

CALCUTTA, THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH, SAWAI RAM SINGH OF JAIPUR AND T. MURRAY

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Abstract: During the stay of prince Alfred, *aka* the Duke of Edinburgh, in Calcutta in late December 1869 and early January 1870 he was photographed by Maharaja Sawai Ram Singh of Jaipur, known since 1985 as “THE PHOTOGRAPHER PRINCE.” The Duke was there also photographed by Bourne & Shepherd as was the ruler of Jaipur. Also in Calcutta, Sawai Ram Singh photographed his minister, Fayaz Ali, whose photograph was also taken by Ferdinand Schwarzschild, along with the Maharaja and his secretary, Pandit Sheodeen. When back in Jaipur Sawai Ram Singh apparently continued to have photographed himself as well as noteworthy visitors like the Prince of Wales to whom he presented a number of photographs when the latter left. Several writers emphasised or even more or less insisted that the Maharaja himself photographed ladies of his harem/zenana. Ever since the discovery of about 2000 glass negatives in Jaipur in the mid 1980’s several writers tried to ascribe most of these photographs to the Maharaja of Jaipur without really taking into account the existence of his court photographer T. Murray from Nainital, whose position together with that of Bourne & Shepherd in Calcutta will be examined in the sequel.

‘His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh (i.e., Alfred Ernest Albert / Prince Alfred, second son of Queen Victoria of the United Kingdom [r. 1837-1901] and Prince Albert of Saxe Coburg and Gotha [1819-1861], 1844-1900)’ ... ‘arrived at Calcutta on the 22nd ult. [December, 1869] and was there received with all due honours by the Earl of Mayo, Governor-General of India (i. e. Richard Southwell Bourke, 6th Earl of Mayo [1822-1872], Viceroy of India and Governor General of India, 1869-1872), Lord Napier, Governor of Madras (i.e., Francis Napier, 10th Lord Napier and 1st Baron Ettrick [1819-1898], Governor of Madras Presidency, 1866-1872); and Sir Seymour Fitzgerald, Governor of Bombay (i.e., Sir William Robert Seymour Vesey-Fitz Gerald [1818-1885], Governor of Bombay, 1867-1872). The *Galatea* (i.e., HMS *Galatea*, a ‘screw steam-frigate, of 3200 tons burden’¹), his own frigate, which brought him up the Hooghly, was regarded with great interest by the English and native people of Calcutta (*The Illustrated London News*, No.1578, January 29, 1870, p. 111, 3rd column)’.

Lord Charles Beresford (Charles William de la Poer Beresford, 1st Baron Beresford [1846-1919]), who accompanied the Duke of Edinburgh, remembered: ‘The *Galatea* lay alongside the wharf. It was necessary to take the most stringent precautions against cholera. Only one boy in the

ship's company was taken ill during our stay. He died inside an hour. But in the merchant ships lying in the port there were many deaths. Men were employed in working parties to push off with long bamboos the corpses that were continually floating down from the Hooghli, lest they should foul the moorings. The bodies used to come floating down with the birds perching and feeding upon them (Beresford 1914, p. 103)'.

A few weeks later *The Illustrated London News* reports under 'Prince Alfred in India': 'The chief incidents of the visit of the Duke of Edinburgh have been related in some recent Numbers of this Journal. It was on Wednesday, Dec. 22, that his Royal Highness arrived. He sailed up to Calcutta in the *Galatea* (not, as has been arranged, in a steamer sent down the river for him), and arrived on the evening of the day mentioned. A procession was formed to conduct him to Government House. The Viceroy and the Duke of Edinburgh, with the Lieutenant Governor, The Commander-in-Chief, the members of the council, and the principal civil and military officers, the Maharajah Scindia (i.e., Maharaja Shrimant Sir Jayaji Rao Scindia Bahadur of Gwalior [r.1843-1886]), the Governor of Madras, the Governor of Bombay, and the Maharajah of Jeypore (i.e., Sawai Ram Singh II,² Maharaja of Jaipur [r.1835-1880]), rode on horseback, with the native chiefs at the side (*The Illustrated London News*, No. 1582, February 26, 1870, p. 230, 2nd column)'.

'The Duke of Edinburgh, at Calcutta, was invested by the Viceroy, on Dec. 30, with the rank of Knight Grand Commander of the Order of the Star of India. An encampment was formed, and the ceremony was held in the Viceroy's durbar tent. There was a procession of the members of the order wearing the complete insignia and bearing banners. The ceremony was brilliantly attended, and the display was magnificent (*The Illustrated London News*, No. 1575, January 8, 1870, p. 39, 1st column)'.

More details about this ceremony and the activities of the Duke in Calcutta can be glimpsed from another article published later in the same newspaper: 'The investiture of the Duke of Edinburgh as Grand Commander of the Star of India at Calcutta [...]. The ceremony is said to have been the most splendid ever be held in India. The native chiefs and their retinues were in great force, resplendent in velvet and brocades, a tissue of gold and silver, incrustated with jewels of fabulous value. The ceremonial took place in an encampment formed for the occasion on the esplanade of Fort William. During his stay at Calcutta, his Royal Highness was fêted or received by Sir R. Temple (i.e., Sir Richard Temple, 1st Baronet [1826-1902]), the Bishop of Calcutta (i.e., Robert Milman [1816-1876], Bishop of Calcutta from 1867-1876), the Commander-in-Chief (i.e., William Rose Mansfield, 1st Baron Sandhurst [1819-1876], Commander-in-Chief of India from 1865 to 1870), and twice by the Lieutenant-Governor (i.e., Sir William Grey [1818-1878], Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal from 1867 to 1870). He has also been entertained by the native community, and has taken part in a fancy-dress ball (*The Illustrated London News*, No. 1579, February 5, 1870, p. 134, 3rd column)'.



Plate 7.1: Albumen print, P & G collection, Karlsruhe-Berlin. Size: full page: 21.3 × 26.6; Print: 19.2 × 26.2 cm.

Apart from these receptions and other entertainments, Prince Alfred visited the ‘Alipore Gaol’, a ‘great industrial prison’ ... ‘with 2300 inmates’ in January, 1870 (*The Illustrated London News*, No.1595, May 21, 1870, p. 538, 1st column, illustrated on p. 537, bottom).

