

YANGON (RANGOON), THE CITY I LIVE (D)



Old and new pictures of the garden city

ဒို့တာဝန်အရေးသုံးပါး

- ပြည်ထောင်စု မပြိုကွဲရေး ဒို့အရေး
- တိုင်းရင်းသား စည်းလုံးညီညွတ်မှု မပြိုကွဲရေး ဒို့အရေး
- အချုပ်အခြာအာဏာ တည်တံ့ခိုင်မြဲရေး ဒို့အရေး

ပြည်သူ့သဘောထား

- ပြည်ပအားကိုး ပုဆိန်ရိုး အဆိုးမြင်ဝါဒီများအား ဆန့်ကျင်ကြ။
- နိုင်ငံတော် တည်ငြိမ်ရေးနှင့် နိုင်ငံတော် တိုးတက်ရေးကို နှောင့်ယှက် ဖျက်ဆီးသူ များအား ဆန့်ကျင်ကြ။
- နိုင်ငံတော်၏ ပြည်တွင်းရေးကို ဝင်ရောက်စွက်ဖက် နှောင့်ယှက်သော ပြည်ပနိုင်ငံ များအား ဆန့်ကျင်ကြ။
- ပြည်တွင်းပြည်ပ အဖျက်သမားများအား ဘုံရန်သူအဖြစ် သတ်မှတ် ချေမှုန်းကြ။

(၅၉)နှစ်မြောက် တပ်မတော်နေ့ ဦးတည်ချက်

- ၁။ နိုင်ငံတော် ရှေ့ဆက်သွားမည့် မူဝါဒလမ်းစဉ်ခန့်မှန်းရန် အောင်မြင်ရေးအတွက် တိုင်းရင်းသားပြည်သူတို့နှင့် အတူတကွ လက်တွဲပူးပေါင်း ပါဝင် ဆောင်ရွက်ရေး။
- ၂။ နိုင်ငံတော်တည်ငြိမ်ရေးနှင့် တိုးတက်မှုများကို နှောင့်ယှက်ဖျက်ဆီးသည့် ပြည်တွင်း၊ ပြည်ပအဖျက်သမားများကို ပြည်သူ့စစ် မဟာဗျူဟာဖြင့် ချေမှုန်းရေး။
- ၃။ နယ်စပ်ဒေသဖွံ့ဖြိုးတိုးတက်ရေးနှင့် ကျေးလက်ဒေသဖွံ့ဖြိုးရေး လုပ်ငန်းစဉ် ငါးရပ်တို့အား ပြည်သူ့လူထုနှင့်အတူ ဝိုင်းဝန်းအကောင်အထည်ဖော် ဆောင်ရွက်ရေး။
- ၄။ ဒို့တာဝန်အရေးသုံးပါးကို ကာကွယ်စောင့်ရှောက်နိုင်ရေးအတွက် အင်အားတောင့်တင်း၍ စွမ်းရည် ထက်မြက်မြင့်မားသော ခေတ်မီတပ်မတော် တည်ဆောက်ရေး။

နိုင်ငံရေးဦးတည်ချက် (၄)ရပ်

- နိုင်ငံတော် တည်ငြိမ်ရေး၊ ရပ်ရွာအေးချမ်းသာယာရေးနှင့် တရားဥပဒေ စိုးမိုးရေး။
- အမျိုးသား ပြန်လည်စည်းလုံး ညီညွတ်ရေး။
- ခိုင်မာသည့် ဖွဲ့စည်းပုံ အခြေခံ ဥပဒေသစ် ဖြစ်ပေါ်လာရေး။
- မြစ်ပေါ်လာသည့် ဖွဲ့စည်းပုံ အခြေခံဥပဒေသစ်နှင့်အညီ ခေတ်မီဖွံ့ဖြိုး တိုးတက်သော နိုင်ငံတော်သစ်တစ်ရပ် တည်ဆောက်ရေး။

စီးပွားရေးဦးတည်ချက် (၄)ရပ်

- စိုက်ပျိုးရေးကို အခြေခံ၍ အခြားစီးပွားရေးကဏ္ဍများကိုလည်း ဘက်စုံဖွံ့ဖြိုး တိုးတက်အောင် တည်ဆောက်ရေး။
- ဈေးကွက်စီးပွားရေးစနစ် ပီပြင်စွာ ဖြစ်ပေါ်လာရေး။
- ပြည်တွင်းပြည်ပမှ အတတ်ပညာနှင့် အရင်းအနှီးများ ဖိတ်ခေါ်၍ စီးပွားရေး ဖွံ့ဖြိုးတိုးတက်အောင် တည်ဆောက်ရေး။
- နိုင်ငံတော်စီးပွားရေးတစ်ရပ်လုံးကို ဖန်တီးနိုင်မှုစွမ်းအားသည် နိုင်ငံတော်နှင့် တိုင်းရင်းသားပြည်သူတို့၏ လက်ဝယ်တွင်ရှိရေး။

လူမှုရေးဦးတည်ချက် (၄)ရပ်

- တစ်မျိုးသားလုံး၏ စိတ်ဓာတ်နှင့် အကျင့်စာရိတ္တ မြင့်မားရေး။
- အမျိုးဂုဏ်၊ ဇာတိဂုဏ်မြင့်မားရေးနှင့် ယဉ်ကျေးမှုအမွေအနှစ်များ၊ အမျိုးသားရေး၊ လက္ခဏာများ မပျောက်ပျက်အောင် ထိန်းသိမ်းစောင့်ရှောက်ရေး။
- မျိုးချစ်စိတ်ဓာတ် ရှင်သန်ထက်မြက်ရေး။
- တစ်မျိုးသားလုံး ကျန်းမာကြံ့ခိုင်ရေးနှင့် ပညာရည်မြင့်မားရေး။

PREFACE

Yangon, also known as the garden city has impressed me from the first time I visited the city in 1996. The colonial buildings, wide tree-lined lanes and especially the narrow, bustling streets in the downtown area are real eyecatchers, if you manage to focus on the little details which make the city so beautiful. After living in the downtown area for over three years, one might think that one might get bored of seeing the same thing everyday, but in reality I still love to wander around and look up in the sky to see the majestic buildings. I often price myself lucky to live in a beautiful city as this one and often wonder how the city looked like in earlier times and how it will look in the future.

While working on this book I tried to go back in time and imagine how U Ohn Sein, a photographer in the 1920's, had made his pictures of the city he lived in. Finding the same place was not always easy, sometimes the scenery had changed, sometimes it was not possible to stand at the same spot to take a picture and sometimes the scene captured in the 1920's was not traceable. Luckily, especially in these times where other capitals in the world have problems providing enough "green zones", Yangon has more trees and green then in the 1920's. At many places visited to make a picture of the same spot as in 1920, we found a scene with more trees then ever before, making it truly a garden city.

This book is not intended to give a complete view of the sightseeing places in Yangon, neither is it intended to be a historical document about Yangon. It shows the city U Ohn Sein lived in around 1920 and the city I live in nowadays. It is simply intended to give readers an insight into the beautiful places this city had in the 1920's which are often still found in the 21st century. So next time when you walk around the city, stand still for a moment and appreciate the historical buildings in the city you live.

Edwin Briels

PREFACE

A couple of years ago my grandmother left me a pile of old pictures from sceneries in Yangon and upper Myanmar. Her brother gave them to her before he died and asked her to pass them on to her grandson.

By putting together this book I want to share the feeling and knowledge that I get every time I watch those pictures, with other people who are interested in old Yangon and Myanmar. After all, a picture can tell more than a 1000 words. I am sure the brother of my grandmother would have been proud if he could see this book with his pictures.

Ko Ye Thu Ya

AUTOBIOGRAPHY U OHN SEIN (THE PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE OLD PICTURES)

Starting from 1915, U Ohn Sein, a hobby photographer living in downtown Yangon, took his car and went around town at weekends to make pictures of his beloved city. Sometimes his little sister, who was 9 years younger, helped him to carry food and accessories for the camera, but he never allowed her to touch his precious camera or tripod.

Before U Ohn Sein died he told the story of his life to family and friends around him:

My sister always helped me after our parents died. I was 14 years old at that time, she was only 5 years old. I attended Judson's College and graduated from Calcutta University in India. When I came back to Yangon I found a job at the Yangon Municipal Committee of the British Government. However busy with my job, every spare minute I went around the city to take pictures. Whenever I got a longer holiday I travelled upcountry to take pictures of the pagodas, but I couldn't stay away too long, since I had to take care of my little sister and our properties left by our parents.

After becoming a high officer of the Yangon Municipal Committee, I married a daughter of a commissioner of the Yangon Port Authority. She didn't like my hobby and she didn't like my camera or my darkroom. Her father however, always helped me to get photocopy paper and chemicals from abroad, to develop the pictures I had taken. Also my sister helped me and supported my hobby.

My wife and I don't have any children; I am not sure if this is fortunate or unfortunate. When I was laying in bed with tuberculosis for a long time, she and the maids left me and took some of my properties with them. Fortunately they didn't take my camera and my pictures. The one who always stayed with me is my dear sister. I think she can take good care of my pictures and I wish that one day she will pass these pictures on to her grandson.

