

The Felt Working Group
Progress Report
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Revision 6

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Several of you have contributed major pieces of information to the search for George Henry Felt's lost work, The Kaballah of the Egyptians. As such, I thought it was time to bring everyone onto a level playing field, in terms of what we know about the Felt, the work, the work's publication history and its subsequent fate.

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0. Focus And Revision History

The focus of this working group is: **either the recovery of what remains of George Henry Felt's manuscript for The Egyptian Kaballah and the Greek Canon of Proportion, or a determination of its final fate.**

Revision Number	Summary of Changes
1	First cut. Consolidation of information.
2	Added Felt-Newton correspondence, Brentano research, Clarence W. Lieb research; JPD Felt material from Randolph book.
3	Added excerpts from Viola de Gruchy letters to Claude Bradgon, and drawings in the U. of Rochester collections.
4	Fixed some typos; added important letter of Felt's from June of 1878, received from JPD, in which he unequivocally confirms his ability to conjure elementals.
5	Added CB diary entry from Andrea.
6	Sanitized version for circulation.

0 -- Significance And Working Hypothesis

The first Theosophical Society was formed around the upshot of a talk given by George Henry Felt to the TS founders, in which Felt unveiled some of the details of his research into the lost canon of proportions of the Egyptians (from which he claimed the Greek canon of proportion was derived) and on the basis of which he claimed -- among other things -- to be able to conjure elementary spirits. Felt's research was slated for publication as (with variations) *The Egyptian Kaballah*, but was never actually published, and has become perhaps the single most famous lost document of the Victorian occult revival.

The only copy of George Henry Felt's manuscript for *The Egyptian Kaballah* was in James R. Osgood's warehouse in Boston, and it burned along with that warehouse in the Boston Fire of November 9, 1872. Having collected a significant number of prepaid subscriptions for the work, and having no means to repay those subscribers, Felt suppressed this fact. Although he found a new publisher for the material, J. W. Bouton, he never finished the replacement manuscript.

His working material, including drawings, printers' proofs and plates for illustration, was among the personal effects of Felt's that were sold, to cover back rent, by a NYC storage facility in August of 1883.

Those personal effects were purchased by an agent of Brentano's, which held the Felt manuscript and materials until 1914, when they were sold to a NYC doctor named Clarence W. Lieb. At the time, Lieb received some accounting from Brentano's of the provenance of the materials.

Lieb stored the materials, and left them untouched until 1932, when Viola de Gruchy -- a youngish student of Dynamic Symmetry, a canon of proportion -- became a patient of Lieb's. On learning of her work, Lieb loaned DeGruchy his Felt materials with the understanding that deGruchy could publish them.

DeGruchy worked on these materials until the late 1930s, when she solicited help from her teachers, who put her in touch with Claude Bragdon, the Rochester designer, architect and occultist, who recognized the value of the materials and attempted to collaborate with VdG (unsuccessfully) in arranging and extending the Felt materials for publication.

At Bragdon's death, deGruchy was in possession of the manuscript materials, which had formally changed hands and were 'owned' by a Miss Felt, who sought their return (directly or through agents/executors/heirs).

As far as is known at time of writing, the materials were still in deGruchy's hands on her death in 1986.

1 -- Timeline for George Henry Felt (Sep 21 1831 - Dec 4 1906)

- 1831: Born Massachusetts, to Willard Felt and Elizabeth Leuman Glover, into extended family of prosperous printers and stationers
- 1840: Living in New York with parents and brothers Willard and David; NY branch of Willard Felt & Co. open
- 1850: Living in New York with parents and brothers Willard, David and Edwin
- 1859: (suspect) Willard Felt has farm property in modern-day Bronx; GH felt breeding and showing horses
- 1860: living next door to his uncle David Felt, in Feltville (New Providence) NJ
- 21 August 1861: Mustered into Union Army (as lieutenant?)
- November 1861: Retrieving deserters for the Union Army.
- May 1863: Requests court of inquiry into conduct of his commanding officer; controversy over Felt's behavior, and commanding officer's appropriation of Felt's signal system invention; Felt publishes pamphlet on inquiry (New York: Willard Felt & Co., Stationers and Printers (No. 14 Maiden Lane), 1863)
- 29 July 1863: Awarded antedated patent for signal rocket system
- 1 December 1863: Awarded patent for improvements in signal codes for signal rocket system
- 11 October 1864: Awarded patent for automated sail reefing and furling apparatus
- 1865: Becomes involved in protracted legal action with his mother, father and a family of tenants (Willard Felt, landlord)
- 1867: Residence at West Farms, Bronx, NY (Willard Felt's property)
- 1868: Publishes *The Therapeutic and Chemical Properties or the Active Medicinal Principles of Cod Liver, Determined and Separated* (New York?: Ward Sutherland and Co.
- September 1870: Mrs. G. H. Felt buys property at 130th and 6th Avenue in NY, for \$25,000; family double-counted in the 1870 census, at West Farms and at this address; families slightly different. In NY: Felt (occupation: chemist); wife Mary; sons Willard, Henry and George; daughters Elizabeth, Annie and Maria. At West Farms: Maria, Willard, Henry, George, Annie and Susanna (no Elizabeth).

- April 1871: N. C. Trowbridge awarded ~\$1000 judgement against Felt.
- Fall 1872: Osgood & Co., in Boston, announce imminent publication of Felt's Egyptian Kaballah (see section on publication history for more detail)
- June 1874: Awarded patent for breech-loading ordinance
- August 1874: Elected member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science
- June 1875: Pursuing UK patents (eventually awarded) through a patent agent, for his non-military inventions
- September 7, 1875: Felt delivers lecture on "Canon of Proportions" at HPB's rooms in Irving Street, claims an ability to conjure elemental spirits using Egyptian techniques, and sparks the founding of the (first) Theosophical Society
- November 1875: VP, Theosophical Society
- April 1878: rallying friends and acquaintances to exert influence on House Military Committee, which is examining Gen. Myer; believes he is due money (see correspondence with Caroline Wells Healey Dall)
- Feb 1880: Awarded patent for liquid/gas pump improvements
- April 1880: Resident in New York: Mary, Willard, Henry, Mary, Annie, George, Marie, Alexander and Caroline (Susanna dead?). George and Willard are listed as "steam engineers"; Henry is "rr [railroad] gateman"; implication -- all trainmen
- 1882: Promoting system for cylinder-based system for storage of oil-based gas for machine operation and lighting
- August 1883: Felt's personal possessions, at Eagle Storage on West 33rd Ave, are sold for back rent, on 11 September.
- Nov 1889: Awarded four patents related to galvanic batteries
- December 1891: Involved in public dispute with Henry J. Newton over the circumstances of the founding of the TS
- March 1892: Incorporates Felt Electrical Light & Power Company (in West Virginia), which is dissolved in 1894.
- 1900: Census: Occupation: Civil engineer; Mary, daughter Mary, Alexander and Carrie still living at home. Two families of boarders. One servant.

- March 1900: Awarded patent for (aluminum-based) metal beam
- 1901: Secretary and Director of Direct Electricity Syndicate Co.
- 1903: Felt's possessions in storage are again sold up.
- 4 December 1906: dies "at his home, 448 St. Nicholas Avenue. He was 75 years old and is survived by a widow and 8 children. His is the first death in the family (??? Susanna???). Mr. Felt celebrated his golden wedding anniversary two years ago. He was an inventor, and before the civil war (incorrect) invented a breech-loading cannon. During the war, when attached to the Signal Corps, he invented the Felt rocket, which was used in that arm of the service. Mr. Felt enlisted at the beginning of the war with the 55th New York Zouaves, and served to the end (incorrect). He was a thirty-second degree Mason." (NYT, 12-6-1906)
- September 29, 1910: Mary Felt dies "On Sept. 29, at her residence, Sea Gate, Mary A., widow of the late George H. Felt, in the 75th year of her age. Funeral services Sunday, Oct. 2, 1910, at 4 PM. Relatives and friends are invited. Milford, Penn., papers please copy." (NYT, 10-1-10) (NB: members of GH Felt's family are living in Milford, PA by this date.)

2 -- Reception History Of *The Egyptian Kaballah*

The Literary World, September 1, 1872, p. 62

Mr. George Henry Felt claims to have discovered the "Kaballah" of the Egyptians -- a geometrical figure -- the actual measurements of which are established through all nature. It is said to be a key to all the works of art in antiquity and those of Nature herself, to the mysteries which surround the origin of language, and to the true meaning of Scripture records. Surely this is a momentous discovery, and one the announcement of which would, under ordinary circumstances, be received with pardonable incredulity. But Mr. Felt's claim is supported by very high authority. The sculptor Ward says "there is no the slightest doubt but that Mr. Felt has discovered the Canon of Proportion of the Greeks, and the Kaballah of the Egyptians." William Page, President of the National Academy of Design, and other gentlemen eminent for art-knowledge, bear similar testimony. Mr. Felt has written a work on the Kaballah, explaining it in the simplest manner, which will be published in ten monthly parts, by J. R. Osgood & Co. These will be sold to subscribers only, at \$2.00 each.

Boston Daily Globe, September 11, 1872, p. 1

(reproduces Literary World notice above)

The Nation, September 5, 1872, pp. 152-3

"Messrs Osgood & Co ask for subscriptions to a work which, if it is anything like what its author asserts it to be, will be worth having, in monthly parts or otherwise. Mr. George Henry Felt, who writes it, says in his prospectus that he believes himself to be the true rediscoverer of the "Kaballah" of the Egyptians -- that "perfect system of proportions" which, "if rediscovered, would furnish us with a complete key to all the works of art in antiquity and of nature herself; would elucidate the origin of language, written or spoken, hieroglyphic or figurative, thus showing the hidden and true meaning of the Old and New Testaments." All this, surely, should make a book that would be cheap at two dollars a part, profusely illustrated, the parts not to number more than ten. One would say that a twenty-dollar subscriber, able to enter on a career of true progress by means of his Complete Key to all art and nature, the origin of language, written or spoken, and the hidden meaning of the Old and New Testament, might well be content with his outlay. Or one might say that Mr. Felt has either made a mistake in the wording of his prospectus, or else that he is aware that a certain class of people, whom Heine said he used to like to meet, are not all dead yet, and are as easily parted from their two dollars a month as they ever were. Or more probably it would be true to say that enthusiasm over something that he really has found out has led Mr. Felt, like many ingenious discoverers before him, into an extremely wild and ill-regulated estimate of the extent of his discovery. That there may be something in what he says about the Greek canons of art having been derived from Egyptian sources, and their being plainly referable to these sources, it might be unsafe to deny. Mr. Page, the President of the National

Academy of Design, who is himself a man of much research in the matter of the proportions of ancient art, gives a guarded approval of Mr. Felt's work. Mr. E. Wood Perry, the Corresponding Secretary of the Academy, says that he thinks "Mr. Felt has found out something more than even the old Egyptians knew," an opinion in which most people will agree with Mr. Perry, we suppose. The Pope of Rome, let along the heathen magicians of the Pharaohs, would not care to assert that infallibility itself requires any of us to know more than a subscriber who is possess of a complete key to everything -- nature, art, the esoteric meaning of the Hebrew Scriptures, modern Freemasonry, and the Eleusinian and other mysteries. But, as we say, while the prospectus is in one view a document nothing less than ridiculous, there need be little doubt that the treatise itself will have both merit and interest. It has been examined by Mr. Page and Mr. J. Q. A. Ward and while neither of these gentlemen would say that his examination has been such as qualifies him to speak without reserve, they have each seen enough to make them think that the book will interest the intelligent, and that its discoveries have value. Nature and art will no doubt still afford some problems after Mr. Felt has unlocked all that the Complete Key opens; but his work will evidently teach something new and true, or corroborate truths before known.

The Nation, September 12, 1872, p. 185

The book by Mr. G. H. Felt, to which we made reference last week in one of these notes, is not a book without value, nor did we at all intend to convey that impression, although the prospectus on which we commented might well enough lead its reader to suspect that he had come upon another work like Mr. Stephen Pearl Andrews's great "Alwato." That also was a book which had "testimonials" from some eminent citizens, though more extraordinary and heaven-defying nonsense has seldom got into print....Mr. Felt's book, as we pointed out, has the approval of Mr. William Page, Mr. Quincy Ward, and Mr. E. W. Perry, who speak of it as being valuable to students of art and instructive to themselves personally as artists. This they say after close investigation, and it would require General Schenck or a committee of Congressmen to dispute the conclusions of these gentlemen on a matter of this kind. So, too, as Mr. Felt informs me, Mr. Felt's work has been found interesting and is believed to be valuable by a number of leading Swedenborgians; by some of the professors of the Episcopal General Theological Seminary in this city, who are disposed to think that the English revisers of the Scriptures would do well to consult with Mr. Felt; by many members of the Masonic fraternity, who are so well pleased with his exposition of the mysteries of their order that he has recently been advanced to the thirty-second degree -- if that is the right phrase -- he having previously taken but three degrees; by several Egyptologists, who have expressed in writing their gratification at the result of his labors; by some of our philological scholars, and by other persons entitled to express an opinion on one or another point to which his attention has been given. As we say, there need be no doubt that the work will be interesting from several points of view, and little doubt that from several points of view it will be regarded as valuable; so that whether or not it traces the golden reed of Ezekiel backwards to its origin in the "wisdom of the Egyptians" and forward through the measurements of ancient and modern

architectures, and does other still more remarkable things, there is no harm in wishing its author success with his subscription list, and this we believe he is having.

[In October of 1872, according to a Wynn Wescott bibliography MD has seen, Felt published an article, possibly entitled "Notes Upon the Kaballah" in *The Rosicrucian* magazine.]

Appleton's Journal Of Literature, Science and Art, October 26, 1872, p. 471.

James R. Osgood & Co. announce, for publication, a work entitled "The 'Kaballah' of the Egyptians, and 'Canon of Proportions' of the Greeks," by George Henry Felt. We are informed in the prospectus that "'Kaballah' existed in the earliest traditional ages, and it is the secrets of Nature and the mysteries of religion, and the meaning of the divine revelations were expressed by occult figures, signs, or words, or by common words, signs, or figures, having a mystical or hidden meaning...." Our own opinion is that Mr. Felt is an honest enthusiast, who may have made some geometrical discoveries, but who is fearfully deluded on the subject of the "Kaballah," and whose work will throw no light whatever on "ancient mysteries," whether of art or of language, of religion or of history.

Messrs. JAMES R. OSGOOD & CO.'S
NEW BOOKS IN PRESS.

Palmetto Leaves. By MRS. HARRIET BEECHER STOWE. Illustrated.

Enigmas of Life. By W. R. GREG.

The Other Girls. By MRS. A. D. T. WHITNEY. A Companion Volume to
"We Girls," "Real Folks," etc.

A Chance Acquaintance. By WILLIAM D. HOWELLS. Illustrated.

American Text-Book of Art Education. By WALTER
SMITH.

The Kaballah of the Ancient Egyptians. By GEO. H. FELT.

The Works of Jules Verne:

The Adventures of Capt. Hatteras. Illustrated.

Five Weeks in a Balloon. Illustrated.

The Land of the Furs. Illustrated.

Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Seas. (New Edition.)

Among the Isles of Shoals. By CELIA THAXTER.

A New Poem. By BAYARD TAYLOR.

Music Hall Sermons. A New Volume, by W. H. H. MURRAY.

In Osgood's Library of Novels:

Not Easily Jealous.

Writings of Emile Gaboriau, as follows:

The Lerouge Affair.	The Mystery of Orcival.	Monsieur Lecoq.
The Slaves of Paris.	Infernal Life.	File No. 113.

Complete Poetical Works of Bret Harte. Diamond Edition.

Gothic Forms, Applied to Furniture, Decorations, etc. By B. J. TALBERT. A
magnificent architectural and decorative work, reproduced by the Heliotype process.

Continuation of the Library Editions of Hawthorne and De Quincy

124 Tremont Street, Boston.

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First edition of Thomas Hughes' *Memoir of a Brother* (Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1873), back matter

THE **KABALLAH** OF THE EGYPTIANS,

AND

Canon of Proportions of the Greeks.

By GEO. HENRY **FELT**.

All traditions respecting the "**Kaballah**" of the Egyptians concur in stating that it was a Perfect System of Proportion, and if rediscovered would furnish us with a Complete Key to all the Works of Art in antiquity, and of Nature itself; that it would elucidate the Origin of Language, written or spoken, hieroglyphic or figurative, thus showing the hidden and true meaning of the Old and New Testaments.

The Grecian Canon was this system of proportion brought from Egypt by Grecian sculptors and architects, about B. C. 850, by which they fashioned their unequalled statues of the human figure, and their architectural masterpieces.

Mr. **Felt** claims to have discovered the **Kaballah**, and that the proof of its correctness is abundant and *positive*. The **Kaballah** is a geometrical figure, the actual measurements of which are established through all Nature and Art. This work is written without technical terms, and plainly, so that a child of twelve years may understand it. The geometrical problems are reduced to the simplest elements, so that they can be understood without a knowledge of geometry.

The work has been examined and approved, and enthusiastically endorsed by prominent members of the learned professions and mechanic arts, and is peculiarly interesting to students of Masonry, being a complete key to the Ancient Mysteries.

The distinguished sculptor, J. Q. A. Ward, Vice-President of the National Academy of Design, writes as follows:—

"There seems not the least doubt that Mr. **Felt** has discovered the Canon of Proportions of the Greeks, and the **Kaballah** of the Egyptians, and, as far as we can judge, he establishes the subject-matter of the first tables of stone, in establishing a law of proportion that exists in all the works of nature and their ramifications or parts.