On January 7, 1870, his Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh left Calcutta at 8 a.m. in the direction of Burdwan (*The Illustrated London News*, No.1577, January 22, 1870, p. 91, 1st column; Fayrer 1870, p. 1).

Despite the fact that British India was basically governed from Calcutta with its many photographic studios, only very few photographs seem to have survived from all these festivities and receptions mentioned above. One of these, (**Plate 7.1**)³ is titled in ink below the print: ‘H.R.H. Prince Alfred & other Government House Guests’. It is dated by the same hand: ‘Calcutta – Dec[ember] 1869’. Several of the persons mentioned above can be identified, the Viceroy, ‘Lord Mayo’ sits in the centre, his left hand resting on a walking stick, while the Governor of Madras is at the viewer’s left end of the sitters. Prince Alfred stands on the centrally seated Lady Mayo’s (i.e., Blanche Julia Bourke [1826-1918]) right, holding a pith helmet with his right hand while his left hand rests on the back of the chair of Lady Mayo. Behind the right shoulder of Prince Alfred the smiling face of Lord Charles Beresford, the future Admiral, becomes apparent, cf. (**Plate 7.2**). The woman seated to the Duke’s right is, as per the pencilled inscription below the print, Lady Ulick Browne (i.e., Catherine Henrietta, née Dicken [1837-1914]), her husband, ‘Lord Ulick Browne (i.e., Henry Ulick Browne, 5th Marquess of Sligo [1831-1913])’ sits at the right hand end of those who got a seat.



Plate 7.2: Detail from Plate 7.1, showing Prince Alfred and Charles Beresford.



Plate 7.3: Photographic carte-de-visite of Charles Beresford by Bourne & Shepherd, P & G collection, Karlsruhe-Berlin.

It is not known, who took this photograph, but circumstantial evidence suggests the studio of James Humpidge & Co., situated as per 1872, at 5 Park Street, Calcutta (*The Bengal Directory* 1873, p. 633 and p. 575 in the Mofussil part). The photograph titled ‘Waiting the Arrival of the Duke of Edinburgh at Government House, Calcutta’ was reproduced as full-page woodcut in *The Illustrated London News*, here the description of the Prince’s arrival: ‘The scene was grand and imposing; large numbers of all classes were present to witness the reception. The crowd of natives was immense, lining the road from Prinsep’s Ghaut to Government House. About sixty elephants belonging to the native chiefs were assembled in the grounds of Government House. Here the arrangements were perfect, and the only disadvantageous circumstance was the lateness of the hour, since it was almost dark when the Prince reached Government House. Our illustration, from a photograph by Messrs. Humpidge, shows the scene a little earlier in front of that stately mansion, awaiting the arrival of his Royal Highness (*The Illustrated London News*, No. 1582, February 26, 1870, p. 230, 2nd column and p. 224 for the illustration)’.



Plate 7.4: Verso of Plate 7.3 inscribed: 'Lord Charles Beresford / R[oyal] N[avy] 1870'.

Plate 7.5: Photographic carte-de-visite showing the Duke of Edinburgh in his 'official' dress by Bourne & Shepherd, P&G collection, Karlsruhe-Berlin.

In early January 1870 both the Duke of Edinburgh and Lord Charles Beresford visited the studio of Bourne and Shepherd at 8 Chowringhee Road, Calcutta. While the latter got himself photographed in a kind of sailor suit (**Plate 7.3**) the former preferred to be immortalized in a more official clothing, wearing the same suit as already observed in Plate 7.2; only the flowery ornament attached to the left lapel of his frock coat differs (**Plate 7.5**).⁴ Both cartes-de-visite are dated 1870, Prince Alfred had his carte-de-visite signed on the back (**Plate 7.6**).⁵

The photographer Maharaja Sawai Ram Singh of Jaipur

Another photograph of the Duke of Edinburgh wearing his official dress taken at Calcutta in early January, 1870, is kept in the The Royal Collection, Windsor Castle, U.K., (**Plate 7.7**).⁶ This technically perfect photograph was in all probability taken in a photographic studio. From

cartes-de-visite it is known that Prince Alfred was also photographed by Thomas Alfred Rust (1841-1904) and in the studio of Westfield and Company, 13, Government Place, Calcutta (Bautze 2008, p. 51). Following an entry in the diary of Maharaja Sawai Ram Singh for January 1st, 1870 (Acc. no. 1808, Sawai Man Singh II Library, City Palace, Jaipur) this photograph, Plate 7.7, however, was taken in all likelihood by Maharaja Sawai Ram Singh of Jaipur himself. The entry in the royal diary informs in a kind of shorthand, lines 2 – 4 in Ram Singh’s handwriting: ‘At eleven o’clock made a picture of the Duke of Edinburgh. Then I went home, ate bread, after I went to the assemblage (fair?) at the “company garden”...’ (Plate 7.8).

Following the translation of the entry for January 2nd as published by Mrinalini Venkateswaran, Sawai Ram Singh ‘photographed Nawab Faiz Ali Khanji (Venkateswaran 2014; Venkteswaran 2016, p. 144)’.⁷ Sir Muhammad Faiz Ali Khan, Nawab Bahadur of Pahasu (1821-1894) was for some time the prime minister of Jaipur under Sawai Ram Singh (cf. Buckland 1906, p. 326).

