

香港歷史資料文集

*Collected Essays on Various
Historical Materials for Hong Kong Studies*



K296.58-53
941

港台書室

719015

香港歷史資料文集
*Collected Essays on Various
Historical Materials for Hong Kong Studies*



市政局
Urban Council

香港歷史資料展覽

(一九九〇年十月二十三日至一九九一年一月六日)

香港市政局主辦

政府檔案局歷史檔案處及香港大學圖書館協辦

Historical Materials For Hong Kong Studies Exhibition

(23rd October 1990 – 6th January 1991)

Presented by the Urban Council, Hong Kong

in association with

the Public Records Office, Government Records Service and

the University of Hong Kong Libraries

©香港博物館編製・香港市政局出版

一九九〇年十月

© Produced by the Hong Kong Museum of History

Published by the Urban Council, Hong Kong

October 1990

工作小組

編輯：丁新豹、蕭麗娟

統籌及研究：蕭麗娟、梁潔玲、鄒兆麟

展覽設計：馮熾雄、謝鴻慈

平面設計：陳滙源、鄒頌卿

視聽製作：李國清

攝影：陳樹堅

印刷：新輝印務有限公司

Production Team

Editors: Joseph S.P. Ting, Susanna L.K. Siu

Management and Research: Susanna L.K. Siu,

Esa K.L. Leung,

Tom S.L. Chau

Exhibition Design: Anthony C.H. Fung, Alvin H.C. Tse

Graphic Design: Chan Wui-yuen, Frances C.H. Chow

Audio-visual Production: Dennis K.C. Li

Photography: Kris S.K. Chan

Printing: Sunshine Press Ltd.

目錄 CONTENTS

- 4 序
- 6 Preface
- 8 Dr. Solomon Bard *Grave Memorials as Historical Documents*
- 14 Dr. Fok Kai-cheong *Private Chinese Business Letters and the Study of Hong Kong History – a Preliminary Report*
- 20 Dr. Patrick Hase *New Territories Poetry and Song*
- 33 Dr. James Hayes *Women and Female Children in Hong Kong and South China to 1949: Documents of Sale and Transfer*
- 48 Dr. Lau Yun-woo *Public Records Office and its War-time Records*
- 55 Dr. Elizabeth Sinn *The Tung Wah Group of Hospitals Archives*
- 61 蕭國健博士 談研究香港前代史之華文資料
- 66 楊國雄 香港大學孔安道紀念圖書館所藏香港史料介紹
- 74 丁新豹博士 歷史畫中的香港歷史 1816-1846
- 81 Susanna Lai-kuen Siu *War-time Postal History of Hong Kong Illustrated by Philatelic Items of the Museum*
- 90 鄒兆麟 香港族譜學概述
- 96 鳴謝 Acknowledgements

序

一八四一年開埠時，香港祇是一個罕為人知的漁村，百多年後的今天，它已經成為世界有數的大城市，東南亞的金融中心。在過去一百五十年間，香港經濟的發展，取得了輝煌的成就，它發展速度之快、變化之大，在中國、亞洲以至世界歷史上都是罕有其匹的。香港的成功有甚麼主觀和客觀因素？它發展的過程如何？未開埠前的香港又是怎樣的呢？這一連串問題，不單生於斯、長於斯的香港人感到興趣，就是國內，海外的學者都亟欲找尋答案，所謂「香港學」，就是在這種情況下出現的。研究「香港學」的熱潮正在香港、中國及海外的學術機構中掀起，方興未艾。

對於香港人來說，香港的發展與他們的生活息息相關，故此他們對於香港的過去，格外有興趣，而一九八四年，中英雙方發表聯合聲明，香港將於一九九七年結束百多年的英國管治，重歸中國版圖，香港歷史將邁進一個嶄新的時代；值此過渡時期，回顧一下香港的歷史發展過程，有溫故知新的作用，為了使年青一代對香港歷史有所認識，教育署將把香港史納入中學的教學課程，而香港史更成為攻讀高級學位人士的熱門選擇。研究歷史，首先必須充份掌握歷史資料，為了促進大家對香港歷史資料的認識，發揚研究香港歷史的風氣，香港博物館特別舉辦了「香港歷史資料」展覽，介紹研究不同時期香港歷史的各種各類中英文、官方及私人的檔案文獻，以至碑銘、繪畫、照片等資料。

展覽將扼要介紹至一九四五年止的有關香港的各類資料，主要劃分為三個時期：一八四一年前、一八四一至一九四一、一九四一至一九四五年。

香港——這個位於珠江口東陲的小島從來都在中國政府的管治之下，一八四一年一月廿六日，英軍在查理·義律的統率下藉着從未簽訂的「穿鼻草約」佔領香港，這是香港歷史的轉捩點和分水嶺，也是香港飛躍發展的起點，展覽的資料亦據此劃分為一八四一年前及四一年後兩個主要部份；日治時代的三年零八個月是香港歷史中一個獨特的時代，故展覽中視之為

一獨立單元。

展覽內容，以文獻為主、碑碣、繪畫、照片及其他資料為副。

展出的文獻，有中文的，也有英文的，如研究開埠前香港及新界地區農村社會狀況的有官修志乘、族譜、民間雜書、田契、民謠等；開埠後至淪陷前一段則既有英國殖民地部及外交部的檔案、香港政府的各類文獻及刊物，也有探討華人社會發展極具參考價值的東華及保良局文獻，研究商業活動必備的私人機構檔案如賬簿、契約、單據、信札等商業文件；日治時期則有各類公告、傳單、海報等。我們盡量陳列介紹各類不同類型的歷史資料，然而，由於有關資料浩如煙海，掛一漏萬之弊，恐仍難以避免。

為了配合這個展覽，本館特別邀請本港一些專門研究香港史的學者撰寫專文，介紹各類歷史資料或收藏香港史料的機構，編輯成這本文集。

前古物古蹟辦事處執行秘書白德博士對香港的歷史建築有全面而深入的認識，他撰寫的〈從墓碑發掘歷史資料〉分析墓碑碑文在研究歷史上的作用，並舉赤柱墳場及跑馬地香港墳場為例，解釋如何利用碑文作歷史研究。

香港大學歷史系霍啟昌博士的〈試論私人商業信件對研究港史的價值〉一文，則利用博物館及孔安道紀念圖書館近年購藏的大批商業信札文件，以研究活躍於二十世紀上半葉的兩位傑出商人馬敘朝及馮民德的商業活動，藉以說明商業文件在研究商業活動上的作用。

