

# APPENDIX 10C

2008 Baseline Review Report  
Prepared under

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Central Kowloon Route and Widening of Gascoigne Road Flyover

Marine Archaeological Investigation (MAI)

November 2008

## 1 BASELINE REVIEW

A comprehensive review was carried out to determine the archaeological potential of the study area. This included archaeological and historical publications.

### 1.1 Archive Search

All archives holding information on shipwrecks in Hong Kong were explored for relevant data.

### 1.2 Shipwreck Data

Practically nothing is known about the archaeological potential of the seabed deposits in Hong Kong. The only marine archaeological discovery is that of a late Sung/early Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) boat uncovered during the construction of the High Island Reservoir, near Sai Kung (Frost, 1974). Since then, no other historic shipwreck has been found. However, this is probably because there were no dedicated marine archaeological surveys until the introduction of the 1998 EIA Ordinance.

Formation of archaeological sites underwater is mainly due to shipwrecks (Muckelroy, 1978). Since these are random and haphazard events it is difficult to predict their exact location if there are no written references. The aim of this review is to examine the evidence for maritime activity within the study area to predict the potential for shipwrecks.

### 1.3 Physical Evidence

In November 1957 a cannon was dredged from Kowloon Bay during construction of the Kai Tak runway (Eather, 1996). The cannon was cast in the 4th year of the Wing Uk Reign of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). It bears the following inscription:

*'Commissioned by Choi Governor of Waiboi and created by Ting Hoi General of Imperial Command – To by Imperial Command appointed Governor General of Kwanung and Kwangsi Provinces Fan, General Officer Commanding Kwantung and Guardian of the Imperial Heir. Colonel Siu Lei-Yan directed the casting for Ho Hing Cheung, Commander of the Ordinance Depot, Sixth Moon of the Fourth Year of Wing Lik. Weight 500 catties.'*

The chance discovery of this cannon is very significant and suggests that there may be other similar cultural resources on the seabed within the study area.

### 1.4 Archive Search

The UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO), Taunton holds a database of surveyed shipwrecks in Hong Kong, including many not shown on Admiralty Charts. The

database does not contain any records of shipwrecks within the study area. However, the Hydrographic Office only charts wrecks which are a potential hazard to navigation. It is therefore possible that there are other wrecks within the study area which are partially or totally buried and thus not recorded. The Hydrographic Office also holds unpublished historical charts of the Hong Kong SAR's waters. British Admiralty Chart from 1853 is presented as below.

