

# The Classification Principle Defined the Charter Membership of Nanking Rotary Club (南京扶輪社) (1934)

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## *The Classification Principle*

What is Rotary? There are so many definitions as there are Rotarians. We hear that it is a service club, an association of business and professional people. An organization is defined by what it does or what its characteristics are.

Accounts of the organization of Rotary and the characteristics of the early clubs is re-read recently. It did not, originally, have a community service motive, attendance rules, meals at meetings, or an international goal. The only two characteristics that survive today are that members be drawn from different businesses and professions and that there be fun and fellowship. Fun and fellowship are natural products of an association of people of generally similar character and interest, but diversification of vocations is an unusual feature of any association. That characteristic, called the *classification principle*, is the special feature of Rotary clubs.

Membership in Rotary is based on the business or profession in which a Club member is actively engaged. It is this principle of membership that makes Rotary a *classification organization*. In his book *《My Road to Rotary》*, Paul P. Harris, Rotary's late Founder, included this paragraph about classifications:

The question is often asked: "Why do Rotary clubs limit membership to one man from each distinct business or profession?" Because our experiment has proved in operation that it makes for congenial fellowship, obviates business and professional jealousies, encourages mutual helpfulness, stimulates pride in the dignity of one's occupation, and broadens one's mind and sympathy with regard to the accomplishments and problems of other occupations.

One Rotarian historian says, "*The Classification Principle was the real discovery of the movement when Rotary was born – the "master key that opened the door to success."*"

Major benefits which accrue from Rotary's plan of a classified membership are:

1. It enables the Club to come in contact with all phases of the business and professional life of the community through a membership which embraces all services to society, and thus is *inclusive* and not *exclusive*.
2. It develops fellowship based on diversity of interest instead of similarity of interest.

To implement this membership plan, Rotary clubs classify their active members according to their respective businesses or professions. The member's classification ("banking," "lumber distributing," "general law practice") describes the principle activity of the business or profession in which he/she is engaged. A classification is considered as being loaned, and thus if a member ceases to represent the classification loaned, he/she automatically ceases to be a member of the Club.

Moreover, the following words comprise the first two sentences of the third paragraph of the United States Supreme Court in the case 1940 of the Rotary International vs Duarte Rotary Club: [Individuals are admitted to membership in a Rotary Club according to a "classification system." The purpose of this system is to ensure that "each Rotary Club includes a representative of every worthy and recognized business, professional and institutional activity in the community.]

### *The Case of Nanking in 1933*

**Question:** Would there be any conflict and violation to the original principle if there were a group of government employees drawn from various specified fields of different ministries, and/or employees of various government-subsidized agencies, joined together to form a Rotary Club, occupying the majority percentage of the club membership?

The organization of a new Club in Nanking (*Nanjing*) (南京) gave Rotary International a new consideration on the "Classification Principle". Nanking in 1933 had a population of about six hundred thousand. Being the seat of the Republican China's capital since 1928, it was largely composed of governmental offices/commissions/agencies, and was not a business plaza. After the careful survey with narrowed down adjustment and great organizational effort rendered by Douglas C. Howland, Rotary International Assistant Secretary for Eastern Asia, though because of duplications on the charter membership list under the classification of "Government", the Rotary International Board of Directors gave concessional consideration and elected to membership the Rotary Club of Nanking (南京扶輪社), Republic of China (中華民國), as of 19 January 1934. However, the Board requested Director Dr. Fong Foo-Sec (龐富灼博士) to give special attention to this Club to the end that the preponderance of government employees might be reduced by the building up of a list of merchants and others.

### *The Birth of Nanking Rotary Club*

In helping Rotary development to go faster in China where the ultimate goal was to form a new Rotary District, Rotary International sent Assistant Secretary for Eastern Asia, Douglas C. Howland, to China in 1933 for 6 months to conduct site surveys and assistance in several cities around Shanghai. Nanking, Republican China's capital, was chosen as one of the prospects.

Howland landed first in Shanghai and visited Nanking on 16 October 1933. In order to try and get a line on the foreign population of this place, he made his first call on the United States Consul-General Willys R. Peck (裴克). Peck was quite favourable to the idea of the formation of a Club there and that Peck had been a member of the Peiping Rotary Club (北平扶輪社) for a short time. From him Howland got the names of a few other American people.

