



# **STRANGERS WHEN WE MET: A Century of American Community in Kuwait**

*W. Nathaniel Howell*

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This history, twenty years in the research and writing, relates the story of Americans living in Kuwait, beginning with the establishment of the American Mission Hospital in 1911. It covers the first century of community experience ending in 2011, which is also the fiftieth anniversary of Kuwait's emergence as an independent state. The rich but largely unrecorded heritage of American missionaries, doctors and nurses, oil workers, diplomats, military personnel, and businessmen who have resided in the country is revealed, including the ways in which they influenced Kuwaiti society and were influenced by it. Based not only on the existing literature but on memoirs, oral interviews, official documents, and other unpublished sources, *Strangers* draws upon those who lived this history to elucidate their experiences as Kuwaiti society evolved. In an era where the vestiges of imperialism often poison official and personal relationships, the Kuwaiti-American relationship provides a positive contrast of service and accommodation between two peoples who began their interaction as strangers. "To my knowledge, no one has told in such a comprehensive way the history of this encounter between our two cultures, American and Kuwaiti. *Stranger When We Met* relates the story of how two completely different cultures, worlds apart geographically, linguistically, in political systems and the fundamentals of faith, grew to understand, accept and respect each other." -Dr. H.A. Al-Ebraheem, Founder and Chairman, Kuwait Society for the Advancement of Arab Children; and Founder and Chairman, Kuwait-America Foundation. "It is a remarkable piece of work. The book is interesting from the standpoint of history as well as from the drama it contains, particularly with regard to the author's personal experiences in Kuwait during the Iraqi invasion in 1990. Furthermore, it is well written in a clear, direct language and style, and its chronological character adds to its readability." -Dayton Mak, Consul and first Charge d'Affairs.

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