

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH-BOOK OF EARLY HONG KONG

G. B. ENDACOTT

New introduction by John M. Carroll



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— Britta Erickson, *The Art of Xu Bing*

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INTRODUCTION TO THE PAPERBACK EDITION

G. B. ENDACOTT AND HONG KONG HISTORY

John M. Carroll

IN his preface to the first edition of *A Biographical Sketch-book of Early Hong Kong*, G. B. Endacott explained how he hoped his book would “in some measure have recaptured the flavour of the period, and give an idea of some of the characters who walked in Queen’s Road a century or so ago.” Even a brief summary of some of these characters will demonstrate the wide range of European personalities in early Hong Kong, the tiny colony that Britain acquired in 1841 to expand its commercial and political interests in China. In Chapter 1, we meet Captain Charles Elliot, the first administrator of colonial Hong Kong, who was later criticized both by British officials and European merchants for not extracting more from the Qing¹ government than this tiny, “barren island.” Henry Pottinger, subject of Chapter 2 and first governor of Hong Kong, during the Opium War wanted to raze the city of Ningbo as a warning to its Chinese residents, but at a banquet marking the Treaty of Nanking (which ceded the island of Hong Kong to Britain “in perpetuity”) sang English songs for Qing Imperial Commissioner Qiying.² Chapter 8 explains that William Caine, the first magistrate of Hong Kong, fought Hong Kong’s rampant “lawlessness by a ruthless application of flogging with the rattan, with or without imprisonment.” Though he was later reinstated, John Hulme (Chapter 9), the first chief justice, was suspended for drunkenness. Thomas Anstey, the “fearless, energetic and upright, but rather unbalanced” attorney general in Chapter 13, spent much of his career in Hong Kong “combating all the abuses, imagined or real, with which he thought the local government was riddled.” Chapter 21 is on George Chinnery, the painter who according to popular legend went to China to escape from his wife, “the ugliest woman he ever saw in the whole course of his life,” also spent some time in Hong Kong when he was not enjoying the Mediterranean tranquility of the Portuguese territory in Macau (where he is buried in the Protestant Cemetery). In Chapter 22 we meet, amongst “Some Other Foreigners,” the only woman in Endacott’s book: Harriet Baxter, the Anglican missionary and educator of Chinese girls, who accidentally almost shot a friend while out walking after dark.

1 “Ch’ing” in the Wade-Giles system of romanization used in Endacott’s book.

2 “Ch’i-ying” in the Wade-Giles system, though Endacott uses the Cantonese pronunciation, “Kiying.”

Born in 1901 in Beer, a small fishing port in South Devon in the west of England, George Beer Endacott liked to describe his own youth as “not unique, but still worthy of notice.” The son of a railway worker, Endacott studied at Exeter and Oxford, where he read philosophy, politics, and economics. He taught history in British high schools until he joined the Royal Navy in 1942, serving as an interpreter with French forces in the Mediterranean. Just as it had been in the early colonial period, Hong Kong was a microcosm of Britain’s changing imperial status when Endacott arrived there in 1946 to join the History Department of the University of Hong Kong as a lecturer (and remained the only faculty member in the department until 1952). In the early 1840s Britain was shifting from mercantilism to free trade, consolidating its occupation of India, and expanding its presence in Southeast Asia and China. Although Britain had recently regained control of Hong Kong from Japan when Endacott arrived, the local economy was in shambles, civil war loomed across the border in Mainland China, and the countdown to independence in Britain’s largest colony, India, was well under way.

By the time *A Biographical Sketch-book* was published in 1962, the British Empire was being dismantled even more rapidly than it was expanding when the subjects of Endacott’s book came to Hong Kong. A new group of colonial civil servants had arrived in Hong Kong. These were the “retreads” from the recently independent colonies. In Asia alone, India, Burma, Ceylon, and Malaya had all won their independence, while Singapore, where Endacott’s book was first published, would in 1963 temporarily join the new nation of Malaysia. The writings of Karl Marx, Mao Zedong, and Frantz Fanon were galvanizing anti-colonial and anti-imperialist movements across the world, and Hong Kong was caught in the middle of the Cold War, even while depending on its giant neighbor just across the border — the new People’s Republic of China — for food, water, and other resources.

Like most colonials, Endacott took the legitimacy of British colonialism in Hong Kong as given. Never in this book, for example, does he question the British motives or means for acquiring Hong Kong. In both *A Biographical Sketch-book of Early Hong Kong* and *A History of Hong Kong* (1958), which for decades remained the definitive English-language history of Hong Kong, Endacott praised Charles Elliot’s remarkable restraint in the first Opium War. Note, for example, how Chapter 23 on the “Princely Hong” of Jardine, Matheson & Co., the largest of the European firms in South China, never mentions opium, which although not necessarily the underlying cause of the first Opium War was nonetheless its immediate cause. (Yet in Chapter 5 Endacott regrets the irony of how the liberal-minded John Bowring, who had been president of the Peace Society that advocated the peaceful resolution of international disputes, and who wanted more humane policies for the Chinese in Hong Kong, helped precipitate the second Opium War between China and Britain.)

Like many British merchants and politicians from the period he described, Endacott saw that war between Britain and China had been inevitable. "The old methods of solving disputes between the two countries were becoming no longer acceptable," he wrote in *A History of Hong Kong*, "and since the Chinese would not open diplomatic negotiations or recognize the British government as anything but normally tributary, it followed that any serious incident would easily lead to war. There was no acceptable alternative." The British acquired Hong Kong not for territorial empire but for commercial expansion in China: "A healthy trade demanded settled conditions, suppression of robbery, guarantee of contract and of impartial justice. Since the Chinese were thought to be unable to provide these conditions, the British had to provide them. This is fundamental to understanding any history of Hong Kong."³

Nor did Endacott make any attempt to hide his enthusiasm for the some of the early administrators of colonial Hong Kong, reflecting as they did "the virility of Victorian society." Although like "all pioneers" their methods were "rough and ready," Endacott writes in *A Biographical Sketch-book* how "their energy and enterprise must command admiration." Although he discusses the crime and other problems in early Hong Kong, Endacott saw colonialism in Hong Kong as a process of trial and error in which principled men of action could eventually overcome obstacles, and as a stabilizing force in China. Early Hong Kong of course had its share of both "greedy self-seeking adventurers" and "men of high principle devoted to the public welfare." But, Endacott reassures us, "Brooding over all was the Colonial Office in London, vigilant in the detection of abuse and insistent that the interests of the Chinese be safeguarded." The fundamental task for early colonial administrators was establishing order within a frontier, and, given colonial Hong Kong's relative historical stability compared with that across the border in Mainland China, Endacott, like most colonial officials, believed that this fundamental task had been successfully completed.

This is not to suggest that Endacott was completely uncritical of the colonial record in Hong Kong. Although books such as *A History of Hong Kong* celebrate Hong Kong's economic prosperity and political stability, they also mention how the colonial legislature passed various ordinances that discriminated against the Chinese population of Hong Kong: until the late 1800s, Chinese could not walk on the streets after nine without a note from their employer and had to carry lanterns; legal punishments for Chinese were generally higher, while flogging was common since many colonial officials believed that poor Chinese preferred the colonial jail to life on the street.

Endacott's later scholarship became slightly less celebratory of British rule. Endacott's preface to *Hong Kong Eclipse* (1978), his account of the

³ G. B. Endacott, *A History of Hong Kong*, rev. ed. (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1973), vii-viii, 13.

Japanese occupation from 1941 to 1945, noted that although the book had been intended as an official history, “this was not to be.”⁴ This comment has prompted speculation that the colonial government disapproved of the way Endacott discussed how poorly prepared the British had been for the Japanese invasion of December 1941. Endacott warned against making any rash judgments about Hong Kong’s defenses without considering the obstacles — for example, the influx of refugees from China that drained the government’s resources. But he also drew attention to the colonial regime’s slow plans for air-raid defense, its reliance on weak artillery and old ammunition, as well as to the weakness of British intelligence, which seriously underestimated the size and quality of the Japanese forces. Endacott also included details of the Japanese occupation that may have been embarrassing to the Hong Kong government — how, for example, the Japanese went to great lengths to publicize and explain their policies to the Chinese of Hong Kong, and how they made some positive changes such as public health campaigns, medical and educational facilities for the poor, and agricultural schemes in the New Territories.

As Endacott explains in his preface to *A Biographical Sketch-book*, many of the chapters in this book first appeared as journal articles. Consequently, the book often reads more as an album of sketches or snapshots of these men (and with one exception, Harriet Baxter, they are all men) as they passed through Hong Kong, rather than as a complete collection of biographies. Because Endacott focuses almost solely on these men’s time in Hong Kong, readers may sometimes wonder why they behaved the way they did. Yet Endacott’s sketch-book approach effectively captures the overlapping colonial connections and networks within the British Empire and particularly in Asia. Colonial officials often moved from colony to colony, which could affect the way they interacted (or, as could often be the case, did not interact) with each place. Although the importance of such imperial connections would have been obvious to contemporary colonial officials and colonists, who would have read in the local press about developments in other colonies, they have often eluded historians of colonialism. Endacott shows how Charles Elliot, who had served in West Africa, the East Indies, and the West Indies, later served in the new Republic of Texas, and as governor of Bermuda and of Trinidad. Henry Pottinger, who before coming to Hong Kong had already “proved himself a man of action” in India, later became governor of the Cape of Good Hope, then of Madras. Before coming to Hong Kong, George Bonham, introduced in Chapter 4, had served in Sumatra and the Straits Settlements, of which he became governor at the age of 34. He, like Governor John Davis (Chapter 3), had started his career with the East India Company. Hercules Robinson (Chapter 6), appointed to restore confidence

⁴ G. B. Endacott, *Hong Kong Eclipse*, edited and with additional material by Alan Birch (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1978), xiii.

after all the scandals under fourth governor John Bowring (who had not begun his career in the colonial service), had previously served in the West Indies and subsequently became governor of Ceylon, New South Wales, New Zealand, and the Cape of Good Hope.

