

'Abdu'l-Baha: Through the War Years

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6 The Passing of 'Abdu'l-Baha

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Editorial

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by Marzieh Gail

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76 Five Books About

a review by Kazem

and Firtz Kazemzctdeh

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Inside Back Cover: Authors and

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THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE had always had subjects who sought to destroy it. In return for their unruliness they had received Second World War, when the opening of hostilities brought the prospect that whole towns and cities might be razed to the condign punishment. As far back as the sixteenth century, under Sulfan Selim I, "The Grim" (reigned 1512-1520), the Shi'ahs of Anatolia, who favored Selim's rival, Shah Isma'il I, the Safavid ruler of Iran, were massacred in their thousands. Greeks and Slavs, Macedonians and Albanians had, in the course of years, rebelled, met with harsh suppression and finally obtained their freedom. With the overthrow of despotism, new hopes had arisen, but were soon dashed by the Baha'is of the Young Turks.

Haifa and 'Akka away from

the hysteria of Within a few weeks of Turkey's entry into around them. As the war, the British occupied the port of Ba~rah , deposed the Khedive of Egypt, prosituated to the claimed a protectorate over the country, and Himself stayed set policies in motion which would affect and occasional-

ground. An enemy warship did

railway bridges between

On that occasion a shell

garden of Ric;lvan but did

day, when the sea was calm

ripple on it, and rocks, far

were clearly visible under a

people of 'Akka took them

fled en masse.

It was against such a

'Abdu'l-Baha decided to move

the officials and the people

a temporary home for them He

Druze village of Abu-Sinan,

east of 'Akka. 'Abdu'l-Baha

in 'Akka with one attendant,

profoundly the future of the Ottoman
 Abu-Sinan. Shaykh
 realms. Arabs, the largest minority in the
 put his own house
 Ottoman Empire, had already shown signs of
 'Abdu'l-Baha, and that was
 restiveness and were to pay for it dearly in
 Quarters were found
 Damascus at the hands of Jamal Pasha.
 homes of village-
 Uprisings among them, particularly the re-
 lived for three
 revolt of the Sharif of Mecca, were still far off,
 people in the
 but signs were discernible and the Turks
 room in the house
 were suspicious. It was also apparent that the
 had occupied,
 call for a holy war (Jihad), coming from
 Istanbul, would go unheeded. Except for a
 Khudabakhsh (Dr. Mu'-
 tiny number, the Muslims of the Indian sub-
 Abu-Sinan, to
 continent ignored it and, even more, did not
 members of the
 hesitate to fight the Turks. Baha'i community soon came
 for treatment.
 Spies were everywhere in the Holy Land
 but paid ac-
 and authorities were becoming increasingly
 most of them the
 repressive. Fear was abroad, a fear which
 Mu'ayyad performed
 could sweep over the population like an
 assisted by Luq
 epidemic, a fear such as was felt in Great
 another graduate of
 Britain and France at the outbreak of the
 College, ran a school,
 side by side with the dispensary, for the
 children of the Baha'is. Life was naturally
 " This chapter from 'Abdu'l-Baha: The Centre of
 isolated village in the
 the Covenant of Bahá'í is reproduced by
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 sole occupant of
 with the publisher, George Ronald, London,
 ly spent a night or two in
 Salih, the Druze chief, had
 at the disposal of
 where His family lived.
 for the other Baha'is in the
 ers. Baha'u'llah had once
 months among these friendly
 foothills of Galilee. The
 of Shaykh Mazruq, which He
 was always left untenanted.
 Dr. I. Fabibu'llah
 ayyad) ran a dispensary at
 which people who were not
 They received equal attention
 according to their means. For
 treatment was free. Dr.
 operations as well and was
 Getsinger. Bad' Bushn'li,
 the Syrian Protestant
 rather primitive in this
 hills. On Mount Carmel, the
 the pilgrim house was the

veteran, I:faji

England. © H. M. Balyuzi 1971.

Mirza I:faydar-'Ali.

