

Gertrude Bell

A halftone illustration of a book with a white flower and a green leaf. The book is open, showing its pages and a blue spine. A large green leaf and a white flower with yellow stamens are positioned to the right of the book. The entire scene is rendered in a halftone dot pattern.

*The Letters
of Gertrude Bell*

Gertrude Bell

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

SELECTED AND EDITED BY LADY BELL, D.B.E.

VOLUME 1

VOLUME ONE CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION TO THE LETTERS OF GERTRUDE BELL

CHAPTER I

CHAPTER II

CHAPTER III

CHAPTER IV

CHAPTER V

CHAPTER VI

CHAPTER VII

CHAPTER VIII

CHAPTER IX

CHAPTER X

CHAPTER XI

CHAPTER XII

CHAPTER XIII

CHAPTER XIV

CHAPTER XV

IMAGES

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D.B.E.**

VOLUME 1

[Table of Contents](#)

**PRINTED IN ENGLAND FOR BONI AND
LIVERIGHT, INC.**

TO GERTRUDE'S FATHER

PREFATORY NOTE

[Table of Contents](#)

In the letters contained in this book there will be found many Eastern names, both of people and places, difficult to handle for those, like myself, not conversant with Arabic. The Arabic alphabet has characters for which we have no satisfactory equivalents and the Arab language has sounds which we find it difficult to reproduce. We have therefore in dealing with them to content ourselves with transliterations, some of which in words more or less frequently used in English have become translations, such as 'Koran,' 'kavass,' etc. But even these words (there are many others, but I take these two as an example) which have almost become a part of the English language are now spelt differently by experts, and at first sight it is difficult to recognise them in 'Quran' and 'qawas'--which latter form is I believe in accordance

with the standardised spelling now being officially introduced in Bagdad. Gertrude herself in her letters used often to spell the same word in different ways, sometimes because she was trying experiments in transliteration, sometimes deliberately adopting a new way, sometimes because the same word is differently pronounced in Arabic or in Turkish. These variations in spelling have added a good deal to the difficulty of editing her letters especially as reference to expert opinion has occasionally shown that experts themselves do not always agree as to which form of transliteration is the best.

I have therefore adopted the plan of spelling the names as they are found when they occur in the letters for the first time, and keeping to it. Thus Gertrude used to write at first 'Kaimmakam,' in her later letters 'Qaimmaqam.' I have spelt it uniformly with a K for the convenience of the reader; and so with other words in which the Q has now supplemented the K.

The word 'Bagdad' which used to be regarded as the English name of the town, a translation and not a transliteration, was spelt as I have given it in Gertrude's first letters long ago. It is now everywhere, even when regarded as a translation, spelt 'Baghdad' and it ought to have been so spelt in this book. The same applies to the name 'Teheran' which is now always spelt 'Tehran' but of which I have preserved the former spelling.

Dr. D. G. Hogarth has been good enough to read the preceding pages of this Prefatory Note, and to give them his sanction. He adds the following paragraph:

"A more difficult question still in reproducing proper names has been raised by the vowel signs in Arabic, including that for the ain and by the diacritical points and marks which convey either nothing or a false meaning to uninstructed Western eyes."

I have therefore omitted the vowel signs altogether.

My own interpolations, inserted where required as links or elucidations, are indicated by being enclosed in square brackets [] and by being "indented," i.e., printed in a shorter line than the text of the letters.

The formulae beginning and ending the letters have been mostly omitted, to save space and to avoid repetition. The heading H. B. at the top of a letter means that it is addressed to Gertrude's father, and the heading F. B. means that it is addressed to me.

I am most grateful to the people who have given me counsel and help in compiling this book: Sir Valentine Chirol, Mrs. W. L. Courtney, H. E. Sir Henry Dobbs, Dr. D. G. Hogarth, Elizabeth Robins, and Major General Sir Percy Cox, who has had the kindness to read and correct many of the Proofs.

I am also much indebted to the following for placing at my disposal maps or photographs, letters or portions of letters from Gertrude in their possession, or accounts of her written by themselves: Captain J. P. Farrar, Vice-Admiral Sir Reginald Hall, Mrs. Marguerite Harrison, Hon. Mrs. Anthony Henley, The Dowager Countess of Jersey, Mary Countess of Lovelace, Hon. Mildred Lowther, Mr. Horace Marshall, Hon. Mrs. Harold Nicolson, Sir William Ramsay, Mr. E. A. Reeves, Miss Flora Russell, Lady Sheffield, Mr. Lionel Smith, Mr.