"His geometrical problems are new and startling, and are confirmed by nature and art. Altogether it is a work of vital interest to every person, and on a subject that cannot help being appreciated by the general reader."

To this testimony we add the following extract of a letter from Mr. William Page, the distinguished artist, President of the National Academy of Design:—

"I am greatly interested in the above-mentioned question of the **Kaballah** as presented by Mr. **Felt**, and concur in this agreement with his belief, that is, so far as I have been able in two investigations to understand, and believe that it will prove of the greatest results, and interest the intelligent to a very remarkable extent when once published to the world."

This work will be profusely illustrated in the highest style of the art, and will be invaluable to Students of Mathematics or Language. Clergymen, and all persons wishing to understand the true meaning of the Bible, Architects, Machinists, Engineers, Builders, Sculptors, etc.

The work will be issued to subscribers only. It will consist of ten parts, to be issued monthly, the first part to appear immediately. Price, \$ 2.00 each part.

JAMES R. OSGOOD & CO., PUBLISHERS.

The Nation, June 4, 1873, p. 384

Mr. George H. Felt, to whose forthcoming work on 'The Kaballah of the Egyptians' we made some reference last year, has himself assumed the publication of it, and may be addressed for information or by intending subscribers at No 47 Liberty Street, in this city.

G. H. Felt, letter to Caroline Wells Healey Dall, June 23, 1873

Dear Madam/ Enclosed please find an add'l printed sheet certificates &c., relating to Kaballah. I was obliged to break off with Osgood & Co and have been getting along slowly since but still moving. Am in hopes to receive some money from an old claim in a few days and then the K_____h will progress rapidly & in that case if you and the Prof. are not yet discouraged, will fwd the copy to you as before, that is, if it would be just as agreeable to you as before when O & Co. were to publish. I cannot blame my friends for being disheartened as I had nearly lost my own courage.¹

Springfield Republican, July 21, 1874, p. 4

An Ancient Mystery Revealed.

The facts that the bee's cell is mathematical, that the petals of a flower are proportioned, that the crystal in the rock's heart has symmetry, that the eye is a model combination of lens, - these things, like the motion of the stars in their courses, have rendered the belief that the universe was framed and is governed by fixed and flawless laws as secure to the man of science as to the theologian, though he may strangely fail to discover behind these laws the central intellect called God. In these manifold operations there grows to the wondering observer a sense of unity; a feeling that this shapeliness in such widely varying uses must be bound by a plan of no less than universal scope. The secret of that plan, the law which underlies and bases all organic life, that alike whirls the spheres and forms the hundred facets of the house-fly's eye, that fills all perfect art, is what Mr. George Henry Felt claims to have discovered anew, for the first time since the Greek and Egyptian sculptors and architects lost it, 1500 years ago. It is the ancient "Kaballah" that Mr Felt thinks he has found, and Mr Felt, though an enthusiast, is no visionary. He is that eminently practical man who invented the rocket and signal system by which Gen Sherman communicated with the fleet a hundred miles off; and for eighteen years he has dwelt upon this mystery, seached for and found it, all alone. What such a man says cannot be set aside as an extravagant dream.

¹ Note that if the "destroyed in the Boston fire" hypothesis is correct, Felt is prevaricating in his communication with Dall.

The Kaballah is “God’s law of proportion;” so the word means. The dictionaries and the cyclopedias are silent on the subject. Refer to them, and all you will find are the words “cabal” and “cabala,” the one a word of common political usage, derived from the other. Cabala (properly, says the New American, “Kaballah,” a Hebrew word signifying reception) grew from its first simple application to indicate the hidden meanings of the Hebrew ritual, and, more widely, a mystic system of the diving Being and the human existence. There is, perhaps, no link of connection between this mystery and that of the Egyptian Kaballah, except the common import of secrecy.

This law of proportion, whatever its nature, has been known as of Egyptian origin, one of the sacred mysteries of that land where worship and science were held by sages as jealously as the “riddle of the sphinx,” the fable that symbolized all their learning. The law, says Mr Felt, underlines the structure of all the great works of antiquity, the Parthenon, the Pyramids, the statues of Phidias. It was determined by astronomical observations, many of which, we are told, must have been taken in latitudes as far north as 54 degrees or higher, and the figure that formulates it is a combination of squares, parallelograms, triangles and pentagons, inscribed within and around a circle. The full reach of its significance was known only to those initiated into the deepest Egyptian mysteries, but, as a basis of construction, it was known to others. It ruled the mighty period of Greek art, as historical record shows, and then, as the ages failed to bring again the genius that could comprehend it, it was lost. The Apollo Belvedere and the Venus de Milo, those ideals of the human form, remain to show what this law wrought; the colossal hold and ivory statue of Jupiter, the masterpiece of Phidias, which perished by fire in Constantinople, 475 A.D., was the crowning perfection of the law in sculpture, as the Parthenon was in architecture. The secret was lost more than a hundred years before the statue; the temple, though ruined, still stands, to the despair of the degenerate ages, in its inimitable beauty.

The rediscovered secret solves, says the finder, the problems of the second and sixth books of Euclid, known as the books of proportion; its elements pervade all life; the eye is formed in reference to it; the facial angles of the various races of men are contained within it; and these things prove it God’s law. We do not know that Mr Felt claims to determine the proportions of the heavenly orbits from it, or the order of the universe, but if he is right in attributing its creation to astronomical observations, the inference is inevitable that it is as inherent in the skies as in the minor elements of this small world, and can be nothing less than universal in its relations.

The Academy, July 25, 1874, p. 96.

The Nation announces that Mr. J. W. Bouton will shortly begin issuing, in ten parts at 2 dols. 50 c. each, Mr. G. H. Felt's *Kaballah of the Egyptians and the Greek Canon of Proportion*, or, as the title goes on to explain, "the normal law of being and of beauty applied to art, sculpture, architecture, symbolism, language, natural law, and science, and the deciphering of the hidden meaning of the sculptured and written Egyptian and Hebrew religious records." The book will consist of 640 quarto pages, with upwards of a thousand illustrations.

Appleton's Journal, August 1, 1874, pp. 156-6.

J. W. Bouton will shortly begin issuing, in ten parts, at two dollars and fifty cents each, Mr. Geo. H Felt's "Kaballah of the Egyptians and the Greek Canon of Proportion: The Normal Law of Being and of Beauty applied to Art, Sculpture, Architecture, Symbolism, Language, Natural Law, and Science, and the Deciphering of the Hidden Meaning of the Sculptured and Written Egyptian and Hebraic Religious Records." The size of the book will be six hundred and forty quarto pages, and it will contain more than a thousand illustrations.

The Literary World, August 1874, p. 45.

A year ago or more we gave a somewhat extended account of Mr. George H. Felt's projected work, "The Kaballah of the Egyptians and the Greek Canon of Proportion." Mr. J. W. Bouton, of 704 Broadway, New York, now announces the work for publication in ten parts, at two dollars and fifty cents each. Many persons of high authority in scholarship and investigation of monumental symbolism have been profoundly impressed by the importance of Mr. Felt's discovery, and his work is likely to excite a deep interest in scientific and scholarly circles. Mr. Bouton has issued a circular which gives much interesting information about the Kaballah.

The American Exchange and Review, August 1874, p. 378

The 'Kaballah' is the latest. Mr. George H. Felt, heretofore known as the inventor of a very remarkable rocket and excellent system of signals, comes forth as a new light upon the fundamental principles of the law of proportion prevailing in the combinations of nature. The Kaballah, or 'God's Law of Proportion,' is claimed as the re-discovery of a principle which was at the base of Egyptian and Greek art, and it pervades the structure of organic life. The figure in which this law is formulated is of astronomical origin, and is a combination of squares, parallelograms, triangles, and pentagons, inscribed within and around a circle, the full, esoteric signification and value of which was known only to

those who were initiated in the Egyptian mysteries. Mr. Felt applies it to the simplification of the demonstration of cardinal geometric problems. And upon this point he claims to be able to show that the problems of the second and sixth books of Euclid are all involved in the Kaballah figure, and very simply demonstrable by its aid.

The Journal of the American Institute for Mining Engineers, August 1874

(repeats AE&R above verbatim)

The Bookseller (UK), September 1, 1874, p. 740

KABBALAH. -- Mr. J. W. Bouton, of New York, has favoured us with a prospectus of a work which he is publishing in parts at 2 1/2 dollars each, entitled "The Kaballah of the Egyptians and the Greek Canon of Proportion: the Normal Law of Being and of Beauty applied to Art, Sculpture, Architecture, Symbolism, Language, Natural Law and Science, and the Decyphering of the Hidden Mystery of the Sculptured and Written Egyptian and Hebraic Religious Records," by George Henry Felt. We have handed this interesting paper to the keeper of the Art library at South Kensington.²

Harte Penn (pseudonym), in Schermerhorn's Monthly: For Parents and Teachers, July 1876, pp. 301-3.

THE LOST KEY.

MR. GEORGE H. FELT, formerly of the United States Signal Service, thinks that he has found a key which has been lost for more than twenty centuries. When we say that this key belongs to the lock which guards all the treasures of ancient knowledge, we have said enough to indicate the importance of its discovery. For it is universally conceded that those old Egyptians, whose well-dried remains are now and then exposed to the profane curiosity of sight-seers in our museums, knew a great deal in their time. Their mathematics, their natural philosophy, their chemistry, and above all, their magic, cannot be matched by this boastful nineteenth century. We admire their colossal structures, but we cannot produce their like. We stand puzzled before problems which they solved. We despair of finding their lost arts. Why they took such pains to embalm their bodies, but none to perpetuate their ideas, has long been a mystery. Mystery, indeed, was always a part of their system. To accumulate knowledge and hide it away, like any avaricious old miser, was their supreme delight. They revelled (sic) in learned secrets and monopolies. But not content. with keeping their envious contemporaries and successors in a state of chronic astonishment, they let their wisdom die with them. For two thousand years the question has been, "Who will find the buried key of Egyptian knowledge?"

² "This interesting paper" is probably Bouton's prospectus. It may be worth finding out if the V&A has it, still.

"I have found it," says Mr. George H. Felt.

This key, which has been the object of more research among the learned of all nations than any other appurtenance of the ancient civilization, whose discovery has been at once the dream of artists, the ambition of philosophers, the coveted prize of moneymakers, and the final despair of all, was found -- well, we could tell where, if we would! It was not in a corner of the Astor Library. It was not -- but the dignity of a scientific announcement forbids that we play upon the reader's patience like an overjoyed child -- it was found deeply imbedded in the brain of Mr. Felt himself. Where it lay before Mr. Felt was born or became conscious of it, we do not know. By what process he evolved or unbrained it, we cannot say. He may have been scalped by Indians, or trepanned by surgeons, or relieved of the headache as Jupiter was by Vulcan. It would not be delicate to inquire. But that the key is in Mr. Felt's possession--he who runs may read and believe. He calls it the Egyptian Kaballa.

We are astounded by the fact now made clear, that in sixty generations of sages, to whom this valuable secret has been entrusted in succession, not one solitary individual has been willing to part with it for the benefit of mankind. Brains there have been, in every age, which gave evidence of a burdensome weight impairing their functions. Philosophers whom both the doctors and the unlearned called crazy have suffered untold agonies from Kaballa on the brain. Kaballa doubtless has been the secret cause of martyrdoms, rebellions, wars, and assassinations. The poor fellows who were afflicted by the Kaballa hidden away in the very centre of life, have endured the obloquy which is always heaped upon fanatics, traitors, tyrants, and lunatics, but not once in the course of all the ages has one of them breathed a word which would lead to discovery. What can have been the motive? Not loyalty to a trust, since the hiding of such a secret could not serve anybody living or dead. Not personal profit, evidently. Not vanity: not the hope of restoring any particular race, nation, or dynasty to power. It must have been a corvine passion for concealment. For there are brains, it is needless to say, that are simply crow's nests, brains in which all sorts of odd ideas, valuable or worthless, are secreted from pure love of hiding. We rejoice that Mr. Felt has risen superior to the weakness of his predecessors. Having discovered the Kaballa ingeniously hidden away beneath his *pia mater*, he immediately exhibits it to the world. He offers to unlock with it, for universal benefit, all the hitherto unknown laws of proportion in art and nature. Persons who have listened to his explanation say that he has not only astonished and delighted them, but also led them to believe that a few more turns of this wonderful key will bring to light all the secrets of ancient times. The most abstruse mathematics is to be made simpler and easier than lovers' kisses; philosophy is to open her doors to the merest tyro; scriptural prophecy is to become as lucid as the upper air; all the skeleton mysteries that have lain concealed under philological rubbish are to rise again full clothed with their own proper flesh. Sculptors, orators, theologians, linguists, chemists, physicians, lawyers--in short, all whose intellectual life has any connection with the long-forgotten past, all, all should make haste to use this rusty old key of knowledge before it is lost or stolen.

The Liberal Christian, September 25, 1875, pp. 64-6

THE CABALA

In each century there have been persons believing that with the Cabala they possess the key that, rightly applied, unlocks the secrets of nature. They have searched for its right application.

In each age, too, it has been believed that a select few have found the key of keys, and so have been masters of matter and spirit, controlling both at will. It was my privilege not long ago to be present at a private meeting where MR. GEO. HENRY FELT, THE CABALIST explained his discoveries. Without belonging to the Occultist or Rosicrucian sect, Mr. Felt has astonished its adepts and initiates with his intimate knowledge of the lore taught in their shekinah. For twenty years he has been pursuing his investigations, and designs presenting them to the world in a large volume of 1,000 pages, with more plates than pages. The gathering which listened to him on the evening referred to, was composed of MEN AND WOMEN OF ALL PROFESSIONS.

Among them were Miss Lizzie Doten, the well-known "Inspirational Speaker;" Mrs. E.T. Porter Beach, the poetess; Dr. Pancoast, whose name came prominently before the public in connection with the autopsy of the Siamese twins; Mr. ----, the editor of the New Era; Mesdames Wood and Johnson, of Chicago, desirous of being sent to Russia in the proposed scientific expedition; Dr. Holbrook, of the Herald of Health; Mr. and Mrs. Hardinge-Britten; C. Sotheran, of the Bibliopolist; Col. Henry S. Olcott, and others. Mr. Felt illustrated his conversation with MANY "KABBALAH" DIAGRAMS of his own preparation, and courteously answered all questions put to him. First, he explained the diagram which unlocks the Cabala. It consists of a circle with a square within and without, containing a common triangle, two Egyptian triangles, and a pentagon, forming the STAR OF PERFECTION.

This diagram he applies to the Pictures, Statues, Doors, Hieroglyphics, Pyramids, Plains, Tombs, and Buildings of ancient Egypt, and shows that they agree so perfectly with its proportions that they must have been made by its rule.

The same canon of proportion he then applies to GREEK ART to show how its masterpieces of sculpture were carved without models by this rule, and how imperfect is living nature itself in the comparison of proportions.

In music, the prismatic colors, the configuration of leaves, and the world's circumference, he finds the same law of proportionate harmony. He also develops some geometric-arithmetical processes which competent mathematicians pronounce as novel as they are simple.

This diagram, applied to the Egyptian Cabala, or life-table of hieroglyphics, indicates the parts to be read, and in conjunction with the ancient pictures of death, transmigration

and the SOUL'S CRISIS AND PILGRIMAGES, develops a startling correspondence; although we who are unlearned in Egyptian antiquities must, for the time, take many of these assertions on the ipse dixit of their maker.

Mr. Felt asserts that learned Rabbins have followed his investigations similarly made into the HEBREW CABALA, and found themselves able thereby to solve mysteries before inexplicable.

Entering, then, the realm of Scripture, he shows the correspondence between the Mosaic account of creation with its STORY OF EDEN, and the Egyptian narrative of the creation of man, thus confirming what many scholars believe and teach in regard to the pictorial origin of some Scriptural passages which people commonly understand to be literally historic.

THE BOOK OF JOB engages his attention, and here also are many curious correspondences. The descriptions of heaven agree with the Egyptian, and the crimes whereof Job accuses himself are those recorded in the Egyptian Book of Death; facts which prove the antiquity of the poem of Job, and the familiarity of its unknown but remarkable author with the learning of days earlier than his own.

IN EZEKIEL'S PROPHECY also are descriptions which prove that the Egyptian ideas of man's destiny colored the imagery of Hebrew seers, and so attest its genuineness. In tracing the ANALOGIES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT Mr. Felt was less successful. Others may not agree with the opinion, but to me it seemed that the symbolizations of the Loaf and Fish miracles were fanciful, and failed to establish the familiarity of Jesus with Egypt and the Cabala. His teachings about the sword, and the antagonism of family relations, "the mother-in-law against the daughter-in-law," may agree with the numbers of the pillars of a certain Egyptian temple entrance, and the relations of the gods and goddesses they represent; but father, son, daughter, mother-in-law, are the common relations of households, especially in the East, where married sons bring their wives to the paternal household, and the simple use of the names and titles would prove nothing of Jesus' acquaintance with Egypt.

This, to be sure, does not affect the value of the Cabala for other purposes. Mr. Felt thinks that the DATE OF THE PYRAMIDS is 16,000 years before Christ. He thinks that their astronomical records, whose configuration indicates a northern zone of the heavens, show that the Egyptians emigrated from Finland, as the earth cooled, with a philosophy full fledged, and that this science they at once applied to their new possessions.