夏思義博士對香港農村禮俗素有研究，是次他撰寫的〈新界民謠〉，介紹了對於研究新界農村風俗極有幫助的原始資料——民謠，極富啟發性。

許舒博士是香港著名的史學家，多少年來孳孳矻矻地從事香港史的研究，著作等身。二十多年來，他為香港的一些文化學術機構搜集了大量的雜書手稿。是次他提供的〈一九四九年以前香港及華南的婦女和女孩：買賣及轉讓文件〉一文，論述買賣婦孺有關的各類文獻，翔實可觀。

政府檔案局歷史檔案處是香港政府保存一些具有行政、法律、財務或研究價值而需永久保留的檔案的

貯藏庫，也是研究香港政治、社會、經濟的資料寶庫，該處的主任劉潤和博士特別撰文介紹該館所藏的戰時記錄。

香港大學歷史系香港歷史研究室冼玉儀博士，對東華醫院有精闢的研究。東華醫院是香港最早的華人慈善團體，東華的文獻是探究香港早期華人社會極具參考價值的史料，冼博士的〈東華三院歷史檔案室〉一文，詳盡地介紹了東華皮藏的各種文獻及其歷史價值。

珠海書院文史系蕭國健博士一向專注於香港前代史的研究，對有關史料至為熟悉，他特別撰寫了〈談研究香港前代史之華文資料〉，介紹研究香港前代史的各類史料，並以具體例子，分析如何以這些資料進行香港史的研究。

研究香港史的人，當不會對香港大學的孔安道紀念圖書館感到陌生，這裏集中皮藏了大量與香港有關的不同種類的資料如書籍、檔案、刊物、手稿、報紙等，該館前任主任楊國雄先生的文章詳細介紹該館所藏的香港史料，方便有志於研究香港史的人士參考。

對於上述諸位學人惠撰專文，使我們能編輯成這本介紹香港史資料的文集，實在萬分感激。

此外，博物館的丁新豹、鄒兆麟兩位亦分別撰文介紹繪畫及族譜在研究香港史上的作用；蕭麗娟則利用博物館所藏之戰時郵品介紹戰時的郵務歷史。香港博物館藏有大批舊照片及明信片，但整理需時，有關研究成果，有待日後發表。

「香港歷史資料」展覽是由香港市政局主辦，政府檔案局歷史檔案處及香港大學圖書館協辦，所展出的文獻，除本館皮藏者外，多借自上述兩個機構，謹深致謝意，此外，更承蒙沙田中央圖書館、東華三院、保良局、香港上海滙豐銀行等機構惠借展品，以供展出，謹此衷心致謝。本展覽從構思到完成，獲多位香港史專家多方賜教，也謹此一併致謝。

何清顯

香港博物館總館長

一九九〇年十月

Preface

When the British took over Hong Kong in 1841, she was merely a small fishing village unknown to the world. Today, some hundred and fifty years later, Hong Kong has emerged as a leading cosmopolitan city as well as a major financial centre in Southeast Asia. During the past one and a half century, Hong Kong's economy has developed at an astonishing rapid pace never witnessed in China, Asia or even the world before. What are the major factors which have contributed to the spectacular growth of Hong Kong? How did Hong Kong develop through the past years? These questions are of interest to local people but also to scholars from mainland China and overseas. Under such circumstances, "Hong Kong Studies" has now become a popular topic for researchers.

To those people who have lived and grown with the city, Hong Kong's past has a special appeal. With the signing of the Joint Declaration by China and the United Kingdom in 1984, China will resume sovereignty over Hong Kong in 1997. The end of British rule will open a new chapter in the history of Hong Kong. It is therefore timely to review Hong Kong's past during this unique transitional period so as to acquire a new perspective of the future. To foster better understanding of Hong Kong history among the younger generation, the Education Department will incorporate the subject into the history syllabus of secondary schools. Local history has also become a popular topic for postgraduate studies. In order to conduct research work on Hong Kong history effectively, one should be acquainted with the extensive and multi-faceted historical materials on Hong Kong history. With a view to stimulating public interest as well as promoting a better understanding of such materials, the Museum has organized a thematic exhibition on "Historical Materials for Hong Kong Studies" which covers the various materials in different periods up to 1945, ranging from official and private records, inscriptions, paintings and historical photographs etc. in Chinese and English, and grouped under three sections.

Even as a small island located at the remote eastern side of the Pearl River Estuary, Hong Kong had always been under the jurisdiction of China. On 26 January 1841, by virtue of the unratified Convention of Chuanbi, the British forces led by Captain Charles Elliot occupied Hong Kong. This was the turning point

and watershed in history which marked the beginning of Hong Kong's prosperity. The three sections in the display are divided as follows: pre-1841, post-1841, and the Japanese Occupation which lasted for three years and eight months.

The exhibition covers mainly historical documents, supplemented by inscriptions, paintings and photographs.

The exhibits on display comprise both Chinese and English materials. For studies in the pre-1841 period and traditional village life in the New Territories, one can refer to the Chinese official historiography, clan genealogies, miscellaneous publications, title deeds, folk songs and poetry. From 1841 to the pre-Japanese Occupation period, the reference materials available included not only British Colonial Office records, Foreign Office records and Hong Kong Government records, but also the documents of the Po Leung Kuk and Tung Wah Group of Hospitals which are indispensable in tracing the development of the Chinese community. There are also commercial records drawn from private firms, such as ledgers, account books, contracts, deeds, and correspondence. All these documents provide important clues for the study of commercial activities. For the Japanese Occupation period, there are various proclamations, leaflets and posters. Much effort has been made to include as many types of historical material as possible in the exhibition. However because of the very wide range of materials, it should be noted that this exhibition should not be regarded as exhaustive.

To complement the exhibition, the Museum has solicited invaluable support from renowned scholars on Hong Kong studies who have contributed articles on various aspects in the study of historical materials, or on major local historical archives as well as institutions which held important collections of history documents. The Museum is indeed honoured to be able to include their papers in this symposium.

Dr. Solomon Bard, the former Executive Secretary of the Antiquities and Monuments Office, is extremely knowledgeable on historical buildings and monuments within the territory. Using the Stanley Military Cemetery and the Hong Kong Cemetery in Happy Valley as examples, he explains how grave inscriptions can be used in the study of local history in his article "Grave Memorials as Historical Documents".

