

Colonel CHARLES HENRY DUDLEY RYDER

Letters late 1913 - 1914.

These letters begin in India and conclude with his time on the Turco-Persian Boundary Commission and journey home through Russia. I have appended an historical note on the work of the Commission and on his colleagues Wratislaw, Wilson and Minorsky (from Wikipedia). Place names and family names are in bold for ease of reference.

Ida continued in India with Margaret and Enid when Charlie went as surveyor to the Boundary Commission.

2nd December 1913, Grange Lodge, Dehra Dun: My own sweet darling, I've practically finished my packing and can give you a few minutes. Yesterday I had tea with the Turners & saw a lot of Col. Bythell. He said he was going to ask you all to a Xmas dinner at the Bengal Club. Tell **Enid** she should chaff him & that sort of thing, he likes it. I had lunch with the Chases. She is immense, about twice the size you used to be. Chase he hoped you'd call on his sister. I forget her name, 52 Chowringher, and Tandy said you must call on his sister, Mrs Ogilvie, 1 Alipore Lane; & you are authorised to pass the box if it is up. I had hope for a letter this morning, but none came, so perhaps I shall get one at **Karachi**. My throat &c is all perfectly well again & I start off feeling very fit. Major & Mrs Mathews (the one with tall hats who used to take our pew) are travelling by our train en route to **Quetta**. I have taken on a night of the broom (?) & two Persian Interpreters. Mrs L. C. has been making me a quilt, or rather rezai¹ to sleep on, and Mrs Cowie has provided me with a bag filled with needles & cottons. Now, darling, goodbye my pet. I adore you. Heaps of love & kisses, from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

5th December, Karachi: My own sweet darling, I got yours of 2nd Dec today; the last I shall get for a long time. I don't know how I got here so quick. We have been very busy all day & only got back for tea. At the shipping agents a long time checking our things, 104 packages besides our own stuff we have got at the hotel. We have to be down for quarantine examination by about 12, but don't sail till the evening, as soon as the Bombay mail comes in. I am so sorry about your luggage. Why didn't you at once write to Col. Browne R.E. He is the manager of the railway. But darling, when you send things on, send those you are not in a hurry for. However, if you have had to get things in **Calcutta** you must get less from home. What you want to get new hats before you have even worn the others, goodness only knows. I knew what it would be the moment you got near shops, it will be a constant spending of money & far from my being able to save anything to go home on, we shall soon spend all we have got from sales. Forgive a grouse.

My room is a regular litter of things we have bought & have to be packed. I shall be glad to be off & have a few days rest, our boat is very small, 1,200 tons. We go to **Muscat** first, then to **Bushire**, then to **Mohammerah**. I've had the red peep (?) hole in the camera put right & got 4 more rolls of films. I hoped I should get one amorous line from you, but no! that is all over! **Karachi** is such a curious place. The town is right back 2 miles from the sea with a sort of causeway leading out to the real port. It is not a place anyone would stop at for pleasure.

Now darling, goodbye & God bless you & all our darlings. Heaps of love & kisses from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

8th December, SS Cola: My own sweet darling, We are nearing **Muscat**, having come across straight west from **Karachi** to the Arabian coast, a very calm passage. We came on board on 6th Dec. but owing to the mail (English) from **Bombay** being late the passengers off that boat came on in the middle of the night which made things rather noisy & disturbed. However, next morning we met them. Mr Wratislaw is a charming man, keen on shooting & wants to have as good a time as possible, ready to agree to all my suggestions and we shall get on. He is about 50 & has been

¹ A Persian carpet.

Consul at **Basrah & Tabriz** & last Consul General in Crete. Rather short & spare with a pleasant clear face. He is accompanied by a Mr Hubbard as his Secretary, also in the Consular Service, about 30, very pleasant, rather the young blood of the party so far. They are both married. Everything points to our being a very happy party. We have already started with maps, discussing things. Wratislaw & I agree that it will take 18 months. We shall go as far as we can north from **Mohammerah** till it gets too hot, then march up north & do the high ground during the summer down to about half way, and then join up with our first work next winter. The Russians are coming out by a steamer direct via **Aden** & will be out about the same time as we are. The Turks & Persians may be delayed so we don't expect to get away from **Mohammerah** till 15th January. M Minorsky the Russian Commissioner has just married hence the delay in starting, as she is coming out too, only 19. Wratislaw knows her well & says she is a very nice girl & has promised to mend all our things. However I fancy she will clear out when the weather gets hot. Cowie & I have been doing accounts all day. We can see the coast of Arabia ahead looking very barren. We shall not really settle things till we get to **Mohammarah**. I see we shall have a pretty strenuous time before we have finished, and once we get to land I'll write you good long letters. Heaps of love & kisses from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

Love to the girls. If you spend too much money you will all have to go home.

8th December, **SS Cola**: My darling Violet, we left **Karachi** on 6th Dec. during the night. The mail boat from Bombay came up & put passengers on board during the night which was disturbing to sleep. Our party is gradually collecting, as Capt. Pierrepoint, our doctor was already on board and Mr Wratislaw, the Commissioner, Mr Hubbard, his Secretary came up by the mail from Bombay. They are all very pleasant and I think we shall get on excellently together, which is a good thing as we shall be 18 months together. There will be Russians, Turks & Persians so we shall be a large party. The present idea is to do as much of the low country as possible this winter, and then march up to the north & do the high ground from **Mount Ararat** southwards during the summer, & then finish up next winter. We are now nearing **Muscat** on the Arabian coast & can see the high mountains behind it. There is a Sultan of Muscat but his people have revolted & he only holds the town. So we have a regiment of native infantry there to help him, the 102nd Grenadiers. We have had it beautifully calm. We land our only lady passenger, a missionary, who came down the Gulf from **Basrah**, but couldn't land as it was so rough; so she was taken on to **Karachi** & now is coming back again. Tell Jean (*Cowie*) her Father is sitting alongside of me on deck, also writing. Much love & heaps of kisses my darling to you all, from your loving Father.

30th December, **Mohammerah**: My own sweet darling, I find it hard to find time for writing & the only way will be to try & get a bit done each day. I have just written to mother to thank her & Blanche for the socks & hankies & also to tell her my news. On Sunday 4 of us went out for a shoot, Wratislaw, Brooke, Dyer (who is here studying Persian & may come as transport officer) & myself. We went by boat, a long sort of canoe, called a "bellem", down river a mile & then up behind an island & landed on the Turkish side. However we got onto the wrong ground I fancy, saw very few birds. Shot only 2 & I never had a shot. So we came back early to tea, & while we were having tea M & Mme Minorski & the two Russian survey officers came to call. Then it came on to pour with rain & rained most of that night & next morning & the whole camp was a swamp, awful mud. However it is drying fairly quickly.

Yesterday, 29th I did accounts all the morning & after lunch crossed the **Karun** to find a way for a traverse line through the miles of palms onto the desert from where one can see the chimneys of the oil place at **Abadan**. That afternoon my head Kahlassi² Niaz died from pneumonia which he got when with me at **Fao**, a great blow as he was a most useful man & was with me in **Tibet**. I couldn't start my traverse today as he is being buried, so I had a long discussion with Wratislaw & Wilson about the work. One of the difficulties is that M Minorski has brought his two survey officers here

² Khalassi is an Arabic word which means dockyard worker, sailor &c.

without any Khalassis or cossacks they use. They want to do something, but when I say all right will you do this or that bit he then says they haven't the men. This afternoon I am starting my traverse to the river bank & Wratislaw is coming with me as I want him to know exactly how we work & he is anxious to know. Our mules arrive about the 4th & then we shall have parties out. Mr Wratislaw is a most charming man & we get on capitally. He said today he thought I was very conciliatory towards the Russians as I offered to lend them Khalassis &c.

1st Jan: Darling, a happy new year to you all. Yesterday I spent out at work from 9 to 5. I traversed through the palms across the **Karun River**, much admired by a lot of dirty Arabs. & then I fixed the oil chimneys at **Abadan**. I wanted to go down there again today, but I have to attend a conference at 3 pm. so I shall observe at our base. Another of my men is down with pneumonia, caught from Niaz. It is a great nuisance as it gives all the men the idea that they will undergo frightful hardships instead of which the climate now is absolute perfection. My pony has been bought, cost Rs133, on condition I don't sell it to a native. It is 16 years old, but will do me all right. I've just finished my accounts for last month & am Rs170 to the good here, not counting my pay. I shall, I think, tell Grindlay to send Rs300 a month to Grindlay, Bombay, which my bit of my pay (*sic*) & I want to draw cheques on Bombay. Bye the bye as soon as you know when you are going to **Simla**, ask Mr Field about changing my pay bill to be drawn at Simla, only let me know, and please see that Grindlay, Calcutta are remitting money home properly. It should have been £50 on 1st Dec. & £45 each month after, but I have had no intimation that they have done so as I told them to send them to you. The mail comes in today.

2nd Jan: I got a wire from Cowie yesterday that he was stuck up down the river by his launch having broken down, and I was going down today to see how he was getting on, when my launch couldn't get started, so I got out & sent him down a note instead, with some rations. Then I spent the rest of the day with accounts. The Shaikh of Mohammerah came to pay Wratislaw a visit for the New Year. He is an Arab & came with a tag rag of an escort, but I only got back just as he had left. We are having glorious weather, not a cloud in the sky. Very delighted to get yours' & M's³ letters of Dec. 23. You seem to be having a very fine time. Sorry I do a grumble now & then about expense, it is however a good discipline for you. I have written to Grindlay, Calcutta today to say: (1) That they are to send Rs300 to Grindlay, Bombay, monthly on receipt of my pay bill, beginning with beginning of January when they receive my Dec. pay bill. (2) That they are to remit home £45 every month on receipt of my pay bill. They will tell you how much that costs, it varies slightly, & you must deduct that & the Rs300 in your counterfoil of cheque book each month.

3rd Jan: Been out all day surveying & only just back in time for the post. I'm feeling very fit & I feel so happy to think you are all having such a good time. Our dinner party all men went off well. We got to bed after 1. Tonight we have two ladies so shall dress. Darling, I adore you & wish to God you were with me & in my arms. I miss you dreadfully. Heaps of love & kisses from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

6th January 1914, Mohammerah: My own sweet darling, We had a long day out yesterday. Wilson, Hubbard and I went by launch up the **Shatt el Arab** to **Diaiji** about 11 miles from here & where the boundary is to leave the river & start northwards. Our object was to find where the boundary lay & select a spot for the first pillar. We did that all right then the headman asked us to lunch & we had to wait a long time for it, rice, soup, chicken, quite good & most excellent coffee. We washed hands before & after. However by that time it was 3.30, and as our boat came along so slowly, the channel being very shallow, we decided to walk in & got back at 7. Cowie had a somewhat similar day in another direction. Then after dinner we shot stars till 12. We are polishing off the inhabitants of **Mohammerah** gradually at dinner. On Friday we had Major & Mrs Haworth, he is Consul here. Mrs Murphy, her husband is in the I.B. & has gone up to **Baghdad**. She said she went home with you n the "Rewa" or the "Dongola", whichever it was. We generally play bridge

for a rubber or two after dinner. I usually win & they all think it is on account of the cards, but it really is because when they have good hands I bid them up till they say more than they can do. My Dec. mess bill came to Rs95 for half a month. I have a pony, an old respectable animal. I have been collecting stamps (*of*) India off parcels & sending them home. I fancy they would like 1/- & 12/- ones. I've come to the end of my cheroots & started a pipe. It burns my mouth at present.

7th Jan: I was out all yesterday morning running a traverse line out towards **Diaiji** where we were the other day, till I came to a canal which I couldn't cross so came back. The irrigation here is all tidal, that is when the tide is high all the side creeks are full & they irrigate from them & that forms the limit of how far in they can grow palms. I have started making sheet No 1 & 2 to replace the old identic (*sic*) maps from **Fao** up to **Diaiji** & hope to have it ready before we leave here. Cowie is A1 for hard work, but he loves doing unnecessary work to make anything unnecessarily accurate. I am in great hopes we may be let off income tax but I may have to draw my pay in Bombay, or rather here & send it to Bombay, so as not draw it in India.

9th Jan: I have suddenly to take a chance of going up to **Ahwaz** today for 3 days & so am rushed. Yours of 3rd. Arrived yesterday. Darling, if I were you I'd drop the Robertson discussion, it only worries you and although they have behaved badly, very, I was to a certain extent in the wrong in not getting it definite from General Gordon that I could sublet. I did mention it to his agent, but what I mean is that it is pointless going on with the discussion with people like that. Ask Mr Dentith to take over the things they don't want to have & sell them for what they will fetch. Heaps of love and kisses my pet from your adoring lover and husband. Charlie.

27th January, Mohammerah: My own sweet darling, We started the frontier on 25th by going in a Turkish gunboat down to **Fao** & back. It had already been arranged that the river was to be Turkish & the frontier was to follow the left or Persian bank only coming out into the river to include some islands. These were not on the old map so I had had (*sic*) put them on & we just looked at them. I said 'There is the island' & everyone agreed. The Turks gave us lunch. The Captain had the principal one in his cabin, the four Commissioners & myself. The lunch was rather good, soup, roast fowl, a pillau, only water to drink. The amusing show was at **Fao**. We landed & got on top of the Telegraph Office to look for some point on the opposite bank where it could be said the river ended & it was that it should be 2 miles below a fort, a residence of the Sheikh Haji Sultan. Then all we had to do was to take a compass bearing quite roughly in case in years to come some other fort was built & there might be doubt which it was. Well I took it & everyone looked and said 'Yes that's right,' except the old Persian who had to take it from about 6 different places & got frightfully excited when the compass stopped swinging & he could read it. On our way back we had to stop 3 miles short of here, as the Turkish Captain felt he couldn't navigate his boat right up, so we were rowed up by Turkish sailors & got in about 7. Now I have to put the boundary on the map. Cowie & most of the Survey Party went off yesterday to **Ahwaz** & tonight I have to do Longitude observations with him. All the afternoon there is to be a Gymkhana races (*sic*) for the men &c.

28th Jan: The Gymkhana went off very well. I was judge. The only pony race I gave a dead heat. This morning we went to call on the Turks who are in camp across the river & this afternoon I (*sentence not finished*).

31st Jan: Very rushed. I note down things as I think. We start tomorrow & return on 5th. Yes please send Miss Fenn at once a cheque for £20. Dearest I have been up till midnight the last two nights observing & up at 7 am. working & I'm pretty well tired. However I must give you a description of our day out on 29th. Having finished the river up to here, we had to do the river from here to **Diaiji** about 18 (?) miles up where the frontier leaves the river. We went up in a Persian river steamer, the Karun belonging to the Shaikh of Mohammerah, a very slow boat. About 5 miles from here we got out to follow up the **Khaiyim Canal**. First two pillars were erected at the mouth. Our steam launch towed up the bellems for a bit, then they were pushed along. Finally we had to get out & walk through the date palms. As this entailed jumping ditches or walking across them by single palm

trees laid across, everyone was soon laughing & very informal. When we got to the point we erected a pillar & a poor sheep was sacrificed, the Persian read a speech in French & then we adjourned to the most enormous lunch I have ever seen provided by the Sheikh, in a large tent laid on the floor of beautiful carpets on white table cloths, 5 whole sheep, huge dishes of pillaos a yard across & piled up, altogether I think 250 dishes. After we had finished, all the followers, cossacks &c went in & finally the Arabs. It really was a most interesting day. The moment I got back here I had to start observing & got dinner at 10. Oh! I forgot the most curious thing was a negro walked about among the dishes ladling out the food & tearing off bits of the sheep. I confined myself to roast chicken & pillao. My dear you would not envy Mme Minorsky. They live in the Arab town. Oh! the stink, it's worse than **Lhassa** (*sic*), no sanitary arrangements to put it politely. I've just been down to the oil company office to talk with Cowie on the telephone.

My darling I'm so sorry my letters are so short, but with Cowie away I have to do everything & it's pretty hard work. It has turned cold again, but I'm afraid it won't last long. My big tent which is 14' x 14' comes with us & I shall have the use of it in standing camps. Otherwise I use my 9' x 8' Khakhi (*sic*) tent. Thank you for sending me the amount Grindlay had in hand. You can go on drawing on what they have till it is exhausted. It is rather a score if I can get out of paying income tax. It will be nearly Rs60/- a month. There has been a professional photographer round here taking groups. I will send you some as soon as they are printed. We got back here on 5th Feb. starting tomorrow for our trip into the desert. We go up the **Karun** by steamer for a day, camp on the bank, then I guide the party to a ruin (?) 20 miles out, where we camp & where the frontier makes a right angle bend, then next day we go along Latitude 31° guided by me to a big marsh & put up a pillar & then sleep there & return in 3 days. I still advise you to let the Robertson row drop & enjoy life. Heaps of love & kisses my darling. From your ever adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

Love to the girls.

