

Mirrored Identities



THE MOYS OF

OBJECTS CAN TELL US many things if we know how to “read” them. An 1890s autograph quilt, for example, documents the materials, designs, and embroidery techniques common in its time. Beyond these tangibles, the quiltmakers’ embroidered signatures can send the researcher on a more intriguing—and challenging—journey to learn more about the lives of individuals who would otherwise remain anonymous.

I began such a journey in 1992, when a silver loving cup was brought to my attention while I was helping move the Minnesota Historical Society’s three-dimensional collections to the new Minnesota History Center in St. Paul. I was surprised to learn

SHERRI GEBERT FULLER



ST. PAUL

Judith Moy and Moy Hee, 1917, from their application for permission to reenter the United States; trophy (left) presented to Moy Hee in 1921.

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from the object, embellished with Chinese calligraphy on one side and English text on the other, that a “Chinese Public School” had existed in the St. Paul-Minneapolis area in 1921. A few days later, while assisting a researcher, I found the business card of Moy Hee, the man to whom the loving cup had been presented. This synchronicity—two items coming to my attention within so short a time—motivated me to find out more about Moy Hee and St. Paul’s early Chinese American community.

In 1994 I started my research journey by looking at acquisition records associated with the loving cup. Along with four family photographs, it had been donated to the Society by Judith Moy in 1923. Engravings

ON NAMES

In traditional Chinese practice, the family name precedes the given name, which usually has two elements. Women do not take their husband’s name upon marriage.

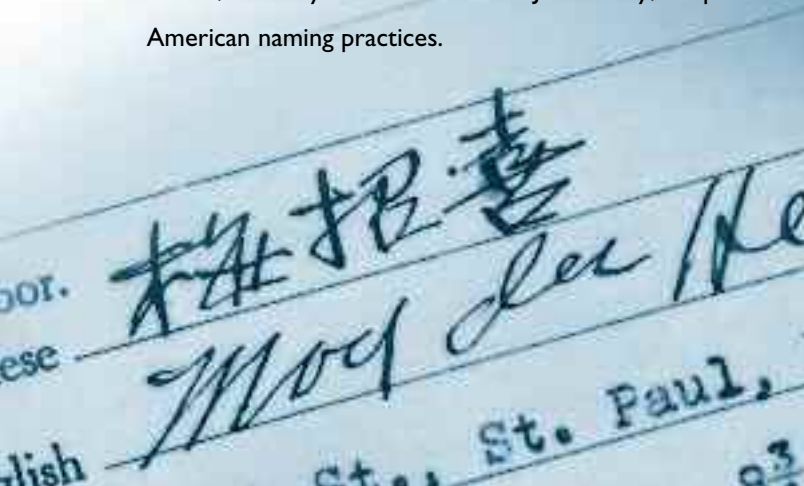
In the United States, individuals interpreted these conventions in individual ways—at least for American consumption. Many immigrants, like Moy Hee, kept their traditional names, perhaps dropping one element. Others, like Hee’s cousin Moy S. James, retained the traditional order but took an American first name. Still others, like Moy Hee’s second wife Judith Moy, adopted American naming practices.

on the trophy and a handwritten note on the business card led me to Moy Hee’s obituary and related newspaper articles. I continued to search for other resources as time permitted. Fellow staff members sent me book titles, articles, and newspaper clippings that served as reminders that the information I was looking for was out there—finding it would just require patient sleuthing.

Over the past six years, I have delved into church and school records, gleaned city directories, paged through theater programs, listened to oral histories, conducted interviews with members of the Chinese American community, read microfilmed probate records at the Ramsey County Courthouse, and, with the help of independent scholar Peggy Christoff, located Moy Hee’s records in the Chinese exclusion files at the National Archives regional offices in Chicago and Seattle. From these strands of information emerged the story of a successful Chinese American businessman and his family who lived in St. Paul from 1901 to 1921.

MOY JU HEE WAS BORN in 1865 in Gum Ping village in the Taishan area of Guangdong Province. It is estimated that 60 percent of the Chinese immigrants in the United States before World War II emigrated from this area in southern China, where food production could not support the population. Moy’s family purportedly owned large tracts of land, and his mother, Jun Shee, had bound feet, a common sign of wealth in Chinese society at that time. Because of his family’s economic status, Moy likely received an education in Confucianism, which emphasized moral rather than utilitarian training. Such teaching encouraged introspection, emulation of virtuous leaders, and the ability to remain balanced in the face of adversity. His education would serve him well when, in 1886, he decided to see what business opportunities awaited him in the United States.¹

Leaving behind his widowed mother, his wife, Hom Shee, and daughter, Moy Foon Hai, 21-year-old Moy sailed west to San Francisco, where he managed Hong Yen Hong, a Chinese drug store. He soon ventured east to work with relatives in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, where a small population of Chinese had established a number of laundries, restaurants, and stores. Moy Hee first assisted his uncle at Hop Chong and Company and later became a partner in the Mee Lee Yuen Company,





which specialized in teas and Chinese and Japanese goods. William Dichman, mayor of Oshkosh from 1891 to 1892, later told immigration officials that “during all the time Moy Hee was a resident of the city of Oshkosh, he conducted himself in a straightforward and honest manner, becoming a Chinese gentleman. . . . He was energetic and attentive to his business, that of a Chinese merchant.”²

In 1882, four years before Moy arrived in Oshkosh, the United States had passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, the first federal law to bar immigration on the basis of race and class. Nativist and political rhetoric on the West Coast, where Chinese settlers made up 10 percent of the California population, fueled this law. With the onset of a poor economy in 1873, Chinese laborers were blamed for unemployment, both locally and nationally. Rather than focusing on the roots of economic upheaval and how to resolve the problems, much of the country became caught up in a wave of Sinophobic emotion—even though Chinese immigrants represented only .002 percent of the U. S. population in 1880.³

Moy Hee’s mother, her bound feet resting on the floral carpet, and his father, with unidentified child, undated studio portraits from Canton

The exclusion law prohibited skilled and unskilled Chinese laborers from entering the United States for ten years. Those laborers already in the country were allowed to remain but would not be readmitted if they left. Exempt from this law were teachers, students, merchants, government officials, and travelers—individuals such as Moy who could facilitate trade relations with China.⁴



Anti-Chinese cartoon from *The Wasp*, a San Francisco weekly known for social and political satire, November 11, 1881

Section 14 of the exclusion act also prevented naturalization of all Chinese immigrants residing in the United States. This not only kept them from participating in politics but severely restricted their ability to acculturate and be accepted into mainstream America.⁵ Within these prohibitive parameters, individuals

like Moy Hee made every effort to adapt to the United States to demonstrate their ability to be good “Americans.”

Despite a marked decrease in the Chinese population on the West Coast between 1882 and 1891, the “Yellow Peril” question continued its impact upon the political sphere. Debate raged in the 52nd Congress, where Charles Felton of California stated that “races so dissimilar as the white and Asiatic could not exist together. One or the other must survive. This is the law of Nature.”⁶

Fueled by this sentiment, Congress in 1892 called for the renewal of the exclusion act and greater resources to implement it. The amended Geary Act, “An Act to Prohibit the Coming of Chinese Persons Into the United States,” made permanent the exclusion of all Chinese laborers. Those already living in the United States were now required to carry a certificate of residence with them at all times or risk immediate arrest and possible deportation.

To enforce the Geary Act, a new federal office was created in the Treasury Department—the Superintendent of Immigration (today’s Immigration and Naturalization Service). This office’s “Chinese inspectors” were charged with the responsibility of determining whether individuals had the right to immigrate or return to the United States.⁷ These developments would directly affect Moy Hee and his family for the rest of their lives.

