

6 EXTENSION OF THE ROSICRUCIAN FELLOWSHIP

In November 1909, Max Heindel left Portland for Los Angeles, where his footsteps led him to the home of Augusta Foss and her mother. He had been away from them for about two years and had not corresponded with them since leaving for his first northern lecture tour and his journey to Berlin. Augusta feared he had forgotten her, so she was very surprised to see him. Heindel told her that he now represented the Rosicrucian Order, that he had written a book, and that he was preparing to give a lecture series in Los Angeles.

She shared with him that after catching a bad cold on January 21, 1909, she suffered a very severe bout of double pneumonia which brought her to death's door.¹⁹¹ On the 28th of the same month, at one hour after midnight, she passed out of the body and saw herself lying on the bed where the cries of the nurse, who shook her, brought her back to life. The illness weakened her constitution. With her afflicted lungs, she was unable to go out into the night air; therefore, she had dropped her affiliation with the Theosophical Society.

Now, upon hearing of Max Heindel's intention to lecture, however, she offered to help him. Max rented a room a few doors from Augusta Foss' home and stored his stock of books and incidentals in the carriage house of the Foss residence.

He rented the large Blanchard Hall for his lectures, the same hall he himself had attended in 1903 to hear the Leadbeater lectures. Its seating capacity was 1300. Augusta Foss was in for a great surprise. She had been a student of astrology for about four years when she first met Heindel. One day, while spending the afternoon at her home, he asked if his horoscope indicated that he could be a lecturer. At that time, he spoke with a strong Danish accent and she supposed that this would be a great handicap, so she replied that he would make a splendid writer, but, perhaps, lecturing would not be his forte. Yet the knowledge he displayed and the questions he extemporaneously answered were truly ingenious. He was a man reborn.

Max Heindel lectured to 800 or more people three nights each week, and the other nights he formed classes and taught both philosophy and astrology. One hundred twenty five pupils attended his first astrology class in Los Angeles. This enthusiastic group became a Center on February 27,

¹⁹¹ Heindel, Max and Foss Heindel, Augusta. *Astro-Diagnosis, A Guide to Healing*. Oceanside, CA: The Rosicrucian Fellowship, 1946, pp. 70 - 75.

1910. Since Heindel had promised his friends in Portland and Seattle that he would return to them as soon as this work was completed, teachers were prepared to carry on the work in Los Angeles.

In order to save on the high cost of advertising and to get as much exposure as possible, Max Heindel ordered hundreds of cardboard signs eight by ten inches, printed with the addresses of the halls, and the dates and titles of the lectures. As he did before in Columbus, he would leave each morning with tacks, hammer and a big armful of these cards, and would tack the cards up in various parts of town. He walked miles in spite of his lame, injured leg, and then stood on the platform or in the classroom the entire evening. This brought results for, in no time at all; the halls were overcrowded, especially after his first lecture.¹⁹² Friends would bring friends until the hall could not hold them all, so he began to issue tickets. He handed them out to each person who entered the door. These tickets would then admit them to the next lecture and assure them a seat.

The great numbers of people forced Heindel to extend lectures and classes to Sunday afternoons. This continued until April 7, 1910, when he prepared to leave for Seattle and Portland to give lessons there. On that night, he turned the philosophy class over to Mrs Clara Gidding, a friend who had worked with him in the past in Los Angeles. The next day he announced that Ms Augusta Foss would take over the astrology class, mentioning that she had been his own astrology teacher, which, of course, helped hold the class together.

The next morning he again fell seriously ill with heart trouble and was taken to Angelus Hospital where he spent several weeks near the point of death. During this illness Max Heindel went through the second initiation and said the following: “On the night of the 9th of April, 1910, when the new moon was in Aries, my Teacher appeared in my room and told me that a new decade (cycle) had commenced that night”¹⁹³ and that in the coming ten years it would be my privilege to give the world a science of healing such as later described. The Fellowship would furnish helpers in the great work. This was the first intimation I had had that such a work was contemplated.

“The night before, my work with the newly formed Los Angeles Fellowship Center had terminated. I had traveled and lectured six out of seven nights a week and several afternoons a week besides. Since my Chicago publishing experience, I had been sick and was withdrawing from

¹⁹² His first lecture was given on November 29, 1909.

