

# Maps of Bangkok, 1856 to 1861: The Changing Face of the Capital in the post-Bowring Treaty Transition Period

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**ABSTRACT**—The first detailed survey of the Chaophraya River from the Gulf of Siam to Bangkok was a fortuitous by-product of a British mission led by Captain John Richards to survey the Gulf coast in the late 1850s. Richards' 1856 map of Bangkok's river was to provide the template for a map of greater cultural significance produced by the American missionary, Dan Beach Bradley, three years later, which provides insight into the scale and juxtaposition of the new Western residents and the existing business community. This article collates information from the UK National Archives to show how Richards' map came about and King Mongkut's attitude to the survey, and then looks at the physical details presented by Richards. The discussion moves on to the maps of Bangkok printed by Bradley in 1860-1861, their evolution and importance, starting with the genesis of the map of the four rivers of central Thailand compiled by the American missionaries, and finally focusing on how Bradley's detailed mapping of the Bangkok riverfront illustrates the changes, continuity and relative spatial positioning of the leading foreign communities of Bangkok during the first years after the signing of the Bowring Treaty in 1855, when the city was experiencing its first wave of Western influence.

## Captain Richards' 1856 survey

On 6 February 1856, Captain John Richards arrived at the bar of the Chaophraya River in his surveying ship, HMS *Saracen*. He immediately transferred to a pinnace, one of the ship's smaller boats, and arrived in Bangkok on the morning of 8 February. King Mongkut (Rama IV, reigned 1851-1868) granted him an audience the very next day. The king was immediately supportive of Richards' mission to complete a survey of the Gulf of Siam, giving him "full permission for the prosecution of the objects of the mission".<sup>1</sup> He was also interested in discussing scientific issues concerning the survey with Richards and felt it particularly important to impress upon him the importance of ensuring that the correct orthography was used in his map:

His Majesty remarked that the Charts of the Gulf in use at the present time were

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<sup>1</sup> The National Archives of the UK (TNA): FO 17/246, Charles Bell and Edward Forrest to Sir John Bowring, 12 February 1856, p. 79.

very incorrect, more especially in the appellations employed, in illustration of which H.M. quoted several of the names of the most important features in the navigation, and endeavoured to shew how the misnomers probably originated.<sup>2</sup>

But King Mongkut's principal interest was in discussing the proposed canal that would link the Gulf with the Andaman Sea, a project that was later dubbed the Kra Canal as it would traverse the Kra Isthmus in southern Thailand. The king's engineers had declared the project impracticable and, while the king did not express his own view on the project directly, it became clear in a later discussion with the Phraklang (effectively the Foreign Minister) that the king was not in favour of it. The Phraklang outlined a number of objections to the plan. Richards was able to easily counter arguments on the geophysical challenges and variations in sea levels, but the real concern was political:

His Excellency then said that were the Burmese in possession of the now British Provinces on the Mergui side of the Malayan Peninsula, the Siamese would not willingly undertake to dig a canal across; as it would afford them great facilities for attacking them, but since the British had taken possession of that part of the country, there was no longer much desire on their part to carry out the work.<sup>3</sup>

Despite the lack of enthusiasm for the project on the Siamese side, Richards knew that the canal was of interest to British commercial and political interests, and in fact had been specifically urged to evaluate the canal by Sir John Bowring, for whom it was a pet project.<sup>4</sup> While he did not have the resources to undertake a land survey of the proposed route, he was able to identify what he considered the most likely anchorage on the Gulf side and point out the river valley, which he believed would provide the most logical route.<sup>5</sup>

Richards undertook a number of soundings around the Gulf starting in 1856, and his sailing directions were published in 1858 in an appendix to *The China Pilot*, a compilation of navigational surveys principally of the China coast.<sup>6</sup> While it does not

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 81-82.

<sup>4</sup> See TNA: FO 17/233, Bowring to Lord Clarendon, No. 279, 14 August 1855, p. 66; and TNA: FO 17/242, Clarendon to Bowring, No. 122, 9 June 1856, p. 292. But not all British interests were in favour of the canal. Some of the strongest opposition was to come from British businesses in Singapore, who were aware that the colony's status as a trading hub could be severely impacted by it, a concern that is still voiced in Singapore to this day.

<sup>5</sup> TNA: FO 17/252 Captain John Richards to Bowring, 21 October 1856, pp. 361-362.

<sup>6</sup> The Hydrographic Office of the Admiralty in London published a number of books containing written sailing directions under the title, *The China Pilot*, from the 1850s. The books were based on surveys made principally by Royal Navy commanders and printed by J.D. Potter in London. The first edition, entitled *The China Pilot: Part 1: East coast from Hongkong to Shanghai* (1855), was compiled "chiefly from surveys of Captain Collinson" and edited by Robert Loney. In 1858, a second edition was published as *The China Pilot: The coasts of China and Tartary, from Canton River to the Sea of Okhotsk; with the adjacent islands*. Collinson was still acknowledged as the main source for the surveys, with revisions by J.W. King. By the third edition (1861), Captain King was attributed as the main compiler on an extended scope. Richards' survey was originally included as an appendix to the second edition, but printed under separate cover as: *China Pilot*:

appear that his initial instructions involved a detailed survey of the Chaophraya River, he nevertheless did undertake one, perhaps at the behest of the king whose final remark to Richards at their 9 February meeting abruptly introduced this topic:

His Majesty then requested that the Meinam Chau Phya (vulgarly called the Meinam) might be surveyed from Bangkok to its embouchure, and terminated the interview.<sup>7</sup>

King Mongkut's enthusiasm for Richards' mission suggests an interesting contrast with his reluctance to sanction a canal across the isthmus. If his main concern in regard to the latter was a potential military threat in the future, did he not have similar concerns for a Chaophraya survey that could be of great use to the military ambitions of an aggressive foreign power? It would seem that the importance of the scientific and commercial advantages to be gained from having accurate maps of Siam's waterways outweighed any potential threat such maps might have created. On the other hand, the king's position may reflect his confidence in the friendship he had crafted with the British, as well as his awareness of the futility of opposing such surveys in the era of greater openness to international shipping that he had himself encouraged.

Three days after his meeting with King Mongkut, Richards and the *Saracen* set sail for the south to start work on the coastal survey. Two months later, the *Saracen* arrived back at the bar near Bangkok where another British ship, the *Auckland*, was already at anchor. The *Auckland* had brought Harry Parkes to Bangkok to complete the ratification process for the Bowring Treaty.<sup>8</sup> Parkes had been in Bangkok as secretary to Sir John Bowring a year earlier. After the Treaty was signed, Bowring sent Parkes directly to England to obtain ratification from the British Government for the Treaty. He had now returned with instructions to conclude the ratification process and negotiate the regulations for its implementation.

