

... description: 1912, Jessie Revell - Visit to Philadelphia
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Jessie Revell

1912, Jessie Revell - Visit to Philadelphia

Brief notes of visits with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

by the Ravells of Philadelphia.

in 1912

In April 1912 when Mrs. Mary J. Revell visited ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in New York City, when He was staying in a Hotel,- He spoke the following words to her “This is a firm believer. Her spirit is bigger than her body”. He spoke these words and many others to her through an interpreter, telling her He would see her often in Philadelphia. The spirit was so powerful that this world seemed very far away.

Mary and Ethel Revell had a wonderful visit with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in New York City He spoke to them most lovingly about the Philadelphia friends – giving them some sweets before they left His Holy Presence. This was Nov. 19, 1912. . Before they left He said “You are my good daughters, good daughters, very good daughters. I will always be with you.”

When ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was in Philadelphia and when He came to the home of Mrs. Mary J. Revell, He gave the name of “Badia” (which means wonderful) to Rebecca Revell (now Mrs. Lawrence Culver of Norwood, Ohio.)

‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave the name of Husayn which means praiseworthy to little Ellwood Revell (a grandson of Mrs. Mary J. Revell) He also gave Ellwood Revell two silver quarters. This was June 10, 1912 when ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was in the Revell Home at 1429 Mayfield St. Philadelphia, Pa. almost every one present had a few quiet moment alone and when (Jessie E. Revell’s) turn came to have this Heavenly Visit, I asked ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to please pray for me that I may be of service in the Kingdom of GOD, in reply he said through the interpreter,- “You are a smiling angel, and you will always serve in the Kingdom of Bahá’u’lláh. I will pray for you always. You are ever with Me.”

When ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was travelling from Baltimore to New York City, He of course passed through Philadelphia again and several of the friends boarded His train at the Baltimore & Ohio Station, riding to Wayne Junction with Him and on this very brief trip, He gave His Rosary to Mrs. Mary J. Revell and said for her to give each believer one bead from it.

While in Philadelphia, June 8-9, 1912 ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke in the Baptist Temple, Dr. Russel H. Coonwell was the Paston and in 1908 Dr. Conwekk visited ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in ‘Akká and requested ‘Abdu’l-Bahá then in case He would come to America in the future,- to speak in his Church. There was an audience of about 3000 or more present in the Baptist Temple to hear ‘Abdu’l-Bahá that night.

While in Philadelphia, Pa. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá also spoke in the Unitarian Church 15th St & Girard. Ave. Dr. Evans, Paston. This opportunity came thru a personal friend of Jessie E. Revell who was a prominent member of that church. An audience of 600 or 700 were present.

While in Philadelphia, Pa. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá also spoke several times at the Rittenhouse Hotel where He had a suite of rooms.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke at the Revell Home calling it “The Bahá’í Home” people were seated upon the floor. All the chairs being occupied. This was June 10, 1912.

Mrs. Mary J. Revell and her daughter Rebecca whom ‘Abdu’l-Bahá named “Badia” attended several meetings in New York City while ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and at one of these meetings ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had them both sit beside Him on a divan on the platform.

Jessie E. Revell made several visits to New York City to see ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, one rivet beautiful visit with Him was while walking along Riverside Drive. The last visit was Dec. 1, 1912 just 5 days before He sailed from America. On this visit He spoke to me while He was sitting on the floor in the position of worship at the home of Mr. Fmory. After He had given me a wonderful message of love for mother for which I had asked, since mother did not expect to see Him again ever He sailed, He spoke more Heavenly words, too powerful for me to take down or remember. I felt like I was lifted up into the seventh Heaven. I seemed to lose all consciousness of the earth in that Wonderful Presence of GOD. In the presence of my Lord when He was praying – giving such a spiritual benediction and confirmation. He showed me the Glory of Heaven that morning. How great is the Life of all Life, the Peace of all Peace, the Love of all Love! It is so precious to think of that Heavenly Placeless place – that wondrous Eternal Home to which He took me that day. After this Heavenly Visit, tea with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and Mr. Fmory and several of the Persian brothers. Mr. Fmory had a Sunday New York paper and we all discussed the events happening in the world at that time. When I was leaving ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, He looked into my very soul, and said to me, while holding my hand: “I will see you again.” Oh to see Him again the Home of Light, to be serving with Him there in the ABHÁ Kingdom.

Oh to be with Him forever in that Heavenly Home. I can hardly wait. How my soul is aflame to serve the Beloved more than ever, since His bodily Presence is no longer with us in this world. Bodily separation is not separation – ever we are together in Reality. My constant prayer is that I may fill every moment with service for my Lord.