1. Banan passed away only recently. As far as

the present writer knows he has not left a
reached

Mirza Fac;llu'llah Khan Banan

full record of that remarkable journey.

Haifa from Shiraz with the

offerings of the

THROUGH THE WAR YEARS

21

Baha'is of that city, on January 19th 1915.

must see 'Abdu'l-Baha

at once. Riding His

His arrival was the last link with the outside

donkey 'Abdu'l-Baha

went to the military

world for a long time. Banin's journey was

cantonment. Jamal

Pasha received Him

fraught with considerable difficulty, for he

courteously, but told

Him that He was a

had to make his way from India to Haifa. 1 To

religious

mischief-maker, which was the rea-

have succeeded was indeed an achievement.

son He had been put

under restraint in the

However, sometime during the war years an

past. It happened

that, in the days of 'Abdu'l-

Arab Baha'i, advanced in years, named I:Iaji

I:Iamid, Jamal Pasha

himself had been

Ramaqin, braving all hazards, managed to

known as a political

mischief-maker. So

reach Tihran. His perilous journey included

'Abdu'l-Baha, to humor

him, now replied

walking for forty-five days. He delivered to

that mischief-making

was of two kinds:

the Baha'is a Tablet entrusted to him by

political and

religious; and then, pointing at

'Abdu'l-Baha, and returned bearing gold and

the arrogant Pasha, He

said that so far the

letters. A second time he attempted that

political

mischief-maker had not caused any

heroic feat, but he did not reach his destina-

damage, and it was to

be hoped that the

tion, and no trace of him was ever found.

religious

mischief-maker would not do so

either.

EARLY IN 1915, J amal Pasha appeared on

Lady Blomfield has

recorded another en-

the scene, Commander of the 4th Army

counter between

'Abdu'l-Baha and Jamal

Corps, whose mission was to overrun the

Pasha, the story being

related by Mirza Jalal,
 Suez Canal and drive the British out of
 'Abdu'l-Baha:
 Egypt. With him came a reign of terror. The
 of the year 1916, at
 whole of Syria (including the Holy Land)
 one morning, 'Abdu'l-
 was under his martial control. Throughout
 His faithful coachman.
 1915 and into the following year, Jamal
 have my carriage
 Pasha was bringing Arab nationalists to trial
 and Khusraw be ready to
 in his military courts. Thirty-four of them
 Nazareth in half an
 were executed, and many more were de-
 commanded, and at
 ported. Mirza Mul)ammad-'Ali and his asso-
 'Abdu'l-Baha left His
 ciates, long discredited and cowed into si-
 accompanied by Khusraw
 lence, now found fresh opportunities to plot
 health of 'Abdu'l-
 against 'Abdu'l-Baha. They went to Jamal
 satisfactory, as one
 Pasha with various tales. Majdi'd-Din told
 signs of weariness on His
 him that 'Abdu'l-Baha was hostile to the
 However, the Commander-in-
 Committee of Union and Progress. The tent
 and Palestine fronts
 which Baha'u'llah had used, the violators
 was Jamal Pasha, and
 gave to Jamal Pasha. It was a tent under
 determined to meet him
 which, 'Abdu'l-Baha is reported to have said,
 of His great fatigue and
 "representatives of the Most Great Peace"
 the Beloved started on
 should have met. 2 Then in order to create
 confusion, the violators set rumors afoot that
 the military government had banished 'Abd-
 arrived at Nazareth in
 u'l-Baha to Damascus.
 o'clock, and took up
 When Jamal Pasha encamped in the vicin-
 German Hotel.

a son-in-law of
 At the beginning
 about seven o'clock
 Baha sent me for
 Tell Isfandiyar to
 brought, and you
 accompany me to
 hour.' We did as He
 the appointed time
 home in Haifa,
 and me. That day the
 Baha was not very
 could see by the
 blessed face.
 chief of the Syrian
 was in Nazareth. He
 'Abdu'l-Baha was
 there, so in spite
 physical weakness,
 His journey.
 'Abdu'l-Baha ...
 the evening at seven
 His residence at the

ity of 'Akka, he told the Governor that he
Master was invited to

lunch at the home of one of the notables
2. Dr. I:Iabib Mu'ayyad, Khatirat-i-Habib.

