HISTORICAL NOTE

Under its charter, granted by Queen Elizabeth I on 31 December 1600, the East India Company had a monopoly of all English trade in Asia and the Pacific. Its trading activities were initially focussed on the port and sultanate of Bantam on the western end of Java, where the Company established a ‘factory’ in 1603. Bantam was a major trading centre, particularly for pepper, and also for exotic spices from Ambon and other eastern islands, silks and porcelain from China, scented woods and Indian textiles. The Dutch East India Company also founded a trading factory at Bantam in 1603 and, after years of conflict and competition, it forced the English company out of Java in 1682. In 1685, however, the East India Company succeeded in setting up a factory at Bencoolen on the south-west coast of Sumatra and it was to be a major source of pepper for the next century. It was transferred to Dutch rule in 1825.

In the late seventeenth century the interest of the Company shifted to India. Trading posts were established at Surat (1619), Madras (1639), Bombay (1668), and Calcutta (1690). The factories developed into forts: Fort William (Calcutta), Fort St George (Madras) and Bombay Castle. Surat was the Company’s first presidency in India, but by the early eighteenth century the presidencies, each with their own army, were Bombay, Madras and Calcutta. By 1765, when Bengal was placed under Company rule, Calcutta was the senior presidency and Fort William became the seat of the first Governor-General of Bengal, Warren Hastings, in 1773. The title was changed to Governor-General of India in 1833. The governor-general and governors were appointed by the Court of Directors of the East India Company until 1858, when the Company was nationalised.

In the eighteenth century the island of Penang, near the western coast of Malaya, was under the rule of the Sultan of Quedah (Kedah). Penang was thinly populated by farmers and fishermen. The Sultan first sought the assistance of the East India Company in 1771 and there was some interest in the idea of a British naval base in that region. In 1785 the Sultan wrote to the Governor-General and offered to lease Penang in return for military and naval assistance. Captain Francis Light, who over twenty years had built up a network of personal contacts in the Straits of Malacca, acted as an intermediary. In 1786 agreement was reached, whereby the Company guaranteed that it would always keep an armed vessel to guard the island and the adjacent coast and would pay an annual bounty to the Sultan to the Sultan as compensation for lost revenue. In August 1786 two Company vessels arrived at the island and Captain Light took possession, re-naming it Prince of Wales Island. A site was found for a settlement, to be called Georgetown, and a fort was erected, named after Lord Cornwallis, the Governor-General. It was rebuilt later and Fort Cornwallis became the administrative centre of the Prince of Wales Island Presidency.

For several years there were strong disagreements between the Sultan of Quedah and Company officials about the terms of the treaty. It was finally re-negotiated by Sir George Leith in 1800. Under the new treaty, the British territory was extended to include a strip of territory on the adjacent mainland (Province Wellesley) and the bounty payable to the Sultan was increased. Initially, Prince of Wales Island was administered by a superintendent, renamed lieutenant-governor in 1799, under the direction of the Governor-General. In 1805 it became the fourth presidency, headed by a
governor, assisted by a council of two or three officials. By that time it had become a major trading centre, having quickly overtaken the Dutch factory at Malacca.

Malacca, in the southern region of the Malay Peninsula, was conquered by the Portuguese in 1511 and taken over by the Dutch East India Company in 1641. In 1795, during the Napoleonic Wars, it was surrendered by the Dutch Governor to the East India Company. It was held by the Company until 1818 and, for most of this period, the British Resident was Major William Farquhar. Under the Treaty of Vienna, Malacca was restored to the Dutch in 1818. In 1824 it was returned to the East India Company in exchange for Bencoolen.

In 1817 Sir Stamford Raffles, who ten years earlier had been secretary to the Government at Fort Cornwallis, became Governor-General of Bencoolen. Farquhar had been attempting to negotiate trading agreements with chiefs of the Riau Archipelago and Raffles recognised the value of a British possession at the southern end of the Straits of the Malacca. There was no Dutch presence on the island of Singapore, but a small settlement of fishermen had been established a few years earlier by the local Temenggong (raja). Raffles negotiated with the Temenggong and also with Hussein Shah, the brother of the Sultan of Johore. Agreement was reached in February 1819, whereby Singapore was ceded to the East India Company in return for annual payments to Hussein Shah and the Temenggong. Major Farquhar was named as the first Resident of Singapore. In 1823 his successor, John Crawfurd, signed a new treaty with the Sultan of Johore and the Temenggong, bringing Singapore under British law and taking over most of the administration. By 1825 Singapore had a population of over 10,000 and was surpassing Prince of Wales Island as a trading centre.

