

भारत के दर्शनीय स्थल

उन्नीसवीं शताब्दी के छायाचित्रों का एक संकलन

— लाला दीन दयाल

GLIMPSES OF INDIA

A Selection of Nineteenth Century Photographs

by Lala Deen Dayal.

Lala Deen Dayal
1844 — 1910

*'In the art of picture-making skill surpassing all
A master even of masters is Raja Deen Dayal'*

This couplet composed in Urdu by His Excellency, The Nizam of Hyderabad, reflects the high esteem in which His Excellency held his Court Photographer. In fact, as an expression of appreciation at the photographer's work, The Nizam conferred on Lala Deen Dayal the title of 'Raja', a courtesy normally reserved only for nobility.

Born in North India in 1844, Lala Deen Dayal served as a government draughtsman till the age of 30, after which he began experimenting with amateur photography. Within a decade, he had had the opportunity of working with leading English photographers, and of photographing eminent personalities, including the Prince of Wales and his Royal Party. With his appointment in 1885 as Official Photographer to the then Governor General and Viceroy of India, Lala Deen Dayal resigned from government service to dedicate himself to professional photography. During the years that followed, his work received widespread recognition and acclaim. He excelled at portraiture and court-life photography, and his work is an immortal record of a bygone 'Anglo-Indian' era.

However, trained as a draughtsman, Lala Deen Dayal's primary passion was to capture through the camera lens, his country's architectural heritage.



His collection of photographs of Indian landmarks are unmatched in artistry and exquisite detail.

In recognition of this monumental work he was the proud recipient of a medal and certificate of merit at the "World's Columbian Exposition" held in Chicago, USA in 1893 to commemorate the 400th Anniversary of the landing of Christopher Columbus. The citation on this award reads "...For excellence of execution and their value in preserving (photographic) representations of the carvings and architecture of some of the most important palaces and temples in India."

At a time when the art of photography was in its infancy, and he was constrained to work with primitive equipment unaided by the electronic paraphernalia of today, Lala Deen Dayal's achievements acquire greater significance. Handicapped by the long exposure and the need to "freeze" his subjects, whom he viewed from under a jet-black hood through the rear flap of his massive wooden camera and extra large lenses, his images are preserved on glass plates, generally 25 cms x 30 cms (10" x 12") in size.

In this calendar, we present 12 select pictures from the work of this great photographer, depicting well-known landmarks from different parts of India. These are reproductions of prints made from the original glass negatives, the majority of which date between 1880 and 1899.



Certificate of Merit, Chicago, 1893.

Lala Deen Dayal

Obverse & reverse of medal, Chicago, 1893.

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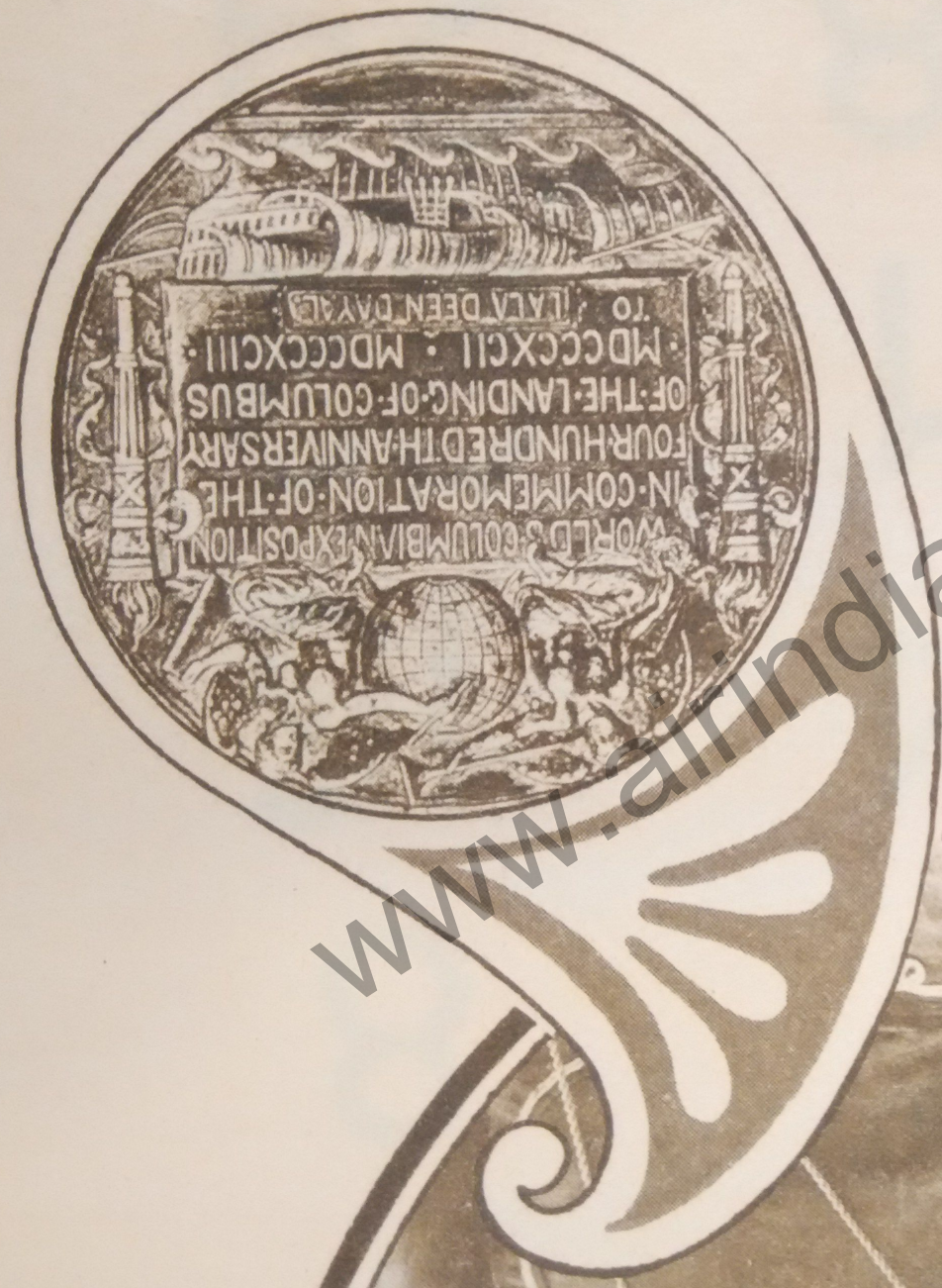


