

HARRY COLLISON, MA (1868-1945):

Soldier, Barrister, Artist, Freemason, Liveryman, Translator and Anthroposophist

Sir James Stubbs, when answering a question in 1995 about Harry Collison, whom he had known personally, described him as a *dilettante*. By this he did not mean someone who took a casual interest in subjects, the modern usage of the term, but someone who enjoys the arts and takes them seriously, its more traditional use. This was certainly true of Collison, who studied art professionally and was an accomplished portraitist and painter of landscapes, but he never had to rely on art for his livelihood. Moreover, he had come to art after periods in the militia and as a barrister and he had once had ambitions of becoming a diplomat. This is his story.¹

Collisons in Norfolk, London and South Africa

Originally from the area around Tittleshall in Norfolk, where they had evangelical leanings, the Collison family had a pedigree dating back to at least the fourteenth century. They had been merchants in the City of London since the later years of the eighteenth century, latterly as linen drapers. Nicholas Cobb Collison (1758-1841), Harry's grandfather, appeared as a witness in a case at the Old Bailey in 1800, after the theft of material from his shop at 57 Gracechurch Street.



Francis (1795-1876) and John (1790-1863), two of the children of Nicholas and his wife, Elizabeth, née Stoughton (1764-1847), went to the Cape Colony in 1815 and became noted wine producers.² Francis Collison received the prize for the best brandy at the first Cape of Good Hope Agricultural Society competition in 1833 and, for many years afterwards, Collison was a well-known name in the brandy industry. The firm also produced cane spirit, a type of white rum. Francis Collison married Phebe Watts at St George's Cathedral Church in Cape Town in 1824. Their son Henry Clerke Collison was born there in 1832, the seventh of their eleven recorded children variously born in England and South Africa between 1825 and 1840. Part of Henry's education was by the Moravian Brethren at Neuwied on the Rhine; for almost a century (1820-1913)

this co-educational school was popular among certain British professional and business class families, particularly those with colonial connections.³

The absence of Francis from England for a period of two years caused his name to be struck off the register of voters for his City Ward in 1841, despite his having maintained a home in Size Lane, a decision against which he appealed successfully the following year in the Court of Registration. In 1846 Francis was one of a deputation of Cape Traders who called upon Earl Grey, Secretary of State for War and the Colonies, to "represent the alarming state of the Cape of Good Hope, arising from the Kaffir irruption into the eastern part of the colony".⁴ When Francis died in 1876 at Herne Hill, his estate was valued at the considerable sum of £15,000, to be divided between his surviving children; the partnership between Francis and two of his sons, Henry and Charles, trading as Francis Collison & Co in Laurence Pountney Hill, had been dissolved in 1873, after which the trading name of the business became Henry C Collison & Co. Today there is still a fine brandy being made in South Africa under the name 'Collison's White Gold' and marketed in the UK by Henry C Collison & Co, now a subsidiary of the Oude Meeste Group.



In 1864 Henry married Katharine Ellen Jane Reeve, only child of William and Teresa Reeve of Pauntley Court, Gloucestershire, born in 1840, Leamington Priors, Warwickshire, at St Martins-in-the-Fields, London. Henry and Katharine had three children: Phebe Teresa (born 1864 Surrey; died 1892), Harry (born 1866 Surrey; died the same year) and Harry (born 1868 Surrey). Katharine, from an old Irish family, was brought up as a Catholic, but converted to Protestantism on her marriage. At the 1871 census Henry described himself as a Cape Merchant. He and his family were living at 16 Lansdowne Road, Wimbledon with a household staff of three servants. At the time of the 1881 census Henry and his wife were apparently in South Africa, with their two children at boarding schools in England, Henry at Albion House, Margate and Phebe Teresa in Essex. In the 1891 census Henry and

Katharine were living in a fine house, Newlands, St George's Avenue, Weybridge, with four servants; Henry by now described himself as a Colonial Merchant. Phebe Teresa, a nurse by profession, was a patient at Kings College Convalescent Home in Hemel Hempstead. She died of broncho-pneumonia in December the following year, aged only 27, having been appointed a night sister at Great Ormond Street Hospital only a few weeks before. The 1901 census shows Henry, now retired, and Katharine living at 17b Great Cumberland Place, Marylebone, London; they still had four servants.

School and University

Harry had travelled with his parents and sister to Cape Colony in 1868, remaining there several years and developing a love for the country, before returning to preparatory school in England.⁵ However, he was a sickly child and, although he passed his examinations to enter du Boulay's House at Winchester College, he was prevented by ill health from taking up his place. Accordingly he was sent instead to board at Uppingham (West Deyne House) in May 1883, under its highly regarded headmaster, Edward Thring (1821-1887). By all accounts Harry did not enjoy his time at school and he was removed by his father in April 1885, following which he spent a year in Paris

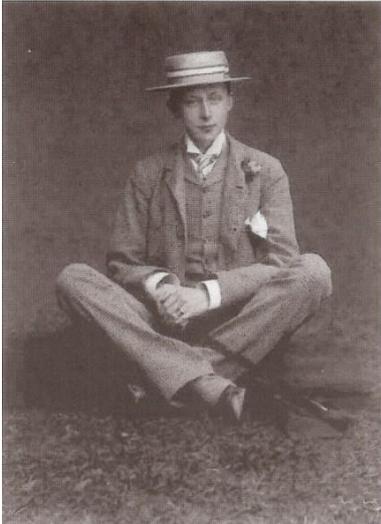


Harry Collison, West Deyne House, July 1884

Photograph: © Uppingham School

attending some classes and performances of the Théâtre Français. He then proceeded to Bonn, where he studied languages at the University, also visiting Berlin and Dresden, where the *Sistine Madonna* evidently made a great impression upon him. At Bonn he became interested in philology and the fluency in German he developed at this time was later of great use to him.

Returning to the UK, he attended Oxford between 1887 and 1890, where he read classics and history at Merton College, becoming a member of the Myrmidons dining club; he received his BA in 1891 and his MA in 1895. Surprisingly, given his somewhat sickly disposition, he was also commissioned as a second lieutenant in the 3rd Oxfordshire Light Infantry militia regiment in 1888. He underwent basic military training and was promoted lieutenant in 1890. However, the army was not to be his career and he had aspirations of joining the diplomatic corps, before which he decided to qualify as a barrister. Upon being called to the bar at the Inner Temple in 1894, when he resigned his army commission, he practised on the Northern Circuit, but he was again beset by ill health and decided to take a lengthy break. On the journey he took he travelled eastwards through Turkey, Greece, Egypt and India and then across the Pacific to America. He tried briefly to practise law again on his return, but suffered another bout of ill health and gave up all thoughts of either the law or a diplomatic career.



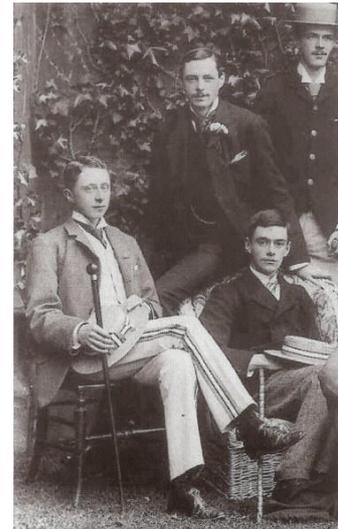
Harry Collison, Oxford Freshman, 1888

Photograph: © Merton College, Oxford



Harry Collison, Oxford, 1889

Photograph: © Merton College, Oxford



Harry Collison, Myrmidons Group, 1890

Photograph: © Merton College, Oxford

Early Interests

Meanwhile, Harry had followed his father and grandfather by becoming a liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Grocers, one of the ‘Great Twelve’ companies that traditionally selected the Lord Mayor, and he eventually served as its Master in 1930/31. In 1890 he also became a member of the Leatherseller’s, again by patrimony, and served as Master of that Company in 1937/38.⁶ His London Clubs were the Windham, which finally closed its doors in 1953 after having merged with the Marlborough a few years before, and the Athenaeum.

