



"OUR BOOK"

A. C. Y. O. A.
NEW BRITAIN, CONN.

Third Annual General Assembly

OF THE

ARMENIAN CHURCH
YOUTH ORGANIZATION
OF AMERICA

September 3, 4 and 5, 1949

ARMENIAN CHURCH OF THE HOLY RESURRECTION
NEW BRITAIN, CONNECTICUT

Dedication

THE OLDEST Christian Church—democratic, well-organized, reaching throughout the world—this is the Armenian Church. This is the Church in which we, the young people of this country, have confirmed our faith; the young people of one of the youngest dioceses of that Church.

As in all cases of beginnings, this young diocese has had its share of difficulties, misfortunes and misunderstandings. Last year marked the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Armenian Diocese in America. With respect to that commemoration, and on the occasion of this Third General Assembly of the Armenian Church Youth Organization of America, the New Britain Chapter has attempted, through this small book, to better acquaint the younger generation with the story of their Church in America.

The material presented shows that the diocese was established through many trying periods; however, through these trials and misunderstandings the Armenian Church has become a sound reality in this country.

The latest step to progress the work of our Church has been the ordination of five young Armenians. To these five men, who have devoted their lives to the work of the Armenian Church, we humbly dedicate this book.

The Prayer
of
A.C.Y.O.A.

O LORD our Saviour Jesus Christ, who art the Way, the Truth and the Life, give us, the youth of thy Church of Armenia, we beseech thee, the wisdom to know, to love and to serve thee, in our personal lives severally and in the corporate life of our Organization.

Thou that leadest men in thy way, lead us, thy children, so that we may be able to serve our Church and people with courage and vision in the faith of our illustrious forefathers. Inspire us, O Lord, so that we may cherish and profit by the heritage which they have left us. Open our eyes to thy light, so that we may be aware of our responsibility as the citizens of our beloved country of the United States.

Fill us, O Christ our God, with thy Holy Spirit, so that we may be the obedient and unselfish servants of the will of our heavenly Father, to whom, together with thee and the Holy Spirit, is befitting glory, dominion and honour, now and always and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



HIS HOLINESS KEVORK VI
SUPREME PATRIARCH AND CATHOLICOS
OF ALL ARMENIANS



HIS GRACE—THE RT. REV. BISHOP TIRAN NERSOYAN
ARACHNORD OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA



Altar of the Armenian Church of the Holy Resurrection

The Armenian Church in New Britain

THE ARMENIANS who immigrated to America half a century ago came to find a better livelihood, and as New Britain offered them work they could do, it was not surprising that many of them settled in this manufacturing city in 1895. As early as 1900 the first Board of Trustees was organized, and the people were able to hear once more the beautiful Armenian Liturgy which they had sorely missed.

During the first quarter of the twentieth century the Armenians held services in St. Mark's Episcopal Church. In 1925 the first Armenian Church was built by the New Britain congregation. The community lost this church in 1938 due to unfortunate circumstances. After that, services were held again in different churches until a new church could be procured.

However, it was not long before the trustees found a building, 80' x 40', that could be converted to a church. In 1940 the structure was bought, a new altar built, pews installed, etc. The church proper seats over 200 people, and the hall downstairs is large and meets the needs of the congregation.

The church was consecrated by the previous Arachnord, Archbishop Karekin Hovsepianz, on March 19, 1941, and was named

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Church of the Holy Resurrection. In the summer of 1942 Terenig Vartabed Poladian visited our parish and through his energetic efforts the money for the mortgage was realized and the mortgage was burned on April 11, 1943. Two years ago the church hall was renovated and painted. Future plans call for remodeling the front of the structure and the installation of new windows. The membership of the church numbers 103, all of whom work diligently and amicably toward one goal—a better and finer Armenian Church.

In the past, New Britain has had the following pastors: Father Karekin Devletian, Father Untzag Kazanjian, Father Mesrob Hovanesian, Father Khoren Mamigonian (1935-36), and Father Mesrob Semerjian (1940-42).

On April 4, 1948, Bishop Tiran Nersoyan, Archnord of North America, ordained to priesthood Archdeacon Minas Kasparian, naming him Der Arnak. Although Father Kasparian continued his studies in New York, every week-end found him in New Britain and church services were held regularly. In a church meeting in the Fall of 1948, Father Kasparian was elected pastor of the Armenian Church of the Holy Resurrection.

The New Britain Church has one diocesan delegate, Miss Sarah Yagoobian, who is also the Choir Director.

In 1912 the women of the Church were first organized, and two years later they became known as the Ladies' Aid Society. This organization has taken full charge of all work in connection with the Armenian School, which was also started in 1912. Each year about twenty children attend classes. The services of the teachers are offered gratis, and at the present time the teachers are Mrs. Vartouhi Yessian, Miss Esgouhi Simonian and Mr. Sarkis Azarigian.

The Sunday School came later, in 1932, and has continued uninterruptedly since then. In 1933 Mrs. Arshaloos Der Hoosigian was appointed Superintendent and she still holds that position. The present teachers are Mrs. Elizabeth Vartanian, Mrs. Anne Yagoobian and Miss Mary Azarigian. Every year approximately thirty children attend regularly. Annually they enjoy a Christmas Party and a summer outing. The expenses of the Sunday School are covered by the weekly contributions of the children.

The Church Choir was formally organized in September 1939, although previously many of our young people joined their elders in singing the Liturgy. The choir now has 27 members who attend regular rehearsals and Sunday services. The organists are Miss Lucy Yessian, Master Samuel Hougas and Miss Maro Manoogian.

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The young people of the church were organized in 1936 by Bishop Mampre Kalfayan, Locum Tenens, under the name of the Sons and Daughters of the Armenian Church. It was one of the first two such church youth groups in America. Its delegates attended the Constitutive Assembly in January 1946 in Providence, and the local organization then became a chapter of the newly-organized Armenian Church Youth Organization of America. It now has a membership of 34 and is one of the most active groups in the State.

