

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Chinatown

other names/site number Chinatown Archeological Site

### 2. Location

street & number Brockton and Tequesquite Avenues

N/A not for publication

city, town Riverside

N/A vicinity

state California

code CA

county Riverside

code CA 065

zip code 92502

### 3. Classification

#### Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

#### Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

#### Number of Resources within Property

##### Contributing

\_\_\_\_\_

1

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

1

##### Noncontributing

\_\_\_\_\_ buildings

\_\_\_\_\_ sites

\_\_\_\_\_ structures

\_\_\_\_\_ objects

\_\_\_\_\_ Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official Kathryn Gualtieri

Date 1-9-90

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

**Entered in the  
National Register**

### 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Kathryn Gualtieri

3/1/90

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/village site  
Commerce/trade  
Social/meeting hall  
Religion/religious structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/not in use

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

N/A

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick  
walls \_\_\_\_\_  
roof \_\_\_\_\_  
other wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Riverside Chinatown archeological site is a 2.5 acre area that once comprised Riverside's large and productive Chinatown. No standing structures remain although there were once many wood and brick buildings housing residents and businesses over the period 1885 until the end of the 1930s. Integrity as an archeological site is moderately high. Much of the area was covered with fill dirt in the late 1940s and 1950s. Although some vandalism and disturbance have occurred, much of the site remained intact. In 1984-5, archeological studies were conducted on a portion of the site. (Much yet remains unexcavated.) The large number of artifacts the site has yielded are now housed at the Riverside Municipal Museum.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Archaeology/Historic-Non Aboriginal  
Ethnic Heritage/Asian  
Agriculture  
Commerce  
Social History

Period of Significance

1885 - 1939

Significant Dates

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

Chinese: Most of Chinatown's permanent residents were immigrants from the village of Ganbian, Guandong Province, China.

Significant Person

\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder

\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Riverside Chinatown archeological site appears to be significant under Criteria A and D. It is the only known complete Chinese village site in California that has not been subsequently developed and rendered unavailable for archeological study. It has yielded information regarding Chinese-American patterns of life, and it is likely to yield additional information after further studies. The findings of the first archeological investigation have been published in a two-volume work called Wong Ho Leun, an American Chinatown. The area is associated with Riverside's Chinese population, a significant part of the region's agricultural work force and contributor to its citriculture developments. It is also associated with the social, cultural and commercial life of the town's Chinese and Chinese-American people.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

See continuation sheet.

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property 2.5 ±

UTM References

A 

1	1
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4	6	4	4	6	0
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3	7	5	9	4	2	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

C 

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B 

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 Zone Easting Northing

D 

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The Chinatown Historic Site being proposed consists of City Lot 156 and 44 feet of the eastern portion of City Lot 157. The lots are bounded on the south by Tequesquite Avenue and on the east by Brockton Avenue. The site is bounded on the north by property of Evergreen Cemetery. The west portion of City Lot 157 that is excluded from this proposal is bounded on the west by Pine Street.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

City Lots 156 and 157 consist of a 6.3-acre site that was purchased on January 13, 1888 by Wong Nim, Wong Gee, and Chen Duey (San Bernardino County Deed Book 68:311-313). The Chinatown business district and most permanent buildings including residences were located on City Lot 156. A few structures were located within the eastern 44 feet of City Lot 157. The western portion of City Lot 157 has been developed by the Riverside County Board of Education.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Don Kleinhesselink, Curator of History/Harry Lawton, local historian  
 organization Riverside County Parks Department date May 6, 1987  
 street & number P.O. Box 3507, 4600 Crestmore Road telephone (714) 787-2551  
 city or town Riverside CA 92519 state California zip code 92519

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The approximately 2.5-acre site of Riverside's Chinatown proposed for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places is the eastern portion of the original 6.3-acre site (City Lots 156 and 157), where a village of Chinese immigrants lived from 1885 until the 1930's. Beginning in 1943 and up until his death in 1974, Mr. George Wong (Wong Ho Leun) owned the site and lived there alone. After his death, the site changed hands several times, and in 1979 was acquired by the Riverside County Office of the Superintendent of Schools. Plans by the County Schools Office of Education to lease the site for a parking lot to the Riverside County Department of Social Services in 1984 led to a grass roots citizens movement to halt construction of the parking lot until an archaeological study of the site could be conducted. Participating in the citizens movement were concerned Anglos, members of the Riverside Chinese community, and the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California (see pages 505-532 of Volume II of Wong Ho Leun: An American Chinatown, provided as an attachment). The Chinatown archaeological investigation was conducted by the Great Basin Foundation of San Diego, a non-profit anthropological research center. Funding for the project was provided by the City and County of Riverside with matching funds from the Great Basin Foundation. The archaeological study was carried out in a two-phase project from October 22, 1984 up to May 29, 1985, mostly on weekends. The following sections present (1) a historical description of the site; (2) a description of its present physical appearance; and (3) a discussion of the archaeological investigation and the results of the study.

## HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION

The Chinese immigrants decision in 1885 to establish their village in the Tequesquite Arroyo was clearly prompted by natural features of the original 6.3-acre site. The site afforded the Chinese access to the fertile Santa Ana River bottom nearby, which they leased to grow vegetables, and it removed them from the downtown area of Riverside, while giving them continued access to the town for commercial enterprises. Other natural features of the site that led to its selection are discussed in the two-volume archaeological report by the Great Basin Foundation (see pages 1-24 of Volume II, Wong Ho Leun: An American Chinatown, provided as an attachment). Research by Mr. Fred Mueller on Chinese selection of the site (see the attachment) indicate that traditional Chinese methods of site selection employing geomancy or feng-shui played a major role in choosing the site as it did in Chinese selection of other village sites in California.

The wooden buildings built in 1885 and the brick buildings constructed in 1893-94 on the site are no longer extant. During the late 1940s and 1950s, owner George Wong had local contractors bury much of the eastern and southeastern boundary areas of the site beneath fill dirt. These extensive areas include the former entrance to Chinatown, an area in which a village shrine once existed, and an area along Brockton Avenue that was once occupied by the entire eastern row of the Chinese commercial district.

## PRESENT PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Presently, the approximately 2.5 acre remaining Chinatown site proposed for the National Register has no aboveground structures. Archaeologically, this is the most significant portion of the original 6.3 acres, since all of the Chinatown commercial and residential

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district was located on this portion of the Chinatown acreage. Currently, this exposed eastern portion of City Lots 156 and 157 is mostly a bare field in a hollow with a sprinkling of pepper trees and a bamboo grove. The south side of these lots running along Tequesquite Avenue is covered with fill put down for Mr. George Wong. This tall mound of fill covers the original entrance to the Chinese commercial district. Approximately 15 feet of fill also covers a large area of the site along Brockton Avenue on the east. This layer of fill completely covers what was once the eastern row of buildings of the Chinese commercial district. The fill area closest to Brockton Avenue has been leveled and is used for a parking lot.

In 1985, during its archaeological investigations, the Great Basin Foundation conducted an exploratory excavation into a portion of the fill on the site where the brick building of the east wing of Chinatown once existed. This exploration established that the brick foundations of the structure still existed. The test shaft was immediately filled up, and no excavation of the site was carried out. This test excavation suggests that the foundations of the east row of Chinatown's commercial buildings are probably still intact beneath the fill. The fill has prevented relic hunters from pothunting, and in all likelihood archaeological deposits remaining beneath the fill are more extensive and greater than those in areas that were excavated in 1984-85.

