

SINGAPORE (1824-1958): THIS IS MY ISLAND IN THE SUN

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There is much literature glorifying the success-story of contemporary Singapore. This tendency permeates much of the historical studies on the island. Each historical period eulogies its founders and achievements and each succeeding generation of researchers further add on to that edifice. The corpus of writings on the histories of Singapore celebrates its successes and general material advances. It is the contemporary success of the ever continuing Singapore's showcase experience that governs historical enquiry. There are only a few brave ones that dare expose the underside of Singapore's social history. The dialogue and debates in the historiography revolve around the yet unresolved arbitrary measurements of social successes and failures. Any attempt to shift the paradigm and demystify the historical literature has to return to the fundamentals that made Singapore.

There exists a mystery; no a riddle; nay an enigma that envelopes the territorial limits of the island of Singapore that commands the grand thoroughway linking the Indian Ocean through the Straits of Malacca with the South China Sea. All authoritative academic textbooks on Singapore neglect to geographically define the parameters of Singapore, except to say that the island is at the tip of the Malay peninsula and faces the main straits that links east and west international trade. The centrality of Singapore and its natural deep-water harbour which served as a world emporium is always highlighted in all general textbooks. All published maps in the 1930's and other official references simply refer to Singapore and its adjacent islands. The general impression made, which is never questioned is that there is the main island of Singapore with its magnificent port, its adjacent islands and the main straits leading to open seas. There were no bounds, only unlimited possibilities in the expansion of Singapore's domination over the Southeast Asian region.

A new reading of Singapore's history is the call to return to the very same documents that earlier scholars have ploughed through with a different agenda.¹ The reader should be extremely sensitive and alert to distinguish between what is the advertisement and hard-selling that permeates all British official records, after all their business in Singapore was for the express purpose of setting shop and operating in the region. There existed a symbiotic relationship between government and business and both understood their mutual interests in their correspondence. The final document that appears in published form for public consumption is always in the affirmative preaching the advantageous of a policy decision for the advancement of collective gain. The Annual Reports of the Settlement of Singapore either championed the virtues of free trade by impressive trade statistics made over the previous year or issued grim warnings of dangerous trends in trade patterns. The

The original version of this paper was presented at a Colloquium for the 13th Conference International Association of Historians of Asia, Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan, September 5-9, 1994.

dialogue centred around business. The tendency to dramatise and overlay official news, assisted by the concentration of media facilities, hides the fragility of Singapore as a physical entity.

British presence on the Main Island of Singapore began on 30th January 1819 with the establishment of a factory. On 26th June 1819 Sir Stamford Raffles secured for the East India Company a strip of coast-land on the Main Island of Singapore stretching from 'Tanjong Malang on the west, to Tanjong Katang on the east, and on the land side, as far as the range of cannon shot, all round the factory'.² In the Convention of 7th June 1823 Sir Stamford Raffles made known his intentions also to secure for the East India Company all land within the island of Singapore, and islands immediately adjacent, to be at the disposal of the British Government.³ The Main Island of Singapore was then an insignificant island lacking in natural resources and human population. It was one of several thousands of islands that made the vast and sprawling maritime-based kingdom of the Johor-Riouw-Lingga Empire. The Empire embraced:

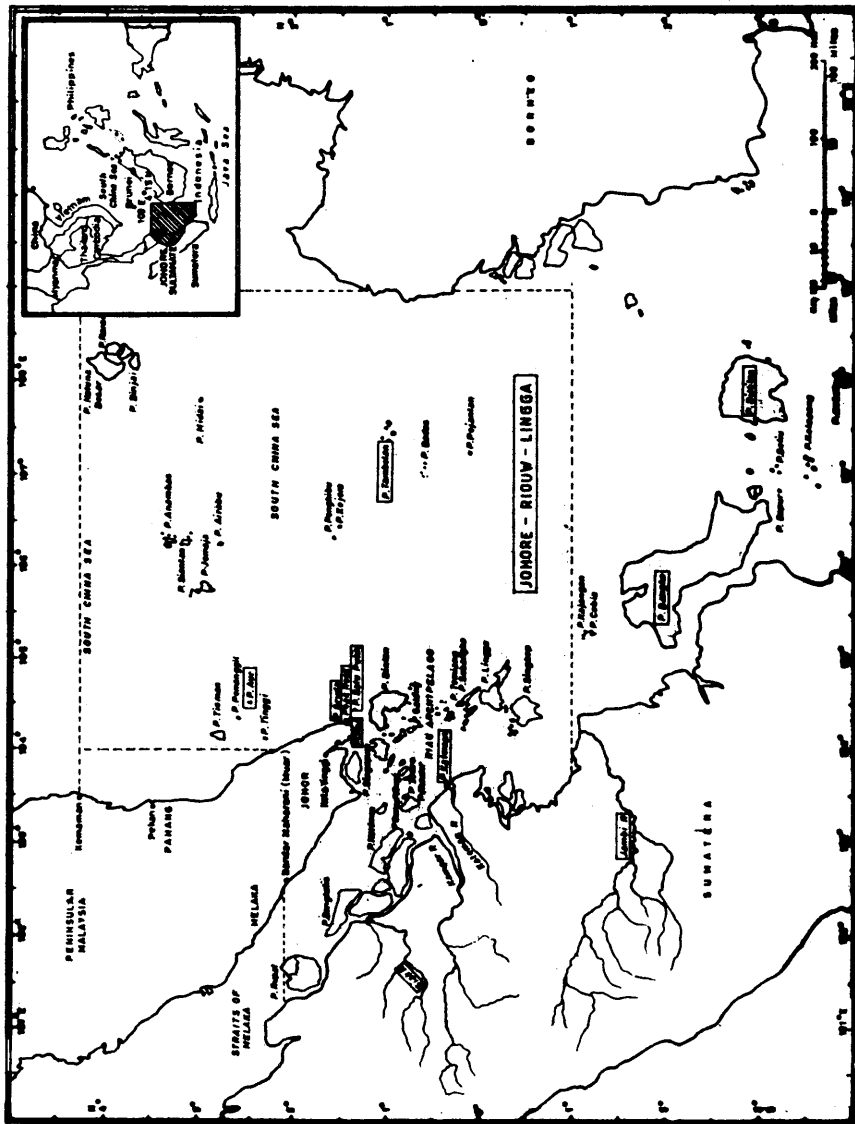
the whole extremity of the Malayan Peninsula from Muar in latitude 2' 0 North on the west coast and from Kemaman in latitude 4' 1" on the east. Independent of this it embraces the numerous Islands at the mouth of the Straits of Malacca lying between 2nd degree north and the 1st degree of south latitude, and not only these but all Islands in the China seas lying between the 104th and 109th degrees of east longitude as far as the Natunas.⁴

The Malay Sultan of Malacca-Johor Lama Sultanate lineage resided on the Island of Lingga, the Bugis Yang Dipertuan Muda (Under-king) held the Island of Bintang, while the Bendahara and the Temenggong were located on the Malay peninsula at Pahang and Johor respectively. These four families forged through marriage alliances dominated the extensive sea-based empire.⁵ They each had their economic resource base in these islands and manpower attached to them. Collectively their domain control all entrances and exists between the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea through the Straits of Malacca, Singapore Straits, Gallang Straits and Riouw Straits. The strategic settlements of population were on the islands of Riouw, Lingga, and Carrimons straddling different Straits and the islands of Tioman, Aur, Natuna, Anambas and Tembilan in the South China Sea off the east coast of the Malay peninsula.

