

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHINESE AMERICAN ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interviewee: T.B. Chew
 Chinese Name: 趙 帝 培
 Date of Interview: 1/5/79, 11/8/79
 Interviewer: Suellen Cheng
 Others Present: Secretary in office
 Language: English
 Summarizer: Suellen Cheng

Interview Number: 4
 Number of Tapes: 4
 Length: 2 Hours & 30 Minutes

Contents

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary	Tape: <u>1</u> Side <u>A</u>
1	005-020	Introduction.	
	021-029	Parents from Sun Wui, Canton, China. Father came in 1915. Mother came in 1920.	
	030-036	Father first arrived in San Francisco and had a herb store on Clay Street.	
2	037-043	In 1924, father moved down to Los Angeles.	
	044-048	Parents first moved to Los Angeles Chinatown for a while, later moved to Santa Monica.	
	049-051	T.B. Chew (TBC) was born in Canton China in 1913 and came to the U.S. with his mother.	
	052-063	Chinese liked to see the new area instead of staying in the old town. Father practiced herbs in Canton.	
	064-068	TBC's older sister was born in Canton China. All the other sisters were born in the U.S.	
3	069-071	Before the mother came father sent money to China.	
	072-082	TBC and mother took Namking Ship. As a little boy just followed his parents.	
	083-092	TBC stayed in San Francisco for a few years and then moved to Santa Monica for a short while and then went back to China for an education.	
	093-107	TBC went to Shen Chow Chinese School (神州學校) for a while as well as an American grammar school.	
4	108-112	Didn't learn much but learned something from the Chinese school.	
	113-116	Sisters and TBC all went to Chinese school.	
	117-124	Had some American friends and belonged to the Baptist Church. Father was an elder in the church. TBC also went to Sunday school.	
	125-129	TBC spoke both Chinese and English at home.	
	130-134	Father owned his store in San Francisco. TBC did not have to help father.	

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
4	135-143	Father opened an office on 911 Santa Monica Blvd. Ninety-nine percent of the patients were Americans. Very few Chinese in Santa Monica.
5	144-153	TBC attended American schools. Two younger brothers were born in Los Angeles. His younger sister was born in San Francisco.
	154-166	Father originally planned to open an office in Santa Monica so he stayed in Chinatown on North Broadway just for a very short while.
	167-176	TBC did not find too many problems with American schoolmates.
	177-186	TBC stayed in Santa Monica for about a year or two, then went back to China for an education. In the old days, parents always wanted to send the youngster to China for an education. Then maybe to get married there.
	187-196	Sisters did not go back to China. Mother passed away in San Francisco and father remarried and had two children. TBC was the only one who went back to China. Father supported him.
6	197-205	TBC was in China from 1925 to 1949 and finished high school and the university.
	206-216	TBC first went to Wah Chiao Ban (華僑班) [overseas Chinese students class] in Canton. Then he went to Shanghai for high school. Then he went to Peking for college.
	217-224	TBC majored in political science and later learned Chinese herbal medicine.
	225-228	TBC didn't have to help his father in the Santa Monica office.
7	229-242	Family lived in the back quarter of the office in Santa Monica. Everyday there were about 10 to 15 patients. Father had a good practice. He advertised in the newspaper about Chinese herbs to the American public.
	243-247	Father learned English here and did not use any interpreter in the office.
	248-258	Father got herbs from Chinatown and also through direct importing from China.
	259-269	Americans tried Chinese herbs as a last resort after they tried all the American doctors and failed.
	270-279	Father did not charge for an office visit, only charged for the medicine, which cost about seven or eight dollars for a week's supply.

