

GUIDE TO INDIA OFFICE RECORDS RELATING TO CENTRAL ASIA

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PREFACE

The purpose of this Guide is to provide information about the archival sources created as a result of British contacts and relations with Central Asia through the agency of the East India Company and subsequently the India Office. It deals primarily with official and private materials available in the India Office Records, which are housed at the British Library, London. It makes no attempt to cover all related archival sources in the India Office, for instance, vast quantity of proceedings, or sources in other repositories in the United Kingdom, or the extensive secondary works. The emphasis here is on the Departmental Records, especially those of the Political and Secret Department of the India Office.

The subject area of this guide refers to former Russian Turkestan and Chinese Turkestan comprising five former Russian and Soviet Republics namely: Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, and their immediate neighbour, Sinkiang, officially named as the Autonomous Region of Xinjiang of the People's Republic of China. The period covered by this guide is roughly from the early 19th century to the mid-20th century. Owing to the interaction between Turkestan and its neighbouring areas, it is inevitable that some other countries or regions in the vicinity may be included, for instance, Persia (Iran), Afghanistan or Tibet, although it is not the intention of this guide to cover all materials relating to those regions. There are guides available for those regions or areas other than Russia and Chinese Turkestan, e.g. *A brief guide to sources for the study of Afghanistan in the India Office Records*, by Lesley Hall (London, 1981); *A guide to source materials in the India Office Library and Records for the history of Tibet, Sikkim and Bhutan 1765-1950*, by A. K. J. Singh (London 1988); and *The records of the British Residency and Agencies in the Persian Gulf*, by Penelope Tuson (London, 1979).

In general, the forms of place or personal names most commonly found in the documents themselves are adopted. However, there are considerable problems in dealing consistently with documents which span over a hundred years of administrative history and include words derived from several languages and different transliteration systems. Strict adherence to a purist system has not always been practicable. On more obscure place names or tribal names I have simply adopted the version on the file.

INTRODUCTION

Pre-20th Century

For the first century and a half following the establishment of the East India Company in 1600, the presence of Britain in Asia was primarily commercial. From the late 18th century the motivation for British activity became much more complex. With the consolidation of Empire in India British interests became accordingly less concerned with the pursuit of trade per se and more concentrated on the establishment and maintenance of diplomatic and strategic links in the geopolitical area surrounding and including the subcontinent.

Throughout the 19th century, the security of India's Northwest and Northern boundary, trans-frontier trade and political intelligence on events beyond the border became a dominating factor in the making of British foreign policy. Long before the East India Company met with the problem of Russian threat to India, the Company had found itself compelled to raise an army to protect its stations against surrounding states that were hostile to the Company. The first Indian troops to be equipped to European standards were raised at Calcutta in 1757. By 1824 there were some 27 cavalry and 174 infantry regiments in the three Presidencies in addition to European artillery and infantry and British Army units. In 1804 the Company formed its Political Department of the Examiner's Office and in 1807, the Board of Control established a Secret and Political Department to monitor the Company's conduct in this field¹. The Political and Secret Departments were primarily concerned with the supervision of the British Indian Government's relations with neighbouring countries and with the Indian Princely States. They corresponded with similar Departments of the Indian Government which supervised the Company's diplomatic agents - 'Residents' as they were called - at the capitals of the princely states, emissaries on missions to Central Asia and elsewhere. In 1829, Lord Ellenborough², a member of the Duke of Wellington's Cabinet, issued orders for the routes by which an invader might enter India to be thoroughly explored and mapped so as to enable the Company's defence chiefs to decide where best the invader might be halted and destroyed. Hence, a number of young officers of the Indian Army were despatched to this region for the purpose and a series of reports including route maps as well as descriptions of the area were produced for the better understanding of the topography, ethnography, statistics and history of Central Asian countries and khanates³. From 1857 onwards, the external policy of the British government in India was directed mainly towards the stabilisation of Middle Eastern frontiers and to safeguarding the continued existence of Persia and Afghanistan as buffer states against the forces of Russian expansion.

There was no direct diplomatic or political representation of the British Government or of the Government of India in the khanates of Russian Turkestan until 1914, when an arrangement was agreed by the Russian Government for a member of the British Consular Staff at St Petersburg or Moscow to make periodical visits to Tashkent, subject to certain restrictions⁴. Nevertheless, a network

¹ See A study of the history and organisation of the Political and Secret Department of the East India Company, by M. Moir as part of his theses for UCL Diploma, 1966

² Lord Ellenborough, Political Diary, 1828-30. London, 1881

³ L/MIL/17/14/72

⁴ L/PS/10/247, file 4966/13 Memorandum from Sir Edward Grey, 25 December 1913.

of Government of India Residencies and Agencies established along the south-eastern outskirts of Russian Central Asia took on a political role which was directly related to the preservation of British fortunes in India. Periodical news reports from Russian Central Asia were channelled through Government of India to London by Residents stationed at Kashgar, Peshawar and Meshed, and occasionally by Residents at Chitral and Herat. Gilgit Political Agency was situated between the Northwest Frontier Province and Kashmir. It was technically part of Kashmir State. The Political agent was subordinated to the resident in Kashmir. Every two or three years there would arrive from Srinagar in Gilgit a colleague of the political Agent bound for Kashgar, where he was to be Consul General, or returning to Srinagar from Kashgar after leaving this post. From about 1890 the government in India maintained a consulate in Kashgar, on behalf of the British government.

In the countries surrounding India's frontiers there was little secret intelligence of a direct military kind to be acquired⁵. What the government needed to know was mainly political - which tribes might be plotting to overthrow some ruler and what might be the effect on the border tribes. From early 19th century, Indian 'Newswriters'⁶ who were traders living in the more important towns, had been appointed to send periodical letters to the Political Resident or Agent in the area telling what was going on. They were presumably paid by the Agent concerned from funds at his disposal. All these reports from the Northwest frontier were duly forwarded to the Government of India's Foreign Department and were printed in a Monthly Memorandum of Information regarding the course of affairs on the Northwest frontier. Besides the appointed news writers, Political Officers on the outposts regularly met Indian traders returning from trading expeditions. Political Officers on the Northwest frontier prided themselves on their rapport with tribal leaders, whether within or beyond the border, and as a rule, they were very well aware of political shifts and likely repercussions. In general, it could be said that every Political Officer ran a local information or intelligence service which Russians might call a spy network, but it tended to be a very informal and parochial affair.

From the 1860s onwards Memoranda were being prepared within the Political and Secret Department of the India Office - even if on a fairly ad hoc basis - as a means of providing the Permanent Under Secretary, the Secretary of State and the Council with background information on the diplomatic and political issues of the day. From the 1870s, it was the practice of the authors of memoranda to submit their own views on the subject of the papers at hand.

The 20th Century

In 1899, Lord Curzon was appointed Viceroy of India. Lord Curzon's external policy was mainly concerned with the Northwest Frontier tribes, Afghanistan, Persia and Tibet. Hitherto the Northwest Frontier districts had been subordinate to the lieutenant-governorship of the Punjab, and the Government of India could only indirectly control them⁷. But, as the British boundary line shifted further to the Northwest, most of the Punjab became as much subject to law and regulations as the

⁵ L/PS/10/247, p.145. Memorandum from Louis Mallet, "...to induce the Russian Government to consent to the appointment of a British Consul in Tashkent and the abolishment of the post of the Military Attaché at HM's Consul-General at Meshed. The supply of military information should form no part of the Consul's duties..." 13 July 1912

⁶ See F/4/1385, Arthur Connolly and his 'News writer'.

⁷ L/PS/18/A148-149, Lord Curzon's proposals regarding the administration of the Northwest Frontier Districts, 13 September 1900.

old settled provinces. In 1901, Lord Curzon included the trans-Indus districts of the Punjab in a new Northwest Frontier Province under a chief commissioner directly responsible to the government of India. Curzon's first moves in connection with the north-western frontier include his proposal of 1904's expedition to Tibet under Colonel F.E. Younghusband. His treatment of the Tibetan problem is open to criticism, but in the view of Lord Curzon and his supporters England could not afford to see Russia allied with the Tibetans and controlling their policy.

Towards the eve of the First World War issues such as the abolition of the slave trade and Russian Revolution linked Central Asia affairs much more closely with European politics. At the same time the development of the telegraph and railways meant that the communications between that part of the world and London were no longer as slow and difficult as they had been.

Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 had for the time settled all outstanding questions with Great Britain, and in the Great War Russia was a British ally. There was a period of crisis following the outbreak of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, when it looked as if many of the Russian Asiatic possessions would pass out of the control of Moscow; but by the end of the 1920s the Soviet Central government had re-established its authority. The Amir of Bukhara was overthrown and sought exile in India or elsewhere⁸. There was no independence for Russian Turkestan. The fall of the Central Asian khanates left Persia and Afghanistan the only barriers between the Soviet's dominions and India, and Bolshevism propaganda was assiduously employed to stir up trouble for the Indian government all along the Northwest Frontier⁹. During this period, many parts of Central Asia were rife with Pan-Islamic movements coinciding with nationalistic sentiments¹⁰. The Government of British India observed with keen interest towards the internal turmoil of Central Asian republics. Meanwhile, it remained in friendly terms with the rulers of Persia and Afghanistan and adhered to strict neutrality in the Afghan civil war of 1928-1929. The Chinese empire¹¹ has fared well in the age of Asian decolonisation, and particularly so following the victory of the Chinese communists in 1949. Regions which were traditionally regarded as protectorates have now been incorporated into the political structure of the People's Republic. British and American representatives remained in Kashgar and Urumchi¹², the capital of Xinjiang, until the mid-20th century.

