THE SPIRITUAL FERMENT – LUCY VOILET HODGKIN IN HAVELOCK NORTH, NEW ZEALAND

Travelling to New Zealand by small sailing ships in the first half of the nineteenth century was every bit as slow, uncomfortable, and adventurous an undertaking as George Fox's voyage to Barbados and America in 1671. The first Friend to set foot in New Zealand was the artist, Sydney Parkinson, who came on James Cook's voyage of discovery in 1769. In the ranks of the earliest settlers from 1836 onwards were small numbers of Friends, braving the long sea-passage to make a new life for themselves and their families in this unknown Antipodean land.

It was to these Friends, still few in number and scattered widely over the length of the country, that Thomas Hodgkin, a Minister and noted Friend then aged 78, with his wife Lucy Anna, and two of their family, Lucy Violet and George, came in 1909, following a concern to visit and encourage isolated Friends in New Zealand and Australia.[1] While staying with the Holdsworth family in Havelock North, the Hodgkins attended, with them, an ecumenical Quiet Meeting in the village church. At this gathering, Lucy Violet then aged 40, underwent a kind of mystical conversion, a sudden, wonderful revelation of the power of silent worship, that brought at last, a spiritual fulfilment to her inherited Quakerism.

What then was the nature of the spiritual environment in which this experience took place?

On the east coast of the North Island of New Zealand lies the small village of Havelock North, a few miles distant from the two provincial cities of Hastings and Napier. Established in 1860, the village grew slowly, the population reaching 374 by 1900 and passing the thousand mark around 1930. From its beginnings, the inhabitants have included a rather high proportion of intellectual, educated, contemplative and concerned men and women, a fact that, over the years has induced others of like mind to join them. It is noted today for its three large independent schools established around the beginning of the century. The climate is pleasant and there is none of the bustle of the nearby cities.[2]

To the locality where Havelock North now stands came, in 1854, John Chambers (1819-1893). In June of that year he with his wife

Margaret and their first three children, Hannah, William and John, arrived in Hawkes Bay and after looking at various possible areas on which to settle, chose to occupy a block of Maori-owned land – the Te Mata Block – where, by the end of the year he had built a homestead and taken up a further 6400 acres – the Mokopeka Block – nearby. By 1885 he owned 18,000 acres carrying 35,000 sheep, and had become one of the province's most prosperous landholders.[3]

John Chambers' parents had been accepted into membership in Chesterfield monthly meeting on 20 June 1814, five years before his birth on 20 January 1819 at Heanor in Derbyshire (12 miles north-east of Derby). He went to Ackworth School when he was 12 and stayed until he turned 14, following which he served an apprenticeship as a blacksmith. John Chambers emigrated to South Australia, where on 16 August 1848, he married Margaret Wills Knox, daughter of a Presbyterian minister and herself a staunch adherent of the church. Although John Chambers maintained his own connections with Friends all his life, and gave financial support to the Auckland meeting, the only formal meeting of his time, he joined his wife and children in membership of the Presbyterian Church. Indeed, until 1891 when the first Presbyterian church was built in the village, services were held at the Chambers homestead, "Te Mata".[4] The homestead was, for several years after it was built, the only house in the district. Many travellers and visitors came to stay, amongst them, in 1860, Thomas Mason, a fellow-Quaker and friend of John Chambers. He too was an isolated Friend, living in Lower Hutt near Wellington, 200 miles away, whence he came (reputedly on foot) to act as godfather to the Chambers' new-born son, named after him, Thomas Mason Chambers. In 1860 also, John Chambers' sister Mary, married since 1839 to a Methodist portrait painter and no longer an active Friend, came to Havelock North where they settled on a few acres of Chambers land.

Two of the Chambers sons, John (1853-1946), Thomas Mason (1860-1948) and one of their daughters, Margaret (1857-1920) came to play significant roles in the development of the spiritual and cultural life of Havelock North. John Chambers senior divided his property in 1886 among three of his sons, each becoming the owner of a flourishing sheep station of 6,000 acres, and thus placed in the comfortable financial position with time freely available to pursue their personal interests.

As early as 1891, John junior, after some years of study with the American School of Correspondence in Chicago, used his considerable talents in electrical engineering to construct a hydro-electric plant on his land, that provided lighting, drove farm machinery, pumped water and

powered an electric cooking stove of his own design. (He had obtained some of the generator components from St Pancras station.)