Nazareth. He was one of
Memoirs of I:Iabib. ('fihran: i 961) , p. 3 3 3.
that day Jamal

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Pasha, and nearly two hundred of the war
war, 'Abdu'l-

leaders, were present at the lunch where
had not been for

the Master sat down at one o'clock and
violators, He would have

arose from the table at four.
leading men

During all those hours 'Abdu'l-Baha
of the

was speaking in Turkish on philosophical
counseled them

and scientific subjects, and on heavenly
prevent disorder.

teachings. So intense was His utterance
violators prevented

that all stopped eating while they listened
to His blessed words.

increasing isola-

. . . Jamal Pasha, who had been His
1915, made

great enemy because of false accusations,
another occasion,

had not paid the proper respect to 'Abdu'l-
India, where

Baha when He had first arrived . Now,
y requested.

however, having heard the Master speak
said, had an

so learnedly and wisely, he was most
condition. But

deferential and full of all kinds of polite-
longer come and

ness. When the time came for the Master
halted, 'Abdu'l-

to rise, Jamal Pasha most courteously held
local affairs,

the Beloved's arm to assist Him to leave

The next day the

of the town of

the Fahum family. On

IN THE EARLY MONTHS of the

Baha said one day that, if it

the intrigues of the

gathered together some of the

amongst the Muslims and Christians

Holy Land and would have

to concert their efforts to

But the actions of the

this.

Relative inactivity and

tion, in the opening months of

'Abdu'l-Baha remark, on

that He wished He had gone to

His presence had been fervent!

Not having work to do, He

adverse effect on His physical

although pilgrims could no

correspondence was almost

Baha was kept occupied with

and soon the task of raising

and providing
 the table, and himself led the way to the food for the Baha'i community
 and many
 reception room, and seated the Master others in need faced Him. The
 mismanage-
 comfortably. ment and the impositions of
 the Ottoman
 Finally, after answering more questions, overlord were gradually leading to
 a state of
 and giving wondrous light on many sub- near famine.
 jects, the Master arose to bid farewell to No matter how relaxed or
 arduous life
 His host. Jamal Pasha accompanied Him might be, 'Abdu'l-Baha always
 found or
 out of the house, and to the bottom of the recalled a humorous situation.
 A cat purring
 steps, and would have gone further with beside His chair would amuse
 Him: this cat, He remarked, is indeed joyous,
 the Master, but was thanked with great
 so carefree, so free of fear. A donkey
 kindness and urged by 'Abdu'l-Baha to standing in the street
 return. This was that Jamal Pasha who made Him remember that He saw
 no don-
 \Was not accustomed to rise from his seat to keys anywhere in the United
 States, and
 pay respect to any one 'Abdu'l-Baha reminded Him of a polar bear
 in the Paris
 was excessively fatigued, and remained Zoo. People were staring at
 the bear, He said,
 that night at the German Hotel at Naza- and the animal was staring
 back, as if
 reth ... ;; wanting to say: how did I get
 entangled with
 But in time the constant insinuations of these folk? A man passing by
 the gates of
 the violators had their effect. Jamal Pasha 'Abdu'l-Baha's house in
 Haifa, carrying a
 stated that he would crucify 'Abdu'l-Baha, basket, put it down as soon
 as he saw Him,
 when he returned victorious from his cam- saying that he could not
 find a porter and
 paigns. When he did come back, ho-wever, he had to carry the basket
 himself. 'Abdu'l-Baha
 was in full flight, defeated and humiliated, remarked afterwards that a
 man should not
 and could not stop to carry out his threat. feel ashamed of doing

useful work. Someone had written to ask where 'Abdu'l-Baha was. Tell him, 'Abdu'l-Baha replied with a smile:
 3. Lady Blomfield, *The Chosen Highway* (Wilmette, Ill. : Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1970), in front of a cannon. pp. 202-05. The war fever slowly abated and life in

