

S. RALPH HARLOW, 1885 - 1972

Biographical Notes

Clergyman, Christian missionary to the Near East, professor of religion and Biblical literature at Smith College (Northampton, Massachusetts), pacifist, civil rights activist, Zionist, international lecturer, and author of A Life After Death and several other books on religion, social action, and paranormal phenomena.

- 1810, June 29 Organization of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Congregational). [Hereinafter ABCFM.]
- 1823, Jan. 5 Birth of Roland Greene Usher, S. Ralph Harlow's maternal grandfather. [S. Ralph Harlow hereinafter referred to as SRH.]
- 1826 ABCFM sent its first missionaries to work among Greeks and Jews of Smyrna, Ottoman Empire.
- 1857, April 6 Birth of Samuel Allen Harlow, son of U.S. Marshal Samuel R. Harlow and father of SRH, in Kingston, New York.
- 1861-1865 Roland Usher served in the Regular Army variously as paymaster-in-chief of the Department of the Gulf, Annapolis, and Virginia-North Carolina.
- 1866 Roland Usher was elected mayor of Lynn, Massachusetts.
- 1876 Roland Usher unsuccessfully sought the Massachusetts Republican nomination for the U.S. Congress.
- 1879 Samuel Allen Harlow graduated from Princeton University, where he had been a classmate of Woodrow Wilson.
- 1883 Roland Usher was appointed warden of Charlestown State Prison in Boston by Governor Benjamin Butler. He made a reputation as a prison reformer. Samuel Allen Harlow married Roland Usher's daughter Caroline Matilda Mudge Usher.

- 1885, July 20 SRH (Samuel Ralph Harlow) was born in the warden's house of Charlestown State prison.
- 1887 Marion Stafford, SRH's wife, was born in Brooklyn, New York.
- 1895, Mar. 5 Death of Roland Usher. By this time, at age 12 years, SRH had decided to become a foreign missionary. This had resulted mostly through the influence of his mother. He may also have been influenced by his mother's brother, Edward Preston Usher, who was a prominent Protestant "modernist." Edward Usher wrote a number of books, of which his Memorial Sketch of Roland Greene Usher and Genealogy of the Usher Family of that year was the first.
- 1902 The Smyrna School for Girls became the American Collegiate Institute (ACI).
- 1903 The International College in Smyrna was chartered under Massachusetts law.
- 1904 SRH entered Harvard University, where he studied with William James, among others. James' interest in psychical phenomena reinforced SRH's own, which dated to SRH's early childhood with his sister Anna, a psychic and Christian spiritualist.
- 1906 SRH went to Nashville, Tennessee, for a Student Volunteer Convention that changed his goal from missionary work generally to work specifically with young people.
- 1908 SRH graduated as a pre-medical student from Harvard. He went with his parents on his first trip to Europe. His father had become interested in the Dreyfus Case and, while in France, visited Georges Picquart and Dreyfus. Afterwards, the elder Harlow wrote an article about the visits.
- 1909 SRH went to New York City, where he lived for a year in the Neighborhood House of Spring Street Presbyterian

Church, a settlement house under the direction of the minister Herbert Roswell Bates, in a predominantly-Italian-American area. He entered Union Theological Seminary, where he was a classmate of Norman Thomas, later the head of the Socialist Party of America. Marion Stafford graduated from Radcliffe College and went to work as secretary to Bates.

- 1911 SRH became assistant minister at Spring Street Church.
- 1912 SRH and Marion Stafford married.
- 1912, Feb. 6 SRH was ordained as a missionary to Turkey by his father in a ceremony at the Tabernacle Church of Salem, Massachusetts, honoring the centennial of the sending by the ABCFM of the first American missionaries to Asia.
- 1912, Aug. The Harlows sailed for Turkey, traveling via the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, and Greece. They were assigned originally to the mission at Afion Kara Hissar, in the Turkish interior, where they were to work among the native Christian Armenian and Greek churches.
- 1912, Nov. Disturbances at Afion Kara Hissar made it difficult for the Harlows to take their positions there. The International College at Smyrna invited SRH to become chaplain and head of the department of sociology. His work was to include counseling the boys and directing Y.M.C.A. and other youth-oriented activities. At the same time, Bates, whose health was failing, urged SRH to return to the U.S. and to take over the work at Spring Street Church.
- 1913 Birth of John Stafford Harlow, Ralph and Marion Harlow's first child. By this time, SRH had accepted the position at the International College, where his sister Anna Harlow Birge and her husband J. Kingsley Birge also were employed as missionary educators.

