

Chung Nye of New Westminster, B.C

- A Canadian Story from the Perspective of Chinese Pioneers living in B.C.
during the 1880s to 1920s

Abstract: Chung Nye left his home village at age 16 for the Gold Mountains. Canadian Immigration record indicates that he first landed in Victoria B.C. in April 1882. His career as a Chinese Contractor in the salmon canning industry and as a proprietor of Sun Kum Wo in New Westminster personifies the contributions made by Chinese pioneers of his time. A chapter on the Chinese pioneers, and their many contributions to the economy of British Columbia, remains missing from the history books of Canada.

Key Words: Chinese Pioneers, Chung Nye (蔣奈,字經可), Moy Kwok Village (梅閣鄉), Sar Tuey Village (沙堆鄉), Sun Woy County (新會縣), New Westminster (二埠), Sun Kum Wo (新錦和), Chinese contractor, salmon cannery, Chiang Shao Hsien (蔣紹賢,字安懷), Chong On Kui (蔣丁酉,字安翹), Leong Kia Chew (梁啟超), Kang Yu Wei (康有為), Chinese Times (大漢公報), Chinese Benevolent Association (二埠 中華慈善會), Constitution Reform Association (憲政黨), Won Cum You (溫金有), Charlie Suey (曾瑞,字雲峰), national identity, cultural affinity.

By Rudy M.T. Chiang 蔣汶德, Vancouver, B.C.

Preface

The story of Chung Nye begins with a family portrait of him with his sons and nephews. The studio photo was taken on the occasion of his elder son On Whei's visit in 1922. The paths of the four young men diverged as each pursued their aspiration. Two of them stayed in Canada, while On Wey moved to USA in the 1930s. Visitor On Whei served in the rebuilding of China. Life came to full circle forty years later when their paths, and those of their descendants, converged again in North America. Some settled in Los Angeles and the rest live in Greater Vancouver.

The Chung Nye Family Portrait, 1922

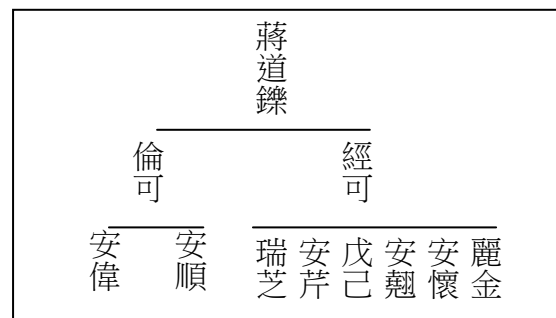


Figure 1. Chung Nye Family Portrait, 1922.

Seated (left): son On Whei (安懷),
Chung Nye (蔣奈), nephew On Shun (安順);
Standing (left): son On Kui, (安翹),
nephew On Wey (安偉)

圖一. 蔣奈與子侄合照. 左起, 坐: 次子安懷, 蔣奈, 長侄安順. 左起, 立: 三子安翹, 次侄安偉

Sixty years after this photo was taken, a copy of the original photo returned to Vancouver. It was originally sent by Chung Nye to his eldest daughter Lai Gum (蔣麗金) in China. She married Chiu Jian Dong (趙振東) of Sam Kong Village (三江). They raised three sons and three daughters. This photo was passed on to daughter Chiu Yew Jian (趙瑤珍) who it gave to Luis Chi Yee Chiong (蔣麒儀) in the early 1980s. Luis Chiong was the third son of On Whei (安懷). This well travelled photo now anchors in Los Angeles. It survived the chaos of the 1930s, the Japanese invasion, and the turbulent years of 1940s and 1950s.

Happy Re-union in 1966

Forty-four years after the Chung Nye Family portrait was taken, On Whei visited his brother On Kui and cousin On Shun in Vancouver. On Wey was in Los Angeles at the time.



Figure 2. Vancouver Reunion, 1966.

From left: On Kui (蔣安翹), On Shun (蔣安順), & On Whei (蔣安懷, aka Chiang Shao Hsien 紹賢).

The History of Chung Nye (蔣奈 ca 1867–1928 AD)

Written family record of Chung Nye did not survive the punishment of time. The first eighty years of the 1900s was marked by wars, depressions, and countless disasters in America and in China. The oral history on Chung Nye was passed down by grandson Chi Ho Chiang (蔣麒賀) to this son. Chi Ho recalled:

- Chung Nye left home at age 16 with a friend for the Gold Mountains.
- He was paid a Family Settlement Fee (安家費), an advance meant to bridge family needs until the sojourner could send money home. He left the twelve pieces of dai yong (大洋, silver dollar) with his widowed mother for the family.
- Chung Nye became a contractor for salmon canneries in B.C. He recruited many of his clansmen and fellow villagers from Moy Kwok (梅閣鄉) and Sar Tuey (沙堆鄉). Nye would prepay their entry fee to Canada ¹. He was well respected among the family and Moy Kwok villagers for bringing them to New Westminster.
- Chung Nye bought gold claims from Caucasian partners, only to find out that it was fool's gold (pyrite).
- Chung Nye befriended Leong Kia Chew (梁啟超) when Leong visited Vancouver in 1903. Nye supported Leong's Reform movement in China.

Chi Ho never met his grandfather Chung Nye in person. The only glimpse he got was through the glass window of the casket when Chung Nye's embalmed remain was returned from New Westminster to Moy Kwok for interment. Chi Ho was twelve years old at the time.

Family Genealogy Record Kept in Canada

Chung Nye (蔣奈), whose married name (字) was King Ho (經可), descended from Grand Ancestor (太始祖) Jiang Shu (蔣書) who settled in Sun Woy County (新會縣) around the 1290s. A grandson of Jiang Shu, named Ching Goh (清居, 字宗輔) settled in Moy Kwok Village in 1373 AD. Chung Nye was the nineteenth generation descendant of the Ching Goh Branch.

