

## Sacramento's Chinese of Yee Fow

Contrary to popular folklore, the Chinese “coming to” America during the 1800’s would better be described as “escaping to” America. Britain had decimated China in an effort the strip the country of its natural resources, most notably porcelain, silk, spices and tea. Today’s drug cartels can never compare in size and scope to the drug cartel of the British East India Company. British exports of opium to China skyrocketed from an estimated 15 tons in 1730, to 75 tons in 1773, shipped in over two thousand “chests”, each containing 140 pounds (67 kg) of opium. <sup>1</sup> The Chinese fought hard to keep opium out of their country but Britain had flooded the land with the drug in an effort to bring China to its knees. Under Britain’s harsh hand many Chinese became addicts, an estimated 2 million Chinese were habitual users.

The forces that drove thousands of Chinese to California were the direct result of the imperialist plunder and domination of China. Britain, France and the United States had carved China up into “spheres of influence” for foreign trade, opium traffic, and missionaries. In 1842 China lost the Opium War with England, and in 1856 China suffered a further defeat in the Arrow War (the “Second Opium War”) with England and France. As a result of these wars, China was forced to buy opium and to pay war reparations to England and France, and open its borders to unrestricted exploitation. Foreign-owned manufacturing crushed local industry. And to pay reparations to the colonial powers, the Chinese government had to levy huge tax increases on their people. The impoverished conditions of the Chinese people, who were overwhelmingly peasants, became even worse and peasant rebellions broke out.

After the Taiping Rebellion, 1851–1864 there was more reason for the Chinese to leave their country than to stay. Driven out by imperialism, they escaped to America. California being the closest route to America, they first came to San Francisco, known as Dai Fow “the Big City.” Sacramento was known as the “Second City,” or Yee Fow.

The Chinese community has been a long and important part of Sacramento’s history. Few Chinese accounts have survived the public record. But within the Chinese community, newspapers, census data and government documents are rich with the contributions of the Chinese.

Although they were not recorded in the first official census of 1850, the special state census taken 1852 showed there were 814 Chinese (804 males and ten females) in Sacramento that year. A closer scrutiny of the 1860 census suggests at least six hundred of the Chinese lived in the city proper. The Chinese population in the city of Sacramento increased to 1,371 in 1870 and reached a peak 1,781 in 1880. The total county data on the Chinese in the nineteenth century is: <sup>2</sup>

1860	1,731
1870	3,595
1880	4,892
1890	4,371
1900	3,254

It is difficult to ascertain the date of the first Chinese arrival in Sacramento and it may not be important, for the most part, he may have stopped only a short while and then headed for the gold country. What is important is the subsequent arrival of other Chinese more practical than adventuresome; these were the Chinese who knew Sacramento would be their Gold Mountain. These early settlers from China were the merchants, restaurateurs, laundrymen, entrepreneurs, peddlers, and a conglomerate of other service-oriented people who served both the Chinese and the white community.

As indicated earlier after arriving in San Francisco or Dai Fow (Big City), the early Chinese immigrants headed for Sacramento, gateway to the gold country, a natural stopover to procure additional information and supplies. The newcomers were not disappointed when they arrived in Yee Fow (Second City) for they found a large settlement with familiar sounds, sights, and smells only one block away from the Front Street harbor.

Chinatown or Chinadom, as it was then dubbed by the white populous, was located on I Street from Second to Sixth Streets. The I Street area was the least desired part of town. Many thought of the area as a health hazard. Most Chinatowns were allocated by the white society from areas deemed as wasteland. But the Chinese saw that it was close to the harbor and close to the main business section. I Street, itself, was a levee road, the north bank backed onto Sutter Slough and both sides of the street laid on low ground. The slough extended from the American River levee to I Street and from Sixth Street to the American River at its mouth; it filled from the high water runoffs of the Sacramento River and also took the overflow from the nearby American River whose mouth was then also located near the slough. During flood stage Sutter Slough overflowed into the city streets and was a hazard. In the center of the slough the water was almost forty feet deep forming Sutter Lake. In the summer the lake provided for boating fishing, and general recreation. Flooding was a major hazard while living near the slough and the Chinese were flooded out periodically between 1850 and 1862. The presence of so many Chinese encamped around Sutter Lake caused many Sacramentans to call the area "China Slough" or "China Lake."<sup>3</sup>

In no time Sacramento's Chinatown of the 1850s became thriving community. As early as 1851 the Sze Yup Association bought a building on I street between Fifth and Sixth, next door, the association provided temporary shelter for their fellow Chinese or those Chinese in need of safety from a hostile general population.<sup>4</sup> One had to only follow the faint sound of Chinese music coming from the rear of a social hall on I Street near Fifth Street to reach the one hundred-seat room in the rear of the building to enjoy the puppet show produced at the Canton Chinese Theater. The puppet show gave way to live performances from theater troupes and their accompanying traveling orchestras. The Chinese were willing to share their love of the theater with the white population as a form of goodwill whites were always invited to attend the performances. Leong Ah Gue, manager and interpreter of a theater troupe scheduled two performances on May 23, 1855, of Chinese historical operas at the Sacramento Theater for an all-white viewing audience. In 1879 the Moor's Opera House, on Third Street between I and J streets, served as a Chinese opera house; the performances began sharply at 7 PM and continued until the early hours of the morning, only a court order instigated by sleepy residents put an end to their performances. However, within a week another Chinese theater around the corner on I Street between Third and Fourth opened their doors.<sup>5</sup>

The Chinese News, a local Chinese newspaper was published by Ze Too Yune in late 1856. This paper, selling for twenty-five cents a copy, was the first newspaper printed in a foreign language in Sacramento, the newspaper stayed in circulation two years, beginning as a daily then tri-weekly and slowly diminishing to sporadic publication. But for those who could not afford the newspaper or when it was out of circulation, the sides of a building at the southwest corner of Third and I Streets served as the community board. Notices of meetings, business transactions, and other matters of public interest to the Chinese community were written in large black characters on red, elongated paper and plastered on the exterior wall. <sup>6</sup>

Aside from the family altars in the local association headquarters, there was also a Chinese joss house and a Christian temple. A traveling artist stumbled into the temple located by the slough; as he described it the inside was filled with bronze, china, and wood carvings: offerings of chicken, pork, candles, and incense lined an altar before a recessed alcove housing a large, seated statue of a clan elder with a flowing beard within a few blocks of the Chinese joss house was another house of worship, the Chinese church. <sup>7</sup>

In 1854 Rev. J. Lewis Shuck, formerly a Baptist missionary in China, opened a small Congregational Chapel on Sixth Street between G and H streets. Shuck had only marginal success in substituting Christianity for the Taoist faith of the predominately isolated Chinese males that had experienced firsthand the violence of white society. The chapel was given over to the first black congregation in 1856. However, other Christian faiths such as the Episcopal and Baptist in due time also established missions in the Chinatown area and remained with relative success. These missionaries goal was conversion and they offered English courses as an enticement. <sup>8</sup>

The most important function of Chinatown, however, was to provide supplies and services to the early Chinese. Stores, restaurants, laundries, and social halls abounded. As a background to the social climate of the mid 1800's, a seething anti-Chinese sentiment among the working classes was developing. Chinese immigrants became scapegoats for economic hardships because of their race and culture, willingness to work for lower wages and unwillingness to unionize with non-Chinese. Anti-Chinese agitation eventually convinced Congress to pass a national Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882. This law excluded Chinese laborers, both skilled and unskilled, from entering the United States for ten years. Furthermore, Chinese immigrants were declared ineligible for citizenship.

Following the passage of this act, many incidents of deadly violence occurred against the Chinese. What is now known as "The Driving Out," forced removals, occurred in Cherry Creek, Colorado; Tacoma, Washington; Tombstone, Arizona; Rock Spring, Wyoming; and Redlands, and California. A popular saying of the day became "He doesn't stand a Chinaman's chance."

