

Selected Archives on Robert Durr

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1315 South 29th Street
BirminJham 5, Alabama

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February 14, 1944

Dear Mr. Holley:

On going through my secretl...Tial notebook I find that I /
have never reported our new colored believer, Mr. Robert Durr.
He is the editor of a colored newspaper herP. in Birmingham.
At our last Feast he was elected to the Assembly to replace
Mrs. Myra Brayant who asked to be released.

You will note that my address has again been changed.
Expect that I will be here for quite some time, at least I hope
sol Movin0 t~ice in two weeks is almost too much for me. There
was a cat at the last address and they give me asthma so I had
to move. Was fortunate to find this lovely place and it is only
half a block from Martha Fettig and Gertrude Gewertz.

Sincerely and faithfully,

--It/~

(Miss) Nina K. Howard
Secretary
1315 South 29th Street
Birmingham, 5, Alabama
March 12, 1944

Dear Mr. Holley:

At our last Assembly meeting we welcomed t1'iO new meubers into the
Community. Their names and addresses are given below:

Mrs. Robert Durr - 30 Twelfth Avenue, North
Mrs. J. H. Lohner - 1027 Eighth Court, South

Sincerely and faithfufly,

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Nina K. Ho ,-ard
Secretary

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CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION

T iE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BARA' IS

OF BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA.

We, the undersigned Trustees of the Spiritual Assembly or the Baha'is of Birmingham, Alabama, all being~ full age and citi-

zens of the United States or America, and residents or the State of Alabama, desiring to form a corporation pursuant to the laws of Alabama providing for the incorporation of Churches and Societies contained in Article 3, of Chapter 7, Sections 124 to 130, inclusive, of Title 10, of the Code of Alabama of 1940, do hereby make and sign this Certificate and certify as follows:

FIRST: The purpose and objects for which the corporation is formed is to administer the affairs of the Baha'i Religion, for the benefit of the Baha'is of the City of Birmingham, Alabama, in accordance with the religious teachings and administrative principles of this Faith.

SECOND: The name of the Corporation is to be "THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHAI'IS OF BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA."

THIRD: The territory in which its activities are principally to be conducted is the City of Birmingham and vicinity,

and the county in which the corporation is to exercise its function is Jefferson County, in the State of Alabama.

FOURTH: The number of trustees is to be nine.

FIFTH: The names and places of residence of the trustee elected to serve until the first annual meeting, which is to be held on the 21st day of April, 1945, are as follows:

NAME	PLACE or RESIDENCE
Martha Fettig	2930 Lawnee Avenue, Birmingham, Alabama.

Verna A. Inglis 3431 011ft Road, Bir.minghaci, Alabama.
Anne E. Lohner 1027 ~ighth Court, douth,
Birmingham., Alaball

Nina Howard 1315 South 29th Street,
Birmingham, Alabama.

Noble Johnson. 2117 Fifth Avenue, ~orth,
Birmingham., Alabruna.

Robert Durr JO Twelfth Avenue, North,
ilm.ingham, Alaba.mal

W. R. Brown 47 Ninth Avenue, North, ~irmingham, Alabama.

Rose Brown 47 iinth Avenue, Uorth,
Birmingham, Alabama.

John Inglis 3431 Cliff Road, Birmingham,
Alabama.

SIXTH: The time for holding its annual meeting
ts to be
on the twenty-first day of April in each year.

SEVENTH: The corporation shall tave the power to ac-
quire and hold real property and personal property,
to reoeITe
property by gift, will or devise, and hold the same in
conformity
with all lawful conditions, and to exercise such other
powers as
are incident to private corporations.

EIGHTH: The members of the Spiritual Assembly of the
Baha'is of the City or Birmingham, Alabama, desiring
to become
incorporated, at a meeting held on the day ot
1944, adopted a resolution signifying such intention, and
elected
the nine persons hereinbefore named as trustees to serve
until
the next annual meeting.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, We as Trustees of The Spiritual As-
sembly of the Baha'is of Blr~i.igham, Alab&:ia, have ~ade 8.tld signed
this certificate, on this the day of
1944.

TRUS~S.

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WEE~HE BIRMINGHAM - .~~ f

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NEWSPAPO.@j

"COVERS ALABAMA LIKE THE DEW"

1622 Fourth Avenue, North - Phone 3-1973

BIRMINGHAM 3, ALABAMA

February 10, 1945

National Spiritual Assembly of the

Loyalists of the United States & Canada

Chicago, Illinois

Dear Friends:

For quite some time I have been debating in my mind if I should bring to your attention a matter which I think has merit. At last I decided I should after having consulted with my wife over the matter.