Not only does Endacott tell us where these officials came from and where they went after Hong Kong, he also explains how their past shaped their actions and attitudes during their time in Hong Kong. Bowring, for example, entered government service reluctantly and late in life because of a failing business career. His Unitarianism and belief in the utilitarianism of Jeremy Bentham put him at odds with the European business community of Hong Kong from the outset. William Caine, who began his career as an army officer in India, brought “something of the East India Company traditions” to Hong Kong (which in contemporary code would have referred to Caine’s loose morals, taking bribes, and strict administration of justice through the “discipline of the barrack-room”).

A recurring theme in Endacott’s book is the Hong Kong colonial government’s reliance on a tiny handful of European linguists. One particularly intriguing and colorful of these “China experts” was Registrar General and Protector of Chinese Daniel Caldwell. The subject of Chapter 14, Caldwell was an interpreter married to a Chinese woman and suspected of both “shady transactions regarding brothels” and associating with pirates. Another so-called China expert was Charles Gutzlaff, the Lutheran missionary and Chinese secretary to the Superintendent of Trade. As Chapter 16 shows, Gutzlaff also served as an interpreter for opium traders, in exchange for using their boats to spread Christian scriptures and tracts, and who claimed to have become a naturalized Chinese citizen in Siam by adopting into a Chinese family there.

Readers familiar with the British colonial experience in India may be surprised by how little interest most British officials seem to have taken in Chinese culture. Certainly there were exceptions. Before coming to Hong Kong as governor, Endacott tells us, John Davis had been one of the few East India Company officials who bothered to study Chinese. Davis helped found the Hong Kong Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, which continues today to promote interest in Hong Kong history. John Bowring believed that learning Chinese and maintaining more personal contact with local Chinese residents and officials in China would help him solve problems in Hong Kong and improve Anglo-Chinese relations — a task at which his predecessors had failed. Included in Chapter 17 among “Some Other Officials” is Thomas Wade, the linguist and diplomat who served as assistant Chinese secretary to the Superintendent of Trade. Wade later became Professor of Chinese at the University of Cambridge, where he helped devise the Wade-Giles system for romanizing Chinese. Also in this chapter is Samuel Fearon, the first registrar general, who later became Professor of Chinese at King’s College, London. And most students of

Chinese history are familiar with James Legge, the great Scottish scholar, missionary, educator and “public-spirited citizen.” Chapter 20 mentions how Legge was so committed to spreading Christianity yet maintaining good relations between Britain and China that, when he embarked upon a missionary expedition to Guangdong Province in 1861 during the Taiping Rebellion, he stipulated that no British gunboat should be sent to avenge his death if he were killed. After returning to Britain, Legge became Professor of Sinology at Oxford, where he continued to translate the Chinese classics until his death in 1897.

But such men were rare in Hong Kong. Whereas in India learning local languages and cultures was considered essential for conquering and controlling Britain’s “Jewel in the Crown,” most British officials in China and Hong Kong did not share this concern. Unlike in India, Europeans in China and Hong Kong communicated with Chinese almost completely in English or pidgin. Shortly after his arrival in Hong Kong in 1859 — very nearly twenty years after the British first occupied the island — Governor Hercules Robinson complained that not a single senior colonial officer in his new administration could read or write Chinese. When Robinson offered financial incentives to encourage officers to study Chinese, only three responded to his offer. Not until two years later, in 1861, did the British make plans for training (including Chinese language instruction) cadets for the Hong Kong Civil Service.

This lack of interest in Chinese culture among British officials and colonists has never been explained adequately. One possibility is that because Britain acquired Hong Kong primarily for commerce rather than for settlement, most Europeans in early Hong Kong were sojourners who had no intention of staying in the colony for more than a few years. The difference between China and India may also have been a matter of timing. Whereas in the late 1700s and early 1800s the East India Company encouraged its employees in India to learn local languages and customs, most of the traders in early Hong Kong were private traders who arrived after the East India Company had already lost its monopoly on the China trade. These private traders were interested mainly in making a quick fortune, rather than in learning about Chinese culture. By this time, even in India the old generation of British “Orientalists” interested in Indian culture had been replaced by the new “Anglicists,” and the East India Company no longer promoted the study of Sanskrit, Arabic, and Persian. Finally, India may have been the exception rather than the rule. As D. K. Fieldhouse has argued, British colonial officials often had little knowledge of local conditions in their empire.⁵

This lack of local knowledge on the part of British officials and colonists should not, however, lead readers to accept uncritically the

⁵ D. K. Fieldhouse, *The Colonial Empires: A Comparative Study from the Eighteenth Century*, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan, 1982), 246–247.

standard assumption that the early Hong Kong government for the most part left the Chinese population alone. Colonialism in Hong Kong did not involve the widespread slaughter or dislocation typical of many other colonies. And it is equally true that the British received help from all sorts of Chinese collaborators, and that colonialism offered many opportunities to Chinese in Hong Kong. But Britain nevertheless acquired Hong Kong primarily through a bloody war with China, and colonialism could be disruptive and bewildering for both indigenous villagers and newcomers from all over Guangdong province.

The early British vision of colonial Hong Kong was frequently called “Anglo-China.” According to this vision, Hong Kong was to be not just what Henry Pottinger called the “great emporium of the East” but, in the words of historian Christopher Munn, “also a model of British good government, a living exhibition of European civilization, a meeting point between east and west, where the manners, institutions and technologies of both cultures would engage each other in a productive and beneficial way.” Yet as we see in many of Endacott’s chapters, the early colonial government faced great difficulties in transforming Hong Kong into more than a colonial outpost and opium center. The colony was plagued by economic depression, piracy, crime, and disease. Munn argues that, because the colonial government failed to help Hong Kong fulfill this vision of “Anglo-China” and was unable to obtain reliable help from the local Chinese leadership, until the late 1800s colonial rule “exerted a considerable impact on people’s daily lives.” As Hong Kong failed to become the “great emporium of the East,” both the colonial government and European residents increasingly viewed the majority of Hong Kong’s Chinese population as criminals. Hong Kong had one of the most top-heavy governments and largest police forces in the British Empire, a huge military presence, an elaborate system of monopolies and taxes, not to mention oppressive curfews and registration programs for controlling the majority Chinese population. With a criminal justice system that created new offenses applicable only to them, the Chinese in Hong Kong “lived under a constantly changing, labyrinthine system of intrusive regulatory laws and policing practices, which increasingly criminalized many daily activities and brought thousands of people into direct contact with the police and the courts.”⁶

One of Endacott’s greatest strengths lies in his ability to capture the frontier-like atmosphere of early colonial Hong Kong. Hard though it might be to believe today, Hong Kong in the early 1840s had all the rugged excitement of a gold-rush frontier town. Charles Elliot’s proclamation in January 1841 that Hong Kong would be a free port attracted an influx of Chinese from the counties across the harbor, European merchants and

⁶ Christopher Munn, *Anglo-China: Chinese People and British Rule in Hong Kong, 1841–1880* (Richmond, Surrey, England: Curzon Press, 2001), 2–4.

Pottinger was so unpopular among foreigners in Hong Kong was that "he alone upheld the public interest in the face of self-seeking officials and merchants." Second governor John Davis was "hated" by Europeans in Hong Kong, "for whom he showed only contempt." When Davis left Hong Kong in March 1848 after resigning before his term was completed, no speeches or banquets were given.

Exacerbating these problems was the chronic shortage of manpower. The book jacket for the original edition of this book explained that the British Empire expanded so quickly in the early nineteenth century that "posts were being created faster than men of character and ability could be found to fill them." In his preface, Endacott explains how manpower was "sadly lacking, and that little attempt was made to organize a colonial service to overcome the deficiency. One of the astonishing things about the British Empire at that time was its unsystematic growth, and makeshift arrangements." Consequently, "recourse had to be made to whatever local men were available." Thus Pottinger, who frequently complained of being overworked, often had to give junior posts to men "of the adventure class, many from Australia, and other roving types." Pottinger was often criticized for not controlling crime, but he had to rely on a small group of locally recruited European soldiers and seamen. Preventing police collusion and extortion was also a problem, especially since the pay for policemen was so low.

All these problems and obstacles are embodied in the short tenure of John Davis, the second and, according to Endacott, "most unpopular" governor of Hong Kong. Only weeks after arriving in Hong Kong, Davis introduced the Registration Ordinance, a highly controversial scheme for registering the entire population that was later amended to apply only to lower-class Chinese. Davis then spent the rest of his time in Hong Kong trying to end the "administrative chaos" that had plagued the colony even before Davis arrived; levying taxes, controlling crime "arising from the influx of disorderly elements from the mainland," and fighting a protracted quarrel with Chief Justice John Hulme.

