

**MEMOIRS OF A
MALAYAN FAMILY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649410262

Memoirs of a Malayan Family by W. Marsden

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

W. MARSDEN

**MEMOIRS OF A
MALAYAN FAMILY**

MEMOIRS

OF A

MALAYAN FAMILY,

WRITTEN BY THEMSELVES,

AND

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL

BY

W. MARSDEN, F.R.S.

Ac. &c.



LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THE ORIENTAL TRANSLATION FUND.

SOLE BY
J. MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET;
AND
PARSONS, ALLEN & CO., LEADENHALL STREET.

1830.



LONDON:
PRINTED BY J. L. COX, GREAT QUEEN STREET.

Miss Lang.
Keeper
11.22-32
26725

INTRODUCTION.

THE Malayan biographical tract of which the following is a translation, appears to have been chiefly drawn up, from time to time as the circumstances occurred, by the principal member of the family whose history it relates, and subsequently added to and finally arranged by one of his younger sons, whose name of *'La-uddin* is found at the conclusion of the manuscript. The date of it he has neglected to insert; but the omission is supplied, with sufficient accuracy, by his mentioning the name of the English gentleman at whose desire the transcript was made, and who is known to have been Chief of the district in which the writer had taken up his abode, about the year 1788. A deficiency, however, of a more serious kind exists, in there not being any statements throughout the manuscript, of the years in which the several occurrences took place, although the intervals of time between each are carefully marked.

marked. But this also is remedied in great measure by the incidental notice of some public transactions,* which enable us to ascertain that the most eventful period of the narrative was comprised between the years 1756 and 1766, when Mr. Carter, whose protection the family sought, was relieved in the government of Bencoolen.

The memoirs, although without any pretension to political or literary importance, are by no means destitute of interest; but their principal merit is that of exhibiting a genuine picture, by a native hand, of Malayan manners and dispositions, more forcibly, and, it may be said, more dramatically represented, than they could be drawn by the pencil of any stranger. They have also the recommendation of affording a specimen of simple narrative; a style of which some writers have thought the Malays incapable, and which is certainly rare in comparison with the romantic and extravagant tales so prevalent amongst these and other eastern people. Nor should we be too fastidious on the subject of their humble attempts at biography.

* Particularly the capture of the English settlements in Sumatra by a French squadron under the Comte d'Estaing, in April 1760, and their re-occupation in the following year.

graphy, when we reflect on the small degree of historical interest that belongs to some of our own most popular works of the same class.

The manuscript was sent to England in the year 1791, and not long afterwards received the dress in which it now appears, whilst the translator was employed in compiling a dictionary of the Malayan language. Its having remained so long unattended to since that period, is to be attributed to various causes, some of a personal and others of a public nature. Among the latter was the consideration, more especially, that the subject-matter of the memoirs being so nearly connected with the disagreements between the English and Dutch East-India Companies, or their respective governments abroad, on the grounds, or pretences of rights infringed, enemies countenanced, and other grievances, they could not have been published at the time without the hazard of giving umbrage to the one party or the other; but the circumstances being since entirely changed; the persons implicated in the transactions, both Europeans and Malays, having long ceased to exist; the rules of conduct towards the country powers being established on a more enlightened policy than

formerly prevailed; and every pretext for future national differences being removed by the treaty of 1824,* there no longer appears to be any sufficient motive for suppressing a recital (true in substance, however partially coloured) that may serve as an useful warning to all persons who, in those countries, are placed in situations of discretionary control, to be just, as well as cautious in their proceedings with a spirited and adventurous race of people, who have strong feelings of independence, are impatient of injury, jealous of insult, and who consider the indulgence of revenge as a duty at least, if not a virtue.

* By this treaty England consented to withdraw its establishments, and to relinquish in favour of the Netherlands, all right to settle or maintain factories in the island of Sumatra; the latter power agreeing, on its part, to renounce a claim to territorial rights over the small island of *Singapore*, on which, as an unoccupied spot, a settlement had been recently formed by the English; and also to give up its factories on the continent of India.

MEMOIRS
OF A
MALAYAN FAMILY.

THIS narrative, which contains a full detail of events that took place at the period of the Dutch (East-India) Company's taking measures for establishing a settlement at *Samangka*,* is transcribed for the information of the (English) resident (chief) of *Laye*,† who has expressed

* The name of a district in the *Lampöng* country, as well as of a large bay near the western entrance of the Straits of Sunda, on the Sumatran side, otherwise called by the Dutch, Keyser's Bay. It does not appear from the maps that the name of *Samangka* was applied to any particular town; nor, especially, is it found in a survey made of the bay by direction of the late Sir Stamford Raffles, or in his excellent map of Sumatra recently published. There is reason, however, to believe that the place called *Böni* or *Birné* at its further extremity, is that which was occupied by this family and other Malays, and where the Dutch hoisted their flag; for in a sketch made at the time by Captain Thomas Forrest, and published in Dalrymple's Collection, it is the only spot where he has marked a town; and it cannot be supposed that he would have omitted the place where he procured refreshments, and lay (as will appear) ten days at anchor. Nor is it extraordinary that in the course of this narrative the well-known name of the bay should be employed instead of that belonging to an obscure river at the mouth of which the Malays had fixed themselves.

† A residency or settlement on the south-western coast of Sumatra, about thirty miles from Bencoolen, of which Mr. B. Hunnings was then chief.