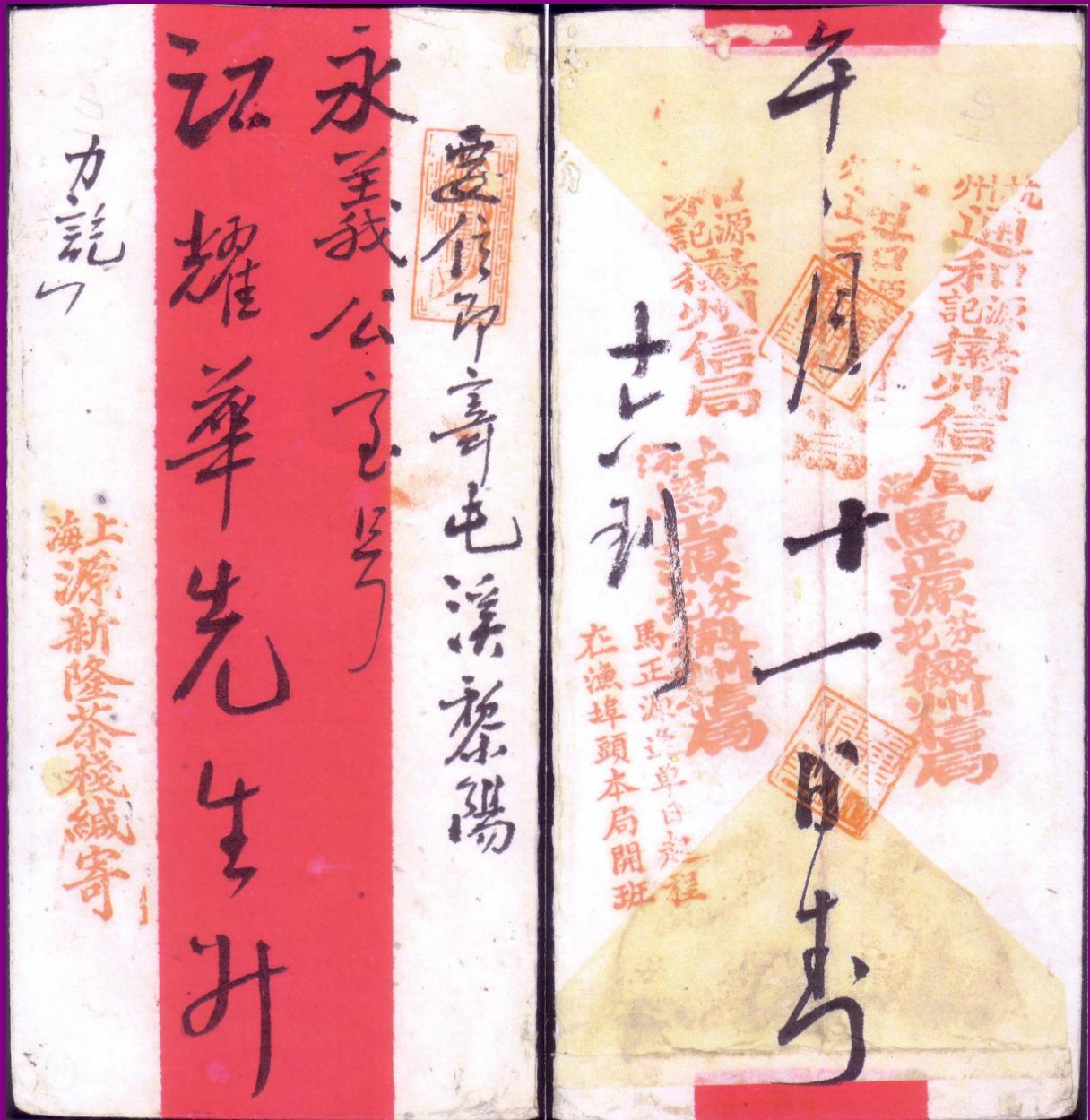


民信局系列

江耀华邮集



MIN HSIN CHU ( PRIVATE LETTER COURIERS )

JIANG YAO HUA CORRESPONDENCE

(I) FRAMELESS VERTICAL TYPE HANDSTAMPS : 37

I							II			II			II													
姑蘇協源信局							上海寶順北局			上海協源北局			上海老公利北信局													
No. 41							No. 52			No. 49			No. 10													
山東寶順信局																										
No. 40																										
蘭協泰森信局																										
No. 33																										
姑蘇寶順信局																										
No. 29																										
常熟協源信局																										
No. 16																										
徽州老公利信局																										
No. 6																										
江九政大源信局																										
No. 3																										
III						III		IV		IV		IV		IV		V		V		V		V				
杭省橋袁拱正大信局						浙江寧岸北江正大信局		拱袁橋全盛源信局		上海福興潤生信局		鎮江福興潤生信局		深渡全泰盛公信局		上海馬正源彬徽信局		杭州馬正源彬徽信局		上海馬正源彬徽信局		杭州全泰盛公徽州信局				
No. 28						No. 47		No. 5		No. 11		No. 23		No. 31		No. 1		No. 2		No. 4		No. 5				
V						V		V		V		V		V		V		V		V		V				
姑蘇馬正源彬徽信局						上海馬正源彬徽信局		杭州通和源徽信局		屯溪全泰盛公徽州信局		徽州全泰盛公徽州信局		徽州馬正源仁信局		屯溪馬正源仁徽州信局		屯溪馬正源彬徽信局		徽州馬正源彬信局						
No. 7						No. 9 No. 12		No. 12		No. 19 No. 30		No. 32		No. 34 No. 40		No. 35		No. 37		No. 50						
VI			VI			VI			VII			VIII			IX			IX			X					
杭州干江永和義信局			杭州橋袁林永和仁信局			上海馬路二全盛合信局			上海全泰盛公徽州北局			佑口西口全泰盛公輪船信局			上海通和源記信局 寓二馬路協興昌內			姑蘇老正公記信局 在閭門吊橋西岸			鎮江全信仁船信局 (西門城)(船輪)(CCCCC)					
No. 17			No. 44			No. 51			No. 55			No. 4			No. 13			No. 45			No. 14					

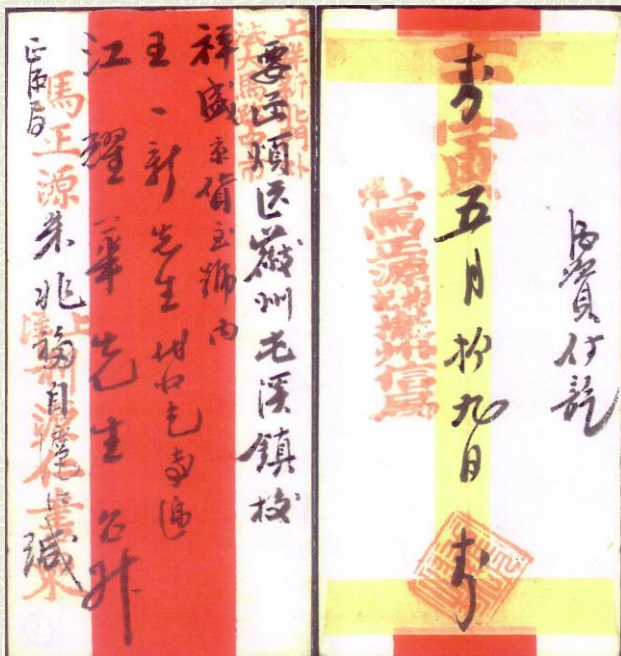


# *A Kaleidoscopic View of Min Hsin Chu's in China*

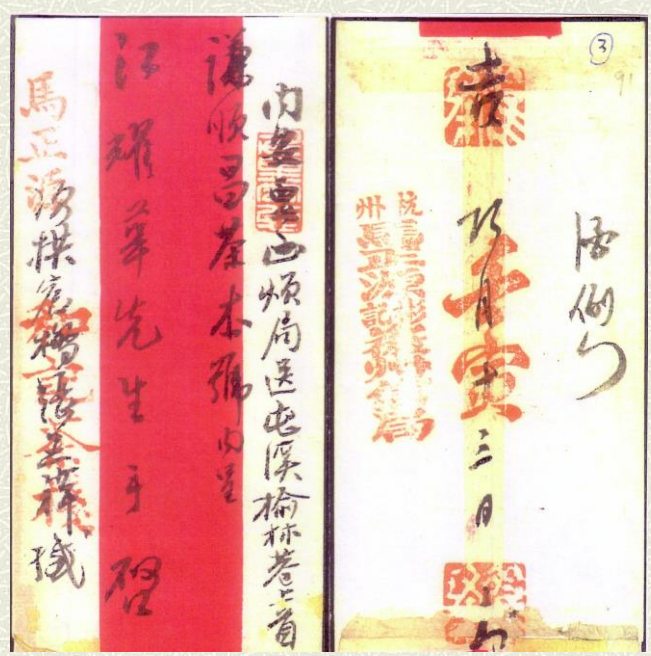
## *The Kiang Yao Hwa Correspondence*

Kiang Yao Hwa (江耀華) was an ordinary merchant specializing in tea trade and probably had come connection with animal oil trade as well. The collection unfolds with a 1902 (壬寅) red band cover from Shanghai, addressed to Kiang in Tunki town of Hweichow city via a store dealing with merchandise from Peking. Kiang did not have a permanent address to receive mails but he successfully solicited several business associates with shop premises to be his intermediaries to receive mail items from other cities of China which he could pick up during his daily visit there. Inconvenient though it may seem, Kiang was able to save operation expenses and he was also very prudent to establish a wide network of intermediaries in an effort to minimize risks in the likelihood that some of his clients might develop business relationship directly with some of them.

No.1



No.2



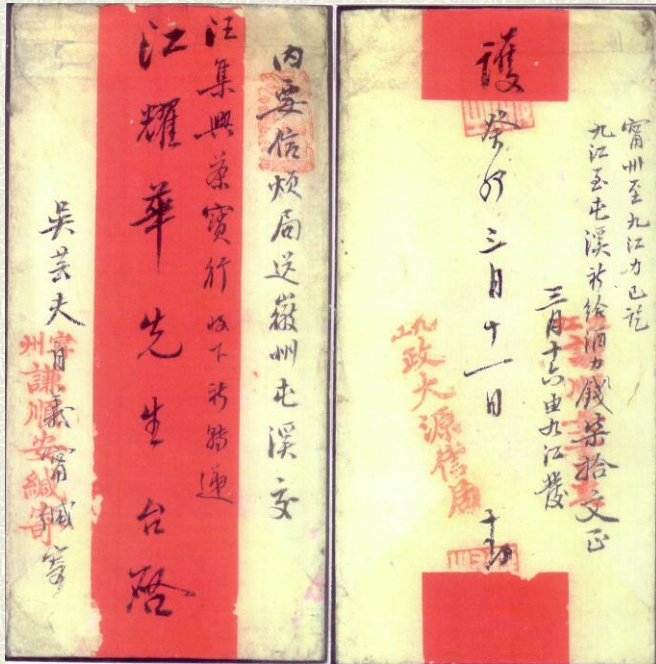
Both the above covers 1 and 2 are dated (壬寅 1902), from Shanghai and Hangchow respectively, addressed to Kiang in Tunki, carried by Ma Cheng Yuan Hweichow Letter Office Shanghai and Hangchow branch offices. Cover No. 1 was addressed to Kiang care of a Peking goods store and No.2 to the 1<sup>st</sup> tea dealer (謙順昌). Kiang was on good terms with this tea dealer because the Shanghai branch of the same tea dealer also acted as his intermediary during his expansion of business activities in Shanghai a few years later.

Cover No. 3 dated (癸卯 1903) reveals many interesting aspects of Min Hsin Chu operations. It was carried by Kiukiang Cheng Dai Yuan Letter Office with manuscript annotations on cover back : (a) letter rate from Ningchow to Kiukiang had been paid, (b) please pay 700 men for the journey from Kiukiang to Tunki and (c) dispatched from Kiukiang on 3<sup>rd</sup> month 16<sup>th</sup> day (5 days from date of letter). The 2<sup>nd</sup> tea dealer (汪集興) acted as Kiang's intermediary.

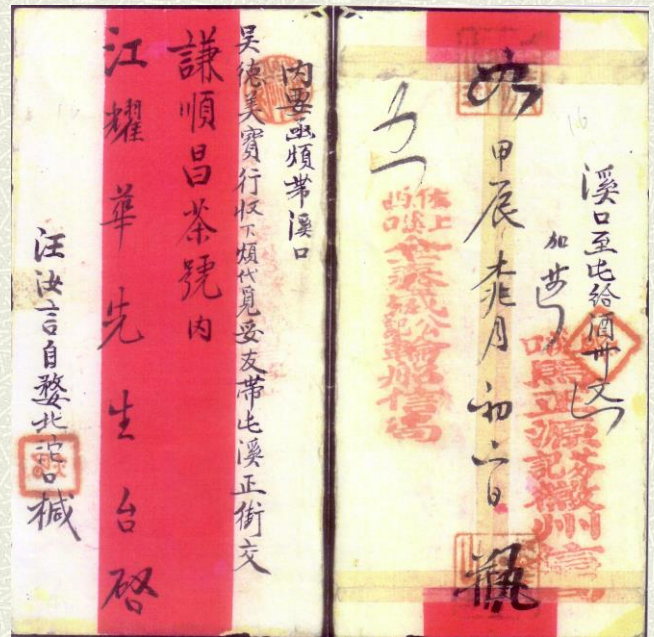


Co-operation between different Min Hsin Chu's surfaced on the ensuing (甲辰 1904) cover originating from Wu Peh (婺北) addressed to Kiang at Tunki via the 1<sup>st</sup> tea dealer, the first leg from Wu Peh to Shang Chi Kow was initially carried by Chuan Tai Shun (全泰盛) Steamer Letter Office and the second leg by Ma Cheng Yuan Hweichow Letter Office Shang Chi Kow branch.

No.3



No.4



Manuscript annotations on cover back of No. 4 indicated (a) pay wine money of 30 men for the journey from Chi Kow to Tunki and (b) add 24 men, perhaps additional fee was charged when a second Min Hsin Chu was involved or alternatively to cover higher fee rate in respect of steamer letter offices.

No.5



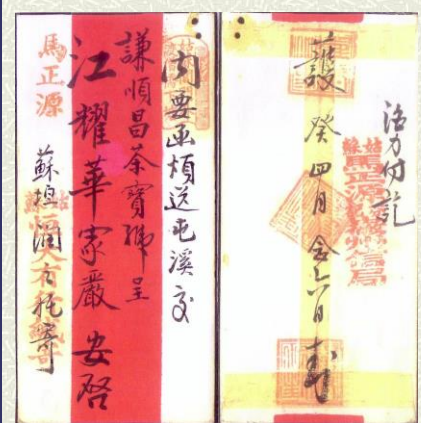
Cover No. 5 carried by related Chuan Tai Shun and Chuan Shun Letter Offices run by different members of the same family. The sender wrote down date as 11<sup>th</sup> but manuscript annotation by Min Hsin Chu staff indicated that the letter was actually handed in on 14<sup>th</sup>.

No.6



Cover No. 6 was carried by the well established Lao Kung Li Letter Office of Hweichow branch with manuscript on cover back instructing the payment of wine money by the intermediary on behalf of Kiang.

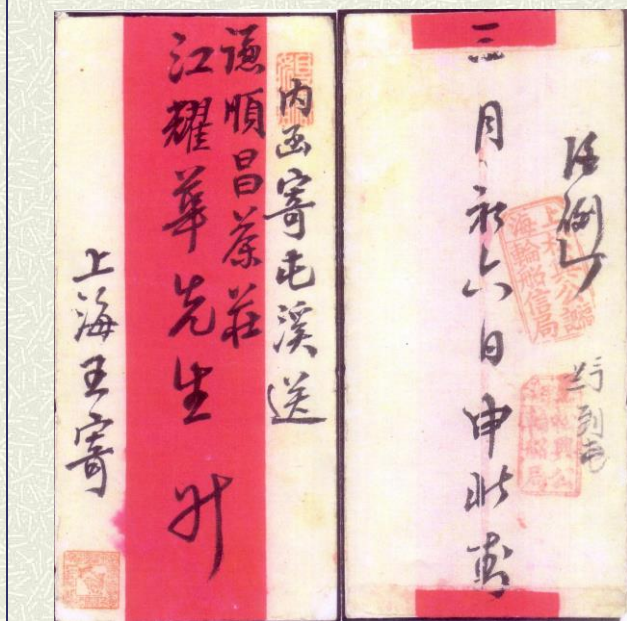
No.7



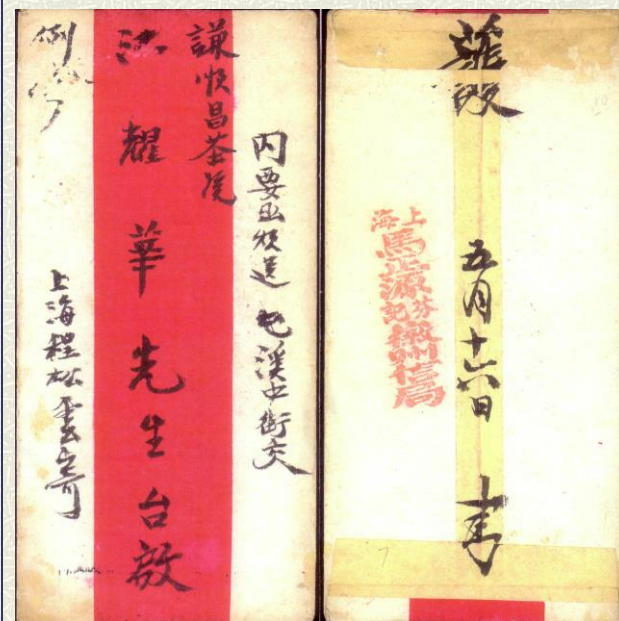
Cover No. 7 originated from Soochow and carried by Ma Cheng Yuan Hweichow Letter Office Soochow branch. Wine money had been paid (by sender) and the cover was dated (癸) which could indicate (癸卯 1903) or (癸丑 1913).