The evening was too short for Mr. Felt to complete his elucidation, and he gave way for some business in regard to the formation of a proposed THEOSOPHICAL CLUB, to be composed of people believing in God and spirit, and desirous of throwing light upon the Cabala and kindred subjects. Dr. Pancoast, of Philadelphia, who is reputed a very wise occultist, propounded some questions. He said that the ancient occultists not only had

wonderful theories, but could put them into practice. They could ACCOMPLISH FOUR WONDERS:

1. They could summon long departed "spirits from the vasty deep," and compel them to answer questions.
2. They could transmute the baser metals into gold.
3. They could indefinitely prolong human life.
4. They could ward off and neutralize the power of surrounding ill-boding demons.

Could Mr. Felt do this? Did he fully understand the meaning of the alphabet, numerals, and other Cabalistic signs? If so, nature was subject to his will, and he could not be confined by bolts and bars. A crystal was also shown to the Cabalist, whose meaning he could not then and there explain.

To the questions there were HIS STRAIGHTFORWARD REPLIES:

He could, with his chemical circle, call into sight hundreds of shadowy forms resembling the human, but he had seen no signs of intelligence in these apparitions. He had found his art useful. By it he had discovered a lacking ingredient, and so perfected the colors of signal rockets that they became very valuable to our armies in the war time, because visible a hundred miles away. He did not wish to be imprisoned, though possibly he might escape therefrom Cabalistically, but he had never tried such experiments. He was not perfect in his science, and would not boast of what he could do. Meanwhile, he did wish to publish his expensive work, which would treat but a portion of a vast range of subjects. This is but an outline of the interview, with this grave, earnest, well-informed and indefatigable gentleman.

Is Cabalism anything more than a CAREFUL STUDY OF THE UNIVERSE'S LAWS and their marvelous harmony, whereby her mysteries can be unlocked, and the veil of Isis lifted? The studies of a score of years cannot be fully or fairly communicated or unfolded in a few hours, and this statement does meagre justice to Mr. Felt and his researches, which are unquestionably of value to many minds, and will lead him and others to something higher. The Cabala is but a chart of material and spiritual truths, and possibly without it pure souls penetrate the celestial arcana.

The Academy, September 18 1875, p. 306

Mr. J. W. Bouton has now in press a work which promises to be of great interest. The work is written by Mr. Geo. H. Felt and is entitled The Kaballah of the Egyptians and the Greek Canon of Proportion. Mr. Felt claims to have "discovered the true geometrical system of the Egyptians, the long-lost and eagerly-sought-for key wherewith Egypt unlocked the mysteries of art and nature." Mr. Felt believes that his discoveries "will give to the world for the first time in three thousand years an exact knowledge of that marvelous system of proportion, of which all subsequent systems have been but fragments and distortions." The author is said to have given years of careful research to

the subject, and has succeeded in making a book that will at least command attention; whether it will carry conviction is another matter. This, I believe, is the same book some time ago announced by Messrs. James R. Osgood and Co. Why those publishers let it pass out of their hands, and whether Mr. Felt's "endorsers" are "of the same opinion still," are, like the Kaballah itself, too deep for me. The cost of preparing this work has been 30,000 dollars, all of which has already been subscribed. I have seen some of the proof sheets and illustrations, of which latter there are over one thousand, plain and in colours. The Kaballah, dedicated by permission to the Khedive of Egypt, will be issued simultaneously in this country and in England, and will be sold to subscribers only. The first number will be issued during the coming autumn.

The American Bibliopolist, October 1875, p. 210

George H. Felt has spent years examining the Egyptian monuments, and believes he has discovered the true geometrical system of the Egyptians, the long-lost and eagerly-sought-for key with which Egypt unlocked the mysteries of art and nature. His work in illustration of these discoveries, "The Kaballah of the Egyptians and the Greek Line of Proportion," (sic) has been illustrated at great expense, and will be published in numbers.

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS.

RESOLVED, That this Convention recognize the PUBLISHERS' WEEKLY as the established organ of the entire trade, and recommend it to publishers as the medium through which they should make their "first announcement" of books they propose to publish, and the full title of all books immediately on publication.—AMERICAN BOOK TRADE ASSOCIATION.

AMERICAN NEWS CO., New York.

The Picturesque Tourist. With Maps and illustr. (Oct.)

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOC., Boston.

Endeavors after the Christian Life. Discourses by James Martineau. Reprinted from the last London ed. 12°, about pp. 450. \$1.25 or less. (*Before Christ-mas.*)

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AUTHORS' PUB. CO., New York.

Champions of the Church; or, Biographical Sketches of Eminent Christians. By D. M. Bennett, editor of the "Truth-Seeker." Cr. 8°, pp. 1000. \$3; leather, \$4. (*End of 1876.*)

Ancient Gods, Ancient Faiths, and Ancient Worship. By D. M. Bennett, editor of the "Truth-Seeker." Cr. 8°, pp. 1000. \$3; leather, \$4. (1877.)

Modern Gods, Modern Faiths, and Modern Worship. By D. M. Bennett, editor of the "Truth-Seeker." Cr. 8°, pp. 1000. \$3; leather, \$4. (1877.)

The Outcast. By Winwood Reade, author of "The Martyrdom of Man," etc. 50 c.; pap., 30 c.

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The Kaballah of the Egyptians, and the Greek Canon of Proportion. Being the Normal Law of Being and of Beauty applied to Art, Sculpture, Architecture, Symbolism, Language, Natural Law, and Science, etc. By George Henry Felt. Several hundred illustr. in color and wood-cuts, etc. In 12 Parts. (By subscription.) Part 1. (*Shortly.*)

Tree, Fire, and Serpent Worship. By Dr. Alex. Wilder. 8°.

G. W. CARLETON & CO. New York.

The American Bookseller, September 15, 1876, p. 205.

The first part of George H. Felt's curious work The Kaballah of the Egyptians, will soon be issued to subscribers.

The **KABALLAH** of the Egyptians and the Greek Canon of Proportion :

The Normal Law of Being and of Beauty, applied to Art, Sculpture, Architecture, Symbolism, Language, Natural Law and Science, and the deciphering of the Hidden Meaning of the sculptured and written Egyptian and Hebraic Religious Records. By GEO. HENRY FELT.

J. W. Bouton begs to announce that he has now in press, and will shortly publish, a work of deep and extraordinary interest, to which he invites the particular attention of all students of ART, ARCHITECTURE, SCULPTURE, LANGUAGE, THEOLOGY, PHYSICS, NATURAL LAW AND SCIENCE, as well as of all those who, like Alphonso the Wise of Castile, "live and learn."

Many persons skilled in the exact sciences, and in the application of Science to Art, as well as in the profound and more subtle relations of Theology and Ontology; and of acknowledged scholastic ability in very many special branches thereto pertaining, have critically and carefully examined, and cordially approved, Mr Felt's method of demonstrating his system of original and intimate investigations into the true meaning of the monumental symbolism of Egypt, in which he claims to have discovered the true geometrical system of the Egyptians, the long-lost and eagerly sought for key wherewith Egypt unlocked the mysteries of Nature and Art.

"Mr. Felt has made the architecture of the Egyptians and Greeks, their statuary, as they are preserved, a study, and shows conclusively that all the ancient monuments, pyramids, temples, and figures were erected and formed according to certain well-established geometrical proportions, verified throughout the entire artistic and intellectual creations of the ancients. He traces with a wonderful perspicuity the progress of the scientific principles first established by the Egyptians through the entire ancient world, their adoption by the Greeks, Chaldeans, Hebrews, and their influence on the symbolism in worship and the growth of language.

"This work, when completed, will shed a new light on archaeological studies, furnish explanations where obscurity prevailed until now, and his book will take rank side by side with the epoch-making labors of Seyffert, Bunsen, Champollion, and other Egyptologists.

"We look forward with great interest to the publication of this remarkable book."—*Jerusalem Times*.

MODE AND TERMS OF PUBLICATION.

The "Kaballah" will be printed upon superior paper, of imperial 4to size, with over 1,000 illustrations, plain and colored, embracing many of large size and great elaboration. It will be completed in ten parts at \$2.50 each, and supplied to subscribers only. Parts I., II and III., nearly ready.

The Publishers Weekly, September 8, 1877, p. 249

Mme. Blavatsky's 'Isis Unveiled,' for which many orders are stated to have been received from all corners of the world, will be ready, in two volumes, in September, and it is hoped to issue the first of ten parts of Mr. Geo. H. Felt's long-deferred "Kaballah of the Egyptians and the Greek Canon of Proportions" in the following month.

(the above is the last known reference to the book and a publisher)

The International Standard, Volume 1, 1883, p. 532

Lieut. George H. Felt says: "I am glad to see that there is an organized protest against the French metric system. The English inch is the standard of measure in nature, as shown in Egyptian construction and Greek art. Twenty-eight inches (one royal cubit) and eighty-four inches (three royal cubits and four common cubits) and multiples and subdivisions of these measures are found all through their constructions.

Book Chat, November 1886, p. 165

In 1872, or about that time, James W. Bouton, of New York, announced as in press, The Kaballa of the Egyptians, by George Henry Felt. What came of it, and will the book yet be published?

Lake Worth, Fla.

Davidson

It has not been published, and at present there is no probability of its being published. The work has not been completed by the author.

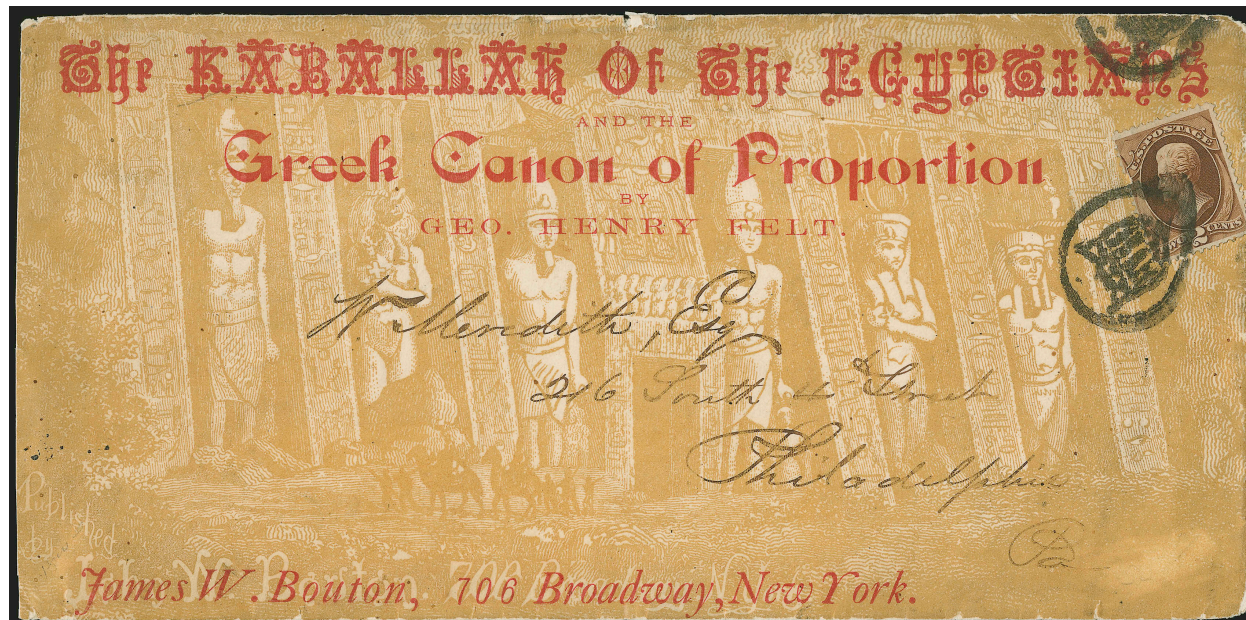
The International Standard, May 1884, p. 183

At the meeting of the New York and New Jersey Auxiliary Society, on the 12th ult., Lieutenant George H. Felt lectured on "Measures as used by the Ancients." Mr. Frank H. Norton, foreign editor of the Telegram, says: "I had the pleasure of attending the last meeting of our section of the Institute, and of listening to the extremely interesting and important paper of Lieut. Felt on the 'Canons of Human Proportion,' a subject to which I have, incidentally, given some attention. My interest in the Pyramid question lies wholly in the direction of its astronomical reference."

Mr. J. N. Wing, secretary of the New Your and New Jersey Branch Society, writes with regard to the same subject: "The meeting was a most interesting one. Though I am not

a mathematician, I was greatly interested in Mr. Felt's geometric drawings. The engineers present seemed to have heard something entirely new in his discourse. One of his statements, that seven feet and seven inches are measures found in nature, and are esoteric, is hard for me to grasp; yet none of the professional gentlemen present that might could gainsay one word of his utterances. Mr. Felt is anxious to meet a body of engineers and mathematicians and lay before them his, so to speak, discoveries in the science of mathematics. There will be a meeting soon of the Liberal Club, embracing a membership of some two or three hundred men of advanced thought. Mr. Felt is to lecture before the club on his subject relative to measures, and says he will prove the origin of the inch. Just now I have it in mind to suggest an open debate, in some large hall, on the merits and demerits of the respective systems of weights and measures.

4 -- Bouton Promotional Post Card For Kabbala (c. 1877)



Note overprinting in red, and white text behind. It appears to MD that Bouton reused a stock card for this, and we should not attribute any particular significance to the Egyptian monument in the background.

5 -- The Fate Of The Manuscript of the Kaballah

In November of 1872, version 1/the Osgood variant of the Kaballah was possibly destroyed in the Boston Fire of November 1872, necessitating a reconstruction of the manuscript.

In September of 1875, Felt delivered his lecture before the group of people who would subsequently found the (first) Theosophical Society. JPD, in his Paschal Beverly Randolph, covers "the dark period" of the first Theosophical Society (1876-1878), and Felt's role in it, and that material is reproduced verbatim later in this document.

In the fall of 1877, in *Isis Unveiled*, HPB writes that: "As to the practical results to be obtained by "the investigations of geometry," very fortunately for students who are coming upon the stage of action, we are no longer forced to content ourselves with mere conjectures. In our own times, an American, Mr. George H. Felt, of New York, who, if he continues as he has begun, may one day be recognized as the greatest geometer of the age, has been enabled, by the sole help of the premises established by the ancient Egyptians, to arrive at results which we will give in his own language. "Firstly," says Mr. Felt, "the fundamental diagram to which all science of elementary geometry, both plane and solid, is referable; to produce arithmetical systems of proportion in a geometrical manner; to identify this figure with all the remains of architecture and sculpture, in all of which it had been followed in a marvelously exact manner; to determine that the Egyptians had used it as the basis of all their astronomical calculations, on which their religious symbolism was almost entirely founded; to find its traces among all the remnants of art and architecture of the Greeks; to discover its traces so strongly among the Jewish sacred records, as to prove conclusively that it was founded thereon; to find that the whole system had been discovered by the Egyptians after researches of tens of thousands of years into the laws of nature, and that it might be called the science of the Universe." Further it enabled him "to determine with precision problems in physiology heretofore only surmised; to first develop such a Masonic philosophy as showed it to be conclusively the first science and religion, as it will be the last"; and we may add, lastly, to prove by ocular demonstrations that the Egyptian sculptors and architects obtained the models of the quaint figures which adorn the façades and vestibules of their temples, not in the disordered fantasies of their own brains, but from the "viewless races of the air," and other kingdoms of nature, whom he, like them, claims to make visible by resort to their own chemical and kabalistical processes."

In June of 1878, Felt drafted a letter intended for the editor of the (London) Spiritualist (W. H. Ainsworth?) which read as follows:

New York, June 19, 1878.
To The Editor Of The " London Spiritualist."

My attention has but just now been called to certain articles, published in your city, and one of them in your paper, which reflect upon statements made by friends of mine, respecting the "Theosophical Society" and myself. One or more of the writers question whether such a person as myself actually exists, or is but "the creation of the brains of Mme. Blavatsky and others." Having very little in common with the public which supports your paper, I seldom see it, and would perhaps never have known of these statements, if they had not been pointed out to me. I am engaged in mathematical pursuits, and take little or no interest in anything that cannot be exactly demonstrated, for which reason Spiritualists and myself have very few bonds of sympathy. I have so little faith in their so-called manifestations that I have long since given up trying to keep track of them.

The Theosophical Society was started under the mistaken impression that a fraternity of that kind could be run on the modern mutual admiration plan for the benefit of the newspapers, but very soon everything was in confusion. There were no degrees of membership nor grades, but all were equal. Most members apparently came to teach, rather than to learn, and their views were thoroughly ventilated on the street corners. The propriety of making different degrees was at once apparent to the real Theosophists, and the absolute necessity of forming the Society into a secret body. This reorganization into a secret society, embracing different degrees, having been accomplished, all statements of what has transpired since the members were so bound in secrecy, are of course to be viewed with suspicion, as, even if such statements were true, things may have been done in the presence of the illuminati, of which many ex-members and novitiates had no knowledge. Of my own acts in and out of the society, before this bond of secrecy, I am at liberty to speak, but of my doings or the doing of others since that time, I have no right to give evidence. Mr. Olcott's statement about my experiments with elemental or elementary spirits, in his inaugural address, was made without consultation with me or my consent, and was not known to me until too long after its appearance for me to protest. Although substantially true, I looked upon it as premature, and as something that should have been kept within the knowledge of the Society.

That these so-called elementals or intermediates, or elementary or original spirits were creatures that actually existed, I was convinced through my investigations in Egyptian archaeology. While working at drawings of several Egyptian Zodiacs, in the endeavour to arrive at their mathematical correspondences, I had noticed that very curious and unaccountable effects were sometimes produced. My family observed that at certain times a pet terrier dog and a Maltese cat, which had been brought up together and were in the habit of frequenting my study and sleeping on the foot of my bed, were acting very strangely, and at last called my attention to it. I then noticed that when I commenced certain investigations the cat would first appear to be uneasy and the dog for a short time would try to quiet him, but shortly the dog would also seem to be in dread of something happening. It was as though the perceptions of the cat were more acute, and they would both then insist on being let out of the room, trying to get out themselves, by running against the glass windows. Being released they would stop outside and mew and bark as though calling to me to come out. This behaviour was

repeated until I was forced to the conclusion at last that they were susceptible to influences not perceptible to me.

