



THE MARSHALL ALBUMS

Photography and Archaeology

Editor

Sudeshna Guha

Preface

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Sandy Morton (fig. 117)

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Front Cover: **Unknown Photographer**, Marshall with His Wife, Daughter
and her Governess at Eastern Gateway of Great *Stupa*, Sanchi,
c.1912–18, Silver Gelatin Print, 149 x 105 mm.

Back Cover: **Public Works Department**, “Inscription below the 1st
Balcony Taken from South”, Qutb Minar, Mehrauli, Delhi, 1908–09,
Silver Gelatin Print, Photographer’s Ref. 1811, 98 x 149 mm.

Frontispiece: **Archaeological Survey of India**, Tomb of Iltutmish, Interior
View, Qutb Complex, Mehrauli, Delhi, c.1919–20, Silver Gelatin
Print, 225 x 210 mm.

Front Endpapers: **Archaeological Survey of India**, Iron Pillar, Qutb
Complex, Delhi, c.1910s–20s, Silver Gelatin Print, 155 x 110 mm.

Back Endpapers: Excerpt from Letter by John Marshall to a Colleague,
1909, Private Collection.

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PREFACE

Prof. B.D. Chattopadhyaya

My none-too-meagre collection of amateur snapshots, taken at a variety of sites, has always been regarded with amused indulgence by my family; in their eyes, my photographic ventures fall far short of expected technical and aesthetic standards. I cannot claim to be a technically sophisticated field archaeologist either.

I was therefore both surprised and delighted to receive an invitation to write a Foreword to this sumptuous volume of historical images accompanied by detailed textual analyses. I was very pleased to oblige; in addition, it was too tempting an opportunity to vindicate my interest in photography to sceptical viewers at home.

As a teacher and researcher in the field of ancient Indian history, I have always relied upon photographic material in order to develop my work. India offers an amazingly unique chronologically diverse spectrum of relics of the past, and the scope of archaeological photography has therefore always been extremely rich. The sheer volume of what is available today is simply staggering. Only a fraction of the material excavated and documented by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) prior to Independence was used as visuals in publications of the time; and though the photo archives of the ASI remain a veritable, but sadly neglected, trove of pre- and post-Independence archaeological photographs, one tends to doubt now whether everything that was collected has been retained. I personally do not know whether pre-Partition archaeological photographs are part of institutionalised departments of archaeology in Pakistan and Bangladesh.

RANDOLPH BEZZANT HOLMES

Tangi Gorge near Khyber Pass, Photographer's Ref. No. 72,
c. 1910s–1930s, Silver Gelatin Print, 242 x 293 mm

The bulk of the photographs in this volume are sourced from the Marshall Albums in The Alkazi Collection of Photography. Visuals have also been taken from the 60 volumes of Marshall Albums now divided into two parts under the custodianship of the universities of Cambridge and Durham. Additionally, there are photographs taken from other albums, museum collections and during the tenure of some of Marshall's predecessors at the ASI. Initially appointed for a period of five years, Marshall had a long tenure at the ASI, first as its Director General (1902–1928) and then as Officer on Special Duty (1928–1934). During his management, the corpus of collected material and its photographic documentation grew enormously.

From a historiographic point of view, since there was a general scarcity of authentic written sources, objects fashioned by the “chisels of the country's ancient sculptors were immeasurably more to be trusted than the pens of her authors”, as has been remarked. But what were the various and particular implications of photography within the demanding discipline of colonial archaeology? Since renderings of the photographed object inevitably altered over time with changes in technology and visual modalities in general, were there specific concerns relating to the manner of imaging of selected archaeological items?