No.8

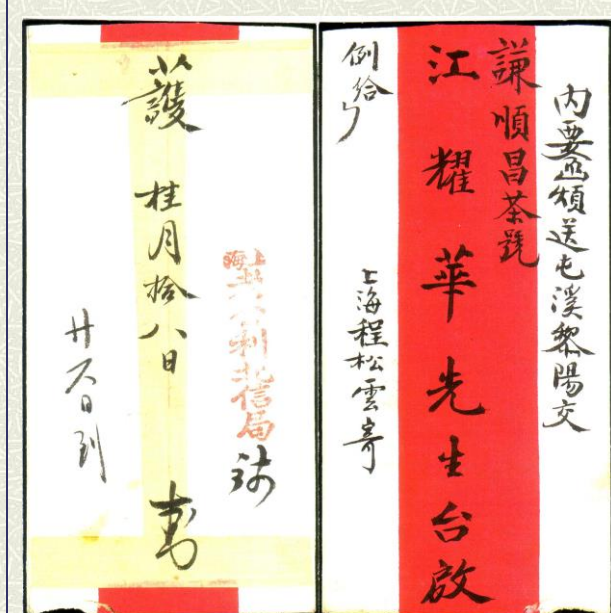


No.9



Two covers Nos. 8 and 9 both from Shanghai were addressed to Kiang via the 1<sup>st</sup> tea dealer, the former carried by two steamer letter offices of (松興公) Shanghai and Wuhu branches, the latter by Ma Cheng Yuan Hweichow Letter Office Shanghai branch. The arrival date 3<sup>rd</sup> month 22<sup>nd</sup> day was written on cover back of No. 8 and by subtraction, the journey from Shanghai to Tunki took 16 days.

No.10



No.11

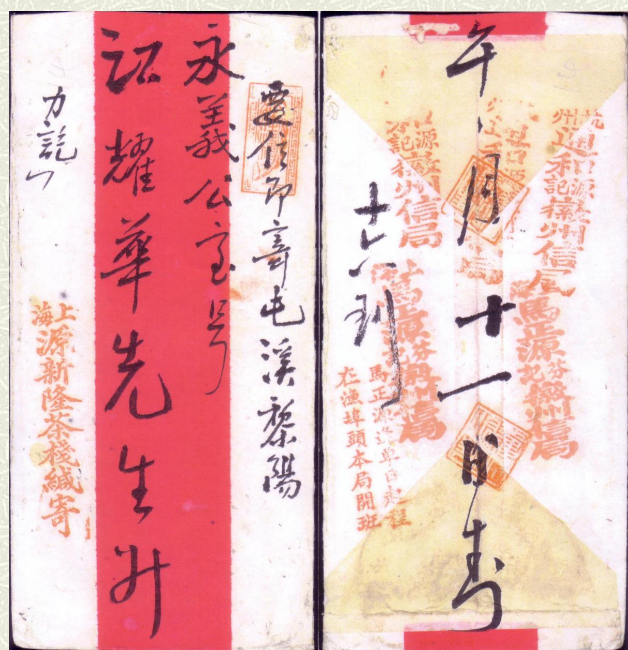


Business associates in Shanghai continued to send letter Nos. 10 and 11 to Kiang in Tunki via the 1<sup>st</sup> tea dealer (謙順昌), the former carried by the well established Lao Kung Li Letter Office (North) of Shanghai which only took 8 days to reach Tunki (18<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup>) and the latter was carried by another well established Fook Ren Shing Letter Office which took 10 days to reach Tunki (17<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup>).

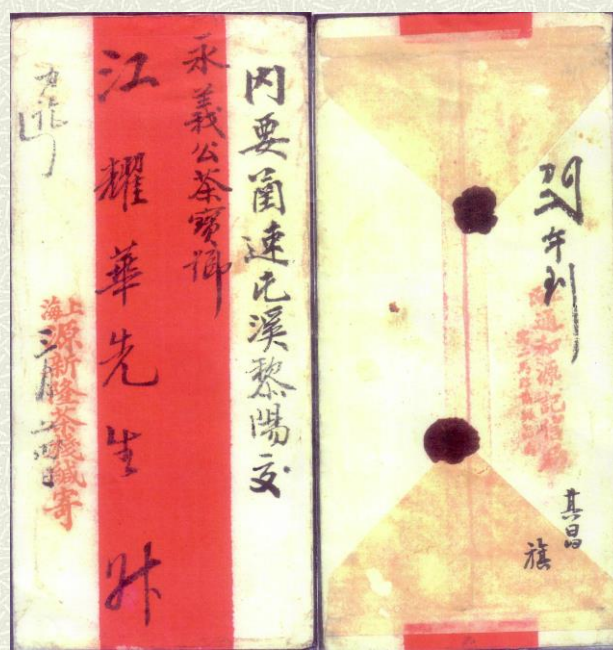


A 3<sup>rd</sup> tea dealer (永義公) acted as Kiang's intermediary in receiving the 2 letters from Shanghai.

No.12

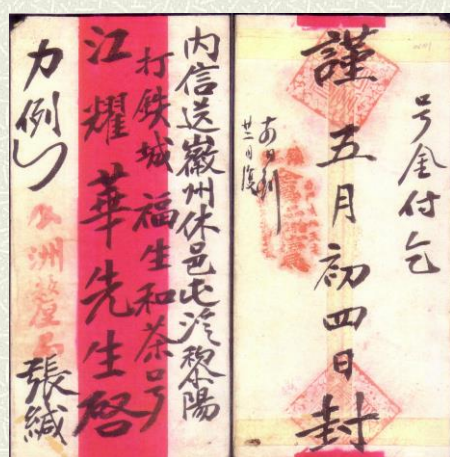


No.13



Co-operation between two different Min Hsin Chu's occurred on Cover No. 12 and even though two letter offices had been involved, it only took 5 days to reach Tunki (11<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup>). Ma Cheng Yuan Letter Office had the resources to handle the letter all the way, but it chose to let smaller Min Hsin Chu's, in this case Tung Woo Hweichow Letter Office Hangchow branch, have a small slice of the cake and the latter effected speedy delivery without fail. The instructional handstamp on cover back announced that "on every alternate single days, Ma Cheng Yuan delivery band dispatches from the letter office located at the Fisherman's Wharf". Cover No. 13 recorded another Tung Woo Letter Office Shanghai branch located in Kiukiang Road of Shanghai city.

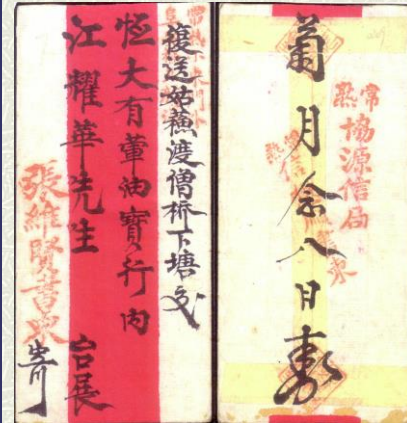
No.14



No.15



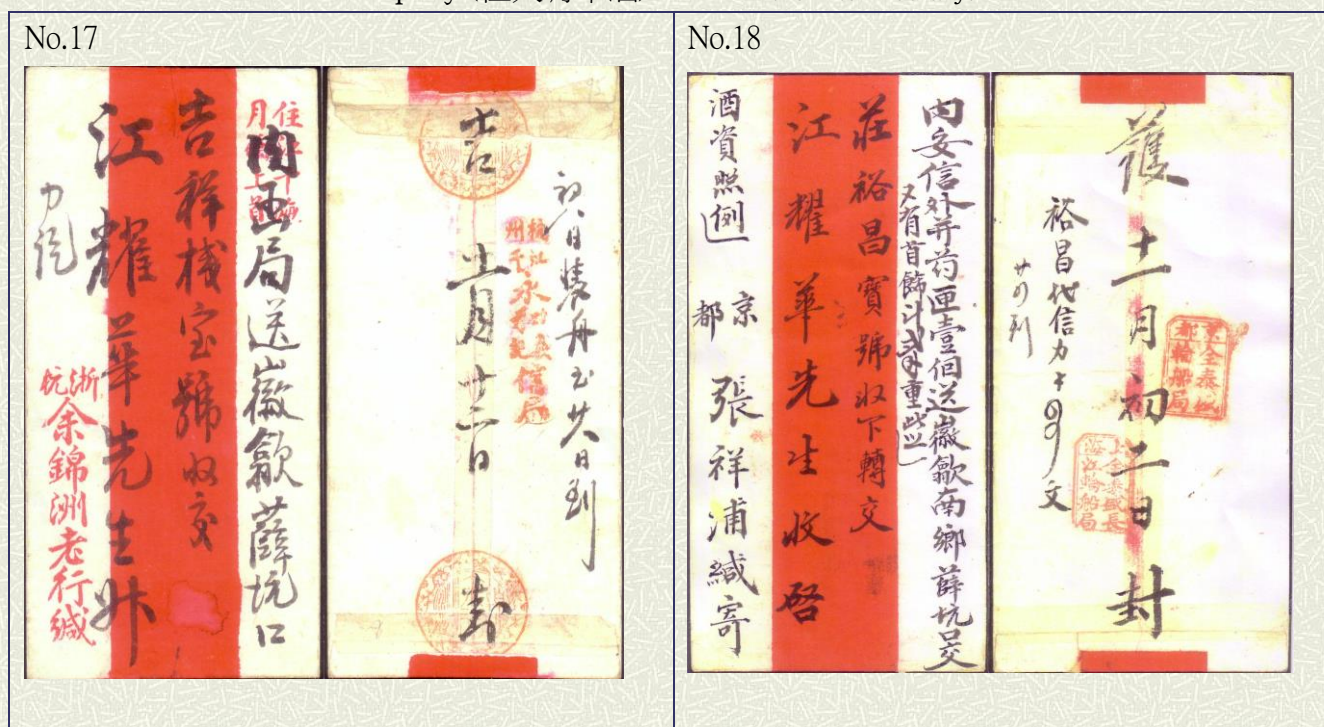
No.16



Two letters from Kwa Chow (瓜州) and Hangchow were addressed to Kiang via (福生和), the 4<sup>th</sup> tea dealer, cover No. 14 was a registered item and the manuscript on cover back (号金付訖) indicated that registration fee had been paid (by the sender) and the letter was carried by Chuen Chong Ren Steamership Letter Office of Chinkiang. Since the letter was of some importance, Kiang wrote on cover back : arrived 14<sup>th</sup> and replied 22<sup>nd</sup>. Cover No. 15 recorded an unusual "nameplate" type letter office handstamp of Chuen Tai Shun (Shun Kee) Hweichow Office Hangchow branch when it



was usual practice that the nameplate type handstamps had only been used by steamship letter offices. Cover No. 16 was addressed to Kiang in Soochow, probably when he was visiting his son there and an animal oil company (恒大有葦油) acted as the intermediary.



A change of address occurred when Kiang moved from Tunki to Si Kang Kow when (吉祥棧), the 5<sup>th</sup> associate and (莊裕昌), the 6<sup>th</sup> associate acted as his intermediaries to receive two letters of some significance. Cover No. 17 originated from Hangchow on 11<sup>th</sup> month 12<sup>th</sup> day and handled by Yun Wo Letter Office of Hangchow, the manuscript annotation on cover back meant that cargo had been loaded on 8<sup>th</sup> (at Si Kang Kow) and arrived (at Hangchow) on 28<sup>th</sup>. Kiang's only connection with Peking was revealed by cover No. 18 when a medical box and jewelry weighing 2 taels was sent to him via the 6<sup>th</sup> associate which paid 44 men on Kiang's behalf and apart this, the letter arrived on 24<sup>th</sup>, 22 days after its dispatch on 2<sup>nd</sup>.

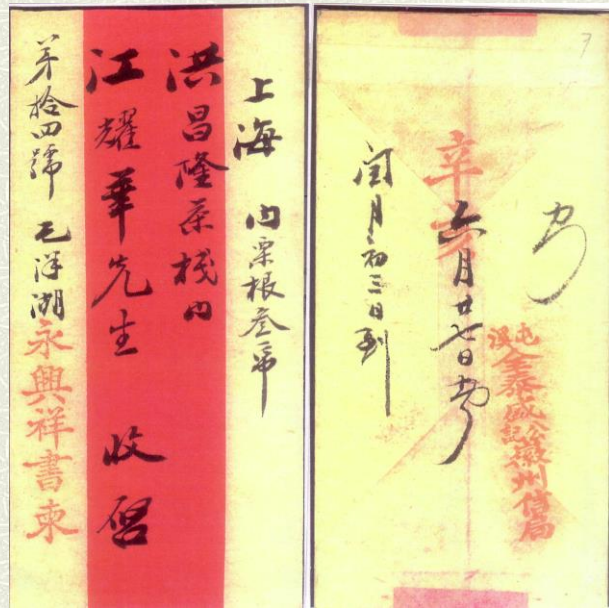
## *Kiang took up residence in Shanghai around 1911*

To start or expand business elsewhere, old connections and associates often prove invaluable assets and Cover No. 19 dated (辛亥, 1911) was probably the first letter Kiang received when he took up residence in Shanghai. This cover enclosed three books of counterfoils, reminding him of his clients and their demands (types and quantities of tea). It was directed to (洪昌隆), the 7<sup>th</sup> tea dealer and so was Cover No. 20 from Hangchow which had been carried by Shun Shing Letter Office Hangchow branch.

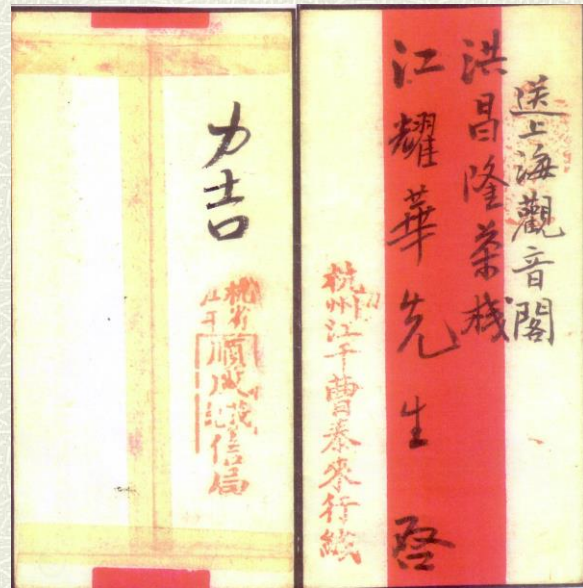
Kiang's connections in Kwa Chow (瓜州) continued to support him and three letters were directed to (永泰源) the 8<sup>th</sup> tea dealer. Two different handstamps of Taikoo Letter Office Wuhu branch and Taikoo Steamship Letter Office Wuhu branch appear on cover No. 21. On the ensuing cover No. 22, the Chinkiang Yeh Dai Letter Office adopted the "nameplate" type handstamp and manuscript note on cover back revealed that it only took 3 days to reach Shanghai from Chinkiang (22<sup>nd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup>). The reputable Foo Hing Ren Letter Office Chinkiang branch handled Cover No. 23.



No. 19



No.20

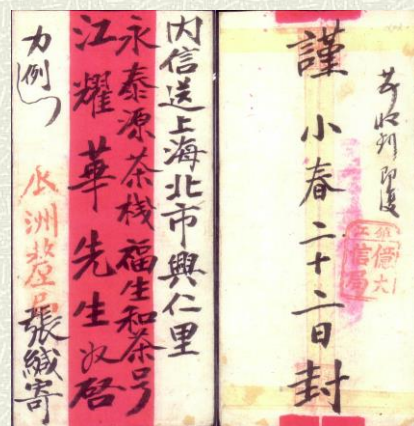


An intercalary 6<sup>th</sup> month occurred in 1911 and cover No. 19 posted on 6<sup>th</sup> month 27<sup>th</sup> day, arrived on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of the intercalary 6<sup>th</sup> month.

