

The Younghusband Expedition

The Empire Strikes



Two illustrations of the British campaign in Tibet in 1904. These drawings are often not historically accurate; the intention is to recreate an atmosphere.



British officers negotiating with the 'lamas'



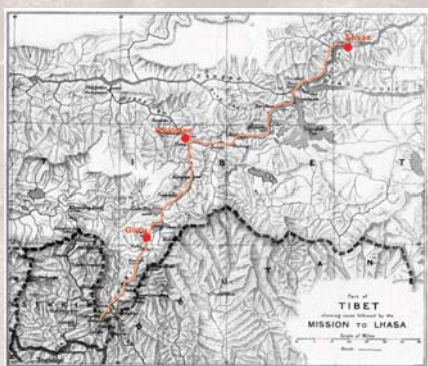
As the Younghusband expedition approached Lhasa, Thupten Gyatso, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama decided to flee to Mongolia. Later, historian Shakabpa wrote: *"It is quite clear that the British were dealing with Tibet as a separate and independent state, particularly since the 1904 convention makes no reference to China or to Chinese authority in Tibet."*



Jetsumdamba Hutuktu, the ruler of Mongolia



The 13th Dalai Lama in Mongolia



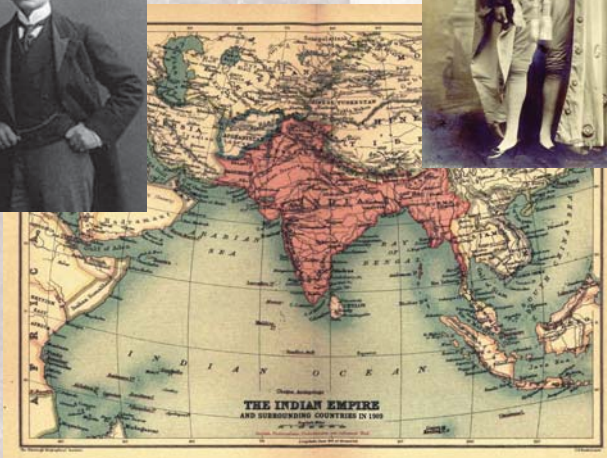
The route of the Younghusband Expedition



Sir Francis Younghusband



Lord Curzon



Lord Curzon dreamt of expanding the influence of the British Empire to the Roof of the World.



For the first time, a large number of foreigners could inform the world about the mysterious land

Lord Curzon, India's Viceroy was a man in hurry. He wanted to open new markets in Tibet and check Russian advances in Asia. He had told London that the Chinese suzerainty over Tibet was a 'constitutional fiction' and he was ready to prove it.

In January 1904, Capt. Francis Younghusband led 5,000 Sikh and Gurkha soldiers into the Roof of the world. For a few days, the Tibetan Army tried to stop them, but the battle of Guru soon ended with 700 Tibetans dead. The road to Gyantse and Lhasa was open.



Illustration showing the British troops entering Lhasa (July 1904)