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
8	280-287	Father printed the instructions for the Americans, so they did not have problems preparing the herb tea.
	288-302	Chinese doctors all had their own kind of formula. Father was good in general.
	303-308	Prepared medicine by quantity and which could be judged by doctors.
	309-315	Mother was a housewife and did not help in the business.
	316-326	TBC went to a chiropractic school in Los Angeles after he returned from China. After graduating he practiced with his father in Los Angeles and in Santa Monica.
9	327-345	Parents told him to learn some business. If you keep on taking economics or political science, you always work under someone else. That's why TBC decided to go into chiropractics.
	346-372	To learn chiropractics would broaden his practice. TBC also studied about X-rays. Father also obtained a chiropractor's license.
	373-390	TBC did not go to Los Angeles Chinatown too often. When they first moved to Santa Monica, there was a railroad track in front of the house.
10	391-400	TBC and family took a train from San Francisco to Los Angeles but took an automobile from Los Angeles to Santa Monica.
	401-413	The neighbors were all Caucasians. Parents associated mostly with Americans. They went to Chinatown once in a while.
	414-429	Los Angeles Chinatown was close to the Union Station. The city planned to build the Union Station there, so Chinese had to move away and gradually develop a new Chinatown.
	430-436	Chinese worked in laundries, restaurants, grocery stores. There was another Chinatown at 9th Street and South San Pedro.
	437-446	Parents went there to buy things, sometimes ate there.
11	447-451	Ate Chinese food at home, so not too crazy about going to a Chinese restaurant.
	452-463	TBC brought American sandwich and cookies to schools.
	464-472	Not a single Chinese student in TBC's class in Santa Monica.
	473-482	Parents wanted TBC to go back to China to learn Chinese culture.

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary	<u>Tape 1 Side B</u>
1	014-017	There were no Chinese students in TBC's class.	
	018-020	Parents wanted TBC to go back to China to learn Chinese culture.	
	021-027	Chinese custom is to educate the boy. At that time, sister was in her "marriage age," no use to send her back.	
	028-030 031-042	Sister married a dentist in Chinatown. Father remarried in 1943 or 1944. Older sister took care of the house when they first moved to Santa Monica.	
2	043-048	Through a friend's introduction, older sister married a Chinese.	
	049-052	TBC went to visit the old place in China once.	
	053-063	TBC associated with both Chinese and American friends. He was very active in Chinese society. Father was many terms president of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association before and after the second World War.	
	064-070	Father had his Santa Monica office first, then had a branch office on Figueroa and traveled to the branch office twice a year.	
3	071-076	Because of the public demand, he opened the branch office. Most patients were Caucasians.	
	077-080	Before the war, no colored people lived around the area.	
	081-102	Father was many terms of president of Lung Kong Association. TBC was the Grand president of this four family association and was vice president for many years.	
	103-110	The last convention was held in Hawaii.	
4	111-128	The Four Family Association (Lung Kong Association) is a family association. It goes back to the Three Kingdom period. It is a social gathering for any occasion and had dinners. It is also a charity organization. In case some members of the brotherhood have difficulty, sickness, the organization and members help them.	
	129-134	Everyone who has the surname of Liu, Quan, Chang, Chow [Low, Quan, Chong, Chew] (劉 關 張 趙) belongs to the organization, if they pay their dues, which is \$4.00 a year. It was two or three dollars in the early days.	
	135-142	There are about 4,000 Lung Kong members in Los Angeles, about two to three thousand in the early days.	

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
5	143-159	The members meet for the New Year (新年), Thanksgiving (感恩節), Tsun Yuen (團圓), Mid-Autumn festival (中秋), and the birthdays of the ancestors: Quan Gong (關公), Chang Fei (張飛), Chow Tze Long (趙子龍).
	160-164	Sometimes maybe one hundred people participated.
	165-177	Usually, it has board meetings once a month. The board members were elected by the members. All the board members are volunteers and have to spend a lot of money for different expenses.
	178-186	In the board meeting members discuss how to make progress and prepare for different occasions and associate with other organizations.
6	187-210	Right now Chung Wah (中華) [Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association] has 27 groups. It is a social gathering group. Sometimes Chung Wah has to face the American public and represent the Chinese American community. Years ago, it fought against the unjust immigration laws and tried to improve the condition of the Chinese.
	211-219	Chung Wah is still involved in politics and protecting the Chinese and to fight for their benefit.
	220-243	One has to pay dues to Chung Wah. Under Chung Wah there are 27 groups. Each group selects a representative to Chung Wah. Each member pays \$100 dues. Every group representative attends the board meetings. But all members of all groups can participate in the activities.
7	244-270	In Los Angeles, there are three categories. Each big group sent four representatives. If the organization has 500 members and up, it belongs to the big groups. If the organization has under 500 members, it belongs to the middle groups. If the organization has around 100 members, it belongs to the small group, which can only send two representatives to the board meeting.
	271-284	The big groups include: Lung Kong Association, Wong Family Association, Ning Yeung, etc.
8	285-292	TBC is not active in Chung Wah lately. TBC was very active before and was the president of the Chinese School and other Chung Wah organizations.
	293-298	Last few years, TBC slowed down.

