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INDIA, RAJ AND EMPIRE: Manuscript Sources from the National Library of Scotland

**Introductory essay by Dr. Crispin Bates, Dr. Kim Wagner, and Dr. Andrea Major
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The East India Company: Government and Administration c. 1750-1857

Between 1757 and 1857, the East India Company was transformed from a purely mercantile venture into a major political power. The necessity to secure trading stations along the South Asian coastline – principally at Calcutta (modern Kolkata), Bombay (Mumbai) and Madras – led to increasing involvement in local politics through alliances with local rulers (a relationship well illustrated in NLS MS 1065 for Arcot, and NLS MSS 5381-6 and 9369 for Tanjore). At the same time, the global conflict with France, resulted in an increasingly expansive policy by the British on the subcontinent to counteract the influence of rival European powers. British presence in India was thus intrinsically tied into a wider network of global trade and politics. The letters of Sir Archibald Campbell, Governor of Madras, 1786-9, NLS MSS 3837-9, demonstrate this interaction between local politics and the wider world, dealing not only with the political, civil, and military affairs of Madras, but also with British relations with the French, the Dutch, and local Indian Princes.

The East India Company (EIC) had begun as an English trading corporation, guaranteed a monopoly of the East India Trade by Royal Charter in 1600. By clever financing (using techniques borrowed from the Dutch) it was able to 'leverage' its assets, expand its fleet, and soon outstrip rival European trading companies. With the failure of the Scottish Darien Company (which had attempted to pioneer a rival westward route to India via the Isthmus of Panama) and the union of the crowns in 1707, Scottish merchants began to involve themselves in the Company's activities. The taxes derived from its trade, became a vital resource of revenue to the British Government, and from 1773 (following the acquisition of Bengal) the Company was obliged to pay a further annual tribute of £40,000 to Parliament. At the same time, the Company was given a Governor-General in India, based in Calcutta, to unite the administration. Prime minister William Pitt's India Act of 1784 brought the East India Company more directly under the supervision of the British crown with the creation of a Board of Control. With the appointment of Henry Dundas as the first President of the Board of Control (from 1793-1801) the number of Scots serving in the Company's administration steadily increased, until by the end of the century one in five EIC officers was said to be of Scottish origin. Scots were also disproportionately to be found amongst both officers and soldiers within the ranks of the Company's armies in India.

By the early nineteenth century, the East India Company had begun to derive its income increasingly from land revenue rather than trade, though the opium trade for instance remained important. With the rising spirit of free trade, the Company lost its monopoly on East India commerce upon renewal of its charter in 1813, and in 1833 a further renewal of the charter obliged the Company to give up trade altogether and to become a species of export bank: financing private British traders, mainly through funds derived from the

management of its newly acquired territories. From this point on administration of Indian territory became a prime focus of the Company's activities.

The guiding principle behind the early colonial state was based on the Orientalism of people like William Jones (1746-94), who argued that India was best ruled by its own laws and customs. Such policies required that British officials have a detailed understanding of the society that they were governing and the late eighteenth century was a productive period for orientalist scholarship on India, much of which was of both academic interest and administrative utility (see, for example, the oriental and British authored manuscripts and other documents in NLS MS 3182, 3184, 5783-4, 8436). The ideals of the Scottish enlightenment also played their part, especially during the 1820s and 1830s, when the Scottish (and Edinburgh educated) historian, economist, political theorist, and radical philosopher James Mill served in India House, rising to the position of head of the important department of Indian Correspondence. His controversial *History of India*, published in 1818, became a standard text for numerous future generations of British soldiers and civil servants.

Initially the British presented the Company Raj as the formal successor to Mughal rule and continued numerous indigenous practices in their style of governance. The legal system, for instance, was based strictly on Islamic law and the decisions of British judges had to be approved by Indian officials. Examples of the judicial system in action can be found in NLS MS 3386, which contains a long series of reports by magistrates on the administration of justice in criminal cases in their several districts from 1789-90. The vast bureaucracy of the early colonial state employed thousands of Indian clerks, interpreters and minor officials, thus allowing a handful of British administrators to govern the ever increasing territories of the East India Company with its hundreds of thousands of Indian subjects. Details of various aspects of this administration, including the army, finance, trade, crops and the advantages of various British stations can be found in NLS MS 1060, 1061, 3385-8, while a personal view of life as a civilian administrator under the East India Company can be found in the papers of Archibald Seton (NLS MS 19208), whose brilliant career included stints as Resident at Delhi, Governor of Prince of Wales Island, and Member of the Supreme Council of Bengal.

British land policy in India had as its main objective the 'modernisation' and stream-lining of administration in order to increase the revenue. The new revenue-settlements introduced during the early decades of the nineteenth century had an immense and often very negative impact on the lives of Indian landowners and peasants. In some cases the enforced introduction of cash-crops such as indigo even led to famines. The intrusion of British rule in India was thus highly disruptive and often met with violent resistance. Indian rulers who opposed the colonial state were usually branded as rebels and suppressed with the use of military force. Feuds, banditry and violent crime were also seen as proof of the backward state of India and the inefficiency of Indian rulers who were often portrayed as corrupt and despotic (in order to reflect well upon East India Company rule).