Like many historians of his era, Endacott regretted how we often forget that "history is made by men." Thus the founding of the colony of Hong Kong was "closely bound up with the career of Captain Charles Elliot." William Caine, the first magistrate of the colony, was an "outstanding personality" who "impressed his personality on the administration of law and order in the Colony." (Note, however, that Endacott does not slip into psychohistory. For example, although he tells that Charles Gutzlaff had an "unhappy upbringing under an unsympathetic step-mother," he does not pursue this any further.) But if the moral of Endacott's story is that men of action can shape history, one of the other morals is that such men are often disliked in their own time. Although Charles Elliot's conciliatory attitude during the Opium War proved that he

was “undoubtedly a man of personality and strength of character,” these same virtues brought him into conflict with European merchants in Hong Kong. Henry Pottinger was “too forthright and too decided in his opinions to be easy to work with.” John Davis was a “man of strong character . . . an authority on the Chinese, keen in argument . . . urbane, bland, and self-assured.” Thus we learn that George Bonham, third governor, was the first popular governor of Hong Kong. However, Bonham’s popularity derived not from any programs or reforms but because his tenure coincided with a period of greater economic prosperity, and because most of the unpopular decisions had already been made by his less popular predecessors. Although Bonham realized that Hong Kong residents were taxed more lightly than those in Singapore, he refused to jeopardize his popularity by raising taxes. Bonham also deferred solutions to controversial problems such as flogging and branding of criminals. Thus Bonham “rarely got into trouble because he pursued no vigorous policy.” Bonham’s secret for success reminds one more of a Taoist sage than of a colonial governor: “Without exerting himself or showing much leadership, he showed friendliness, consideration, and a nice sense of what was better left alone.”

More worthy of notice than this minor contradiction, however, is Endacott’s term “men of action.” As there is only one woman in Endacott’s book, Harriet Baxter, we can assume that Endacott would not be impressed by the more modern “people of action.”¹⁷ With the exception of some European civilians in *Hong Kong Eclipse*, women rarely appear in Endacott’s work. Even more unsettling given how the majority of Hong Kong’s population has always been Chinese, noticeably absent from Endacott’s book is any serious discussion of the Chinese population of early Hong Kong. The reason for this, he writes in his preface, is that during that time the Chinese were “sojourners only, as indeed they have been during the whole of the Colony’s history until recently.” Endacott was correct in that many colonial sources do not say much about the early Chinese population of Hong Kong. But the absence of these Chinese is a pattern found throughout his scholarship. At an academic conference in the mid-1990s at Hong Kong University one of his colleagues observed, only somewhat facetiously, that Endacott’s work could lead readers to believe that the colony had no Chinese residents. In both *A History of Hong Kong and Government and People in Hong Kong, 1841–1962: A Constitutional History* (1964), we frequently read about “the Chinese,” but never quite meet them, while at other times Endacott seems to include the Chinese mainly as the reason for Hong Kong’s lack of political representation (in *Government and People*, Endacott argued that “Broadly the overwhelming Chinese character of Hong Kong and the need to protect their interests

17 A considerably fuller biography of Harriet Baxter can be found in Susanna Hoe, *The Private Life of Old Hong Kong: Western Women in the British Colony* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1993), chapter 11.

have been the main factors in the delaying the introduction of essentially Western ideas of political freedom.”¹⁸) In *An Eastern Entrepot: A Collection of Documents Illustrating the History of Hong Kong* (1964), Endacott attributed Hong Kong’s remarkable economic growth mainly to “British liberal economic policies, particularly free trade, and a strong laissez-faire spirit in administration which aimed at keeping the ring clear for free enterprise under the law administered impartially to all without fear or favour.”¹⁹ And although *Hong Kong Eclipse* remained the most thorough study of the Japanese occupation in English until the publication of Philip Snow’s recent study, *The Fall of Hong Kong*, it too focused mainly on the European population of Hong Kong.

Like many European historians of Hong Kong, Endacott was restricted to English-language sources. There is no reason to doubt his declaration in the preface here that he was not trying to “belittle” the contributions of Hong Kong’s Chinese residents. Much of the recent scholarship on colonies has rightly shifted from analyses of European colonists and indigenous elites to studies of “subalterns”: workers, peasants, and women, for example. But understanding Hong Kong, or any colony, means also looking at its expatriate communities. Hong Kong was never comprised solely of Chinese and Britons. Like the treaty ports along the coast and waterways of China, and like most other cities in the British Empire, the colony was from the outset multi-ethnic. Apart from the British and the Chinese there were Eurasians, Indians, Portuguese from old families in the colony of Macau, Jews, other Europeans, Armenians, and Americans. Although Endacott does not discuss the Asian communities, his chapters introduce some of the other European nationalities in early Hong Kong. Charles Gutzlaff, the missionary and interpreter, originally hailed from Pomerania. Until 1851, the assistant harbour master was an Italian, while the colonial treasurer who succeeded William Mercer in 1854, was R. Rienacker, a German. The clerk of councils, Leonardo d’Almada de Castro, was Portuguese.

Focusing solely on the European community of Hong Kong, however, poses several dangers. First, it ignores how British colonialism was made possible by Chinese collaboration throughout Hong Kong’s history. The British received help from Chinese in the Opium War, which gave Britain control over Hong Kong Island, and during the early development of the young colony. One example of these Chinese is Kwok Acheong, a boatman who supplied the British forces during the Opium War. After the British takeover, Kwok settled in Hong Kong where he became a successful comprador, or middleman, for the Peninsular and Oriental (P&O) Steam

¹⁸ G. B. Endacott, *Government and People in Hong Kong, 1841–1962: A Constitutional History* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1964), vii.

¹⁹ G. B. Endacott, *An Eastern Entrepot: A Collection of Documents Illustrating the History of Hong Kong* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1964), ix.

Navigation Company. Like many of the British merchants in Hong Kong, Kwok tried his hand at many commercial ventures: he owned a bakery, tried briefly importing cattle to Hong Kong, ran a general merchants' firm, and started a line of steamships that sailed between Hong Kong, Canton, and Macau. By the late 1870s, Kwok had become a regional shipping magnate. He was a frequent advisor to the colonial government until his death in 1880. The Chinese were also responsible for building Hong Kong. As in many European colonies in East Asia, Chinese contractors, builders, and laborers completed all major construction work in Hong Kong. An example is Tam Achoy, one of the most successful contractors, who had worked for the British in Singapore as foreman in the colonial dockyards. Tam built some of the most important buildings in early Hong Kong, including the P & O Building and the Exchange Building for Dent and Co., one of the largest European firms. As Endacott explains in Chapter 10, the Exchange Building was later purchased by the government for use as the colony's Supreme Court. In return for his services to the British in Singapore and Hong Kong, Tam received land grants in the Lower Bazaar, the area where most of Hong Kong's new Chinese residents settled. Tam eventually became one of the largest Chinese businessmen in early Hong Kong, leading the *Friend of China* in 1857 to describe him as "no doubt the most creditable Chinese in the Colony."

Endacott's claim that the Chinese in Hong Kong were only sojourners must also be taken with caution. For this is a fiction that would dominate colonial discourse on Hong Kong until after World War Two, a convenient excuse for not introducing political representation and social welfare. Many Chinese in Hong Kong were no more sojourners than the British officials covered in Endacott's chapters. As the work of Carl Smith and other historians has shown, a group of more or less permanent Chinese residents began to emerge in the colony by the late 1850s, not because of the colonial government's efforts to attract wealthier and more "respectable" Chinese residents, but because of the chaos and destruction of the massive Taiping Rebellion that tore China apart in the 1850s and early 1860s. Whereas in the early years Chinese merchants had resided mainly in the squalid Chinese sections of Hong Kong, leaving their families back in their home villages or in Canton, by the 1850s and 1860s Chinese businessmen were beginning to buy or rent property for their wives and families from European owners in the more desirable parts of the main town. These new Chinese businessmen were soon establishing guilds, neighborhood-watch groups, and philanthropic associations — demonstrating the community spirit and urban consciousness that colonial officials hoped from their Chinese subjects. For these Chinese, the colony became a home rather than simply a place to get rich fast.

Furthermore, the same colonial records that Endacott used for his books contain evidence of how by the mid-1850s the Hong Kong

government realized that the Chinese merchants were responsible for the colony's new prosperity. In 1855 Officiating Registrar-General Charles May (discussed in Chapter 15) informed John Bowring that the turbulent conditions on the Chinese mainland had brought many new Chinese traders to the colony, and that the local Chinese community was beginning to build houses of better quality.²⁰ In August 1857 Governor Bowring declared that the Chinese of the colony were "all concurring to render Hongkong one of the most prosperous and progressive of Colonies under the protection of the British flag."²¹ In May 1863 Hercules Robinson, the last governor covered by Endacott's study, reported to the Colonial Office that, "It is the Chinese who have made Hong Kong what it is and not its connection with the foreign trade."²² Hong Kong's new economic growth, sparked by the arrival of new Chinese capital and labor, moreover benefited local European merchants and attracted new foreign investment. This was perhaps most evident in the founding in 1864 of the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank, which would become the leading bank on the China coast for over fifty years and still plays a leading role in Hong Kong's economy. Although most of new bank's capital came local European, American and Parsi firms, Chinese capital was crucial from the outset.

