

Appendix I: Morrison's Letters to Amherst (1821)

Copy of Morrison's first letter to Amherst (date unknown, but written prior to November 1821) (in BL IOR MSS EUR F 140/50 (b))

My Lord,

I had the honour to receive the Letter you sent me in reply to my request concerning the Anglo-Chinese College; & beg to [give] ... sincere thanks for your kindness.

The Monarch who in anger drove us from his Court, died in Tartary, suddenly on Sep 2 1820. His eldest son living has ascended the throne, and adopted the Title Taou-kwang [Daoguang] which means 'Season's glory'.

There remains a good deal of mystery in this part of the Empire respecting the demise of His late Majesty - the prevailing report is that he died a violent death, & that his successor has usurped the throne, Kia King [Jiaqing] having intended it for his fourth son.

My family Mrs Morrison & two children returned to China this year, & by divine goodness we all enjoy tolerable health.

I observe in the Peking Gazette that the Nobleman we called Duke Ho, is much employed by the new Monarch. He was restored & degraded more than once since his degradation on account of his behaviour to us.

The venerable Soo remained in high offices till the late Emperor's death - I have not seen his name mentioned since.

The Legate Kwang [Guanghui] has been a salt Commissioner at a place near the Po-yang Lake ever since his restoration; he is expected here as Commissioner of import & export duties, an Officer here called the Hoppo.

I beg my remembrance to my old acquaintance the Hon. Mr. Amherst [Jeffrey]. I pray God to keep him from the many temptations to which his rank & circumstances expose him.

I remain with respect,
My Lord,
Your Hon. Servant
(signed) R. Morrison

Copy of Morrison's second letter to Amherst, Canton, China, 26 November 1821 (in BL IOR MSS EUR F 140/50 (b))

My Lord,

Kwang Tajin [Guanghui] concerning whom you wrote to me, departed this life before I received your Letter. Instead of coming to Canton he was appointed Judge of the Province of Chih-le, and died in his boat just as he reached the borders of the region over which he was to preside: it was at the place where we were together about this time of the year in 1816. The officer who attended the Embassy whilst at the Joss-house in Canton is also dead. Duke Ho is still Commissioner of the Troops in Fo-kien Province.

Death, my Lord has also visited my family since I parted with you: Mrs Morrison fell a sacrifice to Cholera Morbus at Macao in June last. She was ill only 14 hours. I hope she "fell asleep in Jesus" - & that her immortal spirit is happy in heaven.

I had a good Letter from Hayne; he was well, but did not seem to like his situation.

Canton has been a good deal agitated this season by a case of homicide, or accidental death. A Chinese boat woman was drowned and an American seaman was charged ... The Americans resisted the man's being delivered to the Chinese after which they relinquished the poor man, who protested his innocence; & the Chinese strangled him two days after they got him into their possession.

The present Emperor is deemed more decided in his conduct than his Father. During the 8th moon an epidemic prevailed in Peking which appears to have been a sort of Cholera... His Majesty gave considerable sums to buy medicines for the sick, & coffins for the dead. And according to the usage of the Imperial Family, he has sent to prepare his own tomb in the Mountains of Tartary.

I remain
Your Lordship's
Most Obedient Servant
(signed) R. Morrison

This text is taken from *Britain's Second Embassy to China: Lord Amherst's 'Special Mission' to the Jiaqing Emperor in 1816*, by Caroline Stevenson, published 2021 by ANU Press, The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.