

## Chapter Eight

# **A family of three generations**

Throughout Lingnan University's historical evolution, the area of the campus expanded, so that the college, middle school, and primary-level components could all be housed in one location. This feature may be described as "three generations living under one roof." The school had many special features. Starting with several dozen students, Lingnan expanded to accommodate hundreds and then thousands of students. The students were full of life and enjoyed harmonious relations with one another. At the turn of the century, it could be said that Lingnan had been established to full scale and an atmosphere of flourishing growth was evident. A few members of the school family were already eligible for the role of family elders, greatly respected by every generation of the "Sons and daughters of the red and gray." Two such figures were particularly outstanding. The first was Mr William Grant, who as early as 1895, was elected as a member of the Board of Trustees and concurrently as the Board's Executive Secretary. Mr Grant visited the school on two occasions, in 1895 and in 1921, and raised the funds for a complete system of running water and water purification for

the school. A water tower rose in the sky, and sparkling water spurted from a fountain. In his later years, Mr Grant resided in Orange, New Jersey, continuing to raise funds among the Friends of Lingnan. He and Dr Chung, who at that time was Vice Provost, teamed up in a fundraising campaign. Grant sought donations in Orange, while Dr Chung raised funds among the women of Guangdong. The two worked to raise funds with determined efforts, gathering over 100,000 *yuan* in their joint campaign toward the goal of construction of a palatial residence hall for girls. They hastened to complete the construction project in 1931, in time for students to move in. Dr Chung Wing Kwong was the second outstanding figure. Back in 1900, he held the post of Chinese Dean at Lingnan. During this period he was promoted to the position of Vice Provost. Among the Chinese people, many government leaders, influential and prominent members of society, and rural gentry and elders, had friendships with Dr Chung dating back many years. As for students, they followed him around morning and evening, behaving playfully to amuse him like the legendary filial son entertaining his aged parents so that they would feel young again. Such interactions explain why his life was filled with delight.

According to educational experts, a person's character is formed in close connection to his environment. In the springtime of their growth, the fortunate "sons and daughters of the red and gray" were able to roam freely around Lingnan's vast campus. Taking Dr Chung as a

model once again, we see that his life was spent travelling far and wide to raise funds and gain cooperation for his outline vision of the Lingnan enterprise. His work may be recounted as follows:

