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HOMETOWN CHINATOWN

THE HISTORY OF OAKLAND'S CHINESE COMMUNITY

L. Eve Armentrout Ma

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In addition to these individuals, a former Oakland Chinatown community organization called the Oakland Chinese History Research Committee provided me with various types of information and assistance in the late 1970s, and directed me towards knowledgeable community members who were willing to be interviewed. One result of this collaboration was an early, shorter account of the history of Oakland's Chinese, a book that is no longer in print. Committee members most active in helping me at that time included Erwin Chew, Connie Chang, Howard Ah-Tye, Ernest Chann, and the late Rev. Frank G. Mar. More recently, Howard Ah-Tye and Ernest Chann reviewed portions of this manuscript covering recent events. My daughter, Lucy Armentrout-Ma, and my friend Jody Schoenhard read much of the manuscript and gave me thoughtful comments on it. My thanks also to Garland Press and Dr. Franklin Ng, the editor of this series.

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Foreword

The Chinese have always been builders. For centuries, they have built social systems which constitute the foundation of one of the greatest, most enduring civilizations of the world. They built the Great Wall of China, the only man-made structure on earth visible from the surface of the moon. In America, they helped expand the burgeoning young nation, laboring on the railroads, in the mines, and building dams, such as the Temescal and Chabot in Alameda County.

As we move into the 21st century, the pride, enterprise, and courage of the Oakland Chinese community have pioneered major business and residential construction in the city's Chinatown area. While some Chinese communities are intimidated by the size and scope of San Francisco's Chinatown, the largest in the nation, Oakland, located just across the bay, is not cowed by such comparisons. The people and their spirit have created projects for living from their dreams, such as the outstanding social services center, renovated from a former warehouse.

In this spirit of community pride and involvement, they have inspired this volume, a well-researched, comprehensive history of the Chinese in Oakland. The following pages reveal the cavalcade of outstanding, colorful men and women of the Oakland area who are as much builders in their own way as those who wield stone and masonry. These men and women and their supportive fellow citizens have made their niche not only in local history but regionally and nationally as well. Their foresight, courage, and deeds are chronicled within these pages.

Produced by Dr. L. Eve Armentrout Ma, with some assistance from members of the former Oakland Chinese History Research Committee and Jeong-Huei Ma, this remarkable volume records the history and accomplishments of a Chinese American community. As a Chinese American whose interest in serving in public life first began in the Oakland area, I am particularly proud of what has been achieved in this book. As this book shows, in their proud community achievements, Oakland Chinese Americans have created a blueprint for the future, an example

which other Chinese American communities throughout the nation can certainly follow.

Ambassador March Fong Eu

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Introduction

In 1848, California became part of the United States. Almost simultaneously, gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill. The great gold rush was on, luring hundreds then thousands then tens of thousands of '49ers to the gold country of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. On the coast, San Francisco was transformed from a remote military and missionary outpost into a major port, the point from which most adventurers disembarked to head for the mines. Ferry boats transported the miners from San Francisco up the Sacramento River to the Sierra foothills. From there, the miners pushed on, by pack mule or wagon or on foot into the mountains to search for gold.

The tremendous influx of fortune seekers changed everything in California, even back on the coast. Whaling towns like San Diego, Los Angeles and Monterey grew and developed facilities to reprovisioning ships laden with gold seekers bound for San Francisco. San Francisco expanded, and as its land became more and more expensive, other cities and towns like Oakland, San Jose and San Mateo grew up around the Bay, often built on land which squatters had stolen from Mexican owners.

But most Californians remained obsessed by gold. People came from all over the world to strike it rich in the Sierras: from France, Ireland, China, Chile, England and Mexico, as well as from the United States' East Coast. Justice was rough in the mining camps, and national and racial prejudices ran high. These prejudices were deep-seated: this was only about a decade before the American Civil War. Slavery based on race was still legal in many states, and many scientists declared the white race in general to be innately superior (based on cranial measurements, and the like). Additional "proof" of white superiority was that Western arms and technology were triumphant pretty much throughout the world (including in China). Racial stereotypes were taken to a degree of sophistication beyond what we see today; white Europeans, for example, were divided into "Teutonic," "Slavic," "Mediterranean" and "Anglo-Saxon" types.