Chinese inspectors, who often got their jobs through patronage, were frequently anti-Chinese. Many used their positions for political gain. Assigned to ports of entry and metropolitan areas throughout the United States, including Minneapolis, they often lacked any kind of training to enforce the law consistently and fairly. This was especially detrimental, since the inspectors’ public attitudes and actions often set the tone for the rest of country.⁸

Chinese exclusion files now in the National Archives provide excellent examples of just how much paperwork, redundancy, and bureaucracy quickly evolved to enforce the law. Exempt classes, including merchants such as Moy Hee, were still allowed to travel to and from China but had to work within a restrictive system. Merchants were required to provide information about their business and its value, to answer question after question about their families in China and the United States, and to provide testimonies from two “witnesses

other than Chinese” who were familiar with their business. This paperwork had to be completed for each trip, and answers were often compared to previous application forms. Travel plans could be delayed or reentry denied if an inspector was not satisfied with the applicant’s answers.⁹

A successful application gained the resident immigrant a certificate of identity, the only means to gain reentry into the United States. Between 1894 and 1921, Moy’s merchant status allowed him to make five trips: four return trips to China and a business trip to Mexico. All of these journeys required the same amount of paperwork and questioning, despite Moy’s local and national reputation as a leader and astute businessman.¹⁰

For example, in early 1920 he initiated paperwork to travel to Mexico with nephew Charley Toy, a Milwaukee businessman, to stake out a potential investment. A flurry of correspondence took place between Chinese inspectors in Minnesota and Texas after Moy submitted what appeared to be a simple request. He planned to return to the United States through the border city of Calexico, California, the same city from which he would depart for Mexico. The exclusion law, however, stated that Chinese could leave the U.S. from any location but could only return through one of 12 designated ports of entry. Moy would have to travel from Mexico by water to San Diego, the nearest designated port.¹¹

Moy then asked his lawyer, Joel Mark Dickey, for help, and Dickey turned to Washington, D.C., for support. On March 30, 1920, immigration official Louis F. Post wrote to one of Minnesota’s U.S. senators, Frank B. Kellogg, “In reply to your letter. . . I beg to state that the Department has this day issued instructions whereby the departure and re-entry of Moy Hee via Calexico, Cal., will be allowed, provided his status as a merchant has been satisfactorily established, as set forth in Mr. Dickey’s letter to you.” After four months of correspondence, a May 26, 1920, letter confirmed that Moy Hee successfully returned through Calexico, a rare triumph over the bureaucracy.¹²

MOY’S VISITS TO CHINA combined family and business matters. While living in Oshkosh, he returned to China in 1894 and 1896 for extended visits. His family in Gum Ping village occupied a brick house consisting of one parlor, two sleeping rooms, one kitchen, and a hall. In addition to Moy Foon Hai, born before he first left for America, Moy eventually had four other children: two girls, Moy Quai Fong and Moy Son Woon, and two boys, Moy Hong Yik and Moy Tai Heung, who seem to have been born during and after these trips to China. Or, perhaps, they were not. The restrictions in the exclusion act led some merchants to claim more immediate family members than they actually had in order to create immigration slots for children of friends and family in China who would not otherwise



Paperwork for Moy Hee’s second return trip to China, 1896

be allowed into the U.S. While there is no conclusive evidence, events of later years hint that one or both of Moy Hee's boys were "paper sons."¹³

According to exclusion-file records, Moy's wife, Hom Shee, died in 1896, shortly after the birth of their youngest son, Moy Tai Heung. Moy's mother soon arranged for her 31-year-old son to marry Wong Shee from Canton province, a merchant's daughter with natural feet. After a traditional Chinese wedding on March 3, 1897, Moy Hee and Wong Shee remained in Canton for a short period before returning to Moy's village.

In 1898 Moy boarded a steamship with his new wife, second daughter, Moy Quai Fong, and oldest son, Moy Hong Yik, en route to the United States. Unaware of new requirements in the Geary Act, however, he lacked the proper paperwork from the American consul in China for his family to enter the U.S. Materials in his exclusion files reflect Moy Hee's attempts to round up support. For example, a "witness report" from a friend, Ole Oleson of Oshkosh, states: "Moy Hee is a good and respected citizen of this State and being so well and favorably known among the best citizens of our city, I would consider it a grievous wrong and heart-breaking hardship if the law of our country should tear this family asunder, to deprive these children of the benefits of a common school education, and to bar their return to their home here in Oshkosh."¹⁴

Bureaucracy prevailed, however, and Moy's family was rejected at Port Townsend, Washington, on August 15, 1898, after having traveled for more than 30 days in hopes of making Oshkosh their new home. Not until 1904 did Moy's wife join him in the United States. His plans to bring Moy Quai Fong and Moy Hong Yik that same year fell through; Quai Fong died shortly before, and the boy stayed in China.¹⁵

In 1901 Moy Hee moved from Oshkosh to St. Paul to manage Hui Xian Low (Gathering of Immortals Building), advertised as a "high-class Chinese Chop House," at 439 Jackson Street. The business was likely a



Moy Hee's second daughter,
Moy Quai Fong, 1904

collaboration with the Hum Gin family who had recently relocated to St. Paul from Duluth. Partnerships with friends and family served as important networks for Chinese immigrants, since job opportunities were limited. Such partnerships also helped raise capital for family-owned businesses, thus diminishing the need to rely on loans from Chinese associations located on the East and West Coasts of the United States.¹⁶

According to an advertisement in St. Paul's *Northwest Magazine*, the restaurant offered a "palatable YAO A MAN or some toothsome CHAW MIN" along with "first-class Chinese Merchandise of all descriptions and the Choicest Teas of direct importation." It appeared that

Moy Hee was especially interested in luring theater attendees and guests at the Hotel Ryan, directly across the street from the restaurant, for he advertised frequently in local periodicals and brochures.¹⁷

In St. Paul, Moy Hee had discovered a small but growing Chinese community in the area extending from St. Peter to Sibley and Third to Seventh Streets. A few Chinese had settled in St. Paul as early as the 1870s, but most migrated later from the West Coast to escape discrimination, unfair taxes, and violence. Xenophobic attitudes severely restricted employment opportunities for Chinese throughout the United States, and Minnesota was no exception. By 1900 there were approximately 52 Chinese living in the St. Paul-Minneapolis area, all working in Chinese laundries, restaurants, or stores.¹⁸

In 1902 Moy Hee established a retail shop in St. Paul, Wing Wah Chong Merchandise Company, at 191 Eighth Street. Eight partners, all Moys, provided capital to start the new venture. Moy Hee initially invested \$5,000, while the others contributed between \$1,000 and \$1,500 each. Moy Hee was responsible for purchasing merchandise, while his cousin, Moy S. James, also a recent transplant from Oshkosh, managed the store. The shop's location and partners changed several times in the next two decades. By 1917 Moy

Hee had nine partners, one of them from Hibbing and one from China. Four full-time employees, likely family members—Yip Wei Yik, Moy Kee Gat, Moy Fung Gat, and Moy Guy Chong—assisted him with bookkeeping and sales. Each was paid a monthly salary of \$40.¹⁹

The store's merchandise during its early years is not known, but 1921 Ramsey County probate records provide a picture of what was likely available under Moy's management. Wing Wah Chong specialized in silks, embroidered goods, rice, pottery, canned goods, groceries, and toys. To meet the needs of Chinese laundries, it carried ironing pads and bottles of Mrs. Stewart's bluing. By 1921 the store housed 247 jars of Chinese drugs (herbs) along with a wide variety of teas. A sampling of foods included 19 cans of sour bamboo, 5 jars of Chinese cheese, 35 cans of "cucumber bitter melon," 25 pounds of imported dried noodles, 40 pounds of Chinese dried vegetables, 2 cases of lily root, and 100 pounds each of thick and thin soy sauce.²⁰

During an interview for his fourth return trip to China, Moy stated that his store made a profit of \$17,000 in 1916. Considering that the Twin Cities Chinese population was approximately 300 by 1920, it is conceivable that Wing Wah Chong also provided goods to restaurants, stores, and laundries outside of the metropolitan area.²¹ Using knowledge and experience gained from his work at Mee Lee Yuen in Oshkosh, Moy Hee likely prospered by supplying businesses throughout the region.

