

This PDF was generated on 18/01/2022 from online resources of
the **Qatar Digital Library**

The online record can be viewed at:

http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100000000881.0x000015

It contains extra information, high resolution zoomable views and transcriptions.

'File 8/63 MUSCAT STATE AFFAIRS: SHIHUH TRIBE.'

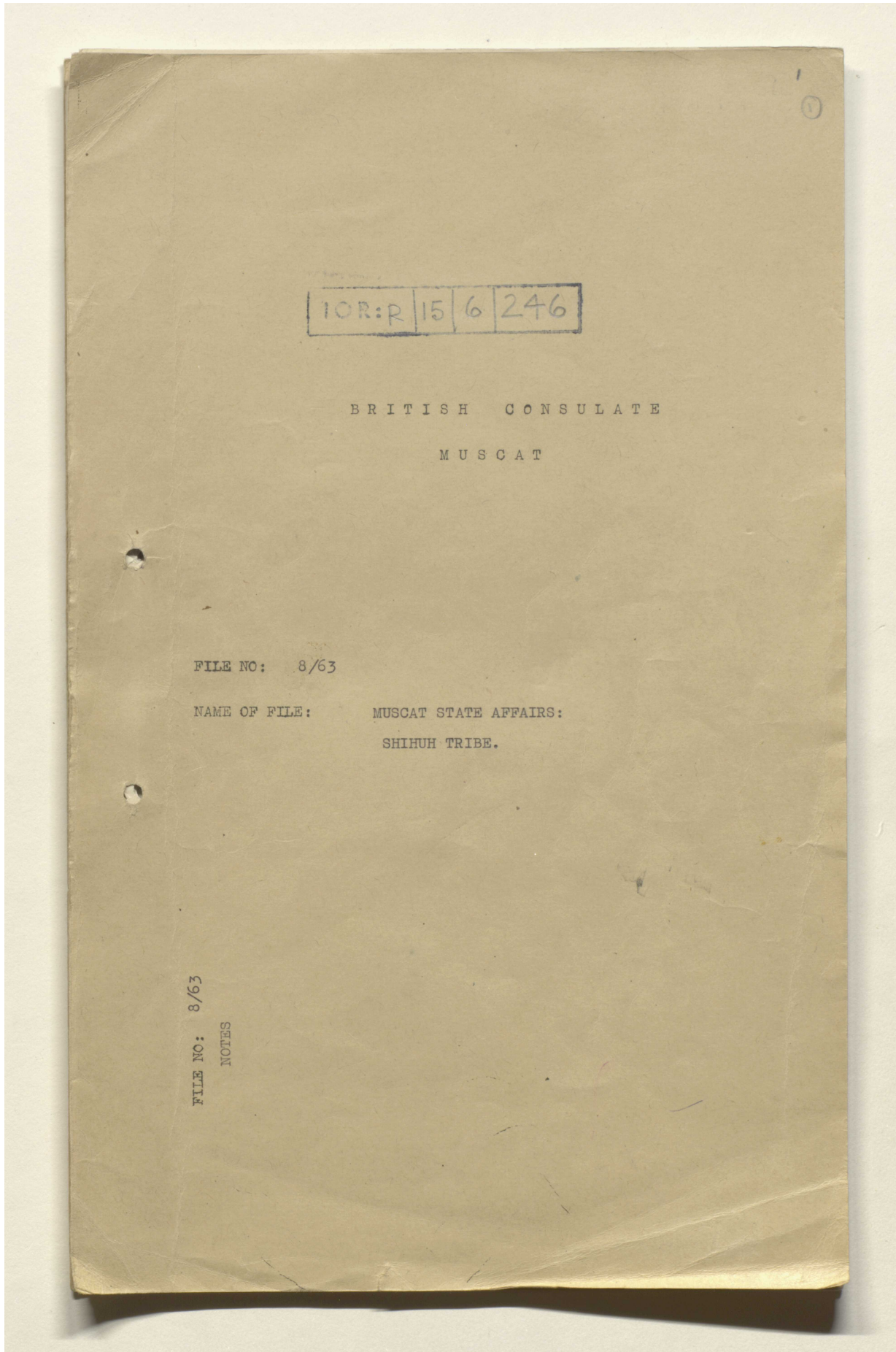
Holding Institution	British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers
Reference	IOR/R/15/6/246
Date(s)	1930 (CE, Gregorian)
Written in	English in Latin
Extent and Format	1 file (26 folios)
Copyright for document	<u>Unknown</u>



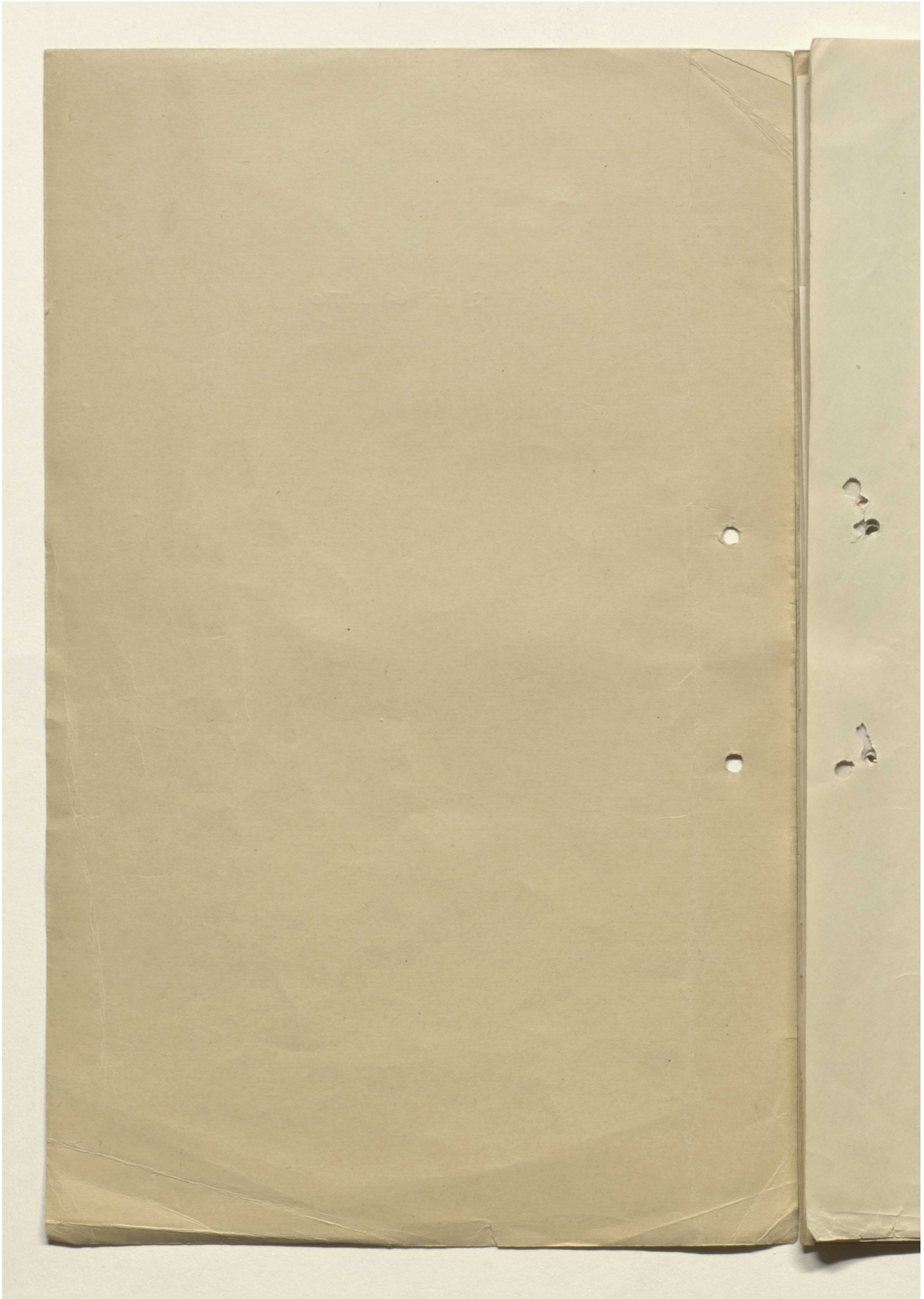
About this record

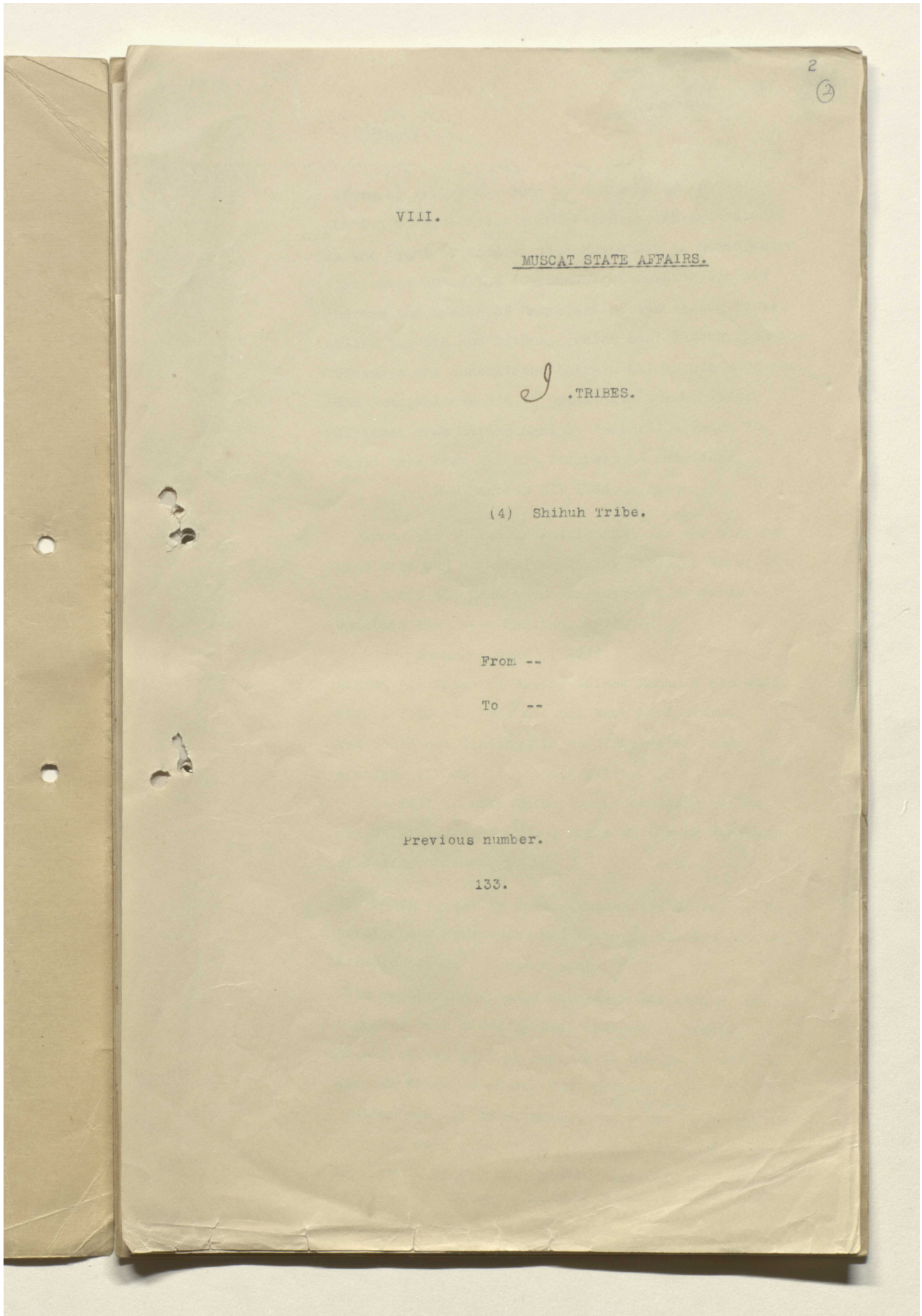
This file concerns the Shihuh tribe of Oman. It mostly consists of notes on the tribe produced by Bertram Sidney Thomas, Wazir to the Sultan of Muscat and Oman, which are enclosed in a letter addressed to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

The notes include the following: a preliminary note on Shihuh politics, a list of villages and their chief personalities (with an illustrative sketch map), a diary of a trip taken by Thomas from Muscat to Khasab (4 January-10 March 1930), translations of letters from Shihuh shaikhs, and a summary of the present situation. Preceding Thomas's letter and notes are a series of excerpts on the tribe from former British officials and other sources.

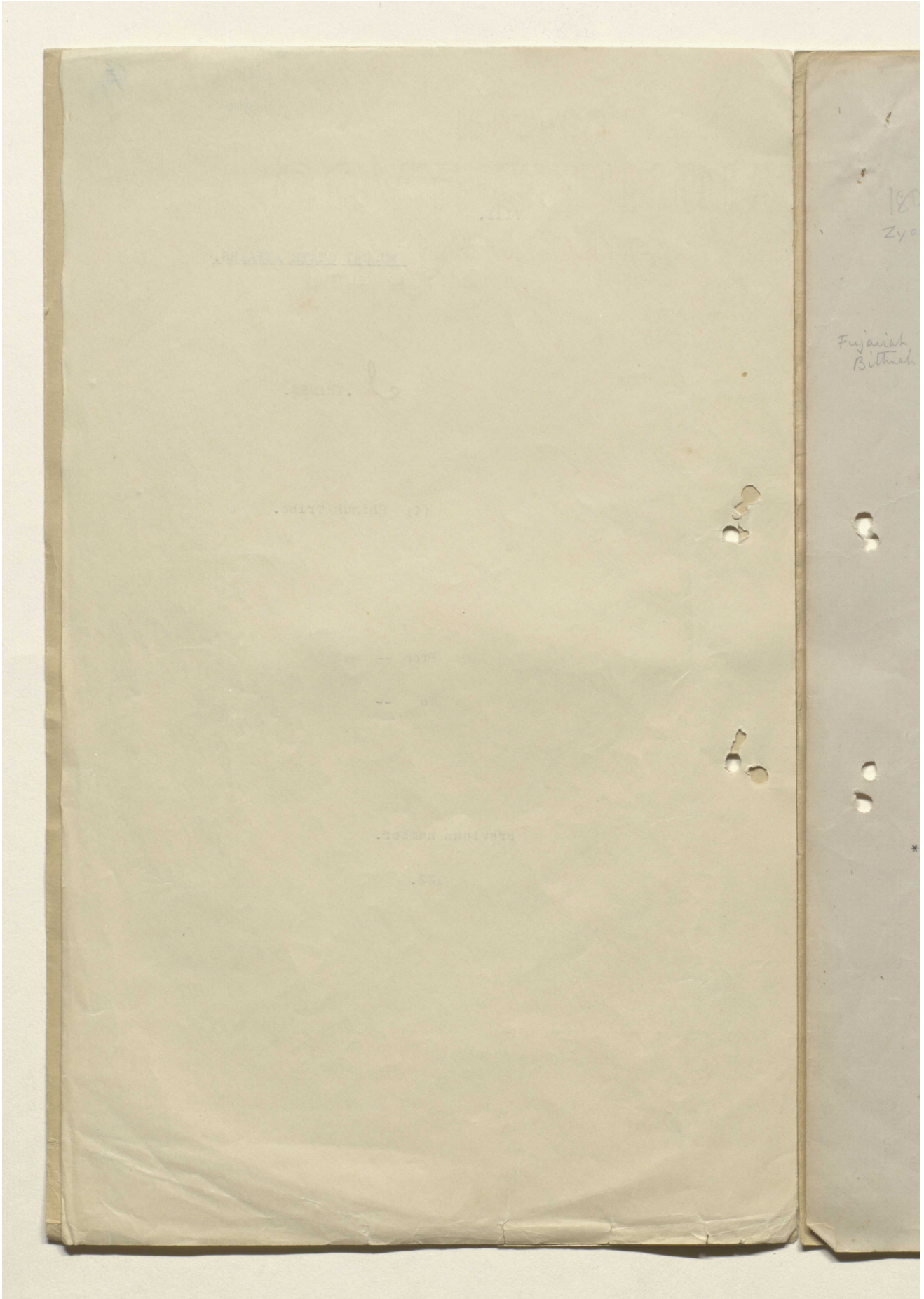


'File 8/63 MUSCAT STATE AFFAIRS: SHIHUH TRIBE.' [front-i] (2/56)





'File 8/63 MUSCAT STATE AFFAIRS: SHIHUH TRIBE.' [2v] (4/56)



SHIHUH.

It is of importance here to notice a new power the Zahib tribe, which the Wahabee sheikh established in the tract of country from Musseldom to Ramse, which he placed under the Government of Hussain bin Ali who was the Sheikh of Ramse, and of two strong forts, called Teguera and Bithney, which Sahood took from the Joasmees, and conciliated Hussain Ali to his support. The Imam, anxious not to break with the Wahabees, refrained from acting against this tribe, which it would have been for his interest to have done.

B.G. Records XIV P. 44.

Among the so called Azdite families who migrated into Nejd and were driven out of there by Sapor. II in A.D. 310-330 and whom our author locates in Oman are the ----Hadiyah, ~~Said~~ said.

Imams of Oman p. VIII.

Rahmah bin Matar al Hawaly Joined Mahomed bin Nasir with a following who did not know good arabic. and could not distinguish his friends from his enemies. (1733) *ibid* p. 111.

He fell in with three boats belonging to the esh Shuahiyyin who are a tribe of the el Hawalah of Julfar. *ibid* p. 239.

