

*Baker Street Elementary*

Presents  
"The Life and Times in Victorian London"



# Baker Street *Elementary*

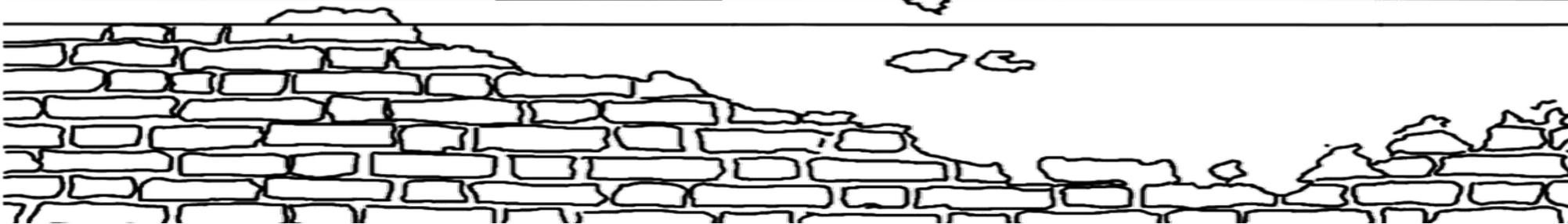
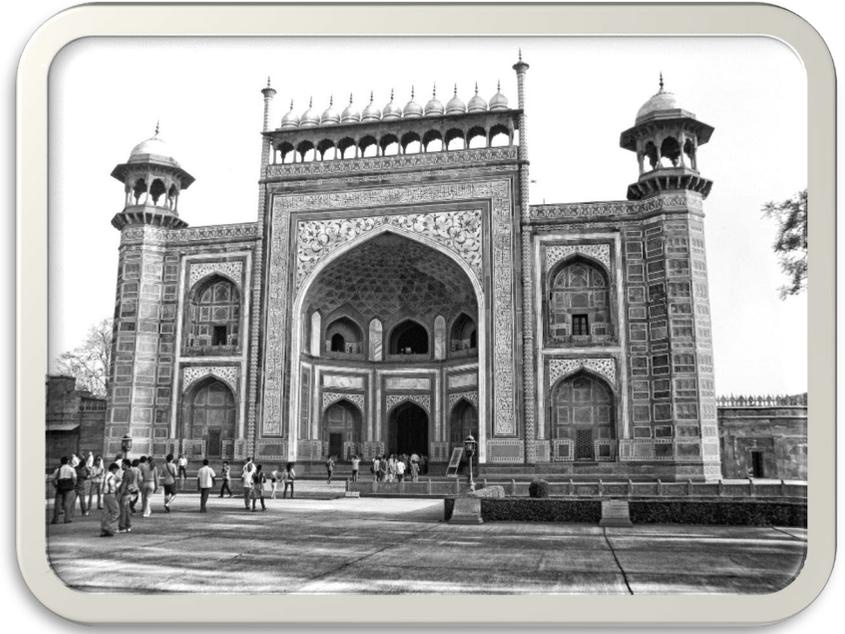
The Life and Times in Victorian London  
# 062 -- The Many Agra Treasures -- February, 2022



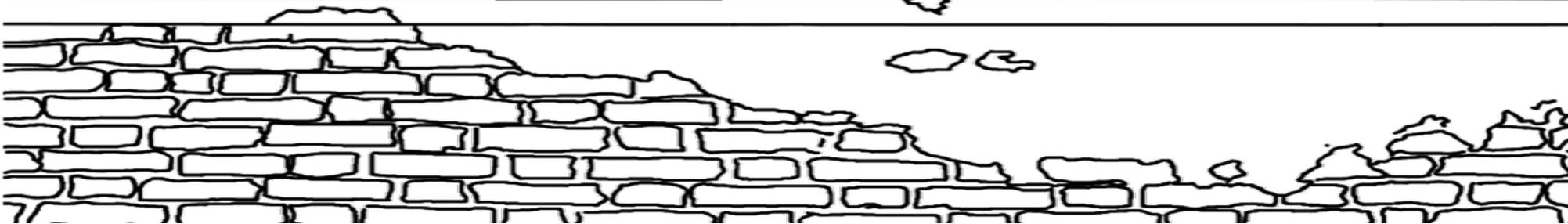
*Welcome to topic # 062...  
Today Miss Lyndsay and I  
will be looking at the city of  
Agra, India.*



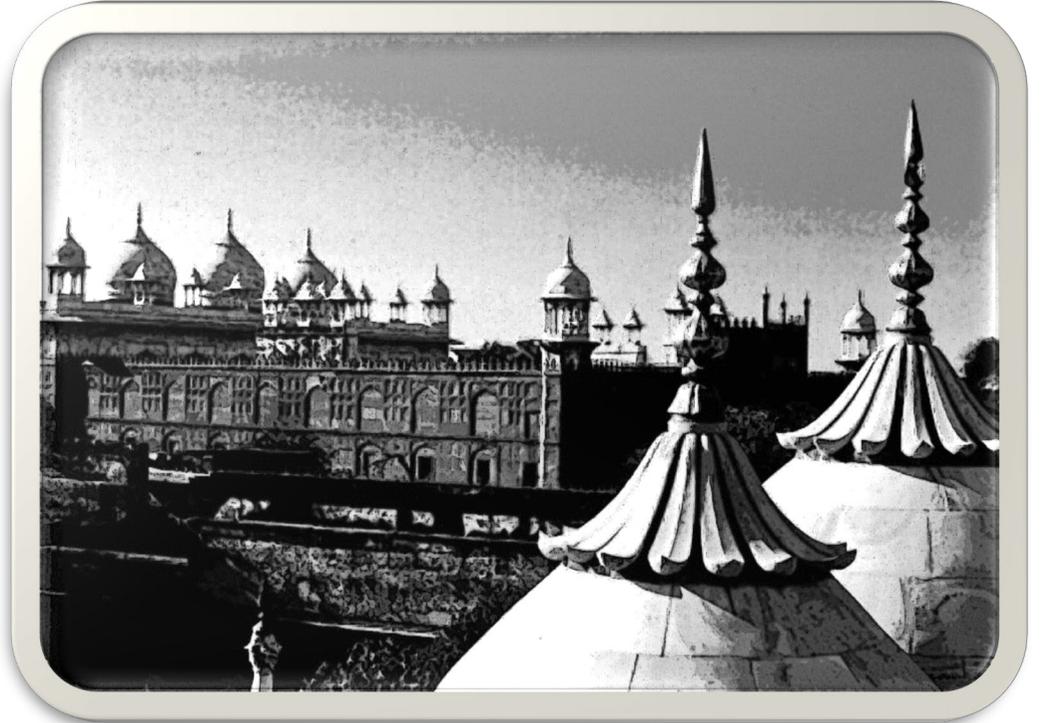
The origins of The Sign of the Four are be rooted in the ancient Indian city of Agra.