Anglo-Dutch rivalry in the early nineteenth century exploited divisions amongst members of the ruling families. The British obtained the support of the Bendahara and Temenggong and installed Sultan Hussain as ruler of Singapore and Johor. His younger brother, Tengku Abdul Rahman was supported by the Bugis Yang Dipertuan Muda and other senior court officials and installed as Sultan of Riouw-Lingga. On 17th March 1824 the Anglo-Dutch Treaty, determined the spheres of influence between Britain and Holland over the Seas, Straits and Islands of the sprawling Johor-Riouw-Lingga Empire. Article XII of that Treaty expressed that:

His Britannik Majesty however engages, that no British establishment shall be made on the Carimon Isles, or on the Islands of Battam, Bintang, Lingin, or on any of the other Islands South of the Straights [sic] of Singapore; nor any Treaty concluded by British Authority with the Chiefs of those Islands.⁶

Map 1



By the middle of 1824 the old Johor-Riouw-Lingga Empire was broken into three kingdoms. There was the principality of Pahang which was independent; that of Johor north of the main straits under British protection and the islands south of the main straits that formed Riouw-Lingga under Dutch protection.⁷ It was in these circumstances that Sir John Crawfurd on 2 August 1824 won the cession of Singapore from the rulers of Johor.

On 2nd August 1824 the sovereign rulers of the kingdom of Johor ceded to the East India Company territories that eventually formed the modern-day Republic of Singapore. Clause Two of the Treaty draws out in no uncertain terms the territorial limits of that cession. Their Highnesses Sultan Hussin Mohamed Shah and Temenggong Abdul Rahman ceded only: *the island of Singapore situated in the Straits of Malacca, together with the adjacent Seas, Straits and Islets, to the extent of ten geographical miles from the coast of the said Main Island of Singapore.*⁸ This innocuous and unheralded clause physically defined the territorial limits of the settlement of Singapore and created a living sovereign entity within the islands of the former Johor-Riouw-Lingga Empire. Outside the limits of this geographical space sovereignty over all seas, straits and islands were possessed by either the kingdoms of Johor or Riouw-Lingga. The line of division in the islands, seas and straits is the Straits of Singapore which distinguished British and Dutch spheres of influence. It was within this geographically defined space that the settlement of Singapore developed its relations as a sovereign entity with its northern neighbour Johor under British protection and Riouw-Lingga, its southern sovereign neighbour under Dutch protection.

One day after the signing of the 2nd August 1824 Treaty, J. Crawfurd sent a memorandum to G. Swinton, the Secretary to the Government, explaining the implications of the various clauses of the Treaty. He drew attention to Clause Two of the Treaty:

...that the cession made is not confined to the main island of Singapore alone, but extends to the Seas, Straits and Islets (the latter probably not less than 50 in number), within ten geographical miles of its coasts, not however including any portion of the continent. Our limits will in this manner embrace the Old Straits of Singapore and the important passage of the Rabbit and Coney, the main channel through the Straits of Malacca, and the only convenient one from thence into the China Seas. These extended bounds appear to me to be absolutely necessary towards the military protection of the Settlement, towards our internal security, and towards our safety from the piratical hordes that surround us, against those incursions and depredations there would be no indemnity if we were not in the occupation of the numerous islets which lie upon the immediate coast of the principal Settlement.⁹

He pointed out that the 17th March Anglo-Dutch Treaty did not conflict with the 2nd August 1824 Treaty with the Johor rulers.

The cession made to us by the Native Princes of the main island of Singapore and the islets adjacent to it, to the extent of ten geographical miles from the coast, is in no respect impugned by the condition in question, as by the most liberal interpretation, the whole cession is strictly north of the southern limits of the Straits of Singapore.¹⁰

Reinforcing the concept of territorial space within the old Johor-Riouw-Lingga Empire, Crawfurd further expressed that Britain would not defend the rights of Johor rulers to any claim of territory to the south of the Main Straits such as they once had

over the Carrimon and Bulang islands. The territorial rights of the Johor rulers were confined to all islands, seas and straits north of the main straits and outside the limits that were ceded to Singapore.

On 3rd August 1825, a year and a day after the historical cession, J. Crawford started a voyage around the main island of Singapore to take formal possession of the island of Singapore and its dependencies. He sailed from the Singapore river harbour and headed for the eastern entrance into the old Singapore straits (Straits of Tebrau) where he landed on Pulau Ubin and planted the Union Jack and fired a 21-gun salute. He left Pulau Ubin and headed in a westerly direction through the Straits of Tebrau and emerged on the west coast of the Singapore island. On 9th August 1825 he landed on the Rabbit and Coney Islands and took possession of them under a salute of 21 guns. 'These two Islets ... form the limit of the British possession to the South West and this possession in all, now embraces a circumference of full one hundred geographical miles.'¹¹

In 1828 J. Crawford published the celebrated *Journal of an Embassy from the Governor-General of India to the Courts of Siam and Cochin China*, where he described the East India Company's prized possession as:

The Island of Singapore, of an elliptical form, is about twenty-seven miles in its greatest length, and fifteen in its greatest breadth, containing an estimated area of about two hundred and seventy square miles. The whole British settlement, however, embraces a circumference of about one hundred miles; in which is included about fifty desert islets, and the seas and straits within ten miles of the coast of the principal island. Singapore is separated from the mainland by the old strait of its own name, which is of small breadth throughout, and scarcely a quarter of a mile wide in its narrowest part. Fronting the island, on its southern side, and at the distance of about nine miles, is an extensive chain of islands, all desert, or at least inhabited only by a few wild races, of which nothing is known but their bare existence. The intervening channel is the high road of commerce between the eastern and western portions of maritime Asia - the safest and most convenient track being so near to Singapore, that ships in passing and repassing go very nearly through the roads.¹²

The exact number and names of these desert islets within the ten geographical mile's limit were never fully listed in the early years until well into the twentieth century. Initially J. Crawford provided a rough figure of 50 islets but much later when he published his authoritative *Descriptive Dictionary of the Indian Islands and Adjacent Countries*, he stated that the settlement embraced no fewer than 75 islets of various sizes covering an area of 17 square miles and that the whole land mass of the entire British settlement amounted to 223 square miles.¹³ In his book publication J. Crawford extended his northern definition of the main island of Singapore to include the continental shore of the Straits of Tebrau. However, the Government Surveyor, J.T. Thomson, writing in 1849 placed the boundary 'as an imaginary line drawn through the middle of the Silat Tebrau, Silat Nanas and Kuala Santi...'¹⁴ It was over islands in the Straits of Tebrau which were disputed between the rulers of Johor and the governors of Singapore. 'Everywhere else, the British settlement extends to 10 miles from the shore of the mainland...'¹⁵ The southern limit of the territorial extent of Singapore was thus '... an imaginary line drawn through the middle of the Main Strait and the larger Strait of Singapore, divided the Residency of Singapore from that of Rhio, which is under the Government of Netherlands India.'¹⁶

It was within these resource-scarce islands that the British succeeded in building a massive urban complex supporting trade and commerce. All the physical high

points on the main island in the nineteenth century were reserved for defence works. A series of forts, batteries and barracks was built on the island of Singapore guarding the entrances into the harbour and the town. Thus in the 1820's defence works were installed at Fort Fullerton Battery, Princess Battery and Sandy Point; in the 1850's additional facilities were built at Mount Palmer Battery and Fort Canning; and in the second half of the nineteenth century further works were constructed at Mount Faber, Pearl's Hill; Fort Tanjong Katong, Malay Spit, Lot's wife and Labrador Villa. The adjacent islands also served in the overall defences of Singapore. St. John's Island in the south served as a battery and signal post since the 1840's. In the 1880's Pulau Blakang Mati had batteries at Fort Cannought to its south, east and on Mount Siloso and Berala Point. In the next two decades facilities were built on Pulau Brani at Teregeh Point and Selinsing Point and on Pulau Hantu. The northern part of the main island of Singapore fronting the Selat Tebrau was fully developed in the twentieth century with the establishment of the British Naval Base for the Far East at Sembawang. The coastal areas of Seletar, Changi, Bee Hoe, Mata Ikan and Pasir Laba Ridge were military installations and complementing facilities were constructed on Pulau Tekong Besar, Pulau Tekong Kecil and Pulau Ubin. Singapore was the most heavily defended port in all of Southeast Asia.¹⁷

Almost at its very inception the vision was to establish a Malta of the East in Southeast Asia. A large portion of Singapore's annual budget is spent on its fortification. The defence of Singapore changed through time with each change in shipping technology. The use of wind and sea currents for sailing led to a specific defence system which was altered with the arrival of coal-driven steamships. At the turn of this century the use of petroleum in steamships yet again forced a change in defence mechanisms. It is bewildering that the simple fact that a large portion of Singapore's budget is consumed for defence works since the 1820's remained undetected. The vulnerability of limited space and the scarcity of resources necessitated the full exploitation of its physical attribute for defence works.