THROUGH THE WAR YEARS 23

' & H ' P
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 r.
 llH.
 .1.ll H

A VIEW OF 'ABDUL-BAHA'S HOUSE IN HAIFA DURING HIS LIFE TIME

'Akka and Haifa, although not back to purchases in the bazaar of his native town. normal, became calmer and more sedate as 'Abdu'l-Bahii. sent this cable to a Baha'i of Mailihad: "[May] My life be a the year advanced. 'Abdu'l-Baha felt then sacrifice unto 'Alf-Akbar. I am well. 'Abbas." Edith Sanderson, who had remained behind Iran fared very badly during the war. None of the belligerents respected when other Western Baha'is had gone, and her declared neutrality. Her own people had moved to Abt'l-Sinan, left as early as adopted active partisan attitudes, the January 1915. Well before Italy's entry into the war on the side of the Allies in May key and Germany. German and Turkish, Russian and British agents were 1915, she obtained a passage on an Italian every- where. Russia and Turkey fought boat. On May 5th the sojourn of the Bahii.'is their bat- tles in the north and the northwest of the country, each side receiving the box that contained the portraits of the substantial aid from the Iranians. The British Bab and Baha'u'llah, which was always kept occupied the port of Bushire (Bt'lshih) in in the room of the Greatest Holy Leaf, was August 1915,

brought back to Haifa by Badi' Bushrt'i and and landed a small force at Bandar 'Abbas in Dr. Mu'ayyad. Ten days later the doctor March 1916, under Brigadier-General Sir himself, who had rendered sterling services, Percy Sykes who, driving inland to Kirman, set out for Persia by the Baghdad route. From Yazd, and I-fahan, reached Shiraz in No- Persia, where the Baha'is--;ere still being vember. The central government was power- persecuted, news had come of a fresh martyr- less. Bandits and highwaymen, as long as dom. Shaykh 'Ali-Akbar-i-Qt'ichani, a highly they did not get in the way of the belliger- learned and respected Baha'i teacher, who ents, had the freedom of the roads and had served the Faith with distinction in the caravan routes. 'Abdu'l-Baha had foreseen Caucasus and India, was shot while making these lamentable events and had spoken of

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them to His countrymen in Paris. Baha'fs had To this period (and a little beyond) also belongs a slim volume: their share of tribulation. For them tragedy risaliy-i-Tis'a-'Asha- riyyih- N ineteen was never fa r off, and it was easy to make Discourses on the lives of them suffice r in order to ap pease others. T he the Bab and H is two heralds: Shaykh AJ::imad- i-Al).sa'f and Siyyid martyrdom of Mirza Fac;llu'llah, the Ka?im-i-Rashti. T hese discourses were written by AJ::imad Soh rab, at the instruction of oi - N araq (near Kashan) , was a case in the Baha'i youth at 'Abdu'l-Baha, fo r the use of meetings in the pilgrim of seven were slain in their home, in the dead house on Mount Carmel. 'Abdu'l-Baha H im- of night. se lf corrected and emended them. Nineteen W ith the Baha'is back in Haifa, weekly Discourses, together with a short autobio- gatherings were resumed in the house of graphical monograph by A.qa MuJ::iammad 'Abdu'l-Baha, and it was in that latter half of Mus~afay-i- Baghdadi

