CHINESE BUSINESS IN VANCOUVER
1886 - 1914

By

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines Chinese business activity in Vancouver, British Columbia between 1886 and 1914 as one avenue of immigrant adjustment. Government documents and reports, as well as business records from local Chinese merchant operations, were consulted. Chinese migrants to Canada brought with them business skills and concepts that were readily applied to economic opportunities arising inside and outside of Chinatown. The Chinese conducted a wide variety of businesses, revealing that the host society was most receptive to the Chinese presence in the commercial sphere. The viability of business activities reassured immigrants that their ambitions to earn money overseas were achievable despite persistent anti-Asian hostility in the general environment. Old and new world elements thus aided the survival and integration experience of the Chinese in Vancouver.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

WHY CHINESE-CANADIAN BUSINESS HISTORY?

This study of business activity amongst Vancouver's early Chinese settlers explores the integration experience of one newly-arrived immigrant group. At the turn of the century the Chinese arrived in a country bitterly opposed to their presence. Yet, despite a far-reaching, restrictive, and demeaning racism aimed against them, the Chinese stayed, settled, and encouraged their kinsmen to join them. How did they adjust and accommodate to this hostile setting, and make sense of the new world? Immigration history today recognizes the influence of migrants' pre-migration culture on their gradual integration, and students of the Chinese-Canadian past have presented Chinese voluntary associations as one important manifestation within that context. Another expression of that process lies in the institution of business, prominent in both Chinese and Canadian history and society, and critical to immigrants who used it as a tool of survival. Business history thus describes one important facet in the lives of the early immigrants, an element which facilitated realization of emigration goals and which also affected subsequent patterns of community development.
Chinese migrants to Canada, like newcomers to North America from around the world, were chiefly motivated by economic aspirations; hence business and financial endeavours lay at the heart of their new world experience. The migrants brought traditional mercantile practices to Canada and adapted them to local circumstances. For some migrants, business activity provided an avenue for upward economic mobility, a raison d'être for the sacrifices, the anxieties, and the humiliations which underlay the immigration experience. For others, small business merely permitted a modest living, enough to justify life in the new world without fulfilling its promise. But whatever the degree of success enjoyed by entrepreneurs, business activity was a ready means of getting on in a foreign land while achieving in some measure the goals of the sojourning migrant.

Business enterprise, especially small retail proprietorship, has long been an avenue of survival or upward mobility for immigrants to North America. Studies on the Chinese and Japanese in the United States have noted the prominence of Asians in this field and have tried to explain it. Some scholars suggest that racist restrictions on Asians in the general economy forced them into self-employment. A second opinion is that the sojourner mentality, which anticipated a short stay abroad and which embodied qualities such as thrift, a propensity for risk, and a desire for quick profits, encouraged business undertakings. Third, the cultural baggage of the migrants has sometimes facili-
tated the formation of small businesses. For the Chinese, kinship and home district ties and a familiar credit system helped generate capital funds within the local community. Finally, small business operators did not require technical skills, special education, or fluency in English to succeed. All of these explanations suggest valid reasons for the steady development of overseas Chinese business. The intent of this study, however, is not to ask why Chinese entered business but to explore the nature of those enterprises and their effect on immigrant integration. How did the institutions of business facilitate change and mutual accommodation between newcomers and their hosts?

The subject of immigrant adjustment has not been fully explored in the literature on the Chinese-Canadian past. Two major themes have preoccupied most of its students: Chinese voluntary associations and white racism. The former topic has identified two concepts important to the immigration history of the Chinese minority. First, the proliferation of associations in Canada was an adaptive response to local conditions and to immediate needs. The first Chinese Benevolent Association was established to settle disputes within the migrant society and to oppose discriminatory measures imposed from outside the community. Home district and clan associations responded to migrant needs for shelter, jobs, loans, and companionship, while Chinese labour unions later worked at improving working
conditions for their members. The recent decline in the number and activities of clan and district associations testified to the fading of white hostility and to the increasing integration and self-reliance of community members.

Second, voluntary associations are viewed as part of the migrants' cultural baggage and as expressions of ongoing ties to the mother country. Organizations which united those possessing similar surnames or hailing from certain counties in China carried out many functions previously undertaken by kinship and village groups in China. The flowering of political, educational, and theatrical groups throughout the first half of the twentieth century despite the shrinking of the Chinese population revealed the intense interest of local Chinese in China's evolution as it experienced modernization schemes, revolution, civil war, and invasion.

The study of voluntary associations has helped sketch a partial portrait of life in overseas Chinese settlements covering internal community structure, social and representative services, and international interests. But the study of institutional and leadership behaviour at an organized political level does not reveal how immigrant needs were met at the individual level. Clan and district affiliations that helped meet housing, employment, and social needs were essentially bases of organization, not tools of survival. How did the immigrant come to understand the new world and incorporate it into his own life? This thesis suggests that
business activity, a feature of both the old and new worlds, facilitated the adjustment process by equipping migrants with skills and perspectives directly useful to economic survival. The Chinese, after all, did not go abroad for the purpose of setting up voluntary associations.

Students of racism, the other major topic which has attracted substantial scholarly attention, have recorded a century of popular and legal anti-Asian agitation in British Columbia and have pinpointed economic and psychological explanations for it. One viewpoint is that white racism arose over competition for jobs and business. Early studies of the 'Oriental Problem' from the 1930's noted that Asian workers deprived whites of jobs because Asians worked for lower wages since their standard of living was lower. Moreover, the practice of remitting funds to China was considered a continuing source of low living standards amongst Asian immigrants. More recently Patricia Roy has shown how fears of economic competition were exaggerated by politicians and journalists in conjunction with fears of racial inundation to inspire the virulently anti-Asian atmosphere of British Columbia in the 1920's.

W. Peter Ward has challenged the economic explanation and argued instead that white racism was generated by a powerful psychological desire in British Columbia for racial homogeneity. That is, the racially-mixed character of the province threatened white Anglo-Saxon attempts to realize a collective identity based on racial purity. Ward sup-
ported his stand by noting that inter-racial job competition was in fact very limited because Asians specialized in a few occupations and because the division of labour in primary industries was racially stratified.¹⁸

These studies of racism have described the conditions surrounding the Chinese rather than the lives of the Chinese themselves. There is no doubt of the pervasiveness of white racism, but probes into its character examine a white phenomenon and ignore the Chinese except as victims and targets. Such studies do not address how the Chinese responded to racism or how they adjusted to any aspect of the new world. There is a need, then, to focus on the Chinese and to examine those affairs which were immediately important to them.

To date there has been only one study made of Chinese-Canadian business history. Charles Sedgwick has pointed out that business activity illustrates Chinese adjustment to life in Canada as businessmen in Victoria diversified their operations to meet changing economic and social circumstances between 1857 and 1947.¹⁹ He noted the spokesman role of leading Chinese merchants and reconstructed the community's economic foundations from published western sources and a few Chinese documents. But Sedgwick described the numbers and areas of new endeavours only as responses to changing local conditions, not as factors within a more intimate process of immigrant settlement and adjustment.

This study of the Chinese in Vancouver between 1886 and 1914 also examines the business endeavours of the Chinese,
but it explores their use as tools of immediate economic
and immigrant survival and as important components in immi-
grant integration. In this context, two major influences
affected the development of business: the new world opened
various economic opportunities to the Chinese, while the
old world equipped them to respond effectively. The activi-
ties of Chinese businessmen show that they were not always
powerless and passive victims of white racism, but rather
were active and aggressive men who carefully managed and
protected the economic resources they controlled. Most of
the evidence presented here documents the first decade of
the twentieth century, during which Vancouver's Chinatown
overtook that of Victoria as the primary trading centre of
the Chinese in Canada.

In essence, a study of this one form of economic
activity among the Chinese explores the most fundamental
circumstance of immigrant life. Immigration was a money-
making venture and the economic opportunities of British
Columbia must have sparked interest and greed, encouraged
competition, and prolonged the stays of many sojourners.
Business was an important dimension in early Chinese-
Canadian society as a functional tool of survival and advance-
ment and as a forum of contact with the host society. Today
the thriving commercial centre of Chinatown remains the
most visible aspect of Vancouver's Chinese community. One
dominant element in this ethnic group's continuity and history
thus appears to be its business sensibility.
FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER I


2 For example, see Edgar Wickberg, editor, From China to Canada (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982), p. 1.


6 Light, p. 60.


CHAPTER II

THE CHINESE BACKGROUND TO EMIGRATION

When circumstances in mid-nineteenth century China and abroad encouraged emigration to North America, the Chinese embarked with useful business skills and strong family ambitions that aided their overseas settlement. China's economy, though agrarian at heart, was highly commercialized and thus it molded financially-adept peasants and stimulated limited internal migration. The nation's social structure, founded on Confucian tenets and the primacy of the family, reinforced the individual migrant's pursuit of wealth, provided bases for overseas community organization, and strengthened emigrant ties to the homeland. Some of the migrants' pre-migration life skills and economic values found ready application in the new world.

The vast majority of Chinese migrants to Canada came from eight rural counties in the Pearl River delta in the southeastern coastal province of Guangdong (广东). Canton (广州 Guangzhou), the provincial capital, stood at the head of the Pearl River and had been a major port city since the eighth century A.D. Guangdong peasants travelled
through Canton bound for South East Asia from the sixteenth century onward. In 1757, an Imperial edict declared Canton to be the sole Chinese port open for trade with the West.\(^1\) Thereafter knowledge about overseas opportunities in North America was readily transmitted to peasants living nearby.

Guangdong possesses a tropical climate, and the growing season in the Canton delta stretches around the year to permit the cultivation of many crops. Rice, the staple, was double-cropped annually, but the region had witnessed a growing tendency to raise other more profitable cash crops in its place since the sixteenth century.\(^2\) One Pearl River county, for example, produced rice sufficient for only one-half its consumption and imported the balance of its needs.\(^3\) Instead, cash crops such as sugar cane, fruit, tea, silkworms, and vegetables were planted to supply consumer demands emanating from abroad and from regional markets within China. Other occupations in this advanced agricultural economy included fish-farming, hemp and reed-weaving, and cloth-weaving.\(^4\)

Inter-regional trade in China had developed rapidly during the empire's reunification in the late fourteenth century. Commercial growth was facilitated by a small canal and road system and the use of paper money and bills of exchange. Urban populations rose in the Ming period (1368-1644 A.D.) and intermediate cities multiplied between the major cities and the countryside.\(^5\) During this period, the Canton region became highly commercialized.
By the sixteenth century, over 2500 weavers each employing twenty or more workers conducted operations in Canton. Iron foundries and gold and silver mines throughout Guangdong utilized large numbers of hired labourers.  

Inter-regional trade also encouraged internal migration between different parts of the empire, chiefly by merchants and artisans. This movement, like overseas migration, saw men travel unaccompanied by their families while continuing to maintain strong ties to their homes. For example, sons borne by host city wives or concubines were often sent back to be raised in their father's village. As well, migrants coming from common locales formed mutual help associations that provided accommodation, letters of introduction, and limited commercial credit. They also organized merchant and craft guilds which reflected the geographic specialization of industries.

By the nineteenth century almost every peasant household in China had access to market centres, towns which were hives of commercial activity. They imported goods unavailable locally and exported produce from the region. Market towns contained services such as tea-houses, oil-dealers, incense and candle-makers, and soap-makers, as well as craftsmen such as blacksmiths and carpenters. Travelling artisans such as tool-sharpeners, livestock-castrators, tooth-artists, barbers, and entertainers made regular visits to such market centres as well. Peasants traded regularly at market towns and many went to nearby ports and cities to
work as coolies and craftsmen during the slack farming season.  

Through exposure to these market activities, Chinese peasants became sophisticated handlers of money. Trading skills were further refined by the extensive use of credit in Chinese society. A nineteenth century observer of China noted that the great mass of the Chinese people were in a chronic state of debt, but that this was a natural and normal state of life for the common man: 

He is born into it; he grows up in it; he goes to school with it; he marries in it; and he ultimately leaves the world with the shadow of it resting on him in his last moments. 

Cash shortages in a marginally-subsistent economy made borrowing necessary while the lure of profits from interest charges encouraged lending. All manner of men and women would calculate their abilities to borrow, lend, and repay funds in the credit marketplace. 

While the prominent money-lenders traditionally included landlords, pawnbrokers and shop-keepers, creditors also embraced peasants, coolies and servants because any person with a small amount of surplus cash could readily find someone needing to borrow. Peasants possessing land used it as collateral to borrow money from city-dwelling lenders. Loans were also widely available from rotating credit clubs. Small groups of friends, relatives or acquaintances paid regular sums into a pool which was paid out to individual members in turn. These loan clubs taught the participants
significant financial skills because the interest one earned could be manipulated through careful planning.\textsuperscript{13}

The Chinese economy had created peasants who were financially shrewd traders. Producing and selling cash crops introduced them to a money economy and the workings of supply and demand in an open marketplace. Widespread acceptance of indebtedness allowed them to play debtor or creditor as finances dictated. In nearby market towns and cities, as well as in the major ports of Canton and Hong Kong, they learned about the opportunities and mechanisms of an industrializing economy. By the time news of opportunities in North America arrived in the 1850's, rural migration to the city was an existing option for market and money-wise peasants displaced from the land.

During this period many factors encouraged emigration from Guangdong. A steady rise in population increased pressure on limited arable lands. Between 1787 and 1850 the population in Guangdong almost doubled, from sixteen to twenty-eight million.\textsuperscript{14} The province's man-to-land ratio fell well below the national average.\textsuperscript{15} An agricultural tenancy rate of over forty percent ranked among the highest in the nation, much above the prevailing rate of twenty percent in North China.\textsuperscript{16} Land ownership became increasingly concentrated in the hands of a small portion of the population.\textsuperscript{17}

The commercialized economy in the Canton region also began to suffer in the mid-nineteenth century. China's
defeat in the First Opium War of 1839-1842 resulted in the forced opening of four additional treaty ports along the Chinese coast. These ports diverted trading activity away from Canton, putting porters, warehousemen, boatmen, and small merchants out of work. The subsequent entrance of foreign manufactured goods onto the Chinese market displaced traditional Chinese industries by undercutting native prices. Cottage industries were disrupted, reducing a traditional source of supplemental income among peasants.

These economic difficulties were compounded by a breakdown in law and order at national and local levels. The Taiping Rebellion swept through China between 1850 and 1864 and claimed twenty million lives. Guangdong escaped the massive destruction of this upheaval, but central government authority was sufficiently weakened that secret society uprisings erupted in the Pearl River Delta in 1853 and took an estimated one million lives. This was followed by armed internecine Punti-Hakka conflict over land and water rights in several Pearl River counties that cost 150,000 lives between the years 1854 and 1868.

The peasantry also contended with natural disasters such as flood and drought. Ongoing warfare prevented farmers from maintaining their fields properly, and an increasing number of able-bodied men were conscripted for military service. Banditry and piracy continued unabated due to the weakened central government. Thus both economic
and political crises stemming from internal dynastic decline and external foreign aggression helped push peasants to seek their livelihood abroad.

Migrants to North America came from merchant, peasant, and labouring backgrounds. The merchants were few in number and may have been originally compelled to go abroad because they, rather than rural landlords, were among the hardest hit when the Canton economy suffered. In the United States, the leading merchants of Chinatown came from Sahm Yup (三邑 San-yi), the 'Three Counties' lying immediately by Canton, one of the most advanced commercial areas in China. The merchants took capital abroad to establish stores to sell groceries and daily necessities to their compatriots. They also possessed connections to the established trading firms in Hong Kong and Canton.

The majority of the migrants, however, came from districts further away from Canton, most notably from Say Yup (四邑 Si-yi), the 'Four Counties'. The backgrounds of the migrants included various strata of the rural peasantry: landless hired hands, sharecroppers, and small landholders who owned marginal amounts of land. Some had already travelled previously to Canton or other towns to seek work as peddlers, rice-carriers, or boatmen, or to ply their own skills such as cobbling. Those owning land often sold it to raise money for their passage, while other families pooled resources to send one clan member abroad. Not all the migrants to North America, then, came 'fresh off the farm',
nor were all of them impoverished paupers.

But while the emigrants came from differing economic backgrounds, they shared common expectations and ambitions in life shaped by Confucianism and the primacy of the family. In the nineteenth century the ancient class system still saw the peasantry producing wealth for the gentry and for bureaucratic and land-owning elites. The longevity of the system had arisen in part from the permeation at all levels of society of Confucian thought, the national belief system which provided rules for all human relations and social behaviour. It preached that a harmonious society required all its members to accept their station in life and to act to preserve the status quo. It taught unquestioning obedience to authority, both to one's emperor and to one's elders. Confucian theory also idealized farming as moral and productive but depicted merchant activities as parasitic and immoral.25

Peasants were viewed as sturdy and productive yeomen, virtuous because of their simple and reverent attachment to the land. Confucian theory elevated them in the social order well above the artisan and merchant but below the educated and bureaucratic gentry classes. In reality, however, while their produce, taxes, and rent payments constituted the economic foundations of Chinese society, the peasants' arduous labour provided a subsistence existence that at best barely preserved them from natural disasters, greedy landlords, corrupt tax collectors, and fluctuating market
prices. Confucian thought functioned to keep the peasants resigned to the drudgery of farm labour.26

Merchants were ranked lowest in Confucianism because they allegedly profitted from the non-productive exchange of goods produced by peasants and artisans. But this did not mean that they were social outcasts; instead they were recognized as useful and valuable members of society. The broad range of businessmen in China included street pedlars, simple traders, brokers, consignment agents, and merchant princes attached to state monopolies.27 Mercantile wealth enabled business families to enter the gentry and bureaucratic classes in two ways. They could purchase lower-ranked official degrees without writing examinations or they could hire good tutors to prepare their sons for the imperial examinations. Merchants therefore had little incentive to overturn the Confucian order.28

The gentry class of scholars and land-owners provided informal governmental and social services to the general population. The gentry possessed both bureaucratic and aristocratic tendencies, the former derived from degree-holding and the latter from wealth, education and birth. At the local level gentry functions in local government included tax collecting, supervision of irrigation works and schools, organizing the local militia, and mediating legal disputes.29 These duties, which augmented their land-holding wealth, were dictated by the Confucian ideal of public service where the gentry guided society's moral
improvement and tended to the safety and security of its peasant charges. High gentry status thus rested on education, official standing, public service, and wealth.

The ideology of class in China, however, included a strong belief in upward social and economic mobility shared at all social levels. Access to the prestige and wealth of government office and gentry standing was theoretically open to all because the imperial examinations were unrestricted. But a dramatic rags-to-riches jump was rare indeed because wealth was required from the outset to finance educational preparation for examinations. Still, the minute possibility of success alleviated social discontent and millions of scholars studied year after year for the tests. For peasants, social promotion initially required the accumulation of wealth from non-farming sources such as merchant activity because one's own plot of land could not generate sufficient surplus funds.

Ambitious peasants and merchants invested their surplus funds in land, the rental income from which was then applied against educational expenses. Peasants could easily see from landowner behaviour that only the ownership of more land would free them and their families from physical labour and permit them to live exclusively from rent. Merchants, too, invested their wealth in land rather than in additional businesses in attempts to overcome their low status by acquiring land to resemble the landed gentry. Thus, a combination of increased wealth, land-holding, and education
was the path to increased status and entry into the gentry and bureaucracy of China.

Confucianism also buttressed the family's role in Chinese society by denoting it as a microcosm of society and state, where family harmony and stability contributed to peace, order and good government in the community at large. In the Confucian family, respect and obedience to the oldest living male was sustained by the cardinal value of filial piety. Ancestor worship, the reverence of one's forebears, reinforced filial piety and the sense of continuity in the family. And, as in other pre-industrial communities, the Chinese family was an economic unit, chiefly concerned with enriching itself, protecting its economic interests, and enhancing its future prosperity. 34

In South China the power of the family was expressed through the lineage, a kinship network of families sharing a common surname and tracing their relatedness to a common founding ancestor. In Guangdong, many villages held only a few surnames, and in Say Yup, many villages contained only one surname. While lineages often encouraged clannish in-group feelings, they also acted as a stabilizing factor in Chinese society because their vertical ties of kinship cut through class lines and because of their many social and economic functions. 35

The lineage was headed by elder members of the clan who met and made decisions at the local level. The lineages were Guangdong's largest landowners, 36 and they collected
rents to use for the lineage. They loaned money, underwrote lawsuits, and distributed relief to the aged and the needy. Funds were used to repair public buildings and bridges and to maintain the ancestral halls. Some lineages established schools and hired teachers. The clan elders also regulated moral behaviour and arbitrated disputes among its members.³⁷

The ritual, economic, and educational functions of the lineage provided peasants with a strong sense of cohesion, of belonging to a larger social unit. A wealthy and powerful lineage gave prestige to all its members, rich and poor alike since lineage membership was determined by blood.³⁸ The lineage was also important to upward mobility because it financed educational and government examination expenses for aspiring individuals. These functions encouraged individuals to contribute to the wealth of their lineage. Overseas migrants thus sought to feed their own families, and in the longer term, to strengthen their lineage.