Sacramento's Chinatown was no different than the rest of America. But the resilient nature of Chinese businessmen and their tenacious attitude towards the hostility of white society was best tested after the "Driving Out." Mysterious fires were rampant in America's Chinatowns and Sacramento was no exception. Although untouched by the first major fire which swept through Sacramento in 1852. The second fire of similar inten-

sity on July 1854 destroyed the greater part of the downtown blocks on both the north and south side of I Street from Third to Seventh Streets. Many canvas structures and wood shanty-like buildings quickly fell victim to the licking flames. Records of business permits indicate that within the first four months after that particular fire the Chinese business houses literally sprung back, eleven business licenses were issued to the Chinese on Street, these included five markets, one merchandising store, a bar and boardinghouse, and three gambling houses.<sup>9</sup>

Twelve months later on July 1855 another major fire struck Chinatown and roared through the area so rapidly it consumed an entire half block in half an hour. The fire was reported to have started in the second floor of the Sze Yup building. This time the Sacramento Fire Department allowed for the fire to burn as long as the wind was shifting northward towards the slough and away from the rest of the town. The loss was estimated at \$65,000 to \$100,000. Suspicious of the city's intentions, the Chinese took their injured to the Sze Yup Association's charity house for safety and medical care instead of the city's hospitals.<sup>10</sup>

In a final effort to "drive out" the Chinese, the Board of Trustees (forerunner to the City Council), amended an ordinance to require only fireproof buildings be erected in the burnt out section of Chinatown. This would require brick, one the most expensive building material of the day. Many city leaders felt the Chinese could not afford to build with brick. But seeing the wisdom of this ordinance the members of the Sze Yup Association immediately complied and rebuilt their building with bricks as did other Chinese merchants.<sup>11</sup>

The first decade of the Sacramento Chinese community was filled with excitement and transition; Chinese stepping off the boats from San Francisco heading east: lured by the gold in the hills, passed other Chinese heading west either to find quarters before winter set in or were disappointed because "gathering gold" was appointed exclusively to white men. There was also plenty of work available in town for those with relatives owning businesses. One of the first Chinese businesses whites patronized in the 1850s was the Chinese laundry.<sup>12</sup> Many of the first bathhouses were located on the north side of I Street.

Newspapers provided the major source of news in America. At this time, it was common practice for a newspaper to report the editor's interpretation of the news rather than objective journalism. If the information reported was inaccurate or biased, the American public had little means for verification. With this sort of influence, the newspapers wielded much political power. In order to increase circulation, the publishers of these papers often exploited their position by sponsoring a flamboyant and irresponsible approach to news reporting that became known as "yellow journalism."

The newspapers of the 1800's contributed greatly to mass racism and anti-Chinese sentiment in California. The Sacramento Union claimed as early as November 1852 the Chinese converted Sutter Lake, a great pond, into a perfect washtub and lined its margins completely around with dripping linen's. Besides using the lake for their washing the newspaper rumored that the Chinese living in buildings on the north side of I Street were dropping their debris and filth directly into the lake and letting the tide remove the waste. The prolonged and systematic anti-Chinese accusations created mass resentment within the city.<sup>13</sup>



For over fifty years the city fathers and civic groups discussed various plans to “drive out” the Chinese from China Slough. In the summer it’s stagnating, putrid water was considered the source of infections diseases and malaria. In 1871 the smell from the slough became so intolerable from the dead fish and low stagnant water that the Chinese were hired to collect the fish and bury them. In 1876 the Board of Trustees planted three hundred eucalyptus trees around the slough and another 2,700 more the following year hoping that the aromatic fumes of the eucalyptus would provide some medicinal quality.

The “driving out” intially began in Sacramento when the Central Pacific Railroad Company which later became the Southern Pacific filled in the slough as they expanded their corporation yard. Work in filling the slough began in 1863 and the task was not completed until 1910 after many years and milestones in city and railroad negotiations. The slough leading to the river was closed off in 1880 and, by 1882, the Chinese fishing industry was eliminated in Sacramento proper when the Chinese fishermen could no longer gain access to the river from their homes on I Street. <sup>14</sup>

Since the solution to the elimination or “driving out” of the Chinese in China Slough remained in the realm of politics and local government, the more adamant whites to focus their ire on the Chinese laundry business which had been only a side issue to the total slough problem. Most Chinese laundries, however, did not relied on the slough water. The city had constructed a waterworks system in 1853 and because of this municipal network the Chinese were able to expand their laundry business to other parts of town. Equating public health hazards with the slough and the Chinese laundries, several laws restricting the Chinese-operated laundries were passed. One law enacted in the 1870s prohibited washing in the open air, washing could be executed only within an enclosed building with a roof, four walls, and a drainage system. Another ordinance prohibited any occupancy or use of building that extended over the water. Another public health ordinance prohibited Chinese from using an oral sprinkling technique for ironing clothes. <sup>15</sup>

While some Sacramentans wrestled with the precise wording of laundry ordinances, other citizens in town continued to patronize the Chinese laundries. One account reported as many as three hundred Chinese were working in fifty-five Chinese-operated laundries in the city. A later report plotted the distribution of forty-three Chinese laundries in Sacramento in 1880. This same report indicated that the number of Chinese grocery businessman was also extensive. Most of the early grocery stores tended to be located on corners in residential sections of towns; but, on I Street, in Chinatown, between Second and Fifth Streets, a short three blocks, there were fifteen Chinese grocery stores. <sup>16</sup>

In the 1860 census there was almost every conceivable occupation in the Sacramento Chinese community including two women fortune tellers and an assortment of musicians and actors. There or is no doubt that there was a Chinese metropolis within Sacramento proper. A lengthy article on the Chinese and Sacramento’s Chinatown entitled “Le Chinois Quartier” in a January 1873 issue of the Sacramento Union told of the Chinese vegetable peddlers and dealers congregating on the corner of J and Third Streets in the early mornings haggling over prices and produce. The vegetable dealers’ gardens were located in Sutter’s Addition, R Street levee, and in the Sutterville area. <sup>17</sup>

As the 1873 article continued, in light industry there were five cigar factories (employing a total of twenty-five Chinese) and two shoe and slipper manufacturers (one on Third between J and K, K Street between Third and Fourth). To Streets and the other on serve the needs of the smaller Chinese communities outside Sacramento, particularly the mountain towns, there were three wholesalers: Wah Hing, Ye Chung, and Tong Wo Yaun; and to serve the greater needs of those Chinatown there were ten grocery stores, three restaurants, six barber shops with a total of twelve barbers, seven physicians, and six drug stores, four butcher shops, two slaughter yards, an assortment of one hundred and fifty other businesses including a complement of one hundred and twenty-five prostitutes, yang gambling houses, a pawnshop, one joss house, and a mission. When the city of Sacramento was thirty years old, the city limits had expanded as population moved east and southward.<sup>18</sup>

Unable to buy or rent in other parts of town the Chinese were still confined to the four or five blocks of Chinatown. In three decades the Chinese population in Sacramento increased almost three times (from the 600 in 1852 to 1,781 in 1880). By then Sacramento Chinatown had absorbed the influx of Chinese miners and old timers from the mountain communities seeking shelter and safety among their own; other Chinese laborers came to town after the transcontinental railroad was completed wanting work on local railroad and road construction projects; and new immigrants looking for opportunities in the new land.

Racist hostilities against the Chinese, their crowded conditions, and their lifestyle began to be displayed more violently. Once again, in the late 1860s immediate solutions to the Chinese problem suggested by the population at large bordered on drastic measures such as washing or burning them out. But the idea of setting fire was unthinkable to the businessmen and white landlords who feared their buildings and property would also be consumed in the flames as well.<sup>19</sup> By the 1870s the anti-Chinese attention focused on the particular vices that were stereotyped of the Chinese in Chinatown, not understanding that the imperialist plunder of China was the root of their opium addiction and the deprivation of stabilizing benefits of family and hearth was the root of their social behavior. The Chinese bachelor sojourner society was relegated to the poly socializing means available to them that was similar to white 49ers of the period: each other, gambling, intoxication, and prostitutes.

In 1876 another newspaper reported of the Chinese area rumored to be centered primarily on the Chinese opium dens and gambling houses. Purportedly, there were below street level, some were frequented by white men, women and young boys.<sup>20</sup> The paper falsely claimed many as eighteen lotteries held drawings twice daily, the tickets ranged in price from ten cents to one dollar, winners collected from twenty-five cents to as much as five hundred dollars; even children ten to eighteen years old bought these lottery tickets.

