

Sam Mardock children, Julian, Lucille, and Sam.

Chinese. Neither required American citizenship, as some professions did, for those who participated in them. In addition, restaurant and laundry workers were not in direct competition with large numbers of American citizens.

In 1900 Sam returned to Canton to find a wife. In a "family arranged" wedding, he was married to Wong Shee. Because of American immigration restrictions in existence at that time, he could not bring his bride back with him to the United States. But he was so delighted with her that he built her a house in Canton and staffed it with servants. He also arranged to visit her at five year intervals until he could bring her to Tyler.

A large crowd gathered at the old Cotton Belt Depot in Tyler to welcome the lovely "bride," dressed in her native garb and with her feet bound in the traditional Chinese manner. Foot-binding had been a mark of gentility and correct fashion among Chinese women for almost a thousand years. The process of acculturation worked immediately and decisively at this point. Mrs. Mardock later recalled that she quickly removed the bindings from her feet. "What a relief," she said. "I never wore them again."

For many years the Mardocks were the only Chinese Texans living in the community. Their neighbors appreciated their industry and self-sacrifice and assisted them wherever possible. In later years Sam became known for his philanthropies, at one time donating land to the city of Tyler for an important project, the Beckham Poplar Overpass.

The Mardock children were also successful in their own professions—Lucille, an artist and real estate manager; Sam, manager of rental property and of an import store; and Julian, a distinguished surgeon in Dallas. Sam and Julian were pilots during World War II. Julian was the first Chinese-American pilot of World War II and one of the first, if not the first, Chinese-American pilot in aviation history.

Throughout most of his life, Sam Mardock dreamed of becoming an American citizen. In 1882 the Chinese were the first Asians to be excluded from the United States. But they were also the first to become legally eligible for immigration and naturalization in 1943. Sam died in 1942, without realizing his dream; but his success in virtually everything else he set out to do served as encouragement for many others.

THE RAILROAD WORKERS COME TO EL PASO

On October 16, 1885, the *Lone Star* of El Paso announced: "Born—In this city, Wednesday morning, Oct. 14, 1885, to the wife of Sam Hing, a fine healthy boy. This is probably the first Chinaman ever born in the state of Texas." Sam Hing was probably the most influential Chinese Texan of his time in El Paso. He owned a general merchandise store, was an active lodge organizer, and served as a private banker for the Chinese community.

Hing made his fortune by operating as a labor contractor supplying Chinese workers for Southern Pacific Railroad construction crews. When the line was completed to El Paso on May 19, 1881, several hundred Chinese laborers remained in the city, forming the nucleus of a colony.

By 1889 there were 312 Chinese Texans in El Paso. They owned restaurants, grocery stores and laundries and worked as physicians, cooks, barbers, farmers, gardeners and writers. A local paper described the city as "the Chinese Mecca of the Southwest." Of the 18 laundries in El Paso in 1889, all were owned and operated by Chinese. One laundryman, Wong Wun, identified his customers by personal descriptions rather than by name. In Chinese characters in a rice-paper book, he described them variously as "Fat man with long fingernails," "Freckled gentleman with loud voice," and "Sneezing man who scratches head."

Through the years since that time, the Chinese population of El Paso has remained numerically stable. Some have felt it important that their children learn their native tongue, so the Chinese language is still spoken, along with English and Spanish. But, at the same time, the Chinese group has been thoroughly assimilated into American culture. Many have established successful careers in medicine, law, engineering and education. The Chinese Benevolent Association, made up of El Paso citizens of Chinese descent, has been one of the factors in this success. The association is primarily a social organization, but during its earlier years its main purpose was to provide relief for needy Chinese. During the Great Depression, all Chinese were provided for; no El Paso Chinese were placed on welfare rolls.

SAN ANTONIO ATTRACTS OTHER CHINESE

The beginning of the San Antonio Chinese community dates back to the completion of the Southern Pacific Railroad. By 1890 some 50 Chinese had established themselves in the city as restaurant owners, laundrymen and truck farmers. Their success attracted other Chinese to San Antonio. One of these was Don Wong, a native of Kwantung Province, who migrated to the United States in 1908.

