

Some New Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation

II. The Case of Bishen Chand¹

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INTRODUCTION

This case is an important one for several reasons. First, most of what the subject said about the previous life was recorded in writing (by K. K. N. Sahay, a lawyer, and a person detached from the subject and his family) before verifications were attempted. Secondly, I have been able to assemble a considerable amount of information about the previous personality of the case and compare this with information obtained about the conduct of the subject both in his childhood and in adulthood. Since the subject, Bishen Chand, was born in 1921, I have information about his development up to middle adulthood. Moreover, since the previous personality was wealthy and the present personality born in poverty, the case, if provisionally considered best interpreted by reincarnation, is outstanding as an instance of "demotion" with regard to socio-economic circumstances. Because the previous personality was a sensuous dissolute and a murderer, the case naturally stimulates conjectures among Hindus and Buddhists about the contribution his misbehavior may have played in bringing about the "demotion." Beyond mentioning this last aspect here, however, I do not intend to discuss it in the present article since it is best considered when a large number of cases can be examined together.

SUMMARY OF THE CASE AND ITS INVESTIGATION

Bishen Chand was born in Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh, on February 7, 1921. His parents were B. Ram Ghulam, a railway clerk, and his wife, Kunti Devi. He had an older brother, Bipan Chand (born

¹ In the July, 1972, issue of the *Journal* we published "The Case of Rajul Shah," which will appear, with additional explanatory and background material, in a new book of case reports by Dr. Stevenson tentatively entitled *Forty Cases of the Reincarnation Type*. "The Case of Bishen Chand," in somewhat more detailed form, will also appear in the forthcoming book.—Ed.

² I wish to thank Dr. Jamuna Prasad, Dr. L. P. Mehrotra and Mr. K. S. Rawat of the Bureau of Psychology, and the Indian Institute of Parapsychology, Allahabad, U. P. for valuable assistance in the investigation of this case. I am indebted also to Professor P. Pal for making available to me his notes of his long interview with B. Ram Ghulam, the subject's father and for other assistance. Mr. S. K. Singh and Mr. V. K. Sharma acted as interpreters for me during two interviews.

about 1914) and an older sister, Kamla (born about 1908). Another brother died in early childhood. Bishen Chand's mother visited the temple of Vishwa Nath in Benares before conceiving him, and, from a sense of gratitude for her pregnancy, she called her son Vishwa Nath. He was known by this nickname during childhood, but gradually adopted his correct name of Bishen Chand.³

When Bishen Chand was only ten months old and just barely able to speak he was heard by his family uttering the word "Pilvit" or "Pilivit." Pilibhit is the name of a large town about 50 kilometers east and slightly north of Bareilly, but the family had no connections there and the name conveyed nothing to them. Gradually, as Bishen Chand gained the power of speech, he began to speak of a previous life in Pilibhit. He mentioned many details of the previous life including the name he said he then had, Laxmi Narain, and that of a man he described as "uncle" Har Narain. He said his father was a zamindar.⁴

When Bishen Chand was about four years old his father took him and his older brother, Bipan Chand, to a wedding party at Golda, another town beyond Pilibhit. As they were returning to Bareilly, Bishen Chand heard the station of Pilibhit announced. He then demanded to get off the train, saying he "used to live here." His request was refused and he cried on the way back to Bareilly.

Some eighteen months later B. Ram Ghulam happened to mention the statements of his child about a previous life to another man, who in turn informed K.K.N. Sahay, a lawyer of Bareilly. Sahay was at that time (in the summer of 1926) investigating the case of his own son, Jagdish Chandra, and he became interested in Bishen Chand's case also. He went to see Bishen Chand and recorded in writing some of his statements about the previous life in Pilibhit. He persuaded B. Ram Ghulam to undertake with him a visit to Pilibhit for the verification of the child's statements. Bishen Chand (and his brother Bipan Chand) went with the two men to Pilibhit on August 1, 1926.

In Pilibhit Bishen Chand recognized various places and made additional statements about the previous life. The statements and recognitions were found to correspond almost exactly with facts in the life of a young man called Laxmi Narain who had died in 1918, a little more than two years before the birth of Bishen Chand.

³ In the published report of K. K. N. Sahay, from which I shall quote below, the subject is referred to as Vishwa Nath, the "pet name" he was generally given in childhood. I have not changed this given name in quoting Sahay's report. The family or caste name is Kapoor, but, as is customary in India, I shall not use it in referring to members of the family. Similarly I shall refer to Bishen Chand's older sister simply as Kamla without giving her full married name, Kamla Mehrotra.

⁴ Zamindars were formerly large landowners and tax collectors in India, and thus wealthy persons.

In a published report (1), K. K. N. Sahay included many details of the statements and recognitions relating to the previous life made by Bishen Chand before and during the first visit to Pilibhit.

During my first visit to India in 1961, I became interested in pursuing the investigation of this case. Unfortunately, at that time I was unable to meet Bishen Chand or members of his family. In 1964, however, I had two interviews with his older brother, Bipan Chand, and a short one with his sister-in-law, Bipan Chand's wife, Shyam Rani. Later in the same year, Professor Pal met B. Ram Ghulam, Bishen Chand's father, in Bareilly. B. Ram Ghulam was then eighty-two years old, but seemingly still possessed of an excellent memory. Professor Pal took down as he spoke a long statement which confirmed and supplemented the information published by K. K. N. Sahay and also obtained by me from other informants. (B. Ram Ghulam died in 1966; his wife, Bishen Chand's mother, had died in 1948.) Finally, in 1969 I met Bishen Chand himself and had a long interview with him at his home in Bareilly. (He works during weekdays as an excise tax collector in another town, Rampur, which accounts for my inability to meet him during earlier visits to India.) In 1971 I met him again and we had a further long talk about his memories and the possible connections between the previous life and events in his life.

PERSONS INTERVIEWED DURING THE INVESTIGATION

In Lucknow, U. P., I interviewed:

Bipan Chand, Bishen Chand's older brother
Shyam Rani, Bipan Chand's wife
Kamla, Bishen Chand's older sister

In Bareilly I interviewed:

Bishen Chand

In Pilibhit I interviewed:

Rajendra Mohan, Laxmi Narain's second cousin

In Bareilly Professor P. Pal interviewed:

B. Ram Ghulam, Bishen Chand's father

RELEVANT FACTS OF GEOGRAPHY AND POSSIBLE NORMAL MEANS OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE FAMILIES CONCERNED

Bareilly is a large city (now of perhaps half a million persons) in western Uttar Pradesh. Pilibhit is a large town (of perhaps 50,000 persons) approximately fifty kilometers east of Bareilly.

The cities are (and were in 1926) joined by a railway line (as well as a road) and there is naturally much traffic between them.

Bishen Chand's family had no connections whatever with Pilibhit or the family to which Bishen Chand referred. Members of his family had, however, on at least one occasion (already mentioned) passed through Pilibhit on the train. According to Bipan Chand, however, they had never stopped at the city prior to the first visit for the verifications of Bishen Chand's statements in 1926.