⁸ See L/PS/10/950.

⁹ L/PS/10/836-7, and L/PS/12/2273-2277, Collection 10

¹⁰ See L/PS/11/171. For internal situation in Russian Central Asia during 1930s - 1948, see L/PS/12, coll. 32

¹¹ For Internal Situation in Sinkiang during 1930s -48, see L/PS/12, coll. 12

¹² L/PS/12/2334, Appointment of a British Representative at Urumchi. Nov 1942- Feb 1945

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INDIA OFFICE RECORDS

The India Office Records consists of the archives of the East India Company, 1600-1858, the Board of Control, 1784-1858, and the India Office, which in 1858 took over the functions of the Company and the Board and became the British Government department directly responsible for the administration of the Empire in India until Independence in 1947. There are also the records of the Burma Office, 1937-1948, and a number of British agencies overseas which were officially linked with one or other of the four main bodies.

East India Company and Board of Control, 1600-1858

The first East India Company was founded in 1600 by royal charter and was granted exclusive rights to trade across the Eastern hemisphere. The United East India Company emerged in 1709 from the union of the Old Company and the New Company, one of its former rival trading groups. Major alterations in the structure and functions of the Company's home government were effected in 1784 when William Pitt's India Act (24 Geo. III, s.2, c.25) established the Board of Control (alias the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India), appointed by the Crown and invested with the power to 'superintend, direct and control' the Company's civil and military government and the business connected with its Indian revenues. Under this arrangement, the directors of the Company continued to exercise their trading privileges, to appoint their own overseas officers and to correspond with their subordinate authorities in the Sub-continent and elsewhere, but their appointments of Governors and Commanders-in-Chief were subject to Crown approval and they were also obliged to send copies of incoming Indian letters to the Board for information and to submit outgoing despatches for the Board's approval and possible alteration before issue. The Board was further empowered to send its highly confidential instructions to India on matters of war, peace and diplomacy through the medium of the special Secret Committee of the Company's Court of Directors and also to call upon the Court of Directors to prepare and submit for approval despatches on any subjects connected with the civil or military government of their overseas territories.

The Act of 1858 (21 & 22 Vict., c.106) brought this process to a conclusion by making the Crown directly and fully responsible for the Government of India and transferring the remaining powers of the Company and the Board of Control to a Secretary of State assisted by a Council. (See next chapter on p.12, C: Council of India 1858- 1947)

India Office and Council of India, 1858-1947

The India Office as it existed between 1858 and 1947 may be conveniently divided into four main administrative components:

- Secretary of State
- Council of India, and (from 1937 re-organised as) Secretary of State's Advisers
- Under Secretaries
- Departments

The Council was constituted under the Act of 1858. Throughout the period from 1858 to 1937 the Secretary of State was authorised by statute to preside and vote at Council meetings with power to give a casting vote. The Act of 1858 (Section 26) allowed the Secretary of State to divide the Council into committees "for more convenient transaction of business", and to "direct what departments of business are to be under the Committees". The main function of the committees was to provide members of the Council with an opportunity to examine, discuss, and comment on the Secretary of State's proposals in some details before they were formally passed on to the Council as a whole. In its relations with the Secretary of State, the Council of India exercised a combination of advisory and controlling powers.

Military Department, c.1752-1920

A Military Department of the East India Company was created at Madras as early as 1752 to defend the British interests against French and other European rivals in India. A Commander-in-Chief was first appointed in 1774, which also gave the governor-general in Bengal ultimate military control over Madras and Bombay. Military Departments followed in Bengal and Bombay in the 1780s. The administrative responsibility for this vastly increased the Company's power exercised initially by the three Public Departments in India, which reported back to the Court of Directors in London through the Committee of Correspondence. It was not until 1809 that they had a counterpart at East India House.

The assumption of direct rule by the Crown in 1858 led to the disbanding of the Company's European regiments in India and the closure of the Military Seminary at home. In place of the Political and Military Committee of the Court of Directors, the Military Secretary now reported to the Military Committee of the Council of India (see previous chapter, C: Council of India, p.11) which discussed business before placing questions before the Secretary of State in Council. During the summer of 1867 the Military Department moved into the India Office building in Whitehall, at the same time acquiring responsibility for marine business from India.¹³

¹³ Anthony Farrington, *Guide to the Records of the India Office Military Department*. London 1982.

Political and Secret Department, 1804 - 1950

The Political Department of the Company's Examiner's Office was formed in 1804 and the Secret and Political Department of the Board of Control in 1807. Until the 1920s its staff consisted of a Departmental (Political) Secretary, one Assistant Secretary and between six and ten clerks, whose main task was to prepare draft replies to all letters from India and Home correspondence received in the department. The procedure for preparing replies to letters from India varied according to the importance of the subject involved, but generally the drafts were submitted to the Permanent Under Secretary (or directly to the Secretary of State) together with précis of, or extracts from, earlier correspondence, and any necessary memoranda on the subject. The drafts were then brought to the Secretary of State, referred if necessary to the Political Committee of the Council of India, returned to the department through the Permanent Under Secretary, submitted to the Council for final approval, and at last returned to the department for the preparation of the final despatch. Home correspondence was dealt with in a similar but often more summary way.

Many of the subjects and areas relating to external relations and frontier affairs as well as Indian internal affairs were dealt with in both the Secret and the Political Departments, although originally, under the East India Company, the Secret Department and Political Department served different functions. The Secret Department was reserved for any highly important and sensitive correspondence involving war and peace and diplomacy, whereas the Political Department handled more routine questions involving relations with the Indian States and foreign governments. Under the India Office, however, with the unification of most of India under British rule or suzerainty, the distinction between Secret and Political tended to become territorial, with the Secret Department being employed for external and frontier policy, and the Political Department mainly dealing with the Indian Princely States and related matters. After 1875 these distinctions no longer apply since from that year Secret and Political documents were filed together in the same volumes.

Up to 1930 the Political Department of the India Office, under a single Secretary, dealt with both the foreign policy of the Government of India and with the affairs of the Indian States. It was therefore decided in April 1930 that the business of the Political Department should be divided between two new Departments, each with its own Secretary, on the lines of the clear-cut division of interests that already existed. The Political (Internal) Department was to take over all work dealing with the Indian States, and also to handle questions relating to Honours; the Political (External) Department was to deal with foreign affairs, including frontier matters.

In 1941 the Political (Internal) Department was amalgamated with the Public and Judicial Department (which dealt with British India) to become the Political Department and the Political (External) department was re-named the External Department.

Even after the Transfer of Power in 1947 the External Department continued to exist although as a Department of the Commonwealth Relations Office instead of the India Office, until 6 April 1948 when it was merged with the Political Department. Until 1950, however, it retained a separate registry, the Political (External) Registry¹⁴.

¹⁴ See IOR: L/S&G/8/548: Services and General Department Establishment File EST 1055: External Department Staffing arrangements from 1946; dissolution of External Department 1948

DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF INDIA OFFICE RECORDS RELATING TO CENTRAL ASIA

C COUNCIL OF INDIA (c.1858-1937)

The Council of India and the Secretary of State's Advisers played an important part in the formation of India Office policy. The Minutes of these two bodies form a continuous series running from 1858 to 1947. Class 'C' also includes other records connected with the Council's activities, notably an important collection of printed memoranda prepared by Members, India Office officials and others to elucidate particular aspects of Indian administration, foreign relations and other matters. The series C/137-142 includes Memoranda and Papers laid before the Council of India from 1874 to 1879 relating to Central Asia.

F/4 BOARD'S COLLECTIONS 1796 - 1858

The Board collections consist of copies of correspondence, minutes, resolutions, etc., cited in, or enclosed with, letters from Indian governments and certain other Company administrations overseas. Most of this material includes extracts from the India Proceedings relating to particular subjects. All the documents are arranged according to the numbers and dates of the Court's responses to draft Despatches. Relevant selections can be identified in the online catalogue using the following locations as search terms: Central Asia, Persia, Afghanistan, Tibet, Nepal, Chinese Tartary and Bukhara.

H HOME MISCELLANEOUS SERIES c. 1600-1880

A plan to collect and arrange unsorted documents belonging to the home administration of the India Office began in 1884. In fact, only the first forty-seven volumes of this series are more or less confined to home affairs. Thereafter the scheme widened to include documents dealing with, or originating in, the settlements in the East, and soon it became the depository of every document for which a suitable place could not be found elsewhere. The title, however, remained unchanged. The series covers a wide span of time and contents ranging from the Factory Series and the East Indies series of the early 17th century, the Wellesley Papers of the early 19th century, 'Unrecorded Papers' of the Board of Control, sundry volumes received from the Political Department during the 19th century, to papers presented to the India Office by various individuals at different stages. Documents dealing with Central Asia problems are scarce but by no means less important than other series.

For a detailed analysis see Samuel Charles Hill Catalogue of the Home Miscellaneous Series (London, 1927).