What did Auntie Chict (?) give me. I've got to hunt through all your letters to see.

4th February 1914, In the desert: My own sweet darling, We are out in the middle of the desert in the most miserable conditions you can imagine, but still very cheerful. However to begin at the beginning, we left **Mohammerah** on the 1st at 7 am. on board the river steamer "Malamie" towing a barge. The Turks & Persians slept on board, & we had to get up at 5.30 to pack up &c. we steamed slowly up the **River Karun** all day having our meals on board & reached our destination **Sabah** at 9.30 pm. quite dark. Here we found Dyer & the mules with the tent pitched. He has been attached temporarily as transport officer. We got into bed pretty soon & next morning had to start early. Wratishlaw & I share a tent a 9' x 8' Cabul, my Khakhi one. He is a very jolly companion. We got here by about 12, 15 miles on the banks of a depression containing about a foot of muddy water & about a ¼ mile long & some 5 miles short of **Kushki Basra**, an old ruin which we can see from our camp. I rode my pony, an old dear, goes along well & stands still when I dismount. After lunch we rode out & began to put up pillars & were not back till after dark. Next day we had a similar day, out all day putting up pillars. The old Persian (he is Surveyor General) insisted on going over my line, but had to admit it was right. We had two lines to lay out at right angles. I went out with a Turk & Russian on one. We really had rather fun, talking broken French. Last night it began to rain & rained off & on today. When we woke up we were like in a sea, only an inch or two deep, but water all round us, so we couldn't move. We went out for a walk in the morning & also in the afternoon, & I fancy must move tomorrow for want of food &c. Wratishlaw & I are sitting on our beds on opposite sides of a shaky little table writing. Our party here consists of Wratishlaw, Wilson, myself, Dyer of the English, Minorski the Russian Commissioner, Capt Tsakaya the Russian surveyor, they mess with us. The Turks have Aziz Sam Bey, their Commissioner & Kadri Bey one of their surveyors, a nice young fellow who calls me "Mon Excellence" & the Persians have Manzur el Sultan, their Deputy Commissioner, Salar Muzaffir, military adviser, the old Persian SG Abdul Rezek Khan & his assistant. The Persian SG everyone looks on as a nuisance. He wants to

measure everything most minutely. The whole of this desert must have been thickly populated hundreds of years ago.

6th Feb: Here we are back in **Mohammerah**. We rode 15 miles in yesterday to the **Karun** & just caught our steamer. We were all vaccinated some time ago as one of the escort followers died from small pox, mine took mildly. I also had accident with my ring. It caught on an iron bit of my bed, on my finger & broke, so I have had to put it away.

Private: I have had to kick out Aziz as the doctor found he was suffering from a certain disease. I have taken on a Persian in his place, who was with Wilson before, he seems quite useful, his failing is getting drunk occasionally. I only got a very weary letter from you this mail. Of 27th Jan. will you please address to me: Turco Persian Boundary Commission, c/o H.B.M. Consul, Basra, Persian Gulf.

I heard from Miss Fenn last mail that she was overdrawn. I asked you to send her a cheque for £20. I hope you have done so, but please do so at once. I have also sent a letter to Cox telling them to remit her £20, she will want both. I have also told her that when she wants more money, she must write to you & tell you how much. When we leave here it will take too long for letters to reach me to do any business. I heard from Field that my January's pay bill was drawn at Calcutta, before my letter about the income tax was received. I will let you know as soon as I know myself, whether my money will be drawn by Grindlay, Calcutta, or send by me from here to Grindlay, Bombay. Anyhow the former have plenty in hand, so you can go on drawing there comfortably for a good long time yet.

7th Jan (Feb): I spent all the morning over at the Russians drawing in the frontier line and the pillars as far as they have been settled. Didn't get back till after 3. Darling, don't forget that your rooms at **Simla** are taken from the 20th March, and if you don't want to go up so early you should let the manager, Hotel Cecil know, but anyhow be up there by 1st April. I agreed to take the rooms anyhow for 3 months. You will I think find them very luxurious. Write & ask Capt. Macleod if he would kindly send a Chaprassi⁴ to meet your train to show you the way. Walk to the hotel, it is only about 10 minutes. We all dined at the Haworth's, the Consul, last night. 13 men & 1 lady, Mrs H. Of the photos I am sending you by this post, send some to the children, writing names at back & one of the survey group to **Una & Mary**. I'll send you more of those taken at the first pillar next mail of the whole Commission. Darling, I'm feeling very good, but adore you. Heaps of love & kisses, from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

Love to the girls.

8th February, Mohammerah: My own sweet darling, We spent all the morning with the Russians at a conference, and it was decided that we should all meet again at **Um Chir**, 7 marches from here on the 24th. So we leave here next Saturday the 14th. It will be pretty long marching, mostly over desert., but we want to be there before the others. The great thing is that we get a move on from here.

11th Feb: I've been repacking all my things, not only my own, but the Survey kit as well, with the result that I have come down to my Gladstone bag & one mule trunk for my personal kit, which I think is pretty good. Wearing Khaki is a great thing. I am sending you another set of photos of groups by the professionals. He is sending them to the Times of India & some home papers. I am anxiously waiting to know how my first roll of my own films turned out. If they are a success I shall go on, if not I shall chuck it. It has begun to rain again, a horrid nuisance as it makes the ground so hong (*heavy?*) & greasy. My pony is an old dear, goes along well & stands perfectly still when I want him to. There have been two sad things happen. One Mr Lorimer ICS the Consul General at **Bushire**, ie. our head man for the whole Persian Gulf, was found shot through the heart in his room with the revolver on his table; supposed to be an accident. The other was that the Captain of one of

4 Messenger boy.

the small steamers at **Basra** was murdered by Arabs, some of the town bundmashes (?), because the Arabs about here in the desert seem very pleasant. We all went & had lunch with the son of the Prime Minister. However it was all English & so disappointed. We also last night had a farewell dinner at the oil company's bungalow & not in bed till 1 am. Wratlaw has gone up to **Basra** for the night to say goodbye to the Crows & other friends. I'm afraid the rain will have been delaying Cowie in his triangulation. I do hope you will be successful in your tennis. What a pity you couldn't have, what's his name, the young gunner as a partner. I'm trying a new pair of boots today to get them into good walking condition. The country round here is just like the Suez Canal, except for the quantities of palm trees along the rivers. The mail comes in tomorrow. After this letter I shall certainly miss a mail & not be able to write very regularly, although Wilson has a good bandobast⁵ for dak⁶. Wratlaw and Hubbard cut my hair 2 days ago, rather well, the former has a mowing machine. Wratlaw is 52. I am 45. Cowie 40. Brooke, Wilson & Dyer 29. Hubbard 28. Dyer has been attached as transport officer, a merry cheery fellow, belonging to the 93rd Punjabi's. He is very bald. My Persian servant, Ali Khan by name is quite useful. He suggested going to his home, however he has made up his mind to stay. I pay him 9 Tomans⁷ a month. There are 10 Krans in a Toman, and 3.7 Krans make a rupee, so his pay is about Rs24 a month, but I don't give him rations. To Sirdar Ali my other man I give Rs30/- & -4/- a day for rations. He is quite a good old man. So this is about what I live on: Persian servant 24/-. Sirdar Ali 37/8. Mess bill 240.

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|--------------------|---------|------------------------|--------------|
| Brought forward | 301-8-0 | Barber | 1-0-0 |
| Aziz's ticket back | 34-8-0 | Stamps & postage | 7-4-6 |
| Cheroots | 19-8-0 | Burial expense of Niaz | 8-15-0 |
| Steamer to Awaz | 20-0-0 | Dhobi | <u>2-0-0</u> |
| Boot polish | 6-0-0 | | 400-11-6 |

& it will get less as we go out. At present our messing costs Rs200 a month & we each pay Rs40 towards a mess fund to accumulate money.

I draw ½ J.G. ie. 5/- a day or Rs150 a month & in exchange for the other half get my transport & syee (?) & pony's food.

13th Feb: We are all ready to start tomorrow & after some rain the night before last today is a perfect day, warm sun & everything drying fast. I was so disappointed, after 4 lines from you last week, to get nothing at all from you yesterday. Darling, it is a little rough on me. Luckily I got a good letter from **Margaret** from **Dacca**. You really should make **Enid** write regularly. Once a fortnight is not too much to write to her father. It is delightful to get off, but as we shall be marching straight away from here for a week, it will be more than a fortnight before I hear again. I'm afraid I shall have to give up trying to know how we stand financially. It seems to me such a simple thing, once a month for you to send a list of cheques you have drawn, but apparently it is too much for you. Have you any idea what you are spending? We have altogether got over 200 baggage mules, & when all four missions are moving together we shall be a fine crowd. I am feeling very fit, but have become very good! Heaps of love & kisses, from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

I am sending you another roll of films. If those first ones were successful, please order 6 more rolls of 6 for a 3A Kodak, 2 tins Williams Shaving Sticks & one box (3 tablets) of Pear's soap. Also order from Messrs. Lawrence & Mayo, Calcutta, 3 eyeglasses 5.5. Mention my name as they have my previous order in November. Pay for these & do it as soon as possible. Anything sent V.P.P. will be delayed.

5 An arrangement to deal with something.

6 A mail delivery system.

7 Persian currency.

16th February: My own sweet darling, We have so far done 3 marches & although it is dead flat, they have been pretty tiring: 21, 23½ & 20¼ miles. We have been following up the **Karun River** camping each night near it, on account of the water. Although on the march one leaves the river & goes straight as it winds so much. Our first camp was at **Rahwali**, 2 miles from what is called locally **Reuben's Tomb**, Reuben the son of Jacob. Though on what evidence I know not. Yesterday at **Kajarieh** & today **Um Tumair**, these are just Arab villages. We have had a steam launch towing up spare supplies & also sick man. The Sawy (?) det: supplied a good number this morning with blisters (?). It is monotonous work marching over a desert. I walk & ride alternately. Yesterday I gave up my pony to a Khalassi with a sore foot, with the result that he has a bruise on his back, like Black Swan, but it is expected to be all right in 2 or 3 days. Today Wilson lent me a pony, a big white one, very pleasant to ride. The launch goes back from here, so it is a chance to get letters off. To save time packing Pierpoint & I share a tent, my 9' x 8' one. We go to bed at 9, up at 6, & breakfast at 6.45 & start about 7.15. It is lovely in the early morning & then warms up. We saw enormous flights of sand grouse, looking like a dust storm, but couldn't get near them. Tomorrow we have another 20 mile march, leaving the **Karun** on reaching **Kharkha**, west from here, on 18th march 5 miles & cross the river & on 19th & 20th two marches down its right bank in N.W. direction to **Um Chir** where all the Commissions are to meet again, but we shall be several days ahead to get on with the survey work. I am feeling very fit & very sunburnt, I just had a look at myself. We generally get in by 1 or 2 o'clock, have lunch & settle down in our tents. We have a neat little camp, laid out in lines. My Survey Khakhi tents look very smart. I wear Khakhi uniforms, does Wilson & Brooke, the others plain clothes. Mr Wratishlaw suffers a good deal from slight sciatica. I have no survey work to do along here, it has all been done. We get very good sort of sour milk from the Arabs. Eaten with fruit it is very good. All day we had a fine view of distant snowy mountains to the north & from here we can see the low hills near **Ahwaz**. Pierpoint has two such nice dogs, Sheila & Mick, her son. The latter a great overgrown lout of 4 months, a sort of Red Irish setter. He rides on the top of a mule. My bottle of oil of cloves broke in my bag, so I am powdered (?) with a pleasant smell. Pierpoint looks after our mess & does it well. He is very particular about all the water being boiled. Darling, goodbye & God bless you. Heaps of love & kisses, from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

Love to the girls.

17th February: My own sweet darling, Today we marched close on 22 miles, straight across the desert. Nothing to see except some occasional low sand hills. Away far to the north one could see the snows of the **Bakhtian Hills**. After 18 miles we struck the **Kharkha River**, having already crossed its old bed, as it changed its course many years ago. We followed it down 4 miles & then had a great crossing, getting everything over in a couple of hours, with the help of a crowd of Arabs & 25 boats, the horses & mules swimming.⁸ Now we are encamped on the river bank with the village of **Kut Saiyid Ali** just below. The river is about 80 yards wide, deep with a fair current. Wratishlaw suffering a good deal from rheumatism, otherwise all well, but the doctor has a good deal to do with men with sore feet &c. Tomorrow we halt a day, as our marches have been 21½, 23½, 20½ & 21½, ie. 87 miles in 4 days, pretty good going. Cowie is said to be at **Um Chir** 37 miles on. I had a good bath & just had a vermouth & feel comfortable waiting for dinner. I walk a bit more each day & feel jolly fit. We saw more huge flights of sand grouse & 1 snipe, but no chance of shooting.

20th Feb: We halted at **Kut Saiyid Ali** on the 18th & that night we had a good storm of wind & rain. One of my tent poles broke at 2.30 am. so I called up my men & moved over to the Doctor's tent. Wilson's ridge pole was broken too, & as the tents were sopping wet & the ground a swamp we decided to halt another day. Pierpoint, Hubbard went off for a partridge shoot & got 6 birds. I got 0. Today Wratishlaw & I went down by boat. The march was only 10 miles, so we stopped & shot in

8 See G. E. Hubbard, From the Gulf to Ararat page 68. (Wm Blackwood & Sons 1916. Reprinted by Asian Educational Services 2003.)

scrub jungle near the banks & got 8 partridges. Got 1. He is a very good shot. He also shot a wild cat. We are in camp about a mile from the river with a marsh in between. Quite nice turf, with a lot of small white flowers. North of us are small bare hills & far away the snows. It is beautiful weather. I am so glad to have my sweater & thick Norfolk jacket.

23rd Feb:⁹ On 20th evening as I was writing, a man came in with a message that there were wild pig in the marsh, so we sallied out. Brooke with a rifle, Pierpoint & I with guns. Brooke had several shots at the pig but missed. Then Pierpoint & I got onto some snipe ground & although I only had No. 4 shot, ie. for big duck, I got 6 snipe in 9 shots. He got 0. So on the 21st when the camp moves on down the river to **Bisertin**¹⁰, 18 miles, Hubbard & I stayed behind & went into the jhil¹¹ again, but we were too early for the snipe, they were very wild, however I got 6 in 12 shots. He got 1. So altogether I was very pleased with myself. Hubbard & I came down by boat, a most rickety affair, if you wi...tred it set the boat rocking. I shot a partridge en route. At **Bisertin** we found Cowie very fit & well. He had carried triangulation up to there. On 22nd we marched out here, **Um Chir**, just nothing on the marsh, camped amongst sand hills. We were out all day looking for the place where the frontier is to leave the marsh, & selecting a place for a base. Today Cowie, Abdur Rahim & I were all out at stations observing & in the afternoon I did computations & then the mail came in. Very happy with yours of 5th & 9th Feb & 1 from **Margaret**. She is a dear about writing.

I have already told you who our mission are, but here it is again. Mr A C Wratlslaw CBCMG, Commissioner; Capt A T Wilson CMG, Deputy Commissioner; Lt Col C H D Ryder DSO RE, in Charge of Survey; Major H M Cowie, Asst Survey officer; Mr G E Hubbard, Secretary; Capt Pierpoint INS, Doctor; Capt A H Brooke 18th Lancers (black), OC Escort; Capt Dyer 93rd Punjabis, Transport Officer. We have heaps of work to do. I haven't read a book since I left board ship. Darling, I would really drop the Robertson row. Just write a cold letter saying so & don't worry any more about it. The other Commissions should arrive tomorrow, but I don't know whether they will or not. Our usual hours are up at 6 am. breakfast 6.45, so you see we are not lie-a-beds. I shave every 2nd or 3rd day. We have all been cutting each other's hair.

26th Feb: On the 24th it rained most of the day, but the Russians & Persians arrived all right, but drenched & the Turks arrived yesterday. All that day Cowie & I were out at work & he has just gone off again to carry on triangulation, camping 8 miles out. I have to be on the station all morning & conference all afternoon. Darling, I can assure you we are not having an easy time. I feel very fit, but have heaps to do, and the water is beastly, salt as salt can be & that we shall have for the next 2 months, except now & again. Cowie has to do most of the outwork. I have to do conferences &c. However we are making steady progress. You must consider when it would be sound for you & the girls to go home. You will find plenty of youths hanging around, but very few marriageable ones. I think myself **Enid** is an ass not to accept Conran. Darling I must go out now.

