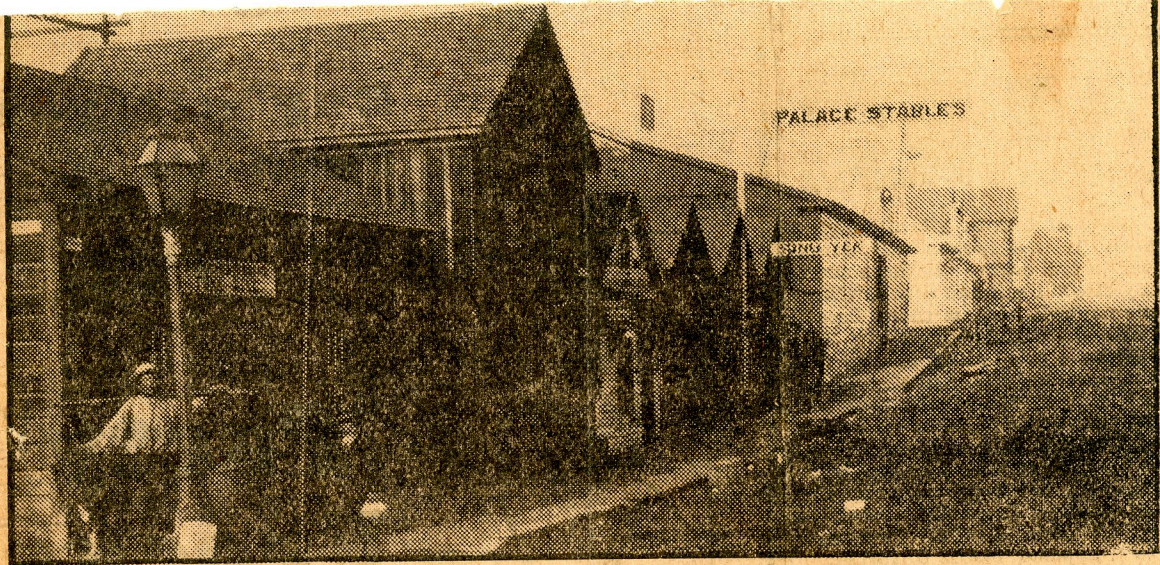


Greyhound is depot and the  
new, modern Bank of America  
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were uncovered by workmen.

The situation had reached the point where it was only a matter of time when the Chinese residents were due for drastic treatment. That time came on the evening of January 6, 1885. A Tong battle was fought and the rivals were destroyed from ambush.



The lower picture is of Fourth and E streets in 1885 when the Chinese were driven from Eureka. A Chinaman of the period can be seen leaning against the old time gas street lamp. Further up the street toward F can be seen the sign of "Sing Yek" a Chinese merchant and farther on against the sky is the sign of the "Palace Stables" at the corner of Fourth and F streets. All of the hovels between the corner of Fourth and E and the stable were occupied by Chinese and are typical of the Chinatown across the street on Fourth and in other nearby sections. The upper picture is the same corner after the Chinese had been driven out. The corner building had been "remodeled" and in its present appearance was the fish market of A. Rosaia & Company. The odor from that well known fish market of early days is still remembered. The picture above was taken in 1902 and the town by that time boasted electric lights as can be seen from the pole which has superseded the gas lamp of the earlier day picture which was taken in the early '80's.