Wong worked and learned English in Watsonville, California. He brought his wife, Lee Shee, and small daughter, Mae, from China in 1912 and moved to San Antonio. There he established a bakery in the Produce Row area. Six sons and one more daughter were born to the Wong family. Each child was given a savings account to teach diligence and economy and to help pay the cost of his later education. Don Wong was aware of the importance of education; he was one of the organizers of the Chinese School of San Antonio.



Jade Lorraine Wong.

As the Wong children matured, they began to realize the value of their father's efforts. Three sons in San Antonio engaged in such businesses as an auto parts store, a motel and a grocery. Another became an anesthesiologist. One son went into building contracting in Austin. Of the two remaining children who survived, one became a chemical engineer in New York and the other a California housewife. Before his death Don Wong saw his children fulfilling the promise of success that brought him to Texas.

Another native of China, Fook Sune Lee, moved to San Antonio in 1915 to open a restaurant. He returned to China in 1920 to marry Lui Shee. The couple returned to the United States in 1921 with their young son, Thomas Jefferson Lee.

Tom Lee, like many children of Chinese parents, was given an excellent education. He studied at The University of Texas at Austin, the University of Notre Dame, and at St. Mary's University, where he received a degree in accounting in 1956. He was awarded an LLB degree from St. Mary's Law School in 1960.

Tom Lee was the first Texan of Chinese descent to serve in the Texas Legislature when he was elected to the House of Representatives from Bexar County. He was also the first officer of Chinese descent in the United States Navy.

A respected San Antonio architect, who is also a colonel in the United States Air Force Reserve, is descended from an early arrival to the San Antonio Chinese community. He is

Howard Wong, whose father came to San Antonio from Canton by way of California and established himself as a grocer in the Produce Row area in 1914.

Howard Wong graduated from The University of Texas at Austin in 1956 and then spent several years studying with architect Eero Saarinen at Blumfield Hills, Michigan, and with Louis Kahn of the University of Pennsylvania. In San Antonio he continued his work with Texas architect O'Neil Ford. The Texas Society of Architects Honor Award for Excellence in Design has four times been given to him. One award was for his design for the First Christian Church in Denton, Texas, and another was for the Inter-Continental Motors Building on Broadway in San Antonio. The design of the Southwest Research Institute facilities and St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, both in San Antonio, are also fine examples of his work.

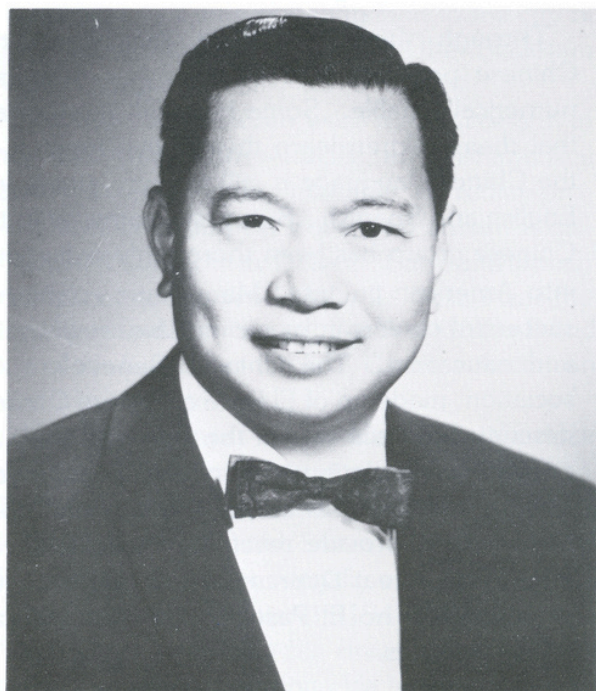
A daughter, Lenora Sue Wong, became the first San Antonio woman to be accepted by one of the military service academies. She entered the United States Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs, Colorado, in 1976.

