

# Library of Birmingham Archives & Collections

## Sources relating to India

Items are listed in chronological order.

### **MS 128/6**

Bill of Lading for 'one bale of calicoes & thirty one duffers of Gun powder, containing seven Candy seven maund and twenty seer....[weight] to be delivered to a Mr George Ramsden at Vizagapatam for the price of twenty pagodes', 1683.

Kenelm Digby was sheriff of Madras from 1776 to 1786:

### **Digby B/73 – 76**

Letters from Kenelm Digby to his mother about life in India, 1774 - 1777

### **Digby B/87 – 107**

Letters from Kenelm Digby, writing from Madras and other places in India to his brother Wriothsley in England, 1750 to 1786

### **Digby B/156**

'Instructions to any person who will...supply the Hunting Society of Madras to the number of twenty couple of hounds annually', 1776

### **Digby B/157**

Copies of papers concerning the sequestration of the goods of Ameer M. Omrah Behander by Kenelm Digby, sheriff of Madraspatnam, 1780

### **MS 3782, MS 3069 [old ref: B&W 530]**

Jacoba Swellengrebel lived in Handsworth from c. 1778 to her death in 1796. Her father was Dutch and her mother Indian. Her husband was a relative of John Fothergill, Matthew Boulton's first business partner.

### **Duke 337**

Will of William Shepherd, merchant, of the House of Forbes, Shepherd & Co, Bombay, 18 Feb 1791

### **MS 1575/5/5/1**

In the papers of George Philip Lemprière (1854-1949) of Handsworth, a balloonist with an interest in politics, is an undated [?18<sup>th</sup>-century] broadsheet of a petition by the wife of one Almas Ali Cawn 'who was lately seized upon and put to death for political purposes in India' to King George of England, begging his release. The King apparently perused it but gave orders for Cawn's execution.

### **MS 3147/5/616**

In 1813, the Nabob Vizier of Oude ordered a steam engine and pumps for draining coffer dams to enable the foundations to be laid across the river of a new iron bridge which John Rennie was constructing. Once the bridge had been built, the engine was to be used for

supplying a large reservoir in the Nabob's garden in Lucknow and occasionally working fountains. The engine house was designed in an Indian style of architecture.

### **Portfolio of Boulton & Watt engine drawings**

**Customer: The Nabob Vizier of Oude, Lucknow, India (BB).** Mar., Apr., Dec. 1813, Jan.— Mar. 1814. 21 items.

*14 horse power independent engine, with 22 inch cylinder, 3 foot stroke, parallel motion, cast iron beam.*

*Reverse view of the large pump and air vessel, longitudinal section of boiler and air vessel, longitudinal section of engine house and engine showing independent framing and governor, transverse section of engine house and boilers, plan of the tunnels and large pump, plan of the engine house and engine and boilers; memorandum describing these drawings; section and plan of pump – partially coloured reverse drawings; plans and sections of the engine and boilers marked "see letter to Mr. Rennie 1 Apr. 1813", bottom of pump cistern, frame to support 2<sup>nd</sup> shaft – press copy drawings; parallel motions for the pump beam – original and press copy drawings; forcing pump, section and plan of valve box for jet (fountain) pumps – press copy drawings; plan of the site showing Palace of Lucknow, Goomty river and Rennie's bridge marked "Mr. Rennie's sketches Mar. 1813"; 2 sheets of sketch plans and elevations; "Memorandums respecting the Steam Engine & Pumps for His Highness the Nabob Vizier of Oude to serve as instructions for Mr. Hugh Thompson", 15 Mar. 1814, in James Watt Jr.'s hand, with second sheet describing the drawings (not by Watt Jr.); coloured plan and sections of the engine, boiler and pumps, marked "H.W.T." [Hugh Thompson?]; coloured front entrance elevation of the engine house marked "drawn by James Miller"; three dimensional drawing of engine house (intended to be a watercolour?). The reverse drawings bear letter codes.*

*Original Portfolio or 'Book' No. 663. Catalogue of Old Engines p. 294.*

See also: 4/94 (Engine Order Book No. 8), Incoming Correspondence (from John Rennie).

### **MS 3147 and MS 3782**

In the 1820s the firm of Boulton and Watt provided engines for the East India Company for the mints at Calcutta and Bombay [**MS 3147/5/707, 708**]

By 1832 Calcutta also had Boulton & Watt engines to power a cannon foundry, a saw mill and an oil mill. There is correspondence, engine drawings and information about the engine erectors who went to India in these collections.

### **MS 3147/12/52**

In 1851, East India House sent a request to James Watt & Co, that they would receive Ardaseer Cursetjee, the Chief Engineer from their steam factory in Bombay and help him to increase his professional knowledge.

### **MS 3147/10/57**

Paper given by Robert Knight to the London Indian Society 'The Indian Empire and our financial relations therewith', 1866

**MS 1675**

The Reverend Thomas Swann was Professor of Theology at the College of Serampore in 1820s. In 1829 he was appointed minister at Cannon Street Baptist Church, Birmingham. He was also secretary of the Birmingham Auxiliary of the Baptist Missionary Society. His papers include annual reports of the Society which give details of its work in India and elsewhere.

