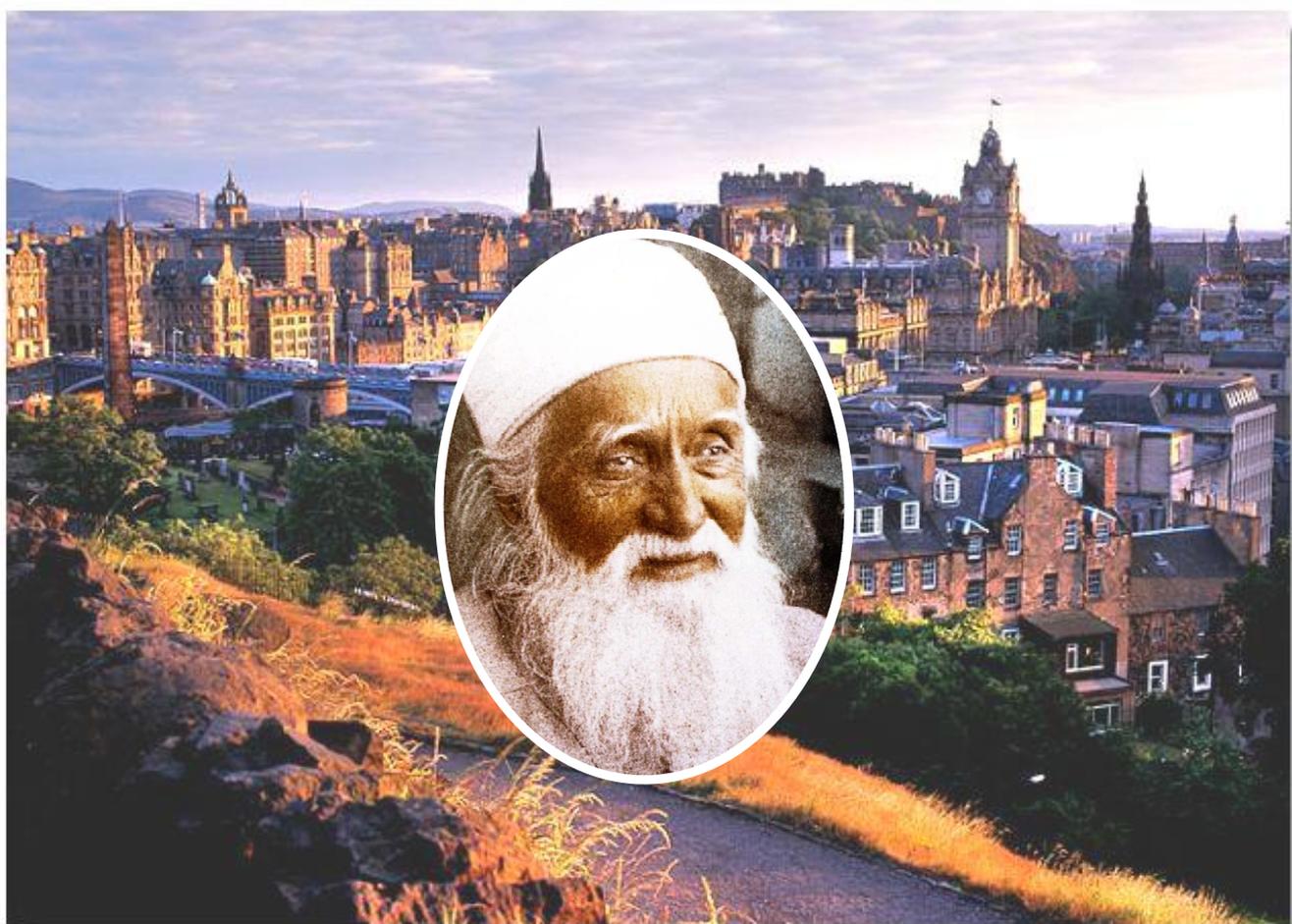


Abdu'l-Bahá in Edinburgh

The Diary of Ahmad Sohrab



6 Jan 1913 - 10 Jan 1913

Abdu'l-Bahá in Edinburgh

Version: 2012.03.23 [Diary Text: 2011.11.12]

Latest Version:

www.paintdrawer.co.uk/david/folders/Spirituality/001=Bahai/Sohrab%20Diary%20Edinburgh.pdf

Sohrab's Diary: 5 Jan 1913 - 10 Jan 1913 with additions, notes and appendices.

Overview

The Diary

What follows, is a very detailed account of Abdu'l-Bahá's visit to Edinburgh by Ahmad Sohrab, who was amongst Abdu'l-Bahá's entourage, and also His translator. The Diary takes the form of letters written every night around midnight after each long and tiring day, on 7 Charlotte Square headed paper, to Harriet Magee of New York. These letters are part of a huge volume in the US Bahá'í Archives. For readability, the many grammatical lapses arising from writing in such a tired state have been corrected to what a more wakeful writer would have written, and old word forms, such as 'hadst', have been amended to their modern form.

The story really begins in Edinburgh on the 6 Jan; however, some early mentions of Edinburgh and the 5 Jan have been included as a lead-in, along with some extra items and references after leaving Edinburgh.

After the diary, there is a description of 7 Charlotte Square and a map of its rooms, a description of the state of the diary, a map showing how Edinburgh in 1915 compares to the size of Edinburgh today, a map of where 'Abdu'l-Bahá visited, a citation reference, and a contents for the Diary with page numbers.

The diary for the whole UK visit is available in both standard and critical editions.

Other Accounts

Besides this diary of Abdu'l-Baha by His Translator, His Secretary also left a diary (volume 1 being translated and published as 'Mahmud's Diary'), of which Adib Taherzadeh made a rescension of the unpublished Edinburgh section; and His host, Mrs Whyte, also is recorded to have kept a diary, yet to be found; various other minor accounts, references and recollections are all included wherever they add something new to the text.

Key to Symbols

You will find many symbols in the text.

Small raised numbers ^{like this} are to footnotes at the bottom of the page, each number beginning with a symbol that indicates what type of footnote it is.

<angle brackets> indicate very uncertain readings.

Footnotes

The footnotes are fairly comprehensive, catering for readers of differing style, ability and familiarity with Britain. They appear in the text as small numbers prefixed by a symbol indicating what type of footnote it is, so you can easily see whether you need to look down to read the footnote. The prefix symbols are as follows:-

+ Additional Account from other sources

- ? (Unfamiliar) Place, Person, or Thing - if it is something familiar you don't need to read this footnote; eg. N.Y. would be footnoted as New York
- i Trivial Info; eg a footnote to a train would give train speeds at the time.
- N Names an unnamed reference to a person; eg "The Persian Ambassador" would give his name.
- ^ After a footnote number indicates a prior footnote to the same thing
- v After a footnote number indicates a subsequent footnote to the same thing
- R Reference (used at the end of an additional account); eg an account might have a reference giving "Star of the West" and its volume, date and page number.
- X Correction to something stated (eg he states Abdu'l-Baha is going to Oxford but not to deliver an address, but as it turns out on the day He does so).
- £ Gives equivalent in modern money.

OT/AT - OT=Original Text, AT=Amended Text, are used in the footnotes to indicate Original (OT) and Amended (AT) Text. The text used for this work is the original unedited text wherever possible.

Special Note

The words of Abdu'l-Bahá are the recollection and understanding of the author at the end of the day, conveyed through a different language, and should not be taken as Abdu'l-Bahá's exact words or meaning. Abdu'l-Bahá's actions and their context and intent are similarly subject to the author's recollection and understanding, and our own.

David Merrick

Contact : www.paintdrawer.co.uk/david/email.php



Account

Earlier Plans Prior to Visit

16 Dec - Arrival in London; Invitation to Edinburgh

At one 40 pm. the train reached¹ in Euston Station², London. There were more than 50 Bahais ready to welcome Our Beloved. Lady Blomfield³ with her automobile and her two daughters were at the station. The Master went to 97 Cadogan Garden⁴ with them without any interpreter and later on they told us the Master was speaking to them all the time... We were welcomed by Lady Blomfield and her gracious daughters and our rooms were shown to us. As the Master had His lunch in the train He could not partake of the special repast prepared for Him but the rest of us were hungry enough to enjoy it. Lady Blomfield is a very noble woman, most sincere Bahai, an active worker, an enthusiastic speaker and altogether a most wonderful woman... The Master rested part of the afternoon and afterward came in the reception room... Then He took Mirza Lotfollah and Ahmad Yazdi for a walk in a garden near by... Then the newspaper women and men came⁵... Then He attended to His mail. Many telegrams from

¹ Arrived after about 4 hours journeying.

² Euston Station is one of the main railway stations of London.

³ Lady Sara Louisa Blomfield (1859 Ireland-1939 London) was a distinguished and active London Baha'i and supporter of the rights of children and women.

⁴ 97 Cadogan Gardens London is just a step South West of the centre of London.

⁵ Presumably the newspaper women considerably outnumbered the men?

Stuttgart Bahais⁶ expressing their happiness at the safe arrival of the Master, and an invitation from Edinburgh, Scotland⁷. etc...

19 Dec - Confirming Edinburgh

...Later on telegraphic communication with Edinburgh, Scotland established⁸ the fact that the Master is going to visit that country the second week of January⁹. Is not this very wonderful?...

21 Dec - Date Confirmed

...The date of Scotland is fixed for Jan. 6th...

30 Dec - Mr Jinzo Naruze

...Then a very distinguished Japanese, Mr Jinzo Naruze who is the President of the Women's University in Tokyo and who has been in the United States for several months came in with an introduction from Edinburgh¹⁰...

1 Jan - Programme for Edinburgh

...The plan¹¹ of Edinburgh is presented to the Master¹². He says I have not been there yet, and they have already planned what I must do every hour. Then He jokes with them about these *rigid customs*, *program-making* and *date-fixing of the western people* so far ahead.



4 Jan - Looking Forward to Edinburgh

This is the last day of London. On Monday morning 6th the Master will start for Edinburgh. I have no doubt that the Cause has been well presented there and Principal Whyte^{32v} whose guests the Master is going to be has arranged a notable program. I enclose a postal card program which fell into my hand today.

5 Jan - Farewell, Maharaja

Sunday

Weather : ☁️ cloudy; moderate wind; 4.6mm rain; no bright sunshine.

London

97 Cadogan Gardens¹³

London S.W.

Jan. 5th 1912

Dear Harriet!¹⁴

The English

This is Sunday and tomorrow at 10 am Our train will start for Edinburgh so this is the last letter that I am writing to you from London in which we have already spent 20 memorable days for ourselves and the Cause. Just at this time there is a great spirit of attraction and enkindlement amongst the Bahais as well as those who are on the verge of becoming as such. It has often been repeated that once the English public takes hold of

⁶ Stuttgart in Germany, where Abdu'l-Baha visited shortly after this UK visit (1-6 Apr, 25 Apr-1 May 1912)

⁷ From Mr & Mrs Whyte.

⁸ AT: "decided"

⁹ 6-10 Jan 1913.

¹⁰ AT: "an Edinborogh Bahai".

¹¹ AT: "program"

¹² "Mrs Whyte... had invited the Master while in London to go to Edinburgh" [Lutfallah]

¹³ 97 Cadogan Gardens was the home of Lady Sara Blomfield, who was a very active believer of extraordinary service to the Cause, author of *#Chosen Highway*, and whose notes form the substance of *#Paris Talks*; she visited Edinburgh in 1926.

¹⁴ Miss Harriet Magee of New York (1883 London, Ontario - 1915 Green Acre, Eliot, Maine) was a Canadian Bahá'í (1899) who in 1910 was elected to the New York City Women's Board of Council; she with her mother, Esther and sister Edith were the first Bahá'ís in Canada [*#JanJasionBio*].

this Cause they will spread it most energetically. Therefore there are many important men and women who come and go with zeal to do that which lies in their power to propagate these doctrines. They are an excellent race, full of pluck and courage.

Illness, Interviews, Daily Schedule

This morning when I entered in the Presence of Our Lord I found Him indisposed. Last night He said, He could not sleep He had fever, the climate not agreeing with Him. I was very sorry but He came out and at about 9 o'clock the interviews started. Every evening at midnight or after midnight, Our Beloved gets up and for at least two hours He prays and communes with the Infinite and when He gets up in the morning, He again prays for more than one hour. Does not this teach us a lesson in prayer with God, Our Maker who sustains us, provides for us and protects us?

A Woman's Questions

A woman who lives in the same house called on the Master and had many questions about Christ "within", visions, dreams, spiritual life and many other topics. Lovingly Our Beloved discarded her ideas and notions about these matters telling her the realities of every question. "Today" He said "the door of the Kingdom of God is open, you must enter therein". "Where is this Kingdom?" she hesitatingly asks. "It's the Celestial Kingdom of Abha" the Master answers her. "Oh! I don't see it! Is it impossible for me to enter therein". "No. Turn your face to God; trust in Him, submit all your thoughts and ideas to Him and He shall lead you to His Eternal Kingdom!" "But, I have been doing this for long years" "Very good! I hope you shall attain therein".

English Minister in China on Women

After a few more people coming and receiving divine Blessings, an English Minister who has been in China for 40 years is ushered into the Presence of Our Beloved. He is interested in the education and uplift of the Chinese women. He has done everything possible to help them. He has heard that the Bahais are doing a wonderful educational propaganda work in Persia and he likes to get the facts so that he may write them for the Chinese people to show them how their Asiatic brothers are advancing in education. The Chinese are great imitators and if you show them how their Persian sisters are progressing they will walk in the same footsteps. The Master was patient enough to give him enough data and material so that he may go and write his article. "This is indeed a marvellous man" he¹⁵ says as he goes out of the room, his face beaming with happiness.

How To Hold Meetings

Then one of the friends comes in and asks how the Bahais must conduct their meetings in London¹⁶. "When the believers gather together" the Master answers "their sole object must be the commemoration of God. When all the friends are present, one in the most clear and effective voice may read a prayer or commune. Then for 5 or ten minutes to most quiet communing with the source of life, and thinking how they should be better and act nobler; then one who knows how to speak may rise and deliver an address either on the proofs and evidences of the Cause, the hardships and tribulations of Baha-ollah, the exposition of the Bahai principles, quoting



¹⁵ "This is indeed a marvellous man" is probably said by the man rather than Abdu'l-Baha, but it is ambiguous.

¹⁶ There were perhaps about 40 Bahá'ís in London in 1913 [*#RM*], although exact numbers are hard to say, particularly as members (who today can vote) and simple admirers were quite vaguely distinguished.

from the Tablets of the Blessed Perfection to the Kings and rulers etc etc. When this is over, one or the same person may read another supplication, thus bringing the meeting to a close. Then they may either talk with each other in groups or may return to their homes or they may serve refreshments. The questioner asked about music. "As regards to music they may act as they are pleased. If they like to have it, all right, if not, again it is all right."

Farewell Address to London

At twelve o'clock the Master entered the Drawing room and delivered a farewell address, expressing His hope that the seeds which He has sown in the ground of the hearts may develop and grow and bring forth many harvests.

Interviews, Rastam Pasha

Today He did not go out, because it was rainy, foggy and very damp.

The afternoon was devoted to many more interviews. The wife of an Englishman who has been serving in the Turkish Government for 40 years came to see the Master. This Englishman was working with another Englishman who was given the title of "Rastam Pasha"²¹⁷ by the Turkish authorities^{T18}. It so happened that the Master knew Rastam Pasha when he was the governor of Lebanon. "He was a good man" Our Beloved said. "He was more loyal to the Turkish government than most of the Ministers. If Turkey had five^{T19} Ministers like Rastam Pasha, she would not have met so many difficulties". Then the Master told us several intimate stories about this man which in turn surprised and delighted our guest. The story of Rastam Pasha's hunting with the Emperor of Russia and how he saved the latter was very dramatic. Another story was about his loyalty in keeping fast during the month of Ramazan, although he was a Christian. Then the story of *Sultan Abdul Aziz*²²⁰ sending a necklace to Queen Victoria and its subsequent sequel was most interesting.

Painter, Evolution

Later on a celebrated painter came and the Darwinian theory of evolution was discussed, its fallacy proved, the two kinds of evolution "horizontal" and "perpendicular" *material & spiritual* touched upon.

Meeting at Miss Herrick's on Spiritual Negligence and Materialism

Later Mrs Cropper²²¹ brought her auto and the Master was whisked to Miss Herrick's²²² meeting^{C23} where we found more

¹⁷ Rustem Pasha (1500 Croatia-1561) was son-in-law of "Suleiman the Magnificent", "the Lawgiver" (1494-1566); this latter was the tenth and longest-serving Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, under whose leadership the Ottoman Empire reached its Golden Age and became a world power. The Rustem Pasha Mosque is renowned for its exquisite tiles set in floral and geometric designs [#W].

¹⁸ AT: "Sultan"; a sultan was a sovereign ruler, or like one.

¹⁹ Or "fine" - the handwriting is ambiguous.