Like the European community, the Chinese community of Hong Kong also found ways to express its approval of colonial officials' performance. One way was through strikes and boycotts, which characterized Hong Kong's colonial history from the start. Another method was the traditional send-off, which became a ritualized form of performance assessment. When Charles Gutzlaff left for England in October 1849, some 170 Chinese shopkeepers praised him with this address: "Since he came to this place his official character has been spotless as water, and not a cash even has he received as a bribe. We bear in grateful remembrance the influence he has exercised in turning men to virtue . . . he was truly 'a courteous, princelike man treating others as himself'."²³ When Governor George Bonham left the colony in April 1854 leaders of the Chinese business community presented him with a sentimental farewell address: "As merchants, whose avocation has led us to leave our native country and cross the seas, you have watched over and shielded us as a father would a child, and ever extended towards us the most affectionate regard."²⁴ When John Bowring left in May 1859, the European community ignored his departure. But the Chinese community, Endacott tells us, bade farewell with "presents and other indications of their high opinion of him."

20 CO 129/51, 4 July 1855, May to Bowring, 29–30.

21 CO 129/64/125, 11 August 1857, Bowring to Labouchere, 88.

22 Robinson to Rogers, 21 May 1863, reprinted in Irish University Press Area Studies Series, *British Parliamentary Papers, China, 25: Correspondence, Dispatches, Reports, Returns, Memorials, and other Papers Respecting the Affairs of Hong Kong, 1862–81* (Shannon, Ire.: Irish University Press, 1971), pp. 62.

23 *Hong Kong Register*, 2 October 1849.

24 *Hong Kong Register*, 25 April 1854.

Another result of omitting the Chinese from Hong Kong's early history is that we never see how poorly many Europeans in Hong Kong treated these Chinese. Visitors to Hong Kong were frequently shocked by the local Europeans' scorn and disdain for the Chinese, noting how they would beat Chinese workers with sticks and umbrellas. In 1877 an Englishman complained after a short visit how British military officers treated all Chinese "as if they were a very inferior kind of animal to themselves."²⁵ Osmond Tiffany, the American visitor, recalled how the "Chinese suffered many indignities at Hong Kong," and how the "worthless [European] adventurers of the town took every occasion to disgust the Chinese, and did not even spare any portion of the better inhabitants."²⁶ It is also difficult to assess the validity of some of Endacott's claims without more evidence from the Chinese side. For example, we must simply take Endacott at his word that William Caine "won the respect of the Chinese too, for though he had a commanding personality which instilled respect, it was combined with dignity and impartiality."

G. B. Endacott died in 1971, leaving his last book, the history of the Japanese occupation, to be completed by his colleague Alan Birch. Both building upon and challenging Endacott's work, subsequent generations of Hong Kong historians have utilized research materials unavailable to Endacott and asked new questions about Hong Kong's early history. Theologian and historian Carl Smith has reconstructed a group of Chinese elites and middlemen generally missing in the work of Endacott and other colonial historians.²⁷ The late sociologist Henry Lethbridge explored issues of class and race that escaped the interest of historians in Endacott's generation.²⁸ In her study of the Tung Wah Hospital of Hong Kong, Elizabeth Sinn has shown how the relationship between the Chinese community and the colonial government in early Hong Kong was plagued by conflicting ideas about death and sickness.²⁹ Sociologist Chan Wai-kwan has applied a class analysis to early Hong Kong society, focusing on the making of the Chinese and European merchant classes and the Chinese working class.³⁰ Challenging the popular image of Hong Kong's history as one of stability, continuity, and political apathy, Jung-fang Tsai has painted a vivid picture of conflict, popular unrest, and nationalist activism in the

25 Cited in James Pope-Hennessy, *Half-Crown Colony: A Hong Kong Notebook* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1969), 53.

26 Tiffany, *Canton Chinese*, in White, *Hong Kong*, 38.

27 Smith, *Chinese Christians*, and *A Sense of History: Studies in the Social and Urban History of Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Educational Publishing Co., 1995).

28 Henry J. Lethbridge, *Hong Kong: Stability and Change* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1978).

29 Elizabeth Sinn, *Power and Charity: The Early History of the Tung Wah Hospital, Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1989).

30 Chan Wai Kwan, *The Making of Hong Kong Society: Three Studies of Class Formation in Early Hong Kong* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).

colony from its founding.³¹ Christopher Munn's recent study demonstrates how the early colonial government failed to transform Hong Kong into the much-anticipated "Anglo-China" where Chinese and European traders would flourish under British liberalism and impartial justice.

Some of the figures in Endacott *Biographical Sketch-book* have found their way into these new studies, often in considerably less flattering light. For example, Endacott writes that after being reinstated John Hulme went on to "gain the esteem of all sections of the community." According to Christopher Munn, however, Hulme was "notorious" for his "hostility" to Chinese defendants, and for the heavy sentences he awarded to non-Europeans.³² Whereas Endacott describes William Caine, first magistrate of the colony, as severe but "dignified" and "impartial," Munn suggests that he, like many of the other officials in early Hong Kong — William Bridges, Daniel Caldwell, and W. H. Mitchell — received bribes. Although Endacott does not exonerate such men of all charges, he generally falls short of accusing them. We learn that Caine was often criticized for speculating in land, Caldwell was implicated in "too many questionable transactions" to ever gain a solid official position, and that Bridges was "typical of the adventuring class of Englishmen" of his time: strong, competent, and determined, but also "rather unscrupulous." And whereas Endacott sees harsh punishment and sentences as a necessary deterrent — or at least as products of their time — Munn, like many contemporary critics in early Hong Kong, argues that such methods not only contradicted official views of British impartial justice, but also failed to control crime and drove away more respectable, wealthy Chinese.³³ Whereas Endacott describes Charles Gutzlaff as a "brilliant linguist," Munn characterizes him as "deeply incompetent," arguing that his mistranslations of colonial government proclamations "provoked fatal clashes between government and people."³⁴ Munn similarly writes that Caldwell's inability to read much Chinese, and his weakness in the Hakka dialect spoken by many of Hong Kong's Chinese residents, "raises questions about his effectiveness as principal interpreter in the criminal courts."³⁵

The Hong Kong of today — since July 1997 the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China — would be scarcely recognizable to a visitor from Endacott's sketch-book (who one hopes would certainly arrive in considerably less time than Henry Pottinger, who came to Hong Kong on the overland route via Suez

31 Jung-fang Tsai, *Hong Kong in Chinese History: Community and Social Unrest in the British Colony, 1842–1913* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

32 Munn, *Anglo-China*, 175, 192.

33 Munn, *Anglo-China*, 113.

34 Christopher Munn, "Colonialism 'In a Chinese Atmosphere': The Caldwell Affair and the Perils of Collaboration in Early Colonial Hong Kong," in Robert Bickers and Christian Henriot, eds., *New Frontiers: Imperialism's New Communities in East Asia, 1842–1953* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 17. A similar argument is made in Munn, *Anglo-China*, 65.

35 Munn, *Anglo-China*, 65.

in the “remarkably short time” of 67 days.) Yet significant continuities and legacies persist. A short walk from Queen’s Road would reveal clues that our visitor would find hard to miss. Streets and roads such as Caine Road, Robinson Road, and Pottinger Street were renamed temporarily during the Japanese occupation (Queen’s Road, for example, became Meiji Road), but they have not been changed since the transfer to Chinese sovereignty. A small handful of former colonial buildings have been preserved, including Flagstaff House, built in 1846 as the office and residence of the Commander of the British Forces in Hong Kong but now home of the Hong Kong Museum of Tea Ware; Government House, completed in the 1850s in a classical style but later renovated substantially during the Japanese occupation; and St. John’s Cathedral, the Gothic-style Anglican cathedral built in 1849 that still plays an active role in Hong Kong’s religious community.

As it did in the early decades of its colonial period, Hong Kong lacks a constitutional framework that satisfies both government and governed. And although he differs from the early colonial governors not just insofar as he is Chinese but because he has no prior political experience, Hong Kong’s chief executive, Tung Chee-hwa, too has faced a series of crises from the beginning of his administration: the 1997 Asian financial crisis, which led to unprecedented unemployment; a protracted legal challenge to the new government’s 1997 ordinance on proving “right of abode” status; the SARS epidemic in the spring and summer of 2003; demands for political reform; and low public opinion. Finally, as in the early years of colonial Hong Kong, the young HKSAR has developed its own rituals of performance assessment. A massive public protest on 1 July 2003, the sixth anniversary of the transfer to Chinese rule, forced Tung to withdraw proposed anti-subversion legislation, while an April 2004 survey found that public dissatisfaction with the Hong Kong government’s handling of relations with the central authorities in Beijing was at its highest level since the 1997 transition. Just as ruling early colonial Hong Kong proved to be a harder task than its founders had envisioned, so may be ruling the new SAR.

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CAPTAIN CHARLES ELLIOT, R. N.

FOUNDER OF THE COLONY OF HONG KONG

THE FOUNDING of the Colony of Hong Kong was closely bound up with the career of Captain Charles Elliot, R. N. Many others might claim to have shared in this episode, for example, Lord Napier, the British merchants who demanded an island trading station, Palmerston and Aberdeen who were the two Foreign Secretaries during this period, and Sir Henry Pottinger who negotiated the actual cession. Yet Elliot has been regarded as the founder of the Colony, and justifiably so since no account of its origins would be intelligible without some reference to him. It was he who negotiated in January 1841 the so-called Convention of Chuenpi by which the Chinese Commissioner Keshen or Ch'i-Shan (琦善) agreed in principle to the cession of the island, though, it must be admitted, he did so in terms sufficiently vague as to be capable of bearing any interpretation he might later have chosen to put upon them. The Convention did no more than embody the main points of agreement and was not definitely and finally concluded; but in accordance with its terms, Elliot ordered the occupation of the island, which was carried into effect on 26 January 1841. In a proclamation of 2 February he announced that "pending Her Majesty's further pleasure, the government of the said island shall devolve upon, and be exercised by, the person filling the office of the Chief Superintendent of the Trade of British subjects in China, for the time being". In consequence, he became the first responsible official in control of the Colony; not, it will be noticed, the first Governor. Both sides denounced the Convention, and Elliot was recalled and replaced by Sir Henry Pottinger, who secured the cession of Hong Kong in the Treaty of Nanking, 29 August 1842, and who became, on the ratification of the treaty on 26 June 1843, its first Governor. But in spite of apparent failure, Elliot had played a fundamental role in bringing about the birth of the Colony.

