Sum Kam, Son of Nokatung
Chief of the Nwites

Drawn from B. S. Carey & H. N. Tuck, The Chin Hills (Rangoon, 1896), Volumes I & II. Compiled for the Paite Heritage Archive; every claim below is quoted or closely paraphrased from the primary text, and every place the source contradicts itself is flagged rather than silently resolved.

Background

Sum Kam (also written Sumkam) was the eldest son of **Nokatung**, the Nwite/Yo chief of Mwelpi seized by Manipur forces during the 1871–72 Lushai expedition and who died in Manipur's jail. Some years after his father's death, Sum Kam led his people from Mwelpi into the Tornglorng country, where the Nwites — by then also known by the nicknames "Malle" and "Tornglorngte" — had settled in several large villages. He became Chief of the Nwites, described in the text as Chief "of the Tornglorngs."

His own headquarters was the village known by three names in the source: **Sumkamkwa** (marked "Tornglorng" on contemporary maps), **Ting Tam**, and **Tornglorng** — 80 houses, roughly 147½ miles from Fort White by the tortuous route surveyed, and, by 1893, tributary to Manipur. A cluster of smaller villages — Nalzang, Numkai, and others — surrounded Sumkamkwa and looked to it as their head village.

The 1892 expedition to Sumkamkwa

In January 1892 the Chin Hills Political Officer, Mr. Carey, personally led a column — accompanied by Captain Stevens, a Myook, and a small party of sepoys — on a 70-mile march from Lenacot to Sumkamkwa to demand that Sum Kam surrender Burman captives held by his people. The party crossed the Manipur river below Bwankwa, passed Taidam at the foot of Howbi Peak, and continued through the Yo villages of Chenglam and Tanvura into the Nwite tract, reaching Sumkamkwa after a circuitous 145-mile route from Fort White itself.

The column camped within 400 yards of the village. Over the following two days, Chins gathered from the surrounding country, and it appeared the Nwites might dispute the British claim to the captives — only three were surrendered. On the third day, with the camp quietly alerted, Mr. Carey and Captain Stevens walked into the village to **Sum Kam's own house**, where, the account notes, "a large body of Chins were busily discoursing over their liquor pots."

> The Political Officer told Sum Kam that time was up: he was to hand over either the Burman slaves, or his two brothers and the Losao chief as security. **Sum Kam "refused point blank."** A pre-arranged signal was given; three men were seized on the spot and dragged back to camp while a second party rushed the chief's house. "Not a shot was fired, although the Chins were intensely excited." One more Burman captive was surrendered immediately, and two others followed the next day. The prisoners were marched first to Manipur, then to Fort White, and held until every slave had been given up.

The source's own footnote identifies two of the three men seized as Sum Kam's brothers — Nokatung's other sons. It does not say outright whether Sum Kam himself was the third prisoner or whether it was the Losao chief named in the original demand; both had been named as acceptable security. Given Sum Kam is elsewhere

described as having "refused point blank" and the arrest followed immediately, it reads as likely he was taken along with his brothers, but the text does not state this in so many words.

