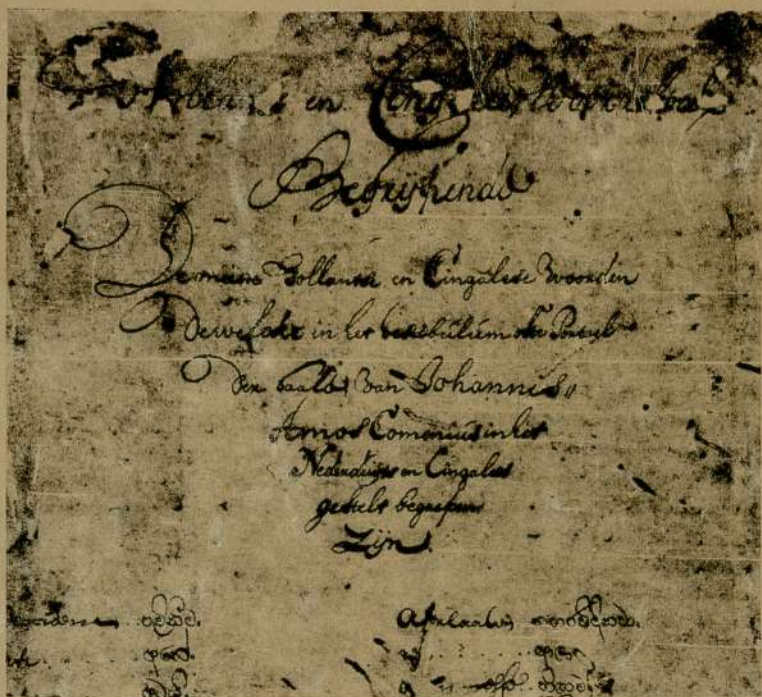


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The Sri Lanka Archives

Vol. 3

1985-6



The Journal of
the Sri Lanka National Archives
Colombo.

Editor

G. P. S. H. de SILVA

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Articles and related communications, as well as books and periodicals for review or notice is welcome and should be addressed to the Editor, Sri Lanka Archives, National Archives, 7, Reid Avenue, Colombo 7, Sri Lanka.

Inquiries regarding subscriptions should be made to the same address mentioned above.

Cover page illustration:

*Copy of the first page of the Dutch-Sinhalese Dictionary prepared by
Johannes Amos Comenius (18th c.)*

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*The Editor does not hold himself responsible for the opinions or statements of
contributors to this journal.*

Not to be Removed from S. Room.

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THE SRI LANKA ARCHIVES

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**Glossary OF TERMS USED IN OFFICIAL
CORRESPONDENCE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF
SRI LANKA, compiled from RECORDS AT THE
NATIONAL ARCHIVES by S. A. W. MOTTAU**

NOTE BY THE EDITOR

This number of the *Sri Lanka Archives* journal, contains a glossary of terms found in official correspondence, of the period 1640-1947, i.e. of the Dutch period (1640-1796) and of the British period (1796-1947) of the history of Sri Lanka.

The Concise Oxford English Dictionary defines a 'glossary' as a list and explanation of abstruse, obsolete, dialectical or technical terms; a partial dictionary. The glossary now published, contains such terms as fall within the OED definition, as well as of those words still in use, although, their meanings may not be quite clear or well known. In fact, for the understanding of such words, many glossaries had been published earlier too, and mostly during the 19th and 20th centuries.

A comprehensive list of the published glossaries is found in the five volumes of the Bibliography of Sri Lanka by H. A. I. Goonetilleke. The titles mentioned therein is seen to deal either with certain subject areas or are of general interest containing words that would have needed explanation during the period in which, the particular glossary had been published.

The glossary presently published is a collection of words done by Mottau during his period of service at the Archives, and thereafter. It contains a list of words alphabetically arranged and gives the meanings associated with such words, and also indicates where such explanation is to be found. I would have wished, if he had also indicated, at least one document where such words occur; but of course that is not to be found in the glossary, and perhaps such information could come in at a later revision.

The glossary now published contains more words than any other similar, single glossary that had been published earlier, and would be of great benefit not only to scholars using archival documents, but also for use in Law Courts, for the understanding of abstruse and other words in little use and also for the better understanding of the language in general.

At this point, I would like to introduce the compiler with a brief biographical note:

Samuel Andrew William Mottau was born on 04.08.1902 and was educated at St. Joseph's College, Colombo during 1913-1918. After passing his Junior Cambridge examination in 1917, he joined the Ceylon Government Clerical Service in 1919 and was seconded for service at the Archives Department in 1937. Later in 1941 he was appointed Assistant Government Archivist and in 1956, received a promotion to the post of Senior Assistant Government Archivist and finally retired from service in 1958.

During his period of service at the Archives he worked as an Assistant to Miss M. W. Jurriaanse, an Archivist loaned from the Netherlands Government to Sri Lanka for compiling a Catalogue of Dutch records in the Archives. Apart from assisting Miss Jurriaanse in her major work, he had also indexed the entire series of Dutch Head and Land Tombos of the Western and Southern coastal districts and had also done many translations of Dutch records for legal, historical and other purposes. In addition to such work he had also prepared numerous guides to the records of the British period as well as to genealogical records in Churches such as the Wolvendhal Church in Colombo, and had also contributed learned articles to periodicals both here and abroad.

Apart from his professional, academic and scholarly work, he has also been an active participant in sports such as soccer, hockey, rugby, cricket, tennis and athletics. To this busy schedule of life he counts over 60 years in the service of scouting and has also been a member of many sports, social and religious organizations.

In 1986, he was honoured by the Queen of Netherlands with the Order of Oranje-Nassau, and now in the evening of his life, he still continues his varied activities to the extent that he could physically, participate in them.

Thus, it is with pleasure, that the Archives has undertaken this publication not only as a contribution to knowledge, but also as a mark of respect for, and in appreciation of, a man who during a whole life time as an archivist, has been accessioning

and conserving records, reading, understanding, interpreting and publishing them as historical documents, and making them available for reference and research to the public.

Finally, to Sam, who is now 85 years of age we wish *ad multos annos*.

The words in the Glossary have been spelt in the way they normally appear in the records, but for sake of clarity, diacritical marks have been inserted. The following system has been adopted:

ā = as in father

ä = as in act

ā̄ = as in man

ī̄ = as in green

ṭ = as in tinker

ḍ = as in dent

Sri Lanka was known as Ceylon prior to 1972, and has been so used depending on the context.