28th Feb: I was out all day observing yesterday, then we had a farewell dinner from the the Sheikh of Mohammerah whose territory we are just going to leave, in a big tent, but after one experience they are not much fun. Then we had a conference which lasted till midnight. The Turks & Persians differ about the frontier from here to the **Typ ?Kor?** About 70 miles on, so they have to give their written arguments to the British & Russians who will settle it, but it is a very good thing, because it will be settled straight out and we shall be able to push on. After the rain it has been thunderstormy more, the air is delightfully cool & we have got better water by sending further into the marsh for it. Today, private (only for you), Wratlslaw said he thought that possibly Wilson would have to leave us opposite Baghdad to go on a railway survey job in which he is particularly interested & would it suit me if he requested my being Deputy Commissioner. I said I would be very glad to do it,

9 Compare Hubbard's account page 71ff.

10 Bisaitin.

11 A pond, marsh, lake or similar wetland area, usually with significant vegetation providing shelter and/or food to a variety of aquatic and semi-aquatic animal species.

however it is only a possibility, so keep it to yourself. I have sent on the rest of the surveyors to catch up Cowie & push on the survey as we are stopping on a day extra here & leave on March 2nd with a long 24 mile march to the **Dewarij¹² River**. I am very pleased with the way the work is getting on. The British Survey do all the surveying & everyone accepts it. Minorsky, the Russian Commissioner has come along with us. From **Ahwaz** he went off to see some ruins, about a week away & we all hope he won't catch us up for a long time. The Deputy Bilaieff is a much nicer man to work with. You should hear him & the other Russians on the nuisance of having a lady with them. Darling pet, I do miss you & long for us to be together again, but this is a good show to be on. Much love & heaps of kisses, from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

Love to the girls.

6th March, Camp on Dewarij River: My own sweet darling, We are having a pretty rough time. I sent you off my last on 28th Feb. Well that evening there was a long meeting which didn't end till midnight & it was decided that the Commissioners should start next morning & do the march here in 2 days as there was a lot of work to do. So on the 1st March we started, our march was across the plain trying to follow up the course of this river, but it split up into many channels which disappeared. We had to stick to the main one and where it failed put up pillars. Finally while Wratlaw & I were searching for the channel all the other nations cleared off into camp. We waited for over an hour, then sent in a note by sowar¹³ & got them out. However we had to follow up about 2 miles of the channel on foot & were pretty cross when they turned up again. However, the Russian Bilaieff produced some wine & water from his flask & they were all very apologetic, like naughty boys, but we made them stick to it into camp. Next day we had a very long time. We found our channel got more & more small until it finally disappeared. So it was decided to go back 1 mile, put up a pillar & draw a straight line for about 6 miles on to a place where the channel appeared again. When we got there we found a much finer channel & after discussing the affair till dark, nothing was decided & we rode into camp, in at 7 pm.

Next day we crossed at a ford & also with a raft made out of skins & oil tins. We had a conference all the morning & all the afternoon. I was at the Persians superintending everyone copying my maps. That night it rained & next day the 4th a flood came down & we had to move camp twice. The whole of our first camp was soon under water, the river rose 14 feet.¹⁴ Today it's going down, but the Russians, Persians & Turks are the other side & have to cross some time. Cowie & I have spent the time measuring a base & triangulating, with all the surveyors out at work. About every 5 minutes during the night there was a boom, as a great bit of the bank fell in. It is cloudy again this afternoon. We are short of meat & only allow it once a day, but this morning Brooke speared a pig so we shall be all right. I feel very fit but get pretty tired by the end of the day. It has been settled that we can draw our pay in India & not have to pay income tax which is a good thing, saves us Rs50 a month.

8th March: Been out all day & I have to shoot stars as soon as it is dark & also attend a conference at 8.30 pm. & march tomorrow, no time for more. Heaps of love, my darling. From your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

Love to the girls. I'm very fit.

16th March, Camp on the Tyb River: My darling **Violet**, Since my last letter to **Bobby**, I think it was, I've come on from the **Dewarij** to the **Tyb**, about 40 miles, along the foot of some low hills; no rocks in them they are all mud. We have to arrange our marches according to where there is water. The last one in here was 22 miles. We are in camp in what is quite a pretty spot, ie. pretty for these parts, as there is quite a lot of green grass & wild flowers. & from my tent I look down on the river, where it breaks through the low hills & through the gap I can see the higher ranges behind. The

12 Douerij according to Hubbard.

13 A member of an Indian cavalry regiment; a mounted orderly.

14 See Hubbard page 81f

water however is not good, very bitter. The best water is always rain water found in pools, as that really is fresh. We can from a little hill above our camp see the course of the **Tigris** by its palm trees & boats sailing on it, but it (is) over 30 miles away. We have meetings of the Commissioners most days which I have to attend to discuss the frontier on ahead. They more or less agree where it is to go for 40 miles or so on ahead & then we have to go along surveying and putting up pillars where necessary. These are sometimes masonry, sometimes earthen mounds. So far as the surveying is concerned, so far we, that is the British have done it all, but the two Russians & a Turk have gone on to **Bhagsai**¹⁵ 50 miles ahead to start from there. I got up before 6 today & went out to try & some chikor, but they were too wily for me, chikor is a red legged partridge. If we had started two months earlier we should have had a very easy time, as it is we are racing against the hot weather. The nights are still very nice. I sleep under two blankets with my tent door open. In the day time, shirt sleeves & shorts are more the style. Heaps of love & kisses to you all, my darling, from your loving Father.

16th March, Camp on the Tyb River: My own sweet darling, We have done our work up to here & leave tomorrow. Yesterday all the morning was more or less wasted over a meeting, & in the afternoon we went out & fixed two pillars, one on each side of the river. No opening medicines are required here, the water does all & more than is necessary. We march in 3 or 4 days to **Bhagsai** where we expect Dyer with more supplies & a dak, & where we shall have to halt several days as it is Persian new year on 22nd March. I have at last got the others to try & do some work, the two Russians, Capt. Tsarkhaya & Alieff & the Turk. Kadri Bey went on yesterday to do a map of round **Bhagsai**. I shall be interested to see what they will do. From here the boundary runs along the foot of these low hills, so will require very little demarcating & we shall do it quickly. Then as soon as I get to **Bhagsai** I shall send on a couple of surveyors to the next place to start work. If we had started even a month earlier it would have been all right. As it is we are having a race against the hot weather. Cowie is a great help to me. He does all the triangulation & computations at which he is very good. I attend meetings & look after the maps & surveyors. Every now & then the local Arabs fire at some of our people & then apologise, thinking we are raiders. All the survey officers take their orders from me quite willingly. Private: Wratishlaw told me he had written home recommending I should be made Deputy Commissioner if Wilson leaves us half way. Please don't mention this to anyone, as I don't want it to get to Burrard's¹⁶ ears. The weather is still quite pleasant, except on the march, mile after mile without an atom of shade is trying. I sleep under two blankets with my tent door open & in the day time generally shirt sleeves & shorts. I have taken to smoking a pipe as my cheroots have run out. We are all very fit, except that the water affects our insides a bit. Now that I don't have to pay income tax, my pay will come to about Rs2,200 of which Rs300 goes to Grindlay, Bombay and £55 home, comes to Rs675. So that leaves you Rs1,215. You should see what you have at Grindlay, Calcutta & I think you might invest a bit. As soon as you have been to receive pay with the Alliance Bank, Simla, you had better write to Grindlay, Calcutta & tell them to remit the balance, except Rs100, home to Cox & Co. I want Rs100 kept with Grindlay, Calcutta, to keep my account open there, as money may be paid in there from our Calcutta office, but there is no object in keeping unnecessarily large sums sitting doing nothing. & it would perhaps be better instead of investing to send it home to Cox & let us be on the right side of them & pay off your dress bills. Wratishlaw said that very likely I might be required to go home on duty after this show was over. That would get me home at Govt. expense, which is a good thing. I wonder if you can make any arrangement for **M & E**¹⁷ to stay out in India & you come home, but I should like (*you*) not to bring **Violet** out till **M & E** are engaged. Three girls in one family frighten men off. I see you are still making the mistake of encouraging charming subalterns without money. You must realise that men marry later in life than they used to.

15 Also Bagsaya.

16 Surveyor General of India 1911-19

17 Margaret & Enid.

6 pm. We had a long meeting this afternoon & it is decided to march 26 miles tomorrow & a long march next day to reach **Bhagsai**. We shall start very early & all the camp is agog packing up. A horrible wind is blowing everything about & filling the air with dust, but it has cooled the air. I hope you will like the hotel at **Simla**. I think you will. Mind & keep on good terms with the Burrards. Heaps of love my darling & kisses too, from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

23rd March 1914, C/o H.B.M. Consul, Basra, Persian Gulf: My own sweet darling, A dak goes off tomorrow morning, but my dear I've never found so little time for writing. I've just written to **Lisle** & sent him a lot of Turkish stamps. Since I last wrote this is what we've done. On the 17th we left the **Tyb River** & marched across desert 22 miles to **Kara Tepi**, a mound about 50 feet high. Obviously old ruins, a fort I fancy & only about 10 miles from the **Tigris**. & from the mound we could see the boats sailing on the river & also a steamer, which proved to be the mail. On the 18th we only did 10 miles to a mullah (?) just at the foot of the hills, where there was some water. That night we had a storm of wind & rain, made it quite cold & then on the 19th we marched 20 miles in here, a place called **Bhagsai**, about 4 miles from the outer low hills & disputed by Turks & Persians, & we've been 4 days here. Yesterday was the Persian New Year, so we all went to call on them & wish them a happy New Year. I was out observing yesterday & today & am now writing to you instead of having a bath. The flies here are a special sort. They don't only tease. They sting. This must have been quite a big village once, now all ruins, a little cultivation & several water channels. The water here is so hard one really gets no lather at all with soap.

I also heard from mother¹⁸, who is paying up the £80 for **Ted**¹⁹, which is a good thing. I feel sorry for poor dear mother, however she can quite afford it. But I gather **Ted** has lost his billet & I don't know what he's going to do. Now that the £80 has been paid in, Ida, pay off your dressmaker. If you want to invest money at Cox, tell them to buy Japanese 4 per cents, not 4½ per cent. If in India tell your bank to put in by thousands in fixed deposit for one year.

In another month or so I shall be able to tell you whether we shall finish this autumn or next spring. We have still got 200 miles of low ground & work will be impossible after 15th May & very unpleasant after end of April. Ida darling, don't encourage those very nice penniless boys²⁰. It is so silly to do so. If you will send me another cake, we shall be very grateful. The whole package mustn't weigh more than 11 lbs to go by parcel post. We like a rich cake with almond icing, but all ornaments only break up. The sowars are playing football in front of the camp. You know at this time of year the desert looks quite green with grass. You've never told me what happened to Black Swan. Darling, heaps of love & kisses, from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

Love to the girls. I keep so fit.

30th March 1914: My own sweet darling, Sudden rush, a dak going off & we were out at 5.30 for a couple of hours to explore the frontier. Since I last wrote we have come on another 20 miles or so, in 2 marches, one along the plain, the other through an awful tangle of hills where we got lost for a bit. This bit of frontier the Turks & Persians can't agree on, so Wratislaw & Minorsky have to arbitrate. I hope they will decide soon. The heat is coming on with a rush, 91° in one mess tent yesterday & I have suddenly abandoned blankets. We are close to some big hills, but they are just like the hills near **Aden**, absolutely barren. The mail came in yesterday with yours of 10th March from **Lucknow**. **Margaret** said in hers, the two nicest men she had met were **Riall**²¹ & Conran. Beware of these charming young subalterns. Our work is going on excellently, but I think when we get to **Mendeli**²² it will be too hot & we shall move up north. Darling, so sorry to only send you this scrap. We all go to bed at 8.30. Heaps of love my pet, from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

18 Josephine Grigg.

19 Presumably Ida's elder brother, who became a tea planter in Ceylon.

20 As suitors for Margaret & Enid.

21 Claud, whom she was to marry 9th November 1915.

22 Also Mandali.

3rd April, **Camp Syed Hassan**, My own sweet darling, We had a second dak yesterday, **Lucknow** 17th March. There is no reason, if you find **Simla** not a success, why you shouldn't go to **Naim Tal**, only I think you have to take the rooms at **Simla** for 3 months. We have had some storms of wind & attempts at rain, which has cooled the air considerably & I slept last night under 2 blankets, but the wind & dust there from are beastly. However this bit of the frontier has been settled & we have only to put up some pillars & then move on to **Zorbathia**, a large Turkish village with palm trees about 8 miles from here. I think 3 days there & then we have 50 miles or so to do to **Mendeli**, long marches & much work. We are racing to try & complete the low ground before it gets too hot, & if we can do that we shall complete the work at **Mount Ararat** in November, when I should like to go home, if you could come & get someone to look after the girls in India, but I shall be able to let you know definitely in about 2 months. My ridge pole broke yesterday. I have had it spliced. Cowie went off this morning carrying on the triangulation ahead. Most of this morning I was over at the Russian camp at a conference & another one this evening at 5. I'm so sorry about my photos. I wish you had sent my failures to show to Wratishaw, who is a good photographer. He would have been able to say what was the matter. I'm jolly glad I didn't undertake to write for the 'Times'. I really shouldn't have found the time. We all are up & have breakfast at 7. Even with that I haven't read a single book since I left. I fancy I'm slower at work than I used to be. Anyhow I'm afraid my letters are miserably short. It is not comfortable sitting at a little shaky table with dust flying all about the place.

4th April: We went out about 10 for an hour to put up a pillar quite close here. My dear, it has suddenly got so cold. I slept last night with a sweater on, 3 blankets. 7 this morning the thermometer was down to 48°. So I have kept on my sweater & Norfolk jacket all day. This is a great thing for the work & will help us on. I heard from Cowie this morning. He leaves **Zorbathia**, 9 miles from here tomorrow & hopes to get to **Mendeli** in a week. I hope we shall push off ourselves soon. I am feeling very fit. I feel my old leg a bit sometimes if I wear putties²³ rather tight, but otherwise very fit & active. This cold weather (we can see snow on hills 6,000 feet high about 40 miles away) acts like a tonic. The only blot on the proceeding is Minorsky, the Russian Commissioner. He talks & talks & talks & is frightfully jealous of all we do. Mrs M we see nothing of I'm glad to say. Darling I'd love to be giving you a good hug, but nothing more! Heaps of love & kisses, from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

I heard from Burrard last mail. He gave no news. You might let me know survey news. Mrs Cowie used to send her husband all the news.

14th April, **Mendeli**, My own sweet darling, It is awful the way the days slip by and I don't seem to have a moment to spare to write. Now 6 pm. I have only done so by getting Cowie to finish some printing on a map, which has to be ready tomorrow for signature. Well we have made a great step forward by coming on here, 5 miles from **Zorbathia**. We left that place on the 8th & had a pretty bad march, 25 miles, and awful storm of wind & sand, fortunately behind us as I don't think we could have faced it. 4 of us took shelter for an hour in a hole in a dry mullah. However we had a nice place to camp on grass. In the evening a lot of rain fell which freshened up the place, & has given us another bout of cooler weather, so that only today it has got up to 90° in my tent again. At night it is down to only 60°. We have done the frontier up to here & I hope leave on the 16th for **Khanikin**²⁴ I have two surveyors on ahead at work, so I think we shall get through that bit & then only 18 miles to **Kasr Shirim**²⁵ from which place only about 30 miles will take us into the hills. Even then we shall have it very hot in the sun in the day time. This is a regular town, 15,000 inhabitants & about 50 miles from **Baghdad**, palm trees all round it & we are in camp just outside. It is cloudy again this evening. Another storm of rain would be A.1. Only each storm smashes one

23 Used to support the ankle and lower leg.

24 Also Khanaqin.

25 He gives various spellings, but now Qasr Shirin.

of mine & one of Cowie's tent poles. We had tea today in a garden just behind our camp under a large orange tree, with pomegranates too. They plant their fruit trees among the palms. I think now we shall certainly finish the work this year, so you must consider what will be best to do about leaving the girls in India. I may be sent home on duty for a bit, but that is doubtful. Go on addressing to c/o Consul General, Baghdad, but once we start off from **Kasr Shireem**, it will take longer & longer to get letters. Your last were dated March 25 about going to **Naini**. You must do what you think best, but always remember my dear, that matrimonially it is no good whatever having a lot of subalterns hanging round. Well done over the tennis. I am glad, especially for the singles. I shall hear next mail what you got as prizes. I had such a splendid long letter from **Lisle** & a sketch of a steam engine he was inventing. You know, Ida, he is a born sapper, much more so than I am. I am so glad you have sold Black Swan. Bye the bye, important, please write to Mr Dentith & ask him what we owe for taxes for the last quarter, 20/- odd & pay it. I got an official letter from the **Shillong Municipality** signed by him, but I don't know where it is. I hope you have invested Rs2000 at least, 1 year deposit with Grindlay, Calcutta, or Alliance Bank, Simla. If you don't, I know you will think everything is all right as long as you have money in the bank & that money at least is what we got for sale of things & therefore should not be spent, but kept for setting up house. I am a little doubtful about my leave. I don't especially want to go home in the winter unless I went on duty, as I can't afford more than 8 months & I have to watch vacancies. Burrard retires in Aug 1915 & Remy in September & I think both Pirie & Robertson go on leave. I don't want to get landed into Shillong again.