Guide to India Office Records relating to Central Asia

H/474 (4) pp.19-24

Intelligence from Mirza Salih Beg at Candahar on affairs of Kabul, Herat, Persia and Bukhara. 1800-01

H/475 (3) pp.5-8, 25-7, 191

Letter from A Ramsay (Judge and Magistrate at Surat) to Duncan, regarding intelligence relative to Bukhara, and Herat. 1800-01

H/479(19) pp.pp.373-5

Letter from Aka Mahomed Hosaine (Merchant at Ispahan) to Mehdy Ali Khan, concerning rupture between Persia and Russia. 8 May 1804

H/737(10) pp.507-44

Sketch of the history of Georgia during the last ten years to elucidate the rise and progress of the Russian connection with that country Charles Pasley, Political Agent, Abushahr. c.1805

H/737 (12) pp.645-53

Capt. Monier Williams (Surveyor-General) to John Malcolm, Geographical information relative to the countries between Persia and India. 13 Apr 1808

H/512(1-2) pp.1-170

Notes relative to the Mission to Kabul under Mountstuart Elphinstone. 1808-09

H/736(2) pp.199-211

(Original letter) From John Adam to Sir John Malcolm, concerning the Persian Mission. 1809

H/657(8) pp.269-72, 331-8, 437-41, 413-5

Drafts of Treaties proposed by Elphinstone; Treaty with the King of Kabul concluded by Elphinstone. 17 Jun 1809

H/659 (4) pp.305-542 (see also MSS EUR E91-2, D128-9)

Guide to India Office Records relating to Central Asia

Memoir of the climate, soil, products and husbandry of Afghanistan and the neighbouring countries
Lt Francis Irvine. [c.1810?]

H/645 (3) pp.39-146 (see also Prints & Drawings chapter, WD350)

William Moorcroft (Superintendent of the Stud at Poosa,) to John Adam with information as to routes to Khatmandu and alternative route to Nepal. Oct 1814

H/646 (8) pp.37-8, 623-7, 635-9

Letter from William Moorcroft to John Adam. Nov 1814

H/664 (24) pp.303-25

William Moorcroft (Superintendent of the Stud at Poosa) to G Swinton, concerning anarchy in Afghanistan. 28 Sept 1824

H/797(1) pp.1-214

Semi-official letters from Sir W H Macnaghten (Envoy to Kabul), Sir Alexander Burnes (21st Bo N I), Col Pottinger (Resident at Hyderabad), etc. 1839-41

H/798 (1) pp.1-338

Semi-official letters from Sir W H Macnaghten (Envoy to Kabul), Sir Alexander Burnes (21st Bo N I), Col Pottinger (Resident at Hyderabad), etc. to Lord Auckland. 1839-41

H/546(1) pp.1-221

Letter book of Maj-Gen Sir Willoughby Cotton, commanding at Kabul. 1840-41

H/550(13) pp.375-409

Release of Persian Prisoners, Russian opinion of the Anglo-Persian Treaty. 1857

H/552 (12) pp.195-201

Copy of letter from Lord Clarendon (Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs) relative to conclusion of Peace with Persia. 1857

H/552 pp.233-54

Russian troops on the Persian Frontier and the Persian Treaty. 1857

H/552(13) pp.203-9

Lord Wodehouse to Earl of Clarendon, Petersburg, Russian views on the Peace with Persia. March 1857

H/551(5) pp.775

Rates for telegraphic messages in Persia and Russia. 1864

H/796 (3) pp.13-30

General Sir Arthur Thomas Cotton to Caird on Afghan War, 1878 6 Apr, 28 Sept 1878

L/MIL MILITARY DEPARTMENT (C. 1819-1920)

The Military Department records, reflecting the whole spectrum of military policy and administration, originated in the activities of a number of different offices and committees, viz.:

- The Military Department at East India House (1808-58)
- Several Court of Directors Committees concerned with military matters, e.g. the Military Seminary Committee (1808-34), and the Political and Military Committee (1834-58)
- The Military Department of the Board of Control (1807-58) and the India Office Military Department (1858-1947)
- Addiscombe Military Seminary (1809-61), responsible for the general and technical education of the Company's officer cadets.

Besides a few papers in Compilations and Miscellaneous (L/MIL/5), there is a small section in the Military Department Library (L/MIL/17/14) dedicated to Afghanistan, Central Asia and Tibet.

For a comprehensive listing and description of all the Military records see Anthony Farrington, *Guide to the records of the India Office Military Department* (London, 1982).

L/MIL/5 Compilations and Miscellaneous

L/MIL/5/378 (32)

Copy proceedings and correspondence on the mission of William Moorcroft, Bengal Stud Superintendent, to Central Asia to purchase horses, 1819

L/MIL/5/810

Draft War Office appreciation of the Central Asian Bolshevik problem, Jan 1920

L/MIL/7 Military Collections

L/MIL/7/5675-82 Collection 129

Afghan Campaign 1878/80: honour and rewards 1879-95

L/MIL/7/5683-88 Collection 129A

Afghan Campaign 1878/80: medals etc. 1879-82

L/MIL/7/9268-69 Collection 207

Afghan War 1878/80: Kabul papers 1879-80

L/MIL/17 Military Department Library

Both the Military Department and the Political and Secret Department built up working reference collections (see also L/PS/20). The collection was broadly arranged according to subject or geographical divisions.

L/MIL/17/14 is specifically designated to Afghanistan, Central Asia and Tibet.

L/PS POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPARTMENT 1804-1950

On the affairs of areas outside India the East India Company Court of Directors and later the Board of Control and the India Office corresponded with the Government of India mainly through their Secret and Political Committees and Departments. Most of the pre-India Office records contained in L/PS class originated either in the activities of the Secret Committee (1784-1858), or in the work of the Secret and Political Department of the Board of Control (1784-1858) and the Political Department of the Company's Examiner's Office (1804-58). For the period of the India Office proper (1858-1947), L/PS is mainly made up of archives from the Political and Secret Department (1858-1930), and the Political Department (1931-47).

In the India Office Record the Political and Secret records are now arranged in twenty different series.

The following series are of particular importance to Central Asian studies:

L/PS/3	Home Correspondence, 1807-1911
L/PS/5	Secret correspondence with India, 1756-1874
L/PS/7	Political and Secret Correspondence with India, 1875-1911
L/PS/10	Subject Files, 1902-31
L/PS/11	Annual Files, 1912-30
L/PS/12	External Files and Collections, 1931-50
L/PS/18	Memoranda, 1840-1947
L/PS/20	Departmental Library, 1800-1947

L/PS/3 Home Correspondence, 1807-1911

The Secret Correspondence was filed separately from the Political Correspondence before 1875, but after that date the two streams are combined in the same volumes. In the pre-1858 series, the series mainly consist of material derived from the activities of the Board of Control while very little of the Company's correspondence is extant.

L/PS/3/5-93 Secret Home Correspondence, 1839-74

Letters from agents in India or outside India to home departments, including letters to Foreign Office, Colonial office and War Office. Enclosures not included.

The following list is incomplete. The content of each volume can be found from Content page in L/PS/3/5-32 or Index page in L/PS/3/33-93.

L/PS/3/5 p.583

p. 583, Letter from Shah Shooja, King of Afghanistan, to HM Queen Victoria. 19 Sep 1839

pp.753-762, Letter from the British Ambassador at St Petersburg to the Secretary of State, re: Russian expedition to Khiva and Bokhara under General Peroffsky. 30 Nov 1839

L/PS/3/28

p.233, Proposed British mission to Khiva. 26 July 1849

p.253, Proposed mission to Khiva. 31 July 1849

p.267, Interview with Count Nesselrode, Russian Foreign Minister, on general policy. 6 Aug 1849

p.275, Herat affair. 6 Aug 1849

p.283, Caspian Sea: appointment of British Agent at Asterabad. 6 Aug 1849

p.311, Rejection of the Board of Control against the proposed mission to Khiva.

p.435, Death of Col Stoddart and Cpt. Conolly. (Cover letter only. Without enclosure.) 22 Dec 1849

p.849, Death of Col Stoddart and Cpt. Conolly. (Cover letter only.) 31 Dec 1849

L/PS/3/188-471 Political and Secret Home Correspondence, 1875-1911

The contents of some of the records in the post 1875 series may duplicate those in the L/PS/7 series. The principal files relating to Central Asia within this series are L/PS/3/333-471.

L/PS/5 Secret Correspondence with India, 1756-1874

The series consists of copies of secret correspondence kept by the Secret Committee, Board of Control and the India Office. Enclosures to the correspondence are not usually included.

L/PS/5/20-65 Secret letters from Bengal and India, 1778-1859

For registers and indexes, see Z/L/PS/4/1-10, Z/L/PS/5/1-2

L/PS/5/259 -277 Secret letters and enclosures from India, 1866-1874

L/PS/7 Political and Secret Correspondence with India, 1875-1911

This series consists mostly of long series of Political and Secret letters received and sent, diaries and news abstracts from Political residents or agents, and monthly memoranda concerning affairs beyond the Frontiers. The main problem is that, until the introduction of the subject file in the early twentieth century, the Department's correspondence was generally bound purely in chronological sequence so that for the earlier period Central Asia material will need to be selected from a mass of otherwise irrelevant correspondence on different subjects.

