

"Chinese Mining & Settlement at the Lava Beds, Ca."

Dr. Randall Rohe

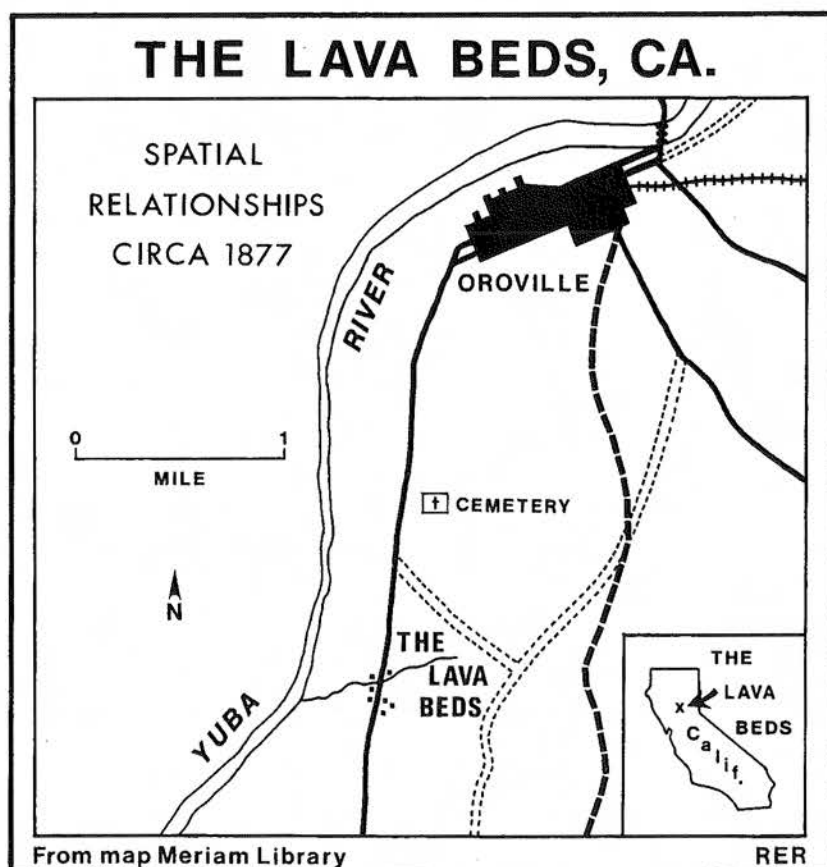
While the foreign element formed a noticeable portion of some gold rushes, Americans invariably comprised the primary component of any goldfield population. With the exhaustion of the rich surface deposits, however, hired labor became the rule in most types of mining and many of the original miners turned to other occupations or moved to new mining regions. Almost ritually, in area after area, men of foreign birth replaced the original miners, after the flush production period. In the placer areas, it was the Chinese. As yields declined, almost every placer region of note received its complement of Chinese,

and they became, in fact, a ubiquitous feature of the mining West. During their first decade in the West, most Chinese worked in the mines, about 75 percent of them by the early 1860s. By the 1870s they had migrated to almost every major placer area. In 1870 the Chinese represented over 25 percent of miners in the West, and in some states they accounted for from 50 to 67 percent of them.

Most settlements associated with Chinese mining activities consisted of distinct enclaves (Chinatowns) within larger Euroamerican mining towns or small temporary camps. In a few cases, however, Chinese mining operations produced fairly large towns completely separate and distinct from any Euroamerican settlement. The

Lava Beds, which flourished from 1873 to 1882, near Oroville, CA, provides a classic example of such a settlement and the mining activities that supported it. In 1873, a local newspaper proclaimed it the largest Chinese camp in California. In fact, it constituted the largest Chinese mining settlement in U.S. history. Despite this status, the Lava Beds has received little attention. In fact, few histories on mining or the Chinese in the American West even mention it.¹

Like most aspects of Chinese mining in the West, material on the Lava Beds is fragmentary and widely scattered. Through the use of period newspapers, mining trade journals, government documents, and other sources, however, it is possible to reconstruct much of the history of this important Chinese mining settlement. Its history provides a representative picture not only of Chinese mining methods

