

Finding Aid

to

CHANG KEE

KAUAI BUSINESSMAN AND PHILANTROPIST

FAMILY HISTORY

1882 – 1942

Kauai Historical Society

Lihue, Kauai, Hawaii

MS 46-FF

1 folder

### Chang Kee, Kauai Businessman and Philanthropist, Family History

In 1882 brothers Chang Kee and Chang Batt 16 and 18 years old, left their village of Oo Syak, Canton China, sailing to Hong Kong, then on a clipper ship moving cargo. The first port was San Francisco, then to Honolulu on the return trip, a voyage of over three months. Both brothers were on visitor visas.

Chang Batt, the older brother manufactured shoes and leather items in a small store in Honolulu. On a trip back to Oo Syak in 1890, he married Lau Shee. He returned to Honolulu the same year, Lau Shee arrived in 1892 where their three children were born, son Dan Fong and daughters Akam and Samtow. The family traveled to China in 1902, Chang Batt returned to his business in 1903, retiring in 1906. He died in Oo Syak in 1910.

Chang Kee's work history begins in Hilo, first with Hip Wo as a cook, then in the C.Y. Aiona Store. After a year Chang Kee moved to Honolulu and was employed by the Kwong Hip Lung Company, an import and export business. He obtained Hawaiian citizenship in 1893 and became a U.S. citizen when Hawaii became a U.S. Territory. The same year, Chang Kee visited his village where he married Chung Shee. They returned on U.S. passports to Honolulu.

The Kwong Hip Lung Company sent Chang Kee to Koloa, Kauai in 1897 to close their C. Poi Kee Store. During his visit Chang Kee searched the island for business opportunities. He found Waimea a busy area, and leased a property from the Knudsen Estate to build a store in Kekaha. The store prospered. In 1900 his wife Chung Shee joined him; they had a son Ah Young; Chung Shee passed away in 1901. In 1907, Chang Kee and Ah Young travelled to his Canton village, where he married Tong Shee, and they toured mainland China. In 1908 he returned with his wife, son Ah Young, and nephew Dan Fong. They lived in Kekaha where Ah Young and Dan Fong attended the government school. Five children joined the family - sons Sing, Clarence Chin, Alvin Yuk Hung and daughters Clara Lo and Dorothy Lee.

Chang Kee and Chang Batt helped organize the Oo Syak Gee Lu Society in 1887 – a Chinese eleemosynary society of Honolulu. Sing Chang and Dan Fong Chang served as board Presidents.

Chang Kee founded and built the Waimea Chinese Cemetery in Kekaha in 1910. In June 1924, he sold his business to his nephew Dan Fong Chang and retired; moving with his wife and five children to Hong Kong where he managed the Leatherman Company, he was a principle shareholder. He passed away in 1925. His five younger children returned to Honolulu in 1927 to finish their college education.

Dan Fong Chang continued to run the Chang Kee Store with his wife Kam Hin. They managed the store for 18 years, and raised seven children – William, Walter, Alexander, Jennie, Laura, Margaret and Shirley. They attended the government schools, and mainland universities. In 1942 Dan Fong Chang retired from this Kekaha business and moved to Honolulu.

This material was donated to the Historical Society on February 4, 2022 by Cal Chang, and is open to research.

Processed by Marylou Bradley in 2022

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Scope and Content:

The original document “in the year of 1882” and indicates it was written in Kekaha in June, 1924. Another version is on 3 typed pages. While they contain similar information, there are some differences in the content, as well as the sequence of events.

Two talk story sessions in July 1981 and May 1988 provided interpretations.

Related Material:

Information on the Park Hook Tong Chinese Cemetery in Waimea can be found in the following locations:

<http://www.oosyakgeelu.com/changkee.pdf>

<http://oosyakgeelu.com/changkee2.pdf>

Chinese Historic Sites and Pioneer Families of Kauai compiled and edited by Tin-Yuke and Wai Jane Char / a local history project of Hawaii Chinese History Center, Inc., 1979. “Pak Fook Tong-Kekaha” by Queenie Mow, p. 33 provides physical details of the location and describes the social hall . Kauai Historical Society Library call number is DU628.K3C48 1979

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