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PREVIOUSLY UNSEEN IMAGES OF BRITISH COLONIAL LIFE TO GO ONLINE

Thousands of photographs and film clips representing almost one hundred and fifty years of British colonial life are to be made available online for the first time later this week. Images of Empire, developed by the British Empire & Commonwealth Museum, will be launched on the 16th November.

Visitors to the website www.imagesofempire.com will be able to explore over 6,000 still images and film clips from the collection, which is currently the UK's largest dedicated resource of photography and film on the British colonial period. Images from the archive can be navigated and viewed using an advanced search facility and photographs from the collection are available to order online. Registration is free, enabling users to build light-boxes, order high-resolution files and access supplementary information. Further images from the Museum's collection will be made available online at regular intervals as more of the archive is digitised.

By presenting this collection online, Images of Empire creates a valuable commercial resource for both professional picture buyers and academic researchers, and supports the British Empire & Commonwealth Museum in its mission to provide a national forum for preserving, exploring and studying Britain's cultural heritage associated with the former Empire and today's Commonwealth. Dr Gareth Griffiths, Museum Director, comments:

"The launch of Images of Empire is a very exciting event for the Museum and Bristol. It makes available a range of photographs and film footage, much of it never seen before. It will be of interest both to the specialist and non-specialist who we hope will return again and again as continues to grow."

The archive itself comprises over one million still images and 400 hours of film footage, dating from circa 1860 to the present day. Its images provide a range of perspectives on the British Empire & Commonwealth and cover a variety of topics across a diverse range of countries. Key themes include colonial life, indigenous cultures, political and royal events, wars and conflicts, notable personalities, ceremonial and sporting occasions, industrial and commercial activities, and labour and leisure. Images of Empire has also formed partnerships with the Royal Geographical Society and Anti-Slavery International, and is presenting a selection of photographic images from both organisations.

The award winning British Empire & Commonwealth Museum is the first major institution in the United Kingdom to present the 500-year history and legacy of Britain's overseas empire. The independently run Museum opened in 2002 and is a registered charity (no.1097205). Built up over a period of ten years, the collections held by the Museum mostly comprise donations from families who lived and worked in the former British colonies and subsequent Commonwealth.

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Pictures relating to Images of Empire are available for download from:
<http://www.empiremuseum.co.uk/downloads/ioe/ioe.zip>

Related links

British Empire & Commonwealth Museum
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