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# NEW MEXICO HISTORICAL REVIEW

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## SHALAM: FACTS VERSUS FICTION

*By* JONE HOWLIND

(As the editor responsible for the acceptance of articles for publication, we have been mortified to learn that last year an article which was in considerable part fiction—or shall we say “creative writing”—was accepted by us in the guise of bona fide history. We are glad, therefore, to be able to give our readers a second article on Shalam, sent us by one who was so intimately identified with the founders of that little colony. “Jone Howlind” is a penname, we are informed, which Miss Howland assumed when she joined the newspaper world in El Paso.—L. B. B.)

RECENTLY an article on Shalam was brought to my attention which appeared in the NEW MEXICO HISTORICAL REVIEW (April 1944), and was titled: “The Land of Shalam: Utopia in New Mexico” by Julia Keleher. As the article was almost completely unrelated to fact, and, so it seemed to me, quite malicious, my first reaction was to ignore it. Then I realized that possibly many fine, sincere people might have read it, believed it true and accepted its wild statements and prevarications. To such people, I address this reply and corrections, and state some simple facts about Shalam; Dr. John B. Newbrough, my father; his wife, my mother; and Andrew M. Howland who later became my step-father.

Newbrough was born on a farm in Ohio, June 5, 1828. He worked his way through medical school by living in the home of a dentist and assisting him. He liked this work and soon combined the two courses so that he was graduated both an M.D. and a D.D.S. When the gold rush of 1849 came, he joined the procession and went to California. Suc-

cessful here, he went to the gold fields of Australia. Between these two ventures he made something like \$50,000. After a trip around the world, he settled in New York City, took up the practice of dentistry, and lived there until he went to New Mexico in 1884. He invested his money in New York real estate and built up a large and successful practice.

We can tell a good deal about a man from the books he owned and read. As he marked his books, making copious notations, it is still easier to follow the trend of his mind. Among his many books, history, science, sociology — are Agassiz, Humboldt, Hume, Darwin, and Draper, to mention a few.

While it may cause a raising of eyebrows now to learn that Newbrough became interested in spiritualism, it is only because people today do not realize the tremendous sweep over the whole civilized world spiritualism made during the middle of the last century. In Italy, Germany, France, England, the foremost scientific men not only engaged in investigating it, they openly endorsed it. So in investigating spiritualism, Newbrough was not only swept along with the masses of ordinary folk, he was in the company of the greatest minds of the day. In 1881, he produced by automatic control a book called *Oahspe*. For this work he has been written up by the British and American Psychical Research Societies. *Oahspe* has attracted eminent thinkers and scholars, and it has also attracted people of low mental order and countless so-called cranks. We can say the same thing for the Bible.

The *Oahspe* plan for bettering society is this: that believers shall gather orphan and castaway babies, go to a remote, isolated spot, found a colony and here raise these children. These people are to care for, raise and educate these children, teach them trades or useful occupations, teach them to be co-operative, loving and helpful towards one another, raise them on a strict vegetarian diet and give them strict religious training in the worship of their heavenly Father.

For something so simple as this, would-be writers have heaped vitriol, calumny, and lies upon lies on Newbrough,

his wife and Howland, not only while they lived, but even today after Newbrough has been dead fifty-four years! World renowned swindlers have been more gently dealt with and had greater respect shown them. Indeed, even murderers who have committed atrocities upon the dead bodies of their victims have never come in for the spleen, vituperation, malice, slander, rankling with scorn and hate, that have been heaped upon all of them, and especially Newbrough. When I think of this and then the kind of man Newbrough really was, I am reminded of another who went around doing good. Before they nailed Him to a cross, He said: "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (St. John, C. 15, vs. 18-19)

There are two things Newbrough did while he was practicing dentistry in New York which show something of his character. At this time Goodyear held the patents on a process used in rubber plates for false teeth. This made the plates expensive and in turn worked a hardship on new dentists or dentists who had a poor practice. Newbrough had a lucrative enough practice so that it didn't hurt him, but he didn't like what it did to others. Being a chemist, he began experimenting and finally produced a plate as good or better than Goodyear's. Goodyear promptly sued him, claiming that Newbrough had infringed the Goodyear patent. Newbrough lost the suit in the lower court and carried it to the higher court where he won the suit. He was therefore entitled to patent his invention, and doubtless he could have made a comfortable sum. The suit had cost him \$20,000, and it would seem that at least he could have held the patent long enough to reimburse himself what the suit had cost him. He did neither. Having won the suit, he gave his invention to the dental profession.

He had been impressed by the long, hard struggle a young dentist had to make before he began to make a living. Newbrough worked out a plan, and though it was a small plan, through it he helped dozens of young dentists get

started. He would employ a graduate dentist in his office. Here the young man gained experience. When Newbrough was satisfied that he possessed the right character and ability, he would open an office, furnish and equip it, pay the rent on it and put this young man in at a salary. After he had built up a self-supporting practice, Newbrough turned it all over to him. In this way, he helped dozens of young dentists get started and eased them through the starvation period of the beginner professional man.

But though he was helping people the best he could, though he had a good practice, he saw things which marred his happiness. As he went to and fro on New York streets on winter nights, he saw hundreds of children shivering in thin, scanty clothes, dashing along icy pavements—news-boys selling papers for a few pennies at all hours of the night. The wrongness of it, the pity of it hurt him to the depths of his great heart. I feel quite sure that it was these pitiful little children, the plight of under-privileged children to be seen on every hand in large cities, that finally decided Newbrough to start Shalam colony. He used to say to my mother—"if we could only take ten or twelve children who have no chance at all and give them a real home, our love and care!"