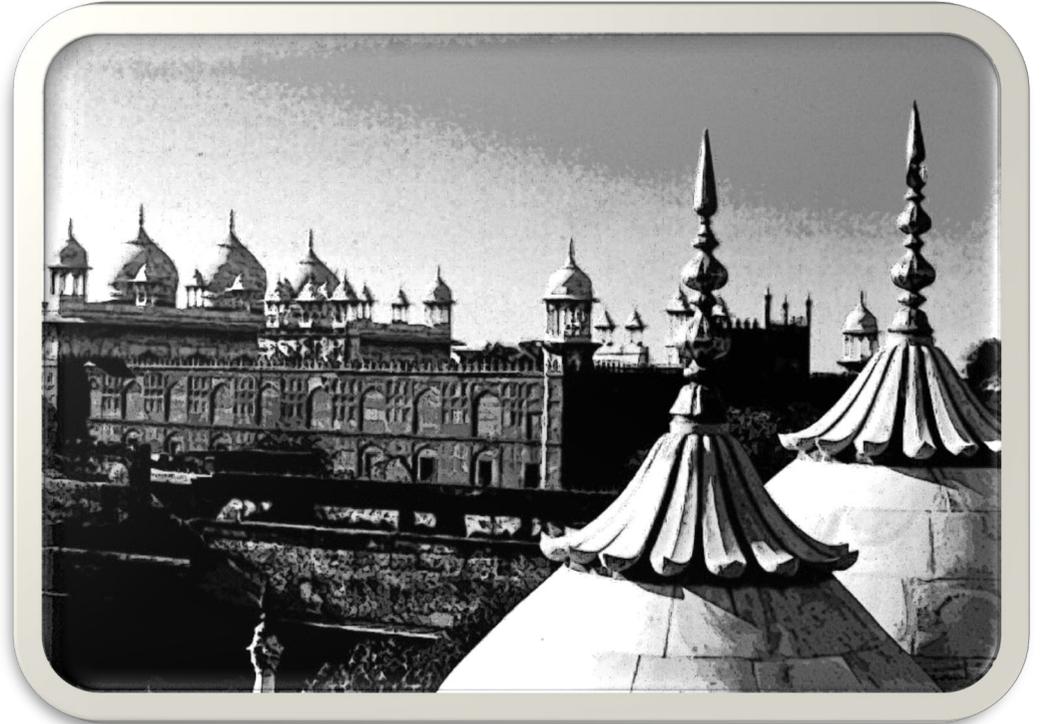
*For Jonathan Small, however, the time he spent in Agra's fort marked the beginning of a thirty-one-year quest for the treasure he first laid hands on during the Indian Mutiny of 1857.*



*Agra the city, originally called Agrevana, was mentioned in the epic Sanskrit poem, The Mahabharata, written about 400 BC.*

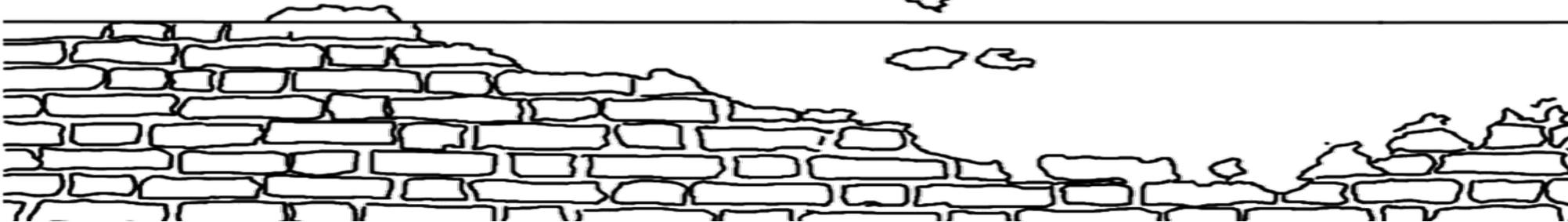


*The fort itself, however,  
was originally built by  
Raja Badal Singh, a  
Rajput king.*



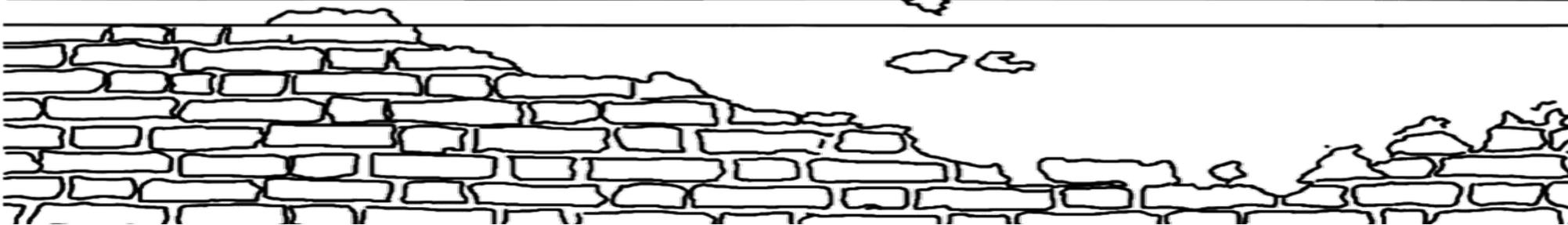


*In 1504, Sikandar Khan Lodi,  
an Afghan ruler, rebuilt both  
the fort and the city and  
moved his capital there.*





*After his son, Ibrahim Khan Lodi, was defeated by the Mughals (the Indian spelling of Mongol) in 1526, Babur, the first Mughal emperor, reconstructed the fort.*



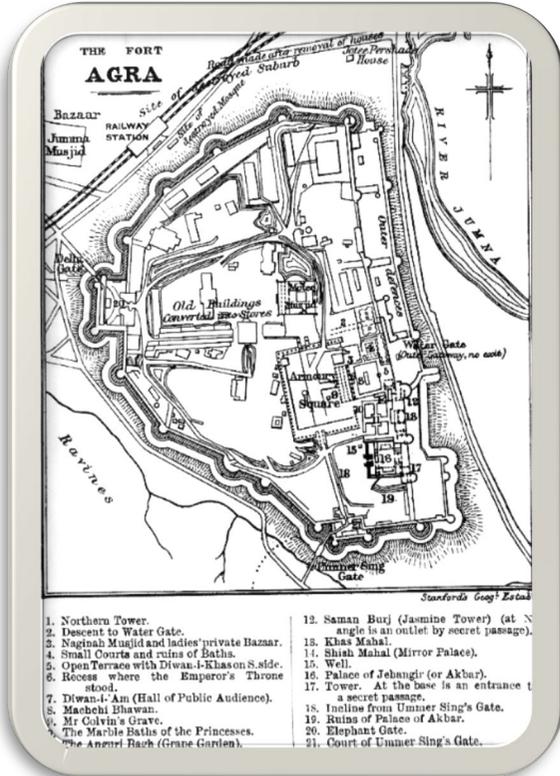


1. Northern Tower.
2. Descent to Water Gate.
3. Naginah Masjid and ladies' private Bazaar.
4. Small Courts and ruins of Baths.
5. Open Terrace with Diwan-i-Khas on S. side.
6. Recess where the Emperor's Throne stood.
7. Diwan-i-Am (Hall of Public Audience).
8. Machchi Bhawan.
9. Mr Colvin's Grave.
10. The Marble Baths of the Princesses.
11. The Anguri Bagh (Grape Garden).
12. Saman Burj (Jasmine Tower) (at N. angle is an outlet by secret passage).
13. Khas Mahal.
14. Shish Mahal (Mirror Palace).
15. Well.
16. Palace of Jehangir (or Akbar).
17. Tower. At the base is an entrance to a secret passage.
18. Incline from Ummer Sing's Gate.
19. Ruins of Palace of Akbar.
20. Elephant Gate.
21. Court of Ummer Sing's Gate.