The western portion of the original 6.3-acre Chinatown site, occupying the west end of City Lot 157, is occupied by the maintenance and operations office of the County Schools Office of Education. This structure is at the corner of Pine Street and Tequesquite Avenue. Immediately to the east of this structure is an asphalt parking lot extending eastward to the last 44 feet of City Lot 157. This parking lot, which is leased to the County Department of Social Services, was subjected to test excavations by the Great Basin Foundation during the first phase of its archaeological studies in 1984-85. The test excavations revealed it had been a garden area and after this mitigation the parking lot was built. The test excavation confirmed the correctness of historical maps indicating Chinatown proper was confined to the 2.5-acres proposed for inclusion on the National Register. What follows is a discussion of the archaeology that has been performed on the 2.5-acre site to date, the research questions that were addressed by the Great Basin Foundation archaeologists, a brief summary of information yielded by the investigation, and a statement about the site's future research potential.

**THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDY (1984-85)**

The Great Basin Foundation's study of Riverside's Chinatown in 1984-85 was never an exclusively archeological study. It involved a cooperative effort of archaeologists, cultural anthropologists, historians, and volunteer workers who were engaged in archival research and recording oral history from descendants of the Chinatown pioneers. It relied also on data gathered over a ten-year period by students in the Department of Sociology at the University of California, Riverside. In addition, interviews conducted with elderly Anglos who were native Riversiders supplied considerable information on the interactions that once existed between the Anglo

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community and the inhabitants of Chinatown. The archival research was characteristically about historic, individual, specific events (abstractions of processes that were expected to be read in the archaeological record). The archaeology unearthed data dealing with daily habits (foodways), style changes (dinnerware), and ethnic preferences (medicine), things seldom mentioned in newspapers or tax records. Bridging these two bodies of information were the oral histories and written reminiscences by Anglos, which breathed life into dry archives and silent artifacts. Thus, connections were made that permitted the archaeological and archival records to become greater than the sum of their parts.

The detailed findings of the GBF historical and archaeological study in 1984-85 are presented in two volumes (Volume I: History, 405 pages; and Volume II: Archaeology, 555 pages), titled Wong Ho Leun: An American Chinatown (Great Basin Foundation, San Diego, 1987). Extensive photohistorical research enabled GBF to amply illustrate the two volumes. In addition, two historic paintings of Riverside's Chinatown were located during the research. One of these paintings, dated 1892, shows the Chinese pioneers engaged in their daily activities and is a work of superb quality (see Volume I, pages 18-19). The artifacts collected during the archaeological investigation are currently curated and housed at Riverside Municipal Museum. The bulk of the archival records and interviews are housed in the Special Collections Department of the University of California, Riverside.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

Historical and archaeological questions guiding the Great Basin Foundation's research on Riverside's Chinatown were posited in two successive stages: (1) prior to the onset of excavation and the archival search; and (2) after the laboratory processing of recovered materials to help guide their analyses. Pre-excavation questions were concerned with (a) the identity of inhabitants/users of Chinatown; and (b) the subcultural life-styles of the Chinese inhabitants. The questions were later expanded and summarized in an analytical guide for those conducting the various analyses of recovered materials (see Volume II, pages 438-44 of Wong Ho Leun: An American Chinatown).

The primary goal of the research was to identify the causes for the creation, persistence, and eventual demise of Riverside's Chinatown, and to identify local, national, or international trends coincident with the emergence, continuance, and decline of the Chinese community. Four major objectives of the archaeological study were established: (1) define the degree of ethnicity operative at Riverside's Chinatown; (2) define the economic orientations of Chinatown; (3) define the social and political structures at work in Chinatown; and (4) define the role at Riverside's Chinatown of those patterns of behavior not directly attributable to economic necessity, biological circumstance, or social structure. The specific questions chosen for investigation in meeting these major objectives are presented in the analytical guide in Volume II of the GBF report (see pages 438-444). As an example, however, a typical question asked under Objective 1 above was as follows: To what extent did Riverside's Chinatown rely on Chinese exchange systems in California for commodities not available through Euroamerican commerce?

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The archaeological investigation of Riverside's Chinatown was carried out in two phases. Phase I research was confined to the western portion of undeveloped Chinatown property in City Lot 157, which was scheduled to become a parking lot for the County Department of Social Services. This area is not part of the approximately 2.5 acres proposed for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Test trenches that were excavated by backhoe and excavation units dug in this phase of the project are shown in Figure 10 (page 442) of Volume II of the GBF report (Wong Ho Leun: An American Chinatown). Excavation was carried out from October 22 through October 31, 1984. Archaeology throughout the area found no evidence of substantial improvement or longterm occupation debris. An 1895 Sanborn Company map of this area indicated that most of Lot 157 was vacant, although two large Chinese frame dwellings and a shed were located at the northeasternmost corner of the lot--and outside the area of the proposed parking lot. It was concluded that the parking lot site had contained (1) no substantial permanent buildings; (2) no substantial evidence of seasonal, temporary camping quarters utilized by Chinese migrant labor; and (3) was most likely utilized as garden fields for growing vegetable crops. An enormous quantity of debitage (mostly ceramic and glass) was removed and later subjected to analysis. Following completion of this phase of the project, construction was immediately begun of a parking lot for the County Department of Social Services.

Field operations for Phase II of the archaeological investigation were conducted mostly on weekends from February 20 through May 27, 1985. Limiting factors for these excavations and those carried out earlier on the proposed parking lot site are described in Volume II of the final report (Wong Ho Leun: An American Chinatown), page 443. Vandalism of archaeological features and trash deposits by relic-hunters in the decade followed by Mr. George Wong's death proved to be the single most disruptive factor in understanding the archaeology of the site. Grading and filling at various times also led to surface litter being intermingled with fill. Phase II of the field work was concentrated on promising areas indicated by scaling a recent (1982) blueprint of the site to coincide with 1895 and 1908 Sanborn Maps of Chinatown in order to facilitate location of subsurface building remnants and non-structural discrete features.

A series of trenches were dug using a backhoe with a 30-inch bucket to intuitively and randomly sample parameters of the 2.5-acre site and reveal artifact concentrations. Sixteen features were unearthed and serially numbered. In addition, an expanded trench area designated Feature "0" west of the main complex was tested for deposits prior to the start of the main excavation of the sixteen features. A full discussion of the excavation work with maps showing excavation units and the sixteen features is presented in Volume II of the GBF report (Wong Ho Leun: An American Chinatown).

A field laboratory was set up adjacent to the excavations manned by a trained archaeologist assisted by community volunteers. Definitive laboratory processing took place in 1985 in a facility set up in San Diego. A description of the processing methods employed is presented on pages 450-451 of Volume II of the GBF report (Wong Ho Leun: An American Chinatown). A thorough discussion of the sorting and classification system

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for both phases of the field operations and data programming is presented as a separate chapter in the GBF final report (pages 495-503 of Wong Ho Leun: An American Chinatown, Volume II). Following processing of recovered materials, packaged discrete collections were delivered to individual analysts, along with a data and research package containing coding instructions, forms, and an elaboration of the overall research design. Some 15 specialists participated in the analysis, and each was provided a group list of the other specialists to encourage coordination. Not all specialists made effective use of the computer program provided, but those who did produced some good results directed toward specific portions of the research design. Personal problems led to a few specialists not completing their analyses, and future work is contemplated with these collections at Riverside Municipal Museum (e.g., stoneware and bird bones). In fact, the collection of recovered materials housed at Riverside Municipal Museum forms one of the finest typological collections of Chinese materials from an inland site on record and is expected to provide a fertile field for many future studies. Currently, the University of California Archaeological Research Unit is excavating a Chinese/Mexican period site about ten miles from Riverside's Chinatown at Agua Mansa. The Riverside collection is providing comparative materials for this new research.