In the United States, this fed anti-immigrant sentiment and led to the characterization of non-whites and white "Slavic" and "Mediterranean" types as inferior.

White Anglo-Saxon miners, jealous that French, Chinese and Mexicans often used more efficient mining methods which extracted more gold, soon began physically ejecting non-Anglo-Saxons from the California mines, or at least from the richest claims.¹ California's state legislature passed laws making it very difficult for "undesirables" (French, Chinese, Latin Americans), to establish themselves in the mining country.² The courts later overturned some of these laws, but it was too little too late: by the 1860s and 1870s, the surface gold, which could easily be extracted by an individual miner, was depleted and most foreign miners had given up. Some, including Chinese, did go to work for the large mining companies that undertook to dig deeper for gold, but most either returned to their native country or settled in California's growing cities and the farming country behind these cities.³

These Chinese would-be miners were part of a great migration out of south China to North and South America, Southeast Asia and Australia. Those who came to the United States came from the Pearl River delta, an area of south China in and around Canton. The barriers that as early as 1850 made it difficult for Chinese to acquire United States citizenship gave a feeling of impermanence to Chinese settlement in this part of the New World. Still, the migration which began as a trickle in the mid-1840s turned into a flood in the 1850s, as Chinese were pulled to California by news of the gold rush, and pushed out of China by civil wars, famine and floods.

Up through the 1860s, almost all of these Chinese lived in California. By the mid to late 1850s, however, several thousand had left the gold fields to return to China. A few thousand more had settled in the San Francisco Bay Area and in California's Central Valley. This dispersion continued as time passed, even while more people arrived from China. By 1880, for example, 99 percent of the Chinese in the United States lived in the western states. Of these, nearly three-quarters lived in California (including some 4,000 in and around the city of Oakland). By 1890, the western states still had 90 percent of the Chinese of which two thirds were in California, and in 1900, three-quarters were still in the western states, half of them in California.⁴

Chinese who left the gold mines fled violence and racial prejudice to find work as tenant farmers, factory workers and agricultural laborers. By the 1870s, however, American factory workers also began to find Chinese a threat and vowed to expel them from the United States. Anti-Chinese sentiment was particularly strong in the West, California taking the lead. Part of the problem lay in a dispute over a Chinese person's right of naturalization. If the growing number of Chinese who lived in the United States had sought and obtained American citizenship, politicians and police may have been more concerned about their welfare. But although Congress had declared that whites and (in 1868 with the Fourteenth Amendment) blacks could be naturalized, it said nothing about Chinese. Most of the western states, and most Californians, took this to mean that Chinese were barred from citizenship. Even earlier, in the 1850s, Chinese who applied for citizenship were often denied it on the basis of race. In 1854, for example, a Chinese person who had applied for naturalization in San Francisco had his application denied him on the basis of race. He took

the matter to Superior Court, but lost.⁵ In 1882, Congress spelled out this prohibition in a law that was not repealed until 1943.

While denying Chinese the right to naturalization, Congress also passed the notorious Chinese Exclusion Laws to forbid Chinese *laborers* (unskilled and especially, skilled) the right to enter the United States. The laws did allow Chinese businessmen, students and diplomats the right of entry but the exclusion laws were interpreted so as to cause Chinese the greatest amount of hardship. They virtually stopped the growth of Chinese communities in America.⁶