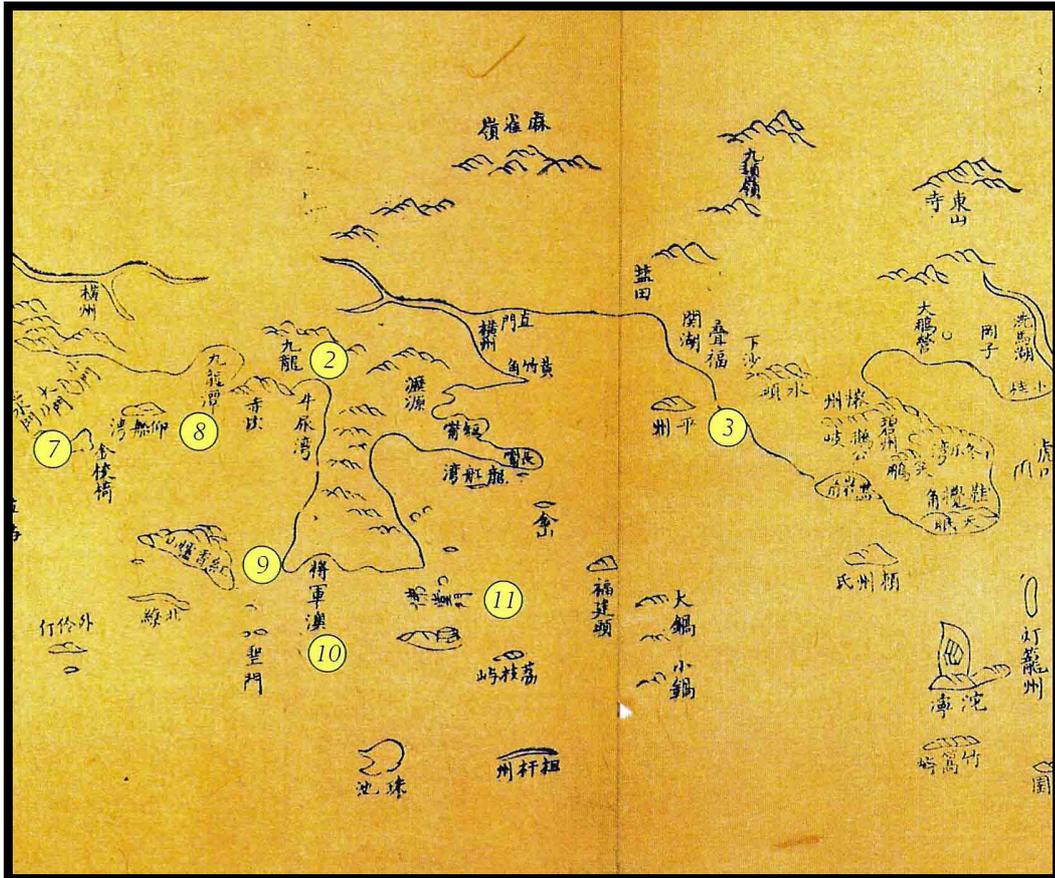


Figure 1. British Admiralty Chart from 1853.

## 1.5 South East Kowloon and Nearby Waters in Pre-British Times

The first reference to the sea passage and waters in what later became called Victoria Harbour are found in the Cheng Ho navigation map of the China coast dated c.1425 AD. This map is believed to be based on the earlier Mau K'un map executed from 1422-1430 AD by his grandson Mau Yuen-I. This map was published in a book called Mo Pei Chi (Notes on Military Preparation), published in 1621 (Empson, 1992). The map indicates the routes taken by vessels of a 15th century Imperial Chinese fleet under the command of Admiral Cheng Ho.

Kowloon waters are also charted in a coastal map of Kwangtung appearing in a book by Ying Ka called Chong Ng Chung Tuk Kwan Mun Chi, first published in 1553. The map was later reprinted in 1581. There are references to Kowloon waters in a 1723 map of Kwang Tung produced by Chiang Ting Sik in his book called Ku Kam to Shu Chap Shing. It is again positioned in “Map of the entire coastline” by Chan Lun Kwing in his book Hoi Kwok Man Kin Luk (A Record of the Countries of the Sea), printed in Ngai Hoi Chu Chan in 1744 (Figure 2).



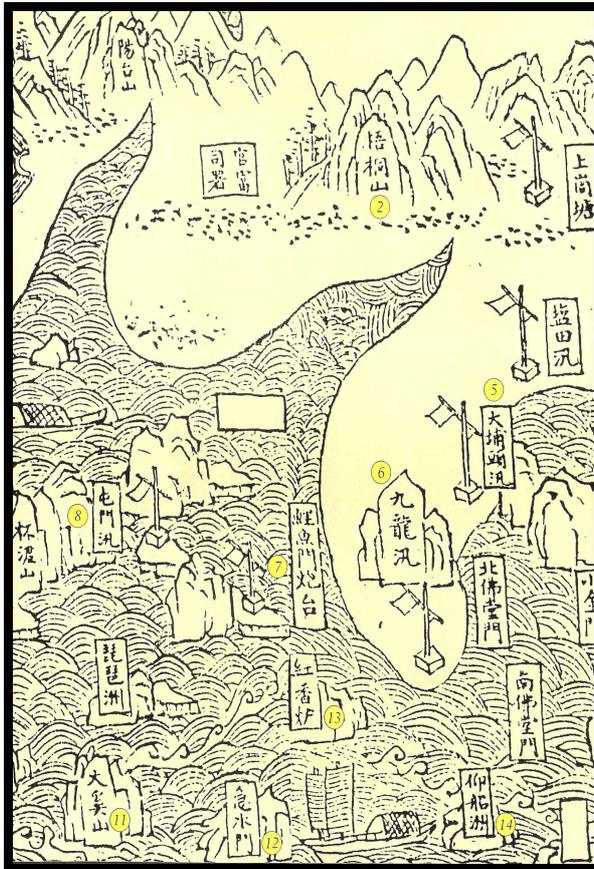
**Figure 2. Section of the Map of the Entire Coastline by Chan Lun Kwing in Hoi Kwok Man Kin Luk (Record of the Countries of the Sea) printed by Ngai Hoi Chu Chan in 1744.**

