

Pattani Guns and Foundry Site.

The following note on the guns cast at Pattani mentioned in Mr. Sewell's recent paper on "Some old Siamese Guns" has been contributed by Mr. John Bowen, of the Royal Department of Mines, Pattani:—

The site of the foundry where the Pattani guns were made is a short distance to the East of the ruined Mosque on the Pattani-Jering road. The road passes through the site, which is unmistakable owing to the barren and burnt nature of the soil—which contains pieces of old iron, and portions of pottery that appear to have been used to smelt the metal and to which is attached slag, but beyond this, there is nothing in the way of ruins to indicate the site.

This area is known as "Dalam Cota," which was translated to me as "Within the walls," and is near to Campong Kersek, the biggest hutment in the locality. Its age is estimated to be upwards of 200 years—based on the fact that the ruined Mosque is over 100 years old and that the foundry antedates that very considerably.

The translation given above, led me to enquire about these walls, and two Malays of about 40 to 50 years of age, took me to a spot about 150 yds. to the East of the Mosque, where I was shown some high banklike ground. These men claimed that this was originally an earth and brick wall surrounding the whole foundry area.

Two gates are reported to have existed, one on the East and the other on the West side of the enclosure. The Western gate is supposed to have been almost on the road, and there certainly exist numbers of large bricks in the vicinity, far bigger than those manufactured there in these days. Big blocks resembling concrete are to be found also. The cementing material is mostly of a gravelly nature, and contains a small proportion of crushed sea shells.

Outside the walls is a moat some 30 metres in width, the present bottom of which is rather less than 3 metres below the walls. This is said to extend around Dalam Cota, and connects with the sea in both directions, via some inlets. I investigated this for a short distance on each side of the road. The moat is certainly quite well

defined here, and is now utilized for the growing of Paddy for which purpose it appears very suitable owing to the moisture it contains.

Some 20 to 30 years ago — whilst the residents were tilling the soil — the skeleton of an old boat was discovered. The suggested dimensions were:—Beam 9 yds., Length 18 yds., and as only the skeleton of the boat was found, the depth was difficult to determine. These dimensions are probably much exaggerated, but easily conform to possibilities, for the moat is certainly large enough to contain such a vessel.

Timber from this old boat has been used to build houses in the neighbourhood, but my Malay informant was not prepared to show me any of it.

With the boat were found pieces of old fibre rope the thickness of a man's ankle.

Only three large guns are said to have been manufactured at Dalam Cota. Their names as known locally are "Sri Negri" the biggest, "Toh Buak" and "Too Dhu Lia."

Two of these are at Bangkok, the third was lost at sea.

Local tradition says that the guns were for military use in the province, and that they were made by Malays, but on my suggesting that perhaps Chinese had done the work, it was agreed that this might easily be so. Small coins, about half an inch in diameter on which were inscribed Chinese or Arabic characters, have been found near the foundry site, but none were in a sufficient state of preservation to allow of their removal and keeping.

Abdul Kadir had it that the guns were supposed to have been made by Arabians, but that in all probability they were the work of Chinese.

One Malay declares that he still possesses a cannon ball of iron. It is about 4 inches in diameter and is said to have been made at Dalam Cota.

Correction. In Mr. Sewell's paper on "Some old Siamese Guns" (S. S. Journal Vol. XV, part 1) page 2 line 12. for "(approx. 15 grammes)" and "(approx. 1.2 kg.)" read (1 baht = approx. 15 grammes) and (1 chang = approx. 1.2 kg.) respectively.