A month into his second visit to Bangkok, Parkes was close to finalising what would be termed the Supplementary Agreement to the Treaty, which mainly involved negotiating procedures and squeezing a few more concessions out of the Siamese, but had run into an unexpected problem. Article IV of the Treaty allowed British subjects to purchase land within a radius of not more than 24 hours' travel time from the city "computed by the rate at which boats of the country can travel", but only to rent land within four miles of the city walls (unless they had been resident for ten years, in which case they were also allowed to buy land in the inner zone). Although these restrictions had been proposed by the Siamese to Bowring – who had seen no reason to oppose them – the king now found them too vague and was worried that lack of clarity would lead to disputes. Further definition was required. It was finally agreed that the regulations would stipulate the districts encircling the city that would constitute the 24-hour limit for the purposes of the Treaty. However, finding a solution for the four-mile limit required

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*Appendix 1: Gulf of Siam: From the survey made in H.M.S. Saracen, between the Years 1856-58.*

<sup>7</sup> TNA: FO 17/246, Bell and Forrest to Bowring, 12 February 1856, p. 80.

<sup>8</sup> The Treaty of Friendship and Commerce between Siam and Great Britain (generally known as the Bowring Treaty) was signed on 18 April 1855 by Bowring and the Siamese Commissioners.

taking accurate measurements, and that could take several months. Parkes came up with a solution that was acceptable to the Siamese negotiators:

The Commissioners ... expressed themselves content with the measurement of four lines – each of four miles in length – drawn due North, South, East & West of the city, provided that the points where the circle cuts the river were also correctly ascertained, this latter consideration having a most important bearing on the settlement of all water frontage lots.<sup>9</sup>

Knowing that Richards and his surveying team were in port, Parkes immediately borrowed a boat from the king and went to the *Saracen* at the bar to seek help. Richards promptly consented and sent two senior surveying officers to work with two Siamese officials, who brought along thirty to forty workers to support the effort. The exercise commenced on 19 April and the required measurements were completed on 30 April 1856.

The *Saracen* surveyors had already been plotting the Chaophraya River for about two weeks before Parkes turned up with his unusual request.<sup>10</sup> As Richards' instructions from the Admiralty appear to have envisaged an extensive coastal survey only, it is conceivable that the survey of the Chaophraya River was primarily an unscheduled response to the unexpected request of King Mongkut.

## Maps of the Chaophraya River in the 1850s

Whatever the motivation for the exercise, Richards was able to produce the most accurate map of the Chaophraya River from the Gulf to Bangkok to date. This was not the first map of the lower Chaophraya River: several had been produced from the late seventeenth century onwards, but they were far less detailed.<sup>11</sup> The British Library file

<sup>9</sup> TNA: FO 228/207, Harry Parkes to Clarendon, 22 May 1856, p. 43.

<sup>10</sup> The movements of the *Saracen* at this time can be deduced from TNA: ADM 53/6092, Ship's Log: H.M. Ship: *Saracen*, 20 April 1855 to 20 November 1856.

<sup>11</sup> These included 'Carte du Cours du Menam de puis Siam jusqu'a la Mer' by the French royal engineer M. de la Mare printed in Simon de la Loubère, *Du royaume de Siam* (Paris, 1691), vol. 1, facing p. 6, and reproduced in the translation by A.P. Gen as 'A Mapp of the Course of the Menam from Siam to the Sea' in *A New Historical Relation of the Kingdom of Siam* (London, 1693), vol. 1, facing p. 4; 'Mappa Meinam' by Engelbert Kaempfer, the German chief surgeon of the Dutch East India Company, based on his 1690 survey but printed posthumously in *The History of Japan: Together with a Description of the Kingdom of Siam* (Glasgow, 1906; first edition London, 1727), p. 76; 'De Groote Siamse Rievier Me-nam of te Moeder der Wateren' by François Valentyn in his *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* (Dordrecht and Amsterdam, 1726), vol. 3, book 6, facing p. 60; and 'Carte du Cours du Menam Depuis Siam, Jusqu'a la Mer' by Jacques-Nicolas Bellin (Paris, 1750) printed in l'Abbé Prévost's *Histoire Générale des Voyages*, vol. 9 (Paris, 1751), facing p. 238. Barend Jan Terwiel in 'François Valentijn's Map of "The Great Siamese River Me-Nam"', *JSS*, vol. 105 (2017), pp. 76-77, references two seventeenth-century maps in the Dutch National Archives in The Hague: Kaarten Leupe Vel 4: 266 and 267, with Leupe 267 registered as 'Kaart van de Rivier van Siam, van de Zee tot aan de Stad Siam ofte Judea' circa 1687-68. A discussion of some of the above and other early maps of Siam can be found in Dawn F. Rooney, 'The Mapping of Thailand: An Introduction', a paper presented at the International Map Collectors' Society Symposium (Singapore, 1991), retrieved from [rooneyarchive.net/lectures/lec-maps\\_intro/lec\\_maps\\_intro.htm](http://rooneyarchive.net/lectures/lec-maps_intro/lec_maps_intro.htm) on 28 December 2019, and in Thomas Suárez, *Early Mapping of Southeast Asia* (Singapore, 1999).

with Richards' map of the Chaophraya River also contains a 1797 map, which includes much cruder depth soundings in what appears to be an earlier attempt by the Admiralty to provide sailing directions from the Gulf to Bangkok.<sup>12</sup>

More recently, the American Protestant missionaries had produced an interesting sketch map based on their own travels into the country's interior to spread the word. The lack of roads meant that river transport was the most effective way to penetrate inland, and the missionaries took the opportunity to take precise measurements that could be transcribed into a map of the four principal rivers flowing into the Gulf from the north of the country.

The first printing of this map appears to have been commissioned by Harry Parkes for a presentation he made to the Royal Geographical Society in London on 10 December 1855, during his sojourn in England for ratification of the Bowring Treaty (see Figure 1). The centrepiece of Parkes' paper on the geography of Siam was the American Protestants' map, titled 'Sketch of the Menam and other Siamese Rivers from the Surveys & Observations of the American Missionaries, Communicated by Mr. Consul Parkes 1855'.<sup>13</sup> In his presentation, Parkes thanked the Presbyterian missionary, Dr. Samuel R. House,<sup>14</sup> for the map and explained how the missionaries had ingeniously collected the data over many excursions to the interior along the four main rivers:

The method resorted to was, to note the course by compass at every turn of the river or canal they traversed. The length of time taken to pass over each course was then marked by the watch, and the rate of going ascertained by a sounding lead, used as a log-line, and thrown overboard whenever it was judged that the rate was changed. The observations thus taken were most numerous and minute. Much of the ground has been gone over more than once by different persons; their respective observations have been compared, and, in working them into the map, the results have been found to agree with very tolerable accuracy with those few positions which have been laid down by astronomical observations.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Thomas Dunning Lippiatt, 'Part of the River Menam in the Kingdom of Siam' (London: A. Dalrymple, 1797).

<sup>13</sup> In Harry Parkes, 'Geographical Notes in Siam, with a New Map of the Lower Part of the Menam River', *The Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, vol. 26, 1856, pp. 71-78, retrieved from JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/1798346](http://www.jstor.org/stable/1798346), on 28 December 2019.

