



Guide to the Collection of papers and manuscripts relating to British Colonial India, 1737-1947

This collection guide was produced in **2010**.

This PDF version was created on **April 3, 2026**.

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Summary

Collection Title:

Collection of papers and manuscripts relating to British Colonial India, 1737-1947

Abstract:

This assembled collection of 47 documents, largely manuscript letters, covers nearly the entire span of British rule in India and is arranged in rough chronological order. The collection includes governmental reports, personal correspondence, and a printed map. Most of the documents are quite short though there are a few longer pieces and collections including a plan for opium sales, a series of reports on Indo-American trade, and a long letter on army discipline prior to the Vellore Revolution.

Extent:

0.5 Linear Feet

47 Items

Language:

Material in English

Collection ID:

RL.00611

Permalink:

<https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/m13p7r>

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Collection of papers and manuscripts relating to British Colonial India, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University

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Background

Scope and Content

Miscellaneous items relating to the history of India, especially during the period of British rule, including a manuscript (12 pp.), 1798, by John Baird discussing a plan for increasing the opium trade in India; letters, 1799-1800, from Sir James Henry Craig, commander of a British division in Bengal, concerning the military

situation in India; letters, 1801-1802, from John Chamier, chief secretary to the Madras government, pertaining to his desire for a seat on the Madras Council and future reforms; manuscripts, 1796-1805, discussing various aspects of the import and export trade between India and America, recording statistics and noting products involved; a map, 1820, of portions of Nagpur and Rewa provinces; and a letter, 1849, from Tomas Boaz requesting funds for a college to train Indian clergymen.

Other materials include a list, 1849, of goods purchased from Boston, Mass., merchants; letter, 1866, from Henry R. E. Wellesley, Madras 1st Light Cavalry, describing his duties and the climate in India, hunting trips, British politics, and the Sepoy army; letter, 1867, from Francis Napier, Tenth Baron Napier, governor of Madras, concerning the structure of the Indian government and his desire for a strong central government; letter, 1879, from General Frederick Sleigh Roberts, First Earl Roberts, discussing parts of his campaign in Afghanistan; letter, 1880, from Sir William Milbourne James criticizing British military ventures into Afghanistan; and a letter, 1882, from General Frederick Sleigh Roberts objecting to British policy of abandoning Kandahar and expressing fear of a Russian advance.

Additional items include a letter, 1883, from John Wodehouse, First Earl of Kimberley, secretary of state for India, concerning the Rajputana railway and the Egyptian telegraph; letters, 1886, from Sir Herbert Hope Risley discussing his work on a census glossary and on marriage customs in Bengal; letter, 1893, from Sir Henry Mortimer Durand, foreign secretary in India, discussing his book, *Helen Trevelyan*; letter, 1902, from Sir Evelyn Baring, First Earl of Cromer, pertaining to plans for the Indian railway; letter, 1915, from Sir Stephen George Sale reviewing the legal basis for viceroyalty in India; letter, 1930, from Sir William Malcolm Hailey criticizing English newspapers for using India as an issue against the Labour Party and discussing the Indian Congress Party; and a letter, 1947, of West Bengal, discussing some of the changes in India since Independence.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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URL: <https://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/>

Access Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

Use Restrictions

The copyright interests in this collection have not been transferred to Duke University. For more information, consult the copyright section of the Regulations and Procedures of the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library.

Acquisition Information

The Collection of papers and manuscripts relating to British Colonial India were received by the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library as purchases from 1961 to 1983.

Collection was formerly titled "India Papers." The library updated the title in 2022 in an attempt to better reflect the collection's contents.

Processing Information

Processed by Rubenstein Library Staff and Mitch Fraas

Encoded by Noah Huffman, December 2010

Accessions 61-297, 61-301, 61-418, 61-452, 63-38, 63-39, 65-146, 71-317, and 1983 Mar. 31 were merged into one collection, described in this finding aid.