Besides providing local Chinese with goods from home, Wing Wah Chong may also have served as a gathering place where men could share news or get assistance with letter writing and translations. As historian Ronald Takaki pointed out in *Strangers from a Different Shore*, "A uniquely Chinese-American institution, the store was a center of life in the Chinese community. . . . There they escaped from the strangeness and fierceness of their everyday world."²²

In addition to starting his own retail shop, Moy established Kwong Tung and Low Co. (Guangdong [Province] Building and Co.), a restaurant at 373 Robert Street in 1903. He would move his eatery one more time before finding his most opportune location at 413 Robert Street in 1908. A Star Theatre program from that same year listed his restaurant hours as 11:00 A.M. to 3:00 A.M., and a 1909 *St. Paul Shopping Guide* advertisement reminded readers that "Visitors should

not fail to see this beautiful place, the most elegant in the Northwest."²³

Moy also relied on partners to establish Kwong Tung Low. While no records were found to verify the names of his early partners, an August 10, 1918, interview in his exclusion files noted that Moy Yin, Moy Bing, and his son Moy Hong Yik each held a \$1,000 share in the restaurant in addition to Moy Hee's \$7,000 investment.²⁴

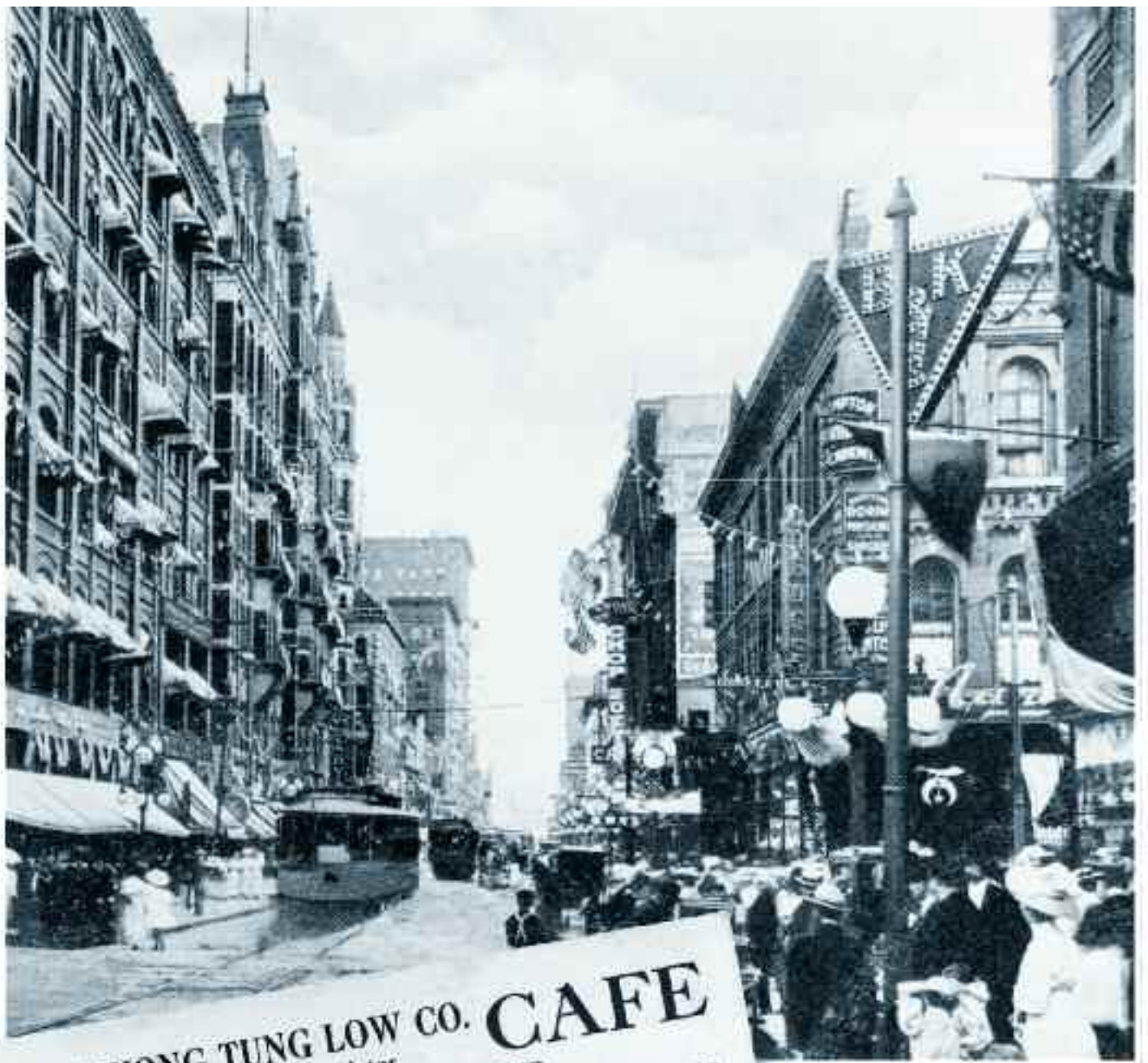
Shortly after Kwong Tung Low was up and running, Moy established another restaurant at 255 First Avenue in Minneapolis. Shanghai Low (Shanghai Building) was managed by his cousin Moy S. James and, according to a 1904 *Minneapolis Journal* article, was a "first-class Chinese restaurant, catering only to the best class of patronage and run strictly on business principles."²⁵

The decor of Moy's restaurants was similar to other Chinese eateries found in St. Paul and Minneapolis at the time. Their interiors were filled with elaborate mirrors, teakwood tables with marble tops, mahogany chairs, embroidered panels, Chinese carved arch partitions, and glass chandeliers.²⁶ These ornate and colorful interiors, an early marketing tool, attracted visitors looking for an "exotic" experience, a word often used by newspapers to describe Chinese culture and food.

In 1906 Moy Hee helped his cousin Moy James plan a Chinese New Year's celebration at Shanghai Low, where approximately 100 countrymen from throughout the Midwest joined in the festivities, complete with fireworks. A delightful description of the menu appeared in the January 21, 1906, issue of the *Minneapolis Journal*:

The menu . . . contains everything which the Mongolian heart can wish. The feast will begin with tea and li chee nuts. After this will come the soups. . . . the [whole] fish, Hen San Gui. . . . then Shue Bec Gap—baked young pigeon. . . . [and] Quong We Hae. This delicacy is made from the bones of chicken and other birds ground fine and made into sort of a paste. . . . While the banqueters are wielding their chop sticks an orchestra will render a few of the Chinese classics. . . . The majority of the Chinamen in town still have their native garb and about half have retained their cues [*sic*].