## FIELD RESULTS

In recent years, a number of significant studies have been carried out on Chinese sites in California (e.g., San Francisco Breakwater, Weaverville, San Jose, Ventura, China Camp, etc.). While the archaeologists associated with the Great Basin Foundation, like all scientists, were wary of comparisons, it is not asserting too much to suggest that the Riverside study has enormously enhanced our knowledge of rural Chinatowns in the United States. The diversity and abundance of recovered materials (more than three tons) provide an outstanding typological collection that will be used for years to come in making comparative studies of other Chinese sites. Among highlights of the collection are (1) the largest collection of stoneware ever excavated in the U.S. from a Chinese site; (2) the largest collection of opium artifacts from any overseas site, with many unique bowl types; (3) more than 40,000 vertebrate specimens (mammal, reptile, birds, and fish) casting light on foodways; one of the largest collection of botanical remains, encompassing 41 species; and large collections of Asian coins, porcelain ware, gaming pieces, and brass, glass, stone, and bone items of adornment. More important than the quantity is the new knowledge that has been acquired about Chinese village life in California through the recovered materials which is set forth in separate chapters by the analysts in Volume II of the GBF final report (Wong Ho Leun: An American Chinatown). The artifactual materials together with the archival materials collected during the investigation provide an enormous fund of information on nineteenth century Chinese overseas villages in California and a source for many future research studies.

Unfortunately, extensive prior disturbance by relic hunters and later grading of much of the site area that was excavated limited the value of dating information. Chinatown's history is composed of four discernible parts: (1) an Inception Period from 1885-1893; (2) a Stable Duration Period from 1894-1918; (3) a Decline Period from 1919-1937; and (4) the George Wong Period of ownership from 1938-1974). In

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the recovered remains of the Wong Ho Leun Site (as the archaeologists christened it) the inception of Chinatown took place in an abrupt manner not devisable into progressive stages in the archaeological record. The village had a relatively stable endurance punctuated by events that were climatic: an undated flooding, the 1893 fire, and an historical beginning and fiery ending for its "joss house" (temple). Individual features were dateable within the context of the site, but no changes in quantification, style, preference, or artifact types could be confidently tied to historic dates or artifactual or stratigraphic markers. Presence of machine-sawn bone in Feature 7 supported archival evidence that the upper end of Chinatown's duration was in the early 1930's. Although it is possible that the stratigraphy of individual depositions was too subtle to be noted by the investigators, specific measures were taken to enhance detection of such phenomena. When the entire site was examined, dated features showed a marked differentiation with pre-1900 dates dominating central portions of the village site and later dates more plentiful around the periphery. This differentiation was largely attributed to the result of demolition of the brick building in the west row in 1978, wherein more recent remains were bulldozed and hauled away.

Objective 1 of the project was to define the degree of ethnicity operative at the Chinatown site by answering five questions. Various papers throughout the GBF final report throw considerable light on questions asked about ethnicity and raise new questions. In so far as a brief summary is possible, the original five questions and their answers may be paraphrased as follows: (1) A high degree of ethnicity was reflected through heavy dependence on imported commodities; (2) Euroamerican commodities appear to have satisfied only occasional needs; (3) Heavy reliance on Chinese exchange systems in California was posited; (4) The community was highly reliant on locally grown foodstuffs, many of Oriental origin; and (5) Archaeological evidence was insufficient to determine to what extent use of imported Chinese goods expanded or diminished over time.

Objective 2 dealt with the economic orientations of Riverside's Chinatown and whether they could be determined. The archaeology provided suggestive evidence of a laundry, identified a laundry drying area, a probable general merchandise store, the probable "joss house" (temple) site, a probable restaurant or dining room for migrant workers, a second general merchandise store, and a probable residence. Historic evidence reinforced findings about economic orientation, establishing that Chinatown provided labor, laundry services, vegetable produce both to its inhabitants and the Euroamerican community, and served as an economic center for meeting the needs of a large migrant population that visited it during harvest seasons.

Objective 3 was an attempt to define the social and political structures at work in Riverside's Chinatown and how such structures changed over time. Considerable data relating to social and political structures was uncovered through the archival

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historical research and is presented in Volume I: History of the GBF final report (Wong Ho Leun: An American Chinatown). The archaeological effort to establish political and social structures at work was less successful, particularly as to how these structures might have changed over time. That there were degrees of wealth in the community was attested to by a range of artifactual material, ranging from commodities that are associated with peasant usage to more expensive commodities such as porcelain ware and quality opium bowls. In general, archaeologists who have worked on Chinese sites in California have posited that the more expensive commodities were typical of the large urban Chinatowns. The Riverside Chinatown site suggested otherwise, and many examples of artifacts of fine workmanship were recovered.

Objective 4 was concerned with defining patterns of behavior not directly attributable to economic necessity, biological circumstances, or social structure. Artifactual material threw considerable light on gaming practices and the use of opium as a extensive recreational pursuit in Riverside's Chinatown. Various papers throughout the report suggest that there was little modification of traditional Chinese behavior as a result of the presence of the village in a Euroamerican community. The large adornment collection that was recovered made it possible to reconstruct Chinese styles of dress, established that there were women in the community, and provided a glimpse into mythology and symbolism important to the Chinese inhabitants.

Both the historical research and the archaeology allowed a rich degree of inference as to the probable function of the sixteen features excavated during the active life of Chinatown. A specific discussion of each of those features is presented in Volume II of Wong Ho Leun: An American Chinatown (see pages 462-487). Many other inferences made from artifactual material recovered can be found in the papers by various specialists who analyzed these materials (see also Volume II). A hypothetical model for future archaeological testing at the Riverside Chinatown site is suggested on pages 491-492 in Volume II of the GBF final report.

## FUTURE RESEARCH POTENTIAL

Research excavations carried out at Riverside's Chinatown site in 1984-85 were as extensive as funding and the duration of the project permitted. Much of the site in the hollow where the west row of commercial buildings were located was not excavated. Artifactual materials still buried on this portion of the site are probably as extensive in quantity as the material recovered. Less than half of Feature 7, which workers termed the "Bonanza Trash Pit," was excavated before the study was halted and the pit was filled over. The walls of this feature remain rich in archaeological debitage. If the proposed Chinatown Historic Park is established, this feature might well be reopened to illustrate the archaeology of the site as a permanent exhibit.

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No excavations were conducted along the east row of the Chinatown business district that ran parallel to Brockton Avenue or of the area along Tequesquite Avenue that once formed the southern and main entrance to Chinatown. These two areas were covered with 10-15 feet of fill dirt dumped by contractors at the request of Mr. George Wong in the 1940s and 1950s. Since these two areas of the site have never been subjected to pot-hunting, so far as is known, there is a possibility that original stratigraphy may have been preserved. These two areas may well be the richest areas of the 2.5-acre site in terms of archaeological potential for future research.

As the last known complete village site of a California Chinatown, it is important that the 2.5 acre site presented for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places be preserved and protected for future generations of Californians and perhaps for future archaeological research.