It is this--for fifteen years I have been Editor and Publisher of the Birmingham Weekly Review which is known in this section as a Negro newspaper.

The Negro Press in America is celebrating its 118 Anniversary this week. It tells me that the way to go forward in the field of journalism is by going forward.

The Negro newspaper exist in the United States because of prejudice, discrimination and exploitation. No Negro Journalist no matter how well trained is given the opportunity to serve and he served

on the basis of equitable employment on so-called white newspapers, therefore it seems to me now is the time for my newspaper to be in to become a newspaper and cease being a Negro newspaper and develop a letup which would employ capable people regardless of race or color in all departments--a newspaper whose features and editorials would reflect the thinking of folk of all races in relations with an International outlook. And without saying so in so many words until the time is ripe be guided in its editorial viewpoint by the teachings of the Cause.

I can think of no step which might be taken that would be more meaningful in this our Second Century effort. Along the line of achieving unity, promoting international understanding and good will with the most real Peace as ultimate goal.

This could be done if each real Eaha1 in the

THE BIRMINGHAM

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"COVERS ALABAMA LIKE THE DEW"

1622 Fourth Avenue, North - Phone 3-1973

BIRMINGHAM 3, ALABAMA

Dear Friends -2- February 10, 1945

You were advised of my desire in this connection
to work with an expression from the National Spiritual
Assembly by suggesting that each adult Bahai give
me a one or two year subscription for the Weekly
Review. I would use it to develop in an inter-
national newspaper out of my present racial news pub-
lication.

I most sincerely,

RD/nlc

P.S.,

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to the "JOURNAL of the A

merican Bahai Community - World

Assembly, Inc. - 1622 Fourth Avenue, N.,

Birmingham, Alabama 35203

Jr. Robert Durr Editor,

Weekly Review,

1622 Fourth Avenue, N.,

Birmingham, Alabama 35203.

The correspondence we had has been turned over to the National Spiritual
Assembly and the members have recorded their gratification of your intention
to serve the Bahai Faith by developing a newspaper free from all racial bias
or limitation.

It is an intention which the National Assembly has the utmost respect for
and sympathy. We share with you the thought that the great cause of
race unity

can well be served at this time by the development of a newspaper along such
lines.

Please ask you now to realize that the National Assembly itself senses
the

cause under certain definite limitations of authority and power.

However, ever

since the institutions described in the Master's Will and Testament were
first

developed, the National Assembly has refrained from calling upon the body of
the believers to contribute to any activity of an individual believer.

Every

Baha'i who joins our community can do so knowing that his only obligation financially speaking is to the local and national Baha'i Fund and that any other expenses he may incur in connection with the Cause are of his own voluntary choice.

We feel also that particular attention must be given to Shoghi Effendi's statement concerning Baha'i News. This statement made many years ago well indicates that the news letter is to develop into a great and representative Baha'i newspaper and in its development it will naturally at all times be entirely free of racial bias and employ the services of representatives of all races represented in the Baha'i community.

We think you will be very much interested in these words of the Guardian, and we quote them as follows: "The News Letter which you have lately initiated fulfills a very vital function and has been started admirably well.

I would

urge you to enlarge its scope, as much as your resources permit, that in time it

may devote a special section to every phase of your activities, administrative,

devotional, humanitarian, financial, educational and otherwise."

•••• It should be

made as representative as possible, should be replete with new, up-to-date in its

information, and should arouse the keenest interest among believers and admirers

alike in every corner of the globe. I cherish great hopes for its immediate future,

and I trust you will devote your special attention to its development, and by de-

vising well-conceived and worldwide measures transform this News Letter into what

I hope will become the foremost Baha'i Journal of the world."

As a token of our direct interest in your plan and our best wish

for your success, the National Assembly enters a subscription in the name of the Assembly itself, and the Members will be very much interested in reading your paper.

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With all good wishes,

Most truly,

I.

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THE BIRMINGHAM

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"COVERS ALABAMA LIKE THE DEW"
1622 Fourth Avenue, North - Phone 3-1973
BIRMINGHAM 3, ALABAMA

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JEW
"COVERS ALABAMA LIKE THE DEW"
1622 Fourth Avenue, North - Phone 3-1973
BIRJ.\fINGHAM 3, ALABAMA

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l.'ay 11 ,1945'.

