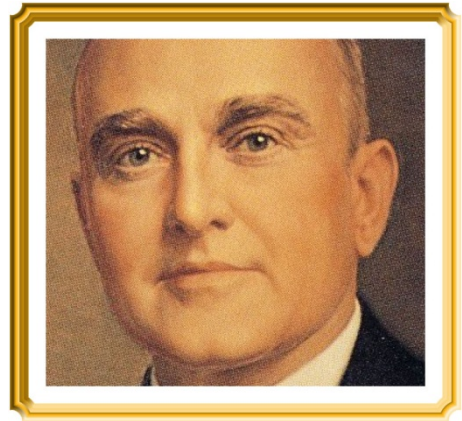


Rajarshi Janakananda:
*Blissfully Hand in Hand
With the Master*



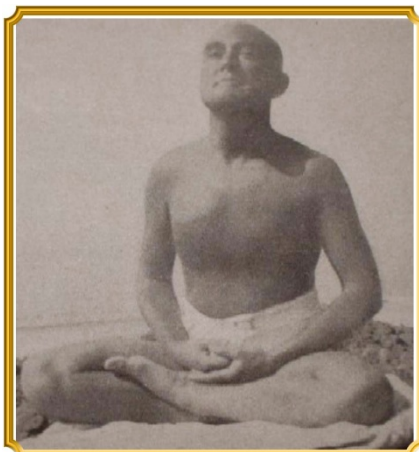
James Jesse Lynn, or Rajarshi Janakananda (May 5, 1892 – Feb. 20, 1955) was Yogananda’s principal disciple and successor. Today he is honored by Kriya Yogis, and yet his legacy remains far too small relative to his stature. He was a spiritual giant, a saint of the highest order. Yogananda wrote: “There is **only one St. Lynn**, a true saint alive for God and the Gurus, and Self-Realization.”* (*from Durga Mata’s book, *Trilogy of Divine Love*)

Why, then, did he remain relatively obscure? During Yogananda’s life, his presence had to remain behind the scene, for business reasons, as we shall see. After the Guru’s passing, his own life soon came to an end. The result is that he has a disproportionately low profile.

Had he lived a long life, as Yogananda had hoped, the world would have witnessed his ecstatic God-communion, his cosmic wisdom and love, his ability to powerfully expand his Master’s mission with his practical genius, as well as his immense inner power. Sister Gyanamata testifies: “His one thought, during these visits, is to pour out his **wonder-power** for our sakes.”

Had he lived longer, he would have become a blazing and unforgettable light in the Kriya Yoga tradition, shining side by side with Yogananda. No other disciple would be remembered more. None would be loved, celebrated, and honored more.

Rajarshi was Yogananda’s greatest ally: “I had prayed to Divine Mother, send me a divine son, powerful and immaculate like the rays, to be **my co-partner** in Babaji’s great work.”* That’s how the Master saw him: “You are playing **an equal part in this work** as I.”*



But is Rajarshi seen in this light today? If not, it is time to let him finally assume his rightful place: when thinking of Yogananda, Rajarshi should immediately appear at his side, as his co-partner, carrying out their divine mission hand in hand. Indeed they have, as Yogananda stated, “twin karma”.*

Swami Kriyananda explained the effect Rajarshi had on many: “To be with him seemed to me like looking out through a window onto infinity.”

Spiritual attainment

Spiritually speaking Rajarshi had achieved deeper God-union than all other disciples. From the 1930s on, Yogananda called him “St. Lynn”, describing him later as a “king of the

saints.”* In fact, from 1932 – and for over two decades – he experienced *samadhi*: cosmic consciousness.

In his inspiring biography published by SRF, *Rajarsi Janakananda, A Great Western Yogi*, we read that the Master revealed that had mastered *sabikalpa samadhi*, and was rapidly approaching the *nirbikalpa* state.

This means that he didn't perceive himself anymore as a man, but as Spirit, as pure Light, as the limitless Self. In fact, on a recording we hear him say: “He brought me to Self-realization... it is God manifest in you.”

Durga Mata tells a typical story: St. Lynn attended the Encinitas cafe dedication. After the refreshments were served, everyone sat at the tables, when suddenly the Master touched him. “He again went into deep *samadhi*. When he came back to conscious consciousness, **Master asked him to bless each one present.** Those who received the blessings all said the same thing, that they felt an overwhelming love coming from him. Master said that his '*samadhi* was one of Divine Love.’”*

Divine love

That brings us to a most inspiring point to consider: the relationship between Yogananda and St. Lynn. The purest form of God's love, Yogananda taught, is friendship. And the highest expression of friendship is the Guru-disciple relationship.



Imagine love on the highest scale: pure, divine, selfless, immense and intense, complete. That was the relationship between Yogananda and his most advanced disciple, St. Lynn.

In his countless letters, Yogananda addressed him with the most endearing words: “Dear Most Beloved .1”, “beloved Little One,” “Most Blessed Beloved One,” “Dear Little Divine Prince.”*

Mr. Lynn, because of his exalted state, knew how to respond to such love from a true Master, who perceives himself as Spirit: not on a personal level, but purely on a level of the soul. In fact, when other disciples responded with personal attachment to his love, Yogananda could become like ice, cold and distant. To others, in order to break through their ego, he had to raise his fiery voice. Few disciples, at any rate, were advanced and elevated enough to meet the Master on his plane of pure and divine love, in Spirit.

But Rajarshi was. On numerous photos (see below) one can see the two soul-friends standing hand in hand. Swami Kriyananda in fact relates: “We would see Master and Rajarshi walking around the grounds, hand in hand, and just gazing at everything with such wonder, because they were seeing God there.”

In India, it is normal for two men to hold hands as they walk through town. But in the West it might easily be misunderstood and misinterpreted. Readers of this article will, undoubtedly, understand.

Theirs was an exchange of pure love on an altogether ego-less plane. In one of his poems of friendship to Rajarshi, written in 1937, Yogananda begins like this:



**“Into the cradle of my love
Came a *little one* from above:
An image of love divine,
Of humbleness, understanding,
will adamantine.”**

Durga Mata testifies: “Such love they had for each other. The world has never seen such love from Master’s eyes when he looked at his ‘Little One.’ It could outshine even a mother’s tender love for her new-born babe, for this love was unconditional and came directly from the Divine.”