<sup>14</sup> Although many missionaries ventured on tours upcountry, Dr House was probably the most assiduous traveller pre-1855 and, with his surveying skills, the main contributor to the map. George Hawes Feltus, in *Samuel Reynolds House of Siam: Pioneer Medical Missionary 1847-1876* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1924), pp. 69-75, 121-128, records ten such trips by House in this period: east to Petru on the Bangpakong River in February 1848; west to Rapri on the Meklong in November 1848; west again to Petchaburi in December 1848; north-east to Prabat in winter 1849; east to the Bangpakong River and then north to Nakhon Nayok in the 1849 dry season; north about 200 miles up the Chaophraya River also in the 1849 dry season; north about 300 miles to Paknambo on the Chaophraya River and then two days' further along the river's right fork in the 1850 dry season; north to Saraburi on the Chaophraya River and then cross-country by elephant to Korat in December 1853, returning via western Cambodia and the head waters of the Bangpakong River two months' later; east to Bangplasoi on the Gulf in June 1854; and north to Pitsanuloke and Pichit on the Chaophraya River in November 1854.

<sup>15</sup> Parkes, 'Geographical Notes in Siam', p. 75.





Figure 1. Parkes Map, from 'Geographical Notes on Siam, with a New Map of the Lower Part of the Menam River,' *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, 26 (1856). From the collection of Thavatchai Tangsirivanich.

The map is constructed on a scale of two miles per inch and covers almost two degrees of latitude of longitude, stretching from Petchaburi to Lopburi and delineating the four main rivers: nearly 400 miles of the Chaophraya, 100 miles of the Bangpakong, 70 miles of the Tachin and 60 miles of the Meklong, as well as principal canals.

While far from providing the level of detail and technical input of Richards' 1856 map, the missionaries' sketch of the four rivers was regarded – at least by Parkes – as of great significance. Available information on inland Siam was sparse and sketchy, and Parkes praises the missionaries as “industrious explorers” whose efforts had provided the most detailed overview of the central plateau of Siam to date:

It is probable that this map contains all the authenticated geographical information we possess on that most important part of the Siamese dominions, the great valley of the Menam.<sup>16</sup>

Richards' map of the Chaophraya River (Figure 2) was first published in July 1857.<sup>17</sup> It contained depth soundings in fathoms as well as tidal information to assist shipping in plotting a course from the Gulf over the bar, avoiding sandbanks and fishing stakes and upriver as far as the British Consulate which, when first opened in June 1856, was located in the Kudi Chin community near Santa Cruz Church in Thonburi. Depth soundings along the river were presented in a more comprehensive zigzag pattern rather than the crude linear soundings of Lippiatt's 1797 survey. The map became the template for future surveys, with “large corrections” made to it in 1869, 1872, 1888, 1902 and 1903.<sup>18</sup>

We do not know whether the king saw a print of the first edition of Richards' map, but if he had he would no doubt have been appalled when he first unfurled it to reveal its printed title: ‘MENAM CHAU-SHYA or BANGKOK RIVER.’ His admonitions to Richards to pay special attention to correct orthography had not prevented a highly visible typographic error. Later editions were to include a correction that was in some ways even more infuriating: ‘MENAM CHAU-FYA or BANGKOK RIVER’. This latter version could not be dismissed as a simple printer's error as it so obviously mistook the aspirated *p* of *ph* in Chaophraya for an *f* sound. Richards' written sailing directions in *The China Pilot* refer to the river as the “Menam Chau-Phya”,<sup>19</sup> indicating that he was well aware of the accepted romanisation of the river name, so the errors most likely occurred at the printer's office in London.

The map provides minimal detail on the river's hinterland, labelling large swathes of countryside by their dominant natural feature or usage: mangrove, paddy fields, orange gardens, sugar plantations, coconut and betel nut trees. More information is provided on various landmarks on the banks of the river, but the information is sporadic. The major

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> ‘Menam Chau-Shya Or Bangkok River Surveyed by Mr. John Richards R.N. Assisted by Mr. G.H. Inskip and Mr. J.W. Reed R.N. H.M.S. Saracen. 1856’ (London: Hydrographic Office of the Admiralty, 1857). The map can be found at the British Library in London.

<sup>18</sup> According to a note on a later edition included in the same bundle of maps at the British Library.

<sup>19</sup> *China Pilot: Appendix I*, p. 17.



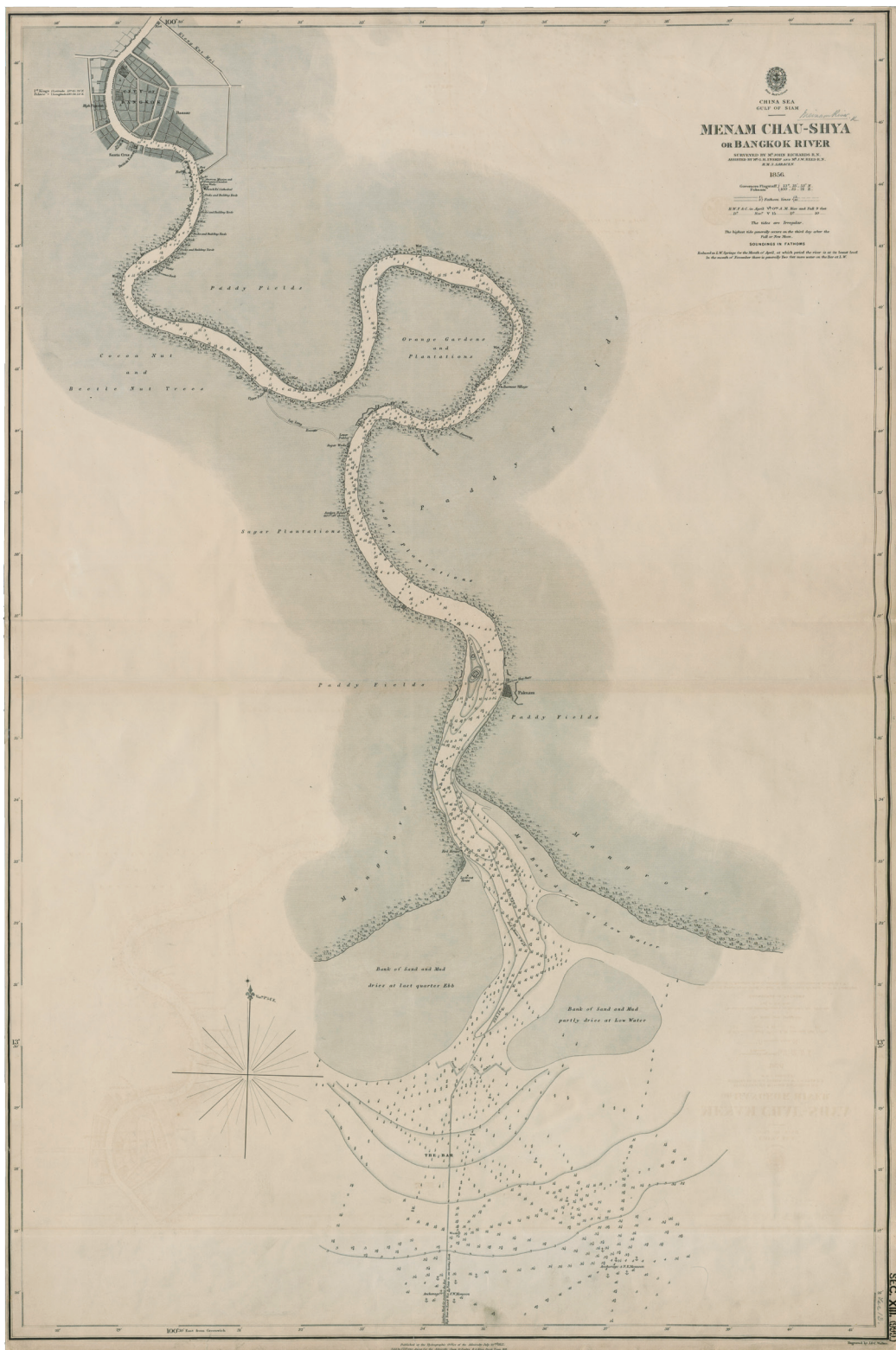


Figure 2. 'Menam Chau-Shya or Bangkok River', surveyed by John Richards, 1856. From the British Library.



riverside communities of Paknam, Lower Paklat and Upper Paklat are noted, as are the position of many riverside *wat* (temples) and forts.