- 1913, Sept. The death of Bates prompted leaders at Spring Street Church to offer the pastorate to SRH, who refused. With the help of Bates' widow, SRH wrote a book-length tribute to Bates.
- 1914 SRH visited Palestine, where he first became interested in Zionism and Hadassah. The seizure of the ABCFM's property at Afion Kara Hissar by Turkish soldiers in December and their periodic occupation of it for five years confirmed SRM in his decision to remain at the International College.
- 1915 Birth of the Harlow's second child, Ruth Carol.
- 1915, Aug. The Ottoman government forbade Christian proselytizing among Moslems in any schools, including the International College. The Harlows left Smyrna in reaction to anti-Christian and anti-American demonstrations.
- 1916 The Harlows stayed in Istanbul (Constantinople), where they worked for a while at Roberts College.
- 1917, Autumn The Harlows returned to the U.S., taking up residence in Boston, where SRH continued to work for the ABCFM.
- 1918 Samuel Allen Harlow took what was to become his last pastorate, at Canton, Massachusetts, Evangelical Church.
- 1918, June SRM spent six months in France as a Y.M.C.A. divisional director of the headquarters of the American Expeditionary Force attached to the New Zealand Division. It was at this time that he came into contact with a black American regiment as a chaplain, thus stimulating his interest in race relations and civil rights.
- 1919, May 15 The Greeks occupied Smyrna.
- 1919, Aug. The Harlows returned to the International College, where SRH established the first Boy Scout troop in what today is Turkey.

- 1920 Birth of the third and final Harlow child, Elizabeth (Betts).
- 1920, Jan. SRH began openly to defend the Greek occupation of Anatolia, which he hoped would result in permanent annexation.
- 1920, June SRH received an M.A. from Columbia University. His thesis concerned his work in Turkey.
- 1920, Aug. SRH, who had been elected general secretary of the Student Volunteer Movement for the Near East for a four-year term, went to St. Beatenberg, Switzerland, for his first World Student Christian Federation Conference.
- 1921, Aug. The Greeks pushed eastward to within about sixty miles of Ankara, the new Turkish capital.
- 1921, Sept. SRH went to Warsaw, Poland, for the World Student Christian Federation Conference. He returned via Switzerland, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Roumania, Bulgaria, and Greece, where he visited student centers.
- 1922 The ACI, which was the ABCFM-sponsored equivalent for girls to the International College, an all-male institution, applied for a charter under Massachusetts law as the American College for Women as part of a planned move to a larger campus outside the Armenian quarter of Smyrna.
- 1922, Jan. SRH, who was now a field secretary of the ABCFM, left for a speaking tour of Asia. He visited the World Student Christian Federation Conference in Peking, China, via Egypt and India.
- 1922, May SRH's trip was cut short by news of his son's serious illness in Smyrna.
- 1922, July 30 The Turkish reimposed its ban on Christian proselytizing in the areas of the country under its control.
- 1922, Aug. The Harlow's left Smyrna for Boston.

- 1922, Sept. 9 The Turks reentered Smyrna. Ca. 30,000 Greeks and Armenians died during the seige. Three-quarters of the city, all except the Turkish quarter, was burned to the ground. The International College was looted and its president stripped and beaten. The ACI was burned to the ground. SRH's sister and brother-in-law escaped, but not without first saving the lives of a number of their Christian students.
- 1922, Oct. SRH undertook a hectic speaking tour throughout the U.S. in behalf of the Near East Relief for the Student Volunteer Movement. He agitated in favor of U.S. intervention in Turkey on behalf of the Christians there.
- 1922, Dec. 26 In the face of growing opposition to his anti-Turkish views among the highest-ranking officials of the ABCFM and the International College, SRH resigned from the latter.
- 1923, Jan. Turkey and Greece signed the Convention for the Exchange of Minorities, under which about 370,00 Moslems left Greece and 1.25 million Christians left Turkey. Although most Moslems and Greeks survived this mass exodus, most of the Armenians were simply eliminated. About this time, the ACI reestablished itself outside Athens, Greece, as Pierce College.
- 1923, Mar. 8 SRH submitted an article for publication in The Congregationalist in which he urged that the ABCFM expend most of its efforts in the Near East on refugee Armenians and Greeks from Asia Minor rather than on Turks. His superior, James L. Barton, would not permit its publication. Shortly afterwards, the ABCFM withdrew its offer to SRH of a full secretaryship.
- 1923, Spring Barton sought and secured SRH's resignation for having written against the ABCFM's acquiescence to the Lausanne Treaty between the Allies and Turkey and Barton's part as an observer at Lausanne.