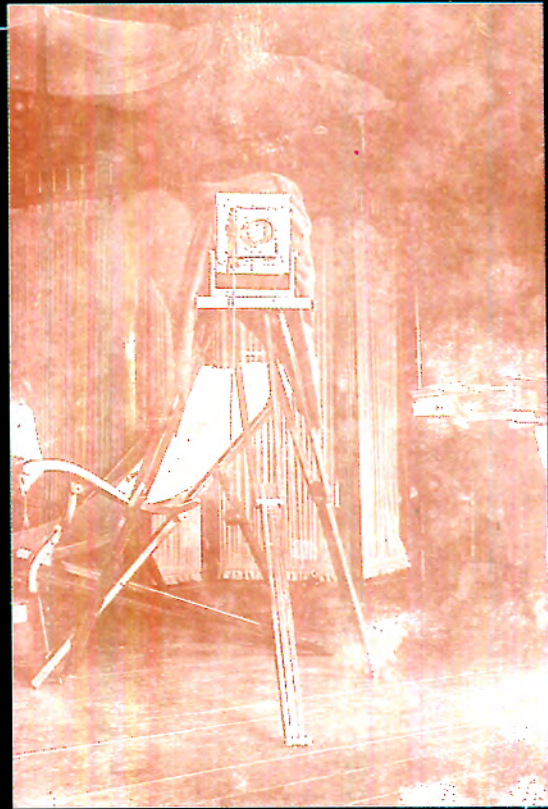
This book is dedicated to the remarkable photographer U Ohn Sein



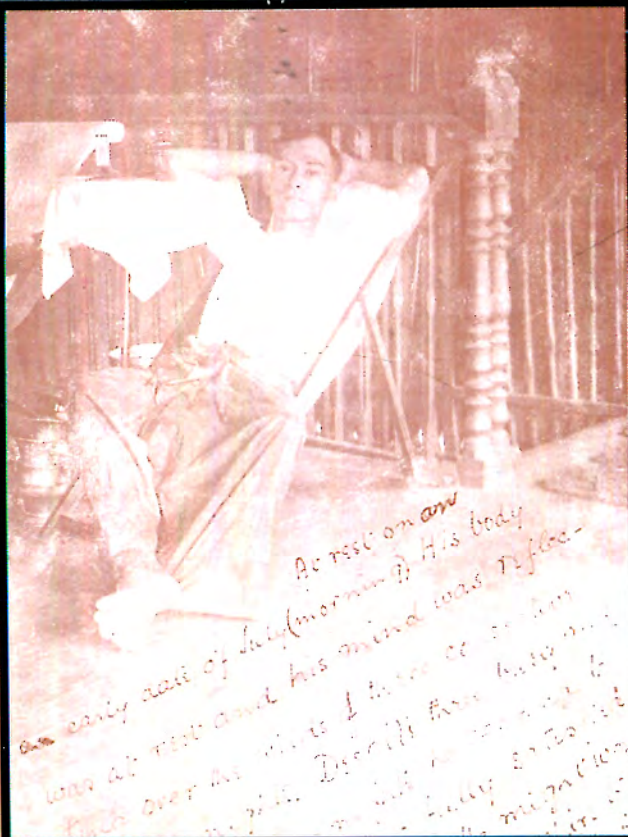
*Very Sincerely Yours
Ohn Sein*



Very Sincerely Yours, Ohn Sein

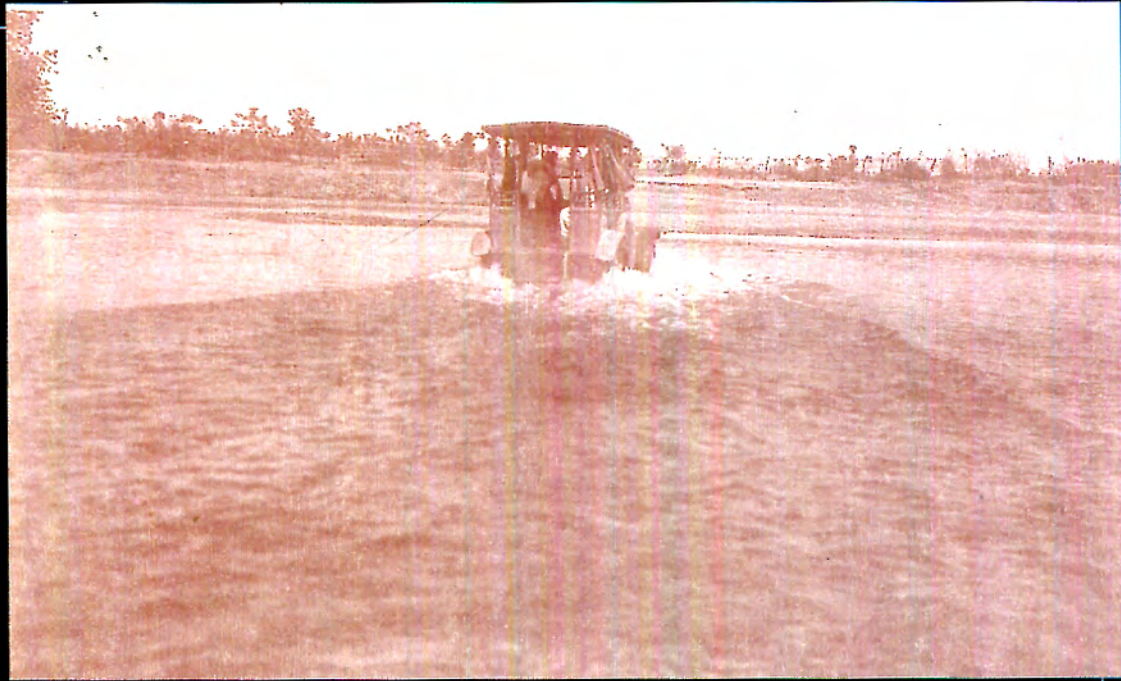


The camera used to make the pictures in the 1920's



Picture is called "At-Rest-at-Home Pose"
 Inscription on the picture says:

At rest on an early date of July (morning) His body was at rest and his mind was reflecting over the wilds of three consecutive restless nights. Despite three busy and restless nights he seemed to be not fully satisfied yet. He might wonder what shirt to wear in the evening again?



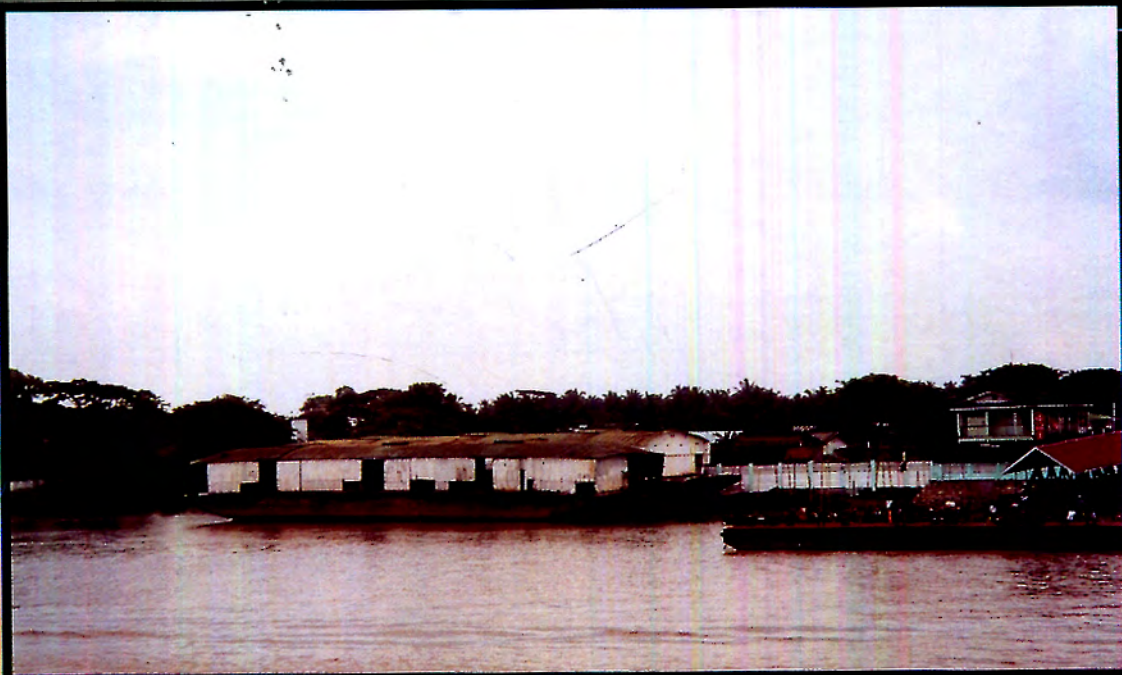
The car used in the 1920's to travel to different places in Yangon as well as up-country to make pictures.



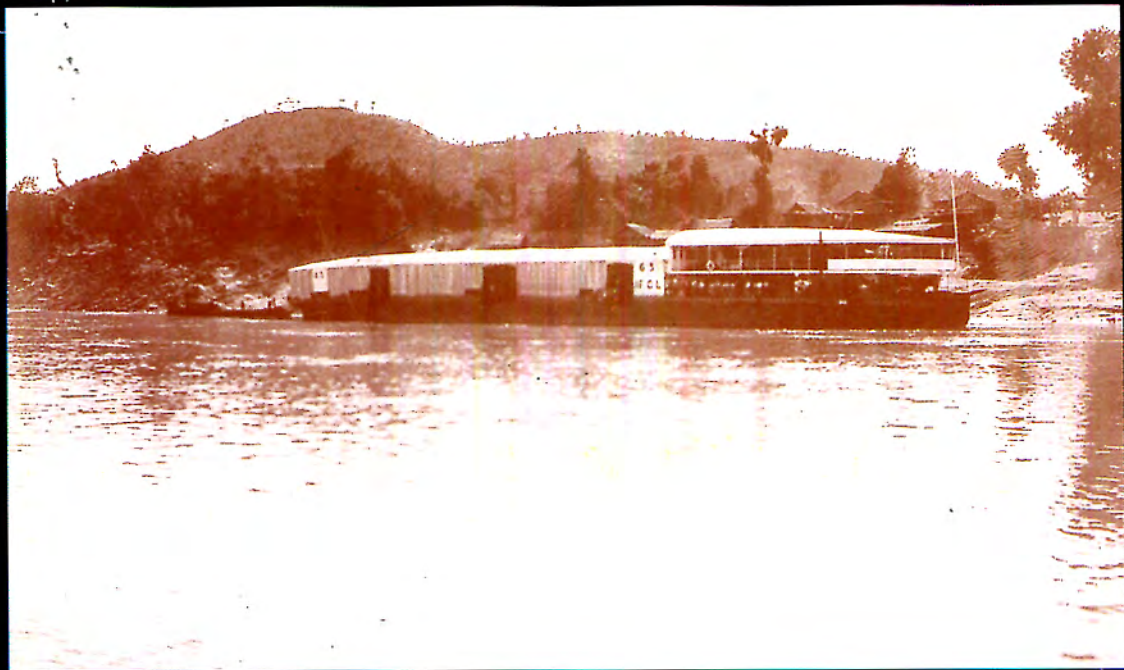
Unloading cargo at Nan Thida jetty in 2003



The photographer writes: "Coastal Service Boat
alongside Sule Pagoda wharf to take cargo 17-1-25"