The cry to legislate against or regulate Chinese gambling establishments escalated in the early history of Sacramento; stringent enforcement of licensing and taxing to total elimination of Chinese gambling depended on politicians in power and the attitude of the local police at the time. For example, after the 1854 fire three gambling houses immediately took out new business licenses, they paid ten times the amount of the license fee charged a regular business (\$150 versus \$15). Sporadically, the police made raids into the gambling places but because they lacked evidence and received purported payoffs, the gambling industry in Chinatown remained a part of Sacramento colorful economy well into the twentieth century.<sup>21</sup>

The attempts to restrict Chinese employment in favor of white workers and to remove the Chinese from the city limits escalated in the late 1870s and 1880s. In April 1876 four thousand Sacramentans, mostly members of the Sacramento Order of Caucasians, an organization dedicated to excluding Chinese labor and promoting white labor, held an anti-Chinese meeting. In 1878 the Board of trustees sent a telegram to President Rutherford Hayes encouraging him to sign a bill limiting Chinese immigration, the resolution claimed the backing of 25,000 residents of Sacramento. In that same year two anti-Chinese groups, the Order of the Caucasians and the Workingmen Party demanded that the Chinese be excluded from municipal employment and a ban placed on government purchase of materials from businesses employing Chinese. Due also to vigorous lobbying by the anti-Chinese Workingmen's Party, led by Dennis Kearney (an immigrant from Ireland), Article XIX, Section 4 forbade corporations from hiring Chinese coolies, and empowered all California cities and counties to completely expel Chinese persons or to limit where they could reside. While the workingmen in the east organized aid struck for higher wages and shorter working hours, in the west, the organization's issues evolved into anti-Chinese movements. Here, the Chinese had become the scapegoat for many of the workingmen woes.<sup>22</sup>

At the 1879 State Fair, a special "white label" created for white-manufactured cigars to call attention to the protest against Chinese labor in the cigar industry. In March 1886 a statewide convention of the California Anti-Chinese Non-Partisan Trustees Association was held in Sacramento hosted by the Sacramento Mechanics and Laborers Anti-Chinese League. The county governments were encouraged to send their officials as delegates, thus the convention was deemed quasi-official. Earlier that year the Board of Trustees entertained various ordinances to remove the Chinese from the city limits. Most of these ordinances lacked total city council support or were proved unconstitutional.<sup>23</sup> The anti-Chinese movements eventually drove the Chinese out of the China Slough. But during the last two decades, at the height of the public clamor, the 1882 Exclusion Law went into effect and in 1892 the extension of the law prohibited Chinese immigration well into the twentieth century. Perceiving the tenor and darkened clouds surrounding them, the Chinese withdrew into almost obscurity and their numbers in Sacramento declined as reflected in the population data:<sup>24</sup>

1880	1,781
1890	1,733
1900	1,065

## **"Driving Out" Sacramento's Chinatown in the Twentieth Century**

Just as the canneries moved to Sacramento, our attention is redirected to Yee Fow to see the changes that have occurred in since the horrible anti-Chinese movements in the late nineteenth century. The greater population in Sacramento finally accepted the fact that the Chinese had no intentions of leaving the city.

Between 1906 and 1909, with the Chinese driven out of China Slough, there was a concerted effort to fill the slough. The project was finally completed in 1910. All the old Chinese shacks on the north bank were torn down. The joss house had already relocated to 915 Third Street.

By the turn of the century the Chinese settlement has begun to spread a few blocks south to Front Street. Still in many residential sections of Sacramento, apartment lodgings and single-family housing units in the area bounded by Third Street on the west, M Street (Capitol) on the north, P Street to the south, and Seventh street to the east. The I Street area was still the economic and social center and also the domain of the bachelor sojourners who had found permanent shelter among the many basement and second floor quarters in stores, laundries, and restaurants. <sup>25</sup>

With the redevelopment of Capitol Mall, the Chinese were displaced once again from Front Street to the I-J Street section of downtown Sacramento. The I Street Chinatown and its immediate vicinity still remained the center for most Chinese activities. Many of the family associations saw fit to build new buildings or give their existing structures facelifts.

Dr. Sun Yat Sen, who reportedly wrote portions of the Chinese constitution in an upstairs room of the Bing Kong Tong headquarters on I Street succeeded in his overthrow of the Ching Dynasty. The 1911 Revolution in China instilled in the local Chinese community a strong interest in China's politics and a sense of having been a part of Dr. Sun's movement. Dr. Sung nationalist party, the Kuo Ming Tong, established their headquarters at 910 Fourth Street. In 1944 the organization celebrated their fiftieth anniversary. <sup>26</sup>

The transition from the late 1920s and 1930s brought the effects of the Depression closer to home and the Sacramento Chinese society underwent a severe change politically, economically, and socially. As noted, the first Chinese community was one composed, for the most part, of bachelor sojourners. By the turn of the century there was an increase in the number of families. Dutifully, some of the bachelor sojourners returned to their homeland and fulfilled marriage contracts their parents arranged. The few American-born bachelors were also expected to return to their parent's villages and wed native girls. Both as merchants and/or American-born, found no difficulty bringing their wives back to California.

It has been over a hundred years since the first Chinese settled in Sacramento, it has been slow, it was done on individual basis, yet seemingly collective to an outsider; but, with the quiet dignity and decorum to which they were trained, the Chinese Sacramentans by the 1960s had dismantled the social barriers built during the time of their pioneering forefathers.

### **The Contemporary Sacramento Chinatown**

The 1960 census lists the Chinese in the Sacramento metropolitan area to be 3,028. <sup>28</sup> One Chinese student described Chinatown as a rundown section consisting of several Chinese-American restaurants, a few grocery stores, liquor stores, and family association buildings. The student equated the appearance of Chinatown to that of a slum. Two major conditions occurring simultaneously, the flight of families to single house dwellings in the suburbs and the political force of redevelopment, seemed to spell doom to the once colorful bustling center. Although no longer confined to a densely-packed geographic area, there still is a viable Sacramento Chinese community. Three or four smaller local neighborhoods house a few Chinese restaurants and grocery stores and serve as convenience centers. <sup>29</sup>

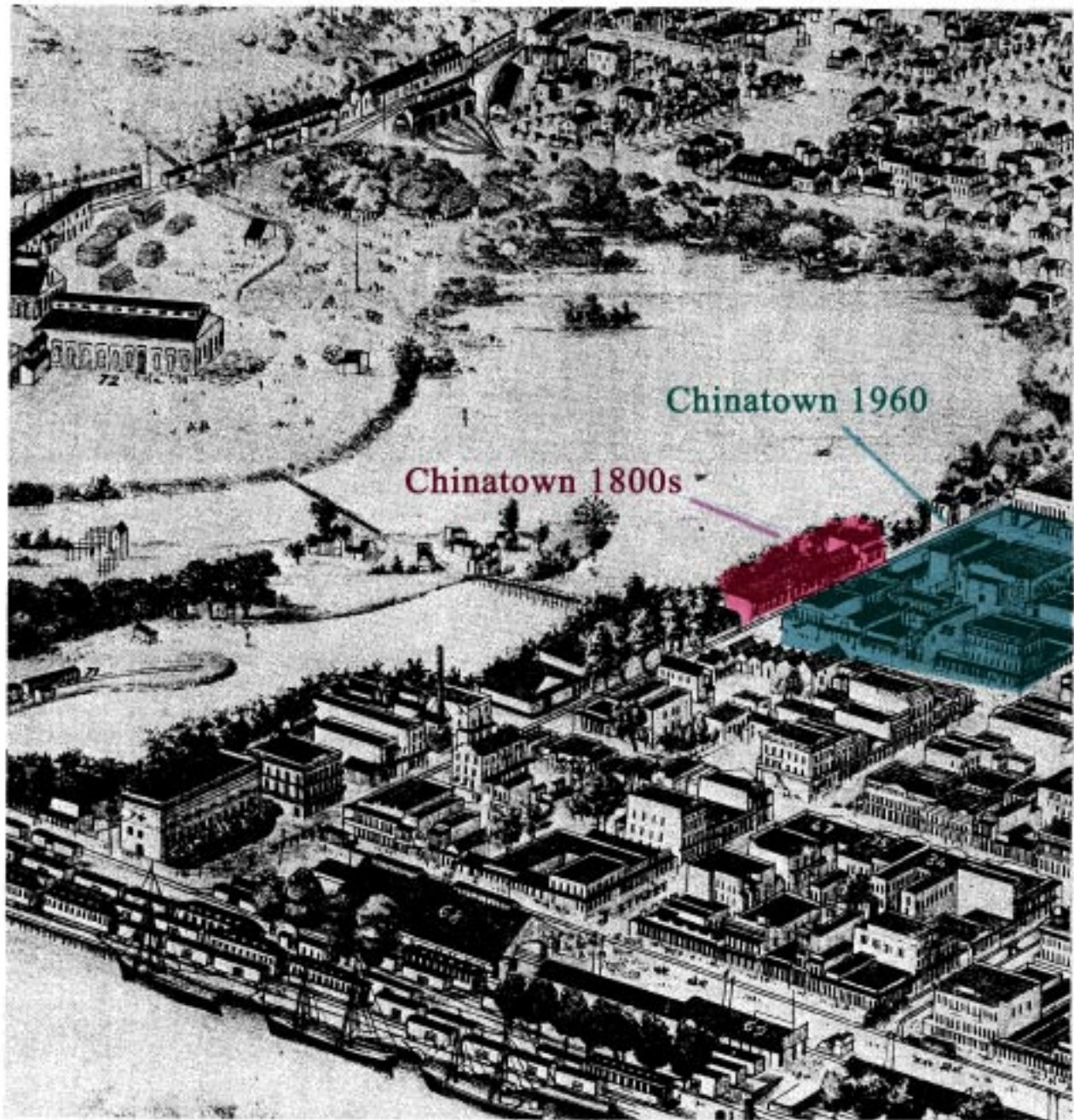
The I-J Street block of modern, Chinese vernacular buildings represents the civic center of the Chinese society. Ground for the Confucius Temple was broken in 1959 with the building completed in 1961. Donations for the \$600,000 building were contributed by local merchants and family associations, other Chinese communities in California, and others as far away as Chicago, New York, and Canada. The Chinese Benevolent Association (Chung Wah) manages the Confucius Church which is the largest meeting hall for the Chinese community. It is used for various community activities. In the basement there are classrooms for the Chinese language school with a current enrollment of approximately 250 students.<sup>30</sup>

