

THEODORE D. SARGENT AND RAYMOND WILSON

The Estrangement of Charles Eastman and Elaine Goodale Eastman

The Mystery of the “Other Woman” Solved

On 18 June 1891, following a highly publicized engagement, Charles A. Eastman and Elaine Goodale married in New York City. Newspapers throughout the East carried stories of the wedding, whose guests included figures prominent in society circles. The fact that the marriage brought together Eastman, who was rapidly becoming the most celebrated educated American Indian in the United States, and Goodale, a non-Indian recognized as an important reformer in Indian education, contributed to the significance of the event. By contrast, the couple’s decision to separate nearly thirty years later was not widely known and has remained shrouded in secrecy for decades. Recent discoveries, however, shed new light on the reasons behind the estrangement of Charles and Elaine Eastman in 1921.

Charles Eastman and Elaine Goodale traveled exceedingly different and unusual pathways to the meeting point in their lives. Eastman (1858–1939) was raised as a Santee Dakota, or Sioux, for the first fifteen years of his life. He abruptly entered the white world at the insistence of his father, Many Lightnings, who had been imprisoned for several years for his role in the Dakota War of 1862 before converting to Christianity and changing his name to Jacob Eastman. Charles Eastman attended a number of preparatory schools and colleges and eventually graduated from Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, in 1887. Three years later, he obtained an M.D. from Boston University School of Medicine, followed by an appointment as the government physician at the Pine Ridge Indian Agency in South Dakota. It was there that Eastman first met Elaine Goodale.¹

1. Theodore D. Sargent, *The Life of Elaine Goodale Eastman* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), pp. 48–49; Raymond Wilson, *Obiyesa: Charles Eastman, Santee Sioux* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), pp. 13–26, 33, 36, 42, 45.

Elaine Goodale (1863–1953) grew up on a farm near the little town of Mount Washington in the Berkshire Hills of western Massachusetts. Almost entirely home-schooled, she achieved considerable notice as the author and coauthor of several books written during her childhood years. The most famous of these, *Apple-Blossoms: The Verses of Two Children* (1878), coauthored with her younger sister Dora Read Goodale, went through several editions and was even read by Charles Eastman during his college days in Boston. Despite her literary talents, Goodale did not go on to college but, rather, accepted an invitation from General Samuel Armstrong to teach in the newly formed American Indian Department at the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute in Hampton, Virginia.²

Goodale quickly proved to be an excellent teacher and developed an intense interest in the spirit of Indian education and policy reform that pervaded Hampton. She convinced General Armstrong to send her on a tour of the Sioux agencies in 1885, an experience that laid the groundwork for several subsequent visits, including a three-year stint at the Lower Brule Agency as a teacher in the White River Camp. In 1889, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Thomas J. Morgan created the office of supervisor of education in South Dakota and North Dakota and named Goodale as its first head. This new responsibility entailed visiting all of the day schools on the Great Sioux Reservation. Goodale's last visit was to Pine Ridge, shortly before Eastman arrived there as the agency physician.³

The two seem to have fallen in love almost immediately, for they announced their engagement on Christmas Day in 1890 after only a few weeks' acquaintance. Tragically, the Wounded Knee massacre occurred just days later, and the aftermath of that event occupied their full attention for many weeks. Six months later, however, the couple held their New York City wedding.⁴

2. Sargent, *Life of Elaine Goodale Eastman*, pp. 1, 5, 7–11, 16–17, 41.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 21, 26–29, 33, 41; Wilson, *Obiyesa*, p. 43. For an examination of Elaine Goodale Eastman's early career, see Ruth Ann Alexander, "Finding Oneself through a Cause: Elaine Goodale Eastman and Indian Reform in the 1880s," *South Dakota History* 22 (Spring 1992): 1–37.

4. Sargent, *Life of Elaine Goodale Eastman*, pp. 48–49.



Elaine Goodale appears here in 1890 when she worked as supervisor of education for Indian agencies in South Dakota and North Dakota.

The early years of the Eastman-Goodale marriage, spent largely at Pine Ridge and in Saint Paul, Minnesota, were difficult. Charles never succeeded as a physician, either within or outside of the Office of Indian Affairs, and the other positions he occupied provided only meager, temporary funds for the family coffers. In addition, the first decade of the marriage produced five children, and Elaine became increasingly weary and disheartened. At this point, she seems to have insisted that the family move back East, where Charles might be able to capitalize on what seemed to be a promising aptitude for writing about his Indian boyhood (with Elaine's considerable editorial assistance). This decision proved wise, for over the next fifteen to twenty years, while living in Amherst, Massachusetts, Charles authored seven books and became a popular and successful public lecturer. Elaine, in addition to her homemaking and child-rearing duties, handled all of the editorial and scheduling details for Charles's career and somehow managed to write three books of her own during this period.⁵

5. Ibid., pp. 53–56, 58, 63, 67–71, 88–89, 93, 100; Theodore D. Sargent and Raymond Wilson, "Elaine Goodale Eastman: Author and Indian Reformer," in *The Human Tradi-*



Charles Eastman was leading the efforts of the Young Men's Christian Association to reach out to American Indians at the time this photograph was taken.

One other significant development during the Eastmans' years in Amherst was their establishment of a summer camp for girls, named "Camp Oáhe: The Hill of the Vision," on the shore of Granite Lake in Munsonville, New Hampshire. Started in 1915, this venture proved to be quite successful, but the camp was also at the center of several fateful events in the Eastman marriage, including the death of their second oldest daughter, Irene, in the influenza pandemic of 1918. Later, in 1921, the camp became the setting for the couple's decision to separate completely and permanently. Much of the speculation surround-

tion in America between the Wars, 1920–1945, ed. Donald W. Whisenhunt (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 2002), p. 96.

ing this event has focused on a presumed adulterous relationship between Charles and someone at Camp Oáhe, although specific details concerning the woman's identity and background have only recently emerged.⁶

Most of what was heretofore known about the events that broke up the Eastman marriage came from Elaine Goodale Eastman's private correspondence with her sisters, Dora Read Goodale and Rose Goodale Dayton. In her letters, Elaine revealed that Charles had had an affair with someone named Henrietta and that an illegitimate daughter named Bonno Hyessa had resulted from that liaison. In addition, it was learned that Bonno was about twenty years old in 1939. Elaine provided few additional details, and the only other information that could be garnered came from one of Bonno's daughters, Maya Cowper Cramer, and her daughter LaMaia Cramer, who noted that Bonno's mother's maiden name was Martindale.⁷ It was coauthor Ted Sargent

6. Sargent, *Life of Elaine Goodale Eastman*, pp. 100–103, 109–10; Wilson, *Obiyesa*, pp. 151–52.

7. Sargent, *Life of Elaine Goodale Eastman*, pp. 110–16; LaMaia Cramer and Maya Cowper Cramer, e-mail communications to Theodore D. Sargent, 1 Apr.–15 June 2003.



