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### 'Note by Sir William Lee-Warner on the Aden Demarcation'

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#### About this record

The file consists of a note concerning the Aden demarcation by William Lee-Warner, India Office, Secretary to the Political and Secret Department.

It discusses the following: the difficulties which have arisen in carrying out the demarcation on the Amiri frontier, the history of past agreements concerning Captain Hunter's map of 1880, the survey of Captain R A Wahab of 1891-92 with comments, the Demarcation Commission, and proposals for the future.

'Note by Sir William Lee-Warner on the Aden Demarcation' [14r] (1/4)

B. 136.<sup>1</sup>

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Confidential.

1902.

**Note by Sir William Lee-Warner on the Aden Demarcation.**

A difficulty has arisen in carrying out the demarcation on the Amiri frontier. The Viceroy supports the local authorities in drawing a line from near Jebel Jehaf across the valley south of Kataba to the opposite range. This would leave to the Amiris Jalela and all villages claimed by them between Jalela and Kataba. (Telegram,\* 16th May 1902.) The Secretary of State considers that Wahab's survey of 1891-92—by which the Government of India as well as the India Office desire to be bound (*see* Viceroy's telegram, † 21st March 1902)—bars a claim to Jalela, Jalas, Minadi, Lakhmat as Saleh and other places to the north of a point which seems to be four or five miles from Dthali itself. The Government of India advocate the enforced evacuation of the above places by the Turks.

\*Political,  
689/1902.

†Political,  
458/1902.

*The Map of 1880.*

The history of our past transactions must be briefly stated. Our first agreement with the confederacy ruled over by the Amir of Dthali is dated the 2nd of October 1880. By it the Amir Ali bin Mokbil entered into friendship with us, and he received the promise of a small annual subsidy. He was not granted protection. Ali bin Mokbil had, however, been recognised by us as successor so far back as 1872, but when he was subsequently imprisoned by the Turks, and another Amir set up in his place, we rendered our ally no help. In 1878 Ali recovered his position by his own efforts, only to find that several of the villages which he claimed had meanwhile given in their allegiance to the Porte. Before we entered into our agreement of 1880 with the Amir, we sent Captain Hunter to report on the Amiri country, and to ascertain its limits. On the 24th February 1880 Captain Hunter submitted his report ‡ and a map in which he described the northern boundary of the Amiris as a line joining Sarafi and Al Shaara, but added that within this line the Turks held numerous Shaari villages, while the Amir claimed a few villages outside the line. The Amir's share of the plateau or highland valley was about 36 square miles. The map showed Lakhmat al Salah both as a Turkish village and well on the Turkish side, Jalela as a Turkish village on the Amiri side of the line, and Minadi, al Wabh, and Sana as Turkish villages on the Turkish side. The information given was precise, and the general effect of adopting the Hunter line would be a compromise between the line now claimed by the local authorities and the Viceroy, and that upon which the Secretary of State relies. But we should still have to reckon with the definite admission that the Turks had villages on the plateau south of the Amiri frontier line traced by Captain Hunter.

‡Letter from  
Bombay  
Government,  
No. 32,  
26th June  
1880.

It is extremely difficult to see how, in the face of this report, written before we entered into stipendiary arrangements with Dthali, we can claim the line suggested by the Viceroy, and demand the retirement of the Turks from positions recognised as theirs before 1881.

*Wahab's Map of 1891-92.*

In 1881 we proceeded actively to support our stipendiary, and we informed India by Despatch (Secret) 11, dated 11th March 1881, that our ambassador would propose "an arbitral delimitation of the Zhali jurisdiction by a British

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\*H.C.  
No. 135 of  
1883.

†Letter,  
No. 134.

‡Enclosure 1.

§Dated 10th  
Aug. 1892.

¶See Letter  
from Aden,  
No. 82, dated  
3rd March  
1892.