Key to place names:

- 2 **Kowloon**
- 3 Ping Chau
- 7 Kap Shui Mun
- 8 Ngong Shue Chau (Stonecutters Island)
- 9 Red Incence Burner Hill (Hong Kong Island)
- 10 Tseung Kwan O
- 11 Fat Ton Mun

The Kang Hsi Emperor commissioned the Jesuit Fathers to undertake a detailed map of China, which was reprinted in part in 1737. The Jesuit map relies heavily on pre-existing Chinese maps of the coast. Hong Kong waters are charted in this map, found in *Nouvelle Atlas de la Chine*, published in Paris in 1737.

A further reference appears in the San On Yuen Chi, a cartogram from the directory of San On County (Figure 3). Another Chinese map of Kwangtung Province, dated from 1820, reportedly the work of a Taoist priest, charts Hong Kong harbour. One of the more detailed regional maps is the Kwang Tung Ting Shang Shui To, by Chan Chi Sze c.1840. A good subsequent Chinese map recording the South Eastern waters of Victoria Harbour is of San On District, in the 1864 edition of the San On Gazetteer.



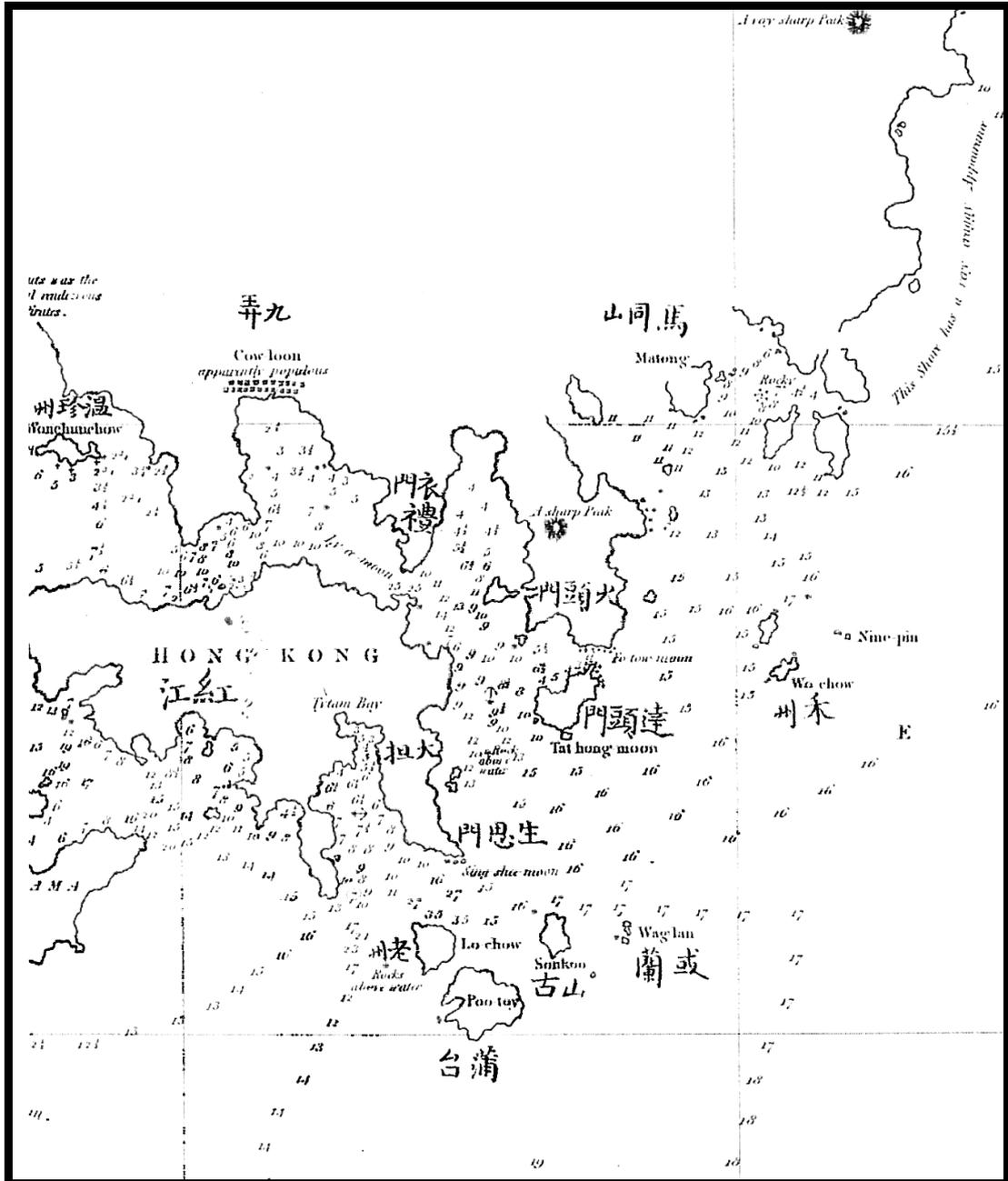
**Figure 3. 1819 San On Yuen cartogram from the Directory of San On County.**