The ethics of colonial rule in India did not go unchallenged in Britain. The actions and policies of the first Governor-General, Warren Hastings, led to his impeachment in 1787 on charges including extortion, corruption, condoning torture and the waging of unjust wars and the passing of the India Act of 1784. Letters from Edmund Burke, who led the

campaign against Hastings, are contained among the Melville Papers (NLS MS 16:ii) and provide a valuable insight into his views on both the Hastings trial and Indian affairs more generally. By the early nineteenth century, in the wake of the Napoleonic Wars, the non-interventionist policy adhered to by the British in India was coming under pressure from the rising influence of Evangelicalism in the UK. It was no longer morally acceptable for the British to rule a continent of 'heathens' without actively seeking to civilize them. The suppression of widow-burning (*sati*, or the ritual suicide of Hindu widows), which had formerly been tolerated, became emblematic of the reformist zeal of British rule during the 1830s. The Indian elements of the Company administration were also minimized until the India Act of 1834, spearheaded by the politician Thomas Macaulay, finally did away with the last vestiges of Mughal practices. Missionaries were first officially allowed to proselytize in British India in 1813, although small contingents had been working surreptitiously on the subcontinent since the late eighteenth century. After 1813 their activities increased until they reached their most aggressive phase in the 1850s when Indian orphans, for instance, were commonly christened. The Letters from Robert Haldane to Lord Melville (NLS MS 2257:iv) discuss early missionary activity in India. On a more positive note, of course, British rule in India also meant the introduction of Western medicine and education (at least for a small fraction of the Indian elite), the establishment of an extensive railway network as well as the telegraph and other signifiers of the Industrial Revolution.

The expansionist policy of the British administration was continued throughout the first part of the nineteenth century. From isolated bases along the coast, British rule extended into the hinterland and eventually reached the border regions to the north-west and north-east. Through a series of military campaigns, the British defeated the remaining Indian powers which could challenge their rule, principally the Sikhs of the Punjab in 1845-9. The letters of Major Alexander Robertson and Colonel Armine Mountain found in NLS MS 1855 provide a useful discussion of the Sikh Wars, among other things. There were set-backs, such as the ill-fated First Afghan War of 1839-42, and the north-west frontier remained troublesome for decades. By 1856, however, British (East India Company) rule over more than half of the sub-continent of India was firmly entrenched.

Agriculture and Trade 1700-1857

The late Mughal period saw peasant and urban unrest in the heartlands of the steadily shrinking empire in the Indo-gangetic. On the margins of the subcontinent, however, there was a steady rise in prosperity as a result of the flourishing trade with the Europeans. Merchants from the British, French and Dutch East India companies all came to the coast by sea, their ships laden with silver bullion, which they exchanged for the goods so highly valued from the Indian subcontinent. These luxury goods had formerly travelled overland via the old silk route to Europe. Conflict between Venice and the Ottoman empire however disrupted that trade, making the sea-going route extremely lucrative: both for the East India men and for the Indian merchants. This rise in prosperity of a class of (largely Hindu) merchants and of the kingdoms on the margins of the subcontinent was to play a crucial part in Mughal decline. Not least of all it meant that there was abundant funds available that might be borrowed to finance trade and to pay for the mercenary armies which the East India Company used to fight its wars in northern and southern India.

The goods brought from India to Europe included the highly valued natural dye indigo (the principal source of the colour blue), myrabolams (which supplied orange and red colours for dyeing), and saltpetre for making gunpowder. There were also of course numerous spices, peppers and chillies. Most importantly of all there was jute, which was used to make sacking (without which there might be no trade) and cotton piece goods (shirts and undergarments especially) which were becoming items of consumption amongst not only the aristocracy but also the middle classes in Europe. These cotton goods were often in small factories not far from the coastal ports which were mostly supplied by Indian merchants.

NLS MSS 8456-7 (1778-89) tells of one Mr. Cochrane, a private individual, who apparently acted as an intermediary between the owners of Indian cotton looms and the Company's 'factors' or buyers. Sometimes ex-soldier would go into this business in the hope of making their fortune. Once such example Colonel George Cadell of the Madras Native Infantry, who worked with the firm of Arbuthnot and Co., merchants and agents in Madras in the early 19th. Correspondence concerning business administration and the production of fabrics are to be found in Cadell papers (NLS MS 9861).

Occasionally, Company men ventured inland. Often this would be to survey possible routes along which Company soldiers and merchants could pass by land from one strategic point to another. Thus NLS MS 9496 is the copy of a journal kept by Benjamin Heyne, assistant on the Mysore survey, during a journey from Madras to Bangalore in 1797. Typically, for a journal of its time, it contains lengthy comments on the geology, agriculture, and the religious and other customs of the people with whom he met. By sea, East India men extended their trade to China, from where tea and highly-prized Chinese crockery was purchased for the European market. Although method of making glass was successfully copied from the Arabs in the 13th century, the making of porcelain 'Chinaware' from the Far East was not mastered until the mid 19th century. Until this date, most Europeans ate from earthenware or occasionally metal vessels. The trade in Chinaware was therefore highly lucrative and attracted a great deal of private traders as well as Company merchants. Early conflict over trade with the Far East was avoided by agreements between the major European powers. The Dutch and the English, in particular, had a careful differentiation of their interests (see NLS MS 1068) whilst the French ceased to be a problem as rivals for several years after their defeat in the Napoleonic Wars. Relationship with the Chinese government however was sometimes more fraught. Strict regulation applied on trade through the Chinese ports, which forced the British to trade through authorised 'Hong' Chinese merchants in Canton (see the letters of George Smith in NLS MS 1069). This limited opportunities for profit, especially when traders sought to pay for their purchases though the smuggling of Indian-grown opium (much of it from East India Company plantations), which was banned by edict of the emperor. The attempts by the Chinese to clamp down on this illegal trade was to lead eventually to the first of several 'Opium' wars in 1839.