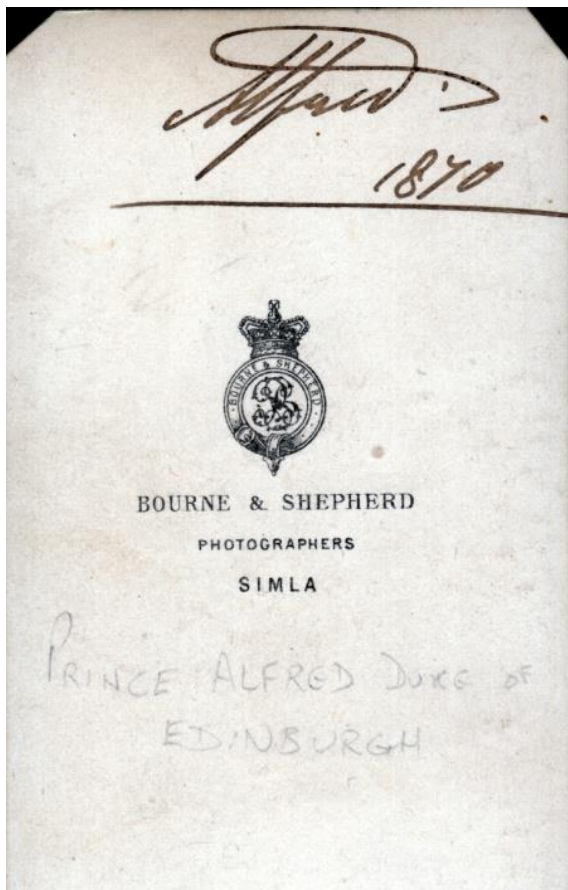


Plate 7.6: Verso of Plate 7.5 with the signature of the Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Alfred, dated 1870.



Plate 7.7: Albumen print, 24.8 × 20.4 cm, RCIN 2902209, reproduced here with kind permission of the Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2020.

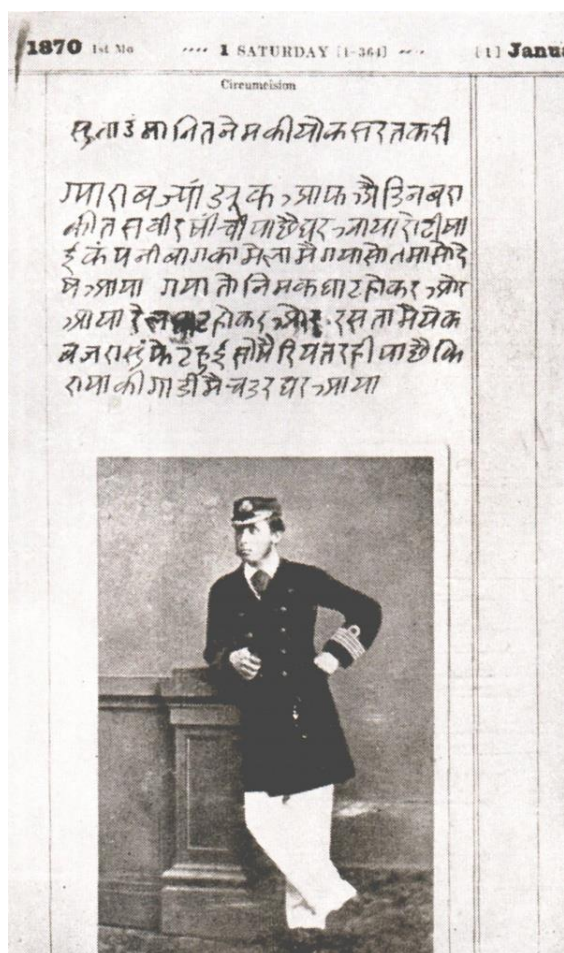


Plate 7.8: Page from the diary of Sawai Ram Singh of Jaipur, reproduced after Das / Sahai 1985, figure 4.



Plate 7.9: Photographic carte-de-visite of Maharaja Sawai Ram Singh of Jaipur as photographed in the studio of Ferdinand Schwarzschild, January 1870. P&G collection, Karlsruhe-Berlin.

What Sawai Ram Singh of Jaipur seems not to mention in his diary is the fact, that he, his prime minister as well as Pandit Sheodeen, his Bengali private secretary and later also prime minister, were photographed in the studio of Ferdinand Schwarzschild, 1, Jaun Bazaar Road, Calcutta.

Sawai Ram Singh stands with his right elbow resting on the base of a prop in the shape of a column while his angled left arm with his hand against his left hip suggests political commitment and power underlined by the two swords with straight blade and guarded hilts (For the type see Nordlunde 2016, p. 234, p. 263 and p. 313). His forehead is decorated with Shaiva marks (Cf. Birdwood 1880, Plate M, no.48), (**Plate 7.9**). On the back of this and the following two cartes-de-visite is printed: ‘Schwarzschild & C^o / Photographers / Calcutta [all in capitals]’ below a symbol of the order of the Garter headed by a crown around the entwined letters F and S, (**Plate 7.10**).



Plate 7.10: Reverse of **Plate 7.9**.



Plate 7.11: Photographic carte-de-visite of Nawab Faiz Ali Khan as photographed in the studio of Ferdinand Schwarzschild, January 1870. P & G collection, Karlsruhe-Berlin.



Plate 7.12: Photographic carte-de-visite of Pandit Sheodeen as photographed in the studio of Ferdinand Schwarzschild, January 1870. Formerly in the collection of Günter Heil (1938-2014), present whereabouts unknown.



Plate 7.13: Sawai Ram Singh with the insignia of a Knight Grand Commander of the Most Exalted Order of the Star of India (G.C.S.I.), detail, after Wheeler 1877, Woodburytype facing p. 76.



Plate 7.14: The same. 13.5 × 9.7 cm, RCIN 2107684, detail, reproduced with kind permission of the Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2020.



Plate 7.15: The same. P & G collection, Karlsruhe-Berlin, detail.

The bearded Nawab Faiz Ali Khan, equipped with a *tulwar* with slightly curved blade stands in front of the same studio props as H.H. Jaipur, (**Plate 7.11**) (Inscribed on the reverse side: ‘Nawab / Fyz Mahomed / Khan’) and so does Pandit Sheodeen, (**Plate 7.12**) (Inscribed on *verso*: ‘Pundit / Sheodeen’). The Pandit holds a book in his right hand, while his left apparently plays with the guarded hilt of a sword with a straight blade that resembles the sword of Sawai Ram Singh held in position by his left hand. These three portraits (**Plates 7.9-7.12**) constitute some of the few securely datable portraits of the three persons mentioned.