Key to play names

- 2 Wung Tung City
- 5 Tai Po Tai (Tai Po)
- 6 Kowloon
- 7 Lei Yue Mun
- 8 Tuen Mun
- 11 Tai Hai/Kai Shan (Lantau)
- 13 Red Incense Burner (Hong Kong)

14 Ngong Shuen Chan (Stonecutters Island) 12 Kap Shui Mun

The first map which clearly depicts Hong Kong harbour in detail is an 1810 marine chart (Figure 4). These maps are particularly important as they indicate that Kowloon Bay was established as a known coastal settlement from the 15th century.



**Figure 4. Marine Chart prepared for the East India Company by Daniel Ross and Philip Maughan, Lieutenants of the Bombay Marine.**

## 1.6 Opium War Period

In the prelude to the First Anglo-Chinese (Opium) War the entire British community resident at Macao embarked and sailed to Hong Kong harbour. This was because the Governor of Macao, owing to pressure from the Chinese authorities, could no longer guarantee their safety. They arrived in Hong Kong waters on 26th August 1839, and once there lived on board ship for several months, mainly in Kowloon Bay.

On The 30th August, H.M.S. Volage under the command of Captain Smith arrived on the scene. On 4th September 1839, having failed in peaceable efforts to obtain supplies from nearby villages, Captain Charles Elliot opened fire from H.M.S Volage on the Chinese war-junks anchored off Kowloon City. The junks were there for the express purpose of obliging the local inhabitants to take back food-stuffs that had already been bought and paid for. It is not recorded whether or not he inflicted serious damage on the Chinese vessels (Sayer, 1975).

## 1.7 1841-1860

On the signing of the Treaty of Chuen-pi in 1841, H.M.S. Sulphur, commanded by Captain Sir Edward Belcher, was commissioned to undertake a hydrographic survey of Hong Kong Island and the surrounding waters. Produced in the meticulous style typical of the Royal Navy, this chart is remarkable for its accuracy and detail. It takes into account depth soundings in a number of areas, which still form the basis of charts in unchanged areas (Figure 5).

The area which is today considered South East Kowloon remained outside British jurisdiction following the cession of Kowloon peninsula, south of what is now Boundary Street, following the Second Anglo-Chinese (Arrow) War in 1860. Large areas remained agricultural or semi-agricultural until relatively recent times, with the predominately Hakka and former stonecutter's settlement of Ngau Tau Kok only being cleared for re-development in 1966.



One of its main industries was gambling, and the tables were a favourite haunt of many prominent Hong Kong residents. Special steam-launches, operating well into the night, provided a free passenger service to gamblers from Hong Kong Island across the harbour, and complimentary coffee and cigars were handed out en route. Representations by the Hong Kong authorities to the viceroy at Canton and to Peking eventually succeeded in having the establishments closed down.

In November 1894, the General Officer Commanding Major-General Digby Barker noted the potential danger to Hong Kong from the large junk traffic associated with Kowloon City that frequented the waters of South East Kowloon and of the periodic visits by the Chinese fleet to its own waters in Kowloon Bay. The Colonial Defence Committee reported in 1896 the need to maintain a considerable military force on the mainland to protect the defence works and stores from pilferage by Kowloon City residents. No specific complaints were at this time made by Hong Kong against the fort, but the town was identified as a source of potentially dangerous criminal activity.