For two days Howland had gone about by rickshaw, he reached his appointment with Raymond S. Hall, General Secretary of the Y.M.C.A. Hall was not very enthusiastic about the chances of the success in forming a Club there. He stated that there had already an International Club (國際聯歡社), powered by the Foreign Affairs Ministry, whose object was to provide a place where the Chinese and foreign residents could meet and while its functions were largely social with the exception of occasional meetings where they had guest speakers. Hall also felt that the Y's Men's Club (國際聯青社), powered by the Y.M.C.A., was doing what Rotary intended to do although he acknowledged that they only had a few foreign members.

After going over a list of Chinese people proposed to call on -- names that had secured in Shanghai and Peiping, Howland's next move was to try and find some former Rotarians such as Dr. Yen Te-Ching (顏德慶博士) (*Peking Rotary Club charter member and later President*) at the Ministry of Railways, and Dr. Lee Hsi-Mou (李熙謀博士) (*former charter Hangchow Rotarian*) at the Ministry of Education. He also called on Mr. Chen Kung-Po (陳公博), Minister of Industry. It was unfortunately discouraging to find these three good men all out of town.

Howland then called on the British Consul-General A. P. Blunt who was quite agreeable but not interested in Rotary. Blunt did not think that would be a success in Nanking. He was quite affable and provided some names of people that he thought might be interested.

If any difficulty did arise it would be due to the difficulty in getting enough classifications other than those under "Government". Of the names Howland obtained, prior to arrival, he found 6 of them were not connected with the government and at least 15 were connected in some way with the government and several of these were former Rotarians. While he would be able to get enough classifications outside of government to fill the charter list, it was going to be difficult to comply with the 10% clause from one major classification in the case of "Government" where they had so much good material in the various foreign consulates and former Rotarians in government service. So, Howland decided to leave the government introductions out and devoted his time to the other classifications.

The formation of a Club in Nanking had presented some new problems and was dragging out longer than Howland expected. To begin with, he found it was quite a handicap to find that while there were 7 former Rotarians, none of them had been very active with the exception of Dr. Yen Te-Ching who was a former president of the Peking Rotary Club (北京扶輪社). In 1931 Yen had tried to organize a Club in Nanking, having been urged to do so by George Ashmore Fitch (費吳生) (*Shanghai Rotary Club President 1930-1931*), but he had not met with any success. Howland's entire first week was taken up in making calls on the leading people and this was made difficult by the fact that so many of the leading Chinese were taken up with the National Athletic Meet that coincided with his visit. As the city was very scattered and it took him a long time to get around even in a car. At the end of his first week, Howland had found 25 people who responded to the idea.

**25 October 1933** -- A dinner meeting was called by Howland at the International Club at which 14 were present. In spite of the fact that there was not a large foreign community there, it was surprised to find that of the foreign members present very few of them seemed to know each other. Of the 7 present there were 2 Americans, 2 Britons, 1 Pole, 1 German and one other European. The meeting did not start very well as some of those present began to tell how different their community was from any other places and how difficult they would find it to

attend a meeting every week. Bit by bit Howland managed to wear down the opposition to the weekly meetings, attendance obligation and a fixed day for meetings, etc. Then, the participants agreed to appoint a committee of 3 Chinese to draw up a list of proposed members among the Chinese, and 1 American and 1 Briton to select names from the foreign community.

By the end of the meeting, it was unanimously agreed that Nanking should have a Rotary Club -- some suggested it should start as an experimental club meeting once a week as Peking did in 1924 before they applied for their charter. They were going to try and find 25 people who started the Club and they would try and keep the membership at least 50% Chinese. Yen was very interested and was the chairman of the committee of five to draw up the list of proposed members. They had also appointed a committee to examine the Constitutions and By-laws.

Nanking was the government centre and almost without exception the Chinese members would be drawn from some branches of government work. All the public utilities were government owned and even the railways too. Because things were so uncertain in government circles and because they were always changing their jobs, nucleus of the club must be made from members who were more or less stationary in the city. Even the foreign managers of the business houses were not live long in one port, and again one found that question of people going away on home leave every 4 or 5 years, which made a shifting population.

When these lists were prepared, a joint meeting was held at Yen's house to discuss same. Yen and W. A. Lewis appeared to be the only people who were actively interested in the formation of the new Club although the list of charter members showed 8 former Rotarians.

