

Notes on "The Heung Regulations of the Ng Tsung Yeung Tong of Man Lau" James Hayes

編者按：第34期《華南研究資料中心通訊》曾刊登許舒(James Hayes)的“The Ng (Wu) Lineage of Man Lau Heung, Sun Wui County (Wenlou Xiang, Xinhui Country) and Its Regulations of 1921”一文，並附錄《文樓吳崇讓堂鄉規》。本文為許舒對此鄉規的補充說明，在文末附載「石岐新寧地圖」。

“The Heung Regulations of the Ng Tsung Yeung Tong of Man Lau” (文樓吳崇讓堂鄉規) is the property of the Lee Family in UK, through Philip and Dorothy Lee. Philip lives at 27 Westview Terrance, Padiham, Burnley, Lancashire, England. His e-mail address is pal2001@hotmail.com.

Philip, born in 1946, is a retired civil engineer. Dorothy, his sister, born in 1951, has worked all over the world, mainly as a croupier, and ending up as a ‘pit boss’. After all that excitement, she now lives in England and works as a florist.

Philip is the grandson of the probable first owner of the book. This was Ng Shek-hoi, who arrived in England, about 1905. Family history had it that, together with a brother, he ‘absconded’ in Liverpool, very likely from a ship. Shipping as crew and then leaving when a seemingly suitable destination was reached, was common at that time among young Chinese wishing to get to the Western world in search of work.

Why would he have left home? There is talk of floods, and may be loss of crops, damage to fields, and hardship in the family, had led him to seek his fortune abroad. However, emigration among young Chinese men was common at the time, and money sent

back regularly to families at home helped to ease any poverty and distress.

Shek-hoi is credited with speaking other dialects of Chinese and to have acted as an interpreter at the Liverpool docks. His only surviving photograph, taken in Western dress, shows him to be a good-looking, well-presented, obviously smart and alert young man. It is likely that he had received a good traditional Chinese education in his home village, and this alone would account for his being in possession of this book.

Shek-hoi did not return to China to find a bride, as many did. Whilst working at the docks, he caught the eye of an English girl, Emma Isherwood, who had been employed as a cleaner for one of the ships. They married at Southport in 1908, and he began his own laundry business in Morecambe. He then moved to Wigan in 1915, adopting the family name of Lee. This is an unusual step, but one reason for doing so may be that the Cantonese ‘Ng’ is a difficult one for the English speakers to pronounce, and it may also be that Lee was his mother’s name. This is pure speculation, I must add!

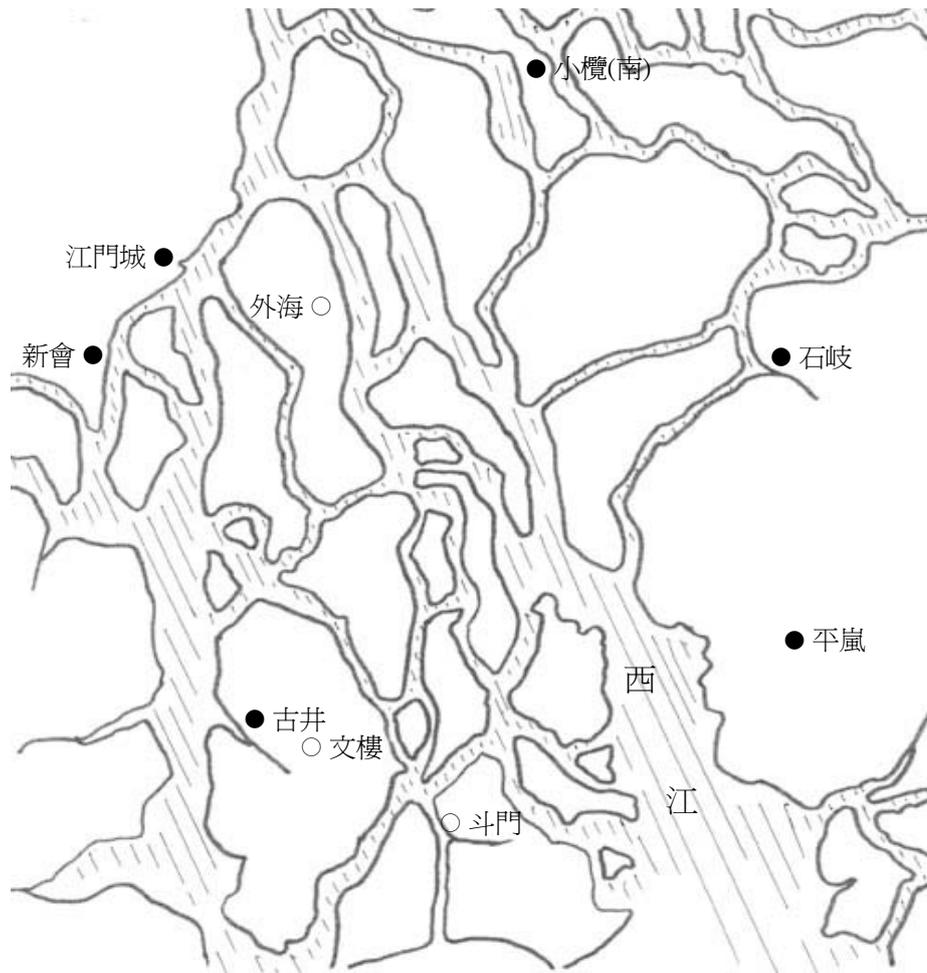
He and Emma went on to produce a large family of two boys and three girls. Two other children died in infancy. All had been given Chinese and English

names. Ng Shek-hoi, alias Ha Fook (the name on his marriage certificate) alias Frank Fook and Frank Lee, died in 1938 after a long illness, aged only 52.

Philip and Dorothy, co-owners of the book, are the children of his eldest son, George Sin-yung Lee, born in 1921, who is still living. George served with distinction in the Royal Air Force in the Second World War, as a navigator on a "Halifax" bomber, as a 'Mayday' (Rescue) signal detector, and with a "Typhoon" fighter-bomber squadron during the invasion of France, serving with the Second Tactical Air Force, no 84 Group, 146 Wing. After the war, George was a painter and decorator.

He is a proficient landscape painter, and until recently was a musician with his own choir.

The "Regulations of Man Lau Heung" is a most interesting and important book, whilst the story of Ng Shek-hoi and his descendants adds another chapter to the history of the undoubtedly locally important Ng lineage of that place. It is to be hoped that George Sin-yung Lee (Ng) and his children, together with other descendants of Ng Shek-hoi, will make the pilgrimage home to Man Lau Heung and Kwu Tseng Market. I am sure it would be a memorable and fruitful journey.



附圖、石岐新寧圖