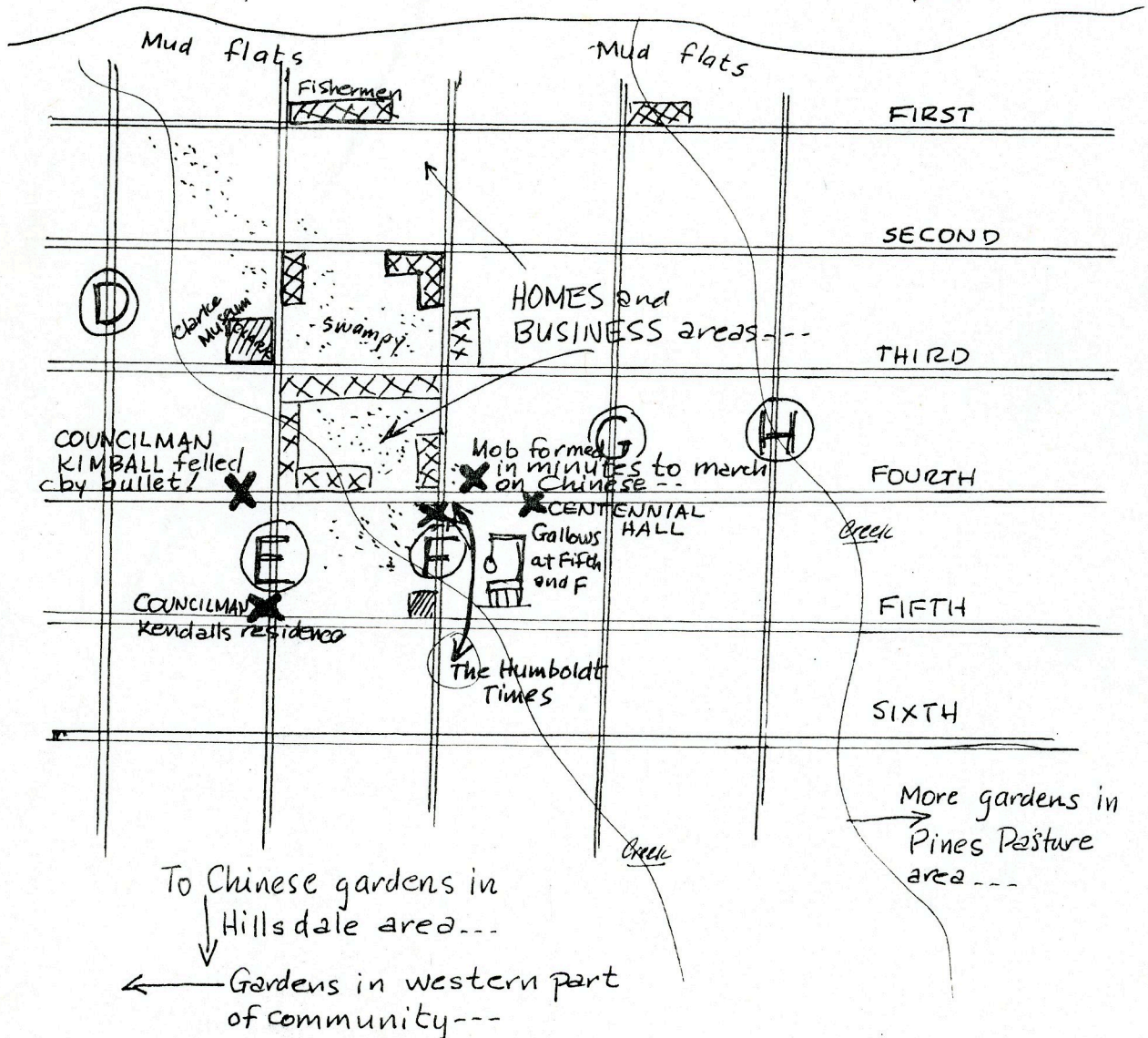
# EUREKA'S CHINATOWN

(Approximate locations...)

## February 6, 1885

reference prepared by  
Andrew Gonzoli

EUREKA CHANNEL  
Humboldt Bay



# Chinese New Year in Eureka's Old Oriental Community Was One Of Noisiest Events in History

## Oldest of Old Timers Easily Recall Festivity at Which Chinese Ate Heavily and Scared Devils

By ANDREW M. GENZOLI

Press dispatches describing the annual observance of the Chinese new year in Oriental circles, and in America's Chinatowns, were noted yesterday. The items stirred in the memories of many a Eureka resident who has lived here for years of occasions similar to those mentioned.

Prior to 1885, Eureka's Chinatown was a flourishing community with a large population of Chinese, living as they did in China, varying only slightly in customs in their new found land, until they were driven out.

The old Chinese new year ceremony, as practiced here, was topic of an old time resident yesterday, as he recalled the festival.

"Usually when the festival came to an end, a blanket of silence rested heavily on old Chinatown. The silence was healing to eardrums dented in one final upheaval of sound with gongs, firecrackers, and "ng-ka-py" bottles when the new year expired officially.

### DEBTS PAID OFF

"Most, if not all debts were paid off. Debtors who couldn't pay at least took an active part in stirring up the skull-splitting sound waves, and a large quantity of noise and good feeling ensued in the process."

At dawn the survivors, either lit up internally or blissfully dazed, would emerge to hunt for rice birds. At 3 a. m. these succulent little fowl rose to 50 cents apiece. They were specific for the head pains of those who have drunk sufficiently—or, as some moralists would say, too much.

"Ng-ka-py" was priced \$2.50 a jar; mutton brandy was still cheaper; peach, rice, plum and cherry juice (triple-distilled) was cheaper yet. Challenged and challenger would rise manfully to shout "Kan Pi." And therefore the head pains, for the body must pay the debt the soul contracts.

### BUSINESSES CLOSED

Usually the Chinese merchant closed his business for the celebration, saying, "If too much business, how can cook proper?"

