

THE	
NATIONAL	
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QUICK FACTS

Source Library: The National Archives, UK

Size: Approximately 850,000 pages

Content Types: Printed documents, manuscripts

Date Range: 1900–1989

Available: December 2025

Newly Digitized Materials: 100% new scanning

Disciplines Supported: Legal history, colonial history, British history, Caribbean history, Canadian history, ANZ history, Asian history, twentieth-century history

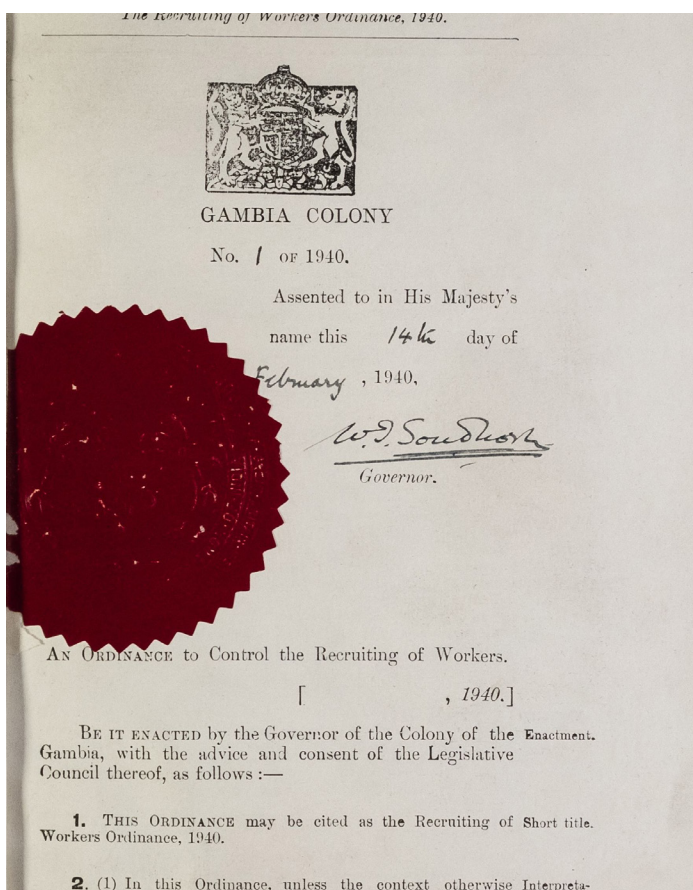
Complementary Gale Archives:

- *The Making of Modern Law*
- *Decolonization: Politics and Independence in Former Colonial and Commonwealth Territories*
- *State Papers Online Colonial: Asia*
- *British Library Newspapers, Part VII: Southeast Asia, 1806–1977*

Usage Highlights:

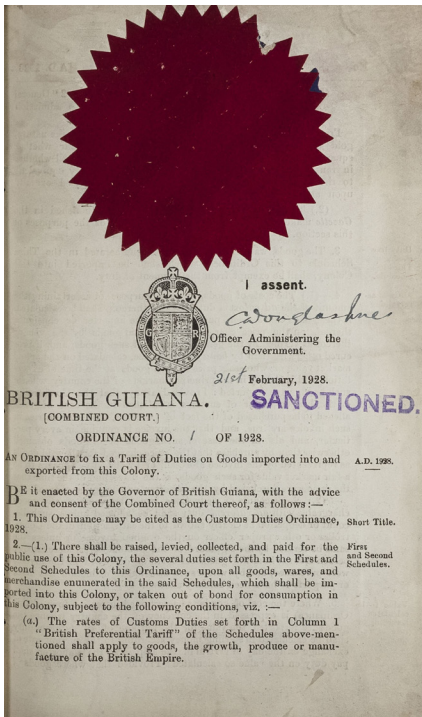
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THE MAKING OF MODERN LAW: BRITISH COLONIAL LAW: ACTS, ORDINANCES, AND PROCLAMATIONS FROM THE COLONIES, 1900–1989



DELIVER GREATER RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

This is the fourteenth installment in *The Making of Modern Law* (MOML) series and its first to focus on British colonial legal history. This module brings together the acts, ordinances, and proclamations passed in British colonies from 1900–1989, spanning the entirety of the Crown’s jurisdictions, and charts the development of the legal systems in those territories, many of which still prevail today. Volumes in the collection cover the vast geographic area of the British Empire from South Africa and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), to Sarawak (now a state within Malaysia) to Bermuda. The collection’s focus on the twentieth century chronicles the change from colony to independent state for nearly all of the territories represented.



VALUE OF THE COLLECTION

A vital resource for the study of colonialism: There is currently no other product available that covers the laws of Great Britain's colonial empire. The legal documents collected here offer a remarkable opportunity for the comparison of the legal systems across the many British colonies.

A chronicle of the Empire's reach: British law and legal systems played a crucial role in creating and maintaining power in the British Empire. Through the study of the legal history of empire, scholars can investigate the law's central role in colonial authority and how agents in British-held territories embedded the Crown's rule in their legal structures.

Past insights into current systems: Post-independence, many colonies did not significantly alter their legal systems. Studying the development of imperial laws gives scholars an insight into their current legislative bodies and governance.

Multidisciplinary appeal: The acts described in these papers governed all areas of colonial life. For example, public health and disease outbreaks can be researched by studying proclamations and acts that were made to prevent their spread, while rebellions and uprisings can be analyzed using the decrees that were announced in their wake.

New perspectives on current research: Scholarly interest in the British empire remains strong as former colonies continue to interrogate their relationship to the British crown. This collection supports students and scholars of colonial and British history, Asian and African studies, and the histories of Australia, Canada, the Caribbean, and New Zealand.

TOPICS COVERED

- Law and legal studies
- Colonial history
- Asian studies
- British history
- History of Australia and New Zealand
- Caribbean and Canadian studies
- African history

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