

2. ‘BEFORE WE CAME TO THIS COUNTRY, WE HEARD THAT ENGLISH LAWS WERE GOOD AND KIND TO EVERYBODY’

CHINESE IMMIGRANTS’ VIEWS OF COLONIAL AUSTRALIA

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The practice of offering gratuitous impertinence or insult to persons of other nationality now and again meets with an unexpected check ... and the following is very illustrative of the fact: ‘A young gentleman — I suppose we must so term him — was a few evenings since riding in a Fitzroy cab, having for a fellow passenger a respectable looking Chinaman, and flippantly remarked, “John, you sabbee, ride in a cabbee.” He was somewhat disconcerted by an intimation from the “Chinee” that if he (the gentlemanly European) wanted to converse with him, he, the “Chinee” would “be happy to accommodate him in English, French, Italian or Chinese, but he must decline a conversation in broken English or slang” ... The particular “John” whose privacy had been intruded upon was Mr Kong Meng, the Chinese merchant, whose lingual accomplishments are well known.’¹

When asked to present a paper based on the material gathered for the Asian Accounts of Australia Project, I noted that there was nothing in Chinese about Australia noted from the National Library of Australia collection that dates from the 19th century. I wondered if there was some connection between this and the multilingual accomplishments of Lowe Kong Meng, who was perhaps the pre-eminent Chinese merchant and community leader in Australia from 1853 until his death in 1888.

I reflected on what documents I knew of that otherwise exist in Australia's public record from this period. My immediate reaction was that there are few known records in the public domain in Australia dating prior to the 1890s that present a Chinese perspective on the nature of Australia; less still of this is written in Chinese text.

Is this purely a function of the small size of the Chinese-speaking population at this time? From a couple of thousand in 1851, the numbers of Chinese in Australia quickly rose to about 50,000 in the Victorian goldrush² in the 1850s and, while the concentrations of settlement moved from colony to colony in the next four decades, the total population of Chinese throughout Australia seems to have fluctuated between 30,000 and 40,000 until the early 20th century,³ and then slowly diminished to 12,000 by the 1940s.⁴

There were at least two short-lived Chinese-language newspapers published in Victoria in the 1850s and 1860s. The first that is known about is *The English and Chinese Advertiser*, published in Ballarat from 1856. Six issues only of this weekly broadsheet are known to have survived. It was mainly — as the name implies — literally a publication of advertisements, as well as government notices to the Chinese from colonial officials. It was published by an Englishman, Robert Bell, and possibly survived only for two years.⁵ Another attempt, with a foolscap-sized newspaper in Melbourne, and also published by an Englishman (E. Whitehead), was the *Fi-pao*, translated as *Flying Intelligencer*. No copies of this remain extant, but the first issue is described in an article in *The Argus* in October 1868.⁶

It was not until the 1890s that we have the first development of a Chinese-language newspaper which included substantial articles. This was the *Chinese Australian Herald*,⁷ which was followed a few years later by the *Tung Wah News/Times*.⁸ From then until the 1940s, a range of Chinese Australian newspapers flourished.⁹ Substantial holdings of these newspapers are held in the Mitchell Library in Sydney and the State Library of Victoria, and one of the tasks of the Chinese Heritage of Australian Federation Project (CHAF) has been to create an online index of the *Tung Wah News/Times*. The CHAF Project is a collaboration jointly initiated by Professor John Fitzgerald at La Trobe University and myself, funded primarily through the Australia Foundation, the National Council for the Centenary of Federation and the Australian Research Council. Further information about this project and its outcomes can be found at the project's web site at www.chaf.lib.latrobe.edu.au

It is a curious question as to why it took 40 years for Chinese-language newspapers to take root in Australia, and to then flourish while at the same time the potential readership was decreasing. This may, of course, relate to the wider issue of when the Western concept of the newspaper began to be adopted in Chinese societies, either in China or in the diaspora.¹⁰ It may also have to do with the improvements in technologies of communication and transportation after the 1880s, which may have reduced the costs of printing and enabled broader distribution beyond a local audience (Melbourne and Sydney newspapers are known to have been distributed around Australia, and to New Zealand and the Pacific). It may also be because of the increasing interest among the Australian Chinese communities in keeping abreast of the major political and social changes in China which accelerated in the last years of the Qing Dynasty and into the Republican period.

But the lack of Chinese-language newspapers from the 1850s to the 1880s may also relate to the attitudes in this period of Chinese Australian community leaders, and perhaps

especially the merchants with the money to invest in establishing a newspaper venture. I will return to the role of the merchants.

First, I would like to consider other ways of finding Chinese voices in Australia dating from the 1850s to the 1880s.