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Tape: 2 Side A

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary	<u>Tape 2 Side A</u>
1	006-021 022-028 029-040	Introduction. When you are in the organization, you spend a lot of time in the meetings. Now TBC just takes it easy. TBC served on Chung Wah for 30 years. TBC felt more Chinese but associated with American friends. He belongs to the Lions Club, etc. Father belonged to the Chinese organizations. Mother was just a housewife.	
2	041-052 053-060 061-088	Father first rented the property then purchased the property. He did not have a problem acquiring property because it was a commercial property. It was much more difficult to buy a house in a residential area. Father bought a beautiful house in Santa Monica in 1934. When TBC built his resident in Los Angeles, he encountered discrimination. He could not get a house in the Silverlake area and in the newly developed area near Hollywood Hills due to the complaints of the neighbors.	
3	089-098 099-101 102-107	Finally, TBC out-smarted them and asked an American friend to buy it first and turn it back to TBC. After TBC moved into the house, the neighbors said hello to him. The main thing is that Chinese have to try to make a better front and act respectful.	
4	108-112 113-122 123-131 132-142	Father always lived in Santa Monica. Sometimes American kids looked down on Chinese and thought Chinese were lower class people. Chinese parents believed in good behavior, studying hard, and educating the youngster. Once in a while, TBC used home remedies in the winter time. Cooked Chinese medicine with and without food.	
5	143-159 160-170 171-193	Family loved the Chinese opera and Chinese movies. Younger generations like American movies and opera. they played tennis and ice skiing. Wong Chian (黃強), Liu Sung Chi (劉崇漢), TBC's father Chow Bao Kaong (趙寶堯), Leong Kuen Yeu (梁桂嚴), a minister, were the prominent Chinese in Chinatown. TBC wrote down all the Chinese names, they were heads of the Chung Wah organizations.	

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
6	194-204	Before the war, there were not many big grocery stores, most of them were small scale.
	205-210	Peter SooHoo was a very prominent person. Unfortunately he passed away at a very young age.
	211-217	Chinese mostly engaged in the import-export business, restaurants and laundries.
	218-230	Some Chinese worked for American families. In the old days the standard was very low, Chinese could not fight American society due to discrimination.
7	231-239	Now the American big business loved to hire Chinese technicians. Now the Chinese youngsters do a good job and have good positions.
	240-253	Before the war the average income for Chinese was about \$150 a month. Two hundred dollars was a good income. Things were cheap so you still could have some savings.
	254-266	When TBC returned to the U.S., he made about \$250 a month working at a part time job.
	267-277	People who came from China loved to find a Chinese neighborhood. But the American born Chinese liked to scatter around.
8	278-286	Compared to other Chinese, father may be special because he did not live near by Chinese.
	287-300	TBC's boys are very well-educated and became professional people. They lived in American communities. His son is in the medical profession. His eldest son owned two drug stores near USC.
	301-305	Children were educated here they had no way to learn to become a Chinese herbalist.
	306-315	Years ago, TBC sent two boys to China for an education. They stayed for a couple of years but because of the political situation, they came back.
	316-320	TBC hoped that the children would follow in his footsteps but there was no way.
	321-332	Children are good. They finished college and have a doctoral degree. One son has two doctoral degrees. But TBC was disappointed because he is still single.
9	333-350	Chinese people loved to save money for emergencies or for their old age. They put money into the Savings and Loans.
	351-380	When father went back to China for retirement he bought property in China in 1947.
	381-396	Father did some import-export company and invested money in the partnership of the produce business.