Records Kept by Library and Archives Canada

On line records of Immigrants from China (1885-1949) returned three entries on Chung Nye:

1. 1895: Register of Chinese Immigration, Port of New Westminster, B.C. ²

The record of November 8, 1895 showed that merchant Chung Nye, age 32, returned to New Westminster from Canton, China. He paid a 50 cents Entry Fee. He was described as "Height 5ft 4¹/₂ inches. Long scar on thumb of left hand, pitted on left corner of left eye. Speaks good English." It reported a prior landing record of April 1882, in Victoria, via steamship. Declaration No. 414, CI5: 832598, CI6: 6587;

Register of Chinese Immigration.										Port of <i>New Westminster 1896</i>												
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11			12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
NAME	DATE	PLACE OF BIRTH	DATE OF ARRIVAL	DATE OF DEPARTURE	DATE OF RETURN	DATE OF RE-ENTRY	DATE OF RE-ENTRY	DATE OF RE-ENTRY	DATE OF RE-ENTRY	DATE OF RE-ENTRY	DATE OF RE-ENTRY	DATE OF RE-ENTRY	DATE OF RE-ENTRY	DATE OF RE-ENTRY	DATE OF RE-ENTRY	DATE OF RE-ENTRY	DATE OF RE-ENTRY	DATE OF RE-ENTRY	DATE OF RE-ENTRY	DATE OF RE-ENTRY	DATE OF RE-ENTRY	
<i>Chung Nye</i>	<i>Nov 8</i>	<i>1895</i>	<i>1895</i>	<i>1895</i>	<i>1895</i>	<i>1895</i>	<i>1895</i>	<i>1895</i>	<i>1895</i>	<i>1895</i>	<i>1895</i>	<i>1895</i>	<i>1895</i>	<i>1895</i>	<i>1895</i>	<i>1895</i>	<i>1895</i>	<i>1895</i>	<i>1895</i>	<i>1895</i>	<i>1895</i>	
										<i>5 ft 4 1/2 in</i>			<i>32</i>	<i>6587</i>	<i>191558</i>	<i>Steamship</i>	<i>Admission</i>	<i>Height 5 ft 4 1/2 inches</i>	<i>Long scar on thumb of</i>	<i>left hand, pitted on</i>	<i>corner of left eye.</i>	<i>Speaks good English.</i>

The same record was also kept in the General Register of Chinese Immigration ³.

The first arrival date of April 1882 coincided with the arrival of the 2,000 men recruited by Andrew Onderdonk on contract with the Canadian Pacific Railroad Co. (CPR) ⁴. Only the CPR, with a desperate need for labour, would pay a Family Settlement Fee of twelve silver dollars. The 16 year old Chung Nye and his friend had to be among the 2,000 men contracted to lay tracks along the Fraser Canyon for Canada.

2. 1901: General Register of Chinese Immigration ⁵

On June 5, 1901, Chung Nye, age 38, Labourer, paid the \$100 Head Tax. He arrived Vancouver from Hong Kong on the Empress of Japan. His place of birth was Moy Gock, Senwoy. Description: 5 ft. 5, scar right corner left eye, scar on left thumb, scar on left 2nd & 3rd finger. CI5 32004

<i>37</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>1901</i>	<i>Chung Nye</i>	<i>Labourer</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>32004</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>Moy Gock Senwoy</i>
<i>5 ft 5 in. Scar on right corner left eye.</i> <i>Scar on left thumb.</i> <i>Scar on left 2nd & 3rd fingers.</i>										

3. 1906: General Register of Chinese Immigration ⁶

On Feb. 3, 1906, merchant Chung Nye, age 43, returned from China via Hong Kong on the Empress of China; Fee Paid: Exempted; Place of Birth: Go Deung (古井) Senwoy; Description: 5ft.4 in, scar on left thumb, scar on left 2nd & 3rd fingers, scar under corner left eye. CI5 45030,

<i>51091</i>	<i>1906</i>	<i>Chung Nye</i>	<i>Merchant</i>	<i>45030</i>	<i>Exempt</i>	<i>43</i>	<i>Go Deung Senwoy</i>	<i>Merchant</i>
<i>5 ft 4 in Scar on left thumb</i> <i>Scar on left 2nd & 3rd fingers</i> <i>Scar under corner left eye</i>								

The passenger list of Empress of China dated January 31, 1906, gave on page 4, the name Tseung Noy, age 42 for Chung Nye ⁷. Spelling consistency was not a concern.

Missing Records

Chung Nye have five children, all were born in China. He must have travelled home for at least five times. Missing records might include a trip prior to 1890, and trips in 1892/3, 97, or after 1906.

Census of Canada, 1891

Chung Nye's name appeared in the 1891 Census as Jung Nye ⁸. The record on Page 34 and 35 of British Columbia, District 2, New Westminster; Sub District 6, New Westminster, showed that on 6th June, 1891, Jung Nye was the head of Household No. 140. It listed the names of 40 occupants. Jung Nye, at age 28, was married, religion Buddhist. Jung Nye and 3 other occupants were able to read and write English. The house, described as W 2/10, was a two story wooden structure with 10 rooms. Ms. Mary Munk of Library & Archive Canada provided this coding information. She generously offered the following insight:

"...For the reference you found in the 1891 census for Jung Nye, W2/10 refers to a wooden, two-story building, with ten rooms. The number 140 is the household number, i.e. it was the 140th household the census enumerator recorded for that sub-district. Under Relation to Head of Family, L means lodger. This means that the men listed on that page were living in a rooming house.

Unfortunately, the other census schedules for 1891 were not retained, only schedule one with the names. This means that the schedule that would have recorded the addresses for the households listed in schedule one no longer exists. Therefore, there is no means of knowing the addresses for those rooming houses."

---Ms. Mary Munk of Library & Archive Canada, personal communication April 8, 2010

The lodge description suggested that Chung Nye and his crew of 39 lived in a bunkhouse. It might be on Front Street, but possibly at 701 Carnarvon Street. Council minutes of September 23, 1895 ⁹ recorded a request from Chung Nye for permission to lay building material on Carnarvon Street. This location was only a short walk to Front Street canneries where the men worked.

Chung Nye's Career as Contractor in the Salmon Canning Industry, 1886(?) - 1928

The exact year when Chung Nye started in the salmon canning industry is unknown. He could have started by the time Onderdonk began laying off his crew in September 1885 ¹⁰.