15th April: We have received rather a blow. Wratislaw who has never been strong, is ill again²⁶ & has decided to go to **Baghdad** & will very likely not come back. I shall miss him very much, as he and I have always done our marches together. Just my luck too, if he had gone ill a month later, Wilson might have left & then if I had been Deputy Commissioner I might have become Commissioner, as it is of course Wilson succeeds him & as regards honours the whole show becomes smaller. However I still hope a 10 days rest at Baghdad while we are doing the bit between here & **Kasr Shireen** may put him right again. Then he will rejoin us easily, as there is a carriage road in from there to Baghdad. But don't forget to keep the idea of my being D.C. quite to yourself. Of course now I'd much rather remain in charge of the survey, than be DC under Wilson, as I am to a certain extent independent as in charge of the survey. We had the Persians to dinner last night & played bridge after, ordinary, they don't play auction.

It is getting hot enough for one to want to wear a *topi*²⁷ in one's small tent. My next letter will be from **Kasr Shireen** I expect. We are all longing to get there. Not that it will be any cooler, but we shall be anyhow in sight of the hills. Darling, I miss you very much. I fancy you will get longer letters, if Wratislaw is not here, because we used to spend a good deal of time over the maps of the frontier on ahead. But I shall be busy at **Kasr Shireen**, because most of my surveyors & khalassis will be back from there, as we were supposed to do most of the survey up to there and the Russians from there onwards. The's (?) in a decent climate would be rather a pretty town, a sort of oasis in the desert. The flies are awful, they retire (*sic*) two things over everything. By the bye, if you are ever bothered by them, get some formaline, mix one dessert spoonful with a pint of milk well sugared. They come & sip & are dead in 3 minutes. We kill thousands & keep our mess tent really almost free. I do enjoy your letters so much, darling & the girls too. It is rather a business translating all the descriptions of boundaries &c into French. I find I can talk it quite reasonably now, as we always talk to all the other Commissions in French. Minorsky talks English well. Heaps of love & kisses, my darling, from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

Love to the girls. Now mother has paid in the £80, pay off your dressmaker, & offer her, as she may have extra expenses with Ted to give up your allowance.

26 There was an earlier reference to rheumatic fever.

27 A sola *topi* is a pith helmet.

27th April, **Qasr Shireen**: My own sweet darling, I have been spending a long day on working up our maps. I am trying to get all our work up to date, and sending off copies &c. Cowie goes out each day triangulating while I & the surveyors work at maps. Our latest news of Wratislaw is that he is better & the Foreign Office want him to stick to it, so probably he may join us here for a day or two, and then go on to **Kermanshah** & join us about 100 miles north of here. I don't mind, so long as he remains even nominal head. You asked me why I should have liked to be D.C. Well you see if Wilson had left before Wratislaw had got ill, I should have become Commissioner. Wilson & Dyer have gone off for the day to the oil works. I get up at 6 & we have breakfast at 7, so one can get in a lot of work in the day. Today has been delightfully cool, only 77° maximum. Have you discovered our old house, Chillingham, yet? I am just going up onto the hills above camp to get a view of the country round.

28th April: Quite cold last night & I was glad to pull on a second blanket in the morning. It is a great pity my camera has gone wrong. I hope my new one will arrive before we leave, as the really interesting part is to the north. We are now getting among Kurds, fine looking men. Very fair. I rather think they were the Medes, of the Medes & Persians. I am hoping we shall get a dak today, it was expected yesterday from **Baghdad**. We have now 8 local guards on our camp, a sort of blackmail, however it has been quite successful so far. The Russians are expected in today and I have to arrange how far we are to reduce strength, as this was the point, half way house, up to which we were to do the bulk of the work, after which the Russians were to increase their strength and take on most of the work. However, I see no signs of their doing so, but anyhow I shall send back Abdul Rahim & reduce our Khalassis from 41 to 24 and if necessary take on local men where required. I still revolve in my mind what is best to do about my leave. I especially wanted to take about 8 months in April 1915 for the following reasons. Burrard retires 12th August 1915. Renny-Tailyour's leave is up about the same time. If he changed his mind & came out to be S.G. that would be all right. I'm pretty certain he won't however. Then will come the question, who will be the next S.G. Bythell, which would make the Northern Circle vacant, or Lennox-Conyngham which wouldn't affect me. Crichton's coming back, which he does in Nov. 1914, however does affect me very much, because if he does he would naturally oust Pirie from the S. Circle. I couldn't oust him & if Bythell wasn't made S.G. He would still occupy the N. Circle (unless he chucked in disgust) & I should be planted into **Shillong** again. I'm pretty certain Burrard would put me back into **Shillong** if I came out while he was still S.G. (this between ourselves) & I don't see what else he could do, as I couldn't oust either Bythell or Crichton. I also when I come out from leave want to get either **Bangalore** or **Mussoorie** circle & stick there & not have the ruinous expense of moves, so that everything points to the advisability of my keeping out of the way during all these moves. Of course, if I only could afford it I should like to take long leave & tide it over that way, but unfortunately we can't afford that. My dear, if you could only marry off the two girls instead of playing about with charming subalterns with no money, all would be well.

28th Aft: Mail just in, yours of 5th April. Find out at the Post Office at Simla when you should post for the Persian Gulf. I think perhaps you might post a day or two later. Now for business. I have heard from Field that my pay bill for March was drawn by the Alliance Bank, Rs.2,215-4-0 and an account opened. They have instructions to send home £55 & Rs.300 to Grindlay, Bombay, each month commencing from 1st May. ie. when they receive my April's pay. Now please keep a regular decent account of your dealings with this bank, always remembering to deduct the Rs.300 & Rs.830 (that is near enough for the £55). Now for the account with Grindlay, Calcutta. You really must have a substantial amount there. I have already given you instructions. Find out what you have. Tell them to keep about Rs.100 in hand, and the balance, either remit home to Cox & tell Cox to invest about the amount in Japanese 4 per cents, or tell Grindlay to place the amount at fixed deposit for a year. This letter about the cheque for Rs.40. I presume you settled that. If so tear it up.

I am sending to Field (by the bye before writing to him find out from Col. Burrard that he is still in Calcutta) some more pay bills. These I am not making payable to any bank, but asking Field to fill

up the bank as you direct, or rather to go on making them payable to Alliance Bank, Simla, unless you tell him to send them elsewhere. This is to enable you to move to **Naim Tal** or anywhere else you like. By the bye don't forget it was you who wanted to go to Simla. I should so much like to know what money we have. Surely you can find out & let me know. Now it would be so simple, I know exactly what I have at Grindlay's Bombay.

29th evening: Post goes this evening. I have been doing maps all day & fell rather headachy. Telegram from Hubbard that Wratislaw is doing well, but not strong, hopes to rejoin us here. Heaps of love my darling, from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

Love to the girls.

30th April, Qasr Shirin: My own sweet darling, Today Wilson & I rode out about 10 miles to see an important point on the frontier where it leaves a river on ahead. We started at 8 & got back at 2. Then I spent the afternoon on maps & just had a shave & bath & waiting for dinner. The Russians turned up today, but are camped below the town. Minorsky wouldn't camp near us, as he has a smaller camp than ours and doesn't like the comparison. Walpole, one of the oil company's men, turned up today from **Mohammerah**. He is very superb, Eton &c. & also Wright from the oil field. They are stopping with us for a day or so.

1st May: We are having more the climate of a hill station, at night down to 49° & now 3 pm. only 69°, most delightful but too good to last. Wratislaw, Hubbard & Pierpoint probably come out here on 5th, but I fancy Wratislaw will go up to **Kermanshah**, about 100 miles into the hills from here & have a good rest & rejoin us early in June, when we have finished the rest of the low ground. I've broken the back of the map drawing, finished two and the 3rd well on. Shas (?) Jamly has gone out to **Koureton** (?), about 5 miles from here to survey. Hamid Gul will go out tomorrow or next day & my 3rd surveyor Sijawal Khan is working round here. We are now in Latitude 34° 30'. I think Major Turner has taken over the **Simla** drawing office from Macleod. Ask him to send you a map and to tell you where I am. Longitude 45° 35'.

3rd May: Each day has been much the same. I haven't had a moment to spare, sorting out kit to go back & settling on the men, as well as going on with maps. I have all three surveyors out at work now, out of doors, so I have roped in one of the escort a soldier surveyor who traces rather well to help.

Afternoon: I'm afraid our cold weather snap is rapidly coming to a close. Today it is 87° in my tent & rising each day. We shall not get away from here for another 8 or 10 days, so Brooke & I are going out to the oil works tomorrow for the day. Our next halt will be at **Baneh**, in Lat. 36°. I mean long halt, that is up in the hills. We are just finishing our last sack of potatoes & I don't fancy we shall see any more for some time. However we do quite well in the food line. This is generally supposed to be the road the Jews followed when they were led away into captivity. We are now getting among Kurds, much finer men than down south. It is so funny hearing the Khalassis squabbling over their accounts between each other. 12 men go back & 27 come on with us. We are expecting another dak on 5th when we start off from here. Daks will get fewer & further between, & in the north it will be much easier getting letters from home than India. As it is I am sending my letters to the children by the Turkish post.

6th May: I am now busy repacking & resorting kit, rather a big job, however it is all practically finished, and my men are nailing on addresses. I have decided to take on my uniform & green trunk of clothes, at least they don't go with us but on to **Serj Boulak**, where we shall be in two months time. I shall then not be tied down for want of clothes, either to go straight home, or back to India by sea or march back, overland. We are being delayed here longer than we expected. Once people get into **Baghdad** it is difficult to get them out again. However all my 3 surveyors are out getting the necessary surveying done round here & ahead. We are getting up to the 90°s again & sitting in shirt sleeves. I fancy we shall feel it a good deal going into small tents again, and we have some

time yet before we get into the real hills. From near camp we can see the snows of the **Avroman Range**, over 11,000 feet. We have fixed several points on it, 70 miles away. We should get up there by the end of May. On the 4th Brooke & I drove out to the oil fields, in a larger stronger edition of our American 4 wheeler, with 4 miles, road very hard & we bumped a lot. These oil fields at **Chia Sourkh** are on a very small scale, only 3 borings, down about 1,200 feet. The oil doesn't come up all the time, but every 2nd day there is enough pressure of gas below to send it up for about an hour. We saw it just foaming up to the top, dirty yellow stuff. It is then refined & sold in tins. Wright is all by himself & always goes about armed. Those wells were more or less abandoned for several years, and the tribesmen amused themselves by dropping little stones down the pipe which is about 8 inches across & filled it up. The following is odd, if a thief comes you don't fire at him, but in the air, because if you fire it is etiquette for him to go, but if you hit him that starts a blood feud, which is never ending.

7th May: Dyer & Hubbard came in today with a dak, Wratislaw & Pierpoint expected tomorrow. We are having our first meeting this afternoon in an hour. I have several maps to sign, and so have to attend. It can only be called beastly hot, 95° yesterday & same today, so work & writing & everything is getting rather difficult. Yours was of 13th April. It is a nice hotel, inside, I'm so glad you like it. I fancy you'll like **Simla** better after a bit as you get to know people & go to dances. I'm so sorry my letters were short, darling, but I do find (I suppose I am older) that it is about as much as I can do to get through the day's work. It sounds very tantalising hearing of you sitting over fires. It is a bit cloudy. I fancy a thunderstorm is working up & then we may get it a bit cooler, but the temperature is said to go up to 115° here in June. Oh, by the bye, I got another letter from the **Shillong Municipality**. We owe them Rs.26-14-0 & I wrote & said you would pay them. Please do so. This is the same I asked you to write to Dentith about, for taxes. Darling, I do hope you will let me know soon what money we have at Grindlay, Calcutta & what at Alliance Bank, Simla. It is so difficult to do any drawing in this heat, when one is a bath of perspiration all over.

9th May: Wratislaw came in yesterday. He is coming on with us but not going to do any work for another three weeks. Yesterday evening we had a short storm of wind & rain, but it hasn't cooled the air. 95° each afternoon in my big tent. We dine outside & as soon as the sun is down it is nice & cool. No signs of our getting a start from here, but I don't think we shall leave later than the 12th. The Turks & Persians are frightful rotters, they do no work only argue. Goodbye darling, heaps of love & kisses, ever your loving husband & lover, Charlie.

Love to the girls & dear little Gus (?), very many happy returns of the day.

14th May: My own sweet darling, Once more I shall be able to write you longer letters as I am off by myself. We all left **Kasr Shirin** on the 11th & marched 15 miles en route to **Aziz Bey** for the Turks & the old Persian S.G. (*to*) put up a pillar. They went back & I came on. We camped at a lovely spot on the hill side looking down on the broad valley of **Zohal** (?), all fine grass, except a few fields. Next day we marched 20 miles, practically level through long grass & crowds of wild hollyhocks, white & mauve, to a nice camp near a spring, on the **Abbasan Stream**, just under the big mountain of **Bamu**. Yesterday Wilson & I went out exploring and as someone had to go out to explore for a road through the hills & Cowie was rather seedy, I decided to come myself. So here I am pushing along cheerily into the unknown. I have to go slow as my surveyor Hamid Gul has to survey so that the frontier can be settled by the Commission as it comes along. My party consists of Hamid Gul, 8 Kalassis, 4 Sowars, 6 local mounted men, a funny old man as an Interpreter we picked up some time back, Mullah Ibrahim, said to be 85, who has been everywhere & talks every language including Kurdi²⁸. I have 22 mules & another 42 of heavy baggage. When I get to **Schemiram**, my objective, I send these mules back to help on the Commission.. I only came 7½ miles today & am in camp on grassy slopes 2,200 ft high near a Kurdish village. I rather wanted to have gone further, but my local guard were very keen on my stopping here to get the villagers to

28 See Hubbard page 86.

help guard the camp, so I got in at 9.30. The road was rough & stony otherwise all right. This country is spoilt by the want of trees. It is jolly hot in the sun, but in my tent very pleasant, except for the stinging flies, which make me yell now & again. I fancy the Commission catch me up on the 20th. The Russians & Turks reached our camp yesterday, the Persians expected today. I fancy my only difficulty will be in persuading my local scallywags to take me to **Schemiram** in 2 days, as they want to do it in 3. I must say I like getting off by myself like this. When we have got the frontier through this lot of hills, we shall (have) the **Avroman** snows straight in front of us.

15th May: I was well guarded by my 4 villagers who fired off 3 shots during the night, at 3 lots of thieves according to my Interpreter, but I think it was only to make themselves feel braver. I did another short march only 8½ miles, over a low range 2,600 ft with the great cliff of **Bamu** always on my left & the country really quite park like, rolling grassy downs, with trees dotted about & heaps of wild flowers. Now I am in camp amongst corn fields in long grass, just near a Kurd village. I have to do these short marches to enable my surveyor to complete the survey as the frontier runs along here, but that makes the days rather long. It has turned very cloudy.

