

1937-1947

Government Trade School



Government Trade School's badge



View of the Government Trade School

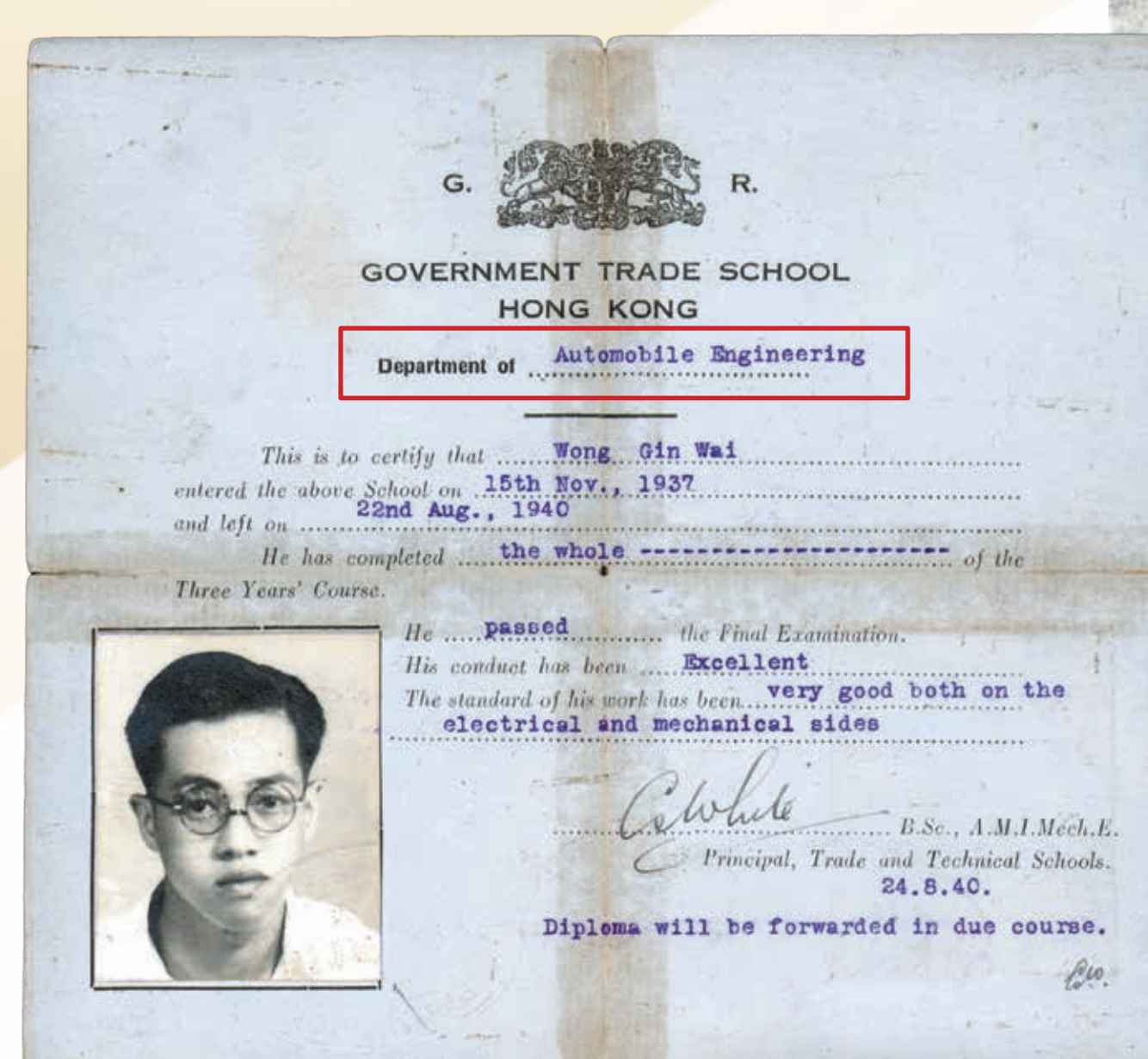
1937

- The History of The Department of Mechanical Engineering dates back to 1937, when the Government Trade School, the early predecessor of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, was established at Wood Road, Wan Chai, with Mr G. White as the Principal.
- The Government Trade School was built in 1935-1936. Three full-time courses were opened in 1937, including a 3-year Engineering course in Automobile maintenance and repair for youths who wished to become garage foremen, etc. There was also an evening course in Engineering for apprentices.

