

Siriraj Museum

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Faculty of Medicine Siriraj Hospital, Mahidol University

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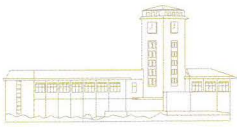
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## Message from the Museum Director

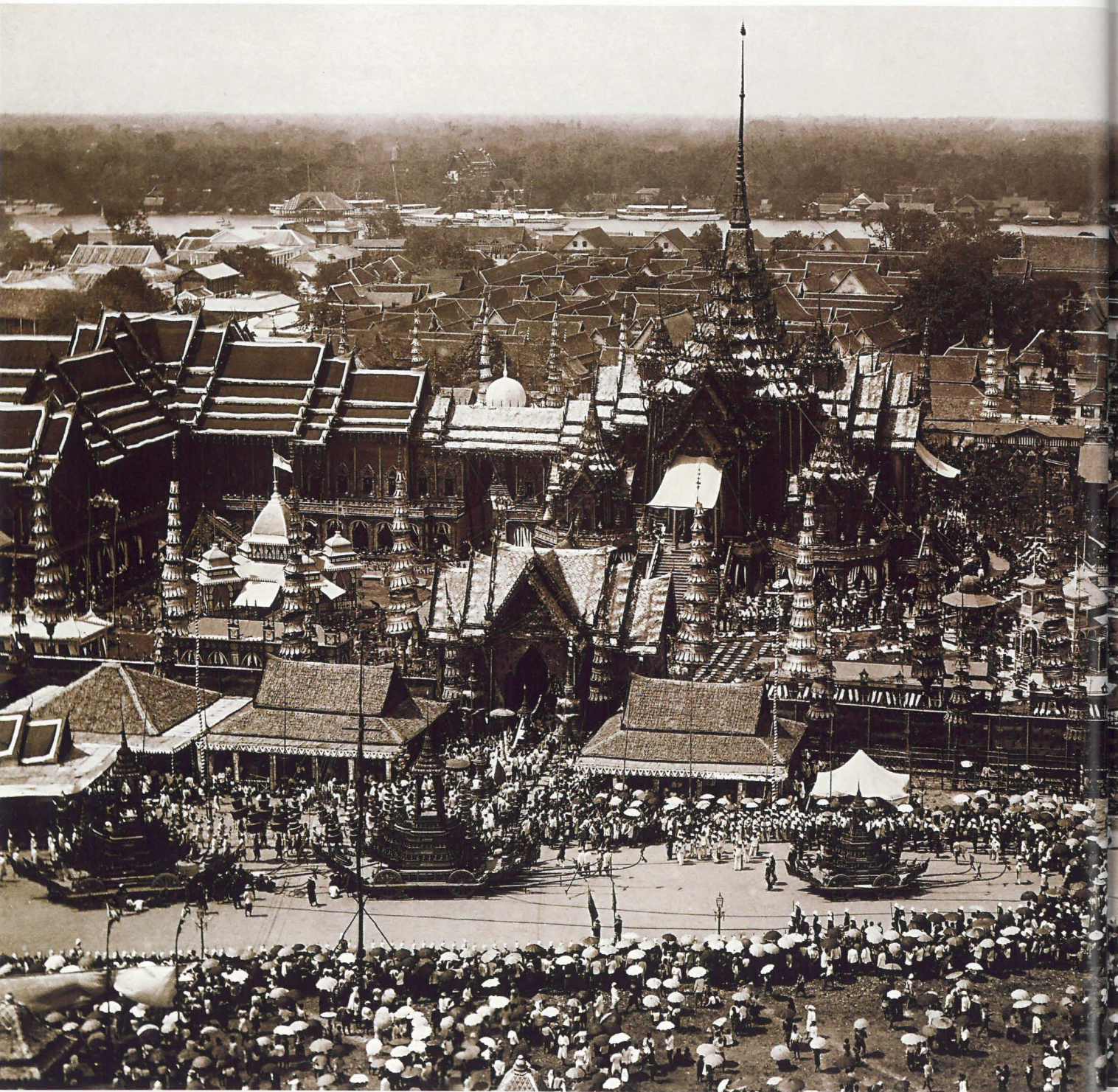
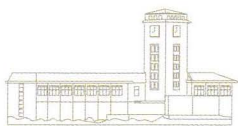
A plot of land located at the south of the Bangkok Noi estuary has been engraved with the past glories of the Ayutthaya Kingdom, and it became a part of the northern fortresses during the Thonburi Dynasty.