Yesterday I was delighted to get a dak, yours & **Margaret's** of 21st April. You were doubting whether you would like **Simla**, but I expect you are by now. I have no doubt now, we shall finish the frontier by the end of September, and then probably have to put in 3 weeks somewhere finishing up maps & signing things. Now can you arrange if I wire to you later on for someone to have the girls, and if so what would it cost? You might have got some survey news out of Bythell & let me know. It is so difficult to decide what is best to do. You see I think that after a show like this, it is a good thing to go home & be known at the Foreign Office, lecture to the RGS &c. and I think it quite probable I might go home on duty. (My dear, these stinging flies are too awful, they stab!) Really my only objections to going home are (1) doubt as to whether you can arrange for the girls, because if you can't the best thing would be for me to give up leave. (2) Absolute ignorance as to what money I have, this my dear, is your fault. (3) I don't feel as if we could afford a year & yet I don't want to come out before winter after next. (4) And a dislike to go home into an English winter, though that is of not much importance. And I don't like the girls being away from us for so long, but I should only come back to India if I was put for 2 or 3 months on special duty & then on leave. As I have already explained to you I don't want to go back to **Shillong**. Just written to Col. Burrard & **Enid**. You might ask Col. B. about my leave. I don't suppose he will mind when I take it, but one always has to find out whether there is a vacancy & not too many fellows on leave already. Darling, I must close now. Heaps of love & kisses, from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

15th May, Camp: (Address always now: Turco-Persian Frontier Commission, C/o Foreign Office, Whitehall, London. & post on Wednesdays.)

My darling **Violet**, I am off by myself for 6 days & as I have very little work to do & only a short march each day, I have time for letter writing. I am sitting in my little khakhi tent camped amongst the hills, in a valley amongst corn fields & some nice long grass, in which by the bye a snake was killed just now. I have come out here to get this bit of the frontier surveyed & also to explore for a road, however this one will do very well. I got 60 miles along it all right with only one upset, my kitchen box, & the boot polish or rather dubbing has got mixed up with my flour. So I have to take to the country flour & brown chipatties. We have now got amongst Kurds, rather fine looking men, fair & independent, heavily armed with rifles, revolvers & cartridges all over them, & awful thieves. Yesterday I got 4 men from the nearest village to do night guard. I heard them fire off 3 shots last night, they said against thieves, but I think it was just to show they were awake. There are such lovely wild flowers about here, including masses of hollyhocks, white & mauve, and it isn't too hot, as I am more in the hills here, 2,300 ft up, only my enemies the stabbing flies are very much to the fore. They stab one right through thick socks. Darling **Violet** I was so glad to hear about your Confirmation. It makes me feel as if you are growing up. I have just written to India to find out about my leave, when I may take it. Darling, heaps of love & kisses, from your loving Father.

Please thank Miss Fenn for her letters.

16th May, (*wrongly written as 1914*), Camp: My own sweet darling, I hope you are quite well. I marched today before 5, with my caravan. Up at 4 & finished my march, 12 miles in 5 hours. Not particularly interesting but quite pleasant down the cultivated valley & crossed several grassy spurs on one of which I am in camp near a small village of **Zarin**. Plenty of grazing for the animals, plenty of firewood as there are small trees of stunted oaks about, but only one small spring of very good water. There is a big cliff just above me to the left., but I get a fine view Eastwards down into the valley of the **Sirwan**, and across to the bare hills backed by higher ones with snow still left on them. I am camped at 2,600 ft so it is quite cool, 84° in my big tent. As I am staying here several days I have had that pitched. I was most careful to drive out all the flies, but a fair number have come in again, but none of the stabbers so far. I am afraid we shall have a hot job crossing the **Sirwan**²⁹. Tomorrow I shall send back my mules, at least 40 of them to help bring up the Mission, who I hope will arrive here on the 20th; by which time Kamid Gul will have got everything surveyed round here. We have some very good lemonade in crystals in our mess. I took on a packet & have nearly finished it. I had an excellent night last night from 8.30 pm to 4 am. Quite pleasant with a blanket over me. Just bought a sheep for Rs.5, half for myself & half backshish³⁰ for my men.

May 17. I didn't move camp today, but while my surveyor was at work I went down to the river which took me over 2 hours, to look for a crossing, however the place I was taken to, although not bad, had no village near it, and as the only means of crossing is by killeks (?), rafts or mussacks³¹ I fancy we shall have to cross at **Shemiran** lower down. Soon after I had got back & had breakfast, the Russian & Persian surveyors turned up. They camped here, but are going on across the river to start survey about 30 miles on.

After lunch I tried to do a sleep, but was woken up by thunder & my man digging trenches round the tents. It is now very cloudy, a little rain & strong wind & the temperature has gone down 10° at once. I repaired my measuring wheel & now am waiting for tea, after which I have to collect the Russians & Persians & tell them what work to do. They go tomorrow to try & cross the river at **Shemiran**. I may go with them to see what arrangements can be made, and return in the afternoon.

18th May: I started at 5 am. With the Russians & walked for 1¼ hours to a pass where I could look down on the **Sirwan** & the **Shemiran** plain about 2,000 ft down below³². So I decided it wasn't necessary to go down as Tshahakaya promised to send me back a note as regards the crossing of the river. I also sent on two sowars to see about possibilities of swimming the horses. I was in camp, had a bath & breakfast by 8.30 & now have just finished a long letter to Renny-Tailyour. The thunderstorm yesterday made it almost cold for a bit, but it has quickly warmed up again. I can see it will be boiling hot in the plain below. I had a grand view today in all directions except to the south, but life is rather dull in camp by oneself, and in this heat I don't feel so inclined as I did in my earlier days to be out climbing hills all day.

19th May: The Commission ought to be here tomorrow & I shall be jolly glad to see them. I have nothing much to do except fight the flies, & now mosquitoes have collected so I am trying the citronella. I think my servant is the biggest fool I've ever come across. He never knows where a single thing is. He is a man the Cowie's got me. My head Khalassi Nawaish is however first rate, I'm a little headache this morning. After a little heat I long for some cold. I feel now pretty certain that I shall not come back through **Persia**. I shall have nearly a month's work when we have finished the boundary, so I shall if I come back to India, come back by sea, but I shall more probably go home. What are your ideas about leaving the girls out in India, who would take them? You won't find it easy, as you don't want to leave them with anyone, and we must think a little of

29 Also called Diyala.

30 Persian gratuity or tip.

31 Inflated bullock skins.

32 This must be near Halabja.

expense. We have given those two girls every chance of getting married & it is their fault not to have accepted the excellent offers they have had. I'm not going to spend all my money on them. I must think of the boys who are coming on. Bless 'em, children are a great responsibility! I have heard that my new camera is on its way out. I should get it next mail, but as we are going straight away from **Baghdad**, it takes longer & longer to get things. I've just put on a 2nd pair of socks against the stabbing flies. It is quite easy for anyone in England to send out letters to us, because they simply address to the Foreign Office who send out a special bag each week to wherever is nearest, but from India it is very difficult. I fancy we shall have to make our final arrangements by wire. But oh! how it would help us to decide if we knew how much money we had. Even (?) Cox & Co. You have your cheque book surely you can tell me what cheques you have written. You have so far only told me of the following: Violet £1-0-0. Miss Fenn £2-0-6 for Xmas. Entioven (?) £3-17-7. Fenn £20-0-0 extra. But haven't you paid your dressmaker. Don't run up big bills & don't pay them. Pay for everything on the nail & then you know where you are.

5 pm. I got a letter from Wilson that they had all arrived at my last camp. Unfortunately I told Kamid Gul that if he was late at his work he could sleep out at a village about 5 miles from here, but I have sent to try & get hold of him. If I do I shall march back to join the Commission tomorrow. I've had a headache most of the day. I think some tinned Brussels sprouts I eat yesterday weren't quite up to the mark.

23rd May: A rush ever since I went back to the main camp on the 20th & not long after I had to go out & put up a pillar. We marched to my camp on the 21st, down to the **Sirwan** & crossed it on 22nd & then to this place **Halabja** or **Alafdja**, large Kurdish village where there is a post & telegraph office. We halted today, but I had to measure a base while Cowie observed. I go off tomorrow with the main body & Cowie goes ahead. We hope to be up at 5,000 ft tomorrow. Here it is only 2,000 ft & very hot. Darling, the cake arrived yesterday with yours of 28th April, also my new camera. This I'm afraid is the last post we shall get for a long time. Nor do I know how we shall get letters sent off. I am now practically certain that if you will or can arrange about the girls, I will go straight home in October on a year's leave. Much love, my darling. Heaps of kisses from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

(PS) Please pay these two bills for me.

28th May, Camp Balkha: My own sweet darling, I am sitting in a most charming spot up in the hills. We all came up here on the 24th a march from **Halabja**, but a rise of over 2,000 feet to 4,700. The next day it rained a lot and the result is we are in a delightful climate, temperature only 71° in the day & down to 50° at night, just like a hill station. There we are in camp at a Kurdish village in a little valley on the hill side under walnut, cherries and mulberry trees on terraces. There is a fine spring just alongside my tent and I write to the tune of tumbling waters. The Russians went on to do this piece & have done it quite well, so I have very little to do, but I fancy we shall stay here a week as there are a good many villages in dispute here. Cowie, Brooke & 2 surveyors have gone on to near **Penjavine** 3 marches ahead to survey the next place under dispute & have it ready when we arrive. Wilson has suddenly gone off to **Kermanshah** & won't be back for 10 days & Wratislaw has taken over again, a great relief to all of us³³.

Of course if there are difficulties about your being able to arrange about the girls I could always march back with the party going back to **Mohammerah**. It would take about 3 months & get me to India in end of December, stay a short time on special duty in **Simla** & then go home with you. **Margaret** says you have left a lot of things at **Shillong**. I thought it was all arranged you were to leave them at the Calcutta office. Field can take them in & they will be properly looked after. I don't even know where you have left them in Shillong. I would rather they were not left in Robertson's office, so as not to be under any obligation to them. I think too, if you can manage about the girls, it would be a sound thing for me to go home with Wratislaw & go to the Foreign Office &c. So think

33 See Hubbard page 187.

out the whole thing as soon as you can & let me know & also find out from Burrard about Crichton's coming out. Don't on any account ask Burrard for Bangalore or Mussoorie.

I was interrupted in this letter this morning by having to go over to the Turkish camp about some work & now it is after lunch, but at 3 we have a meeting in our mess tent. Wratislaw has got his inside wrong today. I hope it won't last This is an odd chance of getting a letter off by the Turkish post from **Halabdja**. I am feeling remarkably fit. It is too delightful for words being up here in the cool, and if it wasn't for this meeting I should lie down on my bed & have a sleep. The ripple of water just alongside has a very drowsy effect on one. If I go straight home Pierpoint & I are going via **Constantinople**. We get onto the Russian railway near **Mt Ararat**, 10 hours to **Tiflis**, 18 hours from there to **Batoum** on the Black Sea, then 5 days by steamer stopping en route at several ports to Constantinople from where it is I suppose about 3 days by train to London. My objections to going home are (1) Can we afford a year? (2) Can you arrange about the girls? (3) I don't like their being away from us for so long, unless it is with someone very nice. Have you thought of anyone?

Darling, here come the Persians. I must stop. Heaps & heaps of love & kisses. From your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

Love to the girls.

31st May, **Camp Balkha**: My own sweet darling, The settlement of this bit of the frontier is taking long (*sic*), however I think today it will I think (*sic*) go to arbitration & be settled. In the meantime it is very pleasant here. I had an interesting conversation yesterday with Wratislaw. He said he would like me to come home on duty, because he knew nothing of maps and would like me to come to the Foreign Office & War Office &c. He himself is going home by train, but he would like me to go home via **Constantinople** to show the maps & explain the work to the Ambassador there. & then come on home. My expenses would be paid, and I would be on duty at home for a short time, so that pretty well settles the question of my going home and I shall be home I should think between the middle & end of October. Wratislaw will apply for this arrangement later on. Now it remains for you to see what you can do about the girls. I expect things will pan out all right.

4th June: Having settled everything we could from our last camp by going out in two directions, on 1st we moved over to a new camp 5 miles off, in a valley, but 1,000 ft lower & decidedly hotter, when to our disappointment we met with a delay. There is a village above here **Khan-i-Guermela** which is on the Persian side of the frontier, but has 50 Turkish soldiers in it, & their officer won't clear out until he has orders from his own General in Baghdad. However the latter won't give orders until the Persians have cleared out of another place lower down. 300 Kurds came down to occupy the village on behalf of the Persians. So we stay here until the thing is settled. In the meantime telegrams have gone off to London, St Petersburg &c to get pressure brought to bear³⁴.

We had been hoping to get a dak, but none has turned up. I think from now onwards your best plan will be to write to me: Turco-Persian Frontier Commission, C/o Foreign Office, Whitehall, London, as they send out their weekly bag to wherever is the best place. **Tabriz** is only 10 days from London & we shall be in touch with that place in another month. We expect Wilson back tomorrow. He went off for 10 days to **Kermanshah**, nominally to get money but we all suspect to play some game of his own, as he is not exactly straight. He served under Sir Percy Cox at Bushire, and as the latter got him a CMG I expect he thinks highly of him. He certainly is extraordinarily clever & energetic, but his bad manners have set us all against him & we are all enjoying his absence. Alieff one of the Russian Survey officers was stung by a scorpion last night. Our doctor was sent for in the middle of the night, however the swelling has gone down now. Wratislaw & I went off to see the Turks this morning, they are camped close by. These valleys in the hills are very pretty. Imagine the **Avroman** range running like a great wall, 10,000 ft high mostly inaccessible, but spurs run off it, bare rocky spurs and in between them the valleys, full of springs, led off into little channels on the hill side to

34 See Hubbard page 190.

water the trees, and the whole of each valley several miles long full of trees, walnuts & mulberries mostly. It is very pleasant walking in the shade of the trees along the watercourses³⁵. They exchange the fruit of their trees with the villagers in the plain below, 3 loads of fruit for one of wheat. The mulberries, the white sort & very tasteless are exported dried. The doctor spends most of his time doctoring the villagers. Crowds come to him, but none of the other doctors do anything.

6.00pm: There is a Turkish post going off tomorrow morning, and as our man hasn't arrived, we are sending letters that way. I hope to goodness we shan't be stuck here too long, as it is only a waste of time. Just been scribbling off letters. It is 90° here in the day, but at night I was glad of a blanket. Cowie & Brooke are 3 marches on ahead. We haven't had any news of them. We play bridge most evenings as we have got most of our work up to date. Capt. Alieff, one of the Russian Surveyors was bitten by something yesterday evening, Probably a scorpion but he thought it was a snake. However, though his leg is swollen a bit he is all right today. These valleys are certainly very pretty. There are a lot of pomegranates in flower & also grape vines. We are lucky in having to halt in a nice place, as after this we shall have two hot marches & then get into hills again. I don't know when we shall get a dak, not for some time I expect. Dear heart, I adore you. Heaps of love & kisses, from your loving husband & adorer, Charlie.

Write to Morrison & Cottle, Calcutta at once & tell them to send to me, Turco-Persian Frontier Commission, C/o HBM Consul, Tabriz, Persia, 1 pair of their planters boots with small screws as supplied before, price 10/-.

6th June, Camp Biara: My own sweet darling, We are still stuck here. However we have still got a bit of demarcation to do here & as the Turks & Persians couldn't agree yesterday the case was submitted to arbitration & will be decided today. It is rather a difficult bit to cross this valley as it is one continuous garden of trees. Each owner has his bit divided off by small walls, but they have exchanged owners & there are many gardens belonging to Turkish subjects in Persian territory & vice versa. I am taking photographs now in plenty, but no chance of sending them to be developed. It is cloudy today & trying to rain, but that only makes it stuffy. We are all very sick of this delay; everything has gone famously up to now, but the Turks are playing some game, though what (*it*) is we don't know. I shall send on another surveyor to help Cowie so as to get as much work done ahead to avoid delay. There are a few mosquitoes about but I sleep under my curtains. I'm afraid I haven't knocked off much fat on this show, but I am feeling very fit. We've been a fortnight without letters now & see no prospect of getting any for a long time. Dyer has even gone down to **Halabja** for the day. Wratlaw & Pierpoint are asleep & Hubbard has gone over to the Turkish camp, so I am alone. I tried to sleep just now but the flies teased too much.

13th June: I haven't written for some days. We had rather a dull time at Biara waiting for the Turks to remove their detachment from the Persian village. However we had a rather intricate bit of frontier to demarcate as the gardens of the two villages were continuous and very mixed up. We finished it and finally got off on the 11th marched down into the plain of **Shehr-i-Zor**, so called because an old Persian King Zor by name founded a city there. The only thing I know about him was that he was once ill with bad sores on each shoulder & his doctor recommended the fresh brains of a man being put on each shoulder each day. He had a good many enemies at court, so he had two killed each day until they were all finished, then he got better.