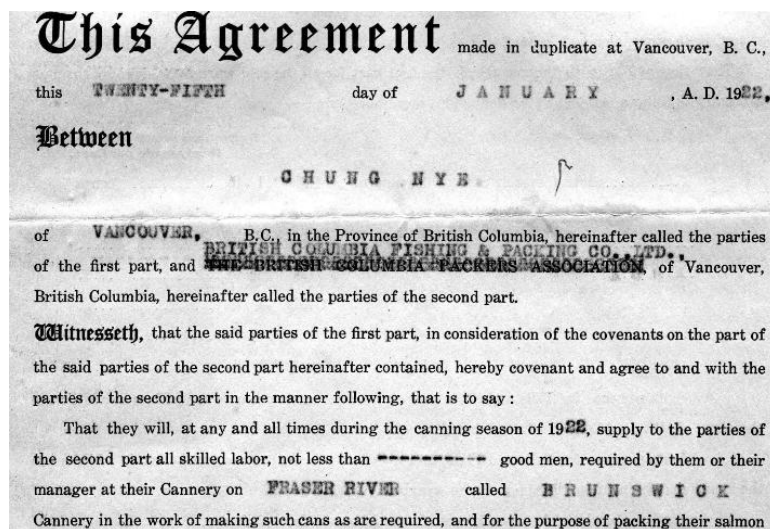
Nine years after his arrival in April 1882, Chung Nye had transformed from a 16-year-old labourer to the head of a 40 men household in New Westminster. He earned enough money to get married at home. His first trip home probably took place between 1887 and 89. With the money he saved, Chung Nye built two identical houses of solid stone blocks. One was for his mom and himself, the other for his younger brother Leon Ho (倫可), father of On Shun and On Wey. His success attracted others to join him. The 39 men staying with him in 1891 had to be his cannery team. His ability to speak and write good English was an asset for his success.

In 1906 four new canneries started along the shores of Fraser River. One named Nye Canning Company, operated for only one season ¹¹. Was Chung Nye the owner operator of this cannery? Further research might ascertain this speculation with supporting information. There is no doubt, however, that Chung Nye was a well established merchant and contractor by 1906.

With a pool of skilled cannery hands, Chung Nye and his nephews: On Shun (aka Chong Quong, 蔣北強,字安順), On Wey (蔣安偉), Chong Yat (蔣逸琴,字安烈), Chong Dot (蔣炳達,字安鰲), family clan members Chong You (蔣有,字容可), Chung Sat (蔣述,字國多), Chong Tee Poy (蔣池沛,字會可) secured contracts from Steveston (市姊廠) to Bella Coola (巴罇咕罇), Klemtu (加欖粗), to Prince Rupert (片市魯別), and Port Edward to Nitnet (乃遠叻, 乃典律). His son On Kui (蔣安翹) took care of business in Bella Coola (巴罇咕罇濕) in 1925. There were many more contractors from the Moy Kwok family.

When work was hard to come by in 1916, Vancouver Chinatown handed out daily congee to the needy. Chung Nye and his family clan listed above supported the drive with donations ¹².

Several copies of Chung Nye's contract with the Brunswick Cannery signed between 1922 to 1927 are housed in The Chung Collection at the University of British Columbia ¹³.

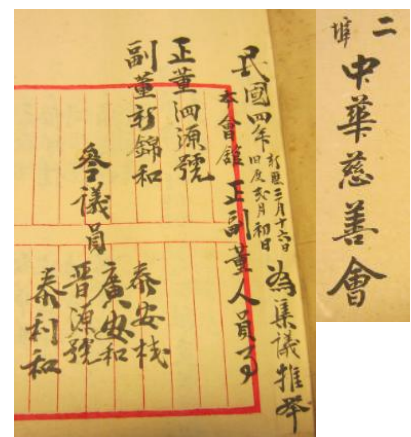


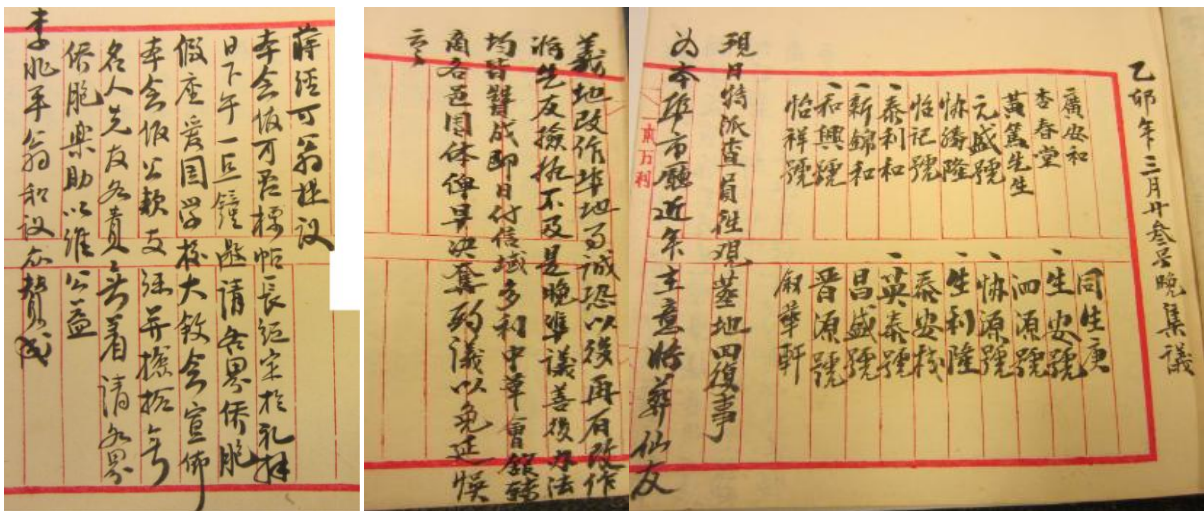
Chung Nye Operated Sun Kum Wo (新錦和) in New Westminster

Chung Nye was the proprietor of Sun Kum Wo (新錦和), a Chinese herbal and grocery store located on 701 Carnarvon Street in New Westminster. It was the booking agent for CPR ferries in New Westminster.