Social order in China thus rested on several elements which diffused potential discontent arising from the unequal distribution of wealth. Peasants believed that wealth and status in the existing Confucian order were accessible through education. The conscious paternalism of the gentry elite and lineage elders eased rural misery. Finally, personal connections between upper and lower classes through a code of mutual rapport (感情 gan-ching) allowed for negotiations and flexibility in contractual relations.³⁹
The Guangdong peasants have been attributed with a progressive and individualistic outlook arising partly from the region's commercial and industrial developments. The geographic isolation of the province from the rest of China helped nurture locally all the major revolutions of modern China. And, according to one observer, the peasants and shopkeepers of the Hong Kong region demonstrated great self-reliance and independence. They, instead of the gentry, assumed local responsibility for routine affairs and dealt with all natural and man-made disasters. This initiative is seen to have arisen from the extremely strong tenant rights that absentee landlordism and South China's 'one-field-two(or more)-lord' land tenure system had generated.

In summary, the Chinese who came to Canada left a country with a highly commercialized cash economy and an agrarian base. The acquisition of wealth was of primary importance to every migrant. Business activity, wage labour, urban migration, and money-lending were established avenues of survival in nineteenth century Chinese society. The strong sense of identification with family and lineage added further incentive to financial achievement. Men were encouraged to go abroad while the lineage undertook to care for their wives and family. Confucian thought also influenced the outlook of migrants for it embodied the concept of a stable, peaceful society with some opportunity for upward social and economic mobility.
In the overseas setting migrants seized upon available opportunities to work in many occupations. Their savings were channelled back to family and lineage in China and into additional money-making ventures in the new world. Chinese migrants thus retained their fundamental outlook towards work, family, and the social order, for new world values were similar in some basic respects. The value system of the Chinese, then, did not undergo a violent disruption upon arrival in Canada and instead lay preparatory groundwork for the economic integration of Chinese labourers and businessmen.
FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER TWO


3 Ibid., p. 474.

4 Ibid., p. 468.

5 Frederic Wakeman, Jr., The Fall of Imperial China (New York: The Free Press, 1975), pp. 40-41.

6 Mei, pp. 468-469.


11 Ibid., p. 173.

12 Wakeman, p. 10.


Ibid., p. 179. In 1812, a Guangdong peasant possessed an average of 1.67 mou of land, compared to the national average of 2.19 mou. A mou is equivalent to .16 acre.


Mei, p. 470.

Lai and Choy, pp. 35-36.

Mei, pp. 473-474.

Mei, p. 475.

Mei, p. 476.

Mei, pp. 477-481.

Mei, p. 482.

Lai and Choy, p. 27.


Wakeman, *The Fall*, p. 51.

Wakeman, *The Fall*, p. 31.

Wakeman, *The Fall*, p. 23


Ibid., p. 52.

Gallin, p. 65.


37 Freedman, Lineage, p. 12.
38 Lai and Choy, p. 31; Freedman, Lineage, p. 54.
39 Wakeman, The Fall, p. 16.
40 Yang, p. 6.
41 Yang, p. 5.
CHAPTER III

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT IN EARLY CHINATOWN

This chapter examines business development in Vancouver's Chinese community during the city's formative years to see how this activity affected immigrant adjustment in the new world. The range of self-owned businesses among the Chinese was wide, and the following pages explore the activities of Chinese labour contractors, laundrymen, merchant tailors, and general merchants. These businessmen traded goods and services and vigorously defended their interests at court and at City Hall when necessary. Merchants were the first to form voluntary associations in Chinatown and rose to dominate them because business assets and wealth proved to be acceptable criteria in both Chinese and white communities for selecting leaders.

Upon arriving in Canada, Chinese migrants became either wage labourers or self-employed businessmen. The former, in general, depended on host society demands for work while the latter provided goods and services to both Chinese and white communities. By 1907, the flourishing business community was pyramid-shaped, with a few wealthy merchants
reaping significant earnings from a variety of enterprises. The varying sizes of operations forming the pyramid reflected individual capabilities as well as local and regional sources of demand. Chinese merchants were also major employers of Chinese labour in Chinatown.

Vancouver's early history was largely shaped by lumbering and the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, two industries which relied on the natural harbour of Burrard Inlet. Prior to 1886, non-Indian settlement clung to the edges of the forests surrounding the inlet, at the Moodyville Sawmill, the Hastings Mill, and the Granville Townsite. Granville, or Gastown, held saloons, hotels, and provisioning stores for the loggers, and was the social centre for men working at the mills.1

Established in 1869, the Hastings Mill's five acre site contained a lumber mill, store and offices, bunkhouses, and a wharf to load timber for Asia, South America, and Australia. The company employed a multi-ethnic workforce of Native Indians, Chinese, half-breeds, Kanakas, and whites.2 Chinese loggers or logging crews also sold logs to the mill as did one Ah Sang, who delivered seven thousand dollars worth of timber to the mill between 1871 and 1872.3

In 1884, an estimated 114 Chinese lived around Burrard Inlet, including sixty sawmill hands, five merchants, ten store employees, and thirty washermen and cooks.4 That year also saw the Canadian Pacific Railway Company announce extension of the railway from Port Moody to the head of
Burrard Inlet, the future site of Vancouver. Chinese workers prepared the railway roadbed near Port Moody and completed this work towards the end of 1885. Unemployed Chinese and white railway labourers then drifted into the Granville area. Many discharged railway navvies found work at the Hastings Mill, but they soon went on strike in April of 1886. The mill manager, R.H. Alexander, refused to reduce working hours for the strikers and argued that he had run the mill successfully with Indian and Chinese labour. His other white employees supported him and helped defeat the strike. During the negotiations, Alexander dubbed the eastern Canadian workers 'North American Chinamen' because they were just another source of transient wage labour to him.  

Several incidents of public abuse of the Chinese followed. In the first civic election of May 1886, Alexander stood for mayor. He allegedly sent sixty of his Chinese workers to the poll in Gastown, but they were stopped and chased back to the mill by the stagecoach driver and his horses. In November, a white workers' organization called the Knights of Labour surfaced and demanded that city firms refuse to hire Chinese or sell provisions to them. Any merchant who defied the ban then saw a large white X painted on the sidewalk before his store, marking him for boycott by the entire city. The Knights also urged expelling the Chinese from Vancouver, and forceful mob attempts to eject newly arrived Chinese land-clearers and to destroy Chinese shanties and stores ensued in January and February of 1887.
This hostile reception did not dislodge or discourage the Chinese from settling in Vancouver. The region's lumber industry had initially drawn them there to work as mill-hands and hand-loggers. By 1892, eleven sawmills operated in town, most of which were located on the waterfront of False Creek and Burrard Inlet. In 1908, an estimated 1500 of the city's Chinese population of four thousand worked in the saw, shingle, and planing mills of the area. The Chinese unloaded the bolts of wood, cut them, piled them up for the saw, and then packed the finished products for shipment. Later the Chinese became sawyers too.

Chinese labour helped transform the dense forests of Vancouver into a modern city. The removal of timber had posed a great expense to private landowners: land-clearing cost between $50 and $150 an acre. Chinese land-clearers were the cheapest available, and such crews also carried out ditching and dyking work in Richmond and South Vancouver. In many cases, white land-owners leased land free of charge to the Chinese to clear and farm for a few years before they drew up leases for ten or fifteen year terms. The Chinese quickly established pig ranches and vegetable gardens, and local homes, hotels, and boarding houses soon became dependent on them for fresh food products. Thus some Chinese workers worked strictly for wages while others (especially land-clearers) worked in exchange for an opportunity at self-employed farming.
In other areas of wage labour, Chinese cooks and servants worked in homes, hotels, and logging camps. By 1902, 260 such labourers were earning $10 to $30 a month working in private homes and more in hotels. By 1908, this number had grown to four or five hundred. The use of Chinese men in domestic work reflected the shortage of white women workers in the frontier and the relative cheapness and dependability of Chinese labour. Chinese workers were also employed in brick and charcoal-making operations in Vancouver.

Most Chinese wage labourers relied on labour contractors to overcome the language barrier, make initial contact with employers, and settle conditions of work. These middlemen in turn received a commission from the workers' wages. They were the first Chinese businessmen to be licensed by civic authorities, though a Chinese laundry and a Chinese general store had been in Granville since 1882. Out of eight licenses issued to 'intelligence offices' in 1888, six went to Chinese firms.

Labour contracting required operators to possess some English language ability and connections to white employers, as the following examples of two contractors show. Nineteen year old Yip Sang (葉生 Ye Sheng, also known as 葉春田 Ye Chun-tian) came to North America from an impoverished family and worked as a dishwasher, cook, and cigar-maker. In 1888, he established the Wing Sang Company (永生號) in Vancouver after overseeing for a Chinese firm that supplied labourers to build the Canadian Pacific Railway. Wing Sang later acted
as ticket agent for the Canadian Pacific Steamship Company, supplied the Empress steamships with food for the Chinese crews, and contracted labour to the salmon canneries. The company also took out an opium license from the city.

Another contractor, Won Alexander Cumyow, was the first Chinese born in Canada in 1861. Son of a merchant with the wealthy Kwong Lee Company, he grew up in New Westminster, and spoke English, Chinook, Cantonese, and the Hakka dialect of Chinese. From 1890 onwards he worked in New Westminster and Vancouver as court interpreter and businessman. He handled requests for cooks, land-clearers, wood-cutters, railway section hands, and bakers. Cumyow's clients were spread over a wide area that included the Lower Mainland, Port Kells, Harrison Hot Springs, Calgary, and Fairhaven, Washington. Cumyow also hired white workers for employers.

To solicit work, Cumyow notified prospective employers in writing of his available workers and also bid for land-clearing jobs. As middleman, the contractor spoke on behalf of the workers. In one wood-cutting contract, Cumyow argued that the rocky and distant location of the trees, and the dismal weather, had thwarted the workers, and asked for a higher price. Chinese land-clearers pressed for payment by day instead of by acreage because the vegetation density could not be predicted. Of course, it was in the contractor's own interest to press for higher wages, since his own commission would rise accordingly. There were also problems in collecting wages: Cumyow sometimes had to threaten court
action against tardy employers.\textsuperscript{30}

The labour contractor stood between the Chinese and white communities and organized the Chinese labour supply to meet the needs of the local economy. Other Chinese businessmen also provided direct services to the host society, but without assuming a middleman role. These included both farmers and laundymen who started their own operations with small amounts of capital. In particular, the rise of the Chinese laundry trade revealed the persistent demand for this service and Chinese willingness to meet that demand despite bureaucratic and racist opposition to the laundries.

Wah Chong's laundry was one of Vancouver's first Chinese businesses, established even before the city's incorporation in 1886. By 1889, Vancouver's thirty Chinese business firms included thirteen laundries.\textsuperscript{31} Ten were located outside Chinatown, near rooming houses and residential hotels where lodgings but not washing facilities were supplied to the transient population moving in and out of the city. Until 1891, even the City Hospital used the services of two Chinese laundries.\textsuperscript{32}

Common stereotypes of the Chinese as an unclean people soon brought about municipal regulation of the laundries.\textsuperscript{33} In 1893, the erection of wash-houses was restricted by civic by-law to the Chinatown area, on Dupont Street (later Pender) between Carrall and Columbia Streets.\textsuperscript{34} Those situated outside the restricted zone were allowed to remain, but they became the targets of nearby residents' complaints.
These neighbours demanded removal of the laundries because they were viewed as a 'nuisance' or as a threat to property values. In 1896, a number of wash-houses were demolished after a by-law regulating drainage was passed.

In 1900, civic actions against Chinese laundries mounted, possibly in response to the rising number of operations. Of thirty wash-houses in business, only two were located in Chinatown. In March, the Health Inspector urged that compulsory smallpox vaccination be introduced for Chinese laundrymen. In June, the Police Chief was instructed to enforce the Sunday Observance by-law against the laundries after complaints from the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council. Then October saw civic officials register all Chinese who slept at their laundries as lodging-house keepers to subject them to housing regulations.

By this time, two hundred Chinese worked in the trade, and some laundries employed ten or more men. They handled three-quarters of the city's laundry business, while four white-owned laundry factories took in the bulk washing of hotels and restaurants. While these mechanized steam laundries complained about unfair competition from the lower wages of the Chinese, the Chinese argued that they did not reap high profits. Two Chinese laundrymen testified in 1904 that they earned fifteen to twenty dollars a month after expenses were paid.

City by-laws were amended in December 1900 to broaden control of the Chinese laundries. The laundry zone was
enlarged to an area bounded by Main Street, False Creek, Cambie Street, and Burrard Inlet. The by-law forbade dampening clothes with water sprayed from the mouth and sleeping overnight on laundry premises. No clothes were to be washed, dried, or aired within sixty feet of any street, and a separate room for sorting clothing was made mandatory. The small scale, low-capital, and confined operations of the Chinese seemed especial targets of these attempts to improve civic sanitation.

Chinese laundrymen responded to these measures with formal protests. Thirty of them retained a white lawyer and successfully petitioned to remove the lodging-house registration. In April 1901, their solicitor unsuccessfully tried to have City Hall repeal the prohibition on drying clothes in the open air. When their license fee was raised to $50 in 1904, Chinese laundrymen brought the issue to court. Their lawyer charged that the high fees restricted competition and accused two aldermen of having conflicts of interest in the matter because they were partners in two steam laundries. The case failed, but the laundrymen again petitioned for a fee reduction in March 1905. These Chinese businessmen proved determined to overcome bureaucratic obstructions to their operations.

Chinese laundry owners also contended with unions. In May 1906, a Chinese Laundry Workers' Union emerged and called for shorter working hours and an end to Sunday labour. On first report, the ninety member union claimed success in
obtaining its demands. Four days later, however, the union charged that employers were luring members away with promises of higher wages. Two weeks later, seventeen men reportedly repudiated their union membership on a public poster, but this was torn down by one man who denied ever leaving the union. It remains unclear whether this flurry of activity was sparked by unsatisfactory working conditions, intransigent employers, or other factors such as the un-named white union organizer.

Between 1900 and 1912, an average of nine new laundries started each year at locations situated further and further away from Chinatown. The total number of laundries increased from twenty-three in 1906 to fifty-three in 1912. Not every firm renewed the annual license as the years passed, and only twelve of the thirty-four laundries registered in 1906-1907 were still operating in 1912. (See Appendix I) The high turnover indicated a perceived economic opportunity that many Chinese were willing to test, but whether operators departed successfully to return to China or unsuccessfully to try another line of work cannot be determined.

Nonetheless, the laundry trade functioned as one economic setting for immigrant integration as many individual operators responded to market demands and learned new work and language skills to deal with customers. The establishment of laundries away from Chinatown indicated a certain confidence among operators of their ability to
function independently without the support systems of Chinatown. Similarly, the willingness of laundrymen to fight civic regulations showed some basic understanding on their part of their rights as businessmen in the new world and of the procedures needed to achieve business goals.

The laundry trade satisfied local urban demands, while another line of Chinese business responded to regional demands. The origins of Chinatown's merchant tailor industry came with Vancouver's rise to a regional metropolis. The city's population jumped from 14,000 in 1891 to 27,000 in 1901 and then to 100,000 in 1911. After the local boom sparked by the Klondike Gold Rush in 1897-1898, sustained industrial growth in Vancouver followed the rapid development of the British Columbian interior and the prairie provinces where demands for lumber and other ocean-imported goods were rising.

One increased western Canadian demand was for ready-made clothing from Vancouver, a product especially popular because local manufacturers followed American styles instead of imitating the British cuts of Toronto producers. Before the turn of the century, eastern manufacturers in Montreal and Toronto working with greater scales of production and with cheaper pools of female labour easily undercut the prices of Vancouver-made clothing. However, local wholesalers preferred handling locally-produced goods because the transportation costs of eastern goods reduced their profits. This preference led them to con-
tract job-lot orders to local Chinese merchant tailors.

By 1902, one hundred Chinese worked in Chinatown's merchant tailor firms, carrying on two lines of work. One line produced overalls, boys' wear, and workmen's pants for wholesale companies and department stores, while the other worked at custom tailoring, producing men and women's suits and coats for blue and white collar customers. Some Chinese firms indicated that they served white clienteles almost exclusively. The Chinese, it was observed, had learned to sew by working for white firms before starting their own shops. Another source reported that the Chinese learned their skills during time spent in federal jails.

Vancouver's eighteen merchant tailors of 1908 employed 122 men, one quarter of the Chinatown-based work force. Shops were set up with sewing machines and other equipment such as button-holers. Hours of work varied according to the wholesalers' demands: for rush orders, fourteen hour days were worked. Wages were graded according to skill: ladies' tailors earned $50 a month, cloth cutters $30 a month, and sewing machine operators $25 a month. Three merchant tailors specialized in producing fancy silk garments for women and located their shops away from the heart of Chinatown. These operators shared white wholesalers' problems with transportation costs because they stated that local manufacturing was more profitable than importing the goods from China.

The fifteen Chinatown merchant tailors collected a
wide range of gross incomes in 1907. Appendix II shows that seven firms earned over $18,000 while the remaining eight received an average of $10,000. The top-earning firm reaped more than three times the $10,000 average and employed eleven men, compared to the average staff of seven. The high earnings reflected the successful mix of both large volume 'rough' manufacturing with custom tailoring, because while the hand-labour of custom tailoring required less capital investment than the equipment needs of wholesale production, the labour costs of skilled hand tailors was higher.

The merchant tailors formed one of several components of the Chinatown economy, one largely dependent on outside demands. Most of the remaining firms were general merchandise companies which purchased goods from China and from local wholesalers to sell within the Chinese community. They traded in essential food, clothing, and work items needed by the migrants, including rice and soya, Chinese medicines, tools, and daily goods such as writing paper and incense. Here too there was a variety of sizes in operations handling different volumes and types of goods at retail and wholesale outlets. The large number of these merchant operations may have resulted from the credit-generated ease of entry into this self-owned livelihood, and may also testify to the exploitation of the migrants' clan and home district loyalties by enterprising individuals relying on patronage from those who shared common aspects of
An unusually detailed block of information on general merchants and other Chinatown businesses was assembled by William Lyon Mackenzie King when he arrived in Vancouver in May 1908 to assess the damage resulting from the anti-Asian riots of September 8, 1907. To determine the amount of compensation for the six days after the riot during which Chinatown was shut down, Mackenzie King asked for the merchants' annual income figures, number of employees, amount of wages paid, and other information. Of the 103 firms that submitted claims, thirty-six were general merchants.

The gross annual incomes of the Chinatown firms ranged from less than $1000 to over $180,000. The distribution of this income was pyramid-shaped: the four firms at the peak earned between $150,000 and $180,000 annually, a range amounting to more than six times the average income of two-thirds of Chinatown's businesses. (See Appendix III) While the income figures supplied to Mackenzie King may have been inflated in hopes of obtaining higher amounts of compensation, the figures still reveal the diversity of Chinatown's businesses in relative and comparative terms.

