

Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din and two companions settle in the Woking Mosque, August 1913

In early summer 1913 Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din wrote in a letter to the Ahmadiyya community newspaper *Badr* in Qadian, India, that he would soon set up his mission at the Mosque in Woking. He wrote:

“Brethren! Allah willing, that time is very near when you will hear the good news from me that I am permanently settled in a place where five times a day the *Azan* is called out loudly and prayer is held. ... The first part of the prayers which I said in the locked-up Woking Mosque four months ago is shortly to attain fulfilment. Of course, this is a time for prayer. God is providing the resources so that this worthless person will sit in a place which the whole world can see as a recognisable centre for the propagation of Islam. Up to now my work has been done privately, and perhaps even a neighbour did not know of its true value.”¹

It would be on **12th August 1913** that Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, along with two companions, settled in the Woking Mosque. It was **the 9th of the month of Ramadan**. His helper who had recently arrived, Shaikh Nur Ahmad, wrote a letter dated 15th August to the editor of *Paigham Sulh* in which he reported:

“How could I have ever come to England! It was a passion which drew me here. I met the honoured Khwaja sahib and said: According to your instructions I have arrived here ‘up and down’ [refers to the sea journey], and there is one burning desire in my heart, that in the land of non-Muslims I should deliver the *azan* like Bilal, may Allah be pleased with him. Khwaja sahib re-assured me, saying: ‘God has provided the resources. Shortly a mosque will come under our charge, and if it does then the *azan* will be called out from it. You should pray for it.’

The town of Woking is 25 miles south-west of London, where there is a small, beautiful mosque which was built about 30 years ago by Mr Leitner. This mosque was placed under our charge by order of the guardians and trustees of the mosque, and we have come here.

So on the 9th of Ramadan I delivered the *azan* in the mosque.

This is a greatly blessed month, and it was a blessed day when, in this abode of unbelief, God the Most High granted a man of an average tongue like me the opportunity to deliver the *azan*. We pray with the utmost humility and sincerity to God that He enliven this mosque, make it blessed for the followers of Islam and for us, make the light of Islam shine over this land, and lastly that, O God, let not this mosque be locked up as it was before.

It is now four days since we have been delivering the *azan* and praying as a congregation five times a day. — Nur Ahmad”²

Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din himself expressed his feelings as follows:

“I am wondering if this is a dream or reality. In England, which is a place of worship of false beliefs, there is a mosque locked up for 25 years. Its builder, God have mercy on him, decides to have *Sura Ikhlas* written above the *mihrab*, thinking that perhaps through this mosque the worship of God Who ‘is One, on Whom all depend, Who begets not nor is He begotten’ will be taught. These people are, after all, progeny of the ‘People of the Cave’. Maybe Allah will again raise righteous ones among the progeny of the righteous.

How fortunate is Shaikh Nur Ahmad, who for the first time in the history of the world delivers the obligatory *azan* in this land five times a day. His loud sounding of *Allahu Akbar* brings joy to the heart. When I sit in the mosque after prayer, I feel a state of ecstasy, saying, God, is this England, or Qadian, or Ahmadiyya Buildings [Lahore]? ‘My Lord, leave me not alone. You are the best of inheritors’ [the Quran, 21:89].”³

The first Friday prayer at the Mosque was said on 15th August 1913. In a letter dated 22nd August, to Maulana Nur-ud-Din, Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din wrote:

“What grace of God it is, that from India four and a half million Rupees were spent in the construction of a mosque and a hall, and only a few months before my arrival it became a trust, and I took charge. Those who ponder can see the purposeful hand of God behind it. Today is the second Friday when we are going to pray in this mosque. At present there are only three of us. May Allah soon increase the congregation. Sir, please pray for this.

Around the mosque and my house there is a large, pleasant garden, and greenery all around. Perhaps not even a very wealthy millionaire would have such an extensive garden. This is all due to the grace of God and your prayers, sir.”⁴

Footnotes:

1. *Badr*, 10–17 July 1913, p. 3.
2. *Paigham Sulh*, 2 September 1913, p. 3.
3. *Badr*, 2 October 1913, p. 3.
4. *Badr*, 4–11 September 1913, p. 3.