(who in his childhood the year 19 15 that the Memorials of the father, Shaykh Mu-Faithful took shape. These short biographies company of Tahirih) of early Baha'is, so eloquent and pellucid, in 1919, by Shaykh animated and moving, were spoken by an outstanding pupil 'Abdu'l-Baha in these meetings. Each one, a sparkling gem, will remain unmatched. Seventy-nine people are mentioned, and most of them are those who were exiled with Baha'is to which was added 'u'llah to 'Akka. But others are included such as Mirza Mubammad-Taqi, the Vakilu'd-hardships. 'Abdu'l-Baha Dawlih (the builder of the Mashriqu'l-suffering. There were Adhkar of 'Ishqabad) and his brother, Haji the Jordan Valley Mirza Mubammad-'Ali. 'Fahirih, although a luminary of the Babi Dispensation, also featured in that galaxy. These talks of 'Abdu'l-Baha were compiled into a book which was published in Haifa in 1924, with the title : Shrines of Baha'u'llah Tadhkirat al-Baha - Vafat al-Memorial of the Mirza Mubammad-Faithful. Quli, the faithful half-brother of Baha'u'llah, owned land at Nuqayb, on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee, where Mirza Mubammad-Mugafa, was a well-known and much-loved figure in the American Baha'i community for three decades. He died in 1937. IN THE PAST, 'Abdu'l-Baha had stayed at 5. Sakinih Sulc:in was the widow of one of the

went to Persia with his bammad- i-Shibl, in the was published in Cairo Mul).iyyi'd-Din-i-Kurdi, of Mirza Abu'l-Fadl. 4 As the war years course, the depredations of Ottoman authorities, devastation caused by ing scarcities and now arose to alleviate properties and lands in and beyond, at Samrah by the shores of the Sea Tiberias), which vate for food. Some of endowments of the and the Bab. Sons of Mul:iammad-Quli was buried.

martyrs of Yazd. She had a daughter, named Tiberias from time to time,
 whenever He needed a respite from the
 F:~imih, her only child, who died young, humidity of the coast. But in summer time
 but left a baby, a solace for the stricken the heat in
 the heat in
 grandmother. Boch because of her cruel be- Tiberias, and in the lands
 re- aments and because of the services she intense and onerous. Until
 that lie below it, is normal conditions,
 had rendered (which included nursing both 'Abdu'l-Baha had to
 the return of ing his first year at the university in Beirut),
 Mirza Abu'l-Fa~l and Shoghi Effendi, dur- 'Abdu'l-Baha always showed her a very gen-
 'Abdu'l-Baha had to spend days and weeks in and
 ing his first year at the university in Beirut), erous measure of kindness. The tenderness
 'Abdu'l-Baha always showed her a very gen- as. T he wheat He sent to
 erous measure of kindness. The tenderness into the care of a lady
 'Akka was given
 of chat kindness is shown in the many Tab- named Sakinih
 named Sakinih
 lets addressed co her. In a Tablet dated In a Tablet addressed to
 Sul~an, in whom He had great confidence. 5
 October 17th 1921, He calls her chat al- though He is overburdened with work, with
 though He is overburdened with work, with her, dated Shavval
 her, dated Shavval
 THROUGH THE WAR YEARS 25
 15th 1336 A.H. (July 26th 1918), 'Abdu'l- provided with choice
 dishes, and there were
 Baha says that because it has been very hot, times when He Himself
 cooked them, His
 so hot as to affect His breathing, perforce He own food was often a very
 simple fare. He
 has had to return to Tiberias. If He obtains took little meat, and
 hardly any fruit. His preference was for milk,
 relief in Tiberias, He will stay until the cheese, and herbs
 relief in Tiberias, He will stay until the wheat is secured; otherwise He will have to
 cheese, and herbs such as mint, tarragon, and
 wheat is secured; otherwise He will have to basil.
 wheat is secured; otherwise He will have to return to 'Akka and Haifa. He has sent some
 mounting. The The ravages of war were
 wheat for the time being, to be distributed British-Indian army was
 pushing forward in Mesopotamia, and in spite
 according to the list enclosed. He also states of its grave set-
 of its grave set- back in April 1916, at
 that prices have gone up considerably, more
 that prices have gone up considerably, more Kt'.it-al-'Amarah, it

