

CHAPTER IX

The Third Annexation Tour: Kengtung

Though not as big or as well known to the Court at Ava as undivided Hsenwi in her hey-day, Kengtung State annals date back to the early twelfth century. By the time Hsenwi was showing signs of disintegration in the middle of last century, Kengtung was one of the biggest trans-Salween States and as such was recognized by Ava as one of the premier Shan States. Lying between the eastern drainage system of the Salween and the western one of the Mekong, she falls within the sphere of influence of that part of Tai racial territory which constitutes the home of the Lus, Lems, Khuns and Laos: this territory stretches from Sipsawngpanna in the north to a point in the Menan valley where the Thais and the Laos call it the boundary between them, and it is bounded in the west by the Salween and in the east by the eastern water-shed of the Mekong. Kengtung's Khun language, religion and culture point to influence from the South. Her political connection with Burma which is in the opposite direction can be explained by the fact that while the Tai States in the south for several centuries were divided into three almost equal kingdoms, namely Lao, Chiangmai and Ayudhya, Burma had already been united and strong under energetic sovereigns.

Unlike the rest of the Shan States during the period under review, Kengtung had been enjoying internal peace ever since the middle of the century when the three Siamese invasions had successfully been repulsed; and except for attacks on Kenghung and Monglem, in 1872 and again in 1881 by Kengtung forces, external peace was also maintained. In 1867, in an attempt to obtain permission to proceed to Kenghung, the commander of the French exploring expedition, M. Doudart de Lagree, was obliged to visit Kengtung. No notable event occurred until Sao Kawngtai became Sawbwa when he declared himself independent of allegiance to King Thibaw and gave shelter to the exiled princes of Mongnai, Lawksawk and Mongnawng. This Sao Kawngtai (Joti Kawngtai was his full name) was also known as Saomom Kengcheng partly because his mother was a lady from Kengcheng and partly because he was appointed Myoza of Kengcheng before he became the Sawbwa of Kengtung. He was the principal architect of the Limbin League as most of the initial forces of the League were drawn from his State, but he did not live to see the disbanding of the League and the removal of the Limbin prince, for as the first

British major expedition was moving towards Yawnghwe in January 1887, he died.¹

Sao Kawngtai was succeeded by his son, Kawng Khamfu, better known as the Tiger Sawbwa, a youth of 12 or 13. The epithet "Tiger Sawbwa" seems to have come from either his heavily pox-marked face, or ferocity of his temper, or his full name: Maha Byagghajoti Kawng Khamfu (Pali: Byaggha = Tiger). Soon after his accession, Lieutenant G. J. Younghusband, of the Queen's Own Corps of Guides, was despatched by the Indian Army to do intelligence work in Siam, Kengtung and Kenghung. His mission to Kengtung was to find out "the feasibility of a flank attack delivered on that State through Siam". His reception there was none too friendly. He was given to understand that the late Sawbwa, Sao Kawngtai, being "strenuously opposed to the entrance of Europeans into his country", would have made "short shrift" of him. Younghusband was, ominously, shown the execution tree and had a sword drawn on him by a Shan who was asked by him to hold his horse. He came to no harm, however.

Of Kengtung affairs at the time, he reported:

Kengtung . . . is, or rather was, nominally tributary to the King of Burma; and tribute in the shape of ivory, gold, and ponies was yearly sent; until the massacre of the Kiang Tung Prince's sister a few years ago (1879 most probably) by King Thibaw. In retaliation for this outrage, the whole of the Burmese Embassy, then resident at Kiang Tung, the capital, were murdered and diplomatic relations with the Court at Mandalay were broken off.²

Although at the time King Thibaw vowed vengeance, and threatened an invasion, with the double intent of punishing the Kiang Tung Shans for their treachery, and of re-instating a Burmese Embassy and Burmese influence in that State; yet his threats were never executed, and, as far as Burma was concerned, Kiang Tung became practically an independent State.

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1. It is not easy to determine the exact year of Sao Kawngtai's death. The Kengtung Chronicle in my possession has it as 1246=1884. GUBSS, II.1.410, apparently a translation of another Chronicle of Kengtung, 1247=1885. Another Kengtung Chronicle yet, translated into Siamese, 1248=1886. Lieutenant G. J. Younghusband who visited Kengtung in March 1887 on a spying mission, stated in his report that Sawbwa Sao Kawngtai had died only two months before his arrival - unless he mistook, through bad interpretation, two years for two months. Also, the letter from the Sawbwa of Kengtung to the Sawbwa of Hsipaw in Chapter V pp. 110-111, seems from its tone to have been written by Sao Kawngtai, who by March 1886 appears to have seen his allies safely across the Salween.
 2. I have not been able to find a record of this incident anywhere else. Most probably the author mixed up the Mongnai revolt with that of Kengtung.

Years of apathy or timidity have considerably reduced the size of the province, the Siamese from the South, and the Chinese from the North, have both encroached to a considerable extent and have taken possession, undisturbed, and almost without protest, of large and valuable tracts of country.

On the status of Kengtung and the policy which he thought the British Government should adopt towards it, Younghusband wrote:

If we intend to maintain our inherited suzerainty over Kiang Tung, it would be both wise and politic, in conjunction with the French, to definitely settle her boundaries in this direction (towards Tongkin), at an early a date as possible.