Based on the business records and documents recently acquired and collected by the Museum and the Hung On-to Memorial Library of the University of

Hong Kong, Dr. Kai-cheong Fok of the History Department of the University of Hong Kong traces the business activities of two renowned local businessmen active in the first half of the 20th century – Mr. Feng Minde and Mr. Ma Xuchao in his article “Chinese Business Letters and the Study of Hong Kong History – a Preliminary Report” to illustrate the role of commercial papers in the study of business activities.

Dr. Patrick Hase who has long studied the customs and practices of village life in Hong Kong, presents a very illuminating paper on “The New Territories Poetry and Song”, a study of primary materials – folk songs and poems and their importance in the study of the customs and tradition in villages in the New Territories.

Dr. James Hayes, a well-known local historian who contributes regularly to academic journals, has conducted research on Hong Kong history for many years. For over two decades, he had salvaged a large volume of manuscripts and miscellaneous publications for various academic institutions. This time he has contributed a very fascinating paper, “Women and Female Children in Hong Kong and South China to 1949: Documents of Sale and Transfer”, to describe the various kinds of documents on the sale and pledging of women and children.

The Public Records Office is a repository of administrative, legal and financial documents and correspondence files which are of high historical value and merit permanent preservation. It is also a treasure of materials for the study of political, social and economic activities of Hong Kong. Dr. Yun-woo Lau, the Government Archivist, outlined in his article the collections in the archives with special reference to war-time records.

Dr. Elizabeth Sinn of the History Workshop of the History Department of the University of Hong Kong has done a thorough study of the Tung Wah Hospital, the earliest local Chinese charitable organization in Hong Kong. Its archives comprise early Tung Wah papers and documents which are of utmost importance to the study of early Chinese community. In the paper “The Tung Wah Group of Hospitals’ Archives”, Dr. Sinn discusses the contents of the archives and their historical value.

Dr. Anthony Siu of the Faculty of Arts and History of the Chu Hai College has devoted much attention to the study of the pre-1841 Hong Kong history. He is fully acquainted with Chinese source materials of that period. In his article “The Chinese Materials for the

Study of pre-1841 Hong Kong History”, Dr. Siu describes in great detail the different kinds of Chinese historical materials and their role and applications with specific examples in the study of the early history of Hong Kong.

For scholars of Hong Kong history, the Hung On-to Memorial Library of the University of Hong Kong should be very familiar. It houses a huge collection of research materials related to Hong Kong including publications, documents, journals, manuscripts, newspapers etc. The former Curator of the Library, Mr. Peter Yeung, describes in his article the wide range of material in the Library.

We are much indebted to the above-mentioned scholars who have contributed to this symposium on historical materials for Hong Kong Studies.

In addition Dr. Joseph Ting and Mr. Tom Siu-lun Chau of the Hong Kong Museum of History have contributed articles on the role and significance of historical paintings and clan genealogies in studying Hong Kong history. While Miss Susanna Lai-kuen Siu uses the Museum’s war-time postal items to trace the development of local postal history during the Second World War. Special mention should also be made of the Museum’s large collection of historical photographs and postcards. Research on these pictorial materials is being conducted and the Museum will publish the result of this time-consuming research in due course.

The exhibition “Historical Materials for Hong Kong Studies” is presented by the Urban Council in association with the Public Records Office and the University of Hong Kong Libraries from which a major portion of the displayed archival materials are drawn, apart from the Museum’s own collection items. While we record our warmest gratitude to these two institutions, we also wish to thank the Sha Tin Central Library, the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals, the Po Leung Kuk and the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited for their support and generosity in loaning us their valuable historical items for display in the exhibition. To all those institutions and individuals who have favoured us with their assistance and co-operation in various ways, I offer them my sincere thanks.

Ho Ching-hin

Chief Curator

Hong Kong Museum of History

October 1990

Grave Memorials as Historical Documents

Dr. Solomon Bard, OBE, ED, JP

Honorary Adviser, Hong Kong Museum of History. Former Executive Secretary, Antiquities and Monuments Office. Dr. Bard has conducted numerous archaeological excavations and has written numerous articles on archaeology and local history.

Recent publication: *In Search of the Past: A Guide to the Antiquities of Hong Kong*.

白德博士

香港博物館名譽顧問。前古物古蹟辦事處執行秘書，曾主持不少考古發掘，亦發表過不少關於考古及本地史的文章。

近期著作：《In Search of the Past: A Guide to the Antiquities of Hong Kong》（《香港文物志》）

*"Death laid here
A man good and true
A prayer please.
It might have been you"*
(grave memorial No. 907)

Introduction

History is largely the story of written documents and verbal recountal. The former takes many forms, from clay tablets and papyri of ancient times, archival records of later periods, to time-capsules of the modern age. The latter is passed as a verbal tradition by word of mouth, from the old to the young, from generation to generation.

Historians at all times have used all these sources of information with considerable success. Among these, one unique source is the subject of this article – the Grave Memorial.

Grave memorials in churchyards and cemeteries have long been known as useful sources of historical information, especially on local history and genealogies. Until recently, however, recording of gravestones has been sadly neglected. Cemeteries are often reclaimed for other land uses, gravestones are displaced or lost, and on those which have survived, the inscriptions have weathered away beyond any recording. And yet, these stones and their inscriptions contain much information of interest to historians, demographers, and even architects.

Historical

It is generally agreed that commemorating an individual by a burial inscription is probably as old as the writing itself. The pyramids and other massive tomb memorials constructed in Egypt in the third millenium BC contained

hieroglyphic inscriptions recording the events and the achievements of the persons buried. Later, Roman inscriptions on burial sarcophagi also recounted events in local history. The custom of monumental inscriptions continued and spread to most countries of the world which practised burial. (Fig 1).



Fig. 1
A Roman tombstone (circa 100 AD, in Cirencester, England) of Sextus Valerius Genialis.

It tells us that he was a trooper in the Thracian cavalry regiment and that he was born in north-east Holland*.

*From "Roman Britain", British Heritage (British History Illustrated).

While burials in ancient times were often multiple, the origin of special enclosed areas, which became, in effect, cemeteries, is obscure. They may have started in early medieval times. In Christian countries, small cemeteries with inscribed gravestones developed attached to the churches. At the same time, as literacy spread, so had the inscriptions on gravestones and monuments gradually become more elaborate, with details of the deceased and epitaphs, often in verse.