Photographs in Moy Hee's exclusion files show that he had adapted to western-style garb and hair as early as 1896.²⁷



KWONG TUNG LOW CO. CAFE
 MOY HEE, Proprietor
 413 ROBERT STREET

CHINESE AND AMERICAN STYLE

IT IS the aim of the management to maintain a cuisine and service in keeping with its appointments. All the popular Mandchou and American Dishes and Delicacies served in the most appetizing way. Polite and courteous treatment is assured to all visitors. Arrangements for private parties may be had with the management.

WE OPEN 10:00 A. M.
 CLOSE 1:00 A. M.

S. W. Cedar 455
 T. 5. 203

Kwong Tung Low's "Chop Suey" sign beckoned shoppers along bustling Robert Street (right side), about 1910. A promotional blotter outlined the cafe's appeal.

Moy's turn-of-the-century restaurants were part of a significant increase in the number of Chinese eateries across the country at the time. One individual who indirectly influenced this growth was Chinese envoy Li Hung Chang, who traveled to New York City in 1896 in hopes of improving relations between China and the United States. Reports of Li's visit piqued the curiosity of many New Yorkers and, as a result, thousands of people ventured to Chinatown for the first time to experience "exotic Chinese culture." Restaurant owners took advantage of this opportunity and advertised chop suey, a meal made by Li's personal chefs during his visit, as the envoy's favorite dish. As a result, chop suey became a familiar term to New Yorkers and helped spur the development of the Chinese American restaurant industry.²⁸

IN 1904, AFTER LIVING IN ST. PAUL for three years, Moy again visited China. This time he used his merchant status to secure certificates of identity for both himself and his wife, Wong Shee. After returning to Vancouver, they traveled east by rail through Canada and entered the United States through Portal, North Dakota.²⁹ Wong Shee, who adopted the name Judith Moy, quickly became an integral player in Moy Hee's business and social interactions.

Judith Moy joined St. Paul's very small circle of merchants' wives including Bessie Moy (married to Moy Hee's cousin and partner Moy S. James) and Mrs. Hum Gin (married to another business partner). The relationship among these women likely was an important means of sharing information and ideas as they adjusted to their new lives. Had they remained in China, Confucian ideals and patriarchal expectations would have narrowly defined their roles and responsibilities. Life in the United States presented new opportunities, improved status, and more independence.

Forging a new life in a strange country could not have been easy for these women. According to a 1949 report to Minnesota Governor Luther W. Youngdahl, "Over thirty-five years ago a Chinese restaurateur brought his wife [to First Baptist Church on Wacouta Street] and asked that someone instruct her in the Bible and American social customs. Miss Alice Northrup was selected and she found her pupil willing and grateful." Church members established a Chinese Bible class in 1912, where teachers worked on a one-to-one basis with students. A photograph of this class from

about 1914 shows Judith Moy in the center next to Alice Northrup, leading one to presume that it was Moy Hee who first requested help for his wife. The class continued with 30 members, including Bessie Moy and Mrs. Hum Gin, until 1917. It was here that Judith learned to speak and write in English.³⁰

Female instructors in Bible classes often served as Chinese women's first role models for American social etiquette and dress. Many Chinese women in the

Friends Judith Moy (center), Bessie Moy, and Mrs. Hum Gin, 1920s



United States converted to Christianity out of appreciation, since they lived in predominantly male communities. According to author Victoria Wong,

In many ways Christianity drew Chinese women into Western society, legitimizing their community involvement. . . . In becoming active in their communities, the women broke from Chinese tradition which idealized women as cloistered, uneducated, and dependent on their families and husbands. The Christian emphasis on women's organizations brought Chinese American women together for the first time in the context of gender, encouraging them to develop a stronger gender-based identity. It implied that they, as women, could contribute to social change in their communities.³¹

Judith became a member of First Baptist Church in 1914. In April 1917 the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* reported approvingly that she was "one of the prominent members of the Bible class.

. . . She has the distinction of being the only Chinese woman in St. Paul who is a member of any church of the Christian faith." Her ability to write and speak English liberated her from the secluded life often experienced by merchants' wives in Minnesota in the early-twentieth century.³²

Judith may also have benefited from the experiences of Liang May Seen, the first Chinese woman to settle in Minneapolis in 1892. Married to businessman Woo Yee Sing, Liang managed her own Minneapolis curio shop and was an important role model for Chinese women in the Twin Cities until her death in 1946. Her family often took the trolley east to St. Paul for Sunday afternoon visits with the Moys.³³

Hee and Judith lived on the fourth floor above the 413 Robert Street restaurant. Their apartment decor was a balanced juxtaposition of eastern and western design including leather chairs, a cigar stand, four inlaid teak chairs with marble insets, and four inlaid teak flower stands. The space was also adorned with a large picture of the last emperor of China, as well as several small pictures and framed photographs on the wall.³⁴

While the Moys did not have any children together, they did not live alone. Census records from 1920 show that they shared their apartment with six adult males and one adult female. Moy Hee was listed as the head of household in the rented building, an employer, and the proprietor of a chop suey restaurant. All of the other men were employed at Wing Wah Chong or Kwong Tung Low and Company. Of the seven lodgers, only one had been born in the United States; the rest had immigrated from China, including his two sons

Hong Yik and Tai Heung and his daughter-in-law Gun Shee.³⁵



Judith Moy (center, above standing child), her teacher, Alice Northrup (at Moy's right), and other members of First Baptist Church's Chinese Bible class, about 1914

HAVING ESTABLISHED a retail shop and two restaurants within a few years of his arrival in the Twin Cities, Moy Hee was seen as an important business leader, both within and outside of the Chinese community. In the U.S., merchants commonly assumed leadership roles traditionally held by Chinese gentry and scholar-officials, who tended not to emigrate because China still

offered them opportunities for upward mobility.³⁶ Thus, Moy's education, wealth, and proficiency in two languages worked to his advantage.

Despite these advantages and the respect they brought, Moy also knew that his business ventures and

transnational family ties depended on his ability to use the legal and social tools available to him. Dinners that he held for St. Paul and Ramsey County officials, including Joel Dickey, his lawyer, reflect his efforts to network with those who could best advise him. Moy understood that his success in the United States depended on his resourcefulness to adapt to and manage opportunities. Poised between the expectations of two countries, Moy Hee discovered what it meant to be Chinese American.³⁷

Moy quickly won favor with the St. Paul and Minneapolis newspapers. Articles featuring him were always complimentary, in contrast to the usual depiction of Chinese laborers as “heathen,” “almond-eyed,” and “celestials.” As author Sucheng Chan noted, “Throughout the nineteenth century, newspaper reporters repeatedly praised the educated urbanity of Chinese merchants, often calling them gentlemen—in sharp contrast to the extremely derogatory manner in which they depicted Chinese laborers. Undergirding this class prejudice was the fact that one of the chief concerns of U.S. foreign policy during this period was expanding trade with China.”³⁸

Articles about Moy Hee began to appear in local newspapers as early as 1902 when the *Minneapolis Journal* described him as enjoying the “unique distinction of being a thirty-second degree Mason, capable of handing any white man who enters his place high signs which mean much to some and are absolutely as unintelligible as ‘Chinese’ to others.” The article enthusiastically called him a “very bright and intelligent representative of his race . . . [who has] neglected no opportunity to improve his mind.”³⁹



First-person accounts from Moy’s contemporaries in the Chinese American community are harder to come by. After many attempts to track down Moy descendants in the 1990s, only one individual was found who recalled Moy Hee. Howard Woo (son of Liang May Seen and Woo Ye Sing of Minneapolis) remembered his family taking the trolley from downtown Minneapolis to visit Moy Hee on the weekends in the 1910s. He recalled that Moy “took everything seriously and was from the old school of thought. He was a big man in Chinese circles and a very prominent family in St. Paul. He had long fingernails, which was a sign of aristocrats, the significance being that he wasn’t a laborer.”⁴⁰