Returning to the Maharaja’s entry for January 1st, 1870, one should compare the carte-de-visite photograph below the written entry with our **Plate 7.9**. **Plate 7.8** shows the Duke of Edinburgh during his first voyage around the world which lasted from February 1867 to July 1868. A good comparison is offered by the Duke’s original photograph published as frontispiece in Milner / Brierly 1869 (reproduced also in Reitz 2008, p. 36). This photograph, **Plate 7.8**, must have possibly been the blueprint for the Maharaja’s posture as shown in **Plate 7.9**, especially since comparatively few Rajasthani rulers were photographed in a similar body posture.⁸ Besides, even the studio props in the shape of the lower column basis are almost identical, which can hardly be accidental.



Plate 7.16: The Prince of Wales in Jaipur. 20.6 × 15.9 cm, RCIN 2701567, reproduced with kind permission of the Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2020.



Plate 7.17: Sawai Ram Singh in his studio in Jaipur. 21.4 × 16.2 cm, RCIN 2701827, reproduced here with kind permission of the Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2020.

In January 1870 (*The Illustrated London News*, No.1579, February 5, 1870, p. 134, 1st column), Sawai Ram Singh was made a Knight Grand Commander of the Most Exalted Order of the Star of India (G.C.S.I.).⁹ With that insignia he was photographed in the studio of Bourne & Shepherd as well. From this photo session at least 3 images are known. (**Plate 7.13**), here a detail from a full figure,¹⁰ (**Plate 7.14**), a cabinet card in size and (**Plate 7.15**), a photographic carte-de-visite.¹¹ Two years later, in 1872, Sawai Ram Singh had to undergo an eye surgery with the effect that henceforth he **had** to wear glasses. When Albert Edward, the future King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland (born 1841, r.1901 – 1910) visited Sawai Ram Singh in Jaipur as the Prince of Wales from the evening of February 4th to the morning of February 7th, 1876 (cf. Russel 1877, pp. 455-460), Dr. Fayrer, medical adviser to the Prince of Wales, remarked about Jaipur's ruler: 'The Maharajah was operated on for cataract not very long ago, and now sees very well with spectacles (Fayrer 1879, p. 109)'. This is confirmed by the artist Valentine Cameron Prinsep (1838-1904) who on 9th February, 1877, remarked: 'Ram Singh of Jeypore is about forty-five, and wears spectacles (Prinsep 1879, p. 90 and p. 92)'. Needless to **say**, that for the dating of portraits of Maharaja Sawai Ram Singh this year specification is very helpful.



Plate 7.18: Sawai Ram Singh in a hand-coloured cabinet portrait by T. Murray, after *Bonhams*, 4 October 2011, lot 416.



Plate 7.19: A local grandee at the court of Jaipur. Detail from RCIN 2701969, reproduced here with kind permission of the Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2020, special thanks are due to Daniel Partridge for providing the scan of this detail, the complete image only measures 9.4 × 13.3 cm.

While in Jaipur, the Prince of Wales was photographed by the Maharaja of Jaipur. A former Prime Minister from Jaipur remembers about this visit: ‘The Prince (i.e., the Prince of Wales) was then conducted by the Maharaja (i.e., Sawai Ram Singh) to his “Tasweer Khana” -Painter’s room- where the Maharaja himself took the photo of the Royal Prince (Champawat 1899, p. 282 quoted after Das/Sahai 1985, p. 7)’. One of these photographs ended up in the Royal Collection Trust at Windsor, (**Plate 7.16**).¹² It shows the Prince of Wales ‘seated, holding a cane in his left hand and a cigarette in his right, leaning on a small, three-legged table on which is a pith helmet (description provided by the Royal Collection)’. This is possibly one of those photographs which the Prince was given by H.H. Jaipur when the former was about to leave: ‘...the Maharaja appeared in the inner court of the Residency, walking up and down in front of the verandah, waiting till he could pay his respects to the Prince’. Sawai Ram Singh brought presents: ‘The Prince accepted a sword in an enamelled sheath gloriously jewelled; a bag of gold mohurs struck at Jeypore, and some

photographs on a large scale (italics are mine, J.K.B.). Many of the Princes of India take to photography, but the Maharaja is a master in the art (Russel 1877, p. 460)'.



Plate 7.20: Hand-coloured and gilded cabinet portrait of the gentleman in Plate 7.19 by T. Murray. P&G collection, Karlsruhe-Berlin.



Plate 7.21: Head-and-shoulders of a bearded gentleman wearing glasses which compare to those used by Sawai Ram Singh. Hand-coloured photographic carte-de-visite by T. Murray. P&G collection, Karlsruhe-Berlin.

At the identical three-legged table, seated on the same chair as the Prince, with corresponding floor covering and studio backdrop, Sawai Ram Singh got himself photographed as well, (**Plate 7.17**).¹³ While the website of the Royal Collection Trust suggests a photographer working for Bourne & Shepherd,¹⁴ Sophie Gordon thinks it is a self-portrait (Gordon 2008, p. 111), while Mrinalini Venkateswaran more **cautiously** wrote: ‘...images *ascribed* to Maharaja Sawai Ram Singh II (*or his studio*)[*italics are mine, JKB*]...(Venkateswaran 2016, p. 175)’. In any event, it is a picture of which several versions, photographs as well as paintings, exist,¹⁵ in which case the question might arise if the Maharaja was really such a narcissistic personality that he couldn’t get enough from posing for himself.

T. Murray, court photographer of Sawai Ram Singh

Although most scholars would probably follow Sophie Gordon¹⁶ it does not necessarily mean that our (Plate 7.17) really shows a 19th century “selfie.” (Plate 7.18), a “Cabinet Portrait” is a detail of Plate 7.17, according to the imprint below the hand-coloured print by ‘T. Murray, Nynee Tal’.¹⁷

Who was T. Murray?

‘Sawai Ram Singh appointed T. Murray of Naini Tal as his official photographer. Murray had a keen eye and adopted improved photographic technique which is noticeable in his well-known series *Views in India*. Dozens of wet collodion plates, albumen prints, and large enlargements prepared by Murray are also preserved. Murray held a very high position at the Jaipur Court and the bungalow allotted to him is now being used by the Chief Justice of Rajasthan High court¹⁸ (Das/Sahai 1985, p. 4, see also Das 1988, p. 29, 1st column)’.

