

# **A Picture, a Story: Telling Chinese Canadian History**

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**Association for Canadian Studies**  
**21 October 2006**

# Chinese in Canada and BC 1881-1891

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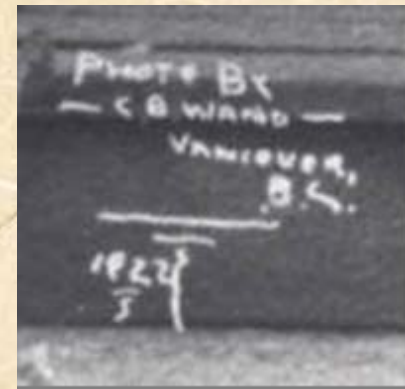
Year	Canada	BC	%
1881	4,383	4,350	99.24
1891	9,129	8,910	97.6
1901	16,375	14,201	86.72
1911	27,774	19,568	70.45

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Adapted from Roy 1989:269



*What can a  
photograph  
tell you?*



# Registration of Birth – Chin Yen Chin (aka Rose Chan)

This form if placed in an unsealed envelope marked "Domestic Statistics (Free)" and properly addressed will pass through the Mails "FREE."

FORM 4.

PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Registered No. 23-07-435136  
By use of Registrar of Vital Statistics only.

**CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION OF BIRTH.**  
 (BY PARENT OR GUARDIAN)

1. PLACE OF BIRTH  
 If in Municipality Vancouver, B. C.  
 If in City, Town or Village Vancouver Street Keefe House No. 1870  
(If birth occurred in a hospital, give its name instead of Street and Number)

2. FULL NAME OF CHILD Chin Yen Chin  
(Surname) (Given name)

3. Sex of child <u>Girl</u>	4. Twin, triplet or other? <u>No</u> <small>To be answered only in the event of plural births.</small>	5. Was the child born alive? <u>Yes</u> <small>(Infant, still or no)</small>	6. Legitimate? <u>Yes</u> <small>(Answer, yes or no)</small>	7. Date of birth? <u>Oct. 3, 1923</u> <small>(Month, day, year)</small>
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FATHER		MOTHER	
8. Full Name <u>Chin Wah Shuck</u>	14. Full Maiden Name <u>Chin Ho Se</u>	9. Residence <u>1870 Keefe St. Van. B. C.</u> <small>(Usual place of abode.) If non-resident, give place and province.</small>	15. Residence <u>1870 Keefe St. Van. B. C.</u> <small>(Usual place of abode.) If non-resident, give place and province.</small>
10. Racial origin <u>Chinese</u>	11. Age last birthday <u>53</u> years	16. Racial origin <u>Chinese</u>	17. Age last birthday <u>31</u> years
12. Birthplace <u>Canton, China</u> <small>(City or place, province or country.)</small>	18. Birthplace <u>Canton, China</u> <small>(City or place, province or country.)</small>	19. Number of children of this mother (including this birth.) Now living <u>7</u> Dead <u>---</u> Stillborn (live with)	20. Occupation, if other than household duties
13. Occupation: (a) Trade or profession <u>Merchant</u> (b) Business in which employed	21. Name and Post Office address of Informant <u>Chin Wah Shuck 1870 Keefe St. Van. B. C.</u>	22. Name of Doctor, nurse or other person in attendance at birth <u>Dr. W.C. Walsh Victoria Nurse Van. B.C.</u>	

I certify the foregoing to be true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.  
 Given under my hand at Vancouver B.C. this 22nd day of Nov. 1923  
Chin Wah Shuck  
Signature of Informant.

I hereby certify that the above return was made to me at Vancouver on the 22nd day of November 1923.  
J. Mahony  
District Registrar.

District Registration No. \_\_\_\_\_

Margin reserved for indexing. Write plainly, with spelling. This is a Permanent Record.  
 If there is more than one child in a birth, a separate return must be made for each, and the number of each, in order of birth, stated.  
 RACIAL ORIGIN will be described by entering 1: when people of foreign birth, whether English, Irish, Scotch, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, etc. The word "Canadian" or "American" must not be used, as they express nationality or citizenship but not a race or people.

NUMBER  
00599

C. I.  
30

# DOMINION OF CANADA

IMMIGRATION BRANCH - DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

THIS CERTIFIES THAT

**Chin Kam**

*whose photograph is attached*

*hereby arrived or landed at* **Vancouver**  
*on the* **6th** *day of* **October 1912**  
*ex* **S.S. Princess Royal Ex Chicago Maru**

**19**

*and upon the representations made has been  
admitted as exempt from head tax under the  
provisions of the Chinese Immigration Act.*

*The above mentioned party claims to be a  
native of* **Ging Boy**  
*in the* **District** *of* **Sun Wai**  
*of the age of* **12** *years. The declaration*  
*in this case is C. I. No.* **27964**

*Dated at* **Vancouver** *on* **Oct 18<sup>th</sup>** **1912**

*Maledon*  
CONTROLLER OF CHINESE IMMIGRATION.