²⁰ Sultan Abdu'l-Aziz (Constantinople: 1830-1876) - 32nd sultan of the Ottoman Empire, reigning 1861-1876 [#W].

²¹ Mrs Mary "Minnie" Thornburgh-Cropper (1850 California-1938 London), married (1874), was an American resident in London, who taught Ethel Jenner Rosenberg^{2110*}, a painter from a distinguished artistic family; together Mary and Ethel played a key part in establishing the Bahá'í Faith in the UK. Mrs Cropper was a close friend of Mrs Whyte in Edinburgh [#JanJasionBio].

²² Elizabeth Skinner Herrick (1864 Norwick, England - 1929 Wandsworth, London) ⁱⁱ had under the name of Madame Corelli a hat shop lockup ^{io} at 137a High Street in Kensington, and a little way behind in 10 Cheniston Gardens, some rooms above the Higher Thought reading room. She supported and donated to women's suffrage, and authored 'Unity Triumphant'. The meeting of 22 Sep 1911 welcoming Abdu'l-Baha appears to have been held in 137a ¹¹, but at this time community gatherings were being held at 10 Cheniston Gardens ^{cs}, [^{lo} #LO, ^{cs} #SOW; 1911-10-16, v2 n12, #PDF2, ¹¹ #SOW, 1911-03-21, v2 n1, #PDF2, ⁱⁱ #JanJasionBio]. She visited Edinburgh in July 1926.

than 150 people (*a group of friends*) all anxiously waiting the arrival of the Master. He gave a very spiritual lecture, the subject of which it is hard to say. But it was about the negligence of the people about God and their submerging in the Sea of Materialism.

Maharaja of Rajputana

Tonight His Highness Maharaja²²⁴ of Rajputana²²⁵ dined with the Master. He is an exceedingly charming personality and speaks the English language very fluently. Many topics were discussed, the elevation of the women in India, the progress of aviation, dispelling prejudices from amongst the religions and castes in India, the Aryan race, their original home and their migration to Europe.

He stayed till 10.30 and invited Our Beloved, Lady Blomfield²²⁶ and her two daughters and the servants of the Master to dinner on the night of the 18th which invitation was accepted. On the 21st he sails from Marseilles for India. Love to all Ahmad

Edinburgh (6-10 Jan)

6 Jan - Train and Arrival

Monday

London Weather : ☁☀ overcast; showers early, then fine; light wind; 5.1mm rain; 1.8hr bright sunshine. "That morning the weather was bright and the sun was shining brilliantly."

[Lutfullah]

Edinburgh Weather : ☀☁ changeable character; morning, bright and sunny; midday and afternoon, overcast, with occasional light drizzle; fresh SW breeze; evening, milder, a moderate breeze springing up from the south; temperature up to 12 C.

Jan 6th 1913

Dear Harriet

Whyte's House

Well, here we are in Edinburgh, in the very artistic house of Mrs Jane E. Whyte²²⁷, one of the noblest and kindest women that I have ever met. Her house is very big and very beautiful. On the second floor^{C28} she has one of the largest and loveliest libraries that I have ever seen. On the third floor^{C29} the Master has a large most comfortable room with a beautiful fire-place which warms the room and gives to it an air of calmness and quietness.



²³ This statement could simply mean organised by Mrs Herrick, rather than necessarily at her home.

²⁴ maharaja - each Indian State had a king ("raja"); a few raja were particularly powerful, and they were called "maharaja".

²⁵ Rajputana (India) was a region of western India, now part of Rajasthan [#W].

²⁶ Lady Sara Louisa Blomfield (1859 Ireland - 1939 London (Hampstead Municipal Cemetery)), married (1887) to Sir Arthur William Blomfield and widowed 1899, was a distinguished and active London Baha'i (1907) and supporter of the rights of children and women, and the prime mover behind Paris Talks; she served in military hospitals in France during WW1 and was involved with the beginning of the Save the Children Fund; elected (1922) to the All-England Bahá'í Council [#JanJasionBio, #LadyBlomfield].

²⁷ Mrs Jane Elizabeth Whyte née Barbour (1857 Edinburgh-1944), married (1881) to Dr Alexander Whyte; she visited Akka in 1906, received from Abdu'l-Baha the tablet "Seven Candles of Unity", and was instrumental to Abdu'l-Bahá's visiting Edinburgh; her name within the family was Monica^{mon}. She lived at 7 Charlotte Square until 1927. [^{mon} #email, Whyte relative].

²⁸ i.e. First Floor - what we would call Ground Floor, First Floor, Second Floor, the author calls First, Second and Third Floor. (There was also a basement and attic.)

²⁹ i.e. Second Floor.

About Edinburgh

As far as I could gather at the table Edinburgh is a very beautiful city, enjoys the splendid reputation of having a wonderful University, with its medical department very famous throughout England and the East; so that students from Burma, Russia, Egypt, India and Persia crowd its lecture Halls and study the profession of Medicine. Its population is 300.75 thousands³⁰.

Mrs Whyte in Acca

Many years ago I believe Mrs Whyte goes to Acca and for 3 days she stays there receiving the divine teachings^{+R31}.

Mr Whyte

Mr Whyte³² is a celebrated clergyman and well known throughout this part of the world.

Train Journey

This morning I got up very early, wrote a few letters, packed my satchel and at 8 o'clock I was ready to start. By that time Lady Blomfield and her two daughters arrived to meet the Master and accompany Him to the station. For the next 4 days they are going to the sea shore to rest and will be back before our return on Friday.

Having all our luggage ready Doctor Moura<e>, Mirza Mahmaud³³, Haji Ameen³⁴ and myself in a taxi cab started ahead of them about 9.10 for the station to buy the tickets and secure the seats.

The Master arrived a few minutes later and after a while all of us were in the car³⁵.

Mirza Lotfollah Hakim³⁶ was added to the party which travelled from America for Europe. At 10 o'clock the train was pulled out of Euston³⁷ Station, while the Persians, Mrs Cropper, Lady Blomfield and other friends were shaking hands and handkerchiefs in the air. On the train I read a portion of



Thomas Moore's³⁸ Utopia to Our Beloved. Later on at twelve o'clock we all had lunch in the dining car, the Master had, however His own dinner which was prepared by Sayad Assadallah.

Here in England the Railroad charges 2 shillings and half £³⁹ for lunch and give you a great deal to eat, very wholesome food. After lunch the Master had a nap and at 4 we all had tea in His Presence.

Miss Ramsey

He spoke to us at the time about a Miss Ramsay⁴⁰ from Scotland who was a most zealous missionary in Acca. She was not friendly to the Cause but the Master showed her all manner of kindness because she was very faithful to her Christ. "Miss Ramsey! do you know how much I love you? Look in your heart and see how much you hate me, to that extent I love you," the Master would tell her as she would try to turn her back upon Him. She had the Bible in her hand and from morning till evening she would go from house to house and read it to the people. For a long time she used to come to our house and read it to the members of His Household. They listened to her every time most attentively. Finally she thought that now I have converted them. One day she was reading when one of the family asked her the meaning of the verse read. She could not give it. They told her this is a prophecy about the appearance of Baha-o'llah. You see, it is so plain. She got very wrath and left the house. She was very charitable. She spent all her money in this work. She had 12 girls educated in the college in Beirut at her own account and often she gave money to the poor in Acca. For forty years she labored very faithfully and when she was 70 years old she said I must return now to Scotland. I have grown too old to be useful. [Abdu'l-Bahá said:] I gave her a farewell banquet. I liked her very much. I would like to see her in Scotland. I will tell her, see, how I have come to see you.⁺⁴¹

³⁰ The 1911 Census has 320,318 for Edinburgh City (Leith with 80,488 was outside the city) and 507,666 for Edinburgh County.

³¹ Mrs Whyte's account is in #7Candles, pp 47-49.

³² Dr Alexander Whyte (1836 Kirriemuir, Scotland-1921 London) a minister of the Free Church of Scotland, he became colleague and successor of Dr R S Candlish at Free St Georges (now St George's West, 58 Shandwick Place), and then principal and professor of New Testament literature at New College, Edinburgh [Life of Alexander Whyte by Barbour].

³³ Mírzá Mahmúd-i-Zarqání (c1875-1924) was Abdu'l-Baha's secretary on this western trip, and is the author of #Mahmud's Diary chronicalling Abdu'l-Baha's journey, of which volume 1 has been translated. In his youth he travel-taught around Iran; from 1903 he began travelling to and in India, learning Urdu; amidst this he went on pilgrimage to Haifa, where he transcribed Tablets, and from there accompanied 'Abdu'l-Bahá on His journey to Europe and America [#MD, Bio Notes].

³⁴ Hájí Amín was Mullá Abu'l-Hasan-i-Ardikání (Persia: 1831-1928 Tehran), married c1848, who became a Babi in 1851, met Baha'u'llah in 1870 and from an early period collected Huqúqu'lláh, and then served as its trustee and was posthumously made a Hand of the Cause and identified as one of the Apostles of Baha'u'llah; the arrival of such a person must have been a profound experience for everyone [Amin, Haji] by Moojan Momen, web; #JanJasion].

³⁵ Car = railway carriage.

³⁶ Mirza Lutfullah Hakim (1888 Persia-1968 Haifa, Israel) was a distinguished Persian, raised as a Baha'i. He first came to England in 1910 to study physiotherapy, living at 13 Wood Lane, Shepherd's Bush, returning to Haifa in 1920, and later worked for the Baha'i Cause in several parts of the world, returning to Britain in 1948 to Edinburgh for studies where he served on the Edinburgh Assembly, the International Bahá'í Council (1951-61) and was elected onto the House of Justice (1963-1967) when it was established. He left a short account of Abdu'l-Bahá's visit to Edinburgh, being in His presence in London and in Edinburgh. See: #Bahai World, 15:430-34, #PDF, 15 p457-461).

³⁷ Euston Station is one of the main railway stations of London. Map.

³⁸ Thomas Moore (1779 Dublin - 1852) was an Irish poet, singer, songwriter, and entertainer [#W].

³⁹ 2½ shillings was £10 in 2010 currency (RPI).

⁴⁰ Miss Wardlaw-Ramsay (years unknown) of the Church Missionary Society. OT: "Miss Ramsey".

⁴¹ Miss Wardlaw-Ramsay of the Church Missionary Society opened a station in Acca. (See 'Studies in Babi and Baha'i History', Moojan Momen, pp75-76.); "Some years ago there lived in Acca, a Scottish missionary who was working most earnestly to spread about her the Christian religion. the results acquired, however, were negligible. Now, although this lady did not like us, I always on meeting her inquired after her health; so, one morning, as I was sitting in the bazaar with a Jewish Bahai, I greeted her as she passed by. Then I said, "Do you see my companion? He was born a Jew and had no regard for the Christ; yet today he believes in him and loves him." ["Is this true?" the missionary exclaimed, astonished, "Then, may I be permitted to ask him a few questions?" "Certainly," I answered, "you may ask him as many questions as you wish." Whereupon the lady turned to the Jew and inquired, "Do you look upon Jesus as your Lord?" "Yes," answered the man. "And how did you come to do so?" she pursued. "Do you want scriptural proof or rational proof?" "Scriptural proof." Then, during nearly half an hour, the Jew spoke very eloquently, advancing quotation after quotation from the Old Testament to prove the validity of the claims of Jesus. Presently, he was asked for rational evidence, and this phase also he was able to treat with equal force and fluency. When the man had concluded, the missionary remained silent for a moment; then she said, "This is indeed a most wonderful thing - a miracle; yet I am not satisfied. If only you had kept him at the fountain of the Christ; but instead you have made him believe in Baha-U-Llah and all the Prophets." This missionary could not appreciate the fact that it was the words of Baha-U-Llah that had made of the Jew a follower of Jesus." [#HHS, p115-6]; "I met a Scottish lady who ran a missionary school. She was an ardent Christian and most anxious to make converts. Thinking that I was a good prospect, she invited me to study with her, and I caught at this chance of learning the Bible and English too. I attended her school assiduously in the evenings, and while I was more interested in the language than in the Bible, I got a lot out of both. I owed this lady a great deal, and respected her love for Christianity which had impelled her to uproot herself from home and take up residence in a strange land. It was a good experience and very useful to me." [#MBP, p61-2].

Islamic Sect

Then He told us the evolution and progress of a Mohamadan Sect in Persia, how they became powerful and influential through their chastity and purity.

Arrival in Edinburgh

About 6, the lights of Edinburgh are seen. It seems the city is illuminated. The train enters in the station^{N742} at 6.15 and as we alight Mrs Whyte, Mrs Fraser¹⁴³ of London and several other friends hail our



Beloved⁺⁴⁴. An automobile takes the Master, Mrs Whyte and Ahmad^{C45} to her home⁷⁴⁶, the three others⁷⁴⁷ in a hotel near by⁺⁷⁴⁸. Mrs Whyte welcomes the Master, inquires about the trip, etc. In the house Rev. Whyte, who is a vigorous old man is introduced with her two daughters⁷⁴⁹, and her two sons⁷⁵⁰. Her eldest son⁷⁵¹ is gone to Belgrade⁷⁵² to attend to the

⁴² Princes Street Station (closed 1965), where Lothian Road meets the west end of Princes Street. Euston was owned by LNWR, and the LNWR-Caledonian route began there and ended at Princes Street Station. The timetable for the time (July 1913) gives 18:14 arrival. Photos.

⁴³ Mrs Isobel Fraser stayed on with Marion Jack in Edinburgh holding Bahá'í classes at Woodburn, 54 Canaan Lane after Abdu'l-Bahá had left [*#TheosophyScotland*, eg 1913-06 p25, 1913-10 p81].

⁴⁴ "Mrs. Whyte and some prominent men welcomed the party on the platform." [*#ABE1963*] "Mrs Whyte and many people had come to the station to meet the Master. It was a most wonderful sight at the station." [*#Lutfullah*] Traditionally, it is recollected that Bagpipes welcomed them. It is hard to imagine Sohrab missing this out, equally, Lutfullah was on the Edinburgh Assembly and the notion may come from him. Perhaps the answer could be that the bagpipes were playing but unrelated to the visit.

⁴⁵ Ahmad Sohrab, the author of this diary. He often writes in the third person.

⁴⁶ 7 Charlotte Square; the journey was 350 metres, presumably carrying their baggages.

⁴⁷ Lutfullah Hakim enumerates Abdu'l-Bahá's companions as 'Sayed Assodullah [Siyid Asadu'lláh-i-Qumí] an old and devoted Persian, Mirza Mahmud Zargoui [Mirzá Mahmúd-i-Zarqání] secretary, Mirza Ahmed Sohrab interpreter and myself'.

⁴⁸ Presumably the Roxburghe Hotel, 38 Charlotte Square - "...within a stone's-throw of the house where he was" [*#Prof Stewart*]. "Mrs Whyte... insisted that the whole party stay at the manse" [*#ABE1963*] "The Master wished to stay in a hotel but with repeated begging and wish of Mrs Whyte that He should stay in her (Mrs Whyte) house He accepted it. So He and the interpreter lived at Rev. Alexander Whyte and we three Persians stayed in a hotel near by." [*#Lutfullah*]. "The most personal attendant was called, in translation, the "Lion of God", an old man, picturesque in appearance and of a most attractive spirit, whose after-dinner stories were a great delight. There was a young man, an interpreter, who was not of the inner company, I think, and who had a more or less permanent home in London. Then there was a very handsome, cultured man, who was a poet of some distinction, according to the interpreter, and whose talk, even in translation, was deeply interesting, spiritually discerning, and beautifully expressed. These three, while sleeping and eating in the hotel, were Dr. Whyte's guests, and to emphasize that, he invited an elderly Quaker lady, a young artist, and myself to be fellow guests with them in the hotel. We had a private suite and did not mingle with the other guests, and it was for us three a very delightful experience." [*#Prof Stewart*].

⁴⁹ Margaret Whyte (1882-1954) & Rhoda Whyte (1890-1966) probably - see fn 53.

⁵⁰ These are two of Gustavus Whyte, Robert Whyte or Lancelot Whyte. There were four sons, and as only one is mentioned as away, this may well mean that all three were present, although only two at this moment. Lancelot is mentioned later.

⁵¹ Frederick Whyte (1883-1970).

⁵² Belgrade is the capital of Serbia, south-eastern Europe.

wounded. Her eldest daughter⁷⁵³ who met Our Beloved last year in London is married and lives in another city.⁷⁵⁴

Alternative Accounts of His Arrival

As the train was approaching Edinburgh, in the late afternoon, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, calling His little party together, said, "We are now coming to Edinburgh, and this is the beginning of the diffusion of Divine fragrances there. You must consort with all the people with such devotion, radiance and spirituality, that all may testify that you are of heaven, and the servants of the Kingdom of God: that your hearts are illumined: and your souls adorned with the mysteries of the Kingdom."^{R55}.