Nearly a score of girls at Camp Oáhe demonstrate the various activities they pursued at the Eastmans' summer camp in New Hampshire.

who connected the names Henrietta and Martindale, thus opening a new chapter in the Eastman-Goodale story.

Since that time, substantial new information has been gleaned about both Henrietta Martindale and her daughter Bonno Hyessa from a substantial collection of letters and papers housed at the Wisconsin Historical Society Archives/La Crosse Area Research Center in La Crosse, Wisconsin. This collection, entitled the Katharine Martindale Family Papers (1699–1977), includes a series of boxes designated as the Henrietta Martindale Hyessa Wilson (1888–1962) and Family Papers (1896–1977). This series includes most of Henrietta’s known personal letters, the vast majority of which she wrote to her younger sister, Katharine (1890–1977), with whom she shared close ties, at least until about 1923.

Henrietta Martindale, born 3 February 1888, was the oldest child of Stephen and Sophie Rosenblatt Martindale. In addition to her sister Katharine, she had a younger brother, Stephen (1893–1949). The Martindales were a prominent family in La Crosse, Wisconsin, owning an insurance firm and involved in a variety of real estate, lumbering, and merchandising concerns. Henrietta graduated from high school in La Crosse and entered Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts, in 1907. Ill health delayed her graduation until 1913, and she then went on to do graduate work at the University of Chicago around 1915–1916. There she became friends with Jens Jensen, a landscape architect and associate of Frank Lloyd Wright, who inspired her to develop some of her family’s property at the Indiana Dunes on Lake Michigan. It was during this period, in 1918, that Henrietta first met Charles Eastman. She had apparently been sent to the Eastmans’ summer camp in Munsenville, New Hampshire, at the insistence of her father, who had been Charles’s classmate at Beloit College in Beloit, Wisconsin, during the late 1870s. Stephen Martindale may have believed that outdoor living at Camp Oáhe would be good for his thirty-year-old daughter’s health, which seems to have been somewhat precarious, although her exact condition is not known.⁸

8. Family background was compiled from various documents in the Henrietta Martindale Hyessa Wilson series of the Katharine Martindale Family Papers. A finding guide

Henrietta sent several letters to her parents and Katharine from Camp Oáhe. In late summer 1918, she records her early impressions of Charles Eastman, calling him “a poet and an artist [who] can tell wonderfully beautiful tales around the fire.”⁹ Another letter describes the Eastman children Dora (the oldest daughter, just four years younger than Henrietta), Irene (six years younger), and Charles (ten years younger), who, like his father, was also called Ohiyesa. Henrietta seemed particularly impressed with Irene, noting that she “is awfully nice” and “goes around singing Indian songs in . . . a wonderful costume [made] out of white doe skin.”¹⁰ In regard to Elaine Eastman, Henrietta wrote, “Mrs. Eastman has a terribly *nagging* disposition and makes things *very* unpleasant sometimes, but we all try to keep out of her way.”¹¹

The last letter written from Camp Oáhe, dated 9 November 1918, is a remarkable document in several ways. First, it contains a detailed account of events surrounding the death of Irene Eastman, who succumbed to influenza on 23 October, providing dramatic insights into this tragic pandemic. Second, it describes the situation that led to Henrietta’s sexual intimacy with the sixty-year-old Charles Eastman. Irene’s death “was terrible for Dr. Eastman,” writes Henrietta, “because he was here all alone with no one of his family able to come, and I was the only one to help him. I know if you had been here you would have had me do just what I did.” She goes on to note, “I did everything for the Doctor that I could. He was absolutely stunned and broken-hearted but very brave,” adding, “He is a wonderful wonderful man and I love him very much.”¹²

to the collection may be accessed at <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/wiarchives.uw-whs-lx00bd>.

9. Henrietta Martindale to Sophie, Stephen, and Katharine Martindale, enclosed in envelope of 12 Aug. 1918, Box 11B, Folder 4, Katharine Martindale Family Papers, Wisconsin Historical Society Archives, La Crosse Area Research Center, La Crosse, Wis. (hereafter cited as Martindale Papers).

10. Henrietta Martindale to Sophie, Stephen, and Katharine Martindale, 15 Aug. 1918, *ibid.* See also Sargent, *Life of Elaine Goodale Eastman*, pp. 59, 64.

11. Henrietta Martindale to Sophie and Stephen Martindale, 30 Aug. 1918, *ibid.*

12. Henrietta Martindale to Sophie, Stephen, and Katharine Martindale, 9 Nov. 1918, *ibid.*



Once a captivating presence at Camp Oáhe, Irene Taluta Eastman had embarked on a career in opera when she fell victim to influenza on her last visit to her parents' camp.

In the same letter, Henrietta hints at her relationship with Eastman, telling her family that on “Sunday Ohiyesa had to go back to the navy and Monday Dora to her school, so Doctor Eastman came in and stayed with me at the Cheshire House until Thursday afternoon, when he had to go to Amherst to Mrs. Eastman and his family.” In the meantime, “Doctor Eastman was perfectly lovely to me here at the hotel,” she reports. Finally, Henrietta concludes: “Our country has great need of a man like that. He is a poet, artist, writer, orator, and first of all, a man of truth and honor, and a lover of little children. He has given me more than I can ever tell.”¹³ Significantly, in a later letter to her sister Katharine, Henrietta declares, “Three years ago today Irene died, and then came to life,”¹⁴ a clear reference to Bonno’s conception.

13. Ibid.

14. Henrietta Martindale to Katharine Martindale, 21 Oct. 1921, Box 9, Folder 6, *ibid.* This quotation comes from a letter fragment marked 21 October 1921 by an unknown

Henrietta sent her next letters from the lodge on the family property, called “The Ledges,” in the Indiana Dunes near Michigan City, Indiana. Jens Jensen had designed the lodge, later named “Solomon’s Seal,” which was to have become the center of Henrietta’s own landscape gardening business. Now, however, she was pregnant, and important new issues relating to that fact had to be addressed. She seems to have decided early on that the only member of her immediate family with whom she would share the truth would be her sister Katharine, and that it would be best, at least for a while, to keep her parents uninformed. At this point, Henrietta began to include sealed letters to Katharine, conspicuously labeled “Private,” along with letters to her parents. As nearly as can be determined, this scheme worked as she had hoped, for there is no evidence that Henrietta’s parents ever learned the truth regarding Bonno. If they did, they never revealed their knowledge to Henrietta.