The following sections contain significant amounts of Central Asia material:

L/PS/7/2-253 Letters Received and Sent

L/PS/7/18-253 Monthly Memoranda of Trans-Frontier Information

L/PS/7/66-74 Affairs in Chinese Turkestan and on the Pamirs (Kashgar Diaries)

L/PS/7/75-253 Kashgar Diaries and News abstracts

L/PS/7/19-209 Peshawar Diaries and Newsletters

L/PS/7/153-253 Meshed Diaries and Military Intelligence

L/PS/10 Political and Secret Subject Files, 1902 - 1931

A subject file system was introduced in the Political Department in 1902 although the Home Correspondence (L/PS/3) and Correspondence with India (L/PS/7) series were still maintained concurrently until 1911. This series consists of individually bound files and easily located files containing reasonably comprehensive collections of documents on particular subjects covering a period of years. From 1902 to 1911, the series supplements Political and Secret Home Correspondence and Correspondence with India (L/PS/3 and 7). From 1912 it supplements the Annual Files listed under L/PS/11. An important file might contain a letter received from the Government of India along with its enclosure, Minutes by the head of the appropriate India Office Department, a draft of the proposed despatch, and a fair copy of the communication which was finally issued.

For registers and indexes see Z/L/PS/7 and Z/L/PS/11.

L/PS/10/16 File 253/1904

Russian Central Asia: travellers. 1904 - 1910

L/PS/10/54 File 2342/1904

Railways: Central Asia; Orenburg-Tashkent Railway; Siberia- Tashkent Railway. 1904 - 1907

L/PS/10/55 File 2359/1904 Pt 1

Chinese Turkestan: Kashgar Consulate [1904 - 1910]. 1904 - 1908

L/PS/10/55 File 2359/1904 Pt 2

Chinese Turkestan: travellers, Lt Eckford; Lt Radclyffe; German expedition to Turfan; Japanese visitors. 1904 - 1909

L/PS/10/241 File 895-6/1912

China: revolution; the situation at Kashgar 1912

L/PS/10/247 File 947/1912

Russia: Russian consular representation in India; British consular representation in Central Asia. 1909 - 1917

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L/PS/10/297 File 3537/1912

Chinese Turkestan: Treaty of St Petersburg 1881; payment of import and export duties by British subjects in Chinese Turkestan. 1910 - 1924

L/PS/10/330 File 124/1913 Pt 1

Chinese Turkestan: affairs at Kashgar 1913

L/PS/10/330 File 124/1913 Pt 2

Chinese Turkestan: registration of British subjects. 1910 - 1915

L/PS/10/453 File 2450/1914

Chinese Turkestan: Kashgar Consulate General appointments of Lt Col Roger Lloyd Kennion, Lt Col Percy Molesworth Sykes, Sir George Macartney, Maj P T Etherton, Mr Clarmont Percival Skrine, Lt Col R Alfred Lyall. 1914 - 1925

L/PS/10/520 File 4529/1914

The War: German agents in China: Pt 1: 1914-16; Pt 2: 1917-19

L/PS/10/654-5 File 691/1917 Pt 1-2

China: attitude towards the German war. 1917-1918

L/PS/10/721 File 4377/1917 Pt 1

The War: proposed mission to Russian Turkestan. 1917 - 1921

L/PS/10/722 File 4377/1917 Pt 2

The War: mission to Kashgar; Lt Col Frederick Marshman Bailey's and Consul Treadwell's arrest by the Bolsheviks; arrest of three Bolsheviks at Meshed. 1918 - 1921

L/PS/10/722 File 4377/1917 Pt 3

The War: mission to Kashgar; Lt Col Frederick Marshman Bailey. 1918 - 1921

L/PS/10/741 File 1735/1918

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Central Asia: correspondence 1917 - 1920

L/PS/10/825 File 2273/1919

Kashgar: monthly diaries. 1912 - 1920

L/PS/10/836 File 2995/1919 Pt 1

Bolshevik activities in Central Asia, Afghanistan and Persia. 1918 - 1920

L/PS/10/837 File 2995/1919 Pt 3

Bolshevik activities in Central Asia, Afghanistan and Persia; anti-Russian movement. 1922 - 1924

L/PS/10/886-7 File 1229/1920 Pt 1-2

Russia: Bolshevik menace to India; anti-Bolshevik measures; Special Bureau of Information reports. 1920

L/PS/10/912 File 5261/1920

Pt 1: Russia: Relations of British Government with Soviet Government; question of intrigue in Afghanistan; Pt 2: Russo-Afghan treaty. 1920-22

L/PS/10/949 File 8512/1920

Chinese Turkestan: status and rights of British subjects. 1920 - 1927

L/PS/10/950 File 8926/1920 Pt 1

Central Asia: Bukharan affairs; overthrow of Amir; appeal of ex-Amir for assistance; ex-Amir's desire to visit India. 1920 - 1929

L/PS/10/950 File 8926/1920 Pt 2

Central Asia: refugees from Bukhara; mission of Abdul Hamid; requests of Bukharan ex-officials to enter India. 1923 - 1929

L/PS/10/950 File 8926/1920 Pt 3

Bukhara: ex-Amir's claim to Rs 16 lakhs in deposit in a bank in India. 1921 - 1925

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L/PS/10/976 File 1743/1921 Kashgar Diaries. 1921 - 1930

L/PS/10/1018 File 5157/1921

Chinese Turkestan: travellers. 1921 - 1929

L/PS/10/1032 File 408/1922

Travellers: Central Asia; Karakoram Mountains; Mr P C Visser and party; Sr Giotto Dainelli. 1922 - 1932

L/PS/10/1108 File 865/1924 Pt 1

Anglo-Russian relations 1923 - 1927; Anglo-Soviet conference and treaty. 1923 - 1927

L/PS/10/1108 File 865/1924 Pt 2

Anglo-Russian relations: Anglo-Soviet Conference 1924; minutes of the meeting. 1924

L/PS/10/1108 File 865/1924 Pt 3

Anglo-Russian relations: anti-British propaganda. 1923 - 1924

L/PS/10/1192 File 3939/1926 Pt 2

Publications: revision of Aitchison's Treaties; Bhutan, Kashgar, Nepal, Siam and Tibet sections. 1928 - 1933

L/PS/10/1217 File 3077/1927 Pts 1 - 4

Pt 1: Chinese Turkestan: travellers, 1927 – 1930; Pt 2: Chinese Turkestan: travellers; Signora Toeplitz and Professor Capra, 1929; Pt 3: Chinese Turkestan: travellers; Mr and Mrs A E Waters, 1929 – 1931; Pt 4: Chinese Turkestan: travellers; Prof Dr A Dirr, 1930.

L/PS/10/1218 File 3077/1927 Pt 5

Chinese Turkestan: travellers; Sir Aurel Stein. 1930 - 1933

L/PS/11 Political and Secret Annual Files, 1912 - 1930

Essentially this series forms the continuation of the Home and India correspondence series (L/PS/3 and 7) which came to an end in 1911, although particularly full files of papers on special subjects were still bound as separate volumes (L/PS/10). From 1912, this series supplements the Annual Files listed in L/PS/11.

The indexes and registers for this series can be found in Z/L&P/7/38-73.

L/PS/11/2-309

Most of the relevant files in this series have the following geographical identifiers in their titles: Central Asia, Chinese Turkestan, Russia in Asia, Russian Turkestan, Afghanistan, Bukhara, China or Kashgar.

L/PS/12 Political (External) Files and Collections, c.1931 – 1950

From about 1931, the series of subject files (L/PS/10) and annual files (L/PS/11) are succeeded by two different series: Internal (L/PS/13), which deals with internal Indian and Indian States subjects only and so is not included here, and External L/PS/12 series, which deals with areas outside India. The External files and collections are arranged by broad geographical or subject divisions and hence, like the subject files in L/PS/10, are easily accessible. The principal collections are as follows:

Collection 10 Central Asia

Collection 12 Chinese Turkestan

Collection 32 Russia

Collection 46 Routes

L/PS/18 Political and Secret Memoranda, c. 1840 - 1947

From around the mid-19th century Memoranda were being prepared within the Political and Secret Department - even if on a fairly ad hoc basis - as a means of providing the Permanent Under Secretary, the Secretary of State and the Council with background information on the diplomatic and political issues of the day. For the historian the memoranda present neat and convenient précis of the more important political and diplomatic questions which came before the India Office between 1858 and 1947. They complement the Foreign Office Confidential Print series in that they not only record individual officials' opinions on individual topics but also summarise the background papers on those same topics.

They were usually printed and were roughly numbered and arranged in four sections according to subject or area: A-D.

The relevant entries can be found in 'A (Afghanistan, North-West Frontier, North Frontier, Chitral etc.)' and 'C (Central Asia)' Memoranda.

N.B.: Before the introduction of the modern subject file system into the Political Department in 1902 the 'file' copies of memoranda are often found with either Home Correspondence (L/PS/3) or Correspondence with India (L/PS/5-7). After 1902 copies of memoranda are often found on their related subject file (L/PS/10) or (1912 onwards) annual file (L/PS/11), and from 1930 with either External or Internal collections (L/PS/12-13).

L/PS/20 Political and Secret Department Library, c.1800-1947

The library of the Political and Secret Department, like that of the Military Department (L/MIL/17), built up a fairly large and varied collection of confidential prints, official publications and commercially published works. The entries are selected from the following broad groups:

L/PS/20 / "A" Books: Subdivided by geographical areas.

L/PS/20/RUS: *Michell's Russian abstracts, 1869 - 1883

L/PS/20/FO: Foreign Office Prints

L/PS/20/MEMO: Bound copies of memoranda kept by officials of the Department.