To get a little glimpse of their soul-to-soul love, here are some excerpts from Yogananda’s letters:

“You are a personal gift from God to me, of the **highest, sincerest, and sweetest friendship.**”*

“Most Beloved of Ages: guru is disciple and disciple is guru, bound in one eternal pledge of friendship until they redeem one another’s soul in Spirit. **Divine friendship is unconditional and waits until perfection. Such is my friendship for you.**”*

“Thank you, little One, for your **immortal love. I send you mine unto eternity.**”*

“With deepest love inexpressible to you, my dearest beloved one, the most gentlemanly, **the greatest loving friend on earth**, for whom I can endure all the crucifixions on earth.”*

“My most beloved one, whom I have written all my endearing terms, but they are futile, for **nothing can express what I feel.** Please ask me, test me if you want, there is no sacrifice I cannot undergo if it would help you, even my life is at your disposal for your salvation.”*

“To be loved by God is everything, and you have **my love added to that perpetually.**”*

Giving

This brings us to another profound point to consider: true love has the spontaneous desire to give, to help. Yogananda in fact gave everything to Rajarshi, outwardly and inwardly: “As material wealth can be transferred and willed, so can spiritual realization be transferred, and you are my most beloved one **to whom I shall give everything.** So rejoice! I see you often blazing in Him.”*

One thinks of Sri Yukteswar, who similarly told Yogananda (*Autobiography of a Yogi*): “I will give you my hermitages and all I possess.” But Yogananda responded: “Sir, I come for

wisdom and God-contact. Those are your treasure-troves I am after!" Then Sri Yukteswar's "eyes held unfathomable tenderness," as he responded: "I give you **my unconditional love.**"

To Swami Kriyananda, Yogananda pronounced these exact same words, "I give you my unconditional love," a love which he undoubtedly offered, and *still* offers, to each and every disciple, even today.

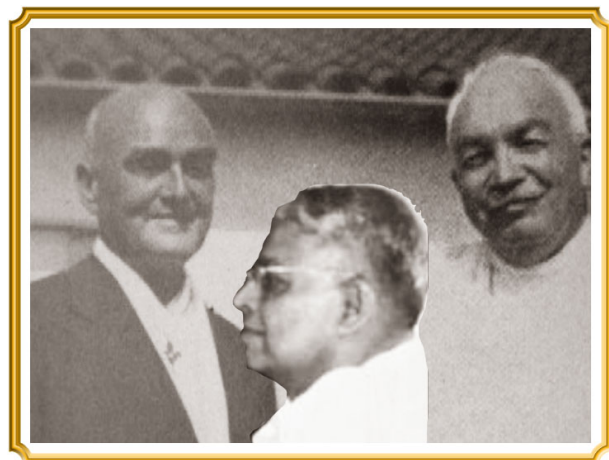
Then there is the disciple's part: Rajarshi too gave his unconditional love to Yogananda, plus the essential financial support for his mission. In fact, he gave *immensely*, out of pure love. That too is an inspiring example for all devotees.

A married and rich successor

Yogananda bestowed upon St. Lynn the responsibility for his entire work, appointing him as his successor in his organization, SRF. This leads us to yet another remarkable point that we should consider: he was married to **Freda Josephine Lynn** (1894 - 1968) and was also a highly successful business magnate, a multimillionaire. The Master, then, made a wealthy married disciple his successor. Yogananda evidently gave little importance to the outer form, but completely focused on the inner man.

Interestingly, he gave Rajarshi monastic vows in August 1951. Was he a monk now? Yes, but certainly a special one. He was still a married man and was immensely rich, "a **prince Maharaj Yogi**",* who was still taking care of his business, as he had to finish working for SRF's financial welfare. Rajarshi, then, was an official, but futuristic (not traditional) monk: a **married renunciate**, and a **businessman-*risbi***.

Yogananda's choice seems highly significant: after his passing, he appointed **three householders** to be at the helm of his organization, Self-Realization Fellowship (SRF) and Yogoda Satsanda Society (YSS). He made **Mr. Lynn** the new president of SRF and YSS; he named **Dr. Lewis** the SRF vice-president. And he selected **Prabhas Chandra Ghose**, his married cousin, to be the YSS vice-president in India. Yogananda wrote in his *Autobiography of a Yogi*: "One of the girls whom my family selected as a possible bride for me, afterwards married my cousin, Prabhas Chandra Ghose."



Imagine these three married men, side by side, as Yogananda's official representatives after his passing.

Here is an intriguing question: had St. Lynn lived longer, would SRF have turned into an exclusively monastic organization, outwardly speaking? In his three years as president, he never felt any such guidance from Yogananda. That guidance came afterwards. Yogananda's monastic order had started in 1931, but always non-monastics had been an important part of SRF: not only Rajarshi, Dr. Lewis, and Prabhas Chandra Ghose, but also others: **Richard Wright** was on the Board of Directors; **Kamala Silva** was ordained by Yogananda in 1935 as a SRF minister and later as a Kriya minister; **Peggy Dietz**, to whom Yogananda wrote

that she is a “soul-minister” of SRF, authorizing her to give Kriya initiation; plus many others. All of them, however, were monastics in their heart and soul: “My goal and desire in life is to find God.”

At any rate, Yogananda wanted Mr. Lynn to serve as a role model everywhere: “May your life become an inspiring model after whose fragrant pattern spiritual aspirants of East and West will shape their own lives.”*



His example

St. Lynn’s example was indeed extraordinary for countless seekers: he achieved complete Self-realization, full enlightenment, while leading a balanced life. He was one of those “American businessmen of endless responsibilities who yet find time daily for their *Kriya Yoga*.” (*Autobiography of a Yogi*)

He faced **the common difficulties** of all those who live in the world and are yogis at the same time. How to make time for meditation? How to overcome the restlessness which the outer world easily creates in us? How to deal with a difficult marriage partner? How to live yogic principles in the business world?

In short: the life of St. Lynn is of special importance for all devotees on the Kriya Yoga path: he, as Yogananda’s chosen successor, was his torchbearer, **his primary example**, acting as his living representative. He was, the Master wrote to him, “my Vivekananda”. Vivekananda was Ramakrishna’s principal spokesperson and heir after his passing.

Furthering his Guru’s mission

The Master’s hope was for St. Lynn to carry on his expansive mission: “And may you live long and well, to carry on the blessed work of the Masters in SRF **all over the globe**”* (Oct. 1951).

In that same letter he expressed his hope for Rajarshi: “You have been a **valiant victorious warrior** in direct business difficulties, surely you can successfully **bring SRF through to the end**.”*

But alas, that wish was not fulfilled. Yogananda told Durga Mata in Jan. 1952: “He always delays and delays, for he thinks he has lots of time yet to do things for SRF, but he does *not* have. Satan is trying to destroy his body.”*

Yogananda’s premonition, alas, proved accurate. Only five months after his passing, a brain tumor was detected in his beloved disciple, “and it was progressing very fast.”* Rajarshi’s public presence therefore remained relatively scarce. After two and a half years and three operations, he passed away.

Fortunately he was able to fulfil his divine task to give financial stability to SRF. He donated millions of dollars.

Rajarshi’s life was divinely orchestrated: he had incarnated to help his Master with his enormous mission of spreading Kriya Yoga. Yogananda therefore often told him: “You are in business for God.”* That was his most important duty: “When you will fulfill **your highest**

mission on earth in firmly establishing this work, then you and I will be released of our duty on earth forever.”*

His second duty was to further the expansion of his Guru’s work, as Yogananda wrote to him: “Meditate thinking that all your desires are finished, for you have found the One who is the fulfillment of all desires. Only strongly keep the desire to help all others through your example and **by ever expanding this work over the earth**. That is your duty as ordained by the Great Ones.”*



The passing of the “mantle”

In the books by Durga Mata and SRF, it is stated that Yogananda passed “his mantle” to Rajarshi. “What is this mantle?”