More detail is given on landmarks closer to the city (Figure 3). Some four to five miles south of Bangkok, the location of some docks and shipbuilding yards is recorded, as are two areas where the small foreign community congregated. The first of these on the east bank includes the French Roman Catholic Cathedral (today Assumption), the lime works that were to be displaced the following year by the new British Consulate and, seemingly occupying the same premises, the Portuguese Consulate and the American Mission. The American Mission is a misleading label, as it refers here to the American Baptist Mission located directly behind the Portuguese Consulate rather than an American diplomatic presence, which would not commence until 29 May 1856 when Reverend Stephen Mattoon, a leading Presbyterian missionary, was appointed the first US Consul and would then use his residence as the American Consulate. The Baptists at the time had a more substantial presence than the other two American Protestant missions (Bradley's American Missionary Association and Mattoon's Presbyterians), but as all three missions were in well-known riverine properties, the map's omission of the non-Baptist missions is curious.

Shortly upriver and just beyond the entrance to the new canal (Klong Kut Mai) defensive forts are positioned on both banks. Further upriver on the opposite west bank we find a second small cluster of Western residents: the British Factory, which had been built by Robert Hunter, the Scottish merchant, in the 1820s and would serve as the first British Consulate when the first Consul, Charles Batten Hillier, arrived on 10 June 1856, and another Roman Catholic Church in the Santa Cruz community.

The zigzag of depth markings terminates at this point. The *Saracen* was not permitted further upriver, which was considered too close to the Grand Palace. The map includes very little detail of the city itself, apart from the position of the two kings' palaces, a rough approximation (which is too far north) of the Grand Bazaar location, the major canals and city walls. Small markings on the river, starting on the west bank opposite the Portuguese Consulate and on the east bank approximately 1.2 miles further north (near present day Sampheng) and ending between the Second King's Palace and the northern entrance to Klong Kut Mai, appear to indicate the positions of floating houses that were the first visual impression noted by so many visitors to Bangkok of the period.

The map provides evidence that enables us to date the survey between 8 February 1856 (when Richards first arrived in Bangkok) and 29 May of the same year (when Mattoon was appointed US Consul). Based on the movements recorded in the *Saracen* Ship's Log, we can narrow the range further, as the survey must have taken place entirely during the ship's second visit to the city, between 1 April and 16 May.<sup>20</sup>

Overall, Richards' 1856 map is a remarkable achievement, delineating in great detail the course and certain characteristics of the river, though necessarily less impressive in its depiction of the hinterland.

<sup>20</sup> TNA: ADM 53/6092, Ship's Log: H.M. Ship: *Saracen*, 20 April 1855 to 20 November 1856.

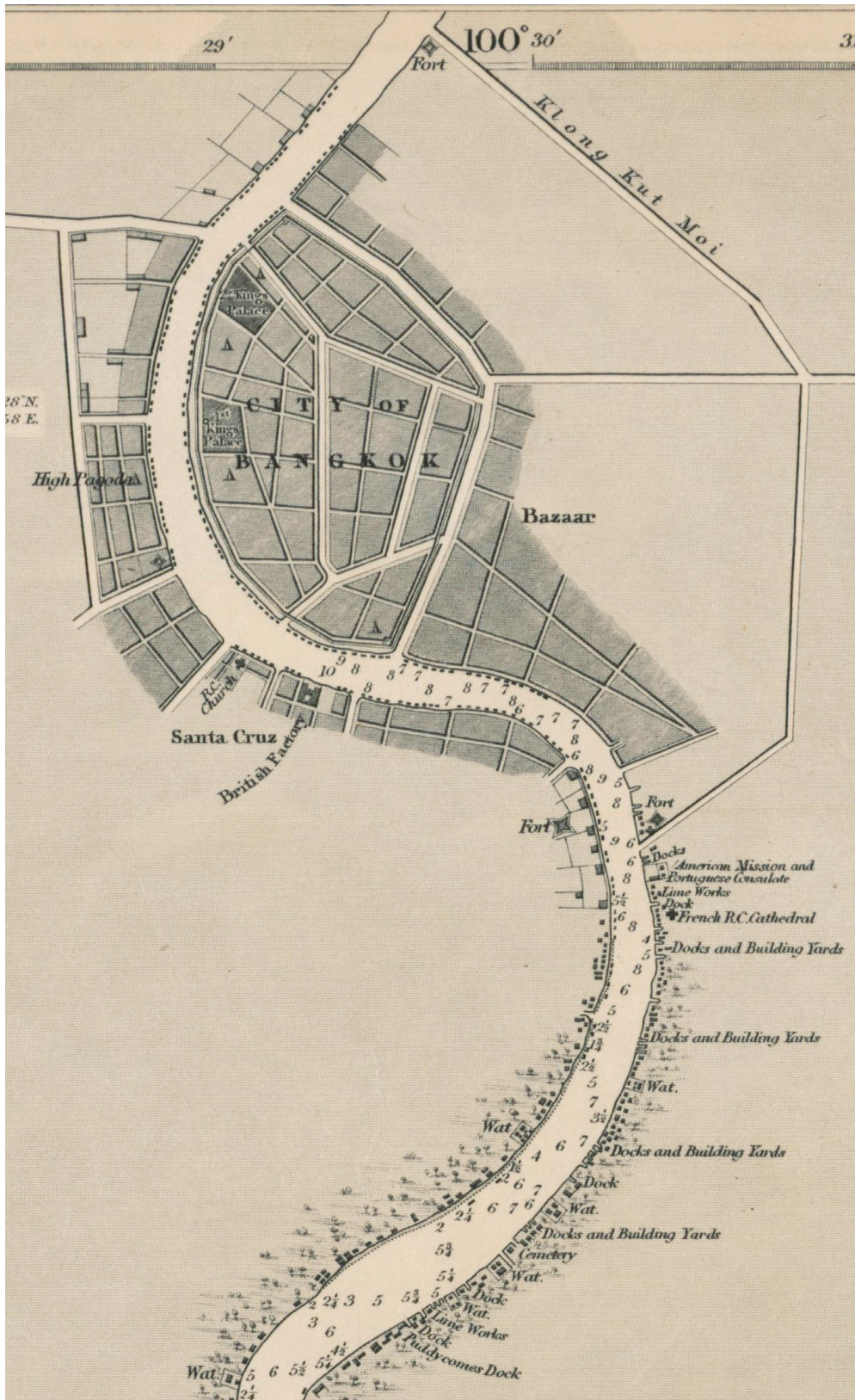


Figure 3. Section of 'Menam Chau-Shya or Bangkok River', surveyed by John Richards, 1856. From the British Library.