- 1923, Sept. SRH became professor of religion and Biblical literature at Smith College, a women's school in Northampton, Massachusetts.
- 1923-1924 In the face of the Allies' failure to make good their World War promises, SRH became an active pacifist lecturer.
- 1924, Jan. SRH introduced his path-breaking course at Smith on "Christianity and the Present Social Order."
- 1924, Oct. 16 SRH's article "Why I Shall Vote for Davis" appeared in The Congregationalist. Shortly afterwards, Barton sent him a letter requesting him to vote Republican in the upcoming federal elections. In the article, SRH had attacked what he saw as isolationism and imperialism in the Republican party. About the same time, SRH had become involved in the Fellowship of Reconciliation, whose liberal tenants did not sit well with Barton and other ABCFM officials. As a result, the Board withdrew its second offer to SRH of a full secretaryship in the Home Department of the Boston office.
- 1924, Nov. SRH formally resigned as a missionary of the ABCFM.
- 1925, Jan. 26 SRH wrote a letter maintaining that the ABCFM should oppose war and should have opposed the Lausanne Treaty. He asked for a formal hearing before the full Board, which was denied.
- 1925, June Ralph and Marion Harlow escorted their first group of Smith College students to Europe for the summer. That year, Anna Harlow Birge died in childbirth.
- 1926 Publication of George Horton's indictment of U.S. policy in Turkey in The Blight of Asia, containing excerpts from articles and correspondence of SRH strongly critical of Barton and officials of the International College for their reluctance to oppose Turkish policy in the face of possible loss of ABCFM property in Asia Minor.

- 1933, Oct. The Crisis published SRH's brief dramatic scene based on the Scottsboro Trial.
- 1934 The Congregational Christian Church established its Council on Social Action. Although SRH had been a member for several years of the early groups that had met informally and unofficially among Congregationalists working toward this goal, he was not invited to sit on the officially-recognized Council.
- 1935 Samuel Allen Harlow retired as pastor of Canton Evangelical Church.
- 1936 SRH ran again for Congress on the Socialist ticket. The International College, which had lost its grounds to the Turkish government, moved to Beirut, Lebanon. SRH had recommended just such a move.
- 1937 SRH was elected president of the National Association of Biblical Instructors. He received the annual award of the Probus Club of Springfield, Massachusetts, for promoting interfaith understanding.
- 1938 Death of SRH's mother Caroline Harlow.
- 1938, Oct.-
1939, Sept. The Harlows went to Los Angeles, Hawaii, the Fiji Islands, New Zealand, Australia, Ceylon, India, Egypt, Greece, and Western Europe. SRH was on a speaking tour for the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. SRH visited Palestine again. Ruth taught at Pierce College and Betts was a student there. In the summer of 1939, SRH served as a visiting minister to England.
- 1940 John S. Harlow went to Seattle, Washington in order to practice law.
- 1941 SRH wrote his book Honest Answers to Honest Questions. He was among about six original founders of the American Christian Palestine Committee, an organization of Christians sympathetic to Zionism. He became a member of its executive council. That year, the

Nazis took over Pierce College, turning it into a hospital.

- 1941, Mar. 15 Samuel Allen Harlow died.
- 1942 SRH wrote Prayers for Times Like These. With U.S. involvement in World War II, he tended to retreat from the issue of war and concentrated his efforts in better race relations. He protested the forced relocation and internment of Japanese Americans of California. He became a strong advocate of artificial birth control and planned parenthood.
- 1943 SRH was elected to the board of directors of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. He became associated with J. B. Rhine, head of the Parapsychology Laboratory of Duke University, Durham, North Carolina.
- 1945, Oct.-
1946, Summer The Harlows returned to Greece with the reopening of Pierce College. They worked there and elsewhere in Greece as part of U.N.R.R.A. (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration). SRH again visited several countries in the Middle East. On the way back to the U.S., the Harlows also saw Italy, France and Switzerland. On his return, SRH became even more active in speaking on behalf of the formation of a Jewish state in Palestine.
- 1947-1950 Elizabeth (Betts) Harlow and her husband worked at Pierce College. He, Harold Cladbourne Harlow, Jr., became director of the School of Social Work there.
- 1947-1948 SRH served as president of the Harlow Family Association, a primarily-social and -genealogical organization.
- 1948 Ruth Carol and her husband Harold J. Berman moved from Stanford Law School to Harvard Law School, where he became prominent in Soviet legal studies.

