Reference code: GB165-0229

Title: Harry St John Philby Collection

Name of creator: Philby, Harry St John Bridger (1885-1960) Explorer and Orientalist

Dates of creation of material: c1902-1957

Level of description: Fonds

Extent: 89 boxes

Biographical history: PHILBY, Harry St John Bridger (1885-1960)
Born 3 April 1885, St. John’s, Badula, Ceylon, son of Henry and May Philby (née Duncan). Educated Westminster School; Trinity College, Cambridge (BA, 1907). Entered Indian Civil Service, 1908; Assistant Commissioner at Jhelum, Rawalpindi, Shahpur, Multan, Ambala, and Dera Ghazi Khan; Deputy Commissioner, Lyallpur, 1914; joined Punjab Government Secretariat, 1914; Secretary to Board of Examiners, Calcutta, 1915; Political Officer, Mesopotamia, MEF, from Nov. 1915, and served as Financial Asst. to Chief Political Officer, officiating Revenue Commissioner for Occupied Territories, Political Officer in charge of Amara district, and special duty at Baghdad; CIE 1917; in charge of British Political Mission to Central Arabia, 1917-18; crossed Arabian Peninsular from Uqair to Jidda; carried out exploration in South Central Arabia; in political charge of Central Arabian Mission to England, 1919; Adviser to Ministry of Interior, Mesopotamia, 1920-21; Chief British Representative, Transjordan, 1921-24; retired from ICS, 1925; elected to Council of Royal Geographical Society, 1925; awarded Sir Richard Burton memorial medal by Royal Asiatic Society, 1925; Resident Director in Arabia of Sharqieh Ltd, 1926-46; further exploration of Arabian Peninsular 1930-55; Director, Mitchell Cotts (Sharqieh) Ltd., Jedda, 1946-55. Married, 1910, Dora Johnston (d.1957): one son, three daughters.

Scope and content: Political and personal correspondence, memos, travel diaries, exploration reports, engagement books, published and unpublished literary MSS: Transjordan, Iraq, Palestine, Arabia, including correspondence and minutes of meetings of Sharqieh Ltd. and Mitchell Cotts Ltd.

Access conditions: Open

Language of material: English; Latin; French; German; Arabic; Persian; Urdu
Conditions governing reproduction: No restrictions on copying other than statutory regulations and preservation concerns; permission for publication to be sought from the Estate of H. St. J. B. Philby with whom copyright rests.

Custodial history: In the possession of St. John Philby. The collection was purchased from his Saudi heirs by ARAMCO.

Immediate source of acquisition: Received from ARAMCO, 1972.

Related Units of Description:

In the MEC Archive
- GB165-0201 Norman Mayers Papers: Box 2 File 2 Letter from Philby to Norman Mayers
- GB165-0211 Mott-Radclyffe: Richard Mumford Brief Outline of his experiences in Transjordan when confidential secretary to Philby

In other repositories
- Royal Geographical Society: Archon code 0402: Correspondence, journals and papers relating to travel in Arabia, 1924-1955. Reference HSP. The catalogue to this collection is available from Access to Archives http://www.a2a.pro.gov.uk/ cited online 4 March 2003.
- Stanford University, Hoover Institution on War Revolution and Peace Archon Code 1113: Correspondence with Elizabeth Riefstahl, 1933-1960. Reference NUC MS 72-1486
- Trinity College, Cambridge: Material relating to Philby’s university career.

Finding aids: In Guide; Handlist

FILE AND ITEM LEVEL DESCRIPTION OF THE HARRY ST JOHN PHILBY COLLECTION

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1/1  Diary: Transjordan vol.1  28 Nov 1921 - 9 Mar 1922
     Diary: Transjordan vol. 2  10 Mar 1922 - 2 Apr 1922
1/2a Diary: Transjordan  3 Apr 1922 - 1 May 1922 (2 copies)
     Diary: Transjordan  8 July 1922 - 27 Sept 1922
1/2b Diary: Transjordan  Duplicates of 3 April 1922- 1 May 1922
     23 July 1922- 27 Sept 1922
     8 July 1922 –27 Sept 1922
     Diary of 1922 trip to Qurayyat al-Milh, al-Jauf
     Travel diary 1923 (Transjordan)
1/3  Diary: Transjordan  1 Jan 1924 – 5 Mar 1924
     5 Mar 1924- 31 July 1924

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2/4  Philby: Articles on Transjordan

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3/2  Philby’s correspondence with Colonial Office and Palestine Govt. on his emoluments as C. BR. Transjordan
3/3  Philby’s visit to Syria, April 1922
     Letter to Lord Astor of 22 May 1924 on Hejaz Railway

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Conditions in Transjordan 1927
Conditions in Jordan 1955

3/4 King Hussein’s visit to Transjordan (Jan 1924)
Emir Abdullah’s visit to England (Oct 1922)
Emir Abdullah’s visit to Palestine (1922 and 1923)

3/5 Elizabeth Monroe: “Transjordan; Philby’s version of his own affairs”

3/6 Diaries: Persia 23 July 1921-16 Aug 1921
Persia: Account of a journey from Hamadan to Karind via Sennah
Philby: Notes on Persian literature

3/7 Persian Gulf treaties 1820-1900

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4/3 Philby’s memos. as Revenue Officer, Basra, 1916-1917

4/4 Papers on the Amara district, Feb-May 1917

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5/4 Sayyid Talib al-Naqib: Letters and papers, 1919-1925
5/5 W.S. Blunt: Letters to Philby and a memo on a settlement in Mesopotamia
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Unpublished book: Arabian Mandates

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<td>Sharqieh Ltd.: Correspondence between Philby and the Directors</td>
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Shelved in Cupboard II

- Islam in England and correspondence with Muslims living in the West.
- Socal and Aramco
- Islamic texts [Philby’s studies in Arabic and Persian]
- British clubs and societies
- Clubs and societies in R.G.S India

**Published books, MSS and proofs:**

- Notes for a history of Arabia
MS and correspondence of Pilgrim in Arabia
Correspondence on Forty years in the Wilderness Arabian Highlands
MSS and correspondence of Heart of Arabia
Arabia of the Wahabis
Poetry MSS and correspondence
MSS and correspondence of Haroun al Rashid
Background of Islam
Book reviews; correspondence with publishers; correspondence on Land of Midian, Saudi Arabia
Correspondence on Arabian Days, Arabian Mandates, Empty Quarter, Arabian Jubilee, Sheba’s daughters (plus part of a second MS of this)
MS of Mesopotage
File of correspondence with Encyclopaedia Britannica

Shelved in Cupboard III

AUB; American Legation
British politics
Travel, epigraphy notebooks, visiting cards
Entomology, Mammals
Botany, Geology, Astronomy
Ornithology
Articles and correspondence with newspapers
Journalism (misc.) and broadcasting
Correspondence with friends (general)
Correspondence with friends (Donald Robertson, Dorothy Ousman, Elisabeth Riestahl, Tracy Philipps, Bayky Winder, R. Said-Reute)
Report on the operations of the Najd Mission, 29 Oct 1917- 1 Nov 1918 (pencil draft)
Najd Mission: Accounts and financial correspondence, 1918-1926
Najd Mission: Correspondence. 3 bound vols.
Diary of political mission to Central Arabia, 1917-1918. 5 vols
Misc and minor files (French translations from Arabic etc)
Misc. and minor correspondence (4 boxes)
Houses
Personal finance
Presscuttings (only partially arranged)