

Life of Hand of the Cause
Agnes Baldwin Alexander
1875-1971

Script



1

Agnes Baldwin Alexander was the first Baha'i of Hawaii & the Pacific.



2

[READ THE TEXT ON THE SLIDE.]



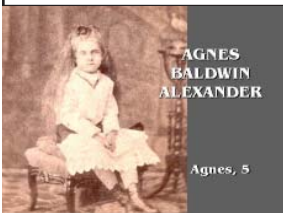
3

[READ THE TEXT ON THE SLIDE.]



4

Here they would raise 9 children--among their grandchildren would appear one who would be praised by ...



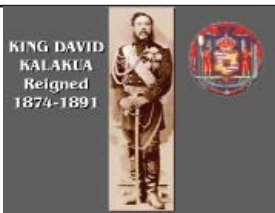
5

'Abdu'l-Baha, Shoghi Effendi & the Universal House of Justice.



6

[READ THE TEXT ON THE SLIDE.]



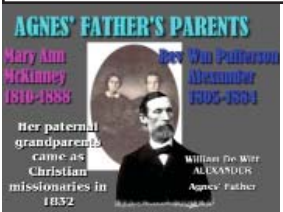
7

She was born during the reign of King David Kalakua, Monarch of the Kingdom of Hawaii.



8

It was a time when foreign powers coveted Hawaii's strategic location, excellent harbors & rich land.



9

Agnes' paternal grandparents sailed from New Bedford, Mass. in 1831, arriving in Honolulu after 6 months at sea.



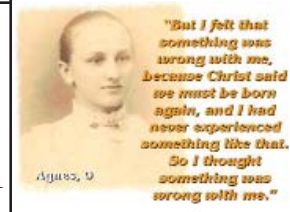
10

Her maternal parents were in the 4th company sent out by the American Board for Foreign Missions.



11

The Alexander family gathered each morning for prayers. Her father read from the Bible then the children knelt for prayers.



12

[READ THE TEXT ON THE SLIDE.]



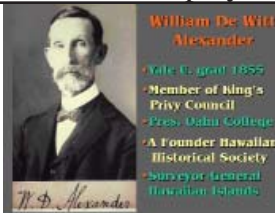
13

Agnes was very fond of animals. In the background is her horse "Koko".



14

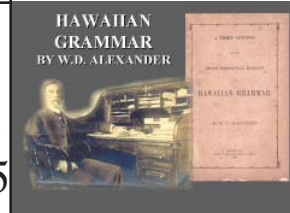
She was the youngest of 5 children born to Wm DeWitt and Abigail Charlotte Alexander.



15

Her father was one of Hawaii's most famous men. {He was not a clergyman, his father was.)

[READ SLIDE]



16

Professor Alexander authored a host of articles in many fields. He may be best remembered for "A Brief History of the Hawaiian People."



Agnes' mother had been accustomed to hardship at a young age.

17

Agnes' mother -- Abigail Charlotte Baldwin -- was born in a grass house in Waimea on the Big Island.

Abigail & her brother David Baldwin

[READ THE TEXT ON THE SLIDE, THEN ADD: "She would often accompany her physician father on horseback."]

19

Honolulu July 7, 1885
Dear Bessy,
"Mama and Willie have gone down from shopping, I wish I could see you. Three of Bessie's dicking are dead.
I read to Mama almost every evening. Mary and I went down to the Whitney's to play with Ada.
I send you a kiss ooooo
Good By Agnes

This note written by Agnes at 8 reveals the very close family ties that bound the Alexander clan.

20

Because the two oldest children were over 10 years older than Agnes, she was closest to her brother Henry and sister Mary.



Agnes' growing years coincided with the development of many important inventions.

21

WAIKIKI IN THE 1890s

There was time to go to Waikiki and enjoy the beach. In later years Agnes even did some surfing!

23

Mary Charlotte Alexander

Agnes was quite close to her sister Mary, who was one year older than her and who also never married.