When was he appointed as ‘official photographer’?

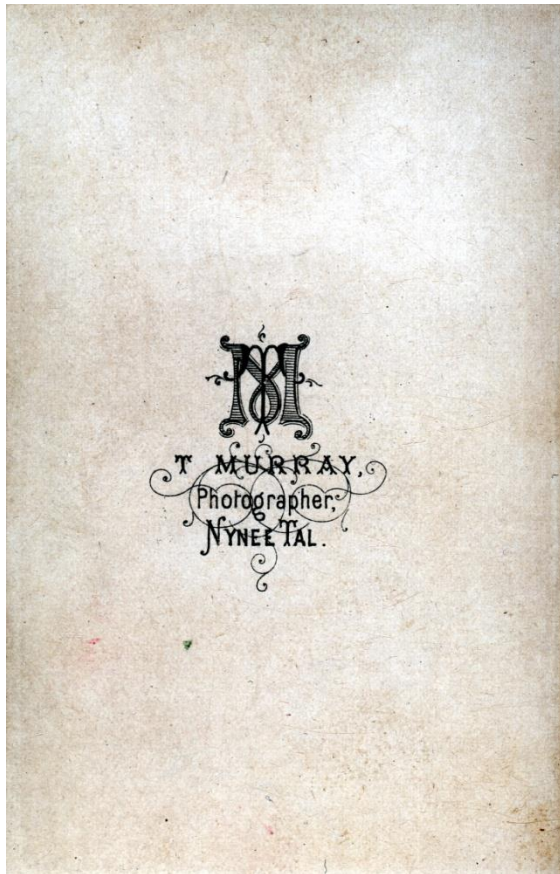


Plate 7.22: Reverse side of Plate 7.21.



Plate 7.23: 13.3 × 10.0 cm, P & G collection, Karlsruhe-Berlin

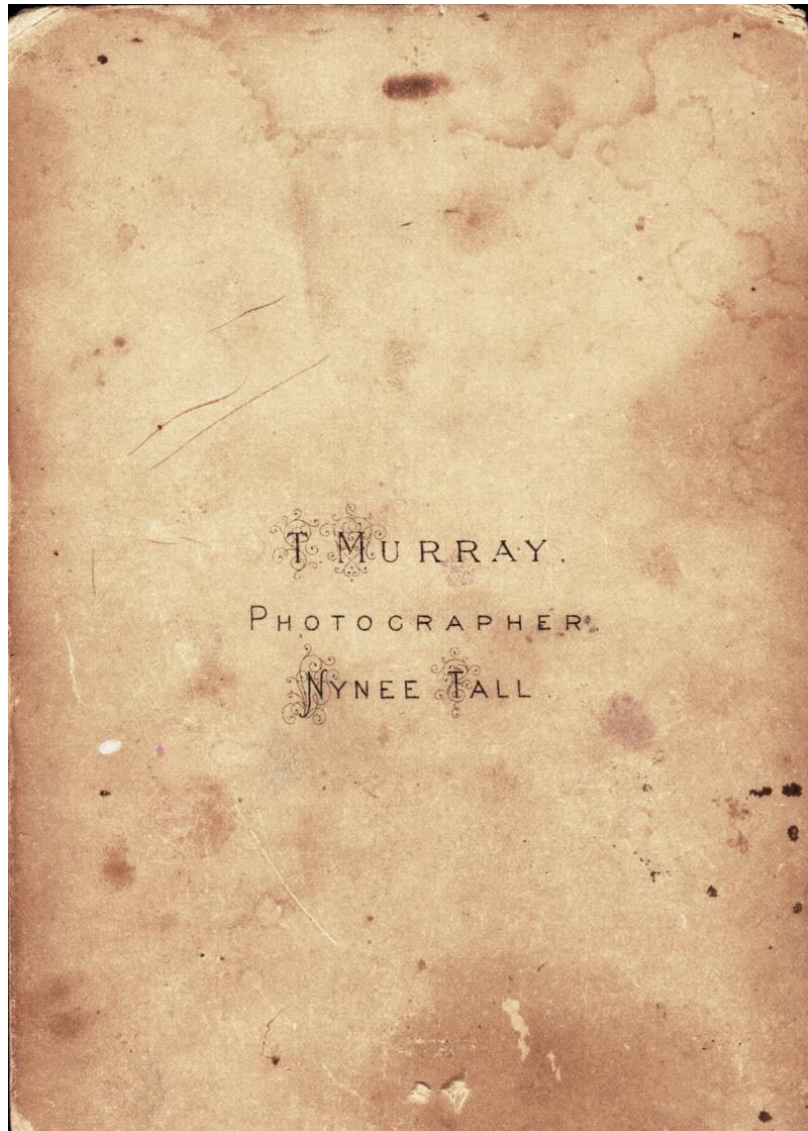


Plate 7.24: Reverse of **Plate 7.23**.

At this point opinions strongly diverge. While G. Thomas thinks: ‘Maharaja Sawai Ram Singh II of Jaipur invited the British artist-photographer of Nynee Tal, Mr T. Murray in 1860 to develop the Tasveer Khana (Picture Gallery) [Thomas 1986, p. 181]’. Yaduendra Sahai, who published the first book on what he thought are Sawai Ram Singh’s photographs, maintains: ‘T. Murry [sic] of Nainital. He was the official photographer of Jaipur in 1880s (Sahai 1996, p. 20)’.

According to *The Bengal Directory* for 1871, T. Murray is listed as photographer in “Nynee Tal” (*The Bengal Directory* 1871, p. 262, quoted after Gordon 2010, p. 371). This means that Murray must have started his business already in 1870. In 1873 he is listed as “photographer, house proprietor and agent” as well as resident of Nynee Tal (*The Bengal Directory* 1873, p. 315 in the *Mofussil*), whereas he is also listed as ‘photographer to H.H. the Maharajah of Jeypore’ in

the 'Alphabetical List of Residents (*The Bengal Directory* 1873, p. 625)'. This implies that T. Murray must have started to work for Sawai Ram Singh in 1872, possibly because of the Maharaja's eye surgery mentioned above. At this point it seems that T. Murray maintained his photographic business in both Nainital and Jaipur. For the following year he is still listed as 'photographer, house proprietor and agent' (*The Bengal Directory* 1874, p. 1068) in Nainital as well as resident (*The Bengal Directory* 1874, p. 1393).