He was born in 1801 at Dresden, where his father held a diplomatic appointment at the Court of the King of Saxony. He was of a distinguished Scottish family, his uncle, Gilbert Elliot, being the first Lord Minto and an eminent lawyer. He entered on a naval career, and as a midshipman was present at the attack on the Barbary pirates at Algiers in 1815. He saw service on the East

Indies and West Indies stations, and on the West Coast of Africa; rapid promotion earned him the rank of Captain in 1828, at the early age of twenty-seven. He then retired from active service and followed his father in seeking a career under the Foreign Office. He still retained his connection with the Royal Navy, however, and secured promotion to honorary flag rank on the retired list, as Rear-Admiral in 1855, Vice-Admiral in 1862, and Admiral in 1865.

His first important official appointment was that of "Protector of Slaves" in the Colony of British Guiana, and he was brought home to advise the Government on the various administrative problems connected with the Slave Emancipation Act of 1833. It was in this year that the Honourable East India Company's Charter was renewed on terms by which it lost its monopoly, now almost nominal, of the China trade, and it was decided to replace the Company's control in Canton by an official Commission consisting of a Chief Superintendent of Trade, a Second and Third Superintendent, and a staff of officials to supervise British trading interests there. The aristocratic Lord Napier, former naval officer and sheep farmer, was selected to lead the mission as Chief Superintendent. Charles Elliot was offered the rather minor post of "Master Attendant", with the duty of interviewing and passing instructions to the masters of merchant vessels, which he accepted with some reluctance. In due course he arrived at Macao with Napier in July 1834 and at Canton early in the following month. From his subordinate position Elliot witnessed the failure of Napier's efforts to induce the Chinese to open up trade and treat with the mission on terms of equality. Napier's official instructions contained directives that were partly self-contradictory. On the one hand, he was ordered to be conciliatory towards the Chinese and "cautiously abstain from all unnecessary use of menacing language" and to avoid action "as might unnecessarily irritate the feelings or revolt the opinions or prejudices of the Chinese people", and on the other, he was told to "proceed to Canton and announce his arrival by letter to the Viceroy" which actions were contrary to the Chinese regulations for the control of the Western traders. Napier was forced to retire to Macao, where he died on 11 October 1834, without having gained a single objective. J. F. Davis became Chief Superintendent, and Elliot was promoted to be the Secretary to the Commission. Davis did not remain long. He had served many years in Canton as a Company official, and he retired in January 1835, leaving Sir George Robinson as Chief Superintendent. Elliot now became Third Superintendent. He complained afterwards that "Sir George Robinson has virtually suspended the functions of his colleagues. The Chief Superintendent has only informed me of what he is going to do or not to do"

Evidently Elliot and Robinson did not see eye to eye.

J. F. Davis thought highly of Charles Elliot and recommended him to the Foreign Office as an able man who both desired and deserved a position of greater responsibility. "The talents, information and temper of that gentleman would render him eminently suited to the chief station in this country", reported Davis just before he left Canton. Elliot was asked to present his views privately to an official at the Foreign Office, a Mr. Lennox Conyngham, and Palmerston, the Foreign Secretary, seemed sufficiently impressed to allow him the opportunity of carrying them into effect. A reorganization of the Commission was decided upon; in June 1836 the posts of Second and Third Superintendents were abolished and Elliot was offered the post of Chief Superintendent, able to act alone. This dispatch did not arrive until January 1837 but its action had been anticipated in the previous month, for in December 1836 Robinson had resigned, and Elliot had assumed control.

Elliot had criticized Lord Napier for his attempt to force the Commission on the Chinese by insisting on residing at Canton, and attributed his failure to his pretensions of exalted rank. He criticized Robinson, too, saying "to be perfectly frank, I will not conceal my own feelings of sincere regret that the strong necessity of taking up the cautious and conciliatory instructions of the Government with an earnest spirit to give them effect is less apparent or palatable to my colleague Sir George Robinson than it is to be wished it were". He criticized the British merchants as showing "a very heedless spirit" towards the Chinese at Canton. The failure of 1834 was, he thought, not entirely due to the Chinese, and Elliot's policy was, briefly, to attempt to make a fresh start by adopting conciliatory measures, which had been so strongly insisted upon in the instructions to the Superintendent, and to secure an improvement in the conditions of trade by winning the confidence of the Chinese provincial officials. He had, he said, "a strong persuasion that a conciliatory disposition to respect the usages, and above all to refrain from shocking the prejudices of this government" would prove to be the most advantageous policy. There was no need to force the Commission on Canton if the Chinese did not want it there. The main objective was to maintain the flow of trade, and leave for the time being the question of sending a diplomatic mission and the negotiation of a commercial treaty. Elliot thought that such a treaty might well produce more difficulties than it solved because the Chinese would interpret it to suit themselves. The Home Government rejected the demand of the British merchants to use force and accepted the policy of conciliation, except on two points in which existing Chinese regulations were to be disregarded. Elliot was told

that he must correspond with the Chinese officials directly on all important issues and not send his communications through the Co-hong merchants as the regulations demanded, and secondly, he must not use the Chinese character for "petition", when writing to the Viceroy, the form habitually used in China by inferiors when addressing superiors.

The Elliot policy of conciliation and of gaining concessions by winning confidence did have some success, and bore out his view that "it is easier in this country to get on than to get in". He was the first Superintendent to be recognized by the Chinese, he secured the privilege of having his letters forwarded by the Co-hong merchants to the Viceroy with the seals unbroken, and he was allowed to take up his residence in Canton in April 1837. However, he continued to correspond with the Viceroy in the form of a petition. Palmerston insisted that the character for "petition" (稟 "pin") should not be used. As the Viceroy refused to receive any letter unless superscribed with that character, the correspondence between Elliot and the provincial officials came perforce to an end, and Elliot left Canton in December 1837 for Macao, where he continued generally to reside until he left for home four years later.

It was the opium question which finally made Elliot's position untenable. In 1838 he ordered all British to cease opium smuggling within the Bogue on the ground that it was provocative to flaunt the contraband trade before the eyes of the Chinese officials. The Chinese then argued that if he could suppress opium inside the Bogue, he could do the same outside it. Commissioner Lin Tse-hsu (林則徐) came to Canton in March 1839 with the special task of suppressing the opium trade. He decided to confiscate the whole stock of opium and kept the foreign community in confinement until it was handed over; he demanded that some of the worst offenders be surrendered and that all Western merchants should sign a bond promising not to import opium on pain of death. Elliot heard this news at Macao, and fearing the worst, he courageously made the journey to Canton and found himself incarcerated in the factories with the rest. He acted with considerable dignity and showed no little power of leadership over merchants, many of whom made his position unnecessarily difficult by their blatantly illegal activities, their disregard for Chinese feelings, and their opposition to his own conciliatory policy.

Elliot withdrew the whole British community from Canton to Macao after the opium had been surrendered and appealed to the Home Government. When Lin exerted pressure against Macao, the British community had to take refuge on board ship in the harbour of Hong Kong. Hostilities began, though war was not actually

declared. Lin Tse-hsu seemed quite genuinely surprised that Elliot would not allow the merchant community to return to Canton nor sign the bond agreeing to the full penalty of the law if opium were carried. Elliot had now made up his mind that trade must be carried on under conditions which would give greater security and remove the chance of the sort of pressure that Lin had used in March 1839, but when the hostilities came he acted with great moderation and the minimum of force. His aim was by all means to get the trade flowing again, and to appeal to self-interest on either side to secure a settlement.

Palmerston had now decided that the time for a permanent settlement of commercial relations with China had come. Charles Elliot and his cousin, Rear-Admiral George Elliot, were named joint plenipotentiaries; they were given detailed instructions as to the mode in which the force at their disposal was to be employed, and the terms they were to demand. Briefly, they were to occupy the Chusan Islands, blockade the coast, proceed to the Peiho River to deliver Palmerston's letter to the Chinese Government, and there open negotiations. They were to demand reparation for the value of the opium destroyed, for the expenses of the hostilities, and for the debts of the Hong merchants. They were told to negotiate for the opening of more ports on satisfactory terms to be embodied in a commercial treaty, or, as an alternative, for the cession of an island or islands off the coast to serve as a centre for British trade, under British control.

The expedition set out for the north in June 1840, occupied Chusan, attempted to deliver Palmerston's letter, and at an interview at the mouth of the Peiho River with the Chinese Commissioner, Keshen, agreed to resume negotiations at Canton. The Admiral fell ill on his return and resigned, leaving Charles Elliot once more in sole control. Negotiations were opened with Keshen as arranged and, after some brief hostilities, Elliot announced the main terms of an agreement on 20 January 1841. This Convention of Chuenpi ceded Hong Kong, with the proviso that Chinese customs duties were to be payable there "as if the trade were conducted at Whampoa". The British Government was to be paid an indemnity of £6 million. As proof of his goodwill, Elliot ordered the evacuation of the Chusan Islands before the terms were actually agreed on.

