

## Final Translations of the “Wing Hong Hum Papers, 1935-1954,” housed at the Montana Historical Society.

- ❖ Note that some letters have specific date while others do not. The letters contained below have been arranged as much as possibly chronologically.

1949:

**89.30.15      IMG\_6382.JPG**

Hong Hum brother:

I gathered that you have received my letter and past it on to my father.

From your letter I know that you have tried, several times, to convince him (my father) to come home. He is old, fragile, and unable to work anymore, so he should come home. However, Jin-Can has not completed the (immigration?) process to get him over, and other notes are unsold yet. Hope that when you have time, write to him seriously to consult on this matter. Asking him to consider that how tough it would be if he came home now without money, while prices on everything are going up daily, and he has no more income but spendings? So, it's a very dark and bleak world!

Anyway, hope after the matter is settled, must come home soon. (Hope after the immigration process is completed, that you (or her father?) will come home soon.)

Since the beginning of this year, haven't received any money nor letters from my father. Family are very worried and wondering what happened out there? And the family expenditures are tremendous now. Please explain these to him and tell him that we wish him to sent some money home no matter how.

Dear brother, When you were home, I have always known you to love the cinema, intensely. I am sure that you are in a theater right now, aren't you? I hope that you are managing to live well, paying attention to hygiene, and keeping your clothes neat and clean. Don't go to dangerous nor prohibited places. As for those movies which help you acquire knowledge and benefits, go during your leisure time. But, you probably got some knowledge from watching movies. I hope you are not wasting unnecessarily everyday, save.

Dear brother, I wrote letters frequently, but it's inconvenient without a fountain pen. I would love for you to buy one for me from there, like the one Brother Yin-Xuan has. Mailing it to me to use is what I wish. (i.e. She would love to have a fountain pen acquired from oversea or wherever Yong-Xiang was and mailed it to her.)

Last month you paid the bill, and your mother gave me \$20 Hong Kong notes. I used it. (i.e., From the money you sent last month, your mother gave me \$20 H.K. dollars to use.)

Wish every family member is well. Please don't

miss (us) from afar. Herein pray (you)

are safe and sound

Sister, Mei-Ling inscribed.

July 27th, 1949

89.30.3 #6363

Dear Brother Wing Hung,

I sent you a letter a short while ago. Trust you have received it properly. I have not received any reply from you. I keep thinking about you. I am now in Hong Kong going through the process of applying to go to the US. It will be fast. All the formalities should be completed within a short period of time. I can then go to the US by ship. However, there is a service fee of USD 550. The process in Hong Kong is rather simple. When you see this letter, please go quickly to arrange a passport so that I can start working on it in Hong Kong. I am worry that there might be a change of consulate in Hong Kong which will cause delay. That's why I urge you, my brother, to get the passport as soon as possible without any further delay. In Hong Kong, the process requires a family photo of all family members as proof. I am glad that I have one taken previously. If I don't have it, they won't accept my passport application. When you see this letter, please remember, remember (emphasize it by repeating the word ) to get the passport quickly. It is important to send it back to me properly. In regards to our testimony, you and I went back to hometown from Hong Kong and got married in July of that year. Your engagement (was/was not – this point not clear ) arranged by Mom. The marriage was in the first lunar month of 37th Years of Republic of China ( equivalent to 1948 ). After getting married, you have to add the point of “return back to Hong Kong after one month, resume work at Luk Lwok Hotel”. If the tax bureau asks, my brother, please answer along this line. Thank you for doing this. I will talk to you more later when we meet.

Best wishes,  
Younger brother Yu Ho  
July 28, 1949

89-30.2 Document 6361

Dear Nephew Hong Hum,

Seeing your letter is like seeing you in person. It has been some months since we separated in Yangshi. By my understanding, you have safely arrived in America. I am very reassured. Guangdong is safe and peaceful now– please don't worry.

I have read Jianchuang's oral testimony. One must pay attention. I have sent this testimony to you. After you have made corrections [to English?], please record/document it. Having done this, confirm the final copy and send it back so we can read it thoroughly. Thus he can use these documents to go to America more quickly. On Jianchuang's university diploma, it says that he was 25. I worry that this is false/inconsistent. This point is very important. Pay close attention and see how this might be amended.

The beginning of the school year at various schools in Guangzhou has yet to be confirmed. Therefore, Yingxuan is still at home and has to wait for further developments to see if they can return to school. I still don't have work in Guangzhou and am living with brother Yingcai for the time being. Those who

can go to work don't have work to go to, and the vast majority of those who should be in school don't have schools to be in. Circumstances at home are unpleasant. If Kexing and Jianchuang are also unemployed, I also do not have work – how does our family survive? Who could not despair at this situation! We must now get Jianchuang and someone else [Kexing] to America in order to solve our problem.

Everyone is well– do not worry. Best regards, etc.,  
Hand written by your ignorant uncle.

July 30, Republican Year 38 [July 30, 1949]  
[Written on Guomintang military paper]

89-30.1                      360-363

360-361-362-363

Envelope:

To: Kuang Xin Da Bao Store

Care of

Mr. Yong Heng Tan

(at the edge of letter:)

Yesterday I received USD100 paid by Ren An Pharmacy. Please do not worry. My sister in law will reply to you later.

(Formal letter:)

Dear my brother Yong Heng,

Your letter has been received earlier together with the HKD20 folded in the envelope. I have replied to you. Have you received? Brother Heng, how are you recently in America? Have you started the process to apply for Bing Shuang's going to USA? Everyone at home cares about this issue a lot. We wish you could go on with it actively so as to save us some worries here. It has been heard that American government has changed their attitude towards the Chinese going to USA. And maybe preparing the paperwork in America and directly filing the application to American Immigration Bureau would be faster and easier than doing this with Consulate in China. We have got some advices through the letters from other American Chinese instructing us some smoother path. Please follow this path to carry on the process rapidly. Now please let me tell you some path about applying to going to USA!

Yaosheng (Aka Yiqiang, the son of Wenzhan), maybe you know him, is applying three young men for going to USA. The cost for each Birth Certificate is 3500 Yuan, (to be continued on next page...)

(Continue from front page:)

All the applications for these three young men were filed in America. While in America, he appointed the grant lawyer Mr. Jinshao Chow to handle this in San Francisco till the safe arrival on a commission basis. Only after the arrival, he would pay just USD400 per person as the commission and remunerate. It has been heard that this grant lawyer, Mr. Jinshao Chow, is a very famous lawyer at the moment. You can consult with Uncle Hua and go on following this way, which should be a good way. We believe that you handling this through Mr. Zhenxun Zhang should be good. Or, you could change to Mr. JinShao Chow. Anyway, you should speed up this process. As for the money needed for this matter, it will be a very important issue whether or not we can raise it. After all, in this current world, only money works. I am sure that you are aware of this. I have written to Bing Shuang and asked him to write to KuangyuanSheng in New York for about 1000 Yuan. If he can get it, it will be the best. However, whether or not he can get it, only the fact will tell us. (to be continued on next page...)

(Continue from front page:)

Otherwise, you will have to find a solution yourself instead.

At this moment, the opportunity is good that all the application can be done in America. It should be faster and trustworthy. We need to catch hold of this opportunity as soon as we can so as to prevent the complicated formalities of doing this in China. That is all we hope. Please proceed rapidly, which is very important.

Now I have another thing to report, which might give you some sentiment. The fifth princess of Uncle Kuangyan was born recently. The baby is fat and white. For us, we received more gift cakes to eat. However, for his family, it is more burdens. Yayan is still breastfed. She doesn't like cow milk. Every night she was fighting with the baby for milk that made her crying badly. Good that Yazhi is at home on vacation and helping temporarily. So our aunty in law can be relieved a little. So you can tell how hard to be a mother.

Our brother Jin Fang has left for USA on 3rd. I believe that he will stop over San Francisco. You better write to him more often and also consult with him about the entry issue of American Chinese. Because he has been in San Francisco for long time (to be continued on next page...)

(Continue from front page:)

..he acquaints with a lot of people. Therefore you may get some help from him. About 80 or 90% of people in our village have immigrated to USA, only Uncle Wei stayed. Tomorrow Yi Fu and Uncle Nai will leave for America. He Rui is going to Hong Kong waiting for the airplane for "the Country of Gold". So far, only a bunch of hobo left in the village being useless parasites!

Recently the war got intense. The Great Battle in Chang Sha spread violently. The security of Nan Hua is relying on this battle. Fortunately there were not big riots in Tai Shan. Only about 10 days ago, eight commies (three were women among them) and some suspects were captured at the Lower Valley. And for each of them, it was ten thousand plus some yuan to redeem their lives. This is some news in Tai Shan recently.

Right now everyone at home is safe and sound. Please do not worry afar. I wish you could write to me more to comfort.

Wish you all the peace and happiness!

Your brother,  
July (mailed on Aug. 1, 1949)

89-30.118 Document 6401

Uncle Yongheng / Hong Hum,

Your registered letter, regular letter, cheque, and 100 dollars of July 20 were received on the 30<sup>th</sup>. On the 31<sup>st</sup>, Uncle Yinxuan came over to collect them. He took and used both the letter and money. After he received the letter, he told us that you had arrived safely and sent the reply. The family was very happy to have received these. We are happy for you. Your letter discussed the conditions there, namely, that affairs in every walk of life are worse than before. It seems that it is like this everywhere. If, in the world, others aren't doing well, then at least you might be doing well. Never resent that you don't make enough money – at least with work you have a place to be and a way to live. Everything else can be arranged well. Take thrift as a principle and don't waste or spend frivolously. Your future is bright and your prospects are unlimited. Everyone at home is peaceful and is comforted by news of your safety. I have written this letter to let you know and wish you success.

Chinese Republic. 1949 August 2.

Li Shengpi / Li Singbai

Envelope reads:

Esteemed Wing Hong Hum receiving  
From Li Shengpi  
America, Maoshidi / 猫失地 [possibly Montana, lit. “cat lost place”]

**89-30.189 IMG 6412**

永亨 Hong Hum (older) brother, ... I received a letter yesterday about 炳雙 (Bǐng shuāng), who left the country. Someone interrupted the matter (wasn't specified)... Hope you can be more aware and talk to uncle 光吳 (Guāng wú) about it soon. I hope that this matter can be solved quickly. It is difficult to leave the country recently. And now America is recruiting soldiers. The process to go to America often takes a long time which shows that things are changing very rapidly in the world. We have to wait for the best time to take actions. In my case, I am only lack of the procedure process because of the payment (maybe he can't afford it?). Hope you can solve this quickly so I do not have to worry about it!

**IMG 6413**

五勝 (Wǔ shèng) sent letters frequently about marriage problems such as finding a partner. There is a girl from 桂水鄉蓮洲 (Guì shuǐxiāng lián zhōu) who is young and beautiful. Her last name is Lee. She has a good manner, perhaps we can settle a marriage for them from the girl's mother. I have not received notifications from America, maybe there are having some problems. (The author mentioned

something about America but he was not clear about it.) Grandma is old but she is in good health. Remember to take care of your family and your health.

Safe travel  
Younger brother,  
Wing Goon

August 8<sup>th</sup> [No Date]

89-30.6 # 6368

Greeting, Wing Hong brother,

I have received your previous two letters and learned the status of all events. I have also updated the status to friends and family here. I also received a letter from my father yesterday. In the letter, my father mentioned that he has met and talked with your parents and Mr. Li Shang Bei of Ren An Pharmacy. During the conversation he learned that you have started the process of my passport application. I am truly grateful in this regards. I am aware that You will need money to hire a lawyer. Although I have already borrowed money from my brother, you will have to wait until I return back to the States to receive it. After my father, your parents, and Mr. Li talked, they suggested something to me. In my father's letter, they suggested that I instruct my brother to wire two thousand five hundred dollars to either the Bank of Da Fu or Xing Shi store (something like Western Union?). The proof of this transaction will be signed and stamped and will be given to you as an evidence of my intension. Upon my arrival to the States, you will then have the money. It is best if you can finalize the agree upon costs with the lawyer. Once I arrive in the States, I will withdraw the money and pay the lawyer. I hope you will accept this suggestion. If you agree to it, please write to my brother to arrange the details. I will also write to him to get his agreement. As for the passport application, please proceed quickly so that I can travel back to the US as early as possible. I really appreciate your help. Below is the address of my brother Li Ding Bang.

Best Regards.