*R. J. Reid*

Courtesy of Stanley Wong

# Male/Female Populations and Sex Ratios of Selected BC Communities

Year	Community	Males	Females	M/F Ratio
1921	Vancouver	5790	585	10/1
	Victoria	2938	503	6/1
	Cumberland	802	52	16/1
	Vernon	136	31	4.5/1
	Nanaimo	379	54	7/1
	New Westminster	702	45	17/1
1931	Vancouver	11952	1059	11/1
	Victoria	3192	510	6/1
	New Westminster	561	38	15/1
1941	Vancouver	5973	1201	5/1
	Victoria	2549	488	5/1

# **Restrictive Legislation Directed at Chinese Immigrants**

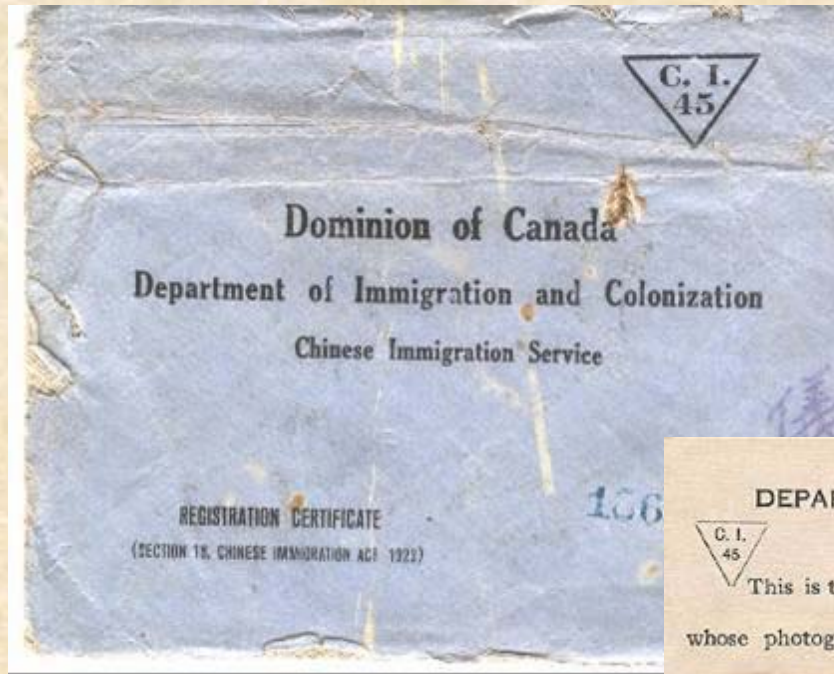
1885 Head tax - \$50

1901 Head tax - \$100

1904 Head tax - \$500

1923 Chinese Immigration (Exclusion) Act

# Registration Certificate – Section 18, Chinese Immigration Act 1923



DOMINION OF CANADA  
DEPARTMENT OF IMMIGRATION AND COLONIZATION  
CHINESE IMMIGRATION SERVICE

No. 18620

C. I. 45

This is to certify that Lily Chun No. 18620

whose photograph is attached hereto, has registered as required by Section 18 of the Chinese Immigration Act, Chapter 38, 13-14 George V.

Dated at Vancouver, B.C.

this 20th day of June 1924

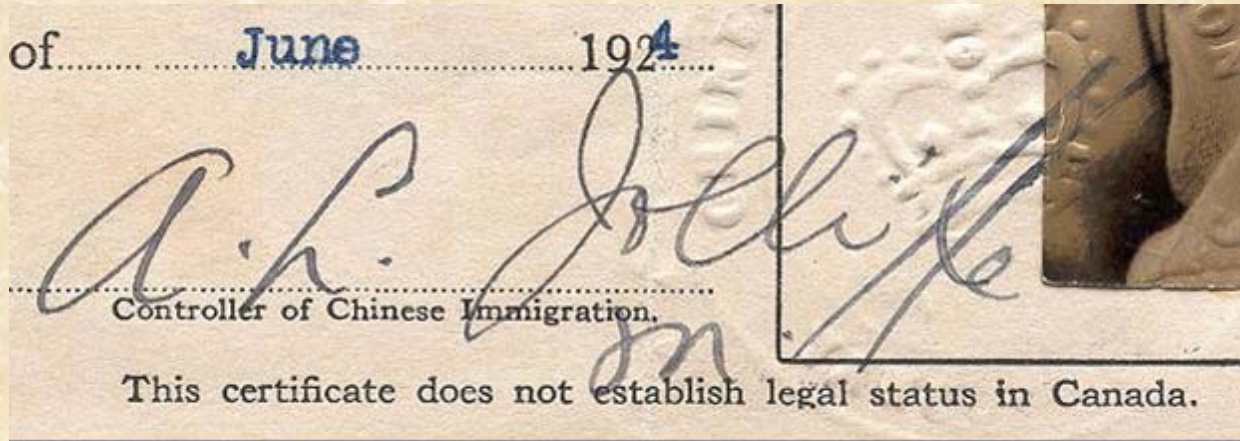
*A. P. Joliffe*  
Commissioner of Chinese Immigration