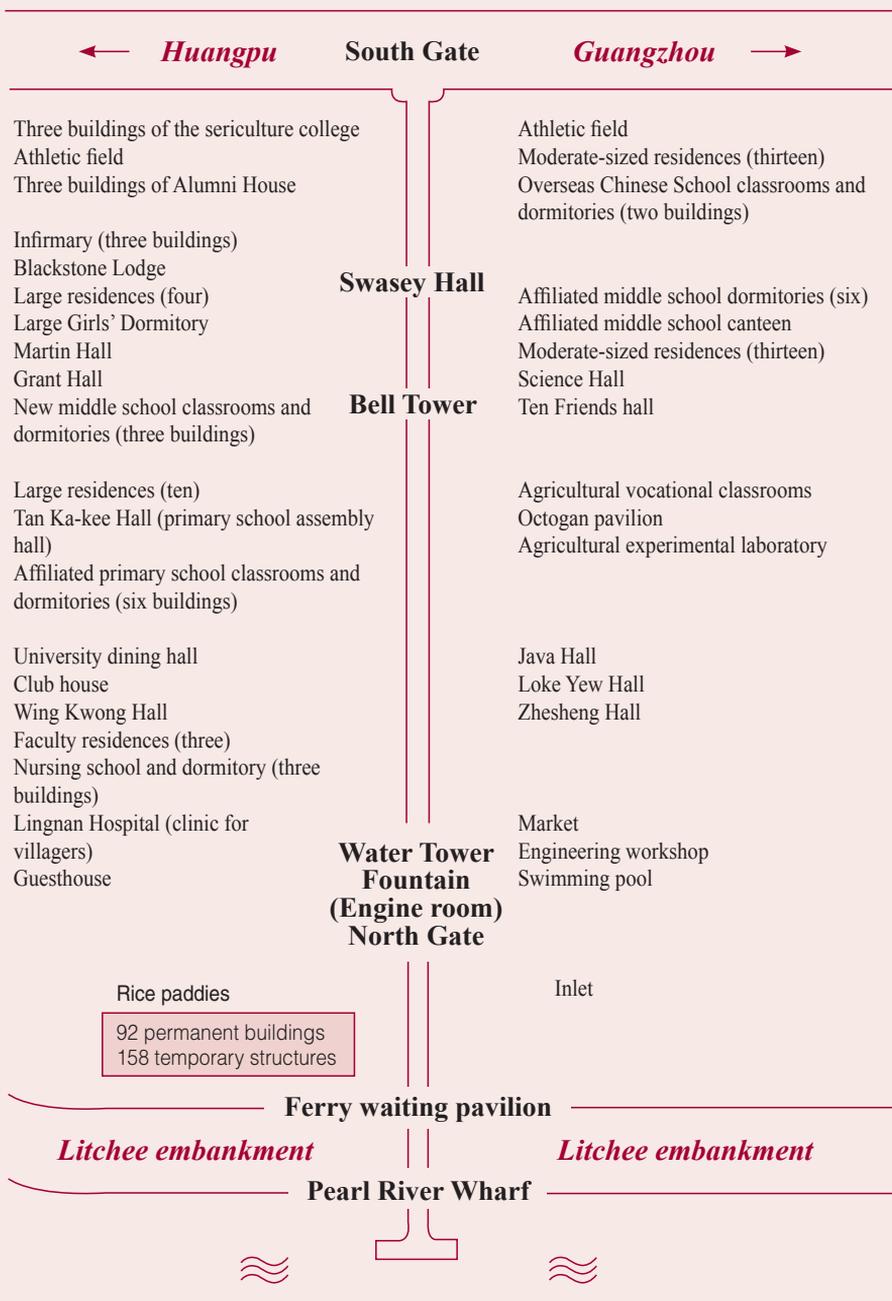
The Lingnan campus was endowed with exceptional natural beauty, and developed under a succession of government authorities, especially during the period of Dr Chung's presidency. He participated in person, starting from scratch and working through difficult circumstances. Dr Chung succeeded in converting uneven passages into smooth paths and transforming wasteland with flourishing trees. During a period of over thirty years he created a magnificent tableau, one of lush green lawns, flowers blossoming in the hundreds like brocade, and banyan, camphor, *an*, willow, pine, poplar, lychee and *yulan* trees. Thick foliage hid the sky, and fresh breezes brushed the grass. Majestic buildings clustered in various areas, and all were embellished with red bricks and green tiles, along with paintings and engravings beneath the eaves, evoking ancient styles in a striking and imposing manner. The layout of the campus was oriented from south to north, with an elevation of about twenty feet above the level of the river bank. Viewed from a distance, the campus appeared to slope up and down like Treasure Mountain. The total area was about three thousand *mu*; including the farmland associated with Lingnan it reached four thousand *mu*. On the river bank at the northern boundary was a hundred-foot wharf, where "Lingnan Universty" was engraved on the face of an arch. The campus extended

to Huangpu Road to the south. Here the surrounding walls ended and fields and forest lay beyond. Two parallel boulevards crossed the campus running from east to west, forming the main borders between the campus and neighbouring villages, each over 3,400 feet in length and lying a distance of 2,500 feet apart, with various villages on the borders. The parallel horizontal roads were joined by small paths. Next to the entrance of the campus was the resplendent swimming pool. The northwestern athletic field and southeastern athletic field were each six hundred feet in diameter. The central quadrangle and the drill ground were each five or six *mu* in size. The sparkling purification pond, engine room, Ma Ying-piu Guesthouse, factory, university dormitories, girls' dormitories, and the Lingnan Hospital donated by Lei Fuk-lam were in the northern district. The primary school was in the eastern district. In the western district were the agricultural experimental fields and the dairy farm. Further to the west were college lecture halls, laboratories, a dining hall, and the model village for Chinese faculty members (eight buildings altogether). The general office, library, museum, middle school classrooms, and residences for western faculty members were in the eastern district. Proceeding to the central quadrangle, Swasey Hall stands majestically. To the east is Blackstone Lodge, residence of the President, the infirmary, Alumni House, and residences for Western faculty members. To the west were dormitories for middle school students; the Overseas Chinese School and the Sericulture College were located further to the south. In all, there were sixteen large

buildings: Swasey Hall, Grant Hall, Chang Hall, Loke Yew Hall, Ten Friends Hall, Zhesheng Hall, Wing Kwong Hall (donated by students), Willard Straight Memorial Science Hall, Java Hall, the girls' residence, the primary school's Assembly Hall, the primary school dormitory, and the middle school dormitories. In addition, there were fourteen other buildings: Tam Lei-ting Alumni House and the villa residences of teaching staff. The workers' dormitories and canteen, the factory, and the shops were in various other locations, all built with donations from enthusiastic supporters in China and overseas for the benefit of the Lingnan community.