YuKe  
August 25, 1949

89-30.7 6369 (Hum Yui Di) [sometimes this name is translated as Tan Yi Di]

Dear brother Hong Hum,

From your previous letter, I am glad to know that your business is doing well, and everything is fine. It's been over a couple decades since I went back to our hometown. My current financial situation is getting worse. I have borrowed US\$500 for the ship fare, and am paying \$30 interest every month. In addition, my son, Wei Kuang, needs money to go to the US. On June 24th, 1910, you borrowed US\$165 from me, plus \$20 in interest, adding up to US\$185 in total.

Please kindly response once you receive this letter. I would really like you to return the money for use in this emergency.

Yours sincerely,  
Brother Yui Fook [sometimes translated as Yi Fu]

August 27th, 1949

Post Stamp: San Francisco, 8.29, [11am](#), 1949

Fr: Yonny Lee  
[1040 Powell St, San Francisco](#)

To: Leong Hong  
[110 S Arizona St, Butte, Montana](#)  
c/o Hum Yui Di [sometimes translated as Tan Yi Di]  
(from Yui Fook)

89-30.143                      6404 | Grand-nephew Zongyan,

I hope you are prosperous and things are well. I also congratulate you. Your mother is well. The household and village are all peaceful. I yesterday (August 13) sent a letter, which I would expect you have received. Everyone in your family is okay don't worry. You [his wife] yesterday (August 30) had a baby boy. Everyone in the family is happy and I wholeheartedly congratulate you. Your son is very cute and your wife is well, already washing clothes, much like usual. I hope you do not worry. I would assume you know that your brother Shice must repay the village [place-name, looks like 师] three times on everything. Your younger brother hasn't been to school and your burden is very great. We received your letter at the end of the year on the matter of your brother's marriage, saying that you had sent 3-5 dollars, which I gave to Jinzhuang [a bank] then to Yi Di. I also have a letter to send to you. However much you send to Yi Di, consider it closely.

Yesterday, on September 1, Communist troops entered Taishan and the governor Xie Yongkuan, took cash of a few thousand dollars to buy army rations and pork, etc. It is yet unknown whether the Hong Kong dollar or the Renminbi is better. Waterways to Hong Kong are not open. There are three people in the new village that took the boat on the ninth lunar day. They left two days earlier on the difficult journey of five or six days. These people had money, which they gave to Yue Fu Chang [a bank], to send back to the village. We can get rice for 60-70 Yuan, but there is a tax. The village chief says its 10 baskets of raw rice. The farmers need five baskets. Civil servants need 2 baskets. Landlords need 3 baskets. Shopkeepers need the same. These, the rich, need an amount equal in value to a poor person's house. On yearly tax collection, I do not know how much is owed [indistinct] and I don't have any money [?]. From my childhood, life has been very difficult and I can't find the spirit to face the world. I hope I can get some help soon. Hong Biaohuai unhappily had a baby girl. Guangyan and his son went to Hong Kong and thus asked Guangxin's wife Zhenzhang and his mother to come to Shi village. The Dinzhang couple went through Hong Kong to see this letter and sent it to Lianzhang.

Letter  
September 6 [1949?]  
Yi Mei [?]

*This was written by a third party, who intentionally made the meaning convoluted with archaic language and probably was unfamiliar with the names of family members. Yi Mei was likely illiterate and hired the scribe.*

89-30.11                      366

To Older Brother Wing Hong Hum: yesterday I received the letter from August 22nd. But I still haven't received the letter from August 17th, I'm waiting to receive it in the near future, then I will respond with another letter. At home, wife received the blessing of giving birth to a child on the [something] hour on August 30th. The baby is lively, and it grows very fast. Everyone at home is happy, and I wrote especially to inform you with the good news. According to second [gong : an elder family member, on the same level as a grandfather]: you sent [a letter] on August 22nd, which I received. Please don't worry about the late harvest this year. Even though the harvest came late, it is quite bountiful. In total, we harvested around 10 or 12 big barrels of crops. Currently it's hard to send letters, so right now I'm giving the letters to [shuiké, literally businessmen on water; smugglers?] to take out of Hong Kong. I didn't use the Hong Kong mail because the process is too complicated. Sending letters is not easy. Currently I've sent out two letters, have you received them? Tell me when you do in a letter. Right now Taicheng [Tai city] still hasn't recovered to its normal self. The business is drying up, the markets are in recession, the pedestrians are few. I don't know when Taicheng [Tai city] is going to recover from its current situation to its prosperous self. During this school year I haven't returned to school, I'm idling at home, daily life is quite boring. Everyone at home is safe and sound. Don't worry about us. I wish you peace.

Younger Brother

[Address of where the letter was sent?] September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1949

in different handwriting: I married [illegible] .... .. Women are healthy and there is no financial concern.... .. [illegible]... September 2nd. A letter September [illegible date]. Don't know if you got the two letters? On August 30th we have a new family member. It's a very happy event and all the women are safe and healthy.

September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1949

89-30.9      6371-6375

Brother Hong Hum,

I received your letter yesterday. We are up to date. Renan Drugstore sent the American cheque of 100 dollars. The commission was one dollar, and the cash-out fee deducted one dollar and seventy cents – we actually got 97.30. Mother, myself and everyone else are delighted and relieved. Already followed the instructions enclosed to distribute money to the family. Please do not worry. Following mother's instruction Zongqing withdrew/took the money father borrowed when he was alive in Los Angeles. She asks what to do or if it can be received. Some months ago, Senlian married, and brought us about 30 marriage cakes. Until now, we have not returned a present – have you already paid, or, shall I? I wrote you a letter, but you did not mention the matter in your reply. We still need to resolve the issue. This is also mother's recurring question. I hope you can reply earlier, and inform us. Nowadays, the war is intensifying. The fighting has reached Ongyuan, near Lechang. Therefore, the north of Guangdong is now a battlefield. Communist troops have reached Yingde county and intend to cut off the Guangdong-Wuhan railway. From this, Guangzhou, Lechang, and Shaoguan are soon to lose infrastructure. You see– the situation is so desperate! And so, my thoughts of returning to Guangzhou to study are dashed. Now, there is only wasting away at home. Life is boring and I don't have any plans. Meanwhile, I am dispirited. Other than going to Taishan to have fun, or play ball in the

afternoon, I have nothing good to do. Under these circumstances, being Chinese is difficult, especially for the common man. All disasters come unprompted. If you don't fear theft, then you fear the draft. For example, now in Guangzhou, they are drafting "piglet soldiers" (child soldiers) – it's insane! This is the extent of society's instability! I believe you understand the crisis with the Communists infiltrating Southern China. This in mind, the common man once again shoulders the crises, between the clashing heads of Communist and Nationalist. The Nationalist soldiers' draft and extortion make life difficult. The Communists engage in theft and looting. We're under pressure from both sides. It's unbearable!

According to your letter, you wish to buy things for our use here, but with the calamitous situation at hand, please do not buy them. They will be taxed to death and there's no assurance of their safety. To re-emphasise, DO NOT BUY, or we will all lose on the bargain. If you want to buy anything in the States, buy it there. Don't bother suffering the worry and trouble – I will not stand for it.

Entering the Taishan market, there is unceasing bearish economic activity/the economy is stagnant. Every line of work is bailing for their lives – every storefront cannot support their operational expenses. On one hand, the taxes and expenses are too high, on the other, no-one is buying – the purchasing power is too weak. Every line of work is only to compete desperately in this situation. We only watch as this year's Mid-Autumn is crappier than last year's. There is simply no comparison.

Brother Chuang sent a letter to say that he works at Lechang Middle School as a teacher. This school, because of the war, while open, cannot stay open for the paucity of students. The classes don't make classes of three, or five, or seven students. Uncle Guangyu in Qujiang First Provincial School as a teacher believes that his new salary is very limited. At this situation with the war, I believe classes will be stopped. This ten or so years has been a series of bad luck and failures for Uncle Guangyu. We have not heard from Brother Ruilin, who returned to Enping county. Lately, from Shen Luogong, the word about Lin is that he received the back pay from the government that he was owed – about a hundred dollars. Think of how slim the pay check is for a civil servant in China. Don't even think about raising a family – you can't even feed yourself! The Chinese living in China live a hard life. From this I admire the fortune of Overseas Chinese – money earned by the sweat of their brow: what they give is what they get, and they can raise a big family. This is a life better than in China ten-thousand times. In the future one simply must leave the country.

Now, with the effect of a bad economy, commodity prices are lower. Every man's purchasing power is much weaker, though. While there are big 'sale' signs everywhere, and all the teahouses offering good discounts to attract guests – the cheap goods need cheap money, and there simply is none to shop with. This is, at present, the situation in the Taishan market. What a tragedy.

Yuzhi is broke. From what I hear, people are mocking him for his poverty, saying he is like a collapsing mountain. What a tragedy. We observe. We sympathise with him, but this is fate, truly unpredictable. The money we lent to him Mother has asked for many times, but has never gotten back. The rumour is that it's not that he doesn't want to return my money – he actually has nothing to give. Then, these stories go, I took his bicycle, or whatever. Truth and lies are black and white. When fortunate one is like a dragon, and in misfortune, like a worm. The proverb says something about the nature of society and man. These things, while just to make conversation about the long and short of people here, we shouldn't mention. Please just take these things as more stories to ignore.

You mentioned that we had to retrieve father's passport the other day – I forgot on the day. I have enclosed the document today, please receive and inspect it. When you have received it, please reply once again. Everyone is okay here – don't worry about us. I have written these lines casually.

Most recent wishes,  
Younger brother, Wing Soong Hum

September 25, 1949

????????? IMG 6378 :

Dear my brother Yongxiang,

I received your letter dated August 22nd yesterday, while your August 17th letter hasn't arrived. If I ever receive it, I will let you know then.

My sister in law has given birth to a girl on August 30th at about 5 to 7 in the afternoon. The infant is very active, grows bigger fast. The whole family is filled with joy now, as we want you to know. According to the 2nd uncle said, the money that you sent back on August 22nd was received. Therefore don't worry. The last crops of this year can be considered a harvest, altogether about 11 or 12 bamboo baskets, which is prospering. At this moment of time, as the traffic hasn't recovered, the mails delivery is very difficult. All the mails need to be taken to Hong Kong by the parallel traders first and then mailed from there. The process is such troublesome and it is not an easy thing to post a letter. There were two letters sent to you in the past a few days. Have you received them? Please let us know. So far, Taicheng hasn't come back to normal yet. All the business is suspended. The market is dull. Less and less people are in the street. We don't know when this situation can be changed and booming comes again. I myself didn't return to school this semester. Now I am staying at home and extremely bored. Fortunately everyone at home is safe and sound. So please don't worry since you are so far away.

Wish you all the best,

Your younger brother,  
Yinxuan  
September 23rd

The 2nd letter on the same page:

Although my wife's brother Xiangming, has written to you about everything here, I still have something to say myself. (I gathered it must be very cold due to the snow there recently.) My nephew, Zongyan, should have told you about our so many wishes to you, my daughter, for your health and wealth. He ever gave me a lot of help in those years when I just came to Kensheng from Difu. I should have come to visit you myself, however, I am sure that you, my daughter, understand my difficulties. Lately when the traffic was good, Xiangming sent to you two letters on September 2nd and 4th. Have you received them? My nephew's son got a baby girl on August 30th. Both mother and baby are doing well. Therefore, you may rest assured.

Best regards,

September 23rd

Xiying (on behalf)

89-30.116 Document 6400

To Hong Hum,

I have heard of your November 20<sup>th</sup> arrival in Hong Kong. According to your instructions, the 250 yuan has been handed to your family. Outside of the money spent in Hong Kong, your mother has personally collected the remainder along with the letter. Please confirm with them their receipt of these items. Rest assured, your family's old and young alike are healthy. Uncle Yiying [sometimes translated as Rui Pok] is also well and healthy, and often comes to our shop to stop and chat. Taishan as of the night of October 20 was liberated. That day, there was luckily little disturbance, and the troops were well disciplined and orderly. Business in Taishan City continues as usual, and is conducted in both Hong Kong dollars and Renminbi. But transportation is not convenient, and, in the future, letters and remittances should be sent to my father in Hong Kong, and then on to the Mainland. I will write more soon.

Best wishes,

Guangbing [sometimes translated as Kong Bing] from Taishan

Elder brother Wing Hum [sometimes translated as Yongheng],

Yesterday, I received the letter and an American cheque for 250 dollars from Grand-uncle Yipu [Yui Pok]. Please don't worry about it. Some time ago, I received the August 17 letter transferred from Renan [Pharmacy] and replied at that time. I did not, though, receive the five dollars you had enclosed.

