

Editor's Notes:

Ensign's Robert Lester's account of his embassy to Ava in 1757 was originally published in Alexander Dalrymple's *Oriental Repertory*. It provides one of the few first-hand accounts of Alaung-hpaya and thus remains a valuable source on the reign and the beginnings of the Kon-baung Dynasty. Dalrymple's italicization has been removed and dates have been expanded to include the month and year in order to avoid confusion.

M. W. C.

**PROCEEDINGS OF AN EMBASSY TO THE KING OF
AVA, PEGU, &C. IN 1757**

Robert Lester, Ensign

[Begins with an opening letter from Thomas Newton to Robert Lester dated 24 June 1757]

SIR,

I have received a Letter from the King of Ava, wherein he has acquainted me with his Conquest of Pegu, and has desired I would meet him in his way to Prone, having some Matters of Consequence to communicate to me; at the same time he acquaints me, if I could not conveniently come myself to him, then to send some proper Person, in my stead, to confer with him.

As I believe it would be imprudent in me to leave the Honourable Company's Settlement, being at this time much indisposed, so, on the other hand, I

believe it will be for the Interest and Safety of this Settlement, to comply, as far as we are able, with the King (of Ava's) desire; I do therefore, on mature consideration, look upon you to be the most proper Person at the Negrais, to proceed on this Embassy, and you are accordingly appointed by me to go as an Ambassador Extraordinary to the Bûraghmah King on this Occasion; and you are to be furnished with such Presents as the Settlement affords at this time, which are to be delivered to His Majesty in the Name and Behalf of The Honourable Company.

I have given Orders for the Mary Schooner to attend you from this Place to Persaim, where you are to meet Antonio, who is ordered by the King (of Ava) to provide proper Boats for your Conveyance, and to conduct you safely to him.

I now send by you, two copies of an intended Treaty of Friendship and Alliance, between the King of Ava, and the Honourable United East India Company; one of which you are to use your utmost endeavours to get His Majesty's Signet affixed thereto, which done and compleated, you are then to present him the other signed by me, and sealed with the Seal of the Arms of the Honourable United East India Company.

And as it will be impossible for me to know, at this Distance, what Reception you may meet with from the King, or His Great Officers about him, so it is out of my Power to give you any particular Instructions, relating to your Conduct on that Head, I must therefore refer it to your own Prudence and Judgment, in acting according to the Treatment you meet with, which will be your best Guide on this Occasion, I have herewith enclosed an Account of such things as are now sent with you, as a Present to the King (of Ava) which I recommend to your peculiar care, until such time as they are delivered by an Order from His Majesty.

I must desire you to let me hear as frequently from you as Opportunities will admit of, I most sincerely wish you Enjoyment of Health and a successful Embassy, and I am Sir, Your most humble Servant,

Thomas Newton

Negrais, June 24th 1757.

P. S. I have enclosed an Exact Copy of my Letter to the King of Ava, which I desire you will shew to Antonio, and endeavour, by all means, to get it well and fairly translated into the Bûraghmah Language.

[Journal begins]

June 26th 1757. This Morning at 7 o'Clock I received the above Letter, and at 8 I embarked on board the Honourable Company's Schooner, the Mary, the Wind and the Tide being then in our favour for Persaim, I ordered the Master to proceed for that place, he accordingly weighed [anchor], and sailed; and at 10 at night we [anchored] at the Entrance of Persaim River; I have with me one Gunner, one Matross and two Lascars; with the undermentioned things, as a Present for the King of Ava, in the Name and Behalf of the Honourable Company, viz.

- 1 Four Pound Gun and Carriage compleat.
- 1 New Carriage for a Nine Pounder.
- 2 Barrels of fine Europe Powder.
- 1 Pair of Brass mounted pistol Blunderbusses.
- 1 Fuzee brass mounted.
- 2 Pieces of ordinary Red Broad Cloth.
- 3 Do. of Perpetuanoes Popinjay.
- 2 Do. of fine China Carpets.
- 10 Do. of Red Silk Taffety.
- 2 Do. of Silk Grogram.
- 2 Do. of Cossimbuzar Handkerchiefs.
- 2 Do. of fine striped Soosies.
- 2 Do. of Seersuckers.