**MS 2899**

Theatre Royal prompt Books

At the Theatre Royal in the first half of the nineteenth century various plays were performed which made connections with the wider world. And prompt books survive for such plays as Francis Burnand's *The Siege of Seringapatam*, Dion Boucicault's *Relief of Lucknow* etc.

**MS 6**

The Birmingham firm of F. & C. Osler supplied lamps, chandeliers, ornamental glass and other items to India, inventing a special 'punkah lamp' for that market. Letters from their agents, based in Calcutta, sent back to the firm, survive for the period 1840 to 1887. They provide a fascinating account of life there, from business enterprise to the 'Indian Mutiny'.

**MS 908/A/3**

Helen Caddick (1843 – 1927)

She had a long term interest in education, travel and anthropology. In 1900 she wrote 'A White Woman in Central Africa'. Helen Caddick was the first woman member of West Bromwich Education Committee and was also one of the first governors of the University of Birmingham.

This volume is a diary of her travels in India in 1893. She visited Delhi, Agra, Baroda, Sharkhej, Ahmedabad, Jeypore, Futhipur Sikri, Cawnpore, Lucknow, and Madras, amongst other places, and included descriptions of a number of palaces and temples, as well as a detailed description of a 'Sacred Thread' and a wedding ceremony in Bombay, (pages 155 – 159).

**MS 99**

The firm of Metro Cammell supplied the world with railway rolling stock from c. 1860 to 1960 and there are surviving drawings and business records.

**370797 [IIR 89]**

This volume of papers collected by Sir Benjamin Stone includes letters and papers, 1902 – 1904, concerning the trial of George Edalji on a charge of horse maiming. Edalji, a solicitor in Birmingham, was the son of a Parsee father from Bombay who had written the standard Gujarati/English dictionary and was vicar at Great Wyreley, Staffordshire.

**MS 1303/18 p. 174]**

In 1931 the Chief Officer of the City Fire Brigade 'reported as to a letter which he had received from the Secretary to the High Commissioner for India with respect to an Indian student who was desirous of receiving training in the Brigade to enable him to take up a position in the Fire Service in India. He had already received training with the Stafford Fire Brigade but desired to obtain fuller experience.' The student commenced duties on 21 April, 1931 and stayed for six months before returning to India.

**MS 466/205/27**

On 18 October 1931 Mahatma Ghandi visited Woodbrooke College, Birmingham and Elizabeth Cadbury recorded her attendance in her diary: 'In aft[ernoon] to W'brooke to hear Ghandi (v. hot room)

**MS 841B/64, 69**

That same year the annual reports from the International Section of the National Council of Women in Birmingham tell us that the members were addressed by Mr and Mrs Sahgal, who explained the idea of self-government from an Indian point of view. The following year, Lady Hartog also spoke on India from her own experiences, and in the year 1934-1935, Miss Slade also spoke on India.

**MS 162/BS54**

A scrapbook from Birmingham Settlement, c. 1935, includes a cutting from the *Evening Mail* about an Indian woman doctor, who was visiting Birmingham and was attached to Birmingham Settlement to study public, social and medical services.

**MS 466/169**

In 1936 Dame Elizabeth Cadbury and others visited India for the conference of the International Council of Women, to which India's National Council of Women had belonged for ten years. The newspaper reports preserved in the Cadbury family papers show the wide range of subjects covered at the conference, from film censorship to women miners, contraception, education and voting rights. Elizabeth Cadbury also raised funds for a travelling dispensary for the Friends' hospital at Itarsi.

**MS 2483**

Two volumes of photographs, newscuttings etc. which document the year of Sir Ernest and Lady Canning as Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of the City, 1937-1938, include an article and a picture which show a meeting of the Birmingham Indian Association at its annual dinner. The article mentions that the Association was formed in 1907, by Mr. K.M.Pardhy, to enable Indian students at the university to meet together.

**MS 321/F/Box 12**

In 1955 an Indian engineer called Raj Kumar called at the B.S.A. works in Birmingham to have a larger engine fitted to his 1947 BSA motorcycle. He was half way round on his world tour, having set out from his home in Glasgow in 1951, and had driven through Asia, China, Japan, Europe and North and East Africa. In Malaysia he was joined by his cousin Miss Gurupdes. The B.S.A. public relations department wrote an article about him.

**MS 4000**

The records of Charles Parker (1919-1980) show several links with India. Parker was a BBC Radio producer, based in Birmingham for over twenty years. He was involved in Christian anti-racist activity in the late 1950s, and worked with singers from the emerging folk revival movement to produce innovative multi-cultural and multi-media events. As the 1960s developed, his artistic ideas were used in increasingly political programmes and folk-based

performances. He founded the Birmingham and Midland Folk Centre in 1963. Parker produced a multi-media, multi-cultural version of a nativity play in 1961, called 'Dog in a Manger', which addressed issues of racism and intolerance. Among the papers for that project are some programmes for events organised by the Asian Music Circle in 1961, and a programme for the Tagore centenary celebration at Digbeth Civic Hall on 6 May 1961, organised by several Indian associations. **[MS 4000/2/83]** The Folk Centre organised a concert with Ravi Shankar performing in Digbeth Civic Hall.