In 1813, the East India Company's Charter was renewed again, but this time with an important provision: the Company's monopoly on all the trade between London and India was broken. In part this was a recognition of existing realities: large amounts of space on East India ships was by then being leased out to private traders (including company men themselves) and the Company was leasing private ships when it could not build enough of its own (for details of the Company's shipping see NLS MS 1066). Correspondence of the

captain of the Calcutta-based ship 'Pacific' in 1775 is to be found in NLS MS 9861. At times even Indian-made ships were pressed into service (in 1796) in defence of the all-important sea routes (see NLS MS 1067). From 1813, however, the trade was thrown entirely open to private traders. These issues of private trading, the importation of rice into England during the food shortages of 1800, and the Company's charter are discussed in NLS MS 1064.

From 1813 onwards the East India Company acted largely as an export bank, engaging in trade on its own account, but also funding and financing the trade of private English traders. This was the era when Far Eastern traders such as William Jardine and James Matheson (both graduates of Edinburgh University) rose to prominence. With the increasing penetration of the Indian interior, it was an era when Indian merchants were also increasingly side-lined. European merchants taking over the business of sourcing Indian goods for exports and Indians were excluded from new investment opportunities, such as the construction of the first railway lines. English Agency Houses piled especially into the Indigo trade which underwent a rapid speculative boom, and then collapsed in the 1830s, recovering only slowly thereafter (see NLS MS 19732 Acc 9969 'Reminiscences of George Anderson'). India handloom weavers began to feel the pinch of competition from manufactured cotton goods from northern England, which were modelled upon Indian goods of the previous century and which entered India tariff-free (unlike the Indian goods which headed to London). Taxes on newly acquired agricultural lands were raised to help pay for the East India Company's wars at the turn of the century and in the 1840s in Sind.. These revenues from the land tax, rather than imported silver bullion, were then used to finance the export trade. This led to a prolonged period of deflation and depression within the Indian economy in the early 19th century which was a contributing factor in rural unrest leading up to the uprising of 1857.

Society, Travel and Leisure 1700-1857

The first British presence in India, from c. 1600 onwards, consisted of small groups of merchants, adventurers and East India Company representatives. British society, as far as such a thing existed, was confined to trading posts, or 'factories', at seaports such as Bombay (Mumbai), Madras (Chennai) and Calcutta (Kolkata). As imperial rule formalised in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, these colonial communities grew rapidly and new British stations sprang up in the interior. These ranged from small administrative outposts to large colonial metropolises like Calcutta and leisure-oriented hill stations like Simla and Darjeeling.

Before the advent of steam in the late 1820s, the sea voyage round the Cape of Good Hope (described in NLS MS 1070, 5208 and 13599) could take five to eight months. A shorter, overland route via the Red Sea and Mediterranean was used for communications from the late-eighteenth century (see NLS MS 1071 and 9594). Both routes had their hazards, however. Sea travel in the eighteenth century was both arduous and potentially dangerous, while the overland route was subject to regional volatility and was compromised completely during the Napoleonic Wars by French influence in Egypt.

On arrival in India, British colonialists faced the rigours of the Indian environment. The climate was notoriously hostile and heat and tropical disease led to high mortality rates for

men, women and especially children. Travel within India was arduous, dangerous and time consuming. Usually undertaken by carriage, horseback or on foot, those travelling to remote parts of the interior faced poor roads, hostile terrain and the threat of 'dacoits' (bandits).

Despite its hardships, travel did offer an opportunity to get a closer view of local Indian society than was possible from the colonial centres. The journal of Benjamin Heyne, NLS MS 9496, recounts his journey from Madras to Bangalore in 1797, describing the county through which he passed, its geology and agriculture, and the religious and other customs of the people. More unusual is the correspondence of Hugh Seton (NLS MS 19207), which gives a fascinating insight into the life and experiences of this eccentric and compulsive traveller, whose wanderings in India ceased only with his death in 1795.

Given the rigours of colonial life, it is perhaps not surprising that the East India Company favoured unmarried male recruits, especially in the lower echelons of its service. That British colonialism in India was an overwhelmingly male enterprise can be seen from the lists of civilian and military personal serving there between 1785 and 1828 (NLS MS 1072, 1073 and 1074). Few in number and reliant on Indian collaboration for the functioning of both their households and their government, male administrators in the eighteenth century often adopted local customs and took Indian wives and mistresses. As the Raj solidified in the early-nineteenth century, however, such practices were increasingly frowned upon and British colonial culture became more insular and divorced from Indian society.