Infrastructure building was the main thrust in the budget expenditure of Singapore. Its physical features were constructed to serve trade and commerce and defend those concerns. In the early decades the Singapore river served as the natural harbour before the New Harbour (1840's) was built within the sheltered area between the off-shore islands of Pulau Brani, Belakang Mati and Hantu and the mainland of the island of Singapore. The harbour itself was extensively dredged to design a deep-water harbour and continuously dredged to maintain its optimum docking operations. This excavation work flies against the much trumpeted feature that the port was a natural deep-water harbour. Pulau Brani and Pulau Belakang Mati served as huge coal depots (1850's) and later in the early twentieth century as oil installations together with Pulau Bukom. Port facilities were also developed on other adjacent islands and underwater shoals. Saint John's island had a signal station. Coney island marked the southern entrance into the harbour with its Raffles Lighthouse (1855) built from granite extracted from Pulau Ubin in the Straits of Tebrau. Pulau Ubin granite also built the Horsburgh Lighthouse on Pulau Batu Puteh (1851) and the Aqualda Lighthouse at Moulmein. Coney island served also as one of two marker points in surveying and mapping of these islands. Buoys were placed on Sultan Shoal and Johore Shoal to the east and west of the island of Singapore. The changing infrastructure of the port is visible in its Outer Harbour, Inner Harbour and

Dockyards.¹⁸ The port of Singapore emerged without parallel in the region when change was made from coal to petroleum and rubber was cultivated on a large scale on the Johor hinterland which was linked with Singapore by a causeway serving road and railway.¹⁹

The port of Singapore purchased and acquired technological advantages over its competitors. The islands of Singapore lacked natural resources but fully harnessed human resources by providing the full advantages of technology in the pursuit of commerce and trade as an emporium. In the period when the winds and sea currents carried sailing vessels, Singapore was one of many harbours in island Southeast Asia. In the mid-nineteenth century technological change made it possible to propel vessels on coal driven engines. The change in the nature of transport meant new fuel requirements and Singapore pushed itself as one of several ports in the region offering coal bunkering facilities. The raw materials were purchased from Japan, Australia, Burma and Borneo and sold to calling vessels. In the early twentieth century petrol began substituting coal and oil depots were built on Singapore's off-shore islands.²⁰ The use of gas and later electricity overcame the islands' obvious absence of natural energy resources. In 1862 gas was used for the purposes of lighting government buildings and residences, street lights and domestic consumption. In 1923 the St. James Power Station was built to provide electricity and thirty years later the Pasir Panjang Power Station ushered Singapore into an industrial age.²¹ In the field of communications again Singapore held the technological edge. It emerged as the regional centre for sea-mail and air-mail letters, telegrams and wireless.²² The purchase of basic natural resources such as sand and water so vital for the survival of the port of Singapore was obtained from neighbouring Johor. In the nineteenth century sand ballast was excavated from the islands but with the increase in volume of vessels and the depletion of resources sand was won along the Johor coast. The massive improvement of port facilities and the construction of the naval base in the 1920's posed severe strain on the islands' limited natural water supply. In 1927 a water rights agreement was entered between the municipality of Singapore and the government of Johore. The physical infrastructure for water impoundment such as reservoirs, water-tanks and spill-ways was built and maintained by the Singapore municipality with 36 inches diameter cast-iron water pipes leading to processing and distribution plants located at Woodlands on Singapore island.²³

The legal interpretation of the territorial rights ceded under Clause Two of the 2nd August 1824 Treaty was continuously tested in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Even as late as the 1860's the Temenggong of Johor continued to exercise his right of collection of dues and services over his people living on islands well within the ten mile limits of the main island of Singapore. He was instructed in no uncertain terms by the British authorities that he should cease exercising his rights within the sovereign waters of Singapore.²⁴

The right to hear and try criminal cases was another area where the two authorities disputed the extent of the ten mile limits. It was clear that after the mid-nineteenth century in cases where the offence occurred clearly outside the ten miles limit Johor courts had legal rights. This principle was established in the case of the Padang incident on the west coast of Johore and that of an incident in the neighbourhood of the Pedra Branca Lighthouse on the south-east coast of Johore.²⁵ However, on borderline cases it was disputed as to the extent of Britain's sovereign

rights under the 2nd August 1824 Treaty. The incident involving Chinese fishermen who claimed to have been assaulted by Johor officials at Tanjong Pengerang were one where legal opinion advised that the extent of British territories covered until the low-water mark of the Johor coastline.²⁶

The more serious territorial disputes occurred over islands located in the Straits of Tebrau where the rulers of Johor and British authorities seriously wrestled over sovereign matters. In 1867 the Temenggong of Johor pressed and won his point that the island of Tanjong Surat up the estuary of the Johor river was part of his territories and was not ceded by the 1824 Treaty.²⁷ The same case applied for Pulau Nanas, a small islet of about 26 acres, one hundred yards from the Johore coastline in the Straits of Tebrau. In this case it was argued that Johor authorities issued quarrying rights and that Singapore had not objected. The island belonged to Johor.²⁸

It was only in the twentieth century that the boundary question over the Straits of Tebrau that separated Mainland Johor with the Settlement of Singapore was finally resolved. The personal role of Sultan Ibrahim in pressuring the British authorities for a resolution on the boundary issue is a case study in the art of fine diplomacy. 'The Sultan is and always has been very touchy about his territorial waters and the trumpery islands and rocks in them...'²⁹ Britain in the early decades of the twentieth century had planned to build a Naval Base at Sembawang on the north-east coast of the main island of Singapore as part of her Imperial Defence. Sultan Ibrahim of Johor seized the opportunity to force negotiation over the sovereignty of waters between Singapore and the mainland of Johor along the Straits of Tebrau. There were at least three interpretations on the boundary in the Straits. The first placed Singapore's boundary on the Continental shore of Johor; the second took a mid-way point equidistant between the two shores and the third suggested a middle channel approach. It was the third approach that was finally accepted by the 1927 Treaty.