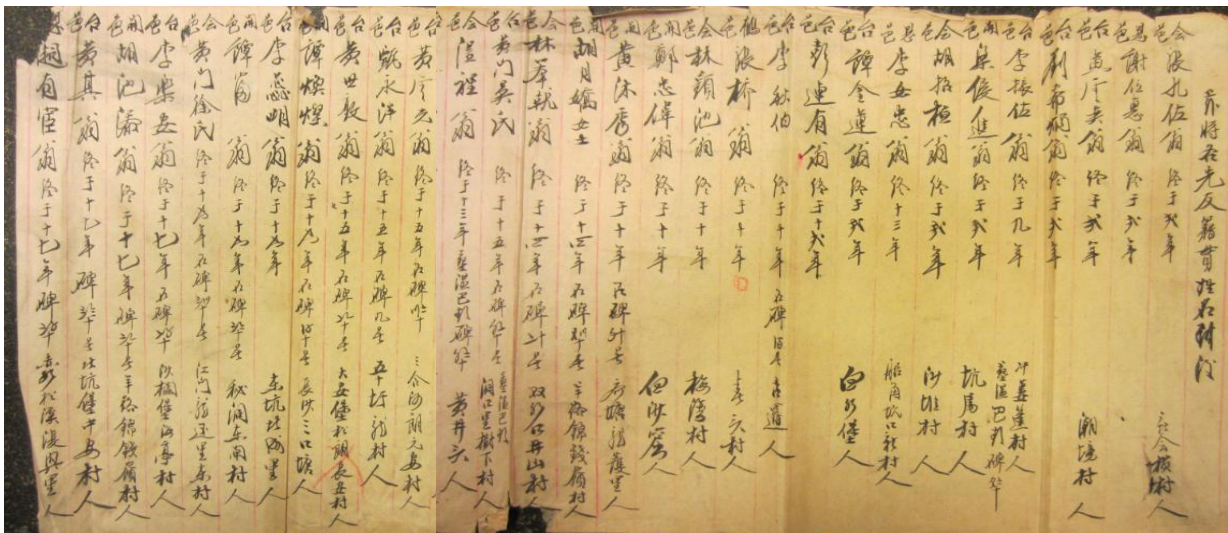
Sun Kum Wo (新錦和) co-chaired the meeting of the Chinese Benevolent Association (CBA: 二埠 中華慈善會) in New Westminster on March 16, 1915 ¹⁴. The priority was to deal with the impact of city council's decision on November 9, 1914 to cancel the Chinese Cemetery Agreement on 8th Street ¹⁵.

A follow up meeting held on March 22 resulted in a decision to ask the Victoria Chinese Benevolent Association to help advise their members, who might have friends or relatives buried in New Westminster, of the urgent need to recover the remains.





Meetings in March and April resulted in a coordinated effort to locate the remains of Chinese pioneers. A three page list of the name of the deceased, showing the ancestral village, the year of death and the headstone number was compiled in 1915. It is kept at the New Westminster Museum and Archives:



A note posted by the CBA on June 30, 1919¹⁶ requested help with identifying the site and name of deceased pioneers at the Chinese Cemetery on 8th Street. The City had levelled all wooden markers at the Cemetery in previous years:

● 二埠檢拾先友遺骸

啟者,本埠定期七月一號開工執拾先友遺骸,大約十天告竣.前因義墳碑記往年已被公家一律掃平,此時全無形跡可考.想各先友之親屬曾經到墳場辦理塋事者,尚可模糊識認.懇即先期報知,或先到墳場豎以証據,俾臨時易於着手,且無混亂.即與先友有親友世戚之關係者,此責亦難旁貸特此預告.

民國八年 六月廿六号

中華會館謹啟

式埠廣安和代理

This was followed by an urgent appeal in the Chinese Times on July 29, 1919. Help was again requested to identify the location and name of pioneers at the burial site. The missing markers made correct identification very difficult. The notice read as follows ¹⁷:

- 欲執先友者見字千祈注意

啟者,本埠義地墳上木碑,原豎有姓氏為記.今據執骸監工人報告,謂因日久,木碑皆被盪廢.屢有誤挖之弊.仰各梓里如有先友欲執者,請速於五,六日內,到墳場指明俾工人按址拾執,以免遺失是為至緊,此佈

十月十九號

二埠中華會館再啟

Chung Nye remained an active member of the CBA Board until his passing in 1928 ¹⁸.

The Great Fire of New Westminster, 11 pm September 10, 1898

A fire started in the business area of New Westminster at 11 pm Saturday, September 10, 1898 ¹⁹. The fire consumed most building structures in New Westminster. According to city records, buildings from Front Street to Royal Ave were burnt. The Chinese District, located south of the town in the “Swamp” area was wiped out ²⁰.

The building of Sun Kum Wo was perished. Chung Nye and the Chinese community’s effort to rebuild while dealing with City Council were captured in council minutes of 1899.

Sun Kum Wo suffered another fire on September 5, 1916 when the second floor of the building went up in flames ²¹.

二埠訪函云:五號日下午兩點鐘,本埠新錦和與憲政黨樓上,不知何故失慎,以致回祿之災.火由瓦面衝上.為勢甚烈.幸有消防隊馳至.激水注射,乃將撲滅.但火由二樓起,故二樓勢已全燬.憲政會與新錦和俱在樓下,然亦盡被水漬.該樓原購有保險.至於新錦和貨物,不知有無購得.左鄰為泰利和,僅隔數尺,幸不殃及,亦大幸矣. ----大漢公報, 1916-09-06

Sun Kum Wo was rebuilt and continued to operate in the 1930’s.

Chung Nye’ Dealing with the City Council of New Westminster

According to city council minutes, Chung Nye sought permission to lay building material on Carnarvon Street in 1895. His request was granted on September 23. A year later, on November 9, 1896, the Council instructed the Board of Works to act on a request by Chung Nye & Co. for a short sidewalk on Carnarvon Street. The B.C. Directory listed the address of 701 Carnarvon Street for Sun Kum Wo & Co.

The 2010 Report “Council Minutes on Chinese, Sep 21, 1874 to Dec 6, 1926” ¹⁵ prepared by John Stark, Stephen Scheving, Colin Stevens, and Wendy Turnbull provided a glimpse of Chung Nye’s dealings with his city hall.

