

## 'then in the distance Quong Tart did we see': Quong Tart, celebrity and photography<sup>1</sup>

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The Sydney merchant, Quong Tart, is probably the best known nineteenth-century Chinese Australian. He is the only Chinese-Australian immigrant profiled in the National Museum of Australia's immigration section, and in 1998 a bronze bust of him was placed in the main street of his home suburb of Ashfield. There has been more written about him than any other nineteenth-century Chinese Australian.<sup>2</sup> A series of events throughout 2003-04 marked the one hundredth anniversary of his death, including an exhibition in the Queen Victoria Building, an online exhibition compiled by the City of Sydney, a multi-media musical play written by Barbara Poston-Anderson of University of Technology, and an international conference, 'Quong Tart and his Times 1850-1903', hosted by the Powerhouse Museum in July 2004.<sup>3</sup>

Quong Tart's contribution to Australian colonial history is significant. A highly successful gold prospector and merchant, he advised a government inquiry into Chinese camps in rural New South Wales (NSW), launched an ambitious anti-opium campaign, sat on the panel of the Royal Commission into Alleged Chinese Gambling and Immorality, and acted semi-officially as a Chinese consulate for NSW.

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<sup>1</sup> *Sydney Advertiser*, c.1881, cited in E. J. Lea-Scarlett, 'Quong Tart: A Study in Assimilation (Part 1)', *Descent*, Vol. 4, No. 3, 1969, p. 88. Research for this paper is part of a PhD dissertation, supported by the Australian Research Council.

<sup>2</sup> These include J. Law, 'Quong Tart: The Story of a Successful Chinaman', *The Young Man*, Vol. 9, No. 99, 1895; E. J. Lea-Scarlett, 'Mei Quong Tart', in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol. 5, Melbourne, 1974, pp. 234-5; Lea-Scarlett, 'Quong Tart ... (Part 1)', pp. 81-101; E. J. Lea-Scarlett, 'Quong Tart: A Study in Assimilation (Part 2)', *Descent*, Vol. 4, No. 4, 1970, pp. 121-40; C. Pratten, 'Quong Tart', in C. Pratten (ed.), *Ashfield at Federation*, Ashfield, 2001, pp. 143-66; M. Tart, *The Life of Quong Tart: Or, How a Foreigner Succeeded in a British Community*, Sydney, 2003 [1911]; N. Teffer, *No Ordinary Man: Sydney's Quong Tart, Citizen, Merchant and Philanthropist*, Sydney, 2004; R. Travers, *Australian Mandarin: The Life and Times of Quong Tart*, Kenthurst, 1981.

<sup>3</sup> 'Celebrating the man', Chinese Australian Historical Society Inc website, <[www.hermes.net.au/cahs/QT%20Activities.htm](http://www.hermes.net.au/cahs/QT%20Activities.htm)> (accessed 10 December 2004).

The Chinese Emperor granted him fifth then fourth rank civil honours for his services during the visit of the Chinese Commissioners in 1887 and for his role as negotiator and unofficial ambassador in the 1888 *Afghan* crisis. He was an active philanthropist, an excellent public speaker and highly regarded by Sydney's social élite. His untimely death prevented him becoming Australia's first Chinese ambassador.

Quong Tart's achievements cannot be lightly dismissed, but we need to distinguish between his actual accomplishments and his fame as one of Australia's early celebrities. There was a significant number of Chinese in colonial Australia who might have been as important as Quong Tart, but who have been relatively neglected and forgotten.<sup>4</sup> So why is Quong Tart so well known as a historical figure? Part of the answer lies in his own lifetime. As Robert Travers noted in his 1981 biography, all of Sydney could easily conjure up an image of Quong Tart.<sup>5</sup> This was not just because of his personality or business acumen, but because everyone knew what he looked like. Quong Tart ensured that people recognised and remembered him through his skilful use of the new medium of photography.

Chinese Australians were photographed in numerous ways and for different reasons. But Quong Tart's photographs far outnumber those of others during his lifetime. Among the extensive collections of surviving nineteenth-century photographs of Chinese living in Australia, there are at least forty-three surviving photographs of Quong Tart.<sup>6</sup> This paper explores the place of Quong Tart in the history of Australian photography. I discuss how he represented himself in photographs and how he used photography in novel ways, to shape himself as a celebrity at a time when celebrities were more likely to be stage performers than businessmen.

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<sup>4</sup> On this apparent neglect, see P. Macgregor, "'Before We Came to This Country, We Heard That English Laws Were Good and Kind to Everybody': Chinese Immigrants' Views of Colonial Australia", in A. Broinowski (ed.), *Double Vision: Asian Accounts of Australia*, Canberra, 2004, p. 47.

<sup>5</sup> Travers, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>6</sup> These are primarily in the picture and manuscript collections of the Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales, the National Library of Australia, and the Society of Australian Genealogists, as well as contemporary newspapers and miscellaneous published sources. Most are undated but the earliest is from the 1870s.

Historical photographs provide a rich source of information about the lives of Chinese Australians, hitherto largely ignored except for illustrative purposes. Since the late 1970s theorists of photography, sociology and history have discussed the deeply problematic nature of the photograph as truthful, self-explanatory representations of the past. Yet more complex understandings of Australian photographic history have not necessarily resulted in broader or more intricate uses of photographs outside this field.<sup>7</sup> One exception is the research by scholars of cultural exchange and colonialism who have been examining photographs in more multifaceted ways to illuminate relationships between the colonist and the colonised.<sup>8</sup> They emphasise the fluid meanings images can hold within different contexts. Photographs of Chinese in colonial Australia problematise this colonist-colonised dichotomy. The prejudice and low status generally accorded to people of Chinese heritage results in many parallels in their visual representation to that of the colonised. However, there are important distinctions. Chinese in Australia were colonisers rather than colonised, and they came from a post-literate and more technologically complex society than Indigenous Australians, meaning they had more opportunities to participate in mainstream Australian life and photography.