The difficulties of the place was the small number of business classifications possible, the places of business scattered over such a large area and the previous failure of the International Club to accomplish what they imagine a Rotary club was going to try and do, namely bringing the Chinese and foreign communities together.

The bright side of the picture was a group of 7 former Rotarians who would like to have a Club and the general feeling that a place as important as Capital Nanking should have a Club. They had no problem for a suitable meeting place and they were at a distinct advantage in having a wealth of material to draw from for good programmes.

**24 November 1933** -- Some trouble was ahead in the organization. Howland had received a list of prospective members. Included in the 42 names, 20 people who were in the government employ in one form or another he made out one set of charter membership cards. For those that should not appear as charter members he put on ordinary membership cards. Yen did not want this at all. This apparently was where "face" came in. They all wanted to be charter members and Howland did not know how to get around it.

It was the intention of the committee to recommend 12 Chinese and 10 foreign people as charter members but the list showed 42 names -- 23 Chinese and 19 foreign. With the exception of the classifications of "Education" and "Finance" and perhaps two others, all the proposed members were in some form of government employ. It could hardly be otherwise as it was the main "industry" of the place. This applied to the Chinese. If Yen had invited Chinese to be members and Howland said that could not have them all on the charter membership list as Yen wished -- Yen lost face and would probably withdraw his interest. Bear in mind that these Chinese that were interested now represent some of China's big men in today's history.

Both Dr. Fong Foo-Sec (*Shanghai*), Rotary International Director of the year, and “Peter” E. F. Harris (*Shanghai*), Honorary Commissioner of the region, understood the problem. This was just anticipation trouble. They all knew what to expect if Yen would not give way.

2 December 1933 -- Howland reported to Chicago from Shanghai:

My stay in China is rapidly drawing to an end. It's almost six months to the day since I landed in Shanghai and I seem to have been on the jump most of the time. ....

The Nanking organization was completed on December 1st. Not quite completed, -- because I have not received their draft for the charter fee and they are very anxious that I return there for their first meeting on December 7th. If Fong Sec can go I should like to put the finishing touches and help them with any problems that crop up at the start. In my opinion one can be of very great service to these new clubs in the first days after they are organized.

Nanking always offered difficulties that were new and I only hope that when you get the application papers that they will go thru all right. It's been a slow job in many ways due to the difficulty in getting around the city. Another thing is that it is not very easy to hurry the Chinese. I did speed things up a little at the last and when we came to the final organization meeting, I was quite at a loss to know who should be president.

Dr. Yen Te-Ching had been the most active of the Chinese and I wanted a Chinese as first president because the larger percentage of members were Chinese. Being a government center it had to be someone that ranks high in the community and they all wanted Sun Fo, the Parliament President of the Republic. Well, I certainly did not. He has a man's sized job on his hands now and I doubt whether he would be able to even attend many meetings. Dr. Yen seemed to be the man but he was most emphatic about not taking the job. Dr. Chen, President of the Nanking University was my second choice and Dr. J. Heng Liu, ex-member of the Peiping Club was the third string. When the meeting was called to order the only one of the three present was Dr. Yen and so I determined to bring all the pressure of the meeting to urge him to take it. Using the same tactics as I did in Hankow, I made the suggestion that they let me suggest a list of officers to start the club in view of the fact that the officers would come up again for election next April. I selected those that had shown the keenest interest and who were all regarded.

Everything went well until we came to the election of the president. Dr. Yen refused point blank. Sun Fo was unable to be present and so there was no danger from that angle. Dr. Chen and Dr. J. Heng Liu were not present so their names were not urged. Eventually after I had added my special appeal backed by the 21 others that were there -- Dr. Yen accepted and with that the rest of the slate that I had suggested also accepted and the thing was done.

While there are quite a few ex-Rotarians among the Nanking members, none of them ever seem to have been in any Club very long except Dr. Yen, and none of them had ever served on any board of directors.

I think this Club will turn out well. For a long time they balked at the weekly meetings and spoke of the difficulty of getting people together during the hot weather. I expect that the attendance in the summer will be much like Lahore but by the time the summer comes they will be able to see how the meetings go and will carry on.

