

## 11 SPIRITUAL CULMINATIONS and the PASSING OF MAX HEINDEL



76. Mother of Max Heindel.

On March 13, 1916 Max Heindel's mother passed on.<sup>221</sup> He wrote about this as follows, "A few months ago when my mother, a resident of Copenhagen, Denmark, passed over I received letters from my brother and sister saturated with grief at the 'loss,' but it was the very reverse to me, for though I had visited her clothed in the soul body a few times a year for a moment or two, I would not have dared to materialize or speak to her as that might have produced a shock, resulting in death, even if such a selfish use of these faculties were permitted, being strictly prohibited. *Thus I was parted from my parent while she lived and was closely associated with my brother and sister.* When death came this was reversed.

Then she was unable to make her presence known to them, she could not talk with them or satisfy them that she was not 'dead' as they believed. But she quickly learned that a mere THOUGHT of me served to carry her to California and when I had taught her a certain signal, she had, and has instant access to me at all times. *Now that she is DEAD to my brother and sister she is alive to me* who had the privilege of helping her through the troublesome transition time, though I am still in this world. Therefore I feel no loss."<sup>222</sup>

Dying is sometimes hampered when bystanders try to prevent it as Heindel's half-sister did. Heindel tells the following story, "This class [deceased persons in which the vital and desire bodies are interlocked due to their wickedness, and therefore are forced to stay in the lower regions of the invisible world] may consequently be met with for a considerable number of years after they have passed away from the body. It is indeed a curious fact that sometimes these evil persons are sought by former friends who have passed out of the body and need help to contact the physical world. I remember such an instance occurring a few years

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<sup>221</sup> Staden Københavens Statistiske Kontor, Folkeregistret, in a letter of October 1970.

<sup>222</sup> *Rays from the Rose Cross*. Sidelights and viewpoints. By "Vita". July 1916, pp. 73-74.

ago, when an aged relative [Heindel's mother] was about to pass over to the other side. She looked forward very anxiously to seeing her mate who had gone on before her. But as he had already reached the First Heaven, his arms and body had passed away and only the head remained. Therefore he would scarcely be able to show himself to her when she had passed over, much less influence conditions at the time of the passing, and these were far from being to his liking. Certain things were being done to retard the severance of the Spirit from the flesh and considerable distress was occasioned to the passing person thereby. In his anxiety over this condition the husband of the lady secured assistance from a friend whose interlocking vital and desire bodies made it easy for him to manifest. This Spirit took a heavy cane standing in the room, and knocked a book out of the hand of the passing lady's daughter, which so frightened those present that they stopped their demonstration, allowing the mother to pass out."<sup>223</sup>

In the spring of 1916 the typesetting-machine, which could no longer handle the work was replaced by a modern up-to-date linotype and it was possible to expand the magazine *Rays from the Rose Cross* to a larger size. Max Heindel first intended to change the magazine to a Rosicrucian daily newspaper, but after the war started many members were sent to the front, some even losing their lives. Also, prices for printing machinery, paper, and printer's wages were very high. There were no members who could undertake the task, so this idea remained unfulfilled.

On the last page of the May 1916 issue Max Heindel wrote in part, "Contest in symbolism! On our inside cover you will find an ancient Rosicrucian Symbol which the Elder Brothers call *The Crucible*. If you use it in your meditation it will reveal itself to you ... When the prize-winning essays have been published the editor will write on the subject."

This picture also appeared in the June to October issues. Only a few persons responded to the invitation, for Heindel wrote in the September 1916 issue, on page 160, "We are wondering whether the students have noticed the contest in 'symbolism', ... for we have only had a few responses and the date set for the closing of the contest, August 1, is past."

In the October 1916 edition, page 169, Max Heindel writes, "The following interpretation of the ancient Rosicrucian Symbol on our inside cover by one of the students is the most worthy attempt at explanation received to date. We trust it may stimulate others to dig into this mine of mystery and extract some of the gems of spiritual wisdom there hidden."

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<sup>223</sup> Heindel, *Questions and Answers*, volume 2. pp. 172, 173.

In order not to interrupt this biography, the interpretation is reproduced in addendum 12. It appears that Max Heindel did not find it necessary, after this, to write on the subject himself.