This shift in British attitudes has traditionally been blamed on the 'memsahibs'. Initially, relatively few British women went to India. Of those that did, some were married to civilian and military officials, while others accompanied male relatives. The latter, often referred to as 'the fishing fleet', were lampooned as husband hunters and fortune seekers. As both travel to and life in India became safer and more stable, however, more women began to arrive. The 'memsahibs' are often criticised for their racism and accused of poisoning the relationship between Indian and British men. Recent scholarship has begun to challenge this assumption, however, suggesting that the infamous vices of the 'memsahibs' - their indolence and intolerance - were the product of a stifling colonial environment.

There were some exceptional women who, like Fanny Parks, bucked convention and embraced the opportunities for travel and exploration that India offered. Others worked tirelessly behind the scenes to help their administrator husbands. Most, however, found their sphere of activity and influence in India extremely limited. Social constraints meant that women's access to the public sphere was even more limited than in Britain at the time. Moreover, the numerous Indian servants found in even the most modest British establishments relieved them of many of their domestic responsibilities. Deprived of other outlets, female society in India was often reduced to a vacuous round of visiting and letter writing. The correspondence of Lady Amelia Campbell (NLS MSS 2903-4) reflects this, containing much London and Madras gossip.

Although the British in India sought to fortify their position as rulers through an outward demonstration of community cohesion, colonial society contained numerous internal divisions. The everyday reality of life in India would have depended greatly on the husband's social and professional position. Military families, for example, would have had easy access to garrison life and mainstream colonial society. As the letters of Lieut. George Brown

(NLS MS 1855) show, however, military personnel moved regularly between British stations and did not forge strong links with the local area. Their experiences would have been quite different to that of a missionary family, like that of Thomas Smith (NLS MS 7185). Missionaries were relatively marginal in terms of mainstream colonial society, but usually lived in one place and often worked closely among the local Indian community. The variety of experiences to be had in India can be seen from the letters of the Grant family (NLS MS 17901-4), whose members included an Army officer in Madras and a merchant in Calcutta, which give a vivid picture of family life in India in the 1850s. The first overseas missionary of the protestant Presbyterian Church was Alexander Duff (1806-1878) who pioneered western-style English education and founded the Calcutta Review and the Scottish Church College in Calcutta. (His letters are preserved in the records of the Scottish Church Mission in the National Library of Scotland).

The Mysore and Maratha Wars

In southern India the Muslim rulers of Mysore, Hyder Ali (1722-82) and his son Tipu Sultan (1750-99) constituted the first and most serious threat to the emergent power of the British. They were furthermore staunch allies of the French and received both material assistance and manpower from Britain's most prominent rival on the subcontinent. The journal of James Stuart (NLS MS 8432) relates events in the military expedition against the French and Hyder Ali in 1782. The forces of the East India Company suffered several defeats at the hands of the Mysore rulers and were unable to effectively subdue them; a fact graphically illustrated in NLS MS 8432, which contains a 'narrative' of events following the British surrender at Bidanore, in April 1783, including the imprisonment of British officers by Tipu Sultan. Many of the letters received by East India Company Director Commander George Johnstone (NLS MS 9246) were from soldiers and civil servants in India and contain reports and comments on the manoeuvres of Tipu Sultan, including his siege of Adoni in June 1786.

Although after defeat of Napoleon in Egypt in 1798, the French ceased to play any substantial role in India, Tipu Sultan was alleged still to have French advisors at his court. This was considered enough of a threat to justify sending several Crown regiments to India to participate in the subjugation of Mysore. Thus in 1799, the British laid siege to Tipu Sultan's capital Seringapatam, which was finally taken after a bloody siege during which the ruler himself was killed – a battle described in letters of Hugh Seton (NLS MS 19207), who took part in it. Tipu Sultan, whose troops wore tiger-striped uniforms and who kept tigers as pets, became something of a colonial stereotype in the way he seemed to embody all the characteristics of the decadent and cruel Oriental despot.

The Court of Directors in London, who formally controlled the East India Company, were strongly opposed to further expansion and costly wars, which were detrimental to the Company's finances. In India, however, the personal ambitions of the Governor General led to further enlarging of the territories under British control. In north and central India the Maratha confederacy alone remained in a position to challenge the British and when a struggle for power among the leaders broke out, the Governor General Lord Mornington (1798-1805) supported the Peshwa of Pune against his rivals. During the Second Maratha War (1803-5), Arthur Wellesley (later Duke of Wellington) fought the Maratha armies which employed a significant number of European mercenaries in command of Western-style

trained troops. Wellesley though was well supplied and financed by abundant loans from Indian merchants who were at this time still benefitting from the East India Company's influence. During the Battle of Assaye (23 September 1803), Wellesley successfully defeated Daulat Rao of Sindhia although he was outnumbered by 5 to 1. The letters of Major John Brown, of the 2nd Madras N.I. (NLS MS 1855), who was killed at Assaye, described Wellesley's operations against the Rajah of Bullum in 1802 and his Mahratha campaign of July 1803.