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<sup>7</sup> Joy Damousi recently noted that 'Despite several calls over the past decade or so for visual material to be used other than in ornamental ways, historians have remained somewhat reluctant to broaden and complicate their use of visual material'. *Australian Historical Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 123, pp. iv-v. See also J. Lydon, 'Regarding Corranderrk: Photography at Corranderrk Aboriginal Station, Victoria', PhD thesis, Australian National University, 2000, p. 5. Note that there has been considerable discussion of racist imagery in nineteenth-century cartoons and drawings. See, for example, R. Woodrow, 'Darwinism and Images of Race in the Australian Popular Press (c.1850 - 1900)', Master of Philosophy thesis, University of Sydney, 1994; M. Mahood, *The Loaded Line: Australian Political Caricature 1788-1901*, Melbourne, 1973; A. M. Willis, *Illusions of Identity: The Art of Nation*, Sydney, 1993; J. Lydon, *Many Inventions: The Chinese in the Rocks 1890-1930*, Melbourne, 1999; K. Bagnall, 'Across the Threshold: White Women and Chinese Hawkers in the White Colonial Imaginary', *Hecate*, Vol. 28, No. 2, 2002, pp. 9-33. Further research has been done in America. See, for example, A. Gordon, 'In Sight of America: Photography and United States Immigration Policy, 1880-1930', PhD thesis, University of Michigan, 2002; A. W. Lee, *Picturing Chinatown: Art and Orientalism in San Francisco*, Berkeley, 2001.

<sup>8</sup> For example, I. & T. Donaldson (eds), *Seeing the First Australians*, Sydney, 1985; E. Edwards, *Raw Histories: Photographs, Anthropology and Museums*, New York, 2001; R. Gibson, *South of the West: Postcolonialism and the Narrative Construction of Australia*, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1992; W. Hartmann, J. Silvester and P. Hayes (eds), *The Colonising Camera: Photographs in the Making of Namibian History*, Cape Town, 1998; J. Lydon, *Eye Contact: Photographing Indigenous Australians*, London, 2005.

The first Chinese arrived in NSW as indentured labourers to meet labour shortages in the pastoral industry, later coming in larger numbers to various Australian goldfields. They quickly became involved in other employment areas and were renowned as market gardeners, storekeepers, laundry workers, doctors, merchants and rural labourers. Their contribution to the clearing and settling of land was particularly significant in northern Australia. The majority came as temporary immigrants maintaining strong ties to their home villages, but many made Australia their home. Complex communities evolved, mostly shaped by village and clan alliances and by Chinese political beliefs. A merchant élite emerged who positioned themselves as intermediaries between the Chinese and non-Chinese communities in Australia, negotiating a path between the two cultures.<sup>9</sup> Quong Tart was arguably the most famous of this merchant élite.

During Quong Tart's lifetime photography came of age. In 1842, roughly eight years before he was born, the first daguerreotype was taken in Sydney by George Goodman. During the 1860s, when Quong Tart was a youth on the Braidwood goldfields, the competing photographic formats of stereoscopes and carte-de-viste portrait cards reached their peak in popularity in Australia. In 1871, the year Quong Tart was naturalized, Richard Leach Maddox developed the 'gelatin dry-plate' process, used universally in Australia from the early 1880s. The 1880s and 1890s saw a range of important photographic developments by Kodak including flexible negative film and the first mass production of cameras. Studio photography boomed.<sup>10</sup> By this stage Quong Tart was well placed to take advantage of these new developments. He had amassed considerable wealth as a gold speculator and, after a short return trip to China, he moved to Sydney in 1881 and established his first tearooms in the City Arcade, which he soon expanded into a chain. He married Margaret Scarlet in 1886 and they had six children. In 1900, four years before his untimely death, the famous Kodak Brownie camera was launched, bringing photography within in the financial reach of most people.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> G. Oddie, 'The Lower Class Chinese and the Merchant Elite in Victoria', *Historical Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 37, 1962, pp. 65-9.

<sup>10</sup> W. Reeder, 'The Stereograph and the Album Portrait in Colonial Sydney', *History of Photography*, Vol. 23, No. 2, 1999, pp. 181-6; G. Clarke, *The Photograph*, Oxford, New York, 1997; A. Davies, P. Stanbury with assistance C. Tanre, *The Mechanical Eye in Australia: Photography 1841-1900*, Melbourne, 1985, p. 2; B. Hall and J. Mather, *Australian Women Photographers: 1840-1960*, Richmond, 1986, p. 1.

<sup>11</sup> Clarke, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

Quong Tart does not appear to have had an interest in taking photographs himself,<sup>12</sup> but he was clearly fascinated with photography as a means of self-expression and self-promotion. His confidence and ease in front of the camera is obvious, particularly in group portraits. Quong Tart used photographs to construct an identity which he promoted in a range of novel ways to both Chinese and non-Chinese communities. By controlling his visual image, he was able to influence how others viewed him. At a time when photographic portraiture was dominated by dull, stereotypical poses taken in photographic studios and placed on walls, mantel pieces and in family albums, Quong Tart was interested in constructing a more complex photographic identity. The key characteristics that Quong Tart chose to project through his photographic representations offer a basic foundation for understanding Quong Tart's public persona.

In reading these characteristics, we need to be aware that a photographic representation reflects the identity that an individual, and the photographer, chooses to promote, constructed within the contemporary traditions of photographic portraiture. They reflect how Quong Tart wanted to be seen and not necessarily who he was. As I do not have access to the photographs Quong Tart might have sent to back to China, and only a couple taken of him *in* China, the examples provided show the identity Quong Tart chose to project in Australian contexts alone. Just as an individual's identity is a complex, fluid concept, shaped by context, so too the meanings of photographs can be said to be fluid and contingent. By drawing out these characteristics from the photographs, I do not intend to constrain the many other possible meanings that can be derived from them.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> N. Teffer, 'Yours Truly: Quong Tart and the Camera', paper presented at 'Quong Tart and his Times 1850-1903', Powerhouse Museum, Sydney, 1-4 July 2004.

<sup>13</sup> L. H. Rugg, *Picturing Ourselves: Photography and Autobiography*, Chicago & London, 1997, p. 6, discusses how an individual 'can forge a photographic self-image through canny manipulation of photographers and the economic and cultural institutions surrounding the production and publication of photography, thus maintaining a kind of "authorship" of self image'. Moreover, the photographer, although a separate consciousness, can come to stand for an impersonalised consciousness, making photographic portraits comparable to autobiography. See also S. Hall, 'The Question of Cultural Identity', in S. Hall, D. Held, and T. McGraw (eds), *Modernity and Its Futures*, Oxford, 1992, p. 277.