In framing the 1927 Treaty the legal draughtsmen upheld the position that the ten-mile limit on the Straits of Tebrau included all waters and islands until the low water-mark of the Johore coastline. The agreement was to delineate the territorial boundary based on the deep-water channel that divided the Straits. In the negotiations lengthy and detailed discussions traced the deep water channel through the larger and smaller islands that sprinkled the Straits. Thus for example the tiny Pulau Chombun was considered to fall on the Johore side as the deep water channel flowed south of it. The larger Pulau Tekong Besar, Tekong Kecil and Ubin were within Singapore's territorial waters. On the western entrance of the Straits of Tebrau Pulau Merambong was held to be within Johore's territories and it became the marker where a line dropped perpendicular from it and cutting the deep water channel marked the three-mile limit between the territory of Singapore and that of Johore. On the eastern entrance Tanjong Setapa on the Johore mainland was taken as a marker and bearing of 192 degrees was taken and where it met the deep water channel it marked the three-mile limit between the two territories.³⁰ It was in this manner the western and eastern extremities of the territorial waters of Singapore in its relationship with Johore were delineated in accordance with the principles of International Law as outlined by the 1923 Imperial Conference which endorsed a common policy for the British Empire in respect of limits of territorial waters.³¹

On the Johore causeway which linked the two countries an International boundary pillar was laid which marked the half-way point between the two

countries.³² A map accompanied the Treaty but it was expressed that in cases of doubt the written word embodied in the Treaty over-ruled the map.³³ This Treaty was ratified by the British Parliament and finally Britain retroceded to the State of Johore all Seas, Straits and Islets north of the mid-channel in the Straits of Tebrau which were once possessed by the Settlement of Singapore and its Dependencies within its ten geographical mile definition.³⁴

The 1927 Map which accompanied the Treaty that delineated the three mile limits between Johor and Singapore on the Straits of Tebrau became the standard for all future Map publications. The visual impression was that of a hanging northern boundary between the two territories cutting off at the three miles limit and everywhere else open seas and islands as far as Singapore was concerned. The British officials had succeeded in projecting and transmitting through its official documents that the territories of Singapore were open to all seas and straits and islands. In secret despatches between British authorities in Singapore and London the wordings of the draft Treaty between Singapore and Johore was deliberately altered to create the impression that the islands and waters of Singapore were not bound by the ten mile limits.

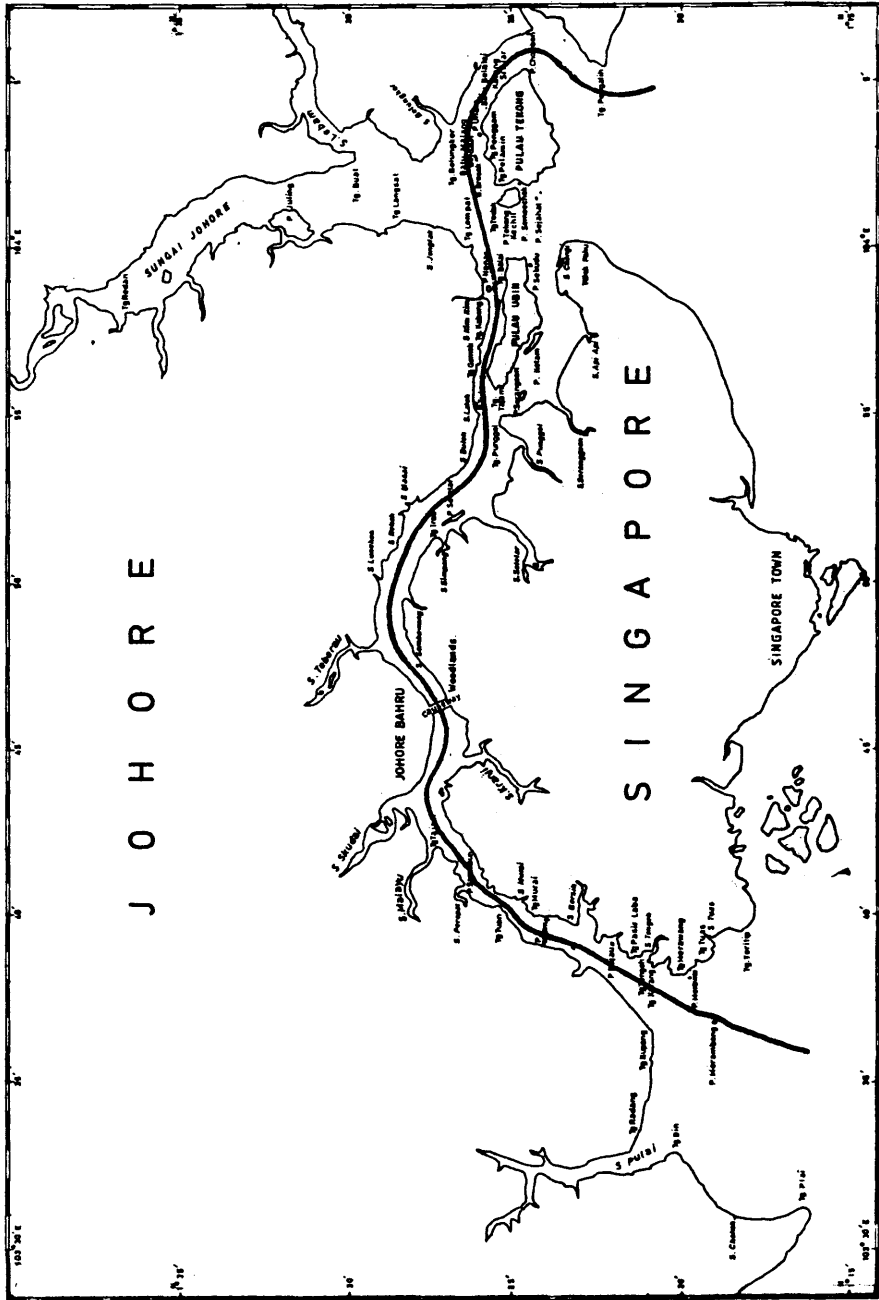
The original draft 1927 Treaty negotiated between the Governor of Singapore and the Sultan of Johore quoted in full Clause Two of the original cession of 2nd August 1824. It specifically mentioned the Settlement of Singapore covered the Main Island of Singapore and ten geographical miles from the coast line of the main island. However, in the last minute the Foreign Office acting on the advice of the Admiralty strongly urged the Governor to alter the draft Treaty to simply read in its preamble:

WHEREAS by Article II of the Treaty of the 2nd day of August, 1824, made between the Honourable the English East India Company on the one side and Their Highnesses the Sultan and Tumungong of Johore on the other, Their said Highnesses did cede in full sovereignty and property to the said Company, their heirs and successors for ever, *the Island of Singapore together with certain adjacent seas, straits and islets:*