Private or business papers and correspondence of Chinese in Australia, written in Chinese, are rare items from this period (although some may still lurk in the homes of descendants of early Chinese pioneers). The earliest substantial first-person document is the journal of Jong Ah Sing (Jong Ah Sing?), a Chinese miner incarcerated in a lunatic asylum in Victoria for the last 33 years of his life from the 1860s onwards. This diary, written in a unique and difficult style of English influenced by Chinese syntax, has been reviewed by Yuan Fang Shen in her *Dragon Seed in the Antipodes*,¹¹ and also has been translated and published in full by Ruth Moore and John Tully.¹² The earliest substantial business records in Australia are those of the Foon Kee Company of Little Bourke Street in Melbourne, which date to about 1905, and are held in our museum.¹³

The earliest known Chinese book about Australia is a Chinese-English phrase book, of unspecified date and place of publication, also in our museum's collection.¹⁴ It provides handy phrases in English, along with Chinese translations and other lines of Chinese characters, which, when pronounced in either of two Cantonese dialects, approximate the sound of the English word. The book also provides lists of place names on the Californian and Victorian goldfields, again with translations and phonetic equivalents. Occasionally the author provides some short commentary about a location, such as saying that 'Emerald Hill is beside the sea, diagonally opposite Melbourne city. That's where the See Yup Company is located'. At another point he notes that he 'lived in the town of Castlemaine for many years, and so is able to provide more names for goldfields in that district'. Something of the lifestyle and concerns of a Chinese colonist can be ascertained from the types of phrases provided: mining gold, dealing with court cases,

buying goods, trading, talking with English women, cooking, seeing a doctor, returning to China and the like. Yet the absence of growing or trading in vegetables probably locates this book in the 1860s, before the increase in market gardening as a major activity in the 1870s.¹⁵

A similar book was discovered in Hong Kong in recent decades, which appears to be published in the 1880s and is specific in content to Sydney. This was analysed by James Hayes at a conference at our museum in 1993.¹⁶

It would seem, though, that in order to find the majority of Chinese accounts of Australia in this period, it is necessary to rely on English-language texts written by Chinese or written by Europeans who are recounting the words and views of Chinese.

There is a perhaps surprising number of these sources, in a variety of contexts. We have letters to the English-language newspapers, petitions to parliament,¹⁷ letters of protest to the Government, memorials and testimonials to British and colonial dignitaries. A number of parliamentary and other government inquiries recorded the words of Chinese witnesses. Court cases also record the views of Chinese involved in litigation or charged with criminal offences. Christian missions to the Chinese in colonial Australia included Chinese immigrants as evangelists, deacons and ministers — and the views of these men are included in church correspondence and publications.

The pages of metropolitan and country newspapers are rich sources of information about Chinese people and their views, and they have only recently begun to be systematically analysed for information about and by Chinese Australians. The Chinese references in newspapers in two particular provincial Victorian towns have recently been made available to the public. An index to Chinese references in the *Bendigo Advertiser* has been made available through a joint project between the Golden Dragon Museum in Bendigo and La Trobe University.¹⁸ Articles about Chinese in the newspapers of the Beechworth district have been extracted and compiled into a book by independent researcher Vivienne McWaters.¹⁹

A more tangential 'account' of Australia is the analysis of photographs and other images of and by Chinese. What and who are being photographed? For what purpose, and for what audience? To enable a more sophisticated analysis of visual records as documents of Chinese Australian history, a new research collaboration has begun between our Chinese Museum, La Trobe University and the Australian Science and Technology Heritage Centre. This is being funded through the Australian Research Council, with PhD candidate Sophie Couchman creating an online annotated catalogue of images of Chinese and their descendants in Australasia, China and South-East Asia.²⁰

What accounts of Australia do these sources, produced by Chinese in Australia, give? In considering this question, I was required to examine, as I increasingly do in my role at the Chinese Museum, what is the nature of Australia and the nature of Australian culture. In the context of this Asian Accounts Project, are 'Chinese' outsiders to 'Australia' commenting from a cultural as well as a geographical distance, or are they part of the developing Australian culture? Are accounts of Chinese community life in Australia accounts of Australia? Has this project fed inadvertently into the 'us and them' mentality by focusing on articles which place a cultural and/or geographical distance between 'Asians' and 'Australians'?