At the pyramid's head stood the four firms of Gim Lee Yuen (金利源), Hip Tuck Lung (協德隆), Lee Yuen (利源), and Sam Kee (三記). The opium factories of Hip Tuck Lung and Lee Yuen imported the raw drug from China and then cooked and re-packaged it locally for distribution across Canada.
Civic authorities charged a $500 annual license for these operations. The opium trade soon ended, despite opposition from Chinese merchants, when Mackenzie King had the drug banned in July 1908. Lee Yuen continued operations with other imports and real estate investments, but Hip Tuck Lung soon vanished. Sam Kee and Gim Lee Yuen imported goods from China, in particular rice and foodstuffs. The Sam Kee Company also possessed interests in charcoal manufacturing, a herring saltery, labour contracting, and cordwood sales. Chinese imports, like Vancouver's wholesale trade, were aimed at the hinterland markets in the British Columbian interior where the majority of the province's Chinese lived. (See Appendix IV)

Like white wholesalers, Chinese importers made extensive use of the ocean liners docking at Vancouver, and the major merchant firms soon became Chinatown agents for different steamship lines. The lucrative passenger and cargo trade between China and Canada encouraged competition: Wing Sang represented the established Canadian Pacific Steamship Company, Sam Kee acted for the rival Blue Funnel Line, and Lee Yuen worked with the Weir Line. Discriminatory immigration laws against the Chinese in the United States also stimulated passenger trade through Vancouver as Chinese migrants entered Canada first before illegally crossing the American border.

Real estate was another source of income for the major firms, all of which possessed sizeable land-holdings in
Chinatown. The Gim Lee Yuen principals owned nine lots forming three distinct sites, while Wing Sang's sixteen lots included the eleven-lot Canton Alley tenement district of homes and businesses. Wing Sang's 1908 holdings were valued at $200,000 while those of Sam Kee were estimated at $500,000. Lee Yuen owned only two lots in Chinatown proper, but like Sam Kee Company, it had invested extensively in neighbouring areas. A 1908 estimate placed Chinese-owned property located in Chinatown at $2 million and elsewhere in the city at another $1 million.

While the major firms of Chinatown acquired their wealth from a variety of activities including import-export trades, steamship commissions, labour contracting, and real estate investment, those firms located further down the income pyramid were not as diversified. At the second highest echelon stood five general merchants earning between $66,000 and $85,000 annually. Two supplied wholesale provisions to fish canneries and may have contracted labour as well. These two acknowledged that wholesale trade was much more profitable than retail sales. The other three merchants imported a variety of goods from China and Japan.

At a third and widening level of the pyramid, a diverse group of sixteen businesses earned $31,000 to $55,000 annually. (See Appendix III). Eleven general merchants, two pawnbrokers, one commission agent, and one custom tailor were included here. These firms did not serve Chinese customers exclusively as was the tendency for those businesses above
them. The commission agent's cattle and poultry dealings were with many whites located outside Chinatown and as far away as Chilliwack. The two pawnbrokers received customers from all nationalities: "...mostly Chinese and next Japanese and coloured and next white people...". The tailor and general merchant who specialized in silks and linens also served white clienteles.

The base of the pyramid contained sixty-six firms with incomes ranging from $1000 to $30,000. There were eleven restaurants situated in the upper half of this income bracket, which employed eighty people and also catered to white customers. The remainder of Chinatown's seventeen merchant tailors and general merchants were evenly dispersed through this cluster, as were three jewellers, four barbers, three shoe factories, two cartage firms, and a butcher. The cartage firms served the burgeoning transport and delivery needs of Chinatown firms, while the jewellers testified to a prospering community. One jeweller indicated that eighty percent of its business came from the Chinese. The Wo Yuen shoe factory produced ready-to-wear and custom-fitted products for "...all classes of people..."

The Chinatown economy was self-sufficient to the degree that it provided its inhabitants with a full range of services including restaurants, lodgings, employment contractors, barbers, and clothing. While these services employed several hundred people in Chinatown, the Chinese remained highly dependent on the outside community for jobs and custo-
mers. The region's important salmon-canning and lumber industries required mobile crews of labourers while the razing of Vancouver's forests demanded cheap teams of land-clearers. Urban needs for affordable clothing, shoes, meals, and laundry services stimulated a steady business response from the Chinese. Finally, demands from within Chinatown and across the province for goods from China created additional opportunities for trade.

The Chinatown economy thus straddled several worlds: the ethnic ghetto, the city of Vancouver, the regional staple industries, the provincial Chinese settlements, and China. Together, these worlds offered a multiplicity of economic opportunities to the Chinese. Some demanded a direct response to white customers, others contributed to the social isolation of the Chinese through the use of middlemen. Nevertheless, a wide range of sewing, cooking, manufacturing, and management skills developed among the migrants. Some skills were extended from the old world, others were newly acquired from the local setting.

In real estate matters, Chinese merchants quickly adopted Western strategies to protect their investments. In China, land had represented the most permanent of assets, prized for its ability to generate food, rental income, and loans. Real estate in Chinatown similarly generated revenue for the wealthy businessmen. As they bought land and transformed the early shacks and cabins into substantial brick buildings, their dealings with white businessmen, tradesmen,
and civic officials led to broader contacts with the larger community and to a greater degree of economic integration.

Chinatown of the 1890's was centered around the unit-block East Pender at Carrall Street, and extended west towards the 100-block East Pender. This location lay as far south of the downtown business district (then situated along Cordova and Abbott Streets) as geography would permit because the foreshore of False Creek banked along Pender. The Chinatown lands had formed part of the land grant used to entice the Canadian Pacific Railway Company to come to Vancouver, and lots had quickly passed into the hands of a succession of white speculators. Title-holders rented their properties for use as stores and dwellings, and in many cases signed leases with the Chinese authorizing the tenants to erect their own buildings.77

Wooden buildings of all sizes containing the stores, laundries and long narrow tenements of the Chinese were scattered haphazardly over Chinatown, surrounded by vacant patches of unused land.78 Non-Chinese inhabited the area too, with the Tivoli Beer Hall and Opera Resort saloon located on Pender Street and many houses of 'ill-fame' rented by white prostitutes. The proximity to False Creek gave Chinatown many industrial neighbours, including the Palmer Brothers' Woodyard, the Royal City Planing Mill, lime and sand warehouses, and several coal-yards.79

By the turn of the century, the rising Chinese population had prompted the occupation of all lots fronting on
the unit block East Pender, leaving the 100-block partially inhabited by Chinese. At the rear of the long narrow lots, additional buildings and storefronts were constructed to face 'Market Alley', the lane running between Hastings and Pender Streets. Business and housing growth also moved along Carrall Street north towards Hastings and south towards False Creek. Although Sam Kee and Wing Sang had bought lands in 1889 and 1892, it was during the early 1900 decade that the Chinese acquired most of the Chinatown lots for development.

In September of 1902, Chinese merchants purchased all the vacant land north of Chinatown on Carrall Street up to Hastings Street. In May 1904, the Wing Sang Company's principals formed a syndicate and raised $50,000 to develop the Canton Alley tenements. At the same time, Gim Lee Yuen bought four lots from the Canadian Pacific Railway Company for $23,000, divided them into eight lots, and erected several two storey brick buildings. Earlier the same firm had sold its holdings on the southeast side of Pender and Carrall for $40,000. Like their white counterparts, Chinese title-holders rented their premises to white prostitutes too.

During this period of physical expansion, the merchants of Chinatown submitted numerous petitions to City Hall requesting improvement of the neighbourhood through the installation of cement and wooden sidewalks. These requests came from the merchants themselves and through their white
lawyers. In fact, the merchants of Chinatown had established an earlier history of dealing with City Hall. In 1896, they had complained about the poor condition of Pender Street and its sidewalks. Subsequent years saw requests for a plank crossing over Pender Street, water-sprinkling of the street in the summer, and repairs to back lanes.

Outside Chinatown the property holdings of the Sam Kee and Lee Yuen companies showed a careful selection of lots situated on corners and main streets and in industrial areas. In the eastern reaches of Chinatown, Lee Yuen principals owned nine lots in the 200-block East Pender, two of which occupied corners. They also held a corner site of three lots in Japantown and an additional corner site in Strathcona. Corner sites appealed to the Sam Kee Company too, for it purchased two in Gastown and another at the downtown intersection of Pender and Richards Streets. Residential hotels and apartment buildings containing some commercial space were erected on most of these lots.

In some cases the two companies purchased existing hotels, but in others they erected new buildings. They then leased the facilities to non-Chinese hotel operators and retained real estate agents such as E.W. MacLean and J.J. Banfield to collect the rents. Sam Kee owned five hotel sites and buildings in central Vancouver and leased two sites from German entrepreneur Edward Stolterfoht on which the company then constructed hotels for sub-leasing.
In the 200-block East Pender, Lee Yuen partners purchased a tenement building of twenty furnished cabins and leased it to white operators. The lease stated specifically that "...no women of disreputable character shall be allowed to reside on the property..." 

In managing its hotels, the two firms dealt firmly with officials and tradesmen by using white lawyers. In March 1911, the City Health Inspector condemned Sam Kee's Oriental Hotel and ordered it demolished. The company, however, argued that its solicitor and architect had consulted earlier with two aldermen and the Building Inspector, and they had all agreed to let the building stand for another five years. Sam Kee ordered its lawyer to appeal the decision, but in vain. In another instance, when the City expropriated one of Sam Kee's Pender Street lots, the firm instructed its lawyers to start negotiations at $70,000 to reach the desired price of $62,000. In 1912, during construction of the East Hotel, Lee Yuen ordered its lawyer to sue the surveyors for a faulty survey of the site.

Away from the city's centre, Sam Kee bought four lots fronting on Burrard Street, which later became a major thoroughfare. Towards the east side of town, both Sam Kee and Lee Yuen acquired land on another main street, Hastings. Sam Kee also held water frontage on the industrial south shore of False Creek. Finally, both firms invested outside the city limits. Sam Kee acquired six sites in what later became the southeast sector of Vancouver.
Both companies held land in Steveston, Burnaby, North Vancouver, and the Hastings Townsite. In real estate, the leading merchants of Chinatown invested extensively and carefully while bargaining aggressively. Their interests were long-term, because the merchants of Sam Kee, Gim Lee Yuen, Wing Sang, Lee Yuen, and other firms had sent for their wives and had established families in Canada. The merchants' stance that civic officials had to undertake physical improvements to Chinatown revealed their understanding of local government, while their use of lawyers and real estate agents extended their reach into the business elite of Vancouver. These encounters were characterized by a fearlessness of their white counterparts, despite the prevailing white supremacy assumptions and attitudes of the period.

Merchants proved unafraid to complain to the Police about their behaviour. In 1905, the Chinese Board of Trade protested gambling raids into Chinatown:

The members of our Board are law-abiding citizens. Many of them have been residents of this City for a number of years, and are large holders in real estate, payers of taxes and other civic assessments.... The members of this Chinese Board of Trade.... have been constantly annoyed and disturbed in their business and household by what we believe to be unjustifiable intrusion of certain members of the Vancouver Police Force.

In 1906, Chinatown merchants purchased fourteen pages of advertisements in an eighty-four page Police souvenir book, hoping perhaps to cultivate better relations with
the Department. The merchants also expressed concerns for their families, as Shanghai Alley residents protested Police actions which had precipitated a migration of Pender Street prostitutes to their neighbourhood:

> It is our desire to have our children grow up learning what is best in Western civilization and not have been forced into daily contact with its worst phases just at the time they are forming the habits that will control the whole balance of their lives.

In their protest activities, the merchants of Chinatown had personal and business interests to protect, and they may have profitted from the positive image of the nineteenth century capitalist then prevalent. In boomtown Vancouver, real estate speculators, bankers, and merchants were respected and popular figures frequently elected to public office. For their part, Chinese merchants who possessed substantial assets were sometimes written up favourably by the local press. Property holdings also identified to the migrant community those merchants with capital and assets, marking them for positions of community leadership.

In overseas settlements, the first urban organizations of the Chinese were jie-fang, street associations formed by mutual consent among the major Chinese companies of a city. Jie-fang were informally created, often for temporary co-operation over specific issues or projects. In Vancouver, Chinese merchants directed local concerns to the municipal government as individuals and groups before the turn of the century. In 1895 the firms of Hip Tuck Lung
and Wing Sang donated to the civic Dominion Day celebration fund.109 Other merchants petitioned in 1897 for Sunday business hours and for a firecracker permit.110 The opium firms lobbied for reductions to their licenses in 1895 and in 1906.111 In 1897 Jun Kee sued the City for $800 after the firm's goods were wrecked during the demolition of adjoining shacks.112 Sam Yuen applied for an injunction to restrain similar razing in 1899.113

It followed then, that the first community organizations in Vancouver were merchant-initiated chambers of commerce, the Zhao-Yi Association 鄭一公所 and the Gung-Yi Association 仝公所. These were established in 1898 and 1899 respectively and amalgamated in 1906 into the Chinese Board of Trade 仲華總商會.114 The Board's leaders included Yip Sang and Lum Duck-shew from the Gim Lee Yuen Company. Later, it was noted that the Board had started in 1895,115 a year coinciding with the date of the informal formation of the Chinese Benevolent Association in Vancouver, nominally the highest ranking and most representative body in the community. Yip Sang and Lum Duck-shew, together with merchants from the Lee Yuen and Sam Kee companies, were among the chief backers to the association too.

The Chinese Board of Trade's membership was selective. In its submission to the 1902 Royal Commission on Chinese and Japanese Immigration, the Board listed only forty-seven member firms that embraced retail stores, tailors,
wholesalers, grocers, opium firms, and fancy good dealers, while excluding restaurants and laundries. The 1901 city directory, however, had listed seventy-one Chinese businesses and this tripled to 236 in 1911. (See Appendix V) The Chinese population in Vancouver did not even double for that period: it grew from 1800 in 1901 to only 3361 in 1911.

The merchant-led Board of Trade and Benevolent Association assumed intermediary roles between immigrant community and host society and undertook charitable works within Chinatown. It raised funds to construct a four-storey association building and installed a hospital in it. The City's Health Officer acknowledged the Board's "... willing and prompt co-operation in the enforcement of sanitary regulations among their people." The Board responded to the 1907 riot by swiftly retaining a white barrister to demand City protection for Chinatown, by publishing leaflets intended to quell the excitement, and by notifying the Chinese ambassador in London.

Merchants from the Wing Sang, Gim Lee Yuen, and Hip Tuck Lung companies also organized the Chinese Empire Reform Association in the late 1890's in response to China's reform movement. This group sought to aid China's modernization and to encourage better China-Canada relations, and received much favourable press coverage, especially on the occasion of banquets tendered to visiting dignitaries from China. The guests at such events, where con-
genial toasts and speeches were exchanged between Chinese and whites, included the American Consul, Canadian immigration officials, and newspaper reporters.121

Community leaders from Chinatown thus tried to arrange a smoother co-existence between host society and newcomer. They organized charitable services within the community and acted as its liaison to the larger world outside. Through the formation of western-inspired organizations such as chambers of commerce and the Chinese Empire Reform Association they sought to improve white impressions of China and its overseas citizens.

This chapter has established the hostile racial context of Vancouver and the numerous economic demands and opportunities that Chinese labourers and businessmen responded to. In particular, business activity compelled operators to assimilate rapidly the technical and language skills necessary to promote and protect their investments. Business provided an arena for inter-racial contact and for development of common business skills, albeit in separate spheres. It revealed to newcomers the areas in which they could expect respect and fair treatment.

Within the migrant community, merchants embraced many roles and fulfilled many functions. Self-interest was paramount, as they enriched themselves while providing the essentials of food, housing, and employment to their fellow countrymen. Merchants helped the community attain a high
degree of self-sufficiency in face of a hostile environment. The merchants also demonstrated to the community that wealth was indeed accumulable in the new world and that economic and social mobility leading to high status inside Chinatown was possible. As well, the role of economic middleman of some became a political one too, as Chinese leaders learned to use western legal institutions to challenge civic regulations imposed against them.

Wealth was a means of achieving leadership in the migrant community. Respect and deference to the merchants was rooted in pragmatic Chinese attitudes towards wealth, traditionally needed for buying land and for entry into the upper classes of Chinese society. Respect for wealth was also a key element in new world industrial capitalism, which drew immigrants from around the world to test its opportunities for quick and easy fortunes. China and Canada thus shared positive views towards the individual accumulation of wealth, and the convergence of these old and new world values in and around Chinese migrants helped them integrate quickly into some economic institutions in their new homeland.

In a sense, the new world setting created a semblance of a Chinese social order in Canada. Migrants from the country markets and county towns of South China encountered a free market situation in Canada, complete with limited prospects for upward mobility. Peace and order were needed for the smooth functioning of the economy, and this impelled
Chinese merchants to rise to deal with the vagaries of the new world experience. They came to shoulder the welfare and representational duties of the traditional gentry and lineage elders in China. In effect, business activity helped transform the social and economic values bought from China into a familiar, functional hierarchical system where migrants could labour patiently at realizing their own dreams.
FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER THREE


6 Matthews, p. 288.

7 Matthews, p. 289.


9 Ibid., pp. 48-52.


13 Ibid., p. 44.

14 Ibid., p. 54.

15 Ibid., p. 70.

16 *The Vancouver News*, 27 July 1886, p. 2.

18. Public Archives of Canada, William Lyon Mackenzie
King, Memoranda and Notes 1887-1921, vols. C39 to C41, Royal Commissi-
on to Investigate into Losses Sustained by the Chinese
Population of Vancouver, B.C., 1908, Microfilm AW 1 R 5507,
pp. C30709-C32900. (hereafter cited as King), testimony of
Shum Moon, p. 31580.


20. See, for examples, Special Collections Division,
The Library, University of British Columbia, Won Alexander
Cumyow Papers (hereafter cited as Cumyow) Vol. 1 file 3,
Letterbook, p. 13, W.A. Cumyow to W.E. Beckett, 13 April
1889; p. 46, W.A. Cumyow to Benjamin Springer, 31 October 1889.

21. CVA, City of Vancouver (hereafter cited as Van. City)
Department of Permits and Licenses, License Registry, 1886-1889,
p. 68.


23. Cicely Tyson, Salmon: Our Heritage (Vancouver:
Mitchell Press, 1969), p. 183; and Vancouver Daily Province
5 June 1908, p. 1.

24. CVA, Van. City., Department of Permits and Licen-
ses, License Registry 1886-1889, p. 90.

25. Cumyow, vol. 1 file 3 Letterbook, p. 31, Cumyow
to Calgary Steam Laundry, 20 June 1889; p. 46 Cumyow to Moody-
ville Sawmill, 31 October 1889; p. 91, Cumyow to J.R. Brown,
15 November 1890; p. 127, Cumyow to Joseph Hartney, 23
February 1891; p. 144, Cumyow to McCoy and O'Brien, Fair-
haven Washington, 11 June 1891.

to Bakers' Union, Seattle, 7 February 1891; p. 119, Cumyow
to Adolph Heinzelman, 4 February 1891.

27. Cumyow, vol. 1 file 3 Letterbook, p. 105, Cumyow
to William Allen, 17 December 1890; p. 113, Cumyow to New
Westminster and Vancouver Tramway Company, no date, 1891;
p. 120, Cumyow to New Westminster Street Railway Company,
4 February 1891.

28. Cumyow, vol. 1 file 3 Letterbook, p. 82, Cumyow
to J.A. Fraser, 9 October 1890.

29. Cumyow, vol. 1 file 3 Letterbook, p. 135, Cumyow
to J.M. Clute, 5 May 1891

30. Cumyow, vol. 1 file 3 Letterbook, p. 61, Cumyow
to Jonathan Patterson, 15 July 1890.


33 For a discussion of this stereotype, see Ward, pp. 7-8.

34 CVA Van. City, Office of the City Clerk, By-law 176, May 1893.

35 See for examples, CVA, Van. City, Office of the City Clerk, Incoming Correspondence (hereafter cited as In Corresp.), vol. 5, p. 5261, A.O. St. George et.al. to Mayor and City Council, undated 1893; vol. 9 p. 8097, J.A. Mills et.al. to Mayor and City Council, undated 1895; vol. 15, p. 11738, George Forsyth et.al. to Mayor and City Council, undated 1900.


38 CVA, Van. City, In Corresp., vol. 15, p. 12037, Medical Health Officer to Board of Health, 7 March 1900.

39 CVA, Van. City, Office of the City Clerk, Outgoing Correspondence (hereafter cited as Out Corresp.), vol. 9, City Clerk to Police Chief, 19 June 1900.