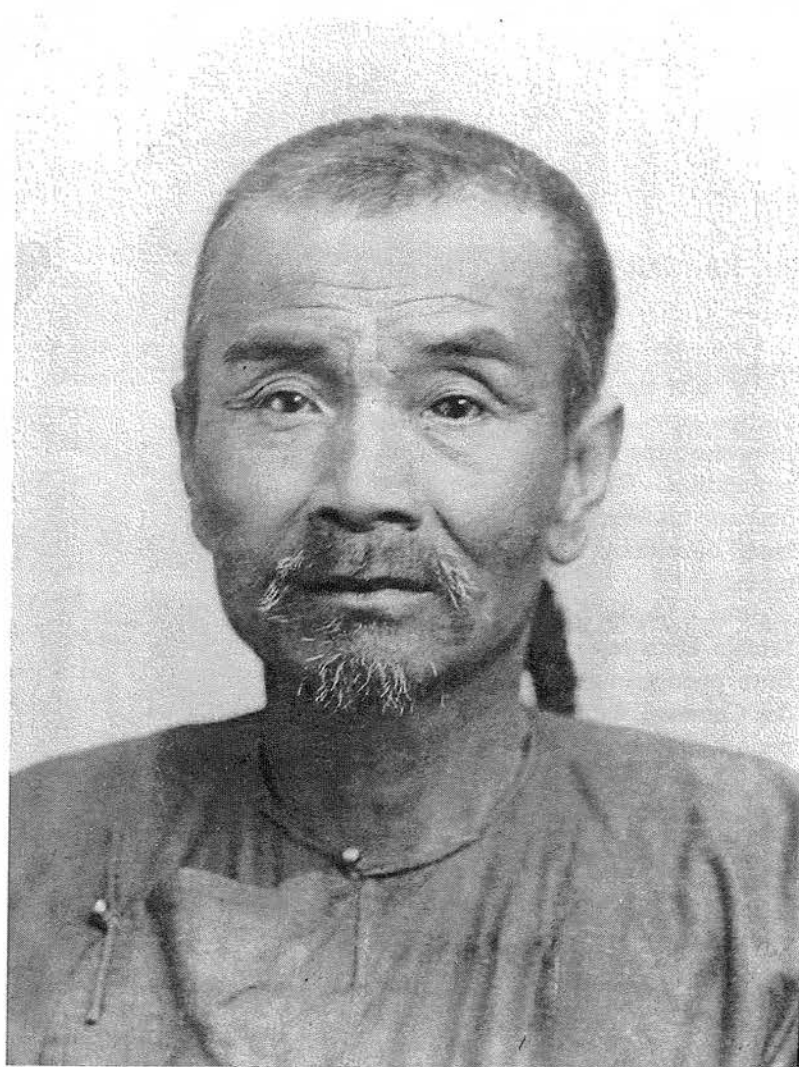


and success, but of migration and settlement, subsistence and trade, culture and lifestyle, and the prejudice and discrimination that the Chinese experienced.²

In 1872 a young man named Kline located paying gold placers about two-and-one-half miles from Oroville. He attempted to conceal his discovery, but Jas A. Gray, a nearby rancher, learned his secret. Subsequently Gray found gold on his land, and offered small parcels of land for sale or rent. Other Euroamericans followed his example and soon hundreds of claims had been located and scores of them sold to the Chinese, who were by law prohibited from locating claims on their own. The first claims were called the Modoc claims, and from the famous Lava Beds of Captain Jack and the Modocs, the mining area became known as the Lava Beds.³

The Chinese mined the entire winter of 1872-73 at the Lava Beds and reports of their success--ten and twenty dollars per day with rockers--infected the entire population of Oroville with mining fever that spread "with the rapidity of the epizootic." "Everybody who can walk . . . has gone, or is to go, out at once and locate claims." The mining district's laws required one day's work in ten to hold a 200-foot claim. By late April 1873, almost every parcel of land for three or four miles below Oroville had been staked and still the excitement continued. By now the Lava Beds contained 200 or 300 white men and between 800 and 1000 Chinese. Few of the whites did any mining, but just made locations to sell to the Chinese. The Chinese already had built up "a considerable mining camp or, rather several camps."⁴

The influx of the Chinese reached such proportions that in May the Marysville and Oroville train added another car to handle the traffic. Sometimes two cars of Chinese a day passed through Marysville on their way to the Lava Beds. According to the *Marysville Appeal*, it seemed "as if San Francisco agents of Chinese companies have fixed on Oroville as a special locality to spread out their surplus of Asiatic population." From the number of telegrams that were sent to towns to the south, local papers expected the



The appearance of Chinese miners at different times and in different parts of the West varied little. They maintained to a great degree their traditional styles of grooming and dress. The Chinese mining at the Lava Beds probably looked much like this Chinese miner who worked in southwestern Oregon (Courtesy Oregon Historical Society).

Lava Beds soon to have 5,000 to 10,000 Chinese. Carloads of Chinese continued to arrive daily well into June until they overran the valley and nearly covered the flat, "giving it the appearance of ant hills, with all their busy life and activity."⁵

In mid-June the *Appeal* estimated that the new mines had added 1,500 Chinese to the population of Oroville. Yet cars continued "to bring swarms of Celestials daily." The number of Chinese at the Lava Beds reached 3,000 in July and more continued to arrive. Although claims did not bring as much as they had that spring, some sold everyday at fairly remunerative prices. In one section of the flat, ten claims, where no one suspected that a dollar could be made, sold for \$1,000.⁶

Estimates in late August placed the number of Chinese at the Lava Beds at between 3,000 and 4,000. The train brought anywhere from twenty-five to thirty more of them daily. "From other sources they crowded the stages and valley roads and come tumbling down the mountains at break-neck speed." Police officials met the Chinese at the depot, marched them to the courthouse square, collected their poll tax and then released them to go where "they pleased or their contacts called."⁷

Initially, almost all the Chinese used the railroad to reach Oroville and then took a stage or walked to the mines, which were several miles away. A "China station" was established on the railroad near the old race course in Oroville, and from here the Chinese disembarked for the diggings. The Chinese employed six lines of coaches to handle this traffic. The railroad fare to Oroville was \$2.50. By the fall of 1873 the Eagle Stables of Marysville were making one, two, and sometimes three trips a week directly to the Lava Beds. One trip in October included sixty-five Chinese, who with their luggage, occupied two coaches and three mud-wagons. The fare was \$1.50 per person. The stages afforded not only a lower fare but ran directly to the mines.⁸

The Lava Beds contained between 5,000 and 8,000 Chinese by mid-November. They came from all over California. San Francisco and Sacramento sent the majority, but even Weaverville in northern California contributed its quota. Some even came from Oregon. A substantial portion of those who came from San Francisco were recent arrivals from China. By now the Chinese owned almost all the mining ground below Oroville. One writer described it as "a howling wilderness to an American, or to any one who does not understand the lingo of the Flowery Kingdom."⁹

Many Chinese had already made their fortune and left for China. The *Mercury* related the example of one Chinese miner who purchased a claim for \$400, divided it into fourteen shares, and sold all but one for \$400 each. From the share that he retained, the miner "made as much money as he desired and left the country." Showing the prejudice typical of the day, the *Mercury* went on to say: "We always feel as though our countrymen had sold their birthrights when they suffer these rich diggings to pass into the hands of these coolies and their masters." The success of the Chinese did little to endear themselves to many whites.¹⁰ The *Mercury's* editor spoke for many of his readers when he wrote that the mines were too good to be sold to and worked by Chinamen:¹¹