24

PUNAHOU ACADEMY Founded 1827

Agnes' life was quite circumscribed as was typical of a young Victorian lady. She attended Punahou Academy which was just across the street.



Despite many inventions, the horse was still the main means of assisted transport in the islands.



25

There were frequent trips to the island of Maui to visit Uncle Henry & Aunt Em & many cousins.

26

Henry Perrine and Emily Baldwin of Maui

Uncle Henry was Henry Perinne Baldwin, a successful sugar grower on Maui.



28

Agnes was a great lover of Hawaii's abundant beauty.



Agnes & Mary also enjoyed summers at Camp Azalea in California. [THAT'S AGNES IN THE YELLOW CIRCLE.]

29

PUNAHOU GRADUATION 1895

Agnes

Ada Whitney

Agnes' graduation essay "Our Poor Relations" was on kindness to animals

[READ THE TEXT ON THE SLIDE.]



30

31

Agnes was now grown but still preoccupied with being 'born again.'



32

It should be mentioned that this was the time of sugar cane wars and threatened annexation.



33

Hawaii was annexed to the United State in



34

Some of the information used in this program was gleaned by reading the diaries of Agnes' mother.



35

Agnes was a bridesmaid but never married, though she did come close at least once. The facts of that romance are not yet learned.



36

Agnes studied at Oberline & Berkely but did not complete a degree. She did teach young children at Punahou for some years.



EMILY ALEXANDER "AUNT EM" OF MAUL WIFE OF HENRY PERINNE BALDWIN.

37

In the spring of 1900 a group of young islanders were going for a tour of the US & Europe. Agnes was able to go along through the generosity of Aunt Em who provided a ticket.



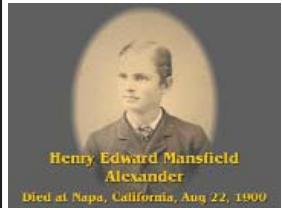
38

Agnes' father drove the family carriage down Nuuanu Ave to the waiting ship.



39

Agnes' crossed the US mainland & was traveling in Europe when she received sad news....



40

Her brother Henry died [READ SLIDE]... Agnes wrote: "We should all rejoice that Henry is at rest & living in Paradiese."



By Oct. 1900 Agnes had visited England, France & Switzerland. As the train approached Rome Agnes said, "A thrill passed through me, as though I had attained my goal."

41



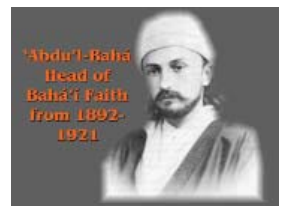
42

[READ THE TEXT ON THE SLIDE.]



43

Her name was Mrs Charlotte Dixon, a Baha'i from Maryland and she and her 2 daughters were just back from ...



44

... Pilgrimage and a visit with 'Abdu'l-Baha.



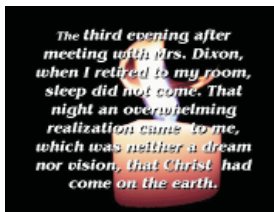
45

Mrs Dixon was one of those rare Americans who visited the Holy Land in the early days of 'Abdu'l-Baha's ministry.



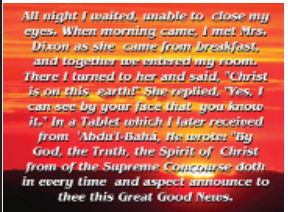
46

But Agnes knew none of this. For 3 straight evenings she met with Mrs Dixon in the back parlour after dinner. Spiritual matters were discussed but not the name of the Faith or it's Head.



47

[READ THE TEXT ON THE SLIDE.]



48

[READ THE TEXT ON THE SLIDE.]



After her 'vision' Agnes stayed on in Italy for 3 months. He only Baha'i literature was a prayer written in longhand. Then she found the address of a Baha'i in Paris ...