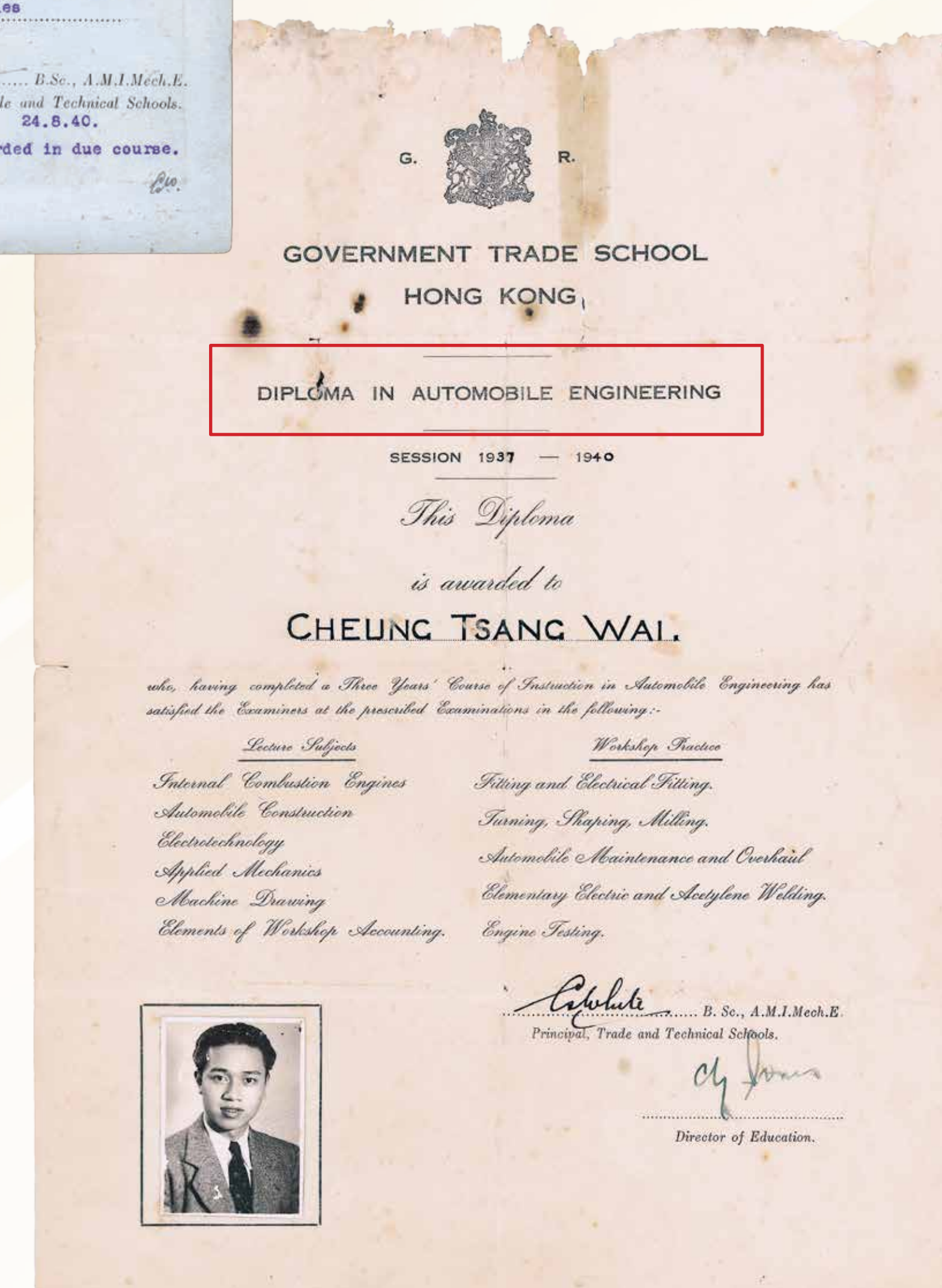


Mr Watt Hoi Kee

- Early lecturers included Mr F. Buckle and Mr Watt Hoi Kee. Mr Watt became the Principal of Hong Kong Technical College in the 1960s and retired in 1965.
- Mr F. Buckle was the Chief Instructor of the Engineering programme, a post which is equivalent to the Department Head.
- The first cohort of about 20 students included Mr Cheung Tsang Wai and Mr Wong Gin Wai. They were graduated under the Department of Automobile Engineering and they obtained the Diploma in Automobile Engineering.



The Certificate of merit conferred on Mr Wong Gin Wai by the Government Trade School (1940)



Diploma in Automobile Engineering obtained by Mr Cheung Tsang Wai from the Government Trade School (1940)