To the Imperial Chinese Government, the fort was an important centre of civil and military administration for that part of San On County since the Deputy Magistrate, with limited powers of arrest and detention and certain Army officers resided there. The British in Hong Kong found the “Kowloon Mandarin” a useful person to have in residence nearby, for he was in constant correspondence with the Hong Kong Police. The military commander had a garrison of more than 500 men and was said to exercise jurisdiction over the 200 civilians living within the walls.

In 1898, the Walled City was about a quarter of a mile from the seashore, although subsequent reclamations have placed it much further inland. Its fortified stone wall was built between 1843 and 1847 with an average height of 13 feet and an average width at the top of 15 feet. In the rough shape of a parallelogram, it enclosed an area of 6.5 acres. Inside were several public buildings, a well-regarded school, two temples and a number of quite substantial residences along the main streets. In contrast, the “suburbs” contained numerous small factories, shops and gambling dens along its narrow, evil-smelling roadways. Other landmarks were a defence wall rising to the top of the hill overlooking the city, a substantial stone pier where the road from the Walled City met the sea and a rest house for travellers.



**Figure 6. Kowloon City pier in the 1890s. It was subsequently buried beneath the western end of the terminal building for Kai Tak airport.**

In 1841, at least one Chinese fort on Kowloon peninsula was destroyed by British forces. It is probable that construction of the Kowloon City wall was started as a specific response to the British presence on neighbouring Hong Kong Island. After the cession of Kowloon in 1860, the population of the Walled City grew in terms of population and importance. Hong Kong residents distrusted Chinese officials and objected strenuously to the very existence of the fort and its suburban area. Whereas to the Imperial Chinese Government in Peking, the Walled City was a government installation, a visible symbol of Imperial control constructed for the very purpose of discouraging British interference in the region (Wesley-Smith, 1990).

After 1898, one of the first tasks of the Public Works Department in the New Territories was the repair of the Kowloon City pier. Timber work was repaired at a cost of almost \$6000 and the work was completed in 1900. At this time it was agreed that:

*'Chinese officials stationed here shall continue to exercise jurisdiction, except so far as may be inconsistent with the military requirements for the defence of Hong Kong. Within the remainder of the newly leased Territory, Great Britain shall have sole jurisdiction.... It is further agreed that the existing landing place, near the Kowloon City shall be reserved for the convenience of Chinese man of war, merchant and passenger vessels, which may come and go and lie there at their pleasure; and for the convenience of movement and people within the city' (Yuen-chung, 1990).*

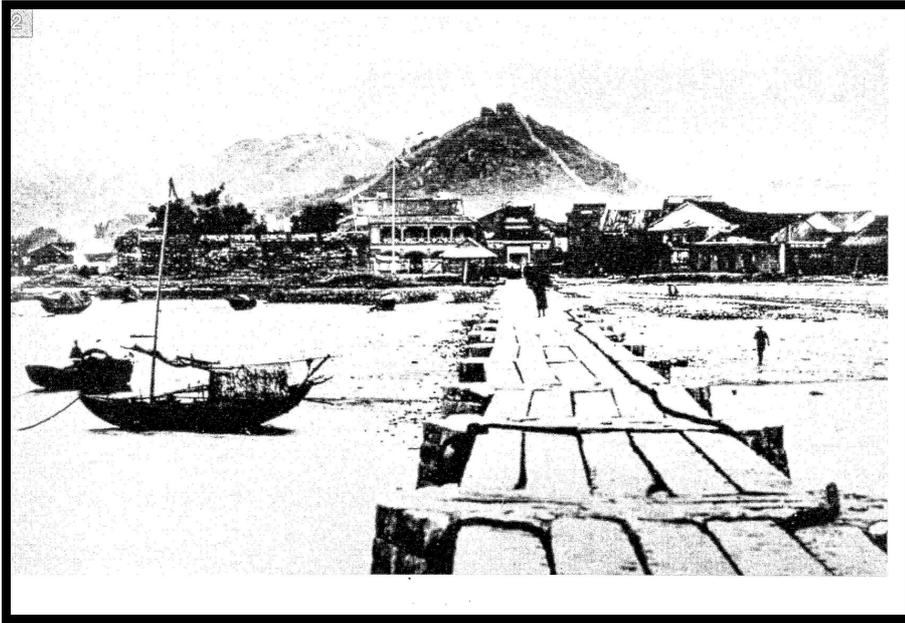
It can be assumed from the above that at this time Kowloon Bay was a thriving maritime community. However, a year later the situation changed. There was unrest in the New Territories and the British asked for help from the Ching Government and six hundred soldiers were sent to assist. The British however, made a very big mistake and thought that the soldiers were sent to assist the uprising. They proceeded to invade the walled city on 19th May 1899 and drove away the imperial officials and the garrison of three hundred soldiers. This ended the Ching military occupation of the Kowloon Walled City.