- 1949, Oct. 26 Northampton, Massachusetts, B'nai B'rith gave SRH a testimonial dinner in honor of his twenty-fifth year at Smith.
- 1950 Harold Harlow went to work at Springfield College. Sherwood Eddy, an old associate of SRH's in the Congregational Church, wrote a book on psychical research, You Will Survive After Death.
- 1951-1952 SRH gave his first major talks on psychical phenomena.
- 1951 SRH undertook research on the life of David Brainerd, eighteenth-century Puritan missionary to the American Indians of present-day Northampton.
- 1951, Oct. SRH and three other clergymen went on a fact-finding mission for the "Committee of 100" in order to find out if two black defendants in Groveland, Florida, could get a fair trial there.
- 1952, Jan. SRH met John Fitzgerald Kennedy at Smith College. About this time, his name appeared in a pamphlet published by the National Council for American Education as one of the alleged "Red-ucators at Leading Women's Colleges."
- 1952, Aug. J. Kingsley Birge died.
- 1952, Fall A group of SRH's former students established the Harlow Scholarship Fund at Smith.
- 1952, Dec. The Smith College Department of Religion sponsored a three-day symposium on "Religion and Social Change" in honor of SRH.
- 1953 Harold J. Berman wrote his book The Russians in Focus. SRH came under fire as a Communist from Alan Zoll and other prominent self-appointed anti-Communists. SRH wrote an article favoring admission of the Unitarian Church into the World Council of Churches. After some difficulty, he secured its publication in November of 1954.

- 1953, June SRH retired from Smith. He was awarded an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from the Jewish Institute of Religion-Hebrew Union College.
- 1953, Oct.-
1954, July The Harlows went to Greece and Israel via Western Europe. They taught again at Pierce College. Harold and Betts Harlow served for three ^{ca}years as directors of the Congregational Christian Service Committee there. Harold Harlow helped to reorganize the Department of Social Work.
- 1955, Jan.-May SRH taught for a semester at Fisk University, a predominantly-black school in Nashville, Tennessee. While there, he championed the cause of Lee Lorch, whose teaching contract had not been renewed by Fisk because of his refusal to answer questions about his alleged Communist affiliations before the U.S. House Un-American Activities Committee.
- 1956, April 30 SRH became a life member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (N.A.A.C.P.).
- 1956, Aug. SRH went to work for Springfield College, Springfield, Massachusetts. He taught a graduate course on the application of religion to social problems for one quarter each year. He taught there for four years. His article "Does Judaism Encourage Belief in Immortality?" appeared in The Jewish Forum. His book on remarriage was rejected for publication.
- 1957, April SRH's book of essays, based mainly on his Smith College courses on the social teachings of Christ and the Old Testament prophets appeared as Thoughts for Times Like These.
- 1959, June James Perkins, an editor at Doubleday and Company, invited Harlow to write a book on psychical phenomena.
- 1959, Oct. SRH met Evan Hill, whom Doubleday had chosen to help SRH write the proposed book.

- 1961, Feb. 17 A Life After Death was published without Hill's name at his request. SRH began to receive a flood of mail from readers.
- 1961, June 20 Death of Marion Stafford Harlow.
- 1961, Aug. 8 A Life After Death was published in the United Kingdom by Victor Gollancz.
- 1961, Aug. 27 A condensation of A Life After Death appeared in Grit, a Sunday weekly with large circulation in small towns in the U.S.
- 1962, June 3 The Jewish Theological Seminary of America awarded SRH an honorary Doctor of Letters degree.
- 1962, Aug. The American Christian Association for Israel, successor organization to the American Christian Palestine Committee, elected SRH an honorary president.
- 1963, Dec. Guideposts published SRH's article on "The Host of Heaven."
- 1964-1966 SRH served as national vice-president of the N.A.A.C.P.
- 1964, Nov. 14 SRH married his second wife, Elizabeth T. Grigorakis Harlow.
- 1965-1968 SRH wrote several articles for Gateway, the journal of Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship, a Christian spiritualist organization.
- 1967, Sept. SRH's article "Betrayal at West Point" appeared in a paperback anthology True Experiences in Prophecy.
- 1968, Jan. SRH unsuccessfully proposed a sequel to A Life After Death to Doubleday.
- 1969 McFadden published a paperback edition of A Life After Death. By this time, he had received over 1,200 letters about the book.
- 1972 Death of S. Ralph Harlow.