The "Illuminator," a monthly publication, was started in January 1947 by the New Britain Chapter of the A. C. Y. O. A. It has a wide circulation throughout the country. It publishes current events that are of interest to Armenians, and cultural material for the educational advancement of the younger generation.

This year the New Britain Chapter is host to 24 chapters of the A. C. Y. O. A. on the occasion of the Third General Assembly convening September 3, 4 and 5. The members of the local branch extend a warm welcome to all the delegates and guests of sister chapters, and they look forward to having this assembly bring forth decisions which will greatly benefit the Armenian Church.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." St. Matthew, Chapter 28, Verse 19-20.

With the growth of the Armenian Church in America there has grown a vital need for clergymen—a need for clergy to teach and continue the work of the church among widespread congregations made up of a generation raised in this country.

His Grace Bishop Tiran, realizing this need, looked for a means to solve the problem. Among his contacts in the United States he met Mr. and Mrs. Alex Manoogian of Detroit, Michigan, who upon hearing of this need for clergymen offered a \$30,000 fund by which young men could be educated and ordained in the United States. With this generous gift Bishop Tiran was able to invite five young Armenians to America.

Upon returning from the Ecclesiastical Congress held in 1945 at Etchmiadzin, Bishop Tiran invited the five men whose brief histories are given in the following pages. All were ordained by His Grace and all are presently students by means of the fund so graciously granted by Mr. and Mrs. Manoogian.

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Reverend Father Vartan Megherian

BORN IN Bagdad, Iraq, on September 25, 1921, Father Vartan was named Garabed Megherian.

Father Vartan went to Jerusalem in 1936 where he became a theological student at the Armenian Seminary of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem. While at the seminary he was ordained Archdeacon in 1940 by His Beatitude Archbishop Mesrob Nishanian, Patriarch of Jerusalem.

After eight years as a student of theology and philosophy Father Vartan left Jerusalem in 1944 and went to Aleppo, Syria. In Aleppo he was an Armenian school teacher for two years, after which he accepted an invitation from Bishop Tiran to study in America.

Father Vartan arrived in America in January, 1947. He entered Northwestern University of Evanston, Illinois, and began studying for his master's degree in philosophy and religion which he will receive in September, 1949.

In November, 1947, Father Vartan married Miss Yevkin Der Bedrosian of Troy, New York, and on February 29, 1948 he was ordained in Evanston to priesthood in the Armenian Church. He is now pastor of the St. James Armenian Church of Evanston, Illinois.

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Reverend Father Arten Ashjian

FORMERLY named Antranig Ashjian, Father Arten was born in Aleppo, Syria, on November 21, 1919. He attended an American High School in Aleppo and in 1934 went to Jerusalem to study. There he was ordained as archdeacon by His Beatitude Torkom Patriarch of Jerusalem.

After completing his studies in Jerusalem, Father Arten returned to Aleppo where he taught in an Armenian School for five years.

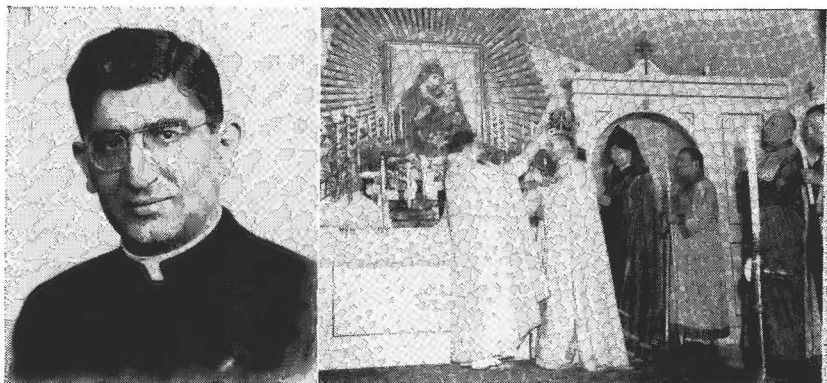
Arriving in New York in March, 1947, Father Arten became a student of the General Theological Seminary in New York. He was ordained to priesthood in the Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Philadelphia on March 14, 1948.

Father Ashjian is now assistant pastor of the Holy Cross Church of Armenia in New York and is also following his studies at the General Theological Seminary.

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Reverend Father Arnak Kasparian

FATHER Arnak was born in Marash, Turkey, on February 27, 1922. He was christened Minas Kasparian.

In 1936 Father Arnak went to Jerusalem where he entered the Armenian Seminary of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem. While a student at the seminary he was ordained archdeacon by His Beatitude Mesrob Nishanian, Patriarch of Jerusalem.

Leaving Jerusalem after eight years as a student of theology and philosophy, Father Arnak returned to Aleppo, Syria in 1944. There he taught in an Armenian School for two years.

Father Arnak came to America on January 29, 1947 and became a student at the General Theological Seminary of New York. At the same time he attended the St. Vladimir Russian Seminary. He received his Bachelor of Arts Degree in Sacred Theology on May 24, 1949.

On April 4, 1948 Father Arnak was ordained to priesthood in the Armenian Church of the Holy Resurrection in New Britain, Conn. He is presently the pastor of that church and studying toward his Master's Degree at the Hartford Seminary Foundation.

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Mrs. Z. Bogosian	A Friend



Reverend Father Shahé Altoonian

FATHER Shahé was born in Nicosia, Cyprus, on July 21, 1922. He was christened Levon Altoonian.

In 1937 Father Shahé went to the Armenian Seminary of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem as a student. He studied in the seminary at Jerusalem for seven years and in July, 1944, returned to Cyprus.

In Cyprus, Father Shahé played an active part among the Armenian youth organizations. He helped to produce dramatical and musical programs by participating as player and director.

Accepting the invitation sent by Bishop Tiran to come to America to study, he arrived in the United States on December 7, 1946. Upon his arrival Father Shahé became a student at the Episcopal Theological School at Cambridge, Massachusetts.