When looking for documents relevant to my paper, I reviewed the reports by Cheong Cheok Hong of his tour of inspection of Chinese mission districts in rural Australia in 1887²¹ and William Young's report on the Chinese population of Victoria in 1868.²² Both notably talk only about the Chinese quarters, camps and communities which they visited. My initial reaction was — well, they're only talking about Chinese, not about Australian society in general. So I, at first, discounted these documents for this paper. But then we had the Chinese New Year Festival recently in Melbourne, with a grand new dragon just arrived from Foshan in Guangdong parading through the streets of Melbourne and, of course, the ubiquitous lions and firecrackers, and tens

of thousands of Chinese Melbournians thronging with the rest of the community. Afterwards, a non-Chinese friend of mine commented, 'It was great — it was just like being in Hong Kong.' My immediate reaction was — no, it's just like being in Melbourne, where Chinese parades have been around for longer than Australian Rules Football, and where the Chinese dragon has been a centrepiece of the Moomba Parade since 1953, and where Europeans and Chinese have been enjoying Chinese festivities together since at least the 1860s.

So, I thought, we keep separating our accounts of Chinese Australian life from accounts of Australian life in general. And I asked myself, should I maintain this separation when framing this paper?

In the end, this led me to critically focus on the views of three key 'spokespeople' of the Chinese community in mid-colonial Victoria: the 'merchants', Louis Ah Mouy and Lowe Kong Meng, and the 'evangelist', Cheong Cheok Hong. These three appear quite frequently in the records of the day and are commonly referred to in histories of the Chinese in colonial Victoria. None of these men has yet received the critical biographical examination that their roles warrant. Oddie gives a cursory account of the 'merchant élite' in the colonial Chinese community, and goes little beyond the comment that the merchants were few and were leaders, and that the majority were labourers. Kong Meng and Ah Mouy get a few hundred words; Cheong is only 'a Chinese missionary'.²³ Kathryn Cronin gives somewhat more biographical details about each of these three, yet her book is mainly an examination of British Australian attitudes to the Chinese in their midst, and provides little in the way of an account of the development of the Chinese community and economic activity.²⁴

Contrary to the stereotype of the Chinese as a temporary sojourner in Australian colonial life, these three men committed themselves to lifelong settlement in the rapidly developing post-goldrush Victoria, and set about taking active roles in contributing to the creation of what Victorian colonial life would become.

What do these men offer us about their attitude to life in Australia in the 1850s to the 1880s?

The key text I will consider is *The Chinese Question in Australia*, published in Melbourne in 1879, in response to the campaign to keep Chinese sailors from working on Australian coastal shipping routes.²⁵ Nominally the work of Kong Meng, Ah Mouy and Cheong, it is probable that the main writer was Cheong. The tone and style is commensurate with that of the extensive Cheong correspondence archives held at the National Library and our Chinese Museum. Kong Meng and Ah Mouy would have lent their considerable renown in colonial life to increase the repute of the pamphlet. Kong Meng was a prolific writer of letters to the Government regarding injustices to the Chinese, so he would also have made a contribution to the content.²⁶ By 1879, each of these two merchants was a prominent entrepreneur, active in the highest reaches of colonial society, about 50 years of age, living in grand houses in Malvern and Middle Park. Cheong, by contrast, having arrived in 1863 as a 12-year-old, was only 27 in the year the pamphlet was written.²⁷ Educated in Melbourne to matriculation, he had a flair for English rhetoric and was well versed in the philosophies, histories and politics of Britain and China, in particular, and international affairs in general.

In broad terms, the pamphlet argues that the West forced China to open itself to the international community, to welcome the benefits of Western civilisation and to sign treaties permitting the free flow of foreigners into China, and Chinese into the territories of the Western signatory nations. Yet in the Australian part of the British Empire, there was a move to exclude and discriminate against Chinese. Much of the pamphlet argues that the terms of the treaty justify equality of treatment for all people as a moral principle. Pointing out the hypocrisy in the views of the Western nations, it demonstrates that discrimination and attacks against Westerners in China would invite the gunboats to bear down on China, yet the same treatment against Chinese in Australia goes unpunished. The pamphlet's arguments are placed in an international context,

with various examples of Western countries' living conditions, political views, citizens and philosophies compared favourably and unfavourably with those of China.

In this broader context, arguing the specifics of these issues in Australia affords us some ideas of how Australia was viewed by Cheong, Ah Mouy and Kong Meng.