Spiritually speaking, it signifies the act of a Master transferring his divine power and authority to the disciple succeeding him, just as the great prophet Elijah had done with Elisha. In other words, Rajarshi wore Yogananda’s shining mantle of Self-realization.

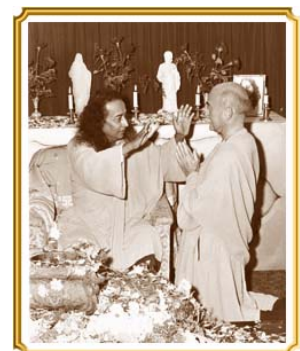
St. Lynn in fact stated: “I have the Christ Consciousness. Nobody has to tell me what it is. I know. I have experienced it.”

He had also achieved the power to transmit *samadhi* to others. A disciple, Daniel Boone, relates: “I once asked Saint Lynn to give me a taste of ecstasy. He answered, ‘If I gave it to you now, you would not be able to bear your life as it is.’” (*Conversations With Yogananda*). Such yogic power can easily become an ego trap. Therefore Yogananda told him: “Never forget where your power comes from. Rajarshi replied humbly, “I won’t. It comes from you.”

An instrument, not the Guru

Yogananda wrote him that he was a pure channel for the Guru: “This is the truth. You are everything that is Divine to me, and in you my highest spiritual desires are fulfilled. **I wanted to live in somebody after I am gone**, and I am happy I am living in you. You are my divine child. **Through you my life shall give salvation to many** and bring them back to the mansion of God.”*

He was a living instrument for *all* the line of Gurus, as Yogananda wrote to him: “When the Great Ones find **a powerful human soul** which makes an altar of his heart with goodness and good works, then they **come in him and they are able to work through him**. The Great Ones love to establish a temple of Spirit in real souls like you that other wisdom-hungry souls may come and feast on the divine manna. Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice!”*



It is of great importance that after Yogananda’s passing, Rajarshi, even though extremely qualified, never accepted the role of SRF’s next “Guru”. “He often **said he regarded Master as a Christ**.”* Disciples can act as a pure and powerful **channel** for him, as we saw, but he, Yogananda, remains the true Guru of this path.

His spiritual name

The next point is of **minor importance**: the spelling of his spiritual name. You may skip it if it holds no interest for you.

Yogananda gave him the name Rajarsi Janakananda on 22 August 1951, during the taking of his monastic vows. “**Janakananda**”, means “bliss of Janaka”. Yogananda explained his choice: “At first, I thought of the name Janaka, the king who was also a saintly prophet, and the guru of Suk Deva, because you, like him, have worldly riches and are a saint.”* Then he added: “But I wanted something more for you, so I thought of **Rajarsi**, which means, “King of the Saints”.*

Durga Mata writes that the Master “at first” spelled the name as “**Rajarsi**”.* SRF in fact published a handwritten note in which Yogananda shows how “**Raja-rishi**” (King-Saint) becomes **Rajarshi**, which then is transliterated as **Rajarsi**.

But later, she adds, Yogananda changed the spelling to *Rajasi*: “Christmas of 1951 Sister Tara questioned Master regarding the difference in the spelling. Master explained it all to us: ‘*Rajarsi* means ‘Royal Saint’, but **without the ‘r’ means ‘King of the Saints’**, which makes a big difference to me, for that is what I feel he is.’”*

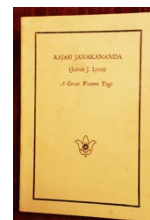
But as we see above, earlier he had said that “**Rajarsi**”, with the ‘r’, means ‘**King of the Saints**’.

Could it be that during this Christmas conversation a misunderstanding occurred? “Rajasi” does not mean “King of Saints”, as SRF correctly explains. It’s a woman’s name, belonging to the goddess Durga. In addition, it is the feminine form of “rajas”, the *guna* (quality) which is restless and passionate. “Rajasi” means the “Divine Mother in her rajasic aspect.” This, certainly, is an unfitting title for Yogananda’s saintly heir.

If the Master indeed made a correction, it seems plausible that he intended to change the early spelling of “Rajarsi” into “Rajarshi”, because on his handwritten note, this is how he had written it. And moreover, this is the way he always pronounced it.

In fact, the SRF book explains the correct pronunciation of the name: “**Rajarshi**”. Swami Kriyananda agreed: this is exactly how Yogananda pronounced the title: “Rajarshi”, not “Rajarsi” or “Rajasi”. Therefore, toward the end of his life, he started to use the spelling “Rajarshi”, because it better reflects the way Yogananda had pronounced the name. Otherwise people would forever mispronounce it.

At any rate, from 1951 to 1959, the SRF magazines, as well as the first version of *Rajasi Janakananda, A Great Western Yogi*, used the spelling “Rajasi”. Mr. Lynn himself signed his name like this, as one can see in that early book.



But when the Shankaracharya Krishna Tirtha, who was also a renowned Sanskrit scholar, came to visit SRF in 1958, the spelling was changed back to “Rajarsi”, following his advice.

For this article, “Rajarshi” has been chosen, simply because in this way we (hopefully) accustom our inner ear to hear how Yogananda pronounced this beloved name.

Let us now turn to look at Rajarshi’s **chronological biography**, beginning with his past lives.

Earlier incarnations

Yogananda often spoke like a lion, full of power. St. Lynn's voice, by contrast, was rather soft and gentle, as one can hear on two recorded talks published by SRF: *'Self-Realization: The Inner and the Outer Path*, and *In the Glory of the Spirit*. That gentle and royal saint reveals his character in other past incarnations.

Yogananda wrote to him: "You are the Hindu yogi of the Himalayas sent as an American **prince Maharaj Yogi**, to light the lamp of Yogoda in the groping hearts of our Western brothers. Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice!"

Rajarshi could apparently remember this life himself: "I am so happy that your memory as being one of the Himalayan saints of India is so splendidly awakened in you."*

Interestingly, in those lives as a yogi he had learned an advanced physical skill: if he ate a certain food that soured in his stomach, he could "get rid of it at will without any of the other foods that were in the stomach coming out, except the disagreeable one."* Yogananda explained that he "had practiced this exercise in his Indian incarnation and it was now natural to him in this life."*

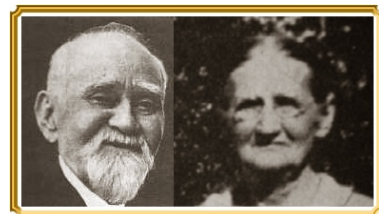
In addition, Rajarshi in a past life was one of the five heroic Pandava brothers of the *Mahabharata*, when Yogananda was incarnated as Arjuna. "He was one of the twin brothers, the positive twin, **Nakula**. He was my favorite brother and I loved him more than anyone else. I was also his Guru."*

Yogananda also informed him: "Not once, but *many times*, you were in India."*

Possibly one of these incarnations was as a woman. This would explain his behavior as a small child. Durga Mata writes: "Little Jimmy was a very sensitive child. In 1953, his sister told me, 'Jimmy was more like a little girl than a boy'....[He] wore dresses and long hair up to the age of six."*

Childhood and youth

Rajarshi was born on May 5, 1892 in Archibald, Louisiana. He grew up in a poor farming family. His father Jesse W. Lynn (Apr. 3, 1853 – Aug. 1, 1945) and his mother Salethia J. Archibald (Feb. 13, 1855 - Sep. 16, 1943) had six children: Robert Hearsey; Mary Elisabeth; Velar Frank; James Jesse (St. Lynn); Josie Estelle; Eugene Matthew.