The hocus-pocus yarn that Newbrough was blindfolded to find Shalam is purely a Munchausen fabrication. He searched for fully a year before he found the spot that suited him. Learning that he was hunting for such a place, people from various parts of the United States, some friends, some strangers, wrote him suggesting places, and if they seemed at all suitable, he went to see them. He made many fruitless trips and traveled over much of the country before he finally found the desired spot. This was by accident. His train was taking him to California and passed through the Mesilla Valley. On his return he stopped off, and not knowing anyone personally, he hunted up a brother Mason. This man drove him up and down the valley. As they drove, Newbrough finally saw a place that enchanted him,—a wilderness nestling in a horseshoe bend of the Rio Grande, mountains close behind it, mountains to

the north, the beautiful stately Organ Mountains fifteen miles directly east. It was love at first sight—a love that lasted the rest of his life. There were 1200 acres in this bend—afterwards the river washed some of it away so that in the end there were only 900 acres. He then and there bought the entire 1200 acres paying all cash for it, and it was his own cash, not Howland's, nor contributions from any one else. Whatever he paid for it, it was too much, for none of it was irrigable as the Santa Fé railroad tracks separated this land from the irrigation canal, known as the Las Cruces ditch. The only other irrigation ditch lay still further east.

The gossip about Newbrough getting Howland to buy this land, the reference to the land in such glowing words as "fertile Mesilla Valley" definitely establish that such writers are either under forty years of age, or are newcomers to the Mesilla Valley. Old timers know that land in cultivation, close enough to one of the two ditches of that early day to be subject to irrigation, undependable though it was, was worth at the most about \$50 per acre. All other land was worthless. It was not until the Elephant Butte dam was assured (about 1906-7) that the sleeping Mesilla Valley awoke. In the 1880's even Las Cruces was but a village with not too many Americans. Until this dam was built, the Rio Grande was a fickle, treacherous stream—sometimes a raging torrent that flooded the valley, washed out railroad tracks, destroyed crops and brought ruin in its wake, at other times, it was a narrow stream too low to reach the mouth of either of the two ditches (the Las Cruces and Doña Ana) and for many months of the year, it was a dry, sandy road-bed. As no crops will grow in this Mesilla Valley without irrigation, it should not be hard to realize that even land which lay within reach of these ditches, with their undependable water supply, was not worth much, and land beyond these ditches was, from a commercial standpoint, worthless. Such land was Shalam land.

It is doubtful if Newbrough realized all this for it was covered with vegetation. The reason was that surrounded on three sides by the river that overflowed deeply into the land,

there was enough water to cause a heavy growth of cottonwood, scrub willow and tornilla on the fringe adjacent to the river while mesquite and other desert plants flourished on the center and higher portions of the land. It looked very beautiful and green so it is no wonder that Newbrough, an eastern man, little suspected that he was getting land on which no crops would grow without irrigation. However little he paid for it, he paid too much, but he was satisfied and never begrudged the price.

Newbrough was not a poor man except by comparison with Howland. To a man who had spent \$20,000 on a law suit and then had given the benefit of this away without even collecting the \$20,000, who had bought the dental equipment and set up in business dozens of young dentists, the few hundred dollars he had paid for Shalam was not a matter of great importance. It is quite likely that it cost more to equip one dental office than this land had cost.

In the fall of 1884, when I was eight months old, Newbrough brought my mother and me and some twenty-odd people down to New Mexico to the place which was to become Shalam. Due to the fact that it was not irrigable, the whole tract was a virgin wilderness—very beautiful, but inhabited by everything which terrifies women: skunks, wild-cats, various kinds of snakes, including the rattler, centipedes, scorpions, tarantulas, while all through the night the air was filled with the weird, plaintive howl of the coyote. My mother had never lived outside New York City and all the others had come from the well-settled regions of the south and east. This wilderness and its wild life must have been a harrowing experience for all. At first they lived in tents, cooking and eating outdoors. Newbrough built an outdoor oven of adobes in which some of the food was cooked (they baked bread here), while boiled food was cooked in kettles over fires. The men hauled the muddy river water by buckets and the women boiled this, settling it as best they could. This was all the drinking and wash water they had until they could dig a well. Altogether, life for them during these first months was as rugged and primitive as anything faced by any American pioneers. To

add to their discomfort, winter came on fast—winter that was cold enough to freeze water, and brought snow and icy winds.

These people worked. Self-preservation, if nothing else, attended to that. The man who drinks muddy river water will be in a hurry to dig a well. Lugging water from the river wasn't pleasant either. Life in a tent through a New Mexico winter was anything but a pleasant prospect. However, none of them knew how to build anything. So Newbrough hired Mexicans from Doña Ana (a Mexican settlement of about 300 people which lay about a mile and a half east of Shalam), and they came over, made adobes, and working with the colonists, built two two-room houses. Into these when they were finished went the women and children. These houses, poor little huts really, were, compared to the tents, snug and warm and comfortable. Their great drawback was that they swarmed with centipedes, and my mother was terrified that some would fall on me as I lay sleeping in my crib. All bedding had to be shaken at night before getting in to bed just in case a centipede might be lurking within the covers, and in the morning all clothing, including shoes, had to be examined for the same reason. Yet despite these hardships, perhaps because of them, that year seemed to be a happy year. The terrors, privations, the wind and coyotes howling outside, the eagerness to hurry and get a comfortable dwelling, drew them together in spirit as they sat huddled around the blazing fires in these little huts.

As soon as these were finished, work was begun on the big, main building which was to house them all—Fraternum. This was to be an immense house (something like forty rooms, Spanish Mission style built around a patio) and Newbrough knew that the unskilled, inexperienced colonists, regardless of willingness, would never get it done. Consequently he hired a crew of Mexicans and these together with the colonists rushed the building as fast as possible. By 1885 when Howland first came to Shalam, it was nearly completed and everyone had moved in.

Andrew M. Howland came to Shalam from Boston,



Mass., where he had been a successful wool merchant for years. Originally he came from New Bedford, Mass. and belonged to the famous Howland family. He was first cousin to Hetty Howland Robinson Green. The Howlands had made vast fortunes in the whaling business, and the Howland Islands in the Pacific were named after some member of this family. The statement that Howland had been in the coffee business, made by Miss Keleher, is as unrelated to fact as her other statements. No member of the Howland family had ever been in the coffee business. (She also stated that Newbrough came from Boston, another erroneous statement).