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In 1984, a check with knowledgeable members of the Society for California Archaeology established that Riverside's Chinatown Site represents the only known site in California encompassing an entire Chinese commercial and residential village that has not been subjected to later Anglo development. The site survived intact because it remained under Chinese ownership from its founding in 1885 until the death in 1974 of its last owner, Mr. George Wong (Wong Ho Leun). Chinatown was established in 1885 by Wong Nim, Wong Gee, and Chen Duey, who formed a traditional Cantonese business company and leased the 6.3-acre site. A contractor, A. W. Boggs, was hired to erect wooden shops and houses, which were leased to other Chinese immigrants. The community's founders were from the village of Ganbian (Gom-Benn) in Taishan District, Guangdong Province, and five generations of residents of Chinatown immigrated from that Chinese village, preserving its culture and customs in their new self-contained community. In 1888, Wong Nim and his partners acquired legal ownership of the property. In 1893, Chinatown was destroyed by a wind-driven fire. Architect G. W. Griff and contractor H. A. Knapp were hired to design and construct two impressive brick commercial buildings on opposite sites of the main street. A thriving new Chinatown developed that endured into the 1920's. Its economy was based on providing labor to the citrus industry, farming extensive vegetable gardens along the Santa Ana River, and laundries and mercantile shops. In 1893, anti-Chinese rioting spread across California and there were deportation raids on Chinatown. In general, however, Anglos in Riverside recognized the Chinese as essential to the orange industry. The village was the economic and cultural center for both its permanent residents and up to 2,000 Chinese migrant laborers who worked the citrus groves during harvest season. At its peak Chinatown had about 500 permanent residents. The village was mostly a bachelor community, although there were usually a handful of women and children. The community had a "joss house" (temple), a shrine, a tong headquarters, and a band, and its residents practiced the customs and traditional observances brought with them from Ganbian. Throughout its history, Chinatown's impact on Riverside's protestant middle class reflected the interaction of social forces that have been active in the complex social matrix that makes up Southern California's social history. In 1911, both Chinatown and Riverside's Anglos rejoiced in Sun Yat-sen's revolution. In 1939, the last of the early nineteenth century pioneers of Chinatown--Sam Lew Gut--died and was buried by George Wong, who acquired ownership of the site in 1941. Recognized as a historically significant site as early as 1958, it was not until 1964 that Chinatown began receiving inclusion on state and local government lists for its historic importance. In the 1970's, students from several departments of the University of California, Riverside, launched studies of Chinatown. Archaeological investigations carried out in 1984-85 by the Great Basin Foundation (GBF), paid for by local government and GBF matching funds, identified the site as quantitatively and qualitatively richer than any California Chinese site previously excavated. Much of the site remains unexcavated, and Chinatown is being considered by local governments for the location of a historic public park to interpret California's rich Chinese heritage. Riverside's Chinatown is the last remaining undeveloped site of those many Chinese villages that once dotted Southern California's citrus belt--a region larger than the state of Kansas.

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CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

Forced to live under the hated foreign rule of the Manchus since 1644, the Cantonese Chinese (Guangdong Province) eventually rebelled after the British drafted the Treaty of Nanking in 1842 to conclude their victory in the Opium Wars. The Cantonese-led Taiping Rebellion freed southern China's peasant population until the Manchus regained control in 1864. During this period of turmoil, many Chinese immigrated to the United States with the first three immigrants embarking in San Francisco in 1847, according to some historians. By 1854, 40,000 Chinese were working in the California Gold Fields. With the commencement of building of the first transcontinental railroad, many Chinese immigrants went to work for Central Pacific. Throughout the next two decades, Chinese formed the major labor force in railroad construction throughout the state, and they soon spread along the California coast, pioneering the fishing industry, and founding Chinatowns in the larger coastal communities.

Gradually, Chinese immigrants migrated inland following the same pattern. The Chinatowns they established throughout the state's interior formed self-contained economic and cultural enclaves that provided a refuge for recreation, religious worship, and mercantile needs of thousands of Chinese laborers, who were being recruited for railroad, canal, and reservoir building and as ranch workers and harvesters of a growing agricultural industry. By 1880, census studies indicate as many as 70,000 Chinese had immigrated to California. The California land boom of the 1880's brought thousands more. Though the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the subsequent Geary Act placed restrictions on immigration, many Chinese continued to enter the country by way of Mexico and British Columbia. In 1893, a San Francisco tax collector estimated there were more than 100,000 unregistered Chinese in the state.

The first Chinese pioneers in the Riverside region were 16 young men who arrived in San Bernardino in 1867. The next year Chinese masons were employed laying brick in the construction of the historic Jensen-Alvarado brick ranchhouse, across the Santa Ana River from the barren plain that would become Riverside. In 1870, Riverside was founded by the Southern California Colony Association, and Chinese immigrants were among its first colonists, planting orange groves and serving as houseservants and cooks. In the late 1870's, a group of Chinese entrepreneurs opened the Hang Wo laundry and other washhouses along Seventh Street. Meanwhile, several thousand Chinese railroad workers built an extension of Southern Pacific Railroad from nearby Colton across the Colorado River to the Yuma junction. Around 1880, Chinese businessman Wong Nim and other countrymen founded a thriving Chinatown in the block bounded by Main and Orange and Eight and Ninth Streets in Riverside. Several thousand Chinese were involved in constructing the California Southern Railroad in 1882 and the Santa Fe in 1885 through Riverside, and these workers flooded into the Chinatown that had sprung up in downtown Riverside. Chinese were employed in canal digging for Riverside's rapidly expanding orange industry, and they formed the major work force in digging the Gage Canal--the greatest waterworks of its time. The presence of a Chinatown in the commercial center of Riverside, however, aroused consternation among Anglo businessmen and a long fight was waged to evict the immigrants.

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Anglo businessmen were supported in their efforts to evict the Chinese from the downtown area by rising anti-Chinese sentiment among unemployed Anglos. Charges of possible fire hazard from crowded wooden buildings and health hazards from open laundry drains prompted a local Grand Jury to indict 46 violators, mostly Chinese. Faced with the expectation of continued harassment, the Chinese merchants quietly paid their fines and agreed to move their settlement out of the downtown district. In 1885, Wong Nim, Wong Gee, and Chen Duey (Duey Wo Lung) formed a company and leased a 6.3-acre site in the Tequesquite Arroyo from John Cottrell. Their venture, known as Quong Nim and Company on local tax rolls, hired A. W. Boggs, a local contractor, to erect wooden buildings on the site. The property was bounded by Tequesquite Avenue on the south, Brockton Avenue on the east, Pine Street on the west, and the steep arroyo slope on the north. The Chinatown that emerged was depicted in 1892 in a magnificent oil painting by Lillian Whaite, the finest, most detailed painting known of an inland Southern California Chinatown (see pages 18-19 of Wong Ho Leun: An American Chinatown in the attachments). In 1888, Quong Nim and Company purchased and acquired title to Riverside's new Chinatown, one of the rare examples of Chinese immigrants acquiring title to property in the nineteenth century (San Bernardino County Deed Book 68:311-313).