Sydney Spencer, Lady Spring Rice, Colonel E. L. Strutt. Also for clerical help given me by Mrs. D. M. Chapman and my secretary Miss Phyllis S. Owen.

FLORENCE BELL

Mount Grace Priory,
August 1927.

VOLUME ONE CONTENTS

Table of Contents

PREFATORY NOTE

INTRODUCTION

I 1874-1892 - CHILDHOOD, OXFORD, LONDON

II 1892-1896 - PERSIA, ITALY, LONDON

III 1897 - BERLIN

IV 1897-1899 - ROUND THE WORLD, DAUPHINA, ETC.

V 1899-1900 - JERUSALEM AND THE FIRST DESERT

JOURNEYS

VI 1900 - DESERT EXCURSIONS FROM JERUSALEM

VII 1901-1902 - SWITZERLAND, SYRIA, ENGLAND

VIII 1902-1903 - ROUND THE WORLD FOR THE SECOND

TIME

IX 1903-1909 - ENGLAND, SWITZERLAND, PARIS

X 1905 - SYRIA, ASIA MINOR

XI 1905-1909 - LONDON, ASIA MINOR, LONDON

XII 1910-1911 - ITALY, ACROSS THE SYRIAN DESERT

XIII 1913-1914 - THE JOURNEY To HAYIL

XIV 1914-15-16 - WAR WORK AT BOULOGNE, LONDON

AND CAIRO

XV 1916-1917 - DELHI AND BASRAH

VOLUME ONE ILLUSTRATIONS (at the end of this file)

Gertrude Margaret Lowthian Bell, to give her all her names, although she rarely used the second, was born on the 14th July, 1868, at Washington Hall, Co. Durham, the residence of her grandfather, Isaac Lowthian Bell, F.R.S., afterwards Sir Lowthian Bell, Bart. Sir Lowthian, ironmaster and colliery owner in the county of Durham, was a distinguished man of science. His wife was Margaret Pattinson, of Alston in Cumberland, daughter of Hugh Lee Pattinson, F.R.S. Gertrude's father, now Sir Hugh Bell, was Sir Lowthian's eldest son; her mother was Mary Shield, daughter of John Shield, of Newcastle-on-Tyne. Gertrude therefore had the possibility of inheriting from both Northumbrian and Cumbrian forbears some of the energy and intelligence of the north.

Gertrude was three years old when she lost her mother, who died when Gertrude's brother Maurice was born.

INTRODUCTION TO THE LETTERS OF GERTRUDE BELL

[Table of Contents](#)

Gertrude Bell, happily for her family and friends, was one of the people whose lives can be reconstructed from correspondence.

Through all her wanderings, whether far or near, she kept in the closest touch with her home, always anxious to share her experiences and impressions with her family, to chronicle for their benefit all that happened to her, important or unimportant: whether a stirring tale of

adventure or an account of a dinner party. Those letters, varied, witty, enthralling, were a constant joy through the years to all those who read them. It was fortunate for the recipients that the act of writing, the actual driving of the pen, seemed to be no more of an effort to Gertrude than to remember and record all that the pen set down. She was able at the close of a day of exciting travel to toss a complete account of it on to paper for her family, often covering several closely written quarto pages. And for many years she kept a diary as well. Then the time came when she ceased to write a diary. From 1919 onwards the confidential detailed letters of many pages, often written day by day, took its place. These were usually addressed to her father and dispatched to her family by every mail and by every extra opportunity. Besides these home letters, she found time for a large and varied correspondence with friends outside her home circle both male and female, among the former being some of the most distinguished men of her time. But the letters to her family have provided such abundant material for the reconstruction of her story that it has not been found necessary to ask for any others. Short extracts from a few outside letters to some of her intimate friends, however, have been included. The earlier of these letters, written when she was at home and therefore sending no letters to her family, show what her home life and outlook were at the time of her girlhood, when she was living an ordinary life--in so far as her life could ever be called ordinary. They foreshadow the pictures given in her subsequent family letters of her gradual development on all sides through the years, garnering as she went the

almost incredible variety of experiences which culminated and ended in Bagdad. Letters written when she was twenty show that after her triumphant return from Oxford with one of the most brilliant Firsts of her year she threw herself with the greatest zest into all the amusements of her age, sharing in everything, enjoying everything, dancing, skating, fencing, going to London parties; making ardent girl friendships, drawing in to her circle intimates of all kinds. She also loved her country life, in which her occupations included an absorbing amount of gardening, fox hunting--she was a bold rider to hounds--interesting herself in the people at her father's ironworks, and in her country village, making friends in every direction. And when she was wandering far afield (her wanderings began very early--she went to Roumania when she was twenty-two and to Persia when she was twenty-three) she was always ready to take up her urban or country life at home on her return with the same zest as before, carrying with her, wherever she was, her ardent zest for knowledge, turning the flashlight of her eagerness on to one field of the mind after another and making it her own, reading, assimilating, discussing until the years found her ranged on equal terms beside some of the foremost scholars of her time.

