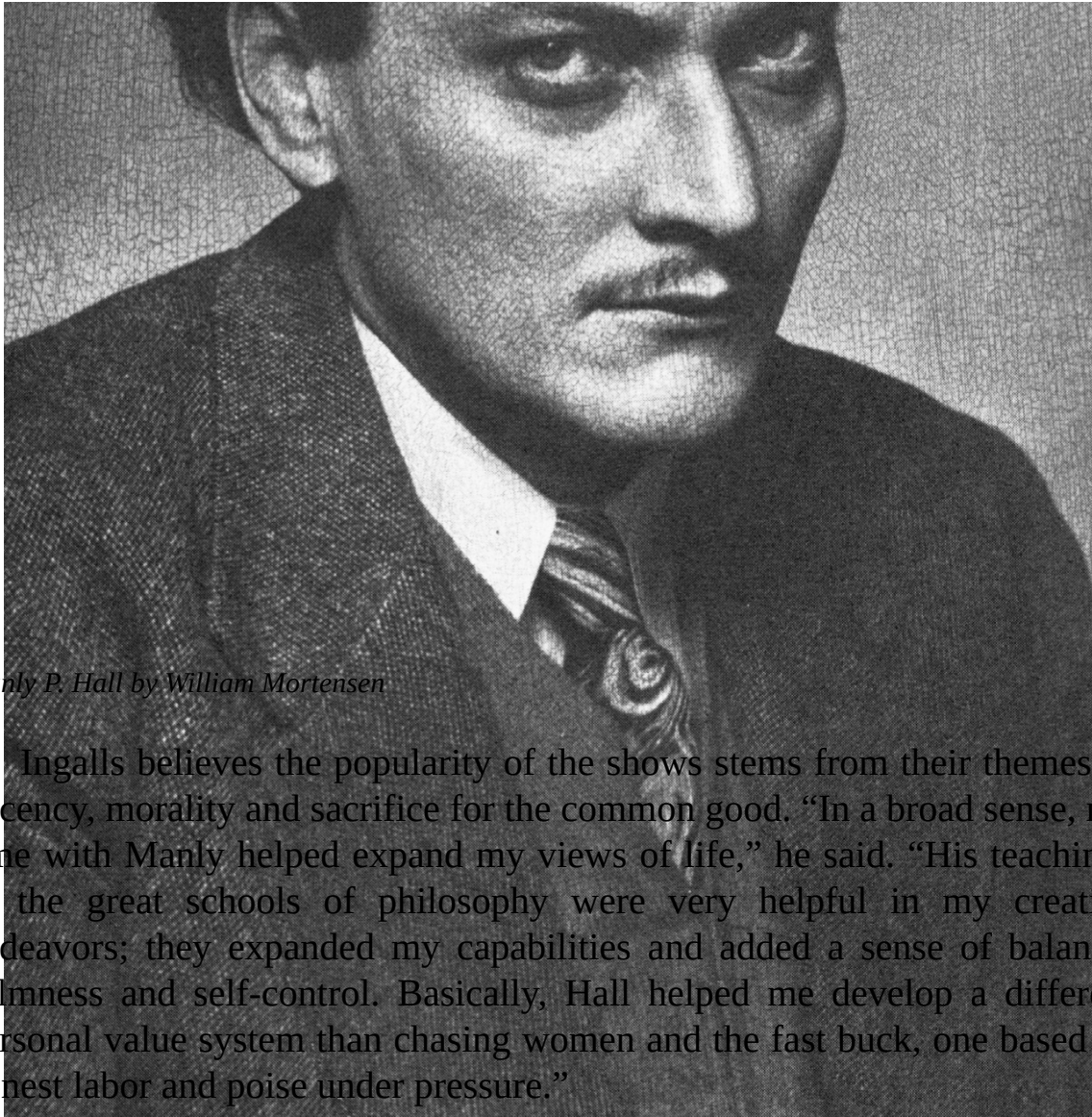
In what he described as the "great quietude and peace" of the PRS library, Ingalls read all of Hall's books and helped him produce his mail-order course, "The Basic Ideas of Man." In 1957, after two years of study with Hall, he left law enforcement and went on to a distinguished career as producer or writer of movies and television series including *Have Gun, Will Travel*; *Bonanza*, and *Fantasy Island*, among others. A conversation with Hall about Madame Blavatsky's notion of parallel universes was transformed into a *Star Trek* episode he wrote for Roddenberry.



*Stacy-Judd's Christmas card, 1955*







*Manly P. Hall by William Mortensen*

Ingalls believes the popularity of the shows stems from their themes of decency, morality and sacrifice for the common good. “In a broad sense, my time with Manly helped expand my views of life,” he said. “His teachings of the great schools of philosophy were very helpful in my creative endeavors; they expanded my capabilities and added a sense of balance, calmness and self-control. Basically, Hall helped me develop a different personal value system than chasing women and the fast buck, one based on honest labor and poise under pressure.”

Yet Hall was not comfortable with Ingalls’ medium, which he called “a precocious infant” that was exerting “an undue influence in the shaping of human conduct.”

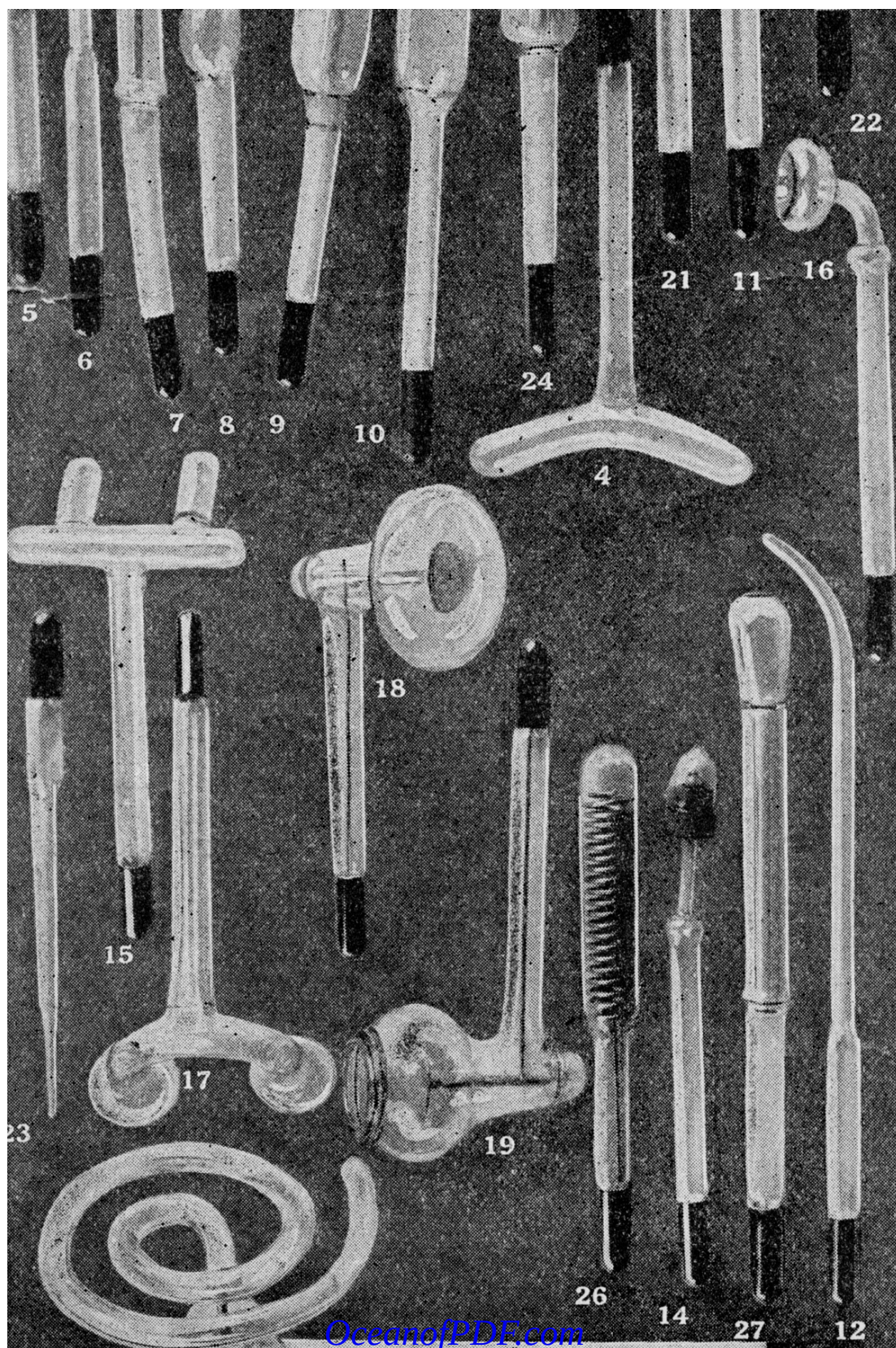
In a lecture delivered in the summer of 1957, Hall said that television conveyed the impression that “the world is filled with insidious human beings, dedicated to selfishness and conspiracy.”

“Practically every activity which interested families prior to the development of television is being neglected,” he said. “There are numerous diversions far more satisfying to the mind and more suitable to creative emotional expression than watching the almost constant panorama of human misfortunes, discontents, and disasters, and such larger and more beneficial activities should be cultivated and encouraged.” [14]

Like so many other popular inventions that had changed the American way of life in the previous 50 years—the automobile, air travel, motion pictures, radio—television could be a useful servant but a dangerous master. Hall wondered whether the contemplative attitudes needed for the potentials of the soul to unfold, or to appreciate fine art, would survive the morbid sensationalism and brief attention span encouraged by television.

In the meantime, millions of viewers looked forward to color television.







## CHAPTER 7

# Good Vibrations

ENERGY WAS THE BYWORD OF HEALTH GURUS AND METAPHYSICIANS WHO FLOURISHED IN LOS ANGELES IN THE 1950S, AS THEY PITCHED MYSTIC MEDICAL TECHNIQUES THAT PROMISED RELIEF WITH RAYS FROM THEIR HANDS, SECRET HERBAL MIXTURES, OR FROM STRANGE MECHANICAL DEVICES.

A Swiss immigrant measured “brain waves” with a “biometer”; a woman diagnosed the “vibrations” in drops of dried blood with a “radionics” machine; a therapist bathed abdomens in colored lights, then tapped the tummies to detect telltale sounds of sickness; a stout machinist gave jolts of healing energy from his hands. These were the faces of alternative medicine in Los Angeles.

They made a living even as they tried to stay one step ahead of the American Medical Association’s relentless crackdowns on scientifically unproven cures. To hear them tell it, they were pioneers trying to break through the walls of tradition, only to be attacked by skeptics in law enforcement and jealous doctors in the medical establishment.

An article in Hall’s *PRS Horizon* touted these healers and latter-day alchemists for laboring in home kitchens and basements, conducting mysterious experiments and pondering the recipes of ancient alchemists in the belief that the madness of one generation would be recognized as genius in another. [1]

The general goal was to restore a proper flow and balance of a person’s “vibratory energy,” a type of spiritual vitality that could not be measured by

traditional physical, chemical or biological methods, but was conditioned by thoughts, emotions, habits and attitudes. In healthy, emotionally balanced people, this energy field, when properly balanced, serves as a barrier to bacterial attacks. Thus, while people are not responsible for the particular germ or virus that attacks them, they are responsible for their vulnerability.

Blocked energy is also harmful, much as a person would find in a home with clogged water pipes. As Hall put it, “Energy flowing desperately outward will do the same thing as a flooded stream. It will break through dams. It will destroy good land. It will break through dikes and flood important communal areas. Energy out of control floods the mental and emotional life resulting in excesses of numerous kinds which always arise from lack of control.” [2]

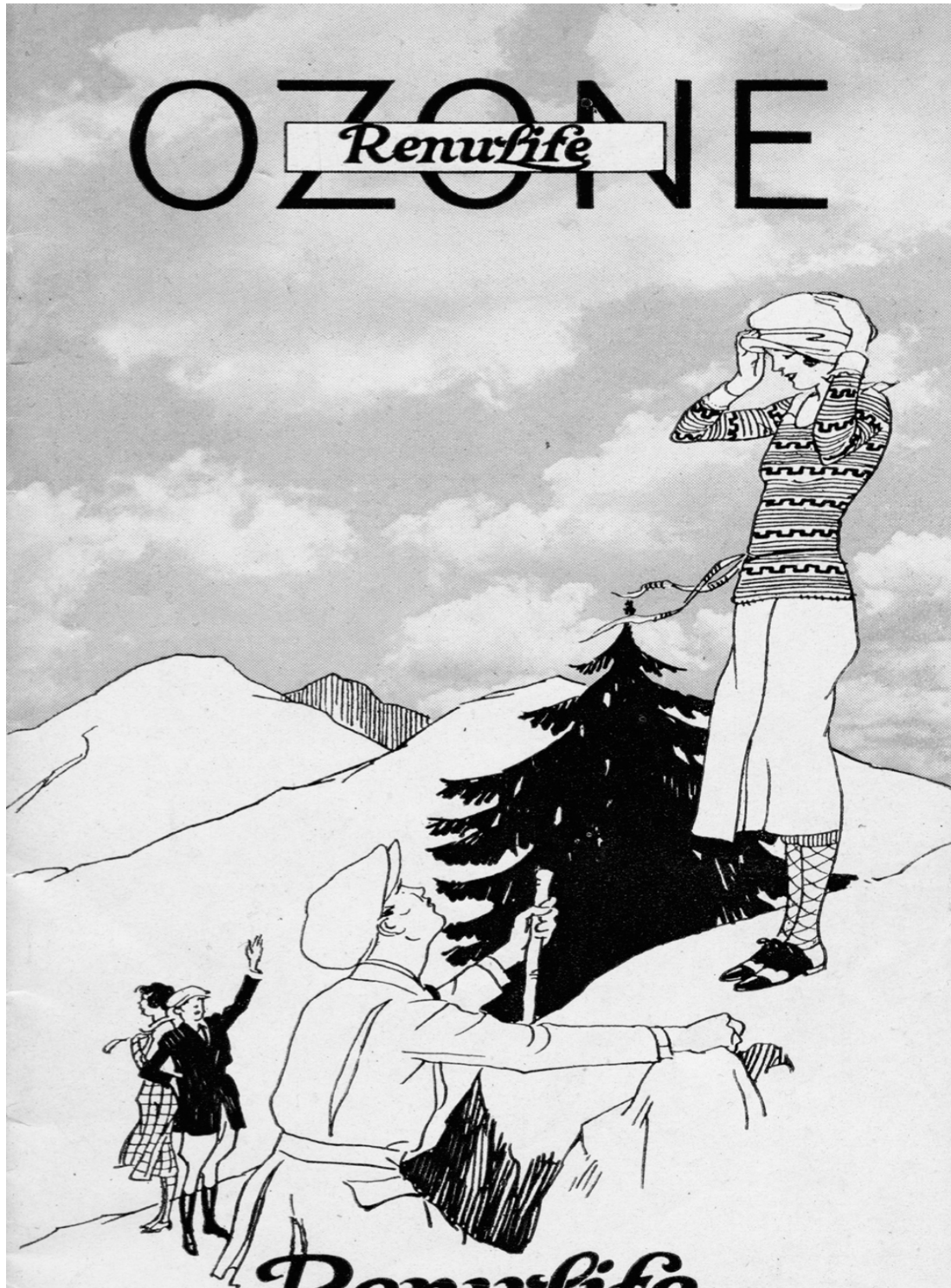
A key to improvement in human energy fields is attitude. Therefore, metaphysician Hall concluded, “Mysticism, as preventative medicine, could probably reduce the need for curing and treating 40% to 50%. A great many ailments could be controlled simply by attitude.” [3]

The patron saints of this approach included Antoine Mesmer, the 18th-century Austrian physician who supposed a healing fluid emanated from the stars, and the similarly inclined 14th-century Swiss physician and alchemist Paracelsus.

Hall’s alchemist friends embraced their ideas. Some of them routinely hiked into the nearby San Gabriel Mountains at night with heavy glass plates on which to collect 15 to 20 gallons of morning dew they believed was laden with powers captured from the rays of the stars.

In fact, Paracelsus prompted the development of modern chemistry as he ventured through Switzerland, Austria and Bavaria preaching, treating and studying various diseases. Paracelsus, who was reviled in his lifetime for challenging academic authorities and for his bombastic personality, also championed the healing power of energy currents he believed streamed from an invisible spiritual world that parallels ours. [4] And it follows, he suggested, that each physical body co-exists with an invisible twin “etheric body,” and that the spleen, liver and other “contact points” allow for the flow of Divine Energies. Blockages of these contact points cause sickness. Paracelsus and other similarly enlightened physicians could clear these passages and restore health. In many respects, Paracelsus’ treatments

mirrored those described in records of Oriental acupuncture practices going back more than 2,500 years. Like Paracelsus, the ancient Chinese thought the body's physiological systems were connected to pathways through which a vital life force they called *chi* circulated.





“As the odor of the lily passes from the flower into the surrounding air,” Paracelsus wrote, according to a translation by Franz Hartmann in his book *The Life of Paracelsus*, “so the vital force contained in the invisible body passes into the visible form, and beyond it. The physical body has the capacity to produce visible organs—such as the eyes and the ears, the tongue and the nose—but they all take their origin from the invisible body, of which the external visible form is only the outward representation.” [5]

Such ideas were discussed long into the night at Betty Morales’ legendary parties for leaders in alternative medicine, medical professionals and celebrities at Eden Ranch, her 23-acre homestead in Topanga Canyon. Known as “The First Lady of Nutrition,” Morales was a charismatic woman of Irish and English descent with a bawdy sense of humor, a 42D bust and a successful health food store on Third Street and Western Avenue called Organic-Ville. “Betty didn’t smoke or drink, but she loved being around interesting people,” recalled her daughter-in-law, Patricia Moore-Joshi. “Betty used to say the gatherings were wonderful, strange mixes of eclectic personalities.” [6]

Before she died in 1987 at 82 as a result of complications from injuries she suffered in a seven-car pileup on the Santa Monica Freeway, Morales was constantly lecturing, experimenting with vitamin concoctions, and smuggling the alleged cancer cure Laetrile across the border from Mexico.

Mingling under Morales’ scrub oaks and pepper trees on a given evening were scientists such as Linus Pauling, the Nobel Prize winning champion of mega-doses of Vitamin C, and celebrities in the occult underground such as actress Rhonda Fleming, who was a member of the metaphysical First Church of Religious Science, actress Gloria Swanson, a famous health food fanatic, and actor Glenn Ford, one of the first movie stars to come out strongly with a belief in reincarnation and astrology. Also on hand were occult philosophers such as Manly P. Hall and psychics and miracle workers for whom Hall was a VIP patient.

His myriad ailments related to his thyroid problems, obesity, addiction to junk food and aversion to exercise kept them busy.



Among Hall's favorite "doctors" was William E. Gray, a cheery, stocky machinist who claimed he could 'blow out your cancer' with jolts of energy from his hands. Gray went by the aliases "Mr. A" and "Phil" to protect his privacy, but he traveled in the same social circles as Hall. A mutual friend of theirs, Judy Crawford, recalled that the men "talked mentally to each other," and were allied with "The Masters" who help guide human activity from some ethereal realm. "I once asked Bill Gray about the Holocaust," Crawford said. "Bill said that he, Manly and the Masters 'saved as many Jews as we could.' You see, Manly and Bill were put here to help change the earth into the new way of doing things. They knew each other from past lives." [7] Gray confided to Hall that he had been born with the power to heal, and that he had used it as a small boy to help sick farm animals. During World War II, he said he used it to treat the aches and pains of Vallejo, California, ship builders. But he could not transfer his powers to others.

Gray's frequent companion was Dr. Dena L. Smith, a resident surgeon at Los Angeles General Hospital. An article in *Cosmopolitan* magazine in 1963 dubbed the blue-eyed blonde one of the nation's "beauties in medicine."

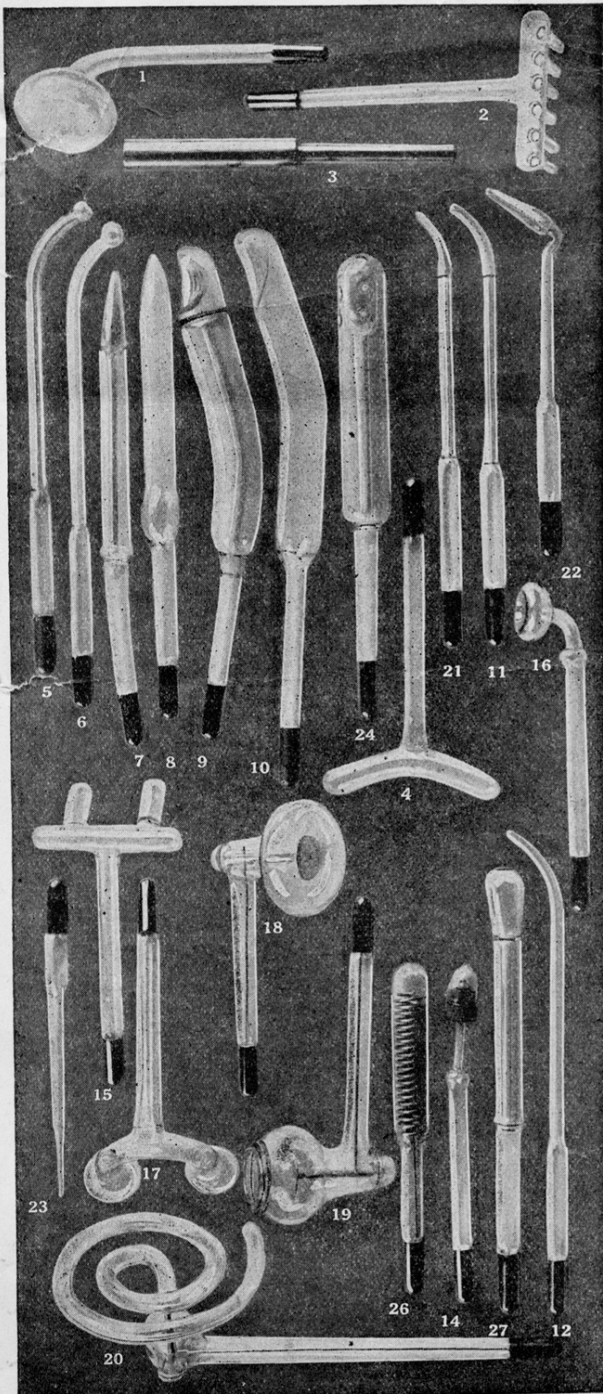
In the 1950s and 1960s, Gray and Smith, who hoped to establish a research clinic based on his seeming ability to help some people, spent the winter months relaxing in the South Pacific. During the summer, they traveled from one appointment to another with patients including Congresswoman Francis Bolton, California Gov. Goodwin Knight and Alabama Gov. George Wallace.

In an interview Smith recalled, "One night, all Sacramento was worried because the governor was missing. In fact, Goodwin had gone to Berkeley that night to receive treatments from Bill." On several occasions, she added, "Bill stayed at the governor's mansion." [8]

Their liaison to Hollywood high society was actor Glenn Ford, who invited his friends including judges, attorneys, and Hollywood executives over for treatments in the living room of his spacious home behind the Beverly Hills Hotel, Smith recalled. Ford, who had a deformed back that was deftly concealed from view in his movies with special costumes and camera angles, grew vegetables in his backyard on immense nursery beds

built on stilts so that he wouldn't have to bend down. He liked to tell people that the Gray's treatments energized him to work in the garden.

# RenuLife Violet Ray



RenuLife Violet Ray electrotherapy pamphlet

## No. 16 Single Eye Electrode

The Single Eye Electrode has been designed for the treatment of all eye troubles. It fits closely and neatly over the eye, and when treatment is being taken, only a slight warmth and twitching of the eyes can be eliminated. It is used for inflammation from the eye, such as IRITIS, BLEPHARITIS, etc. Used for strengthening the eye.

Price . . . . .

## No. 17 Double Eye Electrode

Double Eye electrode is used for the same purpose as the Single Eye, but is designed for treatment of both eyes, and is designed to carry current evenly to each eye, and should be used for all eye troubles.

Price . . . . .

## No. 18 Condenser Electrode

This is an external body electrode, and is used for the treatment of all ailments which condense the current, making it more effective. Should be used in all cases of NEURALGIA, SCIATICA, STIFF JOINTS, etc., when quick results are desired.

Price . . . . .

## No. 19 Cataphoric Electrode

This electrode is made with an indented tip, and is used for the treatment of all ailments which absorbent cotton and liniment of any kind. Violet Ray carries the liniment direct to the point of treatment. Used in treatment of RHEUMATISM, LUMBAGO, etc., or wherever liniment is to be used.

Price . . . . .

## No. 20 Spiral Electrode

Is used to cover a large area of the body, and is useful where the entire body is to be treated. Recommended for physicians to facilitate quick treatment.

Price . . . . .

## No. 21 Ear and Nasal Insulated Electrode

For treatment of the Internal ear for ringing noises, etc. Used for INTERNAL NOSE TREATMENT, etc.

Price . . . . .

## No. 22 Special Goosenecked Insulated Electrode

This electrode is specially designed for treatment of the ear only, and should be used for the treatment of all conditions in the INNER EAR, such as RINGING NOISES, etc. It allows the current to go right up to the middle of the ear, and not distributed along the sides of the canal.

Price . . . . .

## No. 23 Ear and Nasal Plain Electrode

For internal treatment of the nose and the ear. It is the same as electrode No. 21, except that it is not insulated.

Price . . . . .

## No. 24 Special Vaginal Electrode

This electrode is made with perforations and is used for the treatment of all ailments which require purifying Ozone internally, and is used for all female complaints. This as well as all ailments should not be used during pregnancy. Treatment should be given daily.

Price . . . . .

(No. 25 Ozone Generator, see page 2)

## No. 26 RenuLife Tonic Saturator Electrode

Specially designed for saturation treatment. With this electrode it is impossible to receive treatment unless the user comes in contact with grounded pipes, electric fixtures, etc.

Price . . . . .

## No. 27 Special Prostatic Electrode

Particularly designed for the treatment of the prostate. Delivers heat, electricity, and vibration. The RenuLife Violet Ray in conjunction with this electrode is the most effective means known of treating the prostate. Doctor Noble M. Eberhart of Chicago (an authority in the world on Violet Ray treatment) of all cases treated should be complete cure and improvement should be noted in every case.

“Oh boy! Bill is coming today! Bill is coming today!” Hall would chortle to herald the impending arrival of the healer who believed that mononucleosis resulted from repressed emotions, multiple sclerosis from jealousy, polio from “atmospheric life energy storms,” and female indigestion, eczema, bronchial trouble, shortness of breath and heart strain from a “dormant clitoris nerve.” [9]

After exchanging pleasantries and a few jokes about Hall’s weight problem, Gray would set to work, ‘recharging the magnetic fields’ of the philosopher, his wife, and a select group of friends and relatives. The sessions began with Gray laying his ear on a patient’s chest and exclaiming, “Oh, I’ve got the signal.” [10] Then he would slip his flingers beneath a patient’s shirt or blouse, pants or dress, and administer his electric current. Close friends of the Halls said that upon contact, the muscles between Gray’s left shoulder and elbow would expand and contract like an electric pump.

Gray was frequently called on to apply his magic touch to Hall’s chronic sore spots: his neck, stomach, joints, and feet. Hall had particular problems with his gall bladder. He also treated Marie for a problem in her neck that “deflected her energy and made her crazy,” according to Judy Crawford, a friend of the family.

“When things got too bad,” Crawford recalled, “Manly would call and say, ‘Marie’s fighting with everybody. Can you come by and do something?’ Bill would go over and give her an energy treatment below the belly button. She’d lie on the sofa, and he’d apply the energy. Then she’d be just fine.”

In New Age author Ruth Montgomery’s biography of Gray, *Born to Heal*, Hall recalled a visit by Gray when he was bedridden with a severe gallbladder attack. “My abdomen was distended, and I was vomiting green bile,” Hall said. “The doctors told me I was too overweight to risk the necessary operation, and I was really sick. [Marie Hall] called Phil [Gray], who was working in Los Angeles at the time, and he came to my home. After greeting me, he said, ‘Well, Manly, looks like you’re in trouble, so we’ll see what the energies will do. Otherwise I know they’ll pick me as a pallbearer, and you’re too damned heavy to carry.’ Phil and I are always kidding each other, but that time I was too sick even to grin. He blasted the energy through me, and soon I was back on my feet.” (The “remedy” was

short-lived. Hall's gallbladder problem returned with a vengeance a few years later. Before going in for surgery to remove it, Hall went on a cottage cheese-no chocolate diet and shed about one hundred pounds so that medical instruments could more easily reach the troubled organ.)

Gray also treated Marie's daughter Jo Ann for mononucleosis. Marie's sycophant Fred Cole brought his mother in once to have her bowel movements corrected. "He put his hands under my mother's skirt," Cole recalled. "But she eventually had to have an operation." [11]

Not everyone was comfortable with Gray's style of healing. "He tried to lay his hands under my dress and on my tummy," recalled Marie Hall's sister, Agnes. "I said, 'That will be enough of that, mister!'" [12]

When the sessions ended, Marie would prepare an elaborate dinner for the group while Gray and Hall squealed with childish delight over a game of Chinese checkers.

The Halls were close friends of Oscar Brunler, an amiable physician and Rosicrucian chemist who lived a few miles west at the top of a steep flight of stairs on Queens Way off Sunset Boulevard. Brunler was noted for having invented a special torch used in underwater demolition work during World War II. But the Halls were interested in his "brain scale," a mechanism roughly the size and shape of a shoebox that he said produced a numerical value for the frequency of the "di-electric radiation" vibrations streaming out of a person's brain, or off their artwork, or handwriting.

Brunler believed that a person's handwriting could be measured for levels of "brain radiation" with his biometer. This was because, he said, eyes focus such energies on the moving pen or pencil during the act of writing. People with the greatest mental capacity, he determined through experimentation, also showed the highest frequency of vibrations. Writing samples could only be tested with his biometer if they were rendered with a fountain pen. Ballpoint pens, which were becoming popular in the early 1950s, were useless, Brunler said. Hall, who had been collecting the signatures of occultists and influential leaders in science, literature, business and religion for decades, provided Brunler with lots of material for testing.

In his promotional literature, Brunler claimed his "discovery of the di-electric radiation and its application to the mind of man is proving to be one of the epoch-making discoveries of the Twentieth Century," and that he had measured the brain radiation of "20,000 men, women and children from the



common laborer to the outstanding personalities in all walks of life.” Brunler held that most people registered below 300 on his brain scale. Hall’s biometric reading of about 450 was in the vicinity of Einstein’s and Tolstoy’s, Brunler concluded, but about 200 points below Madame Blavatsky’s and Michelangelo’s. Brunler rated himself at 792, 12 points higher than Leonardo da Vinci.

In his book *Rays and Radiation Phenomena*, Brunler tried to explain the dynamics of the peculiar radiation, which he said “no instruments used by orthodox science can measure.”

“The radiation of our mind is di-electric radiation,” he said. “Our mind is a condensation of the all-pervading energy. Mind is not matter, but is energy at its first stage of condensation. Mind is composed therefore of neutrons and the radiation of our minds is the radiation of the neutrons. The wave length of the radiation indicates the energy condensation of the neutrons.”

Brunler’s peers included a mutual friend of his and Hall’s, Ruth B. Drown, a masculine-looking specialist in bone diseases who was being closely watched by American Medical Association investigators. Drown’s method was to transmit shortwave “healing rays” over long distances from a “broadcasting room” in Los Angeles. Drown also used a “radio-vision instrument” to analyze the radiation flowing off dried drops of a patient’s blood on blotter paper and then draw conclusions about his or her health.

In her book *The Theory and Technique of the Drown Radio Therapy and Radio-vision Instruments*, she explained the system this way. “When placed on a blotter, the blood is crystallized, even as ice is crystallized steam, and each small atom is the precipitated crystallized end of an invisible line which reaches into the ethers,” she writes. “This invisible line passes through the body over the nerves and through the blood vessels and the electrons from the air, water and earth supply the body structure, attaching themselves to that line, which holds the pattern of the body.”

Medical authorities believed Drown was an outright fraud, or insane. But some metaphysicians regarded her as a medical genius. Among them was one of Hall’s close friends, Dr. Robert Gerard, who served as chief of intelligence for psychological warfare under General Dwight D. Eisenhower during World War II and later headed the Psychophysiological Research Laboratory at the Veterans Administration Neuropsychiatric

Hospital in Los Angeles. “Ruth Drown was a brilliant woman who was psychologically crucified by the state,” Gerard said. “When you use machines that are more advanced than what science believes, you will be accused of being a quack.” [13]

Gerard, a longtime PRS trustee, was also a devotee of Brunler, who died in 1952, and among five people trained to use his “biometer.” The others included a college counselor, a head of personnel for a large corporation, and a physician, Gerard said.

Leaning back in a comfortable armchair in his Brentwood living room, Gerard reveled in the memories of the 1950s and 1960s. “I got my Ph.D. in clinical psychology at UCLA in 1958. It would have been denied had they known I studied Blavatsky. At UCLA, I was known as a great scholar and hardcore scientist.” Brunler, he added, “thought I was a virtuoso occultist” who could measure a person’s energy fields simply by looking at them. “Before Brunler died, I told him that I could get biometric results without using his machine, which was empty except for some nylon strings,” Gerard recalled. “I had discovered that one’s very soul knows what another’s measurement is. Brunler took my hand and said, ‘So, you have discovered the secret. Please, keep it to yourself. Some people need black boxes in order to believe.’ I said, ‘Dr. Brunler, it shall remain a secret.’”

About 120 miles south of Hollywood, at a secluded health resort in the hills of Tecate, Baja California, Mexico, Hungarian immigrant Edmond Bordeaux Szekely was running the International Biogenic Society he had co-founded with Romain Rolland, a French writer awarded the 1915 Nobel Prize in literature. Rolland’s works celebrated the spiritual struggles of great artists such as Beethoven, Michelangelo and Tolstoy. Szekely, who said he received a Ph.D. from the University of Paris and spoke 10 languages, offered a health regimen that he called a path toward “a wholesome, meaningful and spiritual fulfillment in your way of living, nutrition, meditation, self-analysis, and in other essential preconditions of individual happiness.” [14]

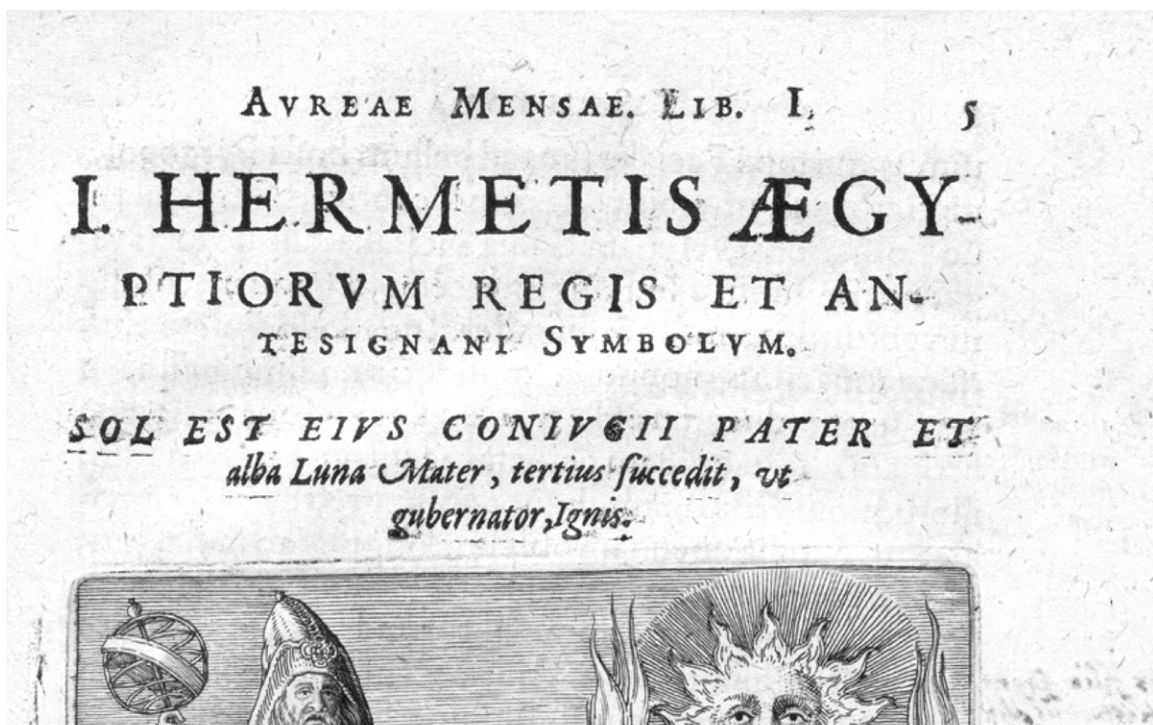
Szekely drew some of his medical strategies from a book called *The Essene Gospel of Peace*, published in 1936, which he claimed to have translated from an Aramaic text he’d gotten from the secret archives of the Vatican. In that gospel, Jesus urges a group of followers to cleanse their

“hinder parts” with an “angel of water”: a colonics device made from a hollowed-out gourd filled with “river water warmed by the sun.”

“No man may come before the face of God,” Szekely quotes Jesus as saying, “whom the angel of water does not let pass.”