When we got near to Edinburgh the Master called us four to His compartment and advised and directed us saying that we are going to Edinburgh where is the beginning of defusing the ABHA Message. We must associate with the people with such enthusiasm and spirituality that all may witness that we are heavenly servants who have turned to ABHA Kingdom with hearts full of light and life full of garden and roses. Then He told us wonderful accounts and real stories and then said now that we are the servants of Divine Threshold and guards of the Everlasting Kingdom we should rise with full enthusiasm and with whole heart and soul to serve His Threshold. Think what we will have to do. However He advised us in detail.^{R56}

On the train 'Abdu'l-Baha told His attendants that they were going to a city where the work of teaching the Cause was just starting and that they should associate with the people with exemplary devotion. Then He told them the story of the Sufi leader, Nur-'Ali Shah, who had to flee his homeland because of the hostility of government and people, could not dwell in peace even in the neighbourhood of the holy Shrines of 'Iraq due to the opposition of the divines, and died an outcast in Baghdad. A few who had remained faithful to him in adversity, though heavily burdened with the cares of the world, pledged themselves not to allow the memory of their master to fade away. They arose with sincerity and determination and, although their work was not of high import, their success was great. How confirmed, said 'Abdu'l-Baha to His attendants, they would be, whose task was to serve the Cause of Baha'u'llah, should they arise with equal devotion.^{R57}

When Abdu'l-Baha and His friends started the trip from London, they had got Economy tickets for the friends, and a first-class ticket for Abdu'l-Baha; but when the train started, Abdu'l-Baha came out from the first class to join the friends, saying He wanted to sit with them, and so the first class was not used. Throughout the journey He was giving them advice, and on how to behave in Edinburgh; it was so very moving for them all. Reaching Edinburgh, Mr Whyte and Mrs Whyte came with two carriages to receive Abdu'l-Baha at the station. Abdu'l-Baha was invited to take His place in the first carriage with the Rev Whyte; in the second carriage, Mrs Whyte rode with another. A number of other carriages took the remaining companions. As they travelled in the carriages, people were standing on both sides of Princes Street, enjoying greeting the procession. They were received by Rev Whyte and the people so majestically, it was like a royal visit.^{R58}

⁵³ Probably Janet Whyte (1886 Edinburgh-1954); she wasn't however the eldest: there's a confusion in the text, no doubt because two of his children had just got married (1912) to two people who happened also to have the same name as his children, combined with a natural expectation that the eldest gets married first.

⁵⁴ The 1911 Census lists Alexander Whyte (75, United Free Church, b. Forfarshire, Kirriemuir) and Jane Elizabeth Whyte (50, b. Midlothian, Edinburgh), daughters Margaret S. S. Whyte (28, b. Midlothian, Edinburgh) and Janet Whyte (25, b. Midlothian, Edinburgh), two sons Gustavus Aird Whyte (22, student, b. Midlothian, Edinburgh) and Robert Barbour Whyte (18, student, b. Perthshire, Killiecrankie) and seven female servants - Mary Macaulay (32, cook, b. Rossshire, Carloway [Isle of] Lewis), Hester McKechnie (38, sewingmaid, b. Argyllshire, Killaró [Kilarrow] (Islay)), Ann Inglis MacDonald (26, laundrymaid, b. Lanarkshire, Govan), Robina M. Stuart (24, tablemaid, b. Midlothian, Edinburgh), Joan Howell (20, under tablemaid, b. Midlothian, Edinburgh), Helen Jane Moran (22, scullerymaid, b. Perthshire, Doune), Mary Martin (34, housemaid, b. Midlothian, West Calder), all unmarried except Mr and Mrs Whyte.

⁵⁵ *#ABE1963*.

⁵⁶ *#Lutfullah*.

⁵⁷ *Abdu'l-Baha by Balyuzi*.

⁵⁸ Marginally abridged account of a communication by #IA in 2012, as recalled from Lutfullah Hakim about 1950. Being of a late date, misattributing the station to Waverley and including the presence of Lady Blomfield opens when and where it happened a little wider. The natural route would have included a short distance along the west end of Princes Street, but as the station is called "Princes Street Station" it's quite reasonable that the journey could have been recalled later as "Princes Street" when that was a memory of the name of the station.

Dinner and Visitors

At 7.30 we have dinner, our Persian brothers coming too⁵⁹. At eight a number of people who have been serving on the committee of arrayment are invited to visit Our Beloved. There are, however, many other people. The Secretary of the Esperanto Society⁶⁰, the general Secretary of the Theosophical Society⁶¹, several professors and many clergymen with their wives are present. The Master comes down. First coffee is served. Then He speaks about His trip from Alexandria⁶² to N. Y.⁶³, how some of the friends insisted that He may take the Titanic instead of the Cedric direct. Afterward people were introduced to Him and He spoke with the Secretary of the Esperanto Society.

This led our Beloved to speak on the various means of unification, that although each a powerful agency for unity, yet they were not sufficient. The power of the Holy Spirit is the eternal bond that binds the hearts of men together. Then He spoke on the misunderstanding which exists between the present nations and religions of the world and how easy it is to do away with these bones of contention. He then reviewed His address before the Jews in San-Francisco^{H@64} which created a tremendous effect, because most of these people are very devoted Christians.⁶⁵

An old scotch song was sung after the Master's address which was very sweet and effective. The Master bade them good bye and went to His room.

The Esperantists are arranging a wonderful program, the cover of which is the full size photo of Our Beloved. The meeting is tonight in the Freemason's Hall.

Last night as I alighted from the train Miss Fraser handed me several newspapers clippings containing some articles about which I will mail them to you later on with the rest. Edinburgh people, all that we have seen are very interesting and hospitable, kind to the strangers and loving to foreigners. Please remember me to all the friends. I remember all of them and if I had time I would have written to every one. Ahmad

7 Jan - Outlook, Esperanto, Orientals

Tuesday

Weather : ☀️☁️ Southwesterly gale all day, with occasional light showers, up to an hour's sunshine; evening fine, calmer; temperature up to 13 C.

Jan 7th 1913

Dear Harriet!

These days are rapidly passing and once gone they shall form the glorious background of our lives, the springs from which new inspirations shall flow, the caskets which contain the treasures of the heart, the blue-turquoise heaven towards which all of us aspire, the garden of memory in which all these flowers are gathered to perfume the nostrils. After all if the soul is not enriched by these divine experiences, if the spirit is

⁵⁹ i.e. From the hotel. [v. #Lutfullah].

⁶⁰ Esperanto is a language published in 1887 as a global language to learn alongside one's mother tongue. Its creator's daughter was a Baha'i.

⁶¹ Theosophical Society was founded in 1875 to advance the principles of the search for spiritual and psychic truth (Theosophy), promoting brotherhood and the importance of Eastern philosophies [#W].

⁶² Alexandria in Egypt.

⁶³ New York.

⁶⁴ Sat 12 Oct 1912 at Temple Emmanuel, 450 Sutter Street, where He spoke convincingly to 2000 Jews of Christ, Islam and Universal Peace, resulting in a movement of unity between them - see #Mahmud's Diary, #Promulgation, 361-70 and #Star of the West, v3 n13 p3-11.

⁶⁵ "...some distinguished guests paid their respects to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke to them, at length and in great detail, about the teachings of God in this age, the manner in which all the Manifestations of God had appeared, and how man has always denied and rejected Them at the time of Their appearance." [#ABE1963].

not transformed in the image and likeness of God, if the heavenly life is not obtained then it is better to abandon all hope for future advancement.

Esperanto Society 1

We had a very wonderful day full of interesting experiences from *early* morning till now returning⁶⁶ from the enthusiastic Esperanto meeting⁶⁷. For the City of Edinburgh it was indeed a miracle. Nothing could show more definitely the power of the Cause and the influence of the word⁶⁸ of Our Beloved than the two meetings of today; each unique and distinguished in its own sphere.

Morning Prayer

It was about half past eight when I heard the bell calling us as I found later to prayer.

When I went down to the Library I saw principal Whyte with the members of the family standing on one side and all the maids which were seven, I think, standing on the other side, each having a hymn book in her hand. Mrs Whyte gave me one of these books and she went to the organ. All of us sung the songs and afterwards Rev. Whyte prayed while all of them knelt down. It was a very new experience to me. Of course this is their daily custom for the Master and the servants to pray to God every morning before starting their daily labors. This is a very lovely custom and affords one a few moments whereby to commune with his Creator. After the prayer we had breakfast and I carried up Our Beloved's tea to His room.



Visitors

About 10.30 a number of people came to see Our Beloved, some with their children; others to receive His Blessings. The children of one of the callers were dressed à la Highlanders⁶⁹ which looked very pretty.

Outlook Tower

At 11 o'clock, the brother⁷⁰ of Lord Haldane⁷¹ the Chancellor or Secretary of the Navy of Great Britain sends his magnificent auto mobile to the Master to go out and visit the "Outlook Tower"⁷² which is guided by the great learned scholar and astronomer Prof Patrick Geddes⁷³.

⁶⁶ Freemason's Hall, 96 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 3DH.

⁶⁷ Mrs Whyte organised this with the Esperanto Society in December 1912 on the agreement that she would cover any deficit of costs. In the event it cost £20. 4/6 and ticket sales were £22. 12/- (making 452 reserved seats, which were at 1/- each), yielding an excess of £2. 7/6 used to publish the address as a pamphlet (£1. 7/6) and a gift of £1 of Esperanto literature to Abdu'l-Baha. The Society received several congratulatory letters from abroad. (*Esperanto Society Council Minutes, 27 Dec 1912, 10 Jan 1913, 7 Mar 1913*).

⁶⁸ Or perhaps "work".

⁶⁹ Highlanders (OT "Hylanders") = people living in the Scottish Highlands in the northern half of Scotland.

⁷⁰ Sir William Stowell Haldane (Cloan, Scotland: 1864-1951, m.1892), 55 Melville Street, was Crown Agent for Scotland, the son of Robert Haldane and the grandson of the Scottish evangelist James Alexander Haldane [#W]; later, the diary calls this brother "Sir", which distinguishes him from Lord Haldane's other brother, John Scott Haldane (1860 - 1936), a Scottish physiologist who invented the gas-mask [#W].

⁷¹ Lord Richard Burdon Haldane (Viscount) (Scotland: 1856 17 Charlotte Square, Edinburgh - 1928 Cloan) was born in Edinburgh, educated in Edinburgh/Germany; a Labour politician, lawyer and philosopher, he was one of Britain's most notable War Ministers (1905-1912), he served as Lord Chancellor 1912-15 [#W].

⁷² Outlook Tower, 549 Castlehill, Edinburgh EH1 2ND.

⁷³ Sir Patrick Geddes (1854 Aberdeen, Scotland-1932 France), 14 Ramsay Garden, was a Scottish biologist and botanist, known also as an innovative thinker in the fields of urban planning and education; as a town-planner in Palestine he had involvement in the cypress avenue leading up to the Shrine

Scenery in Edinburgh

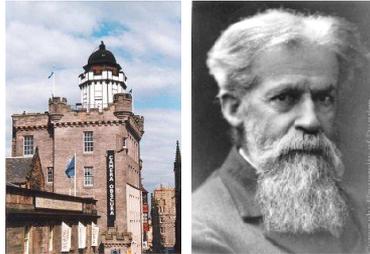
⁷⁴: As we drove out we saw from afar the wonderful mountain upon which the old castle ⁷⁵ of the Scottish Kings is built.

It dates back to the 12th Century and is an interesting historical spot. On this mountain, the base of which is decorated with a lovely blue lake ⁷⁶ there has been built in those bygone ages a road ⁷⁷, on one end of this road the castle was constructed and on the other end a monastery ⁷⁸. This was the beginning of Scotland.



Outlook Tower

Having reached the Outlook Tower Prof Geddes gave Our Beloved a rousing reception. The Outlook Tower is an educational institution which attempts to teach astronomy, natural geography, *oceanography* maps etc.



There are hundreds of maps of various countries, different kinds of globes, maps depicting the progress of the nations; maps portraying the growth of Edinburgh, special rooms devoted to different continents, even upon the floors of the rooms maps were drawn. Prof Geddes with great interest took us through these rooms ⁷⁹, floor after floor till we reached to the highest room in the Tower. Here the room was made dark, in the center there was a round revolving canvass and in the ceiling a hole. I suppose over the roof our Prof. has installed certain mechanical devices and sun-cameras which are connected with wires to this room. Now by the manipulation of these wires the most marvellous thing becomes visible before your eyes. The Master and all of us are gathered around this round revolving canvass. Suddenly we see the city with its streets with its smoking chimneys with people walking to and fro, cars running hither and thither, even women dusting rugs from the windows. You must know this is not a moving-picture but just at that very moment that we were looking at the canvass these things were going on in the outside world ⁸⁰. Most amazingly, every part of the city was shown, the scene constantly changing, giving us the most kaleidoscopic pictures of the real life of Edinburgh.

Coming out of the Tower we had a most charming view of the whole city. The Master praised his energy and patience for Prof Geddes has devoted 25 years of his life to this.

of the Báb (*Abdu'l-Baha* by Balyuzi, p447; #Leroy Ioas, p218), and he also planned a Bahá'í House of Worship in India.

⁷⁴ When looked at closely, the scenic description that follows seems rather confusing, with things from one hill mixed onto the other. However it makes good sense, if we assume the author is treating Arthur's Seat (which most visitors would alone think of as the mountain) and the outcrop of Castle Rock (on which the castle is built) as one single mountain, and the clue that this might be the case is where he writes, 'On this mountain... there has been built... a road...'

⁷⁵ The Castle has royal apartments. After the 15th Century, Holyrood Palace served as the main residence of Kings and Queens.

⁷⁶ Duddingston Loch (larger) and St Margaret's Loch (smaller) are two lakes beside Arthur's Seat, whilst there used to be a somewhat defiled lake called the North Loch beside Castle Rock, which had before his visit already been drained in 1763 and transformed into Princes St Gardens in 1818. He is probably referring to Duddingston Loch.

⁷⁷ The Royal Mile / High Street.

⁷⁸ Holyrood Palace was founded as a monastery in 1128.

⁷⁹ "...took Him by the arm and showed Him around" [#ABE1963].

⁸⁰ A Camera Obscura.

Country Drive

Then after leaving the Outlook Tower we had a drive through the country ⁸¹. One of the most beautiful things about Edinburgh is that it enjoys many green and verdant mountains at the foot of which there are lovely lakes ⁸². The scenery is most entrancing. One of the mountains is called King Arthur's Seat where with his 12 Knights he discussed the finding of the Holy Grail ⁸³. The palace of the King ⁸⁴ was shown to us that when George V ⁸⁵ comes to Scotland he lives there. ⁺⁸⁶

Princes Street

Returning home the Master walked for nearly one hour in the nearby park ⁸⁷ and then we switched toward Princes Street where all the principal shops and department stores are. Here also is the magnificent statue of Sir Walter Scott ⁸⁸. Our Beloved bought several things in different stores and returned home. ⁺⁸⁹

Charlotte Square; Dinner; Rest

We had dinner, the Master afterward going to His room to have a much needed rest. I have not been feeling well for the last two days, having caught a severe cold. So I went to the Library and put my large, comfortable chair in front of the cozy, bright fire place and tried to warm up myself. At 4 the Master had His tea and Mrs Whyte also came in to have a cup of Assam tea.

Oriental Students

At five o'clock the Oriental students began to come ⁹⁰. First the Master met some of them in the small private room, then at 5.30 He entered in the large Library where all of them were sitting. There were almost 200, more than fifteen nationalities from Asia, all gathered under one roof, the most potent evidence of the power of the Word of God. First Rev. Whyte expressed his pleasure at having "our great Master amongst us" and talked several minutes ⁺⁹¹; then a gentleman from

⁸¹ Edinburgh in 1913 was much smaller than today, its northern areas crossing the Waters of Leith only where the rivers pulls into the city on the north-east, stretching on the West only to the start of Gorgie Road, reaching on the South to the Meadows with sparser housing continuing southwards to the railway line, clinging down the bridges to the end of Minto Street, not straying west beyond Arthur's Seat, and connecting (relatively recently) up to Leith.

⁸² One wonders how far afield they drove out, as there are (and were) not many mountains and lakes right in Edinburgh itself; perhaps they drove out south to the Pentland Hills or even beyond.

⁸³ Legendary story. See web.

⁸⁴ Holyrood Palace, Edinburgh EH8 8DX.

⁸⁵ King George V (George Albert; 1865 – 1936) was King of the UK, British Dominions and Emperor of India; he was a grandson of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert and first cousin of Tsar Nicholas II of Russia and Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany [#W].

⁸⁶ "...they all went for a drive down the Royal Mile, past Holyrood House, and up the King's Drive. They found the scenery very pleasing." [#ABE1963].

⁸⁷ The nearby park could be Queen's Street Gardens or Princes Street Gardens.

⁸⁸ Scott Monument (built 1840-1846) is 200 feet high, 55 sq ft at base.

