APPENDIX C

COPY OF AN ENGAGEMENT BY WILLIAM MOORCROFT SUPERINTENDENT OF THE HONORABLE COMPANY'S STUDEY TO THE KAJA AND KALOON AND OTHER CHIEFS AND ELDERS OF LADAKH FOR ESTABLISHING A COMMERCIAL INTERCOURSE BETWEEN BRITISH MERCHANTS AND FOR THEIR PASSAGE THROUGH THE COUNTRY OF LADAKH TO CHINESE AND OOSBEK TOORKISTAN.

I William Moorcroft deputed on the part of the British merchants of Calcutta to establish a commercial intercourse with the North-Western parts of Asia having arrived at Leh, the capital of Ladakh have had various interviews with the Raja and authorities of that country and have been treated with attention and civility by them.

Having signified a desire that British merchants should have as free commercial communication with this country as traders from other places, the authorities of Ladakh have entered into a written engagement that such communication should be established. And for their satisfaction, I hereby promise that any caravan destined for Toorkistan by the way of Yarkand shall be accompanied by not more than fifteen or twenty soldiers for its protection. And also that any caravan intended to proceed to the same countries by other roads shall have along with it for safeguard no more than 50 soldiers including non-commissioned officers.

The usual duty on merchandise entering Leh is thirteen rupees Mahmood Shahee on seventy munwattees, the munwattee being one and a half to the yamboo of China.

To make a friendly reference to British merchants, the authorities of Ladakh have agreed that the duty on

1Foreign Department Political Proceedings, 20 September 1822, No. 60.
the above weight of seventy munwattees of their merchandise shall be 10 Mahmood shahee rupees.

And on the part of the British merchants of Calcutta, I engage that the duty according to this rate upon such merchandise of theirs as shall enter Leh shall be duly paid by the person or persons having charge of it to the officer of customs at that place.

And as far as I have it in my power, I also promise that friendship shall always be maintained between British merchants and the Rulers of Ladakh and that such of the former as shall enter this country shall abide by the above terms as being the conditions by which an intercourse should be maintained. And further that no injury shall happen to the country of Ladakh from the commercial engagement now made. And that British caravans shall not go from Gurdok to Leh.

And having now received from the authorities of Ladakh their before mentioned agreement in writing, duly sealed and executed in the manner with them customary on the part of the merchants by whom I am deputed and of myself, I engage that as long as they shall act in conformity with it, the above articles shall not be receded from.

Sd/-

W. Moorcroft.

Dated at Leh the 4th day of May in the year of Christ one thousand eight hundred and twenty one.

Sealed and signed in the presence of George Trebeck.

Sealed and signed in the presence of Meer Izzut Qollah Khan.