I dropped some of the government names off the charter list. If it is possible to build the Club up without their getting the larger percentage of Chinese members from the administration

side of the government, I do not think they will have such a large turnover in membership. The stability of the government officials at this time is not very secure. They come and go very quickly.

**8 December 1933** -- The Charter Member List was ultimately finalized with 29 persons. Howland wrote again to Chicago from Shanghai:

Well, the Nanking Club is safely launched -- all the papers have been signed and the draft for the charter fee secured and turned over to Honorary Commissioner Harris and I am once more back in Shanghai.

The first meeting of the Club was arranged for Dec 7th and I tried to get Peter Harris and Dr. Fong Sec to go up for the opening meeting. Peter could not go but Dr. Fong Sec did and it was all that the meeting required to make it a success.

The meeting was held at the International Club and 25 out of the 29 members were present -- the other four being out of town. Visiting Rotarians from Shanghai and Hangchow were also present -- which helped. Dr. Yen Te-Ching makes a splendid President and R. S. Hall is just the right kind of a person for Secretary and so I left there feeling very happy that this Club -- which has taken a long time to get started -- got away to a very fine start.

In a previous letter I explained the difficulty with the classifications. There are 8 under the major classification of 'Government' and that is because we could not form a club there, if it is to have a fair percentage of Chinese, without drawing largely from the government. Practically speaking there are no other sources to draw Chinese membership from. At the same time these various government officials live in different parts of the city and are drawn from such a variety of kinds of government work, that I believe consideration should be given to this condition which differs from many other within my experience.

I was glad Dr. Fong Sec could go up with me and see the condition although I think he was pretty well posted on it before he went. He will perhaps add his appeal for consideration of this charter and I feel sure Harris will to. It resolves itself into this -- either that kind of a club or no club.

Howland added some explanations on the classifications of which were necessary:

- (1) Han Lih-Wu (杭立武) (Associations – Boxer Indemnity Trustee) -- The fund that this man helped to administer was the fund that were received from the British Government and which were allocated to all kinds of different purposes, such as assistance to railways, universities, schools and other educational institutions, river conservancy work and many other forms of mutual help. It was a full time job and this work of the Board had been going on for a long time and would continue. Under "Associations" Howland could not find anything that adequately covered it.
- (2) Also under "Associations" was Colonel J. L. Huang (黃仁霖上校). The Officers' Moral Endeavour Association (勵志社) was for the purpose of trying to improve the moral of army officers. They had a very fine building -- something like a Y.M.C.A. and Military Training Leagues covered this work adequately.
- (3) Yu Ching-Sung (余青松) under "Government Administration - Astronomical Service". Howland had this man down as "Meteorological Service" but Yu preferred "Astronomical". There were just finishing a very fine observatory on Purple Mountain (紫金山) and Yu was in charge.

9 December 1933 -- Honorary Commissioner "Peter" E. F. Harris submitted the Membership Application to Chesley R. Perry, Secretary of Rotary International, with a covering letter:

Howland tells me he has explained the difficulties he encountered and in that regard I want you to give special consideration to the list of charter members which as you will see contains eight names under the major classification of "Government".

You will appreciate that at Nanking -- in order to have a Club which contains the representative Chinese membership we must draw these almost entirely from those employed in some form of government service as, with the exception of those in local branch banks, there is practically no material in the Chinese business field. Nanking is not a business centre.

It seems to me equally imperative that a Club be formed at Nanking as it has so many ex-Rotarians and Rotary seems particularly necessary to this community as no media is at present in operation that brings the foreign and Chinese communities together.

The original list of charter members has been cut down considerably and even with those in government employ that have been left out, it still leaves a larger number than your instructions call for. Howland has gone over the present list very carefully with Scotty Souter who has had considerable experience as chairman of our classification list and Scotty thinks that this list should be acceptable to you.

Personally I do not see how a Club could be formed at Nanking, which is to contain a representative list of Chinese, without having more than the required number under "Government" and in as much as these men, with the exception of two under "Government Administration", are engaged in very different types of work. I hope you will give this matter your very careful and perhaps elastic consideration.

15 January 1934 -- In order to give special consideration on the charter members' classifications of the provisional Nanking Rotary Club, the Rotary International Board of Directors at the meeting laid down this decision:

### 128. Nanking, China, Election of Rotary Club of

**Statement:** Director Hager, as the Election of Clubs Committee, asked the Board to assume responsibility for electing the Rotary Club of Nanking, China, to membership in R.I. because of duplications on the charter membership list under the classification of 'Government'.