Henrietta’s next important decision was to spend the term of her pregnancy in California, moving there under the guise of gaining business experience. In a letter to her family dated 25 March 1919, she writes, “I’ve taken the bull by the horns, and I hope you won’t be too mad at me.” She then describes a plan, already underway, to stay in Los Angeles with her paternal aunt, Anna Martindale, long enough to “work up a little business” and learn what she needed to create a gardening center at the Dunes.¹⁵ In this way, Henrietta would be able to account for some time away from home, during which she could give birth to her baby and arrange for its subsequent care.

Little else is known about this period in Henrietta’s life, although a reading of Elaine Eastman’s fictionalized account of Charles’s affair, written as the chapter entitled “A Hollow Shell” in her last novel, *Hundred Maples* (1935), seems to provide some insight. Eastman dedicated her book “To My Son, For His Better Understanding of Woman’s World,” and the chapter may be regarded as a fairly accurate render-

annotator. The accurate date, given Irene’s death date and the fact that Henrietta marked this section of the letter “Sunday night,” would actually be 23 October 1921.

15. Henrietta Martindale to Sophie, Stephen, and Katharine Martindale, 25 Mar. 1919, Box 9, Folder 5, *ibid.*

ing of the circumstances and her reactions to events.¹⁶ In this account, “Jim” (Charles) pays the expenses of “Cara’s” (Henrietta’s) confinement and offers to arrange for the adoption of the child. Eastman even has Jim say, “She needn’t have seen the baby at all; in that case, they don’t get attached to it, you know.”¹⁷

If Charles Eastman had indeed entertained hopes that Henrietta would give the baby up for adoption, those hopes were quickly frustrated. Their daughter, whom Henrietta initially called Irene, was born 10 July 1919. For nearly two years, the mother and daughter stayed in California. Henrietta returned to the lodge on the family property for a few months beginning in February 1921. After going back to California, she returned to The Ledges again, this time bringing the child, who would live with her there for the next ten to twelve years. The move closer to home meant that Henrietta had to formulate another deception to hide the truth from her parents, especially her father. In

16. See Sargent, *Life of Elaine Goodale Eastman*, pp. 112–14.

17. Elaine Goodale Eastman, *Hundred Maples* (Brattleboro, Vt.: Stephen Daye Press, 1935), p. 214.



Henrietta Martindale, the “other woman” in the Eastman story, was finally discovered through classic historical detective work.

a private letter to Katharine, dated 10 July 1921 and annotated, “Somebody’s Birthday!,” she writes: “I cannot tell *exactly* how things will turn out, but I am *hoping* to be there [Los Angeles] 2 or 3 days, and then return with Irene to the Ledges. I am *hoping* to have a telegram when I get there from Irene’s father saying that they [the Eastmans] wish me to bring Irene back to my Ledges to care for as their adopted daughter, until they can take her themselves; and also wiring me \$200 or \$300 for the trip and her care, etc. However, I am not *sure* of this, and if it does *not* happen, I will bring her back otherwise to the Ledges.”¹⁸

At this point, Henrietta seems to have entertained the hope that Charles and Elaine Eastman would agree to raise Charles’s illegitimate daughter in their own home in Northampton, Massachusetts. Charles had visited Henrietta at Solomon’s Seal early in 1921, several months before the actual breakup of his marriage to Elaine in August of that year; Henrietta may have assumed that the Eastman marriage would remain intact and that Elaine would eventually agree to adopt Bonno.¹⁹ While this idea seems to have been little more than wishful thinking on Henrietta’s part, it did provide a cover that she managed to maintain to the time of her father’s death in 1923.

The fact that Stephen Martindale never knew or acknowledged that Bonno Hyessa was his daughter’s daughter, and that Charles Eastman was the father, was an important contributing factor in the tragic turn of events that soon followed. Henrietta clearly intended to reveal her secret to her parents but always found one or another reason to postpone the revelation. In her 10 July 1921 letter to Katharine, for example, Henrietta states, “I will not tell others anything openly until I tell mother and father first, and when I do that I want to show them the Little One at the same time.”²⁰ Similar expressions of intent are scattered throughout other correspondence with her sister, but various reasons to delay the announcement are always appended. In a letter dated 13 January 1922, Henrietta displays her typical ambivalence: “Of

18. Henrietta Martindale to Katharine Martindale, 10 July 1921, Box 9, Folder 6, Martindale Papers.

19. Henrietta Martindale to Sophie, Stephen, and Katharine Martindale, 11 Feb. 1921, Box 11B, Folder 7, *ibid.*

20. Henrietta Martindale to Katharine Martindale, 10 July 1921.

course I *want* to tell Dad, awfully much, myself; but it seems as if it would be better if we waited some longer.”²¹

Henrietta’s inability to reveal the facts regarding Bonno to her father may have stemmed from fear of losing his financial support, including, perhaps, her opportunity to live at The Ledges. Henrietta had few, if any, other options. She did not know whether the Eastmans would ever adopt Bonno. Furthermore, she seemed unwilling to demand support from Bonno’s father, an attitude that allowed Charles Eastman to sidestep responsibility for the child’s welfare. This issue proved pivotal in Elaine Eastman’s decision to end her marriage to Charles. In a letter to her sister Rose many years later, Elaine wrote, “Our final parting was on the sole issue of an honest recognition of the truth, and his assent to my wish that we do what was in our power for his illegitimate child. I was ready to make any sacrifice to that end and made that plain to him repeatedly—indeed, the door has never been closed to the renewal of relations on this basis.” Elaine went on to note that no man, including her brother, Robert, had ever confronted Charles about his responsibilities to Bonno. She believed that Henrietta’s father “might have done something,” but he “died in ignorance.” Elaine concluded, “What he [Charles] needed was a strong man to face him!”²²

Even though numerous parties were aware of the facts in this case, Henrietta’s circumstances grew ever more desperate. This downward slide became apparent in her letters to Katharine soon after she returned to The Ledges with Bonno. Financial concerns, especially the expenses involved in providing food, clothing, and medical attention for the toddler, dominate Henrietta’s correspondence. Although she clearly loved her “Little One” and labored day and night on her behalf, she struggled to make ends meet. “But really I have been in pretty desperate straits,” reads a typical letter, “and so I tried to do first what was *absolutely* necessary for mere existence, and it has kept me jumping every minute. . . . I’ve managed to feed little sweetheart, but that is about all, and she is

21. Henrietta Martindale to Katharine Martindale, 13 Jan. 1922, Box 9, Folder 7, *ibid.*

22. Elaine Goodale Eastman to Rose Goodale Dayton, 3 Nov. 1933, Eastman-Goodale-Dayton Family Papers, Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College, Northampton, Mass. (hereafter cited as Eastman-Goodale-Dayton Papers).

really gaining a lot I think. Only she caught a cold. . . . Dr. Rogers came out here from M.C. [Michigan City]. He only charged \$5.00. Dad asked if her friends [the Eastmans] paid for that, and I said yes.”²³