They were blessed parents. Yogananda wrote to Rajarshi in 1945: "Your father and mother will find redemption through your good karma, inheriting your spiritual, imperishable riches."*

At any rate, little "Jimmy", as he was called, grew up on a farm, milking cows, churning butter, picking cotton, and the like. He sold their butter to stores nearby, which was their only income. "The family rarely had enough money to buy fruit and fresh vegetables."*

Being a reincarnated saint, he must have had profound inner experiences already as a child. However, since he was a silent and withdrawn man, he never shared them.

Jimmy felt a deep urge for education and started school at the early age of five. He was poor, so naturally in the course of his childhood, he was always on the lookout to earn money. He did various jobs like hauling a carload of bricks for six miles, earning \$3 for the whole job.*



When he turned 14 (see photo), in spite of his yearning for education, he left school to find work. In May 1906, he found a job in the town of Mangham, Louisiana, at the railroad station. His duties were to **sweep the station**, learn **telegraphic**, and handle the incoming and outgoing freight. He now earned \$15 a month.*

Already a few months later, in October 1906, he was offered the job of assistant agent at Oak Ridge, L.A., a position that paid a proud \$35 a month.* Quite a lot for a poor boy!

Between the ages of 15-17, from spring 1907-1909, he worked at the terminal at Ferraday, another nearby town. Now his remarkable income had grown to \$63 a month.*

In spring 1909 (see photo), he started work as a clerk at *Missouri Pacific*, first in Moberly, then in Kansa City, until October 1910, when he found work at the accounting department of the *Bell Telephone Company*.* By now he was 18 years of age.

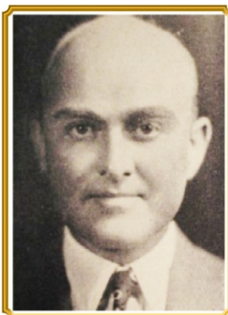


At that time he was finally able to continue his **education**: he worked hard during the day and studied just as hard at night, at the *Kansas City School of Law*. Mr. Lynn was an outstanding, exceptionally brilliant student: in 1912, aged 20, even before he had completed his law course, he was admitted to the bar. Finally, when he was 24, he passed the state examination **with the highest grade on record upto that time**. Mr. Lynn graduated with highest honors, winning several scholarships and other prizes.*

He was a mathematical genius: “Mr. Lynn had a tremendous memory, especially for numerical figures. He could add a long column of figures just as fast as passing a pencil up the line of figures.”*

In January 1914, aged 22, he started to work with *Smith & Brodie, Accountants*, and remained with them until May 1917, when he was 25.* It as then that his great opportunity came.

Mr. Lynn was hired by *U. S. Epperson* (fire insurance) and because of his brilliance soon became the manager of the company. “Mr. Lynn worked day and night for a long time.” He handled millions of dollars. Now he earned \$5,000 a year.*



In 1921(see photo) came the decisive moment: Mr. Epperson decided to sell his company. Courageously, Mr. Lynn offered to buy it. It was an immensely risky enterprise: he had to take out a huge loan. In this way he became the owner and President of *U.S. Epperson*.*

Rajarshi worked tirelessly. In 1927 he also bought a ranch of citrus fruits consisting of 500 acres. In addition, in 1933, he bought an oil well at a high price, which turned out to be another huge success.*

Marriage

Let's step backwards for a moment, to look at another aspect of Rajarshi's life: marriage. On 14 Oct 1913 in Kansas City, he married **Freda Josephine Prill** (Dec. 12, 1894 - Dec. 31, 1968). He was 21, she 18. (In Durga Mata's book and in various articles, her name is given as "Frieda".)



Marriage, however, was not a happy affair for him. It was quite tough. Frieda was known for her tongue-lashing and uncontrolled temper.

Durga Mata explains the situation: "Within a year of their marriage she suffered a major operation, which prevented her from having children. She continued to be both **mentally and physically unwell**. Mr. Lynn's social position grew, but society did not accept Frieda into their circles, and this deeply embittered her. Mr. Lynn did not attend many social functions to avoid embarrassment from her actions. She would have **such violent fits of jealousy** if either man, woman, or child looked at him. Her actions caused him much mental agony."* Still, his gentle heart must have deeply loved her, anyway.

Rajarshi did what he could to please her. Official data show that he was issued a passport in 1925 for the purpose of a "pleasure trip on 14 March to **Great Britain, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Italy**." In 1929, documents show that they visited **Havana, Cuba**, by airplane. These were the years when airplane travel had just started in the USA.



Frieda had all the luxuries, including several servants. She especially loved horse-riding (see photo). Documents however show that she was "later thrown from one of her horses and became paralysed for the rest of her life."

She studied **Yogananda's lessons for four years**, but then grew jealous, turning vehemently against him, "and would violently react to the very mention of his name". "Therefore, Mr. Lynn silently contacted Master and stopped mentioning his name before her."* Frieda, in other words, **knew nothing about her husbands' continued connection with Yogananda**. He had to hide it, in order to spare himself from her ire.

"The secret was kept so well that Frieda Lynn did not know he was still connected with Master or SRF until the 1954 publicity of the million-dollar gift to Self-Realization Fellowship, at which time Eugene Lynn [their nephew, and successor of Rajarshi's business] reported to Rajasi and myself, 'Aunt Frieda sure **raised the roof** over the publicity of your giving that money to SRF.'"