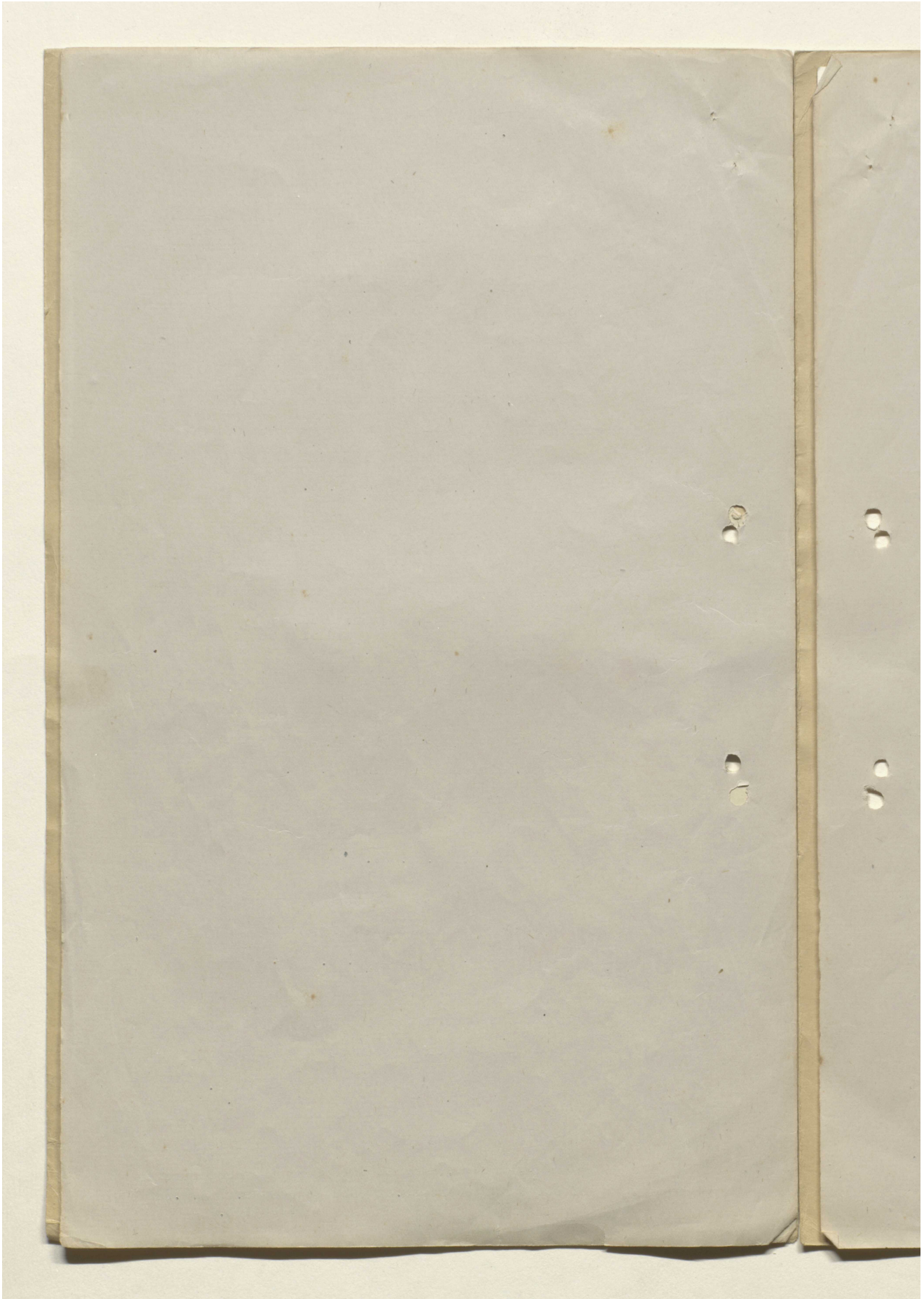
*1804.

The Mazen appear to have occupied the Shemal or Mussendum and were succeeded there by the Shihiyeen, a small tribe. Miles p. 5.

The weathering of cape Mussendum has always been regarded with dread by Arab navigators passing in and out of the gulf on account of the gales of wind and the strong currents that prevail there.

Miles 449.

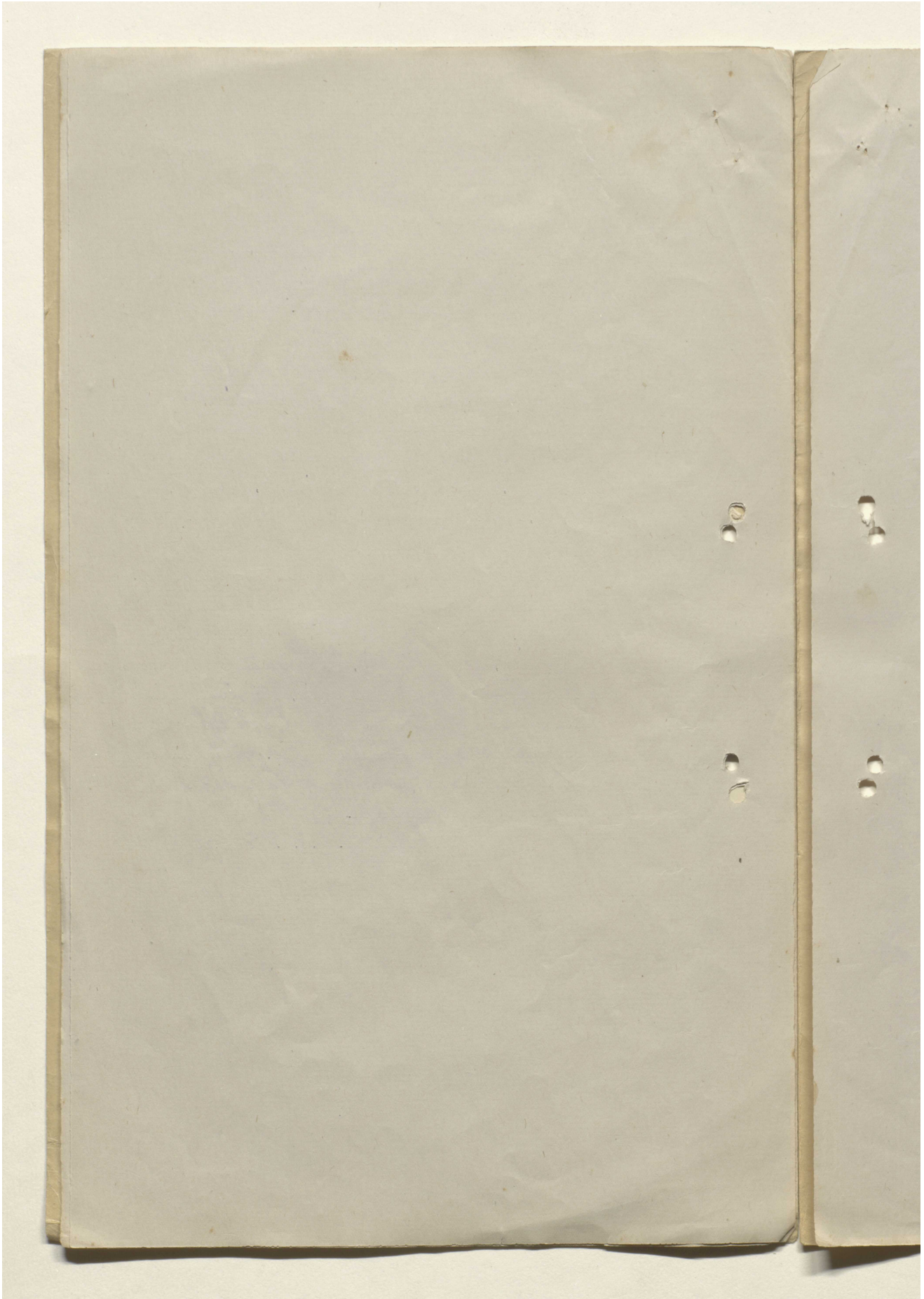
Julfar was almost invariably made use of by the Azab in those days as a military port in preference to Sohar or Muscat, owing to the dread they entertained of rocks and currents at cape Mussandum. A.D. 442 Miles 105.



SHIHUH

Profess Mahomedanism but are unobservant of its forms and ceremonies to the last degree, and in fact will entertain no religious instructors. The chief of the Wahabees was long unable to convert them to their systems of either religion or piracy nor would they pay him tribute. Their language is different from that of the other tribes, and as there are many individuals among them remarkable for the redness of their hair, it may fairly be concluded, as the Arabs declare, that their language is formed from corruptions of the dialects of their Portuguese and Danish ancestors engrafted on an impure stock of the Arabic. Both these nations have settlements in Amsandum and also at Khasab, a bay to the westward of the promontory on the main, where there was, and exists also at present a flourishing manufactory of cloth, of a peculiar sort which has long been used as wrappers for head and loins throughout the two shores of the gulf. Khasab too is said to contain descendants of the Portuguese in the humble capacity of fishermen.

Col Taylor 1818. B.G.R. XXIV p.13



The identification by Mr Thomas, of the tribal setting for the Biblical story of Job, in Oman appears to be somewhat far fetched.

~~xxx~~ To quote from the bible itself.

"O daughter of Edom that dwellest in the land of Uz" La. 4. 21.

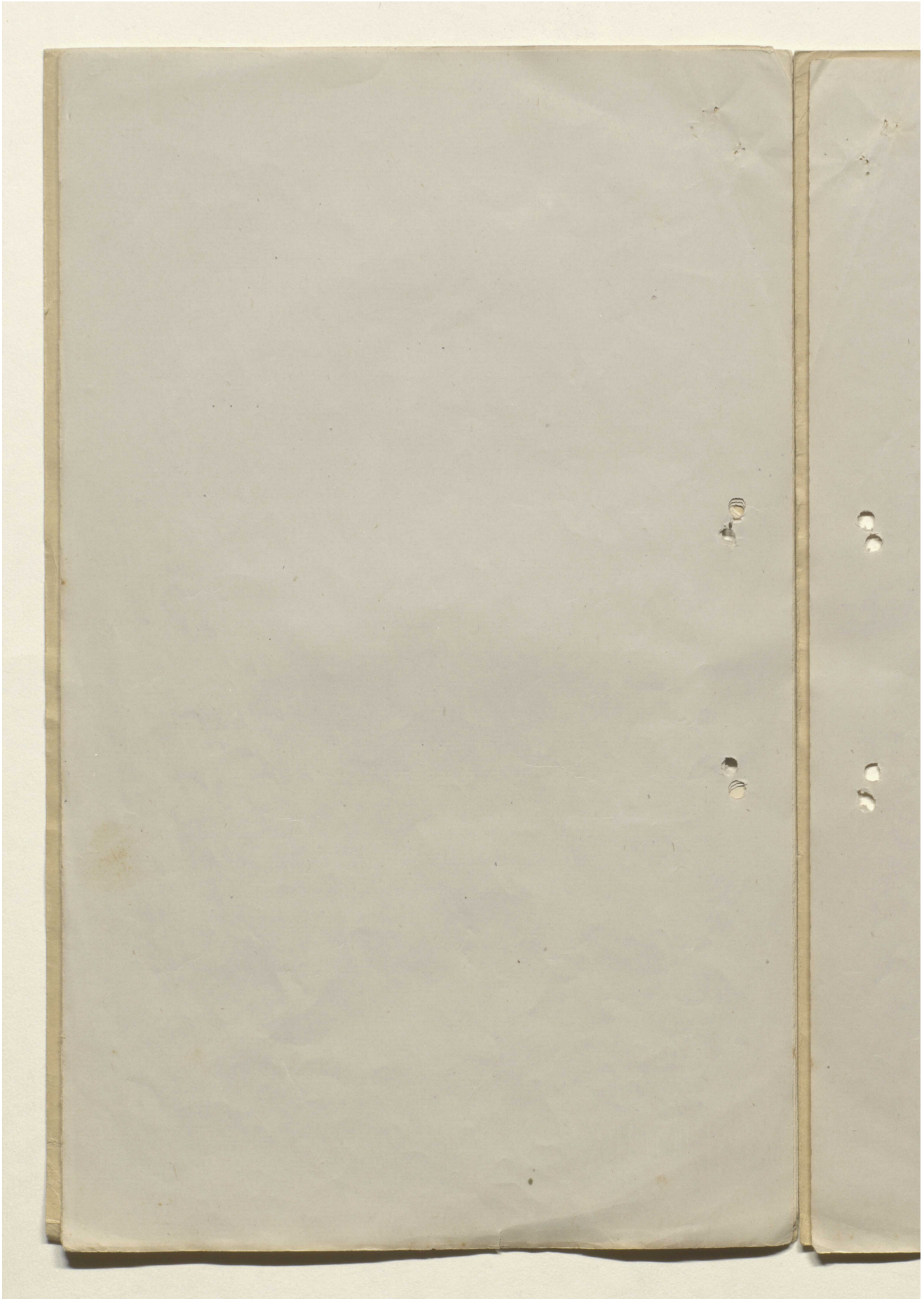
" Concerning Edom, thus saith the Lord of Hosts; Is wisdom no more in Teman ? " Je.49.7.

From the above it would appear that the land of Uz is more likely to have been situated near Edom where it is placed on biblical maps.

I do not know on what authority Mr Thomas identifies the word BLIULAEI which appears on Ptolemys map of Arabia published in Hogarths Penetration of Arabia, with the Bani Bu Ali, This tribe was known and referred to by Arab Historians as the Bani Temim till the beginning of last century vide Imams and Seyyids of Oman translated by G.P.Badger.

~~xxxxxxx~~ The Harth tribe of Sharkiya also derive from the Bani Temim.

It is curious to note that the founders of ~~xxxx~~ and Sufriyyah the Wahabi, ~~xxxxxxx~~ Ibadhi/sects belonged to this considerable and widely scattered tribe.



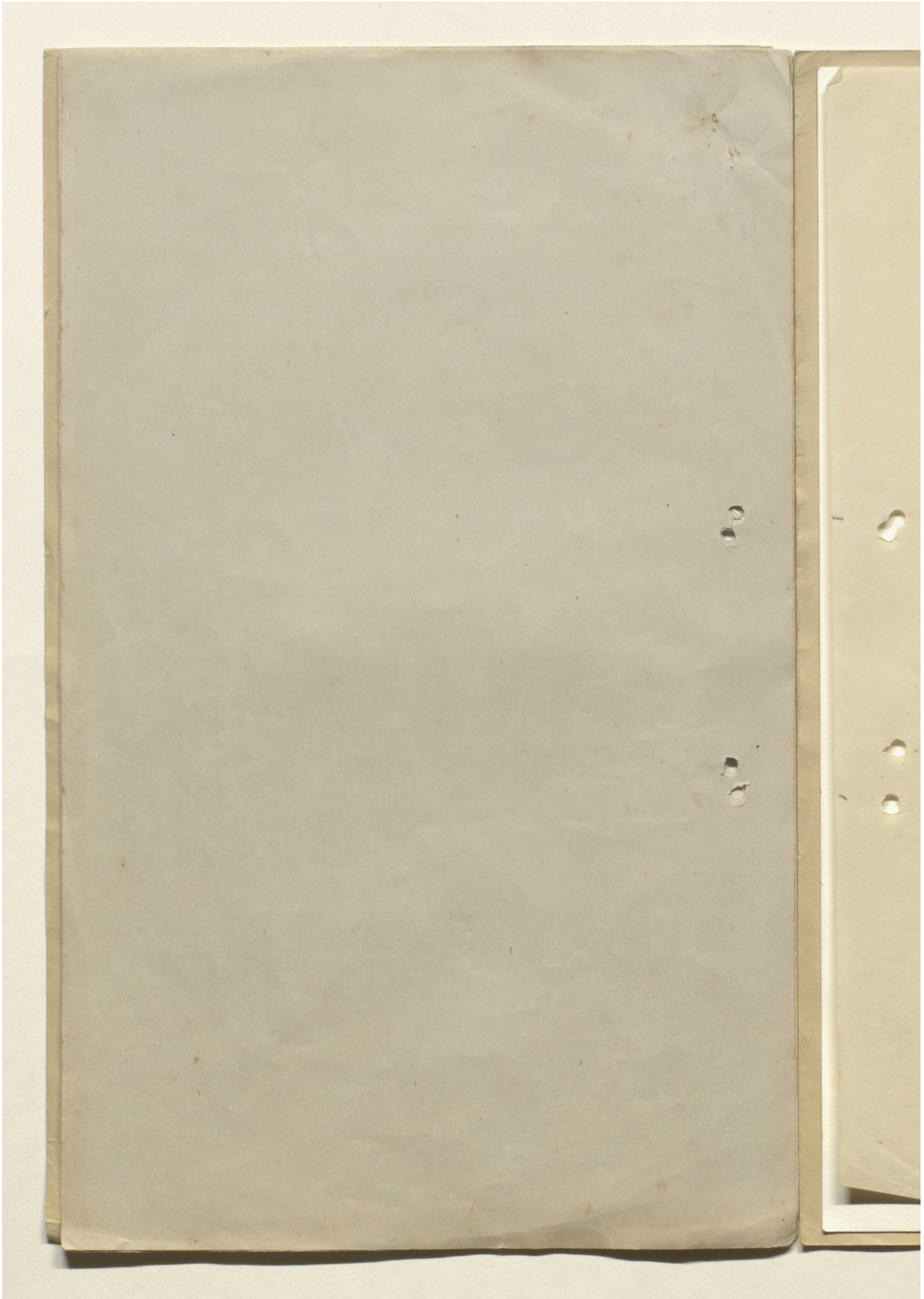
Shihuh.

