

Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission
P.O. Box 1014
Nevada City, California 95959 info@nevadacountylandmarks.com
530-274-7118

21 October 2022

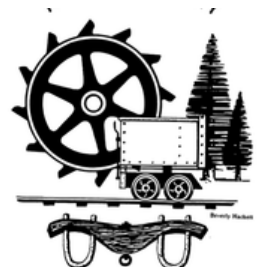
Nevada County Board of Supervisors
950 Maidu Avenue
Nevada City, CA 95959

Honorable Chair and Board Members:

At today's meeting of the Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission, the Commission voted unanimously to recommend to the Board that the attached application for landmark designation of the town of Washington's Chinese Community be approved.

The landmark will commemorate generally Washington's Chinese community, one of the largest Chinese communities in Nevada County during the second half of the 19th century, and specifically the family of pioneer merchant and miner Suey Chung. The applicant is Professor Gordon Chang of Stanford University, who is a descendent of Suey Chung as well as a leading expert on the Chinese participation in the building of the Transcontinental Railroad.

It is anticipated that a plaque will be placed at the top of China Alley, which was one of the principal entryways to the Chinese quarter below. The current property owner has consented to having a plaque placed on the site. It is to be designated as Nevada County Historical Landmark NEV 22-04.



The applicant has provided a thorough and compelling level of research and documentation to accompany its application, which has been reviewed by the Commission for historical accuracy. The application and supporting documentation is enclosed. Commissioner Jerry Martini is to be credited for his dedicated effort in shepherding this application through.

If you approve the application, please forward the resolution and accompanying documents to the County Recorder.

If you have any further questions do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.

Yours truly,


Bernard Zimmerman
Chair

cc. Prof. Gordon Chang w/o enc.





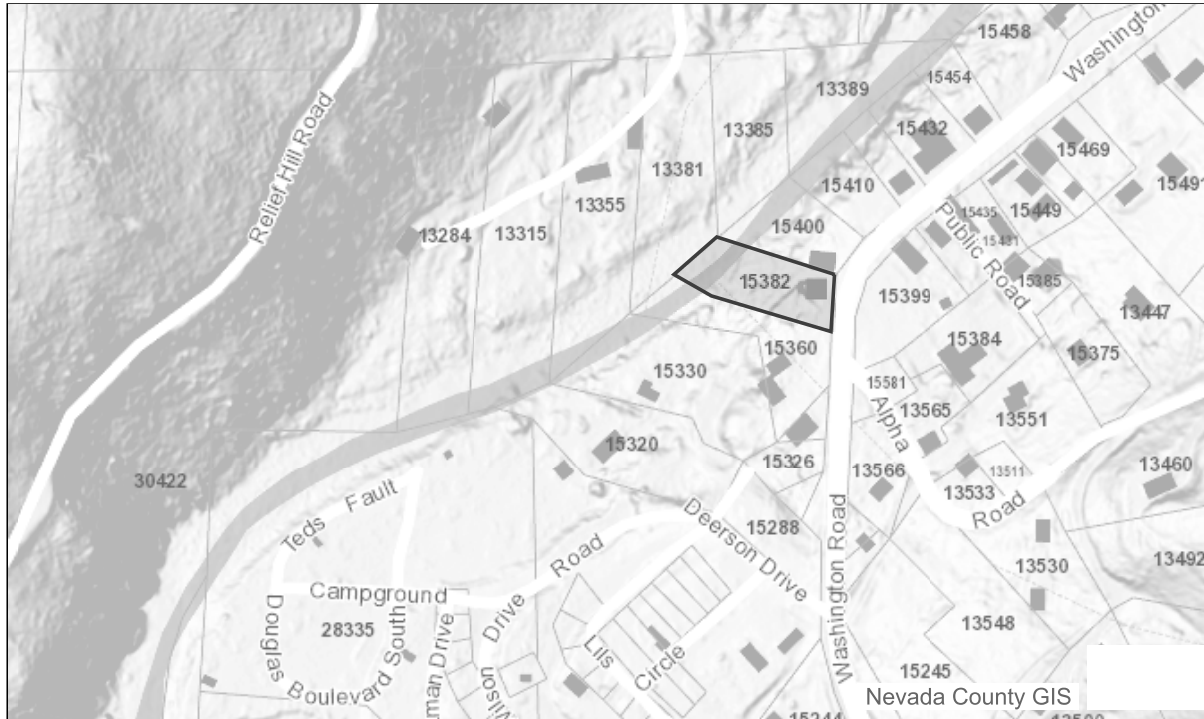
County of Nevada

Nevada County, CA Parcel Report
Data current as of: 11/30/2022

Description: The Parcel Report displays information from a variety of sources – Assessor, Building, Code Enforcement, Environmental Health, and Planning departments to list a few. The report is maintained by the County GIS Division.

Search by Assessor's Parcel Number (APN): **064-060-035-000**

[Search](#)



[View Assessor's Parcel Map PDF](#)

[Site Information](#)

[Property Details](#)

[Districts](#)

[Permits](#)

[Unrecorded Maps](#)

Site Address

15382 WASHINGTON ROAD

Jurisdiction

NEVADA COUNTY

Legal Description

PTN LOT 30 WASHINGTON TOWNSITE

Subdivision

[Washington \(Townsite\)](#)

Owner Data

Roll Year	Owner	Mailing Address	Mailing City, State	Mailing Zip
2022	BANKS GARY	15274 WASHINGTON RD POB 9	WASHINGTON, CA	95986

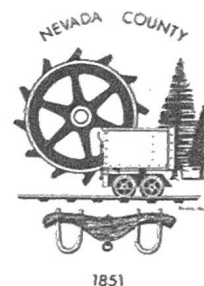
Property Summary

Assessor's Parcel Number	Acreage	Land Value	Improvement Value	Tax Rate Area
<u>064-060-035-000</u>	0.68	\$136,652.00	\$320,608.00	<u>079-001</u>

Property Context

Zoning	Zoning District Map	General Plan	Census Tract	Census Block Group	Max Elevation	Ground Snow Load (lbs/sqft)	Climate Zone	Wind Exposure
<u>C1</u>	<u>95</u>	<u>NC</u>	<u>9.00</u>	<u>3</u>	2,624	49	<u>11</u>	<u>C</u>

County of Nevada
State of California



Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission
Application for Registration of Historical Landmark

Name of proposed landmark - Washington's Chinese Community

Location - 15382 Washington Rd., Washington, California

Name of applicant - Prof. Gordon Chang

Address - [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Home or work phone [REDACTED]

Name and address of owner upon whose property proposed landmark

is located, if owner is not applicant - Gary Banks, 15382 Washington Rd.,
Washington, Cal.

I authorize the placing of a plaque or marker on site.

Gary C Banks
Owner's signature

9/29/22
Date

Brief history and description of proposed landmark

The landmark will commemorate the town of Washington's Chinese community, one of the largest Chinese communities in Nevada County during the second half of the 19th century. It was also the home for many years of the prominent family of town merchant and mine operator Suey Chung, (also known as Fong Chow) whose very accomplished children were the first Chinese Americans to enter many professional fields in California. The applicant is Mr. Chung's grandson. It is anticipated that a commemorative plaque will be placed on a boulder across the entrance to China Alley on Washington Road. The Alley led down to the Chinese quarter.

Historically significant aspects or properties of proposed landmark

Chinese immigrants had a viable and essential presence in Nevada County's Washington Township from the earliest days of the Gold Rush. Chinese arrived here in the 1850s, at which time about 20% of the County's population was Chinese. Chinese miners searched the South Yuba River for gold, both as independent miners and as hired labor. As gold mining progressed into a multi-layered industry, the Chinese provided a necessary and dependable labor force that allowed the industry to advance at a remarkable pace.

Chinese workers contributed greatly to the creation of the intricate system of ditches and canals allowing the search for gold to evolve and flourish. Chinese wood choppers provided much needed timber and fuel. Chinese men and women worked as miners, cooks, housekeepers, gardeners, launderers, merchants, saloon keepers and even soap root diggers that supplied raw material for cosmetics and mattress stuffing. This despite enduring persistent prejudice, such as discriminatory taxes, violence, segregation, and even a prohibition against their testifying in court against whites. All this contributed to the passage of the first Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882.

The Chinese Community that developed along the river in the town of Washington became a hub of support not only for the Chinese population of the area but also for Washington and the outlying communities. Vegetable farmers distributed their crops and merchants provided goods both up and down river and beyond. The town grew large enough to establish its own temple or joss house. China Alley, located between the current general store and 15400 Washington Rd, was one of the principal entryways to the Chinese quarter below.

The viability and importance of Washington's Chinese quarter grew to the point that at times the Chinese population of Washington Township exceeded its non-Chinese neighbors. The 1880 census lists 527 residents of Washington township, over a hundred of whom were Chinese.

Citizens of Washington's Chinese community became influential enough to merit ongoing coverage in the local newspapers. An exemplary resident was Suey Chung (later better known as Fong Chow), a town merchant and supervisor of the Omega hydraulic mine located not far from town. His engagement and marriage to a lovely woman from Marysville, Lonnie Tom, and the birth of their children, were regularly reported in the Grass Valley Morning Union. The couple had eleven children (Theodore, Alice, Minnie, Taft, Helen, Hiram, Albert, Marian, Martha, Leslie, and Lorraine). They named their first three sons after Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, and Hiram Johnson to honor their American citizenship. All the children were "China Gold" to their parents and went on to have families and accomplished careers throughout the country. With the outbreak of World War II, son Albert joined the U.S. Army, rose to be a lieutenant, and died in action in Alaska. He was awarded posthumously the Silver Star, Purple Heart, and Congressional Gold Medal.