**Decision:** The Board elects to membership in R.I. the Rotary Club of Nanking, China, as of 19 January, 1934, and requests Director Fong to give special attention to this club to the end that the preponderance of government employees may be reduced by the building up of a list of merchants and others.

Hence, the Rotary Club of Nanking (南京扶輪社) was then granted on 19 January 1934 the Charter No. 3642. Certainly, there was one "favour" vote from China's representative in the Board -- Dr. Fong Foo-Sec.



## List of Charter Members with Classifications adjusted

1. [President] Yen Te-Ching (顏德慶) (*Government Administration – Railway*) (*Ministry of Railways*) (*Peking Rotary Club charter member & later Club President*)
2. [1st Vice-President] W. A. Lewis (*Refined Oil Products Distributing*) (*Asiatic Petroleum Company*)
3. [2nd Vice-President] Lee Hsi-Mou (李熙謀) (*Government Administration – Education*) (*Ministry of Education*) (*Hangchow Rotary Club charter member*)
4. [Secretary] Raymond S. Hall (*Associations*) (*Young Men's Christian Association*)
5. Claude Albert Buss (*Consular Service*) (*U.S.A. Consulate General*)
6. Thomas M. H. Chau (*Printing & Publishing*) (*Reuters Agency*)
7. Chen Yu-Gwan (陳裕光) (*Education – Universities*) (*Nanking University 金陵大學*)
8. T. Y. Chien (*Railway Transportation*) (*Tientsin-Pukow Railway 津浦鐵路*)
9. B. R. Dyer (*Public Health Service*) (*National Health Administration*)
10. Han Lih-Wu (杭立武) (*Fund Administration*) (*Board of Trustees for Administration of Boxer Indemnity Funds*)
11. C. Y. Hou (*Government Administration – Public Works*) (*Nanking Public Works Department*)
12. Jabin Hsu (許建屏) (*Government Administration – Finance*) (*Ministry of Finance*) (*former Shanghai Rotarian*)
13. Hsu Mo (徐謨) (*Government Administration – Foreign Affairs*) (*Ministry of Foreign Affairs*)
14. J. L. Huang (黃仁霖) (*Associations – Military Training Leagues*) (*The Officers' Moral Endeavor Association*)
15. R. C. Jackson (*Refined Oil Products Distributing*) (*Socony-Vacuum Corporation*)
16. Lin Dao-Yang (凌道揚) (*Forestry Service*) (*National Bureau of Forestry*)
17. J. Heng Liu (劉瑞恒) (*Public Health Service*) (*National Health Administration*) (*former Peiping Rotarian*)
18. P. Y. Loo (*Industrial Engineering*) (*China Engineering Company*)
19. Harry Houser Love (洛夫) (*Education – Agriculture*) (*Ministry of Industry*)
20. M. S. Okecki (*Highway Construction*) (*National Economic Council*)
21. M. H. Pai (*Electric Light & Power Service*) (*Capital Electricity Works*)
22. G. S. Pratt (*Insurance – Fire*) (*Drysdale & Company*)
23. James Kofei Shen (沈克非) (*Hospitals*) (*Central Hospital*)
24. H. W. Siegel (*Machinery & Equipment Distributing*) (*Kunst & Albers*)
25. Ralph Ansel Ward (黃安素) (*Christianity – Protestantism*) (*Methodist Mission*)
26. E. F. Wei (*Postal & Telegraph Service*) (*Ministry of Communications*)
27. W. J. Wen (*State Banking*) (*China State Bank*)
28. Y. C. Wu (*Commercial Banking*) (*Bank of China*)
29. Yu Ching-Sung (余青松) (*Government Administration – Astronomical Service*) (*Purple Mountain Observatory 紫金山天文台*)





Dr. Lee Hsi-Mou 李熙謀博士      Dr. James K. Shen 沈克非博士      Dr. Ching-Sung Yu 余青松博士

### *The Charter Presentation Ceremony*

The Charter Presentation Ceremony held on 5 April 1934 was officiated by “Peter” E. F. Harris (*Shanghai*) -- Rotary International Honorary Commissioner for China, Hong Kong and the Philippine Islands.