Mr. Robert Durr,
The Rirmingha~ eekly Review,
1622 Fourt~ Avenue, North,
Bir~ ingha~, 3, Alabl!lta.

Dear r. Lurrs

The 1:1embersof the Nation!!l Spiritual Asserz.bly were very glad

indeed to meet you and have even the brief op-ortunity
for conversation.

D \e know that you will h!lve u:any important
opportunities to serve the

Cause and we want you to feel that all poesible
encourageaent and cooperation
will al~ays be extended.

As a little souv~nir of the visit we are sending you a copy of
the

Baha'i Cen•enary book with our sincere compliments.

With every good wieh,
Faithfully yours,

Secretary

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THE BIRMINGHAM

-.;ft£-VIEW

~ALABAMA...:SGREATEST NEWSPAPER

"COVERS ALABAMA LIKE THE DEW"•

505 17th Street, North-Phone 3-1973

BIRMINGHAM 3, ALABAMA

July 15, 1947

Mr. Harlan Ober

53 Conant Street

Beverly, Massachusetts

Dear Bahai Brother:

I hope you have gotten rid of your cold by this time. You may be very sure that whatever you do, if anything, will facilitate the acceleration and prosecution of a long range program. And regardless to what has been your experience with others upon whose requests for assistance you have looked with favor, I assure you that you will be repaid. And I could not spoil such a trust if vested in me. In the event of death, my wife would see to the paying of the debt.

Pray and meditate over the matter. Baha 'u' allah will guide you in making the right decision. If it is that you should not look with favor upon my request, I will regard it as the better thing; even though I know you can not possibly know how far reaching assistance in helping me get my house in order, as it were, would be. All Negroes who aspire to do the impossible in this section seek real aid outside the area. It was true with Booker T. Washington and George Washington Carver.

A lot of people in this city and state---both white and black, young and old---look to me to lead the way in doing what ought to be done as a leader, to the end that we may have improved human relations.

I am Chairman of the Negro Advisory Council to the Birmingham and Jefferson County Community Chest. I was re-elected to this position this year for the eighth consecutive year by a unanimous vote of a cross section representation of Negro life in this district, with its 250,000 Negro population.

The Governor of the State had me form a commission early this year to work out a program for the State, bearing in mind all that has to do with Negro welfare. He sent me to Philadelphia recently as the State's representative, and at the State's expense.

I won one of the "Lendell L. Willkie Awards for Negro Journalism"
L.R. Ober -2- July 15, 1947

in 1946. The award was received at the hands of the President of the United States, at the National Press Club in Washington on March 1, 1947.

I merely point out these things to show, that I am so situated in the hearts of people that I can do more good than perhaps any other

member of my race in this area, if I can sunnount this crisis.
Being able to secure what I want will insure my being able to
serve more effectively. If I were in your position anu you were in
mine, I would do all I could for you in His Name.
God bless you and keep you.

Most~ely,

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bw

P.S. Pray for me.

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April 7, 1948

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i:-ea !:3ank, .N. J.

Dear Baha::. l"rienc.ls

.r-or :fifteen years, .L have uperateu a Heekly ne•;spa1Jer in
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especially in this hour • rh n so much auo is beint: ...,adl in the
deep South over the I-resident's Civil dght.s com:nittee's re-
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large family and l thou~ht educational opportunities
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served as "ice-Chair. lruio~ t,"1 =- LSJ\ for th~ pa't t.wo yec_!s.

At

present, I am r.i.cti!;lg Chr.iin:l1-u1, qlso a member o:' the /\labar ..a

• Tennessee .Ke ion.tl. Teaching ,.l.111ittee.

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Birr!linr-ham, Ala.
BIRMINGHAM

WEEKt - v-:....;~
CLEAN·CONSERVATIVE·CONSTRUCTIVE
I
VIEW
...:sGIUATEST NEWSPAPER

1602, 6th Avenue No. - Phone 3-1973
BIRMINGHAM 3, ALABAMA

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of the tr;ted 3tates O£ erica
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correctly, the u'Uardian s :o this
is the time to go out for the aGses -- time to go
ou~ ~or all the peop: and uild in their hearts the
CMuse of Baha'u'llah. it follm1s that he must be
convinced t. a if t.:is is cou ar;eously and audaciously
done, nll th necess ry things , rill he added.