41 Canada. 1902 Report, p. 175, testimony of Donald Stewart.


43 CVA, Van. City., Office of the City Clerk, By-law 373, December 1900.


48 Vancouver Daily Province, 8 May 1906.
49 Vancouver Daily Province, 12 May 1906.
50 Vancouver Daily Province, 29 May 1906.
55 Canada. 1902 Report, p. 180, testimony of Francis Williams. The merchant tailor firm of Hing Kee, for example, sold goods to Spencers' Department Store.
56 Vancouver Daily Province, 29 May 1908, p. 1.
57 Charles Sedgwick, pp. 39-40.
60 Vancouver Daily Province, 30 May 1908, p. 2
61 For example, see King, pp.C32852, C32556, testimony of You Jung G.
62 King, pp. C32022-32023, testimony of Mark Long. This firm was located at 23 East Hastings Street.
63 King, p. C31977, testimony of Yow Yuen of Quong Yuen Company.
64 CVA, Van. City., Department of Permits and Licenses, License Registry 1886-1889.
65 CVA, Add. MSS 571, Sam Kee Company (hereafter cited as Sam Kee), vol. 18 file 7 [Record of Writing Seats on Behalf of the Blue Funnel Line]; and Special Collections Division, The Library, University of British Columbia, Lee Yuen Company (hereafter cited as Lee Yuen), box 2 file 1 [Return to China on a Good Boat, 1908].
66 Lai and Choy, p. 95.

67 Compiled from title searches at British Columbia Ministry of the Attorney General, Land Titles Office (hereafter cited as LTO)

68 Vancouver Daily Province, 4 June 1908, p. 4; 5 June 1908, p. 1.

69 Ibid., 27 May 1908, p. 1.

70 King, p. C31624, testimony of Sam Yuen.

71 King, p. C31816, testimony of Wing Mow.

72 King, p. C31834, testimony of Wong Kong Chew.

73 King, p. C31641, testimony of Lai Hing Lung.

74 King, p. C31871, testimony of Fin Sin Sig.

75 King, p. C31780, testimony of Mee Wo of Yet Sing.

76 King, p. C31811, testimony of Lum Low of Yet Sing.

77 For two examples see LTO, Charge Book vol. 12, folio 424, lease dated 15 February 1893 between John M. Spinks and Hing Kee. This was a fifteen year lease, with the lessee agreeing to pay rent of $20 per month, to remit one-half the amount of assessed taxes, and to erect a building. A twenty year lease is contained in LTO Applications Series, #4772E. The lessors were W. J. Bowser and George I. Wilson, the lessees were Yip Yen and Yip Sang. The lease is date 4 August 1902 and the lessees agreed to erect a two storey brick building within five years of the signing of the lease.


80 LTO, Absolute Fees Book, vol. 21 folio 280, Henry Town to Chang Toy, 25 September 1889; vol. 20, folio 556, George Barnes to Yip Sang, 21 October 1892.

81 Vancouver Daily Province, 30 September 1902, p. 1.

82 Ibid., 12 May 1904.

83 Ibid., 10 May 1904.

84 Ibid., 10 May 1904.
61

CVA, Van. City., Out Corresp., vol. 13, pp. 148-180, City Clerk to Wing Sang, Sam Kee, Lee Yuen, Sam Yuen, Rand Brothers, Hope, Gravely and Company, Richards and Akroyd, et.al., 27 November 1903. Of thirty reprimanding letters from City Hall, eight were sent to Chinese owners.


Ibid., vol. 7, p. 4, 29 January 1896; vol. 7 p. 28.

Ibid., vol. 8, p. 568, 1 December 1898.


Lee Thung owned Lots 12 and 13 in Block 11, District Lot 196, and Lots 30-34, in Block 16, District Lot 196. Lee Yuen, Box 1 file 8 Horatio Gates Moore to Lee Sai Chung, 19 November 1906. Lee Kee owned Lots 22 and 23 in Block 11 District Lot 196, Lee Yuen, Box 1 file 9, B.C. Land and Investment Agency Ltd. to Lee Kee, 28 March 1907.

Lee Thung owned Lots 40-42 in Block 40, DL 196, located at the corner of Gore and Powell. Lee Yuen, Box 2 file 9, Hope and Farmer to Lee Thung, 13 February 1911. He also owned Lots 1 and 2 Block 103, DL 196, corner of Union and Dunlevy, Lee Yuen, Box 2 File 3, Annie Agnes Barrett to Lee Thung, 4 September 1909.

The Gastown sites were Lots 9-11, Block 2, DL 196, and the south 55 feet of Lot 15, Block 2, DL 541. Sam Kee, vol. 10 file 7, City of Vancouver to Sam Kee, 23 September 1910; vol. 10 file 5, Mortgage between Shum Moon and Francis Walter Hall, 1 August 1906. The downtown site included Lots 19-20, Block 25, DL 541. Sam Kee, vol. 10 file 6, City of Vancouver to Sam Kee, 30 August 1904.

Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, p. 133, Sam Kee to Ed. Stolterfoht, 22 June 1908; Sam Kee to R.R. Forshaw, 10 October 1910.

Lei Yuen, Box 1, file 9, Lease between Lee Thung and Edward Donovan, 5 June 1907.


98 Lee Yuen, Box 3 file 4, Lee Kee to Davis, Marshall, McNeill and Pugh, 9 September 1913.

99 These were Lots 9 and north 1/4 of Lot 10, Block 40, DL541, and Lots 4, 5, Block 100, DL541. Sam Kee, vol. 10, file 9, typescript list of property taxes due to City of Vancouver, 1911.

100 These were Lots 16 and 17, Block 9, DL 182A in Lee Yuen, Box 2 file 9, P.J. McKichan to Lee Gee Kwong, 17 April 1912; and Lots 9 and 10, Block 8, DL 183D in Sam Kee, vol. 10, file 9, typescript list of property taxes due to City of Vancouver, 1911.

101 These were Lot 23, Block 2, DL 200A in Sam Kee vol. 10 file 7, City of Vancouver to Sam Kee, 23 September 1910; and Lot 12, Block 9, DL 200A, Sam Kee, vol. 10, file 9, typescript list of property taxes due to City of Vancouver, 1911.

102 These were the following: DL. 394, Block 15, Subdivision 5-9 in Sam Kee, vol. 10, file 7, Municipality of South Vancouver to Sam Kee 26 June 1907; DL. 714, East 1/4, Southwest 1/4 in Sam Kee, vol. 10 file 7, Municipality of South Vancouver to Sam Kee, 26 June 1907; DL. 648, East 1/4, Subdivision 5, Lots 6-9 in Sam Kee, vol. 10 file 7, Municipality of South Vancouver to Sam Kee, 1908 Tax Statement; DL 335, L1/4, East 1/4 in Sam Kee, Vol. 10 file 7, Municipality of South Vancouver to Sam Kee, Tax Statement, 1 November 1911; DL 335, South 1/4, Southeast 1/4, Sam Kee, vol. 10 file 7, Municipality of South Vancouver to Sam Kee, Tax Statement, 18 October 1910; DL 14, Lots 1-4, 7-22, Sam Kee, vol. 10 file 11, Municipality of South Vancouver to Sam Kee.

103 Sam Kee, vol. 10 file 7, Richmond Municipality to Sam Kee, 12 December 1908 for Steveston Block 2, Lot 3; vol. 10 file 7, District of North Vancouver to Sam Kee, 15 November 1911 re DL. 887, Block 4; vol. 10 file 7, W.L. Fagan to Sam Kee, 24 June 1907 re: Hastings Townsite Section 45, East Pt. SW. See also Lee Yuen Box 1 file 4, David Bun and Fong Dickman to Lee Kee and Lee Car, 22 January 1904 re: Steveston property; Box 2, file 3, F.H. Lantz Co Ltd. to Lee Thung, 2 February 1911 re Hastings Townsite; Box 2 file 3, John Hendry to Lee Thung, 23 September 1909 re: Burnaby land; and Box 3 file 3, E.W. MacLean to Lee Thung, 30 March 1912 re: North Vancouver lands.

104 CVA, Board of Police Commissioners, General Files (hereafter cited as BPC.General Files), Location 75-A-11, File 4, Chinese Board of Trade to Chief of Police, 20 April 1905; Tai Sang to Chief of Police, undated.
CVA, Vancouver Police Relief Association, Souvenir of the Police Department, 1901. Pamphlet 1901-6.

CVA, BPC. General Files, Location 75-A-11, File 12, Hing Lee et.al. to Mayor, 18 August 1906.

For example, see Vancouver Daily Province, 4 June 1908, p. 4 for a sympathetic description of

...the two wealthiest celestials in British Columbia.... the remarkable difference between Loo (Gee Wing) and Sam (Kee), the former dressed like a tailor's model in the suit of a prosperous Englishman down to his patent leathers while Sam still retains his Chinese costume and speaks only in his native tongue.

Wickberg, From China to Canada, pp. 30, 34.

CVA, Van. City., In Corresp., vol. 9 p. 7888, C.D. Rand to City Clerk, 6 July 1895.


CVA, Van. City., In Corresp., vol. 11, p. 9121, Supreme Court of British Columbia, transcript of proceedings, 20 August 1897.


King, p. C31560, testimony of Shum Moon.

Canada. 1902 Report, p. 213


CVA, Van. City., In Corresp., Vol. 17, p. 13303, Medical Health Officer to Secretary, Royal Commission on Chinese and Japanese Immigration, 15 November 1900.

King, pp. C31566-31571, 31578, testimony of Shum Moon.
120 Canada. 1902 Report, p. 235, testimony of W.A. Cumyow

121 For example, see newspaper clippings in Cumyow scrapbook, Cumyow, volume 1 file 5, *World* 3 April 1903.
CHAPTER IV

BUSINESS PRACTICES FROM TWO WORLDS

The commercial activities of the overseas Chinese were central to their immigration experience, and at the heart of business were the devices and methods used to oversee and control the movement of money. Mechanisms for raising capital, lending money, forming business enterprises, and investing surplus funds complemented daily bookkeeping and management procedures by promoting growth and development beyond the initial trading of goods and services. These were the tools that facilitated the migrants' economic endeavours in areas other than wage labour. As first generation settlers, Chinese businessmen brought practices such as rotating credit associations and partnership arrangements with them from China. These were supplemented by local western practices and both aided financial development in an extremely money-oriented community. The following pages identify immigrant ways of raising money and forming business, and explore some of the investment opportunities available.

A critical element in economic growth is the availability of surplus capital to finance new ventures or to
expand existing operations. In the new world community of the Chinese in Canada the capital market served a variety of needs. Labourers trying quickly to amass substantial savings for a return trip to China could borrow funds to start their own business. Loans assisted those already in business with their cash flow and helped them expand. Those possessing surplus funds to lend earned profits from interest payments. The borrowing and lending of money, as noted earlier, was entrenched in the Chinese way of life, both as a necessity and as a choice.

In China, one of the most widely used mechanisms for borrowing money was the hui (會), also called 恆 yin-hui or 義 yi-hui), a money loan association offering mutual credit to its members. In general practice a person needing funds organized a hui by assembling a group of about ten friends or relatives and secured from each an agreement to pay a certain sum into a common pool every month. The first pool of cash collected was used by the organizer of the hui. A month later, the contributors gathered and all paid into the pool again. This time, another member, selected through a lottery draw, received use of the cash pool. The hui continued to meet in this fashion until every member had received use of the pooled sum, each having paid into the pool an equivalent amount through the monthly payments.

In a more demanding version of the hui, members bid for the use of the pool. Those who needed the pooled sum
urgently tendered a high user's fee which was deducted from each member's contribution for that month. For example, if the highest bid was $2.00 on $20.00 shares, each member paid only $18.00 to earn the $2.00 user fee or interest, as it were. Wealthy contributors to the *hui* who did not need the cash pool could profit from the *hui* by deducting high user fees bid near the beginning and then by bidding low user fees themselves later on to obtain larger pooled sums. As such, the *hui* was a speculative device for those possessing surplus capital.²

The *hui* required widespread mutual confidence within the community in order to function to meet spontaneous needs for cash as they arose. Confidence limited to a few or to small groups reduced the number of *hui* and the amounts of cash raised. Traditionally the *hui* did not rely on collateral assignments to lessen the risk of members absconding after receiving use of the cash pool.³ In the bidding variant of the *hui*, the organizer was held liable for one-half the debt of any defaulter.⁴ Even then the *hui* relied mainly on the informal social and moral controls enforced through village and lineage networks to guarantee repayment.⁵ Land and house deeds were, however, used as collateral in some *hui* in late nineteenth century South China.⁶ In the overseas Chinese settlements, the sub-communities of region and kinship were re-created in the form of voluntary associations, and expectations of mutual trust, mutual help and moral behaviour were re-established.
Since every Chinese immigrant possessed personal clan and district ties, the hui could tap the pockets of many.

Still, the hui could not generate the massive sums that conventional banks raised from depositors' savings because the hui was based on inter-personal trust. In raising small loans (pooled monthly sums in Vancouver between 1904 and 1913 ranged from $200 to $1300\(^7\)), the hui was remarkably efficient because no operating costs were incurred. Nor was the hui obliged to its members to pursue a profit. It created cash only when urgent needs arose from an organizer. For the nascent level of business development existing in the early overseas community, the hui was ideally suited to generate small sums of capital.\(^8\)

The widespread use of hui in China was facilitated by printed booklets which set out the rules and provided blanks and columns for the necessary entries of members' names, monthly amounts, and date of meeting. Over one hundred such hui booklets were contained in the archives of the Lee Yuen Company (利源號), one of early Vancouver's top-earning firms. The company was formed as a partnership among Lee kinsmen in Victoria and Vancouver, and its managers were two brothers from a wealthy Tai-shan (台山) family. Lee Thung (李雍, Li Cong) was also known as Lee Sai-Jang (李世璋 Li Shi-zhang), while Lee Kee (李祺, Li Qi) was also known as Lee Sai-fan (李世璠 Li Shi-fan). With substantial wealth amassed from the opium trade and later from general trading, the Lee Yuen Company participated in many hui.
In the 105 hui booklets that were examined, the Lee Yuen Company principals organized the credit association only once, suggesting that they were interested in the hui chiefly as lenders pursuing a speculative venture. The hui organized in Vancouver were of the bidding variant. Fifty-nine of these were organized in a single year 1912, while forty-five were activated between 1904 and 1911. One was from the year 1913. Lee Thung, Lee Kee, and their company were listed as members in ninety-nine of the hui, and the remaining six booklets came from other Lee kinsmen who had entrusted their booklets to the company for safekeeping.

In the 1904-1911 block of hui booklets, the individual monthly contributions ranged from $20 to $100, with an average of $60. For 1912, the range was $30 to $100, with an average of $80. The number of participants varied from ten to fifteen. Assuming that all members in all hui fulfilled their obligations, and ignoring the interest deductions, the gross amount of cash assembled and loaned for the 1904-1911 period can be roughly calculated at $456,300 and for 1912 at $811,200.

A total of 169 people participated in the forty-five hui of the 1904-1911 period, with ninety-eight of them joining only once. For the sixty hui of 1912, 162 people joined and eighty-nine of these joined only once. The hui clearly provided access to many individuals to borrow money and/or to speculate for a one-time-only basis. The number of those who joined two hui dropped dramatically to twenty
and seventeen for the two periods, testifying perhaps to the rigours of repaying loans from limited incomes.

The majority of the huī (at least seventy percent of the 105 under study) were organized by Chinatown firms and not by individuals. Those who were already in business would naturally have greater call to borrow and would therefore have set about organizing a huī. As well, a businessman was more likely to be trusted to assemble a successful huī because if his huī failed then recourse might be suffered through the loss of patronage from associates. The loss of face and the liability assumed for any defaulters placed additional pressure on organizers to seek out trustworthy candidates for the association. In many cases, huī organizers were backed by another firm acting as guarantor (擔保人) to the loan arrangement.

While the Lee Yuen data does not represent overall community huī activity because it originated from a single firm's records, it does reveal that the top-earning firms of Chinatown were steady investors, although not organizers, in the rotating credit associations. In the 1904-1911 period, Lee Yuen joined thirty-nine huī, Gim Lee Yuen thirty, Wing Sang twenty-six, and Hip Tuck Lung eighteen. In the 1912 records, Lee Yuen signed up for sixty huī, Wing Sang for twenty-six, and Gim Lee Yuen for twenty-four. Sam Kee entered only twenty-one huī for the two periods as recorded in the Lee Yuen papers. The monthly meetings and bid sessions were held at tea-houses and restaurants and gave
Chinatown's restaurant trade a healthy boost. For example, in a single month in 1906, Lee Thung attended twenty-one
hui meetings at different eating establishments. 10

The ongoing participation of the wealthy merchants of Chinatown stabilized and guaranteed the minor banking func-
tions carried out by the hui. The viability of the hui was necessary to encourage one-time investors to join and add their savings and projected savings to the capital mar-
et. At the same time, the continuing interest of the major firms attested to the profitability of the hui. The rotating credit association was a familiar and convenient instrument that helped the Chinatown economy function and expand when many potential borrowers did not possess sufficient colla-
teral to borrow from conventional lenders. It was not pos-
sible to see if the hui offered a cheaper form of credit than did conventional lenders because the cost of hui borrowing could not be ascertained since the bid amounts were not recorded.

The success of the hui, as stated earlier, depended on non-legal forms of social control over member obligations. No evidence of borrowers using land or buildings as colla-
teral were found in the records. The smooth operation of the hui may have begun to buckle in the new world, however, because beginning in 1912 the Chinese Chamber of Commerce started to act as a clearing-house for the hui payments. Hui members submitted post-dated promissory notes to the Chamber promising to pay the monthly sums to the Chamber's bank
with interest of ten percent. Like the *hui* booklets, the notes were signed by a guarantor. This arrangement created a binding legal document to ensure repayment, and there is evidence that defaulting borrowers were brought to court. The transiency and mobility of migrants and the changes in new world hierarchies may have weakened traditional systems of obligation and control.

As for promissory notes, the Chinese had used them to lend and to extend credit even before 1912. In 1909 Lee Kee loaned $500 to lawyer W.W.B. McInnes secured by a promissory note, while Lee Thung borrowed from the Northern Bank, the chandlery firm of Wood, Vallance and Legatt, and the Lee Yuen partnership with the same instrument. Promissory notes were much more convenient for facilitating credit than personal assets such as carts and horses, or partnership entitlements, which minor Chinese borrowers with less credit standing commonly used.

Another capital-raising device brought from China was the partnership arrangement for business formation. In China the pooling of resources for commerce was common practice, but the underlying assumptions and obligations were never formalized in legal terms. In North American practice and law, liability was the chief consideration separating partnerships from incorporated firms. Partners, like sole proprietors, were fully and personally liable for all the debts of the company whereas limited partners or
corporate shareholders were not. Moreover, in theory non-limited partners shared profits and losses equally, regardless of the amount of their initial capital investment. In Chinese practice, partnerships emphasized the amount of capital contributed and the role of the managing partner in determining profit and liability, and thus resembled the limited partnerships of western practice. Several variants to the Chinese limited partnership were described by a nineteenth century observer. One person might manage a firm formed from pooled capital and treat the various contributions as loans to the firm, thereby eliminating the liability of outsiders. Or partners accepted liability only in proportion to their initial investment, except for the managing partner. The managing partner's liability was usually greater especially in situations where dormant partners played no role in the business. The managing partner answered to creditors and to the other partners on behalf of the entire firm. As such, the silent partners were viewed as investors without any liability for debts. Partnerships in China thus placed a heavy burden of individual responsibility on the managing partner.

The partnership agreements drawn up for two early Chinatown firms replicated Chinese partnerships and also revealed the dominance of clan ties in business. In 1898 the Hong On Jung (同安栈 Tong An Zhan) Company was capitalized at $1500 by five partners, two surnamed Lam (林 Lin) and three surnamed Lee (李 Li). Lin Shi-zhu invested $500
while the remaining four each contributed $250. The Gim Lee Yuen (金利源 Jin Li Yuan) Company started in 1899 with capital of $1000, of which $500 came from the Victoria firm of Gim Fook Yuen (金福源 Jin Fu Yuan) and $200 apiece came from Lum Duck-she-w (林得-shao Lin De-chao) and Leong Suey (梁齊瑞 Liang Qi-rui). The Lam Family Association (林榮德堂) held the remaining $100 share. Both firms were general importers supplying out-of-town customers and the terms of both partnerships were almost identical.