We believe if white men had these mines to

develop, instead of Chinamen, with their superior intelligence as practical miners and improved tools and machinery, they could make more money out of them, and consequently enrich and populate our town and county.¹²

The editor of the *Record* took a more pragmatic view: "we note the success of the Chinese and their enterprise as the next best thing, since they count as population and, to a certain extent, bring life and bustle to the locality."¹³

Mining at the Lava Beds continued with "unabated vigor" well into November. The mines yielded regularly and as late as the third week of December, "the streets of Oroville and the road for miles below are constantly swarming with stages filled with Celestials, while the way is thronged with pedestrians." In December and January the winter rains brought landslides, cave-ins, and flooding which hindered and then finally ended mining. Many of the Chinese went to Sacramento and San Francisco; others moved to "dry diggings."¹⁴

The following spring the tide turned towards the Lava Beds again. The stables of Marysville put on extra stages and the railroad added extra trains to handle the traffic of the Chinese, who were arriving at a rate of 50 to 75 a day. The *Record's* editor did not expect the rush to end short of 15,000 or 20,000. He proclaimed that the Lava Beds was already the largest Chinese camp in California.¹⁵

From April through September there was almost a steady stream of Chinese going to and coming from the mines. Sometimes the number going matched almost exactly the number leaving. Many of those who left had been successful at mining and went to San Francisco where they booked passage for China. The mines contained 4000 Chinese in August.¹⁶

The fall of 1874, however, brought hard times to the Lava Beds. Some claims began to play out; others proved worthless. A number of Chinese could not pay their taxes or bills and had their claims and machinery sold out from under them. An epidemic of billious relapsing fever compounded their problems. It began with headaches, and muscular pains in the back and limbs. Soon after, fever, accompanied by anxiety, photodyshoria, racing pulse and often vomiting, appeared. As the disease progressed, the victim suffered constipation, dehydration, insomnia and frequently delirium. From the fourth to the sixth day, the symptoms became more and more acute. Just when death seemed inevitable, there was a complete amelioration of the symptoms, the fever disappeared, and the individual seemingly recovered.¹⁷ On the

fourteenth day, however,

they were again attacked with a repetition of all the symptoms, a profuse perspiration broke out, and a mulberry rash occasionally appeared at this period. At this crisis death frequently took place from collapse following the critical perspiration; sometimes from coma, and occasionally from prostration superinduced by a low type of typhus fever.¹⁸

The Chinese apparently had little success combating the disease with their traditional medical practices and as a result sought aid from Euroamerican physicians. However, that proved equally unsuccessful. Dr. P.B.M. Miller, an Oroville physician, treated over 300 Chinese and described his success as "unsatisfactory if not positive negatory in the majority of cases." In October, the Chinese were deserting the Lava Beds by the carload. By November the death toll had reached 700 and about 3000 more were sick. Even those that survived suffered for three or four weeks. The *Appeal* claimed that the great number of deaths caused the superstitious Chinese to leave the area.¹⁹

Despite the problems of the previous fall, the spring of 1875 saw another rush of Chinese to the Lava Beds. The lack of rain that year made mining much easier. In late March the Lava Beds had 3,000 Chinese; a month later the figure totaled over 4,000, and they were still coming. It must have been a pretty successful mining season because 3,000 Chinese were still mining that fall. The *Enterprise* characterized the Lava Beds as the most notable and richest Chinese town on the coast.²⁰

While an unusually large number of Chinese worked the Lava Beds during 1876, the yield dropped to between \$10,000 and \$15,000 a month. Production, however, rose to \$60,000 a month the following year. During 1878 more mining occurred than during the previous two years. The *Mercury* reported 1500 Chinese at work in January and the total for that mining season probably approached 2,000. They took out from \$25,000 to \$50,000 worth of gold per month; some months it reached \$100,000.²¹

The Lava Beds ceased to be a major area for Chinese mining after 1878. At times the local newspaper even reported the Chinese leaving the area for work elsewhere. In 1882 about fifty Chinese



No known photos of the Lava Beds have survived. However, this photo is representative of one of the mining methods the Chinese used there. They excavated a shaft, brought the auriferous gravel to the surface with a windlass, and washed it in a rocker. (Courtesy California State Library)

worked at the Lava Beds and the *Director of the Mint Report* for that year noted: "The Lava Beds, worked so extensively by the Chinese a few years since, are now abandoned, from the impossibility of keeping the pits clear of water except by very expensive and powerful pumping machinery." Two years later the same source credited the Chinese at the Lava Beds with a production worth only \$50,000.²²

The Lava Beds lacked sufficient slope for the use of hydraulicking or sluicing. As a result, only small-scale mining by panning or rocking was possible. Water was obtained from the Feather River and Ophir Water Company ditch or by simply sinking a shaft twelve to eighteen feet deep. The pay streak was about ten to twelve feet below the surface and averaged about six to eight cents a pan. The mines paid \$2.50 to \$10.00 a day with a rocker. While U.S. law prohibited the Chinese from locating and establishing claims, they could purchase such claims from U.S. citizens. Early in 1873 the Chinese paid \$100 per acre for mining ground. By May the *Press* noted sales of \$100, \$200 and \$400, and the original discovery sold for almost \$1000. George Groner acted as agent for the Chinese in the purchase of mining claims. They consulted him in every case of offer or purchase. By early May his purchases already totalled over \$10,000, and then he bought \$1,500 worth of claims in a single day. In the latter half of May, claim prices escalated sharply. The Chinese expended several thousand dollars a week and individual purchases ran as much as \$2,000 and more. In locating claims for sale to Chinese, several white men made valuable discoveries and decided to keep them. The Greely Company, for instance, had nine shafts and pumps to drain them in operation by May 1873.²³

