

# **AMOY AND THE SURROUNDING DISTRICTS**

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Amoy and the Surrounding Districts by George Hughes

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**GEORGE HUGHES**

**AMOY AND THE  
SURROUNDING  
DISTRICTS**



AMOY  
AND THE  
SURROUNDING DISTRICTS.

Compiled from Chinese and other Records,

BY

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## PART I.

Historical. Amoy and its vicinity. Troubles with Japanese, with Dutch, Ch'eng chih lung, Ch'eng ch'ing kung (Koxinga). Loss of Formosa by Dutch; their endeavour to obtain a possession on mainland. Capture of Amoy by British. Small knife rebels capture Amoy. History of this society. Scale of duties and charges published by rebel chief. Recapture of Amoy by Imperialists. Capture of Chang-chou-fu by a remnant of Chang mao or T'ai ping rebels. Connection of foreigners with them. Burgevine. Recapture of Chang-chou-fu by Imperialists.

The early Chinese records of Amoy, and its vicinity, are so obscured by statements obviously untruthful, as, at best, to be but very unsatisfactory data, from which to extract a précis of its history. The information available, presents a dreary picture of craft, aggression, and bloodshed, on the one hand, and of haughty intolerance, exactions, and misrule, ending in rebellion, and savagery, on the other. Chinese historians claim that Japan was the dependant state named *Wo*, 倭; and that in the period of Han-ch'eng, 亨咸, of the Tang dynasty, A.D. 670, its name was changed to *Jeh pên*, 日本, or the day spring, from its proximity to the rising sun, in the Eastern Ocean. Early intercourse  
Japan.

That up to the date of the Sung 950-1280, there had been intercourse, under every dynasty, between China and Japan, and that the latter country had paid tribute uninterruptedly; but that after this period, it was discontinued; whereupon the warrior founder of the Yuan, Kublai Khan, dispatched several envoys to demand this proof of allegiance. The proud and warlike Japanese, resenting with disdain the Mongols' attempts to induce them to pay homage, and smarting under slights and

injuries, slew a tribute seeking envoy, and his entire suite. To exact vengeance for this massacre, and to subjugate Japan, Kublai Khan, sent a large fleet bearing a hundred thousand men, under the command of Fan Wan-h'u. It reached Wu-lung-shan, where it was wrecked in a storm, and most of the illfated troops, who escaped the fury of the sea, perished by the swords of the Japanese. Few, if any, ever returned to China. After this disaster intercourse between the two countries, was suspended until the close of the Yuen dynasty, 1366.

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east of China.

During the Ming dynasty, in retaliation for this attempt at invasion and conquest, the Japanese made frequent raids, carrying fire and sword along the coast of China from Che-kiang to Kwang-tung. In 1368 an envoy bearing an Imperial letter, was sent to ascertain the cause of these incursions; but he was contemptuously entreated, by the Japanese, though, curiously enough, it is stated, that, about this time tribute was *frequently* tendered, but as it was unaccompanied by the proper forms of vassalage, it was always rejected. In the 20th year of Hung-w'u, 1386, means were taken to put the coasts of Chê-kiang, Fuhkien, and Kwang-tung, in a state of defence, the former province was directed to furnish one hundred war junks, and the two latter, double that number. At this period an able but crafty minister of the Throne, named H'u-wei-yung, was projecting a rebellion, and sought the aid of the Japanese, who sent one Jü-yao, a Buddhist priest, at the head of four hundred men, disguised as tribute bearers, to his assistance; the supposed tribute consisted of a large mass of wax, in which were concealed arms and gunpowder, but in the meantime H'u-wei-yung, had been overthrown, and beheaded, and the contemplated treachery becoming known, the pseudo tribute bearers were seized and punished, and intercourse with Japan, was again discontinued. Subsequently, when the chronicles of the founder of the Ming were drawn up, Japan was added to the list of unconquered states, fifteen in all.



In the reign of Yunglo, 1401, the Japanese sent tribute accompanied by the proper address, together with twenty of the chiefs of Tui-ma, and Tai-chi, who had been piratically harrying the coast of China. From this time, tribute was always accompanied by such pirates, as had been captured. The address to the Tahwang-té, which covered the tribute, was couched in these terms: "If on the Islands of your majesty's servant, there be persons without regular calling, who engage in piracy, it is in truth without the knowledge of your servant, and he prays your indulgence (or that their fault be not laid to his charge.\*)" Attacks on the Coast, were, however still rife, until 1418, when General Lui-chiang, inflicted a very severe defeat on the marauders at Wang-hai-wó, after which there was a temporary cessation of these raids. At this time, the payment of tribute appears to have been again discontinued.