During the visit for verifications in Pilibhit, K. K. N. Sahay learned that B. Upendra Narain, the brother of the previous personality's mother, lived in Bareilly with his wife. His house, I learned later, was in the quarter of Bareilly where the school attended by Bishen Chand was located. But the two homes (of B. Ram Ghulam and B. Upendra Narain) were about two kilometers apart. B. Upendra Narain's sister, Laxmi Narain's mother, was still living in Pilibhit during the first half of 1926, but she came to Bareilly from time to time to visit her brother and not long after Bishen Chand's first visit to Pilibhit she moved to Bareilly and remained there with her brother. It is therefore conceivable that information about Laxmi Narain was diffused somehow in Bareilly from Laxmi Narain's mother and uncle⁵ and that such information somehow reached Bishen Chand and furnished him with the materials for imagining that he had been Laxmi Narain in a previous life. I think we can be certain, however, that the route of such normally transmitted information was completely unknown (up to August 1, 1926) to B. Ram Ghulam and K. K. N. Sahay. For if they had known of the existence in Bareilly of the uncle of the previous personality, or of the occasional visits to Bareilly of the mother, they would certainly have sought them out to verify the statements of the child before undertaking a trip to Pilibhit to do so. I regard the fact that they went first to Pilibhit as almost proof of complete ignorance on the part of Bishen Chand's family of any facts connected with the life of Laxmi Narain.

Further evidence of a lack of prior acquaintance between the two families comes from the fact (as will be seen from Sahay's report) that Bishen Chand's family only definitely identified the family to which he referred when, during the first visit to Pilibhit, he recognized Laxmi Narain and his father in a photograph that was shown to him there. They then learned that Har Narain was Laxmi Narain's father, not his uncle.

⁵ These persons by no means conclude the list of those who knew Laxmi Narain and who lived in Bareilly. As will be seen in the report of K. K. N. Sahay, a teacher of Laxmi Narain's time in Pilibhit, Sita Ram, had since moved to Bareilly where in 1926 he was teaching in a school there.

In addition to the foregoing, B. Ram Ghulam stated that Bishen Chand had begun to talk about Pilibhit and his life there when he could still not speak clearly. Even at ten months he was muttering "Pilvit" indistinctly. And he was talking in some detail about the previous life when still under three years old, an age when he would be most unlikely to have come into contact with any strangers without this fact being known to his parents.

THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF LAXMI NARAIN

Readers will find the detailed account given later of Bishen Chand's statements and recognitions more intelligible if I here describe the life and character of Laxmi Narain, the previous personality to whom the statements of Bishen Chand referred. I have not myself interviewed any member of Laxmi Narain's family who knew him. In 1971 I met in Pilibhit Rajendra Mohan, a grandson of Laxmi Narain's paternal uncle and therefore Laxmi Narain's second cousin, but Rajendra Mohan was born several years after Laxmi Narain's death. I have therefore had to base my account of him on the information furnished by K. K. N. Sahay and also by Bishen Chand's father and older brother, who had talked with members of the previous family and with other persons of Pilibhit who remembered Laxmi Narain.

Laxmi Narain was the only son of a wealthy landowner, Har Narain, who spoiled his son and encouraged him in a taste for luxury and extravagance. Laxmi Narain dropped out of school after the sixth class which he ordinarily should have attained at the age of about twelve. But B. Ram Ghulam learned that Laxmi Narain only left school after the death of his father, which occurred when the boy was seventeen or eighteen years old. He must have been a most desultory student if he had only reached the sixth class by the age of seventeen. Probably Laxmi Narain continued afterwards with some private education or self-instruction since he apparently had learned Urdu.⁶

When Laxmi Narain's father died he left his son a substantial inheritance. Thereafter Laxmi Narain freely indulged his fondness for good food, fine clothes, beautiful women, and alcohol. He seems to have had no settled occupation other than these pleasures, but at one period he worked in the railway service although we do not

⁶ Urdu is a variant of Hindi written in Arabic script and including many words of Persian and Arabic origin. The British favored Urdu during their period in India and required civil servants to use it. Since Laxmi Narain worked in the railway service at one time, I infer that he must have known Urdu, as Bishen Chand claimed he did.

know for how long. He engaged in a lawsuit with relatives over family property.

Har Narain had been a generous person who gave freely to charities. His fortune was much reduced when he died and Laxmi Narain continued its dispersal so that at his death his mother had almost nothing to live on and was forced eventually to move in with her brother, B. Upendra Narain. The family house became dilapidated and was partly in ruins by 1926.

Laxmi Narain had a special attachment for a prostitute, Padma, and regarded her as reserved for himself. He also seems to have had a quick temper. One day he saw another man coming out of Padma's apartment. Instantly he seized a gun carried by his servant who was with him and shot the man dead. Laxmi Narain then hid in the house or compound of his home. Probably through bribery the case against him was hushed up and after a time he emerged from hiding. If an allusion to a lawsuit in K. K. N. Sahay's report refers, as I think it does, to legal maneuvering connected with this murder, it occurred in 1918. Soon after this event Laxmi Narain moved to another town, Shahjehanpur (also in Uttar Pradesh) where he remained until his death in December, 1918, at the age (probably) of thirty-two.

The reader should not suppose that the character of Laxmi Narain was one of unrelieved vice. On the contrary, the testimony of contemporaries tells about his great generosity. He was known sometimes to give his own food to beggars. B. Ram Ghulam learned that Laxmi Narain had given 500 rupees (an enormous sum in those days) to a Muslim watch dealer as an advance with which to begin his business.

THE REPORT OF K. K. N. SAHAY

I shall next quote almost the entire report of the case published by K. K. N. Sahay (1). To facilitate reading and understanding the report, I have changed the order of one section, omitted some irrelevant material, and here and there modified the phrasing without changing the meaning. Much of the published report consists of a reprinting of two long letters sent by Sahay to the national newspaper, "The Leader." The dates of publication of these letters as given in Sahay's report are August 12, 1926, and August 30, 1926.

Vishwa Nath [Bishen Chand] was born on February 7, 1921 in Mohalla [quarter] Khannu, Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh. He began to ask about Pilibhit when he was a year and a half old. He asked the distance between Pilibhit and Bareilly and wanted to know when his

father would take him there. When he was three years old he began to give a detailed account of himself. The parents were afraid and tried to hide these strange facts. There is a superstition that such children do not live long and the sooner they forget the better for them.

I very recently heard of this case from Thakur Moti Singh, Vakil [attorney] and ex-member, Legislative Council, and went to see B. Ram Ghulam [Vishwa Nath's father] and Vishwa Nath on June 29 [1926]. I persuaded B. Ram Ghulam to go to Pilibhit to verify the facts and offered to accompany him.

