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# **Guide to the Imperial British East Africa Company Papers**

**OSB MSS 344**



by Brooke McManus

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
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New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

**CALL NUMBER:** OSB MSS 344

**CREATOR:** Imperial British East Africa Company

**TITLE:** Imperial British East Africa Company papers

**DATES:** 1859–1899

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 3.42 linear feet (5 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The collection consists of correspondence and printed material documenting activities of the British Imperial East Africa Company and its chairman, Scottish businessman William Mackinnon.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.imperialbritish>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.imperialbritish>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to [beinecke.images@yale.edu](mailto:beinecke.images@yale.edu).

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box  
f. folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased from Maggs Ltd. on the James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection Fund, 2006.

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### Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research

## Conditions Governing Use

The Imperial British East Africa Company Papers is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

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## Preferred Citation

Imperial British East Africa Company Papers. James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

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## Processing Information

Collections are processed to a variety of levels, depending on the work necessary to make them usable, their perceived research value, the availability of staff, competing priorities, and whether or not further accruals are expected. The library attempts to provide a basic level of preservation and access for all collections, and does more extensive processing of higher priority collections as time and resources permit.

This collection received a basic level of processing, including rehousing and minimal organization.

Information included in the Description of Papers note and Collection Contents section is drawn from information supplied with the collection and from an initial survey of the contents. Folder titles appearing in the contents list below are often based on those provided by the creator or previous custodian. Titles have not been verified against the contents of the folders in all cases. Otherwise, folder titles are supplied by staff during initial processing.

This finding aid may be updated periodically to account for new acquisitions to the collection and/or revisions in arrangement and description.

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## Imperial British East Africa Company

The Imperial British East Africa Company (IBEAC) was a commercial association founded to advance African trade in areas occupied by the British Empire. The company was incorporated and granted a royal charter by Queen Victoria in 1888. Led by Scottish shipping merchant Sir William Mackinnon, IBEAC administered the eastern coast of Africa from modern-day Somalia to modern-day Kenya. The company was also tasked with overseeing construction of a railway connecting the east coast region of Mombasa to Lake Victoria. IBEAC began building the Mackinnon-Sclater road, a 600-mile ox-cart track from Mombasa to Busia, Kenya, in 1890, and conducted surveys and expeditions into Uganda, but never commenced work on the railroad. The company began to fail financially, and the British government assumed administration of IBEAC's territory, which was divided to form the Uganda Protectorate in 1894 and East Africa Protectorate (later Kenya) in 1895. The Uganda Railway was completed by the government in 1901.

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## Scope and Contents

The collection consists of correspondence and printed material documenting activities of the British Imperial East Africa Company (IBEAC) and its chairman, Scottish businessman William Mackinnon. Included are letterbooks, reports, pamphlets, and other materials concerning the company's early negotiations with Zanzibar respecting land, taxes, mineral rights, and other matters; general administration of IBEAC's territory; and efforts to develop a railway from Mombasa to Victoria Lake. Letters and reports additionally detail initial scouting of locations for company stations and interactions of company representatives with the Maasai people. Among the correspondents and authors are Barghash ibn Sa'id, the Sultan of Zanzibar, Captain Frederick Lugard, and IBEAC administrator George Mackenzie. The

collection additionally contains letter books documenting Mackinnon's earlier work as co-founder of the British India Steam Navigation Company and director of the City of Glasgow Bank.

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## **Arrangement**

Arranged alphabetically by folder or volume title.

## Collection Contents

b. 1, f. 1-2	British East Africa Reports	1892-1899
b. 2	British East Africa / Uganda / The Mombasa Victoria Railway Bound volume of printed reports and other papers.	1885-1893
b. 1, f. 3	I.B.E.A. Mombasa letters, Vol. 1	1889 January- August
b. 1, f. 4-8	I.B.E.A. Mombasa letters, Vol. 2	1889 July-1890 February
b. 2	I.B.E.A. Mombasa letters, Vol. 3	1889 September-1890 March
b. 2	I.B.E.A. Mombasa letters, Vol. 4	1890 April- August
b. 3	I.B.E.A. Mombasa letters, Vol. 5	1890 August-1891 January
b. 1, f. 9-11	The Imperial British East Africa Company: Founding archive & Capt. Lugard's reports Copy of the company charter; "Concessions given by His Royal Highness the Sayyid Khalifa-Bin-Said Sultan of Zanzibar to the Imperial British East Africa Company"; and reports by Frederick Lugard on his expedition into Uganda relating to the development of the railway.	1888-1892
b. 5, f. 25-27	The Imperial British East Africa Company: Founding archive & Capt. Lugard's reports Engravings based on photographs taken by the IBEAC of a ceremony presenting papers of freedom to a large group of enslaved people and of men holding ivory tusks of slaughtered elephants; IBEAC company share certificates in the name of John Mackinnon; and a copy of <i>The Times</i> containing text of the company charter.	1888-1897
b. 3	Papers relating to Uganda, Momb-Victoria Railway, Cameroons, Suakin-Berbe Railway, Capt. Lugard's report, British East Africa Bound volume of printed parliamentary papers, reports, and other materials. A number of folded maps are tipped in.	1885-1895
b. 1, f. 12-16	Uganda Railway Reports	1892-1895
b. 4	William Mackinnon private letter book	1859 July- December 1860
b. 4	William Mackinnon private letter book	1860 November-1866 March
b. 4	William Mackinnon private letter book	1866 March-1868 June

## **Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### **Subjects**

Colonial administrators -- Great Britain  
Maasai (African people)  
Railroads -- Africa

### **Geographic Names**

Great Britain -- Colonies -- Africa, East --  
Administration  
Mombasa (Kenya)  
Zanzibar -- History -- To 1890

### **Corporate Bodies**

British India Steam Navigation Company  
Imperial British East Africa Company  
Uganda Railway

### **Names**

Barghash ibn Sa'id, Sultan of Zanzibar,  
approximately 1834-1888  
Lugard, F. D., Sir (Frederick Dealtry), 1858-1945  
Mackenzie, George S. (George Sutherland),  
1844-1910  
Mackinnon, William, 1823-1893