Many men located claims solely for the purpose of selling them to the Chinese. Soon tape lines and chains ran through the brush in all directions, and a crop of stakes covered the ground for miles. The lawyers of Oroville did a booming business and the Chinese banker, Sin Yet, could be seen daily hurrying through the streets with sacks of \$20 gold pieces. Some tried to make their fortune by claim jumping or selling the claims of others.²⁴

One Reed, a staid and sober colored citizen says he found himself in a fix the other day, the Chinamen having a written quit-claim deed to his claim, for an expressed consideration of \$700. Against this deed he persecuted a six-shooter and undertook to hold his claim. In relating the incident to us, he swore by the American eagle that on the appearance of his revolver ten

thousand Chinaman in Buckram sprang into sight and tried to kill him, and he "got out a dar as quick as he could!"²⁵

With the profits made in some transactions, it was not surprising that such events took place. In one case Euroamericans purchased a claim for \$400. Some Chinese offered \$500 for half of it, but they turned it down. The Chinese finally acquired it for \$1,100, and took out that much in a single week. The editor of the *Record* quipped that when a Chinese wanted to purchase a claim it was astonishing how quickly the average American mind could understand them. "The click of coin is a language universally understood."²⁶

A visitor to the Chinese diggings at the Lava Beds saw "shafts and drifts with rough and ancient looking windlasses, rockers, pans, pumps, and other tools and equipments incident to diggings of this class." The rudimentary methods utilized by the Chinese reminded one writer of the mines of the California goldrush. "All the tools and fixtures used are old, and none of the more improved and scientific are to be seen in use." Instead of using an iron anvil to sharpen and point their picks, they used a large flat piece of black granite. They replaced the standard forge bellows with an inexpensive but ingenious device that utilized a piston-rod to eject a blast of air through an iron nozzle. The Chinese often showed such resourcefulness, using what was available or recycling items. The local newspaper editor rather than recognizing their resourcefulness said "It is indeed singular that with all their awkwardness and ignorance of mining, they can make such wages as they are certainly doing."²⁷

Generally the Chinese worked in gangs of 10 to 50 or 60 men. On some claims, they stripped off six to ten feet of overburden to reach the auriferous gravel. Workmen then wheeled the pay dirt to a rocker and washed it using the water that they had pumped from the claim. In other places, the Chinese excavated numerous shafts, 30, 40, and 50 feet deep. Each had a windlass over it with a long rope and two tubs to bring the auriferous gravel to the surface. These workmen loaded it into wheelbarrows and transferred it to a shallow reservoir four or five inches deep. A number of Chinese standing in the reservoir shoveled the dirt into a rocker. The Chinese cleaned out each rocker daily and the head man took charge of the gold. Initially the Chinese utilized pumps of various patterns, including wooden belt pumps, for raising water to use for washing the pay dirt. Horse and man power first ran such pumps. In the fall of 1873, however, the Chinese began employing steam-powered

pumps such as the Wilcox Water Lifter.²⁸

The Chinese apparently tried to reduce the amount of timbering in their shafts to reduce costs. The winter rains often saturated the ground and caused landslides and cave-ins that maimed or killed numerous Chinese. The long dry winter of 1874-75 left the claims free from water and therefore easier to work. Correspondingly, that spring brought a rush of Chinese to the Lava Beds, and once again they acquired every available piece of mining ground that they could. The *Press* of June 5, 1875, described three parcels that sold for from \$150 to \$2,000 and claimed that five years earlier none of them would have brought \$10.²⁹

During the mining season of 1875, more of the Chinese equipped their claims with expensive steam pumps to keep them drained. They had about a dozen such machines at work by March. "In the morning their shrill whistles can be heard calling the workmen to their labors, and again at night announcing that the hour has come for rest and sleep." Ah Hap and Company employed a white man to install a steam-powered Hooker Water Lifter. The use of such improved machinery significantly increased the output at the mines. The *Mining and Scientific Press* claimed that "John usually rigs up some kind of a contrivance of his own to accomplish his ends, and does not take kindly to machinery of any style where hand-work will do at all. In this instance, however, he can do little with his crude water-raising apparatus, and has to fall back on a full-fledged steam pump." In truth the Chinese did not unilaterally reject improved methods. They simply attempted to replace machinery with labor whenever possible. In cases where conditions required more efficient technology, they usually utilized such methods. In some instances, in fact, the Chinese introduced improved methods as soon as their white counterparts.³⁰

In 1876 a large number of Chinese again worked the Lava Beds. A visitor in November remarked that in every direction he looked he saw columns of smoke from the steam engines used to drain the claims. However, signs of the pending exhaustion of the mines appeared. While some companies had taken out a great deal of gold, others barely made expenses, and some even failed to pay for provisions. The following year, however, a large number of Chinese again mined at the Lava Beds, working both old claims as well as newly opened ones. Mining reportedly was as brisk as during 1874-75. Supposedly a large influx of white labor into Butte County forced the Chinese to go into mining again, or starve. Production estimates ranged from \$10,000 to

\$15,000 per month that spring to \$60,000 to \$100,000 per month that summer and fall. The mines continued to yield such production another year or two. During 1880 the Chinese companies owning the claims in the Lava Beds contracted about 800 of their laborers to work on the Miocene, Frost and Reece, Butte Creek, and other ditch enterprises in various parts of Butte County. Consequently, production only averaged \$3,000 per week. Production continued to decline through the early 1880s.³¹