I had taken down the story of Vishwa Nath on my first visit to him and had to verify only the following facts. . . He had given his uncle's [of the previous life] name as Har Narain,⁷ Caste Kayasth, Mohalla Ganj, City Pilibhit, and his age as 20 years [at death]. He said he was unmarried. He said his neighbour was. . . Sunder Lal, who had a green gate, a sword, and a gun, and had nautch [dancing] parties in the courtyard of his house. He described his own house as a double-story building with separate apartments for ladies and gentlemen. He described singing parties and feasts which were frequently held at his house. He also described his great fondness for wine, rohu fish, and nautch [dancing] girls. He said he had studied up to the Class VI in the Government School near the river and knew Urdu, Hindi, and English. He described a thakurdwara [shrine room] in his house. . .

We [B. Ram Ghulam, Bishen Chand, Bipan Chand, and Sahay] went to Pilibhit on Sunday, August 1, [1926]. We went directly to the Government High School, Pilibhit, which the boy did not recognize as his school. The present building of the School is new and was recently erected. I requested the Headmaster, Sahib Babu⁸ Asharfi Lal, to help me in the investigation which he kindly did and [he] accompanied us to the various places.

When we reached the gate of the late Sahu⁹ Shyam Sunder Lal, the boy got down from the tonga [carriage] and recognized. . . the green gate of Sunder Lal. He also pointed to the courtyard where nautch parties were held. This was corroborated by the neighbouring shopkeepers. I saw the gate myself. It had a green varnish which had grown faint by lapse of time. Then we went to the house of the late Debi Prasad, Rais,¹⁰ which the boy recognized as his house. He shouted that that was the house of Har Narain. Har Narain was the son of Debi Prasad. Portions of this big old house have fallen and the building has been abandoned by the family. The neighbours told

⁷ Har Narain was the father, not the uncle of Laxmi Narain. For a possible explanation of how the word "uncle" became attached to him by Bishen Chand, see p. 383, fn. 18.

⁸ "Sahib" is an honorific meaning approximately "Sir." "Babu" (or "Bapu") meaning "father" is sometimes also used as an honorific for elderly and respected persons.

⁹ A "sahu" is a businessman, especially a private banker.

¹⁰ The British often conferred the honorary titles of "Rais" and "Rajah" on wealthy or other prominent persons whom they wished to honor or whose support they wished to cultivate.

us that the place had undergone a great change. The boy recognized the building. . . and the place where they used to drink wine, eat rohu fish, and hear the songs of nautch girls. The boy was questioned regarding the situation of the staircase which he pointed out correctly, among the heap of bricks and mud. He then recognized the zenana apartments¹¹ and specially mentioned a room on the upper story which ladies occupied.

An old and faint photograph of Har Narain and his son was brought by the sole surviving member of the family, Babu Brij Mohan Lal, who lives in a separate house. In the presence of a big crowd the boy put his finger on the photograph of Har Narain and said, "Here is Har Narain and here I," pointing to the photograph of a boy seated on a chair in the photograph. This was most remarkable and immediately established his identity as Laxmi Narain, son of Babu Har Narain.

We next took him to the old Government High School which the boy at once recognized as his school and went round it. He swiftly began to ascend the staircase which is situated in the right-hand corner. I and three men followed him up. On reaching the topmost roof he pointed out the River Deuha which was flowing on the back side.

The boy was next questioned about the place where class VI was held in his time. He pointed out a room which was admitted to be correct by his two old class-fellows of class VI, Babu Bishambar Nath, whose old photograph was recognized by the boy, and Babu Ram Ghulam¹² of Pilibhit who came out of the assembled crowd. The old class-fellows asked him the name of the teacher. He described him as a fat bearded man whose name was given by the crowd as M. Moin-ud-din of Shahjehanpur. In the house (of the previous personality) he had correctly pointed out the old thakurdwara which he had mentioned before.

The boy was given a pair of tablas [drums] on which he played with ease. His father, B. Ram Ghulam, informed me that the boy never previously saw the tablas in his life time. The name of the prostitute with whom the boy associated in his previous life was repeatedly asked by. . . people [in the crowd]. He reluctantly mentioned the name "Padma" which the people certified as correct.

Laxmi Narain, son of Babu Har Narain, died at Shahjehanpur on December 15, 1918, at 6 A.M. of fever and lung trouble. His age at the time of death was 32 years and 11 days. He died after a protracted illness of five months. I am indebted to B. Upendra Narain, the maternal uncle of Laxmi Narain, for the above information. He also writes¹³ that the boy, Vishwa Nath [Bishen Chand] has narrated several incidents which were forgotten by members of the family. . .

¹¹ These are the female quarters of a house. In fact, Bishen Chand used the Urdu word "masurate," instead of the Hindi word "zenana" familiar in his family.

¹² This former schoolmate of Laxmi Narain should not be confused with B. Ram Ghulam, Bishen Chand's father.

¹³ Since B. Upendra Narain lived in Bareilly at this time (1926), this reference to writing can only mean that K. K. N. Sahay persuaded him to write out a report

The character of Laxmi Narain was very gay. He loved wine, flesh, and women.

The mother of Laxmi Narain is living¹⁴ at Bareilly with her brother, B. Upendra Narain. The boy was taken to her and she put the following test questions to the boy and became convinced that he is the reincarnation of her late lamented son:

Q. Did you fly kites?

A. Yes.

Q. With whom did you contest [in kite flying]?¹⁵

A. I contested with every kite that came in my range, but particularly I contested with Sunder Lal.

Q. Did you throw away my achar [pickle]?

A. I did throw away the achar, but how was it possible to eat worms? You wanted me to eat worms, hence I threw your achar away.

Note [by K. K. N. Sahay]: The mother says that once her pickles got rotten and she had worms in her jars. She threw the worms out, but kept the pickles in the sun. Laxmi Narain threw the pickles away, much to her annoyance.

Q. Did you ever enter into the service?

A. Yes, I served for some time in the Oudh Railway.

Q. Who was your servant?

A. My servant was Maikua, a black, short-statured Kahar.¹⁶ He was my favorite khansama [cook].

Q. You used to sleep on a bamboo charpoy¹⁷ with no bedding? (This question was put by B. Balbir Singh of Killa, Bareilly.)

A. You never saw my bed. I had a good bed with an ornamental plank towards the head side and had a qalin [thick cover] on it, and I kept two pillows under the head and two under my feet.

Q. What did I teach at Pilibhit? (This question was put by Sita Ram, now a teacher of the Government School, Bareilly, who was formerly a teacher at Pilibhit.)

A. You taught Hindi.

Bishen Chand called Har Narain his Tau [uncle]. There is a gentleman living in the quarter [of Bareilly] who is universally called Har Narain Tau [i.e., "uncle" Har Narain]; hence the epithet imperceptibly suggested itself to the child.¹⁸

of what he knew of the life of Laxmi Narain as well as an account of some additional statements made by Bishen Chand on later occasions of meeting the previous family.

¹⁴ It is my understanding that at this time (August, 1926) Laxmi Narain's mother had not yet moved to Bareilly, and so could be better described as "staying" with her brother in Bareilly, rather than "living" with him, which she did later.

