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Catalogue of the papers of C.H. Thomson

Date range of material: 1901-1951

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April 2025

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Preface

Creation of catalogue
EAD by Jane Hogan, 2020

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Introduction

Collection title: Thomson, Charles Herbert

Reference code: GB-0033-SAD

Dates of creation: 1901-1951

Extent: 1 box

Repository: Durham University Library, Archives and Special Collections

Creator: Thomson, Charles Herbert

Language of material: English

Charles Herbert Thomson

(1891 - 1951)

1914-1934	Sudan Political Service
1914	3rd Inspector, unattached
1915-1918	3rd Inspector, Kassala Province
1919-1921	2nd Inspector, Kassala Province
1922-1923	District Commissioner, Suakin and Sinkat, Red Sea Province
1924	Deputy Governor, Kassala Province
1925	District Commissioner, Gedaref, Kassala Province
1926-1930	Deputy Governor, El Obeid, Kordofan
1930-1934	Acting Governor / Governor (from 1931), Singa, The Funj
1934	Invalided out

Accession details

Presented by Mrs J.H. Thomson, 1958 & 1966

Arrangement

1. Official Papers
 - (a) Kassala and Red Sea Provinces
 - (b) Kordofan
 - (c) The Funj
2. Personal Papers
3. Diaries and Trek Notes
4. Photographic Material
5. Articles (Drafts)
6. Maps
7. Printed Material

Form of citation

Material in the Sudan Archive is given a reference number, which is unique across the collections of papers. Usually it is not necessary to give the name of the person or organisation within which collection the item is found, although it may be convenient to do so.

The short form of citation should be GB-0033-SAD.*reference number*

Most printed references take the form: SAD.*reference number* .

To order items in the searchroom, use the collection reference code(s), derived by removing the repository code (GB-0033-), followed by the reference number. Citing the section of the finding aid is useful.

1. Official Papers

(a) Kassala and Red Sea Provinces

- SAD.402/4/1-7 1922 Feb 6
Diagrams of the camel brands of all tribes in Red Sea Province, compiled in the province office and sent to Thomson by the Governor
- SAD.402/4/8-65 [ca. 1915-1925]
Notes by Thomson on names and position of brands of camels found with the tribes of Kassala and Red Sea Provinces, with diagrams and notes on the various tribes keeping these camels, their sections and sub-sections
- SAD.404/1/65-72 [ca. 1915-1925]
Manuscript notes by Thomson on the Bija, from C.G. Seligman, "Some aspects of the Hamitic problem in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan", in *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*
- SAD.404/1/73-96 [ca. 1915-1925]
Manuscript notes by Thomson on Bija names of places, hills, *khawrs* etc. and their meanings
- SAD.404/1/97-142 [ca. 1915-1925]
Manuscript notes by Thomson on Handanduwah vocabulary, letters A - L
- SAD.404/1/143-234 1922
Bija Rotana, compiled by Thomson when D.C. Tokar, Red Sea Province, as spoken by the Hadanduwah, Amara and other kindred tribes of Bija origin in the provinces of Kassala and Red Sea; chiefly the dialect of Kassala and Tokar districts:
- SAD.404/1/144-166 1922
Part 1: notes on grammar, numerals, names of animals, birds and reptiles, names of plants, meanings of place names, negatives, etc.
- SAD.404/1/167-202 1922
Part 2: Phrases
- SAD.404/1/203-234 1922
Vocabulary
- SAD.404/2/1-7 [ca. 1922]
Bija Rotana: phrases for use in criminal cases
- SAD.404/1/235-309 1922
Tigré Rotana, compiled by Thomson when D.C. Tokar, Red Sea Province, as spoken by the Bani Amar, Habab and other kindred tribes of Eritrea and Tokar District
- SAD.404/1/236-246 1922
Part 1: short note on grammar, numerals, names of animals, birds and reptiles, names of plants and meanings of place names
- SAD.404/1/247-275 1922
Part 2: phrases
- SAD.404/1/276-309 1922
Part 3: vocabulary