The muckrakers may be dismayed to learn that Howland never turned over any of his money to Newbrough! It is really quite amusing how defamers of Shalam and its founders have switched sides over the years. When Newbrough was alive, he was the big, black devil with pitchfork and cloven hoofs—Howland a vague, shadowy echo. But after Newbrough died, critics began to change their allegiance. They got off their old, faded hobby-horse, Hating Newbrough, and climbed on board the bright, shining new one—Hating Howland! Now Newbrough had become a simple prophet and sincere in his efforts to build what he thought was to be a better state of things, but calamity of calamities! This simple good man had died, and a wicked, scheming rich man had seized Newbrough's dream to build it into a monument to himself! However, now that both men are dead, they seem to have gone back to their first love, Hating Newbrough. This hobby-horse is a bit shop-worn, but they have brightened it up with a coat of paint, and seem very happy with it. In case anyone doesn't know, one story is that Newbrough was the schemer, Howland, the dupe. The other story is Newbrough was the victim, Howland the schemer. Take your choice. They can't both be right. These stories circulated by people who never knew either man and probably never knew anyone who knew either man, are a bit absurd to me, the daughter of Newbrough, the step-daughter of Howland. You see, young though I was, I can still remember what close good friends these two men were.

As to either man tricking the other, I think I have laid that ghost in my "Story of Shalam" (still in manuscript form) by showing chronologically what was each man's contribution in building Shalam.

In the old days, people used to send in clippings or papers containing these vituperative attacks, and believe it or not, Newbrough, Howland and my mother used to laugh over them! I can still see my father as he used to shake his head, smile and say—"let them have their fun." Miss Keleher's article shows no imagination. I think I qualify as an expert in making this statement for I have read attacks in which the imagination of the writer really reached the stratosphere.

Take the yarn, for example, about the little cellar Howland had built after Newbrough died. A reporter came up one day and asked to be shown around. So we showed him around. He was taken everywhere. He asked questions about everything. Seeing the little plot enclosed by a white fence, he asked about that. We told him it was the Shalam burial ground, that Newbrough himself was buried there. Well, he wandered around and finally came upon our cellar. Now Howland had grown up back east where houses had cellars in which food was stored, and he liked the idea. So he had had a small room built of brick, half below ground, half above. To add a touch of architecture to it, the front and back walls came up straight and stood above the roof. The roof was curved, made of cement. I confess it did look a little like a tomb. The reporter asked what it was, and we not only told him, but took him down inside to show him how cool and airy it was. He saw before him bins in which were such things as potatoes, onions, apples, etc. He said it was a very nice cellar and that it certainly was a good way to store such things. Then he went away and wrote the story of Shalam, and among other things he wrote that Howland had built a tomb for Newbrough right behind the kitchen door and that there Newbrough lay!

The next yarn was even more gruesome. Howland built a beautiful stone fountain in the center of our front lawn. This writer said that Howland, with malice aforethought,

had built the ever-spraying fountain above Newbrough's grave! He assured his readers very solemnly that we had buried Newbrough right on our front lawn! There was no excuse for such prevarications. Every visitor to Shalam saw the small cemetery and was told that Newbrough was buried there. I relate these stories to show that even when people knew the truth, they couldn't resist the temptation to distort it.

When Howland arrived in Shalam in 1885, he found the diet restricted in variety, though what they had was plentiful. This was partly due to their vegetarianism, and partly to the condition which prevailed at that date throughout the Southwest. There were no market gardens. Mexicans were poor gardeners and they grew what vegetables there were. If there were refrigerator cars, they didn't unload at Las Cruces. So the colonists lived on canned goods, beans, rice, potatoes, etc. The Mexicans introduced them to Mexican beans and taught them how to make chile and they liked these. About the first thing Howland did was to buy a carload lot of groceries and because he liked them and thought the colonists should have them, he added such things as olives, canned mushrooms, pressed dried fruit, apples, bananas, etc. etc. Then, although he had never done a day's work at manual labor, he rolled up his sleeves, supplied himself with cook books, and became cook! During the years that he cooked, there were all the way from five to forty people to be fed.

While Howland acted as cook, Newbrough busied himself with the carpenter work which still needed to be done in Fraternum. Some of the colonists helped him, others did nothing but sit around waiting for Howland's meals. A change had come over the colony. The driving urge of self-preservation which had sent them hurrying to build shelter in which to shield themselves from the freezing blasts of winter was gone. Each person had a comfortable room, a wood stove, a comfortable hair mattress (which was in those days what an inner spring is in these), good, new bedding, ample though simple bed room furniture and plenty of good food if you exclude the fact that, being strict vegetarians,

there were no milk, cheese, butter, eggs and of course no meat products. But there was something more than a mere lack of incentive at work as events which soon transpired proved. It was now evident that both Newbrough and Howland had money. Hadn't Newbrough before Howland had come upon the scene, bought the land? Bought all materials for building? Provided food and also for their other needs? When they had needed outside help, hadn't Newbrough hired Mexicans and paid them himself? He had not called a general meeting and asked for contributions! Not a soul had been asked to contribute so much as a dime! At the very beginning a few had put in small contributions—perhaps a hundred or two dollars. They could see with their own eyes such sums hadn't gone far. (Try feeding 30 to 40 people for two years!) And now here was Howland—evidently a far richer man than Newbrough. Didn't he buy food in carload lots?

One statement Miss Keleher made that was correct (I think it was the only one!) but it was true in a far different sense than she meant it. She writes: "In its (Shalam's) development, appeared the personal greed and individual selfishness which such societies usually encounter but fail to banish from their organization." (I wonder if she has seen a single place in the civilized world which has banished "personal greed and individual selfishness?" She should tell the world about it if she has, for I am sure everyone would be interested!)

Quoting Miss Keleher, NEW MEXICO HISTORICAL REVIEW, vol. xix, p. 131:

The one who precipitated crystalization of dissent, which had been growing for some time, however, was none other than Mrs. Sweet, whom Newbrough had married shortly after she became a member of the colony. The lady had ambitious plans, too, other than being the wife of an emissary from on High, and when it began to be noised around the settlement that she too, had her eye on the fortune that Howland had invested in the project, the colonists most concerned demanded either their money back, or clear titles to a fair share of the rich Mesilla Valley land.

