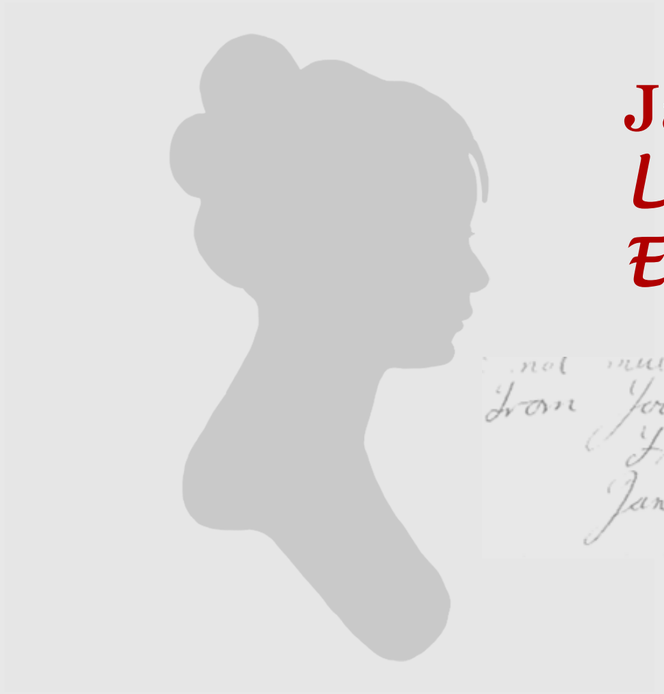


Janet
Letters from Egypt

Very keenest- pleasant girl -

Janet was born in 1903 in Lanarkshire. She had 4 siblings but sadly her mother died during childbirth when Janet was just 6 years old. A year later her father remarried a widow who had 4 children of her own and they had 3 more children together. The family lived in a 2 roomed house at the Allanton Colliery where Janet's father worked. Janet fell pregnant at the age of 21 and rather than tell her family she came to Edinburgh and found a job as a maid for an Egyptian family. Her employers discovered her condition and tried to get her maternity care at the Claremont Park Mother and Baby Home in Leith. Unable to accommodate her, Janet was referred to the NVA who supported her to have her baby in the poorhouse hospital at Craiglockhart. Janet's family who had been contacted by the NVA took her baby back to Lanarkshire. Janet herself returned to her position with the Faidi family who took her on an Egyptian adventure.

THE MATERNAL INSTINCT.

A NEW EDINBURGH HOME.

Dr Finlay, Assistant Medical Officer of Health, formally declared open yesterday afternoon the Edinburgh Home for Mothers and Infants at 17 Claremont Park, Leith. Earlier in the day a short dedicatory service was held in the room, which has been equipped as a chapel, the Rev. Dr W. Swan, South Leith Parish Church, and the Rev. Mr Thomson, of the Episcopal Church, taking part.

The Home was instituted to meet the urgent need for a place where unmarried mothers may be admitted, and to which they may return with their babies from the Maternity Hospital. Miss N. I. C. Johnston has been appointed Superintendent of the Home, which is undenominational, and where the mothers will be encouraged to stay a month or two before the baby's birth, and at least four months afterwards.

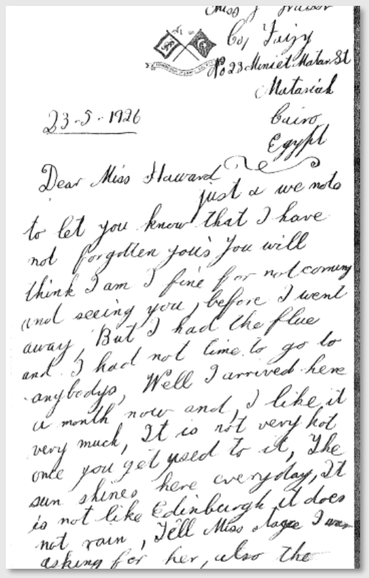
Dr Finlay, in performing the opening ceremony, quoted statistics to prove that infant mortality among illegitimate children was more than double that among legitimate children. The deaths occurred mostly at the age of from one to three months. This pointed, he said, to some bad influence in the nature of environment which was affecting the lives of these children. The object of this Home was to keep mother and child together, and to stimulate that maternal instinct, than which there was nothing more beautiful in the world.