- SAD.404/2/43-115 [ca. 1922]
Second (carbon) copy of Tigré Rotana above
- SAD.404/2/8-42 [ca. 1922]
Tigré Rotana: original notes for vocabulary and phrases
- SAD.404/2/116-121 [ca. 1915-1925]
Manuscript notes by Thomson of plant names in Bija and Tigré
- SAD.404/2/122-126 [ca. 1915-1925]
Manuscript note by Thomson of Hadanduwah vocabulary and phrases
- SAD.404/2/127-189 [ca. 1915-1925]
Notes by Thomson on Hadanduwah special vocabulary, grammar and phrases (manuscript with typescript copies of grammar, phrases and general vocabulary sections)
- SAD.404/2/190-198 [ca. 1915-1925]
List of well centres in the Gash Delta, with data on numbers, average depths, names of owners, tribes and *shaykhs*, and rough sketch maps showing the positions of wells
- SAD.404/3/1-58 1922 Mar 5-1923 Dec 19
Manuscript notebook of Thomson recording route reports on treks undertaken in Red Sea Province, describing distances travelled, the terrain en route, flora and fauna, positions of wells, etc.:
- SAD.404/3/1-16 1922 Mar 5-19
Trek from Karora to Shebat, including lists of place names and their meanings (SAD.404/3/6v), and sketch maps (SAD.404/3/7,9-9v,10v)
- SAD.404/3/17 1923 Feb
Trek from Suakin to Tamerain
- SAD.404/3/18-22 1923 Nov 7-8
Trek A: Sinkat to Khor Tenhula for land dispute settlement
- SAD.404/3/23-58 1923 Dec 2-19
Trek B: Circular route from Sinkat via Gebeit, Erba, Khor Asot, Khor Odrus, Khor Kokreb, Kamotitai and Musmar. Includes lists of place names and their meanings, short Bija vocabulary and list of photographs taken.
- SAD.404/3/59-70 1923 Nov 7-1924
Notebook containing manuscript notes by Thomson on geology to accompany route reports for Treks A and B above (SAD.404/3/18-58) and also Trek C from Gedaref to Mafaza. Enclosed:
- SAD.404/3/70 [1923]
Manuscript map of the region to the west of the Kamobsanha to Erba railway line, copied from the 1 : 250,000 series maps of the Sudan, sheet 46-A (Suakin)
Scale: 1 : 250,000
Size: 27 x 65 cms

SAD.404/2/199-205 1926 Jan 4
Minutes of a meeting held at the Palace, attended by Thomson as Deputy Governor Kassala, to discuss concerns over relations between province authorities and the Kassala Cotton Company and the effect of the Kassala scheme on local interests (typescript)

SAD.639/14/1-15 1931
Memorandum, written by Thomson while Governor Funj, to Qaim T. E. Hearn, S.D.F., describing a raid on Kassala, referred to as the "Sanbu raid", which took place on 28 December 1918, when Egyptian troops in the fort at Kassala were attacked by a force of Hadanduwah Bija, largely of slave origin, led by Muhammad Sanbu, a West African living in Kassala. The attack was repulsed by the Eastern Arab Corps and the province police and Muhammad Sanbu was pursued and killed the following day.
For photographs of the dead leader of the attack, see SAD.644/1/1-4 under section 4. Photographic Material

(b) Kordofan

SAD.402/13/1-4 [ca. 1926-1930]
Notes by Thomson on trees and plants on the El Odaiya to El Oga road, Kordofan

SAD.402/13/5- [ca. 1926-1930]
Botanical specimens, collected by Thomson in Kordofan. Fragile

(c) The Funj

SAD.404/2/206-213 1932 Apr 12
Typescript note by Thomson as Governor, Funj Province, on "Game preservation in the Closed District of the Dinder and Galegu and native rights" (2 copies)

2. Personal Papers

SAD.402/12/21-25 1951 Mar 21-Jul 4

Correspondence between Thomson, after retirement from the Sudan, and G. Andrew, Government Geologist, on their shared interest in the geology of Kassala Province. Attached is a list of photographs of geological subjects sent by Thomson to Andrew.