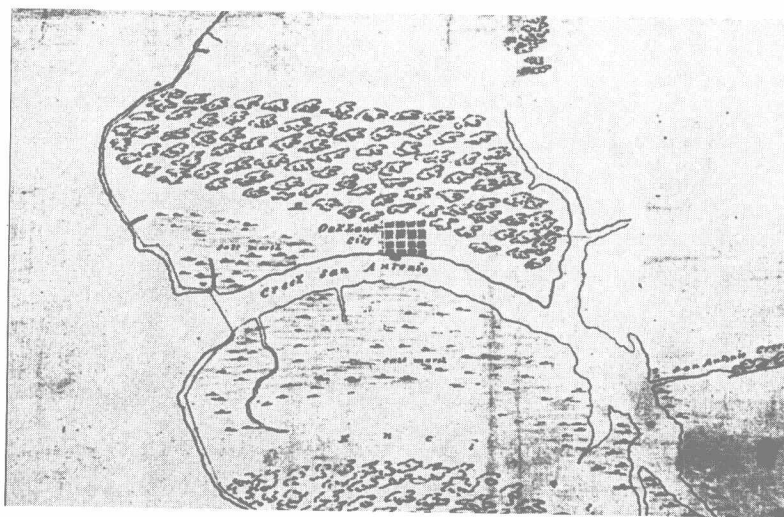
Chinese Exclusion was continued in one form or another until 1943 when Congress renounced it in theory. But it was not until the Walter-McCarran Act of 1952 that Chinese gained the right to immigrate to the United States on the same footing as people from the rest of the world. Even then, however, they were subjected to a very restrictive annual quota, in spite of which the Chinese population of the United States—and of California, including Oakland—finally began to grow again. The rate of growth increased dramatically in the 1970s and 1980s, due to further liberalization in immigration laws and policy, along with events in East Asia. Fears of the return of Chinese rule encouraged an exodus from Hongkong, political change in Southeast Asia led tens of thousands of ethnic Chinese to leave that region, Taiwan eliminated most of its barriers to emigration, and the People's Republic of China made it possible to leave the Chinese mainland.

In the nearly one hundred years between the start of Chinese immigration and the end of Chinese Exclusion, Chinese were subjected to a wide array of discriminatory legislation, particularly in the West. These laws set up a system which the Chinese community only managed to overcome through persistence and fortitude. For example, a 19th century law made it difficult for Chinese nationals to own land in California and a law passed in 1913 made it impossible. Other western states passed similar laws. Between 1870 and 1943, California law (aided by Chinese custom which discouraged women from emigrating) successfully prevented almost all Chinese women from entering that state.⁷ Since most Chinese entered the United States via California (San Francisco was for most of the period prior to 1943 the only legal port of entry on the West coast for Chinese), California's action helped create a "bachelor society," making normal family life almost impossible.

Chinese were denied the right to work in California's state government. California's state and local governments, followed by those in other western states, tried to force Chinese laundries to close, tried to forbid Chinese to testify in court against whites, drove Chinese peddlers out of business, and by 1910 had pretty much eliminated Chinese from this country's commercial fishing industry. In 1870, the state legislature passed a law forbidding Chinese children to attend public schools.⁸ (Most of the children in question were teenage boys whose families had sent them to the United States to work part time and get an education.) When in the 1880s the state relented, the legislature still encouraged local school boards to establish segregated schools for Chinese. The segregated school system for Chinese in California did not officially end until 1947.

The list of laws directed against Chinese was almost endless. The courts eventually overturned some of these laws, but unfortunately, many were allowed to stand. In addition to legal discrimination, Chinese were subjected to physical attack by so-called "anti-coolie clubs," young hoodlums, and miscellaneous angry mobs. In general, the police did little or nothing to protect Chinese from these attacks. It would be an understatement to say that between 1850 and 1945, Chinese in the United States were faced with tremendous obstacles. It was not until World War II that a changed climate of public opinion promised to eliminate the remaining discriminatory legislation, and allow Chinese something approximating equal treatment.

It may be wondered why any Chinese stayed in the United States under these circumstances. Many in fact did not, preferring to return to China. Others, native-born Chinese Americans, children of the few Chinese women who were able to follow their husbands and enter the United States, belonged here in the first place. As for the Chinese immigrants who stayed in the United States, most were motivated by necessity. China's population tripled between the mid-18th and mid-19th centuries, but her land area did not, and there were simply far too many mouths to feed. A 14-year long civil war broke out in south China in 1850, a war which laid waste much of south China and decimated the population. In the 1860s, local rivalry over ownership of good farm land led to bloody battles in the Pearl River delta near Canton. Periodic floods caused by typhoons battering levees in poor repair increased the general level of misery. Under these circumstances, in spite of Americans' discrimination, many Chinese felt they had a better chance of finding a job and making an adequate living in America than in their native land.