Figure 1: Untitled portrait of Quong Tart standing outside one of his tea rooms, Tart McEvoy Papers, 6/26 no.3. Courtesy of Society of Australian Genealogists.

Through photography, Quong Tart projected the identity of a businessman, family man and sportsman. It was a distinctly modern image, projected through a modern technology, and it was different from the photographic profiles constructed by other Chinese Australians, in character and particularly in its complexity. The majority of photographs of Quong Tart show him in a western suit, either posed in a photographic studio, his Victorian Italianate-style house or his 'British' tearooms; or associated him with particularly English activities such as picnics and sports. Photographs of him posed with his cricket team, dressed in his National Guard uniform or painted with his racehorse, all suggest a 'British' demeanour.<sup>14</sup> Brought up by Scottish immigrants, Quong Tart was renowned for self-identification as Scottish and spoke with a Scottish brogue. His wife,

<sup>14</sup> 'Quong Tart with unknown cricket team', Society of Australian Genealogists (hereafter SAG), 5/198-2; M. Tart, *The Life of Quong Tart: Or how a Foreigner Succeeded in a British Community*, Sydney, 1911, following pp. 20, 52.

Margaret Tart, described him as 'Scotch in instinct and sympathy'. However, he does not appear to have been photographed wearing a kilt,<sup>15</sup> suggesting he preferred to contain this more quirky side of his identity to his witty public speeches and performances.



Figure 2: Untitled portrait of Quong and Margaret Tart with their daughter Vine at the piano, Tart McEvoy Papers, 6/16 no.1. Courtesy of Society of Australian Genealogists.

Many Chinese Australians posed for photographs wearing western dress. Using a study of 261 studio portraits created by Chinese Australians for the Victorian Customs Department in 1899 and 1900 under the 1890 *Chinese Act*, we see that the majority of subjects wear a

<sup>15</sup> However, there is a caricature of Quong Tart in kilt drawn by Phil May and published in the *Bulletin*. A large photo-print of the caricature is held in the McEvoy Tart family collection at the Society of Australian Genealogists and was published in Margaret Tart's 1911 biography of Quong Tart, suggesting his family, if not Quong Tart himself, was amused by the depiction.



hat and dark suit complete with waistcoat and watch-chain.<sup>16</sup> In only twenty-five portraits did subjects choose to wear Chinese dress and in twenty they wore a mix of Chinese and western clothing (commonly a Chinese jacket, trousers and shoes with a western hat, but there was a number of other variations). By the end of the nineteenth century the western-styled male suit had become an international symbol of respectability and modernity. In China by the turn of the century, Qing dynasty dress was also being modified and westernised in conjunction with changing political ideas, particularly in major cities such as Shanghai.<sup>17</sup> The Republican government in 1912 encouraged people to wear western dress, particularly civil servants.<sup>18</sup> Yet among Chinese Australians, few approached the level of 'British-ness' displayed in Quong Tart's photographs. Perhaps the only other comparable contemporary portrait is that of James Cheong, posed like an Oxford don in his study at Melbourne University.<sup>19</sup>

Most of the extant photographs of Quong Tart date from the 1880s when he was a Sydney tea merchant. His chain of teashops in central Sydney became a familiar Sydney institution and an essential part of many people's visit to the city. There are five photographs of Quong Tart posed in his tearooms, on his own and with his staff, both inside and outside the premises. In many images he strikes a confident pose with his legs apart (for example, in Figure 1). His staff, in contrast, often seem ill-at-ease or uncomfortable and are sometimes partially

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<sup>16</sup> National Archives of Australia (hereafter NAA), B6443. It could be argued that Chinese Australians projected a more 'western' appearance for authorities, but in my experience these images reflect the nature of Chinese Australian portraiture in other collections, both private and public. For further discussion of this series see S. Couchman, 'Not so Mug Mugshots: Behind the Portraits of Series B6443', *Crossings*, Vol. 9, No.3, November 2004, <asc.uq.edu.au/crossings> (accessed 17 December 2004).

<sup>17</sup> A. Hollander, *Sex and Suits*, New York, 1995; D. Kuchta, *The Three-Piece Suit and Modern Masculinity: England, 1550-1850*, Berkeley, 2002; A. Finnane, 'What Should Chinese Women Wear? A National Problem', in A. Finnane and A. McLaren (eds), *Dress, Sex and Text in Chinese Culture*, Clayton, 1999, pp. 99-131. Finnane discusses influences of nationalism on changes to Chinese male and female dress from the late Qing. See also C. Roberts, *Evolution and Revolution: Chinese Dress 1700s-1900s*, Haymarket, 1997; V. Wilson, 'Dressing for Leadership in China: Wives and Husbands in an Age of Revolutions (1911-1976)', *Gender and History*, Vol. 14, No. 3, 2002, pp. 608-28.

<sup>18</sup> X. Zhou, C. Gao, and Shanghai School of Traditional Opera Chinese Costumes Research Group, *5000 Years of Chinese Costumes*, San Francisco, 1987.

<sup>19</sup> 'James Cheong, Melbourne University, c1891', St Peter's Church Archive.



hidden.<sup>20</sup> This might be more a reflection of the presence of the camera and poor posing by the photographer than of their relationship with their employer. Quong Tart was reputedly a lenient and generous employer. 'There was none of that aloofness of spirit which so often keeps employer and employee apart', according to his wife, Margaret. 'They [his staff] were men and women with souls and were treated as such. Every opportunity was seized for developing a kindly feeling for one another and cementing ties which bound them together'.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, Quong Tart clearly emerges in these portraits as employer, proprietor and successful businessman.

There are plenty of photographs of other Chinese Australians in their workplaces, but many of these have a more voyeuristic and ethnographic feel to them. They were not commissioned by Chinese Australians proudly displaying their work and workplace, but by others wishing to show Chinese as ethnographic types for postcards or commemorative books and albums.<sup>22</sup> The Holtermann collection of photographs includes eight interesting exceptions which show Chinese-Australian store and boarding house keepers posed proudly outside their businesses in rural NSW.<sup>23</sup> A preliminary survey of contemporary photographs of shops in Australia (drawn from collections in the National Library of Australia, the Mitchell Library and State Library of Victoria) shows that the majority are external portraits of the premises which do not include people, except incidentally. The next most common group are external photographs of the shop, with presumably the owner and or staff and family. There are only a very small proportion of photographs of the interiors of shops. Admittedly, this might be because family collections are under-represented in library collections. Nonetheless, the three internal photographs of Quong Tart's tearooms, particularly the very casual nature of the poses, are quite unusual.