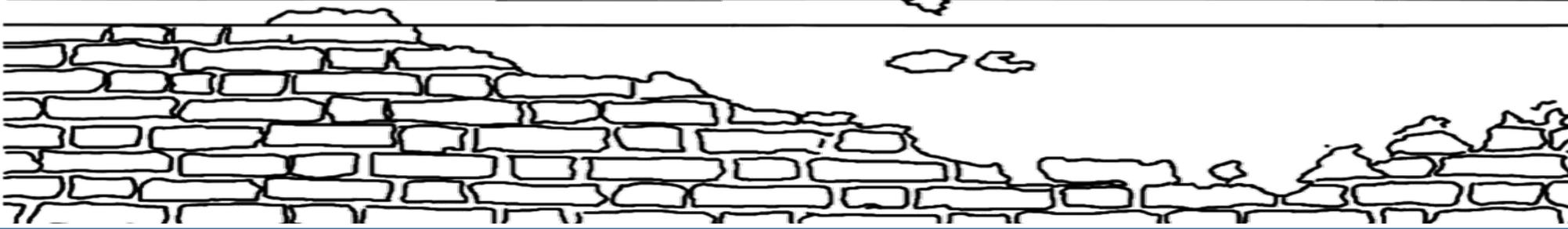
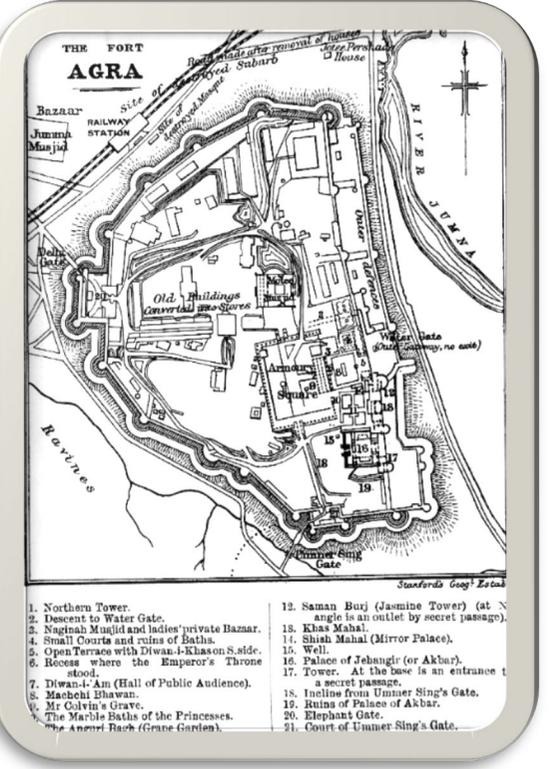
Four thousand workers completed the red sandstone structure in eight years.



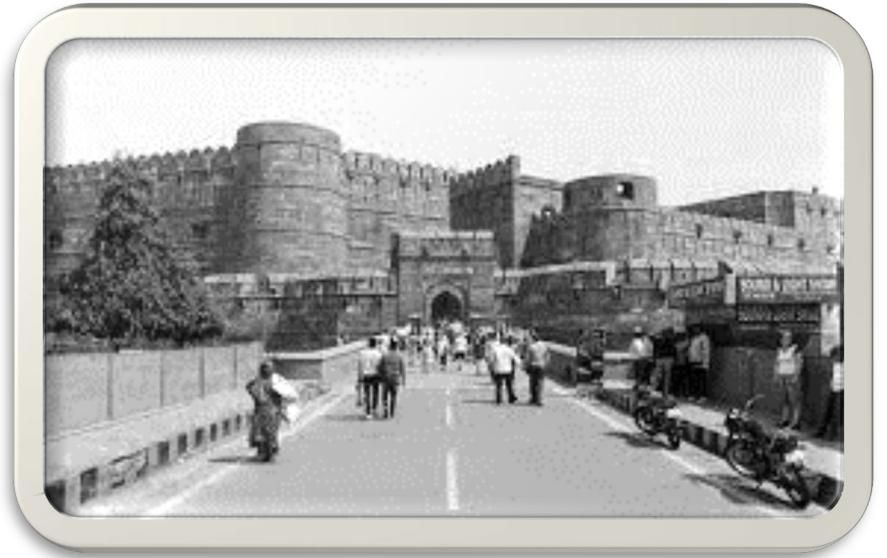
After the Mughal ruler Shah Jahan moved his capital to Delhi in 1648, Agra remained a thriving city and passed to Marathas (an Indian power that ended Mughal domination) control in 1785.



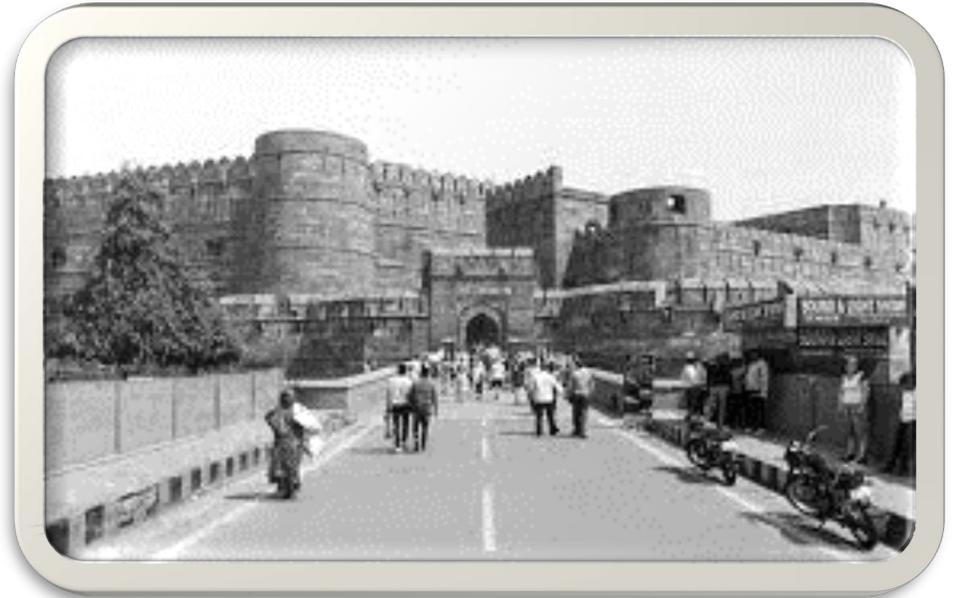
They renamed the city  
"Agra" and ruled there  
until defeated in 1803  
by the British.