Oakland in 1852 was hardly larger than the individual trees depicted on the map.

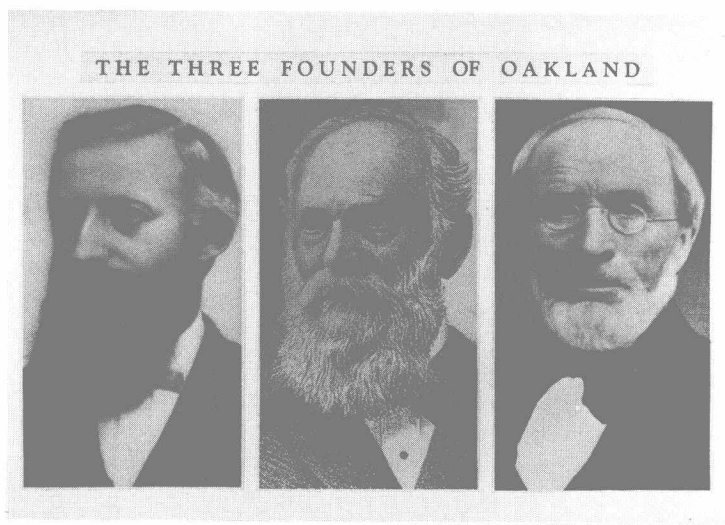
Courtesy: Author's Collection.

Most of the jobs available to Chinese were in or near cities, and Oakland was one of these cities. Oakland—named for a grove of oak trees on the original site of the town—grew out of a settlement started in 1851 by three squatters who illegally settled on land then owned by Don Vicente Peralta. This land was part of a vast ranch (or “rancho”) granted to the Peralta family by the Mexican government during the period when California belonged to Mexico. But the Peraltas lived almost 30 miles to the south, in an area where the downtown section of the modern city of San Jose is located. Knowing that the Peraltas were far away, the three squatters, along with a companion whom they soon bought out,⁹ formed a land development company. They took up residence together in a cabin, then audaciously began drawing up plans for a city. Next, they got the county to give them a franchise to operate a regularly scheduled ferry line that crossed the Bay to San Francisco. When Don Peralta learned of their presence, he sent a sheriff to run them off, but they claimed they only wanted to lease farm land. Don Peralta agreed and gave them a lease. Instead of farming, the three squatters started selling false titles to portions of the acreage they had leased. The land was rich, the climate good, and there were good communications—via their ferry line—with the growing city of San Francisco so many people came, settled, and bought land from them.¹⁰

One of the three squatters was a lawyer named Horace W. Carpentier.¹¹ A man quick to recognize opportunities for wealth and power, it was he who in 1851 had gotten a franchise from the county to operate the ferry line to San Francisco. In 1852 Carpentier named the town he had helped create “Oakland”—it had earlier been called *Contra Costa*—and persuaded the state legislature to incorporate it as a town. He also persuaded the legislature to accept the squatters’ fake deeds. (The legal problems that grew out of this were not resolved until 1867.) One of the first acts of the new town’s government was to grant Carpentier title to its waterfront for the next 37 years. It is said that in return, Carpentier only had to pay the town \$5.00, and build it a public school house. He also, of course, constructed a wharf for his ferry line and turned Oakland into a port, to his great profit.

In the meantime, in late 1852, Carpentier got himself elected to the state legislature. One account claims that when the votes were tallied, four times as many votes were cast for him as were registered to vote in his district.¹² The story goes that he ferried people across the bay from San Francisco to stuff the ballot boxes. One man is said to have admitted to voting seven times! Recognizing the ferry as important to his success, in 1853 Carpentier persuaded the state legislature to give him and his partners a 20 year monopoly on the line. In the same year, he got the legislature to create Alameda County (the Oakland area had until then been part of *Contra Costa County*), and by 1854, Oakland had grown enough for Carpentier to be able to get it incorporated as a city.¹³ It should come as no surprise to learn that Carpentier was its first mayor.¹⁴

What kind of a city was it? In the first place, the territory that Oakland occupies today includes the original, much smaller Oakland along with a great deal of farm land and several small towns which have long since disappeared. As may be imagined, over the years people built houses over the farm land and the expanding



Horace W. Carpentier is the man on the far left.