Harry’s father died in November 1901, probably of a stroke. The value of Henry Clerke Collison’s personal estate was not particularly large, a little over £3,100, all of which went to Harry, including ‘my business and property in South Africa’. When Harry Collison disposed of these South African interests is not known, but he was involved in a court case concerning them in 1908.⁷ Shortly after Henry’s death the family home and a collection of fine art inherited by his mother “that would have been prized by a museum” was almost entirely destroyed by fire;⁸ Henry and Katharine had also added to this collection during their own extensive travels. Only a few watercolours were saved from the conflagration, which became the nucleus of Harry’s own collection. Following these events Harry changed direction again and began to devote himself entirely to painting, studying in London, under Frank Brangwyn (1867-1956) and John Macallan Swan (1847-1910), in Paris, under Fernand Sabatté (1874-1940) at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, and in Rome.⁹ In fact he and his mother, with whom he became very close following his father’s death, decided to spend each winter in Rome and between 1910 and 1920 he maintained a residence there at 14, via Quattro Fontane, near to the Gallerie Nazionale d’Arte.¹⁰ However, in the winter of 1908/09, while he was living in Paris at 86 Rue Notre-Dames-des-Champs, his mother died quite unexpectedly of bronchitis. By his own account this affected him deeply and he had certainly not got over her death by the following year when, for the first time, he heard Rudolf Steiner lecture in Rome and subsequently effected an introduction. Katharine died intestate, with letters of administration being granted for an estate of under £600. Although Katharine was buried in the family ‘vault’ at Wimbledon, her family’s graves in the main were in the churchyard of Pauntley Parish Church of St John the Evangelist, near Newent in Gloucestershire. Harry left a sum in his will for the upkeep of the Reeves family graves.

Rudolf Steiner and Theosophy

Here a digression is required to provide context for this important meeting with Steiner. In 1875 a movement known as the Theosophical Society, a doctrine of religious philosophy and mysticism, had been founded in New York by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-1891), Henry Steel Olcott (1832-1907) and William Quan Judge (1851-1896), immediately gaining considerable momentum and financial resources. Dr Rudolf Joseph Lorenz Steiner (1861-1925), a philosopher born in Croatia, then

part of the Austrian Empire, and who studied in Vienna, became General Secretary of the German Branch of the Theosophical Society in 1902 (in which year he also visited London for the first time). It has been suggested that he sought to use this Society as a vehicle for his own beliefs and from the outset he became known as someone whose spiritual path was not necessarily entirely consonant with that of Annie Besant (1847-1933), who assumed the leadership of the Theosophical Society after Olcott's death. In fact, almost from the time of his joining, Steiner and many other German Theosophists became increasingly uncomfortable with the 'Oriental' direction taken by the society under Besant.

Initially from within the Theosophical Society, Steiner laid the foundations for his own construct, Anthroposophy (human wisdom), a spiritual movement rather than a religion, based in large part on the world view of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832). Steiner's beliefs cannot adequately be explained in a few sentences, but essentially he taught that spiritual advancement could be achieved by adopting procedures analogous to those commonly used in conventional science. In due course his approach led to the development of a 'school of spiritual science', which he led, with sections devoted to medicine, agriculture, mathematics, natural science and teaching. Transcending these sections were to be a series of three 'Classes', taught in the form of lectures by Steiner, which aimed to familiarise those taking them with the spiritual world and how to become more attuned to it. In practice Steiner died before he had even completed the lecture-cycle of the 'First Class'. Nonetheless he was a prolific author and lecturer and produced a vast output of books and lecture-cycles in German relating Anthroposophy to a broad array of spiritual, cultural and scientific topics.

In England, the writings of Steiner had been first discovered in the London reading rooms of the Theosophical Society by one of its members, Herbert James Heywood-Smith (1879-1951), in the winter of 1908/9, but Collison seems to have come across Steiner and his writings independently through his many contacts on the Continent at around the same time. Following his meeting with Steiner in Rome and his attendance at a series of his lectures at the palace of the Principessa d'Antuni (Palazzo del Drago), Harry subsequently developed a close relationship with Steiner, but felt unable to become a Theosophist as he was already a deeply committed Christian and could not accept all of the teachings accepted by the English section of the Theosophical Society. In fact, from 1907, the German branch of the Theosophical Society, unlike the English section, had already begun to reject elements of the new revelations emanating from its headquarters in Adyar, India, and Collison did feel able to become a member of the German Branch, remaining an honorary member until his death.

One of the three formal objectives of Theosophical Society was the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science, a mechanism for which was the creation of formal study groups, or 'lodges', sanctioned by the Theosophical Society headquarters at Adyar and often given names. In 1911 Heywood-Smith approached Annie Besant for her approval of a London group specifically to study Steiner's writings and was granted a charter through the society's secretary, James Ingall Wedgwood (1883-1951), although the other members of Heywood-Smith's group were not Theosophists. Thus the first Rudolf Steiner study group in England initially met at Heywood-Smith's small flat in Ridgemount Gardens in 1911 and it was only after this that Heywood-Smith travelled to Dornach in Switzerland for the first time to meet Steiner. This was originally called the Rosicrucian Group. The membership of this group increased rapidly from seven to thirty, outgrowing their meeting place. Collison, who was then a member of a Theosophical Society study group in Munich, made his larger rented studio in Clareville Grove available to Heywood-Smith's group after visiting them in 1912.

The next study group to be formed, by Collison himself later in 1912, was the Myrdhin Group, named by Steiner early in 1913 and authorised by him, rather than Besant.¹¹ Heywood-Smith's group then again moved on, to premises in Redcliffe Square provided by a generous supporter, Colonel James W Webber(-Smith) (1846-1930), who had also been involved with the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn since its early days. In January 1913, after the expulsion of the German section of the Theosophical Society, Heywood-Smith returned the charter for his study group to Besant, following which "the members transferred themselves to the already-existing Lodge of the Anthroposophical Society" (which may have been the Myrdhin group, or some loose association of them and the members of the Rosicrucian group); it was then renamed the Zarathustra Group, at the suggestion of Steiner. Even at this stage it seems the Myrdhin Group was unofficially recognised as the

Anthroposophical Society of Great Britain, although this was not universally the case as further groups came to be formed. In 1914 Heywood-Smith and his wife, Mabel Margaret (nee Haslehurst, 1865-1951), left London to live near Steiner in Dornach, where the new headquarters of the Anthroposophical Society, the Goetheanum, were being built to an architectural design by Steiner. They remained for the next twelve years, assisting in the construction, responsibility for the Zarathustra group being taken over by Ada Drury-Lavin (1858-1931). By this time there were around two hundred members of the Society in England. Heywood-Smith resumed leadership of the Zarathustra Group after his return to England in 1926.