The Chinaman is proud of his culinary art. He is known as the pundit of the Chinese kitchen. Have you heard of the Manchu cook who spoiled a dish and was hurled into the lake by his infuriated master? He scrambled out half drowned and coming home he found his son deep in the study of a cook book.

"Don't spend too much time over the book," he said, "Learn to swim first."

The Chinese cook is learned in the Imperial Encyclopedia of National Cookery, which is in 753 volumes and has over 3,000,000 pages, and weighs ten times as much as the Britannica. The editors are preparing a new edition and it should be out early in 1936. Most of the Chinese, however, stick to the abridged version of the encyclopedia which is only 30 volumes and weighs less than a half ton.

### WHERE RAVIOLI BEGAN

Dinner usually began with ceremony after midnight with a number of cooks and waiters. A variety of user foods were served including an elaborate kind of Chinese ravioli which came in gelatinous pouches with covers, and appeared to be carved from ivory.

An age-old argument still wages over these ravioli. Italians insist Marco Polo introduced them to China when he visited the ruler, Grand Cham. The Chinese insist it was Marco Polo who took the dish back with him to Venice, where the ravioli best flourished in Europe, and have found their way into Humboldt wayside taverns' Italian dinner menus. Neither will listen for a moment to the theory that the same notion could occur simultaneously in separated regions of the globe.

### LONG BEFORE POLO

The real truth probably is that Marco Polo had nothing to do with it one way or another. He was born in 1254, and the recipe is to be found in an edition of the Imperial Encyclopedia that was printed in 980 B. C. So ravioli in China is an institution of hallowed antiquity, as old as the eggs, almost.

An old Chinese adage is: "The man who eats fears not his wife." And eat the Chinese did. Perhaps the hearty appetites were inspired by the rich salty fog from Humboldt bay and the scented breezes wafted from the towering redwoods. The meals would be prolonged over the week with an occasional new crew of cooks, some attempts at dramatics, and the usual noise of driving away the evil spirits.

The Chinese were proud of their customs and made no attempt to disguise their celebration. Their homes and businesses were gaily decorated, while men, women and children flocked the streets, for they were set for a coming year. It was such a coming year that saw the advent of the Chinese from Eureka, under the pressure of the disgruntled white man after numerous outrages. The fights were meant only for the Chinese, but an

innocent man was the target for the bullet.

### FEW WEALTHY COOKS

The Chinese have not in many years frequented Humboldt, and so we know little of them. However, I was told that a Chinese cook never becomes wealthy. The only one who ever became wealthy was the one who recently introduced a dish into a Mexico city at his small eating house and made it the sensational fashion. After the theater, all the swells and their ladies jammed themselves in to taste his hot Chinese bread—something new in the way of a tortilla, with syrup poured over it. He got into all the papers.

For 50 pesos a lesson, he imparted the secret to other cooks who were sent to him by their employers. He was not really a cook himself, for he had merely helped in a one-armed place near the Chicago railroad station. And what do you think this "Pan Cines" or Chinese bread was? Just ordinary flapjacks!"

SOURCE:

HUMB. CO. COLLECTION

Chinese in Humboldt County  
LIBRARY. HUMBOLDT STATE UNIVERSITY

THE LIBRARY  
HUMBOLDT STATE COLLEGE  
ARCATA, CALIFORNIA

HUMBOLDT CO.  
COLLECTION

## Pack Train Notes

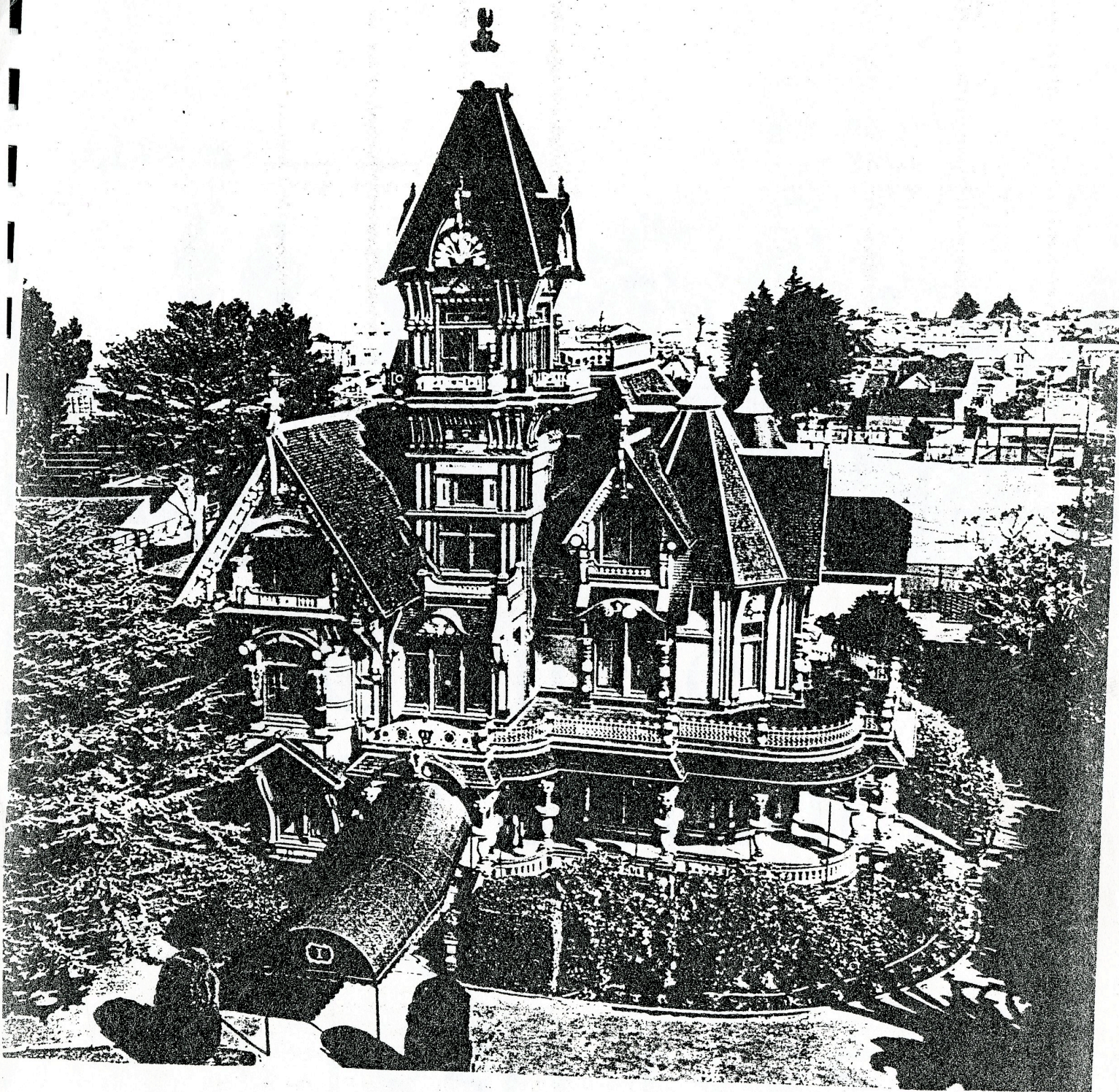
Robert Look of Fortuna, who instigated the listing of stage drivers, etc., sends us a note, too:

"Have enjoyed reading the account of all the early pack trains in Redwood Country as written by Max Rowley. I am surprised someone would have a record after all these years. However, we cannot locate any records of when the overland mail roads were built or by whom—from Hydesville to Alder Point, and from Harris through Fruitland, Camp Grant and Dyerville."

Of historical interest, too, is the fact Willow Creek was once called "China Flat." Named for the Chinese miners who lived and worked in the area.

Bob says he'd like to hear from anyone who may know, for it is important addition to his listing of early horse stage routes in Humboldt County.

On this subject, Bob adds: "I do know the Chinese built a good portion of the overland road through Bridgeville to Alder Point. In the early 1860s there was a large Chinese settlement this side of Bridgeville, still called 'Chinese Flat.'"



# Historical Anecdotes of Humboldt County

compiled by  
Barbara Soul



# Chinese in Humboldt County 1850-1885

By

Barbara Saul



## Chinese in Humboldt County 1850-1885

by Barbara Saul

The first Chinese came to California in 1848. Two men and one woman arrived in San Francisco on a clipper ship from Hong Kong. By August, 1852, 18,000 men and 14 women had followed the news of the gold rush to California.

Most of the Chinese had come to America under a contract system. Large Chinese companies paid the passage of the Chinese immigrants in trade for their labor. They were paid wages which were high for the Chinese but low for white Californians. These wages were sent back to pay the companies in China. Because of this wage disparity and the fact that the Chinese came in such large numbers over a short period of time, anti-Chinese sentiment began to grow in California.

The contracts were held by six Chinese companies, which became very wealthy and powerful. By 1876, the companies had imported 141,300 Chinese laborers. The companies controlled and governed all the Chinese in this country with an iron hand. When their rules were broken retribution was carried out swiftly without regard to U.S. laws. The company regulations were enforced by "highbinders" and the U.S. government rarely intervened.

