



The Appearance of Clemence Isaure (Golden Isis) to the Troubadours, by Henri Martin.

The Founding







In the spring of 1908, while in a deep meditative state, H. Spencer Lewis, then twenty-four years old, had a profound mystical experience in which a spiritual master instructed him to seek out the Rosicrucians. Following many tests and trials, in the summer of 1909 he was eventually led to the Rosicrucians in southern France.

While there, H. Spencer Lewis was initiated into the Rosicrucian Tradition, in an old chateau outside of Toulouse and on another plane of awareness. Following his initiation, he met with the Emperor of the Rosicrucians of France and other Rosicrucians, including the Grand Master of the Rose-Croix of Toulouse, who asked him if he would accept the responsibility of restoring the Rosicrucian Tradition in America.

He accepted.

H. Spencer Lewis was permitted to consult a collection of books and manuscripts in which the principles and major laws of the Order were represented. He was also allowed to copy the symbols and diagrams of the various Rosicrucian ceremonies. These would later become the basis for the Rosicrucian monographs, along with the wisdom gained through H. Spencer Lewis's later mystical experiences and insights.

H. Spencer Lewis was also shown symbolic aprons, an altar cloth, and various archival documents so that he could take note of the symbols belonging to the different degrees of the Order.





H. Spencer and Martha Lewis on their honeymoon, 1914.

At the conclusion of this meeting, H. Spencer Lewis was informed that he was now in possession of all the necessary instructions, but that other inner experiences were yet to come. He was also told that no Lodge should be opened in America until 1915.

Following this experience, H. Spencer Lewis wrote to his wife, Mollie, "...all my hopes on this trip have been realized, but not without many tests and trials . . . At last I am in the R+C, thank God, but the Oaths and vows are severe. How many in America will I find to keep them with me."

Over the next few years, H. Spencer Lewis prepared for the reemergence of the Rosicrucian Order in America. In 1913, Mollie went through transition following complications from a ruptured appendix and now, in addition to his

many other responsibilities, H. Spencer Lewis was the single parent of two young children – Vivian, then six years old, and Ralph, then ten years old.

In 1914, H. Spencer Lewis met Martha Morfier. A few months later they were married. Martha was so indispensable to



Martha Lewis.

the founding of the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC that when the time came to initiate its first candidate, Martha was unanimously chosen for that honor.

She stayed closely involved with all aspects of the organization throughout H. Spencer Lewis's life and then later when her stepson, Ralph Lewis, succeeded him as Emperor. Her wisdom, focus, and generosity of resources and of spirit greatly contributed to the success of AMORC in ways that most members are unaware of.

When H. Spencer Lewis agreed to re-establish the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC in America he was specifically instructed to do so in the year 1915 and was told that from time to time he would meet others who would add certain papers and devices until his working tools were complete.

Mrs. May Banks-Stacey was the person who most fulfilled this special mission. She had been introduced to the Rosicrucian Tradition in India, while traveling there with her son, an Army captain, and from there she was initiated into the Rosicrucian tradition in Egypt.

Mrs. Banks-Stacey, who had previously met H. Spencer Lewis at the New York Institute for Psychological Research, where he was the President, contacted him in the fall of 1914. Then on his birthday, November 25, 1914, she placed in his hands papers and a "mystical jewel" that had officially been transmitted to her.

H. Spencer Lewis stated that it was while May Banks-Stacey was in Egypt that the Rosicrucians there gave her this jewel (today on display in the Rosicrucian Research Library) and some sealed documents that she was to keep until another

person came along and presented her with an exact copy of one of the seals and called upon her assistance to establish the Rosicrucian Order in America.

The documents were some that the Rosicrucians of France had explained to H. Spencer Lewis in Europe in 1909 and which were promised to come to him by a special messenger at the time that he needed them most.

H. Spencer Lewis and May Banks-Stacey decided to pool their efforts

and on December 20, 1914 they published an announcement in the *New York Sunday Herald* inviting people interested in Rosicrucianism to join them.

May Banks-Stacey's contributions were so essential that H. Spencer Lewis always referred to her as the co-founder of the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC.

Within a short time they met Thor Kiimalehto, who soon became one of H. Spencer Lewis's closest friends and later a Grand Master of the Order in America.