As hydraulic mining became restricted following the 1884 Sawyer decision, and the economy and population of Washington Township declined, the Chinese quarter dwindled and disappeared. The Chinese along with many other residents left. The Fong Family relocated to Vallejo. The joss house was vandalized for lumber in 1929. And yet the presence, the contribution, and the importance of the Chinese to the history of the town of Washington and Nevada County endures.

How will the landmark be protected and maintained?

By the town of Washington under the direction of its Fire Department, with the assistance of the Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission.

Bibliography. Cite or attach available books, records, articles or other materials pertaining to the proposed landmark.

Books and articles:

China Gold, by Theresa A. Sparks, Academy Library Guild Fresno California
1954

Historical Notes of Early Washington, Nevada County, California Mining District
by Robert J. and Grace J, Slyter

The Chinese and Hydraulic Mining in the Far West, by Randall Rohe,
mininghistoryassociation.org

A History of Two Chinatowns in Grass Valley and Nevada City, by Thomas Arthur
Deeble, Searls Library, 1972

From Chinese to Chinese American: Chinese Women & Families in a Sierra
Nevada Town, by David Beesley, Available at <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25158476?read-now=1>

Washington Township Population, 1880 U. S. Census

Wikipedia article on Alice Fong Yu at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alice_Fong_Yu
viewed 23 August 2022.

Attached newspaper articles from newspapers.com and The Morning Union

Historical or civil records: (e.g., ownership, assessments etc.)

Other: (e.g. photographs, prints or drawings. Please list and attach separately)

There are photographs of Washington's Chinese quarter and Lonnie Tom in the
Beesley article

Two photographs from the Fong family descendants.



Applicant's signature

Date 9/27/22

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This completed form and all related documents shall be sent to the:

Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission
Attention: Chairman
P. O. Box 1014, Nevada City, Cal. 95959

Attachments and related documents may be submitted in electronic format to
info@nevadacountylandmarks.com

An application must be considered solely on its historic or architectural merits
and not for commercial gain, political benefits, or other non historical reasons.

An individual Commissioner can advise and counsel an applicant, but all
applications must be considered by the full Commission, meeting in regular
session.

**Historical Notes of Early Washington, Nevada County, California Mining District
by Robert J. and Grace J. Slyter, pp. 80-85**

'A CHINAMAN' !

'A Chinaman' was killed at Washington in the claim of the Chinese Company on the Yuba River. Yesterday the rope from the boom to the masthead of a derrick broke and a large rock which it had suspended, fell upon the Chinaman, crushing his head and killing him instantly. *6. June 1870.

At the Washington mine, Ormonde, Monday noon, a Chinese was instantly killed by a fall of 200 feet down the shaft. He was at work at the 200 foot level, on a staging, when the timbers broke loose and the descent of his body was not checked until it reached the 400 ft. level. His neck was broken, his skull fractured and he was otherwise maimed. *4. December 10, 1890.

'A Chinaman' fell down the air chute at the Spanish mine, near Washington and was instantly killed. When discovered he was nearly buried under ore. His remains were taken care of by his countrymen and his funeral took place the following day. *9. May 23, 1904.

'A Chinaman' was killed in the Baltic mine. Rolling stones killed another on Scotchman Creek. The files of the old Nevada County newspapers tell the same story time after time--'A Chinaman' killed. Just 'A Chinaman'. Seldom was trouble taken to get his name.

Ling Hing, popular teamster, returned to Washington today from San Francisco. *4. April 29, 1905.

(Ling Hing: Teamster. Registered voter. N. C. Index to Precinct Register. 1901).

The Chinese maiden of sixteen summers, who has long been bespoken as the wife-to-be of Ling Hing of the town of Washington, arrived last night on the train from San Francisco according to schedule, and was conveyed in a carriage to the home of Ling Hing, where upon her arrival they were married according to the rites and ceremonies of their race. Some of the county-seat Chinese went with her to Washington to attend the wedding. *8. September 14, 1905.

Born at Washington, April 30, 1907: To the wife of Ling Hing--a son. *8. May 3, 1907.

THE WASHINGTON BRASS BAND

'The Washington Brass Band, kindly and favorably known throughout the county, was organized in 1862; under the leader, Mr. Philip Goyne'.

Band members are:

Philip Goyne	Miner
John McBean	Saloon Keeper
John Goyne	Miner
A. W. Potter	Occupation not given
Dr. H. F. Wilkinson	Miner
J. H. Adams	Miner
John W. Brown	Miner

*3.

A picture, dated July 1866; shows the band lined up across the main street of Washington, with a back ground of shake-roofed buildings. Nine serious, mustached men in black hats, white shirts and dark trousers, with instruments held in various positions, and a flag boy at the head of the line.

The picture lists the members names as:

George A. Grissel	Flag Boy
John McBean	Saloon Keeper
Philip Goyne (Conductor)	Miner
John Goyne	Miner
Fritz Meister	Miner
Mr. Moulton	Occupation not given
Dr. H. F. Wilkinson	Miner
J. H. Adams	Miner
John W. Brown	Miner
Name of the ninth man is not given	

Considering the methods of travel and the condition of the roads of that day, it is hard to believe now how this band covered the area credited to it by the newspapers of the time. It is mentioned as being in every parade in almost every town in the county. During the Civil War it played at every fund raising event for the welfare of the Union Army. Always--'without compensation'. Dances in Nevada City, Dutch flat, Rough & Ready, Graniteville, etc. Weddings, lodge parties, political rallies--'Music By The Washington Brass Band'.

'On almost every public occasion of recent date, gotten up by the munificent public spirit of Nevada City or Grass Valley, the services of this excellent band have been brought into requisition, and besides the substantial rewards given them, the citizens of Nevada City have presented Mr. Goyne, their leader, a beautiful silver mounted cornet with echo attachment, as an earnest expression of their kind appreciation.

*1.

How many Chinese were there in the Washington District at the height of mining activity?

They couldn't vote, so there are no records that can so easily set the Caucasians in the District.

'Population, including Mongolians, is about 350'. *3. 1867.

In the town of Washington--'and a population, including a considerable number of Mongolians, is about 350'. *1. 1880.

'A gentleman from Washington informs us that in the vicinity of the village of Washington, there are over 100 Chinese and that they outnumber the white population. There are mostly engaged in mining on the Yuba River and Scotchman Creek'. *6. May 14, 1870.

From a 'Register of Domestic Money Orders' issued at the post office in Washington, from order #1, issued August 21, 1892; to money order #3500, issued October 19, 1899; 'A Chinaman' bought money orders and gave his name as -- Luri Sing, Ah Wing, Yet Chang, Tuck Lee, Suey Chung, Ah Juan, Wah Hang, Sang Lee, Ah Bang, Hee Kee, Sung Chung, Ah Kate, Wong Kaug, Mee Lee, Ah Woo, Ah Soon, Ah Lu, Fong Chow, Yah Moon, Poo Soo, Chine Wing, Ye Lung, Sam Sing, Chung Lee, Ah Sam, Ah Foo, Way Kee, Ah Tom, Gee We Lung, etc.

Ranging from sums of one to 100 dollars, these money orders were made out mostly payable to Chinese names in Nevada City, Sacramento and San Francisco.

A few 'A Chinaman' reached the Washington District very early in the 1850s. He first worked for Caucasian miners or worked over the gravel, and did very well, which the Caucasian gold-seekers passed up as being 'poor'. As the gravel claims became 'worked-out' and hard rock mining came in, he worked in the tunnels side by side with the Caucasian, always for thirty to forty percent less pay, and doing the harder work--mucking.

'A Chinaman' formed companies, taking up or leasing ground from Caucasian owners. In groups they located good timber and cut lagging and mine timbers to sell to Caucasian miners.

(It is suggested that you read 'China Gold', by Theresa A. Sparks. This book seems to be the only written record of Chinese mining activity in the Washington District).

Out of employment when the railroad over the Sierra Nevada mountains was completed in the late 1860's. 'A Chinaman' came into the District in large numbers. He became a cook or waiter in the hotels and mine boarding houses. Old pictures of groups of miners in different mines in the 1870 to 1910 period, nearly always show the clean, slim form of a Chinese cook in the back-ground.

Around 1930 the writer talked to 'Old-Timers' of the District, who thirty to fifty years before had worked -- one Caucasian miner, one Chinese mucker. Of 'A Chinaman' they always spoke of with respect. Many claimed they would never work in a mine that didn't have a Chinese cook. He was always clean. Always had a pair of blue pants, a shirt and a white apron drying on a line behind the cook house stove. Never chewed tobacco while he was making bread. Knew how to make pies, season meat, and didn't just dope the meat with saltpeter to keep it from spoiling, but had a 'cooler' in some damp place in the tunnel. And never had a bottle of whiskey 'hidden-out', from which he took a frequent 'pull'. Was always happy in warm or cold weather and 'easy to get along with'.

During 'the season' vegetables were raised 'down on the river' and peddled to the

Caucasian house keepers of the towns by 'A Chinaman', with two baskets suspended on a long pole over his shoulders. His skill as a gardener gave him vegetables to sell in the spring long before those raised in the gardens of the Caucasians were ready.

In the early 1900's, Wing Lung ran a vegetable stand in the Washington China town. He shipped in fruit and vegetables that were out of season locally, as well as salmon and other fish, for 'Flidee'. He was often seen in Omega, Maybert, Gaston and even as far as Graniteville. His only competition with Caucasian stores was the barrel of whiskey, sold in all stores at a standard price of three--dollars a gallon--bring your own container.

In later years 'A Chinaman' often drove teams and pack-horses. Ling Hing being a teamster in the District until about World War I.