This is as libelous and untrue a statement as has ever been made by anyone. Let's take that paragraph step by step. No one, either man or woman, named Sweet ever came to Shalam. Why does Miss Keleher call Mrs. Newbrough "Mrs. Sweet" when she admits she was Newbrough's wife? Then she says, "the lady had ambitious plans, too." Note that "too," and further on, "... it began to be noised around the settlement that she too had her eye on the fortune Howland had invested." Again that "too." I think Miss Keleher is saying things unconsciously that she had no intention of saying for this insignificant "too" can mean only one thing! Some of the colonists had their eye on Howland's fortune! What colonists? Why, the plaintiffs who sued Newbrough and Howland to collect \$10,000. Why these plaintiffs should sue for "the fortune Howland had invested in the project" she does not make clear except to say vaguely that they demanded their money "back" or—mind this—"clear titles to a fair share of the rich Mesilla Valley land." (I have already explained that this "'rich' Mesilla Valley land" was at that time worthless.) As Howland did not come to Shalam until 1885 and this suit was filed in 1886, he had not yet invested a "fortune" in Shalam! All he had invested at the time of the suit, they already had! In their stomachs!

As Miss Keleher tacitly admits, it was Howland's fortune they had their eyes on, and as no part of this fortune had been invested in Shalam at this time, this suit has all the earmarks of hijacking. In her next paragraph we are told that they sued Howland and Newbrough for \$10,000. At this time the land and improvements were not worth \$5000. Here is what the property consisted of at the time of the suit: 1200 acres of arid land separated from the nearest (about a mile) ditch by railroad tracks, an unplastered adobe building containing approximately forty rooms (that couldn't have been used by anyone except the colonists), a one-room adobe building used as a temple, three small adobe two-room houses, a small shed for the four horses (no other livestock), one shallow well with hand-pump, no improved land—not so much as a carrot growing! Miss Keleher calls the \$10,000 "their (the plaintiffs') fair share." I don't

know and therefore wouldn't say, how many of the colonists were plaintiffs in this suit. I am sure not more than half a dozen, perhaps not that many. Miss Keleher mentions only one. I also don't know how many colonists were there at this time. There might have been fifteen or twenty, or there might have been thirty. Let's be fair and say there were only fifteen. I am sure there were that many. Grant there were six plaintiffs, and again I am sure there were no more than that. Now if Newbrough and Howland had had to pay six of them \$10,000 "as a fair share", what would they have had to pay the other nine? Don't bother to figure it. It would have been all the traffic would bear. The New Mexico Supreme Court denied their claim and declared: "The evidence in support of the Plaintiff's demand is as startling as the declaration is unique." (6 N.M. Supreme Court Reports—1896—p. 182.)

Miss Keleher obviously didn't mean that the plaintiffs in this amazing suit were the ones guilty of "personal greed and individual selfishness" for she tells us that those "sincerely caught in the fog of religious fanaticism" were "disillusioned" by this decision of the court, and left Shalam. I fail to see how any sincere person would be "disillusioned" because someone tried and failed to get \$10,000 out of a property that by the wildest stretch of imagination was not worth \$5000. It is hard to follow Miss Keleher for she has tacitly admitted in the former paragraph that what they really had their eye on was Howland's fortune!

Newbrough and Howland reacted to this suit as any men would have. They had been there, knew what had gone on. They knew that for a good year few had done any work, that instead (while Newbrough was doing carpenter work finishing Fraternum and Howland was cooking for them, as well as buying all food for them) they had milled around, gossiping not only about the leaders, but about each other, and this suit brought everything to a climax. Those involved had already left Shalam, their sympathizers could hardly stay. Newbrough called the remaining ones together and gave his ultimatum. He and his wife were soon going to New Orleans, he told them, to gather as many infants as

possible. In due time they would return, bringing these babes. All who wanted to stay and help with these babies would be welcome. Those unwilling to help must move on. Now. All of them left, all except the leaders and a man named Grill. So we see it was not "disillusionment" which caused the exodus. It was a plain case of—work or get out!

Newbrough and Howland now determined that never again would they leave themselves open to another such attack. The land, buildings and all to be built or placed thereon, were deeded to "The Children of Shalam." Howland was made trustee. Each man kept his own money and outside investments in his own name. They agreed that hereafter every person who worked in Shalam was to be paid at the prevailing wage rate for his labor. As those who came were in every case unskilled, and the pay at that time for this was \$1.00 per day, they were to be paid this, if and when they worked. In addition they were to receive room, board, heat in room, washing and ironing. Women were to be paid the same as men. Newbrough and Howland had to take these steps to protect themselves, the colony and the children they planned to get, from any future attempts at hijacking. Whether this was why some colonists later bitterly resented the wage provisions, I can't say. They charged that Newbrough and Howland had changed the colony into a private business venture. Maybe this was true, but if the founders had been hijacked into paying some designing or disgruntled colonists thousands of dollars, these critics would not have been liable for one dime of it!

The real fault in the way Newbrough and Howland managed the colony was that they were not business-like. They were too easy-going. Working was on a purely voluntary basis! We all know that in any group in the world, there are always some who shirk and a few who do everything. Shalam was no exception. If Newbrough and Howland had done as any man does who owns a store or factory—interview the applicant, outline the work, state the wages, and if he accepts, assign him to his special task and put him to work, I am convinced that few, perhaps none, of the scandals and falsehoods that have been circulated for years

would have been told. Outsiders who came there, and were hired on this basis, liked and respected all of the leaders. None of them, to my knowledge, went away to spread malicious, false tales about them. I can say this: except for yellow journal reporters, all of the tales about Shalam related to certain colonists. And, in a way, this was Newbrough's and Howland's fault. They left work to the colonist's own conscience. They never pointed to a task and said, "go, do that," or "come and help here." Result? The colonists loafed around for a year or so, had a nice warm room, which cost them nothing, were assured regular meals, also gratis. Then when Newbrough or Howland thought that they had had ample time to prove themselves, and had failed to qualify, they would point out to them that they hadn't so far helped with the work, and unless they would help from now on, they would have to ask them to leave. Possibly "hell hath no fury like a woman scorned", but the wrath of the moucher pried loose from "bed and board" can come awfully close! What convinces me I am right in believing that the hate, venom, lies directed at these founders came originally from people frustrated in their attempt to live without working is that the two periods when there were no colonists are the only ones devoid of malicious tales. Take the Keleher article for example. The malicious venom of this article, the law suit, relate specifically to the period in Shalam dating 1884-86. She even mentions the names of people there during this time, and fails to mention the names of people there in any other period! When she tries to tell about Shalam at a later date, she becomes utterly preposterous! Take this sentence for a sample. It is really one of the most amazing things I ever read:

By 1900, however, Newbrough began to show signs of hurdling such bulwarks against authoritarian power, and his ambitious plans for installing himself as the eventual owner and ruler of a 1400 acre kingdom on the Rio Grande became apparent to such colonists as Bowman and Tanner who had put money into the common fund. (p. 131, N.M.H.R., April 1944)



One of the things which makes this such an astonishing statement is the fact that John B. Newbrough died April 22, 1891! Add to this the fact that Bowman and Tanner left Shalam in 1886,—that Bowman was one of the sympathizers, if not plaintiffs in the \$10,000 suit, which the plaintiffs had long since lost, and we see that this sentence really gains momentum as it hurls itself into the depths of asininity! 1900 was the year that Howland's money was gone, and the colony disbanded!

I can't resist adding an aside here regarding "money" that Tanner and Bowman had put "into the common fund." Bowman had a large family of children (which had been supported in Shalam for two years) and when he came to the gathering place in New York, he was so broke, his children so poorly clad, that Newbrough had given my mother some money to go and buy a new outfit of clothing for each child! Tanner was a nice old man whom everybody loved. But when he came to Shalam, he had long since spent his last dime. He had been a country doctor when he undertook his famous fast, and while this brought him nation-wide attention, it reacted badly on his practice. People began to regard him as an infidel and to consider that his forty-day fast was blasphemous. His former patients shunned him, and he had been penniless a long time when he came to Shalam.

Five years after its inception The Land of Shalam was apparently prospering as an agrarian one. Two hundred acres of the nine hundred-original ones were under cultivation, and five hundred additional acres had been acquired through donations and contributions by applicants. Newbrough was an amazing combination of the fanatic and the realist. That he was 'no idle dreamer of an idle lay' is attested to by the fact that in order to provide irrigation independently of ditches, he acquired two steam engines, one six horse-power, and one fifty horse-power, which raised from the Rio Grande about one million gallons of water an hour. The subsequent construction of the Elephant Butte Dam in Sierra County at a cost of seven million dollars, is ample proof that the Bostonian

was a man of judgment, visualizing the possibilities of irrigation in a desert country. (*ibid.*, p. 128)

Practically every assertion in this paragraph is false. During that first two years they were in Shalam, Newbrough did get a small engine (I suppose that was the six horse-power engine mentioned) and thought he could pump water out of the river. Anyone who knows the Rio Grande as it flows through the Mesilla Valley, knows that the soil along its banks is sandy,—quick-sand when wet. The little engine Newbrough got promptly sank into this quick-sand and was lost—that is, was of no further use. And that ended all attempts to pump water directly from the Rio Grande. Any engineer would know that Miss Keleher's assertion that "a million gallons of water" an hour was raised thus from the Rio Grande would have been an impossible feat. He would also know that no two little engines, one 6 h.p., one 50 h.p., could pump a million gallons an hour. Any old-timer would know that except at flood-time, there were not a million gallons of water in the Rio Grande all told! Months of the year it was bone-dry!

In this paragraph, Miss Keleher persists in her assertion that the original tract consisted of 900 acres and states that 500 acres were added through "donations" of applicants. Thus she claims 1400 acres for Shalam. All of this is false. As stated, and I repeat, the original tract consisted of 1200 acres, and Newbrough bought every acre of it with his own money. **NO LAND WAS EVER DONATED TO SHALAM.** Subsequently, the river on one of its rampages took away hundreds of acres, as well as through these years there was natural erosion so that when Shalam was sold in 1907 it had but 900 acres. It would seem that somehow Miss Keleher got hold of the figure of 900 acres, and not knowing one thing about Shalam, its history or its founders, got all mixed and transferred the 900 acres to the beginning of Shalam when really the 900 acres belong to the end of the story! In this paragraph she begins by stating that "five years after its inception The Land of Shalam was apparently prospering as an agrarian one", and says two

hundred acres were in cultivation. She is somewhat ambiguous here for after saying two hundred acres were in cultivation, in the same sentence she goes on to say "and five hundred additional acres had been acquired", etc. A careless reader might easily think that there were seven hundred acres in cultivation. It really does not matter for "five years after its inception", or 1889, not an acre was in cultivation! They didn't even have a little kitchen garden. Except for where the few houses stood, no land had been cleared! Later on, I will give a list of the improvements that had been made up to Newbrough's death in 1891. It was Howland, not Newbrough, who had the land cleared, the irrigation system put in and the large fields of alfalfa, orchards and vineyards put in. All this was done during the 1890s after Newbrough's death.

Following this paragraph of misinformation and wild statements, she begins the next with "Andrew Howland's dreams for orphans materialized." It was Newbrough who conceived the idea of founding the colony, it was his dream to gather homeless infants, and when Howland came to Shalam a year after it began, he joined whole-heartedly in all the plans laid down in *Oahspe* for this colony—which first, last and foremost was for the children. Shalam was never, nor was it ever intended to be, a co-operative colony. It was never intended to be a colony-refuge for adults. On page 133, speaking of Howland after the colony had come to an end, Miss Keleher says that Howland saw "the people whom he had sincerely wanted to help, shadows of his dreams." Rhetorical and sophomoric! But quite inaccurate. Of course, Howland had "sincerely" wanted to help people, he had helped practically everyone who had come to Shalam, and there was no one who kept him from these "sincere" efforts, or from being sincere. I can assure Miss Keleher that many of the adults he helped were much more like nightmares than shadowy dreams to him! I can assure any and all that the maudlin sympathy, the crocodile tears shed over Andrew M. Howland for his magnificent contribution to Shalam, and the orphans he raised, are wasted and completely inappropriate.