After the establishment of the Chakri Dynasty in 1782, King Rama I granted it to Prince of Wang Lang.

Over the years, this land was utilized for various purposes, and eventually became the home of Siriraj Hospital, up to the present time. The people in the neighborhood regard themselves to be inhabitants of Wang Lang-Bangkok Noi. As a constructive consequence, they have shared their 'long history of pride' to become part of our collections here at the Siriraj Museum for the information of prospective visitors.









## Strolling Down Memory Lane Up to the Dawn of the Museum

### Behind the Name: A Very Auspicious Name

In 1887 King Rama V issued a royal command to organize a Royal Cremation for H.R.H. Prince Siriraj Kakudhabhand, and for the other royal family members who also died in the same year, at the Royal Grounds (Sanam Luang).

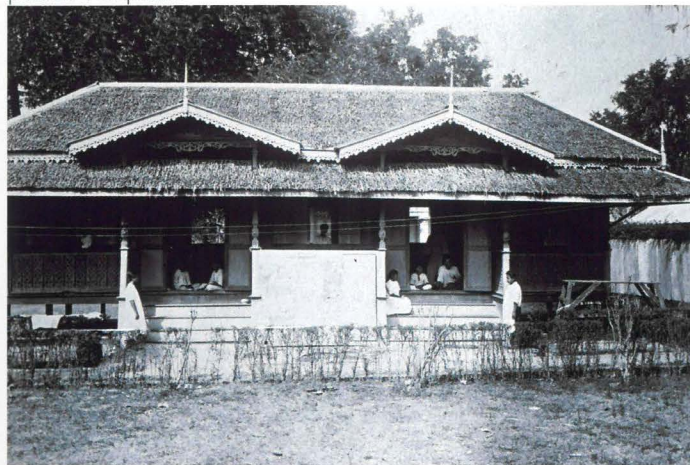
At this ceremony, King Rama V had the crematoriums and their architectural accessories built with wood, and after the ceremony, he graciously donated all of those wooden components to be used for hospital construction. His Majesty the King gave his remarks on this matter:

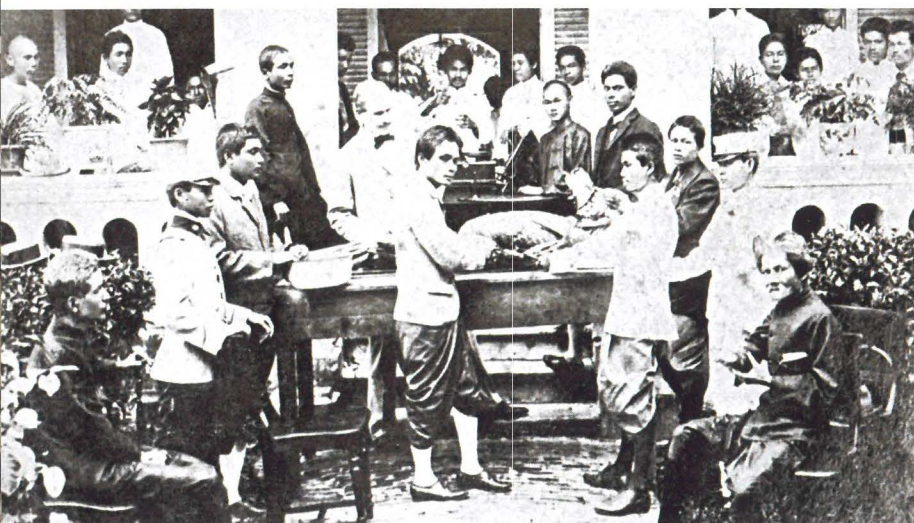
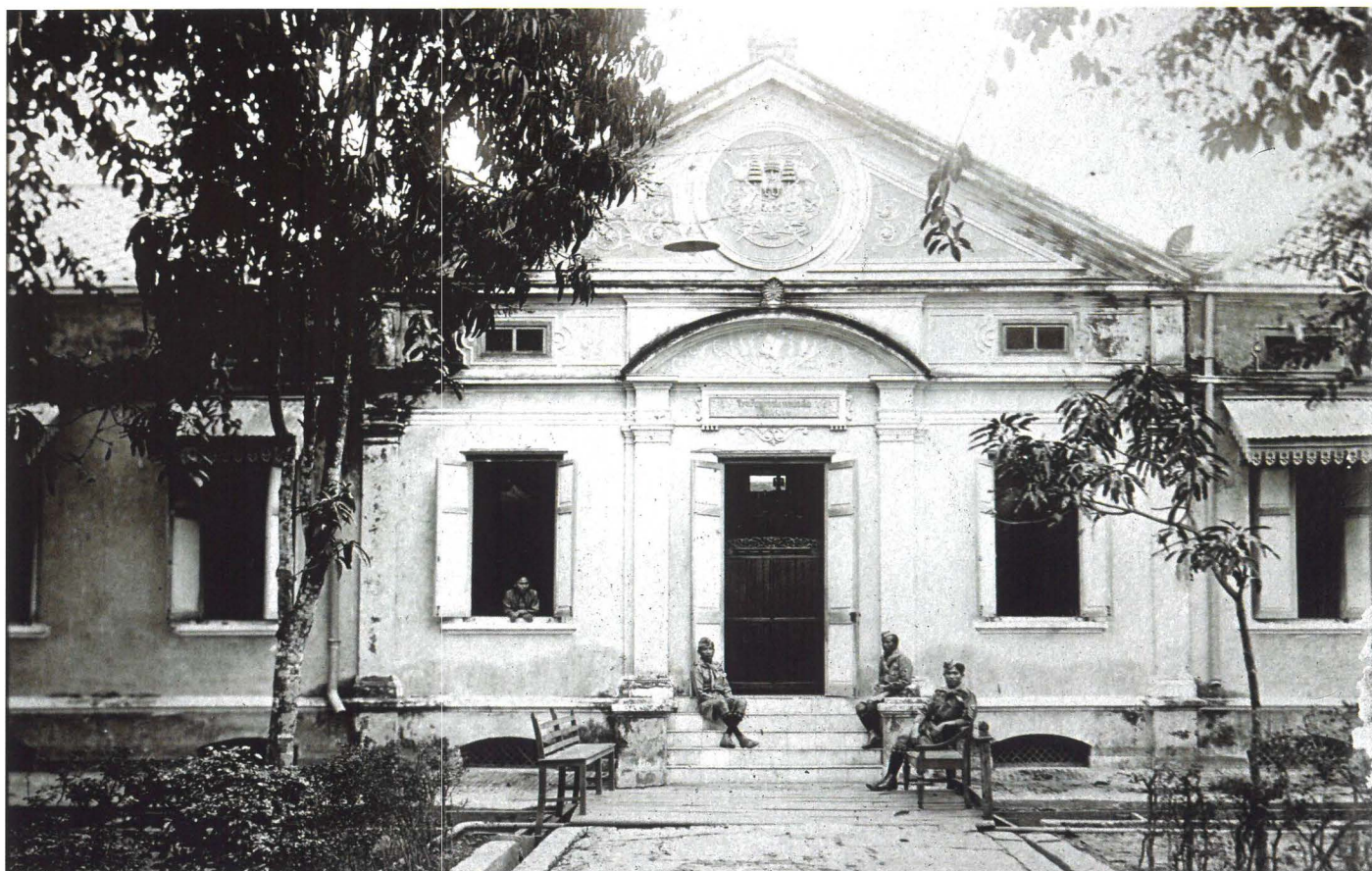
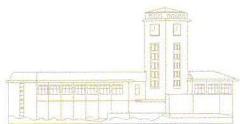
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*"... I took very good care of my beloved son, and yet he suffered the greatest misery. How much more suffering must all the children of my destitute subjects have to endure? This has added to my wish to establish a hospital ..."*

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Due mainly to his divine grace, Siriraj Hospital, with the name graciously granted by His Majesty the King, was established in the following year in the Wang Lang area as Thailand's first public hospital.