Chinese miners were resented by their white counterparts because of their low wages and the fact that they sent all of their money back to China. As the anti-Chinese sentiment grew in 1850, the state legislature passed a law requiring a foreign miner's license. The license was prohibitive to the Chinese and it drove them from the mines into the towns and cities to do jobs that white men wouldn't do such as farm labor, household help and common labor.

In 1850 the first Chinese came to Humboldt County on their way to the Trinity mines. The Humboldt Times newspaper on October 14, 1854 wrote: "The Chinese are still pouring in...headed for the gold fields."

The Humboldt County Census for 1854 listed thirty-eight Chinese living in Humboldt County - mostly in the Eel River area.

The anti-Chinese movement continued to grow throughout California as reflected in this quote from the Humboldt Times on March 14, 1868: "Two Chinese men were brought into Court in Eureka and charged with robbery and assault" indicating that they were in the jurisdiction of the city courts.

Another quote from the Times in 1868 stated "The Chinese are coming, oh dear! No they are not, they are right here!"

By 1874, Chinatowns were established in Eureka and Arcata. In Eureka the location of the Chinese enclave was the block bounded by 5th, F, 4th and E sts in downtown Eureka. Two hundred Chinese men and twenty women lived in this section, with very few families. Most of the buildings in this area were shacks, owned by white landlords. The ground was swampy and a creek ran through it. There was no drainage and the water settled into a stagnant pond, where the Chinese dumped their refuse and sewage. Although the people were personally clean, the Chinese neighborhood was deplorable and the newspaper complained of a nauseating odor from the pond.

Despite their wretched living conditions, some of the Chinese were clever businessmen and a few of the children were enrolled in local schools. They had truck farms which supplied Eureka with most of its vegetables, wash houses at the foot of F Street for laundry and they also worked as servants, janitors, cooks and fire tenders.

In 1875, Chinese were brought to Humboldt County to construct roads and railroads and to work in the fish canneries. Chinese laborers worked on construction of the Eel River and Eureka Railroad, they constructed the "Wildcat" road from Ferndale to Petrolia and the Old Coast Road from Bear Creek to Shelter Cove.

Most of the settlers treated the Chinese with respect, but some bullied them. A newspaper editorial of June 23, 1877 complained of this ill-treatment in the following quotation: "A Chinese man was almost killed in the woods by a white man, and that there are some Chinese if attacked will defend themselves. The best way to do is to let them alone. They will mind their own business and if others would do the same there would be no trouble."

The competition of lower wages between the Chinese and white laborers was prevalent in San Francisco at this time, but it was not a factor in Eureka. In 1884, wages were higher in Humboldt County than anywhere else in the state. This fact was due to the prosperity brought to the area with the increased logging of the Redwoods and the abundance of mill and lumber-related jobs. Despite this, the Weekly Times-Telephone newspaper stated on May 3, 1884 "Too many laborers - starvation labors."

In the 1800's, a different class of Chinese sailed to Eureka from San Francisco. Members of two warring labor companies called "Tongs" were among this group and allegedly included the worst highbinders in the state, including the notorious "Adam Quinn" who had just completed an eight-year sentence at San Quentin for blackmailing and robbery. He had come to Eureka to "practice his trade" according to law-abiding members of the Ong Cong Gong organization of San Francisco.

These rival Tong gangs were armed with pistols, knives, iron bars and other weapons. They established gambling and opium dens in the Chinese section. The pastor of the Eureka Congregational Church, Rev. Charles Andrew Huntington stated in his memoirs: "Chinatown was said to endanger the public morals by reason of their use of opium; their habit of gambling, and their heathenish disregard of Christian morality, and they were the objects of universal hatred because they were a menace to the public morals".

Because the Chinese practiced their own form of governing set by the "Companies" and enforced by the "highbinders" coupled with the fact that they showed no desire to become United States citizens, the anti-Chinese furor grew rapidly in the early 1880's. Local newspapers took up the cause.

On January 29, 1881, the Humboldt Times editorialized: "Opium smoking is becoming one of the fixed vices of this country...In this city there is no ordinance to prohibit its use..It is the Chinese quarters of this city are that are utilized for that abominable purpose. The patrons of the dens are generally said to be young men, and sometimes women...that they have been seen to enter and leave China houses in the night."

At times the Chinese in Eureka openly defied the laws. They would not testify against each other and thereby blocked prosecution. The citizens were soon convinced that Chinese trials were useless since it was impossible to get any satisfactory justice though legal proceedings.