He was ordained to priesthood in the Armenian Church on April 11, 1948, in the Holy Trinity Church of Boston. Presently, Father Shahé is the assistant pastor of the Holy Trinity Church of Boston, and occasionally assists at the St. James Armenian Church of Watertown, Massachusetts.

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Reverend Father Garen Gdanian

ON FEBRUARY 1, 1925, Father Garen was born in Aleppo, Syria. He was named Sarkis Gdanian at birth.

Father Garen received his preliminary education in the local schools (Nersessian and Gurtasiratz) and in October of 1938 entered the seminary of the Armenian Patriarchate in Jerusalem. Within six years he graduated from the seminary and returned to Aleppo in 1944.

In Aleppo Father Garen taught in a local school for one year after which he entered the Theological Seminary of the Cilician Catholicosate in Antelias, Lebanon. After two years he graduated from the seminary.

Father Garen came to America in September of 1947 and entered the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He was ordained to the order of deacon in January of 1948, and ordained to priesthood on December 19, 1948, in Lowell, Mass.

Presently Father Garen is the pastor of St. Vartanantz Armenian Church of Lowell, Mass., and is also continuing his studies.

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An Outlined History of the Armenian Church in America

*Written in commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the
American Diocese of the Armenian Church.
1898 - 1948*

I THE PIONEERS

ARMENIANS were among the first settlers in America. Records indicate that "Martin the Armenian" was a member of the Jamestown Colony as early as 1618. From the present available information, Martin is believed to have been one of Governor George Yeardley's servants. While in Virginia he acquired British citizenship, which entitled him to the distinction of being the first naturalized person on the American continent.*

The next two Armenians came to America in 1653. There was at that time a great desire to produce silk in Virginia. Edward Digges, a leading member of the colony, hearing that the Armenians were expert cultivators of silk worms, brought to America two Armenians at his own expense. The work of the two men proved successful and beneficial to the colony.

* Malcom, Vartan M., 'The Armenians in America'

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THE START OF THE ARMENIAN COMMUNITY IN AMERICA

FIRST TO pioneer in Armenian Immigration individually was Khachador Osgangian from Constantinople, Turkey. He arrived in New York in 1834 at the age of sixteen as a student. Following him came a continual movement of students from Constantinople. The rate of immigration increased so that Armenians began coming to America in groups rather than individually. The Armenians in such groups planned to study in the American Universities and then return to their homeland. Upon arrival in America they entered the theological seminaries at the Universities of Princeton, New York, Yale and Andover.

After 1870 groups of students came to America from the inlands of Turkey and Cilicia. These students came to study, in addition to theology, the scientific and medical fields. There were many young men in this second era of student immigration who were to become renowned personalities in their respective fields. One was Professor Alexan Berjian (Student at Yale 1872-1874) and another was Asador Altoonian of Aleppo, who graduated from Columbia University Medical school in 1885.

About 1850 another group of Armenians came to America. This group consisted of those who wanted to learn skilled trades and those who came in search of adventure.

Typical of the adventurers was Rueben Minassian of Yosgat, Turkey. He arrived in New York in 1867 and moved west until he reached Salt Lake City, Utah. There he served under the head of the Mormon Church. Later, Rueben tried to learn modern farming methods; however, in 1875 his ventures had taken him to Idaho where he worked as a mailman. Again in search of adventure he left Idaho and became a prospector. Prospecting brought him a wealth of \$18,000. With this money he bought property only to lose it all in a fire. Traveling to Nevada he became a cowboy capturing wild horses and buffalo. Leaving this, Rueben bought a silver mine and finally ended his adventurous career by marrying and opening a sugar factory.

During the Civil War Armenians served in the armed forces as soldiers and doctors.

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After 1880 a new phase of immigration began. To escape starvation caused by the Russo-Turkish war and persecution under the Turkish Ruler Sultan Hamid, groups of Armenians fled to Constantinople and America.

As the Armenian population increased in America, small communities grew outside of New York. These were Providence, Boston, Worcester and Fresno, California. The majority of the people in these communities were from Dickranagerd and Harpoot. Most of them became laborers in factories doing some of the most burdensome and trying types of work. Added to their physical hardships, many of these Armenians carried the heartaches of families left behind and the hopes of someday returning to their homeland.

By 1888 there were approximately twelve hundred Armenians in America and it would have been unbelievable at that time that their number would increase by two hundred times within sixty years; increase to become a permanent group in the United States.

II

THE CHURCH ORGANIZES—1888

Pastorate Period

1889 - 1898

THROUGH unusual circumstances the Armenian Church was organized in the United States. Since there was no Armenian Church available at the time, a group of Armenians in Worcester attended a protestant service to listen to an Armenian minister in order to satisfy their religious desires. One day during a sermon the minister untactfully referred to the Holy Articles used in the Armenian Badarak as idolatrous. Upon this accusation most of the Armenians ceased attending the protestant service.

Shortly following the break with the minister (1888), Mugerdich Portukalian, the well-known Armenian field worker and editor, visited Worcester and in a speech explained the vital need for an Armenian Church and school. His speech instilled among the people the desire to have their own church, and such enthusiasm was raised that the community invited a priest from their homeland. There was as

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yet no Armenian Church in Worcester; however, the people felt the need for a spiritual leader more urgent. Their invitation brought to America the first Armenian clergy, Hovsep Vartabed Sarajian, who had studied in the Armenian monastery at Jerusalem.

The first Armenian service with the celebration of Holy Mass by Hovsep Vartabed Sarajian was held in a rented hall in Worcester, Massachusetts, July 28, 1889.

Because Hovsep Vartabed was the only Armenian clergy in America at the time, he visited the various Armenian communities around Worcester. On January 18, 1891, Hovsep Vartabed consecrated the first Armenain Church in America, St. Saviour's Armenian Church of Worcester. Twenty-five communities throughout the United States contributed toward the cost of that church.