The Santa Fe railroad ran trains to Fallbrook and Bonsall on a track that was built in the San Luis Rey Valley, about 200 feet below Mount Ecclesia. Sugar beets were planted in the valley and when they were harvested, they were loaded into cars on a spur track and hauled to sugar beet factories. An enormous flood washed away the railroad tracks and the spur tracks; also farm buildings, trees and vegetation. It was a sad sight to see the barns, chicken coops, horses, cows, and small cottages all washed away by the turbulent river. The flood even swept away the bridges between Los Angeles and San Diego. It isolated Oceanside and no one could reach people there, nor could a message be sent out, for every telephone and telegraph line was down. Five persons lost their lives in this flood and it was three weeks before Mount Ecclesia could receive any mail.

There was need for a Rosicrucian philosophy correspondence course, but the heavy workload prevented Max Heindel from writing it himself, so he wrote to Mrs Kittie Skidmore Cowen of Montana Home, Idaho – she was a contributing writer on *Cosmo* subjects in the *Rays*.<sup>224</sup> He asked her to design a course of twelve lessons with questions. In the spring of 1917, this “Preliminary Philosophy Course,” as it is now titled, was finished. All aspirants must complete this course before they can become members.



77. Ella Wheeler Wilcox, 1855-1919.

In March of 1917 the poet, Mrs Ella Wheeler visited Mount Ecclesia. In the May issue of the *Rays* magazine, Heindel wrote:

FOUND! – AUTHOR

“Recently while Ella Wheeler Wilcox was a visitor at Mt. Ecclesia it developed in a conversation between her and me that she is the author of that exquisite poem.”

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<sup>224</sup> *Cosmo* is short for *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*.

One ship sails east and another sails west  
With the self-same winds that blow;  
'Tis the set of the sail and not the gale  
Which determines the way they go.

As the winds of the sea are the ways of fate  
As we voyage along through life,  
'Tis the act of the soul which determines the goal  
And not the calm or the strife.

“I found this poem a number of years ago without name of author attached and had used it many times expressing frequently my regret that I was unable to state who wrote it. It was therefore a great pleasure to me to learn whence it came and Mrs Wilcox at the same time gave me the history of how she came to write it. It is believed the story will be of as great interest to our readers as it was to me, so we repeat Mrs Wilcox’s story. She said that she was sailing from New York to Boston and while sitting with her husband on the deck he suddenly remarked: ‘Isn’t it remarkable, Ella, that here we see the ships sailing one way and the other with the same wind that blows?’ To this Mrs Wilcox answered: ‘Oh Robert, what a theme for a poem! Give me some paper quick that I may write it!’ And so she wrote the poem in about ten minutes. This, she said, was about twenty years ago and it was first published in Munsey’s magazine. It is also interesting to know that Mr Wilcox was the originator of many of the spiritual ideas which Mrs Wilcox was then able to express so beautifully in verse. According to her their life was an ideal love-life, a very close companionship of two souls, such as only those can appreciate who have either experienced or are now living it. Is it not a pity that such unions of spiritual companionship are not the rule instead of the exception?”

“It will probably also interest our readers to learn that Mrs Wilcox has been a student of the Rosicrucian teachings for a number of years and is very enthusiastic in her praises of *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*. She told me that she had arranged with her husband some time before his death to read together a chapter in it each evening before retiring but owing to their inability to escape company this plan was never carried out which she regretted very much as she felt that Mr Wilcox would have been greatly benefited in the post-mortem state by a knowledge of the facts therein conveyed.”

Shortly before her death in 1919 the autobiography of Mrs Wilcox was published entitled *The Worlds and I*. In it she tells us of her birth in 1855 on a farm in Wisconsin, the youngest of four children. Her childhood and youth were lacking in physical comforts and in mental, emotional and spiritual satisfactions. She started writing poetry at a very early age and became well known as a poet in her own state by the time she graduated from high school. At about 28 years of age, she married Robert Wilcox. They had one child, a son, who died shortly after birth. Not long after their marriage, they both became interested in Theosophy and accepted its teachings. Throughout life, they were always interested in psychic and spiritual matters.

Early in their married life they promised each other that whoever went first to the other side would return and communicate with the other, if possible, and they had little doubt that it was possible.

Robert Wilcox died in 1916 after more than thirty years of close and loving companionship with his Ella. She was overcome with grief, which became ever more intense as week after week went by with no message from him. She visited famous mediums all over the country and also a number of "Wise Ones" of various religions and philosophies without finding what she sought. A stay at a Theosophical retreat helped to calm her and good friends there warned her against blind dependence on spiritualism.

