

British Gurkha Mission to Nepal photograph album

Ms. Coll. 935

Finding aid prepared by Holly Mengel.

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University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

2013 October 3

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Summary Information

Repository	University of Pennsylvania: Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts
Title	British Gurkha Mission to Nepal photograph album
Call number	Ms. Coll. 935
Date	1947 July-1948 January
Extent	0.25 linear feet (1 box, containing 1 volume)
Language	English
Abstract	Following Indian independence in 1947, the British and Indian armies agreed to divide the Gurkha regiments between the two armies. British, Indian, and Nepalese delegations met in Nepal from July 1947 to January 1948 in order to discuss the terms of service of the Gurkha soldier as well as specific rights granted to them in relation to religion, rates of pay, performance and conduct, and leave from duty. This photograph album, containing 90 photographs, documents the three delegations' tour through Nepal. The images, probably created by a British delegate of the Mission, are labeled and the album includes photographs of people, landscapes, and historical and religious sites.

Cite as:

British Gurkha Mission to Nepal photograph album, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania

Biography/History

Following Indian independence in 1947, the British and Indian armies agreed to divide the Gurkha regiments between the two armies. Four regiments were transferred to the British, while six regiments remained with the newly independent Indian Army. The Gurkha regiments were recruited in Nepal; therefore, the Nepalese government became involved in the negotiations which culminated in the Tripartite Agreement, a treaty relating to the rights of the Gurkha soldiers in the armies. British, Indian, and Nepalese delegations met in Nepal from July 1947 to January 1948 in order to discuss the terms of service of the Gurkha soldier as well as specific rights granted to them in relation to religion, rates of pay, performance and conduct, and leave from duty. As part of their work for the delegation, the members of the delegations traveled throughout Nepal.

Scope and Contents

This photograph album, containing 90 photographs, documents the three delegations' trip to Nepal to negotiate the terms of service of the Gurkha soldier in the British and Indian Armies from 1947 to 1948. The images, probably created by a delegate of the British delegation, are labeled and the album includes photographs of people, landscapes, and historical and religious sites.

Although none of the photographs are dated, the album appears to be arranged chronologically, from "Emplaning at Palam" (New Delhi) to "Farewell to Nepal." The delegation seems to have traveled from New Delhi to Bhita, through Raxaul, Birganj, Amlekganj, Bhimpedi, Chitlang, Khathmandu, Bhadgoan, Patan, Budnath, and Thankot, before returning to New Delhi and Agra. The album documents the many modes of transportation taken, including, planes, boats, trains, horse, and a Nepalese "dandy;" activities including a press conference in Raxaul, picnics, site seeing, the Dewali Festival, and Gurkha dance; and historical and religious sites including the Old Durbar Palace, the Maharajah's Palace, the Old King's Palace, and the Singha Durbar Hall in Khathmandu, various temples and shrines in Bhadgoan, shrines in the Old City of Patan, the Bhuddist Temple of Swayambhunath, and the Taj Mahal, JJama Masjid Tomb, Fatehpur Sikri Tomb, and Shah Jahan's Memorial to Mumtaz Mahal in Agra. There are also photographs of the varied natural terrain of Nepal, including terraced fields near Thankot, plains, dry gorges, mountains (including Everest), rivers, and rice fields.

In addition to candid photographs of the Nepalese people (and especially the youth), there are many photographs of the British, Nepal, and Indian delegations. Identified persons include: R.G. Alexander, Kanwar Daya Singh Bedi, Lt. Colonel F.A. Burridge, Major F.M. Cunningham, J. Dayal, Lt. Colonel Evans, Sir George Falconer, Chinie Lama, Colonel R. Leonard, Colonel D.M.W. Smith, Sir Alec Symon, and Lady Symon. There are also a few illegible names included in the photograph album.

One newspaper clipping is pasted into the back inside cover of the album. This clipping shows photographs of Maharaj Padma Shumshere Jung Bahadur Rana, the Prime Minister and Supreme Commander in Chief of the Nepalese Army; King Mahendra, the King of Nepal; and Sir Singha J.B.

Rana, the Comander in Chief of the Nepalese Army.

This photograph album does not focus on the actual work of the British, Nepalese, and Indian delegations in their efforts towards the Tripartite agreement; but is a valuable resource of the British perspective of post-World War II Nepal.

Administrative Information

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Finding aid prepared by Holly Mengel.

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Custodial History note

Sold by a dealer in Istanbul in April 2013.

Controlled Access Headings

CORPORATE NAME(S)

- Great Britain. Army.
- India. Army.

FORM/GENRE(S)

- Photograph albums
- Photographs

GEOGRAPHIC NAME(S)

- India--Photographs
- Nepal--Photographs

SUBJECT(S)

- Gurkha soldiers

Collection Inventory

	Volume
"BRITISH GHURKHA MISSION TO NEPAL" PHOTOGRAPH ALBUM, 1947 JULY-1948 JANUARY.	1