¹⁹³ Heindel, Max. *Teachings of an Initiate*. 1955, ch. 20, p. 146.

public work to recuperate. I knew it was very dangerous to leave the body consciously when ill, for the ether is then unusually attenuated and the Silver cord breaks easily. Death under such conditions would cause the same suffering as suicide, so the Invisible Helper is always cautioned to stay by his body when it is suffering. But at my Teacher's request I was ready for the soul flight to the Temple, and a guard was left to watch the sick body.

“As we have stated previously in our literature there are nine degrees in the Lesser Mysteries of whatever school, and the Rosicrucian Order is no exception. The first of these correspond to the Saturn Period, and the exercises having to do with it are held on Saturn's day at midnight. The second degree corresponds to the Sun Period, and that particular rite is celebrated every Sunday. The third degree corresponds to the Moon Period and is held on Monday at midnight; and so on with the remainder of the first seven degrees. Each corresponds to a Period and is held on the day appropriate thereto. The eighth degree is celebrated at the new moon and the full; and the ninth degree at the summer and winter solstices.

“When a disciple first becomes a lay brother or sister, he or she is introduced to the rite held on Saturday nights. The next Initiation entitles him also to attend the midnight services at the Temple on Sunday nights, and so on. It is to be noted, however, that while all lay brothers and sisters have free access in their spiritual bodies to the Temple during all days, they are barred from the midnight services of the degree that they have not yet taken. Nor is there a visible guard who stands at the door and demands a password of each, as he desires to enter, but a wall is around the Temple, invisible yet impenetrable to those who have not received the ‘open sesame.’ Every night it is differently constituted, so that should a pupil by mistake or through forgetfulness seek to enter the Temple when the exercises are above his status, he would learn that it is possible to bump one's head against a spiritual wall and that the experience is by no means pleasant. As already said, the eighth degree meets at the new and full moon, and all who have not attained are barred from that midnight service, the writer among them; for this degree is no mere mummary to be obtained by the payment of a few paltry coins, but requires a measure of spirituality far beyond my present attainment, a stage to which I may not attain in several lives, though not wanting in effort or aspiration.

“You will therefore understand that on the night of the new moon in Aries, 1910, when the Teacher came for me, it was not to take me into that exalted gathering of that eighth degree, but to another session of a different nature. Besides, though this session was held in the night as it oc-

curs in California, the time is different in Europe. The exercises of the new moon had been held in Germany hours before, so that when I arrived at the Temple with my Teacher, the sun was already high in the [German] heavens. When we entered the Temple some time was devoted to an interview with my Teacher alone, and in it he outlined the work of the Fellowship as the Brothers would wish to have it carried out.

“The keynote of it all was to refrain from organization, if possible, or at least to make organization as loose as we could. It was pointed out that no matter how good the intentions may be in the beginning, as soon as position and power are created which may gratify the vanity of men, the temptation proves too great for a majority, and in the measure that the free will of members is interfered with, the object of the Rosicrucian Order, to foster individuality and self-reliance, is defeated. Laws and by-laws are limitations, and for that reason there should be as few as possible. The Teacher even thought that it would be possible to get along without any at all.

“It is in line with this policy that I had printed upon our letterheads, *An International ASSOCIATION of Christian Mystics*; for there is a vast difference between an association that is entirely voluntary and an organization which binds its members by oaths, pledges, etc. Those who have taken the Obligation as probationers in the Rosicrucian Fellowship know that *that obligation is a promise to themselves* and not to the Rosicrucian Order. The same tender regard for the maintenance of the fullest of individual liberty is in evidence throughout the whole range of the Western Mystery School. *We have no masters*; they are our *friends* and our Teachers, and they never under any condition demand obedience to any mandate of theirs nor command us to do this or that. At most, they advise, leaving us free to follow or not.

“I may say here that this policy of not organizing had already been adopted in starting the study centers at Columbus, Ohio; Seattle, Washington and Los Angeles; but since then I have gone further along this line in trying to spread the teachings to individuals from a World Center rather than to establish more centers in different cities. In some places bands of students have desired to unite for study and spiritual elevation. To this end all assistance has been given them, but as said, I have made no effort to bring about formation of study centers but leave students to do, as they feel prompted.

