

Rare Books, Manuscripts, Maps & Photographs (694)

Wed, 13th Jul 2022, Live Online | Edinburgh

Viewing Times:

Viewing in 33 Broughton Place, Edinburgh

Mon 11th & Tues 12th July

10am to 5pm



Lot 45

Estimate: £2000 - £3000 + Fees

Iraq Archive relating to surveying work conducted by A. L. Holt for the Cairo-Baghdad air route, 1921

1. [Report on two Cairo-Baghdad air route reconnaissance missions], 1921. Typescript with manuscript annotations, 34 pp. (rectos and versos), describing 'The expedition to Ma' Dak Han' (oasis near Ramadi) and the 'First Ford expedition' ('The ostensible purpose was a political mission to Nuri ibn Shalan of the Rowallah tribe', p. 11), incidents include an encounter with Arab chieftain 'Faad ul Duchaim' ('He seemed to think that he ... should receive the same consideration and subsidy as his cousin Fahad Beg ibn Hadhal whose son had taken an active part against the Turks during the war', p. 30), 2 leaves of related manuscript notes attached;
2. '2nd Ford Reconnaissance on the Baghdad-Cairo Air Route, June 6th-16th', c.1921. Manuscript, 79 ff., begins 'Purposes of the Expedition. 1. To establish by ground and air No 4 landing ground at 200 miles from Ramadi, 2. To meet the Cairo reconnaissance party at L.G. 4 and pilot them to Baghdad', describes numerous encounters with locals, e.g. 'Met a crowd of Arabs on the move. These proved to be the people of Jiza ibn Bahr. Consulted Jiza ibn Bahr himself about a guide and he produced one Zumaitan ibn Matar who proved himself excellently acquainted with the country' (f. 23), 'Met a raiding party of Arabs about 100 strong under Mutlaq ibn Thamir going to raid the Beni Sabbar people' (f. 32), 'Arrived Al Mat. Found camped there one Sheikh Mishrif al Awagi (Suwailmat) with about fifty tents but no camels. The camels had been sent away to better grazing while he remained there to retain the right to the water' (f. 35), and the airlifting of wounded sheikh Murthi al Rifadi ('an excellent piece of propaganda', f. 61);
3. 'Short Diary of Instructions & Action Taken in Connection with the Aerial Route to be Constructed between Amman and Ramadi. From 13.3.21 to [30.6.21]', 7 September 1921. Typescript, 16 ff., marked 'confidential' on title;
4. 'Report on Desert Journey to Establish L[anding] G[round] 4', from the Assistant Divisional Adviser, Ramadi, to Major Holt, 22 June 1921. Carbon typescript, 4 ff., typescript covering note attached;
5. 'Names of Places'. Carbon typescript, 3 ff., containing names and description of topographical landmarks apparently in Iraq, e.g. 'Telel Ash Shaur - Two conspicuous hills. Name said to be derived from a big meeting of all the important desert Shaikhs held some time ago', manuscript corrections in pencil;
6. Holt, A. L. Baghdad-Amman Air Route. Report on Proposed Trans-Desert Highway for Mechanical Transport. Baghdad: printed by the superintendent, Railway Press, 1922. 3 copies, folio, each in original wrappers, 9 pp., 'Confidential. Report No. 1' printed on front covers.

Together with similar items relating to Holt's work on other projects:

7. 'Iraq Railways. Proposed Baghdad Haifa Railway. Notes on Estimates Drawn up from Reconnaissance [sic] Surveys with Map of Proposed Route. District Engineer, Construction and Surveys, Baghdad' [cover-title], 24th April 1930. Carbon typescript, 8 [1] ff., folding cyanotype map printed on linen (33 x 120cm, manuscript captions in red, white and blue inks, discolouration around one fold), loose in captioned folder addressed to 'District Engineer, Construction and Surveys, Baghdad';

8. 'Hit - Baiji - Kirkuk. Railway Reconnaissance [sic]', June 1931. Carbon typescript, 21 [2] ff., 2 folding cyanotype maps, secured with grommets, wrappers and one map detached, together with various typescript mileage tables in folder with similar title to preceding item addressed to 'A. L. Holt, District Engineer, Construction and Surveys, Baghdad';

9. 'Bahra Agreement' [concerning the Iraq-Nejd border, parties comprising Sultan 'Abd al-'Aziz of Nejd and Sir Gilbert Clayton], c.1925. 3 ff., typescript, with 6 ff. related memoranda attached;

10. Folding lithographic map of proposed oil pipelines from Naft Khaneh, Iraq, to Tripoli and Haifa (34.5 x 63.5cm, coloured, untitled);

11. 'Port d'Alexandrette. Projet', folding lithographic map of Iskenderun, modern Turkey (65 x 75cm, coloured);

12. Typescript letter to the superintending engineer, Turkish Petroleum Co. Ltd, 1928, attaching manuscript petition in Arabic from overseer 'Hamadan' and response in English from surveyor Balbhadra Singh;

all typescripts and manuscripts on rectos only of foolscap sheets unless otherwise stated, most secured with old paperclips or pins with consequent rust-marks (except items 2, 3 and 7: in loose sheets) (1 folder)