A letter from the Resident at Bunderick dated 3rd May 1756 published in Selections of State Papers 1600-1800. mentions that the Dutch intended settling eighty families of Chinese on Karrack island.

The Dutch remained 17 years on this island from 1748 to 1765. During that time the population of the island increased from a few hundred to 12,000.

La Golfe Perse par Vadala.

6
6



Spore Copies

7
⑦

As from H.M.S. "Lupin",
at Khasab.
31st March 1930.

To
The Hon'ble the Political Resident,
Persian Gulf,
B U S H I R E .

Sir,

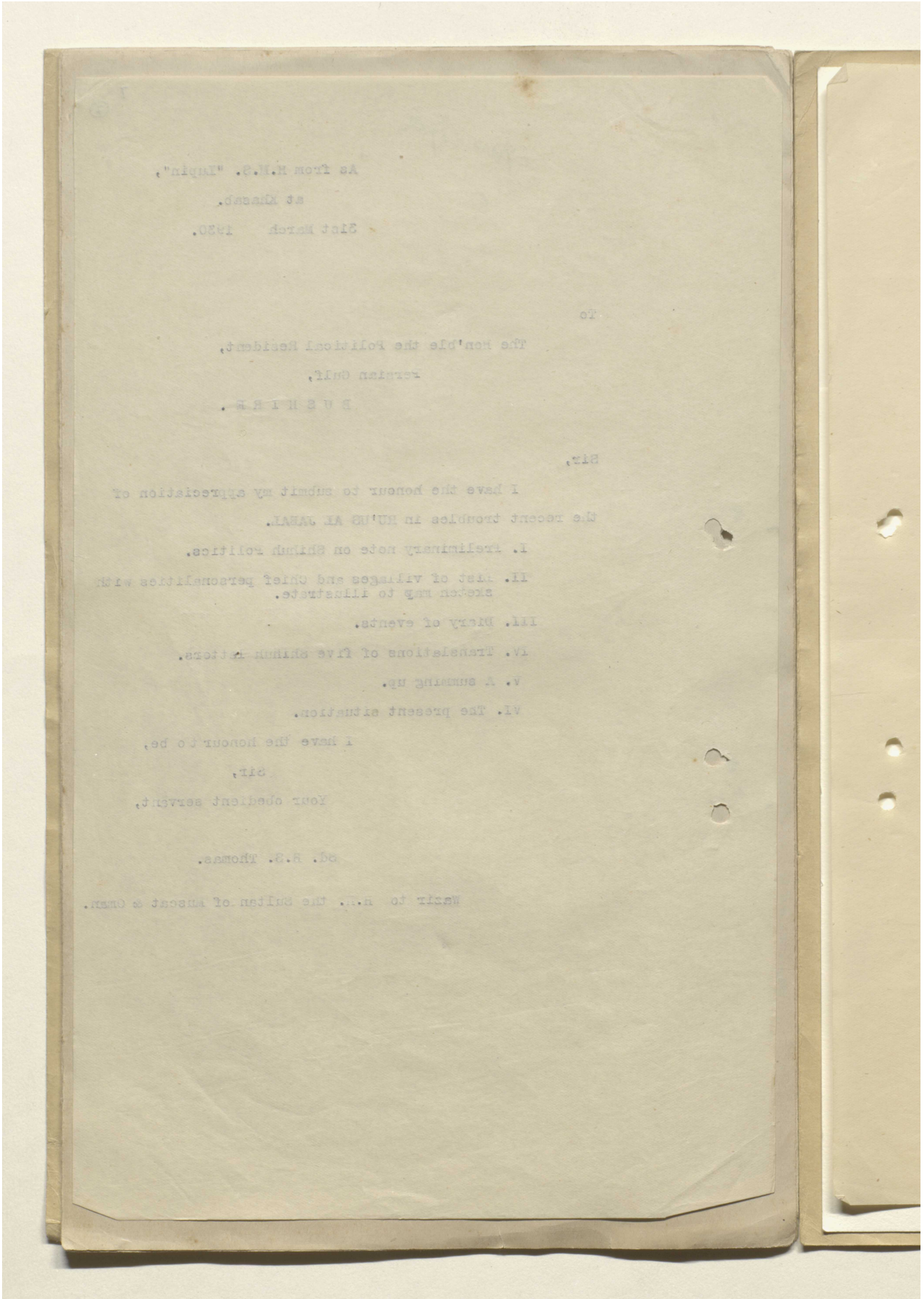
I have the honour to submit my appreciation of
the recent troubles in RU'US AL JABAL.

- I. Preliminary note on Shihuh Politics.
- II. List of villages and Chief personalities with
sketch map to illustrate.
- III. Diary of events.
- IV. Translations of five Shihuh letters.
- V. A summing up.
- VI. The present situation.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,

Sd. B.S. Thomas.

Wazir to H.H. the Sultan of Muscat & Oman.



8
Preliminary note on Shihuh politics.

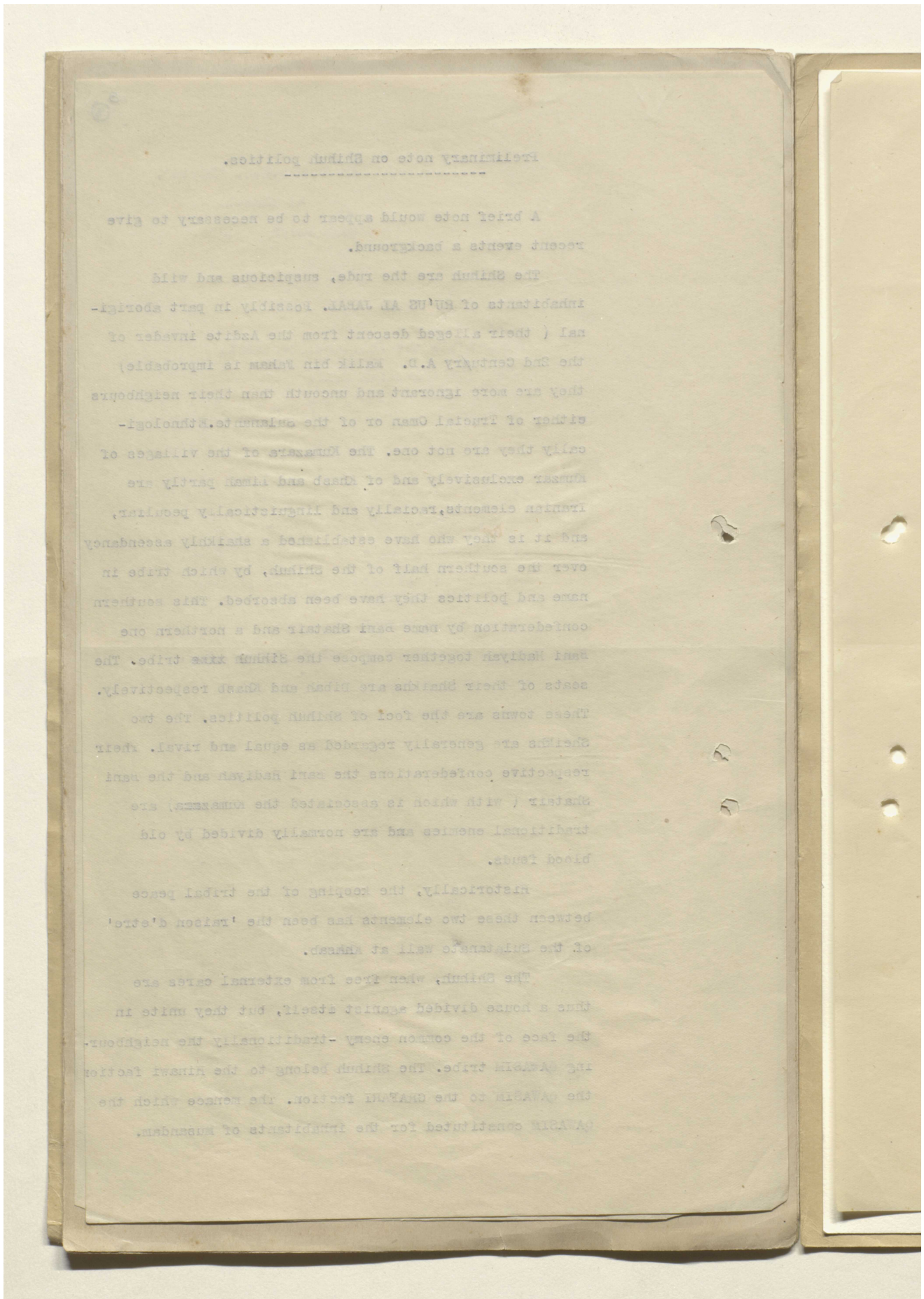
A brief note would appear to be necessary to give recent events a background.

The Shihuh are the rude, suspicious and wild inhabitants of RU'US AL JABAL. Possibly in part aboriginal (their alleged descent from the Azdite invader of the 2nd Century A.D. Malik bin Faham is improbable) they are more ignorant and uncouth than their neighbours either of Trucial Oman or of the Sulanante. Ethnologically they are not one. The Kumazara of the villages of Kumzar exclusively and of Khasb and Limah partly are Iranian elements, racially and linguistically peculiar, and it is they who have established a shaikhly ascendancy over the southern half of the Shihuh, by which tribe in name and politics they have been absorbed. This southern confederation by name Bani Shatair and a northern one Bani Hadiyah together compose the Shihuh ~~like~~ tribe. The seats of their Shaikhs are Dibah and Khasb respectively. These towns are the foci of Shihuh politics. The two Sheikhs are generally regarded as equal and rival. Their respective confederations the Bani Hadiyah and the Bani Shatair (with which is associated the Kumazara) are traditional enemies and are normally divided by old blood feuds.

Historically, the keeping of the tribal peace between these two elements has been the 'raison d'etre' of the Sulatanate Wali at Khasab.

The Shihuh, when free from external cares are thus a house divided against itself, but they unite in the face of the common enemy -traditionally the neighbouring QAWASIM tribe. The Shihuh belong to the Hinawi faction the QAWASIM to the GHAFARI faction. The menace which the QAWASIM constituted for the inhabitants of Musandam.

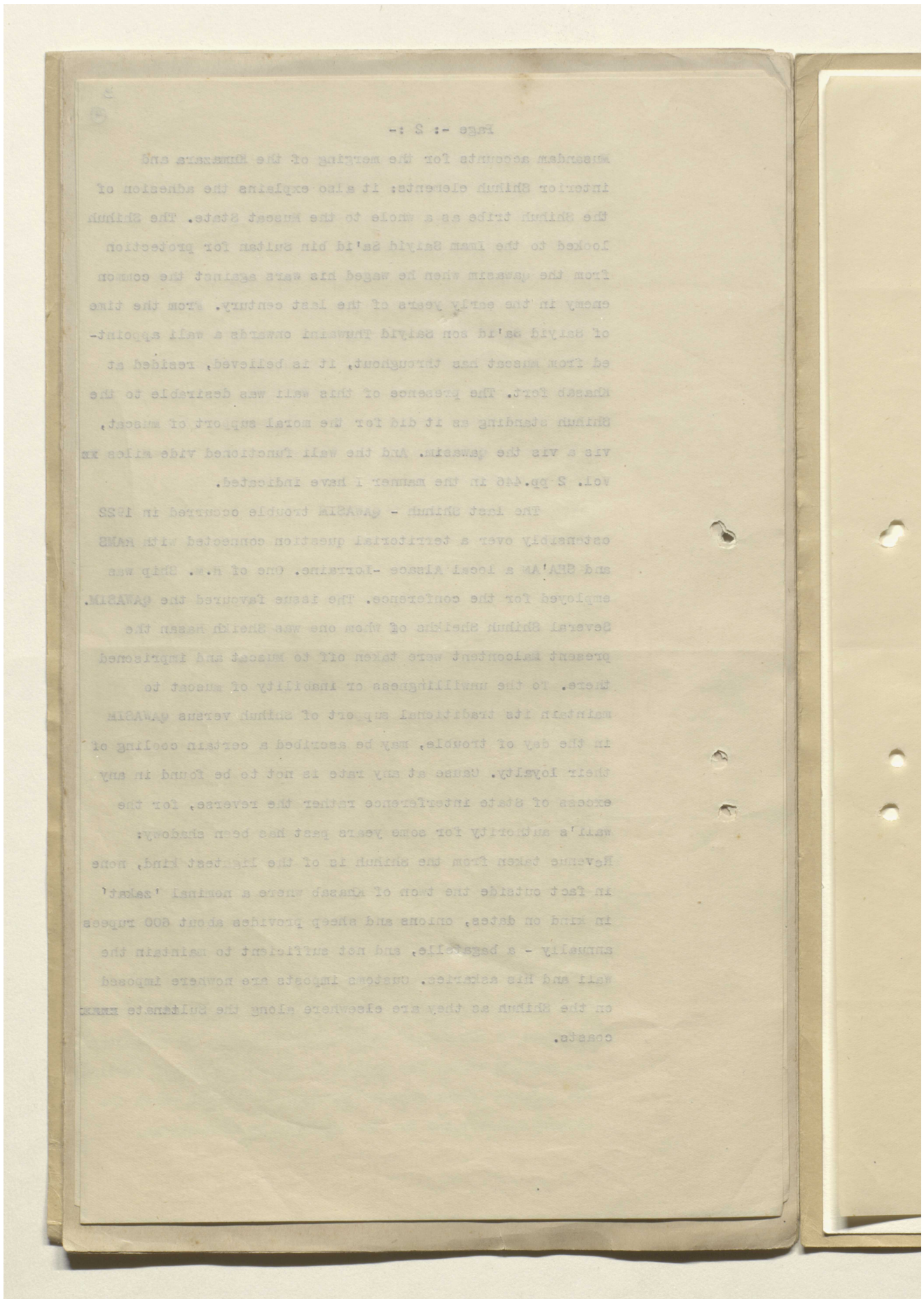
'File 8/63 MUSCAT STATE AFFAIRS: SHIHUH TRIBE.' [8v] (16/56)



Page -: 2 :-

Musandam accounts for the merging of the Kumazara and interior Shihuh elements: it also explains the adhesion of the Shihuh tribe as a whole to the Muscat State. The Shihuh looked to the Imam Saiyid Sa'id bin Sultan for protection from the Qawasim when he waged his wars against the common enemy in the early years of the last century. From the time of Saiyid Sa'id son Saiyid Thuwaini onwards a wali appointed from Muscat has throughout, it is believed, resided at Khasab fort. The presence of this wali was desirable to the Shihuh standing as it did for the moral support of Muscat, vis a vis the Qawasim. And the wali functioned vide Miles ~~XX~~ Vol. 2 pp.446 in the manner I have indicated.

The last Shihuh - QAWASIM trouble occurred in 1922 ostensibly over a territorial question connected with RAMS and SHA'AM a local Alsace -Lorraine. One of H.M. Ship was employed for the conference. The issue favoured the QAWASIM. Several Shihuh Sheikhs of whom one was Sheikh Hasan the present Malcontent were taken off to Muscat and imprisoned there. To the unwillingness or inability of Muscat to maintain its traditional support of Shihuh versus QAWASIM in the day of trouble, may be ascribed a certain cooling of their loyalty. Cause at any rate is not to be found in any excess of State interference rather the reverse, for the wali's authority for some years past has been shadowy: Revenue taken from the Shihuh is of the lightest kind, none in fact outside the town of Khasab where a nominal 'zakat' in kind on dates, onions and sheep provides about 600 rupees annually - a bagatelle, and not sufficient to maintain the wali and his askaries. Customs imposts are nowhere imposed on the Shihuh as they are elsewhere along the Sultanate ~~XXXX~~ coasts.