Backers to both firms agreed that because the operations were newly established, no dividends would be paid until after the third year of business, even if profits were earned in the initial years. Interest of ten percent on share capital was calculated monthly, while dividends were allocated according to the amount of initial capital. The agreements instructed partners to redeem their holdings in the business if they returned to China. No mention of the liability of partners in the event of business failure appeared in either agreement, probably because it was considered inauspicious.

Both agreements placed the managing partner in a major role. The contracts appointed one partner to assume complete management of the firm, with the proviso that he be replaced upon failing the wishes of the partnership. He was enjoined to work diligently for the common good. His salary was subject to change at any time, but if profits accrued then a bonus was granted to all staff. The manager was also held responsible for allowing any debts to be recorded against the
firm by a partner.

The partnership agreement also recognized the prevalence of credit and multiple investments throughout the business community and ruled against any partner acting for another firm. Partners were expected to inform the manager of any such conflicting interests. Partners who had borrowed money or goods from the firm had to declare a repayment deadline and if this was not met the others could move to recover the outstanding amount from the debtor's share of the capital pool.

Further comment on the partnership bases of these two firms is impossible, other than to note that both firms did prosper. Hong On Jung reported gross annual receipts of $50,000 to Mackenzie King's 1908 Royal Commission, while Gim Lee Yuen reported $150,000. Gim Lee Yuen continues to operate as a general importer under the Lam family, but Hong on Jung no longer exists. It is, however, possible to compare these two partnership agreements with two others drawn up fifteen years later to consider tentatively the changes occurring in business among the Chinese.

In 1913 and 1914, Lee Thung subscribed to the capitalization of two eating establishments, both named the Peking Restaurant (北平樓 Beijing Lou) located in Vancouver and Victoria. The pooled capital was set at $4500 and at $4600 respectively, and the Victoria partnership involved some eighteen partners, eleven of whom were surnamed Lee. Some of the partnership terms of the Peking Restaurants
resembled those from the 1898 and 1899 firms: the manager possessed complete responsibility over the business, staff members received a bonus if a profit accrued, partners were not allowed to trade shares on their own and were expected to return them to the company, and profits were disbursed in proportion to the amount of initial capital investment.

Other terms showed a practical concern for liquidation and liability not found in the early agreements. Both restaurants recognized the possibility of failure and stated explicitly that any losses were to be shared among all partners according to their share capital. The Vancouver firm stated even more specifically that funds would first address wages and rents payable before meeting the partners' claims. As for borrowing from the company, partners were now forbidden to do so, and any withdrawal of shares would be based on the company's standing at the previous year's end. The later partnership agreements thus attempted to anticipate and address liquidation problems beforehand and to halt the borrowing of company funds by partners.

Partnerships in Chinatown varied immensely, and appeared in a multiplicity of undertakings. In the gambling sphere, partnerships were remarkably flexible devices for earning dividends, receiving wages, and borrowing funds. Gambling, of course, functioned as a recreational and social outlet for the largely male population of Chinatown, and the many games played held particular appeal for migrants anxious to hit a jackpot winning. For those who set up
gaming operations, these ventures must have appeared to be ideal investment opportunities since there was a captive market and since little was spent on capital goods. The major requirement was the house pool against which clients pitted their luck and funds. At the same time, however, there was the risk that a gambler's sudden streak of luck might drain the house pool and force the partners to inject more funds into the enterprise.

The gambling ventures that the Lee Yuen and Sam Kee company principals backed lasted for short terms of several months to a few years. These brief life spans may have reflected the highly competitive nature of gambling houses in Chinatown, or may have been brought about by police closures. Or perhaps businessmen viewed gambling ventures strictly as short term risks to be liquidated as soon as satisfactory returns were earned. The following examples of four gaming operations demonstrate the variety of economic gains these enterprises offered.

Hop Lee Word Flowers was an 1893 partnership capitalized at $300 between Wing Chong Company, Chang Toy (陳才) of Sam Kee Company, and one Ma Da-yuan (馬大原). Wing Chong invested $150 while the other two put in $75 each to operate the word-guessing lottery. All three acted as working partners and collected a monthly wage or commission of $20 to $25. In the eighteen weeks of operation for which records exist, the company earned $650.40 for games won by the house and paid out
$529.15 for games lost by the house. The three partners then divided the net profit among them, with each receiving $49.05. For their initial investment, the two minor partners had each earned a profit of at least $54 over the eighteen months, a return of fifty-eight percent. But because the net profit was divided equally among the partners, Wing Chong suffered a fifty percent loss on its investment.

Another gambling partnership was Zhen-Tai (振泰) formed in 1905 by Zhen Li Company (振利), Huo-yin (霍荫), Lee Mong Kow (李夢九), the prominent Victoria interpreter, Chen Mei (陳美) and Chen Liu (陳娥). The capital pool of $3000 emerged from the $2000 contribution from Zhen Li, $300 each from Huo, Lee, and Chen Mei, and $100 from Chen Liu. Huo and Chen Mei received monthly wages or commissions as did two non-shareholders Zhu Shi-xiu (徐石秀) and Chang Toy. This partnership, then, contained silent partners and working partners, and non-partners who derived earnings from the daily operations. At year's end of 1905, the company had recorded an operating loss of $135.

Other ventures were more successful. In a 1908 partnership the ten shareholders to the Hop Chong (錦昌) grocery and gambling outlet pooled together $1100 from individual amounts of $50 to $350. In four months' time, the word-lottery, dice games, and grocery sales yielded a return of $119.90 per one hundred dollars of initial investment, approximating a twenty percent return. In another 1912
gaming and fruit table operation, the partners paid themselves dividends at irregular intervals, possibly reflecting their desire to cash in before profits dropped according to the vagaries of gamblers' luck. The first set of dividends were issued after two weeks of operation, the second after eleven weeks, and the third after six months. Partners in this firm also borrowed from company funds, sums which were later deducted from the dividends issued.

Gambling partnerships formed yet another business response to local demands and did not differ from partnerships set up to operate more legitimate enterprises. Investors worked as salaried or silent partners and could borrow against their projected earnings. Three out of the four gambling operations examined here paid dividends according to the amount of initial capital. The low capital requirements, the easily liquidated character, and the profitable nature of these enterprises attracted ordinary and wealthy investors who entered at various levels of affordability with individual shares ranging from fifty to several thousand dollars.

In another area of enterprise, the Chinese formed partnerships to acquire land and buildings as revenue-generating property. The arrangements included those arising between registered co-owners and those containing a number of silent partners or investors. Both kinds of partnerships purchased real estate in Chinatown and beyond. Sam Kee Company and Won Alexander Cumyow pooled funds in
1893 to buy Chinatown buildings which they rented to Yip Sang and other merchants for over two years before selling.  

In 1911, Lee Thung and Lee Fook (李福 Li Fu) co-purchased a $4700 house in the Fairview district and turned it over to real estate agent J.C. Thorn to rent out.

As for the larger land-acquiring arrangements, one form resembled the limited partnerships discussed earlier where managers were appointed and liability was set in proportion to the initial individual share. For example, in 1912 Lee Thung, Lee Gee Kwong (李敬广 Li Jing-guang) and Ma San-yuan (馬三元) became the principal backers of a seven-man partnership to buy an East Vancouver apartment block. The shares ranged in value from $500 to $2000. The purchase price was $32,500 and the partnership raised a $7500 down payment and borrowed the remainder. Each partner then contributed a share of the annual mortgage payments proportionate to his initial investment, while receiving a similarly calculated portion of the rental profits.

The larger partnership was called a tong (堂 tang), a traditional Chinese association often set up for business purposes by groups such as clans to administer funds or to acquire property for private profit. In China, such tong could exist only when a member of the sponsoring organization was literate enough to keep accounts and possessed sufficient business acumen. In Vancouver, leading businessmen were primary promoters of such tong. In 1907, fifteen Chinese led by the Lee Yuen principals formed the Quong Yick Company
(均益堂置业公司) to buy land and buildings in the heart of Chinatown. They raised $20,000 among themselves with shares ranging from $250 to $4500 and borrowed $30,000 to be repaid over three years. The building accommodated several Chinese firms as tenants, from whom $7,770.85 in rent was collected in one year. The property was registered in the names of Lee Thung and Lee Kar, but legal certificates drawn in English were issued to every partner recording his proportional entitlement to the property.

In a similar vein, but with a clear clan base, the Lee Lung Sai Business Company (李龍西置業公司) sold shares in 1908 to raise funds to buy land and erect buildings on two lots in Chinatown. The company raised $27,000 by selling $10 shares and borrowed another $30,000. While selling shares resembled a limited liability company's strategy, the company was still a huge partnership where the directors acted as managing partners and the shareholders were the dormant ones. Unlike the Quong Yick Company, Lee Lung Sai Company shareholders were not assigned individual entitlements to the assets at hand. Instead, the land was registered in the names of the three directors and one other large shareholder Lee Yick Quon.

Lee Lung Sai Company shares were sold exclusively to those surnamed Lee and the share certificate forbade the trading of shares to non-Lee's. The company reserved one room in the building for the clan's common hall and rented out the other floors. The three appointed directors for 1908
were Lee Thung, Lee Ying and Lee Kar, each of whom came from a different county in Say-Yup. As managing partners or company directors, the three possessed signing authority over all company matters. They proposed that all rental income be applied against the mortgage and that no dividends be issued until after the mortgages were fully repaid.

Partnerships that pooled small amounts of individual capital were thus familiar and important vehicles for business formation in Chinatown. They were used in ventures ranging from real estate acquisition to gambling houses. These devices reflected China's pre-industrial economy, where, in the absence of heavily capitalized industries, the marshalling of massive funds to form large corporations was unnecessary. Similarly the commercial rather than industrial orientation of Chinese merchants in Vancouver meant that large sums of capital were uncalled for and that hui and partnership devices met their immediate needs adequately.

At the same time, surplus funds from within the community were too modest to finance substantial industrial and commercial undertakings. The Chinese knew of the limited liability company because a few were incorporated, albeit with small amounts of capital. In 1895 insufficient capital may have discouraged Chinese discussions to establish a salmon cannery to pack 20,000 cases annually. Their proposal intended to use the latest machinery available and the best skilled Chinese labour. The proposition, which would
have required over $130,000, never materialized.

Another disappointment occurred in 1910, when Chinese businessmen purchased the Vancouver Furniture Manufacturing Company from its white owners. The Chinese syndicate headed by Lee Ying and Lim Jim incorporated and registered itself as a limited liability company and started to sell shares to raise $75,000 in capital, but the factory soon failed. Partnerships also incorporated themselves, as did the Wah Ying Chong Company of general merchants and labour contractors with ten shares of capital totalling $10,000.

In 1912, the Pu Hing Limited Company sold thirty-one shares valued at $300 each to twenty-eight shareholders. It had probably chosen the limited company form in order to fulfill a twenty-five year lease signed to build a brick building in Victoria Chinatown. These few incorporations suggest the Chinese did not use the device until the 1910 decade, and then for reasons that remain unclear.

Thus far only means and sources of capital operating within the Chinese community have been examined in any detail. Mortgages too had been employed in China, and in Vancouver white institutions and individuals readily participated in this form of money-lending. As the Chinese acquired title to the lands and buildings of Chinatown, they borrowed against these assets. Chinatown thus became an arena of investment as much a social community of families, businesses, and homes. In general, the Chinese were not inclined to speculate on the real estate market once they acquired title.
to Chinatown property although chains of previous white owners had not shared such a conservative disposition. Instead of speculation, the chief characteristic of Chinese land-holding in Chinatown was that of mortgaging. Land title records for forty-three lots from the three main street blocks of Chinatown revealed that the Chinese started to purchase the lands which they occupied beginning in 1892. These forty-three lots formed twenty-four distinct pieces of property, of which twenty-one were acquired by Chinese before 1914. The data for this discussion is contained in Appendix VI. Twenty-nine Chinese owners or groups of owners had traded them and at least twenty-three of these mortgaged the property in the pre-1914 years for a total of forty-five loan transactions. Merchant Yuen Chong placed six mortgages worth $34,750 between 1905 and 1913 on his one lot, while Sam Sing, the registered owner of the Chinese Freemasons' building, secured seven mortgages totalling $125,750 between 1907 and 1914.

All forty-five mortgages came from non-Chinese institutions and individuals. The sixteen institutional loans came from insurance companies such as the B.C. Life Assurance Company and Confederation Life Assurance, mortgage firms such as the Canadian Permanent Mortgage Corporation, as well as from trust companies including British America Trust and the Yorkshire Guarantee and Securities Corporation. Their loans ranged from $2000 to $50,000 with interest rates between six and fifteen percent. The average institutional loan of
$15,296 was slightly higher than the average loan obtained from personal lenders which stood at $12,558.

The personal lenders included a variety of local men possessing different connections to the Chinese. Ninian H. Bain, George I. Wilson, and Jacob Todd and his son Charles were salmon canners, while John Law, Thomas May, and Henry Mutrie were financial brokers and agents handling real estate and insurance. Others were independent businessmen such as Charles McLachlan of McLachlan Brothers Hardware Limited and Robert Porter, who ran two butcher shops in town. The remaining lenders were a general contractor, a mining engineer, and a lumber mill engineer. The interest rates charged by them also ranged from six to fifteen percent and did not differ from those of the institutional lenders.

The mortgage sources that lay beyond the boundaries of Chinatown show that the Chinese tapped the full range of money supplies available to them. Unfortunately, the application of these mortgage funds, whether used to complete payment of the property at hand or to finance other commercial ventures, cannot be determined from the records at hand. In approaching non-Chinese lenders, Chinese businessmen showed that the racial barriers erected against the Chinese in Canada were lowest in the realm of low risk finance.

In Canada, the particular circumstances of immigrant society allowed it to respond to many different investment opportunities arising from inside and outside the ethnic
community. Gambling houses, import stores, restaurants, real estate and other businesses offered the immigrant an array of schemes for accumulating more wealth. The initial capital required for such undertakings was available from inside Chinatown with the hui and from conventional mortgage lenders in Vancouver's money market. The formation of different enterprises was encouraged by partnership and tong agreements brought from China and by the availability of western business forms such as the limited company. It was both old and new world economic devices that facilitated business development among the Chinese.

Many Chinese had come to Canada equipped with experience and an advanced interest in commercial affairs. Practices such as mortgaging possessed an established institutional counterpart in western business culture, but hui subscriptions had been viable only in China and other overseas Chinese communities where traditional relationships of interpersonal trust could be re-established. The use of the hui and Chinese partnership forms permitted ventures in trading, gambling, and land acquisition that an immigrant could not have carried out on his own. The hui, in particular, made credit accessible to many small borrowers. Old world techniques were thus important in helping newcomers survive and exploit the opportunities in the racially segregated new world.

It was possible for both immigrant community and host society to live side by side but to work separately at
making money through the use of different tools and mechanisms. The migrants had inherited a commercial legacy from China and could also explore Canadian banking institutions. The use of promissory notes and the limited company form showed their adoption of western practices. Economic integration was thus selective: certain host society institutions were closed to the Chinese, while others were open. The Chinese, on their part, could choose from old and new world alternatives those options offering the best returns and easiest access.
FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1 Ivan Light, Ethnic Enterprise, pp. 23-27.


3 Ivan Light, pp. 58-59.


5 Light, p. 60.


7 Special Collections Division, The Library, University of British Columbia, Lee Yuen Company Papers (hereafter cited as Lee Yuen), Box 13. This box contains the 105 hui booklets examined in this study.

8 Light, pp. 57-58.

9 These rough totals were calculated by multiplying average individual monthly contributions x average number of payments per hui x average number of participants x total number of hui agreements for the two periods.

10 Lee Yuen, Box 1 file 8, [Record of monthly hui sessions]

11 Lee Yuen, Box 1 file 5 contains a series of promissory notes addressed to the Chinese Chamber of Commerce and signed by various borrowers and their guarantors, 1913.

12 Lee Yuen, Box 3 file 7, Supreme Court of British Columbia to Lee Sai Chung, 15 April 1915. Lee was summoned to bring to court a "Book of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce containing a Record of monies owing". In this case, Wing Sang was suing Sang Lung Company for debts from 1913.

13 Lee Yuen, Box 1 file 10, W.W. B. McInnes to Lee Kee, 6 April 1909.

14 Lee Yuen, box 1 file 10, Northern Bank to Lee Thung, 24 July, 1908.

Lee Yuen, Box 3 file 3, Lee Thung to Lee Yuen, 27 February 1912.

Lee Yuen, Box 3 file 3, Lee Thung to Lee Mei Zhao, 26 November 1912

Lee Yuen, Box 3 file 4, Ching Hing Jing to Lee Thung, 5 May 1913.


Jamieson, pp. 39-52.

Lee Yuen, Box 12, "玩唱吧舞同安撫書東," [Record of the Hong On Jung Company, Vancouver], 1898.

Lee Yuen, Box 12, "林演緯鴻股部存記," [Record of the Shares of Lum Duck-shew], 1899.

Lee Yuen, Box 3 File 4, "加拿大,雲高華,北京樓股份簿," [Record of Peking Restaurant Shares, Vancouver, Canada], 1913; Box 11, "城多利,北京酒樓,李世璋東," [Victoria, B.C. Peking Restaurant, Lee Sai Chung], 1914.

City of Vancouver Archives, Add. MSS 571, Sam Kee Company Papers (hereafter cited as Sam Kee), vol. 28, file 13, "合利喜花", [Hop Lee Word Flowers], 1893.

This was calculated by the following: 4 months x $20 wage + $49.05 profit - $75 original investment.

Sam Kee, vol. 28, file 10, "振泰監", [Zhan Tai Record], 1905.

Sam Kee, vol. 27 file 12, "合昌月結", [Hop Chong Monthly Totals], 1908.

Lee Yuen, Box 9, "牛彪進銀總部," [Record of Ox-Table Income], 1912.

Sam Kee, vol. 28, file 8, "知合堂貿地成本進支總部," [Hop Wo Tang, Record of Capital, Expenses, and Income for Buying Land], 1893.

Lee Yuen, Box 10, "幸福李駿合股買屋登記," [Record of Joint Capital Pooled between Lee Fook and Lee Thung to Buy House], 1911.
32 Lee Yuen, Box 10, "Lee Sai Cheng Record," [Lee Sai Chang Record], 1912.

33 J.W. Hayes, "Village Credit," p. 121.

34 Lee Yuen, Box 10, "Quong Yick Tang Record," 1908.

35 Samples of certificates are contained in Lee Yuen, Box 1, file 10.

36 Lee Yuen, Box 1 file 11, "Share Certificate of the Lee Lung Sai Company, Vancouver, B.C.], 1913.

37 LTO, Indefeasible Fee Book vol. 4, folio 56, 20 January 1908.

38 Lee Yuen, Box 1, file 11, "Share Certificate of the Lee Lung Sai Company, Vancouver, B.C.], 1913.


40 Lee Yuen, Box 2 file 9, Stock Certificate of Vancouver Furniture Manufacturing Company Limited, 19 September 1911.

41 B.C. Gazette, December 1910, p. 1366

42 B.C. Gazette, May 1912, p. 5813.

43 Lee Yuen, Box 3 file 1, "Record of A Share of Pu Hing Company], 1911.

44 This assertion, and the discussion in subsequent paragraphs, is based on title searches carried out at the Land Titles Office, Vancouver, B.C. Titles can only be traced by starting with the current owner and then identifying each previous owner one at a time. Chinese ownership of Chinatown properties was very stable in comparison to earlier speculative activity. Lots from portions of three blocks and two miscellaneous pieces of property (those of the Chinese Freemasons and the Chinese Benevolent Association) were traced. The three blocks are described as District Lot 196, Blocks 12 and 13, which are the 100 and unit blocks of East Pender Street, and District Lot 541, Block 17, the 500 block Carrall Street. These lands have formed part of Chinatown since its inception.
Mortgage data is derived from title searches as described in footnote 44, since each title registration also records the charges (e.g. mortgages, leases, agreements) held against a piece of property. See Appendix VI for Yuen Chong's site at DL 196, Block 13, Lot 20, and Sam Sing's holding at DL 541, Block 18, Lots A,B,C.
CHAPTER V

THE SAM KEE COMPANY

Chinese businessmen straddled the two worlds of immigrants and host society and facilitated the economic adaptation of the Chinese to Canada in many ways. They brought old world commercial practices to apply to new world circumstances, thereby enhancing immigrant opportunities to amass wealth. This chapter examines the Sam Kee Company (三記號), one of the four top-earning firms in Vancouver's early Chinatown, to study the new world side of influences on Chinese-Canadian business development. The range and quality of Sam Kee's operations and its dealings with white businessmen provide perspectives on the economic receptiveness of the host society and its effect on immigrant integration.

