

The Knight of Bahá'u'lláh to the Shetland Islands



Brigitte Hasselblatt was born in Estonia, a country just across the sea from Finland. Her father was a minister in the Church in the town of Tallin. When Brigitte was still a young girl, her father took his family to live in Germany. When Brigitte grew up, she went to England to train to become a nurse. It was there that she heard about Ba-

há'u'lláh and became a Bahá'í.

In 1953, Shoghi Effendi said whoever was the first person to go to the Shetland Islands in Scotland would be known as a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh. Brigitte thought she would like to go, so she set off, first on the train, and then on the long boat journey from Aberdeen. The boat took all night. When Brigitte arrived in Shetland, she did not know anyone and no-one would give her a job as they were suspicious of this stranger who had come to live among them. She said many prayers asking Bahá'u'lláh to help her.

One day, the wife of the vet asked Brigitte if she would look after her when her baby was born. Brigitte was very pleased to do this. After that, people soon realised what a good nurse she was and eventually she was asked to work in the maternity ward of the local hospital.

Whenever a new baby was born, Brigitte would say the short healing prayer. When a little red-headed boy called Alan was born, Brigitte said the healing prayer for him too. And his mother, Lilian, became the first Shetlander to become a Bahá'í. Her husband and all her children became Bahá'ís as well.

The Knight of Bahá'u'lláh to the Orkney Islands

A boy was born into a large family in Leeds. His name was Charles Dunning. He was not strong as a child and could not walk until he was nine years old. However, by the time he was thirteen he was driving a pit pony in a coalmine. When he was fifteen, he went to sea to work on a merchant ship as a galley boy.

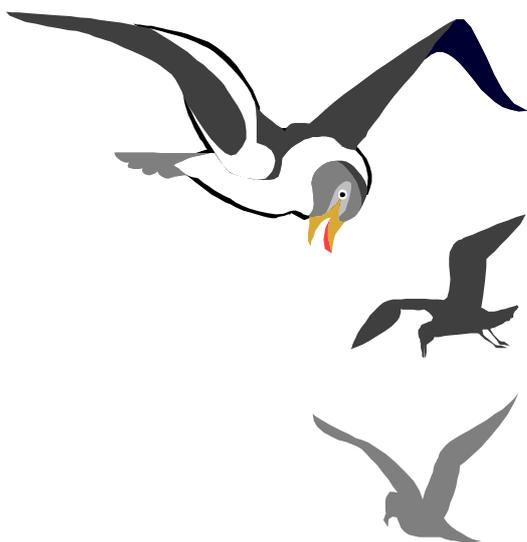


Charlie worked hard for many years as a sailor and in cotton mills, and when he became a Bahá'í, he pioneered to many towns in the United Kingdom. When Shoghi Effendi asked for someone to go to the Orkney Islands, Charlie was the first to go.

As he travelled north, he did not know what he would do when he arrived, and hoped that the islanders would be friendly. But some of them weren't. Men would push him in the street and gangs of children would chase him, throwing stones and calling names. Charlie would read the stories of the Dawn-Breakers and how they suffered for the Faith, and then he would bravely leave his room to go into the town in the hope of being able to tell someone about Bahá'u'lláh.

One day, when a group of young children had been chasing him and he had run up the steps to the house where he was living, he paused outside the door and turned to look sadly at them. One of the children was a boy who was seven years old. He had not thrown stones at Charlie, nor called any names, but he had run down the street with the other children.

As Charles Dunning looked at him, the little boy felt ashamed and knew that what he and his friends were doing was wrong. And he never forgot that day. When he was a youth he became friends with a travelling teacher who was living in Orkney for a year. His new friend told him about Bahá'u'lláh, and he and his sister went to firesides to hear more about the Faith. They were among the first four Orcadians to become Bahá'ís. Their names are Moira and Ian.



The Knight of Bahá'u'lláh to the Hebrides

Geraldine Craney had only been a Bahá'í for a few weeks when she answered Shoghi Effendi's call to go to the islands of the Hebrides, off the west coast of Scotland. She did not know much about the Faith but set off from Edinburgh anyway. She got a job in an office on Lewis, one of the islands of the Hebrides. Because of her brave act in becoming the very first Bahá'í to go to the Hebrides, she became a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh, and Shoghi Effendi sent a cable assuring her of his love and appreciation.

Today there are Bahá'ís not only in Lewis, but in several of the islands of the Hebrides, which are now called the Western Isles.