Page --: 3 :-

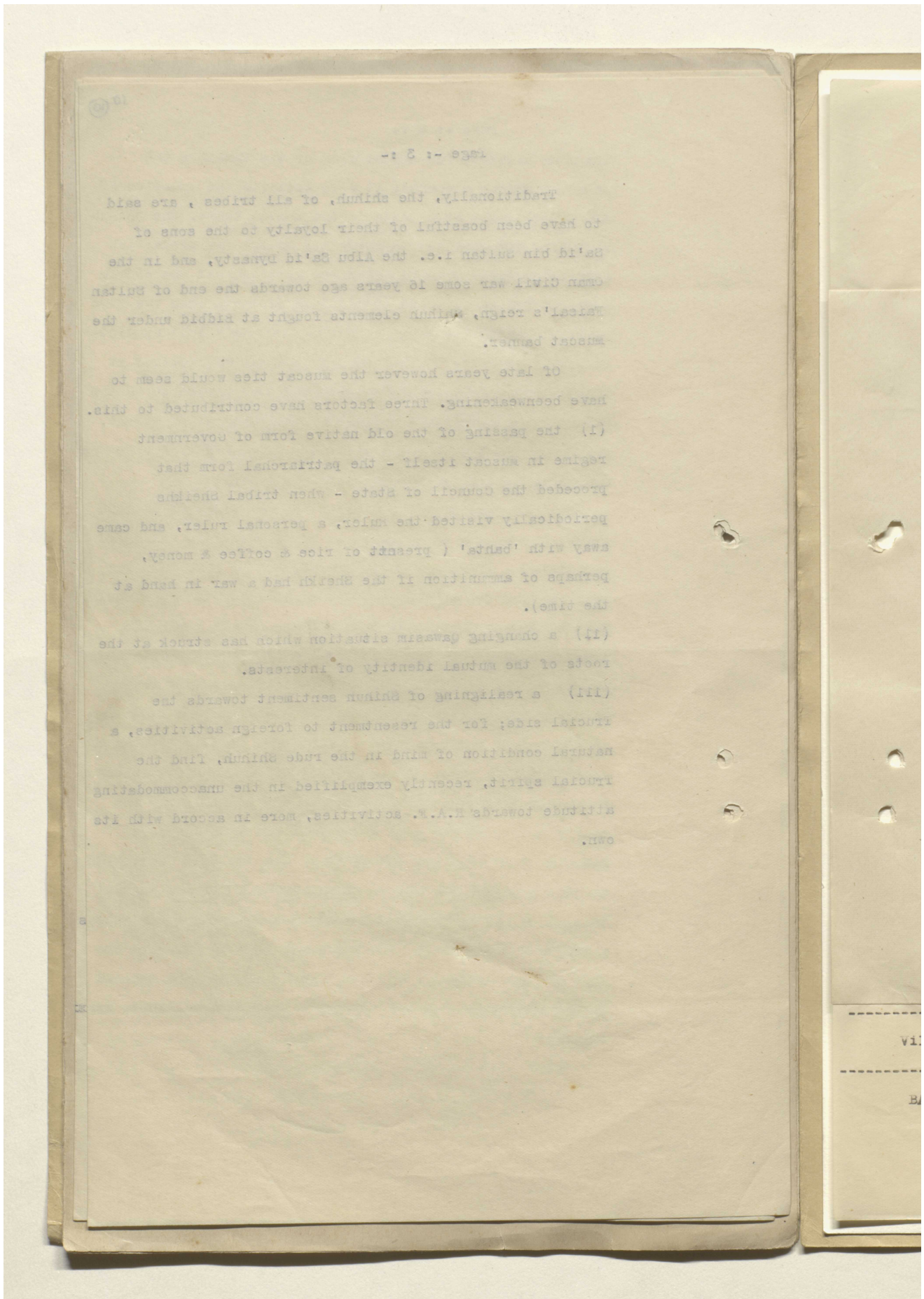
Traditionally, the shihuh, of all tribes, are said to have been boastful of their loyalty to the sons of Sa'id bin Sultan i.e. the Albu Sa'id Dynasty, and in the Oman Civil War some 16 years ago towards the end of Sultan Faisal's reign, Shihuh elements fought at Bidbid under the Muscat banner.

Of late years however the Muscat ties would seem to have been weakening. Three factors have contributed to this.

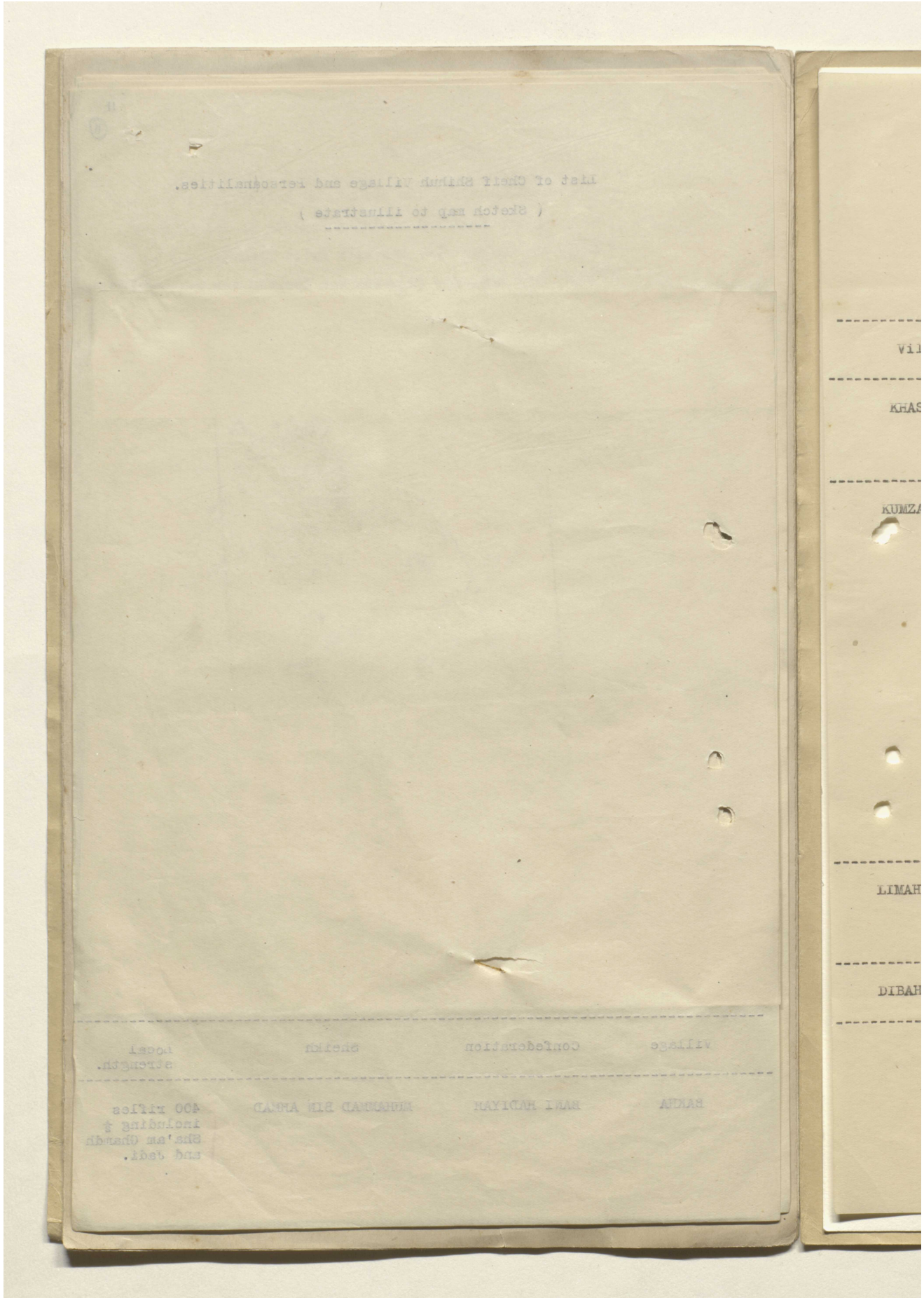
(1) the passing of the old native form of Government regime in Muscat itself - the patriarchal form that preceded the Council of State - when tribal Sheikhs periodically visited the Ruler, a personal ruler, and came away with 'bahta' (present of rice & coffee & money, perhaps of ammunition if the Sheikh had a war in hand at the time).

(11) a changing Qawasim situation which has struck at the roots of the mutual identity of interests.

(111) a realigning of Shihuh sentiment towards the Trucial side; for the resentment to foreign activities, a natural condition of mind in the rude Shihuh, find the Trucial spirit, recently exemplified in the unaccommodating attitude towards R.A.F. activities, more in accord with its own.



Sketch Map of North-Eastern Oman [11v] (2/2)



Page --: 2 :-

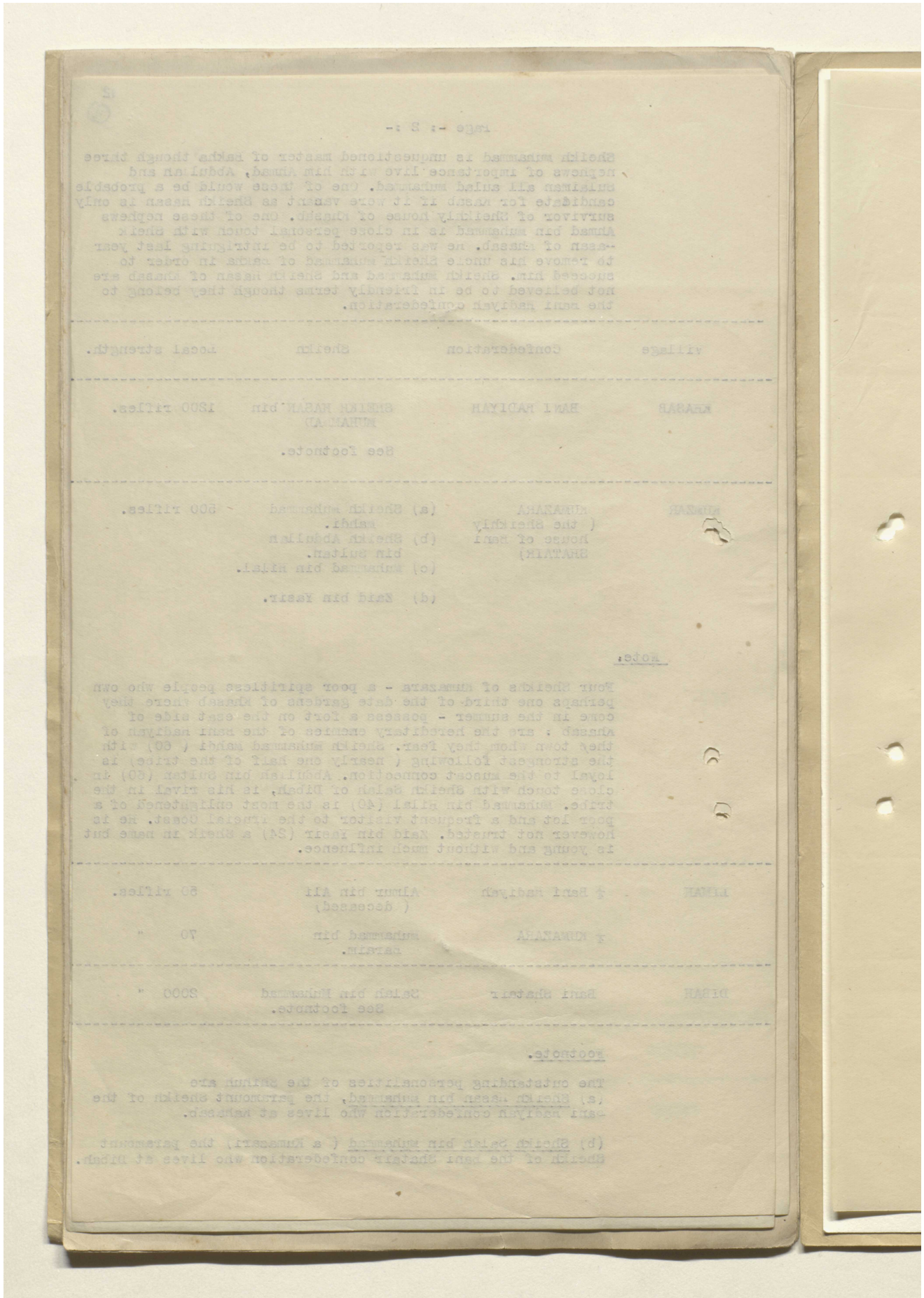
Sheikh Muhammad is unquestioned master of Bakha though three nephews of importance live with him Ahmad, Abdullah and Sulaiman all aulad Muhammad. One of these would be a probable candidate for Kasab if it were vacant as Sheikh Hasan is only survivor of Sheikhly house of Khasab. One of these nephews Ahmad bin Muhammad is in close personal touch with Sheikh Hasan of Khasab. He was reported to be intriguing last year to remove his uncle Sheikh Muhammad of Bakha in order to succeed him. Sheikh Muhammad and Sheikh Hasan of Khasab are not believed to be in friendly terms though they belong to the Bani Hadiyah confederation.

Village	Confederation	Sheikh	Local strength.
KHASAB	BANI HADIYAH	SHEIKH HASAN bin MUHAMMAD	1200 rifles.
		See footnote.	
KUMZAR	KUMAZARA (the Sheikhly house of Bani SHATAIR)	(a) Sheikh Muhammad Mahdi. (b) Sheikh Abdullah bin Sultan. (c) Muhammad bin Hilal. (d) Zaid bin Yasir.	500 rifles.
<u>Note.</u>			
Four Sheikhs of Kumazara - a poor spiritless people who own perhaps one third of the date gardens of Khasab where they come in the summer - possess a fort on the east side of Khasab; are the hereditary enemies of the Bani Hadiyah of the town whom they fear. Sheikh Muhammad Mahdi (60) with the strongest following (nearly one half of the tribe) is loyal to the Muscat connection. Abdullah bin Sultan (60) in close touch with Sheikh Salah of Dibah, is his rival in the tribe. Muhammad bin Hilal (40) is the most enlightened of a poor lot and a frequent visitor to the Trucial Coast. He is however not trusted. Zaid bin Yasir (24) a Sheikh in name but is young and without much influence.			
LIMAH	¼ Bani Hadiyah	Almur bin Ali (deceased)	50 rifles.
	¼ KUMAZARA	Muhammad bin Saraim.	70 "
DIBAH	Bani Shatair	Salah bin Muhammad See footnote.	2000 "

Footnote.

The outstanding personalities of the Shihuh are
(a) Sheikh Hasan bin Muhammad, the paramount Sheikh of the Bani Hadiyah confederation who lives at Khasab.
(b) Sheikh Salah bin Muhammad (a Kumazari) the paramount Sheikh of the Bani Shatair confederation who lives at Dibah.

'File 8/63 MUSCAT STATE AFFAIRS: SHIHUH TRIBE.' [12v] (24/56)



Page - 3 -
 The main Shihin confederation
 not believed to be in friendly terms though they belong to
 succeed him. Shihin entered and Shihin near of Kasab are
 to remove his more Shihin members of name in order to
 reason of Kasab. He was reported to be migrating last year
 Ahmad bin Muhammad is in close personal touch with Shihin
 survivor of Shihin house of Kasab. One of these refugees
 candidate for Kasab if it were vacant as Shihin near is only
 Muslims all called Muhammad. One of these would be a possible
 regions of importance live in Ahmad, Abdullah and
 Shihin Muhammad as mentioned matter of Kasab though three

village	Confederation	Shihin	local strength
KASAB	BAHI RADIYAH	SHIHIN HABAN BIN MUHAMMAD	1200 rifles
		See footnote.	
KASAB	MURABAH the Shihin house of Bahi (SHATAH)	(a) Shihin Muhammad Kasbi (b) Shihin Abdullah bin Sultan (c) Muhammad bin Nizam (d) Bahi bin Yasar	500 rifles

Notes
 Four Shihin of Murabah - a poor spiritless people who own
 perhaps one third of the date gardens of Kasab where they
 come in the summer - possess a lot on the east side of
 Kasab. are the hereditary enemies of the Bahi Shihin of
 they town whom they fear. Shihin Muhammad Bahi (50) with
 the strongest following (nearly one half of the tribe) is
 loyal to the Kasab confederation. Abdullah bin Sultan (50) is
 close touch with Shihin Bahi of DIBAH, is his rival in the
 tribe. Muhammad bin Nizam (40) is the most enlightened of a
 poor lot and a frequent visitor to the British Coast. He is
 however not trusted. Bahi bin Yasar (25) a Shihin in name but
 is young and without much influence.

DIBAH	BAHI RADIYAH	ALIMUR BIN ALI (deceased)	80 rifles
	T. KASABAH	Muhammad bin Kasbi	70
DIBAH	BAHI RADIYAH	Salah bin Muhammad See footnote.	3000

Footnote.
 The outstanding personalities of the Shihin are
 (a) Shihin Muhammad bin Muhammad, the paramount Shihin of the
 and main confederation who lives at Kasab.
 (b) Shihin Salah bin Muhammad (a Kassar) the paramount
 Shihin of the Bahi Shihin confederation who lives at DIBAH.

Page - 3 :-

13

(13)

Both are men of strength and standing in their tribe. Both are limited in outlook fanatical. Both are ambitious.

Sheikh Hasn bin Muhammad of Khasab is a man of about 32 heavily built - rather boorish stupid in conversation but resolute in action. He succeeded his wiser uncle Sa'id bin Sulaiman some four years ago and from the first showed himself vain and independent. Made a practice of not calling on H.M. ships and when the Sultan paid a visit to Khasab two years ago did not come off to the ship and then delayed an hour before coming to make his call at the fort. When Saiyid Sa'id the present President of the Council came on visit in the early part of this year the Sheikh did not bother to come and pay his respects to all. Sheikh Hasan is traditionally the enemy of Sheikh Salah but entered into agreement ~~with~~ with him for presenting a solid front to protect their supposed mutual interests in the Ormonde incident. He is traditionally in alliance with Sakha and opposed to Kumzar. He married a daughter of the late Sheikh of Limah by whose recent death he is said to have inherited considerable property at Limah. He is well

off and trader himself at Khasab where he has at least one small dhow.

Sheikh Salih bin Muhammad of Dibah about 40 years old the elected Sheikh of the Bani Shatair but in origin a poor Kumzari. A pale insignificant individual with rather an inflammable temper. Is crafty, clever and concerted - is the most important personality in the Shihuh and appears to be able to make Khasab his butt. Is on closest terms with Sheikh Hamad of Fujairah the alliance believed to be defensive and offensive. The town of Dibah he shares rather unequally with the Qawasim Sheikh Rashid bin Ahmed. The latter a loyal supporter of authority having only about 200 men and appears to live on sufferance. Limah follows Sheikh Salah as also the Shihuh elements of Sha'am near Ras al Khaima. He has recently built a bazaar of some 14 shops on the seashore at Dibah where he himself trades. He possesses a dhow.