*Under the English, the city became the capital for the Northwest Provinces.*



*The fort's 70-foot high walls encompass 94 acres and follow the Yamuna River on one side. Within its walls, various rulers added to the buildings housed there.*

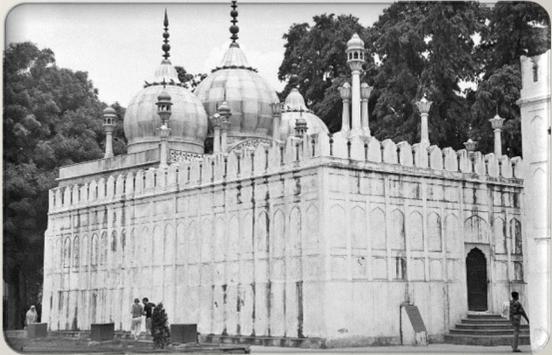


*One of the earliest palaces, Akbai Mahal, is now in ruins, but others still stand, including the Jahangiri Mahal (built between 1565 and 1569)...*

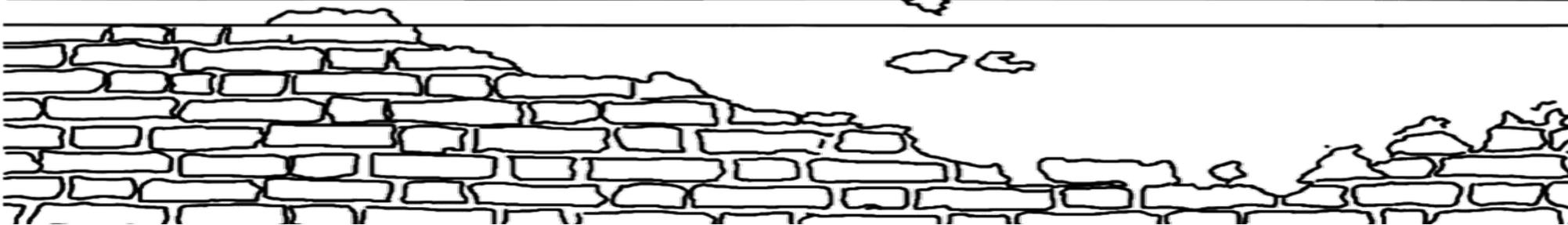


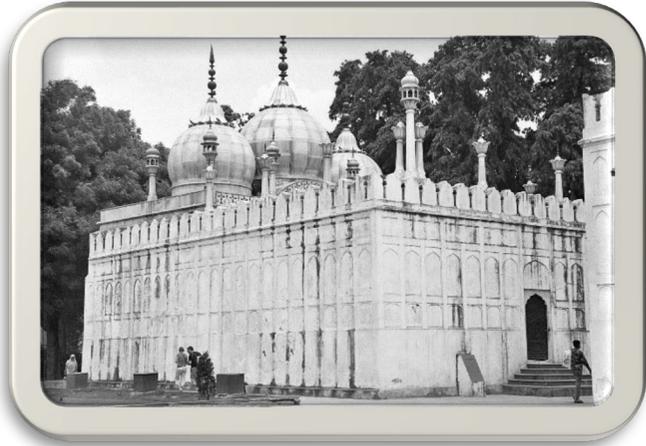
*...the Sheesh Mahal (built in 1631) named the "glass palace" for its mirrors on the walls and ceilings; and the white marble Khas Mahal (built between 1631 and 1640).*



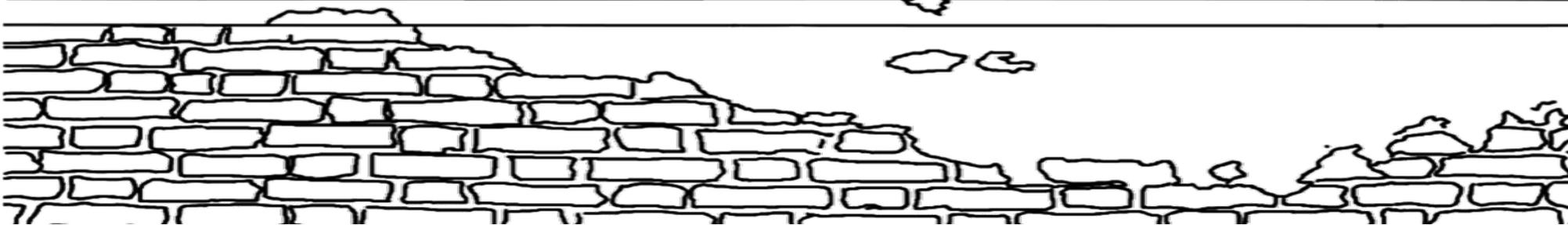


*The fort also holds three mosques. The Moti and Nagina Masjid are both of white marble.*

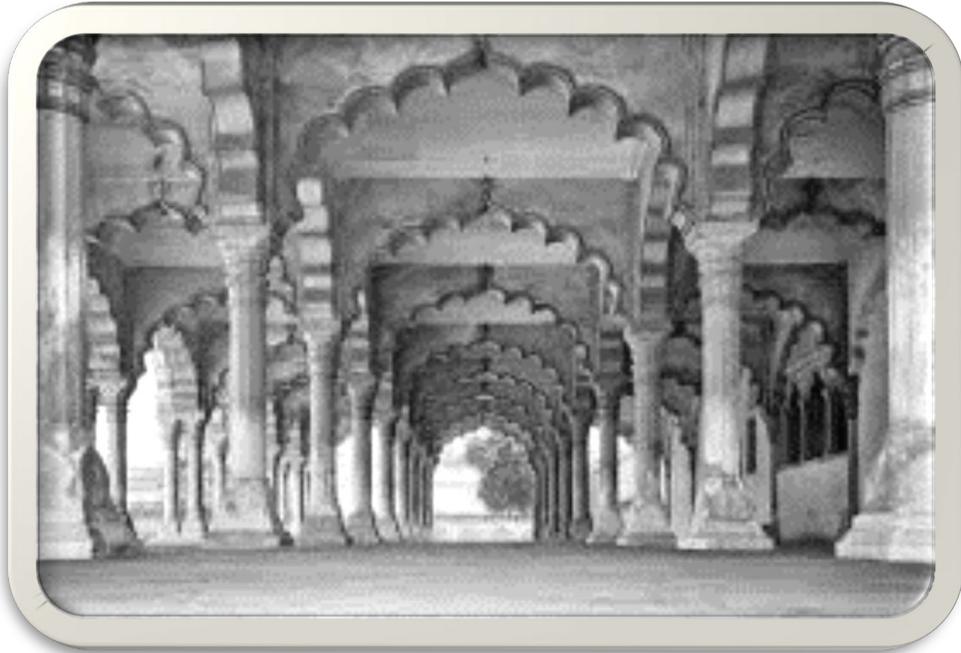




*The third, the Mina mosque, also has marble tiles but has a simpler design because it was built for the royal ladies' private worship.*