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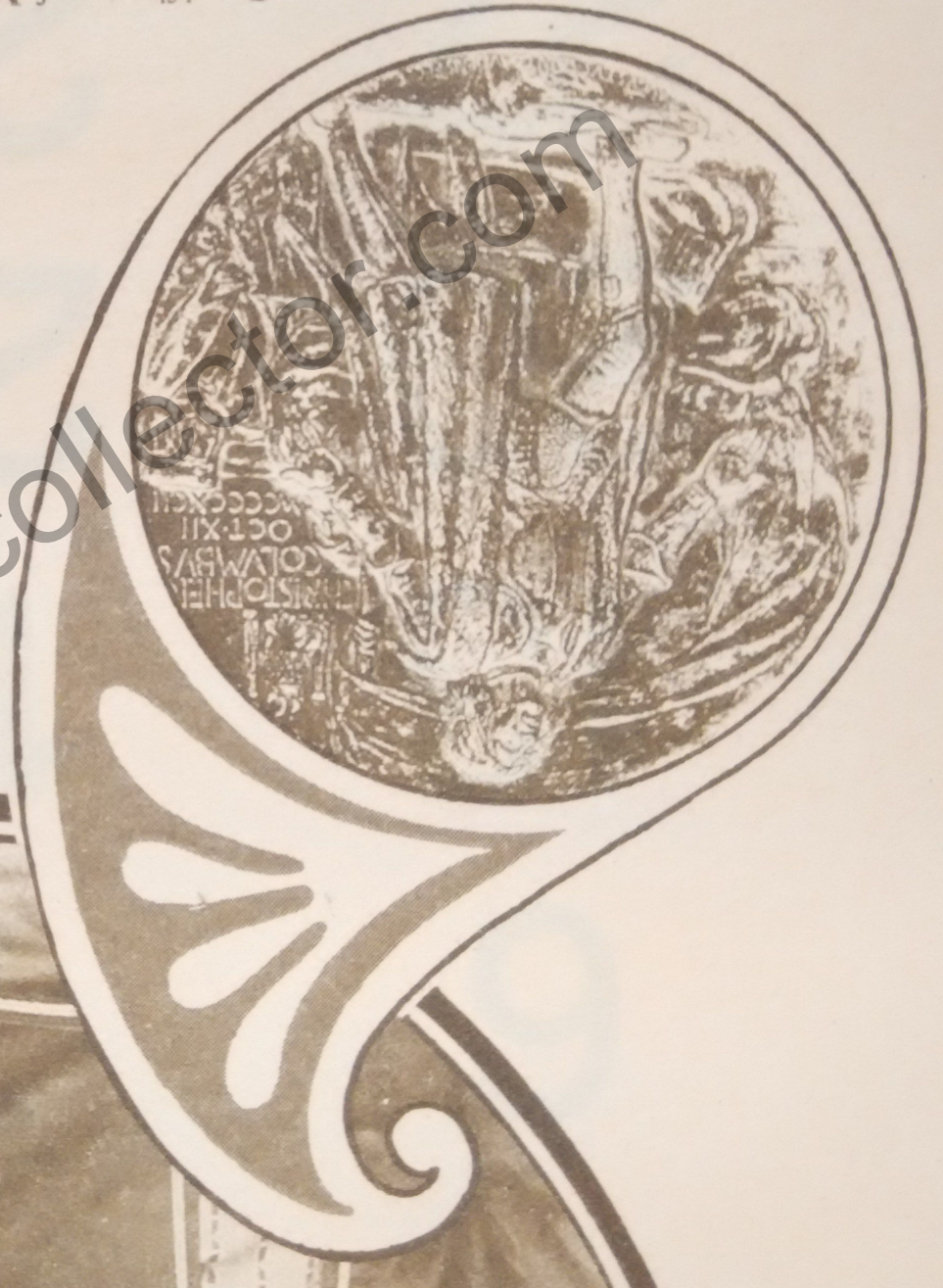
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