At a meeting on March 9, 1882, the citizens of Eureka adopted resolutions urging Congress to restrict the immigration of the Chinese. The March 11, 1882 issue of the Weekly Humboldt Times newspaper reported: "We have anxiously watched the hordes of Mongolian paupers and criminals flooding our shores; we have seen our civilization almost subverted and our children driven from all avenues of honorable labor by aliens, foreign to our tongue, religion, customs laws and social relations..."

The Chinese/white tension throughout California gradually increased. There was strong prejudice against all foreigners, but the Chinese were especially singled-out because of their strange foreign ways, their different language, their small stature and their Oriental features.

Following the Civil War, it was the anti-Chinese laws in California that tested the Civil Rights Amendments. The Federal Government overruled many restrictive laws passed by the California legislature against Chinese as being in violation of the fourteenth amendment. Despite this Federal intervention, a law was passed in 1882 suspending all Chinese immigration into the United States for ten years.

By 1883, the Chinese section of Eureka had regular violent occurrences between the rival Tong gangs. Riots, assaults and murder became commonplace. On August 26, 1884, the Daily Times-Telephone warned "A genuine riot may be looked for in the Chinese quarter at almost anytime..." On the same day a shooting occurred with bullets flying across Fourth Street. Several Chinese men were arrested with no results.

After a riot on September 23, the Daily Times-Telephone stated "One thing was appraised of, however, and that is that the Chinese are becoming an intolerable nuisance to our people, and if some means cannot be devised to make them behave, they should be made of leave."

Another shooting occurred in Chinatown on December 20, a bullet crossed Fourth street and passed through the wall of a house owned by D.R. Jones. On Sunday morning, February 1,

1885 violence broke out at 4th & F sts., across the street from the Humboldt Times newspaper building. Two Chinese men died and six armed Chinese men were arrested.

The Daily Times-Telephone continued to editorialize against the Chinese. On February 5, following the aforesaid incident, it exhorted: "...It will not do for our citizens to longer permit such life-taking demonstrations as the one witnessed in the Chinese quarter, and one of the principle streets of the city, last Saturday night. It was a wonder that some innocent pedestrian was not made to bite the dust....if ever an offending white man is thus offered up on the altar of paganism, we fear it will be good-by to Chinatown."

This newspaper article proved to be prophetic, for on the very next evening, Friday, February 6, 1885 as Eureka City Councilman David C. Kendall was walking from his residence to his office just outside the Chinese section, he was shot. The stray bullet had come from two Chinese men who began shooting at one another. The Chinese men fired about nine or ten shots in quick succession as Kendall was crossing Fourth Street. A bullet hit him and he fell on his face. A neighbor and Mrs. Kendall ran to his side. He was carried to his home where he died shortly. Louis Baldschmidt, a youth who was working in the vicinity was also shot in the foot during the same fracas.

This proved to be the final incident in the growing unrest. Eureka was soon ablaze with the news and men gathered into angry mobs. "Burn Chinatown" and "Hang all Chinamen" was heard throughout downtown. Twenty Chinese men were arrested by Sheriff T. Brown. Afraid that vigilantes would take over the jail, he called in the National Guard for assistance.

Within twenty minutes of Kendall's killing, six hundred men met to discuss the situation. Mayor Walsh was named Chairman of the meeting and H.H. Buhne was appointed secretary. Sheriff Brown spoke to the crowd and counseled moderation.

The men in the hall were fired up and proposed to go into Chinatown and massacre every Chinese man. H.H. Buhne spoke to the crowd and tried to calm them down. Resolutions were proposed from the floor which included:

1. Go to Chinatown and slaughter all of the Chinese
2. Loot Chinatown
3. Burn all the buildings in Chinatown
4. Drive all Chinese out of the city limits.

The crowd was at a rioting point. If they could have identified the real killer they would have lynched him on the spot. Nobody could positively identify the murderer. A committee of fifteen citizens was appointed to go to Chinatown and notify the Chinese to pack up and leave the County within twenty-four hours.

Some respected citizens of Eureka objected to the resolution forcing the Chinese to leave Eureka. Rev. Huntington, for example, spoke against the resolution:

"We all deplore the death of our fellow citizen, Mr. Kendall. But no Chinaman had any design on his life. His death was entirely accidental. The Chinaman who fired the shot is guilty...but the rank and file of the people in Chinatown are as innocent of the death of Mr. Kendall as I am...You have no right to drive them from their homes than you have to drive me from my home."

The mob was kept from rioting by the committee. Three leaders from each rival Tong met with the committee and they were told that they had to leave Humboldt County within 24 hours. By 8:00 p.m. February 6 every Chinese man in Eureka was packing his personal goods to prepare for departure on the next day.

