

San Francisco Chinatown Clans Stick Close Within Organizations

San Francisco — (UP)—More than a century ago the glitter of California's gold fields lured the first adventurous Chinese away from the security of their homes on the south China coast and into the strange and often hostile world of the West.

These first settlers banded together for mutual interest and protection. Thus were formed the associations on which San Francisco's storied Chinatown was built. Today this colorful settlement with its more than 20,000 inhabitants ranks as the largest Chinese community outside China.

Most of the tongs' present work consists of control over the gambling houses that exist in hidden corners of Chinatown. Every operator and worker in these establishments must join a tong.

As for organizations more familiar to the Westerner, Chinatown has many places of religious worship including seven Chinese temples, seven Protestant churches, one Catholic church, and a Salvation Army center as well as Y.M.C.A.

Y.W.C.A. and other organizations common in American communities.

The San Francisco Board of Education has opened an elementary school in the district and the city's public health department operates a clinic there.

With such tight organization and tradition behind the groups it's no wonder that San Francisco's Chinatown is one of the most law abiding and yet most colorful communities in the United States.

Articles Filed for Finance Corporation

Articles of incorporation were filed in Salem recently for the Crater Finance corporation of Medford by Carl L. Wikstrom, Florence M. Byrne and John R. Dellenback.

Van Dyke and Dellenback are attorneys for the corporation, according to Dellenback.

Dellenback said the corporation will handle small loans and will be located at 135 Pine st. Central Point. Construction will begin on a building for the corporation soon, he said. The business should be in operation by Oct. 1, Dellenback added.



A SOLID FRONT—George Meany (left), president of the AFL-CIO, testifies before the Democratic platform committee in Chicago and is backed up, literally, by James C. Petrillo (right), president of American Federation of Musicians. Meany warned the platform drafters that labor will not be satisfied with "weasel words, glittering generalities or the advertising man's glib insincerity."

Oregon Delegation Explains State Law

Chicago — (UP)—Members of Oregon's Stevenson-pledged delegation to the Democratic convention were giving a short answer today to backers of other candidates seeking to switch Oregon votes.

The answer was, "Do you want me to go to jail?"

They then explained that Oregon's election law allows any citizen of the state to swear out a warrant for the arrest of any delegate who switches from the

winner in the state primary. Conviction could bring a fine and jail sentence.

Sen. Richard L. Neuberger (D-Ore.) the delegation chairman, said he has been surprised how few delegates from other states know of the Oregon provision, or that Oregon was the first state to hold a direct presidential primary.

"Even Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt was amazed to hear about it when she visited our delegation," he said.

Following ancient custom the settlers based their first organizations on the family unit. The first family units were formed in the early 1850s and today still are important in Chinatown, with certain families traditionally controlling certain types of business.

As the Chinese laborer's services became more and more in demand, conditions improved and the Chinese began to send for their relatives at home. Soon the family unit type of organization became unwieldy and a broader family group came into existence, the family association. This included all Chinese in the area with the same surname, however distant the blood ties.

Family Name Clubs

There is one such organization for every family name in San Francisco's Chinatown as well as numerous smaller social clubs whose members not only have a common surname but also come from the same village or district in their native China.

These smaller clubs are the real backbone of Chinatown's civic life, for it is to them that the Chinese turns for assistance, social welfare, and any type of help he may need. The clubs also form the core of the average Chinatown inhabitant's social life.

As in China, control of these organizations rests with the elders and with lesser officers elected by the membership. Most complaints are submitted to a board of elders and it is rare when their decisions aren't accepted.

Larger governing units in Chinatown are the district associations, which handle problems arising from disputes between businesses rather than between individuals. There are 11 such districts in Chinatown.

Other Groups

One of the most famous Chinese associations, the Six Companies, has a distinctly American origin. Composed of representatives of the district associations, it constitutes the voice of Chinatown outside the settlement. It has no counterpart in old China and was originally formed to assure the legal rights of Chinese in their new country.

There is a certain infamy and glamor connected with another Chinese organization, the tong. Its influence has almost completely disappeared from Chinatown.

Portland Youth Shot in Argument

Portland — (UP)—Donald E. Smethers, 17, was hospitalized today with bullet wounds to the left arm and left side and a 51-year-old locksmith was booked on a charge of assault with a deadly weapon.