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<sup>20</sup> This is particularly apparent in one photograph. 'Quong Tart with staff', Tart McEvoy papers, SAG 6/26, no.2.

<sup>21</sup> Tart, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

<sup>22</sup> For example, the miscellaneous photographs taken of Chinese wood carters in Darwin in the National Library of Australia and Northern Territory Library picture collections.

<sup>23</sup> For example, miscellaneous photographs taken at Tambaroora, Hill End and Home Rule, in the Holtermann collection, Mitchell Library, ON 4 Box 12. These portraits were part of the daily work of the American and Australasian Photographic Company. J. Delacour, 'Merlin & Bayliss: Work from the Hill End Studio', *Art Network*, Vol. 9, 1983, pp. 33-9.

There is a collection of family photographs that include Quong Tart (for example, Figure 2). A dozen portraits show him posed with various members of his immediate family in studios, in their home, and one outside an unknown residence in Hong Kong. In these photographs Quong Tart is presented as a family man with his nuclear Australian family. There do not appear to be any extant photographs of his parents, brother or any other relatives living in China.<sup>24</sup> Here we see Quong Tart as something familiar, married to an English-Australian wife, living in a respectable middle-class home, leading an ordinary, if affluent, family life.

There are sizeable numbers of nineteenth-century Chinese-Australian family portraits in public collections.<sup>25</sup> These portraits sometimes just show the Chinese father and his children, and sometimes the whole family with a non-Chinese or Chinese wife. Chinese-born wives often wore traditional Chinese dress. Chinese men, as noted above, mostly wore a western suit, sometimes traditional Chinese dress, and occasionally mandarin robes. Children might wear either, but commonly wore western dress. These portraits were mostly taken within studios with set poses, studio furniture, props and settings. This was the dominant form of photographic portraiture at this time. They do not display some of the influences of Chinese portraiture painting that emerged in some photographic portraits taken in China.<sup>26</sup> A few portraits were taken outside, some with a clumsy studio backdrop or in front of a house. Unlike some of the Tart family portraits, I have not yet found any nineteenth-century Chinese-Australian family portraits taken inside the home. The large number of Quong Tart family portraits allowed for a greater variety of poses and settings than other family collections, where only one or two photographs might be taken of members of the family.

<sup>24</sup> Many of these family photographs have been donated to the Society of Australian Genealogists and the Mitchell Library. Some remain with the family. Note that the Mitchell Library holds a painted portrait of Quong Tart's mother painted c1888 in the contemporary style of ancestral portraits, which was allegedly displayed by the altar at Gallop House.

<sup>25</sup> See, for example, the family collections held by the Bendigo Golden Dragon Museum, the Museum of Chinese Australian History and the State Library of Victoria.

<sup>26</sup> R. Thiriez, 'Photography and Portraiture in Nineteenth-Century China', *East Asian History*, Vol. 17/18, 1999, pp. 77-102; C. Worswick and J. Spence, *Imperial China: Photographs 1850-1912*, New York, 1978, report that Chinese insisted on being photographed full length, facing full frontal to the camera with hands displayed, similar to ancestor portraits. Thiriez suggests that while this was true for traditional 'formal' portraits, a large number of portraits did not follow this pattern.

Quong Tart was also widely involved in many sporting activities.<sup>27</sup> He was photographed and painted with his cricket team, his racehorse and as starter of a cycling race. The cricket team group portrait taken in front of a stand is no different from the many photographs of cricket teams that were taken regularly from the 1870s and continue to be taken. Quong Tart's painted portrait with his horse, Nobby, also falls within conventional portraiture of the period. But the portrait of Quong Tart as starter of an unknown NSW Wheelman cycling race with Harry Bagnall is a curiously contrived photomontage. The photograph exists as a printed newspaper photograph in the scrapbooks compiled by Margaret Tart. The date and newspaper name are unknown. The published image also appears to have been manipulated, possibly to remove unrelated figures. Neither figure directly poses for the photograph, nor do they visually relate to each other.<sup>28</sup>

Other Chinese Australians also engaged in sporting activities,<sup>29</sup> but they were not generally photographed as sportsmen. William Nean's portrait taken for Victorian colonial customs authorities in 1900, which shows him on a racing bike wearing full racing dress, is a wonderful exception. There is also a portrait of a Chinese football team taken by the *Leader* newspaper as part of a report on a hospital fund raising bazaar.<sup>30</sup> The difference between these images and those of Quong Tart is in the way these photographs have been used. William Nean used his to obtain exemption from Chinese immigration restriction laws (and possibly also for personal purposes) and the Chinese football team, which played as a novelty feature of the fund raising bazaar, was also published in the newspaper for its novelty, rather than as a personal or group record of the team's game.

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<sup>27</sup> Travers, *op. cit.*, pp. 43, 157; Tart, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-9; Lea-Scarlett, 'Quong Tart ... (Part 1)', p. 85, and 'Quong Tart ... (Part 2)', p. 133.

<sup>28</sup> 'Quong Tart with unknown cricket team', SAG, 5/198-2; Tart, *op.cit.*, following p. 20; 'The League Starters - Mr Quong Tart and Mr Harry Bagnall', unidentified newspaper clipping, Tart McEvoy papers, SAG, Scrapbook 2/40, p. 39.

<sup>29</sup> R. Cashman, *Sport in the National Imagination: Australian Sport in the Federation Decades*, Sydney, 2002; R. Hess, "'A Death Blow to the White Australia Policy': Australian Rules Football and the Chinese Community in Victoria, 1892-1908", in S. Couchman, J. Fitzgerald, and P. Macgregor (eds), *After the Rush: Regulation, Participation, and Chinese Communities in Australia 1860-1940*, Melbourne, 2004. A. Honey, 'Sport, Immigration Restriction and Race: The Operation of the White Australia Policy', in R. Cashman, J. O'Hara, and A. Honey (eds), *Sport, Federation, Nation*, Sydney, 2001, pp. 26-46.

<sup>30</sup> 'William Nean', 1900, NAA, B6443, 1139; *Leader*, 8 April 1899, p. 36.



Figure 3: 'With compliments of Mr and Mrs Quong Tart, 1892, Gallop House, Ashfield'. Courtesy of Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW.