Having heard that in California the spiritual vibrations were stronger, she went to see Max Heindel, still seeking help in her sorrow, still unable to understand why she had had no word from her Robert. This is how she tells of this meeting, "In talking with Max Heindel, the leader of the Rosicrucian Philosophy in California, he made very clear to me the effect of intense grief. Mr Heindel assured me that I would come in touch with the spirit of my husband when I learned to control my sorrow. I replied that it seemed strange to me that an omnipotent God could not send a flash of His light into a suffering soul to bring its conviction when most needed. Did you ever stand beside a clear pool of water, asked Mr Heindel, and see the trees and skies repeated therein? And did you ever cast a stone into that pool and see it clouded and turmoiled so it gave no reflection? Yet the skies and trees were waiting above to be reflected when the waters grew calm. So God and your husband's spirit wait to show themselves to you when the turbulence of sorrow is quieted."

After this visit she returned to her home and spent hours daily in prayer and meditation and after a few months the words Heindel had spoken to her came true.<sup>225</sup>

The offices became so overcrowded that it was necessary to erect a new building for administrative activities. On the thirteenth of March 1917, at two o'clock in the afternoon, after a simple ceremony, nine probationers began construction on the building. But when the building was only half finished, the finances were exhausted. Before the building could be completed a sum of several thousand dollars had to be raised.

Attempts to borrow on their notes in San Diego failed. As the administrator of her mother's estate, Mrs Heindel tried to borrow from that, but needed the consent of her sisters. Consent was obtained which solved the problem and the administration building was finished. The new building housed the Print Shop on the first floor and offices on the second. The second floor also provided sleeping quarters for Mr and Mrs Heindel. The move from the hillside cottage to the administration building saved the Heindels many trips up and down the hill each day.



78. Augusta Foss and Max Heindel in their daily clothing.



79. Augusta Foss with niece Olga Borsum (Crellin).

In May Mr F. H. Kennedy visited Mount Ecclesia. When he stepped up to the front office door, he asked where Heindel could be found and he was directed to the Print Shop. The linotype was, as usual, out of order. Mr Kennedy entered the printing office and there he found Heindel ly-

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<sup>225</sup> *Rays from the Rose Cross*. July 1959, p. 11. She was born on November 5, 1850 and died of cancer on October 30, 1919.

ing on his back under the linotype, perspiration running down his face. Kennedy greeted his friend with a smile. After talking with Heindel, Mr Kennedy returned to the upper office where he found Mrs Heindel. She said she had never seen a human being with such distress on his face as Mr Kennedy. He actually shed tears over the state in which he found Max Heindel. To think a man with his ability was forced to lie under a dirty, oily machine in order to make the necessary adjustments.

They hired a young man, but he had little knowledge of typesetting and even less of the mechanical end.

Mr Kennedy pleaded with Mrs Heindel to find a person among the members who could be brought to Headquarters to help in the Print Shop. She knew of only one man who had some knowledge of book-binding, but he was a poor man with a family of five children. Mr Kennedy took his address and at once began to make plans to have this man come to Headquarters with his family. They guaranteed his wages for one year and built a cottage for him that was called "Ecclesia Cottage."



80. Ecclesia Cottage.

By June 1917 the administration building was ready and Mr Philip Grell and his family arrived just in time to help move and install the printing machinery.

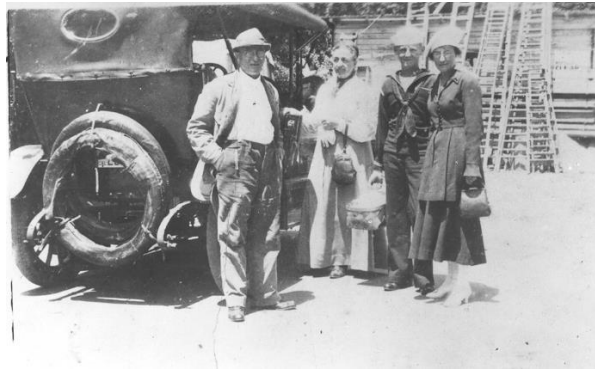
Mr Grell's knowledge of printing and machinery maintenance was very meager indeed. Things did not work out as smoothly as they should have and after eight months the family left Mount Ecclesia. Max Heindel was again under the press and linotype.