CHINESE PRESERVE THEIR HERITAGE

While Chinese have adapted readily to Texas, they have maintained a strong awareness of their own unique heritage. The Chinese School of San Antonio was founded in 1922 to train students in the many aspects of Chinese history and



Thomas Jefferson Lee.



Howard Wong.

culture. By 1928 40 to 50 students attended classes from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. six days a week. This class work was in addition to their regular studies in the public schools.

Reading courses included the study of the enduring classics basic to Chinese culture and philosophy. Chinese calligraphy was taught with traditional brush and ink stone.

Theodore H. Wu came to San Antonio in the late 1920's as teacher for the Chinese School. He became a prominent merchant; his first grocery was located near the San Antonio River in what is now the HemisFair area. He was also one of the founders of Boysville.

During World War II Wu worked as a volunteer translator of Chinese calligraphy for the United States Post Office. He opened the Tai Shan Restaurant in 1946.

As the Chinese were assimilated increasingly into the city's population, class attendance declined, and in 1947 the school was closed. By popular demand and through support by the Chinese Community Council, the school was reopened in 1971 in a new modern building and with an excellent faculty. Chinese history, geography, philosophy and culture are taught along with the Mandarin, Cantonese and Toisan dialects.

The expanding population of Chinese Texans in Houston coincided with an increased interest in the establishment of a similar school in that city. In 1970 the Chinese School of Houston was founded, with classes held at Rice University. Like the school in San Antonio, classes are open to the public. The general reception has been enthusiastic, and class membership has continued to grow.

SOCIAL AND FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS WERE IMPORTANT

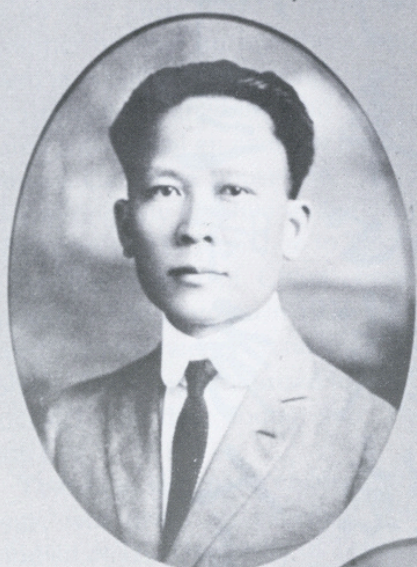
Early Chinese immigrants to America, set apart by their traditions, language and physical appearance, were isolated in what many perceived to be a hostile atmosphere. Relatives and neighbors in the same areas banded together, both for social activity and physical security. In time, their meetings became formalized, and lodges, known as tongs, were formed.

In the beginning tongs provided the Chinese collectively what they could not obtain individually. Tongs furnished members the services they expected but did not obtain from the cities in which they lived: protection from economic sanctions, protection from rampant crime and

麟定時秀人才國工詩書樂地典禮良
弓率心載德濟義翰忠湖海雅度七
流清通
逸農仁兄屬
乙亥四月錢叟吳郁生

Chinese calligraphy.