Below is a diagram of the locations of the buildings on the Lingnan Campus in 1935.

Diagram showing the locations of the buildings on the  
Lingnan Campus in 1935



Dr Chung was tireless in his efforts to raise construction funds among Chinese donors. In addition to material concerns, he rigorously nurtured students' spiritual growth. Therefore student life was able to develop following this principle, becoming increasingly vibrant. Lingnan University's "red and gray spirit" (red and gray were chosen as the colours of the school flag) was based on the Christian spirit. The students' potential was cultivated in a gradual silent process, just as though they lived in a new and fresh-air atmosphere. Expressing this in the phrases of the day, they followed tenets such as: "Honesty is the best policy," "It is better to serve than to be served," "Love thy neighbor as thyself," "Collective cooperation," "Self-respect and respect for others," "Good character is national salvation," "Independent innovation," "Follow the will of the majority," "Comply with discipline," "Lingnan is one family," "Do not be selfish," and "For God, for Country, and for Lingnan." Student life followed these guidelines, approaching ever more closely to and actualizing these standards of truth, virtue, and beauty. To learn is to practise what one has learned at the same time. Practice also depended on the many students' collective organizations and activities on the campus. The following is a list of the various activities in which improved results were achieved day by day.

The Lingnan Students' YMCA naturally became a centre for the YMCA movement. The advantage of the YMCA movement was that it was not bound by the organizational restrictions of the church. It advocated

the New Life Movement, promoting moral, intellectual, and physical education, and teaching altruistic service and social reform. Every year, the Lingnan Students' YMCA held an assembly to recruit new members, nominating Dr Chung and other faculty members to head their campaigns and take the lead in public pledges to the association's goals. These ceremonies were solemn and extremely orderly. The school authorities assigned a treasurer to take care of finances; annual current expenses were funded by donations, which amounted to over 10,000 *yuan*. The General Secretary of the YMCA of Lingnan was specially appointed by the YMCA Board. In 1917, Kaan Yau-man, BA, became General Secretary after returning from his studies in the United States to teach at Lingnan. Mr Kaan was a person of great all-round talent, who filled student life with joyful activities. At that time Benson Fong was President of the students' YMCA; later on Mr Lei Sze-ying succeeded Kaan as Secretary, and just as Cao Cao followed the example of the ancient Han Premier Xiao He, Lei also made many contributions. The Presidents, Vice-presidents and even section heads were all elected in a democratic manner, while as many as fifty or sixty volunteers assisted in fostering leadership for the sake of future society. Each of the college and municipal YMCA branches along with the national YMCA were closely linked. The national YMCA held its annual National Convention at Lingnan in 1922, with the theme of "Personal Character for National Salvation," which was posted on the right-hand wall of Swasey Hall (1915). The various service projects of the Lingnan Students' YMCA operated concurrently throughout the year;

they included Bible study sessions, prayer meetings, discussion groups, and lectures. At the beginning of each school year, new students were greeted, received orientation, and were provided with a handbook. In those years, the most successful planned activities were: (1) Sunday evening prayer meetings, when all gathered in the beautiful light of the sunset, casual and carefree, to sing hymns and worship, followed by self-serve refreshments offered by faculty members' wives in turns. (2) Recreation nights on Saturday evenings. Here the YMCA members and class groups would perform. In those days, even though the actors were all male, there were dazzling performances of big-drum opera scenes by Kwok Lam-shong, the martial arts performer, by Yeung Sheen-mei, actor of female opera roles, by dramatic actors Mok Wai-yin and Chung Po, by Mok Hong-sze, actor of female roles, by violinists Xian Xinghai and Wei Hung-cheung, pianists Wong Man-hsing and Lei Yiu-sun, and flautists Lei Kwong-cheuk and Ng Pak-hsing. Yet these were just a few of many talented performers. The Saturday evening performances attracted full-house audiences from the city, as people crossed the river like fish and swarmed around the entrance even after curtain call. (3) Lingnan Youth (嶺南青年報). This complimentary weekly publication was published every Saturday morning. It was about four pages or six thousand words long; a thousand copies were printed and distributed to the students so that each could take a copy when they returned to their homes for the weekend. The contents included opinion pieces, articles on special topics, fiction, short pieces, school news and other columns. It was first published in 1913, with Kaan

Yau-man as editor. Those serving as general editors later included Wu Kai-yin, Ho Ting-chu, Fung Kut-shau, Cheng Ping-kwong, and Yeung Wah-yat. Ko Koon-tin, Chan Shao-paak, Nin Shing-hoi, Yeung Hok-ling and other gentlemen contributed their calligraphy to the cover. (4) Village services and voluntary education. Every Sunday, preaching teams went out to nearby villages to make speeches and pay home visits. They were known as “student teachers” and taught at the evening school for apprentices. In Phoenix Village they set up two free schools, named “Charity care” and “Evening twilight.” At that time the enthusiastic volunteer teachers included Au Bing-chiu, Leung Hing-ching, Tse Chiu-kit, Chan Man-chu, Tse Tin-sik, Wong Pui-sang, Ng Pak-hsing, Chui Sik-ling, Yu Shui-yiu, Yeung King-chun, Chan Kwei-sang, Hung Ko-wong, Tso Iu, Wu Shu-wing, and Yeung Po-lo.