Courtesy: Oakland Public Library, Oakland History Room

city swallowed up the towns. In this book, to make matters simple, instead of trying to trace the separate histories of each of the towns that later became part of Oakland, when I speak of Oakland I shall be referring to all that had become the modern city of Oakland as of the mid-1990s.

Modern Oakland is a commercial and to some extent an industrial center. It was both of these things in the early days as well. Located on the eastern shore of San Francisco Bay, intersected by several waterways, with tidal flats, the estuary and marshes along its western edge and the hills of the coastal range to the east, it was also a pretty place. In the hills to the north and east of the city, there were beautiful redwood groves. The valley surrounding the city contained large cattle ranches, grain farms planted with wheat and barley, and cherry orchards. In addition, there were the little towns of Clinton and San Antonio—which combined together in 1856 to form the township of Brooklyn—along with the town of Temescal near the redwoods and, in the mid-1860s, the small manufacturing center of Lynn. Something of a buffer zone existed between the city and towns on the one hand, and the large farms and ranches on the other. This buffer zone consisted of small to medium sized truck farms where people grew vegetables and small berries like raspberries and strawberries. To the west of the city and all along the bay lay mudflats, with some peat land.

All of this bounty gave the inhabitants enough for a reasonably comfortable life, and also provided raw materials for industry and job opportunities for the locals. The redwood groves gave rise to a small wood planing industry as loggers cut down the trees for building material. The ranches and grain farms were able to supply tanneries and flour mills, which soon sprang up in the city. A canning industry developed which utilized the fruit and vegetables grown in the orchards and on the truck farms.

Oakland was then, as it is today, a communications center. During much of the 19th century, many of the goods which people considered necessities, or near necessities—kerosene for lamps and often the lamps, themselves, nice clothing, finished chinaware, even good nails for construction—had to be imported to California from the East Coast or from abroad. It was very important to Oakland's residents, then, that their city be on major transportation routes. Oakland's harbor first became important in 1859 when the city dredged the San Antonio bar to give it a deep water port, and turn the Alameda peninsula into an island which was connected to Oakland by a drawbridge. During the early 1860s, Central Pacific Railroad decided to locate the western terminus of its transcontinental railroad in Oakland. Investors in the railroads and the harbor provided capital to construct the city's first dry docks which led to a ship building industry that by 1890 employed at least 450 people.

Railroads and railroad building were important, too, in a day when the principal alternatives were to travel on foot, by horse, or by ox-drawn cart. The big railroad building era in Oakland began in the 1860s with the Central Pacific terminal. After its completion, several local firms ran lines to nearby towns and later the Southern Pacific also built its terminal in Oakland. By 1880, railroads connected Oakland to the main trunk line which ran the length of California along the coast. Another line ran from Oakland into California's Central Valley. Central Pacific operated a steamer ferry which crossed the bay several times a day between Oakland and San Francisco, and by 1900, various companies had constructed street railways, or street car lines, throughout the city and to the neighboring towns.

Good communications also meant access to raw materials. Oakland businessmen started cotton mills which used cotton from Mexico, and a jute manufacturing plant dependent on jute from India. The discovery of coal in western Contra Costa County gave birth to an iron industry. Between 1870 and 1910, the city also boasted several explosives works, an exciting industry to have, since every once in a while, one of them would blow up. In addition, the city had more prosaic but necessary industries such as glass works, soap factories, and a boot and shoe factory (after all, there were no department stores, and not every one could afford hand made shoes). There was even a ribbon factory—popular in a day when women wore lots of ribbons on their dresses and in their hair.