Yogananda revealed why St. Lynn attracted such an ill-tempered wife: it was to learn patience. Rajarshi "graduated from this lesson before leaving this mundane world."* He used to be highly critical of devotees who made a wrong move. However, he "became very tolerant as he progressed on the spiritual path. That is the reason, Master told me, why he attracted a **mentally and physically invalid wife**: to learn patience, and he surely did."*

In fact he describes his former lack of patience in a colourful way: "Before I met Master, I

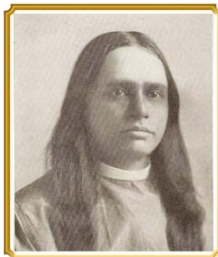
was an **extremely nervous person**, and I would get **irritated** at the drop of the hat. Would you believe, looking at me today, that I was so **quick-tempered** that when I played golf and missed hitting the ball, I would throw my sticks up the tree and walk away.”*

Meeting Yogananda

Let’s again step backward in time, to the period just before Rajarshi and Yogananda met. Financially the Master was going through an immensely troubled time: he “struggled through the depression years of 1930, 1931.”* In those two years “no one received a salary.” The *East-West* magazine couldn’t be published anymore. Durga Mata further reports: “Mt. Washington was heavily in debt and had many mouths to feed. Master had campaign and travel expenses to meet. The work was **again at a standstill.**”*

Daya Mata even recounts that in those years the Guru was “trying to keep his work **from total collapse.**”

He deeply prayed for help. “His constant prayer was that God would send him a male disciple who would be wealthy, honest, kind, and above all who would have a deep desire and love to consciously contact God.”*

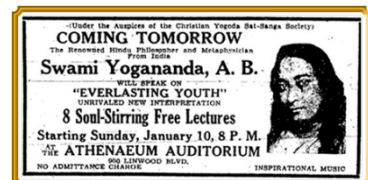


Added to that, another situation was weighing on Yogananda: he “bore a deep love for Dhirananda, a disciple he had trained in India and brought to this country to help him with his SRF work in America. In the summer of 1929, Master was deeply hurt when Dhirananda, whom he loved so dearly, turned from love and struck out independently and finally left the religious life to marry. Master went to Mexico to forget, and we thought **he would never come back.** But the Lord mended Master’s wounded heart. Then he composed the chant, ‘My Lord I Will Be Thine Always.’ He came back to take personal charge of the headquarters, and he often said that the Lord brought him back, because the Lord had a little boy hidden in Kansas City, in the form of Rajasi Janakananda, for him to love a million times more than he could love Dhirananda. One who never disappointed him either in action, deed, or thought, one to whom he could outwardly express his love and receive love in return.”*

On the other side, Rajarshi too was getting inwardly ready for their encounter. In those years, from about 1930, he had already become a **vegetarian** and had **been studying Hindu philosophy** under a teacher called Dr. Gyani. By now he was also living a life of **celibacy.***

In November 1931, Yogananda met that teacher in Salt Lake City. During their conversation, Dr. Gyani mentioned Mr. Lynn’s name. Yogananda recounts: “When I heard that name, **my heart leaped with joy.** I felt I will have to meet this soul someday.”*

That blessed day finally came! Yogananda’s campaign in Kansas City started on January 10, 1932, in the *Athenaeum Auditorium* (see photo). Rajarshi, aged 39, had an inner urge to go and hear him. “The first night Frieda opposed my going, but the second night I made up my mind whether she objected or not, I was going to attend those lectures. She would not let me go alone, so she and her friend accompanied me.”*



He was in bad shape. With all the intense stress of being a manager, he was almost a nervous wreck: “I couldn’t sit or keep my body and especially my hands still, not even for a moment.”* His experience was completely life-transforming: “On the second night of the class, I became aware that **I was sitting upright, my spine straight and I was absolutely motionless.** I looked down at my hands, which were so restlessly moving before and which were now **perfectly still.**”* Then he had a mystical experience. “Marvelling at this great stillness I felt, I looked up at the platform. I saw surrounding Master’s body a **beautiful blue light which almost enveloped the whole stage.**”*

The reawakening of the inner saint had started.

After a few nights of lectures, Yogananda sent his secretary, Miss Marquart, to see Mr. Lynn at his office. Mr. Lynn immediately asked her for an interview with the Master, which was readily given.

Finally they met again in person, “after incarnations of separation.”* It was a glorious reunion of deepest soul-friends. Seeing Rajarshi for the first time, Yogananda “instantaneously recognized **his long-lost friend of the distant past.**”* Rajarshi, on the other hand, immediately understood who Yogananda was and “accepted him as his guru and implicitly trusted and **revered him as a Christ.**”*

The following mornings were unforgettable moments of an ever-new reunion. “Mr. Lynn went to Master’s apartment every day to meditate with Him before going to his office. It was on one of those occasions that Master privately gave Mr. Lynn the Kriya. Master touched Mr. Lynn’s forehead to show him the light.” Rajarshi recounts: “**I felt that my whole face was flushed with light.**”*

His ancient Indian habits surfaced strongly: “Mr. Lynn took fresh milk, cream and butter, fruit and vegetables as an offering at his guru’s feet.”*

The effect on him was immeasurable. SRF reports that already during their first meeting, he entered into *samadhi*. In a lecture, Yogananda stated that “the first day we met, he touched Christ Consciousness.”

During those blessed meetings, Rajarshi offered Yogananda a large donation. Later he paid off the entire mortgage for Mt. Washington and made many more crucial donations. He literally saved the Guru’s work. Yogananda’s gratitude was endless. He wrote to him: “Dear Beloved, you who have **saved** Master’s [Sri Yukteswar’s] and my work **from complete ruination...**”*

After their first meeting

After their blissful reunion, St. Lynn returned to his intense business life. Shown here is a photo of his office building. He developed a marvellous strategy to keep up his meditations in spite of all his responsibilities: at home he couldn’t meditate as conditions “were not favourable.” Therefore he went to his office early. There he closed his door and left a note with the secretary: **‘I am in conference. Please do not disturb.’** In this way he meditated daily until **10am**, being “in conference with God.”



It was one year before he was able to meet Yogananda again.



On January 14, 1933, he visited Mt. Washington for the first time. The photo here shows that blessed moment. Yogananda was eagerly waiting: “Master got everyone on the job, to clean everything from tower to the basement. Master himself was outside with his broom sweeping the sidewalks.” Yogananda even “moved out of his own bedroom and slept in the library, so Mr. Lynn could use his quarters and bed. He cooked for him and watched over him like a doting mother.”*

Some months later they met again in Chicago, where Yogananda gave a lecture at the famous **World’s Fair**. But St. Lynn never enjoyed crowds: he came only to ecstatically meditate with his beloved Master.

Rajarshi came to visit Yogananda whenever he could, which was not often, unfortunately, for three reasons: first, he was an extremely busy man; secondly, his wife Frieda was not to find out; third, his earlier connection with the Hindu teacher Dr. Gyani had created “disastrous reactions” from business associates. Therefore “Paramhansaji encouraged Mr. Lynn to follow him silently and not to mention his name audibly, saying that he would do everything in his power to protect Mr. Lynn’s secrecy and position.”*

India

In 1935 Rajarshi financed Yogananda’s return trip to India. “Master’s joy knew no bounds for at last, he was going to see his beloved Master, and father, and blessed India again.”*

Rajarshi came to visit SRF sporadically: He “only visited Mt. Washington four or five times during Master’s absence.”*

The heavenly surprise

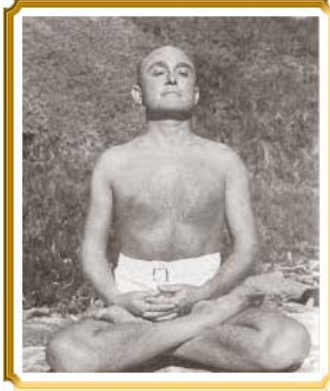
Yogananda finally returned. In late October 1936, his ship *Bremen* docked in New York. From there he drove to Boston, to visit his longstanding friend and disciple Dr. Lewis. The next destination was Kansas City, to meet his beloved spiritual heir, St. Lynn.*

Returning to California, he received the most beautiful surprise of his life: the Encinitas hermitage. It was Rajarshi’s gift of love to him. Yogananda writes in his *Autobiography of a Yogi*: “First speechlessly, then with ‘Oh’s!’ and ‘Ah’s!’, finally with man’s insufficient vocabulary of joy and gratitude, I examined the ashram—sixteen unusually large rooms, each one charmingly appointed.... Was dream ever more concrete?”