He was very much impressed by the caliber of the Nanking Rotary Club and especially by the successful way in which they organized their Charter Meeting. There was President Yen Te-Ching, an experienced Rotarian, a statesman and railway specialist, a vigorous personality and one of the best public speakers in China. Their Vice-President, Mr. W. A. Lewis, was the manager of the Asiatic Petroleum Company, and one of the leading British businessmen. The Secretary, Mr. Raymond S. Hall of the Y.M.C.A. was an American and seemed very energetic.

Prior to the Ceremony which took place at 9:30 p.m. at the International Club, a dinner was given by President Yen Te-Ching at which Harris and the directors were present.

The event was a soiree attended by three presidents or past-presidents of other Rotary clubs in China, distinguished guests, Rotarians and their RotaryAnns, etc. About 150 attended the evening including many Chinese government officials among whom was Mr. Sun Fo, President of the Legislative Yuen, Republic of China (中華民國立法院院長孫科) (*son of Dr. Sun Yat-Sen*).

There were 6 delegates from the Shanghai Rotary Club (上海扶輪社) present and delegates from Hangchow (杭州扶輪社) and Peiping (北平扶輪社) too. Souvenir gifts -- a bell, a clock, and a box -- were presented by the Rotary clubs of Shanghai, Peiping as well as Hankow (漢口扶輪社). Letters and telegrams were received from each and every Rotary Club in China. Also a congratulatory telegram was wired from the District Governor of the 70th District (Japan). President Yen Te-Ching himself presented the Club with a stand containing flags representing the 9 nationalities then included in the membership -- Austria, China, Denmark, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, The Netherlands, Poland, and the United States of America.

Through Rotarian Thomas M. H. Chau, Reuters correspondent telegraphed a report of the Charter Meeting throughout the Far East and a good deal of publicity was given in the press. An account of this meeting also appeared in the *《Far Eastern Rotary Review》*.



南京國際聯歡社(隸屬外交部) *Nanking International Club (Foreign Affairs Ministry)*



Dr. Yen Te-Ching 顏德慶博士

### T. Strong Yen the Rotarian

Dr. Yen Te-Ching (*aka* T. Strong Yen to the Americans) first joined Rotary as a charter member and treasurer of Peking Rotary Club (北京扶輪社) in 1924-1925, followed by Vice-President in 1925-1926 and Club President in 1926-1927. He was instrumental in forming the Nanking Rotary Club (南京扶輪社) and served as its Charter President in 1933-1934-1935. Yen was elected to serve Rotary International as District 97-98 Governor in 2 terms of 1938-1939-1940, and was later elected to serve as a Director in 1941-1942, when he was the second Chinese in history to hold such position.

### Education and Qualifications

Born on 2 November 1878 in Shanghai of the Ch'ing Empire, the son of an Anglican Church pastor, Yen was educated at the Anglo-Chinese College of Shanghai, 1889-1893; at the Tung Wen College (同文館), Shanghai, 1893-1895; at St. Francis Xavier's College (聖芳濟書院), Shanghai, 1895-1896. Those were the first schools of western culture and language in Imperial China. He then went to the United States in 1896 with his elder brother, Yen Wei-Ching "Williams" (顏惠慶) (Republican China's Foreign Affairs Minister in the 1920s). From 1896 to 1898 he prepared

for college at Episcopal High School, Virginia. He studied engineering at the University of Virginia in 1898-1899, and post-graduate school at Lehigh University in 1899-1901 to obtain the Master of Civil Engineering, being the first Chinese graduate to receive an engineering degree from that institution. Yen was conferred Doctor of Philosophy (*honoris causa*) by Lehigh University in 1940.

Yen returned to homeland in July 1902. On 29 October 1906, Yen together with his elder brother both passed the Imperial Ch'ing government examinations for Returned Students and was both conferred the title of "Chin Shih" (進士) (equivalent to a 'doctorate' in the western universities) in translation and engineering, respectively, by order of the Ch'ing Emperor:

《大清德宗景皇帝實錄》卷五六四：三十二年九月丙午，引見遊學畢業生。得旨：陳錦濤、施肇基、李方、張煜全著賞給法政科進士，顏惠慶賞給譯學進士，謝天福、徐景文賞給醫科進士，顏德慶賞給工科進士。

### Career Railway Engineer in the governments of Qing Empire and Republican China

From 1902 to 1904 Yen was connected with the Canton-Hankow Railway successively serving as assistant engineer, superintendent of grading, assistant district engineer and resident engineer. In 1904 Sheng Kung-Pao who was then the director-general of Railways appointed him consulting engineering of the Imperial Railway Administration, Shanghai. In 1905 he joined the Shanghai-Nanking Railway as assistant engineer for the Chinkiang-Nanking Section.