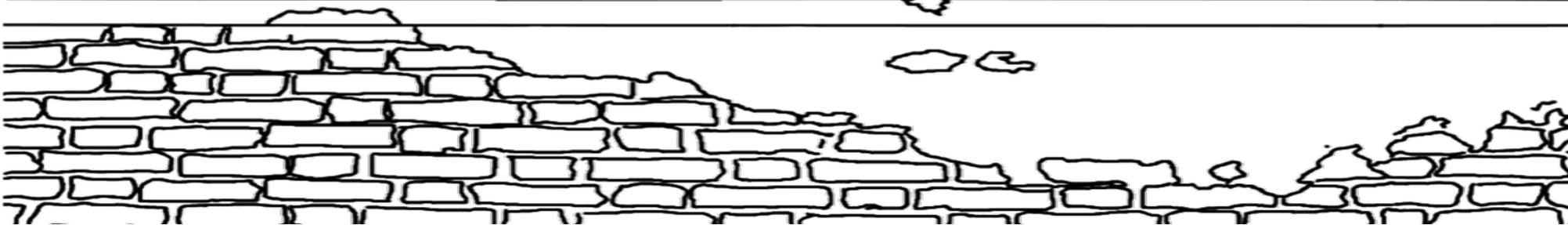
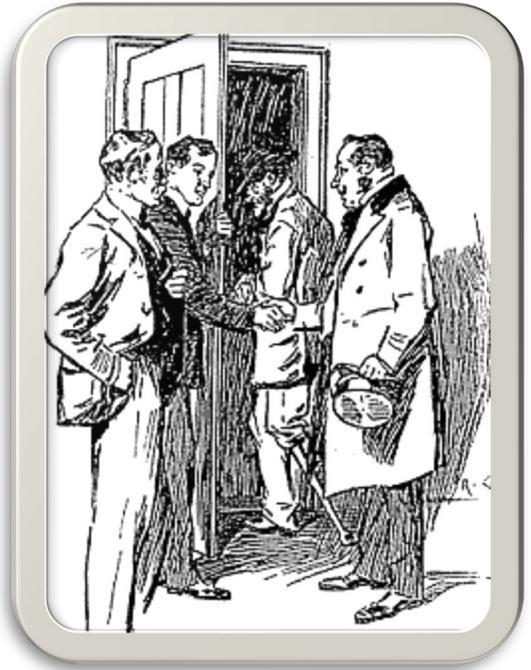
*Two halls, one for public  
and another for private  
audiences, were also  
constructed inside the fort.*



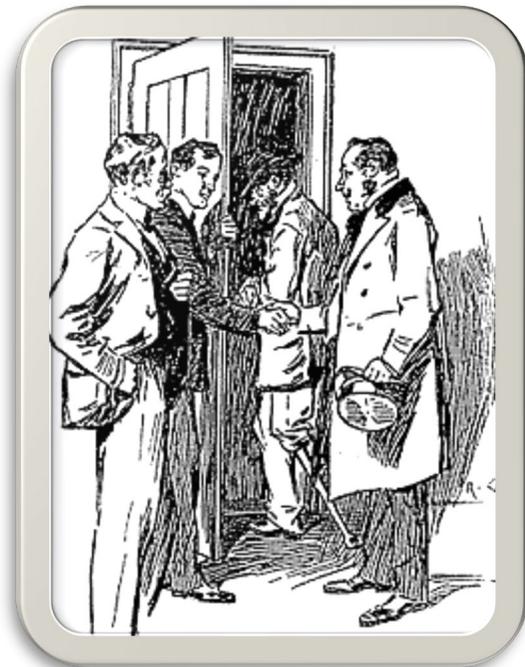
*As Jonathan Small noted,  
the city and fort became  
one of the centers of the  
Indian Mutiny of 1857.*



*In The Sign of the Four, Small recounted how the fort had a modern area, which housed those seeking shelter from the rebels...*



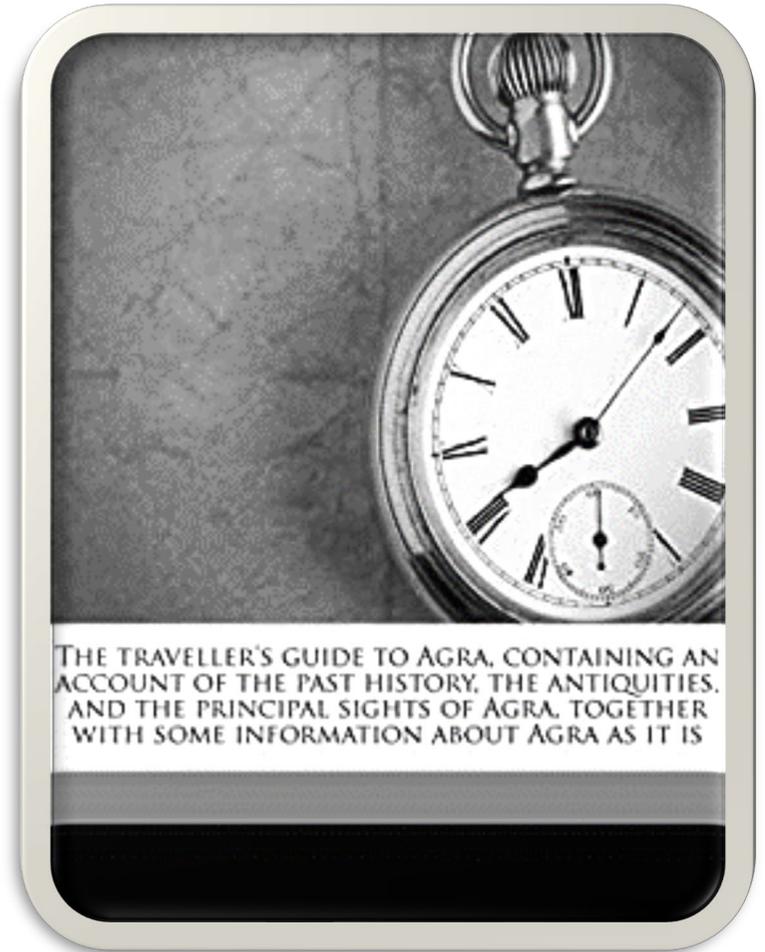
*...as well as an older,  
abandoned section, taken over  
by "scorpions and centipedes."*



