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IN 1923, AT THE AGE OF SIXTEEN, I managed to find a job with a firm owned by some Jewish people. It was a very happy office always full of laughter which made me wonder what gave them so much happiness. A girl in the office who called herself a Bahá'í told me that the bosses were Persian and belonged to this strange religion. I went home full of this Bahá'í and told my mother I was a Bahá'í, told all our friends I was a Bahá'í until my mother told me to be quiet – she was fed up with it.

There used to be many foreign visitors to see my bosses. A young man and his sister used to call and pick up mail for their father who was secretary to the Bahá'í group. They turned out to be Edward and Lucy Hall and this was how I first met them. One day a letter arrived in our office (there was a room there which was used as the Bahá'í Centre), addressed to the Manchester Bahá'í group which had a Royal Crown on it. It was from the Queen of Roumania – very impressive for a 16 year old. I was told she also belonged to this strange religion.

I attended some meetings and learned a bit more; my friendship with three young people grew and some time later they asked me if I would like to join them on a picnic to Hebden Bridge – a local beauty spot in Yorkshire. They said some people who had recently joined this Bahá'í Faith in Leeds would join us. By this time our little youth group in Manchester had grown – the two cousins of Lucy Hall, another schoolteacher friend of Lucy's, Elsie Richbell (later to be Lee) and Joe Lee. By this time Joe had a little van and I had a small fabric Morris Minor, so we all piled into these two vehicles and caught up with some youth from Leeds. They were Cyril Jenkerson, his wife, and Philip Hainsworth.

Well, on a lovely Sunday afternoon the very hills reverberated with the hymns we sang, then it was on to a little cafe for a cup of tea and the Manchester group went to the home of Elsie Richbell where we sang hymns round the piano – very unforgettable treasured memories My next encounter with Philip was some years later and he was a handsome, dashing young Lieutenant in the medical corps, having claimed exemption from killing. He sat on the lawn at a Summer School in Buxton surrounded by a bevy of admiring youngsters whilst he related, much to my amusement, tales of de-lousing the Italians in North Africa.

I notice that mention of Eric Manton was made recently in the Bahá'í Journal. He was a Manchester Bahá'í – a quiet man, a widower with one son of whom he took great care. He wore a patch over one eye I never knew the reason. He came to our home to say good-bye before he left for his pioneer post in Africa. I had the impression he was a very strong character. I don't remember hearing from him again. So much for a few very precious memories.

Pauline Senior, Guernsey