Rajarshi had his own apartment there. At that time, in early December 1936, Yogananda appointed Durga Mata to take care of his personal welfare whenever he came for a visit.

Daya Mata recounts that at such times “we young disciples” (she was 22 years younger than Rajarshi) devotionally observed this blessed scene at Encinitas: “**Every evening at sunset** they could be seen **walking hand in hand like two small children**, up and down the flagstone path on the lawn in front of the Hermitage. Their eyes would be shining with the love and friendship they shared with God and with each other.”



Yogananda also often went down to the beach with Rajarshi and a group of disciples. Durga Mata recounts how in 1937, the Master sat on a large stone beside Rajarshi. He touched him on the chest, and Rajarshi went into *samadhi*, remaining in that consciousness for a long time. Here is a marvellous *samadhi*-photo, taken in 1937.

Samadhi was actually quite normal for him, whether sitting, floating, or lying. Swami Kriyananda writes: “St. Lynn, as he was still known until near the end of Yogananda’s life, would often be seen lying on the grass in *samadhi* (superconscious ecstasy). At other times he would go down to the beach and out into the water, where he floated on his back and thought of himself as floating in the Spirit. The Master always appointed someone on those occasions to be down on the beach with him, lest the ocean currents sweep this foremost disciple of his out to sea.” (*Parambanwa Yogananda: A Biography*)

He was a God-filled saint through and through. Yogananda didn’t want his disciples ever “to think of him as a **money bag instead of the saint that he really is.**”*

In fact, though his business accomplishments were stellar, his enormous spiritual achievements were far more important, as Yogananda often explained. The main blessing Rajarshi brought to Yogananda’s work was *not* his money. Far from it. Once the Guru and Meera Mata were walking in the garden in Encinitas. Several yards ahead of them they saw Rajarshi sitting on the lawn in profound meditation. The Master whispered, “Let us walk quietly now, so as not to disturb him.” When they were out of earshot, he continued, “You have **no idea what great blessings are drawn to the work** every time one of its followers goes as deep in meditation as Rajarshi does.”

His character

All saints also have an outward personality, sometimes a surprising one. Durga Mata in her 15 years of service to him came to know everything about his character:

He was “**honest to the core**”.* His main rules for business success, in fact, were these four: 1. Hard work. 2. Honesty. 3. Whatever you do, do well. 4. Prepare yourself for the future.

His attitude toward money was particular: on the one hand he was “**Scottish**” and “**economical**”, on the other hand he was **extremely generous**, and also liked to buy only **things of quality**. “He did not mind paying a high price for something good, but he was very economical on other things.”*

Great **generosity** was his hallmark. It extended beyond his Master. He donated fifteen acres of land to Kansas City, which became part of Swope Park. He also donated the large Epperson House, which he had inherited, to the *University of Missouri Kansas City*.

Saints too have their normal share of peculiarities. Rajarshi for example was “**meticulously clean**” and desired absolute cleanliness. His apartment and car had to be spotless. He also was **extremely sensitive to noise and smell**, and strongly disliked any kind of ugliness, in his environment and in words.

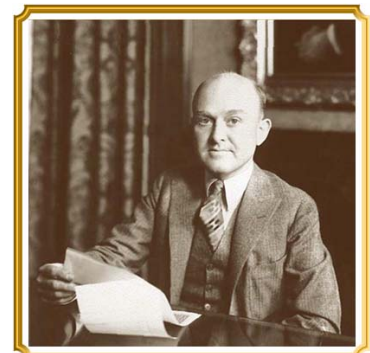
He loved nature and the outdoors, going inside only if necessary. Yogananda wrote him: “Encinitas is your sanctum on your green grass altar. You, God, Gurus, and sunshine have kept you ever happy, a **true God nature boy**.”* He often called him, “my nature boy”.* For health reasons he was “**very strict in his eating habits**,”* eating only wholesome food, vegetarian, natural, lightly cooked, without spices. This is amazing: “He chewed his food so well it would sometimes take him from **one and a half to two hours** to eat his meal.”*

A main characteristic was his **very strong will and determination**. “He used that ability to correct wherever he saw or felt the **slightest discrepancy in himself**.”*

Most of all, he was extremely silent and withdrawn, speaking little. Swami Kriyananda experienced him in this way (*The New Path*): “I found him **gentle, soft-spoken, and remarkably humble**. He seemed completely **dispassionate, centered in the inner Self**. As Master introduced each of us to him, St. Lynn smiled sweetly but said little. I discovered in time that he took almost **no interest in small talk**. A self-made man of considerable worldly means, he referred hardly ever to his outer life. For all we heard from him personally, he might have been a man of few achievements. Virtually his **sole topics of conversation were God, Guru, and meditation**. Silently he would come up to us whenever we met him on the grounds, and bless us. He might then offer us a few words of spiritual advice or encouragement. His mind was always inwardly focused on God.”

First test: business

When he had to return to Kansas City, was life always smooth sailing, filled only with sweet ecstasy? Hardly. Business is often a battle. This was especially the case in 1937, when “his financial and business difficulties forced him to remain in Kansas City more than he wished. His visits to the hermitage were few.”* He remained little. “When he was able to come, it was only for a week or at most two weeks.”*



1938 especially was a time of great testing. Yogananda wrote to him how he, as a devotee, should meet the tests of life: “I am so sorry my little One is tossed on the sea of trials. No matter how many trials and how hard the winds strike you, know you are drifting toward the shore of Infinite happiness. The strong winds of trial are **His Hidden Caresses** to take you home and make your **footsteps firmer** as you are heading homeward. Trials indicate **God is testing your strong spirituality** and deep attainment in Him. Do not take the trials seriously even if they look serious. Just **wait with an inward smile** and surely the present test and their attending trials will blow over.”*

Things indeed got better over time: “But as the years rolled by, his business improved and he had better men to whom to entrust his business during his absence, and it made it possible for him to come more often and for longer periods.”* His nephew **Eugene Lynn**, who lovingly regarded Rajarshi as a father, started to work under him. In 1949 Rajarshi appointed him as Vice-President of his Epperson Company and as his business successor.

