

the Faith. Because he planned to move to New York City, Arthur received Ibrahim Kheiralla's 'Truth Seeker' lessons on the Bahá'í Faith in condensed format. He declared on October 27th. Once Arthur was settled in Manhattan, he invited Kheiralla and family to visit and give meetings. Thus the first Bahá'í meetings (not called firesides at this stage) were held in the Big Apple. Regular meetings were held in his home and in a few short years, the New York City Bahá'í community came a reality

The Assembly of New York City was, according to Arthur's personal records, first elected in 1898. The incorporation seal is dated 1898. Records (official minutes,) show that a "Board of Counsel" was elected on December 7, 1900 at the old home of Mr. Arthur P. Dodge, room 601, Carnegie Building. He was elected president of the Assembly and apparently held the position for several years. Ibrahim Kheiralla' refused to hold an allegiance to 'Abdú'l-Bahá and around 1900, caused a splintering of the Bahá'í Faith after the Master refused to sanction some of his beliefs, or to give him authority over the Bahá'í community in the West. Most of the American Bahá'í community remained loyal to 'Abd'l-Bahá though the leadership of several prominent Bahá'ís, notably Thornton Chase. Arthur eventually was able to lead the New York Bahá'ís into maintaining an allegiance with 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Kheiralla lost contact with the Bahá'ís, as well as Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant, dying in 1929 along with most of his movement.

In 1900, Arthur produced The American, a magazine of a nonpartisan political movement called the "Universal Brotherhood Party," not a Bahá'í publication but clearly reflecting the Bahá'í viewpoint: unity working for God's Peace on Earth. In 1903-1904, Arthur Dodge published articles on the Bahá'í Faith, writing that the Bahá'ís held "to the Positive Reality of actual Christianity, striving to live the life in the knowledge that love and service toward God were not possible without love and service to one's fellow men." This was part of a social reconstruction stemming largely from 'Abdu'l-Bahá's annunciation of universal principles that were being taken up by the Bahá'ís during this period.

During 1911-1912, Arthur Dodge and his wife was host to 'Abdu'l-Bahá on several occasions on the Master's historic visit to the United States. On April 16, 1912, 'Abdu'l-Bahá gave a talk on the significance of the

Mashriqu'l-Adhkar

in his home at 261 West 139th Street. 'Abdu'l-Bahá designated Yew York City as the 'City of the Covenant.' during a Bahá'i meeting on June 19, 1912. He spoke of Bahá'u'lláh's Kitáb-i-'Ahdi and the Tablet of the Branch, the later having been originally revealed in Adrianople for Mirza Ali Riza, and declared His own station to be the 'Center of the Covenant.'

Arthur was also a delegate to the national convention on at least three occasions between the years 1909-1917.

Arthur Dodge was later named as one of the nineteen western Disciples of 'Abdu'l-Bahá by Shoghi Effendi. This same group was also entitled Heralds of the Covenant. Additional accounts of his life and the date of his passing are presently being researched.

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