## Bradley's 1860–1861 maps of Bangkok

Although Parkes was able to produce a neatly printed map for his presentation, the second publication of the missionaries' map was far less orderly. In 1860, the Reverend Doctor Dan Beach Bradley, the pre-eminent American missionary in mid-19th century Bangkok, printed the same map under the title, 'A sketch of the Rivers of Siam from the observations of the American Missionaries'. It would appear that he did not have access to the Parkes version, as in Bradley's version the place names are handwritten, rather than printed. Another amendment was an extension of the original map attributed by Bradley to his own survey from Pakphruek to the upper reaches of the Meklong River.

Bradley printed this map of the four rivers in the appendix to the 1860 edition of his annual publication, *Bangkok Calendar*.<sup>21</sup> He had launched the *Bangkok Calendar* the year before as an almanack of useful information on recent events in Thailand, local customs and practices with observations on sundry matters of interest to Bradley and, he hoped, the growing foreign community and the handful of Siamese nobles and royalty capable of reading English. Bradley continued to produce an annual *Bangkok Calendar* until 1873, the year of his death.

The second edition in 1860 included an appendix with three maps, the third of which was his amended map of the four rivers. The other two maps, however, were based on Richards' map and contained the results of Bradley's own painstaking research on the landmarks and principal residences of Bangkok. The first, entitled 'Plan of the City of Bangkok', depicted the inner city and its immediate neighbourhood, stretching roughly from the northern to the southern entrances of Klong Kut Mai. The second acknowledged its debt to Richards' map in its title, 'Chart of the Menam Chau P'aya or Bangkok River from the British Survey'. The map was essentially a version of Richards' 1856 map, covering the same area, but leaving out some features, such as the depth markings, and adding new data points. This second map was reprinted in the 1861 edition of *Bangkok Calendar* with printed labels replacing the difficult to decipher handwriting of 1860 and one amendment (Figure 4).<sup>22</sup> The 1861 edition did not include the two other maps.

Taken together, these maps present an interesting though necessarily incomplete snapshot of Bangkok at the beginning of the 1860s. By including the locations of leading structures and residents, the maps illustrate the extent to which the city was being transformed in the early years of the new, more open trading regime introduced by the Bowring Treaty.

When the Bowring Treaty was signed in 1855, the Western community in Bangkok probably comprised no more than forty people. At least half of this community were the French Catholic and American Protestant missionaries, the remainder consisting of a handful of merchants and shipbuilders, possibly five British mariners working as captains on Siamese vessels and a couple of Westerners employed in other roles by the Siamese aristocracy.

<sup>21</sup> Dan Beach Bradley, *Bangkok Calendar, For the year of our Lord, 1860* (Bangkok: American Missionary Association, 1860), following p. 90.

<sup>22</sup> Figure 4 presents a detail of the 1861 map.



The Treaty signalled a new openness in Siam's foreign relations and quickly led to similar treaties being signed with various other Western nations. By the end of 1860, Siam had signed such treaties with the USA and France in 1856, Denmark in 1858, Portugal in 1859 and the Netherlands in 1860. The commercial opportunities heralded by the treaties were bringing in a first wave of business operators. The 1860 *Calendar* included a list of European and American residents, which now amounted to 145 people (not including a small number of children). The number of missionaries was more or less unchanged since 1855, but the business community now comprised over forty merchants, clerks, engineers, shipbuilders and various service providers, with another thirty residents employed as master mariners on the burgeoning international shipping routes.<sup>23</sup>

Of the six consulates and twelve business enterprises shown on Bradley's 1860 map, only one consulate and two businesses had been operating when Richards was undertaking his river survey and are also shown on the earlier map. The one consulate was that of the Portuguese, who had since 1820 been in possession of the site that still houses the Portuguese Embassy today. Richards' map notes the position of the British Factory, which would become the temporary premises for the first British Consulate two months after his survey, but within two years new premises had been built immediately to the south of the Portuguese, which is where Bradley located them on his map. The two businesses operating in April 1856 were both shipyards located some four miles downriver of the city. The Caledonian Dockyard, owned by the British shipbuilder, John Baxter, was the most established, having opened in 1852. The nearby Puddicombe Dockyard, which had opened shortly before the Richards survey, was owned by a British mariner, Captain Christopher Puddicombe, who had relocated with his family from Bombay (Mumbai) in 1855 to try his hand at shipbuilding.

The most significant spatial change illustrated by Bradley's map is the emergence of a preferred enclave for Western business and diplomatic residences. Whereas in 1856 the much smaller Western community was divided into two principal locations on the east and west banks of the river, just four years later the new entrants had almost exclusively selected the section of the Bangkok river frontage in the Bangrak area, from just south of the Portuguese Embassy to the first bend in the river, for their lodgings. King Mongkut was soon to augment this stretch of riverside with alternative access by building Bangkok's first substantial road, Charoen Krung Road (New Road), at the request of the Western community.

The map shows that the choice of this locality as a Western enclave was the most pragmatic solution. River frontage was vital due to the lack of roads in the city, and land to the north of the city would have been considered too remote and would have been opposed by the Siamese authorities as constituting a potential threat, as shipping would need to sail past the palaces of the First and Second Kings on a regular basis. The Bangrak area was therefore the closest to the south of the inner city that was not already settled by other, principally Chinese, communities. It was also adjacent to, yet separate from, the thriving Chinese business sector of Sampheng. Moreover, it was also within

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<sup>23</sup> Bradley, *Bangkok Calendar*, 1860, pp. 88-89.

the four-mile limit designated by Article IV of the Bowring Treaty in which foreign residents were permitted to rent and build their residences (or purchase land after ten years' residence in the country).

Bradley's map also shows that the area north of the new Western enclave, around the Sampheng and Talad Noi areas, was occupied by wealthy Chinese merchants, as was a much longer stretch of river frontage on the Thonburi side of the river below the Kudi Chin area that was still home to descendants of Portuguese Catholics, who had been given land here by King Taksin after the fall of Ayutthaya, as well as Chinese and Muslim communities. Bradley's map lists only three Western buildings on the west bank, all in Kudi Chin and all related to its Portuguese profile: the Santa Cruz Church of the Catholics; the British Factory, which had been built in this location by Hunter after his marriage to a member of the Santa Cruz community; and the house of Hunter's son, also called Robert, which was on a neighbouring property and was in fact his mother's former residence.