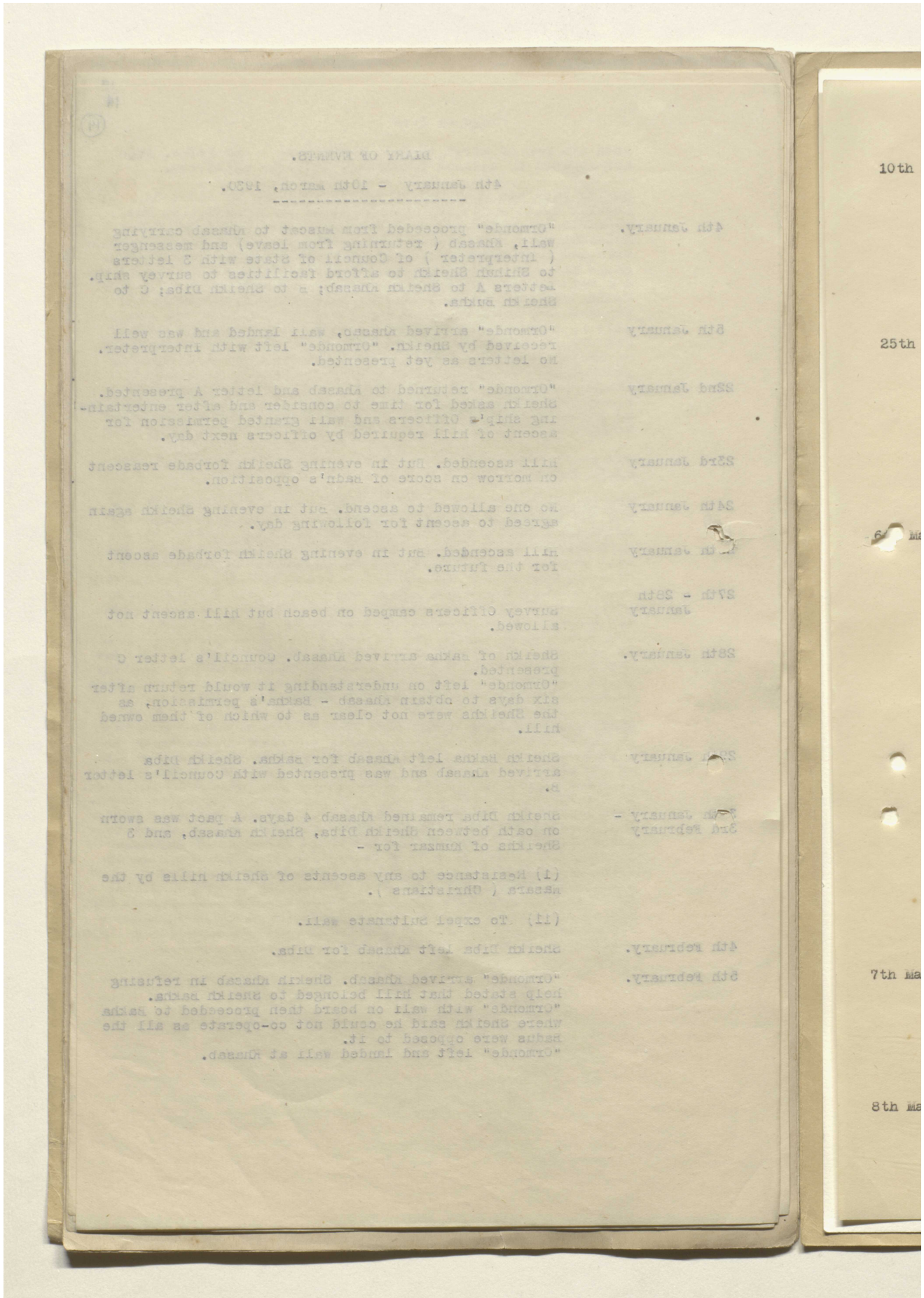
Saiyid Nasir bin Khalfan, age 42 the wali of Khasab has been in that fort for nearly four years. A Sultan's nominee he is a pure Arab and of good family. Had experience before as wali of Murbat in South Arabia. He has been a cypher in the affairs of Khasab where Sheikh Hasan has been the 'de facto' Governor. In the nature of the situation he has not attempted to interfere except the exceptional cases e.g. (1) slavery (11) murder and has usually been resisted in both. Last year a murder took place in Khasab bazaar of an itinerant Moroccan or Egyptian doctor, a Saiyid. Theft was the motive. The wali appealed in vain to the Sheikh to hand the murderers over and they presumably escaped justice. During the wali's term of office this is the first word of complaint from the Shihuh against him. His is a pleasant but not strong character and during the recent troubles he made several appeals to H.M. ships to evacuate him on the score of fear.

DIARY OF EVENTS.

4th January - 10th March, 1930.

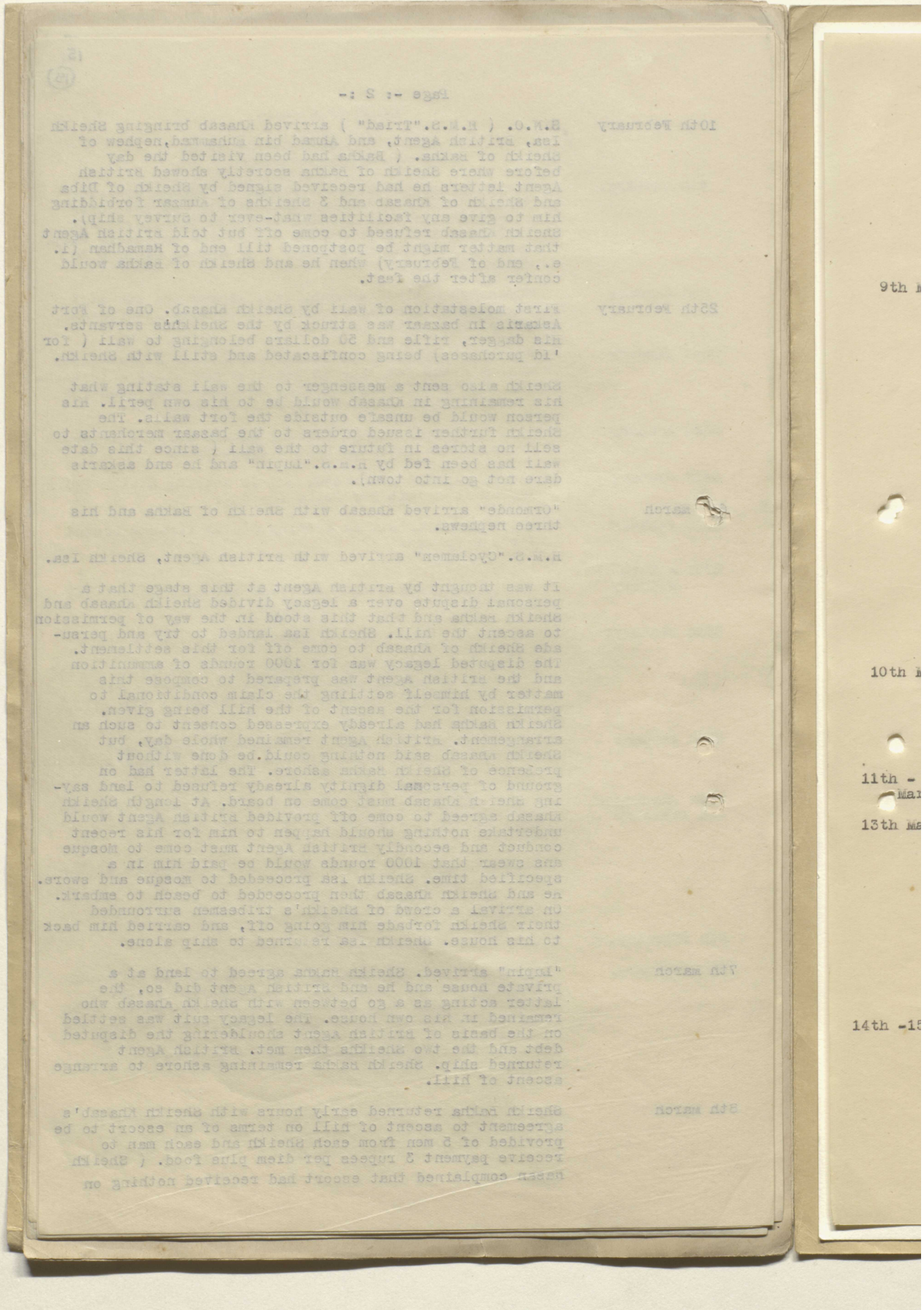
- 4th January. "Ormonde" proceeded from Muscat to Khasab carrying Wali, Khasab (returning from leave) and messenger (Interpreter) of Council of State with 3 letters to Shihuh Sheikh to afford facilities to survey ship. Letters A to Sheikh Khasab; B to Sheikh Diba; C to Sheikh Bakha.
- 5th January "Ormonde" arrived Khasab, wali landed and was well received by Sheikh. "Ormonde" left with Interpreter. No letters as yet presented.
- 22nd January "Ormonde" returned to Khasab and letter A presented. Sheikh asked for time to consider and after entertaining ship's Officers and wali granted permission for ascent of hill required by officers next day.
- 23rd January Hill ascended. But in evening Sheikh forbade reascent on morrow on score of Badn's opposition.
- 24th January No one allowed to ascend. But in evening Sheikh again agreed to ascent for following day.
- 25th January Hill ascended. But in evening Sheikh forbade ascent for the future.
- 27th - 28th January Survey Officers camped on beach but hill ascent not allowed.
- 28th January. Sheikh of Bakha arrived Khasab. Council's letter C presented. "Ormonde" left on understanding it would return after six days to obtain Khasab - Bakha's permission, as the Sheikhs were not clear as to which of them owned hill.
- 29th January Sheikh Bakha left Khasab for Bakha. Sheikh Diba arrived Khasab and was presented with Council's letter B.
- 30th January - 3rd February Sheikh Diba remained Khasab 4 days. A pact was sworn on oath between Sheikh Diba, Sheikh Khasab, and 3 Sheikhs of Kumzar for -
(1) Resistance to any ascents of Sheikh hills by the Nasara (Christians).
(11) To expel Sultanate wali.
- 4th February. Sheikh Diba left Khasab for Diba.
- 5th February. "Ormonde" arrived Khasab. Shekih Khasab in refusing help stated that hill belonged to Sheikh Bakha. "Ormonde" with wali on board then proceeded to Bakha where Sheikh said he could not co-operate as all the Badus were opposed to it. "Ormonde" left and landed wali at Khasab.

'File 8/63 MUSCAT STATE AFFAIRS: SHIHUH TRIBE.' [14v] (28/56)



Page --: 2 :-

- 10th February S.N.O. (H.M.S. "Triad") arrived Khasab bringing Sheikh Isa, British Agent, and Ahmad bin Muhammad, nephew of Sheikh of Bakha. (Bakha had been visited the day before where Sheikh of Bakha secretly showed British Agent letters he had received signed by Sheikh of Diba and Sheikh of Khasab and 3 Sheikhs of Kumzar forbidding him to give any facilities what-ever to Survey ship). Sheikh Khasab refused to come off but told British Agent that matter might be postponed till end of Ramadhan (i. e., end of February) when he and Sheikh of bakha would confer after the fast.
- 25th February First molestation of wali by Sheikh Khasab. One of Fort Askaris in bazaar was struck by the Sheikh's servants. His dagger, rifle and 50 dollars belonging to wali (for 'Id purchases) being confiscated and still with Sheikh.
- Sheikh also sent a messenger to the wali stating what his remaining in khasab would be to his own peril. His person would be unsafe outside the fort walls. The Sheikh further issued orders to the bazaar merchants to sell no stores in future to the wali (since this date wali has been fed by H.M.S. "Lupin" and he and askaris dare not go into town).
- 6 March "Ormonde" arrived Khasab with Sheikh of Bakha and his three nephews.
- H.M.S. "Cyclamen" arrived with British Agent, Sheikh Isa.
- It was thought by British Agent at this stage that a personal dispute over a legacy divided Sheikh Khasab and Sheikh Bakha and that this stood in the way of permission to ascent the hill. Sheikh Isa landed to try and persuade Sheikh of Khasab to come off for this settlement. The disputed legacy was for 1000 rounds of ammunition and the British Agent was prepared to compose this matter by himself settling the claim conditional to permission for the ascent of the hill being given. Sheikh Bakha had already expressed consent to such an arrangement. British Agent remained whole day, but Sheikh Khasab said nothing could be done without presence of Sheikh Bakha ashore. The latter had on ground of personal dignity already refused to land saying Sheikh Khasab must come on board. At length Sheikh Khasab agreed to come off provided British Agent would undertake nothing should happen to him for his recent conduct and secondly British Agent must come to mosque and swear that 1000 rounds would be paid him in a specified time. Sheikh Isa proceeded to mosque and swore. He and Sheikh Khasab then proceeded to beach to embark. On arrival a crowd of Sheikh's tribesmen surrounded their Sheikh forbade him going off, and carried him back to his house. Sheikh Isa returned to ship alone.
- 7th March "Lupin" arrived. Sheikh Bakha agreed to land at a private house and he and British Agent did so, the latter acting as a go between with Sheikh Khasab who remained in his own house. The legacy suit was settled on the basis of British Agent shouldering the disputed debt and the two Sheikhs then met. British Agent returned ship. Sheikh Bakha remaining ashore to arrange ascent of hill.
- 8th March Sheikh Bakha returned early hours with Sheikh Khasab's agreement to ascent of hill on terms of an escort to be provided of 5 men from each Sheikh and each man to receive payment 3 rupees per diem plus food. (Sheikh Hasan complained that escort had received nothing on



Page -: 3 :-

16

on first ascent). The primary condition Sheikh made was the recognition of their independence of the Muscat State but agreed to waive this for a present of Rupees 400/-

In forenoon British Agent, Sheikh Bakha landed to clinch matter. Sheikh isa returned to ship with 3 of khasab's escort of 5, it being understood that they would be joined by two others at kidah on landing there.

9th March.

Sheikh of Bakha came off early hours of morning stating that Sheikh khasab had declared deal was off British Agent promptly sent his representative ashore with Sheikh bakha to discover cause. Sheikh Khasab's attitude was - " the hill is my hill and Sheikh of Bakha has no right to partnership in it" I do not agree to anybody ascending the hill". At 7 .a.m. Survey party unwitting of events ashore proceeded to kidah accompanied by British Agent's son. On nearing shore they saw road was held by 50-60 armed men who told them they would not be allowed to pass. The Survey party remained in launch off shore. They called out that Sheikh khasab had yesterday given permission. The tribesmen answered that they do not recognise Sheikh hasan's right to give permission. They were independent; recognised the right of no one to land and would resist anyone who did. The Survey party returned to ship (not heeding the tribesmen's shouts for Sheikh isa's son to come amongst them) and thence proceeded immediately to a distant spot under Jabal Sham where they landed and carried out observations by French leave. A few hours latter British Agent aboard Lupin received a threatening letter signed by the headman of kidah.

10th March

Sheikh Khasab placed a guard over the wali used by the wali to prevent him getting water and issued orders at the same time that no boatmen may carry him to and from ships. British Agent and Sheikh bakha left khasab by Lupin which returned after landing them.

11th - 12th, 13th March.

Surveying party continued surveying operations on Jabal Sham supported by Lupin.

13th March

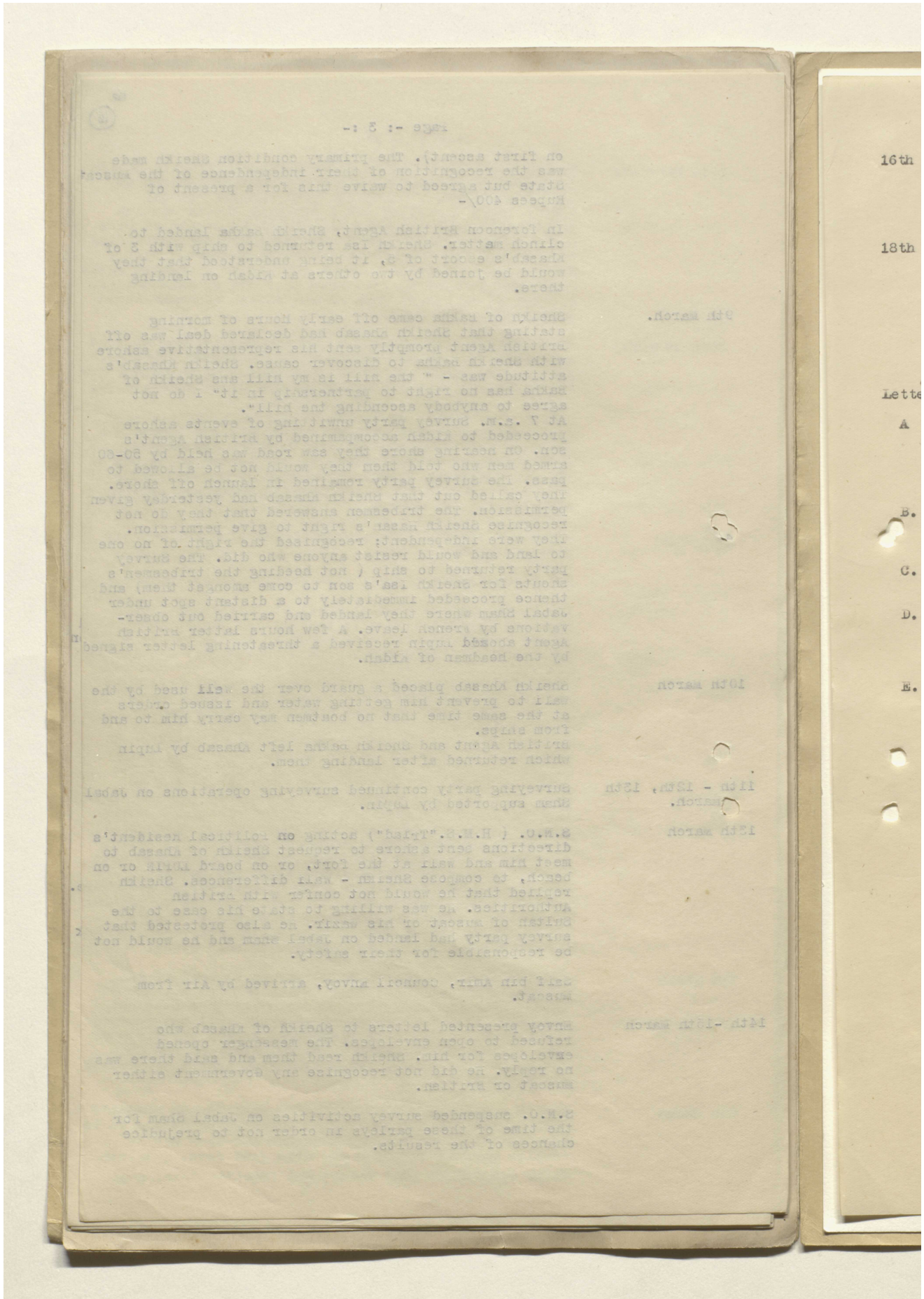
S.N.O. (H.M.S. "Triad") acting on Political Resident's directions sent ashore to request Sheikh of Khasab to meet him and wali at the fort, or on board LUPIN or on beach, to compose Sheikh - wali differences. Sheikh replied that he would not confer with British Authorities. He was willing to state his case to the Sultan of Muscat or his wazir. He also protested that survey party had landed on Jabal Sham and he would not be responsible for their safety.