He spent time and money in developing a library at his homestead "Mokopeka", for the use of his family and the station hands. Some remnants of his personal library survive at the Tauhara Centre at Taupo, amongst them *A Modern Zoroastrian* by S. Laing, 1898, *The Law of Psychic Phenomena* by Thomas Jay Hudson, 1905, *The Purposes of Education* by St George L.F. Pitt, 1913.

Mason Chambers devoted much of his life to service on local bodies, to charitable associations and in support of private school education. Woodford House School for girls, founded in 1894, moved from Hastings to Havelock North in 1911, Heretaunga (later Hereworth) School for boys came in 1913 and next year the Presbyterian Iona College for girls was established. All were built on or adjacent to what had been Chambers land, Mason giving four acres for Iona and selling twenty acres to Woodford House.

Although we do not have records of matters that were evidently considered highly personal, (Mason Chambers diligently kept a diary that he burned shortly before his death), yet every now and then the presence of the two brothers is apparent in the progression of events.

In 1873 Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky and Colonel H.S. Olcott founded in New York, the Theosophical Society – 'to form a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity; to encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science; to investigate the unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in man'. The society had one of its bases in eastern mysticism but nevertheless its hope and search for truth and "the powers latent in man" made considerable appeal to seeking and enquiring minds. In January 1883 the London lodge was founded and in 1889 the first lodge was formed in New Zealand at Wellington.[5] By the end of 1901 the New Zealand membership had grown to 209. Monthly lectures at the several branches ranged over topics such as "The Rosicrucians", "Invisible Helpers", "Reincarnation", "Fear – its Cause and Cure" – this last, by Emma Richmond president of the Wellington Branch, given in January 1902.

In October of that year, Harold Large, "a visitor from the Blavatsky Lodge in London" addressed the Ladies Meeting in Auckland. Harold Large was one of the children of a Napier cabinet-maker, educated there and in Wellington who had gone on at the age of 18 to Caius College, Cambridge where he emerged with a B.A. in 1891. In 1893, back in New Zealand, he took up a post as assistant master at Wanganui

Collegiate School. There for two years he taught Latin, produced and performed in concerts and plays and coached the rowing four. He was a capable pianist and popular vocalist. In the several long periods he spent in England he was a member of Sir Frank Benson's Shakespeare Company.[6,7] His sister Lillie, a noted singer both in New Zealand and in England, was also an ardent Theosophist and from around 1900 to her retirement in 1920 was the singing teacher at Woodford House school for girls. From his return in 1902, Harold Large took an active part in the New Zealand Theosophical Society, over the next five years, editing its journal *The N.Z. Theosophical Magazine,* and becoming in 1903 the assistant general secretary. That year a branch was formed in Napier.[8]

Theosophy in those first years of this century was in a situation of some stress. In 1907 Annie Besant after a long interval, succeeded Helena Blavatsky as president, bringing a further emphasis on the Eastern mystic aspects of the society and two years later discovering in the young Krishnamurti the means by which the forthcoming Messiah would return to earth. The Church which had formerly accepted the practice of Theosophy as a not-incompatible activity on the part of its members, began (as least in New Zealand) to denounce the Society as 'a dangerous Gnostic heresy'. Whatever the total cause, Harold Large abruptly resigned and was confirmed in the Anglican Church by the Bishop of Auckland (a brand snatched from the burning). By 1907 he had come to live in Havelock North.

A number of Napier and Havelock North men and women of some standing were at this time active members of the Society: Elizabeth Jerome Spencer, for example, was headmistress of Napier Girls' High School (Amy Large, Harold's sister was the matron there from 1901 to 1904).

The library and all of the records of the Theosophical Society in New Zealand were destroyed in an office fire in mid-1906, so we can only conjecture that the two Chambers brothers might have been early formal members of the Society, as their later interests suggest, and part of the group of Theosophists in Havelock North, alluded to a few years later by Cyril Hepher.[9]

In 1867 John Holdsworth, then 17, the third and youngest son of John and Martha Holdsworth, a Quaker cotton-mill family, arrived at "Te Mata", with an introduction to John Chambers. In 1877 he returned to "Te Mata" and next year married Margaret, the Chambers' third daughter. The couple returned to Lancashire to live at the Holdsworth family home, Barclay House at Eccles and here they raised a family of two sons and a daughter. John Holdsworth having retired early, devoted

himself to the work of Friends, particularly on behalf of Penketh and Ackworth schools.[10] By 1890 all of the family were members of the Society of Friends, belonging to Hardshaw East monthly meeting.