If, on the contrary, it is the intention of the British Government to sanction the continuance of the practical state of independence in which this province has existed during the last eight years - and I cannot help thinking that this would be the most far sighted policy - it would be well to declare so at once.

The arguments in favour of this latter step are many and cogent, both from a military and political point of view.

The arguments in favour of the retention of this province are few and unimportant.

Our new kingdom of Burma Proper, bound, as it is, on the east by the Salwin river, flowing through high and almost impassable mountains is, on that face, a compact and defensible kingdom, offering serious natural obstacles to invasion, and having a clear and definite boundary between our possessions and those of our neighbours.

Add to it the State of Kiang Tung, and an element of weakness is at once introduced to the safety of our Burmese possessions, to wit, a long, straggling, ill-defined, tongue of country, which runs between two foreign nations, and ends on the borders of a third. A province open to invasion to all three of them - to China from the North, to Siam from the South, and to the French from the East, and separated from the actual possessors of the country by lofty and impassable ranges of mountains, and approachable only to an English Army by passing through Siam or China.

The Kiang Tung province in the hands of the British can never be anything but a source of weakness to the integrity of the Burmese kingdom. It will, like the Irishman's coat tails, be dragging along the ground - a constant challenge to outsiders to tread upon it.

The soundest policy would appear to be to hand over the province to the Chinese; not as a possession, but as a tributary State, making certain stipulations, for trade and defence against aggressions, favourable to British interests.

On the government of Kengtung, Younghusband writes as follows:

The government of the province of Kiang Tung is carried on by an Hereditary Prince, assisted by four councillors, or magistrates.

The present Prince is only a child of 12 years old, who succeeded his father at the beginning of the present year (1887). When I was in Kiang Tung in March, he had not yet been crowned; that ceremony being postponed till after the cremation of his father, which does not take place till six months after his death.

Of course the child is a mere puppet in the hands of the four councillors, though they prostrate themselves before him in public and never approach him, except in that grovelling position peculiar to Indo-Chinese nations.

He is a thin, pale, and rather idiotic-looking youth, with a face that may turn into a very cruel one! His father was an implacable enemy to all foreigners, and would not allow them to enter his domains. The American missionaries had made several attempts to obtain permission to visit Kiang Tung, but without success. The chief councillor informed me candidly that I should not have lived a day if I had been unlucky enough to arrive two months earlier, during the lifetime of the old Prince.

The whole legislative and magisterial government is carried on by the four councillors, all of whom must be blood relations of the Prince. The Chief councillor, who is lord of chief justice, is the most influential man in the province; he is a brother of the old Prince and uncle of the present ruler. One of the four councillors would command the army in case of war, but would probably direct their movements from his own house in Kiang Tung.

Regarding Kengtung's armed forces, Younghusband estimated that the whole of the Kengtung valley, inclusive of the town, could put into the field 3000 men, while its dependencies between the Salween and Mekong rivers could rally 7000 men, making a total of 10,000.

Younghusband regarded the martial qualities of the Kengtung Shans to be superior to those of the Laos, and gave the following incident to prove his point.

I had dismounted at a small hamlet outside Kiang Tung to make a sketch of a hut, and finding my pony troublesome, held out the reins to a Shan amongst a group of people standing by, and asked him to hold my pony a minute. Instead of immediately complying, as a Laos would have done, he drew his knife on me, and poured forth a volley of abuse, which I was not sufficiently a master of the language to understand. Being entirely alone, I thought it wisest to laugh the matter off, and producing my revolver quite quickly, pointed out to him with the utmost good humour that I was six to one too good for him, whereupon he put up his knife and joined in the general laugh at his own expense; we parted good friends.

Younghusband was quite impressed by the walls surrounding the city of Kengtung and struck by the industry and wealth of the Chinese Shans outside the eastern wall. He arrived in Kengtung via Chiengrai and Mongpak, on the 8th March 1887 and stayed on for 10 days, during which he had tried to penetrate north into Kenghung which was disallowed by the State authorities. Kengtung's attack on Kenghung a few years previously was mentioned, as was the Limbin League. His reference to the latter was a question by the Sawbwa's uncle whom he went to see on the 9th having been conducted there by a Burman from Moulmein, named Maung Kin.

He was making copious notes about me, my name, occupation, &c., when he suddenly asked, 'Did I belong to the lot who were fighting the Shans between this and Mandalay?' The Burman answered, "Oh, dear no; this is a gentleman who is travelling all over the world'. He came in a ship to Moulmein, and when he gets to Bangkok, he gets into another ship and goes to some other country." The old gentleman, who did not look at all a nice old gentleman when he asked the questions, became all smiles and good humour, and gave me a house to live in: a rather imposing-looking brick and plaster building, viewed from without. Within, it is like a rather inferior Indian stable.

