

# RESEARCHING IMPERIAL AND COMMONWEALTH HISTORY

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- Records of the Colonial Office
- The Calendar of State Papers Colonial
- Records relating to Commonwealth conferences prior to the establishment of the Secretariat in 1965
- The Foreign and Commonwealth 'migrated archives'

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How to look for records of...

## Colonies and dependencies from 1782

How can I view the records covered in this guide?

☒ View Online
 ☒ Order copies
 ☒ Visit us in Kew
 ☒ Pay for research

How many are online? ☐ None ☒ Some ☐ All

### 1. Why use this guide?

This guide shows you how to find records held at The National Archives relating to the British Empire from 1782 and outlines ways of researching a particular topic. From the 16th century onwards, the British government amassed a wealth of documentation on its empire. The collection is therefore an unrivalled resource on the history of the British Empire and its former colonies.

The guide will show you how to navigate our online catalogue to the relevant document series. It will show how to use finding aids, like indexes and registers, to locate documents where the information on the online catalogue is insufficient.

For advice on records of the earliest English colonies, established in the Americas and West Indies from the late 16th century, see our guide to [American and West Indian colonies before 1782](#) and its supplementary guide to [using the Calendar of State Papers](#)

#### Contents

1. Why use this guide?
2. What we hold and what we don't hold
3. Online records
4. Key Colonial Office and Dominions Office record types
5. Research strategies - how to find records on a topic
6. How to find original correspondence by using indexes and registers of correspondence
7. How to find other types of records
8. Records of former colonial governments - the

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### Related research guides

[Slavery and the British transatlantic slave trade](#)

[Foreign countries](#)

[Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office records from 1782](#)

[Overseas maps and plans](#)

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- Original correspondence
  - Registers of correspondence
  - Entry Books
  - Registers of out-letters
- Acts
- Sessional papers
- Government Gazettes
- Miscellanea

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Colonial Office and predecessors:

**Mauritius, Original Correspondence.**

This series contains original correspondence relating to Mauritius. Includes records and papers of the Commissioners of Eastern Inquiry, 1826 to 1832.

From 1810 to 1814 correspondence concerning Réunion (Ile de Bourbon) is included. From 1887 to 1903 correspondence concerning the Seychelles is included.

Held by: The National Archives, Kew

Date: 1778 - 1951

Reference: CO 167

960 volumes

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**Arrangement:**

Bound volumes arranged chronologically within the following subject headings: Despatches (letters of the governors), Offices (letters of government departments and other organisations) and Individuals (arranged alphabetically). With some case volumes. Each volume with a contents list, or précis of each letter giving name of correspondent, date of letter and subject matter. From 1926 correspondence is arranged in subject files.

**Related material:**

For further records of the Commissioner of Eastern Enquiry in Mauritius see CO 415

For later correspondence relating to the Seychelles see CO 530

For later correspondence see CO 1023

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Unpublished finding aids:

For registers to this correspondence before 1850 see CO 326, after 1850 see CO 356. For indexed précis of correspondence see CO 714.

Correspondence, Original - Secretary of State

CO 167/430, 1861 July - Aug.

