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Please Indicate a Username for our Website: \_\_\_\_\_

FIBIS Relies solely on Volunteers for our work. Please let us know if you can help with Research, Transcriptions, Articles, Admin, at Fairs / Shows or any other way.

Please return this form and your remittance to:

Membership Secretary: 71 Manor Lane  
 Sunbury on Thames  
 Middx. TW16 6JE  
 United Kingdom  
 membership@fibis.org

or join FIBIS online at: [www.fibis.org](http://www.fibis.org)

### BEGINNERS GUIDE

[http://wiki.fibis.org/index.php/Beginners'\\_Guide](http://wiki.fibis.org/index.php/Beginners'_Guide)

The FIBIwiki contains lots of guidance for beginning British India research. It is recommended that you read through the above page before contacting FIBIS for personal research advice or assistance.

### SCOPE OF FIBIS INTEREST

The main focus of FIBIS activities is the 'sub-continent' of India but the Society is interested in all areas and activities of the British in South Asia between the founding of the East India Company in 1599 and 'Indian Independence' in 1947; including:

Afghanistan, Aden, Andaman Islands, Bangladesh, Bencoolen (Sumatra, Indonesia), Burma (Myanmar), Ceylon (Sri Lanka), China, Macao & Hong Kong, Indonesia (Borneo, Labuan etc.), Malaysia, Mauritius, Persia, Singapore, Straits Settlements. Also included are the activities of the East India Company in London and St. Helena.

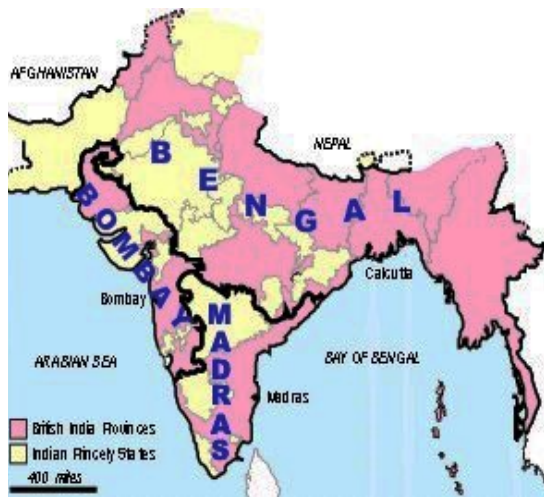
### THE PRESIDENCIES

British India was divided into three Presidencies for administrative purposes.

**BOMBAY**, which covered the smallest area on the west of the country, extending through Sind and to the coastal area of what is now Pakistan, including Karachi, also included Aden. The capital or presidency HQ was Bombay, now Mumbai.

**BENGAL**, was the largest area and stretched from the east of the country. It included Burma and what is now Bangladesh and extended to the North West Frontier to include most of modern day Pakistan, including Lahore, Multan, Peshawar and Rawalpindi. It also included those parts of the East Indies which are now Malaya, Singapore, parts of Indonesia and Chinese trading posts. The capital or presidency HQ was Calcutta, now Kolkata

**MADRAS**, which covered the southern portion of India, but did NOT include Ceylon. The Capital or presidency HQ was Madras, now called Chennai.



Knowing which Presidency a town or city was in is important when researching the India Office Records, whether on-line or in person at the British Library Administrative boundaries moved from time to time as the British annexed more territory, and it is important to check 'border' districts in the adjoining presidency. The map is adapted from Plate 21 of the (1931) revised atlas of the Imperial Gazetteer of India, but being of small scale should not be taken as an authority for boundaries. [~poyntz/India/maps.html#area](http://poyntz/India/maps.html#area)

There are some detailed maps from 1893 here: <https://home.rootsweb.com/>

## **RECOMMENDED WEBSITES FOR RESEARCH**

Start by searching in the three free online databases:

- \* **FIBIS database** holds data from many sources. <http://search.fibis.org>
- \* **FamilySearch** - the website of the LDS Church [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)
- \* **British Library India Office Family History Search** <http://indiafamily.bl.uk/ui/Home.aspx>

**FindMyPast** (subscription needed) carries a comprehensive range of indexed and digitised India Office records. These can be viewed at no cost at the British Library and various other archives. <http://www.findmypast.co.uk/>

**BEWARE:** The India Office records of birth/baptism, marriage and death/burial are **official copies** of church registers from India and are estimated to be at most 70 per cent complete. As these are transcripts of the registers, researchers need to use caution in how much they rely on the accuracy of these records.

## **THE INDIA LIST on ROOTSWEB**

Rootsweb, now owned by Ancestry, also has several message boards and amongst these is the India List. <https://mailinglists.rootsweb.com/listindexes/>

This mailing lists were started almost 20 years ago and its archives are freely searchable.

## **FIBIS WEBSITE FEATURES**

- ◆ Database of over 1.5 million entries <http://search.fibis.org>
- ◆ FIBIwiki of informative guides and research links <http://wiki.fibis.org>
- ◆ On-line library of digitised books (google)
- ◆ A Gallery of photographs and images of British India [www.gallery.fibis.org/](http://www.gallery.fibis.org/)
- ◆ A news blog
- ◆ DNA project through FamilytreeDNA [www.fibis.org/dna/](http://www.fibis.org/dna/)

## **MEMBERSHIP OF FIBIS**

Benefits of Membership include:

- ◆ Two FIBIS Journals per year;
- ◆ Research Advice provided by our Research Officer;
- ◆ Members Only area with additional Data to Members;
- ◆ Access to members only data;
- ◆ Society events;
- ◆ A Membership Research Interest facility;
- ◆ Member's Discounted Price in the FIBIS Shop.

## **FIBIS PUBLICATIONS** [www.fibis.org/store/](http://www.fibis.org/store/)

Four Guides are now available under the FIBIS imprint:

- ◆ Baxter's Guide to Biographical Sources in the India Office Records;
- ◆ Researching Ancestors in the East India Company Armies;
- ◆ Researching Ancestors in the Indian Army 1858-1947, both by Peter Bailey (FIBIS President); and
- ◆ An Introduction to British Ships in Indian Waters: their owners, Crew & Passengers by Richard Morgan.

Additionally, there is a series of 7 short guides as FIBIS Fact Files.

## **RESEARCH IN AUSTRALIA**

There are significant and often substantial resources held at major libraries in Australia. Old Indian newspapers, usually on microfilm, can be found at NLA and several university and state libraries. The SL NSW subscribes to the digitised Times of India. It also holds a large collection of published trade directories from 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century India.

State and University Libraries in Melbourne and Perth are also repositories for significant collections of material from or about British India.