

# THE WILLS OF H.P.B.

Excerpt from *The Judge Case, A Conspiracy Which Ruined the Theosophical CAUSE*  
by Ernest E. Pelletier\*

Shortly after reviewing *The Secret Doctrine* Annie Besant joined the Theosophical Society on March 10<sup>th</sup>, 1889. Besant had made a name for herself as one of England's finest orators and her abilities were needed by the growing Society. Besant showed great promise as a student of Theosophy and was soon sitting at H.P.B.'s side acknowledging her as her new guru. She was quickly brought in as a pledged member of the Esoteric Section. Just one month before her death H.P.B. appointed Besant (April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1891) as the Chief Secretary of the Inner Group of the Esoteric Section and Recorder of the Teachings,<sup>1</sup> and arranged for her to go to America to meet Judge and deliver Blavatsky's message to the American Convention held April 26<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup>, 1891, as her special delegate. At the time Besant accepted that Judge was an Occultist, a view she later discounted. On May 8<sup>th</sup> Blavatsky died in London while Besant was on her way back from America.

Besant had sailed for England on May 6<sup>th</sup> and, upon receiving word of Blavatsky's death, Judge followed on May 13<sup>th</sup>, 1891. Olcott would not sail from India until June 15<sup>th</sup>. Evidentiary facts have been gathered and are presented here for consideration regarding that period between Blavatsky's death on May 8<sup>th</sup> and the time of Judge's arrival in London on May 21<sup>st</sup>, 1891.

Blavatsky executed her first Will before she left India in early 1885. According to Olcott she drew up a Will on January 31<sup>st</sup>, 1885. Olcott stated:

The witnesses were P. Sreenivasa Row, E.H. Morgan, T. Subba Rao, and C. Ramiah. It contains a clause to the effect that she wishes her ashes to be buried within the compound of the Headquarters at Adyar; and another request that annually, on the anniversary of her death, some of her friends should assemble here and read a chapter of the *Light of Asia* and one of *Bhagavad Gītā*.<sup>2</sup>

This is the Will and Testament which is being kept at Adyar to this day, and considered Blavatsky's official Will. But it was not the Last Will and Testament she executed.

A second Will was drawn up in March 1887 while Blavatsky was living in Ostend with Countess Wachtmeister, who looked after her needs. Ten days before leaving Ostend she lost consciousness while

sitting in her chair. Sylvia Cranston recounts from Wachtmeister's notes:

When the lawyer, doctor, and consul arrived, they found a joyous party. The doctor kept repeating, "But she should be dead, . . . she should be dead." He had never known a case in which a person in such condition recovered. The drawing of the will went smoothly until the lawyer learned HPB had left all her worldly goods to the countess and nothing to her relatives. Fearing the countess had exercised undue influence on her mind, he objected, but HPB vehemently opposed. Madame Gebhard, to avoid a scene, gently informed the lawyer, "perhaps when you know the amount which Madame Blavatsky has to will away, you will have no further objections to making the will as she desires, for had Madame Blavatsky died, there would not have been sufficient money to pay for her funeral expenses."

The party broke up several hours later. Departing, the American consul laughingly said: "Well, I think this is enough fatigue for a dying woman!"<sup>3</sup>

Wachtmeister continued:

I will add that I never saw that will again. After HPB's death at Avenue Road, London, on May 8, 1891, I went to Ostend to see the lawyer and asked him what had been done with the will. He told me that after my departure he had given the will to HPB. I suppose that she must have destroyed the deed, as it was never found among her papers.<sup>4</sup>

Blavatsky's second Will, although very different from the first in content, has one element of similarity — both Wills were drawn up at moments of her pending death.

At the end of March 1889, a few months after *The Secret Doctrine* was published, according to Cheiro, a famous palm reader who was in London at the time, Blavatsky invited him to visit her one evening at Avenue Road. Blavatsky had deduced from evaluating her own palm that her life was nearing its end. She apparently contacted Cheiro to verify her conclusions and give her a time frame in which she could expect the inevitable. Again according to Cheiro, Blavatsky thanked him after his reading and said, "Your warning will do me good, for I will now put my papers in order and prepare in earnest for the short time that lies before me."<sup>5</sup> Although a third Will has never been acknowledged, it can be assumed from

\* *The Judge Case, A Conspiracy Which Ruined the Theosophical CAUSE*, Edmonton, AB: Edmonton Theosophical Society, 2004

Blavatsky's supposed comments that she was taking this seriously and that she would take the time to draw up another Last Will and Testament.