June 27th 1757. This evening at 9 o'clock we [anchored] at Persaim, and, according to my Instructions, I immediately enquired for Antonio, the Person who is to be my Conductor to the King of Ava, but was informed that he was at Koughkong, a Place Eighty or Ninety miles up the River, I then ordered a Boat might be dispatched, with all Expedition, to let him, know I was arrived at this Place, as an Ambassador from the Chief of the Island Negrais (with a Present) to the King of Ava, &c.

June 28th 1757. Waiting for Antonio.

June 29th 1757. Waiting as above.

June 30th 1757. This night, at 9 o'clock, Nineteen Boats with a great number of Pegu Families arrived here, from up the Country, in order to settle at this Place, under Protection of the Bûraghmah. No news of Antonio.

July 1st 1757. This Day a small Boat came here from Koughkong, the Head Man of which tells me Antonio will be here in two Days.

July 2^d 1757. At 10 at Night I was informed Antonio was on his way for this Place, and would be here to-morrow.

July 3^d 1757. This Evening at 6 o'Clock Antonio came to this Place, and informs me he shall have Boats ready for my Conveyance to the King of Ava, &c. in six Days, or thereabouts, I then told him of a Copy of the Chief of Negrais Letter, which I have, to be translated into the Bûraghmah Language, which he promises me faithfully to assist in doing, before we get to the King; he likewise tells me that the Prince of Persaim and himself, with the Interest they have, he hopes shall be able to get our Treaty of Friendship and Alliance approved of, and the King's Signet affixed thereto. I have endeavoured, all I can, to bring Antonio to particulars, with regard to an English Ship, which the said Antonio wrote to the Negrais was arrived at Dagon with Presents from Madrass, for the King of Ava; but now he declares to me that when he was coming away from Dagon, he had only time to hear the Captain's Name was Bellam, the Ship from Madrass, but knows nothing further concerning her; but further says, that, since he left Dagon; there's arrived there, a Sloop, belonging to the King of Ava, from Fort St. George, and a French Brigantine, stranded near Syrian Bar, the Crew saved.

July 4th 1757. My Conductor is sometimes employed in getting the Boats in readiness for our Departure, other times torturing the Peguers, and collecting all the Money, &c. he can, from them, to carry to the King (of Ava).

July 5th 1757. Antonio is employed as above.

July 6th 1757. I this Day spoke to Antonio about getting Mr. Newton's: Letter to the King (of Ava) translated into the Bûrāghmah Language, but he tells me he has such a multiplicity of Business on his Hands (collecting as above) that he shall not be able to do it here, but positively promises to do it when we get in the Boats.

July 7th 1757. I am in waiting as above.

July 8th 1757. This Day Antonio desired me to let the 4 Pound Gun be put in the Boat I am to go in, that the Men might cover the said Boat with Thatch, I immediately gave Orders for it to be done, as likewise the two Carriages, to be landed, to put Matts about them, that they might look well, when they came to the King (of Ava).

July 9th 1757. Antonio informs that he expects to meet the King (of Ava) at Dagon, or shortly after he leaves that Place, and that our Rout shall be by the way of Koughkong, and that he shall be ready in three Days, to leave this Place.

July 10th 1757. Antonio is employed as beforementioned.

July 11th 1757. At 6 this Evening Antonio came to me, and desired the things might be put in the Boat to-morrow, as he intends to go away soon the next Morning.

July 12th 1757. This Morning I gave orders to Mr. Briggs, the Master of the Mary Schooner, to deliver to the Bûrāghmah Boats the remainder part of the King (of Ava's) Present.