According to the pamphlet, Australia is a place which is vast, under-populated and ripe for response to the efforts of labouring immigrants from around the world. By opening China up to the nations of Western Europe, Cheong et al. say that 'we [Chinese] learned that there were vast portions of the earth's surface which were almost destitute of inhabitants, and which were capable of supporting the redundant millions of Europe and Asia'.²⁸ Australia at the beginning of the goldrush 'was a great continent nearly half as large again as China, and containing only a few hundreds of thousands of civilised people thinly scattered around the coast ... rich in the precious metals and very fertile'. Now, they argue 25 years later, China 'is estimated to contain not much less than 2,000,000 square miles of territory, and 400,000,000 people. Australia comprises an area of close upon 3,000,000 square miles, and it contains no more than 2,100,000 white people, and a few thousand black. In our own land, millions of men, women, and children — yes, millions — think of the horror and pity of it! — have died of starvation during the last year'.

'Would you seek to debar us,' they go on to say, 'from participating in the abundance with which a bountiful Providence — or, as our Master Confucius says, the most great and sovereign God — rewards the industrious and the prudent in this country? Did man create it, or did God? And if it be His work, then can it be disputed that it is open to all who cannot obtain the means of subsistence in their own country, and who will faithfully conform to the laws of this?'

Australia is also clearly seen by the authors as being predominantly an English country, and clearly a part of the British Empire, with all the privileges and responsibilities this implies. Yet it is also a locus of the benefits of an international

borderless community created through multilateral treaties permitting the free flow of immigrants between nations. Australia is, in theory, governed by English principles of fairness, which are also congruent with Christian values, and, moreover, at heart are similar to Confucian precepts. When the Western powers argued for China's engagement with the world, say the authors, the argument was that 'God hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth. We are all his children. Let us draw together the ties of commercial amity, and live and do business together like friends and brethren'. As a consequence, the Chinese, they say, 'felt sure that such an enlightened people as the English ... would eagerly welcome the arrival of some thousands of frugal, laborious, patient, docile and persevering immigrants'.

The writers add that the English were 'a great, free people ... which owes so much of the prosperity of its mother country to the fact that it has been, for many centuries past, the refuge and the asylum of foreigners flying from religious persecution and political oppression in their own countries. In this way, its woollen, crêpe, and silk manufactures were established by fugitives from the Netherlands and from France; and thus its hospitality to strangers has been twice blessed. It blessed those whom it welcomed to its shores, and it blessed its own industries by the arts and processes which these aliens communicated to their hosts. And if an island so small as the United Kingdom made no demur about opening its arms to all comers, and was not afraid of the competition of these exiles, but greeted them as fellow-workers, surely there is room enough in this large continent [of Australia]'.

They continue, 'Your missionaries came among us, and read from your Scriptures beautiful precepts like those of Confucius and Mencius. They spoke to us of the brotherhood of man, and told us that the foundation principle of the social religion of Englishmen was this — "Ye shall do unto others as ye would they should do unto you". And this, also, is the sentiment of our own Great Teacher'.

Australia was also a country which had undeniably profited from the skills and enterprise of Chinese immigrants. 'It cannot be denied that our countrymen have been good colonists. Had it not been for them, the cultivation of vegetables, so indispensable to the maintenance of health in a hot climate like this, would scarcely have been attempted in the neighbourhood of some of the goldfields; and the mortality of children would have been very much greater than it really has been. Lease or sell half an acre of apparently worthless land to a small party of Chinamen, and, if there is access to any kind of water or manure, they will transform it, by their system of intensive husbandry, into a most prolific garden, and will make it yield such a rapid succession of crops as will excite the astonishment and admiration of European market-gardeners. As fishermen and itinerant fishmongers, our countrymen have been equally serviceable to the community; and as hawkers of all kinds of useful wares, they are indefatigable, cheerful, obliging, and patient'.

Yet the authors express amazement at the amount of prejudice, discrimination and abuse meted out to the Chinese in Australia: 'Nothing, we submit, can be more unreasonable, unjust, or undeserved, than the clamour which has been raised against the Chinese by a portion of the people of this colony; for we refuse to believe that that clamour expresses the opinions and feelings of the great bulk of the community'. Nevertheless, they see that such prejudice does not extend to non-British Europeans. 'You do not endeavour to exclude Germans, or Frenchmen, or Italians, or Danes, or Swedes. There are men of all these nationalities here'.

On the key issue of a supposed downward effect on wages of European workmen if Chinese labour is allowed free rein in Australia, the authors argue this to be a sentimental rather than real grievance. They state that 'the earnings of the Chinese labourer in his native land are quite inconsiderable by comparison with the rate of wages current in Australia, is undeniable. But human nature is human nature all the world over; and the Chinaman is just as fond of money, and just as

eager to earn as much as he can, as the most grasping of his competitors. There are Irishmen in this colony who have known what it was to work for four or five shillings a week in the island they came from; but when they emigrate to Victoria, they are not content to put up with lesser wages than they find other farm hands earning’.

