



## FERRIER, JOSEPHE-PIERRE

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**FERRIER, JOSEPHE-PIERRE**, 19th-century French traveler. Little biographical information survives relating to this intrepid explorer in Afghanistan. A professional soldier who saw service during the Algerian campaigns of 1830-37, he was one of several French officers loaned to Moḥammad Shah's government in 1839, following the withdrawal of British military advisors over the issue of Herat. In Tehran he attained the rank of adjutant-general but fell foul of the Russian legation, leading to his repatriation to France in 1843.

He now sought military employment with the Sikh government in Lahore, whereto several French officers, some formerly in the service of Fath-ʿAlī Shah's son, Moḥammad-ʿAlī Mīrẓā, *beglarbeg* of Kermānšāh, had preceded him. Ferrier unwisely took the overland route at a time when the Anglo-Afghan War of 1838-42 (q.v.) had left conditions in much of Afghanistan very disturbed. The result was a turbulent year in Afghanistan where he fell prey to the internecine rivalries between various local rulers including the hostilities between the *wālī* of Ḳolm and Dōst Moḥammad Khan (q.v.) in Kabul. After many adventures and a period in captivity, he finally had to admit defeat and returned to Herat on 15th of November, 1845. From there he set off for Tehran, which he reached in January 1846.

By 1854, he was in Pondicherry with a manuscript account of his travels to which was appended a recent history of the Afghans. The former, when published, provided much new information regarding Afghan topography, but was flawed by having been written without benefit of notes, these having been seized by Moḥammad Ṣādeq Khan. For example, Ferrier's account of what



appears to have been a Sasanian bas-relief in the upper Harī Rūd region (*Caravan Journeys*, pp. 229-30) remains unconfirmed by later travelers (Maricq, p. 71, 75). In his journeys, Ferrier showed determination and fortitude, and in his account of them he displays a shrewd and ironic intelligence. His description of Yār Moḥammad Khan (*History of the Afghans*, ch. 13, 27 and 32) is a counterweight to the jaundiced view of his British contemporaries.

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