These terms were very lenient, and much less than he had been told to demand; even so they conceded more than Keshen was authorized to give, and he absented himself from what was intended to be the final session of the peace negotiations in February 1841. The war was therefore renewed. Both British and Chinese thought their respective negotiators had yielded too much, and both Keshen

and Elliot were recalled, though news of this took some time to reach them.

On 24 February 1841, Elliot announced the renewal of hostilities. The Bogue forts were once more taken on 26 February and the expedition entered the Canton River. Elliot again strictly controlled operations to allow every opportunity to resume negotiations, and the number of occasions on which he granted an armistice exasperated the naval and military officers. On 19 March the Canton factories were re-occupied but the imminent attack on the city was called off and an armistice granted in order to resume trade, so that by 21 May the whole of the season's tea had been shipped. Negotiations were continued with Yik Shan or Yishen (奕湘), Keshen's successor, and Elliot reported favourably on the prospects of a settlement. The last British ships had barely loaded and sailed when the Chinese renewed hostilities by an attack on British warships at Canton in May. An assault on the city was prepared, but was called off on 27 May as Elliot agreed to spare the city the humiliation of a British occupation. Yik Shan agreed to pay \$6 million as ransom and withdraw all troops twenty miles from the city except for those raised locally. A few days later, early in June 1841, the British troops left the river for Hong Kong, to prepare to carry hostilities to the north. On 21 July, 1841, while on his way to Hong Kong from Macao to join the expedition, Elliot was shipwrecked in a typhoon but fortunately escaped with his life. News of his recall arrived almost immediately after this and he left for home on 24 August 1841.

In view of the detailed instructions he had sent, Palmerston was justifiably annoyed when the news of the Convention of Chuenpi arrived, and decided on Elliot's recall. "It seems to me that Captain Elliot is disposed to act on an erroneous principle in his dealings with the Chinese and to use too much refinement in submitting to their pretensions", he wrote. He told Elliot, "You have disobeyed and neglected your instructions; you have deliberately abstained from employing, as you might have done, the force placed at your disposal; . . . throughout the whole course of your proceedings, you seem to have considered that my instructions were waste paper which you might treat with entire disregard". Palmerston had proposed but Elliot had disposed; and Elliot, not Palmerston, had decided the pattern of events on the China Coast in 1840 and 1841. These events have had to be narrated in an account of Elliot because they reveal the man.

Elliot's policy of conciliation, leniency, and moderate war aims was unpopular all round, and aroused some resentment among the naval and military officers of the expedition. Belcher, Captain of

the *Sulphur*, acidly noted that as Canton was about to be attacked, some Chinese appeared on the walls with white flags, shouting "Elliot, Elliot, as if he were their protecting joss".¹ The British merchants disliked him because they were convinced that force was essential in dealing with a people who were incapable of acting on principle. Elliot was to find, as liberal-minded men after him found, that any attempt to treat the Chinese reasonably led to charges of folly and weakness. He was so eager to demonstrate to all his faith that the Chinese would honour their undertakings that he more than once brought his wife to the scene of his activities, and unintentionally exposed her to the hazards of war.²

Elliot had no doubt whatever that the Chinese could be defeated as he referred to them as "a helpless and friendly people"; nor was he wanting in personal courage. He came to the Canton factories in March 1839 at no little personal risk, and during the hostilities eyewitness accounts describe him as frequently under fire and embarking on the small steamers in their task of reconnoitring, in disregard of his personal safety. He had definite ideas about negotiation with the Chinese which were shared neither by the British Government nor by the British residents. His main object was to keep trade moving to enlist the commercial self-interest of the Chinese in the cause of ending the conflict, and he thought that if the Chinese could be convinced of the moderation of British intentions, they would themselves, without force, bring about a settlement. He believed that the Canton area would remain the centre of trade, and that the opening of other ports was not therefore very important. The cession of Hong Kong at the Convention of Chuenpi was a fundamental part of his policy, for the Canton trade would thus continue, with the difference that Hong Kong would replace Canton as its centre. He even agreed that Chinese customs dues were to continue payable as if the trade were at Whampoa, so that the Chinese should have no cause to complain of loss of revenue. He was opposed to a commercial treaty because he thought the Chinese would evade it by subtlety of interpretation, and he made no demand for the settlement of the Hong debts because repayment was already being arranged.

There was another side of the problem which the Home Government tended to ignore; the problem of opium, and the unruly character of many of the British opium traders over whom the Superintendent of Trade had so little authority. On 18 July 1839, Elliot wrote to Palmerston, "The true and far more important

1 Capt. E. Belcher, *H.M.S. Sulphur in China 1840-1*, London, 1843, Vol. 2, p. 214.

2 Capt. E. Belcher, *ibid.*, Volume 2, p.86.

question to be solved is whether there shall be honourable and extending trade with this Empire; or whether the coasts shall be delivered over to a state of things which will pass rapidly from the worst character of forced trade of plain buccaneering". These were no idle words, for earlier in 1839, he had ordered a notorious opium dealer, James Innes, to leave the China Coast. Innes replied, "Your order to leave China. . . is waste paper. . . and I give you distinctly to understand that looking on your order as illegal, I shall land and stay in China whenever I consider it prudent to do so, without any reference to you". Such direct defiance also partly reveals why Elliot, whose whole policy was based on conciliating the Chinese, thought it essential to demand the cession of an island; for only by securing some British soil on which alone a British administration was able to function, could such men as Innes be controlled. Of course, such an island would also make impossible the kind of pressure Lin Tse-hsu exerted in March 1839.

In June 1841, Elliot addressed to the Governor-General of India, Lord Auckland, a long defence of his policy towards the Chinese. He argued that the best treaty with the Chinese, "if treaty be necessary or advisable until the Chinese seek one", "was that which contained the least number of stipulations". Only two articles were essential. One, the cession of Hong Kong, and two, a most-favoured nation clause by which all concessions or privileges granted to a foreign country should also be granted to Great Britain. The essential thing was to obtain "a secure seat for the trade without loss of time, under our own flag". Hong Kong was his solution to the Chinese problem. No open ports were necessary if all Chinese merchants and Chinese ships could have free access to Hong Kong. He envisaged the continuance of much of the old Canton system transferred to Hong Kong, and in the meantime his aim was "temporarily to prop up and use the existing machinery", and keep trade flowing. If more ports were opened under a commercial treaty, "the Emperor's signet would not guarantee life and property" and he stigmatized the Chinese Government as "most perfidious". The cession of Hong Kong would be an act of justice to the native population because "indescribably dreadful instances of the hostility between these people and the government are within our certain knowledge".

Elliot's conduct of the war, his sparing of Canton in March 1841, which appeared to the military and civilians alike as incredibly pusillanimous, was thus the result of deliberate policy and conviction. He was undoubtedly a man of personality and strength of character. When caught in the typhoon in July 1841 on his way to Hong Kong in the *Louisa*, Elliot took command, and with great

skill and intrepidity beached the ship.¹ Although there was a price of \$10,000 on his head, he induced the inhabitants of the island to take him back to Macao for \$3,000 and landed there in "a Manila hat, a jacket, no shirt and a pair of striped trousers and shoes". One of the naval captains remarked of him "...but that he was wanting in natural talent, or principle, or a wish to serve faithfully his Queen, his Government and his country, his most unscrupulous detractors have scarcely ventured to maintain". He appeared to command respect and to impress all by his courage, ability, and character. Except for a few friends he was aloof and dignified, and devoted to the task he had undertaken. He unbent on one occasion, when he sailed round the infant Colony which he had been instrumental in founding, and was reported by one eyewitness to be "vastly pleased by what he saw".

His position was difficult; the Chinese claim to superiority, the restrictions on the trade at Canton, the contraband trade in opium, the lack of discretionary power, all combined to make an intractable problem. Yet there was one fatal defect in his policy. He never sufficiently took into account that his possession of force, in response to his own request, was inconsistent with the continuance of his policy of conciliation, at least along its old lines. Defending himself on his return to England, he said, "It has been popularly objected to me, that I have cared too much for the Chinese. But I submit that it has been caring more for lasting British honour and substantial British interests to protect a helpless and friendly people". He saw that to secure a settlement based on force was not difficult; it is to his credit that he aimed at a settlement which would respect the fundamental interests of the two countries. On his departure on 24 August 1841, an army medical officer² summed up the general impression Elliot made: "Captain Elliot certainly had a few friends who regretted his departure, but the majority of the foreign residents in China were delighted to get rid of him. In private life he was much esteemed, and even in public, except when employed diplomatically, he evinced talent of no ordinary description; all gave him credit for zeal and activity, but he wanted the dignity and decision of the diplomatist". Though the cession of the island of Hong Kong was his work, it is not surprising that he is nowhere commemorated there.

The Prime Minister, Peel, said that he "was disposed from his intercourse with him since he returned home, to repose the highest confidence in his integrity and ability". He was accordingly retained

1 K. S. Mackenzie, *Narrative of the Second Campaign in China*, London, 1842, p. 185, from an eyewitness account by a naval secretary called Morgan.

2 D. Macpherson, M.D., *The War in China*, London, 1843, p. 201.

in government employ and served as chargé d'affaires in the Republic of Texas, 1842-46, and then under the Colonial Office as Governor of Bermuda, 1846-54, of Trinidad, 1863-69. He received the K.C.B. in 1856 and died at Witteycombe, Exeter, on 9 September 1875.