After carrying on his work for four years, Hovsep Vartabed Sarajian resigned his duties in America and returned to Armenia. The Patriarchate of Constantinople under whose jurisdiction the Armenian Churches in America were at the time, then sent Maghakia Vartabed Deroonian to America. He arrived in Worcester in 1894; however, after two years of service he resigned and returned to Etchmiadzin.

Due to the massacre of Armenians by the Turks in 1895, scores of Armenians immigrated to the United States. Among these many immigrants were also members of the clergy.

III

THE DIOCESE FOUNDED—1898

1. EARLY PERIOD 1898-1920

Bishop Hovsep Sarajian, (1898-1906). The Armenians in America, wanting a religious leader, requested that Hovsep Vartabed Sarajian return to the United States. Upon this request the Catholicos raised Hovsep Vartabed's order to Bishop and sent him to America as Arachnord. The people and local papers received Bishop Hovsep to America with great respect and enthusiasm. After eight years as Arachnord he resigned his duties.

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During his period as Arachnord, Bishop Hovsep performed the first ordination in America of an Armenian clergyman. He ordained the protestant minister Garabed Martoogesian to the order of Ghevont Vartabed.

The first General Diocesan Assembly convened in Worcester, Massachusetts in 1902, at which time the first constitution of the Armenian Diocese was drafted. The prelacy was established at Worcester.

2. NO LEADERSHIP 1906-1913

Following the resignation of Bishop Hovsep Sarajian, Archbishop Yesnig Abahooni, who was at Etchmiadzin, was elected Arachnord of the American Diocese. Archbishop Yesnig arrived in America a year and a half after his election, only to resign his position after one month and return to Istanbul. During the month that he was Arachnord he attempted to call a general diocesan assembly; however, he failed due to the workings of fanatically extreme political party members.

The diocese was without leadership. Each community and clergyman carried on independently each to its own liking, thus creating a chaotic state. The Catholicos, realizing the condition of the American diocese, designated Archbishop Kevork Utujian, then Arachnord of the European diocese, to go to the United States and take steps to begin the proper functioning of the Church in America. Upon his arrival in America, Archbishop Kevork called a general diocesan assembly. That assembly elected Arsen Vartabed Vehooni as Arachnord of the American diocese. After completing his work Archbishop Kevork departed from America.

Arsen Vartabed Vehooni (1913-1917) accepted the position of an Arachnord confronted with the many problems of a disorganized diocese. There were no funds in the prelacy. The prelacy had no secretary, no seals, nor records of trustees, churches, or priests. Added to these problems was the prevalence of disorder and disobedience to church leadership throughout the various communities.

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The Arachnord unhesitatingly began his work of organizing the diocese. He organized the administration of the prelacy, visited the Armenian communities, thereby established some order in them. His work was obstructed and difficulties added by Ghevont Vartabed Martoogesian and Boghos Vartabed Kaftanian. Both were finally unfrocked upon receipt of a telegram from the Catholicos.

By 1914 there were fifteen Armenian clergymen in America, one of whom was a bishop, Archbishop Moushegh Seropian.

After Arsen Vartabed Vehooni resigned as Arachnord, the diocese fell under the authority of locum tenens.

In 1920 the Catholicos sent to America from Etchmiadzin Bishop Khoren Mooradpekian as his representative, bearing the full authority of the Catholicosate. Upon his arrival in America, Bishop Khoren called a general diocesan assembly in Worcester, Massachusetts, at which time Bishop Tirayr Hovanessian of Etchmiadzin was elected Arachnord.

Bishop Tirayr (1921-1928) became Arachnord during a period of mass Armenian immigration to the United States. Survivors of the Turkish massacres—orphans and entire families—all came to America for safety and security.

At that time the diocese under the Arachnord included all of the United States, Canada, Mexico and South America. Gradually the Armenians in various cities began to buy or build churches. Armenian Churches were established in Los Angeles, Boston, Chicago, Racine, South Milwaukee, New Britain, Troy, Philadelphia and elsewhere, all of which were consecrated by Bishop Tirayr.

Each church began forming church organizations. Ladies' Aids, Sunday schools and young people's groups were organized in the various parishes.

The Armenian Prelacy transferred from Worcester to Boston in 1923, and in 1927 transferred again to New York. Secretaries were obtained and work started toward organizing the diocesan records; however, the prelacy was still financially unstable.

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In 1923 the Catholicos permitted the Armenian Churches to use the Gregorian calendar for the celebration of feast days. At the same time, he also permitted the use of organs and pianos in the Armenian Church.

By a decree from the Catholicos in 1927, California became a separate diocese and Bishop Karekin Khatchaturian became the Arachnord.

By 1928 the financial condition of the American Prelacy had reached a critical stage with a six thousand dollar debt (four thousand five hundred dollars to the Arachnord). The unpaid dues by the communities to the prelacy amounted to twenty-two thousand dollars, and it was impossible to collect the main part of it.

At the close of Bishop Tirayr's office as Arachnord in 1928 there were nineteen Armenian Churches in the diocese, ten of which were consecrated by him. The value of these properties amounted to \$864,000. (\$157,000 in California and \$707,000 in the eastern diocese). There were thirty-five clergymen, six of whom had no parishes to serve. Exclusive of California, there were forty-six communities having boards of trustees. (United States 36; Canada 5; Mexico 1; Cuba 1; South America 3).

Due to the lack of finances in the prelacy, and the country being in a period of depression, the diocese fell under locum tenens upon the resignation of Bishop Tirayr as Arachnord. The diocese remained under locum tenens from 1928 to 1931. Finally the general diocesan assembly convening in 1931 elected as Arachnord, Bishop Ghevont Tourian, from Manchester, England.

Bishop Tourian arrived in America a few months after his election, and the future was to prove him the most experienced and able leader that the American Diocese had received, both religiously and administratively.