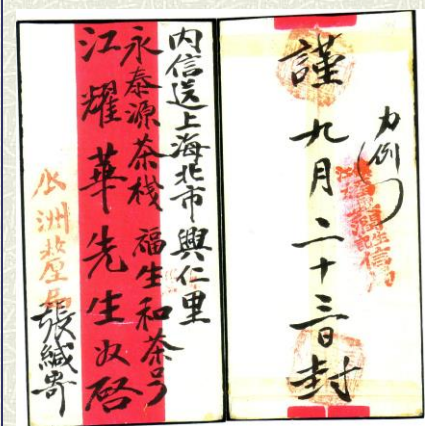
No.21



No.22



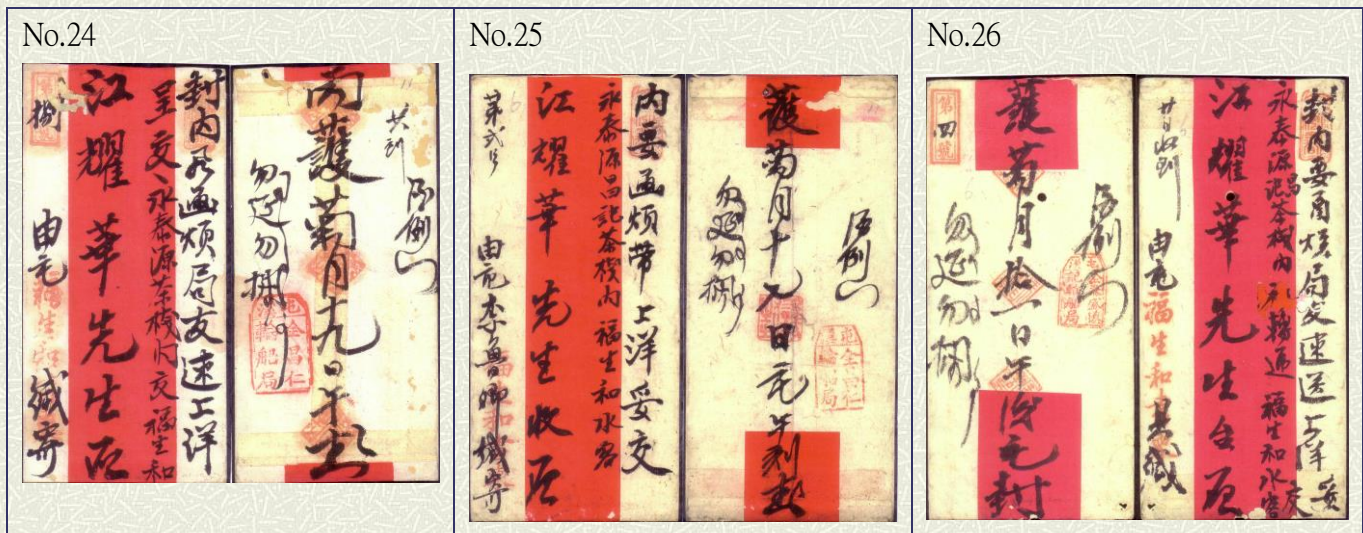
No.23



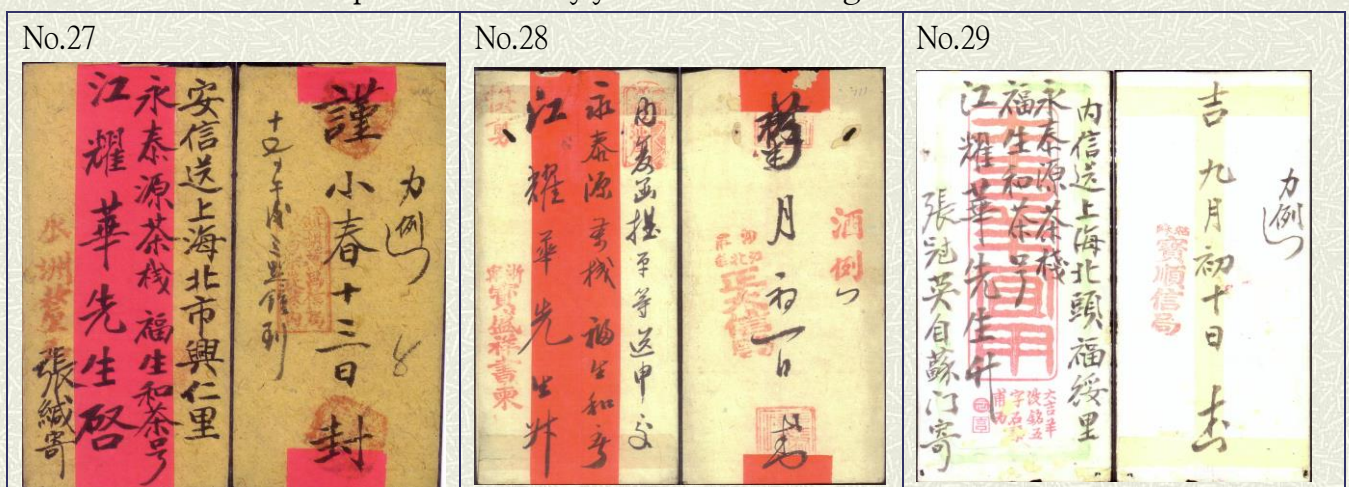
Whilst in Shanghai, Kiang developed prolonged business relationship with (永泰源茶棧), the 8<sup>th</sup> tea dealer which acted as his intermediary in respect of 6 more letters, three of them originated from Kiang's home town in Tunki, the first two handled by Chuen Chong Ren Steamer Letter Officer of Tunki and the third by Chuen Tai Shun Steamer Letter Office Tunki. All three covers were dated (菊月) (chrysanthemum month) and on cover No.24, the character (丙) gave some clue as to the year which was probably (丙午, 1906) or (丙辰, 1916). Double framed Chueng Chong Ren Steamership Letter Office handstamp appeared on cover No. 24, but on No. 25 also carried by the same office, single frame handstamp had been used. Cover No. 26 was carried by Chuen Tai Shun Steamership Letter Office Tunki branch which took 9 days to reach Shanghai (11<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>).

Three more covers delivered by the 8<sup>th</sup> tea dealer to Kiang originated from Kwa Chow, Ningpo and Soochow, respectively carried by Chinkiang Woo Man Chong Letter Office (no. 27), Cheng Dai Letter Office of Chekiang Ningpo (No.28) and Po Shun Letter Office of Soochow (No.29).

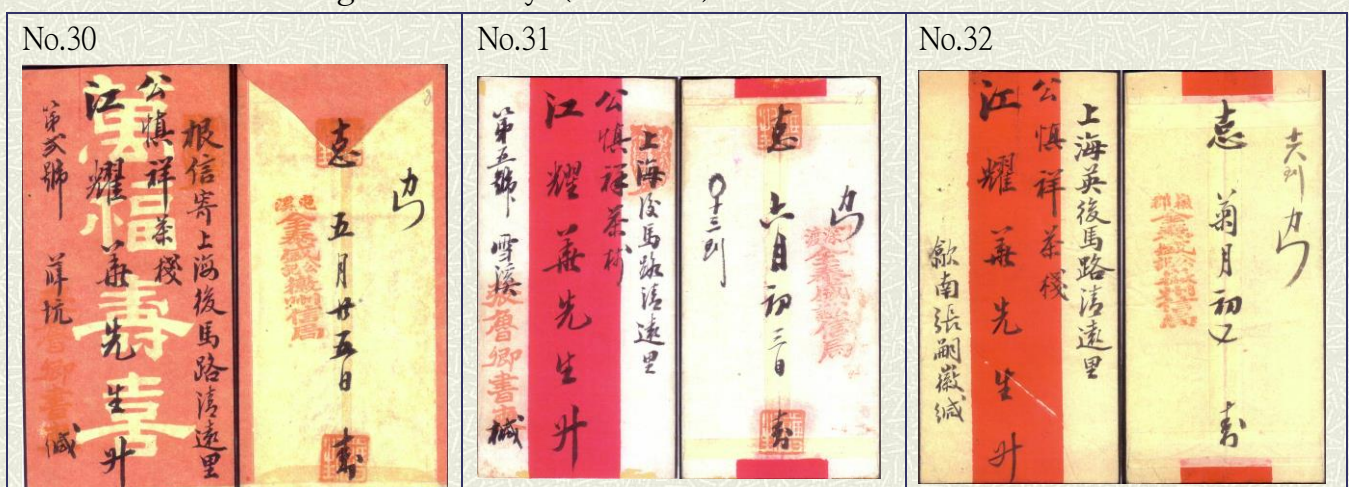




Cover No. 29 looked like a later period (late 1920's to early 1930's) and this serves to indicate a close business relationship of ten to twenty years between Kiang and this tea dealer.



The 9<sup>th</sup> tea dealer (公慎祥) acted as Kiang's intermediary in respect of 6 letters three of which, being Nos. 30, 31 and 32 were all carried by Chuen Tai Shun Steamership Letter Offices of Tunki, Shum Du and Hweichow. The journey from Shum Du to Shanghai took 7 days (6<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>) and that from Hweichow to Shanghai took 9 days (7<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup>).



During the turn of the century, the Chinese Imperial Post had not yet expanded to reach the remote isolated corners of rural communities and Min Hsin Chu's offered invaluable services in delivering mail items to such difficult locations at minimal fee or often free of charge. Even though the Postal Administration Head Office would like to take over all business deals handled by Min Hsin Chu's as evidenced by an attempt in 1905 to abolish the 50% concession on mail items carried by the official



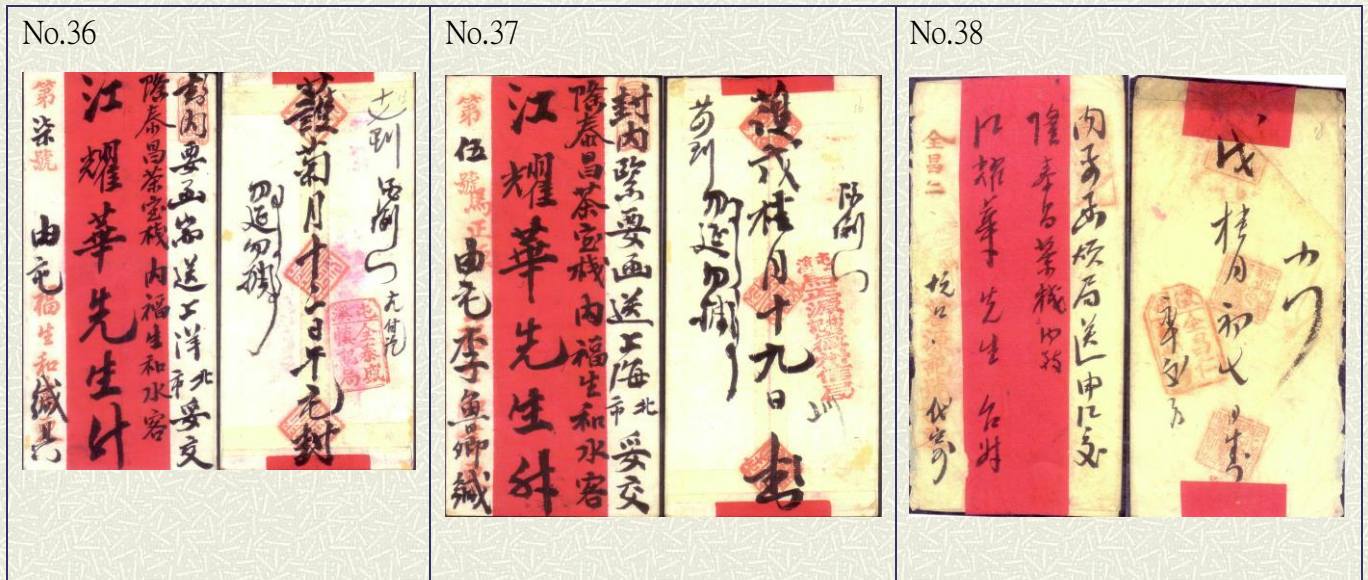
postal system for the Min Hsin Chu's but such attempt was totally unreasonable since the concession was in fact for limited service of handling Min Hsin Chu mail items from one city to another and post office staff was not required to deliver each and every letter to the recipient. Vehement protest coupled with negotiations between Foreign post offices and Min Hsin Chu's had forced the Chinese Imperial Post to shelf this attempt. However if post office staff happens to seize Min Hsin Chu's carrying mail items other than through the official postal system, a penalty of twice the postage (for "registered" Min Hsin Chu's) or three times the postage (for "unregistered" Min Hsin Chu's) was applicable. Later in 1912 when Zhong Hwa Min Kuo was founded under the leadership of Dr. Sun Yat Sen, postal system began to penetrate into rural communities when village letter boxes and letter counters had been established and ultimately in 1932, all Min Hsin Chu's had to abandon letter carrying business, only remittance business with foreign residents could continue. There was a period in late 1910's to 1920's when severe penalties had forced Min Hsin Chu's to disguise their handstamps by deleting the Chinese characters Letter Office and adopted two other characters 書柬 which means letter document along with other ingenious methods, to make the handstamp look like an innocent sender's company seal, in an effort to evade penalty in case mail items happened to be seized by official postal staff.



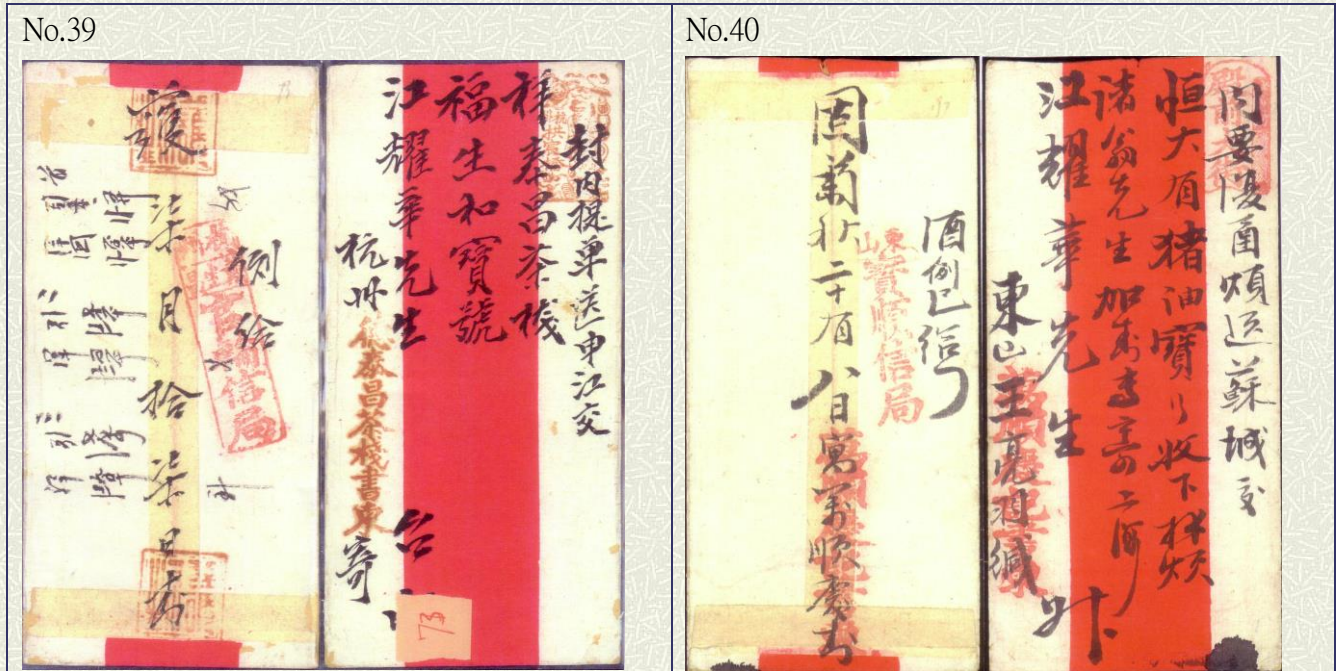
On cover No. 33, two different types of "disguised" handstamps appear, the framed handstamp only included a name and an address and the frameless handstamp looked like the sender's company seal, the cover was subsequently handled by Hip Tai Sum Letter Office of Lanchi. Ma Cheng Yuan Hweichow and Tunki branch offices handled cover Nos. 34 and 35, and on cover No. 35 there is a handstamp meaning "delivered to office on 1<sup>st</sup>" instead of the 29<sup>th</sup> day written by the sender and the letter arrived on 6<sup>th</sup>. Min Hsin Chu staff's attention to details was truly remarkable, many handstamps and manuscript annotations to correct the date of delivery to Letter Office occurred in a few items in this correspondence.

The 10<sup>th</sup> tea dealer (隆泰昌) delivered 5 letters (Nos. 36-38, 44-45) to Kiang when he was in Shanghai, three of them from his native town Tunki or Hweichow. A single Chinese character (戊) on two covers indicate that these covers were either dated (戊申 1908) or (戊午 1918). Cover No. 36 carried by Chuen Tai Shun Letter Office Tunki branch took 5 days (12<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup>) for the journey, No. 37 carried by Ma Cheng Yuan Hweichow Letter Office Tunki branch also took 5 days (19<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup>) and No. 38 was carried by Chuen Chong Ren Steamer Letter Office.





