HISTORICAL TOMBSTONES OF MALACCA.
No title-page issued? Only red-brown wall gilt lettering? There may have been a TP (see below) but I have never seen it. Have only seen copies without title-page, as here.

Early TP:

Historical Tombstones of Malacca mostly of Portuguese Origin,
With the Inscriptions in Detail and Illustrated
By numerous Photographs. By Robert Norman Bland
London: Elliot Stock, 1905, pp. 75.
INTRODUCTORY NOTES.

THE SERIES OF PHOTOGRAPHS in this book shows most of the Portuguese and Dutch Memorial Stones now to be found in Malacca. Some few are so worn as to be undecipherable, but others are as clear and sharp to-day as they were two or even three centuries ago. The granite stones have worn the worst. Those of the Dutch period (1640–1795) are mostly of a dark close-grained stone that has hardly decomposed at all under the influence of constant heat and damp. Such stone is not to be found in Malacca, and possibly was brought from
Holland. The character of the carving of borders and armorial bearings seems to indicate European and not native workmanship.

Most of the Portuguese stones have been moved to the church built by the Dutch and now used for the services of the Church of England. Being under cover they are now likely to be well preserved. Nearly all the Dutch ones are in the ruined and roofless Church of Our Lady of the Annunciation on the hill of Malacca (renamed by the Dutch the Church of St. Paulus), and are exposed to weather. It is probable that this became a favourite burial place with the Dutch when they had built their own church by the river, and that some of the earlier Portuguese stones were displaced by them. In one case it is clear that a Portuguese inscription has been obliterated and a Dutch inscription placed on the same stone.

At a later date some of the early Dutch tombstones were displaced to make room for the burial vaults of a later generation.

Apart from these stones, there remain but few memorials of the early history of Malacca. The Javanese founders of the Kingdom of Malacca (13th century) have left nothing, nor have their Malay successors. The Malay dominion came to an end in 1511, when the town was stormed by the Portuguese under the
famous Affonso d'Alboquerque. In 1726, Valentyn wrote, "There are in the fortress several strong stone houses and pretty good streets all remembering the Portuguese times," but now there is not a single building distinctively Portuguese of the early period. The Dutch (1640–1795) have left a number of substantial and characteristic buildings, most of which are still in use. The Portuguese occupation, which lasted for 130 years, was a constant struggle with their Mohammedan subjects and neighbours, and, during the last 40 years, with the Dutch. During this period the town stood no less than eight sieges.

Godinho de Eredia, in a work dated 1618, mentions the following buildings in the Fortress of Malacca itself:—

"The Castle, and the Palace of the Governor, the Bishop's Palace, the Hall of the Council and of the Brotherhood of Mercy, and five churches: the Church of Our Lady of the Assumption, Our Lady of the Visitation and Mercy, Our Lady of the Annunciation (this stood in the Jesuits' College on the top of the hill), the Church of St. Dominic in the Convent of the Dominicans, the Church of St. Anthony in the Convent of the Augustines. There were besides two Hospitals."
Outside the walls were the suburbs of “Tranqueira” (the Palisades) and “Yler.” The first had two churches, St. Thomas’s and St. Stephen’s; the latter one, that of Our Lady of Pity. On Bukit China (the Chinese Hill) stood the Church of the Mother of God and the Convent of the Capuchins of St. Francis. The Church of St. Laurence stood in the suburb of “Suppa,” now known as “Bunga Raya.” Beyond these, up the Malacca River, were three other churches—St. Lazarus, Our Lady of Guadalupe, and Our Lady of Hope.

It is stated that there were in that time 7,400 Christians in Malacca; four religious houses, eight parishes, fourteen churches, two chapels of the “Hospitaliers,” besides oratories and hermitages.

Of all these buildings all that now remains is a ruined church, a ruined bastion or gateway, and a few tombstones.

The Dutch period lasted 154 years from 1640 and has been chronicled in Valentyn’s History of Malacca (1726). This, as in the case of the Portuguese, is a record of frequent fighting with their Mohammedan neighbours—trading outports were frequently “cut off,” and the town itself was attacked more than once. The Selangor Malays besieged Malacca in 1756; and again, in 1784, only ten years before the first English occupation, a mob of Selangor
and Rhiow Malays under Raja Haji kept the Dutch inside the town and suburbs for nearly six months.

The Dutch built only one church (it is used for Protestant worship to this day), but many of the inscriptions on their tombs show that they were a religious people.

I have thought it possible that others may find an interest in these few surviving memorials of the founders of European dominion in the Far East—people who led perilous lives in uncomfortable surroundings, the Portuguese animated by a religious “furor” which hoped to dominate the world, the more practical Dutch by the hope of commercial supremacy. I am much indebted to Messrs. Copley, Pringle, and Howell for assistance in taking the photographs, and to the Rev. R. E. S. Affonso, Vicar of the Portuguese Church of St. Peter, for help in deciphering the Portuguese inscriptions; also to Mr. Merewether’s list, published in No. 33 of the Journal of the Straits’ Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.

R. N. BLAND.

Malacca,

November, 1904.
Translation of Armenian Inscription:

(Taken from "History of the Armenians in India").

Hail! thou that readest the tablet of my tomb wherein I now do sleep.
Give me the news, the freedom of my countrymen, for them I did much weep.
If there arose among them one good guardian to govern and to keep.
Vainly I expected in the world to see a good shepherd come to look after the scattered sheep.
I, Jacob, grandson of Shameer, an Armenian of a respectable family whose name I keep,
Was born in a foreign town in Persia, new Inefa, where my parents now for ever sleep.
Fortune brought me to this distant Malacca, which my remains in bondage doth keep.

Separated from the World on the 7th July, in the year of our Lord
1774,
at the age of 29.
My mortal remains were deposited in this spot in the
Ground which I had purchased.

Dutch Inscription:

Here lie the remains of Heer Jacob Shamier,
the Armenian Merchant,
who was buried on the 7th July, in the year of Our Lord 1774,
in the 29th year of his age.
Sepultura do P. (Padre) SIMÃO SOARES,
Châtre (Chantre) d'esta sé.
Faleceu em 30 d'Agosto de 1619.

Grave of the Priest SIMON SOARES,
Chanter of this See.
Died on the 30th August, 1619.
É do P. (Padre) IOÃO LUIS BARBOZA,
Châtre (Chantre) Ó (que) foi d'esta Sé e Vigre (Vigario) de S. Thomé.
Falleceo em 24 de Março de (1)620.

Is (the Grave) of IOÃO LUIS BARBOZA,
Chanter of this See and Vicar of San Thomé,
who died on the 24th March, 1620.