



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

SUNDAY, MAY 15, 1977

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OLD HONG KONG MAP RESTORED

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A TATTERED MAP SHOWING HOW VICTORIA LOOKED LIKE 110 YEARS AGO HAS BEEN RESTORED BY THE PUBLIC RECORDS OFFICE.

THE MAP MEASURES 10-1/2 FEET BY 3-1/2 FEET. DRAWN AT A SCALE OF 160 FEET TO AN INCH, IT SHOWS IN DETAIL THE TOPOGRAPHY, STREETS AND MAJOR BUILDINGS OF THE AREA BETWEEN CAUSEWAY BAY AND KENNEDY TOWN IN 1867.

IT IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN PREPARED BY THE SURVEY DEPARTMENT OFFICERS -- PREDECESSORS OF THE CARTOGRAPHERS IN THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

THE MAP THEY DREW HOWEVER IS NOTICEABLY DIFFERENT FROM CURRENT MAPS DRAWN BY THEIR MODERN COUNTERPARTS. THE COASTLINE AT THAT TIME WAS ALMOST WHERE THE TRAM TRACK LIES AT PRESENT AND THE SLOPES OF THE HILLS WERE YET TO BE CUT BACK TO PROVIDE SPACE FOR DEVELOPING THE BUSY CENTRAL DISTRICT.

EVEN THOUGH IT WAS HONG KONG MORE THAN A CENTURY AGO, SOME PROMINENT LANDMARKS AT THAT TIME ARE STILL FAMILIAR TO US: THE BOTANICAL GARDENS, GOVERNMENT HOUSE, CENTRAL POLICE STATION, FLAGSTAFF HOUSE AND THE STEEP, CURVING ICE HOUSE STREET.

OTHERS, THOUGH LONG SINCE FADED FROM LIVING MEMORY, ARE STILL WITH US IN THE NAME OF A ROAD OR A STREET. WONG NEI CHUNG VILLAGE, OCCUPYING A LARGE STRETCH OF FLAT LAND TO THE SOUTH-EAST OF THE RACE COURSE, IS NOW BLOCKS OF CONCRETE FLATS.

A FEW, LIKE THE ROYAL MINT, LOCATED BY THE SEA AT EAST POINT, ARE NOW BURIED DEEP SOMEWHERE IN BOOKS ON HONG KONG'S EARLY HISTORY.

THE OLD MAP ITSELF WAS KEPT IN THE REGISTRAR GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT.

IT WAS BRIEFLY PUT ON SHOW AT THE OPENING OF THE HONG KONG MUSEUM OF HISTORY IN 1975 WHEN IT AROUSED WIDE PUBLIC INTEREST.

AS THE MAP WAS TOO WORN BY THE YEARS TO BE ABLE TO BE KEPT PROPERLY, IT WAS HANDED TO THE PUBLIC RECORDS OFFICE LAST YEAR FOR RESTORATION AND RETENTION.

+THE ORIGINAL SKETCH WAS DRAWN ON TRACING PAPER, HAND-COLOURED WITH TINTED INKS, AND MOUNTED ON CARTRIDGE PAPER AND LINEN,+ SAID MR. A. I. DIAMOND, ARCHIVIST OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS OFFICE. +IT WAS CRUMBLING INTO BITS AND PIECES WITH THE SMALLEST NO BIGGER THAN THE SIZE OF A FINGER NAIL.+

+THE TRACING WAS METICULOUSLY TAKEN OFF AND THE SEVERAL HUNDRED SEPARATE PIECES OF THE MAP WERE SET FLATLY ON NEW CARTRIDGE PAPER BY TECHNICIANS WHO HAVE HAD MANY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN REPAIRING OLD DOCUMENTS,+ HE SAID.

/+THEY WERE

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+THEY WERE THEN FITTED TOGETHER LIKE A JIGSAW PUZZLE, ONLY THAT THE AMOUNT OF PATIENCE AND SKILL PUT INTO THE WORK WAS MANY TIMES MORE DEMANDING.

+TO BE ABLE TO DO THE JOB WELL, THE TECHNICIANS HAVE TO KNOW THE SHRINKAGE RATE OF THE PAPERS USED AND MUST BE ABLE TO MATCH THE GRAIN OF THE DIFFERENT FRAGMENTS.

+THE FINISHED WORK WAS THEN REMOUNTED ON LINEN AND COVERED BY A LAYER OF TRANSPARENT SILK GAUZE WHICH PREVENTS FLAKING AND CRACKING AND HELPS TO PROTECT THE SURFACE.+

THE RESTORED MAP IS NOW KEPT IN THE MAIN STORE ROOM OF THE OFFICE AT A CONSTANT TEMPERATURE OF ABOUT 18 DEGREES CELSIUS AND RELATIVE HUMIDITY OF 60 PER CENT.

+IF THE HUMIDITY IS TOO LOW, THE PAPER WILL BECOME BRITTLE, BUT IF IT IS TOO HIGH, IT WILL TURN SOFT AND BECOME MOULDY,+ MR. DIAMOND ADDED.