City Council Minutes: Sep 21. 1874 to Dec 6, 1926

Date	City Council Minutes	page
1895, Sept 23	Chung Nye, asking permission to lay building material on Carnarvon Street. Granted	11
1896, Nov. 9	Chung Nye & co., asking for short sidewalk on Carnarvon Street —Board of Works to act.[701Carn]	11
1897, May 31	Chung Nye re: Revenue Tax Fine – Finance to report	12
1899, Mar. 20	Chung Nye, asking for sidewalk – Board of Works to report	13
1899, Apr. 17	Chung Nye, asking refund of water rate paid in advance, the premises having been destroyed by fire – Fire, Water & Fy. Comm. to report Kwong Yuen Lung, asking refund of water rate paid in advance, the premises having been destroyed by fire – Fire, Water & Fy. Comm. to report	13
1899, May 15	That the Fire, Water and Ferry Committee reported recommending that the accounts paid in advance on water services which services were destroyed by fire on September 10 last be refunded.	13
1910, Jan. 17	Corbould & Grant re: Sun Kum Wo's claim. City Solicitor to report at an early date.	(53)
1910, Jan. 24	City Solicitor, re: claim of Sun Kum Wo & Co. stating they had arranged with Mr. Corbould for an inspection of the premises – Rec'd & filed. the Assessment Commission reported on the result of the City just than taken showing the total population to be 12,705, including 949 in Chinese District-Report received and filed for reference.	(53)
1914, May 29	...the frame building and attachments known as 31 Blackie Street situate upon Lot Twelve (12) in City Block Eleven (11) in the City of N.W., is a nuisance and dangerous to the public safety and health, AND WHEREAS notice was given to George Mead and Reuben Elley, Executors of Cash Estate, Gorden E. Corbould, K.C. and Joseph R. Grant, owners of the said property and to the occupiers respectively of the said building to show cause at a meeting of the Council on the 30 day of March, 1914.....why the said building and attachments should not be torn down or removed....	(59)
1916, Sept. 25	"Chung Nye and others asking permission to rebuild roof of building belonging to Chinese Reform Assn. Also report of Building Inspector on same, recommending that a life of 1 ½ years be placed on building. Granted and recommended. Adopted"	24
1918, July 04	"The Building Inspector attended and referred to the fire at the building owned by the Chinese Reform Association which destroyed the roof. He stated that the building was a well built one and provided the top story was removed and a new roof put on would comply with the regulations of the No. 2 Fire Limits. The Insurance Co, offered \$100.00 for damage done, which would cover repairs, but he advised that alterations mentioned be made at a cost of \$235.00. On motion the Building Inspector was instructed to negotiate with the Chinese Reform Association to have this done."	25
1923, Aug 13	"That the offer of Tom Hin and Chung Nye to purchase the re-sub of Lot S.P. 3, City Block 36, for the sum of \$750.00 – payable \$150.00 cash, balance in 6,12, and 18 months, with 6% on deferred payments, be accepted, and bylaw prepared accordingly." [譚欽,蔣奈 1920/5/15,p10,ChineseTimes]	36
1923, Nov 16	"Re: the application of Chung Nye and Yuen Ching for repairs to roadway and sidewalk adjoining corner of Royal Avenue and 11th Street – this matter has received attention. ADOPTED"	36

Chung Nye's Support for the Constitutional Reform Association (憲政黨) in New Westminster

When the Reform movement in China failed in 1898, Kang Yu Wei (康有為) left Beijing (Peking) on Sep 20th. Kang went to Hong Kong and Japan prior to visiting Canada in 1899.

According to on line records of Immigrants from China (1885-1949), Kang Yu Wei (康有為) age 42, landed in Victoria as a diplomat on April 12, 1899 via M.V. Igumi Maru. His secretary Li Tang, age 27, accompanied him ²². Kang recruited supporters for the Reform movement and set up Chinese Empire Reform Societies 立保救大清皇帝救國公司(亦稱「保皇會」).

A day after Kang left Beijing, his student Leong Kia Chew (梁啟超) sought refuge in the Japanese Embassy. Leong landed in Japan on October 16, 1898 where he lived in exile until November 1911. On February 20, 1903, Leong embarked on his trip to North American. Canadian record of Immigrants from China (1885-1949) showed that Leong Kia Chew, Wong Wai Chee (黃慧之), Pow Chee (鮑熾), Pow Man Cheong (鮑文昌?) arrived in Victoria as tourists on March 4, 1903 ²³. Leong, age 30, boarded the Empress of India from Yohohama. His companions began their trip in Hong Kong. Wong (age 24) and Pow Man Cheong (age 17) were born in Yohohama. Pow Chee (age 46) was a native of Hung San County (香山). He came from the same county as Dr. Sun Yet San (孫逸仙).

4396917927	Leong Kia Chew	"	436857	30	Senwey	Senwey
4397017938	Wong Wai Chee	"	436858	24	Yokohama	Japan
4397117939	Pow Chee	"	436859	46	Hung San	China
4397217940	Pow Man Cheong	"	436860	17	Yokohama	Japan

The influential scholar Leong Kia Chew was eagerly welcomed by Chinese communities all across America. A native of Cha Hung Village (茶坑村) in Senwey County (新會縣), Leong shared a special bond with the Senwey pioneers. They turned out in droves to lend him support. If Chung Nye did not join the Chinese Empire Reform Society when Kang Yu Wei visited in 1899, he would certainly have signed up by 1903.

Chung Nye's support for Leong continued after 1911. When Leong founded the Constitution Reform Association (中國民主憲政黨), Chung Nye was named honorary Chair of the Canadian Branch (中國民主憲政黨註加拿大總支部名譽總理) in 1919. His fellow clansmen in New West, 蔣英 (Chong Yin?), 蔣紀鼎 (Chong Gae Ding?), 蔣元理 (Chong Yun Li?), 蔣適道 (Chong Shek Dow?), 蔣美 (Chong Mei?), 蔣有 (Chong You) were all members of the board ²⁴. Chung Nye remained a member up to his passing in 1928 ²⁵.

It was doubtful whether the Constitution Reform Association had any impact on the politics of China. The relentless commitment to keep the Canadian Branch going as late as 1944 ²⁶ may best be considered an affirmation of Leong's vision of a strong and democratic China, offering peace and security to its people.

Chung Nye's Funeral in New Westminster

Chung Nye died on November 14, 1928. None of his sons were in Canada at the time. News of his passing was reported in the Chinese Times on November 15, page 3. 大漢公報. 星期四 ²⁷.

- 殷商又弱一個

二埠函、殷商蔣奈翁字經可，新會梅閣人。向承辦雇工製沙文魚罐頭事務。去月因在魚濕食山羊肉煲醋，即覺身體不豫，隨出二埠入醫院調治、越時四日、頗覺痊可、乃出院。未幾舊病復發、遂再入院、至昨晨五時、醫藥罔效。心血管崩裂、延至下午一時、竟與世長辭、享壽共十有五。查蔣翁為人、胸懷磊落、忠厚待人、歷任憲政黨總理。對於社會與黨務、靡不竭力贊襄。今忽歸道山、聞者莫不惋惜。長子紹賢君、英年卓犖、向負笈華北、畢業于天津大學。次子安翹亦學貫中西、已于上月返國云。

His obituary ran in the Chinese Times on November 19, page 3. 大漢公報 星期一 ²⁸.