It was not long before the landing place disappeared when the reclamation of part of Kowloon Bay commenced. The Kai Tak Land Investment Company began development of the area in 1917, and in the 1920's most of the reclaimed land was taken over for construction of the airfield. It was no longer possible for Chinese vessels or Kowloon Walled City residents to use the pier which had existed since before 1898 (Wesley-Smith, 1990).

## 1.9 Kowloon Battery

The Kowloon Battery was located outside the southern gate of the Kowloon Walled City. It was constructed in the 16th year of the Jia Qing reign (1811) during the Qing Dynasty (Kwok-Kin, 1997).

The Battery took a square form with walls measuring 103.23 meters long and 3.66 meters high. There were 42 battlements, each of them standing 1 meter high. The top of the wall facing the sea was 4.33 meters wide, while that at the rear was 1.67 metres wide. The Battery had ten barracks and eight cannon, and was manned by a captain and forty two soldiers. It was abandoned in the 24th year of the Guang Xu reign (1898). The Battery was demolished due to redevelopment in the area. Today, no more remains can be traced.



**Figure 7.** A distant view of the Kowloon Walled City as seen from the Longjin Pier, circa 1910. The photograph also shows the Kowloon Battery on the left.

### 1.10 The Kowloon City Execution Ground

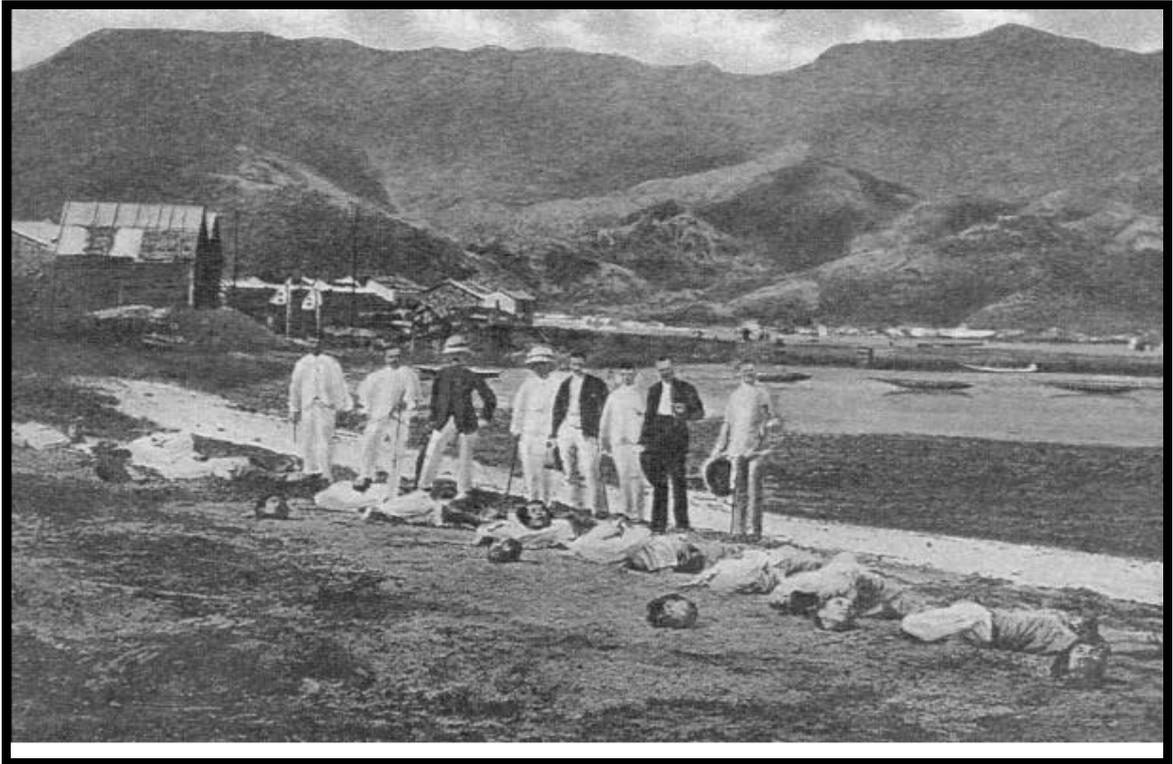
The traditional execution ground for criminals ordered for execution at Kowloon City was an almost enclosed courtyard on the western side of the Kowloon City market, to the south of the Walled City. Occasionally, however, another site was used. This was a peninsula of land south of the city, opening to the bay on the east, and a creek to the west. This peninsula was used because it lay immediately adjacent to the 1860-1898 border, and was used for executions which were of interest to Hong Kong as well as to the Kowloon City authorities, especially of pirates captured in joint Anglo-Chinese Anti-Pirate operations. The site was used as the execution ground because the site could easily be cut off by a cordon of soldiers across the neck of the peninsula, thereby making access to the site subject to the control of the authorities. This execution ground lies within the Kai Tak site, under the western end of the Terminal Building (exactly under the area which was the Waiting Area for people awaiting arrivals).