⁸⁹ "He felt the cold very trying and his hostess found from his attendant that he was most insufficiently clothed for this northern city and a forenoon was spent in providing for his greater comfort - to the interest and admiration of several shopkeepers, unaccustomed to oriental dress and speech." [Prof G S Stewart] "Our only anxiety was lest the rigours of an Edinburgh winter should press hard on the physique of an oriental who, at an advanced age, was touring the World and had never been so far north before. But, when the time came, a miracle seemed to happen; for we were granted four mild and sunny days in which to welcome the venerable guest to our beautiful capital." [#EHC Pagan].

⁹⁰ #ABE1963 mistakenly puts this on the afternoon of 8 Jan.

⁹¹ "Dr. Whyte, addressing 'Abdu'l-Bahá, said, "Dear Master, I have held many meetings in this house, but in all my life never have I seen one like this. This gathering reminds me of the words of Paul, saying, that God "hath made of one blood all the nations of men" (Acts 17, v. 26), and Christ saying that "They

India spoke very beautifully about the wonderful effect of the Bahai Cause and on behalf of the students thanked "Our Master" for His Presence. Then a very eloquent student from Damascus⁹⁹² spoke. His speech was on peace, brotherhood and a warm welcome to the Master.^{+R93}

Then Our Beloved arose from His seat and spoke on Medicine, how the doctors must ever be the means of physical and spiritual healing. He spoke also on a few Bahai principles and advised them when they return to their respective countries they must be like shining stars. After Our Master's talk which was quite long a student from Persia spoke and on the part of the students he tendered a rising vote of thanks which was carried amidst loud clapping of hands⁺⁹⁴.

Then the Master called 3 of the Egyptian students and talked with them for sometimes.

Esperanto Society 2

At 7.30 we had our dinner and at 8 o'clock the automobile was ready to take the Master to the Freemason's Hall^{967^} to address the Esperanto Society. The program of which I enclose. As we reached at the door there were more than 300 people standing



outside desiring to enter in the Hall, but it seemed they could not. The floor and the gallery seat about 1000 people. It is a new building and the architecture is very majestic, simple and dignified, well lighted with brilliant electricity.

On the platform there sat 3 rows of Professors, Scholars and clergymen of the city, most prominent people^{C95}. When our Beloved entered upon the platform all the audience rose to welcome Him. It was a wonderful sight never to be forgotten. Not only all the seats were taken but all the aisles were crowded with people standing, while outside there were hundreds of people disappointed. It seemed that all Edinburgh was there. Before the Master sitting on the platform the musical program was given and so the addresses started. First Rev. John Kellman M.A.D.D.⁹⁹⁶ spoke for some minutes. He gave the short history of the Movement etc. Then Mr Andrew Wilson⁹⁹⁷ (look for his academic letters in the program) spoke on the progress of Esperanto and welcome to Abdul Baha. Then Our Beloved delivered a stirring speech on the necessity of a universal language, telling stories and points which throw the audience into laughing^{T98} and good humor. He carried the audience with His irresistible eloquence on and on to a rarer sphere of unity and unfolded before their eyes the benefits of a universal auxiliary language. There were two tables around which the reporters sat and Our Beloved's address will appear

shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the Kingdom of God." (Luke 13. v. 29.) [#ABE1963].

⁹² Capital of Syria in the Middle East. "Egyptian student" [#ABE1963].

⁹³ See #ABE1963 for a summary-style (adding little) of the speeches of these students and Abdu'l-Baha.

⁹⁴ "Then Dr Whyte got up and thanked Mrs Whyte (his wife) that she was the cause of the coming of Abdul Baha there and because the cause of such a great blessing. On that day money were being gathered for the poor from amongst those present The Master also gave some few pounds as well. This action of the Master touched all those who learnt of this very much." [#Lutfullah].

⁹⁵ Who were looking for doctrines to contend about, but were not given any!

⁹⁶ Rev John Kelman, DD (Scotland: 1864 Leith - 1929 Edinburgh), married, of 52 Melville Street, Edinburgh, and of St George's United Free Church, was a prolific writer on religious and literary subjects, and at one time assistant with the world-famed Biblical expositor Dr George Adam Smith (*The Manx Quarterly*, *Memorial Notices*, n29 - 1923).

⁹⁷ Mr Andrew Wilson, F.R.S.E. (years unknown), special Councillor of the British Esperanto Society [#Scotsman, 1913-01-08, p10].

⁹⁸ Or "laughter".

in all the Esperanto magazines and papers as well as tomorrow's dailies⁹⁹⁹.

After the Master's address Prof Geddes delivered an interesting address showing the progress of events and thanking the Master for His words of wisdom.

Then the Master spoke with several of those who were on the platform and shook hand with more than 200 of the people⁺¹⁰⁰.

[In the next day's letter:] As I came out of the Freemason's Hall a young Mohamadan Hindu who is a medical student in the University gave me a letter for our Beloved. Later on when I read it to Him, the young man desired to be married by the Master to a Scotch "lassie"¹⁰¹. He came this morning and after much talk we found out they cannot be married now because it takes ten days to get a license from the Registrar of the city. And as the Master would not perform the marriage ceremony without the young man's compliance with the laws of the country and as there was no time for such compliance, therefore the young man was disappointed. However, nothing could be done to change the situation.

Return Home; Reporter

Tired and fatigued we returned home and a newspaper man interviewed our beloved on some points of the Cause.⁺¹⁰²

Dinner + Overview

At 10.30 He had His dinner or supper. These two meetings today were very significant indeed, just, in Edinburgh where people have never heard the name of the Cause there is such tremendous interest. Mrs Whyte was very happy⁺¹⁰³ on account of the results of these two meetings.

The effect of the Master's talk to the students will be far-reaching. No one can estimate how much.

We have just received from brother Wilhelm¹⁰⁴ 500 copies of Palo Altan¹⁰⁵ and we divided the same amongst the students.

⁹⁹ *Scotsman*, 8 Jan, *Evening Dispatch*, 8 Jan; it also appeared as a full Esperanto pamphlet and in the *British Esperantist*, Feb 1913.

¹⁰⁰ "...from a remote corner in a distant gallery, I saw and heard the Master for the first time. My very eagerness made me impatient of preliminaries, and perhaps unduly critical of the opening remarks from a local clergyman who seemed to feel his position acutely; for, instead of using his eloquent gift of extemporaneous speech, he rode a carefully prepared statement in which politic insistence on religious barriers somewhat impaired his graciousness as host to such a guest as Abdul Baha. He was followed by Mr Andrew Wilson, F.R.S.E., special Councillor of the British Esperanto Society, in whose name he expressed a warm welcome to Abdul Baha, in Esperanto, of which the Master showed hearty appreciation. Of his address that evening I can find no record, but I well remember with what vigour the aged prophet strode about the platform and how his richly sonorous voice rang out in answer to the greetings offered him by the officials of the Society. He spoke in Persian, each sentence being translated for us into English as soon as spoken. He limited himself to the subject of Esperanto, and illustrated the lack of some such Universal language by humorous anecdotes of travel and also by the fact that notwithstanding his familiarity with at least ten Eastern languages, he required an interpreter in order to communicate with a Western audience." [#EHC Pagan].

¹⁰¹ lassie = young girl.

¹⁰² "I saw him at Dr. Whyte's just after the meeting. He was lying back in an arm-chair, while his personal attendant massaged his legs. He was an exhausted man." [#Prof Stewart].

¹⁰³ "Dear Mrs Whyte. Let me say on behalf of the Esperantists how much we thank you for the opportunity you have given us of hearing Abdul Baha's message on our platform. I cannot but think that you must have been a little disappointed that he devoted so much of his address to our movement, but that disappointment, if it exists, will be tempered by the fact that the address was keenly appreciated by the Esperantists. It has been taken down in shorthand, and is being translated into Esperanto for the purpose of having it made known in every country in the world. I am also putting myself into communication with the Esperantists in order to let them know the importance for them of Abdul Baha's command. Yours Very Sincerely (Sig) W. M. Page" [Ahmad Sohrab Letters, copied for Harriet.]

¹⁰⁴ Roy Cochran Wilhelm (1875 Ohio-1951 Maine) of New York, a coffee importer, was a Hand of the Cause, becoming a Baha'i in 1907, and a wealthy entrepreneur. He introduced Martha Root to the Faith, and served on many institutions including the National Assembly and its predecessor for many years. See #BW, v12, p662-4. [#W, #MD, Bio Notes] AT: "Mr Roy C Wilhelm".

¹⁰⁵ Palo Alto is on the west coast of the US in San Francisco, California, where Abdu'l-Baha visited.

Well, this is 1 o'clock after midnight. I am very tired and I must go to bed. Hope you can read this scribbling and add to it any word which I have left out. Love to all
Ahmad

Alternative Account in the Christian Commonwealth

Abdul Baha's first public appearance was on Tuesday evening, when in the Freemasons' Hall, one of the largest and most beautiful halls in the city, he confined his remarks entirely to the benefits of an international auxiliary language. The meeting was arranged by the Edinburgh Esperanto Society, and among those who accompanied Rev. Dr. Kelman, the chairman, to the platform were Professor Patrick Geddes, the eminent scientist, and Dr. Sarolea, editor of "Everyman" and initiator of the local Esperanto Society ten years ago. The Esperantists were greatly pleased at Abdul Baha's unhesitating approval of their language, and at his important declaration, "Let us thank the Lord that this Esperanto language has been created. Therefore we have commanded all the Bahais in the Orient to study this language very carefully, and ere long it will spread all over the East." That Abdul Baha intends this command to be carried into effect is evidenced by the fact that he has ordered a supply of Esperanto Books to be Sent to Haifa, to be studied by his students there, and four hundred copies of the programme of the meeting, a beautiful production, are being sent to Persia for distribution among the Bahais there. The programme has a portrait of Abdul Baha, the photo block for which was lent by THE CHRISTIAN COMMONWEALTH, and contains the Esperanto poem, "Prego sub la verda standardo," by Dr. Zamenhof, Dr. George Matheson's "Gather us in," and quotations from the Bible, Baha'o'llah, and Burns.^{R106}

Alternative Account by Patrick Geddes

It is impossible to estimate what definite results may remain or arise from Abdul Baha's three public appearances and private meetings; but his friends may fairly congratulate themselves on his reception in every case, which must certainly have exceeded even the most sanguine anticipations of their organisers, and this alike as regards numbers and receptivity of audiences. Never has Esperanto had so excellent a recommendation to the public who crowded the magnificent new Freemason's Hall, as this ardent appeal for it on the international and specific, and the moral and spiritual grounds, which, although realised by Esperantists themselves, have seldom, if ever, to the same extent been put by an effective preacher. Some disappointment, however, was felt that at this meeting the advocacy of internationalism through a common language should have left no time for a statement of the Bahai system as a whole.^{R107}

8 Jan - Rainy Hall, Col Arts, Messiah

Wednesday

Weather : ☁️🌧️🌤️ morning, cloudy with intermittent sunshine; afternoon, light showers; the evening sky was clear and starlit; light SE wind; temperature up to 9C.

Jan 8th, 1913

Dear Harriet!

St Giles Cathedral 1

As we entered St Giles' Cathedral^{?108} and the Beloved took His seat in the front row of the gallery looking down upon the mass of humanity who have gathered there to hear Handel's Messiah all the eyes involuntarily turned to Him with wonder and respect. Then the chorus with delightfully trained voices raised the exultant tone "And the Glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it."⁺¹⁰⁹ Was not this a wonderful prophecy which had they wisdom and perception they could see the Glory of the Lord revealed before their own eyes!

¹⁰⁶ #Christian Commonwealth, 15 Jan 1913.

¹⁰⁷ #Christian Commonwealth, 15 Jan 1913 by Patrick Geddes.

¹⁰⁸ St Giles Cathedral, Royal Mile, Edinburgh EH1 1RE, also known as the High Kirk of Edinburgh, was Edinburgh's religious focal point for at least 900 years [#W].

¹⁰⁹ Bible, Isaiah 40:5; about 10 mins into the piece. "Among the audience, in the reserved portion, was the Persian mystic, Abdul baha, who arrived late, with a few attendants." [#Scotsman, 1913-01-09].

Cables

This morning Our Beloved called me to His room and dictated many cables to be forwarded to all parts of the Orient so that the friends may know that He is well and upholding the standard of Baha-o'llah in amongst the contending nations of Europe "with murder in their eyes".

Morning Prayer

The call to prayer was heard and I hastened down stairs to join the congregation. We sung a very comforting song and Principalⁱ¹¹⁰ Whyte prayed while the rest on bended knees listened.

Mr Whyte and his work

Principal Alexander Whyte is not only a famous preacher of Scotland, not only enjoys the leadership of one of the most influential churches of Scotland^{?111} in which he delivers lectures every Sunday morning, but he is the President of one of the greatest Theological Colleges in the Country. From these facts you can dimly realize how significant it is, the Master's Presence in his home as honoured guest by his own insistent invitationsⁱ¹¹². He is rather an old man but vigorous and active. He is at the head of a committee of 200 with another committee of 200 representing the two denominational churches of Scotland who are trying to unite them and remove the sectarian differences. They have been at it for two years and they are very hopeful. The committee had one of its sessions today and after 3 hours of deliberation Principal Whyte came home an optimist. Tomorrow they will have another session of 5 hours in the Theological College. He is much strengthened and inspired by our Beloved's words and encouragement.

Morning Papers

After the prayer I got hold of the only morning paper of Edinburgh which contained a fairly good article^{?113}. Later on the noon papers were read which contained better articles all of which I send you in a separate package. The editorial of the evening dispatch is very good.



Marriage Request

Last night as I came out of the Freemason's Hall a young Mohamadan Hindu who is a medical student in the University gave me a letter for our Beloved. Later on when I read it to Him, the young man desired to be married by the Master to a Scotch "lassie"^{?114}. He came this morning and after much talk we found out they cannot be married now because it takes ten days to get a license from the Registrar of the city. And as the Master would not perform the marriage ceremony without the young man's compliance with the laws of the country and as there was no time for such compliance, therefore the young man was disappointed. However, nothing could be done to change the situation.



Sir John Clark

¹¹⁰ Principal of New College, Edinburgh, a theological college, and now the School of Divinity.

¹¹¹ St George's West Church, 58 Shandwick Place, EH2 4RT.

¹¹² It may have been rather more attributable to his wife's insistence for His coming, which the generous and ecumenical spirit of Mr Whyte undoubtedly upheld.

¹¹³ One presumes the #Scotsman. We also have the Evening Dispatch for that day... one wonders what the other newspapers mentioned are.

¹¹⁴ lassie = young girl.

Then a Sir John [Clark]¹¹⁵ came to see the Master. He is the publisher of a 12 volumes of the Encyclopaedia of religion and morality¹¹⁶ which contains an article on Bahai movement by Prof. Browne¹¹⁷. He is the superintendent of the 4 largest schools¹¹⁸ in Edinburgh having more than 4 thousand pupils.⁺¹¹⁹



Mr Whyte Autographs; Woman Makes Miniature

Mr Whyte was anxious to impress me with his importance and influence in many circles. He had a book of autographs, signed by Queen Victoria and many royal families and nobilities. He requested Our Beloved to write His autograph in it. He, however, wrote for him a very beautiful prayer which was translated. While He was talking with Sir John [Clark] there was a woman sitting in a corner of the room making a miniature of the Master which was not finished.

Edinburgh College of Arts

About 11.30 the automobile of Sir —¹²⁰ Haldane was again brought at the door¹²¹ and Our Beloved according to the invitation of the President went to the Edinburgh College of Arts¹²². It is a very massive building. Nearly two thousand art students attend. They teach painting, sculpture, drawing and designing etc.



The Master conducted by the President¹²³ of the College was taken to various rooms where boys and girls were painting, moulding etc. Their best student¹²⁴ in Sculpture is an Indian. So far at every student's competition he has carried away the highest prize. The Prof of Sculpture¹²⁵ took us to this Hindu young man. His studio is next to the Professor and he is honoured very much. The Master talked with him, praising his work and giving him incentive to go to India and found the new school of sculpture. He was most delighted with Greek sculpture which are so life-like and human.

Poor Schools / Kings Commissioner

Leaving the College of Arts we were driven to the poor district where the schools for their children are most interesting. After long discussion in the educational circles and the Press the

¹¹⁵ Sir John Maurice Clark, 2nd Baronet (1900), M.B.E., V.D., J.P., D.L. (1859 - 1924, m.1885), 17 Rothesay Terrace, (presumably as the text leaves a blank for the surname), a partner in T&T Clark, 38 George Street, from 1880 to 1923; he was Lieutenant-Colonel and Honorary Colonel of the 7th Battalion, Royal Scots between 1905 and 1910, and was Justice of the Peace (J.P.) for Edinburgh and Deputy Lieutenant (D.L.) of Midlothian, amongst other titles [*#web*, *#Scotsman*, 1924-05-28 (Obituary), 1924-05-31 (Funeral), 1910-11-09 (Election re Schools)] and thepeepage.com).

¹¹⁶ *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hastings et al, published by T&T Clark (founded Edinburgh, 1821).