In addition to his business and social entertaining, Moy Hee also took time to host Chinese diplomats who traveled to Minnesota. In August 1911 Moy Bach Hin, the Chinese consul at Portland, Oregon, and Quan Kai, special commissioner for the viceroy of Canton, were touring the country to make plans for founding a national library in Canton. They stopped in St. Paul to look at the state law and historical society libraries. Moy Hee’s business card in the Minnesota Historical Society’s collections, that seemingly ephemeral object that helped launch this research journey, records this visit with its handwritten notation: “August 9, 1911 with Canton Commission.” The official guests were invited to dine with a number of St. Paul Chinese at a chop suey restaurant—likely Moy S. James’s Joy Ying Low at 440 Wabasha Street.⁴¹

Moy Hee also attended to family matters. In January 1906 he initiated paperwork to bring over his two sons, Moy Hong Yik, about 19 years old, and ten-year-old Moy Tai Heung. The two boys were allowed to enter the country as minors of a “bona fide domiciled” merchant under an exception made to the exclusion law by the U.S. Supreme Court. His sons finally arrived in St. Paul in December 1907.⁴²

Once there, Hong Yik and Tai Heung received private instruction from a “lady teacher, who was paid \$7 per week for several months.” The oldest son then helped out with restaurant work, and Tai Heung attended public school. He did not live with his father but with a Mr. Watts who was paid \$30 per month for board and washing. It is not known why Tai Heung only met with his family on Sundays. Perhaps he was a “paper son,” or perhaps Moy Hee thought that the boy would benefit from immersion in American living. By about 1909 Heung was enrolled at Washington School

at Eighth and Olive Streets in St. Paul. His teachers called him Henry and described him as “industrious, mannerly, and bright.”

In the fall of 1910 his teacher, Ella C. O’Brien, sent him to the school nurse to check the visibly swollen glands in his neck. Although his illness was deemed not contagious, Tai Heung stopped attending school in hopes of improving his health. He was unsuccessfully treated in St. Paul, Milwaukee, and New Richmond, Wisconsin. Finally, Moy Hee asked his lawyer to prepare papers for his son’s return to China, where he might find a lasting cure. Since Moy Hee wanted Hong Yik to accompany his younger brother, he asked lawyer Dickey how to proceed. Dickey, in turn, asked Charles Seaman, the Chinese inspector for Minneapolis, what kind of papers Hong Yik needed to gain readmission to the United States.

Seaman informed Dickey that the exclusion law would allow Hong Yik to accompany his brother to China but not to return to the United States. At 26, he was “no longer a minor, and therefore dependent upon his individual employment as to the legal status under the Chinese exclusion laws. . . . [He] is undoubtedly a laborer under the law. . . . and I therefore know of no papers . . . which would permit his re-entry to the United States.” Another travel companion, Moy Wing Art, likely a relative, was found to accompany Tai Heung to China.

AS THE TWIN CITIES’ CHINESE POPULATION grew to approximately 150 by the year 1910, tong members sought to establish a presence in Minnesota. Tong were one branch of a complex hierarchical structure that evolved on the West Coast during the nineteenth century to provide assistance to Chinese communities often isolated from mainstream America. Local newspapers were eager to report on tong-related activities, since drug trafficking, blackmail, gambling, and prostitution were often associated with these groups from the mid-1800s until the 1920s.⁴³

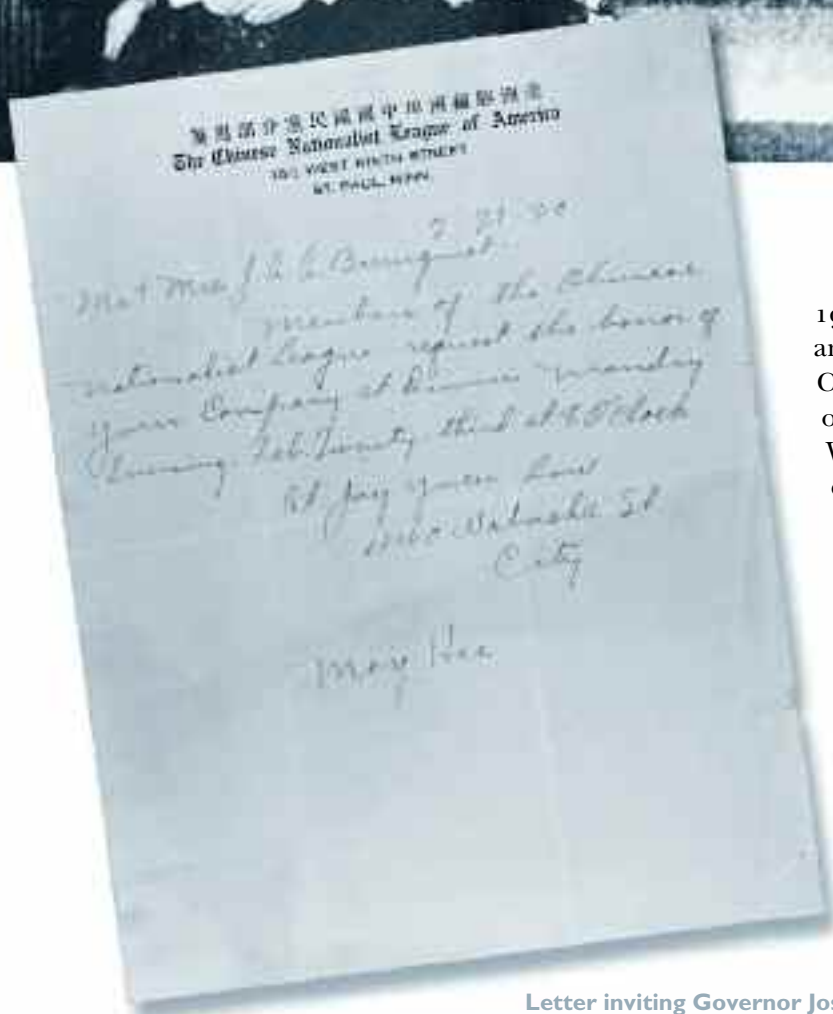
Alleged tong activity in the Twin Cities is documented as early as October 29, 1907, when the *Minneapolis Journal* initiated a series of articles about a raid at On Wong’s store at 239 Fourth Avenue South in Minneapolis, sarcastically entitled “Innocent Chinks Smoking Tobacco.” The articles, which ran through March 1908, covered the arrest and trial of 15 men and related gambling activity.⁴⁴

Stories about tong activity continued to appear in the *Minneapolis Journal* from 1910 to 1912. The Hip Sing tong made headlines in 1912 when it allegedly tried to blackmail money from local Chinese businessmen. According to the *Journal*, “Two restaurant employees were told in a letter to furnish a certain Chinaman \$100 each to go toward organizing a tong in Minneapolis.” On that same day, the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* reported that “Many Minneapolis Chinese . . . are now paying tribute of from \$3 to \$15 a week.” The *Journal* further stated that the Chinese community had asked Moy Hee and Moy James to meet with state officials to see what could be done to prevent the organization and incorporation of the Hip Sing tong in the Twin Cities. (Unfortunately, the newspapers did not report the results of this meeting.) While illegal tong activity likely remained in the Twin Cities throughout the 1910s, various sources suggested that the presence of respected Chinese elders and business partners Moy Hee, Moy James, and Hum Gin, known in Chinese circles as the “three musketeers,” may have helped to minimize tong-related activities, at least in St. Paul.⁴⁵

