



Arts & Humanities  
Research Council



*An invitation to attend a study day at the British Library on 7 December 2012*

The India Office Records section of the British Library has recently received funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) to digitise manuscripts in its collections relating to colonial botany. This builds upon work already done under an earlier AHRC project to identify sources for science and environment in the collections (see *Science and the Changing Environment in India, 1780-1920: a guide to sources in the India Office Records* (British Library, 2010). Files on the Calcutta Botanic Garden have also been digitised for a collaborative project with the Natural History Museum and Kew Gardens, “Wallich and Indian Natural History” (see [www.kew.org/wallich](http://www.kew.org/wallich)). The digitised files from the latest project will be available on the British Library’s web-site in November. For details, see <http://bit.ly/LYKzo9>.

Meanwhile, the Centre for World Environmental History (CWEH) at the University of Sussex has received AHRC funding for a research network, to facilitate research into the meteorological and botanical history of the Indian Ocean World from 1600 to 1900. As its contribution to this network and to promote its own resource, the India Office Records section is hosting a study day on archival sources for botany in South Asia.

The aims of the day are simple: to uncover some lesser-known resources in the UK and South Asia, and to find out how accessible – or otherwise – these currently are. Curators from specialist archives, and from institutions which hold botanical records as part of larger collections, will introduce their holdings. Participants, who will include delegates to the CWEH research-network meeting being held in the same week, will be encouraged to share their own knowledge of relevant sources. There will also be an opportunity to view a display of documents on botanical themes from the British Library’s collections.

The report of the event will map the sources that have been discussed and will highlight any work that is needed to make them accessible. The report will be submitted to the CWEH to feed into the Centre’s planned road-map of sources for Indian Ocean meteorological and botanical history world-wide. The collected information will be mounted on a web-site for researchers and curators to consult and extend. In the long-term, the road-map will act as a basis for developing collaborative funding proposals to digitise historical records.

*Lunch and refreshments will be provided. RSVP to Antonia Moon at [antonia.moon@bl.uk](mailto:antonia.moon@bl.uk)*