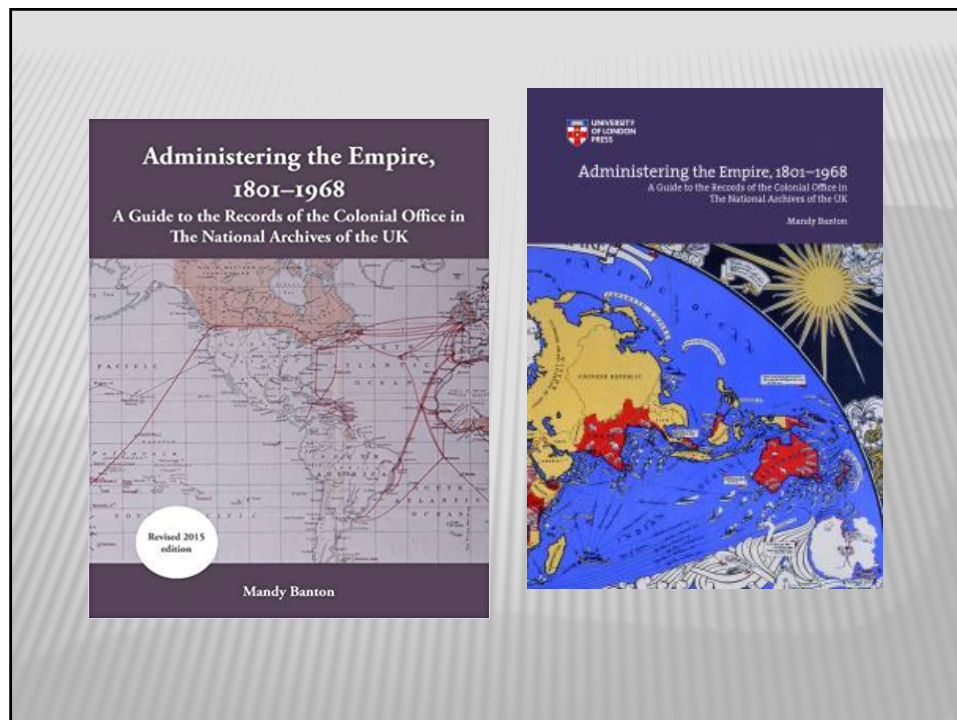
Despatches.

## Date: 1861 - 1862

[illegible]

| Registry  |       | Name                                                      | Date     | No.    | SUBJECT                                          |                                                                                                                                | Former and other papers                                     | How disposed of                                                  |
|-----------|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------|--------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Date 1919 | No.   |                                                           |          |        |                                                  |                                                                                                                                |                                                             |                                                                  |
| 28 Feb    | 13285 | O.A.G. Moorhouse                                          | [8 Feb.] | 143    | <u>late C. Ungebauer</u>                         | Fds. copy of proceedings at inquest on –                                                                                       | MI 963 MGO/32153                                            | To P. of W. Dept. 10 Mch '19 + 4446/14                           |
| " "       |       |                                                           | 9 "      | 144    | R. Nicol 4026 W.A.                               |                                                                                                                                |                                                             |                                                                  |
| 3 May     | 26743 | S. [O.A.G. Boyle]                                         | 31 Mch.  | Secret | <u>Civil Disturbances Scheme of Organisation</u> | Trs. report of committee apptd. to consider a scheme of organisation for use in civil disturbances Secret Circular 11 Nov 1918 | Circular Gov/45224/20                                       | Ans'd Sec. 4 Dec '19                                             |
| 13 May    | 28850 | [Boyle]                                                   | 25 Apl.  | 383    | <u>Influenza Outbreak</u>                        | Submits full report on – by Acting S.S.O.                                                                                      | Gov 23340 SL                                                | Ans'd 1569 16 Sept '19                                           |
| 5 Aug.    | 45205 | D. C. Cameron for O.A.G.<br>// DESTROYED UNDER STATUTE // | 10 July  | 637    | <u>Naval Ratings buried in Lagos</u>             | Steps are being taken to erect crosses over the graves                                                                         | Circ. of 15 May Gov/46727/18<br>MO/3531/24 Nig              | Copy to Admy – 22 Aug '19 (Gov/45479/19 L'wds)                   |
| 3 Dec.    | 68883 | [Gov. Clifford]                                           | 31 Oct.  | 1001   | <u>Report on the Blue Book, 1918</u>             | Trs. –                                                                                                                         | Gov/37804 (B.B.)<br>Gov/23331 (B.B. Report)<br>Gov/61971/20 | PRINTED FOR PARLIAMENT<br>Colonial Reports Annual 1030<br>Put by |

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July 1604

July 2.