¹⁵ Contests with kites are a favorite sport in India and other parts of south Asia. A contestant tries with his kite to entangle or cut the string of an opponent's kite.

¹⁶ Kahars are a low caste group who work in kitchens or at other domestic duties.

¹⁷ A charpoy is a simple bed consisting of four short wooden posts with jute cords or sometimes canvas strips. Charpoys are the usual beds of poor persons in India, and sometimes of more prosperous ones also. This question was deliberately asked to test Bishen Chand's knowledge of the luxury in which Laxmi Narain lived.

¹⁸ Some Indian children pick up the habit of using for a parent the name, e.g.,

The boy remembers the name of Sahu Shyam Sunder Lal as Sunder Lal.

B. Jwala Prasad, Vakil [attorney] of Bareilly, referred to his diary. He finds that in 1918 he defended Laxmi Narain of Pilibhit in a criminal case under Section 193, Indian Penal Code, which was the offshoot of another case which took place at the house of Padma the prostitute, in which Laxmi Narain took part and gave evidence.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS MADE BY BISHEN CHAND

K. K. N. Sahay performed a most valuable service in recording some of Bishen Chand's statements *before* beginning their verification. He actually recorded (or at any rate published) less than half of Bishen Chand's statements. To those he did publish we can add others that Bishen Chand made during the visit to Pilibhit and soon afterwards, as well as still others about which I learned from the interviews with Bishen Chand's father, brother, and sister. These additional statements, together with one told me by Bishen Chand himself, I have included along with those recorded by Sahay in Tabulation One (see below). These latter statements do not have the same evidential force as the ones Sahay recorded before verification. Nor do they have the same value as those other items which he recorded in writing within a few weeks of the visit to Pilibhit (August 1, 1926) when he sent letters to the newspaper which were published on the dates mentioned above. Skeptics may consider the items reported many years later in interviews with Professor Pal and myself during the 1960's as embellishments added later by the witnesses. The testimonies of Bishen Chand's father, brother, and sister were (with the usual small discrepancies about details) concordant in three independent interviews, but I cannot exclude the possibility that this agreement arose from their having discussed the case together, perhaps often, over the years.

The murder of a rival lover by Laxmi Narain is the most important additional detail not described in Sahay's report, but hinted at there in the reference to a criminal court case. Bishen Chand's statements about this murder were well known to his brother and sister. Bishen Chand himself said in 1969 that he still vividly remembered the incident. I believe Sahay knew all about the murder in 1926, but did not publish the facts out of a wish not to offend surviving members of Laxmi Narain's family and perhaps also out of consideration for Bishen Chand's family.

"uncle," which they hear older children of the same extended family using to address the parent. In this way it is conceivable (although unverified) that Laxmi Narain had the habit of calling his father "uncle."

SUMMARY OF STATEMENTS AND RECOGNITIONS MADE BY
BISHEN CHAND

We have altogether 46 statements about the previous life made by Bishen Chand listed in Tabulation One. Of these 46, K. K. N. Sahay wrote down 21 before verification was attempted, and of these 21 statements, 15 were verified. Six were not verified or else Sahay's report and the later informants did not mention the verification. Some of these were almost certainly correct, but we cannot say this except from inference. Bishen Chand made all but one of the remaining 25 statements either during the visit to Pilibhit or in subsequent meetings between the families and other persons concerned soon afterwards. Bishen Chand told me Item 38 himself in 1969.

Nearly all Bishen Chand's statements were correct. Only two in fact were clearly wrong. These were his statements about the quarter (mohalla) of Pilibhit in which the house was located (Item 5) and the age of Laxmi Narain at the time of his death (Item 46).

Item 2 was partly wrong, in that Bishen Chand gave Har Narain's name correctly, but wrongly called him "uncle." As already mentioned, this may have been a childhood habit of Laxmi Narain carried over into the memories of Bishen Chand (see p. 383, fn. 18).

K. K. N. Sahay mentioned in his report a number of recognitions of places and people made by Bishen Chand. And in the 1960's members of his family described several other recognitions that he had made. Since these add little to the evidence of the case I shall not describe them in detail. The most important probably was Bishen Chand's indication of the place where Laxmi Narain's father had some hidden treasure. After the death of Har Narain it was thought that he had left treasure, hidden somewhere, but no one knew, or told, where.¹⁹ Laxmi Narain's mother asked Bishen Chand where the treasure was and he led the way to a room. The treasure was found later in this room. The informant for this event, Bipan Chand, did not say that Bishen Chand was able to show the exact spot where the treasure was hidden, but his indication of the correct room was a sufficient stimulus for a new and successful search.

¹⁹ People in Asia frequently place money, jewelry, or other valuable property in the ground or in hidden recesses of the walls and floors of houses. The motives for such concealment include distrust of banks, dislike of taxes, concern about inflation, fear of thieves, and simple miserliness. The owners usually intend to tell someone else before they die where the treasure is, but sometimes they die without doing so. In the present case it seems that Har Narain, before he died, told Laxmi Narain where the treasure was, but Laxmi Narain told no one else before he died. The habit of burying or concealing money and other valuables is not confined to persons of wealth.

Tabulation One
SUMMARY OF STATEMENTS MADE BY BISHEN CHAND

Item ¹	Informants ²	Verification ³	Comments
1. His name was Laxmi Narain.	Bipan Chand, Bishen Chand's older brother	K. K. N. Sahay	K. K. N. Sahay did not mention that Bishen Chand had given the name of Laxmi Narain before the first visit to Pilibhit.
2. His "uncle" was Har Narain.*	K. K. N. Sahay	K. K. N. Sahay	Bishen Chand referred to Laxmi Narain's father as "Uncle" Har Narain. But Har Narain was Laxmi Narain's father, not his uncle. (See p. 383, fn. 18, for a possible explanation of this error.)
3. He was of the Kayasth caste.*	K. K. N. Sahay	Bipan Chand Rajendra Mohan, Laxmi Narain's second cousin	Bishen Chand's family are of the Katri subcaste of the Kshatriya caste. Laxmi Narain's family are of the Kayasth caste.
4. He lived in Pilibhit.*	K. K. N. Sahay	K. K. N. Sahay	
5. He lived in Mohalla Ganj.*	K. K. N. Sahay	Incorrect	According to Rajendra Mohan, Har Narain's house was in Mohalla Sarai Kham, not in Mohalla Ganj, although there is a Mohalla Ganj some distance away in Pilibhit. A "mohalla" is a quarter or subdivision of a town or city.
6. His father was a zamindar [wealthy landowner].*	K. K. N. Sahay	B. Ram Ghulam, Bishen Chand's father K. K. N. Sahay	B. Ram Ghulam said (to P. Pal) that Har Narain was a prominent person of Pilibhit who had the courtesy title of "Rajah." K. K. N. Sahay stated that Laxmi Narain's family were zamindars.
7. His father died before he did.	K. K. N. Sahay	B. Ram Ghulam Bipan Chand	

¹ Items followed by an asterisk were recorded in writing by K. K. N. Sahay before verification of Bishen Chand's statements was begun. Unless otherwise stated in the *Verification* or *Comments* columns, all statements listed were correct.