To most people outside her own circle Gertrude was chiefly known by her achievements in the East, and it is probably the story of these that they will look for in this book. But the letters here published, from the time she was twenty until the end of her life, show such an amazing range of many-sided ability that they may seem to those who read them to present a picture worth recording at every stage.

Scholar, poet, historian, archaeologist, art critic, mountaineer, explorer, gardener, naturalist, distinguished servant of the State, Gertrude was all of these, and was recognised by experts as an expert in them all.

On the other hand, in some of the letters addressed to her family are references to subjects or events that may seem trivial or unimportant. But Gertrude's keen interest in every detail concerning her home was so delightful, and present her in such a new light to many who knew her only in public that these passages have been included.

Her love for her family, for her parents, for her brothers and sisters, her joy in her home life, has always seemed to those who shared that life to be so beautiful that it is worth dwelling on by the side of more exceptional experiences, and by the side of the world-famous achievements of one whose later life especially might well have separated her in mind and sympathy as well as in person from her belongings. But her letters show how unbreakable to the last was the bond between her and her home, and above all between her and her father. The abiding influence in Gertrude's life from the time she was a little child was her relation to her father. Her devotion to him, her whole-hearted admiration, the close and satisfying companionship between them, their deep mutual affection--these were to both the very foundation of existence until the day she died.

CHAPTER I

[Table of Contents](#)

1874-1892 - CHILDHOOD-OXFORD-LONDON

[This is the earliest letter extant from Gertrude, dated when she was six years old. It is addressed to me, at a time when she was not yet my little daughter but my "affectionate little friend." Mopsa, about whom she writes, was a large grey Persian cat, who played a very prominent part in the household.]

REDBARNS, COATHAM, REDCAR, Sept., 25th, 1874.

MY DEAR FLORENCE,

Mopsa has been very naughty this morning. She has been scampering all over the dining-room Cilla says. I had a great Chase all over the hall and dining room to catch her and bring her to Papa. She bit and made one little red mark on my hand. During breakfast she hissed at Kitty Scott. Auntie Ada had her on her knee and Kitty was at one side. As Auntie Ada let Mopsa go down she hissed at Kitty and hunted her round to my side of the table. Please Papa says will you ask Auntie Florence if she will order us some honey like her own. I gave Mopsa your message and she sends her love. I forgot to say Kitty was very frightened. I send you my love and to Granmama and Auntie Florence. Your affectionate little friend GERTRUDE BELL.

[At the time that the above letter was written, the two children were living with their father at Redcar on the Yorkshire coast. His unmarried sister, Ada Bell, was then living with them.]

Gertrude was eight when her father and I were married. She was a child of spirit and initiative, as may be imagined. Full of daring, she used to lead her little brother, whose tender years were ill equipped for so much enterprise, into the most perilous adventures, such as commanding him, to

his terror, to follow her example in jumping from the top of a garden wall nine feet high to the ground. She used to alight on her feet, he very seldom did. Or she would lead a climbing expedition on to the top of the greenhouse, where Maurice was certain to go through the panes while Gertrude clambered down outside them in safety to the bottom.

They both of them rode from a very early age, and their ponies, of which they had a succession, were a constant joy.

From her early years Gertrude was devoted to flowers and to the garden. I have found a diary of hers when she was eleven. It was an imposing looking quarto volume bound in leather, apparently given her for a Christmas present in 1878 but only kept for a few pages, alas. I have left her own spelling.]

Jan. 11. 1879 Sunday--we played in liberry morning.

Feb. 11. Read Green till 9. Lessons went off rather lazily. We went into the gardin. I looked at flowers. Stilted.

Feb. 14. 1879--St. Valentines Day. I got 12 valentines. The lessons went very badly. The lessons themselves were good. Each got twopence . . . we caught a pigion we put it into a basket.