The diocese which had stagnated in its work for three years immediately took on a new phase of constructive progress. Bishop Tourian formulated and put to work plans for cultural advancement and organizational systems. From his first months as Arachnord he began visiting the communities of the diocese. Throughout his visits

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he came in contact with governmental heads and prominent people in the country. These contacts brought much acclaim for the Armenians from the newspapers and all other peoples throughout the United States. For the first time a feeling of national pride was instilled among the Armenians. They finally felt on equal standing with other nationalities in this country they had adopted, a feeling lacking up to that time.

Contrary to the progress made by Bishop Tourian, he was unsuccessful in receiving support for his work from all Armenian factions in the diocese. With hardly a year having passed as Arachnord, Bishop Tourian found himself the object of attack of the "Hairenik" publication which carried on a bitter campaign against him. The reason for the campaign against the Arachnord by the "Hairenik" was that Bishop Tourian, being obedient to his Holy Head at Etchmiadzin, would not support a policy against the government of that country.

The events of April 24, 1932 and the flag displaying affair on July 1, 1933 at the Chicago World's Fair became reasons that led to parting of Armenian factions and led to bitter and shameful clashes.

Added to the previous disputes was the outcome of the general diocesan assembly held September 2, 1933. Due to illness, Bishop Tourian was unable to preside over the assembly. During the second session of the assembly the delegates parted into two groups. Both groups carried on separate assemblies at the same time; one condemning Bishop Tourian's work, the other commending. The break occurring in that diocesan assembly was the beginning of the present division among the Armenians. Lack of cooperation and disputes grew among the people of each community, and the trustees of churches were unable to work together.

At that time a decree was sent from the Catholicos, Khoren I, to the American diocese proclaiming Bishop Tourian's work as just, constructive and according to law.

An ill-fated year led the bitter dispute among the Armenians to such extremes that on December 24, 1933 Bishop Tourian was assassinated in the Holy Cross Church of Armenia while walking in procession at the start of Holy Mass. The death of Bishop Tourian meant

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not only the loss of one of the bravest and most able Arachnords the diocese had seen but also discredited the Armenians shamefully before all the people of America.

PERIOD OF LOCUM TENENS

1933 - 1939

The American Diocese was in urgent need of a leader. The Central Diocesan Council immediately elected Mampre Vartabed Kalfayan as Locum Tenens. Mampre Kalfayan accepted the office in one of the gravest and most critical periods that the diocese was to pass through. In the stormy months that followed the death of Bishop Tourian there was not only friction in the various communities among trustees and organizations, but even between the members of a family. Even members of the clergy chose sides in the dispute, with one group joining those who had parted from the church. The Catholicos sent decrees to this group to again unite with the church; however, the decrees were unheeded. The Catholicos then unfrocked two members of the group and suspended seven.

IV

Archbishop Karekin Hovsepianz (1939-1944). From Etchmiadzin the Catholicos sent Archbishop Karekin Hovsepianz to America in 1939. Archbishop Karekin was sent as the official representative of the Holy See to settle the disputes among the Armenians and establish a well-organized united diocese. After many efforts of Archbishop Karekin to unite the two factions resulted in failure, the general diocesan assembly elected him Arachnord.

Archbishop Karekin worked unhesitatingly toward improving the condition of the diocese and establishing new organs to strengthen the prelacy. During his term of office as Arachnord he began the publication "The Armenian Church," which was the first official publication of the American Diocese. He visited the many Armenian communities in the diocese and encouraged the work of the organizations of each church. Under Archbishop Karekin's guidance the mortgages of the Troy, Binghampton, Bridgeport, Boston, Lowell and Watertown churches were eliminated. As Arachnord he consecrated the North Philadelphia, West Allis, and New Britain churches.

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In 1940 Archbishop Karekin established the Auxiliary Committee of the Diocese of the Armenian Church in North America, thus founding an organ which afforded a stable means of income to the prelacy. During World War II, the Arachnord organized an Armenian Committee which within a year collected \$120,000 for the welfare of the Armenian soldiers in the Russian forces and for the Armenians throughout the world who had fallen victims to the struggle. Through his own personal efforts Archbishop Karekin raised more than \$85,000 for the David of Sassoun Tank Division.

The ecclesiastical congress of the Cilician See elected Archbishop Karekin to Catholicos of the Cilician See. Thus ended his term of office as Arachnord of the American Diocese. Before his departure from America, the general diocesan assembly elected Tiran Vartabed Nersoyan of the London Church as Arachnord of the American Diocese. Archbishop Karekin was the only Arachnord to relinquish his office as head of the diocese without resignation or by choice of the general diocesan assembly.

BISHOP TIRAN NERSOYAN

November 1944

During his first year as Arachnord, Tiran Vartabed received an invitation from Etchmiadzin to attend the Ecclesiastical Congress which was to elect the Catholicos of all Armenians. Before returning from Etchmiadzin to America, he was raised to the order of Bishop.

At the end of World War II, Armenian repatriation began. The Armenian General Benevolent Union began a One Million Dollar Campaign throughout the United States for that cause. Bishop Tiran encouraged and assisted this drive. His efforts helped make the campaign a success for which he received commendation from the Armenian General Benevolent Union.

As Arachnord, Bishop Tiran has thus far brought about and progressed the following causes for the Diocese:

1. The Armenian Cathedral and Community Center project. The roots have finally been laid for the diocese to have a Mother Church. \$250,000 has been raised and the land purchased.

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2. He has invited and ordained new clergymen into the American Diocese. Thus far the diocese has had the addition of five vartabeds, six priests and two theological students. Preparations have been made for more to come from other countries.
3. The organization of the Armenian Church Youth Organization of America.
4. Bishop Tiran has made efforts to heal the wounds of the past and have the Armenians of the American Diocese again united under the Armenian Church; however, no positive solution has been reached as yet.

Presently Bishop Tiran is striving to reach satisfactory goals in the problem of founding an Armenian Seminary in America and a security fund for the clergy.