than threefold, in comparison with the pre- retrieved its position and
 captured Baghdad in March 1917. A month
 vious year; the cost of transport is also States declared war on
 later the United tion of the Holy Land was
 doubled and trebled. It is indicated that there Shoghi Effendi said of
 Germany. The isola- these days:
 was a shortage of camels for transport, Agony filled His soul at
 almost complete. human slaughter
 because 'Abdu'l-Baha states that much more manity's failure to
 'Abdu'l-Baha in mons He had issued, or
 wheat will be dispatched when camels are warnings He had given.
 available. In another Tablet, in which upon sorrow was added to
 the spectacle of human slaughter
 Sakinih Sul~an is told to give two kayls 6 of manity's failure to
 precipitated through hu- mons He had issued, or
 wheat to Aqa Jamshid, 'Abdu'l-Baha says warnings He had given.
 respond to the sum- upon sorrow was added to
 that He yearns to visit the Shrine of trials and vicissitudes
 to heed the warnings He had given.
 Baha'u'llah; He has been so heavily occupied upon sorrow was added to
 Surely sorrow upon sorrow was added to
 that He has been prevented from going upon sorrow was added to
 the burden of trials and vicissitudes
 there. trials and vicissitudes
 which He, since His boyhood, had borne so
 Most of the communications to Sakfnih boyhood, had borne so
 heroically for the sake, and in the
 Sul~an, regarding the distribution of wheat, sake, and in the
 service, of His Father's Cause.
 consist of a list of names and quantities. The Cause.
 brevity of the following may be indicative of And yet during these
 somber days, the darkness of which was
 how pressing time was: darkness of which was
 reminiscent of the

Ratls 7		tribulations endured during the most dan-
Neighbors' daughters	25	gerous period of His
incarceration in the		
'Abdu'r-Ral:iman the son		prison-fortress of 'Akka,
'Abdu'l-Baha,		
of Al:imad Effendi	30	whilst in the precincts of His
Father's		
J:Ianna's wife	15	Shrine, or when dwelling in
the House He		
The fat woman	25	occupied in 'Akka, or under
the shadow of		
Rafi'ih	25	the Bab's sepulcher on Mt.
Carmel, was		

moved to confer once again, and for the last time in His life, on the community of Although at 'Abdu'l-Baha's table, both signal mark of before and after the war, His guests were investing them, on the eve of the termination of His earthly little time to write, He has written her that revelation of the letter to ascertain her wishes regarding her with a world grandson, Labib. Whatever she chooses He implications even now, will carry out; her wish is the same as His own, and He will never forget her services. of a century, The present writer knew this lady well during and whose un- ing the years that he was a student in the yet in its American University of Beirut.

6. Kay! was a measure for grain. greatly enriched the 7. Ra~! in Syria was equivalent to 5 lbs. administrative

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annals of the first Baha'i century. 8 those who helped to avert that danger speak. First, Lady THE TABLETS OF THE DIVINE PLAN are fourteen in number and were revealed at two was much startled separate times: eight of them in 1916, and telephone mes- six in 1917 serious danger. Take immediate action." It came from an In all, 'Abdu'l-Baha mentioned by name in was not a mo- these Tablets some 120 territories and is- available power lands, to which the message of Baha'u'llah save the should be carried. When He did so, there were Baha'is in only 35 countries. Immediate Lamington. His

His American followers a

His special favor by

ministry, through the

Tablets of the Divine Plan,

mission, whose full

after the lapse of a quarter

still remain undisclosed,

foldment thus far, though as

initial stages, has so

spiritual as well as the

Baba was still in danger. Let

Blomfield:

In the spring of 1918, I

and deeply disturbed by a

sage: "'Abdu'l-Baha in

authoritative source. There

ment to be lost. Every

must be brought to bear to

Master.