15 Feb. The pigion was brought into our room it drank some milk Maurice spilt a lot on my bed. So we went into the cuboard. Breakfast. I read all the morning. Dinner. I read all the afternoon. Tea. I played with Hugo. Mother read to us. Taught Maurice geography and read. Went to bed tired, had a little talk not fun and went to sleep.

Feb, 16 We now have out some yellow crocus and primroses snodrops and primroses. Primroses and snodrops in my garden. Crocus in Papas.

[The only remaining entry in the diary is an account of her birthday, the day she was eleven, Monday, 14th of July. The record, the celebrations, and all the presents seem amusingly childish for a little girl who was reading Green's history before breakfast, and devouring every book she could find.]

When I woke up I went to see the time. It was a quarter to seven. I woke Maurice. Then I hid my face and he got out his presents. He gave me scales a fireplace with pans kitchen furniture. Then I found under my pillow a book from nurse then we got up. When we were ready we went into Mother's room and there I found a hopping toad from Auntie Bessie dinner set from Mother, watering can from Papa. Then we went downstairs to breakfast Mother and Maurice and I cooked a dinner because it was wet. We had soup fish mince crockets Puding, cheese and butter and desert.

[Gertrude never entirely mastered the art of spelling, and all her life long there were certain words in her letters that were always spelt wrong. She always wrote 'siezed,' 'ekcercise,' 'exhorbitant.' Sometimes she wrote 'priviledge.'

The cooking lessons referred to in the diary and sometimes in the early letters did not have much praftical result. She never excelled in this art.

The two or three Years following the time described in the diaries were spent happily at Redcar with Maurice--years of playing about, and studying under a German governess, and having pet animals, of which there were always one or two on hand. There were periodical onslaughts Of grief when one of these died, grief modified by the imposing funeral

procession always organised for them and burial in a special cemetery in the garden.

Gertrude's and Maurice's earliest and favourite companion from babyhood onwards, was Horace Marshall their first cousin and son of their mother's sister Mrs Thomas Marshall. Then after their father's second marriage the two Lascelles boys came into the circle as intimates and cousins, the sons of my sister Mary spoken of in the letters as Auntie Mary, wife of Sir Frank Lascelles.

Florence Lascelles, my sister's only daughter, is constantly mentioned in the letters. She was a good deal younger than her two brothers and Gertrude, but as she grew up she was always one of Gertrude's chosen friends and companions. She married Cecil Spring Rice in 1904.

When Gertrude was fifteen and Maurice had gone to school, she went, first as a day scholar and afterwards as a boarder, to Queen's College in Harley Street, where a friend of her mother's, Camilla Croudace, had just been made Lady Resident. Gertrude lived at first at 95 Sloane Street with my mother Lady Olliffe, who took her and Maurice to her heart as if they had been grandchildren of her own.

The History Lecturer at Queens College at that time was Mr. Cramb, a distinguished and inspiring teacher. Gertrude's intelligence and aptitude for history impressed him keenly, and he strongly urged us to let her go to Oxford and go in for the History School. The time had not yet come when it was a usual part of a girl's education to go to a University, and it was with some qualms that we consented. But the result justified our decision. Gertrude went to Lady Margaret Hall, in 1886 just before she was eighteen, she left it in June

1888 just before she was twenty, and wound up, after those two years, by taking a brilliant First Class in Modern History.

One of her contemporaries at Lady Margaret was Janet Hogarth, now Mrs. W. L. Courtney, who, in a delightful article contributed to the North American Review, entitled "Gertrude Bell, a personal study" and also in her interesting book "Recollected in Tranquillity," has described Gertrude as she was when she first arrived at Lady Margaret Hall-I quote both from the article and the book.

". . . . Gertrude Lowthian Bell, the most brilliant student we ever had at Lady Margaret Hall, or indeed I think at any of the women's colleges. Her journeys in Arabia and her achievements in Iraq have passed into history. I need only recall the bright promise of her college days, when the vivid, rather untidy, auburn-haired girl of seventeen first came amongst us and took our hearts by storm with her brilliant talk and her youthful confidence in her self and her belongings. She had a most engaging way of saying 'Well you know, my father says so and so' as a final opinion on every question under discussion-[and indeed to the end of her life Gertrude, with the same absolute confidence would have been capable of still quoting the same authority as final].

"She threw herself with untiring energy into every phase of college life, she swam, she rowed, she played tennis, and hockey, she danced, she spoke in debates; she kept up with modern literature, and told us tales of modern authors, most of whom were her childhood's friends. Yet all the time she put in seven hours of work, and at the end of two years she

won as brilliant a First Class in the School of Modern History as has ever been won at Oxford."