The Chinatown that Wong Nim and his partners founded flourished from 1885 up until the 1920's, providing a central economic base for as many as 2,000 migrant Chinese workers who harvested the Riverside region's major grape and citrus crops each year from September through the end of the navel orange season in the spring. In addition, Chinatown provided for the needs of Chinese ranchworkers and servants on outlying orange plantations as Riverside became the center of the citrus belt's growing orange industry. At its peak, Chinatown had about 500 permanent inhabitants, most of them immigrants (often relatives of the three partners) from the village of Ganbian and neighboring hamlets in Taishan District of Guangdong Province. Riverside's Chinatown is unique in that oral history interviews conducted with descendants of these Chinese pioneers have established five generations of Ganbian villagers immigrating to Riverside. In 1893, a total of 387 Chinese registered as permanent residents of Chinatown in compliance with the Geary Act, although the local press reported that there were many more who failed to comply. Up until the 1920's, Chen Duey (often known by his store name of Duey Wo Lung) served as spokesman for the community, since Wong Nim had primary business interests in San Bernardino's Chinatown and Wong Gee eventually returned to China.

On July 31, 1893, flames from a Chinese cooking stove ignited a building and wind driven fire quickly destroyed 18 structures along Chinatown's main street. An army of Chinese, white volunteers, and the fire department struggled to halt the blaze, but only eight buildings were saved. Quong Nim and Company immediately hired architect G. W. Griff and contractor H. A. Knapp to design and build two large commercial brick structures, each of which would house half a dozen shops. A more attractive Chinatown arose that eventually comprised about thirty buildings, including a "joss house" (religious temple) and a headquarters building for the local Chee Kung Tong, which housed a shrine to the god Guan Gong, God of War and patron of merchants.

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Periodically, during the nineteenth century, there were bursts of anti-Chinese sentiment, mostly during times of economic recession or depression, although the anti-Chinese movement in Riverside never reached the serious level that it did in San Bernardino or nearby Redlands, where an Anglo mob had to be dispersed by the militia after a day of setting fire to Chinese buildings and harassing the immigrants. In 1879, the Irish agitator Denis Kearney made a whirlwind tour of the citrus belt, preaching to a massive crowd in San Bernardino and continuing to Riverside. Riverside's newspaper editor declared Kearney "unimpressive" and he failed to stir up any significant anti-Chinese feelings in a community that already recognized it had become economically dependent on Chinese for labor in the citrus groves, the town's laundry service, and the vegetables provided from Chinatown's enormous leased garden acreage along the Santa Ana River.

During the recession of 1888-89, however, the anti-Chinese movement won support among many unemployed Anglo laborers and some of the business and professional people in Riverside. An angry anti-Chinese movement in the Loring Opera House almost turned into a riot when the crowd decided to march on Chinatown. They were dissuaded from the march by Bradford Morse, the town marshall, who was prejudiced against Chinese, but argued that the Chinese had their rights and he would protect them. After passage of the Geary Act in 1893, anti-Chinese rioting broke out throughout Southern California and much of the citrus belt. Threatened with deportation and physical harassment, many Chinese from neighboring communities fled to Riverside's Chinatown. Deportation raids by federal officers spread to Riverside, where many Chinese hid in the Santa Ana River bottom and some were sheltered in concealment by Anglo orange growers. Files on Riverside Chinese who were arrested and deported may be found in the Federal Archives Center at Laguna Niguel. Four prominent Riverside Anglos testified in favor of Wong Fong, a Riverside Chinese merchant, and after a year in jail he was released and returned to Chinatown.

The successful overthrow of the Manchu Dynasty by the revolution lead by Sun Yat-sen in 1911, was a cause for great celebration in Riverside's Chinatown and received extensive favorable publicity in the local press. The passage of the Geary Act had slowed immigration of Chinese laborers, and the Chinese labor contractors in Chinatown were increasingly unable to meet demands of the citrus industry, now importing more and more Japanese workers. The renewal of hope inspired by the revolution caused many overseas Chinese to return to their native land, including many of the younger men in Riverside's Chinatown and some of the older merchants who wanted to die in their native Ganbien. By the late 1920's all that remained of Riverside's Chinatown were delapidated buildings and a small number of dying old men, operating garden plots behind Chinatown and along the Santa Ana River.

In 1930, a young newspaper reporter, Robert L. Patton, covered what may have been the last Chinese New Year's celebration in Riverside's Chinatown for the Riverside Daily Press. His account of the miserable poverty of the remaining Chinese inhabitants

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and their loneliness in an alien land haunts the present-day reader. In Patton's news story, we find the first public recognition of the historical importance to Riverside and the growth of the orange industry of the immigrants from China as he pays a stirring tribute to the contributions of these elderly old men who no longer have the money to return to their native land.

The Chinatown site might well have disappeared in the minds of the Riverside community during the 1930's, however, if it had not been for a late-coming immigrant, George Wong, who left Ganbien in 1916 to join his father, Wong Ben Chow, who operated large Chinese vegetable gardens along the Santa Ana River. His father did not want him to grow up in the dying Chinese community and persuaded a local orange grower, S. H. Herrick, to raise the boy and support him through high school. In the 1930's, however, George Wong gravitated to Chinatown after the death of his father, where he eventually started a restaurant during World War II. He acted as a spokesman for some of the dying old men and their problems, and saw to it that a number of them were buried in Olivewood Cemetery. In 1941, after the death of Wong Nim in San Bernardino, he bought Chinatown, where he remained until the end of his life in 1974 as the last survivor of the Chinese community with a vision of someday building a pagoda on the site and a small museum to house the hundreds of artifacts he had saved and stored in the one remaining brick structure. He lived to see Chinatown recognized as an important historical County Landmark and State Point of Historical Interest in 1968. More important, the truckloads of dirt he had contractors dump over portions of the site and the asphalt he asked them to put down over much of the central commercial district preserved most of the site intact from relic hunters. In September of 1976, the City of Riverside Cultural Heritage Board designated Chinatown as Cultural Heritage Landmark No. 19. In that same year, most of Chinatown's artifacts were sold at public auction.

**ARCHAEOLOGY/HISTORIC-NON-ABORIGINAL**

When George Wong (Wong Ho Leun) purchased the Chinatown property in 1941 and started living there, many of the original buildings dating back to 1893 had become seriously neglected. In the late 1940's and 1950's, Mr. Wong instituted a policy of demolishing the more run-down structures, especially along the eastern and southern borders bounded by Brockton and Tequesquite Avenues. He encouraged contractors to dump truckloads of fill dirt over the rubble in these areas and had asphalt laid down over much of the lower lying hollow that marked Chinatown's main street, which served as a base for his large collection of antique automobiles. On the south more than ten feet of fill still covers the original entrance to Chinatown, and about fifteen feet of fill extending westward from Brockton still covers the entire east wing of Chinatown's main street. None of this large area was excavated during the Chinatown archaeological investigations of 1984-85.

Although some pot-hunting by relic collectors occurred on the periphery and within portions of the site that was occupied by the west row of commercial buildings along Chinatown's main street in the 1970's and early 1980's, the heavy layer of asphalt

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that had been laid down by George Wong served to preserve much of this portion of the site. Considerable pot-hunting occurred, however, in areas of the site west of the business district, which had been occupied at one time by Chinese residences and vegetable gardens.

Upon Wong's death, administrators of his estate decided upon a public auction of his possessions, which included antique cars and hundreds of relics of Chinatown, ranging from furniture and household items to furnishing of the "joss house." Most of the relics went to private collectors, although Riverside Municipal Museum acquired the "joss house" shrine, some Chinese shop signs, and other artifacts. In 1977, a fire swept through the remaining wooden structures in Chinatown and they were soon leveled. The fill area along Brockton Avenue, covering the original east row of Chinatown's main street, was leveled and converted to its present status as a parking lot.