Saif bin Amir, Council Envoy, arrived by Air from Muscat.

14th -15th March

Envoy presented letters to Sheikh of Khasab who refused to open envelopes. The messenger opened envelopes for him. Sheikh read them and said there was no reply. He did not recognise any Government either Muscat or British.

S.N.O. suspended survey activities on Jabal Sham for the time of these parleys in order not to prejudice chances of the results.



16th

18th

Letter

A

B.

C.

D.

E.

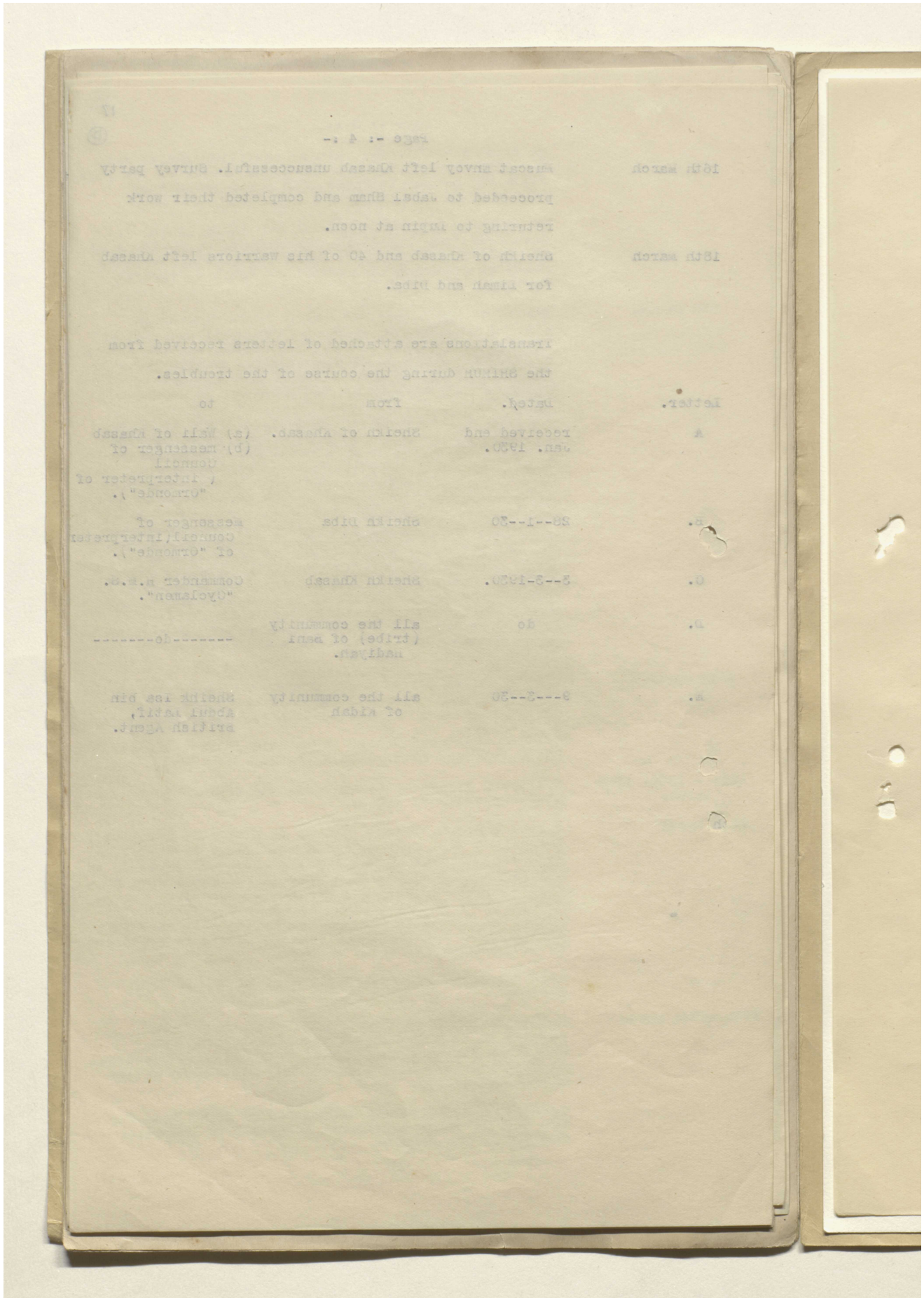
16th March Muscat Envoy left Khasab unsuccessful. Survey party proceeded to Jabal Sham and completed their work returning to Lupin at noon.

18th March Sheikh of Khasab and 40 of his warriors left Khasab for Limah and Diba.

Translations are attached of letters received from the SHIHUH during the course of the troubles.

Letter.	Date.	from	to
A	received end Jan. 1930.	Sheikh of khasab.	(a) Wali of Khasab (b) messenger of Council (interpreter of "Ormonde").
B.	28--1--30	Sheikh Diba	Messenger of Council(interpreter of "Ormonde").
C.	3--3-1930.	Sheikh Khasab	Commander H.M.S. "Cyclamen".
D.	do	all the community (tribe) of sani hadiyah.	-----do-----
E.	9---3--30	all the community of Kidah	Sheikh Isa bin Abdul Latif, British Agent.

'File 8/63 MUSCAT STATE AFFAIRS: SHIHUH TRIBE.' [17v] (34/56)



18

(18)

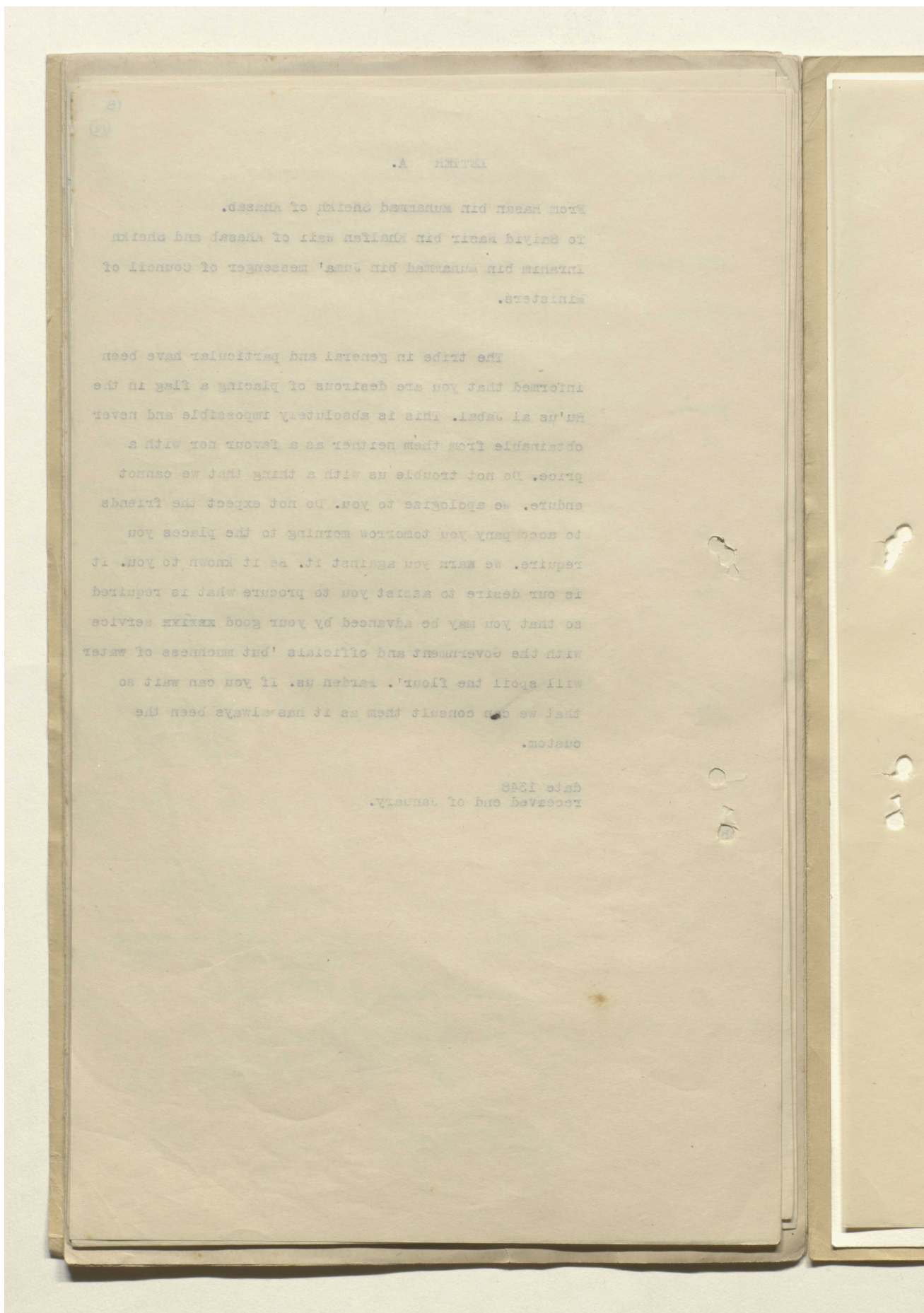
LETTER A.

From Hasan bin Muhammad Sheikh of Khasab.

To Saiyid Nasir bin Khalfan Wali of Khasab and Sheikh
Inrahim bin Muhammad bin Juma' messenger of Council of
ministers.

The tribe in general and particular have been informed that you are desirous of placing a flag in the Ru'us al Jabal. This is absolutely impossible and never obtainable from them neither as a favour nor with a price. Do not trouble us with a thing that we cannot endure. We apologize to you. Do not expect the friends to accompany you tomorrow morning to the places you require. We warn you against it. Be it known to you. It is our desire to assist you to procure what is required so that you may be advanced by your good ~~service~~ service with the Government and officials 'but muchness of water will spoil the flour'. Pardon us. If you can wait so that we can consult them as it has always been the custom.

date 1348
received end of January.



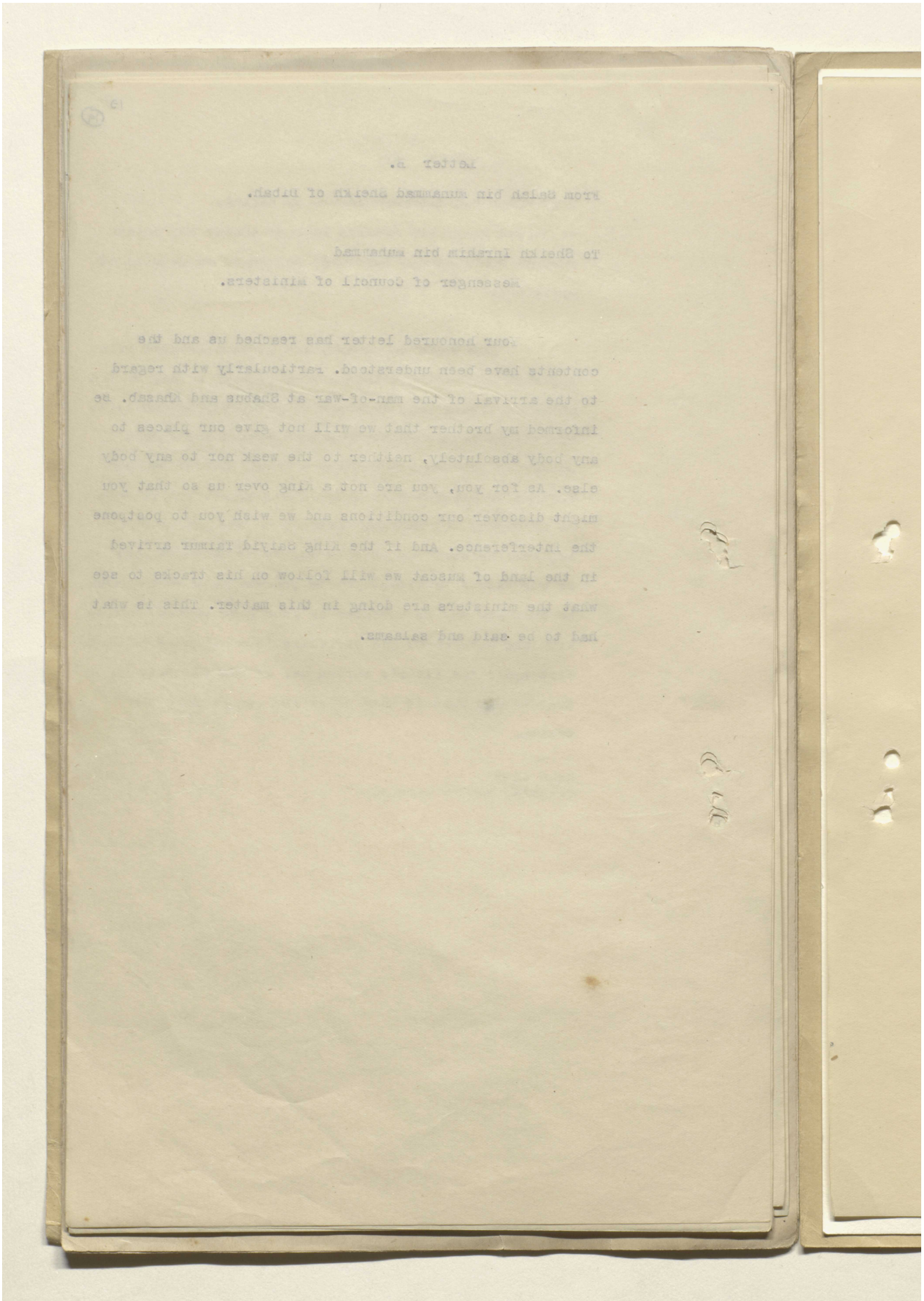
19
19

Letter B.

From Salah bin Muhammad Sheikh of Dibah.

To Sheikh Inrahim bin Muhammad
Messenger of Council of Ministers.

Your honoured letter has reached us and the contents have been understood. particularly with regard to the arrival of the man-of-war at Shabus and Khasab. Be informed my brother that we will not give our places to any body absolutely, neither to the weak nor to any body else. As for you, you are not a King over us so that you might discover our conditions and we wish you to postpone the interference. And if the King Saliyd Taimur arrived in the land of Muscat we will follow on his tracks to see what the ministers are doing in this matter. This is what had to be said and salaams.