Although the exact date of its origins is unknown, the Sam Kee Company was operating on Vancouver's Dupont Street by 1887. Little is known about the company's principals Chang Toy (陳才, Chen Cai, also known as Chen Dao-zhi) and Shum Moon (沈滿, Shen Man) although Chang's participation in the firm appears to have pre-dated that of Shum's. The firm's name was used by the company and customers alike as
a person's name although no such person ever existed. Chang's sons joined the firm in the mid-1900's, and their good grasp of written business English undoubtedly facilitated the company's diversification into imports and exports, retail sales, charcoal and fuel sales, labour contracting in the timber, fishing, and sugar industries, steamship ticket sales, and real estate development.

The company's earliest records document the sale of Chinese goods to local Chinese. Import-export firms shipping goods to and from China have been identified as the earliest businesses of the Chinese immigrants to America. These firms did not require large amounts of initial capital because they relied extensively on credit and good business contacts in Canton and Hong Kong. Many such firms were private partnerships between one or more owners while others were attached to district associations. The primary imports were rice, tea, and dry goods such as clothing and food items, while exports to China included gold, wheat, barley, mercury, salt, and dried seafoods.¹

The Sam Kee Company may have started as a branch of the Wing Chong Company (永祥號) of Victoria because a large portion of the company's early inventory came from that store. Chang Toy was involved from the outset, employing two helpers in 1888. That year, sales totalled $4356.45, and the net profit was $374.81.² The company carried a wide range of goods: a 1901 inventory listed over three hundred and fifty different kinds of items including all types of
Chinese foods (rice, preserved fruits, dried seafoods, salted goods, beans, pastes, spices, and oil), Chinese medicines and wines, and a variety of dry goods such as thread, writing brushes, envelopes, matches, fish-knives, and handkerchiefs. The firm's retail sales climbed in the 1890's from $7740.25 in 1893 to $8660.44 in nine months of 1898. Although the company's records are incomplete and unclear, a tally of daily cash-book entries show that $13,831 was received and $14,891 expended in 1891 while $19,540 was received and $18,471 expended in 1896. Clearly Sam Kee had sources of income other than retail sales of imported Chinese goods.

Sam Kee relied on connections to China and abroad for supplies and for credit. It purchased goods from firms in Hong Kong and Yokohama, chief of which was the Sun Tong Chong Company (新昌號) of Hong Kong. Sun Tong Chong acted as the company's agent in China, purchasing goods outright and on credit for shipment to Canada. In payment, Sam Kee sent funds and Canadian goods to Sun Tong Chong which were then sold to Chinese buyers. Between 1902 and 1907 Sam Kee's purchases from Sun Tong Chong climbed from 9,810 taels ($6,180.30) to 22,735 taels ($17,960.65). Sun Tong Chong levied interest charges of between six and eight percent on annual outstanding balances. As Appendix VII shows, Sam Kee relied heavily on credit purchases, owing amounts that ranged from 2,453 taels ($1,545) to 9,314 taels ($7,358) during the 1902-1907 period.
During the 1900's, the reach of the Sam Kee Company extended beyond Vancouver to supply Chinese firms in Vancouver Island towns such as Extension and interior points such as Enderby. In Vancouver, credit was readily available to Chinatown individuals and firms, and even Japanese and a few whites had accounts with the company. Chinese imports including rice, soya sauce, and firecrackers were sold to white wholesalers in Vancouver and in Revelstoke. As well, prior to 1908, the firm handled an occasional shipment of opium from Victoria.

But the network of communication between Sam Kee and Chinese immigrants scattered throughout the province in small towns and isolated camps was based chiefly on the firm's clearing-house function as it handled the cash remittances which migrants sent to families in China. After receiving the money Sam Kee forwarded the funds by personal carriers or by mail to Sun Tong Chong in Hong Kong and to other business associates in Canton. These firms then arranged for distribution or pick-up of the money. In the 1890's, Sam Kee arranged for monthly dispatches of the remittances containing individual amounts ranging from ten to two hundred dollars.

Rice was a major import which the company promoted extensively. In 1900, it imported at least ten tons of rice from China. These supplies may have been insufficient to meet local demands because Sam Kee purchased additional quantities of rice from local wholesale grocers such as
F.C. Davidge and W. A. Anderson in 1901. By 1908, however, Sam Kee had gained better control of its Chinese rice supplies and was selling rice directly to the major wholesale firms of Victoria and Vancouver including Kelly, Douglas and Company and the W.H. Malkin Company, as well as indirectly to other customers through local food broker J.E. Chipman.

Sam Kee Company set up its own rice mill in Vancouver to process uncleaned rice in 1908, but this venture appears to have failed because the firm tried to sell its milling equipment a year later. The company proved to be an aggressive seller of its rice, sending samples and prices to wholesale firms across Western Canada in Calgary, Edmonton, Lethbridge, Regina, and Winnipeg. It was a canny bargainer too, admitting in one instance that the firm could meet any lower price of competitors because it had purchased its rice too early in the season and was therefore anxious to sell. The company also sold rice to local Japanese wholesalers including the Japan Rice Mill.

Fish was the Sam Kee Company's major export. British Columbia's massive shipments of canned salmon had helped consolidate the provincial staples-based economy in the 1870's. In 1899, Sam Kee sent sixty cases of condensed milk and thirty-five cases of canned crab to Hong Kong and thirty tons of salted dogfish to Yokohama. In 1901, over five tons of pickled salmon, canned salmon, and dried salt salmon were shipped to Chinese firms in Hawaii. Then the development of a salt herring industry in British Columbia,
matched with a powerful consumer demand in China for salted fish, led Sam Kee to export large quantities of this fish beginning in 1903. Most of the early shipments of salt herring went to the Sun Tong Chong Company in Hong Kong, but by 1907, considerable amounts of the fish were also being consigned to Shanghai. Appendix VIII shows the volume of salt herring exports almost tripled from at least 521 tons in 1905 to at least 1544 tons in 1915.

The rapid growth of this export trade led to Sam Kee's direct participation in the processing side of the industry. The plants were centered at Nanaimo, where the herring was caught in nearby waters and immediately salt-packed for export. Local Japanese firms had exported the fish to Japan prior to 1903, when both the Sam Kee and Wing Sang companies of Vancouver began shipping the fish to Hong Kong. At the outset, Sam Kee merely purchased the fish from white and Japanese packers, but soon it began to advance funds to packers to ensure sufficient supplies for itself.

Sam Kee's role as supplier of capital and buyer of finished products relieved the cash shortage and marketing problems of early packers. During the 1903-1904 season, the company advanced funds to Nanaimo packer H.M. McCrae, charging him seven percent interest per annum. When McCrae delivered his shipment of fish to Sam Kee, the company paid cash for half the shipment and was allowed to defer the balance for sixty days. Sam Kee then received a ten percent commission from McCrae for helping to sell the fish.
In the early days of the trade when there was little regulation or quality control over salting and packing procedures, Sam Kee also withheld part of the amount payable as indemnity against any loss by weight or damage caused by improper salting.\(^{30}\)

By 1908, Sam Kee was dealing with several Japanese packers, principally with Charlie Okuri and U. Makino. For the 1908-1909 season, both Okuri and Makino agreed to supply the firm with one thousand tons of salt herring.\(^{31}\) But these two packers supplied only part of Sam Kee's total export volume because the company purchased eight hundred tons of fish from another Japanese firm in the same season.\(^{32}\)

The firm's relationship with different Japanese packers varied over the years, but Okuri and Makino operated independent salteries on waterfront land owned by Sam Kee. They received fish from Japanese fishermen and their workers drained the herring and salted and packed it for shipment. Other Japanese packers later rented buildings and equipment owned by the Chinese firm, but earlier operators had rented only the waterfront land and put up their own buildings.\(^{33}\)

In March 1908, Okuri borrowed $300 from Sam Kee for a six month term, promising to pay interest at $2 a month and offering his saltery buildings and fishing outfit as security.\(^{34}\) In turn, Sam Kee guaranteed to the William Hoggan general store in Nanaimo that it would buy Okuri's fish upon packing and would pay Okuri's account at the store in the meantime.\(^{35}\) The company was a demanding money-lender, and
did not hesitate to order its lawyers to threaten foreclosure over Japanese fish-boats and fishing gear which it held a chattel mortgage. Sam Kee was a ruthless manager too. When it became displeased with Okuri's slow packing and his fishermen's sale of herring to other firms, it threatened to default on Okuri's account at the general store. Similarly, the firm began to charge Makino ground rent of a dollar per ton of salt fish when it discovered that Makino was also selling fish to other buyers.

In overseering the Japanese packers, Sam Kee arranged for the purchase and delivery of all supplies. Salt was purchased from several Vancouver wholesale dealers including Colin F. Jackson and Company and Evans, Coleman and Evans and shipped to Vancouver Island. It also bought salt for export to China. The company bargained determinedly and demanded prices that it wanted. In October 1908 it bluntly told A.R. Johnston that its price was too high, and in May it rejected Evans, Coleman and Evans' offer of a December delivery on one hundred tons of salt and insisted upon a November delivery.

As backer and purchasing agent to the Japanese packers, Sam Kee made the most of its intermediary position in dealing with suppliers. The Hoggan general store in Nanaimo gave the firm a five percent discount for settling Okuri's account on a monthly basis. Sam Kee then took a similar discount off its own account at a local lumber firm without asking because Sam Kee reasoned that it deserved to earn something
for bringing its Japanese business there. With another supplier, the firm demanded that wholesale prices apply to its purchases.

Sam Kee was a careful buyer of supplies. When it came time to purchase ten thousand wooden boxes for shipping, the company invited quotations from nine lumber mills on the Mainland and on Vancouver Island. Hardware wholesalers were also asked to submit quotations for nails and other supplies. When rumours hinted that purse-seining for herring might be prohibited, Sam Kee quickly cancelled its salt orders and urged its supplier Evans, Coleman and Evans to verify the rumour. And when the company declined a salt purchase from C. Gardiner Johnston in August 1908, it indicated that this was due to the inability of Japanese fishermen to secure licenses.

Pressures to restrict the number of licenses issued to Japanese fishermen created an ongoing concern for Sam Kee. The company usually paid a white agent in Nanaimo to obtain the necessary licenses for its Japanese packers. In July 1909 the firm was sufficiently concerned to instruct its agent H.J. Simpson to interview the Fisheries Commissioner with regards to protests over the Japanese fishermen. Next year, Sam Kee discovered that white saltery owners were attempting to manipulate the number of licenses issued and told Simpson to attend to it. The situation worsened in 1911 when only fifteen licenses were granted, and the firm had to send discreet funds to its Nanaimo agent to sway the
In 1910, Sam Kee had approached Furuya and Company, a major Seattle-based herring exporter about jointly setting up an arrangement to control the salt herring industry, noting that the white packers had tried to do so already but without success. No further details on this matter were found in the company's papers, but it would appear that Sam Kee wanted to set up a buyers' syndicate to obtain fishing licenses en bloc or to stop various buyers from bidding up herring prices.

During 1909, Sam Kee contemplated exploiting new sources of herring located at Swanson Bay and in the Queen Charlotte Islands. In March, the company informed agents for the major steamship lines that it would be receiving salt herring from northern British Columbia for shipment to China, and it wanted to ship directly out of Victoria rather than out of Vancouver or Seattle. The N.Y.K., Waterhouse, and Blue Funnel lines responded positively and offered to discount the cost of transfers between Victoria and Seattle if Seattle shipments were necessary. By this time, Sam Kee was shipping such large volumes of fish that shipping lines and agents such as Evans, Coleman and Evans and the Coast Shipping Company would send the firm their sailing schedules well in advance of the herring season.

The northern shipments did not materialize, however. Thus Sam Kee continued to rely on Nanaimo for most of its herring and added new Japanese packers to its list of suppliers. The export volume expanded into the 1910's, and
competition from other Chinese exporters rose. The firm considered buying more waterfront property in Nanaimo to expand its operations, but no frontage with a deep enough moorage could be found. For the 1909-1910 season, Makino supplied Sam Kee with 292 tons of salt herring, Nakaji and Modokoro 374 tons, and Takeda 528 tons. Sam Kee instructed its agent to watch that these three suppliers did not sell any herring to its competitors, noting that if Makino misbehaved the company would have the Inspector of Fisheries cancel his license immediately. To meet the export demand, Sam Kee continued to buy salt herring elsewhere, from the Nanaimo Fish and Bait Company and through A.R. Johnston.

By 1911, Sam Kee's investments in the Nanaimo salt herring industry included waterfront land and a wharf, two gasoline launches worth $3500, fish tanks, a messhall, a bunkhouse, and other saltery buildings. These were rented to Japanese packers under agreements closely resembling labour contracts. Takeda, for example, applied to Sam Kee in 1912 for operating capital and for use of the company's facilities. Rent was charged for the use of the wharf and the boat, and Takeda had to agree to sell the fish solely to Sam Kee at specified prices and also to purchase all nets, food, fishing gear, and packing supplies exclusively from the firm.

The Sam Kee Company's salt herring exports led it to major dealings with white business institutions and their representatives. These included the general stores, lumber
mills and hardware and commission firms that supplied the salteries, marine insurance and steamship agents who arranged for local and export shipments, and the company's own agents in Nanaimo. In all these dealings, Sam Kee's actions and positions were guided by market demands and profit-seeking. At no point did it behave differently from any other astute and aggressive business of the period. Sam Kee was never placed at a disadvantage just because it was Chinese. It behaved aggressively, secure in the knowledge that its volume of production gave it advantages and power. Its middleman role was made possible by the shortage of operating capital among local packers, by the demand in China for salt fish, and by the existence of a viable transportation system over the Pacific.

The herring trade did not hinge upon the Chinese immigrants' disadvantaged position in the general economy, but as a labour contractor, Sam Kee did operate within constraints locking the Chinese into low-paying, semi-skilled work. Labour contracting pre-dated the company's entry into the herring trade and may have exposed it to a wider range of business practices that it used later to its own advantage. As well, the business acumen that characterized Sam Kee's herring trade strategies also surfaced in its labour marketing activities.

The Chinese contract labour system has been studied with reference to the salmon canning industry, but its key features also applied to the areas in which Sam Kee plied
its trade. In the salmon industry a cannery operator and a Chinese labour contractor drew up an agreement whereby the contractor agreed to supply men at a specified price to can a certain quota of fish. The canner provided a cash advance, which the contractor used to entice men to take the job. Crews were then sent to the canneries where they worked and were boarded by the contractor. At season's end the contractor received the final payment and paid his crew their wages less amounts for the advance, room, and board. However, if the salmon run was low, or if any other reason prevented the workers from filling the quota of fish, the canner could refuse to pay the balance of the contract. The contractor too could pass his loss onto his workers by inflating the costs and his tally of the provisions and food he had supplied. Thus the workers could emerge from a cannery having worked and having been fed and housed, but with no cash to show for their efforts.

In short, the contract system shifted the risks of an unstable industry onto the contracted workers and their contractor. Sam Kee's many canning customers included William Hickey, John Wallace, William Hill, and J.H. Todd, as well as firms such as the Burrard Inlet Packing Company, Malcolm and Windsor, Wurzburg and Company, and the Imperial Cannery. Sam Kee's dealings revealed one other way in which the middleman was vulnerable to the losses suffered by the canner. In August of 1905, the Canadian Canning Company sued Sam Kee, charging that the firm's foreman had no control
over his men and that the crew was short and was failing to produce the required 1200 cases a day. 69

Yet the contractors were not entirely powerless, since they controlled the vital supply of labour that canners needed. Canners were constantly demanding full and skilled crews from Sam Kee. 70 In two instances, canners guaranteed in writing to Sam Kee that workers' wages would be paid. 71 In 1901, Sam Kee's lawyers successfully issued a garnishee against one canner for non-payment of its account. 72 But it appears that the competition among Chinese contractors precluded any possibility of united action among them to improve working conditions. 73

The contract system functioned in similar fashion in the sawmill industry. Sam Kee supplied men for packing, jointing, knot-sawing, and other jobs in sawmills, shingle mills, and planing mills. The mills were quick to complain about inexperienced labour crews, their late arrival, and their insufficient numbers. 74 The contractor's vulnerability was exposed again when the Spicer Shingle Mill informed Sam Kee that if sufficient men were not on hand when needed, then the mill would hire additional men and charge their wages to Sam Kee's account. 75

Two sets of tallies kept by Sam Kee for its sawmill workers in 1906 yield some information on the nature of contract labour. Appendix IX shows that the number of men employed fluctuated from month to month: in some cases, over twenty men were taken on or discharged. The amounts deducted
for food and supplies ranged from fifteen to thirty-eight percent of the total wages calculated, such that workers eventually received on average seventy-five percent of the original wage. The average monthly wage also fluctuated, from a low of $14.28 to a high of $28.69, reflecting the different grades of wages paid for different tasks.

In 1902, Sam Kee began supplying workers to the newly established Knight Sugar Company of Raymond, Alberta. Sam Kee furnished crews of 'good, healthy, and practical' farmers under an English-speaking boss to cultivate and harvest eight hundred acres of sugar beets for sale to the sugar company. Contract terms, like those in other labour agreements, specified that if Sam Kee defaulted on the work, it would have to pay Knight Sugar the cost of labour that the sugar company would subsequently engage.

With the sugar beet contracts, Sam Kee protected its own position wherever it could. In 1904, it successfully changed the contract to have Knight Sugar accept the beets in good condition regardless of saccharine content or purity. Earlier contracts had specified a twelve percent sugar content and an eighty percent purity in the beets. Sam Kee also arranged with the Canadian Pacific Railway Company for a guaranteed return fare for the workers, even though transportation costs were refunded by Knight Sugar. Sam Kee purchased land near Raymond in 1904 to cultivate beets for sale to another sugar company, but left the sugar trade by 1907 without any explanation.
Sam Kee's ready access to Chinese labourers also led it to work in logging and timber sales. Lumber mills, brickyards, woodyards, and other small manufacturers needing wood for fuel or for production contracted with Sam Kee to purchase cut timber, paying according to the amount of wood purchased. In some cases, the buyers held timber leases or owned land which they wanted logged, but in other cases Sam Kee had to find its own source of wood. Most sites were situated around Vancouver, but some were located as far away as Ruskin, Stave Lake, and Chilliwack. The wood products included shingle bolts, cordwood, long bolts, and logs suitable for use as pilings and as telegraph or telephone poles.

The contract terms varied according to the owner of the uncut wood. One mill paid for towing costs while Sam Kee paid for stumpage and another paid for a road built to remove the timber. Another buyer of timber supplied a horse for loading the wood and even promised to pay for wood not delivered by year's end. When Heaps and Company neglected to have the shingle bolts cut at Stave Lake promptly measured, Sam Kee was quick to remind them of their contract obligations. When no satisfactory action resulted, the fallers hired a lawyer, and Sam Kee hastened to set up a meeting to avoid a lawsuit.

Sam Kee subcontracted some of the logging work and once more acted as capital supplier. In November 1907, it entered a partnership with W.H. Chow to cut timber on 340 acres of
C.P.R. land. Chow undertook to fell and dispose of the timber with all sale proceeds to be submitted to Sam Kee's bookkeeper. Sam Kee's advance to Chow was to be repaid from the profits, with interest set at ten percent per annum. In another situation, Sam Kee sold its contract for supplying timber and its camp outfit outright to a Chinese subcontractor.

Sam Kee proved once again to be an aggressive dealer in buying and selling its wood products. When the Canadian Pacific Railway Company invited tenders for cutting shingle bolts and timber on its land, Sam Kee argued that it should win the contract because it had already worked the site under another lessee and had spent some one thousand dollars putting in roads. Sam Kee bid $1.10 per cord, with instructions that an additional ten cents could be added if any firm should outbid it. In August, the firm purchased the timber standing in several sites in the Hastings Townsite, and later approached Arthur McEvoy, a prominent Vancouver solicitor, to tender its wood for quick sale to City Hall, the City Hospital, schools, churches, and 'any other big buildings' to clear its stock before the summer. When necessary Sam Kee knew to use the appropriate middleman.

