

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHINESE AMERICAN ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interviewee: _____ * Interview Number: _____ 151
 Chinese Name: _____ Number of Tapes: _____ 1
 Date of Interview: 6/7/81 Length: 1 Hour & 6 Minutes
 Interviewer: Suellen Cheng
 Others Present: None
 Language: English
 Summarizer: Suellen Cheng

Contents

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary	Tape: <u>1</u> Side <u>A</u>
1	001-006 007-023 024-032	Introduction. The interviewee came from Canton China. Parents never came to America. Father was in politics in China. Mother stayed home. The interviewee heard about America from a friend.	
2	033-043 044-049 050-061 062-074	Came to the U.S. in 1924. Stayed in San Francisco for three or four years and went to St. Mary's school. Born in 1910. Father paid for his trip. The interviewee planned to return to China. He worked in the hotel and restaurant to support himself. He did cleaning in American hotels. Didn't have a steady job. He lived in Chinatown with friends and ate out.	
3	075-092 093-103	Came to Los Angeles Chinatown and tried to find a job through friends. He came to Los Angeles by boat first around 1928. Then returned to San Francisco. First he came to Los Angeles and worked for a Chinese restaurant as a waiter in Japan town. The restaurant's name is Yat Kong Low. Customers were Japanese.	
4	104-109 110-111 112-123 124-132 133-144	He didn't speak Japanese except for the names of the dishes. Very seldom he had Chinese customers. He lived on Alameda and First Streets in Japan town at the hotel. It was during the Depression, nobody made good money. He sent money back to China. He went to school in Los Angeles Chinatown part time.	

* Interviewee does not wish his name be used

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Tape: 1 Side A

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
5	145-149 150-158 159-164 165-167 168-177 178-192	He attended adult school learning English. The Old Chinatown was on Marchessault Street, Los Angeles Street and Alameda Street. There were mostly restaurants, grocery stores, in the Old Chinatown. He came to Chinatown walking around and to kill time. He worked seven days a week and got a couple of hours break after lunch. He worked in one restaurant for five years. He made \$75 a month as a waiter. The restaurant sits 200-300 people. All Chinese employees in the restaurant.
6	193-200 201-223 224-238	He didn't have time for any recreational activities. After working for Yat Kong Low, he worked for Peking Low on First Street. It was a smaller restaurant. He got the same pay. He got the job through a friend's introduction. The restaurant opened from 1:00 am to 12:00 pm. He worked as a waiter.
7	239-283	After Peking Low, he went to Catalupe and worked for a Japanese owned Chinese restaurant. After working there for three to four months he came back to Peking Low Restaurant again and got the same pay.
8	284-316 317-329	He went to work for an American seafood restaurant in west Los Angeles. He became a cook. He got about \$90 a month. In the American restaurant, he got Sundays off. He lived in an apartment rented for him by the boss.
9	330-348 349-366 367-385	The Chinatown grocery stores would deliver goods to the restaurant. The customers were all Americans. In the early days, a waiter didn't get much in tips. He learned cooking from watching other cooks in the restaurant. The American restaurant was a small restaurant which sat about thirty to forty people. It was around 1941. he worked there for about nine months.
10	386-455	Then he went into the service in the Air Force at Riverside. He was assigned as a cook and cooked for the officers. He was discharged in 1945. He was sent to China with the 14th Air Force under General Chennault.

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1 Side A

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Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
11	456-485	He was in Kuming (昆明) and Chung King (重慶). Then they went to Shanghai and later was discharged in California.

END OF TAPE 1 SIDE A

Tape 1 Side B

1	001-006	He didn't go back to the village to visit his parents.
	007-015	He came back to Los Angeles and found a job in New Chinatown.
	016-031	His last job was working for Young China Restaurant in Whittier. He was a waiter.
	032-047	After World War II, he got a little more pay. During the Depression everything was cheap.
2	048-052	He traveled to work in Whittier from Chinatown.
	053-062	He used to send money back to China to his parents. After his parents passed away, he stopped sending money back.
	063-067	He got married in 1967 in Hong Kong.
3	068-071	Friend introduced his wife to him in Hong Kong.
	072-080	He was in Hong Kong for three to four months and got married.
	081-095	He has been a lot of places. He now lives in his first own house.
	096-102	He never had a difficult time renting an apartment from Chinese, Japanese, Mexican or American landlords.
4	103-115	He had some white friends, but not Black friends. He had some Mexican friends. He went to dinner with friends.
	116-119	He missed China very much.
	120-133	Relatives from china came to America and would look him up. He helped them find jobs.
	134-139	Most of his friends and relatives lived in San Francisco, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York and Bakersfield.
5	140-159	After staying in Los Angeles for a while he returned to San Francisco and worked as a janitor in a hotel and got \$60 a month for three years. He lived in San Francisco Chinatown.
	160-164	Parents didn't need his support but he still sent money back to China.

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
5	165-170	Parents wrote to him but he didn't write much home.
	171-182	He studied in St. Mary's for six months. He went to adult school in Los Angeles for a couple of hours every day for three or four years.
	183-195	he retired in 1975. Since his retirement, he has visited Chinatown every day.
6	196-209	He felt more Chinese and spoke mostly Chinese with his friends. Never felt sorry for being Chinese.
	210-215	Before World War II, most Chinese worked in the restaurants.
	216-224	He has good health. Whenever he didn't feel good he drank a lot of water and never took Chinese medicine.
	225-233	He was not interested in any American sports.
7	234-244	Never joined any family associations. Most of his friends were Chung, Chan, Lee, Wong, Jue and Ung.
	245-252	He was not interested in other people's doings.
	253-260	Most Chinese worked as cooks and in the laundries.
	261-269	Chinese mostly lived in Chinatown.
270-286	The Asians couldn't buy property before World War II so most Chinese lived in Chinatown.	
8	287-303	The old timers felt that they had to support their family in China, especially if they had a wife in China.
	304-309	Chinese were affected by the Depression. Some Chinese couldn't make enough money to support their family.
	310-322	One was lucky if he could find a job during the Depression.
	323-352	Before World War II, Chinese were not served in the restaurants and were insulted. This happened to Chinese and Japanese.
9	353-365	During the war, he was treated very well.
	366-389	Madame Chiang Kai-shek came to America for help. America sent troops to China to help fight the war. Chinese Americans were treated very well. While in China, he spoke English.
10	390-400	He felt that he was fighting for his own country while he was in China.
	401-416	He felt that Chinese and Jews are different.
	417-433	A lot of Chinese went to Hong Kong to get married after the Communists took over China.
	434-442	The younger generation's idea of marriage is different.

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
10	443-454	Most Chinese parents didn't like interracial marriages.
11	455-467	His parents were from the older generation and didn't like interracial marriages.
	468-485	Most of the Chinese parents didn't like to see their children marry colored people. It was all right to marry other Asians. Now people's attitudes have changed.

END OF TAPE 1 SIDE B

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