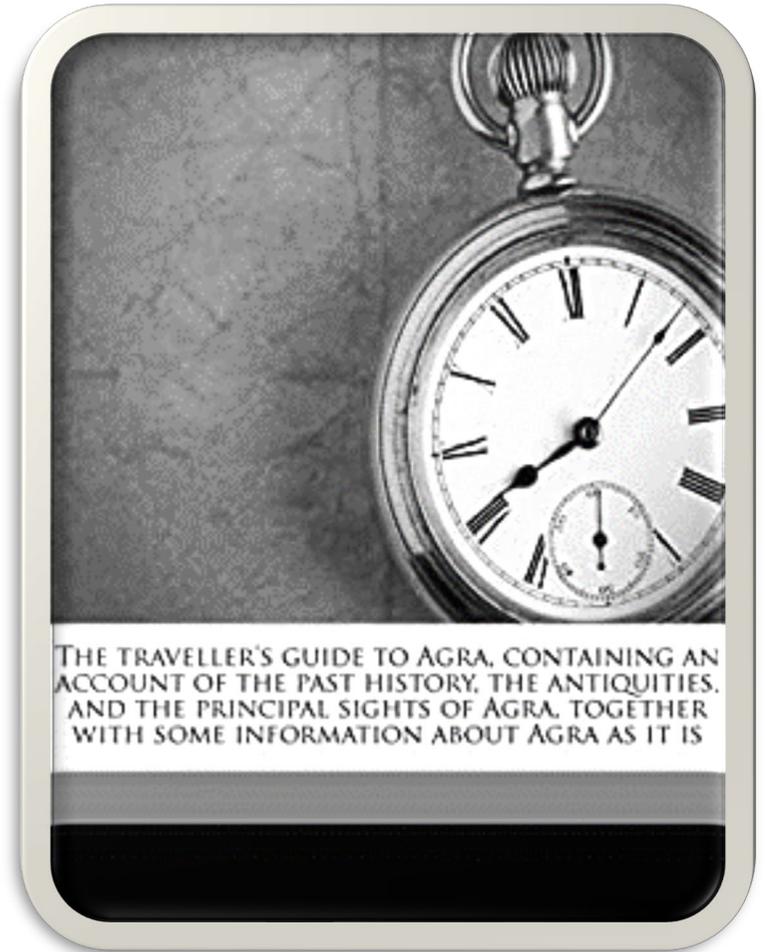
*He also shared how the fort's numerous gates had to be guarded and defended, and he had been assigned one of those in the old section.*

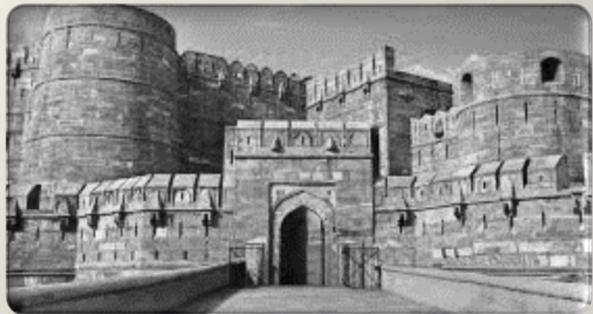


*An account of the battles around  
Agra written in 1892 described how  
6,000 Europeans took shelter in the  
fort during the Mutiny...*

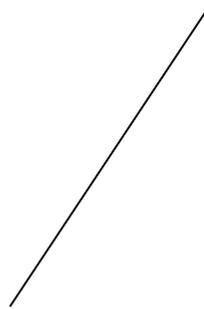


*...after British military and  
civil officers determined that  
all "Christians" should be  
housed there.*





*These refugees included French nuns, Italian priests, missionaries from Ohio, Parisian acrobats and American salesmen.*





*The rebels made various attempts throughout the summer to attack the fort until the fall when seasoned British...*





*...Sikh and Punjabi troops  
arrived and routed the  
rebels in a final attack on  
October 10.*



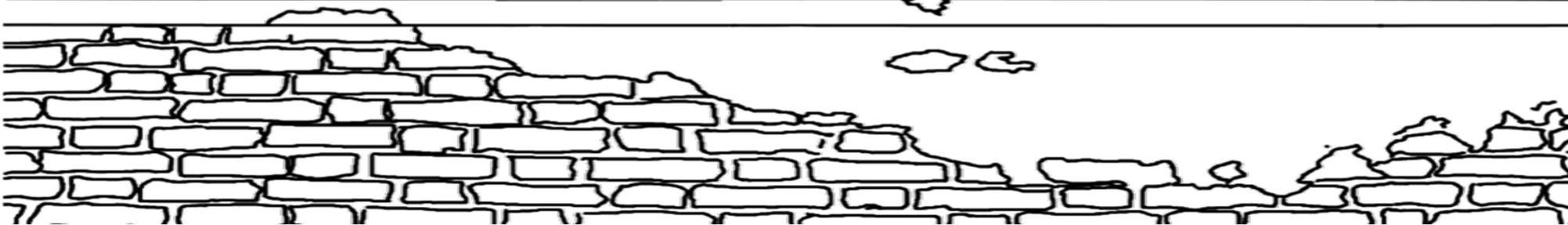
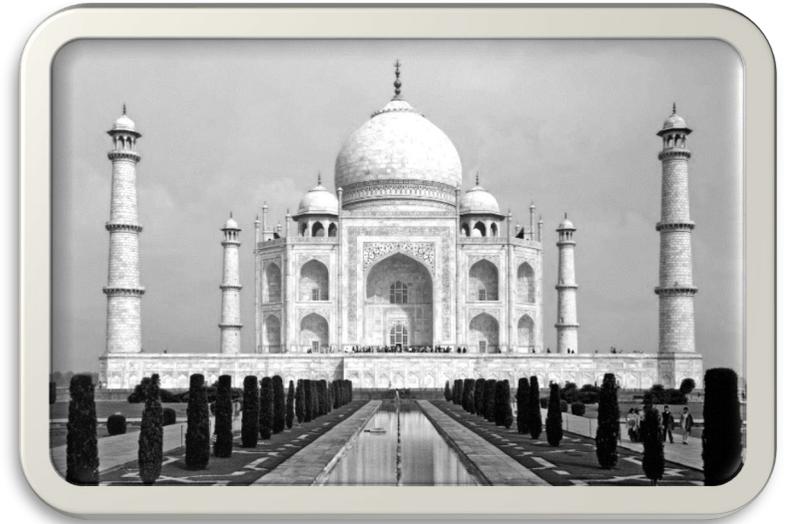
*After the Mutiny, the capital of the Northwest Provinces was moved to Allahabad, and Agra declined.*