## Emergence of the Royal Medical College

Realizing that the hospital would be unable to operate without a faculty of physicians, after due consideration the hospital construction committee agreed to establish a medical school.

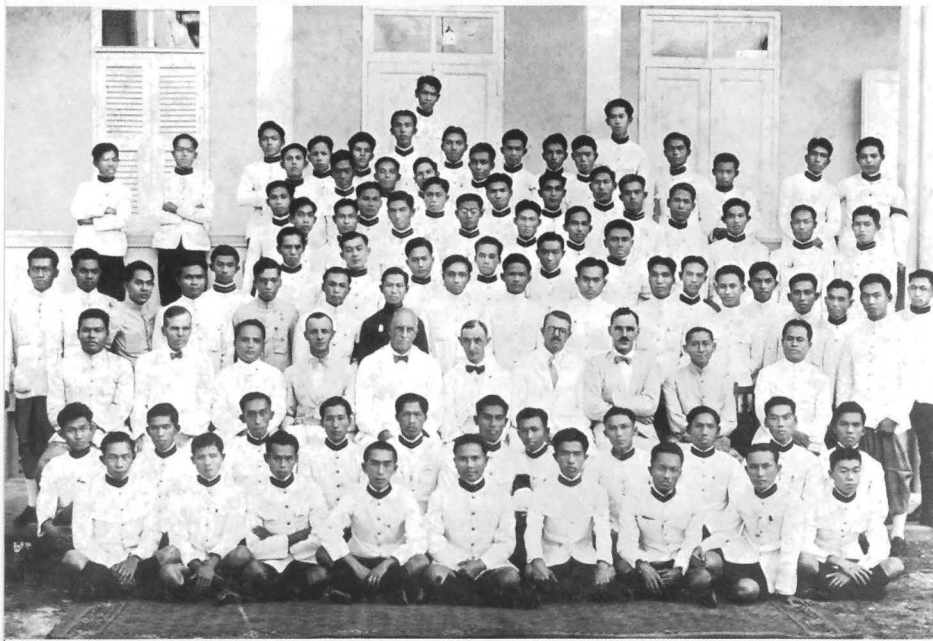
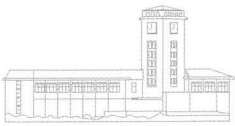
It was not until the year 1890 that King Rama V graciously granted permission for Siriraj Hospital to provide medical school. Later, His Majesty the King granted the name for the medical school to be the Royal Medical College, which was engaged in producing physicians licensed with a medical certificate to perform services for the national benefit.

## His Royal Highness Prince Mahidol of Songkla

Despite nearly 30 years of the Hospital's existence, modern medicine and public health in Thailand still seemed less developed than they should be. When this unfortunate fact became known to H.R.H. Prince Mahidol of Songkla, he decided to shift his interest in joining the Royal Thai Navy to improving operations at Siriraj Hospital,

*"... I have thought to pursue the study of medicine because Thailand needs doctors and because I deem it to be truly beneficial. As for myself, if I'm not to be in the Navy, I then have of the intention to study medicine. Healthcare is very crucial, yet Thais are not quite aware enough about this. ..."*





## The Father of Modern Medicine and Public Health in Thailand And the Father of Tertiary Education in Thailand

In 1923, as a consequence of the collaboration between the Thai government and the Rockefeller Foundation, H.R.H. Prince Mahidol of Songkla acted on Thailand's behalf to improve its medical school, and also kindly provided private funding to make this improvement achievable. The results of this benevolent gesture were several new buildings at Siriraj hospital, and curriculum development and pedagogical training support by western medical professors. At the same time, Thai medical lecturers were offered opportunities to pursue their studies abroad with a view to contributing to the further development of Siriraj Hospital upon their return.



