

# Preface and Acknowledgements

I first became interested in the Six-Day War of 1899 during the mid-1980s, while working on the history of Sha Tau Kok market.<sup>1</sup> Dr James Hayes drew to my attention that there were translations of two interesting letters from the Sha Tau Kok elders in a collection of documents printed for the Colonial Office called *Eastern No. 66: Hong Kong; Correspondence (June 20 1898, to August 20 1900) Respecting the Extension of the Boundaries of the Colony*.<sup>2</sup> Reading through this collection,<sup>3</sup> I found my Sha Tau Kok letters, but also large numbers of documents on the Six-Day War. Shortly afterwards Dr Hayes drew my attention to two further official collections, printed for the Legislative Council, Hong Kong, entitled *Despatches and Other Papers relating to the Extension of the Colony of Hong Kong* and *Further Papers relating to the Military Operations in Connection with the Disturbances on the Taking Over of the New Territories*<sup>4</sup> which had more material on this short war.<sup>5</sup> I found these collections extremely interesting, but took no further action on them until 2005, when Dr Hayes urged me to put the material into some sort of order: this book is the result.

It will be clear that I am greatly indebted to Dr Hayes, and it gives me great pleasure to express my thanks and indebtedness to him here. It was Dr Hayes who, thirty years ago, first opened my eyes to the great wealth of interesting material to be found on the history of the New Territories. Since then, he has been an unfailing source of material, advice, common sense, support, and suggestions. I owe him more than words can say. In every real sense, he is my master and mentor.

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present this research at a public lecture of the Society: the comments made on that occasion were of great value. All errors, however, are mine alone.

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Plates 1, 2, and 3 were previously published in *Hong Kong Invaded, a '97 Nightmare*, Gillian Bickley, Hong Kong University Press, 2001, together with some other photographs of the Hongkong Regiment. Plate 5 was previously published as the Frontispiece of *Unequal Treaty 1898–1997: China, Great Britain and Hong Kong's New Territories*, Peter Wesley-Smith, Oxford University Press, Hong Kong, 1980 (2nd, revised, edition 1998).

Finally, my thanks go to my wife, Aileen, for putting up with eighteen months in which my thoughts, speech, and often actions have been totally dominated by the Six-Day War.