3. Diaries and Trek Notes

- SAD.402/6/1-69 1916 Nov 20-1917 Feb 6
 Diary and route report on an *`ushur* assessment trip through Kassala District by Thomson, describing the terrain, flora and cultivation en route, game shot, detailed notes on geology of each area, crop assessments, with more specific references to ruins at Jabal Maman (SAD.402/6/6-11); in search of limestone at Khor Maman (SAD.402/6/12-13); encounter with a cheetah (SAD.402/6/17); hearing cases and settling claims (SAD.402/6/22); sketch map of the area around Jabal Elba (SAD.402/6/27v); starting work on Hadanduwah Notes and phrases (SAD.402/6/30); description of an ibex (SAD.402/6/35); sketch map of the basin of Wadi Breitak (SAD.402/6/42v); Notes on the Peoples of Eyypt and Sudan (SAD.402/6/56-57). Enclosures:
- SAD.402/6/57v-63 1901-1914
 Newspaper cuttings, mainly from *The Times* pasted into the back of the notebook, including "The development of the Sudan" and "The Egyptian Organic Law", 1914 (SAD.402/6/57v); inauguration of the Egyptian parliament, 1914 (SAD.402/6/58); "Egypt at the cross-roads", 1914 (SAD.402/6/58v-59); "Great Britain and Egypt. The work of thirty years", 1913 (SAD.402/6/60); "Lord Kitchener in Egypt", 1913 (SAD.402/6/61); "Sudan Government Military Railways", from *Engineering*, 1901 (SAD.402/6/62); "Egyptian reforms. The Khedive and Lord Kitchener", from *Evening News*, 1914 (SAD.402/6/63)
- SAD.402/6/64 [ca. 1900s]
 Sketch map of the Sudan illustrating the Author's route, from unknown publication
 Scale: 1 : 2,534,400
 Size: 37 x 25 cms

4. Photographic Material

- SAD.A7/1-48 [ca. 1915-1925]
Photographs taken by Thomson during service in Red Sea and Kassala Provinces:
- SAD.A7/1 [ca. 1915-1925]
A dead female crocodile, measuring thirteen and a half feet, from the River Atbara
- SAD.A7/2 [ca. 1915-1925]
Two men skinning a female crocodile, measuring thirteen and a half feet, from the River Atbara
- SAD.A7/3 [ca. 1915-1925]
Men unloading provisions from a camel at Khor Girger, Kassala District
- SAD.A7/4 [ca. 1915-1925]
'*Anqarib* and mosquito net pitched in bushes at a camp in the hills of Kassala District, near Khor Sultan
- SAD.A7/5 [ca. 1915-1925]
Cattle watering at wells at Gulusit [?], Kassala District
- SAD.A7/6 [ca. 1915-1925]
Trees on the banks of the River Gash in Kassala District
- SAD.A7/7 [ca. 1915-1925]
Men burning locusts on samr bushes, Kassala District
- SAD.A7/8 [ca. 1915-1925]
Jabal Kassala
- SAD.A7/9-10 [ca. 1915-1925]
Landscape at Khor Langeb, Kassala District
- SAD.A7/11 [ca. 1915-1925]
Tent pitched amongst trees in a camp at Khor Langeb, Kassal Ditriect
- SAD.A7/12-13 [ca. 1915-1925]
People and animals crossing the River Atbara during full flood, in a ferry boat at dawn, Butana District
- SAD.A7/14 [ca. 1915-1925]
Buildings, possibly government offices, near Khor Ambeib in the sub-district of Timerein
- SAD.A7/15-17 [ca. 1915-1925]
View of Gallabat, showing *tukls* and other buildings
- SAD.A7/18-19 [ca. 1915-1925]
Old Turkish fort at Aroma, in the Gash Delta
- SAD.A7/20 [ca. 1915-1925]
Interior of the old Turkish fort at Aroma, in the Gash Delta, looking west
- SAD.A7/21 [ca. 1915-1925]
View from the east of the main entrance to the old Turkish fort at Aroma, in the Gash Delta
- SAD.A7/22 [ca. 1915-1925]
Bales of cotton at a *suq* in the market square, Kassala town
- SAD.A7/23 [ca. 1915-1925]
Mess building at Kassala railway station