49



50

... and set out to meet her, this May Bolles lady who had written her a letter permeated with divine love. May said,



51

"I feel by your beautiful letter that God has chosen you to be a servant in His blessed vineyard & you will be greatly blessed."



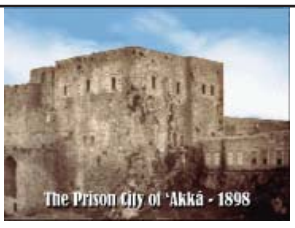
52

When Agnes looked around the room she saw a look of "peace & light on the faces. They had found their Lord & were at rest."



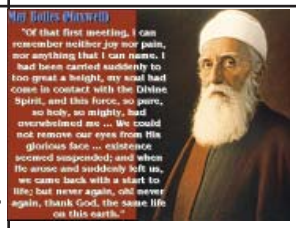
Meeting May was one of Agnes' most precious memories. "From that day she became my spiritual mother, & thru all the years her tender mother love became a guiding star in my life."

53



54

May had been in the very first group of Western Baha'is to visit 'Abdu'l-Baha. She later wrote: [READ NEXT SLIDE.]



55

[READ THE TEXT ON THE SLIDE.]



56

Before leaving Paris Agnes found her 1st Baha'i! He was a fellow islander from Punahou, Charles Hobron Smith. He became the 2nd B. of Hawaii.



Returning to the US Agnes was invited to be the guest of Sarah Farmer, another new Baha'i.

57



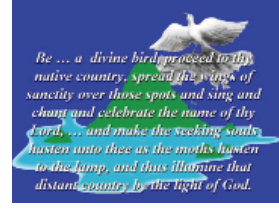
58

As in Paris, Agnes was again tutored by the great Mirza Abul-Fadl, who told her if she would find 5 believers in Hawaii she would have don great work.



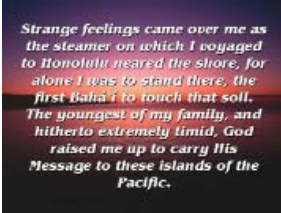
59

Before Agnes had left Paris she received a Tablet from 'Abdu'l-Baha. He said, ... [READ NEXT SLIDE]



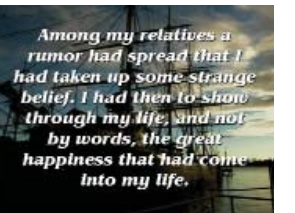
60

[READ THE TEXT ON THE SLIDE.]



[READ THE TEXT ON THE SLIDE.]

61



62

[READ THE TEXT ON THE SLIDE.]



63

She was warmly welcomed by her friends.



64

We don't know what passed between Agnes & her parents about the Faith but we do know her father gave her a Bible less than a week after her return.



65

She now back in the bosom of her family.



66

Her best friend--Ada Whitney Weinrich--later became a crypto-Baha'i.



67

The first on Hawaiian soil to embrace the Faith was Elizabeth Muther who accepted in 1902.



68

Muther in turn taught the first Japanese Baha'i in the world.



KANICHI YAMAMOTO
1879-1961
1st Japanese Baha'i in the World

69

He was Kanichi Yamamoto who placed his hand over his heart when asked how he knew the Faith was the Truth.



70

Having no place to meet, the first 4 Baha'is took the electric trolley to Pacific Heights to say their prayers while overlooking Honolulu.



71

The first public teaching took place in 1909 when Howard Stiven & Mason Remey arrived in Honolulu.



72

Agnes and the rest of the B. Community went out to Honolulu Harbour to welcome the travel teachers who were on a round the world trip.



73

The Friends gathered behind Dr & Mrs Augur's home on Beretania for this photograph.



74

[CLOSE UP OF AGNES FROM ONE OF THE PHOTOS TAKEN DEC 10, 1909]



75

That first meeting was held on the lanai of the Alexander family home on Punahou St. (Mr & Mrs Alexander absented themselves.)