July 13th 1757. I find the Boat that I am to go in is very badly fitted for the present Season, which I told Antonio of, this Morning, he seemed very indifferent about it, and told me that the Saggee of Persaim was just arrived with some Pegu Boats, which had Rice in, that they had bought at the Ntgrais, this seemed to make some disturbance amongst them, as there was a great number of them assembled together at that time; I then told Antonio that I was informed, by the Chief of Negrais, that the King (of Ava) had given Orders that I should have a proper Conveyance, and as I found I had not, it was at my Option to return or not, on which an English Mustee, in Antonio's Service, his Name William Pladwell, who is to be Interpreter from me to Antonio, made use of some very impertinent Language in Portuguese, such as "let them go to the Devil," as I understand a little of the above Language, I was rising up to chastise the above Pladwell, for his Insolence, but on

Consideration I thought it best to let it alone, as it might embarrass The Company's Affairs on my present Embassy, and so I put up with it, on Antonio's promising that nothing of that kind should happen again, I meet with many things amongst these People that would try the most patient Man ever existed, but as I hope it is for the good of the Gentlemen I serve, I shall put Up with them and proceed; Antonio told me he was to go at Noon, on which I embarked, and left Persaim to go on this Embassy, by the way of Koughkong; I wrote to the Chief of Negrais by Mr. Briggs of the Mary Schooner, but as the Letter was delivered, and we were just going away, I made no mention of the above in the Publick Letter, but gave him a hint of their behaviour in private.

July 14th 1757. It being now the Rainy Season, the River is somewhat rapid, and no Flood Tide to assist us; we have four Boats, one that I am in, one Antonio has, with two others accompanying, and make but little despatch, by reason above, I had a meeting with Antonio to day, and put him in mind of his promising to get Mr. Newton's Letter to the King (of Ava) translated into the Bûrghmah Language, but he again put it off, by saying he had a good deal of business to transact before he got to Koughkong, and that he positively would do it before we got to the King (of Ava) he likewise told me, that they had evident proof, that the Negrais supplied the stragling Peguers with Rice, and other things, which hindered them from coming under the Bûrghmah Laws, and would somewhat enrage the King (of Ava) but he hoped it was in his power to make all easy on that head.

July 15th 1757. At 7 this Evening we got to Praggee, and Antonio informs me that he has had Intelligence that the King (of Ava) is at Dagon, he likewise tells me, that we are now half way to Koughkong, and the Boat that I am in will take three Days longer to get there, and that he thinks it is best for him to go away immediately, and get things in readiness for the remainder part of our Passage, to which I agreed; he left Orders with the Head Man of my Boat, to make dispatch, and went away, we have excessive hard rains with much Thunder and Lightning; this Afternoon see some Mountains to the left of us, which is the first I have seen since leaving the Negrais the Land being low, and encompassed with Woods and Bushes, on each side the River, and very little inhabited, at this time, but it appears to be a fine River, and I believe, navigable for Ships as far as I have come.

July 16th 1757. This Morning at 8 o'clock we left Praggee, and at 7 in the Evening the Men made the Boat fast to the Trees, which hang over the River, in order to go to rest, having been rowing all day, the River becomes much narrower.

July 17th 1757. Proceeding to Koughkong as above, at Noon we stopped at a small Town, and got four men more, we have now sixteen Men to row the Boat, at Night lay at the River side as before.

July 18th 1757. At 10 o'Clock this Morning got to the Entrance of Koughkong Creek, and at 6 in the Evening, Antonio told me he was ready to go, on which we embarked and left the above Place, he likewise told me he has received a Letter from the Prince of Persaim, who is with the King (of Ava) desiring him to make all the dispatch he can, and that he believes we shall meet the King of Ava after leaving Dagon.

July 19th 1757. The River is more rapid and our Men take but little time to eat or rest, but labour much in getting the Boats along, this Evening, At 5 o'clock, we joined Antonio, at a small Town, on the bank of the River, and he informs me that he has had intelligence, that the King (of Ava) has left Dagon, and that he expects we shall meet the King (of Ava) in three Days; he likewise promises me, he will come to my Boat to-morrow, and get Mr. Newton's Letter to the King (of Ava), as likewise the Treaty, translated into the Bûraghmah Language, we have excessive hard Rains, which makes it somewhat disagreeable.