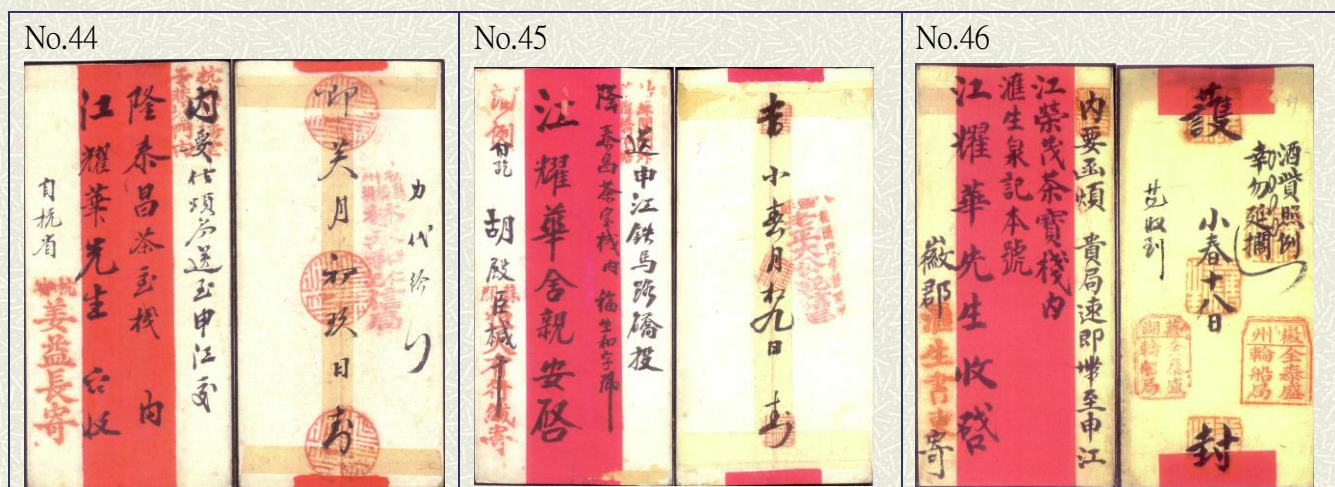
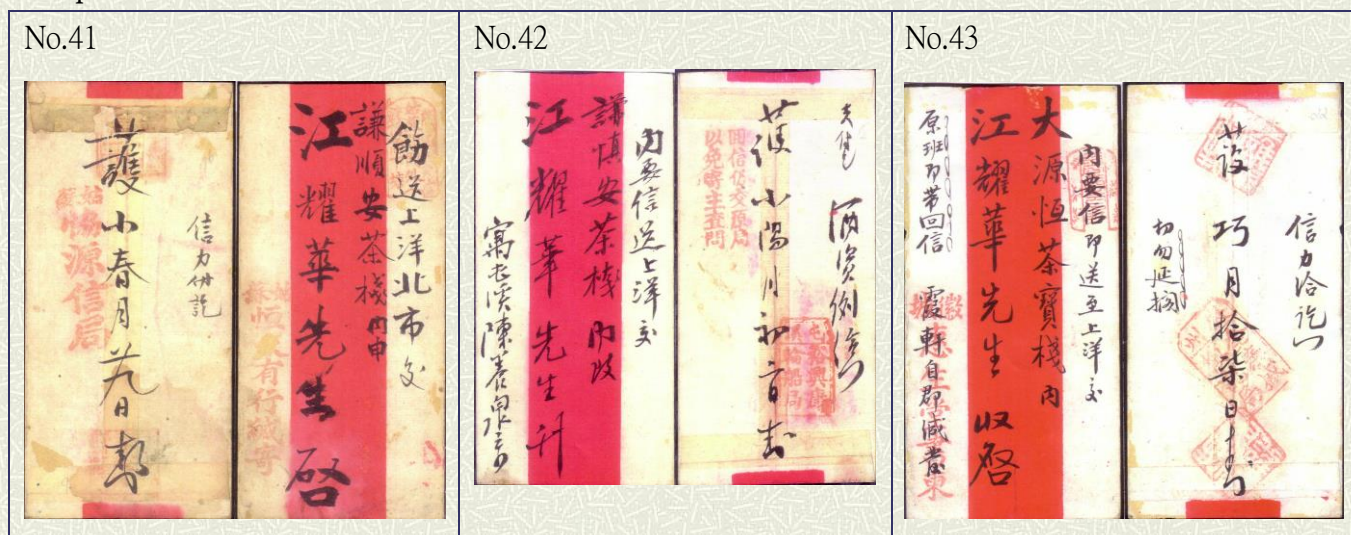
Pirates sometimes robbed steamers of their goods and mail items when some intelligent Min Hsin Chu engaged “official steamers” to carry cargo and mail items and they advertised themselves as “official steamer letter office (官輪信局)”. A bill of lading was enclosed in cover No.39 which was carried, together with the cargo, on Dai Sun Chong “official steamer letter office” of Hangchow and addressed to Kiang via the 11<sup>th</sup> tea dealer (福生和) which happened to be the Shanghai branch office of the 4<sup>th</sup> tea dealer. Cover No. 40 reveals another fact : the letter from Shangtung province had to be delivered to the animal oil firm in Soochow and then redirected to Shanghai at the firm’s discretion. This serves to indicate that Po Shun Letter Office of Shangtung province did not have connection with other Min Hsin Chu’s to effect direct delivery of mail items all the way to Shanghai



The 12<sup>th</sup> tea dealer (謙順昌) was the Shanghai branch office of the 1<sup>st</sup> tea dealer, which continued to act as intermediary to receive two letters for Kiang, cover No. 41 from Soochow, carried by Soochow Hip Yuan Letter Office and cover No. 42 carried by Yu Shing Kang Steamer Letter Office of Tunki with additional promotional handstamp on cover back “return letter hand over to original office to avoid enquiry from sender” This effectively directed the recipient to hand over reply letter to the same letter office, instead of the official post office or other letter offices. Cover No. 43 was sent to the 13<sup>th</sup> tea dealer (大源恒茶棧) and the sender’s manuscript on cover front urgently requested



recipient to hand over return letter to the same band of letter office staff.



A 10<sup>th</sup> tea dealer (公慎祥) received two letters Nos. 44 and 45 from Hangchow and Soochow on Kiang's behalf the former by the well established Lin Yun Wo Letter Office Hangchow and the latter by another well established Lao Chun Dai Letter Office of Soochow. The 14<sup>th</sup> tea dealer (江榮茂茶樓) only handled one letter No.46 from Hweichow, carried by Chueng Tai Kung Kee Shun Steamer Letter Offices of Hweichow and Wuhu arriving Shanghai in 9 days (18<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup>).

Cover No. 47 involved the 15<sup>th</sup> tea dealer (新隆泰茶棧), it originated from Hangchow and was carried by Cheng Dai Letter Office Hangchow branch with year notation (丙 for 丙辰 1916).

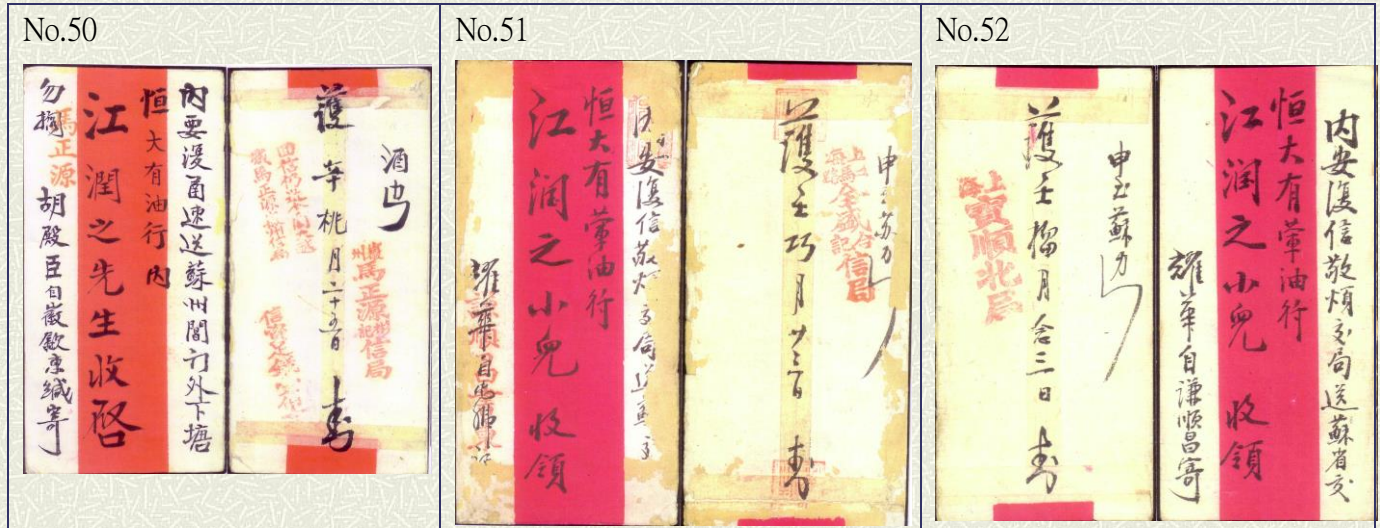
Kiang' s intermediaries in Tunki 1902-1911		Kiang' s intermediaries in Shanghai, 1911 to early 1930' s	
1. 謙順昌	1-2, 4-11	7. 洪昌隆	19-20
2. 汪集興	3	8. 永泰源	21-29
3. 永義公	12-13	9. 公慎祥	30-35
4. 福生和	14-15	10. 隆泰昌	36-38
5. 吉祥棧	17		44-45
6. 莊裕昌	18	11. 福生和	39
		12. 謙順昌	41-42
		13. 大源恒茶棧	43
		14. 江榮茂茶棧	46
		15. 新隆泰茶棧	47



## Kiang's sons Ren Tse and Zha Tse lived in Soochow

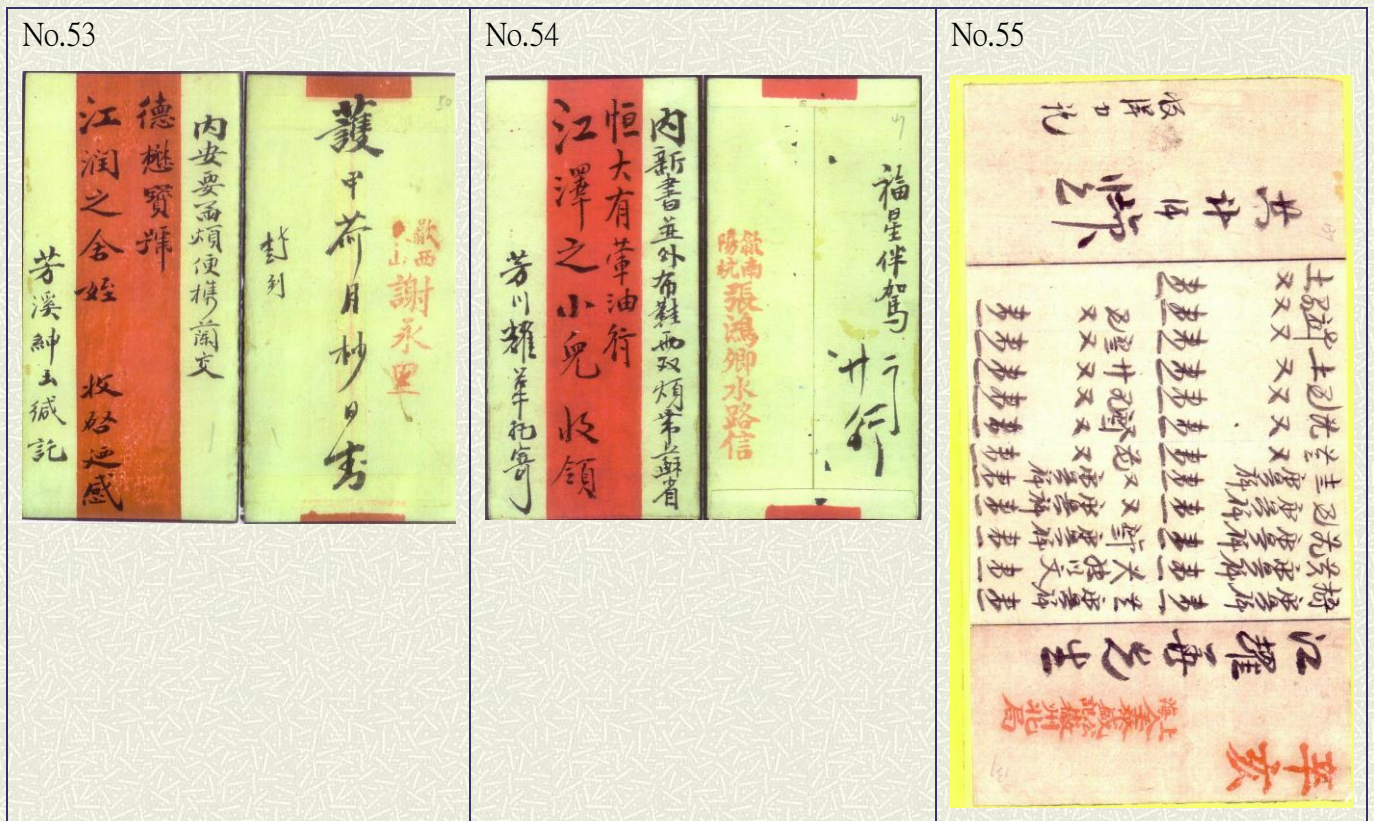


Kiang's sons Ren Tse (潤之 elder) and Zha Tse (澤之 younger) both lived in Soochow and cover Nos. 48 and 49 originated from Kiang's business associate in Tunki and from Kiang himself in Shanghai. The Chinese character (辛) appeared on both covers to indicate the year (辛亥 1911) or (辛酉 1921). These were respectively carried by Hip Shin Chong Steamer Letter Office Tunki and Hip Yuan Letter Office Shanghai.



Three letters Nos. 50,51,52 were addressed to Kiang's elder son Ren Tse in Soochow, the first from Kiang's business associate in Tunki and the other two from Kiang himself. No.50 was dated (辛 for 辛亥 1911) carried by Ma Cheng Yuan (Bun Kee) Letter Office Hweichow with two additional handstamps meaning "Letter Rate 100 men" and "reply letter to be handed to Ma Cheng Yuan Hweichow Letter Office of (address)". Nos. 51 and 52 were both dated (壬 for 壬子 1912) the former carried by Chuen Shun (Hop Kee) Letter Office of Shanghai and the latter by Po Shun North Office of Shanghai. On both covers the letter rate had been paid in full by Kiang, the sender.





Individual couriers became quite popular at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and these individuals plied the intricate waterways of Anhwei province, delivering letters and goods requested by their clients. Cover No. 53 originated from Kiang's brother in Tunki to Kiang's elder son Ren Tse dated (甲 for 甲辰 1904) and carried by (謝永里) an inland courier. Kiang's role as a loving father was revealed by cover No. 54 when he sent new books and cloth shoes to his younger son Zha Tse in Soochow and carried by a "waterway carrier" (張鴻卿水路信).

The receipt No. 55 was issued by Chuen Tai Shun (Kun Kee) Hweichow Letter Office Shanghai branch which detailed the dates when Kiang sent 23 reply letters to his business associates or clients in the year (辛亥 1911). For a period of around 100 days from 5<sup>th</sup> month 19<sup>th</sup> day to 7<sup>th</sup> month 3<sup>rd</sup> day (including the intercalary 6<sup>th</sup> month) at a total fee of \$2.70.

The Kiang Yao Hwa correspondence is a genuine random sampling of Min Hsin Chu's in Kiangsu, Chekiang and Anhwei provinces during the period 1902 to early 1930s, recording over 70 different and diversified Min Hsin Chu handstamps including steamer letter offices, individual couriers, official steamer letter office etc and simultaneously exhibiting valuable data regarding time taken to reach destinations, method of fee collection and co-operation among Min Hsin Chu's. By the way, did you notice the true identity of Kiang on cover Nos. 25-26, 36-37 that he was only a cargo runner of the 4<sup>th</sup> tea dealer (福生和水客) !