The enlarged magazine required that a bigger press be ordered. The spacious printing office accommodated the larger press and also provided

storage rooms to keep the books in good condition without stacking, which would damage the covers. They started bookbinding on a small scale.

During the war years it was hard to get employees. Mr and Mrs Heindel traveled as far as Los Angeles to hire cooks, dishwashers, gardeners, stenographers and printers. With weekly or semimonthly trips, this became a financial burden, as gasoline and hotel bills were costly. The people they hired never stayed long because the country life was lonely for them, and the vegetarian diet unsavory. Every month or two a new cook had to be broken in to the vegetarian methods.

The same difficulties arose with the printers, who would either bring liquor on the grounds, go on drinking sprees, or would go into town for amusement.



81. Heindel, his wife, nephew, and Olga near the Paige.

On July 15, 1917, seven years after Headquarters was established, the Heindels went on their first holiday.<sup>226</sup> They departed on a Sunday morning after the usual simple service in the Pro-Ecclesia. They sat in “Carita,” a sturdy Overland, and went gliding over roads that they had travelled many times before, through beautiful San Luis Rey Valley, past the old Franciscan Mission, over Red Mountain to Lake Elsinore. But these roads were not the same. There was a peace and joy in the air, a calm and a quiet, a balm for their tired bodies and minds. Their whole being seemed to change, they felt themselves rejuvenated; they laughed, smiled and sang like little children. From Elsinore, with the state highway as smooth as a polished floor, they went through Colton, known as Cali-

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<sup>226</sup> See *Rays*, September 1917, pp. 198 ff.



fornia's chief source for cement. Then, on to Riverside where they passed orange orchards and the air exuded the fragrance of orange blossoms.

It is indisputably a state of unsurpassed beauty, for this whole, vast section of Southern California is a veritable Garden of Eden, with its magnificent palms, its sweet magnolias, its golden oranges, and its profusion of flowers that are a pleasure to behold. Fifty years earlier not a single tree grew in this entire area. The country between Los Angeles and San Bernardino was then referred to as "the sixty mile desert," a happy hunting ground for the few scattered settlers.

From Riverside a short drive took them to Redlands, the most picturesque of the small towns in these parts. Here they drove through the famous "Smiley Heights" located on a narrow ridge about five hundred feet high, that divided the great bottomland upon which it stands, into two vast valleys surrounded by mountains on all sides. Driving along this ridge, one finds a number of places that are but twenty feet wide and, without leaving the car, beholds a magnificent panoramic view of the twin valleys with their orange groves and orchards stretching toward the distant mountains.

They also visited San Bernardino, the oldest town in this area, a mining center, but were rather disappointed, so they turned toward the coast again for cooler weather.

With regard to the temperature range, California is unique. If you know where to go, you may find every temperature you wish on any given day, summer or winter, and you will not have far to go either way. It's unusually pleasant and cool on Mount Ecclesia. If you wish to find a nice, warm place, Lake Elsinore - 44 miles away - would be ideal. San Bernardino - 90 miles from Mount Ecclesia - is a real hot spot; or from Los Angeles you can take the electric car on a cool winter's morning, ride up to Mount Lowe, six thousand feet above sea level, enjoy a game in the snow, then board the car for a return trip through Pasadena, where straw hats and shirt waists are necessary for comfort, to Venice-by-the-Sea and Santa Monica, where the blue Pacific Ocean rolls in upon the white beach, inviting you to take a plunge into its invigorating waters.

The Heindels' route to the coast led through Los Angeles and one of its most beautiful suburbs, Hollywood. Then came the climb over the Cahuenga Pass and soon they were speeding through the fertile San Fernando valley toward the mountains that separated them from the coast. Universal City was the first point of interest. There they saw how the film folks make picture imitations of old castles; these studded the neighboring hills to give scenery for the tales of knighthood times. Cowboys in chaps

and ten-gallon hats and corralled cattle gave a striking contrast between the old world and the new.

Onward they sped, with the thriving towns of Lankershim, Van Nuys and Owensmouth on their right, basking in the sunshine among fruit-laden groves. Gold first drew the world's attention to California, and although that produced a vast mineral wealth in the state, it pales in comparison with the wealth contained in the golden grains harvested on the broad fields; or the golden fruits, oranges, lemons, and grapefruits; or the oil. Indeed, these are worth more than gold.