I think it is t~le for th /'J~JrO be thinking in
terms of makinu plaiis to acqui .., .., facts dealing ti th
the ph~'sic~l needs of the poor or all groups in t'<•e
United :::itates, eng~ing in interpreting these fact->,
presentins them to key people and trying to get do. e
that ous;ht be done as a me-ms o bri.leine ell m n 1.0
see the euty of Baha'u'llnh in us and creat~ a
ground-s ,ell of wantin~ on the p rt of people to
surrender themself s in His service in spirit and deed.

Page 'J:'10
mr • ..l'oley

July , 1948

Catholic sister, representative of a group
five 01'

rho came to Birmingham ten years ago. I thought, really, sent
me an invitation a couple of weeks ago to attend the ground
breaking exercises of a high school and a 200-bed hospital.
I attended the hospital exercises, talked with Priests and
nurses. I would be helped in sickness and need by these
people. I realize that assistance is not to their knowledge available
elsewhere. And I recalled that the Catholic church is
making a great effort, "long range program" to help people in the
South, because I understand the good. On this basis, they
are getting, God you know.

It is not pioneers make their decisions... work in
the future (1) give... the cause and (2) try to... done what
you can do for the sick, feed, offered, ignorant people
both White and handicapped.

... of course,

• supporting

we can not ask others to assist

+1-te promulgation

...

of the Cause in the U.S., etc., since

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... that we could not set up some sort of social
service system, I assist in getting for others, in need, the
things they do not have the capacity to get for themselves,
I went to see how it was last fall while
I was in that area during the annual (Jubilee) of the
National Urban League. I can't say anything about
it,

as far as the Green Acres project on that mountain, we
should have a board

• It's a high school staff development

instructors: 10 are Haha! :J.

If it's difficult for youth or children, we'll
do everything we can get done, that we want to get done.
People are drawn to things. In places here there is action
action! Action! on the level of their needs.

You are a busy man with great responsibilities insofar
as the administration of the cause, concern, and I do not
want to add one thing to your burden - so just think on these
things. You need not bother to comment by letter.

When it's in the state, I will try to get
a point of view that you are dealing with on these
issues.

raised in this letter.

~00 I"t .J,
30, 12th ,ve., Uo .
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~.r. :iornce Holley, :iecty.
N'qtion3l ~"piritual ,~sse1nbly
Beh3is of the Uni :.ed ~tates
Tilnette, Illinois

The Guardian nas urged nd ia pr:Jying that the ~1-
mighty ru3y guide r~e in .,inding ~ way to "lt~enu ·the A!""ricM
N tional Bahai f.iet in l'.t..1pol1., Ugand·l, Afric~.
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by :34ir and ship, the date of th1: meet, l;c,1efi o.: tulle to
m~ke the rounu t.:ip ~nd other pertinent det~ils.

s of no, my going s.:e-11s 1,lclo3t il.loosoible, but I
thought I •• ight do soole further checking on t.he : ~t.tPr
just in case the ·va..v should open ~nd I should ...'inu it os-
sib.J..e to clake the trip. I naln " :.o SPe Jou and pay you ;:it
tne Canten-:iry.

THE BIRMINGHAM

"Covers Alabama Like The Dew"
1602 Sixth Avenue, North - Phone 3-1973
BIRMINGHAM, 8, ALABAMA

January 16, 1953

Mr. Horace Holley, Secretary
National Spiritual »..Ssembly of Bahai's
Tilnette, Illinois

Dear Mr. Holley:

I deeply appreciate letter received from the NSA joining
with the Guardian in urging that I attend the conference in
Campala.

So far as I oan see as of now it is impossible for me to
make the trip, because it would cost me upwards of a twelve
hundred (\$1,200) or more dollars to absence myself from my re-
sponsibilities here for the time i would have to be away plus
the expenses involved in making such a round trip.

dere it not for the above I would suspend publication of
my paper for the month of February and go to Campala and as
the guardian suggested do some speaking around the country upon
my return.

It is my feeling that there is a terrific strugele going
on 1n Africa for possession of the minds of the real native

people of this great country and it is most important that they
may have the fullest opportunity possible to be exposed to the
truth and I truly wish for those serving on the African committee
and the conference great success.

With kindest personal regards and most sincere best wishes,
I am,

Mos: JJnoerely,

}tu1f\~AA-v-
Robert Durr
RD/mf

Res: #30 12th Ave. N.
Birmingham, Ala.

— Selected Archives on Robert Durr (Used by permission of the curator)