While having a photographic portrait was in itself an action that displayed status, many of the photographs of Quong Tart are explicit statements of his social rank, often commemorating his role in important official or semi-official events. These include a studio portrait with the Chinese Commissioners, Wang Ronghe and Yu Qiong, during their visit in 1887, and portraits posed with important Chinese community leaders such as Dr On Lee, R. W. G. Lee and the Lin Yik Tong (Chinese Commercial Association).<sup>31</sup> The photograph of Quong Tart with the Lin Yik Tong particularly illustrates his status

<sup>31</sup> *Chinese Australian Herald*, 31 January 1903, p. 4; Tart, *op.cit.*, after pp. 20, 52, 68; 'Superintendent Birch, Quong Tart and unknown man', Tart McEvoy papers, SAG, PR 5-198-1.

because, despite being centrally posed, he was not actually a member of the organisation (contrary to the English caption). In the Chinese caption he is described as a 'businessman', unlike the others whose position in the organisation is noted.<sup>32</sup> The photograph illustrated an article describing the group's successful lobbying of the government for interstate travel concessions. Other portraits reflect his social standing within the broader Australian community, including one posed with two non-Chinese men, possibly police or customs officers, and another taken to commemorate his receiving a silver citizens' platter in October 1902. Another was taken after he was accepted into Sir George Dibbs' National Guard in 1900.

No extant photographs show Quong Tart in Chinese dress other than his mandarin robes. These were worn not as a Chinese version of a formal suit, but as symbols of status. It is possible to track Quong Tart's increasing rank visually through photographic portraits of him. A number of portraits show him in his mandarin robes, sometimes with Margaret Tart in matching robes (for example, Figures 3 and 4). These portraits appear to commemorate and promote these various increases in his rank as a mandarin. They were widely published in the press, and captions and accompanying text always mentioned his rank.

Quong Tart represented himself visually in many ways, but he primarily put himself forward as a successful, modern man. Through photography he shaped an individual personality that successfully negotiated many social and racial categories in nineteenth-century Australia. An ambitious entrepreneur, Quong Tart exploited the fluid and contested nature of class in Australia and positioned himself as a successful entrepreneur in the new rising middle classes. Photographs show him engaging with many aspects of modern Sydney life. In his smart suit with neatly furled umbrella, he was the epitome of the modern capitalist and socialite.<sup>33</sup> His teashops and the way he managed them were new and innovative. He was one of the first tenants in the newly built Queen Victoria building, with its state-of-the-art elevators and electric lights, and his staff worked under generous and, by contemporary standards, very modern employment conditions.<sup>34</sup> His sporting interests, especially his involvement in the administration of cycle racing, reflected an engagement with modern

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<sup>32</sup> Many thanks to Kuo Mei-fen for directing my attention to this in her translation.

<sup>33</sup> For example, Tart, *op.cit.*, following pp. 20, 68; 'Quong Tart outside unidentified tea rooms', c1896-1903, Tart McEvoy Papers, SAG, PR 6-26-3.

<sup>34</sup> Travers, *op. cit.*, pp. 124-125, 152; Teffer, *No Ordinary Man*, unpaginated.

ideas linking healthy bodies with healthy minds. His association with the Railway Coaching Branch, reflected in a group photograph taken at a picnic in 1897, also illustrates a connection with the modern.<sup>35</sup>

Quong Tart's multi-faceted photographic identity was a reflection of his celebrity status, as well as part of its construction. Surviving records do not provide any clues as to the extent to which Quong Tart actually controlled and manipulated his public image.<sup>36</sup> However, as Ponce de Leon notes in his study of the emergence of celebrity in America between 1890-1940, many celebrities carefully controlled their media image, and even 'those who become celebrities through no efforts of their own quickly learn how to use the media to make the best of the situation'. The origins of celebrity journalism can be traced back to at least the mid-nineteenth century and was linked to the emergence of the modern mass media and expansion of the public sphere.<sup>37</sup> Daniel J. Boorstein has famously written that a celebrity is 'a person known for his well-knownness' — that is, a person known only for their image or trademark, their visibility and their ability to attract publicity. On the whole, celebrities are quickly created and quickly forgotten. Embodied in the notion of the celebrity is the idea that any aspiring individual can achieve the image of fulfilment projected in the celebrity life.<sup>38</sup> From the mid-nineteenth century the general public, particularly in cities, were aware of the artifice and unreliability behind the projected personas of public figures. From the 1890s biographers and sympathetic journalists sought to illuminate the 'real self' or private self, while the media increasingly moved away from idealised portrayals towards complex and even flawed public profiles in an effort to make them more trustworthy.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>35</sup> 'Railway Coaching Branch Picnic', McEvoy Tart Papers, SAG, PR 6-25-3; A. M. Willis, *Picturing Australia: A History of Photography*, North Ryde, 1988, notes that railways were often photographed for postcards and promotional albums as symbols of a city's development, progress and modernity.

<sup>36</sup> Unlike Mark Twain, who staged over 500 individual photographs of himself but then strictly controlled their publication and distribution, threatening photographers with legal action when they did not comply. Rugg, *op. cit.*, pp. 3, 45-46.

<sup>37</sup> C. L. Ponce de Leon, *Self Exposure: Human Interest Journalism and the Emergence of Celebrity in America 1890-1940*, London, 2002, chap. 1; G. Turner, F. Bonner and P. D. Marshall, *Fame Games: The Production of Celebrity in Australia*, Cambridge, 2000; S. Ewen, *All Consuming Images: The Politics of Style in Contemporary Culture*, New York, 1988.

<sup>38</sup> D. J. Boorstein, *The Image: Or, What Happened to the American Dream*, New York, 1962; Ponce de Leon, *op.cit.*, p. 18; Ewen, *op.cit.*, p. 95.

<sup>39</sup> Ponce de Leon, *op.cit.*, p. 34. Although Ewen, *op.cit.*, p. 94 notes that the combination of anonymity and poverty are often 'ritually linked' in the telling of celebrity success.