The Anthroposophical Movement

The crisis within the Theosophical Society deepened during 1912, the proximate cause being the advocacy by one of Besant's supporters, Charles Webster Leadbeater (1854-1934), of an Indian boy, Jiddu Krishnamurti (1895-1986), as the second coming of Christ. The Order of the Star of the East was formed to promote Krishnamurti.¹² Following an extraordinary meeting of the governing body of the German branch of the Theosophical Society at Munich in early December, Mathilde Scholl (1868-1941), a close colleague of Steiner, telegraphed Besant stating that membership of the Order was incompatible with membership of the German section and calling upon her to resign. Scholl reported the actions of the German section of the Theosophical Society in an article in its *Mitteilungen* (newsletter), which she edited. The Munich meetings were also reported in the *Theosophist*, the monthly English language journal of the Theosophical Society. In Scholl's view this report was inaccurate and a breach of confidence; probably inappropriately, she wrote a long letter pointing this out to the editor of the *Vahan*, the journal of the British section of the Theosophical Society. Wedgwood, the editor concerned, refused to publish her letter, at which stage Collison wrote to the editor of the *Theosophist* attempting to explain the position. The *Theosophist* refused to publish his report, so he translated the original article himself and sent it to the leaders of all of the Theosophical Society branches.

Meanwhile, during the course of 1912 several of Steiner's followers outside of Germany had begun to see the need for coordinating their activities and set up, with Steiner's approval, an 'International Bund' (International Society) under the leadership of a Dane, Baron Carl Alphonse Walleen Bornemann (1863-1941); Steiner suggested that this be termed the 'Anthroposophical Society' as early as August 1912. As a further step towards a separate existence, the Anthroposophical Union (sometimes referred to incorrectly as the Rudolf Steiner Union), was constituted at Cologne later in December 1912 during the Christmas Conference of the German branch of the Theosophical Society, Harry Collison and Dr Carl Unger being among the principal instigators.

Almost immediately after receiving the request for her resignation Besant reacted by denouncing the German section and revoked the charter of the German section of the Theosophical Society in March 1913, thus excluding Steiner and the Anthroposophists. This outcome being inevitable, the Anthroposophical Society was born out of the Anthroposophical Union and the International Bund just before this, in January 1913. Following the exclusion of the Anthroposophists from the Theosophical Society, they moved their headquarters from Germany to Dornach, where they had been given land. Curiously Steiner was not then a member of the society, but did become its spiritual guide. On his return, Collison cut his remaining links with the Theosophical Society in London, around thirty of whom defected to the Anthroposophical Society study groups at this time. The third study group, named Emerson (after Ralph Waldo), was formed by Edith Cull in 1913, followed quickly by groups in Harrogate, Ilkeston, Manchester and Glasgow. Steiner had visited England annually between 1902 and 1905 for various Theosophical Society meetings. He visited again in 1913 for a series of lectures to, and private meetings with, British Anthroposophists. He did not visit again before the outbreak of the First World War and even after its end delayed his next trip until 1922, in which year he made three visits. Harry Collison was involved with the preparations and arrangements for these, particularly the 'summer conference' held at Oxford during August, where among other events there was an exhibition of 'eurhythmy' in the hall of Keble College.

By 1922 eurhythmy was an important aspect of the Anthroposophical movement. It was a dance-like art form conceived by Steiner in 1912 in which music or speech were expressed in bodily movements.

In 1914 Collison arranged for several performers from Dornach to visit the UK and demonstrate the art to the study groups. The performers were Lori Maier-Smits, her younger sister Ada, Elisabeth Dollfus and Flossy von Sonklar. The demonstrations took place at the large house he had recently bought at 25 Hereford Square, near to his studio in Clareville Grove. His exposure to eurhythmy had begun the previous year, when he had participated in the premier of one of Steiner's mystery plays, *Der Seelen Erwachen* (The Soul's Awakening), put on in Munich. In the second scene a group of performers had to portray 'sylphs and gnomes' (both types of 'elementals') using the new art form; Harry was one of the gnomes. Another eurhythmy performance was put on at the Theatre of the Royal Academy of the Dramatic Arts during Rudolf Steiner's November visit in 1922 and demonstrations were given again during Steiner's visits of 1923 and 1924. The year 1924 also saw the opening of a school for teaching eurhythmy (in Streatham, South London) and efforts by Harry Collison to obtain funds for the building of a Steiner Hall, partly to be used for demonstrations. Many years later, in 1936, the by now separated English Section of the General Anthroposophical Society, with the active support of Collison, acquired an old theatre in Notting Hill and renamed it the Twentieth Century Theatre, using it to stage exhibitions of eurhythmy. The building has since passed through several other ownerships and uses, but still retains this name.

Translation and Publishing

From 1910 Collison had begun to assemble a collection of Steiner's works in English and German, which he kept at his studio and made available to other members of the study groups. Almost immediately he set about the task of producing his own translations from German into English. He was not the first to do this. The Heywood-Smiths had, initially for their own use, begun to do the same on an informal basis immediately on discovering Steiner's writings in 1909 and soon discovered that others were already engaged upon translations. These included Max F Gysi (1875-?), who at this time controlled the English language copyright, Bertram Keightley (1860-1944) and Clifford Bax (1886-1962). In England the publications at this time were under the imprint of the Theosophical Publishing Society (at least eight appeared between 1907 and 1914). Several authorised translations were still underway at the time of the Anthroposophists' exclusion from the Theosophical Society, but it was clear that new arrangements would need to be made in future that did not involve the Theosophical Publishing Society.

In 1913 Harry travelled to the United States and gave his first lectures there on Anthroposophy, from coast to coast, including the St Mark's group, based in studios at Carnegie Hall, New York, and the St John's Group, nominally based in Chicago, but with members from as far afield as California. During this trip he distributed mimeographed copies of his translations, for which he received an annual fee from members.¹³

In America two titles had been published by Macoy & Co at the instigation of Max Gysi, *The Way of Initiation* (1908) and *Initiation and Its Results* (1909), apparently without any formal copyright assignment. G.P. Putnam's Sons published *The Mystics of the Renaissance* (1911) and *The Gates of Knowledge* (1912), urged to do so by their London branch, who had reached an agreement with Gysi to publish the latter in London. However, at least two more books, including *The Occult Significance of Blood* (1912) and *An Outline of Occult Science* (1914) were published in the US by Rand McNally, at the behest of a New York member who had influence on the company. Gysi was Swiss, but his wife was German, and at the outbreak of war in 1914 they had decided to leave England and live in New York City. In 1918 Gysi decided to sell the US copyrights and they were purchased by Ethel Parks Brownrigg, who raised the necessary \$1,500.00 from among the members. In 1922, when Maud and Henry Monges began to publish books in Chicago, the copyrights were transferred to them.

Harry must soon have impressed Steiner with his knowledge of German and his enthusiasm for translating his books and lectures; the first English publication to appear bearing Collison's name was *The spiritual guidance of man and of humanity* (J M Watkins 1911). From 1913 Steiner not only delegated the task of co-coordinating the translations to Harry and arranging their publication, but vested the English language copyright in him contractually, thus granting him authority for publication not only in Britain, but also in America and the rest of the English speaking world. In fact as far as Harry was concerned this editorial responsibility covered not only book publications, but also journal

articles and lecture translations, causing him to fall out with Heywood-Smith on at least one occasion (they also had differing opinions on obtaining suitable premises for the study groups and who should be invited to join the new organisation and at what level). This was a unique arrangement, Steiner only otherwise made publishing agreements for specially selected individual works.