CONCLUSION

This is a new era for the American Diocese of the Armenian Church—an era in which the young generation, born and raised in this country, is to play a major part.

This brief history should help instill in the young people a realization and appreciation that the church in which they are now members has developed through years of difficulties and sacrifices. The story of the diocese is now a more pleasant one, and for this heritage the church looks to its new members to contribute to its growth.

The rights and the wrongs of the past are obvious. It is now left to the young generation to accept them and contribute their fresh knowledge and energies which have developed in this new world. To those raised in America is left the task of correcting the mistakes from the past and creating good for the future so that we may all serve God's work together in the Armenian Church.

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Armenian Church Youth Organization of America

Third Annual General Assembly
New Britain, Conn.

September 3, 4, and 5, 1949

Sponsored by
The New Britain Chapter

Presided over by
His Grace Bishop Tiran

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Saturday, September 3

Banquet and Dance (Semi-Formal)

Hotel Bond Main Ballroom, Hartford, Conn.

Master of Ceremonies—Mr. John Gregory of Boston, Mass.

Guest Soloist—Miss Norma Cazanjan of New York

Accompanied by—Miss Maro Manoogian of New Britain
7:00 P. M.

Sunday, September 4
Armenian Operetta—"ABOOSH"
Nathan Hale Junior High School
8:30 P. M.

Cast

Edward Simonian	Harry Hougas
Hrag Yessian	Maritza Bogosian
Esgouhi Simonian	Harold Manoogian
Elizabeth Vartanian	Mary Azarigian
Mary Yessian	Roxie Yessian
Marion Badrigian	

Directed By
Lazar Manoogian

Accompanists
Lucy Yessian Maro Manoogian
Andrew Bagdigian

Monday, September 5th

All Day Picnic Sagherian's Farm
Harry Hasekian—George Ilbag and Orchestra

CONVENTION COMMITTEES

Hurach S. Azarigian, *Chairman*

Paul Abrahamian	Marion Kevorkian
Gregory Abrahamian	Harold Manoogian
Harry Badrigian	Lorraine Manoogian
Maro Manoogian	Marion Badrigian
Harold Kevorkian	Sirvart Simonian
Lucy Yessian	

BOOK COMMITTEE

Stephan DerMargosian, *Chairman*
Sarah Yagoobian Hurach Azarigian

PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

Given Hoosigian Beverly Onanian



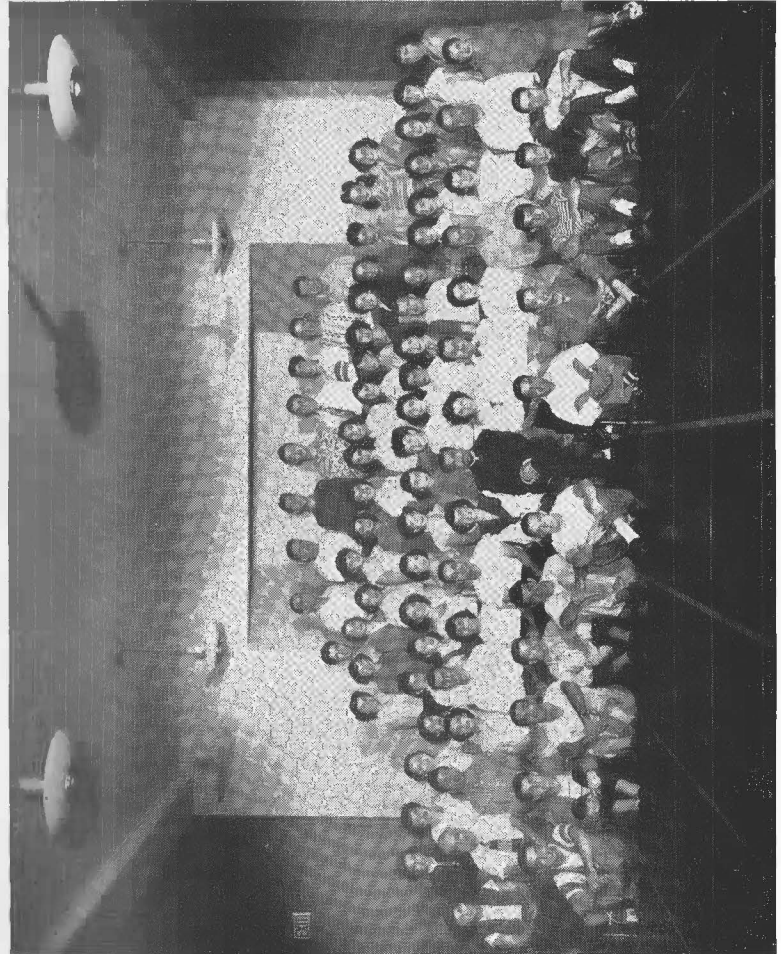
THE CENTRAL COUNCIL

Seated: Zaven Hovsepian, Bishop Tiran, John Soursourian
 Standing: Harold Manoojian, Armen Shekerjian, Mary Shalakian,
 Manoog Heditsian, Gertrude Nahigian, Paul Najarian
 (Haig Serabian, *missing*)