In 1826 the East India Company decided to incorporate Malacca and Singapore into the Prince of Wales Island Presidency. Robert Fullerton became the first Governor of the Straits Settlements, while resident councillors were based in Singapore and Malacca. Fort Cornwallis continued to be the seat of government until 1832, when it was transferred to Singapore. The Straits Settlements ceased to be a presidency in 1830, but remained until the control of the East India Company until 1858. They were then administered by the India Office in London. They became a British Crown colony in 1867, at which time the name of Prince of Wales Island became Penang.

**INDIA OFFICE LIBRARY**

The India Office Library and Records was transferred to the British Library in 1982. It is now called India Office Records and its address is British Library, 96 Euston Road, London NW1 2DB.
INDIA OFFICE LIBRARY

G/34. Factory records: Straits Settlements, 1769-1830

Reel M470

1. Miscellaneous original and copy papers and reports accumulated at India Board of Control offices, 1726-1806

Documents, mostly copies but some originals, relating to naval visits to Penang, proposals for an East India Company settlement on the island, negotiations with the Sultan of Quedah, the acquisition of the island in 1786, the geography and resources of the island, revenues, and the establishment of a court of judicature (1807). The writers of the letters and reports include Capt. James Scott, Capt. Thomas Forrest, Capt. Francis Light and Capt. Alexander Kyd. There are also extracts from treaties, a journal of the weather at Fort Cornwallis (1793-94), a memoir of Prince of Wales Island considered politically and commercially, and extracts from Sir George Leith, A short account of the Prince of Wales Island (1805).

Bengal proceedings, 1786-95

This series of volumes contains proceedings of the Governor-General in Council at Fort William (Calcutta) relating to the Prince of Wales Island. The Governors-General were Lord Cornwallis and Sir John Shore. Incorporated in the proceedings are copies of correspondence between the Governor-General and the Superintendents at Prince of Wales Island (Francis Light and Philip Manington), correspondence with other presidencies (Madras, Bombay), officials and the Supreme Court at Fort William, and military and naval officers based at or visiting Prince of Wales Island. Attached to the proceedings are appendices comprising inter alia lists of shipping arrivals and departures, accounts of imports and exports, financial statements, lists of naval and military stores, transcripts of official inquiries, legal hearings and courts martial, lists of European and Chinese residents, registers of births, deaths and marriages.

2. Bengal proceedings relating to Penang, 1786-87

Reel M471

2. Bengal proceedings relating to Penang, 1787

3. Bengal consultations relating to Prince of Wales Island, 1788-89
Bengal consultations relating to Prince of Wales Island, 1790-91

**Reel M472**

5 Bengal consultations relating to Prince of Wales Island, 1792-93

6 Bengal consultations relating to Prince of Wales Island, 1794

**Reel M473**

7 Bengal consultations relating to Prince of Wales Island, 1795

8 Original and copy papers of the Court of judicature at Penang, accumulated at the Board of Control offices, 1805-12

The documents include a petition from the East India Company to King George III, letters patent establishing the court of judicature, extracts from proceedings of the Governor and Council at Prince of Wales Island, draft rules of the court, duties of peace officers and tables of fees, proclamations, and letters of Sir Edmond Stanley, the first recorder of the court.

**Penang: miscellaneous papers, 1805-23**

The papers include reports and letters of R.T. Farquhar, Stamford Raffles, W.A. Clibey and W. Farquhar, extracts from proceedings of the Governor-General and Council at Fort William and the Governor and Council at Fort Cornwallis, financial papers, papers about spice plantations, and letters from the Governor and Council at Fort Cornwallis to the Court of Directors of the East India Company.