This certificate does not establish legal status in Canada.



## Born in Canada, but not Canadian (Immigration Act, 1923)



On returning to Canada after the end of WWII, Lily Chan was processed through the *Chinese Section* of Immigration Canada.



## 1923–1947: Coming of Age During a Period of Exclusion



Lim Wong, aka Wilbert Lim  
Birth: January 15, 1919



Chan Fong Yee, aka Lily Chan  
Birth: April 21, 1918





Courtesy of George Yipp

Nellie and Charlie Yip  
(aka Yip Guong).  
Charlie's son married  
Chin Kam.



Courtesy of Starlet Lum

# One Family: One Story, One History in BC



Chin Wah Shuck with wife, Hoo She, and their six children.

Children in “western” clothing, as well as the father, but the older women are all in Chinese garb.

1870 is the 1870 Keefer Street residence of Chin Wah Shuck and family.

Chin Wah Shuck was, a man of some means—a merchant, able to hire a professional photographer for the family picture.

# Status and Community

9. Name of medical attendant or accoucheur and nurse.

Dr. T. H. Agnew

Lily Chan, 1918

8. Residence and rank or profession of father.

1672 Albert St. Vancouver

Merchant

22. Name of Doctor, nurse or other person in attendance at birth

Dr. W.C. Walsh Victoria Nurse Van. B.C.

Rose Chan, 1923

9. Name of medical attendant or accoucheur and nurse.

Lim Lip Pun,

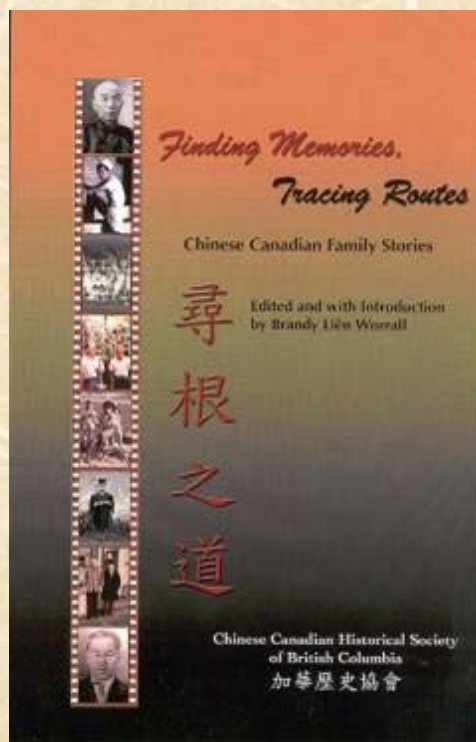
Wilbert Lim, 1919

8. Residence and rank or profession of father.

Chinatown, near Cumberland, B.C.

Merchant

Accessing family history, tracing one's Canadian path.



Vancouver Art Gallery 1985:42

No longer unidentified; Shirley Chan's mother (Wo Soon, aka Mary) back row, far right. (Chan 2006:2)

## References:

Chan, Shirley

2006 "Unidentified Family, c. 1910": The Girl in the Picture.  
In *Finding Memories, Tracing Routes: Chinese Canadian Family Stories*, edited by Brandy Liên Worrall, pp.1-10. Vancouver, BC: Chinese Canadian Historical Society of British Columbia.

Roy, Patricia E.

1989 *A White Man's Province: British Columbia Politicians and Chinese and Japanese Immigrant, 1858-1914*. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

Vancouver Art Gallery (VAG)

1985 *Gum San Gold Mountain: Images of Gold Mountain 1886-1947*. Vancouver, BC: Vancouver Art Gallery.

Wickberg, Edgar (ed.)

1982 *From China to Canada: A History of the Chinese Communities in Canada*. Toronto, ON: McClelland & Stewart.  
1988.