

Fort William 23rd August 1850.

Foreign
Dept.
No 184.

(Copy)

To,

Brevet Lieut. Colonel F. Mackeson C.B.
14th Regiment N. I. and
Captain J. Ramsay
W.M. 22nd Regt. Military Secretary and A.D.C.
to the Governor General.

To,

J. Melvill Esq.
Secy. to the Honble Court of Directors.

Sir,

On delivering over charge of the gem called the Koh-i-
-noor yesterday to the Honble the Chairman and Deputy Chairman
in your presence, we omitted to mention the circumstances con-
-nected with our taking it out of the Treasury at Bombay where
it had been deposited for two months before we embarked
for England. -

You are already aware that in consequence of the
non-arrival of the Medea at Bombay and of the uncertainty
attending her arrival, Lord Dalhousie caused the gem to be
deposited in the Treasury, as being a safer place than to
leave it in our secret custody for an uncertain period
on shore at Bombay. The manner in which the jewel was
deposited was as follows: Sir Henry Elliot, Secretary
to the Government of India, Mr. Courtenay Private Secretary
to the Governor General and ourselves being present, Lord Dalhousie
placed the gem in the small iron safe, and this safe was depo-
-sited in a small despatch box. Both the boxes were locked
and

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and further secured by red tape, to the fastening of which His Lordship's seals were affixed, the impressions of the seals, as observed at the time, were imperfect ones, but we were hurried for time to reach the Treasury before it closed for the day, and it was not thought necessary to renew them. The Key of the inner iron safe was given to one of us, / Colonel Mackeson / and the Key of the outer red despatch box to the other, / Captain Ramsay. / - We four then proceeded with the despatch box to Mr. Goldsmid the Financial Secretary, who took us to the Treasury and in the presence of all of us Mr. Muspratt the Treasurer deposited the despatch box in a chest in the Treasury. -

The despatch box thus deposited remained under charge of Mr. Goldsmid and in the subordinate custody of the Treasurer at Bombay, without their having been made aware of its contents for two months, during which time we were awaiting the arrival of H.M. Steamer *Mesca* from China. On the arrival of the *Mesca* at Bombay we presented to Mr. Goldsmid the sealed instructions of the Most Noble the Governor General with which we had been furnished, directing him to place in our charge "the despatch box which had been deposited in the Treasury." Mr. Goldsmid accompanied us to the Treasury and taking Mr. Muspratt with us, we all went to the room in which the despatch box had been deposited. Mr. Muspratt in taking out the despatch box by the handle with his hands, was obliged to apply some force to it. - With the force applied by pulling at the lid the lock gave way,

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and the lid was separated from the inner portion of the box
to such extent as the tape seemed by a seal admitted. -

This accident caused some alarm to Mr. Muspratt
and Mr. Goldsmid, and we, taking into consideration that the
impressions of the seals were not from the first very distinct,
that they were put on us much for our satisfaction when the
box passed temporarily out of our charge, as with any other
object, feeling more confident, that the Governor General when
he entrusted so valuable an article to our charge, invested
us with full control over it, to be guided by circumstances
as to the means we might take for its safe custody and disposal,
determined in fairness to all parties after what had happened,
to use our discretion in satisfying ourselves that the gem was
present in the small safe, and, of its identity, before we
sailed from India. We therefore requested Mr. Goldsmid
and Mr. Muspratt to withdraw and close the door on us,
while we satisfied ourselves that the locks of the boxes had
not been tampered with, and their contents not withdrawn.
Having satisfied ourselves on this point, we gave to Mr. Goldsmid
the receipts here required "for the despatch box that had been
deposited in the *Jacaway*" and embarked on board the *Medea*.
The despatch box being no longer trustworthy, we supplied
its place by a second heavy iron fire proof box, which we
purchased at Bombay. We conveyed the gem on board in the
despatch box and small iron safe, and immediately trans-
ferred both of them to the larger one - one of us (Captain Ramsay)
retaining

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Ar. 184. retaining the key of the larger safe, the other / Colonel Mackeson /
Cust. that of the smaller one. In this manner the gem was taken
care of until we reached Spithead. When we left the ship at
Spithead in a small open boat there was a stiff breeze blowing,
and with a view to greater security, as well as to guard against
scrutiny and detention at the Custom House, the gem was
secured in a strong silk handkerchief and tied round the
waist of one of us / Colonel Mackeson / and was transferred
again to the small iron proof safe when we reached the
India House. —

We trust the foregoing explanation will satisfactorily
account for the gem not having been delivered over by us
with the boxes secured by seals in which it had been made
over to our charge, and that we may receive an assurance
to this effect in time to admit of our informing the Governor
General of the same when reporting our having been
relieved of our charge by the mail now about to leave
for India. —

The despatch box and the larger iron proof safe
in which the gem was brought from Bombay are herewith
forwarded; the smaller iron safe was delivered with
the gem. —

A bill with voucher is submitted for the
cost of the larger one which we hope will be
passed. —

W. H. Mackeson

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Behave the honor to be ~~sent~~

4 Albemarle Street } / signed / F. Mackeson Lt. Col. 14th Regt. N. I.

July 3^d 1850. } / " / J. Ramsay Captain N. I. 22^d Regiment

/ True copy / Milly Secy: H. D. C. to the Genl.

/ signed / F. Mackeson Lt. Col. 14th Regt. N. I.

/ " / J. Ramsay Captain N. I. 22^d Regt. Milly Secy

H. D. C. to the Genl.

/ True copy /

/ signed / H. M. Elliot.

Secy: to the Govt. of India.
With the Genl.

/ Copy /

A. 185. From, James C. Melville Esq.

Secy: to the Honble the Court of Directors.

To, Lieut. Colonel Mackeson Lt. Col.
and
Captain J. Ramsay.

Gentlemen,

I am commanded to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 3^d instant, explaining the course you pursued on taking the Diamond called the Koh-i-noor out of the Treasury at Bombay, and the measures you subsequently adopted for its safe custody and disposal,
and