At all times, grave memorials have been in danger of destruction, but the threat seems to have increased markedly in the 20th century. Many factors have contributed to this; for instance, the greater dispersal of families who may have looked after the graves, increasing costs of maintenance, and greater need of land utilization. Time is the enemy of history, and so it is with the gravestone inscriptions, which only timely recording can save for posterity.

Historical value of grave memorials

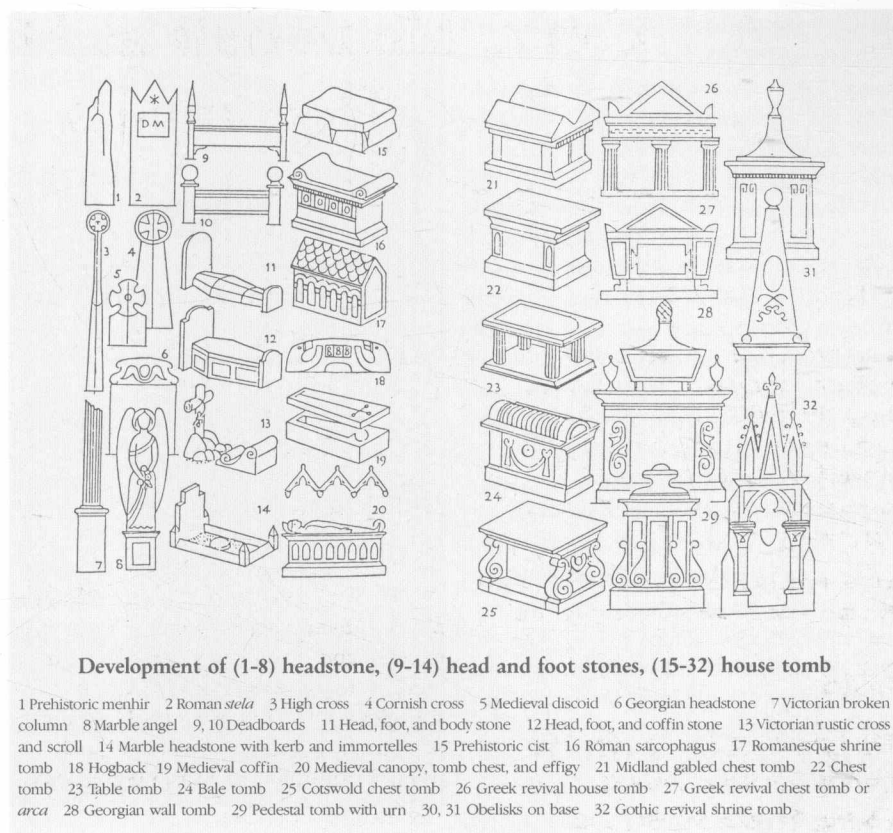
There are three major aspects in which recording of grave memorials may be of considerable interest to the historian: –

(1) Inscriptions on the stone may contain valuable information about important general events in the area, such as epidemics, natural calamities, war, piracy, and so forth.

(2) An art historian and an architect will be interested in the construction of the memorial, its symbolic and ornamental features, from which a development of memorials over a period of time may be studied (Fig 2).

(3) Inscriptions may be of special interest to family historians and genealogists, who may be studying population changes in the area.

Given the intrinsic value of inscriptions on grave memorials, it must not be assumed that all inscriptions contain valuable historical information; many are mundane, containing little of interest. It is the cumulative data of many grave memorials which contribute to the historical study. It must also be remembered that the most useful element of the memorial –



Development of (1-8) headstone, (9-14) head and foot stones, (15-32) house tomb

1 Prehistoric menhir 2 Roman stela 3 High cross 4 Cornish cross 5 Medieval discoid 6 Georgian headstone 7 Victorian broken column 8 Marble angel 9, 10 Deadboards 11 Head, foot, and body stone 12 Head, foot, and coffin stone 13 Victorian rustic cross and scroll 14 Marble headstone with kerb and immortelles 15 Prehistoric cist 16 Roman sarcophagus 17 Romanesque shrine tomb 18 Hogback 19 Medieval coffin 20 Medieval canopy, tomb chest, and effigy 21 Midland gabled chest tomb 22 Chest tomb 23 Table tomb 24 Bale tomb 25 Cotswold chest tomb 26 Greek revival house tomb 27 Greek revival chest tomb or arca 28 Georgian wall tomb 29 Pedestal tomb with urn 30, 31 Obelisks on base 32 Gothic revival shrine tomb

Fig. 2

Development of grave memorials (from "How to Record Graveyards" by Jeremy Jones)

the inscription – is also, unfortunately, the first thing to disappear, or at least to become illegible.

Recording and Methodology

In recording grave memorials, the aim should be to record them as completely as possible, and satisfy all the interested parties – the historian, the art-historian, and the genealogist. The full record might consist of the following components: –

- (1) large-scale map of the cemetery
- (2) detailed records of individual grave-stones on special cards or forms
- (3) photographic records
- (4) background historical research
- (5) computer analysis of the data

(1) **Large-scale map of the cemetery:** the preferred scale is 1:200. In a small cemetery with only a small number of graves under study, it may be advisable to draw each grave to scale, both in size and

orientation. When dealing with a large number of graves, it may be sufficient to indicate their location by conventional symbols, such as a small rectangle, not drawn to scale. All the recorded graves should be individually numbered.

(2) **Recording form:** As many details of a grave memorial as may be required are recorded on a special form, which also contains spaces for a photograph and a reproduced inscription. The latter is the most useful single component of a memorial and should be recorded *verbatim*. Some inscriptions are read easily, but many, especially old gravestones, are weathered and require special efforts in deciphering them.

Many other details of a memorial must be recorded. They include – the type of a memorial, ornamental and symbolic features, shape and dimensions, type of stone used, condition of the memorial and of the inscription. A standard recording form has been produced by the Council for British Archaeology in England which

has proved very useful. However, other forms are available, and a researcher can design one's own form to meet one's particular requirements. The standard form of the CBA is reproduced here, front and back (Fig. 3).

(3) **Photography:** This is essential because a photograph will faithfully reproduce the external features of the memorial, as well as the script style of the inscription. The black-and-white photographs are normally used.