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HAVERTHILL CHAPTER



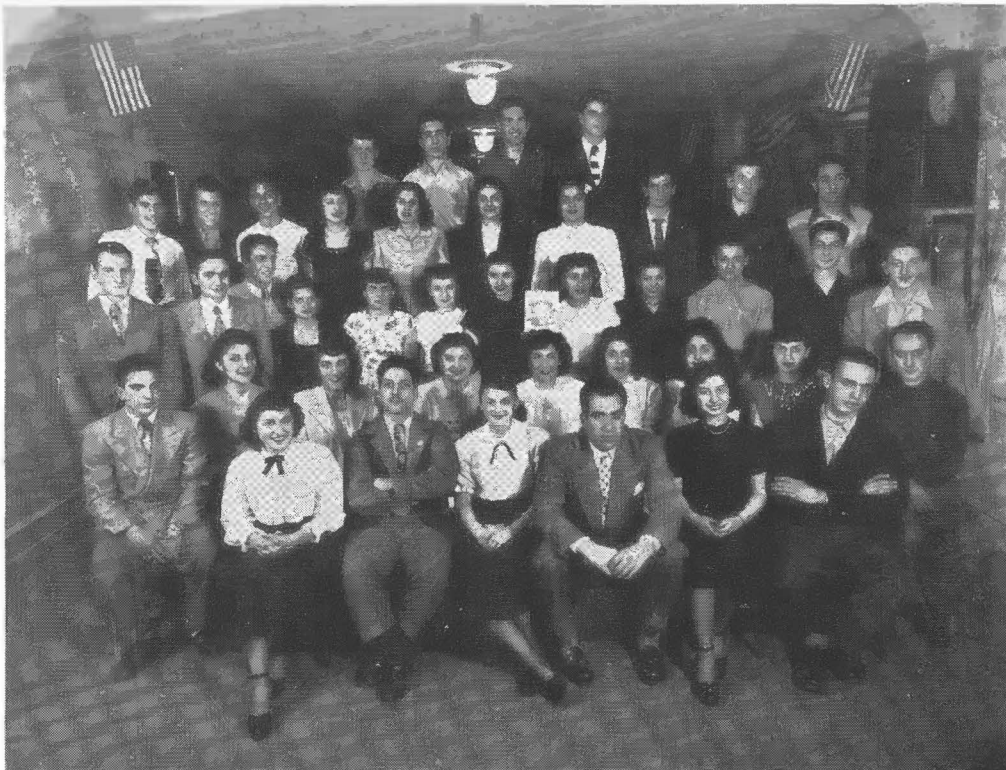
LOWELL CHAPTER



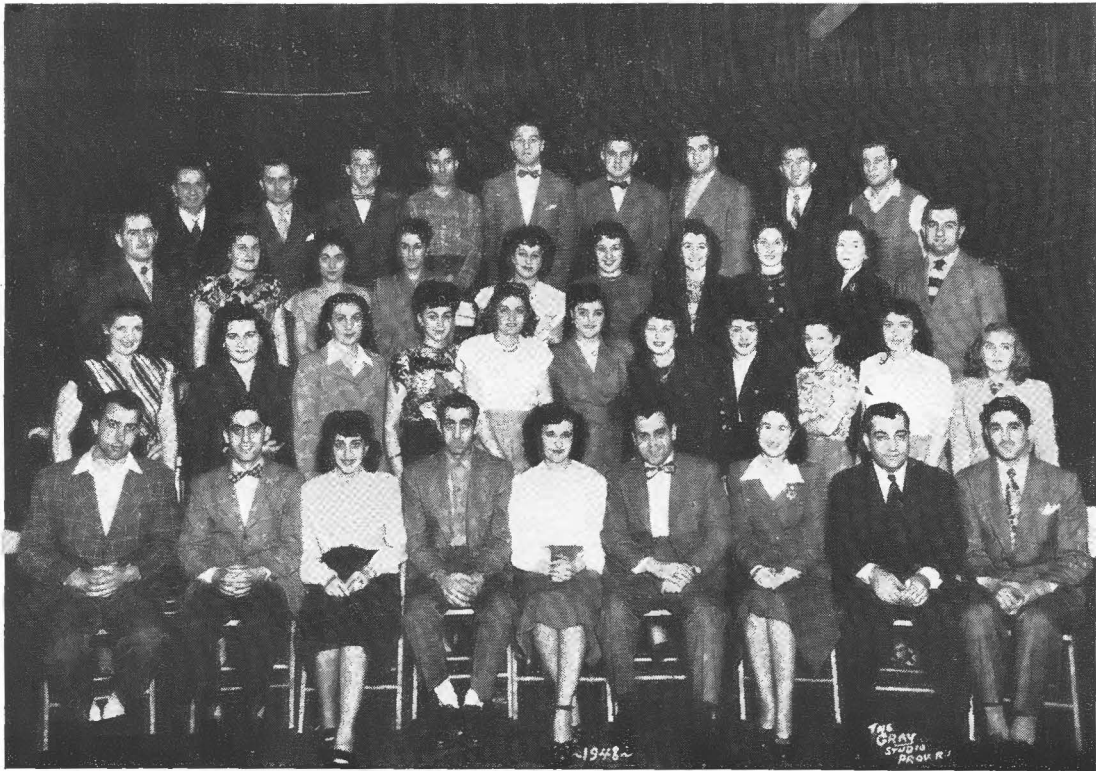
NEW YORK CHAPTER



NORTH PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER



WEST PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER

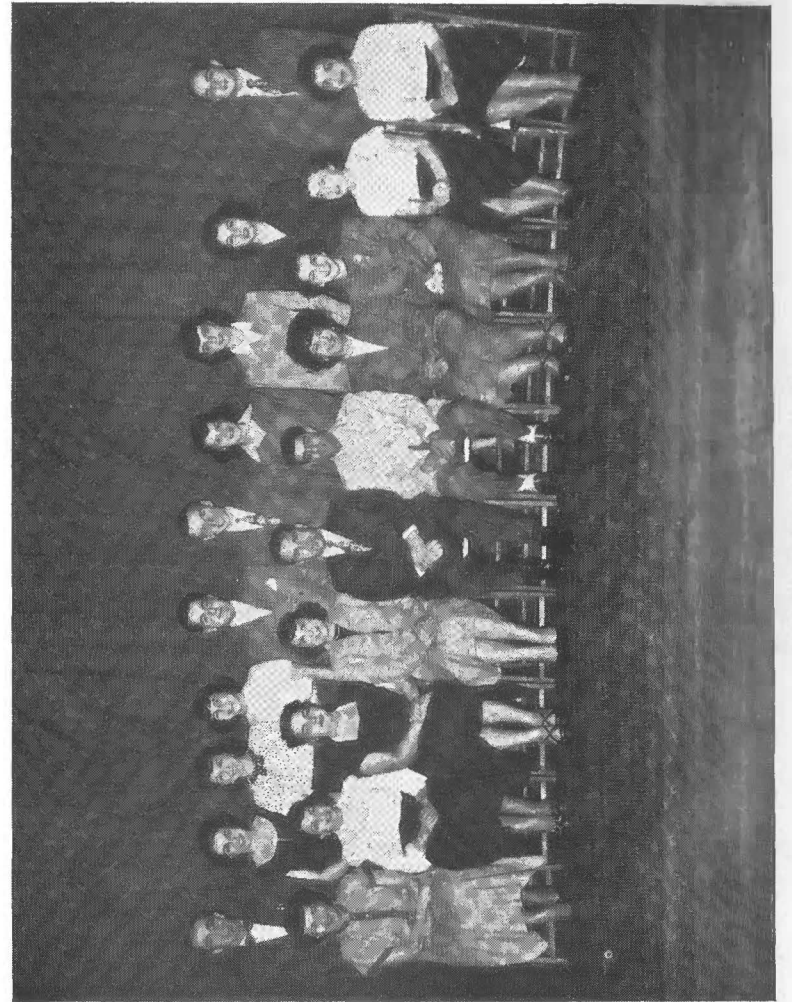


PROVIDENCE CHAPTER

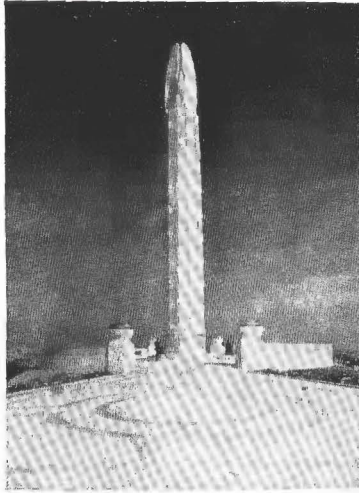


SOUTH MILWAUKEE CHAPTER

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WORCESTER CHAPTER



WORLD WAR I MEMORIAL
Highest In New England

The Story of New Britain

FROM THE top of Walnut Hill Park, where the World War I Memorial stretches skyward, you see a city that has grown out of a "Great Swamp," so named in 1645 by the early settlers of Farmington. Little did those settlers realize that one day the Swamp would change into the "Hardware City of the World," the home of nationally-known electrical appliances, builders' hardware, tools, etc.

History records some interesting facts about our city. Like other settlements, the parish soon built a fort and a meeting house. Early in 1754 the Legislature created the "Society of New Britain" (named from Great Britain), and within two years the first church was built and Fairview Cemetery was set aside.

Strange as it may seem, farming was the chief business of the early inhabitants. Boys not needed at home were apprenticed to village craftsmen, to learn trades. Elihu Burritt was such an apprentice,

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Rogers Recreation
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and his accomplishments furnish a bright page in our city's history. He was later known as "The Learned Blacksmith," and his efforts for universal peace and brotherhood stamped him as an international character.

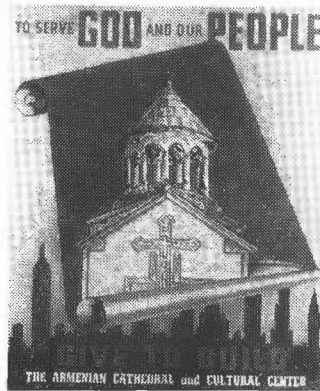
In 1850 a great change was wrought in New Britain. It began to be known as a manufacturing center, and the population increased at the rate of 10% every year. Newcomers were immigrants, bringing with them new customs, religions, standards of life and thought to enrich and modify the old. New Britain became a city in 1870, with a population of 9,840.

The Teachers' College of Connecticut is situated in New Britain. Today our city has 70 industrial establishments, 32 parks, 34 churches and a population of 70,000. New Britain has gained a reputation for never failing to "go over the top" in any civic or charitable enterprise, and this spirit of public service is typical of its men and women.

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The Armenian Cathedral and Cultural Center