The Lingnan Students’ Self-Government Association (or the Student Union) was another important organization. It consisted of a representative assembly and a committee, which took care of the two aspects of administration and academic matters (research, publication, recreation and athletics). It defined the student code of conduct and prescribed a system of penalties. Every person whose behaviour in the classroom was incorrect, whose language was coarse, who engaged in bullying, was disruptive of order, making noise or skipping classes, would be subject to communal judgement. Fines paid to the treasurer of the association in cases of misconduct in which penalties were imposed were

set between ten cents and fifty cents. (5) The Dining Hall Association. The Dining Hall services were contracted out to caterers to supply the food. The association's student president was nicknamed "Emperor of the Dining Hall." The Association was concerned with purchasing supplies and supervising the weights, selection of items for the menu, and supervision of the operations; the surplus funds remaining after food supplies were purchased had the nickname "Customs surplus." They were called the "food surplus," and were retained to hold a celebratory banquet. In those days the enthusiastic officers of the association included Chan Fu-Cheung and Lei Ying-lam; later there were Wong Pui-sang, Leung Meng-chai, Lei Po-tung, Wei Shui-sang, and Yip Leung-choi.

The Lingnan Alumni Association served as an organization for former students. Chapters of the association were established in various places. At the time of this writing, former Lingnan students are scattered around the world, numbering over 10,000 persons. Not only are they ministers, teachers, physicians, lawyers, technicians, artists, and industrialists, there are also a few prominent government officials among them. They all uphold the mission and goals of Lingnan education, resolved to serve as pillars of society. Moreover, they hold their *alma mater* deep in their hearts, returning every year to participate for a full day and evening on Alumni Day. With clasped hands, they talk about the past, or reminisce in chats about their old school days with Uncle Peng, caretaker of the No 1 Dormitory. In addition to the

election of officers, the association discusses alumni affairs, tasks that should be undertaken, and recreational get-togethers and dinners. Those who served as President of the Lingnan Alumni Association over the years included Tsin Shue-fan, Y. L. Lin, Wu Kai-yin, Ms Law Yau-tsit, Chan Shiu-cheung, Kaan Yau-man, Tsang Yan-tao, and Yeung Wah-yat. Publications of the association included the Alumni Newsletter, a periodical, and the directory of alumni addresses.

In Lingnan's academic clubs, teachers and students and scholars from every country cooperated with a great deal of success. The best-known was the publication of the Science Club, the English-language *Science Journal* with its up-to-date contents. Each issue had seven hundred pages, several dozen photographic plates, and several dozen articles, covering subjects such as geography, botany, agriculture, and public health. It circulated widely, reaching subscribers in forty-three countries. Other publications included the *Semi-annual Journal of Agriculture*, the *Southern Wind Arts Weekly*, the *Agriculture Monthly*, the *Overseas Chinese Bi-monthly*, and occasional papers on research in economics. Later various other academic clubs sprang up like bamboo shoots after rain, including the Chinese Literature Club, the English Literature Club, the Education Club, the Sociology Club, the Political Science Club, the Economics Club, and the Medical Studies Club.

Lingnan students valued both intellectual and physical education. When

attending classes they were diligent in their studies and after classes they liked to take part in sports. This was called “moving one’s brains and working one’s muscles and bones to build a complete person.” As for athletics at the school, countless playgrounds and ball courts were dispersed across the campus like stars in the sky or pieces on a chessboard, enough to accommodate large numbers of players. Every evening as the sun set in the west, there were matches between teachers and students. Shouts and yells filled the air and dust was stirred up by everyone’s exertions to achieve victory. Baseball, tennis, basketball, football and swimming were all fully-equipped. There were also swims across the Pearl River and long-distance running around the perimeter of the campus, along with horseback riding beneath the Pagang pagoda. There was also walking in ordinary dress (nicknamed “guerilla combat”). Every student was expected to engage in outdoor activity, experiencing immersion in nature. Recall that the swimming pool was opened in 1915, the Eastern Athletic Field in 1917, and the Western Athletic Field in 1922. For these, teachers and students alike had shouldered spades and excavated the earth, cooperating in construction work which was warmly admired. Surrounding the football fields was a 440-yard track, along with complete facilities for the high jump, long jump, shot-put and javelin throwing. During the year, there were many intra-mural games, and at the school-wide athletic meet, each student who had not been selected as a team member would watch and cheer, having a great time rooting for the contestants. At that time, Tong Fook-cheung, a football player from the South China Athletic