The Tiger Sawbwa gave an audience to Younghusband, and the latter's impression of him and his court should be reproduced in full:

At 3 o'clock Mounkin came to say the Prince would see me. First we went to the court-house, a large wooden house on very high poles. At the end of the hall of justice was a large gilded thing that looked like a horse trough with an over-mantle behind it: in front of this and a little lower were two or three little stools which the Shans use for resting their elbows on whilst sitting on the ground. The gilded trough was therefore, I take it, merely a local emblem of justice, and the judges sat in front of it. My friend, the Prince's uncle, was Lord Chief Justice, and there were three other Judges or Magistrates. He asked my age,

and would not believe I was a day under forty, which apparently is the age at which a Shan begins to get a moustache that many an English old lady would put to shame. Next, "My business?" Answer as before. "Had any 'Magistrate' sent me?" "How long did it take to get from London (very small print to Kiang Tung (largest type)?" He then came down and felt me all over, and unearthing my revolver from my pocket, insisted it should be unloaded at once, and not be taken at all into the presence of the Prince. Having a good stout stick and another weapon handy, I unloaded it, but, under pretence of going home with the revolver, reloaded it and hid it in my cummerbund.

One cannot be too careful when it is one man against a thousand. On my return the Kashmir chogah was handed round and much admired, and then we went across to the Prince's palace, a wretched shanty, in no way to be compared to the Zimme Prince's palace. After passing a broad outer verandah, we came to the audience chamber, which was about 30 feet square and matted. We all squatted round the edges and waited for His Royal Highness to appear through a curtain door. The furniture and ornaments were a mixed collection of very valuable and very trumpery things. Large vessels of solid gold and silver stood about amongst the rubbish of a Moulmein cheap jack; a few spears and guns hung on the walls, and an English naval officer's sword on one side of the door, and an Infantry Field officer's on the other. A gilt couch, with room for two, and a curtain, which could be dropped from the ceiling to hide it, stood in the corner by the door; and in front of it a mattress and some carpets were spread on which the Prince was to sit. He kept us waiting about 15 minutes, during which time both my legs went to sleep. On his entrance the whole crowd prostrated themselves. The Prince is a boy of about 12, a thin-faced, long-nosed, foolish-looking youth. My chogah was presented to him, and then they all began to jaw. I asked if they would like a railway. They said, "No, certainly not." In this conversation the youth took no part, and was busily engaged in trying to get a peep at the chogah through a hole in the paper cover, as apparently it was not etiquette to open it before the donor. Nothing important was said or done. After I arrived home, a man came to say His Royal Highness wanted to see my gun and pistol. I took them to the palace, but, as H. R. H. was much too exalted a personage to see the weapons in my hands, and as I stoutly refused to let them out of them, the young man had to do without them, and I went away. At Zimme the Prince stood up, shock hands, and was most affable. Here no one approaches within ten paces of the Prince, and only then in the grovelling position peculiar to these nations. To-morrow I am to get a decided answer whether it is to be Kiang Hung or not. I don't much care really, for I can get pretty full details about that bit, and the French too, have been over it. Unfortunately Kiang Tung hates China and fears it; whereas Kiang Hung is very friendly

with China. Consequently they have got it into their silly old heads that China, and not Bangkok, is my destination, and that I am going to expose the nakedness of their land to the Chinese, or do some other profound devilment. As things stand, I don't think it would be fair on my orderly and servant to go, except with a caravan. It would not be a matter of taking a considerable risk; it would be going to almost certain destruction, and that won't help anybody.

News of the arrival in Mongnai of the British Annexation Column reached Kengtung on the 17th of March, and thinking that the local populace did not favour the news which might cause them to be actively hostile to him, Younghusband quietly slipped away from Kengtung town on the 18th evening.¹

Actually, the British Column did not get to Mongnai till May and the fears on the part of the British Intelligence officer in Kengtung seemed premature, for when the Assistant Superintendent, Mr. J. G. Scott, on reaching Mongnai to receive the surrender of the Limbin Prince and acknowledgment of British supremacy from the Sawbwas of Mongnai and other States, sent, on the advice of the Sawbwa of Mongnai, circulars to all trans-Salween Sawbwas demanding submission, he received a friendly reply from Kengtung in August.² But nothing happened till the Mongyai Conference in March 1888 when the British received a letter from the Kengtung Sawbwa stating that he had intended to meet the Superintendent at Mongyai but had waited for the Sawbwas of Kenghung, Monglem and the Myosa of Kengcheng until it was too late, and that a later visit was envisaged. A party of high officials from Kengtung did start for Mongnai in May 1888 with the intention of visiting Fort Stedman but when they reached the Salween they were turned back by the news of Twet Nga Lu's antics and by the news circulated by the Yawnghwe Sawbwa, Sao On, that the British were withdrawing from the Shan States altogether!

In the same month of May 1888, the British vice-Consul at Chiengmai, Mr. Archer, was instructed to visit Kengtung on another "fact-finding" mission. With the news of Nga Lu's capture of Mongnai and rumours of the permanent withdrawal of the British from the Shan States still fresh in their minds the Kengtung officials gave but a cool reception verging on hostility to Archer. It also appears that Kengtung was under the impression that Archer asked them to submit to Chiengmai which they stated in a letter to the Sawbwa of Mongnai they would never do. What bothered the Kengtung State government was the question of the permanence of the British occupation. After pointing to the troubles in Mongnai and Mawkmai (which had just been sacked by Sawlapaw), the Kengtung officials in effect told Archer: "Such is the state of the country under British protection to the West of the Salween. Here we enjoy peace and quiet. Now you come to us in this manner from Chiengmai and would wish us to place ourselves