In other business, Sam Kee encountered problems that any firm might have faced. Lumber mills accumulated unpaid debts to Sam Kee for contracts completed. Other customers complained about the quality of Sam Kee's shingle bolts and refused full payment. The company pursued sales with
other customers guaranteeing good timber in the shipment. Transportation was a problem too, and Sam Kee complained to the B.C. Electric Railway Company about the lack of cars available for carrying wood into town. Sam Kee pointed out that it had built a spur line and therefore deserved better service.

The company's work in the lumber and logging industries may have grown from its charcoal manufacturing and woodyard operations which were operating as early as 1898, and possibly as early as 1889. Early reports had noted that a 'syndicate' of Chinese was making charcoal from the refuse of the Moodyville sawmill in an oven built by themselves. By 1900, Sam Kee was running the Quick Delivery Coal and Woodyard at 48 Dupont Street, selling coal, coke, charcoal and wood to businesses such as chandleries and small foundries, restaurants, hotels, homes, and other fuel dealers. Charcoal was sold as far away as Calgary.

Conveniently, the major charcoal customers were the salmon canneries, many of which Sam Kee also supplied with labour. These buyers were located nearby along the Fraser River and at Steveston and further away at sites on the Skeena and Naas Rivers, Quathiaski Cove, and Smith's Inlet. Charcoal shipments averaged between 200 to 250 bushels, and were shipped on the many steamships servicing the British Columbia coast. By 1907, Sam Kee may have had difficulties in supplying charcoal as it investigated purchasing the product from another manufacturer in town.
In another marketing undertaking involving steamship tickets, Sam Kee combined its intermediary role between Chinese and whites with its merchant role of supplying goods and services demanded by the migrants. By 1905, Sam Kee was acting as agent for the Blue Funnel Line and the Japan Mail Steamship Company through Dodwell and Company. It sold tickets to Chinese travellers and boarded them locally as they came to town to await their ship's departure.  

The competition among the various trans-Pacific steamship lines was fierce, with each having Chinese agents based in Chinatowns all across Canada. In 1909, Sam Kee appointed twenty-seven Chinese sub-agents for the Blue Funnel Line in thirteen cities including Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa, Hamilton, Winnipeg, Swift Current, and Moose Jaw.  

The pre-eminent firm in the industry was the Canadian Pacific Steamship Company with its fleet of Empress liners. In compiling information on this competitor, Sam Kee reported to Dodwell that just over two thousand Chinese had departed from Vancouver aboard C.P.R. ships in 1907. The C.P.R.'s advantage, of course, lay in its ability to sell its steamship tickets at the same time that eastern travellers purchased train passage to reach the west coast. To counter this, Sam Kee and the Blue Funnel Line charged the same Pacific passage as did the C.P.R., offering their eastern agents a $2 commission if they would sell Blue Funnel tickets together with the C.P.R. railway fare without informing C.P.R. officials.
As Chinese agent, Sam Kee publicized the advantages of the Blue Funnel Line carefully. It pointed out to its Chinese customers that there were no first or second class accommodations on board the eight steamers of the line, thus allowing all passengers to walk freely about. The 1908 fare of $43.50 included passage, cartage, and board. The Blue Funnel Line, in line with its competitors, offered a discounted ticket to indigent Chinese, and Sam Kee was responsible for verifying the applicants' neediness.

Sam Kee was also quick to report passengers' complaints to Dodwell, noting that bad publicity not only injured the Blue Funnel Line's traffic but also gave the C.P.R. a better chance to regain its share of the business. In 1908, the indigent rate was raised by all the steamship lines to $30 from $25. In 1910, when Dodwell considered raising the passage to match the C.P.R.'s higher rates, Sam Kee advised against doing so because the Chinese would prefer to travel aboard the Empresses if steamship prices were the same.

Given the incomplete nature of the Sam Kee company records, this chapter cannot serve as a comprehensive company history. There is neither a definite beginning nor end to the firm, nor have any major trends been discovered for its various operations. Herring exports increased in the period under study, and the continued existence of the business indicated some degree of success. The records as they stand
can only recreate and reveal a slice of company life for a decade's time, and they show in terms of behaviour and attitude, a fine sense of business acumen and aggressiveness.

The Sam Kee Company sold Chinese goods and steamship tickets to the immigrant community and sold Chinese labour, charcoal, and lumber products to white businesses. The company bought herring and used the local transportation and ancillary legal services of the general mercantile community. These different arms of the business were logically inter-connected. Labour contracting and retail sales attracted customers to the store, where steamship tickets were later sold. The firm's connections to China facilitated its remittance function and the herring export trade. Products from the company's contract logging were channelled into its charcoal manufactory and woodyard sales. Charcoal sales then reinforced its contacts with the salmon canneries for which it contracted labour.

But while these trading arms were unified, the transaction of business revealed two different trading atmospheres. In buying and selling salt herring, charcoal, and transportation services, Sam Kee was dealt with as an equal by its white business counterparts. The wholesale, shipping, and industrial interests of Vancouver and Sam Kee Company spoke a common language of commerce where mutual needs from both sides were satisfied in the trading of goods and services. Racial considerations did not interfere with doing business
or making money.

But in the other arena of labour contracting, Sam Kee had to acknowledge the limited power of Chinese workers in the workplace. The extra obligations that the firm shouldered over quotas of cans, sugar, and lumber were terms dictated by white employers who knew that labour opportunities for Chinese immigrants were limited. Sam Kee's role here was to organize a disparate low-wage segment of the labour force for employers. The company also adopted the ruthless stance of employers in overseering its Japanese fish-packers. The labour contractor stood closer to the employer than to the middleman centre because, in agreeing to an employer's terms, the contractor effectively became the employer's agent.

In other middleman functions, the company's activities as remittance agent, steamship ticket seller, and importer met some of the essential needs of the immigrants. It is not known if the company extracted fees as high as those of the monopolistic Italian padrone, and competition amongst Chinatown's many firms may have precluded profiteering from the 'commerce of migration'. As well, the Sam Kee Company invested in local industries and real estate, making money in areas quite apart from the servicing of immigrant needs. The firm functioned both as an immigrant middleman and a local industrialist responding to forces and opportunities in the general economy.

The company's middleman activities facilitated the
adjustment of the early migrants and reduced the trauma of settlement in a foreign land. Amidst the adverse racial setting, the company helped migrants realize their migration ambitions by providing jobs, food, and contact with the mother country. The company's efforts did not alter the racial climate or directly promote greater acceptance of the Chinese minority. Instead, they merely helped the newcomers co-exist peacefully with their inhospitable hosts. In some functions, the company brought Chinese into greater contact with other Canadians, while in others, it helped the Chinese retain their self-sufficiency.

Sam Kee's activities also revealed how the institution of business encouraged newcomers to act and behave as economic men without concern over colour. The company extended credit to customers and packers, bargained in a hard-nosed fashion, and seems to even have had a hand in corrupt manipulation of fishing licenses. These non-racist encounters, however, were limited to a small circle of businessmen and did not immediately affect race relations. However, Sam Kee's high degree of integration does testify to a degree of receptiveness in the host society hitherto passed over. And, despite the common image of the Chinese as victims of racism and industrial capitalism, their business ambitions and endeavours prove them to have been far from powerless and highly resourceful.
FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE


2 City of Vancouver Archives, Add. MSS 571, Sam Kee Company Papers (hereafter cited as Sam Kee) vol. 15 file 6 "光緒十四年吉日起記庫貨部," [Record of Goods on Hand], 1888.

3 Sam Kee, vol. 15 file 1 "貿易成本簿" [Cost of Goods On Hand], 1901.

4 Sam Kee, vol. 15 file 9, "光緒拾貯年春日立記現款簿", [Record of Sales, 1893]; vol. 15 file 12 "貯款簿", [Record of Sales, 1898].

5 Sam Kee, vol. 14 file 1 "光緒拾貯年抄造支總部" [Journal, 1891].


7 Sam Kee, vol. 3, file 6 [List of Goods Shipped to Vancouver], 1905-1906; and vol. 3 file 11 [List of Goods Shipped to Vancouver], 1908.

8 Ibid.

9 See letters in Sam Kee, vol. 3, files 2, 3, 8 for correspondence with camps and towns throughout British Columbia.


11 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, p. 54, Sam Kee to McLennan and McFeely, 30 July 1908; vol. 6, file 7, Woolsey, LeFeaux and Co. to Sam Kee, 15 May 1906.

12 Sam Kee, vol. 6 file 4, Shon Yuen and Co. to Sam Kee, 19 December 1904.


14 Sam Kee, vol. 5, file 6, Customs declarations, 9 March 1900, 21 May 1900.
15 Sam Kee, vol. 5 file 9, F.C. Davidge to Sam Kee, 22 March 1901, 26 March 1901; W. A. Anderson and Co. to Chang Foy (sic), 28 March 1901.

16 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1 p.120, Sam Kee to Kelly Douglas and Co., 31 May 1908; vol. 1 Book 1, p. 33, Sam Kee to W. H. Malkin, 18 January 1908.

17 Sam Kee, vol. 6 file 12, J.E. Chipman to Sam Kee, 2 January 1907, 10 January 1908.

18 Sam Kee, vol. 8 file 1, Sam Kee to V.E. Roberts, 18 February 1909.

19 Sam Kee, vol. 6 file 12, Sam Kee to Campbell Bros and Wilson, Calgary, Georgeson and Co., Calgary, Hudson's Bay Company, Winnipeg, et.al, 22 January 1908; vol. 1 Book 1, pp. 67-70, Sam Kee to various firms, 19 March 1908.

20 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, p. 52, Sam Kee to Rat Portage Lumber Co., Harrison River, 6 March 1908.

21 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, p. 89, Sam Kee to Japan Rice Mill, 31 March 1908.

22 Sam Kee, vol. 5 file 4, Bills of Lading, Sam Kee to Wing Lee Chun, 25 February 1899, 28 December 1899; Sam Kee to J. Hori, 27 February 1899.

23 Sam Kee, vol. 5 file 9, Bills of Lading, Sam Kee to Chin On, 1 November 1901; 11 December 1901.


25 The export figures are modified by 'at least' because the compilation may be affected by missing records.

26 Leung, p. 6.

27 Sam Kee, vol. 6 file 4, H.M. McCrae to Sam Kee via E.W. MacLean, 19 February 1904.

28 Sam Kee, vol 6 file 4, Agreement between H.M. McCrae and Sam Kee, 14 December 1903.

29 Sam Kee, vol. 6 file 4, H.M. McCrae to Sam Kee via E. W. MacLean, 19 February 1904.

30 Sam Kee, vol. 6 file 4, M. Komatsu and Co. to Sam Kee, 7 April 1904.

31 Sam Kee, vol. 7 file 6, C. Okuri to Sam Kee, 22 September 1908; U. Makino to Sam Kee, 31 October 1908.
32 Sam Kee, vol. 7 file 6, Awaya, Ikeda and Co to Sam Kee, 21 September 1908.

33 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, Sam Kee to Red Fir Lumber Co., Ladysmith, B.C., 15 November 1909.

34 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, p. 54, C. Okuri to Sam Kee, 13 March 1908.

35 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, p. 56, Sam Kee to C. Okuri, 13 March 1908.

36 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 2, p. 24, Sam Kee to MacNeill, Bird, Macdonald and Banfield, 2 October 1912.

37 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, pp. 312, 315, Sam Kee to C. Okuri, 10 December 1908, 12 December 1908.

38 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, p. 388, Sam Kee to U. Makino, 15 February 1908.

39 Sam Kee, vol. 7 file 1, Evans, Coleman and Evans to Sam Kee, 16 May 1908.

40 See, for example, Sam Kee, vol. 6 file 11, Colin F. Jackson and Co. to Sam Kee, 7 June 1907. C.F. Jackson and Company subsequently reduced their price by ten cents a ton. Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, p. 232, 27 October 1908.

41 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, p. 232, Sam Kee to A.R. Johnston, 27 October 1908; vol. 1 Book 1, p. 245, Sam Kee to A.R. Johnston, 3 November 1908.

42 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, p. 113, Sam Kee to Evans, Coleman and Evans, 18 May 1908.

43 Sam Kee, vol. 7 file 2, W. Hoggan to Sam Kee, 19 October 1908.


46 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, pp. 160, 186, 187, Sam Kee to various mills, 18 August 1908; pp. 198-200, Sam Kee to various mills, 12 October 1908.

47 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, p. 163, Sam Kee to Wood, Vallance and Leggatt Ltd., 19 August 1908; vol. 1 Book 1 p. 164, Sam Kee to McLennan and McFeely Ltd., 19 August 1908.
48 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, p. 129, Sam Kee to A.E. Planta, 18 June 1908; vol. 1 Book 1, p. 130, Sam Kee to Evans, Coleman and Evans, 18 June 1908.

49 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, p. 170, Sam Kee to C. Gardiner Johnston, 27 August 1908.


53 Sam Kee, vol. 7, file 7, George Hannay to Sam Kee, 6 September 1911.

54 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, p. 748, Sam Kee to M. Furuya, 14 March 1910; vol. 1 Book 1, p. 755, Sam Kee to M.Furuya, 28 March 1910.

55 Sam Kee, vol. 1, Book 1, pp. 497-499, Sam Kee to Dodwell and Co., K.J. Burns, and Greer, Courtenay and Skene, 5 March 1909.

56 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, p. 535, Sam Kee to Coast Steamship Co., 10 March 1909.

57 Sam Kee, vol. 7 file 2, Evans Coleman and Evans to Sam Kee, 22 August 1908; vol. 7 file 6, Coast Shipping Company to Sam Kee, 15 September 1908.

58 Leung, p. 6.

59 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, pp. 561, 584, Sam Kee to A.E. Planta, 18 March 1909.

60 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, p. 767, Sam Kee to E.G. Taylor, no date.

61 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, pp. 736,812, Sam Kee to George Hannay, 30 January 1910, 23 November 1910.

62 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, p. 726, Sam Kee to Nanaimo Fish and Bait Company, 8 January 1910; vol. 1 Book 1, p. 700, Sam Kee to A.R. Johnston and Co., 25 November 1909.


64 Sam Kee, vol. 8 file 6, Agreement between Sam Kee and O. Takeda, 18 November 1912.
65 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 2, pp. 33,34, Sam Kee to Nanaimo Fish and Bait Company, 19 October 1911, 31 October, 1911.


67 Ibid.

68 For a sample of his clients, see Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, p. 96, Sam Kee to John Wallace, Naas River, 15 April 1908; vol. 6 file 5 W. Hickey Canning Co. to Sam Kee, 5 September 1905; vol. 5 file 1, Burrard Inlet Packing Company to Sam Kee, 1897; vol. 5 file 4 Sam Kee to Wurzburg and Co., 9 November 1899; vol. 5 file 9, Imperial Cannery to Sam Kee, 12 April 1901.

69 Sam Kee, vol. 6 file 5, Russell and Russell to Sam Kee, 11 August 1905.

70 For example, see Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, p. 645, Sam Kee to John Wallace, 15 June 1909.

71 Sam Kee, vol. 6 file 5, W. Mowat to Sam Kee, 9 September 1905; vol. 6 file 7, J.O.W. Brown to A. Desbrisay, 22 March 1906.

72 Sam Kee, vol. 5 file 9, Cowan, Kappele and McEvoy to Sam Kee, 18 May 1901, 30 June 1901.


74 For examples, see Sam Kee, vol. 5 file 9, E.H. Heaps and Co to Sam Kee, 13 July 1901; Spicer Shingle Mill to Sam Kee, 13 May 1901.

75 Sam Kee, vol. 5 file 1, Spicer Shingle Mill to Sam Kee, 22 March 1898.

76 Sam Kee, vol. 6 file 2, Knight Sugar Co. to Sam Kee, 27 June 1902.

77 Sam Kee, vol. 6 file 2, Agreement between Knight Sugar Co. and Sam Kee, 2 December 1903.

78 Ibid.

79 Sam Kee, vol. 6 file 4, E. P. Ellison to Sam Kee 17 November 1904.
80 Sam Kee, vol. 6 file 2, Agreement between Knight Sugar Co and Sam Kee, 2 December 1903.

81 Sam Kee, vol. 6 file 4, E.P. Ellison to Sam Kee, 17 November 1904.

82 Sam Kee, vol. 6 file 2, Agreement between Knight Sugar Co. and Sam Kee, 15 October 1903.

83 Sam Kee, vol. 6 file 4, E.P. Ellison to Sam Kee, 23 April 1904.

84 Sam Kee, vol. 6 file 5, Agreement between Union Stock Company and Shum Moon, 13 May 1905.

85 Sam Kee, vol. 6 file 10, E.P. Ellison to Sam Kee, 20 February 1907; vol. 6 file 11, E.P. Ellison to Sam Kee, 13 April 1907.

86 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, p. 29, Sam Kee to Douglas and Thomas, 3 September 1907; vol. 6 file 4, Harold Burnet to Sam Kee, 12 January 1904; vol. 7 file 1 John Coughlan and Co. to Sam Kee, 25 June 1908; vol. 7 file 2 Joseph Chew Lumber and Shingle Manufacturing Co. to Sam Kee, 3 September 1908; vol. 6 file 10, E.H. Heaps and Co. to Sam Kee, 28 February 1907 and 6 March 1907.

87 Sam Kee, vol. 5 file 9, Dean Brothers to E.H. Heaps and Co., 1 August 1907; vol. 1 Book 1, Sam Kee to Henry Fitzgerald, 17 November 1910.


89 Sam Kee, vol. 5 file 9, E.H. Heaps to Sam Kee, 8 March 1901.

90 Sam Kee, vol. 6 file 11, Cascade Wood Co. to Sam Kee, 26 September 1907.


93 Sam Kee, vol. 6 file 11, Agreement between Sam Kee and W.H. Chow, 13 November 1907.

94 Sam Kee, vol. 6 file 11, Agreement between Chow Mew and Sam Kee, 20 February 1908.
95 Sam Kee, vol. 6 file 11, Sam Kee to C.P.R. Land Department, 25 April 1907.

96 Sam Kee, vol. 6 file 11, Edward Donlan to Sam Kee, 25 August 1907 re: timber on NW¼ of Section 47; Townsend Brothers to Sam Kee, 17 August 1907 re: NE and NW¼ of Block 44; H. Farlow to Sam Kee, 28 August 1907 re: NW¼ of Block 46.

97 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, p. 13, Sam Kee to A. McEvoy, 5 February 1908.

98 See, for examples, Sam Kee, vol. 6 file 7, C.W. Brown to Sam Kee, 8 May 1906 re: $950 debt; Fred A. Shore of Foss Lumber to Sam Kee, 8 August 1906.

99 Sam Kee, vol. 7 file 2, Joseph Chew Lumber and Shingle Manufacturing Co to Sam Kee, 3 September 1908.

100 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, p. 129, Sam Kee to John Coughlin, 16 June 1908.

101 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, p. 274, Sam Kee to General Superintendent, B.C.E.R., 14 November 1908.

102 Sam Kee, vol. 5 file 2, Sam Kee to T. Dunn and Co., 1898 no date; Sam Kee to W.H. Morton Mining and Milling Supplies, 25 November 1898.

103 City of Vancouver Archives, James Skitt Matthews Newsclipping Collection file M1765 "Charcoal", World clipping dated 22 April 1889.

104 City of Vancouver Archives, James Skitt Matthews Newsclipping Collection file M1765 "Charcoal", clipping dated 6 January 1898.

105 Sam Kee, vol. 5 file 5, Delivery lists, 14 February 1900.

106 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, p. 114, Sam Kee to C.D. Taprell, Calgary, 20 May 1908.

107 For examples, see Sam Kee, vol. 5 file 9.

108 Sam Kee, vol. 6 file 11, Electric Turpentine Company of Canada to Sam Kee, 12 October 1907.

109 Sam Kee, vol. 18, file 17 "[Record of Writing Seats on Behalf of Blue Funnel Line], 1905.

110 Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, pp. 611-613, Sam Kee to Dodwell and Co., 7 May 1909.
Sam Kee, vol. 1 Book 1, p. 148, Sam Kee to Dodwell and Co., 30 May 1908.