The town of Washington was the shopping center of the District for 'A Chinaman'. At least two Chinese stores operated here until about 1914. One was owned and operated for years by Suey Chung and another by Mock Hing. The store of Ah Bang is mentioned in the delinquent tax list of 1885. Also in 1896 when the Scotchman dam collapsed.

One small Chinese store also operated in Omega for years.

Also in Washington was the Chinese Temple or Joss House. This was vandalized by Caucasians of the town after the Chinese were all gone, about 1929, for lumber to build garages and for fire wood.

(Theresa A. Sparks, author of 'China Gold', credits Suey Chung with initiation of the move that erected the Chines Temple in Washington).

The last Chinese cook in the District left in 1928. He was employed at the Spanish mine. *12.

Ed Carey, last of the old-time teamsters in the District, often told of taking the last of 'A Chinaman', very sick and old, from Washington to the County Hospital in Nevada City, late in the 1920's.

The only picture known to exist of the Washington Chinatown was taken from the North Bloomfield road. It shows a mass of unpainted buildings stretching along the river bank from a point of the present Washington store (1966), then the town butcher shop, to a point almost to the mouth of Washington Creek.

'One of the great secrets of the success of the Chinese miners is their neatness and economy of labor, and nice calculation of time. They do all the work in such a manner that nothing has to be done over again, no rock has to be twice moved and every particle of dirt once removed is so placed as to be ever afterwards out of the way. In this way they secure neatness and order in future operations. Miners generally might benefit in this respect by their example'. *10. April 21, 1858.

'Chinese Ecomomy. These people prosecute their mining operations with much neatness and at little cost, substituting labor for capital. In fluming they wall up a ditch with stone and earth instead of the use of lumber, as the Americans generally do'. *10. August 25, 1858.

The bodies of three Chinese were found last week in a canyon near Washington, by a man who was out hunting. The discovery caused quite a sensation among the Chinese. An investigation will be made. *4. May 13, 1861.

Some thirty-Chinese, recent arrivals from China, came to Nevada City by stage

from Colfax yesterday. Gathering up their bundles they took off for North Bloomfield, where they have been employed on the North Bloomfield ditch. *15. October 7, 1868.

Fifteen Chinese came down from Washington today seeking some location to spend the winter months. *4. September 16, 1870.

The California 'The Chinese Must Go' ruckus of the late 1870's touched the Washington District. An armed body of men marched on the camps of the Blue Tent Company and the Fall Creek Company, who were said to be constructing a ditch and flumes with all Chinese labor in the Fall Creek and Texas Creek areas. *4. Numerous articles and letters--August 1878.

An accident occurred at Rocky Bar in which two Chinese were seriously, if not fatally injured. They were putting a charge of black powder in a boulder and used in tamping a sledge and an iron bar. The powder was accidentally ignited and the explosion tore the boulder to pieces. One of the Chinese was sitting on the boulder at the time. *4. June 6, 1880.

A Chinese mining on Canyon Creek, four miles above Washington, was killed Monday by a derrick falling upon him. His head was crushed and an arm and leg broken. *4. June 21, 1881.

The Alpha Hydraulic mine employs ten or more Chinese and only three or four white men. This mine and the Hathaway mine seem to be the only corporations in the Washington District employing Chinese, although there are numerous Chinese who have leased claims and are working them. *4. May 18, 1882.

The Omega Hydraulic Mining Company has been cleaning up their claims at Omega. Last Thursday night Joe Williams, the night watchman, saw two Chinese in the ground sluice and shot at them. They ran away, leaving behind them a sack containing a mixture of amalgam and dirt that they had scraped up. Williams hurried off and getting assistance returned to search for the others. They had returned and got the sack and carried it away. Monday night the men worked at the claims until about eleven o'clock and nearly finished cleaning up. They then left, but after getting to the top of the bank looked back and saw lights in the sluice. R. R. Tully and Wm. Hampton, with a shot-gun and rifle, slipped up as close as they could and shot at the robbers, shattering the leg of one and wounding the other in the head and groin. Both are believed fatally hurt. They were carried to an old cabin and left, but since that time they have been spirited away, probably by some countrymen. *4. August 10, 1882.

Chinese names often appeared in the annual list of delinquent taxpayers of Nevada County:

Ah Sam Co, Ye Sang, agent. Claim on Brandy Flat. Also known as the Sam Bower's claim.

Wing Fat Tong Co. Claim on South Yuba River, opposite Grissel's hotel.

Hong Fong. Chinatown, Washington. Lot on site of Chinatown facing the South Yuba, nearly opposite Ah Bang & Co's. store.

Ah Chee. In Chinatown, Washington. Lot opposite lot of Hop Sing & Co.

Ah You. In Chinatown, Washington. Lot bounded by Hop Ling.

Ah Sam. In Chinatown, Washington. Lot near Ah Chee's property.

Mow Fung. In Chinatown, Washington. Lot by slaughter house, known as the garden house lot.

The delinquent taxes on this list ranged from ninety-seven cents to \$10.50. *4. February 4, 1885.

A mining Company, prospecting in Washington Township, had three shifts of two Caucasians and one Chinese to each shift, engaged in sinking a shaft. One of the Chinese, who was operating the hoisting rig, carelessly let a bucket drop and the two Caucasians had a narrow escape. As a result they refused to go to work again unless the Chinese was 'bounced.' He was promptly 'fired'. *4. May 1887.

The anti-mining spies say that eight Chinese were arrested last Thursday at Alpha for hydraulicking. *4. June 1, 1887.

Four Chinese miners were arrested for hydraulic mining near Omega. They were fined \$500 each, or on default to serve one day in jail for each dollar of the fine. *4. April 24, 1888.

In Washington 124 Chinese have been given certificates of registration by the U. S. Deputy Collector of Internal Revenue. *4. May 7, 1894.

Yee Sing, a Chinese who has been engaged in mining in Washington District for many years, and was formerly engaged in merchandising, is going back to China. The old fellow is suffering from quick-consumption and realizes he is not going to live long. Two countrymen, who are going with him, started from Washington to go to Gaston, to see their brother, who is a cook at the mine. The trip through the snow was a rough one, and one of the men gave out. His companion reached the mine and informed the men of what had happened. Charley Lily, foreman of the mine, found the exhausted Chinese, nearly dead from the cold, and carried him on his back to the mine, where the unfortunate man was restored. A little longer in the snow and he would have perished. *4. January 25, 1894.

'Thirty Dollar Reward.

Ah Fong left the Baltic Mine for Graniteville, on snowshoes, January 20, 1895; and has not been heard from since. It is believed that he perished in the snow. A reward of thirty-dollars will be paid to the person finding the remains'. Signed--He Oy or Lung Moon.

(An advertisement published in The Transcript, of June 10, 1895).

Delinquent Taxes #3361. Wing Lee Long. Two houses in Chinatown, Washington. Also gravel claim, commencing at Kohler's barn in Washington and running south into the hill a distance of 800 feet to a tree blazed, thence west to the south side of the Yuba River, etc. Total tax--\$13.15. *4. June 5, 1896.

Suey Chung, a Chinese merchant of Washington, was in Nevada City today arranging for his marriage to a Chinese damsel of Marysville. The marriage will take place in twenty-six days. Chung engaged a four-horse rig to go down for his 'new-wife', whom he has never seen. *4. November 19, 1901.

Saturday morning Henry Lane went to Marysville with a four-horse rig to bring up the affianced of Suey Chung, the Chinese merchant of Washington. He returned yesterday morning with the girl and the vehicle was decorated in grand style with Chinese lanterns and red silk. The carriage was partitioned off and the Chinese beauty was hidden from the rude eyes of the white man. The groom-to-be followed in a two-horse rig. After changing horses the wedding party proceeded to Washington, where the ceremony was performed last night. *4. December 16, 1901.

Suey Chung and wife arrived yesterday afternoon from Washington on their way to Marysville to attend the wedding of Man Loy, a North San Juan merchant, to a maid of the Flowering Kingdom. The bride-to-be is a sister of Mrs. Suey Chung. *9. March 30, 1904.

Ling Hing, popular teamster, returned to Washington today from San Francisco. *4.
April 29, 1905.

(Ling Hing: Teamster. Registered voter. N. C. Index to Precinct Register. 1901).

The Chinese maiden of sixteen summers, who has long been bespoken as the wife-to-be of Ling Hing of the town of Washington, arrived last night on the train from San Francisco according to schedule, and was conveyed in a carriage to the home of Ling Hing, where upon her arrival they were married according to the rites and ceremonies of their race. Some of the county-seat Chinese went with her to Washington to attend the wedding. *8. September 14, 1905.

Born at Washington, April 30, 1907: To the wife of Ling Hing--a son. *8. May 3,
1907

The Saga of a Chinese Family in California 1852-1996

Bury My Bones In America 余大

By Lani Ah Tye Farkas



From San Francisco to the Sierra Gold Mines

1880: CHINESE EXCLUSION

Nevada City Ordinance: Jerry Brady, the son of an Irish miner in Nevada City, California, remembers that his father described "Ah Tie" as "the rich Chinaman dressed in white."¹ Yee Ah Tye apparently went to California's Nevada County in the 1870s to oversee Hop Sing investments.

There were more than one hundred Chinese in the vicinity of the town of Washington in the 1870s. Mostly engaged in mining, they outnumbered the White population. The *Nevada City Daily National Gazette* reported that the Chinese seldom made the news with any quarrels or unlawful acts.²

While living in La Porte, Yee Ah Tye presumably oversaw the Hop Sing investments in Nevada County. Nevada County assessment books for the years 1876 and 1877 list Hop Sing with general merchandise worth two hundred dollars.

