

2 Hanling Village and Tea Hills

Milne is also the earliest Westerner known to write a travelogue about Dongqian Lake.

His article series *Seven Months' Residence at Ningpo* was initially serialized in *The Chinese Repository* and later included in his book, *Life in China*. As a highly articulate writer, he left a detailed record of his seven-month stay in Ningbo.

Milne's book presents a rich tapestry of Ningbo's cityscape, historical landmarks, local traditions, religious practices, civic affairs, political atmosphere, military drills, and the imperial examination system. It also offers a glimpse into his interactions with Ningbo's then-prefect, Shu Gongshou, as well as the traditional architecture of Ningbo residences, ancestral halls, tea houses, theaters, bathhouses, and the vibrant customs surrounding the New Year celebrations. Notably, the book features what is possibly the world's earliest tourism map of Ningbo, which may have been illustrated by Milne himself. Regrettably, his book remains untranslated into Chinese.

After spending a night at "Ying-kia-wan", Milne's team left their anchorage and took a boat to Hanling. It was the dry season, so the lake was shallow. "Extreme difficulty arose from the shallowness of the water, which in consequence of the prevailing drought, was often only two feet deep; the boat occasionally stuck fast in the mud, so that the boatmen had frequently to jump into the water to shove it off, a task which they performed rather reluctantly. As the lake deepened, we proceeded with more facility. At last, a fine breeze sprung up to our assistance ..."

Throughout his visit to Dongqian Lake, Milne was deeply impressed by the warm hospitality of the villagers. "The civility with which we were received was invariable ... The women flocked around to see our faces, examine our clothes, and watch our movements. Instead of flying from us as from hurtful beasts, the people escorted us out of their villages and conversed with us in words kind and friendly."

Upon reaching the Hanling village, Milne received warm welcomes from a multitude of spectators, "some of whom waded up to their waists, or mounted the trees, to catch a glimpse of the strangers. Captain Kennedy and myself went to the principal temple, where we were entertained with tea, cakes, and sweetmeats, sent by the principal inhabitants, each presenting a separate tray. From this we walked into the village, a closely packed and busy place."

Despite its significance as a town situated by Dongqian Lake, Hanling is surprisingly underrepresented in old photographs. According to Shui Yin, the only known image of Hanling from the late Qing Dynasty was taken by French photographer René Tillot before 1905. It was identified by Qiu Bainian, who recognized the location as Hanling's Pei Jun Temple. Constructed during the transition from the Ming to the Qing dynasty, this temple was once the largest among those lining the lake. Tragically, it was destroyed by Japanese forces in 1942. Today, the site is home to the Blossom Hill Hanling.

In the evening, Milne's team returned to the boat and ascended a "tea-hill that overhung the town and was beautifully planted with the shrub, in terraces rising one above another". This might be present-day Fuquan Mountain.



A photo of "Ying-kia-wan" in 1917 by Millican.

3 Hiking the "Peak of Pihpoo"

The following day, Milne, still full of enthusiasm, completed a hike at the "Peak of Pihpoo" (aka. Centipede Peak; currently known as Bai-bu-jian).

The "Peak of Pihpoo" lies on the southwestern shore of Dongqian Lake and was once celebrated as one of the top ten scenic views of the Dongqian Lake area. In recent years, this picturesque spot has been transformed into the popular Tingxiling Ancient Road.

"Our object in visiting this spot was to ascend the Peak of Pihpoo, or 'Centipede Peak,' which looked like a sharp needle shooting up into the very clouds. The hamlet looked insignificant, but prettily situated. As soon as we landed, the headman of the village obtained us the services of two lads to act as guides. We soon discovered several paths leading to the summit of the mountain. To the right a good road struck off, comfortably shaded by trees; but as it seemed circuitous and we hoped another might be found nearer the centre of the mountain, we took a middle course, which turned out to be very romantic, though rough and little frequented. The ascent was toilsome. On reaching the summit, we named it 'Discovery Peak,' being the first Englishmen that had trod that height."

Milne further wrote: "The peak was narrow, barren, and rocky, and its sides, here and there, planted with young firs. The prospect from it was extensive and inspiring. The entire department of Ningpo, with its mountain boundaries, large towns, numerous villages, and well-watered plains, lay at our feet ..."

Before descending, they determined to erect a monument on the peak in commemoration of "the feat of the day". "We collected heaps of stones, and, by dint of hard work, raised a pile, in the heart of which we lodged a bottle containing a written record of our achievement, with our autographs, dated on 'Discovery Peak.' [May 26, 1842]"

Their descent was rapid, and their sail across the lake equally so. As Milne accounted, they had taken a survey of the lake from various points. "... ascertained from native estimates that its circumference was about twenty-two miles. Its greatest depth was said to be only six feet, and the bottom all lined with a bluish clay. It had altogether six outlets, from each of which there was an open and clear water-passage to the city of Ningpo. There were likewise seventy-two villages which encompassed the lake, all fertile and populous. From the numerous fishing and trading boats we saw plying about, there must be a very important traffic upon the waters of the lake."

4 Other Historical Photos and Records

In addition to Milne, several others also documented their impressions of Dongqian Lake.

One of them was British missionary James Hudson Taylor, who arrived in the city in October 1855. On January 20, 1858, he married Maria, a staff member at the Chongde Girls' School built at Zhudu Bridge, at the British consulate in Ningbo. The newlyweds spent part of their honeymoon in Dongqian Lake's bustling lakeside town, Muh-che-yen.

According to *Hudson Taylor in Early Years*, a book published in 1911 by Taylor's son and daughter-in-law, the couple's stay at Muh-che-yen was marked mainly by interactions with local fishermen. It was a time of great joy and tranquility for the young couple, who found themselves surrounded by love and happiness that lifted their spirits. However, a sudden typhoid outbreak forced them to relocate to the city for better living conditions, and only visit Muh-che-yen occasionally.

In November 1868, German geographer Ferdinand von Richthofen also visited Dongqian Lake, as did Arthur Evans Moule, who had lived in Ningbo for over twenty years.

Moule included photos of the Yue Fei Temple at Dongqian Lake in his book, along with copper engravings based on photos of Muh-che-yen Dam and Yue Fei Temple, as well as a pen drawing he made of Mt. Taogong.

As Moule described, one of his images showed the eastern shore of Dongqian Lake, about twelve miles from Ningbo, connected by a canal that serves as a harbor and refit area for many sea fishermen. Boats are winched up from the river into the canal and then into the lake, passing through a sloped embankment, likely Muh-che-yen Dam. Poplar trees line the mud dike of the town's busy pier, with packed housing at the mountain's base, and a small port encircled by rows of willow trees.

Many other foreign photographers, as Shui Yin reveals, also set their lenses on Dongqian Lake. In the early 20th century, Davies captured stunning images of Bangke Mountain and Yinwan Bay; around 1912, renowned British landscape photographer Donald Mennie photographed Yue Fei Temple. Millican's album contains a 1917 distant view of Yinwan, while other old photos of locations such as Yuebo Temple, Mei Lake, Qianyantou Village, Shanghong Bridge, Huli Pond, and Lihua Mountain still exist. However, some of these sites, such as Mei Lake, have changed considerably since then due to land reclamation. For those interested in further information, Shui Yin's book may offer a wealth of insight.