20

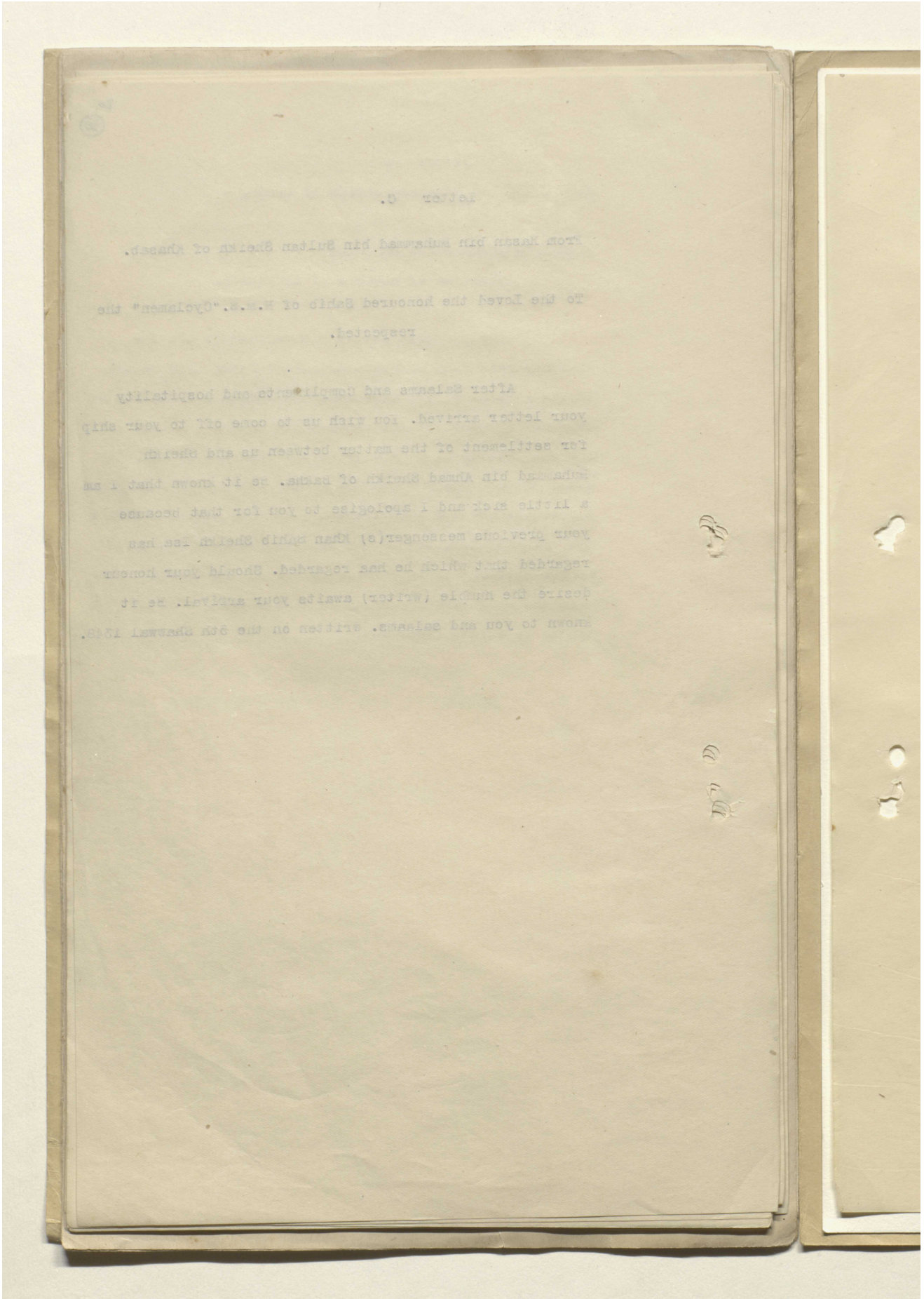
(20)

Letter C.

From Hasan bin Muhammad bin Sultan Sheikh of Khasab.

To the Loved the honoured Sahib of H.M.S. "Cyclamen" the
respected.

After Salaams and Compliments and hospitality
your letter arrived. You wish us to come off to your ship
for settlement of the matter between us and Sheikh
Muhammad bin Ahmad Sheikh of Bakha. Be it known that I am
a little sick and I apologise to you for that because
your previous messenger(s) Khan Sahib Sheikh Isa has
regarded that which he has regarded. Should your honour
desire the humble (writer) awaits your arrival. Be it
known to you and salaams. written on the 5th Shawwal 1348.



21 (21)

Letter D.

In the name of God the Highest.

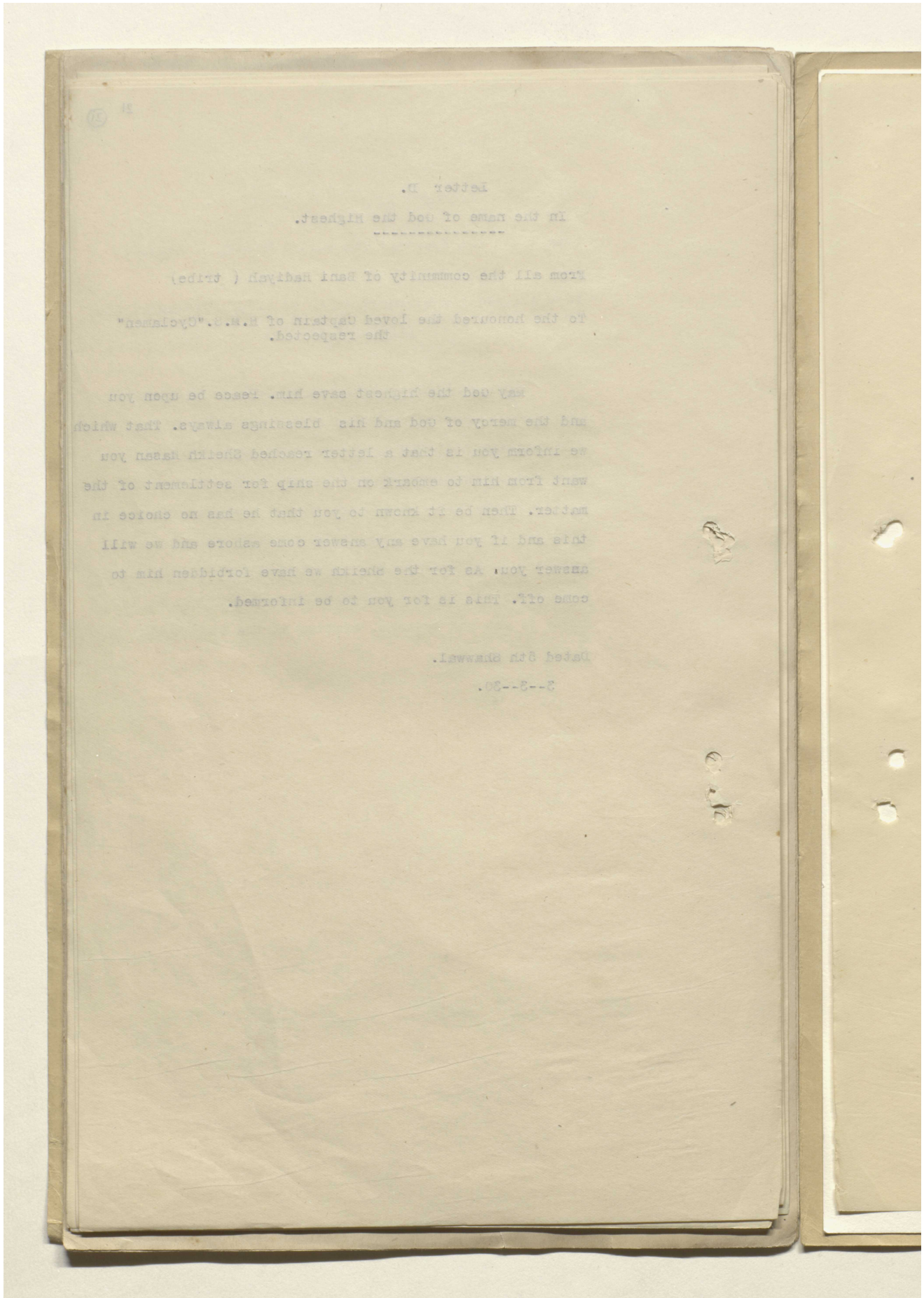
From all the community of Bani Hadiyah (tribe)

To the honoured the loved Captain of H.M.S. "Cyclamen"
the respected.

May God the highest save him. Peace be upon you
and the mercy of God and his blessings always. That which
we inform you is that a letter reached Sheikh Hasan you
want from him to embark on the ship for settlement of the
matter. Then be it known to you that he has no choice in
this and if you have any answer come ashore and we will
answer you. As for the Sheikh we have forbidden him to
come off. This is for you to be informed.

Dated 5th Shawwal.

3--3--30.



Letter E.

(From all the Shihuh community of Kidah to Shiekh Isa bin Abdul Latif, British Agent).

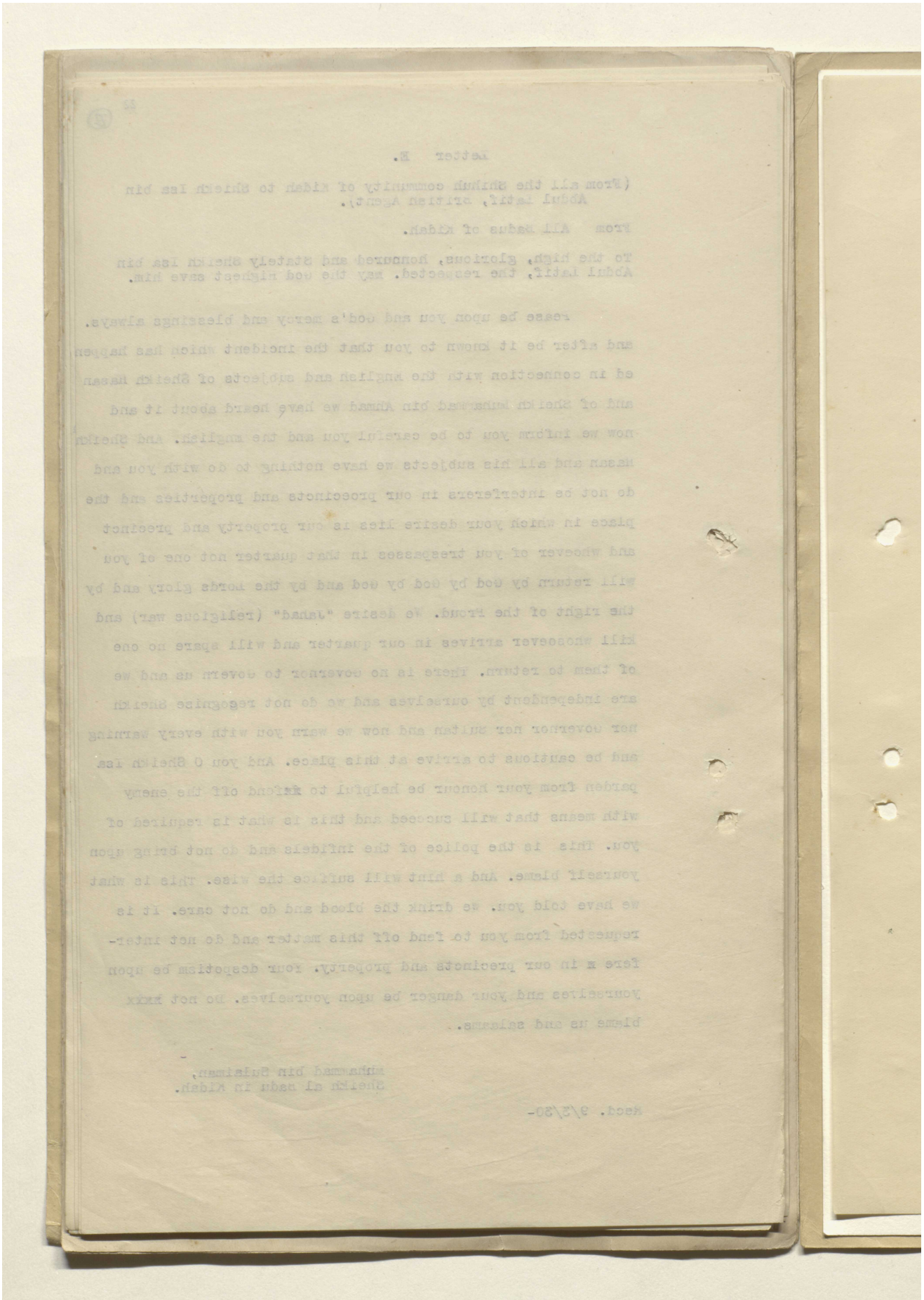
From All Badus of Kidah.

To the high, glorious, honoured and Stately Sheikh Isa bin Abdul Latif, the respected. May the God highest save him.

rease be upon you and God's mercy and blessings always. and after be it known to you that the incident which has happened in connection with the English and subjects of Sheikh Hasan and of Sheikh Muhammad bin Ahmad we have heard about it and now we inform you to be careful you and the English. And Sheikh Hasan and all his subjects we have nothing to do with you and do not be interferers in our proecincts and properties and the place in which your desire lies is our property and precinct and whoever of you trespasses in that quarter not one of you will return by God by God by God and by the Lords glory and by the right of the Proud. We desire "Jahad" (religious war) and kill whosoever arrives in our quarter and will spare no one of them to return. There is no Governor to govern us and we are independent by ourselves and we do not recognise Sheikh nor Governor nor Sultan and now we warn you with every warning and be cautious to arrive at this place. And you O Sheikh Isa parden from your honour be helpful to defend off the enemy with means that will succeed and this is what is required of you. This is the police of the infidels and do not bring upon yourself blame. And a hint will suffice the wise. This is what we have told you. we drink the blood and do not care. It is requested from you to fend off this matter and do not interfere in our precincts and property. Your despotism be upon yourselves and your danger be upon yourselves. Do not ~~xxx~~ blame us and salaams.

Muhammad bin Sulaiman,
Sheikh al Badu in Kidah.

Recd. 9/3/30-



A summing up.

I. The resistance by the Sheikh to Survey party activities and the attempt to oust Muscat Authority are interrelated incidents.

II. A natural impulse of this fanatical tribe jealous to preserve its soil ~~xxx~~ unmolested by infidels was a revenge itself on the Muscat Government that had dared to aid and abet.

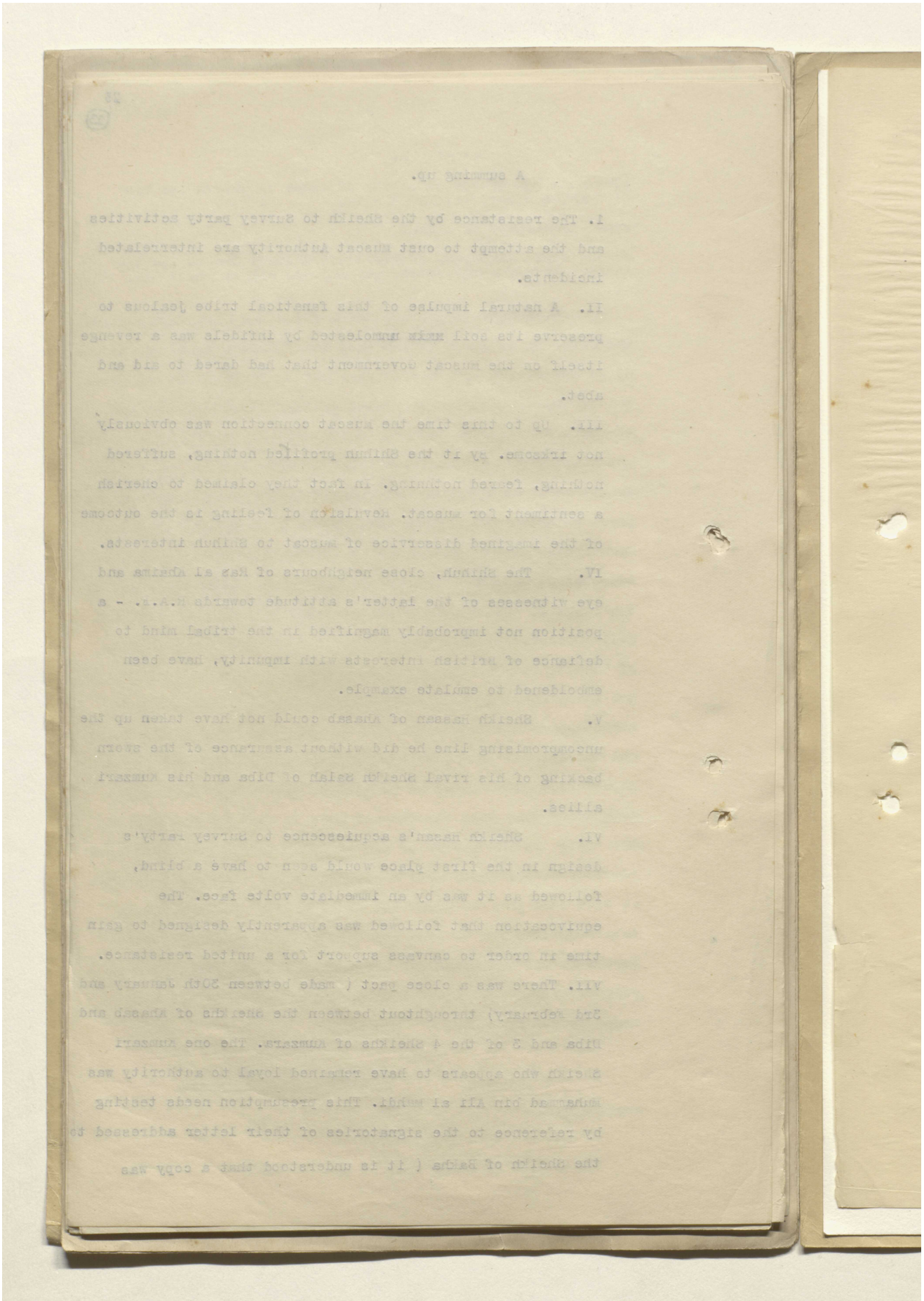
III. Up to this time the Muscat connection was obviously not irksome. By it the Shihuh profited nothing, suffered nothing, feared nothing. In fact they claimed to cherish a sentiment for Muscat. Revulsion of feeling is the outcome of the imagined disservice of Muscat to Shihuh interests.

IV. The Shihuh, close neighbours of Ras al Khaima and eye witnesses of the latter's attitude towards R.A.F. - a position not improbably magnified in the tribal mind to defiance of British interests with impunity, have been emboldened to emulate example.

V. Sheikh Hassan of Khasab could not have taken up the uncompromising line he did without assurance of the sworn backing of his rival Sheikh Salah of Diba and his Kumzari allies.

VI. Sheikh Hasan's acquiescence to Survey party's design in the first place would seem to have a blind, followed as it was by an immediate volte face. The equivocation that followed was apparently designed to gain time in order to canvass support for a united resistance.