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Related Materials

Related Material

India and East India Company Papers, 1691-1830 David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University
Madras Presidency Papers, 1755-1775 David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University

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Names and Subjects

- Opium trade -- India
- Railroads -- India
- India -- Maps
- India
- India -- Commerce -- United States
- India -- History -- British occupation, 1765-1947
- Great Britain -- Colonies -- Administration
- Great Britain -- Colonies -- India
- United States -- Commerce -- India
- Great Britain. Army
- Durand, Henry Mortimer, Sir, 1850-1924
- India. Army
- Hailey, William Malcolm Hailey, Baron, 1872-1969
- Craig, James Henry, Sir, 1748-1812
- Chamier, John
- Cromer, Evelyn Baring, Earl of, 1841-1917
- Roberts, Frederick Sleigh Roberts, Earl, 1832-1914
- Sale, Stephen George, Sir
- James, W. M. (William Milbourne), 1807-1881
- Kimberley, John Wodehouse, Earl of, 1826-1902
- Napier, Francis, Baron Napier and Ettrick, 1819-1898
- Risley, Herbert Hope, Sir, 1851-1911

Collection Inventory

Reports on Indian-American Trade, 1799-1805

Physical Description: 1 folder

"Extract report on the External Commerce of Bengal," 1799-1800 (online item available)

Folder 1

Physical Description: 4 pages

Digital Object: ["Extract report on the External Commerce of Bengal," 1799-1800](#)

Scope and Contents note

Shows exports to America with comments on the trade and goods shipped to America.

"Extract report on the External Commerce of British India," 1802-1803 (online item available) Folder 1

Physical Description: 4 pages

Digital Object: ["Extract report on the External Commerce of British India," 1802-1803](#)

Scope and Contents note

"America, with the exception of a few Marine and Naval stores does not produce a single article required either by the Honorable Company's European or Native subjects..."

"Statement of Arrivals and Departures of Ships under American Colours at + from Bombay," 1802-1805 (online item available) Folder 1

Physical Description: 1 page

Digital Object: ["Statement of Arrivals and Departures of Ships under American Colours at + from Bombay," 1802-1805](#)

"Report explanatory of the trade between America and Bengal," 1803-1804 (online item available) Folder 1

Physical Description: 6 pages

Digital Object: ["Report explanatory of the trade between America and Bengal," 1803-1804](#)

"Extract Report on the External Commerce of Bombay for the year," 1804-1805 (online item available) Folder 1

Physical Description: 1 page

Digital Object: ["Extract Report on the External Commerce of Bombay for the year," 1804-1805](#)

Scope and Contents note

Very brief extract noting the arrival of one American ship that year.

Another copy in a different hand of John Baird's report (see above) (online item available) Folder 1

Digital Object: ["Extract Report on the External Commerce of Bombay for the year," 1804-1805](#)

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Miscellaneous India Papers, 1737-1947

Physical Description: 1 folder

Letter from Honoria and Ann Somerville at Fort St. George [Madras] to their uncle William Somerville, 1737 October 5 (online item available) Folder 2

Physical Description: 4 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from Honoria and Ann Somerville at Fort St. George \[Madras\] to their uncle William Somerville, 1737 October 5](#)

Scope and Contents note

Regarding part of their grandfather's legacy - later note on reverse about the estate.

Letter from [Philip Francis?] to unknown, 1779 July 13 (online item available) Folder 2

Physical Description: 4 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from \[Philip Francis?\] to unknown, 1779 July 13](#)

Scope and Contents note

Bengal- mentions Lady Chambers.

