

YIP SANG

Pioneer Merchant

Extends Greetings to British Columbia



YIP SANG, 80 yesterday, who is the host at a series of ceremonies in honor of his birthday.

YIP SANG, pioneer railway contractor and merchant of Vancouver, celebrated the 80th anniversary of his birthday yesterday.

Mr. Sang was host to a large gathering of real old-timers, many of whom were, like himself, directly connected with the construction of the Coast section of the Canadian Pacific Railway from Kamloops to Port Moody; the Onderdonk contract as it is still known to the old-timers.

Leaving China forty-five years ago Yip Sang reached San Francisco after nearly two months' voyage on a sailing ship. From the Golden Gate he came north to Victoria and across to New Westminster, which was the principal settlement on the mainland then.

When Yip Sang sailed from home it was his intention to engage as a merchant in the New World. However, shortly after he reached here he became superintendent for Kwong On Wo Company, Chinese labor contractors.

Often Yip Sang had more than 3000 Chinese laborers under his supervision at various points in the Fraser and Thompson valleys on the grading of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

He remained with this work until the railway was carried through to Port Moody.

About 38 years ago, Yip Sang started as a merchant in Vancouver under the name of the Wing Sang Company. Since 1889 this firm has been located at 51 Pender Street East, or Dupont Street, as it was known in the pioneer days.

After construction days, Yip Sang became agent for the Canadian Pacific Railway, handling passenger and freight business in the Chinese community, which grew as Vancouver expanded.

Some four or five times he has returned to his home land. His first return trip was made 34 years ago when he sailed on the return voyage of the Empress of India after it made its maiden trip from the Old Country to the Pacific Coast.

The last time Yip Sang crossed was in the spring of 1914, returning to Vancouver shortly before the outbreak of the war.

One amusing incident stands out in connection with Yip Sang's first voyage from China to the New World. After leaving his home near Canton he sailed from Hong Kong on board a sailing ship bound for San Francisco.

Almost immediately after leaving port a strong gale arose, which the ship battled for nearly a week. At the end of a week lights of a city were sighted and Yip Sang thought to himself that it had been a remarkably fast trip. Proceeding to the upper deck to view what he thought was the city of San Francisco, Yip Sang was astounded to discover the vessel had come to anchor again in Hong Kong harbor.

When the ship finally got away from the Far East, it took from 50 to 60 days to reach San Francisco.

The three oldest sons are now interested in the Wing Sang Company. Yip Mow, the eldest, was born in Canton, while the other two, George Yip Shuen and Yip Him, are natives of Vancouver.

George Shuen is a graduate of McGill University, Montreal, in civil engineering, while another son, Yip Ghim, is taking his fifth year as a medical student at Queen's College, Kingston.

Yip Quine, a younger son, who ranked first among city students when he matriculated last June, is now attending the University of British Columbia.

A daughter of Yip Sang has had also a distinguished educational career. Miss Susan Yip graduated from Columbia University with an M.A. degree. She is now teaching in Canton University.

Yip Sang was the first man to introduce salted fish from British Columbia to the Chinese market. At first he arranged to ship across small shipments of salted herring, salmon and other fish.

These products found so much favor among the Chinese that the business of shipping salted fish from this province to China has grown to thousands of tons annually.

From his forefathers Yip Sang has inherited a large landed estate about 80 miles from Canton. The estate comprises about 1000 acres planted with orange, pear and other fruit trees. A large portion also is rice fields.



Headquarters of the Chinese Benevolent Association, which does valuable work in caring for distressed countrymen.

FOUNDED about twenty-five years ago the Chinese Benevolent Association has grown and prospered until today it is a leading organization in the Chinese community of Vancouver.

The founder of this organization is Mr. Yip Sang, who also became its first president and who for many years afterwards held this office. Today his son, Mr. Yip Mow, is the president, being elected to this office a short time ago.

When it was first formed the Chinese Benevolent Association had a membership of about 80, which has grown to approximately 6000. Enrollment in the organization is not confined to any one class but is open to all Chinese in the district. There is a small membership fee on joining and a yearly request made for donations to carry on its work.

The Chinese Benevolent Association not only leads in charitable work among the Chinese but is also ready to lend assistance to charity work generally in the entire city.

For many years it maintained an old people's home, and when the building which housed this institution was condemned a short time ago, the inmates were removed to the home of the Mission Sisters of Immaculate Conception, Campbell Avenue. At present there are about eight aged Chinese being taken care of at that home.

Next year, according to Mr. Yip Mow, it is hoped to erect a new building for the old people's home, and also include a Chinese hospital.

Those who want to return to China are aided by the association if they have relations in the old land to whom they can go.

In addition to looking after the sick and aged the association also assists those Chinese who suffer from unemployment and hard times. In this respect the year 1915 was one in which the association was called upon to render considerable aid owing to general depression in business which followed the outbreak of the war. More than 200 Chinese were assisted that year by the association.

Headquarters of the Chinese Benevolent Association are located at 108 Pender Street East, where a new building of four stories was erected in 1909. The third floor is occupied by the association, while the top contains the Chinese Merchants' Association and the second floor the Chinese Night School. This school was founded by the association some 10 years ago for the benefit of Chinese who wanted to study both their own language and English. An average of about 80 students attend the institution.

In addition to Mr. Yip Mow as president, the following are the chief officers of the association: Vice presidents, Mr. Chong Lee and Mr. Kong Dong Wai; secretaries, Mr. Tsao Mow Shum and Mr. Wong Ow; treasurer, Mr. Lim Jim, and chairmen, Mr. Y. P. Lew and Mr. Chew Woo.



Premises of Wing Sang Co. decorated in honor of the birthday of Yip Sang.