I supposed at first that the hideous representations on the Zodiacs, etc., were "vain imaginations of a distempered brain," but afterwards thought that they were conventional representations of natural objects. After studying these effects on the animals, I reflected that as the spectrum gives rays, which though to our unaided sight invisible, had been declared by eminent scientists to be capable of supporting another creation than the one to us objective, and that this creation would probably also be invisible (Zollner's theory), this phenomenon was one of its manifestations. As these invisible rays could be made apparent by chemical means, and as invisible chemical images could be reproduced, I commenced a series of experiments to see if this invisible creation or the influences exerted by it would be thereby affected. I then began to understand and appreciate many things in my Egyptian researches that had been incomprehensible before. As a result I have become satisfied that these Zodiacal and other drawings are representations of types in this invisible creation delineated in a more or less precise manner, and interspersed with images of natural objects more or less conventionally drawn. I discovered that these appearances were intelligences, and that while some seemed to be malevolent and dreaded by the animals, others on the contrary were not obnoxious to them, but on the contrary they seemed to like them and to be satisfied when they were about.

I was led to believe that they formed a series of creatures in a system of evolution running from inanimate nature through the animal kingdom to man, its highest development; that there were intelligences capable of being more or less perfectly controlled, as man was more or less thoroughly acquainted with them, as he was able to impress them as being higher or lower in the scale of creation, or as he was more or less in harmony with nature or nature's works. Recent researches showing that plants possess senses in greater or less perfection, having convinced me that this system can be still further extended. Purity of mind and body, I found to be very powerful, and smoking and chewing tobacco and other filthy habits, I observed to be especially distasteful to them.

I satisfied myself that the Egyptians had used these appearances in their initiations; in fact, I think I have established this beyond question. My original idea was to introduce into the Masonic fraternity a form of initiations such as prevailed among the ancient Egyptians, and tried to do so, but finding that only men pure in mind and body could control these appearances, I decided that I would have to find others than my whisky-soaked and tobacco-sodden countrymen, living in an atmosphere of fraud and trickery, to act in that direction. I found that when these appearances, or elementals could not be kept in perfect control, they grew malicious, and despising men whom their cunning taught them must be debased, they became dangerous, and capable of inflicting damage and harm.

With one of the members of the Society, a legal gentleman of a mathematical turn of mind³, I accomplished the following, after the manner of Cornelius Agrippa, who claimed for himself and Trithemus, that " at a great distance, it is possible without any doubt to influence another person spiritually, even when their position and the distance is unknown." *De Occulta Phil.*—Hi, III., p. 3. Several times, just before meeting me, he observed a bright light ; and at last came to connect this light with my coming and questioned me about it. I told him to notice the hour and minute at which these lights would be seen, and when I met him afterwards I would tell him the exact time. I did this 30 or 40 times before his naturally sceptical mind was thoroughly convinced. These lights appeared to him at different times of the day, wherever he happened to be, in New York or Brooklyn, and we arranged that, in each case, about two hours from that time I should meet at his office.

These phenomena differ essentially from any mesmeric, magnetic, or so-called spiritual manifestations that I am acquainted with, and are not referable thereto ; this gentleman has never been influenced by me in either of these ways.

Once he came to my house, in the suburbs of this city, and examined some Kabbalistic drawings upon which I was working, with one of which he was much impressed. After leaving he saw in bright day-light, in the cars, an appearance of a curious kind of animal, of which he then made a sketch from memory. He was so impressed with the circumstance and the vividness of the apparition, that he went at once to one of the illuminati of the Society, and showed his drawing. He was informed that though apparently an ideal figure, it was really a so-called elemental spirit which was represented by the Egyptians as next in the order of progression to a certain reptile, which was the figure he had seen at my house, and that it was employed by the Egyptians in making their Zodiacs, at initiations, - etc., etc. He then returned to me, and without comment I showed him a drawing of the very figure seen by him, whereupon he told me that he had seen it and under what circumstances and produced his sketch. He was then convinced that I foresaw that he would see this appearance after having been impressed by my Kabbalistic drawing.

These phenomena are clearly not referable to any familiar form of manifestations. At one of my lectures before the Theosophical Society, at which all degrees of members were present, lights were seen by the illuminati passing to and from one of my drawings, although they stood in the glare of several gas lights, a dark cloud was observed to settle upon it by others, and other phenomena, such as the apparent change of the Zodiacal figures into other forms or elemental representations, were observed.

Certain members of lower degree were impressed with a feeling of dread, as though something awful were about to happen ; most of the probationers were rendered uncomfortable or uneasy ; some became hypercritical and abusive; several of the novitiates left the room; and Mme. Blavatsky, who had seen unpleasant effects follow

³ JPD identifies as W. Q. Judge.

somewhat similar phenomena in the East, requested me to turn the drawings and change the subject. If there had previously been any doubt, the absolute necessity of forming the society into degrees was then apparent, and I have never since met others than the illuminati of the society, with similar manifestations.

The unfriendly tone of the article above referred to was entirely uncalled for, and there was no boasting on the part of any of the members in their remarks. Being a secret society we could not in any manner retaliate until permission to do so was given. Having now received permission, I here publicly state that I have lately performed what I agreed to do, and, unless the Council forbids, I hereby give permission to such of the illuminati as have seen it, to come forward, if they choose and bear evidence of the fact. I do not know if you will think this worth the space it will occupy in your columns, but think that it is but just, after keeping an absolute silence for more than two years, I should now be heard in this matter. Modern Spiritualism need not weep with Alexander, for there is another world for it to discover and conquer.

George H. Felt.

In 1883 (we know) or later (in 1903), Felt's in-storage goods were sold up by his storage provider for back rent, and a trunk containing a post-1872 manuscript of the Kaballah, along with notes, printer's proofs and engraving plates may have been purchased, by an agent of Brentano's (see evidence later in this section).

WINSLOW, LANIER & CO.

Sales by Auction.

ASSIGNEE'S SALE.—Notice is hereby given that I, the undersigned, assignee for the benefit of the creditors of JEFFERSON PATTEN, JR., & Co., by virtue of the assignment, will sell at public auction at No. 61 Greenpoint-ave., in the City of Brooklyn, Kings Co., N. Y., on the 3d day of August, 1883, at 10 o'clock a. m., the goods, chattels and property of the said firm, consisting of engines, boilers, machinery, tools and implements for manufacturing valves and fittings for steam pipes, and for the foundry business, together with the horses, trucks and other property belonging to said late firm.
Dated July 25, 1883.

SAMUEL LYMAN, Assignee.

**D. CAMERON, Attorney for Assignee,
65 Greenpoint-ave., Brooklyn, N. Y.**

STORAGE SALE—On the 11th day of September, 1883, at 10 o'clock, will be sold to satisfy liens for storage and charges, the goods stored under the names of the following persons: Rosa A. Moore, Betty Lewis, Helen Holzer, Emma Barker, Edward S. Ryder, Edward Denman, **George H. Felt**, Rosa Raudell, Frederick R. Sanders, Felix G. de Fontaine, Alice Warner, Henry L. Underwood, George R. Powers. **EAGLE STORAGE**, 103, 105 and 107 West 33d-st.

(New York Herald Tribune, August 1, 1883, p. 6)

Felt was sold up again in 1903 (NY Daily Tribune, October 7, 1903, page 10).

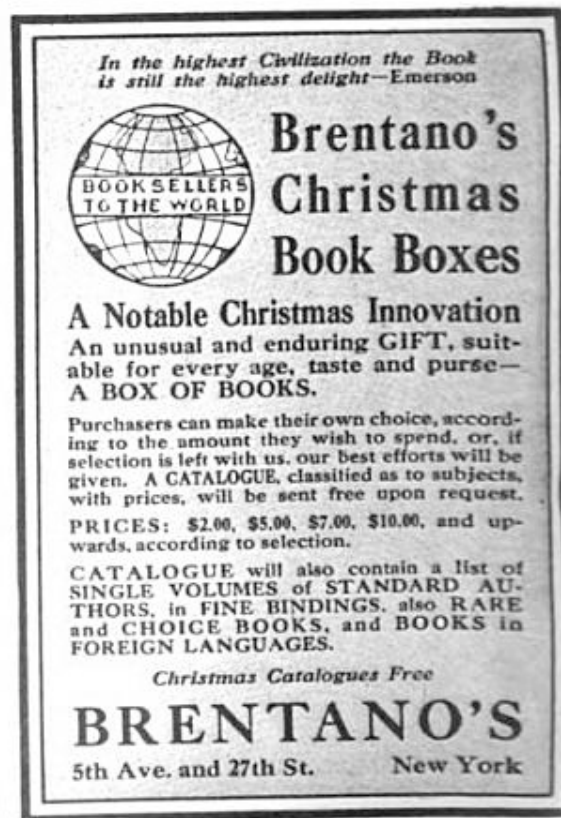
TO MRS. C. F. MEEK, Mrs. A. C. Hunsaker, Edw. C. Gilson, Gerald E. Hart, Mrs. M. McCue, Jos. M. Keatinge, Julius Hirshfeld, Geo. W. Fisher, Albert W. Sully, Otto J. Lang, Laura F. Colford, Mrs. L. Farmer, J. H. Butler, Cristobal Coll, Mrs. F. Carroll, Mrs. Addie A. Levy, Mrs. C. H. Walte, Helen P. Nickels, Helen L. Watson, Mr. or Mrs. B. Tiffany, Louis Comerford, Mrs. R. E. Van der Veer, Mrs. F. A. Wilson, Geo. F. Wilson, Mrs. T. E. Dove, Mrs. M. E. Ward, Finsa Mesa, Florence M. Brooks, Wm. M. Barkley, Matilda C. Gourdier, Wm. Reardon, Jas. Plant, D. T. Robertson, Mrs. J. O. Williams, **Geo. H. Felt**, Carolyn Lee, Miss C. Harris, Mrs. Ruby Senn, W. W. Payton, Clara Ward, Julia Daniels, C. B. Johnson, Serepha M. Reid, Mrs. M. Englehart, Lulu B. V. Snyder, Theodosia Napier, Mrs. Louis McClure, Bertha N. Titus, Dr. C. T. Parker, Mrs. Rae Vallean, John Rogers, Ferdinand Thompson, G. C. Brotherton, Mrs. M. Waldron, Mrs. G. A. Kerr, Miss Mae Sherwood, H. C. Burdett, Mrs. J. F. Kline, J. L. Gordon, Mrs. C. B. Martin, Wm. Phoenix, Mrs. W. Leahy, Annie M. Sexton, Arsula Moore, Rosalie M. Ward, H. D. Cooke, R. E. Dawson, L. E. Williams, Mrs. Sarah Easley, Miss M. A. Maher, Leon Leonard, Mrs. R. Fynes, Mrs. Jackson and Blanch Scott; You and each of you are hereby notified that, the time for the payment of our lien upon the property hereinafter described having expired, after due notice thereof had been given you, we will cause such property, to wit, household goods, personal effects and merchandise, stored by you or in your name in the Columbia Storage Warehouses, to be sold at public auction, according to the statute in such cases made and provided, at 58 and 58 West 47th-st., on Saturday, Oct. 24 1903 at 10:30 a. m., and if the sale thereof is not completed on said date, the same will be continued at the same place on each and every Saturday thereafter, beginning at 10:30 a. m., until the sale is completed.

COLUMBIA STORAGE WAREHOUSES.

The story that the manuscript was bought when Felt's goods were sold up is plausible. Brentano's was in more or less continuous operation, in a variety of New York locations, as both a dealer in rare books and a publisher (much in the vein of Bouton's business) from 1856 onward. By 1883, the firm was in upscale premises at Number 5 Union

Square, and still under the control of its founder, August Brentano (who did not sell out to his three nephews until 1887).

Brentano's nephews focused Brentano's on continental literature, for which the firm would develop a significant reputation at the end of the century. MD has a general sense, from reviewing the newspaper stories on J. W. Bouton in the early 1880s, that he was branching out of the book trade into various joint-stock schemes, that he was having cash flow problems (suing customers for overdue bills) and may have had to bankrupt the publishing operation to save the book-trade business. Speculation: a Bouton employee left J. W. Bouton for Brentano's taking with him the knowledge of Felt's manuscript materials "in storage," which explains Brentano's bid for it. What it does not explain is why Brentano's hung onto it until 1914. If the manuscript was among the material sold off in 1903, then Brentano's held it for only 11 years. By 1914, Brentano's tagline was "booksellers to the world," and they were conducting semi-annual auctions. There is some record of their publishing titles after 1914, but not much.



(Brentano advertisement from Everybody's Magazine for December 1914.)

On November 11, 1895, the New York Herald published a full-page article entitled "Theosophy's Origins Exposed. The Herald Tells the Secrets of Its Birth in This City and

the Jugglers Behind It.” Henry J. Newton was a major source for the article’s material⁴. and Felt is mentioned prominently: “In the summer of 1875, Mr. Henry M. Stevens, at that time on the editorial staff of the New York Observer, became acquainted with Mr. George Henry Felt, who was a teacher of mathematics, a student of ancient geometry, and of the mysteries connected with it. Mr. Felt told an interesting story of his researches into Egyptian mythology, and his discoveries in relation to the cabala (sic), which aroused the curiosity of Mr. Stevens, who introduced Mr. Felt to Mme. Blavatsky, then living in Irving place. She also became interested in the strange and weird stories told by Mr. Felt, and invited him to give a lecture at her house early in August. I was among the guests at the lecture, and there met a large company of persons who were interested in the study of the occult. I was full of the keenest interest, and was expecting a treat, which I did not realize. The lecture was very disappointing, as it was not at all what was expected, but was a dry dissertation on geometry and ancient mathematics, without reference to cabala (sic). The whole thing was flat, and would have fallen and remained so if it had not been for one statement made near the close of the lecture. The lecturer referred to the methods used in Egypt and India in connection with their mysteries, and said: -- They produce the phenomena of so called materialization by a combustion of aromatic gums and herbs, instead of a seance of persons to draw the necessary power from. I have produced these phenenomena (sic) in that way, and can do so again.”

On December 1, 1895, Felt wrote a letter to the editor of the Herald (p. 8):

“To the Editor of the Herald:-- In relation to the article in your issue of Sunday, November 10, entitled ‘Theosophy’s Origins Exposed,’ in which my name is used as one of the ‘aborigines’ or wooden Indians, I would like to have you make some corrections in the cause of truth. Mr. Henry J. Newton’s statements therein as to myself are in the main unqualifiedly false. A man who classifies ‘geometry and mathematics generally’ as a ‘hobby’ and ‘trying to get occult phenomena on a sensitive film,’ whatever that may mean, as an exact science, could hardly be expected to be interested in the ‘strange and weird stories of a mathematical lecturer.’ His statement that ‘they produce the phenomena of so-called materialization by a combustion of aromatic gums and herbs,’ omits one very important factor of the recipe-- viz. rum, either Santa Cruz or New England.⁵ Mr. Newton’s statement, ‘All this India business was an afterthought,’ is false, as this was discussed very fully at the first meeting held at Mme. Blavatsky’s house, and

⁴ MD: This use of Newton as a major source was a bit disingenuous of the Herald, as it had, in April of 1894, held Newton up to significant ridicule for a fraudulent cabinet seance in his home, in which Mrs. Roberts was the medium. See the Herald for 4-29-1894, page 6. The final paragraph of that article damns all parties, including the Herald, in my view: “The Herald of March 3, 1891, contained an account of Mrs. Etta Roberts’ tricks before Mr. Newton and a party. In the Herald of August 17, 1891, was a dispatch from Onset Bay, Mass., which was the camping ground for the Onset Bay Association of Spiritualists. On August 16, Mrs. Etta Roberts was expelled from the grounds because, after a seance she had given, an inquiring group of sceptics (sic) discovered a young woman, Miss Annie West, of Topeka, concealed beneath the bed in the room where the ‘manifestations’ took place. It was proven that Miss West had acted as a spirit.”

⁵ MD: I read this as sarcasm: you have to be drunk to believe in spirit materialization.

her claims an relationship to an Eastern branch of the society fully set forth. 'The third line in the oath of secrecy was left blank for Mrs. Newton, who never signed it.' I am glad there was one sensible person out of the fifty-four signers, and she a woman. As to the photograph with a big 'B' on it, referred to in the article, Newton knew very well how that could be produced, and his statement about the 'unknown means' is absurd (sic). He was and is always looking for spooks, and sees them in everything, as Olcott was always in search of the supernatural, which he found at every corner. Madame would have characterized that letter as 'flapdoodle,' and I don't see any evidence to connect her with it at all. As to Mme. Blavatsky, I never saw anything to lead me to suppose that she was not a lady and a good woman, and Newton's statement that she was very intimate with Colonel Olcott at that time is a cowardly fling at a poor dead woman who apparently has left no friends to protect her memory, but still she was good enough to 'meet members of the Russian legation in his parlours.' As for Newton paying me for lectures, I pronounce the statement false. I never charged a cent for any of my lectures on the 'Kaballah, or Greek Canon of Proportion,' or, as Newton expresses it, my 'hobby of mathematics.' I saw some articles in the spiritualist papers trying to connect my mathematical researches with their vagaries, and claiming that I was a medium, through whom Euclid and Paracelsus were communicating, and I refused to have anything more to do with the society. GEORGE H. FELT. No. 264 West 133d Street, New York City."