It was determined that on the 21<sup>st</sup> of this month, the baby will have the tying ceremony. At that time, we prepare to set many tables and celebrate. But since things are expensive now, the fees are greater than before. I specifically inform you of this present circumstance. The baby is now strong and healthy, cute and ruddy-faced, with sparkling eyes. Looking at the baby is very much like looking at you, brother! Whoever sees the baby loves it. You should be happy!

This year, the village has few new baby boys. Outside of your child and Feiming's, Uncles Qi, Jiu, Nai, He, Xi, Zihong, Hong Biao, etc., all got girls. Therefore our village is very happy for you. How are arrangements for Overseas Chinese exit at the present time? It is imperative that the two Bing family sides have some information. I hope that your coming letter will inform us.

Uncle Jinghe should have, in the last two months, been in Hong Kong to make arrangements to leave the country, but has not gone yet. Is this because there has been a change in current affairs with new exiting applicants being prevented from doing so? I don't know. You have mentioned a number of times the question of my marriage. I am very embarrassed – I have often asked myself about my own future! My life is yet to be decided and the foundations are not set. It is also not the season for marriage and I know you mean well by asking, as a brother. I am very moved, but I think that you, alone, support our entire family, which does not put me at ease. Now you also wish to help me with the

problem of marriage, which also puts me ill at ease. This is another problem that increases your burden, which I cannot condone. When, one day, I build these foundations, I will be ready to discuss this. Brother, you should know my heart on the matter. Now, Taishan is settled down and the market is back to normal, by the way. Everyone at home is well, please don't worry. I have quickly written this much. Best wishes.

Younger brother Wing Soong Hum  
October 15 1949

89-30.10      6377

Dear Brother Wing Heung, [sometimes translated as Yong Xiang]

I have not heard from you after my last letter, and I miss you so much! Hope you are prospering and that everything is alright.

In your last letter you mentioned that my application for immigration to America had been received several months ago. I would appreciate it if you let me know its progress. Please send the passport to me once the procedures have been finished, so that I can go to America as soon as possible. In addition, the political situation of our country is very uncertain. It would be better to take action as quickly as possible to avoid and prevent any unpredictable changes. Please take action immediately when you see this letter in order to prevent any issues arising from the political changes. Please kindly inform me on everything involving the application's progress. Thank you so much!

I don't have any updates about our home town since I am in Hong Kong. I will let you know if I have any news. I received a letter from your younger brother Yin Xuan couple days ago, in which two photos of your deceased father were attached. Two of our photos taken at America were also attached.

Please kindly help my immigration application and know that your help is grateful to me. Look forward to hear from you soon. Wish you safe travels!

Sincerely,  
Brother Yu Ho [sometimes translated as Yu Ke]

[Oct 20th, 1949](#)

89-30.12      6380

Dear brother Wing Heng, [sometimes translated as Yong Xiang]

I have not received any response from you after the last several letters sent. I am very worried about you. Hope everything is fine with you.

I would like to know the state of my immigration application. Is it proceeding? Please let me know on its progress. As you went back to America several months ago, the application should be finished however difficult it is. Friends from our neighborhood, who went to America three months later than you, have completed all the procedures and went back yesterday. Have you started the procedures yet? Please feel free to inform me on the application's progress and if you are encountering any difficulties. Otherwise, I will keep waiting for you. Please be honest with me and let me know if I have

done anything wrong.

I have enough money set aside for any financial need (for the application.) Please don't worry about it. After the the country changed hands (from KMT to CCP, referred to as "color changed"), our home town is calm. However, business is not doing well. The remittance is not yet running smoothly and it is better to transfer money through Hong Kong than through our the home town. Talk to you next time. Hope you are travelling well.

Sincerely,  
brother Wing Goon [sometimes translated as Yong Yuan]

[Nov 29th 1949](#)

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89-30.14      6381 (Wing Heung)

Dear brother Wing Heung, [sometimes translated as Yong Xiang]

I have not received any response from you after you sent those last several letters. I really miss you, and worry about you. Hope everything is fine with you.

After you went back to the states, I was pleased to receive your letters. However, since September, there has been no news from you. I am worried. Not sure if there is anything happened to you or if my last sent letters got lost in between. Please respond right away, so that I won't be worried too much while I am in Hong Kong.

Regarding the application to go to the US, I would really appreciate if you could let me know on its progress.

Until next time. Waiting for your reply.

Wish you safe travel.

Brother,  
Yu Ho [sometimes translated as Yu He]

Dec 9<sup>th</sup>, 1949

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89-30.58      #6387

Wing Hum [nephew],

It is like seeing you by this letter. Hope nephew [you] are fine out there. Everything fine at work. [I] Shall be pleased to know that you are doing as you wished.

I have received your letter these days. Hope I can spare some time later to see Li Bong. Please be informed that Kin Pik has arrived New York airport around 2 o'clock last Wednesday night. We went to meet him.

Aunt is hoping to get permission to land in these days. Attached a letter to inform her that we are doing fine at work.

Please need not to worry about us.

Regards and wish you well.

Kong Yim

18th Day [date]

Envelope 1  
For  
Winh Hum nephew  
Yim

Envelope 2

[english from address]  
Please forward to  
Tam Wing Hum  
[english to address]

(峇?城) Bar City

---

IMG 6379 not completed

English Translation:

永亨 nephew,

I give you my greetings. On August 19th, ( ) bring it in the 8th...

Hope the letter will arrive quickly and try to keep it low profile. You can go to the post office to send the letters. Watch the situation and be cautious about it. This is the hard decision and I hope it will be settled soon. If you have encountered any problems, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Be well,  
1949  
炳雙

Note: It is most likely an uncle 炳雙 writing to his nephew 永亨. This letter was extremely hard to read since the handwriting was not really neat. A large section of this letter has not been translated.

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1950:

89-30.21      371

My dear son 永亨(Yǒng hēng),

After you left home for half a year, I hope your business outside is going well.

The money you sent from America is quite a lot but things are expensive at this time so it is only enough to pay for household purposes. We are happy because of our grandson, named 樹槐(Shù huàng). He is clever, meek, and cute. He is as healthy as a lion and he can bring you reliefs. For now, 炳雙(Bǐng shuāng) has sent letters to 蔭萱(Yīn xuān) saying that he has sent many letters to you but he has never heard from you. Have you received letters from him? About 炳雙(Bǐng shuāng) going to America for business reasons, I hope you can do everything that you can to let him enter America. About the questions of 蔭萱(Yīn xuān) getting married, I have brought up before but it is better to wait until there is a suitable woman for him. Now the most urgent thing is to get 炳雙(Bǐng shuāng) to America then take 蔭萱(Yīn xuān) to America or/then get him married. Everyone in the family is safe and sound. I will talk to you next time!

January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1950

Mother 黃氏付(Huáng shì fù)

Note: 樹槐(Shù huàng). is 永亨(Yǒng hēng)'s son. This letter was sent from New York.

Envelope:

To Mr. 永亨(Yǒng hēng)

89-30.21      375

Dear Nephew Wing Hong,

I got your letter yesterday telling me about your family, including your wife and son. I love my grandson a lot; he resembles you greatly. I also received a letter from my own son yesterday; he told me that I had to wait for one or two months for the confirmation of the \$600 transaction from the bank. My father thought the cost was too heavy, so he returned home to consult with others. On the topic of Bing Shuang, I agree with whatever you have to say. I have a request to make of you, nephew; please extract the keys from within my drawers and open the box in my closet. You will check if the photo of Jian Bi is there, and get the bed sheets. Please mail the bed sheets to me. I am currently residing in Yi Xia Fang with two people named Wei and Tian Xi. Please note that if you mail any packages, you shall mail it to this address. I am fine don't worry about me. For my hometown, I do not know what will become of it in the future. I knew that the Communists have asked for tax and crops from the peasants, and they have become greedier than before. It's hard for me now, to make a transaction of 150,000 Hong Kong Dollars from the bank with the Communists around. I wish you the best of luck with everything.

Sincerely,

Guang Yan (Uncle)

JAW NAM  
141 Hester St.  
New York City, N.Y.

P.S. Please mail the bed sheets to this address.

Jan. 12, 1950

?????? 6402 | Brother Hong Hum,

For the last half year, we have been like separated sparrows. While we live in the same country, we are not in the same place. Yesterday, I luckily received your letter and learnt that my younger brother had, on August 30, a son [using antiquated idiom comparing the value of a son to a daughter as like jade to terracotta]. When I learnt of this, I leapt with unlimited joy. Yesterday, I received my relatives who said that all was well. Now it is new years' and the stores are all closed for the break. Hence I took this opportunity to luxuriously converse with you. Since my return, I am doing what I used to do. The monthly salary is about 25 Yuan. If there is a chance, one should start my own business and reap the profit, which is sure to be several times what I currently earn.

Thank you for giving me Uncle Ye's [Ip?] address so that I may once again communicate with him. Brother, if you have time I would be very fortunate if you can keep up our correspondence. I should conclude, wishing you a happy new year and best wishes.

Elder Brother Jinfang

New Year 1950

89-30.24 #6385

Wing Hum [younger ] brother,

Not hearing from you for almost a month. Thought about America so decided to write to you. Wish you well at life, [elder] Brother.

Recently received a letter and newspaper from home and understand that Sheung Pek Chap Village [Upper North Gate Village] was robbed. Siu [兆伯长伦剪毛药?] suffered the most. Heard that our village also decided to start night patrolling. Having said that Sheung Pek Chap Village somehow deserved this as dated back we were at home, we decided to start field patrolling force which was well regarded by fellow village people. However due to shortage of funds it was originally decided to ask Sheung Pak Chap Village to share part of the patrolling cost of 150 dollars and Ning Wa Society costs of 300 dollars. They refused and now got robbed, don't you think they just deserved it? So now they suffered I just wonder what these Sheung Pek Chap village people would think!

Here I am fine so need not to worry about us.

Regards,

[elder] Brother Kum Fong

1950-2nd Month-26th day.

Dear brother and respected recipient Hong Hum,

Yesterday I received your previous letter, which was instructive. I have understood its contents after reading. At the same time, I must assume you have received my previous letter. With regard to your request to take a dozen photos, I have done accordingly. At present, I have enclosed them to this letter. Would brother please check to receive them, for your use? With regard to your next request to write to younger brother Wing Soong for him to send you your Guangzhou marriage certificate, I have sent another letter to him asking. I would expect he'd send it soon, whereupon I will send it to you. With regard to your preparation of identity documents (passport), please send it as soon as possible, in order to make arrangements in Hong Kong. Hurry, to avoid repeated delays, having lost this last opportunity. Once again, it is best not to hesitate.

The situation from the countryside to Hong Kong and Macau is normal, but the passage is often harassed by Kuomintang aircraft. There are fewer and fewer crossing without urgent business. In the countryside there are bandits and thieves like locusts ["bees"], and in a single night they will strip many households bare and kidnap people for ransom. In Sijiu [Seigau] village, burglary is rife. In the countryside, food prices are high and foreign remittances have been interrupted. The people suffer greatly. I am informing you that there are a good number of Overseas Chinese sending money from America through Hong Kong. Did you, in the past, send a letter to the countryside? If you have, please send a letter to younger brother Wing Soong asking to forward it to me for use in arranging your documents? This is appropriate. If you had sent it to the name "Yingxuan," [Yam Hyun] you can orally testify to Yingxuan being his legal name. This is legal as well. You can also use the name Yongyuan [Hum Wing Yuen] when sending letters to me, which is the name on my documents. If you send it to the Luk Kwok Hotel address, add the name Yu Ho transferring to Hum Wing Hong. It is best to directly send it to Hennessy Road, number 64 (?), fourth floor, Hum Wing Hong receiving. NO MISTAKE. If you're writing to me, do write more. Write a cheque in an American bank to arrange the documents. It costs 20 dollars, and the cheque should be made to Tan Yongyuan, for arranging documents in Hong Kong. If you write the cheque, I will use the present exchange rate to change it to Hong Kong dollars, whereupon I will send it back to you – you will not lose confidence in me. I will use this money to arrange your documents. Send your passport without delay. Sorry for the inconvenience. Very thankful. I write no further. The following is the address – send directly to Hum Wing Hong. Safe travels.

If you're sending the cheque, send to Luk Kwok Hotel, Yu Ho transferring to Hum Wing Hong receiving. Regular postage can be sent to the new address.