We passed such a pretty spot **Goulambar**, an enormous spring, a young river which flowed through grass & willows just like a small English river. It was said to be a snaky place, so many snakes that the village was abandoned each year in the hot weather, as we were told the snakes were as numerous as sparrows, peeping out from behind every stone³⁶. That was a hot day & the temperature was 103° in my tent. We camped near another large spring, a big pool full of fish about 6 inches to a foot long. I thought I'd drive them all down into the channel & catch them in cloths,

35 See Hubbard page 187.

36 See Hubbard page 192ff.

but when I sent men in with sticks all the fish hid under the stones & we got nothing. Yesterday we turned up into the hills up a long narrow valley, a lovely stream flowing down it & all the bottom was full of small chemars, willows & wild figs. Our camp was so much on the slope we didn't pitch tents, but slept in the open under 2 blankets.

Up at 4 this morning. Crossed the pass at 5,200 ft & then dropped into this valley of **Piran**, 4,300 ft. Camp in an old graveyard under some oaks, a delightful spot & so nice & cool. A wide cultivated valley with grassy slopes & others with oaks & to the south the **Avroman** range very rocky towering above us. I expect Cowie & a surveyor in this afternoon with the map, but we shall stop here 2 or 3 days. Dyer goes back to **Kasr Shireen** tomorrow to bring up spare kit & takes these letters. Wilson joined us yesterday with a dak. Yours of 5th May. You seem to be enjoying yourself more in Simla. I'm so sorry for the Burrards, they seem unlucky. Thanks for sending me the Alliance Bank a/c. I thought I said as regards any money with Grindlay, Calcutta, either to send it home to Cox & Co, or to tell Grindlay to put it on fixed deposit for a year at 4 per cent. That is always the best thing to do with small sums. Sher Jang has just come in with his maps, and with news that 2,000 Kurds are surrounding Minorsky a day's march from here & are telling him to leave. He was an ass to go there, as it is right away from the frontier on the Persian side, where the Persians have no authority. Brooke & 6 sowars & Sher Jang were there too, but marched back as Minorsky had a reinforcement of 50 cossacks. So far as we are concerned the only nuisance is that it may delay work, though the Kurds are quite friendly to us & only hate the Russians.

We are in camp in such a nice place & so cool. We have a meeting in our camp at 5 & I have to go over before to the Russians to discuss the frontier with them. Cowie & Brooke rejoin us tomorrow. I suggested this as it is inadvisable to have small parties out. From now onwards we shall get our letters from England via the Russian post, much quicker than from India. Heaps of love & kisses, my darling & oh! I do long for you, ever your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

Love to the girls. Have you thought of any scheme for leaving them out in India & you coming home. I hope to be home by end of October, but don't fix up anything binding till you get a wire from me.

25th June, Camp: My own sweet darling, I am being rather badly treated as regards letters, as ours round by **Baghdad** are taking a long time to get to us, and the Foreign Office bag round by **Tabriz** is delayed somewhere. We have made extra good progress the last few days, and are now about level with **Bamo**, nearly to Lat 36°. We have come up a good deal too & are today in camp at 6,000 ft on a spur covered with stunted oak. We have fine views ahead of the **Kandil Range**, still with a lot of snow on it. Wratislaw is again seedy with indigestion & neurasthenia, but he carries on with his work, but I am always afraid of his cracking up again. This is about the place where the Russians are to take up the bulk of the survey work, but so far they have not produced any more plane tablers, only a Lt. Col. Tchemlikoff who has come to triangulate but with a huge theodolite and an idea that he was going to do regular pukka triangulation & I rather doubt his being much help; also a Lt. Col. Andrieffsky, a military staff officer, but he doesn't do anything except look ornamental. We have our meals at rather irregular odd hours, on the march, breakfast at 5 for instance. We have a shrewd suspicion that the Russians are purposely delaying things for some reason. We are looking down into the valley of the **Lesser Zab**, north of that is what was known in old times as **Assyria Proper**. Our next long halt will be about a week from here at **Vezne** or **Wasna**, but when that bit is done we get the frontier onto one continuous watershed right to opposite **Urumia**³⁷, and as there can be no possible dispute about that we shall go over it very quickly. Here we are having much the same sort of climate you were having in **Simla** in May. Glorious it is to be up so high.

27th June: & very near our birthday, darling. Very many happy returns of tomorrow. A dak is suddenly going off at 9 am tomorrow, in half an hour or at least it really goes off this afternoon, but

37 Otherwise called Urmia.

I have to be out all day with a sub-commission putting up pillars. I have no letters for an age. I fancy I shall get a good bundle soon. Once our dak comes regularly from the north it will be all right. Don't forget my address now is C/o British Consul, Tabriz, Persia, via Brindisi, 2½d stamp. I am feeling very fit, but darling, I am so longing for you & so longing to know what you can do about the girls. If you can't find anyone to leave them with, you must all come home together. I shall be home I expect by end October. Heaps of love & kisses, darling. From your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

Love to the girls.

3rd July, Camp: My own sweet darling, Writing or in fact doing anything is pretty difficult owing to the heat. Cowie and I are sharing one of the larger tents. Yesterday temperature 104° & today much the same. We have been coming down a valley westwards & crossed it today, a small river, the **Lesser Zab**. We could just ford it & only just. The height was only 2,000 ft & very hot. Now we have come up to 3,500 ft, but except for walnut trees near the villages the hills are quite bare, like Aden, & I'm afraid this is the style of country we have got ahead of us. I haven't heard from you for ages, as our Indian dak which comes via Baghdad & **Kermanshah** is being held up at the latter place, as the road is unsafe. I've got plenty of work to do, but Cowie & I have agreed it is really too hot to work. However I don't think anyone is likely to delay things in this heat, rather to get out of it as quickly as possible.

4th July: Rather cooler night. I slept out of doors in only a thin vest & pyjama trousers & no sheet even. Today it is only 99° but still quite hot enough. Worked all the morning at writing out the description of each pillar etc. & then went with Wratislaw to talk over things with the Persians. They were in a very cool spot under a chinar tree³⁸ near a spring. Wratislaw has been offered a billet as Commissioner of the new Turkish & British Board for the navigation of the **Shatt-al-Arab** (the river at Mohammerah Tigris & Euphrates joined) he thinks he will accept & this may lead to his leaving me at **Urumiah**, when we shall be under Wilson again. Wratislaw wired for further details, but in the telegram from the Foreign Office, they said that if he had to leave before the Boundary was finished, Wilson was to be Commissioner & I was to be Deputy Commissioner. They evidently suggested this, on Wratislaw's original letter, suggesting me as D.C. When it was thought Wilson would leave. Aren't I unfortunate in always being put in awkward positions. Wratislaw & I both agreed that the position would be impossible, so presently he will wire privately to the Foreign Office (in London) about it. Of course I ought to have been made Commissioner or they ought to send someone out from home. Then also a Commission (*sic*), headed by a junior Captain becomes a small thing & likelihood of honours diminished. So altogether it is very unfortunate. I hope against hope that they will postpone Wratislaw's new job & let him finish this job first.

7th July: We have been halting in this very dull hot place for the Russians & I have been seedy for a couple of days, much better now, partly from the heat & partly from eating too many mulberries. Mrs Cowie sent me out two delightful photos, a jolly one of **Bobby**, just like him & what a pretty boy he is & one of **Violet**, quite growing up & with a lot of both **Margaret** & **Enid**. Yesterday I got the first letters from home for a long time, the children's of June 3 & 11. They sent a very nice little note book for my birthday. I've got a month's letters wandering about somewhere & long to hear from you. Don't forget to address to C/o British Consul, Tabriz, Persia, via Brindisi. The Russians are a great nuisance as they are delaying purposely to spin things out as long as possible, but there is no doubt we shall finish this year, but I may not get home till November. We have news of a dak suddenly going off via Russia. Heaps of love & kisses, darling. I am too headachy to write more. Ever your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

10th July, Camp: My own sweet darling, I am sitting with **Bobby's** photo in front of me, he really is too sweet for words. We have made a slow forward movement 8½ miles yesterday, 6¼ today up & onto rolling downs, crowded with Kurdish camps, who come up here from the Turkish side to

38 A fine flowering variety of plane tree.

pasture their flocks. Wratislaw & I are sharing a tent. We have to halt here at least two days waiting for the Turks & Russians. I am all right today but have been seedy the last 3 or 4 days, trots. I think eating indigestible bread, as we are mostly the same way. I had a good two hours sleep this afternoon. The Kurds about here are very keen against the Russians on general principles especially just now because of a row between their mule drivers and the Kurds in which 1 of the latter and 2 of the former were badly injured. We are now once more in a decent climate and it is most refreshing, height 5,300 ft & maximum 84° today.

14th July: We made a move today, 10½ miles over a pretty bad road & hot. I walked all the way & sweated like anything. You can imagine the sort of path, a mere track as it took us nearly 5 hours walking, & the last miles 7 hours. We move camp a short distance tomorrow to be nearer to where the frontier crosses this valley. Once we have done this bit the frontier is along the high watershed, **Kandil Range**, till opposite **Urumia**, so we ought to do that bit pretty quickly. I am still longing to have letters from you. I fancy when Dyer joins us, he should bring up a big dak, but it seems ages since I had news of you. Minorsky, the Russian Commissioner is trying his hardest to delay things & talks of finishing outdoor work by middle of November. All the other Russians, the Turks & Persians are with us in wishing to hurry up, so I think we shall finish outdoor work by middle October at latest & then we shall undoubtedly have a delay at the end finishing up things, probably a month and if I go home via Constantinople I ought to get home by end of November.

I have had a very difficult question to decide. Wratislaw finally has decided to leave & go home so as to get a bit of a holiday before leaving for his new appointment at **Basrah**. In the Foreign Office telegram they said Wilson was to be Commissioner & I was to be Deputy. I talked things over with Cowie. If I refused there were only two alternatives. Either Cowie might be suggested, only we agreed that was impossible for two reasons, one that he would then be senior to me, also he felt he wasn't qualified for it. The other alternative was that Hubbard should be Deputy, but he has no experience and is younger than Wilson. So finally Cowie & I agreed & Wratislaw telegraphed accordingly that I was willing to accept Deputy Commissioner so long as I was allowed to keep charge of the Survey work as well, and I expect that is how it will be arranged. Anyhow I had to decide some thing. I have just written to **Lisle**, sending that by Persian post, but this goes by the Turkish. I am hoping soon I shall be getting letters from you round by **Brindisi**. Now for the rest of the time my address will be C/o British Consul, Tabriz, Persia, via Brindisi. I shall miss Mr Wratislaw, he & I generally share a big tent together. He has asked for the children's address to go down & see them. I have been taking a fair lot of photoes (*sic*), which I hope will be decent. I have practically handed over all the surveying to the Russians. It is rather amusing the Turks & Persians don't like it at all, but they were very happy under me.

15th July: It is hot & beastly here. We have a meeting at 10 & then move our camp. I am feeling down in the mouth. I feel this show is fizzling out so far as my getting anything out of it, and we shall have a rotten time with Wilson. I've never met anyone more bumptious or with more offensive manners. Then I've got a bit of a headache, heat I think & I feel down in the mouth not getting any letters from you. With Wratislaw going our bridge four breaks up. I am of course most anxious to know whether you can arrange about coming home. Much love my darling & heaps of kisses, from your loving & adoring husband, Charlie.

Love to the girls.

23rd July, C/o British Consul, Tabriz, Persia, via Brindisi: My darling sweetheart, At last a dak came in with letters for me, yours of May 1 & 8, so you can see how behind hand I am, but Dyer we hear is joining us in a day or two with a large quantity of dak. Once you begin addressing regularly as above I shall get letters regularly once a week.

Thank you darling for finding out how much we have at Grindlays & the Alliance Bank practically 4,000/- in May. I don't know what you are spending in **Simla** though. We have been making very slow progress owing to the Russians trying to take over the survey before they were ready, so we

have done a good deal of halting to enable them to get ahead. However luckily we did most of our halting at this place **Vesne**, a nice little plain 5,300 ft high, good grass & icy cold springs. I have had two afternoons out putting up pillars and on the 18th we all accompanied Wratlaw for an hour on his road to say good bye to him. I felt very lonely after he left, however Cowie & I are sharing a large tent. We leave here tomorrow & go two marches forward. The frontier all along here runs along a watershed, the Kandil Range as far as **Urumia**, Lat 37° 40' or so, a big town. So there can be no discussions, only putting up pillars, and as the Russians have already surveyed everything on the Persian side, there only remains the Turkish side to do. On the 21st we called officially on the Persians because it was the Shah's birthday coming of age (?) & coronation & today the Turks have some festival. We dined with the Persians last night & had a very good dinner. They have A1 servants & everything very clean & nice, now I must do computations.

26th July: We did two good marches, 7 hours & 6 hours for the caravan 17 & 16 miles. Yesterdays' was rather monotonous, because it was along a dead level valley mostly, but the day before was charming, a lot of it through wooded hills but we are told from now onwards to the end there are no wild trees & we are starting our oil stove again for kitchen use. Cowie is going on today a march ahead for his triangulation, so I am up early to see him off. It was quite cold last night, a heavy dew & long grass, regular meadows of grass, and it was quite curious to see the villagers regularly cutting & stacking hay. Dyer with lots of dak is at **Ushnu**, 2 marches from here, so he has been sent for to come in as soon as possible. I don't know how my letters are coming to you, but it is dreadful having none from you. Yours of May 8 is my last.

30th July: I have several days to write about & no ink. On the 27th we halted at **Khane** for a meeting, after which I spent all the afternoon putting up a pillar on a watershed 2 hours from our camp & got back at 8 after dark on the 28th. The rest of our party went off to **Passwa**, while I marched with the other Commissions to put up pillars, marched 11 miles up a valley. On 28th moved camp another 10 miles & I went up with a party, one of each nation to put up a pillar on the main range at 9,600 ft all amongst the snow, it was lovely. The snow had melted off most of the hills but large patches remained & we got amongst lovely grass & wild flowers, but I was out 11 hours & the same today & really I find little time to write or anything. I am feeling as fit as possible, and I enjoy being up in the hills & also being by myself for a bit. We have meeting tomorrow to arrange for the work on ahead & then on 31st march into **Ushnu** & I think should be in **Urumia**, which you will find on the west side of the lake in 100 days. I am in camp at 9,200 ft with Turks, Persians & Russians. Kurdish camps round about, they come up mostly from the Turkish side to pasture their flocks for the summer. They live in black tents. This country reminds me of the best bits of Tibet. We have said good bye I believe to trees, except planted around villages. I hope to get a large consignment of dak at **Ushnu**.

30th July: I've got some ink & also a dak with letters from you of May 26 & June 1. Darling, first I must congratulate you on your tennis, you are a wonder! It was bad luck your having to play 6 sets (*sic*) in one afternoon in your doubles, but splendid getting 2nd prize in the singles. It is a nuisance being so far away, because by the same dak I got a letter dated May 23 from Col. Burrard in which he says that Col. Crichton is coming back in November, and that if we came back within a few weeks of each other, he would keep **Bangalore** for me, but if Crichton comes back 2 or 3 months before I do then he gets Bangalore. The reason being that of the two, Robertson at Shillong & Pirie at Bangalore, the latter is the junior & so should be ousted first, or at any rate that Pirie can't hold a Supt for more than a month or so while Robertson hasn't one. Probably by the time my answer will reach Col. Burrard he will have had to decide, because my letter to him can't reach under I suppose 5 weeks, and I must decide at once & the worst is it is so difficult. First of all I may be ordered home on duty after this is over, then I can't tell really exactly when this show will finish then I've told the children at home, that I hope to come home in November or December, then I shouldn't like to be out in India more than another year before going home & it would be dreadful nuisance & expense settling in Bangalore for only a year, then you must have made so many friends in Northern

India it would be pity to break & go down south, because this is the situation that will occur next year. When Col. Burrard retires in August, either Bythell or Lennox-Conyngham will succeed him, if the former than I should get his place at Mussoorie, if the latter, then I see no reason why I shouldn't get **Dehra Dun (Mussoorie in hot weather)** & an extra 100/- a month. So you see in any case I think I can get out of Shillong all right. Oh! how I wish I could talk it over with you. Really in many ways it would be a good thing for me to go home & be at the Foreign Office a bit, professionally I mean. I don't know how long Col. Crichton is coming out for. You have never told me anything though you might have found out from Burrard. I ought to see this show right out to the end, but we are making good progress. Today we settled a good bit of frontier on ahead, & march to **Ushnu** tomorrow where I hope to meet the rest of our party, and our next séance is at **Kalaseva** on 3rd August, from there we are only 2 marches from **Urumia**. When we get there however everyone wants a fortnight's holiday, while the Russian surveyors get ahead with their work. But I think now it is pretty certain we shall finish outdoor work by first week in October, and then a month to finish off maps & papers, so that I could going round by sea, get to India early in December, but it would be horrible to be at **Constantinople** 3½ days from London & not see the children. I don't think I could miss the chance, then there is always the question, can you arrange about leaving **Margaret & Enid** out in India. You have never said a word about this yet. I don't know what your ideas about **Bangalore** are now, whether you would like to go there or not. I wouldn't consult the girls about it, at least not **Enid**, who would only say I should love to be in a hot place & I should adore eyeflies (?) &c. I keep getting reminders from Hall & Anderson for a bill for Rs.9/-. Please pay it for me, unless you have already done so; also the enclosed bill from the Shillong Club for Rs.10-0-6, please pay. I hope also you have paid the bill for taxes on the house at **Shillong**. This is due from us, not from the Robertsons. You really are a dreadful person for accounts. You've never told me & how many times have I asked you what cheques you have written on Cox & Co, London. It would be so easy just on the last day of the month to give me a list of London cheques & Indian cheques, it does seem to me such a little thing to ask!