officer in concert with the Turkish authorities." This proposal, after some delay, ended in the Turks claiming the whole of Arabia as their own. Thereon Lord Granville, on the\* 10th of January 1883, put his foot down, declaring that "the Sultan's claims over these tribes cannot be recognised, and that interference with them will not be permitted." His Lordship stated that Her Majesty's Government considered a boundary demarcation "essential in order to prevent the constant renewal of discussions." But the Turkish Government would not move, and on 6th August 1886 the Government of India† proposed "to make our arrangements with the tribes other than the Amiri, on the lines suggested by Major Hunter." If the Turks would not agree to a delimitation, Lord Dufferin proposed "to lay down the limits without their consent, and require them to respect" them. In respect of the Amiris "we would make some concessions to the Turks, if they could in this way be induced to enter into a convention." He added that in dealing even with the other tribes, it would be necessary "to avoid including within our limits any tracts which would be likely to gravitate to the Turks." Notwithstanding this tendency to give way in respect of the Amiris, matters drifted on with no prospect of an agreement with the Turks, although the Government of India in their Despatch, dated 6th August 1886, had even proposed to relax pressure on the Turks, and to allow the Amiri hamlets on the uplands to be "gradually absorbed by the Turks," the Chief being perhaps pensioned. But this measure, they had observed, should be deferred until an agreement could be come to with the Porte for the recognition of the territorial limits of the protected tribes. The Foreign Office, in letter dated 19th November 1887, generally concurred, and the conclusion of Protectorate Agreements with certain tribes near Aden and on the Hadramant Coast was sanctioned. The coast tribes were first taken in hand; and then, in Lord Lansdowne's Secret Letter 25, dated 4th February 1891, the Government of India reported their intention to undertake a survey before they proceeded to conclude Protectorate or other Agreements with the inland tribes, as they required fuller knowledge of their condition. Dealing with the Amiris, General Hogg, in letter‡ of 7th October 1889, considered it "unadvisable at present to make a Protectorate Treaty with them." Such a course would only lead to unnecessary complications.

The survey party went to work charged with "the survey of the districts in the neighbourhood of Aden, occupied by the Arab tribes in political relations with the Aden Residency." Captain R. A. Wahab described in his report§ the Amiri territory as bounded on the north and west by Turkish Arabia; on the east "its boundary is somewhat indefinite." He mentioned Kataba as the Turkish frontier post, and Dthali as five miles from the head of the pass, and 87 miles by the route described from Aden. He gave in his Appendix, page 14, a list of Turkish villages including Al Jalela, Al Mafari, J alas, Kataba, Minadi, and Sana. While he was at work on this part, the Turks protested against his intrusion into their dominions. He defended himself in letter¶ B/44, dated 3rd of March 1892, to the Resident enclosing a tracing "showing approximately how the border runs; I have shown in it the frontier villages on both sides, and the furthest points visited by any of the surveyors under your orders." His sketch map showed Kataba, Minadi, Al Wabh, J alas, Jalela as Turkish; and in this part, namely in the highland valley or plateau north of Dthali and east of Jebel Jehaf, it showed the line for which the Secretary of State for India contends. In other parts the sketch map assigned to the Turks tracts between Al Kama and Jebel Jehaf, which the Secretary of State is not prepared at this stage to exclude from the British Protectorate. Subsequently the completed map was furnished with its report, and that is the map of 1891-92, published in 1893, upon which the Secretary of State takes his stand.

*Comments upon the map of 1891-92.*

No clear line of frontier is marked upon this map, and therefore it has been necessary to interpret it by the report and its appendix, by Captain Wahab's defence of his operations already quoted, and by subsequent reports. Of these subsequent reports the most important was one written



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by the Resident when the present Commission was under consideration. It is true that General Maitland has lately expressed his regret at having written this report, but we have not heard that General Creagh has done so. After quoting Major Hunter's report of 1886, which repeated his report of 1880, General Maitland writes in his note,\* "When Major Wahab carried out  
" the survey in 1892-93 great attention was paid to the boundaries of the  
" tribes under our influence, where they abutted on Turkish territory.  
" From the information collected by Major Wahab, afterwards verified by  
" General O'Moore Creagh, the boundary has been dotted down in red on  
" the accompanying map; and it is probable that no material change has  
" since taken place. It will be seen that the boundary line is now much to  
" east of Jebel Jehaf, and that it curves about . . . . . Just skirting  
" Ad Dthala itself, the line goes far to the southwards, almost to the low-  
" lying country, before it turns west along the northern boundary of the  
" Haushabis. On the other hand, all the Shaari villages are on the Amir's  
" side of the line, and it is believed that none are now in the hands of the  
" Turks. The slice of country to the east of Jebel Jehaf appears to  
" represent the permanent result of Turkish aggression of 1873-1878. It is  
" too late now to think of restoring to the present Amir what was taken  
" from his predecessor, but the existing line would seem to have its dis-  
" advantages even for the Turks." The account already given in this note  
shows that we entered into no formal agreement with the Amiris until 1880,  
and that fact adds point to the remark that "it is too late now," &c. to  
redress encroachments before 1878.