Henrietta continued to tell her parents that the Eastmans were paying her \$25 a month to care for Bonno, as they were still “thinking of adopting her later on.” Katharine, who was essentially running the family insurance firm and would take over complete control when her father died in 1923, provided the money to cover this lie. Henrietta still received an allowance of approximately \$150 a month from her father, but she was expected to make payments on the mortgage on Solomon’s Seal and meet all of her personal expenses, as well. Henrietta had to ask Katharine for many items, including blankets, clothing for herself and for Bonno, and money to pay for essentials like lamps and firewood.²⁴ Meanwhile, Henrietta worked to set up a camp for American Indian children at The Ledges. She engaged the assistance of an American Indian woman and asked Katharine to place advertisements in various newspapers. One such announcement for “Solomen Seal’s ‘Lodge by the Dunes’” described “a Camp for little Indian Children” run by “a college trained lady who is a graduate of Smith College” and an assistant who was “a college trained Indian woman who understands the Indian children.”²⁵

This endeavor never succeeded, and the effort would eventually bring Henrietta to the breaking point. Her letters became more bitter, desperate, and, at times, accusatory. “But K, *please* don’t advertise me any more!,” she told Katharine at one point. “I . . . have not a clean dish in the house, or a clean garment, or hardly any food. . . . I don’t have time to do much else, if I take a baby over a mile to get the milk every day, and a mile and one half for the mail, and have to pump every drop of water that is used by a back-breaking pump, and then carry out every drop of water that is used, and bring in all the wood that is burnt, and keep the fires up; and now I have to find someone to split wood.

23. Henrietta Martindale to Katharine Martindale, 3 Oct. 1921, Box 9, Folder 6, Martindale Papers.

24. Ibid.

25. Unidentified newspaper advertisement, ca. 1922, Box 9, Folder 7, *ibid.*



Though her efforts failed, Henrietta Martindale must have drawn inspiration for her camp for American Indian children from the Eastmans' Camp Oáhe. Here Charles Eastman teaches archery to the daughters of the eastern elite.

. . . Nobody will do anything. So please don't *advertise* so much just yet!"²⁶ On another occasion she railed about a possible visit from her father: "I think it is the craziest and most foolhardy thing, Katharine, for you to let him come down here at this time, knowing what you know. I might as well talk frankly to you, since you do so to me. But you know just how tired I am now, and how things are here. . . . I don't know how you think he'll take it when he *sees* how terribly hard it is here. . . . And if Dad doesn't want me to stay here, I'll take Bonno and go off in the woods. I certainly will do it."²⁷

The death of Stephen Martindale several months later on 16 February 1923 was especially devastating to his increasingly distraught daughter. He left no will, and the ensuing difficulties in settling his estate left Henrietta with grave uncertainties regarding her financial

26. Henrietta Martindale to Katharine Martindale, ca. 1922, Box 9, Folder 6, *ibid.*

27. Henrietta Martindale to Katharine Martindale, 22 May 1922, Box 9, Folder 7, *ibid.*

situation. She seems to have concluded that her family was abandoning her, and no amount of counseling from Katharine, who expressed concern and advised patience, would temper Henrietta's anger. Her last letter to Katharine, dated 13 December 1923, betrays her despondent yet defiant state of mind. She dismisses an apparently well-meant gesture on the part of her sister, writing, "But as you speak of sending cookies to Bonno and me, I would suggest that you send, instead, a few crusts of plain bread left over. We would enjoy them, and also our stomachs would, much more than cookies." She goes on to add, "You speak of putting 'calendula's on Daddie's grave.' You might make him happier, I should think, if you put Bonno and me on his grave too." Finally, she essentially breaks off further communication: "Bonno is being known now as Anpäh Martindale Hyessa, and I am being known as her mother, Mrs. Henrietta Martindale-Hyessa. Therefore, Katharine, if you cannot address my letters in my own present name, I wish you would try to write me just as few letters as you possibly can; as it makes it too hard for me otherwise." Signed, "Henrietta Hyessa," this letter is the last known correspondence from Henrietta to Katharine.²⁸ Hereafter, Katharine's letters to Henrietta elicited no response other than the occasional return of an unopened envelope.

The subsequent course of Henrietta's life must be pieced together from other sources, including letters from several of Henrietta's friends and other concerned parties who corresponded extensively with Katharine Martindale. Sometime around 1926, Henrietta married a man named Paul Wilson, a social outcast who had trouble with the law. "He has always had a bad reputation and is known to be lazy and of no account," wrote one of Katharine's correspondents.²⁹ Katharine clearly subscribed to this view, as well, and outlined her concerns in a 1927 letter to Dr. J. B. Rogers of Michigan City, who was caring for Henrietta at the time:

Does she know that he [Paul] has never provided a decent living, according to her standards, for himself alone, and that he will not be able to provide it for himself now; and certainly not for her and Bonno. . . . With Paul, as

28. Henrietta Martindale to Katharine Martindale, 13 Dec. 1923, Box 9, Folder 8, *ibid.*

29. Jessie F. Binford to Katharine Martindale, 20 July 1927, Box 10, Folder 3, *ibid.*

far as my understanding goes, her friends will leave her, and because of Paul they will not give help to Bonno. She has not enough strength for *both* Paul and Bonno. The result will be eventually, I should think, that someone in authority will take Bonno from her for neglect and incompetence. That would break Henrietta's heart and would be tragic.³⁰

Dr. Rogers initially assured Katharine that he had advised Henrietta to divorce Paul Wilson and that she had agreed to that course of action.³¹ Later letters, however, reveal that Henrietta changed her mind. An exasperated Rogers eventually concluded, "I think she is hopeless."³²

Katharine Martindale received another troubling description of Henrietta's physical and mental state during this period from Mae-Ashley Dickson of the Crane Farm for Children in Wheeling, Illinois. Henrietta's problems appear to have overwhelmed her to such an extent that Bonno was being cared for from time to time by Dickson and a Miss L. Garratt. On the occasion of Henrietta's most recent visit to the farm, Dickson reported: "Mrs. Wilson looked very badly, apparently she is suffering more than anyone realizes both physically & mentally. Her lips & jaw were swollen & bruised; she said she had been in an accident but refused to tell of what nature. . . . She was in a highly nervous, & weakened condition; her entire appearance, color, & all was *most alarming*." Dickson went on to analyze Henrietta's condition, calling it "nervous bankruptcy": "For three years I believe your sister has been at this stage; she could not & can not, less & less, apply herself to any mental or physical work; and she is always 'too tired to think.' . . . Patients suffering from mental fatigue are incapable of decisions, they are over-anxious & emotional, & very often most difficult to deal with. But I do believe that someone now, & *right now*, must help Mrs. Wilson & Bonno."³³