MEANWHILE, BACK IN CHINA, Moy’s youngest son, Tai Heung, had recovered. His grandmother then arranged for him to marry a young woman named Gun Shee in April 1917. Moy Hee and Judith returned to China to witness the wedding and see Moy’s daughters Moy Foon Hai and Moy Son Woon, who had married and remained in China.⁴⁶

A letter Judith sent to lawyer Joel Dickey from aboard the steamship *RMS Empress* just before it left Seattle prompted the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* to cover their trip. The article nicely summarized the complex weavings of Moy’s life, noting that he was recognized by the Six Companies of California, an association of tongs, as being the “leading representative Chinaman in the States of North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota.” The newspaper noted that Moy gave four farewell banquets before leaving on his trip: one for the well-known citizens of St. Paul, two for fellow merchants, and one for laundrymen.⁴⁷

The article also provided details about Moy’s financial status, reporting that he took \$40,000 in exchange with him: \$10,000 for presents and banquets for his friends in China, and the rest for investments, possibly for purchasing rental properties. (Moy reportedly owned many buildings in China.) During their



1920. People met to learn of Sun Yat Sen's progress and raise money for his efforts. Moy Hee established a Chinese Nationalist League office on the second floor of Wing Wah Chong, where pictures of George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Woodrow Wilson decorated the walls. In February 1920 more than 100 representatives from Detroit, Milwaukee, Chicago, and Minneapolis attended a fund-raising dinner at Jim Moy's restaurant (he was no longer called Moy S. James in the local newspapers) at 440 Wabasha Street. Sam Wong, a "graduate of the Mechanic Arts High School," presided over the meeting. He emphasized the democratic ideals of the new Chinese Republic and also "urged Americanization among the Chinese, and especially among the young men," according to a newspaper account. Moy Hee, president of the local chapter of the

Letter inviting Governor Joseph A. A. Burnquist to the Chinese Nationalist League's dinner, February 1920, and photo of league members taken that evening at the group's headquarters

Chinese Nationalist League of America, also encouraged attendees to adopt and practice American ways.⁵⁰

This was the first and last known dinner held in St. Paul to support Sun Yat Sen's efforts. Most Chinese were not making enough money to provide for both the Kuomintang and families back home. Also, in 1921, the KMT collaborated with the Chinese Communist Party to end the division of China into military regions run by warlords and the exploitation by privileged powers such as Britain, France, the U.S., and Japan. The political powers and energies of China were moving in yet another new direction.⁵¹

Despite Moy Hee's attempts to encourage Americanization, there was little hope that he would ever become a U.S. citizen. According to historian Takaki, "Chinese in America had realized for a long time how their situation here was tied to developments in China. The very political weakness of the Chinese government conditioned their treatment here. . . . Unlike the Irish and other groups in Europe, Asian immigrants could not become mere individuals. Regardless of their personal merits, they sadly discovered they could not gain acceptances in the larger society. They were judged not by the content of their character but by their complexion." Not until 1943, long after Moy Hee's death, could Chinese seek American citizenship, thanks to China's role as an ally in World War II.⁵²

During China's politically unsettled year of 1921, Moy Hee established the Chinese public school in St. Paul to which the engraved silver trophy in the Minnesota Historical Society bears mute witness. Since the trophy names Moy as "founder," one can guess that he provided the monetary support while handing over the responsibility of managing the school to others. Years later, the report to Governor Youngdahl claimed that Y. Y. Toy, owner of the Ambassador Restaurant at Fifth and St. Peter Streets in St. Paul, hired Dr. K. M. Chan, a graduate student at the University of Minnesota, to teach ten Chinese children the "Chinese language and the classics of Chinese literature." Most of the students were enrolled in the St. Paul public schools during the day and attended the Chinese school in the evening or on weekends.⁵³ The location or life of the school—or anything beyond these bare facts—has yet to be learned. Such a school would undoubtedly have served to bridge the generations of Chinese, encouraging acculturation in their new homeland while maintaining ties to family traditions in China.

The English text and Chinese calligraphy engraved on opposite faces of the loving cup are basically equivalent, reading, "Presented to Mr. Moy Hee, the Founder of the Chinese Public School, St. Paul and Minneapolis, by the pupils of 1921." The Chinese inscription, however, adds four central characters that translate as "Develop schools/Save the country," a common nationalist slogan during this time. Many Chinese in the United States dreamed that their children would return to China not only to support their troubled homeland but also to work in professions unattainable in the United States.⁵⁴

MOY HEE'S ACTIVE SOCIAL AND BUSINESS LIFE came to an abrupt end at age 56 when he was struck and killed by an automobile at Ninth and St. Peter Streets on August 3, 1921. In traditional, patriarchal Chinese society, elder brothers of the deceased or the head of the family clan usually planned the burial ceremony, and, despite their accommodations to some American ways, the Moys had remained faithful to tradition. Thus Moy Toy, son of Moy's nephew Charley Toy of Milwaukee, traveled to St. Paul to arrange funeral details. The funeral was held at First Baptist Church, where Judith had been active since 1914. Reverend Edgar A. Valiant led the service, and Judge John W. Finehout and Dr. Kchew Chow, Moy's business secretary, added tributes. Testifying to Moy Hee's respected role in Chinese and American society, the west wing of the church was decorated with floral arrangements from several city banks, department stores, and the Chinese societies of St. Paul, Minneapolis, Detroit, Chicago, Milwaukee, and Cleveland. According to local newspapers, the church was filled to capacity. Moy Hee's amazing ability to balance the expectations of two cultures was perhaps best summed up by the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*: "His phenomenal success in all business enterprises and his many friendships here and throughout the country are attributed to his genial personality, his staunch advocacy of American principles while he still maintained a love for his native land, and to his habitual readiness to take an interest in anything that would supersede the old order of things."⁵⁵

After the service, friends and family joined the funeral procession, led by mounted police and the Minnesota State Band. The band played in front of the Chinese Nationalist League office on Ninth Street and then slowly made its way to Rice Street and University

Avenue. A second band was in the middle of the 125-automobile procession, and thousands of persons lined the streets.

The final destination for the slow-moving cortege was Oakland Cemetery in St. Paul, where the casket was transferred to a small chapel for viewing. When the service was over, two young Chinese children carrying woven baskets distributed “candy of sorrow” and nickels. The candy was to take “the bitter taste of sorrow from the mouth,” according to the *Pioneer Press*, and the money was “regarded as a personal expression of

One of several local newspaper articles about Moy Hee’s death and funeral, *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, August 10, 1921, p. 5



good will from the deceased.” The newspaper described the event as a “blend of Chinese stoicism and Christian display.” The body remained at the cemetery until June 1922 when Moy was returned to China and buried with traditional Chinese rites.

Upon her husband’s death, Judith Moy petitioned Ramsey County to be allowed to administer the estate, which was estimated to be worth \$40,000, according to local newspapers. Thus began two years of closing accounts with local banks, making rent and repair payments while keeping books and managing the store and restaurant, and inventorying personal and business-related property, court costs, and other expenses.⁵⁶

Moy’s obituary noted that Kwong Tung Low and Company had lent money to “no less than fifteen first cousins and ten nephews” in the Twin Cities. According to probate records, 55 individuals were indebted to him at the time of his death.⁵⁷ Moy had continued the practice of helping friends and relatives with employment and loans, just as his family had done for him years before in Oshkosh and St. Paul.