I went at once to Lord

response came from loving and devoted 'Abdu'l-Baha, his hearts, but before "the proclamation of the ramifications and oneness of humanity" could be raised to all "immediate ac- the world "systematically and enthusiastical- value. ly," the Administrative Order had first to be immediately written to the developed as an instrument of collective the importance teaching-a tremendous labor of sixteen position, His work for years initiated by the Guardian of the Faith spiritual welfare of after 'Abdu'l-Baha's passing-so that by 1937 Through the the first stage in fulfilling the Tablets of the Lamington, and his Divine Plan could be inaugurated in the First with its alarming Seven Year Plan of the American Baha'i the hands of community. Since then, the launching of a number of teaching plans of limited scope in cable was sent to all continents, and the undertaking of two instructions, successive world-encompassing projects in and considera- which the Baha'fs of the whole world have family and His participated, have revealed the potentialities march on Haifa." of the master-plan which the mind of 'Abdu'l- was averted, by the Baha conceived in those years of sorrow and understanding of Lord stress. Bur much still lies in the lap of the Lord Balfour, future, for the Tablets of the Divine Plan are Cabinet here in no less than 'Abdu'l-Baha's charter for the devotion, efficiency, teaching of the Faith of Baha'u'llah through- Tudor-Pole at

sympathetic regard for understanding of the "red tape" necessary for tion" were of priceless A letter was Foreign Office explain ing of 'Abdu'l-Bahi's true peace, and for the many thousands of people. influence of Lord prompt help, the letter, news, was at once put into Lord Balfour. !! That very evening a General Allenby with these "Extend every protection tion to 'Abdu' l-Baha, His friends, when the British So a terrible tragedy promptness and Lamington and the power of his colleagues in the London, and by the and promptitude of Major

out His Dispensation.
was still in the
hands of the Turks.

the Turkish end, for Haifa

ON DECEMBER 9th 1917, General Allenby
aroused by the
entered Jerusalem. It now seemed certain
they had
that the days of the Ottoman rule in the Holy
and all His

The Turks had been so

enemies of the Master that

threatened to crucify Him,

Land were numbered. But the life of 'Abdu' l-
When General Allenby took Haifa,
several days before it was believed possible

family, on Mount Carmel.

8. Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By* (Wilmette,
cablegram to

for him to do so, he sent a

Ill.: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1970), pp.
to won-
304-05.

London which caused everybody

9. Then, the Right Honorable Arthur Balfour,
the hearts of the
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
deep grati-

der, and especially filled

Baha'fs in all the world with

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tude to the Almighty Protector.
upshot of these

cial help at this time. The

The cable of General Allenby was as
and the For-

various activities bore fruit,

follows: "Have to-day taken Palestine.
General

eign Office sent a despatch to

Notify the world that 'Abdu'l-Baha is
ensure the
safe." 10

Allenby instructing him to

family and

safety of 'Abdu'l-Baha and His

Major Tudor-Pole writes:
British Army

entourage so soon as the

It must have been in the early spring of

captured Haifa.

1918 that I began to feel acute anxiety for
through my hands

This despatch passed

'Abdu'l-Baha's safety at Haifa, and that of
Headquarters

in Cairo en route for Army

His family and followers there. I came out
Intelligence was re-

at Ludd . . . and

of the line in December 1917 during the
inquiry. In due

quested to make urgent

attack on Jerusalem, and being temporary
information reached

course this demand for

ily incapacitated for active service, was

the Headquarters of

Intelligence at the transferred to Intelligence, first at Cairo Savoy Hotel, Cairo, and ultimately (when and later at Ludd, Jaffa, and Jerusalem. enquiries elsewhere had proven fruitless) was passed to me for action. As a result, With an advance base at and around General Allenby was provided with full Jaffa, we were beginning to prepare for a particulars in regard to 'Abdu'l-Baha ... and the history of the move towards Haifa and the north at that Movement of which time. For several reasons, including short- He was the Master. age of men and munitions, the British Allenby at once issued orders to the General Commanding Officer in advance was delayed well into the summer of 1918. of the Haifa operations to the effect that immediately the town was entered, Meanwhile, the news reaching me con- a Brit- ish guard was to be posted at a Brit- cerning 'Abdu'l-Baha's imminent danger once around 'Abdu'l-Baha's house, and a became more and more alarming. I tried further guard was to be placed at the to arouse interest in the matter among disposal of His family and followers. Means those who were responsible for Intelli- were found for making it known within the gence Service activities I also brought enemy lines that stern retribution the matter before my own chief, General any attempt to cause death or would follow great Persian Master or to any Sir Arthur Money (Chief Administrator of Occupied Enemy Territory) household. of His touch with an officer whose social and politica l connexions m London were taken, these When Haifa was ultimately strong. Through his courtesy and interest I instructions for posting a guard were duly carried out, and all dangers was enabled to get an urgent message of death or accident were thereby averted. through to the British Foreign Office. Through friends associated with the