Somewhat surprisingly, Elaine Goodale Eastman echoed this concern for the welfare of Henrietta and her daughter. During a visit to Chicago in May 1925, Elaine had met with Henrietta and had seen Bonno, as well. In the first of two letters to Katharine, Elaine pointed out that she had done "everything in [her] power" to induce Charles

30. Katharine Martindale to Rogers, 15 May 1927, *ibid*.

31. Rogers to Katharine Martindale, 11 Apr. 1927, *ibid*.

32. Rogers to Katharine Martindale, ca. June 1927, *ibid*.

33. Dickson to Katharine Martindale, 3 July 1927, *ibid*.

“to do what he could for the child.” She also stated her willingness to free Charles, from whom she was separated but not formally divorced, so that he could marry Henrietta if he so wished. Henrietta, she said, had given the idea some consideration at the time of their meeting but had more recently written a letter in which she called the possibility “preposterous.” Elaine also stated that Henrietta had written her on numerous occasions and that her letters “arouse serious doubts of her sanity.” She concluded, “I have no unkind feelings toward your sister and would gladly do anything I could for her and especially for the child.”³⁴

34. Eastman to Katharine Martindale, 8 Jan. 1926, Box 10, Folder 1, *ibid.*



In her later years, Elaine Goodale Eastman expressed concern for the welfare of Bonno to Henrietta's sister, Katharine Martindale.

In her second letter, written in response to Katharine's reply, Elaine Eastman reiterates her concerns. She notes again that Charles "refuses all responsibility" but also points out that "he is an old man, very erratic, with an income, so far as I know, that is barely sufficient for his own support, and no property." She then adds, "My own personal income is even smaller. Nevertheless, that poor child is much on my mind. What is to become of her? If you can assure me that she will be provided for, and that Henrietta has enough to live on, it will be a relief."³⁵

Together, these letters corroborate prior assessments of Elaine Goodale Eastman's attitudes and actions relating to the affair that ended her marriage. If anything, she appears more perceptive and more generous in spirit towards Henrietta and Bonno than might have been anticipated, especially given Henrietta's admission that she "had been repeatedly intimate" with Charles. In fact, Henrietta claimed to have "seen him very shortly before my call," Elaine wrote.³⁶ Both letters lend additional credence to Elaine's often-repeated insistence that her estrangement from Charles came about not because of his infidelity but, rather, because of his refusal to accept responsibility for his illegitimate child.³⁷

In the meantime, Katharine Martindale's worries about her sister's marriage and the fate of Bonno were proving to be well-founded. In the spring of 1927, Paul Wilson was convicted of "shooting an interurban conductor who failed to let him off at the correct stop" and was sentenced to a year in jail.³⁸ Henrietta immediately began devoting all of her efforts to having him paroled. She eventually succeeded, possibly with the help of two thousand dollars she obtained by taking out a mortgage on her Indiana Dunes property. Once Wilson gained his freedom, however, he remained unemployed and squandered most of the money that Henrietta had received. These circumstances only served to reinforce the earlier recommendation from personnel at the Crane Farm for Children that steps be taken to remove Bonno from her family situation.³⁹

35. Eastman to Katharine Martindale, 21 Feb. 1926, *ibid.*

36. Eastman to Martindale, 8 Jan. 1926.

37. Sargent, *Life of Elaine Goodale Eastman*, pp. 115–16.

38. Unidentified newspaper clipping, "Dunes 'Giant' Must Serve a Year in Jail," attached to note dated 23 Mar. 1927, Box 10, Folder 3, Martindale Papers.

39. Katharine Martindale to Rae Levine, 29 Oct. 1930, *ibid.*; L. Garratt to Katharine

Complicating matters further, Henrietta gave birth to two more children, both fathered by Wilson. The first, named Diana Hyessa (later known as “Bluebell”), was born in 1928, and the second, named Henrietta Martindale (later known as both “Henri” and “Boppy”), was born in 1929.⁴⁰ The girls’ early years were spent in poverty at the Dunes in Indiana. One social worker who visited Henrietta at this time reported to Dr. Rogers that she was “in bed and looks very badly,” that the house was “a mess,” and that Wilson was “still without a job.” She did add, however, that “all the teachers speak very highly of Bonno.”⁴¹

Many of Henrietta’s friends, including Dr. Rogers, Professor Ferdinand Schevill of the University of Chicago, and the famous trial attorney Clarence Darrow, expressed concerns about Henrietta and her children during this period. Everyone believed that she should divorce Wilson immediately. Beyond that, the general consensus was that Henrietta would be best off in a mental institution or a sanitarium and that the children should be placed in protective custody. Bonno, who by all accounts had a wonderful disposition and showed unusual academic promise, was a special object of concern. Dr. Rogers gave the frankest assessment of the situation, telling Katharine: “I think she [Henrietta] should be in a hospital for the treatment of mental cases. I also think the children should be taken from them, and if you will pardon my saying it I believe Paul should be in *Hell*.”⁴² Henrietta, however, displayed no inclination to file for a divorce and remained stable enough to avoid institutionalization. As the director of the Juvenile Protective Association of Chicago pointed out to Katharine, “Even if one thought that was the very best thing for her, . . . you know as well as I do, that with an adult person one can go just so far and no further.”⁴³

At some point in late 1931 or early 1932, Henrietta decided to take her children and return to California.⁴⁴ Wilson seems to have been confined

Martindale, 9 May 1927, Box 10, Folder 1, *ibid.*; Dickson to Martindale, 3 July 1927; Binford to Martindale, 20 July 1927.

40. Manuscript population schedule, Michigan City, LaPorte County, Ind., in U.S., Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930*, National Archives Microfilm Publication T626, roll 603, page 3A.

41. Rogers to Katharine Martindale, 18 Feb. 1930, Box 10, Folder 3, Martindale Papers.

42. *Ibid.* See also Darrow to Katharine Martindale, 3 Jan. 1926, Box 10, Folder 1, *ibid.*

43. Binford to Martindale, 20 July 1927.

44. Florence Carr to Katharine Martindale, 12 Feb. 1932, Box 10, Folder 2, *ibid.*

at the time but eventually rejoined the family in Los Angeles. Henrietta's aunt, Anna Martindale, who had provided her a refuge when Bonno was born, probably assisted again. This time, however, things worked out badly. A report that Bonno was having "very irregular school attendance" was the first sign of trouble. An investigation into the home situation by the office of the supervisor of education in Los Angeles revealed that "Mrs. Wilson has been sent to the hospital because of her weakened condition, Bonno has been excused from attending school because of malnutrition and nervousness, the two little Wilson children are in a temporary home, and Mr. Wilson is still looking for work."⁴⁵