76

THE FRONT PAGE OF THE PAPER ANNOUNCED: "WOULD UNITE MANKIND"



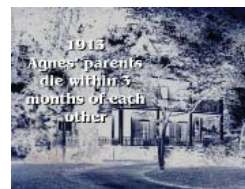
77

Agnes' father--Prof. Alexander--was not amused. He wrote a critical column: "What the 'Bahai' movement really is."



78

Nevertheless Agnes remained at home and all communication between her and her parents was warm and harmonious.



79

In 1913 the Alexander family home was shattered by the death of both her parents within months of each other.



80

Agnes left the islands and journeyed to the mainland and then to Canada.



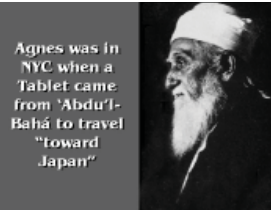
81

In Montreal Agnes was reunited with her much-loved spiritual mother--May Bolles Maxwell.



82

May was now the mother of a precocious 4 year old, Mary who would become 'Amatu'l-Baha Ruhiiyyih Khanum.



83

[READ THE TEXT ON THE SLIDE.]



84

One way 'toward Japan' was through Europe where Agnes had relatives so she went to Italy.



85

She traveled to Milan ...



86

... where she stayed with her Father's sister & her husband.



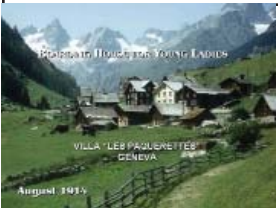
87

From there she ventured north to connect with some Baha'i friends.



88

Europe was then a powderkeg and a match was just struck!



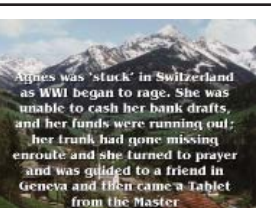
89

Agnes was then at a beautiful inn for young women.



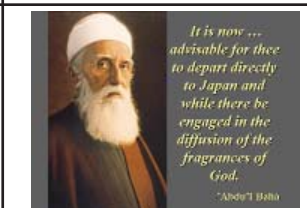
90

Baha'u'llah had warned that an "unforeseen calamity" followed humanity.



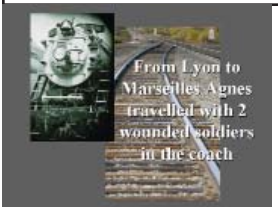
91

[READ THE TEXT ON THE SLIDE.]



92

[READ THE TEXT ON THE SLIDE.]



93

[READ THE TEXT ON THE SLIDE.]



94

At Marseilles her ship was waiting & her cabinmate--Madam Cassuli accepted the Faith from Agnes!



95

The dreaded German cruiser "Emden" was sinking ships so the Maru ran at night w/o lights for most of the voyage.



96

[READ THE TEXT ON THE SLIDE.]



There she joined force with Dr Augur who had preceeded her to Japan and who was later named a “Disciple of ‘Abdu’l-Baha”.

97



98

Like most pioneers she enjoyed dressing up in the native costume.



Those early converts spoke movingly. The 18 year old Mr Fukuta wrote the Master: [READ SLIDE ABOVE]



100

[READ THE TEXT ON THE SLIDE.]

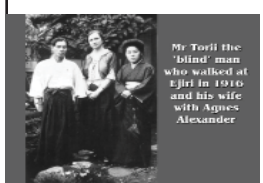


101

[READ THE TEXT ON THE SLIDE.]



[READ THE TEXT ON THE SLIDE.]



103

The blind became a door through which Agnes began to spread the Baha'i teachings.



104

[READ THE TEXT ON THE SLIDE.]



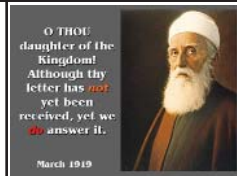
Agnes enjoyed the fellowship of other distinguished Baha'is at Green Acre in Eliot, Maine.