Although administrators of the Wong estate originally collected much of the debris and rubble on the Chinatown property to improve its appearance before selling the land, considerable archaeological material was brought to the surface after almost every rain. This debris was predominantly porcelain and pottery shards. Some of this material recovered by pot-hunters and interested citizens made its way to the Archaeological Research Unit at the University of California, Riverside. Periodically, concern about the Chinatown site was voiced by UCR archaeologists and other citizens.

After changing hands several times, the Chinatown site was purchased by the Riverside County Schools Office of Education in 1980. Development plans were begun to construct buildings on the 6.3-acre site. Paul Chase and Associates of Escondido were hired to develop a mitigation program. In their report of January 20, 1981, the firm recognized the potential that the site held for an understanding of Chinese American history through archaeological studies that could be performed at the site. Chase and Associates located the 1895 and 1908 Sanborn maps of Chinatown and by overlaying them on a 1980 topographical base map were able to determine the extent of Mr. Wong's years of in-filling at the site.

The County Superintendent of Schools Office--after learning that the western 4.27 acres of the site had never had permanent structures built upon it--moved ahead for the development of that portion of City Lot 157 without performing any mitigation. On July 24, 1980, the Superintendent's Office filed a Notice of Determination that the project would not have a significant effect on the historical or archaeological environment and gave their development project a Negative Declaration. Clinton Marr, project architect, proceeded with the development of the western 4.27 acres of City Lot 157. A maintenance and operations office for the County Schools was constructed at the corner of Tequesquite Avenue and Pine Street.

Throughout the development project, various concerned citizens, local historians, and archaeologists had been voicing their protest. In 1984, the County Superintendent of Schools Office initiated plans to lease approximately 130 feet adjacent to the now developed 4.27 acres for a parking lot. Meanwhile, a grassroots movement was organized by an Ad Hoc Citizens Committee to Save Riverside's Chinatown and by the local Chinese community, which formed the Chinese Heritage and Progress Committee of the Inland

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Empire, with the objective of halting the proposed parking lot until mitigation could be achieved. Since the County of Riverside's Department of Public Social Services was the agency planning to lease the parking lot from the County Schools and was a county and not a state agency, any construction associated with the lease was forced to comply with CEQA. The protesting citizens groups took their case to the Riverside County Board of Supervisors, where they received a respectful hearing. As a result, Community Development Block Grant Funds were provided to partially fund an archaeological survey of the impacted area. The Riverside City Council also joined the county with funding for the archaeological study. The proposed investigation eventually was expanded to include a survey and partial excavation of the 2.5-acre site on City Lot 156 that is presently being promoted for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.

The archaeological investigation of Riverside's Chinatown site was carried out in 1984-85 by the Great Basin Foundation of San Diego, a non-profit anthropological research center, whose members had earlier participated in an archaeological study of the Weaverville Chinatown. The Great Basin Foundation's approach constituted one of the broadest studies ever carried out on a Chinatown site by archaeologists, including in addition to excavation historical, ethnohistorical, and cultural studies of many aspects of Riverside's Chinatown. The findings of this investigation by the Great Basin Foundation were published in a two-volume work, Wong Ho Leun: An American Chinatown (Great Basin Foundation, San Diego, 1987), which is submitted as an attachment to this nomination.

**ETHNIC HERITAGE/ASIAN**

In forming a traditional Chinese share-holding company to lease and eventually buy the site of Riverside's Chinatown, Wong Nim, Wong Gee, and Chen Duey embarked on an enterprise that carried the native Chinese heritage of its Taishan villagers well into the Twentieth Century. There were other much larger Chinatowns in Southern California at the time in cities such as San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego. Smaller cities along the coast, such as Santa Barbara and Monterey, had Chinatowns, and most of the inland agricultural communities such as Stockton, Bakersfield, and Anaheim also had Chinatowns. Historians and cultural anthropologists have long suspected that many of these smaller Chinatowns may have been primarily composed of Chinese immigrants from distinct regions of China, rather than a heterogeneous population. In the case of Locke, California, for example, it is known that many of its immigrant inhabitants came from the Chungshan District of the Pearl River Delta

What is unique about Riverside's Chinatown, however, is that oral history interviews with descendants of its pioneer settlers have established that ownership of this self-contained village resided with Chinese immigrants from Ganbian (Gom-Benn) in the highlands of Taishan District, Guangdong China. Furthermore, such interviews indicate that most of the inhabitants of Riverside's Chinatown came from a lineage group of the Wong family residing in Ganbian or from several neighboring villages

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(e.g., Dongkou, Chaoxi), which had established centuries-old reciprocal relationships (such as intermarriage) with the Ganbian villagers. More than five generations of Ganbian inhabitants immigrated to Riverside, and they continued settling in the Riverside community even after Chinatown no longer existed as a cohesive community. The last Ganbian villager to immigrate to Riverside was Wong Gin Voy, who established the Chung King Restaurant on Market Street in 1941. Thus, throughout its history, Riverside's Chinatown was a flourishing center for ethnic practices of hundreds of local Chinese residents that can be traced back to the Taishanese highlands.

In the nineteenth century, some citrus was still being grown in Taishan and the members of this distinct dialect group were known for their skills in irrigation and waterworks construction in an arid region of little rain. Indeed, one of the attractions of Riverside, which is part of the major upland citrus belt, may have been citrus and its similarities to Taishan District. The skills which the immigrants from Ganbian brought with them were thus those most needed by an orange-growing community needing workers for canal building, irrigation, and the culture of citrus.

Newspaper, archival, and archaeological evidence from the 1984-85 excavations indicates that throughout its history Riverside's Chinatown continued to preserve its ethnic traditions. The Ganbian villagers brought with them three basic beliefs that functioned together to form their philosophical underpinnings. Buddhism and Taoism provided a religious foundation, while Confucianism constituted the basis for their social framework. Riverside's Chinatown was a center for festivals and ceremonies associated with the Buddhist/Tao religious paradigm. One of Chinatown's main structures, the "joss house," functioned as the immigrants' temple. A stone monument located near the entrance to Chinatown, sometimes referred to as the town's protective god, paid deference on a tablet to ancestors in Ganbian. The Chee Kung Tong headquarters in Chinatown drew its membership from the villagers and Chinese on the outlying ranches. The single tong, which functioned as a semi-governing unit of the village, managed many of the traditional observances, such as the New Year's celebration and funerals. It acted also to ensure legal representation when necessary for members of Riverside's pioneer Chinese community.

Ethnically, Chinatown provided a traditional environment for its residents, Chinese workers on the citrus ranches, and migrant Chinese brought in for the orange harvest. The self-contained community provided a place for Chinese to come and relax among their countrymen, eat native cuisine, engage in lotteries and gambling, purchase Chinese goods, smoke opium, and practice worship. Forced mostly into bachelorhood by the restrictive laws of the country and socially unwelcome in the Anglo community, it is little wonder that Riverside's Chinatown was such an important cultural center for many immigrants of the citrus belt.

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### AGRICULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The actual site of Chinatown was agriculturally important to the Chinese inhabitants, because it was there and in neighboring gardens along the Santa Ana River where some of them grew vegetables. Chinatown was the center of a vegetable-growing industry that formed a major part of the village's economy and supplied most of Riverside's Anglo community with produce for more than three decades. But more important is the fact that Chinatown operated labor contract agencies that through linkages with similar Chinese agencies throughout the state could quickly supply Riverside orange growers with ranch workers, irrigators, and a vast migrant labor force to pick citrus during the harvest season. The labor-contract system which prevails down to the present day in California agriculture was a system pioneered and developed by Chinese labor merchants.