Of course, the particular interests of individuals heading the ASI, or of those associated with it, may have varied considerably. In his pioneering tour reports covering an extensive area of north, central and other regions of India, Alexander Cunningham expressed his desire for an “accurate description of sites visited and excavated through illustration, plan, and photograph” – the latter being one of the techniques by which “accurate description” could



Introduction

ARCHAEOLOGY, PHOTOGRAPHY, HISTORIES

Sudeshna Guha

During their formative years in the nineteenth century, archaeology and photography made substantive contributions to the historical method. Perceived as field practices capable of rendering fairly objective accounts, the authority that was invested to both derived from the understanding that they allowed reality to be ‘captured’ in an unmediated fashion, and offered a relatively objective means of documentation. However, the knowledge that was established through archaeological investigation and its photographs also acquired many different values through their diverse usages. The five chapters in this volume present analyses of this phenomenon through an exploration of the histories of early India that were archaeologically created during British rule of South Asia. They offer seminal references for archaeology’s

1. **ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA**
John and Florence Marshall with Officers and Staff of the
Archaeological Survey, Simla, 25 April 1925
Silver Gelatin Print, 212 x 283 mm



Chapter One

ORIENTALISM AND ARCHAEOLOGY: WRITING THE HISTORY OF SOUTH ASIA, 1600–1860

Michael S. Dodson

John Marshall's contribution to our understanding of South Asia's past, via his initiatives in furthering the development of formal and 'scientific' techniques and methodologies for archaeological enquiry, is considerable. His efforts in the preservation and conservation of important architectural structures and archaeological sites continue to pay dividends for scholars and enthusiasts alike. Also, it was during his tenure as Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India that the first systematic excavations were undertaken at historically significant sites such as Harappa, Mohenjodaro, Sanchi, Sarnath and Taxila. These excavations have left an important, though often contested, legacy for subsequent generations of archaeologists and historians of the subcontinent. The purpose of this essay is to provide a background and context to the developments in South Asian archaeology under Marshall's leadership by examining some of the earliest British attempts to systematise a history

-
39. COLIN MURRAY
The Lion Cave at Elephanta, c.1870–71
Albumen Silver Print, 236 x 292 mm



Chapter Three

PHOTOGRAPHS IN SIR JOHN MARSHALL'S ARCHAEOLOGY

Sudeshna Guha

A photograph (fig. 68a) depicting the lower half of the Qutb Minar, in the personal collection of John Marshall, bears the following instruction on its reverse: “in mounting, the lower photo [is] to be placed beneath [the] upper, overlapping, and not above it”.

Taken by a staff photographer of the Archaeological Survey of India, this photograph dates from the period when the Survey had completed the restoration of monuments situated inside the Qutb complex at Mehrauli, New Delhi. The note was written by J.A. Page (then in charge of completing the work), who wanted an exact representation of the entire Minar for his magnum opus, *The Historical Memoirs on the Qutb: Delhi*.¹ Page's instruction was carefully followed. The photograph was aligned with another, showing the top four storeys of the Minar (fig. 68b), and the re-photographed composite image appeared as Plate 17a in his book.

67. JOHN MARSHALL (ATTRIB.)
Dal Lake, Srinagar, c.1903–20
Silver Gelatin Print, 104 x 155 mm



Chapter Four

'BUDDHIST' PHOTOGRAPHY

Christopher Pinney

Inaugurating his report on the archaeological work at Sanchi, John Marshall alluded to the magnitude of the task that confronted the site's excavators with a prosaic description of the topography:

The hill on which these monuments are clustered is in the Diwanganj sub-division of the Bhopal State, about 5½ miles from Bhilsa on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, its precise position being Lat. 23° 28' N and Long. 77° 48' E. The hill is not in any way remarkable, nor is there anything in its general aspect to distinguish it from any other eminences that girdle it close on the west and south. It is less than 300 feet in height, of a whale-back shape, with a saddle near the middle, in which nestles the modern village of Sanchi[...] Twenty years ago, when the writer first started his excavations, the jungle extended over

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89. **ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA**
View of Temple 18 from Northeast, Sanchi, 1914–15
Silver Gelatin Print, 270 x 289 mm



