

JOHN HENRY MUIRHEAD was born into an evangelical household on 28 April, 1855 at 4 Royal Crescent, Glasgow, the third of the four sons of John William Muirhead, a Hamilton Lawyer, and Mary Burns whose family members were mainly Presbyterian ministers. J. W. Muirhead died in 1857, but the family appears to have wanted for nothing, having two servants and able to afford one or two months at the coast each year, and the occasional trip to Germany to learn the language and broaden the mind. He was educated at Gilbertfield, a private school in Hamilton, to where the family had moved after the death of Muirhead's father. In 1866 they moved back to Glasgow and Muirhead was educated at the Academy. In 1870, at the age of fifteen, Muirhead entered Glasgow University. At Glasgow he was greatly influenced by the young Caird, at whose house Muirhead met T. H. Green for the first time in 1874. He graduated in 1875. Muirhead won a Snell Exhibition in philosophy and went on to study under Green, and R. L. Nettleship at Balliol. Among his contemporaries were D. G. Ritchie and W. P. Ker. It was while at Balliol Muirhead attended Bosanquet's lectures on Greek History, and that he first made the acquaintance of Arnold Toynbee, whom he subsequently came to know better at Toynbee Hall when Muirhead moved to London in 1885. Muirhead graduated from Oxford in 1879 and accepted a the job of Junior Assistant in Latin at Glasgow University. In 1885 he briefly flirted with the idea of becoming a Unitarian minister and studied at Manchester New College, London. During this time he was an active member of the London Ethical Society, which led to his involvement in the University Extension Scheme, in connection with which he came to know J. A. Hobson. Shortly afterwards he became lecturer in mental and moral science in the newly founded Royal Holloway College. Muirhead lived next door to Graham Wallace in Great Ormond Street and through him met the Fabians Shaw and Webb. Although sympathetic to Fabianism, even attending some of its meetings, Muirhead was distrustful of its emphasis upon efficiency and its lack of sensitivity to how individuals reacted to collectivist reforms. In other words, there had to be an intimate connection between environment and character. In 1897 Muirhead went to what was then Mason College in Birmingham, shortly to become the University, to the chair of Philosophy and Political Economy. He was anxious that the University become involved in alleviating the

social problems of Birmingham by means of co-operation with industry and medicine, and the production of reports on subjects such as carbon monoxide poisoning, and the prevention of industrial illnesses. He even visited factories to witness the conditions for himself. He was also heavily involved in the University Extension scheme, Workers' Education Association, and the work of establishing secondary schools in the Midlands under the provisions of the 1902 Education Act. He was a perfect exemplification of what Idealists meant by active citizenship. He was opposed to the Boer War and economic and social imperialism, and an exponent of international co-operation along the lines present by Kant in Perpetual Peace. Muirhead retired in 1921 and almost immediately gave two sets of lectures to inaugurate the newly established 'Muirhead Lectureship in Social Philosophy', following which he embarked upon an extensive lecture tour of the United States taking care to visit the areas of deprivation and meeting those people involved in experiments in social welfare. In 1923 he deputised for Professor Kemp Smith at Edinburgh, and in 1925 he accepted a one year appointment as Mills Professor, University of California Berkeley, but also lectured at Los Angeles, extending his stay to nearly three years. Muirhead wrote extensively during his retirement years.

Muirhead married Graham Wallace's sister, Mary Talbot, in London on 29 July, 1892. She died after a long illness in 1922. While in California Muirhead married a former student of his at Birmingham, Pauline Baillie. They returned to England in 1928. Shortly after the Second World War broke out, with Muirhead at the age of eighty-four, they took care of two refugee children from Austria and Germany.

He was the editor of the Library of Philosophy series, 1888-1940, and played a prominent role in The British Institute of Philosophy, and succeeded L. T. Hobhouse as Chairman of the Council in 1930. He was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1931. He died on 24 May 1940 at Rotherfield, Sussex.

Biography: Glasgow Herald, 30 May, 1940; C. G. Robertson, 'Muirhead, John Henry (1855-1940)', Dictionary of National Biography 1931-41; J. W. Harvey, 'J. H. Muirhead 1855-1940', Mind. ns., 50 (1941); C. G. Robertson and W. D. Ross, 'John Henry Muirhead

1855-1940', Proceedings of the British Academy, xxvi (1940); J. H. Muirhead, Reflections by a Journeyman in Philosophy (London, Allen and Unwin, 1942).

Principal Works: The Elements of Ethics (London, Murray, 1892); The Service of the State (London, Murray, 1908); By What Authority? Principles in the Reports of the Poor Law Commission (London, Lodge and King, 1909) German Philosophy in Relation to the War (London, Murray, 1915); The Platonic Tradition in Anglo-Saxon Philosophy (London, Allen and Unwin, 1931)