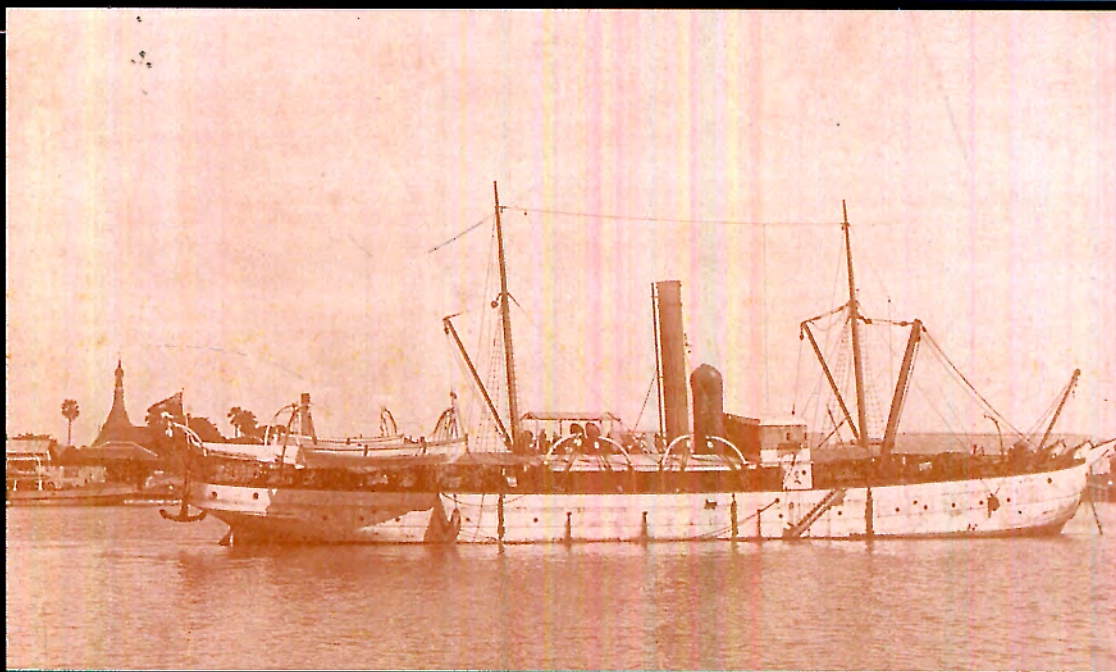
A rice barge on Yangon River



In the beginning of the century boats were the common form of transportation of rice to Yangon for export. The rice barges were pulled by other ships.



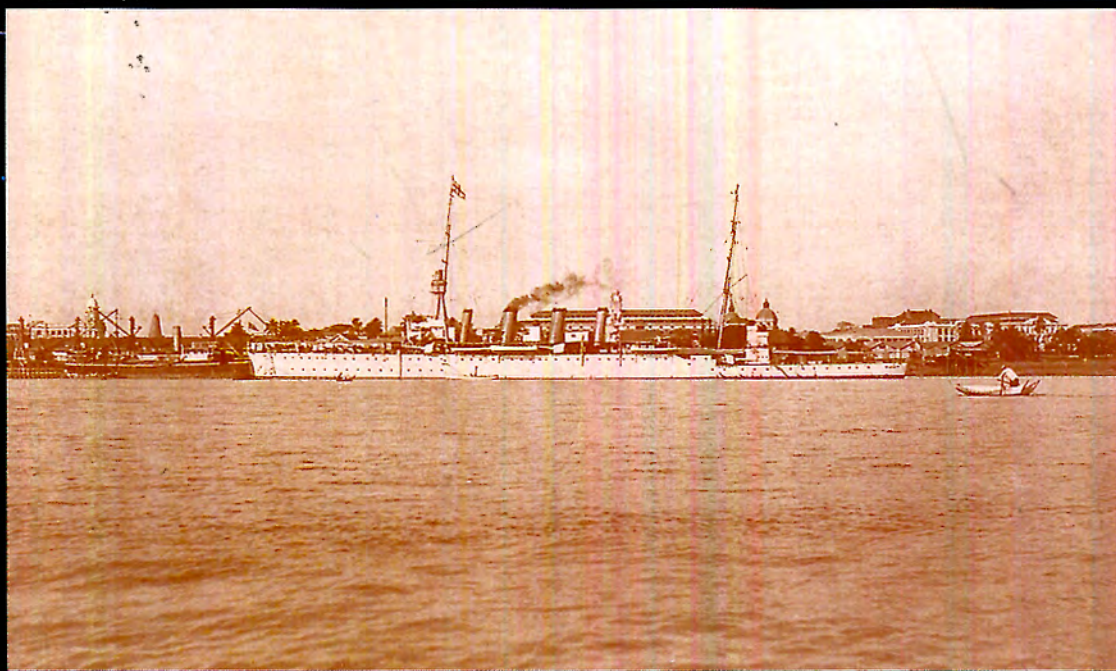
Boats are being loaded at the jetty in Dalah on Yangon River. In the background the "hti" (umbrella) of the pagoda that is on the old picture as well.



The inscription on the backside of the picture says that this snapshot is taken in February 1918.



Old and new boats can be seen from Yangon River



Inscription on the backside: H.M.S. CATHAM in the port of Yangon. The flagship of Rear Admiral Mr. Richmond, Commander-in-Chief of the East Indies Squadron. On a visit of inspection. 17-1-1925



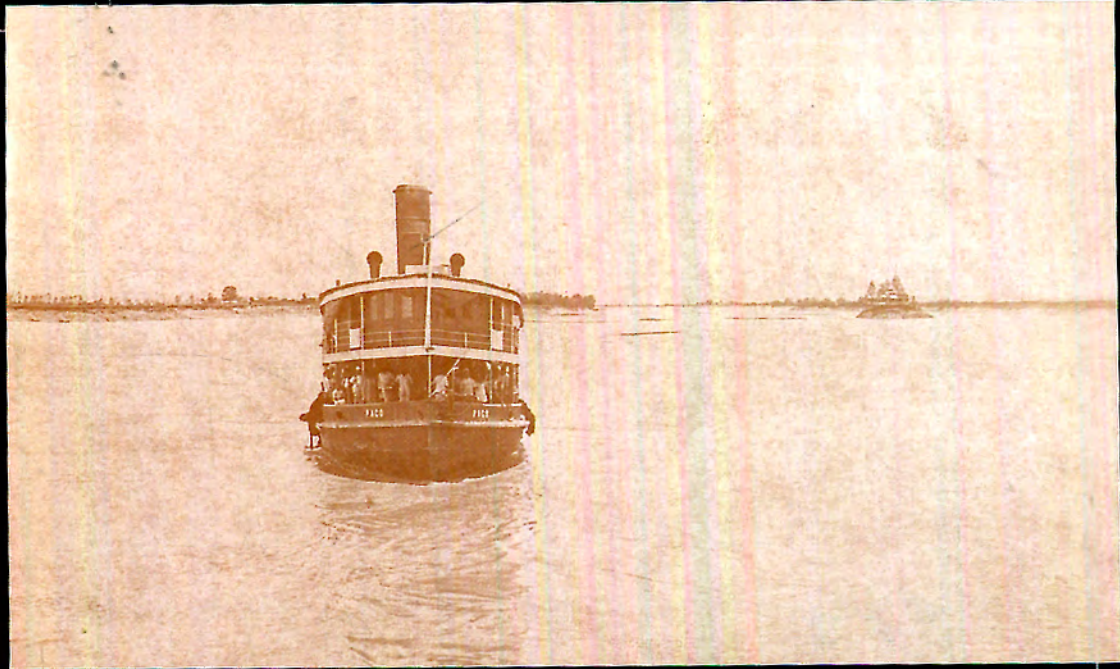
Ships on Yangon River in the beginning
of the 21st century.



Ships on Yangon River around 1925



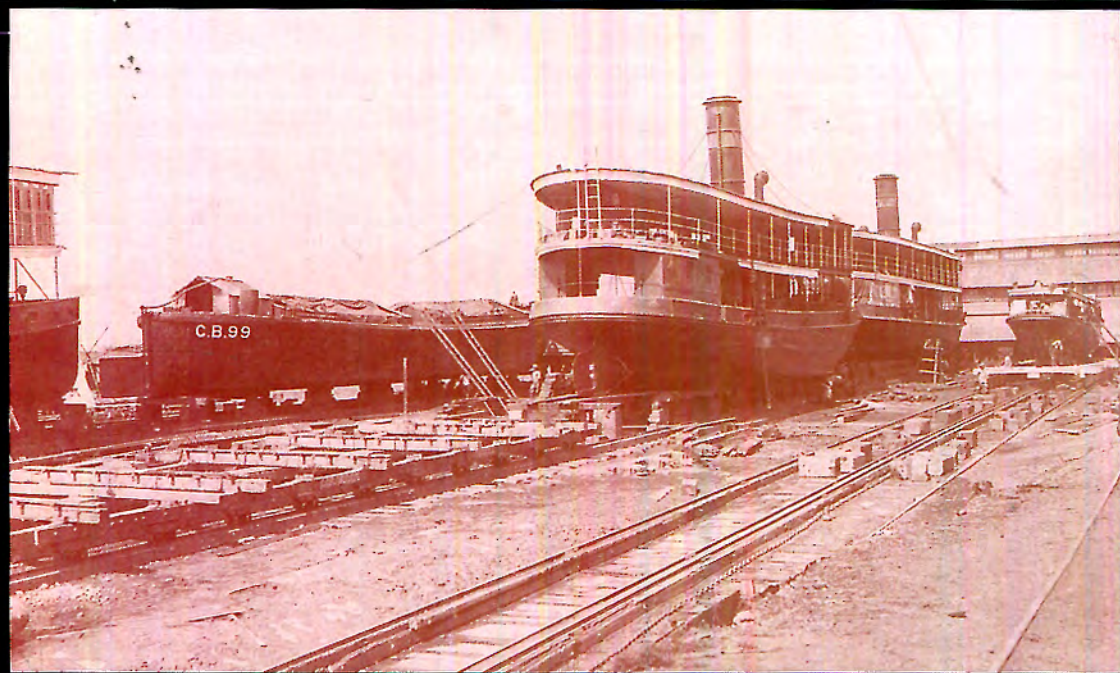
A ferry boat snapped at Yangon River coming from Dalah approaching Pansodan jetty in 2003.



Ferry on Thanlyin river, Kyauktan Pagoda on the back ground



The same boats were already used for river transportation in 1918.