Three translations organised by Collison appeared in London during 1914 under the imprint of the specialist occult and spiritualist bookseller and publisher J M Watkins: Steiner's *Spiritual Science*, Elvezia Lotus Péralté's *The first stages of a spiritual movement* and three Anthroposophic lectures by Adolf Arenson. Arenson (1865-1936) was one of Steiner's trusted associates; Péralté (1862-1953), later known as Baroness Paini-Gazzotti, was a painter, sculptress and writer on the grail legend and other subjects. In 1914 Harry travelled back to America, at Steiner's request, "to gain a thorough knowledge of the copyright laws and to make some arrangements", a task for which he was well-suited by virtue of his legal training. On this trip he found an old school friend to assist him in the translations in America and, on his return, another school friend to help in England.¹⁴ During the war, the main efforts of Harry and his co-translators were focused on Steiner's *Four Mystery Plays*, although a translation of Steiner's lecture on *Christmas* did appear (J M Watkins 1915). The lack of speed in publishing translations during the war does not seem to have gone down well in Dornach, particularly with Marie Steiner, but there were undoubtedly great practical difficulties. In any event Harry insisted on standing by the legal arrangements that had by then been agreed. One other book was published in London at this time, *The new impulse and the new era* (J M Watkins 1916), an account by Collison of Steiner's writings. The printer's proofs of the *Four Mystery Plays* were complete by the end of the war and, in 1919, Harry returned to America to arrange the publication "on a legal and workable basis".¹⁵ Perhaps because they were already familiar with Steiner's work the firm selected was G.P. Putnam's Sons, who had offices in both London and New York. However, the Putnam's arrangement was not exclusive. *The Threefold State*, translated by Ethel Bowen-Wedgwood (1869-1952) and George Adams-Kaufman (1894-1963) was published by Allen and Unwin in 1920, with no sign of Harry's name. *Four Mystery Plays* (1920) and *The East in the Light of the West* (1922) both appeared under the Putnam's imprint, but by 1922 a series of publications began to appear in London under the name of Anthroposophical Publishing Company and, from 1928, in the US under the name of the Anthroposophic Press. The latter had been started, with Steiner's agreement, by an American Anthroposophist, Henry Monges (1870-1954). From 1934 the London imprint changed again, to Rudolf Steiner Book Centre & Publishing Company (H. Collison), which was located at 5 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1. This change may well have resulted from the impending expulsion of the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain from the General Anthroposophical Society. Translators with whom Harry worked later included George Adams-Kaufman, George Metaxa and Dorothy Sophia Osmond.

Without any consultation with other member's of the Vorstand (governing council), in 1943 Marie Steiner set up a legal entity separate from the General Anthroposophical Society, to be known as the Rudolf Steiner Nachlassverwaltung ('estate administrators'), usually abbreviated to simply the Nachlass. The purpose of this was to ensure that Rudolf Steiner's literary estate, that had been entrusted to her, be properly safeguarded for posterity; by 1947 she had transferred into this all copyrights and other rights associated with his literary output. The other Vorstand members took great exception to this action and a court case ran on for three years, eventually being resolved in favour of the Nachlass in 1952. On Harry's death in 1945, in accordance with the terms of his will, the English language copyright reverted to Steiner's literary heir, his widow Marie Steiner von Sivers, together with the rights over any translations he had made. Thus since Marie's death in 1948 all relevant rights have been held by the Nachlass.

While in Cologne at the Christmas conference of 1912, Collison was responsible for arranging for the British sculptress, L Edith C Maryon (1872-1924), to meet with Steiner. Subsequently Maryon and Steiner were to become close and collaborate on an extraordinary wooden sculpture, *The Representative of Humanity*, still displayed at the Goetheanum.¹⁶ Collison continued to correspond with Maryon, who remained in Switzerland, throughout the war and asked her to "pour oil on troubled waters" as a result of his enforced absence from Dornach. When Collison visited Dornach after the war there was a suggestion that he had adopted a somewhat nationalistic view, distancing the Myrdhin

Group from Dornach, and it took him some time to re-establish the relationship he had previously enjoyed with Steiner and Marie von Sivers, now Steiner's second wife. From a letter written to Edith Maryon in 1914, it is clear that Collison was not as wealthy as some people believed, with the Society receiving a great deal of what he possessed.

There was an inevitable lack of progress in England during the First World War. Physically distant from Dornach, the study groups seem to have become closer together during the war and the Myrdhin group appears to have assumed some sort of leadership role, even then assuming the title 'Anthroposophical Society of Great Britain', which was later criticised by the other groups as implying a separation from the parent organisation. In 1915 Harry travelled to Malta for unrecorded reasons, describing himself as a barrister, departing aboard the SS *Nore* on 17 July. Towards the end of the war Harry underwent a serious operation, but he recovered sufficiently well to travel thereafter to America, Australia and New Zealand, giving lectures on Anthroposophy, in particular Steiner's Mystery Plays. He left Liverpool on board SS *Lapland* for his initial destination of New York on 3 April 1919. The first Anthroposophists in New Zealand were members of the Myrdhin Group and, in that country, Harry Collison is remembered as the father of Anthroposophy.



Harry Collison 1922

Photograph: © Rudolf Steiner House

It was not until 1920, following a generous gift from a member, that the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain first formally came into existence; it incorporated all of the study groups, but its constitutional basis was still hazy. With this gift of £1000 the London Anthroposophists, who had outgrown the informal headquarters in Collison's studio, were able to relocate to premises in Gloucester Place (Harry was one of the three trustees who purchased the lease). The prime movers in the formation of the UK society, along with Collison, were Vera Compton-Burnett, her sister Juliet, and Dorothy Sophia Osmond (1889-1978), former head librarian at the Theosophical Society London headquarters.¹⁷ In 1922, soon after its formation, a contingent, led by Daniel Nicol Dunlop (1868-1935), treasurer of the British Section of the Theosophical Society and editor of the *Path*, left the British section of the Theosophical Society and joined the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain. Dunlop, who after a varied career was Director of the British Electrical and Allied Manufacturers Association, had met Steiner in 1922 and they had immediately established a strong rapport. Unlike Collison, Dunlop spoke no German (just as Steiner spoke no English), as a result of which he never seems to have become comfortable in Dornach. The London branches of the two societies had maintained cordial relations since the split in 1913 and Collison had given a lecture on Steiner at the Theosophical Society in 1917, but there were clearly personal tensions between Collison and Dunlop. In 1922 Harry, again describing himself as an artist, travelled to Toulon aboard SS *Ormuz*, departing on 21 July.

In 1923 the original Goetheanum was destroyed by fire, as a result of arson. Steiner took this as a message to restructure his organisation as the General Anthroposophical Society. However, tensions between the older and the younger members in Dornach had also begun to surface at this time and these must also have contributed to his decision. They were not completely resolved by the changes he introduced, which included the introduction of a 'Vorstand' (governing council), comprising himself as President, Marie Steiner, Albert Steffen (1884-1963) as Vice-President, Dr. Guenther Wachsmuth (1893-1963) as Secretary and Treasurer, Dr Ita Wegman (1876-1943) and Dr Elisabeth Vreede (1879-1943). Later in 1923 the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain was reconstituted with Collison as its Secretary General and Steiner as Life President. It seems that Dunlop was Steiner's preferred choice as Secretary General, but the recentness of his 'conversion' from Theosophy meant that he did not have the support of the established membership.

Schism

Rudolf Steiner made further visits to Britain in the summers of 1923 and 1924, continuing the increasing emphasis on educational methods that had begun during the 1922 visit.¹⁸ By then additional study groups had been formed in London (Human Freedom, Seeker and Carlyle), Liverpool, Leeds, Bristol and Sheffield and by 1925 the total British membership stood at around 450.