In her 1887 Will, Blavatsky had apparently left nothing to Olcott and nothing for Adyar either; all was to go to Countess Wachtmeister who was looking after her night and day and receiving no compensation in return. H.P.B.'s circumstances had changed drastically since then and a very different Will was needed to reflect this new status. Judge had become her most trustworthy supporter and the most dedicated to the CAUSE. Blavatsky eventually came to realize that her own Master had initiated him in 1884 and she depended on Judge for the many tasks she needed done. In one of her letters she wrote: "I trust Judge more than anyone in the world. . . ."<sup>6</sup>

Recognizing Blavatsky's involvement with Judge in all aspects of theosophical work, and the fact that Besant had only recently joined the Society, it would seem reasonable to assume that Blavatsky would not have designated Besant as the main benefactor in her Will. Olcott mentioned that when he had arrived at the London headquarters on September 4<sup>th</sup>, 1889, he "found Mrs. Annie Besant living in the house, having just come over from the Secularists into our camp, with bag and baggage".<sup>7</sup> Besant claimed, and declared some months after Blavatsky's death, that she was "the person who arranged H.P. Blavatsky's business affairs in England"<sup>8</sup> during that time. It would be reasonable to expect, therefore, that Besant was *the* person in charge of Blavatsky's Last Will and Testament and would have known where to find it after her death.

It is reasonable to deduce that Blavatsky drafted a new Will sometime after Cheiro's visit and also to assume that Blavatsky drew up her Last Will and Testament circa August 1890 when a Deed of Trust was executed in which Annie Besant's property at 19 Avenue Road was officially vested into the hands of trustees as a headquarters for the British Section.<sup>9</sup> It was agreed at the time that

On the one hand, it was not right to have left the house in Mrs. Besant's name, and on the other, Madame Blavatsky's health precluded it being in her own name.<sup>10</sup>

Once again Blavatsky's health was a major concern.

Following are several reasons why a third Will is a possibility:

1. On July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1886, Blavatsky had offered Judge her royalties from *The Secret Doctrine* and *Isis Unveiled*.
2. In August 1886 Blavatsky asked Judge to help her get her royalties from J.W. Bouton for her *Isis Un-*

*veiled*. She protested that the money was being sent to Olcott at Adyar while she needed the funds to survive . . . .

3. Olcott mentioned years later in *Old Diary Leaves* that "she also offered to turn over her share of the *Theosophist* to Judge and make him her successor".<sup>11</sup>
4. When Blavatsky wrote her second Will she wanted Wachtmeister to have all, but her *Secret Doctrine* had not been published yet, nor had the Esoteric Section been formed.
5. When Olcott, a lawyer, finally declared six months after Blavatsky's death that there was a Will, he carefully worded his speech at the Sixteenth Convention and Anniversary of the Theosophical Society at Adyar. He stated:

*In the will that she executed here, she left me everything and offered her sister the copyrights to her books. . . .*<sup>12</sup> [Italics added]

He not only omitted any reference to the 1887 (second) Will, he carefully avoided mentioning the words "Last Will and Testament" when proclaiming Blavatsky's Will. (Years later in *Old Diary Leaves* he did write that "she executed what proved to be her Last Will and Testament. . . . 31<sup>st</sup> January 1885").<sup>13</sup> Also, in the published transcript of this Will there is no mention of copyrights being offered to her sister.


6. Blavatsky had subsequently made arrangements regarding her share of the net profits from the sale of her books (in 1888 and 1890) and they did not include monies going to Adyar.<sup>14</sup>
7. In the interview by William Mulliss in October 1926, Besant claimed that she had been appointed H.P.B.'s literary executor. . . . In *Rebirth of the Occult Tradition*, Boris de Zirkoff wrote: "As far as English Law is concerned, a Literary Executor can be appointed only in a Will."<sup>15</sup> It is possible that Besant *was* in fact appointed Literary Executor — in a Will that would have been executed *after* she became associated with Blavatsky.
8. It would have been out of character and imprudent for Blavatsky not to have had a new Will executed to reflect changed circumstances.
9. If Blavatsky did destroy the second Will, as Wachtmeister speculates, she would not have done so without another Will to replace it, as it is obvious after reading "Why I Do Not Return To India" that she would not leave *everything* to Olcott and Adyar as stipulated in her first Will.