“The new work of healing, of which I shall presently speak, necessitated permanent headquarters. As we are living in a concrete world under material conditions, it seems to be necessary that headquarters should be incorporated under the laws of the land in which we live, so that that

which belongs to the work may remain available for the use of humanity after the present leaders have been released from life. Thus far we cannot escape hard and fast conditions of organization at headquarters, but *the Association at large must remain free* so that the highest spiritual growth and the longest life may be attained. It is sad to contemplate, however, that though such are our intentions, the day must come when the Rosicrucian Fellowship will go the way of all other movements; it will bind itself by laws, and usurpation of power will cause it to crystallize and disintegrate. But then we have the consolation that upon its ruins will rise something greater and better, as it has risen above other structures that have served their purpose and are now on the way to dissolution.

“After the before mentioned discussion we entered the Temple, where the twelve Brothers were present. It was arranged differently from what I had seen before, but lack of space¹⁹⁴ forbids a detailed description. I shall only mention three spheres suspended one above the other in the center of the Temple, the middle sphere being about half way between floor and ceiling; also that it was much larger than the two others, which hung one above and one below.¹⁹⁵

“A substance was shown to the writer in the Temple of the Rosicrucians on the memorable night previously mentioned, with which the universal Spirit could be combined as readily as great quantities of ammonia combine with water. Inside the large central sphere mentioned before, was a smaller container which held a number of packages filled with that substance. When the Brothers had placed themselves in certain positions, when the harmony of certain music had prepared the way, suddenly the three globes began to glow with the three primary colors, blue, yellow, and red. To the vision of the writer it was plain how during the incantation of the formula the container having in it the before mentioned packages became aglow with spiritual essence that was not there before. Some of these were later used by the Brothers with instantaneous success. Before them the crystallizing particles of the patient scattered like magic, and the sufferer awoke to a recognition of physical health and well-being.”¹⁹⁶

“The various modes of vision above the physical are: etheric or X-ray sight, color vision, which opens up the Desire World, and tonal vision which discloses the Region of Concrete Thought, as explained very fully

¹⁹⁴ “lack of space” is nonsense. The researcher has reason to believe that Heindel would not do so, or was forbidden to tell in detail.

¹⁹⁵ Heindel, Max. *Teachings of an Initiate*. Ch. 20, pp. 146-147 and ch. 21, pp. 148-152.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.* p. 162.

in *The Rosicrucian Mysteries*. My development of the latter phase of spiritual sight had been most indifferent up to the time mentioned, for it is a fact that the more robust our health, the closer we are enmeshed in the physical and the less able to contact the spiritual realms.

“People who can say: ‘I never had a day’s sickness in my life,’ at the same time reveal the fact that they are perfectly attuned to the physical world and totally incapable of contacting the spiritual realm.

“This was nearly my case up to 1905. I had suffered excruciating pain all my life, the after effects of a surgical operation on the left limb in childhood. The wound never healed until I changed to a meatless diet. Then the pain ceased. My endurance during all the previous years was such that the pain never showed by a line on the face, and in every other respect I had perfect health. It was noticeable, however, that when blood flowed as the result of an accidental cut, it would not coagulate, and a great quantity was always lost; whereas after two years on a clean diet the accidental loss of an entire nail in the morning resulted in the loss of a few drops of blood only. I was able to use the typewriter the same afternoon. There was no festering as the new nail grew.

“Up-building of the spiritual side of the nature, however, brought disharmony to the physical body. It became more sensitive to conditions around. The result was a breakdown. This was all the more complete because of the before mentioned endurance that kept me on my feet for months after I should have given in, with the result that I came very close to death’s door.

“As death is the permanent dissolution of the tie between the physical and spiritual bodies, those who are near death approach the condition existing when severance is about to take place. Goethe, the great German poet, received his first Initiation while his body was prostrated nearly unto death. I had not progressed so high, but my studies, aspirations, and an exercise practiced for a long time which I thought then I had devised but which I now know was carried over from the past, all combined to make it possible for me during that first sickness to slip out of the body for a short while and then return. I did not know how I did it, and was unable to do it at will. A year later I did it again by accident. That, however, is beside the case. The point I wish to bring out is that the rupture of physically robust health is necessary before it is possible to attain poise in the spiritual world, and the stronger and more vigorous the instrument, the more drastic must be the method of breaking it down. Then come years when there is an unbalanced fluctuating condition of health, until finally we are able to adjust ourselves so as to main-

tain health in the physical world while we retain the ability to function also in the higher realms.