Police said Smethers told them he and Rudolph J. Ries had argued over the cost of making a key. Ries told officers Smethers became abusive and that when the youth refused to leave he got his .38 caliber revolver to try to frighten him. Ries said the youth made a pass at the revolver.

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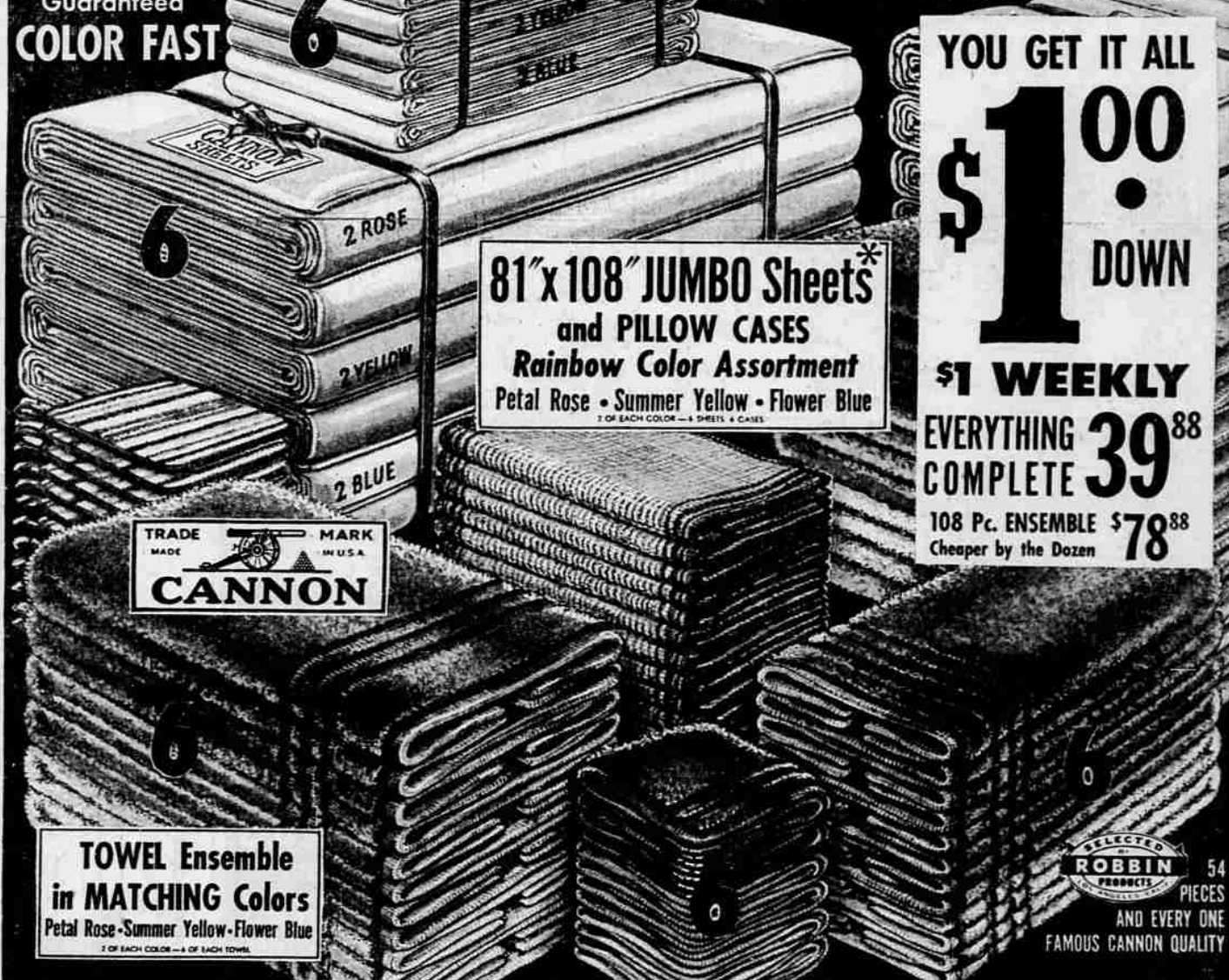
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