However, around 1900, a chance came for John Holdsworth to buy the sheep-station "Waikohu" near Gisborne and to settle his two sons on the property. The whole family, John and Margaret, the sons Granville and Bernard and daughter Beatrice came to Havelock in 1904, the boys taking up cadetships on their Chambers uncles' sheep-stations.

John and Margaret decided to settle there, buying land from her brother Bernard Chambers, on the Te Mata Road. After deciding on the house they wanted built, they returned to England and by the time they came back to Havelock in 1905, the house – Swarthmoor – (still standing) was almost complete. The Quaker population of Havelock rose form zero to five : John Chambers had died in 1893, his gravestone in the Havelock North cemetery testifying to his continued Quaker adherence with the inscription in Quaker fashion – "died 7th month 11th 1893".[11]

Many visitors, Quakers and non-Quakers enjoyed the hospitality of Swarthmoor. Sometime before 1909 the custom had grown of holding regular "Quiet Meetings" of Quakers and other similarly-minded non-Quaker persons. The Vicar, the Revd. Allen Gardiner allowed these meetings to be held on Saturdays in the Anglican Church of St Luke and he himself took part, as did Harold Large and Reginald Gardiner, the vicar's brother. Large and Reginald Gardiner had joined John Holdsworth in establishing this ecumenical occasion[12], although Cyril Hepher remarks that it originated as a Friends Meeting in which others joined.[13]

To examine Reginald Gardiner's contribution to the spiritual and cultural atmosphere of Havelock North we look back to his origins and on to his continuing achievements.

He was born in 1872 in Orange, New South Wales, son of the Revd. A.W. Gardiner, who later, for a brief period before his untimely death, was a Church of England missionary in Africa. His mother died when he was not yet two years old, his father married again but himself died eight years later. Reginald was brought up by his stepmother Amy Gardiner and relatives in England and in 1885 came to New Zealand to live, in the vicinity of Napier, with his stepmother, his eldest brother Allen and his only sister, Rose, 12 years his senior. Allen Francis Gardiner was appointed as curate to St Luke's church in Havelock North in 1900. Reginald worked with an agricultural firm, later going farming, but giving up because of ill health in 1896 at the age of 24, returned to

England on medical advice. (If one suffered ill health in England one was sent to the colonies!)

In a London hotel he met Ruth Scott, daughter of J.G. Scott, head of a Canadian railway company. He later followed her to Quebec where in 1900 they were married. Gardiner worked for his father-in-law for some years but, suffering still from ill health, was advised to seek a warmer climate and he and his wife came in 1907 to Havelock North where in 1901 his brother had become the vicar. Here he met again with Harold Large whom he had known in his earlier years in New Zealand.

Reginald Gardiner brought to their association, a skill in involving people in activities that as his daughter tells us,[14] had not previously found an opportunity for expression. In Havelock North the circumstances were propititious and he was able to engender enthusiasm and support for the idea of an enterprise that drew together in the community those of similar interests and inclinations. In the year following his arrival, the undertaking was formalised at a well-attended public gathering, as "The Havelock Work", to encourage activities 'leading to constructive thought of a cultural, literary, philosophical and dramatic nature'. Even in 1907, however, a small group of people with some literary talent had begun to meet together every month to read their own work in prose and poetry – a circumstance credited to the initiative of Ruth Gardiner.[15] Before the year was over, they decided to bring their work together as a magazine called *The Forerunner,* partly written, partly typed and illustrated with water-colours. Six copies were made and circulated round the group. Twelve numbers appeared up to the end of 1908. But in May 1909, *The Forerunner* appeared in print.[16] Two of the group, one of them Harold Large, now living in a cottage at "Stadacona", the Gardiners' house, learned how to set type and to print, and produced there the first of a series of[21] issues of a journal with philosophic, literary, and informative content of remarkable quality and an extraordinarily high level of typographic attainment.