On December 15, 1895, Newton answered Felt's statements of 12-1-1895 (p. 9):

"To the Editor of the Herald: -- In your paper of Sunday, December 1, I notice an attempt of George H. Felt to reply to my statements regarding the origin of the Theosophical Society of the City of New Your. He says, 'Mr. Henry J. Newton's statements therein as to myself are, in the main, unqualifiedly false.' He is careful to make no specific charges except in the closing paragraphs, where he says, 'As for Newton paying me for lectures, I pronounce the statement false. I never charged a cent for any of my lectures on the "Kaballah or Greek Canon of Proportion," or, as Newton expresses it, "my hobby of mathematics." Mr. Felt seems to hve been, in his day and generation, a rather unfortunate individual. Neither nature nor fortune had a smile for him, and he was compelled to resort to diverse ways of procuring a livelihood. Whenever he came to me he was in great need, and his mental methods seemed to be bungling and incoherent, but, to be charitable in my dealing with him, I will presume that, with other misfortunes, he is forgetful. I have his signature to his receipt for money amounting, in the aggregate, to \$100. Now, Mr. Felt either did or did not forget that he received this money from me. If he has forgotten it, then he shows a lack of wisdom in writing about me as he did, and it also suggests that getting the money made no special impression on his mind as not being in any way novel or unusual. This man seems to be oblivious to the fact that he is the theosophical microbe, the germ from which was constructed that 'crazy quilt' called Theosophy. How anybody with good sense can believe in such vague and irrational teachings is one of the unsolved mysteries of the capacity of the human mind to be duped. I stated in my former article that the origin of the Theosophical Society centered in the statement made by Felt, that he could produce phenomena similar to the fakirs of India, such as the production of human forms from the product of the combustion of the

aromatic gums and herbs -- that he had done it and could do it again. This statement was the only point in his lecture on the occasion of our meeting in the parlors of Mme. Blavatsky which interested me. At the close of his lecture I moved a committee be appointed to organize and investigate the phenomena which he alleged he was able to accomplish. This committee was appointed. I was made chairman and called a meeting at my house where we continued to meet weekly until a society was formed and named "The Theosophical Society of New York." Mr. Felt was elected vice president, and seemed at that time proud of his official position and of the fact that he was associated with respectable people whom he now, in his attempt at sarcasm, denounces as 'aborigines or wooden Indians.' He says I omitted one very important feature of his recipe for the promised production of materialization by a combination of aromatic gums, viz., 'rum, either Santa Cruz or New England.' It is kind of him to give it now; he omitted it then, and mentioned only the herbs and gums. This revelation accounts for much that followed and was not then understood. Felt's statement that I defamed the character of Mme. Blavatsky is utterly false. Felt received from me \$75 at the request of Colonel Olcott, in three payments by check, on the Importers' and Traders' Bank -- on June 1, 1876...June 8...and June 23....These checks were to his order and are now in my possession. I also hold the following: -- 'Received May 19, 1876, of H. J. Newton, \$25, in payment of lecture to be delivered before the Theosophical Society, on Wednesday evening, May 24, or the Wednesday evening following. GEORGE H. FELT.' This was the only lecture delivered by Felt before the Theosophical Society. He had been engaged by the society to deliver four lectures at \$25 each. Shortly after this lecture was given he came to me with a plea to advance the money for the other lectures, as he was in great need. This I declined to do. He then went to Colonel Olcott with his plea, and Colonel Olcott wrote to me thus:-- 'Felt tells me he requires money to purchase apparatus for the experiments of his next lecture, and that upon my order you will advance the the balance of the sum agreed to be paid him. I, therefore, at his request and for the purpose aforesaid, ask that you will let him have the money.' The money was paid in three instalments (sic) as has already been stated. I presume Mr. Felt will not be made happy by reading this statement of facts, but he has no one to blame but himself. HENRY J. NEWTON. New York, Dec. 4, 1895"

(Newton died 20 days later, struck by a street car while crossing the tracks at Broadway and 23rd Street.)

In October of 1903, Felt's in-storage possessions are sold up for a second time.

On March 19 1904, Marie Louise Felt Butler, daughter of George Henry Felt, applies for a visa at the US consulate in Cairo, Egypt, attesting that she left NY for Cairo on the 18th of November, 1903 (that is, four months earlier), and will return to the US within one year. Her identity is attested to in Cairo by one Dr. Charles Faber. Of note: she takes five years off her age, and applies as Marie Louise Felt (although she was married, to one Butler, an Englishman, in 1890, and has a child, Ada Butler, born in

England in 1891); someone in a different hand adds "Butler" to her application in two places.⁶ George Henry is still alive at this time.

[Barton or 189.] (FORM NO. 176.)

Fee for Passport. . . . \$1.00
 Fee for filling out application in duplicate.50
 Fee for administering oath in duplicate.50

NATIVE.

No. 301 Issued, March 19th, 1904.

I, Marie Louise Lee Butler, and loyal citizen of the United States, hereby apply to the Consul of the United States at Cairo Egypt for a passport for myself, ~~accompanied by my wife~~, and minor children as follows: _____, born at _____, on the _____ day of _____, 1 _____, and _____, born at _____, on the _____ day of _____, 1 _____.

I solemnly swear that I was born at New York, in the State of New York State, on or about the 18 day of March, 1895; that my father is a Native citizen of the United States; that I am domiciled in the United States, my permanent residence being at New York, in the State of New York State, where I follow the occupation of _____; that I left the United States on the 8 day of Decr, 1903 and am now temporarily sojourning at Cairo Egypt; that I am the bearer of Passport No. _____, issued by _____ on the _____ day of _____, 1 _____; that I intend to return to the United States within One year with the purpose of residing and performing the duties of citizenship therein; and that I desire the passport for the purpose of travelling abroad.

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE.

Further, I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion: So help me God.

Marie Louise Lee Butler

U. S. Agency and
 Consulate General OF THE UNITED STATES AT Cairo Egypt

Sworn to before me, this 19th day of March, 1904.

Fredrick G. Morgan
 VICE & DEPUTY CONSUL GENERAL

DESCRIPTION OF APPLICANT.

Age: 24 years. Mouth: med.
 Stature: 5 feet, 4 inches, Eng. Chin: Round
 Forehead: High Hair: Brown
 Eyes: Brown Complexion: Fair
 Nose: Straight Face: Pinched

IDENTIFICATION.

I hereby certify that I know the above-named _____ personally, and know h_____ to be a native-born citizen of the United States and that the facts stated in h_____ affidavit are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

[Address of witness:] _____

John J. [Signature]

Note.—This form is to be filled out in duplicate, one copy being retained on the files of the issuing office and the other forwarded with the quarterly returns to the Department of State. It may be so filled out by the applicant, in which case no fee therefor is chargeable.

⁶ In 1910, Marie Louise and her daughter Ada (born England, father English and absent) are living in Manhattan Ward 12 with Marie's brother, and George Henry's son, Alexander. Ada is 19 years old.

In 1914, some or all of the contents of Felt's in-storage materials were sold (directly? via auction house?) to a newly-minted Harvard MD named Clarence W. Lieb, who was practicing in New York City. Information on Lieb is provided later in this document.

In 1935 or 1936 (or perhaps a few years earlier), Viola de Gruchy/Guichy/Guichey/Guchey, an artist and devotee of Dynamic Symmetry (a canon of proportion), goes into treatment with Clarence W. Lieb. In course of conversation, Lieb learns of de Guichy's interest in canons of proportion, and gives her his Felt material.

On June 20, 1936, de Gruchy's instructors at the Roerich Museum connect her with Claude Bragdon, Rochester architect, geometer and Theosophist.

On June 21, 1936, Viola de Gruchy follows up a phone call to Bragdon with a typed letter, from 590 East Third Street, Mount Vernon, NY, to Bragdon at the Hotel Shelton in NYC:

"Dear Mr. Bragdon:-

This is in pursuance of our telephone conversation yesterday, at which time you kindly appointed five p. m. next Wednesday as the time when I may call upon you. Yesterday I had no expectation of reaching you in person. I did hope to arrange an appointment with you at some time within the next few weeks, but when I 'phoned it was to ascertain whether or not you would be in the city during the month of July. But since the day is to be earlier, so much the better.

I am writing now to explain some matters which will enable you very readily to understand my errand and, I hope, justify it. Though I have been to some extent familiar with your varied activities for more than ten years, and have read several of your books with intense interest, I would not think of intruding upon you except in connection with a subject related to your own works, which I feel certain you will be glad to hear about. At the same time, it seems certain that with your great erudition you can and gladly will suggest ways in which I can make my present effort most effective.

About the middle of the nineteenth century, a young American civil engineer --- working completely alone, by intuition, and on his own initiative --- satisfied himself that where there was so much smoke of investigation, asseveration, and denial regarding the existence or non-existence of a canon or key governing ancient art, science, the Bible, Coptic writings, etc., there must in fact be fire.

Though living always on the fringe of poverty, this New York engineer --- George Henry Felt by name --- devoted his life to solving the riddle and presenting his findings.

He planned a monumental work in ten sections --- the first⁷ to deal largely with the Canon of Proportions which he had rediscovered, in relation to Egyptian and Greek art. While preparing his manuscript, Mr. Felt discussed his findings with some three hundred outstanding artists, architects, and theologians here and in England and received the very best of endorsements. J. W. Bouton, a Boston publisher,⁸ was cooperating with him --- in fact, issued a learned prospectus, a copy of which I have. More than a thousand advance subscriptions for the ten-section work, at \$25 each, had been received before Mr. Felt sent his manuscript to Bouton for publication.

That manuscript was destroyed in the Boston Fire. Mr. Felt had no copy of it -- only a few scraps of proof, at best.

Mr. Felt lived till 1906. As late as 1900, it appears that he still had some hope of reproducing his lost work and obtaining publication for it. Indeed, he did put together fragmentarily the first section --- that which relates to the art of Greece and Egypt.⁹

But even this small fragment vanished for years. In 1914 it was purchased for a small sum in a New York bookshop by a medical specialist, as a curiosity. It lay neglected in the library of this doctor for 18 years more. Then, purely by chance, I became acquainted with this doctor in his professional capacity. Inquiring, in a routine way, about the nature of my work and interests, the doctor was reminded of the MS. in his possession. He asked me if I would care to examine it. Later he brought it to his office for me; and upon finding that I had considerable familiarity with the subject because I was at that time deep in the study of dynamic symmetry and the work of Jay Hambidge, he turned it over to me with the understanding that if I found it possible and worth while, I could complete and expand it for publication.

Shortly thereafter I became acquainted with the work of Colman and Coan¹⁰, who were collaborating on their books during the years shortly after Mr. Felt's death, and whose key pattern which they apply to works of architecture is identical with Mr. Felt's Canon of Proportion except that they introduce more of the architect's terminology and approach into the presentation of it. Their nature references are splendid, their writing beautiful and important, but their analytical use of this canon leaves much to be desired. And of course they were not concerning themselves primarily with either the art or the architecture of classic Greece and ancient Egypt, as was Mr. Felt.

⁷ MD: I read this as "the first work" and not "the first section"

⁸ MD: This passage suggests VdG had this information at second or third hand, and not from materials included in the manuscript. Aside from the obvious -- Bouton was not a Boston publisher -- the recitation misses Felt's association with Osgood completely, and otherwise regurgitates information in the Bouton prospectus.

⁹ MD: I read this to mean that a first section, separate from the Proem and Preface in typescript at Rochester, is or was part of the VdG manuscript.

¹⁰ *Nature's Harmonic Unity* (1912), *Proportional Form* (1921).

Messrs. Colman and Coan make no reference to the source from which their key pattern is drawn. Of course I know that in part at least it has been basic architect's equipment ever since the Renaissance, as it was more fully in ancient times; but whether in whole, as presented by these authors, I do not know. I have sometimes wondered if Mr. Felt's canon was not what prompted their inspiration, without their awareness of the fact that the promptings came from him. Mr. Felt presented his discoveries at many meetings of art and architectural societies, and just where the results of his missionary work might crop out is of course entirely problematical.

There is no question, at any rate, that Mr. Felt's was a major intellect, and that he was singularly sane. Completely lacking, as I am, the learning of such men as himself and yourself, it has sometimes seemed presumptuous for me to attempt to complete for publication this fragment of Mr. Felt's work. Yet it seems probably that if I fail to do so, no one ever will, and that for me to refrain from doing so would be a disservice to his memory and the cause of art. Fortunately, I have a clear and comprehensive vision of how and to what end this work should be completed; a grasp of the function of art and aesthetics in the world's civilizations; and a faculty for using this truly mystic design principle synthetically as well as analytically.

During a period of illness in my family which caused a long interruption in my work, I have gathered and produced a substantial amount of material with which to amplify and illustrate and coordinate this manuscript, and am now at the stage where your opinion and suggestions can be most helpful in giving the work its final form and force.

Among the interesting things that I have done in this connection are an analysis of an Uighur silk painting (the original excavated from the Gobi desert by a Russian expedition, the original (inserted: photograph) now in the museum at Moscow. Col. Churchward estimated the antiquity of this piece at 16,000 years.), the theme of which is Felt's Star of Perfection, or Hambidge's Root 3, together with the unique employment of circles of the progression; also of two very ancient platinum bronzes pillaged from China during the Boxer Rebellion --- beautiful examples of triangulation; and of numerous Greek vases and Egyptian bas reliefs --- some of these latter previously analyzed by Hambidge by way of the root rectangles, but more simply and beautifully rendered by my application of the Felt canon.

In every case, this canon unfailingly reveals the design theme. But most interesting of all is the apparent fact that this theme was never applied twice in the same way --- in other words, that the people who used it were true artists, not copyists.

I will stop here, for I fear I am tiring you (knowing that you have recently been ill). I have undertaken this letter explanation, so that when I call upon you next Wednesday the material which I lay before you will be more quickly comprehensible and you will not have to be wearied with too much preliminary detail." <signature of VdG>

On September 15, 1936, Bragdon writes to a correspondent that: “I have met several new Delphic sisters some of whom are remarkable indeed, particularly a Viola de Guichey; a lineal descendant of one of Napoleon’s marshals. She studied art with Denman Ross and with Howard Giles, and she’s re-discovered the canon of proportion of the Egyptians in an old mss. which came to her in the queerest way. A man had devoted his entire life to this research and all but a fragment was destroyed in the Boston Fire. That fragment was given her by her doctor who saw she was interested in that sort of thing. She’s trying to disentangle it and came to me for help. Some of the things she showed me were very impressive—new and direct ways of getting the root rectangles from the circle, etc. etc. It’s simple and convincing. The golden section everywhere appears. I can’t tell you about it for two reasons: I haven’t gone into it myself sufficiently—I’ve only seen the girl twice—and it would take too long and involve diagrams. But really, this person is a find.”

On September 18, 1936, Claude Bragdon (or VdG?) commits a series of 17 drawings that are based on the Felt canonical drawing, and appear to be focused on unifying dynamic symmetry and its root 3 rectangles, as well as other fundamental figures like the Fibonacci spiral, with Felt’s material. For example, this is the first of that series (numbered 1 9/18/36):

equivalent of the sphere, both being considered absolutely perfect figures. The corresponding pentagons on the back of the figure are represented in dotted green”

Number 12: “As we confine ourselves to problems of plane geometry, we must trace the perfect figure in that branch of the science and this is the dodecagon, or figure of 12 equal sides which can be geometrically inscribed in a circle according to the manner shown in the diagram, i.e. <figure inserted> by drawing first the upright and horizontal diameters from the 4 points of intersection of there (sic) diameters with the circumference with a radius equal to the radius of the circle, laying (?) off the points of the dodecagon in the circumference, and the intersection of there (sic) arcs outside the circle, form the vertices of the circumscribed square”

Number 13: “As the external angles of the dodecagon are not available for measuring within the circle, they must be connected so that this result may be obtained. To do this, and to show the geometrically proportioned properties of this figure, <figure inserted> we connect all the points of the dodecagon, two and two, by upright and horizontal diameters, and as thus have the perfect figure in plane geometry, which, with the circle, was analogous to the dodecahedron and sphere in solid geometry, according to the <illegible> of the old mathematicians.”

Number 14: “The figure formed by the combination of the upright and horizontal rectangles thus obtained we call the Star of Perfection, and the rectangles will each be seen to consist of two Egyptian Triangles (right-angled triangles one side of which is equal to one half of the hypotenuse), placed hypotenuse to hypotenuse as shown in the dotted line. Also the figure divides the horizontal diameter into four equal parts.”

In October 1936, Claude Bragdon writes to a correspondent: "I have been delving deeper into this Canon of Proportions and I assure you I think it is the greater knowledge of which Dynamic Symmetry is a mere fragment, but the fragment of perhaps the greatest practical use to the designer. This canon ties together plane and solid geometry as I have never seen them tied before. It has always seemed to me one of the weaknesses of any plane and linear system of proportion that its application to three dimensional objects—buildings, statuary, and the like—could not be exactly justified. For two-dimensional objects—pictures, bas-reliefs—yes! but for statues, seen in the round, where the dimensions change with every changing point of view—I mean the relations between the dimensions?