In February 1915, nine fratres and sores, including H. Spencer and Martha Lewis, May Banks-Stacey, and Thor Kiimalehto became the organizing committee of the Supreme Council for America. Following years of intense preparation, the



May Banks-Stacey.



Thor Kiimalehto.

Rosicrucian Order, AMORC was founded on April 1, 1915. H. Spencer Lewis was unanimously elected to serve as the Imperator and Grand Master General.

The Order was based in New York City until 1918 when H. Spencer Lewis traveled to San Francisco. While there, he had another mystical experience involving the same spiritual master who had contacted him in 1908, which inspired him to move the headquarters of the Order to San Francisco. He stated that moving to California, more than San Francisco, was the real objective as he had experienced some realizations of the Order's connections with nearby Carmel and the Rosicrucians who had landed there with the Sebastián Vizcaíno map-making expedition in 1602. Later research has substantiated much of what H. Spencer Lewis experienced in his meditative state.

In 1925, the headquarters of the Rosicrucian Order was briefly moved to Tampa, Florida.

Then, in late 1927, H. Spencer Lewis moved the headquarters of the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC to San Jose, California, and began to establish what would become Rosicrucian Park. Even when Rosicrucian Park included just one small plot of land with the previous Administration Building and small temple, the Order's letterhead stated: Rosicrucian Park. As H. Spencer Lewis did on many occasions, he acted in the present in the belief of what would manifest in the future.

This is the story of the founding of the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC.

The Rosicrucian Tradition and teachings have been perpetuated by individuals since the publication of the first Rosicrucian manifesto, the *Fama Fraternitatis*, in 1614, and through the long traditional lineage of the western esoteric tradition, since the time of the most ancient Mystery Schools thousands of years ago.

Some of these mystics gave their lives in order to perpetuate this wisdom. Many were persecuted or harassed. Most were tried and tested until found worthy of instruction.

In 1915, this wisdom – the Rosicrucian Tradition – was destined to be perpetuated in North America and from there throughout the world by someone. H. Spencer Lewis, and those serving with him, fulfilled their destinies, their Cosmic Missions, by perpetuating the Rosicrucian Tradition and we continue this mission with our participation as Rosicrucians today.

Let us ever be aware of the sacred light with which we are entrusted.





The Directors and Administrators of the Supreme Grand Lodge of AMORC with Emperor Christian Bernard. From left to right: Ilkka Laaksonen (General Administrator, Finnish Administration), H elio de Moraes e Marques (SGL Director and Grand Master of the Portuguese Language Jurisdiction), Iakovos Giannakopoulos (General Administrator, Greek Administration), Atsushi Honjo (SGL Director and Grand Master of the Japanese Language Jurisdiction), Sven Johansson (SGL Vice President and Grand Master of the English Grand Lodge for Europe, the Middle East, and Africa), Marie Metzler (General Administrator, Polish Administration), Kenneth Idiodi (SGL Director and Grand Administrator for the English speaking West African Administration, including Nigeria), Klaas-Jan Bakker (SGL Director and Grand Master of the Dutch Grand Lodge), Maximilian Neff (SGL Board Treasurer and Grand Master of the German Grand Lodge), Emperor Christian Bernard, Akos Ekes (General Administrator, Hungarian Administration), Paul Panikian (SGL Director and Grand Master of the English Grand Lodge for Australia, Asia, and New Zealand), Julie Scott (SGL Board Secretary and Grand Master of the English Grand Lodge for the Americas), Claudio Mazzucco (SGL Director and Grand Master of the Italian Grand Lodge), Serge Toussaint (SGL Director and Grand Master of the French Grand Lodge), Hugo Casas (SGL Director and Grand Master of the Spanish Grand Lodge for Europe, Africa, and Asia), Live S oderlund (SGL Director and Grand Master of the Scandinavian Grand Lodge), Roland Brisson (SGL Director and Grand Master of the Spanish Grand Lodge for the Americas), Michal Eben (SGL Director and Grand Master of the Czech and Slovakian Grand Lodge), Vladimir Koptelov (General Administrator, Russian Administration). Photo taken at the Rosicrucian Domain in Lachute, Quebec, Canada, 2014, at the Annual Supreme Grand Lodge Board of Directors meeting.