From the fourth to the eight years of Ching tung, (1459-63) the Japanese, at the instigation of two renegades, named Huan-yeu, and Lung-yeu, made several descents upon the departments of Tai-chou, and the district of Tai-ming.

There is little doubt that many of these raids were in retaliation for injustice the Japanese had received at the hands of the Chinese, for while the Government jealously sought to exclude them from their coast, the people of Ché Kiang, and Fukkien, welcomed them for the trade they bought, but at the same time evaded, where practicable, paying them their just dues. When the Eunuchs, who held the posts of Superintendents of Trade, at Ningpo, and at the ports in this province, whose duties were to collect the Revenue, and fix the price of cargoes, were dismissed, and their offices abolished, the control they had exercised, passed into the hands of merchants, until communication with foreigners was strictly prohibited; it then passed into those of persons, who though of birth and station, repudiated their debts

to the Japanese, to a more disgraceful extent than the others had done.

In 1547, intercourse was strictly prohibited by a Hsine-fu, or Governor, named Chü Hwang, who merclessly beheaded those who broke the prohibition. His action entailed upon him the hate of the people of Chê Kiang, and Fuh-kien, and he was impeached by a Fuh-kien man, named Chao Liang, a censor, for putting to death some ninety people as pirates, who had been made prisoners, and forced to aid their captors. He was stripped of office, and he destroyed himself; and the prohibition fell into desuetude. In 1552 the Japanese, aided by a rebellious Chinaman, one Wang Chih 汪直, and his followers, with a fleet of some hundreds of junks, made a descent on the coast. The alarm was given simultaneously east and west of the Chê river, and North and South of the Yang-tse-kiang, for several thousand li.

They stormed the fort of Chang Kwo, invaded Tai-tsang-chou, stormed the city of Shanghai, sacked Kiang-yin, and attacked Chá-pú. They plundered the station at Kin-shan, and invaded the districts of Tsung-ming, Chang-shu and Kia-ting. In the following year they marched from Tai-tsang, upon Suchow, which city they pillaged; attacked Sung-kiang, and repassing the river, rapidly, made a stand at the North of it, at Tung-chau, and Tai-chau; Kia-shen was razed to the ground, Tsung-ming stormed, and Suchow again ravaged; Tsung-teh, Wukiang, and Kia-hing, were captured. They then took up a position at Cheh-lin, (the wood of Cheh) whence they moved through the country at their pleasure, as if it were uninhabited. In 1554, they seized some vessels, and made an onslaught on Chá-pú, and Haining, destroying Tsung-teh, and ravaging Tang-tseh, Sin-shê, Hung-tang, and Shwang-lin. Uniting themselves with some newly arrived Japanese, they made a sudden descent on Kia-hing; but at the river Wang-king, they met with a severe defeat from the troops of Chang-king, president of the

Board of war, who had taken the field, and who beheaded, or said he had done so, some 2,000 of them; the remainder fell back upon Cheh-lin. Again was devastation carried into the region around Suchow, and the land from thence to Kiang-yin, and Wu-sih, was stained with blood. They were on an average only three Japanese in every ten, the remaining seven being Chinese. They crossed and landed from the Ta-Hu, or great lake, without opposition.

It is bootless to follow them; although at times suffering defeat, they appear to have ravaged and destroyed, almost where they listed. In 1556, they directed their course Southward, and made their dreaded appearance at Wu-yü in this prefecture. Desolation was soon carried through the districts of Tung an, Ilwui an, and Nan an; Fuh-ning-chou was assaulted, and after storming and carrying Fuh an, and Ning teh, they, in 1557, besieged and blockaded Foochow, for a month. The towns of Fuh-ch'ing, and Yung-fuh, fell before them and were destroyed, the wave of conquest rolled down to Hing-wei, whence a sudden irruption into the Chang-chou prefecture was made, and dire alarm was felt at Chao-chao-fu, and even at the distant city of Canton.\*

The accounts, which should be the fullest, of these sanguinary invasions here, are, in the Hsia mén-chih, and Chuan-chou-chih, or Chinese histories of Amoy, and Chin-chew, lamentably bald and meagre. Little else than date, place, and event being recorded.

According to these books, the first attack by Japanese, was in 1369, on Chin-chew; the result, as in most of the accounts of subsequent attacks, is not clearly stated, but it may be gathered, without difficulty, from the context. From this date, they do not appear to have again visited this region, until 1552, when they swept down

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\* From the Hai-Kwó-Tú-Chih 海國圖志 a sort of Chinese Atlas, containing brief accounts of foreign countries.