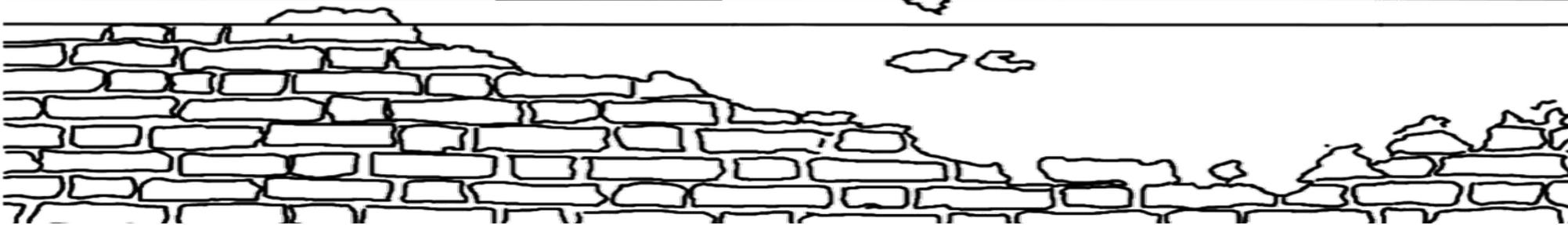
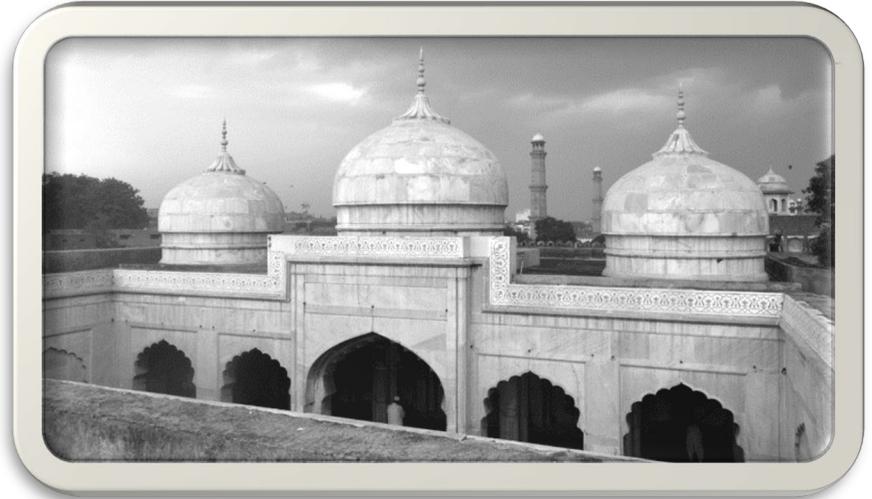
*While Jonathan Small's account of his time in Agra focused on the fort, the city actually held many famous structures.*



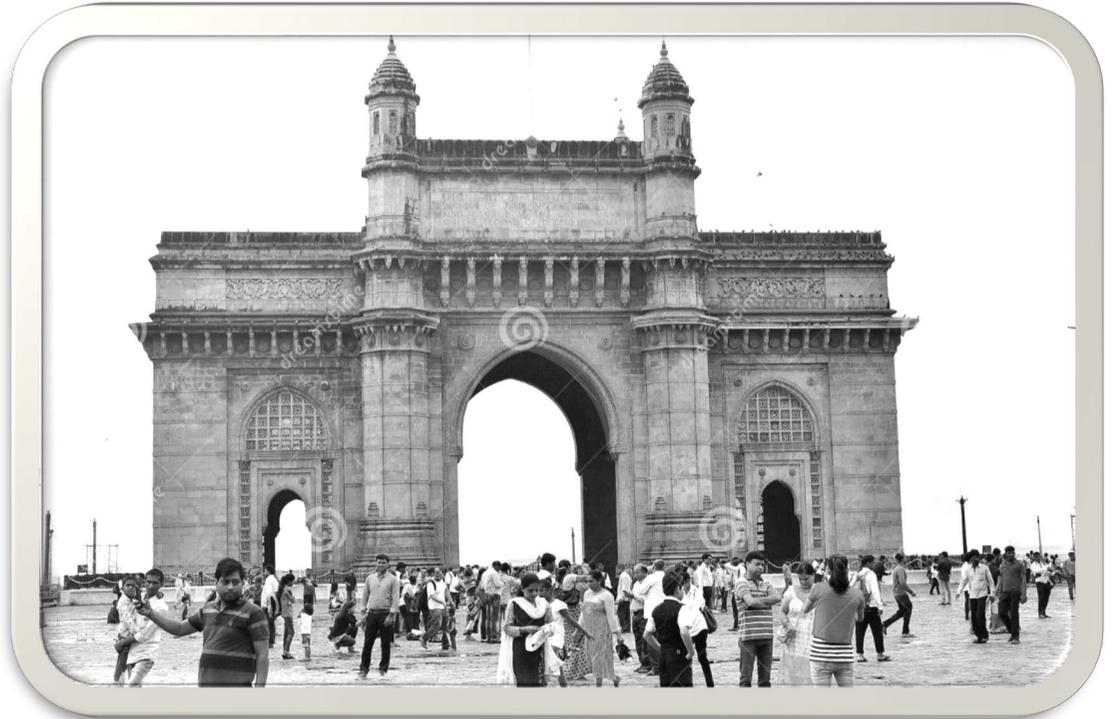
*Perhaps the most well-known was the Taj Mahal, a tomb built by Shah Jahan for his beloved wife Mumtaz Mahal.*



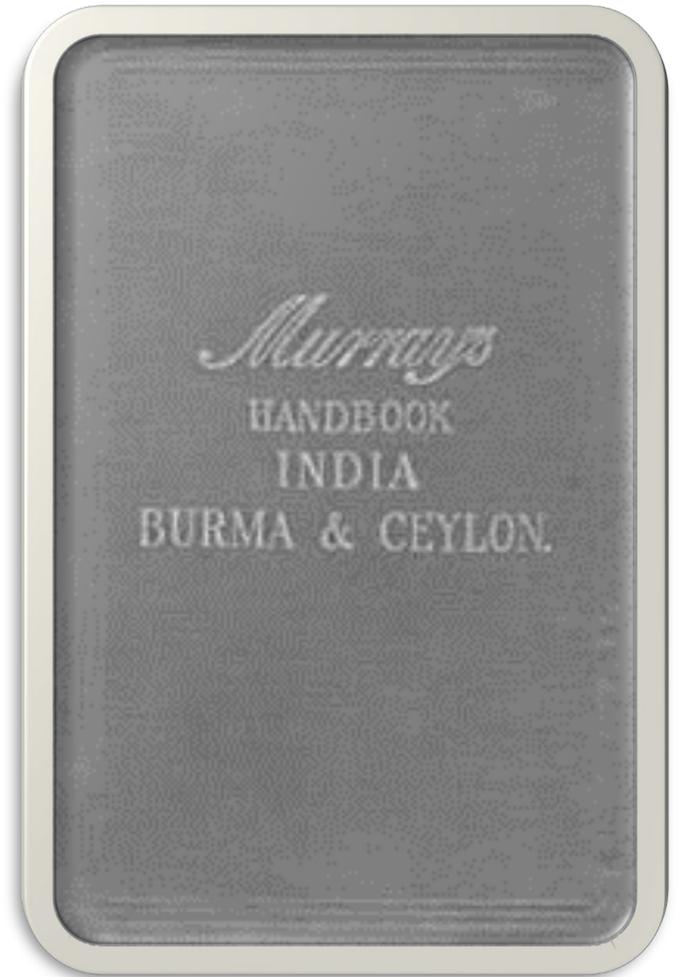
*He also built the pearl-marble mosque, the Moti Masjid mentioned above, as a final project before he moved the capital from Agra to Delhi.*