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2 Side A

Tape: 3 Side A

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
10	397-406	The younger generations put money into stocks and houses.
	407-420	During the Sino-Japanese War, Chung Wah raised a lot of money through big organizations for China Relief.
	421-427	After World War II, Chinese did not send money to China because there was no communication.
	428-443	Father sent money back to the relatives in China. Father sent money and tuition to China for TBC's education.

END OF TAPE 2 SIDE A

Tape 3 Side A

1	004-026 027-035	Introduction. There was discrimination against Chinese in buying property, in house rentals, especially to Chinese students.
2	036-039 040-053 054-076	After the second World War, the situation was much better. Naturally, TBC didn't like [the discrimination], but if the neighbor doesn't like you around there, you find other places. TBC felt sorry for the American people with that kind of attitude. Chinese did a good job, especially among the young people. Chinese stress good educations, family, and respecting the elders. That's why after the world war, Chinese younger generation was very successful in every respect, such as in education. That's a good way to raise the Chinese standard to match with Caucasian upper class.
3	077-100 101-115	Pre-War period, Chinese from the villages were not educated. They had a lower living standard and income was much lower than the American people. After World War II condition changed to good. Chinese people believed in saving and gradually developed into a small business. Naturally, from a small business develop into a larger scale. Mostly import-export business.
4	116-138	Both Chinese and Jewish people are good business people and work hard. Jewish people are more cooperative within their own race. Chinese are more or less for their own family.

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
4	139-155	Chinese are very honest people. They don't believe in revenge.
5	156-161	In the old days, there were many Chinese herbalists in this country. Now there are not too many of them.
	162-176	Chinese liked to get into the herb business. Unfortunately, some of them did not have an English education and no doctoral degree. Lately American society recognizes acupuncture. Since then, they are more free in practice.
	177-184	TBC thought acupuncture is very effective but not in every way.
6	185-201	Before World War II, there was no herbalist license. The only way to practice Chinese herbs was using an import-export business to sell the herbs as merchandise. One could not prescribe herbal medicine.
	202-211	Before his father got his doctor's license, he could only sell the herbs but not prescribe.
	212-223	In the old days the patients came in and describe his trouble and symptoms so the Chinese doctor used his own judgement to diagnose the case and put up the herbs for the patient.
	224-229	Father for his doctor degree in Los Angeles from Chiropractic College after the second war.
7	230-236	Now the school merged with the Los Angeles City Glendale College. Before it was called the Southern California College of Chiropractic.
	237-245	Father went to college for three years, first to broaden his knowledge, second to free hand his practice, and third to have larger fields.
	246-272	Chinese herbalist in San Francisco fought with the American Medical Association many times. Fong Wong in Oakland won the case many times around the 1920s.
	273-282	Chinese herbalists were not supposed to diagnose a case by any means, by instruments. You can only sell the herbs to the patients.
8	283-316	TBC put the advertisement to sell herbs as merchandise. He used some patients' testimonies in the ads. As long as he did not mention prescribing it was okay.
	317-332	Caucasian patients treated TBC as a doctor and other Caucasian friends treated him very well.

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3 Side A

Tape: 3 Side B

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
9	333-344	The herbal business is a higher profession among the Chinese people.
	345-370	There were about a dozen Chinese herbalists before World War II. Today, there are few Chinese herbalists. Because the immigration problem not many young people are coming in. Unless you have a license, you cannot practice free hand.
	371-384	Now many people practice acupuncture which is legal. Even Caucasians practice acupuncture.
10	385-398	The income from the herbal business is higher than the working class income. But compared to the import-export business, the herbalist's income is much lower.
	399-408	The herbalist's income is better than the small restaurant owner but not better than the big restaurant owner.
	409-438	To be successful, first you have to be honest to the patients, secondly to be sincere to the patients, third, don't take a case unless you know you can do some good for the patient. Chinese herbs do not have a side affect.
	439-458	A person's success in this profession relies on the recommendation of the formal patients.
11	459-478	TBC married in Hong Kong. In the old days, many Chinese came alone. After they had established, they sent the wife to come over.

