

The Willows

Where Food and Surroundings
are offered with good taste.

Cosy Dell
Niagara Boulevard
Fort Erie North
Canada

the
Legend
of
the Willows...



*This being a story of ancient
folklore which has lived for
centuries and which has been
portrayed in this authentic pic-
ture used as the theme of "The
Willows" Roadside Restaurant.*

WHEN China was young and romance filled the hearts of her people, there lived a powerful Mandarin who was entrusted to a high Customs post by his Emperor.

The Mandarin was a man of great power and affluence which he increased by fraud. This he accomplished through his young secretary and keeper of accounts whose name was Chang, and who was totally innocent of the part he was playing in these transactions.

Most prized of all the Mandarin's possessions was his beautiful young daughter Koong-se who was regarded as the fairest flower in the entire province.

For this daughter so rich in beauty, the Mandarin planned a lofty and regal marriage, but the god of Romance had other designs and he cast his spell of love over the hearts of Chang, the youthful secretary, and the beautiful Koong-se. Secretly these two lovers met beneath the canopy of the drooping branches of nearby willow trees and there they vowed eternal love and constancy.

But their happiness was short-lived, for soon the Mandarin heard of these trysts and resolved to end them. First he forbade his daughter to leave the grounds of the palace except in the company of a faithful handmaid, and next he caused to be erected a high stockade to hide his lovely daughter from all admiring eyes.

But the handmaid knew of the sadness that filled the heart of her young mistress Koong-se, and she resolved to aid the young lovers by allowing them to meet

in the dusk of the evening beneath the graceful willows.

Then came the fateful day when the Mandarin announced that he had found a fitting husband for Koong-se, and named Ta-jin, Prince of high rank, as his future son-in-law, and made it known that when the willows shed their blossoms, the wedding of Koong-se and Ta-jin would take place midst great pomp and splendor.

The young lovers were distraught at this, and conspired to escape by fleeing to a distant island, the whereabouts of which were unknown to the Mandarin, and where they could be wedded and live joyfully.

Being separated, it was almost impossible to plan together for their elopement, but love always finds a way, and Chang conceived the idea of sending messages to his loved one by awaiting a favorable wind and tide, and then, using a cocoanut shell as a tiny boat, he sailed his words of love and plans of escape to his beloved Koong-se.

At the chosen time the young lovers met beneath the willow branches, but ill-fortune attended their carefully made plans. They were observed, and the Mandarin was informed.

Quickly the Mandarin called on his guards to intercept the flight of the young couple, and he joined the chase which led across the bridge that spanned the palace's moat.

But good fortune followed ill, and before the Mandarin could overtake the

lovers, a friendly boatman appeared on the scene and ferried Koong-se and Chang to their secret island where they were wed and lived in the happiness that is born only of true love and understanding.

The legend continues to relate how Koong-se and Chang thwarted all efforts of the Mandarin to part them, and the years rolled on until that day arrived when the Great Keeper called the lovers to his everlasting embrace.

All of this might have been long since forgotten, but it is said that when these two souls, so faithful to each other, departed from the earth, they were born anew in the forms of two gentle doves, and to this day you will see these two beautiful birds flying in and about their love nest in the branches of the willows.

Look closely at the picture and you will see all parts of this ancient story of China: Note the willows with their drooping foliage, the palace, the lovers fleeing across the bridge with the Mandarin in pursuit, the boatman who came to the rescue of the fleeing lovers, and lastly the two doves that symbolize this undying love.

And that, good friend, is the legend of the willows which ends so happily, and we trust that you, too, who spend your hours at "The Willows" and partake of our fare, will experience that satisfying feeling of "all's well that ends well"; of a repast well prepared and delightfully served.

Faithfully yours,

THE WILLOWS