

Dr Richardson's missions to Siam

1829-1839

Edited by
Anthony Farrington



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16th December 1829. Course N.70° E., distance 8 miles. 8.30 proceeded along a good path, practicable for bullocks, elephants etc. 9.35 at the bottom of a sharp and rather steep descent crossed the Yembyne river, about 70 feet broad, running S.45° E. 11.40 halted for the night on the banks of a small grassy lake. The path has been good and gently ascending (with an occasional declivity) throughout, the jungle of bamboos and common jungle trees, thick and impenetrable owing to the creepers. The march, though only 8 miles, was made with difficulty from the thickness of the jungle. Some detached hills to the southward, in which the Thaluene flows to the south a little westerly.

17th December 1829. Course N.80° E., distance 7 miles 4 furlongs. 7.30 proceeded for some way along a path of the same character as yesterday. 8.15 along a swampy path at the foot of a nearly perpendicular rock, but covered with verdure to the top. 8.35 another rock like the former (called by the Careens Lein Koso), path better. 8.45 crossed a small stream with steep banks at the side of a village deserted last year by the Careens, who remove annually to a new position. It is now overgrown with tall jungle. 9.30 crossed the Yembyne river, wide 30, deep 3 or 4 feet, rocky bed, swarming with fish. Halted for half an hour.

10.30 path soft, a long valley winding amongst the hills with long grass and dwarf bamboos, much intersected by tracks of elephants, rhinoceros and wild hog. Pea fowls also abundant. 11.10 again crossed the Yembyne river, wide 40 feet, course S.20° E. 11.20

having crossed the river again, at 11.30 halted on the eastern bank (course S.65° E.) where it is joined by a small stream called the Mean Keun, running S.50° W., the path nearly as yesterday, continued to ascend. Here we were joined by the Careens from the second village and dismissed those who had accompanied us the last two marches.

18th December 1829. Course N.80° E., distance 10 miles 4 furlongs. 7.30 crossed the Mean Keun four times in 20 minutes and proceeded along a rocky path through thick jungle. 7.50 crossed the end of the Dagne path in a level part of the jungle, the site of a Burman encampment 40 years ago, when the Burmans are said to have taken Zimmay, and where some opposition was offered by the Shans. 8.30 crossed Yea-ta-goon Keun, 20 feet wide, clear, rocky bed. 9.00 came on the banks of the Yembyne river. 9.10 crossed a small stream falling into the last. 9.30 path soft, through long grass surrounded by hills. 9.40 along the rocky bed of Yea-ta-goon Keun (waterfall stream). 10.30 halted for half an hour. 11.00 ascended with some difficulty the face of a broken rock, 3 or 400 feet in height, amongst which the waters of the Yea-ta-goon Keun fall.

11.30 halted at the top of the waterfall within sound of another which we heard tumbling from the hills above us to the eastward. The path today continued ascending and very bad, either soft with long grass or rocky and uneven and extremely tortuous. But the Careens say it is the only pass through this part of the hills, that elephants, horses and bullocks formerly travelled it with loads, and that it was the route of the Burman army in 1790. Passed some of the large bamboos peculiar to this country, some *catechu*, and some of the trees with the sap of which the Careens poison their arrows. The rest of the jungle consisted of common jungle trees, immense creepers and the common bamboos. Tracks of elephants and wild hogs were numerous, but no marks of the rhinoceros, which are confined to the more level part of the country where grass is abundant. They do not roam like the elephants.

This part of the country was formerly inhabited by the Lowa Taliens and the places still bear Lowa names. The same race extended to the Moy Toum before the country was devastated by the Burmans, whose bloodthirsty rapacity had depopulated the whole of this part of the ancient Taline kingdom.

6th March 1830. Direction S.30° W., time 4 hours 15 minutes, distance 12 miles 2 furlongs. 8.30 good path through open jungle and long grass. 11.00 remains of Careen villages. 11.20 plains of considerable extent, marks of wild cattle. 12.25 halted in consequence of the jungle in advance being on fire. 1.40 proceeded, and at 2.00 halted on the south-west bank of the Chline Boye (which falls into the Gyne a short distance in a S.70° E. direction from this) in the bed of the Chline-putty. Such is the level nature of the country that this stream runs into the Chline Boye in the beginning of the rains and out of it after they have fairly set in. The bed of the Chline Boye, which rises 20 or 25 feet in the rains, is here 80 or 100 feet wide, the water about knee-deep in some places, in others of great depth and frequented by alligators, and that of the Chline-putty about 30 wide and 25 deep. They were both choked up with fallen trees, and the latter dry at this season.

The march today has been through a level country, the jungle open with long grass and four or five small plains covered with small grass much cut up by the jungle cattle, elephants' tracks still intersecting in all directions. Saw some rhinoceros marks today. Their feet are smaller than the elephant's, toes more apart and the nails longer. Sent two sick people to proceed down the Gyne in boats under charge of the head Careen.

7th March 1830. Direction S.20° E., time 2 hours 30 minutes, distance 7 miles. 8.30 proceeded along a good path, and level. 9.30 plain with long grass. 10.45 large plain of paddy stubble covered with upwards of 200 buffaloes belonging to the Careen village of 28 or 30 houses called Twine Woot or Twine Bot. 11.00 halted at the end of the plain. No more water for a long march.

The road has been perfectly level today and a great part of it through plains of long grass. The eastern hills in sight, distant 18 or 20 miles, running north and south, of considerable height, the only hills except the Colung Hills on the westward of the Thaluen since leaving the Yentogoon Hills.

8th March 1830. Direction S.35° W., time 2 hours 20 minutes, distance 10 miles. 10.10 proceeded along a level path through a country of the same character as yesterday. 1.40 plain with *ine* trees, hills to the S.60° E, distant 15 miles, rocky hills crossing. 2.00 bed of the Thanbou river. 2.30 halted at the broken bridge over the Atsong river on the high road from Martaban to the town of Gyne, about ten miles from Gyne and an equal distance from Domitta, and within sound of the evening gun of Maulmain. The town of Gyne was destroyed in a revolt of the Talines about twenty years ago. The road today was good and level, very beautiful plains, less water than usual but plenty for cattle or passengers.

9th March 1830. Direction S.20° W., time 6 hours, distance 17 miles. 8.10 route continues through level grassy plain with occasional patches of jungle. 10.50 Caloak Hill S.20° E., distant 6 miles. 11.00 Dzoyga-been Hill S.20° W., distant 7 miles. 11.11 paddy stubble. 1.00 an extreme field of two-crop paddy now in the ear, the only ground we have seen from which two crops are obtained. 2.10 halted near the Thaug-thoo village of Naung-loong, containing about 30 houses and probably about 200 inhabitants. Found here a body of about 100 of the annual caravans of the Shan-Goung-bee Shans, who have been nearly four months of the road from their own country in the north.

The road today level and generally free from jungle, through plains of fine long grass. The path has been extremely tortuous and for the last two hours unnecessarily winding in all manner of directions through a plain of short grass or paddy stubble. The whole of the plains in this neighbourhood are covered with rich green grass, enough for the subsistence of an immense number of cattle through

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