The next structure completed in Chinatown square was the Soo Yuen Association, the headquarters of the Louie and Fong families, with Lu-Shan Restaurant as its main tenant. Hong King Lum built their third building at that same location. Other buildings in the complex are the Hong Kong Bank, Sun Yat Sen Memorial Hall built in 1971, and the Ong Ko Met Association. Ping Yuen and Wong Center serve as housing units for the elderly, single, and low-income persons. The Bing Kong Tong building belongs to the powerful fraternal organization which has managed to exclude all other tongs from the Sacramento area since 1880. Other family associations have moved to other sections of the city, more particularly around and on Broadway Boulevard.<sup>31</sup>

## Footnotes

1. (Lo-shu Fu, *A Documentary Chronicle of Sino-Western relations*, Vol. 1 (1966), page 380)
2. *San Joaquin Republican*, February 2 1853; 1860 U.S. Census (Washington: Gov't. Printing Office, 1864), pp 24-7; 1870 U.S. Census (Washington 1872), pp. 15, 91; (Washington 1883), p.382, p. 416; 1890 U.S. Census (Washington, 1895) p. 437; 1900 U. S. Census (Washington, 1901) p. 565; Melform S. Weiss. *Valley City: A Chinese Community In America* (Cambridge, 1974), pp. 47-8.
3. Joseph A. McGowan, et. al, *Report on the Historical Development of the City of Sacramento Blocks* (Sacramento, 1978), p.1; Dorene Askin, *Chinese Laundries* (Sacramento, 1978), p. 6; John C. Jenkins, "Sutter Lake or China Slough," *Golden Notes*, December, 1966, pp.1-3; Mary Praetzellis and Adrian Praetzellis, *Archeological Study of the IJ-56 Block, Sacramento. California: An Early Chinese Community* (Sonoma, 1982), p. 17; Brienens, West and Schulz, *Overview of Cultural Resources In the central Business District. Sacramento, California, 1981* (Sacramento, 1981), p. 61; William K. Willis, *History of Sacramento County. California With Biographical Sketches* (Los Angeles, 1913), p. 198.
4. Praetzellis, IJ56, p. 28.
5. Lois Rodecaper "Celestial Drama in the Golden Hills: The Chinese Theater in California 1849-1869", *California Historical Quarterly*, June, 1944, p. 104; *Sacramento Bee*, January 17, 1971: Cole, Capitalist Perspective, p. 20.
6. Kemble, Edward C, *A History of California Newspapers 1846-1858* (Los Gatos, 1962), p. 161; *Sacramento Guide Book*, (Sacramento, 1939), p. 79.
7. O. B. Kroupa, *An Artist's Tour* (London, 1890), p.32.
8. *Guide Book*, p. 82; Thomas H. Thompson and Albert Augustus West, *History of Sacramento County, California 1880* (Berkeley, 1960), pp. 105-6; McGowan, *Blocks*, p. 23; Cole, Capitalist Perspective, p. 31.
9. Praetzellis, IJ56, p. 16
10. Praetzellis, IJ56, pp. 16-7.
11. Praetzellis, IJ56, p. 28.
12. Askin, *Laundries* p. 6., *Sacramento Daily Union* , November 23, 1852 ; Jenkins , *Slough* , p. 3.
13. Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California*

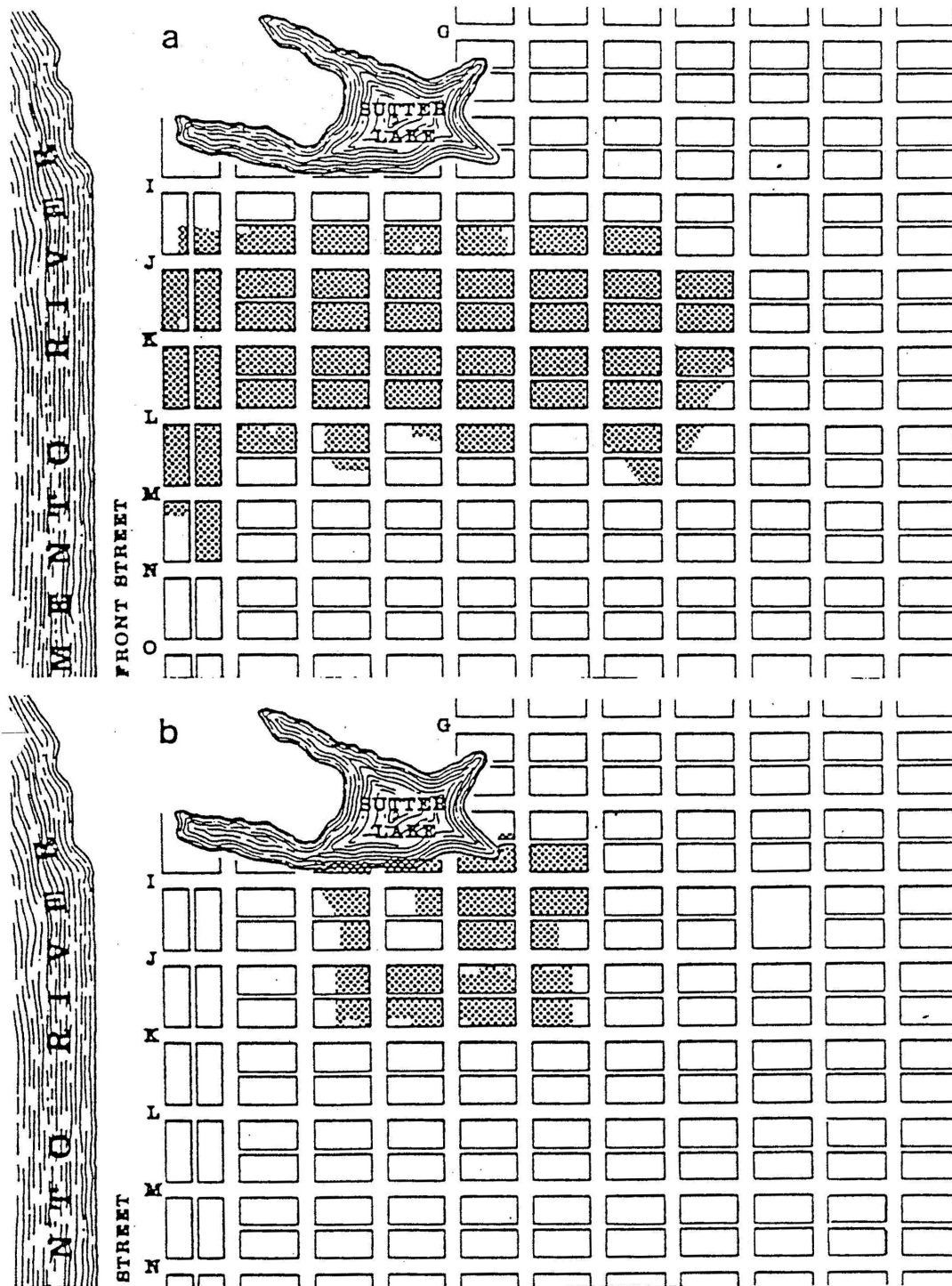
14. J. Roy Jones, *Memories, Men, and Medicine* (Sacramento, 1950), p. 269; Jenkins, Slough, p. 5: *Wells Fargo Directory of Chinese Business Houses -1882* (San Francisco, 1882).
15. Jenkins, Slough, p. 5; Dorene Askin, *The Chinese in Sacramento Through the Acts of the City Council 1849-1900* (Sacramento, 1979), pp. 5-6, 20; Brienens et al., *Overview*, p. 55.
16. Brienens, *Overview*, pp. 50, 56; Askin, *Laundries*, pp. 7-8
17. 1860 Census Population Schedule; *Sacramento Daily Union*, January 11, 1873; Cole, Capitalist Perspective, p. 21.
18. *Sacramento Daily Union*, January 11, 1873.
19. Jones, *Medicine*, p. 257; *San Joaquin Republican*, September 18, 1854.
20. Walls were scrawled with names such as Mary, Minnie, Alfred, John, Bessie, and so forth; *Sacramento Daily Union*, February 23, 1876.
21. Praetzellis, IJ56, p. 16; *Sacramento Daily Union*, February 23, 1876.
22. Cole, Capitalist Perspective, p. 19; Askin, *Acts*, pp. 2-4.
23. Cole, Capitalist Perspective, p. 19; Askin, *Acts*, p. 3; Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California* (Los Angeles, 1971), pp. 208-9.
24. Statistics of the Population of the United States-1880 (Washington, 1883), p. 416; Statistics-1890 (Washington, 1895), pp. 676-7; 1900 U. S. Census (Washington, 1901), p. cxix.
25. Interview with Bill Lim, July 21, 1983; Dan Louis, 12, 1983; Ann Jan, July 27, 1983; Frank Fat, September 2, 1983
26. Sacramento Bee, "Chinatown, Sacramento", January 17, 1971.
28. 1960 U. S. Census (Washington, 1964), P.6-140.
29. Lin Tong Wong, "A Family Biography" *I Am Yellow (Curious)* (Davis, 1959), p. 14
30. *The Development of Yee Fow Chung Wah Headquarters* (Hong Kong, 1963), this book lists all contributors and the amount donated.
31. Sacramento Bee, January 17, 1971; McGowan, *Blocks*, p. 17.