The Governorship of Mornington significantly changed the map of India as the entire region of Doab between the Ganges and Jumna Rivers as well as the Delhi territory was ceded to the Company during his term. Mornington was recalled by the Directors and replaced by another Governor General who was prepared to simply keep British rule in India rather than expanding it. Such a passive policy, however, proved difficult to maintain as the British sought to establish their rule in the newly conquered territories. Incursions by marauders and raiders from the surrounding independent states constituted a continual and serious disruption to trade and constantly threatened the imposition of British authority.

In 1813 a British expeditionary force invaded Nepal but in the face of heavy resistance had to be content with making the small kingdom an ally of the East India Company. As a consequence, Nepalese soldiers, known as Gurkhas, were enrolled in the British army and have since fought alongside Commonwealth troops all over the world. The Third Maratha War (1817-18) dealt the final blow to the aspirations of the Marathas, who were effectively tied the British thereafter through treaties. The war also put an end to the marauding Pindari bands. The Pindaris had originally been auxiliaries of the Marathas but rose to power in the years after 1800 as unemployed soldiers and mercenaries swelled their ranks. Their bands at times numbered thousands of poorly armed cavalry who raided foreign as well as friendly territories, killing and plundering along the way. By 1818, the East India Company was the paramount power and the British the *de facto* rulers of India. Although there were a number of anti-British rebellions in the years to come, no independent Indian power was in a position to challenge the Raj again. With the conquest of Sindh (1843), and of Punjab and the North-West frontier in the second Anglo-Sikh war of 1848-1849 (under the Governor-Generalship of the Scottish Lord Dalhousie), British 'paramountcy' in the subcontinent was complete. (The private papers of Dalhousie (Governor-General of India 1848-56) are to be found to this day preserved in the National Archives of Scotland on Princes' Street, Edinburgh)

The Indian Uprising 1857-58

British rule in India was maintained in large part through the employment of Indian soldiers, the so-called *sepoys*. The British had been able to take over the existing military labour-market and enrol thousands of sepoys who were mainly high-caste Hindus from the region of Awadh. The Company's complete reliance on sepoys, however, proved to be awkward; the British sought to mould the sepoys into an efficient body of troops, while at the same time they had to pay attention to the religious and social sensibilities of the men. During the early part of the nineteenth century there were numerous instances of mutinies. Most of these were brought about when the sepoys felt their religion or caste to be threatened by the military procedures of the British. By the middle of the century service in the Company's army had become increasingly unattractive.

British policies in India had furthermore alienated large segments of the native population. Many native rulers had experienced a significant loss in status and privileges concurrent with the expansion of the Raj. Formerly the rulers of vast territories, they were now dispossessed and reduced to pensioners living off the goodwill of the Company. The British annexation of Awadh in 1856, on the alleged grounds of the king's debauchery and incompetence to rule, had a particularly huge impact on the local population and economy.

In late 1856, the British introduced a new type of ammunition for use with the troops in India, which were rumoured to be greased with the fat of pigs and cows, which would be defiling for both Hindus and Muslims. Although they had numerous other causes for dissent, it is commonly believed that this was the spark which prompted the Bengal army to mutiny. The sepoys being convinced that the British Government deliberately planned to convert them to Christianity, they prepared to defend their faith by force if necessary. Some Indian historians have argued, however, that there was a lot more planning involved, and the mutiny of the Bengal army was part of a wider anti-British conspiracy. Whatever the cause, the subsequent events are clearly known. On 10 May the sepoys broke out in open mutiny at Meerut and the next day they massacred all the British in the capital Delhi (the residence of the Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah II) some forty miles to the south. Once Delhi had fallen, mutinies broke out in one garrison after another. A number of now infamous massacres and sieges took place, at Cawnpore, Agra, Allahabad and Lucknow, as well as at some less well known locations. NLS MS 20206, for example, contains letters and documents relating to the sad fate of the Europeans at Futtehgarh.

The uprising created its own momentum. Popular rebellion rapidly grew out of a developing climate of dissatisfaction with the East India Company's rule, which was provided an impetus by the sepoys' mutiny. However, the uprising assumed widely different characteristics in different locations and was by no means universal across northern India. Some disinherited rulers, deprived by Dalhousie's infamous policy of 'lapse' (which insisted upon British control wherever an immediate heir was unavailable) made common cause with landowners deprived by British land and revenue settlements, and seized the opportunity to regain their lost possessions, while others engaged in traditional feuds with their neighbours to expand their territory. At the front of the rebels in Awadh were the landowners and petty rulers who had recently been dispossessed by the British. Their aims were simply to regain their possessions, but in their opposition to British rule their aims coincided with those of the sepoys.