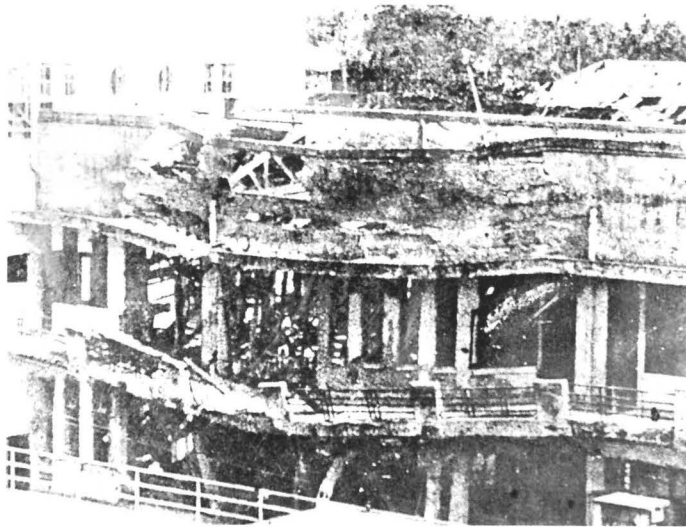
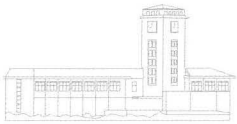
Therefore, the unsurpassed contributions of H.R.H. Prince Mahidol of Songkla to the improvement of higher education in Thailand have earned him the nationally-proclaimed titles of "Father of Modern Medicine in Thailand" and "Father of Public Health in Thailand". Later, he was also honored with the title of "Father of Tertiary Education in Thailand".



## The Very First Museum of Siriraj Hospital

During the period of medical improvements in Thailand, Prof. Dr. Aller G. Ellis, M.D., an American pathologist, collected specimens of patients' organs both for education and exhibition in a similar manner to Jefferson Medical College. This was, therefore, considered to be the first museum ever of Siriraj Hospital. Afterwards, several departments also shared this interest, resulting in more museums within the Royal Medical College at that time.