Mount Howard, at the mouth of Wyapoco, Guiana. Capt. Chas. Leigh to the Privy Council. Arrived in the country with fifty men, with whom he purposed to inhabit in some by-place, away from the Indians; but accepted the offers of the natives to dwell amongst them in their best houses and gardens. Has resolved to remain with forty men, and return the rest for England, with four Indian chiefs as pledges. The natives desire that he will send for men to teach them to pray. Doubts not but God hath a wonderful work in this simple-hearted people. Beseeches the Council to send over well-disposed preachers. Requests the King's protection and free passage to those who will come and settle there. The bearer will certify at large concerning the state of the country and the people.

[DOMESTIC Corresp. Jac. I., Vol. VIII., No. 87, Cal. p. 127.]

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'Note of things desired from Guinea, for which letters are to be written to the merchants of the Guinea Company and the Gold Coast, Humph. Slaney, Capt. Crispe, and [Wil.] Cloberry, and John Wood, Cape merchant. They include an elephant's head with the teeth very large; a river horse's head; strange sorts of fowls; birds and fishes' skins; great flying and sucking fishes; all sorts of serpents, dried fruits, shining stones, &c.

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## From the Archive: Sanctions agreed against apartheid-era South Africa

25 January 2017 News

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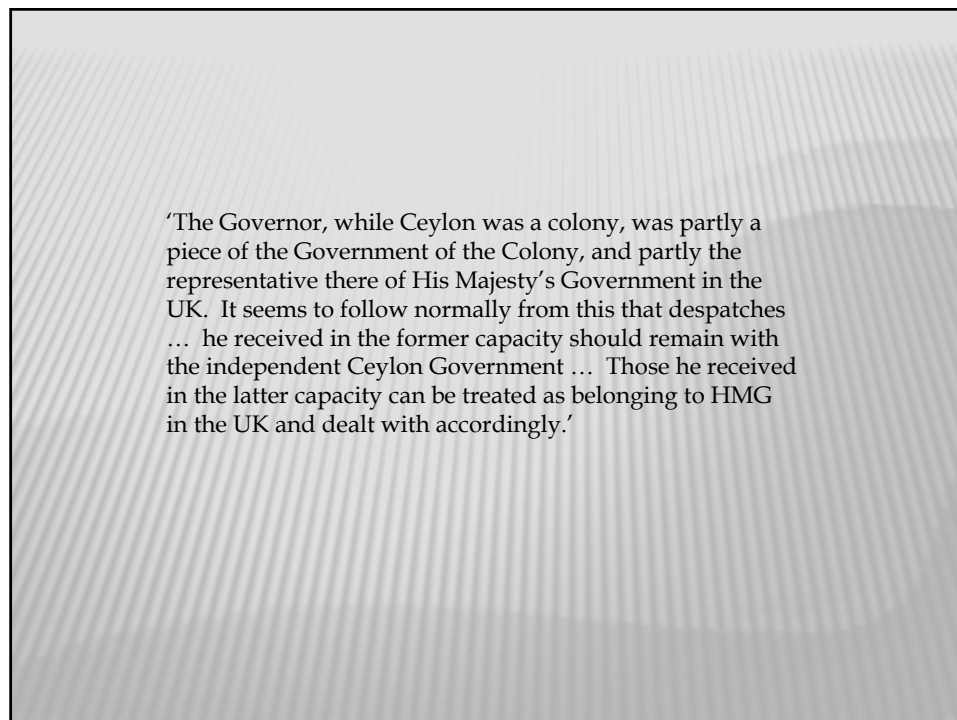
The Hon. Secretary, List and Index Society, The National Archives, Kew, TW9 4DU, United Kingdom  
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- Might embarrass H.M.G. or other Governments;
- Might embarrass members of the police, military forces, public servants or others e.g. police informers;
- Might compromise sources of intelligence information;
- Might be used unethically by Ministers in the successor Government

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Frontispiece. The General Registry of the Colonial Office [1942]:  
Miss Heritage, a member of the registry staff, consults a register of correspondence now in CO 378.  
(With thanks to Pictorial Press)

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