Poetry by Ruth Gardiner and by Hugh Campbell Chambers (the 21-year old son of John Chambers junior), a regular feature "Daily Thoughts for Meditation" by the Editors, "Socialism" by Harold Large, "Gift of the Spirit among Quakers" by Mary Mitchel McLean, appeared in the first year's issues. We should not forget that at this time the thoughts and work of William Morris were very much alive in the minds of many; the typeface of *The Forerunner* is similar to Morris's "Golden" typeface, and the use of ornamental initial capitals reflects Morris's style. In the issues up to 1914 when publication ceased, a number of notable New Zealand figures contributed to *The Forerunner*'s

pages, among them H. Guthrie Smith and Francis Hutchinson junior, the naturalists; Mary C. Richmond, Theosophist and Anthroposophist; Emma Richmond, who became the earliest follower of Rudolf Steiner's Anthroposophical Society in New Zealand; and Elsdon Best, the country's leading ethnologist. Friends wrote for the journal – William B. Matheson of Rongomai, Hugh Goldsbury of Whakarongo, and Edwin Gilbert, organising secretary of the Bournville Adult Schools (in Havelock North for the New Zealand Friends 1913 Annual Meeting).

Some of the underlying philosophy is revealed in the introduction to the first issue, where we read – 'Let our aim be Unity in Diversity, and our joy will lie in sounding each his life-note and so producing infinity of opinion on the common theme "The Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man" '. Mason Chambers was president of "The Havelock Work" and Margaret Holdsworth president of the Ladies Committee. Weekly readings of Shakespeare and Dickens developed into regular Wednesday evening entertainments during the winter months. Lillie Large organised a glee club, Reginald Gardiner opened an Arts and Crafts supplies shop. Needing a more spacious meeting place they raised enough money to build a substantial village hall that seated 300. If we look ahead further, the group organised, in November 1911, an "Old English Fete" with procession, Morris dancing and 'entertainments continued into the night', but the crowning achievement, long-remembered, was the great Shakespearian Pageant at the end of 1912 in which almost the entire population of the village was involved.

These cultural activities, quite remarkable for their extent and continuity, had a deeper significance for the group at the heart of The Havelock Work. John von Dadelszen in his account records that Harold Large's resignation from the Theosophical Society had been occasioned by his conviction that 'eastern methods of training were unsuitable for western people – some form of esoteric training must also exist in the West and he was determined to find it. It was inconceivable that Christianity, of all the great world religions should be the only one lacking in this respect'.[17] He inspired the Gardiners with his own enthusiasm for the quest.

The three were joined by Reginald Gardiner's sister Rose, and in 1907 by Mary Mitchel McLean, a Scottish school teacher then aged 52 who came from Edinburgh to join her two sisters in Havelock North, who had themselves come to New Zealand in 1883. One of them, Madge McLean, had married Mason Chambers.

Mary McLean was described as 'of the same mind as Large' and as 'having met people of similar interests in Britain'. We can amplify this rather guarded description, for one of these 'people with similar interests' was Father Charles Fitzgerald, an Anglican priest, a member of the Community of the Resurrection (commonly known as the Mirfield Fathers) and a member of the magical Order of Stella Matutina, set up by Dr Robert Felkin on the foundering structure of the Order of the Golden Dawn. Another friend of hers in Britain was Dr George Carnegie Dickson, for a time a chief of the Amen-Ra temple of the Order of the Golden Dawn in Edinburgh. They may well have been related in law, for her brother had married Annie Scott Dickson.

The group met regularly in meditation, and after Large left in 1909, began to increase in number and adopted 'a simple form of ritual'. Gardiner referred to The Havelock Work as an outward expression of this more personal quest – a cultural society built around this silent power station.[18]

The Hodgkin Visit and the Quiet Meeting

In May 1909 the Hodgkin family – Thomas, Lucy Anna, Lucy Violet and George – came to Havelock North in the course of their visit to Friends in Australia and New Zealand. They had already attended New Zealand Friends first General Conference in Wellington, had sought out isolated Friends in various parts of the country and met John and Margaret Holdsworth, who had invited the four to spend what amounted to a small holiday with them at Swarthmoor.

The circle of people whom they met in their short stay were the colonial social equivalent of their own friends and acquaintances back in England – the Gardiners, various members of the Chambers families, Sir William and Lady Russell, the Friends at Rissington, Francis and Sarah Hutchinson and Francis Hutchinson junior and his wife Amy Large, among them.[19] They constituted a group of intelligent and affluent people, many of whom were spending a considerable portion of their energies in a search for an extension of human physical existence into the spiritual and mystical spheres beyond the bounds of their formal religious experience. We know by later references that those among them who were Theosophists were still strong in their adherence, actively pursuing the esoteric aspects of their beliefs; within the Anglican fold were seekers after further enlightenment; and the meditation group, pursuing a quest towards the hidden wisdom were following the path laid down by Harold Large and further marked by Mary McLean.