The Daily Times-Telephone wrote "We trust that wise counsels will prevail today..the life of the lamented Kendall could not be atoned for by the stretching of one hundred of their worthless necks."

On Saturday, February 7, piles of household belongings, clothing and merchandise were seen on the streets in Chinatown. Belongings were piled into wagons or any type of available transportation to be taken to the docks where two steamships were in the harbor, the "City of Chester" and the "Humboldt".

This same day, the committee also brought Chinese from the nearby ranches and cookhouses and they were housed in warehouses near the bay. Chinese from Arcata who had

been working on the railroad were rounded up and taken to Eureka. A few Chinese tried to escape by way of Arcata and Eel River, but they were captured and taken to Eureka.

During the night of February 6, some persons built a scaffold with a hangman's noose dangling from it on Fourth Street between E and F Streets. A sign on the gallows read: "Any Chinaman seen on the street after three o'clock today will be hung to this gallows."

Not all Eureka's approved of deporting the Chinese. Some tried to hide their Chinese servants, but were forced to give them up. Rev. Huntington was hanged in effigy in front of Centennial Hall because some men found a Chinese servant hiding in his home. Charley Way Lum, a Chinese boy, was on his way to the warehouses on the bay as ordered, but a crowd of hoodlums dragged him to the gallows and put the noose around his neck in the presence of hundreds of people. No one, not even the police, interfered until the Reverend Rich ordered the crowd to release the boy.

The streets were crowded with people watching the departure of the Chinese. The crowd remained orderly. The committee separated the rival Tongs: one hundred and thirty-five Chinese and fifty tons of merchandise were put on board the "Humboldt, and one hundred and seventy-five Chinese and one hundred tons of merchandise on board the "City of Chester". Four of the Chinese men were merchants who had resided in Eureka from ten to fourteen years.

Because of rough seas, the steamers could not pass over the Humboldt Bay bar until Sunday morning, February 8, but the expulsion of the Chinese is usually remembered as being February 7, 1885. The steamers arrived in San Francisco on Monday, February 9. Mr. Lindsay, the Eureka City Marshall, accompanied the Chinese to the City to assist the Harbor Police in identifying the "highbinders" who were among the Chinese. The rest of the Chinese immediately scattered throughout the city.

Recent storms had broken down communication between Eureka and San Francisco, otherwise authorities would have probably met the steamers and sent the Chinese back to Eureka. Because the Chinese owned no property, the United States Government could not have stepped in and intervened.

The San Francisco Call reported on February 14: "...All Chinese expelled are not criminals. Many of them are peaceable merchants, who businesses have been broken up by the expulsion. Somebody will have to pay for the injury done them."

Fifty-two of the Chinese men expelled from Eureka did bring a lawsuit against the City in the U.S. Circuit Court. The suit was summarized in the San Francisco Chronicle on March 31, 1886: "The suit of Wing Hing vs. the City of Eureka is ended. Mr. Buck of Humboldt appeared for the defendant city and moved to strike from the complaint all damages claimed for driving the Chinese away, and for loss of business. Judge Sawyer granted this motion and ordered all claims stricken out except those for injury to property. As no property was molested or injured, this action of the Court virtually disposes of this important case in favor of the city of Eureka."

On February 7, 1885, the day the Chinese departed, a large crowd assembled at Centennial Hall in Eureka. The citizen's committee reported the following resolutions which were to be Humboldt County's "unwritten law" against the Chinese and other orientals to be enforced for the next sixty years:

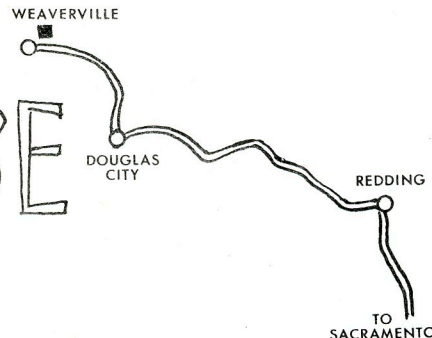
1. That all Chinamen be expelled from the city and that none be allowed to return.
2. That a committee be appointed to act for one year, whose duty shall be to warn all Chinamen who may attempt to come to this place to live, and to use all reasonable means to prevent their remaining.
3. That a notice be issued to all property owners through the daily papers, requesting them not to lease or rent property to Chinese.