And Many years later Mrs. Courtney who had herself taken a first class (in Moral Philosophy) the same year as Gertrude, writes as follows in the 'Brown Book', which is the organ of Lady Margaret Hall:

"I never lost touch with her for well nigh forty years after we parted in the First Class, as she said the day I went round to Sloane Street to wish her joy when the History List appeared"

The untidiness in Gertrude's appearance referred to by Mrs. Courtney gradually gave place to an increasing taste for dress, and she is remembered by more than one person who saw her during the finals of the History School appearing in different clothes every day. The parents of the candidates were admitted to the 'viva voce' part of the examination, and I have a vivid picture in my memory of Gertrude, showing no trace of nervousness sitting very upright at a table, beneath which her slender feet in neat brown shoes were crossed. She was, I have since been told, one of the first young women at Oxford to wear brown shoes, of which she set the fashion among her contemporaries.

Mr. Arthur Hassall of Christchurch, Oxford, who knew her well, records the following incident of Gertrude's 'viva voce.' I quote from his letter: "S. R. Gardiner, the famous historian of the times of James I and Charles I, began to 'viva voce' Miss Bell. She replied to his first question 'I am afraid I must differ from your estimate of Charles I.' This so horrified Professor Gardiner that he at once asked the examiner who

sat next to him (I think it was Mr. H. O. Wakeman) to continue the 'viva voce.'"

The result of the whole examination however did her so much credit that she may perhaps be forgiven this lapse into unparalleled audacity.

Mrs. Arthur Hassall also writes: "Gertrude went to the four balls given at Commemoration that week, of which the last was the night before her 'viva voce,' and danced all the evening looking brilliantly happy." She also writes: "she was the only girl I have ever known who took her work for the schools and her examination in a gay way."

After the happy culmination of her two years at oxford she rejoined her family in London and then at Redcar. My sister-Sir Frank Lascelles being at that time Minister--at Bucharest--begged me to send Gertrude to stay with them for the winter, after the return from Oxford, opining that frequenting foreign diplomatic Society might be a help for Gertrude "to get rid of her Oxfordy manner." My sister was very fond of Gertrude, whom she called her niece and treated like a daughter: they were the greatest friends. The effect however on Gertrude's "Oxfordy manner" of the society of foreign diplomats was not all that Lady Lascelles had hoped, for it is recorded that on one occasion when a distinguished foreign Statesman was discussing some of the international problems of Central Europe, Gertrude said to him, to the stupefaction of her listeners and the dismay of her hostess: "Il me semble, Monsieur, que vous n'avez pas saisi l'esprit du peuple allemand."

There is no doubt that according to the ordinary canons of demeanour it was a mistake for Gertrude to proffer, as we

have been shown on more occasions than one, her opinions, let alone her criticisms, to her superiors in age and experience.

But it was all part of her entire honesty and independence of judgment: and the time was to come when many a distinguished foreign statesman not only listened to the opinions she proffered but accepted them and acted on them.

Gertrude hardly ever dated her letters except by the day of the week, sometimes not even that, so that where the envelope has not been preserved I have had to guess the year by the context. By some mischance none of her letters from Bucharest seems to have been preserved, but we know that she was extremely happy there, and keenly interested in her new surroundings. From Bucharest she returned to London, from London she went to Redcar, enjoying herself everywhere. At Redcar she shouldered the housekeeping and also various activities among the women at the ironworks, Clarence, often mentioned, being Bell Bros. ironworks on the north bank of the Tees.

Her letters of this time give a picture of her relation to the younger children—her step-brother and her two step-sisters, Hugo, Elsa and Molly. Hugo was ten years younger than Gertrude, Elsa eleven years younger, Molly thirteen years. Her letters often recount what she was doing with her two little sisters who adored her. Hugo by this time had gone to school. Some letters are here given that she wrote between 1889 and 1892 during the time spent in England in one of our two homes either in London in the house shared with my mother or at Redcar, where we lived until 1904.

These letters are mostly about every day happenings, always lifted into something new and exciting by Gertrude's youthful zest. Some of these early letters are to her parents, others of which fragmentary extracts are given, are to Flora Russell who remained her intimate friend all her life. Flora was the elder daughter of Lord and Lady Arthur Russell, who lived in Audley Square. The Audley Square circle, the house, the hosts, the people who used to assemble there, formed for Gertrude, as for many others, a cherished and congenial surrounding.]

To H.B.

LONDON, 1889.