The Members and Founders of San Antonio Chinese School 1928



安關



洋明伍



朝李



護鴻伍



顯瓊劉



煒耀伍



璽明伍



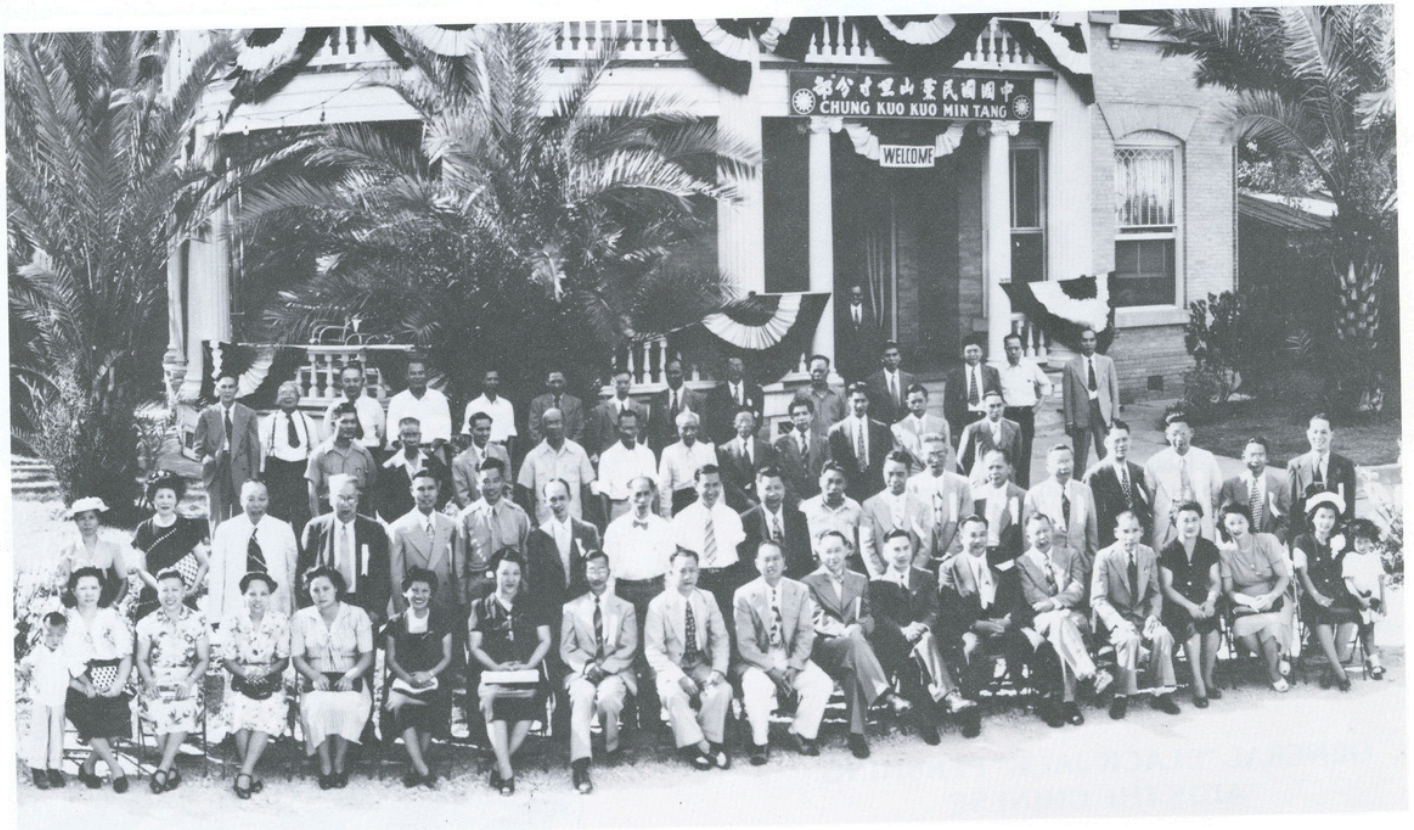
冕文劉

CROWN ART
PHOTO CO.

even protection from slavery.

Tongs assumed strong positions of leadership among the Chinese people, ultimately controlling crime in the Chinese communities ignored by local governments. Tongs even became identified with crime, preventing certain violations but allowing and abetting others. An intense rivalry arose among tongs, and bloody tong wars were the result, particularly in the larger cities. Newspaper headlines sometimes exaggerated the seriousness of the situation, but tong wars did pose a serious problem, and they continued intermittently on up to the 1930's.

One of the most prestigious, the Chinese American Citizens Alliance, was founded in San Francisco in 1895 as the "United Parlor of the Native Sons of the Golden State." Its purpose is to promote fraternal fellowship and to foster mutual interest among Americans of Chinese descent. C. B. Albert Gee, Houston export-import and real estate development executive, was the first national president of the Chinese American Citizens Alliance to be elected outside the state of California. Gee, born in Detroit in 1920, spent his childhood in New Orleans and then moved to Houston, where he was active in



Chung Kuo Kuomintang.