105



106

In 1919 ‘Abdu’l-Baha’s blueprint for the spiritual conquest of the planet was unveiled in NYC. Agnes was mentioned by name in those Tablets.



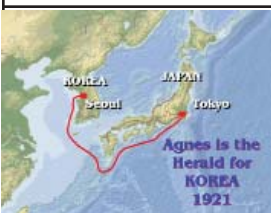
107

WWI caused interruptions in communication with the Master...with the exception of Agnes who received this remarkable note from ‘Abdu’l-Baha. [READ SLIDE TEXT]



108

[READ THE TEXT OF ‘ABDU’L-BAHA’S MESSAGE TO AGNES ON THE SLIDE.]



109

Through the power of inspiration Agnes arose and took the Message of Baha'u'llah to Korea in 1921.



110

To teach effectively she needed a native translator. She remembered her Korean friend Mr. Oh and turned in prayer to the Master for assistance. Later--while riding a street car--someone grasped her hand. It was Mr Oh!



111

With only one days notice, Agnes spoke to some 900 Koreans in the first public meeting in that country. She displayed a photograph of ‘Abdu’l-Baha she spoke simply with a message addressed to the heart.



112

Some hearts were immediately receptive.



That same year the Master ascended. Some of His last Tablets were addressed to the new believers of Korea.

113

[READ THE TEXT UNDER 'ABDU'L-BAHA'S PHOTO FIRST, THEN THE REST.]

115

Agnes had no difficulty in accepting the new Head of the Faith, Shoghi Effendi, 'Abdu'l-Baha's designate.

116

Shoghi Effendi wrote to the Baha'is of Japan through Agnes. [READ THE TEXT OF THE SLIDE NOW.]

117

[READ THE TEXT ON THE SLIDE.]

118

On September 1, 1923 a stupendous earthquake rocked Japan. Three times Agnes read 'Abdu'l-Baha's prayer for protection--each time quiet came after the reading.

119

The Greatest Holy Leaf wrote from Haifa: [READ SLIDE TEXT NOW.]

120

After the quake Agnes left Japan to join Mathra Root who was teaching in China. Agnes' sister Mary accompanied them.

[READ THE TEXT ON THE SLIDE.]

On September 1, 1923 a stupendous earthquake rocked Japan. Three times Agnes read 'Abdu'l-Baha's prayer for protection--each time quiet came after the reading.

The Greatest Holy Leaf wrote from Haifa: [READ SLIDE TEXT NOW.]

After the quake Agnes left Japan to join Mathra Root who was teaching in China. Agnes' sister Mary accompanied them.



In one of her letters Agnes describes how the three of them were pulled along in an oxcart in bitter cold...



...and saw the chopped off heads of highwaymen mounted on the walls of a city.



Martha Root was much struck by the size of the country and wrote: "There is no end to China!"



[READ THE TEXT ON THE SLIDE.]



The last time Agnes saw Martha and taught with her was 1930 when they were together for some months in China.

125

Except for brief sojourns in Hawaii, Agnes spent the period 1930-1937 in Japan. WWII kept her out of Japan between 1937 and 1950.

126

On November 3rd, 1936 Agnes was invited to go on Pilgrimage by Shoghi Effendi. [THE SLIDE TEXT IS INCORRECT. READ THIS: "I WOULD BE SO PLEASED TO MEET YOU FACE TO FACE AT THIS HOLY SPOT. YOUR TRUE BROTHER SHOGHI."]

128

Enroute to pilgrimage her ship stopped in Alexandria, Egypt. A young Aziz Yazdi met with Agnes and announced that [READ SLIDE TEXT HERE.] Without hesitation Agnes remarked, "Mary Maxwell!"



Mary Maxwell Maxwell
1910-1937
Auntie - Bahji
Bahjiyyih
Bahjianna
1829-1900

Agnes had known Mary Maxwell since she was a child and was aware of her extraordinary qualities.

129



Agnes had a wonderful pilgrimage. In addition to Shoghi Effendi and the Greatest Holy Leaf ...