But in this system the sides of triangles, squares, parallelograms, etc., are proved to be also the sides of inscribed cubes, parallelopipedons, tetrahedra, etc., and the diagonals of square, cubes, etc. In other words the plane figures employed have a direct relation to their three-dimensional counterparts. For example; by mean of this canon a square is developed which circumscribes a circle which in turn is inscribed in an equilateral triangle. One side of that triangle proves to be the diagonal of the cube of which the square is a face—I mean of course equal in length to the diagonal. I wonder if you get what I mean? And every one of the root rectangles can be developed by the simplest process from the circle which is the egg, as it were, from which everything is hatched. I am sure the whole thing is deeply philosophical, and was adopted as a canon, because of its philosophical content. I think it ties up with astrology, crystallization, organic growth, and all that sort of thing. Some day I'll tell you more, but I must understand it myself first. A great deal of the original mss. was burned up in the Boston fire, so its probable that part of the author's secret perished with him. I fancy that such is the case, but what remains is of great interest and value.

Miss de Gruchey gives me a lesson about once a week, and leaves diagrams with me which I study, and copy, and try to understand. Her mind works much faster than mine does, she is so familiar with the whole scheme. I had to tantalize you with just these peeps into this new wonderland, but it's impossible to go into in a letter. "

On **October 2, 1936**, Bragdon writes in his diary:

"Miss de Gruchey at 5. Sent Brett plates IX, X and XI of Canon of Proportion copied from Felt."

[MD: This is pretty conclusive proof that the plates being sent back and forth between CB and Brett are copies of Felt's original materials.]

On October 14, 1936, Bradgon writes to a correspondent: "I want you to follow my discourse closely. Then I want you to study the diagrams with care, copy them, in any fashion which suits your fancy, and return them to me at your convenience, for this is my own simple, expanded, added to explanation, far different from the way I find it in the Felt work. Felt, for example, did not know that the two rectangles of the "Star of Perfection" were root 3 rectangles because he came before Hambidge. He did not realize that one was m and the other f because be he came before Bragdon, nor what a

tumult his theory would cause in the feminine breast, because he came before Brett and Miss D. Miss de Gruchey has contributed much, because all that we have to go on is Felt's introduction and only 6 pages of drawings and text but fortunately the beginning of the magnum opus which was destroyed so strangely and this fragment so strangely recovered are now passed ... from hand to hand. I now pass on to you.

Felt begins his opus with this quotation from the Delphic Oracle, "If thou wouldst know in what manner thou shouldst ... inquire of the dead." He claims that the Egyptians developed their canon from their knowledge of nature and natural law, and that it governs their science. Their philosophy, their art, their architecture and that these things existed for the purpose of revealing this secret knowledge. In other words, you and I would use the canon to help to get certain results to create a picture or a building, but to the Egyptians the only worth of either building or picture would be to reveal the canon itself in this veiled form. He claims that the Greeks derived it from the Egyptians as they did their geometry; that the Hebrews took it with them at the time of the Exodus and that Solomon's temple was builded in accordance with it: He makes every kind of a claim, which I suppose his book was written to substantiate, but as we have it not, there's no use dwelling in that so: to my tale!

The Egyptians considered the sphere the archetype of everything, and among the so-called Platonic solids the Dodecahedron is the correlate of the sphere; a solid with 12 equal faces, each one a pentagon (See figures 1 and 2k Plate I) according to Plato the Dodecahedron was the pattern upon which the Deity made the universe. It was ... by him to be an absolutely perfect figure and one with the sphere, because it is the sphere become form, number, concretions. The one is the universe (one) and the other the multiverse (many) and the two are one. They have the relation of the sky and the earth....You see we are forced now to deal in plane figures instead of solids so we consider the circle (a cross-section of a sphere) to represent the sphere, and the dodecagon, a regular figure of 12 equal sides, to represent the dodecahedron, a figure of 12 equal faces. This brings us to Figure 3 and 4, Plate I which I ask you next to consider.

In order to inscribe the dodecagon in the circle draw its four axes (fig. 3) and with their intersections with the circumference as centers and using the same radius, describe arcs. These will determine the remaining 8 points by means of which the dodecagon will be inscribed (fig. 4). A glance at these two figures (3 and 4) should make this plain.

Now. The arcs aforesaid prolonged so that they intersect without (outside of) the circle establish the four corners of the circumscribing square A, B. C. D. (fig.)

In order to apprehend the beauty and perfection of the dodecagon it is necessary to connect its opposite points with lines drawn across the circle, parallel to the sides of the circumscribing square (ABDC). This results in a figure called by Felt The Star of Perfection made up of a vertical and a horizontal parallelogram (look this up in the dictionary if you don't understand it, but again the name ... should tell you, a figure with parallel and equal sides other than a square) EFGH is the horizontal parallelogram and IJKL is the vertical one. Fig. 6.

This is the generating figure of the Canon because it is a resolution or transformation of the dodecagon, which in turn corresponds to the dodecahedron, which in term corresponds to the sphere to which we always return as to the "House that Jack

built.” Indeed we may say of the sphere “This is the house that God Built” and of the “Star of Perfection” This is the house that Man built.

Now I’ll try to show you why the Star of Perfection is so perfect a figure. 1. It divides the sides of the circumscribing square into 4 equal parts. See Fig. 8 top. 2. It consists of a horizontal member (feminine, IN, Japanese, YIN, Chinese) united with a vertical member (masculine, YO, Japanese, YANG, Chinese). These are indicated in blue and red. 3. Moreover each parallelogram is m. and f. yo and in, yang and yin, by reason of the fact that its diagonal (PN, fig. 8) subdivided it into Two Egyptian triangles (a triangle (right where short side is equal to $\frac{1}{2}$ of its hypotenuse) Fig. 10. Hence is defined by two equilateral triangles placed apex to apex (fig. 10). 4. And in addition (a thing Felt did not and Could not know) These parallelograms constituting the Star of Perfection are Root 3 rectangles of Dynamic Symmetry. This is to me the surprising thing. The constant appearance of the root rectangles which were not therefore prime as Hambidge seemed to think, but derivative from the circle. In the next and subsequent lessons I’ll show you how the Root 2, Root 4 and whirling square rectangles are developed from the ... of ... as well as the pentagon and equilateral triangles.”

On October 16, 1936, Bragdon writes to a correspondent, enclosing illustrations: “Plate V is an accurate copy of the little page drawing of Felt’s book, colors and all. What the symbolism of the colors is I can’t tell you. I hazard the guess that the circle is white because like white light which contains every color, the circle contains every form in the womb of all forms. The vertical axis is white as representing spirit and the horizontal axis is black as representing matter. It is divided, as you see, two-fold, one sector being single and the other dual. The equilateral triangle would naturally be red, color of the male or fiery principle because the number 3 is the first masculine number according to Pythagoras. The Star of Perfection would logically be blue. The color of the female or watery principle because the number 4 is feminine is parturative—infininitely divisible. Why the pentagon is yellow and the square green I am unable to tell you. Perhaps, indeed he attached no importance to the colors and chose them arbitrarily. He may go into this in the lost portions of his book. All I have ever seen of are six pages.

Plate VI is also a conceit of my own. Any system which cannot be related back to the human figure and to nature is suspect. This canon can, as you see. Almost all flower forms submit themselves to analysis by means of (1) the spiral (2) the pentagon (3) the hexagon or double equilateral triangle and (4) the cross or square, and of course the circle. The figures used in the “Mystic figure of the Egyptians” are therefore ... to be the same as those which determine the main relations and proportions of the human figure and floral forms. Back of this of course must be some spiritual meanings which are not difficult to guess: the circle = eternity and ... perfection. The cross: soul and body warring with one another. The square and the star of perfection the circle or universe becomes the multiverse. The pentagon is clearly man who is a fivefold being; five fingers, five ..., five senses, five members (... The triangle is the trinity of mental, emotional, physical—and to one might go on and on to little purpose.”

(other mentions in Bragdon letters, and then...)

On October 28, 1936, Bragdon writes to a correspondent: "I enclose Sheets XVI and XVII. Since you seem to be subject of Spiral Trouble, I had best straighten you out a bit there before proceeding to the further unfolding of the Kaballah of the Egyptians. In these drawings you will find disclosed the method of inscribing the logarithmic spiral of any number of convolutions with a circle so that the center of the circle shall be the "eye" of the spiral and its (the circle's) axes the spiral's radii vectors—or rather, four of them, for they are infinite in number, and if the "eye" and the center corresponded the axes would be vectors in any case. (Plate XVI) Also, the method of inscribing the equally-spaced spiral (like that of the Ionic volute) of any number of convolutions within a circle so that the center of the circle shall be the eye of the spiral (Plate XVII) With this data you should be able to plot any spiral you want or imagine, correctly. Oh wonderful, truly, is Art, but more wonderful is Geometry!

I understand from Miss deGruchey that Felt left a lot more stuff than what she showed me, and that it is in her possession, and she has promised to teach me it, in which case I shall try to pass it on to you, but she warns me that some of it is difficult. We have accomplished nothing of late because she had to break on engagement because she was ill, and another because she was moving, but I think we shall meet some afternoon next week, and she has promised to bring the new matter—I am eager for a glimpse of it, for according to her it is full of all sorts of cosmic implications, such as that the Kaballah yields the angle of the ecliptic. "

On November 11, 1936, Bragdon writes to a correspondent: "Miss de Gruchey showed up again yesterday—she had been moving. She brought with her a lot of diagrams which I think you will agree are just swellelegant. One of them represents a new way of developing the root rectangles in progression by means of circumscribed circles, and she showed me still another way of inscribing the root rectangles in a circle—developing them from a circle—which I haven't included but will send you the next time. She brought in Felt's mss—the only one in existence—and it is far more extensive than I had dreamed. It's written in a fine copperplate hand,¹² with many free-hand diagrams, something like Leonardo's note books. Only one signature appeared and that was crossed out. But from that, through the N. Y. Public Library she was able to trace him, for he was a known figure, something like Edgar Allen Poe, always poor, always in debt, always being evicted. This mss was found in one of his trunks probably held for storage charges. It was acquired by Brentanos and was purchased from them by the doctor¹³ who gave it to Miss deGruchey. When Felt's descendants learned that it was in existence and possessed by her they wanted to buy it back but she wouldn't sell it—and quite right too. It represents his efforts as an old man, to repair the loss of the perfect mss. destroyed in the Boston fire. To decipher it and put it in shape would involve a n enormous amount of labor and I doubt if it is ever completely done. What I have given you is only one stone from a great edifice, but luckily it is the cornerstone, for the Star of Perfection is the key figure.... Felt was in the Signal Corps during the Civil War, and is

¹² We have only typescript, and a partial one at that. Indicates to MD that VdG prepared the typescript for Bragdon, keeping the MS.

¹³ Clarence W. Lieb, MD.

the inventor of the wig-wag system of signaling with flags, which is still in use. He was entirely self-educated and was hag-ridden by his Great Idea. He had six children, some of whom are living still.”

(Conclusion: in November of 1936, Version 2/the Bouton version of the Kaballah of the Egyptians existed, in manuscript, in the possession of Viola de Gruchy (Viola Staley, wife of Mortimer Staley, editor of Diesel Magazine, who is I believe living in Montclair, NJ at the time.)

(Conclusion: as of the early 1930s, Felt family members were trying to retrieve the manuscript. That could have been any of the younger Felt children, or their children.)

On November 19, 1936, Bragdon writes to a correspondent: “Plate XXXI seems to me phoney as hell but I pass it on to you for what it is worth. I have not read Felt’s explanation of it, but got everything second hand from Miss deGruchey, so there may be some significance which I have missed, but I have a suspicion that Felt, like Hambidge, is overworking his theory, and applying it to things to which it does not properly belong, although of course if it is what he claims it to be, there is nothing to which it is unrelated. All the same, this Plate 31 seems to me very far-fetched and arbitrary. However, I’ll say it makes a lovely pattern, and it will be excellent practice for you in mechanical drawing. It is the most impressive diagram yet, and you can use it to terrify and discourage unworthy aspirants to this forbidden knowledge of the ancients. Do you realize, Brett, that here in this Kaballah of the Egyptians you have the source and essence of Freemasonry? Some of these very diagrams were—and still are—inscribed upon the Lodge Room pavement and constitute the insignia of Masonry.... [Ms. deG.] says she’s going to translate his copperplate handwriting into typewriting. It is almost impossible to decipher some of it now.”

(Conclusion: the 10 pp. typescript of the PREFACE and PROEM in the Bragdon papers at the University of Rochester was done by Viola de Gruchy, and a copy given by VdG to Bragdon)

In the December 1936 issue of The Journal of Calendar Reform, Claude Bragdon publishes a three-page article called "Star of Perfection"

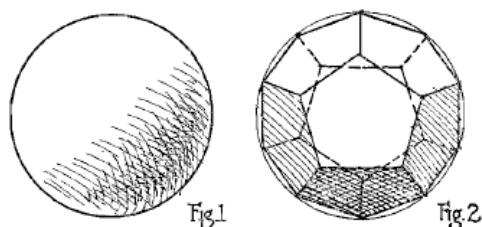
"STAR OF PERFECTION"

By CLAUDE BRAGDON

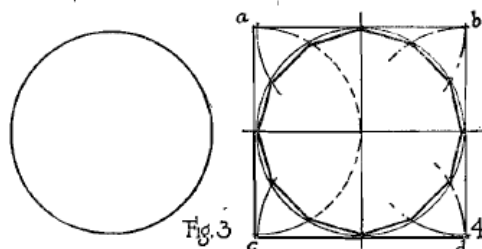
The author derived the phrase, "The Star of Perfection," together with certain of the ideas contained in this article from "The Kaballa, or Mystic Figure of the Egyptians," a remarkable work by George Henry Felt, written in the early part of the Nineteenth Century, unearthed by Viola Louise de Gruchey and placed in the hands of the present author.

REASONS for the adoption of The World Calendar are so numerous and convincing compared with those advanced in favor of any other—particularly the 13-month calendar—that little more can or need be said about it. There is one aspect of the matter, however, which has not been given sufficient importance from the standpoint of the philosopher, the artist, and the geometrician, to all of whom The World Calendar should particularly commend itself. This view I shall attempt here briefly to present. It has to do with the significance, symbolism, and peculiar properties of the number twelve.

If we are dealing with problems in solid geometry, the circle would represent a sphere or ball (*Fig. 1*), and its geometrical plane equivalent



I. THE SPHERE & THE DODECAHEDRON



II. THE CIRCLE AND THE DODECAGON

would be represented by the regular dodecahedron, bounded by twelve pentagons (*Fig. 2*). The corresponding pentagons on the back of the dodecahedron are represented by dotted lines. This the Deity, according to Plato, employed in tracing the plan of the Universe. It was regarded as the equivalent of the sphere, both being thought of as absolutely perfect figures.

As we are confining ourselves to plane geometry (for the particular purpose in view) we must trace the corresponding perfect figure in that branch of the science. This is, of course, the dodecagon, or figure of twelve equal sides, which can be geometrically inscribed in a circle—the plane correlative of a sphere (*Fig. 3*)—by drawing first the vertical and horizontal diameters and from the four points of intersection of these diameters with the circumference, with a radius equal to the radius of the

circle, laying off the points of the dodecagon on the circumference (Fig. 4). The intersections of these arcs outside the circle yield the vertices (a, b, c, d) of the circumscribed square.

To show the geometrically proportional properties of this figure, we connect all the points of the dodecagon, two and two, by horizontal lines, parallel to the vertical and horizontal diameters (Fig. 5) and we have the perfect figure in plane geometry which, with the circle, was analogous to the dodecahedron and the sphere in solid geometry, according to the traditions of the Egyptian and Greek mathematicians.

This figure formed by the combination of the upright and horizontal rectangles has been called "*The Star of Perfection*," and with good reason, for these rectangles will each be seen to consist of two Egyptian triangles (right angled triangles, one side of which is equal to one half the hypotenuse), placed hypotenuse to hypotenuse (Fig. 6). The rectangles also divide the diameters into four equal parts. Furthermore, they are root-three rectangles. Root rectangles are figures of Dy-

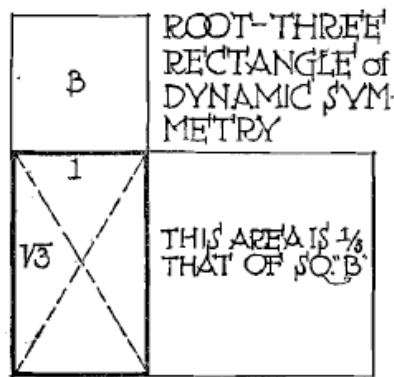
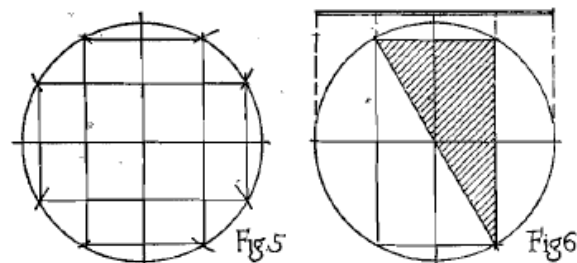


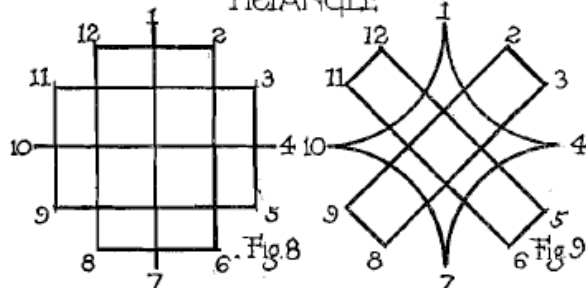
Fig 7

namic Symmetry possessing remarkable mathematical properties, so-called because their sides, not commensurable by linear units, are commensurable by the areas of their respective squares. The square on the short side of a root-three rectangle is one-third of the area of the square on the long side (Fig. 7). Hence the name, a root-three rectangle, because the short side is to the long side as one is to the square root of three ($1 : \sqrt{3}$).