Chinatowns today are model cities in miniature. Serious crime is rare, and juvenile delinquency has never been a problem. Chinatowns have become tourist meccas, authentic showplaces that contribute to overall city development. In place of tongs, there are now social and fraternal organizations that care for the needs of all Chinese.

Many of these organizations are national in scope, and some of them have chapters in cities in Texas. These include the Chinese American Citizens Alliance; Chinese Freemasons, Chi Kung Tong; Chinese Optimist Club; Kuomintang; Hip Sing Association; On Leong Merchant's Association; and family associations.

the restaurant business for more than 20 years. He later became engaged in the importation of foodstuffs and other commodities from Taiwan. In addition to his work in CACA, Gee has maintained an active interest in Houston civic affairs, and he has been honored on numerous occasions for his outstanding contributions to the city.

CHINESE CHURCHES IN TEXAS

Buddhism, Mohammedanism, Taoism and Christianity were among the religious beliefs of early immigrants from China. Christianity has largely displaced the other beliefs among

Chinese living in Texas. Both Protestant and Catholic churches gave considerable assistance to Chinese settlers. Southern Baptists, in particular, paid close attention to their needs and offered help through their Home Mission Board.

As early as 1896 a Baptist Chinese Mission was in operation in El Paso. Along with its religious activities, the mission became the center for the instruction of Chinese children in Confucian philosophy, Chinese art and history, and the Cantonese dialect. The mission grew until in 1964 it became the Grant Avenue Baptist Church.

In San Antonio the Chinese Baptist Church was begun in 1923, the first of its kind in the southern and southwestern areas of the United States. Services were held for a time in the old Spanish Governor's Palace. In 1976 the 200 members of the congregation still conducted a portion of their services, including the singing of hymns, in Chinese.

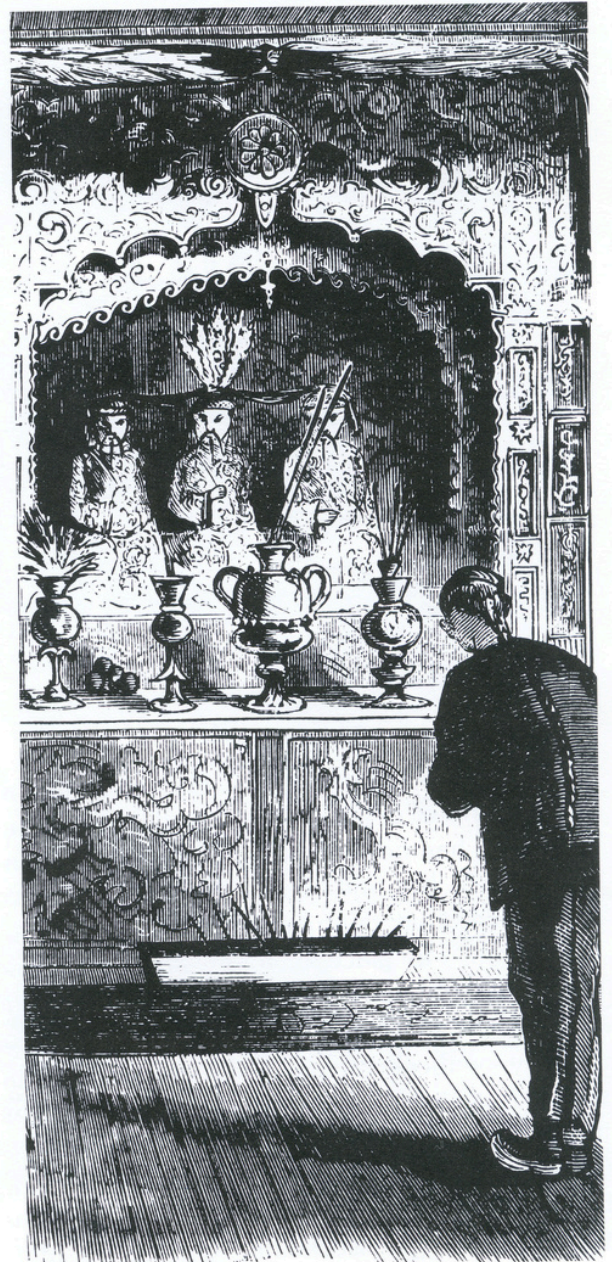
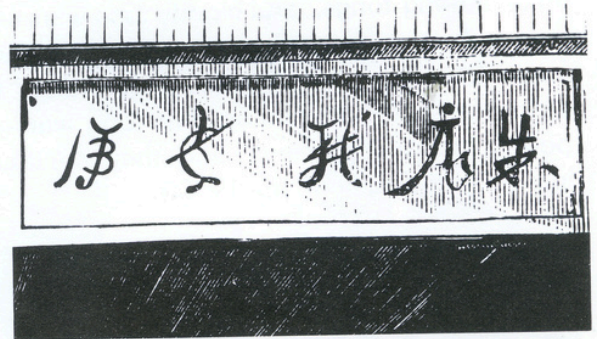
Chinese and English services are also conducted in the Chinese Baptist Church of Houston. The church members began meeting in 1939 and organized the church in 1953. In 1976 the congregation had grown to some 300 worshippers.