9 Penang: miscellaneous papers and reports, 1805-6

**Reel M474**

9 Penang: miscellaneous papers and reports, 1806-10

10 Penang: miscellaneous papers, 1810-23

**Reel M475**

**Prince of Wales public consultations, 1805-30**

This long series of volumes contains proceedings and decisions of the Governor in Council at Fort Cornwallis (Prince of Wales Island), together with appendices and indexes. The Governor was
assisted by two or three senior officials, the longest-serving of whom were William Phillips and John Erskine. Incorporated in the proceedings are correspondence of the Governor and the Secretary to the Government with the Chairman and the Court of Directors of the East India Company in London, the Governor-General at Calcutta and the Governors at Bombay and Madras, and with other officials, naval officers and military officers. There is also correspondence with the Resident at Malacca and the Sultan of Quedah (Kedah). Examples of other papers copied into the proceedings are instructions for diplomatic missions, financial statements, lists of imports and exports, petitions, proclamations, committee reports, and lists of documents forwarded to the East India Company. The appendices consist of a great variety of documents, such as lists of European residents, reports of the Court of Judicature, port charges, lists of military stores, reports of opium farms and other tax farms, and general orders of the Governor in Council.

11 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Sept.-Nov. 1805
12 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Nov.-Dec. 1805
13 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Jan.-March 1806

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13 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, March-July 1806
14 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Aug.-Oct. 1806
15 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Oct.-Nov. 1806

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15 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Nov.-Dec. 1806
15A Nominal roll of NCOs and soldiers of HM 30th Foot, 1806-20
16 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, appendix, 1806
17 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Jan.-Aug. 1807
18 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Aug.-Oct. 1807

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18 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Oct.-Dec. 1807
19 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Jan.-June 1808
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22  Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Jan.-June 1809
23  Prince of Wales Island public consultations, July-Nov. 1809

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23  Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Nov.-Dec. 1809
24  Prince of Wales Island public consultations, appendix, 1809
25  Prince of Wales Island public consultations, index, 1809
26  Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Jan.-June 1810
27  Prince of Wales Island public consultations, June-Sept. 1810

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27  Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Sept.-Dec. 1810
28  Prince of Wales Island public consultations, index, 1810
29  Prince of Wales Island public consultations, appendix, 1810
30  Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Jan.-June 1811

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31  Prince of Wales Island public consultations, July-Dec. 1811
32  Prince of Wales Island public consultations, index, 1811
33  Prince of Wales Island public consultations, appendix, 1811

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34 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Jan.-June 1812
35 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, July-Oct. 1812

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35 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Oct.-Dec. 1812
36 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, index, 1812
37 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, appendix, 1812
38 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Jan.-March 1813
39 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, April-May 1813

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40 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, July-Sept. 1813
41 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Sept.-Dec. 1813
42 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, appendix, 1813

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43 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Jan.-April 1814
44 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, May-July 1814

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44 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, July-Aug. 1814
45 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Sept.-Dec. 1814

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47 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, index, 1814
48 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Jan.-March 1815
49 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, April-July 1815
50 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, July 1815

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50 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, July-Aug. 1815
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52 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, appendix, 1815
53 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, index, 1815

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54 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Jan.-March 1816
55 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, April-June 1816

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56 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, July-Sept. 1816
57 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Sept.-Dec. 1816
58 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, index, 1816
59 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, appendix, 1816

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96 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Sept.-Nov. 1824

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98 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, appendices, 1824
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104 Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Oct.-Nov. 1825
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Prince of Wales Island public consultations, index, 1829

Prince of Wales Island public consultations, Jan.-April 1830

Prince of Wales Island public consultations, April-June 1830

Prince of Wales Island public consultations, index, 1830

Prince of Wales secret and political consultations, 1806-29

Proceedings of the Governor and Council at Fort Cornwallis incorporating letters and other documents on such matters as the military establishment, the movement of naval ships, naval expeditions, the appointment and dismissal of civil servants, censorship of the press, police, piracy, the detention of enemy ships, treaties, and relations with the Dutch East Indies, Malacca, the Malay states, Siam and Burma.