Mrs. Mary J. Revell attended the Convention in Chicago in 1912 when ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was there. She met Him and heard Him speak several times. She attended the meeting on the grounds of the Mashriqu’l Adhkar grounds of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was way over on the far side. Mother (Mrs. Revell) thought to herself – Oh how I would love to touch the hem of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s garment for the brother in Persia who had written asking me to do this for him” – at that very moment ‘Abdu’l-Bahá walked over and stood directly in front of Mrs. Mary J. Revell just long enough for her to fulfil the request of this dear Persian brother and then He walked away. How He took care of every little detail?

These are only a very few of the many beautiful visits we had with our Lord while he was in America in 1912.

My sister Mary and I met ‘Abdu’l-Bahá the day after He arrived in America and we also heard Him speak the following Sunday morning at Dr. Percy Stickney Grant’s Church in New York City (His first public talk in America) Tie saw Him at His Hotel that afternoon and heard Him speak in the evening again, and also in the afternoon.

I walked in back of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá thru Rittenhouse Square in Philadelphia, on my way to the newspaper offices. The newspaper articles about ‘Abdu’l-Bahá visit to Philadelphia were all very good. His words of LIFE mean the raising of the New Song, known only to those who can sing it, and a draught from that of Glory thick has likeness!

Mrs. Revell and Ethel Revell went to New York City in June 1912 to see ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. He was looking at Juliet Thompson’s painting of Himself. It was during this visit that He gave the name “Badia” which means “wonderful” to Mrs. Revell for her daughter Rebecca.

In December 1924 Jessie Revell made the Holy Pilgrimage to ‘Akká and Haifa to Shoghi Effendi, our dear Guardian and the Holy Family. I could write on and on about various visits and experiences in the Path of GOD - but here I must stop.

In Vol. V July 13-1914 No. 7 Star of the West a Tablet to the Philadelphia, Pa. Bahá’ís is printed – also the talk ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave at the Unitarian Church June 3, 1912. In the same number also appears the Talk given at the Baptist Temple June 9, 1912.

In Vol. IV June 24, 1913 No. 6 Star of the West is the picture of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá taken in a Philadelphia, Pa. June 9, 1912.

In vol. V No. 6 Star of the West is a brief description of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s visit to Philadelphia, Pa. In the same Star appears the Talks (‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave June 19, 1912 at the Home of Revells.)

In the Bahá’í Magazine Feb. 1929 Vol. 19 page 350 is a further report concerning ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s visit to Philadelphia. The talks of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Philadelphia are also printed in Promulgation of Universal Peace.

The following is the 15th Tablet I received from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá – it is my Benediction Tablet – a most Holy and Sacred parting word from my Lord written about 7 weeks before ‘Abdu’l-Bahá ascended.

To Miss Jessie Revell: Upon her be the Glory of GOD the Most Glorious!

HE IS GOD!

O thou maidservant of GOD! My letter has been received. It is my hope that thou mayst be completely released from the material world, become celestial and heavenly. Thou art permitted to come. Convey my utmost kindness and respect to thy honorable mother, Ethel and the attracted maidservant of GOD, Mrs. Brittingham.

Upon thee be the Glory of ABHÁ!

Signed ‘Abdu’l-Bahá ‘Abbás.

Oct. 8, 1921. Haifa, Palestine. The Tablet received prior to the above is as follows:

To the maid-servant of GOD, Miss Jessie Revell. Upon her be the glory of GOD the Most Glorious! Philadelphia, Pa.

HE IS GOD!

O thou heavenly daughter!

Thy letter was received. I implored and supplicated to the Kingdom of GOD for whatever is thy utmost desire, so that thou mayest obtain a heart clean as a clear mirror and a tongue speaking of the truths and meanings, be occupied with the spread of the breaths of GOD, give eloquent talks, and become the cause of mindfulness to the sleepy; so that the dead may be quickened with the heavenly spirit. In winter thou has permission to come.

Upon thee be the glory of ABHÁ!

Signed ‘Abdu’l-Bahá ‘Abbás.

Haifa Aug. 3, 1921.

Translated by Rúhí M. Afnán Haifa Palestine.

Jessie F. Revell received 15 Tablets from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá full of teaching and exhorting her to teach.

Mrs. Mary J. Revell received 3 Tablets from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Ethel Revell received 3 Tablets, Mary and Badia each received one – Mary’s husband received one Tablet and Bahá’í and her husband received one. The Philadelphia Assembly received 4 Tablets from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. All of these Tablets were full of teaching and tell all to teach the Cause.

The foregoing is roughly compiled in order to keep all the facts intact for the future.

We have had many blessings from the Heavenly Kingdom and When we think them all over and meditate upon them, we almost feel that our spirits will break the cage of the body, they are so wonderful.

Humbly in His Path

Jessie Revell.