In this ferment, the initiation by John and Margaret Holdsworth of the regular weekly Quiet Meeting provided an ecumenical, non-ritualised focus. From the first it must have been designed to meet the needs of the wider group, for the Holdsworths, being the only Friends in Havelock North, could just as well have met in their own home.

We can think of those who most likely attended the Quiet Meeting that was held at the close of day on Saturday, 22 May of 1909 – John and Margaret Holdsworth, their daughter Beatrice, Revd. Allen Gardiner and his wife Agnes Gardiner, Reginald Gardiner, perhaps Harold Large, the four visiting Hodgkins and two others 'friends and relatives' – Theosophists – of whom we have no specific record, sitting in the gathering dusk of an early winter's evening, tempered by the light of 'one small hanging lamp'. Thomas Hodgkin wrote[20], 'There were one or two prayers and a few short addresses, but the greater part of the time was spent in silence...'. Lucy Violet Hodgkin has herself described the meeting; 'A short prayer from the brother of the vicar [Reginald Gardiner] set us free to utter our needs and share our thoughts. One or two Friends spoke and prayed'.[21] One of these was Lucy Anna Fox who in her marvellous pictorial journal of the 1909-10 voyage to the Antipodes[22] writes: 'I spoke on "the Light that shined in darkness". How we all naturally long for light.' Her words were picked up by the Revd. Allen Gardiner who spoke of Christ as the Light of the World. Lucy Violet continued: 'The words were beautiful. But the silence spoke loudest to some of us.'

It must be remembered that Lucy Violet Hodgkin, though a skilled lip-reader, was profoundly deaf; the thoughts and feelings that this meeting engendered cannot have come through words alone. She was of course, much accustomed to silent worship and to her own familiar responses, within her own private silence.

The gathering of searching souls that she so briefly encountered perhaps gave rise to wider insights; we can observe that the fact of a Friends Meeting of silent worship taking place among a diverse ecumenical group in the physical structure of the Anglican church, moved her profoundly and strongly reinforced her sense of mystical communion. She immediately sought to share her new-found enlightenment, writing an account in the last days of that same month and sending it off to *The British Friend,* where it appeared in July 1909. 'Meeting in church on a Saturday evening gives a big shake in our Quaker ruts and grooves - the forms of our formlessness, of which we are hardly conscious till such a shake occurs.

'It was a Friends Meeting, but it was more. We were in a church, but it was more. The atmosphere was different from anything I have ever

known. The two forms of worship seemed to unit in a reality. Then I understood. Our little separate folds were forgotten. We were all one flock, following the one Shepherd.'

Is this the key? In each of her subsequent writings on silent worship, it is the sharing, the fellowship of silence, that she emphasises. We can well understand that for her, private silence being a customary state, the feeling of sharing her silence across what might have seemed earlier to be impossible barriers was of tremendous spiritual significance.

Lucy Violet Hodgkin's life up to this visit to New Zealand, had run a course illuminated by her scholarship and literary talents. She had written *Pilgrims in Palestine* in 1891, a book based on a family visit, and in 1902 *The Happy World. Notes on the Mystic Imagery of the Paradiso of Dante.* But for the decade following her return to England she shared her newly-found conviction of the mystic wonder of silent worship with Friends, in articles in *The British Friend,* and more particularly when these and other writings were published as four chapters in Cyril Hepher's book, *The Fellowship of Silence* in 1915. In 1919 she was asked to give the Swarthmore Lecture and spoke on 'Silent Worship: the Way of Wonder'.

She was 40 years old when she had been in Havelock North. From this time until her last book (*Gulielma: wife of William Penn*) was published 38 years later, she wrote a succession of stories based on her studies of Quaker history, the best-known being *A Book of Quaker Saints* first published in 1917. She kept up a correspondence with Rufus Jones that reflected their mutual interest in the mystical aspects of religion. In 1937 other concerns were evident in her work, *A day-book of Counsel and Comfort from the Epistles of George Fox.* She became a recorded Minister of the Society of Friends and in the ways we have described and doubtless on many occasions of ministry she exerted a substantial influence on the life of the Society.