Grace Chapel in Houston, an interdenominational church, also conducts services in both the Chinese and English languages. In addition to meeting the spiritual needs of its members, the church supports missions in Taiwan and Hong Kong.

GENERAL "BLACK JACK" PERSHING AIDS THE CHINESE

The Mexican revolutionary, Pancho Villa, had a significant influence on the story of Chinese settlement in Texas. Following his attack on Columbus, New Mexico, on March 9, 1916, the United States government dispatched a punitive expedition into Mexico under the command of General John J. "Black Jack" Pershing. His instructions were to capture Villa dead or alive.

The expedition camped near the small pueblo of Casa Grande, and its members were soon supplied with candy, cakes, cigarettes and services not usually offered to troops in enemy territory. The benefactors were Chinese who lived in the small cities and towns of northern Mexico at that time. Restriction acts and other statutes enforced by the United States had been responsible for keeping Chinese immigrants across the



Altar in Chinese Joss-House, San Francisco.

border. But that did not prevent them from residing nearby, awaiting the time when they might be allowed to enter the United States.

The meeting of the Chinese settlers and the American troops was fortuitous, but its effects proved to be lasting. The Chinese, some in two-horse wagons and others afoot, followed the Pershing expedition from bivouac to bivouac across the dusty trails of Chihuahua. When supply routes were disrupted, they brought food and other necessities from the Mormon community of Colonia Dublan. They operated restaurants and laundries and even served as soldiers in one encounter with Villistas, fighting bravely and victoriously. Villa swore to hang every "Chino" in northern Mexico.

General Pershing and his men returned after 11 months of unsuccessful pursuit of Villa. Among the 2,700 refugees following the expedition back to the United States were 527 Chinese. Under the existing laws of the United States, they were not eligible to enter the country as immigrants. Exclusion acts, occasioned as a result of depressions and a general fear of lack of sufficient jobs for America's labor force, had barred Chinese entry since 1882. Pershing and other influential friends petitioned Congress to grant an exception to these refugees who had been of such great assistance to the expedition. The gratitude of the Chinese Texans for General Pershing's championing their cause was heartfelt and enduring. Many named their sons for him, as in the case of Pershing Yium and Black



Reception for General Pershing at Ellington Field.



Chinese and Mexicans following Pershing, 1917.

Jack Wòng.

Except for General Pershing, the man who made the greatest contribution to the welfare of the newly arrived Chinese Texans was William Tracy Page. Page, born in about 1872, was the son of Elizabeth Page and John Henry Page, Sr., a general officer in the army of the United States. He was educated at Cornell University and later served as an Immigration Bureau official in the Philippines. Page was assigned as civilian advisor to the Chinese refugees when General Pershing placed them under military discipline in Columbus, New Mexico.