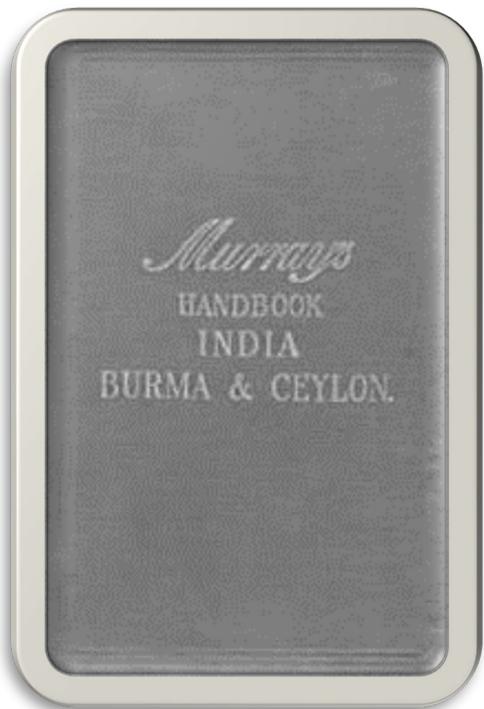


*Currently, between 7 and 8 million tourists travel to Agra each year, but even in Jonathan Small's day, the city attracted visitors.*



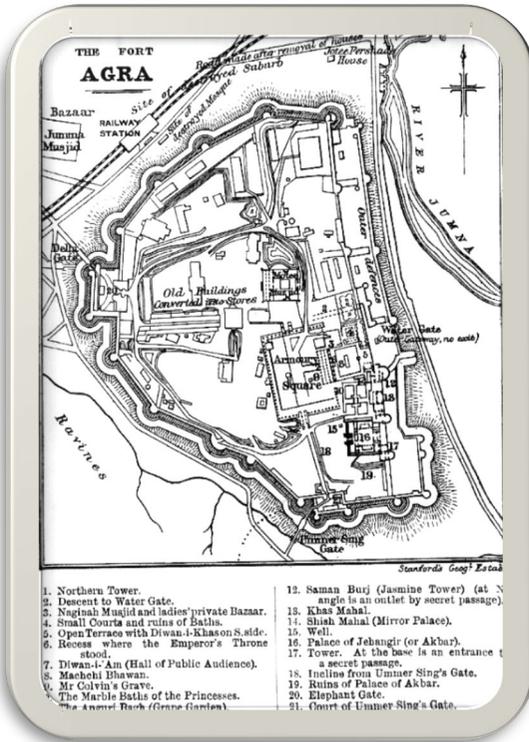
*Several guides and diaries written  
by and for those traveling to  
India were published in the late  
19th century.*





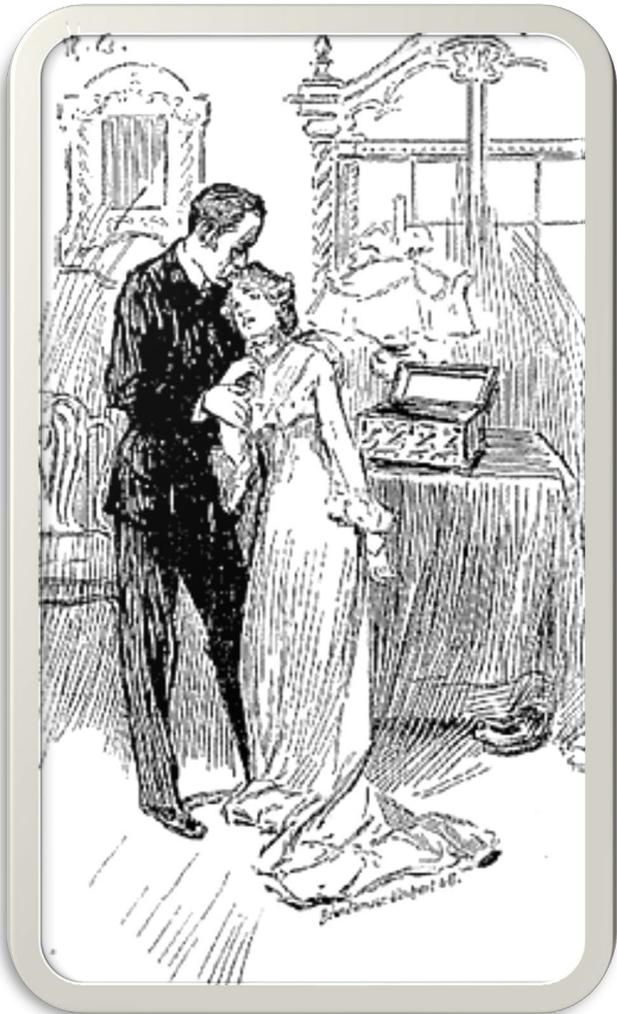
*Of particular note was the  
John Murray series of  
Handbooks for Travellers.*





The earliest one about India was published in 1859 and a second, published in 1911, contains a map of the Agra fort.



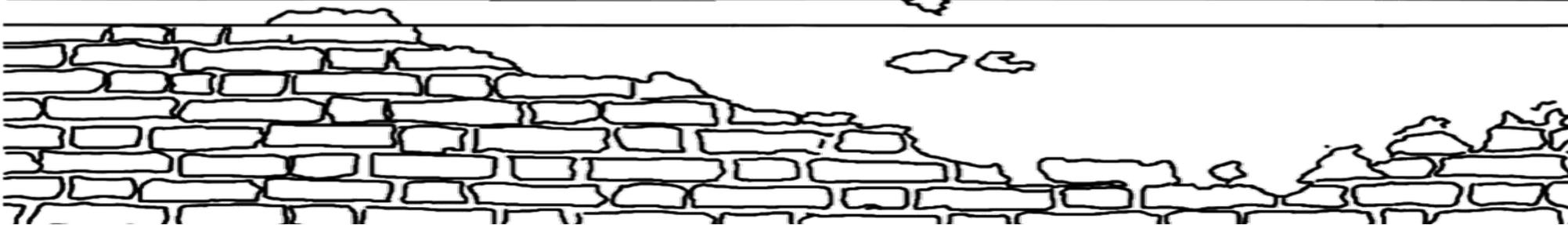


*While for Small the only Agra treasure was an iron box full of diamonds, rubies, and pearls, the city held and still holds a number of riches available for all to enjoy.*



*So we have completed  
topic # 062 in our  
series...*

*Yes, but we'll be back  
with another topic  
soon...*



## Original Source Material for this topic:

- 1) <https://www.britannica.com/technology/typewriter>
- 2) <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-23432653>
- 3) Robert Waller, "Women and the Typewriter During the First Fifty Years, 1873-1923." *Studies in Popular Culture*, 9:1 (1986), page 42.
- 4) Gregory Anderson, *The White-Blouse Revolution: Female Office Workers Since 1870*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988, page 82.
- 5) Sally Mitchell (editor), *Victorian Britain: An Encyclopedia*, New York: Garland Publishing, 1988, page 826.
- 6) David Crown, "Landmarks in Typewriting Identification," 58 *Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology & Police Science* 105 (1967), page 106.
- 7) <http://www.forensicsciencesimplified.org/docs/how.html>



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