

To Beryl

With great
appreciation of her loyal
and efficient work,
without which I could
do so little
I remain
Sincerely Alfred

Dec 24/40

The above note from Dr. Alfred Acton accompanied a Christmas gift to Beryl Briscoe, and it speaks for itself. The original is the property of Alice Fritz, who kindly offered it for publication in this memorial issue.

I can't remember when I first met Aunt Beryl. As the daughter of my grandfather's sister she was always a welcome participant in family gatherings.

But I can remember when I first met Aunt Beryl, the student. I was in theological school at the time, having finished a degree in Latin from Haverford College. Grandfather had been dead for several years, and Aunt Beryl was busy working at winding up the myriad loose ends he had left. She also was virtually in charge of the Swedenborgiana collection for which she and grandfather had done so much. Because of my Latin background, the Theological School's dean, Dr. Hugo Odhner, wanted me to become familiar with Swedenborg's handwriting. Aunt Beryl, who at that time knew more about this than anyone else alive, was assigned the task of instructing me. We met once a week. During those meetings I not only became familiar with Swedenborg's handwriting but also learned much of what she and grandfather had done during their active lives together.

I became more and more impressed with how much she herself knew. On reflection, of course, it seems obvious that someone who had transcribed so much of Swedenborg's Latin; typed so many translations of same; typed, proofread, and indexed so many issues of *The New Philosophy*; prepared for the press all of my grandfather's various books, articles, and abstracts, and meticulously after his death transcribed all of his copious notes on the life of Swedenborg (over 800 single spaced typed pages) had acquired the deep knowledge she had.

But there was more. Aunt Beryl had regularly gone over the many catalogues of rare books to which grandfather subscribed, and worked with him in establishing the collection of books known to have been in Swedenborg's library. She also helped in setting up what she called the "Green Books," a collection of documents relating to the life of Swedenborg now in the Swedenborg Library.

Toward the end of her life, after the dedication of the Swedenborg Library, I had the pleasure of taking Aunt Beryl on a tour. She saw many of the familiar texts which she had helped collect, touched some

of the manuscripts which she had much earlier introduced to me, and seemed quite pleased that they had found their new home.

I append to these reminiscences a list of most of the work in which Aunt Beryl aided my grandfather over their many years together.

WORKS BY SWEDENBORG TRANSLATED BY ALFRED ACTON

Conjugal Love

Angelic Wisdom Concerning Marriage (A reconstruction of the missing work on Marriage taken from the two existing indices)

The Word Explained (8 vols, plus 1 vol. index)

The Messiah About to Come

The History of Creation

Psychologica

The Cerebrum (2 vols. plus a vol. of plates)

The Fibre

The Rational Psychology (with Norbert H. Rogers)

The Philosopher's Notebook

Psychological Transactions

Generation

Swedenborg's Mechanical Inventions

A System of Reckoning

Letters and Memorials (2 vols.)

WORKS PUBLISHED BY ALFRED ACTON

The Nature of the Spiritual World

The Crown of Revelations

The Introduction to the Word Explained

The Mechanism of Immortality

Numerous articles in *New Church Life*, *The New Philosophy* etc.

UNPUBLISHED WORKS BY ALFRED ACTON

The Life of Swedenborg (4 vols. over 800 pages)

Notes on the Spiritual World (2 vols.)

Notes on the *Doctrine of the Lord*

PUBLICATIONS EDITED BY ALFRED ACTON

New Church Life (co-editor with C. Th. Odhner for about 10 years)

The New Philosophy (for over 50 years)