

FIXING OF BOUNDARIES OF SINDH 1843-1947

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Since there were no maps, no survey instruments, no border stones, the boundaries of Sindh were arbitrarily adopted and there invariably were border disputes. In the beginning of nineteenth century there was a border dispute of the Rajasthan and the Bahawalpur rulers with the Talpurs of Sindh. The Rajasthan and the Bahawalpur States had accepted British Paramouncy between 1815-1820 AD and the British were fully aware of the border problem, which they wanted to resolve at the earliest opportunity and this became available to the British on their conquest of Sindh in 1843. the British being in a commanding position to give concession to any extent resolved the problem in the following manner.

Border with Bahawalpur and Rajasthan.

The settlement involved transfer of Bhung Bhara and Subzalkot in Mir Ali Murad's territories, to the Bahawalpur ruler and Gotaru and Shah Garh to Jaisalmir ruler. In addition to these, two other areas, called Fatehpur, Daulatpur, Khumb and etc., in Ubavaro Taluka were also transferred to Bahawalpur.

Two interesting maps drawn by H.T. Lambrick for period 1839 and 1845, in "Charles Napier and Sindh", Oxford University Press, 1952, superimposed on a 1932 map of Sindh, show this changing over territories. The two maps are titled as Upper Sindh, Karachi and Parts Adjoining in 1839 and Sindh in 1845. The Eastern Boundary of Sindh was fixed around 1845 but detailed maps were made available only by 1862 and 1874.

Border of Tharparkar District with Rajasthan and Baluchistan.

An 1850 map of Scindh (Sindh), surveyed and collected by Lieutenant Colonel Neil Campbell, Quarter Master's Department, Bombay Army, was published, on a scale of 8" to 1 mile, size 60" x 54". A copy is available in the India Office Library I.O. No. LV. This map was reproduced for the first edition of "The Memoirs on Sindh", Volumes 1 and 2, by r. Hughes Thomas, Bombay 1955. The 1979 Karachi reprint does not include this map. The map is un-clear and I have traced it out, faithfully and lettering is my own maintaining original spaces and spellings.

Some features of this map pertaining to fixation of the border of Sindh are:

- ❖ The border with Rann of Kutch has been drawn from 1825 to 1828 survey of Capt. Alexander Burnes and plotted in map form in 1829 but the Quarter Master

has not authenticated this border. The Eastern border of Sindh with Balmir district has been shown from the villages Hala in Nagar Parker and Gwarbo in Balmir in the South, to village Koomlala Thor on northern border of present Sanghar District with Khairpur district, beyond the point which formed Mir Ali Murad's territory.

- ❖ The 1855 maps also shows the western boundary of Sindh with Kalat and Lasbella from a point almost west of present town of Khairpur Nathan Shah, then in Karachi collectorate, to Jhan Kand on the Hab River in the south-west in Thano Bula Khan Taluka. It appears from the map that the future border of Sindh and Baluchistan was to be fixed along the centre Hab River a perennial river.

Northern Border of Jacobabad district.

Major John Jacob, Political Superintendent and Commandant of the Frontier of Upper Sindh, had sent a report to the Government of Bombay on 2nd November, 1854, giving details of tribes settled along the Sindh and Baluchistan border to the north. The report includes a map which gives the northern border of Sindh in Jacobabad district with Kalat, Baluchistan and Punjab.

The border appears to have a look of present border but when distances from the settlements, existing since then, are measured it appears that border line drawn is arbitrary rather than based on actual survey. This indicates that borders may have been fixed but no maps by actual survey were drawn.

The area comprising Shikarpur, Jacobabad (Khangarh) were occupied by the British temporarily when the Indus army marched to Afghanistan in 1839 and occupation continued as Sindh was annexed by Governor General after its conquest in 1843.

The border was fixed by John Jacob in 1848 and Scinde Horse posts were stationed at Shahdadpur, Ghari Khairo Jamali, Rohan, Dil Murad, Ghari Hasan, Tangwani, Kandhkot, Kumri and Kashmore with commandant's (Jacob's) headquarters, at Khan Garh (Jacobabad). These posts were a check on Baluchi tribes who attacked settled villages in Sindh. Lambrick's "John Jacob of Jacobabad" confirms that these posts were some miles away from the border. The border was arbitrarily fixed without any agreement with Baluch tribes or Khan of Kalat. The border was meant to protect irrigated settlements and this task was adequately performed.

The above places have been shown on a map "Upper Sindh, Kachhi and adjoining countries, 1839-1858" by Lambrick. However, the map used belongs to a much later date and is similar to maps of early part of twentieth century.

Border with Kutch.

In 1851 Quarter Master General of the Bombay Army issued a map of Hyderabad district on 4 sheets of size 20" x 13" each, on scale of 2 miles to 1", based on surveys of Chief Engineer, from Surveys of various routes and etc. The map shows southern boundary of Sindh with the Rann of Kutch but is not authenticated. Under Talpurs, Sindhuri was the border town of Sindh with Kutch. It had submerged beneath the Rann of Kutch waters in the 1819 Ad earthquake. The border shown in the map is some miles north of Sindhuri, the old border custom check post of Talpur rulers of Sindh.

