

The Tsui-Lim Partnership of Wah Yans:

In 1922, with the rapid success of WYHK, now using Diocesan premises, and made a Grant-in-Aid School, Peter Tsui was able to recover some of his early investment. He wanted to develop what he regarded as a branch school in Kowloon (WYK) which subsequently opened in 1924. He was wrong of course because as a Grant School, WYHK could not technically have a Branch, WYK was a separate private school from WYHK which was a Grant School by then. But nobody, not even the Education Dept, challenged him in his subjective mindset regarding the two schools.



While basking in early success of WYHK, Peter Tsui surmised - could schools be viable and sustainable as a business when teachers' salaries had to be increased every year, but school fees could not be raised every year to catch up? His own answer was negative. He concluded that he must develop side-businesses that could subsidise his educational enterprises.

In this vein, he realised he needed a partner who could help him run the schools, especially caring for WYHK while Tsui was developing WYK, as well as had the business acumens and experience to conduct spin-off business development. Thus this partner had to be a qualified teacher and shared his own educational and enterprising visions.

He found it in Mr. Andrew Lim Hoy-lan. The Partnership had a great beginning, but later faltered due to financial difficulties, resulting in the

dissolution of the partnership and Peter Tsui relinquished operations of the two WYCs in 1933. Lim, a fellow Catholic Hakka, was a qualified teacher in Singapore and the Strait Settlement. He had an array of business experiences and had gone to HK and the Mainland for business development which did not fair well. He was holding a temporary teaching position at St. Joseph's at the time and was introduced to Peter Tsui by a colleague.

Tsui was instantly impressed by Lim. He recruited Lim as a teacher in 1922 soon after WYHK became a Grant School. However, Lim tendered his resignation in 1923. In urging Lim to stay on, Tsui gave him a good raise and conceived future partnership. Since then, Lim rendered good help to Tsui in operating WYHK while WYK was being developed. He also assisted Tsui in getting bank loans for building the WYK premises at Nelson St as well as developing subsequent spin-off businesses. In 1926, Peter Tsui, being appreciative of the help Lim had rendered him since 1923, made Lim Headmaster of WYHK as well as an equal partner without requiring equitable investment. Peter Tsui elevated himself to Correspondent of the two schools.

WYK which was founded in 1924, also became an instant success with high number of enrollment. Tsui appointed three successive Headmasters for WYK - namely, Wai Chung-yu, Chow Ching-lam, Wong Chow-siu until 1933.

In 1927, Tsui-Lim acquired a piece of property (later an adjacent piece was added) at Nelson St, Mongkok, and built a dedicated premises for WYK. By 1928, when WYK moved into the dedicated premises, it was also made a Grant School by the Director of Education.

With the start-up of WYK completed, Tsui-Lim began to invest in side businesses. Through the help of Lim, the Partners mortgaged the premises used by WYK to the Ho Hang Bank to generate a treasury for the development of the spin-off businesses. Tsui focused on acquiring agricultural lands in the New Territories, mainly Fanling where he built his home - the Shek Lo, as well as starting up a rubber plantation in Jesselton, N.Borneo (Kota Kinabalu nowadays). While Peter Tsui was in N.Borneo circa 1929, starting up the rubber plantation, Lim embarked on a shipping and dockyard enterprise in HK, acquiring a ship from Germany to operate a coastal ferry service. The project also included a shipyard. Unfortunately, this shipping project was a complete failure resulting in total loss. Revenue generation from the investment in agricultural land was slow; and the rubber plantation needed years to mature to produce.

The Partnership now faced some cash flow difficulties. Lim, who was also involved with an array of other businesses of his own, indicated that he was under some pressure from his creditors. Recognising that Lim did not want to carry the mortgage overdraft liabilities stemming from their Partnership, the partnership was dissolved in 1932.

By resolution, the operation of WYHK was handed over to the recently arrived Irish Jesuits who were seeking to start a secondary school in HK. The Jesuits paid a nominal sum for the furniture and fixture; and were grateful that they did not have to pay for any Goodwill of the already successfully operating school (WYHK) with Grant-in-Aid status. The Grant in arrear for WYHK for the year before the Jesuit takeover was given to Peter Tsui.

The Jesuits in HK desired to acquire WYK too. But it was disallowed by the Irish Province of the Jesuits, probably for lack of funds. The Jesuits decided to maintain the name of Wah Yan instead of their original intent which was the College of Christ the King. WYHK became WY College. WYK remained as WY School as distinction.

In 1933, Lim was transferred to WYK to be Headmaster and took over as sole Operator of WYK. The Grant of WYK for the previous year was given to Lim. The Mongkok premises used by WYK was assigned to Peter Tsui who solely bore the responsibility of the mortgage which was eventually paid off in the 1950s. Lim paid rent to Peter Tsui for use of the Mongkok premises for WYK. During the War, while WYHK continued to operate as a Chinese language middle school under the Jesuits, WYK suspended operation; the premises were ransacked. After the War in 1946, on the recommendation

of the Director of Education, Lim also handed over WYK to the Irish Jesuits to restart. The Jesuits continued to pay rent to Peter Tsui for the Nelson St premises until WYK relocated to Waterloo Rd in 1952. Thereafter, Lim rented the premises from Peter Tsui for his Tak Yan School until its relocation to Meifoo the 1970s.

Relationship was broken in the early 1960s over the sale of the WYK / Tak Yan School premises at Nelson Street. A litigation occurred over whether Peter Tsui had the right to sell that premises. The dispute stemmed from Lim making allegations to the Government that impeded the sale for over a decade before it was resolved at the High Court in favour of Peter Tsui. The dispute marred the relationship between the two partners and families for at least two generations.

(Courtesy of WYHK Ontario Alumni, [link](#) to the original article)