*Stephen Yea. Hong Kong. July 2007*



(2) SINGLE LINE NAMEPLATE TYPE HANDSTAMPS : 4



No. 19



No. 25



No. 21



No. 39

(3) DOUBLE LINE NAMEPLATE TYPE HANDSTAMPS : 17



No. 22



No. 21



No. 36



No. 43



No. 15



No. 27



No. 8



No. 18



No. 24



No. 38



No. 42



No. 46



No. 46



No. 48



No. 8



No. 18



No. 26

(4) NON LETTER OFFICE TYPE & INDICATIVE HANDSTAMPS : 13

江九謙順安書柬

No. 3

馬正源

Nos. 1, 2, 7

馬正源逢單日起程  
在漁埠頭本局開班

No. 12

常信懋順書柬

No. 18

酒例

No. 28

蘭張詒裕寄

No. 33

初二日交局

No. 35

回信仍交原局  
以免寄主查問

No. 42  
No. 48

萬順慶記書柬

No. 40

回信仍送金蘭大越  
城馬正源徽州信局

No. 50

信資足錢壹佰文

No. 50

歙山謝永里

No. 53

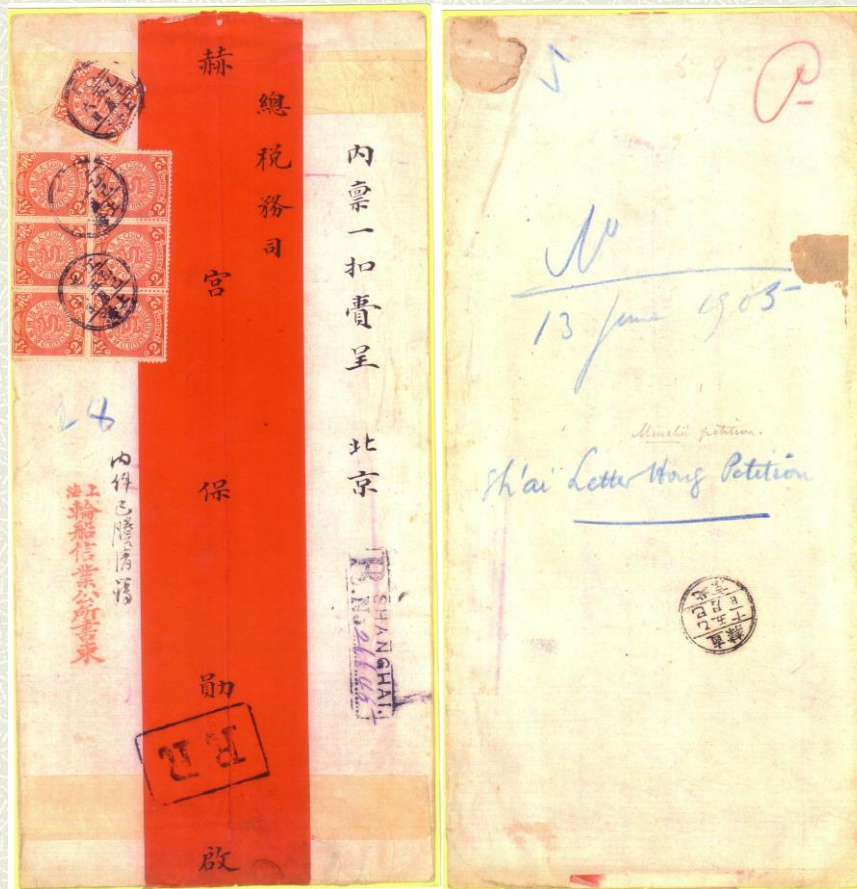
陽歙杭南張鴻卿水路信

No. 54

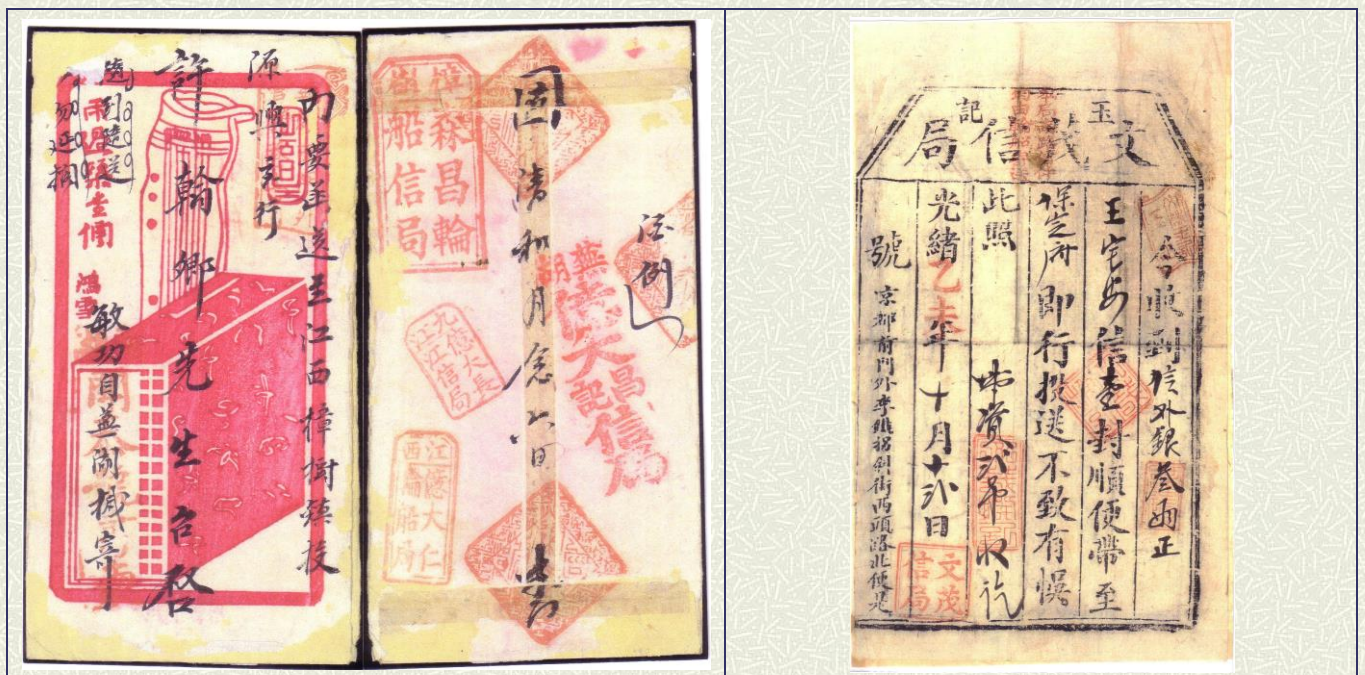
一月	正月, 嘉月, 瑞月, 正陽, 孟春
二月	杏月, 酣春, 皓月, 花月, 仲春
三月	桃月, 央月, 宿月, 桐月, 季春
四月	梅月, 乾月, 清和, 槐序, 孟夏
五月	榴月, 蒲月, 垢月, 皋月, 仲夏
六月	荔月, 旦月, 荷月, 暑月, 季夏
七月	瓜月, 巧月, 上秋, 涼月, 孟秋
八月	桂月, 桔月, 壯月, 中秋, 仲秋
九月	菊月, 涼秋, 玄月, 霜序, 暮秋
十月	陽月, 小春, 上冬, 初冬, 孟冬
十一月	葭月, 龍潛, 暢月, 復月, 仲冬
十二月	臘月, 臨月, 冰月, 嘉平, 季冬



# Forthcoming chapters .....



Shanghai Letter Hong petition to Sir Robert Hart in June 1905

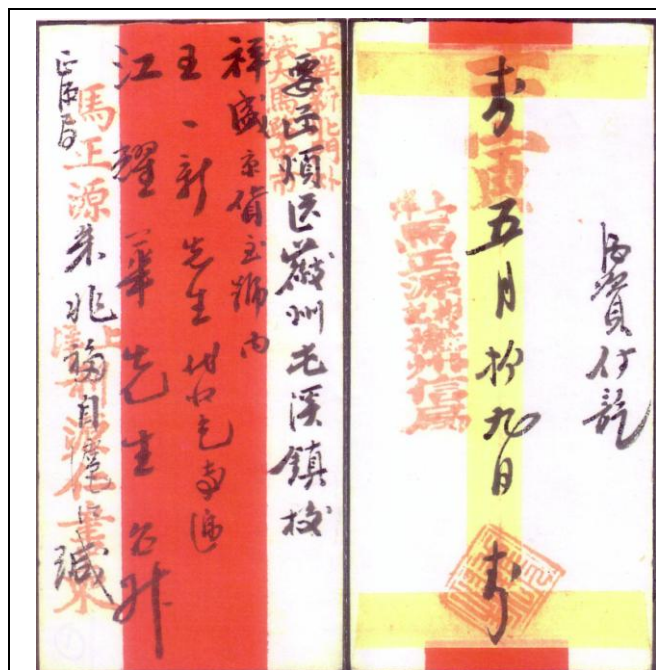


Cooperation between Min Shin Chu's

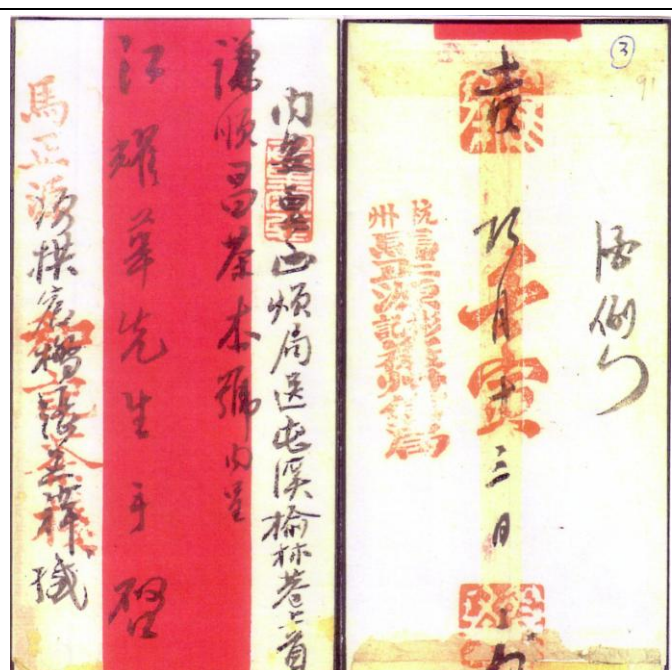
Items with ascertained dates



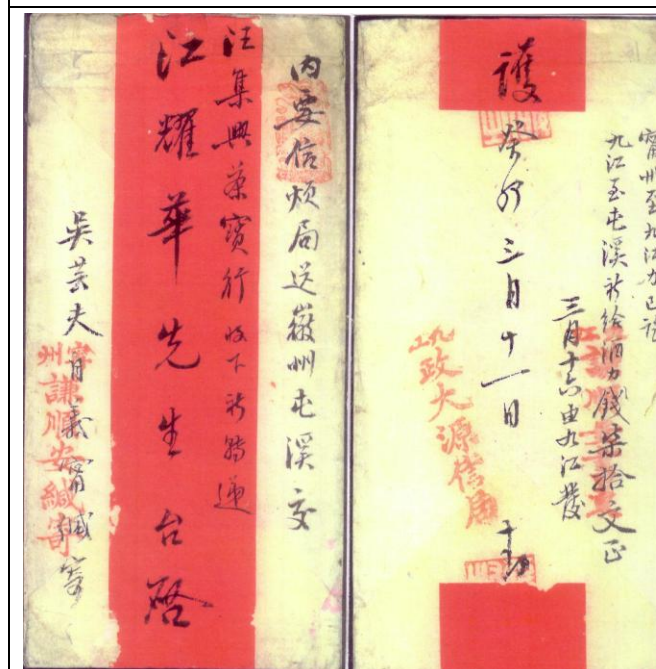
從 江耀華信札 探窺 清末民初時期 民信局 在江浙皖三省分佈運作和沿用戳記



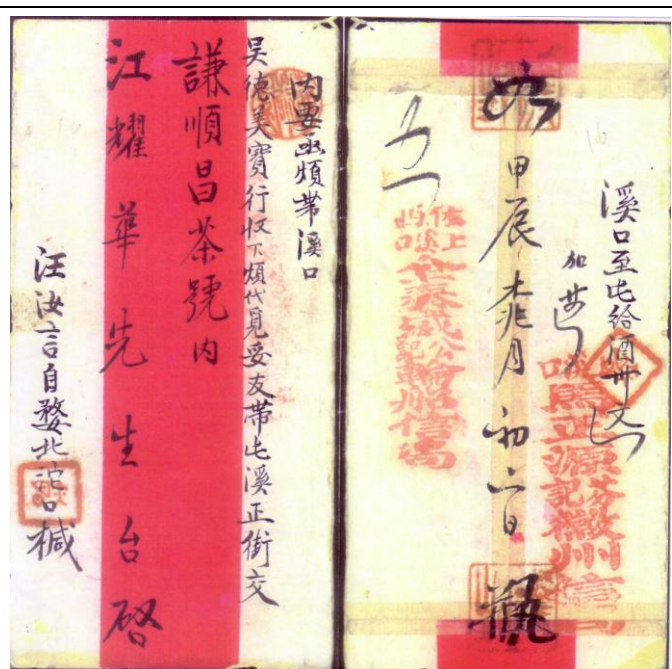
(01) 1902 壬寅年五月在上海由「上洋馬正源彬記徽州信局」遞至徽州屯溪交「祥盛京貨號」內王一新先生轉投江耀華的紅條封，封背批註：酒資付訖。江耀華與該京貨店無業務關係，祇是利用它作為與他省客戶聯絡的眾多轉遞站之一。



(02) 同年巧月(陰曆七月)杭州寄出由「杭州馬正源彬記徽州信局」投至屯溪榆林巷上首「謙順昌茶號」內呈江耀華的紅條封，因為沒有煩交或轉投的字眼，可以確定江是該茶行的東主或主要負責人。封背批註：酒例，表示江在收信時須付正常的酒資。



(03) 1903 癸卯年三月，寧州客戶寄江耀華紅條封經屯溪「汪集興茶寶行」轉投。封背批註「寧州至九江力訖」但無民信局戳記，「九江政大源信局」接手後「三月十六由九江發」，並已議定「九江至屯溪祈給酒力錢柒拾文正」，是民信局合作投遞擴闊業務範圍的例証。

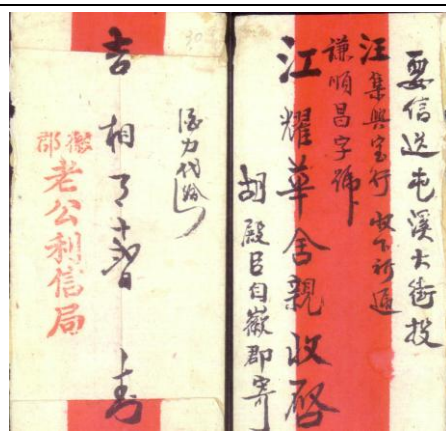


(04) 1904 甲辰年癸北寄屯溪謙順昌茶號江耀華的紅條封，由「佑西上溪口全泰盛公記輪船信局」遞至上溪口後交「上溪口馬正源芬記徽州信局」接棒投至屯溪，封背有批註：「溪口至屯給酒卅文」，可能遇上特殊情况，再批註「加廿四」，又一項民信局合作投遞的例証。

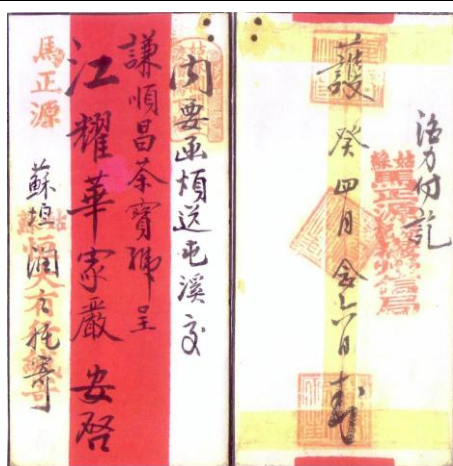




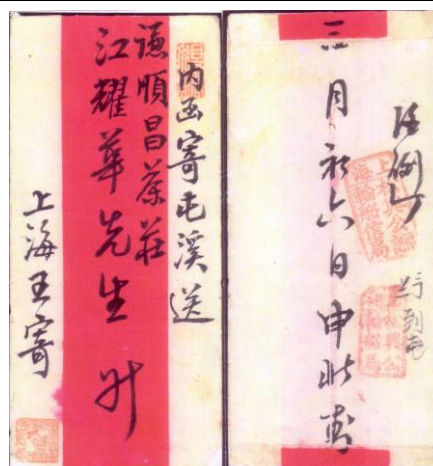
(05) 杭州寄屯溪謙順昌茶號江耀華的紅條封，本來交給「拱宸橋全盛源記信局」，三日後轉交「杭州全泰盛公記徽州信局」投遞，顯示民信局秉承快速投遞宗旨，寧將信件交他局辦理亦不願耽誤客戶時間。



(06) 「徽郡老公利信局」自徽郡帶至屯溪由「汪集興」轉投謙順昌江耀華舍親的紅條封，是親戚寄來的家信，封背批註：酒力代給，表示寄件人已付酒資，收件人無須再付酒資。



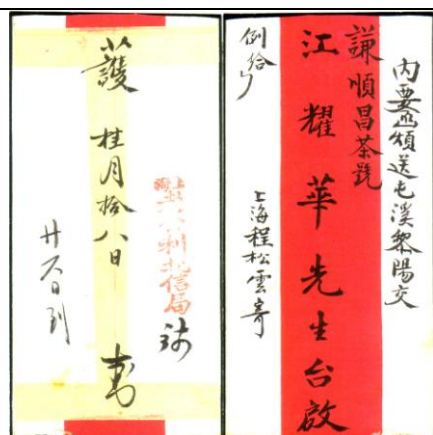
(07) 此件酒力付訖的紅條封是居住蘇州，江耀華長子「潤之」在癸(卯)年(1903)交「姑蘇馬正源芬記徽州信局」寄屯溪謙順昌江耀華家嚴的家信。



(08) 三月初六由上海寄屯溪謙順昌江耀華的紅條封，由「上海松興公(福記)」和「蕪湖松興公」兩間輪船信局合作投遞，歷時十六日，「三月廿二到屯」。



(09) 「馬正源芬記徽州信局」在上海也設有分局，將上海客戶的紅條封遞至屯溪中街謙順昌茶號內江耀華先生。

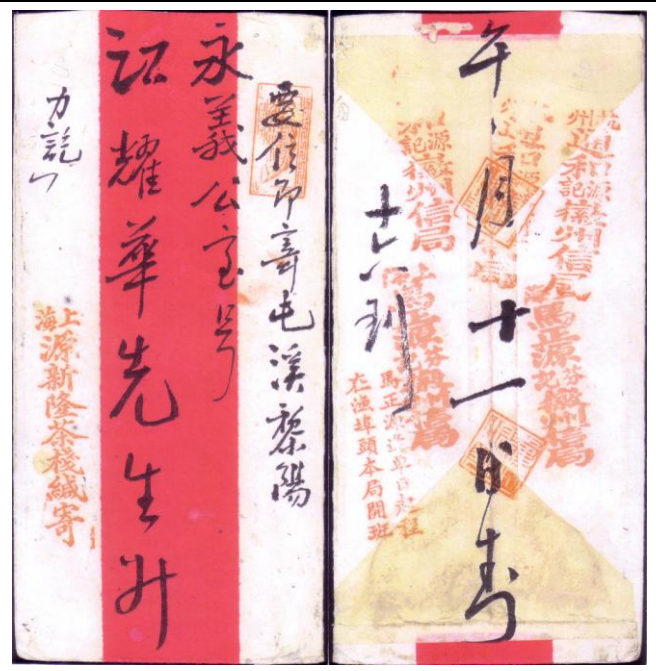


(10) 民信局老字號「上海老公利北信局」祇需時八天(拾八日書，廿六日到) 便將紅條封由上海投至屯溪黎陽謙順昌茶號內江耀華先生。





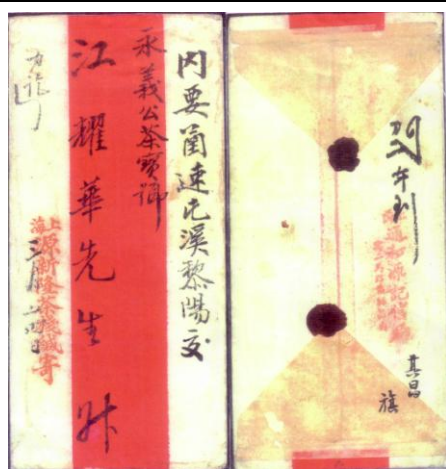
(11) 「上洋福興潤生記信局」投遞由上海至屯溪紅條封，需時十日，「六月廿七到」而江耀華亦於即日回信，編為「松(程松雲)兄五號」。民信局大多數二至三日開班起程，投函時間配合者可節省數天歷程。



(12) 收信地址由謙順昌改為「永義公寶號」，意味著一些轉變，上海新隆茶棧交信給「上海馬正源芬記徽州信局」但到杭州後交由「杭州通和源記徽州信局」接辦。封背紅戳「馬正源逢單日起程，在漁埠頭本局開班」顯示馬正源信局頗具規模，可以維持隔日開班。

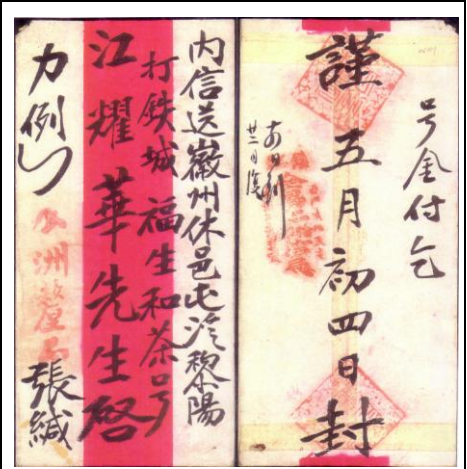
(13)

(14)