Baha'i Cause in England, an independent experience in the avenue of approach to the ruling powers conditions to in London was discovered. Carmel

By these means Lord Balfour, Lord Curzon, and others in the Cabinet were refreshment. advised as to the critical situation at Haifa. majestic yet gentle, Lord Lamington's influence proved of spe- whilst He spoke to me about eternal realities, at a 10. Blomfield, pp. 219-20. material world was

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rocking on its foundations. The divine the Turks would power of the spirit shone through His to be impreg- presence, giving one the feeling that a British soldiers. great prophet from Old Testament days as I was able to had risen up in a war-stricken world, as an follows:- inspirer and spiritual guide for the human of our troops race. into Haifa, the front line was pushed

One or two incidents which happened of 'Akka, shortly afterwards, connected with the cap- position on ture of Haifa, are worthy of record. four miles from

During the British advance from the fortified and south, field batteries were placed in posi- to be filled with tion on high ground immediately to the time. Very early one south-east of Mount Carmel, the intention Service sol-

It was a wonderful midst of the chaos of war visit the Master at His Mount home, which even at that time was haven of peace and I can remember Him, pacing up and down His garden time when the who le facts. He also stated that surrender 'Akki (supposed nable) to two unarmed The resultant facts so far gather them were as Subsequent to the entry forward half-way across the Bay and outposts were placed in the sands of the Bay some 'Akki itself. 'Akki, as a walled town, was believed Turkish troops at this morning two British Army

being to shell Haifa at long range over bearings in the Mount Carmel itself. Some of the Eastern the gates of Baha'fs living on the northern slopes of erroneously that the town Mount Carmel becoming agitated, went to hands. However, the 'Ab::lu'l-Baha's residence and expressed had been secretly fear as to the tragic course of possible earlier, and the events. According to an eye-witness of this British soldiers scene (from whom I obtained the story down and pre- when I reached Haifa), 'Abdu'l-Baha of the town in calmed His excited followers and called credibly stated them to prayer. Then He told them that being un- all would be well, and that no British made post shells would cause death or damage to the lines! 11 population or to Haifa and its environs. As forces com- a matter of historical fact, the range of the rounded the field batteries in question was inaccurate, appeared the shells passing harmlessly over the the notables town and falling into the Bay of 'Akki submission. The first beyond. question that the British commanding officer Another incident of those stirring times put to the Mayor 'of Haifa was: "Is 'Abdu'l- is worthy of record, although I am not Baha in this city? Is He safe?" 'Abdu'l-Baha was sitting calm and able to vouch for its complete accuracy at unperturbed in the forecourt of His house. first hand. Before the fall of Haifa, 'Abdu'l- Baha'fs were there Baha was discussing the British campaign around Him, tense and awaiting

news. Indian
with a few of His followers in His garden army outriders arrived
posthaste at the gates
one day. He then predicted that, contrary of the house. The next
evening, the Gov-
to the general expectation, the taking of ernor of Jerusalem came in
person to pay his
Haifa and the walled town of 'Akki respects. Lt. Colonel (later
Sir) Ronald
would come about almost without blood- Storrs was not a stranger. He
had known
shed. This prediction was verified by the 'Abdu'l-Baha as far back as
the days of His
incarceration within the city walls of 'Akka.
He came again, the following morning-
September 25th-before returning to Jeru-
11. Ibid., pp. 222-25 . salem.

— 'Abdu'l-Baha: Through the War Years (Used by permission of the curator)