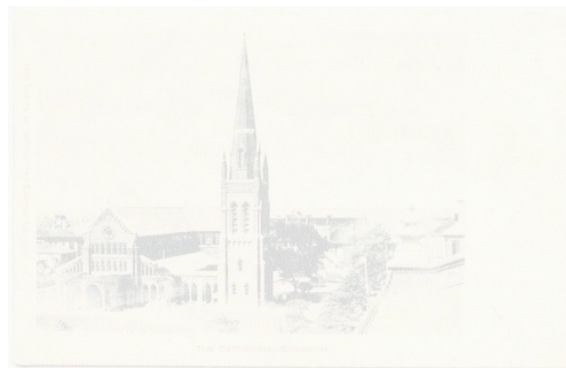


The Middle Kingdom
Shanghai
The Craft & The Church



By Bro. Brian L. Coak



Preface & Dedication

The following pages invites the reader into an insight into Freemasonry in Shanghai at the middle of the Nineteenth century commencing with the construction of the early Shanghai Masonic Halls and in particular the one situated at No. 30 Bund in 1865 This is followed by the Fourth Masonic Hall in Avenue Road constructed in 1931 to the low ebb of Shanghai Freemasonry due to political change in 1950.

It also relates the close relationship between the Craft in Shanghai and the Masonic Hall and Trinity Church established in 1847 to the present day.

Simply stated Freemasonry as described in our precepts is an intellectual and philosophical way of life how best to fulfill our responsibilities to our families our neighbours, to the country in which we reside and to practice the honourable characteristics of benevolence and brotherly love while pursuing one's own religious faith.

It appears that the Masonic family in Shanghai adhered to these precepts and the pages explores further the relationship between the Craft evidenced by the Masonic services held at Trinity Church, especially the Foundation Stone Laying of the church in 1866 officiated by the Deputy District Grand Master, English Constitution of the District Grand Lodge Northern China until its demise.

Dedication

This paper is dedicated to the Shanghai masons who sustained the tenets of Freemasonry in fostering benevolence and brotherly love.



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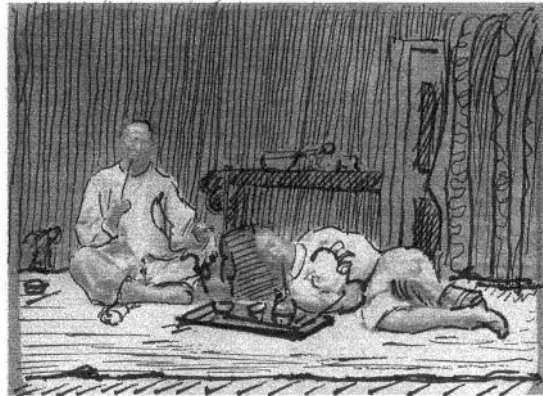
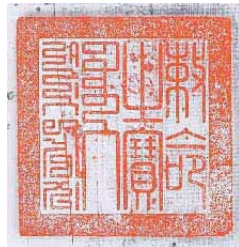
The Middle Kingdom - Shanghai - The Craft and The Church



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Foreign Mud

In October 1838, The Emperor of China, Tao Kuang, summoned Lin Zi Xu the capable Governor-General of Hopeh and Hunan Province to Peking. There, Lin received simple instructions from the Emperor to eradicate opium addiction in China! It was an almost impossible mission, one might say as the illicit nefarious trade had already doomed more than one million opium addicts in China driving them into grinding poverty and with it the destruction of their human psyche. (Fig.1 Opium smokers)



Opium has been used for centuries for medicinal purposes although its hallucigenetic effect was made illegal in 1800.

Commissioner Lin

Commissioner Lin commenced his imperial task with great zeal. The Commissioner first went to Canton to wage his war against the iniquitous opium trade. He threatened anyone found guilty of purchasing, selling or in possession of opium would be sentenced to public execution by strangulation! He decided to boldly bring matters to a head in March 1839. He demanded the traders in Canton to hand over their opium and suspended all trade with the western merchants. Eventually, the traders complied and handed over the opium as demanded but not without protest by Captain Charles Elliot the British naval officer in the port.

Commissioner Lin decided valiantly dispose of more than 20,000 chests of the 'foreign mud' he seized by destroying the opium by breaking over the opium chests and dumped them into three huge trenches filled with lime along the coast of Humen and then opened the drug to the sea.