In another book *Cosmotherapy*, Szekely gave instructions for “preparing the human organism for the taking of an internal douche” by having him or her consume “fruit juices” at lunch and dinner for three days. When it came time for the treatment, the patient was to absorb two to four quarts of water from a container fixed six feet high “so as to provide the pressure required to make the water flow into the intestines.” Application included massaging a patient’s water-filled abdomen by “rubbing it with the hand in a clockwise direction.” In general he advised, “It is a good plan to repeat the douches every five days throughout the period of detoxification, whatever the nature of the illness.” [15]

Szekely, who published more than 80 books before his death in 1979, offered for sale a range of other health programs and gadgets. Among them was a “biogenic battery” comprised of bound leaves of grass to be brushed over one’s genitals. But it was a Szekely-style “water angel” that may have contributed to Hall’s failing health in 1990, according to his family physician and the Los Angeles County Coroner’s Office.





A page from Hall's 17th-century hermetic and alchemical book collection

Hall and Szekely were never chummy, although they often crossed paths at Hollywood parties in the 1930s. Nonetheless, Hall respected Szekely's approach to alternative medicine enough to keep first-edition copies of his books in the PRS library. In the final days of his life, Hall was receiving up to two water angel treatments a day. They were administered with the help of his assistant Dan Fritz, who ran a Santa Monica business called Biogenics. Fritz insisted the daily cleansings were needed to rid Hall's intestines of toxins. However, Hall's physician at the time, Dr. Sterling Pollock, said he repeatedly warned the philosopher and his assistant that the treatments were damaging Hall's rectal tissues and worsening his heart problems by throwing his electrolytes out of balance. Hall and Fritz, Pollock said, figured they knew better. [16] Indeed, Hall had for decades championed what he believed were spiritual aspects of enemas.

In a series of lectures delivered in the 1940s called "Practical Mysticism," Hall said, "The old theory of medicine from Paracelsus down to the present generation, for there are still some old-fashioned doctors among us, was that the individual depended largely upon good health, upon relaxation, blood purification and adequate elimination. So if he had all these things, he was in pretty fair shape. Someone once said to a man I knew, 'Doctor, how long do you think I'll live?' The doctor looked him over and said, 'You are in pretty good shape. You will live just as long as you keep your elimination regular.' That's the length of your life. We find, for example, that poor elimination nine times out of ten arises from nervous



tension; that some form of intensity moves in on this situation breaking these rhythms, creating further toxins and causing the individual to die by first of all creating a tension in the intestinal area. Most of these people begin to die in the great intestine and then it sort of spreads.” [17]

Hall’s closest friends and relatives had grave doubts about the water angel procedure, which Fritz administered behind the partially closed door of Hall’s bathroom. They were worried sick that Fritz had persuaded the Halls to invest in marketing the devices and about what Marie’s sister Agnes called a “possible sexual component to the water angel.” [18]

What no one knew was that Szekely’s water angel was most likely a product of his imagination. There never was an Essene Gospel of Peace, according to Deborah Szekely, who later transformed her husband’s Tecate health spa into a popular health retreat. “No one has been able to find any evidence whatsoever that it ever existed,” she said, referring to a book that has sold over a million copies in 26 languages. As for the “water angel,” she added, “my husband fiddled with some fancy enema techniques at one stage in his life, but he became more mainstream as the years went by.” [19]

Decades later, however, Fritz hoped to make millions off the gizmos. In any case, Deborah Szekely added, using colonic treatments too often is “stupid,” and possibly dangerous to one’s health, as Hall discovered.

Marriage therapist Judith Marx vividly remembers the first time she met Manly P. Hall. She was 16 and the hulking philosopher was graying handsomely at the temples, wearing a huge blue suit and standing in the home office of her stepfather, chiropractor James “Doc” Sabia, on Beechwood Drive in the Hollywood Hills. Hall, who seemed sad that day, towered over Sabia, a balding southern Italian of medium build with short-cropped hair, a neatly trimmed beard, and a fondness for “sex and pasta,” [20] Marx said. “Sabia was always referring to Manly as a great man, and he was proud to have him as a patient,” she recalled. “To me, Manly was bigger than life. I knew in my heart he was the real thing. He knew truths.”

Sabia would ramp up his “electro-stimulating machine,” a wooden control device the size of an upright piano with dials arranged in five rows and seven columns. Hall grasped a copper plate in one hand and a nickel plate in the other while Sabia flipped switches on the machine and recorded numbers that he said corresponded to the energy vibration levels peculiar to various organs of the body. Manly and Marie, along with several



Hollywood celebrities, were sold on the machine and its ability to pinpoint the causes of their aches and pains. At PRS headquarters, however, Hall's staffers jokingly referred to Sabia as "the ghoul from Transylvania" because of his thick accent and odd techniques. "Sabia was an oddball all right. He was into New Age stuff and healing, and he was connected to the Mob," Marx said of her own stepfather. "Yet, he was completely effective. Whatever it was that he did, it was remarkable."

Among such spiritual medics, Hall was regarded as high priest, an initiate as well as a scholar with advanced academic degrees. Hall, who never corrected people when they called him "Dr. Hall," was partly to blame for that. So it must have been a humbling experience in late 1956 when Jaques Cattell, editor of the *Directory of American Scholars*, invited Hall to submit background information to add him to the esteemed list. [21] Although he was lacking in formal higher education, Hall fit the image of a classical scholar. Always clad in a pressed blue suit, crisp shirt and tie, he would sit for hours inside his vault, puffing on a curved briar pipe while perusing rare tomes such as the *Collectio Operum* of Robert Fludd, published in 1617, and its images of inverted Sephirotic Trees with 10 roots above in Eternity and 10 fronds below named after orders of angelic beings recognized in the Kabbalah.

Eventually, he would summon his secretary for hours of dictation. Then, leaning back in his oversized office chair with his eyes closed, he would speak as if in a trance about early stone carvings, the rebirth of interest in Lao Tzu, the power of Mozart's opera *The Magic Flute*, the correlation of the heavens and the affairs of mankind, and how to grow old with dignity.

Nonetheless, the job of responding to Cattell's request for biographical details was handed to PRS secretary Hedda Lark. She wrote back, "I find it difficult to fill out your form adequately . . . due to the fact that Mr. Hall's career and activities are not actually in the academic field." [22]

Cattell did not add Hall to his directory. But it didn't seem to matter to Hall, who had become a powerful, affirming mouthpiece for a growing subculture of seekers and a friend to some of its most colorful characters. Among them was maroon-turbaned organist and television celebrity Korla Pandit, who mesmerized thousands in the 1950s. Pandit, who never spoke a word during his nine hundred TV musical performances, also lectured at PRS on the universal language of music. The olive-skinned musician who

claimed he was born in New Delhi, India, and was hailed by Paramahansa Yogananda as an embodiment of fused Eastern and Western musical traditions, had a secret: he was an African American from St. Louis. It's hard to say how Hall would have reacted to that fact had he known.

For Hall supported the notion that Americans and British citizens were the most spiritually advanced people on the planet, and divinely appointed to lead lesser beings to the next level of development. "We have received with our Aryan birthright great spiritual and intellectual legacies," Hall said in a series of lectures on race and evolution in 1951. "We have the highest spiritual conviction of right, and also the highest evolved group of faculties ever bestowed upon living things, and these must continue and have their way, they must grow and unfold. There has been a great deal of question as to where the Sixth Subrace would come from. Some have felt it would come in an amalgamation of the American and British Empire. We do not know. Certainly the far-flung dominions such as Australia, New Zealand, Canada and other parts of the Empire, plus the American way of life will be a spearhead of a common attitude, and possibly from this spearhead will be derived a new type." [23]



expressed by increasingly vocal oppressed minorities, whom he compared to adolescents experiencing growth pains.

Hall generally held a dim view of the lower classes of society and promoted birth control as a means of reducing the number of what he deemed the “mentally and physically unfit.” [24] By his logic, eugenics—controlling hereditary factors through selective breeding—would provide reincarnating souls with greater chances of being born into wealthier, happier, and more creative families. The world depends on leadership, he wrote in an essay on infant mortality in 1937, and constructive creative leadership can come into this world only when bodies of a fine organic quality can be produced. If some say it is unfair to keep out the waves of comparatively un-developed egos by birth control, he reasoned, it is also unfair that there be no class in society suitable to receive, nurture and culture the higher types of life waiting to bring the world knowledge and understanding.

Much of what Hall and other metaphysicians of his era said seems astonishingly racist, anti-Semitic and unsavory by today’s standards. After all, they were the kinds of politically charged ideas and dangerous stereotypes that had helped give rise to Hitler and Mussolini. For the most part they were drawn from 19th-century comparative studies of races that attempted to prove social and spiritual dimensions of Darwin’s theory of evolution. By adding karma, reincarnation and archetypes to social Darwinism it became distressingly easy for such internationally famous spiritualists and mythologists as Blavatsky and Carl Jung to find supposed racial psychospiritual differences among various groups, or to conclude that races were reflections of entities that were supposedly born into them.

Hall adhered, for example, to Blavatsky’s notion that there were three great systems of “racial karma” operating in the world: Lemurian, Atlantean and Aryan. Hall believed that remnants of what he described as “so-called Black peoples” were condemned to struggle against physical enslavement because they were the first humans to hunt and kill animals. Oriental nations and American Indians, he said, stemmed from Atlantean races paying for sins of arrogance and uncontrolled appetites by suffering through foreign invasions, internal corruption and perpetual poverty. The Aryan mind, he said, regarded complexity as synonymous with excellence. The

result: dreams of empire, conspicuous consumption and blind faith in science. [25]

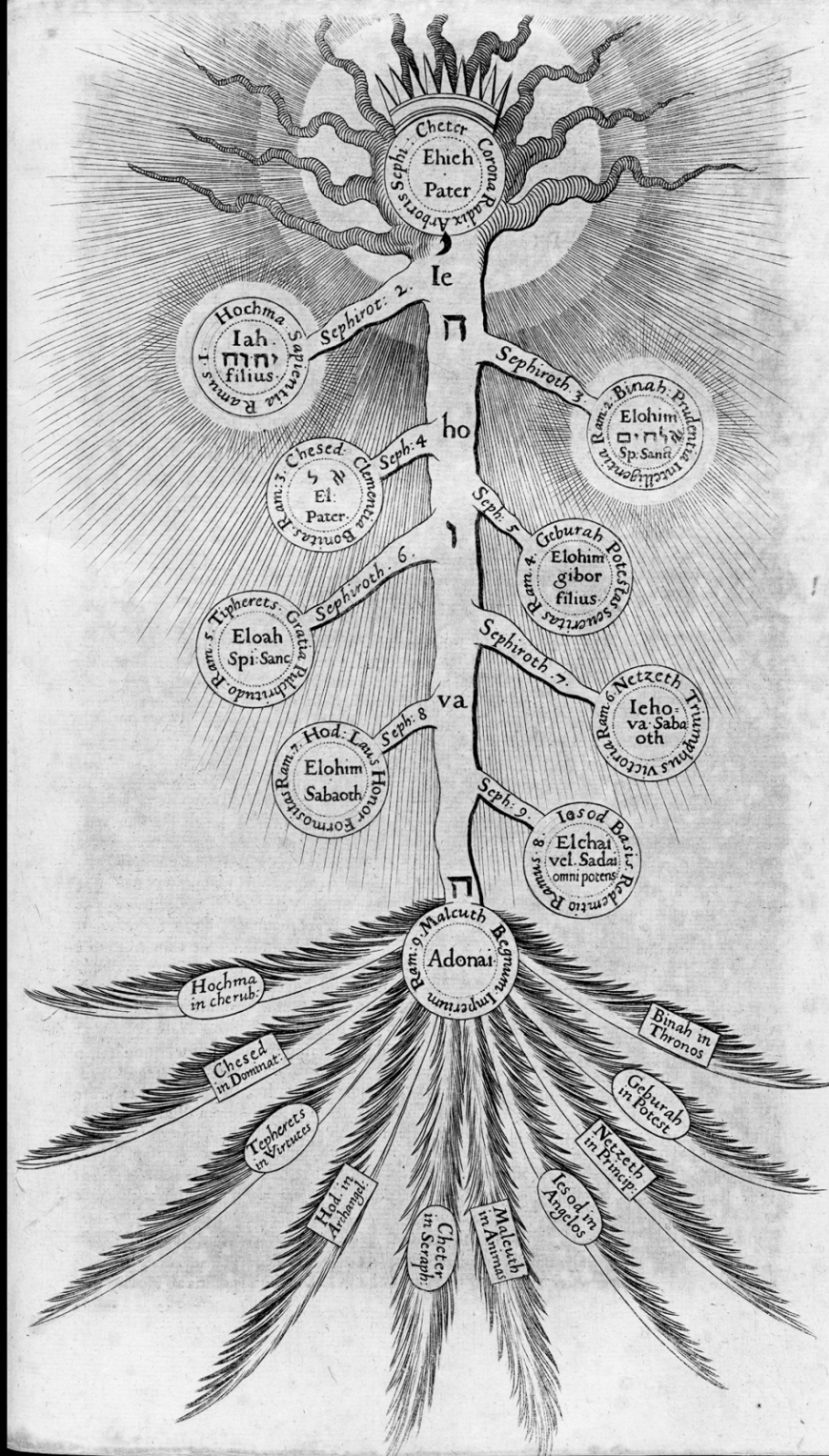
In a 1942 essay called “The Jew Does not Fit In,” Hall suggested that anti-Semitism was the price Jews had to pay for being what he called “a peculiarly race-conscious people.” The karma “of the Jew,” he wrote, “holds a gradual dying out of racial persecution of Jews as a class in the degree and with the rapidity that the Jew forgets he is a Jew and remembers he is a human being.” [26]

Hall’s notions about Jews at the time mirrored those of his friends and mentors including British Theosophical occultist Alice Bailey, who taught that “the average Jew is lonely and unsettled, able to do little to put himself right before the world. Instinctively and intellectually, the Jew is separative; intuitively he has vision, but at the same time he possesses no sense of fusion with other peoples.” [27]

The same year he proposed that “millions and millions of entities who did not believe in competition or competitive systems in life were incarnated in India. The result is that the natural temperament of the Oriental is peaceful, not particularly ambitious; culturally static.” In the same way, he said, in America entities of an almost intolerably possessive type had entered into incarnation together.

Hall’s unsettling speculations about modern life were not restricted to race. In a lecture titled “A Thoughtful Consideration of Capital Punishment,” Hall proposed “de-glamorizing criminal behavior” by censoring news reports on crime and punishment. Newspaper articles should say no more than that “on a certain day, a certain person was tried and convicted, or that another was tried and acquitted.” The sparse coverage, he reasoned, “would end the continual emotional stress aroused by detailed crime reports.” As for the death penalty, he argued that “these cases are far too complicated to advise wiping out these people. . . We cannot say a man who committed a crime at 20 has to be a criminal at 50; he may be, but we have to find out.” He did not address other challenges to the ultimate penalty as being all too often capricious, unfair to the poor and minorities who cannot afford brilliant lawyers, and the investigation and trial processes prone to error. [28]





Description of the Sephirothic Tree, 16th-17th Century

He even defended phrenologists as pioneers who “devoted years of study and training to their work, and examined thousands of heads, normal and abnormal, before they attained outstanding proficiency.” Because of their efforts, he pointed out, “We speak of ‘high brows’ and ‘low brows’ when referring to degrees of intelligence.” He never mentioned that the Nazis had twisted phrenologists’ notions to justify their racial pogroms. [29]

Hall believed that since benevolent thoughts had constructive powers, it seemed reasonable to assume that evil thoughts had the reverse effect. Thus, Hall reasoned, calamities such as droughts, floods, earthquakes, even plagues could be the direct result of divine verdicts for selfish and destructive attitudes. In other words, for Hall, our very water, earth and air had been polluted in some mysterious way with the world’s perversions: ignorance, stupidity, avarice, greed, materialism. Thus, earthquakes and revolutions were closely related. In 1920, when China was establishing its Communist government, an earthquake claimed 180,000 bodies he believed had been misused, abused and neglected. [30]

The ancients would have been proud of Hall for trying to lug the cudgel of their primordial cosmology into the 20th century. But even as some of his followers in the late 1950s were starting to question the validity of those notions at a time when science was eradicating polio and smallpox without any spiritual underpinnings, Hall’s efforts turned toward getting his long-delayed auditorium project off the ground. In July 1956, Hall and Dr. Frederick Waller, consul-general of the Republic of Austria, organized an auspicious musical concert at the Wilshire Ebell Theater to celebrate Mozart’s 200th birthday and raise money for Hall’s building fund. Performers included Marisa Andreis, mezzo-soprano with the Munich & Stuttgart State Opera, and Werner Gebauer, eminent violinist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra. Ticket prices ranged from \$1.50 and were sold at Hall’s Sunday lectures. [31]

A year later, Hall delivered seven lectures in the Oakland Real Estate Board Auditorium and made frequent guest appearances on radio programs sympathetic to his causes such as commentator Ben Hunter’s show on KFI. In April 1957, Hall gave seven lectures in New York’s Carnegie Recital Hall. Proceeds from those out-of-town campaigns were also dedicated to the fund.

Facing contractual deadlines and impending changes in city building codes that would restrict parking, even prevent construction, Hall began work with money borrowed on the promises of contributors who had yet to fulfill their pledges. Years of grueling preparation, fundraising and labor culminated in a dedication ceremony marking the placement of the four-hundred-seat auditorium's final cornerstone on May 16, 1959. At a precise moment determined by the juxtaposition of the stars and planets overhead, Hall placed a box behind the cornerstone containing a list of all the living and dead who had contributed to the undertaking, along with a copy of the PRS constitution, its by-laws and principles. Then he told the crowd of spectators, supporters and news reporters in attendance, "In our foundation, we have recognized the three great instruments of the divine purpose—religion, philosophy and science. We believe that these three divided, have brought terrible hardship upon mankind and that in the re-union of these we have the perfect servant of the eternal." [32]

Anticipating snipes from skeptics who might regard the building as a monument to a cult leader, Hall added, "It is a great and solemn responsibility to be at the center of a purposed endeavor, but I would like to say that, actually, I am not any such center at all. I am only working with you, trying in my own way; just as you are trying to do something that my heart and soul tell me we all want to have done. We do not want this in any way to be a personal loyalty, but a loyalty to ideals." [33] The ceremony would mark the last major achievement of Hall's career.

But Hall, a perennial name in *Who's Who in California*, retained considerable influence and remained loyal to members of his congregation. When they clamored for guidance on the hottest topics of the day—flying saucers, the Russian Sputnik, Zen Buddhism and health fads—Hall reported back in lectures and essays. Hall's talent for ambivalence came in handy when it came to UFOs; he alternately declared in various lectures that they were military aircraft, or machines from another world driven by beings that might share the same religious sentiments as his most cherished philosophers. Hollywood mystic and author Gerald Heard, at the same time, proposed that smart bees from Mars were steering UFOs. After all, Heard reasoned, no other living thing could withstand the high speeds and sharp turns noted by witnesses.

Actress Gloria Swanson, who had a well-known interest in metaphysics, didn't know what to think when she and some friends discovered a 12-foot-diameter metallic disk in a shallow hole off Lakeridge Drive in the Hollywood Hills one night in January 1957. Swanson notified the *Los Angeles Times*, which dispatched aviation writer Dewey Linz to the scene, according to an article by *Los Angeles Times* reporter Cecilia Rasmussen. After interviewing neighbors, Linz determined that the "spacecraft" with wooden floors, dangling electrical wires and cockpit seats upholstered in coral leatherette was a discarded prop from a documentary that had been filmed nearby.

By decade's end, Hall, like UFO sightings, had become vulnerable to public criticism. His most powerful political ally, Gov. Goodwin Knight, had met serious defeat in a run for the U.S. Senate in 1958. The same year, astrologer and Theosophical lecturer G. Cardinal LeGros dared to publicly analyze Hall's character in a *Horoscope* magazine article titled "Manly Palmer Hall—Plato in Hollywood," published in August 1958. LeGros predicted that the "mysterious person with the pale ascetic face and haunting eyes, believed by Hollywood admirers to be an intellectual genius, a magician, a clairvoyant, the possessor of a photographic memory and the reincarnation of Plato," would be remembered most for his personality, rather than for his works. "His critics argue that he is not an original thinker and merely rewrites, in a smooth, diamond-clear style, the ideas of other men," he added. "Being human he is not wholly free from error. Occult students point to his support of certain aspects of hypnotism, a dangerous practice forbidden by all teachers of white magic from time immemorial." [34]

"The remarkable thing," LeGros concluded, "is that Hall has been able to do so much with so little and to surmount the same kind of handicaps that check the progress of thousands of people whose charts are blessed with many virtues lacking in his." LeGros' portrait seemed to suggest that Hall was all style and little substance.



*Hall placing a time capsule in the auditorium wall at FRS, 1959*



Not long after that article appeared, a \$50 volume titled *Bacstrom's Alchemical Anthology* was published, edited with an introduction by London author J.W. Hamilton-Jones. Hamilton-Jones failed to give credit to Hall or his collection of works by 18th-century Rosicrucian Sigismund Bacstrom at PRS although Hall had allowed him free access to it. [35]

Then there were challenging letters from people demanding to know exactly why Masons excluded women from their ranks. "I'm not aware that Masonry makes a special point of guarding its secrets from women," Hall wrote back to one of them. "This is about all I can tell you, but it may be comforting to know that it is among the principles of Masonry to honor and protect all womankind and to improve one's character in relation to his wife and his daughter, and to have loving thoughtfulness about the families of his brethren and all good and upright persons. Trusting this will be of some help." [36]

Those soothing, carefully weighed words were in stark contrast with the fiery, ultra-masculine descriptions of Masons Hall had presented to the world in his 1929 book *Lectures on Ancient Philosophy*. "The Mason who would discover the Lost Word must remember that in the first ages every neophyte was a man of profound learning and unimpeachable character," Hall wrote, "who for the sake of wisdom and virtue faced death unafraid and had triumphed over the limitations of the flesh which bind most mortals to the sphere of mediocrity. In those days the rituals were not put on by degree teams who handled candidates as though they were perishable commodities, but by priests deeply versed in the lore of their cults. Not one Freemason out of a thousand could have survived the initiations of the pagan rites, for the tests were given in those strenuous days when men were men and death the reward of failure. The neophyte of the Druid mysteries was set adrift in a small boat to battle the stormy sea, and unless his knowledge of natural law enabled him to quell the storm as did Jesus upon the Sea of Galilee, he returned no more. In the Egyptian rites of Serapis it was required of the neophyte that he cross an unbridged chasm in the temple floor. In other words, if unable by magic to sustain himself in the air without visible support he fell headlong into a volcanic crevice, there to die of heat and suffocation." [37]

Hall hadn't lost faith in magic and folklore. Throughout the 1960s, he had happily loaned artifacts and books—Kabbalah scrolls, the Egyptian

Book of the Dead, Santeria art figures, illuminated Bible leaves—for display in department stores and city and county libraries across Southern California. But in a rapidly changing postmodern world, he became more discreet, preferring to keep his devotion to them between himself and his aging audience at PRS. Hall, now in his sixth decade, was no longer walking on water but treading in it, trying to keep pace with the times, as ideas and technology seemed to be advancing faster than the swept-wing DC-727s roaring overhead.

Hall's monthly magazine, which had changed its name from *Horizon* to *PRS Journal* in late 1958, was competing against a growing number of periodicals that also sought to put the world of mysticism and magic within easy reach in the early 1960s. *Borderline* magazine was led by Sydney Omarr, a nationally recognized astrologer to the stars with a fondness for Hollywood starlets, Cuban cigars, fine scotch and gambling. *FATE* magazine's pages were filled with profiles of spiritualists and psychics, accounts of UFO sightings, encounters with monsters and reports on the latest paranormal investigations. Another publication, *Exploring the Unknown*, offered articles penned by religious leaders and scholars on topics ranging from witchcraft to sex—subjects Hall never felt comfortable talking about in public. Comic books jumped on the bandwagon with such vividly illustrated series as *Tales of Suspense*.

On television, Rod Serling's hit television series *Twilight Zone* combined masterful writing with modern tales of fantasy and suspense that resonated strongly in a world torn by confusion, fear and anxiety over a possible nuclear war.

The Zen craze withered when new spiritual trailblazers led by Aldous Huxley, Timothy Leary and Richard Alpert made news in the early 1960s by trumpeting psychedelic shortcuts to the kind of awareness that Hall insisted required "lifetimes" of self-discipline and adherence to strict moral codes to achieve. At the same time, Hall was barraged with questions from followers about thorny issues unknown to initiates of old: racism, feminism, LSD, civil rights, abortion and sexual identity.

He began to warn of a looming disaster.

On February 19, 1961, Hall forecasted great tumult and anguish in a lecture titled "The Great Conjunction of February 1962: The Most Important Planetary Configuration of Recent Years." A similar conjunction

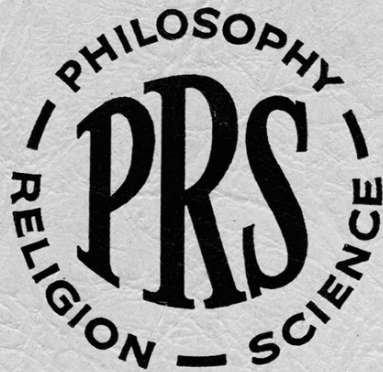
of planets in the sign of Virgo in 1861, he reminded, heralded the Civil War. [38]

Citing the writings of Nostradamus, who also predicted social strife for 1960–65, Hall warned of “political change, social change, cultural change and of course, under the tremendous pressure of the release of atomic knowledge and electronic fields, we may also have the overshadowing menace of war—the kind of war that only a scientific world could conceive or actually make.”

Hall seemed prophetic when in November 1962 the United States and Soviet Union came close to nuclear war during the Cuban Missile Crisis. On October 27, 1963, he predicted trouble for President John F. Kennedy. “Where you have Saturn in the Tenth House conjunct a planet like Neptune,” Hall said, “you always have at least the remote danger of assassination. You have danger to life; you have danger to health; you have danger to public office in a great many ways. So the President’s physical condition would, I think, justify a considerable amount of thoughtfulness and care.” [39] Kennedy was assassinated on November 22, 1963.

But Hall’s ability to correctly forecast events was erratic. In 1962, he announced a connection between an unexpected freeze that had damaged orange groves in southern Texas and the conjunction of planets that would have an impact beyond U.S. borders. “In Cuba, especially, we must bear in mind the Castro regime was established under a square of the sun and moon, and must inevitably be short-lived,” he said in a Sunday lecture. [40]

He also assured his audience that illicit drugs would never become popular in England, because “the English way of life is more sober and conservative, and is strongly influenced by tradition.” “This can only point out that, in general, the English have a basic pride of personal character,” he said. “They have inherited certain levels of behavior. These they must perpetuate and pass on to their children.” As for the spreading use of illicit drugs in the United States, he said, “We are fascinated by the psychological consequences of munching certain types of mushrooms. Our curiosity is insatiable, and our self-control negligible.” [41]



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

WINTER 1958 — Vol. 18, No. 3

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(ALL UNSIGNED ARTICLES ARE BY MANLY P. HALL)

EDITORIAL	Page
"GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN" .....	1
FEATURE ARTICLES	
ATLANTIS—FACT OR FABLE? .....	11
THE MYSTICAL AND MEDICAL PHILOSOPHY OF PARACELSUS	
Part II: Sympathetic Forces Operating in Nature .....	24
THE MYSTICISM OF PLOTINUS—By Henry L. Drake .....	36
SHORT STORY	
THE "UNWORTHY" ONE—The Chamber of Unhappy Spirits .....	44
IN REPLY	
KARMA AND POLITICS .....	50
CURIOUSER AND CURIOUSER	
THE TIBETAN SNOWMAN .....	56
HAPPENINGS AT HEADQUARTERS .....	61
LOGAL STUDY GROUP ACTIVITIES .....	64
LECTURE NOTES	
ARE OTHER PLANETS INHABITED? (Part I) .....	66
LIBRARY NOTES—By A. J. Howie	
THE "LOGIA IESOU" .....	74

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WINTER  
1958



ISSUED  
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VOL. 18, No. 3

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## THE EDITOR'S POINT OF VIEW

### "GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN"



THE second chapter of the Gospel according to St. Mark relates that at the time of the birth of Jesus, an angel of the Lord and a multitude of the heavenly hosts appeared to shepherds who were watching over their flocks by night. The hosts praised the Lord saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." At this Christmas season, it is especially fitting, because of the confusion everywhere prevailing, that we should remember these words of the angels, and the solemn occasion which they accompanied.

"Peace on earth" we all earnestly desire, but its attainment appears to depend upon factors beyond individual control. We can only hope, therefore, and support, in various ways, those of good intention who are striving to arbitrate the differences of nations and unite the human family on strong foundations of mutual respect and understanding. "Good will toward men" offers a more personal and immediate opportunity for the expression of spiritual convictions. We can most assuredly cultivate generosity and kindness in our own relationships with others. We do not need to



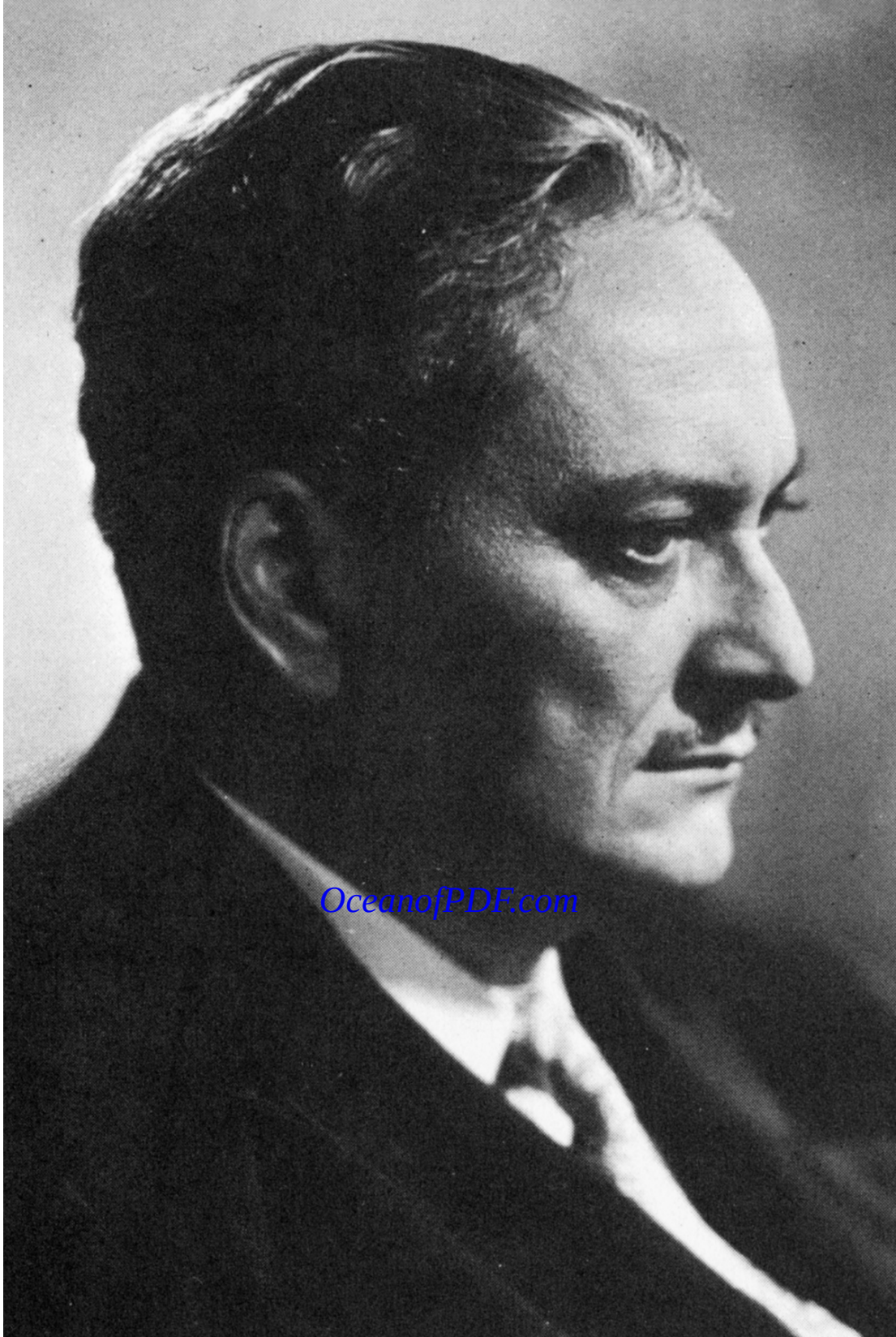
*Hall awards proclamation to a PRS student*

Legions of people on both continents, who were getting stoned and making love or “merging into the all” while listening to the Beatles’ “A Day in the Life” and the Beach Boys’ “Good Vibrations,” would say Hall missed the point. The 1960s followed the beat of a different drum. Hall belonged to the ’20s, ’30s, ’40s and ’50s.

If Hall’s ideas had grown stale, his presence was still in demand in some quarters. When medical surgeon Evarts G. Loomis, the founder of a holistic health retreat surrounded by orange groves in Riverside, wanted a high-profile metaphysician to join the physicians, psychologists and ministers on his Friendly Hills Fellowship’s board of consultants in the early 1960s, he invited Hall. Loomis, a trim, dapper and silver-haired “father of holistic medicine,” based his practice on the belief that glands and hormones were linked to subtle spiritual “life rhythms throughout the universe” and had to be taken into account to properly treat the whole person—body, mind, and

spirit. Health, Loomis contended, is the body's natural state but could be affected by attitudes, activities or internal processes that disrupt the "realm of the spirit" flowing through the human body's chakras and nervous system. Therefore, he reasoned, it took a medical doctor—as well as a minister and a philosopher—to heal ailments from nervous disorders to obesity.

Hall, who was 61 and increasingly self-conscious about his weight, accepted Loomis' invitation. It was a chance to be a disciple of a seemingly back-to-the-future concept: manipulating philosophy, science, and religion to achieve physical and psychic perfection. "If you are willing to accept me on an 'as is' basis," he wrote, "I would be honored and pleased to be included among your consultants." [42] Judging from a photograph taken of Hall at the time, the philosopher should have enrolled as a patient at Loomis' health center. Standing at a Los Angeles street corner and staring into the camera lens with a grim expression on his face, Hall looked dangerously obese in a parachute of a dark coat, his head puffed out like a balloon about to burst.





## CHAPTER 8

### The Great Lost Society

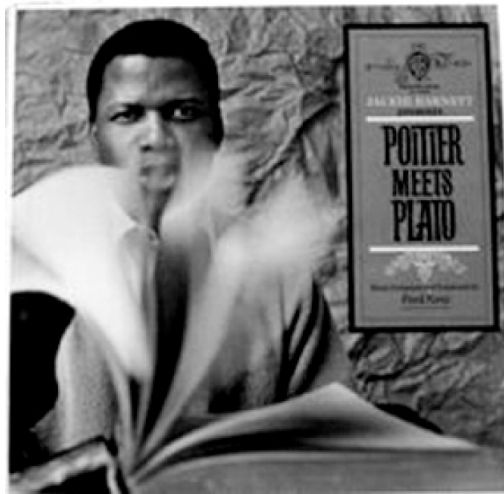
FOR HALL'S INDEFATIGABLE VICE PRESIDENT, HENRY DRAKE, REACHING OUT TO MAINSTREAM AUDIENCES HAD ALWAYS BEEN A JOY. IT RECHARGED HIS BATTERIES AND HELPED HIM CONNECT WITH HALL'S ORIGINAL MISSION OF INJECTING CLASSICAL PHILOSOPHY AND MYSTICAL PRACTICES INTO EVERYDAY LIFE. UNLIKE HIS BOSS, WHO LIKED TO TALK AND WRITE ABOUT DOING SUCH THINGS, HOWEVER, DRAKE WAS AN ACTION-ORIENTED MAN.

In the summer of 1964, Drake collaborated on a high-profile Hollywood project that should have been an enormous source of pride at PRS: an interpretation of the works of Plato for Warner Bros. Records read by the distinguished actor Sidney Poitier, who had won a best actor Oscar a year earlier for his role in *Lilies of the Field*. Drake received a credit line on the back of the album released under the title *Sidney Poitier: Journeys Inside the Mind* for assembling Plato's excerpts in such a way as to make them, as one press release put it, "as pertinent as newspaper headlines." [1]

"As selected and arranged by Dr. Henry Drake," the album notes say, "the literature of Plato loses its schoolroom mustiness. As set to music by composer Fred Katz, the words of Plato find timely settings. As read by Sidney Poitier, the wisdom of Plato thunders meaningfully through the years." The recording sported a slick cover, which was nominated for a Grammy Award in 1964. It framed the shadowy, stoic visage of a woman emerging from a block of stone with a cherubic head in the palm of one



hand, and a skull in the other. Illuminating those images from below is a large bright sun.



*Poitier Meets Plato*

Also nominated that year was the album cover for the Beatles' *A Hard Day's Night*. The award went to Barbra Streisand's album *People*.

Yet Drake's success received only a few paragraphs of mention in Hall's *PRS Journal*, which seems strange given that Hall had once tried hard to break into the movie industry and in 1959 had developed an album of his own, a solemn recording called *My Philosophy of Life, by Manly P. Hall*. It was marketed by PRS in various colors of vinyl including cherry red.