. . . . The little girls spent all day with Hunt [their nurse] at her brother-in-laws. They came home at eight, radiant. Molly says he was a very kind man, he gave them strawberries and cream and lots of flowers but to their surprise he had no servants though he has a conservatory! We suppose he must be a market gardener. . . .

To F.B.

RED BARNS, 1889.

I think the reason the books were so high was because of the dinner party-it was before I began to keep house wasn't it, so I am not responsible, though I feel as if I were.

I paid everything but the butcher with what you sent, and had over 1 pound balance which I have kept for next time.

I went to Clarence to-day and arranged about the nursing lecture to-morrow,-there were a lot of things to prepare for it. Then I paid some visits and came home with Papa at 4:35. Molly and I have since been picking cowslips in the

fields. It is so heavenly here with all the things coming out and the grass growing long. I am glad I'm here.

To F.B.

LONDON 1889.

I must tell you an absurd story. Minnie Hope was sitting with an Oxford man. Presently he grabbed her hand and said "do you see that young lady in a blue jacket?" "yes" said Minnie lying low. "Well," said he in an awestruck voice, "she took a first in history!!"

TO F.B.

LONDON, Friday, 14th February, 1889.

. . . . In the afternoon Sophie [my younger sister, now Mrs. H. J. Kitcat] and I walked across the Green Park to the London Library where I had a delicious rummage with a very amiable sub-librarian who routed out all the editions of Sir Th. Browne and Ph. Sidney for me to see I took down the names and dates and armed with these I felt prepared to face Bain himself.

To F.B.

LONDON, July 5th, 1889.

Billy [Lascelles] and I sat in the garden and had a long talk so long that he only left himself a quarter of an hour to catch his train. I expect he missed it. He wanted to take me with him to Paddington and send me back in a hansom, don't be afraid, I didn't go-What would have happened if I had, it was ten o'clock!

Yesterday morning I went to the French Literature class at Caroline's [Hon. Mrs Norman Grosvenor] house, I came back here, dressed, and went to Queen Street for a seven o'clock dinner-we were going to the Spanish exhibition after it.

We drove in hansoms to the exhibition and Captain ---- brought me home, I hope that doesn't shock you; I discussed religious beliefs all the way there and very metaphysical conceptions of truth all the way back-that sounds rather steep doesn't it--I love talking to people when they really will talk sensibly and about things which one wants to discuss. I am rather inclined to think however that it is a dangerous Amusement, for one is so ready to make oneself believe that the things one says and the theories one makes are really guiding principles of one's life whereas a matter of fact they are not at all. One suddenly finds that one had formulated some view from which it is very difficult to back out not because of one's interlocutor but because the mere fact of fitting it with words engraves it upon one's mind. Then one is reduced to the disagreeable necessity of trying even involuntarily to make the facts of one's real life fit into it thereby involving oneself in a mist of half-truths and half-falsehoods which cling about one's mind do what one will to shake them off.

It's so hot this morning, I went into the gardens to be cool, but presently came the babies who announced that they were barons and that they intended to rob me. I was rather surprised at their taking this view of the functions of the aristocracy, till I found that they had just been learning the reign of Stephen. Molly informed me in the pride of newly acquired knowledge that there were at least 11,000 castles in his time! So we all played at jumping over a string, not a very cooling occupation, till fortunately Miss Thomson came and called them in. Did we tell you how Molly puzzled and shocked her dreadfully the other day by

asking her suddenly what was the French for "this horse has the staggers"!

To F.B.

RED BARNS, October 30, 1889.

The ladies of Clarence were friendly, and oh, unexpected joy!--their accounts came right. . . .

The children and I played the race game in the nursery. They have a great plan but unfortunately they have not hit upon any way of carrying it out, of all catching the measles and being laid up together indefinitely. It seemed to me a gruesome form of conversation and I left them discussing it and their supper very happily. They have expressed no regrets as to your absence. . . .

To F.B.

RED BARNS, November 25th, 1889

My gown came from Kerswell this morning-charming I am so glad I did not have a black one. I had a delightful dancing lesson, learnt two more parts of the sword dance, began the minuet. It is lovely, you must learn it the first dancing lesson you are here. It was so fine this afternoon, a rough sea almost up to the esplanade. I walked a long time and then came in and did history for to-morrow.

[i.e. to prepare the children's lesson for the next day. She was then teaching them history.]

To F.B.