1. Younghusband, G. J., The Trans-Salween State of Kiang Tung, pp. 1, 3-5, 8, 39-428

2. RASS, 1887-88, p. 4.

under the British. It is very well that you have come, but what can you expect us to say?" What could he expect them to say indeed! A lion without its claws and fangs is not too impressive. The officials told vice-Consul Archer that when the West had been definitely settled and they (Kengtung) had had time to consult Kenghung and Monglem (which according to Younghusband's report was subject to Kengtung at the time); "they would be able to decide on a matter that was properly represented to them from Mandalay".¹

The British in Burma were under the impression that the Kengtung's tardiness in acknowledging their supremacy was due partly to the influence of Sao Weng, the exiled Sawbwa of Lawksawk who had taken refuge in Kengtung and partly to fear of British vengeance for past events. It had been known that before the Limbin Prince was invited to lead the alliance against King Thibaw, Sao Kawngtai, the then Sawbwa of Kengtung and chief prop of the alliance, had first approached the rebel Prince, Myingun, who was regarded by the resistance party to the British in Burma as their natural leader! Hence Kengtung's fear of British vengeance.² That Sao Weng managed to influence Kengtung to some extent was confirmed by Archer in his report.

In August 1888, the young Sawbwa of Kengtung wrote a letter to the Sawbwa of Mongnai, protesting against what he mistook for Archer's attempts to make him submit to Chiengmai and saying that he and his younger brother, Sao Kawn Kiao Intaleng, would pay Mongnai a visit at the end of the rains, and that representatives would be sent to Fort Stedman.

The British on their side toyed with idea of visiting Kengtung after the 1888 rainy season, hoping their mere presence would secure the submission of the Sawbwa. Once Kengtung had been annexed, they reasoned, Kenghung, Monglem and Kengcheng would follow Kengtung's lead as these 4 trans-Salween States were related to one another in the following manner. Saonang Wentip, an elder sister of the Kengtung Sawbwa was married to the Hsenwifa³ of Kenghung, while the Sawbwa of Monglem had recently married the mother of young Kengtung! The Myosa of Kengcheng was a cousin of Kengtung's father, Kawngtai.⁴

No visit by either side took place, however. At the Durbar which was held at Mongnai in January 1888 during the march of the Southern Shan Column, most of the Chiefs in the cis-Salween States

1. Political and Secret Home Correspondence, 1888, Vol. 104, p. 1257.

2. Crossthwaite, op. cit.

3. Title by which the Sawbwa of Kenghung is called.

4. RASS, 1887-88.

were present, but Kengtung was not there. Nevertheless, he had written several letters to the Sawbwas of Mongnai and Mong Pawn admitting the advantages of a British protectorate and saying that he would welcome them as soon as a good moment arrived.

In January, 1889, the Superintendent received the following from the Tiger Sawbwa of Kengtung and his brother the Kemmong:

From the Sawbwagi of Kyaington and his younger brother the Kyaington Kyemmong (Heir-apparent) to the Superintendent, Shan States, - dated waxing Natdaw 1250 (December 1888)

By the favour of the Chief Commissioner and the Superintendent of the Shan States we are enjoying good health and our State is at peace. On a former occasion we wrote that when the representatives of Kyaingyongyi and Mainglingyi had reached Kyaington we would, in accordance with the agreement entered into by us with these States, send down our Amats in the company of these representatives. While we were preparing for their arrival letters addressed to the Chiefs of Mainglingyi and Kyaingyongyi were received by us from the Superintendent, Shan States. These letters were duly forwarded. Replies were received from these States saying that they owed dual allegiance (to China and Burma), that they place reliance on the Chinese authorities, and that Chinese military officers were coming down. We have written to the Kyaingyongyi Sawbwa asking him not to let these officers come down.

Kyaington is a remote and insignificant State situated on the border land, and if a large force advances on it from both sides, it will be unable to withstand and must suffer itself to be destroyed. The time is not yet ripe for the despatch of the representatives from Kyaington, and we have asked the Chief of Kyaingyongyi to stay the advance of the Chinese Officers. We are obliged therefore to ask the Superintendent, Shan States, to postpone his visit to Kyaington with an armed force.¹

It is plain that Kengtung was still unsure that the British were really and permanently supreme. If the British had gone into the Shan States with an overwhelming force, instead of columns of two or three hundred men as they did, and had been able to establish law and order everywhere all at once, there would have been no question of any part of the Shan States not recognising their supremacy immediately, and that would have saved much bluff and threats used by the few British Civil Officers to convince the local populace that real forces existed to support their words. And as far as Kengtung was

1. See Chapter X.

concerned, the British policy makers at this time had not yet decided to cross the Salween.

To return to the letter from Kengtung, Scott, as Acting Superintendent, replied on the 15th June 1889 to the effect that if the Sawbwa of Kengtung had attended the durbar at Mongnai he would have seen how all the Western Chiefs had acknowledged the British protection and how peace, prosperity and security had returned to all the Western States as the result. He pointed out all the advantages to be derived from Kengtung accepting British protection, in return for almost "nothing but offerings such as were formerly sent to the Burmese King" minus all forms of presents to local British Officers who were forbidden to accept them. The Acting Superintendent advised the Sawbwa not to listen to Sao Weng, but "to the advice of the old and experienced ministers of his father", and to follow the example of the Sawbwas of Mongpaw and Mongnai.¹

When it was finally decided to send an expedition to Kengtung, Scott was chosen to head it. At this time he was with Ney Elias's Boundary Commission to settle the frontier to Mongnai before starting in order to collect some mule transport of Panthays. To go with him were two other white men: Captain F. J. Pink and Surgeon Darwin. Their escort consisted of "eighteen old soldiers, Sikhs of the Shan Levy which had lately been taken over by the army, and as many untrained recruits of the same corps". To this not too impressive array of uniformed men were added their camp followers, servants, some Burmese clerks, Panthay muleteers and their pack mules.