Quong Tart was an unusual celebrity. As a businessman he does not sit comfortably with the more common celebrities of the period such as stage performers, sportsmen, royalty and even bushrangers. His significant achievements in the public sphere suggest that he was not only known for his image, trademark and personality. On the other hand, it is impossible to deny the extensive publicity that his activities received in the press, the public profile his private life and life story was given, and the appeal of his quirky personality (reflected in his Scottish brogue, love of Scottish songs and poetry, sense of humour and gift for public speaking). Quong Tart wears and cultivates a celebrity persona on top of his other achievements. This celebrity persona distinguished Quong Tart from his Chinese Australian contemporaries, and it was photography, particularly photographic portraits, which helped him achieve and maintain his celebrity status.

There were many other contemporary Chinese Australians who were well-known, successful businessmen, socially well connected, philanthropically active and government lobbyists. Men like Lowe Kong Meng (1831-1888), Louey Ah Mouy (1826-1918) and Cheok Hong Cheong (1851-1928) from Victoria provide a useful comparison. These men were celebrated and valued within the wider community but they do not appear to have reached celebrity status in the way Quong Tart did, nor was their public photographic profile comparable. There is only one extant photograph of Louey Ah Mouy, and two of Cheok Hong Cheong.<sup>40</sup> There are also only a small number of portraits, etchings and photographic images of Lowe Kong Meng. However, Lowe Kong Meng died before the photographic boom of the 1890s when most of Quong Tart's photographs were created. Had he lived longer he might have rivalled Quong Tart's photographic profile.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> I. Welch, 'Alien Son: The Life and Times of Cheok Hong Cheong, 1851-1928', PhD thesis, Australian National University, 2003, p. 68; *Weekly Times* (Melbourne), 2 September 1899, p. 10, as part of a photo-essay on Chinese mission work in Victoria.

<sup>41</sup> One photograph appeared after his death in the *Chinese Australian Herald*, 2 February 1897 (thanks to Mei-fen Guo for drawing this to my attention). See also *Australian News for home readers*, 27 September 1866; J. H. H. Leavitt, 'Lowe Kong Meng', in *Jubilee History of Victoria and Melbourne*, Vol. 1, Melbourne, 1888, plate 4; *Illustrated Australian News*, 20 September 1866; *Australasian Sketcher*, 29 November 1888; P. Macgregor, 'Lowe Kong Meng: Entrepreneur, Comprador or Mandarin? The Economic and Social Significance of a Melbourne Gold Rush Magnate', paper presented at 'Quong Tart and his Times 1850-1903', Powerhouse Museum, Sydney, 1-4 July 2004.





Figure 4: Chinese Australian Herald, 29 January 1897. Courtesy of National Library of Australia



Figure 5: Untitled portrait of Quong Tart, showing the front and back of the card. Private collection. Courtesy of Sandy Barrie.

Chang Woo Gow appears to be the only other person of Chinese heritage in Australia during Quong Tart's lifetime who might also be classed as a celebrity figure, and who was subsequently photographed extensively.<sup>42</sup> Better known by his stage name, 'Chang the Chinese Giant', he was a celebrity for very different reasons to Quong Tart. At roughly eight foot, Chang was an oddity, a stage performer who played to packed houses. His 'show' involved displaying himself to public scrutiny and chatting with patrons in various languages. Chang's image is captured in numerous carte de visites — small photographs pasted onto a card mount about the size of a business card — sold and distributed either at the show or through

<sup>42</sup> Numerous carte de visites have been located in the Gold Museum (Ballarat), the State Library of Victoria, Museum Victoria, the Mitchell Library, the Society of Australian Genealogists, and in the private collection of Dennis O'Hoy. Two others appear in Lebovic et al., *op. cit.*, p. 41.

photographic studios as a means of publicity.<sup>43</sup> According to one newspaper report his Chinese wife Kin Foo sold copies during his show.<sup>44</sup> Chang's act was based on his appearance, and so a number of his portraits use devices to draw attention to his height and Chineseness. The sale of photographs was one of the ways to exploit financially his physical appearance and advertise the show.

So how did Quong Tart use photographs to build a celebrity image? He was generally more creative in the way he did this than other Chinese Australians. As one would expect, many Quong Tart portraits were created for the private consumption of his family and friends, although just as photographs can have multiple meanings they can also have multiple uses. Then, as now, the personal exchange of photographs was common practice. Photographic portraiture was not only meant to convey a person's likeness, but also to evoke 'a sense of intimacy between the sender and receiver' and in some cases to build diplomatic relations.<sup>45</sup>

A number of photographs provide evidence that Quong Tart gave portraits of himself to friends and acquaintances as gifts, enabling him to consolidate and extend his social networks. Through these photographs he was able to choose how he represented himself to others, thereby shaping their views of him. He appears to have done this on a larger scale than most. One extant photomontage, created by combining a selection of family photographs with a floral arrangement and then photographing the assemblage, has a lengthy inscription on

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<sup>43</sup> For example, Willis, *Picturing Australia*, p. 47, notes how carte de visites were used to construct the reputations of the famous and infamous. From his earliest work as an entertainer, Buffalo Bill used CDVs to promote his act. J. S. Kasson, *Buffalo Bill's Wild West: Celebrity, Memory, and Popular History*, New York, 2000, p. 110. See also W. Reeder, 'The Democratic Image: The Carte-De-Visite in Australia 1859-1874', M.Litt. thesis, Australian National University, 1995, chap. 4, on the commoditisation of freak show acts through carte de visites, and Rugg, *op. cit.*, pp. 3, 8, 46, on Mark Twain's use of photographic portraits of himself.

<sup>44</sup> *Bendigo Advertiser*, 16 April 1895. References to the *Bendigo Advertiser* are drawn from the Bendigo Advertiser Index, courtesy Bendigo Golden Dragon Museum.