(4) **Background research:** In general, the inscription on a memorial tells the story, and some researchers will regard this as adequate. However, some inscriptions are informative, others are not. Other researchers, therefore, prefer to follow up with background research for additional historical material, on persons buried or on associated events. When this is done, it must be made clear that such information is not derived directly from the memorial.

(5) **Computer analysis:** We live in a computer age. There is no doubt that most, if not all, research to-day is computer-oriented. Grave recording, as outlined above, is eminently suitable for computer analysis. Care must be taken, however, that the recording form and the designed computer programme are made compatible with the available computer services.

Field Work

The survey of a cemetery, reading inscriptions, and recording of memorials is carried out in the field. The initial record is written in field notes which can be later corrected, amended, or amplified. Only the finished result is entered into the recording form. Two or three "readings" are often required. At the first reading, inscriptions which are clear and are easily read are copied down. Difficult inscriptions are read again using special methods. These involve mainly the use of a mirror and a torch, to reflect light either from the sun or from an artificial source of light, causing shadows around the inscription to be deeply accentuated, thus bringing the inscription into relief. Combined efforts of several recorders are desirable, which often ensure better results. No effort should be spared in

Fig. 3
Grave memorial recording form, front and back,
produced by the Council for British Archaeology

trying to decipher fully even the most difficult inscriptions. There is always a feeling of satisfaction when a particularly difficult inscription has eventually yielded its secret, often thanks to the combined efforts of several recorders.

Grave memorials in Hong Kong

Systematic recording of grave memorials in Hong Kong is comparatively recent. The idea originated in 1982 from the Director of Urban Services, in his capacity as the Authority under the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance. It was proposed to begin with the military garrison graves*, and later extend the research to the civilian, non-Chinese burials, and eventually to all the rest. In 1984, the author of this article was commissioned to record military graves at

*These are distinct from the Commonwealth War Graves, which are the graves of the members of the forces of the Commonwealth who died in the two world wars.

the Stanley Military Cemetery; being a small cemetery, containing only 89 garrison graves, it served well as a pilot project before recording of larger cemeteries would be undertaken. In December 1989, five years after the Stanley Cemetery project, the author was given the go-ahead for the next project – the recording of military graves at the Hong Kong Cemetery (Happy Valley), the project which is now in progress.

Since a good deal of Hong Kong history, during the past 150 years, is connected with the activities of its British garrison, a few words on British military presence in Hong Kong may be useful. British army during the reign of Queen Victoria (1837-1901) was organised chiefly for the defence of the colonies and was spread throughout the world. In 1840, out of 103 battalions which Britain had, only 22 were serving in Britain and Ireland. Moreover, soldiers spent more time in service overseas than at home. The first garrison troops to serve in Hong Kong arrived in 1841, under Major-General Sir

Hugh Gough. The troops belonged to the 55th Regiment of Foot, and were quartered in the matshed barracks newly erected in the city of Victoria.

In 1842, matshed barracks were also erected at Chek-Chu (later re-named *Stanley*) under the mistaken impression that the south side of the island was healthier than the north side. There was already a village at Chek-chu, of some 800-900 local inhabitants, located at the north end of Check Choo Wan (now spelled Chek Chue).

Garrison graves

Nearly all the garrison graves from 1842 to 1970 are contained in the two cemeteries – at Stanley and Happy Valley. Early in 1843, permanent barracks and a hospital were erected at Stanley; they are shown clearly on an early survey map prepared by Lieutenant T. B. Collinson. The cemetery was probably established in 1843, and was used until about 1870. It was used again during the Japanese occupation, 1942-45, for the burial of civilian internees whose camp was located

nearby.

The Hong Kong Cemetery at Happy Valley (previously called the Colonial Cemetery) is a large cemetery of Protestant denomination, containing several thousand burials, civilian and military, the latter numbering over 1300. It was first used around 1845, when burials from the earlier ground, in Wanchai, were transferred to Happy Valley. Next to the Hong Kong Cemetery, and immediately adjoining it, is the Catholic section called St Michael's Cemetery, which has about 60 military graves.

Military graves normally contain one interment; occasionally more, but rarely more than five. The monuments, on the other hand, often commemorate many persons, and tend to record events of wider historical interest. The Opium Wars, piracy, natural calamities, epidemics, and the day-to-day hardships of the 19th century's military life – all caused death of soldiers and sailors, and recorded on the graves and monuments of the cemetery. Their inscriptions contain valuable information, and give us a vivid picture of the life and the role of the army and the navy

in the early Hong Kong. Examples below illustrate.

Conclusion

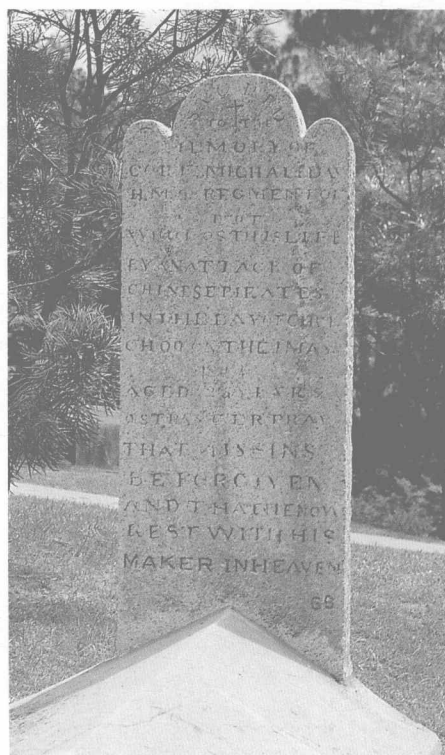
Grave memorials, however humble and delapidated, all can contribute something to the history of a place or its people. It is a challenge to rescue inscriptions which are hardly legible, or ones that are buried, or to piece together the whole from broken parts, with the realization that one is reading what may be an interesting fragment of history, perhaps one which no one can have read for a long time. It is a vanishing archive which should be carefully recorded before it is lost forever.

Ex.1. Grave memorial No. G27 at Stanley Cemetery

The inscription refers to the piratical attack in which Corporal Day lost his life. It also tells us that his regiment, the 98th of Foot, was then stationed in Hong Kong.