#### REFERENCES

Redwood Country, Lynwood Carranco, Star Publishing, 1986  
Daily Times-Telegraph Newspaper  
Humboldt Times



# WEAVERVILLE Joss House



## "THE TEMPLE AMONGST THE FOREST BENEATH THE CLOUDS" IN TRINITY COUNTY

At the height of the Trinity River Gold Rush of the 1850's, more than 2,500 Chinese resided in the vicinity of Weaverville. They eked out comfortable livelihoods as miners or merchants until the supply of gold declined and all but one of these Oriental families returned to their country of origin.

One of the few existing reminders of their stay in America is a temple of worship—The Joss House. Built with local materials, but furnished with elaborate carvings, gongs, panels, lanterns, tapestries and banners from China, "The Temple Amongst the Forest Beneath the Clouds" is a colorful example of the religion of Taoism.

The temple was constructed exactly as it would have been in China except that shrines there are of stone and tile instead of wood.

Among the 40,000 visitors who will step inside this wooden shrine along Highway 299 this year, are still some Chinese who bow reverently before the three elaborate, hand-carved altars with their clay images of the deities. Food, incense and red candles are placed in front of the images by the devout and whiskey and tea kept before them to satisfy their thirst.

Built in the 1850's, the temple was restored and dedicated in 1874 after a fire destroyed it a year earlier. Intricate carvings of fish and dragons decorate the exterior, including the Dragon Chi Wen which supposedly has mystical powers to ward off fires.

The mystical splendor of Taoism is reflected in the temple's century-old furnishings. These were shipped from China to San Francisco, by steamer up the Sacramento to Colusa and from there to Weaverville by muleback.

Situated on 4½ tree-shaded acres, the Joss House looks north toward the southern peaks of the Trinity Mountains. The Tree of Heaven and Black Locust trees line a path toward the beautiful distant peaks.

Adjacent to the temple proper are two rooms. One was long occupied austere by the temple priest who was "on call" at all hours of the day and night. The other is sparsely furnished with benches where the devout awaited their turn to enter the temple individually to worship. No formal communal services were ever held.

Along the wall of the waiting room is a list of 1,000 families who contributed to the rebuilding of the temple in 1874. Here also were posted news bulletins which served in lieu of a local Chinese paper.

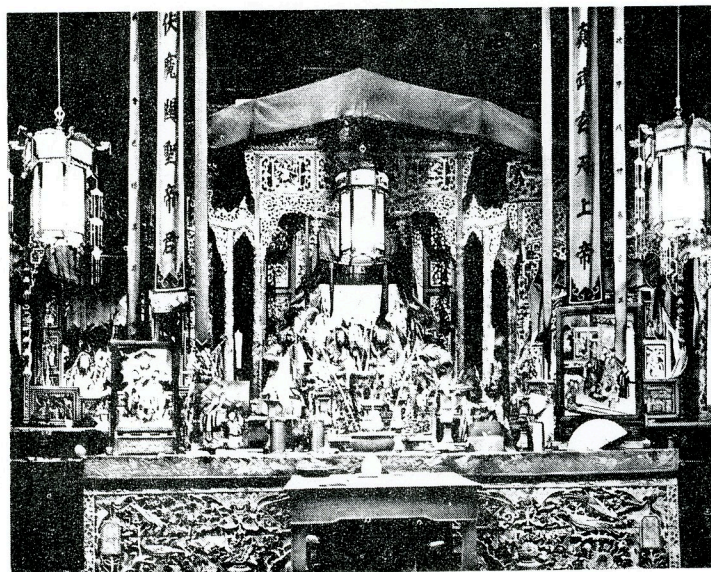
Oldest and most authentic such temple still standing in the Northern Hemisphere, the Weaverville Joss

House is in an excellent state of preservation. It was presented to the State of California in 1956 by Moon Lee, as a trustee of the temple. He is a local businessman and grandson of one of the builders. His was the only family among more than 1,000 in the area which did not return to China when the Gold Rush ended.

A strained relationship existed between the Occidentals and Orientals during the lusty mining days. The Chinese were content to work old placer claims for \$5 or \$6 a day while the Occidentals were making \$50 daily elsewhere. Frugal by nature, they managed to acquire stakes despite a special mining tax levied only against foreigners, which cost them \$8,000 a month.

The Joss House is opened every day of the year, except Christmas and New Year's. Guided tours are conducted by rangers of the Department of Beaches and Parks from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. in the summer and 10 to 5 during the remainder of the year.

This is the 24th in a series on California's official historical monuments. Reprints of earlier articles may be obtained by writing PG&E PROGRESS, 245 Market Street, San Francisco 94106.



**FESTOONED** with banners and ornately carved decorations, these are the three altars of the Weaverville Joss House. Once used by 2,500 worshippers, it is the oldest and most authentic Taoist temple in the Northern Hemisphere.