² The *Informants* column lists the witnesses of what Bishen Chand said relating to the previous life, while the *Verification* column names the persons who vouch for the accuracy of what he said or did in regard to the previous personality.

8. A large crowd attended his father's funeral.	B. Ram Ghulam	B. Ram Ghulam	Har Narain was popular in Pilibhit for his charities. A huge throng of mourners followed his bier.
9. His father gave him silk clothes.*	K. K. N. Sahay	Unverified	In view of the wealth of Laxmi Narain's father, this statement was almost certainly correct.
10. He had studied up to the sixth class in the Government School.*	K. K. N. Sahay	B. Ram Ghulam K. K. N. Sahay	B. Ram Ghulam only verified that Laxmi Narain had studied Urdu, not English. I could not verify this independently, but since Laxmi Narain worked in the railway service he must have known some English and Urdu.
11. He knew Urdu, Hindi, and English.*	K. K. N. Sahay	B. Ram Ghulam	K. K. N. Sahay's report mentions a staircase recognized by Bishen Chand and an upper story where the women's quarters were.
12. His house had two stories.*	K. K. N. Sahay	K. K. N. Sahay	In the houses of wealthier persons it was customary for women to live in separate quarters called "zenana" apartments.
13. His house had separate apartments for men and women.*	K. K. N. Sahay	K. K. N. Sahay	Many houses of Hindus, especially large ones, have such shrine rooms, so this detail is not very specific.
14. There was a thakurdwara [shrine room] in the house.*	K. K. N. Sahay	K. K. N. Sahay	Nautch girls sing and dance in private or public places. They correspond roughly to the night club dancers of Western cities.
15. He used to listen to and watch nautch girls.*	K. K. N. Sahay	K. K. N. Sahay	See text for details of this gift.
16. He had established a Muslim watch dealer in business in Pilibhit.	B. Ram Ghulam	B. Ram Ghulam	I cannot find in my notes that this detail was specifically verified, but the known facts of Laxmi Narain's friendship with Padma make it almost certainly correct.
17. He used to drink wine with Padma out of a single glass.	Bipin Chand	Unverified	

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
18. His "uncle" Har Prasad had a green house.	B. Ram Ghulam	B. Ram Ghulam	Har Prasad was actually a close friend, not a real brother of Har Narain. But since in India close friends are often called "brother," it would have been natural for Laxmi Narain to call Har Prasad "uncle."
19. Har Prasad's mistress was called Hero.	B. Ram Ghulam	B. Ram Ghulam	
20. His own mistress was called Padma.	K. K. N. Sahay	K. K. N. Sahay	It does not seem that Bishen Chand mentioned her by name before he first went to Pilibhit.
21. He had a neighbor, Sunder Lal.*	K. K. N. Sahay	K. K. N. Sahay	From K. K. N. Sahay's report I infer that the house of Sunder Lal was close to that of Har Narain, but he does not say so explicitly.
22. Sunder Lal's house had a green gate.*	K. K. N. Sahay	K. K. N. Sahay	
23. Sunder Lal had a sword.*	K. K. N. Sahay	Unverified	
24. Sunder Lal had a gun.*	K. K. N. Sahay	Unverified	
25. Sunder Lal had nautch [dancing] parties in the courtyard of his house.*	K. K. N. Sahay	Unverified	
26. He used to drink wine.*	K. K. N. Sahay	K. K. N. Sahay Bipan Chand	Very probably correct, however, in view of the friendship between Sunder Lal and Laxmi Narain.
27. He liked rohu fish.*	K. K. N. Sahay	K. K. N. Sahay	
28. He had competed in kite flying with Sunder Lal.	K. K. N. Sahay	K. K. N. Sahay B. Ram Ghulam	

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|----------------|--|
| 29. He worked for a time with the Oudh Railway. | K. K. N. Sahay | K. K. N. Sahay | |
| 30. He had once thrown away some pickles of his mother. | K. K. N. Sahay | K. K. N. Sahay | See the report of K. K. N. Sahay for details of this item (p. 383). |
| 31. His servant was called Maikua. | K. K. N. Sahay | K. K. N. Sahay | According to Bipan Chand, Bishen Chand gave the name of Laxmi Narain's servant before he went to Pilibhit, but since K. K. N. Sahay had not indicated this in his report I have not listed it thus here. |
| 32. Maikua was of the Kahar caste. | K. K. N. Sahay | K. K. N. Sahay | |
| 33. Maikua was dark and short. | K. K. N. Sahay | K. K. N. Sahay | |
| 34. Maikua was also a cook. | K. K. N. Sahay | K. K. N. Sahay | |
| 35. His bed was an elegant one with a heavy covering and four pillows. | K. K. N. Sahay | K. K. N. Sahay | |
| 36. The Government School was near the river.* | K. K. N. Sahay | K. K. N. Sahay | |
| 37. He had shot and killed a man who was coming out of Padma's house. | Bipan Chand
Bishen Chand
(1969) | Bipan Chand | The lawsuit of 1918 mentioned at the end of K. K. N. Sahay's report probably arose out of this episode. |
| 38. He was drunk at the time of the murder. | Bishen Chand
(1969) | Unverified | |

<i>Item</i>	<i>Informants</i>	<i>Verification</i>	<i>Comments</i>
39. After the murder he hid out in the garden.	Bipan Chand Kamla, Bishen Chand's older sister	Unverified	Bipan Chand said Bishen Chand said he had hidden in the house.
40. His mother sent food to him when he was hiding.	Kamla	Unverified	Probably correct, however, if Laxmi Narain was hiding in the garden.
41. He took a job in Shahjehanpur.	Kamla	Kamla	After the murder had been hushed up, it must have seemed wiser for Laxmi Narain to leave Pilibhit. He moved to Shahjehanpur, another town of Uttar Pradesh.
42. He sent rice and oranges to his aunt.	Kamla	Kamla	
43. He died in Shahjehanpur.	B. Ram Ghulam	K. K. N. Sahay	
44. He was unmarried.*	K. K. N. Sahay	Unverified	
45. He had been under the treatment of Hanumant Vaid, an Ayurvedic physician of Shahjehanpur, before he died.	B. Ram Ghulam	Unverified	B. Ram Ghulam went to Shahjehanpur to verify this and found that there had been an Ayurvedic physician of this name there, but he had died by the time of B. Ram Ghulam's visit so that he could not verify whether he had in fact treated Laxmi Narain. Ayurvedic medicine is the traditional medicine of India and still practiced in large parts of the country.
46. He was 20 years old when he died.	K. K. N. Sahay	Incorrect	Laxmi Narain was 32 when he died, according to his uncle, B. Upendra Narain.