Prince of Wales Island secret and political consultations, Jan.-June 1806
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135  Prince of Wales Island secret and political consultations, June-Dec. 1806
136  Prince of Wales Island secret and political consultations, with index, 1807

Prince of Wales Island secret and political consultations, Jan. 1808–Aug. 1809 (duplicate volume)

137  Prince of Wales Island secret and political consultations, with index, Jan. 1808-March 1811, May-Sept. 1813

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137  Prince of Wales Island secret and political consultations, with index, Sept.-Dec. 1813, Feb. 1818
138  Prince of Wales Island secret and political consultations, June-Oct. 1826
139  Prince of Wales Island secret and political consultations, Oct.-Dec. 1826
140  Prince of Wales Island secret and political consultations, index, 1826
141  Prince of Wales Island secret and political consultations, Jan.-July 1827

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141  Prince of Wales Island secret and political consultations, July-Aug. 1827
142  Prince of Wales island secret and political consultations, Aug.-Dec. 1827
143  Prince of Wales Island secret and political consultations, index, 1827
144  Prince of Wales Island secret and political consultations, with index, 1828
145  Prince of Wales Island secret and political consultations, with index, Jan.-July 1829

Marine consultations, 1806-9

These papers comprise correspondence between the Marine Department and the Governor and Secretary of the Prince of Wales Island Government on such matters as shipbuilding, timber supplies, marine stores, disposal of vessels, the arsenal, and finances. There are also minutes of the Governor, general orders, statements on defences, proclamations and public notices.
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146 Prince of Wales Island marine consultations, with index, 1806

147 Prince of Wales Island marine consultations, appendix, 1806

148 Prince of Wales Island marine consultations, with index, 1807

149 Prince of Wales Island marine consultations, with index, 1808

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150 Prince of Wales Island marine consultations, 1809

Prince of Wales military consultations, 1806-7

Proceedings of the Governor and Council and the Commander-in-Chief at Fort Cornwallis including minutes of the Governor and correspondence on such matters as military appointments, the military establishment, the militia, military courts, barracks, the ordnance department, artillery, military stores and provisions, the militia, native troops, charges against officers, and general orders.

151 Prince of Wales Island military consultations, 1806

152 Prince of Wales Island military consultations, with index, 1807

Singapore diary, 1827-30

The diaries record the daily activities of John Prince and his successor Kenneth Murchison, the Resident Councillors at Singapore. They include copies of letters to the Secretary of the Straits Settlements Government, letters to officials and military and naval officers, translations of letters from Malay rulers, copies of advertisements, petitions, lists of British-born residents, reports on revenue, trade statistics and lists of land grants. There are also proceedings of the Governor in Council during visits of the Governor to Singapore (eg. Sept.-Oct. 1829).

153 Singapore diary, 4 Jan.-30 March 1827

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153 Singapore diary, 30 March-3 May 1827

154 Singapore diary, 8 May-22 June 1827
155  Singapore diary, 23 June-31 Dec. 1827
156  Singapore diary, 2 Jan.-1 March 1828

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156  Singapore diary, 1 March-5 June 1828
157  Singapore diary, 7 June-29 Dec. 1828
158  Singapore diary, index, 1828
159  Singapore diary, 2 Jan.-29 June 1829

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160  Singapore diary, 1 July-31 Dec. 1829
161  Singapore diary, index, 1829
162  Singapore diary, 1 Jan.-30 June 1830

**Singapore secret and political proceedings, 1827-28**
Proceedings of meetings of the Governor and the Resident Councillor at Singapore containing correspondence with the Secretary of the Straits Settlement Government, British envoys and Malayan rulers concerning troop movements, political and military affairs in Europe, relations with and between Malay states and other matters.
163  Singapore secret and political consultations, with index, May-June 1827
164  Singapore secret and political consultations, with index, Feb. 1828

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**Malacca diary, 1826-30**
The diaries record the daily activities of Samuel Garling, the Resident Councillor at Malacca. They include correspondence with the Governor of the Straits Settlements, Robert Fullerton, and the Secretary of the Straits Settlements Government, the Resident Councillor at Singapore, the Court of Directors of the East India Company, officials, military and naval officers, missionaries, newspaper editors and Malay residents. There are also proceedings of meetings between Fullerton and Garling, minutes by Fullerton and Garling, copies of government orders, public notices, regulations, financial
statements, reports of committees, petitions, judicial proceedings, lists of government offices and a slave registry (1829).