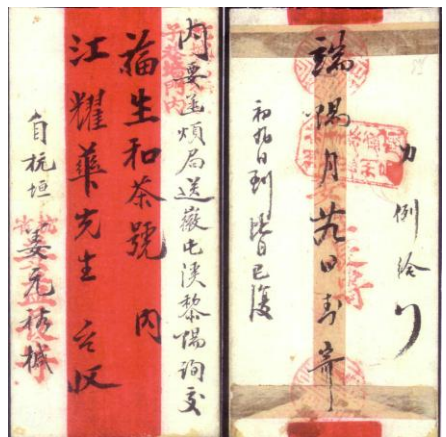
(13) 上海新隆茶棧的另一封信也寄至永義公茶號的江耀華，可能江不想上海客戶直接聯絡謙順昌也。本件由「寓二馬路協興昌內」的「上海通和源記信局」寄遞。

(14) 瓜州釐局寄給江耀華的掛號信(號金付乞)，由「鎮江全昌仁輪船信局」投寄至屯溪「福生和茶號」的江耀華，需時十天(初四封，十四到)，可惜沒有年份佐証這個轉變何時開始。



(15)

(16)

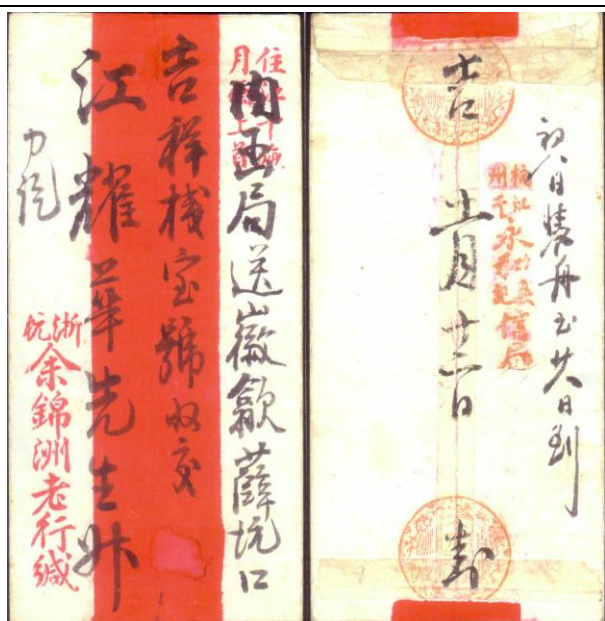


(15) 杭州的客戶也開始寄信至福生和茶號的江耀華，由「杭州全泰盛順記徽州局」投寄，需時十天(廿九日書，初九日到)，該局(早局)採用輪船信局慣用的碑型戳記，比較罕見。

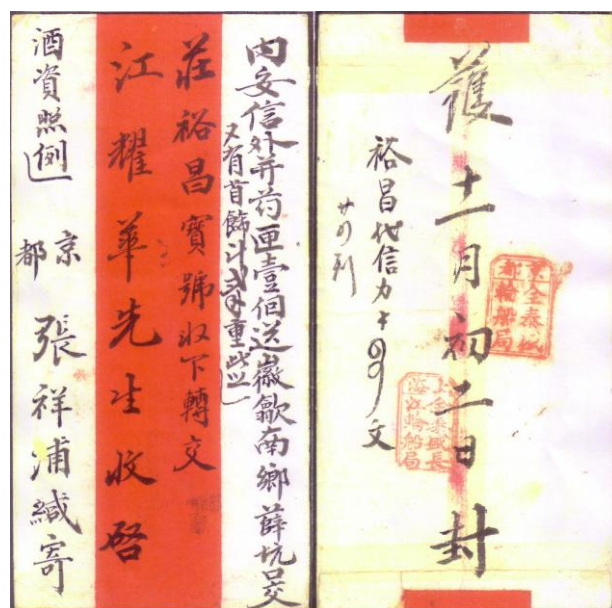
(16) 江耀華兩個兒子「潤之、澤之」居住蘇州，江往探望或在蘇州小住時亦收到由「常熟協源信局」遞至「恒大有華油寶行」地址的紅條封。1911年後江轉至上海營商，寫給兒子的信件皆寄此輩(猪)油行。







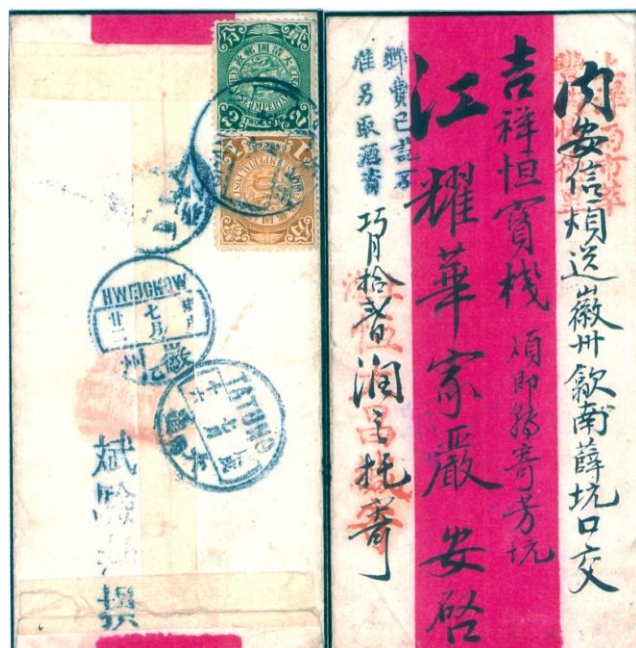
(17) 由「杭州江干永和義記信局」投至徽歙薛坑口「吉祥棧寶號」收交江耀華的紅條封大有文章，源自杭州的一批貨物(茶葉)「初八裝舟至廿八日到」，需時二十日之久。寄貨人在貨物裝舟後四天才致函收貨人，也有些懶散的味。



(18) 源自北京寄徽歙南鄉薛坑口「莊裕昌寶號」收下轉交江耀華的紅條封上可發覺 (一)經由「京都全泰盛輪船局」和「上海全泰盛長江輪船局」合作投遞，(二)需時廿二天(初二日封，廿四到)，(三)附帶藥匣和首飾計式兩重，(四)裕昌代墊信力，江在收件時付回。



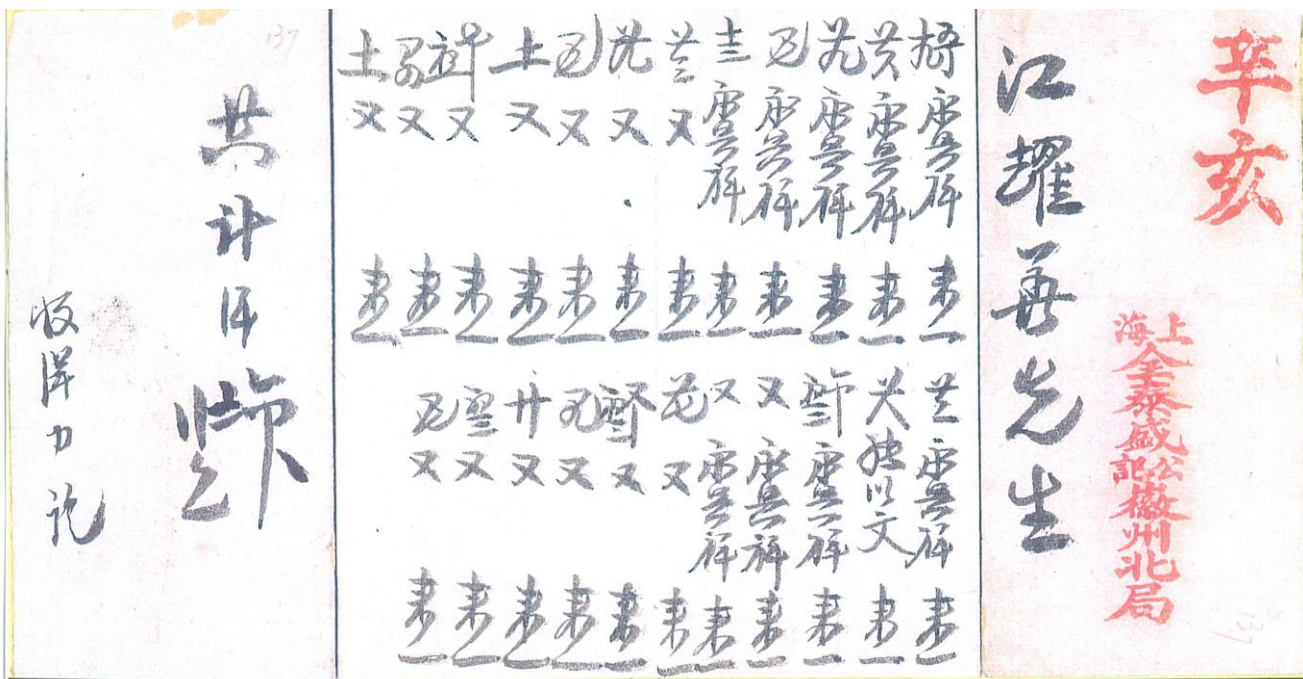
(19)1908 戊申年時，無錫有紅條封寄至「汪聚興茶寶行」內祈遞江耀華先生，貼潘龍二分票一枚，銷江蘇無錫(戊申)三月廿四干支日戳，中轉蘇州(同日)，南京(同日)，大通(廿六日)到達屯溪(四月?日)，歷時約十天，並不比民信局快捷。



(20) 江的長子「潤之」1910 庚戌年在上海視察(翌年江轉移上海營商)時交郵政官局寄給薛坑口「吉祥恒寶棧」轉寄芳坑江耀華家嚴的紅條封貼蟠龍2分,1分票各一枚銷上海庚戌日戳，日期不詳但封上批註「巧月拾貳日」，十六日到大通，廿二日到徽州，歷時十天與民局相若。

1902 壬寅年至 1910 庚戌年的二十件郵品內，可看到江耀華長袖善舞，交遊廣闊而處事謹慎，不讓買方與貨源直接聯絡。隨著長子「潤之」的成長和協助，江耀華振翅待飛的時機來臨，於 1911 辛亥年中轉移上海發展他的茶葉業務。





(21) 江耀華到達上海後，首要的任務是通知老客戶，希望他們將生意和書信轉投上海。在 1911 辛亥年陰曆五月，六月，閏六月(又月) 和七月初，他寄給客戶「永興祥」和「張以文」的信都委託「上海全泰盛公記徽州北局」帶遞，該局在七月初列了一紙清單向江耀華收取信資，該清單所列日期，政件人名稱和信件數目，簡單但一絲不苟。

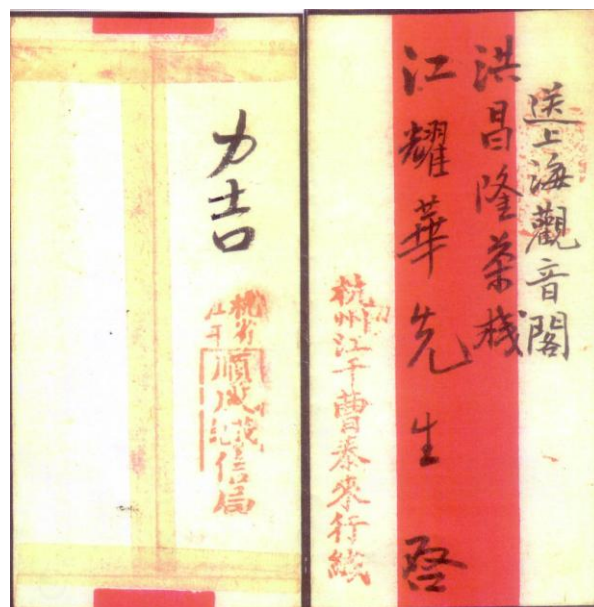


(22) 1911 辛亥年六月份由「屯溪全泰盛公記徽州信局」投遞至上海「洪昌隆茶棧」內江耀華先生的紅條封內含票根叁張，使江掌握客戶對茶葉品種的不同要求和需求量，是營商不可或缺的資料。此外，屯溪(六日廿七日書)至上海(閏月初三日到)的途程也縮短了數日。

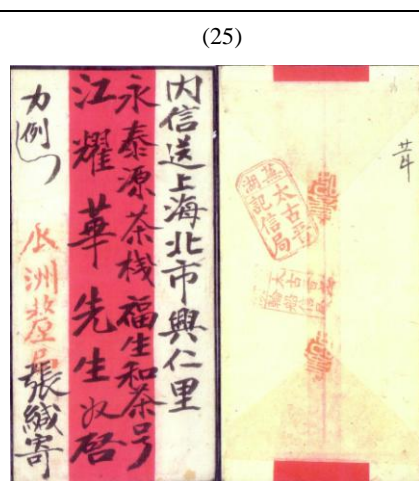




(23) 歙南的客户開始與上海洪昌隆茶棧的江耀華聯絡，本件交郵政官局寄遞，貼蟠龍票三分一枚銷薛坑口辛亥八月初四戳，初八經嚴州，十一經杭州，十一日晚到上海。



(24) 杭州的客户交「杭省江干順成茂記信局」寄給江耀華的紅條封顯示了洪昌隆茶棧位於上海觀音閣。

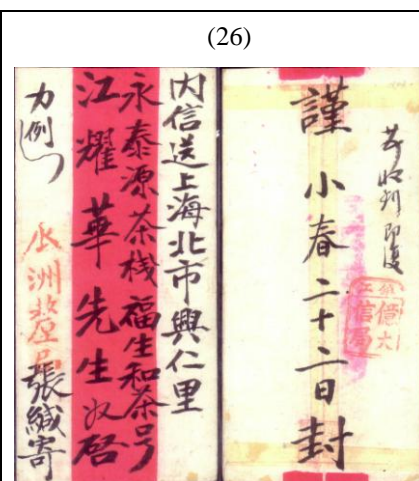


(25)

瓜州釐局也恢復聯絡，寄給江耀華的三封信皆送上海北市興仁里「永泰源茶棧福生和茶號」。

(25) 本件由「蕪湖太古晉記信局」收件後交「蕪湖太古晉記輪船信局」沿長江水路投遞。

(26) 「鎮江億大信局」投遞第二件，祇需三天(二十二日封，廿五收到即復)，比前述(14)号封的十天歷程大為縮短。



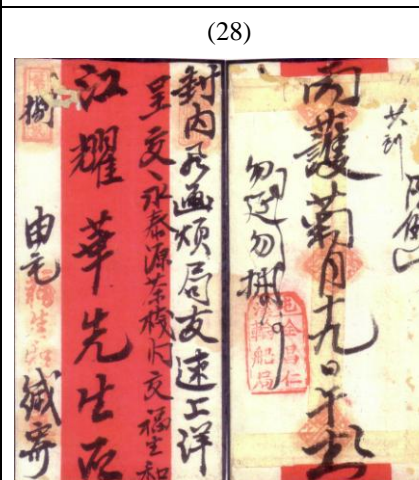
(26)



(27)

(27) 九月二十三日經「鎮江福興潤生記信局」投遞的紅條封，沒有寫上到步日期，無法確定投遞時間是否三天或更久。

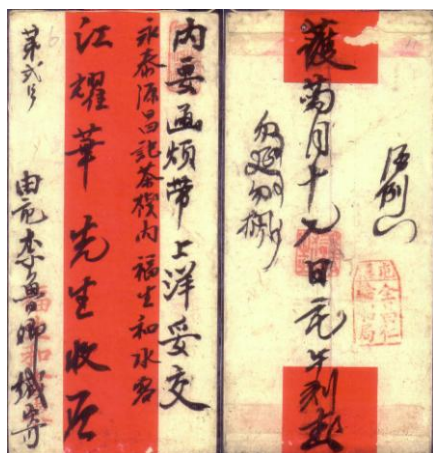
(28) 故鄉屯溪寄來的信，由「屯溪全昌仁輪船局」投遞，歷時九天(十九日書，廿八到)。



(28)



(29)

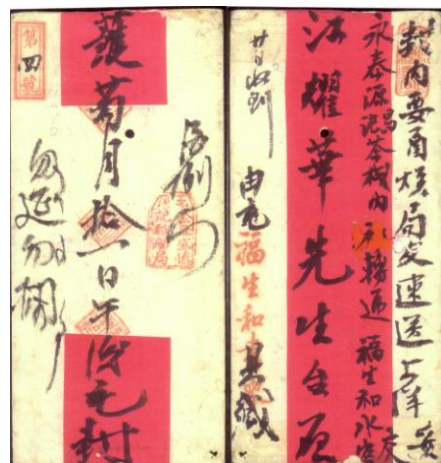


老家屯溪寄來的兩封信，稱江耀華為「福生和水客」，揭露了江的真正身份。

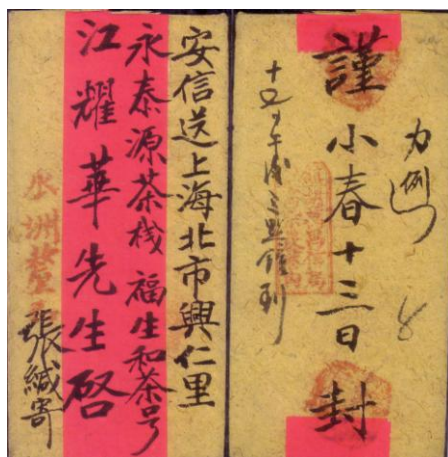
(29) 「屯溪全昌仁輪船局」投遞本件，採用單線碑型戳記。

(30) 本件亦由「屯溪全昌仁輪船局」投遞，採用雙線碑型戳記，歷時九天(拾一日書，廿日收到)

(30)



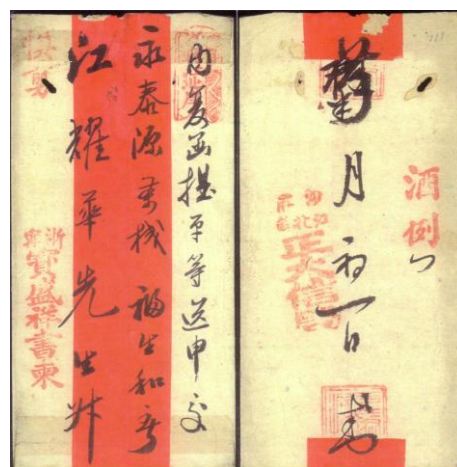
(31)