- SAD.A7/24 [ca. 1915-1925]
Arrival at Kassala town from Goz Regeb of a Ginnery engine, on the east bank of the River Gash
- SAD.A7/25-26 [ca. 1915-1925]
Crowd of people hauling a Ginnery engine from Goz Regeb, on the east bank of the River Gash, Kassala town
- SAD.A7/27 [ca. 1915-1925]
Tree-lined pathway to the District Commissioner's house at Kassala, prior to repairs
- SAD.A7/28 [ca. 1915-1925]
Polo player at Kassala, possibly C.H. Thomson, with Jabal Mokram in the distance
- SAD.A7/29 [ca. 1915-1925]
Men, including C.H. Thomson (third from the left), playing polo at Kassala
- SAD.A7/30 [ca. 1915-1925]
Men, including C.H. Thomson (in the foreground), playing polo at Kassala, with Jabal Mokram in the distance
- SAD.A7/31-32 [ca. 1915-1925]
Pet gazelles drinking from a bowl with a dog and a turkey, Kassala
- SAD.A7/33 [ca. 1915-1925]
Landscape at Mekali in Kassala District, with the *qubbah* of Shaykh Abdallah in the distance
- SAD.A7/34 [ca. 1915-1925]
Qubbah of Shaykh Abdallah at Mekali, Kassala District
- SAD.A7/35 [ca. 1915-1925]
Kassala Province police officers supervising the distribution of grain to the poor, Kassala
- SAD.A7/36 [ca. 1915-1925]
Kassala Province policemen supervising the distribution of grain to the poor at Kassala during the Bairam festival
- SAD.A7/37 [ca. 1915-1925]
Woman being expelled from the courtyard of a *dabtayah*, Kassala town
- SAD.A7/38 [ca. 1915-1925]
Woman carrying twin babies in a sling around her back, in front of Kassala Province policemen supervising the distribution of grain to the poor at Kassala during the Bairam festival
- SAD.A7/39 [ca. 1915-1925]
Shaykh Koko Hasan (left) and Shaykh Wad Brier[?] (centre), Kassala town
- SAD.A7/40 [ca. 1915-1925]
Shaykh 'Abd al-Qadir of the Shukriyah, wearing white robes, Butana District
- SAD.A7/41 [ca. 1915-1925]
Agricultural Department staff group, Kassala town
- SAD.A7/42 [ca. 1915-1925]
Kassala District and *mudiriyah* staff group, Kassala town

- SAD.A7/43 [ca. 1915-1925]
Spectators at a King's Day sporting event, Kassala town
- SAD.A7/44 1917
Group of people standing next to the first Ford motor car to reach Kassala
- SAD.A7/45 [ca. 1915-1925]
C.H. Thomson standing with a dog, Kassala town
- SAD.A7/46 [ca. 1915-1925]
J.G. Fleming standing in a field, Kassala town
- SAD.A7/47 1922
C.E. Wilson, Governor of Red Sea Province, and C.H. Thomson seated in a motor car, Tokar, Red Sea Province
- SAD.A7/48 1922
C.E. Wilson, Governor of Red Sea Province, (second from left) and C.H. Thomson (second from right) standing outside a building at Tokar with the *ma'mur* and sub-*ma'mur*
- SAD.644/1/1-4 1918 Dec 29
Photographs relating to the raid on Kassala by followers of Muhammad Sanbu, and his subsequent death:
- SAD.644/1/1 1918 Dec 29
Crowd of spectators gathered around the body of Muhammad Sanbu (also known as 'El Hamdu'), displayed on an *'anqarib* outside Kassala Civil Hospital. Sanbu was killed after leading an attack on Kassala during the night of 28 December 1918.
- SAD.644/1/2-4 1918 Dec 29
Police officers displaying the body of Muhammad Sanbu (also known as 'El Hamdu'), probably outside Kassala Civil Hospital. Sanbu was killed after leading an attack on Kassala during the night of 28 December 1918.
- SAD.1/14/1-41 [ca.1915-1949]
Photographs, mostly taken by Thomson during his service in Kassala, Kordofan and Darfur, including images of geological features, military groups, landscapes and views of Suakin. Some are duplicates of prints in SAD.1/16/1-10 from which the captions have been taken.
- SAD.1/14/1 [ca. 1915-1925]
Block of Rhyolite lava flow from Jabal Hambolib, detached and fallen into Khor Langeb, Kassala Province (duplicate at SAD.1/16/2)
- SAD.1/14/2 [ca. 1915-1925]
Columnar jointing in Rhyolite lava flow of Jabal Hambolib, Kassala Province (duplicate of SAD.1/16/4)
- SAD.1/14/3-4 [ca. 1915-1925]
Thin band of limestone underlying Rhyolite lava flow at the base of Jabal Hambolib, Kassala Province (duplicate of SAD.1/16/5)
- SAD.1/14/5 [ca. 1915-1925]
Thin band of limestone overlaid by sandstone at the base of Jabal Hambolib, Kassala Province (duplicate of SAD.1/16/6)