Steamer at the dock around 1920



The City Hall of Yangon in the 21st century, designed by the Myanmar architect U Tin in 1927.



The Town Hall around 1910 on Fytche Square, nowadays called Mahabandoola Road



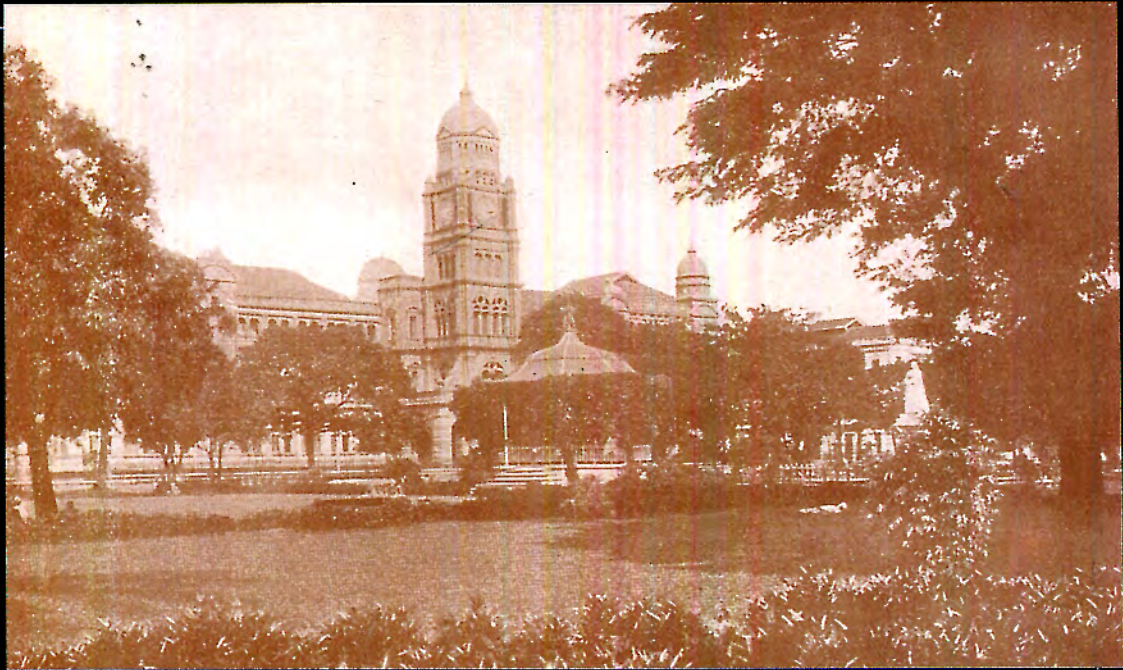
Nowadays still the high court in Yangon, the picture is taken from Mahabandoola Garden Park.



View from Fytche Square towards the high court while the park is being completed. Originally this park was called Tank Square, it is situated in the same area in downtown Yangon since the end of the 19th century.



View from Mahabandoola Garden towards the high court



The High Court of Judicature, Fytche Square



After independence in 1947, the independence monument was built in Mahabandoola Garden Park on the spot where the statue of Queen Victoria used to be.



Statue of Queen Victoria on Fytche Square



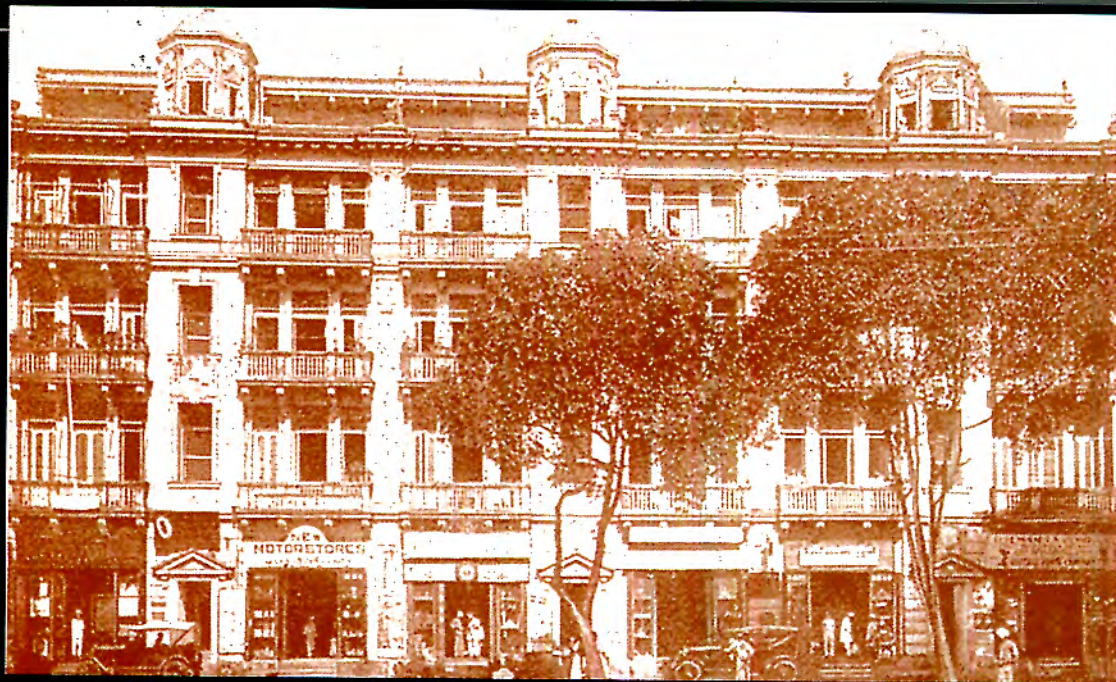
Traffic in the street is busier nowadays and the equipment of the fire brigade more modern. The building is still used as fire station.

The Yangon Municipality Central Fire Station. In those days the tower was high enough above other buildings to use as a watchtower for fire in downtown. (Yangon was badly damaged by a big fire in 1841).





Nowadays the building is housing several shops as for example the famous Let Ywe Sin coffee shop. A busy bus station is situated right in front of the building.



Around 1927 the New Motor Stores was housed in this building; a company dealing in all kind of, mostly imported, motorcar accessories.



Sule Pagoda in downtown Yangon. High-rise buildings have been constructed in the background. The building on the left is nowadays the ministry of hotels and tourism.



The Sule Pagoda around 1920 seen from the southern side



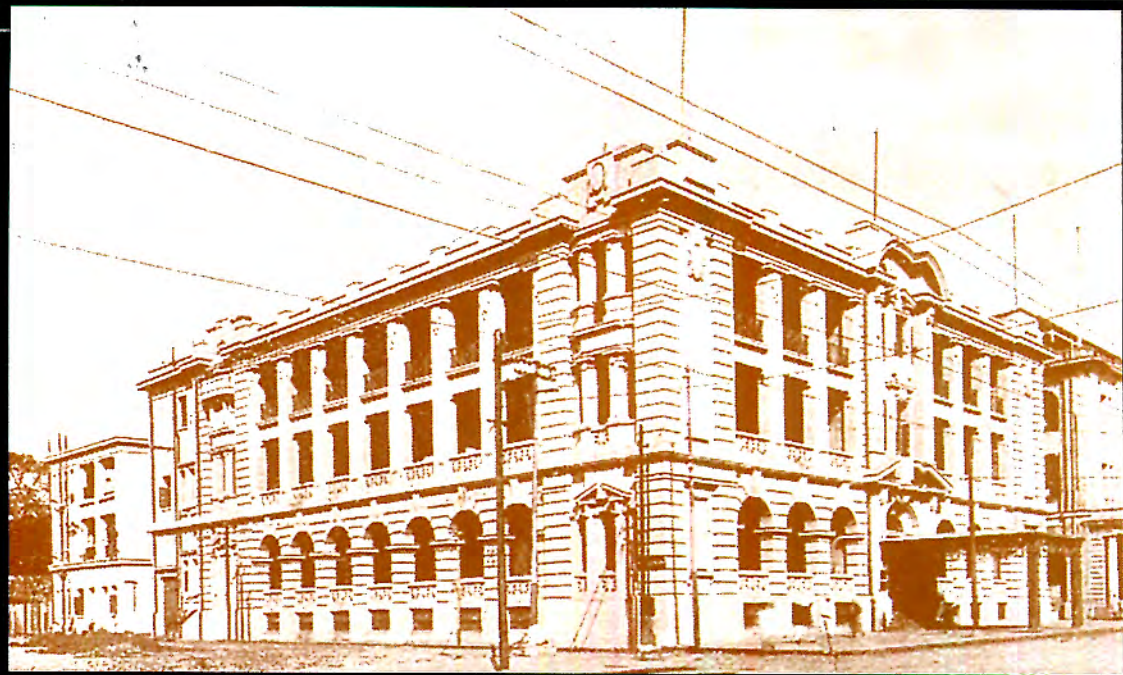
Taxis have replaced the trishaws but the grand old lady of Yangon is still accommodating tourists as in the former days. The railway on the picture is not in use anymore.



A view of the old Strand hotel built in 1901. A man-pulled trishaw is passing, an alternative form of public transport from the tramway which ran along Strand Road in that time.