¹¹⁷ Edward Granville Browne (England: 1862 Gloucestershire-1926 Cambridge, buried Newcastle) was an orientalist who, knowing Arabic and Persian, made a particular study of Persian literature and history and had a fascination for the Babi history and its developments, making important translations. He was well-regarded by the Persians and left a short account well-known amongst Baha'is of his encounter with Baha'u'llah.

¹¹⁸ Through the Merchant Company of Edinburgh, these four schools - Merchant Maiden Hospital (now Mary Erskine School), George Watson's Hospital (now George Watson's College), Daniel Stewart's Hospital (now part of Stewart's Melville College) and James Gillespie's Hospital and Free School (now James Gillespie's High School) [*#W*].

¹¹⁹ "That morning, many seekers after truth availed themselves of the opportunity of visiting Him." [*#ABE1963*].

¹²⁰ For Sir William Stowell Haldane, see above, 7 Jan, p7.

¹²¹ OT: "author" - perhaps 'auto' was in the diarist's mind?

¹²² Edinburgh College of Art (1909) at 74 Lauriston Place, Edinburgh EH3 9DF in 1913, in a huge red sandstone building in the Beaux-Arts style.

¹²³ Frank Morley Fletcher (years unknown) of 23 George Square.

¹²⁴ Fanindra Nath Bose (d. 1926), buried Liberton, Edinburgh.

¹²⁵ Percy Herbert Portsmouth, A.R.S.A. (years unknown) of 39 George Square (no longer exists).

state has come forward and taken into hand the feeding of the very poor children at lunch time.



The Master walked in these long halls¹²⁶ where the children from 6 to 12 years - on one side the girls on the other side the boys - were sitting around large tables and eating their bowls of soup etc. He liked the sight and praised the teachers for their self-sacrifice and service. In one of these rooms the children sung to Him some nursery songs and He in turn prayed for them. They are going to frame the prayer and keep it in the room as a keepsake of this wonderful visit.⁺¹²⁷ As we came out of this school to go to a kindergarten school¹²⁸ which was a block away hundreds of children followed us. Somehow the children got the notion that Our Beloved is the High Special Commissioner appointed by the King of England to pay them a visit, so they were very respectful. Having reached the Kindergarten, the little tots greeted Our Beloved. The teacher was delighted and surprised. She showed us the various little rooms and the playthings of the children; their little cots on which they sleep one hour a day, their gardens etc. The Master told her she is a noble worker, everyone must appreciate her services, she is serving indeed the future generation. May she be confirmed and assisted. We got in the auto and the hundreds of children with their small, darling hands and little capes bade a hearty farewell to the King's Commissioner.⁺¹²⁹



Shopping

At 7 Charlotte Square the Master asked Mrs Whyte to talk for around¹³⁰ half an hour. We roamed toward the stores¹³¹ and looking through the window glasses, He was attracted by the opera-glasses. He bought ten of them to be taken to Syria for souvenirs.



Lunch; Universal Peace

We return home and have lunch. Some one asks whether the Master attended Peace Conferences in America. "Many of them" the answer is given and then an exhaustive discussion

¹²⁶ North Canongate School, 5 New Street, Canongate. Photo.

¹²⁷ "He encouraged the children in their studies and admired their work." [*#ABE1963*].

¹²⁸ St Saviour's Child Garden (1906-1969) was at 8 Chessel's Court, Canongate (entrance where New Street meets Canongate), which is now 4 Chessel's Court. For this kindergarten, see "Diary of a Free Kindergarten" by Lileen Hardy.

¹²⁹ "Mr. Andrew Young, headmaster of the North Canongate School, who presided, said that the head of this great movement when he was in Scotland had the splendid courtesy to come down to the North Canongate School, and bless the bairns and their noon-day meal. Abdul Baha had won the hearts of the children by his great generosity and kindness... On Tuesday, the children of the Canongate enjoyed the lantern slides of the Holy Land, responding with eagerness to the lecturer's questions. When at the end they saw the picture of Abdul Baha, they cried out with delight, and sent their love to him." [*#Christian Commonwealth*, 7 May 1913, p. 562].

¹³⁰ "around for" in the original, with 'around' squeezed in the edge afterward in the wrong place.

¹³¹ Possibly on Princes Street, although there were stores all around.

as regards Universal Peace is carried on. The Master says that in future no war must be undertaken by any nation without the consent of the people and the government may find out this matter by applying the law of Referendum.

Rainy Hall

At half-past four after drinking a cup of tea we are driven to the Rainy Hall ¹³². The Hall is large and filled to the door ¹³³. Prof Geddes introduces the Master to the audience who will speak to you on the ideas and ideals of the Bahai Movement. Then the Master rises from His seat and delivers a powerful speech on the many principles of the Bahai Revelation, a complete record of which will appear in tomorrow's papers. The audience enjoyed the wonderful, illuminating address and repeatedly applauded. After Our Beloved's address Dr Barbour expressed the thanks of the audience to Abdul Baha for His eloquent exposition of one of the great movements of the time. What struck him when the Master was speaking was that He was giving expression to some wishes of their own hearts. The Rev. A. B. Robb ¹³⁴ said we have been in the habit of sending missionaries from the West to the East to preach the Gospel; this day we have a missionary from the East to preach the old Gospel and to preach it in a new and original way. Dr Kelman said last night that Abdul Baha was not here to preseleyse. I am not sure of that. I feel we are not preaching quite the Gospel we have heard today, though we are all longing to preach it and perhaps Abdul Baha's address would give some of us assurance to do so. After the meeting many people came forward and shook the Master's hand and expressed their delight and happiness ¹³⁵



City; Return

Returning home we had a splendid view of the general illumination of the City, as the college of Theology in whose large hall the Master spoke is built on the hill you can see the whole lighted avenues before you.

St Giles Cathedral 2

Without resting much about 8 o'clock the auto took us to St Giles Cathedral. This performance was specially given for the poor ¹³⁶. Thousands of people were present. The Master sat in the gallery and during the two hours



¹³² Rainy Hall, New College, the Mound, Edinburgh EH1 2LX. Tickets were 1s with Outlook Tower members free.

¹³³ "Among the audience were church dignitaries and many eminent Edinburgh men." [#ABE1963]; "a large audience, mostly ladies" [#Scotsman, 9 Jan 1913].

¹³⁴ Rev Alexander Barrie Robb (West Lothian, Scotland: 1872-1939) Scottish Presbyterian clergyman from Falkirk; active in community service; organized relief during World War I for Serbia, for which decorated by the Serbian government [#JanJasionBio].

¹³⁵ "A large number of those present availed themselves of the Chairman's invitation to meet Abdul Baha in an adjoining room where we found him seated to receive us. We went in single file; and each had the separate privilege of a personal greeting that seemed like meeting one's dearest friend and at the same time receiving a benediction. When my turn came I mentioned the name of a Bahai friend in London who had asked me to do so, and I was rewarded by a specially radiant smile as he repeated the name, or rather his own abbreviation of the name, "Rosa", and spoke a few words in English. I could not claim more than this brief moment; but I heard afterwards from "Rosa" that he had mentioned the incident on his return to London." [#EHC Pagan]. The most likely candidate for the abbreviation "Rosa" would be Ethel Rosenberg, who was known as Rosa/Rosah/Roser in letters by Shoghi Effendi and Munavvar Khanum [#UKBH].

¹³⁶ See description at start of day.

program listened most carefully. ¹³⁷
Please remember me to all the friends
Ahmad

Alternative Account of St Giles from Mahmud's Diary

'Abdu'l-Bahá enjoyed the programme very much, and when He returned, said, "It was a good meeting. I saw the poor people were happy. The hearts of the poor are very tender, and so they are hurt ¹³⁸ easily. Once, in Baghdad, a poor man visited us. He sat on a small carpet. Putting his hands on it, he said to me, 'I suppose one can sleep longer and relax better on this carpet because it is very soft? I gave him the carpet. After a few days I saw him again. He said to me, 'I thought I would sleep better on it, but really, it did not make any difference, so I sold it.' "

Then 'Abdu'l-Bahá continued, "The hearts of the poor break easily, so there are no limits to the ways we can give them happiness ¹³⁹. In 'Akká, many times I had the poor in my house. But you do not know the extent to which the poor in the East are in need: these poor people - what can they do!" ^{R140}

Alternative Account - Christian Commonwealth

A statement of the Bahai system as a whole, however, was presented next day in a systematic discourse, and with numbered headings, in the lecture in the Rainy Hall, under the auspices of the committee of Outlook Tower, which he had visited with intelligent appreciation and sympathy rising at times to enthusiastic approval. This exposition was at once a sermon and a lecture, according as one viewed it from its beginning or recalled it from its close. Its beginning was an ardent expression of the spiritual unity of humanity, an appreciation of the historic religions, and an insistence upon the need and practicability of their increasing unison, and of their needed public action from inward good will towards international peace. Its later passages gave a no less cordial appreciation of science and industry, a demand for technical education and universal efficiency, and insistence upon the full equality of woman. Here, in fact, was made plain what is surely one of the greatest merits and recommendations of the Bahai system - its wide catholicity. For though all over the world old controversies are dying out, old hatreds abating, and though the need of reconciling us with the past and leading us onward into a renaissance idealism, permeating modern life and directing its progress, is being widely felt, it is doubtful if any of our Western preachers, men of science or of affairs, has yet learned to give so simple, direct and categorical a statement of all this, at once from the spiritual and the material side, as in this long meditated, simply stated, teaching of Abdul Baha. ^{R141}

9 Jan - Theosophical, Women

Thursday

¹³⁷ "THE MESSIAH" IN ST GILES' CATHEDRAL. - A recital of Handel's "Messiah" was given last night in St Giles' Cathedral under quite exceptional conditions. It was rather in the nature of a church service for the poor than of a musical entertainment. The various missions of the city were offered the opportunity of distributing tickets which would admit the poorest to assist at a production of Handel's masterpiece, which was conceived on the grandest scale. The very place, the genius loci, disovered the customary connection with the concert-room, and imparted a religious feeling to a performance that was artistically of the best. On the initiative of Dr Wallace Williamson, the services of Mr Collinson and the Edinburgh Royal Choral Union had been secured; the work was quite familiar to them. By the benevolence of generous people attached to St Giles' some forty members of the Scottish Orchestra, and four soloists of first-class rank, were engaged to assist at a solemn and in some respects a superb rendering of "The Messiah." The service began with a portion of the Hundredth Psalm, sung by choir and congregation, and was followed by a short prayer, audible in every part of the Cathedral, by Dr Williamson. After that came "The Messiah," with, of course, such omissions from the original as modern conditions demand. The soloists were Mrs Mary Conly, Mrs Ada Crossley, Mr Gervase Elwes, and Mr Herbert Brown - quite a first-class quartet. The audience, so far as could be observed, were deeply moved by the beauty of a presentation of "The Messiah" which, though given free for the benefit of the more respectable poor of the city of Edinburgh, was in its church environment and in the perfection of its performance, quite noteworthy from the musical point of view. Dr Collinson conducted. Mr Siegl led the orchestra, and Mr Gavin Godfrey played the organ. Among the audience, in the reserved portion, was the Persian mystic, Abdul Baha, who arrived late, with a few attendants." [#Scotsman, 1913-01-09].

¹³⁸ "Touched" [#Lutfulluh].

¹³⁹ "...the hearts of the poor will very soon be touched and so the more one be the Cause of the happiness of the hearts of the poor the better." [#Lutfulluh].

¹⁴⁰ #ABE1963.

¹⁴¹ by Patrick Geddes in #Christian Commonwealth, 15 Jan 1913.

Weather : ☁️ ☀️ morning, dark, a fresh SE breeze; afternoon overcast with a spell of sunshine; evening, clear dry and pleasant, with a light SE wind and a mild atmosphere; temperature up to 9 C.

Jan 9. 1913

Dear Harriet!

Theosophical Society

We have just returned ²⁺¹⁴² (11.30 pm) from the beautiful meeting in the Theosophical Society. There was a most lovely spirit of love and sympathy manifest there. Everything was warm and hospital. The audience running into several hundred of people most sympathetic ⁺¹⁴³. Members of the Society have come from all parts of Scotland and even from Ireland ⁺¹⁴⁴ to hear the Master talk. It is one of the most wide-awake Theosophical Centers of Europe. They have a darling house, quite large and commodious, on the second floor ²¹⁴⁵ of which they have their lecture Hall ⁱ¹⁴⁶.

Private Room

They had invited the Master not only to deliver an address but to dine with them. Having left home in two automobiles brought by the General Secretary at <6>.45 we reached their headquarter after a few minutes. They have here *one of* the largest Theosophical Library in the world and all their rooms were well-furnished. On arriving the Master was taken into a private room. Here He met a Mrs Brown ²¹⁴⁷ who has been born in Ramleh ²¹⁴⁸ from a Scottish father. She is a Theosophist and devotes much of her time and her means to the maintenance of this establishment. The Master talked with her and prayed for her that she may soar to the heaven of Reality, a heaven whose sun never sets, whose moon never disappears, whose stars never fall. Afterward a mother ²¹⁴⁹ with seven daughters, the first of whom ²¹⁵⁰ has in turn nine daughters came in to receive the Blessing of the Master. "I hope your daughters may form a blessed family. Abraham was one single soul. God blessed him and today he is represented in millions of soul." ⁺¹⁵¹ Other Secretaries, Treasurers, Presidents of the various Lodges were presented to Our Beloved, especially a young couple who are the assistants of the General Secretary and who are going to marry next June were presented and both received a very wonderful blessing. "May you become as one pearl in a casket! May you two become as one soul in two bodies!" etc.

¹⁴² 28 Great King Street, Edinburgh EH3 6QN. A ticket-only event, at 6d a ticket, firstly open to the Society and then to the public.

¹⁴³ In the 1970s, the caretaker was still the same one who had been present during Abdu'l-Baha's visit, and he gave the description, recalled later by a Baha'i in 2011, #JP, that *everyone was crammed into the room to overflowing, perhaps 120 people were inside, with the people flowing out the door and down the stairs; he remembered where Abdu'l-Baha stood, and the translator especially vividly; how that in those days, it was a particularly vibrant society, with children and teenagers present at the meeting.*

¹⁴⁴ "...even from England and Ireland" [#EHC Pagan].

¹⁴⁵ i.e. the First Floor, immediately above the Ground Floor; Sohrab calls the Ground Floor the First Floor.

¹⁴⁶ An 'L'-shaped room in a Georgian House.

¹⁴⁷ Mrs Brown (details unknown) was likely from Orkney [Ref: *Scottish Theosophical Membership List with addresses 1913*].

¹⁴⁸ Ramleh was then in Palestine, now in Israel.

¹⁴⁹ Jessie Osborne née Pagan (1843-1948) and her seven daughters, of 22 Newbattle Terrace, Edinburgh.

¹⁵⁰ Jessie Hair Pagan (Britain: 1863 Fife-1958 Surrey), who married Mr Pole the Theosophical General Secretary in 1918. She had nine children (8 girls and 1 boy, by a prior marriage).

¹⁵¹ "We went in as a family, mother & her seven daughters & some of her grandchildren. He stood laughing happily at the long procession and we made a ring round him, & he congratulated mother & hoped she would have as many descendants as Father Abraham." (#IM Pagan).

Address on Primordial Atom, Immortality of Soul, Unity of Manifestations

Then at about 8 o'clock the Hall being filled, Mr Pole ²¹⁵² made a very short introduction, that it's the greatest privilege of his life to come in the Presence of Abdul Baha who radiates love. ⁺¹⁵³

The Master spoke on three subjects ⁺¹⁵⁴, on the indestructibility of the primordial atom ²¹⁵⁵, on the immortality of the soul and on the unity of the Manifestations of God. It was a very powerful array of fact and it will appear in the Feb Number of "Theosophy in Scotland," a copy of January I mail with other papers in which the Master's arrival is announced on the first page. After the lecture He delivered a most powerful and spiritual prayer. He stood at the door and shook hand with all ⁺¹⁵⁶. They were delighted with the address and many of them thought it is so much like our own ideas.



Mr DG Pole
Secretary

Rest and Theosophical Dinner

The Master rested in the room for half an hour and it was then announced that the supper is served. I suppose there were about 15 of the Theosophical Leaders who were invited for dinner ⁺¹⁵⁷. They had some Persian and Turkish dishes which were immensely enjoyed. After dinner, the autograph book of

¹⁵² Major David Graham Pole (Britain: 1877 Leith, Edinburgh - 1952 London), 13 Cameron Park, married (1918) Jessie Hair Pagan; Secretary of the Theosophical Society, Solicitor (1901), Member of Parliament (1929-31). Work place, 105 Hanover Street.

¹⁵³ "Abdu'l-Bahá has tremendous spiritual powers. In my opinion, He is the focal point of the spiritual, intellectual, and theological forces of the present and future centuries. When people recognize the powers that 'Abdu'l-Bahá has access to, then they will have no doubt that this Cause will greatly revolutionize the religious and economic life of mankind." [#ABE1963].