Recent photo of Mr Cheung Tsang Wai

1939

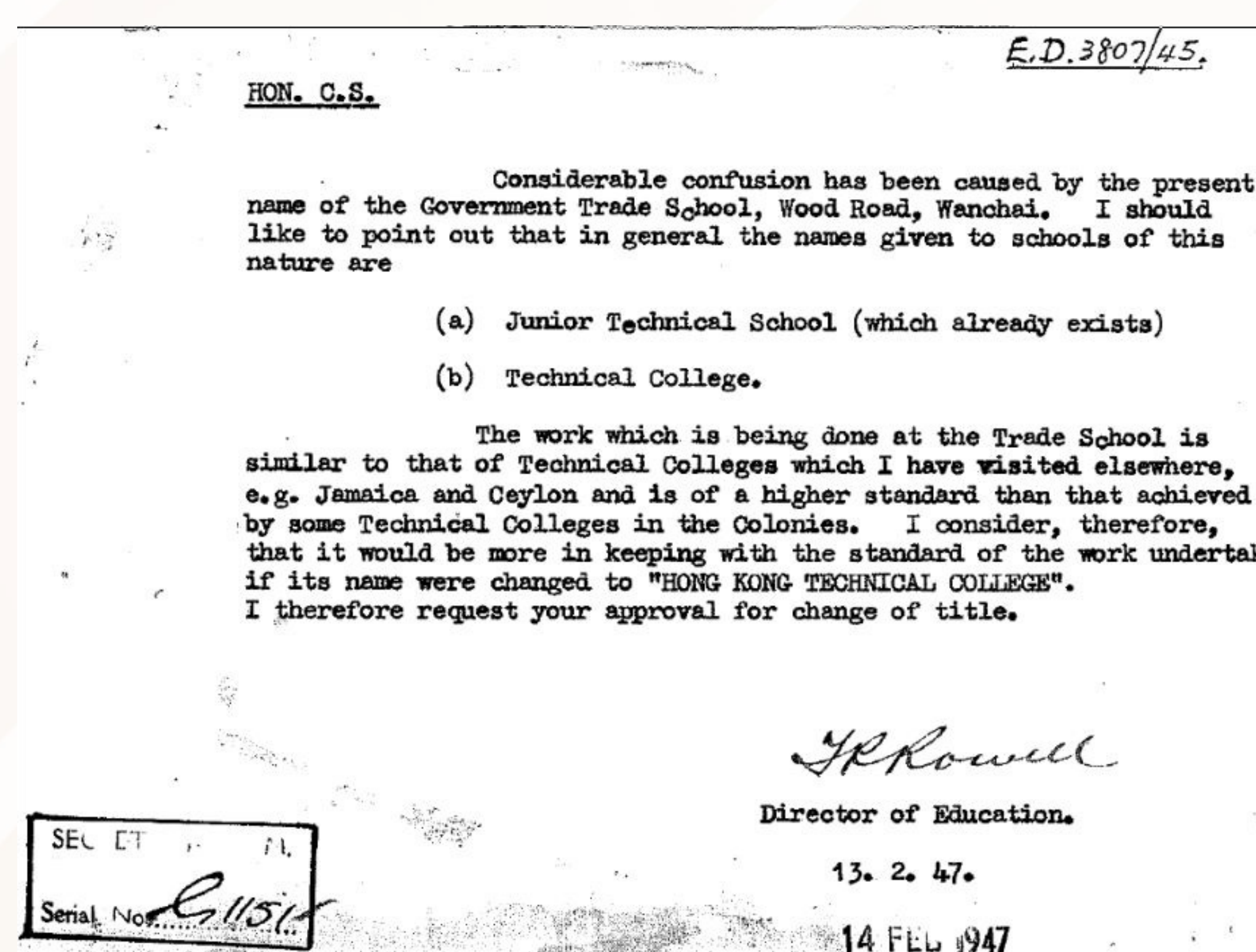
- After the start of the Second World War, courses such as motor vehicle repair work and radar operation were provided for Army personnel, at the request of the Army authorities.

1941

- The Government Trade School was not in operation from 1941 to 1947 due to World War II.

1947

- The Government Trade School reopened and was renamed the Hong Kong Technical College.



An official letter written by The Director of Education, Thomas Richmond Rowell, in 1947 requesting to change the name of the "Government Trade School" to "Hong Kong Technical College"

The complete lists of suitable Chinese Instructors compiled as to decide that English must, at that time, be the medium of instruction, as Mr European Staff, on whom the great bulk of the workshop instruction must fall, could not speak Chinese and the interpreter system is slow, and generally unsatisfactory. The need for courses with Chinese as the medium of instruction has always been recognized, and the progress and whereabouts of past students likely to return as Instructors, have been carefully followed. Sufficient of these are now available to enable the school to be reorganised on a much more satisfactory basis than was previously possible.

With these limitations, the following courses were opened in 1937:-

Auto. Engng. - 3-year course for training of potential Overseas Automobiles, Clerks of Works, etc.

Automotive Engng. - 3-year course on Automobile repair and maintenance, for youths who wished to become garage foremen etc.

Electrician Engng. - 3 months course for steps Radio Officers, transferred from Postmaster General's Department, and considerably extended.

Engineering - 3-year course for apprentices who had either completed 3 years at the Junior Technical School and among apprentices who had completed 3 years in the 'Evening Institutes' during apprenticeship.

Electrician - 3-year course for Carpenters etc. who applied to posts as Foremen.

Electrical Engineering - 3-year course for apprentices at the China Light & Power Company, etc.

Auto. Engng. - 3-year course for apprentices from Taihoon and Sunchoi Dock.

Automotive Engineering - 3 or 5-year course held in Kowloon and Taihoon Dock to enable apprentices to reach necessary standard for 'Engineering' or 'Oligobulding' Courses.

A memorandum written by the first Government Trade School Principal Mr George White in 1941 mentioning the early courses offered by the School