Claremont Park Mother and Baby Home

The Edinburgh Home for Mothers and Infants was opened in 1924 to provide residential care for pregnant women of all ages.

"The Home was instituted to meet the urgent need for a place where unmarried mothers may be admitted, and to which they may return with their babies from the Maternity Hospital. Miss N. I. C. Johnston has been appointed Superintendent of the Home, which is un-denominational, and where the mothers will be encouraged to stay a month or two before the baby's birth and at least four months afterwards. The object of this Home was to keep mother and child together and to stimulate that maternal instinct than which there was nothing more beautiful in the world"

Edinburgh Evening News, 17 July 1924 [British Newspaper Archive]



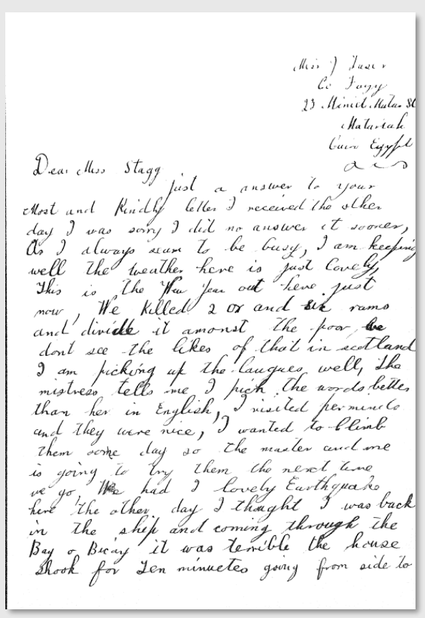
c/o Faizy
23 Manial Mataria St
Mataria
Cairo
Egypt

23-5-1926

Dear Miss Howard just a we note to let you know that I have not forgotten you's You will think I am a fine for not coming and seeing you before I went away, But I had the flue and I had not time to go to anybodys, Well I arrived here a month now and I like it very much, It is not very hot once you get used to it, The sun shines here every day, It is not like Edinburgh it does not rain, Tell Miss Sage I was asking for her, also the

"Well I arrived here a month now and I like it very much. It is not very hot once you get used to it,. The sun shines here every day it does not rain. I have been lucky to leave Edinburgh when the strike has just been awful, my mother and sister write and tell me all about it. I visited the Virgin Mary tree and it is just lovely. I have been to a lot of nice places here, the people here are different dressed than in Scotland, the ladies here cover their faces, the men wear Tarbushes it is comical. There is a lot of English people here, there is a British Club for boys and girls here so I am not so bad, I am so happy I don't care if I don't come back to Scotland. The Mistress and Master are very nice to me, you don't know how they treat me, you think I was their daughter instead of a maid. They take me walks and let me see all the nice things, I was at the zoo last week, it is a big one, bigger than Edinburgh's. I am going to the pyramids next week."*