“Thus it has been with me: strenuous work both physical and mental, even to the present day, has kept the physical instrument in anything but an enjoyable condition. Friends have cautioned me, and I have tried to heed their warnings, but the work must be done, and until help comes I am forced to continue regardless of health; and Mrs Heindel is with me in this as in all else. Out of this precarious condition, however, has come an increasing ability to function in the spiritual world. While, as said, at the time of the experience here related my tonal vision and the ability to function in the Region of Concrete Thought was indifferent and chiefly confined to the lowest subdivision thereof, a little assistance from the Brothers that night enabled me to contact the fourth region, where the archetypes are found, and to receive there the teaching and understanding of that which is contemplated as the highest ideal and mission of the Rosicrucian Fellowship.

“I saw our Headquarters and a procession of people coming from all parts of the world to receive the teaching. I saw them issuing thence to carry balm to afflicted ones near and far. While here in this world it is necessary to investigate in order to find out about anything, there the voice of each archetype brings with it as it strikes the spiritual consciousness a knowledge of what that archetype represents. Thus there came to me that night an understanding which is far beyond my words to express, for the world in which we live is based upon the principle of time, but in the high realm of the archetypes all is an eternal *Now*.”¹⁹⁷

At the time of this 2nd initiation, the Elder Brothers imparted to him the knowledge that an ecclesia or temple was to be built on Mount Ecclesia, where a panacea was to be prepared. Two of its ingredients were shown to Max Heindel, but the third was to be prepared by the consecrated lives of the Probationers, because it was of a spiritual nature.

Max Heindel, still in the hospital, had to have the help of a doctor, according to the rules and regulations of the institution. Although his illness was nearing a crisis, he did not worry. He knew his condition would not change before the new moon. He was waiting patiently because his brain was too numb to be active anyway. He expected that the moon would do everything for him at the proper moment.

But the doctors were indeed disturbed about his condition, and three of them stood at his bedside having a consultation, under the impression that he was unconscious. However, he heard all three of them agree that

¹⁹⁷ Heindel, Max. *Teachings of an Initiate*. Ch. 20 pp. 152-155.

he could not live until morning. Hearing this, Max Heindel started to work on himself with the result that the dropsy, which had nearly reached his heart, disappeared within a few hours. When, as usual, Augusta Foss visited him at one o'clock, he asked her if she would kindly help him into the wheelchair and take him down two stories to the lawn and into the fresh air, which she did. As they were sitting there in the shade of one of the beautiful magnolia trees, he virtually recovered. Two of the doctors passing by were astounded to see their patient smiling and in seemingly good health.

Heindel asked Augusta Foss to rent a room for him near her home so that he could leave the hospital in a few days. Her home was located in what was known as the Bunker Hill section of Los Angeles.

After he was established in his new room he was able to move about town by walking to the streetcar. He advertised for a stenographer, intending to dictate a book in the Fellowship rooms, which were three blocks down the hill. He found this impossible, however, because of admiring friends and students, so he went to the home of Ms Foss and asked whether there might be a room that he could use during the time he would be dictating his book.

A former roommate of Max Heindel's, Carl Oscar Borg, who later became a noted landscape artist, had rented the front room at Ms Foss' home and was away on a sketching tour, so Heindel was permitted to use his room. He then rented a typewriter and had a stenographer come in each day.

During his lecture tours, Heindel had collected written questions presented to him by his listeners and with these in his pocket he walked back and forth in the room dictating answers without references or other help. The room was about ten feet from the sidewalk and his loud and striking voice often attracted a crowd of persons who would stand and listen. Another listener was the eighty-four year old mother of Augusta Foss. She would sit on the veranda and listen to Max Heindel dictate. The book he dictated at this time was the first volume of *Questions and Answers*.¹⁹⁸ At its completion he began to make plans for a northern tour, but due to his illness it was delayed.

In the meantime (1910), the second edition of *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* was ready and the manuscript of *Questions and Answers*, a book of 428 pages, was at the printer's.

¹⁹⁸ Heindel, Max. *The Rosicrucian Philosophy in Questions and Answers*, [Vol. I]. Chicago: M. A. Donohue, 1910.

The day before he left for the North, a memorable event took place. On August 10, 1910, Max Heindel married in Santa Anna for the third¹⁹⁹ time; the new partner being Ms Augusta Foss. She did fear leaving her aged mother who had already suffered a slight stroke, so the marriage was performed in secret.