‘And so it will be,’ they continue, ‘after a very little time, with our own countrymen here. Living among people who have invented thousands of artificial wants, and thousands of means of gratifying them, the expenditure of the Asiatic will soon rise to the European level, because his habits and his mode of living will approximate to those of his neighbours; and, as it is, it cannot have escaped the observation of persons who have been brought much into contact with the Chinese in Victoria, that the diet of such of them as are tolerably prosperous becomes more generous and costly in proportion to the improvement of their circumstances, and that those who marry and settle here conform to British methods of housekeeping, and are not less liberal and hospitable than their European fellow-colonists’.

Even without knowing the background of the authors, and allowing for the special pleading inherent in such a tract, there is still a sense that the authors have a great respect for many of the attributes of Western society, and especially those of Britain; and an equal respect for the characteristics of Chinese culture.

Ah Mouy and Kong Meng arrived within two years of each other in 1851 and 1853.²⁹ Ah Mouy claimed that he was first to start the Chinese goldrush to Victoria. A native of Guangdong, he came to Melbourne via Singapore, as a carpenter working with an English captain bringing prefabricated houses to Melbourne from Singapore.³⁰ Kong Meng was born in Penang, of a Cantonese father and a Malaysian mother. An uncle was a lawyer in the British courts in Singapore, and his brother was killed in ‘the Chinese war’ in the service of the East India Company (this was probably the First Opium War).³¹ In 1859, Kong Meng argued in court in Melbourne that he need not pay the Chinese residence tax as,

being born in a British colony, he was a British subject — although the court determined that ‘the mere fact of Kong Meng having been born in a British settlement did not constitute him a British subject, without collateral evidence of his parents being British subjects also’.³²

Both built their fortunes on a combination of trading and investing in gold mining.³³ Both imported Chinese foodstuffs for their fellow immigrants, and tea for the British Australians.³⁴ Kong Meng had his own fleet of six ships and traded across the Indian Ocean and in South-East Asia.³⁵ Each had substantial investments in companies with a majority of British Australian directors.³⁶ They were not exclusive denizens of the Chinese quarter, but mixed in the leading business and social circles of Melbourne.³⁷ They were also at the forefront of economic innovation, being pioneers in coal mining for the new steam ships and refrigerated fishing boats for the Bass Strait fleets.³⁸ Both were foundation members of the Commercial Bank of Australia in 1866, and were among its largest shareholders.³⁹ Throughout the 19th century, when Australian private banks printed their own notes, this bank printed Chinese text on its notes, and possibly also a series with German text, both in general circulation.⁴⁰ Both actions were an acknowledgement of the considerable populations of Chinese and Germans in the colony,⁴¹ and clearly indicate a willingness to accommodate and incorporate non-British cultures into the economic and cultural development of the country. Kong Meng also organised displays at various Melbourne International Exhibitions of Chinese crafts and industry.⁴² Ah Mouy, a leading member of the See Yup Society, donated the land for the society’s elaborate temple in South Melbourne,⁴³ which was constructed in 1866. It still stands in Raglan Street, South Melbourne, and is a striking combination of neo-classical and Chinese design.

It is important to note that these two merchants came to Australia by way of the British Straits Settlements in South-East Asia and were engaged in commercial activities — before they arrived in Australia — which made use of the expanding operations of the British Empire in the Far East and the Indies,

as well as the networks of Chinese trade. They were active at a time when Australia was still being explored and settled by the British and at a time when Britain was establishing colonial presences in China, South-East Asia, Melanesia and northern Australia, and when Chinese *émigrés* were also expanding labour and trading endeavours in the Pacific and the Indies. It was a time when the definition of Australia as being separate from Asia had not yet been made, and when many Europeans felt that the north of Australia, like New Guinea and the Indies, was better suited to people used to working in the tropics. By their operations and careers, as well as their words, Lowe Kong Meng and Louis Ah Mouy, in concert with the younger Cheong Cheok Hong, demonstrated a clear commitment to a vision of Australia which was multicultural and internationalist, with a free movement of people, a sense of hospitality and welcome, and the creation of a society combining the best of many cultures.

It is also clear, from the way immigration policy developed later in Australia, that they failed in this endeavour.