July 20th 1757. This morning at 8 o'clock Antonio, with William Pladwell, an English Mustee in his Employ, and a Bûraghmah Writer, belonging to Antonio, came into my Boat, and translated Mr. Newton's Letter to the King (of Ava), as likewise the Treaty of Alliance, into the Buraghmah Language, in the following manner, Pladwell interpreted the above to Antonio, in the Portuguese Language, and Antonio dictated to his Writer in the Bûraghmah Language; This. according to my instructions, is the best method I can find, to get the above done, when finished Antonio told me, that Mr, Brooh, as likewise Captain Howes, former Chiefs of the Negrais, had promised the Prince, of Persaim and himself, in case of getting the King of Ava's Signet, or Chop, affixed to the Treaty, that they should have a good Present, and as I was now here in the Name of The Company, if it was done, he hoped that they should not be forgot, on which I gave him my Word and Honour, in the Name of The Honourable Company, that if the above was compleated, the present Chief, at Negrais, would make them a genteel Present, he said he would leave it to the Prince, and went into his Boat, seemingly well satisfied; as the Prince of Persaim has all that Province, from Negrais to Persaim, Koughkong, &c. in his Jurisdiction, and Antonio being the next Man to him, and transacts all Affairs in the above Province, and as we have no other to apply to, to get the above finished, I have taken upon me to make them this Promise, but I fear that will not be sufficient, when we see the Prince.

July 21st 1757. The River is more contracted, and, of consequence, the Water more rapid; At 8 o'clock at night we came to that branch of the River which leads to Dagon, and had the Tide in our favour for the first time, at 10 ditto we stopped at a Town, on the River side, where there is a House built for the King's Reception, there is another branch of the River here, which leads to Prone, &c. &c.

July 22d 1757. This Morning, at break of day, we left the above Town, and now we are come into a wide River, we meet with great numbers of Boats, loaded with Plunder, belonging to the King of Ava, taken at Pegu, and I am informed going up to Prone, Ava, &c. and that the King is not far from us.

At 3 this Afternoon, we came to a small Town, on the bank of the River, where we found the King, in his Barge, with great numbers of other Boats attending him: Antonio waited on the King, to acquaint him I was come, and, at 5 o'clock, a Messenger came from Antonio to acquaint me, that the King would give me Audience to-morrow morning and that it was the King's Desire I should send the Present by the Messenger, which I delivered.

July 23d 1757. This Morning, at 7 o'clock, Antonio came to me, and told me, that the King would give me Audience, at the same time he told me, that on going into the King's Apartment in his Barge, I must leave my Sword and Shoe behind, and on approaching near the King, to the Place appointed for me, I must kneel; I used all the Arguments I could, and told him as an Officer in the Honourable Company's Service, I could not consent to the above, he then, as likewise other Great Men with him, told me, that no Person, let him be of the highest Rank, could have Audience given them by the Great King of Ava, Pegu, &c. &c. (Allaum Praw, next to GOD) if they did not conform to the above, and that all Ambassadors, from the Negrais before, had done it.

As I hope it will be a means of getting the Treaty of Alliance, with the above King and The Honourable Company, settled, I agreed, and went with Antonio to the King's Barge, and after congratulating him, on his late conquest of so potent a Kingdom, with other Compliments on the Occasion I delivered him my Credentials, which was explained to His Majesty in the Bûragmah Language, first Lieut. Thomas Newton's Letter, and after the Treaty of Alliance; this done, The King then said through the Interpreters, William Pladwell and Antonio, that he had fixed his Chop to a Plait of Gold, with Rubies set round it, as likewise to a Paper which were both sent by Mr. Dyer, I then desired the Interpreters to inform the King, that I believed those His Majesty was pleased to send by Mr. Dyer, were Letters, and not of the same kind with this Treaty of Friendship and Alliance, between His Royal Self and The Honourable East India Company; but Mr. Dyer

had this Treaty with him, and I believed His Majesty had approved of it, and promised His Royal Signet, or Chop, should be fixed thereto; and further that the English were strongly attached to His Interest; and if His Majesty would now be pleased to consent to the fixing His Chop to the above, it would be a means of uniting the two Nations together for ages to come.