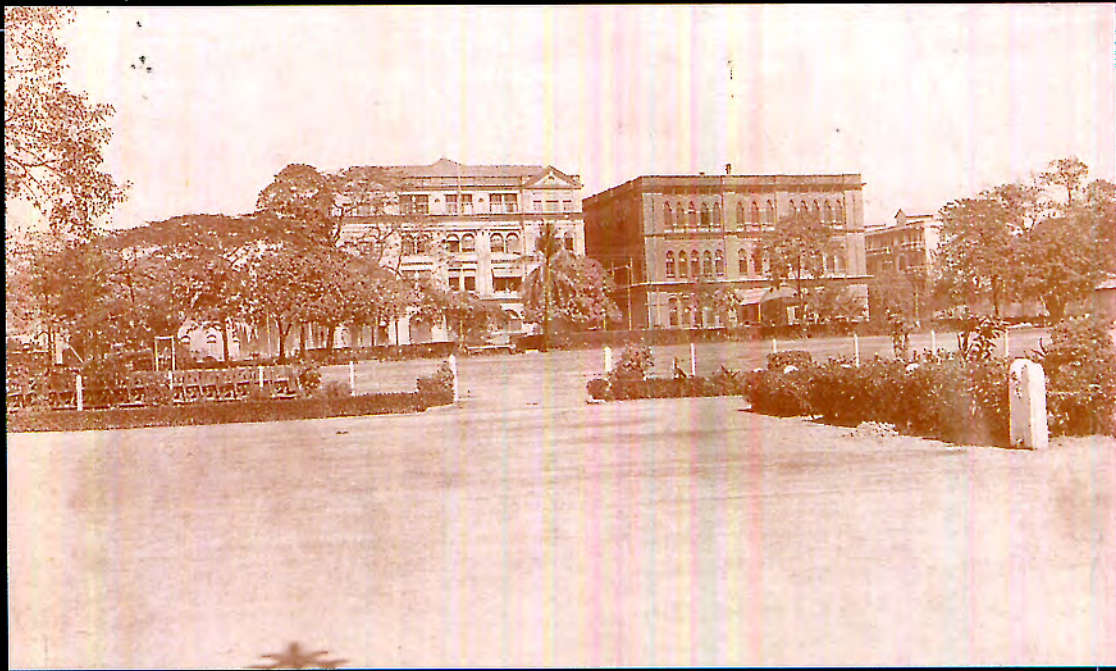
The office of Myanmar Airways, the national domestic carrier in Myanmar



The office of the Bombay Burmah Trading Company, one of the most important timber companies in the beginning of the 20th century.



The white building on the foreground is the British Embassy and the British Council while the building right of the embassy is the General Post Office (hidden behind big trees).



Strand Road seen from the park in front of Yangon River



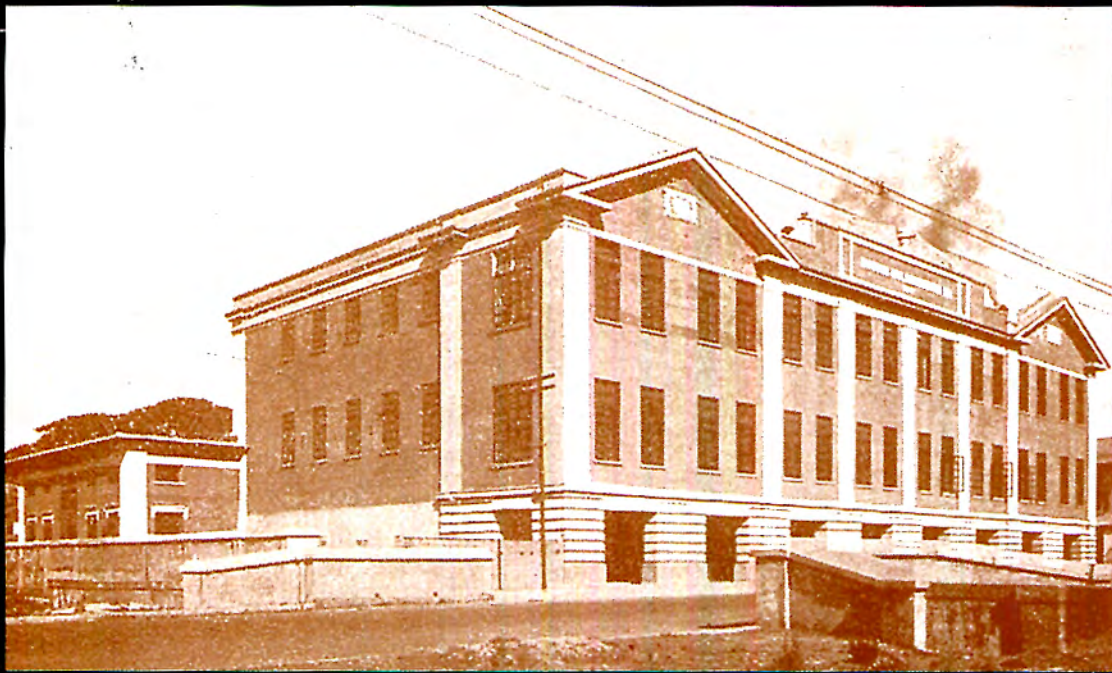
The customs house still stands today and the old clock is still indicating the correct time.



The Customs House on Strand Road in Yangon around 1920



The building is nowadays holding a soft drink factory in Wadan Street.



An ice-factory in lower Keighley street producing in 1926 over 300 tons of ice per day.



The building in Wadan Street is now housing several families



A mineral water factory in upper Keighley Street around 1926



The ministers' office in downtown Yangon, in this building Bogyoke Aung San was murdered in 1947.



Secretariat in the centre of downtown Yangon



High-rise buildings in the same street now named Kyi Daw Street, only one old building survived at the end of the street.



A quiet lane called Kyin Byare Street in downtown Yangon where U Ohn Sein lived.



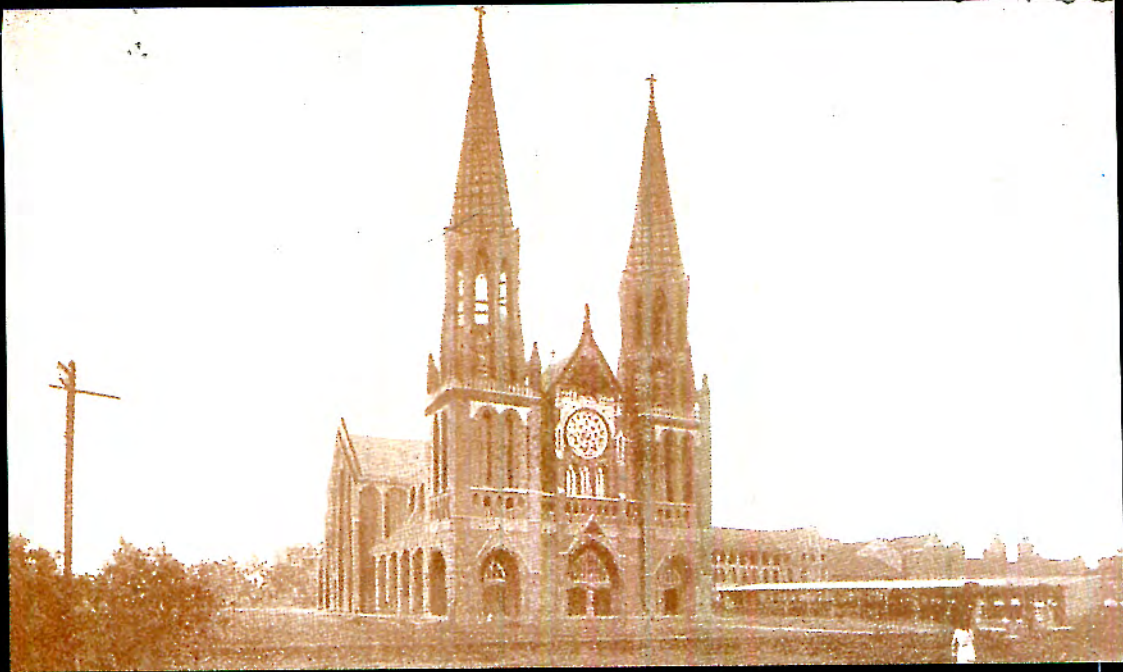
The building on the corner of Bo Aung Kyaw Street and Mahabandoola Street has been replaced by a modern office tower. Only a small part of the original building can be seen in Bo Aung Kyaw Street.



The Free Resthouse in Bo Aung Kyaw Street (Sparks Street) which was built by an important Indian merchant in 1900. The same merchant established also a girls' school in 28th street.



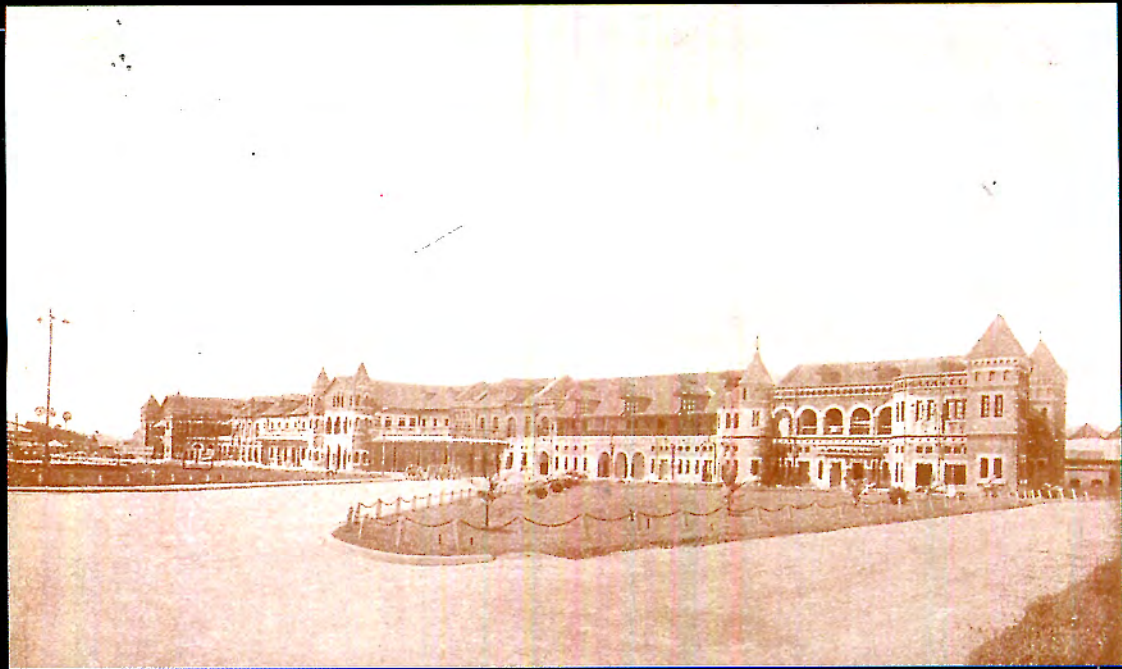
St Mary's Cathedral in Bo Aung Kyaw Street.
The grave of the Dutch architect is at the
entrance of the church.



The catholic church in Bo Aung Kyaw Street (Sparks Street) around 1927. The construction of the church was finished in November 1909. The Dutch architect who built the church, died in 1911 when he fell from the stairs in the church.



Yangon Railway Station, designed by the Myanmar architect U Tin in 1910 (the same architect built the City Hall).