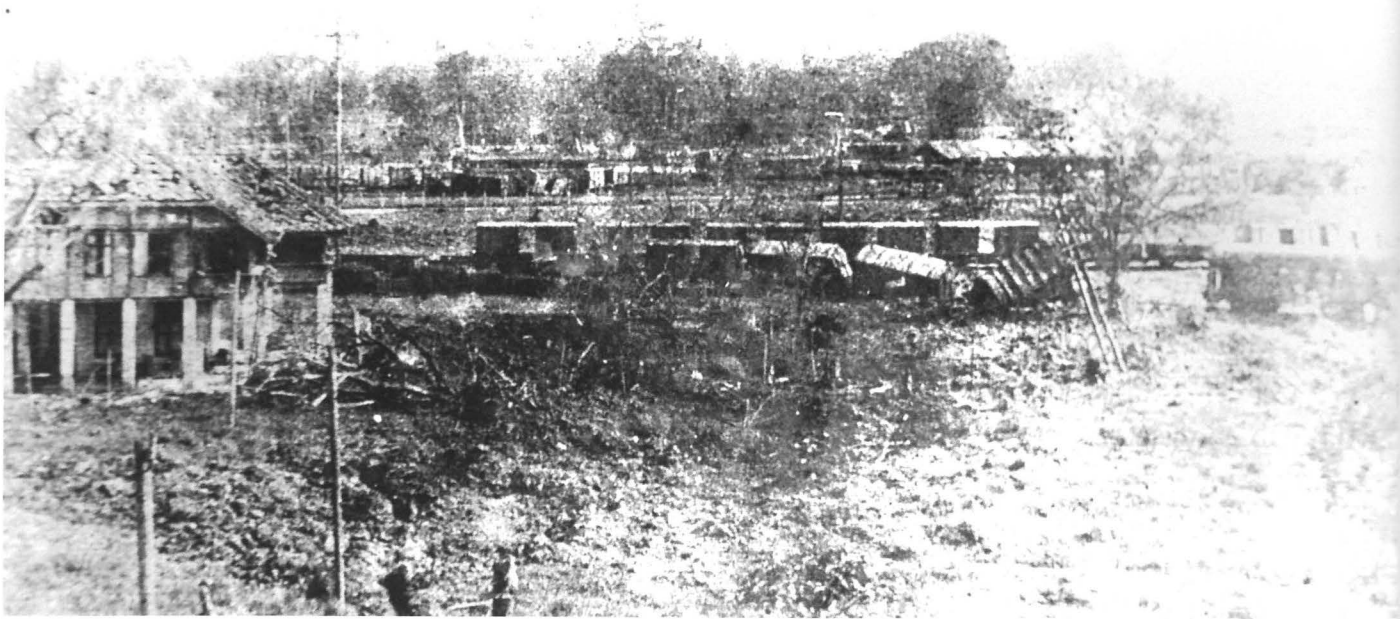




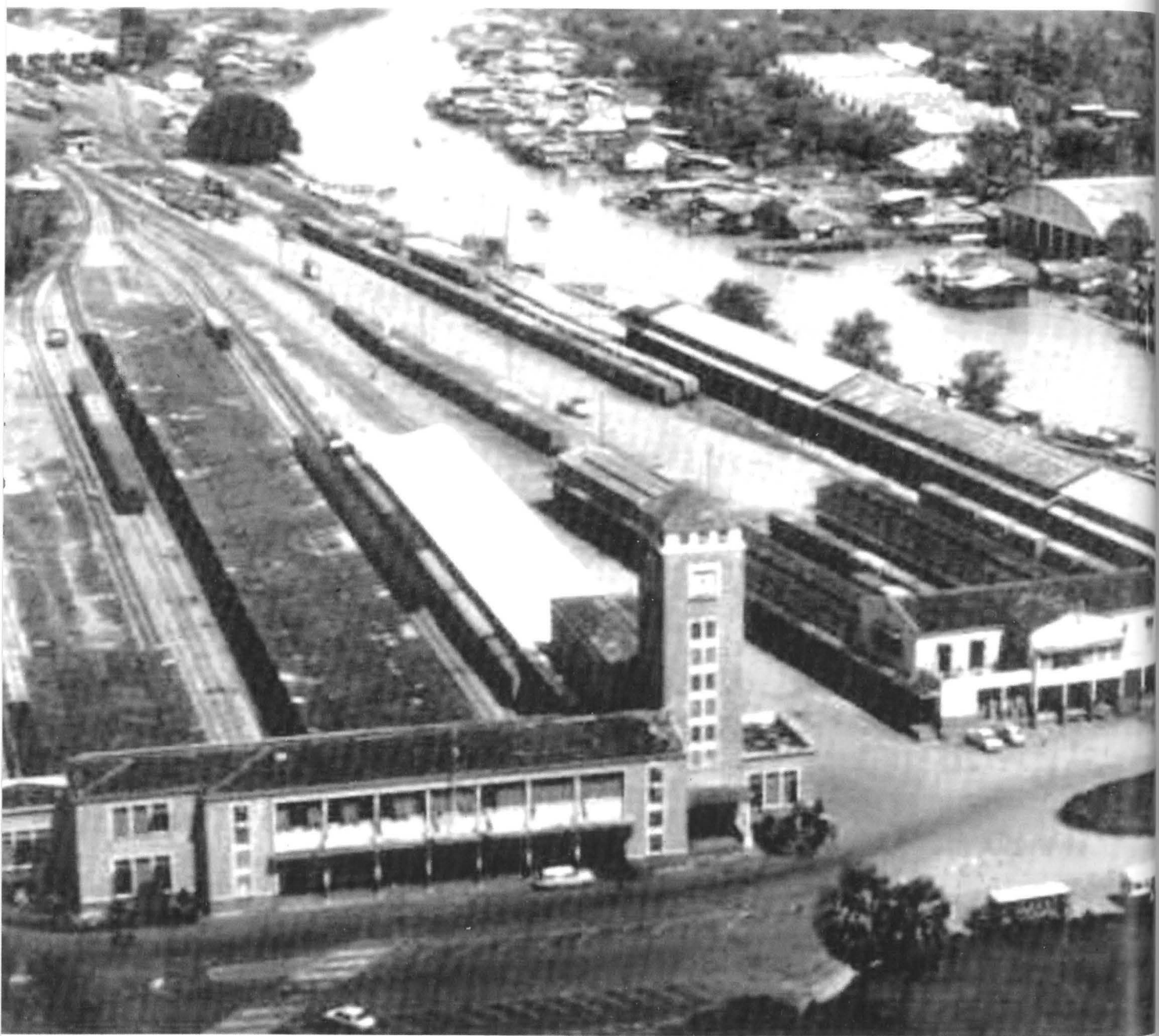
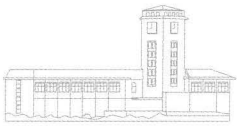
## Siriraj in a Time of Great Tribulation