VII. There was a close pact (made between 30th January and 3rd February) throughout between the Sheikhs of Khasab and Diba and 3 of the 4 Sheikhs of Kumzara. The one Kumzari Sheikh who appears to have remained loyal to authority was Muhammad bin Ali al Mahdi. This presumption needs testing by reference to the signatories of their letter addressed to the Sheikh of Bakha (it is understood that a copy was



24

(24)

was forwarded to Political Resident by the British Agent).
VIII. The Sheikh of Bakha's participation or otherwise in
the pact is not clear from present evidence. A strong
suspicion attaches to his nephew Ahmad bin Muhammad of
Bakha. The apparent misunderstanding which arose over the
Sheikh's personal dispute with the Sheikh of Khasab the
unwillingness of each to meet the other and the unsatis-
factory incident of the ownership of the hill look as
though these delaying incidents were part of a concerted
plan. Against this and in the Sheikh's favour is the
tremendously important step he took of showing the British
Agent a secret letter incriminating all but one of the
other Sheikhs of Shihuh.

was forwarded to political resident by the British Agent.
VIII. The matter of Sheikh's participation or otherwise in
the past is not clear from present evidence. A strong
suspicion attaches to his nephew Ahmad bin Muhammad
Bin. The apparent misunderstanding which arose over the
Sheikh's personal dispute with the Sheikh of Khasab the
unwillingness of each to meet the other and the unatta-
factory incident of the ownership of the mill look as
though these delaying incidents were part of a concerted
plan. Against this and in the Sheikh's favour is the
tremendously important step he took of showing the British
Agent a secret letter incriminating all but one of the
other members of Shihuh.

I landed
on 27th
situation
normal. S
bin Ali a
Sh. Muhammad
are with
Al Sa'id,
two Sheikh
Abdullah
and Sa'id
Yasir ar

The present situation.

Sheikh Hasan of Khasab is on a visit to Limah and Diba. The rumour that he has gone there and to Fujairah to enlist the support of the tribes in the event of punitive action being taken against him (as indicated in P.R.'s telegram No. 291) so far lacks confirmation but it is not improbable. He was reported to be at al Karsha near Diba on 27th the day I left Diba. I have written to him to come at Khasab to see me.

The wali is still living in his fort at Khasab but without influence and indeed is unable to go in safely to the village where the Sheikh's order forbidding the bazaar to sell him food still holds. He is therefore still being sustained from one or other of the ships in harbour - at present Al Sa'id.

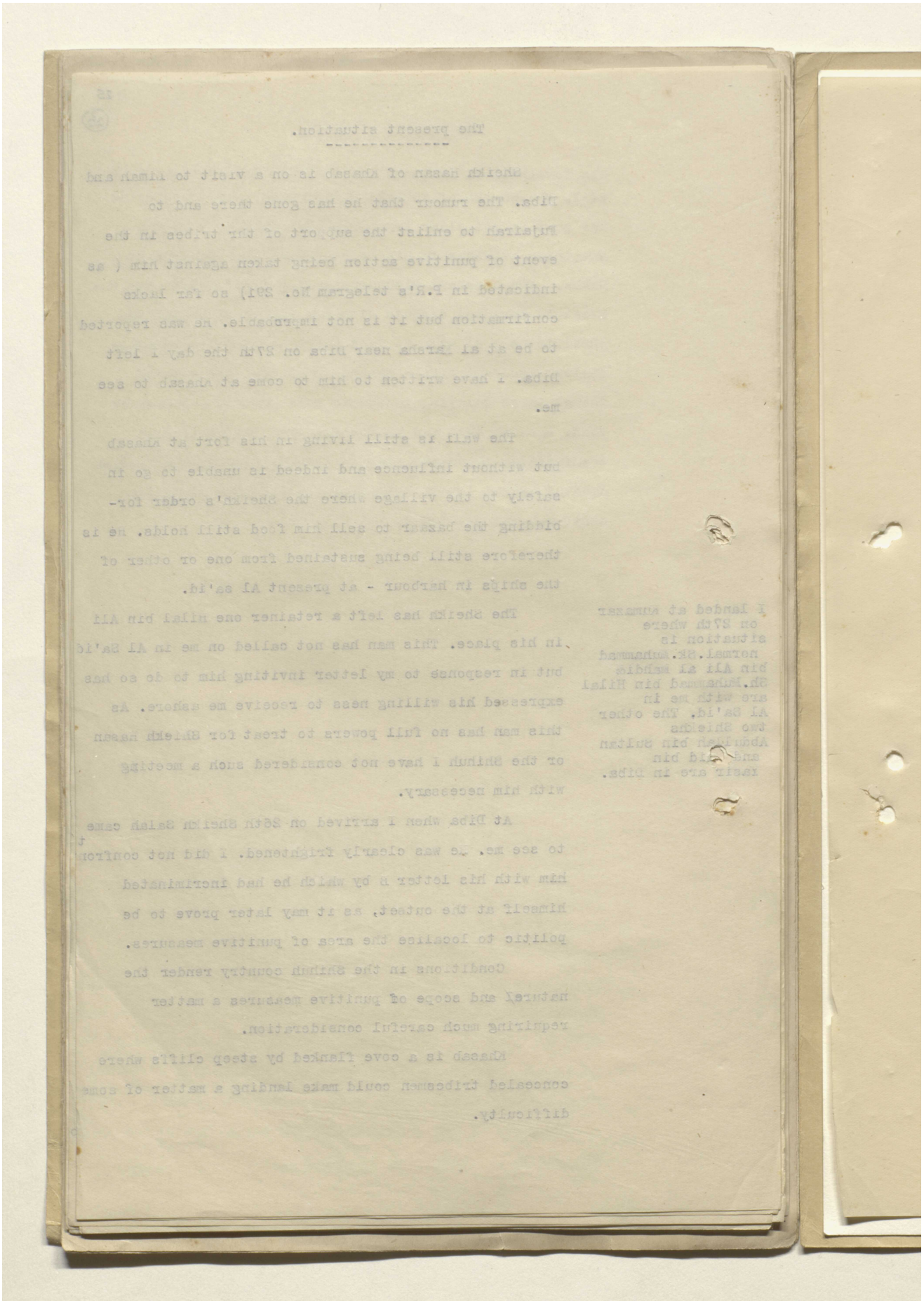
I landed at Kumazar on 27th where situation is normal. Sk. Muhammad bin Ali al Mahdi & Sh. Muhammad bin Hilal are with me in Al Sa'id. The other two Sheikhs Abdullah bin Sultan and Said bin Yasir are in Diba.

The Sheikh has left a retainer one Hilal bin Ali in his place. This man has not called on me in Al Sa'id but in response to my letter inviting him to do so has expressed his willingness to receive me ashore. As this man has no full powers to treat for Sheikh Hasan or the Shihuh I have not considered such a meeting with him necessary.

At Diba when I arrived on 26th Sheikh Salah came to see me. He was clearly frightened. I did not confront him with his letter B by which he had incriminated himself at the outset, as it may later prove to be politic to localise the area of punitive measures.

Conditions in the Shihuh country render the nature and scope of punitive measures a matter requiring much careful consideration.

Khasab is a cove flanked by steep cliffs where concealed tribesmen could make landing a matter of some difficulty.



26
26

Page --: 2 :-

The beach itself is a gently shelving one involving long stretches of dangerous wading especially at some stages of the tide. It is backed by a date grove which would afford considerable cover to defenders.

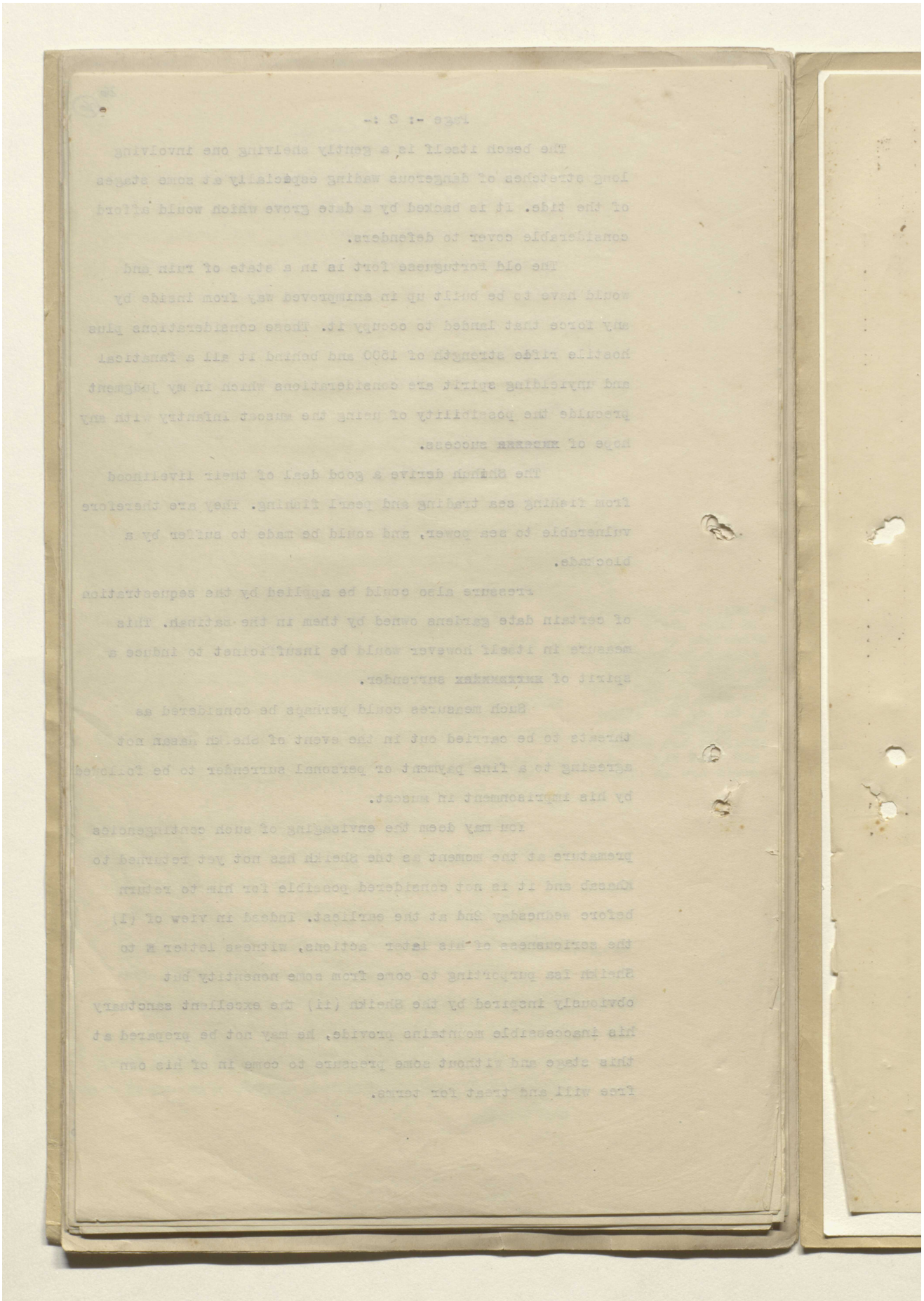
The old Portuguese fort is in a state of ruin and would have to be built up in an improved way from inside by any force that landed to occupy it. These considerations plus hostile rifle strength of 1500 and behind it all a fanatical and unyielding spirit are considerations which in my judgment preclude the possibility of using the Muscat Infantry with any hope of ~~XXXXXXXX~~ success.

The Shihuh derive a good deal of their livelihood from fishing sea trading and pearl fishing. They are therefore vulnerable to sea power, and could be made to suffer by a blockade.

Pressure also could be applied by the sequestration of certain date gardens owned by them in the Batinah. This measure in itself however would be insufficient to induce a spirit of ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ surrender.

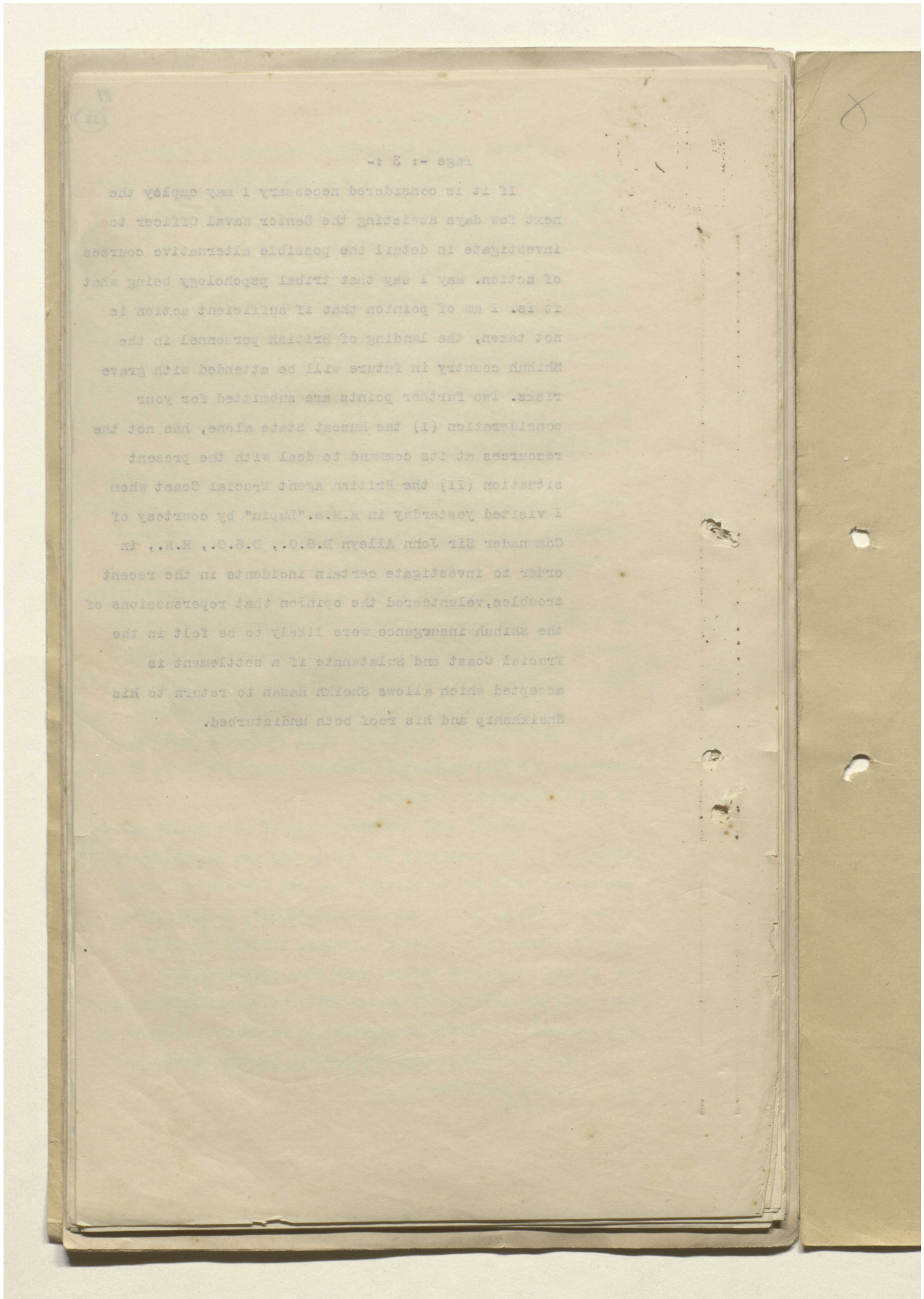
Such measures could perhaps be considered as threats to be carried out in the event of Sheikh Hasan not agreeing to a fine payment or personal surrender to be followed by his imprisonment in Muscat.

You may deem the envisaging of such contingencies premature at the moment as the Sheikh has not yet returned to Khasab and it is not considered possible for him to return before Wednesday 2nd at the earliest. Indeed in view of (1) the seriousness of his later actions, witness letter E to Sheikh Isa purporting to come from some nonentity but obviously inspired by the Sheikh (ii) the excellent sanctuary his inaccessible mountains provide, he may not be prepared at this stage and without some pressure to come in of his own free will and treat for terms.



Page --: 3 :-

If it is considered necessary I may employ the next few days assisting the Senior Naval Officer to investigate in detail the possible alternative courses of action. may I say that tribal pschology being what it is. I am of poinion that if sufficient action is not taken, the landing of British personnel in the Shihuh country in future will be attended with grave risks. Two further points are submitted for your consideration (I) the Muscat State alone, has not the resources at its command to deal with the present situation (II) the British Agent Trucial Coast whom I visited yesterday in H.M.S."Lupin" by courtesy of Commnader Sir John Alleyn D.S.O., D.S.C., R.N., in order to investigate certain incidents in the recent troubles, volunteered the opinion that repersussions of the Shihuh insurgence were likely to be felt in the Trucial Coast and Sulatanate if a settlement is accepted which allows Sheikh Hasan to return to his Sheikhship and his roof both undisturbed.



28

INDIA OFFICE LIBRARY and INDIA OFFICE RECORDS
Photocopying record

Ref. no. IOL: |
IOR: |

	Date	Name	Photocopying process	No. of exposures
1	7-10-71	POSTAL	RAPID	WHOLE FILE
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				

REFER TO THE SPECIALIST CONCERNED

INDIA OFFICE RECORDS
New 6017
MICROFILM

'File 8/63 MUSCAT STATE AFFAIRS: SHIHUH TRIBE.' [back] (56/56)