*During the 1860s the India Office employed John and Robert Michell to translate articles printed in Russian newspapers and periodicals. Not until 1876 was it recommended that their translations be circulated to the Foreign Office and to the Government of India.

L/PS/20 "A" books

L/PS/20/A7 Affairs in Persia, Central Asia, etc., 1826-57. 3 Vols.

L/PS/20/A7/1 Volume I: Papers relative to the war between Persia and Russia, 1826-28; correspondence relating to Persia and Afghanistan [1834- 1839]. Printed solely for the use of the Cabinet [? 1839]

L/PS/20/A7/2 Volume II: Further papers respecting the detention of Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Stoddart and Captain Arthur Conolly at Bukhara [1844-1845]; Report by Consul Keith Edward Abbott of his journey to the coast of the Caspian Sea, 1847, 1848

L/PS/20/A27 Report of a mission to Chinese Turkestan and Badakhshan in 1885-86. By Ney Elias, Political Agent on Special Duty Calcutta: [Govt. of India Foreign Dept.], 1886

L/PS/20/A56 Routes from Russian territory in Central Asia towards Afghanistan and India. Section 1. The Pamir line of advance. By Lt William Robert Robertson, Intelligence Branch. Simla: Intelligence Branch, Quarter Master General's Dept. India, 1893

L/PS/20/A56 Part I. Short military report on the Fergana Province, Kashgar, the Pamirs, and upper Oxus Afghan Provinces, being the country traversed by the routes in Part II

L/PS/20/A56 Part II. Routes leading from the Chimkent-Kuldja postal road to the Hindu Kush between the Dorah and the Karakorum Passes

L/PS/20/A96 The Central Asian railways in Russian Turkestan. By D A O (Bombay, 22nd October 1906). Simla: Intelligence Branch, Division of Chief of Staff, 1907

L/PS/20/A98 Notes on the road from Kashgar to Aris (Tashkent Railway) via the Turgat Pass, Narin, Tokmak, Pishpek and Chimkent. By George Macartney, His Britannic Majesty's Consul, Kashgar, June and July 1908. Simla: Intelligence Branch, Division of Chief of Staff, 1909

L/PS/20/A100 Secret collection of geographical, topographical and statistical material concerning Asia. Vol LXXIX. Eastern Bukhara. A military and geographical description. By Lt-Col Snyesaref, Russian General Staff. Translated in Intelligence Branch, Division of Chief of Staff. 1906. Simla: Intelligence Branch, Division of Chief of Staff, 1909

L/PS/20/A102 Routes in Russian Central Asia, Section III. The Herat line of advance. Simla: intelligence Branch, Division of Chief of Staff, 1909

L/PS/20/A106 Road report: Kuldja to Kabulsai. Simla: General Staff India, 1911

L/PS/20/A107/1 Military report on Russian Turkestan or Central Asia Simla: General Staff India, 1911; Additions and corrections to Military report on Russian Turkestan, 1912, [1913]

L/PS/20/A108 Military report on Kashgaria. Simla: Intelligence Branch, Division of Chief of Staff, 1907 v, 199, xix pp

L/PS/20/A110 Route from the Karakoram Pass to Kashgar via Yarkand. By Maj G P T Feilding, Coldstream Guards. July-August 1907. Simla: [Intelligence Branch, Division of Chief of Staff] 1908

L/PS/20/A114 The Amur and Maritime ("Pri-Amur" and "Primorski") Provinces in the Russian Far East and the Amur Railway, Flotilla and Mercantile Fleet. Simla: Intelligence Branch, Division of Chief of Staff, 1909

L/PS/20/A115 Route from Mun-ul Post (Mun-ul-Dal): 2 stages from Kashgar to Osh. By Maj G P T Feilding, Coldstream Guards. September 1907. Simla: [Intelligence Branch, Division of Chief of Staff], 1908

L/PS/20/A116 Table of distances in Russia, Central Asia, and India. By Lt [G A K] Wisely, RE, under the direction of Col [A S] Cameron [London: Intelligence Branch, War Office, 1885]

L/PS/20/A117/1 Military report on Russian Turkestan. Simla: General Staff India, 1914

L/PS/20/A117/2 Military report on Soviet Turkestan. Simla: General Staff India, 1929

L/PS/20/A118/1 Routes in Sinkiang. Simla: General Staff India, 1926

L/PS/20/A118/2 Military report on Sinkiang (Chinese Turkestan). Simla: General Staff India, 1929

L/PS/20/A118/3 Corrections to routes in Sinkiang, 1926. Simla: General Staff India, 1927

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L/PS/20/A118/4 Corrections to routes in Sinkiang, 1926. Simla: General Staff India, 2nd series, 1929

L/PS/20/A119 Photographs taken by Lt-Col Sir Percy Molesworth Sykes to illustrate Chinese Turkestan, the Russian Pamirs and Osh. April - November, 1915. 48 photos

L/PS/20/A122 Who's Who in Central Asia. Simla: General Staff India, 1929

L/PS/20/A123/1 Routes in Russian Central Asia, Part I. Trans-Caspia and Khiva. Simla: General Staff India, 1922

L/PS/20/A123/2 Routes in Russian Central Asia, Part II. Samarkand and Bukhara excluding Karategin, Darwaz, Roshan and Shignan. 1923. Simla: General Staff India, 1924

L/PS/20/A123/3 Routes in Russian Central Asia, Part III. Fergana, Semirechia, Samarkand. 1923. Delhi: General Staff India, 1924

L/PS/20/RUS Michell's Russian Abstracts

L/PS/20/RUS1 Michell's Russian abstracts and memoirs 1869, 1872 - 1874.

Also includes: Memorandum on the country of the Turcomans, giving an account of the Russian occupation of the East Coast of the Caspian. Reprinted, corrected and amplified. Secret and Political Dept., India Office, 3 March 1873.

L/PS/20/RUS2 Michell's Russian abstracts and memoirs 1875 -1877.

Also includes: Epitome of correspondence relating to Merv, with historical and geographical accounts of the place, and itineraries. Reprint with corrections and additions. India Office, 16 June 1875; Translations of extracts from Journal de St Petersburg, March 1876. [? By Charles Grey]

L/PS/20/RUS3 Michell's Russian abstracts (marked 'Robert Michell's Copy') 1878.

Also includes: The ancient course of the Amu-Daria. (Translation from a German pamphlet by Professor R Lenz of the St Petersburg 'Academie Imperiale des Sciences' [by Charles Grey]). Undated.

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L/PS/20/RUS4 Michell's Russian abstracts 1879 - 1880

Also includes: The ancient course of the Amu-Daria. (Translation from a German pamphlet by Professor R Lenz of the St Petersburg 'Academie Imperiale des Sciences' [by Charles Grey]). Undated; Captain Kuropatkin's itineraries of routes in Kashgaria [1876]. Nos I-II

L/PS/20/RUS5 Michell's Russian abstracts, 1881

Also includes: The Turcomans. By Maj-Gen Nicholas Petrusevitch. (From Journal of Caucasus branch of Imperial Russian Geographical Society, vol XI, no I, 1880).

L/PS/20/RUS6 Copy of L/PS/20RUS5

L/PS/20/RUS7 Michell's Russian abstracts 1882-1883

Also includes: The Turcomans. By Maj-Gen Nicholas Petrusevitch. (From Journal of Caucasus branch of Imperial Russian Geographical Society, vol XI, no I, 1880); The Russians in Akhal. India Office, March 1882; Between Tashkent and Kabul. (From Dr Yavorski's 'Russian Mission to Kabul' in the year 1878).

L/PS/20/RUS8 Michell's Russian abstracts 1882-1883 [Copies of abstracts in L/PS/20/RUS7]

Also includes: Central Asia. No 1 (1883). Despatches from Her Majesty's Ambassador at St Petersburg forwarding translations of the published reports of [P M] Lessar's journeys in Central Asia. Parliamentary Paper C.3586. London, 1883.

L/PS/20/FO Foreign Office Prints

L/PS/20/FO67 Further correspondence respecting the affairs of Central Asia

Part I: July to December 1899, Confidential (7367). Aug 1900

Part II: 1900 Confidential, (7511). Apr 1901

Part III: 1901 Confidential, (7741). Jun 1902

Part IV: 1902 Confidential, (8280). Nov 1904

Part V: 1903 Confidential, (8263). Sep 1904

L/PS/20/FO68 Further correspondence respecting Central Asia

Part VI: 1904 Confidential, (8434). May 1905

Part VII: 1905 Confidential, (8696). May 1906

Part VIII: 1906 Confidential, (8056). May 1907

Part IX: 1907 Confidential, (9322). Sep 1908

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Part IX [*sic*]: 1908 Confidential, (9494). Jul 1909
(*Most likely Part X but incorrectly numbered*)

Part XI: 1909 Confidential, (9629). Mar 1910

L/PS/20/FO69 Further correspondence respecting the affairs of Central Asia

Part XII: 1910 Confidential, (9925). Oct 1911

Part XIII: 1911 Confidential, (10061). Jun 1912

L/PS/20/FO70 Correspondence respecting Russia and Central Asia. [In continuation of "Affairs of Russia" (Part XXII) and "Central Asia" (Part XIII)]