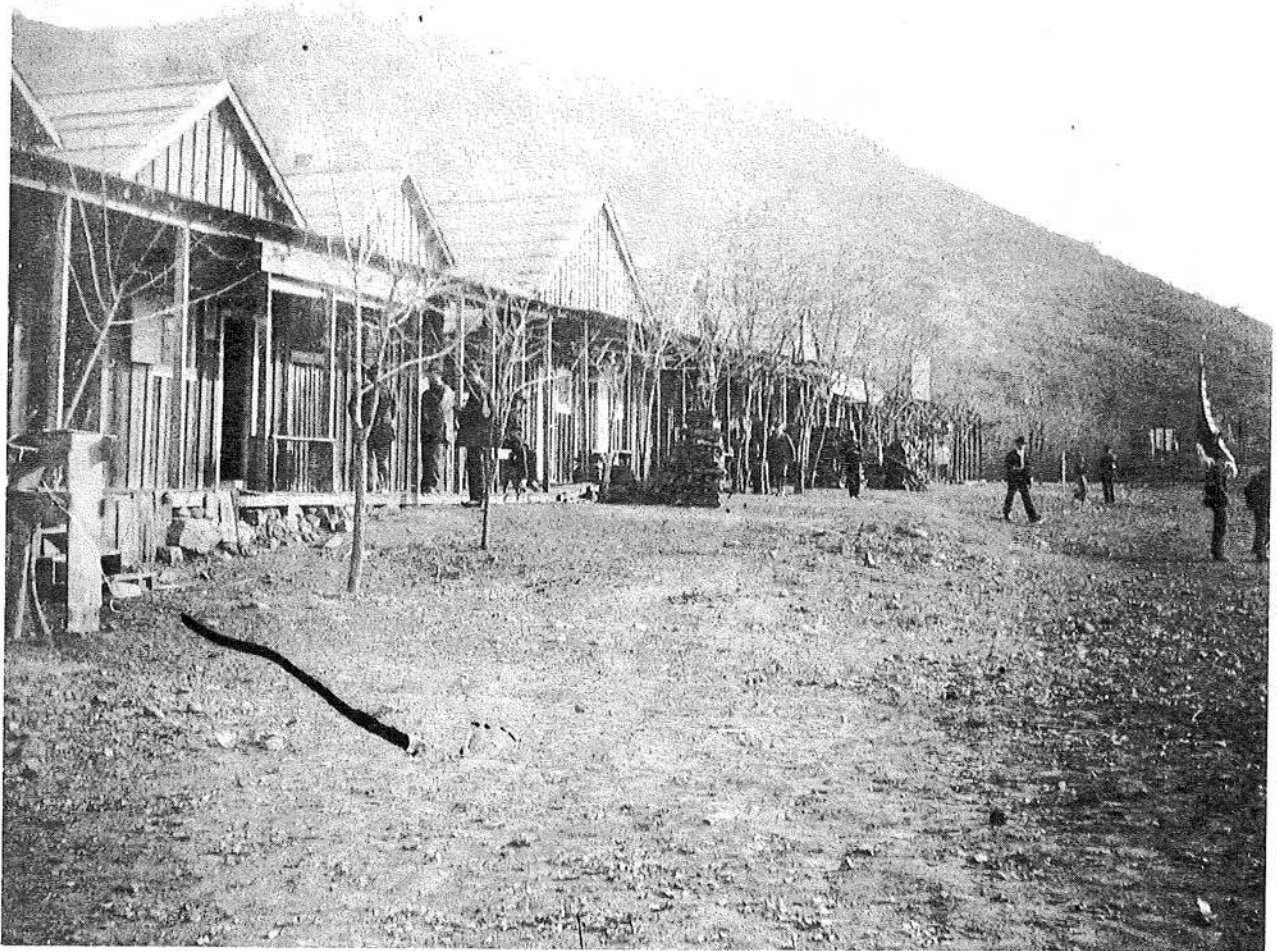
While the Chinese sent some of their gold directly to the mint at San Francisco, most went to Oroville. Oroville had three or four houses that bought gold from the Chinese. One Chinese house shipped over \$7,000 in gold dust to the mint in a single week in the fall 1873. The *Mercury* estimated that the Chinese at the Lava Beds produced \$766,000 between August and November. Oroville and Marysville bankers stated that the Chinese shipped regularly an average of \$18,000 per week that year. In early 1875 the average weekly shipments ranged between \$15,000 and \$16,000; it reached \$20,000 that summer. The Chinese merchants bought most of the gold on Sunday and brought it to the Wells, Fargo and Company Express office the next day. It was shipped below each Tuesday.³²

The production of this much gold, even with primitive, small-scale mining methods, had a very noticeable impact on the land. The effects of the Chinese mining operations were already apparent in mid-March 1873:

It is astonishing the amount of dirt they work with the ordinary hand rocker of '49. They are spoiling the beauty of the valley in which Oroville is situated. Men who quite recently proved to the satisfaction of the land Department that this land was more valuable for agriculture than mineral purposes, and secured patents to it, are now disposing of it to Chinamen to be mined out, and Oroville will soon be surrounded on all sides by piles of barren rock, washed gravel[,] and Celestial slickings. [sic]³³

The *Record* claimed that the Chinese were "making yawning excavations," "heaping the refuse dirt mountain high," throwing up "unseemingly [sic] piles of rock," and in the process destroying thousands of acres of agricultural land.