THE ATTITUDE OF BISHEN CHAND TOWARD LAXMI NARAIN'S
FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Bishen Chand showed much affection and consideration for Laxmi Narain's mother. Even before he had met her, he tried to persuade his father to invite her to live with them. He would say: "Papa, she would not cost you much. She wears a plain sari and a pretty coat and spends the greater part of the day in prayers and worship." When Laxmi Narain's mother came to visit Bishen Chand and his family, they found that he had described her correctly.

Following Bishen Chand's first visit to Pilibhit at the age of five and half, he established affectionate relations with Laxmi Narain's mother and remained in touch with her until he was fifteen years old. When she moved to Bareilly to live with her brother, Bishen Chand used to visit her often, taking meals at the house of Laxmi Narain's uncle and sometimes even sleeping there. He insisted that he wanted to live with her. And he sometimes went alone to visit her at her brother's house.

Later Laxmi Narain's mother moved to Lucknow with her brother, who was transferred there by the railway for which he worked. Once she came back to Bareilly from Lucknow and stayed in B. Ram Ghulam's home for a few days visiting with Bishen Chand and his family. When the time came for her to return to Lucknow, Bishen Chand did not want her to go. When she left anyway, Bishen Chand told the rickshaw puller he would give him double fare if he would bring back news of her safe arrival. (He was evidently too young to realize that the rickshaw puller would take Laxmi Narain's mother only to the railway station, not all the way to Lucknow!)

Bishen Chand expressed a definite preference for Laxmi Narain's mother over his own. This was remarked on by both his brother and sister in their testimony and acknowledged by Bishen Chand himself during my interviews with him. He was unable to identify, however, just what he preferred about Laxmi Narain's mother.

As already mentioned, Laxmi Narain had engaged in a lawsuit with relatives and Bishen Chand showed evidence of preserving the bitterness of this quarrel. Once when some of the daughters-in-law of Laxmi Narain's uncle (I do not know just how many) met him, they offered him some sweets, but he refused to take them. Then they offered him a rupee, which he also refused. When they offered him two rupees, Bishen Chand rebuked them, saying: "You wanted to take my blood, and now you are tempting me with money."

Bishen Chand met Padma, the favorite prostitute of Laxmi

Narain, when he was a child. Padma came to visit him with her younger sister, Ganga. Bishen Chand went to Ganga and sat in her lap. Ganga was about six years younger than Padma and therefore not much older than the age of Padma when Laxmi Narain had died. At this meeting Padma said: "You are a small child. I have grown old." (Bishen Chand's sister, Kamla, was a secondhand informant for this remark.) Considering the fact that only eight years had passed since Laxmi Narain had died, Padma's remark suggests a touch of female vanity. It is unlikely that she was yet thirty-five when she first met Bishen Chand.

Later when Bishen Chand was a young man he met Padma again under circumstances that I shall describe later.

Bishen Chand showed evidence of remembering the worth of persons known to Laxmi Narain. Before his father and K. K. N. Sahay took him to Pilibhit, B. Ram Ghulam mentioned in Bishen Chand's hearing his intention of purchasing a watch. Bishen Chand said: "Papa, don't buy. When I go to Pilibhit I shall get you three watches from a Muslim watchdealer whom I established there." When they did visit Pilibhit, the Muslim watchdealer had moved away. But persons of the area who knew him confirmed Bishen Chand's claim. They said the watchdealer was much indebted to Laxmi Narain for an advance of 500 rupees and that, had he been there, he would gladly have turned over to Bishen Chand not three watches only, but his entire stock of watches.

In contrast, when at Pilibhit someone mentioned that a certain merchant, Lalta Prasad, had been given the honorary title of "Rajah" (since the death of Laxmi Narain), Bishen Chand remarked contemptuously: "Lalta Prasad made a rajah!"

Under the heading of this section I shall mention also Bishen Chand's attitude toward the house in which Har Narain and Laxmi Narain had lived. When he reached it, Bishen Chand entered and walked around it as if it was his own. The house was a large one, almost of palatial size, but it had deteriorated much since the death of Laxmi Narain eight years before. One staircase particularly had apparently collapsed and disappeared to such an extent that observers considered Bishen Chand's pointing out of the place where it had been as some evidence of paranormal knowledge. (See K. K. N. Sahay's report quoted above.) When Bishen Chand saw the decayed condition of the house he wept bitterly and said: "Nobody cared even to repair the house after my death!" He did not stop to consider the unfairness of this complaint, but in fact the generosity of Har Narain followed by the prodigality and squandering of Laxmi Narain had left the surviving members of the family almost destitute and unable to maintain a mansion.

OTHER BEHAVIOR OF BISHEN CHAND IN CHILDHOOD RELATED TO THE PREVIOUS LIFE

The behavior of Bishen Chand between the ages of approximately three and seven showed a number of features corresponding to the behavior of Laxmi Narain and distinguishing Bishen Chand from other members of his family.

Bishen Chand frequently expressed disdain in those years for the humble condition of B. Ram Ghulam's home. B. Ram Ghulam was a poor man who could with difficulty support his family from the meager earnings of a clerk in the railway service. Bishen Chand criticized his father for his poverty, demanded money, and cried when not given it. He said: "Even my servant would not take the food cooked here." He blamed his father for not building a house. He tore cotton clothes off when they were put on him and demanded silk ones. He said he always wore costly, silken clothes and would not give the clothes that were worn in his family even to his servants (of the previous life.) According to his older sister, Kamla, Bishen Chand talked about the previous life every day during these years of early childhood. If so, he must have made himself something of a bore, to put it mildly, with his constant invidious comparisons of conditions now and then. I think it says a great deal for his parents and older siblings that, according to his older brother, Bipan Chand, no one scolded Bishen Chand or attempted to suppress the flow of memories and derisive remarks which can rarely have included anything the people listening wanted to hear.

B. Ram Ghulam and his family were members of the Kattri group of the Kshatriya caste. They were the strictest of vegetarians and would not eat meat, fish, or even onions. Laxmi Narain and his family had been members of the Kayasth caste, and therefore eaters of meat and drinkers of alcohol. Bishen Chand began to ask for meat when he was about five or six years old. He was naturally refused and took to eating meat secretly at the houses of other persons who served it. He was fond of fish also and talked of the rohu fish he used to eat.

B. Ram Ghulam and his family were teetotalers, but on one occasion they had some brandy in the house for medicinal purposes. This was found to be diminishing and Bishen Chand's sister, Kamla, caught Bishen Chand drinking it. When this matter was discussed with him, he said: "I am used to drinking." Kamla thought Bishen Chand was between four and five at the time of this episode. He himself thought he was perhaps six then.

B. Ram Ghulam said that when Bishen Chand was a small child (of less than five and a half years) he said to his father: "Papa,

why don't you keep a mistress? You will have great pleasure from her." His father was much surprised at this remark, but somehow managed to ask his son quietly: "What pleasure, my boy?" Bishen Chand replied: "You will enjoy the fragrance of her hair and feel much joy from her company."²⁰

On the occasion of the first visit of the family to Pilibhit, the Superintendent of Police there, who was with the party on that occasion, asked Bishen Chand: "Now tell us about your wife and children." To this Bishen Chand replied: "I had none. I was steeped in wine and women and never thought of marrying."