In the meantime, the city and its industries grew almost continuously. In terms of population, in 1860 about 1500 people lived in the city, divided into several well-defined groups: whites (people of Anglo-Saxon and "Teutonic" background), Chinese and a few Jews, Mexicans and others. Whites were in the majority with Chinese coming next, and then the other groups. In the 1880s, the city grew to some 67,000 people and had developed a small Japanese enclave.¹⁵

After the turn of the century, the city continued to grow. World War I gave its economy a boost, particularly its ship-building industry, which employed over 40,000 people in the peak year of 1920, shortly after the end of the war. But the Depression brought ship-building practically to its knees, and thousands of people lost their jobs. Fortunately for the unemployed, Chevrolet opened a car manufacturing plant in the city in the 1930s which took up some of the slack. Food processing

plants were also pretty big employers: canneries, flour mills, frozen food plants, meat processors. These continued to thrive right on through World War II. During that war, the population changed significantly, as many tens of thousands of blacks moved into the city, recruited from the South to work in war-related industries associated with the big military bases established in the city. The addition of the black community helped swell the city's population to 385,000 in 1950.¹⁶

In the forty years between 1950 and 1990, Oakland's port with its modern containerized facilities grew to be the city's biggest economic asset. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the port vied continuously with Los Angeles for the title of largest port on the United States' Pacific coast. This, plus the rail and air transportation networks have kept Oakland a major market and distributions center, while the growth of other important new groups in the population—immigrants from East and Southeast Asia in particular—have contributed to the city's growth and made it increasingly cosmopolitan.

A city's history, however, cannot be completely summed up by data on population and industries. Oakland has also been the setting for many events which profoundly affected her inhabitants. A major flood damaged the city in 1862, and there was a big earthquake in 1868. In the late 1870s and during the 1880s, the Workingman's Party and anti-Chinese clubs then sweeping the state temporarily gained control of Oakland's political apparatus, threatening on several occasions to burn down Chinatown and destroy American businessmen who employed Chinese. An early women's movement flourished in the city between 1870 and 1910, whose aims were to close down bars, influence elections, and promote charitable activities. Coxey's Army of unemployed laborers seeking government aid passed through the city in 1898.

In 1906, tens of thousands of refugees from the San Francisco earthquake (including 4,000 Chinese) took up temporary residence in Oakland. Patriotism and anti-foreignism swept the city during and after World War I while in the 1920s, Prohibition gave employment to bootleggers. In 1934, in the middle of the Depression, a nation-wide general strike briefly halted most activity in the city. Two years later, the Bay Bridge was completed, linking Oakland more firmly with San Francisco and helping to weaken the effects of the Depression.

During World War II, Oakland acquired Navy and Army bases. These helped the city and its economy grow much larger, but on a more somber note, Oakland's relatively few residents of Japanese ancestry had to move to wartime "relocation camps." (After the war, most of them returned to the city.) Blacks, on the other hand, began moving into the city in the tens of thousands during the war years, eventually to become Oakland's largest single ethnic group.

During the Vietnam War, expanded activities at the Navy bases gave even another boost to the local economy. After a slight downturn in the early 1970s, Oakland began once again to experience steady growth and prosperity, much of it tied to its huge, modern container port. A significant percentage of the new residents and new money which came into the city after the mid-1970s originated in Hongkong and elsewhere in East and Southeast Asia. Beginning in the late 1970s

and continuing on through the 1980s and 1990s, the city worked on an ambitious project of urban renewal of her downtown area—somewhat daunted, but not overwhelmed, by the Loma Prieta earthquake of 1989. Finally, by 1980, reflecting trends seen throughout California, Oakland's population had become one in which whites were in the minority; indeed, between 1980 and 1990, the white population actually decreased for the first time in the city's history, even as the number of blacks, Latinos and Asians (including Chinese) increased.¹⁷

In nearly one and a half centuries, Oakland went through many changes as a city. Its Chinese community contributed to these in many ways, and had its own, more particular, changes as well—in legal rights, economic opportunities and the like.¹⁸ By looking at Oakland's Chinese, we can learn more about Oakland; but more importantly, we can see how Chinese adapted to life in the United States. Oakland provides a far better example of such a process than the well-studied but hardly typical Chinese community in San Francisco. San Francisco's Chinese community has always been unique, partly because San Francisco is one of the closest and most convenient ports of entry for Chinese coming to the continental United States. It has been a gateway, and to some extent, a jumping-off point. It was also until recently the principal port of entry for trade with China, especially trade handled by Chinese. Furthermore, during the long period of Chinese Exclusion (1882-1943), San Francisco was one of only a handful of ports of entry allowed to Chinese. And since the 1850s, it has contained the headquarters and the strongest branches of almost all the important Chinese community organizations in the continental United States.¹⁹ As a result, its Chinese population has generally been larger, much better organized, more politically active, and far more involved in international trade than any of the other Chinese communities in the United States.²⁰

