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**IN MEMORY OF WILBUR D. BACON**

Korean historical studies suffered a great loss at the death of Mr. Wilbur D. Bacon in March, 1971, at the age of forty-five. His interest in Korea had begun twenty-five years earlier in 1947, when he was working in Seoul for the Department of Commerce of the U.S. Army Military Government. During the following years, he held various positions in Korea, principally as an official with the American foreign aid programs, and his interest in the history of the country grew throughout this period. We are indebted to him for a number of studies and publications about Korea which are listed below:

Welcome to Korea (orientation booklet). UNKRA,1953.

Guidebook to Seoul. OEC, Seoul, 1955

“Korean Journey”, in The Korea Times, 1955.

“Tombs of the Yi Dynasty Kings and Queens”. Transactions of the

Royal Asiatic Society Korea Branch, 1957.

“Fortresses of Kyonggi-do”. TA KB RAS, 1961.

31 at 31 (poetry collection). Tuttle Co.,1958.

“Korean Buddhist Temples” (for Japanese and Korean Studies Center Colloquium). Berkeley, 1968 (mimeographed by the Center).

Mr. Bacon decided in 1967 to return to the United States and dedicate himself to the full-time study of Korean history. He enrolled in the University of California at Berkeley, obtained his M.A. in 1968; and continued graduate work in history during 1969 and 1970. During this time, he became especially interested in studying the Korean accounts of the Imjin war (1592—98), that tragic conflagration begun when the Japanese, under the leadership of Toyotomi Hideyoshi, attacked Korea as part of his plans to dominate Asia. In one seminar directed by Professor Yamaguchi Kosaku in 1968, Mr. Bacon traced the history of the war from all available Western language sources, and began to investigate official and unofficial contemporary Korean accounts. This investigation led him to embark on the task of translating the Chingbirok, the account of the war by Yu Songnyong, who was Prime Minister of Korea [page 6] during the Imjin war and an active participant in the events of those years-

The Chingbirok, which is described briefly in the translator’s intro­duction, has never been rendered into English. It is a record of great importance because it is an eye-witness Korean version of the war from beginning to end, which penetrates behind the scenes to illustrate the great trials and tribulations suffered by the Koreans. Due to the high position of Yu Songnyong, his account also sheds much light on the internal political struggles of the Korean court over the prosecution of the war.

This translation was begun in a course under the direction of Professor Michael C. Rogers, Chairman of the Department of Oriental Languages, University of California, Berkeley. Mr. Bacon felt it might take him ten years to complete the translation of the Chingbirok. He had scarcely collected together the pertinent documents and begun the translation when he was struck down by the unfortunate heart condition from which he died. As a good friend of his, with similar interests in Korean history, I felt that portions of the translation which he had started could be published as a tribute to him. His widow, Mrs. Betsy Bacon, concurred in this. Then the Korea Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society generously offered to cooperate and publish the translation in one of their Trans­actions.

With some minor editing, the translation which follows has been rendered in the same form in which Mr. Bacon left it. No doubt had he lived, Mr. Bacon himself would have polished the translation and sought to improve troublesome passages. Nevertheless, as it stands, the translation is a valuable beginning in the study of an important subject. In publishing the translation, it is the hope of his widow and his friends that it will arouse the interest of others to complete the task which he had begun. This would surely have been his wish.

Warren W. Smith Jr

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**TRANSLATOR’S INTRODUCTION**

This is a translation of the beginning of the Chingbirok 懲毖錄 (Record of Reprimands and Admonitions) by Yu Songnyong 柳成龍, which is an account of the Imjin 壬辰 war of 1592 (Hideyoshi’s invasion of Korea). It is based on an edition published in North Korea by the Kwahakwon 과학원 (Academy of Sciences) between 1959 and 1960, under the same title Chingbirok, which contains both the Sino-Korean original and a Korean translation. Although the Korean translation frequently expands and occasionally bends the original, it was very helpful in preparing this translation into English. A Japanese translation of the first two chapters (kwon 卷) of the Chingbirok, which cover the general narrative of events during the Imjin war, appeared in 1966: Chohiroku (J.), translated by Soga Masataka 曾我昌隆 (Tokyo: Shinko Shobo 新興書房, 1966). The Japanese translation relied on the North Korean translation of the Chingbirok, as well as the original Sino-Korean text. However, it should be used with care, because the translation is often overly free and contains errors.

In this English translation, I have used Chinese and Japanese readings for Chinese and Japanese individuals and place names, and Korean persons and place names are of course rendered in Sino-Korean. Names of offices,etc., which are not translated, are explained in the notes. The glossary attached to the end of the Korean translation was helpful in preparing the notes.

The author of the Chingbirok, Yu Songnyong (pen name: Soae 西厓), was born in 1542 and died in 1607. He had a successful official career and held various high posts,including those of Second State Councilor and Minister of Personnel in the years just prior to the outbreak of the Imjin war,and Prime Minister during the war. He was active in the diplomatic exchanges with Japan before the war,and during the fighting was reponsible for liaison with the Chinese troops. During the peace negotiations he was entrusted with the task of reorganizing the military forces in the central area of Korea. He therefore directly participated in many of the events he described. In 1604 he was exiled for a short time [page 8] to his home near the town of Andong 安東 in North Kyongsang Province, and while there completed the Chingbirok, most of which had apparently been written earlier.

The Chingbirok consists basically of two parts. The first part, in two chapters, is Yu’s personal account of the Japanese invasion,with a brief preface explaining why he wrote it. The remaining 14 chapters are documents relating to the war.

The Chingbirok and the diary of Admiral Yi Sunsin 李舜臣 (1545-98) are the two most quoted sources for information on the Imjin war,even by Japanese authors. I therefore hope that I will be able some day to complete this translation of Yu’s narrative so that a contemporary Korean view of the war will be available to English-speaking readers.