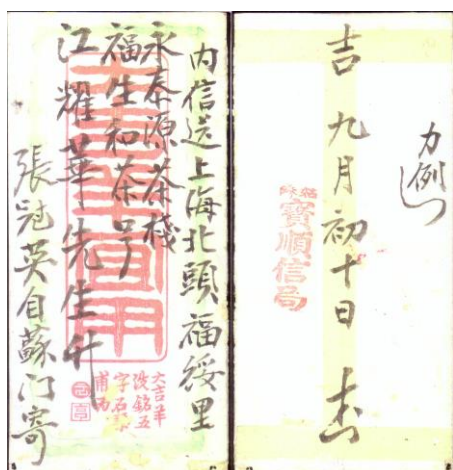
(31) 瓜州釐局繼續聯絡江耀華，本件歷時四天，由老字號胡萬昌信局投遞，該局採用雙線碑型戳記並將地址「寓柴炭巷內」放置碑型戳內，比較特別。

(32) 浙寧的供應商，貨物付船運寄後將提單交「浙寧江北岸正大信局」投至上海福生和號江耀華，因封內附有提單，經手民局蓋上「慎剪」戳記，服務週到。

(32)



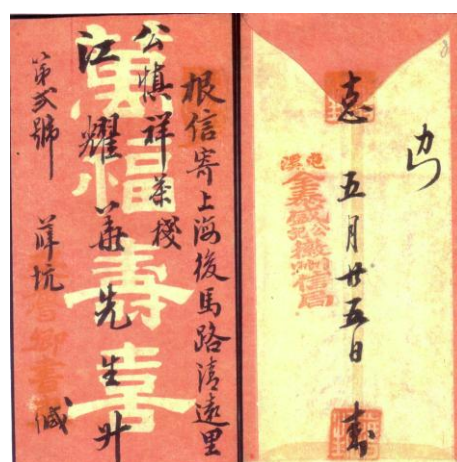
(33)



(33) 以本件信封格式看來，是二十年代風格，該時中華郵政的服務網絡覆蓋廣泛，水陸交通發達使民信局無力競爭而漸趨式微，「姑蘇寶順信局」投遞本件。

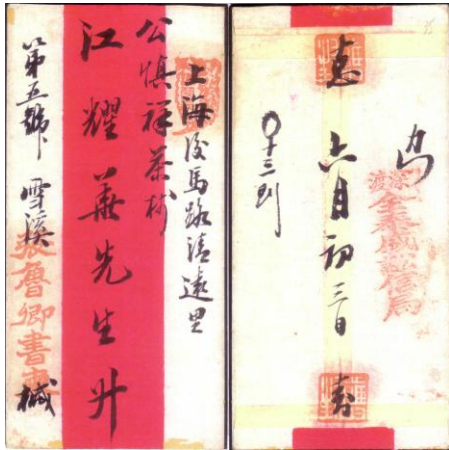
(34) 不知是工作上的轉變或是謹慎，江耀華的收信地址改為「後馬路清遠里公慎祥茶棧」，本件源自薛坑(口)的中式封交由「屯溪全泰盛公記徽州信局」寄遞。

(34)





(35)

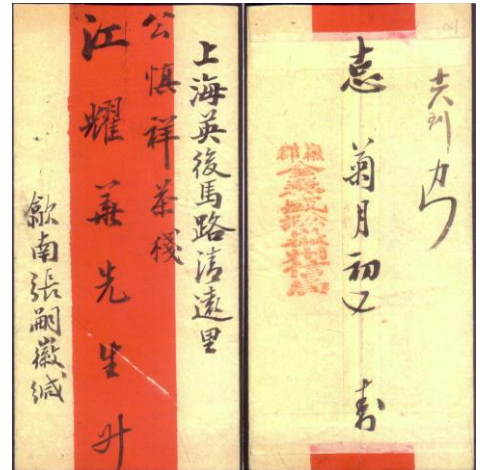


寄至公慎祥茶棧江耀華先生的信，有下列(33)至(37)五件。

(35) 雪溪寄出，交「深渡全泰盛公記信局」投遞的紅條封，歷時十天(初三日書，十三到)。

(36) 歙南寄出，交「徽郡全泰盛公記徽州信局」投遞的紅條封，歷時九天(初七日書，十六到)。

(36)



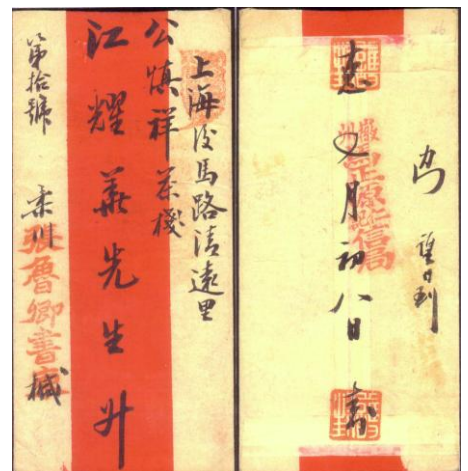
(37)



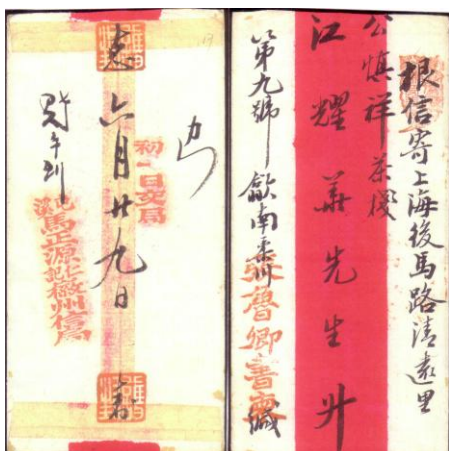
(37) 蘭裕寄出，可能最初交給張詒裕號，後來轉交「( )蘭協泰信局」投遞的紅條封，封背有地址的戳記是民局後期沿用的款式，該時國家郵政極力取締民局業務，許多民局將戳記改成公司私章款式，以免郵件在運送途中被截獲罰款。

(38) 柔川寄出，交「徽州馬正源仁記信局」投遞的紅條封需時七天(初八日書，望日到)。

(38)



(39)



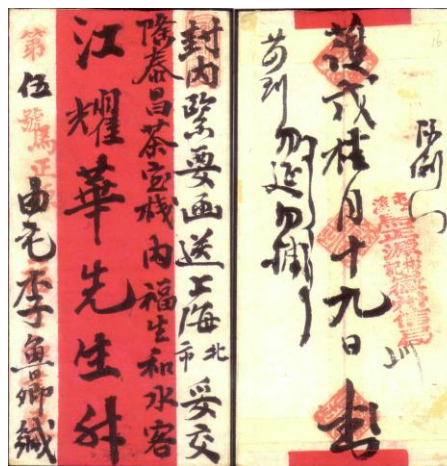
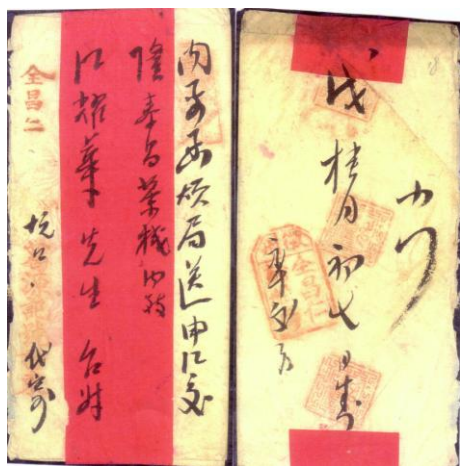
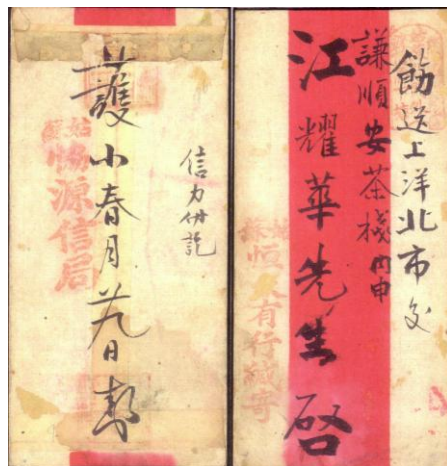
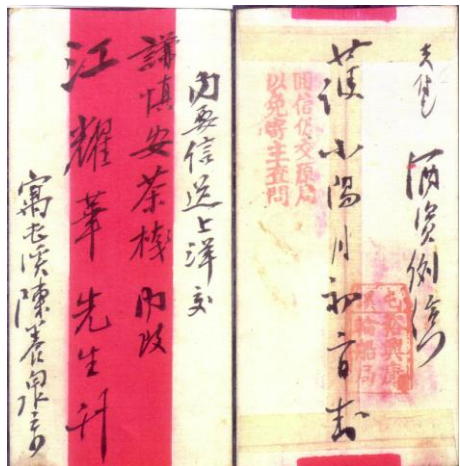
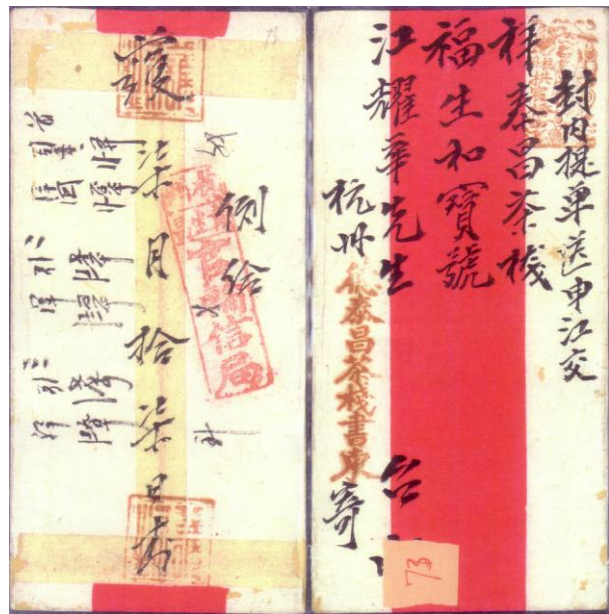
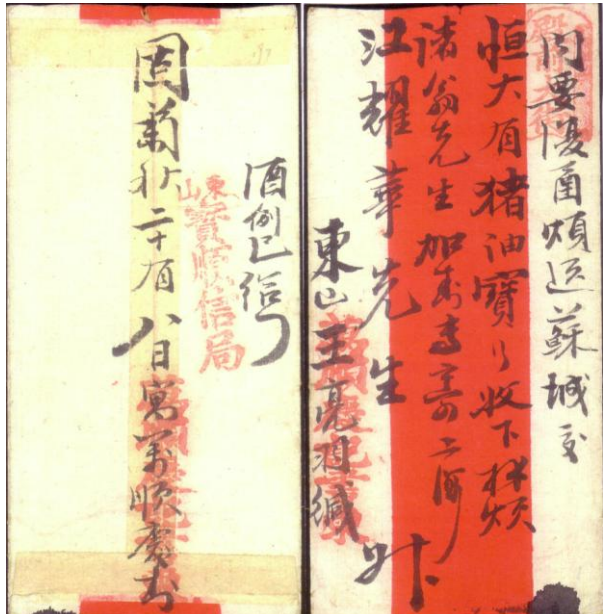
(39) 歙南寄出，交「屯溪馬正源仁記徽州信局」投遞的紅條封，背書六月廿九書，但七月初一送局，民局為正視聽蓋上「初一交局」戳記，六天後(初七)送抵目的地。

(40) 屯溪福生和寄江的紅條封老實不客氣地稱江為「福生和水客」而收信地址改為「隆泰昌茶棧」。本件由「屯溪全泰盛慎記局」投遞，該局(早局)採用碑型戳記比較罕見。

(40)





<p>(41)</p> 	<p>以下兩件亦投至隆泰昌轉交江耀華，封背手書「戊桂月」可能是 1908 戊申年陰曆八月。</p> <p>(41) 屯溪寄出，交「屯溪馬正源彬記徽州信局」投遞，歷時五天(十九日書，廿四到)。</p> <p>(42) (薛)坑口寄出，交「徽州全昌仁輪船局」，由該局收件者加批「初十交局」而非初七書後即交局。</p>	<p>(42)</p> 
<p>(43)</p> 	<p>謙順安茶棧在上海也設店，江耀華亦利用它作為收信地址。</p> <p>(43) 姑蘇恒大有交「姑蘇協源信局」寄來家書，江耀華沒有寫上收信日期。</p> <p>(44) 屯溪寄出，交「屯溪裕興康輪船局」投遞的紅條封蓋上了「回信仍交原局，以免寄主查問」，表示寄信者急候回音，希望收件人在民局回班時可以帶回覆信。</p>	<p>(44)</p> 
<p>(45)</p>  <p>杭州茶棧交「杭州戴生昌官輪信局」運載貨物後將提單寄至新地址「祥泰昌茶棧」交江耀華，他在封背有毛筆記錄和計算。官輪信局並非官營，可能曾運官貨而自詡官輪信局以廣招攬而已。</p>	<p>(46)</p>  <p>東山的客戶知道江轉營上海但無地址，無夸將信交「東山寶順信局」寄至姑蘇恒大有猪油行再轉交上海江耀華，但姑蘇至上海一程沒有戳記，可能放入另一封信件內合寄。</p>	



(47)

(47) 收信地址又改為「大源恒茶號」，徽郡的來信交「徽州全泰盛慎記局」投寄，寄件人在封面左上角手書原班即帶回信」並已信力給訖。

(48)與前列(40)-(42)相同，本件源自杭州的紅條封經「杭州薦橋堍林永和仁記信局」投至隆泰昌並由其代付酒力。

(48)

(49)

(49) 舍親自姑蘇寄來的家信，交「姑蘇老正大公記信局」投至隆泰昌茶棧。這個舍親很客氣，每封信都付訖酒資。

(50) 徽郡寄出的紅條封經「徽州全泰盛輪船局」和「蕪湖全泰盛輪船局」含作投遞，歷時九天(十八日封，廿七收到)，收信店鋪改為江榮茂茶棧。

(50)

(51)

(51) 不知江耀華在賣弄什麼玄虛，杭州經「杭省拱宸橋正大信局」投寄的信竟寄至「新隆泰茶棧內萃馨和茶號」，而舊襪一双的批註費夷所思。

在此重溫一下江耀華在屯溪 8 處和上海 9 的收信地址：

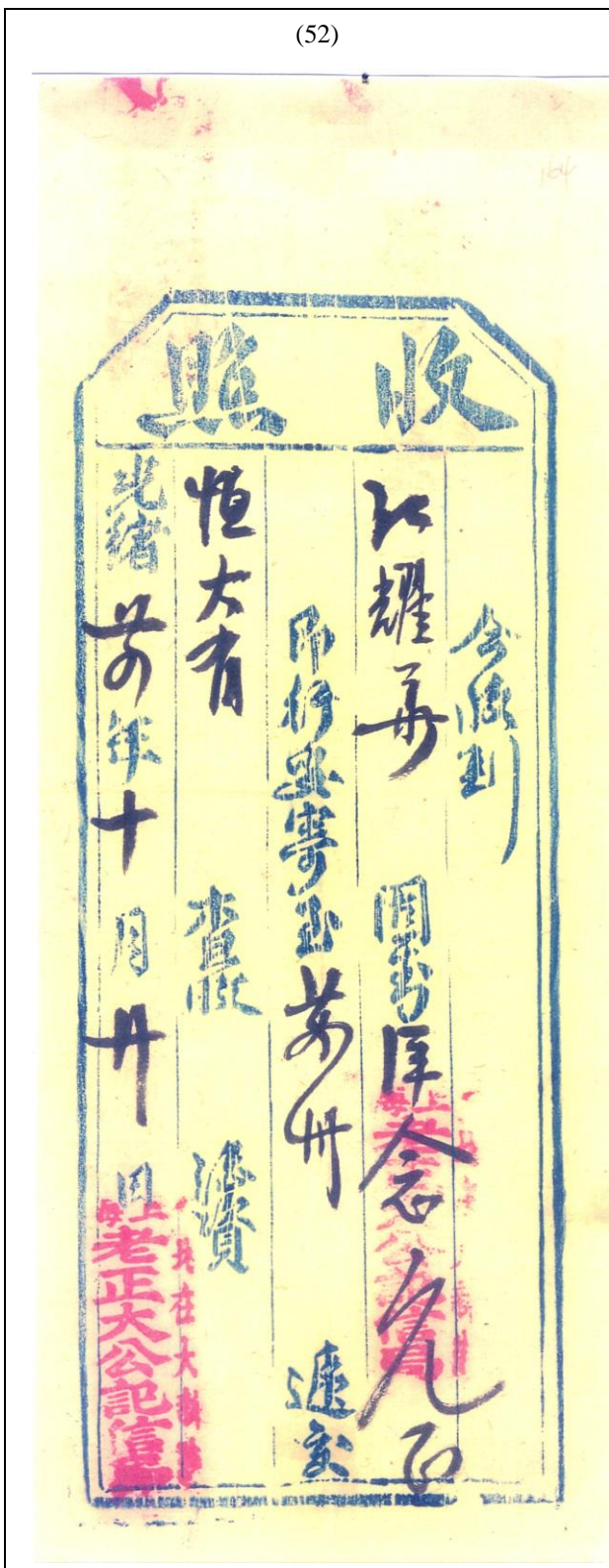
屯溪 1902-1911 年		上海 1911- 1930 年代	
1. 謙順昌	1-2, 4-11	9. 洪昌隆	22-24
2. 汪集興	3	10. 永泰源	25-33
3. 永義公	12-13	11. 公慎祥	34-39
4. 福生和	14-15	12. 隆泰昌	40-42, 48-49
5. 吉祥棧	17	13. 謙順(慎)安	43-44
6. 莊裕昌	18	14. 祥泰昌	45
7. 汪聚興	19	蘇州	
8. 吉祥恒	20	1. 恒大有葦油行	16, 46
		15. 大源恒茶棧	47
		16. 江榮茂茶棧	50
		17. 新隆泰茶棧	51