Footnotes

- 1 Unsourced news article on page 51 of an album of newspaper clippings regarding Lowe Kong Meng, donated to the Chinese Museum by descendants of Lowe Kong Meng. Probably dated from the 1870s.
- 2 Statistics for the Colony of Victoria 1858 and 1859 record Chinese population on the Victorian goldfields for 31 December, 1858 and 31 December, 1859 as 33,673 and 26,044 respectively. During 1858–59 the Victorian Government was imposing heavy discriminatory poll taxes, miners' licences and residence taxes on Chinese, and the Chinese miners were engaged in widespread evasion of these taxes. It is assumed that this evasion would have led to under-counting of the Chinese population, so it may be that numbers reached the 50,000 level. *Statistics for the Colony of Victoria 1858*, p.77, Victorian Public Records Office VPRS/943/P000 Unit 9; *Statistics for the Colony of Victoria 1859*, p.101, Victorian Public Records Office VPRS/943/P000 Unit 11.
- 3 Ryan, J. 1995. *Ancestors: Chinese in Colonial Australia*. p.162. Western Australia: Fremantle Arts Centre Press.
- 4 The 1947 Census recorded 12,094 people living in Australia whose country of origin was China (of either 'full-blood' or 'half-caste' status). See Palfreeman, A.C. 1967. *The Administration of the White Australia Policy*. pp.145–6. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press. Cited in Markus, A. 1994. *Australian Race Relations 1788–1993*. p.152. Sydney: Allen & Unwin.
- 5 *The English and Chinese Advertiser* was published every Saturday and delivered free of charge to all stores and places of business in the township, Main Road, Specimen Hill, Eureka, and at the stores of the Chinese at the Chinese quarters in Golden Point, Redhill and Sailors Gully. At least 96 issues were published. At that time there were approximately 5,000 Chinese living in Ballarat. Four editions are held in the Ballarat Gold Museum. The earliest surviving edition is called the *CHINESE ADVERTISER and Pioneer of Christianity and Christian Civilisation Around the Chinese in Australia*. A later three editions, called *The English and Chinese Advertiser*, are: No. 3, Saturday 25 October, 1856; No. 60, Saturday 28 November, 1857; and 7 August, 1858 (edition number illegible — may be No. 96.). A fifth edition, No. 87, Saturday 5 June, 1858, is held by the State Library of Victoria. The other extant edition is 14 March, 1857, held at the Mitchell Library in Sydney. An article in *The Argus*, 31 October, 1868, p.5, states, 'Chinese newspapers in Victoria are not wholly unknown. They have been attempted more

than once, but we believe the only success achieved in this direction was by a Mr Bell, of Ballarat. He was then a tolerable Chinese scholar, and for years printed and published upon Bakery-hill a Chinese paper. It was entirely his own affair, for he cut the characters on blocks of wood, from which he took impressions. The thing was but a rude broadsheet, after all, and died a natural death long since’.

6 *The Argus*, 31 October, 1868, p.5. The article states that ‘the first number was printed and published yesterday by Mr E. Whitehead, of 87 Collins Street East ... It resembles as nearly as possible an English commercial paper, the reading matter and advertisements being, of course, compiled and edited for Chinese readers exclusively. No. 1 consists — we are informed — of a preface; a portion of the Rev Young’s Chinese report; an epitome of the late mail news; an account of the late South American earthquakes; and other intelligence. The price is 6d. per copy. The *Fi-pao* office is at 75 Chancery Lane’.

7 Published in Sydney from 1894 to 1923. It is archived at the Mitchell Library, Sydney.

8 Also published in Sydney, first as the *Tung Wah News* (1898–1902) and then changing its name to the *Tung Wah Times* (1902–36). More information about this newspaper, and an index to its contents, can be found at the web site of the Chinese Heritage of Australian Federation Project, www.chaf.lib.latrobe.edu.au

9 As well as the *Chinese Australian Herald* and the *Tung Wah News/Times*, the other main newspapers were the *Chinese Times* and the *Chinese Republic News*. The *Chinese Times* was published in Melbourne from 1902 to 1922, with various changes to its Chinese name, and in its ownership and political affiliations, during the period. In 1922 the paper was transferred from Melbourne to Sydney. Although it occasionally suspended publication, it continued in print until the close of World War II. Copies of the Melbourne editions are archived at the State Library of Victoria. It is not known whether copies of the Sydney editions still exist. The *Chinese Republic News*, dating from 1912 to at least 1937, was published in Sydney. Editions for 1914 to 1937 are archived at the Mitchell Library. Besides these general newspapers a number of other Chinese-language magazines were published in Melbourne and Sydney. The Chinese Masonic Association (*Zhigongtang*), for example, issued a purely commercial magazine known as *The Bulletin (Gongbao)*. Another was called *Harmony (Pingbao)* and a third *Commerce (Shangbao)*, which was

published jointly in English and Chinese. For a summary of Australian Chinese newspapers at the turn of the 20th century, see Liu, Weiping, *Chinese Newspapers in Australia from the Turn of the Century*, which can be found at www.chaf.lib.latrobe.edu.au/chinese_newspapers.shtml. This is a translated excerpt from Liu, Weiping. 1989. *Aozhou huaqiao shi (History of Overseas Chinese in Australia)*. pp.99–105. Chapter 7. Xingdao chubanshe.