- 家主蔣紹賢老爺之封翁

清授雄州司馬、經可太老爺痛於民國拾七年十壹月拾四日未時、病終正寢。謹擇拾一月廿一日下午兩點鐘在二埠六街六拾六號、保威棺肆開喪、發引另期扶柩回籍安葬。哀此訃聞
蔣樂安堂家人稟報

The British Columbian, New Westminster B.C. carried the obituary on November 20, 1928:

CHUNG NYE

Chung Nye, 1047 Royal Avenue, a Chinese merchant and contractor well known to businessmen in this city and in Vancouver, died on November 14. He was 62 years of age and lived in New Westminster for 40 years. The funeral service will be held on Wednesday afternoon at 2 o'clock at the Chapel of S. Bowell & Son. The body will be forwarded to China for burial.

The Chinese Times reported his funeral on November 22, page 3, ²⁹ as follows:

- 生榮死哀

二埠廿壹日函。本市殷商蔣經可翁仙遊、暫厝保威棺肆、擇期扶柩回籍安葬。是日午后貳時在肆內設奠、中西人士蒞場致祭者頗多。首由蔣嘉競君贊禮。(一)奏樂、(二)上香、(三)獻花。(四)馮德文牧師祈禱、全體起立、對靈前行三鞠躬禮、(六)廖崇教君演述蔣翁生前事略、(七)林普慶君讀誄文、(八)各代表演說者、有憲政黨溫金有、致公堂梁光、岡州總會館曾瑞、蔣樂安堂蔣思道等君。大意讚頌蔣翁生前、孝友勤儉、忠信誠實。辦理社會與黨務、均能持以熱誠行以毅力。橋梓賴其造福者不少。故今日開喪、到弔者有如是之衆、足見其德望感人之深、誠可謂生榮死哀矣云。(九)奏樂、(十)喪家向靈前舉哀、(十一)蔣嘉競答謝來賓、(十二)代表來賓向靈柩行最後相見禮而散。

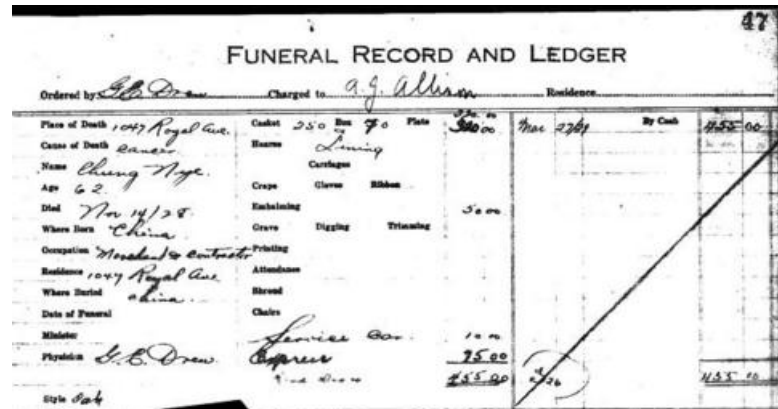
The funeral was attended by many dignitaries of the time, among them Won CumYou (溫金有), Leong Kong (梁光), Charlie Suey (曾瑞, 字雲峰), and company representatives from canneries.

The family posted an appreciation note on page 2 of the Chinese Times ³⁰, November 22 & 28.

先嚴經可府君逝世、于本月廿壹日在二埠保威棺肆設奠。得蒙
宗親戚世友誼、惠贈賻花圈誄詞、並臨致祭、高誼隆情、歿存均感。此鳴
謝
棘人 蔣紹賢等泣血稽顙
民國十七年拾一月廿二日

Courtesy of Bowell & Son, the author was most grateful for a copy of the funeral record of Chung Nye:

Place of Death: 1047 Royal Ave,
Cause of death: Cancer
Died: Nov. 14, 1928
Age: 62 (year of birth ~1864)
Where Born: China
Occupation: Merchant & contractor
Residence: 1047 Royal Ave
Where Buried: China
Physician: Geo. E. Drew
The funeral cost was \$455.00



A handwritten funeral record and ledger for Chung Nye. The document is titled 'FUNERAL RECORD AND LEDGER' and includes fields for 'Ordered by', 'Charged to', 'Residence', 'Place of Death', 'Cause of Death', 'Name', 'Age', 'Died', 'Where Born', 'Occupation', 'Residence', 'Where Buried', 'Date of Funeral', 'Minister', 'Physician', 'Casket', 'Embalming', 'Graves', 'Dressing', 'Attendants', 'Chairs', 'Furnishings', 'Total', 'By Cash', and 'By Credit'. The record shows that Chung Nye died on November 14, 1928, at 1047 Royal Ave, and was buried in China. The funeral was held on November 16, 1928, at 1047 Royal Ave, with a total cost of \$455.00.

The Will of Chung Nye

December 10, 1928 the Chinese Time reported on page 13, a B.C. Supreme Court decision on December 8, validating Chung Nye's will and awarded his estate of \$24,193 to Nye's eldest son Chiang Shao Hsien³¹.

- 蔣奈翁之遺產

二埠八日電:本處法庭業經察驗囑書三通、內有壹通乃屬拾一月拾四日逝世之華商蔣奈者。囑書聲明遺產二萬四千一百九拾三元、歸其子蔣紹賢承領、官已判准施行矣。

The file was kept under Probate Record of New Westminster

B.C. Supreme Court - 1881-1943 (GR-1422) ord:

Call Number: GR-1422 is Result # 1

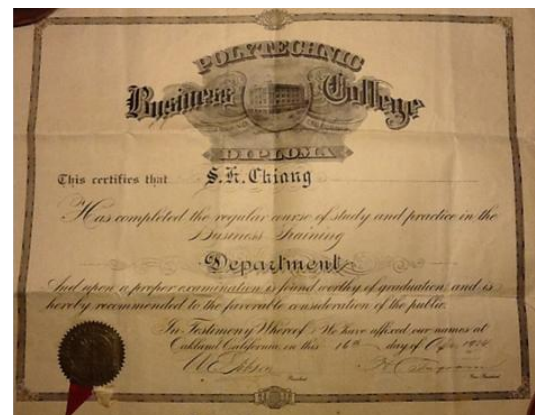
B09624 Chung. Nye 3290/1928

B09624 Chung. King Ho 3290/1928

Chung Nye's Elder son On Whei (安懷, 1895-1974), Visited New West in 1922 & 1928

Born in 1895, On Whei was known by his school name Chiang Shao Hsien 蔣紹賢. His career took him across the Pacific Ocean several times between China and the Americas. After his graduation from Tien Jing University (天津大學), he attended a private business college in the USA. He earned a Diploma in Business Training from the Polytechnic Business College in Oakland California on April 16, 1924. During his stay in US, he visited his father Chung Nye in December, 1922.

