

French Formosa expedition, 1884-1885

Human Relations Area Files - Franco



Description: -

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United States -- Claims

Bills, Private -- United States

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Taiwan -- Description and travel French Formosa expedition, 1884-1885

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Notes: Selections from original published: Paris : Delagrave, 1894.

This edition was published in 1970



Filesize: 47.810 MB

Tags: #Expedition #french #Formosa #1884

The French Formosa expedition, 1884

For over a year prior to China's 'unofficial' declaration of war in 1884, Liu Yung-fu's 'Black Flag' forces effectively harassed the French at Tongking, at times fighting behind entrenched defences or else laying skilful ambushes.

L'expédition française de Formose, 1884

Lange's men bivouacked for the night to the west of the village, ready to attack the Chinese the following morning. The Chinese government agreed to negotiate, but refused to apologise or pay any indemnity.

Franco

At the same time, the Chinese armies had no prospect whatsoever of driving the French from Hung Hóá or Chũ. In February 1885 a French campaign forced Pan to retreat, and the French troops soon reoccupied the town.

A Timeline of Taiwanese History

The French debacle at Lang Son undermined any support in Paris for a general war with China and probably helped prevent the enormous loss of life that might have resulted from such a conflict. As a result of this reverse, French control over Formosa was limited merely to the town of Keelung. Navy, instead of going forward with decisively defeating the natives, retreated from Formosa and sailed back home.

Sino

Women from Tonkin were sold by pirates.

The Chinese Siege of the French Fortress at Tuyen Quang, Tonkin, Vietnam, 1885

The first policy was to restrict the qualification and number of migrants who were allowed to cross the and settle in Taiwan. Although many of China's modern ships were state of the art, the personnel manning them were relatively unskilled: according to Rawlinson, only eight of the fourteen

ship captains that saw action in the war had received any modern training at all.

Formosa Expedition

The French interpretation was apparently also misunderstood by the imperial court in Hué, which continued its former relationship with China.

Pescadores campaign (1885)

In total, the relief column suffered some five hundred casualties en route to the fort. But he failed to establish a direct communication line with Russian forces.

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