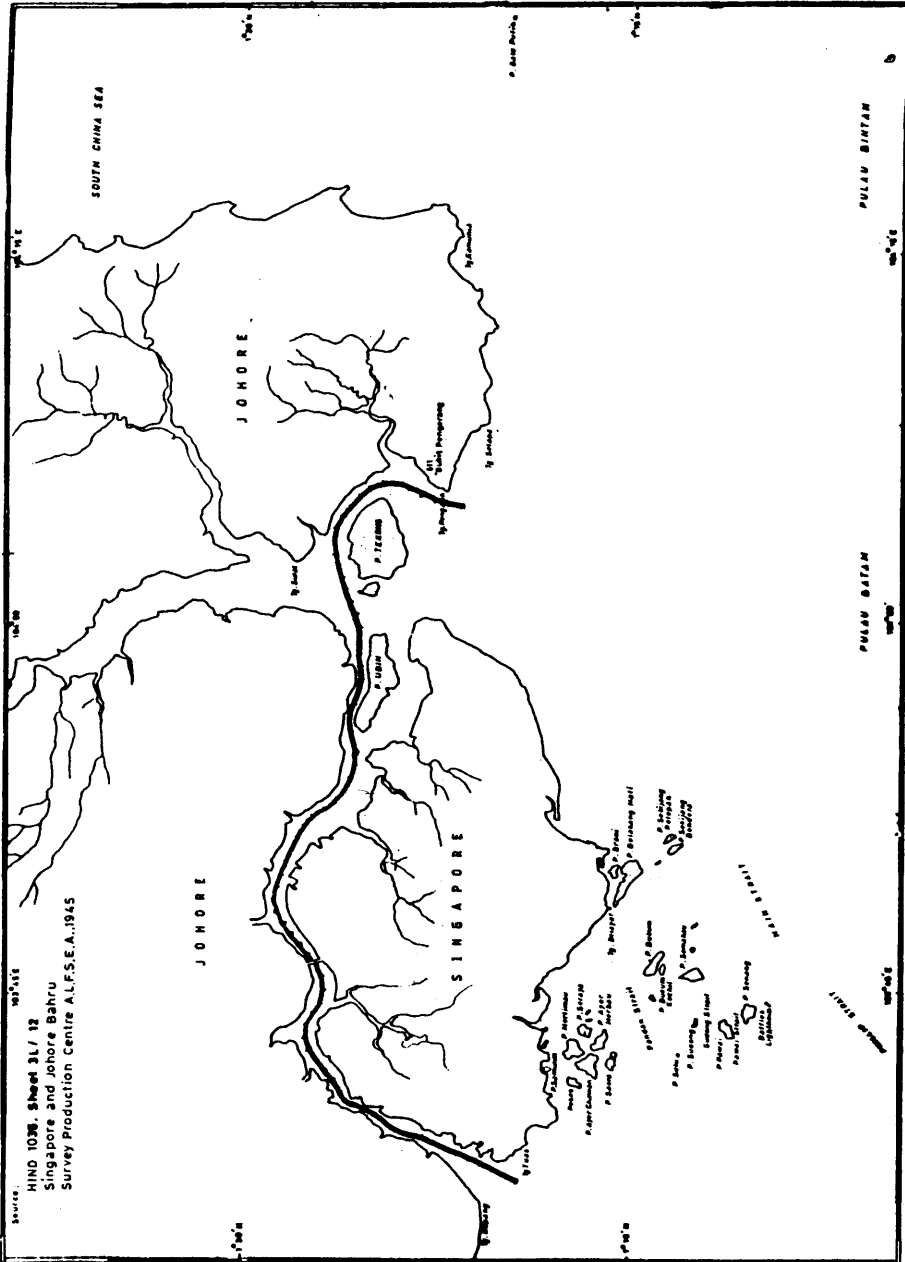
The changing of words had the deliberate intention of creating an impression that Singapore was an island with open seas and adjacent islands leading to its east to the South China Sea and to the west leading to the Straits of Malacca.³⁵ This act of deception was probably one of Britain's best kept secrets and unless researchers return to the fundamental documents leading to the Treaty it remained a secret as the published Treaty available in secondary sources only contain the signed agreement with all its intentions. Even maps that accompanied Treaties were never published in all the important reference books.

All the islands, seas and straits outside the ten miles of the main island of Singapore in the Straits of Malacca, south of the Straits of Singapore and in the South China Sea that once formed the Johor-Riouw-Lingga Empire were in some cases delineated, in others awarded and the rest settled through occupation. The 1862 Johor-Pahang Agreement temporarily revolved disputes over islands in the South China Sea.³⁶ However, the new ruler in Pahang challenged its validity and claimed islands such as Pulau Tioman, Pulau Aur and Tinggi. In 1868 the Governor of Singapore intervened in the disputes using previously signed treaties, agreements and letters between the Governor and Pahang and the Governor and Johore and resolved

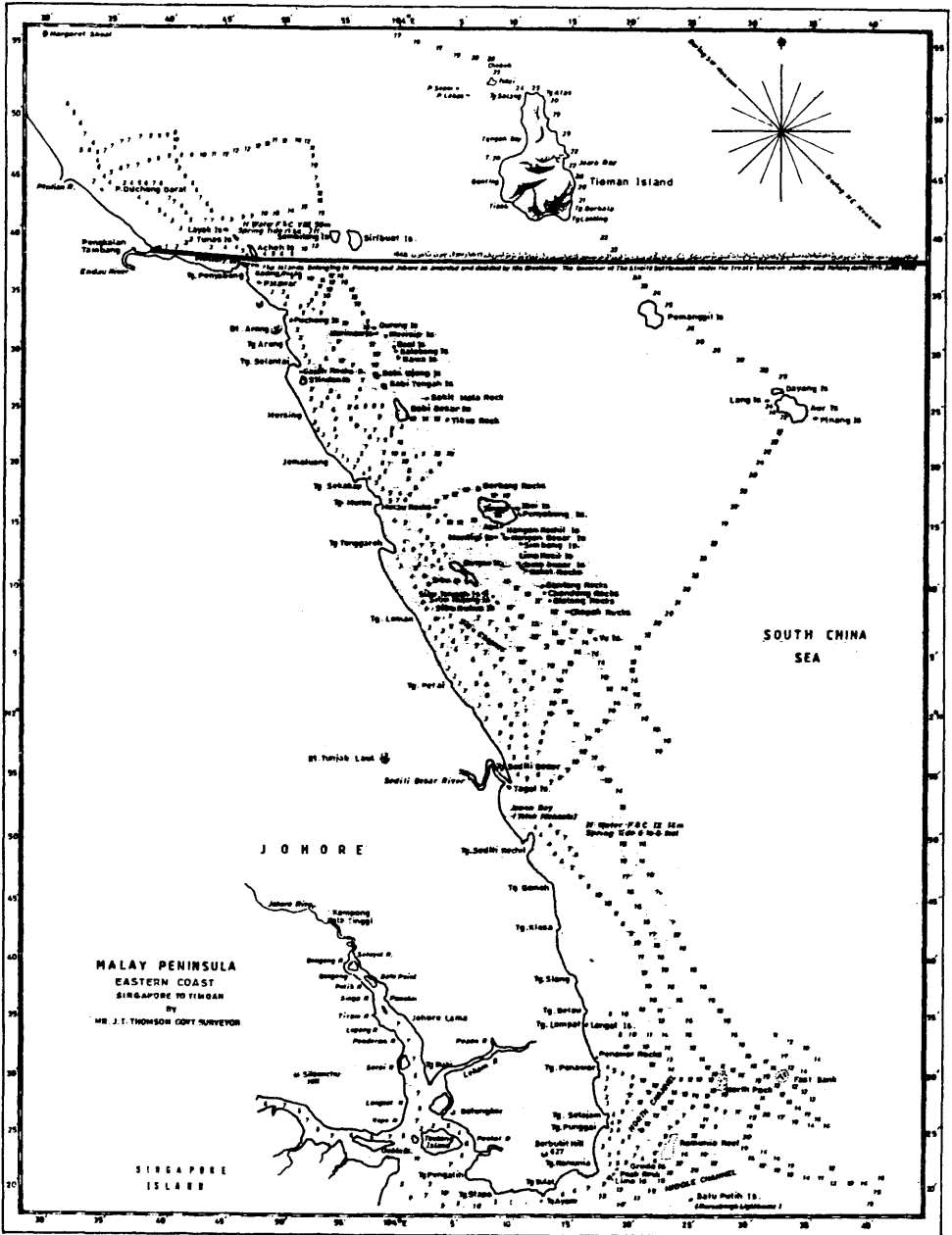
Map 2



Map 3



Map 4



the sovereignty over these islands by a Boundary Award which both contesting parties were Treaty bound to accept.³⁷

The original documents leading to the 1868 Award were accompanied with a Map but the printed version only contained a reference of a Map accompanied. The Map that was used to award the disputed South China Sea islands was based on the 1849 Map of J.T. Thomson, the Straits Settlements Surveyor, and Congalton, the Commander of the Hooghly, which surveyed the Straits of Singapore eastwards until Pulau Batu Puteh north of the main straits and islands in the South China Sea northwards bordering the kingdoms of Johore and Pahang. On the western side Boundary Commissions marked the land frontiers between the British Settlement of Malacca and Johore.³⁸