ALEXANDER ROBERT JOHNSTON

FIRST ADMINISTRATOR OF HONG KONG

ALXANDER JOHNSTON was not among the most important officials in the Hong Kong Government during its early years, in either length of service or the value of his contribution. Yet his name heads this select list of officials, because he was the first administrator of the island. In June 1841, Elliot appointed him as his deputy so that he himself should be free to carry hostilities once more to the north, following the breakdown of negotiations at Canton. Johnston's name might with some justification have even been included in the list of governors. He held no appointment under the Colonial Office, for his administration coincided with that anomalous period when Hong Kong was occupied but not recognized as a colony. His active control lasted only a short time—from June to December 1841, and again from June to December 1842, not much more than twelve months. But he is part of the Hong Kong story, and though he earned no great reputation and made no great contribution, his name figures prominently in the records of the Colony's earliest days.

Johnston was born into a family of colonial officials. His father, Sir Alexander Johnston, was Chief Justice of Ceylon before becoming a Judge of Appeals before the Privy Council in 1831, and his brother held a diplomatic appointment in Spain. A. R. Johnston began his career in 1828, in Mauritius, as a Writer under the Colonial Office, and shortly after became a clerk in the Colonial Secretary's Department. Economies in the civil establishment of that Colony forced him to give up his post, and he returned to England. In 1833 he was appointed Private Secretary to Lord Napier, who, on the abolition in 1833 of the Honourable East India Company's monopoly of the China Trade, was sent to Canton to assume the post of Chief Superintendent of Trade. When Napier died in October 1834 he was succeeded by J. F. Davis, and Johnston became Secretary and Treasurer of the Commission. Davis remained only a short time, and soon after his retirement in January 1835, Johnston was promoted to be Third Superintendent of Trade. In November the following year he rose to the post of Second Superintendent. On the reorganization of the Commission in 1837, which abolished the offices of Second and Third Superintendents, he became Deputy

Superintendent of Trade, Captain Charles Elliot's right-hand man.

When Commissioner Lin incarcerated the foreign community in the factories at Canton in March 1839 with the object of forcing them to deliver up all stocks of opium, Johnston accompanied Elliot on the dangerous journey from Macao to Canton which Elliot made in an attempt to protect the interest of the foreigners. Three days later, when Elliot determined to assume responsibility for surrendering the opium in accordance with Lin's demands, it was Johnston who was deputed to leave the factory area and visit all British ships to convey Elliot's instructions and arrange for the actual handing-over to the Chinese officials. His report that the last-named carefully examined, classified, and repacked the surrendered stock led Elliot and others to the mistaken belief that the Chinese did not intend to destroy the opium. In the hostilities that followed, Johnston accompanied the expedition to assist in the negotiations, and one of his tasks was to attempt to negotiate with the Chinese officials for the release of The Reverend Vincent Stanton, who had been captured near Macao in August 1840.

In January 1841 Hong Kong was occupied in virtue of the Convention of Chuenpi. Though it was never ratified, Elliot determined to retain the island and began to make arrangements to sell land there for building, and create a skeleton government to attract merchants. On 22 June 1841, he placed Johnston in charge of the government of Hong Kong as his deputy, with the assistance of J. R. Morrison, while he himself prepared to campaign in the north. A few weeks later, on 10 August, Sir Henry Pottinger arrived to take control of Britain's relations with China in place of Elliot, who had been recalled. In the absence of any definitive treaty ceding the island, the Home Government would not recognize Hong Kong as a colony, and it ordered that all public works, and particularly those concerned with the disposal of land, should be halted except those consistent with the needs of effective military occupation.

Pottinger retained Johnston in his post in charge of the government of Hong Kong, as his deputy. He visited the island on 22 August, on his way to join the expedition in the north, but spent only one day there, and his instructions to Johnston had to be given in that brief time, which was primarily occupied with the pressing questions of the war.

Johnston's administration of the island earned Pottinger's censure when he returned the following December, for failing to carry out his instructions. Johnston had been told to make no changes until the future of the island had been decided at home, but he began to dispose of additional land for development. On 15 October 1841 he issued a notification saying, "it is now found desirable that

persons applying for lots of land for the purpose of building upon, should be at once accommodated". He divided the lots into three classes—marine, town, and suburban—and laid down the rate of annual rents to be paid for each. These rents were later found to be much below their proper level, judged by the standard of what people were willing to pay. Johnston not only continued to sell land, he evolved quite an elaborate plan for doing so. This drew from Pottinger the rebuke, "You have entirely exceeded the authority vested in you and you have likewise acted in direct opposition to the views and sentiments recorded in my notification to H.M. subjects on assuming charge... [that] all was to remain precisely as I found it until H.M. pleasure should be made known". Johnston explained that he had not been specifically instructed not to grant further lots of land, and Pottinger replied, "I am well aware of the difficulties you had to contend with and also satisfied with your motive for acting as you did". Possibly Pottinger had not made the position clear. The more likely explanation is that Johnston was unable to stand up to the pressure from merchants who were eager to get land cheap, knowing that it would appreciate in value if the island remained under British control.

Johnston earned Pottinger's displeasure on other grounds. He had carried on an independent correspondence with the Governor-General of India, for which Pottinger reprimanded him, and he failed to carry out instructions to demolish a small British fort, Victoria Fort, on the Kowloon peninsula, whose evacuation had been agreed on.

When Pottinger left in June 1842 to rejoin the expedition, Johnston was again left in charge, but he was much more strictly limited in his freedom of action, and was left in no doubt that he was not free to pursue his own policy. He was told that "no further grants of land are to be made on any pretence" except for barracks for the troops and their families who were now beginning to arrive from Britain.

But there is something to be said for Johnston's administration. In November 1841 he sent Pottinger a long account of the progress that the settlement was making; part of Queen's Road had been improved, the prison had been completed, the Magistracy almost so, and rapid progress was being made with the Record Office, a building designed to house the land records. He reported that many people were making application for land, and some were building houses. A bridle path was being cut up the hill, to be continued to Aberdeen (Chek Pai Wan), and wooden barracks had been constructed at Stanley. He had made regulations for the bazaar, or the Chinese area; the streets there were to be straight, and twenty

feet broad, side verandahs being allowed. There were to be three commissioners, or headmen, to be elected by the Chinese occupiers, to make "minor regulations" for the bazaar's good conduct. One of the three commissioners, to be elected among themselves, was to be responsible to the Government and receive a monthly salary. A meeting of all occupiers was being called immediately, to raise sums to buy one or more fire-engines, as the bazaar area's flimsy structures had been the scene of many fires.

This letter is clearly written by a man who felt himself in charge, and who did not understand that the recall of Elliot had created a new situation. Johnston was acting on Elliot's policy of encouraging and arranging for a growing settlement. He was also clearly carrying out Elliot's promise that Chinese law and custom should be respected, and thus two systems of administration, British and Chinese, should be set up side by side to enable the Chinese to continue their own mode of government. Johnston evidently did not realize that the British Government had not decided either for or against the retention of the island, and that it was not for him to lay down policy. After Pottinger had made the position clear, the interesting arrangements for a Chinese administration of the bazaar were dropped. It must also be pointed out in defence of Johnston, that Pottinger himself found that during his stay on the island in 1842, he was obliged to make some allocations of land, to religious bodies for example, and to officials, including Johnston, who had to be given some accommodation. Johnston was allowed to choose two plots of land, on one of which, close to the parade ground, he built a large house which was subsequently taken over by Pottinger as Government House. In 1842 Johnston also raised a subscription to build an Anglican Church to replace the mat-shed structure on the parade ground.

In October 1842 he reported to Pottinger on the prevalence of crime and disorder in the settlement, and said he lacked "the means of visiting adequate punishment". Isolated houses were attacked, often by gangs who landed from boats, and there was much piracy. He said that the jail was full, but that he had no authority to award sentences severe enough to deal with many of the inmates awaiting trial. Such conditions helped to convince the Colonial Office of the need to retain full control of the arrangements for law and order in Hong Kong, and the danger of allowing the Chinese to share this responsibility.

In December 1842 Pottinger returned and assumed control of Hong Kong, and Johnston remained Deputy Superintendent of Trade, a post whose name was changed the next year to Assistant and Registrar to the Superintendent of Trade.

In June 1843, on the proclamation of Hong Kong as a Colony, Johnston, Caine, and Hillier were sworn in as Justices of the Peace, the first J. P.s to be created. One authority says that Johnston also acted as the first postmaster at the Colony's Post Office, but this does not appear to have been reported to the Colonial Office in London.

In August 1843, following on the proclamation of the Colony, Pottinger set up the Executive and Legislative Councils, and Johnston was nominated a member of both. The Legislative Council, however, did not function. It consisted of Pottinger as Chairman, A. R. Johnston, W. Caine, and J. R. Morrison; but the last-named died in the same month, and Johnston went home on sick leave in October 1843, having been out in the Far East for ten eventful years.

He returned in September 1845 and resumed his position as Secretary and Registrar to the Superintendent of Trade. In June 1846 he was made a member of the Executive Council in place of the Colonial Secretary, F. W. Bruce, who went on leave prior to taking the post of Lieutenant-Governor of Newfoundland. Johnston retained his seat on the Executive Council until he retired to England in March 1853 with a pension of £600 per year.

He played little further part in the affairs of the Colony, and he never again occupied any post in the local administration on the colonial side. He remained a well-known local figure, but was not directly concerned with the island's affairs, except as a Foreign Office official dealing with commercial questions.