\*Political,  
1445A of  
1901.

To sum up. The report attached to the map of 1891-92, the defence of  
Captain Wahab made in 1892 when he was charged by the Turks with  
encroachment, and the Resident's note, just quoted, attached to his letter† 116,  
dated 12th October 1901, to Bombay, all agree in interpreting the map of  
1891-92 as leaving to the Turks the plateau east of Jebel Jehaf and north of  
Dhali, from which the Government of India desire to expel them. Captain  
Hunter's report and map of 1880 further confirms the right of the Turks to  
most of this plateau, and to all the villages such as Lakhmat as Saleh,  
Jalela, and others where they are now established.

†Political,  
1445A of  
1901.

*The Demarcation Commission.*

In 1900 there was a serious disagreement with the Turks about their  
occupation of Ad Dareja, in the Haushabi territory. Since this place was  
shown in Wahab's map of 1891-92 as within our protectorate, the intruders  
were expelled by force. In our correspondence‡ we took our stand upon that  
survey and the map. Eventually the Turks themselves§ proposed a deli-  
mitation, a proposal to which we at once acceded. It is important to  
remember that the proposal came from their side. The Foreign Office  
furnished Colonel Wahab with his commission,|| "to delimit the boundary  
" between the territory of the tribes in the vicinity of Aden having direct  
" relations with His Majesty's Government and the dominions of His  
" Majesty the Sultan." The expression "dominions" was deliberately used  
instead of the words "the possessions of the Sultan," or the phrase "the  
Sanjak of Taiz," in order that we might not commit ourselves to any opinion  
as to the nature of Turkish sovereignty, or suzerainty, or administration on  
the other side of the line which marked the limit of the boundary of our  
own exclusive influence over the territories of the nine tribes.

‡Political,  
36 & 1904,  
1900.  
§26 Oct.  
1901,  
Political,  
2488, and  
Persia Print,  
Oct. 28.  
|| See Political  
500/1902.

As soon as the Commission began its work, it became apparent that our  
representatives on the spot were taking a different view of the boundary  
than that taken here. The Viceroy had, on the 2nd¶ of October 1901, shown  
his agreement with us as to a demarcation "on the basis of the map drawn  
by survey party in 1891-92." Accordingly, when the Turks claimed Mafari  
(Aden telegram,\*\* 17th February 1902), we telegraphed to ask its position with  
reference to the map. When again we heard (Aden telegram,†† 10th May  
1902) that the Turks had occupied a village north-east of Jalela, we again  
asked further particulars. We then heard it was called Lakmat as Saleh near  
Sana, and we pointed out that this village seemed of right to belong to the  
Turks. We asked for date of occupation, since we knew that Captain  
Hunter had reported that this village was in Turkish limits even before our

¶Political,  
1157/1901.

\*\*Political,  
4/1902.  
††Political,  
37/1902.



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agreement of 1880. These and other incidents made it clear that the Government of India, Aden, our Commissioner, and ourselves were at cross purposes as to the line which our own Commissioners were to regard as the line of 1891-92. It is unnecessary to repeat the long and more detailed explanation of our consistent views which followed. We explained our view of the line of 1891-92 both south-west of Jebel Jehaf and east of that mountain. We requested our Commissioner to draw the line according to our instructions, and then to send home the tracing and to indicate precisely the Turkish positions on either side of that line from which it was proposed that the Turks should withdraw, and to give us full particulars. In that position the matter stands. We await the maps.

*Proposals for the future.*

If the Government of India adhere to their views of the line, I think that possibly some compromise may be secured in the plateau east of Jebel Jehaf. I do not see any possibility of adopting the Viceroy's proposal of a line "from Jebel Jehaf along the range to near Sana, and thence across the valley to the opposite range" (see telegrams\* 16th May and 26th May 1902). But I hazard the opinion that we might possibly go behind Lord Granville's Note and back to the Hunter line of 1880. That would give us a small part of what the Government of India wish for. But be that as it may, our best course at present seems to be an intimation to the Turks that we will tolerate no intrusion on our side of the line indicated by the Secretary of State, that we shall have more to say hereafter about the plateau east of Jehaf, and that meanwhile the Commission will proceed eastwards and mark out the rest of our line along the desert edge or other boundary of the nine tribes.

\*Political,  
48 & 59,  
1902.

W. L.-W.

18th June 1902.