Part I: 1912 Confidential, (10295). Sep 1913

Part II: 1913 Confidential, (10417). Apr 1914

L/PS/20/MEMO

L/PS/20/MEMO21 Title on spine: "Memoranda on the Central Asian question &c. 1868-1875" ["A W Moore" written on inside front cover. Vol begins with manuscript list of contents and is paginated]. Also includes: Copies of L/PS/18/C4, 5, 13, 66, 67, 83

L/PS/20/MEMO22 Title on spine: "Central Asia. Various memoranda." ["Edmund Need" stamped on fly leaf. Vol begins with printed table of contents numbered A-X, and map]. Includes:

- Memorandum on the Central Asian question H C Rawlinson, 22 May 1874;
- Copies of L/PS/18/C4, 5, 8, 9, 13, 17, 20, 23, 25, 40, 45, 47, 51, 78, 79, 115, 116;
- Report by Ronald Thomson on the Turkoman tribes occupying districts between the Caspian and the Oxus, dated Tehran, 29 Feb 1876, and memorandum by Mission Agent, Asterabad, on the Yemut (Yomut) Turkoman tribes on the Gurgan and Atrak rivers, 23 Apr 1876. Foreign Office (2908) (amended copy), May 1877; [Extract from Rawlinson, *England and Russia in the East* (London, 2nd ed., 1875, pp 318-201);
- Translations of letters published in *The Moscow Gazette*, 25 and 28 October (6 and 9 Nov) 1878, under the initials "N W" and describing the Turcoman country from Krasnovodsk to Kizil Arvat. Translated by R Michell. Undated

V/4 PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS, 1801-1907

A selection of parliamentary papers are included here to highlight the important role played by the British Government on the policy making of the East India Company and subsequently the India Office. The following entries are selected from the Annual lists and general index of the Parliamentary Papers relating to the East Indies published during the years 1801 to 1907 inclusive - Parliamentary Papers (House of Commons) , 1909 LXIV 89

The series also includes some papers of the House of Lords. The papers of the House of Commons are indicated by reference as such: year, session or volume number, page number, and a document number. Those of the House of Lords are indicated by a V/4 reference number, with original parliamentary numbers in square brackets.

House of Commons:

1839 Vol.40, p.317 C.171

Persia and Afghanistan: Correspondence, 1834-39.

1859 Session I, Vol.4, p.1 198

Colonisation and settlement in India and the extension of commerce in Central Asia: Report from the Select Committee, with Minutes of Evidence, Appendix and Index.

1859 Session II, Vol.25, p.7 1

Kabul and Afghanistan: Sir Alexander Burnes' Mission, 1837-38

1864 Vol.42, p.397 64

Report on trade with Central Asia

1868-69 Vol.46, p.481 384

Eastern Turkestan: despatches and memoranda sent to the Government of India since 1866, as to the trade of India with Eastern Turkestan, or the countries between it and the Punjab

1873 Vol.75, p.693 C699

Correspondence with Russia (1872-73) regarding boundaries of Afghanistan

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1873 Vol.75, p.693 C.704

Correspondence regarding Central Asia, 1869-73

1878-79 Vol.77, p.63 C.2209

Correspondence regarding Russian Mission to Kabul, etc.

1881 Vol.98, p.399 C.3032

Correspondence, 28 March to 31 October 1881, regarding annexation of Tekke Turkoman country by Russia

1883 Vol.82, p.57 C.3586

Despatches from British Ambassador at St Petersburg forwarding translations of the published Reports of P M Lessar's Journeys in Central Asia

House of Lords:

V/4/49 (1884-85) [Vol.12, p.81] [115]

Circular Despatch (1864) addressed by Prince Gortchakow to Russian representatives abroad, regarding position of Russia in Central Asia

MSS EUR PRIVATE PAPERS, 1600 - 1947

This is a separate group of documents within the India Office holdings. It comprises collections of private letters, diaries, memoirs, or other historical material relating to South Asia and neighbouring territories and in particular to the British connection with the Indian Sub-continent. The accumulation of private papers started in 1801 when the Directors of the East India Company decided to establish a library for the safe custody of books and manuscripts placed in their care by their servants in India and other individuals. In 1975, the collections of private papers were incorporated with the India Office Records in view of the fact that, like the Records, the private papers are principally documentary material which forms intrinsic part of the primary sources of historical research.

The following is a summary list of the collections relevant to Central Asia, compiled in approximate chronological order.

List of Private Papers collections

MSS EUR A3-5, B4-10, C9-10, D26, E49-50

Erskine Collection: papers collected by William Erskine (1773- 1852), legal office holder, Bombay from 1804, Master in Equity, Recorder's Court 1820-23; Secretary and later Vice- President of the Bombay Literary Society 1805-23; Orientalist; chiefly relating to the history, geography, customs and antiquities of the peoples of India and Central Asia. 21 volumes. 1804-41

MSS EUR E91-92, D128-9

Memoirs on the Climate, Soil, Products and Husbandry of Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries by Lt (later Capt.) Francis Irvine (1786-1855), Bengal Army 1805-22, mostly incorporated into Elphinstone's 'Account of the Kingdom of Caubul' (London, 1815); also list of nine memoirs by various hands on Afghanistan, Persia, etc. relating to Elphinstone's embassy to Kabul 1808 and Sir John Malcolm's mission to Persia 1810. 4 volumes 1808-1810

MSS EUR F22

Translation from the Persian, made c.1850, of reports made by Mughal Beg to his employer Lt (later Lt-Col), Francis Wilford (c1761-1822) in 1790 on a series of journeys made in the preceding years in the Punjab, North West India, Afghanistan and Central Asia. (cf. Wilford's references to Mughal Beg in Asiatic Researches, vol. XIV), 1 volume. 1780-1790

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MSS EUR A20-1, B50-1, C39-45, E5, E113, F35-41, G27-31, D236- 69

Moorcroft Collection: journals, correspondence and notes of William Moorcroft (1765?-1825), veterinary surgeon in the Bengal Army and superintendent of the Company's stud in Bengal 1808-25, apparently employed as a secret agent, chiefly relating to his journey to Bukhara 1820-25 and describing the Himalayan regions through which he passed. 51 volumes. 1812-1825

MSS EUR B198

Letter, dated 8 October 1838, from Henry George Grey, Viscount Howick, later 3rd Earl Grey (1802 - 94), Secretary at War 1835 - 39, to Lord John Russell (1792 - 1878), Home Secretary 1835 - 39, criticising Government policy towards Afghanistan, Persia, and more particularly Russia. 7 folios. 1838

MSS EUR B380

Private letters from Richard Southwell Bourke, 6th Earl of Mayo (1822 - 72), as Viceroy of India 1869-72, to the 8th Duke of Argyll (1823 - 1900), Secretary of State for India 1868-74, commenting on official matters and enclosing copies of official papers (indexed). 5 volumes. 1869 - 1870

MSS EUR C162

Typescript account, incorporating extracts from his diaries, by Lt-Col Frederick Marshman Bailey (1882 - 1967), Indian Army 1900, Indian Political Service 1905 - 38, of his experiences in Chinese Turkestan and Russian Central Asia, and of his escape to Turkestan and Russian Central Asia, and of his escape to Meshed, while on a secret mission for the Indian Government. 1 volume. 1918 - 1920

MSS EUR C178

British Policy on the Roof of the World 1865 - 95, with special reference to the Anglo-Russian agreement of 1895, by Garry John Alder (Ph.D. thesis, University of Bristol, 1959), later published as 'British India's Northern Frontier, 1865 - 95' (London 1963). 1 volume. 1865 - 1895

MSS EUR C256

Theses supervised by Dr Cuthbert Collin Davies (1896 - 1974), as Lecturer in Indian History at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London University 1926 - 36, and Reader in Indian History, Oxford University 1936 - 63; with three others acquired by him. 20 volumes. 1926 - 1967

MSS EUR C313

Sinclair Collection: Papers and photographs of Maj Ronald Sinclair (alias Reginald Teague Jones), (1889 - 1988), Frontier Constabulary 1914 - 17, Indian Army Reserve Officer 1917 - 22, British Consul, New York 1941 - 53; relating to the policing of the North-West Frontier, the British Mission to Central Asia 1917 - 22, and his extensive travels throughout India, Central and East Asia, the Middle East, Africa and West Indies 1926 - 40. 98 items. 1903 - 1980

MSS EUR C651

Letter, dated 3 July 1885, from Field Marshal Sir Frederick Sleigh Roberts, 1st Earl Roberts of Kandahar (1832 - 1914), Commander-in-camp, Madras 1881 - 85, Commander-in-camp, India 1885 - 93, discussing the Russian threat to Afghanistan and the northern frontier of India. 4 folios. 1885

MSS EUR D271-278

Papers of William Hook Morley (1815-60), barrister, librarian (Kaye Nos.403-15) to the Royal Asiatic Society 1859-60, chiefly written between the ages of 15 and 25, comprising notes on oriental studies of all kinds relating to the Near and Middle East, Central Asia, India and the far East; translations from Persian manuscripts; and miscellaneous papers. 13 volumes. 1830-1840

MSS EUR D658

Papers of Lt-Col Frederick Marshman Bailey (1882-1967), Indian Army 1900, Indian Political Service 1905-38, concerning his mission to Tashkent in 1918, and the part played in it by Sir George Macartney (1867-1945), Indian Foreign Dept. 1888-1920, Consul-General at Kashgar 1910-18. 1 portfolio. 1918 - 1940