In 1874 it seems that T. Murray either owned or managed the Mayo Hotel in Nainital, where he is still listed as resident (*The Bengal Directory* 1875, p. 1144 and p. 1498) while in 1875 he really owned this hotel and settled in Jaipur as 'photographer at the Maharajah's court' (*The Bengal Directory* 1876, *Mofussil*, p. 406 and p. 798). This is confirmed for 1876 (*The Bengal Directory* 1877, *Mofussil*, p. 330 and p. 659) and repeated for 1877 (*The Bengal Directory* 1878, *Mofussil*, p. 336 [the 'Mayo Hotel' being managed by Jas. Drew and M. Murray] and p. 751).

On February 10th, 1877, the British artist Valentine Cameron Prinsep had an appointment with Sawai Ram Singh for painting a portrait of the latter. Due to his prayers, Ram Singh was late. Meanwhile, Mr. Prinsep found himself 'in a comfortable room, where the Maharajah spends his leisure time photographing. Praying during the lightest hours of the day, he can have but little time for anything that demands light. He has, however, *several Europeans in his service* [*italics are mine, JKB*] and with them I had to spend an hour and a half waiting (Prinsep 1879, p. 91)'. One of these Europeans might well have been T. Murray.

The situation has not changed in 1878. T. Murray is listed as the proprietor of the 'Mayo Hotel' in Nainital with Jas. Drew and M. Murray as managers and still serves the Maharaja of Jaipur as photographer (*The Bengal Directory* 1879, *Mofussil*, p. 272 and p. 710).

In 1880 the 'Mayo Hotel' was still owned by T. Murray but managed by M. Murray alone while the former still resided at Jaipur as photographer in the service of the Maharaja. (*The Bengal Directory* 1881, p. 743 and p. 1088).

Following the decease of Maharaja Sawai Ram Singh on 17 September 1880, T. Murray probably thought about leaving Jaipur. Not later than 1883 T. Murray left Jaipur, where he is no longer listed as photographer, for good (*The Bengal Directory* 1884, p. 1142).

Almost three dozen examples of painted portraits of people as shown in **Plate 7.18** are known, most of these passed through the salerooms. Their Jaipur connection is demonstrated by photographs taken there. **Plate 7.19** shows a detail from a previously published photograph in the Royal Collection Trust (Paul / Kapoor 2004, p. 128). The Royal Collection Trust preserves two prints of this photograph which was presumably taken within the so-called 'Pritam Niwas Chowk' of the City Palace in Jaipur (cf. Schalek 1929, Bild 55) by an unnamed photographer working for the Prince of Wales while touring through India.¹⁹ The seated gentleman of **Plate 7.19** reappears in another hand-painted and gilded cabinet portrait by T. Murray, (**Plate 7.20**).

T. Murray not only produced cabinet portraits which were later coloured by Indian artists, he also produced photographic cartes-de-visite which appear more subtle coloured as in (**Plate 7.21**) showing a gentleman wearing spectacles closely resembling those of the Maharaja of Jaipur. For the reverse see (**Plate 7.22**).

Ever since the rediscovery of about 2000 glass plate negatives²⁰ now in the collection of the Sawai Man Singh II Museum, City Palace Jaipur, it has been assumed that the photographs showing Indian women were practically all taken by the Maharaja of Jaipur. V.C. Prinsep reports: ‘This Ram Sing, the most enlightened Rajah in India, according to the Indian officials, is very strict in secluding the women of his *rawala* or Zenana. No one has ever seen any of his wives. Even English ladies are not allowed within the sacred precincts, and a doctor told me he had to prescribe without seeing his patient, and was informed he might, if he liked, feel the pulse of one of the servant women, but not the pulse of the Ranee. The *nautch* girls I have mentioned above do all the shopping and commissions for the Zenana (Prinsep 1879, p. 96f)’. On the number of Sawai Ram Singh’s wives, Prinsep asserts: ‘The late Maharajah and his predecessor left twenty-seven widows between them, each of whom is attended by many women: the present man has seven wives;... (Prinsep 1879, p. 91)’.

About the ‘*nautch* girls’ in the zenana, Prinsep remarks: ‘Among the curiosities of Rajpoot Courts are the *nautch* girls, who are a kind of privileged people, and wander through the palaces unveiled and unmolested. I had noticed a number of them here, and, presuming on my intimacy, got the Rajah to order one of the girls, whose photograph I saw, to sit. On Tuesday, then, I had a sitting from her. She is not young, but has a remarkably fine head. Her costume is very handsome, though, of course, rather bizarre. She wears a long flowing robe, and winds her drapery round her with the air of a queen. [...] Ram Sukee, this *nautch* girl, is a great friend of the Rajah,²¹ and soon he came to see how I was getting on, and pottered around me, arranging drapery and fancying he was of great assistance, whereas he generally spoilt everything. My model is not only a danseuse, but a singer. She is from Marwar, generally called Jodhpore, from its capital, as this State is called Jeypore, instead of Dhoonder, and Mewar is called Oodeypore from its capital (Prinsep 1879, p. 95)’.

From these statements we may conclude that with regards to their freedom of movement, there were two kinds of females in the zenana: Those who were allowed to ‘wander through the palaces unveiled and unmolested’ and those, who were not, i.e., the queens. The queens, when leaving the premises of the zenana, were probably veiled. But since Sawai Ram Singh ‘never seems to have photographed any of his queens (Venkateswaran 2014)’ respectively: ‘it seems he never photographed his queens (Mac Dougall Lescano 2016, p. 44f)’ it appears unlikely that he ever photographed a woman from his zenana in *purdah*, i.e., a woman who usually appears outside her living quarters veiled, without the veil.