The interesting question which arises is, what was Judge so concerned about that he would send a telegram from New York, on May 9<sup>th</sup>, to 19 Avenue Road telling the members there to “*Do nothing till I come*”?<sup>16</sup> This was done shortly upon receiving word of Blavatsky’s death and only a few days after Besant’s departure from New York on May 6<sup>th</sup>, 1891.

Blavatsky had appointed Judge as “my only representative for [the Esoteric] section in America” on December 14<sup>th</sup>, 1888. On December 25<sup>th</sup>, 1889, she appointed Olcott as her “Sole official representative for the Esoteric Section in Asiatic countries”, although Olcott’s position appeared to be mostly in an administrative capacity. Neither was in England at the time of Blavatsky’s death. Judge, who H.P.B. claimed “had been a part of herself and of the Great Lodge ‘for aeons past’”,<sup>17</sup> felt very responsible for preserving the integrity of the E.S. materials. H.P.B. had reinforced this in her circular “Notice” of August 9<sup>th</sup>, 1890, in which she stated that all orders in E.S. Instructions issued in the U.S. would only be through Judge or directly by herself. This would have been reason enough to spring Judge into action and immediately send that telegram. Edmund Garrett, Editor of the *Westminster Gazette* and a friend of Besant, reported that “Avenue-road was at first inclined to resent this ukase”,<sup>18</sup> that is, an official order, having the force of law. Interestingly, this telegram of

Judge’s is mentioned by various authors<sup>19</sup> but it never appeared in any official theosophical periodicals of the time. The telegram appears to have been expurgated.

By the time Judge arrived in London on May 21<sup>st</sup>, Besant was already wearing Blavatsky’s ring and Blavatsky’s body had been cremated. Was Judge the one who was supposed to receive H.P.B.’s ring after her death? There is sufficient information included in the Chronology and Appendix A to cover the details surrounding this ring. It will not, therefore, be repeated here.

No Will was ever presented to Judge while he was in England. He may not have known at that time that there was a Will but likely expected there would be. Judge had represented Blavatsky in other legal matters before and would therefore have found it strange that he was not presented with her Will while in London. Some years later, Besant admitted that she destroyed *very important documentary evidence* in her possession related to the “Judge Case” stating, “I destroyed all the letters I had received from Mr. Judge, as I could not carry them with me round the world. . . .”<sup>20</sup> Could it be that Blavatsky *did* have a third Last Will and Testament and that it suffered the same fate? 

*References available upon request.*

---

. . . **Cycle** continued from page 85

vigorously opening its first round through the Zodiac, after the change in command between the Ages.

The two planets are considered “ambassadors” of the galaxy, and H.P.B. wrote that Neptune does not really belong to our solar system (*SD I*, p.102 fn). She also said that Neptune and Uranus are considered warriors and architects. It is possible that by adhering to the solar system with their “weight” and magnetism they gave a final touch to its finely tuned balance and equilibrium (see *SD I*, pp.101-102). Mathematically and astronomically, their orbits are not only closely linked to each other. They are also intimately connected to that of Pluto, another “ambassador” — and one who brings us major structural changes starting from 2008.

There is also the question of the 70 year period. H.P.B. said that every cycle must be a multiple of seven (*SD I*, p.36). Tsong-kha-pa started the end-of-century efforts in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, and we are now at the 21<sup>st</sup> century, both being multiples of seven. H.P.B. adds that the number seven is the great number of the Divine Mysteries, while “number 10 is that of all human knowledge (Pythagorean decade)”.

Hence the number seventy, which is a combination of seven and ten and a multiple of seven, must be a significant figure. In 1875 the public effort for universal brotherhood was started, and if one adds 70 years to that, one finds 1945, the year when, precisely on May 8<sup>th</sup> (the very anniversary of H.P.B.’s death) democracies declared that the war had been won in Europe, and started preparing the United Nations, whose headquarters were established in New York, the same city where the movement was founded. And if one adds another 70 years to 1945, one gets to the year 2015, when the “change of command” between Neptune and Uranus (with Pluto’s assistance) will be complete, and the new cycle’s dawn (*sandhya*) will probably be more visible than it is now. The seven years between 2008 and 2015 promise to be significant.

There is a cautious note, though, to add to the prophecy made by H.P.B. that true occultism will have a final victory before the end of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. She also commented that the 20<sup>th</sup> century might be perhaps “the last to be called by that name”. This warning implies that, depending on how things would evolve, we might experience such a radical change,