In 1860, when the new border was set out, the southern tip of this peninsula fell within the new British Kowloon. The execution ground used the area immediately adjacent to the border, just North of the border-fence, but still within the peninsula.



**Figure 8. A photograph of an execution of pirates which took place here in 1891.**

Figure 9 shows the execution actually in progress, is taken from the north, and shows the border fence immediately behind the last pirate shown. The European officials shown are there because this group of pirates (who had murdered many people on the ships they had captured) were caught by a joint Anglo-Chinese Anti-Pirate agreement. It was considered doubtful that the pirates would receive sufficiently harsh punishment if they were brought to trial in Hong Kong, and so they were returned to the sub-Magistrate at Kowloon City, to be tried there, since some of their crimes had been committed in Chinese waters. The Magistrate invited the naval and police officers from Hong Kong, who had caught the gang, to witness the execution as his guests. This was seen, on both sides of the then border, to be a clear sign of the good relations between the two authorities at this date. Gruesome as these photos may be, nonetheless, the presence of the execution ground within the Kai Tak Development Area is a significant historical heritage factor.



**Figure 9. Execution of Pirates at the Kowloon City Execution Ground, 1891.**

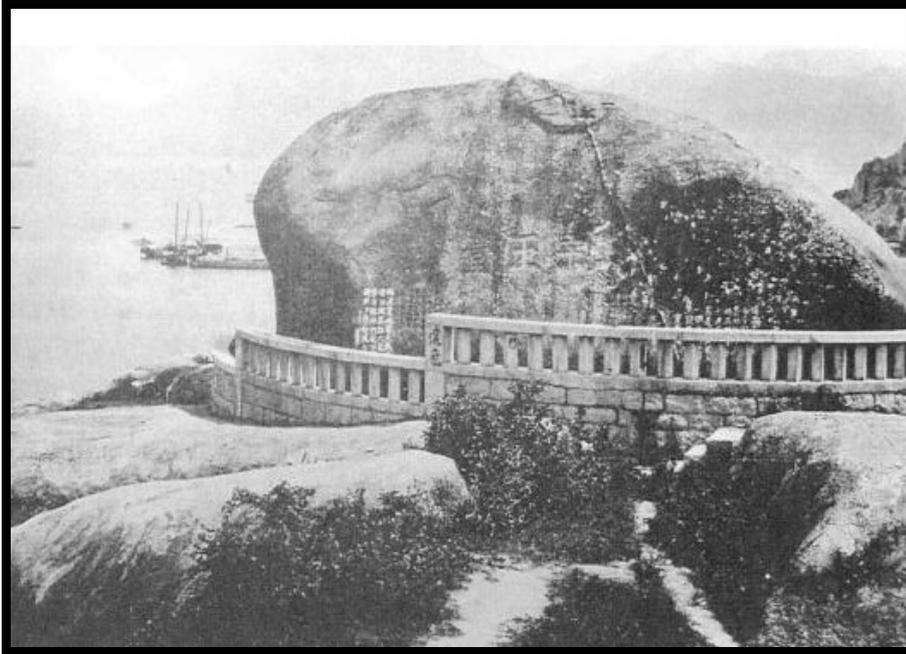
### **1.11 Land Claims in South East Kowloon**