Then, in a 1966 essay that must have broken Drake's heart, Hall suggested that the so-called "Poitier meets Plato" effort was a lamentable example of modern society's preference for watered-down classics. "Many modern writers are merely paraphrasing the ancients, or quoting or misquoting standard texts that are rather too dry to invite general reading," Hall wrote in *Great Books on Religion*. "My experience has been that if we are sufficiently interested in any subject to study it at all, we should be willing to read the texts of its original and principal exponents. If we think Plato is worth reading, we should read Plato, and not a score of smaller popular digests, extracts, opinions, criticisms, or essays bearing upon this great thinker. By going back to the original authors, we can save ourselves a great deal of confusion. In the last twenty years, the tendency generally has been to disparage the great spiritual and cultural leaders of the past. Their

works have been assailed by immature minds, their characters have been slandered, and their writings have been translated by highly prejudiced authorities.” [2] Curiously, Hall made a career out of distilling the teachings of others, but felt that his associates should not.

Drake pressed on, quietly accepting more than his share of responsibilities at PRS, which included arranging workshops and group therapy sessions, lining up guest speakers, answering mail, lobbying local officials, dealing with the organization’s financial matters, and occasionally getting down on his hands and knees to scrub his boss’ floors. And because of Drake, PRS began to attract celebrities of the burgeoning New Age movement. Among the new lecturers were Huston Smith, professor of philosophy and religion at MIT and Syracuse University; Stanley Krippner, a professor of psychology at Saybrook Institute in Berkeley; and psychoanalyst Bruno Bettelheim, director of the Orthogenic School for autistic children at the University of Chicago, who claimed to have received a doctorate from the University of Vienna, and was lauded in a *PRS Journal* for devoting “many years to helping parents of normal children with the problem of child rearing.” (Or so it seemed. Bettelheim committed suicide in 1990. Within months of his death, Bettelheim was accused of doctoring his academic credentials, plagiarizing the works of others, terrorizing his youngest patients and touting the idea that autism is caused by poor parenting.)

Also new on the scene was Gnostic minister Stephan Hoeller, a Hall enthusiast who had immigrated to the United States from Hungary in 1953. “A lot of Manly’s followers from the 1920s and 1930s were interested in occult powers, clairvoyance, telepathy, things like that,” Hoeller recalled. “They were trying to build him up to their own expectations.” [3]

“For me, however, he was one of the last truly universal geniuses,” he added. “He was an 18th-century philosopher in the mold of Voltaire. His presentations were comprehensible to the average intelligent person. He was a valuable cultural influence.”

Hall, however, was beginning to behave like a cross between a prophet in the wilderness and a grumpy senior citizen. In his eyes, America, the great crucible of egalitarian self-improvement, was being undermined by superficial lifestyles, sensationalism, consumerism, moral decay and a dedication to doing what felt good. A fan of austere Theosophist composers

such as Scriabin, Hall had little understanding of, or regard for, jazz, rock, and abstract art. “Three kinds of men paint pictures: One to gain distinction; one to make a living, and one because of the irresistible desire within himself to share beauty with his world,” he wrote to a friend. “Only the third is an artist.” [4]

For Hall, there was no better symbol of an art world gone wrong than a modern sculpture called *The Fountain*, erected a few miles away in the plushest section of Wilshire Boulevard, between the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Miracle Mile. Hall slammed artist Claire Falkenstein’s 45-foot-long, 15-foot-high jagged mass of twisted pipes as a “monument to prevailing chaos” more suggestive of a “gigantic plate of Chinese noodles.” “During the Age of Pericles, it was considered a civic responsibility to beautify communities,” he said in a 1965 essay. “Noble statuary depicting heroes, divinities, and ennobling incidents of history were held to contribute to moral and ethical excellence. . . It is difficult to imagine what ‘The Fountain’ will contribute to the betterment of a troubled world. Is it intended to convey futility, to reveal the warped and twisted entanglements of history? Or is it simply a bid for notoriety, or a conversation piece, like several other recent civic productions.” [5]

He ended the piece with praise for Los Angeles City Councilman John S. Gibson Jr., who was trying to rid the poverty-stricken Watts area—the scene of the previous year’s riots—of liquor-licensed establishments. “Persons on relief should not be encouraged to forget their troubles,” Hall said, “but rather, to remember the need for self-improvement, self-discipline, and the development of profitable skills. All minority groups need to use their minds to think clearly as possible and to work out practical programs. If necessary, they should be protected from unreasonable temptation and from such merchants as exploit poverty and despair.” [6]

Riot-torn Los Angeles could learn a lot from postwar Japan, said Hall, who traveled there often in the late 1960s and early 1970s for two reasons. His followers had begun to take a serious interest in Eastern philosophies and its meditative disciplines, and he admired the country because it stressed modesty of person, gravity of demeanor, obedience to custom, and dedication to tradition even as it modernized. Failing to take heed of Japan’s “profound 20th-century development,” he suggested, would cast doubt on the city’s long-term commitment to dealing with the racial tensions,

rebellious social experiments and youthful acts of defiance against injustice, hypocrisy, authority and the Vietnam War.

Hall always had a deep respect for the doctrines of Buddhism, particularly the widespread Mahayana School, whose beneficial influence on Japanese people could not be overestimated, he said. “Any teaching that will inspire our generation to cultivate self-discipline and experience the benefits of a constructive faith,” Hall wrote in his book *Buddhism and Psychotherapy*, “deserves sincere appreciation.”

It was an ineffective message for the times. There was revolt in the air, and rock had become its anthem. “Flower children” had established colonies in the Haight-Ashbury district of San Francisco, on the Sunset Strip, along Fairfax Avenue in West Hollywood, and around the corner from PRS at Griffith Park. In East Los Angeles, Latino high school students were walking out of class to protest the Vietnam War, police brutality and inadequate schools. Huge peace marches had become routine across the city as the war bogged down in wasteful and futile conflict. Anti-Americanism was taking root on college campuses. Latino farm laborers organized grape boycotts. Hall’s most conservative followers expected their leader to send a strong message to the rebels on the other side of the barricades in America’s cultural wars. But Hall, who had become eligible for social security benefits in 1966, was in no mood for a public tangle. Besides, he lacked the clout.

Anymore, his writings emphasized “gentle systems of thoughtfulness” aimed at smoothing out “one’s eccentricities and inconsistencies.” [7] Carefully censored of magical ideas and concepts that could be abused or misinterpreted, they presented a new, improved, more user-friendly spiritual path for the late 1960s that offended no one, and rewarded adherents by giving them small but achievable practical goals, not unlike the increasingly well-regarded Alcoholics Anonymous 12-step program. “Nature, in order to force us forward,” he wrote, “always confronts us with problems that we can answer only by growing wiser. This does not mean that we must become all-wise—only a little wiser. To be in control of the situation, therefore, we must never be content to remain inadequately informed. It may be that we must temporarily turn to others for help, but only in order that they can direct us so that we can solve our own problem. In spite of all the advice we get, we must do the work ourselves, or it will never be done.”

[8]

During this time, Hall also published a brochure called “Great Books on Religion and Esoteric Philosophy,” a general survey of the literature in the field that included a bibliography of his own writings. The underlying theme was that other contemporary publications lacked “evidence of painstaking research and thorough scholarship. The art of important writing has suffered greatly in this generation of rapid production.” With his brochure as a guide, he wrote, students of the occult could assemble a library similar to the one housed at PRS. [9] The pamphlet was loaded with sharp attacks on his counterpart in Europe: British mystic, editor, translator, scholar and prolific author Arthur Edward Waite, who Hall argued was “extremely opinionated.” Waite, he said, “constantly plagues us with misleading opinions, interpretations, and conclusions. In all of his publications, he is apologetic for his text material. He would like to impress the reader with the fact that he is intellectually superior and mystically far more advanced than the scholars he quotes or translates. Every so often he has a burst of esotericism that would be more fitting to a popular cult writer than a serious scholar.” [10]

In the same book, however, Hall recommends as “authentic and understandable” the 19th-century works of Charles William Heckethorn, who critics said was a slipshod scholar; and those of Colonel James Churchward, who claimed he could interpret the “original meanings” of the symbols used by residents of a lost continent in the Pacific he called “Mu.” He also praised the colorful 19th-century political figure and pseudo-scientist Ignatius Donnelly, who claimed the Garden of Eden existed on the lost continent of Atlantis, and used cryptography to prove that Lord Bacon secretly authored Shakespeare’s works.

Elvis Presley, a longtime fan of Hall’s and owner of his *Secret Teachings*, would not argue with any of that. He would have visited PRS had he not feared being mobbed. According to the rock star’s hair stylist and spiritual advisor during the 1960s, Larry Geller, Presley once sent his then-girlfriend, later his wife, Priscilla to a lecture by Hall. Presley hoped that she might develop an appreciation for esoteric notions by sitting at the feet of the master. Unfortunately, “Priscilla was bored to tears, as I’m sure many young women her age might have been,” Geller wrote in a memoir.

In an interview, Geller said Elvis was steeped in the writings of a wide range of esotericists including Heindel, Blavatsky, Pike, the Roerichs,



Yogananda, and Hall. “One day in the 1970s, I went to PRS to buy a new deluxe edition of Hall’s *Secret Teachings* for Elvis,” Geller recalled. “When I got there, I told a secretary that it was for Elvis. Hall was in a meeting, but when he learned who it was for, came right out and signed it.” Later that day, “I said, ‘Elvis, I have something for you,’” Geller said. “He said, ‘Next time you talk to Mr. Hall, tell him how much I appreciate this.’” [11]

That night, in a Sunset Boulevard recording studio, Elvis asked his band members to gather around the Big Book. It was on a table and opened to a full-page color rendering of The Ancient of the Ancients in flowing red robes and seated on a throne with a lion on his right side, a bull on his left and a nude goddess with flaxen hair leaping out of his head. Behind the bearded god are two gold pedestals, one topped with fire, the other with ice. Before him, at the focal point of aqua blue and red rays streaming out of his raised hands, a nude male appears to be taking shape over a field of stars. “Elvis started pointing out the symbols on the page and explaining what they meant,” Geller said. “Then he said, ‘Now, I’m gonna tell you guys something. These symbols are also on money—somebody give me a dollar bill.’” No sooner had a musician handed him one than Elvis launched into a vibrant but befuddling lecture on Masonic symbols, ancient rites and the nation’s founding fathers. “Don’t feel bad if you don’t get it,” Elvis said. “It took me years to learn this stuff.”

In fact, across middle-class America in the 1960s there was a renewed fascination in esotericism and mysticism, this time enhanced by the spiritual promise of psychedelic experiences. Like Homer’s lotus-eating warriors, who lost all interest in returning to their ships and continuing their voyage home, hippies, factory workers, housewives, business leaders, clergy and legions of average college and high school students were immersing themselves in drug-induced alternate states of consciousness. The comparison was not lost on Hall, who believed the lotus fable in Book VI of the *Odyssey* had special “moral significance” at a time when it seemed as though half the human race had, as he put it, “voluntarily chosen to destroy its own mental powers.” [12]

“Wake up from the dream of running away from experience,” he implored. “Rather seek out the very burdens that seem difficult and, by conquering them, be free forever from a way of life to which we are all

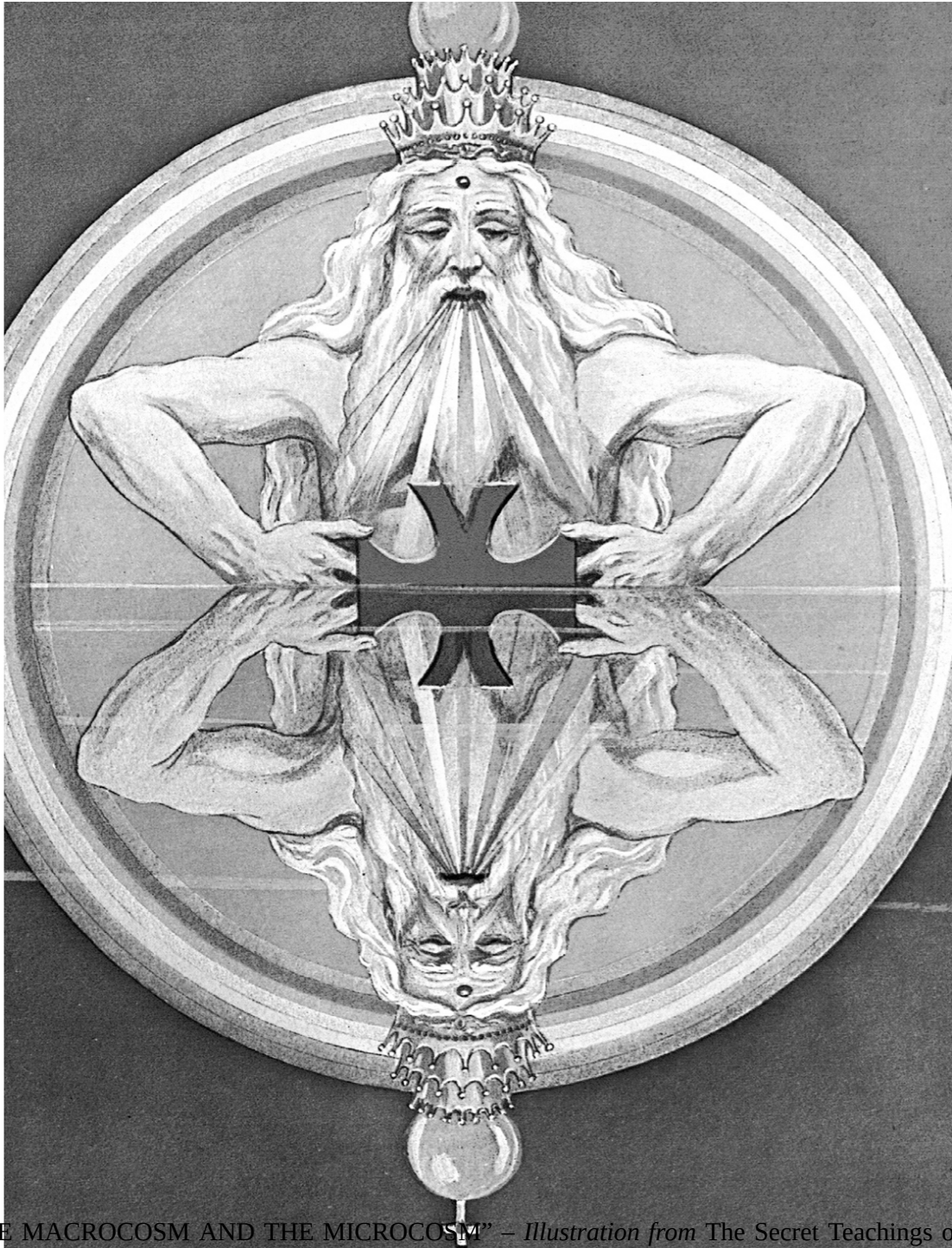
bound only by our ignorance. No drugs are necessary. All we need are the natural energies and faculties with which we have been endowed.”

As for LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide), Hall wrote, “There is no proof or evidence of any kind that LSD actually results in any legitimate type of extrasensory perception. The experiences described are not such that they can be regarded as clairvoyant or true visions in the religious sense of the word.”

Hall blamed the media for the popularity of psychedelic drugs. “The more space that is allotted by the press to this kind of coverage, and the more flamboyantly it is presented, the more trouble we will have,” he wrote in the *PRS Journal* in late 1968. “Sympathetic attention to any form of human distress is right and proper and we should take all possible means to assist those in trouble. But we should not provide them with the means to infect others with their discontents. [13] “One way to clear the air of the present psychological smog is to set about correcting the cause. If we do not, difficulties will increase. It is a serious error to make money by glorifying the mistakes of young, possibly sincere persons who need guidance rather than adulation.”

Of course, many high-profile social critics—Alan Watts, John Lennon and Timothy Leary among them—would beg to differ. Compared with those media stars, Hall sounded sanctimonious and out of touch with popular culture. And yet his *Secret Teachings of All Ages* resonated among many of the same young men and women who were rediscovering the epochal searches for deliverance, freedom and God to be found in the immensely popular fantasy novels of H.P. Lovecraft and J.R.R. Tolkien. “Walk into any of the New Age bookstores that were popping up in suburban strip malls, and there it was, *The Secret Teachings of All Ages*, looking like a wizard’s handbook straight out of *The Lord of the Rings*, only real,” recalled Michael Mirdad, a spiritual teacher who was 20 when he bought his first copy. “Opening the book felt like entering King Tut’s tomb for the first time.” [14]





“THE MACROCOSM AND THE MICROCOSM” – Illustration from *The Secret Teachings of All Ages*

Hall's Big Book was also a hit among youthful experimenters who were tripping out on its strange illustrations and symbols, and fascinated by what they might portend. One young Northern California man confided to Hall that his life changed after he got his hands on *The Secret Teachings*. “The

moment I opened its cover I knew (in a deep sense) the book had been written for me. But I would not have been ready for it if I had not already come to some conclusions regarding the meaning of life as a result of my own study via William Blake, the Homeric tradition and a conscientiously applied program of research with the help of LSD-25, over a two-year span.”

Judging from the stacks of letters he received each day, many of Hall’s students were continuing to get into serious trouble even without drugs. One man complained of being haunted by an entity that took up residence in his body just after he had turned to yoga to deal with chronic depression. A woman insisted that an evil force was expressing itself by dilating the iris of her eye. A man needed confirmation that invisible evil archangels were responsible for the world’s problems. A woman wondered if it would harm the soul to tune into popular comedy television programs such as *Laugh-In* or *The Smothers Brothers*, which were loaded with sexual innuendo, political jabs, rock ‘n’ roll music and psychedelic set designs. A mother of identical twins asked if the fact that they got along so well meant that perhaps one had died and saved the other in some past life. One person wanted to know if, with the advent of surgical heart transplants, one’s karma would be harmed, given that Hall had once written that “man is the temple of God and the heart is the Holy of Holies of that temple.”

In his 1932 book *Man: The Grand Symbol of the Mysteries*, Hall had quoted Madame Blavatsky: “Even if the head be severed from the body, the heart will continue to beat for 30 minutes. It will beat for several hours if wrapped in wool and put in a warm place. The spot in the heart that is the last of all to die is the seat of life, the center of all, Brahma, the first spot that lives in the fetus, and the last that dies. This spot contains potential mind, life, energy and will. During life it radiates colors, fiery and opalescent.” But Hall, pushing 70 and facing the prospect of a heart transplant himself someday, had begun to suggest that Nature had changed the rules. “All scientific processes must be supported by the recuperative, healing power originating in nature and bearing witness to its sanction or approval,” Hall wrote in a 1968 essay. “Facing the reasonable certainty that the heart transplant operation will ultimately succeed, and that other even more important techniques for repairing the human body will gradually be

developed, it can only be concluded that nature sanctions the operations.” [15]

Hall’s new personal secretary, Carol Bell Knight, felt it was an honor and privilege to be associated with the man, although the Ojai elementary school teacher’s family paid dearly for it. Their relationship began in 1968 when Knight, a longtime fan who saw bright lights flashing around Hall’s head while he lectured, successfully interviewed for the job. “He said, ‘I think we can get along. You’ve got the job. You can start whenever you want,’” Knight recalled. “I was so happy, I said the Lord’s Prayer over and over.” [16]

Working for Hall was a mixed blessing. Getting her three children ready for school each day, arguing with her husband who was opposed to the commute and then driving three hours a day to and from PRS wasn’t easy. “It was a real tough time, and Mr. Hall had no idea what I was going through,” she recalled. Still, she calls her two years with Hall “magical.” When Hall received shipments of miniature ivory carvings from Japan, they turned off the telephones, locked the doors and spent the rest of the day lovingly unwrapping and admiring the treasures.

Before she left for lunch each day, Hall would ask her to bring a sweet surprise—a cream puff, chocolate éclair or Napoleon—from the local bakery. Then he would gently implore her to keep the request a secret “between us,” and close his office doors. “One day he smiled and said, ‘Carol, would you like to see what I do in here when I send you off to lunch?’” Knight recalled. “Then he opened the little golden doors of the Buddhist shrine near his desk and said, ‘I stand right here and meditate.’”

But life at home in Ojai or, rather, a lack of it, had disintegrated into “holy Toledo hell,” she said. “One day I said, ‘Mr. Hall, my family needs me.’ He said, ‘Family comes first.’”

On the night of June 4, 1968, Sirhan Bishara Sirhan shot and killed Robert F. Kennedy in Los Angeles’ Ambassador Hotel, where Kennedy was celebrating his victory in the California primary for the Democratic nomination for President of the United States. Among the evidence collected in Sirhan’s car after his arrest was a copy of Hall’s book, *Healing: the Divine Art*. In his book *RFK Must Die*, Robert Blair Kaiser writes that Sirhan, a card-carrying member of the Rosicrucian enclave in San Jose, told him that although he had frequented PRS’ library, he had never actually met



Hall. Oddly, Hall's book, "People's Exhibit #44" in the Kennedy investigation, later turned up missing from grand jury exhibits.

In a separate book on the case, *The Assassination of Robert F. Kennedy: The Conspiracy and Coverup*, authors William Turner and Jonn Christian pointed out that shortly after Sirhan was arrested, Mayor Yorty held a news conference in which he denounced the Rosicrucian group as a Communist organization. [17] Yorty's harsh criticism belied his secret fascination with esoteric schools, and his close association with Hall. In any case, Hall was not among the more than 4,000 people interviewed by law enforcement authorities assigned to the Sirhan case, according to the assassination archives at the Los Angeles Public Library.

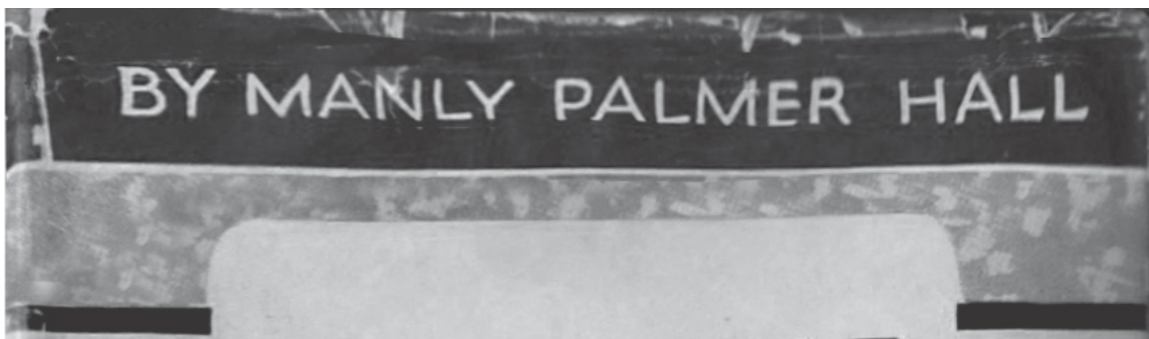
When it comes to connections between 20th-century supervillains and occult literature, few can top the works of Manly P. Hall.

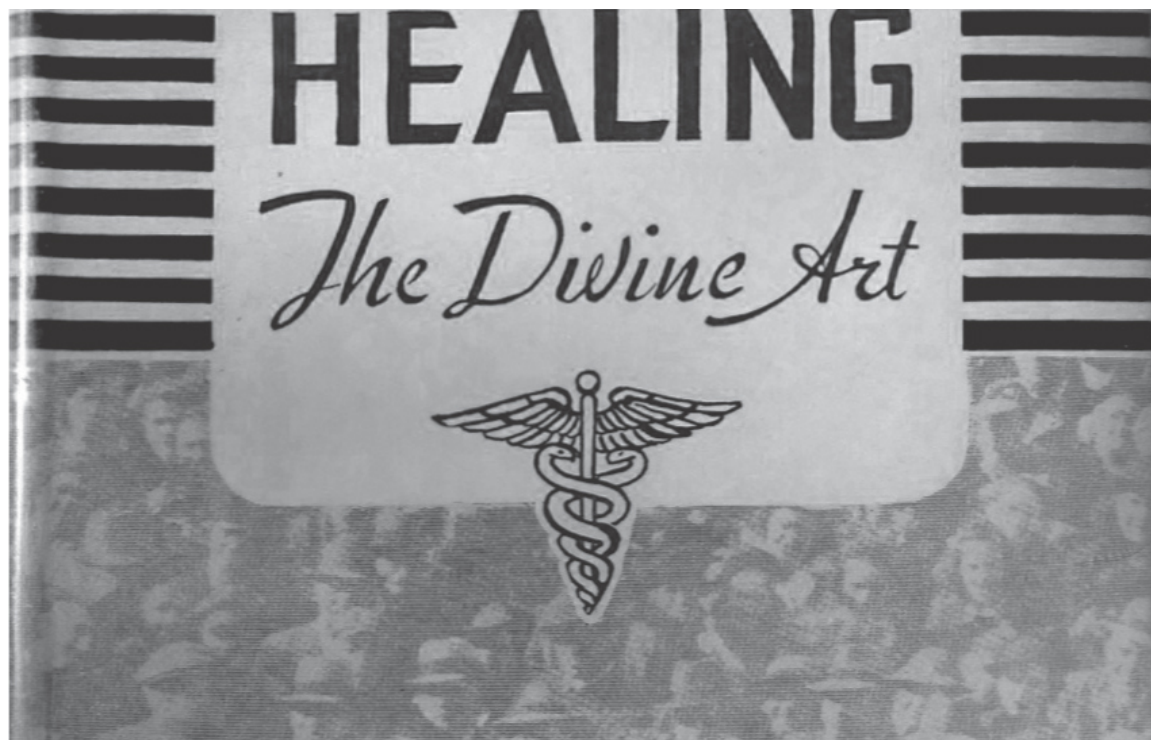
Among the documents and reading materials seized in Osama bin Laden's heavily barricaded compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan after Navy SEALs fired three rounds into his head on May 2, 2011 was Hall's *Secret Teachings of All Ages*. [18]

U.S. military officials later suggested that finding Hall's seminal book at bin Laden's hideout was evidence of the Al Qaeda leader's fascination with the symbolism of secret societies and conspiracy theories involving the Illuminati and Freemasons.

In fact, Hall wrote extensively about the beneficial impact of Islam on history.

But after a decade of negative images of Muslims filling the news since bin Laden masterminded the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the discovery of Hall's book among the anti-U.S. fanatic's possessions drew gasps from New Agers who worried that Hall's legacy would be unfairly tarnished by radicals as a leader of some sort of satanic cult.





*Fans of Healing: The Divine Art included Robert F. Kennedy's assassin, Sirhan Sirhan.*

It's easy to imagine tall, gray-bearded bin Laden sitting alone in isolation with Hall's book opened to the chapter titled *The Faith of Islam*, with its 13-by-19-inch full-color plate of Mohammed triumphantly clutching a scimitar in one hand and sheaves of Koranic law in the other as he rids Mecca of idolaters.

In the text, Hall argues that Islam is a manifestation of a primordial spiritual consciousness that "Phoenixes of wisdom" deliver to mankind every five hundred years or so to reenergize decaying cultures, traditions and faiths.

It was roughly five hundred years, he says, between Pythagoras and Jesus, and between Jesus and Mohammed. Hall dismisses those who said that Islam was created to compete against Christianity in the Arabian desert. Instead, he argues, Mohammed aimed to revive Christian notions in the region.

What followed, Hall asserts, was a period of insight, change and activity that led to the Renaissance, which "was nothing but Islam moving into Europe," Hall said.





contribution to music. One of the most important parts of Bach's music was that he had the daring to incorporate into the European music the great theory, you might say, of garlands and overlays of melody, which is part of the Arabian music you hear when you listen to the Bedouin in his tower, chanting the call to prayer."



*Muslims praying to Mecca*

If bin Laden had any special insight into the spirituality of compassion, or exactly what terrorists hoped to achieve through the destruction on 9/11, he kept it to himself.

On another front, draft-age men started seeking Hall's counsel about the war in Vietnam, most likely expecting the wise words of a pacifist. Hall, however, was gung ho about the war, fully believing the Lyndon Johnson administration's notion that if Vietnam fell to communist forces, every other Asian nation would fall like dominoes. When a young Army private asked whether he should fight, Hall reminded him of "the burden of the Bhagavad-Gita in which the Lord Krishna appears on the battlefield and

explains to Arjuna why he must lead his army against his own kinsmen.”  
[20]

“You say in your letter you are being trained to fight an unjust war,” Hall said. “How have you come to this conclusion?. . . Your nation is involved in a struggle for survival against an absolutely ruthless, unscrupulous and atheistic adversary. The one and sworn purpose of this adversary is to destroy the United States. Realizing the tremendous strength of this country, the adversary must destroy it from within, and he does this by playing on the natural fears of the citizens.

“I seriously believe that if we leave Asia and walk out on our commitments, it will mean the loss not only of prestige and honor, but the communizing of half the Earth. The battles we do not fight in Vietnam, we must ultimately fight within the boundaries of our country. If we prove that we are soft, willing to compromise and pay tribute in order to maintain our luxuries and extravagances, we will fall just as the Roman Empire fell. If we are ready to stand by and watch cruelty and oppression—whether in Asia or in Czechoslovakia or Hungary or Poland—it cannot be justly said of us that we are willing to defend the weak against tyranny and oppression. A man who does not discipline his appetites will become a glutton or an alcoholic and thus ruin his life. . . The majority of those in every generation who do go through military training and sometimes war also gain important experiences which can be of the greatest value in dedicating a career to useful and constructive pursuits. You will know in yourself that you have not failed your fellow men, and if you have the right internal insights, you will know in your heart that you have not failed yourself.”

Hall’s newest friend was retired Air Force Col. Clarke Johnston, a military reconnaissance and risk management expert who had survived numerous bombing missions over Europe during World War II. In the late 1960s, he frequently hitched rides to meet Hall on Air Force transport planes that made pit stops in San Bernardino while carrying soldiers to and from Vietnam. “I thought Manly’s library was a gold mine of information,” recalled Johnston, who held top security clearances in the late 1950s and helped prepare estimates of the Soviet Union military strength for the National Security Council. “Manly would come out of his office to stretch his legs, see me and say, ‘You’re always in here.’ I’d say, ‘Not really, but I’d like to be.’” [21]



“We became close friends,” he said. “Manly would occasionally communicate with me by telepathy. For example, I’d call him on the telephone and during the conversation I’d think about flying to Los Angeles. He’d send me a thought message that was usually very terse such as ‘Come out,’ or ‘Don’t come.’”

Johnston was among several newcomers to PRS in the late 1960s who would become important players in Hall’s affairs in the last years of his life. Another was Irene Bird, a real estate agent and PRS volunteer. Like Drake, Bird claimed she first met Hall in a dream.

One day Bird, a widow at the time, mustered the courage to make an appointment to meet with Hall and discuss some pressing personal problems. Hall’s advice was to find a husband. On July 20, 1969, shortly after his regular Sunday lecture, Hall married Irene and physician Nicholas Bird in a ceremony conducted in his cramped little office. Standing tall in a gold suit beside her new husband, Bird found it hard to keep a straight face during the otherwise solemn proceedings. Just a few feet away, a work crew was noisily trying to connect and tune a huge color television set so that Hall could witness the first moon landing later that day. “It was a funny ceremony,” she recalled in an interview. “At the end of it, Manly placed his hands above and beneath our folded hands. Then he said a little prayer and I felt a bolt of electricity shoot through me. My husband felt absolutely nothing.” From then on, whenever she met Manly’s wife, Bird would tell Marie Hall, “You married the man of my dreams.” [22]

It was around this time that actor and folksinger Burl Ives and his wife Dorothy, both avid metaphysicians, crossed paths with Marie Hall’s sister, Helen, at a Theological school in Ojai, California, called Krotona, which took its name from Crotona, Italy, home of the Pythagorean School. Krotona was originally founded in the once unpaved hills of Hollywood in 1912 for the study of Madame Blavatsky’s writings. Its founders moved to Ojai—a place they believed was awash in positive vibrations—in 1924 in hopes of establishing an occult school for a new generation of reincarnated souls.

Ives lit up when she asked, “I’m related to Manly P. Hall. Have you heard of him?”

“I certainly do know of him; I consider him one of the greatest scholars of this century,” Ives said. Then he held out his hand-carved walking cane

and said, “I’d like to present this as a gift to the great man with my compliments.” [23] The cane, which had an artistic rendering of the evolutionary history of life, from plant life to cavemen, carved on its shaft, had been a gift to Ives from a member of the 1960s folk group the New Christy Minstrels.

Two days later, the Halls and the Ives were chattering and chuckling together on a conference telephone call. A few days after that, the Ives were invited to tea at the Hall home, where Marie and Dorothy formed an instant connection. Both women believed that the 18th-century figure of the French court, the mysterious Count of Saint Germain, was a powerful avatar of the New Age, an unknown signer of the U.S. Declaration of Independence, and a reincarnation of Lord Bacon. “We were sitting in their living room and Marie had Manly’s big book opened to a section about Saint Germain,” Dorothy recalled in an interview. “I said, ‘Saint Germain is my boyfriend.’ Marie said, ‘No! He’s my boyfriend!’” It was the start of a years-long relationship punctuated by nasty squabbles triggered by Marie’s mood swings and conspiratorial nature. Hall and Ives were brother Masons, and exchanged stories about their world travels as well as dirty jokes. In their early days together, Ives drank Jack Daniels and Hall had red wine. They shared a romance with Native Americans and a love of Mexican food, the spicier the better.

They appeared together in the late 1960s in several public television programs produced by Elizabeth MacKensie and her mini-cam crew. At that time, MacKensie’s station was trying to satisfy a requirement to renew its broadcasting license by covering local trends, problems, people, and religious leaders.

Each program was recorded inside the PRS library, and opened with Ives crooning a song strummed on guitar. Then MacKensie interviewed Hall, who, dressed in his fastidious duds—blue suit, white shirt and tie—worked himself into a sweat just talking about religious emblems and philosophy in the hot and stuffy library. “I could hardly get a word in edgewise,” MacKensie recalled with a laugh. “We’d ask Hall a question, and he’d give an hour-long response. It was impossible to chit-chat with Hall because his mind was always in lecture mode.” Added MacKensie, “I got good at finding little snippets to work with in the editing room later.” [24]

In an interview, Dorothy Ives recalled that Hall claimed he was a reincarnation of 19th-century lawyer, poet, philosopher, and 33rd° Mason Albert Pike. Marie told them she was the reincarnation of the Greek spear-wielding goddess Pallas Athena. Ives regaled them with old songs strummed on his guitar; Hall told stories. “Manly was a wonderful storyteller,” Dorothy Ives said. “I’ll never forget the day we were sitting around our kitchen table in Montecito and Manly told us about Bodhisattva. He became so involved in the story he started to cry. Marie jumped up from her seat, ran over and patted him on the head, saying, ‘It’s O.K., papa. It’s all right.’”

Professional astrologer Elayne Manago was doing horoscopes for clients at her Laguna Niguel home one day in early 1970 when the telephone rang. It was 73-year-old former California governor Goodwin Knight. He told her he had been referred by Hall, and he had a special favor to ask. “He said one of his two daughters was divorced and living with her two young children in Newport Beach,” Manago recalled. “He said she was very depressed. He wanted me to do her horoscope.” [25]

Knight said that many years earlier, astrologer Blanca Holmes had warned him that this daughter would reach a difficult, even dangerous point in her life. Now, he was desperate to know if the trouble had finally arrived. Hall, who did not do charts for individuals, had sent him to Manago, based on her reputation for being a smart, articulate woman with a good feel for what the stars had to say. “He was very concerned about this girl,” Manago said. “As an aside, he asked me to do his chart as well.”

“What Blanca told him was accurate to the minute,” she said. “The girl had two psychiatrists and was on medication. Her father was into self-help and spiritual things. It was a real mess. I said the critical date Blanca had referred to was in February. I said after April 5 things would be better for her. I told him to pray with her, quit worrying and take care of himself because he also was under a tough aspect.”

Knight sighed with relief and invited her to visit him at his office in a local bank some day. Later that year, she decided to take him up on the offer. But when she asked to speak with Knight, a bank teller covered her mouth with her hand and said, “Oh my God. Haven’t you heard? Mr. Knight passed away.” Knight died May 22, 1970 of bronchial pneumonia.

And his troubled daughter, Carolyn, had committed suicide in the garage of her home three and a half months earlier.