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CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

This study of Chinese-Canadian business activity has addressed the fundamental problem in ethnic history of immigrant integration. How did the Chinese survive in a Canada that was bitterly opposed to their presence? What factors facilitated a viable relationship to be worked out between two racially distinct groups? Economic and business affairs created a convenient and necessary arena for immediate contact and exchange of goods and services, but a closer look at the inheritance of old world business values and practices, the rise of a thriving merchant community in Vancouver Chinatown, and the receptiveness of certain white commercial institutions has revealed that business played a major role in accommodating Chinese migrants to their new homeland.

Business and businessmen in the immigrant community were central to the adjustment experience. The primary goal of immigration was to accumulate wealth, and the merchants led the way in channelling Chinese labour into the staples economy and in exploring the new world's economic receptiveness beyond those primary industries. The drive for profit
pushed the merchants into a wide range of inter-racial dealings with urban consumers, local businessmen, and civic authorities as many different kinds of enterprises were established. Chinese businessmen not only facilitated the adjustment of their fellow migrants but also revealed the extent of integration that they achieved themselves.

The migrations to the new world have seen a coming together of many diverse peoples. But not all aspects of those differing cultures were diametrically opposed to the North American way of life. Indeed, immigrant adjustment is profoundly affected by the similarity of values or institutions in both old and new worlds. The Chinese arriving in Canada in the late nineteenth century, it would seem, came with many values and skills highly compatible with the new world. They came from a society not of simple peasants with subsistence farming backgrounds, but one in which most men possessed knowledge of and access to a sophisticated internal and international trading economy. Pre-industrial China had extensive capital markets which facilitated a wide range of business enterprises. The Confucian social order promoted ideas of upward social mobility and family/lineage unity that were inextricably linked to the accumulation of wealth. Emigrants from China carried with them not only a determined intent to make money, but also skills and experience with commercial institutions.

Upon arriving in Canada the vast majority of migrants found a fledgling industrial economy that viewed them chiefly
as a cheap source of mobile seasonal labour, one which could be readily organized and controlled by middleman labour contractors. From this base a secondary level of merchant activity arose to channel Chinese labour into the workplace and to meet local and regional demands for food, clothing, housing, and other services. The rapid growth of Chinese business was facilitated by cultural values and economic institutions from China as well as by local individual and institutional white money-lenders. Both old and new world factors helped the Chinese community survive and expand while it was politically and socially isolated.

The general and sometimes intense hostility greeting the Chinese in Canada did not preclude economic integration, especially in the realm of business. Chinese merchants who dealt extensively with wholesale merchants, commission agents, real estate brokers, and mortgage companies discovered that racial concerns did not interfere with the business at hand. At that level of trading, which was admittedly restricted to the wealthiest merchants, Chinese and whites spoke a common language of commerce. The Chinese proved to be shrewd businessmen, ready to bargain and negotiate with their white counterparts over a wide range of transactions.

White racism had rendered the Chinese community politically powerless, a situation exacerbated by China's own international weakness throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Yet from time to time, Chinese merchants, and even laundrymen, felt compelled to defend their economic
and community interests in court and at City Hall. They demonstrated a confident understanding of western legal and political institutions and procedures. They used the economic resources they controlled to their advantage and profit and, in their quest for wealth, gained a small taste of the political power associated with economic success.

Within the Chinese community, merchant activity influenced the migrant group's adjustment and settlement in many ways. It provided the most basic of human needs: employment, food, housing, and contact with the mother country. Through business activity, migrants discovered the applicability of their own old world values and institutions to new world opportunities, thereby helping to overcome the trauma of resettling in a foreign land. Merchants provided a measure of self-sufficiency in the migrant community, allowing it to prosper in a racialist environment. Their banking and investment activities stabilized the overseas settlement in encouraging others to borrow and invest further. Finally business offered an acceptable criterion to Chinese and whites for determining the ethnic community's leaders.

Chinese merchant activity in the business world of Vancouver expanded the arena of inter-racial contact for individual entrepreneurs. Business propelled operators to learn technical and language skills in order to pursue their callings. Observations amongst the Chinese that their merchants could function and prosper in the larger polity helped reassure migrants that the new world was economically recep-
tive to them and that therefore their own emigration ambitions could be realized. Commercial exchanges demonstrated too that the economic base of western capitalism did not differ dramatically from that of China. The migrants could see that upward economic mobility was achievable in the new world just as it theoretically had been in China. They could predict the general behaviour of profit-seeking whites based on common assumptions and shared understandings about free enterprise.

The early immigration experience of the Chinese in Canada was one marked by intense anti-Asian hostility. Yet the new world had continued to attract growing numbers of Chinese, who found the host society's receptiveness most cordial and open at the economic level. Chinese businessmen were among the first to fight unfair legislation and to bring their families over, thus becoming symbols of further opportunity in the eyes of their community. The dreams of North American immigrants to start life anew, to send money home, or to make private fortunes were shared by the Chinese and achieved by some through business enterprise. The economic and familial stakes of these merchants became fundamental components in the continuing settlement of the Chinese in this country.
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APPENDIX I

CHINESE LAUNDRIES IN VANCOUVER

LICENSE ADDITIONS AND RENEWALS, 1906-1912

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>License Additions</th>
<th>License Renewals</th>
<th>Total Number of Laundries</th>
<th>Annual Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>1906</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>+5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>+10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>+8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>-1</td>
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<td>1911</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>+5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>53</td>
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</table>

Source: City of Vancouver Archives, City of Vancouver, Department of Permits and Licenses, License Record, 1903-1906, License Registry, 1910-1912.
# APPENDIX II

**MERCHAND TAILORS IN VANCOUVER CHINATOWN**

**ANNUAL RECEIPTS & EMPLOYEES, 1907**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Claim Number</th>
<th>Name of Firm</th>
<th>Gross Annual Receipts</th>
<th>Number of Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Fongoun Ltd.</td>
<td>$33,000</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Hing Kee</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Suey Ying Chong</td>
<td>10,800</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Quong Ying Chong</td>
<td>12,600</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Lun Chong</td>
<td>22,000</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Quong Yee</td>
<td>11,000</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Yick Wo</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Thomas Kee</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>Wo Sang</td>
<td>18,000</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>Wo On</td>
<td>7,200</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>On Kee</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>Kee Sing</td>
<td>19,000</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84</td>
<td>Quong Yuen</td>
<td>21,000</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>Mark Long</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86</td>
<td>Yuen Sung</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tong Lee</td>
<td>19,000</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bow Yuen</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hing Yuen</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
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</table>

APPENDIX III

NINETY-ONE CHINATOWN FIRMS, VANCOUVER

GROSS RECEIPTS, 1907

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thousands of Dollars</th>
<th>Identification Number Assigned to Chinatown Firm by Mackenzie King</th>
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<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 5</td>
<td>15, 59, 69, 92, 97, 81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 - 10</td>
<td>19, 20, 30, 32, 49, 51, 54, 56, 68, 60</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 - 15</td>
<td>9, 10, 29, 33, 38, 40, 42, 45, 46, 47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 - 20</td>
<td>53, 74, 75, 76, 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 - 25</td>
<td>12, 35, 41, 48, 55, 61, 70, 79, 82, 94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 - 30</td>
<td>102, 5</td>
</tr>
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<td>31 - 35</td>
<td>11, 17, 18, 28, 44, 50, 62, 65, 85, 84</td>
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<td>36 - 40</td>
<td>16, 31, 34, 35, 64, 68, 72, 88, 13</td>
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<td>41 - 45</td>
<td>14, 23, 24</td>
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<td>46 - 50</td>
<td>43, 71, 87</td>
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<td>51 - 55</td>
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<td>2, 8, 27, 57, 73, 83</td>
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<td>66 - 70</td>
<td>39</td>
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<td>71 - 75</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>76 - 80</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>81 - 85</td>
<td>78</td>
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<td>86 - 90</td>
<td>21, 77</td>
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<td>91 - 95</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>96 - 100</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101 - 119</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120 - 129</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>130 - 139</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>140 - 149</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>150 - 159</td>
<td>4, 89</td>
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<td>160 - 169</td>
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<td>170 - 179</td>
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<tr>
<td>180 - 189</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

Royal Commission to Investigate into Losses Sustained by the Chinese Population of Vancouver, B.C., 1908, Resultant Claims (1) and (2), pp. C32537-C32719.
Ninety-one firms gave full evidence to Mackenzie King.
## APPENDIX IV

### CHINESE POPULATION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, VANCOUVER, AND VICTORIA 1891-1911

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>B.C.</th>
<th>Vancouver</th>
<th>Percent of B.C.</th>
<th>Victoria</th>
<th>Percent of B.C.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>8,910</td>
<td>1065</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>2080</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>14,855</td>
<td>1800</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>2978</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>19,568</td>
<td>3361</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>3458</td>
<td>18%</td>
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### APPENDIX V

**BUSINESS TYPES AND NUMBERS**

**CHINATOWN, VANCOUVER, 1901, 1911**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Type</th>
<th>1901</th>
<th>1911</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jewellers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoemakers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurants</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchant Tailors</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundries</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchants</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bakers</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photographers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pawnbrokers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boarding Houses</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacconists</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Agents</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocers</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>71</strong></td>
<td><strong>236</strong></td>
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## APPENDIX VI

### PURCHASES AND MORTGAGES BY CHINESE OWNERS, 1892-1914

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Chinese Purchase Date</th>
<th>Mortgage Date</th>
<th>Mortgagor</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Rate</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>196-12-13</td>
<td>1920 1920</td>
<td>12/01/04</td>
<td>Charles Henry Akroyd</td>
<td>2,200</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>2 yr.</td>
<td>16.413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 15 16</td>
<td>1921 12/01/04</td>
<td>12/01/08</td>
<td>Henry Mutrie and Charles McLachlan</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>3 yr.</td>
<td>20.180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 18</td>
<td>20/01/08 22/11/09</td>
<td>22/05/13</td>
<td>Canada Permanent Mortgage Corporation Caledonia and B.C. Mortgage Company</td>
<td>25,000 50,000</td>
<td>6.5 8.0</td>
<td>2 yr. 5 yr.</td>
<td>26.164 42.749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 20</td>
<td>18/11/09</td>
<td></td>
<td>Charles Fox Todd</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 22</td>
<td>1914 1911</td>
<td>08/10/11</td>
<td>Ninian Hugh Bain</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>3 yr.</td>
<td>33.476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>1902</td>
<td>17/03/03</td>
<td>George I. Wilson</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>3 yr.</td>
<td>16.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>1889</td>
<td>10/09/04</td>
<td>Charles F. Todd</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>5 yr.</td>
<td>16.428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 26</td>
<td>1889 1889</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>196-13-18</td>
<td>1944 1944</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 20</td>
<td>1904 30/08/05</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yorkshire Guarantee and Securities</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>1 yr.</td>
<td>7.217</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>1904 24/08/06</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yorkshire Guarantee and Securities</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>3 yr.</td>
<td>20.430</td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>1904 30/05/07</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yorkshire Guarantee and Securities</td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>1 yr.</td>
<td>19.303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>1904 26/03/12</td>
<td></td>
<td>Henry B. Dalgety</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>3 yr.</td>
<td>36.342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>1904 12/06/12</td>
<td></td>
<td>Vancouver Financial Corporation</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>1904 22/04/13</td>
<td></td>
<td>Vancouver Financial Corporation</td>
<td>2,250</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>1 yr.</td>
<td>40.441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>1904</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 22</td>
<td>1944 1944</td>
<td>01/06/07 30/07/07</td>
<td>Henry Mutrie and Charles McLachlan Hannah McLachlan</td>
<td>32,500 5,000</td>
<td>6.0 8.0</td>
<td>5 yr. 3 yr.</td>
<td>19.435 22.245</td>
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<tr>
<td>23 24</td>
<td>1904 1904</td>
<td>06/01/09 01/06/12</td>
<td>Henry Mutrie and Charles McLachlan</td>
<td>36,000</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>3 yr.</td>
<td>38.177</td>
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</table>
### APPENDIX VI (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Chinese Purchase</th>
<th>Mortgage Date</th>
<th>Mortgagor</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Rate (%)</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>196-13-23</td>
<td>30/10/99</td>
<td>02/05/01</td>
<td>Canada Permanent and Western Canada Mortage</td>
<td>11,000</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>7 yr.</td>
<td>15.256</td>
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<td>01/03/99</td>
<td>23/03/99</td>
<td>Jacob Hunter Todd and C.F. Todd</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>9 yr.</td>
<td>14.428</td>
</tr>
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<td>21/10/92</td>
<td>15/12/99</td>
<td>Charles Fox Todd</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>9 yr.</td>
<td>15.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>04/09/09</td>
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<td>28/03/05</td>
<td>Thomas B. May</td>
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<td>21/11/06</td>
<td>22/11/06</td>
<td>John Bryden and Sir. Charles H. Tupper</td>
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<td>6.5</td>
<td>5 yr.</td>
<td>19.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>14/03/99</td>
<td>13/03/06</td>
<td>Edward Box Wetenhall (Victoria)</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>17.476</td>
</tr>
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<td>17/02/97</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>16/10/09</td>
<td>10/06/10</td>
<td>10/06/10</td>
<td>James Ellison</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>5 yr.</td>
<td>24.404</td>
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<td>01/10/06</td>
<td>04/11/07</td>
<td>Charles Fox Todd</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>5 yr.</td>
<td>21.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>04/07/06</td>
<td>22/06/06</td>
<td>Canada Permanent Mortgage Corporation</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>10 yr.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Chinese Purchase</th>
<th>Mortgage Date</th>
<th>Mortgagor</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Rate (%)</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Reference</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>541-17-1</td>
<td>15/12/06</td>
<td>15/01/07</td>
<td>Charles Fox Todd</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>5 yr.</td>
<td>19.99</td>
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<td>29/04/13</td>
<td>29/04/13</td>
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<td>British Columbia Life Assurance Co.</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>8.0</td>
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<td>42.391</td>
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<td>10/08/05</td>
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<td></td>
<td>John W. Trutch</td>
<td>6,500</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>5 yr.</td>
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<td>21/09/05</td>
<td>15/06/06</td>
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<td>British American Trust Company</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>60 days</td>
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<td>03/07/08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Thomas B. May</td>
<td>6,750</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>4 months</td>
<td>20.312</td>
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<td>25/05/09</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>20/11/02</td>
<td>29/05/03</td>
<td></td>
<td>Canada Permanent &amp; Western Canada Mort.</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>5 yr.</td>
<td>16.230</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/07/07</td>
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<td>George Turner</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>5 yr.</td>
<td>19.407</td>
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<td>19/07/12</td>
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<td>Yorkshire Guarantee and Securities</td>
<td>18,500</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>3 yr.</td>
<td>38.311</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>07/11/04</td>
<td>28/09/04</td>
<td>Confederation Life Assurance</td>
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<td>Confederation Life Assurance</td>
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<td>20.313</td>
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<td>Confederation Life Assurance</td>
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<td>5 yr.</td>
<td>27.419</td>
</tr>
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### APPENDIX VI (Continued)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Chinese Purchase</th>
<th>Mortgage Date</th>
<th>Mortgagor</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Rate (%)</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>541-18-A</td>
<td>15/02/07</td>
<td>15/03/07</td>
<td>Robert Porter</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>5 yr.</td>
<td>20.370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>15/09/08</td>
<td>30/10/08</td>
<td>Albert E. Carter</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>4 months</td>
<td>20.451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>30/10/08</td>
<td>01/03/09</td>
<td>Robert Oakes</td>
<td>2,750</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>25.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>01/04/10</td>
<td>Robert Porter and Sons Ltd.</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>1 yr.</td>
<td>25.735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20/03/12</td>
<td>Robert Porter and Sons Ltd.</td>
<td>14,000</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>5 yr.</td>
<td>26.351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>06/05/14</td>
<td>John Law</td>
<td>65,000</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>3 yr.</td>
<td>36.437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>196-15-25</td>
<td>13/12/99</td>
<td>13.12/99</td>
<td>R.E. Palmer</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>1 yr.</td>
<td>45.132</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


1. 'Location' gives legal description of property in following order: District Lot number - Block number - Lot number.

2. 'Reference' refers to Land Title Office, Charge Book entries. Volume and folio numbers are separated by the period.
### APPENDIX VII

**SAM KEE COMPANY**

**PAYMENTS AND PURCHASES FROM SUN TONG CHONG COMPANY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Sent to Sun Tong Chong</th>
<th>Interest Allowed by Sun Tong Chong</th>
<th>Total Held by Sun Tong Chong</th>
<th>Total Purchases from Sun Tong Chong</th>
<th>Interest Charged by Sun Tong Chong</th>
<th>Total Owing</th>
<th>Balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>T 10,241.36</td>
<td>570.9</td>
<td>10,712.1</td>
<td>9,810.08</td>
<td>9,810.08</td>
<td>902.09</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$ 6,451.83</td>
<td>359.10</td>
<td>6,748.56</td>
<td>6,180.30</td>
<td>6,180.30</td>
<td>586.26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>T 9,361.09</td>
<td>737.25</td>
<td>10,098.34</td>
<td>11,757.98</td>
<td>793.4</td>
<td>12,551.38</td>
<td>2453.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$ 5,991.04</td>
<td>471.68</td>
<td>6,462.72</td>
<td>7,524.48</td>
<td>507.52</td>
<td>8,032.64</td>
<td>1569.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>T 18,462.20</td>
<td>1,204.88</td>
<td>19,667.08</td>
<td>20,896.43</td>
<td>1,623.86</td>
<td>22,520.29</td>
<td>2853.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$ 13,477.26</td>
<td>878.92</td>
<td>14,356.91</td>
<td>15,254.08</td>
<td>1,184.79</td>
<td>16,449.60</td>
<td>2082.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>T 9,932.41</td>
<td>643.17</td>
<td>10,575.59</td>
<td>14,656.44</td>
<td>916.25</td>
<td>15,542.69</td>
<td>4997.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$ 7,945.6</td>
<td>522.40</td>
<td>8,460.00</td>
<td>11,724.80</td>
<td>732.80</td>
<td>12,457.60</td>
<td>3995.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>T 13,650.16</td>
<td>1,093.51</td>
<td>14,743.69</td>
<td>22,725.0</td>
<td>1,332.86</td>
<td>24,057.87</td>
<td>9314.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$ 10,783.50</td>
<td>863.47</td>
<td>11,646.97</td>
<td>17,952.75</td>
<td>1,052.28</td>
<td>19,005.03</td>
<td>7358.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


APENDIX VIII

SAM KEE COMPANY

SALT HERRING EXPORTS TO CHINA

1904 - 1915

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Exports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1904 - 1905</td>
<td>573.29 tons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905-1906</td>
<td>321.55 tons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906-1907</td>
<td>587.59 tons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908 - 1909</td>
<td>638 tons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910 - 1911</td>
<td>1,005.8 tons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912 - 1913</td>
<td>1,649.2 tons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>1,544.25 tons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## APPENDIX IX

### SAM KEE COMPANY

### SAWMILL CONTRACT LABOUR ACCOUNTS, 1906

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Men</th>
<th>Wages</th>
<th>Expenses: Food &amp; Supplies</th>
<th>Expenses as Percentage of Wages</th>
<th>Net Wages Received</th>
<th>Net wages as Percentage of total wage</th>
<th>Average Wage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crew A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>$371.95</td>
<td>$57.05</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>$314.90</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>$19.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>288.05</td>
<td>81.85</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>206.20</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>14.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>241.43</td>
<td>43.60</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>197.83</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>21.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>207.50</td>
<td>48.60</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>158.90</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>15.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>401.70</td>
<td>86.10</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>315.60</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>28.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crew B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>1493.45</td>
<td>390.95</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1102.24</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>15.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug.</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>2154.19</td>
<td>563.76</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1590.43</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>16.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept.</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>1935.90</td>
<td>602.90</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1333.00</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>18.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct.</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>2025.95</td>
<td>648.00</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1377.95</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>23.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>1978.75</td>
<td>542.50</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1436.25</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>23.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec.</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>1975.40</td>
<td>590.40</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1385.00</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>21.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 1907</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>1312.37</td>
<td>498.00</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>814.37</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>14.28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: City of Vancouver Archives, Add. MSS 571, Sam Kee Papers, vol. 11, file 3 [Payroll], 1906-1907.