Following the lease of the New Territories to Great Britain in 1898 the area that now comprises South East Kowloon passed under Crown control. As time went on a number of Land Court cases developed. In the early 1900's, a certain Mr Ho Lap-Pun claimed a large area of the foreshore and seabed as his property from Lei Yue Mun to Ngau Tau Kok, with an apparent frontage of about two miles (Hayes, 1977). For a time the Land Court supported his claim. It was subsequently decided that his title deed did not confer any rights at all over the seabed or reclaimed land, and on appeal by the Attorney-General the Supreme Court considered that Ho's rights were extremely limited (Wesley-Smith, 1990).

### **1.12 Kai Tak Airport and Extensions and the Sung Wong T'oi**

The famous stone boulder, meaning Sung Emperor's Terrace formerly stood in a small park near Kowloon City. The stone commemorates the passage through the Hong Kong region of the last Emperor of the Southern Song Dynasty in the eleventh century AD. The park was proposed by Dr. Ho Kai in 1898 (Choa, 1986). Its original location is now roughly where the former Aero Club premises stood, on Sung Wong T'oi Road. The Sung Wong T'oi was cut down and the ground levelled to make way for extensions to Kai Tak Airfield during the Pacific War. Working parties of allied prisoners of war were drawn from the nearby camps at Shamshuipo (for British, Canadian, HKVDC and other European prisoners), and Ma Tau Chung and Ma Tau Wai (for the Indian Army).

The remaining walls of Kowloon Walled City were demolished in 1943 and the material used as fill for the airfield extension. Consequently, the exact boundaries of the Walled City became impossible to accurately determine after the end of the Pacific War (Wesley-Smith, 1990).



**Figure 10. The Sung Wong To Rock from the North.**

A pre-Song Watchtower is believed to have stood a little to the left of the picture. The boy-Emperor Ching and his entourage looked out to sea from here at some point during their residence at Kowloon City in 1277. The junks in the middle distance are anchored at the piers at Ma Tau Kok which served the quarries there. The Rock and the hill on which it stands today lie under the landward end of the runway.

The airfield at Kai Tak was subsequently extended out into Kowloon Bay in an ambitious project that commenced in 1956. The Kai Tak extension called for a 795-foot wide reclaimed promontory, 16 feet above sea level on which an 8,340 runway would be built with prepared over-runs of 300 feet at the South East seaward end and approximately 750 feet at the northward end. Completion was scheduled for late 1958. Work started in January 1956 with nearby hills being levelled and the resulting fill being dumped into the sea. The first aircraft landed on 31 August 1958 (Dunnaway, 1999).

### 1.13 Villages in South East Kowloon

There were several villages along the eastern coast of South East Kowloon, including Lei Yue Mun, Cha Kwo Leng, Ngau Tau Kok and Yau Tong. These were also known locally as the “Four Hills” and all were actively involved in stone-quarrying. An official report of 1912 states that: “The New Territories are very rich in granite which appears chiefly in the form of granite boulders on the hillsides. By far the most important

quarries are those which stretch eastward along the north of Kowloon Bay as far as Lyeemun. They extend over about 100 acres and are leased to contractors for an average Crown Rent of \$15,000. From these is supplied most of the granite now used in Hong Kong.”

These quarries had been working long before the British occupation of the New Territories. As early as 1810, masons from South East Kowloon were persuaded by one of the Tangs of Kam Tin to cut stone for use in the construction of a fort at Kowloon at a discounted rate as a contribution to the defence of the area against pirates (Hayes, 1977).

2

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