On the other hand, for the century after Oakland's founding, Oakland's Chinese were typical of Chinese communities in the West's growing urban areas. These areas included Sacramento, Marysville, Stockton, Fresno, San Jose, Monterey, Los Angeles and San Diego in California, along with Seattle, Portland and Reno in the states near to California. In many respect, it also resembled the Chinatowns that developed further east, in New York and Chicago. In the cities of the western states, Chinese went through an important period as agriculturalists and day laborers in the factories, with some of those on the coast—Oakland is on the coast of San Francisco Bay—supporting themselves as commercial fishermen, an industry they introduced to this area.²¹

These urban Chinese communities also provided the labor force for the railroad building, levee building and road building that were so important to the development of the west. In contrast to San Francisco, the communities were not tightly knit or particularly well organized during this period, and until anti-Chinese sentiment and Chinese Exclusion put an end to it, they were relatively dispersed throughout the cities in which they lived.

When they hit, the anti-Chinese movement and Chinese Exclusion had a similar effect on each of these communities, driving Chinese into the Chinatowns and

also, as time passed, causing the Chinatowns to shrink drastically as people returned to China. In several cities the Chinese community had disappeared almost entirely by the first quarter of the 20th century; in most, however, at least a core remained. The great 1906 earthquake and fire in San Francisco provided a modest population boost to these cores, especially those in the Bay Area and on the Monterey peninsula.

Throughout Exclusion, Chinese became more and more isolated, more and more self-reliant. As one result, this became a period of organization-building. It was also a time of experimentation for some individuals. There are some rags-to-riches stories which come out of this period, and a revolutionary movement directed against the Chinese government took root as well. In addition, in spite of appearances, the Chinese in these cities were never entirely shut off from the larger community around them. Their own major entrepreneurs, the small laundries, the jobs as domestics for whites, and the needs of their native-born Chinese American children prevented it.

More recently, up until about the mid-1970s, Oakland's Chinese community continued to resemble these other Chinese communities. But as United States involvement in the war in Southeast Asia came to an end, an influx of refugees from Southeast Asia and an upsurge in immigration from "China" (mainland China, Hongkong and Taiwan) led to a divergence between cities which saw their Chinese, and Southeast Asian, population grow, and cities in which the Chinese community entered a state of advanced decline. Oakland, along with San Jose, Seattle, Sacramento, New York, Los Angeles, and the still-distinct San Francisco, was one of those in which both Chinatown and the Chinese community took on new life.

At the risk of interrupting the narrative, it would be well at this point to say a little about sources. Much but by no means all material on Chinese in Oakland consists of written English language sources; for the century before 1950, the most important of these are Hubert Howe Bancroft's monumental work and various local histories written by Oakland boosters. The lack of Chinese-language sources may seem strange, since Chinese are great writers of history, but the majority of the Chinese immigrants to the United States prior to the end of World War II were not members of the educated elite. When they did write histories, it was generally histories of the associations they founded in this country—associations whose headquarters were usually in San Francisco.

A Chinese-language press sprang up towards the end of the 19th century, but the first daily, a newspaper called the *Chung Sai Yat Po*, had its headquarters in San Francisco for most of its long existence. Except for a period right around the 1906 earthquake, it concentrated on the news of San Francisco's Chinese community, on political events taking place in China, and on the development of Chinese political parties dedicated to change in China. In the short period during 1906 when it moved its offices to Oakland to escape the ravages of the great earthquake and fire, it did devote considerable attention to Oakland news, and I have used those issues as my primary source for that period. In addition, I have used other Chinese-language newspapers, but more sparingly. Other Chinese-language sources include the histo-