When the Greater East Asia War broke out on the 8<sup>th</sup> of December 1940, Thailand was forced into action by entering into a contract with the Japanese army. However, near the end of the war, the Allies counterattacked the Axis with an air raid on Japanese-occupied Thailand. Siriraj Hospital became crowded with a great number of injured people. When the Bangkok Noi Railway Station, Thailand's Southern terminal, was destroyed by Allied bombing raids, some of Siriraj Hospital's buildings in the vicinity of the Railway Station, including the entire Pathology Building, were heavily damaged. Tragically, the objects displayed in the museum were destroyed, and there was a shortage of medicine, medical supplies, textbooks and learning materials. Consequently, classes were suspended until the 16<sup>th</sup> of August 1945 when the war ended.

Following these events, every person contributed their efforts in rehabilitating and reviving Siriraj Hospital to its fullest capacity through their unremitting efforts.





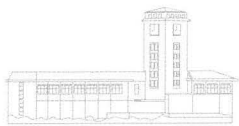




### **The New Railway Station: A New Landmark at the Bangkok Noi Estuary**

The Thonburi or Bangkok Noi Railway Station, which was disastrously destroyed by Allied bombing raids during the War, was magnificently reconstructed and reopened in 1950.

That same year, after their royal marriage ceremony, His Majesty the King and Her Majesty the Queen took a train from the Thonburi Railway Station, leaving Bangkok for a stay at the Klai Kangwon Palace in Hua Hin District, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province. That day the railway station was crowded with Bangkokian well-wishers who gathered in great numbers to appreciate the glory and graciousness of Their Majesties.



## Medical Exhibitions Made Their Debut at the Museums

When Siriraj Hospital celebrated its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the medical exhibitions and objects from various museums were put on display for the public. These exhibitions attracted a large number of visitors who found the items to present a spectacular wealth of knowledge. Following that event, even more people came to visit the museums. It was well known that outside of the museums in Siriraj Hospital, there was often a crowd of guests visiting both locally and internationally, with their guidebooks or maps in hand as they searched for items of interest.



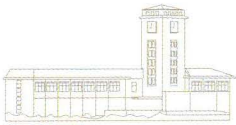
## Siriraj at the Crossroads of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

As a large hospital compared to the others serving the region, Siriraj Hospital provides medical service to all people without discrimination. Siriraj enjoyed strong growth despite restricted space, with high-caliber academics and a variety of distinguished missions that contributed to the continuing benefit of people and society.

Unfortunately, several of its museums were closed down in order to use their space for other purposes.

*More space was required to bring Siriraj to the level of international excellence*





## Sayamindradhiraj Medical Institute

The hope for more space was realized when Siriraj Hospital was granted a plot of land by the Railway Authority of Thailand, covering approximately 13 acres of the former Thonburi Station. At that location the Sayamindradhiraj Medical Institute was established, which incorporated new hospital and research buildings and operated under a newly designed management system. There is also the His Majesty the King's 72<sup>nd</sup> Birthday Anniversary Park, which is home to medicinal plants, acting as a green lung for Siriraj staff members and the surrounding communities.



The Thonburi Railway Station itself, as well as the freight buildings and the warehouses, which form a compound of historic and cultural value under architectural conservation, were renovated and reestablished as the Siriraj Bimuksthan Museum.