During the same age period of which I am here writing, Bishen Chand would narrate with pride the story of the murder committed by Laxmi Narain. He boasted that the influence of Laxmi Narain's family had enabled him to escape punishment.

When he was a child (and later) Bishen Chand had a quick temper. Both his sister and brother affirmed this and Bishen Chand himself acknowledged it. Bipan Chand said his brother when young was inclined to hit people who annoyed him. Although I relate this trait to the previous life, I do not have evidence that Laxmi Narain was quick-tempered other than the fact that, according to Bipan Chand, he killed Padma's lover in a flash of anger.

Bishen Chand did not develop two strong interests of Laxmi Narain. The latter's favorite pastime had been kite flying. Bishen Chand did a little kite flying when young, but did not continue. His father would not permit this, apparently out of a fear that his son might fall off a roof from which kites are sometimes flown by city children in India.

Laxmi Narain was also a markedly religious person, at least in the practice of religious exercises. Bishen Chand, according to his brother, has shown only an average interest in religion. Bishen Chand himself claimed no more when I talked with him.

UNUSUAL SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE SHOWN BY BISHEN CHAND IN CHILDHOOD

The informants for this case credited Bishen Chand with showing as a child two skills which they said he had not been taught.

²⁰ It may seem unlikely that a small child would make the remark I have quoted. At my request, Professor P. Pal rechecked his notes of the interview he had with B. Ram Ghulam and he assured me that, according to B. Ram Ghulam, Bishen Chand, when a small child, used words that showed he understood the difference between a mistress and a wife. Professor Pal interprets the child's knowledge as derived paranormally, such as from memories of a previous life. Several other subjects of these cases have overtly manifested sexual interest in the partners of the previous life or persons who resemble them. For another example see the case of Imad Elawar (2, pp. 275-276).

K. K. N. Sahay mentioned in his report, already quoted, that Bishen Chand played with ease on tablas (during the first visit to Pilibhit) although he had never seen them before. (I do not know from independent sources that Laxmi Narain played the tablas, but his fondness for singing and dancing is well enough established so it is most probable that he could do so.) Bishen Chand's brother, Bipan Chand, confirmed that Bishen Chand had been very fond of playing the tablas (as a child) and that other members of the family knew nothing about this musical skill.²¹

Bishen Chand said that he continued playing the tablas up to the age of about eight and then stopped. He also confirmed that no one had taught him how to play the tablas. Without more knowledge concerning the possibility that Bishen Chand might at least have heard someone else playing the tablas in another family, we should draw conclusions about his exhibition of this skill very cautiously. But I think it can at least be admitted that Bishen Chand showed an interest in playing the tablas not manifested by other members of his family and that he exhibited a skill at it which was, at least to them, not explained by their knowledge of his exposure to instruction in music.

As already mentioned, Laxmi Narain had probably acquired a fair competence in Urdu since he was employed in government service. Bipan Chand said that Bishen Chand when a child was able to read Urdu before he had been taught it. B. Ram Ghulam did not say that Bishen Chand could read Urdu without instruction. He did, however, mention Bishen Chand's unexpected use of some Urdu words when he was a child. For example, in referring to the ladies' quarters of the house in Pilibhit, Bishen Chand called them "masurate" instead of using the Hindi word "zenana" familiar in his family. Also, pointing to a door of the house in Pilibhit, he said: "There was a 'kopal' [lock] on this." The word "kopal" is an Urdu word used by the upper class people of Pilibhit. The Hindi word for "lock" in Bishen Chand's family was "tala."

Another surprising use by Bishen Chand of special words occurred when Laxmi Narain's mother came to visit Bishen Chand in Bareilly with her sister-in-law (B. Upendra Narain's wife) and Bishen Chand recognized them.²² According to B. Ram

²¹ When I first heard about the playing of tablas I conceived it as a very primitive skill amounting to a mere tapping on a drum. I revised this opinion after watching Dr. Jamuna Prasad play the tablas with great dexterity during a musical performance at his home in 1969. I then realized that playing well on the tablas requires discipline and practice.

²² Bipan Chand said that Bishen Chand first met Laxmi Narain's mother in Pilibhit, but I think he was mistaken about this. Bishen Chand himself said the first meeting took place in Bareilly. K. K. N. Sahay did not mention a meeting with her during the visit to Pilibhit and indicated in his report that she first met Bishen Chand in Bareilly. The testimony of B. Ram Ghulam clearly indicates this

Ghulam, Bishen Chand called each by the names used in Laxmi Narain's family. Thus he called Laxmi Narain's mother "Bahu" whereas he called his own mother "Amma." And he called B. Upendra Narain's wife "Mimi." He addressed each woman with the word that would have been used appropriately by Laxmi Narain in talking to them.

THE LATER BEHAVIOR OF BISHEN CHAND RELATED TO THE PREVIOUS LIFE

Beginning at the age of about seven Bishen Chand began to forget the imaged memories of the previous life. By the time he had reached adulthood almost all had faded and when I first met him in 1969 he remembered only one incident of the previous life—Laxmi Narain's murder of Padma's visitor.

As with many other cases of the reincarnation type, Bishen Chand's behavioral traits related to the previous life persisted longer than the imaged memories of it. As he grew older, however, he gradually adjusted to the circumstances of his life. He gave up some of the habits he had shown in early childhood. For example, he stopped playing tablas about the age of eight. He also accepted eventually the fact that his family could only afford to give him inexpensive clothes and not silk ones. He continued eating meat and fish into middle adulthood. At the age of twenty-five he married a girl of his caste who, like his parents, was a vegetarian. She would not permit her husband to eat fish and meat at home, so he was obliged to satisfy this craving at restaurants or in the homes of friends.

Bishen Chand went farther in school than Laxmi Narain had and continued up to the 10th Class. He became proficient in Urdu and also learned a fair amount of English. He entered government service and earned a modest living as an excise officer.

He continued to show a quick temper into his years of middle adulthood, but the tendency to physical violence noted in his childhood diminished in his teens and ceased by the time he was sixteen to eighteen years old. As he grew older he also showed a repentant attitude after losing his temper and would sometimes weep afterwards.

He had weaker interests in women and in alcohol than Laxmi Narain had shown. With regard to alcohol, since his family did not

also since he mentioned that Bishen Chand recognized her at his house. On the other hand, K. K. N. Sahay referred to Bishen Chand "being taken to" Laxmi Narain's mother. Possibly two different occasions are in question, one when they first met and one later when Laxmi Narain's mother put test questions to Bishen Chand.

take it, he had no easy opportunity to satisfy the taste for it that he had manifested in childhood and gradually lost the desire for it.

He seems to have had the usual interest and experiences with women before marriage, but showed nothing like the excesses of Laxmi Narain. After his marriage at the age of twenty-five he remained faithful to his wife. This he told me and his brother, Bipan Chand, supported the claim.