Bound for Santa Barbara, they next glided down a long, steeply curving incline—Canejo Grade—towards the coast, and in time reached Ventura, an important oil town. Then for twenty-four miles the highway skirted the ocean. What interested them most on this part of the trip was Summerland, so named for its spiritualistic haven, at one time a very popular camping ground for the spiritualists. But, oil was discovered there and instead of reaching upwards to the pristine, ethereal region of the angels, men with grimy faces and blackened hands are delved into the realms of Pluto, greedily extracting the slimy substance which kept the factory fires burning.

They secured quarters at Santa Barbara and made up their minds to stay for a while, for they had heard much about the beauties of the surrounding country.

Their niece Olga [Borsum Crellin], who accompanied them on the trip, was ambitious to become a chauffeuse, having already had some lessons on the Maxwell that took the mail to Oceanside. She was easily initiated into the mysteries of driving Carita, so Heindel began to take things a bit easier. Between short trips and long rests the days passed, giving each renewed vigor for the return to Mount Ecclesia.

On account of the war, during the year 1917, it became impossible for astrologers to get the English language ephemerides in America and numerous complaints came in to Headquarters. One evening Mr and Mrs Heindel were having their usual review of the day's work, as was their custom. Heindel remarked to his wife, "Why, dear! What is the matter with you and me? With our knowledge of mathematics and astrology, and our Print Shop, why cannot you and I issue an American ephemeris?"

They acquired the American and French nautical almanacs and spent their evenings calculating an ephemeris; Heindel took the longitudes and his wife the declinations. In February 1918 an announcement appeared in the magazine that an ephemeris had been printed, and on February 10<sup>th</sup>, tables of houses for latitudes 37-48 degrees would be ready. After that, two

other tables of houses for latitudes 25-36 and 49-60 degrees were calculated, while the ephemerides were calculated from 1860.

The publishing of the ephemerides and the tables of houses stimulated the sales of the enlarged edition of *Simplified Scientific Astrology* and consequently many astrologers became interested in the Rosicrucian literature.

In 1918 Max Heindel began to make plans to install a bookbindery and to buy the necessary machinery. He decided to drive to San Francisco to visit the secondhand dealers. A secondhand, seven-passenger Paige was purchased for the trip, a much larger and roomier car than Bedelia. The Heindels invited two ladies to accompany them, Dr Ruth Woods and Mrs Mary L. Lyon. Max Heindel did the driving because he was afraid that the five hundred mile trip would be too hard on Mrs Heindel. After a week they returned to Mount Ecclesia with the binding machinery, which they purchased at a much reduced price.

Later, Max Heindel set up the equipment with the help of Philip Grell and after the job was finished, Mr and Mrs Grell and their family departed Headquarters.

Some time later the Heindels brought to Mount Ecclesia, through an employment agency, two very diligent workers, a man and his wife who helped considerably in the linotype work and bookbindery; but the man appeared to be a periodical drinker and after a few months they left Mount Ecclesia. Again, an advertisement was inserted in the papers for a printer-linotype operator. In this advertisement he used the address of Mrs Heindel's sister who lived in Los Angeles. Here Max Heindel met and hired a reliable printer, Mr N. W. Caswell. Ms Ethel Lanning, a young woman apprentice who worked in the Print Shop, continued her apprenticeship with the help of Mr Caswell. Some years later, these two workers were married, continuing their work in the Print Shop.

The difficulties with the water supply that started in July 1913 again surfaced over the closing of the Mount Ecclesia gate leading to the reservoirs. When the gate was left open, cattle roamed over the Mount Ecclesia grounds, destroying young trees and plants. Max Heindel did not want to go to court, but in 1918, late on a Saturday afternoon, the city Trustees swore out an injunction to restrain headquarters from closing and nailing the gate.

The injunction summoned Mr Heindel to be in court on the following Monday morning. Heindel telephoned his lawyer in San Diego to represent him. Monday morning at ten o'clock, Mr and Mrs Heindel were in the courtroom, but no lawyer appeared. Max Heindel went to the lawyer's office to get him. As he entered he heard the lawyer's voice in the next room. The attendant, however, told him that Mr Adam Thompson

was out of town. Heindel returned to the courtroom where Mrs Heindel urged him to represent himself at the trial. The judge, aware that Thompson was, in fact, in town ruled in favor of Heindel, who won his suit against the city of Oceanside. Furthermore, the judge berated the trustees for interfering with the defendant's lawyer.