Shortly afterwards, in 1905, Chili Province (*Hebei*) Viceroy Yuan Shih-Kai (直隸省總督袁世凱) transferred him to the north for the construction of the Peking-Kalgan Railway. At first he was resident engineer of the railway and afterward a district engineer. He was in charge of the difficult portion of the line which passes through the famous Nankow Pass (居庸關南口). Four tunnels, the longest of which was over 3,000 feet and passed for a length of over 100 feet under the Great Wall at Petaling (萬里長城八達嶺段) were built under his direction.

In the spring of 1909 Yen was sent to inspect railways in Kiangsi and Anhwei, after the inspection of which he proceeded to Yi Chang as assistant chief engineer of the Szechuan Railway.



1909年10月京張鐵路通車典禮技術人員合影，(前排右二)顏德慶。  
October 1909 - Opening ceremony of the Imperial Peking-Kalgan Railway, group photo of technical staff, Yen Te-Ching sitting at front row second right.

The work on that railway was stopped by the Xinhai Revolution (辛亥革命) in 1911 of which found the Republic. In the spring of 1912, Yen was appointed Director of the Railway Department in the Republican China's Provisional Government at Nanking. When the Communications Ministry was regularly organized in Peking in May 1912 he became Councillor of the Ministry.

From July 1912 to January 1922, Yen held the post of Managing Director of the Canton-Hankow Railway, Hubei-Hunan Section. From 1919 to 1922 he was also in charge of the Han-Yi and Yi-Kuei sections of the Szechuan-Hankow Railway. From April to July 1919, he was detailed by the government to be Chinese representative on the Inter-Allied Technical Board. During his connection with that Board he made a tour of inspection from Harbin westward to Perm, beyond the Ural Mountains, in Russia. In November 1920 he was made a member of the Railway Finance Commission.

In January 1921, Yen left China on an official trip touring America and Europe to study the latest improvements in railway construction and operation with the object of adopting them in China. In September 1921 he was appointed Special Technical Expert of the Chinese Delegation to the Washington Conference. In January 1922 he was appointed Associate Director-General of the Hankow-Canton-Sichuan Railway.

In March 1922, Yen was made a member of the Commission on Communication interests in connection with the Shandong negotiation. In June 1922 he was appointed Acting Councillor of the Ministry of Communications. In the same month he was detailed to be chairman of the Second Committee of the Sino-Japanese Joint Conference on Shantung Affairs. In July 1922 he received another concurrent position as member of the National Finance Discussion Commission and later was promoted to be the technical director of the Ministry of Communications. In September 1922, he was ordered to be concurrently the Superintendent of the Bureau of the compilation of China's Communication History.

The Republic's Capital moved the seat to Nanking in 1928. 1928-1929: Consulting Engineer, Peking-Mukden Railway; 1928: Councillor, Ministry of Railroads; 1929-1930: Chairman, Board of Managers, Kiaotsi Railway; Since 1929: Director, Kiaotsi Railway; Since 1929: Chief Technical Expert, Ministry of Railways, 1929; Since 1930: Chairman, Commission on Standardization of Railway Technics; Since 1932: Advisor to Chinese Delegation, Lytton Commission; Since 1932: Member of Board of Trustees for the Administration of Indemnity Funds Remitted by the British Government; 1932-1933: Technical Delegate, China's Delegation to League of Nations.

Yen was a founder of the Chinese Institute of Engineers (中華工程師學會) of which he was Vice-President in 1915; Director in 1916-1920; President in 1923-1924. He was Director of the Association of Chinese and American Engineers in 1920-1921 and the President in 1921-1923.