RED BARNS, December 1, 1889

. . . . The little girls and I went out before lunch. They came up into my room and I made them some Turkish coffee After lunch, they then disappeared. I expect to see them

again shortly. They had supper with me last night by which they were much amused. . . .

I have read Swinburne's Jonson which I will keep for you, it is quite excellent. I should very much like for a Christmas present Jonson's works edited by Gifford in 3 vols. not big ones I think. There are some of his masques I want to read. I don't think they are to be found anywhere else. . . .

The little girls think it is a great pity you are coming back so soon, because we are so comfortable. We shall be delighted to have you though, one's own society palls after a time.

We had a capital cooking lesson yesterday, made scones and gingerbread and boiled potatoes

To F.B.

LONDON, 1889.

About the little girls frocks Hunt would like to have one for Molly made of cambric matching the pattern of Elsa, 16d a yard 40 in. wide: the other two one for each little girl of nainsook which is a shade finer and will she says wash better, 13d. and 38 in. wide. There are two insertions, one at 6d. not very pretty, one at 10d. very pretty indeed.

Would you like to have Molly's cambric frock trimmed with the 6d. insertion and the two nainsook frocks with the 10d or would you prefer them to be all trimmed with the cheaper insertion? The cheap insertion is not at all bad and I think it would not look otherwise than well but there is no doubt that the other is nicer. However it is also 4d a yd. dearer. . . .

Mr. Grimston says that he cannot supply us with mutton for 9d a pound, it is so dear now. I have asked the other

butchers and find they are all selling it at 10d or 10+ a pound so I think it would be best to pay him 10d for legs and loins-what say you?

To F.B.

LONDON, February 12, 1890.

. . . .Met Lord ---- in Piccadilly who stopped and said Oh, how do you do? and then of course had nothing more to say. So I told him I was going to the Russells' where he said we should probably meet-and then we went our ways, It is so foolish to stop and talk in the street-one only does it out of surprise.

. . . . Miss Croudace gave me tickets for a soirée at the Old Water Colours this evening, but I have no one to take me so I can't go. . . .

To F.B.

RED BARNS, April 2nd, 1890.

I have just returned from Clarence where I found only a few mothers but some very agreeable ladies amongst them. I walked back with a very friendly lady-I wonder who she was. She lives in the New Cottages and only comes up to the other end of Clarence for the Mothers' Meeting and for confinements!

. . . . Elsa's cambric frock is quite charming. It fits her perfectly and is most becoming. I never saw her look so bewitching and so grown up too.

To F.B.

RED BARNS, April 17th, 1890.

. . . . I should like to go to the first drawing room if You could because I shall want some evening gowns and shall have none till I can use my court gown.

To F.B.

RED BARNS, April 18th, 1890.

I like the pattern you sent us very much, it is charming. I certainly think a green velvet train would be nicer than a black don't you? I am just going to Clarence so good-bye.

To F.B.

RED BARNS, Nov. 26, 1890.

. . . . The little girls and I had a peaceful evening together. They appeared about half past six and I read them selections from Stanley's letters by which they were much interested.

We looked out his route in the map. Molly was so enthusiastic that she carried the atlas and the Times up to the nurses and expounded it all to Lizzie. Elsa had great difficulty with her knitting. The stitches kept dropping in the most unaccountable way and had to be picked up from the very bottom of the cuff. 3 guinea pigs have been sold! the little girls have realised 2/6 by the transaction.

[Lizzie, first our nursery maid, then lady's maid, was Hunt's daughter. She was with us 38 years and is still in touch with us all.]

To F.B.

RED BARNS, 1890.

The children rode on donkeys this afternoon but it was not very successful for we refused the assistance of the donkey boy and consequently could not get the donkeys to move! We passed a ridiculous hour and finally left our beasts standing peacefully on the esplanade and came home. I don't think judging by their former activity that there was any fear of their escaping.

To F.B.

London, 1890.

This is just a little line to tell you how I am getting on. I had a very nice morning. Lizzie and I went out together and did some delightful shopping in Sloane Street and then walked up Piccadilly and up Bond Street and went on myself in a hansom to the National Gallery where I spent a peaceful hour.

To F.B.

LONDON, Feb. 8th, 1892.

All the sales are over I'm afraid. I went to Woollands this afternoon for the sashes, they had nothing approaching the colour, but I will find it somewhere. I am much interested about your gown, though as you rightly supposed a little sorry its black!. . . .

To-day Flora and I called on Sarah Lyttelton [now Hon. Mrs. John Bailey] and had a delightful long talk with her. I like her so much. . . I want some sashes which are either in a cardboard box or on the high shelf outside my bedroom door. If there are any ribbons I should like them too. . . .