Although large numbers of rebels converged on the old Imperial capital at Delhi, many remained in the plains of north India laying siege to British garrisons. It is thus likely that the sepoys had originally mutinied without much of a strategy beyond the removal of Company rule. By the late summer of 1857, therefore the British had managed regain the initiative by launching several parallel campaigns to resume control of northern India. After the British retook Delhi, in September 1857, the theatre of war changed to Awadh and Central India and coalesced around a few rebel-strongholds. The journal of Sir Frederick William Traill-Burroughs, then a Captain of the 93rd Regiment (NLS MS 2234), describes the march through Fategarh, Cawnpore, and Unao to Lucknow, and the capture of the Martinière and the Begum's Palace there. The momentum of the initial outbreak, in the end, proved insufficient to keep the rebellion going; and despite the apparent unity between Hindus and

Muslims, the collusion between the different rebel parties proved to be short-lived. There was no unified rebel command, which could pursue common strategies, and after a number of decisive defeats at the hands of the British, the Mutiny eventually petered out. NLS MS 2257:xxi contains the letters of Sir Colin Campbell, who, together with Sir Henry Havelock, was one of the most well known British 'heroes' of the Mutiny. At the other end of the social scale, NLS MS 15393 contains the journal and commonplace book of John Charles Brown, a private soldier in the 3rd European Bengal Regiment, who also served during and survived the Mutiny.

In suppressing the uprising, the British were ruthless and entire villages were razed to the ground while Indians were indiscriminately executed by the thousands. After the initial shock had subsided, however, the British had to accept some responsibility for what had happened. As a direct result of the uprising the East India Company was abolished in 1859 and India became a colony under the British crown.

The Raj: British Government and Administration of India after 1858

With India coming under the direct control of the British crown, the East India Company's governor-general was replaced by a Viceroy to represent the Queen and there was a wholesale remodelling of the administration. Queen Victoria herself was declared Empress of India in 1877. Whilst large number of (often Muslim) chiefs who had joined the insurrection of 1857 were deprived of their lands, efforts were made to bolster those Indian princes and aristocrats who had remained 'loyal' to the British. The ratio of British soldiers to Indians in the Indian army was set at one to 2.5, in order to discourage future mutinies, and although admission to the Indian Civil service (as in the UK) was supposedly by merit and examination, Indians were carefully excluded from positions of influence. Recruitment to the Indian army was predominantly thereafter to be from the so-called 'martial races' rather than the high-caste rural populations of Bengal and Awadh, who had proved so unreliable in 1857.

At the end of the 1857 Uprising, a famous proclamation was issued in Queen Victoria's name, guaranteeing fair treatment, a tolerance of religious practices, justice and equality before the law to those who supported the new colonial regime. It was on this understanding that a great many high caste, socially elite Indians underwent training in English and law and entered the colonial administration. To their dismay, however, many found that the exercise of that law in India was not to be as even handed as they had been led to expect. Talented individuals like Surendranath Banerjee were comprehensively blocked in their efforts to seek promotion within the administration. And it was partly in response to the 'Ibert' bill of Criminal Jurisprudence in 1883 – which allowed white men to be tried in a court with an Indian judge only when a majority of the jury were also white – that the Indian National Congress was formed in 1885, in order to provide an outlet for educated Indian opinion.

Unfortunately, there remained strict censorship in force over the Indian vernacular press and a ban on most sorts of political activity. The Congress was thus unavoidably a conservative annual event, where only the most moderate of opinions might be expressed. Most of the efforts of India's burgeoning middle classes and civil society were channelled instead into cultural, religious, and social reform movements in the later nineteenth century – notably campaigns for the education of women, the upliftment of the *dalit* or untouchable

population, and movements of religious revivalism (such as the preaching of Swami Vivekananda) which aimed to modernise religious practice and encourage Indians to recover a sense of pride in their culture and a concern for the welfare of the wider society of Hindu and Muslim populations.

The most dramatic political changes ensued after the reforming Viceroy Lord Curzon, determined to divide the very large province of Bengal into two separate halves in 1905. This assaulted Bengali regional nationalist sentiments and led to the first organised anti-colonial movement erupting in the east of the country, which made use of the tactic of boycott. Although there had been frequent peasant and tribal insurrections in the intervening years, and a revolutionary movement (the *Ghadr*) also spread at this time, the so-called 'Swadeshi' movement in Bengal was the greatest threat, since it united for the first time the educated middle classes in opposition to British policy.

In 1911, the decision to divide the province of Bengal was rescinded (the announcement being made by King George V during a *darbar* in India), whilst at the same time it was determined to shift the capital away from increasingly politically active Bengal, to a new location at the seat of the old Mughal empire, in Delhi. Soon after, the British government embarked upon a series of constitutional experiments designed to strengthen the ties between Britain and India. Based upon the concept of 'dyarchy', the idea was that the British would retain control of the imperial government of India, the excise duties and the army, but the involvement of elected Indian representatives would be sought at a provincial level, where beneficial public works could be carried out with revenues solely derived from the unpopular land tax (which otherwise the government feared to raise). The difficulties of these years are occasionally referred to in the papers of Sir Hugh McPherson, who served in the Indian Civil Service, first in Bengal and from 1912 in Bihar and Orissa (NLS MS 19611-18).

