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Pilgrim Notes

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1918, Parsons Box 20 Wesley Tudor Pole

Pilgrim Notes

Wesley Tudor Pole

1918

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September 25th, 1918.

Dear Miss Hiscox:

I have returned from the Front. The Master is well and being fully protected
and looked after by the British military authorities. I arranged for funds and
relief stores to reach him and shall go to Haifa directly I can get away again. I
have cabled London and seen Yazdí. Please inform the Cairo friends. In great
haste,

Yours,

W. Tudor-Pole.

I saw the authorities at G.H. and fixed up every possible arrangement for his
comfort and that of those around him.

W.T.P.

Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm.

Dear Bahá'í Brother:

Capt. W. Tudor-Pole is an old English Bahá'í and he entertained 'Abdu'l-Bahá at his home in England. He joined the forces in Palestine, was wounded last December during the attack preceding the capture of Jerusalem, was sent to a hospital in Cairo. After recovery, he was given a very important position here in Cairo at General Headquarters, at the behest of the O.E.T.A. (Occupied Enemy Territory Administration), which has necessitated his taking frequent trips to Jerusalem. He was able to do a great deal to interest the Foreign Office in London and Gen. Allenby here at Headquarters in 'Abdu'l-Bahá and followers, and complete protection for them was authorized by the military officials before the attack on Haifa. Capt. Tudor-Pole has sent on 200 lbs., \$1000, to 'Abdu'l-Bahá and ordered food sent on. He has also written to him that any time he would like to leave Haifa, and come to Egypt he (Mr. Tudor-Pole) will make all necessary arrangements to have him brought here. He has sent on a friend and junior officer, whom I also know and who is much interested in the Bahá'í Teachings, to remain permanently at the Military Office at Haifa and he will see 'Abdu'l-Bahá frequently and look out for his welfare and comfort. Mírzá Muḥammad Taqí (one of the old Persian Bahá'ís of Cairo) has sent 50 pounds, \$250, and many of us have sent letters to 'Abdu'l-Bahá through Mr. Tudor-Pole. We know that you have all rejoiced in America to read in the papers of the capture of Haifa and 'Akká by the British. Capt. Tudor-Pole got transferred (last year) from his regiment in England to the Palestine forces in order that he might be of service to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. He has indeed been of the greatest service! I feel he was sent by God. Notify all other Bahá'í centers. Let me know if this reaches you in safety.

c/o Thos. Cook & Son,

Cairo, Egypt.

Faithfully yours in the Cause of God,

Elinor Hiscox.

Later, September 29th.

Capt. Tudor-Pole has just received a message from Col. Storras, now Military Governor of Jerusalem, who had just returned from a trip to Haifa, where he saw 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and gave him the money sent by Mr. Tudor-Pole. 'Abdu'l-Bahá is very well and all the family and have had plenty of food to eat – not luxuries of course – but they have not suffered in that part of the country from lack of necessary food. 'Abdu'l-Bahá said he did not need the money for himself, but he accepted it to give to the poor. He sent greetings and love to all. He wishes to remain at Haifa for the present. Before the war, Col. Storras was Oriental Secretary at the British Residency in Cairo; he studied Arabic for a long time with our Bahá'í Brother Ḥusayn Rúhí, and he saw a great deal of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

when the latter was in Egypt, drove him out to the pyramids in his automobile, etc. So it was a mutual pleasure for them to meet now at Haifa after tee long years of warfare and separation. Praise God! The worst is now past.

Yours in El Abhá,

Elinor Hiscox.

Visit to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá ‘Abbás, at Haifa and Acre

On the 25th, 26th and 27th February, 1919.

I arrived from Jerusalem in Haifa on the 25th February. The new railway from Ludd to Haifa to now completed, and this greatly shortens the journey. For instance, one can leave Cairo at 6:15 in the evening, and arrive at Haifa without change at 11 a. m. the toile owing morning. The Military Authorities are re-building the light railway between Haifa and Acre, and are already making arrangements to bring a new water supply into Haifa, and to improve the drainage system. Roadways in both towns are being reconstructed and general improvements are under way. The Headquarters of the British Army of Occupation have now been removed from a camp near Ludd to permanent quarters in Haifa. A large number of buildings are being erected on Mount Carmel for the Headquarters Staff, and at least 2,000,000 is to be spent upon the port of Haifa and improvements in Acre, always provided that Palestine remains under British control.

The result of all this will be that Haifa will become the most important port on the Mediterranean Coast between Port Sa‘íd and Alexandria, and will be the principal import and export center for merchandise and travellers arriving and departing by sea. The whole of Palestine, (as well as the Damascus areas and the country behind) will look to Haifa as its port, so that from a political, commercial and military standpoint, Haifa is undoubtedly destined to become the capital of Palestine. The seat of Government will probably be transferred, before the year is out, from Jerusalem to Haifa, and Jerusalem will remain the religious center of the country only. Those feels are reported because they fit in accurately with Bahá’u’lláh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to prophecies concerning the great future lying before Haifa and the Bay of Acre.