58. Mr and Mrs Heindel.

The following day Heindel left by ship for Seattle, while Mrs Heindel remained in Los Angeles. After she had bid her husband good-bye at the steamer, she boarded a car to return to Los Angeles. Reflecting she began to realize what she had entered into, and how his work was now hers also. So she stopped off at a typewriter agency and bought a secondhand Underwood. The next day she sat down and tried to write her loved one his first letter. She thought she had bought the wrong machine for she could not find a single capital letter.

Her letter greeted him as he left the steamer. What a laugh he had on her! In his letter sent to her by special delivery the next day he told her how to find those capital letters.

Max Heindel had not consulted his Teacher before the marriage and did not know how it would work in with the plans of the Brothers. But smiling, the Teacher came to him in his stateroom on the steamer, and we quote Max Heindel's words from his letter to his wife on August 21, 1910: "Did not my Teacher congratulate me and say he hoped some day

¹⁹⁹ On the marriage licence is stated '2nd' marriage. Although this was Max Heindel's third marriage it was his second marriage in America, and his second under the name Heindel.

to welcome you at the Temple as a daughter, and he called me son, which he had never done before. And he was more affectionate than ever.”²⁰⁰

On Labor Day 1910 (September 1st) he wrote to his wife: “I felt so uplifted when the Teacher said that they hoped also to welcome you as a daughter of the Temple. That shall be my highest wish to see that day when we shall stand there together and receive the blessing of the Brothers.”²⁰¹

The Teacher told him that his present wife had been under their observation and even their guidance, though unknown to her, for a number of years, and that this marriage was to be most fruitful spiritually, and a safeguard to his health.

Max Heindel’s intentions were to travel to the northern country and then work eastward along the northern route. After lecturing in Seattle, Yakima and Portland for about six weeks, his heart gave him trouble again and he was forced to end his tour.

Mrs Heindel prepared one of her small beach cottages in Ocean Park for the homecoming of her husband and placed her mother in the care of another daughter. A few days before Thanksgiving [about 22 Nov.] 1910, Max Heindel was so ill that when he reached the tiny three-room house he fainted. For three months, day and night, Augusta took care of him.

In Seattle Mr Heindel had bought a small, second hand writer-press, a printing press that required pushing a roller over the type that was set and locked. This press stood by in readiness for use and Mrs Heindel received her instructions on how to run it from the bedside of her sick husband, who sat upright in bed, supported by cushions. Though she was naturally mechanically inclined, it was far from easy. The letters had to be set in reverse so that the impression on the paper would be legible. With much effort with this antiquated machine, she was able to print the first lesson to students in November 1910. Before Heindel left Seattle for the South, the Secretary Mr William M. Patterson sent out notices to friends in Columbus, Seattle, Yakima, Duluth, Portland and Los Angeles, saying that Max Heindel would start a correspondence course from Headquarters in Ocean Park, with the mailing address, P. O. Box 866. There were many replies to this announcement. One can imagine that Mrs Heindel was very busy during that period. She took care of her sick husband, kept her house clean, cooked the meals, set the type, ran the press, addressed all the envelopes for the classes and members, and answered numerous letters.

²⁰⁰ Heindel. *Echoes from Mount Ecclesia*, March 1948.

²⁰¹ Heindel. *Echoes from Mount Ecclesia*, April 1948.



59. Dining room-kitchen in Ocean-Park, 1911.

During this period, the Rosicrucian Fellowship was called: “An International Association of Christian Mystics” and the motto: “a sane mind, a soft heart and a sound body” was introduced.

The doctor, who was called in to examine Max Heindel, told her that he could not live to the end of another year. Mrs Heindel would not accept this discouraging report, because she felt that this illness was a lesson to her husband who was now receiving his third initiation.

During his three-month illness, there were days that he could don a dressing gown and sit up to do his writing. Driven by an indomitable spirit, he made plans to write his fifth book, *The Rosicrucian Mysteries*.²⁰² Again, he advertised for a stenographer to whom he could dictate his book.

Until then, no one in Ocean Park had been aware of Max Heindel, but Heindel’s loud dictation attracted the attention of the people on the street as well as the neighbors. A doctor who lived next door did not know him, but having read the *Cosmo* he became quite sociable, though time for social calls was very limited.

²⁰² Heindel, Max. *The Rosicrucian Mysteries*. Chicago: [1st edition] 1911.