

HA KWAI CHUNG PHOTOS OF THE REMOVAL INTO THE NEW RESITE  
VILLAGE, 1964 (PHOTOS FOUND IN DO TW'S OFFICE DRAWER)

I went to the village about 1992-1993 to speak with Tang Sang's family and others about the photograph of the Sheung Leung (Raising the Beam) ceremony/ritual) to see what information I could gather from those who had been present.

Unfortunately, my main notes were in the travel bag which was stolen in Swindon Book Company in Lock Road, Kowloon just after that time, but I have now (2006) found some others which are reproduced in this note.

I think Tang Sang had recently died. The Village Representative for many years, he was someone I remember well, and liked. Like most VRs, he knew a lot about his village. He was born in 1914, and was 78 at death, which makes this around 1991, allowing for the difference between Chinese and Western modes of calculating age.

Poon Wah-sum, aged 51, gave his own family background. There had been many families previously, but at the time of the removal in 1964 only two were left, and they were still here now. There was a family record, and there had been an ancestral hall but this was exchanged for a house in the removal negotiations. [Perhaps it had been in ruins by then?]

Poon said that the lady in the picture was Tang Sang's aunt (Ah Sum): he was her chat. She was a Wong ('Kong Ha' Wong) of Wun Yiu, Tai Po, a Hakka, and had come to Ha Kwi Chung as a san po tsai. She died in 1988-89.

Tang Sang's younger brother, Tang Kam[Kan?]-fuk, was also in the photograph. He was of the 9<sup>th</sup> generation of Tangs at Ha Kwai Chung, born in 1931. The Tangs may have come from Pok Lo County, from a village called Laang Chai Hang, Ngap Ma Kiu. [This probably from Tang Sang's widow, who was present. Or, less likely, did it refer to the Poons?]

Poon also said there was a Wong in the picture ('Kong Ha' Wong), who was still in the village. Like the Poons, their ancestral hall had been exchanged for a house in 1964.

He added that there had been a Cheung family, but the two [surviving] brothers had been taken in (gwo kai) by the Wongs and changed their names thereby to Wong. They had

gone overseas, to Sandakan and another place not recorded. An unmarried Cheung had lived in Tai Lin Pai hamlet: he was a little older than Tang Sang, and had died twenty years before.

There had been drums and gongs at the ritual. Chan Wah-hang [or hing] with a cigarette in his mouth had beaten the gongs (lo). Poon also pointed out the two workers at either end of the beam, wearing light suits.

Among the items featured in the ritual, and visible in the photograph, were a wooden container (muk tung) to hold mock gold cash, a cash box or chin kam, sae mai (?), sam kok fu (?), hung po or a red cloth, big and to the left of the beam, kau zirn or scissors, yat bar chek or ruler, two muk dau or wooden rice measures (containers) filled with chuk (?), dai kat or the small orange, suen tau or garlic, sang choi or lettuce, bui mai for getting rid of husks, these all being auspicious items and symbolic of hoped for good fortune. There was also one roll of sugar cane (tsea) on the left, together with two lanterns (tang lung) with 'pak chi chin suen', or 'a hundred sons, a thousand grandsons' inscribed on them, together with other auspicious offerings of fruit, cha kwor, pork, chicken, cuttle fish, and "shan sang doi biu" (not understood, unless representative items from the hillsides).

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