2nd August: I came down from my high hills on the 31st, a 16 mile march & joined the others. It is pretty hot down here. I was disappointed to find no more dak. I've had busy days here, including a huge lunch lasting all afternoon with the Russian officers of the detachment here. I am writing to Col. Burrard (now Sir Sidney) to say that I would prefer to take leave after this show is over but that if for any reason my leave can't be granted, I can be back in time to take up Bangalore. Heaps of love my pet. From your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

Love to the girls & thanks so many (*sic*) for their letters.

8th August 1914: My own sweet Darling, Scribbling in great hurry. Just marched into **Urumia** today & during the last 3 days we have been receiving telegrams about the war³⁹. But we know nothing except that we, Russians & French are at war with Germany, Austria & Italy, nothing more. We don't even know if the Commission is to go on. Today I got your wire through Foreign Office about Bangalore & have replied telling them to tell S G⁴⁰ I accept Bangalore appointment as owing to war leave improbable & that I get back to India end November. You will get by wire later news, before this reaches you & of course you must act to best of your judgment about everything. If you hear I'm definitely coming back I strongly advise your taking on the Pirie's house, Victoria & horse & anything else. They are not like the Robertsons, but would be quite nice. This will mean that probably I don't go till 1916. We are in no danger here whatever. Our only doubtful point as regards the Commission is whether the Turks are joining in the war & if so which side. Dak just off. Heaps of love from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie. I hope to bring back a lot of carpet rugs.

14th August: My own sweet darling, This war has come as a great surprise to everyone. We got so little news, but so far as we can gather the Germans are getting the worst of it. However it has

39 See Hubbard pp 246ff.

40 Surveyor General, Col. Sir Sidney Burrard

altered all our plans. At first we thought the Commission would come to an end, only so far the Turks have not joined in the war, so we go on & leave here tomorrow & march back to the frontier. We have I think about 6 weeks work to finish, i.e. to end of Sept then a fortnight of signing up maps &c & then I have 6 weeks to get back to India. I may go round by sea or fast back through Persia. Here we have been the victims of much Russian hospitality from the garrison, a battalion 5th Caucasus Regt. & healthy and jib (?) & general drinking. We are in no danger here darling, only we feel we are out of it here. Of course no one will care two straws about this show. I have been buying carpets. I have 5 now & shall probably come back with 10 or 20. We have just finished a long lunch 12 to 3 to 8 Russian officers. So few of them talk anything but Russian, it is rather dull. I was just beginning to get letters regularly from home, now we don't know how letters will get here. If you are still in **Simla** ask the Foreign Office how to address your letters, or I shall probably telegraph as soon as I decide how to come back. I presume all leave is stopped so we had better look forward to going home in 1916. I trust to getting **Bangalore** all right. We hope soon to get a regular arrangement to get Reuters from **Tabriz** twice a week. It is dreadful not knowing what is happening. Anyhow darling it looks as if we should be together at the end of November & that is delightful to look forward (*to*). I can't write much thinking of the war too much. It is a great blow not getting home & a great disappointment it will be to the children, but in many ways it will be better not to go home till 1916. In the meantime try not to spend too much money. Heaps of love & kisses, from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

Love to the girls.

18th August: My own sweet darling, We marched out of **Urumia** on 15th an 8 mile afternoon march & pitched no tents & then next day came on 12 miles to close to the frontier & are in camp at 6,000 ft amongst cultivated downs. A large number of the people about here are Syrians & Armenians and the whole country is more like a bit of Italy. One sees hay ricks & carts. All our camp except the doctor & myself have been laid up with bad trots, so we were glad to get out of **Urumia**. The Russians came out the day we did, the Turks yesterday & we were to have had a meeting yesterday but the Persians haven't arrived. They are unwilling to leave a Persian town. We have news up to to London (*sic*) 11th August but evidently strictly censored, and nothing much seems to have happened except that the Belgians are putting up a good fight & delaying the Germans. Probably Cowie, Brooke, Pierpoint & Dyer with the bulk of the party for India will leave us in about a month to march back overland. Wilson, I & Hubbard have to remain to the end & I think I shall probably come back round by sea as I can do that in a month, that is provided the line is open & steamers running. How I shall get any letters from you I don't really know. My last letter from you was of June 11 & you were out for your tramp in the hills. That was the road I came back from Tibet by.

4th September: We have been simply rushed off our legs, making great progress with the frontier & should finish outdoor work by end of this month. We got a mail 2 days ago, yours of 20th & 27th June. We have had an incident here. I enclose a rough copy of my report which will tell you all about it. (*see below*) Hubbard is going on fairly, but the bullet unfortunately has cut his sciatic nerve & he has to be sent home as soon as he can be moved. Wilson goes into **Khoi** to work up the authorities to punish the man while I go with the Commission.

We get news of the war, that from the Russians is always favourable to our side, that from the Turks favourable to the Germans. Then we get a copy of Reuters once a week. We never know if the Turks are going to join in against us, so we have to be careful. That is why we are going so fast. The doctor goes home with Hubbard. We are having glorious weather down to 40° one night & we have from our camp at 7,000 ft a glorious view of the north end of the **Urumia Lake**, & hope to see **Ararat** tomorrow. It is about 90 miles away. I don't know when or how to get letters from you, this goes back via Baghdad. Thanks so much for sending me the list of cheques on Cox. Will you do this: Grindlay, Calcutta seem to be going on sending home £45 a month, after they ceased drawing my pay. i.e. I have had letters from them saying they sent on 3rd June & 1st July. It doesn't matter so long as I am not overdrawn with them. The Alliance Bank, Simla are sending home £55 a month. I

am wondering whether fellows have been recalled from leave. If so Renny-Tailyour has come out, there will be no circle vacant for me. You should find this out from Sir Sidney Burrard as it may affect our movements. We have of course sent a joint telegram saying we are ready for service if required when this show is over, but I don't suppose we should be wanted. Darling, my best & warmest love. From your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

2nd September 1914, **Ashnok**: Capt. Wilson. The following is a report on the circumstances under which Mr Hubbard was wounded.

On the 31st August we marched from near **Kohne Shehr-i-Sulmas** to a camp near the village of **Ashnok**. We arrived about noon, and found the inhabitants of a Kurdish encampment near which we camped; extremely pleasant, ready to sell their produce, help pitch tents &c. In the afternoon we decided to go for a chittor (?) shoot near the camp & the villagers pointed out the nullah⁴¹ which they thought would be the best to follow. Accordingly at 4 pm we went out, myself, Major Cowie, Capt. Pierpoint & Capt. Brooke all with shot guns accompanied by Mr Hubbard unarmed, 5 sowars & 5 khalassis also unarmed to act as beaters. After following the nullah for about a mile westwards it divided into two. Major Cowie & Capt. Brooke followed up the southern branch with 5 men. The rest of the party followed the northern branch. Both branches were rather deep with a spur 400 ft or so high between them, so that those of us in the northern branch could not see what was happening in the other branch & vice versa, except hearing shots fired which we supposed were our party shooting at chittor. However a sowar who was on the left, i.e. south of Major Cowie's party was suddenly fired at twice at a range of 50 to 100 yards, was missed & ran down to join the rest of the party when another ½ dozen appeared on the sky line, firing & advancing. On this Major Cowie & Capt. Brooke decided to retire on our camp to bring out reinforcements. In the meantime not finding any birds up our nullah Capt. Pierpoint & I decided to return. Mr Hubbard who had walked up to our left towards the spur between Major Cowie's & my nullah, shouted out that he would go up the spur to see the view & then walk home. We had walked down the valley for 10 minutes, when men appeared on the spur, and fired on us. We considered it advisable to retire to camp as quickly as possible to turn out our armed men, and reached camp about 10 minutes after Major Cowie & Capt. Brooke whom we found advancing with all available rifles. I then sent Capt. Brooke & Capt. Pierpoint with 10 rifles to see what had become of Mr Hubbard, as I hoped that he had climbed the spur well above where the men appeared he might have been unnoticed. However unfortunately he had been hit by a long shot from about 500 yards through the head & leg. That this was deliberate is proved by another shot hitting the ground near him. He tells me that when he was hit 4 men came up to him. They asked if he had any money, searched his pockets. They asked him who had shot him and refused to help him. ~~& when he asked them why they had fired on us as we were British Officers they said they thought we were Russians. They then left him.~~ Capt. Brookes party brought in Mr Hubbard, assisted by a stretcher party Major Cowie has taken out.

The villagers here were helpful in every way, & I at once sent in a letter to Ismail Agha at **Cherik**, who came out yesterday, arrested 6 men of the village **Kyzyl** (?) **Kend** who had attacked us, & who confessed to having fired on us. When asked their reason they replied that they thought we were Turks. This however was in the presence of Col. Andrieffsky who was stopping the night in our camp. Ismail Agha asked me what I wished done with the prisoners. I told him he should keep them until he had communicated with the authorities at **Khoi**⁴² & that he was to take his orders from them.

Mr Hubbard is seriously wounded and must, as soon as he can be moved, be taken in to **Dilman** accompanied by Capt. Pierpoint^{43, 44} C H D Ryder, Lt. Col. RE.

41 A steep narrow valley.

42 Otherwise spelt Khoy.

43 The doctor.

44 See Hubbard pages 268-270.

Major Cowie was hit in the arm by a stone knocked up by a bullet and a good many bullets hit the ground near individuals of our party, which shows that the shooting was intended to hit and not merely with a wish to frighten us away.

We were accompanied from **Kohne Shehr** by a Persian Cossack sent by the Governor of **Dilman** at my request. He however on his own initiative stopped in a village on the way out & never rejoined us. CHDR.

7th October: *On the envelope in Charles' hand*: Mrs C.H.D.Ryder, Hotel Cecil, **Simla**, India. This letter was given by me to an Italian employee of the Turks near **Mount Ararat** to be posted in Oct. 1914. Recaptured in **Baghdad** in March 1917. C.H.D.Ryder, **Calcutta**, 18.5.17.

My own sweet darling, Here we are in the last valley below **Ararat**, with only 20 miles more to do. We should have been able to finish our work in 3 or 4 days, but the Turkish Commissioner, Aziz Bey, pleading illness has retired to **Bayazid**, 5 hours from us. We also hear the **Dardanelles** are closed so that way of going to India is out of the question, i.e. by sea via **Constantinople**. Cowie & Brooke went off that way, but as far we know are blocked at **Batoum**. I shouldn't be surprised if they tried to get to England instead via Sweden. Some of the Persians are going off to **Teheran** so we are sending letters by them. I think Wilson & I will leave in about a fortnight & go onto the Russian railway about 50 miles from here, then to **Tiflis & Baku**, by sea to **Recht**, then either drive to **Teheran**, 2 days, & 5 days drive to **Isfahan** from where it is 20 marches to **Ahwaz** (1 day by steamer from there to **Mohamerah**) or if the Turks haven't gone to war a quicker way will be to drive from **Recht** (on the Caspian) right through to **Hamadan**, 2 days thence to **Kermanshah** & then drive down to **Baghdad**. I shall wire to you or to S.G. Later on as I go along. Anyhow I shall have a very tiring journey.

I am sending a telegram to S.G.⁴⁵ asking whether **Bangalore** appointment still open, as possibly Renny-Tailyour may have been recalled. I got letters from Miss Fenn of 13th August & Una's of 14th Aug. I enclose latter which is to us both. I have answered it, but do you too (*sic*). I sent Miss Fenn a letter from Cox & Co asking them to pay her £50 if she requires it, as very likely prices may have gone up. Wilson joined me here so I have less work to do. All camps are reduced & we only have each a small tent. It is quite nice & warm here at only 4,000 ft. We are longing for more war news, and I for letters from you, but these I quite despair of getting any (*sic*).

8th October, morning: Just time to finish this off. Darling, I do adore you & would like to write much more! Heaps of love & kisses, from your adoring husband & lover, Charlie.

Love to the girls.

11th October: *On the envelope in Charles' hand*: Mrs C.H.D.Ryder, Hotel Cecil, **Simla**, India. Interesting! This letter was given by me to an Italian employee of the Turks near **Mount Ararat** to be posted in Oct. 1914. Recaptured in **Baghdad** in March 1917. C.H.D.Ryder, **Calcutta**, 18.5.17.

My own sweet darling, Another chance of adding a letter to the dak, which we are sending via **Baghdad**. We are still stuck in this camp, but plenty of work to do. I fancy I do about 14 hours a day. However 2 or 3 days more will see the bulk of it off my chest. We are waiting for the Turks all this time, fortunately lovely weather. We still don't know what way we shall get back. I always hope by sea. I am feeling very fit. Love to the girls. Ask the S.G. & Foreign Office to let you know any news we send by wire. Cowie & Co left **Batoum** by steamer on 1st Oct. They will get to **Constantinople**; the difficulty will be getting on from there. Anyhow Wilson & I must see this show through. I have telegraphed to S.G. saying I will be back in India end of November & hope **Bangalore** still vacant, but of course it is quite possible Renny may be recalled. Miss Fenn said **Hugh & Harry**⁴⁶ had been. I can't understand their recalling officers from England. I should have

45 Surveyor General.

46 Ida's brother, killed at Festubert, east of Bethune, 16th May 1915.

thought they would have been more wanted there than in India. I see the King's Own lost heavily. Much love my darling & to the girls. From your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

22nd November, Murhill, Prideaux Road, **Eastbourne**: My own sweet darling, Here I am sitting at your table in the drawing room and such a lot to write about & really don't know what to begin with. I think the children. Ida, they are perfect darlings. I only got down here last night Saturday having to spend a night in town. I'll begin with **Violet**⁴⁷. She is a good deal taller than Miss Fenn, and so pretty, really beautiful, and so nice & interesting to talk to. She is nicely turned out too, blue skirt & white shirt & I've seen her in two pretty hats. I'll try & photograph them all. **Lisle**⁴⁸ I am very pleased with. He talks naturally & sensibly without "bakking" (?). **Ernle**⁴⁹ is taller & thinner & full of fun, & **Bobby**⁵⁰ is the same Bobby. They are both in the pink of health & condition. **Lisle** & I share the big bed with **Bobbie** in his cot, tonight **Ernle** is there. **Bobbie** slept splendidly & this morning all 3 boys were in my bed. The house all looks exactly as it used to, everything neat & nice. The French Governess is a quiet nice girl & they all seem to like her & the two servants Rose, & I forget the other's name, seem nice. All the children have nice manners & **Lisle** is charming to his little brothers, he was finding Bobby's place in the prayer book in Church today. **Bobby** has a "little" voice like **Enid's**. I'll hark back to the children as I go on.

I must write to **Enid** about her engagement⁵¹, darling girl I hope she will be very happy. I found out Elliot Money's address from **Aunt Gussie**⁵² & have written to him. Your last letter to me was 4th August, but I have learnt a certain amount of news out of the letters to the children. Poor Conran, I feel so sorry for him.