165 Malacca diary, 15 Aug. 1826-25 June 1827
166 Malacca diary, index, Aug. 1826-June 1827
167 Malacca diary, with index, 6 July-28. Dec. 1827
168 Malacca diary, with index, 2 Jan.-20 May 1828

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168 Malacca diary, 19 May-Dec. 1828
169 Malacca diary, 2 Jan.-26 Nov. 1829

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169 Malacca diary, 26 Nov.-Dec. 1829
170 Malacca diary, index, 1829
171 Malacca diary, 2 Jan.-12 July 1830

**Malacca political consultations, 1827-28**

Record of consultations between the Governor of the Straits Settlements, Robert Fullerton, and the Resident Councillor of Malacca, Samuel Garling, including copies of correspondence, petitions and other papers.

172 Malacca political consultations, with index, 26 June- 5 July 1827
173 Malacca political consultations, with index, 21 Jan., 20 June 1828

**Malacca journal and ledger, 1826-30**

Financial accounts and ledgers of the Malacca residency.

174 Malacca journal and ledger, Aug. 1826-April 1827
175 Malacca journal and ledger, May 1827-April 1828
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178 Malacca journal and ledger, May-July 1830

Letters received from Prince of Wales Island, 1805-30

Reports and letters from the Governor or the Governor in Council at Fort Cornwallis to the Chairman and Court of Directors of the East India Company in London. In addition, there are letters from the Secretary of the Prince of Wales Island Government to the Secretary of the East India Company.

179 Letters received from Prince of Wales Island, Nov. 1805-April 1809
180 Letters received from Prince of Wales Island, Aug. 1809-June 1813

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180 Letters received from Prince of Wales Island, Aug. 1813-Feb. 1814
181 Letters received from Prince of Wales Island, Sept. 1814-April 1818
182 Letters received from Prince of Wales Island, May 1818-Jan. 1820

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182 Letters received from Prince of Wales Island, Jan.-Dec. 1820
182A Miscellaneous letters, 1818-19

Copies of letters and other official documents. The correspondents include Lord Hastings, the Governor-General, J.A. Bannerman, Governor of Prince of Wales Island, W.A. Cluley, Secretary of the Government at Fort Cornwallis, John Adam, Secretary of the Government at Fort William, Major William Farquhar, Resident at Singapore, and Sir Stamford Raffles, the Governor-General of Bencoolen.

183 Letters received from Prince of Wales Island, June 1821-Dec. 1824

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Letters received from Prince of Wales Island, Dec. 1824-Oct. 1825

Letters received from Prince of Wales Island, Feb. 1826-Nov. 1830

Letters received from Prince of Wales Island, abstracts, Nov. 1805-Nov. 1828

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Letters received from Prince of Wales Island, abstracts, Nov. 1828-June 1830

Despatches to Prince of Wales Island, 1805-30

Drafts and copies of despatches from the Court of Directors of the East India Company in London to the Governor and Council of Prince of Wales Island (1805-26) and the Governor and Council of the Straits Settlements (1826-30).

Despatches to Prince of Wales Island, April 1805-Sept. 1808

Despatches to Prince of Wales Island, Jan. 1809-July 1811

Despatches to Prince of Wales Island, Sept. 1811-Oct. 1812

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Despatches from Prince of Wales Island, Oct. 1812-Sept. 1813

Despatches to Prince of Wales Island, Nov. 1813-Feb. 1815

Despatches to Prince of Wales Island, March 1815-Dec. 1816

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Despatches to Prince of Wales Island, Jan. 1817-Dec. 1818

Despatches to Prince of Wales Island, Jan. 1819-Jan. 1822

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Despatches to Prince of Wales Island, Jan.-May 1832

Despatches to Prince of Wales Island, July 1822-Dec. 1824

Despatches to Prince of Wales Island, Feb. 1824-Feb. 1828
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195  Despatches to Prince of Wales Island, March 1828-May 1830

196  Despatches to Prince of Wales Island, abstracts, April 1805-May 1830

The following two volumes were not filmed:

197  Board of Control: correspondence of the Recorder of Prince of Wales Island with the President of the India Board, 1807-12

198  Board of Control: correspondence of the Recorder of Prince of Wales Island with the President of the India Board, 1811-15