10 For an account of the development of Chinese-language newspapers in South-East Asia, see Chen, Mong Hock. 1967. *The Early Chinese Newspapers of Singapore, 1881–1912*. Singapore: University of Malaya Press.

11 Shen, Yuan Fang. 2001. *Dragon Seed in the Antipodes: Chinese-Australian Autobiographies*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.

12 Jong, Ah Siug, Ruth Moore and John Tully. 2000. *A Difficult Case: an autobiography of a Chinese miner on the Central Victorian goldfields*. Daylesford: Jim Crow Press.

13 Foon Kee Collection, Chinese Museum, Melbourne.

14 Donated to the Chinese Museum in 1988.

15 Frost, Warwick. 2002. Migrants and technological transfer: Chinese farming in Australia, 1850–1920. *Australian Economic History Review*. pp.113–30. Vol. 42. No. 2. July 2002.

16 Hayes, James. 1995. 'Good Morning Mrs Thomson!': a Chinese-English word-book from 19th century Sydney. In Macgregor, Paul (ed.), 1995, *Histories of the Chinese in Australasia and the South Pacific*. pp.113–26. Melbourne: Museum of Chinese Australian History.

17 The title of this paper is drawn from a petition dated 15 September, 1857, regarding the 'Influx of the Chinese', presented to members of the Legislative Assembly of Victoria. Victorian Parliamentary paper. E. 76, 1856–7.

18 This index can be viewed at the Golden Dragon Museum in Bendigo.
19 McWaters, V. 2002. *Beechworth's Little Canton: The History of the Spring Creek Chinese Camp and its Residents*. Beechworth, Victoria: self-published.

20 Images of Chinese in Australia, New Zealand and South-East Asia, 1850–1950. 2002–05. Australian Research Council Linkages Project. No. LP0211909.

21 Letter from Cheong, Cheok Hong, to unknown respondent, 19 July, 1887, which is a report on a recent Tour of Inspection in the Mission Districts of Blackwood, Daylesford, Maryborough and St Arnaud and Melbourne. Archived in the C.H. Cheong letters file, Cheong Collection, at the Chinese Museum, Melbourne.

- 22 Young, Rev W. 1868. Report on the condition of the Chinese population in Victoria. Presented to both Houses of Parliament in 1868. p.21. *Votes and Proceedings, Victorian Legislative Assembly*. Vol. III.
- 23 Oddie, G. 1962. The Lower Class Chinese and the Merchant Elite in Victoria, 1870–1890. pp.65–70. *Historical Studies*. Vol. 10.
- 24 Cronin, Kathryn. 1982. *Colonial Casualties: Chinese in Early Victoria*. For Kong Meng, see pp.26–31. For Ah Mouy, see pp.26–28. For Cheong, see p.117. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.
- 25 L. Kong Meng, Cheong Cheok Hong and Louis Ah Mouy. 1879. *The Chinese Question in Australia, 1878–79*. Melbourne: F.F. Bailliere. An original copy of this pamphlet is held in the State Library of Victoria. A digital transcript is also available on the Chinese Heritage of Australian Federation web site, www.chaf.lib.latrobe.edu.au (Digitised Historic Documents Database in the Resources section of the site).
- 26 McCormack, Terri. 1988. Lowe Kong Meng, 1831–1888: Champion of racial tolerance. In Baldwin, Suzy (ed.), 1988, *Unsung Heroes and Heroines of Australia*. p.58. Greenhouse Publications.
- 27 Welch, I. 1997. Cheok Hong Cheong, 1851–1928. In *St Mark's Review*. p.23. Spring 1997.
- 28 L. Kong Meng, Cheong Cheok Hong and Louis Ah Mouy. 1879. *The Chinese Question in Australia, 1878–79*. Melbourne: F.F. Bailliere. p.1 of digital version at www.chaf.lib.latrobe.edu.au. References in the remainder of this paragraph and in the subsequent eight paragraphs are to pp.1, 3, 5 and 8 of this document.
- 29 Yong, Ching-fatt. 1974. Lowe Kong Meng and Louey Ah Mouy. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. Vol. 5. Melbourne.
- 30 In Days of Old; Victoria's First Chinaman; Story of the Gold Fever; One Letter Brings 37,000 immigrants. p.5. *The Sun*, 12 May, 1918.
- 31 District Court report. *The Argus*, 3 June, 1859. Melbourne.
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 For Ah Mouy's trading and mining, see his obituary: In Days of Old; Victoria's First Chinaman; Story of the Gold Fever; One Letter Brings 37,000 immigrants. p.5. *The Sun*, 12 May, 1918. For Kong Meng's trading and mining, see Yong, Ching-fatt. 1974. Lowe Kong Meng. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. Vol. 5. Melbourne.
- 34 In a meeting with the Chief Secretary of Victoria in 1859, Kong Meng is said to have just had a cargo of 10,000 pounds sterling arrived from China ('Chinese Residence Tax'. *The Examiner*, 4 June, 1859). *The Argus*, 16 February, 1874, reported: 'The ship Rifleman,