Younger brother Yongyuan  
1950, 3, 23

Hum Wisg Yuen  
64, Third Floor  
Hennessy Road  
Hong Kong

???????

6403 |

Brother Hong Hum,

Having received this [??] enclosed there is 5 Yuan [possibly obscured “twenty”], received brother’s important gift. I cannot thank you enough. This 20 Yuan was at Hong Kong, changed at the present rate, by 100 Yuan collecting [unintelligible] sum. As of now the Yuanli Bank exchanged this to the Yuanfa Bank in Taishan, then transferring to Rongye Bank, in order for your mother to personally collect. This sum of money, changed to Hong Kong dollars, is 120. The remainder was deducted by the Yuanli Bank for administrative costs. With regard to your marriage certificate in Guangzhou, yesterday your second granduncle Yiying came to say that his grandson, who is going to Hong Kong, would bring the certificate in order to transfer to you. I believe he will soon send it, please don’t worry. With regard to the Hong Kong remittance of US Dollars, for 100 dollars and above worth of remittance, an administrative fee of 3 dollars is levied. One can also change the 3 dollars to Hong Kong dollars. If in Hong Kong one changes US to Hong Kong dollars, the rate is favourable compared to that in the countryside. I specifically encourage you to take note. On another matter, if the passport application in the US is successful, please send it to me immediately so that I may proceed. Right now the “United States-Soviet standoff” is at deadlock. At any provocation, a real war might begin. Please, brother, send it quickly so that obstacles can be avoided.

April 24

**89-30.187 #6405**

**Letter, May 1950 to Wing H. Hum**

Wing Hum [Elder] Brother,

Guess you should have received my letter earlier but I have not receive your reply yet. Missed you much.

Regarding your money to be handed over in Hong Kong, this has been done yesterday.

About your request to ask Yuet Hing Cheong to act as the payee [in Hong Kong], Tam Rui Pok to receive the money [at home town], and that brother [ I ] to act as the payer [in Hong Kong] and my younger brother Yu Cheuk to be responsible to pay the money [at home town], we have signed all the contracts and handed to Uncle Rui Pok for record.

While we were back in the home town your younger brother Yum Suen and Uncle Rui Ying still not feeling comfortable so we took the liberty to sign another contract with my father to guarantee with our home assets. If Yu Cheuk did not pay the money then they can get my father’s assets to set off the loss. This provides more security and all has been completed too.

So it is possible for you and my relative Bong to start the matter in America? Please write to advise.

About your wish to receive from my relative some money in advance I received a letter from my relative that the money could only be paid in full upon my [relative] brother could be landed safely in America. They do not agree to pay prior the matter is completed. However if you really need so they can put a shop in guarantee to you for paying you the money when the right to abode is obtained. You may choose whether you want a shop in a major town or Kong Yuen Sing in New York for the

guarantee. Once you have signed the guarantee documents please mail the passport to Hong Kong for further processing. This is because buddy Cheuk of Hong Kong Consulate is transferring first day next month. Once he is transferred the procedure may not be as convenient as in the past. So please mail the passport as soon as possible to avoid missing the chance and get the matter further delayed.

Wish you peace and prosperity.

Regards,  
[younger] brother Goon  
May 28<sup>th</sup> Day, 1950

89-30.113      6399

Brother Hong Hum,

We have received your letter from America. We are all happy with your job mining. Under these circumstances working, though, one has to be very careful. Is your health good? We send you our best wishes. Has Uncle Guangyan [Gwongyim] in New York found work? We are worried because of his family's burden.

Liberated China is very different from before. Now, life is still difficult, but everything compared to before is improving progressively. We are assured of the transformation to come in the next few years. Have you heard news from the motherland in America?

Everyone in the family is still well. Father is in Lechang [Lokcheung] Middle School teaching, but his salary is still insufficient to support everyone. I am working in the government, because the country is enduring financial difficulty. One person can only do so much to make ends' meet. Sister Xing [Heng] has pneumonia and can't find work, and is sitting at home wasting our money. She needs injections and medical attention. Our household finances are too difficult and we hope you can send more money back. Help us!!!

The village is the same as before, so you don't need to reminisce. How is life out there? I hope you can write a nice long letter back. We'll talk soon.

Uncles Changgong, Wei and Qu concur, and won't write separately.

Written quickly – best regards,

Younger brother (Tan) Jianchuang [Hum Gincong] – drafted 1950. 6. 21

89-30.61              381

The person who put up the bulletin Li Bang is willing to put up his [laundry shop?] Paul Lee 2168 Ellis Ave Bronx N.Y. for 2500 USD to lend to Wu Bingshuang when she arrives in America in order to buy Wing Hong Hom his birth certificate. If Wu Bingshuang can't show this letter, Li Bang will take the responsibility of transferring the full sum of 2500 USD to give to Tan GuangYan's hands to give to Wing Hong Hum. Just in case verbal agreements don't suffice, I write this letter to document it.

39th Year of the Republic, October 24<sup>th</sup> [1950]  
Written by Li Bang, the person who put up the bulletin  
in different handwriting: witness Tan GuangYan

Envelope

HOM S. SHEE  
229 E. 14th St.  
Apt. 3E  
NEW YORK City N.Y.

譚永享先生收

Hong Hum  
329 80. Arizona St.  
Butte Montana

89-30.61                      382

Dear nephew Wing Hong,

I hope that you are well, in both your work and personal life. Last week I received your letter and understand everything now. Additionally, in Yin Xuan's letter, Bing Shuang said that I was cruel because I didn't go to her brother's agency. If her brother's agency was trustworthy by any sense, we should finish this as soon as possible. Bing Shuang blamed me for delaying her plan in an uncivilized manner. I wanted to go to Guang Yuan Sheng, but she forbade me from going because she was the owner of the place. Please let your family know about the situation. Today, I went to Li Bang twice, and then wrote this letter not according to your pen name, now I wrote it and please check to see if it's suitable. Please send the passport back, and don't forget to keep it safe. Jian Bi and I are well, no need to worry. Jian Bi was now in second grade, every Thursday and Saturday he goes to the restaurant to make some wages by washing dishes because we are poor. I will end the letter here and I wish that all of you are safe.

Uncle Guang Yan

Oct. 27, 1950

This letter also references Paul Lee, 2168 Ellis Ave. Bronx

It is from Hom S. Shee, 229 E. 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Apt. 3E, New York, NY

89-30.21                      373

I included 100 HKD in the letter as a gift. Why make money on the outside of the country? I received a letter from the second eldest grandpa and 望壁(Wàng bì) saying that they will come to Hong Kong

soon. How is the procedure of getting 望壁(Wàng bì) out of the country going? Things are hard to predict. Is my older brother leaving the country? If you know anything, please let me know as soon as possible! How is your health?

If you have more letters, send them to Road 德輔道中(Dé fǔ dào zhōng), number 302, a building called 法泰昌(Fǎ tài chāng) or 李瑞麟(Lǐ ruì lín) then transfer it to 台城, 仁安(Tái chéng, rén ān). It will be good if you send the letters to this address and I will arrange the rest. A young man named ... (the name was illegible) doesn't have motivations in his life. He treats horse race as an occupation and he also gambles a lot in his free time. I believe his future will not be successful. If you have anything, just let me know. Everyone in the family is safe and sound; there is no need to worry about them.

Younger brother,  
容萱(Róng xuān)

October 29, 1950

89-30.21 372

永亨(Yǒng hēng) brother,

I attached a letter. The postal office is slow so I told someone from Hong Kong to send the letter for me. Writing letters is not so convenient. 裔煥's (Yì yǎng)

second grandpa goes to Hong Kong so I told him to send it for me. This time second grandpa 裔煥(Yì yǎng) leaves Hong Kong but the arrangement to leave the country is still unsettled. I attached the photos of sister-in-law and 樹煜(Shù yù). Please take a look at them. When 樹煜(Shù yù) took the photos, he was only 65 days old. However, you can still see his cheerfulness and happiness on his face but he wears many layers of clothes because of winter so it is better to wait until the weather is warmer to take the photos. I also attached the letter from older brother 瑞麟 (Ruì lín) in Hong Kong 德輔 (Dé fǔ) road, number 302, second floor of 法泰昌(Fǎ tài chāng). But now because his address has changed and it is not stable so please send the letters as soon as possible to avoid delays. On the countryside, there was a robbery that happened at 北閘 (Běi zhá) a few days ago. The victim is blind. The short man 葉与's (Yè yǔ) house is all empty from the robbery. Yesterday, many robbers were being arrested at village 涉凹 (Shè āo) and village 浪波(Làng bō). I believe that this case will be solved shortly. Many people are safe so don't worry.

Younger brother,  
蔭萱(Yīn xuān)  
November 9<sup>th</sup> 1950

89-30.29 #6386

Wing Hum [elder] Brother,

Today received a letter from Clan & Servant [Immigration?] office and also USD170. *[note: words hereafter in bracket had been written and crossed out by writer]* ~~(But money was somehow still in Hong Kong and not remitted without knowing the reason, I hope shall receive later)~~ At time of writing it was not yet received but now received.

No need to worry about us.

The letter you sent via Yan Yiu has received. The previous letter you ask Kin Pik [younger] brother to forward also received.

About Ping Sheung's emmigration issue, mother is worrying about this a lot because he has been out of school for a long time. It is hard for me to explain to her so please help to expedite this matter as such mother shall be relieved from worrying days and nights. I understand this is not an easy task and that it seems not possible to process now but given mother used to worry about everything so I still hope to inform you this matter so you could help to resolve this as soon as possible to give her peace. I am so grateful to you about this!

Regarding my marriage issue, personally I think this is premature. For I have not properly settled in in any place yet so if I get marry all the burden shall be added on you. I am too shameful to talk about this. So I would like to wait until Ping Sheung's matter being resolved first. Hope you could understand this.

Siu Chee [younger] sister is rushing to get marry. Only got engaged couple of days ago and is having a wedding on 26th day this month. We have already arranged the wedding gift and has delivered to her. You don't have to worry about this.

Now that earning a living is getting difficult outside. Taiwanese thieves [*note: the way they call Taiwanese with political inclination*] businesses are making losses in every sector in particular banking and finance. Seven / eight out of ten has bankrupt. A lot of youngsters have no jobs in most villages and hence gathered gambling. Almost every village has gambling kiosks. However glad that they are not heavy gamblers because lacking of money. Hence this year's New Year celebration the atmosphere is just ordinary.

Everybody at home is fine. You should be pleased that Shu (?) is particularly active and lovely.

Attached a few photo for your viewing.

Regards,

[younger] brother Yim Suen

[Lunar] December 24th Day, 1950

1951:

89-30.72                    385

Dear 永亨(Yǒng hēng) older brother, I received your letters and I understood the content of them . I also got the money: 200 USD, which equal to about 160 HKD.

Everything is going really well now except that the prices of products are rising and also the currency of RMB and HKD have raised. Now it is only 1 HKD to 4 RMB. It seems like people who have HKD have fewer advantages so even if you have a lot of HKD, the inflation of prices will bring you down. The family is going through a difficult time because of the raising prices. Also because it is autumn, the harvest is not doing well. About 葭萱's marriage, it is not settled yet. And because things are really expensive now, it is difficult to arrange a wedding and prepare gifts for the bride's family. Frugality will be essential due to the current conditions. We just need about 4000 yuan. If you have more money on your hands, please send them to me for family purposes ... (This letter was not finished)

Envelope:

To older brother 永亨(Yǒng hēng)

From the U.S.

89-30.72                    386

1951.1.21

...This money is for emergencies, in case. My grandson, Shu Hui is healthy and lively. He is handsome and moves around more. Everyone loves him. Recently, he can walk and he pulls me with him to the riverbank. However, he is a late bloomer in speech, only knowing "Mama", "Ah Bai", etc. What is surprising is that whenever we talk to him about anything, he understands. With this letter are his photos, when you see them you'll know what cute is. The photo studio thought he was adorable, and his photos are all enlarged for ads because they look amazing. Talking about Bing Shuang's emigration process, please get it done early to avoid Xue Yong Shi's questioning. Xue said that the ambassador of America sent out more than ten people to Hong Kong to deal with immigration issues. Please grab this opportunity to help Bing Shuang. We need your passport, so please send it back to Yi Pu Gong for safekeeping. Currently, China is changing rapidly, with lots of rules different than before. Everyone is super-thrifty, trying to save as much as they can. The New Years' activities are cancelled as a result. The British government is preparing for land reform next year. Jian Chuang is the head of farming, and Ji Xin is working in the People's Bank. Other siblings are at school. Our life is better than before, so everyone is safe and at peace. There is no need to worry about our welfare. I wish you a happy new year.

