

Bogus Collectors. enemy of the Assyrians

The following documents are from the files of the Archives of India showing the names of Assyrians using a variety of aliases collecting funds supposedly to help their people in the Middle East. These were individuals of dubious character who took advantage of the situation to enrich themselves at the expense of their fellow Assyrians.

The India Office in London sent circulars to the Government of India, Home Department informing them of bogus Assyrian collectors whose names were placed on a suspect list. The following names appeared on the suspect list which included the following:

1. Melik Andros Verdas forged credentials to obtain money under false pretences. He appears to have been in possession of a British and Persian passport. His British passport was to be confiscated if found in his possession.¹
2. Andre Vardas alias Malik Andrios alias Malik Andrew Warda used a French (Syrian) passport. He was born in Van, Turkey in 1898 and claimed to be a professor.²
3. Melek Ormuz born 1898.³
4. Mar Emanuel alias Mar Emanuel Mostirian alias Emanuel Awitars Son born in Urmia, Persia in 1884.⁴
5. Youhanna Isaac alias Rev. David Neeson born in Matta de Marzaya, Kurdistan in 1895. He carried a Persian passport which had several pages torn out. Obviously, this would attract the attention of British Immigration officials who would question this individual as to reason why there were missing pages from his passport. He was interrogated by the police and served a short prison term for breaching of the Aliens order.⁵

All the individuals cited above were to be refused a visa to the United Kingdom. These bogus collectors used various aliases to enter countries illegally to conduct their nefarious activities.

¹ Government of India, Home Department, Political section, File 46/7/35

² Government of India, Home Department, Political section, File 46/6/35. it should be noted that Syria was a French mandated territory under the League of Nations 1923-46.

³ *ibid.*,

⁴ *ibid.*,

⁵ Government of India, Home Department, Political section, File 46/8/35

File No. 46/7/35 - Poll
1935.

Collection No.

Govt. of India,
Home Dept.,
Poll Sec

5/10

Pros. Nos.
Serial

Subject.

Home Office Warning Circulars for the month
of July 1935.

4th July, 1985.

MELEK ANDRIOS VERDAS.

The subject of Circular S.C. 6088, dated 1.1.28, hereby superseded.

He is a bogus collector for Assyrian funds and came under notice in 1922-23. He was at that time reported to be in possession of a British, and of a Persian passport. In addition he bore credentials obtained by theft, particularly letters addressed to his uncle the Rev. Melek BENINIM (long since dead) by the late Cardinal Rampolla. He may possibly be identical with either or both the subjects of Circulars S.C. 8588 dated 30.7.34 and B. 1120 dated 29.2.32, issued to Ports only, or with the subject of S.C. 8986 of even date.

Description (1923): Tall; brown complexion; black eyes; aged about 45.

He should not be granted a visa for the United Kingdom and if he is found to have a British passport it should be impounded.

The entry in the Suspect Index should be amended to shew date of birth, "? '78."

F. STOVELL,

H.M. Chief Inspector, Immigration Branch.

M.I.5.

Passport Control for General Circulation

Copy No. 756

SECRET.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY.

14 SC.6033/H.C.

1st January, 1923.

Melek Andrios VERDAS.

Information has been received that the above named is travelling in Europe in the guise of an Assyrian Chaldean priest collecting money for Assyrian refugees. He bears various letters and credentials which he is said to have stolen from his uncle and he is also reported to be in possession of a Persian and a British passport. He is believed to be at present in Italy and intends proceeding to the United Kingdom and America.

He should not be granted a visa for the United Kingdom and if he applies to you for a visa, his British passport if he holds one should, if possible, be confiscated.

W. HALDANE PORTER,

H.M. Chief Inspector, Aliens Branch, Home Office.

Passport Control for all Controls and Consuls.
Military Controls.

VERDAS Melek Andrios - M. 7Pr. 15 - RQ. SC.6033.

File No. 46/6/35 - Political
1935.

Collection No.

Government of India,
Home Department,
Political Section.

Pros. Nos.
Serial

Subject.

Home Office Warning Circulars for the month of June 1935.

Previous References.

Later References.

*Issue
in 1977*

DEPARTMENT.

File No.

BRANCH.

Serial No.

Draft Letter
Memorandum
Telegram

Class for telegrams

Ordinary
Express
Urgent*
Priority
Clear Line†

*Only for Foreign Telegrams
†Not for Foreign Telegrams

No. F46/6/35-1011 Dated 16^A July 1935.

Confidential

To

The Chief Secretary to the
Govt. of Madras
Bengal
Burma
Bombay

Reforms and Political Deptt.

Subject:- Home Office Warning Circulars.

Sir,

I am directed to forward for ~~inf~~ formation, a copy of a letter from the India Office, No. P. & J. (S) 528, dated the 20th June 1935, together with a copy 4 copies of its enclosures, and 6 copies to request that a copy of the circulars may be forwarded to the local C.I.D. for publication, if necessary, in their secret abstracts.

I have etc.,

To be issued on *10/11/35* issued on *10/11/35*
4 copies

1st Reminder

2nd Reminder

3rd Reminder

Heading:

Case or Diary No.

If post copy of telegram required

Date of despatch of above

List of enclosures

(Code word for telegrams)

4 copies to Madras

6 copies to Bombay.

Puc

P. & J. (S.) No. 545/35.

Handwritten: 1917 17

Confidential.