Other reports from this period provided more grim details: "Neighbors have complained to the principal of the school where Bonno attends that Bonno is probably being abused by her step-father; that she is being severely beaten and ruthlessly scolded. Neighbors state that they have heard her screaming. . . . Bonno, herself, looks extremely unhappy although she is doing excellent work in school. The principal states that she is the brightest student who has ever attended that school. However she comes to school very dirty and unkempt. She appears to detest her mother and step-father."⁴⁶

The plight of Bonno, now in her early teens, did stimulate some discussion of alternatives for her care. People who had known her at the Dunes even contemplated taking her into their own homes, or at least contributing to the expenses that might be involved in such a move.⁴⁷ Henrietta, however, seems to have refused any offers of this sort. In the meantime, Bonno was being "looked after" by the Jewish Protective Association of Los Angeles and appears to have left home around 1934.⁴⁸

These developments initiated appeals for money for Bonno's care and once again raised questions about the identity and whereabouts of her father. No one seems to have believed that there was any possibility of obtaining financial support from Charles Eastman. "As a last resort," stated one correspondent, "I have written to Clarence Darrow who is Henrietta's friend to see if any aid can be had from the Indian

45. Elizabeth Waterman to Katharine Martindale, 1 June 1933, *ibid.*

46. Waterman to Katharine Martindale, 21 June 1933, *ibid.*

47. Waterman to Martindale, 1 June 1933.

48. Clara Cahill Park to Ferdinand Schevill, 18 Aug. 1933, *ibid.*

father whom he knows and who is probably still living as not over two years ago I heard from him concerning some other Indian tribal matters mentioned in his books. Darrow knows Hyessa well, and is as sympathetic as any one I could think of who would have the power and authority to help.”⁴⁹

Whether Darrow ever contacted Charles Eastman on this matter, or any other matter relating to Bonno, is not known. Many of Henrietta’s male friends knew Eastman well and were aware that he was Bonno’s father. Dr. J. B. Rogers and Ferdinand Schevill, for example, were Charles’s classmates at Dartmouth, and both men had contact with him during Bonno’s lifetime. Yet, as Elaine Eastman pointed out, no man ever seems to have confronted Charles about his responsibilities with respect to Bonno. In fact, the subject of Bonno may never have come up. Dr. Rogers clearly evaded the issue, at one point informing Katharine: “I saw ‘B’s’ father while East. You know he was a classmate of mine at Dartmouth. He is now at Reserve, Wis. Of course he does not know the knowledge I have.”⁵⁰

Numerous individuals contacted Katharine Martindale regarding Bonno’s support, but one letter in particular must have proved especially startling. Dated 25 May 1934, it reads:

Dear Aunt Katherine,

Could you send me forty dollars as soon as possible? If you are able please, please hurry.

Your niece,
Bonno⁵¹

In her reply a few days later, Katharine wrote, “I think I’ve had the first letter from you that you have ever written me,” adding, “it seems as tho you must be in great trouble.” She agreed to send Bonno ten dollars but asked her to explain her need for additional money, seeking assurance that “it will help you & not harm you.”⁵² There is no evidence that Bonno ever responded to this request, but in later letters to Katharine

49. Waterman to Martindale, 21 June 1933.

50. Rogers to Martindale, ca. June 1927.

51. Bonno Hyessa to Katharine Martindale, 25 May 1934, Box 10, Folder 8, *ibid.*

52. Katharine Martindale to Bonno Hyessa, 31 May 1934, *ibid.*

she wrote of leaving home as a fifteen-year-old in 1934. Presumably, she needed the money for living expenses at that time.

In 1937, Bonno again wrote to Katharine at least twice. Living at home once more, she outlined an ambitious plan to support her mother and two sisters while putting her own plans to attend junior college on hold. She had, she told her aunt, gotten a job that depended largely on her “appearance and personality,” meaning that she could not live “under the conditions which Mother has forced upon her family.”⁵³ Bonno’s plan involved finding a “reasonably priced” apartment for herself; locating a place, perhaps with friends, for her mother; and, finally, finding a “new home” for her sisters. She had only twelve dollars in hand and hoped that Katharine would loan her another thirty.⁵⁴ That Katharine would have done so seems likely, but no further correspondence between the two is known to exist until after Henrietta’s death in 1962.

Among the other fragments of information from this period is Elaine Eastman’s account of a meeting between her friend, Dr. Cora Smith King, a Los Angeles physician (and a classmate of Charles Eastman at Boston University Medical School), and Bonno, in 1939. At that point, Elaine related that Bonno “is in a junior college and helps herself by serving as a model for artists, in Indian costume I judge.” Elaine also noted, “My friend was very favorably impressed by her and says she hears only good of the girl.”⁵⁵

Information on Henrietta’s later years in California is sketchy, at best. She eventually obtained a divorce from Paul Wilson, who again served time in prison. She continually lived in poverty, often moving from place to place, with and without her two younger children, who were sometimes removed from her care. Henrietta occasionally found employment, in one case a job with a federal project at the Los Angeles City Library, where she worked for “a mere pittance.”⁵⁶ She remained hostile towards Katharine to the very end.

Death came to Henrietta on 28 October 1962. Her youngest daugh-

53. Bonno Hyessa to Katharine Martindale, 11 Aug. 1937, *ibid.*

54. *Ibid.*

55. Elaine Goodale Eastman to Rose Goodale Dayton, ca. 1940, Eastman-Goodale-Dayton Papers.

56. Ferdinand Schevill to Katharine Martindale, 4 Feb. 1938, Box 10, Folder 2, Martindale Papers.

ter, Henrietta (“Henri”) Wilson, wrote Katharine that her mother had “died an extremely painful, & long enduring, death from cancer.”⁵⁷ Katharine attempted to distribute some family mementos to all of her sister’s children, but with rather limited success. In the process, however, she reestablished communication with Bonno. This later correspondence sheds new light on what has also been learned of Bonno from family members.

According to family sources, Bonno briefly attended the University of California at Los Angeles before marrying James Denis Cowper around 1941. They had two children, Ann Hyessa Cowper (born 2 May 1942) and Daphne Maya Cowper (born 14 January 1944). Around the time of Ann’s birth, Bonno was a student at the University of California at Berkeley. After the birth of Maya, she dropped from sight, leaving both girls in the care of their father. Bonno briefly made contact with a family member following the death of Ann from polio in 1946, but no one in the family heard from her again.⁵⁸

In her final letter to Katharine, apparently penned sometime in 1967, Bonno revealed that she had taken the surname Fortier and had four more children, beginning in 1948. She listed them as (Fentress) Noël Fortier; Richard Noel Fortier (Seth); (Martha) Jeanne Fortier; and Charles Stephen Fortier. Bonno pointed out to Katharine that this last child was named “Charles for MY father and Stephen for YOUR father.”⁵⁹ In her preceding letter, written at the end of 1965, she also indicated that the family had lived for a time in Washington State. At the time of that writing, Fentress and Seth both lived under the care of others at a place called “The Farm” at Sylmar, California.⁶⁰ Bonno signed her last letter to Katharine, “Maya Fortier.” She apparently lived for another thirty years, for the Social Security Death Index lists a Maya Martindale Fortier, who was born 10 July 1919 and lived in Los Angeles, as dying on 17 December 1997.⁶¹

57. Henrietta [Wilson] to Katharine Martindale, 27 Feb. 1964, Box 10, Folder 10, *ibid.*

58. Sargent, *Life of Elaine Goodale Eastman*, pp. 111–12. Although Bonno and Cowper were reportedly married, no official record of the marriage has been found.