In 1878, Charles Foran sold to "Hop Sing & Company Chinaman" a mining claim known as Brass Wire Bar, opposite Washington. For the price of \$250 the claim included "a dam site and dam about 600 feet ... with a ditch and flume conveying water from said dam ... for the purpose of mining."³ In 1879, records show that Hop Sing and Company paid a tax assessment for improvements on the claim.

However, these investments were short-lived, perhaps due to anti-Chinese attitudes that were far more severe than those in La Porte. In response to the California Constitution of 1879, Nevada City enacted an ordinance in 1880 that removed the Chinese from its city limits.⁴ The presence of the Chinese was said to be "dangerous to the well-being of the community and injurious to public health, safety and public morals." All Chinese were removed from Nevada City within sixty days of the ordinance's passage. Any Chinese who failed to comply was either fined \$15 to \$100 or imprisoned for no more than ten days; sometimes they faced both penalties. Failure of a Chinese to move within forty-eight hours after a conviction constituted a new offense. Perhaps this ordinance prompted Hop Sing and Company to sell the Brass Wire Bar mining claim to Ah Fat in 1881.

Anti-Chinese Leagues

An image of La Porte's Chinatown in 1880 can be glimpsed in the 1880 United States census of Plumas County and its listing of trades or professions:

six merchants
one clerk in store
one barber
one house of prostitution
one prostitute
one laundry
*one opium den*⁵

The main merchandise store in La Porte Chinatown was Hop Sing and Company, headed by fifty-seven-year-old Ah Tye. Two other merchants, Li Wo (age forty-nine) and Sam Ting (age fifty-two), were listed as partners with Shok (age forty-eight) as the store clerk.

Hop Sing and Company built a boarding house for twenty-five Chinese miners, with three additional outhouses. Three of the boarders were married, and the others were single male miners.

By 1880, La Porte's Chinese miners had dwindled to twenty-seven. This number, however, failed to account for the Chinese laborers who had gone to work in nearby mining communities; they were listed in other counties. For example, in St. Louis, a mining community about four miles from La Porte, 150 Chinese were employed to finish a ditch from St. Louis to Grass Flat.⁶

That same year, "Ah Tye and Company" paid \$11,500 for 2,300 feet of mining property at Rattlesnake in Sierra County. Included in the purchase was a cabin, a blacksmith shop, a reservoir, sluice boxes, and flumes.⁷ This mine probably had another sizable Chinese work force. The partners in Ah Tye's firm were two La Porte merchants, Ah Wah and

David Beesley

FROM CHINESE TO CHINESE WOMEN & FAMILIES

Ta Yow, Ah How, Lu Loi, Lonnie Tom, and Fannie Gin were Chinese women who lived in Nevada County, California before 1920. As with most Chinese women in America they do not have a history—if, by this, one means historians have not paid them much attention. Belonging to the first two generations of Chinese in California, they represent an important transition occurring in this overseas Asian community. These women, and a small number of other Chinese immigrants living in the Sierra Nevada, changed from being members of an insular, sojourner-oriented group, into Chinese Americans. If their lives can be considered as representative, by studying them we can broaden our understanding of Chinese immigration to America, and the families that developed from these immigrant origins.¹

The number of women of Chinese descent in the United States before 1920 was small, representing less than 5% of the Chinese who lived in the United States between 1850 and 1924. Until recently, not much has been written about these women, presumably because of a lack of primary source material. But this is not true. Information was available, but historians seemed to have lacked interest in pursuing such research.²

In the 1960s, new attention to the



CHINESE AMERICAN

IN A SIERRA NEVADA TOWN



study of ethnic groups other than just Euro-Americans increased, and this interest, coupled with the effects of the women's movement in America, has produced a significant body of new writing concerning Chinese women. In addition, interest in studies of local history—spearheaded by European and American social historians—has served to focus attention on the lives of women such as those mentioned above.³

In Nevada County, California, manuscript census materials from 1860, 1870, 1880, 1900, and 1910 provide data about Chinese women and families. In addition, letters, newspapers, inquests, trial data, published and unpublished secondary data, and oral interviews also illuminate their lives.

The censuses show that at least 400 women of Chinese descent lived in Nevada County between 1850 and 1920. Others went uncounted because census takers tended to undercount when it came to those of Chinese descent. Enumerated or not, these women either came to Nevada County from China, or were children born in the United States to Chinese parents.⁴

Those who emigrated were part

Ah Gin, a successful Glenbrook farmer in Nevada County, with his family. Courtesy the author.



China Street in Grass Valley, date unknown. Courtesy Nevada County Historical Society (hereinafter cited NCHS).

of the 8,800 Chinese women estimated to have come to the United States by 1880. These women of the pioneer generation of Chinese in America made up about 5% of the total Chinese population in the United States. Before 1880, many were likely to have been prostitutes. After 1880 they increasingly were the wives or children of resident Chinese males. Nevada County women of Chinese descent fit this description generally, although some census evidence for female heads of households exists.⁵

Economic development of the Sierra Nevada provided employment for Chinese and non-Chinese

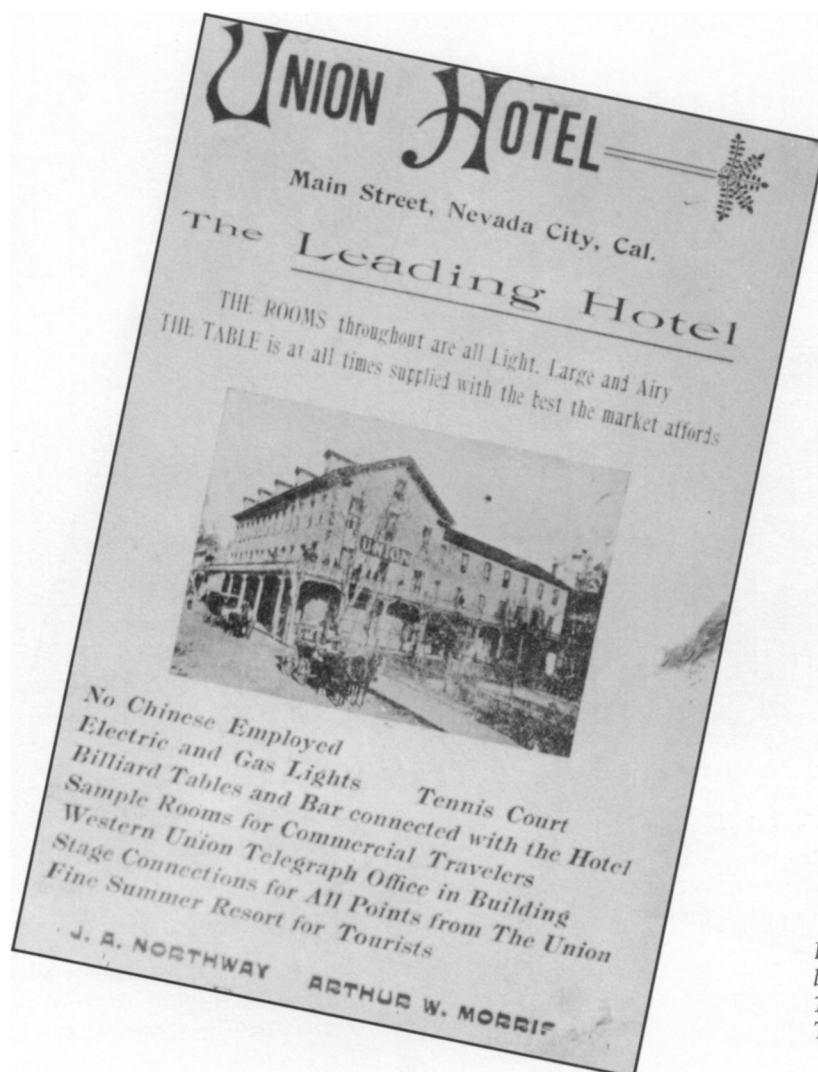
alike between the 1850s and 1860s. The most important economic activities included mining, railroad, and timber related industries, commercial enterprises, and urban service. Most counties in the Sierra Nevada suffered a significant loss of their Chinese residents with the decline of placer mining and the completion of the Central Pacific Railroad. Mining and railroad building had provided the largest number of jobs for the Chinese immigrant males. But Nevada County, along with Calaveras, Mariposa, Placer, Sierra, Trinity, and Tuolumne counties, saw many Chinese remain because of other economic opportunities.⁶

In the case of Nevada County, employment possibilities in the lumber and hydraulic mining industries, vegetable gardening, and domestic or commercial service occupations provided an economic base for the

development of relatively stable "China Towns" in Nevada City, Grass Valley, Truckee, Washington, and North San Juan. It was in, or close by, these urban centers that most women of Chinese descent in Nevada County lived. Their lives illustrate, at least for the other stable Chinese communities of the Sierra Nevada, changes in the Chinese pioneer generation.⁷

The census data from 1860, 1870, 1880, 1900, and 1910 list women of Chinese descent in several different ways. These include an ambiguous designation called "at home," which from context, that is, several young women living together but not listed as wives or children, probably meant that they were prostitutes. In some instances children were given this

David Beesley received his Ph.D. in History from the University of Utah in 1968. He is a member of the History Department, Sierra College, located in Rocklin, California.



Evidence of an organized boycott of Chinese labor in Nevada City, one which failed in 1882. However, a like effort succeeded in Truckee. Courtesy NCHS.

same designation, but are clearly distinguishable from the likely prostitutes. Only the census for 1870 listed prostitutes specifically. Another category was wife or keeping house.⁸

In 1880, the census listed ten women from Truckee as railroad workers. Because no other women are listed from that busy rail and lumber center for that year, and the women are listed on the same page as a number of male railroad workers, it is reasonable to assume that the census taker was in error. The women probably belong in other categories.⁹

Because most of the women in Nevada County before 1880 were likely to have been prostitutes, and because some of the first wives came from this occupation group, let us consider them first. The manuscript census tells us something about

their ages. The oldest of these women was fifty, the youngest, fourteen; their average age was twenty-four. Some of the prostitutes had young children, listed as born in California. These abstract numbers do not tell us very much about the lives of these women, but recently published studies make it clear that their lives were frequently short and cruel.¹⁰ To give content to their experiences, one has to move beyond the census to newspaper accounts, trial data, and inquests.

