

GREAT MALAYSIAN RAILWAY JOURNEYS

Home

Penang Guide

Butterworth to Kuala Kangsar

Ipoh Then & Now

Batu Gajah to Kepong Sentral

Kuala Lumpur

Kajang to Tampin

Malacca

Batang Melaka to Johor Bahru

Singapore

Malaysian Railway History

Railway Mail Service

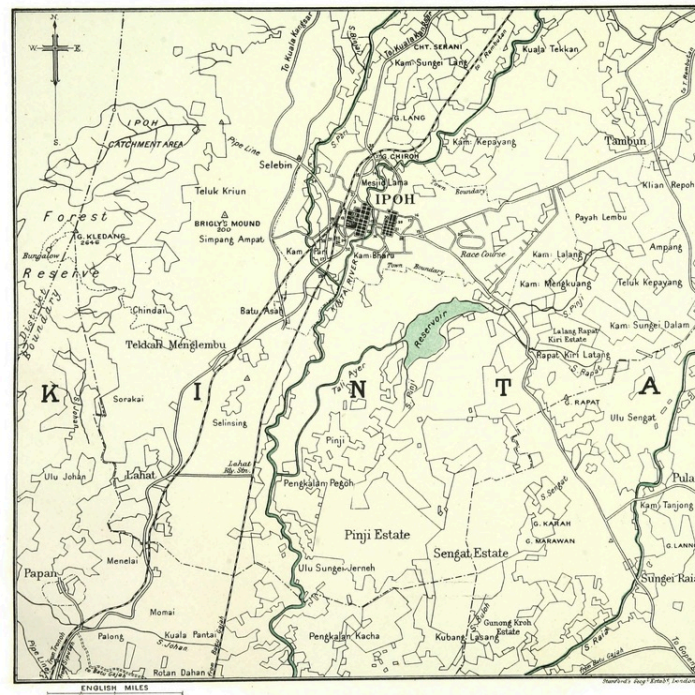
About

Contact

Blog

ROUND THE KINTA VALLEY

Kinta Valley in 1914 was practically one huge tin mine.



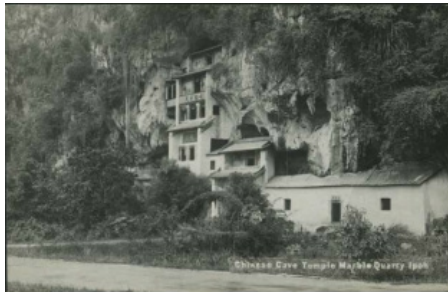
Note from this map of the Kinta Valley in 1914, that there were two railway lines south of Ipoh. The western branch line is no more.

The 1914 Pamphlet of Information for Railway Travellers suggested that visitors to Ipoh take a half-day driving tour around the Kinta Valley, the world's most famous tin mining area at that time.

These are some extracts from the pamphlet:

Seeing that he is in the most famous tin mining area of the world, it is worth while for the traveller who halts at Ipoh to take a motor - they are to be hired in the town - and drive right round the Kinta Valley which surrounds Ipoh.

This temple at Gunung Rapat is far larger than that at Gunung Chiroh and the ramifications of the caves have been cunningly adapted to the uses of the temple. It was here that some years ago proofs were discovered in the soil of the caves that they had been inhabited by the early races of men in prehistoric ages.



The author of the pamphlet was probably talking about Nam Thean Tong cave temple, pictured here in this old postcard. The right photo is the view from the top taken by me. You can read about my ghostly experience in this cave in my [Malaysia Traveller](#) website.

Climb to the topmost shrine, high in the rock, and there through a natural window look out right across the Kinta Valley to the Kledang range.

At the 66 mile is another fork to the right up the hill, which should be taken as it leads to the hill on which stands the Gopeng resthouse.



Gopeng Resthouse

From here is a view of all the valley of Kinta, upheaved, turned over, scored, pitted, scarred, turmoiled by miners, yet not exhausted and still destined to be worse treated, no doubt.



The scars left behind by intensive mining activity are slowly healing.

[View Larger Map](#)

This map gives an indication of the extent of mining activity in the Kinta Valley. Each blue lake represents a former mine.

As a contrast the little resthouse and the shady trees of its hill invite us. All around is the view of the hills, the great splashing scour of the Ulu Gopeng workings being conspicuous.

Below the little hill lies the village.



Tin deposits were discovered on the hill on which the Gopeng Resthouse was built. Not only was the resthouse demolished but the whole hill was excavated and the resulting hole in the ground has since filled with water to become a lake.



A section of mining pipeline dating from 1908 has been preserved in Gopeng

Nowadays, the village / town of Gopeng is home to the Gopeng Heritage House, a small museum with an interesting selection of curios and collectables. You can read more about this museum on my [Malaysia Traveller](#) website.

We turn to the left for Batu Gajah, along a quiet and pretty road passing Kellas Estate on the tawny waters of the Sungei Raia.



Construction of Kellie's Castle did not commence until 1915 so when this guide was written, the older Kellas House would have been the home standing on the banks of the Raia.

You can find out about Kellie's Castle and the sad history and the legends that go with it on my [Malaysia Traveller](#) website.

Next comes the village of Pusing.

Tronoh is the site of the largest open-cast tin mine in the world.

The hill to the west is the Kledeng range.

The village of Papan soon comes into view in the valley on the left.

We reach Lahat village and just beyond is the dumping ground of the Lahat Mine.

Menglembu village follows and finally we run into Ipoh again by the Sungei Pari Bridge and Grand Hotel. The above is a 3 1/2 hour run in a motor and will occupy a morning nicely.



Tronoh 2013



Pusing - Sign says Syarikat Malaysia Smelting Berhad



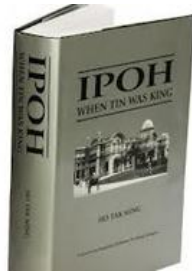
Papan Main Street, 2013



Lahat Mines has now been converted into a resort, commercial and housing area.

The centres of the old mining towns of Tronoh, Pusing, Papan and Lahat are decaying but new developments have sprung up around them. You can see more photos of modern day Gopeng, Pusing and Tronoh on my Thrifty Traveller Blog.

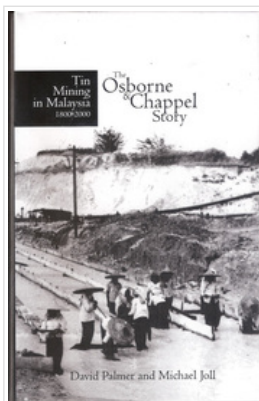
FURTHER READING



**Ipoh
When Tin Was King**

by

Ho Tak Ming



**Tin Mining in Malaysia
The Osborne & Chappel Story**

by

David Palmer and Michael Joll

This book can be purchased at Gopeng Museum (profits go to the museum).

Return from Round the Kinta Valley to Ipoh Then & Now

Return from Round the Kinta Valley to Home