- SAD.1/14/6 [ca. 1915-1925]
Hadaiyob ('the black water hole') at the junction of Khor Odi and Khor Langeb, on the south side of the valley, Kassala Province (duplicate of SAD.1/16/9)
- SAD.1/14/7-8 [ca. 1915-1925]
Landscape with trees, possibly Kassala Province
- SAD.1/14/9-10 [ca. 1926-1930]
Animals watering at the Malha crater, Jabal Meidob, Darfur
- SAD.1/14/11 1938
Root and branch-like lime concretions in calcareous sand at the fossil bed, similar to formations near Khartoum. Image on postcard sent from G.W. Grabham of the Geological Survey to Thomson, Christmas 1938.
- SAD.1/14/12 1949 Mar 14
Nelichu, a trachyte dome, about five hundred feet high, on the Boma plateau near the Ethiopian border. Image on postcard sent by G.W. Grabham of the Geological Survey to Thomson.
- SAD.1/14/13 [ca. 1915-1925]
Two camelmenn, probably Hadanduwah
- SAD.1/14/14 [ca. 1926-1930]
Nuba men with rifles, dancing at a gathering, probably Kordofan
- SAD.1/14/15 [ca. 1926-1930]
Tukls in a village in the Nuba Mountains
- SAD.1/14/16 [ca. 1926-1930]
Western Arab Corps parading on horseback
- SAD.1/14/17 [ca. 1915-1925]
Eastern Arab Corps patrolling on camels, probably Kassala Province
- SAD.1/14/18 [ca. 1915-1925]
Troops of the Eastern Arab Corps on patrol, probably Kassala Province
- SAD.1/14/19 [ca. 1930-1934]
Aerial view of a herd of elephants watering on the Bor river
- SAD.1/14/20 [ca. 1930-1934]
Aerial view of a herd of giraffes near Juba
- SAD.1/14/21 [ca. 1914-1934]
Gazelles in Khartoum Zoo
- SAD.1/14/22 [ca. 1926-1930]
Women getting in to a motor car, El Obeid, Kordofan
- SAD.1/14/23 [ca. 1915-1925]
Causeway leading from the mainland and Gordon's Gateway, Suakin
- SAD.1/14/24 [ca. 1915-1925]
Kitchener gate, Suakin
- SAD.1/14/25 [ca. 1915-1925]
View of Suakin from the mainland
- SAD.1/14/26, 33 [ca. 1915-1925]
View of Suakin from the mainland
- SAD.1/14/27 [ca. 1915-1925]
View from the *muhafaza*, Suakin, to the south west