Some islands like Biar Bet, Bawari Bet, Gainda Bet, Kanjarkot and other minor islands were being controlled by the collector of Thar and Parker and he was collecting Panchari (grazing tax) from the herdsmen until 1947. The border as shown in the map was drawn by Alexander Burnes in 1829, while he worked as Assistant Quarter Master for Kutch. This map of Alexander Burnes is preserved in India Office Library and is on a scale of 2 miles to 1 inch, size 22" x 29" (Ms. India Office No. LVIII. 16).

Borders according to Sindh-Directory.

A map accompanying the George Bease's Sindh Director published by Bombay Gazette Press, 1862, encloses a map of Sindh, which shows following features:

- ❖ Eastern border with Rajasthan states is same as in all later maps of British rule of the South-Asia i.e., it was finalized once for all before end 1845.
- ❖ Border with Bahawalpur State may have been surveyed but is not correctly mapped or if mapped it was not drawn to the scale. The correct border with Bahawalpur appears only in maps drawn after 1870.
- ❖ Sindh and the Punjab boundary as shown then, includes a triangular area of about 200 square miles (base 20 miles wide and two sides about 20 miles each) now in the Punjab, then as part of Sindh. The boundaries of this area are formed by a rain fed stream Suri Pass, leading to the river Indus. Tower located on the present Sindh border, formed the western boundary of Punjab. This triangular area was transferred to the Punjab after 1883 as "The Hand Book of the Punjab, Western Rajputana, Kashmir and Upper Sindh by Eastwick, John Murray London, 1883," also shows this triangular area, as part of Sindh. But the map in Aitkin's Gazetteer of Province of Sindh, 1907, does not show this triangular areas as part of Sindh.
- ❖ The Southern Border with Rann of Kutch (Runn of Cutch then) as well as eastern border of Nagar Parker Talukas is based on 1829 survey of Alexander Burnes, right up to Rahimki Bazar (called as Raomka Bazar then). The border has been shown in the map, but not authenticated by Quarter Master General of Bombay Army.

The Sindh coast shown in this map, is map, is based on the surveys of T.G.Carles; "Memoir to accompany the survey of Delta of the Indus", J. Royal, Geog. Soc., Vol. VII (1837), pp.328-366 and Vol. VIII (1838), pp.459-500.

No notice has been taken of the map by Grieve of Indian Navy "Chart of Eastern Delta of Indus Surveyed by Lieu A.M. Grieve, India Navy 1855-56, scale 1 mile to 1 inch, size 26x39 inches (MS), India Office No. U.V.A.

- ❖ Northern Border of Sindh with Baluchistan has been fixed and is similar to present border except small triangular area of the Punjab mentioned above.
- ❖ North-Western Boundary of Sindh from Dil Murad Khan to 27N, has not been fixed and is shown by a straight line, although this border was surveyed by Captain McDonald and Dr. Lalor around 1860 (Both were at Dharhiaro and Kutte-ji-Kabar peaks in the whole summer 1860 and both belonged to Quarter Master General of Bombay Army).

Border according to 1876 Gazetteer.

Hughes Gazetteer of Sindh 1874, reprinted in 1876, contains a map of Sindh issued by the Surveyor General of India.

The map shows borders of Sindh, taking into account the above mentioned surveys of Dr. Lalor and Captain McDonald (1860), A.M. Grieve (1855-1856) and others. From 1874 to 1880 following maps showing the Sindh border became available.

- ❖ The Province of Sindh scale 1:267,200 (Available with Royal Geographical society London RGSNO 1174).
- ❖ Sindh Revenue Survey sheets scale 1:253,440 (1 inch = 4 miles). Available with Royal Geog. Soc. No. 1168.
- ❖ The Province of Sindh, scale 1:253,440 Royal Geog. Soc. No. 1170.
- ❖ Sindh, scale 1:16 miles 1871 (MS ofmap is available National Archives of India, New Delhi.)

Sindh Baluchistan Border.

The maps drawn after 1874 also shows boundaries of Sindh and Baluchistan from Jhang Kand to the sea. The Sindh border is shown to the east of hab river and Baluchistan border to the west, clearly implying that border is along the centre of Hab river which is a perennial stream.

Since Functions of the Quarter Master Generals of the Bombay, Calcutta and Madras Presidencies were taken over by the Survey of India, the borders between various Provinces, States, Districts and Talukas were fixed by this body. Their maps are considered as legal documents. The Surveyor General of Survey of India had fixed all borders of Sindh to the East North and West. The border with Kutch was authenticated after 1870. The Western border with Baluchistan and the Punjab too was authenticated.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- 1) The sketch map appears in Memoirs on Sindh, Selections from the Bombay Government, No. XVII – New series edited by r. Hughes Thomas, Bombay, 1855, opposite page 125, scale 1” = 16 miles and copied by B.S. Ellis, Assistant Commissioner. The Memoirs were reprinted form Karachi in 1979 in 2 Volumes.
- 2) Lambrick, H.T., “John Jacob Jacobabad” pp.157-18. This map accompanies H.T. Lambrick “John Jacob of Jacobabad”, 2nd edition Oxford University Press, 1975.