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Editor's Notes

Special thanks are due Dr. Nyle Spoelstra for his great help in the copyediting, layout, and computer processing of this issue, all in addition to his many other duties. We thank also Khun Kanitha Kasina-Ubol and her staff for their ready help. Khun Euayporn Kerdhouay freely provided his expertise in selecting and designing the cover.
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LARRY STERNSTEIN, past Honorary Editor of the *Journal of the Siam Society*, has for many years searched through a baker's dozen of archival collections in cities from New York to Calcutta on the track of British efforts to map Siam in the early nineteenth century, beginning with the cartographic work of James Low in 1824. Since 1984 he has progressively reported the result of his research, thrice in the *JSS*. In the course of his studies he has broadened his field of interest to include every available trace of the maps of Siam produced by Low's successors, John Crawfurd and Henry Burney. Now, again in the *JSS*, he presents a wide overview of the Crawfurd and Burney maps as he has discovered them; an analysis of the maps themselves and of their making, including comparison with modern maps; a narrative of British cartographic policies of the period and the area; and a detailed description of the negotiations leading to the creation of the maps and the successes, frustrations and varying fortunes of the cartographers.

DAVID GODLEY, PAUL BISHOP and THIVA SUPAJANYA report on their extensive fieldwork undertaken to determine the true function of Thanon Phra Ruang, the ancient embankment and canal that runs from Kamphaeng Phet through Old Sukhothai to Si Satchanalai. As its name indicated, it has traditionally been considered to be a road: thanon. The conclusion reached by this team of investigators, however, is that the structure was most likely a canal, possibly used for transportation, water harvesting, and irrigation and drainage.

When the missionary work of the Portuguese began to falter in Asia, Louis XIV seized the opportunity to expand French missionary endeavors into areas thus becoming open to them. As lapsed episcopal sees were revived, the French titular bishop of Beirut was put in charge of an ecclesiastic domain extending from Cambodia to Jiangxi. One of the priests who sailed to Asia with the new bishop was Jacques de Bourges. The missionary party arrived in Siamese territory in April 1662 and remained in the capital of Siam for a year. After de Bourges returned to France he wrote a detailed report of the travels of the bishop which was published in Paris in 1666. MICHAEL SMITHIES presents his translation and summaries of those parts of the report which related to Siam. De Bourges's text, the first published account of Siam by a Frenchman, is an important description of the arduous journey undertaken by many others in the seventeenth century and is valuable as a description of Siam as it was in that period.

A. EGGERS–LURA examines the influential role of his Danish countrymen in Siamese commercial affairs at the end of the nineteenth century, directing special attention to Danish involvement in the founding of the Siam Commercial Bank. A key figure in these activities was the sea-captain Hans Niels Andersen, who bought the Oriental Hotel, founded the East Asiatic Company and worked closely with the famous Danish Admiral, Andreas du Plessis de Richelieu, as a business partner connected with the establishment of the Siam Commercial Bank, a relationship unknown until a few years ago.

J.C. EADE continues his research into dating systems used in Thai inscriptions by examining methods of expression used by scribes or artisans in their numerical representation of dates, thereby offering an alternative interpretation of the Mahasakarat year as found in the Grahi Buddha inscription.

MALCOLM SMITH, M.D. arrived in Bangkok in 1901 and remained in medical practice there until 1924. He was appointed medical practitioner to Her Royal Highness the Queen Mother Saowapa in 1914. The account of his experiences appearing in this issue of the *JSS* is now published for the first time (see the editorial note preceding his article).