*Los Angeles Mayor Sam Yorty presents plaque to Hall*



It was a tough year all around. In July, Hall suffered a fall while visiting an art museum in Munich, Germany. A few months later, he received a probing letter from a man who wanted to know if his book *Self-Unfoldment* had been inspired by a similar work published a decade earlier, *The Secret of the Golden Flower* by Richard Wilhelm and Carl Jung. In fact, Hall's book includes portions of text and diagrams that bear a remarkable resemblance to Wilhelm and Jung's so-called "Chinese book of life." But he downplayed the book's influence in a written response. "Dr. Jung has always seemed to me one of the most idealistic and mystically inclined of the prominent modern psychiatrists," Hall wrote. "I have read considerable of his work in recent years, but at the time of writing *Self-Unfoldment*, which first appeared as *Letters to Students* in 1941, I had very little knowledge of Jung's activities. As to how much his writings have influenced me, I cannot really say." [26]

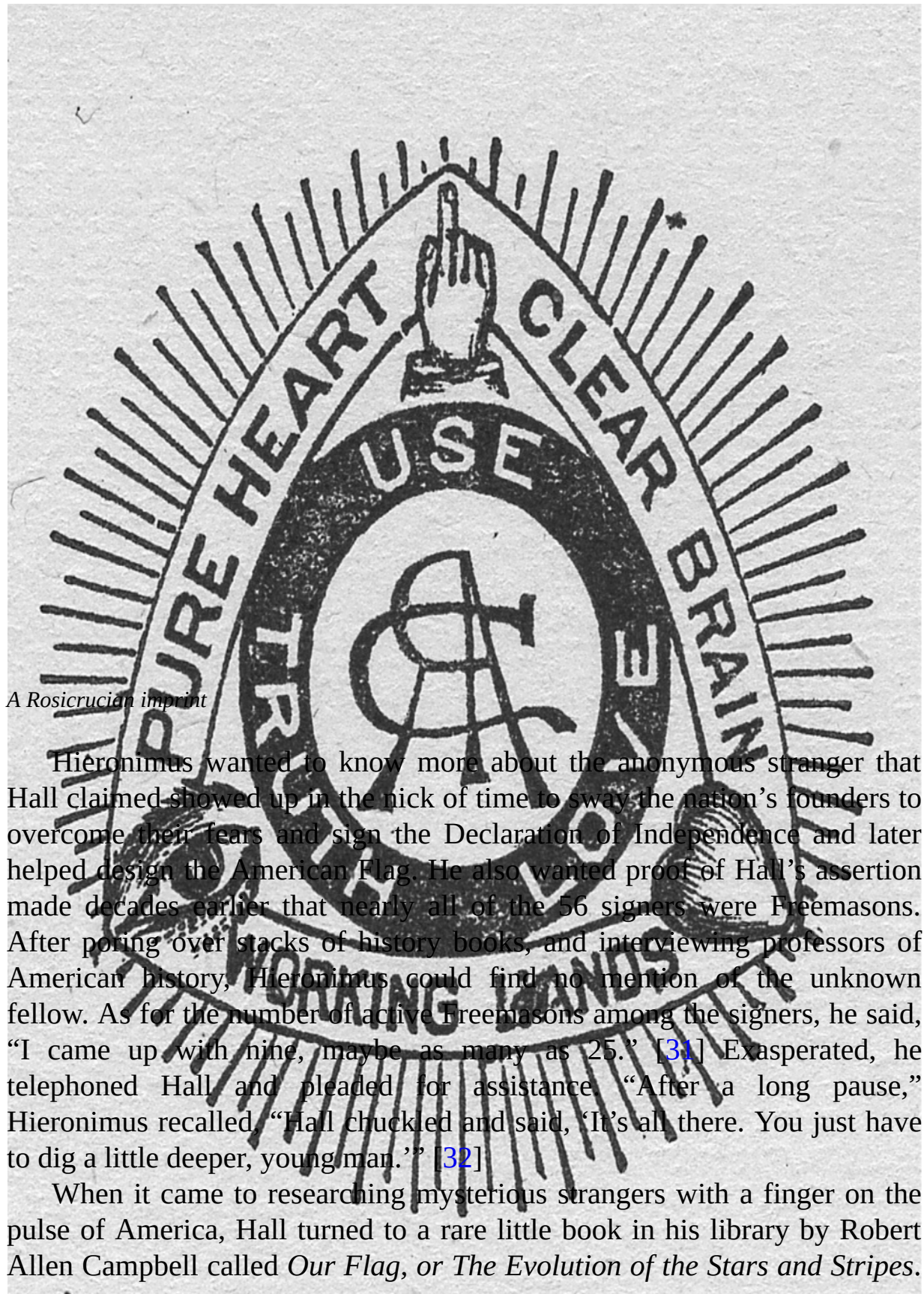
On August 5, 1970, Los Angeles Mayor Sam Yorty invited Hall to his weekly Wednesday morning press conference at City Hall. After the press conference, Yorty presented Hall with a plaque bearing the colorful city seal. Beneath it was a brass tablet bearing an inscription: "To Manly P. Hall in recognition of fifty years of distinguished service as lecturer, author, and teacher. Sam Yorty, Mayor." [27]

Behind the scenes, Yorty had been attending Hall's lectures since 1927 and often introduced him to visiting dignitaries such as the mayor of Nagoya, Japan, Los Angeles' sister city. [28] In this case, however, Yorty sent Hall an autographed photo of the presentation, which was conducted out of view of the local press corps as a private token of appreciation. There is no record of the presentation in Los Angeles City Hall archives. In an interview, astrologer Sidney Omarr said that although Yorty, an outspoken hard-line conservative who played on the anxieties of the city's mostly white electorate, and Hall had been friends for decades, the mayor once confided that he was "embarrassed to be seen with Hall in public." [29]

Still, Hall was grateful, and said so in a surprisingly humble letter: "Please permit me to express my most sincere appreciation for your gracious thoughtfulness in presenting the handsome plaque at your press conference last Wednesday. Also your personal words of appreciation will always be remembered and treasured. Also thank you very much for the most excellent photograph which arrived this morning. In the past you have

been of continuing help and inspiration. For all these nice things you have done, I am most truly grateful.” [30]

By the late 1970s, sickness had become a way of life for Hall, who was nearing 80. His gallbladder problems had gotten so bad that he stopped lecturing outside of Los Angeles. His eyesight was so poor that he could barely get through the daily mail. His joints ached with arthritis. His days were spent visiting one doctor after another, stocking his shelves with prescription drugs and folk remedies, and avoiding the demands of needy hangers-on. One letter made him sit up and take notice because it was from a bright young man who shared his conviction that America’s founding fathers were mystics on a mission to institute democratic rule throughout the world. His name was Robert Hieronimus, and he was working on a doctoral thesis at Saybrook Graduate School in San Francisco dealing with the origins and meanings of the symbols on the Great Seal of the United States.



A Rosicrucian imprint

Hieronimus wanted to know more about the anonymous stranger that Hall claimed showed up in the nick of time to sway the nation's founders to overcome their fears and sign the Declaration of Independence and later helped design the American Flag. He also wanted proof of Hall's assertion made decades earlier that nearly all of the 56 signers were Freemasons. After poring over stacks of history books, and interviewing professors of American history, Hieronimus could find no mention of the unknown fellow. As for the number of active Freemasons among the signers, he said, "I came up with nine, maybe as many as 25." [31] Exasperated, he telephoned Hall and pleaded for assistance. "After a long pause," Hieronimus recalled, "Hall chuckled and said, 'It's all there. You just have to dig a little deeper, young man.'" [32]

When it came to researching mysterious strangers with a finger on the pulse of America, Hall turned to a rare little book in his library by Robert Allen Campbell called *Our Flag, or The Evolution of the Stars and Stripes*.

Hall had received the book, which was published in 1890 and listed no references, in 1919 as a gift from Masonic scholar Milton Pottenger. Hall never vouched for the book's historical precision. Years earlier, he had even humorously suggested that the tale it conveyed belongs among those shadowy and mysterious happenings which influence or change the course of empire but will ever find little favor with prosaic and unimaginative historians. But Hall never questioned its intent since its pages opened and closed with what for him were telltale marks of a secret society: an esoteric Rosicrucian symbol on the title page and a quote by Lord Bacon at the end of the book. [33]

The symbol is a bulging, glowing triangle with a terse phrase on each side: Working hands. Pure heart. Clear brain. It contains an open eye in the lower left corner, a heart in the lower right corner, and a hand with index finger pointing skyward at the top. In the center are the letters "R" and "C" overlaid and backwards. The letters are encircled by a ring within the triangle emblazoned with the words: Use truth, love. The book's final quote: "Out of monuments, names, words, proverbs, private records and evidence, fragments of stories, passages in books, and the like, we save and recover somewhat from the deluge of time."

The book deals, in part, with an alleged episode that occurred in Cambridge, Massachusetts, shortly after George Washington took command of the Continental Army. He and Benjamin Franklin were guests of a well-to-do family where they met a man known as "The Professor," who was connected to European secret societies. As the story goes, Franklin was an old friend of The Professor, who traveled with a trunk full of mysterious manuscripts. The stranger volunteers to assist in designing the American flag, then he vanishes. The story's metaphorical punch line: through emergency human beings achieve wisdom. But Hall never told that to Hieronimus. "I questioned Hall about his sources, and he said, 'You'll just have to be patient,'" Hieronimus said in an interview. "Eventually, I realized that Hall was not really a scholar."

Hieronimus went on to earn his Ph.D., and received a letter of congratulations from the Nixon White House for contributing to the bank of knowledge about the nation's history. He also published a book on the subject, *America's Secret Destiny*. The book's content and title are remarkably similar to Hall's *The Secret Destiny of America*.



In May 1972, Hall was hospitalized and relieved of his gallbladder. Before being admitted, he had asked his old friend Paul Grell, executive secretary of the Scottsdale, Arizona-based American Federation of Astrologers, for a chart to help choose the best day for surgery. Grell, who had studied astrology at the Rosicrucian Fellowship in Oceanside in 1923, pursued a variety of interests in his life. Over the years, he was a catcher for a semi-professional West Coast baseball team, and an opera singer. With his wife Vicky, he taught dancing at the San Francisco Center for the Blind. During World War II, he served four and a half years in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, earning a Bronze Star for meritorious service.

Hall was still recuperating when retired Colonel Johnston sought his advice in dealing with a bully of a ghost. His daughter's mother-in-law, who worked for a real estate agency in Missouri, had been forced to sell a house seven times in three years. Each time, a new owner had been chased out with the ghost in hot pursuit. Hall recommended his standard cures for such cases: fumigate the house; redecorate in different colors; place vases of freshly cut flowers in rooms where the spirit had been felt or seen; place a crucifix at least a foot long in affected rooms; and burn blue light bulbs with no red in them throughout the house.

"All else failing," Hall said in a letter, "the ultimate recourse is to demolish the house, taking special care to excavate the foundations and basement." [34] The situation worked itself out before Johnston had to resort to draconian measures. The ghost had gone elsewhere. "The entity was a bad guy who had been killed in the house by someone he hated," Johnston recalled. "He stayed around there trying to get back at the person who killed him, or apparently anyone handy. He was finally convinced to leave after some considerable phenomena: rattling dishes, making eerie sounds and pushing furniture around to scare people." [35]

Hall's devoted friend of nearly four decades, His Grace, Athenagoras, spiritual leader of the 250,000 members of the Greek Orthodox Christian Church, died in July 1972. He was 86.

The next year, Hall lost his direct access to City Hall when Tom Bradley replaced Yorty as mayor of Los Angeles. Shortly after the election, a special luncheon was held at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion to honor the visiting Emperor and Empress of Japan. Bradley invited five hundred Los Angeles citizens whom he called the "the best this area has to offer." Hall and his



wife, both known as strong supporters of the Japanese community in Los Angeles and Japan, were not among them. Hall's PRS then-secretary Ervin, who was invited, expressed his apologies for the omission in what seemed a mocking letter. "I am sure that there were many others including yourselves more deserving of the honor," Ervin wrote, "and I would have enjoyed lunching with either or both of you at your desks as much or more than amidst all of the beauty and ceremony of the luncheon." [36]

About the same time, Hall lost his young, attractive personal secretary, Ann Badger, who had developed a crush on him. Badger, an energetic slip of a woman with green eyes and a love of micro-miniskirts, had come to PRS in 1971, immediately after losing her job at a San Fernando Valley manufacturing company that suffered major damage in an earthquake. When she walked into Hall's office for a job interview, the 26-year-old woman came under the spell of his personality and words. Her first day on the job, she was transcribing his dictated lectures and essays on arcane subjects including one on the iconography of Northern Buddhism. He just leaned back in his chair, closed his eyes and, as she put it, "let it rip."

"I will never forget having to take down that dictation as long as I live," she said. "I was transfixed. He was huge physically and without a doubt the most brilliant person I have ever met." [37]

They developed a strong and unusually candid relationship. One day, Hall noticed Badger eyeing a young man up and down as he strode out the office door. "Ann," Hall asked, "does he turn you on?" Another day, she recalled, "I walked up to him and said, 'Mr. Hall, if we were closer to the same age, you wouldn't stand a chance.' He said, 'Ann, you are a little devil.'"

In 1973, Badger gave notice of her intention to leave PRS in order to start a downtown Los Angeles candy company with her husband. Hall wrote a glowing letter of recommendation.

In Geneva, Switzerland, sculptress Claire Pierpoint was preparing to ship an eight-foot-tall, two-and-a-half-ton granite stylized statue of an Egyptian sage to PRS as a gift. Drake handled the transfer of the artwork Pierpoint called a holy work, divined by the hands of God, not hers, and she chose its permanent placement at the edge of the PRS parking lot overlooking Los Feliz Boulevard. On the back of the statue is an inscription: "Thou sun who has covered the truth with thy golden disc, do

thou remove the veil so that I may see the truth within thee and know the meaning of the rays of glory for the truth which is within thee is within me—and I am that.”

In a letter to Drake, Pierpoint was adamant about remaining anonymous. “You may recall that one of my requests in offering the gift statue was, indeed, no publicity regarding the matter,” she wrote. “The works I have offered to the society were Divinely inspired and Divinely assisted. I alone did not sculpture them; a mightier Hand moved me to accomplish this work in a period of two years.” [38]

As movers at Pierpoint’s studio hammered together shipping crates to the chant of “O Sole Mio,” Hall was trying to remove a devoted elderly volunteer from the premises—a mighty challenge, given Hall’s aversion to confrontation. She was known simply as “Agnes,” and she had planted herself at the PRS entrance each Sunday in order to sell lecture tickets. But she was so feeble that she could not even deliver the money she collected to Hall’s office at the end of the day. Usually, Drake dealt with such sensitive matters. But with Agnes vowing to stay put, Hall took it upon himself to plead with her relatives. Agnes, he told them bluntly, had become a problem for PRS, and a legal liability. “Naturally, I do not want to make life difficult for Agnes in her closing years,” he told her closest kin. “We have taken care of her for many years as well as we could, but we must now turn to you for help. The present situation cannot continue.” [39]

Agnes was eventually encouraged to leave without incident.

1973 was turning out to be an especially troubling year. At PRS, Hall was being peppered with questions about newly discovered Comet Kohoutek, a chunk of dirty ice highballing through space. Would it be the most spectacular celestial sight of the century when it shot past Earth in late December as predicted by astronomers, or wreak destruction as claimed by some members of the occult crowd? Hall was taking a lower road, scaring people with predictions that the arrival of Comet Kohoutek would trigger earthquakes in Mongolia and Russian Tarkistan, and anxiety, social unrest and public revolts against inflation in the United States. He also predicted that tidal waves and electrical storms would lash U.S. coastal communities. As it turned out, Kohoutek fizzled and was hard to see without a telescope.



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## CHAPTER 9

# On Fairies, Sex Magic and Stuffed Potatoes

FROM HIS FONDNESS FOR THE DIVINITIES OF ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS AND CULTS, AND THE GROWTH OF WORLDWIDE CONSERVATION EFFORTS, AROSE ONE OF HALL'S MOST CURIOUS CAMPAIGNS: TO FASHION AN OCCULT LEGACY ON THE ENVIRONMENT.

Hall took his environmental cues in the early 1970s from seasonal rituals, rites of passage and the worship of the yoni and phallus; acorns and oaks; flowers and fruits as symbols of God's creative powers.

"A living religion is fortunate indeed if it can meet in a living shrine," he wrote in a 1973 essay titled *The Worship of Trees and Plants*, "bring living gifts to its altar, and behold growth even while the rituals are taking place. If man's church was a grove of trees, it would grow every year as continuing evidence of the wonder and splendor of living energies.

"Perhaps understanding will bring us back again to those sentimental, unscientific beliefs that gave folks not only reason for living but courage to stand firmly, like the ancient tree, against the winds of circumstances. Plants have given us so much that perhaps we can afford to confer upon them the right of survival."

Plants, particularly trees, were symbolic of life unfolding from its primitive germ, reflections of the nature of the universe and its manifestations.





Jim B



To Hall, that's why Jesus said: "For this is the parable. The seed is the word of God." Buddha was enlightened under the bodhi tree. Laotse was born under a plum tree. Japan's indigenous religion, Shintoism, builds its shrines out of plain, unpainted timber. The acacia tree was evidence of immortality in Egypt. The Druids of Britain were called "Men of the Oaks." The first edition of the King James version of the Bible shows the tree of humanity rising through the roof of Noah's Ark. Alchemists and Cabbalists have their Tree of Sephiroth.

And forests remained places, Hall said, where the devout could commune in dreams and visions with invisible populations ruled by magical elementals, angels, demigods, gods and goddesses. By invoking the names of these supernatural beings—or inscribing their names in amulets and charms—humans could appeal to them for virility, fecundity, success, safety and knowledge of future events.

Hall's favorite lucky charms included tiny Egyptian figurines of Isis with the infant Horus on her lap and wearing a crown as a reminder of the death of her husband, Osiris. "Apuleius refers to Isis as 'Queen of Heaven,' a designation which was later conferred upon the Virgin Mary," Hall says in another essay published in the mid-1970s. "There seems to be no doubt that Isis with the child in her lap is the Egyptian Madonna. Many feminine divinities, such as Ceres, Athena, and Hera gained large followings and were regarded as the custodians of the gentler and more compassionate emotions of human beings. Isis was a symbol of faithfulness, fertility, and through her son, of human redemption. She also signified the State Mysteries, where the truth seekers were 'born again.'"

So it was in 1973 that Hall devised a plan to christen members of a local hippie cult led by his friend and dietary consultant, Sunset Boulevard restaurateur Jim Baker, a.k.a. Father Yod. They would be given new first names culled from the divine pantheons of Greece, Egypt, Babylonia, Samaria, India, China and Scandinavia.

The names of these powerful entities would give Baker's followers the strength to overcome enemies, the instincts to avoid danger, and the extrasensory perception needed to communicate with the essential spirits, which Hall said were aligned with the Earth's primary elements: earth, fire, air and water.



*The Source Family*

Baker was a judo expert, ex-Marine and alleged bank robber who may have killed two men with his bare hands. With 14 young spiritual wives and dozens of followers, he ran The Source, a vegan hot spot that catered to top-list entertainers and was often featured in movies, including Woody Allen's *Annie Hall*.

Baker, who stood over six feet tall with flowing white hair and beard, also regarded Hall as a master of magic and mysticism. So he rushed over when Hall called to say he had a special gift for the Source family, which shared a nearby mansion in Los Feliz that had once belonged to the *Los Angeles Times*' Chandler family.

Baker and a handful of devotees clad in white robes and sandals were not sure what to expect when they all squeezed into Hall's cramped office at PRS. Hall, wearing a blue suit, white shirt and tie, was sitting behind his massive wooden desk and smiling as he waved a yellow piece of ruled paper covered with handwritten names. [1]

Surrounded by teetering stacks of books, mostly rare original editions, Hall slid the paper across the desk toward Baker. With these names, he declared, Source family members would be born again as a true religious order with supernatural attributes.

A few days later, Source family members, who already shared the same last name, Aquarian, gathered in their mansion's meditation room, where Baker assigned each one a sacred name from Hall's list.

Bickering, however, took the shine off the inaugural ceremony. Some members hated their new names. Others wanted to swap theirs for a hipper name with more verve.

No problem. Baker started over, this time handing the list around so that Family members could choose names for themselves—men first.

"Then we went to the California Department of Motor Vehicles in Hollywood to change our driver's licenses to reflect our new names," Robert Quinn, 64, recalled with a laugh. "In my case, it was Omne Aquarian, which drove the DMV bureaucrat behind the counter nuts."

"That's not a name!" she sighed in exasperation, as 30 other Source family members in white terrycloth robes waited patiently in line. Among them were women nursing babies.

"Eventually, she yielded and we were declared officially street legal," Quinn said.

But apprenticeship in practical magic had only just begun for Baker's tribe of mostly seekers and high school dropouts who had dedicated their lives to the middle-aged guru who tooted around town in a Rolls-Royce and homeschooled his followers by having them read books by Madame Blavatsky and Hall.

Now, armed with new sacred names, Baker led them through a four-day initiation that Quinn described as "ceremonial magic by the seat of the pants."

It started with a private early morning ritual that included writing one's aspirations on a piece of paper, then setting fire to it in the flame of a candle. It ended four days later with a sexual magic exercise that involved filling potatoes with orgasmic body fluids, then burying them under a full moon.

“The goal was to blend the four sacred elements with the genetic material and positive thoughts, then stuff them into a cored potato,” he said. “Then plant that potato so that it would grow and manifest the visions we had infused it with.”

“The absurdity of it all was not lost on me at the time,” he said.

Here’s how it worked:

Source family couples found private spaces in the mansion in which to have intercourse on top of a drawing of a pentagram: closets, dark stairwells, washrooms and pantries. At the moment of orgasm, they yelled “God!!!”

Then, “we clumsily tried to fish back some of the mixture of vital materials from the women and put it inside the cored potatoes. Then we stuck the cores back in the potatoes and headed outside to bury them.”

Quinn was among several participants who ventured into neighbors’ yards to plant their potatoes. “I crawled under a hedge,” he recalled, “then dug a hole with my fingernails, plopped my potato in it and covered it up.”

Quinn said they never returned to see whether their potatoes were growing, or if they had been unearthed by dogs.

But Charlene Peters, who was then known as Isis Aquarian, insisted in an interview that “the potatoes didn’t have to sprout to work.” [2]

“Filled with a kind of a magical elixir of semen and a woman’s body fluid produced at the moment of orgasm,” she said, “the potatoes manifested on another plane. That’s how magic works. The elementals did what they wanted to with them.”

The ritual’s closing ceremony was a show-stopper.

“At the end of the four-day process, we gathered in the mansion’s meditation room,” Quinn recalled. “The gray light of dawn filtered through the curtains as Baker declared the initiation ceremony officially over. Then, after an eerie pause, that entire big-ass mansion began shaking like a bowl of Jell-O from top to bottom.

“At that moment, my brain was rewired. Permanently,” he said. “All nagging doubts about the very idea of reaching out to invisible spirits were replaced by a hard conviction: Nature had talked back to us. Wow.”

The blessings, however, were short-lived. The Source Family moved to Hawaii, where Father Yod went hang-gliding for the first time in August

1975. He crashed, broke his back and died soon after. He was 53.

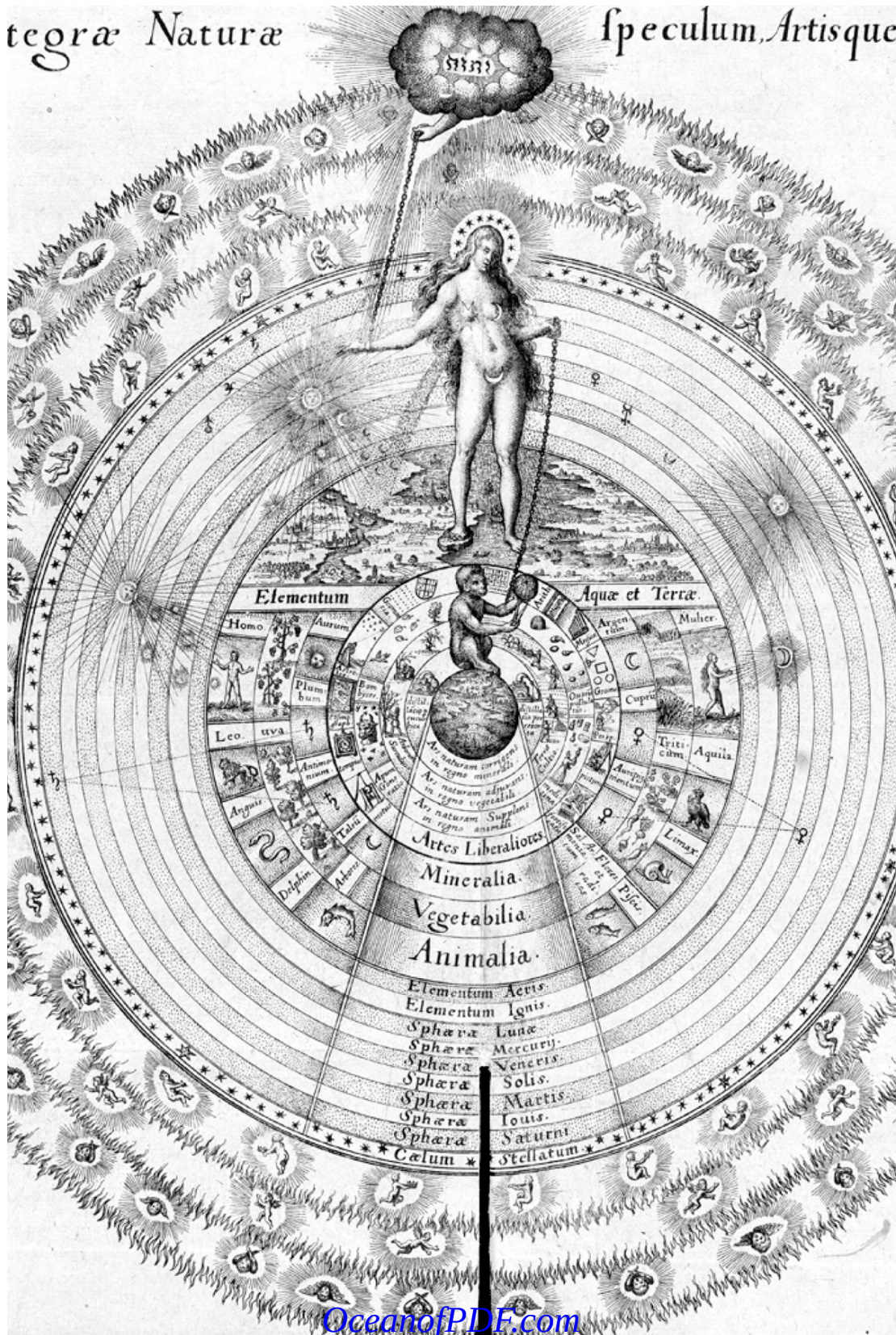
The Source family, which included 51 children born through natural childbirth, fell apart.

Quinn went on to get a job as a mailman.



tegra Naturæ

speculum Artisque



## CHAPTER 10

# Metaphysical Turbulence

ON NOVEMBER 16, 1973, ZEN CELEBRITY ALAN WATTS, AN OCCASIONAL VISITOR AT PRS, DIED OF HEART FAILURE AFTER YEARS OF HEAVY DRINKING, CHAIN-SMOKING AND ALL-NIGHT PARTIES WITH HIS YOUTHFUL FOLLOWERS. HE WAS ONLY 58.

A month later, just days after receiving the prestigious 33<sup>rd</sup> degree of Freemasonry from the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry for the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States of America in San Francisco, Hall underwent surgery to correct a detached retina. [1] After the operation, he was ordered to stay home and recuperate for six weeks. But the healing was not entirely successful and Hall's face was slightly disfigured. And Hall needed still more surgical operations on his left eye. Getting used to contact lenses would not be easy for the old man. Fearing that the scars left him looking like a grief-stricken St. Bernard dog, Hall turned down an invitation to give a lecture in Israel, or even appear on camera in Los Angeles in connection with a proposed 1976 Bicentennial project involving his 1944 book *The Secret Destiny of America*. [2]

But Hall and his wife were preparing a special surprise for America. There was a good chance, they were telling close friends, that the Bruton Vault Marie had been seeking for three decades in Williamsburg, Virginia, would be discovered, unearthed and opened on the nation's 200th birthday.

In the meantime, PRS secretary Ervin was pestering Hall for permission to donate his own home to PRS, and then use it as a tax-free parsonage for himself and his wife. Expecting an argument from Hall, Ervin made the request in an 11-page, single-spaced letter, which included a detailed

reminder of Ervin's formidable credentials, honors, ministerial work, and personal sacrifices and donations over the years to Hall and his causes. Ervin, who had doctorates in law from both the University of California and Harvard and had been attending Hall's lectures since he was a boy, regularly preached and taught children and adults alike at Sepulveda United Methodist Church. He was leader of an ecumenical prayer-healing group encompassing members of the Roman Catholic, Congregational, Lutheran, Presbyterian, and Methodist faiths. He counseled ministers. As an attorney, he represented Stafford Warren, dean and founder of the UCLA Medical Center and senior physician at the Manhattan Project and the Bikini Atoll nuclear bomb tests. Ervin also claimed to have helped heart attack and cancer patients by praying over them, and laying his hands on their bodies. As president of the United Nations Association of Los Angeles, Ervin organized receptions at Los Angeles City Hall chaired by Mayor Tom Bradley. A day after the United Nations building in New York was bombed on November 1974, Ervin appeared on public television and urged people to love those "ignorant and troubled persons who are so sick that they have to resort to violence." [3]

Ervin, who had donated thousands of dollars to PRS over the years and helped boost annual bequests and donations to more than \$100,000 by the mid-1970s, felt it was only proper and appropriate that he be able to transfer title from his home to PRS, and then continue to live in it as an active minister of Hall's Church of the People. In the event of his death, he added, "my widow would be privileged to remain in the home for her lifetime." Fearing Hall might feel queasy about the legality of the proposal, Ervin said, "Since I have the only Doctorate of Taxation ever given by the Harvard Law School in the field of Federal Taxation and taught the subject for 25 years and directed the leading western Institute on Federal Taxation and refused appointments to the Tax Court of the United States and served as Commissioner of Internal Revenue, I feel that my opinion is probably accurate."

Hall, who had the only vote that counted on the PRS board of directors, turned down the request without discussion.

It was that kind of imperious behavior that drove NASA astronaut Edgar Mitchell, the sixth man to walk on the moon, from PRS. Mitchell would continue to serve on the PRS board of trustees in name only.



“Generally, it was a one-man show at PRS,” Mitchell recalled. “It was Manly’s way or no way. I had bigger fish to fry.” [4]

Mitchell was set on an inner quest while piloting the *Apollo 14* Lunar Module in 1971. Peering out of the portal of the spacecraft at the Earth, he was overwhelmed by a sense that the entire universe was conscious, intelligent and loving. “I wept for the ignorance, poverty, trouble and turmoil human beings find themselves in,” he said. “It was Jesus’ message on the cross: Forgive them, Lord, for they know not what they do.”

Mitchell returned a changed man, but also determined to understand what had happened to him up there. His search for answers eventually led to Hall’s doorstep. But no sooner had he become one of the organization’s trustees in 1974 than his views about the big man began to sour. Mitchell found it distressing that Hall was “disgustingly obese and lazy,” and virtually ignored by serious scholars in the fields of comparative religion, philosophy, psychology, and history. While eloquent in writings about spiritual endeavors, Mitchell said, “Hall was on an intellectual journey, not a mystic one.” Then, too, Hall allowed hangers-on “to manipulate his ego.” Basically, “Manly Hall was a brilliant man and terrific writer who was screwed up in many ways,” Mitchell said. “He would have had a much happier life if he had been more willing to accept the world and its failings.”

Eventually, Mitchell launched his own New Age center, The Institute of Noetic Sciences in Sausalito, California, where people search for connections in science, medicine, business, education, and spirituality. Famed rocket scientist Wernher von Braun chaired the new institute’s physical sciences department. In his annual dinner address to the group in San Francisco in 1975, von Braun asked rhetorically, “A nuts-and-bolts man like myself will always appreciate an academic facelift, and what could be more prestigious than and also more exciting than being associated with a project that is attempting to probe the innermost secret of the human mind, to forge a link between reason and intuition, and to bridge the traditional gap between science and religion?” [5]

Mitchell’s departure from Hall’s realm, and his ability to attract high-profile researchers to his competing metaphysical school, generated plenty of gossip at PRS. But some people simply ignored such talk. Carpenter

Edward Titus, who started attending Hall's lectures in 1974, took Hall's words as gospel.

"There was something about Hall that stirred the corners of my mind and my heart," he recalled. "He bit into the very core of questions about religion and politics that had been bothering me."

"I didn't socialize with Mr. Hall," he added. "But the neatest thing he ever did for me was autograph a copy of his big book in 1977. Immediately after that, I spent hours and hours in my workroom at home, building a special box for it. I built it out of solid oak, and lined it with blue velvet. Now, Mr. Hall's book sits comfortably in that box under a coffee table." [6]

In April 1975, a group called the American Heritage Research Assn. declared Hall an "important and valuable human resource of the United States of America living during the closing decade of the first American Bicentennium (1776–1976)."

It was the kind of award given to icons nearing the end of their lives. After writing dozens of books; delivering thousands of lectures on stage, and in hospitals, prisons, churches and synagogues; traveling the world and building a famous library; baptizing and christening newborns; comforting the sick and dying; counseling lawmakers, executives and astronauts, Hall had become an endangered species, one of the last mystic storytellers in a line stretching back to Pythagoras and Homer.

Conducting funerals for loved ones also had become routine for the old sage.

In July 1975, Hall led a Berkeley funeral service for his old friend and healer William Gray, who had died of acute myocardial disease just two years after the publication of Ruth Montgomery's book about him. Hall opened with an overview of the man born July 13, 1895: "Bill," Hall said, "was able to form of his own nature and body a conductor of energies which were for the healing of the sick and also for the general improvement of those he knew."

In the course of Gray's life, Hall went on, "he treated not only thousands in this country but in many foreign lands. He worked with some of the most important officials of our government seeking to give them greater energy and strength and stamina to meet the terrible stress of pressure of modern circumstances." Among them was Alabama's controversial Governor Wallace, whose wife had called on Gray after her



husband was shot in the midst of a presidential campaign rally by a young assailant, leaving him paralyzed in both legs.

In an interview, Gray's assistant, Dena Smith, recalled, "George Wallace's wife called Bill wanting to know if he could help. Bill said, 'I'll take a shot at it.' But Gov. Wallace was in awful shape. There really wasn't much Bill could do, although he did provide some relief." [7]

Gray's passing abruptly ended plans to establish a local health and research clinic in Los Angeles dedicated to better understanding his mysterious healing powers. The Life Energies Research center had been incorporated two years earlier. Its first vice president was Alice Tyler, wife of John C. Tyler, founder of the Farmers Insurance Group and a philanthropist known for his generous contributions to medical research and hospital building funds. "When Bill died," Smith said, "that was the end of all that."

Hall's stepfather, Charles C. Hall, a lifelong construction worker, died a year later of arterial thrombosis at the ripe old age of 87. In an essay, the 75-year-old Hall lauded his stepfather for managing to remain vigorous, strong and cheery despite a steady diet of donuts and candy. He never took supplemental nutrition, seldom had a cold and read without glasses until the age of 85.

His secret, Hall said, was staying active and avoiding worry, anxiety and violent emotional outbursts—the very lifestyle promoted by alchemist physicians of old such as Paracelsus.

Hall claimed to follow that lifestyle as best he could, though he and his wife amended their daily regimens to include injections of B-complex vitamins, hormones, herbal cocktails and stool softeners prescribed by adoring doctors. In the heart of the disco era, the Halls also became fashion-conscious. Marie underwent a breast reduction operation and plastic surgery to erase the bags under her eyes. She also coaxed her otherwise stuffy husband into wearing flashy shirts with wide starched collars and bright paisley patterns, and letting her curl his hair. Because she used rubbing alcohol, the running joke at PRS was that Hall's suddenly wavy gray hair was drunk. Just beneath the spiffy "do," Hall was almost blinded by cataracts, and wracked with arthritis and foot problems so severe it was painful to step on the floor when getting out of bed.

By the late 1970s, Hall's health had deteriorated to the point that he and his aging lieutenants at PRS decided it was time to prepare for future generations, lest the organization's vitality be a one-generation phenomenon. PRS' leaders went into corporate overdrive. They devised plans to produce a detailed survey of Hall's literary achievements, inventory his extensive book and manuscript collection and then put it on computer files, sell his short stories to motion-picture producers, sponsor an archeological dig to generate positive publicity and establish an accredited university and research center. [8] They also persuaded Hall to help look for potential successors. [9]

Few of these things would ever come to pass. But the society seemed off to a fine start when vice president Drake began collecting material for an informal examination of Hall's works to be called *Our Heritage of Wisdom*, or *The Timeless Wisdom*. Hall offered to write a foreword to the digest that was expected to run some six hundred pages.

Drake had also persuaded young metaphysical scholar Stephan A. Schwartz to join PRS as its first senior fellow in charge of research. Unfortunately, that title, which Drake hoped would help legitimize PRS as an educational center and make it less vulnerable to charges of being a personality cult, was never formalized and would result in considerable commotion later. Landing Schwartz was regarded as a coup. At 35, he was bright, energetic, academically credentialed and he wielded influence outside of metaphysical circles: a former special assistant for research and analysis to the chief of Naval Operations, member of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology/Secretary of Defense Discussion Group on Innovation, Technology and Society, a former editorial staff member of *National Geographic* magazine, and author of the 1978 book *The Secret Vaults of Time: Psychic Archeology's Quest for Man's Beginnings*.

Drake was especially impressed with Schwartz's burning desire to make the word research in Philosophical Research Society mean something again by writing and publishing books through PRS, building a laboratory in which to investigate supernatural forces, and inviting world-class scholars to lecture and work on the premises. Essentially, Schwartz wanted to do exactly what Hall had done at that age. But a personal divide quickly arose between the old man and his protégé. They circled each other like lions,

snarling over matters ranging from Hall's dominance on the PRS board of directors to the kinds of questions asked on PRS employment forms.

When Schwartz questioned Drake about Hall's commitment to crisis fixes and long-term reforms, Drake responded with the mantra he had repeated for decades: "We all know what Mr. Hall's strengths and weaknesses are. But I really believe we can build something great here."