Second test: a life-threatening illness

Rajarshi had to face a second major test in the spring of 1946, when he suffered an “**almost fatal illness.**”^{*} It happened while he was at his citrus grove in Texas. Yogananda too suffered greatly: “It has been a terrible test for me too, for I have always felt I would not like to live without you. I have always wanted to go before you.”^{*} In May, Rajarshi came to the hermitage to convalesce, remaining “for the whole summer.”^{*}

As often happens, major tests change our lives, sometimes radically. Rajarshi now completely shifted his lifestyle. He spent the greater part of his year in Encinitas: “After May, 1946, Rajasi spent at least **four to five months in the winter months** at Encinitas, and **three months** or more **in the summer months.**”^{*} That means seven to eight months away from his business in Kansas City. He worked from Encinitas. Yogananda too, during these final years of his life, spent much time in Encinitas, concentrating on his writings: therefore they saw each other frequently now. In addition, in 1945, Dr. Lewis had come to live in Encinitas. Also Sister Gyanamata lived there. **What an amazing Encinitas-team!**

Third test: the dark night of the soul

But still, was life only a bed of roses? It never is. Rajarshi went through a third great test, this time on the spiritual level. It was his **dark night of the soul.** Swami Kriyananda recounts the story: it happened just at the point before he attained the highest enlightenment. Suddenly everything became dark. All the light he had



been seeing during the years of meditation, and also his *samadhi*, were gone. Now he didn't see *anything* anymore. There was a strong temptation to disbelieve in everything, but he just kept trying. After days of darkness, suddenly he saw **a little point of light.** Gradually that point of light came closer and closer until it became Master, then Sri Yukteswar, then Lahiri Mahasaya, then Babaji, then finally, **he merged into the Infinite.**

That was Rajarshi's glorious moment of final enlightenment, his ultimate Oneness: bliss absolute, God-union, eternal freedom, unchangeable *nirbikalpa samadhi*.

Yogananda's passing

In August 1951, he took his monastic vows with Yogananda, receiving an orange robe and his spiritual name. Both Yogananda and Rajarshi “melted in the joy of the occasion.”^{*} The Master then publically announced him as his successor, as the next president of SRF.

However, a heavy premonition weighed on the Master. He often said that Rajarshi's life “was in grave danger and that Satan was trying to destroy his body.”^{*} In October 1951, he wrote to him: “Most blessed Beloved .1: I pictured myself and, God forbid, yourself, away from this earth, and watching what SRF Board would be doing and how it would be able to carry on the work of SRF.”^{*} A month later he wrote: “I am trying to give part of my life to prolong yours.”^{*}

Not long afterwards, on March 9, 1952, Yogananda passed away at the Biltmore Hotel, LA. Rajarshi was not present. Durga Mata intuited that this was Divine Mother's wish, in order not to hold the Master back through his immense love for his “Little One”.

As the new president, Rajarshi conducted the last rites for Yogananda at Mt. Washington, on March 11.

Presidency 1952-1955

Rajarshi was deeply revered by Yogananda's devotees. Everyone knew that they were in the presence of a true saint, in fact, of the "king of saints." He was a highly worthy successor.

His presidency was marked by two outstanding factors: on the one hand, his **ecstatic oneness** with Yogananda and blissful visions; on the other hand, his immediate and increasing **illness**.

Yogananda's premonition unfortunately came true very soon: only one week after the funeral services, the first symptom of Rajarshi's illness appeared: during a business call from Kansas City "he could not understand what the person was telling him."^{*} It was not because of any bad connection. Durga Mata felt "**a dark misgiving cloud** hovering over my head and the whole apartment."

He gave a talk in the SRF Church in Hollywood on April 7, 1952, during the celebration of the first anniversary of India Hall. 250 SRF students attended.

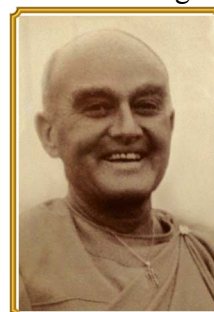
Soon afterwards he left the headquarters at Mt. Washington and "went **back to Kansas City in May and came back in July** to attend our convocation."^{*}

At that convocation he gave a Kriya initiation to 400 devotees. But he was already weakened: "During his speech at the garden party, he could not speak and had to excuse himself."^{*} Therefore he left Mt. Washington again, experiencing increased symptoms: "After we got back to the hermitage [Encinitas], he began increasingly getting worse."^{*}

Inwardly, however, he was soaring in bliss.

First operation

On August 13, 1952, it was discovered that he had a brain tumor. The very next day Rajarshi had his first operation. He had to stay in hospital for one month.



The spiritual effect was immense. Yogananda fully entered into him. Durga Mata relates that afterwards he was "constantly amazed at the absence of feeling that he was in his own body. He so very often exclaimed, 'I tell you it is **not me in this body, I died on the operating table**, it is Master who is occupying this body, now I feel his body swaying in mine, I feel his head in my head.'"^{*}

On September 28, he repeated this sensation to a group of disciples: "It is not I. I have completely lost the consciousness of my own self. It is all Master. Master taking, Master walking, and Master speaking, because Master is everywhere. I died when I went on the operating table. It is he who is occupying this body now."^{*}

The disciples indeed deeply felt the truth of his words. Swami Kriyananda for example relates: "After Master's passing, Rajarshi Janakananda, as we knew him then, seemed almost to *become* Master." (*The New Path*)

His inner visions were ongoing. He was always protected, in divine hands. On August 22, he told Durga Mata: "I have seen Master from the heart up, but this time I saw him **in a**

very brilliant light and in it, I saw Master's entire form. There was only a very thin veil between him and complete materialization in human form."*

He also said: "I see Sri Yukteswarji a lot."*

He returned to Encinitas. Fire broke out and damaged much of it. Rajarshi therefore stayed in Borrego, on a farm which he had rented in 1951 upon Yogananda's advice, and which he "loved so well." Durga Mata took care of him constantly: "I had to drive back and forth five days a week to La Jolla for his treatments."* The last treatment was on December 24, 1952.

Inwardly, however, his blissful inner communion increased. In March 1953 he said: "Sri Yukteswarji **was with me all day in a great brilliant light.**"*

On May 5, his birthday, he received a special gift: "This morning I was awakened by singing and **the Masters were dancing around me.** I could not understand why the celebration, when the thought came to me that it was my birthday and the Masters were singing and dancing around, in celebration."*

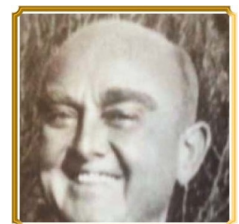
On May 31, 1953, he "**went back to Kansas City** for the first time following his operation." He "came back the latter part of June and spent the summer at the hermitage [Encinitas]."*

As we see, he **hardly spent any time at the Mt. Washington headquarters.** He was able to direct SRF less and less. Swami Kriyananda, whom Rajarshi had appointed as the head of the Center Department, describes how this situation left a vacuum in the organization: "In 1953 Rajarshi Janakananda became seriously ill with a tumor of the brain, which incapacitated him from addressing the problems of the work. No one felt competent, meanwhile, to make major decisions regarding any department." (*A Place Called Ananda*).