-Mother, Huang

January 21<sup>st</sup>, 1951

89-30.72                    387

Envelope: to 永亨 uncle

Dear 永享 uncle,

I received your letters in HK today and if 柄雙's passport is ready send it back to HK. 柄雙's passport has to be checked by the America embassy. The longest time that it will take for them to check the passport is a year. The shortest time will be a couple of months. I will send 480 HKD to your mother. Your mother can take care of the money so she can use them in the future.

1951, jan  
sincerely,  
李聖羆

89-30.73                      389

Envelope:  
From the U.S.  
To Mr. 永亨(Yǒng hēng)

Text on the left:

If you have problems with sending the money, please ask /discuss it with the youngest son 光炳 (Guāng bing) in a place in San Francisco so he can try to solve it for you.

6414CharleneC

Dearest brother Wing Hung,

I received the package; it contained three passports, father's entrance/departure documents, and your documents. I put the passports and documents away safely; unfortunately one of the passports' photos does not contain an official stamp. I have sent the passport to the American embassy in hopes of receiving a stamp. About this, I would like to know about your opinion; please reply your answer in order to proceed. Life in Hong Kong is getting tough. My meager income is only enough for daily use – I am happy regardless. I have heard that you have been well in America; as your little brother I am happy for you. I hope everything is successful there.

Little brother Wing Goon,

February 25<sup>th</sup>, 1951

1952:

89-30.191 #6416 envelope cover:

two 1 Hong Kong dollars stamps  
1pm, 23 Jan 1952

Mr Wing Heung Hum (in chinese)

Wing H. Hum (in English)  
329 South Arizona St.  
Butte, Montana,  
U.S.A.

Dear Wing Heung,

I have received your bank draft of two hundred and fifty on Jan 1st. As now is close to the end of the (chinese) year, I have sent fifty dollars (exchange rate 6.54) which is equivalent to Hong Kong Dollars three hundred twenty seven. I then took back two hundred dollars and paid the two dollars difference. The net amount of Hong Kong Dollars are three hundred twenty five (exchange rate today is 6.60). I have received a letter from Yam Huen who reminded me that this amount should be sent in multiple times separately. I will follow his instruction. Now my family is being blackmailed and the amount is so huge that we cannot afford to pay it. I feel very sorry to my family. My elder son and second son are decisively not to pay because they were afraid that if they paid the first time, they would have to pay again. As everyone knows, this caused a lot of pain to all my family members. I am so helpless and painful, but there is nothing I could do in this situation. I have incriminated a lot of good people. (#6417) Nice people always got framed. People who have knowledge, people who are rich, people who are literate, even people who has culture would suffer, there is no exception. This is extremely miserable. Now I have received two thousand seven hundred dollars through the Gong Jiao Agriculture Association (共交農會). But still short four thousand several hundred million dollars, which approximately around Hong Kong Dollar eleven thousand and several hundreds. This amount of money is as many as the stars in the sky. We are not able to clear this debt. I own two shops, which including one on Chong Wo Road (中和路) of Ning Town(寧市), and the other on Kwong Hing Road (光兴路). I wanted to let the Agriculture Association (農會) chose one of them to repay the debt, but they rejected. As a result, this has not been settled yet. I am so upset about it. I am painful that my family is suffering from it and I could not help them. I really want to help them but I could not make it. This makes me feel so ashamed. Please forgive me! I would be grateful if you forgive me. Please see my other letter to you in which you would find my suggestions. Please read carefully and follow the suggestions if you find them useful, otherwise, disregard them. Please also find an attached letter to my family.

Sincerely,  
Li Sing Pi

Jan 22nd, 1952

#6417 envelope

Please transfer to Older brother Wing Heung Hum

sent fr Hong Kong Yam Huen

89-30.85 Document 6389

Elder brother Yongheng / Hong Hum,

I believe you will have received the two letters I sent previously. I have not yet received your reply and am worried. With regard to the matter that your younger brother, myself, is presently processing, I have directly handed it off to a highly placed Westerner. All of the documents I have are already compiled and handed over to the executor. After he examines these documents, he can continue with processing. According to this Westerner, it is preferable to avoid interviews or blood testing to reduce bureaucratic complications. In the case that we cannot avoid it, then we must make preparations in advance to prevent later confusion. If we must test blood we need another 300 yuan. Added to the present fees it is 1000 yuan [questionable, maybe 2000]. In total, it is 1300 yuan. If we go Dutch, I will still have no way to pay. If you pay its entirety, you will lose too much. In my humble opinion, using this Westerner is something that has to be done. If we suppose that we can't avoid blood testing, it is up to the doctor to decide. The Western executor definitely wants me to prepare the money for testing. In his opinion, which is to pay for blood testing, I cannot pay for it. Suppose that I had a way to get this wad of cash – this would also increase my bill to nearly a thousand. This problem is easier said than done: where am I going to get the money? When I have to get my blood tested, I'll forget it and let fate decide. We must only prepare and deal with it. I am writing to you, brother, in America, to get a doctor to privately test your blood and send the typological report to us. The difference is a few dollars. The four types of blood are A, B, O and AB. The types of blood hormone are R, M, N, and RH. Find a doctor to check this please. Sending the report quickly is most important, because the proceedings are moving to interviews. If you test and send the report, I will, here, get a doctor to measure and see whether the two are alike. Meanwhile I will reason with them and I suppose they will understand. If you don't have the report, then the proceedings will be fruitless. It is possible to proceed. Please, brother, get the blood report and send it. I need it most urgently. I believe the affair can be processed smoothly. In the future, if the situation develops, I will send another letter to inform you. I will write no more. Safe and happy travels.

Younger brother Wing Goon  
September 17, 1952

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1953:

**89-30.90 Letter #1: IMG\_6390**

**Note:** The younger brother wrote to his older brother asking how things are going and if he could help him. However, he did not address specifically what he needed for help in the letter. It is evident that he respects his older brother since he addressed his questions in a formal and respectful way to him.

Direct Translation:

Hope everything goes well with you, brother. I wish everything begins with a new start.

I wish the flowers blossom and it is auspicious.

Hope the weather is good, the condition is favorable, the wealth is stable, and everything goes well.

I included/sent you a letter last month. If you did not receive it, please inform me. I believe the matter I told you to do for me is going pretty well. How are things going now? Did you discover/find anything? Please tell me everything in details so you can calm me. Also, please help me as much as you can outside, I really appreciate your help! This is a book called xiàn xiù shǒu yuán that I want to give it to you as a gift. Thank you so much! Hope everything goes well for you!

I will talk to you next time,  
Younger brother,  
February 19, 1953

**89-30.95 Letter #2: IMG\_6391**

**Note:** This letter is much more difficult to translate because the handwritings are messier and the author's tone is more ambivalent than the first letter. I think that the twins that the author is referring to is a younger brother and an older sister.

Direct Translation:

Part I:

The twins ( Yǒng Jiǔ and Yǒng Xuān ) and aunt (huáng měi lián huá )'s passport to America and one application form are sent to your house. Once you receive it, please tell my aunt to apply for an one way form/ticket to leave Hong Kong to do some paperworks because the form needs my aunt's signature. Please do it immediately to avoid mistakes. Please include (a copy of) the passport and the application form (just in case).

Brother,  
June of 1953

Part II:

This letter is written from a paper on the American plane and copied/rewritten in a car. Send this letter to the twins, make sure you write your address and write the brother's (Yǒng Jiǔ) address then send it to him. After the brother (Yǒng Jiǔ ) receives the letter, forward this letter to the local place (probably inside of HK) as a part of the application form. You can also include a copy of your passport and put it along with your application.

I also got your letter today. I know you are really busy with your work but don't overwork! Find someone to help you to organize your work. Take care of your health! Hope everything goes well for you!

1953.7.6

**Letter #2: IMG\_6392****Note:**

The author didn't specify where and who he received the letter from. For the "four families", I believe the author is talking about the family and relatives of the person he is writing to. In the context, **Shù huī** refers to a mother and a daughter's family name (ex: the Munsons, the Bishops... ) and from his tone I believe he is expecting for their arrivals.

Direct Translation:

The included letter has already been reported and everything is going pretty well. I received the letters already and have tried to send it to you and the **four families** but I heard Shēn Zhèn has been checking for taxes (taxing the citizens) severely and sometimes they check Hong Kong too. I am waiting for the **Shù huī**'s arrival and I will notify you when they arrive. Your mother sent me a letter and told me to make a passport paper to send it to the **four families** so they could apply and come to Hong Kong. You can come and bring your wife huáng měi lián zǐ, daughter yuè yǎ, and your sister's second eldest daughter who's six years old to Hong Kong. If we can't bring your daughter yuè yǎ to Hong Kong, don't rush or get misunderstood, just make two copies of the passports, one for your wife, and one for you and your daughter. If that is the case, please make the copies as soon as possible so you can reapply. There is not enough space for me to write, if you get any letters from home, please send it to me. If you have more to say to me, include it along with the draft.

1953.7.6

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**89-30.151**

Dear Wing Hong my Cousin (1),

I hope this letter finds you well. Wish you safe with your work and everything smooth. Yesterday I received your letter plus other letters. I felt good to know how you are all doing.

Regarding Kin Bik's going to American, there is no clue when will be approved. I received a letter from Rui Pok requesting me to ask a Legislator or a Father to write to the Embassy to speed up the process. How do I know such persons? it is very difficult for me. Please understand that. Yesterday I received my father's letter informing about Wai Si is in Hong Kong applying to the US, and about Siu Kwan's son got approved to the US and Siu Fong's son did not get approved. We asked Rui Pok to try some illegal ways then he never mentioned it again, but hinted that you may have some other ways. So please send letter to him as early as possible to see whether you can help manuscript. Wish you safe.

April 25

(1) : may not be a relative, Chinese would address kids of good friends as "cousins"

**89-30.194 #6419-6420****Summary:**

Wing Goon wrote to his brother Wing Hang about the incident in which Wing Goon's application to visiting the United States was rejected due to the corruption in the government. Consequently, Wing Goon asked his brother to find some powerful and renowned westerner as a connection to get his

application of leaving Hong Kong and arriving in the U.S. approved. Wing Goon also informed Wing Hang about the recent condition of their family.

Dear Brother Wing Hang,

I believe you<sup>1</sup> must have received the letter from our master<sup>2</sup> regarding my application to visiting<sup>3</sup> the America. After the Hong Kong Ministry<sup>4</sup> transferred my application to the Department of State<sup>5</sup> for further processes, my application was, unfortunately, rejected. I learned that my trip to America was actually approved by the Department of State but it was then discarded due to the corruption within the government<sup>6</sup>. I have again sent my documents<sup>7</sup> to the Department of State, and I hope you could help me with your connections<sup>8</sup> in America to grant me the chance of visiting America myself. About the lawyer<sup>9</sup> whom you asked to help me with my case, there are several issues. First, it is hard to work with him as you are so far away so that we do not have a pleasant collaboration and I do not feel comfortable asking him for more efforts, and he has shown little influence towards my situation. Second, the influence of Chinese lawyers and westerner lawyers must be different, especially, in my case with the Department of State. I beg you to find a powerful and renowned westerner, and ask him to be the guarantor of my documents<sup>10</sup>. Please also ask the westerner with his reputation and authority write a request to the Department of State to accept my application to visiting America. I hope upon noticing our connection with the westerner, the Department of State would then approve my trip. It is known that politicians would help one another<sup>11</sup>. If you could further gain the assistance from your city's senators, my application would be approved at an instance. Brother, I beg you to find a powerful westerner quickly to help me<sup>12</sup>. I am in a dire situation in Hong Kong. I also have heard nothing back from the Hong Kong Ministry. My present chance is slim. I wish you could help me, brother. I also wish you have successfully pursued your dream in America. Upon receiving your last month's letter of requesting to help move sister-in-law<sup>13</sup> to Hong Kong, I sent your letter and other files back to Brother Xuan<sup>14</sup>. However, it has been two weeks and yet I have heard nothing back from Brother Xuan. I do not know whether Brother Xuan receives my letter, and thus I sent another letter to the countryside<sup>15</sup>. If sister-in-law arrives in Hong Kong in the future, I will surely inform you her condition. About the other documents: regarding the certificate of us rescuing children that you reported to the Department of Enlistment Service<sup>16</sup>, please use the child photo that father and I took<sup>17</sup> and write an explanation for it. The actual photo of father and us rescuing the child was in our house in the Regal Green Town<sup>18</sup> but our house, including the photo and other family pictures, was burned to the ground by the Japanese army when they invaded Taiwan<sup>19</sup>. A destroyed family photograph had Grandmother, Father, Mother, Third Uncle, you, me, Brother Xuan, Brother Chuan<sup>20</sup>, Sister Xing<sup>21</sup>, in total of nine people on it. On that photograph, Grandmother (in the middle), Father (on the left), and Mother (on the right) who was holding Sister Xing sit on the chairs while Third Uncle and we brothers stand on the sides<sup>22</sup>. That photograph was to celebrate Sister Xing's birth which was several months beforehand. I hope you are doing well. Please write to us if you have any good news.