Letter from R. Floyd to Col. Floyd, 1791 April 22 (online item available) Folder 2

Physical Description: 2 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from R. Floyd to Col. Floyd, 1791 April 22](#)

Letter from Lord Hobart to an unknown general, 1798 January 30 (online item available) Folder 2

Physical Description: 2 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from Lord Hobart to an unknown general, 1798 January 30](#)

Scope and Contents note

Mentions Columbo

John Baird: "A plan for increasing the sale of opium in Bengal and rendering it a more permanent and productive revenue to the Company.," 1798 August 2 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 12 pages

Digital Object: [John Baird: "A plan for increasing the sale of opium in Bengal and rendering it a more permanent and productive revenue to the Company.," 1798 August 2](#)

"Comparative statement of the produce of the Opium Sales," 1798-1800 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 1 page

Digital Object: ["Comparative statement of the produce of the Opium Sales," 1798-1800](#)

Scope and Contents note

Also notes the comparative profit received from Opium in 1798/9, with that computed to be derived in 1799/1800.

Letter from Sir James H. Craig at Cawnpore to [Francis?], 1799 October 19 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 4 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from Sir James H. Craig at Cawnpore to \[Francis?\], 1799 October 19](#)

Letter from John Craig to [Francis?], 1800 January 19 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 4 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from John Craig to \[Francis?\], 1800 January 19](#)

Scope and Contents note

Written while on a shooting party at the Nabob's park at Romna (sic)

Letter from John Craig at Cawnpore to [Francis?], 1800 January 22 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 3 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from John Craig at Cawnpore to \[Francis?\], 1800 January 22](#)

Letter from John Chamier at Madras to David Scott [in London], 1801 October 31 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 3 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from John Chamier at Madras to David Scott \[in London\], 1801 October 31](#)

Scope and Contents note

Concerning a seat on the Madras council.

Letter from John Chamier at Madras to David Scott, 1802 February 1 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 3 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from John Chamier at Madras to David Scott, 1802 February 1](#)

Scope and Contents note

Chamier complains about the Council at Madras and Lord Wellesley: "unless Lord Wellesley be speedily removed, the Company will be precipitated into Bankruptcy."

Letter from Sir James Craig at Colchester to Simon Fraser, 1803 November 1 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 2 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from Sir James Craig at Colchester to Simon Fraser, 1803 November 1](#)

Scope and Contents note

Mentions Napoleon's intentions towards "your Eastern Dominions."

Letter from Col. Barry Close of the Madras army to Lord Wellesley, circa 1806 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 42 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from Col. Barry Close of the Madras army to Lord Wellesley, circa 1806](#)

Scope and Contents note

Concerning Sepoy regiments and army discipline - marked "Private." (Transcript available - 3 typed pages)

Printed map entitled "Sketch of a route between Nagpore and Panna, 1820" (online item available)

Folder 2

Digital Object: [Printed map entitled "Sketch of a route between Nagpore and Panna, 1820"](#)

Scope and Contents note

Also labeled "Engraved for the Calcutta Journal" and "Plate LVIII."

Letter by Dr. J. Marshman at Serampore to Rev. Dr. Raffley at Liverpool, 1829 September 15 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 2 pages

Digital Object: [Letter by Dr. J. Marshman at Serampore to Rev. Dr. Raffley at Liverpool, 1829 September 15](#)

Scope and Contents note

Concerning a friend who was medically unfit for India. Included is one printed page of Chinese text with the manuscript label "Part of the 1st Chapter of St. John's gospel translated by Dr. Marshman presented at Serampore."

Short note by Edward Law 1st Earl Ellenborough (Governor General of India), 1830 September 7 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 1 page

Digital Object: [Short note by Edward Law 1st Earl Ellenborough \(Governor General of India\), 1830 September 7](#)

Letter from Sir Charles Trevelyan at Calcutta to unknown Haileybury teacher, 1832 March 22 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 3 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from Sir Charles Trevelyan at Calcutta to unknown Haileybury teacher, 1832 March 22](#)

Scope and Contents note

The writer offers a copy of a report on Bengal customs (not included) and credits the recipient's lectures at Haileybury for his success.

Letter from a Mr. Cauton [?] at Calcutta to Prof. Schouw, 1837 August 2 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 3 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from a Mr. Cauton \[?\] at Calcutta to Prof. Schouw, 1837 August 2](#)

Scope and Contents note

In a mixture of English and Dutch. Mentions Assam.