ALSO KEPT IN THE SPECIAL STORE-ROOM ARE OTHER TESTIMONY OF HONG KONG'S EARLIER DAYS WHEN LIFE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION WERE MUCH SIMPLER.

ONE OF THE OLDEST IS A LETTER BOOK OF THE FIRST POLICE MAGISTRATE, DATED 1844-46, WHICH CONTAINS CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN HIM AND THE THEN COLONIAL SECRETARY ON VARIOUS MATTERS INCLUDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A POLICE FORCE IN HONG KONG.

THE ARCHIVES OF ST. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL ARE ALSO KEPT THERE FOR POSTERITY. THESE ARE INTERESTING BECAUSE THEY INCLUDE A MARRIAGE REGISTER OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH IN MACAU, DATED 1838, WHICH WAS LATER TRANSFERRED WITH OTHER DOCUMENTS TO HONG KONG.

+RECORDS ARE NOT ACCEPTED BY THE PUBLIC RECORDS OFFICE FOR SAFE-KEEPING JUST BECAUSE THEY ARE OLD,+ MR. DIAMOND POINTED OUT.

+DOCUMENTS ARE SELECTED FOR PRESERVATION ONLY IF THEY MEET CERTAIN VALUE CRITERIA.+

REFERRING TO THE RECENTLY RESTORED MAP, HE SAID IT WAS NOT ONLY AN ACCURATE AND UNIQUE RECORD OF THE DISTANT PAST BUT ALSO THE OLDEST ORIGINAL MAP THE PUBLIC RECORDS OFFICE HAD IN ITS POSSESSION.

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TEMPORARY STREET CLOSURE

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THE CUL DE SAC OF CHI MAN STREET IN HO MAN TIN WILL BE CLOSED TO ALL VEHICLES WITH EFFECT FROM 10 A.M. ON TUESDAY (MAY 17), THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCED TODAY.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT SAID THAT THE CLOSURE WOULD BE FOR A PERIOD OF SIX MONTHS TO ALLOW SITE FORMATION WORKS THERE.

APPROPRIATE TRAFFIC SIGNS WILL BE ERECTED TO GUIDE MOTORISTS.

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WATER CUT

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WATER SUPPLY TO A NUMBER OF PREMISES IN YUEN LONG AND KAM TIN WILL BE TURNED OFF FOR FIVE HOURS STARTING FROM 1 A.M. ON TUESDAY (MAY 17) TO ENABLE THE WATERWORKS OFFICE TO CARRY OUT A NIGHT LEAKAGE TEST.

THE AFFECTED AREA IN YUEN LONG IS BOUNDED BY YUEN LONG MAIN ROAD, FUNG CHEUNG STREET, HOP YICK ROAD, TAI TONG ROAD, KAU YUK ROAD, NULLAH, WAH NING PATH AND TAI YUK ROAD, INCLUDING YAU SAN STREET, HONG LOK STREET AND YUEN LONG POLICE STATION.

AFFECTED AREA IN KAM TIN IS BOUNDED BY KAM TIN ROAD, LAM KAM ROAD, FAN KAM ROAD BETWEEN WING LUNG WAI AND SHEK KONG FIRE SERVICES TRAINING SCHOOL, INCLUDING SHING YUEN, TSOI YUEN TSUEN, SHEK KONG, WONG TOI SHAN, WING NING LEI, WONG TOI SHAN HA WAI, SAN LUNG WAI, CHUK HANG, HA CHE AND SHEK KONG FIRE SERVICES TRAINING SCHOOL.

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COLLECTION OF PRIVATE G.C.E. CANDIDATES ADMISSION FORMS

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PRIVATE CANDIDATES' ADMISSION FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION EXAMINATION, JUNE 1977, ARE AVAILABLE FOR COLLECTION, IT WAS ANNOUNCED TODAY.

A SPOKESMAN OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S EXAMINATIONS DIVISION (EXTERNAL EXAMINATION) SAID PRIVATE CANDIDATES SHOULD COLLECT THEIR DOCUMENTS ON THE DATE SPECIFIED IN THE INDIVIDUAL NOTIFICATION POSTED TO THEM RECENTLY.

+ IF ANY PRIVATE CANDIDATE HAS NOT RECEIVED SUCH A NOTIFICATION OR IS NOT FREE ON THE SPECIFIED DATE, HE SHOULD CALL IN PERSON, BRINGING HIS HONG KONG IDENTITY CARD WITH HIM, AT THE EXAMINATIONS DIVISION, CANTON ROAD GOVERNMENT OFFICES, 11TH FLOOR, 393 CANTON ROAD, KOWLOON BETWEEN MAY 23 AND 25 TO COLLECT THESE DOCUMENTS DURING NORMAL OFFICE HOURS, + HE SAID.

ANY PRIVATE CANDIDATE WHO FAILS TO COLLECT HIS ADMISSION FORM BY MAY 26 WOULD BE REGARDED AS HAVING WITHDRAWN HIS ENTRY, THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

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