<sup>45</sup> Z. Hu, *Zhongguo iu Ying Lu*, China, 1999, pp. 4-5; Y. Ma and Z. Hu, *Zhongguo She Ying Shi 1840-1937 [History of Photography in China 1840-1937]*, Beijing, 1987, chap. 1, discusses the diplomatic exchange of photographs in China by the Governor of Guangdong and Guangxi. Rafael discusses the exchange of photographs among Filipino Nationalists and their families from the late-nineteenth century. V. L. Rafael, *White Love and Other Events in Filipino History*, Manilla, 2000, pp. 92-3; V. L. Rafael, 'Nationalism, Imagery, and the Filipino Intelligentsia in the 19th Century', in V. L. Rafael (ed.), *Discrepant Histories: Translocal Essays on Filipino Cultures*, Philadelphia, 1995, p. 147.

the bottom which reads: 'With compliments of Mr & Mrs Quong Tart, 1892, "Gallop House", Ashfield, Sydney N.S.W.' (Figure 3). This has been printed rather than handwritten, suggesting this particular image was copied and given to numerous people. Quong Tart received, as well as gave photographs. Lord and Lady Carrington sent two autographed photographic portraits in acknowledgement of Quong and Margaret Tart's marriage. These were prominently displayed in the drawing room.<sup>46</sup>

There is evidence that other Chinese Australians also gave photographs as gifts at this time, particularly as a method of consolidating social networks. George Young is reported to have given copies of photographs of himself and his family to prominent people in Eaglehawk, near Bendigo, before their return to China in 1899.<sup>47</sup> These may have been parting gifts but were more likely given within the context of immigration restrictions and the increasing need for identification to obtain re-entry into Australia. Chinese in New Zealand voluntarily provided photographic portraits to prominent people prior to return trips to China to assist identification on their return.<sup>48</sup> Chinese Australians also sent photographs home as gifts to family and friends left behind — though nineteenth-century examples are difficult to find. Quong Tart is believed to have taken photographs of his wife and daughter with him on his second return trip to China in 1888 to show his mother.<sup>49</sup> Quong Tart's photographic gifts were, however, unique for the period in that they were often personally inscribed. While this practice becomes more prevalent for other Chinese Australians in the early-twentieth century, it appears to have been uncommon during Quong Tart's lifetime, suggesting he had a more modern and innovative outlook towards photography than many of his Chinese Australian contemporaries.

Quong Tart also appears to have deliberately and innovatively used the print media to distribute his photographs. Numerous photographs of him were published in Chinese and English-language newspapers, particularly in Sydney. Photographic illustrations began to appear in Australian daily and illustrated newspapers in the mid-

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<sup>46</sup> Tart, *op.cit.*, p. 13; Lea-Scarlett, 'Quong Tart ... (Part 1)', p. 96.

<sup>47</sup> 'Clara Young – imprint left hand', NAA, B13, 1917/3260.

<sup>48</sup> J. Ng, *Windows on a Chinese Past: Larrikinism and Violence: Immigration Issues: 20th Century Assimilation: Biographies*, Vol. 3, Otago, p. 126. E. J. Arnold was known to have received photographs of Chinese wanting to leave New Zealand, c.1900.

<sup>49</sup> Travers, *op.cit.*, p. 100.

1890s after the invention of the halftone reproduction process, but were not dominant in daily newspapers until the 1930s when the boom in pictorials had declined.<sup>50</sup> Photographs of Quong Tart were among the earliest published in these newspapers. One of the first photographs published in the *Chinese Australian Herald* in 1897 was a portrait of Quong Tart in his mandarin robes (Figure 4). It had previously been published in 1895 in a slightly different format in the *Australian Town and Country Journal*, and another copy was given by Quong Tart as a gift to an unknown person in 1894.<sup>51</sup> The use of a single photograph of Quong Tart in multiple publications might in part reflect the syndication of news, or might be because Quong Tart was providing photographs to the press. The other portrait of him in his robes was also published in a number of places.<sup>52</sup>

Quong Tart's celebrity status is also reflected in the wide discussion of his family life and life story in the newspapers — a practice that blurred the distinction between his public and private lives. This included photographs of Quong Tart and his family in their home. The photomontage discussed earlier that was given to friends or acquaintances includes one photograph of the family standing outside their home, 'Gallop House'. This photograph was also published in the *Illustrated Australian News* in 1893. Another photograph of Quong Tart and his two children accompanied it. This second family portrait was also published in 1899 in *Young Man* to illustrate a biographical article on Quong Tart by John Law.<sup>53</sup>

There are certainly examples of photographs of Chinese Australians that were published in newspapers but they tend to be isolated examples. The family portrait that George Young distributed to prominent people in Eaglehawk ended up in the *Illustrated*

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<sup>50</sup> Willis, *Picturing Australia*, p. 79. State Library of Victoria information on the nature of illustrated newspapers held in their collection, <[www.statelibrary.vic.gov.au/slv/latrobe/illusnew.htm](http://www.statelibrary.vic.gov.au/slv/latrobe/illusnew.htm)> (accessed 19 August 2003).

<sup>51</sup> *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 23 February 1895, p. 28. A copy of this portrait from an unidentified private collection was published in the catalogue of the 'No Ordinary Man: Sydney's Quong Tart, Citizen, Merchant and Philanthropist' exhibition, Queen Victoria Building, New Contemporaries Gallery, 1 July–15 August 2004.

<sup>52</sup> 'Quong Tart and On Lee with others', c1892-1898, SAG PR\_6-25-1. Cropped version in *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 26 March 1898, p. 38. Full version in *The Sketch*, 4 May 1898. The original is held in the family collection.

<sup>53</sup> Law, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-4; *Illustrated Sydney News*, 22 April 1893.

*Australasian*.<sup>54</sup> Every Chinese New Year Chinese-language newspapers published a supplementary edition that sometimes included portraits of people. These included a portrait of the well-known Sydney businessman, W. R. G. Lee, and his family and a posthumous portrait of the Victorian merchant, Lowe Kong Meng.<sup>55</sup> Chinese Australians were more likely to feature in photographs as participants or attendants in Chinese processions, such as James Lamsey dressed in mandarin robes sitting in his horse-drawn buggy.<sup>56</sup> But even these were rare in the nineteenth century.

Quong Tart's visual image was also an important aspect in the promotion of his tea business. Similarly, the promotion of his business enhanced his reputation.<sup>57</sup> Like the more modern entrepreneur, Dick Smith, Quong Tart's business dealings were closely tied to him as a celebrity figure. Margaret Tart writes in her biography that 'a genial personality counts for much in bringing to a prosperous issue any commercial undertaking ... Those who patronized him [Quong Tart's tearooms] were his friends first and his customers afterward'. Small quips in newspaper articles also suggested that women attending his teashops were more interested in him than his tea. During his campaign against opium, the *Truth* quite bluntly opined that his philanthropic aims were a 'reformation-cum-advertising scheme'.<sup>58</sup>

There is also evidence Quong Tart used carte de visite portraits of himself to promote his business. Carte de visites were extremely popular in the mid-nineteenth century but were still produced and circulated at the turn of the century. In Australia they were not used as visiting cards, as the name suggests, but were only collected in albums and exchanged.<sup>59</sup> Leo Brandy, writing about the US, suggests that they became a 'prime means for public figures to strengthen their political or military campaigns with a shower of personalized, pocket-sized portraits' and that these small portraits assisted in the creation of an

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<sup>54</sup> *Australasian*, 31 March 1900, p. 703.