- from Hong Kong, with a general cargo, consisting of rice, tea and chow-chow, consigned to Messrs. Kong Meng and Co., paid her first visit to this port yesterday'. In 1881, Kong Meng imported substantial quantities of tea on the SS *Ocean*, SS *Meath* and the SS *Bowen*, from Foochow and Hong Kong (LKM newsclippings scrapbook, Chinese Museum, pp.74, 84). Ah Mouy established a tea merchant's business in Swanston Street in 1852, which was still in business at the time of his death in 1918 (*The Sun*, 12 May, 1918. p.5).
- 35 Yong, Ching-fatt. 1974. Lowe Kong Meng. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. Vol. 5. Melbourne.
- 36 Various news clippings documenting the affairs of Kong Meng and Ah Mouy are contained in a scrapbook of clippings donated to the Chinese Museum by descendants of Lowe Kong Meng. Ah Mouy and Kong Meng were shareholders and members of the provisional committee for the Commercial Bank of Australia, founded in 1866 (Prospectus for the Commercial Bank of Australia, *The Age*, 30 March, 1866, in scrapbook, p.18). Kong Meng was treasurer and provisional director for the Yarra Distillery Company (scrapbook, p.74). He was on the Provisional Committee for the South Crinoline Amalgamated Quartz-Mining Company (p.77), and was a provisional director of the English, Australian and New Zealand Marine Insurance Company (p.78), the Midas Consols Gold-Mining Company (p.92), the Madame Bent Gold-Mining Company (p.95), and, in 1888, of the Outward Bound Consolidated Silver-Mining Company, Thackeringa, NSW (p.98). And, although Kong Meng had the largest shareholding (10 per cent) in the Madame Kong Meng Gold-Mining Company in 1887, the rest of the 26 shareholders were British or European Australians (p.82).
- 37 On one occasion the Mayor of Melbourne entertained the principal Chinese mercantile men resident in Melbourne in the Town Hall (LKM newsclippings scrapbook, Chinese Museum, p.47). On another occasion it was reported that 'Mr Cook, MLA, Mayor of Hotham, Mr Whiteman, MLA, Mr Kong Meng, and a large number of well-known citizens in official and mercantile positions' were present at a banquet held by John Bunclie to celebrate the opening of new showrooms for his agricultural implements (scrapbook, p.53). Kong Meng was on the committee for a banquet held in honour of visiting British parliamentarian Alderman McArthur (scrapbook, p.69). Kong Meng was also a patron of an Easter Fair to raise funds for Melbourne's New Homoeopathic Hospital (scrapbook, p.86).

- 38 Kong Meng was a provisional director of the Hazelwood Coal-Mining Company (LKM newsclippings scrapbook, Chinese Museum, p.47) and the Mirboo Collieries' Proprietary, Gippsland (scrapbook p.94). Kong Meng and Ah Mouy were provisional directors of the Melbourne Fishmongers and Deep Sea Fishing Company (scrapbook, p.72).
- 39 Prospectus for the Commercial Bank of Australia, *The Age*, 30 March, 1866, in Lowe Kong Meng newsclippings scrapbook, Chinese Museum, p.18.
- 40 *The Sun*, 12 May, 1918. p.5: 'Years ago certain Chinese characters were printed on the bank notes, and they aroused great curiosity. This was Ah Mouy's successful device to obtain the custom of the Chinese residents of Melbourne'.
- 41 By the early 1860s, more than 10,000 Germans were living in Victoria. See www.heritage.vic.gov.au/pdf/forms/german_report_pp.1-21.pdf
- 42 McCormack, Terri. 1988. Lowe Kong Meng, 1831-1888: Champion of racial tolerance. In Baldwin, Suzy (ed.), 1988, *Unsung Heroes and Heroines of Australia*. p.57. Greenhouse Publications.
- 43 *The Sun*, 12 May, 1918. p.5.