Phayre Street Station before 1910, the main railway station for Myanmar Railways which was used for the first time in 1877 by the Rangoon and Irrawaddy Valley State Railways.



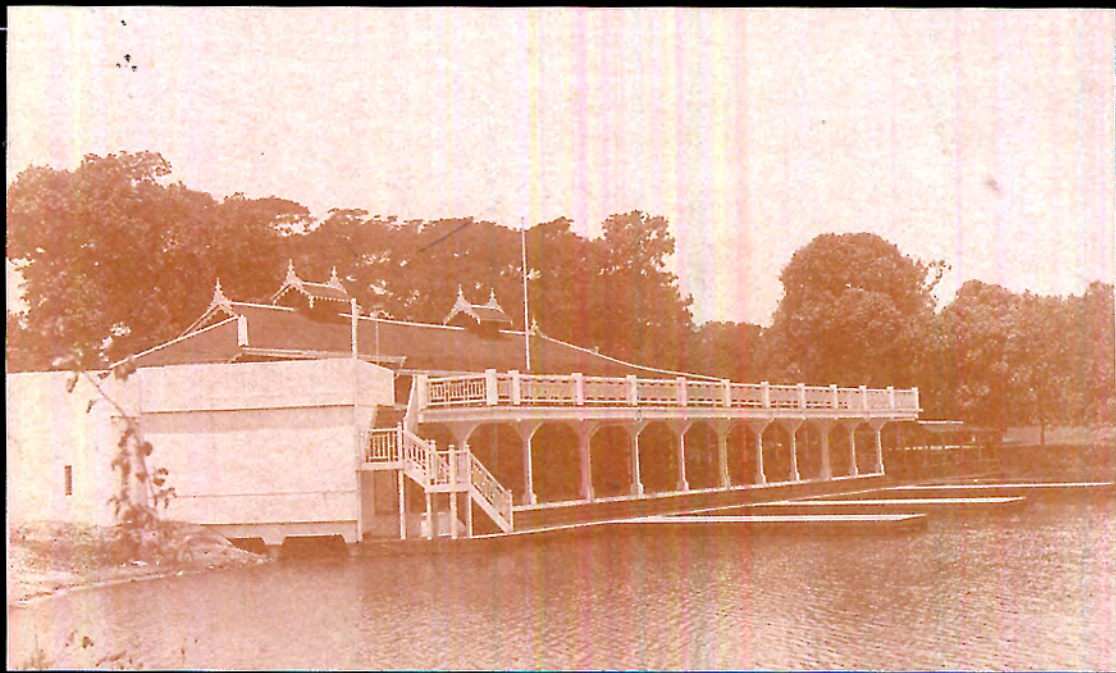
The same view in 2003 with the Kandawgyi Palace Hotel on the left side in front of the Shwedagon Pagoda.



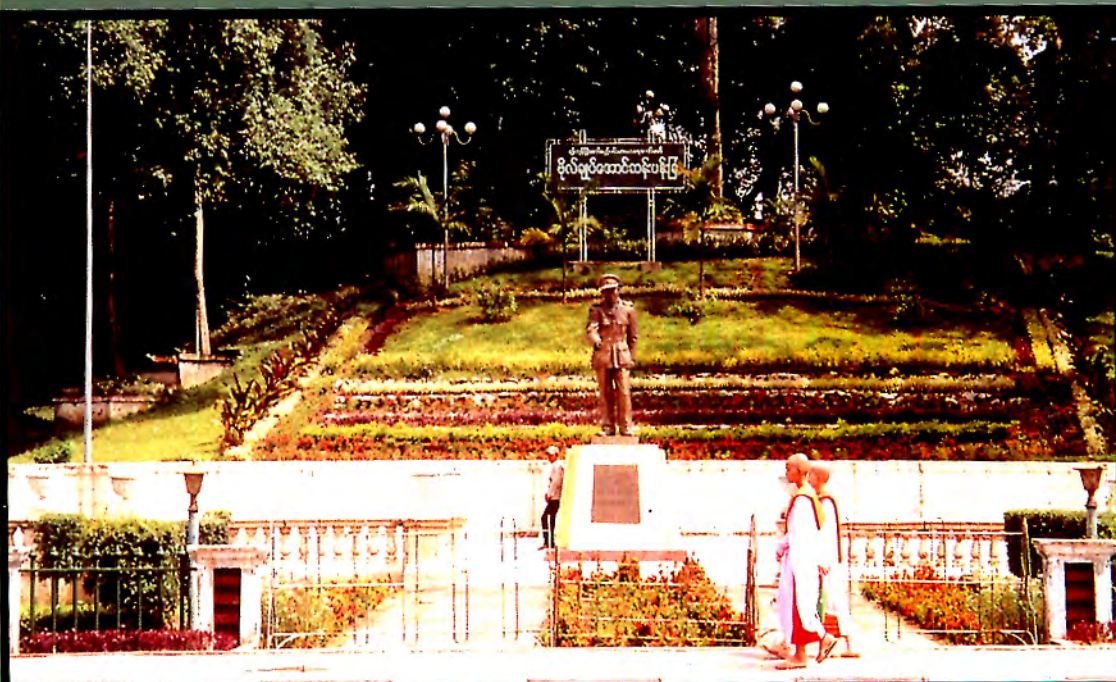
A picture taken around 1925 of the Royal Lake with in the distance the Shwedagon Pagoda.



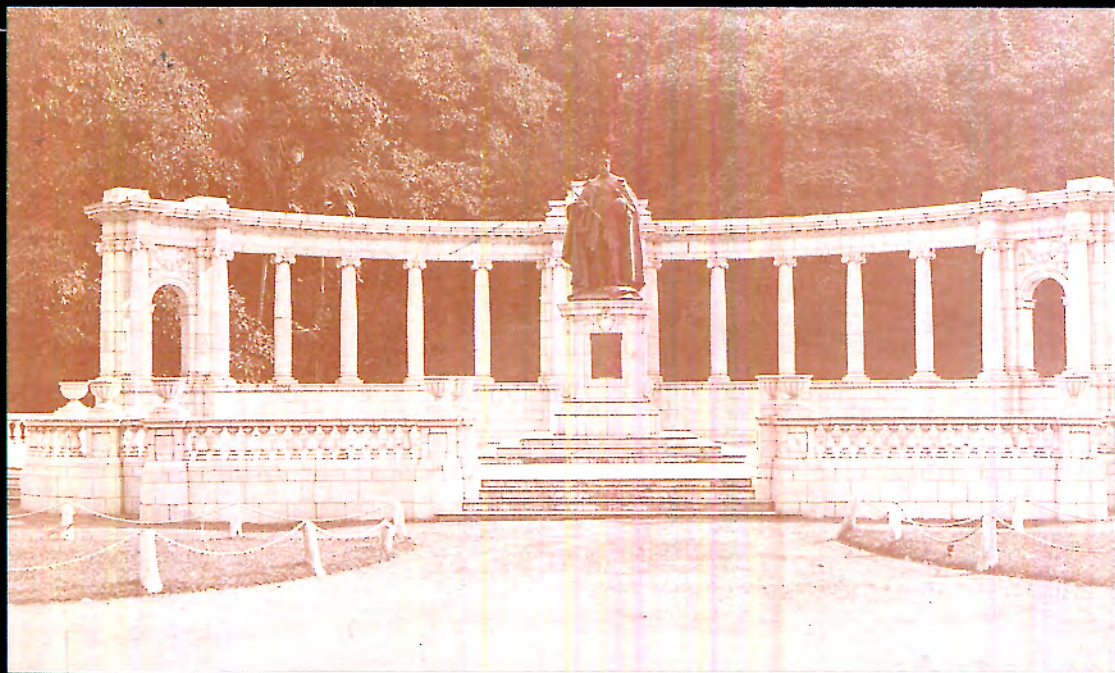
The old club is now part of the Kandawgyi Palace Hotel on the shore of the Kandawgyi Lake and houses a seafood restaurant.



The old boat club on the Royal Lakes was a popular place to meet people.



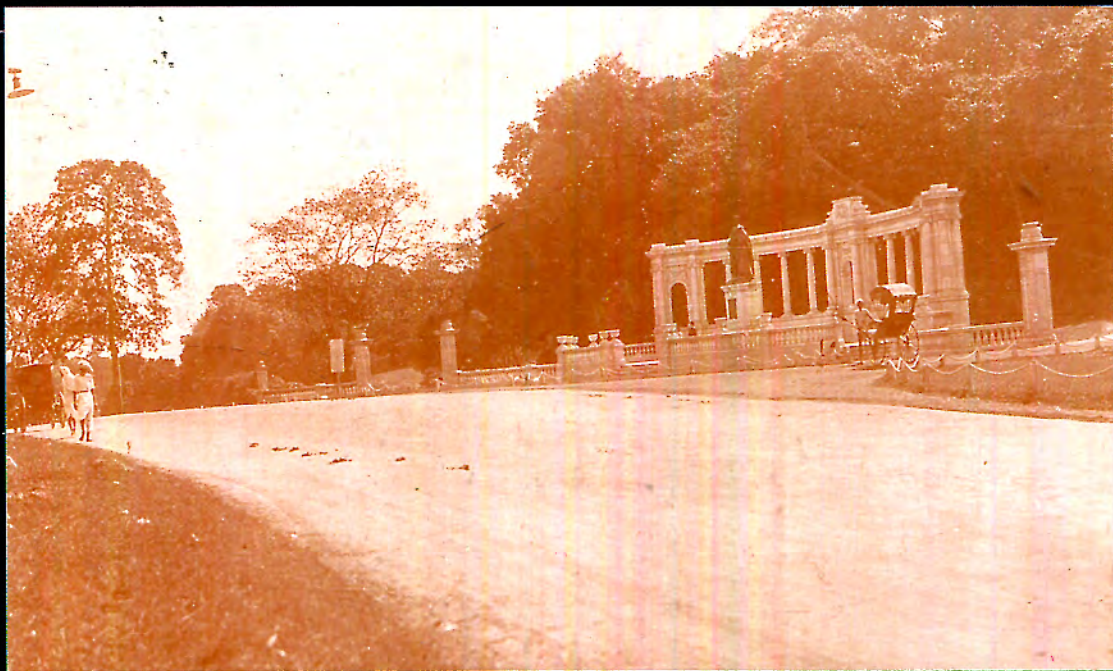
2 nuns are passing the statue of Bogyoke Aung San, the man who gave Myanmar independence in 1947.