Chapter Five

CUNNINGHAM, MARSHALL AND THE MONKS: AN EARLY HISTORIC CITY AS A BUDDHIST LANDSCAPE

Robert Harding

Rajagriha, between the towns of Patna and Gaya, was the capital of Magadha in the time of the Buddha. Some of the principal scenes of his life occurred in its neighbourhood, and the place was consequently held in very great veneration by all Buddhists. Every hill and every stream had been made holy by Buddha's presence, and the whole country around Rajagriha was covered with buildings to commemorate the principal events of his life. Numerous ruined topes, sculptured friezes and inscribed pillars still remain scattered over the country as lasting proofs of the high veneration in which this religious capital of Buddhism was held by the people.¹

When John Marshall became Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India in 1902, he came into an institution that had already established a set of paradigms by which the archaeologically

98. **ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA**
Mora Moradu, Stucco Relief on South Face
of Main Stupa, Taxila, 1915–16
Silver Gelatin Print, 146 x 202 mm

99. **ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA**
Panorama, Julian, Taxila, c. 1913–16
Silver Gelatin Print, 131 x 338 mm

Appendix A**JOHN MARSHALL AND THE PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTIONS**

Sudeshna Guha

Part I**Sir John Hubert Marshall (1876–1958)****A Personal Profile****1876**

Born in Chester (UK), 19 March. Youngest of four sons of Frederick K.C. Marshall (QC), and Annie (née Evans), his first wife (fig. 107).

January 1888–July 1895

Schooling in Dulwich College, London, from where he matriculated. Edited the college magazine, *Alleynian*, in 1894–95.

1895–1900

King's College, Cambridge. Joined the University with a scholarship in Classics.

1898

Completed Part I of the Classical Tripos, obtained first class and was awarded the Porson University Prize.

As preparation for Classical Archaeology for Part II, joined the British School at Athens in 1898 and participated in its excavations of 1898–99.

1900

Completed Part II, obtained first class, and was awarded the Prendergast Travelling Studentship. After graduation, Marshall went to Crete in November 1900, to work on

the excavations undertaken by the British School. He participated in the restoration of a selection of vases from Mycenaean graves and at the tomb at Vapheio, and visited Knossos where Sir Arthur Evans, assisted by Duncan Mackenzie and David Hogarth, had started excavations.

1901

Awarded the Craven Studentship at the British School in Athens, and excavated at Praisos with Robert Carr Bosanquet from May to July, after which both Marshall and Bosanquet participated in Hogarth's excavations at Kato Zakro. Marshall worked on the classification of the excavated and surface finds of pottery. The method of careful collection of the surface pottery, which Marshall introduced to archaeological excavations in India, was informed through this work.

While working for the British School, Marshall applied for a Fellowship at King's College, Cambridge, but he was selected to the post of Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India before the College nominations were made. Due to Marshall's leaving the British School, Frederick Henry Marshall (no relation), assistant in the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities at the British Museum, took over the excavations at Praisos, and eventually wrote the excavation report.

Before leaving for India, Marshall sold a collection of objects he had made during his Cretan explorations and excavations to the Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge. He, however, did not part with all his Cretan antiquities. In 1931

he donated another object, a worshipper of the “long bodied type”, from his personal collection to the Museum.

1902

Appointed, from 22 February, Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India, initially for five years.

Before leaving for India Marshall married Florence Longhurst (fig. 108), daughter of surgeon-dentist Sir Henry Bell Longhurst, on 11 January 1902.

They had a son, John, and a daughter, Margaret (fig. 109).

1906

Tenure as Director General of Archaeological Survey of India extended until age of retirement.

1910

Honoured Commander of the Indian Empire.

1913

Awarded Honorary Doctorate, University of Cambridge.

1914

Honoured Knight Commander of the Indian Empire.

1922

Awarded Honorary Doctorate, University of Calcutta.

1927

Elected Honorary Fellow of King's College, Cambridge.

107. UNKNOWN PHOTOGRAPHER

Marshall's Parents, Captioned “Grandpa and Grandma”, Dulwich, England, c.1900
Silver Gelatin Print, 63 x 44 mm