MSS EUR D951

Burne Collections: correspondence and papers of Maj-Gen Sir Owen Tudor Burne (1837-1909), British Army 1866, Private Secretary to Viceroy 1869-72 and 1876-78, Secretary, Political and Secret Dept., India Office 1874-76 and 1878-80, Member of Council of India 1887-96. 32 items. 1858-1907

MSS EUR D942

'A Journey through Soviet Russia in March-April 1918 - Petrograd to Persia': memoir by Maj T S W Jarvis (born 1890), British Army 1914-20, describing his journey, in disguise, to Baku Commissars, and copy of report, dated 1918, on future relations with the Bolsheviks. 1 portfolio. 1918

MSS EUR E264

Chelmsford Collection: papers of Frederic John Napier Thesiger, 1st Viscount Chelmsford (1862-1933), as Viceroy of India 1916-21. 94 volumes. 1916-1921

MSS EUR E420

Barrow Collection: Official, semi-official and private papers, correspondence and diaries of General Sir Edmund George Barrow (1852-1934), Indian Army 1877-1919, Military Secretary, India Office 1914-17, Member, Council of India 1917-24, including material relating to the Kitchener-Curzon controversy 1905, and the Mesopotamia Commission 1916-17. 45 items. 1877-1930

MSS EUR F88

Elphinstone Collection (2): papers, correspondence and journals of Mountstuart Elphinstone (1779-1859), Bengal Civil Service from 1795, including papers as Envoy to Afghanistan 1808-09, Resident at Poona 1810-17, Commissioner for territories annexed to Bombay 1817-19, Governor of Bombay 1819-27. 103 boxes. 1790-1859

MSS EUR F111-112

Curzon Collection: correspondence and papers of George Nathaniel Curzon, Marquess Curzon of Kedleston (1859-1925), Parliamentary Under-Secretary, India Office 1891-92 and Foreign Office 1895-98; Viceroy of India 1899-1905; Lord Privy Seal 1915-16; Lord President of the Council and member of War Cabinet 1916-19; Foreign Secretary 1919-24; and papers of his family c1842-1968. 1464 items. 1866-1925

MSS EUR F114

Napier Collection: correspondence and papers of Robert Cornelis Napier, Field Marshal 1st Baron Napier of Magdala (1810-90), Bengal Engineers 1826; Military Member, Governor-General's Council 1861-65; Commander-in-camp, Bombay 1865-68; commanded Abyssinian Expedition 1867-68; Commander-in-camp, India 1870-76; Governor of Gibraltar 1876-82. 68 volumes, 7 portfolios, 10 boxes. 1794-1910

MSS EUR F123

Hamilton Collections: papers of Lord George Francis Hamilton (1845-1927) as Secretary of State for India 1895-1903, including correspondence with the Viceroy, the governors of Madras and Bombay, and others. [See also MSS EUR C125; D508-510]. 140 items. 1895-1903

MSS EUR F126

Pelly Collection: correspondence and papers of Lt-Gen Sir Lewis Pelly (1825-1892), Bombay Army 1840; Indian Political Dept. 1851; held political posts in Persia and Zanzibar 1859-62; Political Resident, Persian Gulf 1862-73; Agent to Governor- General and Chief Commissioner, Rajputana 1873-78; Resident and Special Commissioner, Baroda 1874-75. 112 items. 1842-1883

MSS EUR F131

Keyes Collection: Letters and papers of Brig-Gen Sir Terence Humphrey Keyes (1877-1939), Indian Army 1897-1932, Indian Political Service 1903-33, relating to his services in Iran 1904- 6, Makran (Baluchistan) 1912-17, with the British Military Mission, South Russia 1917-20, and as Resident, Hyderabad 1930-33; biography, dated 1988, by his son Michael; with family correspondence and a diary by his daughter. 46 items. 1897-1953

MSS EUR F132

Lyll Collection: correspondence and papers of Sir Alfred Comyn Lyall (1835-1911), Bengal Civil Service 1856-87; Foreign Secretary, Government of India 1878-81; Lieutenant- Governor of North-Western Provinces 1882-87; Member, Council of India 1888-1903; and of Sir James Broadwood Lyall (1838-1915), Indian Civil Service, Punjab 1858-92; Lieutenant- Governor of Punjab, 1887-92. 173 items. 1842-1911

MSS EUR F140

Amherst Collection: correspondence and papers of William Pitt Amherst, 1st Earl Amherst (1773-1857), Minister to Sicily 1809-11, Ambassador to China 1816-17, Governor-General of Bengal 1823-28, and of other members of his family, comprising official and semi-official correspondence and papers, pamphlets, maps and private and family correspondence, papers and diaries. 234 items. 1789-1835

MSS EUR F154

Skrine Collection: private and official correspondence, papers and diaries of Sir Clarmont Skrine (1888-1974), Indian Civil Service 1912, Indian Political Service 1915-48, including material relating to Iran, Baluchistan and Kashgar; also sketches and watercolours by Lady Skrine, chiefly of Persian costume and humorous illustrations of Indian Civil Service social functions. 55 items. 1912-1954

MSS EUR F157

Bailey Collection: correspondence, papers, diaries, photographs and maps of Lt-Col Frederick Marshman Bailey (1882-1967), Indian Army 1900, Indian Political Service 1905-38, and of his wife Irma (nee Cozens-Hardy); of his parents Lt-Col Frederick Bailey, Royal Engineers 1859, Indian Forest Dept. 1871-92, and Florence Bailey (nee Marshman); and of his grandparents John Clark Marshman (1794-1877) and Alice Marshman, missionaries. 597 items; plus photographs. 1827-1976

MSS EUR F171

Werge Thomas Collection: papers of Brig-Gen John Nicholson (1821-57), Bengal Army 1839-57, and other members of his family; of General Sir James Abbott (1807-96), Bengal Artillery 1823, Deputy Commissioner, Hazara 1847-53; of their biographer Evelyn Maude Werge Thomas (1891-1975); and of other members of the Thomas family, including Geoffrey David Ivor Thomas (1905-74), Indian Civil Service, Burma 1905-74. 155 items. 1833-1972

MSS EUR F197

Younghusband Collection: Papers of Lt-Col Sir Francis Edward Younghusband (1863-1942), British Army 1882, Indian Foreign Dept. 1889-1909, British Commissioner to Tibet 1903-4, religious thinker; his wife Helen Augusta (nee Magniac) (1861-1945); his daughter Dame Eileen Louise Younghusband (1902-81); and other members of their families. 680 items. 1836-1981

MSS EUR F203

Caroe Collection: papers of Sir Olaf Kirkpatrick Caroe (1892- 1981), Indian Civil Service 1920, Indian Political Service 1923-47, including a few papers relating to his Governorship of the North-West Frontier Province 1946-47; but chiefly reflecting his literary and other interests in retirement, and including unpublished autobiographical writings. 119 items. 1946-1981

MSS EUR F213

Broughton Collection: Papers and correspondence of John Cam Hobhouse, Baron Broughton (1786-1869), as President of the Board of Control 1835-41 and 1846-52. 65 items. 1827-1852

MSS EUR F224

Maynard Collection: correspondence, diaries, memoirs, literary writings and other papers of Sir Herbert John Maynard (1865- 1943), including material relating to his visit to Russia 1895-96. 79 items. 1880-1944

MSS EUR F228

Kirkpatrick Collection: Papers and correspondence of Maj- Gen William Kirkpatrick (1754-1812), Bengal Army 1773, and Lt-Col James Achilles Kirkpatrick (1764-1805), Madras Army 1780, chiefly as successive Residents at Hyderabad 1793-97 and 1797-1805, but also including papers relating to Mysore, the Marathas, and Nepal; also some papers of Maj-Gen Sir John Malcolm including material on Afghanistan, c.1800. 96 items. 1782-1811

MSS EUR J631-57

Masson Collection: papers of Charles Masson (1800-53), (pseudonym of James Lewis), Bengal Artillery 1822, deserted 1827, traveller, Agent to the Government of India at Kabul 1834-36, comprising correspondence, journals and narratives and other topographical, historical and numismatic papers, notes, sketch maps and drawings relating to Afghanistan, Punjab, Sind Baluchistan and Persia. 29 volumes. 1828-1853

MSS EUR IOR NEG 4233-

Papers of George Douglas Campbell, 8th Duke of Argyll (1823-1900) as Secretary of State for India. 5 Reels. 1868-1874

MSS EUR Mack Gen

Mackenzie General and Miscellaneous Collections: translations and miscellaneous papers chiefly relating to south and central India collected throughout his career by Col Colin Mackenzie (c1753-1821), Madras Army 1783-1821, engineer, surveyor, and antiquarian collector; also material relating to Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Tibet, the Sikhs, the East India Company and the Madras Engineers.. 179 items. [s.d.] -1821

MSS EUR Ph/Eur37

Memoir of General Sir Edward Francis Chapman (1840-1926), British Army 1858, Military Secretary to the Command-in- Chief, India 1881-85; Quartermaster-General, India 1885-89, compiled in 1938 by his widow formerly Georgiana Charlotte Clive Bayley. 1 volume (photocopies). 1840-1926

PRINTS AND DRAWINGS C.1600-1950

The Prints and Drawings collection consists of various types of material from different sources. Several published catalogues are available, including Mildred Archer, *British drawings in the India Office Library*, London HMSO, 1969. For the purpose of this guide, the material relating to Russian Turkestan, Chinese Turkestan, Russo-Afghan Frontier, and North-West Frontier of India has been listed, with catalogue numbers and short descriptions in approximate chronological order.