END OF TAPE 3 SIDE A

Tape 3 Side B

1	018-027	TBC married in Hong Kong. In the old days, many Chinese came alone. after they had established, they sent the wife to come over.
	028-034	Some got married through a matchmaker, some through introductions.
2	035-040	Some of the American born Chinese girls were sent to China to get married. Most of the time they stayed here.
	041-054	Chinese still have the attitude to prefer having a son over a daughter in China. They consider daughters as an outsider after she is married.

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Tape: 3 Side B

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
2	055-063	TBC believed that daughters are closer to the parents and more thoughtful. To TBC, sons and daughters are equally important.
	064-073	Most people still think interracial marriages are not too pleasant, but nothing you can do. In modern days, you just let them do what they want. Parents just hope they have a good marriage.
3	074-085	In the old days, [Chinese] were very much against interracial marriages. The way to prevent it from happening is to bring the family back to China or send the youngster to China to learn Chinese culture and give them more of a chance to meet Chinese friends. That's another reason for sending the youngster to China.
	086-102	People from China felt that it was important to have their youngster learn Chinese. But the attitude of American born Chinese is different. They don't know the Chinese language themselves.
	103-117	Parents encourage children to get good grades in school and treat sons and daughters equally in education. But the old timers still think it is important to educate sons in Chinese culture.
4	118-125	If Chinese is in good shape, particularly in political situation, most Chinese would like to go back to the old country to stay, or at least to visit.
	126-131	In the old days, Chinese saved their money to go back to China and to buy property and stay there.
	132-147	The older generation always planned to go back to China after they saved enough money. they didn't plan to stay here forever.
5	148-158	Unless they have no relatives, they don't use to go there. Secondly the political government was unstable, therefore some Chinese decided to stay.
	159-187	Chinese are in a better position in the American movies than before. Now they don't disgrace Chinese. In the old days they always made the Chinese look bad.
6	188-196	Chinese protested against such movies through Chung Wah and the Consulate. In some cases is helped.
	197-202	In these modern days, Chinese educational standard is much higher. When your standard is higher, people respect you more.

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3 Side B

Tape: 4 Side A

Contents (cont'd)

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
6	203-222	Never heard Chinese say they are embarrassed to be a Chinese. Chinese are proud to be Chinese. Chinese have good culture, they have a good government, most Chinese people like to stay in their own country instead of going away from their homeland.
	223-231	Chinese considered businessmen, teachers, professors.
7	232-252	People respect teachers and doctors, so the Chinese family encouraged children to become doctors, lawyers, architects, and engineers. Always raised up the standard and broaden the knowledge.
	253-259	TBC has three sons and three daughters. Sons are in medical professions and daughters are teachers.
	258-276	Brother is a doctor of pharmacy. Younger brother is an engineer. Sister graduated from USC. Brother-in-law is a dentist. The older sister married an engineer. She is a housewife.
8	277-292	TBC advertised in American newspaper and introduced Chinese herbs to Americans.
	293-300	Very few Chinese herbalists advertised. Father wrote the advertisement and had his friend correct it for him.

END OF TAPE 3 SIDE B

Tape 4 Side A

1	007-011	Introduction.
	012-018	Blank.
	019-034	After World War II, the Chinese family organizations got along very well. Once in a while there was a disagreement between organization but they always use the diplomatic way to solve the misunderstanding. No more fighting like in the old days.
2	035-041	In the old days they fought over the misunderstandings, business conflicts, and working conflicts, etc.
	042-051	There were some conflicts among the family associations before the war.
	052-061	The business conflict or once in a while gambling conflicts caused the dispute.
	062-077	Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association came out and tried to solve the problem. CCBA was the middle man who came out to solve the problems.

END OF TAPE 4 SIDE A

END OF INTERVIEW

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