August 10, 1953  
Respectfully yours,  
Your brother, Wing Goon

Notes:

This letter was written in a formal manner so that part of its language was written in Ancient Chinese prose. My father's secretary could tell from the writing that Wing Goon Hom is from the southern part of Guangdong. From my analysis of the letter, I believe that Wing Goon and his brother came from a prominent family (judging from Wing Goon's eloquent and sophisticated writing style and language with many Chinese idioms); however, the Sino-Japanese War destroyed its past glory and forced the family to flee to Hong Kong. Overall, this letter was more of a formal plea for aid.

1. Wing Goon “I” always referred himself as “your younger brother”; the recipient, Wing Hang, always as “older brother.”
2. Master as in “mentor” or “teacher”
3. I am not quite sure whether he wanted to visit or immigrate to the United States.
4. It does explicitly state which department of the Hong Kong Ministry.
5. In his letter, it is more like “U.S.’s Department of State.”
6. It does not state which government (Hong Kong or US)
7. Documents for the application.
8. “Connections” means using the help from westerners (Caucasians).
9. The “lawyer” is a Chinese lawyer.
10. Those documents included Wing Goon’s, his mother’s, and his father’s documents, which I do not know how to translate the names of those files.
11. It is an idiom in Chinese.
12. He used many idioms after that sentence.
13. “Sister-in-law” is Wing Hang’s wife.
14. I am not sure about the name translation here so I used pinyin to translate the name into English. Brother Xuan was Wing Goon and Wing Hang’s younger sibling.
15. Most of his family lived in the countryside which I’m not sure about the location.
16. I suppose it is the Chinese enlistment department, but I am NOT sure.
17. It is not clear whether the child or Wing Goon and his father took the picture.
18. “Regal Green Town” is the name of a town. I translate it word by word.
19. Apparently from this letter, Regal Green Town was in Taiwan.
20. Brother Chuan was Wing Goon and Wing Hang’s younger brother.
21. Sister Xing was Wing Goon and Wing Hang’s younger sibling.
22. I do not know how he described a photograph, which was destroyed by fire, in so many details.

?????

#6367

Dear Virtuous Brother Wing Hung,

I received your teachings ( respectful way of saying message ) and know what has been going on. In regards to the arrangement of the passport, I urge you, my brother, to do it as soon as possible. Have it done when you come back so that I don’t have to keep thinking about it. In your letter, you talked about the urgency of the matter. I would not dare not to follow. For your disposal, I have sent a mail to where my brother lives in the US. However, my brother is not so sure if he can accept your opinion. Cause your passport has not been arranged. Prior to that, the contract that we have, a deposit of three hundred and seventy yuan has been paid. For the balance, it is stated that after my arrival in the US, my brother will pay you two thousand and five hundred yuan. Balance will be paid in Hong Kong by my brother Yu Che ( in Lee Hang company? ) to your honorable parent. I have reported this information to my brother in the US before. Now I sent him another letter, requesting him to pay three to five hundreds to you. Due to conflicting messages, my brother in the US may be suspicious. He sent me letters before. His payment to you will only be arranged after my landing in the US. You saw this quote “ that page of letter has been sent to your brother, if you want to know the details, you can sent him a letter”. My brother has straight forward character. I am afraid he may not be able to live up to your expectation. I am sorry for this. I ask for your forgiveness and don’t blame him too much. You now have a big network of friends in the US. Many of them rely on your help. You can consider this amount of money as a donation. ( next sentence not sure ). If the tax bureau ask about when the family photo was taken, you can tell them that it was taken within 10 days after I got married. Because you ( not sure about the term ), you were not in the picture.

Talk to you later.

Best wishes,

Younger brother,  
Yu Ho

Aug 11

????? **IMG 6410**

永亨 cousin, hope everything is going well for you. Yesterday I received a letter from 炳雙 (Bǐng shuāng) and it is hard to trust him because he lacks the responsibility. He only promises me orally but did not take actions. I have talked to 炳雙 (Bǐng shuāng) but he does not want to be responsible to this. 李邦 (Li bāng) signed a contract but it was fake which also affected to 炳雙's (Bǐng shuāng) credibility. People were unhappy about it. Please cousin, look over it to see if this is a fair case. Hope 炳雙 (Bǐng shuāng) can come with sincerity to apologize and can take responsibility of the letter. You can't write (something \*I could not read this part) in the bank. Hope 炳雙's (Bǐng shuāng) lying will stop and redeem his mistakes. I wish you can come (to me) on September 11th.

Be well,

光吳付 (Guāng wú fù),

August 29<sup>th</sup> [Date]

89-30.100 6394

From the Law Offices of Chow and Sing

To the correspondent:

Your previous correspondence was received and read. We can now individually discuss the following:

First, your spouse's affairs – Continue as usual. Second, your two offspring living in Hong Kong – According to new immigration law, they cannot confirm their American citizenship. If you claim them as dependants, there will be a problem in a certain circumstance. Next year, during income tax reporting, the dependant (providing they cannot be the husband and wife pair, but the husband alone) must be an American citizen. That is, the dependant must have either been to America, or is living in America. Supposing that you claim or report the two sons as your dependants, I fear that one cannot prevent this problem's occurrence.

With all this in mind, and with concern for the best result, we should avoid declaring dependence.

In response to your request for my reply, please make provisions to follow my advice.

My best regards to Tan Yongheng [Wing Hong Hum]

November 24, 1953

## UNKNOWN DATES

### ????? IMG 6428:

Dear Wing Hong (永亨) brother:

I pay my respect to you. I sent 4 letters yesterday and hope you already received them. If you have already received them, please reply/send a letter to me. Please come to America soon, I will be really happy if you do. About applying to leave the country, how long will it take for you to come to America? Will they (the government) interrogate you for leaving? I really hope you can put your time and efforts into this. If the government has asked you about the process with the blood test, do you know if the procedure requires the doctor's help? Don't forget to pay the 1000 yen. You will need it for the procedure fee for the blood test. Please give the money to the doctor first. Can I trust you on this? It is better if you can pay the money first, I will be happy to see that. Trust is very important to people, hope you, brother, can understand. It is the best if you can give it to the attorney so the attorney can complete the process. Don't waste any time, and if you, brother, comes to America, there are many things that I want you to do/know. Today if you, brother, helps me, I will do the same after you come to America. I believe that you are a good brother and you will help me.

#### Notes/Summary:

In the letter, the writer expresses respect to Wing Hong (永亨) because he is his older brother. It seems like Wing Hong(永亨) has to complete the blood test and some procedures to go to America from Hong Kong. The writer reminds him to give the fee to the doctor as soon as possible. He seems really eager for his older brother to come to America.

### IMG 6429:

About the procedure fee 1000 yen, it is a lot to me because I am very poor. It will be better if you could pay 700 yen and I will pay 300 yen. I believe that your environment is better than mine and you can afford the fee. 700 yen will just be like a hair on your body (meaning it is that little to him.) I am living in a harsh condition and I will pay you back one day. Also, I hope that you can give me 200 yen as a charity work. I will really appreciate your help if you do so. I hope your business will be really successful and I hope you can understand my situation.

Yesterday the government asked me about the procedure. I know after the February of 1951, I received a promise letter that you sent to me. I sent them to the government on February 17th along with your ID, the receipt/certificate? of the English school that you went to in 1949, and some money. I told someone to translate your ID into English and then sent it to the government. I got the letter from the government on the 16th (didn't specify the month), saying that they already received the promise letter in June.

### IMG 6430

(continue from IMG 6429) ... you sent me the promise letter and copied/printed it. On August 13th, I told someone to translate the letter and the promise letter that you sent me so I could send it to the American Embassy. On the same day, the American Embassy sent me a letter, telling me to meet with them. They asked me about the name, nationality, address/location, date of births of you and your parents. They told me to raise my right hand to swear by my naturalization. I did not sign the "loyal to America" part. On the next day (August 14th), they told me to go to the Embassy again for more questions. They asked me if there were mountains, villages, railroads around "北閘村-North Gate Village" (Běi zhá cūn). They also asked what brother 永創 Wing Tong Hum and brother 崑杏樂昌

Hore Hong Hum did for their living (occupations). I told them what you wrote and after they finished with the questions, they handed me a piece of paper. The paper told me to wait until after November and told me not to hurry them before November. I waited until November but I still didn't get any notification from the Embassy about the second meeting. I have told someone to write letters to hurry the Embassy but there were no replies. Finally in July 19th of this year, I received the notification letter from the Embassy. The letter told me to wait until the final meeting which they will need our mother and the three brothers to come in order to verify the procedure. After I received the letter, I took a photo of the letter and sent it to mother and the three brothers. After awhile, the third brother replied, telling me that starting from the second phase in the village (he didn't specify the second phase of what), they were not allowed to come to Hong Kong...

### IMG 6431

... So at the meantime, I told someone to arrange the payment for the procedure, but the person did not want to take the case. I was not satisfied with it. I wrote a letter in Chinese to the American Embassy, promising them that we will pay the money, but there was no reply. In the letter that I sent, I told them that since our mother and the three brothers were in the country side, they were not allowed to leave the areas. I pleaded them to allow them to go to America to do the verification. However, the letter did not have any power/effect to the situation, please understand everything that I have said, older brother. The oral verification and my wife came to Hong Kong a few years ago to meet. During the time, we had the IDs, but she brought it back when she returned back to the country side. On August 13th, they asked me some questions. They asked me the time that I came to Hong Kong, the manger was 陳伯宏 (Chén bó hóng), and who brought me to America. I told them that Wing Hong (永亨) brother brought me to America. I told them that I do not know English. They told me to writer Wing Hong (永亨)'s address. They said Montana. Brother, don't worry. It will be easier if we do the procedure when the new laws and old laws in America are changing. Please complete the process quickly. If you could help me, I will not forget about it. Trust is my second life in my life, just have faith in me. Also, I have many things that I will need help with in America. Perhaps we can split the rent in half, but anyway, I hope you could complete the process as soon as possible. I will not forget what you have done for me, brother.

Safe travel,  
Younger brother,  
永元 (Wing Goon)

December 1<sup>st</sup> [date]

89-30.202 Image 6434:

Tan Yongxuan, official name Yinxuan, is now studying at University of Guangzhou. At 17 years old, he joined the high school attached to the University of Guangzhou, which was moved to Taishan at the time when Japanese occupied Guangzhou.

Tan Yongchuang, official name Jianchuang, left home when he was 13 years old and joined the middle school attached to Zhongkai Agriculture Vocational College. After high school, he joined Agriculture School of University of Guangxi, and graduated from there in the 37th year of Republic of China.

Before Guangzhou fell into Japanese hands, he moved to Lechang along with Zhongkai College. After the high school, he was admitted by University of Guangxi. After graduation, he became a teacher at Dezhi High School in Guangxi.

[date]

Envelope:  
To Mr. 永亨

89-30.12      374

Dear son,

I have received the money that you have sent; please do not worry. A few days ago a baby boy was born on the 21<sup>st</sup>. We received gifts such as gold, jewelry, and cloth – because of high prices; a lot of money was spent. We named the boy shu huang; what do you think of this name? Shu huang is still such a small boy but he is strong and cute. My sister's daughter came to visit but I could tell that she is weaker than shu huang. I was going to take pictures for you to see, but since it's winter now he wears a lot and it won't properly show you what he looks like.