About the photographs of women in the collection of the City Palace, Yaduendra Sahai, the author of *Maharaja Sawai Ram Singh II of Jaipur*, made conflicting statements: ‘... Sawai Ram Singh II photographed women without [...] *Purda* or veils. It is another thing, of course, that even the Maharaja was unsuccessful in getting his wives, the *Maharanis*, to pose in front of his camera (Sahai 1996, p. 23)’. In the sentence thereafter Sahai asserts about Ram Singh: ‘Each of his *Maharanis* (he had twelve) and a dozen of *Rani Dholnis* (singers and *Dholak* players), *Bais* (virgin attendants) cooks and other servants *were photographed* [*italics are mine, JKB*]’.

These two contradictory declarations divided subsequent authors in two categories: Those believing that Ram Singh photographed women in *purdah* (e.g. Weinstein 2010) and those who considered that he did not as shown above. It is difficult to place Venkateswaran here when she writes: “...these images of women are unique, affording us an unrivalled glimpse *behind* [*italics are mine, JKB*] the *purdah* of a 19th century Rajput zenana (Venkateswaran 2016, p. 185)’.

Be that as it may, the about 180 photographs showing Indian females in the collection of the Sawai Man Singh II Museum, City Palace Jaipur,²² represent so-called *nautch* girls, singers, musicians, actresses and so forth. With regards to the posture, dress and ornaments the *nautch* girls in these images in particular hardly differ from those photographed at the court of Udaipur.²³ Sahai’s remark that, apart from the dancing girls and performers ‘hundreds of females (Sahai 1996, p. 23)’ populated the zenana exceeds the above mentioned number of photographs showing Indian women anyway.

Many of these photographs with women taken reportedly by Sawai Man Singh share the properties of the photographic studio with images shown here with **Plates 7.16** and **7.17**, namely the three-legged round table with fringes around the table edge, the chair, the floor covering and at times also the backdrop (Cf. Sahai 1996, p. 17, right; p. 20 both, p. 21, left; p. 23, both; p. 27, bottom, both; p. 28, both; p. 29, both). The Ram Prakash Theatre in Jaipur, built 1879, has a published coloured version of the ‘Dancing Girl from the *Gunijankhana* (Sahai 1996, p. 27, bottom, right = “*Unidentified woman of the zenana*” Venkateswaran 2016, p. 186, top left)’ hanging in the foyer (Nath / Singh Jodha 1993, p. 105, top right). It can hence be said that prints from negatives reportedly exposed by Sawai Ram Singh got circulated as hand-coloured copies.

Another such example is introduced here with (**Plate 7.23**), it shows the same props mentioned above and so do several others (Nath / Singh Jodha 1993, p. 105, bottom right; *Bonhams* 5 October 2010, p. 40, lot 127 [a coloured version of MSMS II M2012.04.0074-0013]). (**Plate 7.24**), the back of the image reproduced here under **Plate 7.23**, shows again that it is credited to ‘T. MURRAY / PHOTOGRAPHER, / NYNEE TALL [sic]’ and it is not the only photograph of an Indian woman with corresponding props credited to this photographer (for another see *Bonhams* 5 October 2010, p. 31, lot 97).

In view of the above it is reasonable to ask if Sawai Ram Singh really took all these photographs himself or if, being the Maharaja, he set up orders and delegated the work to his European photographers like T. Murray. Or did Sawai Ram Singh just made use of the card stock supplied by this photographer, T. Murray? This, however, seems most unlikely, since Sawai Ram Singh from 1870 onwards marked many (or all?) of his own photographs with a kind of printed label (Das/Sahai 1985, p. 3f, figures 2 and 5; Das 1988, p. 31f). In any event, Asok Kumar Das, a former director of the Sawai Man Singh II Museum in Jaipur explained: ‘Unfortunately, the number of prints which are identifiable are not very large as a substantial part of the collection was dispersed before it was transferred to the museum. Although the authorship of the glass negatives are not certain most *may be* [*italics are mine, JKB*] attributed to Sawai Ram Singh with the exception of a few bearing the names of Samuel Bourne, T. Murray and others. [...] A number of rolled up prints are identified by pencilled notes in Murray’s handwriting (Das 1988, p. 32)’. There were ‘drawers full of rolled up albumen prints’ (Das 1988, p. 31) and these are also mentioned by Yaduendra Sahai in his book: ‘It is a fact that *thousands* [*italics are mine, JKB*] of albumen prints are found rolled up in the *Photo ka Karkhana* and are very delicate to handle. No method has been worked out to unroll these prints and I dare not venture to even straighten them for having a quick glance, as they snap, rip or develop cracks if handled or unwound for just a while (Sahai 1996, p. 53)’. In a mail sent on 24 September 2018 to Mrinalini Venkateswaran I asked about these ‘rolled prints mentioned by Sahai,’ she replied in a mail received by the author on 4 January 2019: ‘And no, rolled prints are nowhere to be seen’.

Even one of the most iconic photographic portraits of Sawai Ram Singh, which adorns the front page of the first ever publication of the Maharaja’s photographs in 1985, was labelled: ‘Sawai Ram Singh in court costume probably by T. Murray, c.1867 (Das / Sahai 1985, p. 8)’. Only later it was attributed to Maharaja Sawai Ram Singh (Das 1988, p. 23; Nath / Singh Jodha 1993, p. 100: ‘...(possibly a self-portrait) of Ram Singh on his *gaddi* or ‘cushion’, synonym for an Indian raja’s throne, 1864’). Since Sawai Ram Singh in this photograph shows all insignia, viz. the two badges, the collar and the star of a Knight Grand Commander of the Most Exalted Order of the Star of India (G.C.S.I.)²⁴ - in particular the star on his left chest as clearly shown here in **Plates 7.13 to 7.14** - it cannot be dated earlier than 1870.

Return to Calcutta

It is an irony of fate that the first book on the photographs attributed to Maharaja Sawai Ram Singh of Jaipur published in 1996 shows on the front cover a detail of a photograph taken in Calcutta on the occasion of the Maharaja receiving his G.C.S.I. award, as represented here by **Plate 7.15**. A hand-coloured version of this image is preserved in The Pictorial Archives of the Maharanas of Mewar in Udaipur (197 × 151mm, CPMU 2008.05.0225, see Kumar / Venkateswaran 2014, p. 135). It is titled: ‘Unidentified photographer and artist, Maharaja Sawai Ram Singh II of Jaipur (r.1835-1880).