The tactic adopted by the colonial government was repression of so-called 'extremists' followed by repeated concessions to 'moderate' Indian political leaders in order to seduce them into co-operating with the regime. This policy went horribly wrong in 1919, when proposals by Justice Rowlatt to make India's war-time restrictions upon civil liberties a permanent feature of India's peacetime constitution, met with determined protests from India's legally-trained middle class elites. Demonstrations in many town and cities, were met with wholly disproportionate force in the city of Amritsar in April 1919, where General Dyer – appointed to take charge of the city by the military governor of the Punjab – slaughtered 379 unarmed civilians (according to official estimates) and wounded at least a further 2,000 who had innocently gathered in the Jallianwalla Bagh, unaware of the General's promulgation of a general curfew in the city.

The infamous Jallianwalla Bagh massacre kick-started the Indian nationalist movement, and in turn brought Mahatma Gandhi to prominence as the moral conscience and leader of the Indian nation. The Indian independence struggle was to last some 28 years from 1919 until 1947. As the British struggled to retain control, further measures of devolved power were granted, and for a while – following the government of India act of 1935 - elected and wholly independent Indian administrations were created at a provincial level in 1937-39. Indianisation of the civil service continued at the same time, in part simply because Britain could no longer supply enough enthusiastic recruits to run the empire (far more lucrative

positions being available in trade in London), nor could the Indian government afford to employ sufficient numbers of them. In parallel with these British efforts, the nationalist movement ran campaigns of disruption: in 1920-22 (the non-cooperation movement), 1930-32 (which began with Gandhi's famous Salt March), and in 1942 (the so-called Quit India campaign). One of the longest serving Viceroys of this tumultuous time was the Scottish Lord Linlithgow (Viceroy from 1936-1943).

The great experiment in devolved administration in 1937-9 was brought to an end by the outbreak of World War II – during which Gandhi and the Indian National Congress were bitterly opposed to Indian involvement. It was at this moment that the British government began to seriously patronise and support the Muslim League as a counter-weight to the Indian National Congress: a tactic which dangerously accelerated the division of Indian politicians into opposing Hindu and Muslim camps at the end of the war. This led ultimately to the partition of the subcontinent into a Hindu-majority India and a Muslim-majority Pakistan in 1947 – a farcical solution to the allegedly insoluble problem of Indian 'communalism', since far more Muslims were left behind in the state of India than were to be combined in the eastern and western halves of the new state of Pakistan (the eastern half eventually breaking away to form the state of Bangladesh in 1971).

The truth of course was that by 1947, the British could no longer really afford the empire in India. The whole enterprise had begun with little responsibility and enormous profit but had gradually become a tremendous burden, which was poorly justified by the 'captive market' of the sub-continent as new and more prosperous avenues for British investment arose in Europe and the Americas. There were certainly still some financial advantages to be had from Empire, but by the end of the war in 1945 the British State were virtually bankrupt and politicians could only think in terms of the easiest and quickest exit from colonial commitments.

Agriculture and Trade after 1858

In the immediate aftermath of the Indian uprising the society and economy of the Indo-gangetic plain was devastated and scarcity stalked the land, culminating in the famine of 1865. Thereafter, however, there was a steady recovery, facilitated by a number of factors. To begin with, there was the American Civil War, which disrupted the supply of raw cotton to the expanding industrial cotton mills of Manchester. British merchants quickly turned to India for their supplies. Then there was the steady decline in the value of the silver rupee, which made Indian commodity exports progressively cheaper on world markets. Finally, there was the advent of the railway. Indian investors were pretty much excluded from investing in the railways, but English investors were guaranteed a return of 5% on their money (paid for out of Indian taxes) whether or not the lines constructed proved to be commercially successful. There consequently ensued a boom in railway construction in the 1860s and '70s. Initially, they were constructed primarily for strategic purposes, so the Indo-Gangetic plain was criss-crossed with lines so that troops might easily reach the site of any fresh insurgency. However, lines connecting the major port cities also crossed the interior and opened up areas such as Khandesh, Berar, the Narmada valley, and the Punjab for the production of export crops such as wheat, cotton and (later on) tobacco. Special rates were negotiated for bulk commodities destined for the UK market. This did not help Indian

manufacturers, but it hugely assisted the industrial mills of Manchester in becoming the largest manufacturers of cotton cloth in the world by the close of the century.

The construction of railways assisted in the opening up of Assam for the creation of tea plantations and in the rapid growth of the colonial cities of Bombay, Madras and Calcutta – which by the end of the nineteenth century was the largest city in the British Empire and the largest in the world. Having grown at such a break-neck pace, there was a great need for urban improvement work, and the English social evolutionist, city planner and architect Patrick Geddes (who had become well known for his work in Edinburgh's dilapidated old town) was drafted in to help. Correspondence with Indians and from Geddes' time in India is to be found in NLS MS 19260.

