

Curator's Choice

A WOMAN'S TUNIC in the Chinese style with ornamental braid is among the diverse items of clothing in the Minnesota Historical Society's collections. Custom made, it boasts a body of colorful brocade and sleeves of brown satin.

David Yep donated the jacket to the Society in 1984, after researchers interviewed members of the state's Chinese American community for *They Chose Minnesota: A Survey of the State's Ethnic Groups* (MHS Press, 1981). Yep was involved in a family business established in the early 1950s, the Sui Yep Cafe on St. Paul's Payne Avenue.

FRONT COVER: MOY HEE, an immigrant from China's Guangdong Province, made Minnesota his home in 1901 after assisting with a family business in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. His wife Judith Moy (Wong Shee) joined him in 1904. Their photograph was affixed to an important certificate of identity issued before they returned to China for a visit in 1917. Because Moy was a merchant, they were permitted to travel and reenter the United States despite the country's Chinese exclusion laws.

Accompanying the portrait is a hand-painted Chinese porcelain plate made for export in the early part of the twentieth century, when China, Chinese people, and Chinese goods attracted much attention in the United States.

By 1920 at least 10 Chinese restaurants flourished in Minneapolis and 6 each in Duluth and St. Paul—including two owned by Moy Hee—suggesting the growing cultural presence of Chinese immigrants around the state.

The thank-you letter written in cursive Chinese characters contains good wishes for an older brother. It is associated with Duluth's Arrowhead Cafeteria, operated by the Huie family on West Superior Street from at least the mid-1930s to the mid-1940s.

For more on Moy Hee and Judith Moy, see the article beginning on page 162. *Photo by Peter Latner/MHS; portrait courtesy National Archives and Records Administration, Seattle; plate and letter in MHS collections. Digital compositing by Lois Stanfield, LightSource Images.*



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