#### Honours conferred by the Peking Government of the Republic of China

April 1920 -- Order of the Golden Grain 2nd Class Grand Cordon (嘉禾二等大綬勳章)

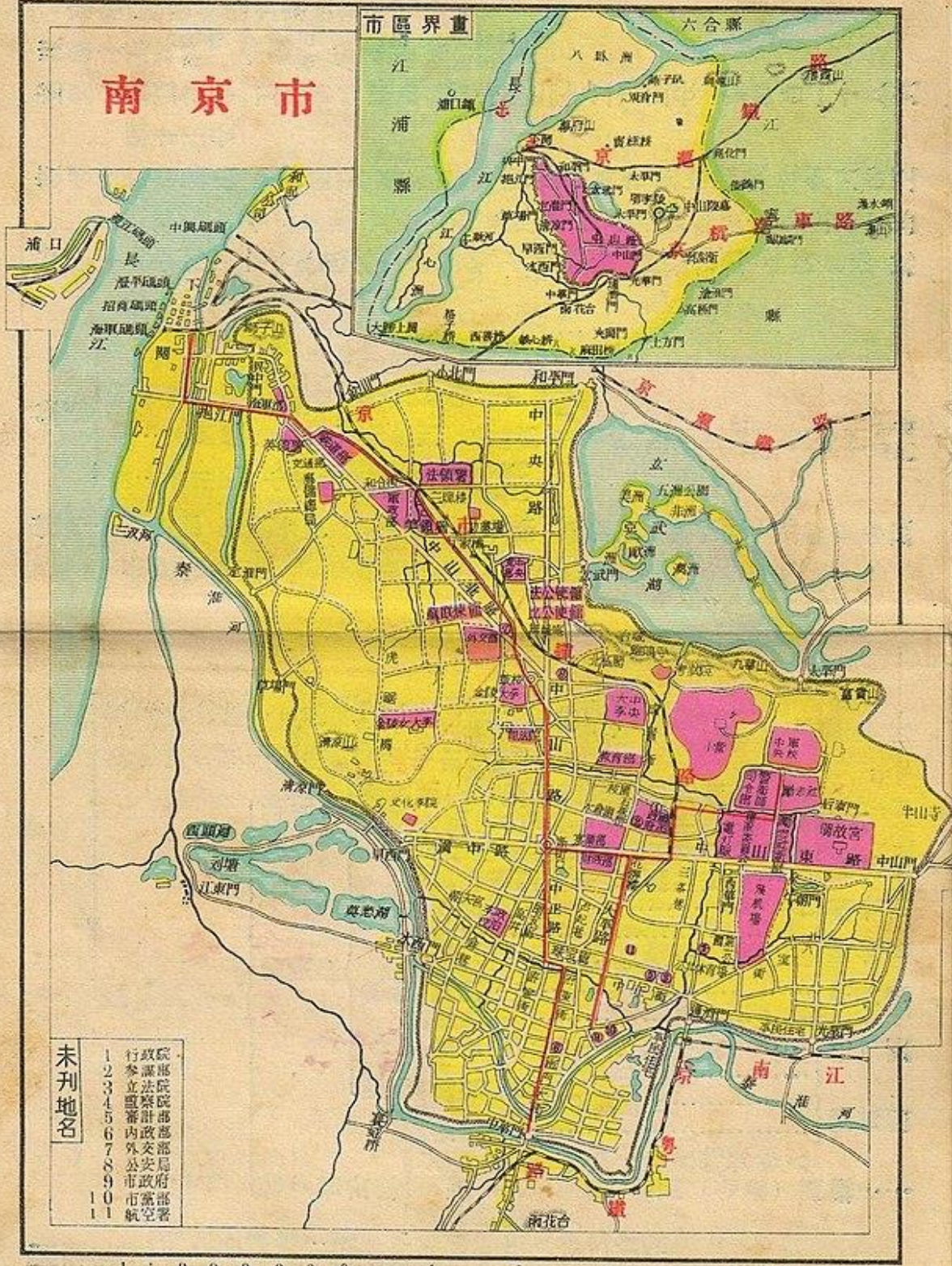
October 1920 -- Order of Striped Tiger 2nd Class (文虎二等勳章)

February 1922 -- Order of Precious Brilliant Golden Grain 2nd Class (寶光嘉禾二等勳章)

June 1922 -- Order of Precious Brilliant Golden Grain 1st Class (寶光嘉禾一等勳章)

January 1923 -- Order of the Golden Grain 1st Class Grand Cordon (嘉禾一等大綬勳章)

# 南京市



Scenes of Nanking in 1934