In August 1856 he wrote to Labouchère, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, asking that he should be given some recognition for his services. He gave an account of his official career, and claimed that he founded the Colony of Hong Kong, having been left in charge of the island by Elliot and Pottinger. When Pottinger returned from Nanking, Johnston said, he found a thriving colony, clearly implying that it was thriving because of him. This claim is very doubtful. His administration of the Colony's affairs was, rather, a source of embarrassment. It seems safer to conclude that he found himself placed in control of the island by accident; he built himself no great reputation, and the most generous thing that can be said is that he was a not incompetent official. At least the Colonial Office must have thought so as it did not accede to his request.

WILLIAM THOMAS BRIDGES

WILLIAM THOMAS BRIDGES came to Hong Kong in April 1851 and for the next ten years he was one of the Colony's leading figures. He was a barrister, and since a man with law qualifications was a comparative rarity in Hong Kong, he quickly came to enjoy a lucrative practice. He also held high official positions from time to time acting as Attorney-General, and Colonial Secretary, while the holders of these offices were on leave. He secured the honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Law while he was in England engaged on a case before the Privy Council in 1856, after which he was always referred to, and called himself, Doctor Bridges. He was evidently very proud of the honour. He was a thoroughly able lawyer and a strong, determined, but rather unscrupulous character. He was typical of the adventuring class of Englishmen of that period.

He had little professional competition and he exploited the opportunity to the maximum, unfortunately succumbing to the temptation of allowing Chinese ignorance of English law to serve his personal ends. It is related that he once boasted "that his principal luggage on landing consisted of a cricket bat and wickets"; ten years later he left the Colony a wealthy man, but not without being involved in considerable scandal.

There is not much detail available about his early life. He was an Oxford man, had been a friend of W. T. Mercer at Exeter College, and was called to the Bar at the Middle Temple. Mercer had been brought out to Hong Kong by his uncle, Sir John Davis, Governor from 1844 to 1848 as Davis's private secretary, gained rapid promotion and eventually became Colonial Secretary. It was through his agency that Bridges came out, and it was in part due to this influential friendship that he quickly flourished.

The same morning that he was enrolled in the Hong Kong Bar, he complained against the practice of solicitors appearing in court for clients, a practice that had grown up simply because few barristers were available. Bridges's protest was upheld, and solicitors were barred from acting as counsel in the Supreme Court. He had been in the Colony less than a year when he was made Acting Attorney-General as deputy for Paul Sterling, who became Acting Chief Justice in place of Hulme, on leave. He occupied this post again in April 1854 when Hulme was granted sick leave, this time with a provisional seat in the Legislative Council, and on Hulme's

return he continued to act for Sterling, who went on leave. Sterling resigned during this leave, and Thomas Anstey was appointed in his place. Bridges anticipated that Anstey, who was due to arrive in January 1856, would very soon become Chief Justice because Hulme was frequently ill and expected to retire, and Bridges saw an opportunity of becoming Attorney-General with the succession to the bench.

He went home in January 1856, to urge his claims so it was thought. If this was his reason it was wasted effort, because Hulme did not retire. Bridges had no reason to be dissatisfied with his first five years in the Colony, however. Three other barristers had recently arrived, but for much of the time he enjoyed a virtual monopoly and for nearly four years of the five, he had acted as Attorney-General. While he was so acting, one of his decisions came in for criticism at home. He had advised that cases concerning property held by British subjects in China should be governed by English law and not Chinese, on the ground that the Chinese were uncivilized. This drew from the home Law Officers the unequivocal rebuke that, "We do not concur in the conclusion of the acting Attorney-General that the Chinese are to be considered as beyond the pale of civilized nations".

Bridges returned to the Colony before the end of 1856. A few weeks later Mercer went on leave, and he became Acting Colonial Secretary, and provisional member of the Executive and Legislative Councils. He was also given the right to continue his private practice. This led to difficulties, and was only defended by Bowring on the ground that he was the most suitable man for the post and that he refused to accept it on any other terms.

The Attorney-General, T. Chisholm Anstey, had been crusading against extortion and malpractice amongst officials since his arrival early in 1856, and though he caused trouble and became the centre of a series of libel actions, he undoubtedly uncovered some real abuses. Dr. Bridges did not escape his scrutiny, and the two men became bitter enemies.

Bridges unquestionably was not too scrupulous over the etiquette of the Bar where this limited the lucrative character of his practice. He advertised himself by two brilliantly coloured signboards in English and Chinese, "the letters and characters being brightly gilt on a black lacquer". They were placed outside his office in Queen's Road so prominently as to constitute a breach of the rule against advertising. Bridges was eager to accept briefs direct from the public and so eliminate the solicitor, yet he had been earlier opposed to solicitors being allowed to conduct cases in court on the ground that the two branches of the profession should be kept distinct. He and other barristers urged that the two branches be amalgamated, and

in January 1858 a joint meeting was held. There had been much criticism over the costs of legal actions and the heavy fees charged, and on Anstey's advice, Bowring had caused an ordinance to be passed controlling legal fees, and limiting the retaining fee for a barrister to ten dollars. At the meeting the barristers were out-voted and the two branches remained separate. Bridges took occasion to declare that he intended to continue to charge a retaining fee of twenty-five dollars, ordinance or no ordinance.

He also engaged extensively in money-lending and notoriously charged high rates of interest. His offices were often full of miscellaneous goods which had been deposited as security. Bowring had objected to this side of Dr. Bridges's activities, and had consulted Mercer about it, but the latter advised against any action on the ground that it was impossible to interfere with Bridges in the conduct of his private business. The Acting Colonial Secretary combined ability with strong-mindedness, but he allowed his keenness to degenerate into avarice. Bowring had not been very anxious to employ Bridges in an official capacity, but had felt that his ability was too useful to ignore. Anstey's crusading attacks on the two men drove them into each other's arms. Anstey initiated two famous cases that involved Bridges in scandal and showed up some of the sharp practice of which the latter was capable.

In the spring of 1858 a man called Hoey was charged with a breach of the opium monopoly. During the case there were disclosures of financial dealings between Dr. Bridges and the holder of the monopoly. The suspicions were echoed in the local Press. To clear himself Bridges asked for an official enquiry and a Committee of Enquiry comprising Davies, the Chief Magistrate, and J. M. Dent, a local merchant, was appointed in May 1858. It was discovered that as the Opium Monopoly Ordinance was being passed in March 1858, Bridges had accepted "cumshaw" from the monopolist in the guise of a retaining fee, despite the fact that he was in charge of the measure as Acting Colonial Secretary. The Committee concluded that though Bridges had not done anything dishonest or dishonourable, his conduct in accepting a retaining fee at such a time was open to censure. In spite of this compromising report, Bowring regarded Bridges as having been cleared and blamed Anstey for fomenting trouble by a personal attack on Bridges.

In the same month came another enquiry, into the Caldwell case, and again Dr. Bridges was implicated. Caldwell was a brilliant linguist employed as Interpreter and Assistant-Superintendent of Police, and had just been given the responsible position of Registrar-General and Protector of Chinese. Anstey accused Caldwell of being unfit to hold the office of Justice of the Peace because of malpractices

in ownership and licensing of brothels, and because of his notorious association with Ma Chow Wong, an informer against pirates who was proved to be a pirate himself.

A Commission of Enquiry was set up under the chairmanship of Cleverly, the Surveyor-General, and it reported that of nineteen charges brought by Anstey, Caldwell was guilty only of four, and that these did not constitute sufficient ground on which to dismiss him from his post, or deprive him of his commission as a Justice of the Peace. This verdict was held to exonerate Caldwell, and as a result Anstey was suspended for causing scandal by bringing unjustified charges against high officials. But the affair did not blow over so easily. It transpired during the enquiry that some papers found in Ma Chow Wong's home at the time of his arrest had definitely incriminated Caldwell. These papers had been burnt by order of Bridges, and Tarrant, editor of *The Friend of China*, had declared in commenting on the case that Caldwell had got off by a contemptible damnable trick. Tarrant was accused of criminal libel, and at his trial the facts came out. Bridges admitted being on intimate terms with Caldwell, who had recommended Chinese clients to him. It was clear that the incriminating papers had been taken to Dr. Bridges, and were burnt on his instructions. Tarrant was acquitted, and suspicion at once centred upon Bridges, who had been drawn into the scandal.

Bridges had resigned as Acting Colonial Secretary soon after the suspension of Anstey. His aim was to become Attorney-General, and Bowring recommended him for the post should Anstey's suspension be confirmed. This was in August 1858, and as a first step Bowring made him Counsel to the Superintendent of Trade. However, Bridges never held office in the Colonial Government again. The revelations in the Tarrant libel case soon afterwards created too unfavourable an atmosphere. Bowring resigned, and left in 1859. The new Governor, Sir Hercules Robinson, came out in September 1859 with instructions to make a careful enquiry into the whole government service. Since his suspension, Anstey had stirred up public opinion at home to demand that the Caldwell case be re-opened. Clearly Caldwell and Bridges were both on trial, and a Civil Service Abuses Enquiry was set up in June 1860, which recommended the dismissal of Caldwell.

Bridges was unwilling to face this new probe, and before the enquiry was completed he left the Colony by the P. & O. steamer *Bakar* on 15 April 1861. His departure was allowed to pass almost unnoticed, except for some hostile comment in the Press, in marked contrast to his leave in 1857 when a public dinner had been given in his honour by the legal profession. He had unmistakably forfeited

the esteem of the community.

Norton Kyshe says that where he went and what happened to him is not known, and it is to be presumed that with the fortune he had made in Hong Kong and his mode of making it he was not unwilling to retire into the obscurity of private life.

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