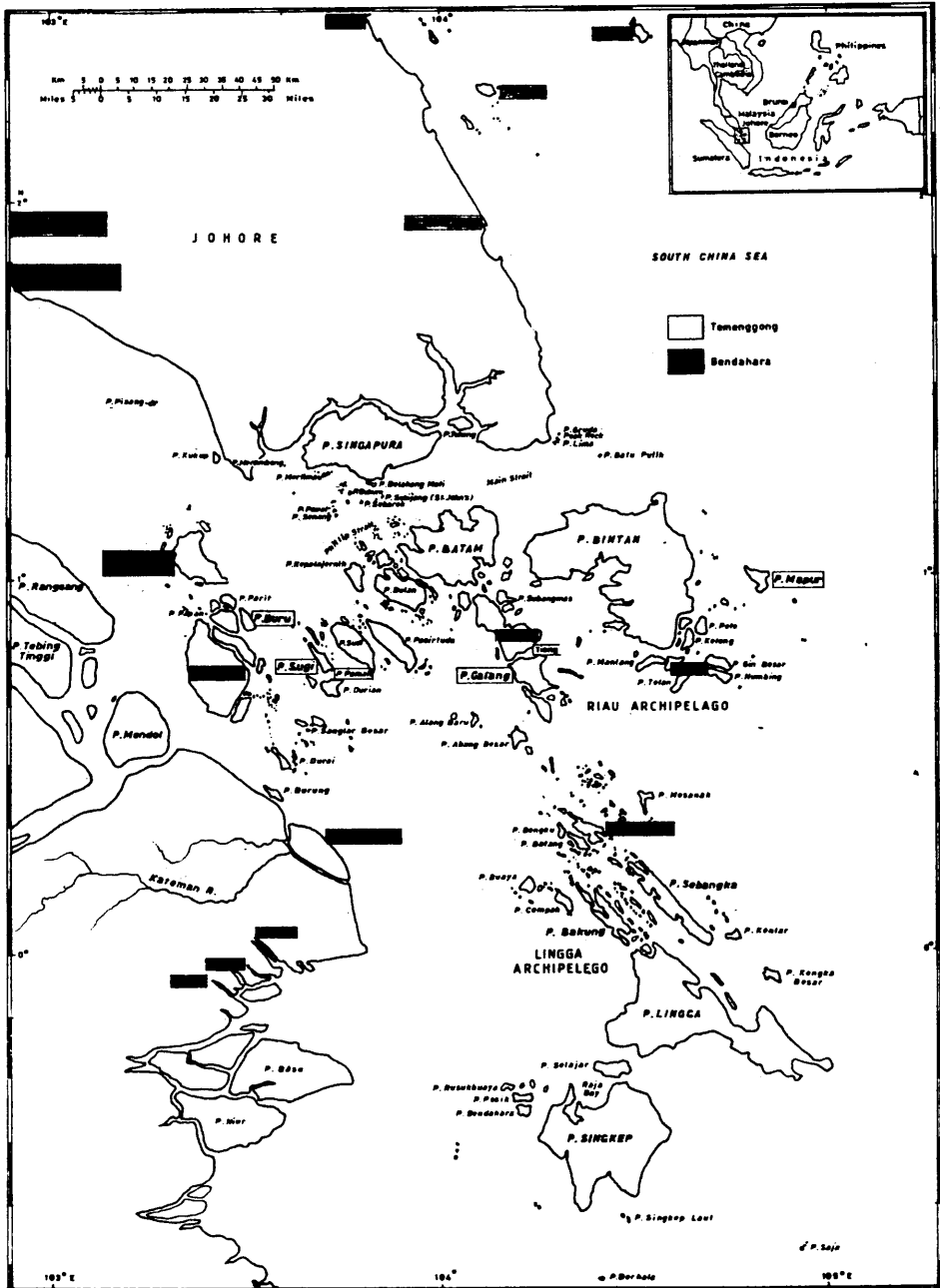
The islands south of the main straits were attributed by the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 17th March 1824 to the Dutch sphere of influence. The only serious contest was over the Carrimon islands south of the straits where the Sultan of Johore waged an unsuccessful naval battle against the Yang Dipertuan Muda of Riouw and the Sultan of Lingga in 1827. All the other islands south of the Straits of Singapore were recognised by the British as belonging to the territories of the kingdom of Riouw-Lingga. The Dutch Resident of Riouw concurred with the British Resident and observed that over the extensive Johore-Riouw-Lingga Empire:

We have two Sultans now instead of one. Each one reigning over a separate part, the one Sultan Hussein residing at Singapore to be considered as Sultan Johore and its continental dependencies, he being himself under the influence and control of the English authorities in these parts of the world, the other Sultan Abdul Rahman residing at Lingga reigning over the islands all around, he himself under the influence of the Dutch authorities.³⁹

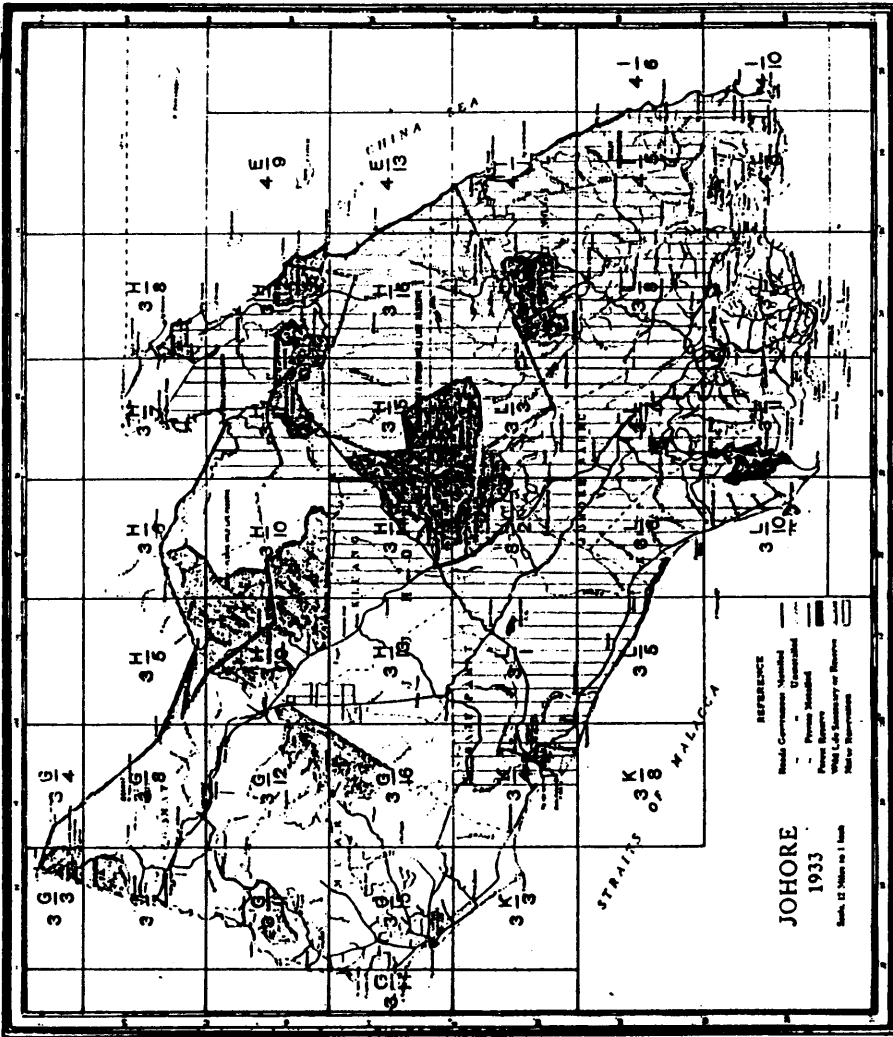
The islands north of the main straits and the straits of Singapore and outside the ten miles limit belonged to the territories of the kingdom of Johor. In maritime kingdoms all islands, all islets, all seas, all straits had economic and strategic value. In the 1880's the Sultan of Johore asserted his claims through diplomatic channels with the British over the Natunas, Amambas and Tembilan islands. However, he was advised that the Dutch backed Riouw-Lingga kingdom had long established their claims over that part of the former territories of the Johor-Riouw-Lingga empire.⁴⁰