A follow-up research in Hong Kong archives gives further details of the incident: – the soldiers were conveying a payroll of 12,000 rupees, when they were attacked by more than 20 pirates at Stanley Bay. Several soldiers were killed (the exact number is uncertain) and the money carried off. The pirates responsible for the attack were eventually apprehended in China, and executed in Canton.

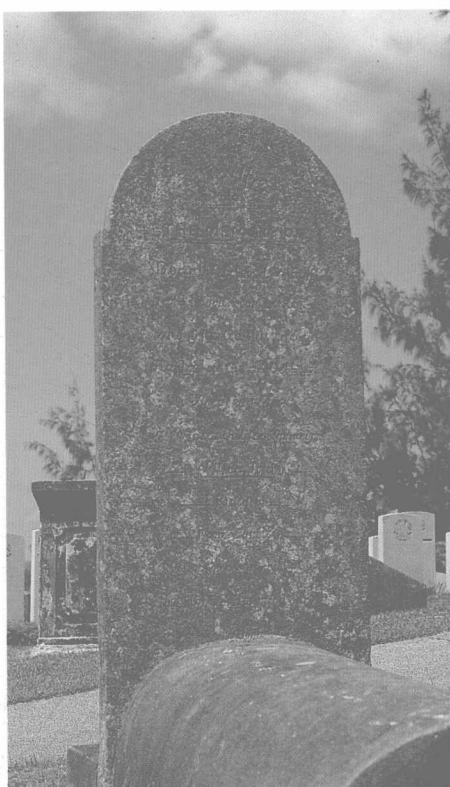
The above shows the value of information contained on a tombstone, when combined with background research. The latter may be further extended to the study of piracy in Hong Kong waters generally, which has been a very big problem for many centuries.



SACRED
TO THE
MEMORY OF
COR P^L MICHAEL DAY
H.M. 98 REGMENT OF
FOOT
WHO LOST HIS LIFE
BY AN ATTACK OF
CHINESE PIRATES
IN THE BAY OF CHUK
CHOU ON THE 1 MAY
1844
AGED 25 YEARS
O STRANGER PRAY
THAT HIS SINS
BE FORGIVEN
AND THAT HE NOW
REST WITH HIS
MAKER IN HEAVEN

Ex.2. Grave memorial No. G52 at Stanley Cemetery

The inscription tells an immensely sad story of Sergeant Johnston, of XX Regiment, who had lost his wife and three children in one devastating blow. This was undoubtedly the result of an epidemic, which is confirmed by further archival research. Stanley in the 1860s was still a very unhealthy place with endemic malaria and frequent epidemics of dysentery and cholera.



THE MEMORY OF

Dora the beloved Wife of
Sarg^t R. Johnston XX Reg^t
who departed this life at
Stanley on the 12th Oct^r 1864

Aged 26 years
also three children namely

— William Joseph —

— Richard —

— George Conflict —

This stone was erected by
the beloved Husband and
Father

40

Ex.3. The inscription on Grave memorial No. 378, Hong Kong Cemetery

Captain Bate was killed during the attack on Canton in the 2nd Opium War. His death was described by the special correspondent of The Times, G. W. Cooke, as follows: — "...but I may state it as within my own knowledge, that Captain Bate was killed while superintending the placing of the scaling-ladders."

As the inscription states, there is a memorial plaque to Captain Bate on the wall of St. John's Cathedral.



Sacred

To the Memory of

Captain William Thornton Bate R.N.

Who was killed at the storming
of Canton

on December 29th 1857

In the 37th year of his Age

Mark the perfect man, and behold
The upright for the end of that man

His friends in this country
Have erected a monument
Near St. John's Cathedral
As a token of their deep affection
And respect for his memory.

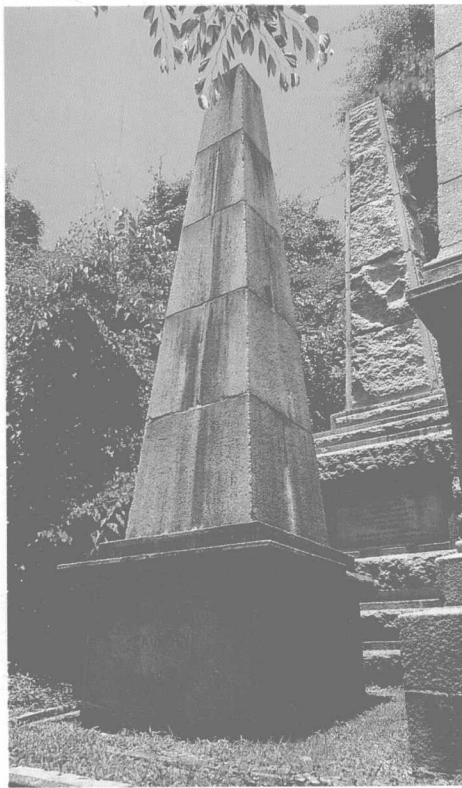
Ex.4. Monument No. 1035, Hong Kong Cemetery

The tablet facing east, depicted here, states – “Kuhlan” 1855.

The tablet facing north (not shown here) reveals that the monument was erected by the officers and crews of the American steam frigate “Powhatan” and Her Majesty’s steam sloop “Rattler” in memory of their shipmates who were killed in a combined boat attack against pirates, off Kuhlan on 4th August 1855.

The south face of the monument carries the names of 4 men killed from “Rattler” and 5 men killed from “Powhatan”.

Further archival research reveals that this was, in fact, the second expedition against Kuhlan – the stronghold of pirates, the first one being only partially successful. The fighting on this occasion was very fierce, with casualties on both sides. Ironically, it was admitted that though their cause was evil, the pirates had fought with considerable courage!