Statue of King George VI at the same spot around 1920



Natmauk Street about 80 years later, the park behind the statue is called Bogyoke Park



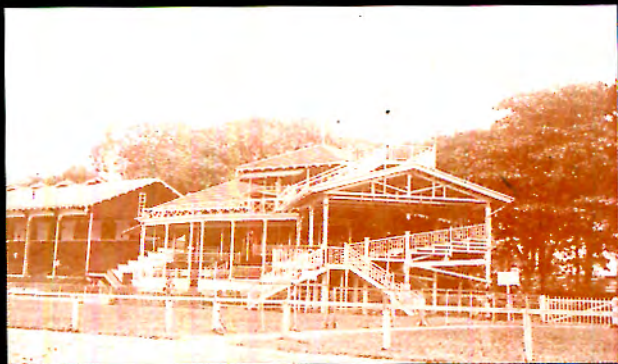
Statue in Park Lane. A hand pulled trishaw is waiting for his client who is paying a visit to the statue.



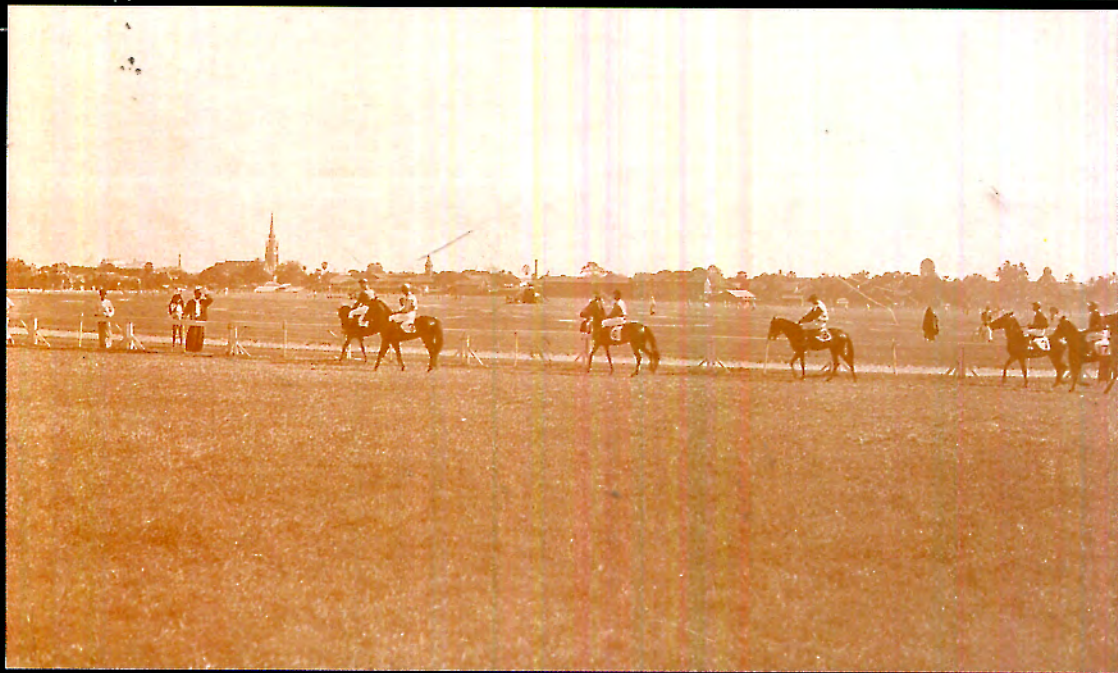
Nowadays called Kyaikasan ground, the logo "RTC" at the gate reminds of the former glory days.



In the '20's horseracing at the racecourse of the RTC was a favourite past-time for many people..



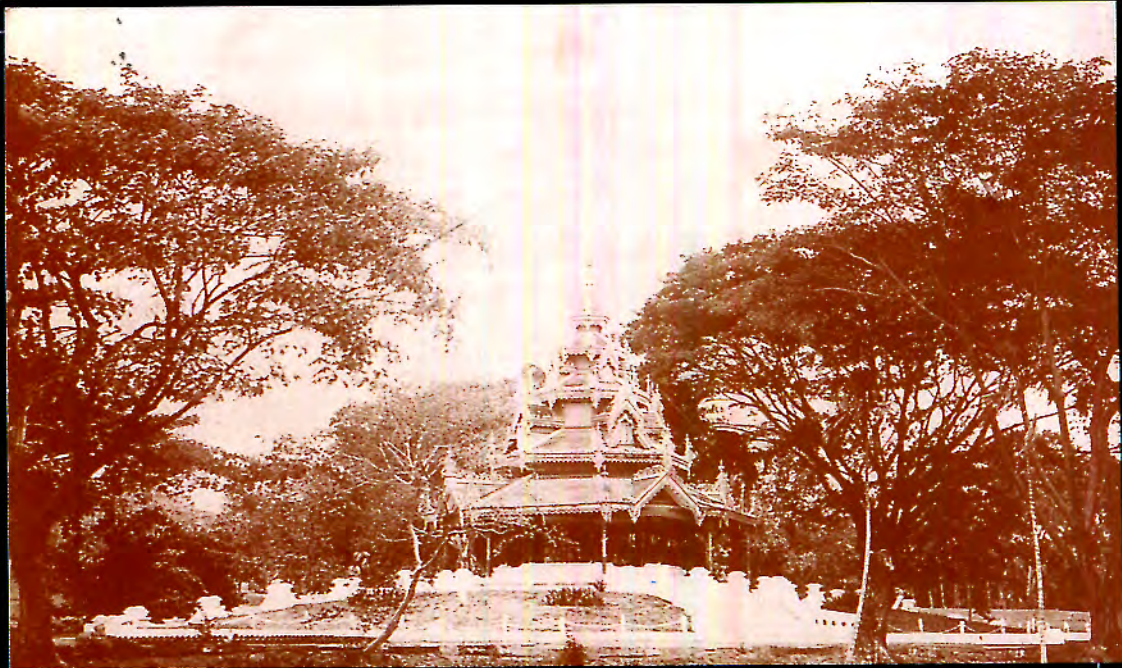
R.T.C.



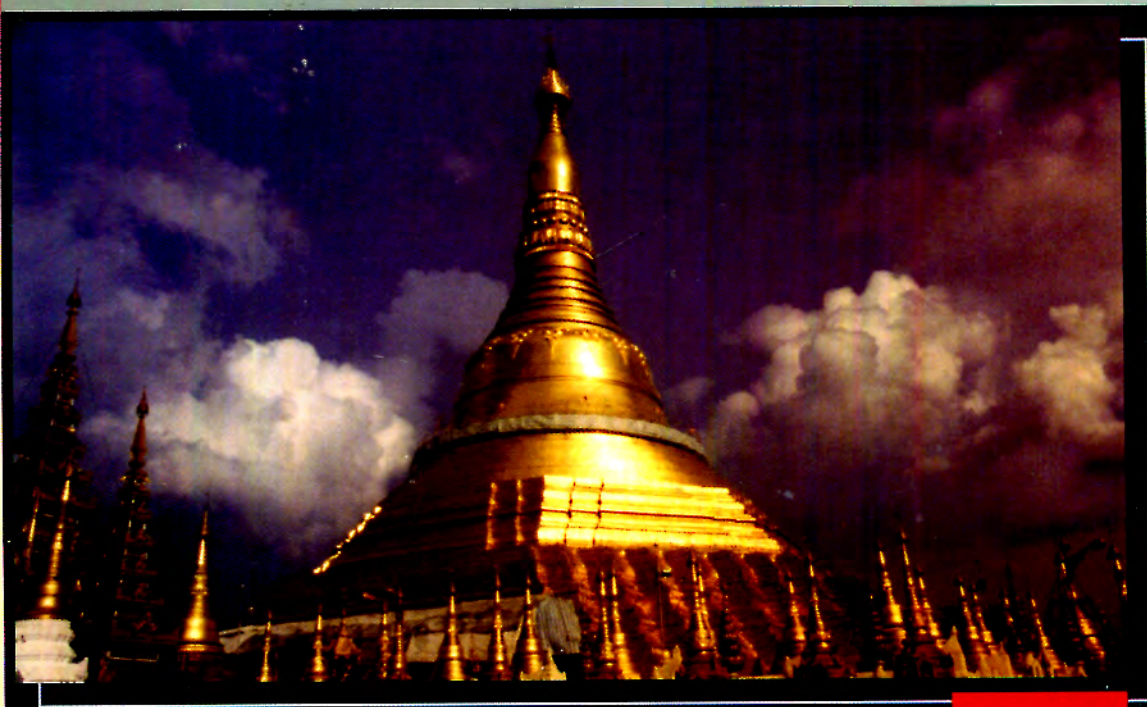
Horse racing in Yangon around 1920



The same rest house in 2003 in Kan Daw Mingala Park. The tomb of Queen Supayalat, the last queen of Myanmar and the tomb of U Thant, secretary-general of the UN is next to this park.



A rest house in the Cantonment Gardens opposite of the south gate of the Shwedagon Pagoda



The Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon is, for centuries already, the most important Buddhist shrine in Myanmar and frequently visited by devoted people to pay respect to Buddha. Of course this pagoda was an important subject for photography for U Ohn Sein.