Third aunt is out and earning money for herself but still has to rely on her son-in-law for money.  
(End of first page)

89-30.59      380

Envelope sent from Hong Kong

To The United States of America  
To: Tan Yong Xiang (Wing Hong Hum)  
From: Li Shengpi

6362  
Img 6362CharleneC

Black Stamp: sent from Canton to Butte, Montana on July 31<sup>st</sup>, 1949  
Cost: 15 cents

6364  
永亨 (Yǒng hēng) nephew, on July 30<sup>th</sup> (Western Calendar) and June 28<sup>th</sup> (Lunar Year), I received your letters and I am happy about it. I was busy a few days ago so it took me some time to reply your letters. My address is 19 Mort, Street, Cart, S. New York City) and I have another address (it is on the cover of the envelop of the letters). The address on the cover of the envelop will be more convenient. If you have more letters, please send it to 86 Charles Street, New York City. If your younger brother comes to America, I am willing to be his sponsor without asking for a payment. Can you please

include/pay my fee for going to 唐山(Tángshān) twice. My circumstances are decent. Please send them soon.

景強 Jǐng qiáng  
August 1<sup>st</sup>

Notes: This means 景強(Jǐng qiáng) is confirmed to be 永亨 (Yǒng hēng)'s uncle.

Duplicate of 6364

Yongheng cousin [please?] read: Western Calendar July 30th, old calendar June 28th. ... A few days ago I went off on some other business, and cousin Xian received the letter, which is why I got it late, A few days ago my mailing address, (19 Mott St, (Apt ; 5.) New York City.) because it's very [not?] suitable, only I have another mailing address, (as written on the envelope) compared to the one a few days ago, this is more convenient, if you have any letters to send me, please send it to 『86 Charles St, New York City, N.Y.』, if your brother comes to America requiring me to be the witness, I can try my best to do it, and I won't pay any of the fees for being a witness. My pictures and my [working documents?] from the two times I visited and returned from Tang Shan, I will send them in another letter, [please don't ...far]! My circumstances are normal, there are nothing good to tell, I wrote this letter only to reply, in a little bit of a hurry, please be well!

Jingqiang  
Western Calendar August 1<sup>st</sup>

6370

Dear 永亨 brother,

I received your letter yesterday and I understand the content of your letter thoroughly. I hope you, older brother, has live in good circumstances and your business go well. For our third uncle 潭洪's 玉照, I already received them. The oral testimony is recorded as well in the testimony office as well. Hope you are making the passport; I will be really happy and grateful. Now the country's circumstances are in tense; Hope you can make the passport quickly or else it will be delayed by the current circumstances. You have to include my name and my address in HK on the passport. If you do the procedures in HK, you can stay in America for a couple months. The procedure in HK is easy, because you don't need ID. You only need your family photo to prove your identity and the cost of the procedure is 55HKD. Yesterday I received a letter from my brother 含戚, he expresses his concern in the letter. If I go to 華普( a place in San Francisco) please take care of me. Hope you can arrange the passport quickly, I will be really grateful. I will talk to you soon, hope you travel safely.

Younger brother 子可 (Wing Goon Hum)

September 3<sup>rd</sup>

6370

Yongheng brother,

Yesterday I received your message, after I read it I know that you are doing well and rich. I got the photo of 潭洪 from third uncle so don't worry, and also the testimony has already being recorded. I am happy and thankful that you are progressing the best way to get the passport. Now the China is in a nervous situation, so you have to get the passport as fast as possible, just to avoid for the current

situation. If you get the passport in the normal process, you have indicated I live in HK, and I made the progress in HK. It is easier to get the passport in HK, because you don't need any document but only a photo as evidence. I will send you the money and when I arrive, no matter what I will give you the money and will not break my word. I hope you can send back the passport as soon as possible and I will talk to you next time. Thank you.

September 3rd ,

By younger brother with messy handwriting

IMG 6378 :

Dear my brother Yongxiang,

I received your letter dated August 22nd yesterday, while your August 17th letter hasn't arrived. If I ever receive it, I will let you know then.

My sister in law has given birth to a girl on August 30th at about 5 to 7 in the afternoon. The infant is very active, grows bigger fast. The whole family is filled with joy now, as we want you to know. According to the 2nd uncle said, the money that you sent back on August 22nd was received. Therefore don't worry. The last crops of this year can be considered a harvest, altogether about 11 or 12 bamboo baskets, which is prospering. At this moment of time, as the traffic hasn't recovered, the mails delivery is very difficult. All the mails need to be taken to Hong Kong by the parallel traders first and then mailed from there. The process is such troublesome and it is not an easy thing to post a letter. There were two letters sent to you in the past a few days. Have you received them? Please let us know. So far, Taicheng hasn't come back to normal yet. All the business is suspended. The market is dull. Less and less people are in the street. We don't know when this situation can be changed and booming comes again. I myself didn't return to school this semester. Now I am staying at home and extremely bored. Fortunately everyone at home is safe and sound. So please don't worry since you are so far away.

Wish you all the best,

Your younger brother,

Yinxuan

September 23rd

The 2nd letter on the same page:

Although my wife's brother Xiangming, has written to you about everything here, I still have something to say myself. (I gathered it must be very cold due to the snow there recently.) My nephew, Zongyan, should have told you about our so many wishes to you, my daughter, for your health and wealth. He ever gave me a lot of help in those years when I just came to Kensheng from Difu. I should have come to visit you myself, however, I am sure that you, my daughter, understand my difficulties. Lately when the traffic was good, Xiangming sent to you two letters on September 2nd and 4th. Have you received them? My nephew's son got a baby girl on August 30th. Both mother and baby are doing well. Therefore, you may rest assured.

Best regards,

September 23rd

Xiying (on behalf)

6388

My humble brother Wing Hong, please read the letter:

Thanks are to whom open this letter. It's been a long time that I haven't written letter to tell that I was safe and fine, and many months passed just like a sudden. During this period, because of the busy works that you brother didn't have time to write to me of asking my safety. I feel deeply sorry for that. Please forgive me (for I didn't write the letter initiatively to inform my safety). It is the start of new spring now, and as the plants met spring they grew prosperously. Peony is blossoming as signs for riches and honors. Eulogize.

My humble brother, you are away from home, but are both lucky and healthy, holding the work to earn money stably. Everything is smooth, nice, and successful, and you adapted well. Things are going well that can be congratulated. Your brother here is still safe, luckily, but others are not capable to console you. Recalling from August last year when I went to US Consulate to give the materials and waiting for investigating process went through to give me approval, I still barely hear from them till now, and I didn't get any replying letters from US Consulate asking me to go through the next process since then. This is such regrettable matter. I really don't know the reason. Yet this makes me have the feeling of waiting eagerly without a clear target! I heard that at the end of last year, there were already four consuls of US Consulate went back to their country to continue their work. Now there is only four remained there to work so the process is even slower than it was. There were several fellow countrymen living abroad like me, and they all didn't get the letter or notice. They showed that they have similar feeling with me!

Yesterday, when talking with my friend Mr. Ma, he disclosed that when the US Consul General notices me that I can go and arrive in the territory of America, the materials I handed in would later go through the second process while approved to disembark. It is the same with the process before the war. I can go to US by ferry without going through the second process and waiting for approval in Hong Kong. Yet, the only thing needed is that the relatives of the one who hands in materials, like his/her mom, dad, or brothers, need to give the application to the American Local Consul Immigration Office. Then everything is going to be valid. I wrote today to ask for your help. I hope you, my brother; in US can instruct the office as fast as possible to help me get the chance to US. I deeply feel thankful for all the efforts you make and the precious time you spend. Later when we meet, I will thank you directly. Recently, due to the local news, all the letters will be checked if written. I still didn't get the situation here clearly. Meanwhile, I believe that the articles on US newspaper and magazines published in great details so you can understand what is happened without my descriptions. I am not repeating. If you think the words are too few please forgive me for that! For the rest I didn't write prelude because I have time to get taught by Yan Zha, which I feel so lucky.

Wish you

Safe and fine during new spring.

Written by brother Gong Hum on Feb 3.

6406

Mr. Wing Hong Hum,

My humble brother in law Wu Yu Ke sent a letter of relation. The person that is transacting your American passport has talked about the fund. I had promised in previous years to take the charge of paying this fund, yet he has to be present so that I can actually loan the fund to him. For convenience of my brother in law to obtain the fund, it is currently entrusted to my relatives in the commercial port

shop. You can inform the shop as soon as the passport paper is settled into shape. Because I'm commissioned by my brother in law Mr. YuKe, I have not necessarily met you, but I'm not worried about being bold, and am sending this letter to inform you. Hope you have a safe trip.

Lee Bang.

(From Lee Bang, in Bronx NY, To Wing Hong Hum)

6407

Img 6407

Mr. WIng Hung Hum (Yong-xiong Tan),

I have received the letter last week. Due to the hot wether recently, I felt so reluctant to write, thus replied you late. I feel so sorry. About the twenty-five hundreds for BingShuang I'll be responsible for, when BingShuang is coming to town in the future, I will give it to Uncle YanGuang, and tell Uncle to give it to you. The other thing I would like to know is when the passport process will be done. Hope you will let me know.

Sincerely reply and wish you a safe journey!

Ban Li

July 5th

6409

Hum Tan

The letter was received last week. Due to the hot weather, I have no desire to pick up my pen. Therefore tardy in replying the letter, I sincerely apologize. About paying 2,500 RMB for Bing Shuang, when Bing Shuang arrive in the United States in the future, I will give the money to your uncle, Yan Guang. Then, your uncle will give the money to you. I am willing to know about the process of the production of the passport. I hope you will tell me. I will be here to reply and ask questions. Hope you have a safe trip.

Li bang July 5<sup>th</sup>

6415

Dearest Brother Wing Hung,

I know that you have sent 250 USD to Hong Kong. Recently we paid about 700 USD in government fees. Because class ranks have not been chosen yet, I don't know if we will have to pay more in the future. Nowadays we live frugally; preparing for the future. Hopefully you can send some more money home soon. Older sister suffers on a daily basis; she's even been penalized before. In your free time, please write to Yue Wei grandfather. Nephew has grown up; he's so lively and high-spirited! Everyone loves him – I just wanted to let you know about him. That's it for today. Enjoy the new spring!

Little Brother Wing Goon.

6421

I am second brother, Wing Goon Hum title Zonghong is currently 33 years old, is born in Guangdong [Canton] Taishan Baishui Bao Bi Rui (Bick Suey) Village, on the Chang hour, March 25th during the 8th year of the Republic of China. At nine years old, he goes to school at Bi Rui [Bick Suey] School. When he's sixteen he stopped going to school and stayed home. In the 30th year of the Republic of China, the Japanese army occupied Hong Kong. [Something] is congested which affected family life. This made third brother and I (Hore Hong Hum?) finish breakfast everyday at 6 o'clock and go to Taicheng [Tai city] to do vendor business. We sold old clothes everyday until 6 o'clock at night. Although the business is hard, and profits are thin, but we can sustain our lives. Thank goodness that fourth brother was out at school during that time and the government pays for everything, no burdens on the family. Until the 33rd year of the Republic of China when the Japanese army forced us to move to Beijia village. At the time, we took part of the funds from selling the old clothes to help build a house of YiGao. Until the War against the Japanese ended in victory, and first brother sent some money home did we stop our vendor business. In the first month of the 35th year of the Republic of China, Tan YiZhang from my home village introduced me to work at the laundry department of the Luk Kwok Hotel in Hong Kong. YiZhang got introduced to work in Hong Kong, but because he was old and could no longer handle the job he introduced me to do this job. After I went to Hong Kong I didn't go back home. Only when first brother returned from America to China I went home with first brother. First brother got married on July 5th of the 37th year of the Republic of China. I went back to Hong Kong within a week of first brother's marriage. At home, mother arranged a marriage for me and sent a letter asking me to go home to get married. So I took days off to go home. Mother arranged the marriage between Li ShengXian's daughter Li QingWei who is currently 25 years old. In the 37th year of the Republic of China on the 12th of the First Month, I returned home and confirmed the marriage. The wedding was held on the 20th of the First Month in the 37th year of the Republic of China, everything was done according to first brother's wedding.

6424

The name of my third brother is Yong Tong, He is 28th years old. He born in BiRui village located at White Water Castle of Taishan, Guangdong Province, in September 15th, 1924. At first, he studied at the BiRui School for a few years till he was sixteen, where the Teacher is Tang Yun who is about 50 years old. But, later during the war, Japan took over Hong Kong which causes the disconnection with outside world, he goes to Tai City with the 2nd brother selling used clothes for a living. After the war, he finally can go back to his hometown. Since the oldest brother has enough money home to improve their living condition, he then stays home free after that.