Daya Mata during that time was making sure that SRF continued to function smoothly, being in charge at Mt. Washington.

In July 1953, Rajarshi returned to Mt. Washington and "attended to the initiation of the convocation of that year." Blessing the new *kriyabans*, however, "was a long time to stand. He suddenly sat down and he had to leave the room."*

He went back to Borrego for the winter of 1953. On December 6, he said: "I don't feel myself at all. It's just Master. When his joy comes, I cry."*



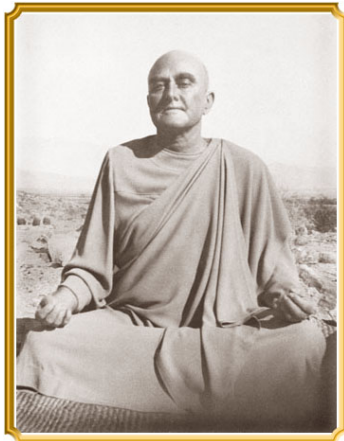
On December 23, he returned to Encinitas for Christmas, to meditate with the monks. On December 24, he meditated with the nuns at Mt. Washington. The next day, he presided over the Christmas banquet.

On January 5, 1954, Yogananda's birthday, he had a most special vision: "I awoke around two or three o'clock in the morning and I saw **Lahiri Mahasaya in the greatest blaze of light I have ever seen.** Then one by one, **Sri Yukteswarji, Babaji, and then Master.** Master lifted me **out of the body** and we floated together over many gatherings of people, even to India. Master blessed each group as we floated over them. We were not walking, but floating overhead. It seemed as though Master wanted all the people to **know that I was with him.** I was with Master a long time from waking to 9 a.m. This is the longest time I have been with him this way. Master is very busy there, just as much so as he was here, helping people

in these other spheres, teaching them the way of salvation and how to achieve Self-realization themselves.”*

In March 1954, at Encinitas, he received the YSS vice-President Prakhas Das and Swami Atmananda, who was in charge at the Dakshineswar center in India. The latter took his Swami vows with Rajarshi. “They remained at the hermitage for a few days.”*

In April, St. Lynn again shared his blissful union: “Oh, Master is with me all the time. He is happy, happy. He is in me. He is so happy. He is nothing but joy, joy all the time.”*



Second operation

On April 18, 1954, Rajarshi left for **Kansas City one last time**. But already after a few days he returned as he felt the “symptoms of the tumor returning.”* His second operation was hurriedly arranged for April 26, 1954, after which he had to stay in the hospital for a month, until May 22.

Afterwards he came to live, for just one week, at Mt. Washington, where doctors could visit him. The building’s “tower” had been especially prepared as his new living quarters.

During that time, he told Swami Kriyananda: “Master has a great work to do through you, Walter, and he will give you the strength to do it.” (*The New Path*)

After that week at Mt. Washington he “returned to Encinitas for the summer.”*

In 1953, he had already said: “I made arrangements for SRF to be the beneficiaries of my life insurance of half a million. By the time I am through doing things for SRF, it will have from **three to four, yes even six million dollars** in assets to its credit, that should please Master.”* Oh yes!

In Summer 1954, “he was through” fulfilling his divine destiny of ensuring SRF’s financial security. It ended up being around six million. Today, this would be the equivalent of **57 million dollars**: a veritable fortune. SRF had become a wealthy organization.

Back at home, his wife was furious about it and “raised the roof.” Rajarshi “never went back to Kansas City after that incident, therefore sparing him of Frieda’s verbal reactions.”*

From “the latter part of September” he returned to Borrego “for the Winter.”* Durga Mata was with him all the time. By this time “he was **not able to feed himself**, for his right arm was weaker.”*

Third operation

He was operated for the third time on October 12, 1954, and again had to spend one month in hospital. After the operation he returned to Borrego. This third operation “left him noticeably weaker.” “We took him for rides down the road in his **wheelchair and helped him walk**.” By January his strength had diminished even further: “We raised him, and **helped him stand** as often as he could be strong enough to do so.”*

His passing

Rajarshi's physical situation deteriorated: "He **could not speak** in those last days." Durga Mata asked him, "Did you see Master?" He nodded. "What does he say?" "In answer, tears came to his sad, deep blue eyes, lowering his eyes and head with an expression that Master had told him **that he was soon going to him and leaving us.**"*

The doctor diagnosed that the tumor would not be the cause of death, but that it "brings on a disease in which the lungs fill up."* Breathing becomes impossible (possibly it was *pneumocystis pneumonia*, as SRF writes that he died of pneumonia).

The fatal day finally came. Durga Mata writes: "Luckily, Daya, Mrinalini, and Sailasuta had come for the weekend. None of us left his bedside that night. I sat by his side and held his good hand in mine to the end. I could feel the life force leaving his hand and feet. I kept my eyes glued to his face and eyes. As I was doing so, I could see his eyes getting dimmer and a **white light was around his head... The light kept getting brighter around his head.**" "At 4 a.m. Sunday, February 20, 1955, the breath did not come back."*

In that state, immersed in the divine light, this great saint left his body. He was only 62.

It was a major loss, of course. Swami Kriyananda wrote: "Rajarshi's untimely death in 1955 came as a **sad disappointment** to all of us." Durga Mata was more direct: it was "the **second greatest shock of our lives** [after Yogananda's passing]."*

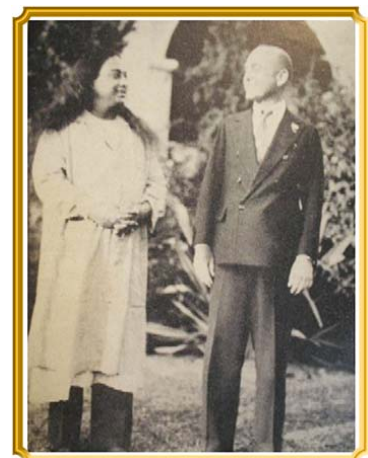
The disciples knew very well that Yogananda had greatly feared his passing and that, in January 1952, he had told Durga Mata: "Tell him how this work would become **an orphan** if he and I would both be gone."*

Rajarshi's body was buried in the *Forest Hills Cemetery*, Kansas City. We may ask: why not at *Forest Lawn* in Los Angeles, next to Yogananda's body, like so many other close disciples? It was because of his wife Frieda, who "would not hear of it."*

But what does it matter? Rajarshi now was blissfully reunited with his beloved Master. Again they can blissfully walk hand in hand, as they had always done here on earth.

In Heaven, their divine love and friendship continue to shine. As Yogananda had written him in a poem:

Walk sacred, bright-faced soul,
scattering God from your heart's chalice to all
Your happiness, my happiness;
your joy, my joy ever;
Your smile, my smile in God forever.
We met before, we meet again,
on earth's tumultuous main.*



Rajarshi, like all true saints, is always completely available for all sincere devotees. He blesses us from heaven whenever we care to ask, and he does so, of course...

hand in hand with Yogananda.