After some delay in procuring mules and elephants, the party started from Mongnai late in February and made for Takaw on the Salween via Nawngwawp, Kengtawng, Kengkham and Kenglom. In Kengtawng evidence of ravages by Twet Nga Lu was to be seen. Scott wrote in his report: "West of the Nam Teng, in the Mone State proper, the country showed signs everywhere of the ravages of Twet Nga Lu. East of the river, where the sub-State of Keing Tawng is entered, the state of affairs is very much worse. Except for a few houses recently built at Mak Lang the country for nearly 20 miles on a stretch is practically a desert. Yet all along the road old wells, ruinous monasteries, and the grass-grown skeletons of former paddy fields, to say nothing of the hill clearings, showed that formerly there must have been a large population here. There does not seem to be much prospect that the land will be soon reclaimed. The handful of people who have so far returned to Keing Tawng have settled 20 miles further south, round the side of the old capital. There is a magnificent banyan tree, known far and wide as Mai Hung Kon, at Mak Lang. The adjoining monastery was burnt by Twet Nga Lu's brigands, and not even the sanctity of the tree, which 20 men could not span and under whose branches a fair-sized village might be built, has been able

1. RASS, 1888-89, pp. iii-iv of Appendices.

to persuade the monks to return. There are in fact not enough of the pious in the neighbourhood to support them".¹

At Keng Kham the party was enlarged by the Myosa of the place and his retinue who accompanied Scott to Kengtung. Scott reported: "He gave me to understand that his object was to improve his mind by travel and to learn English modes of procedure. It afterwards, however, appeared that he was attracted by the fame of the charms of a sister of the Kengtung Kemmong. He was successful in his wooing, and it may be hoped that his bride will put an end to the habit which he is developing of making inconsequent marches. Otherwise he is in great danger of becoming an intolerable young prig".

From Takaw the party went on to Hsenmawng where the road branched off to Mongpeng and Mongpu-awn, both routes leading eventually to Kengtung. The Mongpeng route was the shorter of the two and had been known as the "Lanmadaw" as it was the main route from Takaw to Kengtung much used during the former regime. At the time of the little column's passage in March 1890, however, it was blocked in several places by landslips due to neglect and disuse. The neglect had followed disorders at Mongpeng on account of rival claims to the Phyaship of the district which resulted in a minor civil war that had made the road unsafe for the past three years, and Scott reported at the time that the end of the strife was not yet in sight. So the party took the Mongpu-awn route. The capital village of Mongpu-awn was found to be a thriving little place - the houses were large and substantial, rice was grown far beyond the requirements of the inhabitants of the valley, and the cultivation of opium in the hills to the east brought in a good deal of money. The Hpaya in charge was Hpaya Hsai, whose family had been in control of the place for three generations, receiving direct appointment from the Sawbwa in Kengtung.

The small British Column reached Kengtung on the 14th of March 1890. The following account by J. G. Scott was his first impression of the city of Kengtung, and it is worthwhile reproducing it in full before we proceed to describe his business in Kengtung:

It lies in a plain about 20 miles long and perhaps 15 broad. Actually about 5 miles broad. To the west and north this is perfectly flat and under paddy cultivation. The town is built on the western edge of this rolling country and overlooks the paddy lands. It is surrounded by a wall about 15 feet high and machicolated at the top. The bricks are insufficiently burnt, the wall is old and has therefore crumbled away in many places, so that it is picturesque rather than formidable; moreover, some hills to the southwest would enable field guns to drop shells wherever they please all over the enceinte. The wall follows the line of the rolling ground, and to the north and south towers high above