The 1891 Manipur uprising

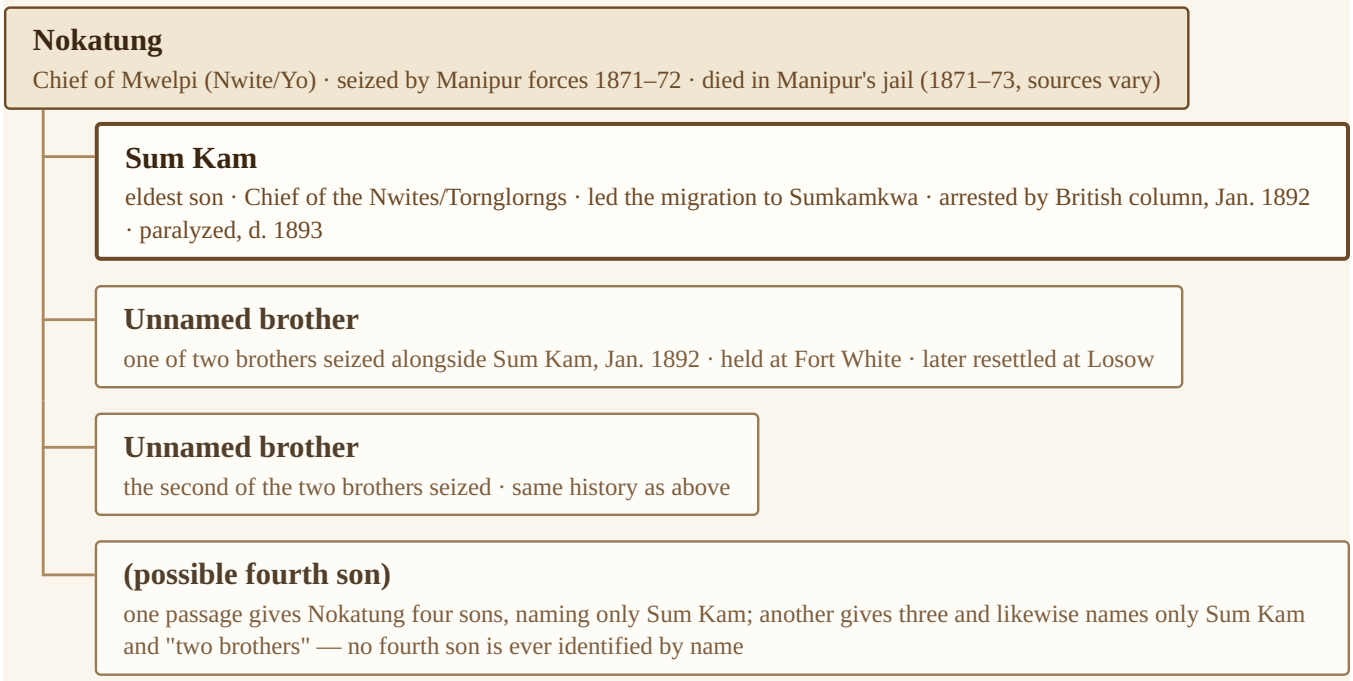
The year before this expedition, "the massacre of British officers in Manipur and the subsequent operations in that State did not affect the general behaviour of the Chins" at large — but the text specifically notes that "the Nwites of Sumkam's village and Losao admit that they took part in the fight at the Residency," before returning home and spreading exaggerated reports of British losses. Separately, the Volume II gazetteer entry for Laltwel (a nearby Nwite village) records that "many of the inhabitants... were present at the massacre of British officers in Manipur in 1891."

> This is the same 1891 Anglo-Manipur War and Residency siege recounted firsthand in two other documents already held in this archive: Sir James Johnstone's *My Experiences in Manipur and the Naga Hills* and Ethel St. Clair Grimwood's *My Three Years in Manipur and Escape from the Recent Mutiny* — both written from the British side of the same conflict the Nwites of Sum Kam's own village fought in.

Decline and death

Sum Kam became paralyzed and died in 1893. His home village declined rapidly afterward — "very much reduced in size and will probably soon be abandoned entirely" — as his surviving brothers, two of whom had already spent months in the Fort White quarter-guard as prisoners, relocated to Losow (also spelled Losao), a larger village of some 300 houses shared with Vaipes and Soktes, in territory that passed to Manipur under the 1894 Chin-Manipur Boundary Commission agreement.

Family genealogy



Discrepancies the source leaves unresolved:

- **Number of sons:** "three" in one passage, "four" in another — only Sum Kam and two brothers are ever actually named or described.
- **Identity of the third 1892 prisoner:** two of three seized are identified as Sum Kam's brothers; whether the third was Sum Kam himself or the Losao chief is not stated outright.
- **Nokatung's death year** (affecting Sum Kam's own chronology): given elsewhere in the source as 1871, 1872, and 1873 — see the companion account, "Nokatung / Kokatung, Chief of Mwelpi & Kochim's Raids on Manipur," in this archive.

Source documents

Carey, B. S. & Tuck, H. N. *The Chin Hills, Volume I — the history* (1896). paite.heritage.qzz.io/media/b172f6f6-249f-422b-ad28-e6fb511b1489

Carey, B. S. & Tuck, H. N. *The Chin Hills, Volume II — the village gazetteer* (1896). paite.heritage.qzz.io/media/4073bb52-3031-49e2-8704-5ef2437e15ed

See also, in this archive: *Sokte / Kanhow Chiefly Genealogy*; *Nokatung / Kokatung, Chief of Mwelpi & Kochim's Raids on Manipur*; Johnstone, *My Experiences in Manipur and the Naga Hills*; Grimwood, *My Three Years in Manipur*.

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