59. Maya Fortier (Bonno Hyessa) to Katharine Martindale, ca. 1967, Box 10, Folder 8, Martindale Papers.

60. Bonno Hyessa to Katharine Martindale, 1 Dec. 1965, *ibid.*

61. LaMaia Cramer, e-mail communication to Theodore D. Sargent, 12 Sept. 2008.

In addition to this factual information, Bonno's last letters to Katharine provide some insight into her feelings and outlook on life. She clearly (and understandably) harbors intense ill will towards her mother, whom she characterizes as "a dreadful miserable woman who stayed alive by harming people, particularly her children." Bonno adds, "She got started on mine *but* I was able to put a stop to it." The ill will extends to Bonno's two half-sisters, as well. "Up until a month ago," she writes, "I had not seen or heard-from either of my sisters for almost 10 years. The law also prevents *them* (at my request) from going anywhere near my children." Even Katharine herself becomes the target of Bonno's antagonism, although to a lesser extent: "My mother hated you. I doubt that her hatred was justified. However, I'm not going to turn around after she's dead & say I would love to have your favor. I would *not* love to have it."⁶²

In several respects, Bonno's later letters reveal that she shared some of the same personality traits and behaviors that her mother had exhibited: suspicion, along with feelings of persecution, misunderstanding, and outright betrayal, followed by threats to withdraw from further contact. In much the same way that Henrietta had reacted to Katharine's later attempts to assist her, Bonno rejected Katharine's offers of family heirlooms and mementos, writing, "My own children have been brought up as Friends & they would feel embarrassed to receive objects. Also, my mother was AWFUL to them & they don't want mementos of her." She bristles further at a seemingly innocuous inquiry: "As for the Eastmans—altho' it is none of your business I will tell you: my father is dead & I have nothing to do with the rest of them." Finally, Bonno suggests breaking off contact: "My man feels that it upsets me too much to go on trying to communicate with you. I feel that I & my children would be happier if you would just let us alone."⁶³

Taken together, the documents in the Katharine Martindale Family Papers shed valuable new light on the estrangement of Charles and Elaine Goodale Eastman, in some cases confirming what was already known or suspected and in others bringing entirely new information

62. Maya Fortier (Bonno Hyessa) to Katharine Martindale, ca. 1967.

63. *Ibid.*

to the fore. Prior reports have described a critical event that resulted in Charles Eastman's abrupt departure from Camp Oáhe in the summer of 1921, followed shortly thereafter by the couple's permanent separation. An illegitimate child has often been suggested as the most important factor in the separation, but until now, the primary basis for this interpretation came from the letters of Elaine Eastman to her sisters, as well as the chapter in her novel *Hundred Maples*. The identification of Henrietta Martindale and the discovery of her letters provide compelling firsthand evidence of her ongoing relationship with Charles Eastman and the fact that a daughter resulted from that relationship.

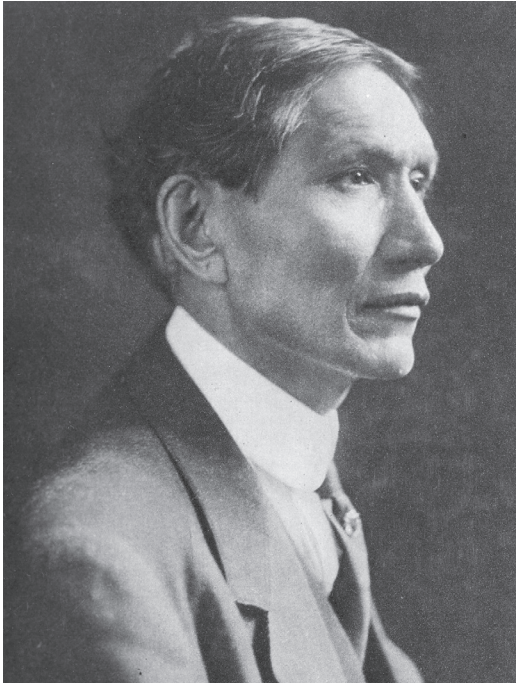
Elaine Eastman always claimed that the breakup of her marriage was based not on Charles's adultery, but on his refusal to accept responsibility for his illegitimate child.⁶⁴ The new evidence at hand suggests that this was indeed the case. Elaine repeats, in letters to Henrietta's sister, Katharine Martindale, her willingness to "forgive, stand by and help" Charles fulfill his responsibility, provided that he acknowledged his paternity.⁶⁵ Elaine further expresses a willingness to divorce Charles so that he could marry Henrietta and thereby provide a family setting for the child.

The subject of Charles Eastman, and of his responsibilities to Henrietta and Bonno, is difficult to address. In a perfect world, Charles would have acknowledged his daughter and supported her to the best of his ability. Charles, however, always denied that the child was his.⁶⁶ Perhaps more importantly, no one appears to have made a formal request for his support. Without such a request, the issue of paternity never arose. Elaine tried to put moral pressure on Charles to do the "right thing," but to no effect. There was also the question of his ability to pay, even if he had been compelled to do so. Charles was clearly nearing the end of his working days, and his income was limited to small royalties from the sales of his earlier books (he wrote no books after his separation from Elaine in 1921) and fees for the occasional lecture or talk. Indeed, the evidence suggests that Charles was unable to

64. Sargent, *Life of Elaine Goodale Eastman*, p. 112.

65. Eastman to Martindale, 8 Jan. 1926.

66. *Ibid.*



While Charles Eastman was lauded as a respected author and cultural ambassador, his actions reveal a more complex personality.

support himself in his later years and required financial assistance from his son.⁶⁷

Unfortunately, Charles Eastman appears to have made no record in the form of diaries or personal letters of his thoughts on the matter, leaving one to wonder how he viewed his own circumstances. Eastman was well aware of the consequences adulterers faced in traditional Sioux culture,⁶⁸ but he may not have been so certain about mores in his adopted culture. During his school days in the West, he wrote in his autobiography, “I had learned to reverence New England . . . as the home of culture and art, of morality and Christianity.” When he moved east to study at Dartmouth, however, he “met society people of an entirely dif-