1. RASS, 1889-90, pp. 10-11.

the plain. To the west, it has not this advantage, and jungle affords admirable cover up to the dry ditch which protects it on this side! To the north, east and south swampy ground covers the approach. The walls measure $4 \frac{3}{4}$ miles round and have 10 gates, which used to be covered by semi-circular arches. Only two of these arches, however, now remain, both on the eastern face! There is very little level ground within the walls and only the northern half of the walled wall is inhabited. Even this portion is so overrun with trees as to be almost jungly, and there are several large swamps among the houses! These supply people with water to drink and small mud fish to eat! There are probably 700 or 800 houses within the walls and many of these are substantial! Some are entirely built of bricks, some have brick basement and plank walling, and the number of bamboo houses is very small! All the better class houses are roofed with small tiles made locally! To judge from the Sawbwa's audience hall these tiles are not very satisfactory against the rain, but they at any rate prevent the fires which do much frequent mischief in other Shan towns. The monasteries are numerous and some of them are adorned with elaborate carving and wall-paintings. These are very much like the ordinary Burmese or Shan Kyaungs in general architecture, but there is an undefinable suggestion of Tartar influence about them. This is particularly noticeable in the massive gate ways which immediately suggest the pai-fang of China! The resemblance is no doubt due to the fact that the brick work was run up by Chinese or Shan-Chinese handi-craftsmen. There is no similarity whatever to the steep-roofed, parti-coloured, tiled gables of the Bangkok wats! Outside the walls the villages are very numerous and populous. Affairs at Keing Tung was for a time so critical that it was inadvisable to send out the military surveyors to map out the plain, so that the number of villages can only be guessed at. I should, however, be inclined to estimate the population of the whole plain at from 15,000 to 20,000. To the east of the town is a very large colony of Shan Chinese, Tai Meo or Tai Neu as they are commonly called. These people have been resident for many years! They have large gardens and keep goats, pigs, duck and fowls in great numbers. Their houses are all built of bamboo, and their villages, like those of China, are inconceivably dirty, though in person the inhabitants are clean enough. They do a good deal of trade. It is they who introduced the manufacture of tiles into Keing Tung, and I believe that the pottery-work, the plates, cups, bowls, jugs, tea-pots, spittoons, pagoda ornaments, and so forth, which are so varied in kind and so cheap in Keing Tung, are mainly their handiwork. They are peaceful enough, but they have a shrewed idea of their own strength and are said on several occasions to have regulated the imposition of taxes according to their own ideas, and to have over-awed the Sawbwa into accepting their views! These Tai Che visit all parts of the Shan States during the dry season in search of work, but, so

far as I know, Keing Tung and Keing Hong, where also there is a large colony of them, are the only places where they have formed permanent settlements."¹

The small British Column was described by Sir Charles Crossthwaite thus: "Not a very imposing embassy, certainly, to represent the majesty of England, and to require the allegiance of a chief who ruled over twenty thousand square miles of country. But the leaders had the right spirit The elephants, although they marched slowly, and may have been execrated at times on that account, undoubtedly added pomp to the somewhat insignificant procession which entered the city".²

The party was met at the edge of the plain, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the city walls, by a deputation of officials headed by the Chief Minister."³ A great part of the road was lined by spectators, who in many places stood three or four deep to see them pass."⁴

They camped on the site of the old Burmese post, and were visited almost at once by the Sawbwa and his brother, the heir apparent. The visit is best described in Scott's own words:

We had barely got our tents pitched when the Sawbwa and the heir apparent came in state to pay us a formal visit. They came in separate parties, riding on gorgeously caprisoned ponies and shaded by numerous gold umbrellas. Each had his own body-guard of several hundred men. Most of these were armed, but they drew off and did not come up to my tent. Half the town followed, and we were surrounded by a half moon

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1. RASS, 1889-90, pp. 16-7.
 2. Crossthwaite, C., op. cit., pp. 226 & 228.
 3. This is from J. G. Scott's Official Report on the Administration of the Shan States, 1889-90, para. 11, p. 17. From "Scott of the Shan Hills", p. 141 we have this account: "Messengers had been sent from Kengtung to meet the British party, but missed them by going out on the northern road; they hurried back and reached the camp late at night". And from Scott, J. G., Burma & Beyond, p. 251: "Mr. Scott sent a letter on ahead to say he was arriving on such a date. He expected to be met, and was rather piqued that he wasn't, nor was there any one to point out a place to camp, even when he actually arrived at Kengtung".
 4. Incidentally my mother was among those who went to see "the entry of the Kalas".

of 2,000 or 3,000 people. The Sawbwa was obviously very nervous. He is sixteen and well grown for that age, but his appearance is far from prepossessing. The ordinary Shan type of face is not handsome and it requires a pleasant expression to make it even passably engaging, rather than brilliant-hued satin coats, gold-bespangled trousers, with a dado pattern round the bottom, gorgeous slippers with the toes turned up mediaeval style, and diamond rings and ear cylinders. The Sawbwa has the usual heavy jaw, the extremely prominent cheekbones, lips more than usually protruding, nose more than usually sketchy, eyes set nearly flat with the forehead, and with an expression which is instantly repellent. Very deep traces of an attack of small-pox add, altogether unnecessarily, to those ill looks. On this face the struggle between conceit, which had never before met any one not an inferior, a desire to presume, yet a fear of consequences, and a natural dullness of brain, which rendered ideas scarce, produce an unpleasing effect. He hardly said a word except yes or no. The heir-apparent is a bright little boy. He looks two or three years younger than his brother! He has a rather pleasant face.¹

The Chief knew no Burmese, and acknowledged what Shan remarks were addressed to him only by grunts over his shoulder but he fingered books and papers lying on the camp table, and roused the doctor to fury by taking up his briar pipe and putting it in his mouth.

Conversation was desperately jerky, and as soon as he could with propriety, Scott said that he would return the Sawbwa's call next morning, if that would be convenient. The Chief was understood to say that he didn't mind, but some of his attendant ministers, who were elderly, well-mannered, and obviously well acquainted with Burmese courtly forms, said for him that it was very condescending of the Wundauk; any time would be suitable.