Almost immediately after Steiner's death in 1925 disagreements as to the direction the Anthroposophical Society should take began to develop, in both Dornach and London. In Switzerland the Vorstand dissolved into two factions; the majority, comprising Marie Steiner, Albert Steffen and Guenther Wachsmuth, and the minority, comprising Ita Wegman and Elisabeth Vreede. There were several underlying reasons for the split, including the extent to which esotericism should continue at the forefront of Anthroposophical activity; the opposing view being that greater emphasis should be placed on education, medicine and science (exotericism). Steiner had appointed no-one to take over his mantle of leading the esoteric aspects of his teaching (the 'First Class') and there were some who thought this activity should be dropped completely. Vreede and Wegman were finally forced to leave the Vorstand in 1935, to the dismay of many Anthroposophists.

Rudolf Steiner Hall (later House), at 35 Park Road, London was opened in 1926, with additional rooms added in 1932.¹⁹ In 1927, Collison stood down as Secretary General of the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain and took up the post of President, which had been occupied by Rudolf Steiner until his death and not subsequently filled. Harry was very much himself in the esoteric camp and bemoaned the fact that he was not given access to Steiner's surviving First Class lectures, falling out with George Adams Kaufman on the subject. Although despairing of what he perceived to be the failings of the Vorstand following Steiner's death, he remained essentially loyal to Dornach and Marie von Sivers. In 1928 Harry led a group of predominantly older members in the British Society, including Ada Drury-Lavin, into the formation of a 'Rudolf Steiner Union', somewhat on the model of the German-language one founded by Albert Steffen at Dornach in 1926. In 1929 he stood down as President, gave up his editorship of the *Anthroposophic Movement* (the Society's English language news sheet, published by the Anthroposophical Publishing Company since 1924) and the Union effectively withdrew from the British Society, attaching itself directly to Dornach and renaming itself the 'United Groups Branch'. The process of detachment was still not quite complete; in 1930, a group of over a hundred members led by Collison formally seceded from the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain and later formed the English Section ('Landgesellschaft') of the General Anthroposophical Society, of which he later became President.²⁰ This group found themselves new premises in Bedford Square and, in 1933, with the agreement of the Vorstand, Harry instigated a new English language publication to be issued from Dornach, the *Anthroposophic New Sheet*.

Due to its continued loud support for Wegman and Vreede, the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain was expelled from the General Anthroposophical Society in 1935. Dunlop died within a few weeks, but still this was not the end of the matter.²¹ In 1937 Heywood-Smith, who had remained within the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain, removed his group from Park Road and sought to have it affiliated directly to Dornach, due to continued quarreling within the British Society, although a rapprochement of sorts occurred later. As late as 1944, Harry was writing to Marie Steiner von Sivers complaining about the disagreements that continued.²² Even after the deaths of Collison in 1945 and Heywood-Smith in 1951 the two British sections continued to exist in parallel. Heywood-Smith left the society a generous legacy on his death in 1951, only a month after his wife had died, along with his personal papers. The British Society finally rejoined the General Anthroposophical Society in 1963 and, in 1970, the English section wound itself up, the surviving members rejoining the British Society.

Freemasonry

Harry's Masonic connections might almost be described as promiscuous. In May 1889 he had been initiated in the Apollo University Lodge N° 357, then meeting at the Masonic Hall in Frewin Court, Oxford; he was passed in November 1889 and raised in February the following year. Also in 1890 he was perfected in the Oxford University Rose Croix Chapter N° 40, advanced in the University Lodge of Mark Masters N° 55 and elevated in the University Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners N° 55. His interest in masonry did not diminish on his coming down from Oxford. In 1892 he joined the Earl of

Sussex Lodge N° 2021, which had been founded in 1887 and then met and dined at the Royal Pavilion, Brighton; he was installed as its Master in 1897, but resigned in 1901. He was exalted in the Apollo University Royal Arch Chapter N° 357 in 1893 and in the same year was installed in the Knights Templar Preceptory of Coeur de Lion N° 29 at Oxford. Next, in 1894, joined Westminster and Keystone Lodge N° 10, but resigned in 1896 at which time he joined one of its daughter lodges, the Northern Bar Lodge N° 1610. In 1898 he was installed as Sovereign of Oxford University Rose Croix Chapter; he had been appointed to the 30° of the Ancient and Accepted Rite in 1894 and was further promoted to 31° in 1909. Also in 1898 he was installed as Master of the University Mark Lodge, serving again in 1908 and 1926, receiving Provincial Grand Rank in 1909 (ProvGJW) and Grand Rank in 1925 (PGD). He joined the Oxford and Cambridge University Royal Arch Chapter N° 1118, meeting in London, in 1900, but resigned in 1902 and joined the Westminster and Keystone Royal Arch Chapter N° 10 in 1908, being installed as First Principal in 1910 and resigning in 1912. In 1903 he was enthroned as Preceptor of Coeur de Lion Preceptory; he may well have been awarded with Provincial Grand Rank soon thereafter and was certainly appointed Past Great Aide de Camp in 1921. In 1919 he was one of the successful petitioners for Old Uppinghamian Lodge N° 4227, serving as its Master in 1923. He rejoined Westminster and Keystone Lodge in 1925 and Westminster and Keystone Chapter in 1929, having been appointed Past Junior Grand Deacon in the Craft and Past Assistant Grand Sojourner in the Royal Arch in 1928. He was also a petitioner for the Old Oundelian Lodge N° 5682 in 1937, by virtue of his governorship of the school, which had very close links with the Grocers Company. He was almost certainly a member of Societas Rosicrucia in Anglia, but this has not yet been established definitively. At the time of his death he retained his memberships of Apollo Lodge and Chapter, Westminster and Keystone Lodge and Chapter, the Northern Bar Lodge, his two old school lodges and several other Masonic units, including Oxford University Rose Croix Chapter and Coeur de Lion Preceptory. Westminster and Keystone Lodge regularly attracted young graduates just down from Oxford and, in his later years, Harry was remembered by Sir James Stubbs as someone with a kindness towards such young men.

Steiner was himself a Freemason of sorts and had begun to consider a ‘revival’ of the Memphis and Misraim Rite during 1904; this was a system of higher Masonic degrees that had been fused from two separate, but related, antecedents in 1881 by General Giuseppe Garibaldi. Although he was happy for his co-workers to explain many of the aspects of his teachings, Steiner reserved for himself leadership of what became known as the ‘Esoteric School’, which had its origins as an ‘inner circle’ of the Theosophical Society.¹ As an element of the development of this, in January 1906, he had been granted a warrant for a ‘mixed’ (i.e. open to both men and women) Lodge of the Memphis and Misraim Rite by Theodor Reuss (1855-1923), an Anglo-German occultist with pretensions of Masonic greatness.²³ Steiner and Marie von Sivers had been admitted to the Rite in November the previous year, receiving, in his case, the 33° and 95° (degrees far higher than would normally be awarded to a new entrant, reflecting his standing). Reuss had been given permission to establish the Memphis and Misraim Rite a few years before in Germany by John Yarker (1833-1913), an Englishman who controlled a number of ‘fringe’ Masonic rites and had conferred a Masonic degree on Blavatsky in 1877. The Chapter and Grand Council formed by Steiner was given the title ‘Mystica Aeterna’, but tended to be referred to by him initially as ‘Esoteric Masonry’ and later as the ‘Misraim Service’ or the ‘Cognitive Cultic Section’. Steiner incorporated his own insights into a revised ritual and was still adapting this as late as 1913, after the expulsion of the Theosophists from the Theosophical Society.²⁴

Collison and Heywood-Smith seem to have joined this order around 1912, but by then there were some who felt the introduction of Mystica Aeterna into the UK would be a mistake. These included Nevill Gauntlett Myers Meakin (1876-1912), a writer, Freemason and Anthroposophist who wrote a lengthy letter to Baron Walleen in 1912, during one of the latter’s several lecture tours to the UK, explaining why the United Grand Lodge of England would be antagonistic towards the new Order and make life difficult for those of its own members who became involved with it. Meakin particularly argued against the Order being described as ‘Esoteric Freemasonry’, which he felt would be a red rag to a bull as far as UGLE was concerned. Whether Walleen or others debated the issue with Rudolf

¹ Madam Blavatsky had created an Esoteric Section within the Theosophical Society in 1888, in part because she was losing members to the Golden Dawn.