從墓碑發掘歷史資料

墓碑可反映地方歷史和死者的世系，本為重要的歷史材料，可惜卻一直備受忽視。

替死者立墓碑的習俗，可說是源遠流長，早在五千年前埃及人已經在金字塔及其他墓碑上刻上文字，記載死者的成就及事蹟，其後羅馬人亦在石棺上刻上當地的歷史事件，而立墓碑記事的風俗差不多傳遍世界各地。

墓碑對歷史研究主要有三方面的貢獻：（一）碑文可能記載了當地的大事，例如天災人禍等；（二）墓碑的造型及裝飾特色有助研究墓碑建築風格的發展；（三）碑文有助研究家族史和世系學。

隨著歲月的侵蝕，碑文逐漸變得模糊，因此，詳盡記錄墓碑的資料便成為當務之急。記錄墓碑時應該盡量詳細，必須包括以下資料：（一）墳場的大比例圖，以一比二百為最理想；（二）詳細的墓碑記錄表格，以便填寫墓碑資料及貼上照片；（三）墓碑照片，以黑白照片為佳；（四）墓碑的

歷史背景研究；（五）電腦分析及整理所有資料。記錄墓碑資料必需作實地考察，遇上難辨認的碑文時更需要用不同的儀器或利用不同角度或強度的光線來仔細辨認。

香港墓碑的研究和記錄始於近年，一九八二年市政事務署署長曾建議記錄境內的墳場，由軍人墳場開始。一九八四年作者受聘記錄赤柱軍人墳場，至一九八九年十二月作者再進行另一研究計劃記錄跑馬地墳場，計劃至今仍在進行中。

在香港過去的一百五十年中，英國軍團扮演著重要的角色，而赤柱軍人墳場及跑馬地墳場安葬了差不多所有於一八四二至一九七〇年去世的軍人，因此研究這兩個墳場的資料有助了解香港歷史。墳場的紀念碑記載不同的歷史事件，例如戰爭、天災、瘟疫、海上掠奪等，提供了軍人及水手去世的原因，同時顯示了軍人及海軍的日常生活及他們在香港開埠初期扮演的角色。

Private Chinese Business Letters and the Study of Hong Kong History – a Preliminary Report

Dr. FOK Kai-cheong

Lecturer, Department of History,
University of Hong Kong. Honorary
Adviser, Hong Kong Museum of History.
His main research interests relate to the
role played by Hong Kong and Macau in
modern Chinese History.

Recent publication: *Lectures on Hong
Kong History: Hong Kong's Role in
Modern Chinese History*.

霍啟昌博士

香港大學歷史系講師，香港博物館名譽顧問，對香港及澳門在近代中國史上扮演的角色有深入研究。

近期著作： *Lectures on Hong Kong History: Hong Kong's Role in Modern Chinese History*

Most people probably understand that the success story of how Hong Kong developed from a "barren island with hardly a house upon it" into "the pearl of the orient" has much to do with trade. But perhaps not too many people are aware of the fact that Hong Kong's economic upsurge started from the second half of the nineteenth century with the great influx of Chinese into the colony from South China as a result of the Taiping Movement. It is true that Hong Kong's unique environments under British rule in the late nineteenth century offered a viable infrastructure for the development of trade. A magnificent harbour, efficient banking, insurance and shipping services and warehousing facilities, a comparatively stable government and just legal system consistent with security of life and property but with minimum bureaucratic interference were no doubt ingredients germane to the rapid development of trade in late nineteenth century Hong Kong. But the most important factor behind the success story remains to be the Chinese population of Hong Kong.

After the Taiping Movement had begun, quite a number of well-to-do Cantonese merchants not only brought their families with them to Hong Kong but more importantly, also their capital, entrepreneurial skills and business connections. Their business finesse and farsight enabled them to immediately make use of Hong Kong's unique environment and turn it into a centre of trade network stretching from Peking and Tientsin in North China to the distant countries in South-east Asia, North America and Australia. It was some of these merchants who soon founded the Chinese trading hong, the so-called Nam Pak Hong (Nan Bei Hang), the lifeline of nineteenth century Hong Kong's entrepot

trade.

Contemporary government records concurring with the view that these Chinese merchants accounted mainly for the growing prosperity of nineteenth century Hong Kong are certainly not wanting. Suffice just to name a few here. In his report to the Colonial Office in 1863, Governor Robinson mentioned that "It is the Chinese who have made Hong Kong what it is ... they have made the colony the centre of a large local coasting trade – a seaport at which produce of the North and South destined for consumption in China changes hands."¹ On 23 April, 1881, Governor Hennessy openly admitted in a public speech that "as to the great prosperity of the Colony, he felt it was due far more to the merchants, bankers and shopkeepers he saw in the deputation (the prominent Chinese community he was addressing), than to any labours of his own."²

Despite their most important role in Hong Kong's early success story little is known about the activities of Hong Kong Chinese merchants from the late nineteenth century into the first three decades of the twentieth century. Government archives and other publications very seldom refer to their activities and even if they do, they only make passing and fleeting remarks on these Chinese merchants. The contemporary English and Chinese newspapers fare a little bit better. Nevertheless they can only add a few more scattered and fragmentary pieces to the puzzle. A documented account of their activities has thus remained an enigmatic topic for the local historians, so important and yet so elusive of their reach.

Thanks to the strenuous and dedicated efforts of local historians, librarians and museum curators alike, some impor-

tant source materials about the business undertakings and connections of our forefathers have fortunately been uncovered and acquired in recent years.³ Amongst such materials the business letters of Mr. Ma Chū-cháo (Ma Tsui Chiu, 馬叙朝) and Mr. Fung Mun-tak (Fung Manter, also Huken, 馮民德 also 厚根) are perhaps the most colourful and interesting.⁴ This paper is a preliminary investigation into these business letters to show how information derived from such rare sources may lead to significant revelations on the seldom understood economic activities of Chinese merchants in the period under study.

It has been pointed out in a recent study that the Chinese communities which sprang up in North America, Australia and South-east Asia after the 1860's were significant contributors to the rapid growth of Hong Kong's entrepot trade because they constituted a sizable and significant market for the Chinese merchants.⁵ But as to precisely how this trade network functioned, no existing work has yet been able to account for it. The 700 or so business letters preserved in the Ma Chū-cháo Papers are significant revelations on how Hong Kong Chinese businessmen were largely responsible for building up such a network of trade during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Mr. Ma Chū-cháo was born in 1878 in the Tái-shan district of Kwangtung province. He came to Hong Kong at an early age to learn about doing business. At the beginning of the twentieth century Mr. Ma had become a rather successful businessman in the colony. The business letters collected in the Ma Papers amount to over 700. Of these about 500 were written to him before 1911. The rest falls into the period of the 1920's and 1930's.⁶

These business letters of Ma were written to him either by his overseas Chinese clients and business contacts who mainly lived in North America or their counterparts from China. However, there are also a few cases in which Ma's contacts lived in the Philippines. They are, as a rule, almost exclusively members of the extended lineage group of Ma Chū-cháo, that is, they bear the same surname Ma. Or even if they don't in a few exceptional

cases they are at least from the same native district in China as Ma.