The King then said, that he had sent a Sloop some Months ago to Madrass, with Goods to purchase Powder, &c, and he was informed by the Captain of another Sloop, now arrived at Dagon from the Coast, that the Governor of Madrass had detained his Sloop there, I answered that we had received no Lettters, or News of any kind, from Madrass, but I was positive if the Sloop was detained, that the Governor of Madrass did not know that she belonged to His Majesty: As I had not room to stretch my legs out, and I was somewhat uneasy, I saw a small Stool behind me, which I took, and sat on, this caused a laughter among the Great Men about me, the King asked the reason, and was informed, on which he rose up and came close to me, and laughed very heartily, and asked me what was the reason that Englishman could not kneel?

I told him we were not accustomed to it; on which he pointed to the Yard of the Boat, which was close by, and told me I might set there, I told His Majesty I was not insensible of the Honour he did me, he then pointed to the Prince of Persaim, and told me he had given him a new Name (Mungee Narataw) on account of his good behaviour, the King then asked me several Questions, through the above Interpreters, viz.

Does your King go to the Wars and expose his Person as I do?

Do you understand the use of Ordnance, &c?

Could you point a Gun to kill a Man at a great distance?

Is there as much Rain in your Country as in this?

What is the reason you wear that at your Shoulder, (my Shoulder Knot)?

How much Money does The Company pay you [per] Month?

Why don't you black your Bodies and Thighs as we do (at the same time rising up, and shewing me his Thigh)?

Let me feel your Hand, feeling my Fingers and Wrist, and said we were like Women, because we did not black as above.

Is there Ice in your Country as in mine, small Creeks froze over?

I answered to all the above Questions, which seemed to please them, and to the last Question I told him that I had seen a River, as broad as this His Majesty is now in (meaning London River) frozen over, and an Ox roasted whole, upon the Ice; to which the King, as likewise all the Great Men about him, laughed heartily; the King asked me, what was the reason we did not leave the Negrais, and come all to Persaim, and settle there? I told him that the Negrais was a Key to that River, it we lost it entirely, that the French, who I believe we were now at War with, would likely come there, but that we should come with a firm resolution to settle at Persaim, if His Majesty would indulge us in settling the Treaty, and leave a small Force at the Negrais; The King then said if all the Powers in The World was to come, he could drive them out of His Country; he then asked me, if we were afraid of the French; I told him that the English and French had no great liking for each other but there never was that Englishman born, that was afraid of a Frenchman; the King then told me, that he had taken great quantities of Guns, Bombs, &c. with all kind of Warlike Stores at Pegu, and that he was now going up triumphant (with the former King of Pegu, and his Daughttr, the Uppa Rajah, and other Great Men, Peguers, prisoners) to his great Cities, Prone, Ava, &c. and that he would put his Chop, to our Treaty of Alliance, and give us Liberty to trade in any part of his Kingdom; he then ordered me to follow him to the Mouth of the River, which leads to Ava, where there is a House, as above-mentioned, for the King's reception, and I am informed, he intends to stay two or three days, and he would send me Provisions and settle the above; I desired the Interpreter to return His Majesty my hearty thanks for the Honour done me, and as His Barge was getting in readiness to proceed, I was desired to take my Leave, which I did and came away; I have made Presents to the Prince of Persaim, Kind's Brother, Prime Minister, and other six Great Men, about the King's Person, of the following things, viz. Scarlet Cloth 30 Yards, 2 Pieces Seersuckers, 1 Piece Pullicat Handkerchiefs, 1 Kittysall, 1 Bottle Lavender Water, 1 Ring, Bristol Stone, with a Brilliant Spark on each side, 1 Black Feather, from my Hat, 1 Piece of Silk Handkerchiefs; this I have done, hoping it may be a means of getting my business done, on The Company's Account, the sooner; the remainder part of this day we have been following the King to the Place abovementioned, the Fresh in this River is excessive rapid, and we could not come to the Place where the King was, at Night, I believe, at a moderate computation, there's in Boats, on this River, on this Occasion, One hundred thousand Men, Women, and Children.

July 24th 1757. This Day we have been making the best of our way up the River, after the King; At 5 this Evening, I saw the Prince of Persaim and Antonio in their Boats, who informed me that the King was a little way above us; and that we should go to that Place, and stay all night; At 7 we came to the Place where the King was, and lay by the Bank-side of the River.