Unsettled issues regarding the closing of abandoned streets that had been laid out on the grounds during the now-defunct real estate boom, and concerning the closing of the gate and roads leading to the reservoirs, awaited the arrival of Mr Hiram Graves. He came to headquarters to help out in the office, but as a former detective associated with friends in Oceanside, he uncovered many facts concerning unethical conduct by the city trustees. He produced the proof and publicly exposed them, forcing them to resign. Newly elected trustees willingly settled out of court and the case was closed at last, late in November 1918.

The Print Shop remained in operation day and night in order to produce the many years of ephemerides, plus the expanded *Message of the Stars*, which the November 1918 issue of *Rays* announced as "ready."

In November Max Heindel went to his lawyer in San Diego. While there, and without mention to his wife, he transferred all of the copyrights, as well as the plates that were in his name, by Deed of Gift, to Augusta Foss Heindel.

While calculating the 1920 ephemeris one evening in early December 1918, Heindel urged his wife to work out the entire ephemeris by herself. This surprised her, as it was customary for her to calculate the declinations and for him to do the longitudes, so she asked, "Dear, why do you want me to do this work alone? Do you think you are going to leave me?" He replied, "No dear, I just want to be able to tell people that you did this ephemeris all alone. I want to be proud of you."

After the Grell family left Mount Ecclesia, a technical problem arose, so there was nothing for Max Heindel to do but operate the engine himself. He studied the bindery machinery until he thoroughly learned the mechanism, and operated it until he became quite proficient.

He was beginning to be encouraged when again the printer quit and it was necessary to advertise again. It seemed like all the skilled men had been killed in the war. The Heindels therefore drove to Los Angeles on Wednesday, January 1, 1919, in their seven-passenger Paige "Carita" to hire a printer. They succeeded and found a man and wife. The man had experience in linotyping and printing and the wife had some knowledge of bookbinding. They, Max and Augusta Heindel, left Los Angeles on Friday, January 3, at 5:00 a.m., in order to stop at the market to buy vege-

tables. They arrived at Mount Ecclesia at noon tired and hungry with the back of the car loaded with vegetables and other necessary items.

On Saturday evening, January 4, the library at Mount Ecclesia was filled with happy faces. Friends from nearby towns gathered for a belated New Year's Eve party. Max Heindel sang several songs with his deep, strong, lyrical bass voice. One of his favorite melodies was *Ben Bolt*. He also sang a version of *Where are you going my pretty maid*, an old standard among sailors.<sup>227</sup> He told short stories and comic coincidences and surprised the guests by slipping in quietly with ice cream and cake he had bought in Oceanside.

On Sunday, January 5, Heindel was most pensive and quiet, but apparently in the best of health. He busily prepared the students lesson. In the evening he gave an address in the Pro-Ecclesia.

Then on Monday, January 6, Max Heindel, again very quiet, but serene and placid, arranged the papers on his desk and left notes in various places on how to order stock for the Print Shop. He was most desirous of having Augusta remain with him in his office. Several times, he asked her to sit down and talk with him. She told him that she feared she would interfere with his work, and Heindel replied, "But I do love to have you with me and visit with me."

A few minutes after four o'clock, he went into her office with a letter that he had written to the postmistress requesting delivery of mail to Mount Ecclesia once each day. At about four-thirty, while Augusta was reading the letter he stood near her with his hand on the edge of her desk. Suddenly, he slipped to the floor by her side. It was a strange fall, as though unseen hands were holding him and letting him down gently. As Mrs Heindel leaned over him, his last words were, "I am all right, dear." He became unconscious from the stroke and was carried to his room, which adjoined the office of Mrs Heindel. While she remained with him, the workers held a healing meeting for him in the Pro-Ecclesia. At 8:25 p.m. he opened his eyes once more and smiled to his wife, then expired. The body was left in his study without ice and without embalming fluid for three and a half days. Curiously enough, the body was ostensibly unchanged; his lips and cheeks retained their color as in life. Some friends doubted that Max Heindel was clinically deceased, so Mrs Heindel decided that, unless there was a change after the body reached the crematory in San Diego, she would store it in the vault for several days. But this was not necessary. As the memorial service was being read in the Pro-Ecclesia, Max Heindel appeared to his wife and assured her that

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<sup>227</sup> See addendum 11.

all was right. The body was then cremated and the ashes were deposited around the roots of the rose bush at the foot of the Cross.