China Slough and Railroad Shops 1869



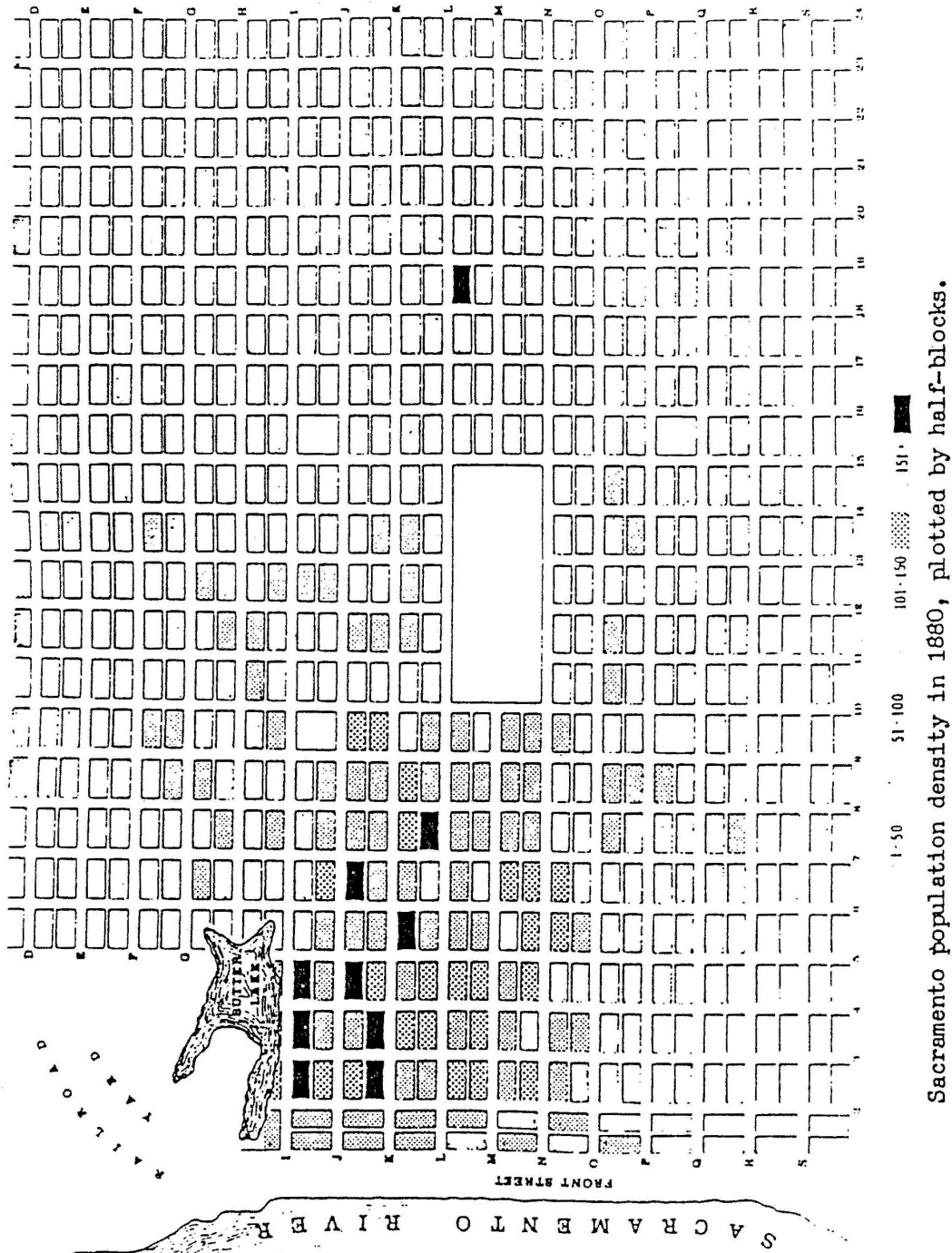
PLAT 1



Extent of destruction in two major fires: a) November 2-3, 1852;  
b) July, 1854 (after Askin 1978a).

Source: Brienens, West, and Schultz, 1981.