July 25th 1757. This Day we have been following the King, as Yesterday, and at night we stopped as above; the Rains are excessive severe, and I cannot lye dry, which makes it excessive disagreeable.

July 26th 1757. At 10 this Morning we came to the Place, where the House, beforementioned, is built for the King's reception; the King's Barge lay close to it, and numbers of other Boats all about it, there being four foot Water, all round it; occasioned by the swelling of the River since it was built; at Noon Antonio came, and told me that the King wanted me, I dressed myself and went with him to the said House, or Island but found the King was gone into His Barge, on which the Prince of Persaim let him know I was come, his answer was I must follow him to Lunzee, a Place much farther up the River, and the King went away immediately.

But now the Promise made to Antonio on the 20th instant (as I expected) won't do, he now tells me that Mr. Brooke, former Chief of the Negrais, promised the Prince, of Persaim, thirty Viss of Silwr, and himself twenty; if the King's Chop was fixed to our Treaty; and that I must give them from under my Hand, in the Name of The Company, that those Sums must be paid, otherwise no Chop should be affixed to our Treaty; I told them, The Company was at a great expence, and must be at a much greater, before they could bring the Negrais, and Persaim, to any Perfection, and this was a very large Sum.

Now, I am certain that nothing can be done without the Interest of the above Men; this Affair has subsisted a long time, and is of the utmost Consequence; there has been many Embassies before, on this head, and attended with a great Expence to The Company, and if I don't finish now, there must be another Embassy (with a Present) on the same Account, I therefore concluded, within myself, to make them an Offer, and put the finishing stroke to this long Affair, which I did of Twenty Viss, which was not accepted, and on their going into their Boats I made them an Offer of Twenty-five, which was likewise refused; so we parted: the remainder part of this Day we have been following the King, but did not come up with him at Night.

July 27th 1757. This morning. At 8 o'clock, we came opposite that narrow entrance which leads to Koughkong, I there saw the Prince of Persaim and Antonio, and as I

am positive nothing can be done, but through these Men, neither can I get Audience to the King but by Antonio, who is my Interpreter, I have taken upon me to offer them Thirty Viss, which they accepted, and promised that they would get the King's Chop affixed to our Treaty, and be firmly allied to our interest; this will, I hope, meet with the Approbation of The Honourable United East India Company, and Governor and Council of Fort St. George, &c. This day has been attended with a hard Storm of Wind, and Rain, I have nothing to eat but Salt Beef, which has been on the Island Negrais four years; the Buraghmah King has not been so good as his Promise, in sending the Provisions; our Men put the Boat in a very disagreeable place this Afternoon, and would not proceed any further, I believe through fear of the inclemency of the weather, this gives me some uneasiness, as we could not see the King's Barge this night, but as it is a conveyance found by the Country, and I could not speak the Bûraghmah Language, to the Men, to endeavour to make them go on, I was obliged to wait with patience.

July 28th 1757. We have been all this Day on our way for Lunzee, but have seen nothing of the King's Barge, neither the Prince of Persaim, or Antonio; at Sunset we passed a large Town, this River, all this Day, has been as wide as at the Negrais, and the Fresh very strong against us.

July 29th 1757. This Morning, At 9 o'clock, we came to Luunzee, and found the King's Barge here, and preparing to go away; Antonio came to me, and told me that the King was just going away, and that the King's Chop was affixed to our Treaty, and as the Prince of Persaim was going with the King to Ava, he had left every thing with him with regard to the Persaim Country; and that he would deliver me the Treaty at Koughkong, but if I chose to see the King, he believed we should have just time to see him and no more; on which I went with him, and found the King was just going away, so that I was with the King but a short time, the King told me, he would order the Men In the Boat that I was in, to be punished for their neglect, in not coming up sooner; he likewise told me, that he had been informed, the Negrais had supplied the stragling Peguers with Rice, &c. which had hindred them from being subject to His Laws, and that I must inform the Chief, that nothing of that kind must be done for the future; and, as he was just going away, he had left every thing, with regard to settling the Treaty, with Antonio; and his Chop was affixed thereto: and told me, we must come to Persaim and settle; I desired Antonio, in case the Ships at Dagon had Letters, or Stores, for the Negrais, to ask the King for an Order, that they might have the liberty of sending those things, which the King promised to grant; the short time I was with the King, he asked me several questions, of the same kind, as the last time I was with him; he likewise told me, that he would go to Madrass and carry a large, Chest of rich Stones, with all sorts of other Commodities, which his Country afforded; he