The Riverside colony, founded in 1870, was the first inland community to successfully pioneer commercial citrus growing, and the Chinese contract labor system as it developed in Riverside and expanded to other orange-growing communities was a critical component in Riverside's leadership in the citrus industry. It was Chinese labor that built reservoirs, dug canals, planted and tended citrus groves, and harvested and packed the commercial product. Continuing research is providing evidence that the Chinese were responsible for many innovations that contributed to the success of the citrus industry. Both the hand-wrapping of oranges and the "China Pack" used in the early days of the industry to sort and fill orange boxes appear to have been Chinese innovations. In the 12th Century, Han Yen-Chi wrote the first treatise on citriculture, which describes citrus clippers used for picking oranges that were made from bamboo. While the origin of the citrus clipper in Southern California is unknown, the device is similar to that used in ancient times in China. Up until 1880, all citrus in California was handpulled from the trees. The sudden appearance of the citrus clipper coincides with the use of large numbers of Chinese to harvest oranges in the early 1880's and probably was a Chinese innovation. The Chinese probably were also responsible for the importation of many of their native citrus varieties, which were planted extensively in the citrus belt in the Nineteenth Century, including the most important rootstock of the period, Chinese lemon.

Finally, an increasing body of evidence going back to the 1880's suggests that the furrow method of irrigation, a revolutionary new irrigation practice that became known as the "Riverside method" of irrigation for its place of origination, actually was a Chinese introduction. Furrow irrigation was first tested in Riverside in about 1878--replacing the older basin and flooding methods of irrigation used in the Spanish and Mexican periods--and it quickly spread throughout the citrus belt and to other crop industries of the Southwest. In 1895, Theodore Van Dyke in an article in Irrigation Age magazine wrote about the new method and attributed it to either Chinese irrigators or Anglo observations of the method used in Chinese vegetable gardens. His article aroused an angry furor among Anglo citrus growers in Riverside, continuing research on this subject is lending further support to Van Dyke's claim.

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## THE IMPORTANCE OF CHINESE IMMIGRANT COMMERCE

The Chinese who lived in Riverside's Chinatown developed a number of commercial industries that were significant in the early history of the city. Surely the most obvious to Riversiders of the Nineteenth Century were the cheap laundry services and the garden vegetables provided by Chinatown, both of which were maintained by a regular delivery service run by the immigrants. In the 1890's, when there was an attempt on the part of some Anglo citizens to organize a boycott of Chinese vegetable vendors, the local press humorously responded by suggesting that before the boycott started it might be well for Anglos to first learn to grow vegetables. Similar attempts at boycotting Chinese laundries failed, because Anglo housewives refused to return to doing the work themselves nor were they satisfied with the inferior service provided by an Anglo steam laundry that briefly attempted to compete with the Chinese. In short, Chinatown provided these two services far better and cheaper than could be achieved by Anglo competition.

Up into the 1920's, most of the fertile lands adjoining the Santa Ana River were leased by Chinese gardeners operating out of Chinatown. More than fifty Chinese leases, some of them for more than 100 acres, are housed in the Chinese Archives of the Tomas Rivera Library at the University of California, Riverside. They cover a period from 1882 to the 1920's, and the cultivated garden areas leased extend from south of Riverside along the river north as far as the town of Colton. Much of the produce business was conducted by bargaining between Chinese house servants representing their Anglo employers and Chinese vendor deliverymen.

While Chinatown functioned primarily to provide food, goods, and other services to its own countrymen, Euroamericans also frequently patronized the immigrant village. The 1984-85 archaeological excavations indicated that most goods sold in Chinatown were imported directly from China, probably through middlemen in Los Angeles and San Francisco Chinatowns. In the 1890's, Anglo women made regular trips in their carriages to Chinatown to purchase some of these imported products--clothing, household items, and various exotic goods. Anglo ranchers relied on several Chinese contract labor agencies operating in the immigrant village for supplying permanent labor and large numbers of migrant Chinese for the harvesting and packing seasons.

Tax assessment rolls of Chinatown from 1884 to 1907 were studied by the Great Basin Foundation during its 1984-85 archaeological investigations (see pages 337-372 of Volume 1, Wong Ho Leun: An American Chinatown, which is provided as an attachment). In 1892, two Chinese merchants selling Chinese goods and fixtures had valuations of \$800 each placed on their stock. Eleven other merchants received stock evaluations of from \$600 to \$100 (a butcher). When Chinatown was destroyed by fire in 1892, insurance evaluations of the worth of ten businesses destroyed ranged from \$2000 to \$10,000. In the early 1880's, a local newspaper estimated that Chinatown residents were sending as much as \$100,000 annually back to their native land to help support relatives.

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## SIGNIFICANT SOCIAL HISTORY

Any examination of California's social history must include the Chinese immigrants. Chinese labor was an important part of the socio-economic fabric of Nineteenth Century California. While anti-Chinese prejudice and periods of harassment of the immigrants are the most dramatic elements of social history, the interrelationships between Chinese community and the Euroamerican culture in Riverside is far more complex and ambiguous than might be imagined, and prejudice and tolerance vacillated with the economic climate, the social position of Anglo observers, and the extent of their social contact with the Chinese. The elaborate relationships that existed between Riverside's pioneer Chinese settlers and the Anglo community has been explored in detail by cultural anthropologist Shelley Raven, who carried out an extensive study of the subject for the Great Basin Foundation of San Diego during its 1984-85 archaeological investigation (see pages 215-265 of Volume 1, Wong Ho Leun: An American Chinatown, which is provided as an attachment).

Riverside's Chinatown site is a significant cultural reminder of the less exemplary aspects of its social history. The relocation of Riverside's Chinese from the city's downtown business district to the Tequesquite Arroyo occurred not only because land values were soaring in the downtown area, but because of anti-Chinese sentiment among Anglo merchants and unemployed whites. Anti-Chinese activities flared up again in the recession and depression years of 1889 and 1893, and on November 29, 1896 night riders swept into a packinghouse in Casa Blanca and brutally assaulted seven Chinese workers. In general, however, anti-Chinese sentiment and examples of brutality toward the immigrants were relatively rare in Riverside as compared with many other California communities. Raven's 1894-85 social history study of Riverside's Chinatown in relationship to the Anglo community and to orange growers in particular indicates that close personal relationships did develop between Euroamericans and the immigrants, often clouded by ambiguous feelings that ranged from stereotyping Chinese to romanticizing them. Seventeen volumes of newspaper clippings containing more than 2,000 articles on Riverside's Chinese community from 1876 to the 1940's were compiled by local historian Harry Lawton during the Great Basin Foundation archaeological project. These and hundreds of other documents, articles, interviews, and reminiscences, all of which are now stored in the Tomas Rivera Library, offer a fertile field for continuing research on the social history of Riverside's Chinatown. Currently, a graduate student in sociology at the University of California, Riverside, Mrs. Pat Hanrahan, is computerizing much of this material and correlating it with Chinese census data for Riverside. Another UCR graduate student, Paul Wormser of the Department of History, has also embarked on a study of Chinese death records in Riverside and other communities of the citrus belt and is correlating it with burials in regional cemeteries.

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Berkeley, CA.