These sources show that Chinese prostitutes in Nevada County faced several possibilities in their lifetimes. These included kidnapping or legally supported abduction, violent confrontations with "clients," murder, suicide, or abandonment in sickness. A sixth, and probably more pleasant prospect, was marriage or some other escape from

prostitution. The focus here will be on the first and last of these possibilities.¹¹

The threat of kidnapping or legally supported abduction of women was a common problem. Brothel operators and pimps, aided by lawyers, used illegal and legal methods to seize or secure the return of unwilling women, some of whom could have been legally married at the time they were abducted. For example, in 1861, the Nevada (City) *Journal* reported an attempted abduction of a Chinese woman. As it stated, a man named Ah Wau had been charged with theft by another man called Ah Cut. While Ah Wau was in jail, Ah Cut abducted a woman named Ah Soo who had been purchased earlier



The celebration of Bomb Day, a popular Chinese event, in Grass Valley, date unknown. Courtesy NCHS.

by Ah Wau for \$400.00. Ah Cut then sold the woman for \$300.00. Under protest at his trial, Ah Wau convinced the authorities that he was the victim of a plot.¹²

The court sent for Ah Soo to testify. But Ah Cut arranged for another woman to impersonate her. This woman claimed that she had not been kidnapped, but instead had gone willingly with Ah Cut. Ah Wau, fortunately, exposed the impersonator. After the real Ah Soo was brought to court, she testified that she had been kidnapped by Ah Cut. The judge then dismissed charges against Ah Wau and married him to Ah Soo at their request.¹³

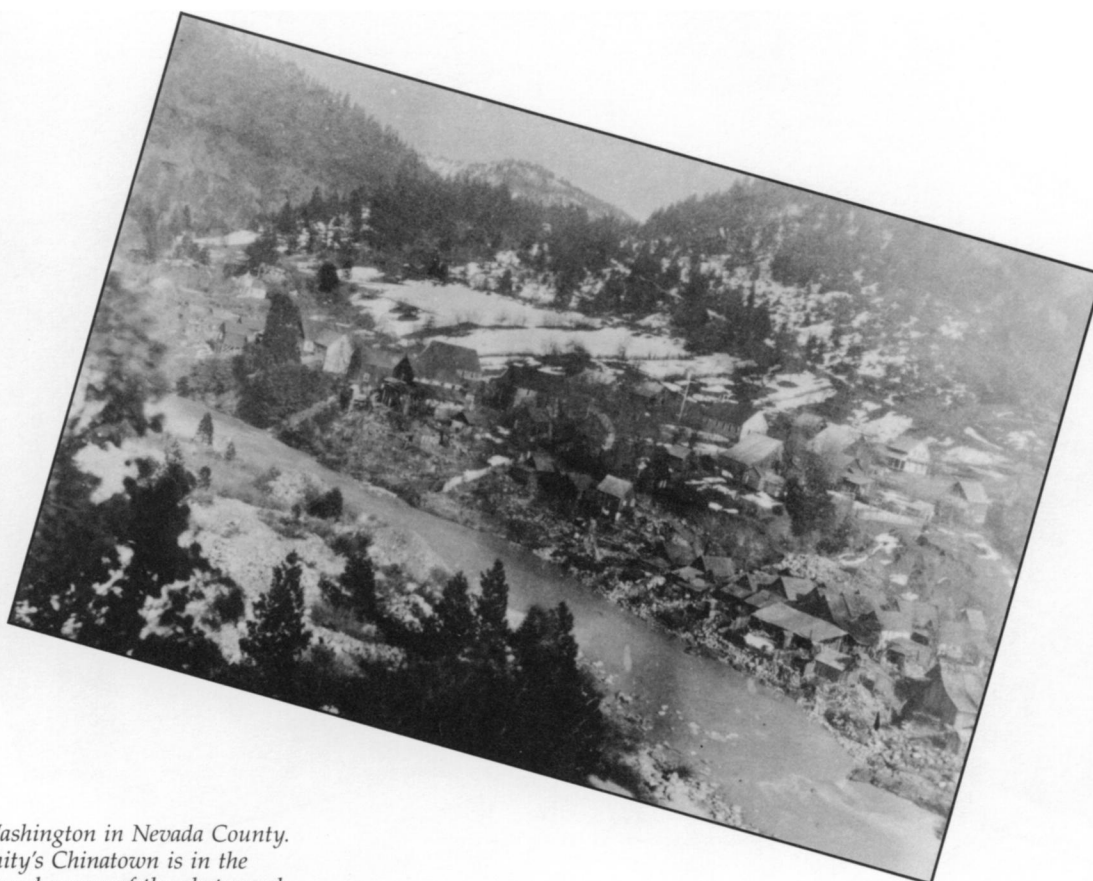
A similar case that year involved the arrest of three Chinese women in Nevada City on a charge of grand larceny by a Sacramento policeman. A newspaper account stated that it was "the usual complaint," implying

that the ruse of charging a woman with a crime so as to have her held until brothel keepers could arrive with a lawyer, was commonly employed. After control was secured, the charges were dropped and the women were forced back into prostitution. The newspaper said, "They are probably abducted, as one of the women has been living as the wife of an industrious Chinaman some months, in this city." The paper commented on the loud wails and lamentations of the women as they were taken away.¹⁴

In 1873, a similar use of the legal system to kidnap a Chinese woman led to violence. Ah Quee, of the mining town of North San Juan, tried to secure control of a Truckee woman named Sin Moy. Under Ah Quee's prompting, the town constable and a four-man posse entered the Chinese section of Truckee to try

to arrest her. The residents of this Chinese quarter formed together to prevent the outsider from accomplishing his purpose. A melee ensued in which about forty shots were fired. Ah Quee and several others were wounded, but Sin Moy was still taken into custody and returned to Ah Quee. A similar incident occurred in Truckee in 1874, and six Chinese were wounded in that struggle. Other battles over control of Chinese women were reported as common in Grass Valley and Nevada City.¹⁵

In 1876, a Chinese woman named We Lane was kidnapped from North San Juan by two men named Ah Goon and J. L. Lockwood. They took the woman to Yuba County, but were compelled to bring her back. In the hearing that ensued in Nevada City, witnesses included Euro-Americans and Chinese, men as well as women. A prominent political



*A view of Washington in Nevada County.
The community's Chinatown is in the
lower right hand corner of the photograph.
Courtesy NCHS.*

figure and judge from North San Juan spoke in her behalf, suggesting that the woman was probably not a prostitute at the time, but instead married to a local man of Chinese descent.¹⁶

A theme common to these accounts was that Chinese women could be treated as property and coerced into prostitution. One of the women had been kidnapped and taken to Marysville. Others were falsely charged with theft, which could lead to abduction by men using the California legal system. Some of these women were probably married, but were still threatened by such practices. Kidnapping was common in areas outside of Nevada County, as a study of Chinese prostitutes in America shows.¹⁷

This same study also claims that women who had been prostitutes usually were accepted without

stigma after having left the occupation.¹⁸ This was probably true of the women mentioned above, especially Ah Soo and We Lane. In their cases, the incidents ended happily. Others, however, were not so fortunate.

The use of marriage, coupled with arrest, to help secure control of Chinese women was probably employed in Nevada and surrounding counties. This is shown by analysis of a series of telegrams found in neighboring Sierra County. A regular retrieval system appears to have extended from the state of Nevada into the California counties of Sierra, Nevada, Yuba, and Placer. Men of both Chinese and Euro-American descent from Downieville, Nevada City, and Marysville regularly corresponded by telegraph to speed up the process of securing control of women.¹⁹

Three telegrams concerning one

incident in particular illustrate this point. In 1874, a wire was sent from Marysville to Downieville between Fook Sing and Tie Yuen stating: "I saw the woman but have not arrested her. Send marriage certificate." The return from Tie Yuen says: "Will send the certificate next stage." A month and a half later Tie Yuen sent a telegram from Downieville to Nevada City to Fook Sing and an E. Berry asking: "Is the woman in jail or not. If she is I will send money. Answer quick."²⁰

Marriage apparently provided an escape from prostitution for many Chinese women in Nevada County. This marked the beginning of the trend away from that occupation as the dominant pattern



for women of Chinese descent. Information drawn from oral interviews from the Chinese community in Grass Valley, newspaper accounts, and county marriage certificates seem to confirm this. The manuscript census data for 1860, 1870, and 1880 list a small number of women who were either living with men, were wives, or were daughters of women of Chinese descent.²¹

Twenty-seven marriage certificates involving Chinese men and women, primarily from Nevada City, Grass Valley, Truckee, and North San Juan, exist for the time from 1850 to the 1880s. The average age of the women listed on these certificates was twenty-two. For the males it was thirty-one. All were natives of China. Some of these women may have been prostitutes, and a few of these marriages could have

been for the purpose of securing their control. Several newspaper accounts of marriages of Chinese couples, such as a woman named Ah How, and a hotel cook named Ah Sam, show that many of the marriages were clearly legitimate.²²

Some of the more successful vegetable farmers, store keepers, regularly employed laborers, service workers, gamblers, or physicians purchased women or married those who had successfully escaped brothels or the control of criminal tongs. Some of these men may have been already married, but had left their first wives behind in China. Some, having acquired enough money, returned to China, but not before, reportedly, selling the wives they had married in California. If for some reason return to China became impossible, men, who were already married, stayed with their wives ac-

quired in America either as childless couples or raised a second family. There are also stories of men from Grass Valley, who could qualify to visit China and return to the United States under the restrictions of the 1882 immigration law, who brought back women for other men whom they swore were their wives.²³

The earliest census data for Nevada County shows that wives or women keeping house were included in the Chinese population, even if prostitutes predominated. By 1900, prostitutes had disappeared, and wives and California-born daughters were the only women listed. The women listed in the census years from 1860 to 1900, who were not prostitutes, were listed as living with gamblers, physicians, washmen, and merchants.²⁴

Nine women in the 1870 census, including one prostitute, had chil-



A relic from the past. A sign from the Sing Lee Laundry, Chinatown, Nevada City. Courtesy the author.