131

... her spiritual mother May was there!
[AGNES AND MAY SHOWN ABOVE.]



132

One sad note. Shoghi Effendi advised her NOT to return to Japan. He said: [READ SLIDE TEXT NOW.]



During her pilgrimage the Guardian asked Agnes to record her pioneer experiences. She wrote 2 books: [READ TEXT.]

133



After pilgrimage Agnes was the last Baha'i teacher to travel through Germany before Himmler banned the Faith.

134



In 1940 Agnes' spiritual mother died at her pioneering post in South America. Agnes wrote: [READ SLIDE TEXT NOW]

135



WWII kept Agnes out of Japan. Most of that time was spent in the islands teaching.

136



Agnes worked closely with the Baha'is on Maui, a community with the first Baha'i of Hawaiian descent - Auntie May Fantom.

137



In 1950 Agnes was able to return to occupied Japan by accompanying a military couple.

138



In March, 1957 Agnes Baldwin Alexander was named a Hand of the Cause of God by Shoghi Effendi. [READ TEXT ON SLIDE]

139



Eight months later the 'beloved of all hearts' died in London. [READ TEXT ON SLIDE]

140



That November Agnes met with her fellow Hands at the first Conclave of the Hands at Bahji.

141



[READ TEXT ON SLIDE]

142



Just a year later Agnes was the representative of the Universal House of Justice at the formation of Hawaii's first National Convention.

143



[READ TEXT ON SLIDE]

144



145



[READ TEXT ON SLIDE]

[READ TEXT ON SLIDE]



147

The "mother" of Hawaii's Baha'i community was supremely happy on that day.



148

[READ TEXT ON SLIDE]



149



150

After the convention Agnes returned to her pioneer post in Japan. Here she poses with one of the Ainu.

[READ TEXT ON SLIDE]



151

In 1965 Agnes fell and broke her hip while attending an Esperanto conference in Tokyo. For 2 years she remained in a Tokyo hospital.



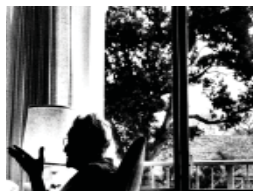
152

In 1967 Agnes' nephew took her back to Honoulu to live out her years in the Acadia on Punahou St.



153

Though she could not get about as she used to she lost none of her fire or humor.



154

An ironic sidenote: The window in Agnes' room...



155

...looked down on the property where she was born and raised.



156

On January 1st, 1971 Agnes Alexander's soul winged its flight to the Abha Kingdom.

[READ TEXT ON SLIDE]



157

Agnes Alexander was buried in the family plot behind Kawaihau Church, know as "Hawaii's Westminster". The teaching story behind her burial is too long to be retold here.



158

Through this simple gate is the path to her resting place..



159

She is laid between her sister and a brother.



160

She is the only Baha'i in an otherwise Christian cemetary. A silent teacher indeed.

"At this time, in the island of Hawaii, through the efforts of Miss Alexander, a number of souls have reached the shore of the sea of faith! Consider ye, what happiness, what joy is this! I declare by the Lord of Hosts that had this respected daughter founded an empire, that empire would not have been so great! For this sovereignty is eternal sovereignty and this glory is everlasting glory."
 'Abdu'l-Baha

161



The testimony of 'Abdu'l-Baha will ring down through the centuries.
 [READ TEXT ON SLIDE]

[THIS ENDS THE MAIN PROGRAM - A FEW SLIDE FOLLOW THAT COULD BE INCLUDED.]



AGNES ALEXANDER AWARD FOR SERVICE TO HUMANITY

163

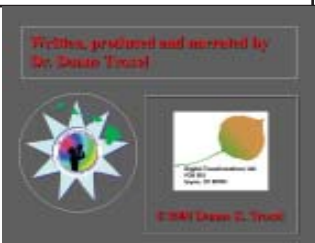


164



165

The creator of this program with his wife and Agnes Alexander in August, 1968.



166