Their work turned the whole valley topsy-turvy, "upheaving the beautiful valley below town, and covering it with piles of gravel and stone." The Chinese so completely gophered the flats for five or



The Lava Beds probably resembled at least generally Chinatowns in the rest of the West. Typically they consisted of attached, narrow, gable-roof structures like these at Yreka, CA. (Courtesy Siskiyou County Historical Society)

six miles below Oroville that it was "dangerous attempting to navigate off from the main roads without a guide." The Chinese transformed fields and gardens into barren mounds of sand. If the pay dirt led under Oroville, the editor of the *Record* expected them to follow it at whatever cost.³⁵

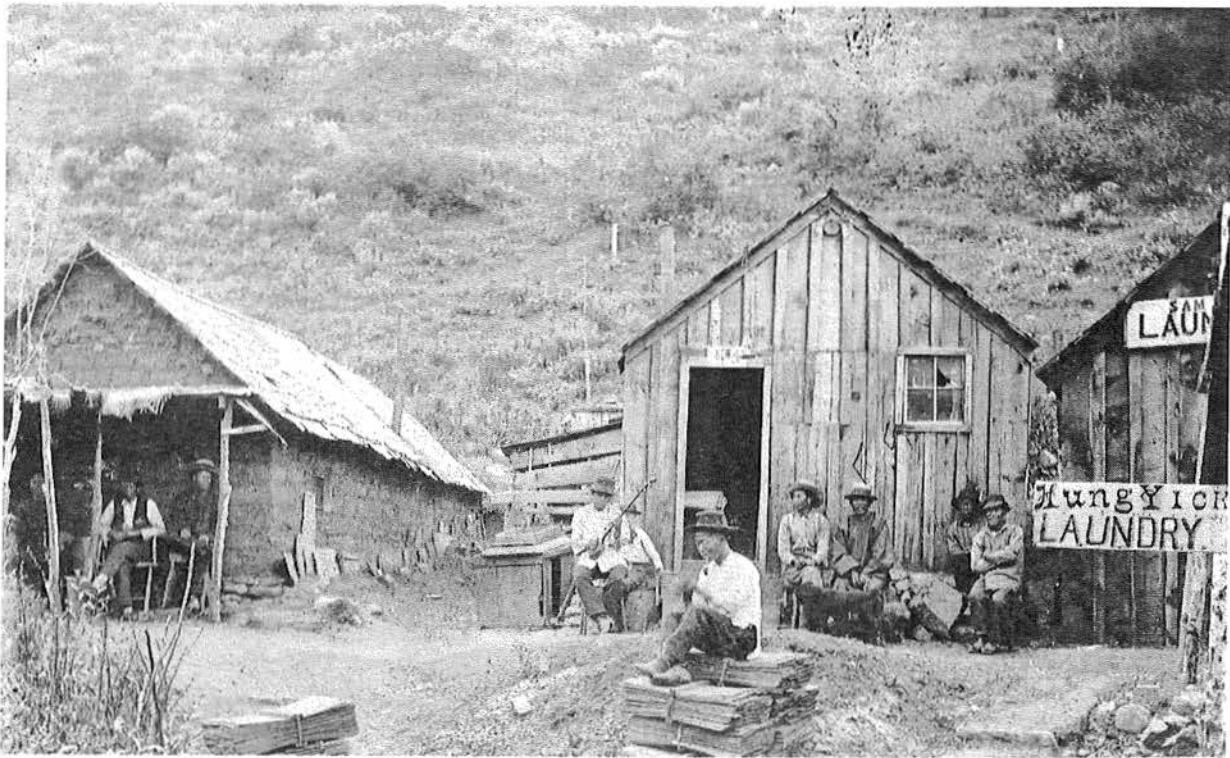
They will thus encompass the Gem of the Foothills, turning up the earth and leaving timber in their excavations to decay and exhale their poisonous malaria. It will soon become a serious question with Oroville, and our people may as well look it in the face, and so far as practical avert the evils threatened from this source.³⁶

With each year the area impacted by mining grew and the mounds of strippings reached "heavenwards, like the tower of Babel." Long lanes that had been mined showed the direction of the pay streaks.³⁷ While

Chinese mining notably altered the land, it is noteworthy that the local newspapers largely ignored the much greater environmental destruction wrought by Euroamericans using such large-scale methods as hydraulicking.

While some of the Chinese who mined at the Lava Beds lived in Oroville, the vast majority built dwellings near their claims. In March 1873 the *Record* reported that the Chinese were building their shanties all over the flats below Oroville. Their brush and rough lumber and shake shanties, twelve by thirty feet in size, lined both sides of the road below the town. Some of them were built on low ground along Dry Creek and when it flooded, the Chinese required "boats to go to bed."³⁸

By April the Chinese had "built up a considerable mining camp, or rather several camps," as the mining district was three to four miles long and one to two miles wide. The Chinese built their settlement



This view of Chinese buildings at De Lamar, Idaho is probably representative of what those at the Lava Beds were like. Note their small size and the Chinese sign over the structure in the center. (Courtesy Idaho Historical Society)

"solidly so as to accommodate a large population without infringing largely upon the mining ground." They laid out the streets parallel to each other without any cross streets to allow more building room. By the fall of 1873 the town contained about 150 buildings, a dozen canvas tents, and a single brick store. Another couple dozen shanties surrounded the town proper. Dr. P. B. Miller described some of them as "dilapidated structures much resembling a pig house." Well into December the Chinese continued to build, and new buildings were constantly springing up. Of special note was the construction of a brick Joss House. The following spring the Chinese added a theater, which cost \$3,000, to their settlement. As the population grew and the amount of trade increased, the Lava Beds gained several more stores. The settlement probably also had several gambling halls and opium dens or the Chinese patronized those in Oroville's Chinatown.³⁹

The closely built, overcrowded wooden structures of the Lava Beds were an invitation to fire. Like most Chinatowns, it suffered several fires. The first one in August 1875 leveled a good portion of the settlement, consuming about sixty buildings at a loss of \$60,000. Two years later another fire destroyed all the houses and stores, probably thirty-five or forty in all, on both sides of the principal street with a loss of \$20,000. "No sooner had the fire showed itself on the outside

of the building than each Chinaman got together what little stock of worldly goods he had and struck out for more hospitable quarters without ever once trying to put out the fire."⁴⁰

A reoccurring theme of the anti-Chinese writings of the 19th century was that Chinese settlements like the Lava Beds were completely self-contained and self-sufficient and that the Chinese purchased practically nothing from white merchants, and all the gold that they mined ended up in China. The economic contribution of the Lava Beds to Oroville and the surrounding agricultural community more than adequately dispel this myth.