The Chinese Times reported³² that the Constitution Reform Association held a banquet in honour of two visitors from China. One of them was Chiang Shao Hsien, a recent university graduate from Peking. He was visiting his father Chung Nye in New Westminster. Shao Hsien gave a dinner speech on his eye witness account of political upheavals in China. It was well received. The family picture in this article was taken at the time.



- 憲政會之大讌會

蔣柰翁之長公子蔣紹賢先生、在中國北京肄業多年、茲者學成來遊此地。并陳宗璜先生奉北京孔教會委任、籌建北京孔教總會堂、駕臨本埠數日。昨日下午六時、憲政會諸先生特設酒與兩先生晤談、酒酣之餘、會長溫金有翁宣布設讌理由、先請蔣紹賢先生演講、亶亶而談、尤足動聽....

Chiang Shao Hsien returned to China after graduation. While serving the modernization of his country, Shao Hsien maintained close ties with his father and brother Chong Ding You in New Westminster. The Chinese Times reported on March 27, 1927, a car accident involving a party of three returning from a fund raising drive in Chilliwack B.C. The drive was to raise money for the building of a school in Sun Woy County. Chiang Shao Hsien suffered a minor cut on his hand when the car rolled into a ditch ³³.

Upon learning the death of Leong Kia Chew on January 19, 1929, the Chinese Times published memorial tributes offered by members of the Constitution Reform Association in Vancouver. An eulogy by Chiang Shao Hsien was quoted on page 11 of the April 29 edition ³⁴:

雲埠憲政追悼梁任公先生輓聯
訃聞萬里、面隔七年、回首京華一別那
知成永訣
自有傳人
親附葭莩、情同師弟、等身著作千秋應
蔣紹賢

Translated:

“From ten thousand miles away, the sad obituary came; Who would have thought that our face to face encounter in Peking seven years ago, Turned out to be an everlasting memory?

Draped as a kin, we shared a teacher to student bond; Your teachings and lofty publications stacking tall, Shall forever be echoed by followers to come.”

--- Chiang Shao Hsien

Chiang Shao Hsien maintained ties with the Chinese community and provided news from China. In a letter he wrote to his brother On Kui, he shared the joy of progress achieved when construction of a 200-mile long railway was completed. It connected Hang Chow and Lang Kai County in Jie Jiang Province. He also negotiated a \$7 million loan from Shanghai banks to fund a 155-mile rail extension to Yue San County in Jiang She Province. He was pleased to witness all the progress. He forwarded to his brother, a list of investment projects open to overseas Chinese in Jie Jiang Province.

The Chinese Times published Chiang Shao Hsien's letter on March 1, 1933, Page 10 ³⁵:

- 編者昨接友人蔣紹賢君由杭來書、內夾上列新聞一則。書中略謂：
弟自去年六月來杭、即蒙曾廳長養甫派在建設廳工作、辦理會計事務。後因杭江鐵路會計事宜極關重要、故改委來局任會計科長。服務以來於茲半載、責重才輕、阻越時虞。現本局築成通車部份、約二百公里、由杭州直通達蘭谿縣。前數月分別向上海銀行界及英庚款委員會借款七百萬元、以為展築路線至江西省玉山縣、約計一百五十五公里、大約一年有餘、即可全部通車矣。浙省年來財政雖在困難時期、然各種建設頗有進步、茲將關於華僑可以投資之事業報告一則。

浙江省建設廳、呈報實業部、有關於浙省可以投資興辦之事業、因僑務委員會、函請代調查各省市最近之實業計劃及產品、以便介紹僑胞投資興辦....

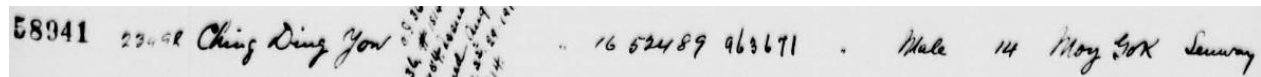
Shao Hsien continued his accountant career during the war. Reporting to Jung Yeon Pu (曾養甫), he served as controller for the Chinese Army Corp of Engineers. The Corp constructed an airport in the mountainous Yun Nam Province to allow air lifting of supplies to China. A plan to link Yun Nam Province to Siam by rail (滇緬鐵路) started in 1938. The Corp designed and laid the grounds for the Chinese portion for an 886 km railway. It was sadly abandoned when Japanese invaded Siam in 1939.

Chiang Shao Hsien went to Hong Kong in 1950. He left for Cuba in 1952 to join his son Luis Chiong. In 1960 Luis fled Castro's Cuba to Florida with only US\$5 in his pocket. He got a job at Trader Vic the next day. Right away, he sent for his father in Cuba. Shao Hsien left Cuba with the US\$5 allowed. He soon accepted a job as secretary-custodian for the Los Angeles Kong Chow Benevolent Association at 931 N. Broadway.

Chiang Shao Hsien passed away at age 79, on June 2, 1974. He was laid to rest at the Los Angeles Chinese Cemetery.

Arrival of Chung Nye's Son Ching Ding Yow (蔣丁酉 1897 – 1978), May 15, 1910

Chung Nye's third son, Chong Ding Yow, arrived in Vancouver on the Empress of China from Hong Kong on May 15, 1910. He was exempted from the \$500 Head Tax because the 14 year old was a merchant's son. The name was recorded as Ching Ding Yow ³⁶.



Ding Yow, whose married name was Chong On Kiu (蔣丁酉, 字安翹) graduated from High School in New Westminster. He later moved to Vancouver and became a career journalist for the Chinese Times (大漢公報). He retired as general manager on April 1, 1958.

Chong On Kiu was fluent in both Chinese and English. He was recognized among North American literary circles for his lyrics and couplets. A tribute to Ding Yow's talent was evident in a poem by Ho Choy Yee (何彩詒) ³⁷:

蔣安翹詞長乃新會梅閣鄉人也。勤敏好讀、學貫中西、且接友和藹、恭敬禮義、素以聯學見長、名滿北美。前者投聯迭冠軍之選、馳驟吟壇鉤心鬥角、得以出奇制勝也。先生任職大漢公報司理、十多寒暑于茲、欽羨無似、因賦俚句敬上、工慵不計也。

[支微韻] 何彩詒

志能伸屈好男兒、仗義行仁永不違、廣博通融多史識、清新俊逸妙文辭；
賽聯首獎欣榮譽、巧對心裁奪錦旗、頭角崢嶸瞻器宇、胸襟磊落仰高儀。

--- The Chinese Times, page 5, July 9, 1956

Chong On Kiu was a committed member of the Vancouver Chinese Freemason. As the Conference Chair of the 3rd Pan-America Freemason Party of China, he took responsibility for hosting delegates during their stay in Vancouver in January 1950.