¹⁵⁴ "when He mounted the platform in the evening, before a packed hall, He looked very tired. He remained seated in silence for a few moments, after Mr. Graham Pole had reverently introduced Him. Then, seeming to gather strength, He arose, and with voice and manner of joyous animation, and eyes aglow, He paced the platform with a vigorous tread, and spoke with words of great power." [#Chosen Highway].

¹⁵⁵ Primordial atom - The singleness and indivisibility of true atoms which evolve their combinations to express different qualities, as an entry metaphor to the singleness and indivisibility of the human soul. His address to the Wimbledon Theosophical Society on 3 Jan is described similarly: "The Master spoke from their own standpoint; the evolution of the single atom through the various Kingdoms of being; in every stage going into the making of a certain composition and in every form appearing with a distinctive virtue. Then He spoke about the eternal dominion of God which is not accidental or temporal but everlasting. Therefore His holy Divine Manifestations have appeared always and His grace is never-suspended."

¹⁵⁶ "When He sat down, applause and cheering reverberated throughout the building. The audience, most reluctant to leave, filed past the Master reverently. A young couple, who were to be married shortly, knelt in front of Him, and whilst holding on to His robes, begged Him to bless their lives." [#ABE1963].

¹⁵⁷ "Many of these were granted private interviews from which they returned refreshed, feeling their troubles lessened and their difficulties explained in a new and illuminating manner. These interviews, following on the afternoon talk to women, must have tasked the Master's strength; and although he would let no one go away unsatisfied, he certainly looked very tired when he mounted the Theosophical platform to address the members and friends who had crowded to hear him. He remained seated in silence for a few moments after Mr Graham Pole had reverently introduced him to the audience and then, as if gathering strength from our sympathy, he sprang to his feet and, with voice and manner of joyous animation, and eyes aglow, he paced the platform and exclaimed, as translated to us sentence by sentence... Abdul Baha remained at the Theosophical Head-quarters where he was entertained to supper before starting for London by the night train. those who were privileged to be with him at table were struck by his geniality and by the special concern he showed in seeing that a member who was deaf should not lose her share of the happy conversation around her." [#EHC Pagan].

the headquarters, Bahai books, photos of the Master were brought to Him to write a line or sign His name, which He did with the utmost patience⁺¹⁵⁸. The General Secretary was the happiest man on the face of the earth! He is a young man, full of enthusiasm, brimming over with hope and optimism⁺¹⁵⁹.

Return Home

Then the two autos being ready, he himself came with the Master to 7 Charlotte Square. Really I was so pleased with this meeting. The people were alive and appreciative and there was an air of culture and refinement about them. There were some newspapermen and I have no doubt an article may appear in tomorrow morning's paper.

Ahmad Up Late; Morning Prayer; Newspapers

This morning I got up a little late because I went to bed extremely tired and wearied with the activities of the day. Having attended to my morning prayer with the rest of the family I was glad to read in the paper^{?160} a quite complete report of last night's meeting. It is fair and you will realize by reading it whether the translator has done well or not.

Visitors : Professor, Secretary, Theosophical Member

Later on a Prof. from Aberdeen, the Secretary of the Islamic Society and a member of the Theosophical Society came to see the Master. The first asked questions about heredity, immortality of the soul and environment, the third about healing and incarnation and the second desired that the Master may speak to the members of the Islamic Society. All these questions were satisfactorily answered. Some more people came and received the blessing.

Visitors; Painter

At about 11.30 am, the auto which has served us for the last 2 days was present. This time a Miss Watson and a Minister came with the Master. First Our Beloved called on a painter^{?161} of artistic and imaginative pictures. He and his wife^{?162} showed us some of the large paintings. One^{?163} represented children doing almost all conceivable things^{T164}, the other depicting the legendary story of Brigdet^{?165}, another a little child riding on a lion, another a sinner before Christ and many other works. The Master blessed them and they were most pleased.



Drive to Forth Rail Bridge

Then we drove for nine miles^{?166} to see the greatest engineering feat of Scotland, a bridge^{?167}, more than one mile long over a river^{?168}.



Having arrived there we came down to look at it. Indeed it is a very colossal affair.

We drove back home and on the way the Master spoke to the Minister, and Miss Watson. She is an artist of considerable ability and the Master praised her much for her keen intelligence and understanding, asking her to read the Bahai writings.

Lunch

Arriving home we had our lunch. At the lunch table the Master asked Lancelot^{?169}, the youngest son of Mrs Whyte to study Persian and talked with Him a great deal about these matters.

Women and Equality Meeting

At 4 o'clock Mrs Whyte had the meeting of Edinburgh women (150) in her own spacious Library. The Master came down. At first in an adjoining room, some noble Ladies were introduced. There was a Lady who goes to London. She is almost a Bahai and she invited the Master to speak in her large parlor. The Master told her to come and see Lady Blomfield. Then Our Beloved was conducted by Mrs Whyte in the other room. All arose from their seats. His talk was first devoted upon the Unity and Spirituality, then He branched off to the equality of women, the stories of several Bahai heroines etcⁱ¹⁷⁰. It was a dramatic address in many of its passages. In the audience there were suffragists^{?171}, suffragettes^{?172} and anti-suffragists⁺¹⁷³. It was a most difficult thing to talk in a way that all of them may be pleased, all of them may co-operate with each other. But after the meeting Mrs Whyte said that all of them were highly satisfied.⁺¹⁷⁴



¹⁵⁸ "...the President brought the Society's Book, in which He wrote this prayer:- "He is God. O God, from the Sun of Truth cast a ray upon this Society, so that it may be illumined." " [#ABE1963] "Then the head of the Society brought the Society's book and the Master wrote a prayer in it for them. Then he (the headman) gave his own book and the Master wrote in his book a short prayer as well." [#Lutfullah].

¹⁵⁹ "The Theo. Society was so pleased that eve. that it is beyond my power to explain." [#Lutfullah].

¹⁶⁰ Presumably the #Scotsman, which ran a full report.

¹⁶¹ John Duncan (1866 Dundee-1945) a foremost Celtic revivalist painter, on the Management Board of the College of Arts, who was guided along by Patrick Geddes. He married Christine Allen in 1912 and immediately moved to 29 Bernard's Crescent as his home and studio, where this visit took place. Both were members of the Theosophical Society. (See special notes for identification.)

¹⁶² Christine Duncan née Allen (c1886-) was a spiritualist with connections to Wellesley Tudor Pole and Alice Buckton.

¹⁶³ Most certainly "The Play Garden", which had two versions, and was painted at that time (Photo).

¹⁶⁴ AT: "all kinds of delightful pranks".

¹⁶⁵ Saint Bridget (various spellings) (450-525 AD), a well-known Irish Saint; painted in 1913, this is on display at the Scottish National Gallery entitled "St Bride", a title which would capture St Bride's Well where Christine believed she had discovered the Holy Grail, and also his new marriage (Photo).

¹⁶⁶ By far most likely up Queensferry Road; not impossibly up Corstorphine (A8) or even, more remotely, via Gorgie (A71).

¹⁶⁷ Forth Railway Bridge, Edinburgh EH30 9TB, an engineering marvel stretching 2.5 km from South to North Queensferry, opened 4 March 1890.

¹⁶⁸ Firth of Forth, where the River Forth flows into the North Sea.

¹⁶⁹ Lancelot Law Whyte (1896 Edinburgh-1972 London) - his account of 7 Charlotte Square is given as an appendix; "I was the youngest child, yet I recall... Abdul Baha Abbas, the leader of the Persian Bahai movement, whose blessing on me made the East seem friendly for life." He was a Scottish financier and industrial engineer, and claimed to have worked with Albert Einstein on the unified field theory. Whyte proposed something he called "the unitary principle" to unify theories of physics. Married in 1921, 1926 and 1947.

¹⁷⁰ Tahiri undoubtedly foremost.

¹⁷¹ Suffragists = men or women who lobbied for women's right to vote, an issue that was at the fore of the times, and which came to pass in 1918.

¹⁷² Suffragettes = members of the women's suffrage movement, often quite radical or militant.

¹⁷³ "The Suffragettes were there and also an opposing group of men who occupied high positions in life." [#ABE1963].

¹⁷⁴ "Abdul Baha addressed a Drawing-room Meeting on the subject of "Women's rights", which was a burning question of that time. Besides speaking of the high importance of Motherhood and all that is involved in the early training of children, he urged women to fit themselves by study and training in every kind of science and art and social service. "Fit yourselves for responsibility", he said, adding with sad emphasis, "you will inevitably have it thrust upon you." These words came back to many of us, when, before two years had passed, women were called upon to fill every kind of civilian post left vacant by our men at the front; and also to organize and carry out auxiliary army services for the relief of sick and wounded all over the world. Political enfranchisement has naturally followed this evidence of "fitness" in nearly every country concerned; so that his advice to adhere to a constructive rather than a militant policy seems justified... From this meeting at the house of his Scottish hostess, Mrs Alexander White, Abdul Baha and his Persian friends went to the Headquarters of the Theosophical Society..." [#EHC Pagan].

Bulgaria Hospitals

Mrs Whyte had received a letter from a women's nurse in one of the hospitals in Bulgaria about the awful conditions owing to the lack of medical treatment. So she read this letter to the audience and solicited funds for the wounded and sick in this hospital.

There are more than 150 sick ones with only one doctor and one nurse. Turks and Bulgors are alike treated in this hospital^{H175}. The maid had a small tray in her hand at the door of the room and everyone gave something. Our Beloved gave £10^{£ 176}.



On Confirmations

Then the Master came up and talked to us a long time on the Confirmations of Baha-ollah, how He has assisted all of us in performing services in His Kingdom. Then He quoted an arabic poet:- If divine assistance is with you you can draw the globe toward yourself with a hair; if confirmation is cut from you, even the chains will be broken." Then He told us a long story about a man who becomes the King of Persia through his fidelity and love to God.

Overview

Well, Harriet! This is the last letter from Edinburgh. Tomorrow morning at 10 we will take the train for London. Altogether the meetings in Edinburgh were miracles of the Power of Abdul Baha. In a city where there is no Bahai assembly^{C177}, no active workers in the Cause, to witness so much interest not only on the part of the public but the Ministers. All the Ministers praising Our Beloved and His Teachings. Such events are really incomprehensible! Every gathering was well attended and many people were disappointed because they could not get any seat; all the audiences were sympathetic and glad to hear the message of love and life.

Good bye for tonight.

Love to all

Ahmad

Account of Meeting Abdu'l-Baha in Edinburgh - Scots Pictorial

To be ushered into the presence of 'Abdu'l-Baha, 'Abbas Effendi, 'the Servant of God', is to have the curtains of time lifted back and to hold converse with a prophet of Israel. The artistic dignity of his quietly coloured Eastern gown, the white folds of his turban, and the patriarchal beard which hangs upon his bosom all contribute towards giving the immediate impression of an Eastern scholar and divine. But it is the finely moulded contour of his face, the gentle movements of his hands, and the deep expression of his eyes which make it manifest that here, indeed, is an embodiment if the prophets of old. In comparing 'Abdu'l-Baha to the Biblical prophets, there is a distinction to be made. The early prophets descended upon mankind as scourgers of iniquity and as swords of the Lord. This messenger comes as a great reconciler of all faiths, as the forerunner of universal peace. In his eyes there is suffering and love. He is a man who has looked aghast and with pity upon the turmoil of life, and has heartfelt thoughts to utter.

When I entered the dimly-lit room, Abdul Baha was seated deep in a great arm-chair. At his feet reclined a companion in quiet conversation with him. Nearby there sat one of his secretaries, a slenderly-built young Persian, with a delicately-shaped nose and a short square-cut black beard. He looked like a figure from an Assyrian statue. A gentle and courteously-mannered Persian, Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, acted as interpreter.

In a low and gentle voice Abdul Baha spoke to his interpreter, who translated his message into English, sentence by sentence.

[...Abdu'l-Baha's speech...]

¹⁷⁵ Bulgaria (Orthodox Christian) borders Turkey (Muslim), having broken away from Ottoman rule and re-established as a constitutional monarchy in 1878. See web.

¹⁷⁶ £10 was worth £767 in 2010 currency (RPI).

¹⁷⁷ The "(Spiritual) Assembly" was the general community-group coming together, rather than what we would now call a Spiritual Assembly.

When he had finished speaking the prophet smiled gently. With a feeling of deep reverence I clasped his hand as he wished me good-night. When I had left the presence of Abbas Effendi I asked Mirza Ahmad Sohrab for the history of the Bahai movement. [...Sohrab's speech]^{R178}

10 Jan - Train to London

Friday

Edinburgh Weather : ☁ all day, overcast with rain and a cold strong SE breeze; temperature up to 7 C.

London Weather : ☁ misty; moderate wind; no rain; no bright sunshine.

97 Cadogan Gardens

London S.W.

Jan 10th 1913

Dear Harriet!

Scotland

Our Beloved was most pleased with the results of the work in Scotland. For during 3 days of our stay there, many people accepted the Cause to the extent that they came to Him and asked how should they join the Bahai Cause. I believe from now on there will be Bahais in Scotland and of course many people who will be always interested and many Societies who will be glad to open their platform to Bahai teachers. The Scottish people are deeply religious and once they accept the teachings they will become very active Bahais. The seeds of Truth are scattered in the prepared soil, now someone who can teach wisely must go there and water them: then many harvests shall be garnered and heavenly Benediction shall descend.

Morning and Packing; Call to Prayer

This being our last day in Edinburgh I had to get up very early morning, pack up my small satchel and be ready to be called by Our Beloved which He did after a while. I packed His satchel too and was doing something else when the call to prayer reached my ears. I hastened downstairs in the large Library and joined my voice with others in Thanksgiving to the Lord. Having a hasty breakfast I returned upstairs. Mrs Whyte came in with her autograph book in which Our Beloved wrote a most beautiful prayer with His own Hand. The Persian friends came from the hotel and between Our Master and Mrs Whyte there was a long discussion as to who is going to pay the Hotel Keeperⁱ¹⁷⁹. Mrs Whyte having already been making the arrangements wanted to pay and the Master insisted gently that He has money and He must pay. At last Mrs Whyte yielded reluctantly and the Master ordered Mirza Lotfollah to go and pay the bill. A curious event happened this morning which was very interesting. Principal Alexander Whyte in giving me one of his printed books on the life of Jacob Boheme^{?180} said:- "I wish you were a Christian." I answered: "We are all Christians. The Bahais are teaching today the Christ".



Farewells and Departure

It was about 9.45 when we came down to go to the station. Our Beloved asked for all the maids. When they all gathered He said: "You have a very good lady. For the last few days you have served me. I am very pleased with you. I will never forget you. I will pray for you that you may become confirmed and assisted and that your head be crowned with the diadem of eternal glory." Then in the



¹⁷⁸ 'Ion', (Journalist for) *The Scots Pictorial*, Vol XIII, O.S. No 696, 18 January 1913, p335. [#7Candles].

¹⁷⁹ Where Abdu'l-Bahá's companions were staying.

¹⁸⁰ Jacob Boehme (1575-17 Nov 1624) was a German Christian mystic.

palm of each hand He puts a £1- £181. Two automobiles take us to the station which is very near^{N?42^}. There we meet Mr Page^{?182}, the active and energetic *Secretary* of the Esperanto Society, Mr Pole^{?152^}, the kind and hospital Theosophical General Secretary; one of the Persian students and two Ministers with several ladies and gentlemen who have come to say farewell to Our Beloved. Their hearts are full of gratitude. They are happy because the Sun of Truth shone from the horizon of their Country⁺¹⁸³. Just at 10.05^{T184} the train was pulled out of the station and our eyes could see on the platform the hands and handkerchiefs waving farewell to Him.

Cables; "Scotland Illumined"

The Master dictated some cables to be sent to America. One to Mr Roy Wilhelm in New York: "Scotland illumined. Greetings to all friends."⁺¹⁸⁵

Isobel Fraser

On our train the ever-faithful Miss Isobel Fraser who came especially to Edinburgh to serve *as an advanced publicity agent* was with us on the train and Our Beloved called her to His Reserved Compartment. All the way from Edinburgh to London, now and then the Master would give her teachings and instructions; especially about the prophecies of the old Testament concerning the coming of the Messiah. "This is a great Dispensation" the Master says. "All its events are unique. Baha-ollah appeared with such Majesty and Power that even the enemies were discomfitted^{?186}. They arose in persecution and in order to exile Him but they were unable to ridicule or scoff at the Cause. The greatness of this Cause will become apparent in the future." Miss Fraser told us how on her arrival in Edinburgh she went directly to see two of the Editors and gave them literature and articles some of which were printed. One of these editors said <?????> that the people of Scotland cannot realize what a wonderful event has happened in the history of Scotland. But I know and appreciate and will do everything to bring the principles of this Cause before the attention of the public.⁺¹⁸⁷



¹⁸¹ £1 was worth £77 in 2010 currency (RPI).. In the 1963 account it is a guinea, making the difference between a note and a coin. "He expressed His deep appreciation of their services during their stay, and gave each of them a guinea. The gentleness of His manner and speech affected some so much that they broke down into tears." [#ABE1963].