A new railway is projected between Haifa and Damascus to take the place of the present narrow gauge Turkish system. Jerusalem is also now linked up with Haifa by the broad gauge railway via Ludd.

On arriving at Haifa, I was met by Mírzá Aḥmad Yazdí, Persian Consul at Port Sa‘íd, who is now visiting the Master at Haifa. He told me that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was at Acre at present. He also gave me the interesting news that he had been married on the previous Saturday to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s daughter Monever Khanoum, to whom he had been engaged for some years. On the following day,

I drove round the Bay and found the Master at Acre, showing every sign of vigor.

It appears that General Commander-in-Chief of the British Forces, had called upon Him at Haifa a week ago, and at the Master's wish had written with him to Acre and taken tea at Hadje's, outside the city. The party included Allenby: General Bole, chief of General Staff: and Colonel Staenton, Military Governor -of Haifa, who has become a firm friend, and promise to do all possible for 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the movement generally.

I cannot report the intensely interesting conversation between General Allenby and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, because it was of a private nature, Sufficiently to say that the Commander-in-chief was deeply impressed, and asked for literature on the Bahá'í Movement, with which I have since provided him.

'Abdu'l-Bahá has now been visited by all the important military personages in Palestine, including the Commander-in-Chief, General Sir Arthur Money, Chief Administrator, General Ronald Storrs, Military Governor of Jerusalem, and many military heads of departments, to say nothing of a constant flow of officers and men who call upon him daily.

The Master states that he has no present intention of leaving Haifa, where he is overwhelmed at the moment, with a world-wide correspondence and many collars. It can be stated confidently that his presence is of immense value to the British Authorities, and that his influence is doing much to lessen the friction between various important religious communities in Palestine and elsewhere.

The Master entrusted me with about 100 tablets to be distributed to various parts of the world, and expressed the strong desire that I should return to Palestine after spending some leave in London during the present spring.

After spending the day in Acre, I returned to Haifa in the middle of a violent thunderstorm, during which the carriage in which I was travelling with Mírzá Aḥmad Yazdí was nearly swamped in the sea. The weather at present is very violent in this part of Palestine, but on the whole the winter has been a mild one.

The following day the Master travelled across to Haifa, the weather was most inclement, and gave me several hours of his precious time in discussing many confidential matters affecting the future of the country, as well as of the Movement. He is extremely anxious that any friction which may have arisen between individual friends in the Bahá'í Movement in England or America should be entirely alleviated in order that a thoroughly united front may be shown to the world, thereby proving that this Movement is of a spiritual nature which unites rather than creates discord. A tablet dealing with this important subject has been written to friends both in England and America.

He is also very anxious that the aims and the ideals of the Movement should be placed before the world in a dignified and correct manner, and is, I believe,

about to issue certain suggestions concerning the future publication of book and pamphlets.

I promised to return to Haifa on or about the 18th March, 1919 before leaving for England, and meanwhile have arranged for some important interviews by which the beneficent effect of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's presence in Palestine at this critical juncture may be largely increased.

Meanwhile I am happy to able report that the Master's health is good: that he is receiving every consideration from the authorities: that he is taking part in a quiet and important way in the reconstructive and regenerative work in Palestine that he is cheerful about the future: that he to call certain friends to Haifa from various parts of world: and that there is no cause for anxiety regarding his future welfare under British protection.

Any literature in English or French that can be spared direct should be dispatch direct to Shogi Rabbání, Effendi c/o 'Abdu'l-Bahá 'Abbás, Haifa, who is forming a small ending library for the use of many people out here who wish to understand what this Movement stands for.

The news received from friends in India and Persia is satisfactory, where Bahá'ís are increasing very rapidly in numbers under the new political and social conditions now developing in those countries. Friends throughout the Near and Middle East look to friends in England and America to show by their example a united and, harmonious front, so that the news of the movement may spread without the danger of sectarian of other differences springing up.

I strongly advise the friends in the rest to combine in sending a Memorandum to both General Allenby (General Sir E. H. H. Allenby, C. C. M. G., K. C. B. & C. Commander-in-Chief E. E. F.) and to General Sir Arthur Money, C. S. I. & C., Chief Administrator, Jerusalem expressing gratitude for the courteous consideration shown to 'Abdu'l-Bahá 'Abbás and his friends since the British occupation, and at the same time a Memorandum should be sent to the Et. Hon. A. J. Balfour, O. M., M.P., Foreign Office London, who was responsible for instructing the Military Authorities out here to safeguard 'Abdu'l-Bahá and to give him full protection. Copies of these Memoranda might be sent to the Foreign Office officials at Washington, and also to the Master himself, by hand in the latter case.

The above notes are not intended for publication but for the private guidance of Friends. There is no objection, however, to carefully edited extracts appearing under the aegis of the Bahá'í Publication Board.

(Signed) W. Tudor Pole.