The restaurant continued to do well until winter moved in. Profits from February to August 1922 were meager, at best. On September 8, 1922, Judith advertised its sale in the *St. Paul Dispatch*, *Duluth Herald*, *Minneapolis Tribune*, and *Fargo Forum*: “Moy Hee’s Kwong Tung Restaurant, 413 Robert Street, St. Paul, must be sold to highest bidder to close estate. Bids must be in by Sept. 16. Inspections and bids can be made at restaurant, 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. Address Judith Moy Hee, administratrix.”⁵⁸

Business transactions surrounding the sale of the restaurant created a stir among some members of the St. Paul-Minneapolis Chinese community. Large, red-lettered signs requesting that “whosoever taking over the business must notify us before you start it,” signed by the On Leong tong, were displayed near the exterior of the building. An anonymous informant told one of the local newspapers that Moy Hee operated a lottery and often held drawings on Sunday mornings. After Moy’s death, players were never able to collect their winnings. According to the On Leong, “Debts of honor against the Moy Hee estate must be settled in the Chinese way.”⁵⁹

Despite such threats, Judith continued working to settle the estate. In 1922 the restaurant was sold for \$8,777.10 to Moy Gan Nai (Maurice Moy, perhaps a cousin), who had originally established a laundry in

Chicago with his sons Bruce, Tom, and Hugh after fleeing China to escape execution following the 1910 revolution. In 1924 the restaurant name was changed to Port Arthur Café. It remained in business at 413 Robert Street until about 1957, when the building was razed to make way for an expanded Emporium department store.⁶⁰

Moy Hee's retail business, Wing Wah Chong, was sold to Moy Fook Yuen for \$1,500 in late November or early December 1922. By 1928 the name of the store had been changed to Kwong Chung and Company, and it was managed by Harry Yep. It remained in business at 13 West Ninth Street until the mid-1930s.⁶¹

It is interesting to note that neither of Moy's sons assumed responsibility for Kwong Tung Low or Wing Wah Chong, although both had worked in these businesses. According to traditional patriarchal structure, sons were first in line to inherit and run family businesses. Probate records also show that Judith informed the Ramsey County court that "the deceased left him surviving your petitioner and two children, whose names and ages are as follows: Gong Moy Fu Hau and Chin Moy Sing Wone, who reside in Sunning District Canton, China."⁶²

Since sons Moy Hong Yik and Moy Tai Heung were Judith's stepchildren, why were they not listed in the records? Were they paper sons after all? While some Chinese merchants sold paper slots in order to make

money, Moy Hee probably did not need to do this. The "sons," therefore, could have been nephews, cousins, or close acquaintances from his home village whom he was trying to help. Or perhaps they were his real sons, and information that would explain this mystery is still waiting to be found. Or perhaps it never will be. Neither Moy Hong Yik nor Moy Tai Heung are listed in the St. Paul or Minneapolis directories after 1924.

After the estate was settled, Judith purchased a house in White Bear Township and a three-room summer cottage, which she rented to summer vacationers and lodgers for \$15 per month. She died in 1938, leaving behind the daughter she had adopted after her husband's death, Frances Marquez, a son-in-law, Manuel, and a grandson, Phillip. She is buried in St. John's Episcopal Cemetery, White Bear Lake.⁶³

We do not know what motivated Judith Moy to donate the silver loving cup to the Minnesota Historical Society in 1923. Rediscovered almost 70 years later, this modest object served as a gateway to information about a Minnesota family whose lives mirrored the complex politics and growing pains of two very different cultures. While the wide range of sources that yielded information for this article may not reflect the actual voices of the Moy family, they do provide today's reader with a glimpse of evolving Chinese American identities in early twentieth-century St. Paul.

Thank you, Judith. □

NOTES

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1. File 20111, Moy Hee, in Chinese Case Files, District 10, St. Paul, Segregated Chinese Files, 1893–1942, Immigration and Naturalization Service, Record Group 85, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)—Great Lakes Region, Chicago; Sarah Mason, "The Chinese," in *They Chose Minnesota: A Survey of the State's Ethnic Groups*, ed. June D. Holmquist (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1981), 532; *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, Aug. 8, 1921, p. 10; portrait of Jun Shee, Minnesota Historical Society (MHS) Library, St. Paul.

For more on Confucian teachings, see Arthur Waley, trans., *The Analects of Confucius* (New York: Vintage Books, 1938); Donald J. Munro, *The Concept of Man in Early China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1969).

2. File 20111, Moy Hee, NARA—Chicago; *Weekly Northwestern* (Oshkosh), Sept. 12, 1889, p. 5, Feb. 10, 1894, p. 7.

3. Philip P. Choy, Lorraine Dong, and Marlon K. Hom, eds., *Coming Man: 19th Century American Perceptions of the Chinese* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994), 19.

4. Choy, Dong, and Hom, *Coming Man*, 169.

5. Qinsong Zhang, "The Origins of the Chinese Americanization Movement: Wong Chin Foo and the Chinese Equal Rights League," in *Claiming America: Constructing Chinese American Identities During the Exclusion Era*, ed. K. Scott Wong and Susheng Chan (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998), 51.

6. Here and below, Charles J. McClain, *In Search of Equality: The Chinese Struggle Against Discrimination in Nineteenth-Century America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994),

