

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Political and personal correspondence, memos, travel diaries, exploration reports, engagement books, published and unpublished literary MSS: Transjordan, Iraq, Palestine, Arabia, including correspondence and minutes of meetings of Sharqieh Ltd.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

Archivist's note: Fonds level description created by C. Brown 27 July 1999 and revised by D. Usher 9 October 2003.

**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)	
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2/3	Transjordan: general correspondence
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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

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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- 4/1 (Gertrude Bell) Arab Bureau, Basra
The Muntafik
Arab aims
Pacification of the tribes
- 4/2 Philby's Mission to Simla, July 1916
- 4/3 Philby's memos. as Revenue Officer, Basra, 1916-1917
- 4/4 Papers on the Amara district, Feb- May 1917
- 4/5 Memo and telegrams re Euphrates Line, 1917
Note on district of Suq al-Shuyukh, (1917)
Note of a tour from Amara to Swaib, 1917
Bonham-Carter: Memo on admin. of civil justice in the Baghdad vilayet
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- 5/1 Iraq: diary for 5th-23rd October 1920
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- 5/3 Draft mandate from Mesopotamia/Syria
Correspondence with League of Nations Union
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Letters to Philby re Mesopotamia from MPs
- 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
- 5/6 Cotton growing in Iraq
- 5/7 Note on the proposed railway and pipeline from the Mediterranean to Iraq
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Military administration: control of supplies, 1916-1917

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- Electoral law of Iraq
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- 6/3 Arab rebellion 1920
Persian affairs
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Papers on the future of Mesopotamia, 1919-1920
- 6/5 Iraq: Appointment of Sir Percy Cox as High Commissioner, 1920
Feisal's candidature for the throne of Iraq, 1920-1921
- 6/6 Iraq Sept/Oct 1920-Jan 1921
- 6/7 Iraq: General correspondence
- 6/8 Electoral Law of Iraq

BOX 7

Unpublished book: Stepping Stones in Jordan
Unpublished book: Arabian Mandates

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Unpublished book: Mesopotage
Unpublished book: Mines of Midian
Unpublished book: More Arabian Days (2 chapters)

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Unpublished book: The Legend of Lijman
Unpublished book: Simon Peters Out

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- 10/1 Palestine: correspondence 1920-1929
- 10/2 Palestine: correspondence 1929-1960
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Notebook 'C' Mecca-Riyadh, Taif-Shifa 9 Aug 1931- 18 Oct 1931
Notebook 'D' Mecca-Riyadh, A....-Dahna, 23 Oct 1931- 3 Jan 1932

- 12/4 Proposed Rub' al-Khali trip 1925
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- 14/5 Philby: Various articles on exploration and travel in Arabia
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- Philby: letters and articles about T.E. Lawrence
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Unboxed (Cupboard I)

Bound diary of a visit to the Hijaz	20 Oct 1926- 6 June 1931
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42/6 Correspondence concerning Philby's conversion to Islam
42/7 Saudi Arabia: Social customs
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Shelved in Cupboard II

Islam in England and correspondence with Muslims
living in the West.
Social 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 Mesopotamia
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 Riefstahl, 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)