PLAT II

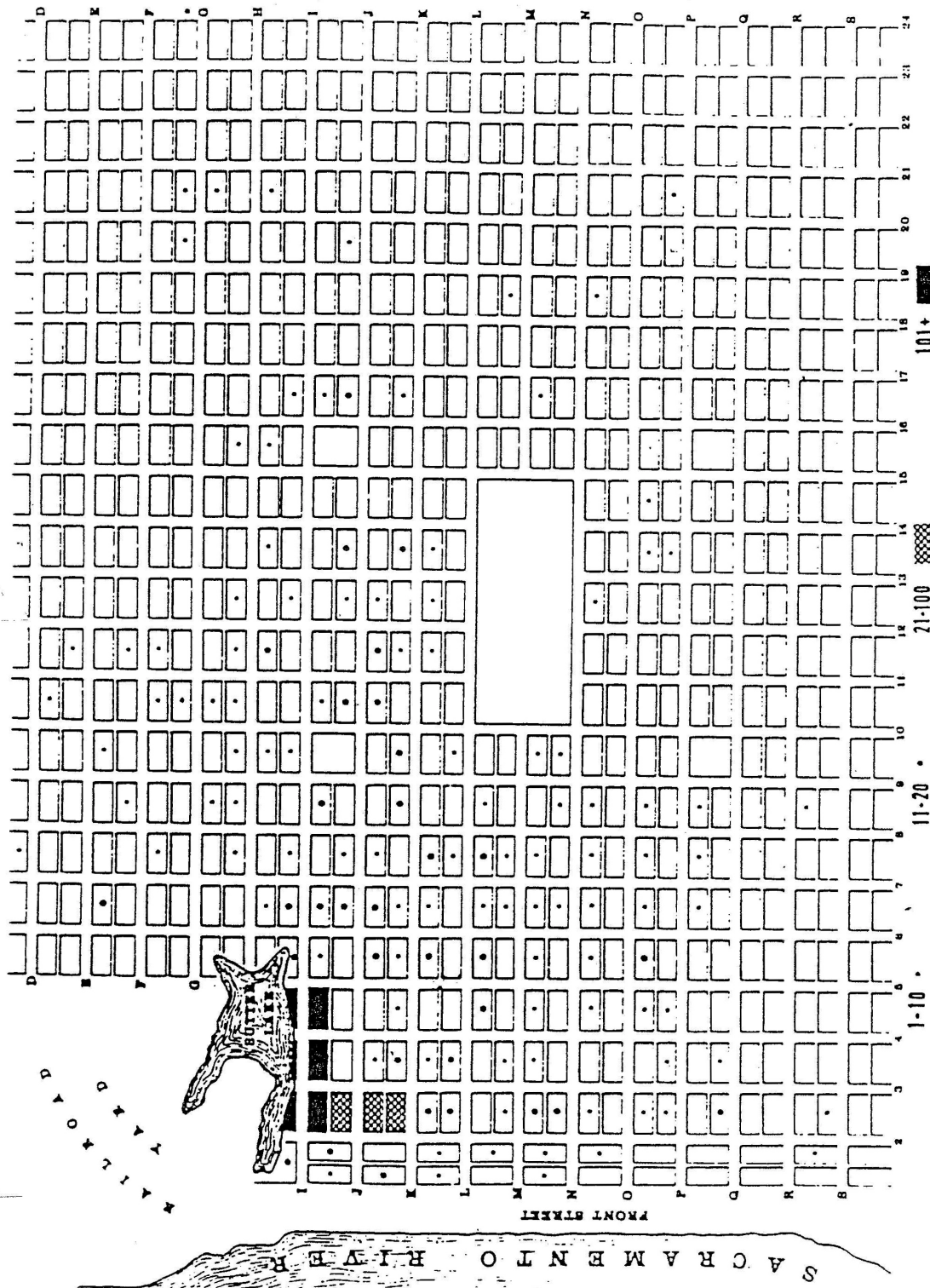


Sacramento population density in 1880, plotted by half-blocks.

Source: Brienes, West, and Schultz, 1981



PLAT III



Density of Sacramento's Chinese population in 1880, plotted by half-blocks.

Source: Brienos, West, and Schultz, 1981

PLAT IV

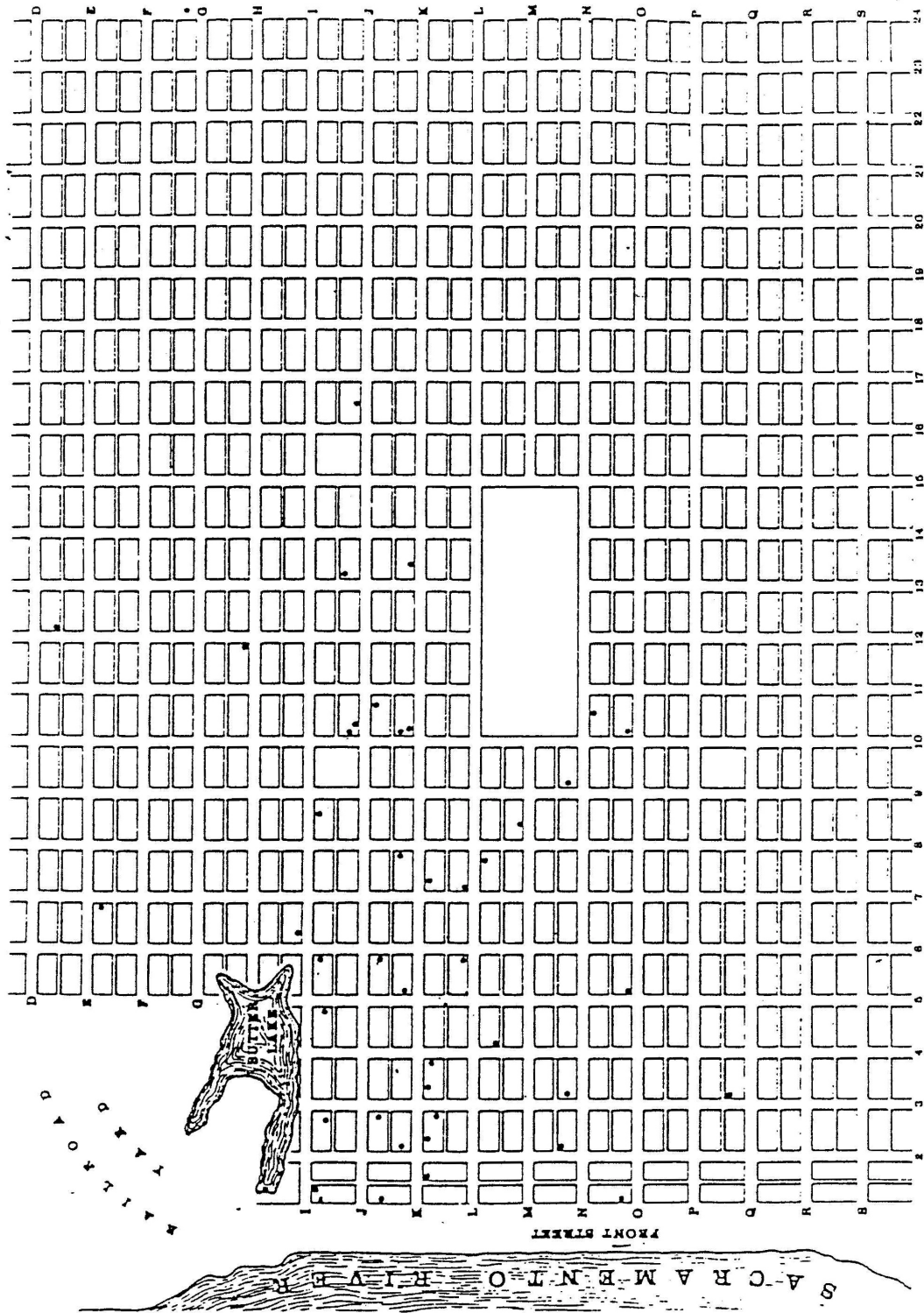
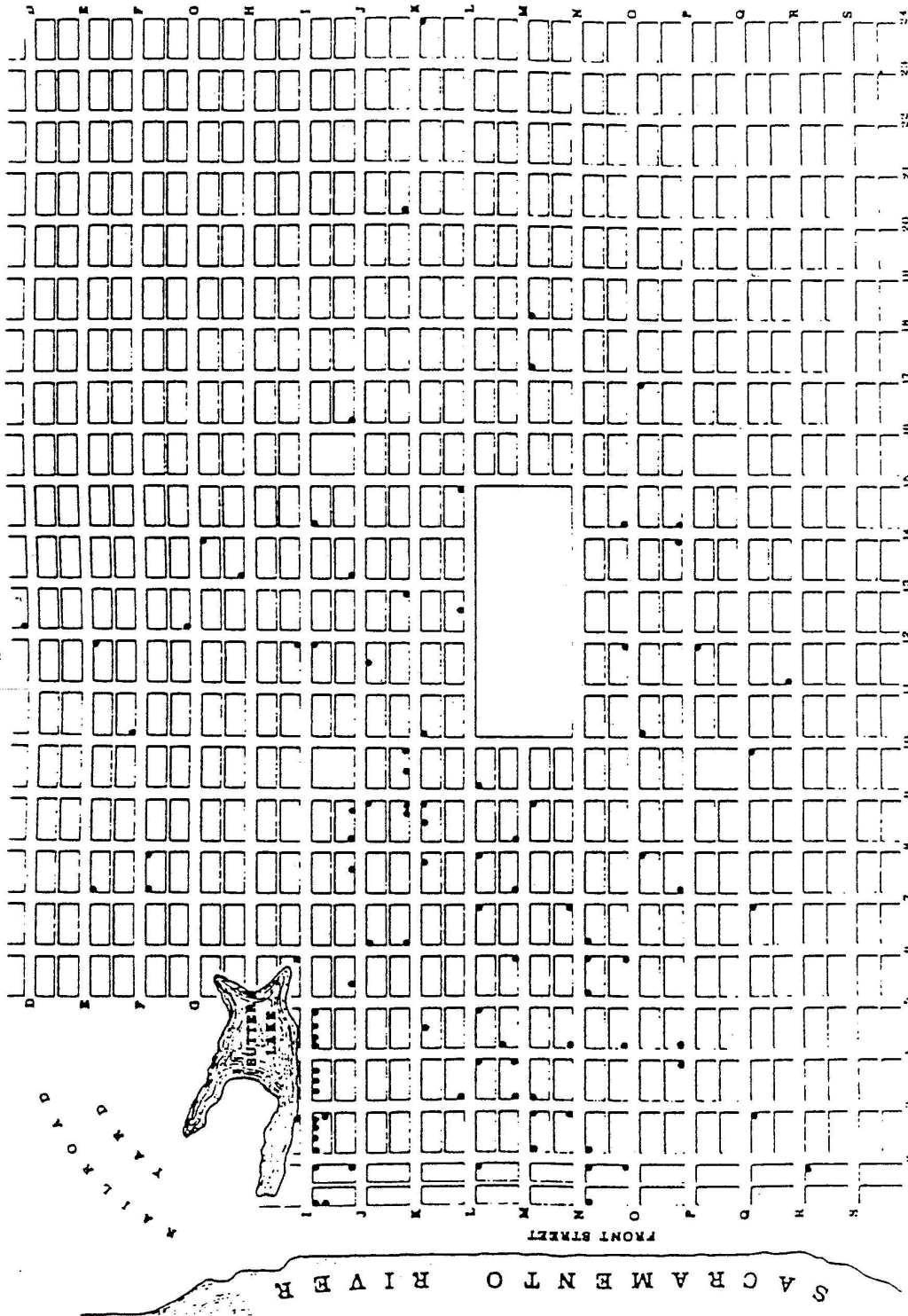