"Speaking in Spanish, smiling in Chinese," 427 refugees arrived in San Antonio by special train on June 7, 1917. Several of their countrymen had returned to China, some had gone back to Mexico, and a number of them had been able to establish themselves as independent merchants elsewhere in the United States.

A critical need existed for labor at army installations in San Antonio at that time, and the War Department provided a temporary work program for the Chinese at Fort Sam Houston. Each refugee was given a certificate of identity, admitting him as a temporary resident.

The refugees were sent to Camp Wilson, an addition to Fort Sam Houston and later renamed Camp Travis. Its purpose was to house part of the national army being assembled under the draft laws of 1917. The Chinese refugees were employed by the United States government. They were paid a regular wage for their work as laborers, laundrymen, carpenters, blacksmiths and cooks. William Tracy Page was to declare later that all members of the camp voluntarily took the oath of allegiance to the United States and that, to the best of his knowledge, all had remained loyal.

Page resigned his position in July 1919 to become treasurer and an associate in an engineering enterprise in San Antonio, but he continued to try to secure citizenship for the Chinese immigrants. He made coherent their pleas for legal acceptance in the United States, and he freely gave his time and energy to make the project a success.

THE CHINESE REGISTER AS AMERICANS

About half of the Chinese refugees at Camp Wilson chose to remain permanently in San Antonio. They continued to maintain a strong de-

votion to their benefactor, General Pershing. In early December 1919, William Tracy Page wrote a letter to his Chinese friend, Ng Hing, advising:

"Chuck, Louie Sun and a few other refugees are going to meet me downtown this after-noon at four o'clock to buy a Christmas present for General Pershing. I don't know what we are going to get but it will be something nice. I will let you know later on what was decided on. I am going to suggest a silver pitcher. They are always nice things to have and are useful."

General Pershing came to Texas in 1920 on a speaking tour, making stops in San Antonio, El Paso, Dallas and Fort Worth. While reviewing troops at Houston's Ellington Field, he noticed a group of men standing to one side. He was told that these were 36 Chinese from the group he had brought out of Mexico in 1917. Pershing then greeted each man, urging him to learn English and to become a good citizen. Later, while touring southern military posts in January 1922, he visited with a group of almost a hundred Chinese in San Antonio, advising them to become "good citizens."

Public Law 29, signed by President Warren G. Harding on November 23, 1921, granted the refugees the "right to be and to remain within the United States." It gave them the legal right to participate in a community beyond themselves and also provided the first step toward their permanent integration into American society. Between January 27 and February 3, 1922, 281 Chinese men were given Certificates of Registration as provided for in Public Law 29.

The San Antonio Chinese found working conditions in the city to their liking. Many entered the retail grocery business, and, with the aid of a jobbers' cooperative that they managed, they were successful in their ventures. The entire community assimilated well into the life of the city, and members began taking positions in a large variety of occupations.

In 1943 the Chinese exclusion laws were repealed. Immigration from China was still strictly limited, but all Chinese who had made previous legal entry into the United States were granted the right of naturalization. Thus all remaining Chinese refugees who had been brought into the country by General Pershing became United States citizens. When General Pershing died in July 1948, the largest floral offering on his grave at Arlington National Cemetery was from his San Antonio Chinese friends.