Then there was silence, which was rather embarrassing, but was abruptly put an end to by the Chief's getting up and saying: "I'm going now", and off he went without any of the most ordinary form of Oriental civility in leave-taking.²

And now we turn to the Official Report:

A formal visit was paid to the Sawbwa next day. He is building himself a new brick haw, and the old palace, which is a dingy wooden erection, is said to be so rickety that it would have infallibly collapsed with the number of people who

1. Mitton, G. E., Scott of the Shan Hills, p. 142.

2. Scott, J. G., Burma & Beyond, p. 252.

were to be present at the reception. We were therefore received in the court-house, which looks rather like a railway goods shed outside, but has been rather highly decorated inside. The gilding is now, however, worn and tawdry. There is a large gold throne at the further end enclosed within a railing and reached by folding doors from behind, like the Mandalay Yaza-palin, which it otherwise resembles in construction. The Sawbwa and his brother sat on chairs in front of this, outside the railing, and we were placed between them. There was an enormous gathering of officials both of the town and the neighbourhood, and of the prominent merchants of the town, and the conversation was kept up by these and by the Kyem Meung, for the Sawbwa had never a word to say beyond yes or no. The merchants all talked of the opening up of communications with the west, and particularly of the construction of a railway. Trade at present is entirely with China. The old Chiangmai trade is greatly interfered with, and almost put an end to by vexations, restrictions and imports levied at the Siamese frontier posts. The general impression received was that the merchant class and the bulk of the ministers were delighted with the establishment of British authority in Keing Tung. There is a huge drum near the door of the audience hall. It is made of hide stretched on a wooden frame, and is about the size of a puncheon. This is said to have been made by the "hill people", but by what hill people and where nobody knew. One stroke on this sigyi announces that the Sawbwa has ascended the throne, two that he has left the palace to go through the town, and three strokes summon all officials and armed men within hearing to the palace without an instant's delay. We heard three strokes on this drum a good many times during the next few days.¹

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1. The drum can still be seen in Kengtung at the Kemarat Club which occupies the building of the Old "Court House" where Scott was received by the Sawbwa. It is one of a set of three made from the same tree trunk - the other two being at Wat Hokong and the present Hawgyi. The size of each is bigger than a puncheon (= "Large cask for liquid &c. holding from 72 to 120 gallons" - The concise Oxford Dictionary, 1946 Edition) - probably each will hold about 300 to 400 gallons. Certain "hill people" from certain areas in Kengtung are known for their ability to make such large drums. The one - two - or three strokes signals seem over dramatising. The drum at the Hawgyi is played during certain State ceremonies in conjunction with the Frog Drum. It is also used to summon people - normally the Sawbwa's own officers and pages - to the palace, and then more than three strokes are required, beginning with slow, measured beats and ending in continuous, fast ones thus X X X X x x x x x . . . with the intensity of last beats dying away, and this is repeated three times when there will be a pause of ten to fifteen minutes, and then the beating begins again, and after another pause, the beating of the drum is made for the third time - this constitutes the summoning of the Sawbwa's men by the big drum.

The "delight" noted by Scott at prospects of British rule was marred by an incident which placed the Sawbwa at a disadvantage and showed up the gun-boat pluck and bluff of empire builder Scott. On the night of the 16th of March, some eight Panthay muleteers of the British party wandered into the pwe which was being held in the precincts of the haw, and were attacked "by the Sawbwats men" in which attack one of them was killed and one wounded, while the rest dispersed. The wounded men limped back to the British camp and reported to his masters what had happened. According to this man the muleteers were innocently buying some cheroots in the pwe when they were "set on by the Sawbwa's men" and while most of them escaped, one by the name of Lao Pan, "was seized, held with his face to the ground, and shot in the back by the Sawbwa himself". Scott's report on the incident and his writings about it, were based on the report given by the Panthayst, who maintained they had touched no drinks nor had misbehaved themselves in any way at the pwet

Scott wrote in his official reportt

... I demanded, next morningt, an explanation from the Sawbwa and production of the man who had fired the revolvert. I got no explanation except that the Sawbwa had issued an order that none of our followers were to be allowed to go about in the town wearing armst. In a country where every male above six years wears a dagger this was an absurdity. The order had, moreover, not been communicated to our peoplet. I therefore demanded the surrender of the offender and had issued this order before the Panthe's managed to summon up courage enough to denounce the Sawbwa himself as the murderer. It was impossible to recede. It was necessary for British prestige and for our own personal safety to settle the caset. Our followers expected to be massacred in their beds; the Sawbwa feared that he would be seized in his palace and filled it with armed men. For two days the suspense was tryingt. I then announced that if my orders were not complied witht, I would march down to the haw the next day. This brought up the Tawpaya and several other ministers with a petition that I would decide the case as it stood. They produced no witnesses and did not deny that the Sawbwa as the offendert. I therefore sentenced him to pay Rs.500 compensation to the wounded man and Rstlt500 if the missing man were not produced within five days alive and well. This sentence I informed them was a coteession to the low state of their civilization and the ignorance of the Sawbwag. The Rs.500 were paid a couple of hours afterwards and the Rsgl,500 a few days before we leftt.

Scott himself must have felt a slight sense of guilt at his own behaviour, for the next paragraph of his official report begins with the sentence: "The incident was all the more embarrassing because none of the details of the Sawbwa's relations with the British Government had been settled".¹

1. RASS, 1889-90, ppt 17-18t

The money was paid to the chief muleteer, who received it "with a wide grin".¹ The grin suggested little sorrow for poor Lao Pan and one wonders how much of the compensation reached his relatives.