Figure 14. Distribution of Chinese laundries in Sacramento in 1880 (Crocker & Co. 1880).

Source: Brienens, West, and Schultz, 1981

PLAT V



Distribution of Sacramento grocery stores in 1880 (Crocker & Co. 1880).

Source: Brienes, West, and Schultz, 1981



WELLS FARGO & CO. EXPRESS  
DIRECTORY OF CHINESE BUSINESS HOUSES FOR SAN FRANCISCO,  
SACRAMENTO, MARYSVILLE, PORTLAND, STOCKTON, SAN JOSE,  
VIRGINIA CITY, NEVADA. 1882

Sacramento:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Business</u>	<u>Location</u>
Ah Coon & Co.	Cigar Makers	89 K, bet. 34d & 4th
Ah Key	Laundry	NE Corner of 7th & L
Ah Kung	Laundry	39 Front, bet. J & K
Ah Lee Son	Cigar Factory	4th bet I & J
Ah Loy	Cigar Factory	17 I Street
Ah Loy & Co.	Tailor & Cigar Store	20 I St., bet 2nd & 3rd
Ching Chong	Laundry	K St. bet Front & 2nd
Chong Hing	Tailor	328 I, bet. 3rd & 4th
Chung Hop	Laundry	J St., bet 12th & 13th
Chung Kee	Laundry	2nd St., bet K & L
Chung Lung	Laundry	J bet 10th & 11th
Coon Chong	Laundry	8th bet J & K
Coon Chong Lung	Grocer	Corner of 4th & I St.
Congregational Chinese Mission		I bet 6th & 7th
Fong Lee	Grocer	229 I bet 2nd & 3rd
Gee Kung Tong Chinese Free Mission		Corner of 5th & I
Hand Jim	Laundry	9th bet M & N
Hee Wo	Laundry	13th bet I & J
Hi Lee	Laundry	3rd bet K & L
Hong Duck Tong	Drug	230 I St bet 2nd & 3rd
Hong Fong Low	Restaurant	406 I bet. 4th & 5th
Hong Chung	Laundry	5th bet L & M
Hop Lee	Laundry	K St bet 13th & 14th

<u>Name</u>	<u>Business</u>	<u>Location</u>
Hop Sing	Laundry	7th bet J & K
Hung Lun	Tailor	31 I bet 3rd & 4th
Hy Fong	Pawn Broker	I St bet 3rd & 4th
Jong Sing	Laundry	10th bet J & K
Kong Long	Laundry	10th bet N & O
Kong Soon & Co.	Grocer	310 I bet 3rd & 4th
Kue Kee	Comm. Merchant	221½ I bet 2nd & 3rd
Kum Lung	Laundry	2nd St. bet M & N
Kwong Song Chong	Grocer	226 I bet 2nd & 3rd
Kwong Kee	Tailor	213 I bet 2nd & 3rd
Kim Lum	Tailor	402 I bet 4th & 5th
<sup>L</sup> Kee Kwong Kee	Vegetable Dlr.	I bet 2nd & 3rd
Lee Yick	Grocer	316 I bet 3rd & 4th
Lee Set Yet	Chinese Employ- ment Office	329 J bet 3rd & 4th
Lun Chung	Laundry	3rd St bet M & N
Mee Sing	Fish Merchant	Corner of 3rd & I
Ming Kee	Butcher	I bet 3rd & 4th
M.E. Chinese Mission		Corner of 5th & I
Moon Kee Ho	Cigar Store	910 - 3rd St.
Own Chong	Fruit Store	210 I bet 2nd & 3rd
Own Kee	Tailor	222 I bet 2nd & 3rd
Presbyterian Chinese Mission		4th St bet I & J
Quong Chong	Laundry	L St bet 7th & 8th
Quong Goon	Grocer	224 I bet 2nd & 3rd
Quong Hing	Laundry	K St bet 10th & 11th
Quong Hing Lung	Grocer	314 I St bet 3rd & 4th

<u>Name</u>	<u>Business</u>	<u>Location</u>
Quong Hong Hi	Grocer	414 I bet 4th & 5th
Quong Hong	Pawn Broker	312 I bet 3rd & 4th
Quong Hop	Laundry	4th St bet L & M
Quong Loy	Laundry	Front bet I & J
Quong Kee	Laundry	12th St bet D & E
Quong Wo Tong	Drug Store	402 I bet 4th & 5th
Quong Yick	Laundry	5th St bet K & L
Quong Gin Tin	Plate Factory	227 I bet 2nd & 3rd
Sam Hing	Laundry	J St bet 10th & 11th
Sam Kee	Laundry	K St bet 9th & 10th
Sam Lee	Laundry	Corner of 6th & L
Sam Sing	Laundry	Corner of 5th & K
Sam Wo	Laundry	3rd St bet J & K
Sang Hop	Laundry	Corner of 7th & J
Sang Long	Laundry	Front bet N & O
San Lung & Co	China Goods	526 J bet 5th & 6th
Sang Wo	Butcher	315 I bet 3rd & 4th
Shung Lee	Laundry	I bet Front & 2nd
Shung Wo	Laundry	I bet 8th & 9th
Sing Kee	Laundry	K bet 7th & 8th
Sing Kee	Vegetables	I bet 3rd & 4th
Sing Lung	Fish Merchant	3rd bet I & J
Sing Lee	Laundry	K bet 2nd & 3rd
Soon Hop	Laundry	Corner of 5th & N
San Chong Kee	Grocer	908-3rd St.
Son Sing	Butcher	412 I bet 4th & 5th
Son Wo	Butcher	308 I bet 3rd & 4th



<u>Name</u>	<u>Business</u>	<u>Location</u>
Sun Duck Wo	Dry Goods	321 I bet 3rd & 4th
Sun Kum Wo	Dry Goods	810 J bet 8th & 9th
Tai Chong & Co.	Grocer	214 I bet 2nd & 3rd
Tong Wo Chan	Grocer	300 I corner of 3rd & I
Ty Sing	Grocer	302 I bet 3rd & 4th
Wah Chong	Laundry	K St bet Front & 2nd
Wah Hing & Co.	Grocer	430 I bet 4th & 5th
Wah Hop	Laundry	J St bet 8th & 9th
Wah Lee	Butcher	231 I bet 2nd & 3rd
Wah Lun	Tailor	410 I bet 4th & 5th
Wah Sang	Boots & Shoes	525 J bet 5th & 6th
Wing Chong	Laundry	4th bet K & L
Wing Hop	Laundry	L bet 3rd & 4th
Wing Sing	Laundry	K bet 3rd & 4th
Wing Wo	Laundry	Corner of 18th & M
Wo Kee	Laundry	5th bet I & J
Wo Own Yu Kee	Grocer	326 I bet 3rd & 4th
Wo Sing	Vegetable Dlr.	225 I bet 2nd & 3rd
Yee Chin Low	Restaurant	215 I bet 2nd & 3rd
Yee Hop	Comm. Merchant	223 I bet 2nd & 3rd
Ye Hing Hin	Restaurant	7-3rd St bet I & J
Ye Sing	Cigar Factory	228½ I St bet 2nd & 3rd
Yet Wo	Laundry	Corner of 12th & H
Yet Sing	Vegetable Dlr	3rd bet I & J
Yick Lung	Cigar Factory	322 I bet 2nd & 3rd

<u>Name</u>	<u>Business</u>	<u>Location</u>
Yick Sang Tong	Drug Store	218 I bet 2nd & 3rd
Yow Lung	Tailor	212½ bet 2nd & 3rd
Yu Chong & Co.	Grocer	320 I bet 3rd & 4th
Yuen Chung	Laundry	6th St. bet J & K

## Images of Sacramento's Chinatown

### *Chinadom*

Postcard of Chinadom or Chinatown centered along I Street in Sacramento, circa 1854.