The Emperor was greatly pleased with Commissioner Lin's action at first. But later, unfortunately, the Commissioner fell from grace and he was sent into exile to a frontier province in August 1840. It was another ten years before the Emperor decided to reinstate Lin but he died in November 1850 enroute to his new assignment in Kwangsi. There is a large bronze monument to Lin in Fuzhou and his attractive former courtyard residence survives. (Fig.2 &3 see below Lin's residence)



The First Opium War

Lin's rigorous action triggered the first of the 'Opium Wars' between Britain and China. It is difficult to know now whether it was possible that this conflict could have been avoided if there had been greater understanding of the values, customs, culture and ignorant pride on both sides and whether a solution could have been found politically rather than by military means. Great Britain, however, went ahead to prosecute an aggressive coercive policy towards China over trade. It is regrettably for a country waged war against another that was merely endeavouring to suppress a crippling vice that was weakening the country economically and detrimental to its people.

British Gunboat Diplomacy exhibited at Shanghai

The die, however, was irrevocably cast when a British fleet commanded by Vice-Admiral Sir William Parker with a military force of 4,000 men under the command of Sir Henry Gough was dispatched to invade Northern China.

On the morning of 16 June 1842, the expedition sailed slowly up the Yangtze and arrived off Shanghai.

The men o' war were towed into position by steamers to face the Chinese lines at about 500 yards. The Chinese open fired and a number of British ships were hulled. The trained British gunners soon showed their superiority and the junks were put to flight and the land based Chinese forts were quickly overwhelmed. A landing detachment under Lt. Colonel Montgomerie cut across the fields heaving their cannons across the numerable creeks and entered the city with little opposition. All signs of authority had vanished and there was some looting until British troops restored order.

On 23 June 1842, the occupying forces left Shanghai to participate in the main expedition to reach upstream where Chinkiang an important city on the junction of the Yangtze and the Grand Canal was bombarded. The Manchu garrison was again overwhelmed and many Manchus fell in this conflict. The British expedition finally arrived at Nanking in August 1842. The Chinese authorities had little option but to capitulate and sue for peace.

The Treaty of Nanking



The first treaty between China and Great Britain known as the Treaty of Nanking was signed on board the 'Cornwallis' on 29 August 1842. The Emperor appointed two Imperial Commissioners, Ilipu and Ki-yang to negotiate with the British Plenipotentiary, an Irishman, Sir Henry Pottinger left Hong Kong to sign the treaty. (Fig.4 Sir Henry Pottinger)



The Effect Of the Treaty

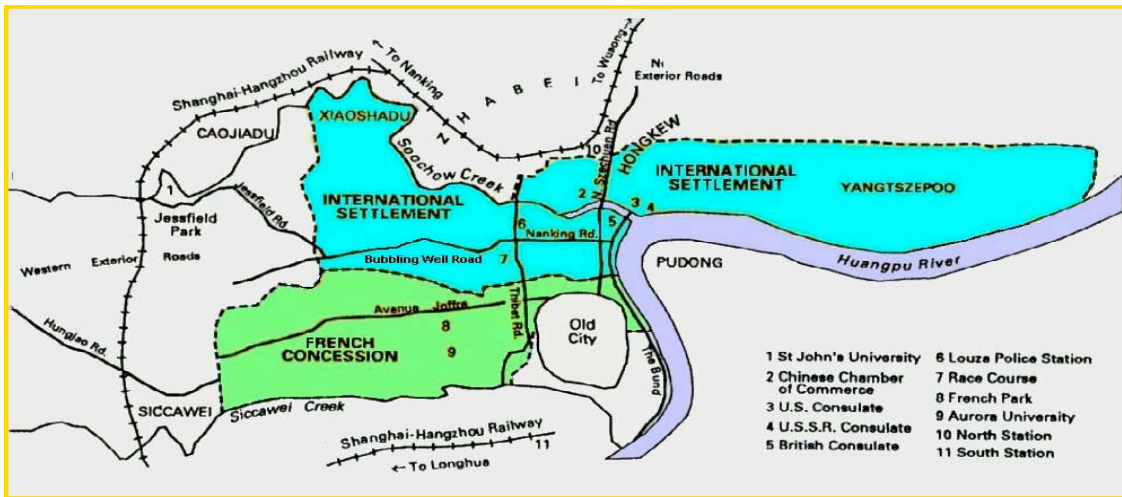
The effect of the Treaty made provision to open foreign trade to Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo and Shanghai - the Treaty Ports. It was agreed that fair tariff rates should be imposed. (Fig. 5 The Treaty of Nanking 1842 on board the Cornwallis above)

