

ELINED PRYS KOTSCHNIG
2-16-1895 to 6-30-1983

Elined Prys Kotschnig was born in Trebecca, Wales, on February 16, 1895, and died at Pennswood Village, Newton, Pennsylvania on June 30, 1983.

She grew up in Wales and was educated at the University of Wales, graduating summa cum laude in 1918, with a degree in philosophy. From 1918-19 she pursued graduate work at Cambridge University. In 1920, she was called upon to head up the World Student Christian relief work with the refugees from W.W. I. It was during this time that she met Walter Kotschnig in Vienna. They were married in 1924 and settled in Geneva, Switzerland a year later. During the ten years, as their children were born, Elined was drawn to pursue her interest in Carl Jung's thought. She undertook analysis with Dr. Tina Keller, at the Jung Institute in Zurich, and worked with Jung himself.

A turning point occurred in her life, in the early thirties when the Friends Meeting of Geneva began studying the religious mystics. Elined wrote a paper on mystics and the Quaker movement, and a study group was formed to pursue the subject. Through Dr. Keller, a meeting was arranged for members of the group to travel to Zurich to talk to Jung about religion and psychology. She loved to recall that visit when two carloads of Friends drove to Zurich and spent the day with Jung, talking in the garden where he served them strawberries and cream. At that time he said if he'd had a choice about his religion he would have been a Quaker because his own spiritual beliefs and psychological understandings were most closely allied with Friends' teachings. This fateful discussion then formed the basis of what was to become her life's work - the exploration of the interconnectedness between psychology and religion.

The Kotschnigs immigrated to the United States in 1936. They settled in Northampton [Massachusetts] at Smith College where Walter was teaching. Elined began her career as a Jungian analyst and also developed ties with the Northampton Meeting and other east coast Friends, including the analyst Martha Yaeger and Rachel DuBois.

She found American Friends unreceptive to her concerns about psychology, which was dominated by Freud's thought at that time. At one gathering the question was asked by a Quaker, "Isn't psychology dangerous?" She responded, "So is religion."

Out of her association with these Friends, she helped found The Friends Conference on Religion and Psychology in the early 40's as a response to the horrors of W.W. II. She firmly believed that the knowledge of psychology as well as our spiritual insights was needed to try to understand the human condition. Through the Friends Conference hundreds of seekers have been introduced to the ways of Friends.

The concern for world peace was a dominant factor in the lives of both Walter and Elined Kotschnig, although they pursued that concern in different ways - his was outward through world diplomacy - hers was inward through the individual psyche.

In 1944, the Kotschnigs moved to Washington D.C. when Walter joined the State Department.

For the next 30 years Elined was the only Jungian analyst in the area. Her home became a gathering place for all those interested in Jung's thought.

She joined Florida Avenue Meeting and was active during the 40's, 50's and early 60's. The Pathways groups she helped form are still active today as are off-shoots of the analytical study group she also formed. She had a special genius for recognizing the needs of like - minded people to share their concerns with each other, and she could sense how to organize such groups so that the organization met the needs of the individual. Another gift was her insight into finding the right person for a given job. Usually the task was just what was needed for that person's growth.

In 1974, the C.G. Jung Working Group evolved out of Elined's living room get-togethers. Ten years later, the group is a focal point for those interested in Jungian thought and spiritual growth. Even today, 40 years after her original conception, the cross-connection of religion and psychology is still new in the professional community. She once said, "How can doctors and psychiatrists become healers when their own spiritual development is infantile?"

At one point midway through her life, she underwent a period of deep searching with regard to the question of writing and publishing her thoughts. Returning from a trip to Europe, she realized that it was not her task in this lifetime to write books. Rather, her expressive medium was to be the publication of the journal of the Friends Conference on Religion and Psychology. She authored numerous articles and pamphlets, but the bulk of her thought can be found with the pages of *Inward Light*, her beloved life's work of 40 years.

With Elined's death I, along with many others, feel the loss of a spiritual mother, a teacher, and a friend. Especially I will miss the lovely afternoon teas taken in her kitchen alcove, garden or sunny dining room and the thoughtful conversations with her that ranged from global issues to deeply personal concerns. She believed that it is the responsibility of each person to look within for knowledge of themselves and the leadings of the Holy Spirit. Only by increasing the individual consciousness can we hope to meet the challenges facing the world today.