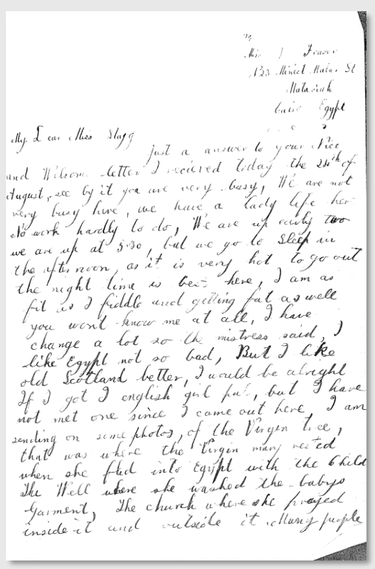
* Fez hat



Miss J Fraser
C/o Faizy
23 Manial Mataria St
Mataria
Cairo Egypt

Dear Miss Stagg just a answer to your most kind Kindly letter I received the other day I was sorry I did no answer it sooner, As I always seem to be busy, I am keeping well The weather here is just Lovely This is the New Year out here just now. We killed 2 or and six rams and divide it amongst the poor we don't see the likes of that in scotland I am picking up the Langues well, the mistress tells me I pick the words better than her in English, I visited pyramids and they were nice, I wanted to climb them some day so the master and me is going to try them the next time we go. We had a lovely Earthquake here the other day I thought I was back in the ship and coming through the Bay of Biscay it was terrible the house shook for ten minuetes going from side to

"I am keeping well the weather here is just lovely. This is the New Year out here just now. We killed 2 ox and six rams and divide it amongst the poor, we don't see the likes of that in Scotland. I am picking up the language well, the mistress tells me I pick the words better than her in English. I visited pyramids and they were nice, I wanted to climb them some day so the Master and me is going to try them the next time we go. We had a lovely earthquake here the other day I thought I was back in the ship and coming through the Bay of Biscay, it was terrible the house shook for ten minutes going from side to side, they kept us all in. I bet you I got a fright. The grapes are ready now, we have a lot in our garden I get as many as I like to eat."

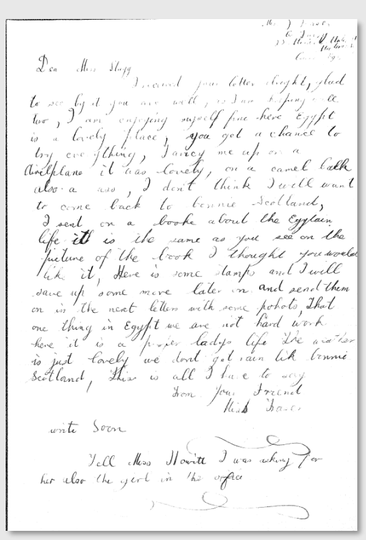


Miss J Fraser
133 Manial Mataria St
Mataria
Cairo Egypt

My Dear Miss Stagg just a answer to your Nice and welcom letter I received today the 28th of August, see by it you are very busy, We are not very busy here, we have a lady life here No work hardly to do, We are up early we are up at 5.30, but we go to sleep in the afternoon as it is very hot to go out the night time is best here, I am as fit as a fiddle and getting fat as well you wont know me at all, I have change a lot so the mistress said, I like Egypt not so bad, But I like old Scotland better, I would be alright If I got I english girl fat, but I have not met one since I came out here, I am sending on some photos of the Virgen Mary that was where the virgen mary rested when she fled into egypt with the Child Jesus Well where she washed the babys garment, The church where she prayed inside it and outside it many people

"We are not very busy here, we have a lady life here. No work hardly to do, we are up early, we are up at 5.30, but we go to sleep in the afternoon as it is very hot to go out, the night time is best here, I am as fit as a fiddle and getting fat as well, you won't know me at all."

"I am enjoying myself fine here, Egypt is a lovely place, you get a chance to try everything, fancy me up in an aeroplane, it was lovely, or a camel back also. I don't think I will want to come back to bonnie Scotland."



Miss J Fraser
133 Manial Mataria St
Mataria
Cairo Egypt

Dear Miss Stagg I received your letter, kindly, glad to see by it you are well, as I am very busy myself fine here Egypt is a lovely place, you get a chance to try everything, fancy me up in a Aeroplane it was lovely, or a camel back also a way, I don't think I will want to come back to bonnie Scotland, I send on a book about the Egyptian life it is the same as you see on the picture of the book I thought you would like it, Here is some stamps and I will save up some more later on and send them on in the next letter with some photos that one thing in Egypt we are not hard work here it is a proper lady life the waiter is just lovely we must get back to bonnie Scotland, That is all I have to say

from your Friend
Miss Fraser

write Soon

Well Miss Howitt I was asking for her also the girl in the office