John Tinlay of Grass Valley. Courtesy the author.

A young Chinese Woman of Nevada City. Courtesy NCHS.

dren. All of these children were California born. Most of these had been given Chinese names, with the exception of one child of a married woman living with a Truckee gambler. Their male child was called Colfax and had been born in California. It would seem that he had been named either for President U.S. Grant's vice president, Schuyler Colfax, or for a town named after him that lay on the railroad line connecting with Truckee.²⁵

In 1880, forty-one women were clearly designated as wives, keeping house, or daughters in the census. Their average age, excluding daughters, was twenty-nine, making them slightly older than those listed earlier as prostitutes. There were nine female children, all but one being California born. The women listed as wives or at home were associated with men whose oc-

cupations included merchant or grocer, laundryman, carpenter, farmer or gardener, miner, doctor, woodchopper, and banker. Obviously, not just merchants had wives or women living with them. Any occupation which provided a regular income made it possible to establish a relationship in the United States with a Chinese-born woman or marry a California-born daughter of another Chinese man.²⁶

The census of 1900 revealed a fundamental change in the Chinese community in Nevada County. Because of the exclusion acts passed since 1882, the total number of Chinese was drastically reduced. The anti-Chinese movement in the eastern end of the county at Truckee had

driven all Chinese from that area. Similar actions in the western part had failed, however, and hydraulic and other mining continued to provide employment for miners, and income for merchants and service workers. But still, the drop in numbers of those of Chinese descent was significant.²⁷

This reduction was not as readily apparent in the ranks of women of Chinese descent, however. They remained at about 4% of the population. The number of wives was fourteen. Their average age was thirty-six, making them much older than those who had preceded them. They were listed as having fifteen children, all but one born in California. The women reflected the reduced economic opportunities of the area and times following exclusion, since their husbands were miners (probably employers of other Chinese),



merchants, physicians, or farmers.²⁸

This census shows that families had become the reality for the more fortunate of those of Chinese descent in Nevada County. This same data, so ideally suited for quantitative analysis, also lends itself to looking at individuals. In one case, it shows that a daughter of a sixty-three-year-old physician kept house for her father and a 13-year-old brother. Both of these children were born in California. In another, it tells of a woman named Mary Yew, aged thirty-five, who was married to a farmer. They had nine children, four girls and five boys, ranging from age nineteen to age one. Two boys of nine and thirteen were said to be at school. All of the children had first names that were Euro-American and not Chinese.²⁹

In the 1910 census the average age of women had increased to forty-

one. There were more children listed in that year, and all had been born in California. These ranged from the age of twenty-five down to one. Of the fifteen wives listed, eight did not have children. Three of these were beyond child-bearing age, however. Mary Yew was still listed, but now as head of household. She raised vegetables with her children on a farm south of Grass Valley. The occupation category of the husbands of the other women were merchant, miner, teamster, farmer, laundryman, and cook.²⁹

From 1910 to 1920, census data, oral interviews, newspapers, and published secondary sources available on the Chinese of Nevada County, illustrate the changing nature of this small Chinese community. Four areas—Nevada City, Grass Valley, Washington, and You Bet—provided an economic base for

its survival. Instead of a community consisting primarily of bachelor males and a few prostitutes, as it had been from 1850 to 1880, family life was a fact in fifteen cases.³¹

Seven of the families had children, some of whom were attending or would soon attend public schools. A few of these were taking some kind of Chinese language instruction privately in the larger communities. While many of the males heading households had been born in China, most of the women with children had been born in California. In one case, a teamster and his wife, both born in California, had three sons who were also California born. This made for two generations whose direct contact with Chinese culture was limited.³²

Four accounts of Chinese families illustrate the transition that occurred between 1880 and 1920 as descen-



Photographs of two Nevada County Chinese, Wong Sing (lower) and Ah Fi (upper) for purposes of securing re-entry to the United States, a requirement after the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act. Courtesy the author.

Young Chinese man, resident of Nevada City. Courtesy NCHS.

dants of the Chinese-born moved towards becoming American citizens. The process was uneven, old ways conflicting with new, as in all immigrant communities. In 1883, Hi Loy of North San Juan and his wife were charged with cruelty by a Nevada County court. They had tried to bind the feet of their daughter so as to make her more desirable for marriage. As a report in the *Grass Valley Daily Union* said: "It is stated that Miss Hi Loy is soon to be wedded to a Marysville Chinaman and the latter has agreed to pay the fond parents \$600 as a sort of salve to heal the wound inflicted on their feelings by giving up their daughter. They were squeezing her feet down to a small size so she would make a tony appearance on her wedding day." The father was let off from the charge, but the mother was fined for her part in the binding.³³

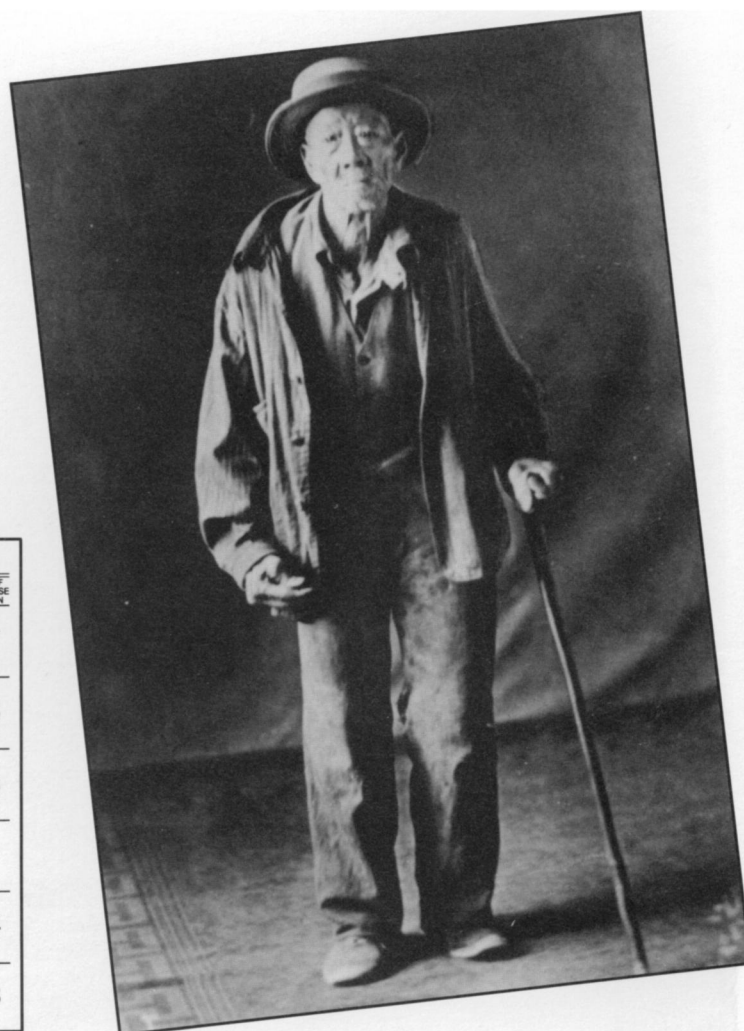
In another case, a hydraulic miner and a merchant named Suey Chung or Fong Lee arranged for marriage in a traditional manner using individuals acting as go-betweens with a family from Marysville. He brought his wife Lonnie Tom back to live with him in the town of Washington. Over the next few years they had several children together, who were all educated in the local public school. Suey Chung not only tried to fit into the community, giving his children American names, but also tried to preserve elements of their Chinese heritage. Despairing of his ability to properly raise his oldest son in the Chinese language, he arranged to send the boy to China. In a tragic incident there, the boy lost his life.³⁴

In another case, Kan Tin Loy who had been a miner, farmer, and grocer, raised a family in Grass Val-

ley. Tin Loy acted at times as an interpreter for the Nevada County Court. As with Suey Chung he tried to maintain a tie to Chinese culture, while at the same time trying to fit in with the American society around him. His daughter, on the other hand, seems to have had other plans. In a report concerning the girl, the *Nevada City Daily Transcript* stated:

Miss Lily Tin Loy, a native American young lady (born of Chinese parents) and a member of the Grass Valley school, has gone to San Francisco and purchased a fine horse and buggy with which she intends to amuse herself and her numerous Caucasian playmates. She and her mother propose to drive the rig all the way home. Some time since while on a visit to China, Lily showed her American spunk by bucking against Chinese customs (foot pressing included.) [sic] Her

CATAGORIES OF CHINESE FEMALES IN NEVADA COUNTY BY CENSUS YEAR							
CENSUS YEAR	AT HOME OR NO OCCUPATION LISTED	PROSTITUTES	WIVES OR KEEPING HOUSE	FEMALE CHILDREN	OTHER	TOTAL	PERCENT OF TOTAL CHINESE POPULATION
1860 8TH CENSUS	54			1		55	.027
1870 9TH CENSUS		109	13	2		124	.048
1880 10TH CENSUS	59		32	9	10 <small>LISTED AS R.R. WORKERS</small>	110	.038
1890 11TH CENSUS	CENSUS INFORMATION DESTROYED IN FIRE						
1900 12TH CENSUS			14	5		19	.034
1910 13TH CENSUS			15	16		31	.118