The Chinese required large amounts of timber for supporting their tunnels and shafts and lumber for building material. They purchased mining equipment such as steam pumps and wheelbarrows. They bought a great deal of hay for their horses on the stage line and those used in teaming, and they consumed significant quantities of hogs, chickens, and fish for food and in religious rites and festivals.⁴¹

As early as the fall of 1873 the Chinese controlled the wood, egg, poultry, and hog markets; they paid better prices than others when necessary and got their price when the opportunity arose. While the Chinese merchants kept provisions, the Chinese purchased most of their clothing and hardware from white merchants. Best of all, claimed the *Mercury*, they

asked for no credit and paid for everything in gold or silver. The newspaper claimed the Chinese mines produced \$720,000 annually and a large portion of it ended up in the tills of white merchants. Another source claimed the Chinese accounted for more than three-fourths of the trade of the town. As a result, Oroville did not experience hard times as badly as other towns in the county which lacked such trade.⁴²



Since some Chinese resided at the Lava Beds only during the mining season, they lived in canvas tents near their operations. With the arrival of the rainy season, they picked up and moved elsewhere. This was a pattern they followed in many parts of California. (Courtesy California State Library)

Pork and chicken were not only a staple of the Chinese diet but played an important role in many of their religious rites and festivals. Local newspapers frequently noted large herds of hogs being driven to the Lava Beds. Sometimes three herds passed that way a day. Most of the hogs came from farms around Hamilton and Chico. After a Chico man made several large sales of hogs, the *Mercury* claimed that a thousand hogs would find an equally good market. The demand for chickens at the Lava Beds made it almost impossible to find one at any price in Oroville. Teams went straight to the Lava Beds and sold them there. Besides passenger service, Chinese activity at the Lava Beds increased the freight business of the Oroville and Marysville Railroad. Sometimes it brought in almost an entire carload of merchandise just for the Chinese.⁴³

Chinese mining at the Lava Beds did not just invigorate the economy of white Oroville, it also resulted in the doubling in the size of its Chinatown. The hotels and gambling houses did a thriving business and the number of Chinese stores in and around Oroville multiplied. New mining supply stores, boot and shoe stores, blacksmith shops and other Chinese enterprises, including some large brick structures, appeared. Rents advanced fully 50 percent. Mining and the trade that it generated increased the Chinese population of Oroville - multiplying it "with almost mathematical progression." E. W. Fogg claimed that Oroville had 10,000 Chinese in 1874,

7000 of them at work in the mines.⁴⁴

Later activities completely destroyed any evidence of the Chinese settlement or their mining activities at the Lava Beds. Dredging in the early years of this century destroyed much of the site. Later the construction of the New York Machine Shop, the operations of the Kaiser Rock Company, the building of the Oroville dam and the widening of state highway 70 further altered the site.⁴⁵ Despite its historical significance, not even a sign outlining that importance marks the site. Perhaps just another example of the failure to recognize the Chinese and their part in the development of the West. Hopefully this paper somewhat rectifies that and helps preserve some of the history of this important Chinese site.

NOTES

1. The best general examinations of mining in the West are Rodman W. Paul, *Mining Frontiers of the Far West, 1848-1880*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963, William S. Greever, *The Bonanza West: The Story of the Mining Rushes, 1848-1900*. Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1963, and T. A. Watkins, *Gold and Silver in the West: The Illustrated History of an American Dream*. Palo Alto: American West Pub., 1971. Most studies of the Chinese emphasize the prejudice and discrimination that they experienced. See, for example, Gunther Barth, *Bitter Strength: A History of the Chinese in the United States, 1850-1870*. Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1964 and Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy--Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California*. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1971.
2. Only a few studies specifically examine Chinese mining in the West or in individual states. Exceptions include Ping Chiu,