Letter from unknown writer at an Indian military camp to a Mr. Maddick, 1843 December 9 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 6 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from unknown writer at an Indian military camp to a Mr. Maddick, 1843 December 9](#)

Letter on London Missionary Society letterhead to unknown, 1849 February 6 (online item available)

Folder 2

Digital Object: [Letter on London Missionary Society letterhead to unknown, 1849 February 6](#)

Scope and Contents note

Letter mentions the planned building of a London Missionary Society college at Calcutta. Signed by C. Walton and Thomas Boaz.

Letter from J.C. Ballard at Calcutta to R.C. Mackay and J.T. Coolidge in Boston, Mass., 1849 July 13 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 4 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from J.C. Ballard at Calcutta to R.C. Mackay and J.T. Coolidge in Boston, Mass., 1849 July 13](#)

Scope and Contents note

Concerning cloth sales.

Letter from John Lawrence (later governor general) at the India Office to a Mr. Cates, 1862 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 3 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from John Lawrence \(later governor general\) at the India Office to a Mr. Cates, 1862](#)

Scope and Contents note

Letter discusses retirement benefits and annuities.

Letter from H. Wellesley at Madras to "Eliot," 1866 December 12 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 19 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from H. Wellesley at Madras to "Eliot," 1866 December 12](#)

Scope and Contents note

Letter describes life in Madras and an elephant hunting expedition.

Letter from [Francis] Napier at Madras to Col. Strachey, 1867 November 7 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 5 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from \[Francis\] Napier at Madras to Col. Strachey, 1867 November 7](#)

Scope and Contents note

Letter marked "private." Napier relates his opinion that he is "not in favor of turning India into a federation" but rather that "India ought to have a splendid and powerful Central govt." He further opines that if India is broken up "I am in favor of a Congress of Delegates from the several Presidencies which may deliberate on the best way of breaking up India into separate states."

Letter from Frederick Sleigh Roberts at "Camp Karca" to a "Macgregor," 1879 June 13 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 5 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from Frederick Sleigh Roberts at "Camp Karca" to a "Macgregor," 1879 June 13](#)

Scope and Contents note

Letter relates mountaineering expeditions and speculation on the "easiest route from India to Afghanistan."

Letter from Lord Justice William Milbourne James to his son "Willie," 1880 August 13
(online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 5 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from Lord Justice William Milbourne James to his son "Willie," 1880 August 13](#)

Scope and Contents note

The letter mentions the late Anglo-Afghan war throughout: "I quite agree with you that we are thoroughly beaten in Afghanistan and it is no use attempting to disguise the fact."

Letter from Frederick Sleigh Roberts at Secunderabad to "Sir John," 1882 March 13
(online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 6 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from Frederick Sleigh Roberts at Secunderabad to "Sir John," 1882 March 13](#)

Scope and Contents note

Letter mentions Russian interest in central Asia.

Letter from Lord Kimberley [John Wodehouse] to General Strachey, 1883 December 30 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 3 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from Lord Kimberley \[John Wodehouse\] to General Strachey, 1883 December 30](#)

Scope and Contents note

Mentions the Rajputana state railway.

Letter from Ratha Krishna Tondiman at Pudukota to an unknown official, 1886 February 29 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 2 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from Ratha Krishna Tondiman at Pudukota to an unknown official, 1886 February 29](#)

Scope and Contents note

The letter states that the writer is first cousin of the Rajah of Pudukota and has a complaint with the Madras government over his Jaghire. The recipient could be a member of the Privy Council as the letter asks the recipient to "peruse the petition submitted through the Local Government to the Secretary of State for India...and order me justice in council."

Letter from Herbert Riley of the General and Revenue Departments Bengal to "Giles," 1886
May 11 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 4 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from Herbert Riley of the General and Revenue Departments Bengal to "Giles," 1886 May 11](#)

Scope and Contents note

Letter discusses formulation of the census glossary and gives a rough draft with explanation of the entry for the "Mahili" caste.