REPOSITORIES OF DATA

The most extensive collection of data related to the history of Riverside's Chinatown is housed in the Chinatown Collection of the Special Collections Department, Tomas Rivera Library, University of California, Riverside. The holdings are probably the largest collection of materials ever assembled in California on one of the State's interior Chinatowns, and includes more than 500 photographs of Riverside's Chinatown and other rural interior Chinatowns of the Nineteenth Century. Among these holdings are the following: (1) seventeen scrapbooks containing more than 2,000 xeroxed newspaper clippings on Chinese pioneers in Riverside and the Southern California citrus belt, assembled by Harry W. Lawton, a local historian and lecturer at UCR, while carrying out historical research on Riverside's Chinatown for the Great Basin Foundation during its archaeological study; (2) archival materials relating to Chinatown that are part of the Riverside Municipal Archives housed in the Special Collections Department; (3) copies of research papers by undergraduate and graduate students of UCR's Departments of History, Anthropology, and Sociology written over the past fifteen years about Riverside's pioneer Chinese; (4) manuscript material such as reminiscences and letters relating to Chinatown donated to the library by private citizens; (5) interviews and copies of oral history tape transcripts conducted with Mr. George Wong (Wong Ho Leun), last surviving Chinese-American resident and property owner of Riverside's Chinatown; and (6) much of the Great Basin Foundation's files and correspondence related to the archaeological study of Riverside's Chinatown.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

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Other repositories of data are the following:

- (1) The City of Riverside's Historic Resources Department's Municipal Museum, Riverside, CA. The Municipal Museum sponsored a major exhibition on Riverside's Chinatown in 1985, and is the repository for archival materials collected by Riverside's Cultural Heritage Board. Its collection includes some of the original business records and correspondence of Riverside's Chinatown; many photographic images of Chinatown and Chinese citrus belt pioneers; and a number of Chinese shop signs, the Chinese joss house altar, and other artifacts of Chinatown purchased at the auction of the George Wong estate in 1976. In addition, more than three tons of artifacts excavated during the Great Basin Foundation's archaeological study of Riverside's Chinatown in 1984-85 are currently curated and housed at the museum.
- (2) The History Division of Riverside County Parks Department. This entity is the repository for archival materials acquired by the Riverside County Historical Commission. Among primary archival materials housed at the History Division are records and documents relating to the Jensen-Alvarado Ranch, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is now the Jensen-Alvarado Ranch Historic Park. The ranchhouse was built by Chinese labor in 1868 (see Volume 1, pages 167-172, of Wong Ho Leun: An American Chinatown, which is included as an attachment to this nomination).
- (3) The California Department of Parks and Recreation's Office of Historic Preservation. This entity is the repository for the list of State Points of Historical Interest, and houses recorded information on Riverside's Chinatown as State Point of Historical Interest RIV-008.
- (4) The Riverside Public Library. The Local History Section of the library contains some historic photographs and other archival materials related to Riverside's Chinatown. In addition, it contains extensive documents and correspondence related to the grassroots effort of Riverside citizens that led to the archaeological study of Riverside's Chinatown by the Great Basin Foundation in 1984-85 and material related to the building of the Chinese Memorial Pavilion in 1987 honoring the city's Chinese pioneers
- (5) The Redlands Smiley Library, Redlands, CA. The Smiley Library contains some material on Riverside's Chinatown and considerable material that relates to Redlands Chinatown of the nineteenth century and the role of Chinese pioneers in the citrus belt. Its Chinese archives include scrapbooks of newspaper clippings, maps, pioneer reminiscences, and other information of a documentary nature.

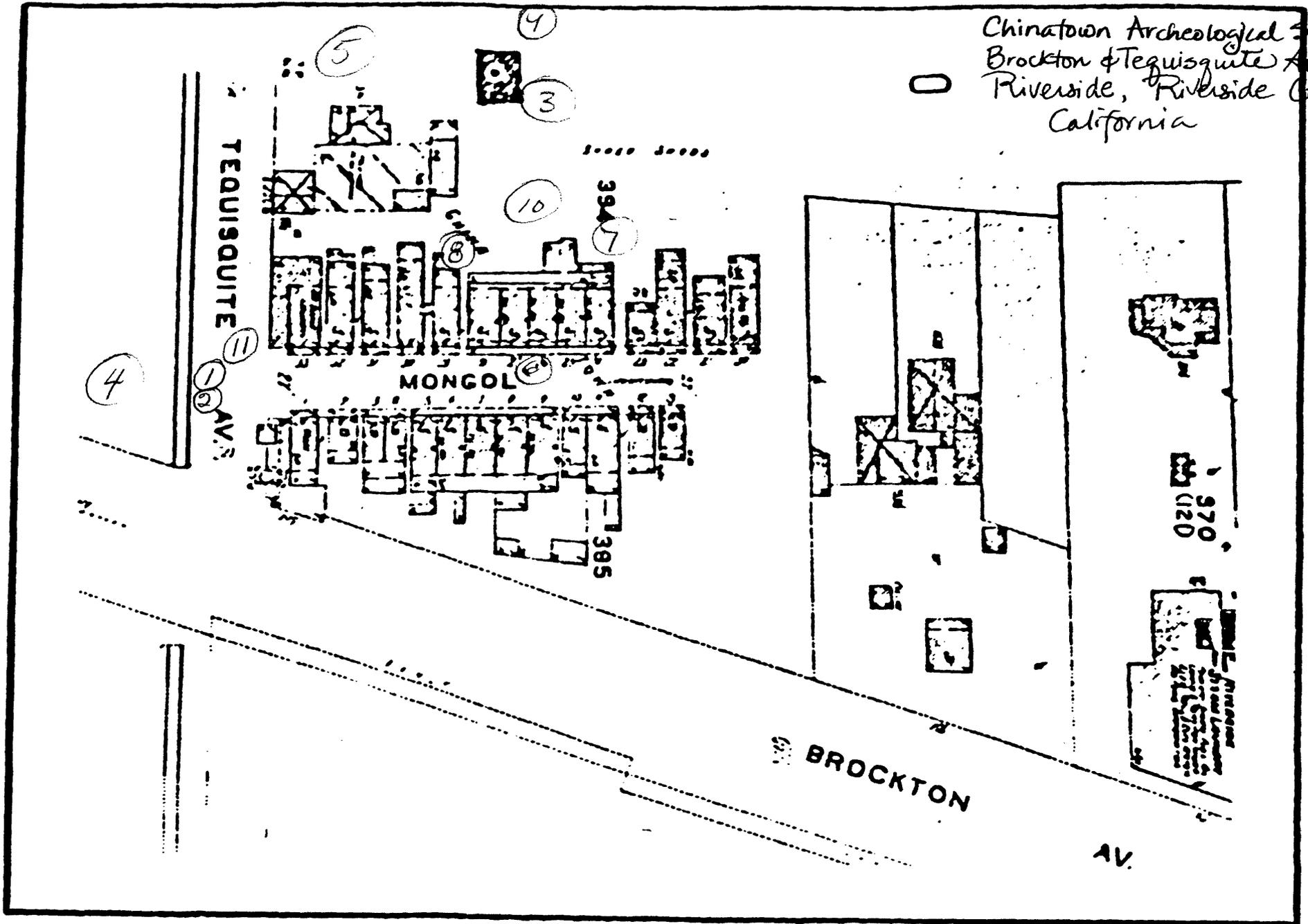


Figure 3. The 1908 Sanborn Co. insurance map of Chinatown structures.