

Old EAC Sites in

By Hans Henrik Melchior

A so-called EAC Reunion Group, consisting of former EAC staff sent abroad in 1975, visited Thailand in early June 2009. For many years it was the policy of EAC Copenhagen to employ young Danes, who, after apprenticeship and training at the EAC Head Office and school in Copenhagen, were sent abroad for overseas service at the various EAC offices all over the world.

During a cycling tour in and around Phrae the group visited two sites used by EAC in the early 1900s, when the Company had a major teak concession in the northern part of Thailand. Both these sites are today used by the Forestry Department. The first site was the place where all the logs were inspected, recorded and marked prior to being sent on their 12-18 months trip down the river to the Company's own sawmill at Wat Phya Krai in Bangkok. This area contained a building for the main office at this site, which also functioned as a guest house for business visitors to the facility, as well as a number of other buildings. The second site contained the EAC Head Office for all the timber activities in North Thailand, the Manager's residence and a number of other buildings, all still in an impeccable state of maintenance and in use. The former head-office building is today a Teak Museum, displaying exhibits, documents and images describing the history of the teak trade in the Phrae area, including due mention of EAC's activities on the site.

The following historical details are based on a document prepared by former EAC staff Harry Schultz in 1998. In 1900 EAC applied to the Thai Government for a concession to pull out logs from the northern forest district of Phrae and was



The EAC Group in front of the old EAC Phrae Head Office, now Teak Museum

Former East Asiatic Co., Ltd's office building Present Teak Museum



Display in Teak Museum recognizing Display in Teak Museum recognizing

Phrae



The Inspection Site Head Office

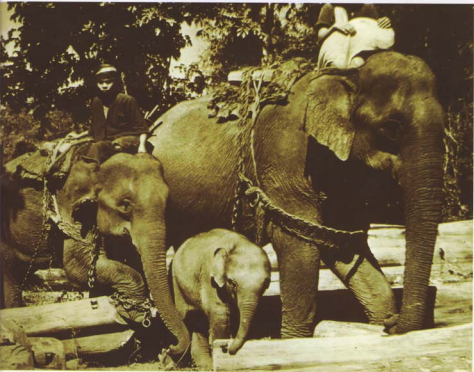


Display of old photo of "Vold Husen", the Manager's residence.

granted the concession for the Me Kampong forest (20 sq. miles). This concession was renewed in 1907. In 1909 the Thai Government made a new apportionment of the concessions and EAC was allotted the district east of Me Yum river (abt. 100 sq. miles). The concession was prolonged to 1936. During the later years EAC employed about 1,400 persons in the

Phrae area and EAC had a working force of 100 elephants plus 160 elephants from contractors.

The visit to Phrae, as the rest of the Tour for the EAC group, was arranged by Bent Laasholdt from Adisti Travel & Adventure, who regularly arranges tours in the Phrae area for Scandinavian tourists.



EAC elephants at work.