THE ARMENIAN Church is second to none in its history, culture, and splendor. These facts are obvious in the near east and other parts of the world which are centers for our church. These truths, however, have not as yet become obvious in America.

The American Diocese of the Armenian Church is a relatively new addition to our ancient church but it has rapidly grown to take its place as a potential part of the Armenian Church. However, as yet the influence of this diocese as a means of showing the culture of the Armenians is small because it lacks a center by which our people can represent themselves in this country.

For the past three years under the leadership of His Grace Bishop Tiran steps have been taken toward creating such a center by the building of a cathedral and community center in New York City. The development of this project will not only mean a mother church for our diocese and an educational center but also a standing edifice by which the ancient culture of the Armenians can be obvious and available to all the peoples of this country.

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Mr. and Mrs. Walter Barber

Through the energetic work of individuals and organizations, enough funds were raised so that the site has now been purchased. The plot containing over 15,000 square feet is located on Second Avenue between 34th and 35th Streets in New York City.

Now it remains to complete this project as soon as possible. The task requires a major participation by the young generation raised in this country. This generation is called upon to use their energies to bring about the completion of what is to be the most beautiful means of identification for them in America—an identification of themselves as the inheritors of one of the finest cultures in the world.



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Acknowledgment

THE SUCCESS of any effort can only be realized by the support and encouragement offered by its active and inactive participants. It is only proper that such support should be acknowledged and in this small way the recipients try to express their deep appreciation.

The successful outcome of this book and the Third General Assembly has come about through the kind support of all the sponsors listed in this book, the many guests who have attended the affairs of the assembly, and the many people who generously donated their time and efforts in so many ways for our cause.

To you the New Britain Chapter expresses its sincerest gratitude. We graciously accept all the kind support you gave and hope that you received the benefit and enjoyment from this assembly that the members of our chapter worked to offer.

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