Actually it was not as simple as reported officially - this is revealed in Scott's other writings. Having been told that the Sawbwa was the offender it was not easy for Scott to broach the subject to the Sawbwa directly. To impress the latter, and the local populace with the might of the Empire, before dispensing justice, Scott arranged for his twenty odd uniformed personnel to have a parade, arms drills and exercises and a mock battle. This went off well and it was wound up with a general salute, before which Captain Pink was reported to have said: "We'll salute you and not that savage, so mind you take it".

During the display, Scott could not bring himself to mention the Lao Pan affair, but wrote about it immediately upon reaching his camp and sent the letter to the Sawbwa, asking him to come and discuss the terms of his sanad.

The sawbwa went to see Scott the next day, and Pink posted his men about their camp in such a way as to prevent any surprise attack, with men pretending to clean their rifles.

The Chief came with a smaller escort than the first time. He treated the question of British suzerainty with imperturbable nonchalance. He had nothing to say against it, and saw no particular advantages in it. I had to argue in every way I knew, until at last, out of sheer boredom, he agreed that a covenant should be drawn up. Then I asked about the mule-driver. The Chief said that the Nats had not yet answered, but there would probably be an answer on the day of 'preparation before the full moon'. That was four days ahead. Then he flung himself off.²

There is no record to show the Sawbwa's version of the story. There is no reason to discredit the main happenings, only, it is not necessarily true that the mule drivers were such angels as Scott would have us believe. The incident, nevertheless, was a great help to the ease with which Scott "conquered", single handed, the largest of the Shan States.

A durbar was held on the 29th March, three days before our departure from Keing Tung, for the purpose of formally presenting the Sawbwa with his sanad. Except for the

1. Scott, J. G., Burma and Beyond.

2. Mitton, G. E., op. cit., p. 151. The account of the Lao Pan affair in this book is even more colourful.

presence of the Keing Kham Myoza and the Naw Kham Meung Tein, brother-in-law of the Mone Sawbwa, those who attended were all connected with the Keing Tung State! This, however, is so large that the area represented is quite as great as would have been the case at either a Mone or Fort Stedman durbar. Besides the Sawbwa, his brother, and his ministers, there were many men of position from places considerably over 100 miles from the capital. I therefore took advantage of the opportunity to address them at some length on the advantages which must follow to the State from the acceptance of British suzerainty. I especially impressed upon them that the British supremacy meant peace and trade, and urged them to maintain the one and develop the other. As is usual with a speech in the Shan States a running comment was kept up in different parts of the audience on the various points enumerated, and on the whole it seemed that their comprehension was satisfactory and their resolution praiseworthy. The ministers promised for the Sawbwa complete obedience to the Chief Commissioner in all matters connected with his State, and the Sawbwa himself was divided between admiration of the repeating carbine which he received as a present and a laudable desire to be amiable! The gold and silver flowers, and other tributary offerings, of which a list is given in Enclosure No. IV, were made up to the full amount, a portion having been already presented before we reached Keing Tung, and on the whole the settlement had every appearance of being satisfactory, certainly much more so than had seemed at all possible when the Panthe muleteers were shot. We left Keing Tung on the 1st April and in the 2½ months which have elapsed since then the Sawbwa has asked for advice under the terms of his sanad, complete peace has been maintained throughout his State, and every thing points to the observance of the terms of his sanad by Soa Keing Tung as carefully and loyally as by the more civilized Chiefs west of the Salween river.¹

The British party left Kengtung on the 1st of April via Monghsat and Mongpu. This route was reported to be so much more difficult than the Takaw route. The Salween was crossed at Ta Peu, and after a delay of about one week at Mongpan, Fort Stedman was reached on the 6th of June.

Years later Sir George Scott mentioned that at a Government garden party at Maymyo the Sawbwa of Kengtung told him "casually that it was only because of the intercession of his wives that he had not massacred the whole party", and that he now thought they had been right.

Lady Scott added: "Though Scott was not to be allowed any special recognition on account of what he had done, yet in a private

1. RASS, 1889-90, pp 24-25.

letter to him, Sir Charles Crossthwaite, the Chief Commissioner, acknowledges his value handsomely¹.

The chapter can be closed with the list of tribute given to the British party as below:-

"Tribute paid by the Sawbwa of Kyaington".

Article.	To The King		To the Crown	
	Number	Value in rupees.	Prince.	
<u>By the Sawbwa.</u>				
Small gold flowers	: 110	: :	:)	
" silver "	: 110	: :	:)	
Gold ornaments for pony trappings	: 110	: :	:)	
Silver " " " "	: 110	: :	:)	One half
Rolls of satin	: 2	: 10	:)	except in
Rolls of bayaw satin	: 2	: 10	:)	respect of
Pieces of black cotton cloth	: 10	: :	:)	the gilt and
Pieces of Turkey cloth	: 10	: :	:)	silvered
Gilt candles	: 1	: :	:)	candles.
Silver "	: 1	: :	:)	
Ponies	: 2	: 40	:)	
Trousers	: :	: 5	:)	
Spear-handles	: :	: 7	:)	
<u>By the Mahadeur.</u>				
Large gold flowers	: 2	: :	:)	One-half.
Large silver "	: 2	: :	:)	
<u>By the four Amats.</u>				
Large gold flowers	: 4	: :	:)	One-half.
Large silver "	: 4	: :	:)	

1. Mitton, G. E., op. cit., p. 152.