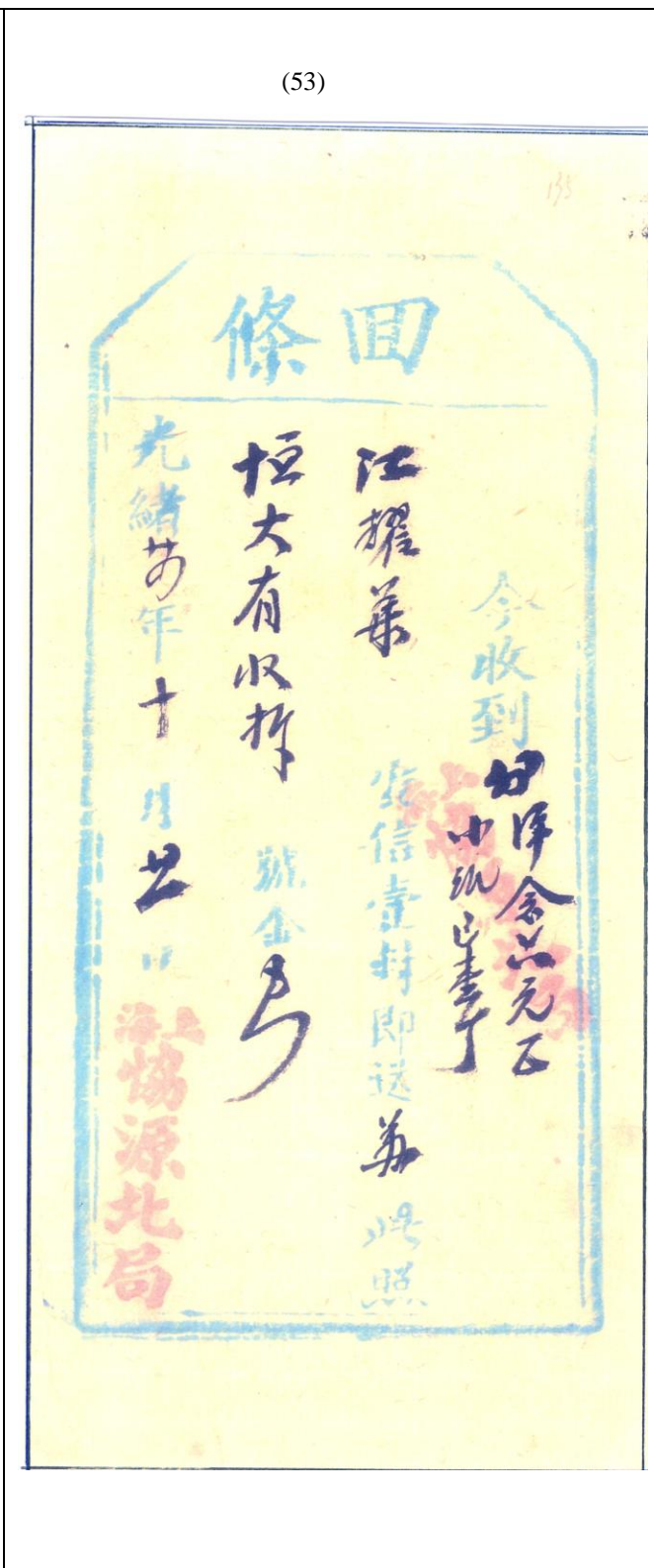
江耀華除了是一位出色的茶商之外，他另一個角色是個慈父。在 1898 光緒廿四年十月廿日他滙款給居住蘇州的兩名兒子，第(52)件收据顯示他在上海經「上海老正大公記信局」寄銀洋念元至姑蘇「恒大有(葷油行)」內的兒子，到了翌日(光緒廿四年十月廿一日)，他又經「上海協源北局」寄小洋念六元和紙包一個至姑蘇恒大有(53)。兩日內用兩個民局分批滙錢至同一目的地，反應出江耀華對減低風險的心思十分慎密。

此兩件收据也對江的出身，構成了疑點，江是否祖籍上海，轉往屯溪營商後在 1911 年返回上海發展？這些對本文的研究沒有特殊意義，暫且不用深究

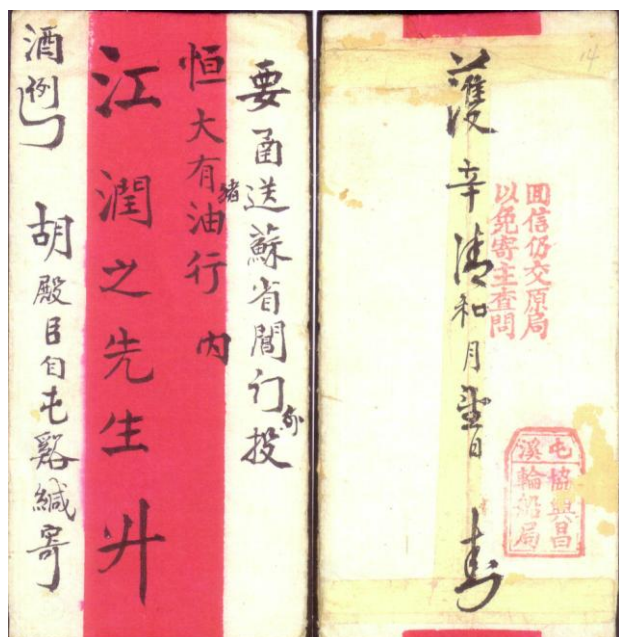
(52)



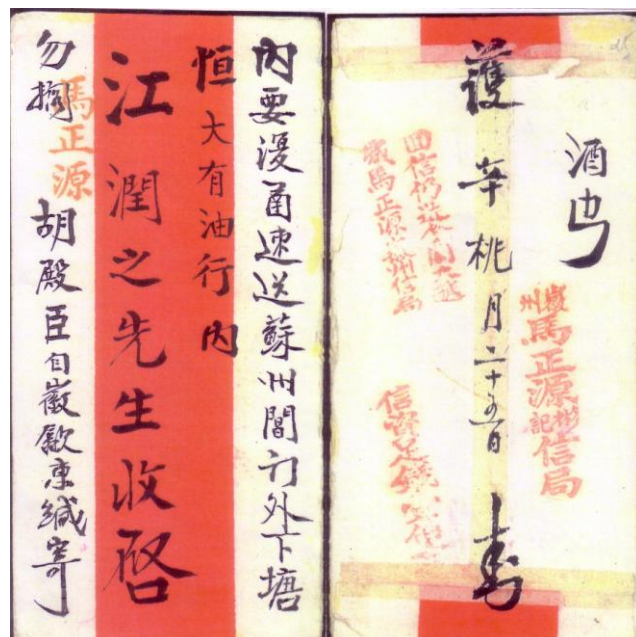
(53)



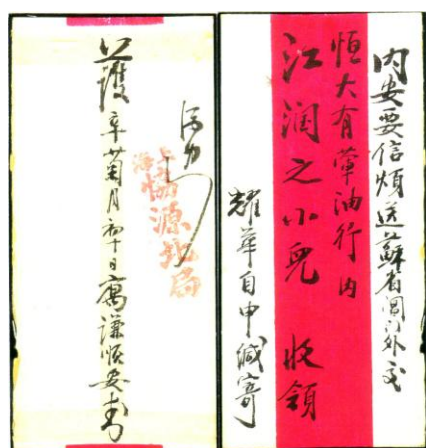




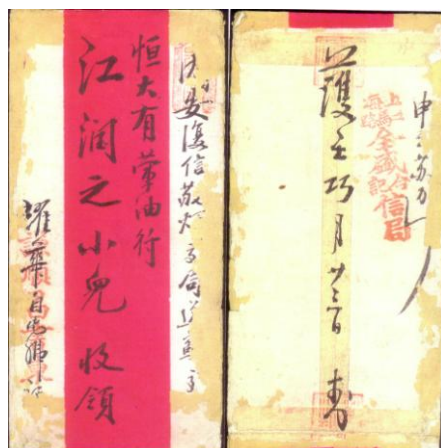
(54) 寄信人胡殿臣稱江耀華為舍親，又經常寫信給江潤之，估計是後者的岳父，他在辛清和月(1901 或 1911 年陰曆四月)經「屯溪協興昌輪船局」寄信給女婿後希望他立即回信，民局順寄件者意思蓋上「回信仍交原局，以免寄主查問」提示戳。對女婿不用客氣，胡殿臣手書酒例，女婿收件時依例付酒資。



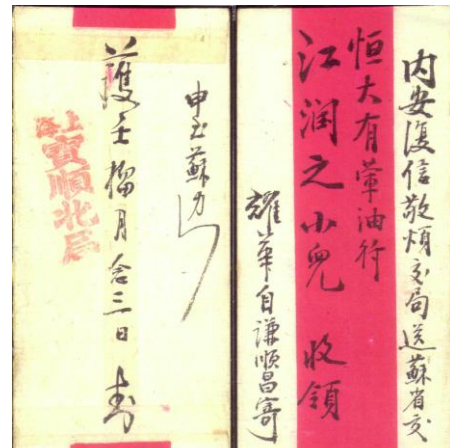
(55) 另一件辛桃月(1901 或 1911 年陰曆三月)給女婿的信却交「徽州馬正源彬記信局」投寄姑蘇恒大有油行，由於等候回信，經手局在封背蓋上「回信仍送金閶大越城馬正源徽州信局」和「信資足錢壹佰文」，使回信者知道回信地址和收費。



(56) 江耀華在上海寫給潤之的信，不交全泰盛信局而付「上海協源北局」投遞。江在封背手書「寓謙順安書」，提供了回郵地址。

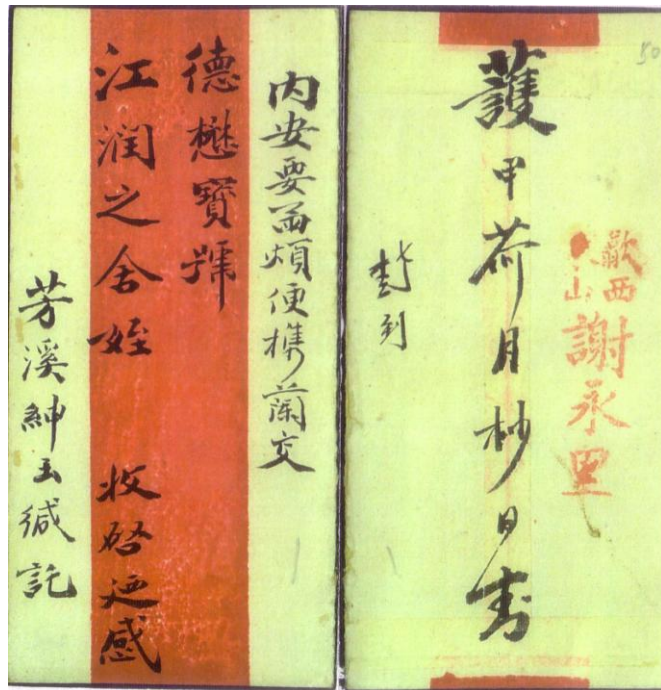


(57) 翌年七月(王巧月)給潤之的信交「上海二馬路全盛合記信局」辦理，封背有批註「申至蘇力乞」。

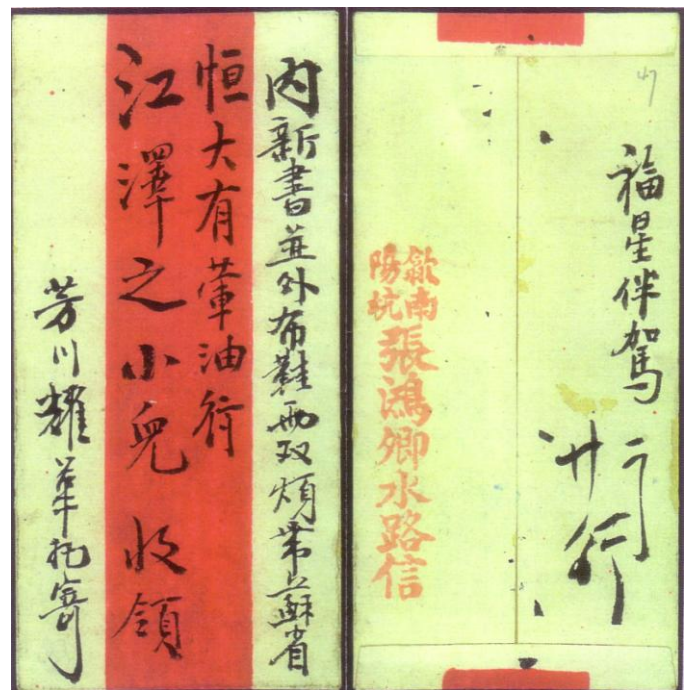


(58) 四個月前(王榴月)給潤之的家書交「上海寶順北局」投遞，下款註明自謙順昌寄，封背又批註「申至蘇力乞」。江耀華選擇眾多民局，估計是擇其即日或翌日開班的民局替他帶信。





(59) 私人信客曾經在十九世紀末葉盛行過，他們任勞任怨，替客帶信外兼運送私人物件，稱江潤之為舍姪的寄信人在甲荷月(1904 或 1914 年六月) 委託「歙西( )山謝永里」帶信給潤之，並無附寄他物。

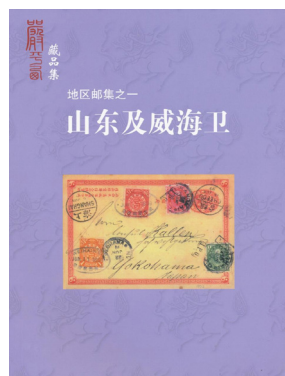


(60) 江耀華居住芳川時亦曾委託「歙南陽坑張鴻卿水路信」寄信給次子澤之，並附新書和布鞋兩雙。這也反應出交付和人信客託寄的物件，笨重有餘，價值不高，無法收取合乎經營效益的資費，私人信客的存活率不甚樂觀。

六十件郵品逐一介紹後，將所有戳記分類排列一下，得到七十餘不同品種；再將戳記依城市位置臚列在地圖上，民信局在蘇，浙，皖的分佈形勢凸現了，現將戳記分類表和民局分佈示意圖附上以供參考。本文以「江耀華信扎」為框架，簡單地探窺清末民初時期民信局在蘇浙皖三省的分佈，運作和沿用戳記，希望拋磚引玉地引起郵壇先進和有識之士撰寫更精彩的同類型研究資料，以饗一眾民信局的研究者。







1



2

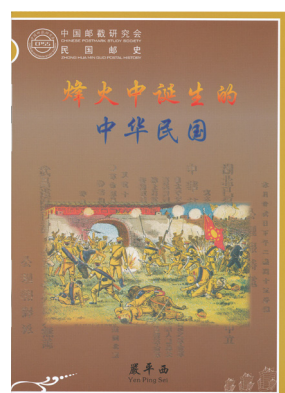


3

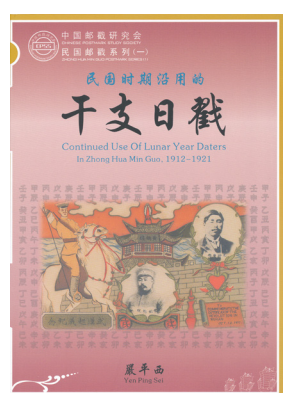


4

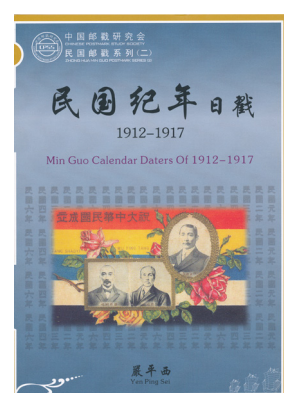
1-4 平装及精装



5



6



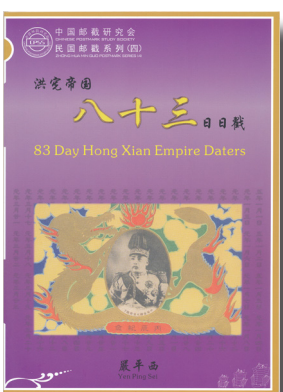
7



8



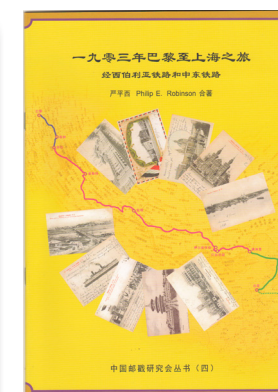
5-8合订本



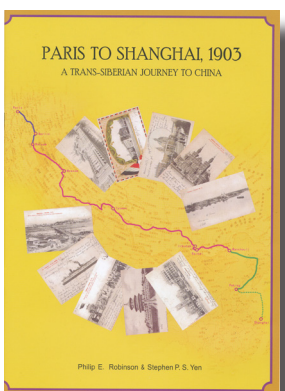
9



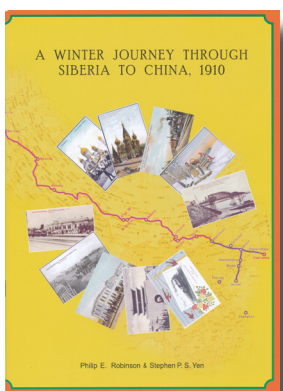
10



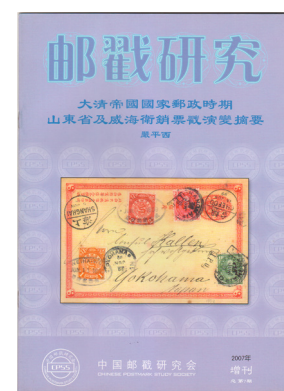
11



12



13



14



15