The Havelock North Quiet Meeting of this time had other and far-reaching influences.

In 1904, resolving to strengthen the Church in South Africa, the Church of England sent there a number of priests as a Mission of Help. Its evident success raised thoughts within the Church in New Zealand that a similar Mission would be of great advantage to their work in that country. Four years of earnest preparation in the New Zealand parishes[23] led to the arrival in early 1910, first of two "Forerunners", whose task was to make the needed local arrangements and draw up an itinerary, and secondly plan the Mission itself. Sixteen priests and one lay-missioner arrived at the end of August to spend a fortnight in each of the six dioceses, where individual missioners were allotted a number of

parishes within the diocese as their particular concern. Its work in promoting the practice of prayer, the place of the sacraments and 'the importance of men in the work of the church', came to an end in December of 1910 and most of the missioners set off for England by way of Cape Horn and Montevideo.

Within the diocese of Waiapu (the East Coast North Island area that includes Havelock North and Napier) two members of the mission, the Revd. Cyril Hepher (later Canon of Winchester) and Father Charles Fitzgerald, carried the mission to the church of St Luke in Havelock North (the Revd. Allen Gardiner's wife Agnes was a daughter of the retired Bishop Leonard Williams of Waiapu). Both these missioners, breathing the spiritual air of Havelock North discovered for themselves experiences and affinities beyond the evangelical confines of the Mission itself.

After a time at New College, Oxford and service in various northern parishes (including Heanor in Derbyshire where John Chambers was born) Cyril Hepher had become vicar of St John the Baptist in Newcastle upon Tyne. In June 1910, on the occasion of the World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh, John Holdsworth, then visiting England, attended (as did Lucy Violet Hodgkin), and afterwards at the house of his friend Thomas Pumphrey, was introduced to Cyril Hepher, invited there to meet "a Friend from New Zealand". Hepher by then knew he was to go to Havelock North, and asked if John Holdsworth knew where it was. John Holdsworth told him of the Quiet Meeting held in the Anglican Church there, and suggested that he attend when he came.

By the time Hepher arrived, two months later, he had overcome his immediate reservations – 'I took care not to commit myself'. He attended the Quiet Meeting and he too was touched with an uplifting of the spirit that influenced much of his later work in the church. He was moved to write 'I believe our Quiet Meeting to have been the consecrated use of latent psychic forces which led directly and deeply to the spiritual, to God Himself'.[24]

He was led, on his return to England, to institute the practice of Quiet Meetings in his church. He invited Thomas Hodgkin to participate, which he did in April 1912.[25] Hepher carried his own ardent response to silent worship to his fellow clergy in England, to America, to Canada and to all who might read of it, in his books *The Fellowship of Silence* and later *The Fruits of Silence.*

At the fourth Conference of New Zealand Friends held at Christchurch in 1912, 'All gathered together on the sands [they were out on a picnic] to hear a letter read by John Holdsworth, from Violet

Hodgkin, giving a most interesting account of how she had attended a silent meeting at an Anglican church in London, which meeting was the outcome of the weekly meeting held on the basis of silence in the little Anglican Church at Havelock North'.[26]

In a sense, Lucy Violet Hodgkin had found herself, for a brief time, carried by the flow of a spiritual development that had been growing, as we have described, up to that point and which has continued to flourish and diversify from then to the present day. It is truly remarkable that such a small village should have been the focus of so much spiritual energy.

Meditation to Mysticism

The small meditation group influenced by Harold Large up to 1909, developed further when Father Fitzgerald arrived as part of the Mission of Help in 1910, for he brought to them a more definite orientation of their quest towards 'that infinite world of truth – to that country where the light is such "as never was on sea or land" ' as McLean described it.[27] After 1910 the group began to expand, a simple form of ritual was introduced and it took the title of The Society of the Southern Cross.[28] There is little doubt that the continuing guidance that Fitzgerald gave to the group then and after his departure led them towards the mystical rituals and ceremonies of Dr Robert Felkin's Order of Stella Matutina to which Fitzgerald belonged.