Schwartz was not so sure. "Manly had this weird thing about wanting to make his associates complicit in his sneaking of sweets and fattening foods," Schwartz recalled. "Once, against his doctor's orders, he asked me to take him to a funky hamburger joint on the east side of town where they ground the meat on the spot. On the way back, he asked me to stop at a drugstore where he bought a box of cheap chocolates. I said, 'Manly, you're not supposed to eat that stuff.' He said, 'Yes, but you're not going to tell anyone, are you?'" [10]

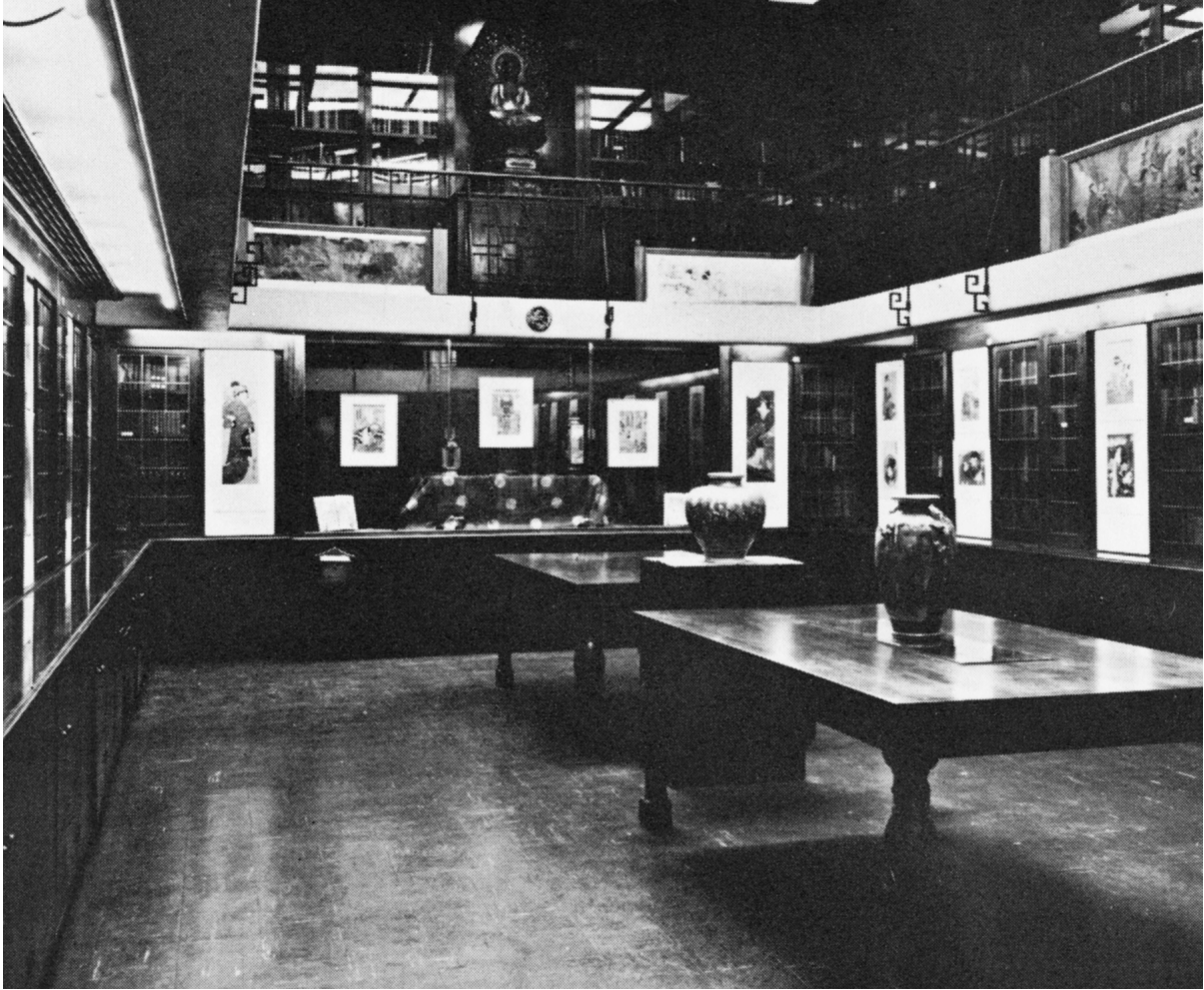
Weekly dinners at Hall's home meant coping with Marie's nonstop chatter about the Bruton Vault. "The game was to outmaneuver Marie without having her blow up," Schwartz said with a laugh. "They were crazy meals. Marie would carry on and on and then Hall would turn to me and say, 'Let's take some air, shall we?' When we returned, Marie would rant for another 45 minutes. Then Hall would say, 'Marie, could you make some tea?' That would give us a few more minutes to talk."

To be sure, there was plenty of pressing business to attend to. In 1978, Schwartz ran into a publisher of softcore pornography at an annual booksellers convention in Atlanta, Georgia, who was passing out brochures about his pending publication of the first paperback version of Hall's *Secret Teachings of All Ages*. "I called PRS from the convention floor and said, 'Henry, we have to get our own paperback out or we won't have it anymore,'" he recalled. "Drake said, 'Let's go for it.' Hall reluctantly agreed. Then I went back and invited that pornographer to meet me for a drink. "I told him, 'Let me be clear. I'm senior fellow at PRS and I saw your announcement. We are going to bring out a paperback of that book.' He argued that our copyright had lapsed. But he eventually backed down when I pointed out that the law supports the living author in such cases."

With the glory days of Hall's book-buying sprees three decades gone, Schwartz persuaded Hall and Drake to hire Bennett Bruce Gilbert to catalogue PRS' existing collection of alchemy books, and make a general

assessment of their value. Gilbert, who held a B.A. degree with magna cum laude from Yale University and an M.L.S. degree from the School of Library Science at Columbia University, was more than qualified to compile such a work. [11] “The alchemical books and manuscripts of the Philosophical Research Society on the whole represent a later and degenerate stage of alchemical work,” Gilbert wrote in a report to Schwartz. “In the 17th Century, alchemy and Rosicrucianism mingled closely, and the occult science in general mingled with the intellectual movements in Germany and England. So, from the point of view of the psychological investigation of alchemy, the value of many of the books is limited; from the point of view of the historian of culture, the collection here is important; and from the point of view of the occultist, this collection is singularly valuable.” [12]

Appraisals of Drake’s survey of Hall’s work, *The Heritage of Wisdom*, were not as favorable. Although it seemed fitting that this “best of Manly P. Hall” should have been assembled by his vice president of 26 years, major publishers across the country turned it down without explanation beyond saying that at six hundred pages it would be far too long for a mainstream audience. The anthology, which took Drake years to assemble, was a cut-and-paste collection of excerpts drawn from 34 books and 72 essays, comprising 10,000 pages condensed into a single volume that ostensibly traced the main line and principal themes of the man he described as “one of the most outstanding authors of the century.” In five sections and 26 chapters further subdivided into over five hundred topic headings, the book aimed to disclose a purposeful universe and humanity’s endless potential for spiritual growth.



*PRS Library*

In the foreword, Hall wrote, “Thoughtfulness has induced me to explore many fields bearing upon the primary purposes of human existence. I have never felt the urge to create a new system of learning, but instead have sought to perpetuate a wisdom that has always existed and which has descended to us as the most precious heritage of the human race. As the years passed it became increasingly obvious that the fundamental truths that could help us solve immediate problems should be restated in contemporary terms suitable to the needs of thoughtful persons. If we are to fulfill our proper destiny, it is apparent that the noblest convictions of mankind relating to integrity and right conduct must be made more generally available.”



At a time when sci-fi films were breaking box office records, movie studios also thumbed their noses at proposals for turning Hall's mystical short stories into films. As one producer put it to a screenplay writer who was trying to market Hall's works to Hollywood, "Got anything along the lines of *Star Wars*?"

Hall apparently assumed that reassigning Drake to his executive responsibilities, keeping Schwartz on a short leash, and returning to his tried and true brand of New Age projects would stabilize the PRS organization, and possibly advance its agenda. It didn't turn out that way. On St. Patrick's Day, 1978, the staff at PRS threw a surprise birthday party for Hall, who was recovering from eye surgery and only permitted to visit the office occasionally. On that day, however, Marie invented a pretext to drive him over. When Hall entered the library, Drake led the singing.

A few months later, Drake, 72, underwent coronary artery bypass surgery. Shortly after the operation, Hall and Schwartz visited the venerable spiritual pilgrim while he was still under sedation and connected to a battery of medical monitors and transfusion devices. Hall laid his hands on Drake's body and whispered a prayer of healing. According to Schwartz, the dials and needles in the monitoring machines suddenly began to twitch and flutter, triggering alarms that sent nurses rushing into the room to ascertain the cause of the commotion. Within a few weeks, Drake seemed well on the way to recovery. It was later learned, however, that Drake started bleeding internally within a few weeks of his surgery. In the early morning hours of November 7, 1978, Drake's condition took a fatal turn in a small local hospital.

A little more than a year later, Drake's wife, Sarane, committed suicide with the same technique used by Hall's first wife: breathing carbon monoxide pumped into an automobile through a garden hose connected to the exhaust pipe.

Without Drake's dedication and practical guidance, Hall and his staffers were squandering PRS' bank accounts. Book sales were off. Distribution networks were coming apart. There were only a few people at PRS Hall felt he could trust. All this had big implications for Schwartz, who believed he had been brought on board to take Drake's position, perhaps even Hall's when the time came.

Fed up with delays in getting meaningful reforms off the ground, Schwartz dispatched a series of confidential memoranda to Hall in January 1979 blasting his boss' organizational skills, and making it clear that he had no intention of being a quiet helpmate, as Drake had been. "As I have already tried to make clear, I do not see myself as an anonymous business administrator," Schwartz wrote Hall. "I am perfectly at ease with deferring to you, and with making you the center of all society functions. But I am not willing to give up research, writing and lecturing of my own." [13]

Underlining his view of the future of the society, Schwartz added: "At the time of your death or retirement I will be in my mid-forties and this is hardly the time to make an unplanned professional change. For this reason, and because without a clear cut transitional plan the confusion attendant to your passing or retirement could well destroy the society (one need only consider what has happened to the society with Henry Drake's death), I feel it is extremely important that an open statement of intention on your part be revealed to at least the Board of Trustees." [14]

Schwartz didn't wait for an answer. He established a research arm called "Mobius Society." Then, in early March, Schwartz left Los Angeles on an archeological expedition to Alexandria, Egypt, to seek the tomb of Alexander the Great and remnants of the fabled Library of Alexandria. In a blunt letter to Hall, he advised that the costs of the journey would not be charged to PRS since the organization "does not wish to be associated with this project." [15]

While Schwartz was out of the country, Hall forged stronger alliances with PRS secretary Ervin, who was promoted to vice president after Drake died, and his wife, Patricia. When Schwartz returned, he was shocked to discover that Mrs. Ervin, with Hall's approval, had painted his office, cleaned out his cabinets and desk drawers, and stacked his files in precarious piles on the floor. In conversations with staffers Schwartz learned that she'd also spread rumors that he had left town to start a hot tub company.

"I had a long conversation with Manly about all this," Schwartz recalled. "But Manly explicitly said, 'Look, I don't want to do any of the research projects we talked about when Drake was alive. If you want to stay, you have to take care of me. When I'm gone, you can take it over.'" [16]

“Manly,” Schwartz responded, “I’m not going to wait around for you to fall into your grave. That’s not my style.”

Schwartz’s insubordination was intolerable. Hall and the PRS board assigned Mrs. Ervin the task of asking him to resign on grounds he was allegedly conducting personal business on the society’s time. No one was sure he would leave. On June 24, 1979, Schwartz dropped a bombshell during a scheduled public lecture at PRS. “This will probably be my last lecture for the Philosophical Research Society,” he told a stunned audience, “and I would like to thank all of you for coming regularly over the last two years. . . The society is really not interested in my research, lecturing and writing, so it seems appropriate that I sort of go my own way.” [17]

A month later, trendy advertisements decorated with psychedelic butterflies and mythic forest scenes were distributed at PRS announcing that Schwartz would be lecturing in Monterey alongside Ram Dass, who in the 1960s had left his teaching position at Harvard to become a spiritual leader.

“I went to see Manly one time after I’d left PRS,” Schwartz recalled. “I went to his home and said, ‘Manly, I’m sorry it ended badly, but I wish you well.’”

Before leaving, Schwartz asked, “What are you going to do with PRS?” Hall replied, “Stephan, I want it to hang together until I’m gone. After that, they can pave it over for a parking lot.”

“Don’t you care?” Schwartz asked.

“No,” Hall said. “I don’t care what happens to it after I’m gone.”

In the short term, however, Hall had begun paying more attention to his remaining stalwart staffers such as his personal bodyguard and shipping department manager Richard de la Barcena, who earned a profile in the *PRS Journal* as reward for 25 years of service. Barcena’s life story was hard to believe. Born in El Paso, Texas, Barcena said he left home at 10. At 14, he learned to fly an airplane. Two years later, he was working as head cook in a restaurant, and living with an elderly Asian man who introduced him to Eastern philosophy and martial arts. Later, he traveled to Japan where he received a 10th degree black belt in Judo. After a stint in the armed forces, where he did exhibition wrestling, he found work at the Brown Derby restaurant near the PRS headquarters on Los Feliz Boulevard. There, he crossed paths with Hall, who would baptize his five children. [18]

In private conversations with PRS staffers, Barcena said he was Hall's personal bodyguard, and could be dangerous. True to his warrior image, he once showed up for work late and badly bruised. His explanation: "I saw a woman being attacked by two men and tried to save her. In my prime, they wouldn't have stood a chance."

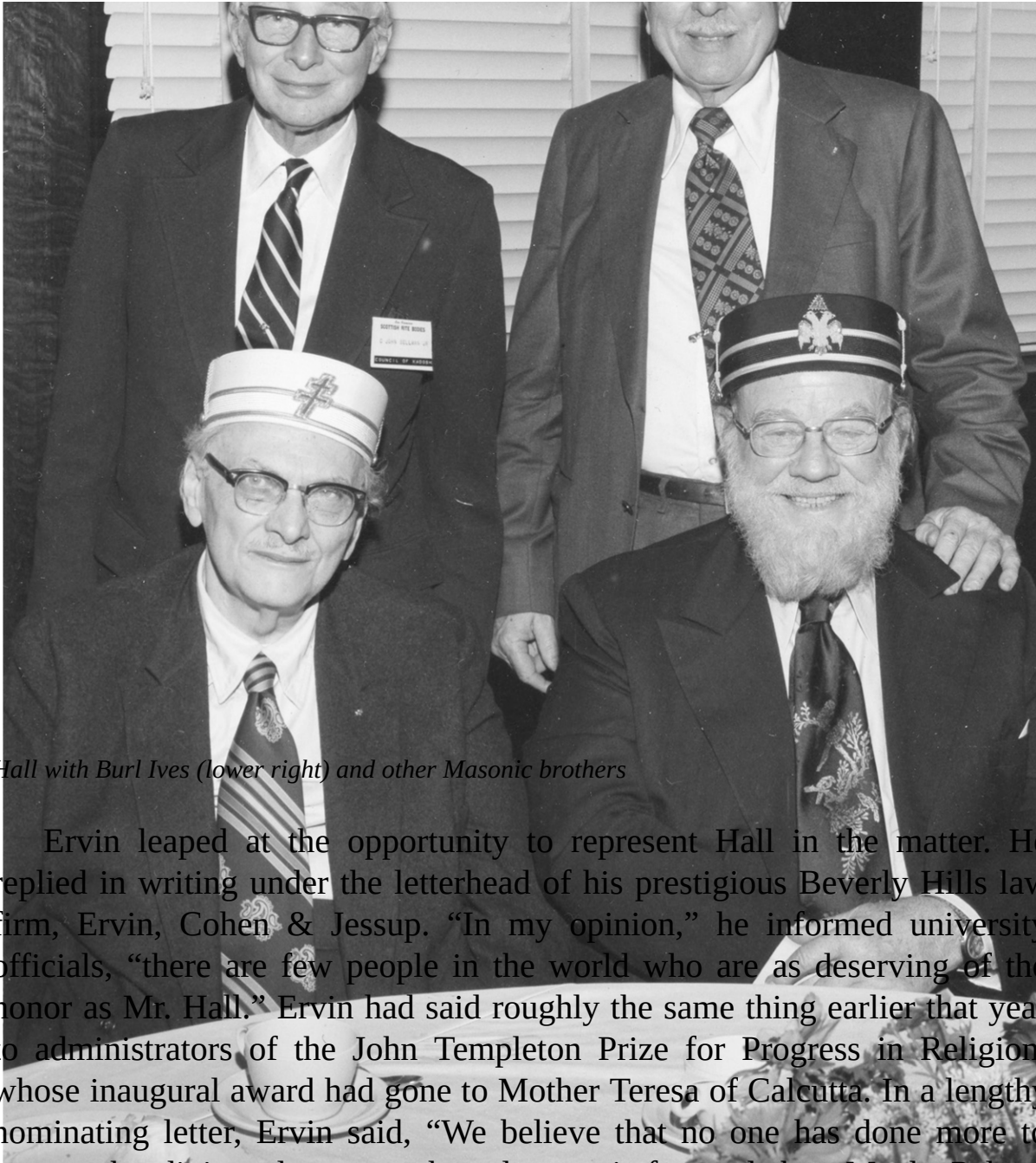
"Richard would say things like, 'If I loan you money and you don't pay me back, I break your leg. That's how I play,'" recalled former PRS custodian Phil Boroff. "He said he was a bodyguard for Frank Sinatra for a while and that Frank had him kick the ass of people he didn't take a shine to." [19]

"Once, at a skating rink, one of his sons was shoved around and had his clothes torn by an armed guard," Boroff added. "Richard took a chain and went back and nearly beat the guy to death. Richard played hard."

With the Ervins, Barcena, secretary Edith Waldron and PRS librarian Pearl Thomas at his side, Hall managed to save the society from collapsing and embarked on the kind of high-profile project he could endorse without hesitation, an illustrated bibliography of his collection of alchemical books. Destined to be the last major PRS publication in Hall's lifetime, the bibliography would be collated by Gilbert and include almost no books or publications of the 19th or 20th centuries.

In March 1980, just in time for Hall's 79th birthday, John F. Kennedy University in Orinda, California, gave the philosopher and his followers something else to crow about. The school wanted to present Hall with an honorary degree in recognition of his scholarship and contributions to the field of consciousness studies. All they needed to begin processing the degree was a detailed bibliography of Hall, access to his works, and background information on PRS.





*Hall with Burl Ives (lower right) and other Masonic brothers*

Ervin leaped at the opportunity to represent Hall in the matter. He replied in writing under the letterhead of his prestigious Beverly Hills law firm, Ervin, Cohen & Jessup. “In my opinion,” he informed university officials, “there are few people in the world who are as deserving of the honor as Mr. Hall.” Ervin had said roughly the same thing earlier that year to administrators of the John Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion, whose inaugural award had gone to Mother Teresa of Calcutta. In a lengthy nominating letter, Ervin said, “We believe that no one has done more to restore the divine plan to earth and carry it forward than Manly Palmer Hall.” [20]

The 1980 Templeton Prize went instead to Professor Ralph Wendell Burhoe, founder and editor of *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science*. Burhoe’s journal provided a critical link between religion and science by offering a neutral ground for dialogue, according to the prize committee.

On May 5, John F. Kennedy University officials informed PRS that its efforts on Hall’s behalf failed to meet the deadline for him to be considered



for an honorary degree that academic year. Then Burl and Dorothy Ives resigned from Marie Hall's Veritat Foundation after she accused Ives' daughter of stealing \$139.59 out of her purse while the families vacationed together on a cruise ship bound for Europe. Marie had also made an embarrassing spectacle of herself during a luncheon in Norway by railing against the U.S. Congress and the United Nations as "dunderheads" in a loud, hysterical voice near friends and colleagues of the Ives family. Then she called Ives' local bank and cast aspersions on the actor's financial dealings with her. [21]

Not about to cross his wife in the matter, Hall wrote the Iveses a letter on Marie's behalf. "I think that we will all be happier and there will be fewer complications if you will return to her the following items: Copies of her first book, *Quest for the Bruton Vault*; typewritten copy of book two, *Solving the Riddle of the Shakespeare Sphinx*; and photographs of Marie and her family we loaned you." Marie also demanded that Dorothy Ives cease work on a biography about her. [22]

Hall followed up with another letter to Burl Ives that included a special request. "It would be a personal favor to me," Hall wrote, "if you could find it possible to come to my office so that you and I could discuss the whole situation in the spirit of our Masonic brotherhood." [23]

A year later, their Marie-related problems resolved, Hall and Ives were receiving laser beam treatments for arthritis from the same physician, Dr. Friedrich W. Plog of Mesa, Arizona. The treatments involved putting a laser ray on the body's acupuncture points.

Ives was quoted in a *National Enquirer* article as exclaiming that the applications left him "feeling no pain at all!" He added, "Manly Hall, an 80-year-old friend of mine who's been crippled and feeble for many years also went to take laser-ray therapy from Dr. Plog. Manly took his wife, who couldn't move her left arm because of arthritis. Now, after the treatments, they're both free from pain." Those remarkable results, however, were short-lived.

John F. Kennedy University came back to Hall in early 1981 with plans to honor him that June with an honorary doctorate. University liaison Pam Atkinson, an instructor of a class based on Hall's writings, presented the good news in a letter: Hall would be saluted with a doctorate of literature.

University officials had considered conferring a doctorate in philosophy, she acknowledged, but dismissed that idea as “flamboyant.” [24]

Hall’s secretary responded promptly with a gift set of Hall’s published works for the university library—and a few demands regarding the awards ceremony. Given that Hall was losing his sight and hearing, any questions asked of him by students after the award ceremony would have to be written down in large, dark letters so that he could read them. Also, Hall refused to discuss anything whatsoever having to do with sex. Finally, his acceptance speech, tentatively titled “My Personal Search,” was not available for distribution later. The material was copyrighted, she explained, and Hall did not want it published in his lifetime since it contained material being collected for a definitive biography.

The prospective biographer Hall’s secretary had in mind was a new young addition at PRS: Ron Hogart, who was introduced to Hall in the early 1980s through a tattered copy of *The Secret Teachings of All Ages*, which he bought with a \$50 gift certificate at the Bodhi Tree bookstore in west Los Angeles. Poring over the book in his apartment less than a block up the street from the Whisky-a-Go-Go nightclub on the west side of town, he felt electrified by its strange symbols and diagrams. Later, a friend’s mother suggested, “Ronnie, why don’t you go to one of Hall’s lectures?” Hogart shot back: “Manly P. Hall is still alive?!” [25]

At the time, Hogart was a bright but bone-thin teenage alcoholic with cascades of waist-length hair who played guitar in a punk rock band. Hall’s Big Book changed all that. Within a matter of days, Hogart had cut his hair, given up drinking and launched into a crash course of self-improvement.

The following Sunday, he stepped into the PRS auditorium astounded by the sight of the enormous man on stage who was speaking matter-of-factly about medieval philosophers who preached the importance of disciplining desires and overcoming fears. In an interview at his home high atop the Hollywood Hills, Hogart recalled, “At that time, I had a fierce mania about earthquakes and desperately wanted to move away from California. So I was floored when Hall looked straight at me from the stage and said, ‘I’m talking about irrational phobias that can emerge in such things as fear of earthquakes.’ I turned to my girlfriend and said, ‘We have to get involved here.’”

Like so many before him, Hogart showed up at the PRS main office a short time later and announced, "I'd like to work here. I'll wash windows. Sweep floors. Anything." Hall's secretary asked, "Are you good at languages? Can you write? Edit?" Hogart nodded shyly in the affirmative. A few days after that, he was invited to meet the man.

When Hogart ventured into Hall's inner sanctum, the philosopher looked up, smiled, and said, in a perfect imitation of W.C. Fields, "Sit down. Make yourself miserable." Then he slid a large stack of papers across the desk and said, "I've got a job for you, if you want it. That is a bibliography of our alchemical books. I want you to edit it."

"I want to see you from now on," Hall added. "I'm the only one you take orders from. Is that understood?"

Hogart gulped and muttered, "Yes, sir."

Initially, Hogart felt like a sorcerer's apprentice. He studied alchemical manuscripts in Hall's walk-in vault, fielded phone calls from professional clairvoyants and astrologers, and edited the philosopher's wife's "scientific papers." He was touted as the newest addition to PRS' teaching staff, and was named an officer of Marie's Veritat Foundation. Clad in jeans and a tank top, he lectured on subjects ranging from New England Transcendentalism to the hidden meanings of Marie's writings. As a regular in Hall's office, he overheard strange conversations. Once, an elderly Mason asked, "Manly, am I spiritually advanced enough to be conscious after I die?" "Oh, I think so," Hall advised, while munching on a cookie. Another time, a photographer felt compelled to tell Hall that a third eye was growing in his forehead. After that meeting ended, Hall roared, "Why do I get all the nuts?!"

In the course of his bibliographical research among Hall's texts, Hogart's duties included removing references about alchemists' interests in the purported magical properties of human body fluids such as urine. Hall wanted them stricken, reflecting his desire to put his historical antecedents in the best light.

Hogart married girlfriend Tamra Spivey in the yard of Hall's home, where they had spent many dreamy weekends watching cartoons with the philosopher and his wife while enjoying bowls of vanilla ice cream covered with crème de cacao. Sometimes, Hogart sat on the floor, leaning against Hall's leg. Although Hall referred to himself as a self-taught "rogue

scholar,” and joshed that Ph.D. stood for “piled high and deep,” he persuaded the rock ‘n’ roller to enroll at Occidental College.

Hall was a magnanimous mentor. He gave Hogart a duplicate copy—with his own notes scrawled in pencil on the inside front cover—of A.E. Waite’s *The Rosicrucian Brotherhood*, and a first edition of his *Secret Teachings of All Ages*. He gave Hogart’s girlfriend three Japanese woodblock prints of temple musicians. Later, for their wedding, Hall gave the couple an antique Japanese rendering of a golden Buddha blessing two bodhisattvas.

Hogart was part of a new wave of energy at PRS. There was former San Francisco State philosophy professor Roger Weir, a dashing and witty scholar of spiritual classics and the history of the exotic Egyptian city of Alexandria, once a vortex of Hellenistic and Hebraic civilizations and home of the largest library of the ancient world. Movie producer and screenwriter Dan York actively tried to interest Hollywood in Hall’s occult fiction. Art Johnson, an Academy Award-winning guitar player who backed such pop divas as Lena Horne and Barbra Streisand, was in charge of recording Hall’s lectures, and making them available to the public on cassettes.

Walter Stewart, a fellow Mason, wanted Hall to ordain him as a minister. Instead, he was appointed head of a hastily created PRS security task force after one of Hall’s Sunday lectures was disrupted by a man who approached the stage wearing an Air Force fighter pilot’s jumpsuit and bouncing an enormous beach ball designed to resemble planet Earth.

The following Sunday, the same man strode into a PRS office wielding a large knife and demanding to speak with Hall. Moments later, Hall’s acolytes were scrambling for safety as a team of security guards contracted by PRS grappled with the man on the office floor. The assailant was eventually subdued, handcuffed and led off the premises after paramedics injected a dose of muscle relaxant into his right arm.

Hall never said a word about the intruder, Stewart said. “But after that,” he said, “our PRS security team made sure Hall’s lectures proceeded without incident.” [26]

Art Johnson has fond memories of his early years at PRS. The fact that Hall read newspaper funny pages before taking to the stage for his Sunday lectures, nursed icy vodka martinis after a long day at the office and, as Johnson put it, “never stopped checking out women’s legs and asses,” only

enriched the character of the man he recalled as “a significant personality of the 20th century whose influence was never properly recognized.” [27]

“He was one of a kind,” Johnson said. “He was part P.T. Barnum and part practicing magician with neo-Platonic leanings. He had W.C. Fields’ sense of humor and Lionel Barrymore’s face. He wanted to build a school of the philosophy of religion, but he was discouraged that most people around him were thinking small. They just didn’t get it.”

But historian Ann Holliday, a close friend of Marie’s in the 1980s, never could reconcile how “Manly and Marie behaved like children when it came to celebrities.” [28] Take pop star John Denver, an avid New Ager himself, who frequently dropped in at the Halls’ home whenever he performed at the Greek Theater during the 1980s. By then, Denver’s record sales were waning, his marriage was falling apart, and he had a serious drinking problem. At Hall’s home, however, he was treated as a hero. Marie, who acted as a marriage counselor to Denver, tacked an autographed publicity photograph of him up on her bedroom wall and bragged that the singer was secretly in love with her.

New celebrity friends aside, Hall’s life reached a pinnacle on June 20, 1981, when he donned robe and mortarboard to accept the honorary doctorate at John F. Kennedy University. In a signed citation, university president Robert M. Fisher said “your productive output over more than half a century has been rarely equaled in modern times. Your books alone, since 1922 more than 40 in number, evidence an unparalleled breadth of scholarship. In comparative religion, psychology, esoteric traditions, Greek and classical philosophy, and in the mysteries of Oriental thought, you have made your intellectual home. For untold thousands of readers, you have opened the door to the wisdom of world cultures. Your legacy to our society is unique.” [29]

Hall’s acceptance speech, delivered in a stifling auditorium during one of the hottest days of the year, amounted to a colorful but heavily censored retelling of his life story.

In an interview later that day, *The San Ramon Valley Herald* reporter Beverly Cederberg asked Hall “how he maintains his own deep reservoir which enables the constant giving necessary in a lifetime of service.” [30]

“I just keep on going and will do so as long as I can,” Hall said. “I have no secret rites or ritual. I don’t meditate. Your job is your meditation. It’s



like praying. To keep on doing what you think is right may be as good a prayer as there is. Instead of verbalizing, just live it.” [31]

Yet, Hall, whose habit had been to pore over newspaper articles and periodicals for evidence of universal patterns and laws in daily existence, was almost completely detached from current world events. Because of his failing eyesight, he had not even finished a book in five years. When Los Angeles adult school teacher J. Turetsky went to him for insight into the “reprehensible acts of violence and cruelty going on today” in El Salvador and Guatemala, he found Hall’s written reply deeply disappointing. Essentially, Hall linked the political turmoil that was driving tens of thousands of immigrants from those nations to seek refugee status throughout the southwestern United States to “materialism” and “the population explosion.” [32]

“I was turned off by his letter,” Turetsky recalled. “It turned out that he wasn’t very imaginative or knowledgeable about those situations.” [33]

But Hall still was considered the ultimate arbiter when it came to esoteric lore. For that reason, Orinda’s JFK University professor of parapsychology Pam Atkinson arranged for 28 students in her class on “The Ancient Mysteries” to spend a November weekend at PRS for which they received one unit of academic credit. Following a tour of the PRS library, the students gathered in a lecture room where they were seated in a close semi-circle around Hall, who lectured on Greek philosophy from a chair in front of a potted ivy plant and his large framed portrait of Madame Blavatsky.

One of them was Taun Cosentino Relihan, who remembers listening to Hall speak from a living room chair given to him by actor Errol Flynn, enjoying a fancy roast beef dinner with Hall at a local restaurant and sleeping on a carpeted floor in his home beside a Satsuma vase filled with rose petals. Over the fireplace loomed a portrait of a young Marie, raven-haired with porcelain-white skin in a red dress with a lace bodice, a slender copper cobra encircling her right wrist. An entry in Relihan’s journal described her initial impressions: “At the Halls’. Absolutely lovely home. He is dynamic even though obviously not well. I believe he went to bed after we had brunch but now he is up again working. We could see his gray hair through the window of what I know absolutely must be his room. It is a very still house—everyone is sprawled out on the floor in sleeping bags.

The windows are all *shoji* and two beautiful foo dogs are in the dividers between the rooms.” Her closing remarks for the trip were simply, “They have been very kind! And taken great care of us.” [34]

Becoming gravely ill while out of town was routine for Hall. During a 1980 airplane trip to London, he caught a severe cold, which nearly developed into pneumonia. In November 1981, while the Halls were vacationing among the red rock spires, mystical bookstores and crystal shops of Sedona, Arizona, Hall came down with bronchitis. Hall was still trying to shake that bug on the morning of Friday, April 16, 1982, when his multifaceted vice president, John Ervin, shot himself in the head with a small caliber pistol at age 64. At the time, relatives refused to disclose the cause of death. But it was later revealed that the influential tax attorney, who was in a parked car when he committed suicide, had been depressed for years over domestic problems and incurable stabbing pains to his head.

Upon learning of Ervin’s passing, Mayor Tom Bradley wrote, “His death is a great loss to everyone involved, and he will long be remembered for his efforts and many outstanding contributions which have made our City and Nation a better place in which to live.” [35]

Hall was devastated by Ervin’s death; he looked worn out, and spoke in a raspy voice. Moreover, his executive offices were once again were thrown into chaos. In an effort to restore order, Hall appointed Patricia Ervin to replace her husband as PRS vice president. Her first priority was to cut expenses, with good reason. Lloyd family trust funds, which had been funneling \$10,000 to \$20,000 a month into the society’s coffers since 1964, were scheduled to terminate at the end of 1984. Moreover, PRS’ annual expenses far exceeded its cash reserves of about \$350,000. [36]

Another consideration was Hall’s advancing age and failing health. In closed-door meetings, Hall told Ervin that upon his passing he wanted her to divide proceeds from the sale of his stamp and coin collection—and on-hand cash savings—between his wife and PRS. As possible successors, he suggested Dr. Randall Phillips, a Methodist minister and 33rd° Mason, philosopher Marcus Bach or psychologist Dr. Robert Gerard. If none was able to take over, he suggested handing PRS over to the Masons. [37]

Hall also made a point of answering as many letters as possible. In April 1983, he received one that showed his teachings were still having an impact. It was from Rev. Wilbur A. Korfhage, chaplain of the California

Senate in Sacramento. Korfhage said it had been a “high privilege” to have attended one of Hall’s lectures on Easter Sunday that year. The spokesman for the state legislature’s California Council on Alcohol Problems also wanted to thank Hall for the “disciplined studying” that culminated in the *PRS Journal*. “I use it,” Korfhage said, “as a basis of my preaching, as well as preparation for my prayers.” [38]

Another admirer in Sacramento was Carl Wahlstrom, a printer and longtime PRS financial donor whose descent into a world of fantasy is sadly chronicled in letters he sent Hall over two decades.

They began in 1968 as cheery updates on his research into the metaphysical properties of colors. By 1983, Wahlstrom was pleading for Hall’s assistance to persuade state political leaders to let him build a “Department of Defense Navigator Planetarium for Plotting Peace” in the state capital’s rotunda. [39]

It was bad enough that Hall seemed to encourage Wahlstrom’s delusional pursuits. That he also continued to solicit financial donations from Wahlstrom and his mother seems unethical at best.

In a consoling letter written to Wahlstrom on September 23, 1983, Hall suggested that he and Wahlstrom were misunderstood idealists on par with Lincoln and Gandhi.



*Hall's niece, Heidi Knut, at 14*

## CHAPTER 11

### Heidi

CLOSER TO HOME, HALL HAD A LOT TO LEARN ABOUT SEX, DRUGS AND ROCK 'N' ROLL FROM HIS REBELLIOUS YOUNG NIECE, HEIDI KNUT.

It's hard to imagine a more tragic childhood than the one endured by Heidi Knut. Abandoned by her mother, then sexually abused by her stepfather, Knut was suicidal as a kid.

As a young woman she partied with Northern California cocaine traffickers and hustlers who smuggled cash and commercial goods across international lines. She also spent long hours in Hall's living room in the 1970s and early 1980s, clad in micro-miniskirts and stiletto heels as she shared details about her life on the wild side without fear of judgment or admonition from the man she knew as "Uncle Manly."

Looking back on it all, Knut, now a 64-year-old wisecracking and cheery black sheep of the family, said, "I was always in trouble and Uncle Manly actually seemed to get a kick out of that. I could tell him anything. Our conversations always began with the same two questions: 'What's your latest, Heidi? What have you been up to?' Then I'd let it rip as he settled back in his chair with hands folded comfortably over his tummy. He loved my most adventurous stories, which were all about getting high and doing crazy, crazy shit.

"He'd nod in approval, saying, 'Hmmm. Very interesting. Be careful now; you're running in a dangerous world. But please, continue. What happened next, Heidi?'" [1]



Knut's first memories kick in in 1954, when at age three she and her twin brother, Michael, and their mother, Agnes, Marie Hall's sister, stepped through the door of the family's apartment in the university town of Tübingen, Germany, just after a woman had committed suicide on the living room couch. Her father, a local political leader, had been having an affair with the woman, who was, Knut recalled, "very pregnant at the time."



*LAX, 1960s*

Her mother divorced her philandering husband, then sent the twins to live with separate foster families in an impoverished farming village on the outskirts of the city.

Three years later, their foster parents sent them packing again, this time on a plane bound for the United States, where they were to live with relatives who offered to give them a better life: Marie's other sister, Martha, and her husband, Paul Avery, a co-founder and resident of Northern California's Squaw Valley ski resort.

"We flew to America alone," Knut recalled. "All I had with me was a suitcase my foster parents had filled with chocolate candy to hand out to relatives. My brother's suitcase was crammed with sausages."