Now when we apply this "Star of Perfection" to The World Calendar of twelve

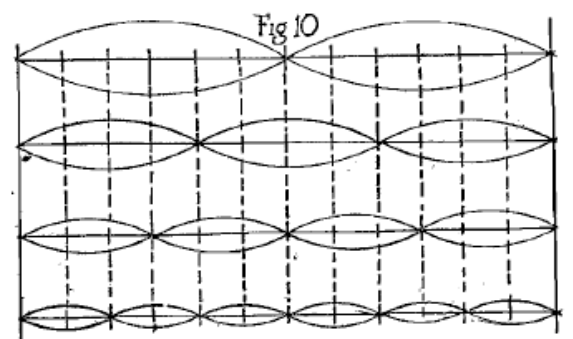


THE TWO RECTANGLES & EGYPTIAN TRIANGLE



POLYGONAL SYNOPSIS - WORLD CALENDAR

In order to further differentiate the thirty-day months from the thirty-one-day months, let us connect the former with straight lines drawn



THE NON-FRACTIONAL DIVISION OF 12 INTO HALVES, THIRDS, QUARTERS

diagonally across the circle, and the latter with the arcs of circles (Fig. 9). This results in a figure of considerable intrinsic beauty, for it is one of those androgynous symbols, like the *crux ansata* of the Egyptians, and the "rose and the cross" of the Rosicrucians, made up of a straight and angular member (masculine) and a curved member (feminine)—the *Yang* and *Yin* of Chinese philosophy, *Yo* and *In* to the Japanese.

Such a geometrical synopsis of The World Calendar is not something forced, but a natural and obvious thing. It serves to make plain to the eye that inherent harmony and perfection which it has to the mind. In order to realize that such is the case, try to apply a geometrical synopsis to the 13-month calendar. If beauty and symmetry be the desiderata it clearly defies every attempt in that direction. The reason why the first lends itself to such treatment and not the other is because of the harmony inherent in the number twelve, which is the first important *conjunctive* number. Let me try to explain just what I mean by that.

The progression and retrogression of numbers in groups as expressed by the multiplication table give rise to what may be termed "numerical conjunctions." These are analogous to astronomical conjunctions: The planets, revolving around the sun at various rates of speed and in different orbits come at certain times in line with one another and with the other heavenly bodies. Then they are said to be in conjunction. Similarly, numbers, advancing toward infinity singly and in groups (expressed by the multiplication table) at certain stages of their progression come into relation to one another—notably in the number twelve, for of a series of twos it is the sixth; of threes, the fourth; of fours, the third; and of sixes, the second (Fig. 10). It stands to eight in the ratio of three to two; and to nine, of four to three. It is related to seven, the sum of three and four, by being the product of these two numbers.

It would seem obvious that the number of months in the year should be capable of division into quarters on account of the four seasons, which are determined by the earth's relation to the sun, and are more important than the moon's relation to the sun and earth, which is the only astronomical justification for the 13-month year. The other reason advanced by its advocates is that it makes the months exactly divisible into weeks. This seems too trivial to deserve consideration, because so clearly inspired by the desire of Big Business to simplify its accounting, for then the weekly pay-off would be commensurate with the monthly pay-off. All this is entirely beside the mark; it is a rendering to Caesar the things which are God's, and could result only in confusion and disaster.

[MD note: based on a look at the typescript of the above article, the compressed paragraph above is in now way significant. It appears normally in the typescript.]

On February 17, 1937, Bragdon writes to a correspondent: “ I am trying to help Miss de Gruchy put this Kaballah thing into presentable shape, but it looks now as though I would have to do all the work myself, as she is decidedly flighty, like a bright-winged insect, never there when one strikes at it. I don’t know how much of this material she has, or the value and importance of it, but the glimpse we’ve had of it fascinates me. I have made a beginning by making a presentable and I think readable digest of Felt’s “preface” which is written in that old-fashioned leisurely way which people simply will not read now-a-days. I have reduced it to have the original length without omitting anything of importance. Here is a copy for you. De Gruchy was in yesterday for the first time in weeks and weeks. First she was sick, then her dog got blood-poisoning and has to be operated on by a veterinary in Montclair. I am trying to pin her down to a program of work; laying one stone upon another, for as an architect that is my way. She is always going off at a tangent, finding new applications of the canon in Chinese art and what not. She would burden the whole thing with the weight of scholarship and research so that the original simple pattern could not be discerned. She says I’m right, but it’s difficult for her to work my way, yet I cannot do anything without her for it is she who is in possession of the dope. I’m trying the experiment of assigning her a definite and simple task, the results of which are to be submitted to me for my comment and criticism the next time she comes in which will be in about a week. That task is the presentation of the Mystic Figure in words and diagrams simple and convincing. She is extraordinarily intelligent and accomplished, and her paintings are of a breath-taking beauty—Chinese in their general effect, but not deliberately so. But she is Ariel, a winged creature of the air, who constantly escapes me: will not draw my little cart. “

(Somewhere in Bragdon’s papers at the University of Rochester is this text: “The Kaballah of the Egyptians, compiled and arranged from the manuscript and drawings of GEORGE HENRY FELT by Viola de Gruchy and Claude Bragdon. In the summer of 1936 I was visited by Viola de Gruchy, fairly incandescent with the knowledge of a secret which she had sought me out in order to impart. She kindled in me a corresponding fire, but burning more temperately, I can perhaps broadcast her story best.

She had been a pupil of the late Denman Ross, known for his life-long absorption in the mathematics of beauty, and of Howard Giles, friend and disciple of the late Jay Hambidge, the re-discoverer of Dynamic Symmetry, alleged by him to have constituted the canon of proportion employed by the ancient Egyptians and the Greeks. Her interest in these matters prompted her to talk about them to her friends, among whom was her doctor Clarence W. Lieb, who thereupon placed in her possession those documents which form the subject of this tale.

They proved to be all that remained of the life work of George Henry Felt, an American engineer of the Civil War period, and the inventor of that system of signaling with flags employed even today. His chief title to fame, however, would have been far other had it not been for the calamity which befell him in 1872, when all but a few sheets of his magnum opus, the Kaballah of the Egyptians, were destroyed in the great Boston

fire of that year... 300 persons distinguished in archaeology, art, theology and general literature (had seen them). (discovered it) in about the year 1860. Further research showed that the developed figure possessed philosophical, astrological and mystical implications in addition to its amazing geometrical and arithmetical properties.... What he did claim was this: That he had never found this compound geometrical figure in any work or works, except as hidden in the productions of the ancients; and he expressed the belief that the Mystic Figure had not been made within the last nineteen hundred years by the Greeks, or during the last fifteen hundred years among the Egyptians; and if, by accident, it had been made, it was without any comprehension of its significance.”)

On May 16, 1937, Bragdon writes to a correspondent: “Lu de Gruchy has not shown up for a long while and I imagine she’s vanished out of the picture so far as the Kaballah is concerned, for now she’s determined she’ll do everything herself without any outside aid. I think she’s afraid I’ll steal her stuff—and not without reason. For a thing like that belongs to the world and not to one individual. I’ve given Cobb the plates to copy—the ones I sent you—and now Johnny Wurerich has them. “

(It is not clear whether these are Bragdon’s plates, Felt’s plates, or a combination of the two.)

On May 30, 1937, Bragdon writes to a correspondent: “Miss de Gruchy after a long silence and absence is coming to see me again, but her letter killed something in me and perhaps something in herself. Even though she repented of it and took it all back there is a finality about things of this sort one can’t take things back. The inevitability of all actions, behind which lurks a fear and the network of consequences therefrom. all that she must learn in her own way as you learned in the matter of Lawrence’s as his: You yielded to idol worship which is the worship of the symbol instead of the thing signified. “

(Reference is to an earlier letter in which VdG apparently spurned Bragdon’s help bringing the Felt manuscript to publication, saying she would “do it all herself.”)

On September 12, 1941, VdG writes a letter to Bradgon which includes the following:

“What do you make of this, Claudius? This morning, my sister (Evelyn) received a phone call from some woman who called herself Mrs. Newell.¹⁴ She said she was trying to get in touch with me as she had orders from the Felt family to take the manuscript away from me to return it to them. Evelyn said she was not involved in any way with my affair with the Felt family, but that she would deliver the message to me when she saw me.

I don't know who she is or anything about (insert) it. I certainly shall never give the manuscript to anyone except Miss Felt herself -- and in person. Her last letter to me was written in the same tone as all previous letters and many times, since she bought the

¹⁴ MD: Need to track this person down. Believe this is a Felt daughter or grand-daughter.

manuscript, she has told me to go right on until I am finished with it. I have kept all her letters, perhaps fortunately.

They must still think that there is some fortune hidden in it for them. I know that there is nothing of the sort. And I know, too, that there is no money in it for me, either. I would never get back what I have spent on it already. It's a pity that Mr. Felt should have such a family.

If they took it away they could do nothing with it. The whole thing depends upon me and how I present it. And the correct application of the figure to ancient art, which is wholly lacking in the manuscript. Then, when I have finished, the real result will be that a great American will be given his rightful place in the world of art. That is all.

I shall ignore that call and if Miss Felt wants the manuscript, she must write to me herself and say so."¹⁵

In September of 1944, the last known letter from VdG to Bragdon is written, and there is no mention, after 1941 in known letters, of the Felt manuscript or VdG's work on it.

On November 28, 1986, Viola L. de Gruchy Staley died, a widow, in Montclair, NJ. There were as far as I can determine no children from her marriage to Mortimer Laurie Staley. Viola's younger sister, Evelyn, died in a Connecticut nursing home, a widow with no children, in 2000. The hypothesis is that, since VdG was very proprietorial about the Felt manuscript, doling it out, refusing to return it to the Felt family, she presumably kept it secure, and made arrangements for its safe-keeping in her will.

¹⁵ MD: I read this as stating clearly that (a) the ownership of the manuscript has shifted from Lieb (technically speaking) to the "Miss Felt" of the letter, during the period prior to this letter; (b) that VdG and this Miss Felt have had extensive written and verbal conversations in which Miss Felt has given her permissions for VdG's work on the manuscript to continue, but that (c) that conversation petered out some time prior to September of 1941 -- a sufficiently long period of time for Miss Felt to have "lost contact" with VdG. It is also possible that the "Mrs. Newell" mentioned in the letter is a child of "Miss Felt" or her heirs, an attorney, etc. -- that, in short "Miss Felt" the owner of the Felt manuscript circa 1940, may have been dead by September of 1941.

6 -- Felt and the (First) Theosophical Society (JPD)

After the initial lecture, Dr. Seth Pancoast (Madame Blavatsky's sometime physician and a learned occultist) challenged Felt on his ability to evoke "spirits from the spatial deep," and Felt replied that, not only had he actually called "into sight hundreds of shadowy forms resembling the human," but that he would do so before the assembled group in future lectures if they would bear the cost of his preparations. He also promised to teach "persons of the right sort" how to evoke and control the elementals.¹⁶ The actual method of making these evocations--presumably learned by Felt from his reading of the Egyptian hieroglyphics--appears to have been a combination of magical formulae and the burning and use of unspecified chemicals, herbs and plants.¹⁷ This latter element was one with clear antecedents in the western magical tradition--and in Randolph's mirror magic and the magic of the H.B. of L.¹⁸

It was as a consequence of this exchange that the idea of founding a society for the study of such things was first proposed.

Despite Felt's acknowledged abilities, Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott appear never to have stated that Felt was an adept or a member of their brotherhood or even its emissary, or that he had been sent deliberately to develop the Theosophical

16 Old Diary Leaves, 1:117.

17 See Michael Gomes, "Studies in Early American Theosophical History, Pt. VI, Rev. Wiggan's Review of George Henry Felt's 1875 Lecture on the Cabala," *Canadian Theosophist* 71, no. 3 (July-August 1990): 68 ("They [the Egyptians and Indians] produce the phenomena of so-called materialization by a combination of aromatic gum and herbs, instead of a seance of persons to draw the necessary power from. I have produced these phenomena in that way, and can do it again."). See also Quæstor Vitæ, "The Real Origin of the Theosophical Society" in *Theosophical History* 1, no. 7 (July 1886): 176 (Felt "claimed he could invoke the phantoms of the dead, by using certain magical formula, combined with the burning of aromatic herbs, &c., and without the presence of a Spiritualistic medium."). The subject of magic crystals came up in the discussions following Felt's initial lecture (see note 68, below), and it is possible that Felt's herbal recipes had some connection with the manufacture or consecration of magic mirrors. See Godwin, *The Theosophical Enlightenment*, 287: "[The] most likely possibility is that Felt was referring to some form of scrying, perhaps with chemically treated mirrors such as the French magnetists had been experimenting with, and Randolph described in *Seership*."

18 See Randolph, *Seership*, 60-61: "There are hundreds who visited the 'Rosicrucian Rooms' in Boylston St., Boston, who marveled greatly at hearing no raps, or ticks, and seeing no clouds pass over the splendid mirror there owned and used, until perfumes were scattered and incense burned--whereupon, thousands of patterings rained upon the silver tripod, and glory-clouds, in presence of an seen by scores, floated over the black-sea face of the peerless mirror." In *The Occult Magazine* 1, no. 1 (February 1885): 6 ff, the editor (Peter Davidson) quotes Eckhartshausen on the narcotic properties of such fumigations and adds: "There are certain powerful substances which will exalt the nervous susceptibility, as well as assist in clarifying the veil of atmospheric density, inducing trance, etc., and increasing the power of representation, and consequently of the Astral Visions." On the use of such "magische-nekromantischen Räucherungen," see Karl Kieswetter, *Geschichte des Neuren Occultismus*, 2 vols. (1891-95, reprinted New York: Arno 1976), 2:726 ff; Kieswetter, "Magische Räucherungen," *Der Sphinx. Monatschrift für die geschichtliche und experimentale Begründung übersinnlichen Weltanschauung auf monistischer Grundlage* 1 (1886): 219 ff. Kieswetter tried these fumigants himself but only got a strong headache. See E. Howe, *Astrology, A Recent History, Including the Untold Story of its Role in World War II* (New York: Walker & Co.), 78. He is reported to have died of the use of drugs to develop clairvoyance.

Society. Madame Blavatsky did assure Olcott of Felt's ability to deliver on his promises,¹⁹ and Olcott was initially very enthusiastic about Felt's discoveries. It is undoubtedly true that Felt and his magic were the original focus and in fact the very *raison d'être* of the society from a practical point of view. Olcott states that "Felt's demonstration of the existence of the Elemental races" was "counted on as the sound experimental basis" of the Society.²⁰ When Felt vanished from the scene and his efforts proved (in Olcott's later judgment) futile, the society was left essentially purposeless, a study and discussion group, and had to fall back on bland investigation of flower mediums and precipitators of spirit photographs.²¹ Olcott sadly admits that after Felt's departure "we made slow progress, for, though we all, by tacit consent, put the best face upon it, every one of us was secretly discouraged by Felt's fiasco, and there seemed no chance of finding a substitute" The Society's need of a *practical* magician after Felt's departure was so great that Olcott even commissioned one of the members who was going to Tunis "to find a real magician or sorcerer who [would] consent to come to this country . . . and display his powers before the Society."²²

The perception of the success of Felt's demonstrations was mixed. In response to a letter claiming that Felt had not succeeded in producing the promised "elementaries," Emma Hardinge Britten guardedly stated that the society had become a "secret order" and that the correspondent, accordingly, was in no position to judge the success of the experiments. The implication, at least, was that Felt had done what he

19 Old Diary Leaves, 1:138.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid., 1:140. They also investigated frail, piano-moving mediums. See "Spiritualism and Theosophy," in H.S. Olcott, *Applied Theosophy and Other Essays*, 153, 169 and 231.

22 Gomes, *Dawning of the Theosophical Movement*, 99, quoting Olcott's letter to E.S. Spaulding in August 1876. Similarly, the primary reason for the enthusiasm for the alliance of the Theosophical Society with Swami Dayananda's Arya Samaj was Madame Blavatsky's claim that in the swami the society could find an adept, "a Yogi himself and an Initiate into the mysteries of the Yoga-Vidya (or secret sciences)," to instruct its members in practical occultism. See, e.g., *The Path* 9 (July 1894): 130 (Madame Blavatsky had told Olcott that "the Swami's body was inhabited by an Adept of the Himalayan Brotherhood"); Blavatsky, "Echoes from India: What is Hindu Spiritualism?," *Banner of Light* (October 18, 1879), reprinted in BCW, 2:68-80, 207; Blavatsky, "Letter of Madame Blavatsky, Dr. Rotura's Discovery," *La Revue Spirite* (December 1879), reprinted in BCW, 2:205-208. See also *The Autobiography of Alfred Percy Sinnett* (London: Theosophical History Centre, 1988), 17. It was the final disillusionment with these claims of practical instruction that prompted a revolt within the British Theosophical Society and the hasty institution by Olcott of a sort of lodge within a lodge that appears to have degenerated quickly into mere mediumship. See R.A. Gilbert, *The Golden Dawn and the Esoteric Section* (London: Theosophical History Centre, 1987). As usual in these intra-society conflicts, Madame Blavatsky (and not her Masters) received the blame for exciting "many . . . to vague expectations of a training and experience for which necessarily very few are fitted." "C.C.M." [C.C. Massey], "Theosophy and Spiritualism," *The Theosophist* 2, no. 12 (August 1881): 260.

promised.²³ Olcott relates that when Felt exhibited his diagrams on September 18th, several persons thought they saw light "quivering over the geometrical figures," but he was later inclined to dismiss it all as an effect of the power of suggestion.²⁴ In his Inaugural Address in November 1875, however, Olcott was still enthusiastic.