¹⁸² William Main Page (1869 London - 1940), British Lawyer, Esperantist and writer including hymns, with many Esperanto posts in Edinburgh, Nationally and Internationally [#W].

¹⁸³ "Even Dr. Whyte was very much touched. He (Dr Whyte) gave his book and the Master wrote a prayer for him in his book. He (Dr Whyte) and many came to the station to see the Master off. Mrs Whyte, the heads of Esperantists and Theosifists Societies begged His blessings. He spoke so touchingly and heartfully to them all. I cannot express how touching that farewell in the station was and of how Dr and Mrs Whyte and others were affected is beyond saying" [#Lutfulluh].

¹⁸⁴ OT: 10.5 - The timetable for this train lists "10.5" for departure, meaning 10:05, and this is also how the diary states it.

¹⁸⁵ The cable when it was sent was worded in English: "SCOTLAND IS ILLUMINED CONVEY GREETINGS FRIENDS ABBAS." [Cable in US Archives]. Sometime on this day, the famous tablet to Andrew Carnegie was translated.

¹⁸⁶ discomfitted = routed, defeated.

¹⁸⁷ "During the journey, He remarked, "Such soul-stirring influence among people is solely due to the Might and Confirmations of the Kingdom of God, that in the great gatherings of this city, and in the house of one of their eminent clergy, we, a few souls from Persia, were enabled to diffuse the signs and teachings of God with such power and might, and speak of the glory and greatness of Muhammad, the Messenger of God, to such an extent that all became humble and showed their humility and respect. The eye of creation

Lunch in Train

At 1.30 pm all of us took lunch in the dining car with Our Beloved. He said: The most important food is the spiritual food. This material food must be eaten three times a day but whosoever eats of the spiritual food shall never hunger. The Spiritual food is the love of God, the Knowledge of God, attraction with the Breaths of the Holy Spirit and abstraction from material desires. These very conversations of ours today consisted of the spiritual food. God had so destined that you (Mrs Fraser) be here with us in this train so that undisturbed we may talk together on these ideal subjects. There must be a wisdom in this. I hope that you may become a great teacher of this Cause and be my daughter.

Chinese and Roman Artists

Later on the Master told her a story^{+R188} of a competition between the Chinese and Roman artists. The king appointed a large hall where both of them could paint. The Chinese asked for a curtain to be hung in the middle of the Hall so that their competitors may not see what they are doing. The Chinese Artists worked for 6 months day and night but the Roman Artists did not work and everybody thought they are going to lose. Just one day before the King's coming to give the award, the Roman Artists set to work and polished the wall like a mirror. The King's Ministers and courtiers came. First they saw the Chinese paintings. They were marvellous and beautiful. The curtain then was put aside so that they see also the Roman works. The wall polished by the Roman Artists was so transparent that the Chinese paintings on the opposite wall were entirely reflected therein. The award went to the Romans. Now, may your heart be as pure and as transparent so that the pictures and images of the Kingdom of Abha may be reflected therein.

London: Arrive Euston Station; Taxi to Cadogan Gardens

We arrived in Euston station^{?2^} at 7 o'clock. Miss Jack^{?189} and several other friends were there to greet Our Beloved.



In a taxi cab we drove to 97 Cadogan Gardens. The ladies were waiting for the coming of the King. After a few minutes the Master expressed the desire of going to a hotel and have the meetings here. They have troubled themselves too much. Lady Blomfield and her daughters and Miss Platt moaned and lamented and pleaded, the latter on her knees till the Master consented to stay. Haji Ameen and the rest are gone to Paris but two new Persians have arrived from Tehran. I had a very bad headache so I went to bed before 11 o'clock. I enclose a copy of "vote" in which the Master's address is printed (not all of it) also a copy of Edinburgh paper. Love to all Ahmad

Additional Account in Sohrab's Diary, 12 May 1913

We have many friends in Scotland, many devoted friends, amongst them is Mrs Whyte. I am most pleased with my visit to that country. Scotland's weather is very invigorating. The City of Edinburgh is beautiful and its inhabitants progressive and deeply religious. They are very firm and of strong character. They are thirsty for spiritual water. They are not dogmatic but they

has not seen such assistance and confirmations before. "We must appreciate these confirmations and in thanksgiving arise in His service." [#ABE1963] "The whole of that day the Master was very happy and joyful of His visit to Edinburgh." [#Lutfulluh].

¹⁸⁸ This story also appears in #IHHS, p64.

¹⁸⁹ Miss Marion Elizabeth Jack (1866 Canada - 1954 Bulgaria) was an artist with international exhibitions and early Baha'i pioneer, praised by Shoghi Effendi as an "immortal heroine". She shared a flat with Elizabeth Herrick and she stayed on and promoted the Faith in Scotland with Isobel Fraser, including public meetings at 54 Canaan Lane in Edinburgh.

feel a heartfelt sincerity about their religion. This is good. They have a deep sense for spiritual ideals. While there, they asked me many questions; and several large meetings were organized and we delivered addresses. The people of Edinburgh are intelligent and critical. They investigate. They do not accept anything on blind faith. All their questions were dignified and based on a desire to learn. An especial meeting was held in Mrs Whyte's house for the Oriental students. They were from China, Japan, Persia, India, Turkey, Syria, Arabia, etc. It was a wonderful demonstration of the union of the East and the West. Those were strong purposeful young men.

Another meeting was organized by the Esperantists and one by the Theosophists. Both these meetings were marvellous. Mr Page the Secretary of the Esperanto Association and Mr Graham Pole, the General Secretary of the Theosophical Society were most intelligent and sympathetic. They were very kind and hospitable. In short I met many people in Edinburgh whom I shall never forget.

There are certain souls whose thirst is never allayed, while others are satisfied with one drop. The larger the vase the greater its capacity to hold water, but when the vase is small, there will be very little water in it. When his holiness Christ appeared, the Jews said: 'we have enough water in our vases. We do not need the fountain of Christ. We have been blessed with many prophets during the Jewish history. These prophets have been the divine Cup-bearers. We have quaffed the pure water from their hands. Are we going to run after this new spring? But those souls who were really blessed and glorious they drank deeply from the fountain of Christ and yet were they thirsty, yet were they seeking. His Holiness Baha-ollah says in one of his Tablets: 'if you drink all the seas of the earth there must be no sign of wetness on your lips; they must be parched with more thirst. You must be always thirsty for the water of reality and significances. The more the circle of your information is widened, the greater must become your search. Through this open attitude man will become perfect, but a soul whose cup is filled with a few drops will never become perfect.



Mentions After Visit

11 Jan - Followup Teachers to Edinburgh

...Since His return to London He is anxious that teachers may go to Edinburgh and yesterday the name of Miss Buckton ¹⁹⁰ was mentioned in the train; that as she knows how to speak with Church people, she is certainly the one to go there for a while and try to teach and water the seeds that the Master has sown; for there were many people who have expressed their desire to join the Bahai Movement. Therefore this morning when Miss Schepel ¹⁹¹ and Miss Buckton came in the Master called them in and after greeting them and inquiring about their health said *to the latter*¹⁹²:- "You must go to Scotland. The people are immensely interested. Edinburgh has great capability. There are many people who are interested. You must go there and teach in churches, in societies, everywhere. We have scattered good seeds in that soil; now souls who can water this cultivation must go there..."

13 Jan - At the Persian Legation

...Then we called 3 taxi cabs and proceeded for the Persian Legation. The Minister ¹⁹³ greeted Our Beloved most cordially. We entered the large drawing room which was furnished á la Louis XV King ¹⁹⁴. He asked whether the visit to Scotland was enjoyed. He had read the papers which came to him from a clipping Bureau. He went and brought them to us. There were some that we did not read while in Edinburgh...

Alternative Account in Balyuzi's Abdu'l-Baha

...In the evening of the 14th, Mushiru'l-Mulk, the Persian Minister in London, gave a dinner party for 'Abdu'l-Baha at the Legation. The Minister and his staff

¹⁹⁰ Alice Mary Buckton (1867-1944) engaged herself in social work, child education, play-writing and poetry, and was an eager devotee of Abdu'l-Baha.

¹⁹¹ Miss Annet Schepel, Alice Buckton's longterm companion. They lived in Byfleet, Surrey, where 'Abdu'l-Baha visited them. See also Abdu'l-Bahá in London. OT: "Chapel".

¹⁹² AT adds "to the latter".

¹⁹³ AT: "Ambassador"

¹⁹⁴ AT: "Louis XIV style"; OT: original XVI corrected to XV

rejoiced over the news of 'Abdu'l-Baha's visit to Scotland, the reception accorded to Him in Edinburgh, the reports which had appeared in the press. That 'Abdu'l-Baha had indeed brought glory to the people of the Orient was evident to them all, even as He had described it to the Minister, in their first meeting...

14 Jan - Newspapers Sent to the World

...Today most of the time I was translating the Edinburgh papers into Persian language for the benefit and interest of the friends in the Orient... I have already mailed about 40 packages of Christian Commonwealth to various Bahai centers, in America, each package containing five copies and tomorrow 32 packages of Edinburgh papers will be forwarded. I also mail to you copies of the "Plain Truth" of Pembroke Chapel of Liverpool, containing the address of Our Beloved in that church on His arrival in England. Likewise the last issue of Christian Commonwealth containing articles about our trip to Edinburgh; also a copy of the "Suffragette" having the verbatim address of the Master's address before the Suffragists in London. All these articles go no doubt to form that great public opinion which although silent is very eloquent and powerful...

18 Jan - Baha'i Cause Discussed Everywhere

...Today in all the circles of England and Scotland the Cause is discussed from every angle of vision...

12 May - Summarising Visit

We have many friends in Scotland, many devoted friends, amongst them is Mrs Whyte. I am most pleased with my visit to that country. Scotland's weather is very invigorating. The City of Edinburgh is beautiful and its inhabitants progressive and deeply religious. They are very firm and of strong character. They are thirsty for spiritual water. They are not dogmatic but they feel a heartfelt sincerity about their religion. This is good. They have a deep sense for spiritual ideals. While there, they asked me many questions; and several large meetings were organized and we delivered addresses. The people of Edinburgh are intelligent and critical. They investigate. They do not accept anything on blind faith. All their questions were dignified and based on a desire to learn. An especial meeting was held in Mrs Whyte's house for the Oriental students. They were from China, Japan, Persia, India, Turkey, Syria, Arabia, etc. It was a wonderful demonstration of the union of the East and the West. Those were strong purposeful young men.

Another meeting was organized by the Esperantists and one by the Theosophists. Both these meetings were marvellous. Mr Page the Secretary of the Esperanto Association and Mr Graham Pole, the General Secretary of the Theosophical Society were most intelligent and sympathetic. They were very kind and hospitable. In short I met many people in Edinburgh whom I shall never forget.

There are certain souls whose thirst is never allayed, while others are satisfied with one drop. The larger the vase the greater its capacity to hold water, but when the vase is small, there will be very little water in it. When his holiness Christ appeared, the Jews said: 'we have enough water in our vases. We do not need the fountain of Christ. We have been blessed with many prophets during the Jewish history. These prophets have been the divine Cup-bearers. We have quaffed the pure water from their hands. Are we going to run after this new spring? But those souls who were really blessed and glorious they drank deeply from the fountain of Christ and yet were they thirsty, yet were they seeking. His Holiness Baha-ollah says in one of his Tablets: 'if you drink all the seas of the earth there must be no sign of wetness on your lips; they must be parched with more thirst. You must be always thirsty for the water of reality and significances. The more the circle of your information is widened, the greater must become your search.

Through this open attitude man will become perfect, but a soul whose cup is filled with a few drops will never become perfect.

1 Jul - Tablet to Theosophical Society

Port Said, Egypt

Last night Abdu'l-Bahá told me to come to Him in the morning with a number of petitions just received; so I was there quite early. While He was dictating Tablets He carried on different lines of conversations with a stream of callers and pilgrims. Tablets were revealed for a large number of friends in Europe and America, and a wonderful article for the "Theosophy" of Scotland in Edinburgh, the Editor of which is Mr Graham Pole.

Tablet Quoted

- *Abdu'l-Bahá in Egypt by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, p2*

28 Jul - Fatigues in Europe

"I have tarried in Egypt for a few days because I was weakened by the fatigue of traveling through the cities of Europe; by the variable climates of the American mountains and prairies and by the length and hardships of the voyage. While in Europe one day we were in London and another in Edinburgh; now in Paris and anon in Stuttgart; once in Budapest and again in Vienna. We were almost every hour in another place, delivering lengthy speeches and addresses, and notwithstanding the indisposition of the body, day and night I cried and raised my voice in large meetings and important churches..."

- *Abdu'l-Bahá in Egypt by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, p122*

19 Aug - Isabel Fraser

...May the Hand of God protect you Isabel Fraser throughout your voyage and bring you safely into the land of Egypt wherein the ideal Joseph lives! We Ahmad and company are all gladness because you are coming and look forward to the day when we will again talk of holy and divine things as we were wont to do in London and Edinburgh, Bristol and Paris. You will be a welcome guest in the holy household...

- *Abdu'l-Bahá in Egypt by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, p207*

29 Aug - Tablet to Theosophical Society

To-night we had a meeting at the House of Khorassani. Mirza Mahmoud spoke on the trip of Abdu'l-Bahá to Edinburgh. There were many Bahá'ís of different nationalities. An interesting Tablet was sent to Mr. Graham Pole, the Editor of the *Scotland Theosophy* in Edinburgh, in which Abdul Baha refers to Mrs. Besant, the President of the Theosophical Society. As He has spoken before many of their societies in various cities, both in the United States and Europe, it will not be out of place to quote it herein, so that the friends may become informed of its contents:

O THOU MY BELOVED FRIEND !

"Thy letter was received from India. From its contents it became evident that thou art occupied, and art spending thy days in the company of that respected lady, Mrs. Besant. I hope thou mayst be ever happy, serene, confirmed and assisted; so that thou mayst become able to render a signal service to the respected lady, Mrs. Besant. The ideal of Mrs. Besant, I say truly is very lofty. She is working and labouring most valiantly, and her utmost hope is to render a service to the world of humanity, and to be the means of the establishment of good-fellowship and love between all the communities of the earth. At all times I am praying in her behalf, so that the Confirmations of the Kingdom may surround her, that she may sow the seed of service in pure, productive soil; and that she may gather many, many harvests; then the heavenly benediction will be obtained, the outpourings of the Holy Spirit realised, and her services,

troubles and hardships crowned with eternal results. I desire this station for her.

Consider how many important women have come into this world! How many queens have lived upon this earth! How many distinguished ladies have become the presidents of Societies! But neither have their names nor any great account of their deeds been left behind! Yet Mary Magdalene, who was only a peasant woman, because she became inspired to serve the Kingdom of Christ and to scatter his seeds in productive ground - what a great crop she gathered! And through the blessing of that harvest, they are even now building churches in her name! In all the Churches the people glorify and praise her and now, after 1900 years, Abdul Baha is speaking of her lofty station! He testifies to the fact, that, in the Kingdom of Christ she served more than all the apostles. She even became the cause of the firmness and steadfastness of the Apostles, for, accordingly to the Text of the Gospels, their faith wavered after the crucifixion, but Mary Magdalene inspired them with resolution, and certainty. Consider what a service she rendered to the Kingdom of Christ! That is why, like unto a star, she is shining from the horizon of Eternity.

"Convey my most respectful greeting to the revered Lady, Mrs Besant.

"Upon thee be greeting and praise.

(Signed) "ABDUL BAHA ABBAS."

While in America and Europe Abdul Baha often stated that the Bahais must associate with the Theosophists because they were nearer to this Cause than many other groups.

- *Abdu'l-Bahá in Egypt by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, p253*

"A Meeting Recalled" - Florence Altass Recollections

The following is an account by Miss Florence Altass, now (1967) of Hastings, of her meeting with 'Abdu'l-Baha in Edinburgh in 1912.

I had known Dr. Johnson and Dr. Hakim who had invited me to meetings and I went regularly and always felt the profundity of the readings. It all rang so true.

Then the great day arrived when the Beloved 'Abdu'l-Baha gave a talk. Although I didn't know the language, I felt I knew the message He gave. The interpreter didn't mean anything to me, somehow my eyes were riveted on The Great Teacher and Messenger. His great blue eyes seemed to pierce my very soul and I knew then I belonged, but not on the outer plane. Within me a battle went on for years after, as I had been an ardent Catholic and felt that Church held my allegiance.