HOME DEPARTMENT.....
 File No.....
 15. JULY 1935
 Diary i 44603591a

INDIA OFFICE, LONDON.

27th June, 1935.

Handwritten: B 13/7/35

HOME OFFICE WARNING CIRCULARS.

Sir,

With reference to the letter from this Office, No. J. & P. (S.) 3849/20, dated 5th October 1920, I am directed by the Secretary of State to forward, for information, copies of circulars regarding the persons whose names are mentioned in the attached list.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

Handwritten signature: L. Johnston

To the Secretary to the Government of India,
Home Department.

FOR OFFICIAL
USE ONLY.

19 S.C. 8986/V.739/H.O.

19th June, 1935.

ANDRE VARDAS *alias* MALIK ANDRIOS *alias*
MALIK ANDREW WARDA.

A bogus collector for **Assyrian** funds. He was refused leave to land at Harwich on 27.3.35, when he arrived with a French (Syrian) passport describing him as a professor and as born at Van, Turkey, on 1.9.1888. This passport was issued at Salonika on 18.5.28 and stood valid till 5.10.35.

He has been said to be a brother of JOHN MALIK, subject of circular B. 1120 sent to Ports only on 29.2.32. He may, however, be identical with the subject of circular S.C. 8583, dated 30.7.34, whose possible identity with either or both the subjects of circulars S.C. 6083, dated 1.1.23, and B. 1120 already cited, has not yet been established or disproved. Circular S.C. 6083 is being revised.

He should not be granted a visa for the United Kingdom.

The following entries should be made in the Suspect Index:—

ANDRIOS, MALIK
? '88 — M. ? Fr. ? Priest uc. RD. S.C. 8986
VARDAS, ANDRE
'88 — M. ? Fr. ? Priest uc. RD. S.C. 8986
WARDA, MALIK ANDREW
? '88 — M. ? Fr. ? Priest uc. RD. S.C. 8986

F. STOVELL,

H.M. Chief Inspector, Immigration Branch.

M.I.5.

Passport Control for General Circulation

Copy No. 755

FOR OFFICIAL
USE ONLY.

21
S.C. 6083B/V.789/H.O.

20th June, 1935.

MELEK ORMUZ.

A name given as that of a bogus collector for Assyrian funds.

Described as born on 16.4.1893; height 5ft. 4in. or 5in.; eyes brown; hair black.

He should not be granted a visa for the United Kingdom.

The following entry should be made in the Suspect Index:—

ORMUZ, MELEK
'93 — M. nd. ? Priest uc. RD. S.C. 6083B

F. STOVELL,

H.M. Chief Inspector, Immigration Branch.

M.I.6.

Passport Control for General Circulation

Copy No. 755

22

FOR OFFICIAL
USE ONLY.

27 S.C. 6033A/V.739/H.O.

20th June, 1935.

MAR EMANUEL *alias* MAR EMANUEL MOSTIRIAN
alias EMANUEL AWITARS SON.

These names have been given by a bogus collector for Assyrian funds. Persian, born at Urmia 15.4.1884 or 15.10.1885.

He should not be granted a visa for the United Kingdom.

The following entries should be made in the Suspect Index:

EMANUEL, MAR
? '85 — M. Pr. ? Priest uc. RD. S.C. 6033A
MOSTIRIAN, MAR EMANUEL
? '85 — M. Pr. ? Priest uc. RD. S.C. 6033A
SON, EMANUEL AWITARS
? '85 — M. Pr. ? Priest uc. RD. S.C. 6033A

F. STOVELL,

H.M. Chief Inspector, Immigration Branch.

M.I.5.

Passport Control for General Circulation

Copy No.

758

File No. 46/8/35
1935.

Collection No.

11/15/35
157

710

Courts of India,
Home Dept.,
Roll: Section.

Pros.
Serial Nos.

Subject.

Home Office concerning Circulars for the month of
August 1935

Previous References.

Later References.

FOR OFFICIAL
USE ONLY.

S.C. 9048/N.1155/H.O.

23rd August, 1935.

YOUHANNA ISAAC *alias* DAVID NEESON.

A Persian, of Ottoman origin, the date and place of whose birth are given as 1895 at Matta de Marzaya, Kurdistan. His first recorded visit to the United Kingdom was in 1930, and he appears to have made several other visits under aliases at present unknown. He last left *ex* Dover on 3.1.35 and returned at Croydon on 9.2.35 as YOUHANNA ISAAC, aged 42.

In the name of the Rev. DAVID NEESON he obtained sums of money, ostensibly for Assyrian refugees. On interrogation by the police he had in his possession a Persian passport, from which several pages had been deleted.

He is now to be deported after serving a term of imprisonment for a breach of the Aliens Order.

Description: Height (in shoes) 5ft. 9½ins.; complexion sallow; hair dark brown—bald on top; eyes brown; acne on back of neck; acne on right side of back; scar on left side of temple; several scars on left side of nose; scar on back of left elbow; mole on back of left forearm.

He should not be granted a visa for the United Kingdom.

The following entries should be made in the Suspect Index:

ISAAC, YOUHANNA	?	'95	—	M.	Pr.	? Priest	exo.	RD.	S.C. 9048
NEESON, DAVID	?	'95	—	M.	Pr.	? Priest	exo.	RD.	S.C. 9048

F. STOVELL,

H.M. Chief Inspector, Immigration Branch.

M.I.5.

Passport Control for General Circulation

Copy No. 754