Steiner is not known, but *Mystica Aeterna* was suspended by Steiner in 1914; he seems anyway to have become disillusioned with the ability of Masonic ritual to enhance his teaching and felt that its time had passed. In his posthumous autobiography, *The Story of My Life* (1928), he sought to minimise the importance of his connection with Reuss and, following his death, Marie Steiner questioned whether her husband had been a Freemason at all, but this seems to be a question of semantics.

Also in 1912 Harry signed the pledge for *Stella Matutina* (Morning Star) and advanced through the first few grades. This was an order dedicated to the dissemination of the traditional teachings of the earlier Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, which had been founded in 1888 by William Wynn Westcott (1848-1925), secretary of the *Societas Rosicrucia in Anglia*.²⁵ After a schism in 1900, one of the three resulting groups in England took on the name of the Hermetic Society of the Morgenroth, which in time came to be led by a British doctor and Anthroposophist, Robert William Felkin (1853-1927). In 1916 Felkin decided to emigrate to New Zealand and before doing so arranged for three ‘daughter temples’ to be formed. One of these, to be known as the Merlin Temple, was to be based in London, with Harry Collison (known by the ‘motto’ *Benedic anima mea Domino*)²⁶ and Colonel Webber (*Non Sine Numine*)²⁷ as two of its chiefs, but it is not clear whether the temple was ever consecrated.²⁸ In fact Webber had been one of the members of the original Golden Dawn from an early date.²⁹

Harry’s connection with the *Stella Matutina* continued at least indirectly for some time. After Felkin emigrated, one of the remaining ‘Chiefs’ of the *Stella Matutina* in the UK was Dr William Hammond, the Librarian of the United Grand Lodge of England. It would appear that Felkin still desired to absorb some of the *Mystica Aeterna* ritual (which he had seen demonstrated in Munich several years previously) into his Order and Hammond wished to know whether this could be done legitimately. Collison discussed the matter with Steiner in the Netherlands, who afterwards, in a letter to Hammond, stated that Felkin had no power or authority to do this.

Harry’s Freemasonry was a point of contention prior to his appointment as Secretary General of the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain in 1923, in so far as some members of the society who supported the candidacy of D N Dunlop, newly arrived from the Theosophy Society, had expressed an opinion that Freemasonry was not compatible with Anthroposophy. When invited by Collison, Steiner took the opportunity to make it clear to the general meeting that there was no incompatibility between Freemasonry and Anthroposophy. Plus ça change ...

Artist

Despite his heavy involvement with Anthroposophy from 1910, Collison did not give up his artistic interest; in fact he described his subsequent career as “fairly successful”. Between 1909 and 1936 he had numerous paintings exhibited in England at the International Society, the New English Art Club (founded in 1885), the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool, the London Salon and the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition (in 1922, 1930, 1931 and 1936). He also exhibited at the Salon des Artistes Français between 1923 and 1930, receiving an honourable mention in 1925. In 1928 he was granted an exhibition of 91 of his works at Walker’s Galleries at 118 New Bond Street; copies of the catalogue survive in the library of the Victoria & Albert Museum.³⁰ They included not only formal portraits of senior legal and city figures (for example Sir Leslie Scott, Sir Robert McCall, Sir Rigby Swift and Sir Claude Schuster), but a series of landscapes that he must have painted on his trip to Australia and New Zealand via California and the Pacific Islands. In a description of his works at this exhibition, the correspondent of *The Times* remarked that “though they left a good deal to be desired in drawing and construction, the portraits ... are not wanting in life and character”.³¹ Two oil portraits by Collison are in the collection of the Leathersellers’ Company: John Leigh Nissen (1855-1939), Master 1924/5; and Frederick John Nettlefold (1868-1949), Master 1936/7. He also painted another ‘Colonial Merchant’ from an old trading family, William James Thompson (1870-1949), Master of the Grocers’ Company and a fellow member of Westminster and Keystone Lodge, N^o 10. Mr. William Knightsmith, probably the most famous toastmaster ever and the person who introduced the scarlet tailcoat to his profession, is the subject of a portrait still in the possession of the National Association of Toastmasters; it hung in the Café Royal for many years and is now on view in the Millennium Hotel, Grosvenor Square. There

is also an example of his work at *The Museum of Art and History Roger-Rodière*, located at Montreuil-sur-Mer in the Pas-de-Calais.³²



Frederick John Nettlefold (1868-1949)
by Harry Collison, c. 1937

Photograph: © Leathersellers' Company



William Knightsmith (1859-1932)
by Harry Collison, c. 1927

Photograph: © National Association
of Toastmasters



John Leigh Nissen (1855-1939)
by Harry Collison, c. 1925

Photograph: © Leathersellers' Company

During his life Collison assembled a unique collection of over a hundred English watercolour paintings, ranging from Brabazon through Sandby and Turner to Wilson Steer. About the time of the commencement of the Second World War he began to give consideration as to the fate of his collection, which had already been partially dispersed to the Grocers' Company and the National Gallery on a temporary basis. Harry was keen that the works should serve as an inspiration to young artists, rather than lingering in a museum, and felt that the public schools were generally lagging behind state schools in the teaching of the arts. He initially approached Oundle School, of which he was a governor, who declined the gift.³³ His next thought was apparently Rugby School, where he seems to have been impressed with the work being done in the art department, but a chance meeting with Dr Montague J Rendall in 1939, who had retired some years previously as Headmaster of Winchester College, led to the collection being transferred there in the summer of 1940, after a lengthy negotiation relating mainly as to how the pictures should be displayed (Harry was keen that they should be kept together and shown in chronological order). The Warden and Fellows were persuaded to accept the gift by the influence of Professor Gleadowes and Sir Kenneth Clark, later Lord Clark, a Wykehamist and at that time Director of the National Gallery. Another nine works were added to the gift over the years between 1940 and Harry's death.

The timing of the gift was just as well, because within a few months, on 12 October 1940, Harry's London home at 25 Hereford Square, along with what remained of his art collection, was destroyed by enemy action. Harry was not at home when the bomb fell, but another painter, Margaret Raymond Wansey (1871-1940), who lived at 27 Clareville Grove, Harry's studio nearby in Chelsea, was in the house at the time and was killed.³⁴ Wansey was a painter, mainly in water-colours, of gardens, animals and mountain scenery, specialising in the Alps and Pyrenees, to which she travelled regularly.³⁵ Although she tried to incorporate Rudolf Steiner's theory of colour into her work, she admitted to finding this very difficult. She had exhibited frequently between 1910 and 1938, including the Graham Gallery, 72 New Bond Street in 1924, the Alpine Club Gallery, Mill Street in 1935, the Archer Gallery, Westbourne Grove in 1939 and occasionally at the Royal Academy. She was an early member of the Anthroposophical Society in England and looked after the Myrdhin Group's library that was kept by Harry at Clareville Grove.

