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"Hugh Cleghorn and Forest Conservancy in India"

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Das, Pallavi. "Hugh Cleghorn and Forest Conservancy in India." *Environment and History* 11, no. 1 (Feb., 2005): 55–82. doi:10.3197/0967340053306149 . This paper examines the important and pioneering role played by Dr. Hugh Cleghorn, a Scottish medical surgeon, in the implementation of forest conservancy in colonial India. I focus on three aspects of his contribution in India, which preceded forest conservancy in Britain itself. Firstly, I deal with the social and intellectual background of Cleghorn that greatly influenced his ideas on forests. Then I discuss Cleghorn's contribution to forest conservation in India. Here, I analyse Cleghorn's views on the causes of deforestation in India. I then examine his ideas on forest conservancy and the importance of forests. Given the economic and political context, I also show how and to what extent he could use his ideas to influence the colonial state to implement forest conservation. I explain why it was that the colonial state accepted Cleghorn's conservation views. I argue that to the extent that Cleghorn was able to show that forest conservation would maintain the timber supply to support infrastructure intended to exploit India's resources efficiently and thereby generate revenue, the colonial state accepted his proposals. Finally, I discuss what kind of forest conservancy, based on Cleghorn's ideas, was adopted by the state. All rights reserved. © 2005 The White Horse Press

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Source URL: http://www.environmentandsociety.org/node/3225
Print date: 26 November 2026 06:55:39