Now this is the situation as regards myself. Of course I couldn't pass through England without volunteering for the war. We had asked the Indian Govt to send us orders to the India Office but there were none. The first man we saw Sir A Herztel said he would telegraph to India, but he thought the Indian Govt would order us back. I then went to see Dunlop Smith who said he would send over a note to Col Fitzgerald, Kitchener's Military Secretary. I asked him today that all I was anxious to do was to serve anywhere in whatever capacity I was most suited for including going back to India, if they thought that right. I telegraphed to you yesterday & also to the S. G. I hear that Renny-Tailyour has gone back to India so obviously (*the post in*) **Bangalore** is out of the question. In one of your letters to Miss Fenn you said it would be **Shillong** or **Mussoorie**. On Tuesday I am going to **Bedford** for a night to see mother⁵³. Poor **Kitty**⁵⁴ is with Mrs Wake at Sidmouth. It is dreadfully sad about poor old **Hugh**⁵⁵. I know no details, but the 2nd, 3rd & 8th Gurkhas seem to have suffered heavily. & poor Hamish. I went round today & saw **Aunt Gussie**, Ethel & May Thomson and the Erskines. The latter told me Col. P. J Gordon had some billet at the War Office, and that McHarg had gone on service somewhere. That was all the Survey news they had.

Until I got home I thought that Cowie had come home. The Ambassador at Constantinople wired to that effect, but apparently he went on to India from Port Said. If you get a telegram saying that I am coming out, you must at once write a letter to Messrs Grindlay & Co, Bombay, telling them to keep letters for me & write to me to their care, telling me as much as you can of your news since 4th August, telling me where you are, & telling me where we are to go to. One can't go across the continent now. All letters & passengers go round by sea. I think I should probably sail Friday week the 5th Dec. Bertram Ward, Cousin Kate's eldest son, commanding the Middlesex, has been killed⁵⁶.

47 16 on 23rd

48 Aged 12.

49 Aged 8.

50 Aged 6.

51 This would have been to Wigram Money whom she married in 1956 after Neil Campbell died.

52 Augusta Money, sister to Charles' mother Julia Money.

53 Ida's mother Josephine Grigg.

54 Ida's sister.

55 Son of Thomas Grigg, Ida's first cousin.

56 Related through Julia Ironside, Charles' mother's mother.

I am sitting up late (for me) ½ past 10, to get on with this. I'll try & give you a description of our journey. We put up the last pillar on 26th October & on 27th I went into **Matton** 3 hours, to sell off the rest of our things, Wilson remaining out for a final meeting on 28th. He came in that afternoon & on the 29th with Capt Tsakaya we drove into **Shahtakhti** the nearest railway station. It rained all the last half of the 36 miles & went (*sic*) we got to the bridge over the **Araxes** just by the station we found a strong guard of Russians, who thanks to Tsakaya let us through. We slept that night at the station & then next morning were told that there was war against Turkey. Our baggage came in that morning & we decided to (*send*) the mules & remaining men to **Tabriz** & ourselves go via **Tiflis** to **Baku**. We took 40 hours instead of the usual 18 to get to **Tiflis** & Tsakaya looked after us well. We had a few hours to wait there & a lot of students went (*sic*) they found out we were English insisted on hoisting us up on their shoulders cheering lustily. Then we had a nights journey to **Baku** on the **Caspian**. We there decided that it would be too risky to march across Persia. Had lunch at the Consul's & found that a Mr Wilton, a King's Messenger from **Teheran** was coming through next day for **Petrogradh**. So we waited a day there & travelled very comfortably under his guidance, as he talked Russian, & reached **Petrogradh (Petersburg** that was) on 6th. At the Embassy we were strongly advised to go via **Archangel**, got there on 8th, two days by train & found our steamer the 'Borodino' would start on the 10th. However we got only a short distance down that day, down the river all frozen over, & then had to stop for the night. Next day we were ordered back & couldn't think why. As another steamer ahead of us was also ordered back we thought it might be a German boat outside. However it wasn't, but the Russian Govt had stopped the export of eggs & we had 12 million on board. However after another day's delay we finally got off, had 4 hours through ice & then into the **White Sea**. Then we went round the North Cape, 4½ degrees inside the Arctic Circle, very cold, but no ice. Then we came down the coast of **Norway** inside the Fjords. Oh my dear such lovely scenery, all covered with snow, had glorious sight of the Aurora Borealis & finally left the Norwegian coast at it's southern point & had 1½ days across the open (*sea*) to a little north of **Newcastle**, all lights out. However we got across all right & then had a day down the coast to the **Humber**, anchored at the mouth & came up the river next morning to **Hull**, just in time to catch a train & reach **London** at 7 pm that night the 20th. & now my dear I'm too tired to write more.

Nov 23rd & our engagement day, darling & **Violet's** birthday. I gave her a £1 & took her to a kinematacolor on the pier of all the armies & navies of the different countries. Miss Fenn is going to take all the others on Wednesday. That Mrs Pierson, her son in the Gurkhas has been killed, poor woman. Darling, it would do your heart good to hear **Ernle** & **Bobby** rushing about the place, full of spirits & fun. Violet speaks French so well & quite naturally without having to think. Her hair, by the bye is disappointing in length. She still has some of the wavy (*sic*) in front, but is inclined to tie it tight back. It really doesn't matter she is so pretty. It is a good thing she doesn't think too much about her personal appearance. School has done a lot of good to **Lisle**, he is no longer bumptious. I hope this letter will get out to you all right. I am off to **Bedford**. Go up to town tomorrow, stay the night in town and then to **Bedford** on Wednesday. Mrs Cowie is lunching with me tomorrow. I heard from her today a lot of Survey news. All the subalterns & junior captains have been recalled to military service & it is expected that senior captains & junior majors will be in March. Major Cowie is at Calcutta, & Major Gunter, Renny Tailour back in Bangalore, the Tandys & Crosthwaits in Dehra. "Teddars" has whooping cough. I went to see Col. & Mrs Hawkins today but they were out, but funnily enough they sat in front of us at the Kinematacolor.

26th November: I came up to town on 24th, stopped with Wratlaw & found Pierpoint there. He had been on a hospital ship at Boulogne. Went to the R.G.S. & found Macleod there. No orders at India Office, so I came down here yesterday. **Blanche**⁵⁷ met me & I found mother very well it seemed to me. I went & saw Mrs Nixon (?) who sent you her love, & Aunt **Mary**⁵⁸. I go off tomorrow. Friday

57 Ida's sister.

58 Mary Ann Grigg, Ida's father's sister.

spent night in town & then go down to **Una & Mary**⁵⁹. Up again to town on Monday & then I shall have seen everybody & be ready to start off for India by the mail following this & do anything else that is suitable. Darling it seems so funny to be in England without you. Heaps of love & kisses my pet, from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

I wrote to **Eliot Money** & had a nice letter back from him. I hope to go down there for a night if I can. He said that **Wigram** raved about **Enid** & from her photo he could understand it⁶⁰.

* * *

Cambridge Archive Editions: Near & Middle East Titles:

Iran–Iraq Border 1840–1958, The (11 volumes pub 1989)

Resumé

The Iran-Iraq boundary can be viewed as unique within the Middle East region, as it has long displayed the classic characteristics of a political frontier zone or a border march. This contrasts sharply with the 20th-century framework imposed largely by European colonial powers elsewhere in the Middle East. Imperial conflict over the Zagros mountains and elsewhere in the Mesopotamian plain was a regular phenomenon in ancient times. The period under review covers three principal phases of diplomatic activity which have shaped the course of the Iran-Iraq boundary. Each has resulted in the signature of treaties defining or modifying the boundary.

This collection contains the key primary documents from British Government files, covering 120 years of records on the Iran-Iraq border, in a single major reference work. The historical evidence for the evolution of the Iran-Iraq border may be considered as a common background for negotiations following the Gulf War and the invasion of Iraq. Included are treaty texts in facsimile and detailed accounts of negotiations between British, Russian, Turkish, Persian and latterly Iraqi sides.

Historical Overview

The Iran-Iraq boundary can be viewed as unique within the Middle East region. The morphology of the border landscape is certainly much more varied than the desert through which many of the geometric boundary lines of the Arabian Peninsula have been drawn. From north to south, the most recently agreed delimitation (1975) utilises a number of high drainage divides in Kurdistan, continues along the western edge of the Zagros mountains and then crosses a broad, alluvial plain to the Shatt al Arab, where for its last sixty-five miles the boundary assumes a course along the Thalweg.

More significantly the Iran-Iraq boundary has long displayed the classic characteristics of a political frontier-zone or a border march. This contrasts sharply with the twentieth-century framework imposed largely by European colonial powers elsewhere in the Middle East. Imperial conflict over the Zagros mountains and the Mesopotamian plain was an ancient phenomenon. In pre-Islamic times this east-west configuration could be observed when the Persian and Greek empires hired Christian Arab groups from the Hira and Damascus respectively to fight out their own wars. Essentially beginning with the series of conflicts inaugurated by Sultan Selim I in 1514, the Sunni Ottoman Empire and the Shi'a Persian Safavid Dynasty clashed repeatedly in their efforts to impose their respective creeds of Islam upon the Zagros-Mesopotamia region.

59 Charles' sisters.

60 Enid met up with her cousin Wigram again after the death of her husband Neil Campbell and married him in 1956.

Evolution of the boundary: (1) Second Treaty of Erzeroum (1847)

For the period under review three principal phases of diplomatic activity have shaped the course of the Iran-Iraq boundary. Each has resulted in the signature of treaties defining or modifying the boundary, in 1847, 1913, and 1937 respectively.

The second Treaty of Erzeroum of 1847 and its Explanatory Note of 1848 were the culmination of four years of intense negotiations between the British, Russians, Ottomans and Persians. The land boundary was allocated for its entire length while further south a territorial limit was rather loosely defined along the east bank of the Shatt al Arab river. Reference to the nineteenth century documentation in the volumes, which include substantial sections of the original, handwritten diary of the Turco-Persian Boundary Commission, will highlight the massive problems encountered in precisely establishing the Perso-Ottoman divide.

The complete distaste for compromise shown by the Persians and Ottomans led an exasperated and impatient British Foreign Secretary, Lord Palmerston, to comment in 1851 that "the boundary line between Turkey and Persia can never be finally settled except by an arbitrary decision on the part of Great Britain and Russia".

Evolution of the boundary: (2) The Constantinople Protocol (1913)

In the Tehran Protocol of December 1911, Persia and the Ottomans agreed that a new delimitation commission should commence work based on the clauses of the 1847 treaty. During 1912, eighteen meetings provided no tangible results. However, mediating powers of Britain and Russia worked energetically behind the scenes in pressing for a new settlement to resolve all outstanding difficulties. Instead of the dispute being referred to the Hague Court of Arbitration, Britain induced 'the sick man of Europe' (the Ottoman Empire) to agree to a boundary line in July 1913. Further quadripartite negotiations resulted in the signature of the Constantinople Protocol of November 1913, when the delimitation was clarified in considerable detail. In 1914, as the immense detail of the Procès-verbaux illustrates, the boundary was demarcated by pillar. The frequently tense and exciting record of these developments is reproduced in full in this collection. A spate of very useful printed Foreign Office memoranda appeared around this time, familiarising Whitehall personnel with the nineteenth century history of the border dispute.

Evolution of the boundary: (3) The Tehran Treaty (1937)

Relations between Iran and Iraq soured over the Shatt al Arab in the early 1930s. Accusations and counter-accusations of border violations were made with increasing frequency and both sides argued the boundary issue in an inconclusive hearing before the League of Nations in 1934-35.

The Saadabad Pact regional security agreement between Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan was signed in Tehran in July 1937. After two and a half years of exhaustive and often fruitless negotiations, Iran and Iraq took this same opportunity to sign a further boundary treaty. This extended Iranian sovereignty to the Thalweg over a stretch of water alongside Abadan anchorage but otherwise confirmed the validity of the earlier 1847 and 1913 treaties.

The Iraqi revolution of 1958 ended Britain's intimate and continuous involvement in the development and administration of the Iran-Iraq border and the documentation ends at this point.

WRATISLAW, Albert Charles, born 1862 in Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk; died 1938 in Felixstowe, Suffolk

1871, Grammar School, 18 Northgate St., Bury St. Edmunds (aged 8); 1881, Rossall School, Thornton in Fylde, Lancs. (aged 18); 1888, Vice-Consul at Smyrna (witnessed marriage of Cumberbatch & Rees there 1891)

1892, V-C in Philippopolis 1892; Consul at Basrah (Bussorah in Who's Who) 1898

Bet. 1903 - 1914, C-General in Tabriz 1903-09; Crete 1909-13; Turko-Persian Bdry. Comsn. 1913-14
Bet. 1914 - 1920, Consul-General in Salonika 1914-19; Beirut 1919-20
1920, Retired to The Thatch, Felixstowe, Suffolk; (13 York House, Kensington in 1932)
2 May 1938, Funeral at St John's Church, Ipswich (died 28 April aged 75)
Baptism: 17 October 1862, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk
Burial: 28 April 1938, Felixstowe, aged 75
Education: 1881, Rossall School; Main occupation: Bet. 1883 - 1920, Consul-General
More Education: 1883, Entered Levant Consular Service.

Royal Geographical Society

WILSON, Sir Arnold Talbot (1884-1940)

Born 1884; educated, Clifton and Sandhurst; served in 32 Sikh Pioneers; Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society (Life Member), 1907-1940; Indian Political Department, 1909; British Commissioner on the Turco-Persian Boundary Commission, 1914; political officer with Indian Expeditionary Force, Mesopotamia; Deputy Civil Commissioner, 1916; Acting Civil Commissioner and Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, 1918-1920; Anglo-Persian oil company, 1920-1932; MP, 1933; Pilot Officer in the RAF, Oct 1939; died in action, Nov 1940.

Vladimir Fedorovich Minorsky (Russian: Владимир Фёдорович Минорский; February 5, 1877 - March 25, 1966) was a Russian Orientalist best known for his contributions to Persian history, geography, literature, and culture.

Minorsky was born in Korcheva, Tver, northwest of Moscow on the upper Volga River, a town now submerged beneath the Ivankovo Reservoir. There he was a gold medallist of the Fourth Grammar School. In 1896 he entered Moscow University to study law, graduating in 1900, then entered the Lazarev Institute of Oriental Languages where he spent 3 years preparing for a diplomatic career. He made his first trip to Iran in 1902, where he collected material on the Ahl-i Ḥaqq religion.

In 1903 he entered the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, serving 1904-1908 in Persia (now Iran), first in the Tabriz Consulate-General and then the Tehran Legation, and 1908-1912 in Saint Petersburg and Tashkent. In 1911, jointly the Four-Power (British, Russian, Turkish, and Persian) Commission, he carried out a mission in North-Western Persia to delimit the Turko-Persian border, and also published a monograph on the Ahl-i Ḥaqq religion for which he was awarded the Gold Medal of the Ethnography Section of the Imperial Society of Natural Sciences in Moscow.

One of the most important Kurdish manuscripts he obtained during this period was *The Forqan ol-Akhbar*, by Hajj Nematollah, which he later wrote about in "Etudes sur les Ahl-I Haqq, I.", *Revue de L'Histoire des Religions*, tome XCVII, No. 1, Janvier 1928, pp. 90-105. His surveys in Iran also provided invaluable material for his 1915 work, *Materiali dlya izucheniya vostoka* (Materials for the Study of the East), published by the Imperial Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, St. Petersburg.

From 1915-17 he served as Chargé d'affaires in the Russian Legation at Tehran. As the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 made problematic his return to Russia, in 1919 he moved to Paris where he worked at the Russian Embassy. There his expertise in Middle Eastern and Caucasian affairs was useful during the Versailles and Trianon peace settlements.

In 1923 he began to lecture on Persian literature at the *École nationale des langues orientales vivantes*, where he subsequently taught Turkish and Islamic history. In 1930 he was named Oriental Secretary to the 1931 International Exhibition of Persian Art at Burlington House, London, and in 1932 was made lecturer in Persian at London's School of Oriental Studies. In 1933 he became Reader in Persian Literature and History, University of London; Professor of Persian in 1937; and in 1944 retired. During World War II, SOAS had evacuated to Christ's College, University of Cambridge, and there the Minorskys retired apart from a year (1948-49) at Fuad University, Cairo.

In 1960 Minorsky was invited by the Soviet Academy of Sciences to attend the meeting of the Twenty-Third International Congress of Orientalists in Moscow. After his death, his ashes were interred in the Novodevichy Cemetery, which was reserved exclusively for outstanding artists, literary men, composers, scholars, etc.; the bulk of his personal library was given to Leningrad.

Minorsky received numerous honors during his lifetime, including being made a Corresponding Fellow of the British Academy, 1943, Honorary Member of the Société Asiatique of Paris, 1946, and Doctor honoris causa of the University of Brussels, 1948.