The Winchester collection includes two portraits of Harry's mother: Mrs H C Collison as a child, 1852, by Robert E Foster; and 'Mrs Collison – *in memoriam* 1840-1909' by Sir Walter Russell (1867-1949), along with a watercolour by Turner of the Rhine opposite Neuwied, presumably purchased by Harry as a result of his father's association with Neuwied. The collection can still be viewed by prior

arrangement with Winchester College and has been the subject of special exhibitions from time to time, including a loan exhibition in aid of the Winchester Cathedral Trust at Sotheby's in 1988.³⁶ The catalogue to one of these exhibitions notes that one of the artists whose works were presented by Harry was an Australian born to English parents, Henry Mayo Bateman (1887-1970), one of the twentieth century's best-known caricaturists and cartoonists. Although described therein as a relative of Harry, Henry was actually the husband of Brenda (nee Weir), one of Harry's cousins.³⁷ Another late addition was a watercolour of Coldharbour Farm in Kent, owned and managed by the artist and writer, the 4th Baron Northbourne (1896-1982), who championed an Anthroposophical approach to agriculture.

Around the same time as he gave the paintings to Winchester he gave his personal library of Steiner books and lectures to another Anthroposophist, W.H. Paton, a gift that was confirmed in his will.



Mrs H C Collison as a child
by Robert E Foster, 1852

Photograph: © Winchester College



Neuwied and Weissenthurm
by J.M.W. Turner, 1817

Photograph: © Winchester College



Mrs Collison – in memoriam 1840-1909
by Sir Walter Westley Russell, 1909

Photograph: © Winchester College

Death

In October 1945 Harry completed a commentary on Steiner's *Four Mystery Plays*, which was only published in 1949, four years after his death.³⁸ He died, at Wimbledon, in December 1945 at the age of 77, having by then made a few more gifts of artwork to Winchester. Despite his periodic bouts of ill-health he lived longer than both his mother and his father, both of whom only survived to their 60s. The primary cause of death, after a short illness, was stated to be broncho-pneumonia, from which his sister had also died; diverticulitis and asthma were given as secondary causes. Diverticulitis, an intestinal disorder that can produce painful and persistent symptoms, may well have been the medical problem from which he suffered for most of his life. By then his mobility was deteriorating and his eyesight had also been failing for some time. Several of his close friends, including Lady Maitland Heriot, Adrian Stokes, the artist, and Sir Arthur Cowley (whose portrait by Collison still hangs in the Bodleian) had predeceased him, but he retained a very wide circle of friends until the end

His will, drawn up in 1944, was proved in December 1945 with an estate amounting to £54,000. He left nothing to the Anthroposophical Society as an organisation, but did leave personal bequests to several of its members, including £200 to Marie Steiner. He also bequeathed to her, free of death duties, "... my copyright and rights in the books of Rudolf Steiner or any translations thereof." Other bequests included £500 to the Homeopathic Hospital in Great Ormond Street and sums to the Grocers and the Leathersellers, with the former as his residuary beneficiary, to be used for charitable purposes. A portrait of his father by William Oules, RA was bequeathed to Oundle School (although this legacy does not seem to have been carried through) and a cartoon by Bateman of himself and King Charles II, both in the robes of Master of the Grocers Company, was given to the Company, along with a humorous design of the combined arms of the Grocers and Mercers Companies executed by his cousin, Colonel Collison, DSO. Oundle was also left a monetary bequest with the income to be used for promoting studies of the arts and this still exists. His bookselling business was left to his cousin,

Brenda Bateman, and his remaining pictures to her elder daughter, Diana. Harry Collison was buried in the family grave, with his parents and brother, a few feet in front of the west door at St Mary's, Wimbledon Parish Church.³⁹

Notwithstanding the clear contribution of Heywood-Smith, Collison was generally regarded by his immediate followers as the founder of the Anthroposophical movement in the United Kingdom, serving as their indefatigable leader for over thirty years. It seems clear that there were also periods when Both Rudolf and Marie Steiner considered him leader of the movement in the UK, although Harry's independence of spirit meant that there was not always agreement between them. However, in a schismatic organisation there was scope for different perspectives and the broad consensus would probably have been that he was only one of a number of early leaders, albeit one to whom many members were grateful, particularly for his work on translating Steiner. Following Steiner's death he was undoubtedly considered one of the 'old guard' and seems to have been happy to marginalise himself from the mainstream of the British Steiner movement in order to preserve his principles.

Despite his deep spiritual beliefs, on a first or casual meeting he would give the appearance of being no more than a well educated English gentleman of the old school, there was no attempt by him to create an impression. He was variously described by those who knew him as charming, humorous, whimsical and genial, a delightful companion with whom to take a walk in the country or a tour of an art gallery, a provider of wise advice and counsel. He could also be excitable in conversation, authoritarian in his approach to dealing with issues and curt in manner if he lost patience. As Rudolf Steiner's widow and the co-founder of the Anthroposophical movement, Marie Steiner von Sivers, wrote, he enjoyed a rich life.

Acknowledgements

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John W Hawkins, MA, MBA, MSc
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¹ This article draws heavily on: (1) Marie Steiner von Sivers, 'Harry Collison' in *Anthroposophic News Sheet* (6 March 1938); (2) Elsie D. Armour, 'In Memory of Harry Collison' in *Anthroposophic News Sheet* (December 1946); (3) Marie Steiner von Sivers, 'Harry Collison' in *Nachrichtenblatt* (23 December 1945); (4) T Gordon-Jones 'Harry Collison' in *Anthroposophic News Sheet* (30 December 1945); and (5) Herbert J Heywood-Smith, 'Early Stages of the Anthroposophical Movement in England' in *Anthroposophical Quarterly* Vol. 15, No. 4 (Winter 1970), but written in 1925; some of these articles contain obvious errors. Philip Martyn's 'Harry Collison' in *Anthroposophie im 20. Jahrhundert: ein Kulturimpuls in biografischen Porträts* (Anthroposophy in the 20th century: a cultural movement in biographical portraits), Dornach, Switzerland: Verlag am Goetheanum (2003) is mainly based on the foregoing and perpetuates minor errors.

² Another brother, Henry (1791-1881), remained in the UK, taking Holy Orders and becoming rector of East Bilney-with-Beetley, Norfolk, retaining that living for fifty years.

³ Marianne Doerfel, 'British pupils in a German boarding school: Neuweid/Rhine 1820-1913', in *British Journal of Educational Studies* Vo. 34 No. 1 (February 1986).

⁴ *The Standard*, 17 July 1846.

⁵ Armour's obituary of Harry refers to a description of him as a child from his own writings "riding often alone on the slopes of Table Mountain, among the ferns and arum lilies, the apricot and silver trees", but this autobiographical fragment has not been located.

⁶ Henry Clerke Collison was made Free of the Leathersellers by servitude on 8 January 1856 and became a Liveryman in April the same year, having been apprenticed to John Wotherspoon of Cheapside, Fur Manufacturer, on 6 October 1847 (the apprenticeship indenture is in the Company's archives). He was elected on to the Court of Assistants in 1888, but paid a fine rather than serve as Master for the year 1895-96.

⁷ *Cape Times* Supreme Court law reports, vol. 17 (1908), p.681.

⁸ *The Wykehamist*: No. 867, 9 July 1940; No. 911, 17 December 1945; and No. 1294, 1 December 1981.