Soon after, in 1844, the United States and the French quickly availed of the opportunity of the British victories to sign Treaties with China for their foreign merchants to trade in the Treaty Ports. The Treaty of Nanking marked the legalization of 'extraterritorial rights' as well as the formal treaty relationships regarding commerce.

The First Shanghai British Consul

Sir Henry Pottinger selected a formerly Indian Artillery Officer, Captain George Balfour as the first British Consul at Shanghai and he arrived in November 1843. One of his first acts after concluding the appropriate protocols with the Chinese Taotai was to find a residence. The unwelcome foreigner eventually secured the lease of a dwelling house containing 52 rooms. On 14 November 1843, Shanghai was declared open to foreign trade. Pottinger made no agreement in the Treaty Articles about the site of a foreign settlement and it was left between the Consul and the Taotai.

Shanghai Settlement Early Days



(Fig.6 Map of the International Settlement)

In those days, most of the cultivation interspersed marsh and dotted with residing in Shanghai did so conditions were not very population was about 50 years later it increased to roads were poor and narrow and the main form of transportation was wheelbarrow, sedan chair or rickshaw. (Fig.7& Fig.8) The American and English Settlements were amalgamated into the International Settlement in 1863. (Fig.9 Yang King Pang Creek below centre)



land was raised and used for with ditches, creeks and graves. The first foreigners outside the city walls and the pleasant, and the foreign persons in 1844 and five 175 foreign residents. The



First Public Worship

It has been said that wherever an Englishman goes he takes with him his church and his racecourse. It was true of Shanghai. The first public worship was held at the British Consulate in 1843 when it was still within the 'native' city and conducted by Dr. W.H. Medhurst and other missionaries.

Trinity Church

The first Episcopal Church to be erected in Shanghai was Trinity Church. Mr. Beale an influential merchant of Messrs.Dent & Company donated the land. The first church built on this land was a design undertaken by Mr. Geo. Strachan, Architect, and was completed in 1847. The building cost \$6,000 but required constant repairs. (Three years later on a Sunday morning in July 1850 just before the service commenced the roof collapsed and the repairs required an additional \$5,000).



Freemasonry Commences in South China



The first Masonic Lodge erected in South China was The Royal Sussex Lodge No. 501 in Hong Kong (formerly No. 735). The Warrant was dated 18 September 1844. This was followed by Zetland Lodge No. 768 EC and its charter was dated 21 March 1846. Its first meeting was held on 24 June 1846 in rented premises. Royal Sussex Lodge continued to work in Hong Kong until 1848 leaving Zetland to carry the banner in Hong Kong when Royal Sussex moved to Canton. (Fig.10 Zetland Logo above)

The Craft Puts Down its Roots in Northern China

The first Lodge erected in the north was appropriately called - Northern Lodge No. 570 EC and warranted on 27 December 1849. The first Masonic meetings in Shanghai were held in Chinese houses near the church and in a bungalow along Foochow Road. The lodge contemplated acquiring appropriate accommodation but the country was in disarray. China suffered a number of unprecedented natural calamities including famine and due to the inability of the Qing government to relieve widespread misery exacerbated by the smuggling of opium condemning more of the populace to misery.

The Taiping Rebellion 1851

A rebellion was initiated in Kwangsi Province led by HongXiuchuan (). Hong formulated a strange ideology combining ideals of pre - Confucian utopianism and Protestant beliefs. The rebellion started at Canton and spread gradually towards the north. About the same time, a Triad society began operating in Shanghai and the 'Small Sword' faction obtained possession of the 'native' city. The young Settlement was threatened both by the insurgents and the Imperial forces. In 1853, the three Treaty powers decided to

adopt a policy of armed neutrality and organized a volunteer corps. Thus, the Shanghai Volunteer Corps was established and faced their baptism of fire at the Battle of Muddy Flat. It was not until February 1854 that the rebels were dislodged and only after much looting. The Imperial forces then executed many rebels once they regained control.