The systematic topographic survey of Johore and its territories on a three inch to one mile scale began only in 1924. It formed part of the HIND series and covered parts of India, Malaya and Southeast Asia. The HIND series was broken down into sheets which was further broken down into Map Squares and each Map Square was further broken down into Grid squares. The printed survey sheets were gazetted and sold in individual sheets.⁴¹ The survey was conducted by the Surveyor-General of the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malay States. However, it is in unpublished documents that it is established that in the survey of Johore territories the Sultan acted on his sovereignty and negotiated directly with the British War Office to undertake the survey by-passing the governor of the Straits Settlements. All the sheets under the HIND series were surveyed by the War Office and paid for by the Johore government except three sheets.⁴² The south-eastern portions of Johore and its off-shore islands were surveyed by the Admiralty from Johore funds and permission was requested from the Sultan of Johore for each occasion the war-ship sailed into Johore waters.⁴³

Map 5



Map 6



REPRODUCED FROM THE ARCHIVES OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF MALAYSIA



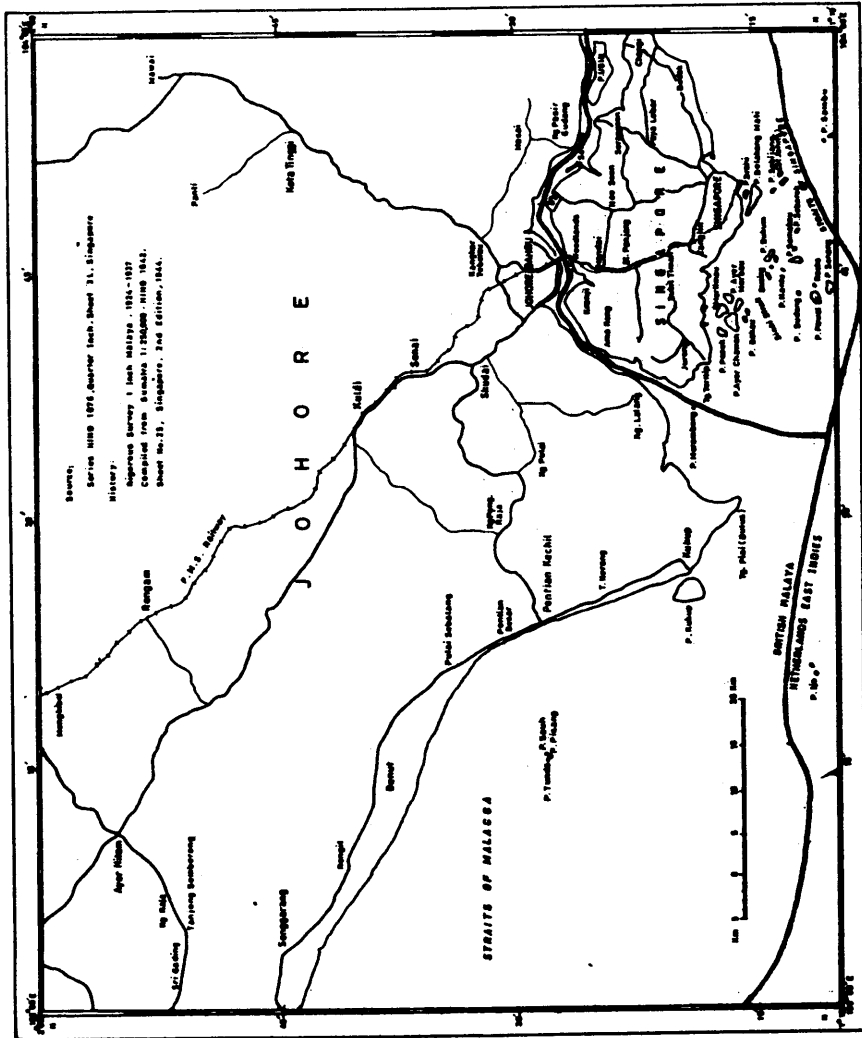
The southern portions of the Malay peninsula are the combined sheets of the kingdom of Johore and the British Settlement of Singapore. The Singapore map on itself shows the demarcated Straits of Tebrau, an enclosed western side following the contours of the ten miles limit and an open eastern side. However, the independent sheet of map on Kuala Sedili which covers the south-eastern portion of Johore, has a western boundary drawn in and takes the main straits as demarcating British and Dutch held possessions. These two maps when placed together reveal the stunning image of the islands of Singapore within its ten-miles limit after the retrocession of islands, straits and seas on the Straits of Tebrau in 1927.⁴⁴ The enigma that is modern day Singapore is a series of islands, straits and seas geographically bounded and contained and yet with the application of technology and human resources able to break-through all barriers as the Island of islands in Island Southeast Asia.

The final puzzle that need answering is exactly how many islands did the Rulers of the State and Territories of Johor actually cede to the East India Company in 1824. There were references of between 50 and 75 islands within the ten geographical mile limits. It is clear that the Settlement of Singapore in 1927 retroceded some of its islands in the Straits of Tebrau. In 1958 when the original Settlement of Singapore (1824) had transformed itself from the status of the Colony of Singapore (1946) into the State of Singapore it consisted of 63 islands.⁴⁵ These islands encircled the main island of Singapore to its northern, southern, eastern and western extremities.