*father is an ordinary Chinaman who has saved up some money here.*³⁵

The Tin Loy family by the second generation had clearly committed itself to assimilation. In 1913, for example, John, the son of Kan Tin Loy, announced that from that time forward, those of Chinese descent in Grass Valley would celebrate the New Year on January first along with the surrounding Euro-American community.³⁶

Concern over citizenship by another family was demonstrated by a Chinese American couple from Nevada City. They hired a lawyer from there to help them establish the United States citizenship of their thirteen-year-old son Lee Gum Sing. The father, Lee Chung Tai, and his wife, Chun See, provided a birth certificate and a sworn deposition to prove his birth in Nevada City in 1907. The

legal deposition included a photograph of a thirteen-year-old boy dressed in western style clothing.³⁷

Unlike many other communities in California, Nevada City, Grass Valley, Washington, and North San Juan gave opportunities for the children of families of Chinese descent to attend public school alongside those descended from Euro-Americans. In newspaper accounts in which mention of them appears, three children of Chinese descent were listed by the school marshall as attending school in Nevada City in 1865, five in 1870 were listed in Nevada City, and five in Grass Valley in 1871. There are also oral accounts of children of a Chinese-born grocer attending public school in North San Juan before

1920. Suey Chung's children, as previously mentioned, attended public school in Washington.

While anti-Chinese statements are remembered by some students of Chinese descent or mentioned in published sources, many positive accounts also exist. The open nature of the high school at Grass Valley even drew back former residents of the Chinese community such as Ping and On Lee, whose parents had moved to Locke.³⁹

Between 1910 and the 1930s, the Chinese-American community in Nevada County shared in the reduced economic conditions which resulted from the declining fortunes of the major mining towns. Rigid enforcement of laws to control hydraulic mining, utilization of labor saving machinery which brought a reduction in the need for mining and other labor, and a depressed mining



Ah Chu, an elderly resident of Nevada City, one of the town's last Chinese bachelors. Courtesy the author.

Lonnie Tom, wife of Fong Lee, of Washington, Nevada County. Courtesy the author.

economy in general had negative effects on all inhabitants of this area.⁴⁰

A few Chinese-American families and a small number of aged bachelors continued to live in Nevada City, in or near Grass Valley, or in Washington. In the town of Washington the former hydraulic miner and merchant Suey Chung or Fong Lee left for Vallejo when hydraulic mining became impossible. Some families, such as the Kans, left the region for the Bay Area to improve their economic fortunes. In Grass Valley the residents of "China Street," which included a small number of families as well as bachelors, were forced to move when their neighborhood was razed to make room for a parking lot and Greyhound Bus station. Most of these families bought houses and continued to live in the area for several years. Some members of these families eventually moved to San

Francisco or Sacramento, but others remained in the area.⁴¹

Nevada County is one of several California counties included in the Sierra Nevada which has seen a long term pattern for residence for those of Chinese descent. They were first drawn to the area by placer gold mining. The continued economic opportunity which came with railroad construction, the timber industry, and hydraulic, and quartz mining gave an opportunity for many Chinese to remain there. In the time from 1850 to 1920, the nature of this immigrant community changed. At first, it was sojourner-oriented, predominantly male, with most of the few women engaged in prostitution to serve this bachelor society. By the 1920s and 1930s, although some sin-

gle men remained, stranded because of the exclusion laws and poverty, a small native-born community of families of Chinese descent had grown.

This makes the Nevada County, California experience important, because it sheds light on the pioneer Chinese-American community in America. These people of Chinese descent built families against tremendous odds. They survived in an ephemeral mining economy, adapting to changes in sources and techniques. They carved out economic niches, such as farming, and provided needed services. They were hurt by organized anti-Chinese actions mounted at the local, state, and national level, but a few managed to hold on and eventually achieve community acceptance. Theirs is an important part of the story of American immigrant origins. CHS

See notes beginning on page 206.

IN HONOR OF LITTLE SUEY CHUNG

Feasting and Toasting in Abundance in Nevada City's Chinatown Yesterday—The Father Was Present.

SUEY CHUNG, the well known merchant of Washington, yesterday entertained his many Nevada City friends among the Chinese colony. There were eighty in all and during the entire afternoon and late into the evening they were toasted, feasted and wined, and a most pleasing time was had. In fact, it is a long time since the Chinese residents of Nevada City have had a more enjoyable gathering.

The affair was given in honor of the fact that Suey Chung has recently become a father—the sire of a healthy baby boy. Since the happy event his many friends, not only throughout Nevada county, have been celebrating and he desired to join in the celebration.

Today Suey Chung will leave for Sacramento. After remaining there a few days he will continue to San Francisco, where the feasting will continue.

Since the young Suey Chung's advent into the world he has been the recipient of gifts from all sections of the United States, as well as China. The little fellow has been literally loaded down with gifts of almost priceless value. Bracelets of gold and costly gems for the most part constitute the array of presents. To yesterday's feasting more gifts were sent and the little fellow starts out in the world with the best wishes of many friends.

SUEY CHUNG WASHINGTON 1903



Clipped By:

seniorphotomoment
Fri, Jul 1, 2022

HONOR PRESIDENT
ROOSEVELT

Mr. and Mrs. Suey Chung of
Washington Name Their Son
After the Nation's Chief.
Event Joyously Celebrated.

THERE was a christening at Washington yesterday. It was for the purpose of conferring a name upon the youthful heir of the household of Suey Chung, and was performed with all Oriental splendor. Friends, both Caucasian and Chinese, had been invited from all sections of the county and a more enjoyable event has not taken place in Washington in a long time.

The young man who is now the ruler of the Chung household came just twenty-eight days ago yesterday. Almost since the time of his arrival plans for the christening had been in progress and, as with American folks, Mr. and Mrs. Suey Chung had been racking their brains for an appropriate name for the son and heir. It was not until a few days ago that the happy couple decided to name their boy in honor of one of their ancestors and "Fong" was decided upon.

But Suey Chung has resided in the United States for many years. He is thoroughly Americanized and has adopted the ways and manners of the American. Incidentally he has become imbued with the spirit of patriotism and is a great admirer of President Roosevelt and a staunch supporter of the policy of the nation's chief. He is determined that his boy shall grow up in the good ways of the people of his native country and is also determined that the boy shall have an American name. With these facts in view he determined to start the boy off with a good American title to his already illustrious name and "Tin," which translated from Chinese means "Teddy," was decided upon.

The name is given in honor of President Roosevelt and it is stated that a number of Mr. Chung's American friends are going to see to it that the President is informed of the action, for little Chung is probably the only Chinese baby in the United States that has been named in honor of the President.

After the interesting Oriental ceremonies were over the many friends that had assembled were dined and feasted, the merrymaking continuing until a late hour, when the guests departed, wishing Mr. and Mrs. Chung unbounded happiness and a bright and successful life for their boy.

Among the guests present from Nevada City was James Tilley, an old friend of the family. Mr. Tilley was accompanied by Frank Maiden, a commercial man from San Francisco.

SUEY CHUNG WASHINGTON 1903



Clipped By:

seniorphotomoment

Fri, Jul 1, 2022

city, Cal.

APPLICATION FOR LIQUOR LICENSE.

Pursuant to the requirements of Ordinance No. 84. of the County of Nevada. State of California. notice is hereby given that Hung Shung intends to make application to the board of supervisors of said Nevada county. California. at the regular meeting of said board of supervisors. which convenes Tuesday. the 2d day of January. A. D. 1906. for a license to open. conduct and carry on a business of selling liquors in quantities of not less than one quart at Washington. California. in said county. The location of the place of said intended business is particularly described as follows. to-wit: On Chinatown street. Washington. California.

Dated at Washington. this 27th day of December. A. D. 1905.

HUNG CHUNG.
Petitioner.

HUNG CHUNG 1905 WASHINGTON



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seniorphotomoment
Fri, Jun 24, 2022

Wholesale Liquor Licenses.

Edward Kriegel, Lost Hill, Nevada Township.

A. Olsen, Washington, Washington Township.

McKillican & Mobley, North Bloomfield, Bloomfield Township.

Hung Chung, Washington, Washington Township.

Suey Chung, Lurg, Kee Co., Washington, Washington Township.

W. L. Moon & Sons Co., North San Juan, Bridgeport Township.

The report of the grand jury was read and in accordance with its recommendation the board ordered the building committee to have the official maps of Grass Valley and Nevada City on file in the office of the county recorder, and the map known as the "Hartwell Map" in the county treasurer's office properly framed.

The county hospital was visited by the board and everything connected therewith was found in excellent condition.

SUEY CHUNG WASHINGTON 1906

Clipped By:

seniorphotomoment
Fri, Jul 1, 2022

REWARD OFFERED FOR A MISSING CHINESE

ir Celestial Who Left Gaston Recently
nt Has Not Been Heard From and It
l- Is Believed That He Perished in the
s. Snow—Countrymen Are Anxious.

Not long since a Chinese was lost
y in the mountains near Gaston and
h, nothing has been heard of him since.
n- He left Washington, reached Gaston,
g where he took dinner, and went on his
l- way. Since that time no sign of the
a missing Mongol has been seen and
h his countrymen at Washington are
n- anxious to learn whether he is dead or
to alive.

in Suey Chung, the well known Chinese
ed merchant of Washington, has offered a
reward of \$30 for the missing man,
v; dead or alive. It is generally believed
J. that he became lost and perished in
l- the snow.