In another paragraph, p. 133, Miss Keleher has Newbrough discouraged, making his exit from Shalam and dying in El Paso. She leaves this interesting bit of misinformation dateless. Here are the facts of Newbrough's last year of life. Time and place, 1890, Shalam. He and Howland had decided to build the brick house for the children,—babies they were at the time. Together Newbrough and his wife, my mother, had brought thirteen babies from New Orleans during 1888-9. They had converted the library in Fraternum into a nursery, but it was totally unsuited for this as it was at the opposite end of the long building from the kitchen, and except for the kitchen sink, Fraternum, at this time, had no plumbing. The new house was to be constructed so as to make the care of the babies as easy as possible, and it was to have plumbing. Instead of being "discouraged", Newbrough had perhaps never been happier in his life. The brick house was his dream house—a house built just especially for babes and children. Besides this, he and Howland had completed the proof-reading of *Oahspe*, and Howland was to go to Boston to get out the second edition. In the spring of 1891, Newbrough planned to make a trip throughout the east to lecture in the hopes that now at last with all these children, he would find the right kind of people who would come and help with the work of raising them—which was what Shalam was for! In the late summer of 1890, Newbrough, my mother and all the babies moved into the brick house. Howland went to Boston to get out the second edition of *Oahspe*, and this left two men—colonists in Fraternum. They did not work—never had, but one of them had been loyal to Newbrough throughout the trouble that first crowd had made, so Newbrough let him stay. We were, for the time being, free of all impedimenta in human form. We had a mechanic and his wife, who lived on the place. He ran the engine which supplied the brick house with water. My mother had one Mexican woman to help with the babies. That's all there were of us at this time and through that April of 1891. That winter a flu epidemic (they called it "la grippe" then) struck the eastern coast of the United States and swept across the entire

country. It was a very virulent type of flu. It struck Shalam in April. Newbrough felt ill first, but the next day while he was still up and around, all of us—every one of the children, then about three and four years old, my mother and I became sick. We never knew how sick the children were for my mother and I became delirious at once, and by the time she was recovered enough to know, Newbrough was too sick to tell. There he was—ten small children (three had previously died) all sick, I, his seven year old, and his wife. John Tesson came to see Newbrough about something and discovered our plight. He and his wife promptly got Newbrough to bed, sent for the doctor and a practical nurse, and then they came in and took over. What angels of mercy those two people were! All of us got better—all except Newbrough. The work of nursing twelve very sick patients when he himself was so sick had been too much. Pneumonia set in. On April 22, 1891, John Newbrough died. Howland came on from Boston, and in the room in Fraternum we called our parlor, he read the Faithist burial services for his friend. The Masons in Las Cruces had asked permission to conduct Masonic rites which they did following the Faithist services, both in the parlor and at the grave. Newbrough was buried in Shalam, the place he loved so much. When we sold Shalam in 1907, I myself had his remains moved to the Masonic cemetery in Las Cruces.

In the second to last paragraph on page 133 of this article, Keleher says: "Howland, always a follower, never a leader, saw the buildings which his money had made possible fall into ruin . . ." Howland never saw the buildings in Shalam fall into ruins! He did see much of Levitica washed away by a river flood, but as long as we lived in Shalam, and when we sold and left, every house in Shalam was in perfect repair. The people we sold to put in sharecroppers, Mexicans, and I don't know how many kinds of people in those buildings, and they did wreck the place. Howland never went back. He never saw the wreck.

I note this in the foregoing paragraph: "the buildings his money had made possible." She should know! However she is hard to follow because in the second paragraph above

this statement, she tells us how the colonists felt when the court ruled that Ellis should not get \$10,000 "as his fair share." She said: "the decision handed down by this court disillusioned those sincerely caught up in a fog of religious fanaticism, or those who were interested in tracing a new pattern of social and economic life." And on page 131 she tells us that Bowman and Tanner had "put money into the common fund." It would almost seem that Miss Keleher was a mental contortionist! As to Howland "always a follower, never a leader," if we look at results, I think we shall see that Miss Keleher was just about as wrong in that statement as she was in all of her other statements.

Before we look at the record, I want to quote a quotation Miss Keleher used from George Baker Anderson, who wrote: "Andrew M. Howland, the chief sufferer through the duplicity of Newbrough, and his wife still reside upon the property . . ." (p. 133; *ibid.*)

Let's keep these things in mind,—“always a follower, never a leader,” that Howland was the “chief sufferer” and also about Newbrough's duplicity. We've got that lovely old hobby-horse all decked out in a new coat of paint, and we must never lose it. We have reached Shalam in April 1891. Newbrough is dead, so let's see just how Howland had been “a sufferer” through the “duplicity” of Newbrough. Howland had lived in Shalam six years. He had built the brick house for the children and their caretakers (and he lived in this house himself for years), he had put in cesspools and built a brick studio for Newbrough. Total cost about \$20,000. He had helped to feed better than a hundred indigent colonists, and he had cooked for about three years. It was a splendid contribution, and I am not belittling it, but when we consider what he did in the next nine years, we can see “this chief sufferer” of Newbrough's “duplicity”—this man who was “always a follower, never a leader” was not at all as he has been painted—a duped follower, but had a mind of his own, and the will to build as he saw fit.

While Newbrough was alive, Howland did not spend over \$20,000 with possibly a couple of thousand for food, etc. After Newbrough died, that is, after April 22, 1891,

and up to 1900, Howland spent somewhere between \$300,000, and \$350,000 in building Shalam! Seeing that Newbrough was dead, we can hardly say that it was his duplicity which caused Howland to spend this!

Here's what Shalam had that April when Newbrough died: Fraternum, the brick house, a shop (in which was the engine to pump water for household) studio, three original houses, now improved, one adobe building used for temple, a small shed for four horses (no other livestock), one wagon. Not one acre in cultivation. We didn't even have the tiniest vegetable garden for two good reasons,—the many small babies took most of the time and effort, and we had no water supply other than just enough to give us household water. None of this stood in Newbrough's name. When Shalam ended in 1900 because all of Howland's money was gone, the entire property, including all that Newbrough had put in it (he bought the land, you remember) reverted to Howland. No one ever questioned the rightness of this. Not even the gossips!