67. Elaine Goodale Eastman to Rose Goodale Dayton, 3 Feb. 1936, Eastman-Goodale-Dayton Papers.

68. Charles A. Eastman, *The Soul of the Indian: An Interpretation* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1911), pp. 65–66.

ferent sort to those I had hitherto taken as American types.” In particular, he confessed to being “struck with the audacity and forwardness of the women.” Eastman further admitted to being “astonished to learn that some women whom I had observed to accept the most marked attentions from the men were married ladies.” One senses some disapproval, as well, when he described “pretty women clad so scantily” at dances during his student days in Boston.⁶⁹ Perhaps he had absorbed a dual view of women from his white classmates that divided the world into “good” girls and “bad” girls; or those that should be treated with respect (and eventually married), and those that could be treated otherwise. Some such distinction seems to have motivated the words that Elaine Eastman, in *Hundred Maples*, puts into Jim’s (Charles’s) mouth when his wife suggests that he marry Cara (Henrietta): “Men don’t marry that kind of woman.”⁷⁰

Even if marrying Henrietta was out of the question for Charles, the issue of financial responsibility remains. One might assume that he had to have known that Henrietta and Bonno were in dire financial straits during the time that he kept in contact with them. According to Henrietta, she saw Charles on a number of occasions between 1919 and 1925, both at her lodge in the Indiana Dunes and at a hotel in Chicago. There is no evidence, however, that Henrietta asked Charles for financial assistance. Whatever pressure she did apply seems to have been directed toward Elaine, at first in an attempt to have the Eastmans adopt Bonno, and later in the form of requests for money. Somehow, Henrietta envisioned the Eastmans remaining together, and such might have been the case had Charles admitted his responsibility to Elaine. As common sense might have predicted, however, this adoption never occurred. Still, Henrietta continued to absolve Charles of financial responsibility, or, in Elaine’s words, “to shield Dr. Eastman from blame to an extreme which seems irrational.”⁷¹

Henrietta’s role in this entire matter is, in a word, confusing. Clearly, she was a troubled woman, and any analysis in those terms lies well

69. Charles A. Eastman, *From the Deep Woods to Civilization: Chapters in the Autobiography of an Indian* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1916), pp. 72–73.

70. Eastman, *Hundred Maples*, p. 212.

71. Eastman to Martindale, 8 Jan. 1926.

beyond the scope of this article. Yet, despite her often erratic behavior, there are certain constants in her outlook and actions that appear to have played a critical role in determining her fate. For one, she seems to have displayed a remarkable combination of need, trust, and loyalty towards the men in her life, especially, perhaps, towards Charles Eastman, whom she apparently idolized. This tendency may account for her unwillingness to hold him accountable for Bonno's welfare or even, perhaps, to make him aware of their need. In fact, Henrietta may have given money to Charles, as Paul Wilson asserted in a letter he wrote to Katharine Martindale from San Quentin Prison in 1939. Referring to an episode that happened after Diana's birth in 1928, Wilson wrote: "She had \$95.00 when she left me (my pay check from the Sullivan Mach. Co.). . . . [Two weeks later] she did not have a cent. She often got rid of money the same way before, by watching I found she was giving it to Hyessa." This same letter details a liaison between Henrietta and Charles that occurred in Chicago in the mid-1920s: "Not 2 weeks after we were married I found that she went to the hotel La Salle to see Mr. Eastman. . . . She stayed with him for 1 night, next day she asked me to let him come live with us. I to stay in the little place in the woods. She to live at the lodge with her [lover]. I refused. And told her I'd kill him if I ever caught him near the place. Him a married man too. And the father of Bonno."⁷²

Meanwhile, Henrietta continued her dangerous downward slide, both physically and mentally. The estrangement from her sister Katharine that stemmed in part from misunderstandings relating to their father's estate may have produced a sense of isolation (though largely self-imposed) that played an important role in her decision to marry Paul Wilson. This action further alienated Henrietta from her family and friends and led to a life of almost unimaginable poverty and misery for everyone concerned. At the time, however, Henrietta may have viewed the marriage as a way to provide some legitimacy, and the possibility of some financial support, for Bonno.

The question of the extent to which Henrietta's increasingly unstable mental condition might have been attributable to the stresses in-

72. Wilson to Katharine Martindale, 17 Mar. 1939, Box 10, Folder 2, *ibid.*

herent in giving birth to and raising an illegitimate child largely alone again raises the issue of Charles Eastman's culpability. What might he have done? He could have admitted that he was the father of Bonno, remained married to Elaine, and raised the child within his own family. Inevitably, however, the question of appearances to the outside world would arise, to say nothing of the disruption such an arrangement would cause in the existing family dynamics. Bonno clearly could not have been the Eastmans' own child, and an adoption would likely serve to confirm what many suspected regarding Charles's role in fathering the child. Remaining in the marriage under these circumstances was probably unthinkable for Charles.

Similarly, divorcing Elaine and marrying Henrietta would have been tantamount to admitting infidelity. There is also the question of whether Henrietta's father would have accepted such a marriage. He, too, would have been aware of appearances, and his attitude towards Charles, a man his own age and an American Indian, will never be known. Charles seems never to have seriously considered this option.

Another possibility, that of Charles providing financial support to Henrietta while staying married to Elaine but retaining separate living arrangements, was complicated by the fact that Elaine had always run the family finances and, indeed, often remarked on her husband's ineptitude when it came to matters involving money. Unfortunately, this inability to manage financial affairs seems to have continued after the separation, with Charles showing little, if any, budgetary restraint or accountability. In fact, he failed to share any of his royalties with Elaine, as he had promised at the time they separated, and he frequently ran up bills that his son eventually had to pay.⁷³

In the end, Charles Eastman seems to have followed the path of least resistance, which often involved doing nothing, throughout this entire affair. In this sense, his actions, following an initial sin of commission, might best be described in terms of sins of omission. Rendering any judgment of Eastman in this case is difficult, however. His life history involved two exceedingly different cultures, and in both worlds, his social situation was most unusual. In the Indian world of his youth,

73. Elaine Goodale Eastman to Rose Goodale Dayton, 3 Feb. 1936.

he grew up without the consistent presence of either a mother or father and undoubtedly missed out on some important aspects of family socialization. His later entry into the white world was almost entirely restricted to a highly educated and well-to-do subset of that society with complex and unfamiliar social mores. Moreover, there are no written records that reveal any of his own views on the matters considered here. In a real sense, then, little can be determined concerning what might be described as Eastman's sense of "morality" and especially, perhaps, his attitudes regarding gender, sex, and family issues. That being said, however, there can be no doubt that Eastman knew that Henrietta Martindale was rearing their child under extremely trying circumstances, and his failure to acknowledge them or to provide assistance reveals a human weakness—perhaps best described as emotional detachment—in this particular episode. The reasons behind this shortcoming, in an otherwise noteworthy life, must await further investigation.

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