- SAD.1/14/28 [ca. 1915-1925]
View of street houses and Hanafi mosque at Suakin
- SAD.1/14/29 [ca. 1915-1925]
Sail boat in the Red Sea at Suakin
- SAD.1/14/30 [ca. 1915-1925]
View of Suakin
- SAD.1/14/31 [ca. 1915-1925]
Boats on the water at Suakin
- SAD.1/14/32 [ca. 1915-1925]
Quyasahs and a steamer on the Red Sea at Suakin
- SAD.1/14/34 [ca. 1915-1925]
International cemetery, possibly Suakin
- SAD.1/14/35 1930 Nov 2
Aerial view of Suakin, taken by the RAF
- SAD.1/14/36 1926
Aerial view of the White Nile bridge, spanning the Nile between Khartoum and Omdurman
- SAD.1/14/37 [ca. 1915-1925]
Soldier of the Eastern Arab Corps holding a flag on camelback, probably Kassala Province
- SAD.1/14/38 [ca. 1915-1925]
Biplane circling Jabal Kassala
- SAD.1/14/39 [ca. 1926-1930]
Western Arab Corps crossing the desert
- SAD.1/14/40 [ca. 1915-1925]
Eastern Arab Corps crossing the River Atbara in the winter
- SAD.1/14/41 [ca. 1915-1925]
D.C.'s house, Suakin, formerly Kitchener's house
- SAD.1/16/1-10 [ca. 1915-1925]
Photographs of geological formations, Kassala Province, taken by Thomson and mounted on loose album sleeves:
- SAD.1/16/1 [ca. 1915-1925]
Jabal Hambolib and Khor Langeb, looking north
- SAD.1/16/2 [ca. 1915-1925]
Block of Rhyolite lava flow from Jabal Hambolib, detached and fallen into Khor Langeb (duplicate at SAD.1/14/1)
- SAD.1/16/3 [ca. 1915-1925]
Near view of Jabal Hambolib from the south
- SAD.1/16/4 [ca. 1915-1925]
Columnar jointing in Rhyolite lava flow of Jabal Hambolib (duplicate of SAD.1/14/2)
- SAD.1/16/5 [ca. 1915-1925]
Thin band of limestone underlying Rhyolite lava flow at the base of Jabal Hambolib (duplicate of SAD.1/14/3-4)
- SAD.1/16/6 [ca. 1915-1925]
Thin band of limestone overlaid by sandstone at the base of Jabal Hambolib (duplicate of SAD.1/14/5)

- SAD.1/16/7 [ca. 1915-1925]
Khor Langeb, looking north - Nubian sandstone lying on older sedimentary crystalline rocks and sloping up to the east
- SAD.1/16/8 [ca. 1915-1925]
Outcrop of very pure crystalline limestone (marble) near the Eritrean frontier
- SAD.1/16/9 [ca. 1915-1925]
Hadaiyob ('the black water hole') at the junction of Khor Odi and Khor Langeb, on the south side of the valley (duplicate of SAD.1/14/6)
- SAD.1/16/10 [ca. 1915-1925]
Hadaiyob ('the black water hole') at the junction of Khor Odi and Khor Langeb, on the south side of the valley

5. Articles (Drafts)

SAD.402/7/1-2 1927 Dec 18
Short draft article, probably by Thomson on "Malha Crater, Darfur"

6. Maps

SAD.402/7/3

[ca. 1920s]

Geological sketch map of Kordofan showing the locations of volcanic and crystalline rocks and sandstone

7. Printed Material

(a) In Archive

- SAD.404/1/2-64 1886
Almkvist, Herman Napoleon, 1839-1904: *Die Bischari-Sprache, Tū-Beḍāwie, in Nordost-Afrika / beschreibend und vergleichend dargestellt von Herman Almkvist*. Upsala : Druck der Akademischen Buchdruckerei, 1881-85. Bd 3 [annotated by Thomson]
- SAD.402/7/4 1949 Oct-Nov
Short extract from *Sudan Monthly Record* on "Geology"
- SAD.402/7/5 1909 Jun-Jul
Grabham, G. W.: "Wells of the North-Eastern Sudan". [S.l. : s.n., 1909]. Reprinted from the *Geological Magazine* vol.6, 1909.
- SAD.402/7/6 1948
Andrew, G.: "Geology of the Sudan". [Oxford : O.U.P., 1948]. Reprinted from *Agriculture in the Sudan*, 1948.

(b) Separated printed material now in Durham University Library

Printed material deposited with collection; now integrated into the library's printed collections and catalogued on the Open Public Access Catalogue