Courtesy of the California History Room, California State Library, Sacramento California



### *Chinese Commercial District*

The most important function of Chinatown was to provide supplies and services to the early Chinese. Stores, restaurants, laundries, and social halls abounded.

Courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley, BANC PIC 1950.02705--PIC



### *Makeshift Dwellings*

Many canvas structures and wood shanty-like buildings quickly fell victim to the the many fires in Sacramento's Chinatown.

Courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley, BANC PIC 1950.02699--PIC



*Chinese Sunday School Children*

The Chung Wah, Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, established Chinese Schools to teach their children Chinese culture and language. From the collection of Joseph A. Baird circa 1880

Courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley, BANC PIC 1950.015--PIC



*Octopus Chinese Man Cartoon*

"What Shall We Do With Our Boys?" As the Chinese expanded into a range of industries, newspapers blamed economic hardships on them. Anti-Chinese cartoons such as this one were prevalent during the years leading up to the Exclusion Act of 1882.

Courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley

*Chinese Vegetable Peddlers*  
Newline photographer Arnold Genthe  
From the early days of the Gold Rush,  
Chinese have been in service trades to the  
larger white community and their own  
people.

Courtesy of California Historical Society,  
FN-02346





## A Linkage Site



*SP Rail Yards: Unimproved*



*Sacramento Riverfront*



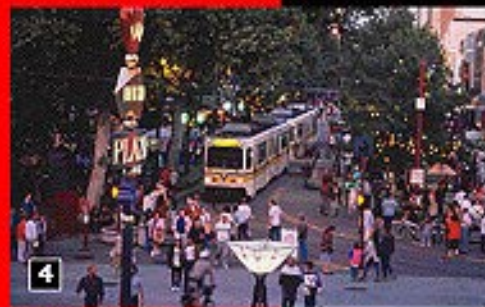
*Downtown Sacramento*



*US Federal Courts Building*



*Downtown Plaza: Shopping and Entertainment Center*



*N Street: Transit Mall, Retail and Entertainment*

The Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency views the Ping Yuen site as an important connection between emerging downtown areas. Ping Yuen will become a gateway site into the SP Rail Yards development, enhance an established high-rise residential enclave, and continue to promote Chinatown's role as a cultural center for Sacramento's Asian community.

### PING YUEN

Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency

## 華埠

The Ping Yuen Chinatown site is located in an emerging commercial area in Downtown Sacramento. Ping Yuen is at the center of over \$200 million in contemporary investment.

Currently, a new multi-modal transit station and Federal building are underway on adjacent parcels.

The center of investment in Downtown Sacramento has shifted towards the Chinatown area. This enhances the potential for successful redevelopment of the Ping Yuen site.

1

# Chinatown



## 華埠

Chinatown has come to symbolize the presence and important contributions Asians have made to Sacramento.



*Southern Pacific Multi-modal Station  
Amtrak, Light Rail, Trolley, Bus*



*Existing 5th Street  
Residential Edge*



## Chinatown



*Community Buildings:  
Confucius Church, Qing Yi Mei  
Association, and other community  
meeting spaces.*

Chinatown was conceived as part of the 1960's redevelopment planning for downtown Sacramento. In 1968, the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency adopted a plan with design restrictions for Chinatown. With the Agency's assistance, the Asian business community developed a complex of themed buildings and spaces that have become a focus for social, business and religious activities.

Ping Yuen provided a residential component to the district. Ping Yuen was developed as a Section 8 project with 20 of its 72 units being for very low income residents.

*1960's Redevelopment  
Ping Yuen Housing  
(Top)  
4th Street Gateway  
(Middle)  
Hong Office Building  
Construction  
(Bottom)*



*J Street Frontage  
Gateway to Downtown  
and Linkage to  
Downtown Plaza  
Shopping Center*

The Chinatown district has been developed utilizing a prescriptive set of themed design guidelines.

## PING YUEN

Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency

Image courtesy of SHRA

2



# Creating a Gateway

## 華埠

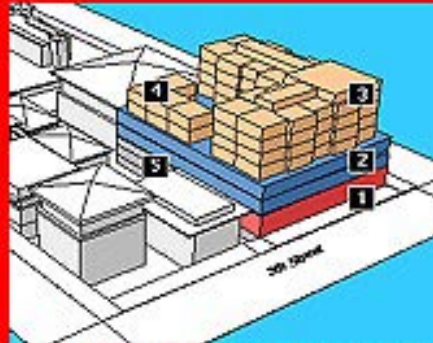


View from Southeast



View from Northwest

Missing and Scale of Existing Chinatown Blocks

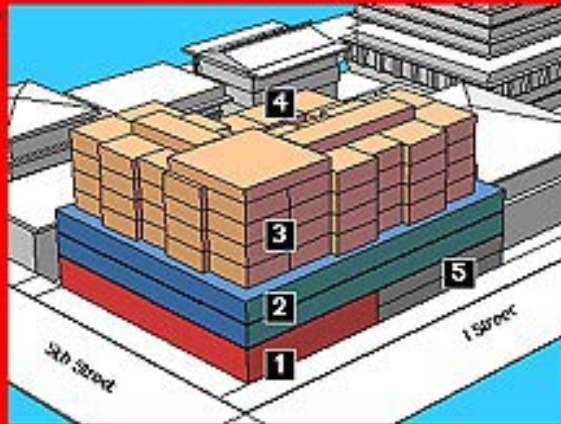


Redevelopment of the Ping Yuen site will provide an opportunity to reconnect Chinatown to downtown.

The redevelopment concept for the Ping Yuen site envisions a mixed use project that provides income for the residential component.

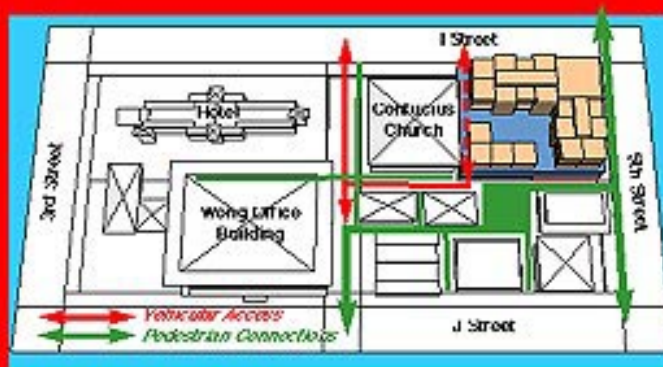
The Concept Development Program includes:

- 40 Units of Market Rate Apartments
- 8 Units of Corporate Apartments
- 20 Units of Low Income Apartments
- 50,000 SF of Office
- 8,000 SF of Commercial
- 125 Parking Spaces



### Development Concept

1. Ground Floor: Retail and Commercial
2. Level 2-3: Office
3. Level 4-5: Residential
4. Level 4-5: Roof Court Townhouses
5. Level PDR2: Parking Garage



## PING YUEN

Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency

August 1998

### Ping Yuen Redevelopment Concept

#### Mixed Use

The project is envisioned as a mixed use commercial and residential building. As a mixed use project, it takes advantage of the location's easy access and proximity to employment centers. The development uses commercial to assist in underwriting residential elements.

#### Transit User Market

The SRIUP Depot across the street from the site is being redeveloped as a multi-modal transit station.

#### Ground Floor Retail

5th Street will become an increasingly busy pedestrian connection between downtown and the SRIUP Rail Yards district.

#### Commercial Office

This is an advantageous office location due to its proximity to the new Federal Building.

#### Market Rate Apartments

The project is proposed to have market rate units, which supports the community's goals for increasing housing in the downtown area. It also includes several corporate apartment units that take advantage of the proximity to the multi-modal station and Federal Building.

#### Affordable Units

The development would replace the existing 20 very low income units.

#### Parking

The project assumes the parking will support the proposed uses in the building.

3



Sacramento's Chinatown as it exist today.



Ancestral altar of the Ong Ko Met Association, Sacramento's Chinatown