

Moy Shun

(- 10 Apr 1904)

The Evening Star, April 11, 1904, p. 12

Moy Sue Wing Dead

Popular Chinaman Succumbs To Heart Disease

Will Be Buried in the Congressional Cemetery on Date Not Yet Selected

Moy Sue Wing is dead and his place of business at 235 4 1/2 street southwest is closed. The laundry business was conducted by Moy and his partner under the name of Hop Sing. Moy died suddenly yesterday afternoon about 1:30 o'clock and Coroner Nevitt saw his body later in the day. A certificate showing that the Chinaman's death had resulted from natural causes was given by the coroner, and the body was taken to the undertaking establishment of J.W. Lee, 332 Pennsylvania avenue northwest, to be prepared for burial. When the body will be taken to Congressional cemetery for interment has not yet been determined. The arrangements will not be made until a cousin of the deceased in Chicago is heard from. It is said that the marriage name of the dead man is Moy Sue Wing, but his fellow Chinamen say that his real name is Moy Shun. South Washington people, who patronize his laundry, knew him as Hop Sing.

Whatever his name may have been he is dead, and brothers and cousins by the score, are left to mourn his loss. There is nothing in the conduct of some of them to indicate mourning, however, but they are displaying some anxiety about his \$600 bank account.

"We can't bury him till we get the money," one of them said to a Star reporter today, "but Lawyer Ambrose will get it for us and we will send what is left to Mrs. Wing and her four children in China."

Moy belonged to the local Chinese lodge of Freemasons. He did not attend any Sunday school in this city, but professed to be a Christian when he lived in Chicago. He was about 55 years old, and had been in this country nearly thirty years, during which time he paid two visits to China to see his wife and children. Fifteen years of this time he spent in this city. Had he lived until next year it was his intention to have returned to his native country for the last time. He had symptoms of tuberculosis, and although nearly dead he remained at his work in his laundry and sent to their owners the clothes he had handled.

Prepared His Noon Meal

Yesterday morning he ironed clothes until about 11 o'clock, and then he prepared his dinner. When his noon meal had been eaten a customer called and Moy found himself too weak to make change. He was in the act of opening the money drawer when he fell against the counter and expired. His death was due to heart failure, and a certificate to this effect was given. Coroner Nevitt says the man's condition indicated that he also had consumption. The coroner's attention was called to the habit many Chinamen have of taking a mouthful of water and sprinkling their laundry with it. Such a practice on the part of a Chinaman suffering from consumption, the coroner stated, would undoubtedly infect the garments. It is a matter, he thought, which might easily be remedied by the authorities. The practice, he stated, is a dangerous one, and ought to be stopped.

Known as "Good Man"

In "Chinatown" Moy was looked upon as a "good man," and those who knew him well say he was never known to sit at a fan-tan table or participate in gambling games of any kind. A cousin of the deceased, who related the circumstances of his death, seemed to regard the life and demise of Moy as a huge joke.

"He was a good man," the cousin said, "but he was stingy. He would rather work than eat, 'cause he get money for his family when he worked and was paying it out when he eat."

"Yesterday," he said, showing more amusement as he proceeded, "Moy worked, and it was Sunday. He didn't care about Sunday just so he was making money. Then he went in the back room and cooked his own dinner. He eat dinner, smoke pipe and die."

He was so much amused by the time he reached the end of his short account of his friend's life that he could hardly finish it for laughing.

Moy will be given a typical Chinese funeral. His casket will probably be a plain and inexpensive one. Chinamen do not believe in spending much money in this way. They will pay for all the carriages that are necessary to transport the numerous relatives to the cemetery and will spend money for what is wanted for the comfort of the spirits that are expected to hover about the grave, and do not mind buying fine garments to robe the body.

Until the day the body is interred it will rest in the undertaking establishment, and everything will be done by the Chinamen to prevent the assembling of a crowd of curious people at the grave. When they conclude to inter the body the undertaker will be notified and the carriages summoned at short notice. Then the solemn procession will start toward the cemetery. Imitation money will be scattered along the route of the procession to tempt the evil spirits and keep them so busy that they will forget the departed spirit.

The Washington Herald, April 14, 1904

Funeral of Chinaman

Moy Chun Laid to Rest With Appropriate Oriental Ritual

The funeral of Moy Chun, the laundryman who died April 10, occurred yesterday afternoon. The interment was made in Congressional cemetery. The remains had been embalmed and retained at Lee's undertaking establishment until his estate could be levied on to pay in cash the funeral expenses.

There were no ceremonies before the departure of the cortege for the cemetery. The body was clothed in silk raiment and enclosed in a casket of conventional pattern.

On the seat of the first carriage following the hearse sat a Chinese youth, who from time to time threw out small slips of manila paper, folded and having several perforations in irregular order. This paper represented money, which it was believed would delay and propitiate the evil spirits who followed the dead until the body was safe in a final resting place.

Awaiting the funeral party at the cemetery was a large crowd of curious people, mostly women.

The funeral party consisted of about seven Chinamen, who gathered at the edge of the grave as the casket was lowered into it. Two of these had brought baskets containing edibles, to be deposited in the grave for the pacification of attendant spirits. As the first clod of earth fell upon the coffin a bunch of joss sticks were stuck in the earth at the head of the grave and ignited. As their perfumed smoke floated about a Chinaman prepared a pot of tea, which, together with a bowl of rice, a broiled chicken and other components of an appetizing meal, were placed in the grave for the departing spirit to regale himself and new acquaintances in the next world. A diversion was created for the crowd when a cloud of smoke rose from the ground a short distance from the grave. The occasion of this was the burning of the dead man's personal effects. These included his clothing and all his private papers.

When the grave was refilled the funeral party entered their carriages without further ceremony were driven to their homes.