(Fig.11 SVC badge)



In 1854, a Northern Lodge committee prepared plans and estimates in order to purchase sufficient land for the construction of a Masonic Hall. The new lodge premises were completed in 1855 in Park Lane (Nanking Road). It was a one-storied structure and accommodated a banqueting room and preparation rooms.

Effect on Trade

Trade was greatly affected during those troublesome days of the Taiping conflicts. Trade in silk and tea was reduced yet imports of opium increased. In 1853, 24,200 chests of opium were landed in Shanghai worth \$14,400,000.

The First Municipal Council and Second Opium War

Due to the disorder, there was a great influx of Chinese into the Settlement including many wealthy Chinese residents but they were subject to a tax for their protection. About half of the first Municipal Council budget was expended on the Police leaving little for construction of roads and other improvements. (Fig.12 Municipal Council flag)



In 1856, the second war between Britain and China erupted. Additional improvements were made to the first Masonic Hall but the hall was heavily fettered by debt due to the high interest prevailing. So, it was decided to sell the building and erect a new hall.

Trading of Opium Legalized

At the Treaty of Tienjin in 1858, the sordid trade in opium was legalized. (Fig.13 Preparing opium)



The Chinese authorities refused to ratify the Treaty in the capital. This led to the sacking of the capital by an allied British and French expedition under Lord Elgin. The Summer Palace was burned down and the Chinese signed under duress the Treaty of Peking in October 1860. The legalization of the opium trade meant the appearance of opium receiving hulks moored along the Bund for many years to come. In August 1860, the Taipings attacked Shanghai. Many Chinese residents again fled to the Settlement or Pootung. The cost of taking a sampan across the river to Pootung to escape the Taipings the going price was \$20.00 (Fig.14 Sampan crossing the river below)

The Second Masonic Hall in Canton Road



In 1861, Northern Lodge members successfully entered into another contract to construct a second Masonic Hall in Canton Road free of debt.

The British Consul Mr. W.D. Medhurst addressed the Master of Northern Lodge in 1863 suggesting that the Masonic Hall should be given an appropriate Chinese designation. The Consul suggested that the hall should be known among the Chinese residents as " Kwei Keu Tang" i.e. 'Compass and Square Hall' as it would express the two implements the moral characteristics as mentioned in the teaches of the Chinese sage, Mencius. The Lodge agreed to this suggestion and the name was carried forward to the third Masonic Hall after the sale of the Canton Road building later.

The Structure of Trinity Church Deteriorates

Travelers could see the church above the skyline of the buildings on the Bund as vessels plied the Woosung River. Following the restoration of the church in 1851 known as the 'second church', the tower and the roof was declared unsafe and was finally abandoned in 1862. The oil painting below shows the Bund in the background with the spire of the church. (Fig.15 Oil painting circa 1870)



The Arrival of Royal Sussex Lodge No. 501EC in Shanghai

The pioneering Lodge of Freemasonry in southern China, Royal Sussex No. 501, after a lapse of four years stationed in Canton secured authority to remove the lodge to Shanghai. The first meeting was held on 11 April 1863. Coincidentally, the racecourse was extended. (Fig.16 See below the racecourse)



The First Scottish Lodge Erected in Shanghai

The first Scottish Lodge to be erected in Shanghai and Warranted on 7 March 1864 was Lodge Cosmopolitan No. 428 SC. The Lodge was consecrated at the Masonic Hall in Canton Road on 28 December 1864.

The Royal Order of Scotland



This Order was re-established on 24 June 1314, after the Battle of Bannock burn, by King Robert the Bruce. The modern origin of the Order can be traced backed to the middle of the 18th century. The Provincial Grand Lodge for China was warranted on 24 June 1865 and the first meeting was held in Shanghai in October 1865. (See Logo) The first Provincial Grand Master was Bro.C.M.Donaldson and was succeeded by Bro. J.H. Osborne in 1892. He was also the Vice President of the Masonic School Fund and the Masonic School. Donaldson was the Secretary of the Shanghai Dock Engineering Ltd. situated in Pudong.

By 1865, the numbers in the Craft living in Shanghai gradually increased and with it their Masonic commitment. The lodges under the English Constitution working in Shanghai were soon able to raise sufficient funds for the erection of a new Masonic Hall on the Bund.