Predeceased by his son Doy Hon (蔣岱漢), Chong Ding Yow passed away at the Vancouver General Hospital on January 22, 1978 at age 83. He was survived by his wife and nephews ³⁸.

Arrival of Chung Nye's Second wife Mock Shee and her Son on July 28, 1915

Chung Nye's second wife Mock Shee (莫氏) and his forth son, Chong Moo Kee (蔣戊己) arrived on the S.S. Axion in Vancouver on July 28, 1915 ³⁹. As merchant's wife and son, both were exempted from the Head Tax. Mock Shee, age 36, came from Sun Woy City (新會城), her son Moo Kee was age 13. Sadly, Moo Kee passed away at an early age. No record survived on the whereabouts of Moo Kee and his mom.

Chung Nye's Nephew On Shun (蔣安順, 名北強, aka Chong Quong, 1891-1972)

Nephew On Shun was known by the name Chong Quong. He came at age 12 to stay with Chung Nye in 1903. He became the Chinese boss at age 18. Chong Quong was well known in the canning industry. He held contracts along the Fraser River and up the B.C. Coast. His son Danny Chung (蔣章霖) held contract with the Port Edward Cannery of Nelson Brothers until 1959. Chong Quong's younger son, Wayne Horne Chong (蔣榮漢) retired from the Canadian Fishing Company's Home Plant at the Foot of Gore Ave in Vancouver.

Chong Quong passed away at age 81 on July 11, 1972. He was laid to rest at the Forrest Lawn Cemetery in Burnaby B.C. ⁴⁰.



Photo: Chong Quong next to a bailful of salmon and holding a 30 pound Spring salmon in each hand. This photo was kindly provided by Dr. Brian Ho.

Chung Nye's Nephew On Wey (aka Charles On Wey Chong, 蔣安偉, 1894-1968)

Nephew On Wey also stayed with Chung Nye in New Westminster in the 1920s. He was a member of the cannery clan. The Vancouver Gee Gong Tong (雲域致公堂) acknowledged donations received from the cannery crew of On Wey and 鄺田 (Kwong Tien) on November 19, 1930 ⁴¹. On Wey moved to New York in the 1930s and later worked as a bar tender in Washington D.C. He retired in Los Angeles. In 1963, three generations of the On Wey family were finally reunited when his wife Kwong Shee (鄺仲笑), son Shek Wan (蔣石穩) and family landed in Los Angeles on February 28. On Wey passed away at age 74 in 1968. He was laid to rest at the Los Angeles Chinese Cemetery.

National Identity versus Cultural Affinity

The story of a family photo taken 90 years ago unfolded in different directions, as each of the four young men took divergent paths. Wherever their destiny led them, each took their career seriously. They contributed to the community they lived in.

Even though New Westminster did not acknowledge them during their time, Chung Nye, On Kiu, On Shun, and On Wey accepted the dichotomy of their Canadian identity without compromising their Chinese cultural affinity.

This dichotomy should not invoke the question of divided loyalty. National identity is a commitment to where one lives, and make contributes to. Cultural affinity is an expression of the life style one prefers to live. Where one lives and how one lives, are two distinct issues. They do

not have to be congruent. Most Chinese pioneers would incorporate a part European, part First Nations, and part Chinese life style. Their cultural affinity may broaden with time, but Canada was their home, even though they have to wait until 1949 before they were recognized.

The colonial imperative of the day would not allow for such distinction. After the Head Tax, the Chinese Exclusion Act was imposed on July 1, 1923, thus closing all doors to Chinese immigrants. Little did the province and the Dominion realize that they too have closed the door to potential growth opportunities.

Discrimination not only deprived financial rewards to Chinese workers but it taxed the discriminator in productivity gains. New Westminster suffered a population outflow. The opportunity cost of discrimination, expressed as impeded economic growth to the discriminator, is seldom acknowledged.

Conclusion

The story of Chung Nye and his family was by no means unique for men of Chinese descent in British Columbia. They struggled and worked hard so that their family in China could have a better life. Impediments, one after another, were imposed against them. Trade unions, civic authorities, provincial and federal governments all conspired to exclude the Chinese pioneers. Lobbyists did not hesitate, however, to reap benefits from the wealth created by the value added labour of Chinese pioneers.

Chung Nye and his peers met each challenge. They not only survived hardships but brought with them ethics, humanity, reciprocity, family value, and the commitment to build a better home in Canada.

They helped each other in times of need and cared for those who were less fortunate. They organized benevolent societies, contributed to a departure fee of \$4 for each home trip they made. The money was to pay for shipping home, the remains of those who died in a foreign land.

When the dichotomy of national identity and cultural affinity is fully appreciated as non-congruent, the Chapter of our Chinese pioneers and their way of life at the forefront of Canada's nationhood will flourish. Their founding role in British Columbia and their participation in our nation building must not be left blank in Canadian history.

Acknowledgement

This story is possible thanks to the availability of digital and photo records on the Chinese Head Tax, Census of 1881 and 1891, and the Chinese Times. Library and Archives Canada, Multicultural Canada and the B.C. Provincial Archives are all to be congratulated for posting the data on their website. Mr. Barry Dykes of the New Westminster Museum and Archives kindly made available the minutes of the Chinese Benevolent Association from 1915 to 1929. Ms. Mary Munk of Library & Archive Canada provided explanation on the meaning of census codes.

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- [5] General Register of Chinese Immigration,
<http://data2.collectionscanada.gc.ca/e/e243/e006067023.pdf>
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Census 1891, http://data2.collectionscanada.gc.ca/1891/pdf/30953_148092-00363.pdf
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- [13] <http://chung.library.ubc.ca/collection/details/6000>
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- [20] New Westminster, the Great Fire of 1898.
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- [22] General Register of Chinese Immigration, Kang Yu Wei visit in 1899.
<http://data2.collectionscanada.gc.ca/e/e243/e006066675.pdf>
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<http://data2.collectionscanada.gc.ca/e/e243/e006066874.pdf>
- [24] The Chinese Times 1919-3-14, page 5; <http://www.multiculturalcanada.ca/node/240457>
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