SUEY CHUNG WASHINGTON 1906



Clipped By:

seniorphotomoment

Fri, Jul 1, 2022



SUEY CHUNG WASHINGTON 1906



Clipped By:

seniorphotomoment

Fri, Jul 1, 2022

SAVED FRIEND TRIP TO CHINA

Suey Chung Fortunately Had Duplicate Copy of Fung Loy's Papers.

Fung Loy of Grass Valley is a happier Chinaman today than he was yesterday. Loy resides at Grass Valley, where he is the agent of Suey Chung, the well known and prosperous Chinese merchant of Washington. It is necessary for all Chinese in this country to have certain documents showing how long they have resided in this country, and a complete description for identification. The government keeps a strict watch on these affairs and any Chinaman found without these documents stands a good chance of getting free transportation to his native land to see the old folks.

Loy's papers were in San Francisco during the earthquake and fire and, like many other documents of more or less importance, were destroyed. It became necessary through the course of some business for Loy to produce his papers and he could not do so. Yesterday J. B. McChesney of the Chinese bureau of the government came to Nevada City to investigate and settle the matter. Suey Chung, the friend and adviser of Fung Loy, knows a thing or two when it comes down to business or the law. Fung Loy was a resident of Washington when the papers were drawn up, and with a sagacity that is commendable he had a duplicate copy of the papers stored away in his safe at Washington and these were shown to Mr. McChesney yesterday and Fung Loy's trip to China has been indefinitely postponed. The proof was satisfactory to the government official.

Loy felt highly gratified at the way affairs had taken a turn and Suey Chung has risen considerably more than 100 per cent in his estimation. Chuey thinks himself "pletty slick."

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SUEY CHUNG WASHINGTON 1907



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Fri, Jul 1, 2022

BORN.

LING HING—At Washington, Nevada
county, California, September 2,
1909, to the wife of Ling Hing, a son.

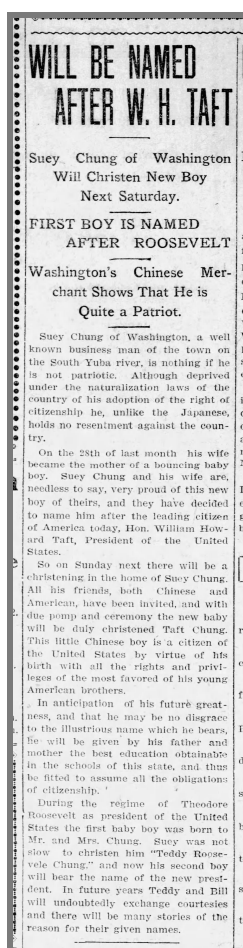
NEW TODAY.

Long hing Washington 1909



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Sat, Jun 25, 2022



SUEY CHUNG WASHINIGTON 1909



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Fri, Jul 1, 2022

WING YEE LUNG
(Chinese Merchant)
Now has a large stock of Vegetables,
Fruits, Groceries, Etc., for sale in
Chinatown, Washington. Prices rea-
sonable.

WING LEE LUNG 1910 WASHINGTON



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Fri, Jun 24, 2022

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SUEY CHUNG PATRIOTIC.

Suey Chung, the well-known Wash-
ington merchant, is nothing if not pa-
triotic. Suey is the proud father of
another son, born on the 6th, inst.
He has named the newest arrival in
the Chung family Hiram, in honor of
Governor-elect Hiram Johnson. Suey
has two other sons, one of whom is
named Teddy Roosevelt Chung and
the other Taft Chung. It begins to
look as though Suey Chung is a Re-
publican. The christening of Hiram
Chung will take place on Tuesday,
January 3, 1911.

WILD DUCK STEW.

Saturday night at Costello & Jep-
son's.

SUEY CHUNG WASHINGTON 1910



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Fri, Jul 1, 2022

**NOTICE OF COMMISSIONER'S SALE
OF REAL ESTATE ON FORE-
CLOSURE OF MORTGAGE.**

B. Goodwin, Clementine H. Christensen
And Citizens bank, a corporation,
Plaintiffs.

vs.

Ethel Gold Mining Co., a corporation
Clementine H. Christensen, John M.
Platt and Suey Chung, Defendants.

Notice is hereby given by the undersigned, Commissioner appointed to make sale of the real property hereinafter described, under mortgage, that pursuant to a decree and judgment of Foreclosure duly made and given by the Superior Court of the County of Nevada, State of California, on the 10th day of December, 1914, in the above entitled action, wherein B. Goodwin, Clementine H. Christensen and Citizens Bank, a corporation, are plaintiffs and Ethel Gold Mining Co., a corporation, Clementine H. Christensen, John M. Platt, Suey Chung are defendants; the above named plaintiff secured a judgment and decree of foreclosure and order of sale against the above named defendants for the sum of twenty-one thousand nine hundred and fifty and ten-hundredths (\$21,950.10) dollars including costs and attorney's fee, together with interest thereon at the rate of seven per cent per annum from the date of said Decree, which judgment is recorded in Book 6 of Judgments, page 22 et seq., records of the Superior Court of the County of Nevada, State of California, and Order of Sale thereunder, made on the 11th day of December, 1912, by the Clerk of the said Court and under the seal thereof, commanding the undersigned, as Commissioner named and appointed in said Decree to make sale of the following described real property as in said decree provided, to-wit:

Those certain quartz mining claims situated in the Eureka Mining District, County of Nevada, State of California, to-wit:

The Ethel, South Ethel, Southeast Ethel, West Ethel, Malta, Gaston, Gaston Extension, Yellow Pine, Sugar Pine, Fir, Army and Major Gold Quartz Lode Mining Claims, held under quartz mining locations; also that portion of the Northwest quarter of Section Thirty-five (35) (including timber thereon) situate in Township 15, North of Range 11, East M. D. M. excepting that portion of said quarter section embraced within the Star, Crown Point and Crown Point Extension Mining Claims, all of which property is situated in the said Eureka Mining District, County of Nevada, State of California.

Also, including the quartz mill, that certain building used as a boarding house, that certain building used as a Bunk House; that certain building used as a stable, that certain building used as a mine and assay office, that certain building used as a black smith shop, that certain building used as a powder house, and all situate upon the above described mining claims together with all of the fixtures, machinery and mining appliances contained therein attached thereto or situated thereon.

Together with all and singular the tenements, hereditaments and appurtenances thereto belonging, or in any wise appertaining.

Public notice is therefore hereby given, that on

SUEY CHUNG WASHINGTON 1913

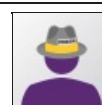


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Fri, Jul 1, 2022

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Suey Chung, for many years a well known Chinese merchant of Washington, has disposed of his business there. He arrived in this city yesterday and will leave shortly for San Francisco to reside.

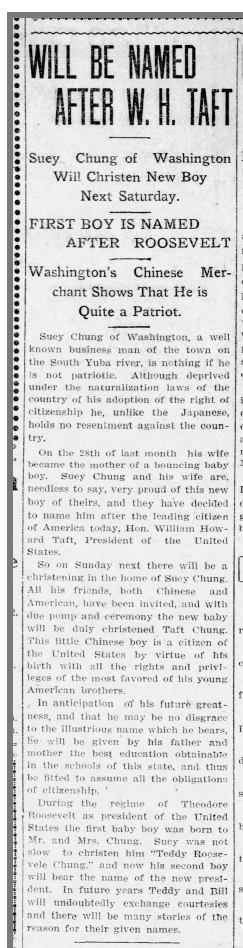
SUEY CHUNG WASHINGTON 1916



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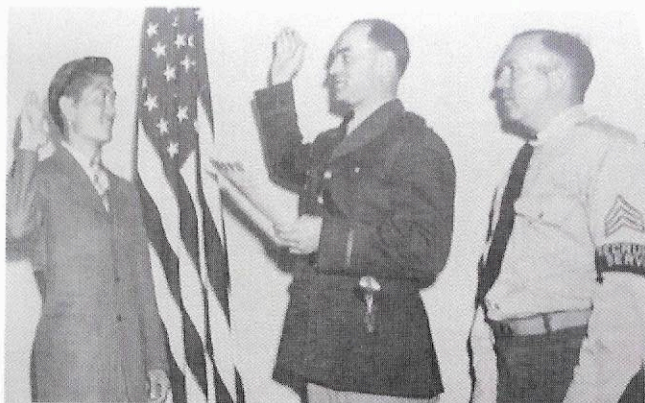
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Fri, Jul 1, 2022



Telephone operators at the town of Washington in the early 1900s. The woman in the middle is Mrs. Ling Hing Mark A. Yin.



ALBERT PAUL FONG, FIRST AMERICAN OF CHINESE ANCESTRY
INDUCTED AT SPRINGFIELD, MASS. JULY 8, 1941

Albert Paul Fong - Army

Albert Paul Fong was the third son of Fong Chow and Lonnie Tom. Fong was ambitious and inspired. He dedicated himself to the youth of the community. In preparation for this work he attended Springfield College at Springfield, Massachusetts. With America's entry into World War II, his plans, like those of a great many others, were interrupted. Fong entered the army and was selected as a candidate for Officer's Training School at Fort Benning, Georgia. He successfully concluded the course and was awarded the commission of the second lieutenant in the United States Army. Fong was deployed on Attu to halt the progress of the Japanese in Alaska. He died on May 25, 1943 during a Japanese air raid. Fong was posthumous awarded the Silver Star and the Purple Heart for his extraordinary heroism.



Lonnie Tom and Fong Chow circa 1940



Fong children in front of Washington school

Several Fong children in front of Washington School circa
1917