Albumen print, hand-coloured, (c. 1875)'. Since Sawai Ram Singh does not wear his spectacles it should not be dated after 1872. Besides, as was shown above, the photograph was taken by Bourne and Shepherd in Calcutta, 1870.

Notes:

1. For details see: *The Illustrated London News*, February 9, 1867, page 135, 3rd column; Milner / Brierly 1869, pp. 1-2 and Beresford 1914, Volume I, pp. 73-74. For reproductions of the ship on her voyage with the Duke of Edinburgh see: *The Illustrated London News*, February 9, 1867, p. 136; *The Illustrated London News*, September 14, 1867, p. 284; *The Illustrated London News*, November 2, 1867, p. 476; *The Illustrated London News*, April 11 1868, pp. 348-349; Milner / Brierly 1869, coloured illustration facing p. 10, illustration facing p. 79, coloured plate facing p. 128, coloured plate facing p. 155 and the coloured illustration opposite p. 481.
2. In the local chronology and list of rulers, Sawai Ram Singh, born on 28 September 1833, occupies number 37. Despite the fact that there is no "Sawai Ram Singh I" he is usually listed as "Sawai Ram Singh II." Ruler no.28, Ram Singh I, reigned from 1667-1689, the title "Sawai", however, was only introduced for ruler no.30, Maharaja Jai Singh II (r.1700-1743). For details see: Harnath Singh 1965, List of Rulers or Śyāmaldās 1886, Vol. II, pp. 1320-1337.
3. This print first published in Bautze 2008, p. 51. For another copy of this photograph see Rohatgi 1983, p. 148, *Photo 132* (45) reproduced in Bence-Jones 1982, p. 71.
4. The same suit is observed on other photographs taken during the Duke's trip through South Asia, e.g. during an official reception at Madras in March as well as in Colombo on April 23, 1870, cf. Bautze 2008, p. 52.
5. For Alfred's signature cf. Milner / Brierly 1869, frontispiece. Note: the popular edition of this book is not only of smaller size, but it also lacks the original photograph of Prince Alfred, all separate plates as well as the large folded map at the end and does hence not include the Duke's signature in facsimile below the print of his portrait. For the portrait with the signature see also Reitz 2008, p. 36.
6. Published first: Gordon 2008, p. 112, figure 3.
7. I have not seen the actual entry.
8. For one of the few examples see Kumar / Venkateswaran 2014, p. 93, right.
9. The insignia of this award, the star in particular, are reproduced in Hendley 1909, full-page plate 149.
10. Rohatgi 1983, p. 291: "FL standing. Photo 305 x 226mm. Photographer: Bourne and Shepherd. *MSS Eur G 38/1* (191), *Photo 99* (31)." For an uncropped print see Allen 2000, p. 211.
11. Another copy of this image is kept in the British Library, *Photo 127*(8), cf. Rohatgi 1983, p. 291: "HS. Photo 83 x 51mm, oval vignette."
12. For another photograph of the Prince of Wales, taken during the same session, see Das 1988, p. 31, top (detail). For a fuller view see Venkateswaran 2016, p. 199, right.

13. Published first: Gordon 2008, p. 111, fig.1.
14. <https://www.rct.uk/collection/search#/3/collection/2701827/h-h-maharajah-of-jeypore-g-c-s-i-prince-of-wales-tour-of-india-1875-6-vol-4>
15. Cf. Ajmera Jain / Jain 1935, illustration opposite p. 22; Nath/Singh Jodha 1993, p. 98 (painting based on a photograph = Sachdev/Tillotson 2008, p. 103, figure 7, cf. Venkateswaran 2016, p. 177, MSMS II M 2012.040073-0007); Kumar/Venkateswaran 2014, p. 202, CPMU 2008.06.0041; Soni/Relia 2016, p. 20f. An apparently unpublished further version is in the collection of Gursharan and Elvira Sidhu, Seattle (Washington).
16. ‘There is a scholarly consensus that the Maharaja himself produced the approximately 2,000 glass plate negatives dated between 1860s and 1870s and hosted by the Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum in Jaipur (Mac Dougall Lescano 2016, p. 42)’.
17. Nynee Tal, old spelling of Nainital, a hill station in Uttarakhand, India.
18. Glass negative **no.** MSMSIIM2012.04.0013-0018 in the collection of the Sawai Man Singh II Museum, Jaipur, most probably shows that building which has a name plate on the gatepost at right reading: “M^R MURRAY” with renderings in *Nashtaliq* as well as *Devanagari* script below. I am indebted to Dr. Giles Tillotson, Consultant Director at the Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum, City Palace, Jaipur, for providing a high resolution image of the digitally produced print from this negative which is otherwise only published in low resolution in Venkateswaran 2014.
19. Russel in his report mentions him only as ‘the photographer’, cf. Russel 1877, p. 458 and p. 509.
20. The numbers given for these negatives may differ according to the author. Sahai in his book gives two different figures: ‘2700 collodion glass plate negatives found in fifty four wooden boxes custom built for Maharaja Sawai Ram Singh II of Jaipur... (Sahai 1996, p. [v])’ and: ‘Recently over 2500 collodion glass plate negatives of all sizes from 10” x 8” half size, full size, [...] all kept in well-designed boxes belonging to the 19th century and in “Mint condition” were found in a store in the City Palace of Jaipur and were given over to the Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum for preservation and cataloguing (Sahai 1996, p. 17)’. ‘The collection of photographic material at the Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum consists of [...] 1.941 glass plate negatives...(Venkateswaran 2016, p. 147)’.
21. ‘Ram Sukee’ literally means “Ram’s [girl-] friend.”
22. Information on the number of photographs with Indian women supplied by Laura Weinstein in a mail to the author received on 24 April 2020. **Mrinalini** Venkateswaran in this context only remarks: ‘A large number...(Venkateswaran 2016, p. 185).
23. Cf. Kumar / Venkateswaran 2014, illustrations on p. 72, p. 73, left and p. 74, both.
24. See again Hendley 1909, plate 149.

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