<sup>55</sup> *Chinese Australian Herald*, 12 February 1902, and 8 February 1902. Thanks to Kuo Mei-fen for drawing my attention to these portraits.

<sup>56</sup> *Bendigonian*, 17 April 1900.

<sup>57</sup> This is also noted by Lea-Scarlett, who suggests that the outfitting of 137 King Street as head office 'was possibly made with a clear vision of the boost that his own image would receive from the venture'. Lea-Scarlett, 'Quong Tart ... (Part 2)', p. 127.

<sup>58</sup> Tart, *op.cit.*, p. 21; *Bulletin*, 19 September 1886; unreferenced newspaper cutting, 4/339, SAG, p. 2; Travers, *op.cit.*, p.108; *Truth*, cited in Travers, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

<sup>59</sup> Reeder, 'The Democratic Image', p. 11.

emotional intimacy between the famous and their audience.<sup>60</sup> A carte de visite portrait of Quong Tart held in what is believed to be the album of the Russell family, might have been a gift from Quong Tart to this Braidwood family.<sup>61</sup> However, it is also possible his portrait was included in the album, not as a friend or acquaintance, but as a celebrity. Carte de visite albums often included famous people such as royalty, ministers of religion, actors, bushrangers and 'freak' acts such as Tom Thumb the dwarf and Chang the Chinese Giant.<sup>62</sup> By the 1870s Quong Tart was already a wealthy and well-connected figure in the Braidwood area. Margaret Scartlet is believed to have begun collecting information and newspaper clippings about him (often multiple copies) for her scrapbooks from around the time she met him.

Sandy Barrie, an Australian photographic history enthusiast, claims an article in a contemporary photographic magazine reported that Quong Tart ordered 50,000 carte de visite portraits for distribution.<sup>63</sup> A carte de visite portrait held in his private collection supports this idea as it has an ink stamp on the back of the card of the well-known Q&T double heart logo with the name and address of the business (Figure 5). Even if the extraordinarily large order of carte de visites is incorrect or inaccurate, the ink stamp on the back of the card nevertheless illustrates Quong Tart's manipulation of the collectable nature of carte de visites to promote his business.

Although carte de visites would often have an advertisement for the photographic studio that produced the card on either the front or back, it was uncommon for them to be used for advertising as they were more expensive to produce than trade cards. Trade cards initially had lithographed illustrations, but with the invention of chromolithography they were also produced in colour. They emerged in the United States in the late 1870s and were particularly popular there in the 1890s, until other forms of mass circulating advertising such as magazines emerged.<sup>64</sup> An undated trade card or business card of Sun Goon Shing importers in Melbourne is the closest Chinese-Australian example of the use of photographs on cards for

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<sup>60</sup> L. Brandy, *The Frenzy of Renown: Fame and Its History*, New York and Oxford, 1986.

<sup>61</sup> 'Quong Tart carte de visite in Russell family album', Mitchell Library, PXB 387.7.

<sup>62</sup> Reeder, 'The Democratic Image', pp. 42-56.

<sup>63</sup> Personal email from Sandy Barrie, 17 April 2004.

<sup>64</sup> 'The 19<sup>th</sup> Century American Trade Card', Baker Library, Harvard University website, <[www.library.hbs.edu/hc/19th\\_century\\_tcard/](http://www.library.hbs.edu/hc/19th_century_tcard/)> (accessed 24 November 2004). I am indebted to David Rudd for discussions regarding carte de visites.



advertising.<sup>65</sup> The card has a printed photograph of the Sun Goon Shing building with the name of the business clearly emphasised. The back of the card provides the address and details of the goods traded. The business operated from 1884 to 1951 so the card could date any time from the 1890s into the twentieth century.

Quong Tart drew on other methods of advertising his tea business, including text and illustrated advertisements in newspapers. He did not appear to take advantage of the halftone printing process to include photographs in his newspaper advertisements. However, he did print a four page foldout leaflet advertising the Elite Hall tearooms located in the Queen Victoria building, possibly around 1898 shortly after its opening.<sup>66</sup> The four photographs reproduced show the exterior and interior of the tea rooms and the text provides details of the facilities and refreshments available for sale. It is not known how these brochures were distributed. Quong Tart does not feature in any of the photographs but his name is visible on signs in two of them and prominent throughout the text.

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Since the very early development of photography, people have been manipulating and using photographs for many different purposes. The 1880s and 1890s were significant decades in the use of photography. Technological developments meant that photographs were now widely and cheaply available and much easier to distribute. The celebrity figure, as we know it today, was just emerging out of a fledgling mass media. Quong Tart, the epitome of the modern man, was quick to take the opportunities offered by these developments. He appears to have appreciated the power of personal publicity. Despite being a Chinese businessman in an explosively anti-Chinese Sydney, Quong Tart saw how he could use photography to control and shape his own visual image, and how to use that image in the public arena to influence the opinions of others. In doing so he became more than just a well-photographed man. He became a nineteenth-century Sydney celebrity.

Other Chinese Australians used photography in similar ways to Quong Tart but no one individual drew on its potential to the same extent. It was not until later in the twentieth century that more Chinese Australians began using photography in the more creative ways

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<sup>65</sup> Museum of Chinese Australian History, P00767 and P00768.

<sup>66</sup> untitled, McEvoy-Tart collection, SAG, 11/6/26-8.

pioneered by Quong Tart — to build and consolidate social networks through the exchange of personally inscribed photographs; to display status and promote business in the media; or even to create more complex photographic identities. In ways we associate with more modern businessmen, Quong Tart used his own personal image to promote his business and visa versa. This is not to suggest photography was the sole way in which he built his reputation, or that self and business promotion were his only motivation in the creation and distribution of photographs. However, he was the first modern Chinese Australian to realize the powerful potential of the photograph. It has proved to be a lasting legacy, for his photographs continue to feature prominently in exhibitions, articles, books, conferences and websites. In building a strong photographic archive of himself, Quong Tart helped to ensure his own prosperity and historical importance.