Finding Aid for the British Occupation of Kandahār Album

Beth Ann Guynn
Descriptive Summary

Title: British Occupation of Kandahār Album

Date (inclusive): 1881

Number: 2013.R.5

Creator/Collector: Dr. Benjamin Simpson

Physical Description: 1 album (72 photographic prints)

Repository:
The Getty Research Institute
Special Collections
1200 Getty Center Drive, Suite 1100
Los Angeles 90049-1688
reference@getty.edu
URL: http://hdl.handle.net/10020/askref
(310) 440-7390

Abstract: The album documents Kandahār and environs following the British siege of Kandahār in 1880. Included are local landmarks, tribal groups, occupational portraits, street scenes, and scenes of the British occupation.

Request Materials: Request access to the physical materials described in this inventory through the catalog record for this collection. Click here for the access policy.

Language: Collection material is in English

Biographical/Historical Note

Dr. Benjamin Simpson (1831-1923) had a long career as a British army surgeon, spanning five decades from 1853 to 1890 and culminating in his appointment as Surgeon General of India. A group of portraits he took in India was exhibited at the London International Exhibition of 1862, while other photographs were reproduced as lithographs in Colonel Edward Tuite Dalton's Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal (1872).

Access

Open for use by qualified researchers.

Preferred Citation

http://hdl.handle.net/10020/cifa2013r5

Acquisition Information

Acquired in 2013.

Processing History

Cataloged by Beth Ann Guynn in 2013.

Digitized Materials

The collection was digitized in 2013 and the images are available online:
http://hdl.handle.net/10020/cifa2013r5

Scope and Content of Collection

The Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878-1880) concluded with the British defeat of the Afghani leader, Ayub Khan, at the Battle of Kandahār on September 1, 1880. The British withdrew from Kandahār on April 22, 1881. This album of 72 albumen photographs taken by Dr. Benjamin Simpson documents Kandahār and environs in the period following the September battle during which British troops continued to occupy the area. Included are local landmarks, tribal groups, occupational portraits, street scenes, and scenes of the British occupation. Sites depicted include the Durrani Gate, the Baba Wali Kotal, the ruins of Kandahār Citadel; Chilzina or the Forty Steps, and the Kerka Sharif or Shrine of the Cloak, which holds the cloak believed to have been worn by the Prophet Mohammed.

Images related to the British army include views of the camps and barracks, officer's quarters, the military cemetery, and the artillery and base hospital squares. Several group portraits depict the medical staff, engineers, headquarters staff, transport officers, and political officers. There are two group portraits of officers who were present at the siege of Kandahār, and a group portrait of Afghan officials that includes Ghazi Mohammed Ayub Kahn, the leader of the Afghan forces during the Second Anglo-Afghan War, his son, and the Imam Sahib Zadah. Images 14-18, mounted on sequential leaves, form a panorama taken from Karez Hill that encompasses Chilzina and the Murcha Pass.
The album covers are dark green leather; the front cover is detached and the spine is missing. Photographs are mounted on 36 leaves (one photograph each, recto and verso). The photographs are signed and/or numbered in the negatives: B. Simpson. Titles are from the numbered letterpress captions (numbered 1-75 with omissions), affixed below most of the photographs. Titles devised by the cataloger are enclosed in square brackets.

**Arrangement**
The collection is arranged in a single series: Series I. British Occupation of Kandahār Album, 1881.

**Subjects - Topics**
Afghan Wars
Islamic shrines -- Afghanistan -- Kandahār
Tombs -- Afghanistan -- Kandahār

**Subjects - Places**
Afghanistan -- Description and travel
Afghanistan -- History, Military -- 19th century
Kandahār (Afghanistan) -- Antiquities
Kandahār (Afghanistan) -- Description and travel

**Genres and Forms of Material**
Albumen prints -- Afghanistan -- 19th century
Photographs, Original
Photograph albums -- Afghanistan -- 19th century

**Contributors**
Dr. Benjamin Simpson

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**Series I. British Occupation of Kandahār Album, 1881**

**Arrangement**
In original order.

- **page Front paste-down** 2013.R.5-fpe Blank page
- **page Front free endpaper** 2013.R.5-ffe Blank page
- **page Verso front free endpaper** 2013.R.5-fe_v Blank page
- **page 1 recto** 2013.R.5-1r 1. Tomb of Ahmed Shah from SW Bastion of Citadel
- **page 1 verso** 2013.R.5-1v 3. View of City, from Signal Tower Looking West
- **page 2 recto** 2013.R.5-2r 4. Deh Khoja, from above the Durani Gate
- **page 2 verso** 2013.R.5-2v 5. Deh Khoja, from the Cabuli Gate
- **page 3 recto** 2013.R.5-3r 6. Murcha Pass, from top of Durani Gate
- **page 3 verso** 2013.R.5-3v 7. The "Sisters" and Walis' Burial Ground, from Durani Gate
- **Page 4 recto** 2013.R.5-4r 8. The Baba Wali Kotal, Showing the Position of Ayauab's Guns
- **Page 4 verso** 2013.R.5-4v 9. Ditto, Ditto, on the North Side of Kotul (The Baba Wali Kotal, Showing the Position of Ayauab's Guns on the North Side)
- **page 5 recto** 2013.R.5-5r 10. Ayauab’s Camp in the Arg
- **page 5 verso** 2013.R.5-5v 11. Tombs of Hazrati and Shere Ali’s Father
- **page 6 recto** 2013.R.5-6r 12. Baba Wali Kotal, from the Beloch Lines
- **Page 7 recto - 9 recto** Panorama Taken from Karez Hill Embracing Chilzina and the Murcha Pass