In Assam, vast areas were leased out to European planters and cleared of forest by indentured, migrant Indian labourers in the years after the Indian uprising. The resulting produce was then shipped to Calcutta and from there by 'Agency Houses' overseas. These plantations would liberate Europe from dependence on imports of Chinese tea and became a hugely profitable part of the India trade. They also attracted a great many ambitious young Englishmen and Scots, who set out to India to forge their career on this often lonely frontier. A description of the experiences of a tea planter's assistant is to be found in NLS MS 9659. Major investment in plantations in highland Ceylon (modern Sri Lanka) paralleled that in the north-east of India. Here labourers from Tamil Nadu were largely imported to carry on the work of establishing both plantations. The NLS manuscripts include extensive correspondence relating to the experience of Scottish planters, most notably James Taylor (1835-92) who left his home in Kincardineshire in 1851 to work as superintendent of a coffee estate in the Kandy area of Ceylon, where he was one of the first planters to start growing tea and cinchona as commercial propositions during the coffee blight of the 1870's and 1880's (MS 15908 - see also D.M. Forrest, *A Hundred years of Ceylon tea*, London, 1967). Taylor's correspondence home includes a description of local reactions to first news of the Indian mutiny and of the social and economic effects of the coffee blight. Equally engaging are the papers of Andrew Hunter, 1862-5, son of Charles Hunter, who was co-owner with Alexander Hood of the Nanoo Oya and Talawa Kelle coffee estates in Ceylon. The collection includes Andrew Hunter's letters and diary (1862-5), accounts of the coffee estates (1846-67), maps and plans of the coffee plantations in central Ceylon, and the correspondence concerning the estate of Andrew Hunter from 1866-69. [MS 19722, 19723, 19724-5, 19726 and 19732].

The boom years in agriculture were brought to an abrupt halt by a succession of famines at the end of the nineteenth century, which cost upward of 20 million lives. Central India was hit especially hard. The famines revealed the inadequacy and fragility of the colonial administration in remote rural areas, the steady growth in landlessness as a result of the commercialisation of agriculture, and the lack of alternative forms of employment when times were hard. The 'deindustrialisation' of India and the excessive burdens of the land tax became a major theme of Indian nationalist writing at this time, most famously by R.C. Dutt, who published an *Economic History of India in the Victorian Age* in two volumes in 1902-04. It was not until the early twentieth century that Indian owned jute and cotton mills in Calcutta, Bombay and Surat began to outpace their British rivals and to generate important new sources of employment in the urban areas. Major suppliers the UK and the military and two world wars, the colonial relationship was however irrevocably undermined by the great

depression of the 1930s which eroded both commodity trade and British investment in India. Thereafter, Indian merchants and industrialists and merchants started to contemplate the better opportunities they might enjoy under Indian rule and began to rally to support the nationalist Indian National Congress party in the struggle for Indian independence.

Society, Travel and Leisure after 1858

Although often considered the jewel in Britain's imperial crown, India was never a settler colony. Developments in steam power and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 significantly shortened the journey to India and the increasing stability of British rule made family life there more sustainable. Despite this, however, the vast majority of the British merchants, soldiers and civilian administrators who were the backbone of the Raj viewed India as a place of exile. Most intended to return 'home' to Britain after their terms of service were complete. As a result colonial society in India retained many of the features of an expatriate community throughout the period of colonial rule. Spatially and ideologically separated from Indian society, most British colonialists sought to recreate the institutions of British life in India, from rose-gardens and European fashions to the ubiquitous Club.

In the hot season most women would remove to the cooler hill stations, which were renowned for their lively rounds of social events, often leaving their husbands behind at their posts in the plains. Life in India also involved more significant separations than this, however. Although medical advances led to decreasing mortality rates, the Indian climate could still place a strain on delicate constitutions. Many of the letters from Florence Baird Smith to her husband (NLS MS 10984) were written after the former's health forced her to return alone to Scotland. Most children were still sent 'home' to Britain to be educated and mothers often faced the heart-rending choice between parting from their children or from their spouse.

Perhaps the main exceptions to the stereotype of insular Anglo-Indian society, were the missionaries. Though certainly not exempt from the cultural racism of the times, missionaries formed closer relationships with local communities of actual and potential converts than most other British residents in India. Although they had begun as itinerant preachers, by the mid nineteenth century missionaries had become institution builders, often running schools, hospitals and other charitable institutions and by the early twentieth century, their focus had moved from aggressive proselytisation to conversion via good works. The papers of the Rev. Robert Kilgour (NLS MS 20487) give a good insight into the nature of missionary activity in the twentieth century.

When work was finished, India provided an exciting range of leisure activities, especially for men. The Indian landscape provided numerous opportunities for recreation travel, trekking and exploration, especially after the construction of an extensive rail network in the second half of the nineteenth century, which brought distant parts of the subcontinent into closer contact. Those with a scientific bent had ample opportunity to practice amateur botany, anthropology and geography. Such pursuits remained popular throughout the period of colonial rule. The diaries of Indian civil servant Sir Hugh McPherson (NLS MS 19611-18) detail his various expeditions in the Himalayas in the early twentieth century and include accounts of the local populations he encountered.

Field and equestrian sports were extremely popular, as were hunting and fishing. The letters of Lieut. General Frederick Markham (NLS MS 1855), and Major Francis William Brown (NLS MSS 1857-8) describe their various sporting activities, while the journals of James Augustus Grant (NLS MS 17914) and Major Douglas Cunninghame Graham (Acc 10702) give detailed accounts of hunting expeditions. The easy access to both small game and the unique opportunity to track large game animals like tigers made hunting in India a British obsession. It is one of the ironies of colonial period that the same British hunters who did so much damage in their vociferous perusal and slaughter of now endangered game animals were also among the first to document the Indian environment and begin to realise the importance of its protection.