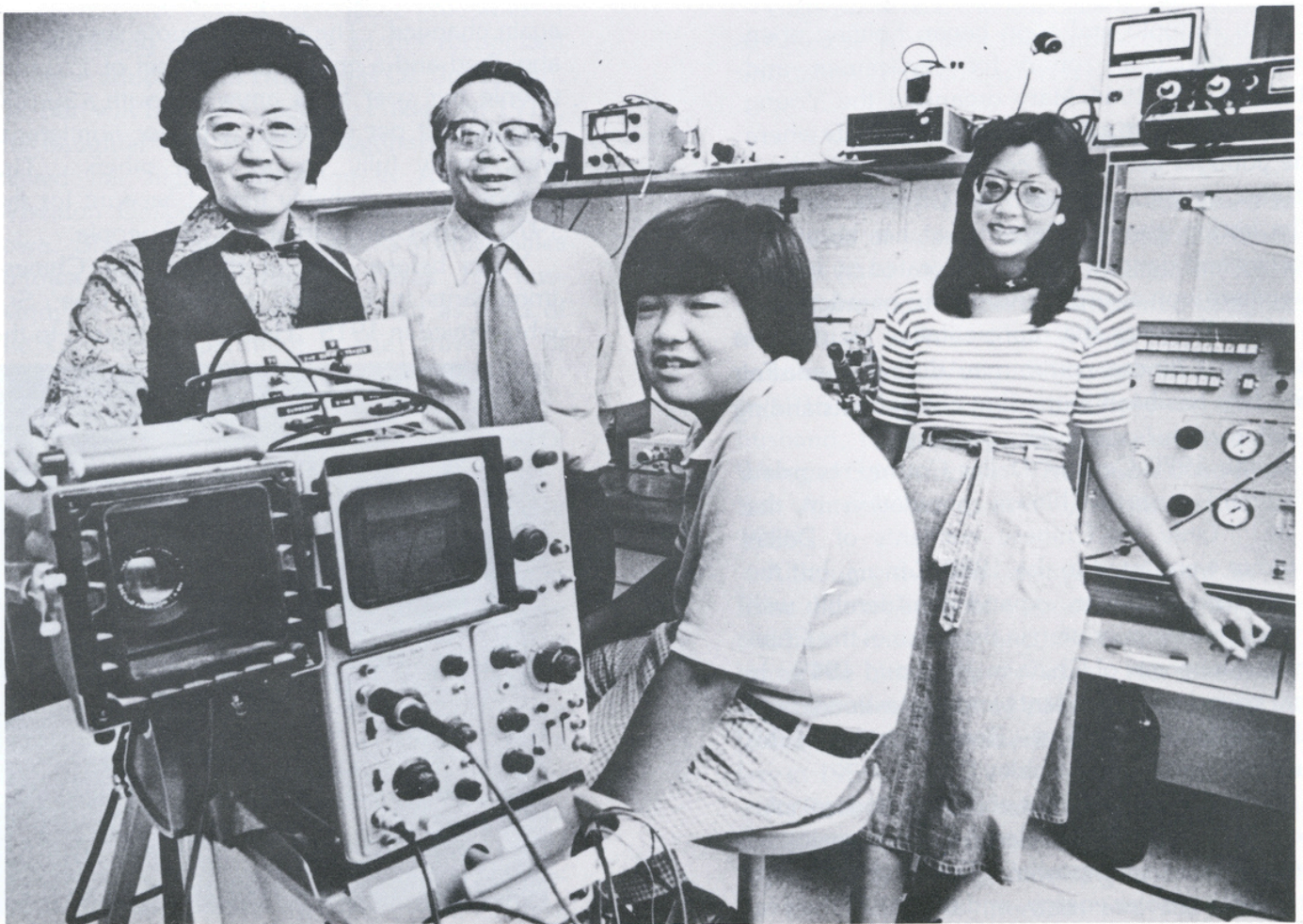
CHINESE CHOOSE URBAN LIFE

Chinese in Texas adapted themselves well to urban life and a large percentage of them chose to settle in cities. They did not congregate in Chinatowns, however, except for the small one in Toyah and the one in El Paso that has since become a part of the city. With the arrival of Pershing's refugees, Bexar replaced El Paso County as the Chinese population center of the state. By 1940 Bexar County was the home of 47 percent of the Chinese residing in Texas, and almost all of these were living in San Antonio.

Their industry, perseverance and thrift gained for them financial security and, among some, wealth, which they regularly shared with family



Mary Eng.



Dr. Ting L. Chu, Dr. Shirley Chu with children Dora and Daniel.