The children thought they'd landed in some sort of paradise of sunshine and modernity when Marie picked them up at Los Angeles International Airport on a summer day in 1957. "Marie was stunning," Knut recalled. "She was beautiful and vibrant, and wearing enormous gold earrings and a flashy sun dress with a wide belt."

"Manly, we're home!" Marie called out as they trooped into Hall's Los Feliz residence, which resembled a king's palace decorated with massive Chinese urns, Buddhist renderings and a glamorous portrait of Marie in a red dress and wearing a bracelet shaped like a serpent.

"Manly and Marie were wonderful to us," Knut said. "They were like parents we could trust."

The villa with four bedrooms and two bathrooms was filled with the sounds of uplifting classical music and surrounded by lush Japanese-style gardens. Knut remembers Marie always puttering in the kitchen, making Jell-O or frying fake bacon for the hefty man she lovingly referred to as 'papa.' Everyone laughed one night when Hall pretended to cry over the challenge of having to eat her low-calorie dinner recipes.

"Manly and Marie had their problems," Knut said. "But we only knew their sunny side. Marie was sweet to Manly, and it was infectious."

Before long, Knut and her brother moved on to their prearranged final destination, the High Sierra home of Paul Avery, an aficionado of fine Oriental art who often accompanied Hall on buying sprees in Japan. There, Knut said, "I soon came to know Paul Avery as a true monster. You won't find a crueller, more abusive man in books."

At age 10, Knut was acting out and the Avery family sent her back to Germany, where she lived for two years with relatives. Michael was sent to a military academy.

In 1965, she moved back to Squaw Valley to live with Avery and his new wife: Heidi's mother, Agnes, a general practitioner in the western Sierra Nevada.

Agnes, it turned out, was having an affair with a local surgeon at that time. Together, they conducted unauthorized after-hours surgeries on Knut over the next five years in Sacramento, about 110 miles west of Squaw Valley.

"For some reason, they removed some of my lymph glands," she said. "When I was 18, against my will, they inserted silicone breast implants."

They told me that I had some kind of flu and needed an injection, which put me to sleep. While I was under, I got the breast implants, which was the last thing I wanted because I was athletic and a competitive skier just happy the way I was.

“Both implants became infected. Another doctor performed corrective surgery that included four hundred stitches. She felt sorry for me. So, there was no charge.”

Later, Knut said, “people kept telling me, ‘File charges. File charges.’ But I just couldn’t file charges against my own mother.”

By now, Knut was in full rebellion, hanging with kids who were far older and joining in with the “turn on, tune in, drop out” ethos of the Timothy Leary era.

But Knut earned some heavy emotional baggage. Once, after taking LSD, Knut pointed Avery’s .45 caliber handgun at her temple, but ultimately couldn’t fire it.

“The same year, my brother stole the same gun, fully loaded, and took a Greyhound bus to Uncle Manly’s house,” she said. “I had told Manly all about Paul Avery. He understood what we were going through. He calmly took the gun away from Michael, then called Agnes to say everything was fine. Nobody got hurt.”

It wasn’t until Knut was in her late teens in the late 1960s that she realized Hall was famous and revered around the world. She couldn’t know, however, that some of the stories she confided to Hall about her coke-crazed adventures were grist for his essays and Sunday lectures.

In an essay published in 1973, Hall advises: “Everyone is doing the best he can for what he is.

“We can all ask ourselves the simple question: If I were that person, with the same upbringing, the same temperament, mental attitudes and emotional pressures, would I be any different? Usually, the answer has to be no, but we seldom carry the point that far.

“Some have larger endowments than others,” he said, “some have more severe problems in their own lives, but the overwhelming majority are simply living out patterns of attitudes which have gradually become stronger than the ability to change or modify them...When in doubt, we recommend a kindly and forgiving attitude. It may set an example which

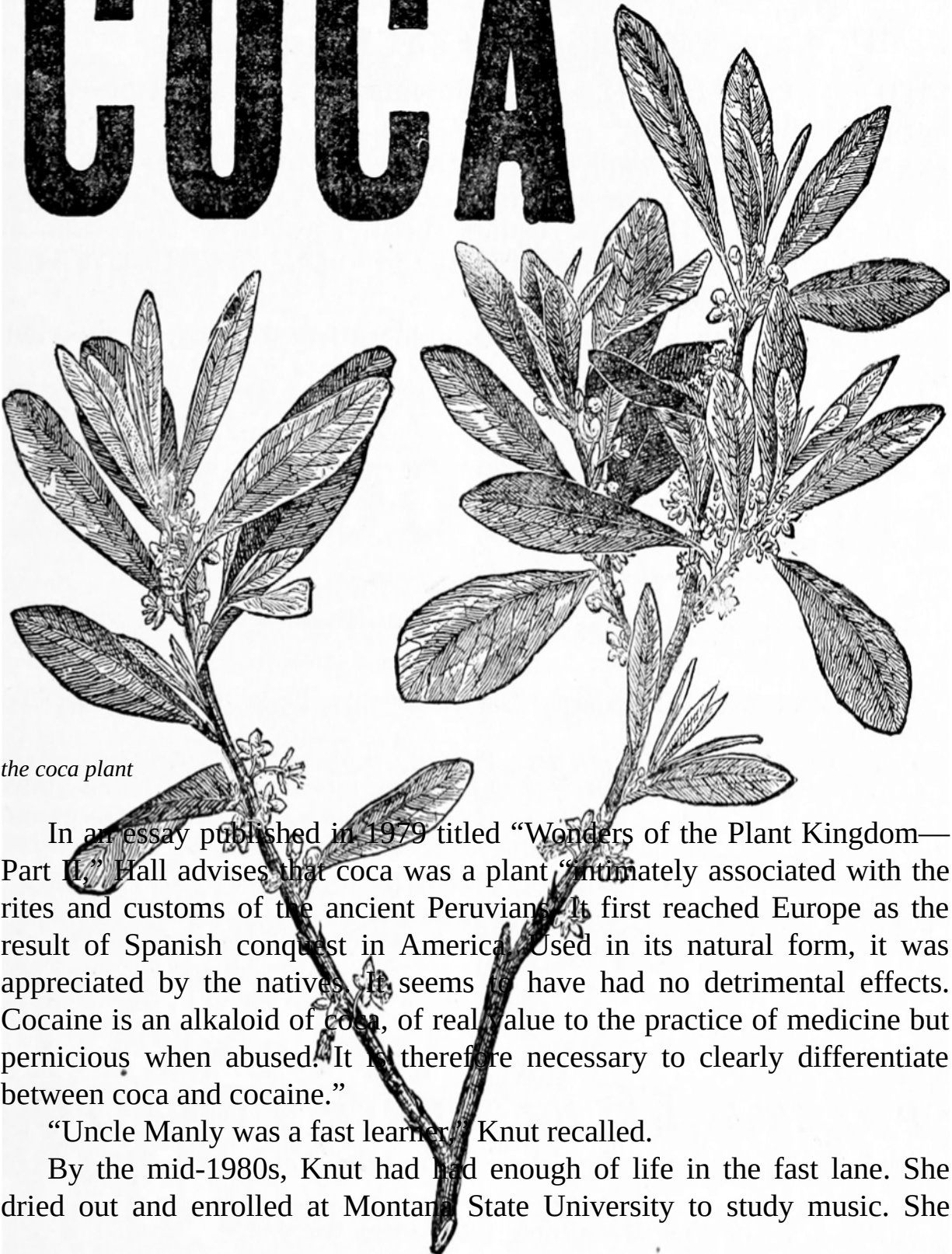
may inspire a person to improve his own ways. We do not need to condone wrong actions. But neither is it necessary to condemn them.”

In 1979, Knut was pregnant, single and suicidal, and sharing a two-bedroom home with loafers and drug dealers in the Marin County city of San Rafael.

Throughout, she stayed in touch with the Halls, who never tried to intervene and turn her life around.

“Uncle Manly knew all about my lifestyle—and wanted to know more,” she said. “With me, he only wanted to talk about things that were not the least philosophical, like the difference between coca and cocaine.”

# COCA



*the coca plant*

In an essay published in 1979 titled “Wonders of the Plant Kingdom—Part II,” Hall advises that coca was a plant “intimately associated with the rites and customs of the ancient Peruvians.” It first reached Europe as the result of Spanish conquest in America. Used in its natural form, it was appreciated by the natives. It seems to have had no detrimental effects. Cocaine is an alkaloid of coca, of real value to the practice of medicine but pernicious when abused. It is therefore necessary to clearly differentiate between coca and cocaine.”

“Uncle Manly was a fast learner,” Knut recalled.

By the mid-1980s, Knut had had enough of life in the fast lane. She dried out and enrolled at Montana State University to study music. She



became a professional percussionist and backup vocalist, playing gigs at Club Med resorts and with top-shelf rock groups including Santana.

“I survived,” she said, “thanks to the man I married, who loves me unconditionally.”

In a 1982 essay titled “Hypogenic Religions,” Hall put it another way.

“Many of the young people who became involved in drug abuse have now reached mature years,” he said. “A good percentage of them are no longer on drugs. They take it for granted that they are free from the consequences of an earlier indiscretion. They now have jobs, are married, and raising a family. Nothing could induce them to have recourse to narcotics, and they are painfully aware of their earlier vices. Yet frequently we hear of some popular personality who has died from an overdose of habit-forming drugs.”

After Avery died, Knut’s mother became profusely apologetic about what she’d done to her children. “How could I have been such a monster?” she cried out over and over during family gatherings in the late 1990s. “How can you ever forgive me? How could you ever love me? I’m so sorry.”

“But we did forgive her,” Knut said. “We threw our arms around her and hugged her tight. How can you hate a crazy person?”



## CHAPTER 12

# Hanging Out With the Halls

IN HIS UNPUBLISHED MEMOIR OF AN AFTERNOON HE SPENT WITH MANLY AND MARIE HALL AT THEIR HOME IN THE WINTER OF 1983, DAN YORK PROVIDES YET ANOTHER LENS THROUGH WHICH TO WITNESS THESE COLORFUL, ECCENTRIC MYSTICS BEHIND CLOSED DOORS.

Manly and Marie clearly care deeply for each other, but their marriage had turned into a never-ending nasty battle over disagreements that cropped up before they married 33 years earlier. Marie uses York as a pawn, transforming their close friend into an audience to witness her attempts to peel away Hall's pretenses and reveal his broken promises.

York, a close friend of the Halls at the time, worked as a producer and writer for television and films. He was executive producer of the 1993 movie *Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story*, and associate producer on the 1988 film *Midnight Run*.

York had done some acting, including an appearance as an outlaw in the 1974 cult action film directed by Sam Peckinpah, *Bring Me the Head of Alfredo Garcia*, and as an FBI agent in the movie *Midnight Run*.

This passage shows that he also is an inspired listener.



December 9, 1983

*I arrived at Manly's house in the afternoon, sat on the living room couch and asked Marie how she was.*

*"Not so good," she said. "I've had a terrible time of getting my work out."*

*I asked Manly how his new book on alchemy was coming and he said he hadn't been able to do anything in the last couple of weeks because many of his staffers were on vacation or out sick and it was taking all of his energy just to keep the place running.*

*Marie said it was just as well Manly's work was stalled—and that was the start of a terrific upset.*

*"That's all you guys—you philosophers and great scientists—are good for," she said sarcastically and gesturing grandly. "You keep digging in the dirt for the lost secrets, the same old things that didn't save us in the first place. It's time you stop building your own pile and work for the future! With my work, which could bring life to the world instead of death. That could do some good. So don't tell me!"*

*She stood up and whipped her robe around her, first one side, then making an almost rapier-like slash with the other.*

*She accused Manly of using her work in his books without formal credit or even thanking her for it. Instead, she said he acted as though he'd gotten it from some mysterious source. Nor did he try to help her complete books she'd been laboring over for decades.*

*"I need an editor right now and some of his people could help," she huffed. "But does he offer? Not once."*

*All the while, Manly sat quietly, sometimes listening and looking at her with open, sensitive eyes, patiently waiting for the storm to blow over. Other times, he turned down the volume on his hearing aid and rested his chin on his chest in meditation.*

*I leaned back on the couch and asked, not without some humor: "Did I fight traffic for an hour for this?"*

*Manly smiled and looked at Marie hopefully. When she noticed his expression, she froze in anger.*

*"You shouldn't have come," she said to me. "I've had it. This has been going on for 45 years and I can't stand it anymore. Repeating the same patterns over and over again. It's time they were over. I long for men to come to their senses, and for women to knock 'em awake."*

*She blamed women for falling for men to the detriment of mankind. She blamed Manly, directly, because he was the only one there to take it.*

*“When you marry someone, Dan, make sure it’s someone who will work for a common goal,” she said. “Not someone who isn’t going to help you because it’s too much.”*

*She went on to say that after they met, she wanted very much to be a part of his work and to dedicate herself to what she felt was his “great cause.” She recalled standing alone in his house one day, long after she’d divorced her first husband George, and Manly said, “If we got married, it would be easier. We could talk.”*

*As Manly spoke, another masculine voice that only she could hear whispered clearly in her ear, “His work will take life from yours.”*

*Suddenly, she was filled with nagging doubts about Manly’s commitment and honesty that only grew stronger over the decades. When friends and acquaintances asked why Manly never touted her metaphysical efforts, she said, “I had to make up lies about it.”*

*Turning to her husband, she said defiantly, “But I’m through making up lies. From now on I tell them the truth. You’re as bad as the materialists, the great accumulators of possessions, like the Rockefellers. Manly, the way you accumulate the intellectual display, you’re the Rockefeller of the intellect. But that’s not what helps the little guy, which is 99% of the people. And I know because I am one of them!”*

*Manly remained silent. Then she chastised him for that, too. “It’s easy to sit there,” she taunted, “and be superior, and not say anything, and let it go by you like it was some unrelated explosion. You used to say, when I was younger, that it was just that time of the month. Thank God, you can’t say that anymore. You don’t even defend yourself, because you know it’s true.”*

*“You haven’t said anything I want to defend, Marie,” Manly said.*

*And she went off again. “That’s not true and you know it,” she said. “If you cared about the world, you would take up my work and help me with it. I’ve covered up enough all these years and I’m through. I’m disgusted with the way men run the world, the way men are, and the way they—they are self-displaying, they are self-centered, and they don’t give any credit where credit is due. They don’t really try to help people accomplish things that must be done, and look at us now. We’re in terrible shape.”*



This went on for quite a while. She would tirade, then sit up on the couch and hold her temples and forehead with her hands and elbows on her knees, seeming to gather herself. Then she would think of another thing that set her off yet again. Her bathrobe would be flapping with popping sounds, and she would jump back on the couch and then lean forward over Manly.

He just watched her, at times revealing her words had touched a scar or carved a new hurt. Overall, he was unhappy that Marie was unhappy.

When she calmed down a little, I shared some observations.

"He's doing the best he can, Marie," I said.

"That's what he says," she said angrily. Then she mocked him: "I'm doing the best I can, Marie."

"Well, it's not good enough," she said. "You're not doing all you could. I'm doing all I can—and what I can do is not good enough."

"We hurt those that love us most," I said.

"Not that mushy kind of love," she said. "That's not what love is."

She looked hard at Manly and said, "You talk about me as your pretty little girl, like I'm some kind of ornament. And you want to hold hands. Well, I'm not a pretty little girl. You wait till you're half blind to tell me that, and it's not true, anymore, so you can stop it."

"And are kindest to total strangers," I said, finishing my point.

"Strangers are the only ones worth talking to," she said. "You don't understand. I've been trying for 45 years. You don't know what it's like."

Then she turned to Manly. "When you come home from the office," she said, "you leave your work behind and all you want to do is sit and hold my hand. And get all mushy and tell me how much you love me. I don't need that. I don't want that."

"I do my work at home and I can't leave it. I want your help. That's what marriage is supposed to be: two people working together to accomplish a goal greater than themselves; working together, not pulling and working in different directions. And we've never had that, and it's never worked."

"Maybe he feels he doesn't understand your work yet," I said slowly, measuring my words. "I see some of it, and the importance of it, but can't say I understand your work, Marie."

"You haven't studied it," she said, then corrected herself: "You've studied it only a few weeks, it's taken me 45 years to get it down."

*“But you’re the only one who really knows what you are talking about,” I said. “We see its potential through you, but we aren’t experiencing it.”*

*“If anybody would know, it’s him!” she said, pointing at Manly. “For 45 years I’ve been teaching it to him, and he has a pretty good idea. And when he gets something, he attributes it to some Oriental scholar or something—no mention of my work or any offer of help. And when I say I’m sorry and all that, I’m not. I’m not. This is the truth and the way I feel and you are not going to be able to put it over on me.”*

*As she spoke, I was trying to understand how she could bash Manly for not supporting her while she often handed out significant sums of the money he had earned to strangers who expressed an interest in her work.*

*About then a woman arrived to give Manly an acupressure treatment. Marie answered the door and was cheerful. Manly stood up and said, “I better go get ready.”*

*“And his weight,” she said. “For years I tried to get him to lose weight, and I succeeded in getting him to lose one hundred pounds. Now, he’s gaining it all back. I feed him at home—keep him on a regime—but down at the office they are always having a party and slipping him cake and ice cream and he says he has to eat it to keep from hurting their feelings and a lot of garbage. I went down there and told them that I had him on a strict diet and I didn’t want them giving him candy or cake.”*

*“What do you want from him?” I asked calmly.*

*“His help; support,” she replied. “Not for me, but to help bring the work to the world. He’s supposed to be the stepfather of my work, Bacon the father.”*

*“He did offer to help you once before you were married, right?” I asked.*

*“Yes,” she said. “I was all ready to publish my first two books. Then he did that spread in Life Magazine with Bela Lugosi, and I took the books back. I told him that if he could give metaphysics a black eye, then I didn’t want him to have anything to do with my work.”*

*She had told me about the magazine spread. It was part of a promotional campaign for a picture about the black arts. Lugosi was studying for a role in it with Manly, an acknowledged student of the occult.*

*“Of the two of you, who is stronger?” I asked.*

*She looked me in the eyes and said, “Me? I guess so.”*

*"You know it," I said. "And when you take off into one of your explosions, as silent as Manly may be, inside he is churned up and upset, probably more so than you. And remember that after you explode, you eventually will swing back the other way and feel guilt."*

*"Yeah," she said.*

*"You are the strongest," I said. "When you are in the midst of the pain, remember that, and think of where he is also."*

*"I have to explode sometimes," she said. "It's that, or have another nervous breakdown."*

*"It's certainly better than that," I agreed. Then I said, "Well, I have to go."*

*I gave Marie a couple of hugs. Then I went to find Manly to tell him I would see him soon.*

*"I want Marie in here to get some of this acupressure treatment too," he said.*

*"Marie, they want you in there," I said.*

*"You should come over more often," she said. "Manly misses you. He never had a son, and..."*

*Suddenly, she was pulling me back to the door of the bedroom. Manly was looking at her. She cut herself off short and said, "Well."*

*"I have to go," I said.*

*"I'll walk you out," Marie said.*

*"I'm not proud of the way I acted," she said.*

*"Get some rest," I said. "You need some rest."*

*"O.K.," she said.*

*I told her I would call her tomorrow.*



Over at PRS, Hall was telling people what they wanted to hear and, perhaps, what he truly believed. Well into his eighties, he told potential donors, volunteers and friends that he had been born amid mysterious circumstances that hinted at magical powers; that his invisible personal spiritual guides included a Chinese man clad in a ruby red gown; and that he was the reincarnation of one spiritual leader or another. "He told me he was the reincarnation of Madame Blavatsky," recalled massage therapist

Oma Tuewen, a follower of Hall's who massaged his feet twice a week for two years in the early 1980s. "I called him 'Papa' because he said we had lived together in past lives." [1]

"I didn't charge him for my services," said Tuewen, who frequently spent the night in sleeping quarters Hall had built for her inside a walk-in closet in his home. "It was a labor of love. As I rubbed essential oils on his feet, he would hum saying, 'Oma, my feet are singing.'"

His penchant for embroidering the truth nearly backfired on Hall in early 1985 when Betty Joan Pimmitt discovered that the philosopher had been born in her hometown and birthplace of Peterborough, Ontario. [2] Hoping to learn what else they might have had in common, Pimmitt started looking over old city directories, where she learned Hall's father's name and that he had been a dentist residing in the Oriental Hotel. Failing to find any medical records of "Dr. Lapp," the seven-foot-tall physician Hall claimed had delivered him by Caesarean section, she wrote him a letter asking if he wanted her to dig deeper.

Hall responded that he might have been mistaken about Dr. Lapp, and that there might be nothing to find. Rumor had it, he told her, that his hospital records had been destroyed by fire. In any case, he added, "you may turn up something else, but if you happen to come upon a family skeleton let it rest in peace." [3]

Pimmitt replied innocently that although she had not turned up any dark secrets, "I don't suppose there is really any danger of that anyway." [4] As a token of her good wishes, she sent along a box of maple sugar candy and a bottle of maple syrup, which he likely devoured.

Having to confess to a routine birth, an elementary school education and parents who abandoned him while he was a baby could have been a public relations fiasco as he was being fêted with lifetime achievement awards. Earlier in the year, Hall had been awarded the highest distinction that the Supreme Council of the Southern Jurisdiction of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry can bestow, the Grand Cross of Honor, as well as an award of distinction from the American Federation of Astrologers.

Between award ceremonies, he wanted to be left alone to complete a few more projects, and conduct his routine ministerial duties. In July 1985, he performed the marriage ceremony of restaurant owner Linda Lee Beighle, 41, to hard-drinking writer and poet Charles Bukowski, 64, who by

then had become a major figure in contemporary American letters. His compositions dealt with the crude reality of life in the bars, train yards and back streets of Los Angeles.

Hall was several minutes late showing up for the marriage ceremony, which took place August 18, 1985, in the PRS library. [5] The nervousness and anxiety felt by Beighle and Bukowski, a rigidly punctual personality who had vowed to stay sober through the ceremony, was palpable and caught on videotape as they and their 25 guests wondered what might have happened to the minister. Eventually, the silence gave way to the sound of loafers squeaking under Hall's nearly three hundred pounds as he slowly strode to the front of the wedding party wearing the diamond-studded cross over his black robes. Hall said he was pronouncing them married "under the authority of the order of Melchizedek," a lineage of priest-kings stretching back to the beginning of time.

Before Hall could say "You may kiss the bride," the bride and groom were already locking lips. Hall was stifling a laugh when Bukowski's bride suddenly turned and asked, "May I kiss the minister?"

"Oh my dear," Hall said. "The minister always gets a free kiss."

At the time, Marie Hall was enjoying a growing reputation in New Age circles for being a sort of aging Nancy Drew of the occult. In the late 1980s, she schmoozed at metaphysical seminars and gatherings from Los Angeles to Guaymas, Mexico, and hosted parties at her house for a group of associates that had grown to include Drummond Riddell, assistant director of the critically acclaimed movie *A Man for All Seasons*, and Steve Marble, a video producer who helped develop the *Back to the Future* ride at Universal Studios theme park.

Marble was enlisted to produce a videotape of Hall and his wife discussing her search for the elusive Bruton Vault. Shot on a shoestring budget at the University of Southern California with the help of some film school students, the finished product was an embarrassing failure for everyone involved. "Manly did not talk much because Marie wouldn't let him—she took over the show and it was difficult to keep her on track," Marble recalled. "They saw it and decided they didn't want it seen." [6]

By this time, Hall's walk was slow and painful, with nasty sores around both ankles that wouldn't heal. Marie, on the other hand, was actively attracting the wrong kind of attention by telling anyone who would listen



that she and her husband had assembled a collection of Egyptian, Babylonian, Indian and Asian artifacts, artworks and jewels with a fair market value in excess of \$300 million, or more. That was a wild exaggeration. But it spread like lightning among would-be gurus and healers who wanted cash to get their own cults and clinics off the ground.

Among those in need of financial assistance was Daniel Henry Fritz, a self-proclaimed Oriental priest who first met the Halls at a 1985 fundraiser in Santa Monica. Fritz, a former banker and computer marketer whose New Age sidelines included renting isolation tanks and administering colonic treatments, was soliciting donations at the time for an underwater birthing center he wanted to establish on the island of Molokai, Hawaii. [7]

After listening to Fritz's presentation at a fundraiser held in Santa Monica, a member of the audience leaned over and told Hall, who was seated beside him, "That guy is the biggest fraud I've ever seen." Hall nodded in agreement and said, "Why do you think I try to stay away from these things?"

For Marie, however, Fritz was a godsend. That same day Fritz volunteered to push Hall around in his wheelchair. Then he dazzled her with promises to get her books out on emerging global computer networks and to revive Hall's health with alternative medicine techniques and supernatural formulas. He also offered to teach her how to write on a computer.

Marie was sorry to see Fritz leave for Hawaii in 1985. But in early 1987, Fritz showed up on the Halls' doorstep ready to make good on his promises.

It was none too soon, either. Marie had been invited to speak at a Masonic lodge in Sedona during a four-day Harmonic Convergence celebration in May. Having Fritz along to take care of her husband, who had come down with a severe flu, would free her to socialize and make critical connections with influential people and potential donors.

Wracked with fever, nausea and muscle pains, Hall tried to bow out of the trip on grounds he was too sick to travel. But because Hall gave her credibility, Marie dismissed his arguments, insisting that he would be in good hands. "So, she had Manly stuffed into a plane at Glendale-Burbank International Airport and off they flew to Arizona," recalled Johnston. [8]

The Halls rolled into Sedona in a rented Cadillac. Over the next four days, Marie was treated like visiting royalty, flitting from one private dinner

party or social event to another. Hall, meanwhile, fought his flu symptoms in the bedroom of an expansive three-story home owned by New Age enthusiast Reba Gloger, who liked to tell people that she was on friendly terms with a green-eyed extraterrestrial that appeared to her in mirrors.

On Saturday, May 9, Hall was helped to the stage to deliver a lecture on the legend of the Phoenix at a movie theater called The Flicker Shack in downtown Sedona. The following day, his wife delivered a rambling talk at the local Masonic Temple on “The Mystery of the Bruton Vault: The Bacon-Shakespeare Connection to the Spiritual Destiny and Heritage of Our Nation.”

After her lecture, Marie attended a Mother’s Day potluck for one hundred invited guests. Too sick to join the party, Hall waited outside in an automobile, leaning back in the front seat with his eyes closed, listening to the patter of rain on the windshield. [9]

Their visit was trumpeted in a *Red Rock News* newspaper article written by George W. Morley, president of The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. Hall’s presentation left a standing-room-only audience “charged with spirit,” Morley said. He wrote that Marie said “a record left by Sir Francis Bacon’s descendants is contained in copper cylinders which preserve priceless historical documents of vast benefit to contemporary mankind. To stimulate the arousal of the voice of the people or ‘Vox Populi’ to bring about the opening of the vault is part of the Halls’ incentive for their rare public appearance, a first in Sedona.” [10]

But Hall was soldiering on. At times, cohorts led by Fritz held Hall up by the armpits to ease the pain of walking up a flight of stairs, or out to a waiting automobile. In an interview, his Sedona host Gloger recalled feeling sorry for the sick man, whose dismal mood was compounded by a strict diet imposed by his wife. “They parked him in my bedroom and he only went out for speeches,” she said. “One day, when Marie was gone, I was eating chocolate ice cream on a stick. I said, ‘Hey Manly, want one?’ He said, ‘Yes, but don’t tell Marie.’” [11]



*Manly Hall's bedroom, the same bed he was later found dead in.*

“A drop of chocolate fell on his pajamas and I cleaned it off,” she went on. “Then we had Eskimo pies. When Marie came home, she immediately spotted that spot of chocolate and asked, ‘Who gave it to him?’ I confessed.”

The next day, Marie tossed a single oatmeal cookie at her bedridden husband, which was to be his breakfast. As soon as she left the house, Gloger whipped up fried eggs and bacon for her very special guest.

Hall returned to Los Angeles a different man. Some associates even wondered whether he had suffered a stroke during those four days in Sedona. His speech was impaired and his short-term memory was shot. He had trouble using his right hand and couldn't even tie his shoes or sign his name.

Marie turned to 51-year-old Fritz for help. Within weeks, Fritz, along with two young female assistants and his taciturn teenage son David,

became fixtures at Hall's home. They helped him walk, massaged his aching feet and thighs with warm oils, prepared his meals, and made him drink so much fresh carrot juice that his skin turned orange, a common reaction to too much beta carotene. They even repaired his toilet and drove Marie to the market. They injected Hall with herbal formulas and regularly administered colonic treatments to both Hall and his wife. At night, Fritz murmured magical chants over Hall to help him sleep. By day, he taught Marie to write on a computer that he had helped install in a back bedroom. [12]

With support from Fritz's team, Marie sponsored a vegetarian banquet on August 4, 1987, to honor the 200th anniversary of the nation's Constitution, and raise funds for her effort to unearth the Bruton Vault and its "proof of America's secret destiny." The banquet, which was held in the Starlight Room of the Sheraton Miramar Hotel in Santa Monica, drew 320 people and featured appearances by Marie and her famous husband. [13]

"Fritz is my angel from heaven!" Marie told friends. "And he is doing all this for free! For free!"

Not really. By November 1987, Fritz had become a signator on Hall's checking accounts and credit cards. Out of those accounts, he paid for Hall's groceries and Marie's trips to places including Moscow and Puerto Rico. Fritz also used them to cover his own extensive business, travel and living expenses, as well as for food, gasoline, car repairs and visits to his favorite Thai restaurants. PRS bank records noted a sudden storm of charges incurred at Walt Disney Enterprises, Chi Dynasty restaurant, Chan Dara Restaurant, Budget Rac, and Miller's Outpost, as well as at car rental and air travel companies. [14]

Hall's longtime stamp and coin dealer, Michael Orenstein, knew none of that when a husky man bellied up to the counter in Olympic Boulevard shop one day offering to sell 10 gold coins on the philosopher's behalf. "That immediately raised red flags with me," Orenstein recalled in an interview. "He said that Manly Hall told him to sell the coins, which were worth real money, about \$5,000. But that was not the way Mr. Hall did business. He would have called first to say he was coming in." [15]

"I wrote a check and made it out to Manly," Orenstein said. "Then I called him and asked about this suspicious male nurse claiming he had permission to sell the coins. Manly said, 'There's something not right about

this. But I depend on this man, Michael. Let's overlook the whole thing.” Fritz never came into the shop again, Orenstein said.

As Hall's caretaker, Fritz began to screen all visitors, banning those who brought the philosopher bad tidings, talked of personal problems or warned that Fritz was not to be trusted. Freed from basic household chores and the burden of babysitting her husband, and eager to get her message out to the world, Marie supported everything Fritz did and turned a cold shoulder to many of her stalwarts who questioned Fritz's motives.

Hall's young student Hogart, who had graduated magna cum laude with a degree in literature at Occidental College in just two and a half years, recalled feeling as though “I was suddenly no longer part of their inner circle. Overnight, I had become a peon.” [16]

“Everything turned dark and gloomy, as though PRS was preparing for some terrible storm,” Hogart said. “Mr. Hall was withdrawn and gaunt, and I swear I could see fear in his blue eyes. Marie was only concerned with what Fritz was doing for her. Clearly, it was time for me to move on.”

Before walking away from it all, Hogart met with Hall one last time, seeking answers to pressing questions: “I asked about a biography, and he said, ‘I don't want you to write about me. Let my enemies do it.’ I asked if he had it to do all over again, would he emphasize the Great White Brotherhood and Illuminati? He said, ‘I would drop all the magical trappings and emphasize self-help.’ I asked him if I should get a Ph.D. and come back to PRS. He said, ‘No. This place is custom-made for me. You need to build your own life.’”

“I said, ‘When I came here, I was a rock singer. I still feel drawn to it. I know you hate it,’” Hogart recalled. “He said, ‘That's exactly what you should be doing.’”

In a chilling coda to the conversation, Hall said, “This is all about end days now, Ron. I don't want you to be a part of it.”

“I hated to leave,” Hogart said. “Mr. Hall was spectacular, like the sun. Yes, some of his work was historically inaccurate. But the spirit of what he was writing about is priceless. He pointed toward adventures in ideas. I feel blessed to have known him.”

Hogart left Hall's world at PRS without explanation or good-byes. A decade later, he and his wife were producing stream-of-consciousness



poems set to screeching electric guitar rhythms for Hollywood's punk rock audiences.

In an article he wrote for *Newtopia* Magazine in 2012 called "The Maestro and the Boy: The Kindness of Manly P. Hall," Hogart, who now goes by the name Ronnie Pontiac, said, "Thanks to my surrogate grandfather, a racist misogynist teenage rabble-rouser and aspiring criminal grew up to be in a band that played seven riot grrrl conventions, a rare honor very few if any male musicians share. We played shows with Black Panther poets; their newspaper gave our first CD a glowing review. We backed up Warhol Superstar drag queen Holly Woodlawn at a couple of her performances in West Hollywood."

Pontiac, primary guitar player in a band called Lucid Nation, also thanked Hall for marrying him to Spivey "by authority of the order of Melchizedek."

"Since then," Pontiac wrote, "she and I have collaborated on everything we do: music, documentary films, blogs, books, art, business, cleaning the cat box. Every once in a while we whip up some zucchini pancakes, from Marie's recipe, and as we chew, smiles on our faces, we remember the couple who gave us a chance to live worthwhile lives."

Unable to discern exactly who was in charge at PRS and fearing for the safety of their once powerful leader, Hall's congregation crumbled into bickering camps. A thriving black market had emerged on the PRS premises specializing in Hall's rare books, art pieces, photographs, even the original etched silver plates used to print the magical symbols that grace his Big Book. Suspicion spread as Hall reverted into an almost infantile state of dependence upon Fritz, who PRS staffers had come to believe was a practitioner of black magic. Compounding problems, Hall and his wife tattled to Fritz when their closest friends tried to warn them that things were going terribly wrong.

"This was one of the very difficult situations to deal with," Hall's longtime associate Edith Joyce Waldron explained in a court deposition later. "Whenever anyone went to Mr. Hall or Marie with information against Fritz, that information was passed on to Fritz, which enabled him to cover his tracks. He would go to the informing individuals and tell them that Mr. Hall must not be disturbed, that they had been responsible for causing Mr. Hall great stress, and any messages for Mr. Hall must only go

through Fritz. Eventually, it became impossible to contact Mr. Hall directly except by subterfuge or going in the evening when Fritz was gone, but he would always be informed of any such visit by the Halls.” [17]

John Ervin’s widow, Patricia Ervin, had other reasons to worry about Fritz’s unusually heavy hand in Hall’s affairs. In just a few years as Hall’s vice president, she had managed to boost PRS’ assets to more than \$1 million in U.S. Treasury bills, and checking and savings accounts. In addition, three diamond rings and some gold coins were missing from Hall’s walk-in vault at PRS, along with Hall’s private collection of books on black magic from around the world. [18]

Ervin resigned in August 1988 after Fritz convinced Hall that she, his long devoted vice president, was secretly planning to have him committed then take control of PRS. Hall appointed Waldron to succeed Ervin. Then he announced to staffers that his two best friends in the world were Waldron and Fritz.

To Dan York, a scriptwriter and close friend of the Halls, it seemed as though “like aging velvet, a grand fabric was coming apart.” [19]

Then PRS recording engineer Art Johnson put it another way. “The spirit was gone, and everybody turned into backstabbing idiots,” he recalled. “Things got very strange and far out. The whole place just took a hard right turn and went straight out over the ocean.” [20]

Hall had three years to live.



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## CHAPTER 13

### “Dr. Fritz”

THE QUESTION SEEMED PERFECTLY INNOCUOUS. AS A SAN FRANCISCO SCRIPTWRITER FOR MOVIES AND THEATRICAL PRODUCTIONS, BRENDA WADE SENT HALL A LETTER EXPRESSING HER INTEREST IN DEVELOPING HALL’S SHORT STORIES ABOUT A JAPANESE SAGE NAMED “MR. M.K. NAKAMURA” INTO A SCREENPLAY. THE STORIES, DERIVED FROM HISTORY, LEGEND AND FOLKLORE WERE SET IN THE KYOTO AREA DURING THE EARLY 1920S, A TIME WHEN MODERN ENCROACHMENT WAS MINIMAL.

Arrangements were made for a meeting she would never forget.

Wade strode into Hall’s office one day in early May 1987, and shook hands with “one of the most androgynous people I’d ever met. He was huge, and had dramatic white hair that stuck straight up, like Einstein’s. He was wearing a bolo tie and had his right hand on a cane. In a very high, almost falsetto voice, he said, ‘Well, my dear, I’m happy you have an interest in the unusual Mr. Nakamura.’” [1]

“Mr. Hall, I find him evocative and intriguing,” she said. “They are lovely, whimsical stories.”

“Well, thank goodness. You understand,” Hall responded with a smile. “I will only allow you to use the stories if you include the whimsy.”

When Wade asked if the stories were true, Hall replied, “You’ll have to decide that for yourself. Mr. Nakamura was real. The stories, perhaps so.”

The meeting ended with Hall warmly encouraging her to pursue the screenplay and telling her to run the project by Fritz.

While escorting Wade to her car, Fritz's manner turned sinister. In menacing tones, he warned, "Remember this: Whatever you do or write, it has to go through me. I make sure that Mr. Hall is never taken advantage of, and I'm no fool. Write me a letter telling us how much you'll pay for rights to Mr. Hall's writing."