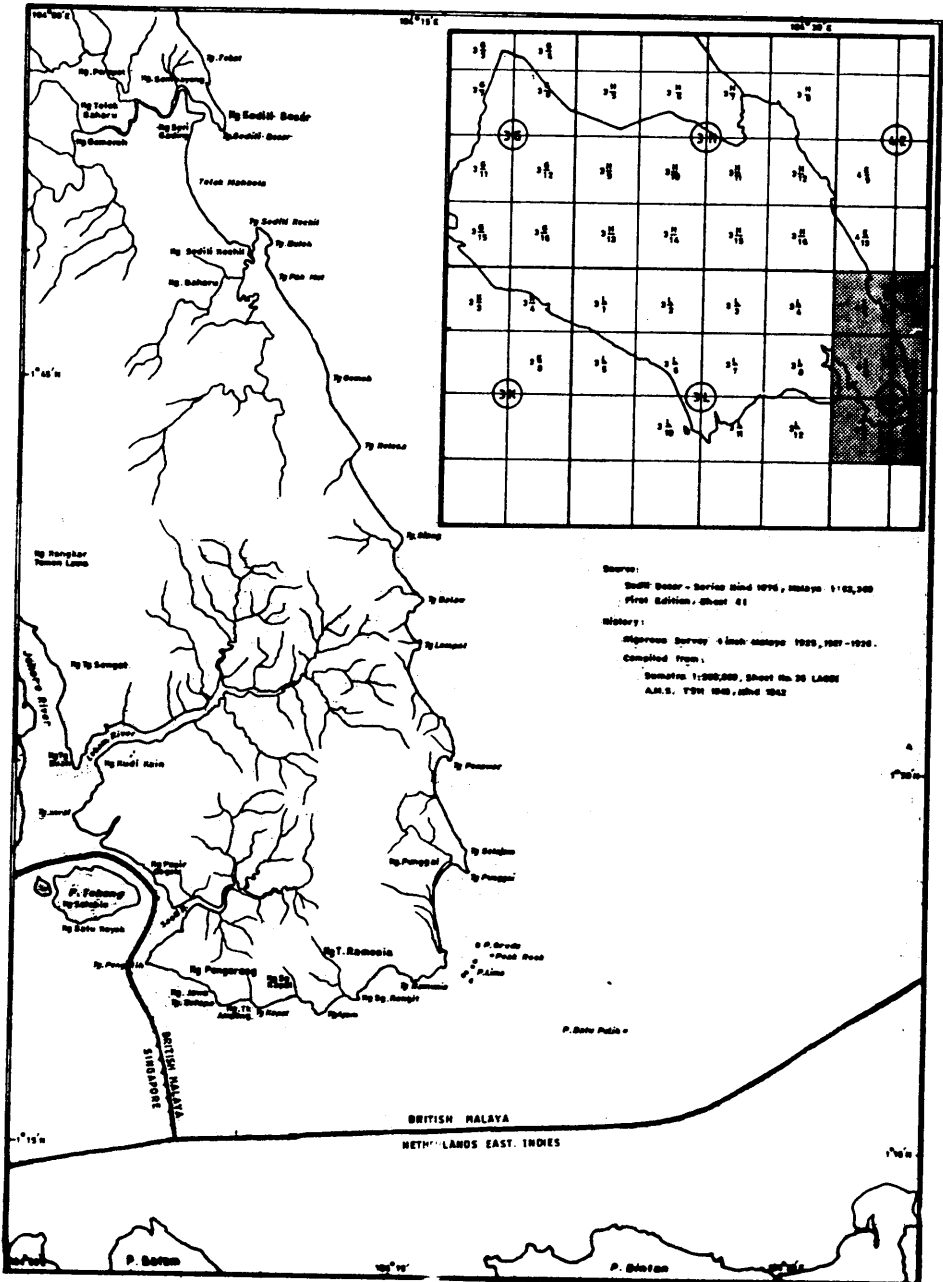
The islands in the sun willed by Sir John Crawfurd's hand in 1824 remained, with the exception of those in the Straits of Tebrau, in the possession of the Colony, State and since 1965 the Republic of Singapore.

In 1939 a British target-towing vessel used in testing firing range strayed a mere 2,000 yards south of the Coney island where the Raffles Lighthouse was constructed into Dutch territorial waters and was apprehended by the Dutch armed vessel *Flores*.⁴⁶ There were uninhabited islands south of the Main Straits across from Raffles Lighthouse which British officials eyed. But the Dutch had the fire-power to stop the territorial ambition at the tenth mile from the main island of Singapore at the Straits.

Map 7



Map 8



NOTES:

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3. *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.
4. Singapore Chronicle, March 1825, in J.H. Moor, *Notices of the Indian Archipelago and Adjacent Countries*, Singapore, 1837, p. 244.
5. V. Matheson and B.W. Andaya, *The Precious Gift (Tuhfat al-Nafis)*, Kuala Lumpur, Oxford University Press, 1982.
6. Dutch Treaty of 17 March 1824, in J. de V. Allen, A. J. Stockwell and L. R. Wright, eds., *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 288-293.
7. Singapore Chronicle, March 1825, in J.H. Moor, *op. cit.*, p. 244.
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9. 'Notices of Singapore', *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Vol. VII, 1853, p. 351.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 357.
11. J. Crawford, 'Journal of a Voyage Round the Island of Singapore', in J.H. Moor, *op. cit.*, pp. 269-273.
12. J. Crawford, *Journal of an Embassy from the Governor-General of India to the Courts of Siam and Cochin China*, London, Henry Colburn, 1828, p.
13. J. Crawford, *Descriptive Dictionary of the Indian Islands and Adjacent Countries*, Chaukhambha Orientalia, India, 1974, p. 395.
14. J.T. Thomson, 'General Report on the Residency of Singapore, Drawn up principally with a view of illustrating its agricultural statistics', *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*, Vol. 3, 1849, p. 619.
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16. J.T. Thomson, *op. cit.*, p. 619.
17. See Siti Khajar Md. Shah, 'Sejarah Pertahanan Pulau Singapura dan Wilayahnya, 1819-1927', MA thesis, Department of Southeast Asian Studies, University of Malaya, 1995.
18. See Hanizah Idris, 'Pembangunan dan Perkembangan Infrastruktur Pelabuhan Singapura, 1819-1941', MA thesis, Department of Southeast Asian Studies, University of Malaya, 1995.

19. See Ichiro Sugimoto, 'Perkembangan Kapitalisma di Negeri Johor, 1800-1957', MA thesis, Department of Southeast Asian Studies, University of Malaya which is in the process of completion.
20. Yusrina bte Yahaya, 'Tenaga di Singapura (1819-1941): Dari Angin ke Arang Batu ke Petroleum', B.A. (Hons, Exercise), Department of Southeast Asian Studies, University of Malaya, 1993-94.
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22. Faizah bte Samsudin, 'Surat ke Kabel Telegraf ke Gelombang (Perkembangan Saluran Pos dan Telegraf di Singapura 1844-1941)', B.A. (Hons.) Exercise, Department of Southeast Asian Studies, University of Malaya, 1993-94.
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26. See Advocate General's Legal Opinion in *Ibid.*, ff. 419-421.
27. CO 273/12: SS to CO, 18 September 1867, ff. 80-84 and CO 273/17: SS to CO, January 1868, ff. 14-15.
28. See enclosures in CLM 2304/1919 and CO 273/530: Law Office to CO, 3 December 1925, ff. 229-239.
29. CO 273/536: file no. 28045 A, f.5.
30. See Johore Treaty of 19 October, 1927 in J. de V. Allen, A.J. Stockwell and L.R. Wright, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 114-116.
31. CO 273/530: FO to CO, 3 December 1925.
32. See enclosures in GAJ 489/1928.
33. J. de V. Allen, A.J. Stockwell and L.R. Wright, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 114-116.
34. See enclosures in CO 273/536: 1927, file number 28045 A.
35. CO 273/533: FO to CO, 23 December 1926, ff. 470-475. On 3 August 1928 the British Parliament passed the *Straits Settlements and Johore Territorial Waters (Agreement) Act, 1928*. See *The Law Reports 1928, The Public General Acts*, London, 1928, pp. 182-185.
36. See Pahang Treaty of 17 June, 1862 in J. de V. Allen, A.J. Stockwell and L.R. Wright, *op. cit.*, pp. 343-344.
37. See Pahang Treaty of 1 September, 1868 in *Ibid.*, pp. 345-346.

38. See Straits Settlements, Report of the Boundaries Commission, 18 February 1898.
39. Straits Settlements Factory Records (India Office Library), 6 September 1827, Extract from Major Elout's Private Letter, 18 August 1827.
40. CO 273/142: His Majesty Sultan of Johore to CO, 20 March 1886, ff. 841-856; CO 273/142: FO to CO, 10 April 1886, ff. 232-285 and CO 273/150: Admiralty to CO, 3 June 1887, ff. 4-15.
41. See *Johore Government Gazette*, 1933, p. iii.
42. Enclosure 1, Surveyor General F.M.S. and S.S. to British Adviser Johore, 18 November 1931, in GA 662/1931.
43. See Encl. 1, Commander-in-Command to Governor, 7 April 1925, in GA 267/1925.
44. See Map V, Map VI and Map VII.
45. Singapore Rural Board By-Laws, 1954 and Ordinance No. 11 of 1958, Southern Islands Local Council.
46. CO 273/656: 1939, file number 50334.