In 1912 Fitzgerald advised the group that if they wished to make further progress he suggested that they invite Dr Felkin, his wife Harriot and daughter Nora Ethelwynn to visit them. John and Mason Chambers provided the £300 for the fares and the Felkins left for New Zealand on 12 October 1912. 'This they were the more ready to do because they believed that New Zealand was destined to play an important spiritual role in a future civilisation based on the countries bordering the Pacific Ocean'[29] – a reflection of Theosophist concepts. Charles Fitzgerald came again to New Zealand at the end of 1913, staying while in Napier with the Bishop of Waiapu and giving addresses there and at Havelock North. He reported at the end of his visit that 'one of the things that stood out was the sense of spiritual power, especially in Havelock North. They waited on God in silent prayer ... The power is evident in spiritual healing and conversion of life and the work is all so hidden that it cannot be spoken about, though much spoken against. Through it the Lord will do exceedingly abundantly for New Zealand and beyond all that we can ask or think.'[30]

The way had been well prepared. By the time the Felkins' three-month visit was up, a temple, named Smaragdum Thalasses had been

established and consecrated and about 12 persons had been trained and received into membership. Soon after the Felkins' visit an ample plot of land was given by Mason and Madge Chambers. J. Chapman Taylor the noted architect was commissioned, two years later, to build there a house (called "Whare Ra" – the house of the Sun) above a basement temple with a seven-sided sanctuary. The Felkins returned in 1916 to settle and the mystical Order of Stella Matutina now established in Havelock North, continued there until 1978. The Order attracted a large following: there were 300 people in the lesser Outer Order and 100 in the Inner Order, which included many of the influential and educated people of Havelock North. The ritual and symbolism of Stella Matutina, like those of its parent Order of the Golden Dawn, came from Rosicrucianism and from Masonry. In 1926 Robert Felkin died.

The German branch of the Theosophical Society, led by Rudolf Steiner, had, by 1910, become disenchanted with Annie Besant's leadership and broke away in 1913. Steiner established the Anthroposophical Society in that year, retaining some of the mystical elements of the Theosophical Society but adding his own views on the place and practice of science and education.

Steiner's philosophy was spread in the form of a succession of "lectures" that very soon attracted many who had formerly been Theosophists. Notable amongst these was Emma Richmond, formerly president of the Wellington Branch of the Theosophists, who brought Steiner's lectures to Havelock North. Her daughter Rachel and her son-in-law Bernard Crompton-Smith went to Germany, just before the Great War, to study Steiner's educational methods, and returning to Havelock North, founded in 1915, St George's Preparatory School which they ran on Steiner principles. They picked up the mantle of Emma Richmond when she died in 1921 and the Anthroposophical movement commenced to grow. Two early members, Ruth Nelson and Edna Burbury ("saved from Felkinism")[31] built on their property "Taruna" what became for many years the centre of Anthroposophy in New Zealand. A prominent European member of the Society, Herr Meebold, arrived from Heidenheim in Württemberg around 1930 and stayed for a number of years, a dominating figure in the Society's ranks. The Anthroposophical Society's natural pharmaceuticals enterprise Weleda, set up a garden and laboratory opposite "Taruna" in 1952 and has now bought John Holdsworth's former property, "Swarthmoor" to extend its operations. In the 1980s a teacher's training college was built on the "Taruna" site.

Robert Felkin in 1912 also brought with him to New Zealand 'the symbols and teachings, all new and fresh' of a School of Christian Chivalry known as The Order of the Table Round, of which he was the 41st Grandmaster. The teachings were based on the ideals of chivalry and the first members 'set to work to practice them and to spread them through the natural life'. Felkin on being promoted to the higher order of Mage, was succeeded as Grandmaster in 1914 by Sir Andrew Russell: very shortly afterwards Reginald Gardiner succeeded him and held the position until 1949. The Order is still active and meets regularly. Prominent in it until his death some years ago, was Jack Taylor, whose notes supply most of what is commonly known about the order.[32]

Notable residents of Havelock North and the surrounding districts participated at various degrees within the Order – as Pages, Squires, or Knights: among them were George Nelson who had become the owner of the first house that Reginald Gardiner had built on coming to Havelock North and John von Dadelszen, Mayor of the Borough in 1958.

From this point on, the succession of spiritual and philosophic developments in Havelock North were not to affect Lucy Violet Hodgkin directly. Although she returned from 1922 to 1924 to live there, her own spiritual concerns were centred, as her journals of that period show, in the gathering of Friends in her own home and her encouragement and support for a regular meeting of Friends in Napier close by.

James and Audrey Brodie

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