- 202–03. Minnesota Senator Cushman K. Davis’s attitude was not as harsh; see his “Relations with China: Speech Delivered in the Senate of the United States, Nov. 2, 1893, on the Chinese Exclusion Legislation,” copy in MHS Library.
7. McClain, *In Search of Equality*, 215.
 8. Erika Lee, “Chinese Exclusion and Its Legacy for United States Immigration History,” lecture, May 20, 1999, Immigration History Research Center, University of Minnesota, St. Paul.
 9. McClain, *In Search of Equality*, 214–15.
 10. File 20111, NARA—Chicago. See also, *St. Paul Dispatch*, Aug. 5, 1921, p. 5; *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, Apr. 22, 1917, sec. 4, p. 8.
 11. File 20111, NARA—Chicago. The designated ports were San Francisco and San Diego, CA; Portland, OR; Port Townsend and Sumas, WA; Malone, NY; Portal, ND; Richford, VT; and Boston, New York, New Orleans, and Tampa; Mary Roberts Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration* (New York: H. Holt, 1909), 279.
 12. File 20111, NARA—Chicago.
 13. Here and below, Mason, “Chinese,” 536; file 20111, NARA—Chicago.
 14. File 35450-2-2, Moy Hee, in Seattle District Chinese Exclusion Act Case Files, 1895–1943, Immigration and Naturalization Service, Record Group 85, NARA—Pacific Region, Seattle; file 20111, NARA—Chicago.
 15. File 35450-2-2, NARA—Seattle.
 16. *Northwest Magazine* 19 (Nov. 1901): 41; Albert Hum, interview by Sarah Mason, Nov. 18, 1980, and Stanley Chong, interview by Sarah Mason, Jan. 11, 1979, notes in Minnesota Ethnic History Project, Box 20, MHS Library. For more on Chinese associations, see Him Mark Lai, “Historical Development of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association/Huiguan System,” *Chinese America: History and Perspectives* 1 (1987): 13–51.
 17. *Northwest Magazine* 19 (Nov. 1901): 41; *Star Theatre Program*, Apr. 26, 1908, p. 3, and *Auditorium, St. Paul, Program*, Jan. 1918, p. 44, pamphlet file, MHS Library; *St. Paul Shopping Guide*, Jan. 1909, p. 52, MHS Library.
 18. Mason, “Chinese,” 531–32.
 19. File 35450-2-2, NARA—Seattle.
 20. File 35450-2-2, NARA—Seattle; estate of Moy Hee, Nov. 23, 1921, Ramsey County Probate Records, Ramsey County Courthouse, St. Paul.
 21. File 35450-2-2, NARA—Seattle; Mason, “Chinese,” 531.
 22. Ruthanne Lum McCunn, *Chinese American Portraits: Personal Histories, 1828–1988* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1996), 47; Ronald T. Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans* (New York: Penguin Books, 1990), 127–29.
 23. *St. Paul City Directories*, 1903–21; *Star Theatre Program*, Apr. 26, 1908, p. 3; *St. Paul Shopping Guide*, Jan. 1909, p. 52.
 24. File 20111, NARA—Chicago.
 25. *Minneapolis Journal*, Oct. 12, 1904, p. 7.
 26. Estate of Moy Hee; Mason, “Chinese,” 535.
 27. *Minneapolis Journal*, Jan. 21, 1906, p. 12; file 35450-2-2, NARA—Seattle.
 28. The number of Chinese restaurants in New York City increased from eight to more than 300 between 1880 and 1902; Renqui Yu, “Chop Suey: From Chinese Food to Chinese American Food,” *Chinese America: History and Perspectives* 1 (1987): 92–95.
 29. File 35450-2-3, Wong Shee, in Seattle District Chinese Exclusion Act Case Files, 1895–1943, NARA—Seattle.
 30. Governor’s Interracial Commission of Minnesota, *The Oriental in Minnesota: A Report to Governor Luther W. Youngdahl* (St. Paul, 1949), 24; [Norma Sommerdorf], *A Church in Lowertown: The First Baptist Church of Saint Paul* (St. Paul: Mason Publishing, 1975), 110; *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, Apr. 22, 1917, sec. 4, p. 8. This was not the first English class offered to Chinese immigrants in St. Paul. A similar class was organized as early as Nov. 1883 by the Young Men’s Christian Association; *Minneapolis Tribune*, Nov. 18, 1884, p. 6.
 31. Ginger Chih, “Immigration of Chinese Women to the U.S.A., 1900–1940” (master’s thesis, Sarah Lawrence College, 1977), 34; Victoria Wong, “Square and Circle Club: Women in the Public Sphere,” *Chinese America: History and Perspectives* 8 (1994): 136–37.
 32. First Baptist Church Parish Records, 1851–1944, MHS Library; *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, Apr. 22, 1917, sec. 4, p. 8; Mason, “Chinese,” 537.
 33. Sarah Refo Mason, “Liang May Seen and the Early Chinese Community in Minneapolis,” *Minnesota History* 54 (Spring 1995): 223–33; Howard Woo, Minneapolis, telephone interview by author, Feb. 28, 1994, copy of typed transcript in MHS museum collections accession file 6305.
 34. Estate of Moy Hee.
 35. United States, *Census*, 1920, *Population*, St. Paul, Ward 4, Precinct 2, enumeration district 38, sheet 10, microfilm roll 852, MHS Library.
 36. Lai, “Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association,” 16.
 37. *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, Apr. 22, 1917, sec. 4, p. 8.
 38. See, for example, *St. Paul Daily Globe*, Apr. 13, 1879, p. 1; *Minneapolis Journal*, Oct. 27, 1918, p. 1; Sucheng Chan, “The Exclusion of Chinese Women, 1870–1943,” *Chinese America: History and Perspectives* 8 (1994): 117.
 39. *Minneapolis Journal*, Apr. 11, 1902, p. 3. No further information about Moy’s involvement with the Masons has been found.
 40. Woo interview.
 41. *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, Aug. 9, 1911, p. 12, Aug. 10, p. 4.
 42. Here and three paragraphs below, file 20111, NARA—Chicago. The case, *Mrs. Gue Lim v. U.S.*, 176 U.S. 459, is cited in Moy’s file. Ages and dates cited on various documents in the file do not always add up correctly.
 43. For an overview, see Lai, “Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association”; Mason, “Chinese,” 539. See also Joseph Hart, “The Tongs in Minneapolis: A Preliminary Exploration,” directed research paper, Department of History, University of Minnesota, 1999, copy in author’s possession.
 44. *Minneapolis Journal*, Oct. 29, 1907, p. 6.
 45. *Minneapolis Journal*, Nov. 9, 1912, p. 1; *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, Nov. 9, 1912, p. 2; Mason, “Chinese,” 539; Governor’s

Interracial Commission, *Oriental in Minnesota*, 10. See also *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, Aug. 5, 1921, p. 1, and *St. Paul Daily News*, Aug. 5, 1921, p. 2, wherein lawyer Joel Dickey commented that Moy Hee was successful in keeping the tongs out of St. Paul.

46. File 20111, NARA—Chicago.

47. Here and below, *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, Apr. 22, 1917, sec. 4, p. 8; file 35450-2-2, NARA—Seattle.

48. File 20111, NARA—Chicago.

49. See Jonathan D. Spence, *The Gate of Heavenly Peace: The Chinese and Their Revolution, 1895–1980* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1982).

50. *St. Paul Dispatch*, Feb. 23, 1920, p. 14.

51. Ed Thom, interview by Sarah Mason, June 7, 1979, notes in Box 20, Minnesota Ethnic History Project; Spence, *Gate of Heavenly Peace*.

52. Takaki, *Strangers*, 268; *St. Paul Dispatch*, July 21, 1944, p. 16.

53. Governor's Interracial Commission, *Oriental in Minnesota*, 23.

54. Translation by Chen Zhang, Sept. 14, 1999, notes in accession file 6305, MHS; Gloria H. Chun, "Go West . . . to China": Chinese American Identity in the 1930s," in *Claiming America*, 173.

55. Here and two paragraphs below, *St. Paul Dispatch*, Aug. 5, 1921, p. 5, Aug. 9, 1921, p. 1; *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, Aug. 10, 1921, p. 5, Aug. 8, 1921, p. 10 (quote); estate of Moy Hee.

56. *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, Aug. 6, 1921,

p. 10. Probate records show that the estate was actually valued at approximately \$20,000; estate of Moy Hee. According to the Minneapolis city directories, Moy's other restaurant, Shanghai Low, was no longer in business by 1920.

57. *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, Aug. 8, 1921, p. 10; estate of Moy Hee.

58. Estate of Moy Hee; *Duluth Herald*, Sept. 8, 1922, classified sec., p. 31.

59. Unidentified newspaper clipping, ca. Oct. 1922, in file 20111, NARA—Chicago.

60. Estate of Moy Hee; John Moy, Eagan, interview by author, May 5, 1994, copy of typed transcript in accession file 6305. John, grandson of Maurice Moy, recalled Port Arthur having five or six cooks. During the St. Paul Winter Carnival parades, it was filled to capacity. Family members continued to live on the fourth floor, including Seong Moy, a contemporary

artist whose paintings are in the MHS art collection and museums throughout the United States. John Moy also noted that Chinese Americans stationed at Fort Snelling during World War II frequented Port Arthur, by then run by his father, Hugh-Moy Wing Yip.

61. Estate of Moy Hee; *St. Paul City Directories*, 1923–36.

62. Estate of Moy Hee.

63. Estate of Judith Moy, Dec. 20, 1938, Ramsey County Probate Court, Ramsey County Courthouse, St. Paul; *St. Paul Dispatch*, Nov. 5, 1938, p. 10.



The photos on p. 162–63, 164, 167, 168, and 175 are courtesy the National Archives and Records Administration, Seattle; p. 166 is courtesy the Chinese Historical Society of America; p. 172 is from A Church in Lowertown: The First Baptist Church of Saint Paul (1975), 110; p. 176 is from Minneapolis-St. Paul Chinese Directory (Hong Kong: Wanchai, 1970), 9. The trophy, blotter, and business card, all in MHS museum collections, were photographed by Peter Latner/MHS; all other images, including the letter, p. 176, in the J. A. A. Burnquist Papers, are from the MHS Library.



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