Brief note from Herbert Riley to "Giles," 1888
May 26 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 2 pages

Digital Object: [Brief note from Herbert Riley to "Giles," 1888 May 26](#)

Scope and Contents note

Letter concerns finishing work on the "marriage customs of Bengal."

Letter from Dadabhai Naoroji (on National Liberal Club Whitehall stationary) to E. Hays Jones, 1892 April 3 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 2 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from Dadabhai Naoroji \(on National Liberal Club Whitehall stationary\) to E. Hays Jones, 1892 April 3](#)

Scope and Contents note

Letter concerns pamphlet distribution and an upcoming election [Naoroji was elected to Parliament in 1892].

Letter from Sir Henry Mortimer Durand at Calcutta to an unknown Colonel, 1893 January 25 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 4 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from Sir Henry Mortimer Durand at Calcutta to an unknown Colonel, 1893 January 25](#)

Scope and Contents note

Durand discusses his literary work.

Letter on Department of Finance and
Commerce letterhead to General Strachey, 1902
June 23 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 6 pages

Digital Object: [Letter on Department of Finance and Commerce letterhead to General Strachey, 1902 June 23](#)

Scope and Contents note

Letter mentions railways and the Bhopal area.

Letter from Sultan Jahan of Bhopal at
Ahmedabad Palace (Bhopal) to a Mrs. Grant
in London, 1909 December 30 (online item
available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 2 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from Sultan Jahan of Bhopal at Ahmedabad Palace \(Bhopal\) to a Mrs. Grant in London, 1909 December 30](#)

Scope and Contents note

The letter extends social greetings and thanks for a card and photo album and encloses the Sultan's published travels to the Hejaz (not present).

Letter from Sir Stephen George Sale at the
India Office to Col. Strachey, 1915 July 13
(online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 4 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from Sir Stephen George Sale at the India Office to Col. Strachey, 1915 July 13](#)

Scope and Contents note

The letter appears to be in response to one by Lady Strachey about the positions of Governor General and Viceroy of India. Sale writes that he can find no documents or warrants appointing anyone a viceroy after Queen Victoria appointed Lord Canning in 1858. Subsequent governors general have merely been descriptively called viceroys for the function they perform.

Typed letter from Sultan Jahan of Bhopal at Ahmedabad Palace (Bhopal) to a Mrs. W. Grant in London, 1929 July 3 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 2 pages

Digital Object: [Typed letter from Sultan Jahan of Bhopal at Ahmedabad Palace \(Bhopal\) to a Mrs. W. Grant in London, 1929 July 3](#)

Scope and Contents note

Letter comments briefly on the Sultan's son and his administration.

Letter from William Malcolm Hailey (Gov. of the United Provinces) to Sir Guy, 1930 February 26 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 4 pages

Digital Object: [Letter from William Malcolm Hailey \(Gov. of the United Provinces\) to Sir Guy, 1930 February 26](#)

Scope and Contents note

Comments on the possibility of an [Indian National] Congress "no rent campaign."

Typed letter from Chakravarthi Rajagopalachari (Governor of West Bengal) in Calcutta to Sir Lionel Leach in London, 1947 August 25 (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 1 page

Digital Object: [Typed letter from Chakravarthi Rajagopalachari \(Governor of West Bengal\) in Calcutta to Sir Lionel Leach in London, 1947 August 25](#)

Scope and Contents note

Letter on altered British government stationary. The brief note comments on the chaotic state of the Calcutta High Court, mutual appreciation of the importance of South India, and social nicety. It concludes "Independence has come. It will take some time for happiness to arrive in India."

Undated manuscript fragment mentioning allegations by a nabob (online item available)

Folder 2

Physical Description: 1 page

Digital Object: [Undated manuscript fragment mentioning allegations by a nabob](#)

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