Within the new Western community, Bradley's map illustrates the nexus between diplomacy and business in the post-Treaty transition period. Pickenpack, Thies & Co was the first German trading firm to open in Bangkok in early 1858. The trading firm was to develop into a leading agent for marine insurance and banking, including for the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank and the Bank of Rotterdam. The map shows the Hanseatic Consulate sharing an office with the company because the company's German partners, Theodor Thies and Paul Pickenpack, had been appointed, respectively, Consul and Vice Consul for the Hanseatic States. Space considerations presumably prevented Bradley mentioning that the same location also housed the Swedish and Norwegian Consulate since Pickenpack had also been appointed their Vice Consul. Later in 1860, Pickenpack and Thies were to add the titles of Consul and Vice Consul of the Netherlands to their roster. Bradley also marked the location of the new Danish Consulate, but omits to mention that this was shared with the offices of the firm of D.K. Mason & Co., which had opened in 1857 and whose eponymous British principal had been appointed Danish Consul in 1858. King Mongkut was later to appoint Mason as Consul for Siam in London. The second German company in Bangkok was the trading and shipping firm of A. Markwald & Co., which also opened in 1858. Markwald was to become a significant trading firm and shipping agent, later diversifying into rice milling and bulk petroleum storage. Its proprietor, Adolph Markwald, would be appointed Prussian Consul in 1865.

All the other Western business enterprises on Bradley's maps had opened after the Richards survey and were involved in either trading and agency work (Silva Grenon, S.P. Goodale, Remi Schmidt & Co. and Borneo Co. Limited), ship's chandlers (Orr Dare & Co. in the 1860 map, replaced by T.S. Chune & Co. in 1861), towing and lightering services (C.G. Allen), rice milling (American Steam Rice Mill of George A. Dunn & Co.), storekeeping (Charles Grant & Co.'s Bangkok Naval Stores) or running a boarding house (Captain James White).<sup>24</sup> The new Customs House that was built to support the new business activities, as required by the Bowring Treaty, is also shown on the map.

The US Government, which had similarly avoided the expense of posting a dedicated

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., pp. 68-71.

consul to Bangkok by appointing the Presbyterian missionary, Stephen Mattoon, as its first Consul in 1856, was now in new hands, but still on the fringes of the new Western business area. On Bradley's map, the American Consulate is shown about four miles downriver from the city, as it was now located at the property of John Hassett Chandler, who had first come to Siam as a printer attached to the Baptist Mission in 1843, but had left the Baptists to go into business; this had enabled him to invest in his large riverside property. When Mattoon returned to America in 1859, Chandler succeeded him as American Consul and his residence became the new American Consulate.

The other three Consulates – the British, French and Portuguese – were all in the central area, and were the only ones that had posted Consuls from overseas, although one of these, the unfortunate Portuguese Consul Antonio Frederico Moor, was not being paid a salary by the Portuguese Government and thus had to make his living as a merchant.

Bradley's 1860 *Calendar* suggests that the Western population of Bangkok had more than tripled since the signing of the Bowring Treaty, yet it was still a very small community, comprising under 0.3 percent of even the lowest estimate of Bangkok's population in the early-mid 19th century at 50,000 people.<sup>25</sup> But Bradley was not interested in producing a map to reflect the complicated, multi-ethnic demographic profile of Bangkok. Instead, his focus was on leading players, not only within the new Western immigrants, but also among the established Siamese and Chinese elites.

While his depiction of the Western community covers most of the main players, his plotting of the residences of the Siamese and Chinese communities appears much more selective. In the case of the Siamese, the only residences that merit inclusion are those of the First and Second Kings, Prince Krom Hluang Wongsa and the two leading ministers (the Kalahom and the Phraklang).<sup>26</sup> Bradley was certainly familiar with many other princes and noblemen in the city. It is possible that these five leaders were included because they were not only the most powerful men in the kingdom, they were also the most outward-looking, involved in opening up the country to trade with the major Western powers and, as such, would be most familiar to the Western community, which constituted Bradley's main audience. Prince Wongsa, the Kalahom and the Phraklang comprised three of the five commissioners appointed by King Mongkut to negotiate the Bowring Treaty and were heavily involved in subsequent treaty negotiations. The other two commissioners for the Bowring negotiations had both passed away before Bradley made his map: the Somdet Ong Yai in 1855 and the Somdet Ong Noi in 1858.

His rationale for selecting the Chinese residences shown on his second map is more difficult to discern. Certainly, he has included many of the leading lights of the Chinese business community on both sides of the river, but inland residences, such as some of the large Chinese mansions that lined the Grand Bazaar, appear not to have been included. The selected residences are shown as lining both sides of the river to the south of the city.

<sup>25</sup> For a discussion of Bangkok's 19th century population, see B.J. Terwiel, *Through Travellers' Eyes: An approach to Early Nineteenth century Thai History* (Bangkok: Duang Kamol Books, 1989), pp. 224-233.

<sup>26</sup> These are shown on the first map, 'Plan of the City of Bangkok', in Bradley, *Bangkok Calendar, 1860*.



On the east (Bangkok) side he marks nine residences between the inner city and the entrance to Klong Kut Mai (Klong Padung Krung Kasem) just north of the Portuguese Consulate, where the new Western enclave begins. This area, that we know today as Chinatown or Sampheng, was first populated by Chinese merchants. When King Rama I (reigned 1782-1809) decided to relocate the capital from Thonburi to Bangkok, he had the Chinese community relocated from the location where he was to build the Grand Palace to Sampheng.

The map indicates that one residence in this area, that of Chaosua Yim (labelled *y* on the east bank in Figure 4 as *Chawsóóă yĩm*),<sup>27</sup> was located significantly closer to the inner city than the others, within a predominantly Hokkien (Fujian) community.<sup>28</sup> Chaosua Yim, (also known by his Chinese name, Lau Poh Yim, and his official Siamese title, Phra Phasisombat) was the son of King Mongkut's favourite Hokkien tea supplier and had inherited a bird's nest tax farm. He became a leading sugar tycoon and tax farmer, including for opium. He was later able to persuade King Mongkut to use royal funds to develop Klong Phasicharoen, which was designed to serve his sugar business. He also owned a steamship plying the Bangkok-Singapore route. King Chulalongkorn (Rama V, reigned 1868-1910) would later promote him to Phraya Phisonsombatboribun and his descendants adopted the family name Phisonyabut.

The cluster of prominent residents in the mostly (but not exclusively) Teochew (Chaozhou) Sampheng area included Chaosua Phoson, also known as Soan (Figure 4: east bank, *a*, *Chawsóóă p'awsoàn*), a grandson of So Siang, who had been appointed Luang Aphai Vanich in the reign of King Rama III (reigned 1824-1851) and was the forefather of the Chatikavanij and Panyarachun families; Chaosua To or Toh or Tan Jue Giag (Figure 4: east bank, *c*, *Chawsóóă to*), a famous tax farmer and sugar tycoon, who was also granted the title of Phraya Phisonsombatboribun; and Liu Kian or Thian (Figure 4: east bank, either *d*, *Chawsóóă oteean*, or *f*, *K'óón bantééan*), the patriarch of the Jotikasthira family and of Hakka descent. Liu Kian had been the supercargo on the last tribute ships sent to China at the beginning of King Mongkut's reign and, under King Chulalongkorn, was to be given a senior position in the government's financial administration; and, in 1879, he was appointed Phraya Choduk Rachasretthi (leader of the Chinese community).

On the west (Thonburi) side there are twenty-four labelled residences from a point roughly opposite Sampheng to a point opposite the Borneo Company and Pickenpack, Thies & Company. Among these, Bradley identified the residences of leading Muslim traders, who were occupying a floating house and a building known as the Red House at the mouth of a canal, as well as a more substantial structure known as the White House

<sup>27</sup> Bradley's idiosyncratic transcription system, used in the map legend, was outlined by him in *Bangkok Calendar*, 1860, p. 51, and repeated and expanded in subsequent editions.