likewise told me if a nine pound Shot was to be fired out of a Gun, and come against his Body, it could not enter; with some other things of the same kind. As his Barge was just going to put off, I asked the King if he had any Commands to the Chief of Negrais, he told me he had given Antonio a Letter, which he would deliver to me; made me a Present of Eighteen Oranges, two dozen heads of Indian Corn, and five Cucumbers; so I took my leave of this Great Monarch, and came away; and on our coming to the Boat, Antonio told me, that the Boat I came in, must go to Ava, with the King, and I must remove to another Boat, shewing me a small inconvenient Boat, which was almost sinking; I was obliged to go into this Boat, or go to Ava with the King; so I agreed, as I could not help myself; but I advise any Gentlemen that should come on these occasions, before they leave the Negrais, to get a good Conveyance, for of all mankind, which I have seen, the Bûragmah promises the most and performs the least; At 3 o'clock this Afternoon, we left Lunzee, and At 11 at Night, we got to that Branch of the River which leads to Koughkong.

July 30th 1757. All this Day we have been on our way to Koughkong, at Night we stopped at a small Town, on the Bank of the River, for the men to rest; this Day has been attended with constant rain, my two Europeans, with one Lascar, are sick, by being exposed to the inclemency of the Weather, Antonio is gone before.

July 31st 1757. This Day at Noon we came to Koughkong, Antonio sent his Writer to me, to let me know he had provided a House, for me, and that he was much indisposed with a Fever, I went and looked at the House, and found that there was about two foot Water underneath it, occasioned by it's being built near the Creek, but as the top seemed as if it would keep the weather out, I preferred it to the Boat, and landed, I find myself much disordered; the weather as yesterday; the Boat I came in sunk at night.

August 1st 1757. I am much Indisposed, as likewise my Men, Antonio, I am informed is the same, so that we cannot have a Meeting.

August 2d 1757. Antonio I am informed is very bad, the Saggee of Persaim died at this Place to-day, myself and men are as yesterday.

August 3d 1757. Constant rain, Night and Day, the Water under our House, rises much, Antonio is still bad, I am something better to Day.

Aug. 4th 1757. The Weather as yesterday, Antonio is so bad that I cannot speak to him, and I have no other Person here, that I can understand, as Pladmil is likewise bad.

Aug. 5th 1757. The Rains are excessive severe, this Afternoon, about 5 o'clock, we had a violent Shock of an Earthquake, which I took to last about a minute and a half.

Aug. 6th 1757. I this Day had a Meeting with Antonio, and settled the Treaty with him, in the following manner, viz.

That we are to have two hundred Bamboos square, (each Bamboo containing seven Cubits) at Persaim, and the King's Promise of more Ground, after our settling at that Place.

That we are to present to the King annually, for the Grant of the Island Negrais, and Spot of ground at Persaim, one Piece of Ordnance to carry a twelve Pound Shot, with two hundred Viss of good Gunpowder, as an acknowledgment, &c. &c. as specified [by] Article the 6th, in the Treaty of Friendship and Alliance.

After this we exchanged Treaties, he presented me the Treaty with the King of Ava, Pegu, &c.'s Chop fixed thereto, and done in the above King's Presence, I presented him with the other, to which Lieut. Thomas Newton, Chief of Negrais, had signed his Name, and fixed the Arms of The Honourable Company; and according to my Promise, made to the Prince of Persaim and Antonio, on the 28th of last Month, I gave him the undermentioned Note, in the Name of The Honourable, Company, but Antonio desired that he might be called Checado in it, which is his Station in the Country.

Koughkong, August 6th, 1757.