I went to Audley Square where Henry James appeared.

To F.B.

LONDON, Feb. 14, 1892.

Horace came here about three on Saturday and we walked to Kensington Square, where I took him to call on Mrs. [J. R.] Green. It was pleasant and amusing. . . . Mrs. Green told me that Mr. York Powell had said to her-this is not a becoming story, and suited for the ears of one's immediate family only-that I was the only girl he had ever examined who knew how to use books or had read things

outside the prescribed course and that he thought I had got into the heart of my subject. What a little daring it takes to deceive his misguided sex!

To F.B.

LONDON, Feb. 16th, 1892.

. . . . I ordered the buttons today at Woollands. I hope they will prove satisfactory.

I regret to announce to you the death of my trumpeter, under which painful circumstances I'm bound to tell you that Lady Edward [Cavendish] has been very complimentary about me to Auntie Mary. She is pleased to approve of me.- We all dined at Devonshire House on Thursday.

The Lytteltons have invited me to a dance of theirs on the 25 th. I shall go if Lady Arthur will take me. I suppose I can ask her.

Feb. 18th. This afternoon I called on the Lushingtons.

[She was at this time staying in London with Lady Lascelles.]

To F.B.

LONDON, Feb. 20, 1892.

We dined at Devonshire House. There were there Lady Edward, William Egerton, Alfred Lyttelton and Victor Cavendish [now Duke of Devonshire] who came in from the House announcing that he must be back in 30 minutes but finally stayed till ten. Victor C. is tremendously interested in his politics, talks of nothing else; it is very nice to see, as genuine enthusiasm always is.

To F.B.

LONDON, Feb. 22nd, 1892.

. . . . Yesterday such an absurd thing happened. Auntie Mary had gone out; Florence and I were walking together; the boys alone here, hear a ring and a voice asking for Lady Lascelles, then for me, then angrily, "Well, it's a very odd thing for I was told particularly to come here this afternoon." Presently we came in and found Lord Stanley's card--now this was very odd for Lord Stanley does not know Aunt Mary--We wondered what could be the explanation until tea time when Auntie Maisie came she said "I hear Henry is giving you Persian lessons!" Then it appeared that Grisel Ogilvie to whom I had related my attempts to find a teacher of Persian had sent him--he is a good Persian scholar. Auntie Maisie had met him at Dover Street at lunch and he had told her he was coming here to teach me--and had asked if he would be likely to find us in. She had said "no" but he had come all the same. . . .

I had another offer of lessons on Saturday afternoon at Miss Green's from Mr. Strong. I feel I shall end by receiving special instruction from the Shah in person. . .

To F.B.

London, Feb. 26th, 1892.

I have been paying a visit to Maclagan this morning. Which I think was wise as I have been feeling tired and unenergetic lately. He gave me a tonic and told me to take care of myself and not do too much. . . .

It was pleasant at Mansfield Street. Mr. William Peel, Horace, Diana, Harold, Grisel, Mildred Hugh Smith. [Horace Marshall, Diana Russell, Harold Russell, Lady Grisel Ogilvie and Mildred Hugh Smith, now Countess Buxton, G.B.E.]

Uncle Lyulph presently went to sleep; Harold, Mildred and I had a long and amusing talk together which lasted all the evening. She is such a nice girl.

On Thursday I walked in the afternoon with Flora and went back with her to tea. . . .

The Stanley dance was extraordinarily successful. There were about 20 little girls and ten big ones and a few young men. We danced wildly with the children and the young men. At eight a kind of elaborate tea was provided for the children and for us a small dinner of soup and cutlets and so on. Uncle Lyulph was quite taken aback by the splendor of his party, "I knew we should have something to eat," he said, "but this gloat I certainly did not expect." He was so much pleased by the success of the evening that Auntie Maisie thinks he will let her give a real grown up ball. . . .

["Uncle Lyulph," then Lord Stanley of Alderley, afterwards Lord Sheffield. "Auntie Maisie," now Lady Sheffield.]

[During this year, there are very few letters to her family. I have inserted a few extracts from her letters to Flora Russell, recording some of her doings.]

To Flora Russell

REDCAR, Jan. 4, 1892

My DEAREST FLORA,

* * * *I had a long and delightful letter from Clara the other night, she is a person who charms and interests me immensely

[Clara Grant Duff, now Mrs. Huth Jackson].

To the same.

RED BARNES, Jan. 10, 1892.