She complied, explaining that as a practicing psychologist and single mother of two children she was able to offer \$5,000 to \$10,000 for rights to Hall's works for one year, renewable for two years. When Fritz telephoned back, he was furious. "How dare you!" he screamed. "You must think I'm stupid. Do you take me for a fool? Do you think I'll let you take advantage of me? Well, you're not!"

"It was such a low-level response I was shocked," she recalled. "In any case, I sent Fritz my treatment. He never called back."

Hall's caretaker was no diplomat. In the world of "consciousness raising," Fritz had a reputation for chumming up to second-tier gurus such as Bulgarian mystic and astrologer Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov and Igor Charkovsky, of Russia, who specialized in "Dolphin midwifery": assisting underwater births in the vicinity of dolphins with a goal of producing a new breed of super-intelligent children. Now, he was in charge of managing the health, public image and hefty assets of a man regarded around the world as one of the last authentic Western mystics.

Not bad for a 57-year-old former 9-to-5 computer programmer and salesman who claimed that a near-death experience in 1978 had transformed him into a healer specializing in administering colon irrigations. To hear Fritz tell it in a deposition later, he derived his expertise from "the studies that I participated in from the Essene religion and from working with my own body." [2]

To be sure, Hall felt like a new man under Fritz's care. Physical exercise had become part of his daily routine, just as it was for the great philosophers of Greece. Finally, he had a helper with mystical notions for making things better and the energy to see them through. With every pound Hall shed, he also began to realize that PRS was in desperate need of improvements or it would not survive the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Fritz said as much while he and his crew helped Hall with a variety of isometric exercises conducted in his bedroom and in a new Jacuzzi they had



installed in the backyard. After stretching Hall's flabby arms and legs in the warm water, they prepared special meals: vegetables, fruits and herbs that Fritz promised would restore vigor and fight cancer. In the morning, they cleansed his colon with one of Fritz's "Water Angels."

Fritz and his assistants lacked experience or credentials in physical therapy. But that mattered not to Hall, who agreed with Fritz that most mainstream medical practitioners were only in it for the money. Fritz, however, seemed to Hall to be as knowledgeable about modern medicine as about the cures promoted by the medieval alchemist magicians Hall had touted for decades. [3]

By late 1987, PRS staffers and associates were worried about Hall's surrender to a man who claimed to be a descendent of Atlantean priesthood, and strangely only needed an hour or two of sleep a day. Fritz, meanwhile, was trying hard to assure them that his intentions were good. In a single-page "Special Report" directed to PRS enthusiasts, Fritz said Hall was on the road to recovery from the severe health problems that arose during the Sedona trip and had already lost 50 pounds. By curtailing stressful situations and making time for vacations and rest periods, he expected Hall to remain active and productive "for a number of years yet." [4]

Hall associates such as structural engineer Charles MacKintosh, whose company built grandstands for stadiums and the Rose Parade, were worried. In less than a year, Fritz had managed to take complete control of Hall's life with a spooky confidence that had some disciples convinced that he had cast a demonic spell on the spiritual leader. Believing that Fritz aimed to overthrow Hall and take control of his society and its assets, some PRS old-timers formed an alliance and began compiling information that might prove useful in some future police investigation.

Fritz drove a 1988 blue Oldsmobile Cutlass. His ex-wife lived in the Palm Springs area. He had four children. Hall had given Fritz's Biogenics Health Foundation in Santa Monica \$25,000 in loans for production and marketing of his colonics gadgets, and thousands more dollars to his church, the Independent Church of Antioch. Those loans were never repaid. Fritz told people he was connected with the Soviet Union's secret service. He sometimes signed his name as "Dr. Daniel Fritz," but could offer no proof of having earned a doctoral degree. He had become a member of the board of trustees of Marie Hall's Veritat Foundation and was managing the

Halls' personal and business affairs. Fritz and his son David had keys to Hall's home, where Fritz went each day from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. and peered around corners when other people were talking to Hall. Fritz did not keep receipts or a running account of his charges on Hall's credit cards or the checks he wrote against Hall's bank accounts for services rendered. Fritz's two female assistants were earning nearly \$1,000 a month each simply for being Marie's constant counselors and companions. Fritz had leased a two-story apartment near PRS for \$2,000 a month. He'd used PRS funds to buy a 35-foot motor home rigged with a large bed in the back so that Hall could lie down while they traveled on the lecture circuit, and searched for a possible new home for PRS. Hall was suddenly desperate to move away from Los Angeles, which he feared was on the verge of some kind of calamity that would destroy everything he'd accomplished. The motor home was registered in the names of PRS and Daniel Fritz.

Hall, who was beginning to show signs of senility, felt indebted to Fritz and refused to listen to allegations by friends and others that his caretaker was a con artist.

Alarmed by what they regarded as a hostile takeover, some PRS supporters formed an internal resistance group. PRS lecturer Georgia Lambert made the mistake of allowing a representative of that group to make an announcement after one of her classes on esoteric anatomy. "I received a letter from the PRS lawyer saying, 'We can't risk a lawsuit. You're out,'" recalled Lambert. "I was given a week and a half to leave." [5]

Some PRS employees rigged telephones in the offices used by Fritz and his associate Mogens Brandt, whom Fritz had recruited to manage Hall's revenue streams, so that they could listen in on their conversations. Hiding in separate offices, employees scribbled down potentially incriminating words and phrases. "Mr. Hall would not allow us to talk against [Fritz and Brandt], and I tried," recalled Hall's former secretary Ann Badger, who had returned to work at PRS as an administrator. "I got into a lot of trouble for it once. I organized a staff meeting so that people could vent their frustrations and concerns. Later, Hall called me into his office and said, 'We cannot have the divisions you are creating, Ann.'" [6]

Hall's new financial manager Brandt was blunter. "I understand you've been talking to people," he told Badger. "You are not going to do that

anymore or I'll see that you are fired."



*Manly and Dr. Fritz*

Three years before assuming control of Hall's world, Fritz had been presenting himself to potential investors in North Carolina, Florida, Phoenix and Southern California as an expert on underwater birthing. With their help, he hoped to establish an underwater birthing center at a peaceful Hawaiian cove teeming with playful dolphins. Infants born there, he promised, would grow up to be natural, pure souls to effect world peace. When he felt the need to really impress someone, Fritz pointed out that Marie Hall backed his project and donated generously to the cause. Indeed, in late 1985, Marie held a send-off benefit for Fritz in her Los Feliz home attended by more than a dozen pregnant women and their husbands.

A few months later, Fritz's "The Hawaiian Prenatal Cultural Center," a.k.a. "Stairway to the Stars," opened for business on the east end of the island of Molokai in an old hunting lodge on the Pua-O-Hoku Ranch. He had leased the property from an elderly woman who had given him power of attorney over her affairs. According to documents filed with Hawaiian authorities, the center operated under the auspices of Fritz's nonprofit Academy Research Association. The group's stated purpose was "... to engage in the scientific investigation of the cause and effect certain elements create on their relationship experience with other elements and the

resulting change from one condition to another in living things; plants, animals and humans.” [7]

The first customers included 10 mostly upper-middle-class pregnant women from across the country and their husbands who somehow didn’t flinch when Fritz told them that the birthing center also served as a base for alien spaceships and a training center for immaculate conceptions. Eager to get on with the business of creating world peace through ideal birthing techniques, the women dutifully moved into their cramped bunkrooms and stuck to his strict regimen of meditation, colonics treatments, diets of raw vegetables and avoidance of sexual activity.

Clad in a white suit, white shoes, dark sunglasses and a red kerchief, Fritz led them in morning prayers and urged that they focus their thoughts on his goal of eventually buying the ranch. At night, he would leave the group to its routine and go to Hotel Molokai for its cocktails and steak dinner. The pregnant clients got thinner and thinner. Fritz turned into a blimp.

Jacob Tragert, a holistic dental consultant from Florida, said he invested \$30,000 in Fritz’s birthing operation. “I was open and vulnerable and bought into his trip,” Tragert recalled. “For example, he demonstrated his magical powers in a cave that was filled with mosquitoes. I was enthralled that they didn’t bother him. He laughed and said, ‘Just focus your energy.’” [8]

Fritz had something special in mind for 23-year-old Susan Tonini of California, who was expecting the birth of her second child, a son. At a fundraiser in Santa Monica, he pulled her aside and confided: “Manly will be making his transition soon and he wants his soul to reincarnate in your baby. In other words, Susan, he wants you to be his new mother.” [9]

Tonini didn’t know whether that would be an honor or a horror. But after considerable thought, she and her husband Ron packed their bags and flew to Fritz’s Molokai compound with their infant daughter in tow. On the island, Fritz treated the Toninis like close friends, constantly sharing information he said was for their ears only. He used words like love and harmony a lot with them.

“Fritz was always talking about what he called the ‘spiritual aspects of sperm,’ and hoped to develop the ability to withhold sperm during ejaculation,” Ron recalled. “And he strongly urged us to invest in



commodities, whose prices were bound to skyrocket, he said, because evil forces were buying up the world's supplies of grain and seed."

The Toninis also became close to Fritz's son David, who usually didn't have much to say. But when he did, it made heads turn. "David used to call excitedly to tell us about dream trips he'd taken to Saturn's rings and Jupiter," Ron said. "He and his father [Daniel Fritz] had serious conversations about such things that were between comical and fascinating. Once, Dan shared a story about his son's psychic abilities. They were in a car one day, Dan said, when David blurted out, 'Hey dad. Watch this.' At that moment, a worker at a produce market across the street dropped a watermelon on the sidewalk. Dan got upset and scolded David saying, 'You must never use your powers to manipulate people that way.' Later that day, David broke his arm. Dan said it was karmic."

Fritz's most incredible claim failed to materialize. Susan had her son without incident before Hall died. "He is not Manly P. Hall," she said.

Others at Fritz's compound had a tougher time of things. Claud Sutcliff, who taught violence prevention techniques to elementary school students in Hawaii, said his wife experienced birth complications so severe she had to be whisked by helicopter to Maui Memorial Hospital. No sooner had the helicopter left the ground at Molokai than Fritz turned to others, pounded a clenched fist into an open palm and vowed, "I blew it in Atlantis, but I'm not going to blow it here!" [10]

It was an angry reminder that Fritz believed he was a reincarnation of an Atlantean priest. "My wife and infant daughter survived, but it was very traumatic," recalled Sutcliff, who has since divorced. "It slowly began to dawn on people that Fritz was crazy."

The Sutcliffs' near-disaster triggered feelings of grief and outrage among paying customers at Stairway to the Stars. As if waking from a dream, Fritz suddenly seemed to the clients more like a nutty potentate surrounded by foolish cultists. Some muttered nervously among themselves about noticing books on brainwashing techniques on Fritz's desk, that Fritz's white suits were smudged with dirt, his white shoes scuffed. There was talk of a lawsuit, but no one had the will or the money to follow through. Most packed their bags and headed for home after only a few months on the island.

For Fritz, the final blow came just four months after the birthing center's grand opening when Tom DeCoite showed up at the ranch with a copy of a lease agreement from a co-owner of the property purporting to take effect August 14, 1986. Claiming he was the only person with a legal right to be on the land, DeCoite ordered Fritz to leave or face the consequences. Fritz notified the Maui County Police Department that he had been threatened. He didn't wait for them to act. Fritz abruptly called it quits, closed down his center and returned to the mainland.

In early 1987, Fritz showed up on Hall's doorstep with a battered suitcase and a plan that made Marie's day. Essentially, he offered to take care of her husband while she knocked out new books about the Bruton Vault. There would be no charge, Fritz said, for services rendered. Clad in his usual cream-colored business suits, styled hair and aviator shades, Fritz quickly transformed a back bedroom in the Halls' home into a fully equipped office for Marie. From then on, Marie could be heard at all hours howling in alternate delight and frustration at her computer. Fritz's son David equipped the office with audio equipment so that Marie could record her life story and divine inspirations and sell the tapes. Marie felt renewed and in step with emerging global electronic communications networks that she hoped to fill with exciting news about buried secrets for world peace.

Fritz spent eight to 10 hours a day tending to Hall who, while ill, was finally emerging from more than a decade of sulking in fears of becoming inconsequential. Hall was so hungry to be in the public eye that he welcomed the 1988 publication of a book called *Mysterious Canada: Strange Sights, Extraordinary Events, and Peculiar Places* by John Robert Colombo, which lumped Hall's birth in Peterborough with sightings of UFOs and abominable snowmen in Canada, haunted houses and curses.

Hall returned to updated versions of sermons he delivered in the 1930s warning that history was repeating itself in distressing ways. "The prosperity of the 1920s was an illusion, the high financing of the 1980s an exaggeration of self-deceit," he wrote just before his death. "In the 1920s, bootleggers and gangsters threatened to take over the country. Six decades later, drug cartels and street gangs endangered the civilized world." And while World War I saw the influenza epidemic, he added, now AIDS was taking lives by the thousands. [11]

Convinced that the end of his life was near, Hall began pestering astrologer William Dodson with a burning question: “When am I going to die?” Only people with a morbid curiosity hounded astrologers for the exact time of their death, Hall had proclaimed as a younger man. Not anymore.

“Mr. Hall, that’s forbidden information. I can’t tell you that,” Dodson recalled telling the bedridden philosopher. “He said, ‘It’s all right. I’m an old man. I’ve got nothing left to stick around for.’” [12]

Hall’s anxieties were exacerbated by deeply embarrassing complaints Marie was expressing to close friends and the family physician, Dr. Sterling Pollack. Manly and Fritz, she said, had been conducting strange healing rituals: combining samples of their urine and then dribbling the mixture down the eastern side of a backyard tree at dawn. The ritual required that ants lap up the fluid.

Of greater concern, she claimed to friends and Pollack to have been mortified to discover what appeared to be her husband being masturbated by Fritz while receiving a colonics treatment in the family bathroom. Because the treatment required the applicant to massage the patient’s water-filled abdomen, it is possible that Marie misunderstood what she was seeing. However, that would seem unlikely because Marie frequently received the enema treatments herself. “She made these accusations in my office and in front of Manly,” recalled Pollack, who went on to become a chief physician at the federal penitentiary in Lompoc, California. “He was embarrassed, but he did not want to dispute them because he knew they were true. Marie also suggested that Manly had had [homosexual] relations with other men.”

In other words, Marie told Pollack that her husband was bisexual. And Pollack believed her. “He was AC/DC,” Pollack said in an interview.

Pollack had been a sounding board for the family’s most intimate problems since 1985. Once, shortly before he died, Hall even sought his advice on the possibility of surgically removing his sagging belly fat. “Manly was definitely embarrassed about his physical characteristics,” Pollack recalled. “He alluded to the fact that he was seriously considering plastic surgery to remove his fatty apron. I said that was absolutely out of the question for a man of his age.” [13]

Hall had already lost credibility among serious scholars. “Over time,” said J. Gordon Melton, director of the Institute for the Study of Religion in

Santa Barbara, “he came to be seen as someone who embodied the flaws of amateur scholarship, and those flaws were showing up quite visibly in his work. By the late 1980s, he was generally regarded as someone whose time had past.” [14]

Hall’s own staff successfully scotched a book he had written about Nordic, Gothic and Finnish rites on grounds it was filled with errors and erratic writing, and may have been largely ghostwritten by some lesser talent. Still, Fritz and Hall firmly believed that the old philosopher was on the verge of a personal and professional renaissance. In October 1988, with Fritz’s encouragement, Hall formed a three-person PRS Management Group to revive a foundering PRS. At a time when it was not unusual for people to walk up to Hall and exclaim, “Gee, I thought you were dead,” this was no job for ambitious amateurs, or even trusted friends. Only professionals would do if his image and teachings were to endure in the years ahead.

The group’s formidable mission included developing PRS education and public outreach programs, expanding income, improving publications and launching a sophisticated public relations campaign. Hall, whose salary was boosted to \$60,000 a year, gave the group one year to work its magic. [15] The team consisted of Fritz, Brandt and Michael Mitchell, a spellbinding public relations man with a remarkable résumé, big-league political connections and a penchant for tailored suits. Mitchell was a former vice president of the Los Angeles Olympics in 1984, founder of the entertainment productions powerhouse MCM Group International Production, and executive director of the Live Aid concert in 1985, one of the largest fundraisers in history, raising \$120 million in a single day.

Mitchell agreed to serve for three years as part of what he called a “moral commitment” to the man whose writings he had admired since the 1960s. [16] Mitchell, as PRS secretary, agreed to work for \$32,500 a year, less than half of his total annual expenses in promoting PRS.

Mitchell tapped environmental attorney Jan Hartke, a former treasurer of New Mexico and son of a three-term U.S. senator from Indiana, to help develop new national and international activities for Hall. [17] At the time, Hartke had never heard of the man Mitchell believed was “one of the most extraordinary thinkers on the planet.” But feeling that he was being invited into something special, Hartke promptly telephoned Hall, who asked, “Will

you be available when the time comes?” Hartke recalled. “I said, ‘Yes.’” [18]

In 1988, Hall published *Meditation Symbols in Eastern & Western Mysticism: Mysteries of the Mandala*. The breadth, depth, and balance of this exploration of these religious geometric designs is a testament to Hall’s lifetime study and interpretation of occult beliefs, and it echoes the themes first presented a half-century earlier in his *Secret Teachings of All Ages*.

In it, Hall notes underlying connections between diagrams of the solar system by Egyptian astronomer Claudius Ptolemy, Zen meditative symbols and the poems of Ralph Waldo Emerson. Hall said the diagrams symbolized aspects of the deity in all things and supported the notion that “all humans are citizens of a communal system.”

In the book’s final chapter, “Mandalas in World Government,” Hall concludes, “The mandala reminds us that life is sacred, that its use is a religious responsibility, and that the perversion of any universal resource is a sin against the Holy Spirit. In the center of the universal mandala sits the infinite Buddha as eternal life, light, wisdom and love. This same being in quiet repose dwells in the innermost of a blade of grass, a little bird, or a newborn child.” [19]

Inside PRS, accountant Brandt watched as Fritz and Hall developed a relationship that seemed to be as close as father and son. “They were fond of each other,” Brandt recalled. “Sometimes it was touching to see the way they related to one another.” [20]

One day, while Fritz was filming a video of Hall in the PRS library, a drip appeared at the end of Hall’s nose. Without a word, Fritz reached out and wiped it off with his handkerchief.

Another day, “Dan wanted to throw out a pot with a withered flower in it that had been standing in Manly’s bedroom,” Brandt recalled. “When he asked if it was all right to throw them out, it was as if Manly saw his own frail body in the withered flower. He said, ‘I think the flower wants to grow as long as it can.’”

Just six months after the new management team swung into action, Hall could happily report to his board of trustees that book sales were up appreciably; a single dealer ordered \$50,000 worth of Hall’s works. In other realms, PRS was experimenting with new computer programs to spiff up published materials, and filming Hall’s lectures intending to sell them in the



burgeoning market for self-help and instructional videotapes. The PRS bookstore and mail order business were operating on a larger scale. Discussions were underway to construct one of Hall's most cherished dream projects, a public museum to house his valuable collection of artifacts, talismans, paintings and diagrams. [21]

The group also was stitching together a "university home study course with a holistic approach to knowledge" called "Learning to Live by Living to Learn." The first year's curriculum would be selected portions of Hall's lectures and essays, many of them steeped in the 17th-century principles of Bacon. It also would address a range of practical matters: anatomy and physiology, child and infant training and rearing, career and retirement counseling. "There's no reason why the PRS should not be remembered like Plato's Academy and the Pythagorean Institute at Crotona," Hall enthused to his congregation. [22]

During this period, when helicopters flew over Southern California spraying noxious Malathion to eradicate medflies, Fritz whisked Hall to holistic physician Loomis' health retreat in Hemet for a few days of solitude and clean air, and special alternative medical treatments. Noting that "Manly had several endocrinological difficulties. . . and atrophy of one testicle," Loomis recalled in an interview, "I gave him male hormones." [23]

Hall and PRS' fortunes were suddenly looking so good that Hall was visibly upbeat, even finding humor in the oxygen tank he kept nearby at all times. "It's my gin and tonic," he liked to say before taking a few hits off it.

"Manly was the kindest of bosses," Brandt recalled. "He was appreciative, even grateful for the management reports I prepared and which helped put him back in control of the society he founded." [24]

In mid-1990, Hall, who had been the subject of a recent glowing profile in the *Los Angeles Times* by reporter Santiago O'Donnell under the headline "Last Western Mystic Thrives in Los Feliz," decided to share all the positive happenings with the 15,000 people on the PRS mailing list. [25] "It seems advisable that the image and teachings of the founder should endure in the years ahead when I will no longer be here in person," Hall wrote in mid-1990. "To do this, a massive collection of my writings... and my lectures recorded on audio cassettes, will be available far into the future. More recently, videotapes were made so that persons who may never have

heard me speak can become familiar with a reasonable facsimile. This is all part of a planned reorganization that prepares the society for its work in the next century.” [26]

At meetings of PRS trustees, Hall expressed sincere gratitude for progress PRS seemed to be making. In closing remarks in May 1990, Hall said, “I know you must realize how deeply I appreciate your help at this time. I’ve had a long time trying to get along and do these things, and now at the very late evening of my life, good people like you have come along to help me. Please accept my gratitude, and my blessing for your health.” [27]

Some of Hall’s trustees, however, would always wonder whether Hall was joking when he warned earlier in the same meeting to “be careful to please” Fritz, whom he described as “the High Lord Executioner.” [28]

Fritz and Brandt brightened the mood in the room by pointing out that all of Hall’s lectures were being recorded on professional three-quarter-inch tape, and could easily be packaged and sold in what had mushroomed into, as Fritz put it, “a \$4 billion market” for instructional audio and video tapes. [29]

Meanwhile, Fritz, who was drawing a salary of \$3,000 a month for his work on the PRS management team, was trying to persuade Hall to invest in a highly speculative proposal involving alternative health technology: mass production of his Water Angel hygienic lavage kits. When Marie got wind of the discussions, however, she demanded a partnership. Initially, Fritz balked at letting Marie in on the deal. But he relented when Hall promised to buy out her share at the first sign of trouble.

On May 24, 1990, the three of them signed a Letter of Partnership to market colon cleansing equipment and an air purifier device called “Breath of the Divine Spirit” under the name “Ideal Body.” Fritz was a general partner and not obligated to put up any cash. The beneficiaries were to be PRS, Hall’s Church of the People, and Marie’s Veritat Foundation. Their Letter of Intent of Partnership was signed on May 24, 1990. [30]

Manly and Marie each invested \$100,000, which Fritz deposited in his bank accounts. Fritz spent roughly \$60,000 on marketing materials, research and development, 1,000 hose kits, and 80 so-called Water Angels. Fritz spent another \$10,000 on 25 gold coins, 10 of which he buried at a secret location on Hall’s property. [31]

In a lawsuit filed later, Marie angrily recalled that Fritz never brought up the “Ideal Body” partnership again until after Hall’s death, although he used the technology on her husband against a doctor’s advice. Moreover, the partnership was never formed and the money was never returned.

“Fritz was purging Mr. Hall with daily enemas,” Pollack recalled in an interview. “I told Fritz, I told Mr. Hall and I told his wife, that was improper. I told them it could damage the mucous membranes of his colon. But six months before his death, this man Fritz had some kind of control over Mr. Hall.” [32]

Hall’s bathroom had become a laboratory where irrigating the boss’ colon twice daily was only part of the routine. Fritz was injecting him with adrenal hormones and testosterone, and administering exotic remedies and chemical concoctions even Pollack had never heard of. [33]

Pollack noticed that Hall’s mental capacity was deteriorating by the summer of 1990. When he asked Hall simple questions like “Are you eating well?” his elderly patient would look at Fritz and ask, “What do you think, Daniel?” Sometimes, Hall replied in a peculiarly childlike voice, saying, “Well, you’re the doctor. You should know.” Such responses had been foreign to Hall only a few years earlier.

The heavy doses of laxatives and frequent enemas were taking a physical toll. Hall had lost control of his bowels and was terrified that he would embarrass himself in bed or in his wheelchair. He’d become dependent on Fritz even to defecate.

During his last visit to Pollack’s office, Hall expressed a chilling new concern. Fritz had temporarily left the room when Hall muttered, “I am afraid of Daniel. He is controlling my life.” The moment Fritz returned, Hall changed the subject.

Pollack recalled being worried by the comments.

In late summer of 1990, Fritz, Brandt, and Hall began discussing a living trust arrangement so that Hall could avoid probate and death taxes, but also have full control of his assets while alive. A paralegal financial consultant and an attorney were hired to develop the document. Fritz also began urging Manly and Marie to consider spending a week-long vacation at her daughter’s home two hundred miles away and north of Santa Barbara. Hall was suffering from a bronchial infection at the time. Instead, Brandt

and Marie suggested scotching the trip and getting Hall some strong antibiotics. [34]

“I remarked to Dan that Manly didn’t look strong enough to accompany Marie on a road trip in the motor home to see her daughter,” recalled Brandt. “Dan said Manly loved his bed in the motor home and that he would enjoy getting out of the house.” [35]

But Hall was often too weak to move on his own and frequently gasping for breath. He was spending most days within arm’s reach of an oxygen mask in his sparsely furnished bedroom. There, the philosopher was usually propped up on pillows, his arthritic hands laying palms down on a coral bedspread. His pale blue eyes peered from a gaunt face framed by white curls of hair. Beyond the palms and prickly pear cactus outside his window he could see Los Angeles in the haze—a fabled paradise of opportunity when he arrived nearly seven decades earlier—a city now choking on gang crime, a crack cocaine epidemic, wave upon wave of poverty-stricken immigrants from Asia, Mexico, Central and South America, overcrowded schools and failing students, and rising racial tensions. Manufacturing plants were fleeing and the defense and aerospace industries were imploding even as the nation began to mobilize for a war against Saddam Hussein that August of 1990. [36]

The 89-year-old sage seemed passé compared with a constellation of new gurus with rock star friends. He struggled to make the trek a mile down the hill to his Philosophical Research Society headquarters. [37]

For entertainment, Marie and Manly and their friends gathered in his bedroom and watched videotapes of their favorite movies. High on their list was the 1967 musical *Dr. Doolittle*, which stars Rex Harrison and tells the story of an eccentric veterinarian who lives in a house full of animals and learns from his pet parrot how to speak with them. After each showing, Hall and Marie would lecture their guests on the movie’s hidden meanings: A five-pointed star in one sequence was a sign of hope for world peace. A large hog symbolized Lord Francis Bacon. The subsequent appearance of a little pig, Marie told the guests, indicated that Hall was the reincarnation of Bacon. [38]

Playing back the threads of his experience, a technique he used throughout his life, he could not deny that his world was nearing an end. From his vantage point, a new generation had come to town seeming to

want to loot and destroy, not create and build. He'd been sick and feeble too long.

Given that Hall barely had the strength anymore to grant even brief audiences with his most dedicated followers, Michael Marsellos, president of a Los Angeles Masonic research society, was happily surprised when he accepted his invitation to be guest speaker at an annual banquet for Masonic dignitaries. The topic: Freemasonry in the New Millennium.

On May 26, 1990, Hall arrived at the door of the Scottish Rite Temple on Wilshire Boulevard in a wheelchair looking stressed and very ill. He was followed by Fritz and his son, David, who carried in the enormous chair Hall would speak from on a stage in the temple's fourth-floor banquet room. "Mr. Hall won't be dining with you tonight," Fritz told Marsellos before he could even extend an invitation. [39]

Despite the ominous signals, Hall was in top form when he launched into the last public talk of his long career in the heart of the majestic temple that, back when he was just another newcomer in town, had dominated a landscape of small buildings, citrus groves and oak savannahs. What the Masons saw that night in May, 1990, was an oracle in a blue suit; a gentle giant in body and heart, seeming the embodiment of rock-sure Masonic virtues and principles; a self-educated man with an unusual depth of knowledge and authority; his phrases unforced and relaxed, and distilled from the oldest sacred writings and rituals in existence. This was a philosopher who aligned himself on the side of biblical prophets, the magicians of Egypt, the Mysteries at Eleusis, and sincerely dreamed of a renaissance of the great traditions of the ancient world.

"I took great pride in organizing that event," Marsellos said nearly two decades later. "Although my colleagues said he would never come out and speak to us, I dared to call and ask the great man. Then I met him and he was kind and gentle and accepted my invitation. For that, I'm eternally grateful."

In mid-August, Hall invited his friend and fellow lecturer at PRS, Roger Weir, over to watch a videotape of the movie *Lost Horizon*, the 1937 classic about a plane crash that places a group of people in the miraculous utopia of Shangri-La. When the movie ended, Hall, as if to show that his health had improved, shuffled into the bathroom and then climbed back into bed. "We were chatting when we heard a door slam," Weir recalled. "Two minutes



later, a face peered around the doorway. It was Fritz's son, David. As soon as he saw me, there was an expression of shock on his face. Then he said, 'Excuse me,' and disappeared. I said, 'Manly, are you going to be all right here?' He said, 'Yes, things will be fine.'" Weir stood up to leave and reached out to shake Manly's hand. "Instead," Weir said, "he took hold of my wrist and the last thing he said to me was, 'We're all counting on you very much.'" [40]

On August 23, Fritz, Brandt, Hall, and a paralegal consultant gathered at Hall's PRS office for the formal signing of a new will and living trust that left Hall's estate to his PRS and Church of the People. Under terms of the new will, which superseded one Hall had signed in 1970, all of Hall's personal belongings—his property, stamp collection, gold coins, bank accounts and Treasury bills—would go to PRS. Fritz and Brandt were senior managers of the PRS, and the beneficiaries named in the will. All Marie would get after a 40-year marriage was the privilege of living in the house she shared with her husband—but not title to it. Her children would get nothing.

At the time, "I didn't notice anything out of the ordinary, except that Mr. Hall was very frail," recalled Douglas Cobb, the paralegal recruited by Fritz. "I asked if this was his wish, and he said it all matched his wishes. He signed, I notarized. Then I went to Marie's home. She signed, I notarized. Then I went home." [41]

Hall's relatives and Dr. Pollack would later insist that at the time Hall executed those documents, he was mentally unsound, possessed little memory and no willpower. Marie also claimed that she had been tricked into signing.

"In my opinion, Mr. Hall would have had very limited ability to comprehend the details and the significance of those documents and papers," Pollack said in a deposition later, "and would have had equally great difficulty in understanding what they were." [42]

Later, in court depositions, Fritz said he did not discuss the contents of the documents or their implications with his boss before the day he signed them. In fact, the first time he laid eyes on the documents was the day Hall put his pen to paper. Three days later, Fritz loaded the big man and his diminutive wife into the back of the PRS motor home and set out at 10 a.m. for Santa Barbara. [43] The rig pulled a car trailer with Fritz's Oldsmobile

on it. Following close behind was David Fritz in a newly purchased Ford Bronco. The drivers communicated by walkie-talkie.

On the road, Marie could not stop marveling at how the little vacation was starting exactly 52 years after she unearthed what she believed was Lord Bacon's hidden Bruton Vault in Williamsburg, Virginia. The caravan had just passed Ventura when Fritz exited the freeway on Isadora Street and parked in a residential area saying the engine was overheating. Marie's internal alarms went off. She had not seen any steam rising off the engine, nor had she heard any strange pings or knocks. [44] And Fritz didn't even raise the hood to eyeball the situation. Instead, he strongly urged Marie to proceed north with his son in the Bronco. He promised to join up with them once the problem was fixed.

Marie refused to leave her husband by the side of the road. Rather than exacerbate an already explosive scene, Fritz turned around and headed back to Los Angeles without getting any repairs done on the vehicle. At about 4 p.m., he called Marie's daughter Jo Ann to say, "We returned to Los Angeles due to engine radiator problems with the RV."

The following day, Fritz telephoned Jo Ann to say, "We're leaving the house," then set out in the same caravan configuration as the day before although no repairs had been done on the RV. About two hours later, Fritz pulled off the freeway in the Santa Barbara area saying the engine was overheating. Again.

After lunch in the RV, Fritz persuaded Marie to continue on with his son. It was the last time Marie saw her husband alive.

At about 4 p.m., Fritz called Jo Ann to say that David and Marie were en route and that he and Hall planned to remain with the disabled motor home. After dropping off Marie, and having dinner at Jo Ann's home, David rejoined his father at about 9 p.m. Fritz later claimed the three men spent that evening on a Santa Barbara street in the motor home. Then, he said, Hall asked to return home.

The following morning at about 9 a.m., Hall's longtime neighbor Arthur Applebaum saw Hall and Fritz arrive in their common driveway in Fritz's Oldsmobile. He grew concerned when Hall, sitting motionless and ashen-faced in his wheelchair, failed to respond to his oral salutation. Applebaum strode back into his home and shouted to his wife, "Manly looks like a zombie!" [45]

At about 6 p.m., according to statements given during a deposition later, Fritz had just finished helping Hall get to his bedroom when he noticed swarms of ants on the headboard. Hall watched from his wheelchair as Fritz and his son wiped up the insects with wet white towels. They also rid nearby shelves of sweets including an open jar of honey and cough drops. Then, he said, they changed Hall into his knee-length nightshirt and put him to bed. [46]

Hall fell asleep in his usual position: on his right side facing the wall and under the old coral-colored bedspread. Fritz said he slept in a chair eight feet away from Hall's bed. His son spent the night in an adjacent room. Although Hall kept bedpans near his bed, Fritz recalled helping the sickly old man amble down the hall to the bathroom at about 3 a.m. After hearing the toilet flush, Fritz said he returned to help Hall walk back to bed. [47]

Exactly what happened next may never be known. Court records and interviews with private detectives hired by the Hall family, LAPD investigators, Dr. Pollack, and people who had intimate conversations with Fritz provide discrepancies about Hall's demise, which eventually triggered a homicide case and a venomous court battle over control of Hall's assets.

In a telephone conversation secretly recorded shortly after Hall's death by one of Fritz's former birthing school clients, Fritz said that he first noticed Hall was having trouble breathing at about 6:30 a.m. on August 29. According to a partial transcript of that conversation, Fritz said he then detected "a sweet odor of very high frequency" emanating from Hall's body. A thought flashed through his mind: caring for the philosopher had been an 1187-day ordeal. Helping Hall cross to the other side of life would be his final accomplishment. Instead of calling paramedics or attempting to resuscitate the great man, Fritz chanted in prayer. For a moment, Fritz said, he felt as though his soul and Hall's were making powerful eternal connections just as the sun was rising. "I'm the luckiest guy on the planet," Fritz thought.

According to records of the telephone calls made from Hall's home on the morning of August 29, he called Dr. Pollock and said that Hall had died. A few minutes later, he called Brandt and inexplicably said Hall was "dying."

“Dan called me early in the morning and told me that he thought Manly was dying, and he asked me to pray for him,” Brandt recalled in an interview. “He then called me sometime later and told me that Manly had passed away. Dan was apparently deeply broken up by the event and in tears when he talked with me.” [48]

Fritz waited an hour after contacting Pollack to call Marie at her daughter’s house with the bad news. Marie, in turn, called her closest relatives and friends. One of those friends called Marie’s trusted ally, Fred Cole, who was literally knocked off his feet by the news. “After I heard the words, ‘Manly Hall has passed away,’ I fell back on my couch and had a heart attack. Then I called 911,” Cole recalled. [49]

After five days in the hospital Cole was well enough to return home and to his position on the board of directors of the Veritat Foundation, which at the time was trying to arrange a meeting between Marie and First Lady Barbara Bush.

Hall’s death had a variety of effects on his followers.

Christina Monterastelli, who specializes in the metaphysical properties of crystals, immediately contacted a Hopi shaman in Arizona and implored, “Won’t you please come to California as soon as possible? Marie is terrified.” [50]

A few days later, the shaman arrived at Marie’s home with an A-team of psychics and astrologers prepared for battle with evil forces. It didn’t take long to find what they were looking for, she said.

Seven members of the team fanned out across the property, dispersing spells and neutralizing pockets of negative vibrations. Others counseled Marie in the living room.

“As Marie was telling us her story,” Monterastelli recalled, “I got a telepathic signal from the Hopi shaman. At that moment, I looked across the room—in the etheric plane—and saw a pentagram on the floor in front of the fireplace. I thought, ‘Poor Marie.’”

Longtime PRS supporter Marie Bingham recalled that “a week after he died I had a dream that he gave me his Canadian tweed overcoat. I’m five-foot-one-inches tall. He put it on my arms. It hung way down and hit the floor. I laughed. He put it back on my arms and gave a lecture to me. I can’t recall what he said. A week after that, I dreamed that he gave me his eyeglasses. I handed them back saying, ‘But you already gave me your

overcoat.’ He gave another lecture, but I can’t remember what he said.” [51]

Admirer Donna Matson organized a séance in her backyard patio with a goal of contacting Hall and asking exactly how he died. With candles lit and incense burning, her friend Ada Marie went into a trance and summoned the dead philosopher to the patio table. “Manly’s response was that we take care of Marie,” Matson recalled. “She needed someone to stay close to her.” [52]

Walter Stewart, a high-ranking Freemason who expected to be among the last ministers ordained by Hall, could not stop thinking about his last conversation with the philosopher. “Oh yes, you’ll be ordained, Walter; even if I die you’ll be ordained,” Stewart recalled. “It sounded out of the ordinary, in part, because the Manly Hall I knew was very logical.” When Stewart brought it up with Fritz, he added, Fritz “recommended I get in touch with the man who ordained him in the Church of Antioch, which was out of the question.” [53]

Singer John Denver showed up unannounced at Hall’s residence demanding to speak with Marie. “He had personal problems and wanted to speak with her, but Manly had just died. She was in grief and just couldn’t see him,” recalled Marie’s friend and nurse Clarita Woolridge. “She never heard from John Denver again.” [54]

Fritz told an associate that he felt special because “I was able to help Manly with his death.” It was a job, he said, that included following Hall’s strict orders to keep paramedics—and Marie—as far away as possible. “I’m hoping that the next time,” Fritz said, referring to some future life, Hall “can be my mother.” [55]

Marie wrote a seven-page rambling letter titled “About the Premature Death of My Husband Manly Palmer Hall, A Personal Opinion written by Marie Bauer Hall,” alleging that he “left this world by way of murderous causes,” and then dispatched it to friends and supporters across the country.