- Chinese Labor in California, 1850-1880: An Economic Study.* Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1963; David V. Dufault, "The Chinese in the Mining Camps of California, 1848-1870," *Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly*, Vol. 41 (June, 1959): 155-170; Randall Rohe, "After the Gold Rush: Chinese Mining Activities In The Far West, 1850-1890," *Montana Magazine of Western History*, Vol. 32 (Autumn, 1982), 2-19; and Stephen Williams, "The Chinese in the California Mines, 1848-1860," M. A. thesis, Stanford University, 1930.
3. *Butte Record*, June 21, 1873, July 19, 1873; *Northern Enterprise*, April 25, 1873; *Mining and Scientific Press*, May 3, 1873; George C. Mansfield, *History of Butte County, California*. Los Angeles: Historic Record Co., 1918, 269-270; Rossitor W. Raymond, "Statistics of Mines and Mining in the States and Territories West of the Rocky Mountains," 43rd Cong. 1st Sess., *House Ex. Doc. No. 141*, serial 1608 (Washington 1874), 132.
 4. *Butte Record*, April 19, 1873, April 26, 1873; *Mining and Scientific Press*, May 3, 1873; Raymond *op. cit.*, 133.
 5. *Butte Record*, May 3, 1873, May 10, 1873, May 31, 1873; *Marysville Appeal*, May 30, 1873, May 31, 1873, June 1, 1873; *Northern Enterprise*, May 30, 1873.
 6. *Marysville Appeal*, June 11, 1873, June 14, 1873, July 30, 1873; *Butte Record*, June 21, 1873, July 19, 1873; *Yreka Union*, July 26, 1873; *Northern Enterprise*, July 25, 1873.
 7. *Mining and Scientific Press*, August 23, 1873; *Oroville Mercury*, August 21, 1873; *Butte Record*, September 6, 1873; Mansfield, *op. cit.*, 270; *Marysville Appeal*, September 25, 1873.
 8. *Marysville Appeal*, October 9, 1873, October 9, 1873; *Butte Record*, June 21, 1873, December 6, 1873.
 9. *Mining and Scientific Press*, November 22, 1873; *Yreka Union*, November 29, 1873; *Trinity Journal*, November 22, 1873; *Butte Record*, November 29, 1873, May 2, 1874; *Marysville Appeal*, September 14, 1873, May 14, 1874; *Oroville Mercury*, August 21, 1873.
 10. *Oroville Mercury*, November 20, 1873; August 17, 1877, August 24, 1877; *Mining and Scientific Press*, April 13, 1878.
 11. *Oroville Mercury*, September 25, 1873.
 12. *Ibid.*, September 11, 1873.
 13. *Butte Record*, August 16, 1873.
 14. *Marysville Appeal*, December 23, 1873, January 11, 1874, January 22, 1874; *Butte Record*, November 29, 1873, *Oroville Mercury*, October 10, 1875; *Mining and Scientific Press*, November 22, 1873; *Sacramento Daily Union*, November 12, 1873, November 27, 1873.
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 16. *Marysville Appeal*, May 13, 1874, May 14, 1874, July 18, 1874, July 23, 1874, August 16, 1874, September 15, 1874; *Butte Record*, June 6, 1874; *San Francisco Evening Bulletin*, November 16, 1874; *Mining and Scientific Press*, August 29, 1874.
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 18. *Oroville Mercury*, February 19, 1875.
 19. *Butte Record*, October 24, 1874; *Marysville Appeal*, October 18, 1874, October 30, 1874; *Mining and Scientific Press*, November 7, 1874, *Oroville Mercury*, February 19, 1875.
 20. *Mining and Scientific Press*, January 23, 1875; *Oroville Mercury*, March 22, 1875, April 23, 1875; *Mariposa Gazette*, May 1, 1875; *Marysville Appeal*, September 14, 1875; *Northern Enterprise*, December 31, 1875; *Sacramento Union Record*, April 24, 1875.
 21. *Oroville Mercury* October 19, 1877, January 18, 1878; *Mining and Scientific Press*, June 9, 1877, October 9, 1877.
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 23. *Butte Record*, April 12, 1873, April 26, 1873, May 3, 1873, May 10, 1873; *Mining and Scientific Press*, May 3, 1873, May 17, 1873; *Northern Enterprise*, April 25, 1873, May 30, 1873.
 24. *Butte Record*, May 24, 1873, June 21, 1873.
 25. *Ibid.*, June 21, 1873.
 26. *Ibid.*, January 17, 1874.
 27. *Marysville Appeal*, September 14, 1873; *Mining and Scientific Press*, September 27, 1873; *Oroville Mercury*, September 11, 1873.
 28. *Oroville Mercury*, November 3, 1873, March 26, 1875, June 25, 1875, July 16, 1875, December 17, 1875.
 29. *Butte Record*, December 20, 1873, *Mining and Scientific Press*, May 8, 1875, June 5, 1875, February 23, 1878; *Oroville Mercury*, May 28, 1875, October 10, 1875, November 10, 1876, February 15, 1878, *San Francisco Evening Bulletin*, June 1, 1875.
 30. *Oroville Mercury*, March 26, 1875, April 23, 1875; *Mining and Scientific Press*, May 8, 1875, June 9, 1877; *Mariposa Gazette*, May 1, 1875.
 31. *Oroville Mercury*, November 10, 1876, June 8, 1877, October 19, 1877, January 18, 1878, October 18, 1878, September 17, 1880, January 20, 1882; *Mining and Scientific Press*, November 18, 1876, March 24, 1877, June 9, 1877, June 16, 1877, January 26, 1878, January 28, 1882; *San Francisco Evening Bulletin*, November 14, 1876.
 32. *Butte Record*, November 29, 1873; *Oroville Mercury*, March 26, 1875, June 25, 1875, March 26, 1876; Raymond, *op. cit.*, 133.
 33. *Butte Record*, March 15, 1873
 34. *Ibid.*, March 29, 1873.
 35. *Ibid.*, April 12, 1873, June 21, 1873, November 8, 1873; *Mining and Scientific Press*, August 23, 1873; November 22, 1873.
 36. *Butte Record*, June 17, 1874.
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 38. *Butte Record*, March 29, 1873; December 13, 1873; *Marysville Appeal*, September 14, 1873.
 39. *Butte Record*, April 26, 1873, October 11, 1873, December 20, 1873, May 2, 1874; *Oroville Mercury*, November 3, 1873, February 19, 1875; May 22, 1874.
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 43. *Butte Record*, November 8, 1873, November 29, 1873; *Oroville Mercury*, February 19, 1875, July 16, 1875; *Marysville Appeal*, June 10, 1873; *Northern Enterprise*, June 5, 1874.
 44. *Butte Record*, August 16, 1873, September 27, 1873, October 11, 1873, December 6, 1873; Mansfield, *op. cit.*, 270; *Northern Enterprise*, December 12, 1873.
 45. Lowe, *op. cit.*, 22, Letter from William A. Jones, Head Special Resources, Meriam Library, California State University, Chico, Chico, CA., March 28, 1991.