<sup>28</sup> Information on the Chinese merchants has been kindly contributed by Pimpraphai Bisalputra and supplemented by reference to *A History of the Thai-Chinese* by Jeffery Sng and Pimpraphai Bisalputra (Singapore: Editions Didier Millet, 2015). Information on the Muslim merchants is from Bradley's *Bangkok Calendar*, 1860 and Edward Van Roy, *Siamese Melting Pot: Ethnic Minorities in the Making of Bangkok* (Chiang Mai, Silkwood Books: 2017), pp. 148-149. Van Roy also identifies the locations of the main Chinese speech groups on p. 185.

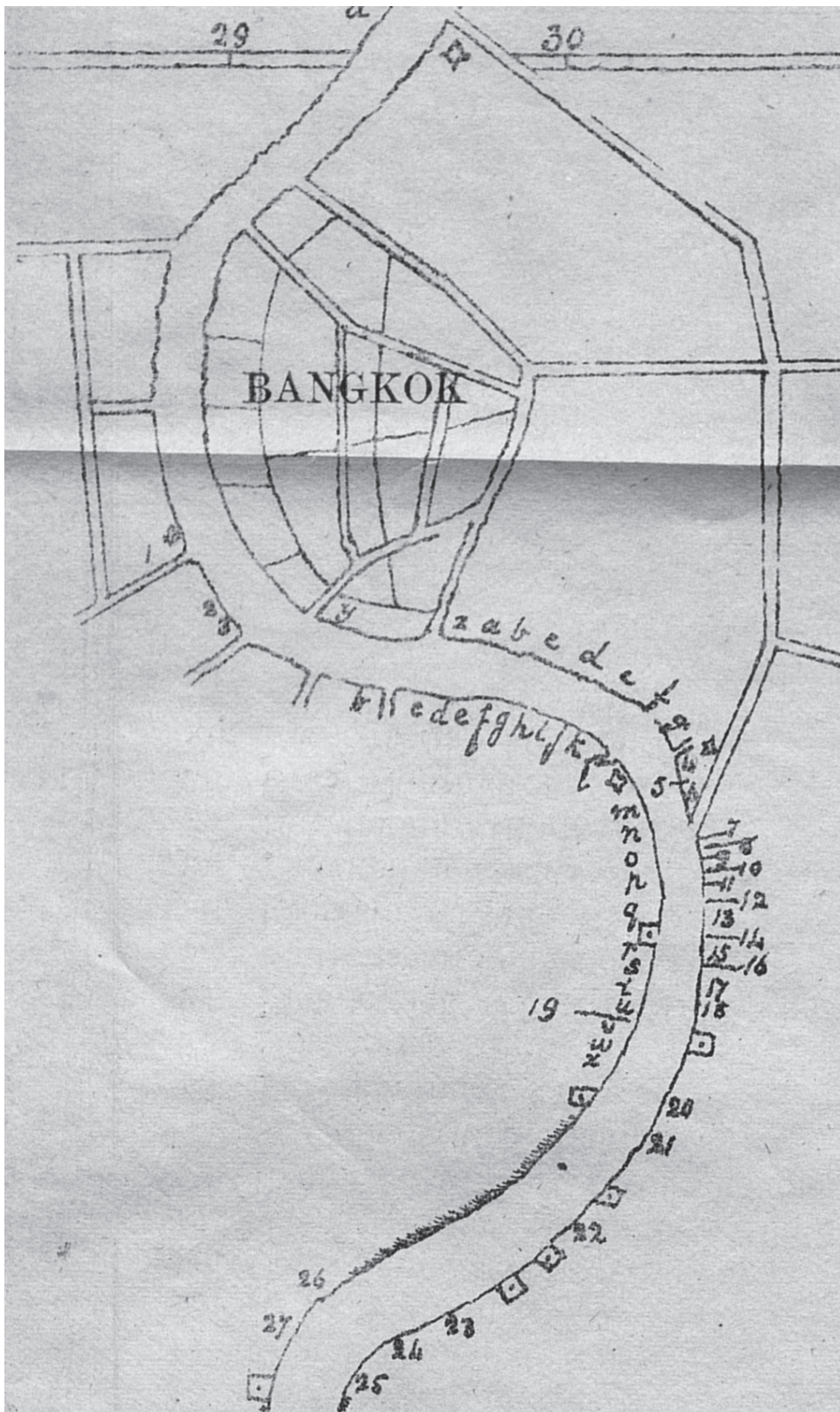


Figure 4. Section of 'Menam Chow P'aya or Bangkok River, From the British Survey &c.' printed in Bangkok Calendar, 1861, by D.B. Bradley.

*Legend for Figure 4<sup>31</sup>*

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|---|--------------------------|
| 1. A.M.A. Mission.                                  | a Chawsóóă pan           |
| 2. Santa Cruz.                                      | b Nakodah Mănchěgee      |
| 3. Robert Hunter.                                   | c Nakodah Abdool Russool |
| 4. Roman Catholic Church, and Silva Grenon & Co.    | d Chawsóóă p'ook         |
| 5. Danish Consulate.                                | e Chǒŏnchoofăk           |
| 6. A. Markwald & Co.                                | f Mussulman Square       |
| 7. Custom House, and Capt. J. Bush, Harbour Master. | g P'ăya p'isănsǒŏpápon   |
| 8. C.G. Allen, Steam tug Office.                    | h P'ăw kĭm               |
| 9. S.P. Goodale.                                    | i Chek yǒŏsěng           |
| 10. American Baptist Mission.                       | j Chawsóóă cheench'aa    |
| 11. Portuguese Consulate.                           | k Chawsóóă lǒwch'aa      |
| 12. British Consulate.                              | l Chǒŏnchoochoo          |
| 13. Doctor James Campbell.                          | m Chǒŏnchoo mánhóóă      |
| 14. French Consulate.                               | n Chawsóóă kěngsooa      |
| 15. Remi Schmidt & Co.                              | o Chawsóóă kěngyǒŏ       |
| 16. Capt. James White.                              | p Chawsóóă p'o           |
| 17. Charles Grant & Co.                             | q Chawsóóă eeām          |
| 18. Bishop Pallegoix, Church and College.           | r Chawsóóă kwangsĭw      |
| 19. T.S. Chune & Co. (1860: Orr Dare & Co.)         | s Chǒŏnchoo p'ow         |
| 20. Borneo Co. Limited.                             | t Chawsóóă kět           |
| 21. Pickenpack Thies & Co. and Hanseatic Consulate. | u Akawn nóó              |
| 22. Protestant Cemetery.                            | v Captain choon          |
| 23. Caledonian Dockyard.                            | w Akawn mǒŏt             |
| 24. Puddicombe Dockyard.                            | x Chawsóóă òn            |
| 25. U.S. Consulate.                                 | y Chawsóóă yĭm           |
| 26. Presbyterian Mission.                           | z Chawsóóă ěngkěēap      |
| 27. American Steam Rice Mill.                       | a Chawsóóă p'awsooàn     |
|   | b Akawn p'ăw             |
|   | c Chawsóóă to            |
|   | d Chawsóóă oteean        |
|   | e K'óón bānkĭm           |
|   | f K'óón bantééan         |
|   | g Lóóáng meitree         |