Without claiming to be a theurgist, a mesmerist, or a Spiritualist, our Vice-President [Felt] promises, by simple chemical appliances, to exhibit to us, as he has to others before, the races of beings which, invisible to our eyes, people the elements. . . . Fancy the consequences of the practical demonstration of its truth, for which Mr. Felt is now preparing the requisite apparatus! . . . What will the Spiritualists say, when through the column of saturated vapor flit the dreadful shapes of beings whom, in their blindness, they have in a thousand cases revered . . . as the returning shades of their relatives and friends. The day of reckoning is close at hand, and the name of the Theosophical Society will, if Mr. Felt's experiments result favorably, hold its place in history as that of the body which first exhibited the "Elementary Spirits"²⁵

Later Olcott was to thank his stars that he had added the "if" to his praise of Felt.²⁶ His often-quoted final judgment on Felt's experiments as a whole was that they were "a complete and mortifying disappointment. Whatever he may have done by

23 Emma Hardinge Britten, "Another Book on 'Art Magic,'" *Spiritual Scientist* 6, no. 1 (September 6, 1876). The letter was written in July 1876. The same guarded response, necessitated no doubt by the oath of secrecy, is given in the Society's notice, "To the Public," published in the *Spiritual Scientist* and *Banner of Light* in April 1876.

24 *Old Diary Leaves*, 1:126.

25 "Inaugural Address of the President of the Theosophical Society," in H.S. Olcott, *Applied Theosophy and Other Essays*, 24, 43-44. Olcott's confidence in the future of Felt's experiments was clear: "As a believer in Theosophy, theoretical and practical, I personally am confident that this Society will be the means of furnishing such unanswerable proofs of the immortality of the soul, that none but fools will doubt." *Ibid.*, 27. See also Olcott, "Occultism and Spiritualism," *Spiritual Scientist* 3, no. 25 (February 24, 1876), 295.

26 The spiritualist press found Olcott's conditional praise of Felt "droll." See Hiram Corson's letter, "The Theosophical Society and its President," *Banner of Light* 28, no. 15 (January 8, 1876): 2. Olcott responded with a "confession of faith." See Olcott, "The Theosophical Society and its President. Colonel Olcott's Reply to Professor Corson--a Confession of Faith," *Banner of Light* 28, no. 17 (January 22, 1876): 2.

himself in that direction, [Felt] showed us nothing, not even the tip end of the tail of the tiniest Nature-spirit."²⁷

In the standard version of events, then, Felt, although elected one of the first vice-presidents of the Theosophical Society and granted \$100 by it for his experiments, was a dismal failure at evoking elementals and was the first of the "formers" of the Society to fall by the wayside. After his second failure at evocation in June 1876, the society even had its attorney (W.Q. Judge) formally demand that Felt fulfill his legal obligations; he did not and thereafter Felt was heard from no more.²⁸

The reality of Felt's relations with the Theosophical Society appears to have been somewhat different and more extended, and the conflict in testimonies may bespeak some reason on the part of Olcott and Madame Blavatsky after the fact to minimize Felt's involvement. At the time, Madame Blavatsky had no doubt whatsoever about Felt's success. In her scrapbook she included a clipping from the Banner of Light in January 1876 on Olcott's Inaugural Address and added in her own hand: "And Mr. Felt has done it in the presence of nine persons in all."²⁹

Felt's own version of events is contained in a letter of his included by Colonel Olcott in Old Diary Leaves.³⁰ The letter is dated June 19, 1878 and was later published in the London Spiritualist. Felt says that it was drafted in response to skeptical letters in that journal more than two years before, about which he had only just learned.³¹ In the letter, Felt asserts that the effect of his diagrams on those attending the original meeting in September 1875 was so powerful that the real "illuminati" present immediately realized the necessity of a degree or grade system within the Theosophical Society as a means of preserving such serious workings for the elite Theosophists alone. This system of degrees, he says, was in fact instituted and he continued to work within the Society with such members as possessed the appropriate degree of development. Felt states that he was unable to publish the details of this work, because of the obligation of

27 Old Diary Leaves, 1:138. Felt's last appearance in Theosophical history is his rejoinder, "Mr. Felt's Disclaimer," published in the New York Herald (December 1, 1895, sec. 6, 8), to an account of the early days of the society. See Michael Gomes, "Studies in Early American Theosophical History. III. The Ante- and Post-Natal History of the Theosophical Society," Canadian Theosophist 70, no. 3 (July-August 1989): 52. The best factual account of Felt's role in the society in late 1875 and early 1876 and of the institution of the obligation of secrecy is given in Gomes, "Studies in Early American Theosophical History. III. The Ante- and Post-Natal History of the Theosophical Society," Canadian Theosophist 70, no. 4 (September-October 1989): 76 ff.

28 Old Diary Leaves, 1:138-39; Gomes, Dawning of the Theosophical Movement, 90.

29 BCW, 1:192-93.

30 Old Diary Leaves, 1:126-131.

31 From the text of the letter and the fact that a draft of it was found by Olcott in his own papers when writing Old Diary Leaves in the early 1890s, it appears that Felt had felt constrained by his oath of secrecy and had asked the Council of the society for permission to write. The immediate cause of the retort was probably the letter of John Storer Cobb, the treasurer of the Theosophical Society, printed in the Spiritualist for February 22, 1878, which said Felt's experiments produced nothing. I am grateful to James Santucci for this reference.

secrecy imposed upon him when the Theosophical Society was transformed into a secret society (in early 1876), but what he does feel free to reveal is quite interesting.

First of all, he claimed that he had discovered that the Egyptians in their initiations made use of the appearances of the elementals that were evoked with his figures, and that they taught the neophytes how to control and use the elementals. His original intention had been to introduce such initiations into Freemasonry, and he strongly implies that when the Masonic attempt proved bootless he in fact introduced these Egyptian elemental initiations to the elite members of the Theosophical Society.

After relating his failed attempt at introducing a form of initiation into Freemasonry and his resolve to find more appropriate students, Felt states that "with one of the members of the Theosophical Society, a legal gentleman of a mathematical turn of mind" he carried on a series of experiments in which, with his diagrams, he was able to project elementals at a distance which appeared to the recipient as bright lights or animal shapes in Egyptian form." The legal gentleman was, surprisingly enough, the young W.Q. Judge, who apparently related the results of this and other experiments with Felt to a meeting of the society sometime in 1876.³²

Finally, to dispel any question that his experiments before the society were ineffective, Felt reiterates that, after his original experiments at which the members of lower degree were frightened by the apparitions, he produced similar manifestations only with the "illuminati." Having obtained permission of the Council of the Theosophical Society to speak of matters covered by his obligation, he could state unequivocally "I have lately performed what I agreed to do, and, unless the Council forbids, I hereby give permission to such of the illuminati as have seen it, to come forward, if they choose and bear evidence of the fact."³³ The use of "lately" is especially interesting because Felt's letter is dated June 1878, two and a half years after the foundation of the Theosophical Society and only six months before Olcott and Madame Blavatsky departed for India.

Succinctly put, by Felt's account, given without contradiction by Olcott himself and only after Felt says he had obtained the permission of the Council to speak, Felt continued to work with the "illuminati" of the Theosophical Society all through the dark

32 See "A Reminiscence," *The Path* 7 (February 1893): 343-44. If this was not actually written by Judge himself, it clearly reflects his recollections. The piece, while confirming the practical experiments, only confuses matters in attempting to add to Olcott's recollections on the Felt letter published in *Old Diary Leaves*: "The letter was drafted by William Q. Judge and copied out by Felt, and the person he speaks of in the letter as experimenting with is Brother Judge. These things I state advisedly and with permission. It was intended for use at a meeting of the T.S. in 1876, but instead of using that a paper was read by Brother Judge embodying the facts and including many other results of different experiments." It is hard to see how Judge could have drafted the Felt letter itself, and the assignment of the letter to 1876 is contradicted by the letter itself. The reference to permission for revealing these facts is interesting because it indicates that even in 1893 concern for preserving the secrecy of the early work was still strong. The article is reprinted in volume one of *Echoes of the Orient*, The Writings of William Quan Judge, Dara Eklund, ed., 3 vols. (San Diego: Point Loma Publications, 1975). The results of Judge's experiments are confirmed by a letter of Madame Blavatsky, dated June 15, 1877: "There is Judge, who has become simply a holy Arhat. He sees apparitions and escapes. He claims that he disengages himself each night from his body and wanders in infinite space." Quoted in Narad Mani, "Baptême de Lumière," *La France Antimaçonnique* 25, no. 50 (December 14, 1911): 540.

33 *Old Diary Leaves*, 1:131.

years of inactivity of the society (1876-1878), including the period when Isis Unveiled was written. Clearly, Felt's account reflects the secret work of at least a part of the original Theosophists along practical lines. Just as clearly, however, Felt's efforts--whether as eccentric autodidact or as emissary of the H.B. of L.--were not totally satisfactory. Nor, as we shall see, were his experiments the only practical occultism of the society during the New York years.

7 -- Attempts by Felt Descendants To Recover The Manuscript from VdG

From VdG's correspondence, we are invited to consider a scenario in which either Lieb or VdG herself sold the manuscript to a "Miss Felt" and retained the right to continue working on the manuscript until at least 1941, when a representative of "Miss Felt" contacted Viola's sister Evelyn, seeking the return of the manuscript.

Who is "Miss Felt"?

George Henry Felt had 10 children. One, Susanna, died when very young, leaving 9 possibles. Another, Elizabeth J., appears also to have died when young, leaving 8.

His eldest son, Willard Oliver Felt, married and had a large family. It also stands to reason that, as the oldest child (b. 1858), Willard would have been most familiar with his father's work, since the work was undertaken when Willard was himself an adult, and contributing to the upkeep of the family.

His second son, Henry Leighton Felt, also married and had a family (daughter Grace, son Henry). Born only a year after Willard, and independent of GHF relatively young, Henry Leighton may also have been in a position to (a) know and value his father's work and (b) seek its recovery. Henry Leighton was living at Sea Gate (where GHF's wife died in 1911) when he applied for a passport, in October of 1903, for himself, his wife Emily and his children). This is at almost the same time that Marie Louise Felt must have applied for her passport. Felt had the passport sent to Thomas Cook on Broadway, indicating he and his family were leaving the US immediately.³⁴ Henry L. Felt and his family were sufficiently well-placed in NYC society to feature in the Society pages of the NYT. Henry L. Felt was a NY property developer.

GHF's other children either died relatively young, disappear from the historical record, or are living together, all unmarried, until their deaths.

On this basis, I am inclined to identify the likely Felt buying the Kaballah manuscript from VdG or Lieb as Grace Felt, the daughter of Henry Leighton Felt.

However, given that Alexander Felt was also reasonably well off, and that Maria Louise Felt was his likely heir, we have to look at her as the potential buyer as well.

³⁴ Apparently this trip was to England; the family is in the immigration records, returning from Plymouth in 30 November 1903, arriving in NY 10 December.

8 -- Clarence W. Lieb

Role: purchases Felt manuscript at Brentano's sale (in 1914?), and passes it along to his patient, Viola de Gruchey.

Born and raised in Rhinelander, Wisconsin. Moved to La Junta, Colorado. Has three marriages: one early (1913?), on to Mabel (?, 1916?) ending in wife's death in 1924, with an almost-immediate remarriage to a Germaine Nadia, French national, in London. Extensive European travel.

1904 -- performing scientific experiments related to blood pressure at Pikes Peak. Lots of Colorado Springs newspaper coverage.

1906-10 -- Undergraduate/graduate education at Colorado College (BA 1908, MA 1909); good enough to do graduate-level work and get publication mentions from advisors prior to 1910. Work on tuberculosis.

1907 -- wins first place in "declamation competition" at Colorado College; address called "A Vision of War"

1908 -- Secretary of CS chapter of Pearsons Society (?)

1910 - In graduate (medical) school at Harvard in 1910 (graduated 1914), studying "the function of the extrinsic innervation (sic) of the gastro-intestinal tract."

1914 - From April 1, 1914 until June 6, 1914, when he resigns, is "pathological house officer" (1 of 2) at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital. Later biography has this as an internship.

1915 - Becomes physician in residence at the Glen Springs (New York).

September 1916 -- a daughter born in Watkins, NY. Treasurer of Schuyler County Medical Association.

August 1917 - Publishes "Rationale, Indications and Contra-Indications of the Nauheim Bath" in Medical Record (V 92).

October 1917 - Harvard Alumni Bulletin (p. 160) -- **"M. D. '14 -- Clarence W. Lieb, who has been for the past two years medical director at the Glen Springs Sanitorium, has opened an office at 64 West 56th St., New York. He is living at 152 Slocum Crescent, Forest Hills."**

1924 - Publishes "Newer Points in Colitis Therapy" and two other articles in New York State Journal of Medicine (Vol. 24).

1926 - Publishes "Poison Liquor and the Doctor's Duty" in McNaught's Monthly

1927 - Writes The effects of an exclusive, long-continued meat diet..., a pamphlet. Apparently collaborating with Arctic explorer Vilhjalmur Steffansson, who was on said diet (?) Protein metabolism. Also published in JAMA as "A Twelve Months' Exclusive Meat Diet" in 1929. His findings are popularized as pro-meat, and used by Swift and Armour, among others. He becomes a favored expert of the American Meat Institute. His work is covered in Theosophy (Volume 15). Also covered in mainstream newspapers for his recommendation that dogs, cats and horses be barred from all metropolitan areas (see Springfield Republican, 2-6-1927, p. 39)

1928 - Writes Eat, Drink and Be Healthy: An Outline of Rational Dietetics (New York: John Day). Also referred to in the literature as "Eat, Drink and Be Slender". Widely advertised and touted. In Woman's Home Companion, touting the banana as high-value food.

1929 -- Credential listing is "MA, MD Formerly associated with Peter Bent Brigham Hospital, Boston. Also with New York Hospital and Post-Graduate Medical School and Hospital, New York City. Member American Medical Association, New York State ..."

1930 - Quoted in Woman's Home Companion magazine article "Changing Ideas About Diet".

1930 -- Apparently associated with Edward L. Bernay. Covered in mainstream media for his warnings about spinach-eating, particularly for children. Living (working?) at 366/400 Madison Ave. in NYC.

1932 -- Publishes "Science: The First Fifty Years" in Colliers.

1935 -- "The minimum of milk a day should be a quart for children." Also promoting "active mental life, " particularly for older people.

1936 - [SUSPECT] Apparently involved in some kind of altercation with patient. See Key Boyle, et alia. 365 Days, p. 397: "I think I must have been temporarily insane when I allowed myself to go as far as I did with Dr. Clarence W. Lieb. It was a terrible thing to have done. Everything's a blank for me after I found myself in Dr. Lieb's bedroom where he was lying on the bed." 365 Days is a collection of fiction edited by Kay Boyle. Still, the name is striking. No contemporary copies of 365 Days available to check context.

1937 - Publishes "The Use of Leuco Triphenylmethanes as Reagents for Bacterial Polysaccharides" in Stain Technology (volume 12). Associated with something called "Clinical Research Laboratories" in NYC.

1940 -- AMA is routing CWL's pamphlet "The Compatible Eating Fad". Offers medical opinion om John Dryden's illnesses to Dryden's biographer J. M. Osborn.

1941 -- Advocating against refined sugar, and for fructose (fruit-based) substitutes.

1948 -- Publishes "Outwitting Your Years"

1949 -- Living and working in Rancho Santa Fe, California. Doing artificial insemination research (rabbits).

1953 -- Anti-smoking stance widely covered.

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Are cigarettes poisoning YOU?

Tobacco, used to excess, may be the cause of grave physical ills, says Dr. **Clarence W. Lieb**. But used in moderation, it relaxes the weary body and mind—and by watching the way you smoke, says Dr. Lieb, you can reduce the dangers.

In December Reader's Digest, he tells why practices like inhaling, puffing fast, and smoking too much of each cigarette are especially injurious; and gives simple rules for forming smoking habits that are safer for your health.

Get your December Reader's Digest today: 40 articles of lasting interest, condensed from leading magazines and current books.

(Cleveland Plain Dealer, 11-25-1953, p. 4)

1957 -- Mentioned in Norman Vincent Peale's Stay Alive All Your Life. Lieb was Peale's personal physician.

1958 -- Publishes "Don't Let Smoking Kill You" - pamphlet form of prior articles.

1964 -- Publishes Peace and Power Through Prayer, co-authored with Chester L. Tolson, with an introduction by Norman Vincent Peale.

(1977 - is listed in Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine as a member.
Could be the son, Clarence W)

9 -- Next Steps

- determine plausibility of “lost in the Boston fire of 1872” for version 1 of the manuscript. MD has done this. James R. Osgood & Co.’s warehouse was completely destroyed in the fire; ergo, it is plausible that, if Felt had only one copy of the manuscript, and it was there at the time, it was lost. However, see the Dall letter from Felt of June 1873: no mention is made of the loss of the manuscript as the excuse for delay in publication.
- determine plausibility of the Brentano-purchase story. MD did this. Plausible, but we need to locate Brentano sale catalogs for the 1914-ish period, or alternatively find Clarence W. Lieb’s papers to determine precisely when the purchase was made, and indeed if any material remains with Lieb’s materials.
- obtain a copy of Viola L. de Gruchy Staley’s will from Essex County, NJ. JPD did this -- no records remain.
- track down living GH Felt descendants and send them letters. MD has started this process. No responses to date.
- obtain VdG/Bragdon correspondence, and working papers for “Star of Perfection” from the University of Rochester. Done and included.
- pray to the household gods. We may yet recover Felt’s manuscript.