**Scope and Content Note**
Five part panorama, each part mounted separately in the album moving from the left side of the image to the right side. The individual parts are numbered 14-18; only number 14 bears a caption which serves as a title for the entire panorama.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Image Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 recto</td>
<td>2013.R.5-7r</td>
<td>14. Panorama Taken from Karez Hill... [Rock Outcropping above Fields and Mountains]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 verso</td>
<td>2013.R.5-7v</td>
<td>15. [Man Standing on a Rock Outcropping Overlooking Fields]</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 recto</td>
<td>2013.R.5-8r</td>
<td>16. [View of Fields Looking Towards Mountains]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 verso</td>
<td>2013.R.5-8v</td>
<td>17. [British Encampment on the Plain]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 recto</td>
<td>2013.R.5-9r</td>
<td>18. [View of Plain with British Encampment to Left]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 verso</td>
<td>2013.R.5-9v</td>
<td>19. Group of Officers Present during the Siege</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 recto</td>
<td>2013.R.5-10r</td>
<td>20. Ditto, Ditto, Ditto [Group of Officers Present during the Siege]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 verso</td>
<td>2013.R.5-10v</td>
<td>21. Theatrical Troupe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 recto</td>
<td>2013.R.5-11r</td>
<td>22. Baba Wali Kotal, from the 27th Lines</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 recto</td>
<td>2013.R.5-12r</td>
<td>24. European Cemetery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 verso</td>
<td>2013.R.5-12v</td>
<td>25. View from North Wall, Showing the Cemetery within the Walls and Giving a General View of the City</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 verso</td>
<td>2013.R.5-13r</td>
<td>26. [Another View from North Wall, Showing the Cemetery within the Walls and Giving a General View of the City]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 recto</td>
<td>2013.R.5-14r</td>
<td>27. Signal Tower</td>
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<td>15 recto</td>
<td>2013.R.5-15r</td>
<td>29. Group Hazāras</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 verso</td>
<td>2013.R.5-15v</td>
<td>30. Group, Ayaub’s Ambassadors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 recto</td>
<td>2013.R.5-16r</td>
<td>31. The Medical Staff at Kandahār</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 verso</td>
<td>2013.R.5-16v</td>
<td>32. Group of Natives at Ziarat-i-Hazratji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 recto</td>
<td>2013.R.5-17r</td>
<td>33. Group, Parsiwans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 verso</td>
<td>2013.R.5-17v</td>
<td>34. Group, Timuris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 recto</td>
<td>2013.R.5-18r</td>
<td>35. Edegah Gate</td>
</tr>
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<td>18 verso</td>
<td>2013.R.5-18v</td>
<td>36. Camels Coming out of Durani Gate</td>
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<td>19 verso</td>
<td>2013.R.5-19v</td>
<td>38. Transport Officers</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 recto</td>
<td>2013.R.5-20r</td>
<td>39. Looking across the Agrandab Valley from Baba Wal Ziarat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 verso</td>
<td>2013.R.5-20v</td>
<td>41. Chilzina or the 40 Steps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 recto</td>
<td>2013.R.5-21r</td>
<td>42. Ahmed Shah’s Tomb, from Khirka Sharif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 verso</td>
<td>2013.R.5-21v</td>
<td>43. The Ruins from Kandahār Citadel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
44. Khirka Shariff, the Shrine Where the Mantle of the Prophet is Preserved
Scope and Content Note
Caption continues: The old Kazi who appears in the picture is stated to be 112 years of age.

45. Char Su, the Point to Which the Roads from the Principal Gates Converge
Scope and Content Note
Caption continues: - the scene of Capt. Willis' murder by a Ghazi. Image depicts a procession of Afghans, led by officials, emerging from the gate.

46. Courtyard of Wali Shere Ali's Zenana

47. In the Streets of Kandahār
Scope and Content Note
Image depicts groups of men in and around a portico.

48. In the Streets of Kandahār
Scope and Content Note
Image depicts groups of men gathered in various doorways and windows, and in the street.

49. Artillery Square Showing Main Bastion of Citadel

50. Cantonment, 63rd Regiment, Barrack Square

52. Picnic in Argandab Valley

53. Group, Political Officers

54. Group of Natives, Taken in the Walis' Zenana, Lately Used as a Durbar

55. Afghan Horse Dealers

56. Group, Officers of Transport Department

58. A Beluchi Beggar: "Dato Obolum Belisario"

59. General Hume's Quarters and Officers' Quarters, 11th and 63rd Regiments

60. Base Hospital Square and Cantonments

61. Group of Fakirs

62. Barracks Square, 78th Highlanders

63. Headquarters Staff

66. Gymkhana in Foreground

67. Walis' Burial Ground from North

68. Ditto, from South [Walis' Burial Ground from South]

69. View of Plain North and East of Kandahār, Showing Graves &c

70. Interior of Walis' Burial Ground Showing Graves

71. Kandahār from Hazratji's Shrine Showing Full Extent of N. and E. Walls

72. [Another View from Hazratji's Shrine Showing Full Extent of N. and E. Walls]

73. Headquarters

74. Col. St. Johns' Residence in the City

75. Chilzina and Old Kandahār, From Picket Hill