I Promise, in the Name of The Honourable United East India Company, that the Prince of Persaim (Mungee, Naratow) as likewise Checado, the next in Station to the above Prince, in that Province, do receive from the Chief of the Island of Negrais, thirty Viss of Silver between them, each Viss containing one hundred Ticals, on Account of their being the means of getting the Treaty of Friendship and Alliance between The Honourable East India Company and the King of Pegu, Ava, &c. settled, the Prince to receive Twenty Viss, the Checado Ten.

Robert Lester

I hope this will meet with the Approbation of the Gentlemen I serve, I am positive that it signifies nothing our continuing at the Negrais, or Persaim, without we are in the interest of the Prince of that Province; as likewise Antonio, who transacts all Affairs there; and as I could not have an Opportunity of writing to the Chief of Negrais, this is the best method I could think on; Antonio tells me I must stay here five or six Days longer, the River being now so rapid, that their Men think it too great a Risque to go to Persaim.

August 7th 1757. This Day the Weather has been more moderate.

August 8th 1757. Antonio tells me this Day that he would have Conveyance ready for me to go to Persaim in two days, but as he has not recovered his proper state of health, he cannot go with me, but will come shortly after.

August 9th 1757. This Day Mr. Buckley Hope, the Captain of a Ship which was stranded some Months ago on the Pegu Coast, came to this Place, and informed me, that he was come from Dagon, and that there were two English Ships at that Place, both from Bengal, last from Madrass; one, Capt. Lowes, the other, Capt. Bailey, which was called Bellam by Antonio before; and that Capt. Bailey had brought a Present, from the Governor of Fort St. George, for the King of Ava, &c, viz. One Brass Field Piece compleat, Eight Chests of Powder, and five hundred Shot.

August 10th 1757. I this Day wrote to the above Captain, at Dagon, desiring them to send all the Intelligence they can to the Chief of Negrais, with regard to the Company's Settlements at Bengal and on the Coast of Coromandel; I expect to go away to-morrow Antonio having two small Boats in readiness.

August 11th 1757. This Day, at Noon, I left Koughkong, having with me Captain Hope, Antonio being not quite recovered, he intends to follow me in a few Days, at Night we stopped at the Bank of the River.

August 12th 1757. This Day, at Noon, we passed Praggee; At Night we stopped at Sanguaine, a small Town. on the Bank of the River, very hard Squalls.

August 13th 1757. This Morning we left the above Place, and at midnight we got to Persaim,

August 14th 1757. As there is no proper Conveyance at this Place, to carry me to the Negrais, I landed, and wrote to the chief, to let him know I was come.

August 15th 1757. Very hard Rains, waiting for a Conveyance to carry me to the Negrais.

August 16th 1757. As Yesterday.

August 17th 1757. Waiting as above.

August 18th 1757. Waiting for a Conveyance to carry me to the Negrais.

August 19th 1757. As Yesterday.

August 20th 1757. As above.

August 21st 1757. As above.

August 22^d 1757. This Morning I went on the other side of the River, and took Possession of the Spot of Ground, in the Name of The Honourable United East India Company, having the King, Allaum Praw's Liberty for so doing, I hoisted our Colours, and fired three Vollies of small Arms on the Occasion; at the same time, I measured, from High Water Mark, up to a fine Spot of Ground, and found it to be Eighty-four Bamboos to the said Spot, each Bamboo containing seven Cubits, so that according to my Ageement [by] Treaty, we have one hundred and sixteen Bamboos further in, on the Land from the above Spot, which is a fine Plain; this Evening the Schooner came to this Place, and I had the pleasure of receiving a Letter from the Chief of Negrais, acquainting me that there was a Sloop at the Negrais, bound for Bengal, and that the would sail the 25th Instant; on which I ordered my things to be put on board the Schooner, that I might reach the Negrais before the above Sloop sailed.

August 23rd 1757 This Morning I embarked on board the Schooner, the anchor was immediately weighed, and we sailed for the Negrais.

August 24th 1757. On our passage for the Negrais.

August 25th 1757. On our passage as above.

August 26th 1757. This Morning, at 3 o'Clock, we anchored at the Negrais, At 6, landed and delivered the above Proceedings, as likewise the Treaty, and a Letter from the King of Ava, &c. to the Chief.