Association in Hong Kong, came to the school to contribute his expertise. He was not only an English instructor, but also vigorously organized the Lingnan Football team, creating heroes such as “crazy horse,” “fat boy,” “charcoal,” “rice-sack,” and “darky Lung.” Teams from the University of Hong Kong and St Paul’s were invited to matches at Lingnan, becoming friendly in the course of return matches. In those days the Athletic Club bestowed special privileges as a way to encourage the athletes. Thus the selected players could enjoy an additional three fried eggs at their meals, or even as many as six eggs per meal, and would receive double portions of each side dish they ordered. Thus the high-spirited athletes won successive championships from the second Guangdong Provincial Games onward, and also were among the national candidates and teams competing in the Far Eastern Games in Manila and Tokyo. In athletics and swimming, there were Lingnan boys such as Tang Tso-yum, Ng Kow-tsit, Kwong Sum-yeung, Tong Fook-cheung, Fung Siu-cheung, Leung Mo-yeung, Liu Ching-sun, Lei Cheuk-po, Yeung Sik-cheung, Wu Yu-heng, Tso Iu, and Wei Chak-sang. In the victory homecoming celebration, they displayed gold medals on their chests. Some even filled Palmer’s Biscuit tins with their collections of medals. Bravo! Bravo!

Music at Lingnan University was outstanding. It reached such a high level that after one of its symphonic assemblies harmonious sound would reverberate for days in the ears of listeners like the many-hued tones of nature. Among the foreign teachers, Mrs Groff and Mrs Graybill would

sing wonderful duets, and G. C. Griggs had a loud and resonant voice like a pealing bell. Among the female students Lei Wai-hing, Lei Wai-cheun, and Wong Man-sing played the piano like smooth streams flowing downhill and the roaring of stampeding horses. Among the boys Xian Xinghai and Wei Hung-cheung played the violin, stretching the high and low tones. Ho Tin-fu and Ng Hin-chiu played the xylophone with rapid leaps like a running rabbit and descents like a swooping crane. The students were trained to perform impromptu whenever invited, in preparation for entry to music academies after graduation. As a result Lingnan's choir became known for the high standard of its program, both in scope and quality, and a student orchestra was organized as well. Ray E. Baber, a physical training instructor, directed Lingnan's brass band together with Law Wai-kin. Each of these two student corps had more than twenty members, creating heroic sound. When playing at charity benefits and in parades, they would be sure to receive tremendous applause.

There was more: there would have been something missing if student life at Lingnan had not included military training. In addition to the formation of a Boy Scout unit, the student corps usually formed two infantry companies. Not only did they wear smart uniforms and carry polished wooden rifles and bayonets (following the style of the West Point Military Academy), but they also marched in precise formation in exercising their well-practiced drills. Military inspections were held every Friday. The commandant, Sun Hung, would mount a podium and

direct the drills as bugle calls signaled rapid maneuvers and changes in formation. These exercises enhanced the students' attitude of heroic virtue, raising them to manhood. In every flag-raising and flag-lowering ceremony, everyone stood solemnly, stirred by strong patriotic sentiment. But as the school entered the collegiate stage, there was no longer enrolment in the student corps, because the students were all too fond of lives of freedom. Furthermore, after Lingnan became coeducational, it was unavoidable that there were more social activities, and a greater emphasis on academic study.

Finally, in those years the students enjoyed a popular pastime, called "story-telling." After a notice had been posted, an attentive audience of young and old would congregate on the doorsteps of Swasey Hall. The narratives were swift and exciting, captivating the listeners. They would boo if a speaker made an unreasonable statement. One of the popular master story-tellers was Wan Iu-bun, who recounted tales by Arsène Lupin; another master was Kam Nai-kwong, who recounted fantasies. He would continue his tales in weekly instalments, each time leaving listeners in suspense and eager to hear the next episode. This reflected how Lingnanners were young at heart.

These various student activities all remain as clear as if they had taken place just yesterday. Without Dr Chung's instruction, encouragement and wise guidance, how could we have enjoyed such happy times?