When Newbrough died, Shalam was reached by a winding wagon road that led through dense tornilla, mesquite, over and around sandhills. After Howland cleared this land, the road was a broad, straight lane edged on either side with fruit trees. There was a dense growth of one kind or another even on the sandhills. Howland cleared the entire tract except a deep edging along the river. He kept this and we got our firewood from here as long as we lived in Shalam. Having cleared the land, he tore down the immense sandhills and made hundreds of acres as level as a living room floor. Perhaps some may wonder, or have wondered, how Howland spent so much on Shalam. Right here is part of the answer. Clear five acres of tornilla, mesquite and level down some sandhills, and it will give you reason to understand. Also in the 1890s, there were none of the modern farm implements which replace man-power and do in one hour what it would take a man days to do. Shalam was cleared by Mexicans with scrapers, plows, axes, shovels and hoes. Then Howland put in orchards: pears, apples, peaches, apricots, plums and prunes. 30 acres were planted

to vineyards—every kind of grape grown in California. Our own house vegetable garden and a truck garden were planted. Howland said that the irrigation system alone cost him \$30,000. It was probably the largest and best privately installed irrigation system ever put in by anyone. In addition to all this, there were the dairy and chicken plants. The dairy was stocked with registered Guernsey stock from Gov. Morton's farm in New York, and Hoard's Dairy in Wisconsin. The chicken plant had a thousand hens—all pure-bred. When you picture all these things, and then look over what Shalam was when Newbrough died in 1891, you wonder where anybody got the nerve to say Howland was "always the follower, never the leader", or that he was the "chief sufferer" of anybody's duplicity, or, considering that Newbrough had been dead while all this was taking place, it is a little hard to see how Newbrough was to blame—if blame there was. Besides all this, there was Levitica, built by Howland, later destroyed by flood.

Miss Keleher quotes from the *Evening Citizen*, July 18, 1890. It is impossible for me to believe that she has given the date of this quotation correctly for the improvements listed were not in existence in 1890. They were put in and added beginning in the summer of 1891, after Newbrough's death, and were not in the complete state as they appear in this list until *after* 1894-97. (See Keleher's article, p. 130.) What is spoken of as "Howland's residence" was not his personal residence (he never had one in Shalam), as the article infers, it was Fratenum, the building which housed us all at various times, and where always the colonists lived—except the few who lived in Levitica. The dairy mentioned was not put in until 1897.

On page 129, Miss Keleher describes the little country store Howland had built in this grandiose language:

One of the most significant accomplishments of these two commonwealth builders, from the viewpoint of those interested in the historical structure of Utopias, was the erection of a coöperative store with its various compartments separated by glass partitions. A department store in Mesilla Valley in this period must have been



enough to make even the most lukewarm crackpots join up with the Faithists just for the opportunity of buying a package of Arbuckle's coffee.

Let's get our historical structure of Utopia straight first of all by saying that the store wasn't put in until two or three years after Newbrough's death, so it could not have been "a significant accomplishment of these two commonwealth builders." Secondly, it was not a coöperative store. Shalam was not a coöperative venture. Next, all the stores in Las Cruces were better and bigger than the little, unpretentious country store Howland ran for the benefit of the Mexican day laborers who worked in Shalam. He put the store in because when he was clearing the land, putting it in cultivation, building the irrigation system, etc., he was employing from 100 to 150 Mexican men six days per week. There were two store-keepers in Doña Ana (where all the Mexicans came from), and these men, seeing this fine payroll where before there had been none, put on their own private inflation scheme. It ended with the Mexicans paying these store-keepers all their wages for the bare necessities of life, and even going in debt for these. Howland felt it was an outrage, so he built a one-room store with warehouse. He hired one clerk. Saturday afternoons, my mother and one of the children's teachers helped out. This store was a sort of Lum and Abner country store carrying calico, gingham, muslin, thread, overalls, shirts, work shoes, etc. and groceries. Goods were sold on a cost basis. Cost of goods, freight, clerk hire. Howland never considered it any part of the Shalam plan. It was put in to save the Mexicans who worked there from being exploited as they had been. In order to keep anyone except employees from buying there, Howland sold his men coupon books, and only these coupons were good for trade at the store.

In this paragraph quoted, we find Miss Keleher calling the colonists "crackpots", yet in another page or two we find her shedding crocodile tears when people she has already branded as "crackpots" fail to collect \$10,000 as their share of buildings which in another place she says Howland's money built! What interests me is: why should

the colonists want to *buy*—even surrounded by elegance!—Arbuckle's coffee when they had all the Chase and Sanborn's coffee they wanted served them free and already made in the colony?

During the nine years (1891-1900) that Andrew Howland was building Shalam, people continued to drift in and out of Shalam just about as they had during Newbrough's lifetime. Immediately following Newbrough's death, there had been a big influx of people. Howland pursued the same course he and Newbrough had agreed upon: if they would work, he paid them and put them to work. When they proved by continued idleness that they were only seeking a way to live without working, he got rid of them. From the arrival of the babies in 1887 until 1900, I think I am fair in saying that not more than eight people came who were willing to and did work. Besides these, there were several men, superior to the average ones who came, scholarly, intelligent men of some means who, when they found they were unfitted for the work that was to be done;—day labor, gardening, care of infants and children, left, not in a surly, disgruntled way, but in a friendly, cordial, gracious way.

I have answered only a few of the misstatements made by Miss Keleher. Her entire article is malicious slander and a complete distortion of fact. Nowhere in the article, however, does she sink quite so low as when with cheap would-be wit and sly innuendo she attempts to portray my mother to whom she gives the fictitious name of "Mrs. Sweet". (Perhaps she had a libel suit in mind.) My mother was twenty when she married my father, Dr. Newbrough. She was born, brought up in, and had never been outside of, New York City and immediate areas. She had been a kindergarten teacher. She never saw California until 1894 when, after she was married to my step-father, Andrew Howland, she made a short visit to relatives. She never knew, much less was married to the head of some California cult. This man, mentioned by Miss Keleher in her article, is a purely fictitious character.