<sup>31</sup> Bradley's list of Chinese/Muslim merchants starts on the west bank with the letter references *a* to *x*, then switches to the east bank for *y*, *z* and *a* again through to *g*. The indifferent quality of the map makes some of the references difficult to locate, but it would appear that they are all there.



in the middle of the Chinese community. These brick buildings had been built as royal warehouses during the Third Reign by Phraya Si Phiphat (under King Rama IV he would become known as Somdet Ong Noi), but were now rented to Indian merchants. The White House (Figure 4: west bank, *f*, *Mussulman Square*) was the centre of this community, comprising the offices of some nineteen separate Muslim traders, who are listed by Bradley.<sup>29</sup> The Red House was occupied by leading Muslim traders, Abdul Russul and Mahamad Hussein (Figure 4: west bank, *c*, *Nakodah Abdool Russool*). Moored nearby was the floating house occupied by Nakodah Manchegee and Abdulah (Figure 4: *b*, *Nakodah Mānchēgee*).

However, the area was dominated by the much larger community of Chinese merchants. Among the most prominent of these were two, who would be appointed to the post of Phraya Choduk Rachasretthi under King Chulalongkorn: the Teochew merchant, Chaosua Pook or Li Hok (Figure 4: west bank, *d*, *Chawsóóǎ p'ook*), the owner of the Lee Tit Guan shipping company, an active trader with the Straits Settlements with a branch office in Hong Kong; and, next door to Pook, Lim Fak (Figure 4: west bank, *e*, *Chǒǒnchoofāk*), a Hokkien descendent with various business interests in the south of Siam and also an official of the Krom Tha Sai. Although the residence of the serving Phraya Choduk Rachasretthi, Ng Tiengjong, is not explicitly referenced, Bradley does show the residence of his son-in-law, Lim Kengsua or Phraya Phakdee Phatrakorn (Figure 4: west bank, *n*, *Chawsóóǎ kěngsooa*), whose descendents were to adopt the name Bhadranaṇḍik.

The residence of one of the leading tax farmers, Koh Chun or Phraya Phisansupaphol, the patriarch of the Bisalputra family, is also shown (Figure 4: west bank, *g*, *P'āya p'ísánsǒǒpápon*). Koh Chun was the owner of the Huay Chung Long steamship terminal and rental offices and a fleet of ships, including the first Siamese steamship to service Bangkok and Hong Kong. Among the many tax farms he held at various times were the concessions for salt and opium. His second son, Koh Poh Kim, the owner of Guan Tit Lee rice mill in Samsen is shown as living in the property adjacent to his father's (Figure 4: west bank, *h*, *P'ǎw kīm*). A little further downriver was the residence of Koh Mahwah (Figure 4: west bank, *m*, *Chǒǒnchoo máhóóǎ*). Koh Mahwah had originally worked as an apprentice and manager for Koh Chun and then bought out Koh Chun's Hong Kong business. Under the new name of Yuan Fat Hong, this business would become one of the major Chinese import-export companies in Hong Kong and expand from trading and shipping into rice milling, real estate and finance.

Among the other prominent Chinese merchants identified in Bradley's map are Kim Lohchae (Figure 4: west bank, *k*, *Chawsóóǎ lǒwch'aa*), a prominent Teochew merchant, who ran a successful junk trade and was the patriarch of the Poshyananda family.

Interestingly, Bradley does not include any Chinese residences in the Kudi Chin area, which was the heart of the Hokkien community, hemmed in between the Portuguese Catholics and a Muslim village. Instead, the line of residences on the Thonburi bank would have housed a mostly Teochew community, apart from the Muslim merchants. The fact that the map shows a more substantial community of Chinese merchants on

<sup>29</sup> Bradley, *Bangkok Calendar*, 1860, pp. 71-72.

the west bank of the river, compared to the east bank, may reflect its greater availability of riverside plots for new businesses in the first half of the 19th century. Perhaps Bradley's rationale was simply to include as many businesses as he could on the main river frontages, which was in effect the city's most important street until the era of road building started with the construction of Charoen Krung Road.

Whatever his rationale, the effect is to provide a unique view of the city, juxtaposing residential clusters populated by leaders from the long-established communities with locations popular with the new Western immigrants. Unlike in the Ayutthaya and even Thonburi periods, foreigners were no longer confined to exclusive enclaves, but had the freedom to choose their location within the constraints stipulated by the Treaty. As a result, they were now, if not fully integrated, at least living in close proximity and sometimes in overlapping clusters. In the case of the Chinese, of course, many were fully assimilated and considered themselves Siamese. The map provides a rare record of the residential locations of many leading Chinese merchants who had dominated Siam's international trade since the Thonburi Period of the late 18th century.

A final group of longer-term residents, which Bradley ensures are represented on his map, is the cohort of missionaries. Bradley naturally corrects Richards' omission by including all three Protestant missions – his own American Missionary Association, the American Baptist Mission and the Presbyterian Mission. However, he is slightly less scrupulous in regard to the Catholic missions. Bishop Pallegoix had recorded five Roman Catholic churches in the city in the early 1850s,<sup>30</sup> but Bradley has listed only three of them: Santa Cruz in Kudi Chin, Bishop Pallegoix Church and College (Assumption Cathedral) and a Roman Catholic Church near the entrance of Klong Kut Mai (Holy Rosary Church). The missing churches (Conception and Saint-Xavier) are both located in the Samsen area to the north of the city, which Bradley appears not to have mapped at all. On the other hand, Bradley did not ignore the much wider distribution of Buddhist temples in Bangkok, plotting the location of fifty-four *wat* in his first map, the plan of the inner city, and providing additional information on alternative names and an estimate of the number of monks for each *wat*.

## Conclusion

Richards' 1856 survey of the Chaophraya River provided the most accurate map to date of the riverine landscape of the city of Bangkok. The fact that the map was developed with the explicit support – and possibly at the direct request – of King Mongkut indicates that not only were the scientific priorities of the survey well understood by both parties, but also that the king was not at that stage overly concerned about potential military uses to which the survey could be put by the British. Similarly for the British, the motivation for the survey was primarily commercial, rather than military, and was possibly an unplanned by-product of Richards' designated task, to undertake a coastal survey.

The clarity and precision of the map produced by Richards would be of great

<sup>30</sup> Monsignor Jean-Baptiste Pallegoix, *Description of the Thai Kingdom or Siam: Thailand under King Mongkut*, translated by Walter E. J. Tips (Bangkok: White Lotus, 2000), p. 405.

benefit, providing a reliable base for future planning and development. The first known use to which it was put by Bradley was to plot out the city's principal landmarks and the residential and commercial locations of its leading inhabitants. By undertaking this painstaking exercise, Bradley provided a unique insight into the changes to the spatial dynamics of the city being wrought as a consequence of the Bowring Treaty. Bradley's map offers a snapshot of the developing cityscape during the early post-Bowring years and demonstrates the relative extent of the Western and Chinese business communities, the emergence of a preferred area for Western businesses and residences and how this fitted in to the existing business landscape of the city.

### *Acknowledgments*

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