⁹ Curiously, in an annotation to a letter to the Headmaster of Winchester College concerning a watercolour by Field-Marshal Lord Grenfell (1841-1925), which had been sent to the school in error, Collison states that his first drawing lesson was given to him by Grenfell. The watercolour, ‘Capucine Monk, 1865’, passed to the family of Lord Grenfell under Harry’s will. A plan to substitute one of Harry’s own watercolours (which he never exhibited) for the Grenfell seems to have come to nothing. See Winchester College Archive, Collison Papers P4/2 and P4/34.

¹⁰ He may well have been in Rome at the time of the 1911 UK census, in which his name cannot be found.

¹¹ Myrdhin was a legendary Welsh prophet, a wild man of the woods, who gradually became assimilated into the Arthurian legend and reemerged as Merlin. Steiner gave Collison’s group this name to reflect the belief that King Arthur was an early British ‘initiate’ into the mystic arts.

¹² The Order of the Star of the East was an organisation established by the leadership of the Theosophical Society at Adyar from 1911 to 1927. Its mission was to prepare the world for the expected arrival of a messianic entity, the so-called *World Teacher* or *Maitreya*. Its precursor was the Order of the Rising Sun (1910-1911) and its successor, the Order of the Star (1927-1929).

¹³ Henry Barnes, *Into the Heart’s Land: a century of Rudolf Steiner’s work in North America*, SteinerBooks (2005). *The earliest days of Anthroposophy in America*, a lecture first given at the New York Anthroposophy Society’s Centre on 14th February 1958 by Hilda Deighton is also relevant.

¹⁴ Shirley Mark Kerr Gandell (1866-?) in the US and Robert Theodore Gladstone (1885-?) in the UK; both from Uppingham. In fact, Gandell’s name appears on only two works other than the mystery plays and Gladstone’s on no other.

¹⁵ Villeneuve has two Collison translations of Steiner published by Putnam’s in 1918: *A road to self-knowledge* and *The threshold of the spiritual world*, but his has not been confirmed.

¹⁶ In his biography of Maryon (see below), Rex Raab notes a similarity between the features of Collison and the face of one of the beings depicted in this carving, the rock-being ‘Cosmic Humour’.

¹⁷ These were two of the twelve children of the homeopathic doctor, James Compton-Burnett (1840-1901), by his two wives. Another sister was the novelist, Dame Ivy Compton-Burnett (1884-1969).

¹⁸ The first Waldorf School, adopting Steiner’s teaching methods, had been opened at Stuttgart in 1919.

¹⁹ Many of the early records of the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain are contained in archives maintained at Rudolf Steiner House. Other important correspondence is held at the Goetheaum at Dornach and by the Nachlass.

²⁰ See also the important compilation Crispian Villeneuve, *Rudolf Steiner in Britain: a documentation of his ten visits*, 2 vols. Forest Row: Temple Lodge (2004). This work also refers to Rex Raab, *Edith Maryon Bildhauerin und Mitarbeiterin Rudolf Steiners* (Edith Maryon, sculptress and colleague of Rudolf Steiner), Dornach, Switzerland: Verlag am Goetheanum (1993), but points out various errors in its narrative concerning Collison.

²¹ See Thomas Meyer, *D.N. Dunlop, a man of our time*, Forest Row: Temple Lodge (1992).

²² See Johannes Kiersch *Zur entwicklung der freien hochschule fur geisteswissenschaft: Die erste klasse* (The development of the free college for humanities: The first class), Dornach, Switzerland: Verlag am Goetheanum (2005). English translation by Anna R.E.K. Meuss published as *A History of the School of Spiritual Science: The First Class*, Forest Row: Temple Lodge (2006).

²³ See Ellic Howe and Helmut Möller ‘Theodor Reus’ in *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum* Vol. 91 (1978), pp. 28-46.

²⁴ See “*Freemasonry*” and *Ritual Work. The Misraim Service: Texts and Documents from the Cognitive-Ritual Section of the Esoteric School 1904-1919*, by Rudolf Steiner and others. Introduction by Christopher Bamford; translated by John Wood, SteinerBooks (2007).

²⁵ At least thirty members of the Theosophical Society were also members of the Golden Dawn. See Ellic Howe ‘Fringe Masonry in England 1870-85’ in *Ars Quatuor Coronatum* Vol. 85 (1972), pp. 242-295.

²⁶ The first words of Psalm 103 and the last words of Psalm 104 – ‘Bless the Lord, O my soul’.

²⁷ ‘Not without divine favour’.

²⁸ Having become a committed Anthroposophist, Harry’s motivation for joining the Stella Matutina is unclear. Ellic Howe, also a member of Westminster and Keystone Lodge, in *Magicians of the Golden Dawn: A Documentary History of a Magical Order, 1887-1923*, York Beach, Maine, U.S.A.: Samuel Weiser, Inc. (1984) suggests that Steiner wished him to keep a watching brief on the Order (p.264n), but Villeneuve discounts this and it is hard to disagree with his conclusion. Howe quotes Robert Felkin, writing in 1916, ‘There are ... also a number of members of the Anthroposophical Society who are seeking admission.’

²⁹ Howe, *Magicians of the Golden Dawn*, p.98. Webber-Smith joined the Golden Dawn in 1893.

³⁰ Walker’s Gallery. *An exhibition of portraits and works in Europe, New Zealand, and California: June 1st to 12th, 1928 by Harry Collison*.

³¹ *The Times*, 5 June 1928.

³² Founded in 1935 and named after Roger-Rodière, an archaeologist who lived in Montreuil-sur-Mer.

³³ The Leathersellers' Company is closely associated with Colfe's School in south east London, which Harry may well have been referring to when he mentioned his governorship of a school that was assisted by the L.C.C.

³⁴ *The Times*, 19 October 1940. See also 'Margaret Wansey' in *Nachrichtenblatt* Vol. 17, No. 47, 17 December 1940.

³⁵ She also made at least one trip to India, departing aboard SS *Viceroy of India* for Bombay on 21 January 1932, describing herself as a 'missionary artist'. See also Charles Baile De Laperriere *The Society of Women Artists Exhibitors, 1855-1996*, Calne: Hilmarton Manor Press (1996).

³⁶ *Watercolours from Winchester College*. Catalogue of a loan exhibition in aid of the Winchester Cathedral Trust held at Sotheby's, London, 4-27 January 1988; includes an index of artists.

³⁷ Henry M Bateman married Brenda M C Weir in Sep Qtr 1926 at Marylebone (1a 1514); Brenda was one of the executors under Harry's will along with Alfred Hildesley, KC (substitute: Paul Francis Glyn Hildesley, his son) and Major M.E. Leonard Dent, DSO (formerly 6th Dragoon Guards). Brenda and Henry had at least two daughters, Diana Katherine Bateman (Sep Qtr 1927 Reigate 2a 360), who was a goddaughter of Harry, and Monica Mary Bateman (Sep Qtr 1929 Reigate 2a 407).

³⁸ *Commentary on Rudolf Steiner's Four Mystery Plays*, London: Rudolf Steiner Publishing Company (1949).

³⁹ His sister was buried in a prominent position in Brompton Cemetery (Compartment 8, Section 3: 153 feet x 131 feet), having died, "whilst in the discharge of her duties as sister of the children's hospital, Great Ormond Street". The inscription on her grave is: "Pray for the repose of the Soul of Phebe Teresa, only daughter of Henry Clarke Collison, of Weybridge, Surrey. December 27 1892, aged 28." Although the form of the words may be regarded as Catholic, the burial is not marked as such in the burial book. The grant of award for the grave is to her father; the absence of her mother's name on the inscription is curious.