Members of the Folk Centre took part in a multi-media performance work called 'Of One Blood' in 1966. This looked at issues of apartheid, racism and human rights, concentrating on South Africa, Vietnam and Greece. Traditional Indian dance was included, and music from India, the West Indies and America.

Parker produced several programmes for BBC radio using recordings made by Dilip Hiro. In 1968, there were two programmes called 'Asian Teenager', on the experience of Indian and Pakistani children growing up in Britain. In 1970, there was a programme called 'Under an Apple Tree' where people talked about their experiences of marriage between Black and White people. Dilip Hiro also went to Calcutta to record students on the British legacy to the education system in India, which was broadcast in 1972 as 'Snowballs in Calcutta' **[MS 4000/2/140]**, and to record people for 'A Place Way Out', about European and American settlers in India **[MS 4000/2/142]**.

Tape recordings in the Charles Parker Archive relating to folk music have now been digitized and catalogued and can be listened to in Archives & Heritage. These included recordings of performances at the Grey Cock Folk Club in 1973 and 1974 by Kali Das Gupta from Bombay. **[MS 4000/5/3/5/4/103, 132, 138]**

#### **MS 2141**

The Papers of the Indian Workers' Association (GB) were deposited in Archives & Heritage in 1998. The Birmingham branch was organised in 1959 and was a very active group with a militant stand on racism and on the immigration laws of the 1960s/70s. The records include correspondence, newscuttings, reports and other papers from c. 1961 onward.

#### **MS 2142**

Avtar Jouhl, General Secretary of the Indian Workers' Association (GB), also deposited a large collection of his own papers which complement those of the Indian Workers' Association, and, in addition, contain much on Trade Union organisation and struggles, and the development of Trade Union education in Birmingham. There is also a transcript of recorded interviews on Mr Jouhl's life and political activity.

#### **MS 2303**

Some records about Vaisakhi etc. have been deposited by the Council of Sikh Gurdwaras, Birmingham, 1998-2000.

## Photographic collections

### MS 2265

Sukhvinder Singh Ubhi, photographer.

Photographs of the Vaisakhi festival in Birmingham, 1999, and of Sikh musicians, 2000

### MS 2303

Photographs from the Sikh Council of Birmingham of Sikh festivals and events. c.1999

### MS 2356

Sangeeta Redgrave, photographer.

Photographs of the Diwali festival in Birmingham. 2000.

### MS 2346

Ravi Deepres, photographer.

Photographs taken for 'Capitalising on Culture', produced in 2003 as part of the bid for Birmingham to be European Capital of Culture in 2008, and photographs taken for 'Cricket and Cultural Identity', 2002.

### MS 2479

Tim Smith, photographer.

Photographs of Britain's South Asian communities, including those living in Birmingham, c. 2003.

## Printed books

### MS 2579

Mahmood Hashmi collection of books and magazines in Urdu, c. 1945 – 2005. The collection consists primarily of over 300 printed books and magazines of Urdu literature and poetry, mostly published in India.

Mahmood Hashmi comes from a village in Azad Kashmir and was from the 1940s a well-known name on the literary scene, with short stories and articles of literary criticism appearing in reputable journals such as Saqi and Adabi Dunya. He graduated from Punjab University and went on to gain an M.A. and L.L.B. from the University of Aligarh in 1943. In 1950, at the time of independence and partition he wrote a book of reportage, Kashmir Udas Hai, which was very popular in Pakistan, which was reprinted in 1995. He emigrated to England in 1953. He gained a postgraduate certificate in education from Leeds University and became the first black teacher in Birmingham in 1956 at Loxton School, Duddeston, Birmingham. He also turned to journalism and in April 1961, he became the founder editor of the London based 'Mashriq' (The East), Britain's first Urdu language weekly newspaper and also the first South Asian newspaper. The paper was initially financed by Pakistani and Kashmiri factory workers from Birmingham who could see the significant impact it would have on their lives.

When he left 'Mashriq' in 1972 he returned to Birmingham and set up an Urdu interpreting and translating service, edited a bilingual newspaper, 'Saltley News', and worked as a teacher.

**LS 5/64 [295823, L07.2/BAR]**

The Indian Captive, and other poems by Louise Margaret Holl, 1839

**LS 6/12 [628678, L07.3/GAR]**

The One Anna & Two Anna Stamps of India 1854-55, by L. E. Dawson, 1948

A discussion of the manufacture and appearance, including defects, of the above stamps. Illustrations (12 collotype plates). Published for the Royal Philatelic Society of India.