When 'Abdu'l-Baha shook hands with me, He seemed to transmit something to me, and I've never been the same since, but still the battle went on and the Church I loved seemed like a barrier between me and my conscience. Before Dr. Johnson passed on, I was deciding to go to London. He gave me an address, in a very shaky writing, at Clifton Hill where I could contact more Baha'is. I never called them and for years heard no more until Richard St. Barbe Baker came along. I never mentioned to him my thoughts about the two loves and whether I should be true to the Church of my childhood. While talking He read a prayer to me and then sent me a prayer book, Baha'i, of course, which I treasure. He went away and I used the Prayer Book daily and asked for light but had quite lost sight of any Baha'is until in Brighton I saw an advertisement and went along each week. Friends were very kind to me although I was still an "outsider". Then for three years I was very ill, with no thought of recovery. That decided

Citations

1963	"Abdu'l-Baha in Edinburgh" by Adib Taherzadeh, a rescension of the Edinburgh section of the diary of Mahmúd-i-Zarqání
CH	"Chosen Highway" by Lady Blomfield
IHHS	"I Heard Him Say" by Ahmad Sohrab
Lutfullah	Jan 1948 account (based on 1963) by Lutfullah Hakim.
MBP	"My Baha'i Pilgrimage" by Ahmad Sohrab

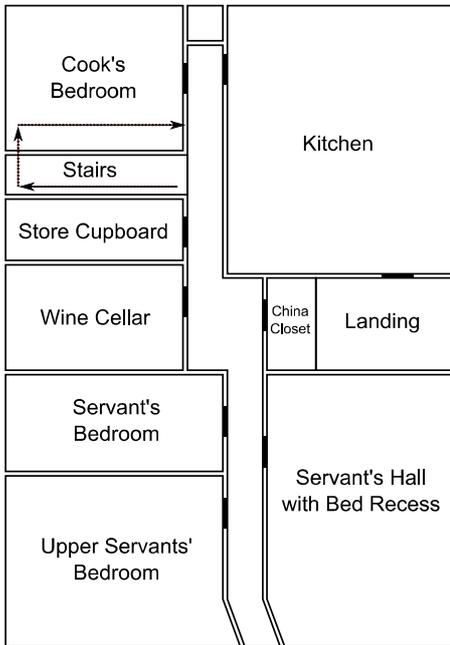
Contents

OVERVIEW.....	2
The Diary.....	2
Other Accounts.....	2
Key to Symbols.....	2
Footnotes.....	2
Special Note.....	2
ACCOUNT.....	2
Earlier Plans Prior to Visit.....	2
16 Dec - Arrival in London; Invitation to Edinburgh.....	2
19 Dec - Confirming Edinburgh.....	3
21 Dec - Date Confirmed.....	3
30 Dec - Mr Jinzo Naruze.....	3
1 Jan - Programme for Edinburgh.....	3
4 Jan - Looking Forward to Edinburgh.....	3
5 Jan - Farewell, Maharaja.....	3
London.....	3
The English.....	3
Illness, Interviews, Daily Schedule.....	3
A Woman's Questions.....	3
English Minister in China on Women.....	3
How To Hold Meetings.....	3
Farewell Address to London.....	4
Interviews, Rastam Pasha.....	4
Painter, Evolution.....	4
Meeting at Miss Herrick's on Spiritual Negligence and Materialism.....	4
Maharaja of Rajputana.....	4
EDINBURGH (6-10 JAN).....	4
6 Jan - Train and Arrival.....	4
Whyte's House.....	4
About Edinburgh.....	5
Mrs Whyte in Acca.....	5
Mr Whyte.....	5
Train Journey.....	5
Miss Ramsey.....	5
Islamic Sect.....	6
Arrival in Edinburgh.....	6
Dinner and Visitors.....	7
7 Jan - Outlook, Esperanto, Orientals.....	7
Esperanto Society 1.....	7
Morning Prayer.....	7
Visitors.....	7
Outlook Tower.....	7
Scenery in Edinburgh.....	8
Outlook Tower.....	8
Country Drive.....	8
Princes Street.....	8
Charlotte Square; Dinner; Rest.....	8
Oriental Students.....	8
Esperanto Society 2.....	9
Return Home; Reporter.....	9
Dinner + Overview.....	9
8 Jan - Rainy Hall, Col Arts, Messiah.....	10
St Giles Cathedral 1.....	10
Cables.....	10
Morning Prayer.....	10
Mr Whyte and his work.....	10
Morning Papers.....	10
Marriage Request.....	10
Sir John Clark.....	10
Mr Whyte Autographs; Woman Makes Miniature.....	11
Edinburgh College of Arts.....	11
Poor Schools / Kings Commissioner.....	11

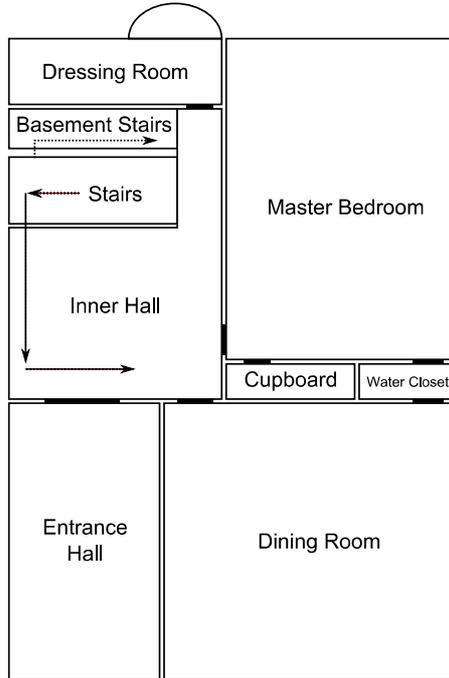
Shopping.....	11
Lunch; Universal Peace.....	11
Rainy Hall.....	12
City; Return.....	12
St Giles Cathedral 2.....	12
9 Jan - Theosophical, Women.....	12
Theosophical Society.....	13
Return Home.....	14
Ahmad Up Late; Morning Prayer; Newspapers.....	14
Visitors : Professor, Secretary, Theosophical Member.....	14
Visitors; Painter.....	14
Drive to Forth Rail Bridge.....	14
Lunch.....	14
Women and Equality Meeting.....	14
Bulgaria Hospitals.....	15
On Confirmations.....	15
Overview.....	15
10 Jan - Train to London.....	15
Scotland.....	15
Morning and Packing; Call to Prayer.....	15
Farewells and Departure.....	15
Cables; "Scotland Illumined".....	16
Isobel Fraser.....	16
Lunch in Train.....	16
Chinese and Roman Artists.....	16
London: Arrive Euston Station; Taxi to Cadogan Gardens...	16
Mentions After Visit.....	17
11 Jan - Followup Teachers to Edinburgh.....	17
13 Jan - At the Persian Legation.....	17
14 Jan - Newspapers Sent to the World.....	17
18 Jan - Baha'i Cause Discussed Everywhere.....	17
12 May - Summarising Visit.....	17
1 Jul - Tablet to Theosophical Society.....	18
28 Jul - Fatigues in Europe.....	18
19 Aug - Isabel Fraser.....	18
29 Aug - Tablet to Theosophical Society.....	18
"A MEETING RECALLED" - FLORENCE ALTASS RECOLLECTIONS.....	18
Thoughts on seeing a vision of 'Abdu'l-Baha.....	19
7 CHARLOTTE SQUARE.....	19
TRANSCRIPTION NOTES.....	19
State of the Diary.....	19
Citations.....	20
CONTENTS.....	20
7 CHARLOTTE SQUARE - DIAGRAM OF ROOMS.....	21
EXTENT OF EDINBURGH IN 1915 COMPARED TO 2007.....	22
BAHÁ'Í LANDMARKS IN EDINBURGH.....	23

7 Charlotte Square - Diagram of Rooms

Basement



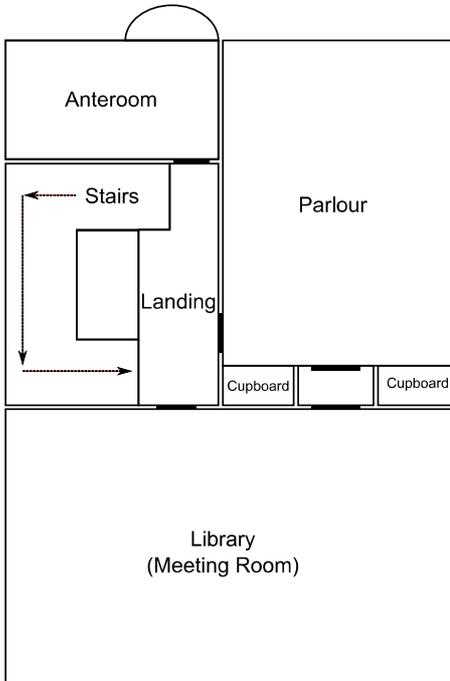
Ground Floor



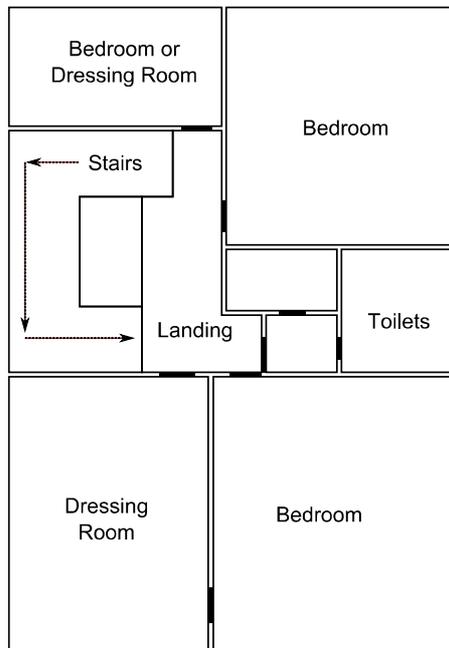
Main Entrance

**"Georgian House"
7 Charlotte Square
Edinburgh**

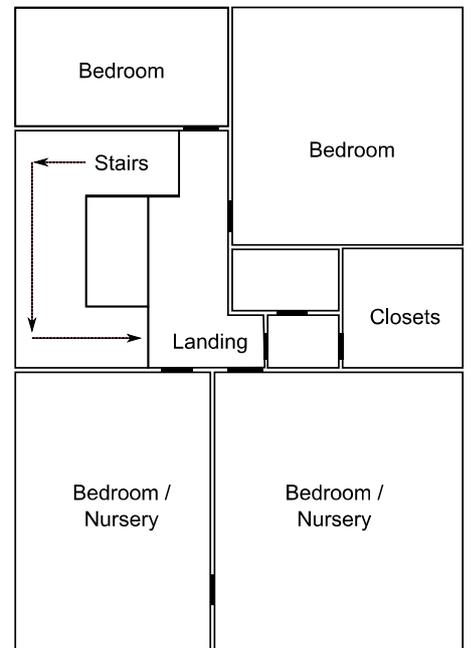
Floor 1



Floor 2

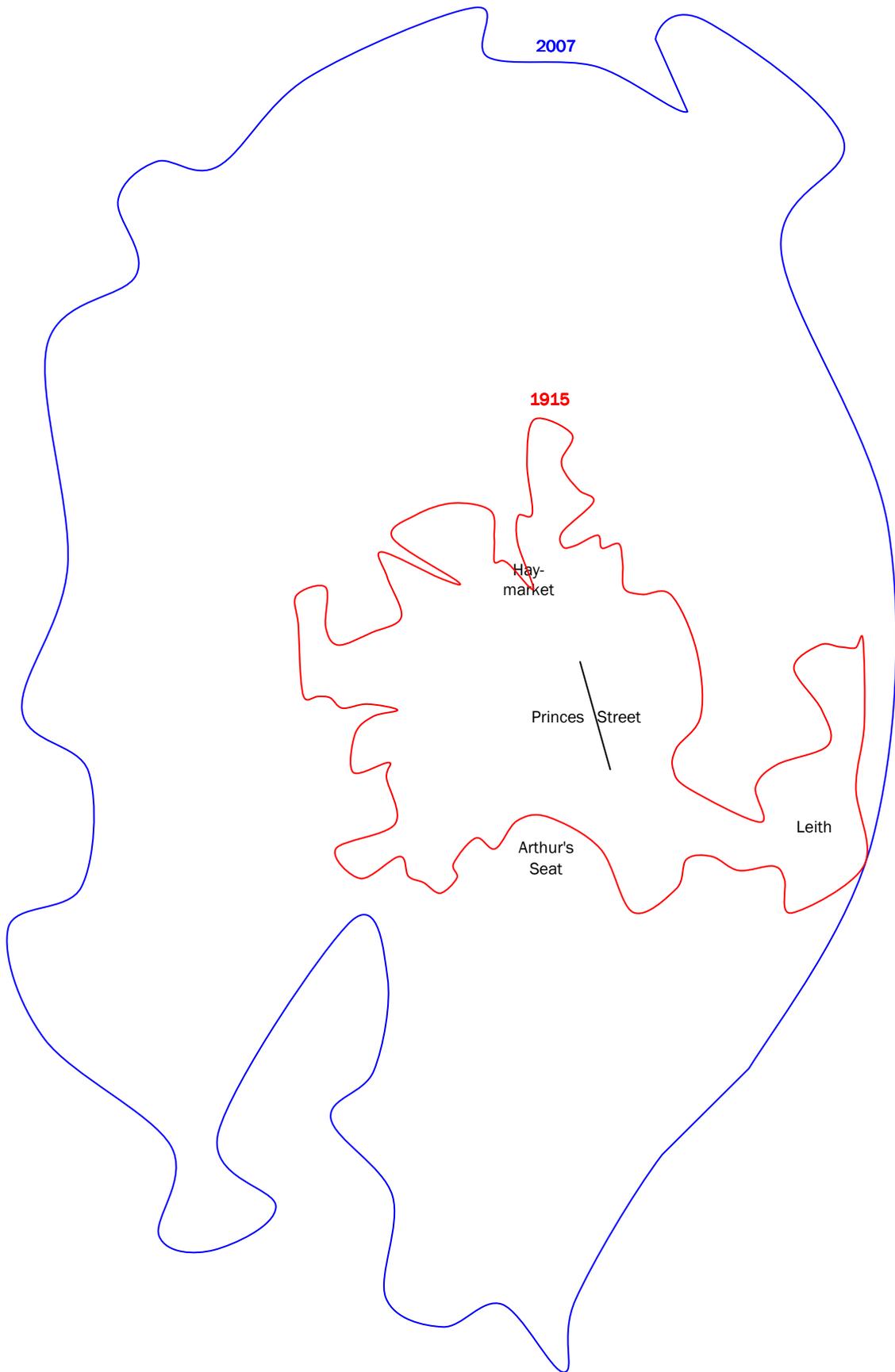


Attic



Extent of Edinburgh in 1915 compared to 2007

Boundaries enclose well-populated areas. North is to the right.



Bahá'í Landmarks in Edinburgh

Esperanto Society
Freemason Hall, 96 George Street EH2 3DH
 07 Jan 1913 Abdu'l-Bahá addresses 300 people on International Language

Eagles
Fredrick Street meets Queen Street
 Eagles said to have been copied across the Holy Land

Theosophical Society
28 Great King Street EH3 6QN
 09 Jan 1913 Abdu'l-Bahá talks on many topics

Bahá'í Centre
44 Albany Street EH1 3QR
 15 Jul 2005 Purchase of new Bahá'í Centre



John Duncan (Artist)
29 St Bernard's Crescent

Georgian House
7 Charlotte Square
 06-10 Jan 1913 Abdu'l-Bahá's residence during his stay and site of many discussions

Forth Railway Bridge
Sth Queensferry (off page)
 09 Jan 1913 11:30
 Abdu'l-Bahá is taken on long drive to visit the Forth Railway Bridge

Whyte Gravestones
Dean Cemetary
 1921 Dr Whyte
 1944 Mrs Whyte

Princes Street Station
Lothian Road
 06-10 Jan 1913 Abdu'l-Bahá's arrival (18:15) and departure (10:50)

St George's West Church
58 Shandwick Place EH2 4RT
 Church of Rev Alexander Whyte, at whose house Abdu'l-Bahá stayed

Rainy Hall
New College, The Mound
 08 Jan 1913 16:30
 Abdu'l-Bahá talks on Basic Bahá'í Principles



Gates of Holyrood Palace
 07 Jan 1913 Abdu'l-Bahá driven in automobile

North Canongate School
5 New Street

St Saviour's Child-Garden
4 Chessel's Court
 08 Jan 1913 Abdu'l-Bahá visits North Canongate School and kindergarten close by.

Edinburgh College of Arts
74 Lauriston Place, Edinburgh EH3 9DF
 08 Jan 1913 11:30

Outlook Tower
549 Castlehill EH1 2ND
 07 Jan 1913 Abdu'l-Bahá visits tower and city projection (Camera Obscura)

St Giles Cathedral
Royal Mile
 08 Jan 1913 evening Abdu'l-Bahá attends charity performance of Handel's Messiah

Royal Mile
 07 Jan 1913 Abdu'l-Bahá driven in automobile down the Royal Mile

Salisbury Crag, Arthur's Seat
 07 Jan 1913 Abdu'l-Bahá driven in automobile around the hill Arthur's Seat and also Salisbury Crag