“I believe that in the last three months of Manly’s life, Fritz and his accomplices had deliberately accelerated their fiendish designs so that Manly became visibly frailer and seemed more and more frightened for reasons that I now do understand,” she wrote. “Though in their blinded hearts and perverted minds they would not only gain millions of dollars they could do with whatever they pleased, but in an insidiously satanic way



they could parade their hypocrisies long enough to discredit and soil my husband's and my own idealistically realistic lifetime endeavors represented through the PRS and through the Veritat Foundation.” [56]

Marie also bothered to point out that it was “curious to say the least that our fatal vacation started on August 26, 1990. That is the exact date of the 52<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of my unearthing the original Bruton Church foundations and locating the Bruton Vault in Williamsburg, Virginia, during the summer and fall of 1938.”

One of the letters landed on the desk of Jay Kenny, then publisher of *Gnosis Magazine*, in San Francisco. “I really didn’t know what to make of it,” Kenny recalled. The assertions, he said, “seemed awfully conspiratorial and high-strung. I thought, ‘Oh boy, who knows what the real story is here.’ Because of the tone, I tended to discount a lot of her allegations.” [57]

Hurt by the allegations, Fritz told anyone who would listen that Marie had been institutionalized as mentally unstable, and had abandoned her children at a young age. He also told stories about Marie’s cruel treatment of Hall; how she turned up the television volume just to irritate him, screamed in his face that he was a fool, even knocked him down onto the floor at times.

In a letter published in the August 1993 edition of *Whole Life Times* magazine, Fritz attacked Marie supporter Art Kunkin. Documents filed in the civil trial, Fritz reminded, said Marie had senile dementia, and he described her “history of multiple involuntary psychiatric commitments, one of which was instituted by Mr. Hall himself.”

Fritz incorrectly, however, argued in a response to the magazine that the police department “has never had an open file on Mr. Hall’s death.”

A Masonic Memorial Service dedicated to “The Illustrious Manly Palmer Hall, 33 degree, Grand Cross of Honor,” was held Sunday, September 23, 1990 at the Los Angeles Scottish Rite Cathedral on Wilshire Boulevard. Presiding over the service was H. Douglas Lemons, Grand Master of Ceremonies of the Supreme Council, Southern Jurisdiction of the United States and Sovereign Grand Inspector General in California.

The sound of bagpipes filled the air as the cathedral filled to capacity with more than 1,000 people. Only a few of them knew that Hall had accidentally been placed in a casket without his Masonic apron, a breach of

Masonic protocol. But no one realized that even as Lemons addressed them in his typical calm and thoughtful way, the 33rd-degree Mason was overwhelmed with memories, and nagging questions. [58]

“I did a standard Masonic service. But I had trouble presiding over that funeral because my thoughts kept returning to my personal time with Manly Hall,” Lemons said, leaning back in a chair in a Long Beach office decorated with awards and photographs of many of the most influential politicians and celebrities in the United States. “And I was taken away mentally by the horrendous things that had happened to Manly in his last days.” [59]

Among those in the audience was *Cult Movies* magazine publisher Michael Copner, who recalled the service seemed to crescendo when Gnostic minister Stephan Hoeller took to the dais and proclaimed: “I can declare this better than anyone else in this room: He lives! He lives! He lives!” [60]

When the PRS board of trustees convened a week later on October 30, 1990, Fritz told the group it had been named as trustee of the Manly P. Hall Trust established six days before he died, and was obliged to carry out the trust’s instructions. They included making an inventory list of Hall’s assets—his stamp collection, gold coins, T-bills, bank accounts, stocks, rare books and other personal property—and transferring them to PRS.

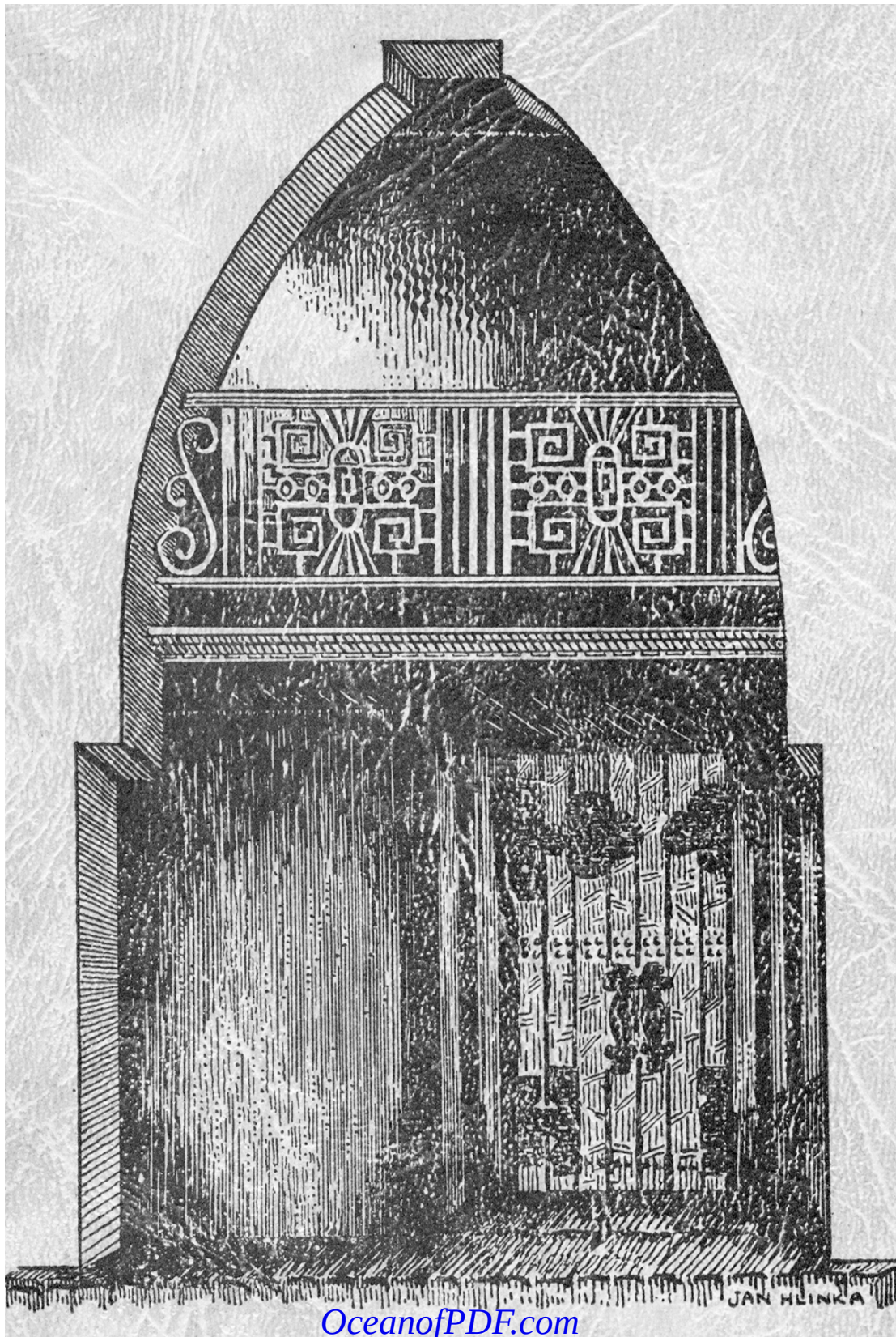
Brandt provided a copy of Hall’s trust to each of the trustees, along with a copy of Hall’s death certificate, signed by the county coroner. Fritz and Brandt also pointed out that both Hall and his wife had created their own living trusts on the same day, and that all they had left to each other was their 50% interest in their home.

Mitchell made the motion that Fritz be nominated president, and Brandt vice president. The motion carried unanimously. From then on, Fritz kept Hall’s false teeth in his desk drawer as a keepsake, occasionally taking them out and holding them up in admiration.

Mitchell, PRS’ top business consultant at the time, figured it was time to quit. “Upon his death,” Mitchell said in a brief interview many years later, the forces that Hall “feared, surfaced, and a climate was created that made it unfeasible to fulfill his management vision.” [61]

About the same time, LAPD detectives were assembling a homicide case involving a Hollywood VIP and a caretaker allegedly grabbing for a

piece of the action.





## CHAPTER 14

### The Maestro's Transition

DR. POLLACK WAS IMMEDIATELY ALARMED WHEN HE ARRIVED IN MANLY HALL'S HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOME ON THE MORNING OF AUGUST 29, 1990.

He saw the immense pale body of the man who helped give birth to the New Age laying face up, wearing trousers, on a bed without a single wrinkle in the covers. He saw thousands of tiny dark-brown and black ants streaming from Hall's throat, nose, mouth and ears. The body felt "stone cold" to his touch, indicating that Hall had been dead for at least eight hours. Pollack wondered if he could have died someplace else. The doctor saw two housecleaners noisily shampooing reddish-brown stains on the carpet near Hall's bed and in the living room. He watched Dan Fritz's son, David, carry armloads of clothing and stamp collections from Hall's large closets and dressers. Dan Fritz told Pollack that Hall died in his sleep. But no one at the house seemed to know exactly what had happened or what to do next. [1] Except Fritz, who told Pollack he wanted Hall's body cremated as quickly as possible. [2]

"How did the ants get there?" Pollack asked incredulously.

Fritz shrugged his shoulders and said he didn't know; that the ants were there when he found the body.

Pollack grew increasingly suspicious. At 9:30 a.m., he rescinded the certificate he'd signed less than two hours earlier, which listed Hall's cause of death as acute myocardial infarction attributed to natural causes.

Marie Hall arrived with her daughter Jo Ann shortly before noon to find Hall's body on a gurney near the living room fireplace, just beneath a



portrait of Marie. Two attendants from Forest Lawn were waiting to take away the corpse, which was in a black body bag with only the face showing. They appeared nervous, even frightened. “Manly looked smaller than I remembered him, and he had a smile on his face,” said Jo Ann, who had raced down from Santa Barbara after Fritz called to notify her of Manly’s passing. “I just wanted to leave. I felt very uncomfortable.” [3]

Fritz insisted that Hall had simply died in his sleep on his bed. But Pollack, Hall’s closest relatives, and eventually Los Angeles Police Department detectives, suspected another scenario: that Hall was murdered just six days after signing the agreement giving Fritz control over assets including \$2.3 million in cash, a trove of religious artifacts, rare books, his home and PRS properties worth millions more.

It was a curious coda to the life of a once influential celebrity philosopher who believed the state of consciousness at the moment of death affects the trajectory of reincarnation. Hall had spent years preparing himself for a passing—and rebirth—that would happen with mindfulness, courage and compassion.

For legal help, Marie turned to Helen James, a trim, flamboyant Los Angeles lawyer in her late thirties who drove a two-tone sand and brown Rolls Royce, never wore the same Chanel business suit twice during trial, and charged \$250 an hour for her services.

With a demeanor that ranged as needed between a street fighter and a smooth-talking corporate intellectual, James began life in an illiterate family of Ukrainian immigrants in Saskatchewan, Canada. She would go on to create a legal practice at the center of the rough-and-tumble of Los Angeles’ real estate market. [4]

James spoke four languages—English, German, Spanish and Russian—and had trained as a flight cadet in the men’s division of the Royal Canadian Air Force military officers academy. She had a Class A general engineering license authorizing her to construct dams, freeways and high-rises.

James was also interested in comparative religions and New Age ideas. She was a personal friend and client of Phil Gray, the spiritual healer who had treated Hall and his wife for years.

Marie, who was starting to show signs of dementia, and her children had one condition when James was retained to represent them in litigation

against Fritz and PRS: that she keep a wrongful death lawsuit alive as long as possible.

Hall's relatives stopped the cremation plans and had Hall's body transported to Forest Lawn. There, in a private closing ceremony, a friend of the family prayed and chanted over the corpse.

Immediately after Hall's death, Marie had asked that the corpse be kept on ice at the Forest Lawn Mortuary in Glendale while she tried to compile evidence to support her assertion that her husband died of "murderous causes." After three months, mortuary officials lost their patience. "They kept calling and asking, 'Hey, when can we dispose of this body? It's getting ripe,'" recalled Brandt. "I said, 'Marie, you have to do something.'"

Her solution was to have Hall's body temporarily interred. In November 1990, the corpse was placed inside a cheap wood casket lined with white rayon cloth, and buried without witnesses in an unmarked grave near a stand of eucalyptus trees at the Forest Lawn Memorial cemetery. Under explicit orders from Marie, it was to stay there until all legal questions about her husband's demise were satisfactorily resolved. According to some PRS insiders, however, Fritz knew its location and even visited the gravesite to pay his respects.

The post-mortem examination was conducted September 7, 1990 by Deputy Coroner Dr. Irwin L. Golden of the Los Angeles County Coroner's office, nine days after the reported time of death. The report was so flawed that it noted the existence of a gallbladder even though Hall had his removed two decades earlier. It also failed to note a thyroidectomy Hall had in 1940.

Golden concluded that Hall died of natural causes.

Hall's family didn't believe the medical examiner. Marie paid \$12,000 to have forensic pathologist Cyril Wecht conduct a second autopsy seven weeks later on October 27, 1990, at the Forest Lawn Mortuary in Glendale. By then Hall's body had been embalmed. In a scathing report, Wecht said he turned up 61 additional mistakes and omissions in the county coroner's examination. He was also distressed that the body had not been refrigerated from the time of the first autopsy to the time of the second.

Nonetheless, Wecht detected smudges of soil around Hall's eyes, nose and mouth, a bruise on the right side of his face, a purple bruise on his neck and additional evidence of trauma on his back and legs. He also found

mysterious “recent small needle puncture marks of the skin and mucosal surfaces of the various body orifices.” As for the swarms of Argentine ants, Wecht could not find an entry point for the insects in Hall’s bedroom. In his report, Wecht wrote that Hall had been outdoors lying face down in dirt at the time of his death. Wecht also concluded that Hall died of asphyxiation from smothering or other mechanisms such as manual strangulation. [5]

Separately, retired Los Angeles Police Department officer Lon Sandoval, a student of esoteric teachings who had been hired by Marie to investigate her husband’s demise, followed possible leads. It wasn’t easy. “A lot of people didn’t want to talk,” he recalled; “they were afraid that what happened to Manly Hall might happen to them.” He had better luck with several psychics who channeled conclusions of their own from sources on the other side including one named “Aristotle.” Hall, they independently informed Sandoval, was asphyxiated. [6]

Wrong, all wrong, Fritz told LAPD homicide investigators in a confidential interview a week after Hall died. “I can explain everything,” Fritz said. Hall died in bed at about 8 a.m., and the ants had been attracted to an open jar of honey and cough drops on shelves beside Hall’s bed. Right after finding the body, Fritz and David took Hall’s bedding to the cleaners because it was soiled, and hired a crew to clean the filthy bedroom carpet. They hauled Hall’s clothing to a local Goodwill outlet, and transported some of his valuables to PRS headquarters in keeping with guidelines prescribed by the new trust agreement. He even left Hall’s wallet in the philosopher’s coat pocket. Above all else, he said, “I had absolutely nothing to do with Hall’s death.” [7]



*Marie and a friend look on as workers exhume Manly's waterlogged casket.*

The detectives did not believe him and set about gathering evidence to prove that Hall was a victim of homicide.

Much of the LAPD's case piggybacked information collected by James. The initial days of her investigation were hampered by conflicting stories, reluctant witnesses, Marie's volatile personality and a battery of attorneys representing Fritz and his son, David, who tried to bury her in paperwork.

It didn't help, she recalled, that she could hear and feel Hall's spirit "trapped in the astral plane and coming to me in dreams and telepathic messages. He was trying to run my case in my own mind. He was giving me a devil of a time. I told him there was no way I would allow him to tell me who I should interview or how the case should proceed." [8]

"He was ill-informed," she said. "I was afraid he was going to spoil my case. For example, he never once mentioned the chief suspect, Daniel Fritz."

In an effort to expedite her investigation, James brought in another lawyer and hired a medium to deal with Hall's nagging spirit.

“One night, I had the medium contact Manly in my living room,” James recalled. “I asked, ‘Manly, after you first crossed over, did you see a white light or bright energy coming toward you?’ He answered that he had, but thought it was so strange that he was afraid to go there.”

“The medium prepared Manly to leave the astral plane and ascend to the higher planes where he belonged,” she said. “The process took several hours. Eventually, we got him to go to the entrance of the white light. Manly took a few steps, then said, ‘Helen, I can take it from here.’”

In a separate move, she requested a temporary restraining order to stop Fritz and his son from taking photographs of her. “I sensed that they were taking photographs and then using them in black magic rituals to cast spells,” she said. “My request included that Fritz and his son hand over any photographs of me in their possession.

“The judge denied the TRO saying, ‘Helen, I think you can handle yourself in these matters.’”

Five times between 1993 and 1994 they presented the case to the Los Angeles County District Attorney’s office. Each time, they were turned down, and told to get more evidence. But given the irregularities and apparent incidents of possible embezzlement, the district attorney also recommended that the case be referred to the police department’s bunco/forgery squad. [9]

At best, the evidence of foul play was circumstantial, homicide detectives said.

The detectives could prove, for example, that Fritz’s medical treatments over the previous three years had created a severe electrolyte imbalance and spiked Hall’s magnesium intake to dangerously high levels for a man with a weak heart. They also could show that on August 27, while driving Hall to Santa Barbara in the motor home, Fritz had written two checks against Hall’s bank account, one for \$80,000 and the other for \$2,500. Fritz somehow managed, detectives said, to cash both of those checks on the day Hall died without notifying Mrs. Hall or anyone else at PRS. When he appeared at the bank to cash those checks, Fritz also failed to tell bank officials that the depositor had died that morning.

Homicide detectives theorized that Hall died after being left in his wheelchair outdoors in the hot sun. The Argentine ants found swarming out of his mouth on the day he died, they suspected, had been looking for water.



“I hated to see that guy [Fritz] get away,” recalled retired LAPD homicide investigator James McCann, who was a lead investigator in the Hall case. “We worked that case 12 hours a day. The problem was we couldn’t do that forever. We only have so many Hollywood detectives.” [10]

Outraged by the delays, Wecht and half a dozen forensic experts familiar with the case sent a letter to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors on June 27, 1995 demanding that the coroner’s case “be reopened and further investigated.” Their goal was to have the cause of death changed from natural causes to homicide. The letter included a detailed outline of the experts’ findings and opinions. In addition to a reiteration of Wecht’s report, it noted that an examination by a technical lab assistant found an ant lodged between the decedent’s bottom teeth and lower lip, and part of an ant in his hair on his forehead. The LAPD presented the preserved ants for forensic scientific examination and analysis to Dr. Ron Snelling, entomologist at the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History, and David K. Faulkner, entomologist/curator at the San Diego Natural History Museum. [11]

In separate reports, both Snelling and Faulkner concluded “to a 99.9% degree of certainty” that the species of ants in Manly Hall’s body virtually assured that he died outdoors and was later removed to where he was discovered in bed. [12]

Wecht’s letter also made reference to LAPD homicide detectives’ evidence concerning the history of the decedent’s last year of life, including the use of laxatives and colonics, combined with a diet low in protein and high in fruit juices. Kathryn Challoner, board-certified toxicologist at the USC Medical Center, described that treatment as “an extremely dangerous practice. Further, the prolonged application of such procedures would almost certainly result in a health crisis or death...and easily cause electrolyte imbalance and pulmonary edema.” [13]

In summary, Wecht wrote, “Considering all the circumstances and physical findings relating to Mr. Hall’s death, I believe that a proper, diligent, and thorough medical-legal investigative analysis by a forensic pathologist would lead to a reasonable suspicion of foul play.” [14]

The Los Angeles County Coroner eventually agreed—up to a point—with Wecht and Marie. Over a period of five years, the coroner repeatedly

amended his findings to ultimately indicate that Hall died of “unknown causes” under “suspicious circumstances” suggesting “foul play.” The coroner’s office also changed the time of death from 9:30 a.m. on August 29, 1990 to “Found: 8/29/1990. Time of Death: Unknown,” and deleted references to a thyroid gland in the body.

(The flubbed autopsy returned to haunt the county coroner’s office again in 1995 during the murder trial of football star O.J. Simpson. In that case, prosecutors questioned the post mortem examinations on the bodies of Simpson’s alleged victims—his wife Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend Ronald Goldman—and reminded the jury of the mistakes and omissions made by Sathyavagiswaran and Golden in the Hall case.) [15]

But the district attorney’s office demanded more ammunition. Specifically, it wanted a county coroner’s determination of homicide before it would file murder charges and take the case to court, McCann said.

Coroner Lakshmanan Sathyavagiswaran would not budge.

In a 2003 interview in his office, Sathyavagiswaran conceded that he did not buy Fritz’s story that Hall died in bed. But neither was he impressed with Wecht’s opinions. “My conclusion is that Mr. Hall died someplace else, and then was brought to bed,” he said. “But we cannot conclude homicide because there is not enough evidence to prove it. I can’t say, ‘I think that Manly Hall was murdered.’ However, we do suspect foul play and we told the district attorney that.” [16]

But Sathyavagiswaran said he would reopen the case should new evidence come in.

Separately, Wecht told LAPD investigators that if and when charges were ever brought, he was prepared to testify that Hall was murdered. Fritz vehemently denied that. He told investigators that he loved and respected Hall. He did not kill him, he said.

Shortly after Hall’s death, Marie went to court to overturn the will and trust arrangement, alleging that Fritz and several associates at PRS had conned her sick and senile husband into signing over personal and society property. [17]

Fritz, who had been given power of attorney over Hall’s affairs, continued to deny any wrongdoing. He asserted that Hall was mentally alert to the end and signed the trust documents of his own accord. As evidence, he pointed out that Hall was giving lectures on philosophy within a week of

his death. Fritz also insisted that Hall had designated him to run the society after his death and handle its affairs.

The dispute deteriorated into a bitter four-year-long court battle and non-jury trial that hinged on whether Fritz was a crook or a benefactor. “Inside the courtroom you could cut the tension in the air with a knife,” recalled Marilyn Joyce, who was the features editor at *New Perspective Magazine* at the time. “The two sides were totally at war with each other. I still look back and think that all my innocence was wiped out by that case.” [18]

In August 1993, Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Harvey A. Schneider invalidated the will and trust arrangement citing Fritz’s influence over Hall. “It’s crystal clear to me that the treatment (provided to Hall by Fritz) rendered Mr. Hall dependent on Mr. Fritz and permitted him to influence Mr. Hall,” Schneider said from the bench. “And I think that as he grew weaker, he became more dependent upon Mr. Fritz.” [19]

On the \$200,000 the Halls invested in Fritz’s Ideal Body venture, Schneider said, “Fritz took the money and spent it. . . I have no idea what Mr. Hall’s view of this partnership was, and I suspect we’ll never know. But I perceive it to be a scheme of Mr. Fritz’s to obtain money from Mr. Hall, which was successful.”

“Did Fritz effectively steal from Mr. Hall? I think the answer is clearly yes,” Schneider said. “The evidence is overwhelming that Mr. Fritz exerted undue influence over Mr. Hall. . . The whole thing just doesn’t pass a reasonable person’s sniff test.”

He wasn’t the only one who felt that way. Midway through a blistering pretrial videotaped deposition, Fritz excused himself from the room, then ran to the bathroom and vomited. Later, during the civil trial, Fritz was hounded by a friend of Marie’s who chased him down a courthouse hall while screaming, “You filthy little murderer, we’re going to get you!”

The fight between Marie and PRS over ownership of Hall’s assets continued until late 1994 when they reached a settlement worth about \$1.9 million, according to an article in the *Los Angeles Times* by staff writer Bob Pool. Marie dropped any claim to PRS’ books and treasures in exchange for free title to the home she had shared with her husband on Hillhurst Avenue, and return of works of art the couple had collected. [20]

PRS also agreed to pay her \$50,000, return her husband's stamp collection, and give her 214 rare Rosicrucian and alchemical books. Those volumes were eventually sold to the Getty Museum for about \$750,000. Most of that money was used to pay Marie's attorney fees. [21]

PRS had paid more than \$300,000 in attorneys' fees on behalf of Fritz, who continued to be dogged by Marie's allegations that he had liquidated portions of Hall's stamp collection valued at more than \$50,000. Hall, Marie told her attorneys, always said he purchased stamps instead of buying insurance. [22]

In April 1993, the PRS Board of Trustees elected a new president, Obadiah Harris, director of the special gifts program at the Arizona University State Foundation. Harris, who had earned a doctorate in the Philosophy of Education at the University of Michigan, arrived with plans to establish a "wisdom school" at PRS that would be taught by highly credentialed individuals, work in cooperation with mainstream universities and offer masters and doctoral programs. He aimed for eventual state approval and accreditation.

Harris and the remaining PRS staff had their work cut out for them. After years of legal morass, the society's resources had been nearly drained, its reputation crippled. It seemed to be headed nowhere but bankruptcy and shame.

As part of an effort to keep Fritz and his allies from trying to sell off the place brick by brick, PRS supporters managed in June 1994 to have the Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Commission vote to declare the pale pink Mayan revivalist-style library and auditorium a historic-cultural monument. [23] (The designation contained an unforeseen downside. In 2006, Harris' plans to sell the property to a developer and move to a new location with more parking and newer structures were dashed by local homeowners' groups and historical society members who vowed to use the landmark status to block any effort to replace PRS with an apartment complex or condominiums.)

With the estate dispute resolved and new leadership at the helm of Manly's PRS, Marie figured it was time to dispose of Manly's corpse. On a sunny day in June 1995, Marie and four friends gathered at the cemetery's ivy-covered Rosemary Chapel for a final goodbye. Members of the group took snapshots of each other standing arm-in-arm in front of the chapel, and

individually praying somberly with hands clasped over the gravesite. A cemetery crew stood nearby with a skip loader ready to lift the casket from the ground. Unfortunately, the cremation was delayed by a last-minute hitch. The casket, which had taken an hour to unearth, was too wet to burn.

“When they pulled the casket out of the ground, water streamed out of it; it was waterlogged,” recalled Doreen Key, a close friend of Marie and Manly Hall. “We needed a day to dry things out so that he could be cremated.” [24]

The following day, the group converged again at the chapel where Hall’s remains had been transferred to a casket-sized cardboard box resting on top of a gurney. As a form of tribute, Key said she placed a grapefruit-sized rock she had taken from the home of Sir Francis Bacon’s father in England atop the box “to mix the energies.”

“We meditated around the cardboard coffin,” she recalled. “Then they opened these big steel doors. We could hear the furnaces going. They wheeled the gurney into the furnace. We stayed there with heads bowed for 30 minutes.”

Fred Cole believed he “could smell the flesh, the burning flesh.”

After the cremation, the group returned to their cars and then caravanned to a Lucky supermarket where they giddily raced through aisles to buy a few bottles of champagne. “We all toasted Manly,” Key recalled. “Between toasts, we kept filling Marie’s little thimble-like glass.” [25]

Fritz and Brandt were forced to resign from PRS. Before leaving, Fritz and Harris met in a Pasadena restaurant. There, Fritz, still a homicide suspect, tearfully confided that he felt cursed. “Everywhere I go I have problems,” he told Harris. “And I bring down everyone around me.” [26]

Brandt headed back to the Bay Area. Fritz moved to Sunny Valley, a historic gold mining district with a population of 300 in rural southern Oregon, about 15 miles north of Grant’s Pass. There, the motor home customized to accommodate Hall’s massive frame broke down, never to run again. Fritz became a fixture in regional health food stores. Heavy-set with a beard and clad in bib overalls, he liked to brag about his relationship with the famous Los Angeles illuminati, and rail against the medical establishment.

In 2001, Fritz was diagnosed with adrenal cancer, a rare, deadly disease that afflicts two out of every one million people each year. Not surprisingly,



he refused standard chemotherapy and radiation treatments. Instead, he ingested large quantities of hydrazine sulfate, a compound federal researchers believe actually causes cancer, and antioxidants such as the spice turmeric and grape seed. He also used a potent alleged Native American herbal formula comprised of burdock root, powdered sheep sorrel, slippery elm and turkey rhubarb.

The cancer spread to his lungs and bladder. In late 2001, Fritz went to Reno, settling into a room at the Vagabond Motel on South Virginia Street. It was just a few blocks from health food stores and the offices of Dr. Michael Gerber, a homeopathic physician who tried to comfort Fritz with prescriptions of vitamin C drops, painkillers and amino acids to promote tissue repair, maintain cell structure, and hormone production.

“When I first saw him, he was sweating profusely and couldn’t eat. He had adrenal problems and bladder cancer. He’d lost 50 pounds and had blood in his urine. He was taking a ton of [alternative medicines],” Gerber recalled in an interview. “He referred to himself as a priest ordained by Manly Hall, and said he ran a Pythagorean School of Virgin Mothers. He also talked about fighting some demonic government and warned of some coming war.” [27]

Fritz died in his motel room bed on December 9, 2001. At his side were his ex-wife, Corine, his son David, and a longtime female assistant. In his record of death narrative, Reno’s deputy coroner Michael Gonzales said, “The victim had been hand bathed and wrapped in a sheet according to religious protocol.” He also noted that a sunflower had been placed on Fritz’s forehead.

Fritz’s son David died two years later in Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital, where he had been admitted suffering from severe neck and head pains. The cause listed on his death certificate was meningitis brought on by the human immunodeficiency virus that causes AIDS.

Marie Hall spent the last years of her life in front of a television set watching reruns of old screwball comedies such as *I Love Lucy*, speaking with imaginary visitors during psychotic episodes, and repeatedly begging forgiveness from her children for having abandoned them during her half-century search for the Bruton Vault. In a telephone conversation, she even told Jo Ann, ‘I love you.’”

Marie was 100 when she died at Hollywood Presbyterian Medical Center on April 21, 2005. It was Marie's wish that she be cremated and her ashes mixed with Manly's in an urn kept by her children. Moments before the old occultist passed away, "something incredible happened, and I'll never be the same because of it," recalled Clarita Woolridge, a registered nurse and close friend of Marie's. "It was just starting to get light outside, and I was in Marie's room praying with two other women who had cared for her for years. Suddenly, an awesome invisible presence and a palpable sensation of peace filled the room. As a reality check, I asked the other women, 'Did you notice anything?' One of them said, 'Oh, Clarita, what was that?'" [28] Woolridge said the "once-in-a-lifetime experience" motivated her to enter a seminary in 2006 with a goal of becoming a Presbyterian minister.

Brandt, who moved back to the Bay Area where he landed work as a bookkeeper for a property manager, remained steadfast in his belief that Fritz and Hall were daring pioneers whose esoteric endeavors—their experiments with human urine and ants, for example—only seemed "strange and foreign" to "outsiders and unthinking people."

Nearly two decades after his death, Hall is remembered by seekers of wisdom as a man, far from perfect, who introduced tens of thousands of people to an array of religious and philosophical movements, offered ancient mystical solutions to modern problems, and encouraged a generation to cultivate the timeless values and virtues of courage, self-discipline, hard work and contemplation.

To rejoice in the good laws governing all things is to find security, happiness and peace, he taught his students. His grasp of the essence of the spiritual beliefs, philosophic principles and symbols of antiquity was reflected in hundreds of books and lectures—a body of work that spans nearly a century. Through the interpretation of myths and symbols of a far-off time, to which he devoted a lifetime, Hall found fulfillment and meaning. Flawed as are all people, Hall took a path toward deeper understanding and awareness of the divine power in all things. You can argue whether it was for better or worse. What you can't argue is that he stayed true to his quest.

Still, no one can say whether he found what he was looking for.

“By the time man has lived in this world eight hundred times, he will know how to live well,” Hall always said. Not long before his passing, Hall urged his friends not to try to contact him in the afterlife because “I’m going to be awfully busy.”





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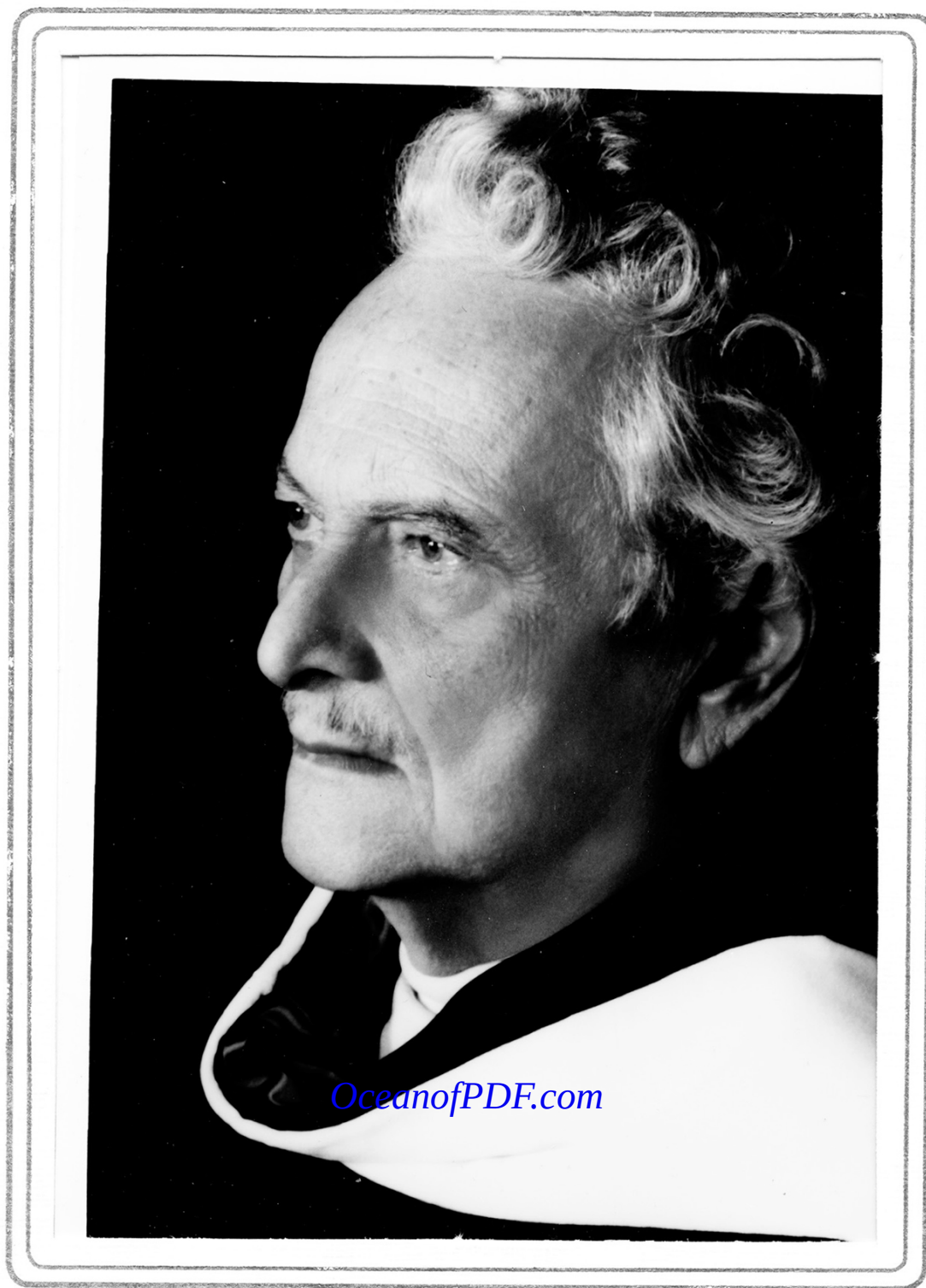
# EPILOGUE

MANLY PALMER HALL FOUNDED THE NONPROFIT PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY IN 1934 FOR THE STATED PURPOSE OF PROVIDING RARE ACCESS TO THE DEPTH AND BREADTH OF THE WORLD'S WISDOM IN LITERATURE.

IT WAS ALSO HIS LIFELONG DESIRE TO ESTABLISH A SCHOOL OF WISDOM ON THE GROUNDS OVERLOOKING LOS FELIZ BOULEVARD NEAR GRIFFITH PARK. ON AUGUST 29, 2002—EXACTLY 12 YEARS AFTER HE DIED—THE NEWLY FORMED UNIVERSITY OF PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH RECEIVED FULL STATE APPROVAL TO OFFER A MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM IN CONSCIOUSNESS STUDIES. ON JANUARY 15TH, 2008, UPR RECEIVED NATIONAL ACCREDITATION.

THE UNIVERSITY'S SYMBOL IS ONE HALL CHERISHED: THE PHOENIX, THE RESPLENDENT WINGED CREATURE SAID TO RISE LIKE ANCIENT WISDOM FROM THE COLD ASHES OF LIFELESS CREEDS.





*Manly P. Hall*

# END NOTES

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