

# DAPHNE MARLATT

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## ENTRANCE TO WHAT

early Portuguese spice traders knew as Pulo Pinaom north of Malacca Strait's monsoon shelter trade route Moluccas to Madras or Pulau Ka-sathu First Island to the sea-sakai or Isle of Areca/ betel nut palm under the mainland's Kedah sultanate trade rivalries meant its Tanjong Penaga stand of coastal laurel trees met Sir Frances Light's costly goldcoin cannon shot luring underpaid Indian sepoy and lascars to cut dense hardwood clear rainforest jungle growth for Fort Cornwallis that British East India Company outpost then Prince of Wales Island a town rapidly growing Hokkien-Malay-Tamil-Euro entrepôt trade rival Malacca's but George yes George Town's shallow harbour hosting high-prowed junks triple-masted Indiamen sail wind sail as sampans unloaded to ghauts coolie labour hauled up merchant wares for go-downs and finance houses West to East East to West now Malaysian Pulau Pinang's long-gone betel nut stands ghost under so-called Silicon Valley of the East's Internet of Things yes "things"