Bishen Chand told me of an episode illustrating the persistence in his early adulthood of vulnerability to alcohol and women. The unusual circumstances could hardly have been improved upon to bring out the old habits of Laxmi Narain. The incident occurred in 1944 when he was twenty-three years old. At that time he was working in the Central Excise Office in Tenakpore, a town eighty kilometers north of Pilibhit, in Uttar Pradesh. One day, quite unexpectedly, Padma and two or three other women came into the office where Bishen Chand was working. He had not seen Padma since the time of their first meeting when he was about six. (In 1944 she would have been about fifty-five years old.) Bishen Chand recognized her and said: "Are you Padma?" She said: "Yes." Thereupon he embraced her, but was then so overcome with emotion that he fainted. In those days Padma was living in the hills nearby at a village called Naikot, three miles from Tenakpore. On the evening of the same day, Bishen Chand went out to her home equipped with a bottle of wine and carrying the design of renewing the companionship which Laxmi Narain had enjoyed some twenty-six years before. When Padma saw him, however, she reproached him. "I am an old woman like your mother," she said. "Please go away. You lost everything in your previous life. Now you want to lose everything again." And she broke the bottle of wine and sent him off. In 1971 Bishen Chand told me that since his secret imbibing of medicinal alcohol as a child, he had never drunk alcohol before or after this episode. But the intensity of his aroused affection for Padma made him eager and willing to drink with her on this particular occasion.

Bishen Chand did not meet Padma again after the above incident in 1944. In 1970 Dr. L. P. Mehrotra searched for news of her in the Tenakpore area and learned from her nephew that she had died at the end of 1945, thus not very long after the above meeting with Bishen Chand. So I have not been able to obtain her account of the rather dramatic meeting which Bishen Chand described to me. Two years after his last meeting with Padma, Bishen Chand married and has since lived an exemplary conjugal life.

As I have already mentioned, when Bishen Chand was small he boasted about the murder committed by Laxmi Narain and otherwise also showed the behavior of a wealthy and arrogant

young man. But as he grew older he began to reflect on the circumstances of his life, those of birth into poverty, and a continuing struggle to earn a meager living after he became an adult. He continued to compare his situation with that of Laxmi Narain, but now in a rather different spirit. Gradually his attitude changed. He assigned no specific date to this change. The above incident with Padma no doubt contributed to his reflections, but was not decisive. However, as a result of brooding over the contrast between his situation and the previous life he decided that he was born into poverty because of his conduct in the previous life, especially the murder that he committed. Remorse replaced haughtiness. In view of his changed attitude, it is of particular interest that in 1969 Bishen Chand told me he had forgotten all but one of the events of the previous life. Everything else he told me he remembered only from what his father told him. As I have mentioned, the original memories of the previous life had begun to fade after the age of seven; but he still remembered the murder of Laxmi Narain's rival lover with vivid clarity.

In 1969, when he was forty-eight years old, Bishen Chand still had some nostalgia, if I may call it such, for the previous life. He remembered himself as happier in that life than he was now. He said that the wealth of Laxmi Narain had given more freedom to enjoy life and also to help others. He thinks of himself as being generous (as was Laxmi Narain), and regrets that his very limited means give him little or no scope to demonstrate this virtue. These aspirations to an improvement in material conditions are not accompanied by a desire for the luxurious living that Laxmi Narain could indulge himself in. He described his taste in clothes as simple and his manner of saying this impressed me with its sincerity. I felt myself in the presence of a person who had learned that material goods and carnal pleasures do not bring happiness. Moreover, Bishen Chand's aspirations for another life, if he should have one, centered not on wealth, but on a desire for mental qualities such as superior intelligence, although he tinged this with a hope of fame through some unusual accomplishment.

To facilitate review and understanding of the behavior of Bishen Chand related to the previous life, I have listed the more important of these in Tabulation Two along with remarks about their fading or persistence in the years after childhood. I wish to remind readers that I have not myself interviewed any member of Laxmi Narain's family who knew him. My conception of his character derives from remarks in K. K. N. Sahay's report together with the information furnished by Bishen Chand's older brother and father and Bishen Chand himself.

SUMMARY OF BEHAVIORAL TRAITS OF BISHEN CHAND RELATED TO THE PREVIOUS LIFE

The Case of Bishen Chand

<i>Trait</i>	<i>Person Confirming Existence of Trait</i>	<i>Fading or Persisting Later</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. Liking for meat and fish.	Bipan Chand, Bishen Chand's older brother	Persisted into middle adulthood.	He surreptitiously ate meat and fish as a child and was still eating these foods outside his home in adulthood.
2. Fondness for alcohol.	Kamla, Bishen Chand's older sister	In childhood only, except for one episode at age 23.	
3. Precocious sexual interest in women.	B. Ram Ghulam, Bishen Chand's father	No unusual sex interest in adulthood.	
4. Desire for expensive clothes.	Kamla Bipan Chand	Acceptance of need to wear inexpensive clothes complete by adulthood.	
5. Interested in music.	Bipan Chand	Persisted into middle adulthood, but Bishen Chand gave up playing musical instrument (tablas) about age 8.	
6. Ability to read Urdu.	Bipan Chand	Fading of this skill could not be assessed because Bishen Chand studied Urdu, so presumably his innate skill blended with what he learned of Urdu later.	
7. Interest in kites.	Bipan Chand	Faded in childhood.	Bishen Chand's father suppressed his interest in kites on the ground that (under the conditions in the city) it was dangerous.
8. Quickness of temper.	Bipan Chand	Persisted into middle adulthood, but tendency to physical violence faded in late teens.	

COMMENTS ABOUT THE EVIDENCE OF PARANORMAL PROCESSES
IN THE CASE

As I mentioned in introducing this case, it seems to me an unusually strong one with regard to authenticity. K. K. N. Sahay, a lawyer detached from the subject's family, recorded many of the subject's statements and then took the child and members of his family to the place of the previous life for verifications. I regret that Sahay did not explore further the possibility of some contact between young Bishen Chand and members of Laxmi Narain's family who were living in Bareilly. Unfortunately, I reached the case too late to do any detailed investigations of this aspect with the previous family, although I did inquire about it with Bipan Chand, Bishen Chand's older brother. In view of the early age of Bishen Chand when he began to talk of the previous life I should think it extremely unlikely that he could have acquired by normal means all the information related to the previous life that he showed between the ages of two and a half and five and a half. He was five and a half when first taken to Pilibhit.

In this case, as with many others, a full interpretation of all the facts requires some understanding of the subject's behavior apart from the information he exhibited about the previous life. Bishen Chand, when a small boy, showed the habits and attitudes of a spoiled, rich young man and in addition one belonging to a caste different from that of his family. He expected them to adapt their ways to his rather than that he should adjust to theirs. His father tolerated his alien behavior and gradually guided his son toward important modifications. But I cannot imagine any motive his parents could have had for promoting the sort of attitudes that Bishen Chand showed as a child. Or can someone seriously suppose that B. Ram Ghulam wanted to hear his son boasting of a murder he had committed and deriding his family for their poverty?

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