The business network set up by Ma operated somewhat like this. All his business clients overseas would either remit directly to him or send money to him indirectly through firms or business contacts in China. Such firms and businessmen in China in turn became Mr. Ma's business associates and therefore belonged to his trade network as a participant member. From the letters examined these business associates of Ma inside Mainland China were located mainly in such ports and cities in Southern China as Canton, Foshan, Shanghai or towns inside Tai-shan district such as Hsin-chang and Pai-sha.

Ma's overseas clients were, on the other hand, in most cases, residents of a few cities located on the western coast of North America such as Vancouver, Edmonton and Calgary in Canada and San Francisco and Sacramento in California of the United States. There are of course exceptions. For example, there was one client who lived in Clifton of Arizona State.

Mr. Ma offered services to his business clients in numerous ways. For one, he was often asked to credit orders placed on him by the overseas buyers for various kinds of commodities to be acquired from China and Hong Kong. Then a lot of his clansmen overseas sent money to him in Hong Kong. The money was to be ultimately remitted to the sender's family in China through Mr. Ma's network of business firms.⁷ Ma often charged his clients a small commission for such services. As a creditor, Ma was also sometimes asked by his overseas clients to advance payment to their family members or business associates inside China for various other purposes.

There were also occasions in which Ma was urged to be co-investors in some business enterprises. He also, therefore, had to serve them as a business consultant. Sometimes he needed to investigate into some investment projects proposed by his clients to decide whether they were sound investments. On the other hand, when his business associates overseas or inside China wrote to him about their expressed will to invest into Hong Kong's entrepot trade with their capital, Ma was accordingly expected to provide them

with a professional assessment of the situation and make the right recommendation.

From Ma's letters we also learn that he was instrumental in rallying his overseas clansmen's support to contribute to a renovation project for their ancestral hall back in their native district. Many letters between Ma and his overseas contacts made references to this matter and the total donation raised overseas at the end was quite sizable. This shows that notable Hong Kong Chinese businessmen like Ma often played an important intermediate role in helping to maintain the close ties of overseas Chinese with their places of origin. This is because Hong Kong Chinese like Ma was able to keep their overseas clients informed and concerned about the plight and welfare of their kinsmen back in China.

One recent study noted that the Ch'ing's foreign trade became diversified towards the end of the nineteenth century.⁸ Another pointed out that to a great extent this development was brought under the auspices and control of Chinese merchants in Hong Kong.⁹ An analysis into Ma's business letters can further bear this out. Mr. Ma was constantly asked by his overseas clients to supply them with a large variety of Chinese products. It was this need for Hong Kong Chinese merchants to cater for the demand of overseas Chinese communities that had been largely responsible for the sharp increase in the varieties of commodities exported to Hong Kong from China during the turn of this century.

Late nineteenth century Hong Kong not only has become an important entrepot for international trade but also the transit center for migrations of Chinese to different parts of the world. This was because by the last two decades of the nineteenth century, Hong Kong had already become a center of international shipping activities. Chinese who wanted to migrate to foreign countries need to come down to Hong Kong first to get on board the steamer that would ultimately take them to whatever destination they had in mind. Such activities are often referred to in Ma's letters.

Ma's letters thus provide us with



Samples of business letters sent to Ma Chū-cháo by his overseas clients.

some inside stories into the ethos and pathos of this Chinese epic of human movement. Many who successfully arrived at the New World recalled in the letters how without the financial assistance or advanced loans of Hong Kong merchants such as Ma Chū-cháo, they would have never made it there. Others recaptured rather vividly the risks and hazards they had to undertake along routes mapped out to bypass customs check points in order to reach their final destination safely.

There is little evidence in most of these letters to suggest that the writers were legal immigrants. As a matter of fact the contents of the letters are more suggestive of the possibility that the writers were trying to enter the foreign countries without any proper documents. Thus some of these letters offer the Hong Kong historian a rare non-official documentation to study a most important chapter in the colony's social history – the whole process of how legal and illegal immigration of the Chinese people through the port of Hong Kong took place towards the end of the last century. What is more, quite a few letters also touched upon some key social problems confronting the government at that time, that is, the abuses and social evils in connection with illegal immigration.

It is important to point out that one of the most prevalent abuses was the

smuggling of kidnapped women abroad to serve as prostitutes. From the middle of the nineteenth century on, illegal emigration of Chinese females through Hong Kong rose to the peak. According to one well-documented study, the number of Chinese females who migrated to San Francisco through Hong Kong was believed to have been 408 in 1868.¹⁰ The next year the number jumped mercurial high to 1691.¹¹ Most of these women were kidnapped from the neighbouring districts of Canton. In view of such a high rate of smuggling either kidnapped or non-kidnapped women out of Hong Kong to foreign countries, the Hong Kong government began to pass a series of ordinances to suppress such trafficking activities in 1873.

To start with, the government only aimed at suppressing the smuggling of Chinese women and female children into the colony to serve as prostitutes. That is why the ordinance of 1873 stated that it was unlawful to sell, decoy and purchase Chinese women and female children for the purpose of prostitution in Hong Kong.¹² The measure introduced to prevent kidnapped or non-kidnapped women being smuggled out of the port of Hong Kong to serve as prostitutes in foreign countries did not come into effect until the early 1880's.

The first measure adopted was a system of "photographing for purposes of

identification in order to prevent personation of registered prostitutes and women and children who pass the Emigration Office."¹³ This system was in fact first adopted to identify registered prostitutes inside the colony. Having found the system of photographs very successful in preventing personation in the registered brothels, the Hong Kong government decided to adopt the same system with reference to women and children about to emigrate so that kidnapped women could not be easily smuggled out of the colony to foreign countries for purposes of prostitution.¹⁴

The effectiveness of the system of photographs to check the illegal emigration of Chinese women for prostitution should not be doubted. In his report to the Secretary of State for the Colonies in August 1883, Governor Bowen remarked that "The system of photographing registered prostitutes and women and children who intend to emigrate have done much good and that there has been an enormous reduction in the kidnapping cases and selling women for prostitution since the introduction of these measures."¹⁵

However, it is also quite obvious that such measures could not entirely eradicate the abuses of illegal emigration. This is evident in the fact that the Hong Kong government had to pass another ordinance in 1887 to stop the purchase, decoy