To give a proper understanding of my mother and her immense contribution to Shalam, I must be personal. When

I was born, she had Bright's Disease. We both nearly died. The complications which followed left her with a bad heart condition which lasted until I was two. Besides this, it left her with a dropsical condition of the feet and legs. Until I was nine years old, every afternoon one foot was so swollen that she had to wear on that foot a shoe that was two sizes larger than the other shoe. She was 5:4 tall, weighed about 115 pounds until 1900 after which she put on weight. Despite these physical handicaps, when I was three years old, she went to New Orleans with my father, Dr. Newbrough, and they gathered together ten babies, most of them new born. The house they lived in was a large two-story frame—real Southern style house. For help in caring for ten babies and one three year old (myself), she had one colored maid and my father. Being of Holland Dutch descent, she could not stand one speck of dirt and the house and babies were kept immaculate. Besides this, she sewed; made clothes for the babies, hemmed diapers, etc. When one considers that one baby takes three dozen diapers, it does not take imagination to see that between sewing, taking care of babies, housework, my mother worked hard. As any mother knows, baby work isn't something you do for eight hours and then go and rest. It is a twenty-four hour job. My mother took care of babies and small children from 1887 until 1900. After a year in New Orleans, yellow fever broke out and Newbrough sent us all back to Shalam. My mother made the trip alone with us. Arriving in Shalam, she converted the library in Fraternum into a nursery as it was the only room large enough. The distance from the library to the kitchen, at opposite ends of the building from each other, would probably have measured a short city block—about twenty-two rooms between. There was no plumbing in Shalam at this time. All baby feedings had to be prepared in the kitchen and carried from there to the nursery. All bath-water for bathing the infants had to be lugged in pails the same distance. Each baby nevertheless received its daily bath. My mother with the aid of one Mexican woman brought all these feedings, hauled all this bath water from end to end of this long building—for two

and a half years! And while she hauled water, bent over and bathed ten babies, lifted and carried them, kept them clean and dry, the colony women who were enjoying free room and board, played games, rested, read, loafed and—of course, gossiped. Two women did come who worked shoulder to shoulder with my mother. Each stayed about one year. They left because they were discouraged with the colony loafers.

Newbrough brought three more babies on from New Orleans when he came. That summer cholera infantum broke out, many were sick. Three died. After Newbrough died, Howland went to Kansas City and got nine more babies, and the next year my mother went to Chicago and got six two-year olds. All of these children were in Shalam by 1897, and remained until 1900. During this time my mother had two women to help her take care of all these babies and small children. When in 1899, the money was running low and they had to let the children's teacher go, my mother became teacher. In addition to all this, she took over the chicken plant with the help of one Mexican youth. As we know, both babies and chickens get you up by five, so for all these years, my mother began her day at this hour, worked all day and was never certain of an unbroken night's rest. In fact, through the years, she did all the night work for the babies. She built fires. She brought in wood. She lugged out ashes. She cooked, invented vegetarian dishes, hemmed sheets, table cloths, napkins, made and mended clothes, darned stockings, took care of the sick, played games and read to us children, canned and preserved fruit, made jams, jellies, chow-chow and the like. I might sum up her work by saying she was the mother of a big family. Howland tried to get all the help he could, but such a big place, so many children, so much to do meant a lot of heavy, hard work for her. She was glad and eager to do it. I can never remember seeing her sit idle. Even after we had left Shalam and she had grown old, when she visited with anyone, she would sit and knit or crochet. As we grew older in Shalam, evenings she and Howland would play

games with us, or my mother would read aloud, or we would read or talk and she would mend.

It was the Christmases she gave us children which were the big event in Shalam. (How strangely silent the scandal-mongers and gossips have been about these!) A pine tree from the mountains across the river, so tall it reached the ceiling, was put in the brick house dining room. Then for some three weeks we were barred from this room. Every spare moment my mother could steal from her duties, she would shut herself in here. Every evening, often till twelve o'clock, she worked here. If there were "made" tree decorations then, we didn't have them. She made them. They were simple, perhaps crude, but we thought them beautiful. With the decorations went candles—dozens of them all over the tree. And popcorn. She used to pop quantities, string it and hang it in festoons over the tree. Besides making the decorations and fixing them on the tree, there were dolls' clothes to be made, little sheets for dolls' beds—lots and lots of work, but how she loved it! When the great day arrived, she and Howland would open the big double doors, and we saw what seemed to us a real fairyland! It was practically a toyshop. Wagons, tricycles, hobby-horses, shoe-flies for tiny tots, drums, balls, horns, dolls and their furniture—nothing was lacking, and each child was bountifully supplied with presents and toys. We would scatter and play with our new toys—play there inside the "big room" (30 by 90 feet) for it was cold outside, and such a bedlam of noise we made. She and Howland would sit there side by side, and beam and beam on us.

Success did not come to them in the way they wanted it, but people who had memories like this; who had lived unselfishly for little children; who raised one boy to become a fine man and three girls to become fine, splendid women—besides all those they had brought from babyhood to be ten and twelve years old; who watched and saw what fine people these children grew to be; who were loved by these children as though own parents — can never be called failures.

Perhaps the best part is that their work goes on after

them. The boy they raised to manhood fought for his country in the last war. My mother worked hard to save his life when he was a baby! Today all the sons of all the girls they raised are serving their country in many parts of the world. There is not a slacker or a conscientious objector among them! One is a major, another has the Purple Heart, one is a lieutenant in the air corps, one a lieutenant in the navy. One has had the job of flying above our ground troops and strafing the Germans in front of them. Undoubtedly it helped to save the lives of many American boys. The navy lieutenant for months patrolled our Atlantic shores for submarines, and later helped land our troops in Normandy on D day. There they are, these fine boys! Infantry, air corps, navy, all over the world, serving Uncle Sam. Newbrough's and my mother's blood is there, too, for one of my sons is in the air corps and the other is a paratrooper.

When it is remembered that the aim of Shalam was to take homeless babies, give them a home, a father's and mother's love and care, to raise them to be upright citizens, it seems to me that no one can say that Shalam was a failure. It seems to me that no one can say that such unselfish, noble people whose whole lives were dedicated to caring for little children, were failures.

The people who worked for them, the people of Las Cruces who knew them, loved, admired and respected them. All three of them were held in the highest esteem by those who really knew them. It was only strangers and disgruntled colonists who criticized them.