The Shwedagon Pagoda around 1925



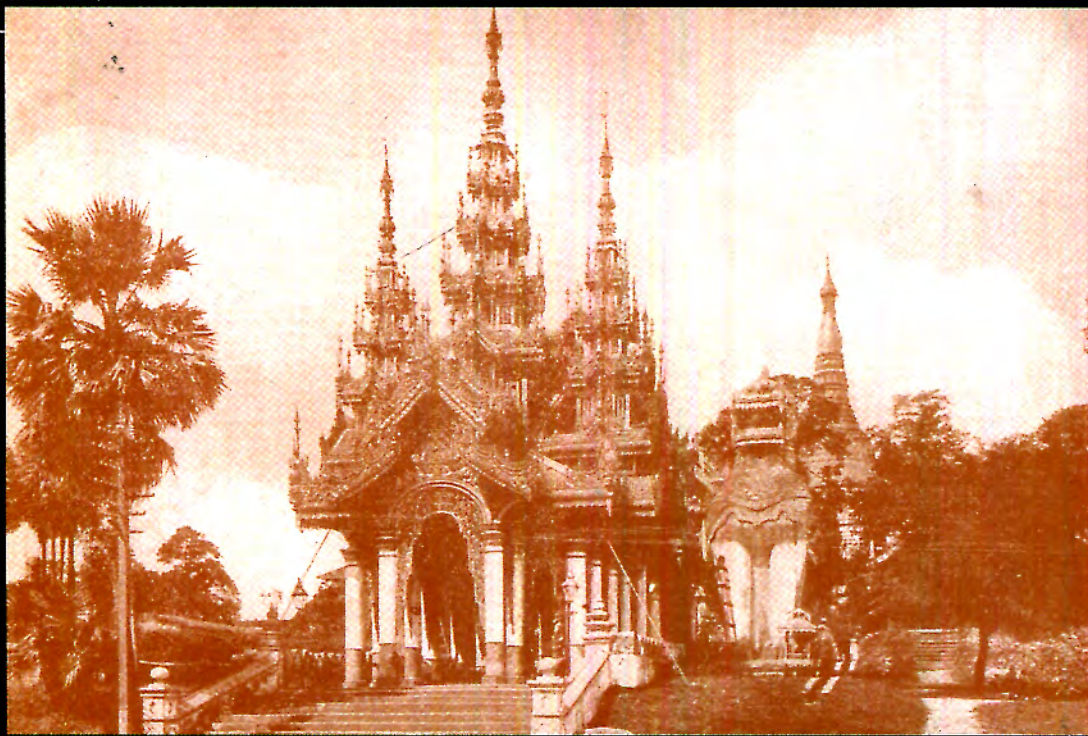
The south entrance of the Shwedagon Pagoda in 2003; trishaws have been replaced by modern cars.



The south entrance of the Shwedagon Pagoda
around 1920



Nowadays, coming along Shwedagon Pagoda Road, from a distance one can see the impressive statues of the chinthes, a mythical animal.



A view at the south gate, arriving from Pilgrim's Way, the old road leading from the harbour to the Shwedagon Pagoda.



The south gate of the Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon seen from U Htaung Bo Street.



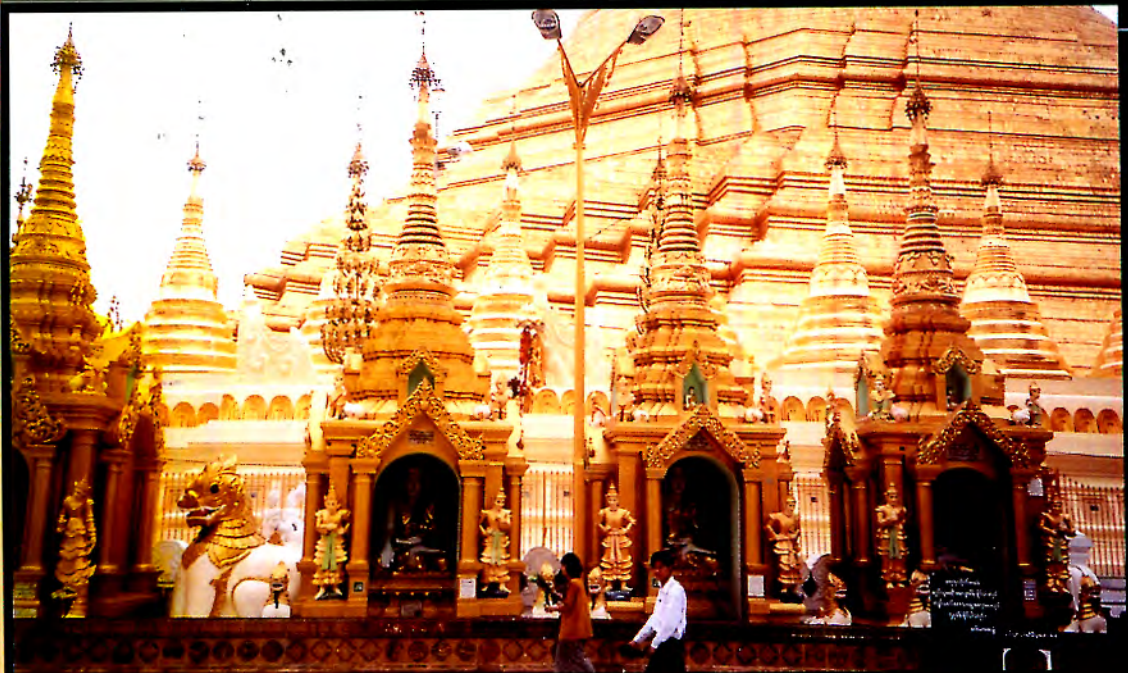
The south gate of the Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon seen from the eastern side.



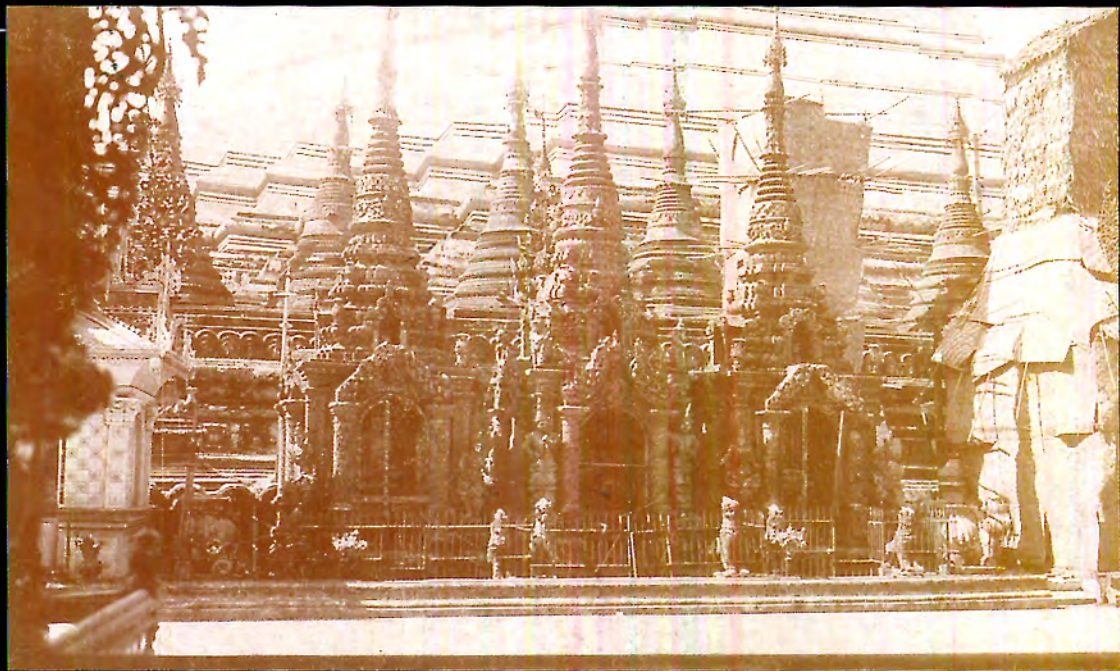
A view of the Shwedagon Pagoda through the trees



The Shwedagon Pagoda seen from the south. The white wall in front of the pagoda was an important defence wall during the first Anglo-Burma (Myanmar) war.



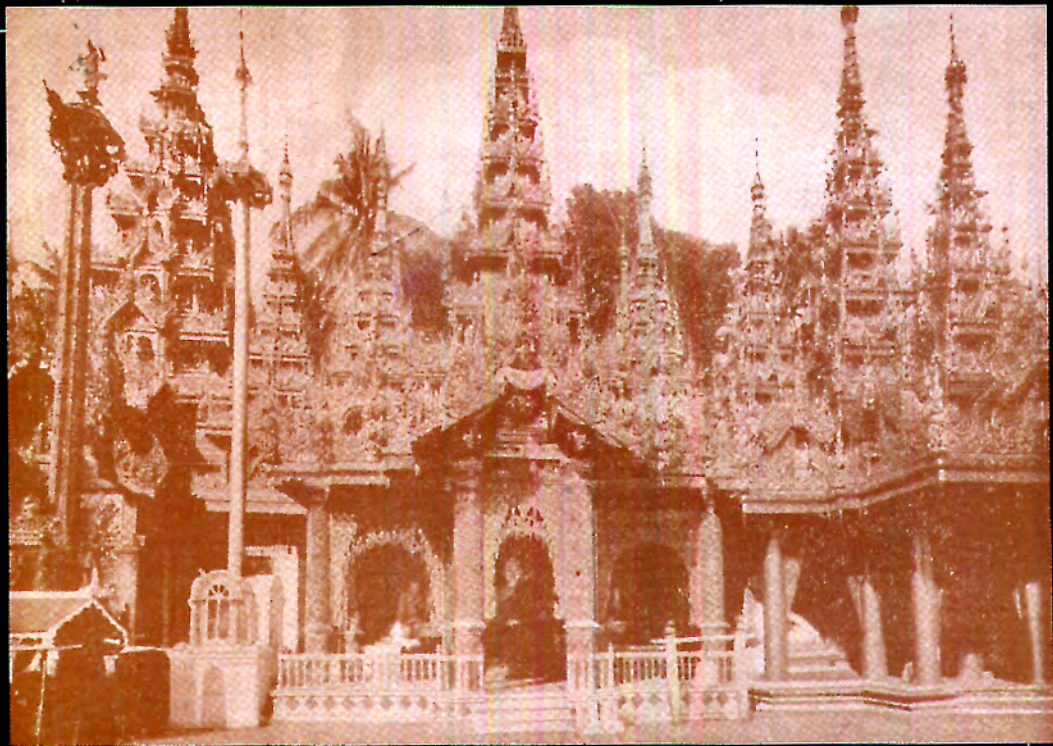
Close-up of the base of the stupa in 2003



Close-up at the base of the stupa, some parts of the pagoda are being renovated.



View on the platform in 2003



One of the many religious buildings on the platform of the Shwedagon Pagoda around 1920



Devote Buddhists are pouring water over the Buddha at the worship place for people born on a Monday.



The same place to worship Buddha for Monday born
around 1920.



People walking at the platform of the Shwedagon Pagoda in 2003.



People walking in clockwise direction around the stupa of the Shwedagon Pagoda.



Residences in Yangon around 1920



Residences in Yangon around 1920



Residences in Yangon around 1920

Acknowledgment

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