WD: British drawings

British drawings of Central Asia and vicinity area made by various British or European travellers, missionaries, officers, topographic surveyors etc. The numbering of drawings are mostly prefixed by WD. Some of the drawings are listed in the European Manuscripts thus have the prefix of MSS. EUR. Separate drawings are mounted individually and arranged according to numbers and size. Bound volumes or albums are given separate numbers which in turn are subdivided by folio numbers (e.g. WD152/ff1-26)

WD350

Drawing by Hyder Young (1782-1840) on Moorcroft's expedition to Tibet to trace the sources of the Sutlej and Indus. Moorcroft and Hearsey on the road to Lake Mansarowar (Tibet). [See also H/645(3), H/646(8)]. Watercolour; 14 x 20.5". July 1812

MSS EUR G29

Six sheets of rough drawings by William Moorcroft, (1765- 1825), and George Trebeck. Moorcroft went to India in 1808 as Veterinary Surgeon to the Bengal Army and Inspector of Military Studs. Ostensibly looking for horses for breeding purposes, he travelled in the Himalayas and Central Asia. In 1811 to 1812 he traced the sources of the Sutlej and Indus. In 1819 to 1825 with Trebeck, he proceeded to Bukhara via Lahore, Ladakh, Leh, Kashmir and Kabul. Both travellers were killed on the return journey. ff.5a and 7 signed: G Trebeck. [Various sizes]. [See also H664 (24)]. c. 1820-23

WD2392-2407

Sixteen drawings by James Atkinson (1780-1852) depicting the march of the Army of the Indus from Sind to Kabul in Afghanistan via Quetta and Kandahar. NOTE: These drawings are part of the original set of twenty-four water- colours from which lithographs were made by L. and C. Haghe for J. Atkinson, *Sketches in Afghanistan* (London, 1842). Water-colour; 9.5 x 14.5". 1839-40

WD13

Portrait of Mohan Lal by John George Paul Fischer (1786- 1875). Note: Mohan Lal (?-1870) accompanied Alexander Burnes and Dr Gerard on their expedition to Persia, 1832. His diary, 'Journal of a Tour through the Punjab, Afghanistan, Khorasan, and part of Persia', was published in English in London in 1834 and again in 1846. Water-Colour; 14 x 11". 1846

WD1344

Drawing by an unknown artist found amongst Sir Herbert Benjamin Edwardes's papers. (Sir Herbert Benjamin Edwardes, 1819-1868, Bengal Infantry.) Full-length portrait of Shahzada Sultan Muhammad, envoy from Kokan. Water-colour; 8.25 x 5". c. 1855

WD542/1-6

Six drawings by George W. Hayward, (1839-1870): five of landscapes in Kashmir and one in Bihar. BIBLIOGRAPHY: G.W. Hayward, 'Journey from Leh, to Yarkand and Kashgar, and exploration of the sources of the Yarkand river'. Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, XL, 1870, 33-166, and Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, XLI, 1871, 1-46. - Major T.G. Montgomerie, 'A Havildar's journey through Chitral to Faizabad in 1870', Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, XLII, 1872, 180-201. Water-colour; 23 x 19.5" 1868-1869

WD2040

Drawing by Sir Edward Francis Chapman (1840-1926) of Camp at Tirrit in the Shayok Valley, during Sir Douglas Forsyth's Mission to Yarkand. Water-Colour; 8 x 12". 2 October 1873

WD1353

Drawing by John G. Day (1854-1931) during the Afghan War of 1878-1880. A view of the Khyber Pass road looking North West. Pen and ink and pencil; 8.25 x 12". 23 August 1880.

WD1354

Drawing by John G. Day (1854-1931). View of the junction of the Kabul River with the Indus at Attock (Punjab) showing the snows in the distance. Pen and ink and water-colour; 8.25 x 14" 1880.

WD467-471

Five Drawings by Sir Edward Law Durand (1845-1920). Scenes of the Oxus River and Kilif Castle (Bukhara) from Russia and Afghanistan. Wash; various sizes. 1886

WD F837

Portrait of Arthur Conolly (1807-c.1842) by James Atkinson (1780-1852). Oil on canvas, 35x30 cm. c.1838-39

MSS EUR F154/54

Thirty-four loose drawings with humorous sketches, views and character studies including Kashgari women in traditional dress. By Doris Forbes Skrine (fl.1920s), wife of Sir Clarmont Percival Skrine, ICS 1912-48. (See also Photo 920/1-5). Of mixed media; various sizes c.1920s

Photographs

The photograph collection in the Prints and Drawing section is not only interesting as authentic historical and topographical documentation, but also provide examples of early photography from aesthetic point of view. Serial numbers have been given to each album or collection of photographs and sub-numbers to each item, followed by a Print number in brackets. e.g. Photo 430/4(5).

Photos 355/1 (96-112) are by Edward Francis Chapman (see WD2040, and MSS EUR Photo Eur37) and feature the Yarkand Mission

Photos 430/4(5-15) are by an unknown photographer and feature Bukhara and Samarkand.

Photos 364/4-6 are by Lawrence John Lumley Dundas, the Second Marquess of Zetland (1876-1961) feature Chinese Turkestan, Samarkand and Bukhara.

Photo 851/2 (66-68) by an unknown photographer feature Samarkand and Bukhara

L/PS/7/232 Reg.No.1500 (27p; ill.) Report by Major Percy Molesworth Sykes on a tour to Bujnurd, the Gurgan Valley, Astrabad, Shahrud, Sabzawar and Nishapur of Persia; with photographs. 7 Oct 1909

L/PS/20/A119 Photographs taken by Lt-Col Sir P M Sykes to illustrate Chinese Turkestan, the Russian Pamirs and Ogh. April - November 1915

MSS EUR F157/486 Photographs taken by Lt-Col Frederick Marshman Bailey (1882-1967): Kashgar and Bukhara [at end]. 1919-21

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MSS EUR F157/489 Photographs by F M Bailey: Turkestan expedition. Kashgar, Bukhara, Persia [Includes some photographs taken by a Russian, A. Krijoff.] 1918-20

MSS EUR F157/824 Scenes of Turkestan and pictures of F M Bailey in various disguises including a picture of a friend from Shustur. 1918-20

Photo 743/8 (187 - 387) by Frank Ludlow: Views in Chinese Turkestan 1928

Photo 920/1-5 by Clarmont Percival Skrine: Views in Chinese Turkestan, 1924?

APPENDIX

List of British Consul-General and Vice-Consul at Kashgar from 1890:

- 1890-1891 Sir Francis Younghusband
- 1891-1918 George Macartney [In charge of Chinese Turkistan Mission Jul 1891-Jul 1892; Special Assistant to Resident in Kashmir for Chinese affairs in Kashgar Oct 1892-Mar 1893; Special Assistant to Resident in Kashmir Apr 1893-1908; Consul-General at Kashgar 1908-1918.]
During periods of absence the following individuals deputized for him:
- 1908 Allan Robert Betham Shuttleworth
- 1914 Roger Lloyd Kennion
- 1915 Percy Molesworth Sykes
- 1918-1922 Colonel Percy Thomas Etherton, Consul-General
1918-1922 Nicholas Fitzmaurice, Vice-Consul
- May-Jul 1922 Nicholas Fitzmaurice, Consul-General
- 1922-1924 Clarmont Percival Skrine, Consul-General
Aug 1922-Jul 1923 Harold Ivan Harding, Vice-Consul
- 1924-1925 Colonel Robert Adolphus Lyall, Consul-General
- 1925-1927 Sir George Van Baerle Gillan, Consul-General
- 1927-1930 Frederick Williamson, Consul-General
1927-1930 George Sherriff, Vice-Consul
- 1930-1931 George Sherriff, Consul-General
- 1931-1933 Nicholas Fitzmaurice, Consul-General
1931-1933 Ralph Ponsonby Watts, Vice-Consul
- 1933-1936 Lt-Col. John William Thomson-Glover, Consul-General
1932-1934 Benjamin Ormsby Burge, Vice-Consul
[1934-1935 Sir Michael Cavenagh Gillett, Vice-Consul *]
1934-1936 Henry Arthur Northey Barlow, Vice-Consul
- 1936-1938 Kenneth Chalmers Packman, Consul-General
1938-1939 Michael Cavenagh Gillett, Vice-Consul
- 1938-1940 Major Harry Hall Johnson, Consul-General
- 1940-1942 Eric Earle Shipton, Consul-General
1940-1941 Dr. Antony John Selvey, Medical Officer & Acting Vice-Consul

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1942-1945 Sir Michael Cavenagh Gillett, Consul-General
1945-1946, Dr. Thomas P Binns, Consul-General
1945-1946 (Raymond) Gordon Antony Etherington-Smith, Consul-General
1946-1948 Eric Earle Shipton, Consul-General
1946-1948 Dr. Allen Mersh, Medical Officer & Acting Vice-Consul
1948 Dr. Allen Mersh, Acting Consul-General

* Michael Cavenagh Gillett is listed as Vice-Consul 1934-1935 in some secondary sources, but no official record of this appointment has been found within primary sources.

Sources:

- India Office Registers
- IOR/L/PS/12/2335, 2345, 2350