The fourth brother named Yong Chong, He is 26th years old. He born in BiRui village located at White Water Castle of Taishan, Guangdong Province, in January 9th, 1926. He studied all the way to nine year old at the BiRui Elementary School. When he was sixteen (between March 30th and September 20th events in 1941), with the help from his friend he gets chance to go to Zhong Kale Agriculture Middle School at Le Chan Xi in June. This school has the government grant at that time, so he does not need to pay any tuition and, at the same time, he can get some allowance to cover for his living cost. Therefore, he does not need any monetary help from the family. In 1946, he moves to Guangxi and studies at the Department of Forestry at Guangxi University after graduation from middle schools. He never went back home till 1947 during holiday vacation (even for our oldest brother wedding) and stays till January, 1948 to attend our 2nd brother's wedding. We have a big family picture taken at that time. He was 24 at the time of college graduation; and at his 25th, he get a teaching job and teaches in Le Chan Middle school to earn for a living. Due to the minimum wage, he did not even send any money back home to support our family.

6425

I have a little sister, 24 years old, 1928 march 6<sup>th</sup>, born in Guangdong Bi Rui village. Went to school at the age of nine at the Bi Rui school. Stopped at the age of 14 because of the invasion of Hong Kong. At that time second eldest (brother) and third eldest were selling old clothes in tai city. Sometimes they took the old clothes and I would cut them with mother. I had no work at the time. In 1948 Second eldest got married and fell ill because of overworking. He had a high fever and xiao chi doctor said he had to take time to recover. Wing Tong Hum and second eldest had a limit to their break and had to go back to the lok kwok hotel to work. Because of that xing sister had to miss the family photoshoot.

The school sometimes had a lot of people sometimes few.

Wing Goon's older brother went to school for 6 years. Third eldest went for three years. Fourth eldest went for one year; sometimes with older brother or sometimes with little brother.

6426

the relationship with father. I further asked: "the envelopes of the letters Oldest Brother sent me can prove my relationship with my father." The embassy worker responded: "we only need your fathers' documents of when he was alive, not your Old Brothers'. Documents like this cannot help you immigrate/go to America." I asked the embassy worker again: "can you please let me go to America first [so I can] prove my relationship with my father with my brother?" He (embassy worker) said: "No, I cannot help you." Afterwards, he showed me the letter Oldest Brother sent [to the embassy] through Zhuang Shi. The embassy replied the letter and requested more evidence. But Oldest Brother has yet to send anything even after four or five months now, even the letters don't give reasons for proof. Through the above scenario, the Yong brother said that he hopes the phase for candid and open communication should begin soon. He wrote in his letter: "hope you can ask Zhuang Shi to send in a request to the American Foreign Affairs and Immigration Agency to approve the request quickly." Only through this way we can have some hope to redeem the situation. Around now I will be offering an oral testimony. "BuRi (??)" embassy mails back to America's diplomatic department to process the testimony, utilizing this timing to apply, permission to go to America may be granted. If Brother Heng /Hum is not outside [in America] the situation will be reduced to nothing." Therefore we should face the current problem, for the solution in the future. We must prepare in a timely manner, so this whole thing can be finished as soon as possible. During the most crucial times, please send letters with Yong Brother so the present existing problems may be solved. Simultaneously, I hope that you will reply me after receiving this letter, and record the oral testimonial Yong brother, so we can match the testimonials in the future.

6433

First part:

永享(Yǒng xiǎng), I got your letters and my younger brother's testimony on Wednesday afternoon. Your list of everyone's age and the files are pretty good in general but only the year and month of when 潭福 (Tán fú) passed away is unknown. Did 潭福 (Tán fú) pass away in America or 唐山 (Tángshān)?

If 潭福 (Tán fú) is still alive today, he would be 73 years old by now. He was born in America. He was born on August 10<sup>th</sup> of 1988. I will send these files back to you and so you will receive them.

景海 (Jǐng hǎi)  
March 16<sup>th</sup>

Note: The person that is writing this letter is 永享's (Yǒng xiǎng- Wing Hong hum) uncle.

Second part:

Grandpa 潭福's (Tán fú) birthday is on August 10<sup>th</sup> of every year.

Be aware of 裔娘's (Yì lǎng) birthday (the year, the month, and the date).

潭芳 (Tán fāng) was born on January 7<sup>th</sup> of guāng xù 25<sup>th</sup> or on February 16<sup>th</sup> of 1899.

潭洪 (Tán hóng) was born on October 20<sup>th</sup> of 民國 (Mínguó) 3 or December 7<sup>th</sup> of 1914.

Image 6434:

Tan Yongxuan, official name Yinxuan, is now studying at University of Guangzhou. At 17 years old, he joined the high school attached to the University of Guangzhou, which was moved to Taishan at the time when Japanese occupied Guangzhou.

Tan Yongchuang, official name Jianchuang, left home when he was 13 years old and joined the middle school attached to Zhongkai Agriculture Vocational College. After high school, he joined Agriculture School of University of Guangxi, and graduated from there in the 37th year of Republic of China.

Before Guangzhou fell into Japanese hands, he moved to Lechang along with Zhongkai College. After the high school, he was admitted by University of Guangxi. After graduation, he became a teacher at Dezhi High School in Guangxi.

6435

Dear nephew Wing Hong,

I have replied your letters a few days ago, I thought it had arrived by now. Currently, in this letter, I have some photos attached of myself. I hope that you can keep them safe for me. I also have some slightly important news to inform you and your brother of. I list them here as follows:

Jing Qiang (Uncle), August 14<sup>th</sup>

News listed:

- Tan Hong returned to Tang Shan for the first time on November 13<sup>th</sup>, 1936 (Western calendar date). He boarded a boat from the harbor back to Tang Shan, on January 18<sup>th</sup>, 1938, he returned to the USA from Hong Kong by ferry.
- Tan Hong returned to Tang Shan for the second time on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1944. He boarded the soldiers' ship back to Tang Shan. He then returned to the USA from Shanghai by plane from January 19<sup>th</sup>, 1947.

- Tan Hong used to be a soldier in the American Air Forces and also part of the army. He was a captain of the army. Tan Hong's other name was Ke Qiang. Tan Hong's wife is Miss Huang, he was residing in XXX Village in Tai Shan with four houses.
- Tan Hong had two sons in total: the elder named Tan Jun, born in October 1937. The second son was named Tan Chao, born in October 1946.

6435

Dear Wing Hong (nephew),

The letter that I sent you several days ago must have arrived for a while. I attached couple of my pictures inside the letter. Hope you will keep it well.

Now I have several important "evidence" for you and your (younger) brother. You two have to understand some of this strategic evidence, which listed below.

Hope you are well.

(from) King Keung Aug 14th

HUM Hung 1st time back to mainland China

1936 Nov 13th from (? can't read ) port back to China by ship

1938 Jan 18th from Hong Kong back to US by ship

HUM Hung 2nd time back to China

1944 Nov 22nd from San Francisco back to China by serving on a naval army vessel

1947 Jan 19th from Shanghai back to US by plane

HUM Hung had served in the air force and army as army squad leader

HUM Hung also named HUM Kwong Keung

HUM Hung's wife's maiden name- Wong

HUM Hung now lives in Toi San, Lung Tam Village, second row, first house

There are 4 houses in Lung Tam Village

HUM Hung has two sons

Older son, HUM Kwan, born in 1937 Oct

Second son, HUM Chiu, born in 1946, Oct

6444

Dearest Wing Hong,

I haven't written in a long time; I'm guessing you're doing well? Our son Shu Huang is learning at home and in the village. The elders and youngsters like him a lot and he tells them jokes. He talks really well now. However I haven't received a letter from you asking about Shu Huang – you must be very busy. In the morning your letter wrote about your sister; she never came to my house before. What would be the reason? It's because the communist ideal's era is completely different from before. It's different in the fact that they didn't allow women to leave their village past dark. Now they want to increase knowledge amongst women. It's sad that it's hard not to grow suspicious of the country. Strict

(page ends)

6441 (continuation of 6444)

very strict..... People are dwelling well. My dear. People went out during the Second Sino-Japanese War to the US for life lasting works; their relatives will be easier to go abroad. Jinbo's wife, who is in the same alley as I, has a chance to go to the US in several months, and I require you to have this ability. I will be very happy about that if you can do what I hope. I pray for you and I hope you do what I want. My mom and Meixin working in Hong Kong can only sustain their own lives from the pay. Now, many people in Hong Kong move enthusiastically to places, some for works and some for escaping. I want you to mail me 100 dollars. Did you agree? If you agree I will be even happier. This is the pay for your one-week work, right? People are not loose but they want to be poor and honest. Write letter to me and let me know.

And

Hope your work is successful.

Jun 2 (Lunar possible)

Sent by Meilin (is that his wife?!?!?)

6408

To my nephew Wing Heng, at this beginning of summer, I hereby send to you my best wishes. You have ceded the passport for going to USA to Yuke Wu. Your uncle Yiying and your brother Yin Xuan have agreed on 800 some US dollar, except for the deposit plus the money you need to pay after the applying for going to USA is completed, for signing a guarantee contract on your behalf with Yuke Wu in Hong Kong for his applying to go to USA. About 10 days ago when trying to sign this contract, Yuke Wu agreed with two cosigners, with one signature and one store stamp but later on he changed his mind. I realized that he wasn't very steady so that I didn't sign anything on your behalf. After that I asked your uncle and your brother for their opinion through letters and followed their instructions. Recently your brother sent to me two letters saying that he has discussed and agreed with Xueyong Wu if Yuke can allow only Yuzhuo signing the contract in Hong Kong, while in the mean time, at hometown, Xueyong Wu also signing with giving his property as security and then I can sign this Contract with Yuke on your behalf in Hong Kong. As per your brother's letter, I have signed this Contract of Guarantee with Yuke on May 27<sup>th</sup>. It stated that 820 USD would be paid after the application went through. Your uncle Yiying said it should be 830 USD. If it is true that the contract has 10 USD in short, you should ask for 10 USD back in America. You should pay attention to this. However, since the Contract has been signed, please send the passport back as soon as you can.

6423

The boat called "General" will dock in Hong Kong on June 8<sup>th</sup> this year whilst traveling to Guangzhou. I came to the Kowloon ferry pier to pick up older brother, he had three pieces of luggage; a suitcase, a satchel and another sack. He lived in the Six Countries (that has to be Luk Kwok) hotel, on the fourth floor. Big brother lived in Hong Kong until the 11<sup>th</sup>, and then he boarded the ship "Buddha Mountain" to Guangzhou. On the way he transferred to another boat named Xin Chang Li to Xin Chang Bu harbor, and finally got on the bus on Taixing road. He got off the bus at the crossroad between Taixing road and Bei Zha Zhi road. Mother, third brother, and sister Xing was there to pick him up. They hired four male servants to carry his luggage that were temporarily hired at the crossroad. The cost for hiring was paid by Big Brother himself, of which I didn't know about. In 1947 I came home with Big

Brother, we arrived home on April 27<sup>th</sup>. Big brother was married on July 5<sup>th</sup>. His wife, Miss Huang, was the daughter of Huang Zeng Dao. Miss Huang was twenty-five when she married. The wedding was not lavish; there wasn't a big family party. We only invited the villagers to have a gathering for tea. After the refreshments were retrieved from Xi Hao teahouse, Ya Hao went to pick up the bride in her sedan. Two people carried the sedan, and the bride was dressed in a long red qipao rather than a fancy dress. She had a flower headdress atop her head, and her dowry consisted of: a dressing table, a dining table, a closet, two wooden crates, and four wooden stools. Mother paid the cost for hiring the people, the amount unknown. The next year, Big Brother had his first son named Kong Yi. Big brother returned to America the following year on May 30<sup>th</sup>, and his wife was pregnant with his second son named Shu Hui. He left China on May 23<sup>rd</sup> from Guangzhou, where he traveled to Hong Kong. He stayed in Hong Kong for five days before boarding the boat "Qiao Ge Dun" (English name unknown) on May 29<sup>th</sup> back to America.

**(These details above seem to be about WHH, his wife, and their children)**

In file 89-30.198 (which is the general testimony of Wing Hong Hum for immigration) I see some new details:

WH Hum was 5' 8" and 156 pounds. It lists him as a miner.

He traveled on May 16, 1947 on General Meiggs

He returned on July 13, 1949 on USS Gordon

It looks to me that WH Hum was married to Wong Mee Ling (who I think was born on July, 18, 1926). It seems that they were married on July 5, 1947